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Environment top of Gov's agenda

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PHUKET: Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura has ordered that a special committee be set up to protect the environment in Phuket.

Gov Udomsak said that he would like police officers, forestry staff and volunteers to sit on the committee, which would respond to complaints from the public about environmental damage.

"I would like the committee to be able to act as soon as it receives a report that someone is damaging the environment, especially when they are despoiling hills," said Gov Udomsak.

"I have had so many complaints from people about officers just standing by and letting commercial interests chop down trees or make a mess of hills."

The Governor, who was speaking at his monthly meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall, also urged residents to support the government's attempt to save energy, by switching off the air conditioning in their offices when they went out for lunch and turning off power in their homes for five minutes from 8:45 pm.

He also urged road users to cut fuel consumption by driving at a maximum of 90kmh and by car pooling. "For example, people who like to play golf should go to the golf course in one car, rather than each driving there in his own vehicle," he explained.

The Governor also touched on the subject of crime, suggesting that Phuket should have its own sniffer dogs to search for bombs and drugs.

"It would be great if Phuket had at least two dogs. If any foreigner thinks he has a dog that might be suitable as a sniffer dog,



Maju Ozawa: 'It doesn't feel like there was a tsunami here at all.'

Star to boost Phuket in Japan

PHUKET: Top Japanese actress Maju Ozawa is to make a 54-minute TV show for presentation in her home country in order to promote Phuket to the Japanese market.

Arriving in Phuket on May 26 to tour Phuket and sign her contract with the Phuket Tourist Association, Ms Ozawa explained that

he can contact the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office," he said.

Gov Udomsak also recommended that the authorities see the low season as an opportunity to tidy up public amenities and services.

He said, "This is a good op-

portunity to put everything in order, especially public transportation such as tuk-tuks and motorbike taxis, while there is time to do this.

"If it isn't done now, the high season will be here again, and it's anybody's guess when we would have chance to do it then."

Island to get water from Surat Thani dam?

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Surasak Anak-khaphan, Adviser to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Minister Suwit Khunkitti, has proposed that water be piped from Chieo Lan Reservoir in Surat Thani Province as a long-term solution to Phuket's chronic - and worsening - water shortage problems.

At a meeting on May 31 at the Phuket Provincial Hall, K. Surasak explained that Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra had allocated each minister the responsibility of solving drought problems in two provinces, and that ICT Minister Suwit was given responsibility for Phuket and Phang Nga provinces.

Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura said that Phuket currently has about 19 old tin mine lagoons that can be used as water sources.

He added that Phuket will have two more water sources: a dam at Klong Krata in Chalong that will be able to hold 5.5 million cubic meters of water, and another at Bang Niew Dum in Thalang, which will be able to store 7.2 million cubic meters.

But, K. Surasak said, "In the longer term, we have to investigate whether to put a pipe from the dam in Surat Thani to [supplement] supply to Krabi, Phang Nga and Phuket."

He said that the pipeline would be 190 kilometers long and would cost, at today's prices, about 3.9 billion baht.

Gov Udomsak set a June 5 deadline for the Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation to give K. Surasak any appropriate information and suggestions for improving Phuket's water supplies.



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ABSOLUTELY LOVIN' PHUKET



This week's 'We Love Phuket' sticker winners were (left) Phakkaphol Sri-Utaiwong, who went home with a return ticket from Phuket to Singapore, courtesy of SilkAir, presented to him by the *Gazette's* Accounting Manager Wipa Putkeaw; and (right) Keith Robinson, who received a two-night stay for two at the Holiday Inn from *Gazette* Chief Reporter Sangkhae Leelanaporn.

IN BRIEF

Airport numbers go into a tailspin

PHUKET: International passenger arrivals and departures at Phuket International Airport in April plummeted to less than half the number in April last year, and the number of international flights dropped by a third, thanks to the downturn in tourism following the tsunami.

The statistics, obtained from the airport, show that the number of international passengers using the island's airport slumped from 140,016 in April last year to 60,909 this year, a drop of 56.5%.

The number of domestic passengers fell by 22.92%, from 228,934 in April last year to 176,470 in April this year.

The number of international flights was down from 1,190 flights last year to 806 flights this year, a fall of 32.27%. Domestic flights also decreased by 8.74%, from 1,385 last year to 1,264 this year.

Road death toll leaps

PHUKET CITY: Official figures obtained from Wachira, Thalang, Patong and Ruampaet government hospitals show that 18 people died in motorcycle accidents on Phuket's roads during April.

In addition, three died in car accidents and one unlucky pedestrian was killed.

The figures are an increase on those for March, when 11 people died on Phuket's roads, all in motorbike accidents.

The hospital records also show that during April, 1,262 people were injured in road accidents. Of these, 1,146 were on motorbikes and 116 were in cars.

Volunteer cops train

THALANG: Ninety new volunteer police officers have taken part in two days of training during which they learned martial arts basics along with topics including providing security for VIPs and dealing with sensitive situations such as bomb threats.

The 90 who have volunteered to support the province's 400 paid, full-time officers gathered at the Khao Pra Taew Wildlife Conservation Development and Extension Center in Thalang District.

The volunteer police officers scheme, an initiative of the Phuket Provincial Police and the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), was launched in October last year.

Volunteers get paid for their efforts – but only around 2,000 baht per month. They wear uniforms similar to those of conventional police officers, but do not carry firearms.

The *OrBorJor* plans to recruit 90 more volunteer officers, although no timetable has been set for this.

Island gets first film festival

PHUKET CITY: The island's first movie festival, the European Union Film Festival 2005, will be launched at the SFX Coliseum Cinema in Central Festival on June 16.

The 11-day, 30-movie festival, co-sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*, will kick off on the evening of June 16 with an opening party followed an 8 pm screening of *Dream Car*, a romantic comedy directed by Barna Kabay of Hungary.

All movies will be screened with their original soundtracks and subtitles in English. Tickets will cost 70 baht per movie.

For more information call Phuket SFX Coliseum Cinema at Tel: 076-209000 or the SFX Bangkok call center at Tel: 02-6288888. A full program and synopses of movies can be seen online at www.phuketgazette.net/moviefestival.asp

Drive to promote duty-free shopping

By Athiga Jundee

PHUKET: The government is to urge businesspeople to open more duty-free shops in Phuket, the Director of the Thai Customs Department, Sathit Limpongpan, said on May 25.

K. Sathit said it was hoped that having more duty-free shops in the province would encourage more tourists to come here.

There are currently only two duty-free shops in the province: one at Phuket International Airport and another, Wang Talang, on Chao Fa West Rd.

At present, customers who buy from Wang Talang collect their goods at the airport as they leave Phuket.

But the government would like to see duty-free shops established from which customers could take their goods with them after buying them, and show a proof of purchase at the airport as they leave Phuket.

The drive is the latest attempt by the government to boost duty-free shopping in Phuket, after abandoning plans from last year to make the entire province a duty-free zone.

K. Sathit was speaking after the start of the first bilateral meeting between the Thai Customs Department and Royal Malaysian Customs.

The meeting, held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel on May 25 and 26, was intended to pave the way for simplifying import

and export procedures between the two countries.

If the new procedures are adopted by the two countries, people importing and exporting goods would have to fill in only one set of forms and have their goods inspected just once.

At present, they must fill in forms for Thai Customs and Malaysian Customs and have their goods inspected twice – when they leave the country they are being exported from, and when they arrive in the country they are being imported to.

K. Sathit said that if the new procedures were successful, "This could be a pilot for procedures followed by our neighbors, such as the countries around the Mekong River."

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K. Suwan with the fungus that simply appeared in her shed.
- Photo by Lothar Schudt.

Fungus sparks lottery lust

RAWAI: Hundreds of people have been making their way to a small house in Village 6 to see a clump of enormous, white mushrooms that sprang up there on Visaka Bucha Day and which is thought by many villagers to be a harbinger of good luck.

Homeowner Suwan "Prachuap" Phungkung, a fortune-teller by trade, told the *Gazette* she discovered the mushrooms growing out of the dirt beneath three sheets of linoleum in an old storage shed in front of her house at 182/12 Soi Naya.

The 51-year-old explained that she returned to Rawai from her native Trang on the evening of May 21. As she slept that night, she dreamed that an old couple came to her to ask her to tell their fortunes.

"At first I told them I was too bored, but finally I gave in. But when I went to tell their fortunes, I couldn't find the white linen sheet I needed to lay the fortune-telling cards on. That frightened me, and I woke up," she explained.

The next morning she noticed her white cat, Songsee, behaving strangely and pawing at something beneath some sheets of linoleum in the shed. Afraid it might be a snake, she used a stick to ease back the linoleum. As she did, she uncovered the huge mushroom, which had over 25 "ears" set in three tiers and bore a striking resemblance to a coral formation.

K. Suwan considered the appearance of the mushroom of Visaka Bucha Day to be auspicious, so she immediately lit joss sticks and set up a small shrine with fruit and flower offerings.

Word travels fast in a Thai village, and before long visitors from near and far were coming to pay their respects to the unusual fungus.

Many of them hoped that a close inspection of the fungus would somehow convey to them the winning numbers in the June 1 lottery draw.

Counts of the number of individual ears have varied, some seeing 27 and others 29. Both of these numbers proved popular with people playing the two- and three-digit government lottery.

As for K. Suwan the fortune-teller, she said she seldom plays the lottery.

"I neither expect nor am interested in deriving any financial gain from this good thing that has happened in my home.

"All I ask is that it will bring happiness to my family," she said, adding that anyone who was interested in seeing the mushroom was welcome to come by and pay their respects.

- Sangkhae Leelanaporn

Gov orders probe into tour company

PHUKET CITY (*Khom Chad Luek, Phuket Gazette*): Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangura has ordered an investigation into a tour company for allegedly intimidating tourists into buying overpriced package tours.

The Tourist Police denied having received any complaints about the company in question, which is located close to their office on the bypass road.

The Governor ordered the investigation while chairing the monthly CEO Governor's Meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on May 25.

During a discussion of Phuket's "transport mafia" woes, former Phuket Town Mayor Phummisak Hongsyok, who attended the meeting in his capacity as President of the Phuket Real Estate Club, mentioned that a high-ranking police official was involved in operating a "tour

company" that picked up fares at the airport.

"I have had many reports from tourists about one 'influential' company that [somehow obtained the right to and does] pick up passengers at the airport. From there, they take them to their offices, sometimes detaining them for one or two hours and forcing them to buy highly overpriced tour packages," he said.

K. Phummisak said that the tour company would also call around to various hotels and arrange accommodation for the tourists, charging them, in some cases, 1,000 baht or more upon arrival at their hotels. He added that the company also received a commission from the hotels involved.

"If we don't take action against this soon, it will create big problems for Phuket tourism in the future," he said.

Gov Udomsak agreed readily to take action against the tour company, which he already knew to be located next to the Tourist Police office.

"The Tourist Police can't tell me that they don't know anything about this ... This issue has come up time and again in these meetings ... but I don't see anybody [doing] anything about it. We talk about it all the time, then nobody does anything. I just don't understand it," he said.

It is understood that Provincial Police Deputy Commander Pol Col Kokiak Wongvorachart will head the investigation.

The Governor also suggested putting the owners of the company on the provincial list of "influential figures", thus allowing those responsible to be dealt with at a higher level as part of the the Prime Minister's "war on corruption".

Mental trauma center opens

KHAO LAK: More than five months after the tsunami, the Mental Health Recovery Center (MHRC) - in Khuek Khak, Takua Pa District, Phang Nga Province, and set up at a cost of some 20 million baht - was opened on May 26 by Deputy Minister of Public Health Anutin Charnvirakul.

Dr Benjaporn Panyayong, the Director of the MHRC, told the *Gazette* that the center's purpose is simple: to facilitate the psychological recovery of tsunami victims in the six affected provinces.

She added that Phang Nga was that obvious choice for the center of operations because the greatest devastation and loss of life occurred there.

According to figures released by the MHRC, 17,501

people have so far been in touch. However, Dr Benjaporn estimates that, based on evidence gathered from sampling, a further 30,000 people in the six tsunami-affected provinces may need help.

Although the main focus of the MHRC's attention will be Thais, Dr Benjaporn said that people of all nationalities can make use of the service.

The center, in Baan Banglah Oan, Khuek Khak, will remain open for a maximum of two years. For further details call Tel: 076-423556-8 between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm daily.

- Anongnat Sartpisut

Blood bank calls for foreign volunteers

PHUKET CITY: The blood bank at Wachira Phuket Hospital is appealing for expatriates of all ages and nationalities to become volunteer helpers.

The head of the blood bank, Sriroung Choophak, said that foreign volunteers could help put donors at ease when they came to give blood, and maybe come up with ideas for improving the blood service.

K. Sriroung also appealed for more donors, especially those with blood types B or O.

The blood bank can be contacted at Tel: 076-369188 or by email to: sriroung9@yahoo.com

Queer News

Return to sender!

TAK: A mother in Sam Ngao District paid the ultimate price for letting her curiosity get the better of her - when she opened a parcel addressed to her daughter that turned out to be a letter bomb.

The victim, 56-year-old pig farmer Phayao Ruamsuk, had collected the parcel, which was addressed to her daughter Kannitha.

Kannitha, 22, had married just a few days earlier and gone to live with her husband, a veterinarian from Lop Buri.

It is not uncommon for Thai mothers to open their children's mail, and at about 11 pm on May 24 that's what K. Phayao did.

The force of the ensuing blast blew off her clothes, except for her underwear, and left her unconscious with deep wounds to the body and head. When police arrived at the house they found K. Phayao lying face-down and in a pool of her own blood.

She was rushed to Somdej Prajao Thaksin Maharaj Hospital in Tak, where she died of her injuries.

Her husband Khaen, 59, said the package had contained what purported to be a wedding gift - a plastic doll shaped like a cat - accompanied by a note congratulating their daughter on her recent wedding.

The parcel also contained a piece of wire and a battery, which presumably served to detonate the device. K. Khaen said he only survived the blast because he went out behind the house to cook, apparently leaving his wife to fiddle with the unusual wedding present - before it exploded.

Police arrested a 25-year-old car salesman, Jamriang Pumanat, in his house in Tak's Muang District the following day and charged him with premeditated murder. He reportedly sent the bomb to K. Kannitha after she broke his heart by marrying the vet.

Police checked with the Sam Ngao Post Office, and staff there remembered seeing Jamriang coming to the office to mail the parcel on May 15.

Jamriang denied sending the parcel, but his handwriting on the outside of the parcel, along with the posting record made a strong case against him, police said.

K. Kannitha told police that she had known Jamriang as a friend for seven years but had rejected his attempts to become her boyfriend.

She added that she had asked Jamriang to stop calling her after she got married on May 14, but he phoned her on May 15 asking for her husband's mailing address in Lop Buri so he could send her a wedding gift.

She refused to give the address in Lop Buri and asked Jamriang not to send her anything.

Sources: Daily News, The Nation

Advertisement for Raksatt Pet Hospital (Kaorang) Phuket and Raksatt Dog Spa & Salon. Includes services like treatment, surgery, grooming, and pet care. Contact info: 076-211549.

Memorial or

Some weeks ago a curious dispute took place at Takuapa Town Hall in Phang Nga. On May 15, Pat Jantkaew, chairman of the Tsunami Museum Foundation Committee, called together the full board for a meeting.

In his role as adviser, Phang Nga MP Kris Srifa noted a media report in which Plodprasop Suraswadi, an Assistant to the Prime Minister's Office, was quoted as wanting to tell the committee that after surveying the proposed site for the museum he found the plan was solidly opposed by local people.

He also expressed concern that people abroad would oppose the museum, viewing it as exploiting tsunami deaths.

"That's something he'd like all of us to consider before proceeding," K. Kris told the meeting.

As former chief of Thailand's National Park system, K. Plodprasop's opinion carries weight. But why does he think foreigners would object to construction of the museum?

The tsunami, after all, did not discriminate. Roughly half of the dead were Thais and the total financial losses were overwhelmingly suffered by Thais, who continue to suffer from the subsequent slump in tourism.

What K. Plodprasop and other officials are plainly aware of, however, is that a great wave of cash is about to pour in on Thailand.

After former United States Presidents George W Bush and Bill Clinton toured the disaster zone in January, they reportedly used their fund-raising skills to gather more than one billion dollars in donations for tsunami relief from the private sector.

That money is only a part of the cash entering southern Thailand. Phuket Senator Pairoon Upatising recently criticized the government for failing to fulfill promises of financial help made to tsunami victims.

"The government budgeted only 5 billion baht to revive tourism in the six southern provinces," he said. "That amount

Debate still rages over the proposed tsunami memorial to be erected in Phang Nga, with some solidly opposed to it and others in favor.

Here, Na Meuanmaew looks at the issues and tries to determine whether the memorial - if it is ever built - will be a serious attempt to pay homage to the victims of the horror of December 16, 2004, or whether it risks being seen as pandering to 'dark' tourism.



Former US Presidents George Bush (left) and Bill Clinton (red shirt) visit the Wall of Remembrance in Mai Khao, which has already become something of a tourism site.

was cut to 2.317 billion; and now it's been reduced again, leaving just 1.061 billion ... if we had not received help from Thais and foreigners in the South, if we had relied on the government alone, our gums would be shriveled and dry before we [had] ever received the money."

The amount that individuals and small organizations have donated is staggering and continues to grow, with many new projects announced last month. It's no wonder, then, that the government has been able to cut the tourism revival budget. What is lacking is not money, but tourists.

The cornucopia will increase further if the government

shells out 963 million baht earmarked for coastal clean-ups before the end of September. The clean-up for Kamala alone is budgeted at 330 million baht.

Money is flowing, yet all is not well. There is a corruption problem: 2 million baht disappeared from a strong box in Phuket's Provincial Treasury Office in February and in Tambon Kok Kloy, Phang Nga, the local government has admitted that relief funds have been improperly disbursed.

In Phang Nga, allegations of land-grabbing by developers who pay thugs to drive local people from their homes are rife. One allegedly improper land deal involves a 20,000-rai plot of Na-

Real estate advertisement for Sinsuk Thani. Features images of houses and text: 'The best value homes in Phuket. Polyurethane foam. The insulation material for every unit.' Contact: Tel: 0-7631-4107-9, www.sinsukthani.com

exploitation of death?



Baan Nam Khem is to get a memorial centered on this stranded trawler, which already attracts camera-toting tourists.

tional Forest land in Kapong on which documents have been issued to developers. A former village chief there told investigators on May 22 that he had been bullied with threats into certifying the plot's boundary lines.

Many of the problems, as Phang Nga's Governor Anuwat

Metheeviboonwut pointed out, are long-standing. As he also pointed out, "The tsunami has made Phang Nga much better known throughout the world."

The same can be said of Thailand and Phuket. Scrutiny of activities here will be much more searching in the future.

Clearly, with so much money at stake, and so much turmoil just beneath the surface, tales of

official corruption are not welcome. Neither are allegations of trading on the tragedy to make a quick buck.

Foreigners were perhaps surprised by the many tsunami VCDs and DVDs blatantly trading on death and disaster that have shown up at street stalls.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand may also have raised some eyebrows by organizing budget tours to stricken areas; Chambers of Commerce "were ordered" on May 6 to take advantage of the 3,700-baht-per-person offer.

In what seems an obvious tourism ploy, a four-million-baht monument to the fallen is slated to be built at Phang Nga's Ban Nam Khem and a "Wall of Remembrance" erected in January at the Mai Khao Disaster Victim Identification Center has also become a tourist stop.

