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Billionaire's killer caught

KATHU: After almost six months of investigation, police arrested a hired gunman who confessed to the murder of billionaire businesswoman Komkai Kositkoon, a partner in the Jintana Plaza complex in Patong.

After his arrest at a construction site in Krabi on the morning of December 20, 39-year-old Aroon Chanma of Phattalung was brought in for a re-enactment of the crime, which took place in the Tung Tong area of Kathu.

The victim's husband Araya Kositkul, who was in the car at the time and suffered gunshot wounds, got a good look at the shooter. He was able to provide police with enough evidence to make an accurate composite sketch that was distributed throughout the South and eventually led to the arrest of Aroon.

Handcuffed and wearing a black cap with a white skull-and-crossbones emblem, Mr Aroon confessed to working with two other men to shoot Mrs Komkai.

Aroon told police he was working as a construction foreman in Krabi when he was approached by a man who asked him to carry out the hit with two other men, one driver and a man who identified the target.

After Aroon accepted, he was taken to the area and provided with a 9mm pistol. He carried out the hit with the two other men on July 18, firing 42 shots into the car before returning the gun to its owner. He then split up with his two accomplices, went



Fearing that confessed assassin Aroon might himself become a target of a silence killing, police are keeping him under very tight security.

to Patong Beach, where he caught a speedboat and returned to Krabi.

Aroon said he did not know who the mastermind was, but said the three-man hit squad had been deceived because they were only paid 150,000 baht each, when they were promised 5 million baht in total. The other two gang members are still at large.

Aroon used to work as a volunteer security officer in the southern border provinces, he told police. The contract killing was

his third and he planned to use the proceeds from it to support his children, born by his current and former wife, he said.

In late August, Phuket Provincial Police Commissioner Apirak Hongtong described the investigation as "problematic" because Mrs Komkai was involved in at least 10 lawsuits.

At last report, police took Aroon in a helicopter to point out members of a six-strong gang hiding out in a mountain-top retreat in a jungle in Phattalung.

He identified the six suspects as Sophon "Pon" Rattana, Wirote "Plob" Inthasra, Aphichoke "Ake" Inthasra; Nun Duaylek, Wirichai "Yo" Juan-on and a man identified as "Sin", last name unknown.

Mr Sophon and Mr Wirote are kamnan (tambon chiefs) in Phattalung's Khao Chaison District. Aroon, now a key witness for the state, is being kept under tight police security, Maj Gen Apirak said.

Sources: *Siangtai, City News*

Road safety campaign launched

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Governor Preecha Ruangjan presided over a ceremony at Phuket Community Hall on the afternoon of December 23 to help promote road safety.

The event was sponsored

by Esso, and organized by the Phuket Provincial Office of Disaster Prevention Mitigation (Phuket PDPM). The event included free crash helmet giveaways for riders. The young riders were encouraged not only to

wear a helmet, but also to fasten its strap and drive with the headlights turned on - even in daytime. The vast majority of road accident fatalities in Thailand involve young men riding motorcycles without helmets.



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Emergency services team up for training

PHUKET: A large-scale disaster training exercise was carried out at Phuket International Airport last week under the banner "Loss is gain if we can learn from it".

The mock evacuation exercise involved the joint participation of a number of different departments and emergency services, including the Disaster Medical Assistant Team (DMAT), the Staging Care Unit (SCU) and Air Transportation.

DMAT is a mobile medical unit that can be rapidly deployed in states of emergency and disaster situations. With a response time of 6 to 24hrs, a DMAT team can provide medical assistance for up to 72 hours at a disaster scene, treating between 100 to 250 people at a time.

The Staging Care Unit is an on-the-ground monitoring center set up at the scene of a disaster. Its function includes the registration and collation of information about the injured, the provision of medical beds and equipment, and liaison with air transportation services in evacuating the injured to hospitals.

Last week's simulation enacted a mock disaster situation, an earthquake registering 6.8 on the Richter scale. In this rehearsal exercise, a report was issued by the Royal Thai Navy Seismic Research Station in Chiang Mai at 7:30am. As a first response, The

National Disaster Warning Center sent a report to Phuket and other affected provinces, whereupon the governor set up a Disaster Warning Center on the island to assist people with advice and information. In a real disaster, details would then be broadcast on Thai TV, radio stations and mobile phones via SMS alerts.

An order was then issued for all people in the areas at risk to evacuate to designated safe areas, where they were accounted for and the number of 'missing persons' recorded.

The Royal Navy was enlisted to search for and rescue those washed out to sea. DMAT and SCU teams were dispatched by the Royal Thai Air force in C-130 Hercules military transport planes and air-dropped, where necessary, into the worst affected areas. There, a Command Unit was set up to tend to the injured and report the on-the-ground status back to the Disaster Warning Center. The "injured" were evacuated by Royal Navy boats and helicopters, and transported to medical centers outside the danger areas, where they were treated or transferred by C-130 planes to other medical facilities.

Following this 'real-life' enactment of a disaster response operation, Chodnarin Koedsom, Chief of the Phuket Provincial



Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, shared his thoughts with the *Phuket Gazette*.

"This is the first training exercise where we have been able to practise long-distance medical transportation procedures that would be required in the event of an emergency. In Phuket we now have 22 teams made up of doctors and nurses from the Ministry of Health, volunteers from local communities as well as staff from the Local Rescue Foundation. We have two C-130 Hercules transport planes on standby, ready to respond to emergency situations.

"Phuket is now well prepared to respond to any disaster situation in the Andaman Sea, he concluded.

To Be Number 1 in agriculture



PHUKET: The Center of Juvenile Observation and Protection in Phuket (CJOPP) and the Children and Youth Promotion Foundation (CYPF) invited Vice Governor Smith Palawatvichai to the opening ceremony of the Youth Farmland project on December 17. The 'To Be Number 1' project aims to educate 41 children, 39 boys and two girls, between the ages of 15 and 17 in agricultural methods and will be overseen by 40 supervisors whose role it will be to look after and encourage the teenagers.

The CJOPP and the CYPF

have developed an area five meters wide and 180 meters long behind their training center and have converted it into a banana tree plantation with a population of 150 trees. Throughout the duration of the Farmland project, the children will be divided up into 10 groups and given the responsibility of looking after the welfare and growth of the trees for a whole year. In addition to the banana tree project, the center also offers children the opportunity to develop additional skills, including organic vegetable cultivation and park design.

Phuket selected for 4G launch

PHUKET: Phuket has been chosen by CAT Telecom as one of three pilot locations for the roll-out of 4G services next year. CAT Telecom will battle against private telecom operators in the bidding for the 3G spectrum licence as part of next year's road map to develop both 3G and 4G services.

The state agency's president, Phisal Jorpocha-udom, said CAT was eager to secure the 2.1GHz license to develop the 3G service as well as the Long Term Evolution (LTE) technology or 4G technology service.

"It's our road map of wireless business next year. We plan to launch the 4G service only in Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Phuket," he said.

The National Telecommunications Commission intends to award the 2.1 GHz licenses by the middle of next year. CAT wireless businesses include code division multiple access (CDMA) 2000 1-x cellular service in 51

provinces. Hutchison-CAT Wireless Multimedia, a CAT joint venture with Hong Kong giant Hutchison Telecom, provides the cellular service on a separate CDMA network in 25 provinces. Phisal said he would ask Hutchison to upgrade its network in the 25 provinces to the evolution-data optimized (EV-DO) system to boost its data-transmission speed. CAT's network in 51 provinces already uses the EV-DO high-speed data-transmission technology.

CAT and Hutchison Telecom are in talks to merge the two networks. Phisal said CAT was interested in forging a partnership with its own private mobile-phone concessions True Move and DTAC in many areas.

In a separate development, the board of directors of state telecom agencies reportedly plan to tender their resignations to pave the way for the appointment of a new board by the new government.

Thungthong police announce latest arrests

PHUKET / KATHU: On December 22 at 11 am, Thungthong police held a press conference to announce the arrests of a num-

ber of suspects for crimes including firearms possession, assault and manslaughter.

On December 19 at around 9.30 pm Thungthong police arrested a 49 year-old man in possession of a .45 calibre automatic pistol and several bullets at a checkpoint on Phra Baramed Rd in Kathu.

The man has been charged with possession of a firearm without a license and possession of a firearm in a public place.

On December 20 at around 10 pm, police arrested a 26-year-old man in possession of a .03 caliber automatic pistol and a

magazine containing several bullets at a checkpoint on Soi Bangthong in Kathu.

The man was also charged with possession of a firearm without a license and possession of a firearm in a public place.

At around 2.30 am on December 21 in Chalong, police arrested two teenagers, one aged 17, one aged 18, for manslaughter and assault.

The two accused and two victims were allegedly drinking together when an argument broke out, resulting in the stabbing of the victims, one of whom later died in hospital.



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Central Festival Phuket gets Garuda



PHUKET: On December 15 Central Festival Phuket held a ceremony to attach a Royal Garuda sculpture to its storefront.

The emblem is bestowed on prominent businesses in Thailand by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej in recognition of their prestige and contribution to communities. To receive the award is considered a great honor.

The Central Department Store chain as a whole received the Royal Garuda emblem from HM The King on December 9 2005, and was the first department store to receive the award.

