



# Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation

Volume 3, Number 3

April 2009

Changing Children's Lives in Phuket Island, Thailand



## Contribute Today

Give the gift of education by supporting the Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation with a contribution of money, an in-kind donation or by volunteering. Details follow in this newsletter or for more information, visit our website at [www.phukethasbeengoodtous.org](http://www.phukethasbeengoodtous.org). Thank you for your support.

## Our Mission

The 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.

## Seeing Progress: The Children of Coconut Club



The first semester of the Coconut Club, our Foundation's extra-curricular program for the 150 residential students of the King's Foundation School in Kamala, was a huge success. We would like to thank all the volunteers and donors who have made this program possible. Your efforts to support these disadvantaged and orphaned students through the various activities of the Coconut Club have proven effective in building their self-esteem, critical thinking, life skills, and enhancing their ability to retain and further develop the language proficiency they have gained in the classroom. In fact our test scores showed that students who attended the Coconut Club averaged a significant increase over those who did not. Teachers also saw anecdotal evidence of the same. "At first, students were unsure how to play with blocks, tentatively watching teachers build small structures. With much encouragement, they are now constructing soaring architectural marvels accented by bright colors and interesting patterns," explained teacher Caroline Thoys.

At an end of semester party, celebrating the great work done by all, teachers and volunteers organized team games with balloons, musical chairs, a football match, and a running water relay. Each child received a special surprise personalized present from volunteers Jeanne and Ian Prior. The gifts were gratefully received by students like Su, a 12 year old boy, who hugged his new Spiderman doll with a giant grin on his face.

At the semester's close in March, staff successfully ran a week-long English camp. Students wrote letters to pen pals at Grosse Ile Elementary School in Michigan, US. Volunteers Rick and Ann Gartland conducted a paper airplane and bead making workshop. Volunteers Tina Hall and Graham Haslam led team building water safety and lifeguarding games on Kamala Beach, based around materials donated by Surf Life Saving Australia and Telstra. Students had a scavenger hunt around school, ran an obstacle course, and tried different sports including miniature golf. The camp culminated in an awards ceremony where all students received medals, donated by Shaun Boulter, for their good work.



## Behind the Scenes with Tom Doherty, Managing Director

Our Foundation's whimsical logo is a childlike cut out of a coconut tree. It was designed by Fleur Birch-Atkinson, daughter of our founder, the late Tom McNamara. When Fleur was a young girl, father and daughter planted a coconut tree by their home on Kalim bay, near the Kalim school, site of our successfully completed three-year pilot program. As they placed the seed Mr. McNamara explained, "All you need in life is a coconut tree...." He proceeded to list the many uses of the coconut tree in providing, food, tools, shelter, even transportation. It made a lasting impression on young Fleur. Years later, the Asian Tsunami would destroy the family home and the Kalim school. But the tree survived, the school was rebuilt, and Fleur returned to Phuket to help her father and start this Foundation. The coconut tree logo is thus meant to be a metaphor for education, one of life's basic needs.

As we enter our fourth year, we've learned that providing these basic needs goes beyond simply English language education in the classroom. What we teach the children is best retained when they have opportunities to practice their conversational English in other settings. To that end, we established the Coconut Club in 2008. A low-cost supplement to our English education, it is almost entirely run by volunteers. You can read more about the Coconut Club in this, other newsletters and on our website. We do not limit our work to teaching English. We shape minds, bring the community together, build fruitful relationships between tourists and residents, act as positive role models and help promote a stronger Thailand for generations to come. It is our sincere goal to inspire others to do the same, we hope to inspire you. Help us give the gift of education to the children of Phuket and provide them with the basic tools they will need for life and a brighter future.



## Contributors: November 2008-March 2009

### In-Kind Donations:

Hamptons Infants and Nursery  
Nivea  
Shaun Boulter  
Rick and Ann Gartland  
Ian and Jeanne Prior  
Louise De Jongh  
Surf Life Saving Australia and Telstra  
Phuket Post  
Marsha Lutz & Friends  
Jerome Nutile  
Aaron Hooper  
Luc Baudet/Château Mas Neuf  
Baan Rim Pa Restaurant Group

### Volunteers:

Stephanie Maguire	Sarah Wyatt
Sally Hughes	Charmaine Morris
Ian and Jeanne Prior	Pat Michel
Helen Dawkins	Alicia Boothby
Rick and Ann Gartland	Marsha Lutz
Kristian King	
Eli Hidalgo	
Jannis de Vrij	
Tina Hall and Graham Haslam	

