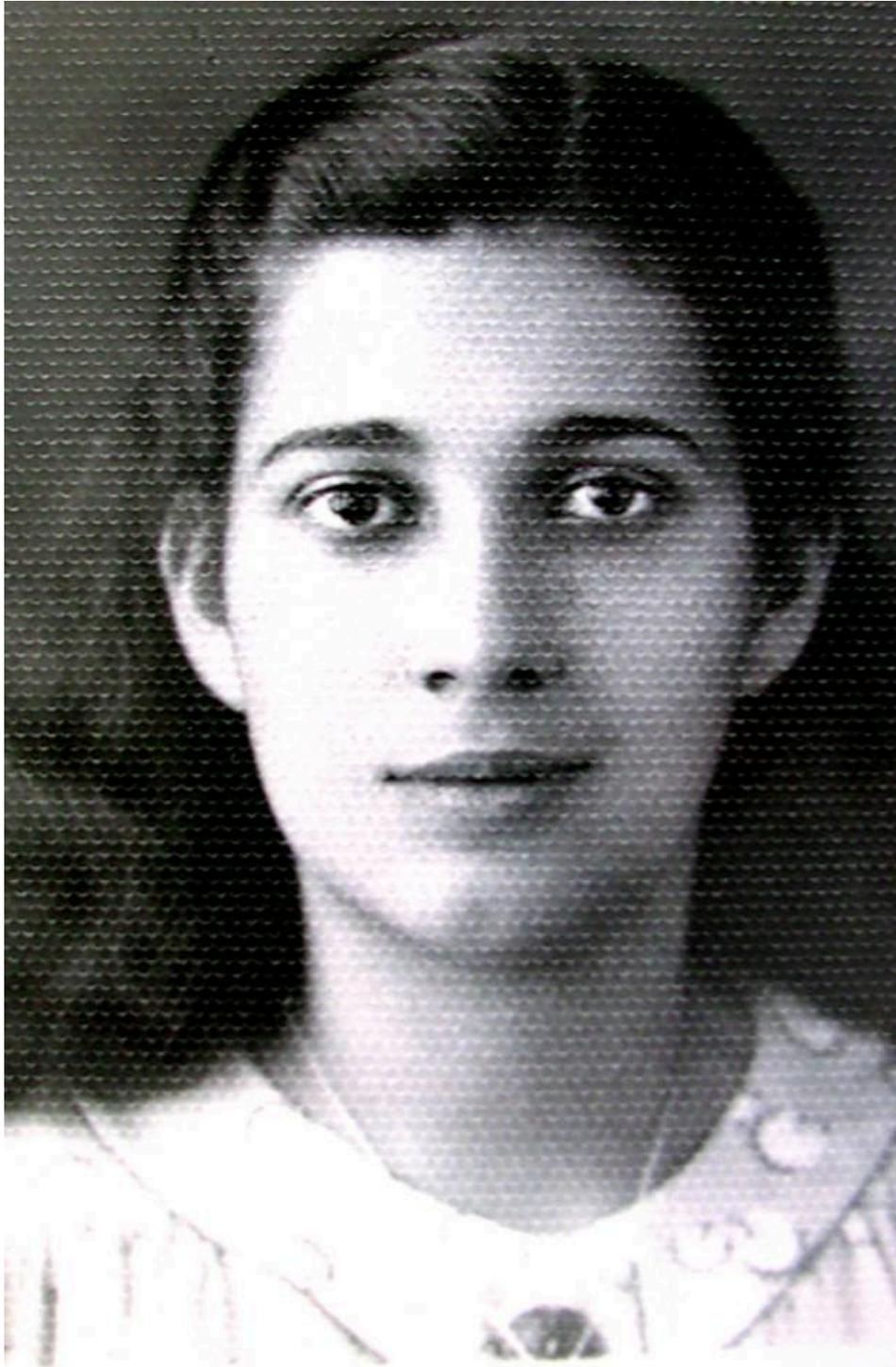


Palo Alto Friends Meeting
El Salvador Projects



Carmen Morán Broz
December 15, 1923 – September 17, 2015

Letter from the Director

Robert Broz



So many experiences and powerful emotions flow through my mind as I begin this report to you, our supporters, just weeks after the September 17th death of my mother, Carmen Broz, at 91. Some of you in this relatively small group of friends and supporters have sustained the El Salvador Projects with your contributions and your loyalty for most of the 26 years since my mother started this work in 1989. Others joined in over the years, as her letters and visits to Quaker Meetings and other groups brought a first-hand view of conditions in El Salvador and showed how poverty and injustice could be overcome. Since I became responsible for the projects, I've done my best to continue the community-based, very personal approach that she pioneered. For many of you, Carmen Broz was the one common factor, the inspiring figure who gave you hope that together we could help Salvadorans find the way to a better future. Our average annual budget of around \$12,000 - \$25,000 in the early years, then increasing to \$35,000 more recently, means that over the 26 years you have provided about \$625,000 in contributions. Such amazing generosity!

My mother's early letters, followed by newsletters from the El Salvador Projects Committee, have acquainted many of you with her background and her mission here in El Salvador. Memories that committee members are sharing in this newsletter will tell you more. In this report, I want to tell you how I myself came to El Salvador and became involved, and reflect on the hundreds of lives our programs have changed, my mother's life of service to others, my family, and my own Quaker ties and beliefs.

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Note from the Clerk



Friends ~~~

Carmen recruited me into helping Salvadoran refugees in 1984, which was life changing! She recommended that Palo Alto Meeting pay my way to Tucson in 1986 to attend a great gathering of churches and synagogues supporting Sanctuary work.

The purpose of the gathering was to support those convicted of helping with illegal border crossings. There I met Jim Corbett and Rev. John Fife, who were out on bail. They were two of the first to do this work.

Carmen returned to El Salvador briefly in 1986, then again in 1989 when fighting in the civil war was severe. The Peace Accords were signed in 1992.