The Garuda is a large mythical bird-like creature that features in both Hindu and Buddhist cosmology and has been used in Thailand as a symbol of the royal family since the Ayutthaya period.

Phuket governor visits Naka Yai Island

PA KHLOK: On December 19, Phuket Governor Preecha Ruangjan visited Naka Yai Island in the district of Pa Khlok.

Plans are afoot to turn the island into a popular tourist destination, potentially improving its infrastructure and resulting in better education and higher incomes for the indigenous inhabitants.

Naka Yai covers an area of approximately 1,000 rai and is currently home to just one small village. However, the beauty of the island has captured the imagination of developers, which has led to the construction of three resorts. It seems likely that in the not-too-distant future, Naka Yai will be transformed from being a traditional, sleepy Thai fishing village into an exclusive holiday get-away destination.

There are also plans to develop a range of properties that will provide the island with long-



Governor Preecha meets the children of Naka Yai Island's school.

term visitors.

Following his visit to the island, the governor outlined three areas that warranted special attention.

Of immediate concern was the provision of electricity. Engineers will soon travel to the island to oversee the erection of electricity pylons that will supply power to the island.

The second area of concern was the availability of fresh water. Gov Preecha made it clear that a solution will be found to supply not just the resorts, but the island as a whole.

The final issue was the education of the island's children. Making an impassioned statement, the governor asserted that everyone in Thailand deserves a chance to study and receive an education and that he would do whatever he could to provide better facilities for the island's teach-

ers and students.

In drawing up the list of desired improvements, Gov Preecha called upon the locals of the island to not simply rely on help from the government, but to work with officials and contribute towards making Naka Yai a place that they can be proud of.

It is hoped that the construction of the resorts will lead to opportunities for the local people to enjoy a substantial rise in income and consequently a better standard of life.

The island developers plan to construct a walkway above the mangroves of Naka Yai in a bid to offer tourists a chance to explore the island whilst preserving its natural beauty and ecosystems.

A plan to construct a center where tourists can learn more about Thai-Muslim culture is also under discussion.

No such thing as a free lunch

SRISOONTHORN: Thalang Police arrested two men on December 17 for passing counterfeit banknotes at local shops and restaurants.

The suspects were later identified as 24-year-old Nikorn Raksapol from Nakhon Sri Thammarat and Pattipong Nueanan, 31, from Chiang Rai.

The pair were apprehended at about 11 pm in the Fah Sai Restaurant in tambon Srisoonthorn Village 5, following an investigation by uniformed and plain-clothed officers.

Local merchants reported that people had been using fake 1,000 baht banknotes to make small purchases, then walking away with large amounts of real cash as change.

A formal complaint was filed earlier that evening by the owner of the Khrua Phan Laan Restaurant located at Srisoonthorn Village 1, where a man matching Nikorn's description had paid for a meal with one of the bogus bills.

Police found Nikorn enjoying a meal at the Fah Sai restaurant with Mr Pattipong.

The pair were arrested after they attempted to pay the bill with another phony banknote. Mr



The fake notes all had the same serial number.

Pattipong was also found in possession of another counterfeit 1,000 baht note.

All three notes collected as evidence in the case had the exact same serial number.

Nikorn and Pattipong will get to enjoy more free meals in the days ahead, courtesy of the Thalang Police, as the pair will remain in custody at the station for the next 12 days while their case is forwarded to the Phuket Provincial Prosecutor's office.

Thailand has stiff anti-counterfeiting laws, carrying a minimum 10-year prison sentence for

those convicted of producing counterfeit currency. Those found knowingly passing counterfeit notes face incarceration ranging from one to 15 years plus a fine of 2,000 to 20,000 baht.

Police said merchants can spot fake banknotes by comparing them with real ones and looking for differences in size, color, paper quality and the image of HM The King.

Other tell-tale signs include identical serial numbers on different notes, a poor quality watermark and the absence of a reflective silver band.

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Looking back at 2008

It's a tired cliché, but the years do seem to go faster with every year you age. Christmas has come and gone and the end of 2008 is now upon us. It has been a mixed year for Phuket, and indeed for Thailand as a nation. As a region we've seen politicians come and go and people making a stand for democracy. International sportsmen and women have competed for glory and we have witnessed the physical and inner beauty of the human race through a plethora of Miss Universe contenders and numerous charity events respectively. Here the *Gazette* takes a moment to look back at a number of stories that have made the news in Phuket in 2008.

Just three days into the new year, the Kingdom of Thailand mourned the loss of HRH Princess Galyani Vadhana who passed away, following a long battle with cancer, at the age of 84. HRH Galyani was the elder sister of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Following the announcement of her death, large crowds journeyed to the hospital to pay their respects.

HRH Galyani had worked tirelessly for the development of Thailand's education system as well as undertaking a large amount of charity work across the Kingdom.

Mourners in Phuket were able to pay their respects to HRH Galyani by signing an official book of condolences that was placed outside the Phuket Governor's Office for a fortnight following her passing.

In July, three rough-toothed dolphins were rescued and treated after they were found on the mudflats at Ao Makham. The rescue came just nine days after a pod of false killer whales beached at Koh Racha.

The dolphins were discovered by local fishermen who, with the help of some compassionate locals, did their utmost to keep the beloved mammals' heads and skin wet. The concerned carers contacted the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) who administered basic treatment to the dolphins before helping them back into the sea.

In August, the closure of Phuket International Airport by People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) demonstrators, for almost two full days, cost Phuket an estimated 250 million baht in lost revenue per day. Perhaps realizing the harm being inflicted on Phuket's all-important tourism industry, local PAD leaders later held a press conference to deny that "real" PAD members were involved in the closure and that those responsible were "infiltrators" bent on making the PAD look bad.



Tourists stranded in Phuket by the airport closures in Bangkok late in the year kill time with a game of chess.

"Phuket's PAD protests were never staged in a way that would harm or negatively affect people's everyday lives," a press statement read at the time.

Despite or perhaps because of all the obstacles, Phuket's tourism industry is renowned for its resilience. A report released recently by local consultancy C9 Hotelworks revealed that some 30 new hotels, resorts and other places of accommodation will open on the island by 2011.

November saw a number of the world's top female beach volleyball players arrive in Phuket to contest the Swatch FIVB Volleyball tournament.

The tournament, in its third year in Phuket, has become one of the most popular events on the island, particularly with the guys. The Open tournament had a local flavor to it this year as Thai pairing Orradee Phupanee and Aunchalee Yunsuwan, both aged just 16, lined up alongside beach volleyball's big guns. To the disappointment of the local partisan crowd, the Thai pairing were eliminated in the early stages of the competition. The final was won by the American pairing of Jennifer Ross and April Boss, who came from a set down to claim victory by two sets to one.

April 9 will go down as a dark day in Phuket's history as

54 illegal Burmese immigrants died after suffocating inside a seafood delivery truck on route to Phuket from Ranong. Of the 121 people packed inside the truck barely half escaped with their lives. One of the victims was a girl just eight years old. The survivors were questioned about the event and then deported.

It was subsequently announced that the relatives of the victims would receive 35,000 baht compensation for each relative lost in the awful tragedy. The harrowing events of April 9 led to a change in trafficking laws which had previously focused solely on protecting women and children from being sold into prostitution.

The driver, despite ignoring cries for help, was sentenced to just six years in prison after his sentence was reduced for supplying evidence concerning human trafficking.

In November, Phuket got a makeover with the arrival of 36 Miss France contestants. The 36 finalists plus an entourage of 59 stayed at the Indigo Pearl resort after being flown into Phuket on a special XL Airways flight direct from the City of Lights. The French Misses took part in a number of photo shoots for the competition, which was held on December 6, but also found time to

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Well-known restaurateur Tom McNamara passed away on November 23 after a battle with prostate cancer. His legacy lives on with the Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation, which he founded after the 2004 tsunami.

take a trip to the Phuket Sunshine Village Foundation where, proving that beauty is more than skin deep, they donated Christmas presents to children who had been orphaned by the 2004 tsunami.

Finally, after a topsy-turvy year in Phuket politics, Preecha Ruangjan took office as the new governor of Phuket. Gov Preecha replaced the departing Niran Kalayanamit, who returned to Bangkok to take a post at the Interior Ministry's Department of Provincial Administration.

Upon his arrival in the province, Gov Preecha paid his respects to the statue of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), before accepting flowers from Phuket officials.

Gov Preecha told members of the local press that he would do his best to develop Phuket's economy in a sustainable way, focusing on high-end and eco-friendly tourism, and that he looked forward to meeting and serving the needs of the island's large expatriate population.

In his time in office so far, Gov Preecha has been prodigiously active in getting out around the island and meeting the people of Phuket.



Monks take part in HM King Bhumiphol Adulyadej's birthday celebration, coinciding with the official completion of the colossal Mingkongkol Buddha image in the Nakkerd Hills.



The Thai Dive Association, For Sea Foundation and other organizations successfully sank the Coral Reef Squadron off Bang Tao Bay, creating a new dive tourism attraction that is expected to take some of the pressure off natural dive sites.

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Mr Abhisit's first day in office was "Big Cleaning Day" at Government House, the traditional seat of Thai government that has recently been returned to the public domain after a four-month occupation by members of the People's Alliance for Democracy, better known as PAD.

