



silc newsletter

the monthly publication of the Samutprakarn International Ladies Club

a note from our president

Year of the Sheep, Goat or Ram: A year to relax and make peace with ourselves and with others.

In this year of turmoil and talk of war, I am glad to have entered into the year of the sheep. This is the year for harmony, reconciliation and peacemaking. A time for healing of rifts. Wars, international conflicts and mutual animosities usually end in the year of the sheep. How fitting. This year this is what I want to believe in.

We have all been very busy little SILC worms since I last wrote. We kicked off with a very successful BBQ. It was great to see so many people letting their hair down. This was quickly followed by some chocolate indulgence at the Novotel Bangna. Then a delicious lunch and a floating tour and finally we were transported back to

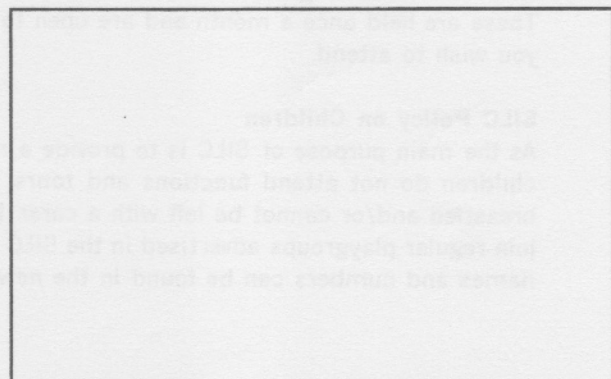
reality with a talk by Susan Race about the Mae Hong Son Hilltribes. Her work is inspirational and she is passionate about the people she helps. Thank you to the committee members who keep our social calendar full. Take a look inside for this month's activities as well as all the regular monthly activities.

Last month the committee decided that it would support a new pre-school that will be opened in the Samutprakarn area. This is a community with desperate need of assistance. At the moment the children just hang around all day while their parents are off collecting rubbish. Dr Amporn wants to start up this

school to teach the children some life skills, as this may be the only education that these children will ever have. This will be an ongoing project that SILC would like to be involved in. If you are interested in more information please contact any committee member.

See you all out and about.

Maria Thompson



committee members

PRESIDENT

Maria Thompson

Email:

Tel: 02 316 4141
mariamal@loxinfo.co.th

VICE-PRESIDENT

Laurie Burns

Email:

Tel: 02 316 4074
lburns@netvigator.com

NEWCOMERS/MEMBERSHIP

Kelly Phelps

Email:

Tel: 02 751 9891
kelly@loxinfo.co.th

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moores@loxinfo.co.th

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Linda Fullerton

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Tel: 02 336 0965
lindaful@loxinfo.co.th

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. **Sara Cowley**

Email:

Tel: 02 336 1171
sarang@loxinfo.co.th

2. **Antonia Kaewchansilp**

Tel: 01 922 9828

3. **VACANT**

Organisation of the Club

SILC creates an opportunity for women of all nationalities living in the Samutprakarn area to meet socially and participate in a variety of activities without travelling into Bangkok. We invite members to join monthly meetings, tours and interest groups. Members pay an annual fee of 500 Baht to cover costs and receive a newsletter and club directory.

Newsletter

The newsletter is published ten times a year with articles and information on club activities. Contributions are welcome and can be sent to the newsletter editor.

Committee Meetings

These are held once a month and are open to all members. Please inform the hostess of the meeting if you wish to attend.

SILC Policy on Children

As the main purpose of SILC is to provide a network and support for its members, it is our policy that children do not attend functions and tours, except in the case of very young babies who are being breastfed and/or cannot be left with a carer. Members with babies, toddlers and children are invited to join regular playgroups advertised in the SILC newsletter and special family activities. Details of contact names and numbers can be found in the newsletter.

what's in this issue...

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Newsletter Information

Advertising Rates

Quarter page	300 Baht
Half page	600 Baht
Full page	1200 Baht
Flyer insert	600 Baht

Personal advertisements for SILC members are free of charge.

Advertising requests must be received by the editor prior to the monthly deadline.

April Deadline

Monday 17th March

Please forward all contributions to the Newsletter Editor before this date.

urgent request for help from all SILC members

We are about to update the SILC directory and we are missing email addresses and other contact information.

Could all members currently listed in the SILC directory, please check that all details have been included, especially email addresses.

Could all members not listed in the current directory (May 2002), please forward any new email addresses, or contact details, which may have been missing from your membership application.

It's important that SILC have these details to make it easier to contact people about new events or changes to advertised events.

Please email or phone Kelly Phelps by 10th March, to ensure that your details are included in the new directory.

Email: kelly@loxinfo.co.th
Home: 02 751 9891
Mob: 01 172 8537

Open
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Saturday
9.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m.
For reservation
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ext. 1878.
E-mail:
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lunch and dinner*

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OR

CHOIX DE FRUITS AU SABAYON RHUM

VARIETY OF FRUITS WITH RUM SABAYON

regular activities



Golf

Come and experience the wonderful frustration of golf. We play every Thursday morning on alternating courses in Samutprakarn.

Newcomers are welcome.

For more information please contact:

Annette Gerlach
Tel: 02 336 0895
Mob: 01 846 0702
Email: gerlach@loxinfo.co.th

Playgroups

Mums with babies or young children are invited to join these neighbourhood playgroups.

Tuesday mornings

Ladawan

Contact: Melanie Newton
Tel: 02 385 8016

Thursday mornings

Lakeside 1&2 and Garden Towers

Contact: Lyndy Broadfoot
Tel: 02 316 4023

Friday mornings

Thana City

Contact: Sarah Spensley
Tel: 02 336 1083

Tennis

Calling all Wimbledon Wannabes (or not).

