

# San Francisco Libre News



Reading's Twin Town in Nicaragua



Volume No. 4

June 2003

## Mat Wright

The Association would like to thank the family of Mat Wright for their generous donation of £600 earlier this year.

Mat became involved with Nicaragua when he took part in a work and study tour to San Francisco Libre in the summer of 1997. Working alongside residents of the local community, he gained an understanding of the social and economic conditions in the municipality. On his return to England he continued to work to raise awareness and support for Nicaragua.

Tragically, Mat died during Christmas 2001 at the age of 31. Last September his friends and colleagues from the Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign took part in a sponsored cycle ride in his memory. They were joined by cancer charity campaigns from across Britain and in total almost 3000 riders cycled the 40 mile route along the Thames from Richmond to Windsor, past landmarks such as Laleham Abbey and Hampton Court.



Mat's brother Will (centre) and his two cousins, Ben Bensen and Steve Wright

We greatly appreciate the fact that Mat's family decided to donate part of the sponsorship money raised to Reading San Francisco Libre Association. The money will be used to support the carpentry workshop and hopefully in turn, the community he visited.

## Update on Carpentry Project

The months since Christmas have been a busy time for Jeyserd, our carpentry student from Nicaragua. He has been working hard both in the carpentry workshop at Reading College, and in his English lessons, also provided by the college.

He has come on in leaps and bounds and is now able to communicate confidently in English. Consequently, he is also making giant leaps forward in carpentry. Danny Cronin, the head of Carpentry at the college has described Jeyserd as one of the most naturally gifted students he has taught, and he is confident that Jeyserd will have the basic skills necessary to begin work as a carpenter in SFL.



Jeyserd playing his guitar during a meeting at RISC about the Coffee Crisis

## Carpentry workshop in San Francisco Libre

Jeyserd will be returning to Nicaragua on 14th July. Once there, he will set up a small workshop in the middle of the town and begin to produce simple furniture at affordable prices which, it is hoped, local people will be able to buy.

The furniture he is planning to produce includes tables, stools, beds and basic shelves and cupboards etc. He will also bid for contracts with local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in the town to continue the rebuilding and repairing of homes.

Plans are well underway. The site for the workshop has already been agreed with the town's mayor, and will be right in the centre. For those of you who know San Francisco Libre, it will be situated in the buildings where the old market used to be held, and where there is still a mural of some of the main players in the Sandanista movement: Sandino, Carlos Fonseca and Daniel Ortega.

Jeyserd and the group have been working on a detailed business plan for the workshop and are beginning to make contacts with the various NGOs to seek work.

### Upcoming Events

- 5 July Rivermead Stadium Party for Reading's Twin Towns – all invited, no admission charge.
- 26 July WOMAD – We will hold an event on the One World Stage during Saturday early afternoon.
- 21 Sept Sponsored Cycle Ride. *Provisional date* for a ride around Reading. Contact David Ruddle 0118 956 8453
- 19 Oct Paintballing Day. *Provisional date* for day in High Wycombe. Contact Nicola Shute 0118 975 1488

If anyone would like to do a sponsored walk etc. to raise funds for Jeyserd, please feel free. We have also attached a form at the end of this newsletter to allow those who would like to send a donation, either as a one off, or as a regular contribution, to do so.

Contact us: <http://www.reading-sfl.org.uk> [editor@reading-sfl.org.uk](mailto:editor@reading-sfl.org.uk)

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## Support for the Workshop

Reading College has been extremely generous in their support of Jeyserd. In the next few months they are hoping to work with their contacts and suppliers to provide Jeyserd with the basic hand tools he will need to stock his workshop. We are also in contact with "Tools for Self Reliance" who are optimistic that they will also be able to help equip Jeyserd.

The Parish of St James and St William of York have continued to give tremendous support to Jeyserd and to raise funds to assist his long term plans. An enormous thank you goes to everyone involved with this project over the year. Without the college and the churches, we would not have been able to bring Jeyserd over.