Protesters 'must face legal action'

BANGKOK: On his first day at Government House on December 19, newly-installed prime minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said the protesters who had besieged government offices and blockaded Bangkok's two commercial airports should be held legally accountable for their actions.

"With every incident that has happened, we must uphold the rule of law," Abhisit told reporters.

The People's Alliance for Democracy protesters included Democrat MP Somkiat Pongpaiboon, who is one of the PAD leaders.

PM Abhisit said he had told Mr Somkiat not to use his position as an MP to try to gain immunity.

It had been almost four months since a prime minister – Samak Sundaravej – was able to work at Government House. His successor Somchai Wongsawat was unable to do so, due to the PAD's occupation of the compound.

In an attempt to oust the People Power Party government, the PAD occupied Government House for almost 100 days between August and December.

Human trafficking still big business in the capital

BANGKOK: Activist group the Mirror Foundation has identified five spots in Bangkok used by human traffickers to lure victims, including one spot right in front of City Hall.

Ekalak Lhumchomkhae, head of the Mirror Foundation's anti-trafficking unit, said the group was releasing the information in the run-up to the January 11 gubernatorial election in the capital so that the new mayor can take immediate action. Human trafficking has persisted in Bangkok for many decades, with many victims lured to work on fishing trawlers, he said.

Scouts station themselves at the Mor Chit bus terminal, Sanam Luang, Hua Lamphong train station, Wong Wian Yai roundabout and Rommaninart Park, which is opposite the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration office. Many migrants nap under the shade provided by trees there and at Sanam Luang while trying to find work.

The victims fall into the trap because the human traffickers claim they can offer good-paying jobs, Mr Ekalak said.

His foundation recently rescued a 14-year-old boy sold to a fishing trawler in Samut Prakan. Traffickers lured the boy from Hua Lamphong on May 27. Workers are reportedly sold to fishing boats at 10,000-30,000 baht per head, he added.

Mobile phone bill blues

BANGKOK: Billing errors for mobile-phone charges topped this year's list of the top-ten complaints filed with the Telecommunication Consumer Protection Institute, the agency has revealed.

Institute director Prawit Leesatapornwongsa said 252 consumers called the agency with complaints about bad service over the past year. Service quality was the second highest grievance on the list, at 24%.

Another 10% said mobile-

phone operators had violated their privacy by sending unwanted and annoying SMS messages.

Mr Prawit said 158 complaints had been resolved so far. Consumers should file law suits against mobile-phone operators if personal information has been sold to other companies for commercial purposes, he said.

Sourced from The Nation, Daily Xpress and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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Mass support to quell southern violence: PM

In a television interview on December 18, Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva said the escalating violence in the south of Thailand can no longer be contained by the military and the police alone. Acknowledging that the authorities in the troubled region don't have the resources to deal with the unrest, Mr Abhisit said the government intends to urgently address the crisis.

Mr Abhisit said he will designate an agency to ensure that justice and strategic co-ordination will prevail in the strife-ridden area.

The unrest will not end unless the government can win overwhelming popular support, something that can only be achieved by bringing about sus-

tainable development with respect for the identity, traditions and faith of the local people, he said.

Mr Abhisit later voiced concern that the Southern situation has the potential to deteriorate further, even though military and police forces have become increasingly effective in fighting terror attacks.

While Mr Abhisit is enjoying something of a honeymoon period, the fact that there is a new government in Bangkok seems to have made little difference to insurgents.

Two separate bombings in Pattani and Yala on the night of December 20 caused one fatality and left at least 12 people wounded.

The first exploded in front of a department store in Pattani at 6:10 pm, killing 35-year-old Suenee Wansulong and injuring her two young sons.

Four people were slightly injured when a bomb exploded in front of the Park View Hotel in downtown Yala about 20 minutes later. Police said the 15-kilogram bomb, which only partially exploded, could have caused much more damage if it had been better assembled.

Peaceful end to power struggle

CHUMPHON: Some 200 environmental activists held four Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) officials captive for around eight hours on December 17 to protest plans to build a coal-fired power plant in the Pathio District.

At around 4 pm the activists traveled to Wat Arawan in Tambon Chumkho, where 15 EGAT officials had gone to perform a merit-making ceremony. Eleven of the officials managed to escape, but the other four were surrounded.

Pathio District Chief Somsak Charoenphaitun went to the scene to try to bargain with the protesters, but they refused to release the EGAT staff.

Activist leader Thanathep Komsin, Chief of Tambon Chumkho Village 11, said the officials would not be released until the EGAT director came to Chumphon and promised not to build the power station.

Just after midnight the following day, the activists released the four officials after submitting two demands to the provincial governor.

Police seize weapons from politicians

NAKHON SRI THAMMARAT: During a police raid, authorities seized weapons and a bullet-proof vest from the homes of three local politicians. The seizures followed intelligence that two of them were building arsenals in preparation to launch attacks on each other.

Police in Nakhon Sri Thammarat have raided a number of houses of prominent local politicians recently to search for weapons.

Nakhon Sri Thammarat Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Sarawut Phiranon said on December 18 that he ordered officers to search a number of targets after intelligence indicated that weapons stockpiles were being accumulated.

All the seized weapons were government weapons held legally by their owners for keeping the peace in their constituencies, but police would hold them as a precaution to check if they had been used in any crimes, Gen Sarawut added.

The first check came at the house of Usa Ratmano, also known as "Kamnan Pan". Police discovered one .45 calibre pistol and two shotguns at the home of the tambon chief, located in Tambon Na San Village 3, Phra

Phrom District.

The next search was conducted at the home of Samrit Phongphrom, known as "Phu Yai Mit", the Chief (phooyai baan) of Village 6, Tambon Na San, where police found no evidence of any weapons. At the third target, the house of Decha "Kamnan Ohn" Khun-in of Tambon Thai Sa-mphao, also in Phra Phrom District, police found a shotgun and a bullet-proof vest. Mr Decha was subsequently charged with possession of a bulletproof vest without a license.

Mr Samrit came to national prominence during the Jatukham Ramathep amulet craze in 2006, when it was reported in the national press that he miraculously survived an attempt on his life by holding his amulet in his mouth.

According to reports, gunmen armed with automatic weapons opened fire on Mr Samrit at a funeral. Two bystanders were killed and three seriously injured, but Mr Samrit returned fire with his pistol until the attackers retreated.

The Thai press reported that four bullets ripped through his shirt, but left only bruises on his skin.

Gold shop robberies prompt security alert

SURAT THANI: Police have released a sketch of an armed robber who stole more than one million baht worth of gold from a shop in the Surat Thani Tesco Lotus shopping mall on December 16.

Police released the sketch of the suspect made after examining the CCTV tape from the Hang Thong Burapha gold shop, as well as from five other cameras inside the shopping centre.

The robber walked into Hang Thong Burapha at approximately 11 am and threatened the shop assistant with a pistol before snatching 20 five-baht weight gold necklaces and running outside where an accomplice was waiting on a motorcycle, police said.

Shop assistant Ankhana Bunsampankij, 43, said the robber was about 170cm tall and wearing jeans and a black jacket.

He had disguised himself with dark glasses and a cap, she added.

Other witnesses said that the man entered Tesco Lotus as soon as it opened at 9 am and wandered around outside the gold shop for two hours before going in and robbing it.

Surat Thani Provincial Governor Pracha Terat called on gold shops in the province to increase their security measures, adding that gold shop owners could not rely on the police alone.

The robbery was the second gold shop hold up in Surat Thani in the space of two weeks.

A similar heist on December 4 saw the robber escaping with 220 bahtweight (3.3 kilos) of gold.

Mr Pracha added that with the economy faltering, crime is likely to increase, so people should help the authorities.



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FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

KOH PHANGAN: Following an arson attack that gutted the previous treatment center, The Koh Phangan Animal Clinic (PAC), thanks to the support of the island's community, has commenced the rebuilding of its facility.

The clinic is run by volunteers and veterinarians who, with the help of donations, have been treating stray animals across the island since 2001. After several years of fundraising, the clinic finally reached completion and was fully operational before the building was destroyed by the fire several months ago.

Community kindness puts animal clinic back on track



GUTTED: An arson attack on Koh Phangan Animal Clinic destroyed the treatment center.

A vigorous public relations campaign, involving the eleven temples located on Koh Phangan, has raised awareness around the region of the organization's plight.

The PAC hopes that the support of the people of Surat Thani province will also serve as protection against those who sought to derail their efforts to protect the island's animals.

Police on Koh Phangan and

in Surat Thani led the investigation into the arson attack but, to date, no arrests have been made.

The PAC, taking matters into its own hands, publicly denounced the attack and gained the support of the community at large.

The group has also applied for status as a legal foundation, which will further aid the project's growth.

Heavy rains trigger landslide

SURAT THANI: Heavy rains in the Wipawadi district of Surat Thani caused the side of a hill to collapse, leaving hundreds of residents running for safety.

Over 300 people were said to have fled the landslide that caused severe damage within the area. No injuries were reported following the incident.

Officials, as a precautionary measure, had issued a warning that the large amounts of rain that had fallen in the province could lead to mudslides.

