

# San Francisco Libre News



Reading's Twin Town in Nicaragua



Volume No. 2

Summer 2002

## NSC Representative takes up his post

The summer has kicked off with the association welcoming a new link in Nicaragua. Paul Baker, a North American by birth, has been recruited to replace Chris Baird as the NSC (Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign) representative based in Managua.

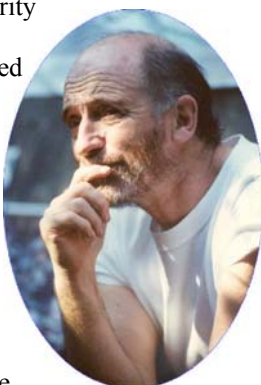
During his brief visit to the United Kingdom last month Paul was able to attend a meeting of the Reading San Francisco Libre Association, where he impressed us with his knowledge and commitment to the work of the NSC and the Twin Town Associations.

Although he has lived in Nicaragua for a number of years, working for the American Organisation Nica Net, he admitted that he had never visited San Francisco Libre, something he intends to rectify in the very near future.

Ninoska Maya Vega, a consultant in agriculture with experience in participatory project identification, monitoring and evaluation, is assisting Paul Baker's initial work relating to development initiatives in San Francisco Libre.

## New representative in SFL

We have also welcomed a new recruit to the Association from the town of San Francisco Libre itself. Alina Briceño will work for us for approximately two days per month representing Reading at local NGO meetings and keeping us informed of developments within the municipality.



This has been a long-term goal for the association but until now attempts to have a representative have floundered because of poor communications. All has now changed however thanks to the accessibility of email in Managua, and the willingness of Felix, one of the volunteers from Oldenburg (SFL's German twin town), to travel regularly between Managua and SFL.

Alina works in the town hall and also sits on the board of APREDEN a local NGO operating in the town. She has accepted her role with gusto and has already sprung into action welcoming Hannah Starkey in late May and looking after her during her week-long stay. She has already begun to represent Reading at local meetings and has communicated with us three times in the last month, which is excellent.



Alina

## Peter Oakley Trust

One of Alina's key responsibilities will be to oversee the administration of educational funds sent to APREDEN from the Peter Oakley Trust. In her first letter she gave us the following details of young people currently being supported by the Trust:



## Darling Briceno Diaz

Darling is an eight-year-old girl who lives two kilometres from SFL town with her mother Maria Diaz. Her father died last year. She is in the third year of primary school.

## Thayron Jose Salinas

Thayron is a 14-year-old boy in the second year of secondary school who lives in La Conquista, 12 kilometres from SFL town. During the week he stays in the house of a friend in San Francisco Libre, only returning home at the weekends. His mother is Martha Rosa Salinas. His father has abandoned the family.

## Karen Ramirez Valle

Karen is from the community 'La Majada' which is 11 kilometres from the village. She is also in her second year of secondary school, and like Thayron, stays in SFL town during the week. She is given accommodation by a local family in return for work.



## Aracelly Ordonez Diaz

Aracelly is a 12-year-old girl in her third year of primary school Aracelly is from La Trinidad that is 25 kilometres from SFL town. She lives with her mother and father.

## Eddy Antonio Gomez Gutierrez

Eddy is a 13-year-old boy, Eddy is from Las Lomas 16 kilometres from SFL town and is in his sixth year of primary school.

## Hilda Moran Treminio

Hilda is a 14-year-old girl in her second year of secondary school, Hilda

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is from Las Mercedes de Santa Maria which is 11 kilometres from SFL town. Her mother is Juana Treminio but Hilda lives with a friend of the family.

**Hamileth Conde Angulo**

Hamileth is a 7-year-old boy in his first year of school. He is from the community of San Jorge 18 kilometres from SFL town. He lives with his mother and father.

**Sayda Janeth Obando Diaz**

From La Timidad, Sayda is 11 years old and in her third year of primary school. She lives with both parents.

The fund appears to be operating successfully, with money being channelled through APREDEN. The selection process was based on application forms from the town hall and information from teachers, community leaders, women’s organizations and other, independent reports. As the scheme is working well, we intend to increase the number of beneficiaries in the near future.



**College Sponsors Nicaraguan Student**

Fred McCrindle, Principal of Reading College and School of Art and Design has very generously offered a place on the City & Guilds carpentry course to a student from San Francisco Libre beginning this September. Alina has again been active in recruiting a suitable candidate and we have just recently confirmed that Jeyserd Juseff Torrez Martinez will be arriving in Reading on 16th July to take up the offer. Jeyserd is 19 years old and as well as having an interest in carpentry, also enjoys painting, playing the guitar and giving music lessons. He will start an intensive English course in July provided by the college, ready to begin carpentry in September. It is hoped

that at the end of the year Jeyserd will return to SFL and pass on the skills he has learned to others via the existing carpentry workshop, which is at the moment, underused.

**St William of York & St James Churches**

The Catholic Churches of St James and St William of York are also supporting Jeyserd by providing accommodation for him throughout his stay. Each year the churches choose a charity to focus on and we are delighted that this year they have chosen San Francisco Libre. The congregations have both recently had brief talks about SFL during their Sunday Mass and are already planning fund raising activities for throughout the year. More information is available through Greg Bello Tel: 0118 9677861 or Kevin Boyle Tel: 0118 9267100. We will of course feature any events in this newsletter.

**Sponsored climb**

Hannah Starkey raised £500 for the Association when she, Lauren Breheny and Rachel Caulcutt climbed to the top of Scafell Pike, England’s highest mountain. It was a tremendous effort and a great achievement. The money raised will go to the Peter Oakley Trust. Hannah visited San Francisco Libre in May as part of a four month trip to Central and South America.



Hannah and Lauren

She enjoyed working with children in SFL. She also appreciated the warm hospitality of many people, some of whom had previously visited Reading.



**Maiden Erlegh School**

Sixth formers at Maiden Erlegh recently received a talk on San Francisco Libre from John Bullus. This is the second year in a row that we have been invited to the school. Following last year’s talk, the students donated £613 raised by a sponsored walk. This was very gratefully received. Thank you very much.

**WOMAD**

Members of the association will be on the WOMAD One World Stage on Saturday 27 July at 4.00pm and at 8.30pm. Among other things, Jeyserd will play his guitar and we will ask the audience to play some games from Nicaragua. Please come and support!



**Is there a budding film editor?**

We have an archive of good quality DV video footage taken during visits to San Francisco Libre in recent years. Last year Joe Pedder kindly edited a short video which some of you have seen, showing the damage caused by Hurricane Mitch. This four-minute film has a strong impact on audiences, whenever it is shown. We’d now like to put together a longer video showing many aspects of life in SFL and the progress since Mitch. Unfortunately, we have neither the equipment nor the skills, though we have good ideas of themes etc. If anyone is a film editor, or knows someone who is, and would be willing to give up some time, then please let us know.