Where: Lakeside Villa 1
Condominium Club House

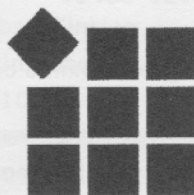
When: Every Friday

Time: 7.30 - 9.30am

Contact: Lynda Cooke
02 316 6276

All abilities are welcome as our resident coach is on hand to keep games flowing and fun. There is a small charge for his fee. Whether you are an experienced player or beginner you will be guaranteed a chance to play with like-minded folks.

continued next page...

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regular activities continued ...

Mah-jong

Do you know how Mah-jong REALLY started?

Well, a long, long time ago, Chinese men normally had three or four wives at home.

So, what were they going to do with all these women in the house?

How to stop them going out to sleep with other men, avoid them fighting at home, gossiping etc.

Apparently this is how MAH-JONG began.

What are YOU going to do when your husband's away on a business trip, the children are

at school, or they simply don't need you anymore.....

Come and join us! No experience required.

We are currently a regular group of 12, can be more and play simple Mah-Jong every Wednesday between 9.00am - 12.00pm.

If you are interested in this addictive Chinese game (and enjoy eating biscuits/cakes and drinking coffee of course), please contact either Audrey or Julie for more details and information.

Audrey Watt
Tel: 02 316 4091
Email: wattbkk@loxinfo.co.th

Julie Heather
Tel: 02 385 8133
Email: rodheath@ksc.th.com

Movie Club

Major Cineplex Bangna now has luxury Laz-y-Boy recliners in their Emperor Cinema (as well as a bar), in addition to the standard cinema seats.

We are looking for members who would like to go and see a movie either during the day, or at night time if you work.

We will contact you if you are on our list and set a suitable time/date for everyone.

Contact:
Audrey
Tel: 02 316 4091
Email: wattbkk@loxinfo.co.th

Sue
Tel: 02 751 9876
Email:
daviesps@lox1.loxinfo.co.th

SILC Functions Reply Policy

It is essential that either the host or organiser of any SILC event know how many people are expected to attend.

Please try to get into the habit of letting us know if you plan to attend a SILC function. It makes the host's job easier and if we have a visiting speaker, we can if necessary cancel rather than have six or seven people listening when we have told

the speaker there will be 20 plus attending.

Just call the designated person. If they are out leave a note in their letter box, fax or email them. Or simply sign the sign up sheets available at our coffee, lunch or evening meetings.

It only takes a minute.

All email addresses and fax numbers can be found inside the front of your newsletter or in the telephone directory.

Representatives for replies:

Lakeside Villa 1:
Gill Sheffield 02 316 8157

Lakeside Villa 2:
Maria Thompson 02 316 4141

Ladawan:
Jeanette Dobbs 02 385 7882

Garden Towers:
Alison Tyrrell 02 751 9942

Others:
Annette Gerlach 02 336 0895

march events

General Committee Meeting

Monday 3rd March, 8.30am
Linda Fullerton's Home
92/47 Prestige Housing
Thana City

All SILC members are welcome to attend. Please RSVP to any committee member.

Coffee Morning

What To Do In A Medical Emergency

On: Wednesday 5th March
Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm
At: Sue Belsey's Home
48 Mooban Sinklao
Srinakarin Road
Praves 10260
(Opposite the Seri Centre)

Many of you will know Monique Mommers from the Thai Museum Volunteers, however, Monique is also a registered nurse.

She has run several First Aid courses related to life here in Thailand and has agreed to come and talk to us about essential first aid for medical emergencies.

So if you want to find out what to do when a snake bites, a toddler chokes or when the car

crashes come along to this month's coffee morning.

Monique is thinking of running a new First Aid course and there may be an opportunity to find out more and sign up.

To make the coffee morning a greater success please bring along a plate of cakes/savouries for all to enjoy.

Many thanks
Ros

RSVP your coffee morning rep,
Ros Jones
Tel: 02 751 9859

Lunch at Bua

This month we have decided to have the SILC lunch a bit closer to home. We have opted for 'Bua' a more traditional restaurant. Bua is newly renovated, clean and air conditioned and there is a car park at the side.

'Bua' is situated at the side of the Seri Center, opposite @ease and is next to 'Ducki Suki' the sign for 'Bua' is actually written in Thai so isn't obvious to those passing it.

We have chosen a set menu which will be about Bh200-250 per head.

We will meet at 12.00pm on Monday 17th March.

For those who are interested in joining us, want directions or need a lift, please contact myself, Lesley Moore.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Lesley Moore
Tel: 02 751 9909
Mob: 01 875 5336

Evening Event

A Guide To Traditional Thai Textiles
Wednesday 12th March
7.30pm
Julia Galliker d'Aliberti's Home
92/32 Prestige Housing 1
Thana City

Gorgeous silk textiles abound in Thailand! But how is Thai silk produced? What techniques are used to create these beautiful weavings? What are the different styles of traditional textiles?

One of our SILC members, Julia Galliker, has been studying Thai textiles with the National Museum Volunteers during the past year. Julia will give us

...events continued next page

events continued...

some tips to help us buy, understand and appreciate silk textiles better.

RSVP: Laurie Burns
By: 11th March
Tel: 02 316 4074
Email: lburns@netvigator.com

** Bring a small plate of dessert to share while sampling gourmet coffees and teas provided by SILC. Wine will be available by the glass.

Tour

Wat Mahabuk
Tuesday 25th March 2003

Meeting Point: Reception,
Bangkok Patana School, Soi La
Salle, Sukhumvit Soi 105

Time: 8.30am

Return by: 12.00pm,
or 1.00pm if we go for lunch.

Cost: To cover transport
approx 150B

This temple, in Sukhumvit Soi 77, On Nut, is famed for housing the spirit of Nang Naak - a woman who died in childbirth while her husband was away at war with Burma.

