Dear Friends:

In 2016, we will explore Copper Canyon, or Barranca del Cobre, on a memorable train adventure that will bring you dramatic scenery, natural history and Tarahumara Indians on one of the most unique adventures in the Americas!

This Easter expedition offers a unique combination of history of early explorers, contemporary Tarahumara Indian life, and the distinctive natural heritage of the region, plus a special opportunity to be in Copper Canyon at the time of the Tarahumara Indian Easter celebrations.

Join Betchart leader Cathy Waterman as we explore Copper Canyon—one of the world’s biggest canyon systems. The striking volcanic scenery, bridges, tunnels, and villages will be seen from the “train in the sky” and on the new tram!

The itinerary includes:

- **Tarahumara Easter Festivities** — the largest group of native people in northern Mexico, the Tarahumara live much as they have for the past 400 years. Easter brings fascinating dances celebrating the conflict between good and evil, wrestling matches, vigorous drum beating, and more! Eventually, a colorful effigy of Judas is burned, and devils are rounded up and herded into church.

- **Copper Canyon Complex—Copper, Urique, and Tararecua Canyons**—these rugged canyons are the largest and deepest canyon complex in Mexico. The headwaters rise at 9,000 feet and end at sea level over a distance of less than 150 miles. We will explore the Canyon Complex by train, bus, and the newly constructed **Copper Canyon Tram** which descends a couple thousand feet into the Canyon.

- **Urique Canyon** — one of the deepest canyons. We will explore Urique Canyon by bus and foot including lunch in Urique village.

- **Chihuahua al Pacifico Train** — completed in 1961 with 408 miles of track, 85 tunnels, and 37 bridges, the train provides a panoramic view of the canyon scenery. The first class, Fiat-built train and track system is one of the engineering feats of the world.

We hope you will join us this year to discover the wonders of Copper Canyon on this special Easter adventure!

Sincerely,

Margaret M. Betchart
President, Betchart Expeditions Inc.

March 21-28, 2016

An Easter Adventure!
**ITINERARY**

**Day 1 – Fly to Los Mochis, Mexico**
Depart the USA for Los Mochis, Mexico, situated just inland from the Sea of Cortez. Meet your Mexican guide and transfer to the colonial town of El Fuerte. Founded in 1564 by the conquistador Francisco de Ibarra, El Fuerte is an hour from Los Mochis. The El Fuerte Valley is agriculturally rich, producing many winter vegetables for North America, as well as sugar cane, corn and fruit. Enjoy a tropical drink, dinner, and trip orientation. *La Choza Hotel.*

**Day 2 – El Fuerte to Bahuichivo**
Transfer to El Fuerte train station, to begin our adventure on the Chihuahua al Pacifico “train in the sky.” Today’s ride is a spectacular introduction to the Copper Canyon complex, a system of steep-sided gorges or “barrancas” which cut through the heart of the mountains of northwestern Mexico. This region is also home to 50,000 Tarahumara Indians. The Tarahumara call themselves “Raramuri,” meaning foot runner, for their non-stop races which exceed the length of several marathons.

The train passes waterfalls, switch-backs up mountain sides, and cuts through a mile-long tunnel before we disembark at Bahuichivo, near the mountain town of Cerocahui. Afternoon walk along scenic Cerocahui Canyon with picturesque oaks, pines, wildflowers and a mix of tropical and temperate birds. *Hotel Paraíso del Oso (2 nights).*

**Day 3 – Urique Canyon**
We will have a full day to explore Urique Canyon, as we make an ecological transect by bus and foot. We first ascend through the Sierra Madre pine-oak forest, pausing to peer across awesome cliffs to the floor of Urique Canyon, judged by many to be the deepest and most spectacular. On the descent to Urique village, the pine-oak forest gradually gives way to Sinaloaan thorn scrub with giant cacti, Kapok, and Tree Morning Glory. The cliffs consist of thick layers of volcanic ash deposited in cataclysmic eruptions. The remote hamlet of Urique, nestled in the canyon bottom 6,000 feet below the rim, embodies the quiet isolation of rural Mexico of years past.

**Day 4 – Cerocahui**
Spend the morning walking through pine-oak forest beneath towering rhyolite spires. Visit the Jesuit mission and boarding schools established for the children of the Tarahumara who live in remote ranchos. Our afternoon train trip will take us through the last of the tropical vegetation and into the Maderan conifer forest.

The Mansion Tarahumara Hotel is a few minutes walk from an expansive vista overlooking the junction of three canyons: Barrancas Urique, Copper, and Tararecua. After lunch take a walk below the barranca rim, where we may see how the Tarahumara farm and see handicrafts including baskets meticulously woven from pine needles, and dolls and animal figures carved from pine bark.

