

# Dog and Cat Rescue Center Samui

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Dear Animal Lovers

December 2006

Once again Christmas is coming and it's time for the New Year update. I've said it before many times and make no apologies for repeating myself: because of your help we have achieved a lot. A big thank you to all who've been supporting the Dog (and Cat) Rescue Center Samui (DRCS) for a long time, for your active help at the shelter and for your donations from all over the world. For our new 'animal friends' who perhaps won't know about our background, please check our last Newsletter ([www.samuidog.org](http://www.samuidog.org) under 'Info and News').

**PUPPY HOUSE.** The puppy house was completed on time and, during the two-month construction, we only had to deal with a few insignificant problems: a pillar erected on the terrace had no function and wasn't part of the plans. The builder wasn't too happy about removing it and tried to persuade us that it was necessary for the stability of the ground. After that little hassle, the builders constructed a very strong roof. Petra, who drew up the puppy house plans, now firmly believes that the roof will hold at least 2 metres of snow! Excellent! A big thank you to Petra! For a long time now she's been an invaluable help at DRCS. Petra runs Hemmingways in Bophut which is a tea house/bar on the beachfront there. Go and have a look for yourself; the sunsets are fabulous and the cocktails are the best on the island.



Hurrahhhh! At last the puppy house is finished. Students from St Leonard's College in Australia had a great time painting the names of the sponsors on the wall.

The number of volunteers fluctuates from day to day but we do get a good number over the year. I would like to thank sincerely all the volunteers who have helped out at DRCS.



Whoever spends their holidays on Koh Samui can immortalize themselves on our wall.



A big thank you to all wall sponsors! One metre of wall costs 25 Euros and there are still quite a few metres available! Originally, we planned to paint all the sponsor names on the wall but, because of the humid weather conditions, the wall gets covered in moss and the task is more difficult than originally intended. We have another set of students coming to visit next year and Richard Newton from St Leonard's College plans to come again with more students. Once the puppy house is covered with names, we will move on to the vacant walls in the cat house!



When it comes to the puppies, Zita from Belgium and Tom from Switzerland make a great team.



Tom has been helping out at DRCS for about six months. Six days a week he tends to the puppies in their new house, keeping each family set separate to reduce cross-infection. This has been quite successful and the death rate has decreased significantly among those born at DRCS. Unfortunately most puppies arrive at DRCS with some sort of illness or are simply too weak to survive. Distressingly, not even the best treatment can make a difference. Because of our overall success with the puppies, we need to find homes for them. We put an advert ('Good homes wanted for the cutest puppies in town') on the Information Board at Tesco-Lotus (biggest supermarket on Samui) and have been successful in finding new homes for many of the puppies.

#### PROJECT LAMAI

Silvana visited us last autumn to get a good picture for herself of our work in Lamai. She's very pleased with what's been done so far and is willing to continue funding the costs of one member of staff (Egg). Egg has been doing a great job and, if we ever do 'finish' with Lamai, we will extend the project. Hua Thanon - here we come! Nathon - here we come!



Even during heavy rainfalls dogs need to be caught.



Silvana and Egg, catching dogs on the Lamai beach.

## OUR EMPLOYEES

Again we lost some of our staff. This is not only a DRCS problem but one faced by most hotels and restaurants on the Island. The members of our staff need to be trained continuously and, as soon as any one seems to have understood his duties, he's gone.

BAU was working at DRCS for only a short time before deciding not to show up again. It can be very difficult discussing with a Thai why he wishes to quit. It appears to us that a person can be cowardly not giving a reason to quit, whereas a Thai will see it as not wanting to offend me by giving me reasons.

SAWAI explained to me that he would like to go and help his family with the coffee harvest and then come back to DRCS in two months' time. He's been a hard working member of staff and has been keeping the cat room clean. The cats never complain about him so I will be happy to welcome him back in January.

DON worked at DRCS for a long time and, if it wasn't for his 'little' problem with alcohol, he'd still be here. He assisted the vet (DR SID) and learned a lot. However, he left in a hurry. Sometimes, when the Thais are in deep trouble, they move away at little or no notice. Don was one of these and left, as usual, owing me money. He left owing a lot of money to his work colleges, some of whom, it seems, threatened his life. I really could not agree to this idea as then I would lose another helper. The staff and I have an agreement that usually, if one of them leaves still owing me money, everyone else has to share that debt.

We haven't found any new helpers so far. Don left recently and I'm sure we will soon find somebody new.

It's difficult for me to say no if one of my helpers wants to borrow money. They usually ask for small amounts (10-30 Euro) but a lot of small amounts become a big amount. I've heard all sorts of reasons why they need to borrow money. Usually it's for a sick family member. How can I let someone's Grandma die by not lending the money for the medicine?

