

Dog Rescue Center Samui

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Dear Animal Lovers

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How time flies! Christmas is near and again a lot of things have happened at the Dog Rescue Center Samui (DRCS) The unpredictability of the rainy season chaos is only matched by life at our shelter: Dr Tom left us abruptly, the workers are constantly sick and the increase of puppies and kittens never breaks off.

From 21st December until 14th January, my husband and I will be in Germany. Allison, Janine and Sandra will take care of the animals and DRCS. All three of them have been long-time helpers and Allison and Janine lived in our house last Christmas which worked out just fine. I know that our cats, dogs, staff and volunteers will be in good hands!

As reported in the last newsletter, Dr Tom had difficulties delegating work. Because of his shyness, he had problems instructing the Thai staff who in return didn't show him respect. Dr Tom would take the dogs out of the single boxes himself and prepare them for castration; he would also clean wounds and dispense medicine rather than ask the staff to do these tasks. This was why he was always pressed for time. One day I couldn't find Dr Tom in the operation room and none of the helpers knew where he was. I finally managed to locate him in Compound 1 where our big and strong dogs reside. Dr Tom was busy cleaning the wound of a 30 kilo dog which was not very pleased and was jiggling around. It is better if two people clean wounds together as the dogs feel that they are being helped. Cleaning wounds, etc, are the duties of the other Thai staff but they made no effort to change the situation by helping Dr Tom. Why should they? It would have meant more work.

Dr Tom couldn't cope with the management and responsibility of the shelter and gave notice after half a year's service. His resignation was not in the usual Thai style (leaving without a word) as he gave me two days' notice! That's something at least! As he had already asked his parents to pick him up, it was not possible for me to change his mind.

Maybe I should have motivated my other Thai staff (with fines) to do what they were employed for, ie help the doctor! I think Tom's friend who works in the pharmaceutical industry contributed to Tom's decision to leave as he had decided to become a drug rep in another part of Thailand.

Regardless, we wish Tom luck!



Our manager Wit who came to the rescue by quickly finding a new vet for us.

We can 'manage' for a while without a vet as the Thai staff were well trained by Dr Jo (he knew how to delegate work and taught the staff complicated things, eg give infusions). Wound cleaning, treating the 'normal' diseases, vaccinating and giving mange treatment are no problem for our staff. For surgical procedures, we worked together again with the Animal Clinic in Chaweng. Even though we only carried out female sterilisations in the Animal Clinic (males are too expensive), almost all of the 44 single and double boxes were occupied during the gap between vets.

As soon as Tom announced his intention to leave, we placed an advertisement in a newspaper to look for a new doctor. Did you know that, in Thailand, it's not allowed to mention the salary in an advert? Don't ask me why! As we are willing to pay 35,000 Baht (about 700 Euros) a month, offer free accommodation and a motorbike, this would have been a good selling point on an advert (the vets in Bangkok earn a lot less). Well, the advertisement was no success. Our manager, **Wit**, believes that in Thailand you can only achieve something on the spot. As a result, he went to Bangkok to search for a new vet at the universities and clinics. He spread flyers all over the city and his quest was not in vain. He managed to poach a vet from a clinic. **Sid** is 30 years old, has 6 years' experience and is able to carry out 6 castrations a day without any problems. He proved his eagerness on the day he arrived. After he introduced himself to me in Chaweng, he wanted to have a look at the shelter in Ban Taling Ngam, planning to start work the following day. However, he was enthusiastic from the start and, still dressed in his Bangkok clothes of shirt, suit, shoes and black socks, he began work that afternoon! After a while he gave up taking off his shoes when entering the operation room (putting them on when he was leaving) and he just ran around in his socks and ended up in the cat room standing in a puddle of urine which a kitten had just left! I call that dedication! After the first few days the helpers were speaking highly of him, saying that he is fast in carrying out operations and attaches great importance to cleanliness. Not bad! Experience has taught me not to jump up and down because of a good first impression of Dr Sid. We'll wait and see! I hope to be able to report you in the next newsletter that Sid (?Samui International Dogs?) will still be with us. He seems to be far more determined than Dr Tom and I suspect he will become the alpha dog in our staff's pack. The only trouble is that he speaks only a little English. This is not a huge problem as it will give our voluntary helpers the opportunity to practice their Thai. Dr Tom's English was so poor I couldn't understand him anyway! Dr Jo barely spoke English with me, preferring to demonstrate his knowledge of the English language almost exclusively to pretty female volunteers. In Thailand, the vet students only learn how to read and write in English; they don't speak it. Changes are afoot to correct this by employing many more native English teachers.