I was privileged to stay with Carmen a couple of times in San Salvador after the war. She delighted in telling me of her life, including stories we'll share with you in this newsletter.

In Peace,
Trudy Myrrh Reagan
Clerk of El Salvador Projects
Committee

Memories of Carmen Broz: Six decades of friendship and inspiration

~ Jamie Newton ~

Carmen Morán Broz was a powerful influence in my life and a dear friend for more than 60 years. With her husband, Perry, Carmen came to Scottsdale, Arizona, a few years after the Phoenix Friends Meeting was formed in 1950. With the Stamler, Newton, Bowers, and Hurn families and a few others, Carmen and Perry met for Quaker worship in the homes of Friends, then in the open on a piece of desert land the Meeting bought, and later in our first meeting house – a ramada we built ourselves (children working alongside the adults). Throughout her life my mother, Catharine Newton, treasured a note in my eight-year old scrawl where I wrote the details Perry gave about the birth of their first son, Franz Jacob. As the years passed, the families of Phoenix Meeting formed bonds strong enough to endure through the decades, even though most moved out of the area.

In 1963, when I was 16 years old, Carmen welcomed me to live with the Broz family in

San Bruno, so that I could experience the San Francisco Bay Area. Later she and I were both members of Palo Alto Friends Meeting. From her letters and periodic visits in the 1980's and after, I learned of conditions in El Salvador and of her courageous, innovative efforts to promote health and education for the poorest and most vulnerable Salvadorans.

Long before her retirement, Carmen felt a calling to return to El Salvador and offer some benefit to the country that had formed her character, yet she was startled and intimidated when in 1986 the Share Foundation asked her to join an international group to accompany campesinos (rural peasants) who were leaving refugee camps at the height of the civil war to resume their former way of life farming in the village of El Barío, a few miles from Suchitoto. A few years earlier the military had driven them out, massacring those who could not escape, burning homes, killing livestock and pets, even destroying cooking vessels to make habitation impossible. The Share Foundation was providing tools and seeds, and they hoped that accompaniment by supporters from several nations would deter the military from capturing or killing the campesinos as they tried to return. Carmen told me frankly that she was terrified by the prospect, but after declining and hanging up the phone she thought, "If not me, who? If not now, when?" She called back and volunteered.

