



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Canine Master on Pet Life Radio - Episode #15 SOI Dog Foundation

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Chris Onthank: So here we are in Phuket, Thailand, and I am so lucky to be here with the Daleys. This is John and Gill Daley, and they are the originators, or the founders, of Soi Dog. Am I correct on that?

John Daley: Yep.

Chris Onthank: Yeah.

John Daley: With another lady, we started it in 2003.

Chris Onthank: Well, it's been really amazing. I just took an amazing tour of this facility, and I cannot believe what I have seen. This would put many shelters to shame across America, and I mean that, boy, wouldn't they be so envious to have the facilities? The amount of dogs that you are treating here is just mind-boggling, in my mind. I cannot believe the facilities and what you're building. You're doing better things and better things all the time. How many dogs are you saving a year?

John Daley: Oh, well, last year, we're sterilizing 30,000 and we're treating around 100 a week here. So probably around about 5,000 are being treated every year.

Chris Onthank: 5,000 dogs. Truly amazing. I will also ask you, tell me a little bit how you guys got started on this. I heard you came here for some retirement or something?

John Daley: Yeah. Bit of a standing joke. We came here to retire and something went wrong. But I was fortunate to be able to take early retirement at a relatively early age, in my early 50s. We'd been coming here for a few years on holiday. In fact, we got married here 19 years ago. Better get that right, haven't I?

Gill Daley: Absolutely.

John Daley: So, we decided, "Yeah, we'd like to move here," but also wanted, because we're relatively young, to not just spend our days laying on the beach, which gets pretty boring after awhile, but to try and put something back into the community that we were now calling home. We'd seen, over the years, the stray dog problem, which was horrendous at the time. Literally, you couldn't go down any street corner without coming across many dogs emaciated, starving, most of them hairless, covered in sores, and the problem was clearly getting out of control.

So, I determined I would look to see what could be done about this. Neither of us had any background in animal welfare at all. Gill initially was going to look at teaching underprivileged kids English, but there are a lot of people doing that, and it wasn't so easy to get involved with being retired, so she joined as well. I met this Dutch lady who'd also just retired to Phuket, and she was a great believer. She'd been doing it in Bangkok in her own neighborhood for the previous year, of sterilization being the most effective tool. That's really how it started.

Chris Onthank: So, it started with sterilization, but now you've gone much farther than that. You're dealing with dogs that are going into the meat trade, correct? John, isn't that something that you focus a lot on? I know that's a lot of what I hear about Soi Dog in the news.

John Daley: Yeah. There's a film being made, actually, called The Shadow Trade, and it's well-titled because a lot of people, including myself, were totally unaware there was a dog meat industry going on in Thailand. It wasn't until about 2009 when I saw a newspaper photo of a truck loaded with well over 1,000 dogs. In a newspaper photographed in Halal, this was a truck of Thai dogs on the way to Vietnam. I started to look into it and found out just how big an issue it was and how many dogs were involved. At that time, the Thai Veterinary Association estimated half a million dogs a year going from Thailand to Vietnam alone.

Chris Onthank: Half a million dogs a year being used for meat purposes.

John Daley: To Vietnam, and that doesn't include the ones being killed locally for their skins and for local meat consumption. So I literally focus every big charity I could think of. We were still in small charity in those days, but nobody was really interested in it. So I made a promise to myself at that time that as soon as I thought we could do something concrete about it, that I wanted to do this, because I said to myself at the time, "If there's one thing I can achieve before I die, it's to see an end to this," because people think that, "Okay, it's a cultural issue. Haitians eat dogs just as Westerners eat beef or pork." What people aren't aware of is

the horrendous cruelty involved in this business literally from the moment the dogs are picked up to their end, and it's horrendous.

Chris Onthank: You know, we were just talking a little bit earlier when we were looking at the dogs from the meat trade that have been saved and all been adopted down there that we had seen, that there's this common belief in different cultures that if you beat the dogs when they're alive, that they're more tender. Is that right? What are the beliefs that some of these cultures have?