As regards our other staff, one day **Dilek** didn't show up. After a few days, even the others were worried and went to check on him. His apartment was completely empty. Poor Dilek was up to his ears in debt which led him to turn tail and leave the Island under the cover of darkness. This is common practice in Thailand. Whenever a Thai is in debt too deep, he changes his location.



Em is the youngest of our helpers. At 18, he is the 'pet' of his family, but he's a adult when it comes to cleaning wounds.



When you're in a jam, Sakda's your man! He's been with us for 5 years and is the team's leader.



Here's Vieng dispensing medicine. Vieng's the most elder member of our team.

Vieng, who started with us in August, has settled in well. He is not the fastest or brainiest of our team but certainly willing and anxious to learn. At wound cleaning he has already distinguished himself. After cleaning a wound with Betadin, he was supposed to treat the wound with Negasunt (antiseptic powder against maggots). From 50 cm, he sprinkled the powder over the whole dog (at least he covered the wound!) and afterwards threw the empty bottle in a high arc over the wall on the neighbour's land. Sandra, who had helped him clean the wound, was speechless; not me - it took Vieng quite a while to find the bottle in the overgrown land over the wall.

Incidentally, I've learned that elderly workers (Vieng is 57 years old) are not sick as often as the younger ones which is a great help as I can have between 2 and 4 workers daily on sick leave.

We employed three new helpers but two of them didn't come after two days on the job. As regards the third one, after two weeks I told him either to speed up or change his occupation to a motorbike taxi driver. He chose the motorbike. This man was so slow at working, he made it a work of art! I have never seen a Thai person work that slowly before. Wit too was fascinated by the man's slowness, comparing it to Tai Chi (a Chinese martial art where every movement is performed very slowly). At the shelter, one of the main tasks is to clean the single boxes and feed the dogs in them. However, the dogs didn't like getting their first feed at 5 pm in the afternoon. At that time they are normally into their second bowl.

Most of our dogs in the single boxes get rice mixed with dry and canned food. Thai dogs love rice and we give them special food in the hope that they recover from the operation or disease quicker than normal. The long term guests in the bigger compounds get dry food and almost all of them are nice and plump.

Have a look at the dogs in the shelter in Ban Taling Ngam at our homepage! www.samuidog.org "What we do", "Dogs to sponsor" and then click on "compounds".



I was found in Nathon by tourists who brought me to DRCS. I had a big wound in my ear which was full of maggots. After 3 weeks the wound had healed.



Brigitte has told me that I soon can move from the single box to the bigger compound. I've had to promise her that I won't let the others bite me in the ear again.

We would need some more double boxes urgently! It is unbelievable how many sick dogs are currently roaming about the Island. Daily, we receive phone calls from tourists who see injured or mangy dogs.



That's how I look today after three months. I got pretty big, and ain't I beautiful?! My name is Bella and I haven't found a sponsor yet! Maybe you would like to sponsor me?

www.samuidog.org
HOW TO HELP,
'Cats and Dogs' to sponsor'.



That's how I looked when I was brought to Brigitte's house. I suffered from a very bad fungus which was treated daily with a horrible tasting cream.

Puppies, puppies and even more puppies ...