Residents in other areas of the Wipawadi district and around Surat Thani had to be evacuated due to a variety of hazardous conditions including damage to roads and raging floodwaters.

Businessman survives shooting

KOH SAMUI: A businessman was shot outside a hotel in the Paillem area of the island on December 3. Pinit Manasud, 51, a construction contractor and owner of a Toyota dealership on the island, received gunshot wounds to the neck and left shoulder. Mr Manasud was later rushed to Bandon International Hospital where he was treated for his injuries.

Investigations are still ongoing but, to date, no arrests have been made. Police believe the attempt may have been motivated by resentment from rival business owners in the construction industry.

Koh Phangan moves upmarket

KOH PHANGAN: In a move distancing itself from the Full Moon Party scene, Koh Phangan is celebrating the grand opening of one of the most luxurious resorts to have graced its shores.

With the recent development of the majestic Rasananda resort, Koh Phangan has raised the bar for the island's high-end market. Officials on the island hope that the move towards a higher grade of tourist will improve the reputation of the famous "party island".

Located in the idyllic bay of Tong Nai Pan Noi, the Rasananda is the sister hotel at the Buri Rasa Resort on Koh Samui. Guests arriving on Samui will be transferred to a luxury beach house located in Ban Rak, where they will be greeted and escorted to the Koh Phangan Rasananda by a 37-foot luxury cruiser.

Comprising 44 villas and suites, the resort was designed with the utmost quality in mind. Chief Executive Officer Harold Wentworth explained, "Rasananda is a chic, luxury resort, blending the comforts of traditional luxury with a touch of raw Thailand to create a retreat suitable for the most discerning traveler."

Facilities include five-star dining in addition to an impressive 500-bottle champagne and wine lounge. A "glass" pool bar, signature spa, library, gourmet shop and a fitness facility including a sea-view yoga studio offer holiday-makers ways aplenty to indulge themselves.

Donsak awarded funding to develop tourist attractions

DONSAK: Officials have confirmed that funding has been allocated for the development of the area. Members of the district are meeting with Surat Thani officials to devise a plan that would install services and amenities as well as a promotional package designed to inform travelers of the area's attractions with a view to it becoming a tourist destination in its own right.

The area, best known for the ferry port used by tourists traveling to the islands of the Gulf, offers travelers beautiful beaches and picturesque surroundings. Area officials are hoping that steps will be taken to promote the region as a tourist destination and not just a transit hub.

SINGING WORKSHOPS AT BIS!

BIS are pleased to announce the return of Joshua Alamu in January, when he will be delivering singing workshops to both children and adults.

Joshua is a world class singing coach and is also a coach and judge for many talent shows in the UK including Dance X, Pop Idol and the X-factor. Some of his students include Will Young, Westlife, Daniel Beddingfield, All Saints and Joss Stone whom he has trained vocally and in performance skills prior to their tours.

Please check out <http://www.euphonicproductions.com/index.php> for a full background and further information. Joshua is also a songwriter for Chrysalis records and currently spends his time between Hollywood and London.

Workshops run for one full day and the options available are:

Children's singing workshop – aged 7-11.

Teenage singing workshop – aged 12-18.

Intermediate singing workshop – all ages for experienced singers.

Vocal workshop – adults only, beginners and intermediate.

Song-writing workshop – all ages.

All workshops cost **2,800** baht for one day and will take place between the **21st and 28th of January.**

Private lessons are also available for booking with Joshua.

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A Merry Christmas for Phuket Sunshine Village kids

As we celebrate Christmas and New Year, it's impossible to forget that just four years ago, when many were enjoying their festive holidays, a disaster of unthinkable proportions changed the lives of people forever.

Following the 2004 tsunami, the Phuket Sunshine Village Foundation (PSV) was established jointly by Child Watch Phuket and the Lions Club Phuket Andaman Sea to give hope to children whose lives were devastated on that fateful morning.

Santa came early to PSV this year, when their principal financial backers, the Lions Club Phuket Andaman Sea, presented the home with a check for 1.27 million baht on the afternoon of December 13.

Director Nutisa Tatbunpagun told the *Gazette* that PSV is currently home to 74 kids, 46 of them girls.

"Phuket Sunshine Village Foundation has 12 houses at the moment. Each house looks after boys and girls between the ages of two and seventeen and employs one 'mother' per household to take care of the children," she



As Christmas neared, the kids at the Sunshine Village Foundation were treated to parties at two of Phuket's top hotels. On December 13, the Mövenpick Resort & Spa hosted the first Sunshine Village Christmas Party (left) and a week later, staff at Indigo Pearl entertained the foundation's children (right).



explained.

Children aged two to six are educated at the Foundation, but those six and above are sent to the nearby Koh Sireh School.

Although born out of sadness, the village is a ray of sunshine and safety for the children.

As Christmas neared, the kids at the foundation were treated to parties at two of Phuket's top hotels.

On December 13, the Mövenpick Resort & Spa hosted

the first Sunshine Village Christmas Party. A week later, staff at Indigo Pearl entertained the foundation's children.

At what is traditionally a fun-filled time of the year, the two resorts were keen to involve the children in the happiness and holiday cheer, giving them two days that they would never forget.

Mövenpick Resort & Spa organized a day packed with fun activities and games, many of which the kids had never tried

before. These included arts and crafts, team building, music and singing, all followed by a delicious lunch.

Each child also received a Christmas present and a surprise parcel full of goodies.

The party at Indigo Pearl commenced with a magician welcoming the children with a magic show, followed by a big lunch with all kinds of special treats.

The party ended on a high

with Santa giving a special presents, many donated by hotel guests, to each child.

With 74 mouths to feed and a full-time staff to support, PSV is always in need of additional funding support and volunteer workers.

Those interested in making a contribution can do so on-line or get additional information at www.phuketsunshinevillage.org

Sheraton in Grande Gesture

PHANG-NGA: On December 23, the season of goodwill filled the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket as the Sales and Marketing team headed to the Baan Klong Sai School in Phang-nga province.

Taking a break from their tradition of delivering Christmas hampers to their clients, the team decided to spread a little Christmas joy to the children of the school.

Ashleigh Brayshaw, Marketing Communications Manager, began the festivities by presenting Head Master Charlerm Janpong with a gift, before handing out presents to all the children.

The pupils then enjoyed a special lunch from the Sheraton as well as party games and karaoke.

The donation of Christmas gifts was part of Laguna Phuket's ongoing project of supporting the school.

In July, Laguna Phuket teamed up with ESPN Star

Sports presenters and raised almost one million baht for much needed renovations.



"Tis the season." Marketing Communications Manager, Ashleigh Brayshaw, hands out gifts to pupils at the Baan Klong Sai School.

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On the menu

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Rainforest Garden

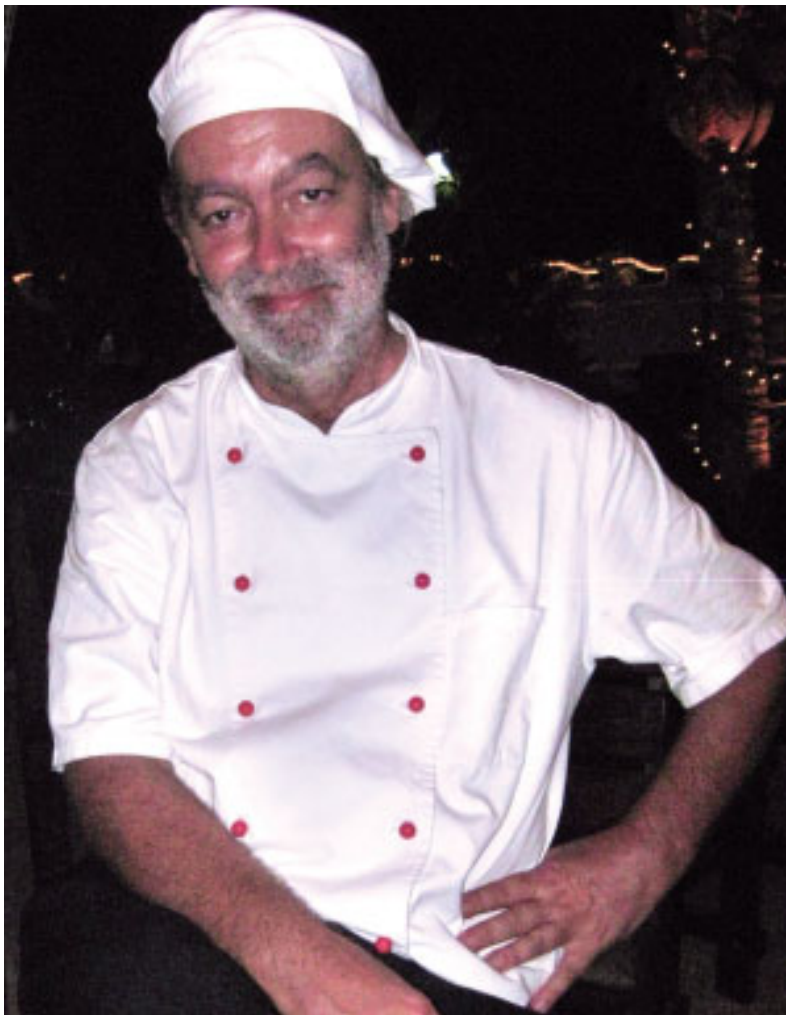
For those who have never been to Rawai, here's a simple piece of advice – Go!

