



# The Thai That Binds

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## Message from Maile

By Maile McCoskrie Lindley '67, [isbmaile@sbcglobal.net](mailto:isbmaile@sbcglobal.net)

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**Purpose:** The ISB Network Foundation, Inc. is a not-for-profit, 501-C-3 organization, dedicated to bringing Alumni of International School Bangkok together to support, maintain, and create contacts between people who shared similar experiences in Thailand. We serve as the Official Alumni Association for International School Bangkok.

**Dues & Benefits:** Membership fees are \$40.00 for 2 years and are tax deductible. Our goal is to provide you with three newsletters per year and access to contact information of all known ISB Alumni. You do not have to be a member to be listed on the website/directory or to attend a reunion.

Your paid membership helps support the activities performed by the all-volunteer Board of Directors responsible for maintaining the database, publishing the newsletters, maintaining presence on the web, and planning the biennial reunions.

Join online or by mail. Click on **Join ISBN** on our website <http://www.isbnetwork.com>. Or write us at the above address. When you join, you will receive a password to gain access to the Members-only areas of the website.

Your ISB Network Board of Directors (BOD) is made up of volunteers who have particular skills and time that they are willing to share for the betterment of our organization. A commonality among us is a deep love for the ISB Network and the desire to see our alumni association grow through our volunteer efforts. Nothing pleases us more than to welcome a long lost classmate back "home."

Currently we have ten active Board members, many of whom have already served more than one two year term. What we don't see is a group of volunteers lined up to become part of the Board. We would all like to see this change by bringing in new Board members that will allow some of us to step aside. In short, we are looking for volunteers with the time and desire to make a difference.

We also have non-Board jobs open that are adjunct and complementary to that which is already being done. Please look over the job descriptions on our website at [www.isbnetwork.com/bod.php](http://www.isbnetwork.com/bod.php) and contact the person serving in that position should you be interested. Most Board positions require access to a computer and Internet connection. Each one of us could use an assistant and would welcome the chance to correspond or talk to you about the skills you have to offer. We want you to help shape the future of the ISB Network!

As we move into summer we will begin to make more plans for our 2010 Reunion in VA Beach. Extra hands would lighten the load for everyone so please consider volunteering.

I'm pleased to announce that Maureen Lockhart Salahshoor '75 has offered to fill the position of Vice President on our Board. Maureen has served on the BOD since 2002 as our Webmaster and continues to bring enhancements to our website. Many of the duties of the VP she already performs. She will also continue to serve as our Webmaster. She is very interested in finding someone to assist her who is familiar with html and has my SQL/PHP skills. Please contact Maureen if your talents can help maintain our site.

The following positions are open with all but one being a BOD position:

- [Director of Public Relations](#) - Open
- [Director of Fundraising](#) - Open
- [Director of Reunion Planning](#) - Open
- **Non-Board Position**
  - [Shack Manager](#) - Open

## TEN YEARS AFTER

### **My Visit Back to ISB**

**By Marleen Gimpel, '99**

Hi, I'm Marleen Gimpel, ISB class of '99. Currently I work as a translator for Dutch television for SDI Media Netherlands and I recently took a trip 'back' to Thailand.

I left Bangkok in 1997 because my dad was stationed back in Holland. We had lived in Thailand for almost eight years, and I really felt like I was leaving my home. After graduating from the University of Amsterdam in 2004 and receiving my Master Degree in English Language & Literature, my parents surprised me with an all expenses paid trip to Thailand. I dreamed about this trip for years, but school, then work and buying a house made it impossible. It took a few years before my boyfriend and I made solid plans to visit Bangkok. My boyfriend had heard countless stories about my childhood, ISB, my old house, Patpong and had grown curious to see what that special part of my life looked like. The plans were made and on November 12 we finally started our fifteen day trip.

We arrived at Suvarnabhumi Airport on November 13. The smells, heat and people really made me feel like I was 'back.' We stayed in The Montien on Surawongse Road (right across from Patpong) and made several trips from there, including to Kanchanaburi. There were two places I had dreamt of visiting, ISB and my old house.

The second day of our stay in Bangkok we took a taxi meter to Soonvichai, New Petchaburi Road to visit my old house. The last time I was there, the Bangkok General Hospital took up one side of the road, but it has now expanded to both sides and over the road. We passed the hospital and drove into my little Thai Village. It was amazing to see how little had changed. The same swimming pool with the same pieces of tile missing, the same old benches. When we approached my old house I noticed that again nothing had changed. Sure, the walls had a new coat of paint but the driveway, gate and porch were exactly the same--almost as if I could just walk in and find my old room exactly how I had left it. Unfortunately there was nobody home, so we weren't able to take a look inside. Although I would've liked to have seen the inside just one more time, it didn't make the experience any less special.

When we were just about to leave the compound, we passed a Thai maid. We said hello and kept on walking, but then my boyfriend noticed that she was staring at me. I turned around and she pointed and yelled out something in Thai. (I still understand a bit, but...) It turns out that she recognized me! Thanks to another lady who acted as a translator, I heard she immediately recognized me and that, although I had grown a lot taller and older, my face hadn't changed a bit. She remembered how I and my friends from the compound used to rollerblade around, swim in the pool and light fireworks on the back field. Really special.