### Donors:

Peter Burke	Ying Jansson
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Chris Gordon	Ben Davis
Rotary Club	Phuket Scuba Club
Audio Visual Creations Phuket	Jonathan Higgins
Simon Ruckert	Princess Mahacha
Steve Taylor	Lars Ydmark
Craig Rogers	Rudy Schneidewind
Mike Austin	Victor and Julia Fung
Peter Hamilton	Ashling Geh
Chuck Feeney	Thomas Joseph McNamara
Daniel Meury	Rob Collins
Jimmy Nixon	Andy Street
Scott Ashton	Laguna Resort Phuket
Michael Weinstein	Sukhothai Chumbala
Peter Kraus	Matthew Burlage
Don Kennedy	
Assorted cash donations from the funeral of our founder, Thomas Joseph McNamara	

**Thanks to all!**

## Measuring Success: Testing Results 2008-9

In the second semester of the 2008-9 school year, running from November 2008 to March 2009, Kalim and Kamala students progressed well. On written tests, Kalim students improved by an average of 9 points and Kamala students improved by an average of 7 points; the national average for improvement in English classes is 2.5 points a semester. At Kalim this was nearly four times the national average and at Kamala it was three times the national average. On the oral test, Kalim students improved by 12 points.

Grades 1, 5, and 6 at Kamala and Grade 1 at Kalim, who were all starting out in the Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation English Program, showed immense improvement in their English skills. Grade 1 at Kalim had a leap of 35 points on their oral tests, a 128% increase in score over the class' performance on tests given at the beginning of the semester. Class 5-2 at Kamala improved by 15 points, 6 times over the national average.

There were some changes to the testing process during this semester. At Kamala School, we chose not to evaluate the students using the oral tests. Senior teacher Laura Gray explained, "While we are very happy with students' progress this semester, we have concluded that the oral test, which has been used for three years, does not accurately correspond to the actual content of the students' English language education in our program. We have learned that our oral tests need to better demonstrate the knowledge and progress of our students." PHGBTU is currently working on developing a new oral test for both Kamala and Kalim, which will have more of an emphasis on phonics, conversation skills, and vocabulary needed for industries specific to Phuket. Island. There is a detailed report on the testing posted on our website.



## Student Profile: Barbie



Congratulations to Amarin Sitanyarat (nickname: Barbie), a Prathom 6 student at Kamala School. Barbie, aged 13, has shown terrific progress and leadership skills this year. In his first year in the English Program, Barbie improved his written test score by 46 points, almost ten times over the national average. Barbie is a residential student expected to perform poorly in academics, but has thrived in the classroom and Coconut Club programs. Barbie consistently makes an effort to use English in the Coconut Club program and encourages other students to do the same.

Barbie had once been described as a troubled and naughty child, but during the photography program which he was selected to participate in, Barbie expressed his desire to, "become good at photography and make my friends and family proud of me." He has certainly made PHGBTU staff proud of his co-operative attitude, leadership skills, and the care that he shows to younger students.

## Sneakers for Star Students

The second semester of school, Kamala and Kalim students participated in an exciting competition orchestrated by the PHGBTU staff. Students, who earned three 'Star English' tickets, won a pair of brand new Adidas, Nikes, or Asics. The sneakers were donated by Shaun Boulter, organizer of the Triballistic Triathlon events in Phuket. Laura Gray, head teacher, explains, "Students were awarded tickets for working hard, good behavior, and independent thinking. Some of them have never owned sneakers before, so it was a real motivation booster for them to strive for new shoes." Teachers gave out thirty pairs of sneakers, as well as t-shirts, bags, medals, and trophies. We are hoping to continue our incentive program, if you have any clothing, sports equipment, toys, etc, that can be used, please contact us.

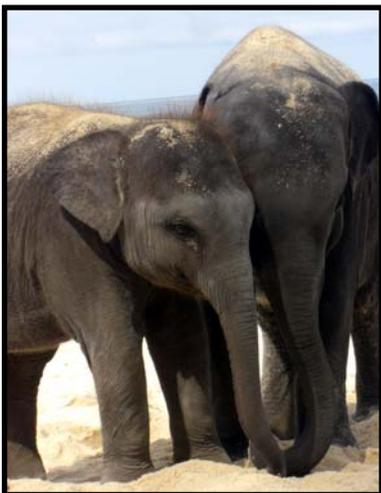


### Budding Shutterbugs Create Unique Images of Phuket



In February, photographer Martha Lutz from Idaho in the US taught a week long workshop on digital photography to ten Coconut Club children aged 12-14. Using five cameras donated by Marsha's friends in the US, students explored composition and lighting in portraiture, street photography, and landscapes. On Saturday, the budding artists were taken to the Elephant Sanctuary in Laguna and the local market in Kamala to try their new skills.