John Daley: There's a lot of different beliefs. That's not universal, but certainly in some areas, yeah, they believe that the more pain the dog undergoes before death, that increases the adrenaline and that improves the flavor of the meat, and that is practiced in some areas. Other areas, though, it's quite literally almost as though they don't understand the suffering these dogs are going through. It's very common to skin dogs alive, to throw them into pots of boiling water, puppy eyed photos of puppies that have been just thrown into a pot still alive, and it's this type of thing that is the heart of the why I want to stop it, but the beliefs are ... It's not cultural at. A lot of these countries, it's a growing business, and it's based on false claims that, for example, dog meats ... There's a film coming out shortly and called Eating Happiness, and a lot of Chinese believe that by eating dog, it will make you happy, because dogs are happy.

In Vietnam, the peak season for eating dogs, it ties in with lunar cycles. So at the end of the lunar cycle, it's lucky to eat dogs, but at the beginning, it's bad luck, and the peak time is in the winter because they believe that dog meat has warming properties. Yet in Korea, the peak time is in the summer.

Chris Onthank: Which is now.

John Daley: Because they believe it has cooling properties. The majority of dog meat is eaten by men who drink it at parties with beer. They believe it has aphrodisiac properties. In certain cultures, in Cambodia, particularly, black dogs are considered to have more aphrodisiac properties. They're going to make you powerful, strong, et cetera. All of this is nonsense, and the reality is eating dog is dangerous. Nowhere, no country is it considered livestock, and there are no regulations governing it. So even in Asian countries, there will be regulations and inspections of meat that's classified as livestock. Beef, pork, chicken, et cetera, but dog meat doesn't fall under that, so there are no regulations covering it.

We know a large percentage of these dogs are carrying rabies. Now if a dog is cooked properly, you cannot transmit rabies, but dogs carry a

lot of zoonotic diseases that can be passed to humans. There's been documented outbreaks of cholera in Vietnam through eating dog meat trade. It's actually not a healthy meat to eat, as a lot of people here believe it is.

Gill Daley:

You also have to remember, as well, a lot of people think that these people eat dog meat because they've got nothing else to eat or they can't afford something else. Whereas the fact is that dog meat is a luxury meat. It costs three to four times more than a piece of chicken or a piece of pork would. So it is a treat, and that's how it's seen, as something to celebrate. If you've got a birthday party or you want to treat your long lost friend that's coming back to see you, you take them out for the best thing that's available, and that is dog meat.

Chris Onthank:

That's amazing. John, let me ask you another question. The dog meat trade in Thailand, is that legal?

John Daley:

As from the end of December last year, it is now illegal to eat animals that are not considered livestock or normal animals that would be eaten in society. So that includes dogs, cats, because we mustn't forget either, in Asia, domesticated cats are eaten, and that is now illegal as of the end of December. One of the things we've worked on in the last five years is getting an animal welfare law brought into Thailand, and that was achieved at the end of December when it was passed. We're now working on, in effect, putting the meat on the bones, if you like, of the law, because it's one thing to say it's illegal to be cruel to animals, but you have to define that. But yet it is illegal now to eat dogs or cats in Thailand. It was illegal before the actual trade in moving dogs to Vietnam, based on disease transmission, and in effect, that's how we were able to stop, significantly reduce, anyway, the trade of dogs from Thailand to Vietnam.

We believe the trade now, compared with the half a million of few years ago, is now down certainly less than 20% of that. That was because we held conferences with partner organizations, including the Humane Society from the US, Animalization in Vietnam, and Change for Animals Foundation, and we formed an alliance, and we hosted conferences in Hanoi with the governments of Vietnam, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia, and then had a follow up one with the same people in Bangkok, and this was not based on cruelty, I have to say that. This was based entirely on disease control, because we knew that the Vietnamese government wouldn't really care about cruelty.

Chris Onthank:

Wouldn't care about that.

