

Phuket Has Been Good To Us

June 2013 Newsletter



Vocational Opportunities
Through English

Greetings from the Board

The new school term has just started and excitement is in the air. The students are eager to start learning again and our teachers are refreshed and looking forward to getting back into the classroom. Enthusiasm is a key attribute for our teachers and volunteers, who provide quality English language education to more than 900 students. This term we welcome two new teachers, bringing our team to 6 full time teachers and many amazing helpers in the classrooms and Coconut Club.

The work that we are doing is so important for these children. In Education First's most recent ['English Proficiency Index'](#) Thailand was ranked as one of the countries with the poorest English language skills. Students who learn English with us vastly improve their future employment options.

Support from our local community and abroad allows us to continue the work of improving the economic opportunities of young people in Phuket. Thanks to the sponsors and guests at our recent event, the Mystic Mirage at Bliss Beach Club, we raised more than 750,000 baht. We have also received incredible support from newlyweds who wished to make their wedding day extra special by giving something back and asking their guests to do the same. And then there are visitors to Phuket - who continue to fill their holiday luggage allowance with in-kind donations! Thank you all for your continued support; you are making a lasting difference in the lives of these children.

Peter Ferrier
Board of Managers

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We are always in need of more supplies and goods.

If you are interested in contributing in-kind to Phuket Has Been Good To Us, please let us know.

You can also "like" our [Facebook](#) page to stay in touch!



Improving the Economic Opportunities and Lives of Young People

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www.phukethasbeengoodtous.org | www.facebook.com/phukethasbeengoodtous
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School Updates

Hello Teacher Talya!



Hi everyone, my name is Talya Ventura-Lawrence. I first began teaching English to orphaned children in Mexico in 2008, shortly before travelling to Thailand to do an Advanced PADI course. It was during this time that I fell in love with both teaching and with Thailand, and so after returning to my home country of England to do a BA degree in English Language, I jumped at the next chance to return to Thailand to fulfill my dreams of teaching here.

I feel extremely privileged to be part of the Phuket Has Been Good To Us team, and am really looking forward to seeing what the next year here will bring. Not only do I find my new job rewarding, I am excited about taking part in the Coconut Club activities with the children!

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Hello Teacher Michele!



Hello, I am Michele Shrader from Seattle, Washington! I have been teaching in the Special Educational sector for over 20 years at every level from pre-K to secondary education.

I love teaching and have always felt it was my calling, never could I have imagined a different career. When the opportunity came to teach in Thailand for one year in Ayutthaya, I jumped at it. After my time in Ayutthaya, I was thrilled to accept my new position with Phuket Has Been Good To Us. I have always dreamed of providing for the underprivileged and now feel I am truly living my dream by being part of the Foundation.

Teacher Shah's Transition from Teaching Primary to Secondary

There are two age levels in Thai schools: Pratom (ages 7 to 12) and Matayom (ages 13 to 18). After Matayom 6, eligible students move on to university.

When I first joined the Foundation, I taught Pratom levels 1 to 5 but later began teaching Matayom as well. I have to admit that conditions can be difficult due to the language barrier and learning attitudes of Matayom students. As they did not have the benefit of being in our programme during their earlier years, they often lack the confidence to use English. Some of them are unable to read and write English proficiently.

In Matayom 3 and Matayom 6, students have to take entrance exams for either vocational college or university. If they do not perform well in their English exams, they cannot go to their school of choice. This puts extra pressure on me to help the students brush up on English.



For their exams, Matayom students must translate long English texts that they simply do not understand. At first, I helped them build their confidence by assigning simple sentences from fairytales for students to translate in groups. To further encourage self-assurance, we use Thai-English dictionaries that were kindly donated to the Foundation. It is very encouraging when my students come to our office after class to borrow a dictionary to use on their own.

It is clear to me that Matayom students value learning English because they realise the importance of this language towards their future. As their teacher, I humbly hope that I can help them achieve their dreams of attending university and one day beginning their ideal careers.