In fact, on the way to El Barío the military stopped the group at Aguacayo, surrounding them as they typically did before a massacre. The internationals protested. Fluent in Spanish and with dual citizenship, and fired with indignation, Carmen confronted the colonel in charge and a young lieutenant. When

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Fall 1955 at the Phoenix Friends ramada - Carmen, Perry, & Franz Broz. Kay, Ken, and Jamie Newton.



Carmen and Lt. Paloma in Aguacayo, 1986

I first heard her tell the story, Carmen told me that she reproached them with the insult, *¡Sinvergüenza!* – Shameless!. Years later, when I reminded her of that remark, Carmen was a little embarrassed, telling me, “Jamie, I said much worse things than that.” She recalled with humility and gratitude that it was the young Lt. Paloma who changed the tone of the confrontation,

saying to her *Señora, nosotros también somos seres humanos*. (Madam, we are also human beings.) She embraced him, her fury easing.

All of the internationals with the exception of one Spanish priest were deported. The priest stayed behind and accompanied the refugees to El Barío. The internationals were thrown into the backs of trucks like bags of fertilizer, Carmen said, then deported with *persona no grata* stamped in their passports to make it difficult to return. Remarkably, the campesinos were allowed to return to El Barío, perhaps protected by the fact that international organizations knew of their situation, and the village they reconstructed became a major focus of Carmen’s educational initiatives after the settlement that ended the civil war in 1992.

My wife, Marion, and I have been members of the El Salvador Projects Committee for many years, helping to raise funds and provide personal support for Carmen and later, her son, Robert Broz. We have visited the Salvadoran villages the projects serve, meeting the Salvadorans who are our partners in making the projects enduringly effective. We shared Carmen’s grief when seven people, six of them PAFM scholarship high school students, were killed in a bus crash going between El Barío and Suchitoto to attend classes. This was before the new school in El Barío included a high school. We shared her joy as one group after another progressed from high school to the university level and graduated, then found employment – a dramatically new opportunity for children from poor rural families. Working with Carmen Broz, and now with Robert, has given us life-changing experiences and cherished friendships with Salvadorans whose resiliency and determination amaze and inspire us. We invite all of you who are Project supporters to look through past issues of the newsletters on the website, www.pafmelsalvadorprojects.org, where you will find the articles we have written after our trips to El Salvador.

We stayed closely in touch with Carmen in her last years. We miss her, even as her spirit and her example stay with us.



Carmen hugs Lt. Paloma

Robert Broz ~ The Beginning

I arrived in El Salvador at the age of 33, a horticulturist, recently divorced, and recovering from the loss of my father who died in 1992. Since 1989 my mother had urged me to come to El Salvador: *You would love it here... You should see the work I am doing! And of course: You could be of help, too.* In 1994 I purchased a 30-day round-trip plane ticket, thinking that it would be enough time to see what Mom was doing, visit relatives, and relax before I started rebuilding my life back in California.

Within a day of arriving I realized that my mother, now retired, was more active than I had ever seen her as a schoolteacher and single mother of four boys. On my second day in El Salvador I drove her to a village to drop off some furniture at a day care center about four hours from the city. The next day it was a trip to El Barío with a young pediatrician and a gynecologist. Mother always made a point of introducing me to the community leaders, the teachers, and especially the children in the communities.