At the moment we've got one vet (Dr SID), WIT our manager and nine members of staff: SAKDA, RID, SOMKIÄT, OW, EM, EGG, BANG, WIANG and DAM. We manage fine, as long as most of them show up in the mornings. The puppies are usually looked after by volunteers but, if we have no volunteers; I have to place one helper there just to look after the puppies.

## BREAD DONATIONS

We faced some initial difficulties in the co-ordination of picking up the bread and food leftovers from various hotels but, after the staff saw how angry I got when this job wasn't done, the co-ordination problems were sorted out. The dogs love the bread and, because they are all `Thai fighting dogs`, they love rice and other (Thai) food leftovers. The next time you are on holiday on Koh Samui, ask your hotel manager if he's got any daily bread leftovers for our dogs. There will never be enough bread for all of our dogs!



## DANY - a normal dog story on Koh Samui



Arrived in Chaweng: 25 October 2006



Hmmm! This is this nice!



Hello, I'm Dany and I've seen much better times than this. I am a beautiful cocker spaniel underneath and was cared for by my owner. However, when I lost my fur and didn't look as attractive as before, my owner just abandoned me. For many days, I walked up and down the ring road in Maenam begging for food. Everyone chased me away and, if it wasn't for Dany from the DIVEPOINT (best diving school on the Island), my days on that busy road were numbered. Because I have had so many bad experiences with humans, I gave Dany a hard time when she tried to catch me. Eventually, I was too tired to run any more and I let her catch me. I will be forever grateful to Dany for saving me. Dany took me to DRCS in her car (I left a lovely doggy aroma in her car by which she will forever remember me) where they had to cut away the sticky fur revealing lots of wounds underneath.



DANY: 25 November 2006

I didn't like that bit at all but, after it was over, they gave me some medicine and, best of all, some good food. I was so weak, I could hardly stand so Brigitte and Werner let me stay with them in their house and I have a lovely basket all to myself. There are plenty of cats in the house - I love cats. I love to play with them.

## CATS, CATS, AND MORE



**CATS** Hello, I am Sir Francis and now live with Ann in Atlanta. She saved me from this Island which sometimes is horrible for street animals. While awaiting my trip to the USA, I stayed with Brigitte and Werner and had a great time with all the other cats, especially at feeding time.



## THE FISH PARTY

Every day, we get oh-so excited waiting for the fish to be cooked. Sometimes the fish smells very funny, but that usually because one of us has got too close to the cooker and singed some fur!



The irksome waiting time is over. The venue for the nightly 'Fish Party' has been changed to the terrace where there is a lot of space. Until the fish is served, we are kept at bay behind the closed terrace doors. However, when they are opened we swoop to be served our fish fillets.



Sometimes one of the hairy muts in the house manages to sneak into our cat group. There are fewer puppies in the house as they get looked after by the volunteers in the new puppy house. The volunteers play with the puppies and their (surrogate/real) mothers. At Brigitte's and Werner's place, the cats are in the majority!

On the terrace there is enough space for all of us and after eating we surely need to rest. Allison is already looking forward to the new style of the fish party. Ones again Allison will look after us and the DRCS when Brigitte and Werner go to Berlin to visit their family and friends from the 19<sup>th</sup> December until the 7<sup>th</sup> January.



### ON AIR IN THAILAND

As DRCS has become more and more well known on Koh Samui, the local TV stations have shown interest. Samui Cable TV has filmed at the shelter several times and the third programme in the series is now being broadcast. Thais people always have a TV on somewhere nearby and many have told me that they have seen our programme. TV5 has shown a long interview with our staff but, unfortunately, I haven't seen it as I don't know when the programme is on.

**POISONING ON KOH SAMUI** Unfortunately I still hear a lot about the poisoning of animals on Koh Samui. Often it's about neighbours fighting and, in the end, it's the poor animals which suffer: chicken-killing dogs aren't at all popular. It's difficult to do something about these one-off criminals. It's different when it comes to the hotels. There are many dogs on the beaches of Koh Samui and, as a result, many of them congregate at hotels where the tourists feed them. The hotel managers are not always happy about this and go to awful lengths to control the animal population. I can understand trying to control the situation but I'm sure it's not in the tourists' interest to poison the dogs. If dogs are killed, new ones will appear overnight; the poisoning process has no long term benefit. Who wants to have a dying dog on their terrace? That's when the holiday joy disappears and, for animal lovers, the holiday is ruined. Unfortunately many managers still do not understand why tourists don't like dying dogs. Furthermore, leaving poison lying around is very dangerous for if there are children around. We all know that children pick up things and put these in their mouths. I can hardly imagine that it's the security or gardening staff who feed the poisoned meat to the dogs. Many Thais are terrified of dogs. Furthermore, when a dog sees a hotel worker from afar (particularly the ones who have thrown stones at them or chased them away), I don't think the dog will just go up and eat the poisoned meat out of the gardener's hands. So, the gardener (or security guard) will just throw the meat down and, when the dog comes along and eats it that is the end of that dog's life. But, what happens if the dog only sniffs the meat and ignores it, having been fed already by some of the tourists? What will happen if a child then finds the meat and eats it? You can get rat poison in every supermarket! I don't want to imply that a member of the gardening or security staff would spontaneously poison the dogs or cats but somebody must be instructing them to do so. Of course everybody else

could have done this. Do you and your children want to spend your holiday in a hotel or bungalow resort where they poison dogs and cats? For sure not!

