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The Phuket Gazette

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Foreign guides plan comes under attack

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: Panomphol Thummachartniyom, President of the Phuket Professional Guide Association (PPGA), has blasted a proposal to legalize foreign tour guides.

There are already enough qualified Thai guides, he argued, while slamming the authorities for not cracking down on foreigners working illegally as guides.

"Phuket already has problems with foreigners working as tour guides, especially Koreans and Russians. Thais who have already been trained are being used only as 'sitting guides'."

"This makes the Thai guides feel discouraged about their work and many choose to stop working as guides," he said.

Tour firms that use illegal foreign guides usually also employ "sitting" Thai guides whose job it is to act as window dressing should a tour party encounter the police or other officials.

K. Panomphol's comments came after Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura floated the idea of legalizing foreign guides at a Provincial Hall meeting on February 15, saying that Tourism and Sports Minister Pracha Maleenont had asked him to sound out opinions.

The PPGA President continued, "Foreign guides are still working in Thailand because foreign tour companies still hire them. They work illegally which makes it easy for the companies to control them."



Guides leader Panomphol Thummachartniyom wants police to crack down hard on illegal guides and the companies employing them.

"Everyone - including the police - knows that there are illegal guides working in Phuket, but still there are about 2,000 illegal guides here."

He added angrily, "Minister Pracha says that we don't have enough guides, but we have conducted a nationwide survey and there are more than enough guides covering all [the major tourist] languages."

The 2,000 Thai registered guides working in Phuket were already suffering, he said; about half of them are currently unemployed due to the drop in tourist numbers since the tsunami.

He also reminded the Governor that the PPGA and the Guide Association of Thailand had staged a protest rally against legalizing foreign guides in Bangkok on November 1 last year.

Gov Udomsak replied, "We may have enough guides, but we need to look at whether they are fluent, whether they have been trained to a level that ensures that tourists of all nationalities feel as if they are talking to a guide from their home country."

The Governor did not comment about illegal guides working in Phuket, but Phuket Tourist Police Inspector Maj Bundit Khaosutham told the *Gazette*, "If police discover illegal tour guides, they are obliged to arrest them."

"However, we have only a few officers to go on patrol inspecting tour groups. The Tourist Police have to deal with many problems involving tourists, such as jet-skis, tuk-tuks and drunks fighting."

"We are now focusing on building tourists' confidence in visiting Phuket, so we have even less time to inspect tour groups."

Gov orders study on new Patong-airport highway

PHUKET: Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura on February 15 ordered the Phuket Provincial Highways Office (PPHO) to conduct a study into the feasibility of building a road between Phuket International Airport and Patong.

"Right now, a lot of properties are being developed along the main road from the airport [Route 402], and soon Phuket will have traffic congestion problems," he said.

"The same happened in Lad Prao, in Bangkok. When many properties were developed there, the number of cars and people in the area increased, causing the traffic congestion [that exists] there now."

Gov Udomsak said he would like a more direct route from the airport to Patong, passing the Pearl Village Hotel at Nai Yang, Baan Sakoo, Baan Manik, the British Curriculum International School and Loch Palm Golf Club.

He added that he discussed the proposal with Deputy Prime Minister Somkid Jatusripitak the previous week.

"If we are allowed to do it, the PPHO would build this road to be a 'tourism route' as it will pass old tin mines and forests, and across the lagoons we could build beautiful bridges that would give the feeling that you are driving in an exotic country," Gov Udomsak said.

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Talbot murder trial set to start next January

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Provincial Court Judge Yupawan Piri-sinsith was briefed on February 20 on defense and prosecution witness lists in the case of Briton Paul Chetwynd-Talbot, accused of murdering his girlfriend, fellow Briton Debra O'Hanlon.

The judge scheduled the next hearing in the case for January 18 next year, to allow the prosecution time to examine eight witnesses.

Judge Yupawan, who will decide at that time what charges may be brought against the accused, instructed the prosecution to focus on forensic evidence given by doctors who examined the body of Ms O'Hanlon.

Kathu Police recommended that Chetwynd-Talbot be tried for murder.

Ms O'Hanlon's body was discovered in the couple's rented

room at the Eric Guesthouse on Nanai Rd on July 31, 2005. An examination found that her neck was broken.

Chetwynd-Talbot turned himself in to Kathu Police three days later and confessed to hitting Ms O'Hanlon in the face. He claimed the force of the blow caused her to fall back against the bed head, breaking her neck.

Bound in leg irons and handcuffs, Chetwynd Talbot appeared healthy but dejected during the February 21 hearing, which lasted just 10 minutes.

Defense attorney Somsak Chattay told the court that because the autopsy report revealed that no weapon was used against Ms O'Hanlon, the charge should be one of inflicting injury resulting in accidental death, punishable by three to 15 years imprisonment.

The murder charge, in contrast, carries a mandatory sentence of 15 years to capital punishment.

K. Somsak also presented the court with an autopsy report from Vachira Hospital that showed the cause of death to be a combination of brain hemorrhage and a complete neck fracture.

"I want this charge changed from murder to inflicting injury resulting in accidental death," he said. "Paul never intended to kill Ms O'Hanlon."

After the hearing Chetwynd-Talbot was returned to Phuket Provincial Prison, where he will stay until the next hearing. No request for bail was made. If he is found guilty, time already served may be deducted from the sentence.

- Sangkhae Leelanaporn

Low-cost carriers keen on Krabi

KRABI: Low-cost carrier Thai AirAsia will launch daily direct flights from Bangkok to Krabi on March 1, while Singaporean low-cost carrier Tiger Airways has announced it will extend its Singapore-Krabi service to run throughout the low season.

Thai AirAsia Public Relations Executive Jaqueline Mercader told the *Gazette* that the new service, designated FD 3165, will depart Bangkok daily at 5:05 pm with return flight FD 3164 departing Krabi at 6:50 pm. The aircraft used will be a 148-seat Boeing 737.

In April, the airline plans to

increase its service to Krabi to two flights daily.

In order to mark the launch of the new Krabi service, Thai AirAsia is offering a three-day, two-night package from Bangkok with accommodation at the SriLanta, Krabi Hotels & Resorts, for 6,999 baht, Ms Mercader added.

The no-frills carrier is also planning to launch Bangkok-Surat Thani routes, though the start date for this has yet to be fixed, she said.

Asked about the Phuket-Haad Yai route, abandoned last October by Phuket Air, she said

that there are still no plans to take over the route.

"We know that some passengers are waiting for this service, but at the moment we are very busy and we have other priorities that must come first," she said.

Addressing questions about the status of Thai AirAsia following the sale of parent company ShinCorp to Singapore's Temasek Group, Ms Mercader said there would be no disruption of domestic routes as a result.

She explained that 51% of Thai AirAsia shares have now been acquired by Thai nationals. As a Thai-owned company, it is allowed to fly domestic routes.

In more good news for the Krabi tourism industry, Singapore's low-cost carrier, Tiger Airways, has announced on plans to extend its four-times-weekly direct Singapore-Krabi service to fly throughout the year.

"With Krabi now a year-round destination, we expect visitor numbers to increase substantially this year," said airline CEO Tony Davis in a press statement.

"There are many tourist attractions and marine activities at this beach paradise for visitors that [will] keep them coming back to Krabi. - Janyaporn Morel

Real Estate Club to stage property show

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PHUKET: The Phuket Real Estate Club (PREC) will stage an exhibition showcasing property in Phuket and on Koh Samui, at Central Festival Phuket from April 6 to 10.

PREC President Phummi-sak Hongsyok said that the exhibition is partly to support Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura's aim of having more activities staged in Phuket, now that the tsunami anniversary ceremonies are over.

"This is the first event of this kind that we have arranged, and we do not expect that many customers will actually put down deposits for homes. The main idea is to give people information to help them make decisions," K. Phummi-sak said. "We understand that people have to think very carefully before buying a house."

The show will comprise

some 60 booths showcasing homes and land in Phuket and on Koh Samui, with prices in the "medium" to "luxury" range.

K. Phummi-sak said that the property industry is showing solid growth. It is in better shape than the tourism industry, he said, because its customers include Thais as well as foreigners.

He noted, however, the link between property and tourism. "We have had good feedback from foreigner investors, both those developing property and those buying homes in Phuket and Samui.

"They believe that tourism will return to normal, which gives them the courage to invest."

Supot Suwannachote, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Land Office, said that he is considering taking a booth at the show to give people information on the technical aspects of buying land and property.

Obituary: 'Crazy Dave' Polman, pioneer of Patong

AMERICAN David Polman, one of the first foreigners to set up a business on Patong Beach, died in the US on February 5 at the age of 70.

In the 1970s, "Crazy Dave" worked in Iran but fled as tensions rose in that country. He was in transit at Bangkok's Don Muang Airport when he met an old friend who sang the praises of Phuket.

Dave immediately changed plans and flew to the island on the next available flight. Finding it much to his liking, he settled in Patong in 1979.

He quickly made friends with a Dutch World War II underground hero, Jeff, and his wife Dao. The three planned and built the Thai Garden restaurant.

Dave was the first to bring in a video cassette recorder. He hooked that and a TV set up to the generator at Thai Garden. The place was full every night, with

locals, expats, tourists and travelers watching every genre of movie from action films to comedies.

At a time when no other bars were showing movies, Thai Garden quickly became the hotspot on Patong Beach.

He finally sold his share in Thai Garden. Where it stood is now part of the area occupied by the Paradise complex.

Dave, who is survived by his wife Clara, daughter Catherine and son Zak, had a busy and varied life, during which he traveled to every continent.

At various times he was a master machinist, a sailor, a gourmet chef, a motorcycle racer, a stock car racer and a Hell's Angel. Above all he was a very funny guy.

Crazy Dave's big smile and bellowing laugh will be remembered and missed by all who knew him. - Gary Stamey



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Jet-ski races get go-ahead

PATONG: Phuket Province has given the green light for Patong to host the first round of the 2006 Jet Ski Thailand Championship, on March 4 and 5.

The go-ahead for the event was confirmed at a February 14 meeting between Vice-Governor Niran Kalayanamit and members of the Thai Jet Sports Boating Association (TJSBA), including its President, Dr Santad Sasiwanich.

After the meeting, V/Gov Niran explained that allowing the event to take place in Phuket did not indicate a policy shift. Both the Governor's office and the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) considered the TJSBA proposal and agreed that the event's tourism promotion benefits were too good to pass up, he said.

Action from the high-profile event will be broadcast on TV in Thailand and abroad by networks including UBC and ESPN, giving Phuket widespread international exposure, he pointed out.

When Phuket turned down the opportunity to host World King's Cup jet-ski races in December 2005, that event was instead held in Pattaya.

TJSBA officials earlier told the *Gazette* that that event was not approved because it was not in line with provincial policy. But on February 14 V/Gov Niran said that it was bad timing, not policy, that had triggered the rejection of the 2005 event.

"We will continue our provincial policy to regulate jet-skis and make sure they are not too noisy. As for a sporting event such as this, we can control them," he said.

Patong Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukkaban admitted there was some resistance to holding the event in Patong. He suggested that those seeking a quiet day by the sea on the first weekend in March might consider going to one of Phuket's other beaches.

The jet-ski races will take place inside an area 500 meters long and 400 meters in width, just offshore from the Patong football field. Temporary spectator stands will be erected on the beach.

Prize money totaling 60,000 baht will be up for grabs at the event.

Sondhi 'lights a flame' in Phuket

PHUKET CITY: More than 20,000 people attended a rally at Saphan Hin on the night of February 20, addressed by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's nemesis, Sondhi Limthongkul.

K. Sondhi and Sarocha Porn-udomsak, his co-host on the weekly political talk show on the ASTV satellite channel, *Muang Thai Rai Sapda* (Thailand Weekly), were the main speakers at the rally, holding forth in front of a giant banner reading, "Thaksin Get Out".

MASS POLITICS

"It took me a long time to come to Phuket," K. Sondhi told the assembly. "But I will come to Phuket again and again, even if PM Thaksin resigns."

"What I want to tell people is very important; we must light an intellectual flame. When it is alight, all of us must look after it because it is a flame of democracy."

"I have already lit the first flame. Now I want other people



to spread it. We did not light this flame for ourselves alone. We lit it for our children."

Placing his hands together in a *wai*, K. Sondhi said, "Pay homage to Luang Por Chaem

[famed former Abbot of Wat Chalong], to Tao Thepkrasattri and Tao Sri Soonthorn [the Phuket Heroines] and ask them to watch over the people who have come tonight to join this rally

Sondhi Limthongkul makes a point at Saphan Hin.

— Photo courtesy Manager, Phuket Office

to campaign for Thailand to be made whole again.

"And I want to curse those who have corrupted the nation so that they and the next 10 generations will go to hell," he added.

K. Sondhi concluded his speech by urging the crowd to join the next anti-Thaksin mass rally, planned for next Sunday at Bangkok's Sanam Luang.

"February 26 will be an important day because it will gather together huge numbers of people from around Thailand who want to save the nation."

"I may have lit the flame, but I am not a hero. Today there are many people carrying the flame of intellect – I am no different from any of them. We must all get more people to light and carry the flame."

Prem School study nearly complete

KATA: Architect and developer ML Tridhossyuth "Mom Tri" Devakul, says that a study into the feasibility of building a new private school in Phuket should be complete in about two months.

Mom Tri, owner of Mom Tri's Boathouse hotel in Kata, and developer of top-end projects such as the Trisara resort and the Baan Kata development, is also the owner of the Prem Tinsulanonda International School (Prem Center) in Chiang Mai.

While on a visit to Phuket on February 16 with Prem Center school administrators, he told the *Gazette* that if the decision is made to go ahead with the proposed school in Phuket, the project will be done in tandem with a residential development.

Speaking at his Villa Royale project in Kata, Mom Tri said, "In terms of education it's certainly worth it to establish an IB [International Baccalaureate] school."

"But we have to look at this

from a business standpoint as well, and consider the return on investment."

It cost about 1 billion baht to build the Prem Center in Chiang Mai, which was not developed as part of a real estate project, he added. That school, established in 2001, now has a student body of 400.

"It's similar to developing a golf club. Green fees alone may not be enough to cover the entire cost, so a real estate project is established along with it."

The feasibility study is looking at the pros and cons of building a school and residential project on 600 rai of land Mom Tri owns near Trisara.

"If the study determines the project is viable, we will move forward by talking to relevant parties, including seeking bank funding. We would certainly use the Prem name," he said.

Initially, the Phuket school would be for students from kindergarten age through to 12 or 13 years old, he added.

OVERSTAY FINE TO RISE TO B500

BANGKOK: The fine for remaining in Thailand past the expiry date of a permit to stay, currently 200 baht a day, will rise to 500 baht a day with effect from March 15.

However, the maximum fine payable will remain the same, at 20,000 baht, Pol Lt Gen Suwat Thamrongrisakul, Commander of the Immigration Bureau, stated in a document posted in Thai on the Bureau's website. The document gave no reason for the increase.



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Peter Davison, the International Services Manager of Phuket International Hospital (PIH) offers some stark statistics. "Around 0.3% of Thais have 'Rhesus-negative' blood, while among non-Asian foreigners, it's around 17%. Now, whereas those are straight percentages, get this: at any one time there can be as few as 10 units [a unit is 450 milliliters] or less of negative blood stored in Phuket.

"It could take only a medium-sized car or bus crash for the island's supplies of negative blood to be exhausted," he says. "It might even be just one person requiring all available units, as some trauma cases result in severe hemorrhaging."

The situation is, thankfully, being managed – and managed well – by the collaborative efforts of the Thai Red Cross Society and Phuket's government and private hospitals, with an emergency database of a few hundred foreign donors who can expect to be called upon – sometimes at night and usually at very short notice – when a crisis arrives.

Rupert, a 30-something expatriate living in Phuket, is now on first-name terms with the staff managing the blood bank at Vachira Phuket Hospital.

He should be: during the island's high season he receives a call to donate blood every four weeks, on average.

Rupert belongs to one of Phuket's more exclusive clubs; members all have B Rhesus-negative blood.

A BLOODY

It would be a bitter irony indeed were one to go to the extreme measure of having one's blood group tattooed on one's arm – only to lose the arm in an accident.

That scenario is unlikely for a number of reasons, a major one being that surprisingly few people actually know what their blood group is. A straw poll in the *Gazette* offices produced a rash of blank looks and shifty gazes rather than knowledgeable answers. Yet blood is quite simply a matter of life and death, and knowing one's blood group can be crucial to survival; following an accident, precious minutes can be lost while the victim's blood group is ascertained. There is also the issue of the availability of donated blood, with – on occasion – scant supplies to hand. *The Gazette's Andy Johnstone and Nattamon Ratcharak* investigate, trying to separate fact from fiction; myth from misunderstanding.

"I am told that only around 2% of people of European descent have my blood group, which means that here, I am considered even more special than back in Britain. Apparently, around 0.9% of people of African descent have

it, but of the non-European, non-African communities – such as in Asia – it's as low as 0.1%."

He has known his blood group for about 20 years, since he first began to give blood in the UK.

"Being 'special' brings its own problems; knowing that so few people in Thailand share my blood group does cause me some concern," he says.

"There are around 10 people on the database here with my blood group. If I need a transfusion, then it means there is one less person who can be called upon to donate."

He describes what he feels is a "shared moral responsibility" to donate. "I suppose I like to think that someone would donate their blood as readily as I will. I will not know who they are, and they won't know for whom they are donating blood – perhaps we should form a real club: Phuket Clots or something and have each others' telephone numbers? But we are, surely, part of a community and with that comes a responsibility to one another."

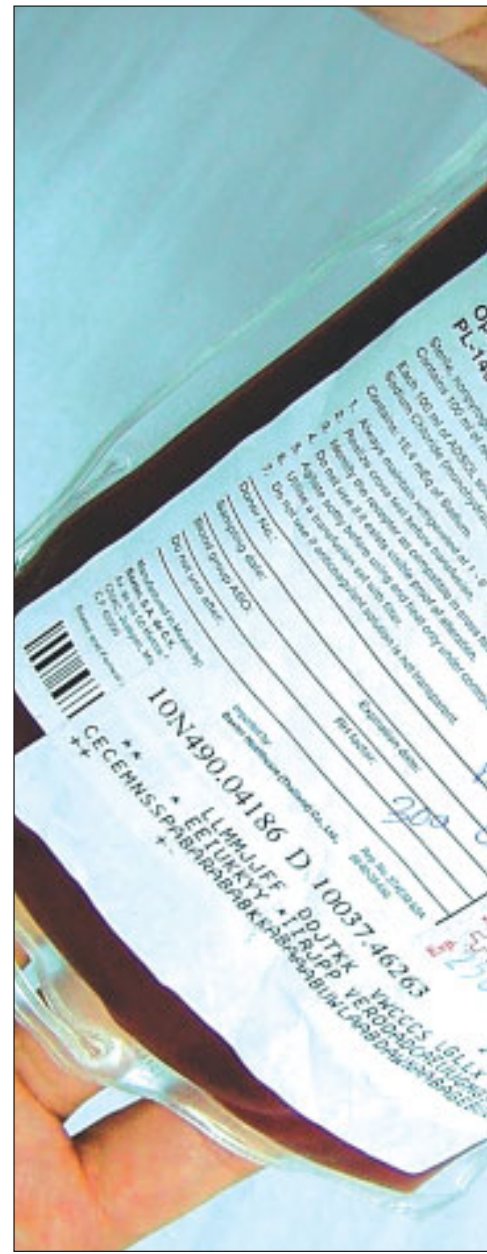
However, it seems that the idea of forming a club is unnecessary. Mr Davison says that the island-wide database that includes Rupert's name and number is operating well, though he does add, "We could always do with more donors."

Explaining more about the system, he says that the "expat" side of it, managed by PIH in conjunction with the other hospitals, was set up around five years ago by Cindy Ratcliffe, now President of the Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC).

"I arrived in Phuket around three years ago from another province in Thailand and had the experience there of problems with the blood donation system. The database here had around 20 or so names on it, mostly PIWC members or their spouses, and I set about expanding it, with the PIWC's aid, as well as that of the Thai Red Cross.

"We are running this project in consultation with the Thai Red Cross Society because we, as a private international hospital... have more 'marketing influence' to go out there and get people on the database," Mr Davison explains.

"We act as central database compiler and distributor. Anybody can phone us and ask to go on the database, and every couple



of months we send out that list to the island's hospitals: Mission Hospital, Vachira Phuket Hospital, Bangkok Hospital Phuket and [PIH], and the [Thai] Red Cross.

"[This is] on the clear understanding that the list is to be used solely for emergencies: it is not to be used for soliciting, marketing or for any other purpose. They, the hospitals, can then call up the negative-blood donors as and when needed."

The database is used frequently, and not just for people in Phuket. "There was a recent case of Bangkok having run out of negative blood; the database in Phuket was activated so blood was donated here to be sent up there," he explains.

As Mr Davison puts it,



'Donating blood is a superior offering to make. It can, after all, save a person's life. The donor will receive much merit for that.'

– Phra Samianarwudthammo, Abbot of Wat Paaramradtana-ram

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GOOD SHOW



Left, between 1,000 and 1,500 units of blood are donated each month in Phuket. Above, giving blood is not dangerous. Indeed, it offers time to relax and catch up with friends.

Thais cannot supply the “marketplace” with negative blood, and the system therefore has to rely on foreigners.

“That said, all blood is in demand. Stocks – in Phuket and all over Thailand – are not high. We need more donors.”

Expatriate society is by nature transient. “People come here, add their names to the database, stay for a couple of years and then leave. So every 12 months all the person in the database are called to determine if they still live here.”

While attempts are made to call all the names on the list over a period of a few days, when it comes to the rarer negative-blood donors, attempts continue for a number of weeks, he says.

Should people feel obliged to become donors? Mr Davison asks a simple question. “If a person needs blood, would they expect someone to have donated blood for them? If the answer is ‘yes’, then they should consider putting themselves on the database.”

“It might not even be you,

but one of your loved ones, who needs it. It is an ethical dilemma individuals must solve for themselves.”

But isn’t giving blood risky? Mr Davison’s response is strident.

“Look, this is a myth, and one that stems from the erroneous view still held by some that Thailand is a Third-World country. It isn’t. The entire process is done as per the regulations of the [International Committee of the Red Cross] and consequently, the procedures for donating blood in Thailand are as stringent as they are in Sydney or London. Updates to procedures are implemented here as quickly as they are elsewhere, that is, immediately.

“Donating blood here is very, very safe,” he concludes.

The decision whether to donate or not, is of course, a personal one. Rupert’s “shared moral responsibility” and Mr Davison’s choice of the phrase “ethical dilemma” underline this. People of certain religions, Jehovah’s Witnesses for example, are

barred from accepting blood transfusions.

But Phra Samianarwudthammo, Abbot of Wat Paaramradtanaram, says that donating blood is every bit as much an act of *tam boon* (making merit) as giving alms to monks and is in keeping with the Lord Buddha’s teachings on giving and not holding onto that which one has.

“In fact,” says Phra Samianarwudthammo, “Donating blood is a superior offering to make. It can, after all, save a person’s life. The donor will receive much merit for that.”

Dr Kongkiat Kespechara, Acting Director of Bangkok Hospital Phuket, agrees.

Among Thais there is the added incentive that the efforts of the Thai Red Cross Society, including its blood drives, have been under Royal Patronage since its inception as the The Red Unalom Society of Siam 113 years ago.

HM Queen Sirikit is President and HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn is Executive

Vice-President of the Thai Red Cross. At the provincial level, the Governor’s wife is usually charged with overseeing operations.

“People who donate blood more than 30 times receive a special award personally from HM the Queen, in recognition of their contribution,” Dr Kongkiat notes.

He likens the system for blood collection and distribution in Thailand to that of a monetary bank. “The central blood bank is in the capital and there are regional and provincial branches. Our regional center is Nakhon Sri Thammarat, with Vachira Phuket Hospital as the provincial center.