In my second week in El Salvador something happened that changed my life. It started when my mother asked me to take some playpens to the village of Nueva Esperanza. I was to go alone, as she had another commitment in San Salvador. Well, I thought, we were there just the week before, so I do know how to get there. As planned, I drove to the village, dropped the playpens off, and after a simple lunch started the trip back to the city. Just as I was getting close to the city I got a flat tire and discovered that there was no spare, no jack, and no lug wrench. As a feeling of panic started to grow, I realized that I had only perhaps \$2 in local currency, there were no public phones, and I was remembering my mother saying "Don't ever leave the car alone because people will steal the tires, battery, and whatever else they can." In the 4 or 5 minutes that this was all going through my mind, an old car pulled over to see what was going on. The driver, an older man, got out and started to ask me something... But I had no idea of how to tell him I had no tire, spare, or jack. Very quickly he understood not only my problem but my limited skills in Spanish. With his small jack and some rocks, we were able to remove the tire together. About two hours later I was on my way, but not before I had offered the fellow the little money I had. From his offended look, I could see that he was not helping for money. I smiled and drove away, thinking that these Salvadorans are truly good people, and knowing that I would have been ignored by thousands of drivers if this had happened on Highway 101 back in California.

Returning to my mother's home, I thought of all the good things that living in El Salvador could mean... twenty types of mangos, twenty varieties of bananas (all better than the bananas we buy in the US), how nice people are, how everyone says hello and good-bye in passing... It was an easy decision to make. Some thirty minutes later, I was telling my mother with a big smile that I had decided to move to El Salvador. Now when I am asked how I ended up here I tell the short version of how I fell in love with El Salvador and its people.



Robert Broz, his wife Tita, and daughter Carmencita

~Robert and Tita~

Those who know me today always say that I should mention my wife in the “its people” part of my story. I met Tita during my first 30 days in El Salvador. She had worked for my mother, first as a domestic worker and later in two of the day care centers Carmen started in San Salvador. At the time I didn’t realize that she knew more about me than I would have considered healthy. My mother had confided her worries about her youngest son as I plowed through life dealing with alcoholism, substance abuse, my father’s death, and a failing marriage. When I met Tita in 1994 she was working for a large childcare center that was started by a Swiss nonprofit. She lived and worked close to my mother’s house, and I can easily blame the first two visits on my mother and my appetite. Today I clearly remember my mother calling Tita and saying, “My son has finally come to visit and I want him to try the wonderful pupusas you make.” Perhaps two weeks later her call was a request for chicken tamales. Then my mother had to return to California, so I called Tita and asked if she could come by and cook pupusas again. We have now been together for 20 years, we have had two children together, and we finally married in June of 2006.



Robert Broz's wife Tita at their wedding, 2006

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Hulda Muaka Reminisces

Carmen, 88, in Santa Rosa, California



I met Carmen when I joined Palo Alto Friends Meeting in 2002. Coming from a third world country I resonated with her idea that education was the fastest way of changing a person's life. I was impressed by her El Salvador projects. Later, I did not hesitate to work on the El Salvador committee, on which I still serve.

On Sundays, I put on my African outfits, a practice that gives me closeness to my home while far away from home. It is also a practice for most Africans to dress up on Sundays, a day of rest, prayer and festivities. One day, I came to Meeting dressed in jeans and a t-shirt, and Carmen came to me and told me to never ever forget my culture. She related that dress was part of culture and told me to continue wearing my colorful African outfits. So when I am preparing for worship, Carmen's voice still rings loud and clear.

Four years ago, Trudy Reagan and I visited Carmen in Santa Rosa. We had been given a ride by Hubert Morel-Seytoux who was going to a Board Meeting at Friends House. We thought we would visit with Carmen for a short while as she was not feeling well. To our amazement, we spent the whole day with her. She talked about her life and felt like she had done all God wanted her to do on earth. She kept asking why she was still here. I am glad she was, for we had her go down memory lane using an album Chula Morel-Seytoux had lent us for the day. The album contained pictures that Chula and Hubert had taken during their trips to El Salvador. It was a day well spent.

As she talked about her life she mentioned that one day she washed bed sheets for Dorothy Day of the Catholic worker movement. When she went back on the following day hoping to put in another day's work washing bed sheets, she said Dorothy told her to sit down. She was going to teach her how to beg, meaning how to solicit for donations that the projects have survived on. Carmen then noted that begging was a great skill for she has begged since then. We who are still here will continue with this skill of begging for the less fortunate to get an education and better their lives.