The legend lives on and many people visit her shrine to either ward away bad spirits or to bring themselves luck. The

story has been retold numerous times, most recently in a film produced in 1999. Further information can be found on:

<http://www.thailandlife.com/nangnak01.html>

<http://www.bangkokpost.net/kat/archives/161000a.html>

We will tour the temple grounds then make a short trip on a long tailed boat along the adjacent klong, which is an area of interest and home to a sector of Bangkok's Muslim community.

After that, depending on the wishes of the majority of the group, we may visit Sweet Chilli, a Thai restaurant nearby in Soi 77, for lunch.

Cost for transport only, to be calculated once numbers are confirmed.

Contact:

Linda Fullerton
Email: lindaful@loxinfo.co.th
Tel: 02 336 0965

Contact number on morning of tour only: 01 581 9913

member's advertisements

URGENT - Maid Required

I'm looking for a second Maid. Her jobs will be cleaning, washing, ironing, taking care of the kids if necessary. She should be a live-in Maid. It would be great if she can speak English.

Please contact
Annette Gerlach
92/8 Prestige Housing
Thana City
Tel: 02 336 0895
Mob: 01 846 0702

For Sale

We are leaving Bangkok in the beginning of May and we will sell our:

- **Honda CRV**

January 2001
30,000 km blue
One Owner
780,000 Baht

- **Keyboard**

This Roland E-36 is a 61-note, polyphonic synthesizer of professional quality.
4,000 Baht

Contact: Ruth Sallaz
Tel: 02 726 2195
Mob: 01 988 0210

Maid Available

Our honest and hardworking, English speaking Maid, Luay, needs to find a new job as a live out maid, from 20th May. She has worked with us for nearly three years and is a great cook of western and Thai food. She manages everything in our household.

She is great with our dog and she would also like to work with children. We would love to take her with us... who doesn't when they leave?

Contact:
Ruth Sallaz
Tel: 02 726 2195
Mob: 01 988 0210



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welfare report

SILC Donates 200,000 Baht for New School!

At the February SILC committee meeting it was decided to put 200,000 baht of SILC funds to good use.

Working with FORDEC, SILC is helping to set up a new pre-school in Samutprakarn.

This school will be in a community that unlike other slum communities has no electricity and no running water. Sometimes residents are forced to buy water. Needless to say washing is low on the priority list and may be an event that occurs once every ten days.

At the moment the children just hang around all day while their parents are off collecting rubbish. They have no basic life skills and little to look forward to in the future.

The sooner the pre-school is started the more chance these children will have to develop cultural and moral values as an essential part of their overall development. Plus the children will get a nutritious meal each day and practical learning experiences.

FORDEC needs an amount of 400,000 baht to get the

preschool up and running. We are pleased to pledge half of this amount to them. The Public Welfare Department has been aware of this community for a while and has agreed to supply a teacher.

This is a wonderful opportunity for SILC to do something for a community in Samut Prakarn that really needs help.

SILC Members will be able to visit and see where their money is being spent.

SILC officers will visit the site on Tuesday 25th February. If you are interested in seeing the site for the new pre-school, Dr Amporn is very keen to show us this new project. Please contact Lyn Bradley on 02 316 2977 for details.

FORDEC is a Foundation dedicated to helping those in need. It runs an extensive lunch program on the Thai/Cambodian border, giving many children their only nutritious meal of the day.

It also runs several pre-schools, some in the provinces and one right here in Samutprakarn, in Soi Wat Dan Samrong.

It also has programs to help the aged and gives loans to help families become self sufficient.

If you are interested in finding out more about FORDEC, their website is:

<http://www.fordec.org/>

Julie Heather

SILC Tour Policy

Please make sure that when you sign up for any SILC tour, if you are unable to attend, you give notice of your cancellation at least 3 days before the event.

Due to late notice of cancellations (within 3 days of the tour) and no-show members on the actual morning of tours, we have had to introduce a policy of 'no refund', asking for payment in advance in order to compensate for costs involved.

This is regrettable, however, we are sure that you will appreciate that it is unfair to ask those members on the tour to pay an additional amount to subsidise other members who sign up, then do not attend.

We take every step to try to maintain a waiting list, however, as you will understand, it is not always possible to fill a place at very short notice. Please make it your responsibility to check your name is on the list if you are unsure you've signed up.

You can either pay for a tour when you sign up at a SILC coffee morning or lunch, or give your name and payment to your local SILC representative.

For cancellations, please inform either your tour contact, or a SILC committee member, to make sure we receive the message.

Effective from February 2002.

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8.15 am Monday and

4 pm Tuesday and Thursday.

Lakeside 2: at Clubhouse pool

8 am Thursday

For more info, call Jenny:

(02) 740 3067

(01) 349 5727

Membership

Welcome to the following new members:

Duangporn Bodart
39/11 Kochathanee
Chalermprakiat 28
NongBon Prawet 10260
Tel: 02 337 4740
Mob: 09 813 7365
Email: duangbodart@yahoo.com
Nationality: Thai
Partner: Eric
Children:
Tess 8th November 1992
Kevin 28th August 1995

Morag Crawford
S8B Garden Towers
2/4-5 Moo14
Bangna Trad Rd Km 6.5
Samutprakarn 10540
Tel: 02 751 9864
Mob: 07 012 2928
Email:
crawfordmorag@hotmail.com
Nationality: Scottish
Partner: Andrew
Children:
Charlotte 16th September 1994
James 20th November 1998

Lily Tian Young
ASA Garden, E14/Floor
46-48 Sukhumvit Soi 24
Bangkok 10110
Tel: 02 260 1104
Mob: 01 315 0663
Email: tianlily0503@yahoo.com
Nationality: Chinese/American
Partner: Derrick