“One of the main functions of the regional center is not only to store copious supplies, but also to test them for contamination with, for example, HIV or Hepatitis A, B or C.

“Blood is also tested when it arrives at a hospital blood bank. And of course, all donors must answer a questionnaire about their general health and lifestyle before they give blood.

“Donation is safe, and so is receiving transfused blood or blood products.”

Dr Kongkiat explains that one unit of blood donated does not equate to one life potentially saved. “In fact, one unit of blood is separated into three components: red blood cells; plasma; and platelets, which means that three lives can be saved from each unit.

“On average, between 1,000 and 1,500 units are donated in Phuket each month and we – the Thai Red Cross Society and the government and private hospitals here – all agree that more people need to donate blood.

“The process does not take long and is safe for donors. It causes no ill effects as long as you are well rested and have eaten before you donate. From start to finish, it takes y30 minutes, which is a small sacrifice compared with the good it can do.”

For more information, visit www.redcross.or.th or contact Peter Davison at Tel: 076-249400 or the Phuket Blood Donors’ Club at tel: 076-369-188.

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ROYAL PHUKET MARINA

Queer News

Baleful baying brings bureaucratic bungle

PHUKET CITY: The provincial government is so far unable to deal with a middle-aged man – described as “eccentric” – whose antics have the radio jocks and others living in Radio Thailand’s staff housing all in a fret.

According to a vernacular report, numerous complaints about the unidentified man have been filed by neighbors with the police and the Provincial Office of Social Development and Human Security – but all to no avail. “The man is middle-aged, wears black trousers and no shirt; he sleeps in a flat at Radio Thailand’s staff housing,” the report explained.

“At night he howls uncontrollably, frightening the women and children, civil servants, and students who live nearby.”

Radio Thailand’s broadcast facility in Phuket, and its staff housing, lie adjacent to Phuket Rajabhat University, just north of Phuket City; the area is crowded with rental flats for students.

“People can’t rest,” the report continued. “Moreover, no one knows what he may do; because not only does he howl, he throws bricks and stones and pieces of wood and whatever else he can find inside the flat. He’s wrecked it.”

When neither the police nor Social Development Office per-

sonnel responded, other agencies were contacted but none seemed able to come up with a solution to the problem.

So another complaint was filed, this time with the Provincial Ombudsman’s Office, which reports directly to Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura.

“The complaint requested the Governor order the relevant agency to provide help urgently.” As it happens, the “relevant agency” is the Office of Social Development and Human Security, whose chief, Panee Sitikarn, responded by saying that her office really wants to help, but is unable to act.

“When mentally deranged, mad or eccentric persons cause problems no law punishes them, except in cases of assault or similar trouble.

“Fellow citizens must deal with the problem by watching out for themselves and their families. We particularly urge children be kept away from such people,” she said.

Then the issue of money reared its head.

“As for the person in ques-

tion, there are rules regarding compensation and daily expenses for those taking mentally ill persons to hospital,” K. Panee explained.

“The task is normally undertaken by police and Interior Ministry officers ... A provincial governor’s meeting in 1953 de-

ecided the governing authority is responsible for transportation and attendant expenses.

“Thus [to take care of the ‘eccentric’] the provincial government must request a budget from the Interior Ministry to pay police and Ministry officials.

“So,” she said, “I am requesting the provincial office cover transportation expenses from the Interior Ministry’s 2006 budget, now and for the future.”

It seems like a lot of bureaucracy to deal with one rather odd person who, if he read the local news account, is probably now howling more loudly than ever.

Curiously, it appears no one has ever contacted the man.

Perhaps, though, he isn’t crazy at all – but only in training to become a deejay.

Source: *Siang Tai*

‘Not only does he howl, he throws bricks and stones and pieces of wood and whatever else he can find inside the flat.’

204 couples exchange vows on Valentine’s Day

PHUKET: More than 200 couples on Phuket were married on the most romantic day of the year, Valentine’s Day.

Karnjana Hongboonyanurak, the Registration Officer at the Phuket Muang District Office, told the *Gazette* that her office was the busiest on the island, with 142 couples, including five cross-cultural couples, plighting their troths.

“Some couples arrived at the office before it opened in attempts to be the first couple to marry on Valentine’s Day,” she said.

Couples who registered their marriage at the Phuket City office, K. Karnjana explained, received gifts such as a free voucher for dinner at Thainaan restaurant or a one-night stay at a hotel. Other gifts included treatment for two at one of the many spas on the island.

“No couples turned up to register a divorce,” K. Karnjana added.

The turnout of brides and grooms in Phuket City this year was down on the number last year, when 199 signed the big book, K. Karnjana said.

Uthai Tabtong, Chief Registration Officer at Thalang District Office, said, “We had 42 couples who registered marriages, and nobody came to file for divorce.” There were no special gifts on offer, she added.

In Kathu, 20 couples exchanged vows. Suksan Siangaek, Chief Administrative Office of Kathu District Office, said that his office gave away five pairs of tickets for couples to visit Phuket FantaSea.

“We had 20 couples, including one couple from England, who decided to register their marriage on Valentine’s Day,” he said.

Although it was possible for people to register divorces at the Kathu office on Valentine’s Day, none took the opportunity, he added.

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Chat lines pose sex threat to teenagers

Following the case of a teenage girl who was reported missing and then found with a boy she met on a telephone chat line, police fear the users of the new, low-cost chat lines such as Chat Sanook may be using the service to lure young girls into wanton behavior.

Mobile phone chat-lines have become more accessible since the previous 1900 numbers, which cost nine baht a minute, were replaced with 02 numbers charged at local call rates within Bangkok.

Chat Sanook became an instant hit with students, who call in and are asked to introduce themselves briefly before being invited to listen to the others' introductions and choose a match.

Those who are not paying members are allowed only five minutes to chat, so participants often exchange mobile phone numbers within that time in order to continue the conversation.

In a trial conducted by *The Nation*, a number of participants used their introductions to invite others to talk about sex.

Police said that they could not press charges in this case as the girls had consented to sex.

Pol Maj Gen Khamronwit Thooprakjang, commander of the Division for Suppression of Crimes Against Children, Juveniles and Women, said it was difficult for the police to take action against chat-line providers until it can be proved that the lines have been set up with a sexual objective in mind.

Hit and run: The driver of a speeding public bus fled the scene after running down and seriously injuring 64-year-old monk Phra Kru Mongkol Thammayuth of Phraya Yang Temple. The acci-



Wooden performance: Three performers control a giant wooden puppet at a press conference for the 8th Wood Carving Road Fair held recently in Bangkok's Bang Sue District. The event included stalls selling quality wood products, vocational workshops and a folk-song contest.

dent happened in Bangkok's Phya Thai District.

Motorcycle taxi driver Somneuk Saengpanya, 30, said the monk was walking across Rama VI Rd on a morning alms round when the speeding bus took a left turn and hit him, leaving his belongings scattered on the road.

The bus driver quickly parked the bus and fled the scene.

Land scam officials: Senior Royal Forestry Department official Suntorn Watcharadilokkul said his department has evidence that three high-ranking officials conspired to sell more than 1,000

rai in the Khao Soi Dao forest reserve and wildlife sanctuary.

The case was exposed after the Revenue Department demanded tax payment for the land sale from villagers in Pong Nam Ron District. When the villagers insisted that they knew nothing about the deal, an investigation was launched and revealed "irregularities".

The land in question was developed into the Soi Dao Highland project. Started in 1992, the project now features a golf course, four-star hotel and orchards. K. Suntorn did not identify the suspects, but said they

held positions in the Land Department, the National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department and the Royal Forestry Department.

The case has been sent to the National Counter Corruption Commission, he added.

Murder most foul: Police in Chumphon's Sawi District found an infant clinging to his dead mother, who had been shot eight hours earlier by an unknown assailant.

Police found the the body of Kanchana Thongkham, 27, in the front yard of her home in a rub-

ber plantation. Her 30-year-old husband, Pramote Thongkham, was found dead in the back yard.

There was no sign of a robbery, but cartridge cases and footprints left by the gunman were found at the scene.

The couple's infant son had been holding on to his mother's lifeless body and trying to suckle milk.

A trail of blood indicated the boy had been toddling between his parents' bodies before he fell asleep on his mother's body.

K. Pramote died of shotgun wounds to his shoulder and head. Police believe the assailant shot K. Kanchana in the back before fleeing, to make sure she would not identify him.

Politician = bad: A poll conducted by Assumption Business Administration College found that the term "politician" continues to carry a negative connotation. About 32% of those surveyed said the post of Prime Minister should be reserved for a non-politician; only 24% disagreed with this. About 44% held no opinion.

The poll also found that 56% of 4,210 people surveyed want a two-term limit enshrined in any Constitutional amendment.

A clear majority, 62%, said they supported amending the Constitution while about 25% opposed such a move; the rest had no opinion.

About 30% of those polled said MPs should not be required to belong to a party and 26% said they should. The rest had no opinion. A majority, 61%, said the one-term limit for senators should remain: 31% said it should be repealed.

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

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ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds

Ah yes, the good old days. The old-timers of Krabi love to reminisce about the days when Ao Nang was just a jungle with thatched-roof huts on the beach. While some wish that nothing had changed since then, most of us are happy that services and infrastructure have improved.

For those residents who had to travel here frequently before the Krabi Airport was built, there was nothing worse than having to leave paradise three hours early to get to Phuket Airport. Days or weeks with no running water was not romantic, to say the least.

So the many improvements have made our life easier, yet we often think back to those old days with fondness. So we spoke with some old timers about the things they missed – some good – some not so good.

A recent survey of local old-timers' memories turned up the following gems:

- I remember when...
- There were only four tailors in Ao Nang;
- When all five bars would close on New Year's Eve for the infamous Green's Bar Party;
- You had to pick up your own mail from Krabi Post Office in town;
- The first electric light box was put up to advertise bungalows for rent – except the sign



Below, Fifteen years ago, Across The Bay columnist Gus Reynolds on a long tail boat – hard to find then – going to Poda Island. 'We were the only boat there,' he says. 'Now there are dozens lining that beach and you can't even swim there.'

Main picture, left, longtails line Ao Nang beach today.



Nostalgia just ain't what it used to be

read "Bungalows for Rent", so all the other locals changed their wooden handwritten signs from "bungalows" to "bangalows";

- There was no milk or cheese available, and if you ordered a tuna sandwich, you got a fillet of fresh tuna and two pieces of bread;
- There were only 12 longtail boats;
- 200,000 baht a rai was considered expensive land;
- You could park on the beachfront;
- There was no McDonald's or 7-Eleven;

- There was no cell phone service;
- Leela Valley was a rice paddy and was under a foot of water every rainy season;
- Your water was delivered to your home or business by truck;
- The bars closed when they wanted to;
- The exchange rate was 25 baht/US\$1;
- The popular places were the Austria Hut, Don's Pizza, Green's Bar, Gift's Bungalows, Corner Bar, Black Cat Bar, Bei Freddy and the Kon Thai Bar;

So what will we be reminiscing about 10 years from now?

- I remember when there were only 40 tailors in Ao Nang;
- I remember when you could buy land for 2 million baht a rai;
- Remember when we had to go to Phuket for shopping/medical care/restaurants?
- Who could forget the tsunami...

Preposterous impost: One event that will be remembered is the the Glorious Krabi Fiesta

2005 that was held on Haad Nopparat Thara Beach on December 18. It included sports activities, shows, top entertainment acts from Bangkok and celebrated cooks making Thai food – all for the entrance price of 2,000 baht per person.

Ticket sales were poor right from the start as marketing was weak and foreigners are not familiar with top-name Thai entertainers, nor particularly interested.

In addition, 2,000 baht per person is expensive for foreigners and beyond budget for local Thais. In comparison, one can see the show at Phuket FantaSea for 1,000 baht, so it made for a difficult sell. A rainy night made for few walk-ins and the turnout was poor.

Though the event itself was lackluster, what will be remembered is that as rumors spread of a multi-million-baht budget, and financial losses, local businesses were asked to "donate" money to make up for the deficit.

Bars and small businesses and individuals were asked for 2,000-5,000 baht each, while resorts and larger businesses were hit up for between 20,000 and 60,000 baht.

These demands came at around the first anniversary of the tsunami, with many local businesses still struggling to pay off last year's debts and watching every *satang* to make it through this season.

So the new impost was quite a shock to many business owners, who had no participation in, or benefits from the event.

Owners were asking why were they expected to pay the bill. In fact, in times of poor business conditions, especially in light of the catastrophic events of the tsunami, wouldn't one expect the government to sponsor such programs to benefit and support local businesses?

Why are the local businesses, which are fighting to survive and keeping local people employed, expected to foot the bill for government deficits? Maybe a re-read of Economics and Taxation 101 is in order.

On a brighter note: Just when we were ready to write off this season after a poor December and mediocre January, February has burst onto the scene with an huge influx of tourists – hotels are full, there are waiting lines at the popular restaurants and the bars are busy again.

How long will it last? Nobody knows, but the longer the better.



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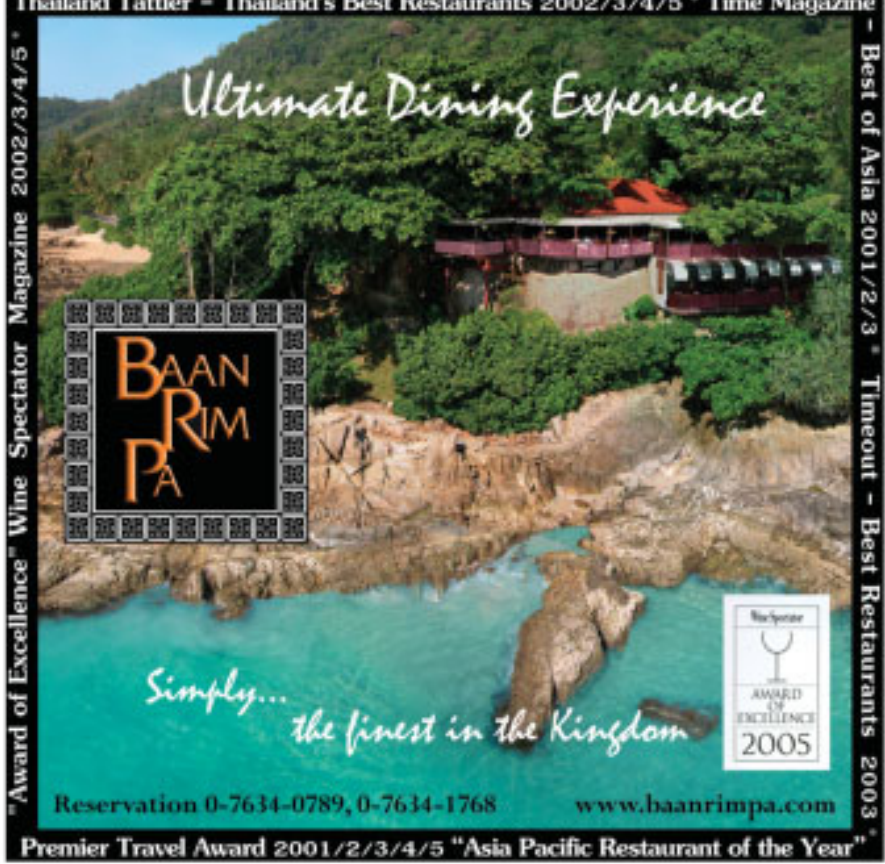
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Whispering Cock, at entrance to Laguna Phuket
Yacht Haven / Haven Restaurant, Mai Khao
Yacht Haven Marina Office, Mai Khao

By Stephen Fein

There are numerous ways to enjoy oneself in Patong, but not that many of them can be considered wholesome, family activities.

But one way to have a nice day out with the family is getting professional family photo portraits done – in authentic traditional Thai costumes. The only place to do it in Phuket that I am aware of, the simply-named Thai Studio, is a refreshing change from the hustle-rustle-and-tout tactics that seem to characterize the Patong tourism industry these days.

For a start, the studio owner and photographer, Aussapon “Thong” Kunagonrungsimon is a consummate professional, whose resumé includes work with slinky pop singer, actress and model Pornichita “Benz” na Songkhla, TV personality Nok Booriphan – and many others.

He and his girlfriend, Anne, both from Bangkok, opened their door for business on the less-than-auspicious morning of December 26, 2004. The studio was undamaged by the tsunami, but needless to say business did not get off to a flying start. Now, however, more and more people are starting to use the service.

Thai Studio has a wide range of colorful, handmade costumes based on designs from many different eras of Thailand’s past, including Thai Dusit, Rattanakosin and 16th-century costumes familiar to anyone who has seen the movie *Suriyothai*.

Perhaps best of all is that they have costumes for just about everyone, from 105-kilogram dad all the way down to a makeshift outfit using *jonekaben* (calf length Thai wrap-around trousers) and a *sabai* (pleated fabric worn around the chest and mid-section) for my five-month-old, five-kilo daughter, Sanda, on her first family outing.

For our “shoot”, we chose



The Fein Family in fine form, thanks to Thai Studio.

group and family pictures.

The prices at Thai studio are reasonable, given the quality of the work and the final results. Happily, there is no double-pricing or commissions paid out to taxi drivers for bringing in business.

“People get discouraged when they know they are being taken advantage of,” K. Thong said.

There are three fixed “sets” of photos to choose from. The most popular – and the one we chose – was Set B. At 3,950 baht, this includes costume selection, makeup, hair preparation and photos for one person, in 18 different poses. There is a 500-baht surcharge for each additional person in the picture, which basically covers the extra cost of makeup and the costumes.

The prints were ready about an hour after the shoot: 12 4" x 6" prints; two 8" x 12" prints and two 12" x 16" prints. The negatives are included, so customers can later have as many prints made, at whatever size they want.

Of the other two options, Set A comprises 12 poses at 2,450 baht and Set C is 25 poses at 5,550 baht.

In the past, I was at a loss when visiting friends people asked me what there was to do in the daytime in Patong – apart from going to the beach.

Now I shall recommend a trip to Thai Studio, which is a pleasant way to spend a few hours and with the fun, attractive portraits to remind you, a visit you won't soon forget.

SNAPPED BACK IN TIME

costumes based on designs 700 years old from the Lanna Kingdom in the North of Thailand. K. Anne, who knows a lot about the costumes and speaks English well, told us these are among the most popular selections.

She spent 30 minutes putting makeup on my wife, Piya. This is the type of wait that would normally have me climbing the walls and seeking Heineken (am I still allowed to say that?) – but the atmosphere at Thai Studio is relaxing, almost surrealistically un-Patong.

Thai music from a bygone era plays in the background, lemon grass incense burns and there are interesting antiques to

look over, including gongs, elaborate alms bowls, a straw safari hat, old radio sets and many more items the studio uses as props.

K. Thong said that he had run a similar studio in Rangsit, near Bangkok, before splitting with his partner there and setting up shop in Patong.

Looking through the studio’s guest book, I saw that most customers were couples. K. Thong explained that many were Thai women who lived abroad with their foreign husbands and who wanted a quintessentially Thai souvenir to take back with them when they returned home after their vacations.

Others guests included



Photographer Aussapon “Thong” Kunagonrungsimon

same-sex couples, people having single portraits done and some

Thai Studio is located at 91/18 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong, next to the Patong Bayshore Resort and just north of the Sai Nam Yen intersection. Open 11 am-9 pm daily. Advance reservations strongly recommended. For more information call K. Thong at Tel: 06-6008260 or 05-8885115.

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Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket



Above, Maria Goretti Benedito Tearpoa and Benjamin Taotafa, from Switzerland, were married at the Kata Beach Resort on January 24.



Right, Kritaya Pakdeewan and Luechai Luangnitikul were wed on the beach at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort on the most romantic day – February 14.

KING

A recent coup for The Chedi – one of Phuket's most luxurious hotels – as well as a treat for the island's legion of lotus eaters, was the set played at the hotel by José Padilla, 46, the DJ famed for years of creating sets of perfect musical accompaniment for the sunsets viewed from the legendary Café del Mar in Sant Antoni on the Spanish island of Ibiza.

The *Gazette's* Andy Johnstone caught up with José – recognized as one of the world's finest DJs and lauded as "the spiritual father of chill-out music" – for a rare interview at The Chedi. It wasn't the first time the two had met, however; The *Gazette* staffer once bought one of the earliest Café del Mar cassettes from him in Ibiza's flea market in 1991 and heard his sets at the Café two years later.

José Padilla grins as he talks about his teenage years growing up in a small town near Barcelona, describing them as "...great days – and nights – catching the bus into Barcelona, running around clubbing and chasing English girls around the Plaça Reial.

"I enjoyed being there, being part of the nightlife, so much that I ended up working as a waiter in the historic Barri Gòtic, just off Las Ramblas. The money wasn't much, but it gave me the excuse, as if I needed it, to be out late; I just wanted to be there..." he reminisces.

José soon became entranced by the smooth, simple and sophisticated bossa nova sounds played in the bars of Barca, and he began to wait on the tables closer to the DJ's booth. "I tried to synchronize taking the food to the diners just before the DJ was due to take a break," he says.

"My plan was that I could

say to the DJ, 'Shall I play a record while you're gone? I don't have anything to do right now, you see...'. And it worked!"

Lost for a moment in a reverie, José returns to the conversation, saying, "But a few minutes playing tracks here and there wasn't enough to satisfy what I felt was a deep need to play music and, well, to do what I wanted.

"I grew up in what was effectively a ghetto, and really, there was little to do there apart from sit around smoking all day. I suppose that's why the city center of Barcelona attracted me so much. I wanted to get out of a ghetto existence."

So too did his family, who thought the best way for him to achieve that goal was to get a "responsible" job, as an accountant or an office worker.

"But I didn't want to do that; I suppose I was bit of a rebel; a rebel with dreams that didn't involve wearing a suit," he says.

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OF CHILLOUT



*Thinking, thinking, thinking of tomorrow
With the sunset in your eyes
I feel everything is sorrow
So I have to say goodbye...
If there is new love, new ways,
new faces in our lives
Those times will last forever ...
adios ayer.*

“And you know, I miss ... elements of Café del Mar; I had very good years there, but it isn't the same as it was. It's now a tourist attraction, like the Eiffel Tower, and the the vibe, too, has changed. But good memories.”

He is on the road often, and admits that although his enthusiasm for music and playing is undimmed, that his “batteries” occasionally wear down a little. “This business takes a lot out of you, and if you don't take a break once in a while, then you won't be able to keep going,” he says.

“But taking a break doesn't mean stopping completely; I just play in different venues or for different reasons. Today I am at his wonderful hotel on this beach; next week I am playing at the Sukothai [hotel] in Bangkok; other times, I just pack a box of records and go to see some good friends in Finland who own a club. It's good to do things simply again.”

The intoxicating mix of Phuket's sunsets and sandy beaches mirrors that of Ibiza, arguably the chill-out capital of the world. Add to this the vast influx of visitors looking for sun, sand and ... cerebral stimulation and the parallels become clearer still.

Phuket has what can best be described as a “lively” but rather down-market bar scene. The island also has a number of talented DJs – both foreign and

Thai, such as Miguel Kirjon, and visiting ones such as the UK's Lisa Loud, who played at Trisara last year, and American salsa supremo Henry Knowles who played recently at TaiLife.

Phuket also has as a number of more upmarket clubs yet it still does not boast the clubbing kudos of Bangkok or Hong Kong. Perhaps it is the seemingly all-pervasive influence of jazz, rock and blues that has kept the clubs and clubbing in abeyance.

A form of snobbery along the lines of, “Dance music is for young people. Young people have little money. People with little money are not welcome in Phuket,” seems sadly prevalent.

The vibe at The Chedi shouts, in an ecstatically chilled-out way, that the time is right for Phuket to progress a little.

Charlie and Christina, “young” 28-year-old investment bankers both resplendent in baggy white linen trousers, down from Bangkok for the weekend, couldn't agree more.

“A crowd of us have met up just to be here,” begins Christina. “We could have gone to José's show in Bangkok, but decided that the beach is the best place to see him and hear his mix. Friends of ours – Amy, Ryan, Adam and Mel – even flew in from Shanghai.