The next place I absolutely had to visit was ISB. I had already had contact with Anthony Arnold via e-mail beforehand in which the date and time were set up. On Friday, November 14 at 10 am we were to be picked up by a mini van and taken to the school. I have to admit I was incredibly nervous and had no idea what to expect. We arrived in front of the school and were directed to the Administrations Office to meet up with Anthony Arnold. Tony assumed I had never been to this school, but I went to both the old ISB on Sukhumvit as well as this one at Chaengwattana. He was going to give us a personal tour, but seeing as I had spent over seven years here, he sent us on our way to explore the school by ourselves.

Just like at my old house, it struck me that little to nothing had changed. The only thing I noticed was that the cafeteria had been altered a bit and that the chairs and walls were a different color. We were allowed to go anywhere we wanted and we even got to go inside the auditorium and see the stage, on which I sang with the choir and danced with other students once upon a time. It was amazing to walk through the halls and see the classrooms again. Although it had been over eleven years, it felt like I had just left the day before.

Right after we arrived, the lunch period had started for the high school kids. They all have uniforms now! I remember we were the only school in Thailand that didn't have uniforms, but now it's a fact at ISB too. The uniform consists of all kinds of clothing items, like skirts, shorts, long pants, shirts, sweaters and it looked like all combinations were allowed.

After seeing all corners of the school ground, I wanted to visit the area next to the school too where we used to hang out after school every single day. The grassy knoll that used to be right in front of the gates has been filled up with dozens of houses. Actually, the whole surrounding area has been filled up with houses. No more view of the lake when you walk or drive to the school, no more grassy knolls and no more 'the circle.' That's an area where we used to hang out as well.

We spent about two hours in and around the school. I remember so well how my boyfriend kept saying: "How big is this place!?" I had told him stories about our tennis courts, two outdoor gyms, two indoor gyms, track and swimming pool but it soon became clear that he was not expecting anything like this. It was an amazing experience to show him where I had science, for example, and where we sat in the cafeteria, and how I walked from Math to PE. We went back to Anthony Arnold and decided it was time to go. I loved visiting the school and will never forget it, but it was sad that none of my old friends or teachers were there to share memories with.

Following our week in Bangkok, we flew to Koh Samui. We were to spend eight days here, but everything changed when members of the People's Alliance for Democracy decided to take over the main airport in Bangkok, leaving us stranded in Thailand. We were meant to fly home on November 27, but it soon became clear we weren't going anywhere soon. After a few days of waiting on the island, we decided to travel back to Bangkok by ferry and bus. Although our friends and family were seriously concerned about our safety, it must be said that we didn't feel like we were in danger for a second. True, we weren't able to leave the country, but the Thai people remained their hospitable and friendly selves and we were able to enjoy the ten extra days we were 'forced' to spend there. On December 7 we were finally able to fly home.

All in all this was an experience and trip down memory lane I will never forget. The demonstrations and chaos in the final part of our trip were not enough to take away my love for this country and to keep me from visiting again in the future. It was amazing but also kind of surreal to revisit all the areas I once saw as 'home.'

For those of you who haven't had a chance to revisit Thailand or ISB, I strongly recommend you do. Once you hit those streets, it will feel as though you've never left.



## Meet the Board of Directors

**Debbie Steinmetz Caulfield '70**  
**Director of Membership**



Senior Year 1970



San Diego 2008

When I arrived in Bangkok the summer of 1968 I was one of the boring ISBers. My father's employer, the Marine Corps, which barely even recognized family members, had detailed him AND his family to a first time ever overseas tour. My first airplane ride landed me at a high school teeming with young people far more interesting than me. There were the State Department kids who had lived for multiple years in multiple countries I could barely locate on a globe. There were the missionary kids whose first language was Thai who boarded in Bangkok during the school year and lived upcountry during the holidays. Then there were the international kids whose parents worked for their countries' governments or businesses. I was wide eyed with excitement and curiosity to be surrounded by such a worldly, multi-cultured group of people.

There were a few other boring ISBers like myself who were forever changed by this experience. I lived at Rishi Court across from the school but most of my memories of life in Bangkok come from the places away from school I experienced because my parents granted me so much freedom. I mostly hung out with a good group of girls and we were always exploring. We did the typical trips on rivers and trains, but the best trips were the ones on samlores and buses to the nooks and crannies of Bangkok. I don't have to tell my readers what kinds of adventures awaited us in those places, but they were so unique and so rich that the memories of them crowd out those of the rest of my life.

After graduation from ISB I looked for every opportunity to keep myself in the company of people like my fellow ISBers. I delayed college and ended up in Europe working as an au pair in Spain when I ran out of money. I married John, whom I met in Bangkok the summer of '69 when he came to visit his family, and I directed him to take every overseas tour his Air Force career offered. I took my two children on camping trips in many lands where they took diversity for granted. (They both ended up majoring in Geography!) When I returned to the states I added English as a Second Language certification to my teaching credentials and surrounded myself with immigrant students and their families. Now that I am retired in the foothills of Virginia and don't travel as extensively as I would like, I find myself reaching out to old and new ISB friends whose biographies and experiences continue to delight and enlighten me.

When I am not engaging with ISBers through my job as Membership Director and through my Facebook page, I am enjoying my new life as grandmother. My two grandchildren delight me in ways I never knew possible. I

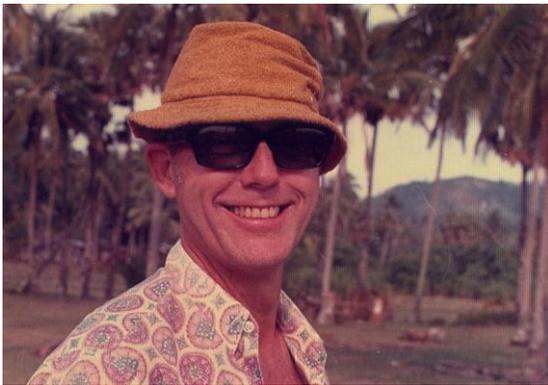
make it my responsibility to broaden their horizons through regular field trips to the Washington, D.C museums. Church is a big part of my life as is running a volunteer ESL program in my community. My workout hobby is tending my five acres of garden and orchard and my leisure hobby is watching foreign movies.

