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WHEN IT SIZZLES

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KOLB SPILLS IT

VERY ROOTED

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FOONG WOON IS ALL
STRENGTH

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When It Sizzles

ONE OF THE GREATEST INVENTIONS THAT HAS REVOLUTIONISED THE BEVERAGE INDUSTRY SOMEWHAT WAS CREATED RIGHT HERE IN MALAYSIA - CANNED DRINKS THAT HEAT UP AUTOMATICALLY WHEN SHAKEN! LEONG WONG CHATS WITH DATO' KENNETH KOLB, ITS CREATOR.

Country Heights, a gated luxury housing community located out of Kuala Lumpur, is where a noted inventor and patent creator in the country lives with his family.

The Prestige team journeyed to interview Dato' Kenneth Warren Kolb at his beautiful modern wooden bungalow in its serene surroundings. This reporter was ushered into a wall to wall and floor to ceiling American Oak panelled den while our photographers 'roamed' outside to look for perfect spots to snap our photographs.

As Dato' Kolb led the way into the den, one could not help but spot a polo hat sitting on a nearby leather foldable chair. "I played polo before but two years ago, I fell off my pony, ended up with six broken ribs and was admitted to the ICU! My wife was then six months' pregnant with my second daughter. So that sort of ended my polo game!"

How did this man who has achieved so much in his young life do it? As Kolb

discloses, while other teenaged boys were out playing football and other physically strenuous activities, one 12 year old lad from New Orleans in the United States preferred to remain deep in his thoughts and do research on his science projects at home and prepare for a science competition.

Kolb, who has a Cuban mother and a second generation German-American father, was not your average kid. He loved to fill his time intellectually and dextrously through inventing things as a hobby.

Dato' Kolb reasons that his hyper-activeness probably has something to do with the environment he was raised in. "My father was an electrician and was also very good at fixing and making just about anything," he shares.

"I have always been making things and when I was in my sixth grade, I won my very first competition at the International Science and Engineering Fair. It was for my invention of a solar steel water filtration device that uses solar heat to separate mud from the muddy waters of the Mississippi



and turn out clean water."

Dato' Kolb has not looked back since, going on to far bigger and better things. Right after obtaining his college degree in BGS (Biological Science) at the University of Tulane, New Orleans and concurrently studying and conducting scientific research under a Nobel Laureate in medicine, he was offered a job he couldn't resist. The package was a lot more handsome than his previous position. The new job as Vice President of Product Development and Vice President of Overseas Operations for a US-based furniture importer took him a lot to Asia

Not once wavering from his penchant for inventions, he carried on developing and researching into all things that's practical and that could help "ease our lives."

"I have 15 working patents out there today," he discloses, adding that one of the most successful products was the Hot Can which has recently taken the world beverage market by storm.

"It is a commercially-viable product that heats a perfect piping hot cup of coffee, tea or soup in less than three minutes, anywhere, anytime. It also uses up to 65% less energy than a conventional electric kettle would have," he explains.

He adds, "The can itself is made up of aluminium which can be recycled many times over without losing any of its strength and quality; it is the most recycled packaging container which can help save up to 95% of the energy required to make aluminium from the raw materials."

The next question that arose naturally would be on the chemical involved in heating up the content within and its safety to the human body and the environment. "The heating source comes from natural by-products which are made up of water and calcium carbonate, the very same material that constitutes natural coral reefs and is also widely used in environmental protection applications."

"These materials are also used in drinking water treatment and the neutralisation of acid rain in forests and lakes," he elaborates. "In addition to that, the can is constructed in two parts; the outer one contains the liquid content while a smaller separate enclosure, that sits at the bottom of the can, contains the heating elements. So, all in all, it is environmentally friendly."

For the Hot Can alone, there are four patents that went with it. Kolb's company was awarded at the Fourth World Halal Forum for Best Innovation in the Halal Industry on 4th May 2009 for the invention.

He has added them proudly to the other awards he's received - a gold and a silver for Innovation Design Tech.

Dato' Kolb's serious concern for the environment is understandable. He is father to two lovely daughters, (India Scarlet Kolb, 6 and Electra Amber Kolb, 1½ years old). "If you ask me if I care about the environment, say, when I was in my 20's, I would probably say it was the last thing on

THE 4TH WORLD HALAL FORUM GALA DINNER 2009 THE HALAL JOURNAL AWARDS



Dato' Kenneth Kolb receiving the award for Best Innovation in the Halal Industry from Tun Abdullah Badawi



A beaming Dato' Kolb with the award

"I want to make the world safe for my children"

"This did not spell the end of his curious and inventive nature, though. While working for the furniture company, he designed, engineered and created several patents in relation to beds for the company.

"I was travelling a lot between here and the US as most of the manufacturers were based out here. Eventually, in 1990, I decided to set up home here as it only makes sense for the company to have me based out in Asia."

As years went by, he began starting up his businesses in his adoptive country.

my mind," he muses.

"Since I became a father, I developed a keen awareness of environmental safety literally overnight! I want to make the world safe for my children," he says, revealing a soft, paternal side.

With his attention turned on doing inventions (which comes as second nature, he says). Kolb still manages to find time for much deserved vacations. During one of these working holiday 10 years ago in London, he fell in love at first sight with a beautiful English rose by the name of Sophia Louise and got married to her in Pulau Langkawi, Malaysia!

As expected, the devoted husband and father has built some things to surprise his delighted family. While his wife and children were away in England recently, he remodeled the kitchen to make more room for everyone.

And during the Chinese New Year break this year, he built a stone castle with a draw-bridge for his two daughters, who were obviously elated. "I was bored over the break and decided to do something. I started building the stone castle during my spare time, it took me a month," he recalls.

There is always something to build, Dato Kolb says. "Even my house is not quite complete, there is always something to do and install."

He pointed out to a portion of the beautiful split level bungalow that is constructed in chengal wood in a subtle blend of modern and traditional Balinese style. He discloses having built almost three quarters of the house himself.

The garden, which stretches segmentedly over a few different levels, is very well kept. "I have a gardener who cuts the grass and does the light jobs around the garden, otherwise I do everything else myself. Even if there are heavy branches of trees to chop off, I will be directing him on what to remove!"

Despite his hectic schedule at work, Dato' Kolb is steadfast about spending as much time as possible with his daughters, "I am very much a hands-on dad, I even put the little ones to bed every night," he says, beaming.

He sends them to local private schools. His older daughter just started her first year at the Alice Smith International School. "When it comes to post secondary education, if she wants to go to Oxford or Cambridge University, I will be more than happy to send her there. But for her primary and secondary education, it will be here."

What else can Dato' Kolb surprise us



with? You better believe this, he also owns Little Havana on Changkat Bukit Bintang and also has a wine distillery here in Malaysia, with top quality grapes imported from Australia called Station Hill.

He is also an ardent reader, with a wide area of interest – from Shakespeare (Hamlet) to Marcus Aurelius (Meditations), Frank Herbert (Dune) to Sun Su (The Art of War)

So, it is no exaggeration to assume that we haven't heard the last of Dato' Kolb. The near future might see more patents revolutionising our lives. Not that we are complaining... □