It's no wonder that K. Plodprasop was worried when he heard of plans for the tsunami museum. Tour buses lining up daily to disgorge hundreds of "disaster tourists" might indeed look like "exploiting death" to some.

At the Museum Foundation Committee meeting in Takuapa, it was decided that K. Plodprasop was in error, however. Apparently deriving inspiration from Holocaust museums, the committee affirmed their project "is in the interests of study ... and so that people around the world will know what happened."

The committee stressed,

"The people of Phang Nga will have the museum. Many things have changed here, for better and for worse, so it is imperative that this project be pushed."

Part of the imperative is undoubtedly the budget: the central government is allocating 10 million baht a year for two years to gathering material – pictorial, written and anecdotal – on the tsunami.

Prof Sommai Pinpootasilapa of Phuket Rajabhat University, a consultant to the committee, was quoted in the Thai-language press saying: "We're trying to get this museum finished as quickly as possible."

"But the committee is occupied with many different aspects of the project, so progress is slower than we'd like."

During the meeting it was decided to establish an official charity organization for donations "...from Thais and foreigners", to make a "public relations video", and to register an Internet domain name for the new charity.

For years, tourism industry officials worked to raise global recognition of the region. On December 26 they got what they wanted, but in a way they could never have imagined and definitely would not have wanted.

Whether or not the tsunami museum takes off, one thing is sure: the tsunami will continue to affect tourism here – for better or worse – well into the future. *Editorial – page 20*



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By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

NEOPRENE DREAMS

For years, divers in drab, black wetsuits had to grudgingly accept being upstaged by the brilliance of the butterfly fish, moorish idols, anemone fish and other colorful creatures that grace Phuket waters.

Designed with safety foremost in mind, wetsuits have traditionally been among the most utilitarian of apparel – until recently. Now divers wanting to explore the depths in style will want to check out Octopus Wetsuit in Chalong, which tailors colorful, made-to-order Neoprene wetsuits that are as striking in appearance as they are comfortable.

With designs ranging from military camouflage to bright, sleek designs that Aquaman would be proud to don, the shop can outfit divers in just about any style or color they want – and at prices cheaper than anything available in Europe or North America.

Shop Manager Rattana T.N. Dee told the *Gazette* that, fashion concerns aside, the best part of having a custom-made Neoprene wetsuit is the comfort and flexibility it offers – something off-the-rack wetsuits just can't match.

And for children, very large people or those with unusual body shapes, hand-made wetsuits are often the only option. The wetsuits are surprisingly light as well, a typical Neoprene wetsuit weighing about one kilogram.

The shop currently has some 20 designs which can be tailored to fit the customer, but more often than not divers already have their own unique designs in mind when they come



Left, Shop Manager Rattana T.N. Dee with one of her wetsuits showing that native marine life need not be the only animals in the sea in camouflage.

Above, Some more lively looking wetsuits.

Neoprene is available in thicknesses from 1.5 millimeters to 5 millimeters, and that the shop will soon expand its range to include a 7mm fabric for added warmth. For warm water divers, lycra wetsuits are also available.

Mr Mainardis added that in recent years many divers have come to view wetsuits as more than just equipment. At first, divers started ordering orange and yellow panels to spice up the classic black. Now the shop is offering bright red, blue and violet as well. With a little imagination, now any diver can not only enjoy the beauty of the reef but also blend right into it.

Octopus is open daily from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm. Tel: 076-282425 or email: octopus_wetsuit@hotmail.com

in to order – and many want to stand out from other divers, she said.

K. Rattana pointed out that, with wetsuit rentals on the island starting out at about 200 baht a day, it makes good sense for anyone who plans to do a lot of diving to get their own suit made. And there are few better places to take the plunge than at Octopus Wetsuit, which is one of just a handful of shops in Thailand that make custom wetsuits.

Not surprisingly, many of

the shop's customers are foreigners here on dive holidays.

"Most of the customers want to get their wetsuits in Thailand because they are high-quality, yet reasonably priced at about 5,000 to 6,000 baht. We give a six-month guarantee and repair any flaws in the fabric during that time," she said.

The company uses high-quality Neoprene imported from Taiwan, and produces a range of other products from the material including life jackets at 500 baht

each and wrap-around beer coolers with logos starting at about 75 baht each.

The wetsuits can also be screened with lettering, pictures, or just about any other image the customer wants – so there is nothing to stop a couple from having a "his and hers" pair of divesuits with their names on them – and matching beer coolers as well. How's that for a fashion statement?

Marketing Manager Guido Mainardis told the *Gazette* that

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The song remains the same

Citing a 2003 Cabinet resolution, Culture Minister Uraiwan Thienthong said government agencies and state enterprises will be required to play only the official version of the Thai national anthem sanctioned by the National Identity Promotion Office. She also asked the private sector to comply.

The announcement comes as a blow to the Ministry of Defense, which asked recording powerhouse GMM Grammy for various versions of the anthem in a bid to attract a wider audience. When the entertainment house came up with six renditions, it faced a storm of criticism.

"The Cabinet resolution is clear, so we have no need to issue any resolution involving the newly arranged versions and to hold a public hearing," K. Uraiwan said after chairing a heated meeting of the National Culture Commission.

Historic ruling: Thailand's system of checks-and-balances was thrown into turmoil when the Supreme Court's political division found all nine anti-corruption commissioners guilty of abusing their power when they awarded themselves a pay rise.

The court gave each of the nine members of the National Counter Corruption Commission (NCCC) a two-year suspended jail term, a verdict that put them under immediate pressure to resign en masse.

The unexpected demise of the entire commission spelt bad news for the opposition, which is trying to overcome constitutional obstacles to launch a censure bid against the scandal-plagued Thaksin government.

The charter requires that any graft-related censure motion be accompanied by an impeachment motion – and that must go through the Senate and the NCCC.

The commissioners' fate also cast dark clouds over some



FULL IMPACT: Soldiers inspect the wreckage of a military truck hit by an attack with a home-made bomb in Narathiwat Province on May 24.

It was one of five bomb incidents in the Southern province that day. Four soldiers were injured in the attack.

other independent bodies, such as the Constitutional Court, whose members also awarded themselves a pay rise.

The Supreme Court's political division ruled that the nine commissioners were state employees, therefore their pay rise had to be effected by law.

War on tobacco: In an attempt to help people quit smoking, the Ministry of Public Health will allow over-the-counter sales of nicotine chewing gum and patches.

Public Health Minister Suchai Charoenratanakul signed a directive allowing prescription-free sale of the anti-smoking aids, which will allow the devices to be made available as soon as the directive is published in the *Royal Gazette*.

Nicotine gum and patches provide supplementary nicotine that can prevent early nicotine withdrawal symptoms in people trying to kick the habit.

Thai Pharmaceutical Council Vice President Wisit Praweenwongwut said that up to 30% of smokers who use supplementary nicotine aids are able to quit.

Fight for survival: About 50 representatives from various private organizations called on the Governor of Chiang Rai to order construction of a new Tesco Lotus superstore near Mae Sai to cease.

"Many retail shops along the border will die if a superstore is built there," said Sumeth Phormjaisa, head of the Rak Mae Sai Group that is organizing the protest.

K. Sumeth said more than 10,000 local families are ready to act against the superstore and fight for the survival of local businesses that would inevitably be affected.

Work on the 12-million-baht store on 30-rai of land about five kilometers from Mae Sai Town is scheduled to start in November. Chiang Rai Governor Vorakiet Somsay said he would discuss the issue with related agencies and ensure that all sides are treated fairly.

Killer cop gets life: Pol Sgt Somchai Wisetsingha, 40, was sentenced to life in prison for murdering British tourists Adam Lloyd, 25, and his girlfriend,

Vanessa Arscott, 24 in Kanchanaburi Province.

Somchai shot Mr Lloyd, then ran down Ms Arscott in his car before shooting her dead in an effort to conceal the first killing, the court ruled. He was also found guilty of two weapons offenses.

The murders took place on September 9 last year. Somchai fled after the murders, not surrendering to police until October 7.

He initially confessed to the killings during police questioning, but later denied murdering the couple, claiming he had never met them. He pleaded innocent in court.

Family and friends of the victims arrived at the courthouse in a motorcade and hugged each other as an interpreter translated the ruling.

Beautiful illusion: The government's payment of 265 million baht for the right to host the Miss Universe pageant appears to have been wasted, with hotel occupancy rates in Bangkok falling nearly 10% compared with the same period last year.

The government had justified the payment by saying it would boost tourism – the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) predicted that 10,000 international visitors would converge on the Kingdom to watch the show.

Apichart Sankary, President of the Association of Thai Travel Agents, said that 93,458 tourists arrived during the first 15 days of May, down 9.5% over the same period last year.

Thai Hotels Association Deputy President Prakrit Shinamoupong said Bangkok's average hotel occupancy rate in the first half of the month was 70%, the same as last year.

Most observers seem to blame the poor preparations and delays in finalizing the deal between the TAT and the Miss Universe Organization, which left tour companies little time to come up with promotions.

Fishy business: The Department of Fisheries has announced what it claims to be the world's first successful breeding of the near-extinct archer fish, and says its efforts may create a lucrative market for the rare species.

The Sitdhi Boonyaratpalin, Director-General of the department, said that the Fresh Water Fisheries Research and Development Center in Nakhon Sawan Province had finally succeeded in breeding and raising 500 of the fish after three years of trying. The fish are now more than a month old and each fish is about two centimeters long.

K. Sitdhi said there were no reports of successful breeding and raising of juvenile archer fish anywhere else in the world.

Around the Nation news roundup is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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Unbearable slowness of funding

Five months have passed since the tsunami, but it is certainly not something that we can just put behind us. That said, though, a mild sense of normality is settling in, with more and more shops and restaurants re-opening in Khao Lak and with the greenery growing back fast, thanks to heavy rainfall.

On a sunny day, Bang Niang Beach is almost the beautiful paradise it once was – so long as the photographer manages to get the right angle for a glossy magazine shot.

It is almost magical how fast Bang Niang has been cleaned up and reconstruction started. Bang Niang Rd is completely paved now. Several dirt sois in Bang Niang are now concrete roads, and a 7-Eleven has opened near the Bang Niang intersection.

But Nang Thong Beach is far behind Bang Niang, with the beach road still littered with wrecked cars and ruins, grim reminders of the tragedy.

The slowness of banks in

processing soft loan applications and a lack of funding are still the biggest obstacles to reconstruction.

Countless proposals have been submitted, but very few have secured funding. With the German Embassy in Thailand announcing that no more funds are available, the question everyone is now asking is: "Where are the millions of Euros donated by Western countries?"

Browsing the so-called donation portal of the German TV station ZDF, you will have a hard time finding overseas donation funds that actually reached Khao Lak.

Battered and bruised, the majority of Khao Lak residents and business people are having to rely solely on loans and private donations.

The big-time losers here are without doubt the small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and private home owners, as few government officials believe that a formerly "rich" resort or beach house owner suddenly has nothing left.



Among the Bang Niang resorts rapidly being rebuilt is the Mukdara.

The SMEs are fish too small to be of any interest at all to the banks, while former villa owners are being encouraged to go back to their home countries and simply pick more money from the trees.

Some Thais who previously lived in improvised shacks on government land now live in houses a hundred times more stable and comfortable than their former homes, and they have qualified for up to 10,000 baht a month from Thai and foreign donors merely by sitting in a tsunami shelter enjoying free food and medical treatment.

A fair system would recognize the potential for tourism dollars that an SME represents and would at least try to help SMEs to get back on their feet as quickly as possible, by offering them sufficient financial support rather than the paltry 5,000 or 10,000 baht they have received.

Even though my words will most likely not change a thing, at least I hope that I may have opened the eyes of some potential donors.

Right now, the relief efforts have reached a crossroads. We are long past the time when attention should have been switch-

ed from shelter and home construction to serious planning for the future. It is essential to create jobs and get survivors out of the camps and back into a "normal" life with a future ahead of them.

Mental help: With more than 150 days having passed, the Department of Mental Health and the Ministry of Public Health have finally managed to set up and open the "Mental Health Recovery Center" (MHRC) in Khao Lak. The opening ceremony took place on May 26.

The center is located in the southernmost part of Khao Lak center, occupying five shop houses that previously accommodated Jack's Dive Supplies.

The goal of the medical team here is to help tsunami victims recover from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression and possibly resulting drug abuse. While the intentions of the MHRC and its team are certainly honorable, the question remains: "What took you so long?"

Anyone still troubled by the aftermath of the tsunami is encouraged to call 02-9511378 for further information or visit the MHRC to make an appointment.



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Location Map



This week



NOTABLE NORDICS: At the grand opening of the 34th Asian Area Skål Assembly, held recently at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa, was Vice-Governor Supachai Yuwaboon (left) with the Secretary General of Skål International Jim Power, Asian Area President Denis Bechard and Uzi Yalon from Israel (3rd, 4th and 5th from left, respectively) and (from right) Phuket President Martin van der Reijden, Malai Sakolviphak and Matanyah Hecht, President of Skål International.



LAGUNA LAUNCH: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura ties blessed fabric to a longtail boat during a Mae Ya Nang blessing ceremony at Bang Tao Beach on May 26. The boat was one of 49 donated by the Laguna Phuket Tsunami Recovery Fund to local fishermen whose boats were destroyed by the tsunami. James Batt (foreground, right), Joint MD of Laguna Resorts and Hotels, and Claire Chiang (on his left), MD of Retail Operations at Banyan Tree Gallery, look on.



GOOD TO BE GREEN: Entertainer Miss Julie (2nd from left) steals a kiss from Heath Norris, CEO of Offshore Holding Advisory, after a charity performance at the Green Man Pub & Restaurant in Rawai on May 25. With them are Mangosteen Resort & Spa Managing Director Kewalee Von Keller (left) and Green Man MD Poonpun Jangruga.



LUCKY DIP: J D Pools Managing Director Tanusak Phungdech (2nd from left) and Director of Sales Norbert Witthinrich (right) pose for a photo with lucky prize draw winner Peter Stallinga (4th from left), from Krabi, who won a 50% discount on a pool during the recent Phuket & Andaman Rebuild show at the Royal Phuket City Hotel.



TIP OR TREAT? Dulwich International College teacher Sue Horne helps her kindergarten students to work out what change to give a diner as part of their recent field trip to the Tea House restaurant at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Beach Resort.



CRAZY CLEANERS: Staff from the Crazy Bar in Kamala take a break during the weekly Sunday afternoon beachfront cleanup at Kamala. Since the tsunami, nearly 100 employees of small businesses in Kamala have been coordinating their efforts to clean up the beach, and will continue to do so throughout the rainy season.

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Natural reformation in

Phuket Gazette: People told me that once you were a bad boy before you came to your senses. Just how bad were you?

K. Chatchai: I was born here in Baan Phara to a Buddhist mother and a Muslim father. I didn't finish school. I did six years of primary school and that was it.

I liked going around town, having fun, living day to day. I guess you could say that I didn't pay much attention to life. Once I got myself into real trouble and I went to jail. I did my time. So I was pretty bad.

PG: What made you become a good person?

K. Chatchai: I guess it must be maturity. I'm 32 years old now. From my wild days I saw and learned a lot and now I've learned to be good. I don't want to go back down that same route again. I figure I'm a thinker; I've always had ideas, and to set up and run a club to preserve Baan Phara's traditions and its natural water sources and mangrove trees is my thing now.

PG: Why this club and why Baan Phara?

K. Chatchai: I lived on Koh Yao Yai for some years. I married a local girl. I was a fisherman in those days and I saw a lot happen there. Things are changing; the locals are selling off land to outsiders and to foreigners.

Some locals have changed their lifestyle. Some have stopped fishing and have gone to Phuket or to Phi Phi to work in the tourism industry. That affected the lifestyle of the whole island in my opinion and I didn't like that.

If the locals can earn a good living by doing something that goes along with their lifestyle and

Chatchai "Att" Wonglee, from Baan Phara, Thalang, is a man with vision. He looks like any typical Thai Muslim, but Chatchai has experienced a complete turnaround in his life. Once the bad boy of the village, he is now the force behind an important village project.

Here he explains to the *Gazette's* Rungtip Hongjakpet about his personal reformation and the project that has become the driving force in his life today.

don't have to move anywhere else to earn money, it would be better.

I moved back to my home village and wanted to do something to prevent [locals selling their land and moving away].

You see, we have many good things in our village and the area nearby. We have an untouched waterfall which no one knows about, rare birds, giant trees and these are just to start with.

PG: Tell us how you went about setting up the club.

K. Chatchai: About seven or eight months ago, I went round to see my old friends and family in the village to talk to them about how important it was for us and our new generation to preserve our traditional way of living before

it became too modern. I told them we should learn how to live with nature.

I knew that we have good products we made under the OTOP [One Tambon One Product] scheme in the village and sold elsewhere. So why didn't we try to bring visitors and tourists to our village to participate in our lifestyle and at the same time they could also shop in the village?

I suggested doing something like a home-stay program. They liked my ideas and they've become reality.

PG: How many members of the club are there, and who are they?

K. Chatchai: There are around 400 houses in the village. We have 100 members and have an agreement that only one person from each house can be a member. It's easier to work that way.



'...to set up and run a club to preserve Baan Phara's traditions and its natural water sources and mangrove trees is my thing now.'
- Chatchai "Att" Wonglee



The members are from all walks of life; from fishermen to rubber plantation workers, housewives, school teachers to the police.

I can tell you, it's not easy to explain to them what I'm doing and some of them even say to my face that I'm crazy but I'm not giving up. I told them that this club is really for our village.

I don't care who you are, Buddhist, Muslim or anything. This club is run by the villagers for the villagers. We actually

have two *farang* members. One is from Denmark and the other ... I can't remember.

These people are my friends; they live in and like the village. One of them teaches our children English, so when we have tourists come to use our home-stay service in the future, the two sides can communicate.

PG: Is the club active yet?

K. Chatchai: Our first activity is that we are hosting 30 students, aged nine to 16, next weekend (June 4-5, 2005). They are sea gypsy youngsters and local kids. They are learning how to be little tour guides, how to live and help to preserve nature around us. It's a lot of fun.

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Baan Phara



Club member Isarapap Hapha (right) with his two daughters Alisa (left) and Marina stand on the terrace of the family house with K. Chatchai. The house is around 90 years old and is now ready to welcome home stay tourists.

PG: Tell us more about your home-stay idea. Have you started it yet?

K. Chatchai: Our first group of guests should come in about a month or two. They are *farang* and it will be a good test for us.

We are preparing about 10 old-style Phuket wooden houses in the village. To make the home-stay project work we will have to have clean houses with clean toilets and workable kitchens.

In our houses in Baan Phara, we have old household items such as irons, Chinese bowls, Chinese ink and fishing equipment. Some of these are antiques and are irreplaceable.

Guests who are interested in this kind of thing can just visit the village and see the items. It's a part of our home-stay program. I don't want to have them displayed all in one place.

PG: Any major problems in running the club?

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K. Chatchai: Not really. Our club has very good support from the government.

But before anyone becomes a club member they have to know a few things, for example the fact that I started the club and have worked very hard to make it happen so they have to accept that I'm the leader.

I choose my committee from the members and if one member of the committee does not work out for some reason, I will just replace that person.

I take this work very seriously; I used to earn around 20,000 baht a month driving a construction truck in Phuket City but gave that up to do this, so I will not do the usual thing by letting the members vote for their leader.