Carmen has for sure left this world a better place. Rest in Peace!

Robert Broz ~ The Story Continues

In my first year and a half here I worked for two non-profits, both with problems. In 1997 I started working for a Quaker-related group as an agricultural consultant, where I did more basic business training and grant writing than anything else. I continued to help my mother with her projects, especially when she would head back to the US, and I would basically take care of everything for 2-3 months while she was in California. I also helped her every year as she would prepare her final financial report and review the budget for the upcoming year. I helped where I could as the programs that are overseen by Palo Alto Friends Meeting changed over the years, often combining my work for another group with that of Palo Alto. I realized, as did my mother, that to support education, especially higher education, is the most effective and economical way to alleviate poverty in countries like El Salvador. Of course, this approach would have been impossible if we had not first financed general social development programs in nutrition, health, water, and early education, but the change was quite evident and necessary in 1999 when our first-ever high school graduates asked Carmen a simple question: "What now?"

I remember my mother's concern after meeting with nine high school graduates from the village of El Barío, where the students first expressed gratitude for all of their basic education and then asked that one simple question. Carmen and the Committee in Palo Alto knew that this was much larger than what anyone had planned, but despite some worry that a university student loan program would be expensive and long-term, our university student loan program was born.



Carmen Broz at a daycare center in Santa Anita, 2006

Robert Broz ~ The El Salvador Projects Begin

Those original nine students studied teaching, nursing, and technical programs in chemical engineering and textile manufacturing. We put these youths through their study program with a tiny stipend of \$64/month. We opened our first student house in San Salvador so they could be closer to the universities and spend less time traveling. Since my involvement as Project Director we have been able to maintain an average of 20 university students, who receive funding and have access to student homes. We have graduated more than 70 students in many programs of study. Students now receive \$1000/year because the cost of living and tuition has increased over the years. In the past three years we have combined efforts with other programs, which allowed us to rent a larger house just blocks from the National University. Currently, 22 university students from four different programs reside in the house, which has Internet access and basic furnishings. This year, with funds from an organization in Santa Cruz, California, we will start a resource library of textbooks for students in the house. Even with El Salvador's current problems and the news about high levels of violence, the exodus of unaccompanied minors to the US in 2014 and 2015, and a declining economy, our work continues to provide a bright future for those we are able to support. Carmen's simple view of educating one person at a time to form new professionals in El Salvador's most susceptible population, the poor campesinos from rural villages, has and will continue to change El Salvador, helping to make it a better country where everyone will have access to a good education, health care, a decent diet, and a peaceful life. Working alongside my mother when she still lived in El Salvador opened my eyes. After living my first 33 years in the US, I feel truly blessed with my life and work in El Salvador, doing what I can to make the world a better place for those around me, serving in any way that I can. I owe this primarily to one person, my mother, Carmen Broz.

Just to see a photo of a student or the village the student came from makes it evident that our programs have changed hundreds of lives forever. To show this and to commemorate my mother's life of service to others, I will highlight one of our university students. For her and her family, life was transformed by my mother's initiatives, and by our emphasis on education for rural Salvadoran youths.



*Jamie Newton,
Romelia Chicas, and
Carmen in El
Salvador, 2004*



Carmen Broz with children in El Barío

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Karla Lili Martinez
Rodriguez, 2015

Young and vibrant Karla Lili is from the village of El Gigante, just outside Perquín, Morazán, in the northeastern mountains of El Salvador. Her parents received a small annual scholarship from us for her studies when she started elementary school some twenty years ago. She and her younger brother also received monthly visits from a pediatrician, and before they were born their mother received monthly checkups from a gynecologist. (Carmen arranged these medical visits.) Like most of the villages we supported in the early 1990s, El Gigante received nutritional programs to ensure that both parents' and children's diets were adequate. Both of Karla Lili's parents have been active in the community and their agricultural cooperative throughout her life, inspiring her to do the same. Karla Lili is now finishing her fifth and final year of course work at the national university in San Miguel, preparing to graduate as a social worker in 2016 after a year of thesis work. A top student from first grade through high school, she continues to excel in her university studies. She is active not only with the Cooperative, of which she became a member at 18, but also in the family's many productive projects, such as bee hives and macadamia, coffee, and fruit production.