Their photos will be printed and sold at a gallery show later in the year. We are currently seeking local Thai and foreign photographers who are interested in teaching workshops to the students.



All photos were taken by our very talented student photographers.



"We are excited about the expansion to include Grades 4, 5, and 6 at Kamala in 2008. Now operating full primary programs at both Kalim and Kamala school, we've revised our curriculum to encourage independent thinking and help build student's confidence with the English language. Students are engaged in many different listening and speaking activities, decision making, and role playing games. We are very proud of what our students have achieved this year."

Senior Teacher, Laura Gray

## A Typical Hour Lesson

PHBGTU Teachers like to pack a lot into each lesson. We have included a sample of one of our interactive 50 minute lessons to give you an idea of what we are up to.

**Good morning.** Teacher Laura greets students who are early to class, engaging them in conversation and helping them read books which are stacked outside of the classroom. This is a time to check in with the students on a personal level and encourage them to use their English outside of the classroom.

**Line up!** Students line up to enter the classroom. Laura does a quick knowledge check, each student is asked to identify a flashcard or answer a question from the last lesson. Laura has a chance to see what knowledge and vocabulary students have retained from the last lesson.



**Tell me.** Laura asks students, "How are you?" They are rewarded for creative answers that express their individual feelings like "I am hungry. How are you?" and "I am sad." The only incorrect answer is the one rote memorized by all Thai children "I am fine, thank you. And you?"



**Color and Number Time!** Students review colors. Half of the class is given a word and half are given colored balls. Students race to find their 'partner,' matching a yellow ball with the word card that says yellow. Students must talk to each other in full sentences, asking "What color ball is it?" "It is yellow." Laura quickly reviews numbers 1-10 with flashcards. Students are asked what letter each number starts with checking their knowledge of phonics, Ex: 3, t.

**Mind your P's and Q's.** Student monitors hand out a worksheet, colored pencils, and erasers for a guided listening activity. Monitors say, "This is for you," making sure their classmates politely respond "Thank you" when handed items. Using monitors gives the students a sense of responsibility and gets them practicing two way conversation with their classmates.

**Stand up!** Laura gets the students moving and their blood flowing with a silly song and dance routine. After a little exertion, students are able to concentrate better on written work.

**Follow along.** Laura instructs students how to complete their worksheet. "Color balloon one, purple." The names of students who listen carefully, are quiet, and don't share answers are placed under the happy face on the board.



**Trick or Treat.** Students line up to exit and are quizzed on the way out. If they answer correctly, they are given a treat of stickers, nuts, or dried fruit. Students tidy up the classroom, before reluctantly heading off to their next lesson.

## Volunteer Profile: Tina Hall and Graham Haslam



Tina and Graham are two enthusiastic volunteers who have been working with students at Kamala School since November 2008. They plan on staying in Phuket and continuing their work with the Foundation. Here is what they have to say about their experience:

“What can you achieve in one hour if you're on vacation in Phuket? Lie on the beach and add a couple more wrinkles, watch half a movie, have a coffee and read a dozen pages of the latest best seller... Or you could volunteer with the Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation where you can join an English class and help keen five year olds with their a,b,c s or sign up for the Coconut Club where children who don't have a chance to go home at night are encouraged through craft work, sports and play to build their confidence, communication and English language skills. When you volunteer you get to experience the radiant grin of a child when you tell them 'job well done' and see a child's eyes light up as they understand a new English word. This is how two English tourists have made their stay truly purposeful and memorable - giving something back to the children of Phuket one hour at a time.”

## Tutor Corps

A new semester brings changes to the PHGBTU volunteer program. Starting in May 2009, we will implement new approaches for the volunteers working in-class, while still keeping the same focus for volunteers involved in Coconut Club. Volunteers placed in the classroom will be doing either individualized tutoring or conducting a reading program. The one-on-one tutoring will target select special needs students, by removing them from the classroom to work on achieving learning targets in an environment personalized to their needs.



Sally Hughes, a volunteer at Kamala School, began a reading program last year with the Grade 4 students, which teacher Jonathan Higgins found an immense help to students literacy and self confidence. Adding more individualized tutoring such as the reading program allows volunteers and students to build a stronger bond and lasting friendship. Volunteer Jannis de Vrij, a councilor from Holland, who spent three weeks at Kalim said, “I found it most rewarding working with Grade 6 pupil, Art. Art had often acted up as a means to voice his frustration, due to his learning disabilities. But after only a few weeks of one on one's his behavior in class really improved.” The progress was evident in test scores; Art's written test score improved by 9 points this semester.