What if they vote for a friend who doesn't have a clue about how or where to start work? The worst thing would be to get someone who likes the title but is too lazy to do anything. I can't take that.

PG: Don't you think that people will not like it because it's not democratic?

K. Chatchai: I don't care. This is not the first time we have formed a group in the village.

We have had quite a handful of clubs or groups and you can check out where they are now – they're either gone or dead. I don't want to waste my time like that. I have an idea, I have a clear focus and I'll complete it.

PG: How long do you think it will take for the project to be completed?

K. Chatchai: We already have a few different groups inside the club. For example, the OTOP group – making batik and hand-made leather goods – the fishermen's group and the home-stay group.

I hope that in two to three years all the groups can manage by themselves and I'll stop and hand over all my work to the next leader. Then I'll be able to relax.

For more information about the Baan Phara home-stay project or the traditional lifestyle preservation club set up by K. Chatchai, call Tel: 09-9709822 (Thai language only).



K. Chatchai holds an antique Chinese ink pad that reminds him of the ways of yesteryear.

Club member Kobkaew Sae-Tan (below) holds a bottle that is more than 100 years old, one of many old artefacts that visitors can see in villagers' homes.



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Pretty

Fashion



Pusita Kanokthadarat is – at 173 centimeters – quite tall for a Thai woman. Her being relative lofty caused her to travel overseas simply in search of clothes.

“It was hard for me to find the right clothes in Thailand, so I went shopping overseas sometimes. It cost me a lot of money,” she says.

Struggling sartorially, K. Pusita decided, in 1996, to design her own clothes, lending her given name to the company.

She categorizes her designs as “modern chic”, and aims them at working women from 28 to 45 years old.

“Pusita is famous for its jackets,” she tells the *Gazette*. “We take a simple jacket and make it more chic.”

Smart working women can currently take advantage of a 50% discount at the Pusita branch in Central Festival Phuket, with the discount aimed spe-



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Pusita

by Rungtip Hongjakpet

cifically, as K. Pusita puts it, at "...Phuket girls, because I want them to try something new and chic.

"I also want tourists to buy my clothes and take them home. I want people to know my brand.

"The idea works very well," she says. "I have had good response from tourists because they can buy very good designs at a very good price. They cannot compare the price and designs with clothes found [in their home countries]; clothes there are too expensive," she notes from experience.

K. Pusita says that she uses good cloth from Australia, Japan and Italy for her designs, which "... allows us to be creative."

Designs from Pusita range in price from 1,000 baht all the way up to 19,500 baht for an evening dress.

Pusita Boutique Gallery is on the 2nd Floor of Central Festival Phuket. Tel/Fax: 076-209082.



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Bloopers, bad attitude and paranoia

Good news for gourmets this week from asiaweb-direct.com. "The quality of food (in Patong) has improved 100%. McDonald's has not opened again after the tsunami."

www.travelfish.org expounds on the subject of the island's fast food and not-so-fast transportation with "The days of grass huts on the beach are largely gone and simple seafood feasts have been replaced by KFC, Starbucks and Pizza Hut ... you can't avoid the disgraceful public transportation here, where the spineless authorities refuse to crack down on the tuk-tuk mafia."

Heartless promotion seems to be the name of the game at inm-asiaguides.com. Why's that? Well, the site informs us that Phuket is in the "Adman Sea" and in the best Internet tradition it heaves with inconsistencies and bloopers such as "Nai Harn is the property of the Meridien Yacht Club." Since when?

For some reason the Asia Guides writer has a bee in his bonnet about the Laguna development. "A number of first-

OUTSIDE IN

By Lis Kinswoman

class hotels have been built there during the past years, most of them, despite their four or five star ratings, [are] pretty awful.

"This is the so-called 'Laguna District', there are a lot of sometimes smelly ponds, euphemistically termed lagoons."

Considering that the "Laguna District" is a laudable triumph of environmental recovery, this is a bit of a rich bitch but there's more erroneous content.

"No matter how hot it is, gentlemen must wear long pants in urban areas ... Sleeveless shirts or sleeveless sweaters should be avoided ... You won't find 'real' taxis on Phuket. Instead there are tuk tuks (three-wheeled open vehicles, a kind of motorized trishaw that can be driven at amazing speed.)"

It's mighty hard to confuse downtown Bangkok with the balmy shores of

Phuket but evidently this website has overcome myriad difficulties to do so, at least in terms of clothing and transportation.

Some information sites about Phuket are, it has to be said, flawless, attractive and professional, yet a few come into a class and lingo of their own.

Take for example the website www.theexperiment.it/Luxury: "And consultant is information you several cleaning service property to info any European holiday real visitors hot and hot on the buying agent, Chinese provinces to until Phuket."

I'll take a tablespoon of whatever he's on in my tea, please.

On a more serious note, words of wisdom flow from the cyber pen of www.business-in-asia.com/phuket_tourism.html, a site that feels the island has been given a hard time since December's tsunami because of misinformation in the media.

This misinformation "is being grasped by others in the region to try to confuse travelers that Phuket is not the place they should be considering for a visit

or for investment. This view is simply misguided. The strong infrastructure, good medical care, positive Thai attitude, joy of life and willingness... to look out for their foreign guests remains unchanged."

Good on yer, mate.

Although not pertaining directly to Phuket, www.siamspy.com - tagline: "We focus on only one subject ... catching cheaters!" - is a cracker.

"Is your Thai girlfriend cheating on you? If she is in Thailand and you are not, chances are that she is 'on the game'. Find out the truth! If your husband is in Bangkok, chances are that he has been to one of the many go-go bars here ... and taken a go-go girl home with him! Find out the truth!"

The site makes money out of couples' paranoia. "You may think your husband is fat, unattractive, old and boring [come on now, do you?]. No young pretty Thai girl would want him. You couldn't be further from the truth."

And truth, on the face of it, is a rare commodity on the Net.

Phuket Gazette
June 1995

Safety campaign launched in run-up to 'Helmet Day'

PHUKET: May 18 saw the opening of a major drive to save lives on Phuket roads when Governor Sudjit Nimitkul presided over the launch of the 1995 Safety Helmet Campaign.

The campaign, sponsored by Novotel Phuket City in conjunction with Phuket Province, has as its principal objective the conversion of motorcycle riders who do not wear helmets into those who do, a task that will be

aided significantly on June 30 when traffic police will commence cracking the whip in a broad-scale clampdown on violators.

The opening ceremony, held at the Novotel construction site on Phang Nga Rd, was hosted by Anothai Nganthavee, Managing Director

of hotel owner C.B. Property, and Laurent Betourne, the hotel's General Manager.

During his speech, the Governor reiterated his commitment to road safety and reminded participants that it will no longer be

possible for those who ride without a helmet to escape penalties after June 30.

Guests witnessed a safety exhibition, a presentation of helmets to the Governor and Novotel staff, a panel discussion about motorcycle safety in Phuket, a simulated motorcycle accident, and a parade led by the Governor and Mr Betourne.

Following the event, staff from Novotel Phuket City and many other participants boarded

their motorcycles and toured around the town to broaden public awareness of the campaign and its vital message.

The Safety Campaign will run until September 17.

Phuket beaches to get lifeguards

Phuket Gazette
June 1, 2000

PHUKET: The Phuket Provincial Administration Organization, (*OrBorJor*), will allocate 3 million baht to providing lifeguards on beaches during the monsoon season, it was announced on May 20.

Harnchai Jantarachote, president of the *OrBorJor's* Tourism Committee, told the *Gazette*

that statistics compiled by the National Institute of Development Administration show that about 30 people - Thais and foreigners - drowned last year in Phuket's waters.

The budget will pay for three lifeguard points on Patong beach, two on Karon Beach and one on Kata Beach.

Three lifeguards will be posted at each point, equipped with a jet-ski, oxygen tanks, first-aid kit, binoculars and other equipment to help save people's lives.

"The *OrBorJor* plans to implement the program just for the monsoon season," K. Harnchai said.

This, he explained, is because spending must be planned and put in the budget at least a year in advance. The lifeguard plan is too new to have been included in this year's budget. This is because the current council has only been in session a few months.

"Next year the committee will try to organize budget for the entire year (2001).

"We also hope to have permanent towers for the lifeguards next year, so they will be able to see swimmers better," K. Harnchai said.

THE TIME machine

News from the past

Wordly wise

"How could you people have done this? Do you want to see us doomed? Why didn't you use your heads?"

- Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra reproving some of the 60 MPs from his Thai Rak Thai party who opposed the appointment of Visut Montriwat as Auditor-General.



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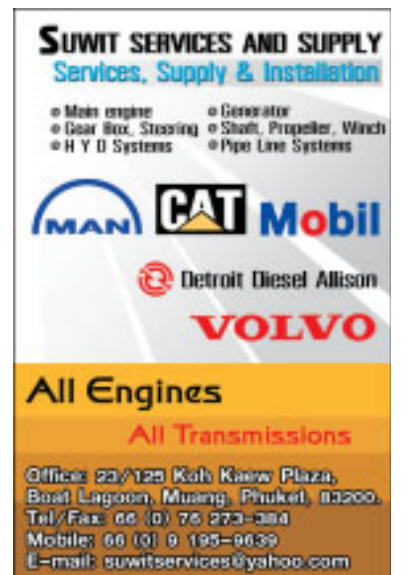
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Hitting the Hagi heights

Isolated on the northwestern tip of the Japanese island of Honshu, Hagi is closer to Pusan, South Korea, than it is to Tokyo, and its character is both influenced by and more reminiscent of *samurai* times than the 21st century.

It's an intriguing remnant of days gone by, yet modern Japan owes much to this picturesque port.

Many of the power brokers behind the near bloodless revolution of 1868 that dispensed with the shogunate and put the Meiji emperor back on the throne were born here.

Set on the delta of the Hashimoto River, Hagi is cut through by the Aiba-gawa waterway, once used to irrigate rice fields and now home to schools of colorful carp.

The place to start exploring is where Hagi itself began, at the castle at the foot of Mount Shizuki. Built in 1604 on the or-



Each shrine throughout Hagi comes replete with wooden blessing cards that provide a clunking chime when the winds blows.

ders of the warlord Mori Terumoto – who proceeded to rule the area with an iron hand – it stood until 1874 when it was pulled down in a rather eccentric expression of allegiance to the new Meiji government.

Parts of the walls and the former dungeon remain today, as does the attractive and traditional Hananoe Tea House in the adjacent gardens.

The next stop is the Mori Asa clan residence, the largest of the surviving samurai houses which grew up in Hagi beyond the castle walls.

The streets of the castle town, or Joka Machi, were divided into three sections in a deft acknowledgement of prevailing social strata; one for lower-ranking samurai, a second for rich politicians and the third for merchants.

Wandering its lanes – particularly

Edoya, Iseya and Kikuya – every turn reveals another pocket of the past.

The son of a doctor and one of the Meiji Restoration's dynamos, Kido Takayoshi, grew up in a house on Edoya Lane.

Another prominent Restoration strongman, Takasugi Shinsaku, lived in Kikuya Lane, and was cured of smallpox by Dr Shusuke Aoki, another inhabitant of Edoya. All their residences are on view to the public.

After the Restoration, a number of *natsu-mikan* (Japanese summer orange trees) were planted in Hagi, mainly to provide some relief to the unemployed samurai. Many trees dot the Horiuchi (inner moat) district, and in May and June the scent of



The Mori Asa clan residence (above) is the largest surviving samurai house outside the Hagi castle walls.

the blossom is almost intoxicating.

Hagi's other great influence on Japan is its pottery, rated as some of the most beautiful in the country.

At first glance it can appear deceptively simple, but closer examination reveals subdued colors and classical features, especially in the glazing, which is exceptionally clear and vivid.

Hagiyaki (Hagi pottery) came to Japan in the wake of the warlord Hideyoshi Toyotomi's invasion of Korea in the 16th century – one of the wars that have long characterized relations between Japan and its neighbor.

The spoils of war from

one invasion included Korean potter brothers Yi Chak-kwang and Yi Kyong, who were hauled back across the Korea Strait to Hagi. Their skills subsequently flourished once the artisans were allowed to practise their craft.

Today there are some 100 kilns scattered about the city. Many feature small exhibition rooms, and some will let you take a turn at the wheel.

Traditional teaware is fired for about 30 hours in a *nobori-gama* kiln at temperatures of around 1,250°C, but – surprisingly for a country where outrageous prices are the norm – is sold for as little as a couple of hundred yen (75 baht) per piece.

Yes, Hagi is a fine place for pottering around.

TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters



Small shrines in serene surroundings can be found dotted throughout the town.



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KIDS THE FUN PAGE FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 20 deadly poisons. The words may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. See if you can find more than your family or friends. Score: 10 or more, good; 15 or more, very good; 20 or more, excellent.

W	N	F	E	I	M	H	J	G	V	D	A	Z	E	E
O	S	I	P	N	N	U	E	J	C	V	X	L	N	G
L	P	H	G	K	A	D	I	U	P	I	D	I	I	M
F	N	W	Y	H	C	B	U	L	N	O	N	V	T	C
S	D	E	Y	D	T	D	N	U	L	H	Q	T	O	Y
B	Q	O	R	T	K	S	B	E	C	A	W	B	C	A
A	W	V	H	X	G	C	H	Y	H	U	H	M	I	N
N	P	H	E	N	O	L	R	A	Y	U	E	T	N	I
E	Y	N	O	M	I	T	N	A	D	R	R	T	D	D
E	R	N	A	R	S	E	N	I	C	E	A	S	E	E
E	T	I	N	O	C	A	M	U	V	L	R	E	D	V
O	T	Y	C	L	B	N	R	A	L	P	U	O	O	F
W	D	Z	U	I	S	Y	U	G	L	P	C	C	G	L
K	O	A	Y	R	N	U	L	J	H	E	P	I	X	E
Y	O	Z	C	B	T	E	H	O	W	A	P	S	Q	Z
B	J	V	M	Z	A	P	S	E	V	C	D	I	D	X
Q	B	I	L	D	W	G	K	O	M	E	S	V	P	M
V	V	W	Y	U	E	U	J	I	C	L	T	D	E	K
T	X	N	T	N	B	E	L	L	A	D	O	N	N	A
A	J	G	E	D	N	B	E	R	M	M	I	C	O	R
B	F	F	V	I	X	W	T	F	D	R	E	U	K	J
U	Z	W	X	I	F	J	K	Y	O	U	O	G	J	S
N	K	O	F	J	N	T	Y	L	U	O	F	D	U	Y
Z	I	K	R	U	E	R	H	L	W	F	C	Z	E	N
D	O	M	D	O	D	C	X	R	Y	I	T	Y	V	T

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



Kids! Get Mum and Dad to help you find the answers to these questions. They're not easy, but if you do some research you should be able to find the answers to all of them.

- Which 19th- and 20th-century English prelate was known as The Gloomy Dean?
- Who directed the movie *Kingdom of Heaven*?
- The bark of the conessi tree (*Holarrhena pubescens*) is used as a remedy for what ailments?
- What, in the southern US, is a haint?
- Who composed the ragtime classic *The Entertainer*?
- Where would you find your occiput?
- Hope There's Someone* is the latest single by which band?
- Which actor has played Chewbacca in four *Star Wars* movies?
- How tall is he?
- What, at age 14, was Chinese actress Bai Ling's first "profession"?
- How many Jewish refugees were aboard the *SS St Louis* when it was refused entry to Florida on June 4, 1939?
- The poem *The Defence of Fort M'Henry*, set to the tune *To Anacreon in Heaven*, is better known by what name?
- Who wrote the poem?
- Who led the "Terra Nova" expedition to Antarctica in 1910 to 1913?
- In Between Dreams* is an album by which former pro surfer?
- Comfortably Numb* was a hit for which band?
- The line "Then can I grieve at grievances foregone" comes from which of Shakespeare's sonnets?
- What is the Zend-Avesta?
- $4\pi r^2$ is the formula for calculating what?
- Protests in which Chinese square were brought to a bloody end on June 4, 1989?

Answers next week

Never a Cross Word!

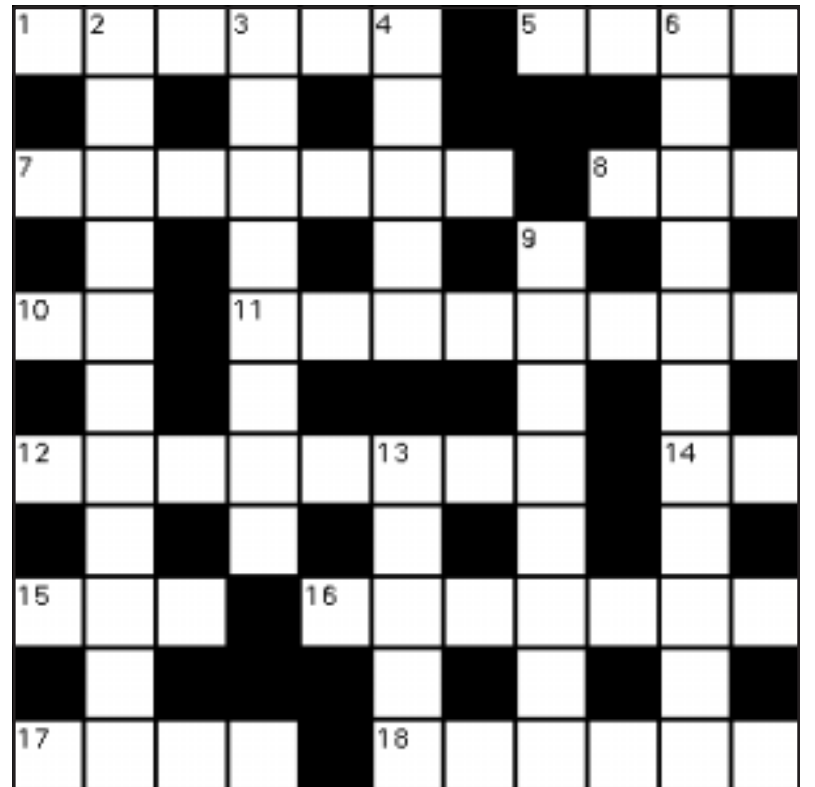
ACROSS

- The Pearl of the Andaman.
- By any other name, it would smell as sweet, said Shakespeare.
- The Emerald Isle.
- Little devil.
- Say yes to an Italian.
- Al Capone, for example.
- It bit off a diver's thumb recently (5,3).
- Initials for top make of car.
- Front of a boat.
- Salad vegetable.
- Sports TV channel.
- A little bit drunk.

DOWN

- Vegetarian in the animal kingdom.
- A thousandth of a tonne.
- Mortice and *****.
- When the left side mirrors the right, an object is this.
- Stuck on an island.
- Vote into office.

Solution next week



Solution to last week's crossword

P	L	O	U	G	H	S	H	A	R	E
O	N	O	B	A						
M	U	R	D	E	R	N	E	S	T	
I	E	N	A	E						
U	S	E	R	S	E	S	A	M	E	
I	C	H	A							
H	A	R	O	L	D	V	I	P	S	
N	A	I	I	H						
W	A	N	T	N	E	L	S	O	N	
E	N	G	L	R						
T	H	E	R	M	O	M	E	T	E	R

Brain Buster!!

You have three cards face down in a row on the table in front of you. All are either aces or kings and are either diamonds or clubs. Identify each card using these four pieces of information: There's at least one ace to the right of a king. There's at least one ace to the left of an ace. There's at least one diamond to the left of a club. There's at least one diamond to the right of a diamond.