“All it takes for Phuket to become an Asian clubbers' paradise is getting the right artist and the right venue. Do that and it's sorted. Couldn't be easier, in fact.

“That's THE José Padilla mixing there, and we're down on this fantastic beach after a magical sunset. Couldn't be better,” she smiles. Glass in hand, she goes off to chill again.

“My dreams made it essential that I had to get out [of the environment I grew up in]. So I did.”

José took a boat south from Barcelona's harbor – under the watchful eye of the statue of Christopher Columbus – leaving behind the city of other visionaries such as Picasso, Dali, Miró and Gaudi, and headed for Ibiza.

He says, reservedly, that his leaving Barcelona was “...an escape; I think I was escaping from many things, including myself.”

The great escape he made saw him donning a waiter's apron again before the gradual slide into DJ-ing on the famous Balearic island, which at the time – the mid-'70s – was a bohemian bliss-infused arrival point for many run-aways from civilization.

Somewhat coincidentally, Columbus' statue, atop a tower at the end of Las Ramblas, points east toward his supposed birthplace, Genoa. Ibiza also lays claim to him – and Carthaginian conqueror Hannibal – who, Ibizans claim, was born on their island. Hannibal's family nickname, Barca, is also supposedly the origin of the name Barcelona.

The irony of this is not lost on José, who smiles and says, “Of course I knew the legends and history from school and I had seen Columbus' statue for many years. But if someone had told me that I would end up in a place rich again with fables about these two travelers, I would not have believed them.”

José began the rounds on Ibiza playing in bars, hotels and beaches, developing his famously idiosyncratic style of mixing vastly different types of music.

“I see it as light and shade,” says José. “I read the feeling of the audience and want to keep them amused, interested, entranced. That's why I mix a clas-

sical Flamenco guitarist like Pac de Lucía's 1973 hit *Entre dos aguas* with *The Look of Love* by Dusty Springfield with Moby's *Whispering Wind*.

“It is change, change of tempo, style, meaning... It is pure communication – spiritual and not relying on chemicals – between me and the audience.”

His reputation grew as he honed his talents. This led to him playing at Es Paradis, Ku and Pacha, as well as finding time to open his own bar, Museum.

“But my friend and business partner shot himself in the bar. I lost a few years because of that,” he admits, “but I was selling tapes of my mixes, and they eventually found their way to the people at Café del Mar, who took me on as their resident DJ.”

Animated, José says, “And the big difference between playing in the clubs on Ibiza and at Café del Mar was the audience.

Before, I was playing to the

people. Now, I was playing to the sun as it set. The sun was my audience!

“And the entire set was based around that. People lying on the beach listening to the music actually clapped as the sun finally set. Do they do that here?”

José and Café del Mar parted company, and although reticent to discuss precisely how the relationship ended, he explains that one of his most loved self-penned compositions – *Adios Ayer* – (Goodbye Yesterday) is his farewell to all that.

“When I left Café del Mar ... well, it didn't end very well, but Café del Mar still means a lot to me, and the song is a tribute to it,” he begins.

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INSIDE EMINEM

Undoing the rapper

The so-called “whiny-assed white rapper” Eminem has released a “greatest hits” album, *Curtain Call – The Hits*.

Interestingly, the epithet “whiny-assed white rapper” (the Beastie Boys are given the same treatment and worse; they are not only white but also Jewish) tends to be applied by white people who would balk at describing Ghostface Killah as a “whiny-assed black rapper”.

What is behind this inverse racism? Is it that Marshall Bruce Mathers III (Eminem) has dared to intrude on a musical genre perceived as being outside his ethnicity in the same way that Elvis Presley, Eric Clapton and a host of others did with blues, or countless white jazz musicians have done, or The Clash, who were playing reggae to critical acclaim years before it entered the mainstream?

Reverse the scenario – non-whites involved in “white” music, such as the late Phil Lynott or the divas Jessye Norman and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa – and few would even consider suggesting that they are unable to achieve as much as white people.

RESPECT

Suffice it to say that Eminem has respect among his peers; he was, after all discovered by the legendary Dr Dre and has collaborated with the likes of Nate Dogg and 50 Cent.

Curtain Call comprises 17 tracks, including three previously unreleased recordings: *Fack*, *Shake That* and *When I'm Gone*.

The album features, naturally, what is considered to be his breakthrough single, *Stan*, featuring a haunting sample from *Thank You* by Dido. A live version of this track appears at the end of the album, with Elton John substituting for the divine Dido. Hmm...

Stan is the disturbing story of a fan – Stan – who writes to Eminem, without receiving replies. Already unbalanced, Stan (in the penultimate verse) delivers his third and final verse as he drives his car off a bridge with

his pregnant girlfriend in the trunk. The fourth verse is Eminem responding too late to Stan, only realizing at the last second that he has heard about Stan's death as he was writing to him.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Eminem has been and continues to be the target of massive amounts of criticism, most commonly accusations of misogyny and homophobia. Although this is of course a subjective matter, it can be argued that Eminem is reporting what he may have experienced.

It isn't beyond the realms of possibility that he is reporting in a first-person narrative style what the dark Slim Shady – a character/alter-ego he has created – “sees”.

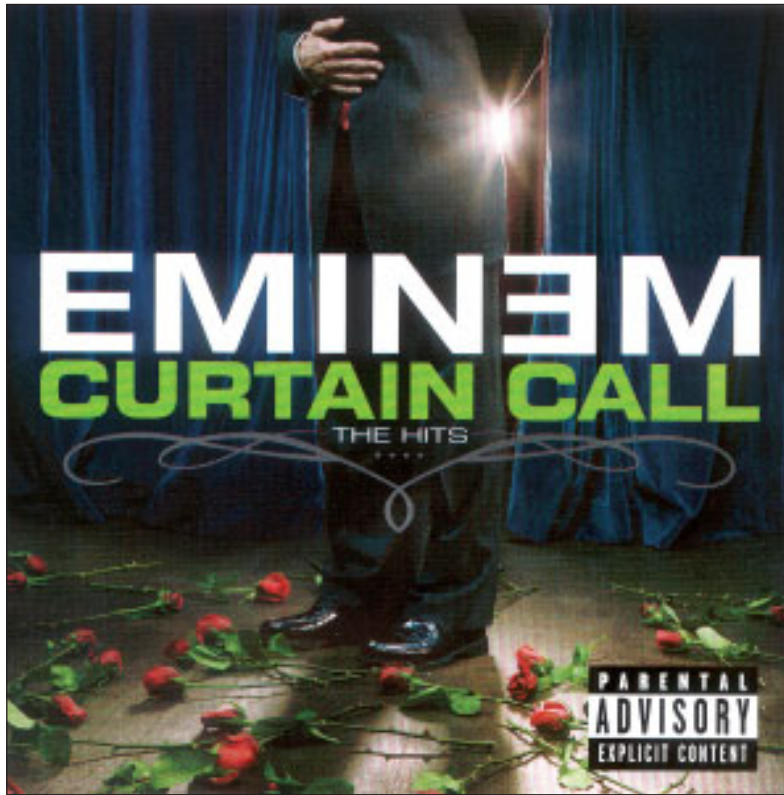
Few would have credited that David Bowie, despite his multiple personae, really believed that aliens were about to land (*Starman*), that Bret Easton Ellis, author of *American Psycho*, is himself sadistically violent, or that Robert Louis Stevenson, author of *Treasure Island*, was a pirate. The jury is still out on Jagger and Richards over *Sympathy for the Devil*, however...

Arguments abound about the estheticization of violence – and desensitization to it – just as they have done for many years.

The fundamental question is, “Is the artist producing this work because: he/she wants notoriety/money; is making a sweeping political or social statement; or because he/she is a screwed-up weirdo?”

Some now see Eminem's lyrics as actually being capable of making the listener more sensitive to violence, homophobia, misogyny and other social ills, arguing that bombarding his audience with extreme verbal imagery may make (some of) them

EAR CANDY with Andy Johnstone



more aware of it. Yes, just as his black counterparts have been doing for 25 years.

While Eminem is respected by many fellow rappers, he has also had feuds with a number of others.

Curtain Call features Eminem's *Like Toy Soldiers* – his attempt to smooth over the rifts – which have, in his case, tended to stay on disc rather than end up in fisticuffs or someone being “popped”.

Sampling the disarmingly haunting chorus from *Toy Soldiers* – the 1989 hit by Martika – itself a song about drug abuse, Eminem speaks of his amazement at inter-rapper warfare:

There used to be a time when you could just say a rhyme/And wouldn't have to

*worry about one of your people dyin'/But now it's elevated cuz once you put someone's kids in it/The sh*t gets escalated, it ain't just words no more is it?*

He ends the track with:

I'm just willin' to be the bigger man/If ya'll can quit poppin' off at your jaws well then I can/Cuz frankly I'm sick of talkin'/I'm not gonna let someone else's coffin rest on my conscience cuz...

Step by step, heart to heart, left right left/We all fall down like toy soldiers/Bit by bit, torn apart, we never win/But the battle wages on for toy soldiers.

The video for the track features, among others, murdered rappers Notorious B.I.G., Big L, former D12 member Bugz and 2Pac (Tupac Shakur), the only

rap artist to have sold more albums than Eminem.

This compilation also features *My Name Is*, *The Way I Am* – Eminem's explanation of what success has done to him, the blame he and other controversial singers receive, and a plea for privacy – and *When I'm Gone*, one of the three new tracks.

He revisits the negative effect of fame on his life and relationships, specifically those with his wife, Kim – they divorced and have remarried – and his daughter, Hailie (the couple have also adopted a child and Kim has a child from when they were divorced) on *When I'm Gone*.

I hear applause, all this time I couldn't see/How could it be that the curtain is closing on me/I turn around, find a gun on the ground, cock it, put it to my brain, scream "die Shady!" and pop it.

The chorus is said to Hailie:

And when I'm gone, just carry on don't mourn/rejoice every time you hear the sound of my voice/Just know that I'm lookin' down on you smilin'/ And I didn't feel a thing so baby don't feel my pain/Just smile back.

The casual listener can find much to complain about; obscene lyrics and Eminem's attitudes for example. But – and it's no easy ride – listen a little deeper and read the lyrics, and his intelligence, concern and humanity become abundantly clear.

Curtain Call – The Hits Eminem Aftermath Records 988 789-3. For more information on this release, visit www.cdwarehouse-asia.com. CD Warehouse will buy back old DVDs, CDs and VCDs. Call Tel: 02-6551140-5 ext 120-122 for more information.

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Where IP means Internet Partner

By Janyaporn Morel

FANTASIES

When the hot season lies over Phuket, from March

until May, temperatures can soar to 40° Celsius. To escape the heat, people seek refuge in air conditioned homes or shopping centers, they lie under ceiling fans, plunge into the nearest swimming pool or take cold showers.

But what to do when none of these options are available or appropriate? The answer is in your hand... or more precisely, can be held in your hand.

Hand fans have been part of cultures worldwide for millennia. No better example can be seen than the Chinese-style fans, which have inspired highly decorated large versions used as wall ornaments.

Fans, called *pat lom* in Thai, can add a touch of elegance to a woman's appearance – and for those who are properly trained, they can come in handy as a martial arts weapon for defense against a stealthy *ninja* attack in a dark Phuket City alley.

In Phuket, hand-held fans are used to compliment the traditional Chinese costumes used in stage performances or worn by the bride at traditional Chinese weddings, but they can taken – and be used – anywhere.

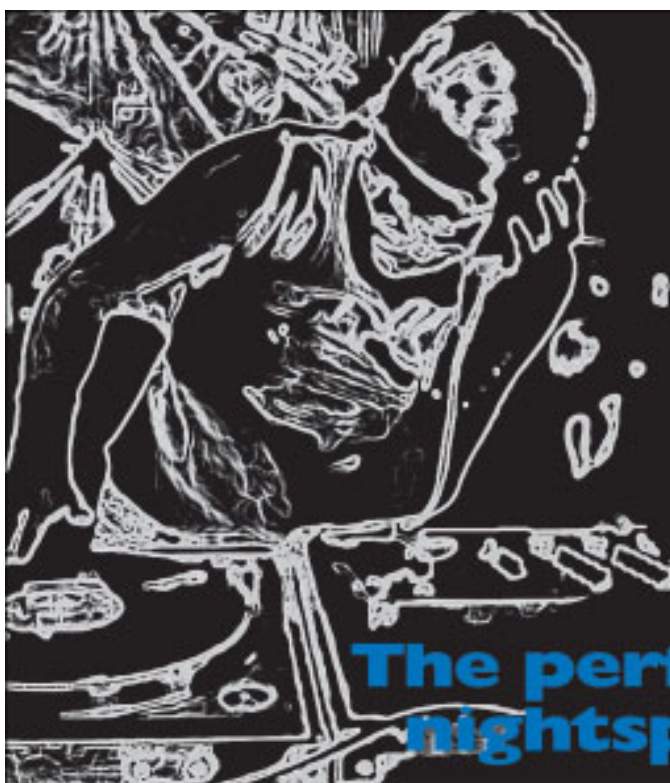
Simple synthetic fans with a floral design can be had for as little as 85 baht, but prices rise according to how elaborate and how well made a fan is.

At the top end of the price range are those with plumes. A goose-plume fan will set you back about 140 to 200 baht, while a peacock fan sells for about 230 baht.

Many more styles of fans can be found around the island, but a good place to start – and where the fans pictured here are available – would be Soonthorn Sungkhaphan, at 104 Thalang Rd, in the heart of the Sino-Portuguese area of Phuket City. Tel. 076-211243.



Left: When it's not hot, a fan is perfect for raising the temperature with a little flirting. Above: Peacock feathers for real glamor. Below: Pretty as a picture with Chinese scenery.

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This week



John Magee and Janpen Arno Magee's housewarming party on February 18 attracted guests from as near as Cherg Talay and as far as the Isle of Wight, all present to sample the catering by Watermark Bar & Restaurant and music organized by Andy Anderson, featuring the Soi Dog Blues Band and the Groove Doctors. Oh, and the brownies were provided by Pensri Lewis.



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TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

Hong Kong's advertising slogan could be, "Blink and you'll miss it." It's a city where Time's winged chariot doesn't so much hurry near as overtake on the inside lane, and this year it's showcasing a raft of new attractions.

Mickey Mouse and pals are strutting their stuff at the mini- (small pun intended) Disneyland, while, right next to the airport, those who like such things can cavort about a spanking new convention center.

A cable car, swaying up to the dizzy heights of the Big Buddha at Ngong Ping on Lantau Island, should be open by the summer, while, further north, nature lovers can make a bee line for the new Wetland Park at Mai Po.

All of these are well and good, but as anyone with even a passing acquaintance with Hong Kong knows, the former Brit colony's foremost attraction is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.

For three action-packed days at the end of March, the fun simply never ends, and what's more, there's a bit of rugby to watch thrown into the bargain. The tournament's pulled in a couple of international sponsors, but to aficionados it's simply known as The Sevens.

For the past three decades, fans from all over the world have flocked to Hong Kong's premier stadium every spring. The tournament has grown by leaps and bounds, attracting some of the game's greatest players and worldwide media coverage.

Why? Anyone going to the Hong Kong Sevens does so for the sheer joy of it. You don't even have to know a great deal about the game (seven guys – and gals,



Fueled by plenty of amber nectar, fans of the Wallabies – the Australian team – can be counted upon to make a colorful display.

Seven reasons to visit HK

too, nowadays – on either side, all trying to get the ball over their opponents' goal line, one way or another).

Play is fast, spirited, egged on by roars from a myriad throats and there's always something happening.

The entertainment is by no means confined to the pitch. Fans by the dozen pick a zany outfit to bolster support for their team. Families cluster in the upper reaches of the stadium, the more

energetic larrikins make an alcohol-fueled dash to the South Stand, well-padded types in corporate boxes get entertained by bebies of go-go girls, and everyone gets up to dance to their favorite adverts on the mammoth screens that rise high above the bleachers.

Streakers are not quite so high-profile nowadays, with grim-faced security men thronging the perimeters, though, as the day wears on, one or two "ward-

robe malfunctions" are not unknown.

And at the end of the day the final whistle actually signals the start of play, as much of the crowd goes off to celebrate in the bars of Wan Chai, Lan Kwai Fong or in the marquee erected immediately outside the stadium.

The fans range from face-painted pre-teens to grizzled pensioners, and could form their own mini-United Nations. Thailand is not playing this year, but favorites

England will be battling it out with top teams from Fiji and New Zealand. A total of 19 sides will include participants from nations less well known for their rugby prowess such as Sri Lanka and Madagascar.

Soccer may be the beautiful game but rugby is the bountiful game, generously including everybody in its free-for-all party atmosphere. And there's no better example of this than the Hong Kong Sevens.



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BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

The world's No 2 auto maker, Japanese giant Toyota, is set to build its award-winning compact, the Yaris, here in Thailand.

Until now the Yaris has been built only in Europe and Japan; the Thai production line, the first in Southeast Asia, is expected to double Toyota's current output in the Kingdom to almost 500,000 by 2008, when the expanded manufacturing facility in Chachoengsao becomes fully operational.

The first Yaris appeared in 1999 and was almost instantly awarded the accolade "European Car of the Year"; it also became Japan's "Car of the Year", making it the first model to achieve such wide recognition. It has also been named as one of the most reliable cars by an influential German survey.

Although of modest dimensions, the Yaris has achieved a remarkable five-star rating in the influential EuroNCAP crash tests. Dual front airbags and side bags are standard, with side air curtains optional and the "supermini", as the Yaris has been dubbed by the EuroNCAP authorities (www.euroncap.com), was awarded a massive 35 points for adult protection in the tests, the highest ever achieved by any Toyota.

It also scored well in the child protection category and did relatively well in the pedestrian protection listing.

The Yaris will be available in Thailand with a choice of three engines, all powered by gasoline (or gasohol). There are currently no plans to introduce the excellent 1.4-liter diesel, which is available throughout Europe.

The Thai-made Yaris will feature a three-cylinder 1-liter engine producing a modest 68 bhp



Toyota.com is silent on the origin of the name Yaris, but one news service quotes a Toyota PR person as saying it's a cross between Charis, the ancient Greek goddess of grace; "Ja" (the German for "yes", pronounced "ya"); and Paris, recognized center of excellence in style.

WEIRD NAME, BUT TOYOTA'S NEW YARIS IS A WINNER



(51 kW) and 93 Nm of torque, and a 1.3-liter version delivering 85 bhp (64 kW) and 121 Nm. A 1.5-liter version is also planned.

All engines feature variable valve technology and constantly variable transmission, which radically improves fuel consumption and lowers emissions, will be available as an option. A five-speed manual transmission is standard.

The interior, surprisingly roomy for a car this size, is very well equipped. A CD player is standard while the Yaris is also the first compact to get Toyota's new sound system which is MP3- and WMA-compatible. And if you still want to listen to the radio, the

digital audio tuner reduces interference on AM/FM channels.

A new rear suspension design intrudes less into the trunk than the old one did, while the rear seats split 60:40 and will slide and recline independently. They can also be folded flat to increase luggage space which, says Toyota, is the roomiest in the sub-compact class.

Clever design of the front overhang and windshield position increased the Yaris's interior space, making it close to that of many larger vehicles.

In addition, Toyota has carefully designed the passenger compartment to incorporate deformable safety structures, in or-

der to dissipate crash energy, whether generated from the front, rear or side. Noise and vibration have been reduced by the adoption of double sealing on all side doors.

Wind noise is far lower than normal for this class of car, thanks to a low drag coefficient of 0.30 which, Toyota says, is the result of more than 1,000 hours of wind tunnel research.

The Yaris has Brake Assist across the range, a system that detects emergency braking and increases line pressure in conjunction with the ABS; it is a

proven fact that most drivers do not brake hard enough when facing a possible crash.

Large disc brakes all round are standard on the larger engine models, with rear drums fitted to the 1-liter version.

The Yaris may be small in overall dimensions, but it is superbly equipped and when the Thai versions come on stream, it should be available at a very reasonable price.

Jeff Heselwood may be contacted by email at jhc@netvigator.com

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In the words of Robbie Robertson, from his 1987 song *Somewhere Down the Crazy River*, "Take a picture of this..."

The picture in question is the belvedere of a peach-and-mauve sunset streaked through with the puffed-up contrails of an airliner ploughing its way northwest. The contrail draws its own needle-like shadow on a thin haze of cirrus cloud as the Eye of Ra eases its way shut for another day.

The location of this quiet view of the infinite is from the tree-canopied beach between the Andaman Sea and the Casuarina Beach Pub & Restaurant at Dusit Laguna, and at this moment, I can think of few places I'd rather be.

Barreling a 1957 Ford Fairlane convertible (a *maquina*) down the coast road out of Havana with a Julieta between my smirking lips is one place.

Sprawling on an antique-red Chesterfield sofa in my club (the Drones Club in London), enjoying the effect of a few glasses of malt whisky and the latest edition of the *Morning Star* hidden between the pages of *The Daily Telegraph* – or vice versa – for amusement is another.

But right now I am on Phuket's sandy shores and looking forward to what promises to be a most delightful repast.

As the sun is now over the yard-arm, it is incumbent upon me to have a bit of a bracer. What could be better than a reviving Pimm's Cup? Well, according to both of tonight's two dining companions, something non-alcoholic appears to be preferable. The list of virgin (on the ridiculous) cocktails, smoothies and the like is extensive, which is appropriate for the family atmosphere of Casuarina.

However, those of us with cast-iron constitutions also have a splendid range of aperitifs, cocktails and wines from which to choose.

Following its refurbishment, Casuarina is gloriously light and airy, even on a warm evening. It's spacious, too, providing the

Casually CASUARINA

rugrats with an ample area to enjoy themselves – well, did you want to sit still for half an hour when you were three years old?

Faced with the difficult decision of just what to have for my appetizer, I defer to the amiable service staff to aid me in my choice.

The *goong sarong*, is, I am told, delightful and who am I to argue, even if I were an argumentative sort of chap? I await my starter with bated breath.

Casuarina's casual but classy atmosphere creates the climate for equally casual chit-chat. Gem – also known as Kanittha Thanthanasap – Dusit Laguna's PR Manager, and my other companion, Lin – who may or may not be a spy, an award-winning movie director or the songwriter behind such chart hits as, well, I really cannot say – are getting on like a house on fire.

An added bonus to our evening is the music. No piped muzak tonight, but rather the seriously talented Chris Melchior. It takes me moment to realize where he is, and slightly longer for my brain to realize that this glorious chill-out sound is being made by him, his laptop and a violin.

"Live remix" he accurately calls it in a conversation between

Anyway, between the aural bites come some food bites in the shape of deliciously crispy *goong sarong* – prawns wrapped in noodles and deep-fried.

Again at the recommendation of the staff, we choose the Captain's Platter – a medley of seafoods – for our shared main course. "If it's good enough for the captain," we say as one, "it's good enough for us."

The captain must possess a healthy appetite, no doubt due to all those months at sea, for the platter requires the efforts of two strapping lads to carry it to our table. Well, almost; some artistic license is permitted.

Large mussels, delectable oysters, fragrant crab, grilled rockfish, squid and oodles more besides is demolished in double-quick time, and let's face it, seafood is the thing to eat on the beach, right?

The dining delights are by no means over, however. I have wisely reserved a smidge of space for one of my favorite desserts: *crème brûlée*.

This being Dusit Laguna, however, it isn't just the simple classic dish but a visually-stunning range of eight spoons with four different flavors – including mango and coconut.

"Simply wonderful," I muse, before realizing that I have – all starry-eyed and non-plussed for a moment – spoken out loud.

For more information, contact Dusit Laguna Resort at Tel: 076-324324 ext 7309, Email: dlpfdir@dusit.com or visit www.dusit.com Casuarina Beach Pub & Restaurant is open from midday to 10 pm daily.