Judi Blackhurst
757 Lakeside Villa 1
Bangna Trad Rd Km 6
Samutprakarn 10540
Mob: 09 813 6597
Email:
judiblackhurst@hotmail.com
Nationality: British
Partner: Darren
Children:
Adam 25th February 1994
Katy 3rd February 1997

Jenny Dibbayawan
627 Lakeside Villa 1
Bangna Trad Rd Km 6
Samutprakarn 10540
Tel: 02 740 3067
Mob: 01 349 5727
Email:
dibbayawan@clickta.com
Nationality: Australian
Partner: Gerald
Children:
Matthew 15th June 1987
Thomas 29th January 1991
Anna 23rd March 1998

Changes:

Lynn Nelson
207/38 soi 24
Sukhumvit Soi 77
Bangkok 10110
Tel: 02 331 2513



what's on in Bangkok?

Bangkok Community Theatre (BCT) Presents "Annie"!

Mark your calendars for the best family entertainment of the year: Bangkok Community Theatre's presentation of the hit family musical "ANNIE".

Bangkok Community Theatre (BCT) will stage "ANNIE" at the Bangkok Playhouse on Petchburi Road on 28th & 29th March at 7.30pm and 29th and 30th March at 2.30pm.

Tickets at B550 for adults and B350 for students and children for all four performances will be available at CD Warehouse in the Emporium on Sukumvit Road from mid-March.

"Annie" has been described as the perfect family musical.

It first opened on Broadway in November 1977 and won 7 Tony Awards including the award for Best Musical.

A film of the musical was made in 1982 which was followed by a Disney remake in 1999. With wonderfully uplifting songs and dances, this is a true feel good show.

In the words of Annie's creator:

"Those who come to see the show go away with a sense of optimism, a sense of hope and joy and love. I think that is why it is a success."

That kind of optimism from a little orphan girl as she hugs her dog and tells us "The sun will come out tomorrow" is just the kind of uplifting entertainment Bangkok families need this Spring.

This local production boasts 48 adult performers, 10 kids and a dog! Don't miss it! (for more information please visit the BCT website at www.bct-th.org)

Proceeds to benefit Thai Children's Charities!

Siam Society Lecture

"On the Eve of One Hundred Years of Belgian Diplomatic Presence in Bangkok : 1904 - 2004"

The lecture will be given by a panel of three speakers who will present an expose on specific topics.

Date : Thursday 6th March 2003

Time : 7.00pm

At: The Siam Society
131 Sukhumvit Soi 21

Siam Society Study Trip

A Forest Hike in Khao Yai National Park

Friday 7th March to Sunday 9th March 2003

Leader:

Dr. Warren Y. Brockelman

- Hear and see gibbons in special research areas
- Watch birds
- Observe strange plants in the forest
- Observe the problem of poaching mai hom wood
- See how forests in Khao Yai are regenerating

For more information please contact:

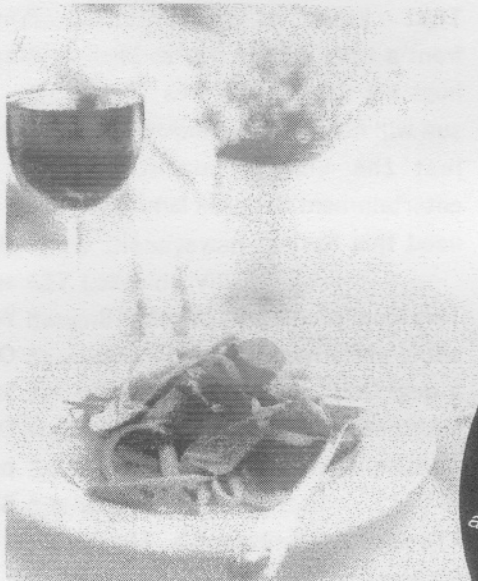
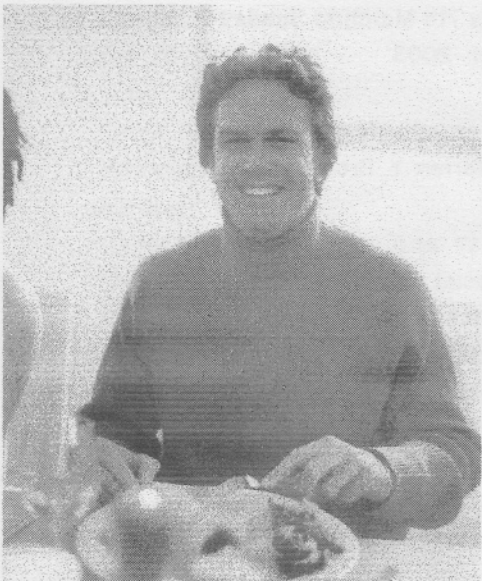
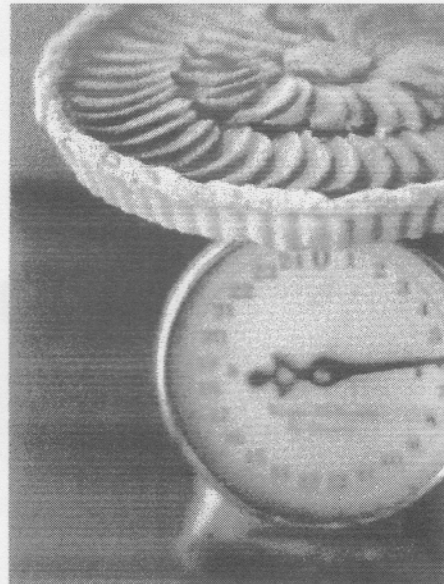
The Siam Society
131 Sukhumvit Soi 21 (Asoke)
Bangkok 10110

Tel: 02 661 6470-7

Fax: 02 258 3491

Email: info@siam-society.org

Web: www.siam-society.org



Open
 20th March 10.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.
 Venue Garden Towers,
 unit S-23A, South Tower
 1,000 Baht for outside guest
 (include Coffee morning and lunch)
 Coffee morning starts at 10.00 a.m. Class starts at 10.30 a.m.