A. Left: king of diamonds; centre: ace of diamonds; right: ace of clubs.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

- David Almond;
- Légion Étrangère (French Foreign Legion);
- The *bunad*;
- Operation Chastise, or the "Dambusters" raid;
- Toyota;
- René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo in 1959;
- Panoramix;
- Military helmets;
- Wonder Woman;
- Secretary;
- Yaw;
- Netherlands;
- Spinal Tap;
- Break Like The Wind*;
- Graduating Norwegian high school students;
- Cape Town;
- Chrysler Building;
- Briton Tommy Flowers;
- Darmstadtium;
- In the summer months between 50° and 60° north and south.

In The Stars

by Isla Star

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): If you are celebrating a coming of age this week, you can safely leave party plans to others. The only thing you need do is to check that no important people have been omitted from the guest list. Your usual good judgment is compromised during the first half of this month; take care not to make promises that will be hard to keep. The color gold will encourage finances to flow better.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Someone you were previously unsure of shows a more likeable side of their character. Where work is concerned, you are advised to check that the end will justify the means; this applies particularly if you are self-employed. For those who have been digging their claws firmly into the sand to avoid commitment, romance is likely to founder on the rocks. Last minute delays and changes are highlighted with regard to travel.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Your usual flair for organization falls by the wayside during the coming days. Domestic matters are certain to occupy most of your attention; this is an auspicious time to look into the possibilities for obtaining more free time. Something you've been wanting to happen since the beginning of the year suddenly comes to fruition. If this doesn't gladden your heart as much as expected, there is still room for improvement.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Business opportunities abound on the ground, so Virgoans searching for a new direction in life can afford to be choosy. Beneficial astral conditions will ensure that money matters remain positive until the end of this month. Taking a short break from island life will help you put possibilities into perspective. Scorpio can be trusted to give solid advice regarding a personal dilemma, but Aries will find it hard to keep a secret.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Your knack for cutting corners will be useful during the coming days. Resist the urge to splash out on unnecessary items to prevent the arrival of an unwelcome bank statement later this month. While money continues to trickle in at an unsatisfactory rate, more spiritual matters will occupy your mind. You are about to start looking for a more meaningful existence and will finally realize that all that glitters is not gold.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Scorpions seeking success in business won't have much longer to wait. After a series of false starts, you will finally discover a previously untapped source of income. While others are suffering from wet weather blues, it seems that nothing can hold you back for the rest of this month. Where romance is concerned, keep options open for the time being. Aquarius is preparing to reveal their secret desire.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Patience is a virtue that Sagittarians will be lacking this week. Although you know deep down that rocking the boat won't produce any magical results, it will be hard to resist doing so anyway. Overdue answers won't become apparent until later this month. Everything in your garden of love looks rosy, but be on the lookout for a snake in the undergrowth whose motives are dishonest. The number 4 looks promising on Thursday.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): New horizons are beckoning you. Changes are in the air and these are mostly for the better, although it may take a while for you to accept the inevitable. Your need for security is strong and this is going to be compromised during the next few weeks. Support from loved ones and good friends will be the rock that facilitates an easier transition.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): A mischievous mood means that Aquarians could find themselves landing in hot water this weekend. Words spoken in jest are likely to be taken seriously by someone who is feeling rather fragile at the moment. On a more positive note, your love life will benefit from a more light-hearted attitude. If you're single, be on the lookout for Scorpio, who has a surprise in store. The color turquoise will balance your energy.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): After a slightly depressed period, your enthusiasm for the good things in life will be satisfied this weekend. An exciting social whirlwind promises to put a new spring in your step; people you meet this month could become trustworthy friends in the future. Career goals that have recently been put on hold will suddenly seem attainable again but will require careful nurturing. Take care of personal belongings on Monday when carelessness could result in a serious loss.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): This week, you will be tempted to daydream to escape reality. A star-crossed love affair will be on a smoother path later in the month. In the meantime, you are advised to concentrate your energy on your home environment; you should consider ways of brightening up the interior to provide a cheery contrast with the grey skies above. A money matter comes to a head on Monday or Tuesday.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Sparks will be flying to encourage progress in romance. Those who weren't sure whether Cupid was on their side can start to relax. Work should not be ignored in the midst of all this passion – you will receive a rude reminder of a forgotten deadline mid-week. Leo has an interesting proposition, but you need to read the fine print before committing. The number 5 is lucky on Tuesday.

Giving snakes

Ever since the serpent was expelled from the Garden of Eden – minus its legs – the snake has been a reviled and feared creature, feeling shared by many in Phuket.

This was brought home to me recently when, in just three days, I spotted three snakes – including one large king cobra – slithering through my garden.

Although these visitors provided some amusement for our resident animals, my wife issued very forthright instructions to get rid of the ophidians pretty damn quick.

"Just how would you like me to do that, darling?" I asked. I did not, fortunately, have to put my masculine prowess to the test, as each one of them had disappeared by the time I had armed myself with a very long stick.

But how worried should we be when these creatures visit our homes? Statistically, the answer would seem to be "not very".

Of the several varieties of poisonous snakes found in Southern Thailand, the most likely to be encountered in Phuket are cobras, all varieties of which flare their heads when threatened, and the red-headed krait. Divers may also encounter poisonous sea snakes.

Of the 86 species of Kingfishers in the worldwide family *Alcedinidae*, Thailand boasts a whopping 15, nine of which are found on or around Phuket.

A pair of White-throated Kingfishers, *Halcyon smyrnensis* frequent the trees surrounding the pond by our back terrace.

Generally, they live separate lives, feeding on small fish, pond invertebrates, and large insects from a perch 10 meters above the edge of the pond. The bird returns to its perch with its prey in its bill then beats the insect or fish to death on the branch



By Top Dog

All snakes avoid man like the plague, and with good reason. As with sharks, we kill millions of them every year, to the extent that many species are already extinct – or close to it.

Snakes tend to attack only if threatened, and most bites result from people accidentally stepping on one while it is sleeping.

But what should one do if, as *Gazette* columnist Graham Doven's maid did, you find a cobra slithering around your bathroom?

I would imagine that amateur herpetologist (snake lover to you and me) Graham's advice to "... put it outside" did not go down too well.

I asked Graham what we should do, apart from making an emergency call to a pest-control company, which would inevitably result in the swift demise of said snake.

Graham suggested opening the doors to the property to give the snake an escape route.

"Snakes generally won't

The kings

before swallowing it whole.

Despite their name, our kingfishers seem to prefer to forage more on the dry edges of the pond than in the water itself.

Unfortunately, not much is known about the mating habits or demographics of kingfishers, although it is accepted that most species are monogamous.

The kingfishers in our garden prefer to nest in holes in a tree abandoned by woodpeckers. Their bills are not strong enough to make holes in a hardwood tree,

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the big slip

enter a house unless by accident or if chasing prey," he said.

"And they won't want to hang about for long. If they don't leave straightaway, a tap on the tail with a stick will usually hurry them along."

I will leave braver – or more foolhardy – readers to follow his advice of pinning the snake's head down with a long, forked stick and then picking it up.

Many people unwittingly provide five-star accommodation for snakes without realizing it. Snakes love dense undergrowth, so while that "jungle garden" may look nice to you, it also looks very nice to snakes.

In addition, many houses in Phuket have a void between the house and the soil beneath. If your house has an opening to allow access, ensure it is kept sealed.

You should also avoid storing piles of wood or other debris in your garden. Snakes love dark and damp places and tend to shy away from dry, bright and exposed areas.

Many Thais swear by putting sulfur powder or crystals down on any possible access areas. The theory is that snakes and other reptiles will not cross over sulfur.

The jury is still out on that one, but when I tried this method during the last rainy season, we

saw no snakes, and far fewer frogs to boot. The downside is that it is necessary to replace it regularly in the monsoon season.

Anybody wanting to try this can find bags of sulfur powder at Super Cheap, although for some inexplicable reason the powder is stored in the baking section.

You should be on the lookout for snakes during and after heavy rain when they are escaping flooded habitats. Conversely, you should also keep an eye out for them during droughts, when they are in search of water. The ones in my garden were probably en route to the lagoon at the bottom of my garden.

The killing of snakes does nothing to help the local ecology. Snakes here feed on mice, rats, frogs and insects, and in the case of the king cobra, on other venomous snakes.

Snakes have the ability to get to their prey in areas where other predators cannot reach, and are, in turn, preyed upon by mongooses.

Thanks to the ever-onward march of property developers, the natural habitat of snakes and many other animals is shrinking all the time.

If left alone, they will simply get on with what they do best: eating, sleeping and making baby snakes.

Losing the battle for hearts and minds

David Donovan's *Once a Warrior King* (Cassell Military Paperbacks, London, 2005, 399pp) deserves an honorable place on the shelf of Vietnam War literature.

For nearly a year, starting in April 1969, Donovan was a first lieutenant in a remote village in South Vietnam, near the Cambodian border. He wrote the book – subtitled *Memories of an Officer in Vietnam* – to let his wife and college-age daughter know what he had been through. Like most Vietnam veterans, he had long stayed silent on the subject.

Once a Warrior King is different from the usual run of Vietnam War memoirs because Donovan's war was different. He and his team of four were an elite deep-insertion unit living in a mud fort in remote Tram Chim, the home of 3,000 farmers and fishermen strung along the Dong Tien Canal on the Mekong Delta. They promoted schools and

clinics and development projects besides leading the local militia in patrols and ambushes.

Unlike other US military forces in the theater, they worked hard to learn the Vietnamese language and culture. In his rare trips back to big towns and cities, Donovan was shocked by the raw contempt shown by American GIs toward the Vietnamese.

"It should be no surprise that most GIs at war often are not polite even by American standards, and their sensitivity can be somewhere between that of a tank tread and a helmet liner," he writes.

Donovan's main task is to advise the district chief and militia officers on how to develop their district and fight off the Viet Cong guerrillas who attack their clinics and schools.

Villagers unite behind him, partly because he earns their trust as a leader and partly because, as Catholics and members of the Hoa Hao religious sect, they have a visceral hatred of communism that stretches back decades.

At the conclusion of his book, Donovan defends the morality of his role, protecting a people from an alien system of government and an ideology they despised. In short order, by leading in battle and constantly working for the welfare of his villagers, this 24-year-old Georgia farm boy became the warrior king of the title.

Donovan is not a natural

writer; his characters, both Vietnamese and American, fail to come to life.

He is, however, capable of writing some stirring set pieces: the night ambush that opens the book; the massacre of children in a booby-trapped school and his team's frantic rush to treat and medevac them; the destruction of his fort after a foolhardy officer accidentally shoots his M-16 into a propane tank.

He captures well a poignant moment on Christmas Eve when he is suddenly confronted by a procession of village children singing *Silent Night*:

"Armed to the teeth, I watched the celebration of the Prince of Peace. I was not only separated from my family and a world away from my own country, but now I felt estranged from God. I struggled to control the lump in my throat and fought back the tears that were threatening to roll down my cheeks."

Back in the US, he is treated to the usual reception for a Vietnam veteran: indifference or hostility. Abandoning a military career, he enters academia and amid the anti-war movement, he keeps his own counsel.

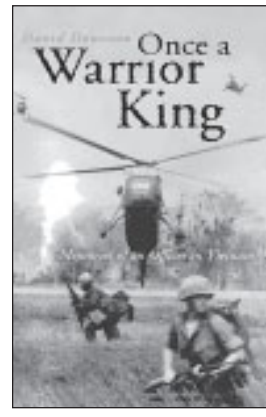
He reaches a catharsis in November 1982 when he attends the opening of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington. A Vietnamese family notices his tiger-stripe uniform and Vietnamese blue beret. He silently shakes the father's hand.

"I didn't stop," he concludes. "I didn't know what to do or what to say. We Americans might have lost a war, but that family had lost a country."



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



of winging it for freedom

but they are able to enlarge a nest or hole if the wood is pulpy or rotten.

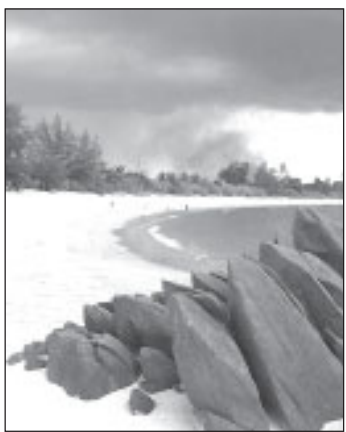
Others seem to prefer holes in termite nests in trees, or even a tunnel in a steep river bank. Once a nesting site has been chosen, the birds will use it for several years and defend it aggressively.

Eggs are generally laid at one-day intervals; four eggs composing a clutch in the tropics, and eight in temperate regions. The eggs hatch at one-day intervals, so the broods are staggered. In due course the young fledge and learn to fly and forage; they are then expelled from the parents' territory. Non-migratory kingfishers may spend their entire lives in the same territory, however

There are two species endemic to northern Thailand and four found in other areas as well. Southern peninsular Thailand, Malaysia and Sumatra have three endemic species. Fossil records are scant and shed little light on their evolution, relationships or geographic dispersion pathways.

The *Alcedinidae* probably evolved 40 to 50 million years ago in southern Asia as forest insectivores. They broadened their feeding to include small vertebrates and shallow water dwellers and then moved into more aquatic habitats.

Around 5 to 10 million



EARTH WATCH

By Robert Cogen

years ago they spread across the Bering Strait into the New World. Sometime in the past 2 to 5 million years, a green kingfisher crossed the Atlantic from the Americas to become the Pied Kingfisher in Europe.

Fairly recently, a dwarf kingfisher from Southeast Asia emigrated and colonized Madagascar without bothering to stop in Africa, becoming the Madagascar Pygmy Kingfisher.

Brown-winged Kingfishers are uncommon residents around Phuket except along the streams and ponds of the smaller islands where they prey on crab and small fish. Every time I have boated up the main river into

Lampi, I have seen Brown-winged Kingfishers on low branches along the way.

Often they have flown ahead of me, landing every few hundred meters and staying put until I got too close, then flying further upstream.

I have watched Collared Kingfishers on Lampi and Clara Islands in the Mergui, carefully surveilling tide pools in late afternoon.

One afternoon I fell asleep on the beach on Clara. I awoke to see a Collared Kingfisher sitting on my dive fins watching sand crabs scuttling across the beach.

These birds are among my favorites both in Asia and America.

Robert Cogen is a well-known California lawyer and a broadly experienced naturalist with a degree in zoology. Email: indepth@asis.com.

✝

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Darkness falls on tourism sites

A scant three weeks after the tsunami, a major Scandinavian tour company announced that it was to resume sending tourists to Phuket from February 3.

The *Gazette* mentioned this to an official from the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). Not surprisingly, his face lit up. But then he said, "We were wondering about whether to go ahead with promoting tsunami tours but if the tourists are coming back this fast, we shall definitely go ahead."

A few days later, it was announced that the TAT aimed to launch a "Tsunami Trail" tour, initially aimed at the Thai market, including sites "both damaged and undamaged".

This was followed in February by an announcement that the government planned to spend a mind-boggling 2 billion baht (later revised down to 1.5 billion baht) on a tsunami memorial in Bang Niang, Phang Nga, in a scheme that sounded like a cross between a museum and a Disney experience.

The TAT is certainly aware of the growing trend worldwide toward "dark tourism" – also known as "tourism macabre" and "thanatourism" (from the Greek word for death). One hopes it is aware that this can be a double-edged sword.

There have long been grim sites for people to visit, where they could experience a frisson of horror. Probably the most famous are the Nazi-era concentration camps in Germany and Poland. Other more recent examples include the Tuol Sleng death camp in Cambodia and "Ground Zero", the site in New York where the World Trade Center once stood.

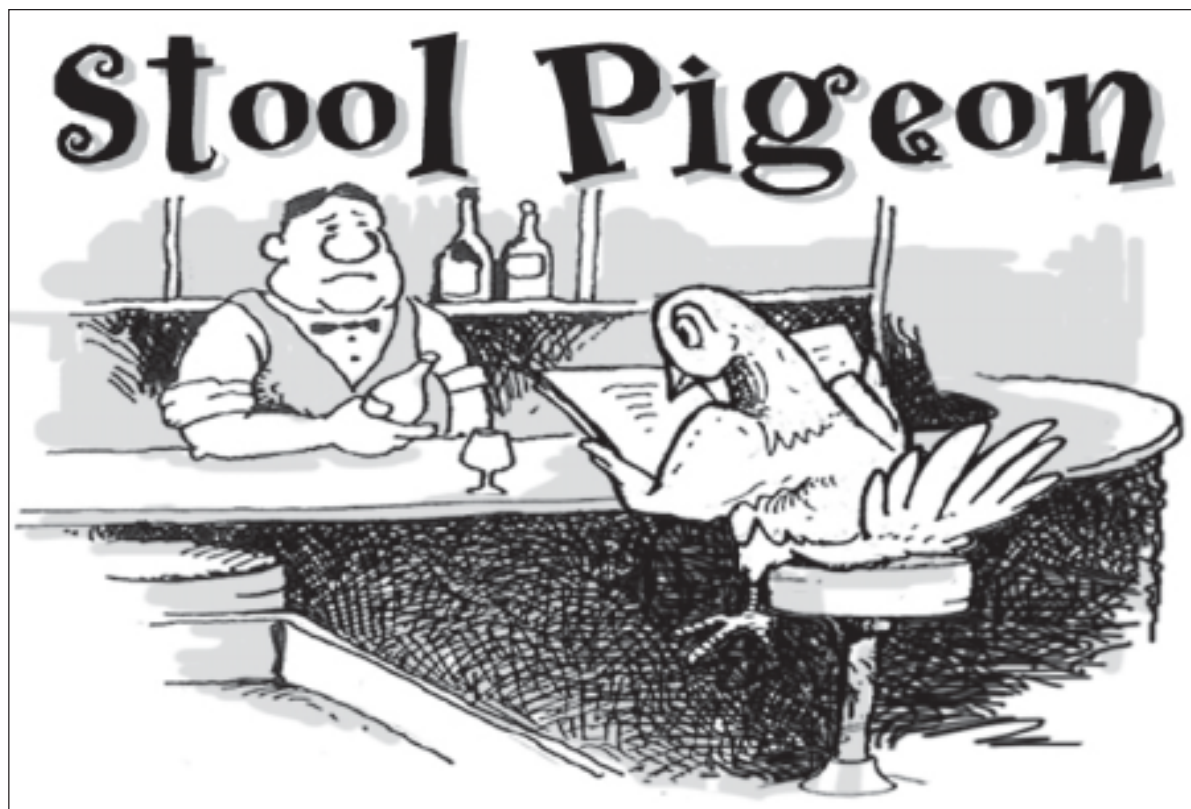
While it is impossible to regulate the reasons people have for visiting places associated with death – these may range from a genuine wish to understand better, to a perverse urge to gaze on the misery of others – it is important that the motivations and ethics of those running the tours and the sites be carefully examined.

This is why there was such an outcry among survivors in Phang Nga about the government's plans for a memorial dome at Bang Niang, with a high-tech "crystal" prism to display the names of known victims and other "wow" ingredients, which were widely seen as being part of a tasteless attempt to cash in on the disaster.

Perhaps the old newspaper formula to "inform, educate and entertain" should be dusted off and applied to tsunami tourism sites and tours, but with a major adjustment: If it informs and educates, that's good. But if it entertains – or is even perceived as entertaining – that's bad.

The tsunami and its victims should be remembered by current and future generations. But how the memory is preserved requires a great deal of careful thought.