On the menu



WITH
Andy Johnstone
Casuarina



If it's good enough for the captain ... the Captain's Platter.

sessions and, despite the proficiency of many of the island's musicians, Chris is undoubtedly one of the best. The soundtrack

to the evening he creates is mesmerizing and unique, like magic dust being sprinkled on our souls. One to watch out for.

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PHUKET DIARY

of coming events

March 4-13: Tao Thepkrasatri & Tao Sri Soonthorn Cultural Fair. Held every year to commemorate the role Phuket's heroines played in the victory over a Burmese incursion in 1785, the fair this year will be bigger and better than ever.

Pattama Rujee Wong, of the Phuket Provincial Cultural Office (PPCO), said that the celebrations this year would be the biggest yet, to mark HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 60 years on the throne.

Festival activities will take place between 8 am and 10 pm each day, at Thalang Chanasuk Memorial Field, in Baan Kian, where the battle took place.

The battlefield covers 96 rai, one kilometer west of the main intersection in Thalang Town, on the road to Cherng Talay.

The fair will start with a head-shaving ceremony at 1 pm on March 4 for men entering monkhood, followed ordainment at 8 am on March 5.

On March 11, 12 and 13, starting at 7 pm, actors will reenact the battle.

On March 13, remembered as the day of the battle, a wreath-laying ceremony will be held at the Heroines' Monument at 8 am.



MUDDY BATTLEFIELD: Muay Thai Talay will be one of the fun attractions of the Tao Thepkrasatri & Tao Sri Soonthorn Cultural Fair

K. Pattama said that the PPCO will improve the following six sites with landscaping and by installing plaques explaining each locale's historical significance:

Thalang Chanasuk Memorial Field; the birthplace of the two heroines at Baan Kian; Baan Kian Mosque, where the Heroines' mother is believed to have prayed; Mae Ma Sia cemetery,

in Baan Kian, where the heroines' mother is believed to be buried; Wat Muang Komaraphat, near Wat Phra Nang Sang, where Thai warriors massed before the battle; and Nop Nang Dug, where Thais dammed a klong to block the Burmese troops' water supply.

The plaques will be in Thai and English, and are expected to be installed before the fair begins.

Sport competitions, including *takraw*, *Muay Thai*, *Muay Thai talay* (boxing while sitting on a horizontal pole over a pool of water or mud) and greasy pole climbing, will be held as part of the festival.

The main sporting event, on March 12, will be a mountain bike race, with off-road sections, taking in historical sites en-route.

Riders in Category A of the race will cover the full 35-kilometer course, with riders starting at 1:30 pm, while riders in Category B will race over a 25km course, starting at 11:30 am.

Category C, for children under 13 years of age, will cover 10km, starting at 10 am.

The winners of the men's and the women's sections of categories A and B will receive trophies donated by HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn.

All three courses will start and finish at Thalang Chanasuk Memorial Field.

The entry fee for Categories A and B is 300 baht per person, while entry in Category C is free.

For more information contact the Thepkrasatri Municipality at Tel: 076-311381, or for the bike races see www.thaimtb.com/cgi-bin/viewkatoo.pl?id=78475.

Until February 28: "We Are Not Alone" art exhibition. This exhibition features the work of 20 artists from the Andaman coastal region.

The goal of the exhibition, say the organizers, is to show solidarity with those who are concerned about the environment.

The show, at Phuket Art Gallery, 74 Thalang Rd, Phuket City, is open to the public from 10 am to 8 pm, seven days a week, until February 28.

April 6: Chakri Day (Public Holiday). Chakri Day commemorates the origins of the Chakri dynasty, founded by Rama I, who established Bangkok as the nation's capital.

April 13-15: Songkran (Thai New Year - Public Holiday). Also known as the Water Festival, and held during the driest months in Thailand, Songkran is celebrated by Thais throughout the country by pouring - traditionally only a little, but these days more playfully a lot - of water on other people to wish them good luck for the Thai New Year.

April 12-16: Phuket Bike Week. Phuket Bike Week 2006 will be held from April 12-16, 2006.

The Grand Dinner by Ride Thailand and Phuket Riders Club will be on April 14 at Thainaan restaurant, opposite Central Festival Phuket.

Tickets are for sale at 300 baht each and include dinner, a show and competitions. Seating is limited and early bookings are recommended.

There will be an "OTOP Market Party" on April 14-15.

Visit www.ridethailand.com or www.phuketbikeweek.com for more information.

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PUZZLES

The Cryptic Crossword

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are names of at least 25 components or materials used in building a house. The words may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. Score: 10 or more, good; 15 or more, very good; 20 or more, excellent. Solution on next page.

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

ACROSS

- Dr Ike was confused and irritated. (5)
- Put name to an omen. (4)
- No male in this country. (4)
- Composer A created the States. (7)
- Very small units of time? (7)
- Bays within impediments. (6)
- Buffed Edward from Gdansk. (8)
- Recognize type of power wisdom. (11)
- Chap used to shoot down aircraft. (3)
- Verily, that's an affirmative. (3)
- Refreshed, Ann met tench for a spell. (11)
- Shoot left or right of the hearth. (8)
- "500 with two rounds after five with two rounds" - it's black magic. (6)
- Erases what assassin does. (4,3)
- Conclude no blaze. (7)
- However, I find beast. (4)
- I make an attempt for the same. (4)
- Fib to General Electric? Lord! (5)

1														
10										11				
12										13	14			
										15				
16													18	19
20		21											23	
24											25	26		
										27				
28									29	30				
31									32				33	

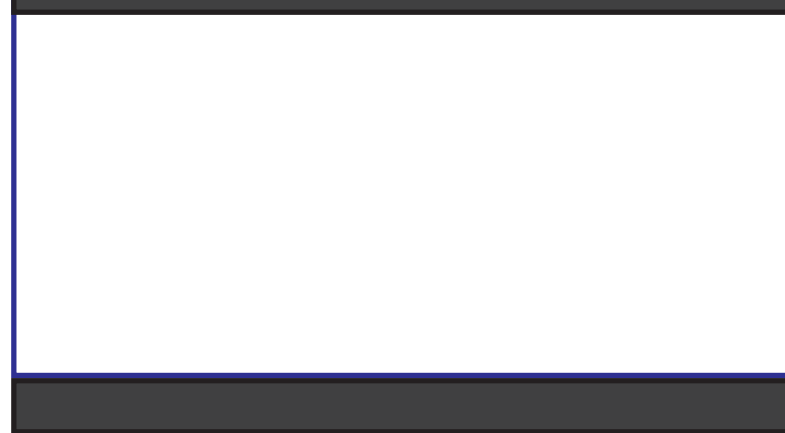
Compiled by Tortuus. © 2006

Down

- Kind of friend who's not around, yet is. (9)
- Lo, Hakka's twisted in Phang Nga. (4,3)
- Lived with note on shoe part. (5)
- Belt of southern fire remnant. (4)
- Place where James exercises?
- Is the same as lucifers. (7)
- Went ahead slightly and snooped. (5)
- We hear the independent gentleman is broke. (8)
- Gary is getting on in years. (6)
- Calm 100 in tartan. (6)
- Galosh on top of brake part. (8)
- It's said city dwarf beats time. (9)
- Car and boat tumble tumbler. (7)
- Support rear of Cockney nag. (7)
- Bryan's boat. (5)
- Not on, Al has guts. (5)
- Brain object. (4)
- But container's backed up. (3)

Solution on next page.

Scribble Space



EZ TRIVIA QUIZ

- Which volcano erupted in 1883, causing a tsunami that killed at least 36,000 people?
 - Which is the world's largest coral reef?
 - What disease results when a child has 47 chromosomes instead of the usual 46?
 - In police work, what does SWAT stand for?
 - In what Indian city did a 1984 chemical leak cause the deaths of at least 15,000 people?
 - What is the name of the huge dam being built in China?
 - Which company manufactures Barbie dolls?
 - King Kong came from what island?
 - What's the name of the condition of having one's clothing stuck between one's buttocks, often after one's underwear is pulled up as a prank?
 - What was Aladdin's monkey called?
- Answers on next page.

Brain Buster!

Nang Naam and her twins, Somboon and Somsri, want to cross from the east side of the river to the west side in a canoe. But the canoe can hold no more than 200 pounds. Nang Naam weighs 160 pounds, while Somboon and Somsri each weigh 100 pounds.

How can all three of them reach the other side of the river using the canoe?

Answer on next page.

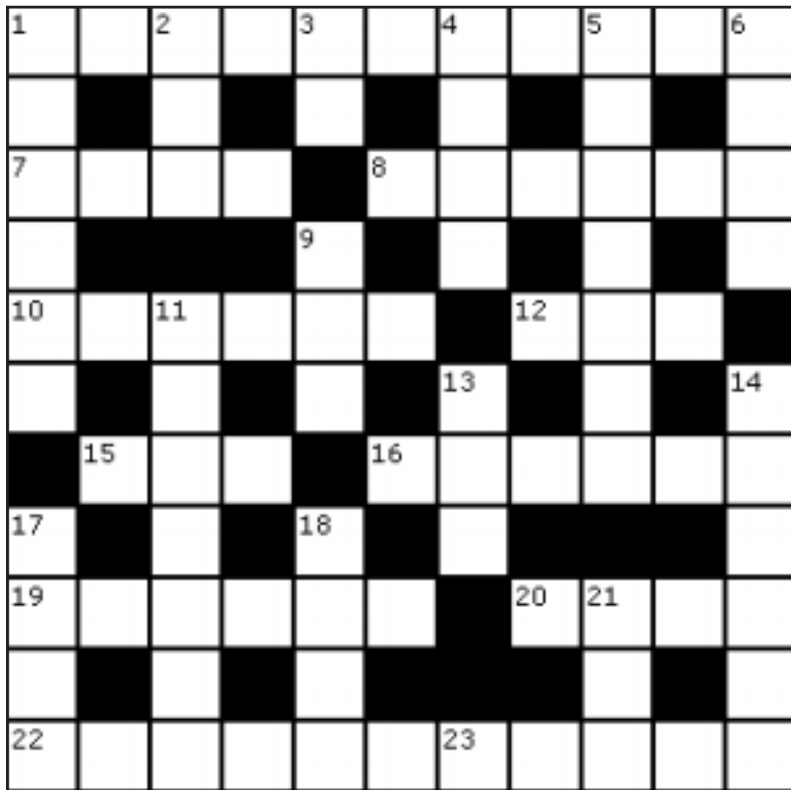
su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

	5		8	7	
	8		2		1
9	1		5		2
3			1		4
		6	5		7
2	5				3
		7		8	5
	9	3			4
4				9	5

Sudoku is very simple: each row, each column and each "box" of nine squares within the puzzle must contain all the numbers from 1 to 9 with, naturally, no repetitions. Beware: there is only one solution to this puzzle, which is on the next page.



Quick Crossword

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1. Holland. | 1. He discovered gravity. |
| 7. Salary. | 2. Pull sharply. |
| 8. Clothing fastener. | 3. For example. |
| 10. Lots and lots. | 4. Ruffian. |
| 12. Seamstress's tool. | 5. Zilch. |
| 15. Frozen water. | 6. Despatched. |
| 16. Very small person. | 9. Good place to sleep. |
| 19. Citizen of Troy. | 11. Medics. |
| 20. Bathroom wear. | 13. Leg part. |
| 22. Eating places. | 14. Capital of Greece. |
| | 17. The sun, for example. |
| | 18. Indonesian island. |
| | 21. Possess. |

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



Kids! Ask 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.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1. Who, in 1710, coined the phrase "The best of all possible worlds"? | 8. Which director's movies include <i>Yojimbo</i> , <i>The Hidden Fortress</i> and <i>Rashômon</i> ? | intentions of which Looney Tunes character? |
| 2. Who followed this phrase in his 1975 film <i>Love and Death</i> with, "It's certainly the most expensive"? | 9. Who was the leading actor in all three movies? | 15. What is Sylvester the Cat's full name? |
| 3. Who, with 31 awards under his belt, holds the record for Grammy Awards? | 10. In which play does Lady Anne Neville say, "No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity"? | 16. What is the motto of Western Australia? |
| 4. Who won the 2006 Grammy Award for Best Dance Recording? | 11. From which British sitcom are the French sitcom <i>Le Bureau</i> and the German sitcom <i>Stromberg</i> derived? | 17. Tokaji wine is produced in which country? |
| 5. Which name is shared by an alleged terrorist and a chill-out music DJ? | 12. In Polynesian mythology, where did Tiki, the first man, find Marikoriko, the first woman? | 18. Spam musubi is a dish thankfully peculiar to which region's cuisine? |
| 6. Who wrote the fable <i>Jonathan Livingston Seagull</i> ? | 13. Who wrote the plays <i>Mirandolina</i> and <i>The Servant of Two Masters</i> ? | 19. The phrases "Ugandan negotiations", "Shome mishtake, shurely?" and "continued page 94" are routinely used in which satirical publication? |
| 7. BF Pinkerton, The Bonze and Sharpless are characters in which opera? | 14. Penelope Kitty was the target of the amorous intentions of which Looney Tunes character? | 20. Britain's King George V had one, so did Denmark's Frederick IX. Even Queen Victoria may have had one. What did they have? |

Answers below, left.

Puzzle Solutions

Brain Buster Solution

First the twins paddle to the west side of the river. Somboon stays on the west side, and Somsri comes back. Nang Naam rows alone to the west side, leaving Somsri on the east side. Finally, Somboon comes back for Somsri and together, they paddle to the west side of the river.

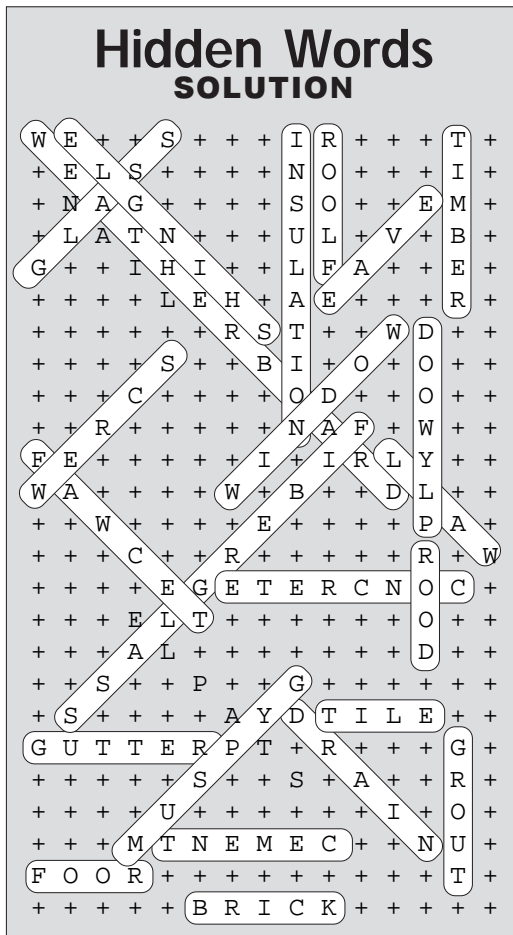
Monster Quiz Answers

1. Gottfried Leibnitz; 2. Woody Allen; 3. Sir Georg Solti; 4. The Chemical Brothers for Push the Button; 5. José Padilla; 6. Richard Bach; 7. *Madame Butterfly*; 8. Akira Kurasawa; 9. Toshirô Mifune; 10. *The Life and Death of King Richard III*; 11. The Office; 12. In a pond; 13. Carlo Goldoni; 14. Pepé Le Pew; 15. Sylvester J. Pussycat Snr; 16. Cygnis Insignis; 17. Hungary; 18. Hawaii; 19. Private Eye; 20. A tattoo.

EZ Trivia Answers

1. Krakatoa; 2. The Great Barrier Reef; 3. Down Syndrome; 4. Special Weapons and Tactics; 5. Bhopal; 6. Three Gorges Dam; 7. Mattel; 8. Skull Island; 9. A wedgie; 10. Abu.

Hidden Words SOLUTION



Solution to this week's Cryptic Crossword



Solution to this week's Quick Crossword



Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle



Nothing wrong with a gimmick or ten

You gotta have a gimmick," said that great American literary figure Gypsy Rose Lee. Novelist Michael Cunningham's gimmick is literary association with a famous writer.

His last novel, *The Hours*, was a great commercial and critical success, made into a movie starring Nicole Kidman, Meryl Streep and Julianne Moore. The plot had three women at different times and places involved with the plot of the novel *Mrs Dalloway*, including author Virginia Woolf herself (played by Kidman in the film).

The great literary figure of Michael Cunningham's new novel is Walt Whitman. *Specimen Days* (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York, 2005, 308pp) links three recurring characters, all obsessed with Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

The novel opens in 19th century New York during the lifetime of Walt Whitman, who makes a cameo appearance on Broadway. Lucas is a 14-year-old Irish slum kid in the Lower East

Side, obsessed with *Leaves of Grass*, a copy of which a kindly teacher has given him. He is given to spontaneous quotations of Whitman's poetry rather than ordinary conversation.

His brother Simon has just died in an industrial accident and Lucas's other obsession is the sweatshop seamstress Catherine, Simon's grieving fiancée. Frail and misshapen, Lucas takes over the foundry machine that killed his brother.

The narrative tone is lugubrious, with shades of Charles Dickens, and you wonder where the author is going with all this. Add to this Cunningham's customary academic style – fussy, fastidious, over-elaborate – and I was ready to chuck the book aside.

We have Lucas buying a white bowl as a gift for Catherine with 75 cents of his \$1.03 salary while his parents are starving at home, and later hearing voices from his foundry machine warning him to rescue Catherine from her sweatshop just before, as it happens, a fire burns it down.

But suddenly we're in contemporary New York, some years after 9/11, and in the narrative company of Cat, a 38-year-old black woman with a PhD and a job on the NYPD crisis call line. Cat lives in the same East Fifth Ave tenement that Catherine did.

She's attractive enough to have a handsome rich 32-year old futures manager as her boy-

friend. His name is Simon. Her dead son was named Luke.

Cat's also got a wry, tough sense of humor and draws the reader back into the story again. She gets a call from a kid quoting – surprise! – Walt Whitman and warning of a suicide bombing by another kid. One day, she spies a white bowl in an antique shop and buys it on impulse. See the pattern here?

Bombs go off, Cat chases clues and we've got the making of a damn good detective story with a sharp twist at the end.

Flash forward two hundred years or so. The United States has suffered some kind of nuclear catastrophe and is now dismembered. The one with the Whitman obsession now is a cyborg named Simon. In Central Park he chats up a nanny named Catareen.

Catareen is even weirder: "She was by Earth standards a four-and-half-foot-tall lizard with prominent nostrils and eyes slightly smaller than golf balls...Her skin was emerald."

Catareen is a Nadian, one of thousands brought back after Earth's one and only foray to another inhabited planet. The Nadians wound up taking menial jobs.

Simon and Catareen fall foul of the law and escape to New Jersey after a thrilling chase on a subway and across the George Washington bridge pursued by a laser-firing predator drone.

Simon is programmed to make an appointment in Denver and the two set out on a picaresque westward-bound journey, along the way picking up a young, misshapen, hustler named Luke. The white bowl talisman turns up in Denver along with the startling conclusion to the tale.

Okay, the novel is fraught with gimmicks. But they're good gimmicks and provide a rousing read.



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



In The Stars

by Isla Star

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Important information is liable to be lost in translation midweek. If you are anxious to get the right message across, double-check the results. In the zone of romance, Sunday is the most auspicious day to reveal those cards hidden up your sleeve in order to achieve maximum impact. If you are celebrating a birthday this week, expect to receive a meaningful gift from a secret admirer. No 4 is promising on Monday.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Being involved in a love triangle proves to be too stressful this week. You will discover that someone hasn't kept a promise and you should walk away from this situation before too much damage is done. Next month, Cupid will send an arrow in your direction that is sure to lead to a more balanced, fulfilling relationship. No 8 is lucky next Thursday.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): A stampede of elephants will not be enough to prevent you going after what you want this week. Others may have the opinion that you are pushing your luck, but the stars are definitely supporting your endeavors. As March gets under way, you will be glad to start taking things easier after recent exertions. The heat is on where long-distance romance is concerned. Wear lotus pink to soothe frazzled nerves.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): As the temperature rises this week, your frustration could reach boiling point. If you are feeling hot under the collar you should make every effort to cool down. Optimism has been at a low level lately, but is set to increase slowly as March begins. Where relationships are concerned, the chances of a new romance blossoming with Aries are looking better by the minute. No 4 is lucky next Wednesday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Support comes from an unexpected direction early next week. Just when you thought that nobody was interested in your wild ideas, progress is indicated. The green light is also about to shine on your romantic interest in Sagittarius, who will appreciate a low-key approach. Postpone signing important papers until after Wednesday. Walk away from an uncomfortable social situation this weekend. Wear the color marigold yellow to sharpen your instincts.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Your stealth in the jungle is a great asset this week. Where others are certain to leap into agreements without looking back, you are bound to consider all options before committing. An Aquarian friend is set to seek advice on Tuesday; be careful about the use of ambiguous words on this occasion, as they could backfire. Plan an escape this weekend to avoid family members demanding too much of your time.

PISCES (August 23-September 23): The cosmic atmosphere will support your efforts to get ahead this week. During the last few days of February you will finally be able to concentrate on your own needs. Someone from your past is planning to make contact. This should happen before the middle of March. Memories will be stirred up as a result; Virgos involved in a relationship could find themselves getting caught in the middle.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Love looks like turning out for the best for Librans who have recently been through a rocky period. There are strong signs that a smoother path through the forest will be revealed on Sunday. A faltering business deal can be repaired this week, but don't listen to suggestions offered by Aquarius. Your finances are becoming more secure as the year progresses,

but remember not to put all your eggs in one basket.

CANCER (October 24-November 22): An enlightening conversation this weekend gives you food for thought. If you've been toying with the idea of relocating, this could become reality in the near future. A family drama occupies most of your attention midweek. You should guard against letting this molehill turn into a mountain. No 7 promises to bring good luck on Tuesday.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): A sprinkling of stardust will ensure that you have extra charisma this weekend. Your social life is guaranteed to be at an all-time high and new friends are likely to become close ones. The only slight downside during the coming days could occur on Tuesday when a work-related misunderstanding threatens a business relationship. Your tact and diplomacy should ensure that this blows over without any lasting damage.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): If you think you have time on their side, remember that February is the shortest month of the year. An important project deadline is looming and you need to streamline your interests in order to focus on this. Someone close to you is demanding too much attention; take distance now to avoid relationship burnout. The color azure blue will encourage cash to flow more steadily.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): An interesting week lies ahead. Taurus has a business-related secret to share on Wednesday; this could lead to substantial gain if you're willing to take a risk. The wind of change is set to blow better financial luck toward you in other ways too; there are signs that an overdue debt is about to be repaid. The color purple encourages passion in your life.

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The case for a jet-ski race

There will undoubtedly be people who will want to criticize the Phuket authorities for allowing – indeed, inviting – jet-ski racers to Patong next month to compete in the first round of the 2006 Jet Ski Thailand Championship.

After all, they will argue, the Governor has already pledged to phase out all jet-skis by March 1, 2011. So why would he want to bring in dozens of them to race in small circles in the one bay that is most plagued by jet-ski operators and their noisy, dangerous machines?

There is, however, a basic flaw in any argument that puts the two topics together: these are two very different groups of people.

The jet-ski operators on the beach are a notoriously cantankerous group, resistant to all regulation and seemingly happy to allow complete novices to jump on their powerful machines and, in some cases, kill or maim themselves or others.

The racers, on the other hand, are professionals or highly skilled amateurs who will be racing in a restricted area, clearly marked, for just two days – not all the way through the high season.

Arguing that they should not be allowed to do this because of Phuket's perennial problems with jet-ski operators is similar to arguing that the Monaco Grand Prix should be canceled because Monaco has problems with idiots driving dangerously through that city's winding streets.

When the *Gazette* ran a front-page story in October 2004 about plans to bring a round of the Formula 1 Power Boat Grand Prix circuit to Phuket, one angry reader wrote to ask whether we would advocate them driving their boats at full speed across coral reefs and through mangroves.