- John Daley:** Wouldn't really care about cruelty, and to go to them and say, "Well, you shouldn't be allowing this to happen, because it's cruel," was not going to work. I remember actually saying to them, because the Vietnamese were resistant, but actually saying to them, "Look, you as a country have, with all the other countries in the Southeast Asian Nations Association, pledged to eliminate rabies by 2020, and stopping this trade of thousands and thousands of unvaccinated dogs of unknown origin ..."
- Chris Onthank:** And some of them carrying rabies.
- John Daley:** "Some of them carrying rabies, as tests have shown, is not going to eliminate rabies in Vietnam. But I can 100% guarantee you if you allow this trade to continue, you will never eliminate rabies," and in effect, that put them in a position where they would have looked rather stupid to say, "Well, we couldn't care less about that."
- Chris Onthank:** So you basically boxed them in.
- John Daley:** In a way, yeah.
- Chris Onthank:** Through those regulations, you were able to stop something else.
- John Daley:** The Vietnamese government then, as a result, imposed a five year, initially, ban on the import of dogs from outside Vietnam. I have to say that has not impacted the industry in Vietnam, it just means more Vietnamese dogs are getting stolen and used, but it stopped that trade. That's why now in reality, we're just starting Soi Dog in Vietnam, because it's not right, in my view, to ... "Okay, we stopped the Thai dogs going," and then it doesn't matter about-
- Chris Onthank:** The Vietnam dogs.
- John Daley:** There's estimated between five and seven million dogs a year consumed in Vietnam, and estimates-
- Chris Onthank:** What's that number in China?
- John Daley:** No one knows the true figures. It's believed, in China, could be 20 to 30 million, and in Asia as a whole, 30 to 50 million, but nobody really knows the total figure, because there's no ... You could probably get figures for the amount of beef consumed and everything, because it's all legal.
- Chris Onthank:** But it's not regulated, so we can't find that.

John Daley: It's not regulated. What we do know is that both in China and Vietnam, from research we've done and others have done, that it looks now that approximately 70% of the dogs in those countries are stolen pets. A lot of people think, "Oh, these are just stray dogs that nobody wants."

Chris Onthank: These are purebred dogs. 70% are stolen.

John Daley: In China, in the trucks that are intercepted there, you can see a huge number of them are actually German Shepherds, Golden Retrievers, Labradors, this sort of dog, and they are stolen. This is what a lot of people don't realize. In Vietnam, it's not a criminal offense to steal something under a certain value, a couple hundred dollars. So these young lads who go around stealing these dogs to generally electrocute or poison them to get them, they can do that almost with impunity.

Chris Onthank: No repercussion at all.

John Daley: Well there is, but I'll come to that in a minute, because there's no legal repercussions for them, generally. So they're stealing a dog. A dog in Vietnam, a good sized dog could fetch \$100, and that fuels, often, drug habits and whatever. Whereas if they were dealing with drugs, they face a death sentence. So you work out the odds.

Chris Onthank: Oh my gosh.

John Daley: What is happening in Vietnam, there's been numerous cases, it's happening all the time now, is that villages in central Vietnam and Southern Vietnam are getting fed up of this, and actually taking the law into their own hands. While I'm not advocating this, there have even been cases of these people being killed, literally beaten to death when they'd been caught, and others get severe beatings, and this is becoming quite a phenomenon now in Vietnam.

Chris Onthank: Wow. So there are some big dog lovers in Vietnam and all over Asia.

John Daley: Yeah, all over Asia. In China, it's restricted, actually, predominantly to the three Southern provinces, and one of which border Vietnam, coincidentally or not, and also one in the Northeast which borders North Korea. Yes, you will find dog meat restaurants in Beijing or other places, but these will be servicing mainly people who have moved from those areas, and as these people move, so they bring the habit with them. In Vietnam, if you go back to the war years, there's no records of dog meat restaurants in Saigon. No records at all, really, in central Vietnam and Southern Vietnam, of dog being eaten. Certainly in the North, certain hill tribes, it was their culture, and we believe Chinese military advisors also brought in, made it more popular, and in

times of farming, let's face it, people will eat anything. But it grew in North Vietnam, and then after reunification, as North Vietnamese spread throughout Vietnam and government positions, the habit was introduced further afield.

Chris Onthank: Amazing. I just can't believe all you're doing, but it's not just about the meat trade. You also are doing a lot of sterilization here. I've been walking around your facility and seeing many dogs being sterilized just today, and you're building a new hospital to also do a lot of sterilization. Gill, can you tell us a little bit about how that started and your success that you have found so far?

Gill Daley: Yeah, sure. When we first started Soi Dog, that was our main aim. The three of us, as John said, there were three of us. We used to pick up dogs ourselves for sterilizing. We worked with two local vets who very kindly did sterilize the animals for the cost price. We occasionally had visiting volunteer vets coming from overseas, and that's how it started very slowly, and we used our own money to fund that. Obviously that was not sustainable. Later on, after the tsunami hit, we got a two-year grant from Whisper, and that would enable us to move on and expand our sterilization program. It's paramount that this continues. Phuket is now under control. In the last 12 years, we've now just sterilized over 90,000 animals, cats as well as dogs, but predominantly dogs. Phuket, as I say, is now under control. Just the maintenance program. We have now started to move off island into the local provinces, where at the moment, the team is sterilizing about 1,200 dogs per month.

