

For taxpayers with higher income who are paying more rent and staying in abodes of greater value, however, the tax differential can be quite large. For instance in one case, at a remuneration level of US\$250,000, I found that the U.S. tax would be \$15,000 if the couple continued to rent versus \$7,000 if they decided to buy.

**Other factors to consider**

Consequently, if taxes were the only consideration, then in a world with a reduced housing exclusion and a tax stacking provision, buying would result in less tax than renting. However, there are other important factors that will certainly influence your decision and require serious consideration. Some of these factors are as follows:

- The impact of tying up the down payment in Singapore property (versus property in another country or other investments such as stocks) and what the exchange rate is at the time of purchase
- Whether the value of the property will increase from the time you buy it until the time you sell it
- How easily you will be able to sell the property when the time comes (and what the exchange rate will be)
- Whether you would be willing to rent the property should you be unable to sell it and what the property market is like for similar rentals
- The direction that interest rates will take in the coming years

**Tax impact significant at higher income levels**

Given that each person's or family's situation is unique, the decision of whether to buy or rent can be determined only on an individual basis. In writing this article, my objective was to demonstrate that, although the housing exclusion has been reduced and a tax stacking provision imposed, the tax impact of renting versus buying only becomes significant at higher levels of income and thus should not be a primary and/or motivating factor in the decision of whether to buy or rent while living in Singapore unless this is the case.

Other ways of minimizing the U.S. tax burden (in the current tax environment) would be to maximize 401(k) or IRA contributions, consider whether converting to a tax equalization arrangement (if this is available) would be more beneficial, or asking your employer for assistance in paying the additional taxes due.

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# Scientific Shangri-La in Singapore

By BRETT GOLD

The friendly, high-energy, and renowned husband-and-wife cancer research team of Dr. Neal Copeland and Dr. Nancy Jenkins has found paradise here in the tropical city of Singapore, leaving behind their long-time home at the National Cancer Institute in Maryland for more research-friendly shores.

While some of their colleagues were taken aback that the dynamic pair would choose to leave the United States, those who know them well were not surprised. The veteran researchers consider Asia one of their favorite areas of the world and have traveled the continent extensively, visiting almost every country in the region. (Their first trip to Singapore was in 1984.) Their travel experiences made becoming expatriates a fairly easy transition, especially because they had so much to gain professionally and scientifically.

The doctors were lured here in September by the impressive scientific research opportunities and the nation's positive, open attitude toward science. Singapore is aiming to build a knowledge-based economy, and biotechnology is a vital part of its strategy to diversify the nation's economic base. The tiny city state has made a giant commitment to embrace biotechnology, and Biopolis, the \$500-million, seven-building complex, which opened in 2003, is at the core of this effort.

The tandem cancer researchers spend their work days in a building named Proteos: the Institute of Molecular and Cellular Biology, where they replaced the wall that once separated their offices with a shared table. Directly outside the conjoined offices is their bustling lab. They manage a highly motivated and determined staff and are beneficiaries of any researcher's dream—a five-year budget. For 60 months, they can devote their efforts to their pioneering cancer work instead of worrying about funding each and every year.

Back in the United States,



Scientists Neal Copeland and Nancy Jenkins have found paradise.

the research environment is not so rosy; a scarcity of research grants, political upheaval over stem-cells and corporate emphasis on quick returns have left many scientists disillusioned. Even their almost unheard of offer of two full-professorships at Stanford couldn't keep this distinguished couple in the United States.

While some of their American peers thought the team might be putting themselves "outside the loop" by relocating so far away, Copeland and Jenkins have found just the reverse. They cross paths with many more scientists from all over the world here in Singapore than they ever did in Maryland, and find there are more conferences and seminars than they can possibly attend. They also had the chance to meet with Lee Kuan Yew at a dinner with about a dozen other scientists. The former Prime Minister and father of modern Singapore reiterated the country's dedication to scientific research and its understanding that the process is a long-term effort. He emphasized that Singapore's objective is to educate, train and employ scientists.

On a personal level, although they have some of the same vexations many of we Americans have when moving here—using the windshield wipers as turn signals and looking the wrong way when crossing the street—Copeland and Jenkins feel fortunate to be in Singapore for many of the same reasons other expats do: it is a great stepping-stone for travel and has a safe and clean environment and fabulous food. Self-described "foodies," they are happily dining their way through Singapore's varied eateries. They also appreciate living

within walking distance of the American Club, making it easy to get an American fast-food fix (the Buffalo wings are a particular favorite) and to go for a workout at the well-equipped gym.

Dr. Copeland mentioned that he and his wife might like to retire right where they are. In little Singapore, at the visionary Biopolis, the dynamic couple may have found their Shangri-La.



The American Association Dragon Boat team is sponsored by Glenn Defense Marine.

By JANICE HULSE

The 2007 Dragon Boat season is in full swing! The American Dragon Boat team is energized and ready to compete! We are delighted to welcome new members to the team and encourage more to join. We have plenty of room for more members and look forward to an even stronger team as the year gets under way.

Practice is every Saturday from 4-6 p.m. at the Kallang Water Center.

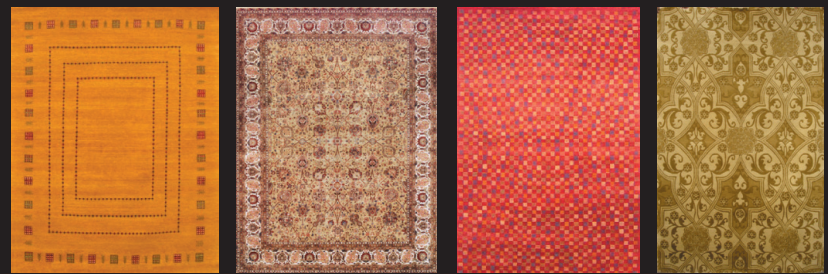
Our season starts with a 500-m race in March. The race is being held at Lower Seletar Reservoir on March 17 and 18. We hope family and friends will be there to cheer us on!

American Dragon Boat news and membership information can be found on [www.aasingapore.com](http://www.aasingapore.com).

See you at the races!

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