Of course we would not – just as we have never advocated allowing tourists operate jet-skis in areas where people swim.

But we do support sporting events that have the potential to bring in extra visitors and generate much-needed revenue for island, especially as it continues in its post-tsunami recovery.

As with the Monaco Grand Prix, the chances of an innocent being hurt or killed in the course of the Jet Ski Thailand Championships are small indeed.

There will undoubtedly be those who argue that spectators of the jet-ski event may be inspired afterward to jump on jet-skis themselves and roar around the bay. But is that a good reason to bar an event? If so, all grand prix events should likewise be barred, along with motorcycle racing – and pie-eating contests. – **The Editor**

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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.

It's wrong, dash it all

I disagree with the answer to Question 13 in the Monster Quiz of the February 18-24 issue of the *Gazette* (Volume 13 Issue 7).

The question was, "What does the signal SOS mean?" [The answer given was "Si Opus Sit (Give relief where necessary)" – Ed]

The answer should be, "It stands for nothing." These letters were picked because, when heard in Morse code, they had an unmistakable sound: *dit dit dit dah dah dah dit dit dit*.

I was a radio officer for 27 years, serving on British, Dutch and Italian merchant ships.

Michael G Finn
Phuket

Thank you, Tourist Police, and goodbye

Phuket is always trying to find additional tourist attractions and travel incentives. Now we have the elite Tourist Police and Highway Police, who bravely apprehended those 12 tourist criminals doing a visa run.

The 12 were then given free lodging in the finest rooms with concrete floors, and bars instead of windows. By golly, that was luxury they surely never expected.

And, of course, those 12 tourist criminals tried to buy their way out of the predicament knowing full well they had violated the law. Thankfully, these fine upstanding officers of the law refused to accept bribes.

Seriously, does Pol Maj Songproad Sirikul [chief of the Ranong Tourist Police] still have his job?

There's an old saying, "If

you don't like our country, get out." Well, I'm on my way – never to return to Thailand after coming here regularly for 20 years.

Name and address withheld

Well done, Gazette

With regards to the recent visa overstay story [*Gazette* lead story, issue of February 18, 2006], I would just like to say I think the *Phuket Gazette* has done an excellent job and reported the facts without bias or prejudice.

As a long-term expat, I'd like to take the opportunity to say thanks to all the *Gazette* staff for producing such an informative paper for all on the island.

Keep up the good work.

John Kennedy
Phuket

Guiding light

It is time the president of the Phuket Professional Guide Association [Panomphol Thumma-chartnyom – see news pages] woke up to see the reality in Phuket – and the rest of the country.

Doesn't he understand that – now, more than ever – what is needed are accomplished foreign guides to help the economy and tourism.

Why are so many Thai tour operators willing to risk fines or worse penalties to hire them?

The answer is very simple: most of the so called "professional" Thai guides are not up to the job.

Few are able to speak fluent English, never mind other languages, and deliver their tourist spiel as a parrot would, not as if they were engaged in an inter-

esting chat about the daily life here on Phuket.

My brother-in-law has been an illegal tour guide for 14 years and has greater knowledge about Thailand than most Thai guides. He is fluent in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian, and can speak some Russian, some Tagalog and some Thai. Where is the Thai guide who can do the same?

K. Panomphol, face reality and help improve tourism here.

Walt
Phuket

Wag the dog

I know it's been said time and again, and the *Gazette* has been instrumental in focusing attention on the issue, but interest in the plight of the dog pound seems to have waned, to the extent that the place sometimes runs out of food.

Last weekend when I was there the dogs were fed only rice soup. Some dogs in the bigger holding areas were ripping other dogs apart.

On the positive side; they have added some kennels for "boarders" and I would like to recommend this to dog owners who need to be away. The animals are well looked after, it seems, and this creates income for the dog pound operators to spend on the animals in the pound itself.

I think we need to keep this issue in the spotlight and to encourage residents to help, and to shame the local authorities into action when it comes to providing adequate funds. We also need to step up the sterilization of dogs roaming the streets and generally making a nuisance of themselves.

Arjan
Phuket

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

People must have the right to get the news

I left the employ of the Thepkrasattri Municipality a long time ago, but I still help them with activities such as Children's Day.

I feel that it is important for everyone to continue providing services to our respective communities.

Some time ago, many people asked the Thepkrasattri mayor when they would receive a relayed broadcast service in their community.

We eventually found a suitable place to erect speakers, and I had my own stereo equipment that could be used.

Then the issue of who would foot the electricity bill was raised. For me, the cost of the electricity is not a problem; I have the money to pay for it. In fact, I was happy to pay for it, because it was for the benefit of the community.

I am an early riser, so it was absolutely no trouble for me to be up and ready to begin

relaying the broadcast of [Ministry of Communications] radio station FM.101.5 each day from 7 to 8 am.

I did this for three months and felt it was beneficial to the community on two counts: people could hear the news, and they could tell what time it was because of the broadcasts, and would know when to set off for work or to take the children to school.



FIRST PERSON

There are now probably very few people in Phuket without access to a radio or a television for daily news reports. However, as has been documented in the *Gazette* by one columnist and a number of readers' letters, as well as submitted Issues & Answers, some areas of the island have the added luxury of news delivered to their homes via community

loudspeakers.

Reactions received by the *Gazette* to these broadcasts have been negative. However, not everyone is against them. **Somchai Wichitbut** is a vendor of *khao larm* (sticky rice roasted in bamboo tubes). He also broadcast news and local affairs by loudspeaker (left) from his home in Thalang until recently, when officials, after receiving complaints about the noise, told him to switch it off. Here he explains why he believes in his mission to relay news to the local masses, whether they want it or not.



Left, the contentious loudspeaker tower. Above, Somchai Wichitbut at the controls.

However, the relayed broadcast had to stop a few weeks ago because of complaints received by the Municipality. Since then, many people have asked me why it stopped and, to be honest, I have no good answer to give them. The number of people asking me that question is surely proof that the service was regarded as valuable.

Yes, I know that most people within earshot of the broadcast have their own radio or television. But they might not have been able to hear it while they were busy [working or preparing for work]. Anyway, it was good for the entire community to hear the same broadcast.

Now I just let those who want the service revived contact

the Municipality. But I also plan to approach the Municipality and ask them to hold a public hearing on the matter.

A public hearing may well give all parties a better understanding and provide some way forward with the complainants.

I really don't understand why those who complained did so; they have prevented the dissemi-

nation of knowledge.

However, I also understand that the Municipality must do its duty.

I regret that it seems as though considerable time, effort and money have been wasted because of one person or a few people who thought about themselves rather than the wider community.

Franky: Khao Lak's Top Gun

Please pass on my compliments to Franky Gun, your columnist from Khao Lak. Reading his words today, it's hard to believe this is the same man who used to draw the *Man Farang* cartoon strip in the *Gazette* and, before that, owned a run-of-the-mill heavy metal bar on Kata Beach.

His development as a person over the past decade, as well as his development as a writer in a language not his own, is truly amazing.

It is also very encouraging

to think that, as Khao Lak faces the dilemmas that come with tourism development, there is somebody like Mr Gun taking notice and making comment.

Please let Mr Gun know that I enjoy reading his column in the *Gazette* every time, and I look forward to reading many more.

Steve Rosse
Iowa City, USA

Crumbs! Woody takes the biscuit

I am a Norwegian citizen and moved to Phuket about two years ago. I have just got a telephone

Letters

line installed in my house, and want Internet connection on the line.

As I have no experience concerning these matters in Thailand, I took the liberty of contacting your columnist Woody Leonard concerning the matter. He has just been fantastically helpful and has given me a lot of good advice. This man knows about these things!

I just want to let you know that I am truly grateful for his

assistance. I will read the *Gazette* every week. Even though it now costs 25 baht, it is truly worth it. Keep up the good work.

Steven R Bell
Phuket

We'll be back again

After a week-long vacation on Phuket (Jan 22-29) with my wife and two daughters, we returned home refreshed and impressed by the warmth and friendliness of the Thai culture and all there who have adopted a refreshing approach to life.

We stayed at the Sheraton

Grande Laguna and the staff were outstanding. With two children in tow, both under four years old, we especially appreciated this.

We met a gentleman called George who sings at the Sheraton with a band called "Back to Black" and enjoyed many interesting tales about his life as an American living on Phuket. He has embraced this culture as opposed to trying to change it.

On behalf of us all, thank you. We look forward to our next vacation there!

Mark Reis
Hong Kong

The Book of Job is truly one of the great works of literature. In it, God allows the Devil to test the faith of a righteous man named Job. The devil wipes out Job's cattle, kills all his children, and afflicts him with sores from head to toe. Job wonders why God is doing this to him.

Eventually God appears and tells him, in effect, "I'm bigger than you are. How dare you question me?" Job accepts this, and God rewards him by giving him twice as much as he had before.

Critics have given God a very bad rap for his behavior in this book. Not only does he allow a good man to suffer, but he then justifies it with an authoritarian rationale that is often cited by bullies, tyrants, and parents.

But suppose God had acted differently. Let's update this ancient work and call it the Book of Joe. God has reformed his behavior and decided always to be Mr Nice God. He has blessed a righteous man named Joe with an abundance of goodies, and now goes down to check on him.

Joe, a corpulent man in his 50s, is sunning himself by the swimming pool in front of his mansion while being massaged by beautiful maidens.

God: Hello, Joe. How's it going?

Joe (sitting up and taking off his sunglasses): Everything's hunky-dory, Lord. (The maidens retire.)

God: Is there anything I can do for you? Anything you'd like to eat or drink?



TSOWNINGS

By S. TSOW

Joe: Well, come to think of it, I could use a steak.

God: It shall be done as you desire, my dear child. (Snaps his fingers. A large filet mignon materializes on a gold platter.)

Joe (examining the steak): Actually, I was thinking more of a sirloin.

God: Of course! No problem. (Snaps his fingers. Steak turns into a sirloin.)

Joe (cuts off a piece and tastes it): This is medium rare. I like my steaks well done.

God: Whatever you wish, my beloved child. (Steak becomes well done.)

Joe (chewing his steak): You know, Lord, I have to thank you. You've given me everything any man could possibly want.

God: The pleasure is all mine, my dear Joe. You are a good man. I am your God. It is my duty to reward you. I've turned over a new leaf. No longer am I going to permit evil to plague the earth. I'm going to give good for good, and I'm going to do it consistently.

The Lord revises Job

Joe (still munching his steak): Yeah, but there's a problem.

God: A problem, my beloved child? Merely tell me what it is, and it shall be solved.

Joe: Well, having everything handed to you on a platter gets a little boring. There's no variety. I need a challenge.

God: A challenge?

Joe: Yeah. I mean, you've spoiled me rotten. You haven't done anything to build my character. I look at old Job, and I envy him. What a man! He really had character. All the suffering he went through, and he still had the guts to stand up to God.

God (eyes narrowing): So you envy Job, eh? And you want some challenges to build your character?

Joe (taking another mouthful of steak): Something like that, yeah.

God: Well, never let it be said that I don't give my children what they ask for. (Snaps fingers.)

Joe (chokes on his steak): What the...? Jesus! This tastes like mud. (Ex-

amines the steak.) It IS mud. What...? (The mansion and the swimming pool vanish. Joe is sitting naked on a garbage heap in the middle of a slum. He looks at his body.) Jesus! I'm covered with sores! Christ, do they itch!

God (mildly): Do not curse, my beloved child. You wanted challenges, so I'm giving you challenges. You wanted me to build your character, so I'm going to build your character. "But I swear to Me I'll never understand you humans. I give you evil and you complain, I give you good and you still complain. No matter what I do, you're never satisfied. Goodbye, my child. Have fun meeting your challenges and building your character. (Leaves.)

Joe: Wait, that's not what I meant! Bring back my steak! And my mansion! And my maidens! Aaaaagggghhhh! (Curtain.)

You can give S. Tsow a challenge and build his character by flaming him at stsow@yahoo.com.

Since mid-2000, yours truly has been wearing another (ridiculous) hat writing *Nightmarch*, a regular night-life column, first for the *Pattaya Mail*, briefly for the *Pattaya Expat* and, since November 2002, for *Pattaya Today*.

Apart from detailing the openings, closings, coming and goings, prices and staffing of bars across Fun Town, I have also been privy to a host of wonderful tales usually involving foreign male visitors doing silly things, usually with the aim of winning the heart of a lady of easy virtue.

I call these vignettes – all true, so my informants assure me – "Tales from the Crib". I'm sure the title needs no further explanation. Reproduced below are a couple of the best.

Music for a pink flute: In the early hours of the morning, a condo dweller in south Pattaya is

Bits and pieces

suddenly shaken awake by loud music coming from next door.

The music is of the German martial style, all trumpets and clashing cymbals; think Richard Wagner and *Götterdämmerung* (*The Twilight of the Gods*) and you'll get the idea.

Thinking there is a wild party in progress next door, my friend, a tall man, leans over his balcony and is able to peer into his next door neighbour's lounge.

There, instead of a bacchanalian booze-and-dance fest, he sees a lone man sitting in a lounge chair while a Thai woman kneels before him clearly practising the arcane art colloquially known as a "blow job".

One wonders if the man

was hoping to time crescendo to coincide with the climax of the martial music pounding out of his stereo system.

A Special Freckle: My friend Ray, a constant source of odd tales, swears this tale is true.

It starts innocently and innocuously enough: an Englishman meets a woman in a bar, falls in lust and determines to make her his own. She readily accedes to his request and the besotted Englishman, after returning to the Land of Drizzle, starts sending her the equivalent of 50,000 baht per month.

Of course, the lady in question is in clover. Not surprisingly, she has neglected to mention she

was already married to a handsome Thai fellow and, while her sugardaddy is back in Pommyland, she is tucked up each night with hubby.

When the Englishman returns for a stint, the husband simply makes himself scarce for a few weeks.

One night, however, the Thai woman introduces the Pommy to her husband, claiming he is a distant cousin, or whatever.

The Pom – for reasons that will become clear – asks the Thai man if he fancies a spot of three-cornered mattress dancing. The husband says, "Okay."

The three excited parties have a wonderful time spelunking in all sorts of cavities. They all agree that playing sandwich is great fun and the Pom invites the Thai man to return for a reprise.

This recurs on several more occasions, by which time it has become quite plain that the En-

glishman is spending more and more time "entertaining" the Thai man rather than his girlfriend.

The truth is out: the Pommy is now in love with the husband.

A decision had to be made. The 50,000 baht a month remuneration is in danger if the Thai man does not agree to keep presenting the freckle. Though he is not gay, the husband agrees to roll over and keep the Pom happy.

In a strange twist of fate, the trio has been reduced again to a duo, but with the Thai woman on the outside.

The money, however, keeps rolling in.



FROM THE STREETS OF PATTAYA
By Duncan Stearn

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Making the grade: Alan Cook on the cricket ground, bought with money that was 'festering' in his bank account.

GOING A BIT BATTY

I've got some money festering in the bank – it's a problem" said Island Furniture's Alan Cook one night in the pub. "Uh huh," said I to myself. "This is one Englishman who mightn't be impervious to heat – I'd say he could've had a touch of midday sun today."

I enquired further about this unusual dilemma, but quite clearly and coherently he repeated that he had some money "festering" in the bank.

A number of solutions came to mind, but none of them seemed to create instant reactions of enthusiasm, so after some time my interest in helping to solve this particular problem disappeared.

The problem was apparently solved for, a few weeks later, he announced to me that he had spent the "festering" money on a piece of land which couldn't really be lived on as it was under the high-tension power lines.

"Aha!" I thought. "I know what you're up to." Knowing something of the background of Alan's long-time efforts to establish a proper cricket club in Phuket, the purpose of the large piece of unliveable land was instantly clear. He was finally

realising a long cherished dream, by making it come true himself.

For the sake of American readers and people from other countries where cricket is not played, who might wonder what all the fuss is about, a cricket field is approximately the size of two soccer fields side by side. That's a sizeable chunk of land.

Alan has always been involved with cricket, both as a player and, later, in several organizational capacities, including now as President of the Phuket Cricket Union, an organisation primarily involved with bringing cricket into Phuket schools.

But it's not the first time that he has been involved in the creation of a cricket facility in a distinctly non-cricket country. With the help of a powerful sheikh who donated the land, and a colleague by the name of Simon Beardshaw, he built the cricket club at Sharjah in the UAE, now an immensely popular and successful facility for international and domestic matches.

"I had access to all the

equipment required, Simon had access to the labor force and the sheikh had the land, so with the right combination we had ourselves a cricket field," he explained.

Cricket has been well established in Thailand for many years, both in normal competition and special tournaments such as the "cricket sixes" a six-a-side tournament, cricket's version of Rugby sevens. (A full cricket team has 11 players.)

One of the best known tournaments in Asia is the Chiang Mai Sixes, a week-long contest that draws teams from many countries.

I'm confident that a proper cricket ground in Phuket will bring enjoyment for many, and attract new visitors to Phuket.

I am also convinced, as Noel Coward sang, that the locals will talk long into the night, with shaking heads, about this strange pre-occupation of Alan Cook.

*At twelve noon the natives swoon and no further work is done
But mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun."*

LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

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Beer mania in Phuket

From the Phuket Gazette, issue of February, 1996

PHUKET TOWN: Phuket Excise Officer Boonchuay Taenjahn told the press that the denizens of Phuket drank 6.8 million liters of beer last year.

He said the trend in alcohol consumption among Thais has been more and more toward beer, and predicted it would continue.

Beer consumption statistics in Phuket broke down as follows:

30- and 50-liter kegs, 176,000 liters; 330cc containers, 3.2 million liters; and 630-cc bottles, 3.2 million liters.

As for liquor produced in Thailand, consumption was divided among the producers of Hong Tong, Mekhong, Sang Thip, Siang Choon, and *lao khao*. Total consumption in Phuket was 3.4 million liters.

Teenage bag-snatching gang members arrested

From the Phuket Gazette, issue of February 15-28, 2001

PHUKET TOWN: Four members of a teenage bag-snatching gang were arrested at the end of January after a theft attempt near Wat Chalong went wrong.

Nongyao Ausit, 25, reported to police that she went to the Wat Chalong fair with her husband on the night of January 27.

At around midnight, she reported, they were driving their motorcycle home along Soi Thep-Anusorn.

Three teenage boys on a motorcycle drove up from behind and pulled alongside the couple. One grabbed K. Nongyao's necklace from her neck.

While accelerating to get away, the rider of the motorcycle lost control and bumped into K. Nongyao's bike, causing both machines to fall over.

Two of the boys ran into nearby woods while the driver picked up his bike and rode away.

K. Nongyao and her husband memorized the license number of the teenagers' red Honda Dream and rushed to the Phuket

Town Police Station to report the incident.

Acting on this information, police officers went to a house behind Suan Luang park and arrested three 16-year-old boys: "Ton", "Nak" and "Big Samkong" – identified as the gang's leader.

After questioning by police, the three admitted that they belonged to a four-member gang.

They told police that they had committed at least 10 motorcycle snatchings around

Tambon Chalong and Tambon Wichit since being released about a month before from the Juvenile Observation and Protection Center (JOPC), where they had been in custody after being arrested for theft of cars and other items.

Police later arrested another gang member, "Eff", 16, from his house on Surin Rd.

The four are now back in the JOPC, awaiting trial at the Juvenile Court.

THE TIME machine

News from the past

The New
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The search for recognition

This week I will review some of the ins and outs of search engine registration. This is the tool that the Internet uses when someone enters a search word or phrase into a search engine such as Yahoo or Google.

These search engines are becoming more and more sophisticated – as are the methods of getting your website noticed by Internet surfers. Here is a recent question I received from one of our clients.

Q We run two fairly large dive shops in Samui and Phuket. A few years back, we spent quite a lot of money on what I believe is a pretty darn good website.

Back then, it seemed that all we had to do was get a good website name, pay for an attractive design, write some good content and poof ... an instant 35% increase in business.

Over the years, however, it seems that our online business has dropped significantly – even though we update our site often.

My techie friend says we are not well-placed on search engines. What does this really mean? We just want to get more online business.

A Like so many others, you have entered into an online marketing can of worms or, depending on how you handle it, a can of opportunities.

With a bit of homework on your part and a relatively small online marketing budget, you can make tremendous improvements to your online business.

What your techie friend is referring to is called search en-

gine optimization. Over the years, this has become nothing less than a technical art form.

The bottom line is that you need to take a shotgun approach, applying many techniques throughout your website and online services.

Start with search Engines. These use sophisticated methods to determine the relevance and general usefulness of the information on your site. One of these methods is the aptly named the “spider”, a program that crawls around the web searching for anything and everything – on every site.

Spiders deposit this information in massive databases and then sort, categorize and assign “credit points” to data based on a complex set of computer algorithms. Herein lies the opportunities – and the keys to your online success.

Text content. It’s important to use simple, descriptive words and phrases throughout your site. In your case, obvious ones would include: diving, scuba, Phuket, Samui and Thailand.

Phrases might also include: “underwater sports”, “eco-tourism”, “reef diving”, and even “fish watching”.

Guessing at these can be a daunting and frustrating task but there’s good news ahead... take a look at www.digitalpoint.com (free) and www.rapidkeyword.com (not free). These two very powerful tools will help you determine the best keywords and phrases.

Next, you will need to make liberal use of these keywords throughout your site. Be careful not to overdo it though; spiders are pretty smart and they will fig-



Searchenginewatch.com has thousands of tricks and tips for boosting your rating on search engines.

ure out if you are just blasting your keywords everywhere.

Here are just a few ways to use your keywords effectively; any webmaster worth his salt will know these.

Page Titles. The part of your site code where you can store the name of every page. Using keywords and phrases that best describe that page content will get you some pretty good “credits”.

Meta Tags. A hidden area on the top of every web page where you can simply list your keywords.

Alt Image Tags. These are names that you assign to images, logos and photos on your site; giving short descriptive names to these will have a very positive effect.

Here’s a trick: act like you are a customer and do your own search on Google, Yahoo or MSN looking for great diving.

Note who comes up on the top and look at their overall design and content. Then, in MS Internet Explorer, click on View | Source. You will be amazed at what you find.

You don’t have to be a webmaster to read and understand the top section of these pages. There, you’ll find the Page Title, Meta Tags and Descriptions.

Now go back to the web page and right-click on any logo, graphic or photo. Choose Properties and you’ll see the Alt Image Tag for that image. A great source for good ideas.

Ok, so now you’ve got your design, content keywords and image tags; what’s next? A lot! Remember, this has become a technical art form.

Good placement on search engines requires constant registration with each. I suggest you shop for a good provider of these services.

Available everywhere, these can be had for a nominal fee – or sometimes a not-so-nominal fee. If you are a do-it-yourself kind of person, then you must try www.searchenginewatch.com. Here you will find literally thousands of tips, tricks and resources for everything to do with getting noticed on the web.

If you have allocated funds for your online marketing budget, another must-see is www.overture.com, one of the most powerful websites for getting into the Top 10 Search Engine listings ... but, it’ll cost ya.

Basically, it’s an online auction site, where you bid for top placement based on your chosen list of keywords. Be careful, this can get pretty expensive pretty fast because you are paying each

time someone clicks on your site from within a search engine.

Take your time and read the Tips & Tricks section carefully. It’s pretty simple but you’ll want to be sure about what you’re doing here.

Two pointers: First, choose your bid words carefully. “Thailand” may auction for 20 US cents, “Phuket” may go for 10 cents and “underwater sports” could go for as little as .03 cents.

Second, don’t bid for the top two spots because everyone, including those who are just kicking tires, clicks on the top two listings. Shoot instead for the third, fourth or fifth placement. In those positions it is more likely that the visitor is really looking for something – and you will pay about 80% less for the same keywords.

Last, but not least, you will want to know how much progress you are making – and probably don’t want to wait to see it in your bottom line. This whole thing is about CANI – constant and never-ending improvement. For this, you should check out www.nedstat.com.

