

Dog Rescue Center Samui
Brigitte Gomm
112 / 35 Moo 6 Chaweng
Samui 84320 Suratthani
Thailand
Phone 077 413 490
Mobil 01 893 94 43
e-mail: samuidog@hotmail.com
website: www.samuidog.org

Dear Animal Friends,

April 2002

Some of you will surely have wondered why our mailing is somewhat late. However, the DRCS still exists and as usual, there is so much work that often I simply do not know where to start. The most important thing is of course to take care of the 70 dogs living next to our house and to train the helpers. Also, each morning we try to catch two dogs and take them to Dr. Somsak for castration. Sometimes the pick-up is organised before. But that isn't that easy, since the strays quite often do not turn up punctually at 09:30 h at the arranged meeting point. Without the help of animal loving tourists it often would not be possible at all to catch the dogs. Thus a lot of office work remains undone. The computer was broken for three weeks also and that did not help either. But once again I was really lucky.

We found a helper for the DRCS, helping me free of charge with the office work and all sorts of other tasks. Her name is Olivia and she comes from Switzerland. She has been living on Koh Samui for the last two years and enjoys helping the stray cats and dogs. She comes here every day and really is a great help! Thank you very much indeed Olivia!

Since a short time the new homepage is finished in English and German. All animal friends with an e-mail address I have informed them about this since a few days ago. Many thanks particularly to Diana Zeidler and Jens Schnabel for the great new homepage: www.samuidog.org. The comics have been added on my request and do not really match Diana's ideas. Of course I would like to thank Diana also, for granting me my wish. The monthly expenses for the homepage are carried by Diana and Jens.

Angela Goldmann has translated the homepage into English and without her You would have had to wait a lot longer for the new English homepage. Many Kind thanks to Angela! The former English homepage (www.samuidog.com) is no longer online. When we came back from a two months stay in Germany to Koh Samui in January approximately 20 new dogs expected us. All in a more or less poor state, needing treatment. At the time being there are about seventy dogs near the house and it is hardly possible any longer to integrate new dogs into the large pack. Animals that are so weak they can hardly stand are, however, not attacked by the others. A healthy and strong male would hardly stand a chance. The whole pack would try to bite the newcomer. Dogs are pretty strange animals. Even a dog very far down in the pecking order will surely try to bite a newcomer already lying on the ground. Normally these animals act inconspicuously and do not start a fight but submit themselves immediately. It took some days to get all the dogs injected, to fit them with collars with their names and to find out why they had been taken to the DRCS. The helpers have always had difficulties to remember where a dog is from and thus it was not possible to take any of these dogs back to where they came from. More than 70 dogs are scurrying around our house right now and we do not have the possibility to separate the healthy animals from the sick ones. The really sick ones are on our terrace. Right now also about ten dogs! And our garden is tiny, about 100 m²! Thank god the animals are too weak to dig out the plants and chew them up into tiny little pieces. In the front garden plants have no chance to survive. Even plants with

thorns aren't spared. Five to eight dogs are living in front of our garden. There is some open ground right now, where pretty soon a large building will be erected. The dogs will surely enjoy helping to construct the house and to dig up the sand. These are mainly male dogs, evidently not feeling like fighting for a place in the pecking order. They are fine and they do not go far away. Of course some of them now and then go for a stroll to the market. All of them have been strays. If we do not get dogs as puppies, it is very hard to stop them from wandering around. Some disappear for weeks and all of the sudden come back and stay again for quite a while. One dog came back after some weeks, after he had been badly injured. The dogs living in front of our premises are of course fed and medically treated in case of need. Later on they will be moved to the animal home. It is really urgent to set up the animal home as soon as possible since it is impossible for the DRCS to take in any more dogs. To treat an injured animal on the beach or next to the road is often quite difficult. Injured animals often need medical care for a few days only. Of course here I depend on the help of animal loving tourists or locals. Most injured dogs are taken here by tourists anyway. They also take care of the dogs afterwards. Without their help a lot of dogs would not get any help.

But here are some really good news:

The DRCS has found a donator willing to pay for the land for the animal home. Khun Shompunute from Tongsai Bay had offered the DRCS 2 Rai (3200 m²) free of charge for eight years and we surely would have accepted this offer gladly and would have started to build the animal home immediately on that land because the DRCS does not have enough money to purchase land.

Silvana from Switzerland, however, thought that eight years was not exactly a very long time and has therefore decided to make another most generous donation. Silvana already donated the money for the dog house. She is always trying to collect money for the dogs and cats on Koh Samui in Switzerland. I wonder what would have become out of the DRCS without the help of the animal friends in Switzerland? The land for the doghouse on our premises close to the Laem Din market was donated by Khun Ying and Khun Bae from Montien House.