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 e-mail: garden@teohong.com



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reviews february coffee morning

A group of ladies enjoyed a leisurely morning sipping coffee and tea at the Novotel Hotel Bangna while watching a demonstration on how the Hotel's delicious hand-made chocolates are made.

The professional pastry chef and the well trained chocolatier demonstrated the art of making a selection of delectable chocolate treats.

They started with "Grand Marnier" dark chocolate truffles and continued with roasted almond milk chocolate clusters.

Of course, we all had to sample the morning's offerings and did not complain a bit.

They continued by teaching us how to make the lovely chocolate decorations we so frequently see on a delicious chocolate gateaux.

It definitely looked easier than it was. The melted chocolate had to be at exactly the right temperature for the art to work properly. They definitely knew what they were doing.

Another enjoyable and informative morning. A big thank you to Novotel for sponsoring this lovely event.

Lenore Coetzee

Chocolate Recipes kindly provided by Novotel Hotel Bangna

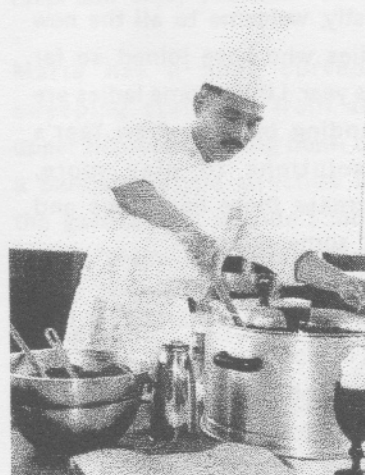
Chocolate Grand Marnier

- 400g Dark Chocolate Couverture
- 250g Whipped Cream
- 10g Glucose
- 5oz Grand Marnier

Milk Rocher

- 300g Whole Almonds
- 200g Milk Chocolate Couverture
- 2 tablespoons Vegetable Oil

Photos Marjana Dickhoff





reviews continued

SILC GOLF UPDATE

Firstly, welcome to all the new ladies who have joined so far this year. I think some ladies are standing by their New Year's Resolutions to play more, decrease those handicaps and get some exercise!

The ongoing competition has got off to a good start, with four ladies obtaining points so far, hopefully we will see some more on the list next month:

Marjana 18
Annette 14
Yoshiko 8
Tina 8

Annette has organised a weekend away for the whole family. Here are the details, please contact her as soon as possible if you and your family would like to join in the fun:

Forest Hills Golf and Country Club, Khao Yai **14th - 16th March**

Superior rooms 1,800 Baht
Deluxe rooms 2,200 Baht
Green fee:
800 Baht plus caddy fee
Tee Off Times:
Saturday 11.00am
Sunday 9.00am

Also, some of the ladies, have requested that we meet once a week at Bangplee Driving

Range, to practice together then perhaps play the Par 3 Course (next to the driving range) afterwards.

Yes, golf practise can be really tedious, so why not make it more fun by turning it into a bit of a 'social event' as well. We will use any excuse to organise a get together.

Please email Annette if you are interested, specifying the day and time you prefer (she will go with the majority's choice).

Last, but not least, is the matter of the Golf Membership Fee. Just a reminder that 500 Baht each is due on the 1st April.

A small price to pay for all those prizes WE WILL win at Forest Hills in March. Let's not allow the husbands to take too many prizes away this time!

Here's to champion style chipping!

Sarah Spensley

Sarah and her family are leaving Thailand for Germany at the beginning of April after living here for seven years. I'd like to take this opportunity of wishing Sarah, Axel, Alana and Finn "Bon Voyage" and good luck in their new posting. *Ed*

TUTTI'S LUNCH REVIEW — Wednesday 22nd January

Twelve ladies and a baby attended this Italian restaurant at the end of soi 33.

The atmosphere was not great due to a lack of other diners, however decor is very pleasant, and the staff very helpful.

There is a set-lunch at 325 Baht which most of us opted for and was good value.

There is also an a' la carte menu with bigger portions and plenty to chose from.

Most ladies enjoyed a Tutti's Long Island Iced Tea, they were very potent, and one of these is more than sufficient for lunch time.

We were all invited to attend their 'Grand Opening' the following evening. Three expat widows (sorry, wives) accepted the invitation. Generally a good time was had by all.

Kelly Phelps & Jo Thomas

SILC BBQ — Saturday 25th January

Just a small BBQ for a few people – NOT! I would have been a nervous wreck, but as far as our organisers were concerned, it was 'jai yen' all the way. An unbelievable 74 SILC members and their spouses/relatives/friends descended on the home and garden of Maria Thompson, our President, for the event.

As for the weather, it was a far cry from the last catered event at Concordia School to commemorate SILC's 10th Anniversary.

For those of you who were there, you will recall the terrific storm that drove us all inside. Unlike that, (or any BBQ in the UK come to think of it), there was no sign of rain on this exceptionally cool, balmy evening.

Even the mossies seemed to be absent to a large degree (or maybe there were so many people, some of us escaped).

How wonderful it was not to have to fight your way into town on a Saturday night, and it was also a BYO, what more could you ask for!

We arrived and went straight to Maria's rear garden, where we found a very professional

setup indeed. This is where the organisation of our ladies shone, as the eagle-eyed Laurie Burns was seated, making sure we all paid up before we got through.

There were fairy lights around the trees, music was playing and large tables and chairs were set up for all guests, not to mention the tables awaiting the food.

