

Phuket Has Been Good To Us

Foundation

Volume 4, Number 2 August 2010

Changing Children's Lives on Phuket Island, Thailand

Our Mission

Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation works to improve the economic opportunities and life chances of young people, funding and implementing high quality, practical English language education on Phuket Island.

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What one word describes the students?

Awesome, Carl Osmar, Director of Education

Enthusiastic, It is such a joy to come into school every day to see students who are so excited to learn English. They all run to English class and their enthusiasm shines through everything they do; from the younger ones yelling the ABCs because they are thrilled they know it and want me to know they know it, to the older ones who want to converse in English with me, asking each other for certain words and thinking hard to pull the vocabulary they know together to communicate. I am incredibly fortunate to work with such enthusiastic, loving students. Yaka Yamaguchi, Teacher

Cheerful, In the sense that, in spite of all the things that the residential children have experienced, you will never have a dull moment with them. They always give a warm and happy smile when they see you. The warm and joyous heart can't be denied. Cris Torrecampo, Teacher

Compassion, that they have for each other and that they bring out in everyone else. Ryanne Rothenberg, Teaching Fellow

www.phukethasbeengoodtous.org

During the 2009-10 school year, we expanded our after school programs to 280

Learning to Swim with Coconut Club



Teachers and volunteers at the Foundation decided that swimming is a life skill which all of our students should have. Over the year we have had support from the local community to ensure that every student at Coconut Club can become a confident and competent swimmer. The first classes were at BIS, then at PIA where Thai swimming instructors taught the children to swim in just a few short weeks. Students practice putting their heads under water, collecting sunken objects from the bottom and pushing off the side. By the end of each

session even those who were nervous to begin with were competing in races and jumping in. Local hotels Kamala Dreams and The Palms have also invited the students to use their pools. A huge thank you to all of the businesses and volunteers who are making this programme such a huge success.

Birthday Parties at Absolute Patong Ville

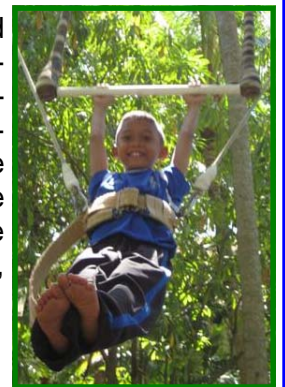
Every two months 30 very excited children climb into mini busses bound for Absolute Patong Ville where clowns, magicians and animal balloon makers await them for a marvelous afternoon. Students have a brilliant time swimming, eating food and cake and playing party games with Absolute staff. Thank you to everyone involved for giving up their weekend to make these very special birthday parties such a huge success.



Turtle Conservation and Kid Soleil



The JW Marriott invited Coconut Club students to visit and learn about the conservation of turtles. First, they participated in JW Marriott's Kid Soleil - they tried juggling, bicycling, trapeze work and trampolining. Lunch was at the noodle bar, where the students cooked their own meal and ate chocolate cake. In the afternoon the students went to the Mai Khao Turtle Foundation where they learnt about turtle conservation and made posters about recycling. A fantastic, informative, fun day out thanks to JW Marriott.



Amanpuri Fun Day

Amanpuri staff and management ran a Fun Day at Coconut Club on Saturday 31st July. They organised fun ball games, their beauticians provided manicures and hair braiding and the children could make jewelry or paint great pictures. Then there was an amazing buffet served on silver trays followed by ice-lollies and a huge chocolate cake! Over 40 Coconut Clubbers were invited to the fun day - deepest thanks to Amanpuri for such an great time!



Thank you to all of the local organisations who have provided amazing days out for Coconut Club students

Skateboard Tuesdays



Skateboard Tuesday is considered THE best time by the residential students at The Rachaprachanukroh School on Kamala Beach. Every Tuesday from 3.30 - 4.30 the residential students sign up for skateboarding and then run downstairs to put on their safety helmets and pads. The children can be seen showing off their newly acquired skateboarding skills thanks to Luke Remmers of Surf House, Bang Toa Beach, who brought Skateboard Tuesday to Coconut Club. Luke has been teaching skateboarding for a number of months and we now have budding young skateboarding stars! It's just great to see their self-confidence grow from week to week.