Walter and Carmen from Switzerland had taken care of the DRCS whilst we were in Germany and they have busily been looking for land. They found some in the South of the island between the elephant gate and the snake farm. In the Chaweng and Lamai area the prices for land are so high these days, nobody can afford it. They are building all over the island. It is also not an easy task to find some land for the dogs, since nobody wants that many dogs as neighbours. Our president Khun Theerasud Chaichalremwong has already made a contract in writing with the landowner. The land is 130 000 Baht pro Rai (1600 m²). The land in question is 4,5 Rai. (approximately 7000 m²). For these we have to pay 585 000 Baht (approximately 16.000 Euro). If we are lucky and surveying the land and the final fixing of the contract does not take too long, we will be able to start building this month! The Land is not directly next to the street, but about 100 m away from it. This makes matters far more complicated because we also have to buy about 400 m² of the adjoining land for the approach road. These 400 m² coast 200.000 Baht! About 5.400 Euro! Furthermore the guy owning this land still has to agree! The land in question is owned by a group of several Thais and all have to go to the land registration office and sign the necessary papers. My husband already tried once and took all the money from the account (in Thailand you normally pay cash) and went to the land registration office with our president in order to settle the matter. But one of the of the owners of the adjoining land (which we do not want to buy anyway) wasn't there and nothing could be done. On the 17th of April 2546 (in Thailand they have a different calendar) we have the next appointment for the final completion of contract. Khun Ying's brother is a lawyer and has prepared the necessary papers for the purchase of the land. As a donation! Our president is now purchasing the land in his name and the DRCS sets up a contract with him. With all sorts of obligations it is possible right now for foreigners to buy one rai . However, 1600 m² are not enough and also, we would have been obliged to found a company (involving many more

obligations and expenses) with Thai people in the majority. You have no idea how complicated it is in Thailand to buy land! Even amongst Thais! There is a huge pile of paperwork. Of course everything in Thai writing. That's fine with me, after all we are in Thailand and Thai is written here. The contract with the DRCS will of course be fixed in English. My very special thanks to Khun Theerasud, Khun Ying and Khun Bae for their help.

The DRCS was founded three years ago and by now we are quite well known on the island. More and more animal friends get to know about us and are trying to help sick animals during their holidays. Some, however, have totally wrong ideas about the size of our organisation and believe that one call is enough and an emergency vet will turn up immediately in a helicopter. Of course I am somewhat exaggerating, but not much. Please do believe me, I get phone calls late at night from supposed animal friends informing me that they have seen a dog in need in front of the Reggie Club (a large disco on Chaweng beach). They describe the animal and think that's it. The DRCS is informed and will take care of the matter. If I am then trying to explain to them that without their help I will not be able to catch a dog or cat in the middle of the night, they even get cheeky. The DRCS is open from Monday till Friday from 09:00 to 18:00 h and on Saturday and Sunday from 09:00 to 14:00 h. In this time I will send one or two helpers to the animal friend informing us about an animal in need. The helpers can catch an injured animal without any further help but they can't find it. I have tried that already several times and it hardly ever works. The helpers come back after a certain time with that very friendly Thai smile telling me they did not find the dog. MAH MAI JUH (The dog was not there). It is a waste of time to send the helpers on their own, hoping they will find an injured animal by themselves. The rest of the time I depend on the help of animal friends. If somebody does not understand, I am sorry, but then he can't be helped. If he feels bad for not having helped I can't help him and he has to cope with his bad conscience himself.

Since taking care of the dogs living on our premises takes a lot of time, we have employed another helper. Apart from Poehm, Daeng and Sakda, Don is also working for the DRCS now. Each helper receives 6.000 Baht (160 Euro) per month. All other steady helpers (Olivia, Carmen, Walter, my husband Werner and myself) are working free of charge. Don has by now been working for the DRCS since three months. He loves animals, uses his brain, is very busy, punctual and highly motivated to help the animals. He is the best helper the DRCS had so far. But he surely is an exception and I hardly hope that I am able to find another Don. Many dogs get medication twice a day. Injured dogs have to get their wounds cleaned every day and the dogs have to get washed all the time in order to get rid of the ticks. The moment the helpers are finished with 70 dogs they have to start all over again washing them against mangle. This year there is quite a tick plaque once again. It is almost worse than last year. Maybe the ticks like the dry climate. Since January it has only been raining twice. By now there is a water shortage on Koh Samui. Many wells dried up and the public water supply is not reliable. Water and electricity are not self evident on Koh Samui. Sometimes there is no electricity for a whole day. Of course without any advance notice. Tourists staying in large hotels often do not notice at all, because the hotels have generators and large water tanks. After two days without water and an empty emergency tank, we had to look for a long term solution. Surely you can imagine how much waste is produced by 70 dogs every day and that it really gets smelly if everything is not cleaned thoroughly with water several times a day. We had to lift many flagstones in order to find the emergency tank and when we finally found it and opened the lid in order to look in the empty tank the water started to come in that very moment. The Thais of course all agreed: That's magic! No matter what they believe we wanted to have a well drilled immediately. You are not going to believe it, but two days later a builder arrived and right now they are drilling a well 7 meters deep. Since we are living next to the lake they found water quite soon. At a depth of 1,5 m and I am confident that in the future there will be no further problems with the water supply. Of course a well is no help at all without electricity. Therefore, we will buy a generator later on too. All these expenses are of course carried by ourselves and not financed from donations.

