



# OH MY DOG!

## SAMUI DOG & CAT RESCUE CENTER: 14 years of devoted activity

by Brigitte Gomm

Samui is a paradise, but not for dogs or cats! There are many beautiful beaches, thousands of coconut palms, 60,000 inhabitants and several hundred bungalow resorts and hotels. But here are also hundreds of stray dogs begging for food. Most of them live in small packs and remain within their territory. This territory is defended by the whole pack and it is very hard for new dogs to join a pack.

Until April 1999, there was no vet on the island and medical treatment was impossible. Countless sick or injured dogs and cats died wretchedly and were completely ignored as they lay by the roadside. Even small bite wounds can prove lethal because, in the tropics, flies deposit their eggs in the cuts with the resulting maggots eating their way deeper and deeper into the animal. All it takes is a thorough cleansing & some powder and even large injuries infected with hundreds of maggots can heal quickly.

Dogs have puppies twice a year. Litters with ten puppies are not uncommon. If only five out of ten puppies survive, that is 10,000 living pups per year from 1,000 bitches. Before we started in April 1999, the government carried out mass poisonings and the problem was solved for some time. For the tourists who had to witness this, their holidays were ruined. Even dogs with owners had two litters a year and the Thai people, not knowing how to deal with puppies, took them to the temple. There, the dogs were fed by the monks with some rice and other leftovers but, if there were too many, the government also poisoned these dogs. As the majority of the Thai population is very poor, and the only vet at that time was on the mainland, traveling there with a dog was not feasible. The average salary is about 10 Euro a day; the price for a castration, however, is about 30 Euro.

When we started helping the dogs on Koh Samui, there wasn't much of a cat problem as dogs eat cats (sad but true). As our work with the dogs progressed and their numbers fell, and the cat population grew. As a result, we had to address the cat problem so we started to neuter and look after the cats on the island and this work continues still.

In the summer of 1997, I (Brigitte Gomm) got to know Danny van Urk from Holland on the beach where she was treating some dogs. Danny was living on the island and, for several years, had been trying to help the animals there. She gave anti-baby injections, treated dogs with mange (mange causes dogs to lose their fur and leads to compulsive scratching), dewormed the animals and took care of injured ones as much as she could. Unfortunately, without a vet, there was not much she could do for dogs with serious injuries. My husband Werner and I were very happy that somebody was trying to ease the animals' suffering and we decided to help Danny realize her dream of having a vet for stray dogs and cats on Koh Samui. Thanks to the help of many animal friends who were also not able to stand the misery of the animals on Koh Samui, the Dog Rescue Center was founded.

We kindly ask you, dear animal friends, to help us achieve our aims. Koh Samui should also become a paradise for dogs and cats, not one just for humans. Stray dogs & cats can have happy lives on the beaches and in the resorts but they must have their rabies injections, live in stable packs, get medical treatment when required (eg after an accident), and be prevented from breeding.





Doing a permanently great job on the island: The team of the Dog Rescue Center.



Center Director Brigitte Gomm

#### AIMS OF THE DOG & CAT RESCUE CENTER SAMUI:

- \* To inject all dogs and cats against rabies.
- \* To sterilise all dogs and cats by castration or spaying.
- \* To treat dogs suffering from mange by injecting them with Ivermectin or by washing them with Amitraz.
- \* To deworm all dogs and cats.
- \* To treat all stray dogs & cats in the event of injury or sickness and give them somewhere to rest.
- \* To educate the people concerning the keeping of their animals.

Thankfully there are often Tourists on Koh Samui that want to help. Sometimes, animal friends give up their whole holiday to work for DRCS. Others are living on Koh Samui and help DRCS regularly. Volunteers are always welcome. Even if its only a few hours or one day, for us and the animals it is always a huge help.

We also would like to thank the various hotels/restaurants for their food supply: TONGSAI BAY, IMPERIAL BOAT HOUSE, NORA BEACH, KANDABURI, MOONLIGHT, AKYRA, KULAI PAN, AMARI PALM REEF, MONTIEN HOUSE, ORCHID, SIAM DREAMS, CHAWENG BURI, ANDAMAN, ZICO'S, CENTARA, POPPIES, FIRST HOUSE, IMPIANA, BLUE WATER SCHOOL, SILAWADEE, BEACH REPUBLIC, SCALA and NIKKI BEACH



Good cooperation with the Samui temples

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We have two shelters: a small one in Chaweng at our house and the large one at Ban Taling Ngam in the south west of the island. Both of the shelters are open from 9.00 to 18.00 o'clock daily and it is not necessary to make an appointment. Just come by and have a look at the shelters in Chaweng or Ban Taling Ngam! Of course, you can give us a call before you visit and ask for further information. We speak German, English and Thai.