Cooking Classes

James, the chef from the beautiful Paresa Resort on Kamala Cliffs, and his finance Bree, come to Coconut Club every Monday afternoon to cook with the children. There are many recipes on offer to the little chefs—anything from chicken pie to gingerbread men. James and Bree follow in the footsteps of other great volunteers including: the Harries Family who made 'tin foil fish'; Dagmar von Diessl and Chantal Fernandes who have both baked cakes for the children to decorate. It was Tavis McGinn who, along with Ingrid Poolen and Jane Chan started the cooking sessions at Coconut Club with cookies and the hugely popular fruit smoothies. The children have a great time, learn some new vocabulary and get to eat the finished goodies!



Coconut Club Projects



Often holiday makers contact us before they travel to Phuket and ask what fun, educational programme they can run for the students at Coconut Club whilst over here. Isabelle-Marie, Adam and baby Alexis from Hong Kong brought T-shirts and 20 lucky students tie dyed shirts one Saturday afternoon. The children were amazed when they took out the knots to find the patterns they had made. Another project they brought with them was stenciling shirts with cats and dogs which was great fun too!

Coconut Club Birthday Parties

Every residential student at Kamala School gets to attend a birthday party in Coconut Club and invite two of their friends. At the party there are fun games, party food, birthday cake and small birthday gifts. A huge thank you to everyone who makes these days possible, including Rockfish, Banyan Tree, Laguna's Banyan Tree Management Academy, Bodega café, Maitree and all the donors and volunteers who make these very special birthday parties such a success.



Thank you to all of our volunteers who run such great projects at
Coconut Club

Volunteers are the heart of our organization.

They assist in the classroom, run small reading groups, manage activities at Coconut Club and much, much more offering opportunities for our children to practice their conversational English. Volunteers are also able to work with us in the office. **A huge thank you to all of our volunteers!**

Will Perkins, Full-Time Teaching Fellow

I heard about the Foundation the way you discover many things in life - through a friend of a friend. I heard that they were looking for a full-time teaching fellow - but I was looking for a paid teaching position. Over the next month I interviewed at schools in Chalong and Phuket Town, but I didn't find the English program I was hoping for. Then I went to the Foundation's website and spent the next hour learning about the small tight-knit Foundation. Everything about the Foundation interested me: the history, the staff, the volunteers, the Coconut Club, and their approach to education. As soon as I finished watching the video clip, I knew I had to be a part of this organization. I met with Carl Osmar, Director of Education. As we talked I saw a passion and felt a kinship absent in other interviews. A month later I



was living in Kamala and teaching classrooms full of eager children. It's been almost two months now and I've no regrets. I've had priceless experiences and am developing relationships I hope will last a lifetime. I'm thankful to the staff and students, for accepting me as part of their family. I'm grateful to be here and am daily encouraged by the student's progress and of course, their contagious smiles.



Adam Meehan, Volunteer Financial Consultant

It is truly amazing how life can be. I made contact with the Foundation in a totally obscure way - at a golf competition in Singapore! I met the husband of the Director of Operations, he was very energetic about the charity and that was addictive and attractive to me. A few months later I had arranged to stop work and spend 3 months in Kamala. I helped out where I could in the office - which was most of the time. To my surprise and delight, it was a pleasure to work with the staff. There were no egos

to fight with as you would have in a corporate environment and things could just get done. The range of activities was large from accounting to helping out with preparations for the May Ball - no stress and helping a good cause. The 3 months just flew by and it was very relaxing and very friendly. I will be back some time and hope to stay for another few months. The volunteers may have changed by that time but I think the spirit will persist. Thanks to all for this most special time in my life.