The co-operation with Dr. Somsak is still just great. Every day he is at least castrating two female dogs and also takes care of all emergencies cats and dogs. When these animals have been taken by some tourists or our helpers to Dr. Somsak for a first treatment they are afterwards often taken to our house. All Thais not having enough money to pay the treatment can take their dogs and cats to him and he puts the expenses on the monthly bill for the DRCS. The expenses for the castration only amount to something like 40.000 to 50.000 Baht. One castration is between 1.000 and 1.300 Baht. Each month we pay an average of 100.000 Baht to Dr. Somsak for medications and medical treatment (about 2.700 Euro). I am sure employing our own vet would not be cheaper since then we would have to pay rent and money for electricity, telephone and water. Also the storage room for drugs would have to be paid for.

The lease for the clinic has been paid for until the end of May and I hope that after that the material stored there can be stored on the ground of the animal home. It does not take long to set up a shed does it?!

All our medical devices, the sterilisator and a lot of drugs went to Koh Phangan (that is the neighbouring island) last year. To the PAC (Phangan Animal Care). Shevaun Gallway, an Irish vet working in Hongkong, has already castrated many dogs and also other vets spent some time on Koh Phangan in order to help. Why don't you have a look at the homepage www.pacthailand.org. The foundation of the PAC would not have been possible without the starting help given by the DRCS .

It will surely not be easy to find a suitable Thai vet for the DRCS. I have some experiences with Thai vets and will only offer payment after work carried out. No more discussions about a fixed salary. However, this is truly not the time to worry about how to find a vet eventually.

Of course it would be very nice, if we could set up a clinic on the land where we are going to construct the animal home. We could carry out the castrations right there. For the next year I have offers from foreign vets wanting to do voluntary work for the DRCS for some time and also carry out castrations free of charge.

At the time being we do not have the financial means to set up a clinic on the land for the animal home. First of all we have to build a wall, approximately 600 m long, to surround it. Then we have to drill a well. Since the land is not far away from the next street it should be affordable to get electricity. And the dogs need plenty of huts of course.

About six months ago we started to have some of the dogs fed by reliable people in some places of the island. Some massage ladies and the boys working for Jetski on Chaweng Beach are willing to feed the dogs with dry food. Dany from Divepoint is taking care of the dogs on the Northern part of Chaweng Beach and informs us immediately if one of the dogs need medical treatment. She is a big help for the DRCS and feed many of the dogs on her own expense.

A lot of dogs living on the premises of two large temples are supplied with dry food also. Unfortunately just now after half a year we had to state that the dogs living at one temple are poisoned regularly when leaving the premises. One monk at this temple particularly loves animals and was happy to accept our support. But if a lot of food is offered, more and more dogs stay there and are sooner or later poisoned when leaving the area. We had to stop feeding the dogs there. At the other temple things are working out fine. A Thai lady has been taking care of the dogs there since a long time. But the dogs got more and more and she finally asked the DRCS for help. Many of the female dogs there have already been castrated or got anti-baby injections. So, multiplication is stopped for the time being at last. There are

about 30 to 40 dogs near this temple. Just now somebody left some six to eight weeks old puppies there. At the time being it is simply impossible for the DRCS to accept any more dogs. We are feeding about 150 dogs on Koh Samui at the time being. Somebody I do start worrying if we can collect enough money to feed all of them on the long run.

But thank God I tend to think positive and therefore I do know that you have not forgotten about the dogs on Koh Samui and will keep on helping the DRCS not only to offer first aid and castration to stray dogs and cats but also to see to it that they get enough food on the long run and do not have to start looking for food in dustbins and rubbish piles again. If I will not have enough money for all the hungry dogs I will cut down costs drastically by not taking two dogs daily to Dr. Somsak for castration. But I do hope this step will not become necessary.