Jeyserd has been an excellent ambassador for his town and for Nicaragua, and has made an impact on all who have met him.

As the first half of this project now draws to a close the Reading San Francisco Libre Association is turning its attention to raising the funds necessary to support the set up and work of the carpentry workshop.

A reduced rent has been agreed with the mayor who is fully behind this project, and as mentioned above, donations from the college and the church will go a long way to equipping

the workshop with tools. There are a number of other costs that will be incurred. These include \$300 for connecting electricity and water to the workshop. Jeyserd will then have to buy a quantity of wood and transport it from Managua. He will also need to store it securely, which will involve buying good quality locks.

The Association has agreed to pay Jeyserd a wage for the first six months to support him while the workshop is established. Overall we have set ourselves a target of raising £2500 of which we currently have £1300 – please see the boxed section overleaf for some of our fundraising events and ideas.

## Peter Oakley Trust

The work of the Peter Oakley trust goes from strength to strength. We now have 12 young people being supported in their education. Photos have been taken of some of the new recipients, and we hope to show these in the next edition.



*Karen, recipient of one of the first set of Peter Oakley Trust education grants*

## News from Nicaragua

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has threatened to cancel the loan agreement it recently signed with Nicaragua because the country's legislature, the National Assembly, changed the nation's budget to give more money to local governments for public improvements and to slightly raise the low salaries of teachers, police officers and nurses.

For the national health system the insufficient budget means that in hospitals and primary health centres like the one at San Francisco Libre the medicine storerooms are virtually empty. They lack essential items such as medicines to treat asthma or cardiac problems. There are insufficient antibiotics, antiseptics, analgesics or other basic equipment like sterile gloves, syringes, needles, clamps for umbilical cords and bed sheets for women giving birth. The list of supplies needed is best summarised as "everything". This situation contributes to the unnecessary suffering of patients and often to the death of patients from curable diseases. If you can help in anyway please contact the Association.

As of the time of writing Arnaldo Alemán, the former Nicaraguan President convicted of corruption, and misappropriation of \$100 million of Govt. funds is still under house arrest.

**San Francisco Libre, Nicaragua.** Please return to: RSFLA Treasurer (John Bullus) 1 Maple Close, Winnersh, Reading, RG41 5PE

<p><b>Reading San Francisco Libre Trust</b></p> <p>Gift Aid</p> <p>Gift Aid can boost the value of your donations by 30%, at no extra cost or trouble to you! To make a Gift Aid declaration to RSFL Trust, please complete the box below – and we can reclaim tax on all future donations. To qualify you must pay income or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount to be reclaimed on your donation.</p> <p>RSFL Trust, Registered Charity No.1006736</p>	<p>STANDING ORDER MANDATE</p> <p>To The Manager .....Bank/Building Society</p> <p>Address.....Postcode.....</p>
<p>Please treat all my donations as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise</p> <p><b>Details of donor</b></p> <p>Full Name.....</p> <p>Address.....</p> <p>..... PostCode.....</p>	<p>Please pay The Co-op Bank, Reading <span style="float:right">Sort code: 08-90-16</span></p> <p>For the credit of Reading San Francisco Libre Trust <span style="float:right">Account No. 50415108</span></p> <p>The sum of £..... (Amount in Figures) ..... (Amount in Words)</p> <p>Commencing ..... (date) and thereafter every..... (Frequency)</p> <p>Until ..... Or until you receive further notice from me/us in writing</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Name of account to be Debited <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Sort Code</span> <span style="margin-left: 100px;">Account Number</span></p> <p>Signature(s)..... Date.....</p> <p><b>Please ensure signed in accordance with account mandate</b></p> <p>Note: The Bank will not undertake to: (i) make any reference to Value Added Tax or other indeterminate element (ii) advise payer's address to beneficiary (iii) advise beneficiary of inability to pay (iv) request beneficiary's banker to advise beneficiary of receipt.</p>