– The Editor



Letters

The *Gazette* is pleased to receive mail from readers. Please write to us at 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000, fax to 076-213971 or send an email to editor@phuketgazette.net

with your views for publication in our next issue. We reserve the right to edit all letters. Pseudonyms are acceptable only if your full name and address are supplied.

Don't worry – the Vikings are coming

I just want to tell you that tourists from Norway are planning to go back to Thailand.

This weekend the newspapers say that almost every charter flight to Thailand is sold out for the winter.

I have just come back from your country and I have seen how your people are fighting every day to make a living.

Do not worry, everything will be fine next [high] season.

See you in October, and love to all our friends in Thailand

Astrid and Odd
Trysil, Norway

Valuable insight from abroad

I recently visited Phuket and the island was – in my opinion – very quiet. Why are all the people who visited Phuket before the tsunami not coming now?

It was an act of nature, not a terrorist bombing [that killed, injured and swept away thousands of people].

I really hope that the people of Phuket and the surrounding islands can return to normal as soon as possible, and get the tourists back soon.

Andrew Westmorland
UK

Tsunami Center should be in Phuket

I just read your online edition, and found this pretty hard to swallow: "Some 200 government officers from Bangkok and the

six tsunami-affected provinces gathered at the Pearl Village Hotel yesterday to offer suggestions as to what data should be included in the Tsunami Information Center (TIC), which will be built in Bangkok at a cost of 10 million baht."

I must be living in a parallel universe.

Can I make a couple of radical suggestions [to the government]?

First, stop treating bureaucrats to all-expenses-paid trips to resorts so they can hang out and talk. Ever heard of email, teleconferencing or videoconferencing?

Second, put the TIC in Phuket. It would be the perfect vehicle to restart/revive/wake up the moribund/dormant/somnambulant Phuket branch of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa).

This excerpt is from the *Phuket Gazette*, April 8, 2004: "Information and communications technology (ICT) in Phuket will outstrip that of Singapore within two years, the head of Phuket's newly-established Sipa [the Software Industry Promotion Agency] office has ambitiously predicted."

Seems like a no-brainer to me. How about it?

Stephen Evans
Singapore

Phuket to profit from Schapelle case?

The 20-year jail sentence recently meted out to Australian Schapelle Corby, found guilty of attempting to traffick hashish into Bali, Indonesia, has upset many Australians.

I have no doubt that people thinking of traveling overseas will now turn to Thailand.

In fact, I envisage a major increase in "first timers" coming to Thailand for their next holiday.

Personally, I cannot understand why anyone would go to Indonesia in preference to Thailand, but I am biased toward Thai people, who are the friendliest on the planet.

All the vendors and hotel operators should hang in there; I am confident that your fortunes are about to change.

See you in July.
John
Perth, Australia

Japan promotion is misguided

Maju Ozawa, the Japanese actress contracted by the Phuket Tourist Association to promote Phuket, said "...It doesn't feel like there was a tsunami here at all." (See News, this edition).

We wonder if she has visited Kamala, Khao Lak or Baan Nam Khem?

We were in Phuket two weeks ago and *have* visited these areas.

Instead of paying a lot of money to promote Phuket in other countries, [the authorities] should make more effort to support local people rebuilding their homes, their businesses and their beaches.

We think that there is more to do in Phuket than paying people to give misleading impressions to those in their home countries.

Christel Janssen and
Stefan Vanzonhoven
Belgium

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Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials and/or business owners are published as *Issues & Answers* on the facing page.

The Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) has forwarded three lists of applicants' names to DOLA; the first names were submitted on January 13, the second list on January 25 and the third on February 25.

Two tranches of money – 28.06 million baht and 24.28 million baht – have been distributed so far, with each of the 2,571 recipients being granted a one-off flat 20,000 baht in aid. There is no latitude to alter the amount of aid to reflect the amount of losses suffered; everyone is treated the same.

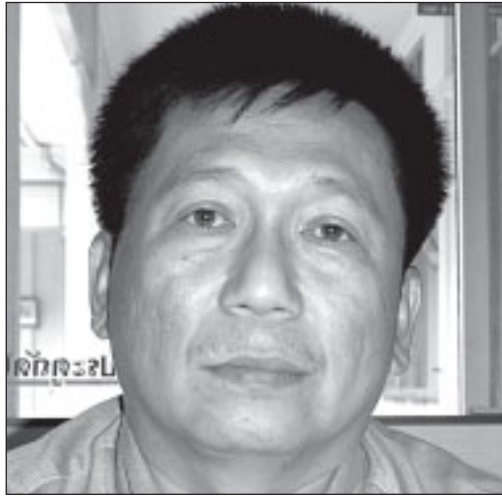
One of the reasons for a standard amount of aid is to limit the amount that could be lost through false claims, perhaps involving government officers.

Indeed, of the 52.34 million baht initially distributed, we found that 920,000 was given out in response to 46 fraudulent claims.

These people were told that they would be prosecuted unless they returned the money to DOLA. They returned the money.

Checks performed by, for example, Cherg Talay Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) on some applicants

Why aid is slow



FIRST PERSON

According to figures supplied by the Ministry of the Interior (Mol), the Department of Local Administration (DOLA) has granted financial aid totaling some 52.34 million baht to 2,571 local people operating small businesses since the tsunami.

Two deadlines have been set – and have passed – for pleas for aid to be submitted, but still the applications are coming in.

Here, the head of the local DOLA office, **Sorrawit Chaisawad**, explains the current situation.

found that they had made repeated claims or that they were not tsunami victims in the first place.

One method they employed was to make a claim to the *OrBorTor* for the area where their business was located and another claim in the district where they lived.

No funds were actually distributed to them, and they had to

pay fines for making false applications. We felt that it was necessary to make an example of them to “dissuade” other potential tricksters from trying the same thing.

There are 968 claims still being processed by DOLA in Bangkok, plus a further 48 claims that were made after the final deadline expired. We sent these additional 48 claims to Bangkok

because this is a humanitarian issue. They are late, and perhaps some are false, but others may be [legitimate].

Of course, we have been asked, “Why are you taking so long to process the claims?”

One reason is that the DOLA [in Bangkok] is handling claims not only from Phuket; it has a mountain of claims from the other five provinces affected

by the tsunami to investigate. This takes time.

One aspect of the process is to determine whether a claim is valid, and DOLA officers are making random checks – on perhaps 20% of claims – to make sure that the claims are legitimate.

However, I accept that some recipients of aid have made false claims – by assuming another person's identity, for example – and have not been discovered.

The DOLA has become far more stringent in its investigations.

It is worth noting that applications do not go directly to the DOLA; they are submitted through each *OrBorTor*'s “approval committee”, which is made up of representatives from the *OrBorTor*.

These local committees are responsible for rectifying any mistakes they make or allow.

We at the DOLA will accept claims if they are submitted, but the later they are received – it is more than five months since the tsunami now, and three months since the “final” deadline – the more stringently they will be investigated.

– Compiled by **Anongnat Sartpisut**

Divorcing missing spouse

I have a good friend who is married to a guy she hasn't seen for three years. She is afraid of him and doesn't want to see him again.

How can she get a divorce and will she have to share her belongings with him if she does? She is living in Hua Hin, but doesn't know where her husband lives.

Tom
Phuket

McEvily & Collins Law Offices responds:

Thailand, in its laws regarding marriage, is very similar to what common-law countries refer to as a “Community Property Jurisdiction”.

With some exceptions, all property acquired during the course of the marriage becomes what is known as *sin somros* and belongs equally to the spouses.

Generally speaking, parties may become divorced through mutual consent whereby a settle-

ment on division of the assets is mutually agreed upon, or through a court-ordered divorce and division of the assets. The various grounds for divorce include:

1. The desertion of one spouse for more than one year (CCC Code section 1516[4])

2. The husband and wife choose to live separately because of mutual incompatibility for more than three years, or involuntarily live separately for more than three years – for example, if one spouse is imprisoned. (CCC Code section 1516 [4] 4/2).

3. If one spouse is adjudged to have disappeared, or has left his or her domicile or residence for more than three years or it is uncertain whether he or she is alive; (CCC Code section 1516[5]) the other may enter a claim for divorce.

After the court has issued a divorce decree, *sin somros* will be divided equally between the divorcees. Property which cannot be divided may be auc-

tioned off with the proceeds being split.

The jurisdiction of the court which may hear an action for divorce may meet one of three criteria:

1. You may file a case for divorce in the jurisdiction where the petitioner is employed.

2. You may file for divorce in the jurisdiction where the marriage was recorded.

3. You may file for divorce in the jurisdiction where the events giving rise to the claim for divorce occurred.

What are the taxes on property?

I plan to invest heavily in property in Phuket, but I am unclear about the tax that I will have to pay if and when I sell in the future.

I understand that I have to record all the money I remit to Thailand in order to buy property, though I cannot remember the name of the form I need. Also, if I make a capital gain on my property, how much capital gains tax will I pay and are there any rules about the amount of money that may be transferred out of Thailand?

I realise that this is a complex issue, but I would be grateful for some guidance.

Paul
Hong Kong

Matthew V. McEvily, of McEvily & Collins Law Offices, replies:

Thailand does not have a

Capital Gains Tax (CGT) as such. Income produced by the sale of property is taxed as ordinary income either to the private person or to the corporation receiving the income.

When a company sells property, it pays a specific business tax of 3.3% of the appraised or registered price, whichever is higher, withholding corporate tax of 1% of the appraised or registered price, whichever is higher, and other costs.

At the end of the fiscal year, the company must file its annual audit and balance sheets.

Net profits to the company are taxed at 30%, though there are at present some tax breaks available for smaller companies.

After paying its taxes and setting aside a reserve, the company may pay dividends to its shareholders.

These dividends are subject

to income tax if paid to an individual.

Thailand's taxes are graduated, and can range from 0% up to 37%, depending upon the annual income of the tax payer. Non-residents (for tax purposes, not in immigration terms) are subject to a withholding tax of 15% on ordinary income and 10% on interest payment income, for which the foreign tax payer may file a tax return.

The tax obligation may also be affected by whether a Double Tax Treaty exists between the tax-paying foreigner's country of residence and the Kingdom.

There are legal ways to reduce your exposure to tax liabilities. Since you are preparing to invest “heavily” here in Thailand, we would suggest you consult with a reputable law firm and/or a CPA to discuss the best way to structure your investment.

Duty on personal items

I'm moving to Phuket from Hong Kong and I would like to bring my personal stuff with me.

I have been told by the moving company that I will need a permit for my belongings to be released back to me. Is this true?

Ed
Hong Kong

Wuthichai Ekisarap, Customs officer at Phuket International Airport, replies:

If you are moving to Phuket, you will need to show only your passport to retrieve your belongings from customs. We will not ask for any other documents.

Please note that there will be no charge for personal items that you bring with you.

However, if you bring new items, for example electrical items, you will need to pay some tax on those.

ON THE MOVE

Achim Brueckner has been appointed General Manager of Le Meridien Khao Lak Beach Resort & Spa, which was badly hit by the tsunami. The hotel is due to reopen in October.

Mr Brueckner, from Germany, began his hospitality career in 1990 at the Robinson Club Lyttos Beach, in Greece.

He later became General Manager of the Le Meridien's properties in Kihaadhuffaru, Maldives, Sinai and the Seychelles before moving to Thailand in 2003.

Before joining the Meridien



Achim Brueckner

in Khao Lak, he was Hotel Manager at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort.



Aekphon Phothiphrom

from Bangkok, has been appointed Food & Beverage Manager of



Siriporn Salika

the JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa. K. Aekphon graduated from Kasetsart University and

studied Hotel Management at IHTTI in Switzerland for two years before joining the JW Marriott in Phuket as Director of Restaurants in 2001.

Siriporn "Ann" Salika, 31, from Phang Nga, recently joined the five-star Aspasia Phuket above Kata Beach as Sales & Marketing Manager. She holds a degree from Kasetsart University in Bangkok. K. Siriporn has previously held positions as Sales Executive at the Layan Beach Resort & Spa and the Deevana Patong Resort & Spa.

Outlook's irritating 'autocomplete'

My past four columns dealt with ADSL from TOT and TT&T. Judging by the volume of email received, they were the most popular Khun Woody's Computer columns ever.

For those of you who asked, no, TOT and TT&T haven't yet solved their respective problems.

Next, I'm going to try to sample some of the higher-priced Internet connection services available here on the island and see how they stack up against the 1,000-baht-per-month offerings.

If you have an ADSL connection with any major ISP, and you'd be willing to run some speed tests, I'd like to hear from you! Don't be bashful!

Q In Outlook, when I start to type an email address, Outlook "helps" by finishing the address for me. Unfortunately, most of the time it guesses wrong, and it isn't smart enough to update the autocomplete list with entries that I use all the time.

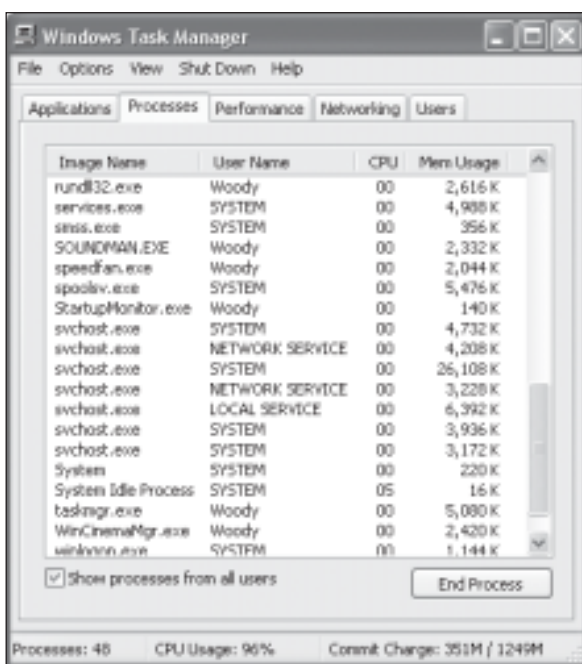
Why does Outlook insist on

being so dumb? Where are the addresses saved? How can change them?
SR, Kamala

A Oh, do I feel your pain. I once had an, uh, intense exchange going with an attorney in the US, whose name is John. Many times I typed "john" when composing new messages to the attorney, and Outlook sent it correctly.

One day, for reasons that still completely baffle me, I typed "john" and Outlook took it upon itself to send the message to a friend here in Phuket, who also happens to be called "John". My friend John got a real earful.

Outlook assembles the autocomplete list in ways that defy logic. The list gets compiled, more or less, from addresses on outbound messages, but it's never verified against the Contacts list in Outlook – so if someone changes their email address, and you update your Contacts, for example, the new



The file svchost.exe is a 'wrapper' – a program that runs other programs. If you get a 'Generic Host Processes' error message, that's probably where the problem lies. But it's not easy to fix.

address won't appear in the autocomplete list for at least 100 years.

The list maxes out at 1,000 entries, and once you hit the limit, nothing new gets added. It stands out as one of the worst-designed features in Office, which abounds with poorly designed features – and there's very little you can do about it.

Enough people screamed that Microsoft finally fixed a tiny part of the problem, however. In Outlook 2002 (the version in Office XP) and Outlook 2003, you can type the first three letters of an autocomplete entry in the To: box, use the down arrow to move to any matching entries that you want to delete, hit the Delete key, and that person's entry disappears from the autocomplete list.



Unfortunately, this approach only works if typing the first three letters of the name brings up more than one entry. (Got that? Microsoft must have run out of money when they were building Office, doncha think?) If you're desperate, Microsoft has an absolute kludge of a workaround for the problem at support.microsoft.com/kb/289975.

You can obliterate the entire autocomplete list. First, make sure that Windows shows you hidden files and folders. (You already have Windows set to do that, right? In Windows XP, click Start | My Computer, then click Tools | Folder Options | View. Click the button marked Show Hidden Files and Folders, then click OK.)

Then make sure Outlook isn't running. Click Start | My Computer and navigate to C:\Documents and Settings\\Application Data\Microsoft\Outlook where <username> is your user name. Delete (or rename) the file called Outlook.nk2.

Of course, the minute you restart Outlook, it'll start constructing a new congenitally defective nickname file – but at least you will not have to deal with the problem for a while.

Q I just bought a new computer and it came with Windows XP installed. I immediately noticed that after it started a message appeared: "Generic Host Process for Win 32 Services ... ERROR: a problem exists and

was closed." You are asked to report this to Microsoft. I have no idea what this means. How do I get rid of the message for good?
PP, Patong

A There are thousands of different possible sources of problems. "Generic Host Process for Win32 Services" (also known as svchost.exe) is a "wrapper" – a program that runs other programs.

Unfortunately, there is no easy way to tell what program was running when Windows crashed.

Your best bet would be to take the computer back to the company you bought it from and let them try to solve it. No new computer should crash on startup.

Q My computer is connected to a Linksys wireless network, and it works fine. But when my son tries to connect his computer to the network he always gets the message, "Unable to assign a network address. Access denied."

We have tried every combination we can think of, but we can't get it right. Can you please suggest what we can do?
LJ, Kamala

A If you cannot get wireless networking to work on your computer, you need Windows XP Service Pack 2 (SP2). Microsoft bills SP2 as a, uh, well, as a Service Pack – a collection of bug fixes and minor changes.

It isn't. In fact, it's a major upgrade to Windows XP in many respects, and the improved wireless networking alone is worth all the hassle. [In this case, installing SP2 solved LJ's problem immediately.]

– Woody Leonhard
woody@khunwoody.com

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So sue us, spa club challenges taxman



'We want to show the media and the public that the spa industry is against this regulation' - Pakin Ruktae-ngam.

By Athiga Jundee

PHUKET: The Chairman of the Phuket Spa Business Club (PSBC) has said he hopes any spa operator refusing to pay the controversial spa tax will be taken to court for non-payment - because it will give the club the chance to show the strength of opposition to the tax.

Pakin Ruktae-ngam told the *Gazette*, "If the excise department wants to catch someone who is not paying the tax, that will be good because we want to show the media and the public that the spa industry is against this regulation.

"Sometimes, it takes something bad to get publicity."

K. Pakin has been leading the protest against the 10% entertainment tax, which was introduced in November last year and which lumps legitimate "wellness"-type spas together with massage parlors offering sexual services.

Some spas have been exempted, but PSBC members feel that they all should be.

Many claim the tax is being applied arbitrarily, with a lack of consistency in the bureaucrats' choice of which businesses are required to pay the tax and which are exempt.

While some spas in Bangkok have caved in and are paying the tax, there is stout opposition to it from operators in Phuket, Phang Nga, Chiang Mai and Koh Samui.

Phuket spa operators have also pointed out that the tax is especially burdensome now, with so many spas struggling to stay in business because of the slump in tourism brought about by the tsunami.

The 65 members of the PSBC are currently refusing to pay the tax, even though, by their action, they are breaking the law.

There have been claims that members who had decided to pay the tax - even if they disagreed with it - had been subjected to unfair pressure from the club to join the tax boycott.

However, one operator contacted

after the *Gazette* had spoken to K. Pakin said "all" club members had agreed to withhold the tax, believing a united front was the best way of forcing a change in the law.

"If one person pays, we all fall," said the operator.

Even among operators of spas exempt from the tax, there is a feeling that the law does not make sense. The *Gazette* spoke to the operator of a spa in an upmarket hotel, which inspectors have declared exempt.

The operator, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the application of the law seemed to be "pretty arbitrary."

The operator said, "It seems like they decided the law should cover every establishment, then they select exemptions from there, and it doesn't seem very equitable.