I can only hope that you will not forget the hungry dogs on Koh Samui and keep on supporting the DRCS also in the future.

**One bag with 10 kg of dry food is about 6 Euro.
Help up to feed the stray dogs on Koh Samui!
Small donations also help a lot on Koh Samui!**

Right now we have more than 70 dogs next to the bungalow and of course for many of those dogs a godparent has not been found yet. To become a godparent it takes 15 Euro per month and you will receive a photo of the animal you picked and of course will get any interesting news on your pet. I will try to take pictures of the dogs within the next few days and will include these on our homepage www.samuidog.org. At the moment I cannot send any photos by mail since the printer broke down for a change. We cannot buy a new printer in Thailand, since it is impossible to buy ink cartridges. From the 10th of June till the 12th of July we are going to Germany and will take the printer along in order to have it fixed there. We have exactly the same model in our flat in Berlin and will most probably take that one to Thailand. Unfortunately each printer model needs different ink cartridges. We brought a lot of cartridges along with us from Germany in winter for the printer that of course now broke down. At the time being I am using an old printer that was in the clinic but this is only a black and white printer. Some of you have been waiting since Christmas for a photo. I am very sorry that I cannot send you a new picture at the time being. Please let me have your e-mail addresses and I will then send you a photo by e-mail. All dogs with godparents are just fine. If there are any special news to report I will let you know.

Please do not send any mail to the clinic. Since we closed down the clinic in November and only use it as a storage room, we do not get any mail. Please send mail to our home address - stated on the letter head. However, mail is not always reliable. If you do not receive any answer to letters, simply assume that we never got the letter. E-mail and phone are functioning fine most of the time.

The DRCS is by now receiving the rabies vaccine from the government in Bangkok. Our new helper Don has made countless calls for achieving this. Then a letter had to be written that had to be modified twice until it met the official's approval. I do not have the slightest idea what the DRCS has written and what it says in the government's reply. But that does not matter anyway. The main thing is that we get the vaccine free of charge. One injection is 35 Baht.

In the last months a lot of animal friends have visited the island (it is high season from January till April on Koh Samui). And with their help we could catch a lot of dogs and inject them against rabies. We can only inject dogs on parts of the beach where animal liking tourists stay informing us on the number of dogs. We have been to Chaweng beach several times trying to catch as many dogs as possible. Some very good "dog catchers" were here

once again. On the whole of Chaweng beach we only found three female dogs that had not yet been castrated. But of course dogs from the hinterland join the packs and there is still a lot of work to be done.

Some tourists are quite sad that there are hardly any puppies on Chaweng beach. "They are so cute!" Where did all the cute puppy go? These stupid people do not think about that. They believe the hotel managers if they tell them that they all found a good home, if they are gone all of a sudden. The government does not carry out any poisoning activities any more on the island. But some hotel owners still poison the dogs, if guests complain or simply because they want to get rid of the dogs.

Of course by doing so they lose a lot of guests and the holidays are spoiled for the tourists. Also tourists that normally do not care much for dogs are not thrilled by seeing dogs die in agony next to their deckchair. We always get to know about these poisoning activities because we are informed by tourists. Some of the dogs can sometimes be saved by Dr. Somsak if they are taken to him in due time. In one resort it only took three days until new dogs arrived. Hopefully these dogs will not suffer the same fate as their predecessors. We will of course castrate and inject these dogs. But normally castrated and injected dogs are endured by hotel owners. Poisoning activities are rare but of course it will never be possible to prevent them. But eventually it becomes known in which hotels the dogs are poisoned again and again and for animal loving people this is a good reason to stay in another hotel.

I hope that a lot of animal friends will visit Koh Samui this year and will help us create a small paradise for the dogs. Koh Samui is worth a trip. I have met a lot of animal friends in the last three years who have been coming here for years and they also noticed the changes in the population of stray dogs. On the first of April 1999 the DRCS introduce the first vet on Koh Samui - Dr. Somsak. Since then we have castrated more than 1300 dogs and treated a countless number of emergencies. Without your help this wouldn't have been possible and most probably there still would not be a vet on Koh Samui. What this would mean for the animals you can surely imagine. Misery and suffering without end and all over the place!

**Do not leave the dogs and cats on Koh Samui alone!
They depend on you!**

Since individual transfers to Thailand are quite expensive I collect donations on my private account in Germany. By now we have animal friends in Switzerland, Austria, the UK, the US, Australia, Sweden and the Netherlands collecting the money for the DRCS and transferring it all together.

Many kind regards

Brigitte

Further information for sponsors you'll find on page "How to help" of our homepage