Karla Lili often speaks of Carmen, who was like a second mother, motivating her to continue her studies and telling her and the other students from her village that the future of El Salvador is in their hands, that they must continue in their professional development. Carmen urged these young people to become active adults in the community organizations and local politics, emphasizing that we all need to live a life of service and to do so we need to first study, then help meet the needs of our families, communities, cities, and country, and to do all we can to make the world a better place for all.

Paul Engstrom Remembers

My warmest memories are of the times I visited Carmen in Nicaragua and El Salvador years ago. In 1988, Trudy Reagan and I visited Carmen in Nicaragua where she had secured a teaching position for personal living expenses and enabling her to help a number of Salvadorans, refugees from the violence of the Salvadoran government against its citizens in the civil war.

Carmen got some local technical adviser to design a plan to bring potable water from outside the refugee site and into each refugee home using PVC pipes which refugees learned to put together following the simply designed plan. Carmen further encouraged the male refugees to use their ability to make adobe bricks, to build more secure homes, now to be available with individual water supply, rather than the flimsy temporary shelters with daily labor carrying water. Carmen was using education - use of new plumbing ideas, and in developing a cooperative, stable community.

I saw rapid, easy construction of a potable water supply system using PVC pipes and fittings in El Salvador, by men of a poor "squatter" barrio community to which we were giving donated material aid. They were "borrowing" water from the city's public water hydrants!

Trudy Myrrh Reagan Shares Her Memories

I remember Carmen said, "To really help, you have to live close to the problem, and focus on a few things you can do well."

The following stories about the Projects in El Salvador were mostly documented in her letters to us. After the nursery school she tried to start ran into difficulties, she began funneling money and personal support to people she knew who were already doing great things to meet a pressing need. When she took us through Mariona, site of the infamous prison, she told us this:

"Mariona is a very overpopulated and dirty part of the city. When I first came, only three Catholics were offering any social services for thousands of people. The childcare center didn't even have water! Or latrines!" Carmen did various things for them, and finally left when they were on their feet. "They graduated out of my program."

She has had many adventures along the way that don't show up in her letters. When she visited the Lower Lempa delta after the flooding from Hurricane Mitch in 1998, access was extremely difficult. Roads were rivers of mud. A male pediatrician was driving her on a trailer, and it tipped. He jumped off, but she was left hanging there!

Another evening, a female pediatrician was driving her home from Morazán on the Pan American highway (a winding, two-lane road). When they arrived at an awkwardly-placed bridge, the doctor pulled over to the shoulder, rolled up the windows and turned out the lights. Then she said, "I'm waiting for some decent people - another car to cross here with. There are often bandits on the other side."

"Whether I have an immortal soul or not, death is the biggest adventure," said Carmen.

As she got older Carmen would say, "I feel like I'm still in kindergarten, like I have just started. I keep learning and being surprised. We're all still in kindergarten in this life. Is there another life where we can use all this, and become wiser perhaps?"



At 80, Carmen marched in the 2004 procession to honor Archbishop Romero. Left to right: Romelia Chicas, Marion Newton, Carmen Broz, Jamie Newton, and Sylwia Saenez

Thoughts from Bill Bauriedel

I first met Carmen as part of the Palo Alto Friends Meeting several years before the start of the El Salvador projects. Her passion for the people of El Salvador was infectious. She is one of a small handful of people who have touched my life in a profound way. She had a wonderful knack for explaining the importance of helping people in El Salvador and made it very clear that the work and the human touch was more important than just giving a contribution. But the work couldn't continue without funds and she always would ask for what she needed. After listening to her speak it was impossible not to help. She asked me if I could help computerize the mailing list which, in the beginning, was simply names on pieces of paper. Peggy Thompson had begun this work, but soon moved to Santa Cruz. This was something that was easy for me to do and from that time on she had me hooked on the many projects that have been undertaken over the years. I have gotten to know many wonderful people through the contacts I have made by being part of the El Salvador Projects Committee.