As the number of sick adult dogs increases, also the number of puppies grows. Many are dumped at night in front of the shelter or I receive phone calls from tourists who have picked up injured or sick puppies. At the moment we have around 30 of the little ones who, sorry to say, go down like flies. Puppies are prone to diseases which they pass to each other. The parvo- and distemper viruses are endemic and linger in the soil. Many of the puppies arrive sick at DRCS and it is not possible to separate them all as we do not have enough single boxes to accomplish this effectively.



We puppies must snack very often. We do not only share a bowl ...



... but also our bedroom.

We are about to build a new puppy shelter. Currently, we've isolated four double boxes at the back of the shelter with two fences. The boxes (150 cm x 180 cm) can be opened as needed and the puppies can run around in the area in front. The next step will be to concrete that area to reduce the number of germs settling in the grass and soil. We will try to keep the boxes and square as germ free as possible with as much disinfection as we can get. This is just a temporary solution and I hope we will be able to build a puppy house next year.

Up until August, I was of the opinion that a puppy house wouldn't make sense as the helpers couldn't maintain the rules of hygiene. However, I've changed my mind and hope to reduce the puppy mortality by building their own house. By fining and controlling the staff, I hope to get a grip on the importance of hygienic conditions.

The staff can each get up to 1,000 Baht extra a month if they do their work properly! The basic salary is 6,000 Baht a month but some get more because they are more diligent and interested to learn.

Please help build the puppy house with a donation!



The cats and their new home

In contrast to the unfinished quarantine ward for the puppies, the cat house is now finished. It came as a surprise to me that construction work started the same day I gave the order and that it went ahead unbelievably quick. This is very unusual for Thailand! Less surprising though, was the creativity of the site manager. He must have held the plans upside down and he simply 'forgot' to create a door! I complained a couple of times but the workers only put me off. It was only when the plaster work was about to begin that the workers took a big fretsaw and cut out a door in the brickwork!



The door behind me hasn't always been there!



Now my little tigers have a house with two rooms (40 m² including the terrace) and a garden (about 240 m²) which invites them to play and romp around. The garden isn't so well-attended during the rainy season, but baskets, rattan furniture and polystyrene boxes constitute the scratch paradise inside. I've also had some shelves installed which as created lots of space for rest and recuperation.

This oasis for our little tigers is perfect and I can safely say that they are in the best of health and very happy with their new home.



This is our new cat house. We have a lot of space to play, a big terrace and a beautiful garden. Ow and Dilek (who has now left us) fitted the shelves. In the picture, the shelves are a bit lop-sided (Thai style) but have since been adjusted.

When a kitten comes in, we keep it at our house in Chaweng. When it's old enough for castration, Werner and I decide whether returns to the house or stays in the shelter in Ban Taling Ngam. I cannot part from some of the cats because I love them so much. At the moment, there are about 40 cats living in Chaweng and 50 in the cat house in Ban Taling Ngam. It's not a good idea to put kittens directly into the shelter as they will not be accepted by the older cats. Also, they would become feral and could not be tamed later on. So, the kittens live at our house – that's a pleasure and a pain for me as, unfortunately, some of them still die.

How many cats are in the basket?



Sunshine is not only taking care of her own kittens.

As the cat house and so many cats are now an integral part of the shelter, not only our logo has gone through a change. What do you think about a second name: Cat Rescue Center Samui! Dog and Cat Rescue Center would not be bad either but seems too long. Moreover, I do not want to give up the name DRCS since we are on top of the list of the search engines. From now on I will use both names and hope that the search engines will notice and cat friends will soon be able to find us. In the meantime, our webmaster has registered the site www.samuicat.org. Does anyone know how search engines work and give us tips how we can push the Cat Rescue Center Samui to the top of the list? I would be grateful for suggestions!

As usual, we have had significant computer problems in the past 4 months. We have lost some data and, on top of that, the server broke down and we lost some unanswered e-mails. If you haven't received an answer after 2 to 3 weeks, please write again.