This is my favorite web traffic tool because it gives great, easy to understand reports... and it’s FREE.

It’s a tool your webmaster places into each page that you want to track. The reports tell you how many clicks you have, what country they came from, what keyword was used to find your site – even where the user was before and after they left your page, and how long they stayed.


Care to play “Big Brother” anyone?

John Seebach has 25 years’ consulting experience in information systems and business process technology. His company, Island Technology, offers IT solutions and broadband services throughout Southeast Asia. For more information, send an email to: john@islandtechnology.com

IT ISSUES

By John Seebach

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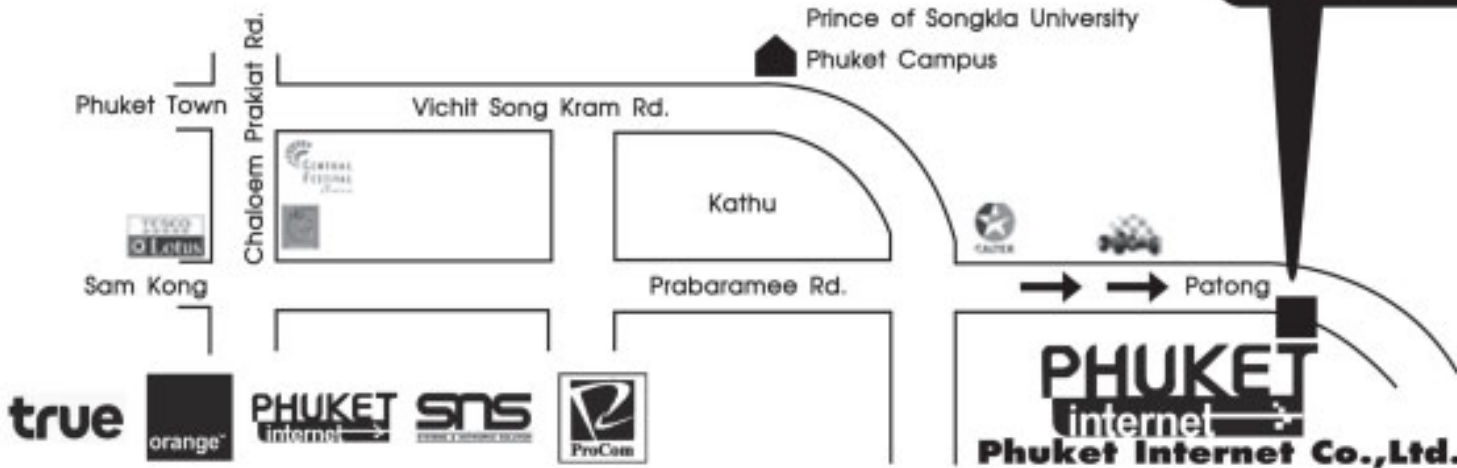
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ON THE MOVE

Permsak Yodmit, 43, from Songkhla, has been appointed General Manager of the Thiwa Ratri Resort & Spa Phuket. He has a degree in business administration from Ramkhamhaeng University and a degree in political science from Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University. His experience includes five years as Group GM of the Viangtak Riverside Hotel in Tak province. Before joining the Thiwa Ratri he was the GM of the Baan Karonburi Resort, in Karon.



Arun Keodsom, 38, from Surat Thani, is the new Chief of the Phuket Provincial Office for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (ODPM). He holds an economics degree from Maejo University in Chiang Mai and a master's in public administration from Prince of Songkla University, Phuket campus. He spent three years as a planning and policy analysis officer at the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board. Before moving to Phuket, He was Chief of the Surat Thani ODPM for three years.



Atjana Iad-On, from Yala, has joined The Phuket Resort Management Co Ltd, part of The Richmond Group, as Assistant to the General Manager. Her 12 years' experience in the hospitality industry has seen her work in customer care and service, sales and marketing, and business management and training at the Kamala Bay Terrace Resort, Sheraton Grande Laguna, Allamanda Laguna Phuket, Banyan Tree Phuket and the new Arahmas Resort & Spa Phuket.



Phuket sees boom in fitness industry

By Nattamon Ratcharak & Stephen Fein

PHUKET: With the opening of two large new fitness clubs, Phuket seems to be experiencing a boom in the fitness industry. The two newest clubs are the 36-million-baht Easy Fitness Center and the TaiLife Health & Leisure Spa, built at a cost of more than 50 million baht.

Easy Fitness Center is a 1,100-square-meter club on the bypass road, just south of Thainaan restaurant. Yvon Van Eyseren, CEO and majority investor, told the *Gazette* that since opening two months ago, the club has signed up 120 members.

Yvon, a fitness expert who holds "top trainer" status in Europe, said he expects it will take about six years for the investment, part-financed by a loan from KasikornBank, to pay off.

Easy Fitness has a total of 41 machines by Cybex, Stex and Free Motion. About half of these are for strengthening, the remainder for cardiovascular exercise. Free weights are limited to

dumbbells, as Easy Fitness does not see bodybuilders as its target market and does not want to risk members injuring themselves.

The club also offers a variety of dance, aerobics and martial arts classes in two purpose-built group training rooms, as well as a health-food restaurant, Internet access and a children's play room.

LADYBOYS

Members pay an 8,000-baht "entry fee", currently reduced to 3,000 baht as a promotion, and a minimum three months' membership fee at 1,400 baht per month. Monthly rates are reduced to 1,300 baht and 1,200 baht respectively for members who pay for six months or a year up front.

Various discounts are also available for government bureaucrats, students and other groups. The club also sees ladyboys as a specific market, and has a special changing room to cater to them.

"Within five years, we would like to see 5% of the population between 14 and 70 years

old actively exercising, and we will also motivate ladyboys to join the club. This group is an important market share that happens to be body-aware," Yvon said, adding that the club's goal for the first year is 800 members, followed by an increase in members by 200 a year thereafter.

Easy Fitness' competitive advantages are its central location, individualized service and state-of-the-art equipment, he says.

In Patong, which has led the island's boom in fitness clubs, the newest is TaiLife Health & Leisure Spa, which opened in November 2005, and now has 280 members.

Manning Director Brett Taylor and two silent partners funded the 990-sqm TaiLife, which is centrally located on Soi Sunset.

Day passes start at 200 baht. Memberships are offered on a weekly, monthly, six-monthly or annual basis. These include a Health Pass that allows access to the gym, a Leisure Pass for pool and spa facilities, or a Platinum Pass with access to both.

There are hefty discounts for Thai women. For them, a one-month Health Pass is 900 baht, a Leisure Pass 700 baht and a Platinum Pass 1,200 baht. Normal prices for these are 3,000, 2,400 and 4,200 baht a month respectively.

Mr Taylor said TaiLife's main target group is European men aged 31-50 and Thai women between 18 and 35.

TaiLife's competitive advantage, he says, lies in the 990-sqm facility's qualified fitness trainers and state-of-the-art machines. These include 11 cardio machines by LifeFitness and 12 Cybex strength training machines. There are also Olympic-standard free weights.

Other facilities include a 25-meter swimming pool, sauna, steam room, sports and relaxation massage service with professionally qualified massage therapists, and a health food restaurant.

Mr Taylor expects the business to recoup its original investment within 10 years.

Other top-end fitness centers on the island include Club

Asia Fitness on the 3rd floor of the Royal Phuket City Hotel, which opened in 1996. The center, run by Asian Wind, has more than 600 members, 30% of whom are foreigners.

Manager Nongnuch Surin said Asian Wind has a main workout room of 269sqm, equipped with 19 cardio machines and a 140sqm workout studio. Membership is 3,250 baht plus a 1,599-baht monthly fee.

Asian Wind, owned by Australian Peter Heppell, also manages the fully-equipped BodyWize Fitness at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort and the fitness room at the Leelavadee Spa.

PIONEERS CLOSE

Also in Phuket City is the Royal Spa on Yaowarat Rd. The fitness center there has 11 strengthening and 12 cardio machines as well as free weights and other spa facilities. The spa, covering 4,500sqm, was opened in March 2000, the fitness center followed a year later.

Marketing Manager Surchet Chiang-In told the *Gazette* that investment by partners Narongsak Juthamongkol, Suppakorn Bunyapatson and Singaporean Aung Ko Lin was 35 million baht, excluding land – the spa was built on land leased for 30 years, he said. The Royal Spa fitness center currently has 250 members, 80% of whom are foreigners. Membership is 2,000 baht to join plus 1,495 baht a month.

Two of the pioneer fitness centers have closed down. One was the fitness center at the Holiday Inn Resort, which closed about four years ago when the contractors running it moved to Europe. The other, Fitness R Us at the Boat Lagoon, ceased operations last month after three years. Former partner Pensri Lewis said the club could not attract enough members.

However, in Patong three new fitness centers have opened in recent years. These are Phuket Gym, near Patong Hospital; the Patong Gym, on the dead-end road near the Nanai Rd and Prachanukhro Rd intersection, and Fit Club, on Rat U-Thit-200 Pi Rd, which was recently sold.



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Any investor who has been paying attention to world markets must have noticed that commodity prices have boomed in recent years. This trend is likely to continue. Asia is experiencing strong economic growth and commodity demand is very likely to be robust for decades to come.

But if an investor believes that prices of oil, metals or agricultural products, for example, will rise, it is more than a little impractical for him to buy, say, 100 tons of sugar or coffee or whatever and store it while waiting for a price increase.

There is another approach and that is to use the futures markets. But buying and selling futures is not as simple as taking a picnic on the beach. Futures markets are extremely volatile and complex; for the average investor, it would probably be safer to go digging for gold in a minefield.

Individual investors normally confine themselves to leaving money in bank accounts, buying residential property or investing in the stock and bond markets. The one approach that 99% of individual investors make is to invest hoping – sometimes praying – that the investment will rise in value.

However, the investment world is not always an accommodating arena; history tells us that prices of assets may fall as well as rise. It therefore makes perfect sense to invest in areas that can profit from both rising and falling markets.

It was this philosophy that led to the start of the Hedge Fund industry. The same reasoning caused the creation of futures markets. Today, the world trades enormous amounts of futures, options and a whole range of instruments known as “derivatives”. The size of this market in global terms is currently around US\$2 quadrillion.

When one considers that, in 2005, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the US was a bit over US\$13 trillion and the world’s population was just over 6 billion, US\$2 quadrillion is obviously huge on anybody’s scale. To express the number in full, it’s US\$2,000,000,000,000,000. That’s US\$333,333 for every man, woman and child on earth.

Readers would be more

MONEY TALKS



By Richard Watson

than justified in wondering how the total derivatives market could reach such a stupefying size. The answer is simple: demand.

Thirty years ago, graduates with master’s degrees or a PhDs in mathematics were most likely to spend their careers teaching this subject. Today, if they show signs of brilliance, they are more likely to end up working in the financial world, earning vastly higher remuneration.

One group involved in commodity markets is Amalgamated Metal Corporation PLC of London (AMC). Its origins go back to the formation of the London Metal Exchange in the 19th Century, of which it was a founding member.

The AMC Group now distributes, trades and manufactures metals, metal products and chemicals. It has operations

in 12 countries worldwide and 26 subsidiaries in distribution and processing, manufacturing and trading.

One 100%-owned subsidiary, AMT Futures Ltd, trades in international financial futures and is a commodity broker and fund manager. It operates a number of investment funds that are open to the public and to institutional investors.

Until five years ago the fund accepted only subscriptions of US\$1 million-plus, but since then

Derivates fund has high risk – but high rewards too



Investing direct in stockmarkets is risky, and in derivatives it’s riskier. A derivatives fund is safer.

– Photo by EPA/Everett Kennedy Brown

Readers would be more than justified in wondering how the total derivatives market could reach such a stupefying size. The answer is simple: demand.

this has been reduced to US\$ 10,000.

This is not because AMT is exactly desperate for new investors, but more because the whole industry has moved to include the “retail investor”.

To return to our topic of commodities investment, AMT runs the IQS Fund, which invests in the futures markets for coffee, cotton, sugar, wheat, soybeans and soybean oil; a variety of currencies; crude oil and natural gas; copper and gold; and interest rates on 30-year US Treasury Bonds.

The fund is volatile but has been extremely profitable. Its worst period was after 9/11, not because of property destruction but because a huge number of American futures traders had

their offices in the World Trade Center. After the attack, the exchange had to move to temporary offices in New Jersey, initially trading for only two hours a day, such was the loss of life.

However, normal trading resumed shortly thereafter and the IQS Fund continues to rise. The fund managers have the ability to invest in long or short positions – in other words, to profit from rising or falling situations.

Where a rising trend is believed to be evident, the fund simply stays invested and lives through day-to-day corrections and volatility.

The returns have justified the risk. Over the past 10 years the fund has achieved growth of more than 2,000% for investors, a staggering return. In 2005

alone, it more than doubled investors’ holdings. Half of that gain came from Hurricane Katrina – a clear case of clouds with silver linings.

AMT is authorized and regulated by Britain’s Financial Services Authority and is accepted by all the leading offshore insurance companies.

It is not for widows, orphans or those of a nervous disposition, but it should form a small percentage of any serious investor’s portfolio.

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



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Stunning to watch was Ericsson, the 60-foot Volvo ocean racer that came third in the Racing class.
- Photo courtesy www.shufen.net

Poor turnout for Langkawi regatta

LANGKAWI: Only 33 yachts, down from an expected 50 boats, turned out for the Royal Langkawi International Regatta 2006 (RLIR), held off the Malaysian island from February 11-17.

The poor turnout was predicted in early February by Tony Knight of the Ao Chalong Yacht Club, who blamed the organizers for moving the event forward, leaving Thailand-based crews too little time to prepare after the Phang Nga Bay Regatta.

In addition, the Rebek Champagne Run, the annual overnight race from Phuket to Langkawi, previously held on the eve of the RLIR, had been canceled, for the same reason.

Conditions were marked by light winds, giving Malaysian crews and RLIR regulars a local-knowledge advantage.

Troy Yaw and Ray Roberts teamed up aboard *Ulumulu* to win the Racing class. As this year's winner of the Prime Minister's Challenge Trophy – the top prize in the regatta – Yaw, Roberts and crew are off on an all-expenses-paid trip to Valencia, Spain, where the 32nd America's Cup will be contested in 2007, to meet America's Cup contenders

BMW Oracle Racing and to visit the team's base.

Captain Malik Sulaiman and his Royal Malaysian Navy crew on *Zurah* finished second overall on 11 points, ahead of Thomas Blixt's V60 *Ericsson* (13 points), currently touring the Asian yachting circuit, but better suited for stronger winds.

David Lindahl's *La Samudra* won every race against Keith Garry's *Beaux Espirits* to win the Premier class.

In the Sports Boats class, *KDP II*, another Royal Malaysian Navy entry, took top honors with a series tally of five points. *Sail in Asia* team, led by Mathew Rickard, finished second overall with seven points, while *Motor Net* came third on nine points.

Phuket resident Mia Gillow on *Minx* scored straight wins to the IRC 1 class with a perfect score of four points. Stewart Crowe on *Cinders* came second with nine points, and Looi Sing Hoe's *Gapurna Mas Ayu II* finished third on 11 points.

Roger Kingdon's *Moto Inzi* blitzed the Multihull Racing class, amassing a winning series tally of just three points. Kazuo Kobayashi and his all-Japanese crew

sailed well on *Chameleon* to finished second with seven points, while Larry Pollock's *Running Cloud* finished third on eight.

The Ocean Performance Multihull class was a much closer affair with *Moto Inzi* winning the class with five points, *Chameleon* finishing on six points, and Henry Kaye on *The Sting* taking third place with seven points.

Visiting Koreans in convincing victory

PHUKET CITY: South Korea's Hallelujah Football Club maintained its perfect record against Thai sides with a 7-2 drubbing of Phuket in a match played at Surakul Stadium on February 16.

Hallelujah FC Head Coach Lee Young Moo told the *Gazette* that although the team has been coming to Thailand for about 16 years, it was the first time they have ever played Phuket.

"I was impressed that they really came out hard in the first half and tried to win," he said.

He added, however, that a lack of strength on the part of some Phuket players and an absence of teamwork overall accounted for the lopsided final tally.

"But I think the Phuket players have good basic skills. If they practice more with a professional coach, they will be an excellent team," he added.

The Phuket side consisted of players who compete in the Southern Division of the new Thai League.

Hallelujah FC, founded in 1980 by a Christian missionary and now competing in the K2 League, South Korea's second



Surprised by Phuket's efforts: Hallelujah FC coach Lee Young Moo.

division, won matches against Satun and Krabi before their showdown with Phuket.

BCIS stun Island CC; Patong move to top spot

KOH KAEW: Kamala Beer Garden were five players short at the start of the match against Patong CC on February 18.

Their stand-in captain, Ray Muller, decided to bat after winning the toss. They were soon in trouble against the swing bowling of Nimit and the medium pace of Turner and found themselves at 16 for three after just five overs.

This brought Peter Davison to the crease and he led a recovery with support from Terry Connell (17 runs) and Marcus Berry.

Davison was the last man out, having made a fine 34 and taken his side to an unlikely total of 90 runs.

The bowling duties had been spread around the Patong side, with Nimit returning the best figures of 3 for 10 in six overs.

Patong, not having a huge

task, made light work of the run chase. Showing good technique, Wesley Turner made an impressive 22 not out. Ian Henry made 22 and Raju Seemant thrashed 37 runs, including 4 fours and 3 sixes to take his side to victory inside 20 overs.

Muller bowled a tidy spell of 8 overs 1 for 18, but in the end KBG just hadn't scored enough runs.

DEMOLISHED

The following day, the BCIS versus Island CC clash had all the makings of an exciting match, with ICC at the top of the table and BCIS having shown impressive form in recent matches.

Unfortunately, the scorers were hardly troubled. BCIS won the toss and chose to field. Nifty Catts then proceeded to demolish the strong ICC batting line up

with an unbelievable spell of seam bowling.

Wickets tumbled at an alarming rate and ICC were skittled out for just 22 runs, Catts finishing with impressive figures of 7 for 9 in six overs.

He was well supported by Millward's 2 for 12 in five overs, along with some athletic BCIS fielding.

With just 22 runs between them and victory, BCIS were in confident mood.

However, the ICC side became very excited when Diwan and Tannu sent the two star BCIS batsmen, Roddy Meyer and Andy Millward, back to the pavilion with ducks.

There were mutterings of "cricket's a funny old game" around the pavilion, but Dennis Bacon took control and steered his side to an easy victory with 16 not out including a huge six to win the game.

Both matches were played at the British Curriculum International School.

Results: BCIS CC: 15 points, ICC: 1 point. Patong CC 16 points, KBG CC 2 points.

League Table: 1. Patong CC, played 4, won 3, 57 points; 2. Island CC, played 4, won 3, 50 points; 3. BCIS CC, played 4, won 2, 43 points; 4. KBG CC, played 4, won 0, 12 points.



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Iron Birdman calls for charity sponsorship

PHUKET: Les Bird, Phuket's resident ironman athlete, is competing in this year's Ironman Australia Triathlon at Port Macquarie in New South Wales on April 2, and has issued a plea for sponsors to back him to raise money for charity.

All sponsor donations will go to the Maesai Childlife Foundation in Chiang Rai, he explained.

Mr Bird hopes to complete the grueling race, comprising a 3.8-kilometer swim, a 180-km cycle race and a 42.2-km run, in less than 14 hours.

"I hope to raise 500,000 baht, and I am working closely with Childlife on how this would be allocated. Any money donated will go to support Childlife," said Mr Bird.

"The Maesai Childlife Foundation is a Thai non-government organization that helps children who

have been subjected to, or who are at risk of child labor, human trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation. It cares for all children in need, regardless of ethnicity, nationality or religion.

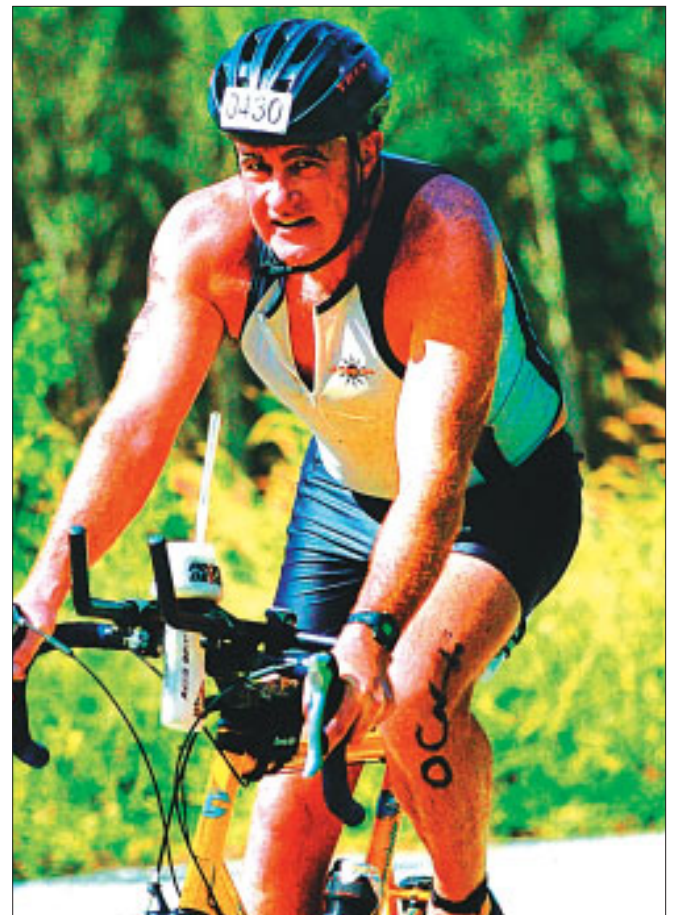
"Most of the children receiving care from Childlife have been displaced from their homes in northern Thailand as a result of Thai-Burmese cross-border conflicts. They have been subjected to, or are in danger of, human rights abuses, forced labor, and other physical abuse as a result of the fighting," he explained.

Mr Bird said that he will be paying all costs associated with taking part in the Ironman Australia competition. "When you make a contribution, please indicate that you are doing so in support of 'Ironman Triathlon'," he added. "That way we

can track your donation and can inform you later of the results."

Mr Bird has a solid record of using sporting events as fund-raisers. In 2004, running in the Gold Coast Marathon, also in Australia, he raised 450,000 baht for Phuket's Life Home Foundation, which cares for children and mothers affected by Aids, and last year he raised a significant amount for the Phuket Tsunami Recovery Fund by taking part in the New Zealand Ironman Triathlon.

To make a sponsor pledge, email Mr Bird at: lesbird@loxinfo.co.th. For more information on the Maesai Childlife Foundation or to make a direct donation, see www.childlifemaesai.org. For more information about the Ironman Australia Triathlon, see www.ironmanoz.com



Les Bird in action. He hopes to raise 500,000 baht.



Shock and horror as Amigos lose beer leg

PATONG: All Valentine's Day matches in the Patong Darts League, apart from Didi's walk-over win against the now defunct Winchester team, ended in 5-4 nailbiters.

Amigos remain in first place after notching up a 5-4 win on the road, but league secretary Steen checked out the beer leg to salvage a point for hosts Queen Mary. It was Amigos' first loss in a beer leg this season.

In the romantic confines of the Dog's Bollocks Bar, Aussie Vince hit the winning x3 in the decider to give Piccadilly their fifth straight win.

February 14 results: Queen Mary*

4 Amigos 5; Dog's Bollocks* 4; Piccadilly 5; Valhalla 5; OffShore* 4; Two Black Sheep* 5; The Boss Bar 4; Shakers 4; Coyote Bar* 5; Didi's* 9; Winchester 0 (walk over). (*=Winner of the beer leg.)

Standings: 1. Amigos (19 points.); 2. Didi's (18); 3. Piccadilly (17); 4. Queen Mary (16); 5. Valhalla (15); 6. Dog's Bollocks (14); 7. OffShore (13); 8.= Shakers, Coyote (11); 10. Two Black Sheep (6); 11. The Boss Bar (3); 12. Winchester (1).