The most appealing aspect of this quaint resort, just like its north Phuket counterpart Nai Yang, is that it gives the impression of being a tourist destination that has never stopped being a working fisherman's village. This atmosphere gives Rawai an endearing charm and only Bohput, on Koh Samui can rival this idyllic and tranquil ambience in southern Thailand.

A shimmering azure seafont, a pier for fishing and a local fish market await the traveler who ventures to Phuket's deep south. These traditional Thai fixtures are joined by a plethora of bars, restaurants and noodle bars, many of which offer hungry visitors *al fresco* dining by the beach.

The approach to Rawai Village is lined with exotic karaoke dens and variegated bars. Suddenly, on your right-hand side, you'll notice what resembles a faux temple designed by an ever-so-slightly deranged architect. This is the Shell Museum, a truly fascinating place. Diagonally opposite the museum is another impressive-looking establishment called Rainforest Garden. Since its inception, this restaurant has gained the attention of the local German population and it is now time everyone stood up and took notice.

A Tropical Garden of Delights



Beef roulade (top left), Yam Talay (bottom left) and the inspiration behind the dining experience at Rainforest Garden, Chef Dirk Seitz.

German chef Dirk Seitz is dedicated and passionate about food. He clearly cares deeply about his clientele and his culinary delivery. Under his direction, the restaurant has established an extensive menu as well as monthly specials. This December's offering, for example, is a French ensemble of some 11 dishes, while Italian gastronomic pleasures are

planned for January.

Dirk, an island resident for three years, has a pragmatic approach to attracting regular customers who appreciate good food at reasonable prices in an agreeable environment. One can only admire his outlook on dining, with its soft background music played at discreet levels, in this well-appointed restaurant. Affable in nature and at ease in English, Thai and German, Dirk is the reason why so many diners return.

Another major plus for Rainforest Garden is the extensive Isarn menu. When one studies the demographics of Rawai's Thai/foreign population it's really not hard to understand why... I did say that Dirk had a pragmatic approach, didn't I?

Inside the well-lit entrance stands a mama-and-baby stone el-

ephant and further exploration of the restaurant, which can accommodate 80 people, reveals a collection of decorative brass instruments that would be at home at Munich's Oktoberfest. However, if Lieder-hosen clad gentlemen were suddenly to materialize, blowing away in jaunty unison, I'm unsure how my slightly sparse vodka Martini aperitif would stand up to it.

Losing no time ordering, due to our excellent and attentive waiter, we're soon exploring a Greek Zorba salad, mixed salad and herbal sausages, accompanied by garlic bread.

The authentic cuisine continues with the arrival of the main course; beef roulade with Bavarian red cabbage – sweetened with a dash of apple juice and mashed potatoes with a Thai sea-

food salad.

This is truly fine fare, too much to handle at one sitting, so not being ashamed to admit it, I ask for the rest of it to be bundled up to take back home with us.

For reasons unknown, in the western world, a 'doggy bag' has connotations of shame and is seen to be lacking in class. Here in Thailand, it's the norm to request a 'toom gap ban' (take home).

If you're into linguistics, you'll know that German verbs come at the very end of each lengthy sentence.

Does this also mean they save the best for last? Maybe so as a lovely ice cream combination arrives for my son and he's as pleased as Punch.

Affordable wine adds 'street cred' to any Phuket eatery and in this regard Rainforest Garden is impeccable.

A pity, therefore, that white wine has a nail-biting, sleepless-night effect on us. Rainforest Garden presents a very reasonable 790 baht deal on a white Wipfelder Zehntgraf Bacchus.

In addition, they offer a house white and a red *Montepulciano* at just 90 baht a glass, half the price of other comparable establishments. We plumped for a delicious Australian Twin Beaks red at 1,290 baht.

As the evening draws to a close, Dirk opines on the recent political and financial events, "We're never going to give up. We survived the tsunami and will see this through." Admirable words and his determination encapsulates the entire island's attitude towards the inscrutable actions in the capital.

It's a wonder that 'I Will Survive' was not on his play-list the evening we visited Rainforest Garden.

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This week



BON APPETIT: Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa was chosen as the venue for the recent *Chaine des Rotisseurs Bailliage De Phuket* dinner. *Chaine des Rotisseurs* was founded in Paris in 1950 and includes both professional and non-professional members. The different branches, or *Bailliaiges*, host a number of events around the world to promote fine dining and preserve the camaraderie and pleasures of the table.



UNIVERSAL BEAUTY: Former Miss Universe Jennifer Hawkins (center) recently visited Phuket. While on the island she stayed at The Chava Resort, Surin Beach. Also pictured are Director of TAT Phuket office Mr Sethaphan Buddhani (left) and Director of The Chava Resort and Honorary Australian Consul Mr Larry Cunningham (right), who welcomed Ms Hawkins to The



STAYING SAFE: Phuket Provincial Public office has launched a new AIDS prevention and awareness campaign to inform and educate people about the risks of the disease. Launched under the banner "Know love, know safe sex", the project urges people to protect themselves against AIDS and other sexually-transmitted diseases by wearing a condom during sexual intercourse.



VROOM VROOM: On December 10, Patarapa Taratam (center) was crowned Miss Andaman Motor Show 2008. The four runners-up were (from the left) Natthawan Kunwanit (4th); Sandra-gredwai Rolfwaber (2nd); Chonchanok Saetang (3rd) and Natthipak Kulwanit (5th). The motor show was held at Central Festival from December 4 to 11.



LION'S SHARE: The Lions Club of Phuket Andaman Sea recently made a donation of 1,272,373.74 baht to Phuket Sunshine Village, which currently takes care of 46 girls and 28 boys. The youngest resident girl is 18-month-old Patcharaporn "Im" Patyen. The two oldest are Pitsamai "Eed" Buakeaw and Namfon "Tukkata", who are both



RENDEZ-VOUS WITH ART: Dec 12 saw the official opening of Kris Surachoenjai's new exhibition entitled "Oriental fantasy" at Art Rendez Vous gallery. The collection explores the relationship between art and the elephant. Pictured are (from left) Kris Surachoenjai; Korean Honorary Consul for Phuket and Member of Parliament Khun Tossaporn Thepabuttra; Khun Anchalee Vanich Thepabuttra and Artistic Director of Art Rendez Vous Mr Patrick Bois.



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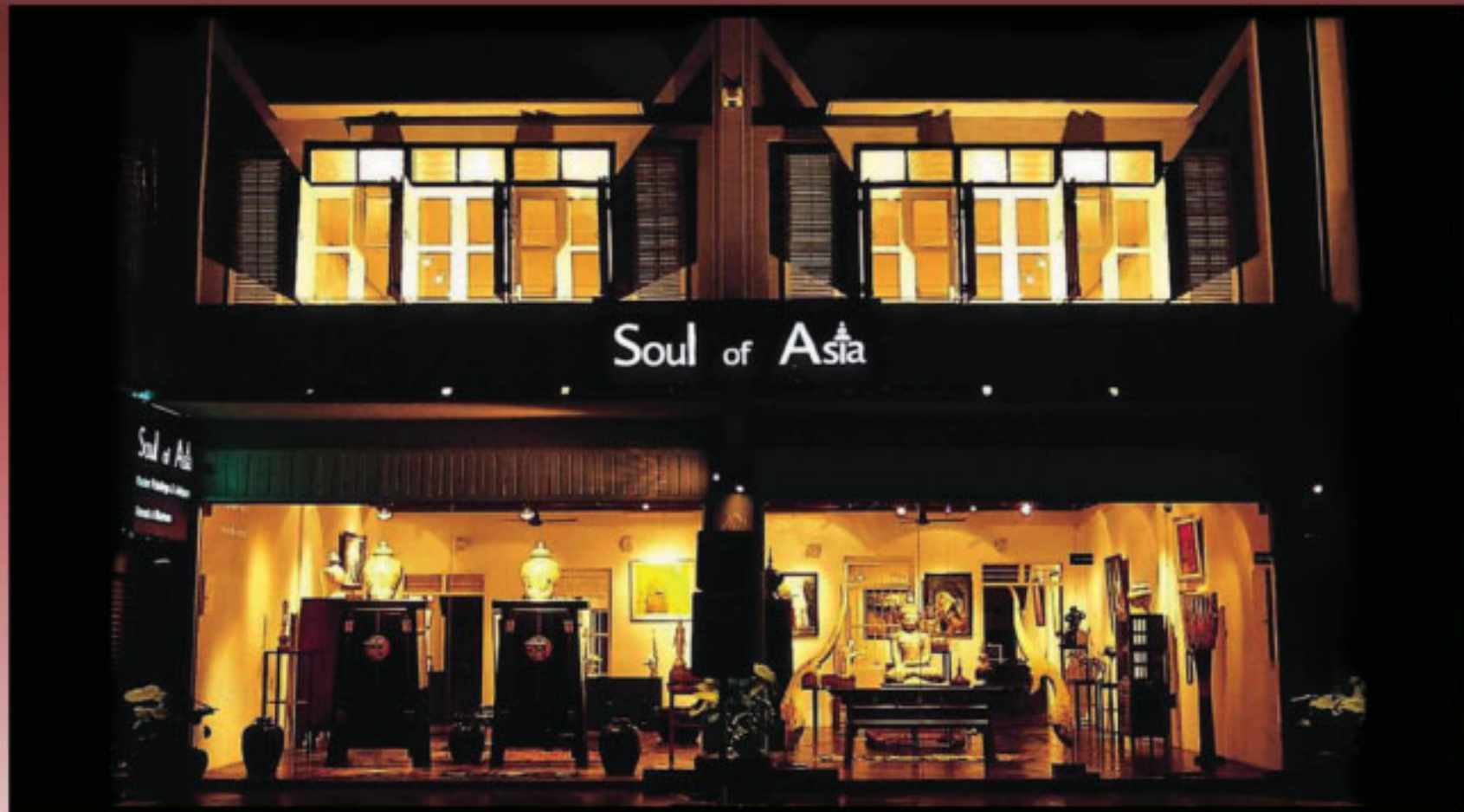
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Making the most of a career in hospitality

Local President of the Thai Hotel Association talks about building the life of his dreams

By Bruce Stanley

Methee Tanmanatragul, President of the Thai Hotel Association's Southern Chapter, has been thrust into the center of the turmoil confronting Phuket's hospitality industry.