For those who had forgotten wine (or for those who needed to restock later that night) there was some available to purchase. More to the point, for those who forgot their corkscrew, Malcolm, Maria's husband, was happy to do the honours!

Everyone got down to some serious socialising and when the food arrived, all 74 hungry people immediately descended on the spread. It wasn't nearly as bad a scrum as the Jim Thompson sales at Queen Sirikit Centre, but it was a measure of the great food, catered by Whatsits (thanks Bea!), that it was eagerly despatched to the tables and it was so plentiful that I couldn't imagine anyone going hungry.

There were Aussie steaks, great bangers, chicken kebabs and numerous side dishes and salads. As for desserts, there was that chocolate-thingy-to-die-for and then my memory gets hazy (must've been all that

drinking before eating!), but it seemed that it was one of those nights that was so well organised, you couldn't help but relax and enjoy yourself.

Maria has a huge curved, sweeping staircase from an upper bedroom leading down to a bandstand-type structure in the garden that wouldn't look out of place in a Hollywood movie. It was well used as the dance music (courtesy of Sara and Roy Gori) came as fast as the drinks and some serious boogey-ing took place. I recall some unknown Aussie tunes that went down well, that a lot of us didn't know, but then I did learn some different Aussie expressions that night!

And that's the way it should be, a good night with good company and good food.

I believe the unofficial 'drinks up' came around 1am, which ended an event that was expertly planned by both Laurie's organisation of the event and Maria (and Malcolm's) hard work in setting up all the tables and chairs, (and lugging them all back the next day), decorating the garden and generally being great hosts. Thank you for such a fantastic evening.

Audrey Watt



reviews continued

January Coffee Morning

Alexandra Harrison, European Massage Therapist Swedish, Sports, Pregnancy Massage

Mob: 06 906 9767

January's coffee morning was held at Lesley Browning's Home at Lakeside 1.

A Masseuse was booked to give us a talk on her various treatments and massage therapies.

It was an interesting and informative talk on the benefits of massage but I think most of us had already decided we were definitely in need of treatment.

Subsequently, I along with several others, booked Alexandra for her 1 hour aromatherapy massage.

Alex comes to your home complete with oils, massage table, soothing music and flowers.

She sets the room up before you are allowed in. On entering the room, your senses are immediately soothed by the aroma of oils and the quietly playing music. Frangipani are carefully placed and you know you are in for a treat.

Alex is extremely professional and asks you several questions before she starts about any injuries or problems you may have, so that you begin feeling at ease and secure that no damage will be inflicted upon you.

The experience was wonderful, and at the finish you are so relaxed you are not sure if you were asleep or not. You definitely need a period of quiet relaxation afterwards, as your body needs time to settle afterwards.

It is wonderful to have found someone who can perform this massage and I wish Alex every success in her endeavour. I for one have a regular booking now. Call Alex on 06 906 9767 for any further information.

Gill Sheffield

February Evening Event

SILC's February evening event was well attended by a large group of ladies, eager to learn about the Mae Hong Son Hilltribes of Northern Thailand, and the remarkable efforts of THEP (Thailand Hilltribe Education Project) to provide education and adequate facilities for learning.

We were privileged to have Susan Race, founder of THEP, to enlighten us about her many adventurous travels to remote inroad hilltribe villages in the Mae Hong Son District.

Her talk was accompanied by a colourful slide presentation. The slides captured the beauty of the land and the people, as well as the hardships and challenges they endure.

The aim of THEP is to provide the opportunity for hilltribe children to receive education while preserving their culture.

Through THEP's implementation of many worthwhile projects, since its formation in 1991, they have provided a ray of hope for the future survival of these impoverished settlements.

Successful projects that have been funded by THEP include construction of schools, canteens, boarding houses, water treatment systems, and donations of portable libraries, along with an immeasurable amount of support and guidance to the headmasters and teachers.

Through the untiring efforts and determination of Susan Race and THEP, many children of the Mae Hong Son villages are now

receiving education in a safe and loving environment, which would otherwise not have been possible.

In addition to Susan's interesting talk about the Hilltribe people, their culture and customs, she brought along some beautifully hand-woven traditional garments for us to see. Many of us also walked away with some lovely stationery, gift wrap, and cards with all proceeds going towards THEP.

It was an enjoyable evening, rounded off with lots of yummy delectables, coffee and tea.

Many thanks to Susan for her interesting and informative talk. Also, thanks to Felicity Dent for hosting the evening event.

Heather Poulter

Lunch at Coffee Beans on Monday 10th February

What a treat was in store for those who attended the last luncheon at 'Coffee Beans'.

Mouth watering cheesecakes on display as you walked in through the door convinced us we mustn't eat too much in the first round.

Fourteen ladies attended the lunch in the delightful cafe which was bright and cheerful.

The staff weren't too good with large numbers of customers but they did their best.

We ordered all manner of dishes including one 'Fish'n'Chips' complete with 'Crinkle Cut Chips' and Tartare Sauce.

Most of us indulged in the desserts which were delicious, someone even bought more to take home!

We had a lovely lunch time but all agreed that we were glad we didn't live near by, boy would Abdul have a struggle!

Highly recommend and highly addictive!

Lesley Moore

Koh Chang island get-away

Koh Chang is Thailand's second largest island after Phuket. Only four hours away from Bangkok by car it is more accessible for a short break.

Last year the Thai government approved the development of Koh Chang as a luxury tourist destination. This is evident in the building currently underway along the island's major road. However, Koh Chang isn't overrun by tourists yet so still has a relaxed laid back feel.

Koh Chang isn't the destination for an action packed holiday. It is lovely for a relaxing holiday on the beach. There are, however, a few activities worth doing to explore the island fully.