We've also got a small clinic in Bangkok who sterilize on a daily basis, and we're looking to start a huge program there, which will take several years to complete, but employing probably another 50 staff to start mass sterilization there. So yeah, it's pretty busy.

We do do sterilizations here Monday to Friday. The new hospital is not for sterilizations. That's purely for treatment. We have many dogs that come in who are road accident, they've got skin issues, they've gotTVT cancer tumors, many different kinds of diseases that we need to treat here. They've got nobody else to treat them, so we treat them wherever possible. They go back to the street, unless they're in danger, then we keep them here.

John Daley: Cruelty cases, for example, we never could.

Gill Daley: Cruelty cases, we would never ever put a cruelty case back on the street.

Chris Onthank: The idea is sterilize and get them back into the environment where they were before.

- Gill Daley:** Because mother nature avoids a void. You start removing animals from the street that are vaccinated, that are sterilized, then other animals will move in and take their place, and then you've got probably, again, unsterilized, unvaccinated dogs because there's a food source. So it's vital that these sterilized and vaccinated animals remain on the street.
- John Daley:** Chris? Yeah, sorry. You know being a dog behaviorist, dogs are territorial by nature, and they will guard their area. In fact, we're trying to get a cartoon done now for education purposes that shows if you go into an area and you sterilize all the dogs, and the next area we're showing dogs want you to come into there, but not sterilized, they will be kept out because dogs protect their food source. So if you then come in and remove those dogs, which does happen, and the local authority will get a complaint, they'll just remove them. Then other dogs that you've not had chance to sterilize yet move in, and you're then going to their previous area, but behind your back...
- Chris Onthank:** They become dominant and they start to breed and maybe create more pets.
- John Daley:** Behind your back, some have now moved into that area, and within months, you've probably got a bigger problem than you had before. It's trying to get over to local authorities and even local businesses.
- So you've got this situation where, okay, local authorities and businesses just see stray dogs as a nuisance, but they don't understand that if a dog ... Phuket is now Thailand's first rabies-free province, because all these dogs we're sterilize against rabies.
- Chris Onthank:** Thanks to the two of you.
- John Daley:** Well, not ... But our team and our supporters.
- Chris Onthank:** And your volunteers.
- John Daley:** And our supporters. Bear in mind, we can't do anything-
- Chris Onthank:** Without their support.
- Gill Daley:** Absolutely not.
- Chris Onthank:** Yeah, we're going to talk about that in a second.
- John Daley:** Yeah. So you've got this situation where if you find people, "Oh, they're a nuisance, we don't want them here," you quite often get, for example, a new hotel manager will come in from the West, probably been working in Europe and probably have never seen any stray dogs

on the property or ... Get rid of them. What he doesn't realize is that the garbage problems here and everything else and [inaudible 00:21:32].

Those dogs are probably very friendly, they're used to tourists, they're sterilized, they're vaccinated, they're keeping other dogs out. Had a case years ago where a new manager did this, and literally, within three months, he had double the number of dogs that were not friendly, were having puppies and whatever, and he's screaming, "Oh, can you come and do something about this?" It's educating people, though. People don't really understand that if you get all the dogs ... If you get 80%, which is our aim here, minimum 80% of dogs sterilized in an area, you will see a reduction. If you'd have been here 12 years ago and now drive around Phuket, you will see a phenomenal difference. Not only will you see far less dogs on the street, but you'll also see that the ones that are there are in far better condition.

Yes, we still get horrendous cases, but they're the minority as opposed to the majority. So people are happy they don't have this huge stray dog problem. Tourists are happier they don't have to see dogs in horrendous condition which they upsetting, and it's ... Okay, still be an eye opener coming to Thailand if you're used to only living in or visiting a Western country, but it's vastly changed from what it used to be.

Chris Onthank: You know, Gill, you doing dog rescue has really been trying. You got injured and sick from actually rescuing dogs. Tell me a little bit what happened.