"As things stand, they seem to be saying, 'Every place is a warehouse unless we say otherwise'."

- Additional reporting by
Alison Winward

German growth surprises the analysts

The middle of May saw the release of a higher-than-expected growth figure for Germany. Analysts had predicted 0.5%, but instead it was 1%. This figure was for the first quarter of 2005 - Europe, unlike the US, gives actual growth figures rather than an annualized rate. In other words, if this had been US data, the growth rate would have been described as "4% annualized".

At first glance this seems very good news for Germany, especially when economic growth as measured by GDP (Gross Domestic Product) actually shrank in the last quarter of 2004. Further analysis of the German economy revealed that exports for the first quarter of 2005 reached an all-time record but domestic consumption was flat.

The Italian GDP figures were grim; Italy has entered its second recession in two years. In France, industrial production figures revealed a drop in output and previously-issued statistics were revised downward.

Against this rather bleak background there is still some good news: corporate profits, in many cases, are surpassing market expectations. Many companies are cutting costs and improving their operations and their balance sheets.

British retail sales, unfortunately, were not included in the good news. Figures released for April show a drop of 4.7%, the largest fall since the new index was created in 1995, and probably the worst figures since the recession of the early 1990s. The Governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, expressed "surprise".

The drop, combined with industrial production moving again into negative figures, has

greatly increased speculation that interest rates are likely to be cut twice in 2005.

The current expectation is for interest rates to be trimmed from the current 4.75% to 4.5% in August and then to 4.25% in December.

The scale of the fall in retail sales may have surprised Mr King, but this downward trend has been in evidence since late 2004. The consumer, feeling the effects of increased interest rates and carrying a mountain of debt, is becoming increasingly cautious.

Interest rate increases by the Bank of England, which started in the autumn of 2003 and only stopped in late 2004, took base lending rates from 3% to the current 4.75%.

For a central banker, there is always a delay in seeing the effects of interest rate changes on the "real" economy - some economists say the minimum period is six to nine months, others say 12 to 18 months. What is not in dispute is the current effect on the UK economy.

Across the Atlantic, the market expected April's job creation figures to show between 150,000 and 220,000 new jobs. It was a very pleasant surprise when the figure released was 274,000, and additionally revised figures for February and March revealed that the economy over that period had added 85,000 more jobs than previously thought.

The greatest effect these



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

figures had was on the currency markets. The US Dollar reversed its previously weak position and moved strongly forward.

This impetus was reinforced when trade figures were released just before mid-May. Instead of the anticipated deficit of US\$61 billion, they came in at US\$55 billion; still very high, but the figures revealed falling imports and rising exports.

At the time of writing the US dollar has reached levels against other currencies not seen in the past nine months.

Through a hedge backwards: One other story that has been widely reported, though often in abbreviated terms, concerns

"hedge funds", and centers around General Motors.

General Motors is experiencing "interesting times", or - to put it differently - "certain difficulties".

Global rating agency Standard & Poor's recently dropped General Motors' credit rating to a "speculative" grade or, as it is more commonly known, "junk". Moody's, another major credit rating agency, reduced General Motors to the lowest investment grade. Some question remains whether pressure was applied to

stop Moody's, too, making the rating "junk".

A number of hedge funds, sensing blood, took heavy positions on General Motors. They took a two-pronged approach, buying General Motors bonds for the high yield and simultaneously selling the shares "short".

The mechanism for "short" selling is simple. In this case, the hedge funds involved simply approach a large long-term holder of General Motors shares, such as a pension fund, and borrow the shares. In turn, the shares are sold at the ruling market price.

When hedge funds or other large investors take a "short" position, they are betting that the price will fall. Selling shares at, say, US\$20 and buying them back later at, say, US\$10 gives them 100% profit, less a small charge levied by the lender of the shares.

The advantages to both parties are that the hedge fund makes its profits and the holder of the shares, such as a pension fund, makes extra income by lending the shares.

In practice, there is usually a third party involved, a bank. The hedge fund does not wish to make a profit simply using its own investors' cash; it wants to maximize the profit potentially available.

Hedge funds often borrow several times the amount of their own cash to invest in whatever appeals, in this case General Motors shares.

Short selling does have its risks, usually when something unexpected happens, such as the targeted company declaring better-than-expected financial results, or another company announcing a takeover bid.

General Motors was no exception to the "unexpected" hap-

pening: veteran US investor Kirk Kerkorian entered the fray by buying 27 million shares in GM in a single well-publicized purchase, at a premium to the ruling price.

The hedge funds suddenly faced sharp losses and were forced immediately to repurchase GM shares, which in turn drove up the share price.

The rumor mill is working overtime on the hedge fund losses, and the true situation will take some time to become clear. What is important to investors is that there are more than 8,000 hedge funds and only a very small percentage of these will be involved in this situation.

Richard Watson runs *Global Portfolios Co Ltd*, a Phuket-based personal financial planning service. He can be reached at Tel and Fax: 076-381997, Mobile: 01-081-4611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th.

The rumor mill is working overtime on the hedge fund losses, and the true situation will take some time to become clear.

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South Africans blitz 10s title

By Chris Husted

KARON: Phuket rugby was taken to higher level on May 28 and 29 when the Rainbow Warriors from South Africa, led by former Springbok scrum-half Garth Wright, beat Australian [Defense] Services Rugby Union (ASRU) Warriors 12-5 in the grand final of the 7th AirAsia Phuket International Rugby 10s.

The seven-point victory came after 30 minutes of fast breaks, bruising tackles and superb scrambling defense tactics that delighted the crowd of more than 500 at the beachfront stadium on May 29.

The South Africans, early favorites to win the Clive Williamson Memorial Trophy, made their intentions clear from the kick-off by securing the ball with a crunching tackle that forced a scrum.

ASRU Warriors rallied and worked their way upfield only to lose possession through a knock-on eight meters from the goal-line. Rainbow responded with well-timed runs from the backs, finally creating a gap in the ASRU defense. Although the South Africans managed to enter the goal area, the Aussies scrambled well and stopped the ball from being grounded – no try.

The following minutes saw some fierce tackling from both sides, before Rainbow's Graham Bennett crashed through the defense to score the first try.

ASRU's Paul Yates responded with a try of his own two minutes later, after breaking quickly from a midfield scrum. However, he failed to convert his own try.

The second 15-minute half opened with brilliant breaks down both wings and crashing charges up the center, with both teams entertaining the crowd with fine end-to-end rugby.

The pace of the match started to stutter as the referee made his presence known,



Graham Bennett (left) scored the Rainbow Warriors's two tries in their 12-5 defeat of Australia's ASRU Warriors.

though Rainbow soon learned to take advantage by taking quick penalties, catching the Aussie defense napping and allowing Bennett to score his second try. Teammate Quentin Daniels converted the try to score the extra two points.

The South Africans continued to pile on the pressure, but the Aussies refused to yield and even managed to win a scrum against the head – a rare sight in modern rugby anywhere.

In the closing minutes of the match, Rainbow continued to drive down the wings, but could not find a way past ASRU's superb sliding defense.

However, with the South Africans maintaining possession, the Aussies could do little more than wind down the clock and stop the Rainbow Warriors from punishing them any further on the scoreboard.

Full-time score: Rainbow Warriors 12, ASRU Warriors 5.

In the Plate final on May

29, the Alabang Eagles from Manila took on the Rams 2 Hyenas, a second squad fielded by former Phuket 10s champions Melbourne Cruiser Rams.

The Rams opened the scoring with a converted try in the fifth minute, followed by another try – not converted – three minutes later.

Excellent one-on-one sliding defense by the Rams shut down run after run by the Eagles, who kept attacking the left wing.

Settling into their rhythm, the Rams' forwards forged ahead up the center, but the Alabang defense countered well and finally forced the ball into touch.

The Rams continued to pile on the pressure, stretching the Eagles' defense and finally finding a gap in the middle to score just seven meters from the posts.

In the second half, despite a great tackle by the Eagles' scrum-half, forcing a loose ball, the Rams recovered and scored under the posts. Sensing victory, they scored a converted try yet again two minutes later.

Alabang rallied with a break up the center, with quick hands sending the ball down the

right wing, but the Rams' defense was too quick and bundled the Alabang winger into touch.

The Rams came back with two good kicks that finally resulted in a scrum five meters from the Eagles' try line. But a minute later, Alabang charged upfield to 25 meters out from Rams' goal area, working the ruck well and scoring just three meters from the posts two minutes later.

Not ready to relinquish a well-earned lead, the Rams won a line-out after the restart to score yet another converted try in the final minute of the match. Final score: Rams 2 Hyenas 31, Alabang Eagles 5.

In the third-place playoff in the inaugural Old Codgers competition between the Bangkok Bangers and local Phuket Vagabonds, the players managed to get the game started but stopped for on-field refreshments after the ball was kicked into touch at the end of the first minute.

Only slightly distracted and pausing for an on-field photo, both teams forgot to finish the match. The quick-minded officials decided to let Hong Kong

Contemptibles and the "not-so-old" Old Bill, also from Hong Kong, take the field for the Old Codgers final. Despite former Swedish women's international Susie Olovsson doing her best for the Contemptibles, the Old Bill proved too quick and ran away with the match.

Earlier in the day Bedok Kings beat the Singapore Wanderers to win the Bowl final.

Apart from providing two days of entertaining sport, the tournament was also aimed at raising funds to support tsunami orphans. Rainbow Warriors skipper Garth Wright told the crowd, "At a time like this, you must reflect and be humble. Just when you thought the world has forgotten you ... We love you, we'll be back. God bless Thailand."

Two teams in particular made plain the depth of their concern for orphans: the Selangor Dogs donated 150,000 baht and the Penang All Blues gave 90,000 baht.

Tourney organizer Patrick Cotter told the *Gazette* that the event had raised about 350,000 baht, not including funds to come from a charity dinner due to be held on May 30.

Former England international player Gareth Chilcott was due to be guest speaker at the dinner, and items to be auctioned included a Wallabies jersey signed by the current Aussie international squad, for which an early bid of 30,000 baht had been received, as well as three copies of Jason Leonard's book autographed by the current England prop, and an autographed jersey donated by former English soccer international Paul "Gazza" Gascoigne.

Eam Thavornvongwongse, President of the Phuket Sports Association, praised the event. "It is a good thing for Phuket. [This year] it has brought about 1,000 people and generated at least 20 million baht. Children from Phang Nga who were affected by tsunami were brought down to watch the rugby and to meet the players," he said.

K. Eam said that he was looking at the prospect of Air-Asia, the main sponsor of this year's Rugby 10s, supporting rugby clinics for children and at the possibility of adding another international rugby event to Phuket's sporting calendar.

Additional reporting by Anongnat Sartpisut

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Phuket beats Nakhon Nayok – on paper

PHUKET: In a bizarre provincial competition for a prize from Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Phuket crushed Nakhon Nayok 31 to 11 on May 25 – National Sports Challenge Day.

Despite this sterling effort, however, Phuket languished outside of the Top 10, far behind the eventual winner, Nakhon Phanom, which scored 89, and run-

ners-up Nong Bua Lamphu and Chon Buri with 86.12 and 86.04 respectively.

The "competition" rarely saw the participants breaking into a sweat, though, as the scores refer solely to the percentage of each province's registered population that pledged to take part in sporting activities between 5 am and 7 pm on May 25.

Phuket was paired against Nakhon Nayok because the two provinces have registered populations of around 250,000 people.

The Bangkok-based Office of Sports and Recreation Development reported that a total of 80,768 people in Phuket registered while a piffling 28,865 did likewise in Nakhon Nayok.



Runner-up Montinee Thangpong (left) and Phuket Champion Ryoko Fuda show off the plaques they were awarded during the post-match awards ceremony.

Japanese teen wins Phuket ITF title

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Eighteen-year-old Ryoko Fuda of Japan won the May 28 final of the US\$25,000 TAT-Phuket Women's Open with a straight-sets victory over Thailand's Montinee "Poy" Thangpong.

In the doubles' competition, the first-seeded pair of Napaporn Tongsalee of Songkhla and Akgul Amanmuradova of Uzbekistan breezed to an easy 6-1, 6-1 win over the 4th-seeded duo of Monique Adamczak of Australia and Annette Kolb of Germany.

The matches marked the end of Phuket's first-ever International Tennis Federation (ITF) competitions, which featured three week-long US\$10,000 men's circuits tournaments followed by the women's finale.

Fuda had little difficulty breaking Montinee in the first set, winning 6-1. In the second set, Montinee took encouragement

from the partisan crowd, breaking back to draw even at 4-4, but in the ninth game she was again unable to hold serve. Up 5-4, Fuda held her own serve to close out the game, set, match and tournament.

The win, which took little more than an hour to complete, could move Fuda into the Women's Tennis Association top 200 and added US\$2,940 to her winnings this year of US\$18,996.

Montinee, who missed out on a chance to win her third ITF title, took back US\$1,666 in winnings to her native Samut Sakhon.

Fuda told reporters she enjoyed playing in the heat and humidity of Phuket.

"I was lucky to win today against Poy, who is my good friend. I played very well and was focused throughout the match ... and it was a good match.

"The weather here is so hot, it never gets this hot in Japan. I like this weather better than the

cold," she said, adding that her next tournament would be Wimbledon.

Montinee was a gracious loser. "I didn't get comfortable with Fuda's pace in the final, even though we have played each other before. The court was really fast, and she played better than me," she admitted.

"I really didn't expect to make it through to the final, but I was especially happy with my second-round win (5-7, 6-3, 6-10) over Wynne Prakusya of Indonesia, who is just coming off a big singles win at the ITF event in Vietnam."

Napaporn, now seeded No 308 in the world in singles, and developing into a doubles specialist, split the US\$1,176 prize with her Uzbek partner.

The pair also came out on top in last year's ITF event in Bangkok, and more recently took second-place at an ITF event in Vietnam in May. Kolb and Adamczak took home US\$686.

Heads-up for '05 King's Cup

PHUKET: This year's Phuket King's Cup Regatta – one of the highlights of the yachting calendar in Southeast Asia – will be held from December 4 to 10.

Speaking to the *Gazette*, Santi Kanchanabandhu, President of the regatta's organizing committee, claimed that the six-day event – which, as ever, will be based at Kata Beach – will help to boost tourism in Phuket.

"Almost 100 yachts, and 3,000 sailors and others took part in last year's event.

"We expect to better these figures in the 2005 event, which is the 19th," he said.

For more information, contact the King's Cup Regatta organizers at Tel/Fax: 076-273380, Email: info@kingscup.com or visit the regatta website at www.kingscup.com

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

May 24 results: Amigos* 8 Valhalla 1; Dog's Bollocks* 5 Two Black Sheep 4; Queen Mary 5 Pickles* 4; OffShore*4 Nag's Head 5; Shakers 6 Piccadilly*3. (*=winners of beer leg)

Pickles (28) 7. Piccadilly (26); 8. Nag's Head (22); 9. Valhalla (21) 10. Dog's Bollocks (18); 11. Two Black Sheep (9).

Standings: 1. OffShore (44 pts); 2. Queen Mary (36); 3. Shakers (31); 4.= Amigos, Didi's (29); 6.

May 31 fixtures: Pickles v Shakers; Didi's v Amigos; Piccadilly v Dog's Bollocks; Two Black Sheep v Queen Mary; Valhalla vs Nag's Head.

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Phuket Diary

June 22

Punchline Comedy Club. Top UK comedians Paul Zerdin, Richard Blackwood and Andy Askins from London's Comedy Store will perform a one-night adults only show. Watermark will also put on a three-course set dinner before the show, strictly by reservation only. Book early to avoid disappointment.

Location: Watermark Bar Restaurant at the Boat Lagoon. Event time: 7pm-11pm. Contact: Stuart Bird. Tel: 01-7376184. Email: info@watermarkphuket.com. Websites: www.watermarkphuket.com and www.punchlinecomedy.com.

July 21

Asarnha Bucha Day. Asarnha Bucha Day public holiday commemorates the first occasion when the Buddha, his teachings and five disciples were present together after his enlightenment.

July 22

Vassupanayika – Buddhist Lent Day. Following Vassupanayika, monks are obliged to remain in a certain place, preferably a monastery, for a period of three months from the day after Asarnha Bucha Day. It is a public holiday.

August 12

Birthday of HM Queen Sirikit. August 12 is the birthday of HM Queen Sirikit, a public holiday and, by tradition, Mother's Day in Thailand.

November 16

Loy Krathong Festival. Details of events to be held to mark this festival will be added later.

November 26-27

The 3rd Phuket International Soccer 7s. This tournament is an invitational tournament that provides a socially competitive environment for players who approach the game with the right attitude and in the right spirit. This competition has previously attracted some 20 teams from around the world and is expected to become a major attraction in Asia for expatriate soccer players. Teams come not only from Asian countries, but also from Australia and New Zealand. Teams from France and the UK have also expressed an interest.

Location: Karon Municipal Stadium. Kick-off: 8 am. Contact: Alain at Tel: 06-9998839 or Email: alain@reperages-thailand.com

December 5

Birthday of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej. December 5 is the birthday of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej, a public holiday and, by tradition, Father's Day in Thailand.

December 12

Substitution for Constitution Day. December 12, a public holiday, is a substitution for Constitution Day, which falls on Saturday, December 10.

Pinot Grigio – source of the exciting whites

One of today's most exciting white wines is pinot Grigio, yet, although it is growing in popularity, many consumers find it rather perplexing, because it comes in many guises and many names, according to where the grapes are grown.

In France, the grape goes by the name Pinot Gris and is at its best in the Alsace, although it is also found in the Loire Valley. In Alsace, the grape also sometimes goes by its erstwhile name, Tokay, and in Southern Germany it's called Ruländer.

Everywhere else the grape is known as Pinot Grigio. In Italy it accounts for most of the memorable white wines of Collio, Friuli and the Veneto, as well as in the Piedmont. New Zealand and California's coastal regions produce very good Pinot Grigio, and you can find it from other countries as well.

Pinot Grigio's unique color and flavors seem to translate well outside Europe, and one can expect to encounter more and more Pinot Grigio wines from other countries, such as Australia, Chile and South Africa.

Pinot Grigio is actually a pink grape that arose from a mutation of the red Pinot Noir grape and that was subsequently propagated as a distinct selection. The

WINE



By Steven Roberto

higher levels of tannin and phenols Pinot Grigio inherited from its red progenitor explain the distinctive copper hue that sets it apart from other white wines.

This grape often favors high altitudes, and in Italy and France you find the best grapes growing on mountainsides. In Northeastern Italy, the wines usually have light-to-medium body, crisp acidity and a distinctive lemon-guava-and-light-sour-cream characteristic that is both enjoyable and distinguishing. The wines are often bottled with a slight touch of effervescence.

Against the sunny and sheltered hillsides of Alsace, Pinot Grigio has greater richness and

higher potential alcohol. In Alsace, the wines are not only richer but also have an almost oily texture and ripe flavors of peach and apricot.

It is easy to spot an Alsace wine, as it is the only French wine permitted to put the name of the grape on label, and the traditional tall, slender German-style "hock" bottle is still used there.

Pinot Grigio is versatile with food and well suited to Thai cuisine. It pairs especially well with seafood and shellfish. I love it with vegetarian or seafood pizza, and to accompany pasta with a light cream or pesto sauce.

Pinot Grigio's uniqueness translates well to new climates and soils wherever it is planted. Any stylistic variation is due more to differences of opinion about how the wine should be made than to place of origin.