"Ban Kwan Chang" Elephant Camp, situated near Klong Son in the northern tip of the island, offers several elephant jungle rides ranging from a short one hour trek to a half day which includes the opportunity to feed and wash the elephants.

If you are interested in jungle trekking there are several walks to chose from. The walks to the waterfalls on the island are some of the easiest with well laid out paths. At "Nam Tok Khlong Phu", on the western side of the island, you can swim in a pool beneath the falls to cool off after your walk. There

is also a restaurant near the falls.

Situated on the south-western tip of the island is a small fishing village. Several restaurants are located right in the village and serve delicious Thai seafood specialities. Some even have Western cuisine for those less adventurous.

There are several SCUBA Diving operators on Koh Chang, including Koh Chang Divers, Sea Horse Dive Centre and Eco-Divers. However, we didn't try diving so are unable to make any recommendations.

We chose to stay at the new Panviman Koh Chang Resort on Klong Prao Beach. This new resort was in a soft opening phase when we visited. It is built in a traditional Thai style with large rooms and an open air style bathroom.

Situated right on Klong Prao Beach, we enjoyed the opportunity of swimming in the sea for the first time since moving to Thailand. From our drive around the island it also seems to be the best beach on the island. The water was clear, clean and very warm.

We were a little disappointed with the ambiance and service at the Panviman. The swimming pool is right next to the outdoor

bar area, where the staff were playing loud upbeat pop music. Not the most conducive to a relaxing atmosphere. On check-in we were disappointed to find that although promised a sea view room, none of the rooms have a full sea view.

After three nights in the resort it did grow on us and the staff are trying their best, but we would probably try another resort before going back to the Panviman.

Getting There From Bangkok By Car:

From Bangkok take the Bangkok Chon Buri motorway, route 7, until you hit the 344. Turn left and head towards Klaeng. At Klaeng you join up with route 3 and head towards Chantaburi and Trat. About 60 kilometres after Chantaburi turn right on the 3156 towards Laem Ngop. Follow the signs towards the ferries. We took the Koh Chang Ferry which takes 45 minutes one way and leaves on the hour between 8am and 6pm every day from Ao Thammachat. For a car and two passengers we paid 210 Baht for a return fare.

For more information on Koh Chang, visit the island's website at www.koh-chang.com

Ingrid Leese

trip to Mae Hong Son in may

Join Susan Race, co-founder of THEP (Thail Hilltribes Education Projects) on a trip of a life time.

You will fly to Chiang Mai, transfer to a van, then transfer to a fourwheel drive pickup to visit the most remote villages in the Southern Part of Mae Hong Son province.

Currently there are no sealed roads in the area, but some are now in the planning stages.

These roads will surely change the village life in the next few years.

You will accompany Susan to check on her on-going projects in the various villages.

Susan plans to go in mid-May, either the second or third weekend. Dates to be confirmed in late March.

Tentative schedule:

- Friday 6.00am depart Don Muang Airport for Chiang Mai
- Travel to reach the village by nightfall
- Saturday and Sunday - visit projects
- Sunday night late - return to Bangkok

Approximate costs: 7000-8000 Baht per person, including

4550 Baht return airfare to/from Chiang Mai. Food and water is included in this price and is very local. Delicious!

Susan will only take 6 people. This will be on a first-come, first-deposit-paid basis. Contact Laurie to indicate your interest.

This will be kept also on first-come basis. Once Susan has confirmed the exact date, Laurie will contact each person interested for payment.

A deposit of 5000 Baht is due to Laurie Burns before 1st May.

Laurie will start a waiting list in case of cancellations. Any cancellation is a forfeit of deposit and will be considered as a donation to THEP.

This is why a waiting list will be kept.

In case of heavy rains in the region, the trip might be cancelled a few days before. In this case, you can elect to go on Susan's next trip, or receive a full refund.

Call Laurie Burns to reserve your place and arrange payment of deposits, etc.

A full itinerary will be sent to those planning to go, along with

a list of what you will need during the trip.

Laurie Burns

Tel: 02 316 4074

Email: lburns@netvigator.com

Soi Dog Rescue helping the community

Margot Homburg Park moved to Thailand in 2000. Dogs and the wellbeing of animals in general have been an important part of Margot's life. Margot is a SILC Member and lives at Green Valley.

After moving to Thailand, Margot quickly recognized the urgent need in this country to continue her work for dogs and started to focus immediately on capture-neuter-release work and educating the Thai public about dogs.

Her first project was working on the strays in her own neighborhood. Now she is very active in the slums in her area as well as at local temples where Thai people traditionally dump unwanted animals. In addition to neutering, she treats many dogs for malnutrition and diseases like mange and VD, which are rampant.

Margot and her husband currently house two rescued Spanish Greyhounds, two rescued whippets (one from Hong Kong and one from Thailand), one rescued Italian Greyhound from Japan, three rescued soi dogs from Thailand, one of which has paralyzed back legs, and 2 rescued cats.

Soi Dog Rescue's Aims

Soi Dog Rescue (SDR), is a fledgling organization born in Bangkok but with a global outlook, was founded with a simple aim: help improve the

lives of street dogs and, in so doing, create a happier, healthier environment for everyone.

With a philosophy equally as simple - that "every little bit helps" - and through programs of education, sterilization and adoption, the team at SDR believes it is making a difference in neighbourhood areas, and that many lives are benefiting - both human and canine.

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little."

Edmond Burke

Capture-Neuter-Release

A SILC neighborhood where SDR is currently focussing efforts is Green Valley (KM 15) and Wat Bang Chalong on Bangna-Trad Road (KM 18) in Samutprakarn. This temple is an important part of community life. Hundreds of children go to school at the Wat and in the evenings the temple grounds come alive with music and people of all ages.