Stephanie Utz from Germany made an entry in our guestbook last October and asked me for help. She had to make a terrible experience at the First Bungalow on Chaweng Noi Beach. A dog had to die in her arms after being poisoned. I asked you all to support us with our protest campaign. Thank you very much for your help! We were successful and the management of the First Bungalow has changed their attitude towards dogs and they will even start to feed them. Everyday we can now pick up old bread and they also allow us to leave our flyer on the hotel reception. The management assured me that there will be no more poisoning at the First Bungalow. Apparently they never had anything to do with it so it definitely won't get any easier to prevent poisoning in the future. But who's got interest in poisoning dogs at the First Bungalow and on the beach there time after time again?

## GUEST BOOK AND COMPUTER HASSELS

Unfortunately we've had many problems with our guest book. I haven't had access to it for more than a month. Strangely enough there were a few entries about the poisonings! Well, anyway, I will mount the letter from Stephanie on to the homepage under 'Info and News'. I would be very grateful if you could try to open the guest book and place your entry, e.g. Merry Christmas or whatever you like. I would like to know if it really works or not. Please contact me in case it doesn't work. I'm looking forward to the day when computers finally are faultless.

## ADVERTISING

I've been working on street advertising for a long time. First, we needed posters. This process went very slowly. Five months ago we went to a printing factory in Surat Thani to order a 1 m<sup>2</sup> square poster (made from special material). After five attempts, we now have a poster in the right size and colour. It took us **FIVE MONTHS** to get from start to finish. Even though our manager Wit speaks perfect Thai, the communication turned out to be more difficult than expected. The first two mock-ups were about 4 m<sup>2</sup>. Those posters are now at the road - end at Bahn Taling Ngam - you **CANNOT** miss us! Please come and visit!



## THE KING OF THAILAND AND HIS DOG THONGDAENG

The majesty, King Bhumibol Adulyadej has got a big heart for dogs, especially for street dogs. On the 13<sup>th</sup> December 1998 he got a 5 week old puppy. Thongdäng was born as one of many street dogs and was lucky enough to be brought to the king. In a book, he asked the Thai community to look after the street dogs and treat them with respect. Have a look at the pictures of the king and read the story of Thongdäng on our homepage [www.samuidog.org](http://www.samuidog.org) under Info and News.

After building the new puppy house, we have no savings left so have had to shelf the purchase of a new car. Let's hope that the old car keeps going for a while and that maybe next year we will gather enough donations to replace the car. Please send donations of string and Superglue to keep our old car together?!

Besides, it's definitely necessary to build a few single boxes outside our house.

To stop them escaping so easily, Dogs and Cats who are injured or require castration/spaying are usually sent directly to the big shelter in Bahn Taling Ngam. However, problems do arise when dogs arrive at the house too late, after the helpers have left. Then they are placed in cages, a lot of which get destroyed by the dogs, each costing 15 Euros! If we leave them free in the yard, the others start barking to no end and some of them even manage to escape.

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. Because of your donations, we can neuter at least six animals every day. (Find the statistics on our homepage WHAT WE DO). We offer free medical treatment for ALL cats and dogs (with or without an owner) including a pick-up service. Over the last three years, around 250 dogs and almost 150 cats that couldn't make it on their own on Koh Samui have found a home in our shelter. Many of them are looking for sponsors to make sure that their bowls are never empty. Have a look on the homepage ('How to Help', 'Cats and Dogs to Sponsor'). Sponsoring a dog or a cat is only 15 Euro a month. Even if you do not want to sponsor an animal, it is lovely to look at our many dogs and cats and read their stories! As the shelter in Ban Taling Ngam is very big and surrounded by a wall measuring some 800 meters, you can still 'buy' pieces of wall for 25 Euro per metre ([www.samuidog.org](http://www.samuidog.org) 'What do we do'). 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 (multiwormer), flea collars and flea/tick shampoo (for the dogs not the volunteers!). We can always use these things. Please don't forget the old cuddly toys for the puppies.

**Don't forget the dogs and cats on Koh Samui.**

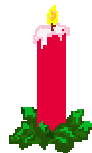
**They still need your help.**

**Every small donation helps us take one step forward**

Our monthly costs amount to 6,500 Euro. If you are on Koh Samui, you are cordially invited to stop by. You are welcome to come and look at our (financial) books. The dogs, cats and I always love visitors!

Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year!

Best wishes



*Brigitte*

Banking details for sponsors:  
please see  
[www.samuidog.org](http://www.samuidog.org) - HOW TO HELP