Gill Daley: Yeah, sure. I blow darted a dog, and what that basically means is dogs that are not easy to pick up, we chemically blow dart them with an anesthetic. So when the needle goes in, the dog jumps up and runs away, and what happened was this dog ran into a water buffalo field at the height of the rainy season, which had about 18 inches of water in it. I knew that if I didn't go in after her when the anesthetic took hold, she would have gone under the water and drowned and died. So I just ran in after her, I got to just where she was going into the water. I dragged her out to my truck, which was a fair way, and she was quite a big girl, so I was exhausted by the time I got out. I took her to the clinic, she got sterilized and got taken back, and I've thought no more about it.

A few days later, I started feeling unwell, and the day after that, I had said to John, "You're going to have to take me to hospital." The pain in my legs was excruciating, I can't describe. He took me to the hospital. They put me on a trolley in emergency, and we just watched my legs change color from normal flesh to a blue gray color.

Chris Onthank: So gangrene?

Gill Daley: Yes. Septicemia. I don't remember anything from that moment on for another five weeks. John was told that I was expected to die. If I did survive, then in all likelihood, I would lose both my arms and legs. The reality at the end of it was, I only lost my legs.

Chris Onthank: So you lost both your legs?

Gill Daley: Both legs, yeah. So yeah, that was that, and I came out of hospital two days before Christmas, and being the mad brit that I am, I cooked Christmas dinner for 12 people out of my wheelchair two days later. And then on Boxing Day, we got news that the Asian tsunami had hit, and my best friend Leoni was killed in the second wave.

Chris Onthank: Was she one of your volunteers?

Gill Daley: She was one of our volunteers. She covered the South of the island, she fed hundreds of dogs down there and was involved in sterilization problems down there with us. So basically the Boxing Day before, my dear dad died, then I lost my legs, and then my best friend died in the tsunami. That kind of ... Yeah, it was not a very particularly good year.

Chris Onthank: I can imagine, but I will tell you one thing, I had no idea that you had lost your legs. You were walking with both your prosthetics, and as I'm walking around and you're touring me around your facility, you were doing quite amazing with two prosthetics. So I would never have known that.

Gill Daley: It's 10 years ago now, and I'm getting used to it. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. The one thing that kind of helped me through all this, in a bizarre way, maybe things happen for a reason, I don't know, but because there were no relief teams here at the time, and the worst hit areas were just off island in Khao Lak, and there were hundreds and thousands of bodies. It was just absolutely appalling.

Chris Onthank: Oh gosh, you guys both lived through that.

Gill Daley: So John, four other gentleman and myself went up to Khao Lak. The guys were wrapping bodies, and John took me to the local hospital where I was just basically counseling people that just wanted to tell their story, have somebody's shoulder to cry on, to have a cuddle. So we did that until the relief teams arrived. We then came back to Phuket. I carried on at the hospital in Phuket till all the people had gone. Okay? I don't know what it's like to go through a tsunami, as in the actual event, but I do know what it's like to go through a life changing trauma, albeit only a few weeks before.

Chris Onthank: Oh my gosh, and there you are counseling and helping people. This is the kind of people that you guys are, you're just givers. You're give,

give, give. It's amazing. It must feel good somehow. It's feeding your soul somehow.

Gill Daley: People quite often say to us, "Why do you do this? You don't take a salary. Are you mad? Why do you do it? I don't get it." What they don't get is that they're the losers because we're the richest people in the planet, because our hearts are so full of the love we get back from these animals and the joy of knowing you've helped some thing, be it a dog or a human or a cat, whatever, just putting something back makes you the richest person on the planet. No money can buy that, no money, nothing else can give you that feeling.

Chris Onthank: I want to ask you a question. I had a colleague years ago, she said to me that street dogs were some of the happiest dogs on the planet. That street dogs, many of them don't need to be saved. What are we saving them from? We take them off the street and we stick them into apartments and we lock the door, and now we've taken a dog that was free and we've now basically made them into a prisoner in our apartment. What do you think about that?

John Daley: I think that's a very valid comment. We get, sometimes, comments on Facebook saying, "How can you return that dog? Surely you don't return these dogs?" What you're talking about here is thousands of dogs a year, now, we're sterilizing. Last year was 30,000 dogs. We talked about 90,000 over 12 years. In the last three years, more than half of those in the last three years since we've grown. What you're talking about, we would need a shelter the size of Phuket to keep these dogs, but would the dogs be happy? I can show you beach dogs or whatever living on the beach, and okay, you can say there is a danger of somebody maybe poisoning them or whatever, but those dogs are living happy. Bring them into a shelter situation where they're going to be contained ...