February 28 fixtures: Queen Mary v Valhalla; Winchester v Coyote Bar; Two Black Sheep v Didi's; Piccadilly v Amigos; The Boss Bar v Shakers; OffShore v Dog's Bollocks. (Home teams first.)

SCREAMING FOR ATTENTION

Among the world's top jet-skiers to compete in the 2006 Jet Ski Thailand Championship races in Patong on March 4 and 5 will be Japanese rider Hajime Isahai, in the 1200cc Pro Seat Division. Expected to give him a run for his money is Thailand's top rider Chaowalit Kuajaroon. There will be racing in 14 categories, including three professional divisions.

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Home of the Week

Surin Beach

This week's Home of the Week is the former showhome at Baan Thai Surin, with all construction, fittings and finishings completed to exceptional standard, and outstanding views of Bang Tao Bay stretching out to the Andaman Sea from every aspect of the house.

VANTAGE POINT

The impressive driveway leads to a two-car garage and a gated entrance, bordered by flowers and a lotus pond.

Across the wooden bridge, with a lion fountain on each side, over the 20x5-meter infinity-edge swimming pool with sandwash deck and in-pool bar, are the large poolside sala and the changing rooms adjoining the main pavilion.

To the left of the pool is the dining pavilion, with a marble floor and a black, compressed bamboo table large enough to host a dinner party for 14, with panoramic views of the Andaman Sea.

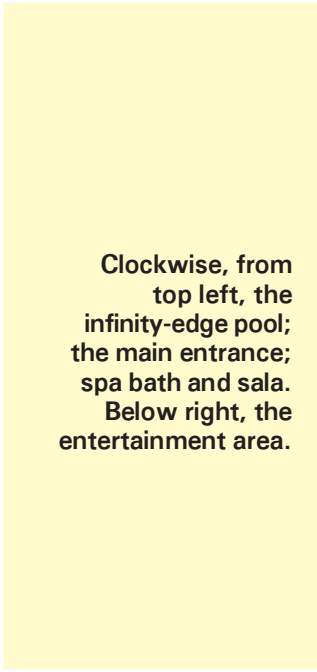
The Western-style kitchen in the dining pavilion comes with high-standard fittings and appliances, including granite worktops, large fridge-freezer with built-in ice maker, dishwasher, African slate floor and built-in mahogany-stain cupboards.

The island cooking unit has a Teka cooker with both electric hot plates and gas rings, large convection oven and extractor hood, and sea views can be enjoyed through the kitchen windows.

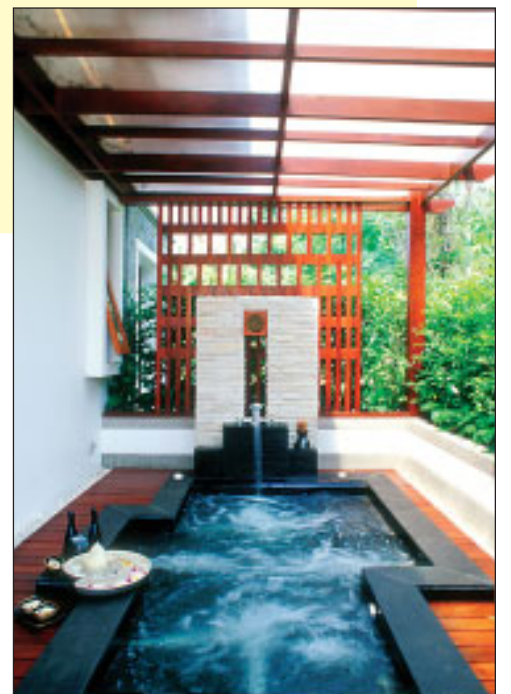
To the rear of the kitchen is a two-story office or study area with two lines for broadband Internet access. Again, there are exceptional views.

Alongside the dining pavilion is the entertainment pavilion, featuring a massive TV and the central control for independently adjusting the volume of music being piped to different areas of the house.

A covered granite veranda



Clockwise, from top left, the infinity-edge pool; the main entrance; spa bath and sala. Below right, the entertainment area.



leads to the master bedroom in its separate pavilion, again with outstanding views.

At the end of the bedroom's en-suite bathroom, with built-in wardrobes and views across the coconut palms in the landscaped gardens below, is a massage bench and Jacuzzi surrounded by an orchid garden.

On the level below, opposite the utility room and maid's quarters, is the first of three large guest suites with an en-suite bathroom on its own veranda, with sunken bath and sunset views across the palms – but here seen while sitting in the bath.

Beyond the first guest suite is the main bedroom on this level,

with two more large guest suites beyond that could be combined for use as a large family room. All suites have en-suite bathrooms, with showers, "his-and-her" areas each with its own sink, outdoor sunken baths and dressing rooms finished to five-star quality.

Below is yet another level, with large, independent living quarters with separate access, bathroom with "his-and-her" areas and adjoining open-plan bathroom complete with shutter doors and indoor garden.

The large, covered enter-



tainment area on this lower level includes a bar and cooking facilities, and a barbecue area that leads to gardens and a large sala.

The villa, comprising 2,200 square meters of living space on a 3,000-sqm plot, is available with Chanote title at 92 million baht.

For more information, contact Gary Holmes & Associates. Tel: 0-4-0568420. Fax: 076-383897. Email: sales@garysholmes-associates.com Website: www.garysholmes-associates.com

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Above, the beach next to the site of The Village on Coconut Island. Right, the roofs of the homes are designed to echo the shape of a longtail boat.



Life by the bay

Andrew Howard, Commercial Director of the 2.5-billion-baht development The Village on Coconut Island said that the “self-contained development” on Koh Maphrao will not have a typical housing estate atmosphere.

“Basically, the project will have the feeling of a holiday destination,” said Mr Howard, adding, “It will have a lot of amenities in terms of sporting facilities including a tennis court, a fitness center and a spa.

“It will also offer water-sports equipment and berths for vessels and ‘dry-storage’ space for as many as 60 powerboats of up to 10 meters in length.”

The development, which comprises 148 villas, as well as shops, a restaurant, bar and a children’s club, is being built on a 72-rai site at the northern tip of the tranquil island.

Part of the concept, explained Mr Howard, is that purchasers of the properties – which are split into three styles – will find that the island “offers peace and exclusivity, as well as ready access to Phang Nga Bay, at least for those with their own boat.”

There will be 62 Type A units, each with an internal living area of 120 square meters, plus 85sqm of terraces and decking on plots ranging from 300 to 600 sqm. Each will have one or two bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, a kitchen, living and dining areas as well as a pool. Prices start at US\$350,000 (about 14 million baht).

There will also be 62 Type B units. These properties will have an internal area of 210sqm and external space of 120sqm on plots of 600 to 1,200sqm. These homes will have the same amenities as the Type A, but with two or three bedrooms. Prices start at US\$550,000 (22 million baht).

The internal area of the 24 Type C units will be 310sqm plus external living area of a further 170sqm. These houses will each sit on a plot of between 1,100 and 1,600 sqm (1 rai). They will have four or five bedrooms, and are priced at US\$750,000 (30 million baht) upward.

The design is described as “contemporary Thai” with the roof fashioned to resemble an upturned longtail boat.

Interior design will feature wood prominently – floors, for

example, will be of *maka* – and, Mr Howard added, emphasis has been placed on using traditional materials for a traditional look, but with modern facilities such as European-style bathrooms and granite kitchen surfaces.

The site will have its own well and Koh Kaew Tambon Administration Organization is expected to bring mains power to Koh Maphrao soon, once a budget for this has been finalized.

Mr Howard said that he is looking for customers who wish to enjoy year-round or extended holidays in a self-contained development, with an added investment return from rental.” We expect high rental returns for purchasers.”

Construction of the properties, being developed by Chrysalis Estates Ltd, is due to begin in April this year, with 50 homes being built each year.

For more information, contact Mr Howard at Tel: 076-239724 or 07-8888082. Email: info@thevillage-coconutisland.com, andrew@chrysalisestates.com, or andrew@thevillage-coconutisland.com or visit www.thevillage-coconutisland.com

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Luck in your living room



A laughing Buddha statue invites happiness in all aspects of life. This one is from China House.



Beckoning cat statues vary in color depending on their purpose. This purple cat, from RQ House, helps make wishes come true.



Happily ever after: China House also stocks special statues for wedding gifts.

Having a little bit of luck certainly doesn't hurt – just ask any billionaire. According to Chinese custom, it certainly doesn't hurt to have a few lucky charms around the house to invite good fortune.

If you decide to have lucky

ornaments dotted about the abode, there is no reason why they shouldn't be attractive as well as lucky.

That is where Phuket native Wanchai Saetiew, owner of China House, in Phuket City, can help. He imports "lucky"

ornaments from Shanghai. "All our products are ideal gifts for anyone opening a new office, moving house, for a new year, a birthday or a wedding," said K. Wanchai.

The range of statues to choose from at the store is im-

pressive. K. Wanchai also has a range of wall hangings bearing inscriptions of good luck, with prices ranging from 150 baht to 10,000 baht.

"For those who believe, 70% of business success is due to the owner's acumen and 30% is luck. This is not wishful thinking, it is faith," K. Wanchai says.

A Happy or Laughing Buddha invites happiness in all aspects of life, but according to Chinese beliefs, some good luck omens need to be of a specific color to invite a specific type of luck.

A lucky cat ornament, for example, has to be blue to invite good health, purple to help wishes come true, pink to invite luck in love, yellow to bring prosperity, and orange to bring luck while traveling.

Other icons of good luck include the classic *Hok Lok Siew*, a triumvirate of Chinese Gods who invoke long life and help wishes come true, and *Phi Sia*, a lion with features of other animals which, in combination, guard against ill luck and at the same time boost prosperity.

RQ House, on the second floor of Ocean Shopping Mall in Phuket City, sells similar wares, though with a much more modern flair.

Owner Salinee Pamornsapakul says that her best-sellers are statues of pigs, cats and dogs, ranging in prices from 250 to 1,000 baht.

"Dogs and pigs sold well this year because they look so cute and most of our customers are teenagers or tourists shopping in the area," she said.

K. Salinee explained that the dogs invoke good luck, while the pig invites a life of abundance.

And if the good luck you were looking for doesn't

present itself, don't worry, at least your home will look better for it.



A lucky pig from RQ House will invite a life of abundance

• *China House*, 1st floor, *Index Living Mall*, on the bypass road, *Phuket City*. Open daily 10 am-9 pm. Call K. Wanchai at Tel: 01-0777069.

• *RQ House*, 2nd floor, *Ocean Shopping Mall*, on *Tilok-Uthit 2 Rd*, *Phuket City*. Open daily 10 am-10 pm. Call K. Salinee at Tel: 07-2829733.

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Germans. You've got to love them. I know many *Gazette* readers happen to be from that delightful country, so I have to be quite careful what I say here.

But I do have a slight problem with Germans: their words are too long. I did a quick search online about this, and it would appear that there isn't a "longest word" in German, as there's literally no limit to how long they can be. This can get a little confusing.

If Germans felt the urge to do something amusing (they are of course renowned for their sense of humor) they could invent words that looked completely insane on paper, and they'd still be grammatically correct. Apparently *Oberammergaueralpenkräuterdelikatessenfrühstückskäse* has something to do with breakfast meats.

The Danube steamship company, once the world's largest riverboat operator, is now no longer afloat. Perhaps this has something to do with the company's tongue-twisting name: *Donaudampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft*. With a triple F. Seriously.

Even numbers aren't immune from this fascination with ever-lengthening words in the German language: *Neunhundertneunundneunzigtausendneunhundertneunundneunzig* is a number just under a million, I'm told. At least, I hope that's what this means, and that I'm not spouting German profanities.

Flower names can be just as confusing – they're not always as easy as they could be. A rose is always a rose, a daisy is a daisy, and an orchid is always an orchid. Well actually, sometimes it's not, and that's the point. Why do things as simple as flowers have to have names that are often so complicated?

The cream-fruit plant, or Indian rubber vine, even has two names in Latin: *Strophanthus gratus* and *Roupellia grata*. For the purposes of this article, let's settle on *Strophanthus*.

I've asked several Thai



The cream-fruit plant has lots of names and lots of uses, from curing 'unmentionable' medical conditions to slaying the neighbors.

AFRICAN INTERLOPER

friends of mine, who all think they know a bit about gardening in Thailand, and they struggle to provide a definitive name for the plant in Thai.

So far, we've come up with *daeg peenang*, *yaem peenang* and *nang yeng peenang* – the only thing all three have in common is a reference to the Malaysian island somewhere in the dim and distant history of the plant.

This is doing my head in. Are Germans as confused as I am? Originally, the cream-fruit plant is from far afield. Its ancestral home is tropical West Africa, and was brought to this part of the world by early explorers.

Its glossy, evergreen leaves are thick and leathery, and it bears terminal clusters of waxy, bell-shaped, purple-and-white flowers that look a bit like begonias but

are fragrant at night, with a smell similar to some roses.

This smell kind of reminds me of the rather inexpensive perfume sported by early girlfriends, way back in my teens. Not exactly Chanel No 5, but fragrant enough. Back then it didn't really matter.

The flowers that follow the deep purple buds that initially appear are a particularly weird shape. Five petals surround a big hole in the center about an inch deep, with a long pollen-covered stamen in the middle.

The open central part is surrounded by a dozen or so vertical "spikes", in contrast to the delicate petals around them. Even after they're cut, these flowers last several days and are great for floral displays.

The folk healers of tropical

West Africa have found a number of uses for the cream-fruit plant. They make a rubbing compound from its leaves to reduce fevers; they mash the leaves to treat various skin problems and wounds and make medicines from the leaves to treat various "unmentionable" problems.

The seed of the *Strophanthus* yields a substance known as *ouabain*. The most common use for this in its native land was as a source of arrow poison, both for hunting and for forays against neighboring villages.

It was this use that initially brought the plant to the attention of Western science. In 1861 the explorer David Livingstone observed native people hunting with a poison that had been made from the seed of a closely related plant (a vine called *Strophanthus*

kombe, if you care) and he later reported the substance as an apparent cardiac stimulant.

This led to the investigation of many similar species, of which *Strophanthus gratus* turned out to be the most valuable. Africans who later heard that the English were using the poison from the seeds in a pure state as a medicine concluded that the English were a completely mad race. They may still be right to this day.

As it belongs to the same family as the allamanda, the internal sap of the plant is fairly poisonous. Just before I sat down to write this, I picked a cream-fruit flower from my garden (the one in the picture), and it seemed quite keen to secrete as much sap on my skin as it could.

If you do handle this plant, make sure that you wear gloves, or at least avoid touching the sap.

Given the right conditions, *Strophanthus gratus* grows like crazy. The one in my garden started life as a tiny pot plant, but once it became established in a shady corner, it went mental, making its way into the eaves of my house and showing no signs of slowing down.

This plant adores the sun, too. It will be content in the shade, but the more sunlight it gets, the more flowers it will produce. More flowers also appear when it's drier, so it shouldn't be over-watered.

To propagate the cream-fruit plant, all you need is to snip off a woody cutting and stick it in some moist compost. It will take root and grow fairly quickly.

The cream-fruit plant is another smelly plant that looks good too. What's it really called though? Never mind. Just be sure to be careful if you decide to use it to treat "unmentionable" problems.

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?
 Email Bloomin' Bert at: bloominbert@hotmail.com

The Beach Boulevard. A smart move in Paradise

These luxury boutique hotel-style guesthouses are designed specifically for sale to discerning investors looking for a property with potential in the Kata Beach area. The project is being developed and managed by a professional team with more than 10 years' experience.

The Beach Boulevard is located just 300 meters from the Club Med, a few minutes away from the popular Kata Beach, and is a short drive from Phuket City (30 minutes) and Phuket International Airport (50 minutes).

Each three-story hotel compound has 12 bedrooms and 13 bathrooms. Facilities include air conditioning and water heaters.

The suites in each boutique hotel all come fully equipped with a kitchen, dining room, living room and luxurious office area. High-quality materials have been used throughout.

Situated On New Kata Bypass Road

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A special modern-style home with some local touches. The overall design emphasizes simplicity. An L-shaped set allows more space for family activities or sports. Glass walls make it possible to view all areas of the house. A private swimming pool (with salt water) has therapeutic benefits. It is located in an elevated area adjoining the unit and can be viewed from two master bedrooms on the second floor. To increase privacy, the garage is specially designed to stand in a spot that partly covers the pool.

All this combines to make The Beach Pool Villa one of the best-designed two-story homes with a pool in the Kata area.

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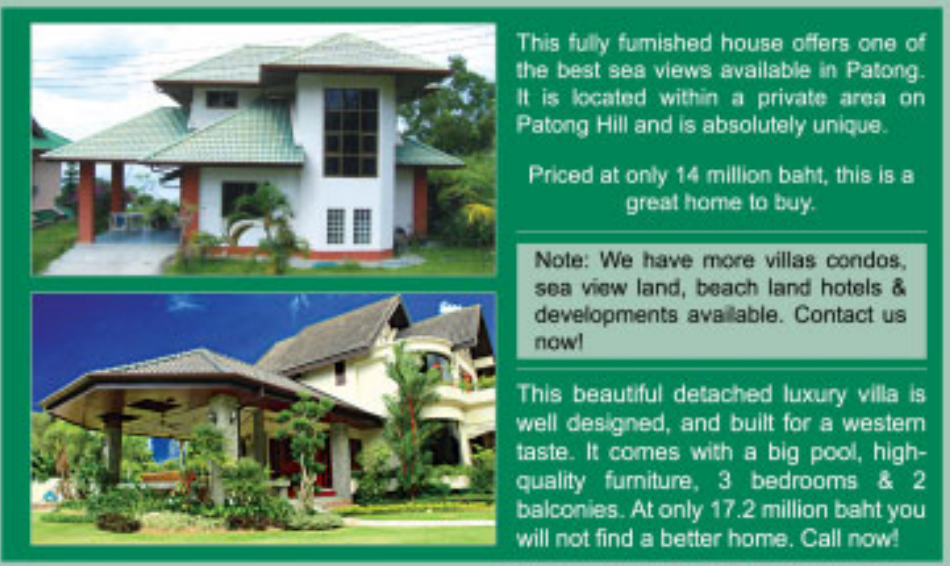
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 for sale. House and land for sale just 2 minutes from beautiful Nai Thon Beach. Price is a negotiable 3.2 million baht. Please call for more info. Tel: 07-2811995.

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 1.5 million baht per rai. Amphur Thalung. Serious inquiries only! Call Tammy for English (09-5211749) or Somporn for Thai (07-284-9676). Email: tammyb@nustyle.net

NICE CHEAP LAND
 in Mai Khao. 1,281sqm and 853sqm for 1.5 million and 1 million only. Chanote. Please contact for more details. Tel: 077-231976, 04-7168042. Email: notime@mail.com

BEACH LAND, 38 RAI
 10 million baht per rai. Sakul Beach. Serious inquiries only! Call Tammy for English (09-5211749) or Somporn for Thai (07-2849676). Email: tammyb@nustyle.net

LAND FOR SALE
 Flat land 1 rai in Pa Khlok, 1.5km to the sea. Price 1.2 million baht. Tel: 09-8731019.

LAND FOR SALE
 2.5 rai at Loch Palm, good location and view. Tel: 06-279-0837, 01-7196998.

LARGE HOME,
 land and pool. 4-5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 4 aircons, 30sqm kitchen, furniture, security, 4 shaded areas, 1.25 rai w/landscaping, good water, 5mx10m saltwater pool. Priced to sell at 14.5 million baht. Please contact for info. Tel: 076-388525, 06-893-4235. Email: dlj1002000@yahoo.com

MAI KAO LAST PLOT
 15 rai with 200 meters of beach front. Asking 6 million baht per rai. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

www.knightfrankphuket.com Knight Frank

Laguna Villa for long-term rent "live the view"

- spacious 4 bedroom residences available for long-term rent
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Laguna Townhome Resale (Phase 1) "guaranteed lifestyle investment"

- 3 bedrooms, maid's quarters, private pool, sala, outstanding furniture and furnishings
- located in Laguna's most sought-after phase, high demand for rental, excellent lifestyle choice, secure location
- purchase includes all Laguna benefits and privileges
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Stylish Laguna Residences (Resale) "grand master"

- 4 bedrooms airy residence, wide panoramic fairway views
- versatile separate living
- cool pool and outdoor dining sala
- spacious open-plan design
- oversized land plot, perfect for families
- large balconies, great breezes.

Laguna land plot "give me land, lots of land under starry skies above"

- chanote title
- approx 1,640 sqm land plot
- golf course frontage
- design your own spacious villa
- cool, northeasterly aspect
- only minutes to the beach, restaurants, golf pro shop and Laguna hotels
- owner moving overseas, priced to sell.



"Laguna Village" Hong Kong Exhibition 23 - 26 March 2006
 in the offices of Knight Frank Hong Kong 29th floor, "Office Tower" Convention Plaza, 1 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong.
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Property Gazette

NEW HOUSES IN PATONG



3 new connected deluxe houses on Patong hillside, Soi Thamdee, for sale. Ground floor: Garage and separate one-room apartment with toilet. Second floor: 2 bedrooms and bath, balcony. Third floor: living room with balcony, built-in kitchen and dining room, toilet. Fourth floor: big roof garden with Jacuzzi. Usable area: 200sqm; freehold land: 100sqm. Price: 6.2 million baht. (US\$155,000). Please contact K. Peter. Tel: 01-8928526. For details please see our website at: www.phuket-besthomes.com

1 RAI, MISSION HILLS

1 rai close to Mission Hills. 2 million baht. Tel: 076-239-432, 01-0879237. Email: crob58@inbox.com

12 RAI BEACHFRONT

at Khao Pilai. 5.5 million baht per rai. Please email for further details and photos. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

PATONG SEAVIEW

2.5 rai. Ideal for residential or hotel project. Located on Sai Nam Yen Rd. 5 million baht per rai. Can also sell upper plot of 1.5 rai, or lower plots already divided into 10 separate land titles. Tel: 05-8882022. Email: slees@slees.com For further details, please see our website at: www.slees.com

NEW HOUSE IN PATONG



Brand-new, deluxe house, with a swimming pool, on a Patong hillside, on Soi Maneesi. 2 floors, modern Thai-style architecture, completely furnished, ready to live in. Ground floor: big living room, Western-style kitchen and dining room; guest toilet. Second floor: big master bedroom and bath with Jacuzzi, 2 bedrooms and a separate bathroom. Each room has an air conditioner and a balcony. Living area: 200sqm; freehold land 150sqm. Price: 8.5 million baht. (US\$210,000). Please contact K. Peter at Tel: 01-8928526 or visit our website at: www.phuket-besthomes.com

37 RAI AT NAI THON

Sea view, 4.6 million baht per rai. Please email for more info. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

3-BEDROOM

4-bathroom home. Lovely house. Nicely landscaped and walled in for privacy. Beautiful pool. Marble floors, granite counters. Great location. 7.9 million baht. Tel: 01-286-4825. Email: mecromagnon@yahoo.com

PRA THONG ISLAND

Phang Nga Province. 48-rai plot with mangroves and beach frontage. 1 million baht per rai. Tel: 09-5944017.

RAWAI SHOP HOUSES



2 new, connected shop-houses in Rawai, on Wiset Rd are for sale. Ground floor: sales office, staff room, kitchen, dining room and toilet. Second floor: master bedroom with separate bath and 2 separate bedrooms with connecting bath. Third floor: living room and en-suite bedroom. Living area 200sqm, freehold land: 100sqm. Price 4.5 million baht. (US\$113,000). Please contact K. Peter at Tel: 01-8928526 or visit: www.phuket-besthomes.com

LAND NEAR LAGUNA

800sqm, good road, electricity, water, near main road and Laguna, hill view. Market price is around 2,500 baht/sqm; asking price: 2 million baht. Tel: 01-0780014. Email: andamanproject@myway.com

RAWAI-CHALONG

9 rai for 1.6 million baht per rai, perfect for development. Tel: 07-2747470.