Having enjoyed a lifetime of success promoting and managing the island's most popular resorts and hotels, he has gained important insights into developing survival strategies to help get through difficult times.

"We must reassure visitors that Thailand is a safe and welcoming destination. We need to say we are sorry for the inconvenience caused by the recent airport closures and offer incentives for tourists to return," he says. "We left 350,000 tourists stranded on their holiday. That is not going to be good promotion for Thailand in their home countries. We need a mega-campaign to offer them incentives to return, such as room discounts and complimentary dinners and services."

During the airport crisis, Mr Methee was on the front-line, helping tourists find flights out of the country. He even drove visitors to Pattaya from Phuket to catch flights back to Europe. At



Methee Tanmanatragul has gone from humble, rural beginnings to becoming an advisor for upscale resorts.

Phuket airport he faced the anger and frustrations of stranded passengers.

"The recent demonstrations in Bangkok proved that the country has become more tolerant of disagreements to democracy.

In the past, the military would have intervened. While some factions may have gone too far and created a negative impact on the economy, we, as a country, gained in terms of endurance to democracy," he continues. "We've had a release valve with regard to recent events and now we need a time to reflect.

We are ready for a new generation of Thai politician."

As President of the local Thai Hotel Association, he represents 160 member hotels and resorts in southern Thailand.

The responsibilities of the Association are manifold, including advising the government on how to legislate the hospitality industry before passing laws that can be difficult to change or enforce. "Many of our challenges come from dealing with the Thai government, which enacts legislation that is not supportive of the country's hospitality industry. For example, every property is required to undergo a building inspection each year by a team of architects. The charge is around 10 baht per square meter. Now the Ministry of Interior wants to conduct its own inspections with a different team of inspectors with additional charges. This duplication is unnecessary and the costs are too onerous for many of our members to bear."

Mr Methee began his hospitality career several decades ago as a child living in the rural countryside outside Bangkok.

He used to watch for airplanes in the sky and wonder about people coming to Thailand. He had an ambition, a dream to work in an international company

and to speak English well.

He secured his first job in hospitality with the Hilton in Bangkok before traveling to Los Angeles to complete his studies in hotel management, working nights at the Beverly Hilton to pay for his studies.

Over the past four decades, he has opened such Phuket properties as the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort and served as General Manager at the Kata Thani, overseeing the resort's expansion. For the past few years, he has been advising on the opening and marketing of many of Phuket's upscale resorts while developing his own property, Rising Sun, a collection of luxury holiday villas on the mountainside overlooking Wat Chalong and Phang Nga Bay and where he lives with his wife, Khun Wipa. His handpicked staff of 20 ensures that guests receive ultimate service.

"Rising Sun has six 3-bedroom villas and five one-bedroom residences, set in a beautiful, quiet setting with spectacular views. I wanted to develop a property for discerning guests who want the convenience and comforts of a five-star resort but who require privacy and individual service," he explains. "Everything is possible here. We retain a full staff



Mr Methee's Rising Sun luxury holiday villas.

to chauffeur our guests around Phuket nine hours a day and cooks that prepare breakfast and dinner."

Mr Methee's experience in providing international guests with memorable holidays has enabled him to create his own upscale holiday retreat.

"My focus now is on helping the local hospitality industry weather the challenging times ahead. While we can expect difficulties, we can also expect the tourism industry to rebound as Phuket is a holiday destination that will always remain attractive to the international visitor," he concluded.



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Taking in the delights of southwest Turkey

In southwest Turkey, between Datça and Marmaris, stretches one of the country's most beautiful coastlines. Nearly 800 kilometres from bustling Istanbul, Datça bay offers visitors natural beauty, tranquility and Turkish hospitality, making for a truly unforgettable experience.

The Datça and Bozburun peninsulas, together with Greek island Simi, protect hundreds of bay inlets and small rocky islands from the open Mediterranean Sea. The coast is lined by rock formations and pine woods stretching down to pebble beaches and the crystal clear water's edge. Here and there, ancient ruins offer reminders of the Greek and Byzantine occupation thousands of years ago.

Little sleepy villages and towns with unpronounceable names like 'Selimiye' or 'Orhaniye' are dotted along the coastal areas and bay inlets. Life is rural and the pace is slow in this part of the world; *yavas, yavas* (slowly, slowly) is a favourite local expression. During the summer the days are long and hot, with not a cloud in the clear blue sky and temperatures climbing to over 40°C.

Goat herders and cow herders travel and rest along the dusty roads, slowing down the occasional traffic. Locals trade in small shops or on the weekly market; others sit in coffee shops drinking Turkish tea and coffee. Children enjoy the outdoors, playing in the passage ways or jumping in the sea. Fishermen prepare their small, wooden fishing boats for the night trip out to sea. Locals wait in front of their restaurants for tourists to pass by or anchor their boats in the bay.

The life of the local people is bound to the earth and the sea. Most local houses have their own vegetable garden, where the families grow delicious fruit and vegetables for home use, for the market or for one of the many family-run restaurants. As the saying goes here, "our garden is our insurance".

Goats, sheep and cows provide the meat for dishes like kebabs and sautés as well as milk for cheeses and the famous Turkish yoghurt. Local bees provide honey, and the chickens in the backyard supply eggs until, inevitably ending up on



A boat trip offers the rare opportunity to visit some of the many beautiful bays accessible only by sea. Most of these small paradises have few or no inhabitants, but sometimes you might come across a tavern ashore.

the dinner table. Grouper, calamari or prawns are only some of the delicacies caught daily in the sea.

Turkish hospitality revolves around food. Visitors or even strangers receive a gift of the host's own produce or are invited to enjoy a feast consisting of what the garden and the sea have to offer. Dinners include the much-loved national drink Raki, which is enjoyed whenever possible.

Tourism provides the primary source of income and people in the area need to make their living in the five months of the summer season to sustain them through the long autumn and winter. The tourist industry grows every year, but in most places the area remains relatively untouched and unspoilt.

Travellers come from all parts of the globe to stay in the little guesthouses or private villas. Many visitors charter a boat or book a trip on a traditional wooden Turkish boat or gullet to explore the area by sea. Motorized and sailing yachts are very popular, with experienced sailors prefer-

ring the later summer months when the local wind, known as the meltem, blows stronger.

A boat trip offers the rare opportunity to visit some of the many beautiful bays accessible only by sea. Most of these small paradises have few or no inhabitants, but sometimes you might come across a tavern ashore. The visitor can swim, relax and listen to the sounds of nature; the lapping of waves, the humming of bees and the bleating of goats.

Visitors looking to venture beyond beach and sea can explore the local area on a number of hiking trails, offering spectacular views. Guides are available to accompany the hiker or mountain biker on a variety of tours of varying degrees of difficulty and duration.

And should you ever need a break from all this rural tranquillity, you might wish to sample the shopping and night life in Marmaris or perhaps take a ferry trip to the Greek island of Rhodes or visit Datça Town.

Factfile

The closest airports are at Dalaman and Bodrum, which handle both local and direct international flights. Travellers can also fly via Istanbul and connect with one of the several daily local flights.

Private villas and gullet trips can be rented through Exclusive Escapes in London (www.exclusiveescapes.co.uk). Sailing yachts can be chartered from www.sunsail.com or www.setsail.co.uk.

Motor yachts can be chartered from www.captaintayfun.com.

Accommodation can be found by searching for Selimiye, Bozburun and Hisaronuon on www.nisanyan.net.

For accommodation in Orhaniye see www.orhaniye.net Good restaurants: Sar-dunya Restaurant (Selimiye), The Mermaid (Sogut), Club Mistral and Fanari (Orhaniye).

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Feminine passion for fashion

Fashion designer launches a line of functional designs for females



Venera Tabakin, pictured in blue dress takes the plaudits at the fashion show held at the Beech House Grill Bar at Surin Beach on December 13.