Sadly though, temples are also a traditional dumping ground for unwanted cats and dogs, and Wat Bang Chalong is no exception.

Left un-sterilised, these animals continue to multiply, and as their health deteriorates, the health risks to the community increase.

This project involves befriending local animals with food and friendliness and subsequently catching them as humanely as possible to neuter primarily the females, vaccinate against rabies and treat diseases like VD, mange, etc. and return them to where they came from.

Adoption

Pups who are obviously at great risk, we rescue from the streets in Thailand and nurse back to health.

Those who recover quickly and have companions where they came from are returned. Others, who are too sick, often emaciated and/or injured puppies and do not learn to forage for food on the streets or temple grounds in their young lives, we want to find loving homes for.

Typically, the puppies live with one of us, where they are partially trained and socialized. They are even offered for adoption in America!

Through marketing in the New York and Boston areas, results have already been achieved and two rescued pups have found their way to great new lives in Massachusetts with families who truly understand the long-term responsibilities of pet ownership.

Our hope is to expand this adoption program over time to include other countries and to step up our efforts to find loving homes here in Thailand too.

For more information about SDR, please contact:

Sherry Conisbee
SDR Puppy Matron
01 611 2865

Margot Park
SDR Capture-Neuter-Release
Program Coordinator
09 895 9965

How YOU can help

- Click on the *donations* button on our website, or phone one of us if you feel able to help financially. Medical costs, nursing and feeding care for dogs and pups soon mount up!
- Donate your old, but still

airworthy, dog crates and cages.

- Other Donations in kind and time are also greatly appreciated.
- Consider adopting a pup from SDR! They are vaccinated and in good health
- Interested in fostering a puppy prior to re-homing it – let us know.
- Suggestions as to how we can do our work better are always welcome.

To understand how enthusiastic we are about our project, please take a moment to check out our website:

www.soidogrescue.org

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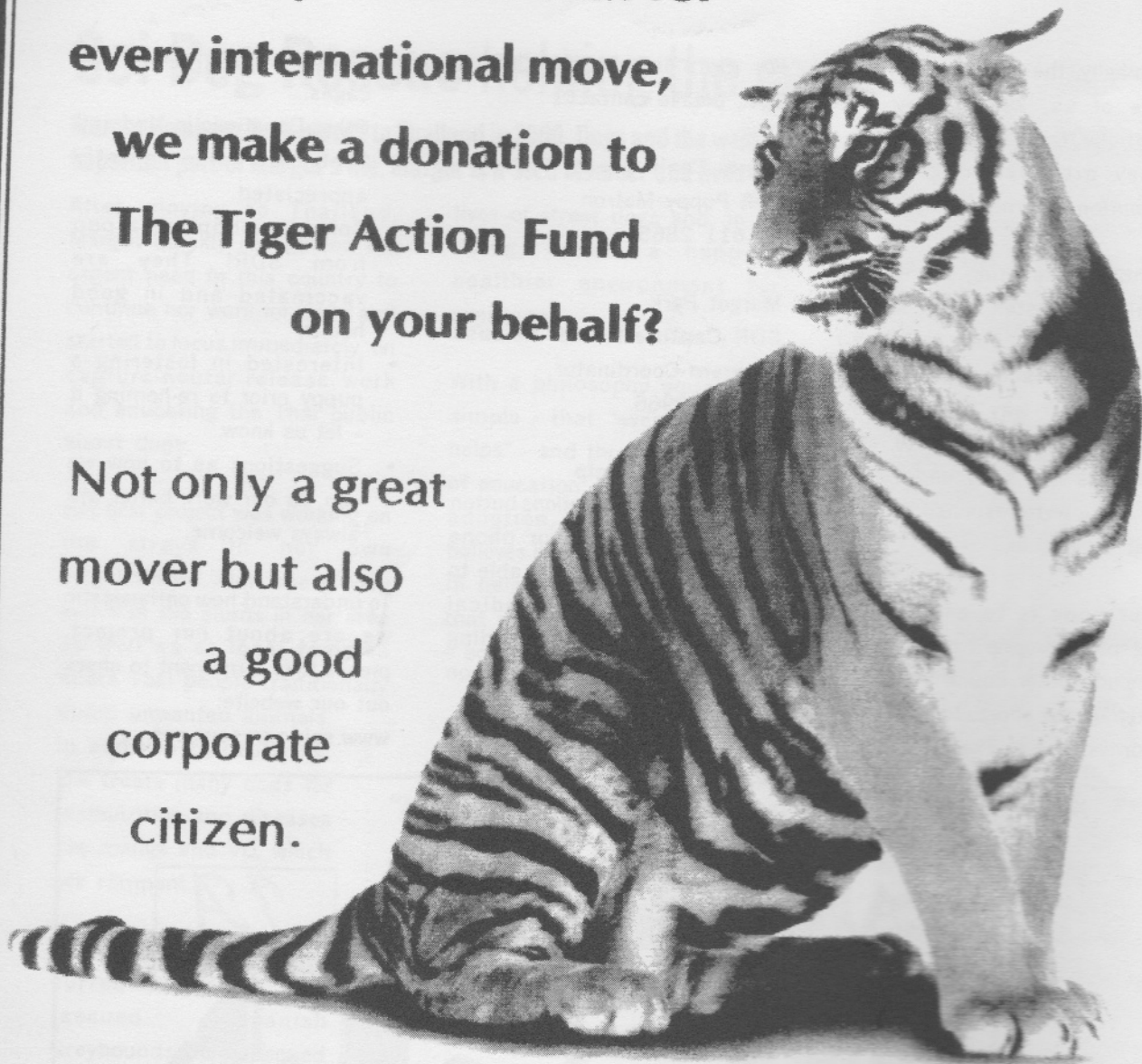
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