My very closest friends remain my old ISB pals. My experience of living in Bangkok with its land and its people was invaluable, but never would I have guessed those many years ago that it would be the relationships with all the ISBers I knew and would come to know that would have the most long term impact on my life.

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## Travels with Roger Welty

By Jean Garmany '76



Some of my favorite memories of attending ISB from January 1973 to June 1975 were Roger Welty's ISB trips around Thailand and Malaysia. Roger taught Thai culture at ISB and his trips were always so much fun.

I recently went through my photo album from pulled out some pictures of two trips that I took back then.

*Editor's Note—Mr. Welty died in December, 2002.*

Roger Welty on our Thailand/Malaysia trip



Our transportation for the trip, along with some local elephant traffic.

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That's me in the center with my back to Ken Young '77.  
Grace Buita '76 is on my right.

Amazing Scenery!



This is how we washed on the trip. Linda Fuelling is on the far right and I'm standing next to her.



This building in the rock was part of the movie set for The Man with the Golden Gun, the James Bond film with Roger Moore that was shot in Thailand

These pictures are from a hike we took through the jungle in Thailand.



We're getting ready to set up camp. That's me in the Center and Becky Fallon '76 in on the right.



Beginning the hike.



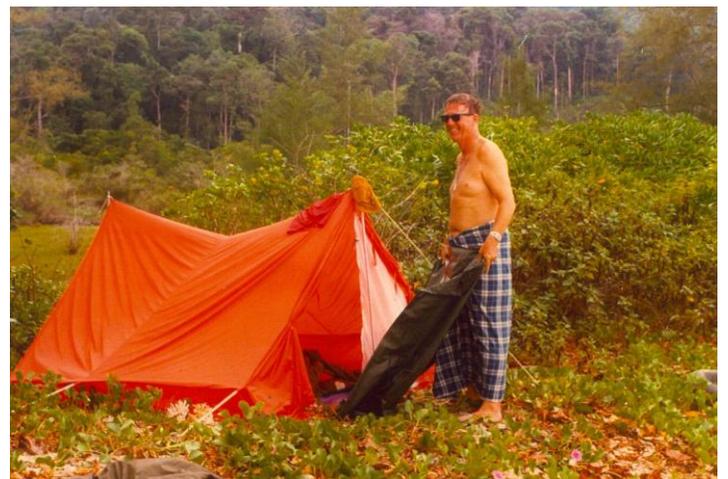
Me with Tom Sandlin '77. He and Ken Young made my Welty trips extra special.



Mr. Welty after completing the hike.



Setting up camp. Becky Fallon is on the right and her sister Nancy '78 is on the left

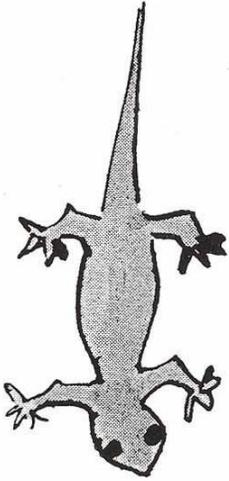


Mr. Welty and his tent.

## Chinchooks—Sticky Toed Acrobats

By Mr. Phil Reeves

ISB Science Teacher from 1960-1984



Practically from the moment that I arrived in Thailand, my first source of natural interest was the lowly chinchook. In fact, most of my very first night in this intriguing country was spent in studying these little creatures. Their antics reminded me of the children's game called king-of-the-mountain. One youngster gains a summit, then tries to keep his opponents from pushing him off and thereby taking his place. The chinchook plays a modified form of this interesting pastime. One individual – often a fat female – will find a lucrative spot for catching tasty insects; then she will go to great lengths to retain her position.

Watching a chinchook perform, one is constantly reminded of a similarity between this timid little creature and his more aggressive and somewhat hostile relative, the gecko or tokay, as he is more commonly called. Both are lizards and therefore are representatives of the class Reptilia; they are members of the order *Saurea* and are even members of the same family – the *Gekkonidae*. However, the tokay belongs to the genus *Gekko*, while the chinchook belongs to the genus *Hamidactylus*.

Most members of this family possess specialized structures on their toes which make it possible for them to crawl about or run on ceilings or walls as easily as if they were dashing about on the floor. Upon closer examination, these structures consist of a series of overlapping pads which possess certain adhesive qualities that are quite effective on any smooth surface. It is interesting to note that such adhesive qualities were primarily intended for tree members of this group and have been secondarily adopted by those members frequenting rocks or human dwellings. The chinchook has tiny claws as well. These are found at the tip of each toe, and are of specific value to the animal whenever it has to crawl over a surface that is too rough or uneven for the adhesive pads to be serviceable.