Uzbek fashion designer Venera Tabakin is passionate about creating garments suitable for women of all ages. "The inspiration for the clothes is simple; functional designs that will take you through the day and straight into the evening," she explains.

Her work, along with that of Russian designer Elena Romanschenko, was paraded down the catwalk at a fashion show she organized at the Beech House Grill Bar at Surin Beach on December 13.

Venera is a graduate of the London College of Fashion and has over 20 years' experience as a dressmaker. Like many art school graduates, she is not afraid to wax lyrical about her work. "Fashion design is such a perfect art, allowing us to use the most brilliant creation on earth: the

human being," she says. "As fashion designers, we put our non-visual imagination into practice and change it into visual form by wrapping the human body in it, making the garments come alive. The things we create tell us who we are," she adds.

Venera has developed her own style of stitching and binding, which she uses on trims, sleeves, pockets and collars. Often, linen and cotton are mixed together in one garment. "This brings something special to my designs," she says.

The Surin Beach show also featured designer Elena Romanschenko's new collection of light dresses, entitled "Lounge". The collection takes its name from lounge music and aims to channel the genre's smooth lightness of touch into the form of the dresses. "Dressmaking is similar

to playing music. The catwalk allows the models to demonstrate the beauty of the dresses in movement," she says.

Elena is a professional designer with a degree in women's dressmaking from her home country of Russia. She has been creating designs for her own fashion brand "GN" for several years. She combines different fabrics and techniques such as embroidery and painting on fabric with the use of ribbons, beads and laces, to ensure her designs are always feminine and unusual.

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The new BMW 7 Series



The new BMW 7 Series incorporates the very latest in auto technology, including 4-wheel steering, night vision technology, a speed limit display system and pedestrian recognition.

Although the recently launched fifth generation of BMW's flagship 7 Series sports a number of new additions, it takes many styling cues from the outgoing model. The latest creation is more user-friendly and the radical exterior design has been substantially toned down. The previous version of the 7 Series was introduced in 2001 and its critics dubbed the rear end the 'Bangle Boot', after designer Chris Bangle, who tended to favour the bulbous approach to sedan design. Despite a lack of critical acclaim, the car sold more than 50,000 units, making it the most successful luxury BMW ever.

Initially, the new model will be of-

fered with a choice of three power plants: two gasoline and one diesel. The gas versions are also available with a long wheel-base body. BMW has stated that all three engines will produce more power, use less fuel and produce fewer emissions than the models they replace.

The 730d, powered by a new all-aluminium, three-litre diesel engine, delivers 245 break horse power (bhp) and a massive, teeth-pulling 540 Nm of torque. The three-litre 740i gasoline model, complete with twin turbochargers, offers 326 bhp and 450 Nm. Finally, the top-of-the-range 750i, with its 4.4 litre V8 engine and twin turbo located in the centre of the 'vee', pushes out a decidedly healthy 407 bhp

and 600 Nm, which will propel the car from 0 to 100 km/h in just 5.2 seconds with an electronically limited top speed of 250 km/h.

The 7 Series transfers power to the rear wheels via a six-speed automatic gearbox. This has been significantly improved in the new model. A new electronic control unit with a greater memory capacity, modified torque converter and upgraded hydraulics allows for quicker, more precise gear changes.

Equipped with BMW's award-winning technologies, the new 7 Series includes brake energy regeneration, active aerodynamics and on-demand use of ancillaries, which improve fuel economy and further reduce carbon emissions. Brake energy regeneration uses an absorbent glass mat battery that can handle intermittent charges. The system is able to use power created by an engine on over-run and convert it into electrical energy to power ancillary devices on the car. Conversely, when the car is accelerating, the alternator is automatically disconnected from the engine so all the power created is channelled into the performance of the car.

The 7 Series is manufactured with 'Drive Dynamic Control', which contains four distinct set-ups: comfort, normal, sport and sport-plus. At the touch of a button, the driver can alter the gear shift characteristics, throttle response, degree of power steering assistance, damper settings and the dynamic stability control program. Active steering, which allows all four wheels to steer, is optional. As bizarre as it may sound, it permits closer lane changes

and tighter cornering. Furthermore, it improves the turning circle at low speeds.

Ever at the forefront of automotive technology, BMW, in a world first, has installed a speed limit display system which, using a forward-facing camera, scans road signs and displays the current speed limit to the driver. The 'lane departure' warning shares the same camera, monitoring road markings and warning the driver if the vehicle is in danger of straying out of lane.

The 7 Series can also be purchased with night vision technology as well as individual pedestrian recognition. The latest system scans the road 300 metres ahead and warns the driver if a pedestrian is likely to walk into the path of the car. Side-view cameras and head-up display (HUD) are two further safety features that are offered as 7 Series firsts.

The new BMW 7 Series is comprehensively equipped for safety, featuring front, side and head airbags in the front and impact-dependent air curtains for both front and rear occupants. The air-conditioning system is fully automatic with a four-zone control, while the 750i features a glass sunroof and a CD auto-changer. The 730d and the 740i are fitted with a single CD aperture, but an optional upgrade is available.

The three new models go on sale in early 2009, although prices have not yet been announced for Asian markets.



By Jeff Heselwood

Jeff Heselwood can be contacted at jhc@netvigator.com



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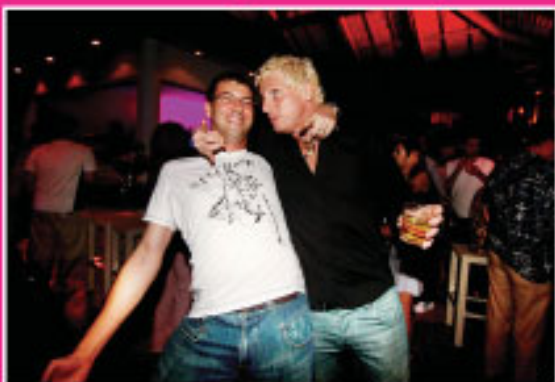


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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island



TriBallistic Triathlon Series 2009 Race 1 of 4 - January 18

Start the New Year with a bang at the TriBallistic & Phuket International Academy Triathlon Series 2009. The first of four events gets underway at the JW Marriott Resort & Spa.

- Splash & Dash 50m swim, 1.5km bike, 750m run
- Junior 200m swim, 6km bike, 1.5km run
- Senior Sprint 750m swim, 20km bike, 5km run

Teams welcome. Prizes for all podium finishers, medals for all finishers. Preferential overnight rates for athletes with online registration. Transition opens at 6am, first race 8am. Sports nutrition and TriBallistic merchandise for sale on race day.

For further information contact Shaun Boulter.
T: 089-5902014. E: tri@tribalisticclub.com
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December 28.
PC Group Therapy Chalong.
From 10am until midday at the Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. For directions to Sandwich Shoppe Chalong (Chao Fa East, near Wine Connection), see the web site. Sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes. For more information contact Woody Leonard. T: 089-1960940. E: woody@khunwoody.com. W: www.KhunWoody.com.

December 31.
New Year's Eve – Public Holiday.

December 31.
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the four regions of Thailand this New Year's Eve. The Grand Ballroom comes alive with a spectacular display of cultural specialties, dances, and music all combined into one night of fantasy, discovery, and celebration.

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December 31.
New Year's Eve Dinner @ Laguna Beach Resort.
Usher in the New Year at Similan Restaurant, Laguna Beach Resort with the history & culture of the Kingdom of Thailand.

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Ticket prices are: Adults: 6,150++ baht. Children: 2,890++ baht. For further booking information contact Tana Uisawat. T: 076-324352. E: sales@laguna beachresort.com. W: www.laguna beachresort.com.

January 1.
New Year's Day – Public Holiday.

January 2.
Public Holiday.

January 26.
Chinese New Year.
The Chinese New Year starts with the first New Moon of the new year and is the biggest social occasion in the Chinese calendar.

The event is celebrated with gusto amongst Thailand's sizable Chinese community and legions of Chinese tourists from neighboring nations choose to enjoy the holiday in Phuket.

February 9.
Makha Bucha Day.
Makha Bucha Day falls on the full moon of the third lunar month and commemorates the Buddha's ordaining of 1,250 monks who had arrived unannounced from afar.

It is also held to be the date the Buddha delivered his Fundamental Teachings – just a few months before his death.

February 20 – 21.
Phuket International Blues Rock Festival.

The 4th annual Phuket International Blues Rock Festival will be held at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort and Spa from 6pm to 1am. The festival will feature international star Eric Bibb - one of the greatest contemporary blues artists. Eric has performed at Glastonbury and tours the world constantly.

California's world-class, New Orleans style, boogie-woogie piano man Mitch Woods will be there, and guitar god Rich Harper. Sweden contributes with top acoustic duo Bert Deivert & Janne Zander. The Blues Machine from Pattaya and Bangkok's Cannonball will return and our very own Groove Doctors, fronted by Tony 'Hacksaw' Wilson.

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ON THE MOVE

Decha Mingkwan has been appointed as Chef de Cuisine at Indigo Pearl, Phuket. 28-year-old Mr Decha holds a diploma in French Cuisine from PIVA Hotel School Belgium. He has worked in many Countries including Greece, France, Denmark, Japan, India and the United States. Before joining Indigo Pearl, Chef Decha worked at Zunderterras Restaurant and Brasserie in Antwerp, Belgium; Koyao Island Resort & Spa Phuket and Kriston Food & Beverage Company Singapore.