Tavis McGinn, Volunteer Coconut Club Coordinator

After researching on www.idealists.org, I felt that teaching English in Southeast Asia served an important need and offered the chance to experience a very different culture. I came to Phuket to co-ordinate the Foundation's after-school program, Coconut Club. This program offers active learning to the 150 children who live at the school because they do not have families or because their families are unable to look after them. Through cooking, sports, arts and crafts the children develop relationships, learn new skills, express their creativity, build self-confidence, and practice speaking English. My favorite activity to run was cooking since it allowed me to be like a big brother in the kitchen for many of the children.



The students here are incredibly sweet and it can be heart-breaking to realize that many of them will spend their lives at school without a home and without a family. If you are thinking about volunteering internationally - I would highly recommend volunteering with Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation.

If you would like to volunteer with the Foundation please call on
076 278 146 or email info@phukethasbeengoodtous.org

What the Students Think about Coconut Club

"Coconut Club makes us feel like we can do anything" **Speed, aged 12**

"I love to go to Coconut Club because I smile every time I go there" **Cheeta, aged 13**

"I like Coconut Club because it is fun and we can go out on trips" **Gap, aged 11**

"At Coconut Club I am able to talk with Farangs and learn English" **A, aged 9**

"Coconut Club is fun and I can learn new things" **Nut aged 11**

"I like Coconut Club because I can learn English" **Winyoo, aged 13**

"Coconut Club is fun and there are lots of games to play" **Meu, aged 8**

Why I Want to Learn English

"I want to learn English because I will be able to use it for daily life" **Beer, aged 11**

"If I speak English I can talk with tourists" **Bow, aged 11**

"I want to learn English to gain a new skill" **Ging, aged 10**

"I want to learn English so I can earn more money" **Bom, aged 6**

"I want to learn English because I want to be an airhostess" **Pai, aged 15**



On, Age 14—1st place

Student Artwork



Winyoo, Age 13—2nd place

At Coconut Club we ran a drawing contest:

"Why I like Coconut Club"

The students produced some amazing pictures. The winning drawing was by On, a boy aged 14. On's education has been affected by his family circumstances and he is in class with 12 year olds. Because of this he doesn't have a great deal of self confidence. Winning the art contest was so important to him; he was extremely proud in English class the next day.

Sponsor a Child Programme

There are over 150 residential students in need of your support. These children live in dorms at the government school in Kamala because they are orphans or their families are not able to look after them. Your sponsorship allows us to provide them with a quality English education and the opportunity to work with them in Coconut Club. The club introduces students to new activities, builds self esteem, and challenges their perceptions of what they are capable of as they learn through play. The programme runs during the week afterschool and at weekends. Weekend programmes fall into three main categories: swimming lessons; art workshops; sports, adventure and team building workshops. 2009-10 workshops included surfing, rock climbing, circus arts, public speaking, and an adventure team building class. Currently, one third of our residential student's activities are underwritten by our generous sponsors. There are still 100 students who are not sponsored. Please help us get them to their destination by sponsoring a child.

If you would like to sponsor a child with the Foundation
please call Tina Hall on 081 439 554 or email
tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org

A word from Carl Osmar, Director of Education:

May saw the start of a new academic year here in Thailand and with it came many changes. Both of our schools in Kamala and Kalim have new directors; each coming from Nakhon Si Thammarat. Our teaching team welcomed Crisalyn Torrecampo from the Philippines, Will Perkins and Ryanne Rothenberg from America and Sayaka Yamaguchi a Japanese-American from America. We warmly welcomed back Lynn Crevling for her second year at the Foundation, now as a full time teacher. This academic year sees our teaching moving up the years to Mathyom 1 (high school age).



What is your most encouraging moment?

A most encouraging moment was an autistic child's first lesson in an English class. Not only did he survive but he went away having enjoyed the experience. His Thai teacher was so relieved. *Carl Osmar, Director of Education*

I have so many encouraging moments every day! When I see the look on the faces of the students when they finally understand something, or when they love the content being learned in class. You can see their faces light up when something clicks, or they get an answer correct. The students are so excited about learning and understanding English. Their excitement and desire to learn is so genuine. *Yaka Yamaguchi, Teacher*



The most encouraging moments would be seeing the students learning and acquiring the English language. At the end of each lesson, I always feel rewarded and motivated; the children encourage you to always do your best, they push you harder. *Cris Torrecampo, Teacher*

What one word describes the Foundation?