The tails of members of this family are of particular note, since they offer both balance and protection in the area of self-defense. Their tails are fragile and therefore are easily lost or broken. After falling off, either by accident or specific intent, they wiggle and twist, often serving to attract the attention of a predator away from the animal itself. A technique somewhat similar to this was used by the little tailor bird mentioned in Kipling's *Riki Tiki Tavi*, who lured an attacking cobra away from its nest of young ones by pretending to have a broken wing and half-flying, half-walking near the ground. Except in rare cases, the lost tail of a chinchook will always be regenerated completely. Since the regenerated part contains no bones, just cartilage, the new tail rarely has the same external characteristics as the old one. Thus, with care and close examination one can usually distinguish the reproduced tail from the original one.

Complete regeneration of a lizard's tail, at such a high level of development as is found in the Reptilia, is quite unique if one considers the fact that there is usually a much greater chance for complete regeneration in the lower forms of life – the invertebrates. To cite several examples: the flatworm can regenerate an entirely new head and tail; sea cucumbers, after spewing forth their digestive organs as a means of defense, can produce a new set in a relatively short period of time; and the starfish can gain an entirely new "arm" complete with water-vascular system and all of the other parts of systems that it lost with its severed "arm."

It is of further interest to note that of all the families that make up the order *Saurea*, only two of these families contain species that possess a voice mechanism, the *Eublepharidae* and the *Gekkonidae*. Those individuals which are silent may, however, make a slight hissing sound, but this occurrence is rare. Sometimes a little squeak may be produced when air is forcibly extruded from the animal's lungs.

As the result of an observation questionnaire which I passed out to approximately 250 junior high students, a great deal of first-hand data has been gathered about chinchooks.

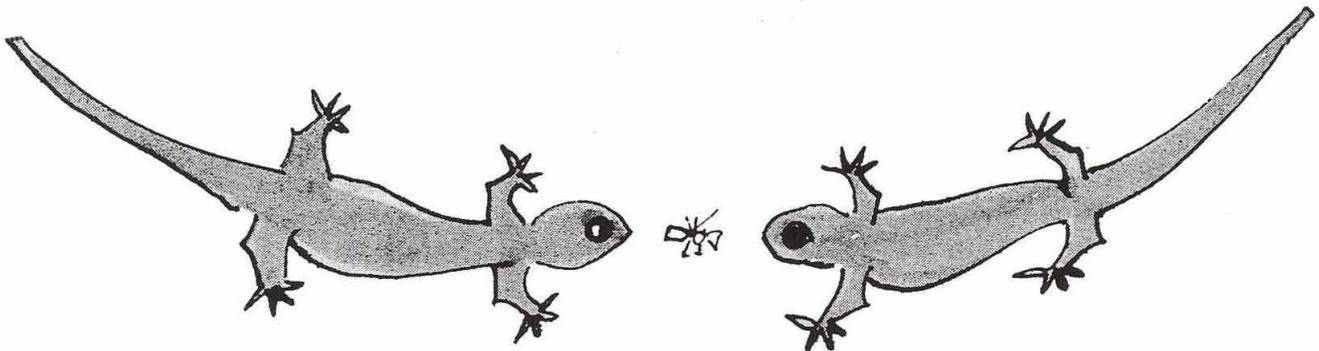
Though many students had their first experience with chinchooks in a Bangkok hotel room, others of this well-traveled group had already met the chinchook, or his first cousin, in far corners of the world — in Florida and California, in Malaya, the Philippines, Italy, Japan, and Mexico, in Hawaii where he brings good luck, and in Ceylon where he is supposed to predict the future. The initial meeting, wherever it is, is apt to be a traumatic experience. When asked, "What's the first thing that comes to mind when you think of chinchooks?" one student answered, "My mother screaming!"

After the shock of first acquaintance, most students become interested observers of chinchooks. Many have special favorites and become quite attached to them. Some have collected chinchook eggs and watched them hatch. However fascinating and lovable when they're alive, though, finding them dead is another matter, especially if smashed in a door jam. Not finding them can be even worse! As one observer wrote, "A chinchook dead for several days behind a couch does not smell like Chanel No. 5."

Although he is generally shy and rather timid, the ubiquitous chinchook can be found on and in almost any kind of structure, both in the city and out in the countryside. His most typical background or camouflage shades are sandy-cream, olive green, reddish-brown, flesh color, bluish gray, pale transparent, and a mixture of mottled shades. In addition to these, there are a large number of variations.

The chinchook could find no better place to set up housekeeping than in a country such as Thailand, which offers primitive as well as modern living accommodations. His diet is almost as extensive and varied as another well-known household inhabitant, the cockroach. True, flying insects, especially mosquitoes, are his favorite fare, and he will devour a moth twice his size, but as a connoisseur, he also savors such foods as cookies, cake, and bread crumbs, sugar, oranges, grass, leaves, paint, cereal, and rice. Our observers also report seeing him dine on cocoa, coffee, coca cola, and molasses, as well as on other chinchooks and their discarded tails.

Despite the fact that these little critters eat almost anything, they seem to be constantly busy 24 hours a day hunting food, as well as looking for a mate or a pal with whom to play tag. All through the day and night one is aware of their familiar calls, described by some as "the continuous popping of corks", by others as "a cross between the call of a cricket and the ticking of a clock" or as a simple "tsk, tsk, tsk". Calls of the male and the female seem to be almost the same; the only difference in sex seems to be observed during mating and in times of danger when the female produces a more high-pitched sound than the male.



Two questions brought out a high percentage of non-scientific answers from the students: “Can you distinguish between the call of a male and female?” and “Is the mating call different or the same?” “Are you *kidding!*” seemed to be the stock answer. One conscientious student, though he couldn’t answer the questions, shows he is developing a proper scientific attitude: “I can’t comment because I have insufficient data”.