Chris Onthank: They'd be miserable.

John Daley: They'd be miserable.

Gill Daley: In my opinion, it is cruel unless you are doing it for a reason, whereby somebody has tried to kill the dog. We get machete attacks, dogs being shot.

Chris Onthank: Or the dog's been injured. In that case, you bring the dog in and then they can't fend for himself on the street.

Gill Daley: If the dog is deemed not to be able to fend for itself on the street, or if it's a human cruelty attack, you cannot put a dog back that somebody's tried to kill, because they're just going to try and kill it

again. So those kinds of dogs we keep. Dogs with amputations, this kind of thing. Blind dogs, deaf dogs. We keep all these dogs because we can't return them to the streets, because it's the wrong environment for them.

Chris Onthank: But dogs that are happy on the street-

Gill Daley: The dogs ... Leave them there.

Chris Onthank: Leave them. I agree.

John Daley: But sterilize them.

Chris Onthank: Sterilize them so they're not reproducing.

Gill Daley: Vaccinate them. They are so much happier living free on the streets. It's a bit like, say, "Would you like to carry on living your normal life, going around and about doing your thing?", and yes, there's a little bit of risk in all life. We could all have a car accident tomorrow. We'll flip and break our legs or whatever. "Or would you like to be locked in a room for the rest of your life?" To me, it's no different.

Chris Onthank: So basically what you're saying is that when you're reincarnated, you want to come back as a dog in Phuket that's been sterilized.

Gill Daley: I wouldn't mind that.

Chris Onthank: That would be okay, right? You've finally finished out your retirement job.

John Daley: You'd also get, you just saw now as we were walking past a truck pulling up with a cage with seven puppies in it or something.

Gill Daley: Six, seven.

John Daley: That had just been picked up that our mobile clinic brought back from Andar province. The mother had been poisoned. Now these puppies looked about five, six weeks old.

Chris Onthank: About five weeks, I'd say.

John Daley: Yeah, and obviously, those puppies are not going to survive on their own, so they have to come here.

Chris Onthank: And those guys are going to need a home.

John Daley: They're going to need a home, and that's always the object. Every dog that comes here, the object is to try and rehome them, and the fact is

people ... Again, 90% of these dogs make fantastic pets. And these puppies, you couldn't leave them there, and obviously when they're grown older, we can't then just pick them up and say, "Okay, you go back to where we picked you up from," because that's strange. They don't know where they are. So that's this sort of situation. They have to stay as well, or get just to be home.

Chris Onthank: Yeah, I think it's fabulous. I cannot believe the amount of volunteers. How many volunteers do you have, Gill?

Gill Daley: Oh, it varies week to week, day to day, even. We have two types, the long-term volunteers who come here for two weeks plus. We get day trippers coming. We also get people just coming for a few days. And what's quite common is that people will come to Soi Dog and say, "Oh, next week I'm going up to Chiang Mai. The week after that, I'm going to Lao," they end up not leaving Soi Dog, and they stay here for the full length of time that they're in Thailand. We have many, many repeat volunteers who come back again and again and again.

Chris Onthank: So volunteers from the States, from Europe.

Gill Daley: All over the world.

Chris Onthank: All over the world.

Gill Daley: All over the world.

Chris Onthank: If someone wanted to volunteer, how would they go about doing that?

Gill Daley: Well obviously, they have to fly.

Chris Onthank: They've got to get themselves here.

Gill Daley: They've got to get themselves here. Something that sorts out some accommodation. We're in the North of the island. If you stay in a reasonable distance which we can give you the information on near the shelter, we can pick you up and take you back every day. We can order lunch for you, this kind of thing.

Chris Onthank: That's wonderful.

Gill Daley: So that's taken care of, but if just anybody's interested, they just email info@soidog.org, and they'll be sent some information.

Chris Onthank: Info@soidog.

Gill Daley: Dot org.

Chris Onthank: Dot org. I will tell, you what was amazing is your socialization with these ... These people are assigned to a group of dogs. They are getting to know these dogs, and this is actually helping socialize them. It helps them out to help be adopted.

Gill Daley: Yeah, absolutely.

Chris Onthank: So it's so important that these people do this. You guys are doing an amazing feat. It seems like such a huge undertaking. I don't know how you can really accomplish it all without support from other people. Tell me a little bit about how do we help you? How do we get you what you need to continue this mission?