**Day 5 – Copper Canyon Tram — Easter Festivities**
This morning, we will depart by coach for Divisadero and the Copper Canyon Tram. We will take the Tram part way down into the canyon—a descent of a couple of thousand feet! We will then continue our coach drive through green mountain valleys to Creel. Semana Santa (Easter) is a very important festival time for the Tarahumara and we will see Easter festivities this afternoon. Pharisees and Soldados (soldiers) have captains that lead them. “Tenaches” carry the saint’s images and “pascolers” dance with ankle bells to the sound of violins and flutes. We will delight in the spectacle! *Best Western Creel Lodge (2 nights).*

**Day 6 – Creel – Cusarare & Tarahumara Festivities**
Today we will have a combination of sightseeing in Cusarare, a typical Tarahumara Indian village, and seeing the conclusion of the Easter celebration where the raramuris finally defeat the “Spanish Judas Evil” and burn its remains. The Soldados and Pharisees will engage in wrestling matches, battling symbolically for...
Yes! I/We want to join the Copper Canyon Expedition, March 21-28, 2016. Please reserve _____ space(s). As a deposit, I/we enclose a check for $____________ ($500 per person) payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) ___________________________________________ Age_________

Name(s) ___________________________________________ Age_________

Address ________________________________________________________

City_________________________ State______ Zip____________

Phone: Home (________) __________________________

Work (________) __________________________

Email Address ________________________________________________

Membership (please circle):

AAAS   Sigma Xi   ACS   Planetary Society

Accommodations Preference:

Twin   Single   ___ Share (with a friend)

 ___ Share (assign a roommate)

 ___ Nonsmoker   ___ Smoker

Signature __________________________________ Date ____________

Signature __________________________________ Date ____________

Mail To:  Copper Canyon 2016
           Betchart Expeditions Inc.
           17050 Montebello Road
           Cupertino, CA 95014-5345

control of Judas.
The Soldados then take possession, shoot arrows into the three figures, and set them afire. The beating of the drums continues and pandemonium breaks out in the form of ceremonial wrestling between good and evil. Eventually a colorful effigy of Judas is burned, along with other symbols of evil. Devils are rounded up and herded into the church to be cleansed and returned to society as normal people.

After the dramatic activities, we will return to Creel to explore the town, the Tarahumara Museum, and more!
Expedition Fee: $2,995 per person twin share for 8 days plus air fare to Los Mochis, Mexico.

Questions: Please call Marisa Eide, (800) 252-4910 or (408) 252-4910. Fax: (408) 252-1444.

What to Expect: This expedition is planned for travel enthusiasts who would enjoy exploring Copper Canyon at Easter, learning about prehistoric and contemporary Tarahumara Indian culture and scenic natural areas in Mexico’s Copper Canyon. Travel is by Chihuahua al Pacifico train on three days, and by school bus, and motorcoach March 25-27. There will be walks of 1 to 2 miles. Temperatures will range from the low 60’s to the low 90’s during the day and may be in the 50’s during the night. The elevation will range from sea level to a train ride that reaches 8,071 feet. Most hotels and walking locations will be between 4,500 and 6,500 feet (or less). Please consult your physician if you have any concerns. (No smoking in vehicles, during lectures, or meals.)

Expedition Fee Includes: Land transportation by train, aerial tram, school bus, and motorcoach; accommodations in first class hotels and lodges based on double occupancy of a twin-bedded room with bath; all meals; entrance fees; tips; baggage handling; leadership, administration.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Air fare (quoted separately); gratuity to leaders; personal items such as laundry, phone calls, beverages at meals, alcoholic beverages, snacks, personal insurance; or foreign airport departure tax.

Air Fare & Airline Ticketing: Airline flights to Los Mochis may be via Mexico City or through Mazatlan or other gateways with a return from Chihuahua. Flights and ticketing will be handled by Betchart Expeditions Inc. Please contact Taunya at (800) 252-4910. AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Accommodations: Are based on double occupancy of a twin-bedded room with bath in first class hotels and lodges. Limited single accommodations are available for $495. Paraiso del Oso is rustic and in a rural setting. If you do not have a roommate, or we cannot assign one, you must pay the extra cost of a single.

Reservations, Deposits & Payments: To reserve a place on this expedition, please complete the reservation form with your check for $500 payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account. Then please mail to:

Copper Canyon at Easter 2016
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435

The balance is due 60 days before departure (January 15, 2016).

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit for the expedition is refundable up to 60 days before departure less a handling fee of $100 per person. There will be no refund for any cancellation after the 60-day period unless your place can be resold, then only the $100 handling fee will be withheld. There are no refunds for unused meals, accommodations, or other expedition features.