SEAVIEW LAND 1 RAI

4.2 million baht per rai, road, 3-phase electricity. Chanote title. Tel: 06-2670898.

NAI HARN - 1 RAI

Walking distance to the beach. 6 million baht. Few plots left in Nai Harn. Please contact for more details. Tel: 01-5376866.

COURTHOUSE HOMES



2 detached bungalows at Loch Palm, set in a safe, secure complex with swimming pool, terraces and gardens. Prices 5.9 to 7.5 million baht. Tel: 076-345081, 01-9241447. Email: mail@villa.co.th

HOUSE IN PATONG



A 1-bedroom, timber house on Nanai Rd, overlooking Patong. Quiet, private, good garden and views. Good potential. Price: 3 million baht. Tel: 07-0444387. Email: cosmicrhythms@yahoo.co.uk

FREEHOLD FLAT



Phuket Palace Condominium, 300m from beach. Fully furnished, 1 or 2 bedrooms, 1 or 2 bathrooms, plus kitchen, living room. 120sqm. Asking 5.9 million baht. Tel: 09-8719739.

PANORAMA SEA VIEW

62 rai in Rawai for sale. All plots have sea view. For sale at 370 million baht. Tel: 04-8374429. Email: sales@chokechainproperty.com

LAND FOR SALE PHUKET

Cherng Talay, 2km from Laguna, 292sq wah (approx 1,170sqm). Excellent area with large new homes surrounding. Freshwater bore with excellent water. I am forced to sell this land, so offers considered. Market value currently is 2,500 baht per sqm (approx 2.9 million baht). Please call for full details. Tel: 09-6491753 (English), 01-0820266 (Thai) Phuket.

STUNING SEA VIEW

Rawai. 3 rai, 4.9 million baht per rai. 3-phase electricity. Please call for more info. Tel: 07-8938747.

HOUSE & LAND

for sale. House and land for sale just 2 minutes from beautiful Nai Thon Beach. Price is a negotiable 3.2 million baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 07-2811995.

Central Patong Land Lease and Building For Sale!

The premises are situated in a prime location immediately adjacent to the luxurious new Tailife Spa on Soi Sunset, close to Bangla Road. Consents have been obtained in principle to extend the existing 3-floor structure up to 5 levels, providing a rare opportunity to develop 1000m² - 1600m² of quality hotel accommodation in central Patong. Other uses may be considered. The owners are offering the lease and building for sale or will consider a joint venture development.

Contact Mike at MJ Associates for details. Telephone 06 277 6698

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A small, luxury development of 28 two- and three-bedroom seaview apartments of 136-188sqm each, overlooking Layan Beach. Spectacular views. Also has a 250sqm pool and a clubhouse. Only 8 million baht.



Outstanding modern Thai luxury villas on gated residential community on West Coast, near Laguna Golf. Own swimming pools and salas. Also few remaining smaller villas with shared pools. Not to be missed! From just 5.9 to 22.8 million baht.

New Developments - Villas - Land - Workpermits Insurance (licensed by Allianz)

Tel: 07-2671920 (English) or 06-6865998 (German and Dutch). www.tropical-homes.net



BESIDE WATER CHALONG BAY

5.5 rai beside water. Asking 8.5 million per rai; good for expensive homes or apartments. Please contact Andy. Tel: 07-2747470. Email: nsupin@yahoo.com

4 RAI OF LAND CHALONG BAY

Near yacht club. Asking 2.7 million baht per rai. Has road, electricity and water supply. Please contact Andy. Tel: 07-2747470. Email: nsupin@yahoo.com

LAND IN RAWAI

1, 2, 4, 9 rai. 4.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 04-8374429. Email: sales@chokechainproperty.com

LAND IN RAWAI

for quick sale. 3 rai in good location for 3.3 million baht per rai. Tel: 04-8374429. Email: sales@chokechainproperty.com

LAND IN RAWAI

7.75 rai, good location, 50% sea view: 38 million baht. Tel: 04-8374429. Email: sales@chokechainproperty.com

HALF RAI RAWAI

Near beach, perfect spot. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 07-8938747.

BEAUTIFUL PATONG

condo. Phuket Palace private condo: 10th floor, 50 sqm, seaviews, fully upgraded, fantastic pool, comes ready with company. No purchase taxes, perfect for investment or home. Only 2.5 million baht. Tel: 06-9453450. Email: coltat1962@yahoo.com

CHALONG

Nice location. 1,200sqm. 2.3 million baht. Chanote title. Tel: 06-2670898.

3 RAI, FULL SEA VIEW

Chalong, amazing spot, 3 million baht per rai. Please call for more info. Tel: 06-2670898.

SALE OR RENT

4 bungalows, 1 restaurant at Bang Tao Beach. Please contact. Tel: 01-8946686.

1 RAI - CHALONG

500m from beach. 4.5 million baht. Nice for houses, Chanote title. Tel: 01-5376866.

KATA SEA VIEW

400sqm, good plot for house, top location. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 09-6525664.

WATERFRONT VILLA

Secluded location. Views of Phang Nga Bay. Luxury accommodation. Offers over 1.2 million euros. Tel: 04-0541360. Email: yes-siam@hotmail.com

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Property Gazette

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 - Sea views & pleasant breeze
 - Freehold with Chanote title
 - Peaceful & convenient location
- Baht 33 Million**



- 17 rai of seaview land in Krabi
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 - Freehold ownership
- Baht 55 Million**

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NAI HARN PRIVATE HOUSE



3 minutes' drive to the beach, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, fully furnished, carport, shared pool, tropical garden, beautiful view, quiet area, 160sqm. Condition as new. For sale at 5.9 million baht. Tel: 07-2660228 (Helene), 01-7192467 (Tuk).

HOUSE FOR SALE IN VILLA 5



Phuket Villa 5, 90sqm, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a large living area and kitchen, 3 air conditioners, built-in wardrobe, 5-piece rattan lounge suite and a phone line. Only 5 minutes to Central Phuket Festival and only 15 minutes to Rawai. For sale by owner. Asking 4.5 million baht (negotiable). No agents! Tel: 04-1868531, 01-5988725. Email: s_oranut@hotmail.com

SURIN LUXURY

New Thai-Western-style villa for 18.9 million baht. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, spa, all appliances 32m pool set in tropical gardens. Quality construction, beautiful setting. Private sale. Tel: 07-282-7576. Email: pea@hk.super.net

BIG HOUSE FOR SALE

5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 5 aircons area about 1 rai with big garden, car park price 15 million baht. Please contact for info. Tel: 01-5698345. julie_phuket@hotmail.com

THE BEST, NO JOKE, THE BEST



The old song goes: "they paved paradise and put up a parking lot..." (Sound familiar? This is what Phuket is becoming.) We refuse to do this; our land is right beside a national park with the best sea view of Phang Nga Bay I have ever seen (considered by many to be one of the 7 wonders of the world). We are going to keep the park-like atmosphere, so no street lights and minimal paved roads. If you like giant original-growth trees behind you and Phang Nga Bay in all its wonder in front of you, call me. Chanote title, sea views. Starting at 3.8 million baht per rai. Also, flat land with some sea views available for 2.4 million baht per rai. Tel: 07-2747470. Email: nsupin@yahoo.com

HOUSE IN KATA



The house is located about 800 meters from Kata Beach, in a quiet safe area, with no traffic. 3 bedrooms, one with balcony. 2 bathrooms and 4 air conditioners, UBC and telephone line. Asking 3.8 million baht. Tel: 07-0297590 (English) 06-7612511 (Thai). Email: bjaco2@hotmail.com

LAND & HOUSE

Urgent sale. Completely renovated house. Baan Muntana: 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 5 air conditioners, fully equipped kitchen, Thai-style decor. 7.5 million baht or best offer. Please call for appointment. Tel: 076-225215. Email: eric@insurance-in-thailand.com

1.5 MILLION BAHT

Fully furnished house in quiet soi in Kathu, aircon, very clean. Chanote. Tel: 076-202446, 07-2786439. Email: pin@halo-products.com

BRAND-NEW

3-bedroom, unfurnished home for sale by the owner. Located in the Parichart project at Land & Houses Park. Total area: 96 sq wah. Single story, spacious garden, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 large aircons, cable TV, phone. Please contact for further information. Tel: 01-8227571. Email: faa@loxinfo.co.th

RAWAI, WITH SEA VIEW



704sqm with building plot, all island furniture included. Aircon, TV, 2 en-suite bedrooms with Jacuzzi. Returning to UK, so offers for quick sale. Please call for info. Tel: 076-388157, 01-9583513.

KAMALA HOUSE/ POOL

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Living area: 152sqm. Land size: 360sqm. Swimming pool, 2-car garage. One year old. Great area in Kamala. 5.1 million baht. Tel: 01-273-4212. Email: coasters@earthlink.net

Properties For Rent

CHALONG CIRCLE OFFICE SPACE



- A 4 x 4-meter unit (16sqm).
 - Outdoor area landscaped.
 - Parking spaces for staff and customers.
 - Air-conditioning included.
 - Front window and built-in shelves.
- Asking 7,000 baht a month per unit.
Contact Bee at
Tel: 01-0793012
(English)

HOUSE + BIG GARDEN

2 bedrooms with air conditioners, hot shower. Located in a quiet area at Palai Green, Chalong. Tel: 01-8924311.

NEW 2-BED HOUSE

Unfurnished house, big garden, quiet area, Muang Tong Soi 1, 3km to town, 2km to beach. 5,000 baht per month. Tel: 05-8855415.

MAI KHAO LAND

Cheap. Rent 2 rai at 7,000 baht a month for 30 years. Tel: 06-9769560. Email: webmaster@asia-tourservice.com

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CONTACT: 09-815-6746 (Mink)



NEW 2-STORY HOME

for rent. Very convenient location in Phuket City. Just 5 mins to Tesco-Lotus, Central, Bangkok Hospital Phuket. Unfurnished. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, front and back yards. 18,000 baht per month.

Please contact Ann at
01 868 7676

VILLA FOR RENT



275sqm living space, 3 bedrooms, 10m pool, 1,200 sqm of land. Fully furnished, Nai Harn. 70,000 baht per month. Please call for details. Tel: 07-8896074.

RAWAI HOUSE

for lease. Has 5- to 10-year lease. Asking 250,000 baht. Tel: 06-6865567. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

RAWAI CONDO 4 LEASE

Has 5- to 10-year lease. Asking 150,000 baht. Tel: 06-6865567. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

TROPICAL GARDEN

homes. 2 minutes from Chalong Pier. Houses with 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, phone, satellite TV and access to a big swimming pool. From 14,000 baht plus 2 months' deposit. Tel: 01-0808557. Email: info@no1visa.com

BUNGALOW FOR RENT

1 bedroom, quiet location, 7,000 baht a month for long-term rental. Tel: 06-2790837, 01-7196998.

9 RAI

Plot with a nice view - good for a resort, spa, etc - next to Pae Ma Nam, for long-term rent. Close to hospital, about 1.5km from Big C, Tesco-Lotus, and Central Festival. Tel: 01-8675084.

PATONG APARTMENT

Sea view, kitchen, cable TV, 10 mins to beach. 600 baht per day, 14,000 baht per month. Please contact for full details. Tel: 04-0514003. Email: capnard@excite.com

KARON H₂O FRONT

Luxurious condo, 1 bedroom 50m. from beach, 270-degree sea view. All brand-new Western appliances. Long-term rental only. Email: wawrx999@yahoo.com

KAMALA BEACHFRONT

Fully-furnished, 3-bedroom houses for rent. Long-term lease available. Aircon throughout. Swimming pool. 70,000 baht per month. Call Keith. Tel: 01-6777185.

KATA LUXURY APT

Fully-furnished, 2 bedrooms, huge terrace and garden, aircon, 2 bathrooms, parking, teak kitchen ensuite. Available March 1. Long-term preferred. Tel: 09-5926890.

NEW STUDIO SUITES

Chalong. Furnished serviced apartments. Roof-top spa, pool. Aircon, Wi-Fi, satellite TV, kitchenette, hot water shower, housekeeping. From 9,500 baht/month long term. Tel: 01-8938592, 06-282-6221. Email: sanerod@yahoo.com

BIG SHOPHOUSE

located in Soi Patong Resort, off Soi Bangla, the commercial hub of Patong Beach. Nearly 170 square meters on two open floors. Not suitable, as it is, for residential use. Tel: 076-340290. Email: paciugo89@yahoo.com

DETACHED HOUSE

Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 computers + ADSL Internet. 14,000 baht per month only. Not negotiable 20,000 deposit. Mar-Nov '06. Please call Tel: 01-5693768.

STUNNING SEA VIEW

New house overlooking Karon Beach. Quiet location, furnished, UBC, Internet, pool, aircon, garden. Long-term rent. Please call. Tel: 09-5938690 (German, English, French), 07-8100150 (Thai).

Property Gazette

Property Wanted



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Do you have adequate insurance? Because we have Phuket covered.

BUNGALOW/HOUSE wanted. in Karon. 2 or 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, long-term rent. If the house is nice and the price is ok, I will rent it for many years. Email: stig_zottele@hotmail.com

PATONG TOWER APT Looking to buy a 1- or 2-bedroom apartment in Patong Tower or other building close to Patong Beach. Please contact for more info. Email: muiheng.koh@ntlworld.com

Accommodation Available

ROOMS TO LET



Lake-view apartments in Kathu. Fully furnished with aircon, fridge, cable TV, hot water and car park. Standard room is 6,000 baht per month or 500 baht per day. Delux room is 8,500 baht per month or 700 baht per day. For more info. Tel: 076-202585, 09-1968449. Email: ketmaneeclayton61@hotmail.com

PATONG LUXURY apartments. Central Patong 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. For information and photos, Email: suites247@yahoo.com

PATONG APARTMENT Sea view, kitchen, cable TV, 10 mins to beach. 600 baht per day, 14,000 baht per month. Tel: 04-0514003. Email: capnard@excite.com

ROOMS IN PATONG Close to beach. Ground floor rooms with your own hot shower. 24hr security. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-342280, 01-9781956. Email: palm@phuket.ksc.co.th

KATA BEACH Southern Fried Rice, a brand-new guesthouse, 3 minutes walk from the beach, with seaview rooms, 2 balcony rooms facing the beach, wireless Internet, a pool and an excellent restaurant. All rooms have air conditioning, a minibar, cable TV, a safe and a king-sized bed. Tel: 01-8948446. For further details please see www.southernfriedrice.com

Accommodation Wanted

APARTMENT I'm a single American male looking for a quiet place in Phuket for less than 8,000 baht per month. I will arrive at the end of February and stay four months. Will consider any location but prefer something within 15-minute motorbike ride to Big C. Please contact via email at Email: npxm@hotmail.com

PHUKET SEAVIEW Apartments. Luxury apartments on a hillside in Patong, rooms of 82-200sqm, large terrace, kitchen, swimming pool. Affordable long-term rates. Tel: 076-296888. Fax: 076-297021. Email: contact@prince-edouard.com For further details, please see our website at: www.prince-edouard.com

PATONG CONDO Good room in Patong Condotel with "everything". 500 baht/night. Please contact. Tel: 01-8948446. Email: sfrkata@hotmail.com

APARTMENT OR VILLA Looking for villa or apartment in Patong, Karon, Kata or nearby. Should have 2 bedrooms, kitchen and, preferably, a living room. Needs to have Internet connection with at least ADSL. Prefer a Wi-Fi network. That the connection works properly is a HIGH priority. The stay is for March and April, and, if everything works well, May. Email: ekim9999@hotmail.com

WANT TO RENT 3-bedroom house or bungalow, fully furnished, with pool, from June 16-August 30, inclusive. Will pay up to 125,000 baht for the right property in Chalong, Rawai or Nai Harn areas. Tel: 151-648-2258. Fax: 151-6050806.

HOUSE, BUNGALOW or villa. 2 families are looking for a place to stay from June 29-July 20. Close to Nai Harn Beach and with a swimming pool. 1 or 2 bungalows or 1 house/villa, min 3 bedrooms. Please email: a.compen@chello.nl

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- Metal anti-corrosion
- UNI PH 7/120 cleaner
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Household Items

MOVING SALE! Quick sale required - moving to Hong Kong.

1. Sony 29" flat-screen TV. Bought for 15,000 baht; will accept around 10,000 (less than 1 year old).
2. Panasonic DVD home theater system. Paid 20,000 baht; will accept around 12,000.
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in Rawai. Looking for Thai women, 18-35 years of age, with fair English skills & computer knowledge: 1 full-time, 1 part-time. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-288808, 01-8924282. Email: rudi542001@yahoo.de

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To assist farang in small restaurant. Must speak reasonable English. Good salary. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-294-330. Email: sgb.fishnchips@gmail.com

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Tel: 01-8924282.
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Windsurfer - complete - 150 liters and not too old. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-385-801, 07-2760141. Email: kat_stockleclark@yahoo.co.uk

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II. ARTIST

- ▶ Graphic-design skills and knowledge of Adobe Illustrator, PageMaker, Photoshop and Dreamweaver required
- ▶ Freehand drawing and web-design skills a plus
- ▶ Responsible, hard working, attention to detail
- ▶ Able to work in a fast-paced environment and meet deadlines
- ▶ Good communication skills, team player
- ▶ English speaker

III. ASSISTANT ACCOUNTANT

- ▶ Thai, age 23 up
- ▶ Bachelor's degree or higher (in any field)
- ▶ Reasonable command of written and spoken English
- ▶ Must have a car driver's license
- ▶ Accounting experience would be an advantage, but the Gazette is willing to provide training for a novice with good interpersonal skills and unquestioned honesty

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Wipa Putkeaw, Human Resources, by email, fax or post to:

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367/2 Yaowarat Rd., T. Taladyai, A. Muang, Phuket 83000
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Role: airport customer service staff

Qualifications:

- university diploma
- English speaking
- Experience working in an airport a plus

Interested persons should contact. Tel: 09-9266115. Email: baekjb@koreanair.co.kr

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GENERAL MANAGER

a Phuket-based hotel. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-239-820, 01-7373720. Fax: 076-239828. Email: hr@jivaresort.com

ASIA-PACIFIC TROPICAL HOMES

The region's most widely distributed lifestyle magazine, is produced from Phuket. It is looking for an Editorial Researcher with strong Internet skills. Thai national with good English. Email: nevjob@aapress.net See our website at: www.aapress.net for company details.

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SPA MANAGER Spa Manager – with 3-5 years' experience – urgently required. Must be confident and able to manage and motivate staff. Good earning potential. Please send your CV or contact for more information. Tel: 076-396205. Email: gm@islandiagroup.com



DIVING ONLINE, the leading Internet provider of discounted dive packages, is seeking for qualified staff to join its team. Applications are being taken for:

1 Experienced Web Developer

- Male/female
- Thai national
- Good communication skills and command of spoken & written English
- Experience in software design and development
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- Work experience in SEO a plus
- Have good structured design and programming techniques

1 Booking Officer

- Male/female
- Thai national
- Excellent communication skills & good command of spoken and written English
- Good computer skills
- Experience in the diving industry

Applications stating qualifications and experience, as well as expected remuneration should be sent to: info@save-money-diving.com



URGENTLY REQUIRE

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| • Executive Assistant Manager | 1 position |
| • Executive Housekeeping | 1 position |
| • Receptionist | 3 positions |
| • Demi Chef De Partie | 1 position |
| • Cook | 2 positions |
| • Hostess | 1 position |
| • Bar Captain | 1 position |
| • Waiter/Waitress | 5 positions |
| • Bell Boy | 1 position |
| • Florist | 1 position |
| • Therapist | 2 positions |

Interested candidates are invited to send their resumé with a recent photograph to:

Peach Hill Hotel & Resort Thailand
2 Laemsai Rd., Kata Beach, Karon, Phuket 83100 Thailand
Tel: 076-333291, 076-284211 Fax: 076-330 895
Email: personnel@peach-hill.com

WANTED: STORE MANAGER, BAKER

Khun Woody's Bakery and the Sandwich Shoppe in Patong are growing fast, with a new production facility and another shop coming on-stream next month. We need experienced Thai nationals who are committed to outstanding service and great food. We're looking for a baker, preferably with high-quality bread experience. We're also looking for an experienced store manager – a customer-oriented leader with good English skills. We offer excellent pay, good bonus, solid training, and a chance to grow professionally with the "Khun Woody" family.

Tel: 076-340066.

Email: woody@khunwoody.com

MANGOSTEEN TEAM

Due to high occupancy, we are seeking to fill the following positions. Only qualified, experienced staff wanted.

Office

- Accounting
- Storekeeper
- Cost Controller
- Income

F&B

- Chef de Partie
- Waitresses
- Pool Attendant
- Stewards

Housekeeping

- Room maids

Tel: 076-289223. Fax: 076-289389. Email: myfuture@mangosteen-phuket.com

WAITRESS

needed to work 6 days a week in a trendy Internet cafe and juice bar in Phuket City. Good salary. Tel: 076-223210 or 04-0143121.

OPERATION MANAGER

The Mangosteen Resort & Spa, the luxury 5-star boutique resort in Rawai, is looking for an Operations Manager for our young and motivated team. Enjoy working in a successful resort, setting the highest service standards. Thai nationals preferred. Please send CV by email or call for interview. Tel: 076-289223. Fax: 076-289389. Email: hajo@mangosteen-phuket.com

F/O MANAGER

The Mangosteen Resort & Spa, the 5-star luxury boutique resort in Rawai, is looking for a Front Office manager. Enjoy working with our motivated team, setting the highest service standards. Please send CV by email or call for interview. Tel: 076-289223. Fax: 076-289389. Email: hajo@mangosteen-phuket.com

CHIEF ENGINEER

The Mangosteen Resort & Spa, the 5-star boutique resort in Rawai, is looking for a talented young Chief Engineer. The resort has been built to very high Western-quality standards and there are several expansion plans. Thai nationals only. Please send CV by email or call. Tel: 076-289223. Fax: 076-289389. Email: hajo@mangosteen-phuket.com

Employment Wanted

GERMAN WOMAN/ MANAGEMENT

German woman, 33, is looking for a job on Phuket. 11 years' experience in fashion/textile industry, HR management and training of sales staff, and motivating/managing branch managers. I speak German and English. Email: muenchen1@gmx.net

CIVIL ENGINEER

Thai, 48, experienced as Project Manager in condominium, housing projects for project owner-contractor, seeks position as Project or Construction Manager (permanent or contract basis). Languages: Thai, English, German (fluent). Please call Tel: 01-8031780 for details.

MANAGER

Six years in Patong. Will manage your bar/restaurant while you have holiday or are overseas. Call Bob now! Tel: 01-3672366.

HOUSEKEEPER

Work experience in a luxury villa, now seeking a job. I can speak English and have computer skills. Email: bijoraken@yahoo.com

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles For Sale

NOTHING TO WEAR?
New ladies' clothes, sizes S-XXL European brands and sizes. Lots of XL pants, skirts and tops. Sale will be held at Perfection Beauty Salon on Thursday, March 2, noon to 8 pm. Tel: 01-5396106. Email: liessol@phuket.ksc.co.th

BOSE STEREO
system. Lifestyle 3 (1 base speaker with amp) and 2 cubes with CD/tuner. Bought 4 years ago for 66,000 baht; will sell for 20,000. Great for bar - big sound. Tel: 09-909-1917. Email: porter20022@yahoo.com

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and car seat. Baby cot made of wood for baby up to 5 years old and Maxi Cosi car seat for child up to 13kg. Good condition and safe. 8,500 baht. Tel: 076-323486, 09-9710550. Fax: 076-323486. Email: vcu_a11@yahoo.com

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player. MZ-R410 Walkman. Good condition. 3,500 baht. Tel: 07-8896758. Email: ukdj007bond@yahoo.co.uk

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New body board, used 3-4 times. Paid 4,500 baht; will sell for 2,500. Tel: 06-120-6934. Email: go2spoon@yahoo.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
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018954763 (English) or
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