Their traditional enemies appear to be the tokay, certain species of snakes, and several kinds of reptile-feeding birds, but they also learn to be wary of cats and dogs who delight in mauling and teasing them. This is mostly in play, but cats will eat them and will even scramble up screens trying to catch them. Well-meaning small children can also be dangerous, like the ones whose mother taught them to toss out the door any chinchooks they caught in the house. Even so, one can assume that the chinchook clan must have an agreement with its enemies because there are always a goodly number of chinchooks just about everywhere. In keeping with their apparent desire to spread their numbers, females lay their eggs in any kind of container, in the backs of radios, inside seldom-worn shoes, on pantry shelves, and in clothes closets. The young resemble their parents from the time of birth, and must be turned loose to fend for themselves at a very early age.

Feelings about chinchooks vary, but here in Thailand there can be no one who has not had an experience of some sort with the chinchook playing the leading role. In his own way, he has added a ray of sunshine or a drop of rain to the lives of some, while to others his presence has left a feeling of distaste or even fear. Nevertheless, despite his effect both good and bad on our lives, the chinchook is here to stay. He symbolizes the presence of a multitude of insects, a condition typical of the tropics. Without his quick tongue and nimble antics, the scale of nature soon would be set off balance.



## **ISB Network Reunions: A General Primer Biased Toward My Fellow Introverts**

**By Vince Bennett '67**

I’ve attended three ISB reunions. They were an interesting mix of enjoyable and uncomfortable times. My goal for the 2008 San Diego reunion was to explore what I enjoyed and didn’t enjoy about reunions and to figure out why. This will go a bit beyond that scope as I’ll discuss an approach to having a good reunion experience.

I was somewhat apprehensive about attending my first reunion (Phoenix 2002), but was determined to have a good time. To my surprise, I had a great time. It started on the way to my room. People I didn’t know began asking me about Thailand. We compared notes and I discovered that I had more in common with this group of strangers than I did with any other group save my immediate family. Bill Molthen ’66 has said that the only

time he feels 'at home' is at the ISB reunions. After the first reunion, I told my wife it was the first time I've ever been surrounded by people who understand how I grew up. They know what it is like to be a teenager in Bangkok. Yet there are parts of the reunion that I don't care for. So let's begin.

First of all, everyone is there to have a good time. There are different definitions of 'good time', but people want to see old friends, to make new friends and to just be around people that understand those important years in our lives as we struggled to move from children to adults. Nobody cares if you were the king and queen of the prom or that geeky kid who loved chemistry class and the Student Science Society. Of course, people are looking for their high school friends, but not to the exclusion of meeting anyone else. Some people are there to relive those carefree youthful days of drinking Singha all night. Some might be hoping to steal a kiss from an old girlfriend or boyfriend. But I sincerely believe the underlying theme for everyone who has experienced at least one reunion is to just be surrounded by people who understand that part of our lives. Your goal at the reunion is to find the right niche for you. The good news is that there is a broad range of opportunities to do that.

People might not want to go because they are carrying a few extra pounds. Or perhaps they are balding or have gray hair. I can guarantee this: if everyone who was graying, or carrying some extra weight or balding didn't go, then it would be a very small, lonely reunion consisting of the hotel staff and some random guests who just happened to be at the hotel. I've been blessed with a full head of hair, but I'm fatter, grayer, blinder and deafier than I was in 1967. We all are to one degree or another. Get over it!

I realized at this reunion that the parts I enjoy the most involve smaller groups. I'm very introverted and it takes a lot of energy for me to be around large groups. I'm much happier being with 5-15 people in a small setting than in a room of 400. Extroverts recharge by being around people. Introverts recharge by being alone. So put me at a table of 8-10 people at an event, I'm happy. If you drop me in a large room with 400 people mingling I tend to withdraw into myself. This can be a problem at a reunion that draws as many people as the ISB Network Reunions. We already have over 160 rooms reserved for the 2010 reunion (I'm in already). So how do you approach the reunion to have a good time?

First understand what activities you prefer. If you like small groups, then look for opportunities to be with small groups and to carve small groups out of large crowds. Second, encourage your high school friends to show up. I was able to get Lee Riley and Kim Pao Yu, two of my Student Science Society buddies, to show up in San Diego. We didn't spend the whole reunion together as we had multiple interests and different groups of friends to visit, but it was great to see Lee and Kim again. It gave me a constant thread throughout the reunion to connect with Lee and Kim. Third, actively seek out your classmates or others from your time in Bangkok. I've had some great conversations with people I don't ever remember talking to in High School. Find out who is coming, contact the people you know and make plans to get together at the reunion.

If you are flying, look for people in the airport wearing ISB T-shirts and hats. Go introduce yourself as a fellow ISB'er. If you happen to rent a car, you might even offer to give someone a ride. It is your first opportunity to meet someone headed to the reunion.

My wife and I like to arrive early. I should point out that most people will be there without their spouses. My wife's personal history is the complete opposite of the typical ISB alumnus, but she enjoys the reunions as much as I do. She lived in one home until she left for college. She finds the stories of my classmates very interesting. Pick the ten most interesting stories at a stateside high school reunion and put them against any ten random stories from ISB alums and we win hands down. Going early allows me to meet people in smaller groups. This

is what I enjoy. When you register, look for people you know. It is also an opportunity to strike up casual conversations with people you don't. Volunteer! If you are registering attendees you get to meet a lot of people.