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School Updates

Teacher Gina's Reading Group

Reading Group began with the aim of helping students develop their reading comprehension skills through small groups. For nearly five years now, the success of the programme has been undeniable thanks to the volunteers whose eager support helped this programme develop from an occasional activity to a weekly aspect of our curriculum.

Last year was a tough year for the reading group: because the school's schedule can change at a moment's notice, there were periods where our lovely, well-prepared Reading Group leaders were already in the classroom and waiting for our dear students, only to find out that English classes were unexpectedly cancelled for the day! We also didn't have enough volunteers to work with us for a term, hindering the programme. All this can make coordinating Reading Group difficult. Despite the problems, we are lucky enough to have volunteers who never get annoyed with the schedule changes and are happy to help us.

This year we are looking forward to helping more students in developing their reading skills, and I am hoping that we will continue to grow and have more people who will help us in making this programme a success.



Sponsor an Education

The Phuket Has Been Good To Us **Sponsor-A-Child** programme is a very special opportunity to contribute to our students' education and well-being.

With the new term just getting started, now is the perfect time to lend your support to one of the residential children at Kamala School! Not only is this a great way to give back, but it will allow you to really connect with a student when you receive updates on your child's progress throughout the year.



Your 10,000 baht contribution (less than \$1 USD per day) will provide one deserving student with English language lessons, extracurricular activities and field trips for a year.

Many thanks to all of you who currently support our work through the Sponsor-A-Child programme. If you would also like to be involved, please visit our [website](#) and find out how you can sponsor a child today!

Guitar, an Excellent Student



Janupon Yaiyeur, known as "Guitar" by his friends, is a 12-year-old boy from Patong who always strives to do well in school. For the past two years in Teacher Agie's class he has been the top student.

Always excited to come to English class, Guitar has fun learning new words and playing English games with friends. Although he sometimes boasts of his excellent ability to read in English more than his classmates, he is also very helpful to those who are struggling. In Coconut Club you can often find Guitar cooking or playing football.

Someday he hopes to become a policeman, as he likes the idea of riding in a helicopter and rescuing people.



Recent Fundraising Events

An Exotic Night at Mystic Mirage



On 26 April, 150 people dressed up to enjoy the delights of our annual fundraiser at Bliss Beach Club. This year the theme was Arabian Nights, and aptly titled Mystic Mirage.

Guests enjoyed the night in a mystical oasis, complete with belly dancers, a whirling dervish, henna tattoos, and 'Cave of Wonders' photo booth. They feasted on Middle Eastern delights while sipping bubbly, cocktails and free flow wine.

The event proved to be incredibly successful, raising over 750,000 baht for our English language education programme.

This event would not have been possible without our incredible sponsors, who are listed at the back of this newsletter.



Local Events Provide Continuous Support

We rely on fundraising events such as the Mystic Mirage to continue our work, and have been fortunate in the past few months to receive support from community events to help us continuously raise much needed funds throughout the year:

Our monthly quiz nights at **Aussie Pub** in Kamala offer attendees a fun night of testing their random knowledge while supporting our cause! We also held a quiz night in April at **Sugar Reef Sports Bar** in Cherngtalay.

In early March, the team at **Legends Bar** in Kamala raised over 19,650 baht for our students by throwing a charity music night, complete with good food and live music. Also in March, the organisers at Can Do Event Agency chose Phuket Has Been Good To Us as the charity of choice for their very chic '**Black is Back**' fashion event at Da Vinci Restaurant in Nai Harn, raising more than 18,000 baht for our programme through silent auction sales.

Songkran was especially delightful for those who attended **Bliss Beach Club's** Songkran Bonanza on 13 April. Many guests enjoyed having their faces painted by our talented volunteers, who accepted donations at the event!



Fantastic Donations and Visitors

Technology Donations

Our small staff relies on computers to achieve our education and fundraising goals. Until recently, we did not have enough computers to accomplish this important work.