John Daley: Well obviously, like any charity, I often say, you can only do as much as the funds you raise. We like to think that we ... I mean, our Facebook page has well over a million followers, and I like to think that people support us because they feel like they get what they see on the can. There's no moneys going on this or somebody's expense account or whatever. The money is going to help animals. Yes, we have overheads, of course. Any charity does. But all our people who are volunteering overseas to help us, they're all volunteers, we don't have paid staff. Yes, we have paid staff here, administrative staff. It'd be great if everybody was a volunteer, but that's not possible. Gill and I are fortunate. I have a pension, so we're self sufficient. I don't need a salary, but our people do have to work to earn a living, and we've got some very good people here now, obviously besides the Burmese and Thai shelter carers, our vets, et cetera.

Obviously, as far as helping goes, volunteering is one thing. The main ways is go to our website or Facebook page, and you can sponsor a dog here. That's one of our big programs. Or you can sponsor our emergency response team, or you can help dogs that have been rescued from the dog meat trade. We spent an awful lot of money on building new shelters for them in the North of Thailand, because they were crowded. Literally thousands of dogs were starving to death or dying from disease, crammed into pounds and had literally gone from one hell into another, and I couldn't allow it. It's one thing to organize rescuing these dogs. Couldn't stick by and let this happen. It was ridiculous. So again, we fund raise, we built these huge shelters in Buriram, which is about four hours North of Bangkok.

It's not ideal, but it's far better. At least they've got room now, they've got shelter. Again, we've had to build those shelters. The government department who has a responsibility is department of livestock. Dogs are not livestock, so they have no budget to care for these dogs.

Chris Onthank: Oh my god.

- John Daley:** So again, we have to supply all the food, which is currently at the three shelters. There's two more shelters where there are fewer dogs, but still there. We're at around about 30 tons of food every month. We don't get any special deal on that. That's to be paid for, and so people, again, can sponsor that. It's all on our website, the different programs. I know it sounds odd when you're talking about money, but the fact is that this doesn't happen. What you've seen today, the new hospital, these teams going out, all these vets sterilizing, the teams going out getting the dogs, retrieving the dogs. I wish it could happen for free, but it doesn't.
- Chris Onthank:** You have six. It does, and you have six veterinarians that are working here.
- John Daley:** Full time here.
- Chris Onthank:** Full time.
- John Daley:** I've got two full time in Bangkok and we've got another three now under training for the new program in Bangkok.
- Chris Onthank:** That's amazing.
- Gill Daley:** There's also another two subcontract vets that work at the mobile alternate days.
- John Daley:** Or alternate weeks now, at the moment.
- Gill Daley:** Alternate weeks.
- Chris Onthank:** I will tell you, I just think it's amazing what you guys have been doing, and I'm going to try to help you as well. We're going to get you some Dog Gone Smart pet products to help you out, and people that listen to my show, a lot of you are in the pet industry. I'm going to ask you to look at Soi Dog and see whether you can help them out, because they need as much support as we can give them. They are doing an amazing job here in Thailand, and I'm so fortunate to be able to walk around today and to see this amazing vet hospital and this facility and see the dedication of your staff and of the volunteers. It really is quite impressive and amazing. I did not expect, I'll be honest, to see what I saw today. And I did not expect to hear about what's going on with the meat trade. I had no idea it was as large as it is, and the work that you guys are doing is wonderful. So I thank you for that. We all thank you.
- Gill Daley:** Thank you very much.
- John Daley:** Thank you for coming.

Gill Daley: Thank you for coming, and really, really appreciate your offer, and if any of your readers have got anything they can help us with, any donations will be gratefully received.

Chris Onthank: Well, we're going to make sure that happens.

John Daley: Listeners.

Chris Onthank: Listeners. I have the blog as well, so thank you very much.

John Daley: Well, you might want to ask just one question.

Chris Onthank: Sure.

John Daley: A lot of people ask us, what does SOI Dog mean?

Chris Onthank: Well that's what I asked you, Gill. I said, what does SOI Dog mean?

Gill Daley: Soi. Soi is the Thai word for street or alley. So it usually translates as "street dog" or "alley dog".

Chris Onthank: So go visit www.soidog.org and check you guys out, and thanks a lot for having us here today.