Rather than staying in your room after registration wander around. People gather in the lobby, at the pool, in the bar, the registration area, the memorabilia display and The Shack (the store). Again I like this because it is smaller groups. It is also fun because people you know are arriving randomly on Thursday and Friday.

Thursday night is the Thai dinner with seating generally by class. It is a great opportunity to sit at a table with 8-10 ISB'ers. The food is great and you get to talk with old friends or make new friends. Thai food is a great conversation starter. You can talk about the meal (always excellent) or discuss eating off the carts way back when or the great Thai restaurant in your home city.

Friday night is an open mixer with appetizers held in a large ballroom. This is problematic for me because it is a lot of people. One thing that helps is the seating is roughly by class. You look for your class year and find people from the same year. You don't have to sit at your class tables, but it is a good place to find people you know. The second thing that helps is arranging to meet your old friends there. Once there, mingle and get to know people. I know a few people from other classes that I've met at reunions over the years that I look for just to say 'hi' and catch up. We might not talk long, but it's great to see them again.

Friday and Saturday during the day there are informal group activities like golf outings, tennis or yoga. There are groups that will go to local attractions. Set up something with your friends. I have a small group that likes to find local art glass galleries. We usually visit a gallery or three and have lunch somewhere. Don't forget to join in or watch the House Games on Saturday run by the Ewing family. Just watching Amos emcee is worth the price of admission (it's free, but Amos is still a riot). Some of the classes have hospitality suites. If your class has one, then this is a great place to hang out. There may be a fee for refreshments, but it is well worth it.

Saturday night is another of those events that is problematic for me. There is the sit down dinner followed by a dynamite band. I enjoy the dinner as it is a smaller group, but once the band starts playing and people begin mingling I can find myself withdrawing again if I don't watch myself. If I feel like I've lost too much energy, I'll sneak off and find a quiet corner to recharge. This is the time to look for like minded individuals in your class suite, other common areas of the hotel complex or perhaps the "Teen Club." The teen club will feature some of the musicians you might remember from bands that played 'back in the day'. Enjoy the music of your youth. At the last reunion there was a quiet room allowing people to converse without competing with the band.

Sunday morning there is a continental breakfast. It's a good place say goodbye to your friends (old as well as new) and to meet new friends. My wife and I have had some great conversations with people we hadn't met before.

Finally, we like to stay another day and go to dinner with a small group of committed reunion goers. It's a nice way to cap off an enjoyable weekend. Monday we say goodbye and start the count down to the next reunion.

Vince Bennett '67

Go to [http://www.isbnetwork.com/read\\_article.php?id=117](http://www.isbnetwork.com/read_article.php?id=117) for more reunion information



## **GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN**

### **MEMORIAL WEBSITE HONORING ISB ALUMNI/FACULTY WHO HAVE PASSED AWAY**

**A Message from Dave Wilkerson '71**

Dear ISB'ers,

Please be advised that I recently discovered that the contact e-mail link on the ISB Alumni Memorial site at [www.mekongbrothers.com](http://www.mekongbrothers.com) was no longer working. If any of you submitted information regarding the passing of an ISB brother or sister to include teachers and staff at ISB could you please check the site and make sure we received it. Please use the address [isbangkok@aol.com](mailto:isbangkok@aol.com) to update us. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused anyone and deeply regret not finding it earlier.

In addition, I must report that there are some lonely pages on the site, so I am appealing to you to write memorial anecdotes, articles, stories, tributes-- anything so as to warm up the many, many bare pages by telling us what that person meant to you. You can send them directly to me at [isbangkok@aol.com](mailto:isbangkok@aol.com)

Sincerely,

David Wilkerson '71

Editor's Note: The ISB Board of Directors wishes to thank Dave Wilkerson for his commitment and dedication to maintaining this website.

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## **Time Passages**

Promoted - Tim Geithner'79, to United States Secretary of the Treasury  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International\\_School\\_Bangkok#Notable\\_Alumni](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_School_Bangkok#Notable_Alumni)

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## On Being a Third Culture Kid

By Jeff Tank '69

I spent most of my childhood living overseas and attended ISB from 1964 to 1968. Even though it has been nearly 40 years since I attended ISB and I have resided in the US since my return in 1968, I still consider myself a Third Culture Kid, or TCK for short. Of all the aspects of being a TCK that still affect me today, the one that hits home the most for me is the issue of how many of us felt like an “outsider” not only in our country of residence but also in our country of nationality. It brought back memories of how I felt on returning to the US for the first time shortly after reaching the age of 9 years. It was then that I first came to experience this sense of isolation and of feeling like an outsider among my peers. Prior to 1959, I had spent seven years in Europe and then two years in Libya on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. While Europe was certainly every bit as cosmopolitan and modern as the US, Libya in the late 50’s was completely different from the western cultures I had been familiar with up to that time. After spending two years there and seven in Europe, I simply could not relate to what I found on returning home to the US. I was now reaching the age where children become more sensitive to their surrounding and develop greater self-awareness, and I experienced quite a case of culture shock. It may seem odd that I would have felt more like an outsider in the country of my nationality than I had ever felt overseas, yet that is exactly how I felt. It was “home” only because I was an American, not because it was in any sense familiar or that it represented anything else that I normally associated with the idea of home. Having spent my entire lifetime moving from country to country and different continents, I was unprepared for what I found. Suddenly finding myself living among other children for whom travel meant visiting Grandma across town or perhaps as far as the next big city only served to heighten my sense of isolation.