We are so grateful to **Pegas Touristik Phuket** for their amazing donation of three brand new Lenovo desktop computers for our teachers and administrative staff, as well as **Honorary Director of our Board Arnaud C.M.C. Verstraete** for donating two gently used MacBook Pro's. These remarkable contributions will be incredibly helpful in our work.



Thank you Pegas Touristik Phuket and Arnaud Verstraete for your wonderful generosity!

Phil and Andrew: Visitors Extraordinaire

We are very lucky to have friends abroad who help us in many ways. Phil Ross and Andrew Volvricht have been regular visitors from Australia for years now, bringing in-kind donations for our students and spending their holidays in Phuket fixing up our classrooms. Thank you Phil and Andrew for continuously supporting our work and our students!

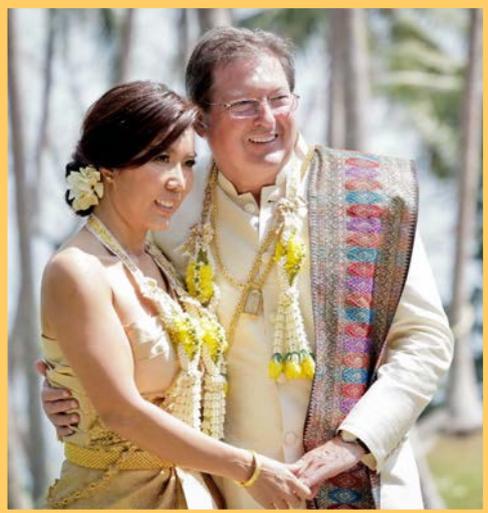


If you are interested in helping our organisation during your visit to Phuket, let us know!

Thank you to the **Nutrimetics** team from Australia for visiting Coconut Club and providing a fun, make-up filled afternoon for our students!



A Very Generous Wedding



Working for a charity means that we are lucky enough to witness true generosity on a daily basis, but once in a while someone comes along who acts in a way that is so exceptionally selfless it leaves us stunned.

Jean-Claude and Khun Kantaya Reuille are two such generous people. The couple recently married in Phuket and made the decision to ask their guests to support the Foundation in lieu of wedding gifts. *Over 650,000 baht was raised through donations from the couple and their loved ones!*

Words cannot express how much this support means to us and how far this contribution will go in changing the lives of the children at Kamala and Kalim schools. It just goes to show you what a difference two people can make.

If you or someone you know is interested in incorporating charitable giving into a special day—be it a wedding, a birthday, or other personal event—please let us know. We'd love to help make it possible!

Foundation Updates

Farewell to Hayley

Hayley Mill has been a dedicated and passionate full time volunteer at PHBG TU for nearly a year. We are incredibly sad to see her go, as her experience, intelligence, and enthusiasm have immensely enhanced our organisation's efforts.

Some of you may be familiar with Hayley's work here—if you attended the Mystic Mirage, you saw her talents first-hand! She has played a vital role in our fundraising and marketing strategy during her time in Phuket, coordinating events and campaigns to ensure the Foundation can continue its important work. More often than not, you could find her working nights and weekends.

"Working for the Foundation has been an amazing, life-changing experience. My original plan was to be here for six months but I ended up staying for a year! I am so proud to have been a member of this amazing team and happy to have played a part in helping these wonderful children."

Although Hayley will be sorely missed here, we wish her the best of luck in future endeavours and can't wait to hear about her upcoming travels in South America!



A New Full-Time Volunteer!

Hi everybody, my name is Cari and I'm the new Office Fellow! I arrived two months ago from Vancouver, Canada after getting my Bachelor's in International Relations.

After graduation I felt a little lost in the "real world." All I knew for sure was that I wanted to see more of the world and do something meaningful with my time. Those aspirations (and some serious Googling) eventually led me to the Foundation's website. I am so grateful for the chance to be part of the work here—this team inspires me every day and I feel like I am exactly where I'm supposed to be!



Farewell to Teacher Mac

We have also had to say good-bye to Teacher Mac this term. After two years teaching at Kamala School, Mac decided he was ready to pursue teaching at university-level.