Getting to know Pinot Grigio means unlocking a most fascinating and enjoyable conundrum that should only serve to encourage us to explore this grape's unique personality.

Steven Roberto is a winemaker and restaurant consultant from California. He is the Managing Director of enVision Phuket, a Phuket-based wine importer and consultant. Email: stevenroberto@lycos.com.

Wine Connection pops the cork in Chalong wine bar

CHALONG: Some 150 people turned out for the official opening of Wine Connection's wine bar at the Fisherman Way Business Center in Chalong on May 28.

There to mark the occasion was famed Argentinean wine maker Gabriel Baigorria, who is presently in Asia promoting his range of wines.

Mr Baigorria, who was in India before arriving in Phuket, launched his popular trivento

wine in Phuket at the Saturday evening event.

Martin Bizen of Wine Connection told the *Gazette*, "The wine bar is now officially open every day and customers can enjoy wines, beers and spirits at wholesale prices."

He explained that, for the time being, Wine Connection is offering wines served at the new wine bar at off-the-shelf prices. "That represents a saving of about 10-15%," he said.

However, he added that it had not yet been decided how long the promotion will run or what other promotions the company will offer.

For more information, contact Wine Connection at Fisherman Way Business Center, 19/55 Moo 8, Chao Fa East Rd, Chalong, Phuket 83130. Tel: 076-282411. Email: info@wineconnection.co.th Website: www.wineconnection.co.th

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On the menu

with Andy Johnstone

Pacific Club Spa Boutique Resort

Having tired somewhat of eating out during the – as Louis Armstrong sang – “... dark sacred night”, I decided to take a leisurely lunch with my companions during what turned out to be a “... bright blessed day”.

Our destination was Pacific Club Spa Boutique Resort Phuket, which, for the purposes of brevity and to eschew prolixity, wordiness or even verbosity will henceforth be referred to as Pacific Club.

In fact, as I sit bashing at the computer keys, two hours have not yet passed since the feast and a guided tour of Pacific Club ended – and the tastes, sights and smells of the delightful place are still in my senses.

One of the sights I remember most is not, for once, an attractive young waitress (of which there are a number at Pacific Club) nor my equally attractive dining companions, but a right dog.

A young golden retriever to be precise, called Rascal. He may not be the typical maître d’, but he greets us with a warmth and vitality (read: he gets as up close and personal to each of us as could best be expected on a first date) that makes us feel right at home.

But what is this “home” like? Eric Conger is the club’s director, but he also takes more than a passing interest in the architecture and design of the establishment, as well as being something of a dab-handed autodidact in the kitchen.

Eric has, for Pacific Club, eschewed the quasi-Thai style of architecture and taken an altogether more restrained path.

The walls have a delicate wash of pink on them, and arches and windows abound, allowing a welcome breeze through the spacious restaurant. I am led – almost – into believing I’m walking into a casa in the mountains overlooking Acapulco.

But the views from the windows are of Karon’s grand hills



Left, Fettucine Shrimp Alfredo with all the trimmings. Above, bhajis and naan bread.

pasta, Eric serves me some rather splendid white fish stuffed with seafood and herbs and topped with a delectable sherry cream sauce.

Delicious, actually, with the sauce revealing itself in stages as I eat. Too late, though – my companions have caught the scent too and help themselves.

But I’m already onto the Chicken Cordon Bleu, about which I could write chapter and verse – but I won’t. Try it for yourself; the sauce especially is divine, and I would be quite content simply to eat that with chips or one of the delightful baked potatoes served here.

Eric wisely suggests a tour around the rest of the club, just to walk off lunch. By the way, a club it is, for that oft-forgotten group of people in Phuket: expatriates.

The concept behind Pacific Club is simple; full resort facilities – accommodation, spa, pool, fitness facilities, and a nightclub next year – that are open to everyone, tourist or expat, with accommodation for us lotus eaters here if the trek over the hill and back to reality seems too much.

Pacific Club has space, privacy and character by the bucketful. The restaurant serves all the usual favorites – and more – in generously-sized portions at reasonable prices, and the whole enterprise has a competent man, and his dog, at the helm.

I think I know where I’ll be spending my days off from now on.

Pacific Club, 16 Patak Rd Soi 24, Karon Beach. Tel: 076-398350. Web: www.pacific-club-phuket.com

Pacific terrific

canopied in semi-tropical rain forest – and are even more impressive from the 8th-floor rooftop garden and swimming pool.

An equally impressive spread – of food – awaits us as we return to the table following Stage 1 of our grand tour of the Pacific Club.

First up is a crisp salad with hard-boiled eggs hard-boiled just right, that is, the center of the yolk is a just a tad more yellow and creamier than the rest of it. A scattering of olives, a choice of three dressings – I choose the blue cheese – and French bread.

My petite colleagues are already beginning to look full.

Obviously made of sterner stuff than I imagined, however, they leap into the rest of the cuisine offered with reckless abandon.

Authentic onion *bhajis* and a fragrant lamb curry with homemade *naan* – garlic and plain – make our eyes pop and our mouths water. Ignoring decorum – Western decorum, at least – I’m ripping up the *naan* and scooping up the lamb without the aid of cutlery. It’s spot-on.

Alas, my colleagues do not eat lamb – “Chef can make you a shrimp or vegetarian one next time,” advises Eric – therefore it is up to me to more or less clear the bowl, which I do.

The Fettucine Shrimp Alfredo benefits from the addition of a dollop of pesto in the rich creamy sauce, and joy of joys, the large shrimps has been completely shelled. No need for the messy and annoying chore of doing it myself.

This goes down very well with the girls and while they are distracted by the pleasures of the

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Home of the Week

Chalong

The large four-year-old home, located in Land & Houses Park, offers privacy in the heart of Chalong.



Samui

LARGER THAN LIFE
By Graham Doven

I have been a regular visitor to Samui for about 15 years. I loved it a decade-and-a-half ago, and I love it now. I was involved in marketing for Bangkok Airways, and the production of their inflight magazine.

I still love Samui, and when I say I am a "regular visitor" I mean that I go there at least once a month.

I drove to Samui this week and used the super highway between Krabi and Surat Thani. If you follow the signs to Nakhon Si Thammarat and Koh Samui, you end up at Donsak, the ferry terminal serving Koh Samui.

Unlike in the old days, five years ago, there are now two ferry companies, Raja and Seastran.

The ferries run every hour, on time, an extraordinary improvement on before, when you had to get up at 6 am if you were leaving Samui to guarantee getting on a ferry by 10 am.

The service has greatly improved, no doubt thanks to competition.

It may be easy to get to Samui now, but on the island itself, there is still room for improvement.

Facilities and development, including property, shopping, restaurants and accommodation are amazing, but the infrastructure is nothing short of disastrous.

There has been little improvement in the roads since I first visited the island in 1990. It didn't matter so much then, as there weren't that many places to go.

Menam Beach, for example, was a very pleasant little village with a magnificent beach and some delightful little bungalow resorts.

Now there are traffic jams and traffic lights, but the road is still the same, a little concrete strip that goes all the way around the island.

Chaweng, the main beach

Land, house – and boat

This imposing four-year-old house in Land & Houses Park, Chalong, sits on more than half a rai of grounds and is surrounded by high walls and fences.

The rear garden, which has views across the lake, a two-bedroom guesthouse and mooring for a small boat, also has a swimming pool and two salas.

The well-equipped guesthouse also features two bathrooms and a Western-style kitchen, while the main house has four bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms.

The large Western-style kitchen, with a range of appliances, has storage units finished in wood with marble worktops.

The house also boasts an airy lounge-dining room – which opens onto a terrace – a study and two maids' rooms. It is equipped with air conditioners and ceiling fans, water heaters, solar power, a septic tank and three-phase electricity.

All floors are tiled or marbled and the house is spacious and well finished throughout.

The land title is Chanote and the house is on the market for 18 million baht.

For further information contact: Richard Lusted, Siam Real Estate, at Tel: 076-288908. Email: info@siamrealestate.com or Web: www.siamrealestate.com



The property comes with a large private swimming pool (above), a large yard (right) and its own mooring for a small boat on a lagoon behind the house (left).



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secret love affair



Colin McKay and his caddy enjoy a round of golf at Koh Samui's Santiburi Golf Club, in the hills overlooking Menam. A round of golf at the club is one of the best ways to appreciate Samui, and to get away from the traffic jams in the township below.

area, is ridiculous: the beach road is no longer adequate for the mass of shopping centers, restaurants and hotels that has grown up around it. Driving along it at night makes one feel that a trip down Sukhumvit Rd in Bangkok would be a nice break.

While I understand that a lot of money has been spent on building a new road along the lake behind Chaweng, with a view to creating a more efficient road system, it hasn't been fin-

ished, and nobody I have met who lives on Samui can tell me what is going on.

Never mind, the clutter has its own charm. You cannot fail to be impressed by the quality of the shops, entertainment venues and restaurants. The service in many places is excellent and, while Samui has a concentrated market and Phuket is spread out, it wouldn't be a bad idea for Phuket businessmen to come and have a look.

I played golf with friend Colin McKay at the Santiburi Golf Club. This is a superb course opposite the Dusit Santiburi Resort on Menam Beach, way above the traffic chaos below.

The course gives absolutely stunning views over the north of the island and nearby Koh Phangan. If you like golf, you've got to give it a go. It's expensive, but, at least the island has a golf course, and it is top class.

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Fantastic plastic not required

What is it with plastic? It has to be one of the most ugly materials ever created, and anything made of plastic is usually non-recyclable and not something you're likely to admit to owning.

I suppose that there are some lovers of plastic. Personally, I'm not a huge fan of plastic shoes or nylon shirts, and I am still waiting for one of those plastic belts that come with some new pairs of trousers to last more than a week.

Plastic does have its uses, though. It's ideal for water tanks and washing-up bowls. It's perfect for three-year-old girls who want jewelry just like their mum's, or for boys who are looking for a doctor's set to kick-start their medical studies before they even start primary school.

But plastic should never be used as a substitute for plants. Plants grow and do all the other things that living organisms do, so why does there seem to be an obsession with making plastic versions of them in this part of the world? It's not as if we're living in the harshest environment on the planet – that title would probably go to somewhere in deepest, darkest Lancashire, in England.

Plastic plants invoke all sorts of problems – how often have you looked at a plant in a hotel or shopping center and wondered if it was real? Often, real plants look like plastic replicas – instead of vice versa – no matter how hard the creator has tried. Disregard the flowers, and consider only the stems and leaves, and the difference between a plastic plant and the real thing becomes more difficult to distinguish.

The caladium is one of



The showy caladium (or one variation on the theme): Some claim the poisons it contains may help ward off bubonic plague.

these. It's a spectacular plant that doesn't have flowers or even a stem – just a load of brightly-colored leaves growing straight out of an underground tuber. The dramatic arrow-shaped, paper-thin leaves are mixtures of bright reds, white and green, in striking combinations. The leaf markings are more than a little showy, and look like the product of a bored artist with a little too much time on his hands.

It's much replicated as an artificial plant, which I admit looks a lot more convincing than my Aunt Ethel's plastic daffodils that have been gathering dust on her sideboard for the past 50 years.

I'm not sure if they're still there, but before the tsunami, if you looked up from the lobby in Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort, near Patong, you could see dozens of these lined up. They looked impressive, but were they real or not? Who knows.

Originally from South America, the caladium has a

number of aliases: angel wings, heart of Jesus and alocasia, among others. Thais know it as *bai born*.

Thai caladiums are somewhat different from their relatives elsewhere on the globe, as the hybridizing of them in Thailand has taken a bizarre but creative turn from the "standard" versions.

Plant breeders in Thailand haven't focused so much on producing larger leaves, and instead have opted to develop more unusual leaf shapes and bizarre color combinations. Produce a few leaf deformations, and throw in some weird variegations and you have the Thai offering to the caladium world. There are hundreds of hybrids here that are virtually unknown outside Thailand.

Like so many plants in this region, the caladium is poisonous. Apart from minor skin irritations, it will also cause major problems if it's eaten, so *khao pad caladium* is probably not a good idea. That said, there are

those who would argue against the health warnings, and suggest the caladium as a vaccine. Believe it or not, some websites list the caladium as a preventive measure against bubonic plague. One for Mr Ripley, perhaps.

This is yet another plant that you don't have to work too hard at to encourage it to grow, as it's quite accepting of most conditions. Just about the only thing that it will complain about is direct sunlight. The delicate leaves will become scorched, so it should always be planted in the shade. This is where the caladium is often seen in the wild – they've escaped the gardens and are now contentedly thriving in the shade of tall trees or in a damp wooded areas.

As it grows from tubers, the caladium even possesses the ability to "die" for a few months. If there's an extended dry period, it will retreat gracefully underground, re-appearing when it's a bit happier with the water content of the soil. If it gets plenty of water year-round, it should continue to grow and spread.

The next time you see a caladium at a restaurant or hotel, try to resist the temptation to investigate its authenticity. At best, you'll be disappointed that the otherwise fine establishment can't be bothered to display real plants; at worst, your skin will itch for hours – though you may stand a better chance of not contracting bubonic plague.

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?
Email Bloomin' Bert at:
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Construction Update



Work on the 50-million-baht Phuket Marina Residence project on Koh Sirey, begun in October 2004, is scheduled for completion by the middle of June 2006.

Project developers Phuket Seaview Co held a press conference at the Andavana Spa on May 14 to announce that both construction and unit sales are now about 30% complete.

Managing Director Kavinvit Boonudomsup told the *Gazette* that the project's location, on more than eight rai of coastal land, offered a unique chance to construct a full-service marina on the island's sheltered eastern side.

The project aims to offer privacy, full facilities and easy access to boat owners and other community residents at affordable costs. Units range in price from about 4.4 million baht to 12 million baht for a luxury penthouse.

The 54-apartment development has a "tropical and contemporary" design aimed at offering

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by Athiga Jundee



Construction is well advanced on the apartment blocks.

Koh Sireh homes for boat lovers

spaciousness, privacy and sea views. Over half of the total land area of the development is earmarked as open space.

Each of the project's three seven-story buildings, Towers A, B and C, will comprise 18 units. Towers A and B are identical and offer one- to three-bedroom units ranging in size from 70 to 160 square meters, with penthouses on the top floor. Tower C has larger one- to three-bedrooms units of 110 to 250sqm and penthouse units.

Project design is by Global Engineering Concept Company and combines the professional experience of both BBMT (Thailand) and the Atkins design firms.

The marina side of the project will include 70 full-service yacht berths, with condominium owners offered marina membership privileges.

Communal facilities will include a waterfront swimming pool, Jacuzzi, fitness room, sauna, jogging trail, playground, business center, restaurant, and small shopping complex. A water park and planned boat resort and golf academy are all within walking distance.

"Our target market is foreigners, both those living in

Phuket and abroad. We are not focused solely on yacht owners, but on anyone interested in the lifestyle offered by a luxury marina residence. We are confident that all 54 units will be sold by year's end," K. Kavinit said.

Akkapob Tankimyong, Business Development Manager of the project's property consultant firm, Trade Max Co, said that apart from offering all the amenities of a full-service marina, residents would also get special benefits at Andava Spa and other affiliated companies.

For more information contact the sale office (Tel: 076-6252917; visit the project website at www.phuketmarinaresidence.com or send email to: sales@phuketmarinaresidence.com

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Property Gazette

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HOTEL PROMOTION

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Kamala. Private, secure residence. 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, living/dining. Aircon throughout, UBC included. Tel: 01-8931360. Email: info@phuketinvestments.com

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- Maid service Tel: 076-344484, 01-4236906. Fax: 076-344485. Email: sunsetap@ji-net.com

APARTMENT

near Loch Palm Golf Club. 1 bedroom, living room, kitchen, bathroom, terrace, hot water, cable TV, telephone line, swimming pool, for rent at 12,000 baht/month. Tel: 076-202725, 01-8916632. Fax: 076-202725. Email: golflandview@gmx.de

PATONG LUXURY

apartment. Central Patong, 1- & 2-bedroom apartments. Email for info & photos. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

EXCLUSIVE APARTMENT

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Accommodation Wanted

APARTMENT

in Patong. Seeking a reasonable self-contained 1- or 2-bedroom furnished apartment in or around Patong for 6 to 8 weeks in August and September. Will pay up to 3,500 baht per week, all in. Aircon, kitchen/kitchenette, satellite TV and safe or safe deposit essential. Serviced and with balcony preferred. Email: karlh@labyrinth.net.au

LUXURY HOLIDAY

accommodation. Luxury house or apartment required for Dec 19, 2005 to Jan 4, 2006. Must have seaview and at least 2 bedrooms. Photographs required. Email: wimo@mweb.co.za

LOOKING FOR HOUSE

to rent. We are 2 families totaling 9 persons who are looking for a house to rent in the Phuket area. It can be 1 big house with 4 bedrooms or 2 smaller houses together. We will arrive December 10 and will stay for 1 month. Our budget is 60,000-100,000 baht. Email: jonny.hoffman@abaseafood.se

HOUSE NEEDED

My family will arrive in Phuket around June 9 and we would like to rent a house near a beach somewhere in Phuket for about 5 days. Nothing too pricey. If you also have a car for rent that would be useful. Please get back to me as soon as possible. Tel: 09-6503002. Email: kamil.tyebally@gmail.com

CHALONG

Looking for 2-bedroom aircon house around Chalong Circle, to rent for July. For more information. Email: antoniobruno@hotmail.com

ACCOMMODATION

in Phuket. Want to rent room or apartment with aircon, fridge and a balcony in the Patong area for about 3 months. June 20 to Sep 12. Max 8,000 baht/month. Please contact me for details. Email: l-mk@telia.com

HOUSE WITH GARDEN

I need a small house, unfurnished, with a large garden area, 10-15km from Phuket City. Must be:

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Household Items

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Would you like to keep up on what's happening in Phuket - the good, the bad and the bizarre? Let us share it with you - every week!

TO: The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd, 367/2 Yaowarat Road, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000, Thailand.