Now I found myself thrown in with children whose entire world was limited to walking distances, not flying distances. When my new classmates related various escapades they had been involved in, the locations were most often given in such terms as “behind Joe’s house” or “down by the pond.” International locations were totally foreign to them, yet for me they were simply a part of life. In an attempt to fit in I would relate some similar event I had participated in, only for me it might have taken place in London or Paris or perhaps Benghazi. I quickly learned from the blank stares I received that while the event itself may have had some similarity to their stories, because it had transpired in a location so totally foreign to them, it lost much of its impact. Indeed, I came to realize that for many of them the easy manner in which I named such foreign cities equated to bragging and as far as they were concerned I was simply attempting to impress everyone. Yet nothing could have been further from the truth. For me and the children I had been used to associating with overseas, identifying such diverse locations was the norm and until my return stateside I had never given it a second thought. So I learned the hard way that in order to fit in I had to refrain from mentioning the places I had lived except when conversing with those few who like me, had lived overseas. In looking back at those years I realize now why I tended to form friendships with children from other cultures rather than my American counterparts.

Though I don't remember it being a conscious decision on my part at the time, I must have subconsciously gravitated toward others for whom the US was also a "foreign" country and who shared my sense of isolation.

Compounding my sense of isolation from my peers during those years was their apparent lack of acceptance for diversity, both cultural and ethnic. Again for me, diversity was the norm, and I was dumbfounded by the reactions I would often get when expressing the idea that someone's skin color or place of birth had absolutely no relationship to their intelligence, abilities or rights as an individual. How anyone could not realize what I knew with such absolute conviction was beyond my comprehension. Cultural intolerance was one of those things I'd heard about, but never imagined it actually existed to the extent that I found it among my schoolmates in the US. My indignation and desire to dissuade others from such blatant bigotry became yet one more trait I learned to sublimate in order to survive in relative harmony within the culture that existed in this country during the early 60's.

So while those four years in the US certainly were not all bad and I did have many good times and made several close friends, it was with great relief that I received the news that my family was once more going on assignment overseas. I didn't really care where, but I knew one thing for sure, I would once more be among kids who understood what I understood and who shared my world view. While it's true that I might continue to be an outsider from the standpoint of the country of residence when I was overseas, at least I would not be one among my schoolmates. Finally, after four years of feeling like an outsider I was once more going home!

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## Lost and Found

This section of the newsletter is dedicated to ISB alumni who have been "lost" since they left Bangkok and have had no contact with any of their former ISB friends UNTIL they stumbled upon the ISB website or were found by an old friend who had been searching for them. Every once in awhile, one of these long lost alumni resurfaces and comes "home" to their old ISB family and friends. Some of them have been gone for a VERY long time. Here are the latest ones that I am aware of. Please let me know if I have left anyone out that has resurfaced in the past year or so. You can visit the alumni page on the website to find out more information about them.

Peggy

[Jim Brennan](#) '60

[Jerry Hutchins](#) '65

[Susan Lipton](#) '63

[Libby Oppenheimer](#) '65

[Jeff Tank](#) '69

[Jeronna Galbreath](#) '67

[Peggy Brockman](#) '66

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## Mae La--A Karen Refugee Camp

By Val Philbrick Sherman '67

Do you remember hearing about or seeing the long-necked Karen people? Very few of them actually put the rings around their necks today, but there are many Karen (pronounced ka Ren) people. They have always lived in Thailand and Myanmar/Burma. For the past 30 years the incountry military has made survival very hard for the Karen in Myanmar/Burma. Therefore, in 1986 the UN arranged for nine refugee camps along the Myanmar/Thai border so that the Karen people would have a place to go in order to avoid death. This is not the first time that Thailand has helped others. During the terror brought by the Khmer Rouge (1975 to 1979), 360,000 refugees from Cambodia came to Thailand seeking safety.

For the third time in 23 years, I returned to visit my friends in the largest camp, Mae La. There are 45,000 registered IDP's (Internally Displaced Person) in the camp. An estimated 15,000 live there without papers. In order to avoid trouble when the UN does a check and you have no papers, refugees just move to the end of camp, then move to where they have checked as they get closer to where they are. A lot of the people have gone for resettlement in countries that will accept them, but most remain. The houses are crowded in between the road and mountains. Many volunteers work for the UN distributing food (rice, dahl, fish paste, oil, charcoal) or in the schools. Most refugees try to grow their own food as well, but space is very limited. Sometimes they move from one camp to another in the hope they will find something better. But most camps are the same and offer no hope for the young, so they marry and have children. Isn't that what everyone does? Many sneak out and find work but when they are caught they are sent back to Myanmar/Burma.

When Maile and Brian arrived back in Thailand in January, 2009, they brought with them a huge bag filled with Beanie Babies for the children at Mae Sot, another refugee camp. Before they left for R35, they gave the Beanies to me for delivery. Another friend donated toothbrushes, so my father, my son, my Thai friend, Jed, and I took off for Mae Sot. It was a six hour drive from my house. We first went to visit Dr. Cynthia Maung's Mae Tao Clinic/Hospital in Mae Sot. I have read her web site many times but seeing her hospital was not what I expected. It is very primitive, and left me wondering if I was still in Thailand. Visit her website at [www.maetaoclinic.org](http://www.maetaoclinic.org) and take the time to acquaint yourself with this fantastic Karen woman who tries to care for 400 Karen or Burmese patients a day, as well as trains and sends backpack medics into Burma.