Heart The Foundation is all about having heart. It is with heart that we come here as volunteers, or for little pay. It is with heart that we teach, believing that the language of smiles opens doors for the children to learn and grow. It is the heart of the Foundation that attracts volunteers from all walks of life who want to support the children. *Lynn Crevling, Teacher*

Family, *Will Perkins, Teaching Fellow*

Giving I've seen and experienced it myself, the giving heart of the Foundation, making sure that the children, through support grow to have a positive outlook in life. The foundation doesn't stop at teaching the language alone. It builds the whole personality of a child by exposing them to a variety of activities be it academically or in their extra-curricular activities. The foundation really is a symbol of giving. *Cris Torrecampo, Teacher*

A word from Lynn Crevling, Teacher

This semester, during my second year with the Foundation as a teacher we are focusing on practical topics including numbers, colors, clothing, jobs, animals, the sea side, shops in town, favorite things and time. We include as much interactive learning as possible using tools such as the *ABC Rock song*; restaurant menus; dollhouses to learn about the home, Genki English CD driven learning games and songs and vowel and consonant-blend scavenger hunts. Also, this year the teachers have embraced more classroom volunteers who aid and provide remedial help to students who need extra assistance. The teachers currently support seven volunteer-run reading groups in grades 3 - 6 up from two last year.



We are overwhelmed by the incredible generosity of businesses who donate in-kind goods and services for our events - see page 8 for a list of our supporters.

Passion for Fashion

Our next fundraising event is on Sunday 12th September 2010. Andara and Silk are hosting Passion for Fashion. Starting at 12pm with a reception including cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. A runway show debuting Marisa Zeman's Hong Kong based line, "Nude is Rude," will commence at 1pm. Following the show there is a 2 hour Thai tapas buffet brunch at Silk. There will also be a raffle featuring Andara properties, spa and dining events. All proceeds from the event will be donated to the Foundation. Tickets are 1,000 THB. For further information, or to purchase tickets, please contact arati@phukethasbeengoodtous.org



One Night in May

One Night in May was a truly amazing evening at the Sheraton Grande Laguna; with sumptuous food and great service. The Sheraton's General Manager, Klaus Christandl, approached his colleagues at Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide who donated an incredible half a million baht worth of auction and raffle prizes. Over 200 guests from Phuket, Hong Kong and Singapore were full of praise for the event. There was spectacular entertainment from the Boat Bar and a Michael Jackson impersonator. The guests then rocked the night away with music by DJ Doris. The night was a huge financial success for the Foundation due to the generosity of the Sheraton Grande Laguna, 91.5FM, Phuket Post, BB&B, Andaman Wine Club, Diageo Moet Hennessy, Kookaburra's, Chateau Vendome, Kata Rocks and numerous other local businesses who donated everything needed for the dinner. Full proceeds from the event (over 2 million baht) went to Phuket's children in need served by PHBGU.



ABBATASTIC



Saturday 12th September 2009 Les Anges held a fantastic fundraiser for the Foundation. Peter Webber provided spectacular entertainment and amazing food and 91.5FM great music for the 150 guests. Superb auction and raffle prizes were on offer including a one off ABBA plaque and a trip to London to see *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*—thank you to the many individuals and businesses who donated prizes. A huge thank you to IWS and Royal Eastern Beverage Company for providing great deals on the beverages for the night.

Other Fundraising Ideas

Not only is the Phuket Oilfield Classic donating all proceeds from their golf tournament to PHBGU but for every 2+ clicks on the website www.phuketoilfieldclassic.com they will donate 1 baht to the Foundation; when he entered a triathlon, Bryan Lunt, asked his friends to support him by giving to the Foundation; at the Simpson Wedding in Hong Kong they asked no gifts, just donations to the Foundation; at his birthday party Mark Phillips asked for no gifts, just donations to the Foundation.

Contributors: August 2009—July 2010

Thank you to all our supporters, without you, none of this would be possible!

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