Animal-friendly hotels on the island

Unfortunately, dogs and cats are still being poisoned in hotels. As usual, the managers are never involved! I cannot mention any names because the managers would never admit that they gave the orders to get rid of the dogs. The gardeners do not have a choice: be kicked out or kill dogs. Over the past years we have learned in which hotels the animals have to die this cruel death. Some of the dogs do not eat enough of the poison and creep away where the gardener (or someone else) won't find them on time to spirit them away. The next day they are found by tourists and sometimes we are able to rescue them. I find out about these actions of the managers. I know of one hotel where the employees are forbidden to call DRCS when they see sick animals in the hotel grounds. However, one employee couldn't bring himself to ignore this instruction and informed us secretly.

On Chaweng Noi Beach, ALL dogs have been continually poisoned for years. Animal lovers shouldn't spend their holidays there under any circumstances. Dying dogs on the terrace or the beach are an unforgettable and sorry sight, and have spoiled many vacations. Please send me a note of which hotel you want to book and I will inform you personally what I know about this hotel concerning its animal friendliness.



Hopefully our new vet also has a heart for animals. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Aurahs who supports us regularly by publications in the three magazines 'Ein Herz für Tiere', 'Geliebte Katze' and 'Partner Hund'. Thank you very much!

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS FOR ANIMAL LOVERS

What do you think about 1 meter wall as a Christmas present for an animal-loving friend? **1 meter of wall is 25 Euro!** Please have a look at the homepage www.samuidog.org (WHAT WE DO). There, everything about the symbolic wall sale is explained. As soon as possible, we will write your name on the wall and send you the picture. However, the rainy season goes on until December and I doubt we will be able to paint your name during this time. How about a certificate of 1 meter of wall in the meantime? In January, we will send you the photos!

In the August newsletter I told you you'd have the opportunity to order T-shirts with the new DRCS logo. The shirts are 15-17 Euros (including postage and packaging) and half of that is a donation for DRCS. Please have a look at the homepage (INFO AND NEWS). There you can see the pictures of the T-Shirts, the terms of delivery and the size chart. The shirts are available in white, black and yellow, with and without sleeves! The Thai sizes differ widely from the Western sizes and a detailed explanation is necessary which goes beyond the scope of this newsletter! It is a typical Thai story. You could call it 'The endless T-shirt story'.

Thank you very much again to all the sponsors and helpers from all over the World. Because of your help, EVERY dog and cat can be helped for free on Koh Samui. Stray animals which have not found a place to survive on their own on Koh Samui can be brought into the shelter. Every day we neuter at least six animals because of your donations. We offer free medical treatment for ALL cats and dogs (with or without an owner) including a pick-up service. About 250 dogs and almost 100 cats that couldn't make it on their own on Koh Samui have found places in the shelter over the past 2 years. Many of them are looking for sponsors to make sure that their bowls are never empty. Have a look on the homepage at 'HOW TO HELP', 'CATS AND DOGS TO SPONSOR'. **Sponsoring a dog or a cat is 15 Euros monthly!** Even when you do not want to sponsor an animal, it is certainly nice to look at the many dogs and cats and read their stories!

When you come to Samui and want to bring something, bring old towels, white, green and pink lined index cards (A5 size), powdered kitten/puppy milk, cat de-worming paste, de-worming tablets for dogs, flea collars and flea/tick shampoo (for the dogs not the volunteers!). We can always use these things.

**Don't forget the dogs and cats on Koh Samui!
They still need your help!
Every small donation helps us take one step forward.**

Our monthly costs amount to 5.000 Euro. If you are on Koh Samui, you are cordially invited to stop by and look at our books. The dogs and cats always love visitors, and so do we!

***Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Best wishes.***



Brigitte

Banking details for sponsors:
please see
www.samuidog.org - HOW TO HELP