Usually a request to visit the camp takes six months to process but we were able to get special permission from the UN to enter the camp. I passed out the Beanie Babies to the younger kids, and to see such happiness made it a VERY special day. We spent the afternoon with my friends Ruby and Min ya. They have three children of their own and have taken in twenty six children that have no parents. They had a beautiful lunch for us and the afternoon was spent with all the children.

Because Beanie Babies have names and birthdays, we told each child the name of the Beanie that he/she had adopted. We played games and told stories, using the older children as interpreters.

Most of the paths seem to go up or down hill and we all wondered how these people were able to walk anywhere in camp during the rainy season. That evening my Thai friend Jed looked at me and said, “They look just like me; I don’t know what to say. There are no words for what I saw today.”

Editor’s Note—Val Philbrick Sherman ’67 has lived in Thailand for more than five years and volunteers on a full time basis there.



Val passes out Beanie Babies



Happy kids with Beanies



## **Panther Gatherings**

Any time two or more ISB'ers get together, that's a Panther Gathering! Send your pictures, along with names and class years to [isbpeggy67@gmail.com](mailto:isbpeggy67@gmail.com). They'll appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

### **Richmond, Virginia February 14, 2009**



Susan Cerrone '67 and Gary Kinney '65



Barbara Jones-Bowman '72, and husband



Deb Steinmetz Caulfield '70 and Tal Wingate '70



L to R Todd Lockhart '77, Todd's wife Nina, Jeff Tank '69, Tom Snow, husband of Peggy Allison Snow '67, Deb Steinmetz Caulfield '70, Peggy Allison Snow '67, Larry Doggett '66, Bryan Doherty '73, Tal Wingate '70, Pat Donovan Hight '66, Ted Ong '73, Susan Cerrone '67, Gary Kinney '65. Missing is Mr. Culver Ladd, faculty

**December 2009**



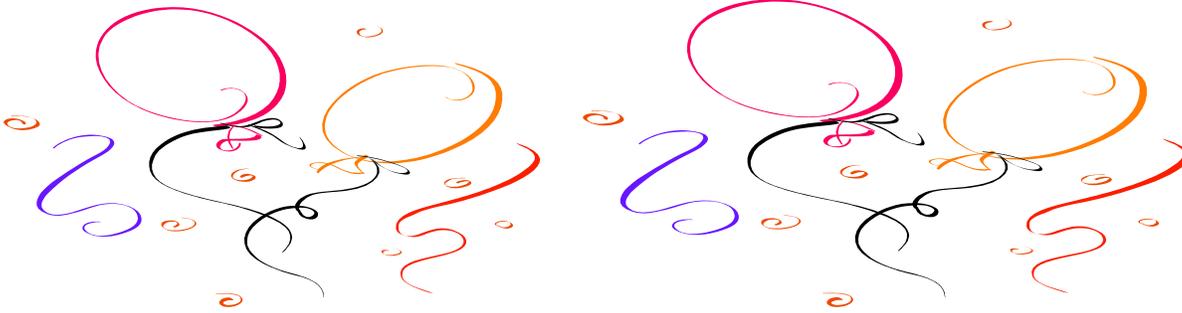
L to R Kathy Walker, Don Nibblett, Carol Stroud, Debby Steinmetz, all class of '70

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## Thai'ing up Loose Ends

- Want to read about today's ISB? Go to <http://touchstone.isb.ac.th>
  - Be sure to read the [Bulletin Board](#) on the website. It's full of "what's happening."
  - Please forward suggestions, constructive criticism, or comments regarding this newsletter to [isbpeggy67@gmail.com](mailto:isbpeggy67@gmail.com)
  - This is your newsletter, and it can't exist without your input. Send stories, memories, current news-anything that would be of interest to the above email address. I'll help you with editing, etc.
  - When the time comes, [renew your membership](#) in the ISB Network. You'll be glad you did.
  - Have you had a "Small World" experience, in which you've by chance run into an old ISB pal or found someone that went to ISB? I'd like to hear about it. It doesn't matter if it was yesterday or many years ago. Send [Peggy](#) an email.
  - Check out the website for the latest "[Who's Coming](#)" to see an updated list of ISB'ers who have already made hotel reservations for the 2010 Virginia Beach Reunion. Then, if you haven't already done so, make YOUR reservations so you won't miss out on what promises to be the best reunion ever!
  - Our webmaster, Maureen Lockhart Salashoor, needs an assistant. If you have mySQL/PHP skills and have some time to lend a hand, contact her ([webmast@isbnetwork.com](mailto:webmast@isbnetwork.com)).
  - Attention all artists/graphic designers/people who like to draw: be sure to enter the [logo contest](#) to design the logo for "High Thai'd in Virginia Beach", the theme for our next reunion to be held August 26-29, 2010, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The winner will receive a free hotel night during the reunion. Deadline for entering is April 30, 2009, and the membership will vote on their favorites from May 1-31. You can't win if you don't enter! See the website for full details.
  - Check out some great websites on Thailand, courtesy of [Devin Brougham](#)'73. For nice photos on life in Thailand, go to [www.richarddaniels.com](http://www.richarddaniels.com). Another good website is [www.stevevanbeek.com](http://www.stevevanbeek.com), who is the author of books and documentary films about Thailand and other Asian countries.
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**In Closing...**



Confetti and streamers to all the ISB'ers who have contributed to this newsletter. Remember, this is your newsletter, and it can't exist without your input. Send stories, memories, current news—anything that would be of interest to the above email address. I'll help you with editing, etc. Khop Khun mach ka.

Peggy