Marion Stamler Bowers Newton's Memories of Carmen

My earliest memory of Carmen is from about 1955. I was in kindergarten, and my elementary school was just down the road from the Broz home in Scottsdale, Arizona. I recall one afternoon walking there by myself after school. Franz, the first of the Broz brothers, was just a baby in his first year. The house was dark and quiet and cool: Carmen kept the curtains closed during the day to keep the house cool against the bright hot afternoon Arizona heat. In my own house, we didn't have curtains and the bright light always streamed in through the pyracanthas growing outside, so the contrast seemed profound to me, as if I'd walked into another world. Carmen spoke softly to me in that lovely voice of hers that to this day I can hear in my mind.

I have considered Carmen as one of the wonderful mothers in my life. I had no idea how much I was to learn from her in her 91 years. I am grateful to have been one of the young people under her influence.



Marion and Jamie Newton with Carmen in her home in August 2008

Will you help to sustain the vision and legacy of Carmen Broz – to support education for young people from poor families in the countryside of El Salvador so that they can raise their families out of poverty? Readers of this newsletter know that education made our lives better. Many of us were given opportunities and resources by our families, plus scholarships and loans that enabled us to complete college.

Carmen laid the foundation for the projects we continue today, directed by her son Robert Broz. As the memories shared by Committee members in this newsletter illustrate, Carmen initially provided school uniforms, shoes, and some classroom materials for elementary education, followed by middle school and high school assistance. It was the students themselves who asked Carmen and her community of supporters in the United States to help them go on to college when they finished high school – truly a radical change for youths whose parents were virtually illiterate. Your contributions through the years have opened opportunities for children whose families could not do so for themselves and for whom there is very little funding from scholarships and loans. They then repay what they’ve received in cash, through community service, or by paying for other poor children to complete their own education.

Carmen’s insights, grounded in her direct experience and knowledge of the culture and social practices of the country where she grew up, continue to guide the projects that make such a difference to the lives of the students and families you read about in our newsletters. Your help is essential, and your contributions go a long way because education is so much less expensive in El Salvador than in the United States. Please give generously – and thanks!

Yes! I want to help Salvadorans improve their lives!

Mail donations to: Palo Alto Friends Meeting - El Salvador Projects, 957 Colorado Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94303

NAME _____

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- \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 other _____
- Check here if you want your gift to support a college student.
(Please specify on your check memo line “College Loans.”)

Donations under \$250 will normally be used for General Programs, and donations of \$250 or more will be used for university student loans (unless you state another preference).

Contribution checks should be made to PAFM - E.S. Projects. Your contribution is tax-deductible.

FRIEND US ON FACEBOOK! Search on: Palo-Alto-Friends-Meeting-El-Salvador-Projects

HOW TO DONATE READING GLASSES AND LAPTOP COMPUTERS:

We need reading glasses (any magnification) to expand life opportunities for elderly people and others with visual impairments. For student and school use, we need laptop computers (compatible with Windows 7 or later- in working order. Please send glasses and laptops to: David Hinson davidphinson@yahoo.com (Tel. 650-857-0232), 3298 Ramona, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

Dave Hinson is also the one to contact if you want to receive your newsletter by email.



**November 2015 Newsletter - Commemorating the
life of Carmen Broz, 12/15/1923 - 9/17/2015**

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Palo Alto Friends Meeting
El Salvador Projects
957 Colorado Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94303
USA

Address Corrections Requested

**Carmen Broz Memorial Service:
Saturday, December 12th at 2 pm
First Baptist Church
305 N. California Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94301**