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 - 21-inch TV
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tracks and brackets. Approx 38m for 9 windows. Call for window sizes. 12,000 baht. Tel: 076-288050, 04-189-8419. Email: albertjames1940@hotmail.com

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- Diamond TV, 6 months old: 2,750 baht (cost 4,190)
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sitting. Loving care for your animals while you are away. We will exercise, feed and comfort any household pets in your home. We are two fine young Canadians, who have loads of experience with animals. Gardening and general household maintenance is not a problem. We have been residents on the island for the past 5 years and have excellent local references. We are booked for August but are still available immediately until the last week of July. Those who may have already tried to contact the previous ad may find that the phone number no longer exists, Tel: 07-8979987. Email: frasergow@hotmail.com

Property Services

PHUKET THAI HOME

company. If you can't sell your home, land or other property, let us sell it for you. Free consultation. Tel: 04-626-8105 (English) or 01-7291391 (Thai). Email: phuketthaihome@hotmail.com

Boats & Marine

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Prout 38 Catamaran (1999)

286,000 Euro

Island Gypsy (1994)

\$169,000 USD

Grand Banks 49 (1991)

\$450,000 USD

www.leemarine.com

Dealership Office The Boat Lagoon Contact: Martin Holmes tel: 076 238 803 fax: 076 273 319 Email: info@leemarine.com	Brokerage Office The Boat Lagoon Contact: Andrew de Bruin Mobile: 01 894 1530 tel/fax: 076 239 729 Email: brokerage@leemarine.com	Yacht Haven Marina Office The Yacht Haven Marina Phuket Contact: Jim Poulsen Mobile: 01 891 3237 tel/fax: 076 206 260 Email: yachtaven@leemarine.com
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20M LIVE-ABOARD CRUISER

MV Ariel has been fully refitted and refurbished. She is licensed by the Harbor Department for 40 pax. She is currently based at Koh Chang and can be inspected there. All details are available on our website. Offers over 5 million baht are invited. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-7253960, 06-8871196. Email: derek.levitt@onetel.net For further details, please see our website at: www.ariel-cruises.com

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LOOKING FOR
longtail boats for tsunami relief. I am looking for a few second-hand longtail boats in good condition. They must be minimum 10m long and have an engine. My average budget runs around 50,000-70,000 baht - no more! Please call Tel: 09-6498218 for more information or contact me by email at: makebetter2005@yahoo.com

SPEEDBOAT
380,000 baht. 2 years old, Thai registered, 27ft, can transport 15 + 1 + 1 people. Wood frame with glass fiber, sunroof, 200hp Yamaha engine (10 years old). Please call for more information. Tel: 01-8924282 or contact me by email at: taxiregio@freenet.de

TEAKWOOD VESSEL
23m teakwood boat with Hino engine. Ideal for conversion to tour or dive boat. Seller can assist with design and construction. Offered as is, at 1.5 million baht. Tel: 09-650-0957. Email: thavorn@andamandolphin.com

TOURIST BUSINESS
Wanted: tourist boat operation with room for expansion. Phuket and surrounding islands. Please email as much information as possible to Wayne at: wmole@bigpond.net.au

MARINA BERTH
Freeze your monthly payments for the next 14 years on this 15m Boat Lagoon berth. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-383670, 09-6459470. Fax: 76-383670. Email: beeguy@phket.loxinfo.co.th

NORTH SAILS
spinnaker. Red, white and blue radial design. 26ft luff and leech and 16.5ft (area about 400 sq ft). 6,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-5871862. Email: mmcgrath2@hotmail.com

WINDSURFING
equipment. I have a 5.3 Gaastra windsurfing sail with fiberspar masts. A decent board and all the required parts to have a blast. All going for only 30,000 baht. Tel: 07-8979987. Email: frasergow@hotmail.com

16M CATAMARAN
I'm looking for partner(s) for my catamaran, made for charter work. US\$12,000 = 20% of the boat. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-8919620. Email: catnoia@yahoo.de

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(super toy). Searider, Thai registered, built in 2000. New 135hp engine (no hours on it); can see bill. 5 seater. In great condition. Very fast - put in your driveway and go in the water. Easy to handle and no marine fees. A bargain at 430,000 baht, including trailer. Be fast! Go fast! Tel: 01-0823240, 01-5376866. Email: bigbhouda5@hotmail.com

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Length: 40m; beam: 8.6m. Price: 2.8 million baht. The boat was designed as a luxury live-aboard. Please call or email for more information. Tel: 04-0511944. Fax: 076-243089. Email: boat_phuket@yahoo.com

BOAT ITEMS
- 3kg Bruce anchor with 2.5 meters of stainless chain and stainless shackles.
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Everything to go quickly and cheap! Pls contact. Tel: 076-281479. Email: palmtree@loxinfo.co.th

BAUER COMPRESSOR
K 14 Bauer diving compressor, in very good condition. Please email: saildivefree@yahoo.com

DIVE BOAT WANTED
Liveaboard dive boat wanted for 12-16 guests. All boats considered. Email: dougie@divejohnsandy.com

DIVE BOAT WANTED
Pimalai Divers requires a 20m (+) dive boat to operate on long-term contract starting November 1, 2005. Boat to be based at our jetty, Pimalai Resort & Spa, Koh Lanta. Contact David Giles. Tel: 075-607920. 06-2832426. Email: diving@pimalai.com

ONE LASER LEFT
One laser sailboat left for anyone who is interested. Give me a call or an email to arrange a time to come look at this excellent boat. All equipment and a few extras, going for 60,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-8979987. Email: frasergow@hotmail.com

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- Thai registered
- Meets TAT requirements
A perfect boat for daily dive or snorkeling trips, in very good condition. Please email or call for more information and for photos. Tel: 077-456216, 07-9700913. Email: charlott_ragnarsson@hotmail.com

DAY TRIP DIVE BOAT
Wooden boat, Thai registered, 11 months old. LOA: 24m; beam: 4.5m. Location: Krabi. Tel: 66-010789397. Email: hpihemp@hotmail.com

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"Boats & Marine"

at www.phuketgazette.net!

Island Job Mart



Royal Phuket Marina a world-class residential resort community encircling a sleek, state-of-the-art tropical marina. We are currently seeking applicants for the following positions:

(A) Training Manager

1. Male/female age between 30-45 years old .
2. Bachelor's degree or higher in any field.
3. At least 3-5 years' of training experience.

(B) Corporate Lawyer

1. Male/female, age not over 30 years old.
2. Bachelor's degree or higher in laws.
3. 2-5 years' related work experience in a business environment especially in corporate law, the property development field as well as government is preferred.

(C) Electrical technician

1. Must be over 25 years old.
2. Graduate with diploma in electrical power/plumbing.
3. Minimum 3 years' experience in a maintenance or installation position.

(D) Machine and equipment technician

1. Must over 30 years old.
2. Graduate with diploma in machinery.
3. Minimum 5 years' experience in the fitting and maintenance field.
4. Can drive or be prepared to learn to drive heavy machinery such as travellifts and forklifts.

(E) Dock hand

1. Female, age not over 30 years old.
2. Graduate with diploma or higher in any field.
3. Fair command of English

A, B, C, D positions require:

- Good command of English.
- Familiar with computer systems.

C, D, E positions required:

- Be able to swim and prepared to learn lifesaving skills.
- Ability to work outdoors.

Please apply in person or submit your application letter, resumé, expected salary together with recent photo to:
Wasinw@royalphuketmarina.com

Human Resource Department, Royal Phuket Marina
68 Moo 2, Thepkasattit Rd., Khokaew, Muang, Phuket 83200
Tel: 076-239758 Fax: 076-239756

Cape Yamu seeking...

Site Manager (2 positions)

- Male (Thai)
- Degree in civil or electrical engineering, or in architecture
- Minimum 5 years' experience in the construction industry
- Excellent command of English
- Computer literate
- Good personality, hard working and able to coordinate a team

Site Inspector

- Male (Thai)
- Degree in civil engineering or architecture
- Minimum 3 years' experience in related field
- Good command of English
- Computer literate

CAD Draftsman

- Thai citizen (female or male)
- Vocational education as draftsman
- Minimum 3 years' experience in related field
- Good command of English
- Computer literate with CAD-related programs

Interested candidates, please send resumé + recent photo to the Project Secretary.

Cape Yamu office: 23/102 Thepkasattit Road,
T. Koh Kaew, A. Muang, Phuket, 83200.
Tel: 076 273 490 Fax: 076 273 491
e-mail: hom@capeyamu.com

INVESTOR STAFF

wanted. Danish grillhouse chain seeks investor for the last 29% of shares. We have 3 shops, with a turnover of about 20 million baht. We are also looking for franchisees in Kata, Kamala, Phuket City, Krabi. Franchise investment 400,000 baht. Staff wanted: Thai, 28-40 years, must have skills in Word and Excel and be English-speaking. Admin work, 3-4 hours/day. Please contact Mr Kim Kristiansen. Tel: 06-2989-500. Email: la@grillhousedk.com For more details please see our website at: www.grillhousedk.com

E-COMMERCE

opportunities. Phuketsail Group, Thailand's yacht equipment leader, is seeking highly qualified candidates:
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Phuket One Realestate (Thailand) Co., Ltd has a vacancy for a Thai national to work in our property management department. Previous experience in a property management department is essential.

Reply to larry@phuketonerealestate.com

Desjoux (Phuket) Co.,Ltd seek to fill the following position:

Senior cooperator (Hat Yai branch)

- Male age 35 years and up, Thai national
- Bachelor's degree or higher in business management or related field
- At least 3 years' experience in a related field
- Excellent command of written and spoken English
- Excellent interpersonal, leadership and communication skills

Please send your resumé to or apply in person to **Desjoux (Phuket) Co.,Ltd.**
19/28 Moo 2, T.Wichit, Muang, Phuket, 83000.
Tel: 076-263688 Fax: 076-264023
desjouxphuket@yahoo.com

SECRETARY/PA

to Manager. Must be good at English and have a good, happy personality. Experience preferred. Knowledge of accounting and office computers. Please contact for details. Tel: 076-344350. Fax: 076-344350. Email: manager@kalimresidence.com

WEB SHOP DESIGNER

I need to hire some professional Web shop builders to do updates, create new shops, etc. I work with OS-Commerz and Shop-Factory (PHP, MySQL). Please call for more information. Tel: 09-8093566 or contact by email at: lennartviberg@hotmail.com

COOK NEEDED

Small restaurant urgently needs a cook for breakfast, European food and Thai food. For more information or to apply, please call Tel: 01-8914019 or contact by email at: tkoschig2000@hotmail.com

NANNY

Basic English required. Monday-Saturday, 9am-6pm, Chalong circle area, references. Tel: 09-4744083, 076-281391, 01-9872821.

KINDERGARTEN

teacher. Need 2 kindergarten English teachers. Native speakers only, please. Email: info@kajonkiet.com

EXECUTIVE

assistant. Phuket-based advertising company is looking for a hard-working Executive Assistant. Education or experience in communication arts, marketing or related field or will be favored. Applicants need to have a good level of spoken and written English; computer skills in MS Office, Word, Excel and PowerPoint is a must; and have a bright personality, be good at working with members of a team, be mature. Must have a driver's license. Email applications to Khun Bee at: bee@leadingedge-media.com or call Tel: 076-239746 for an interview.

ACCOUNTANT

Fluent written English & computer skills. 1-year project, good package. Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-2670352. Email: stan@csloxinfo.org

NATIVE ENGLISH

teachers. Many excellent jobs available; must be TEFL-trained. Apply now. For more information please call Tel: 06-9520088 or email: paul@langserv.com

BOOKKEEPER

wanted. Min 3-years' experience, knowledge of Quickbooks Pro. Office near Wat Chalong. Email: bic1@phuket.ksc.co.th

IT SUPPORT OFFICER

At least 2 years' experience in networking and hardware maintenance. Good command of spoken English would be an advantage. For more information, please call Tel: 076-272572 or 01-535-8041; or Fax: 076-273447 or contact by email at: wilawan@greatglove.com

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Island Job Mart

Gallery International Limited invites candidates to apply for the following positions for a restaurant and a club located in Jungceylon, Patong, Phuket. Opening late September 2005.

1. Executive Chef (Thai National)

We are looking for a highly motivated Chef who has worked with international hotels and has ambitions to become the leader of an international restaurant with a staff of approximately 10-12 persons. Must be able to control staff, food costs and be able to create "Fusion-menus", East and West, local and Western cuisine. Menu planning, dish developing and menu costing. Computer-literate is an advantage. The restaurant will be open around the end of September 2005 and the successful candidate should be on board late June, early July 2005. Job training and English classes will be provided.

2. Marketing Executive (Thai National)

Female, 25-40 years of age with a minimum of 3 years' experience in Hotel and Restaurant Marketing. Computer-literate. Enthusiastic, driven, customer-focused, creative-thinking and result-oriented. Researching customer needs, developing and implementing strategies and procedures to boost sales and repeat business. Candidate should be on board early July 2005. Working place will be in the Corporate Office, Patong.

3. Restaurant/Saloon Manageress (Thai National)

Male or female, 25-40 years of age with a minimum of 3 years' experience in similar position in a hotel or restaurant. Must be able to control restaurant and bar staff and liaise with the kitchen staff.

4. Restaurant Hostesses

5. Restaurant and Club Supervisors

6. Waitresses

7. Head Bartender

8. Bartenders/Cashiers

9. Cooks

10. Commis Cooks/Kitchen Helpers

11. General Cleaners

12. Office Boy

Positions 4-8 should be females, **MUST** be able to speak English and have a minimum of 2 years' working experience. Work place for position 12 will be in the Corporate Office, Patong. Job training and English classes will also be provided. Candidates should be on board early August, 2005.

The company provides further long-term opportunities to its staff to join various hotel and restaurant operations in Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia.

Interested candidates please apply with resumé, recent photo, present and expected salary to the Corporate Head Office 241/16 Rat-U-Thit Road, Tambon Patong, Kathu, Phuket. Att. Horst J. Soeller; or email details and application to horst@gallery-int.com Or contact Khun Aey at Tel: 09-6525931.

Closing date: June 25, 2005

SENIOR SECRETARY

Tilleke & Gibbins International, established in Thailand since 1893, is coming to Phuket. We are establishing a full service legal office at Cherng Talay and we require:

OFFICE MANAGER/SENIOR SECRETARY

- Bachelor's degree an advantage, preferably with a major in English or Business Administration

- 3-5 years' experience in secretarial or office administration

- Excellent command of spoken and written English

- Accurate typing skills

- Able to operate MS Office

- Good interpersonal and communication skills

Closing date: May 30, 2005.

Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-9890919. Send resumé to: trw@tillekeandgibbins.com

ACCOUNTANT

wanted. Fluent English, 5 years' experience in AR/AP/VAT, filing social security. Contact Tim for more information at Tel: 01-9279328.

JUNIOR SECRETARY

Tilleke & Gibbins International, established in Thailand since 1893, is coming to Phuket. We are establishing a full service legal office at Cherng Talay and we require:

JUNIOR SECRETARY

- Secretarial diploma

- Good command of English

- Good and accurate typing skills

- Able to operate MS Office

- Experience is a plus

- Good coordination skills

- Service-minded and organized

Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-9890919. Send resumé to: trw@tillekeandgibbins.com

TEACHERS WANTED

Phuket Wittayalai School requires native English-speaking teachers with TOEFL certificates and a degree. Please contact K. Boonthong at Fax: 076-213922 or send Email to: boonthong_a@pkw.ac.th

SAILING SKIPPER

required. Kia Ora Catamaran Charters, located on Koh Samui, requires an experienced skipper to operate our 52ft day-charter sailing catamaran. Please contact for more information. Tel: 077-425264 or Email: mark@kiaorathailand.com Please see our website at: www.kiaorathailand.com

JOB VACANCIES

Krabi La Playa Resort is now recruiting for the following positions:

- Reservations Manager

- Restaurant Manager

- Personnel Manager

- Sales Executives

A minimum of 3 years' experience in the hotel field is required. Please contact for more information. Tel: 075-637-500, 01-8812317. Fax: 075-695497. Email: worasuda@krabilaplaya.com For further details, pls see our website at: www.krabilaplaya.com



The Sila Evason Hideaway & Spa, a 6-star resort located on the tropical island of Koh Samui, is currently recruiting for the following positions:

- Asst. Housekeeping Manager (Thai)
- Room Attendants
- Korean Guest Relations Officer or Butler
- Japanese Guest Relations Officer or Butler
- HR/Training Officer
- Airport Representative
- Revenue Supervisor
- Reservation Agent

For the above positions, candidates must have considerable 5/6-star hotel/resort experience, and have an excellent command of English.

We offer very competitive salaries, service charge, benefits, accommodation, first-class training and excellent career opportunities to the right candidates. Please email all CVS, resumé, photos, etc to Colin@evasonhideaways.com

9/10 Moo 5 Baan Plai Laem, Bophut, Koh Samui, Surat Thani 84320, Thailand

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management. Do you have businesses in the following areas: Hotel, apartments, cafe, bar, restaurant, vehicle rental, retail, fitness and more? Friendly British man with English-speaking Thai wife available to manage your business while you are away on a month-by-month basis. Experience in Thailand and overseas businesses. Integrity, care and quality of service assured at all times. Why not give us a call today? Tel: 076-202473. Email: nik@indigosiam.com

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Care-giver/maid available for Chalong, Rawai, Cape Panwa. References available. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-6935015.

CHINESE & ENGLISH

speaker. Currently living in Phuket. I am looking for work as an interpreter in Chinese/English. I speak and write fluent Cantonese and English. Email: gbriar@gmail.com

MY NAME IS DON

My name is Don Copley. I am a West Australian who has been visiting Phuket for nearly 20 years. I have a Thai partner and intend to take up permanent residence in Phuket. I have spent 40 years consulting in real estate and related fields. I hold licences for real estate, valuation, land conveyancing and auctioneering, and have vast experience in subdivision and project management. I am looking for full- or part-time consultancy or related work. Excellent references can be provided. Please contact for more information. Email: ccopleya@bigpond.net.au

EXPAT SEEKS WORK

Mature gentleman, diligent, very responsible and a local resident(non-smoker) seeks full- or part-time daytime work on the island either as a caretaker of your home (I'm also a "handyman"), or in any marketing or sales-related field. I'm highly proficient in the English language. If you have something to offer me please contact for more information. Email: viaphuket@hotmail.com

THAI WOMAN

39 years, is returning to Phuket after more than 12 years in Europe and is looking for employment. Experienced in tourism-related jobs (receptionist and head-cashier in hotels, lounge hostess at Vienna International Airport, employee in a tour agency), computer literate, native Thai speaker, good command of English, excellent command of German language, good personality, friendly, polite, concerned about customer care and service-oriented. CV available on request. Please contact Mrs Metta Krenn by email: gueni.k@gmx.net

RESERVATIONS, GSA

I have an active and joyful personality. I can speak both English and Thai and can get along with people quite well. I have 5 years' experience in the reservations department of a travel agency, plus 2 years in a hotel as a tour coordinator. Tel: 07-8884647. Email: wanliya28@hotmail.com

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Bulletins

Alcoholics Anonymous

is holding meetings in English at the following places:

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Mission Hospital

on Wed and Sun at 7 pm

Bangkok Phuket Hospital

on Fri at 7 pm

Patong

Patong Hospital

on Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun at 7 pm and on Fri at 8 pm

For more info, please call 012732053 (Scandinavian), 018954763 (English) or 018912895 (Frank)

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Good location. Price: 500,000 baht. Tel: 07-8814415.

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BAR FOR SALE

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European-Thai company, Phuket. Please contact for more info. Tel: 01-5697618. Email: investor_wanted@hotmail.com

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Personals

BACKGAMMON

Retired businessman looking for backgammon players on Phuket Island. Please call if interested. Tel: 076-386113, 01-5778443.

ROMANCE

I am 52, physically fit and traveling to Phuket early next month. Hoping to meet an attractive and sincere Thai woman 25 to 33 years old. Email: ydelk@hotmail.com

FEMALE FOR FUN

on Phi Phi. Looking for a female companion, romance, friendship, just to have a few days of fun at the Phi Phi Islands with me, around June 6. Email: timesreporter@tscnet.com

TRIP TO EUROPE

Easy-going European guy (46), living in Phuket, is traveling to Europe for a couple of weeks in August, and does not want to go alone. If you are a nice, charming, uncomplicated and slim Thai lady between 20 and 40 and want to join me, then I would like to invite you. All you need is a passport, and I do the rest. Don't wait too long, and send me an email with a picture of you. Let's go. Please contact. Email: bpauidai@yahoo.de

USA MAN SEEKS

Thai lady. Businessman is traveling to Phuket in May and is seeking to meet a Thai lady for romance and companionship. Please contact for more info. Email: Imbrjack60@yahoo.com

Pets

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The owners of these vehicles can choose from a free one-month membership at Club Asia Fitness, a two-night weekend stay at a Fisherman Way holiday home, or a buffet lunch for two at The Metropole Hotel Phuket.

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