## TEFL Phuket: Teach, Meditate, Volunteer

In November 2008, TEFL Phuket approached the staff of PHGBTU with a unique partnership: new volunteers every month in exchange for training hours at our schools. TEFL Phuket located in Kamala issues Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) certification, for students who complete the classroom hours and spend twenty hours practice teaching or observing. So far, ten TEFL candidates, all wanting to experience working in a Thai government school, have created materials, worked in Coconut Club, and assisted in the classroom. In addition, candidates have the choice of coming to the course early or staying after its completion to work with PHGBTU. TEFL Phuket is unique in that it is Thailand's only TEFL school that also offers meditation retreats through The Karuna Center.



## Fundraising Dinner at Hung Fats

This past January, a group of approximately thirty supporters of the Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation attended a charity gala dinner organized by Board members Peter Hamilton and Michael Weinstein at Hung Fat's restaurant in Kalim. This dinner paired the French chef Jerome Nutile, awarded two stars by Michelin, with Joe's Downstairs executive chef Aaron Hooper, recent winner of the "King of the Kitchen, Thailand" award granted by HAPA (Hospitality Asia Platinum Awards). Wine was sponsored by Luc Baudet of Château Mas Neuf. Hung Fat's is the newest of the four restaurants of the Baan Rim Pa restaurant group, formerly owned by our founder, the late Tom McNamara. The event raised over 250,000 baht for the children served by the Foundation. Thanks to all who helped organize and conduct this dinner, your support is much appreciated.



## In-Kind Donors: Hampton Infants and Nursery



Hampton Infant School and Nursery located in Middlesex, UK recently sent boxes of school and art supplies to the PHGBTU Foundation. As part of a farewell tribute to Sean Daly, a teacher leaving Hampton and a good friend of senior teacher Laura Gray, students and their families donated 3,400 items to PHGBTU! Headmaster of Hampton, Damian Burke, sent home letters to parents soliciting their support for this venture, "I am writing to you to ask for your support for his friend's school. I know that it would mean so much to him that the school where he has worked for the past four years has helped a school which has nothing." The generous donation was accompanied by the addition of PHGBTU to Hampton's International Dimension and listing in their sustainability award portfolio.

## One Click Away

It is now easier than ever to donate to the Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation.

There are three ways to contribute:

- 1) Go to <http://www.phukethasbeengoodtous.org/donate.html> and click on the Donate Today button, to contribute using your credit card via Pay Pal.
  - 2) Send a cheque (Thai baht preferred) to our office at Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation, 80/14 Moo 3, T. Kamala, A. Kathu, Phuket, 83150, Thailand
  - 3) Make a bank transfer to our Thai baht account on Phuket Island:
    - Bank Name: Siam Commercial Bank- Patong Branch
    - SWIFT Code: SICOTHBK
    - Savings A/C Name: Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation
    - Savings A/C #: 601-2-71944-7
- \*\*If you make a donation via bank transfer to this account, please contact us and let us know the amount and the date of your transfer.

We thank you for your generosity.

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## Become a fan!



The Phuket Has Been Good to us Foundation now has a "fan page" on the popular Facebook website. The page enables the Foundation to post photo albums of the children and their activities in the Kalim and Kamala schools and with The Coconut Club. We plan to make other uses of the site's potential functions in the future as well. For now the fan page will serve to increase the Foundation's exposure both locally and worldwide. We can also easily send out messages to all its fans via Facebook about upcoming events or other initiatives. Join us at <http://www.facebook.com>



your donation, we will send you a bio, photos, updates on your student's academic achievements, and an invitation to visit the school. For more information on sponsorship please visit our website.

## Sponsor A Child

Help us continue our work by sponsoring a residential student at the Kamala school, many of whom are orphans from the Tsunami. The cost of our normal English classroom training plus extra-curricular programs (the Coconut Club) for these disadvantaged children is approximately 10,000 baht a child, or about 300 dollars a year. In return for

## Be an Ambassador

Help spread the mission of Phuket Has Been Good to Us in your community. Ambassadors are friends from around the world who are interested in volunteering their time to help the children of Phuket. International ambassadors promote PHBGU by organizing small to mid-size fundraisers like charity runs, donation drives, bake sales, dinner parties, etc. Ambassadors based in Phuket help with fundraising in-country. Ambassadors are listed on our website and in our newsletter.

Please contact Ashley Nelson at [Ashley@phukethasbeengoodtous.org](mailto:Ashley@phukethasbeengoodtous.org), if you are interested in becoming an Ambassador for the Phuket has Been Good to Us Foundation.

## Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation

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