During his tenure with PHBG TU, Teacher Mac has been an enthusiastic educator who the students really enjoy learning from. Mac's passion for teaching and dedication to our students will be missed, but we are glad that he will continue being a part of the Foundation in other ways!



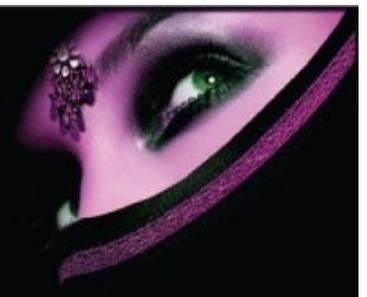
Teacher Gina Got Married!

During the school holidays, Teacher Gina took a special trip home to the Philippines to marry her long-time partner David.

Congratulations to the happy couple!



Thank you to everyone involved in
the 2013 Mystic Mirage.
Your generous support helped to make the night
a great success.



1000 Folded Cranes	Double Tree Resort-Hilton, Surin	Outrigger Phi Phi Islands
Absolute Bangla Suites, Patong	Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket	Pimalai Resort & Spa, Koh Lanta, Krabi
Adam and Glodee Judd	EthniCity	PIPS (Phuket Island Property Service)
AHMS Hotels	Events Thailand	Pluto Ice-cream
Aladdin Beach Club	Fragola Creations	Production by Kritidech
Amanpuri Villa	FunStart	Rembrandt Hotels & Towers, Bangkok
Amari Hotels	Giuseppe 'Pepe' Viva	Renaissance Phuket Resort and Spa
Anand Jagota	Hilton Phuket	RnR Décor
Anantara Phuket Villas	Holiday Inn Resort Phuket	Rockfish
Andaman Cabriolet	Imperial Adamas Beach Resort	ROM-YEN Guest House
Andaman Wine Club	Indigo Pearl	Royal Phuket Marina Health Club
Andara, Phuket	Island Bliss	Saigon Bellydance
Angsana	Jabu Days	Sala Phuket
Angsana Spa Laguna Phuket	Jay Leshark	Sarabell Nail Salon & Spa
Art & Culture Asia	Joe's Downstairs	Sarah Pettigrew
Baan Rim Pa	John Gray	Savita Sriram
Baan Rim Pa Group	JW Marriott	Sea Bees Diving
Bangkok Burger Co	Kata Beach Resort	Serenity Resort & Residence Phuket
Banyan Tree Phuket	Katalina Collection	Sofitel Plaza Hanoi
BB&B	Kidz Sole	Splash
Beauty Today	Kira Body Art	Sri Panwa
BillioNail	Lady Pie	Sue McGoldrick
Bliss Beach Club	Laguna Golf Club	Sunanda Spa
Blue Elephant	Le Meridien - Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia	Tatonkas
Blue World Safaris	Lim's Restaurant and Bar	Tawan Cruises
Breeze at Cape Yamu	Live 89.5	Terry Davis
British International School Phuket	Lotus Agency Asia	The 9th Floor Restaurant & Bar
Brotzeit Bier Bar & Restaurant	Luxury Collection Naka Island Phuket	The Artist - Dance Choreography
Centra Ashlee Hotel Patong	Michelle Clowes	The Pavilions Phuket
Chalong Bay Rum	Movenpick Resort & Spa	The Phuket News
Chef Alex	My Gate 2 Success	The Regent Phuket Cape Panwa
Choice Foods	Navrang Mahal	The Surin
Clare Plunkett	NINE Lounge and Bar	The Vijitt Resort Phuket
Climax Restaurant	Novosti Phuketa	Tracey Burr
Coral Seekers	Oasis Spa	Trisara
Core Synthesis	Offspray Leisure	World Lennium
Creative Concept AV Co. Ltd	Oriental Events	Xana
Da Maurizio	Outrigger	
Delish (Liz and Greg)	Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach Resort	
Design Den	Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort & Villas	
Dewa Resort & Spa		
Dorothy Macpherson		