Le Méridien Phuket Beach Resort has now appointed **Somphop Prattranasanti** as Executive Assistant Manager. Born in 1970 in Bangkok, Somphop began his career in the hospitality industry in 1991 joining the Shangri-La Hotel Bangkok as a receptionist. He later worked at the Burasari Resort Phuket, first as Rooms Division Manager and later as Hotel Manager. In 2005, he returned to the Shangri-La Hotel Bangkok for a year before joining Le Méridien Phuket Beach Resort.



Bangkok native **Wanchat (William) Pandonsuk** has been appointed Hotel Manager of Thavorn Palm Beach Resort in Karon, Phuket. Mr Wanchat has previously worked as Sales Manager for Best Western, Executive Assistant Manager at Thavorn Beach Village and Spa in Phuket and as Resident Manager at Dusit Princess Srinakarin. He has now returned to Phuket to take up his new position as Hotel Manager of Thavorn Palm Beach Resort in Karon.



MONEY TALKS: A license to print money

Desperate times call for desperate measures; the decision by America's central bank, the US Federal Reserve, to reduce its overnight lending rate from 1% to a range of 0 - 0.25% took markets by surprise. It was anticipated that 0.25% was possible but a rate of 0% was unforeseen by most.

This now takes US interest rates to their lowest rate in recorded history and positions the US as the country with the lowest interest rates in the world.

The closest is Japan, with interest rates at 0.30%, while the Hong Kong Monetary Authority recently slashed interest rates by a full 100 points (1%) to 0.5%.

The Fed's move is indica-

tive of how serious a position the economy is in, and it has obviously reached the bottom of the interest rate cycle as it is not possible to have negative interest rates.

Its next step, already underway, is "quantitative easing". In this the Fed becomes an active buyer of mortgage-backed securities and US Treasury Bonds and will tend to increase its activities in these areas.

The change in the US administration takes place on January 20 and will probably be accompanied by an announcement of a federal stimulus program of around US\$ 600 billion. Anything less than this amount will be met with disappointment.

At the time of writing, the fate of the big three auto manu-

facturers, Ford, GM and Chrysler, remains uncertain, but they will certainly be included in any rescue plan. Both the Bush administration and the Obama team are anxious to prevent them from failing, fearing serious ripple effects across a raft of related industries.

The current administration learned a hard lesson about letting substantial businesses fail, when it allowed Lehman Brothers, the US investment bank, to collapse.

An alternative for a business unable to service its debt is to enter Chapter 11 bankruptcy, a tried and tested process that allows a business to reorganize itself and continue to trade.

The auto giants are trying to avoid Chapter 11, saying that their brand names would be too tarnished for them to ever recover and that second-hand auto prices would virtually collapse.

The price of US Treasury bills has reached ridiculous levels; for example, the 10-year Treasury bill is currently offering a yield of less than 2.5%. Investors are not buying these investments with the intention of holding them to maturity; they are instead hoping the Fed will come along as a buyer, allowing them to make a profit.

In reality, this is a dangerous strategy, because the Fed will not buy all 10-year Treasury notes and there is every likelihood that investors will be left nursing sub-

stantial capital losses.

A more sensible approach, particularly for the risk averse, is to buy bonds that are covered by a federal government guarantee. This can easily double the return without the risk. However, the economic situation has become so serious that people are often not making sensible decisions.

Matters are complicated by the banking industry as it has to offer its customers some sort of return. With official rates at zero, banks will have to enter the bond market to find an interest coupon from which to offer a return to their clients.

Regardless of how much money it takes – estimates have moved up to almost three trillion dollars – the economy must be revived.

President-elect Obama, Federal Reserve Chairman Bernanke and many others have all said they must spend whatever is necessary. This would obviously be impossible for any private entity but governments own the money printing presses. They can issue as much money as necessary.

The risk is that this kind of monetary stimulus will stoke inflation. It's similar to starting a fire: if you collect enough dry paper you can get it burning. But once the fire is raging away, you have to ensure it doesn't get out of control.

Logically, increasing the

amount of money in the system will lead to inflation. However, it is worth bearing in mind that during World War Two the US government ran an average government deficit of 30%. Yet after the war there was no inflation problem.

Former Fed member William Poole said that the Fed is sending out the message that it will print money continually until it sees the economy expanding. At that stage, the Fed must then reduce the money supply and raise interest rates, he added.

This will require a fine balancing act.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that this whole fiasco could have been avoided with sensible policies and regulation. It is the quality of regulators that is questionable. The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) failing to detect the recent US\$50 billion Madoff "Ponzi" fraud has led to SEC Chairman Christopher Cox calling for a probe of his own agency. Who is going to regulate the regulators?

Richard G Watson runs Phuket-based personal financial-planning service Global Portfolios Co Ltd., and has over 25 years' experience in this field. Tel: 076-381997. Mobile: 081-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th Website: www.globalportfolios.com

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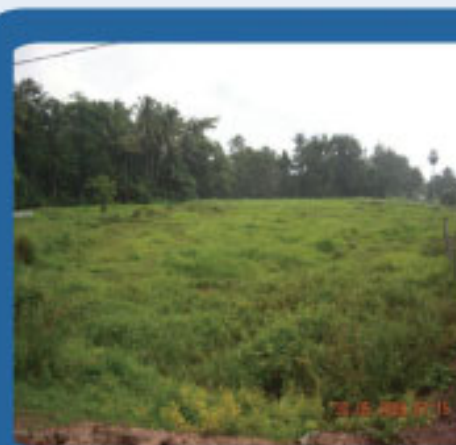
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ModernDog returns to its own world

By Dan Waites

Wednesday December 17 saw Thai indie-rock pioneers ModernDog play the Phuket Brewery, their first gig in Phuket since the release of the band's fifth album, Ting Nong Noy on September 9.

The Gazette caught up with Thanachai "Pod" Ujjin (vocals, rhythm guitar), May-T Nojjinda (guitar) and Pavin "Pong" Suwannacheep (drums), to discuss their new sound, a rather suggestive album cover and the band's unusual allergy.

Gazette: How do you feel about the new album?

Pod: "It's an album we're very proud of because all the elements worked."

We made it bit by bit over the past two years.

We found a mixing engineer we liked in Nashville and sent it over there, and we got work that we're really satisfied with."

Gazette: What have you been trying to achieve with the new album's sound?

Pong: "[In the past] we've tried to find our own sound but



THE BAND (from left): May-T Nojjinda (guitar), Thanachai "Pod" Ujjin (vocals, guitar) and Pavin "Pong" Suwannacheep (drums).

still relate it to Western stuff. But in this album we've really tried to come back to our own world. I think we've finally done that after 15 years."

Pod: "We covered a 40-year-old Thai song on the last track. It's a song our parents used to play and we've brought it back. And we've used traditional Thai instruments and brought them into our music too. So the album's kind of mixed."

Gazette: Is this a direction

you're going to continue to move in?

Pong: "For the moment, yeah..."

Pod: "But we get bored so quickly. I think it's important to make music that shows where you're from. Like when you listen to a band from Iceland... Sigur Ros, Björk... They have this sound... You can feel the coldness. In Thailand I think cha cha cha, Carabou, is a good example of Thai rhythm, Thai style. But a rock band like us, how can we express that?"

Gazette: What sort of reaction has the album had from the fans?

Pod: "I think the audience is a lot more open now. In the past, when we released an album, they always preferred the previous album. They'd say 'Oh, the last one is so good, but this one...' [shrugs] And then when we released the next one, they'd love the one they already had. But now I think they'll get this one straight away. Or maybe after two weeks..."

Gazette: The album's cover is a photograph of Hinta Hinyai on Koh Samui (a natural rock formation supposed to bear more than a passing resemblance to certain male and female body parts). Why did you choose this as the album's cover?

Pod: "It's about perception and how viewers can see the



ModernDog's lead singer Pod performing live on stage at Phuket Brewery recently.

same thing differently...

If a foreigner sees it they will think 'Where is this place? Is it real? Is it man-made or natural?' We want to make them question, think about it."

May-T: "Every country has its own important stones. So we chose this place: Thai rock. The TAT are very pleased about it..."

Gazette: Do you get bored playing the same songs all the time?

Pod: "Oh, we get bored. [lots of laughter]"

It's very hard, to be honest. This is show business. This is the reality. The same songs aren't fun but a new audience can bring

something different for us."

Gazette: There are a lot of people in here sitting and eating and drinking here tonight.

Does that affect the way you play at all?

Pod: "There are two things that our band can't stand."

One is direct spotlights and the other is *pae sa* (steamed fish)."

May-T: "We're allergic to it!"

Presumably glare reflected off lustrous fish skin isn't good for the band's eyes.

Amid the colossal towers of home-brewed beer that are Phuket Brewery's specialty, Wednesday's crowd seemed to delight in a set of the band's hits, old and new, and for many of the band's most popular numbers much of the crowd abandoned their tables and rushed to the stage.

There were plenty of dishes of *pae sa* being served in the Phuket Brewery that night, but if the light was indeed getting in ModernDog's eyes, it didn't show.

PUZZLES

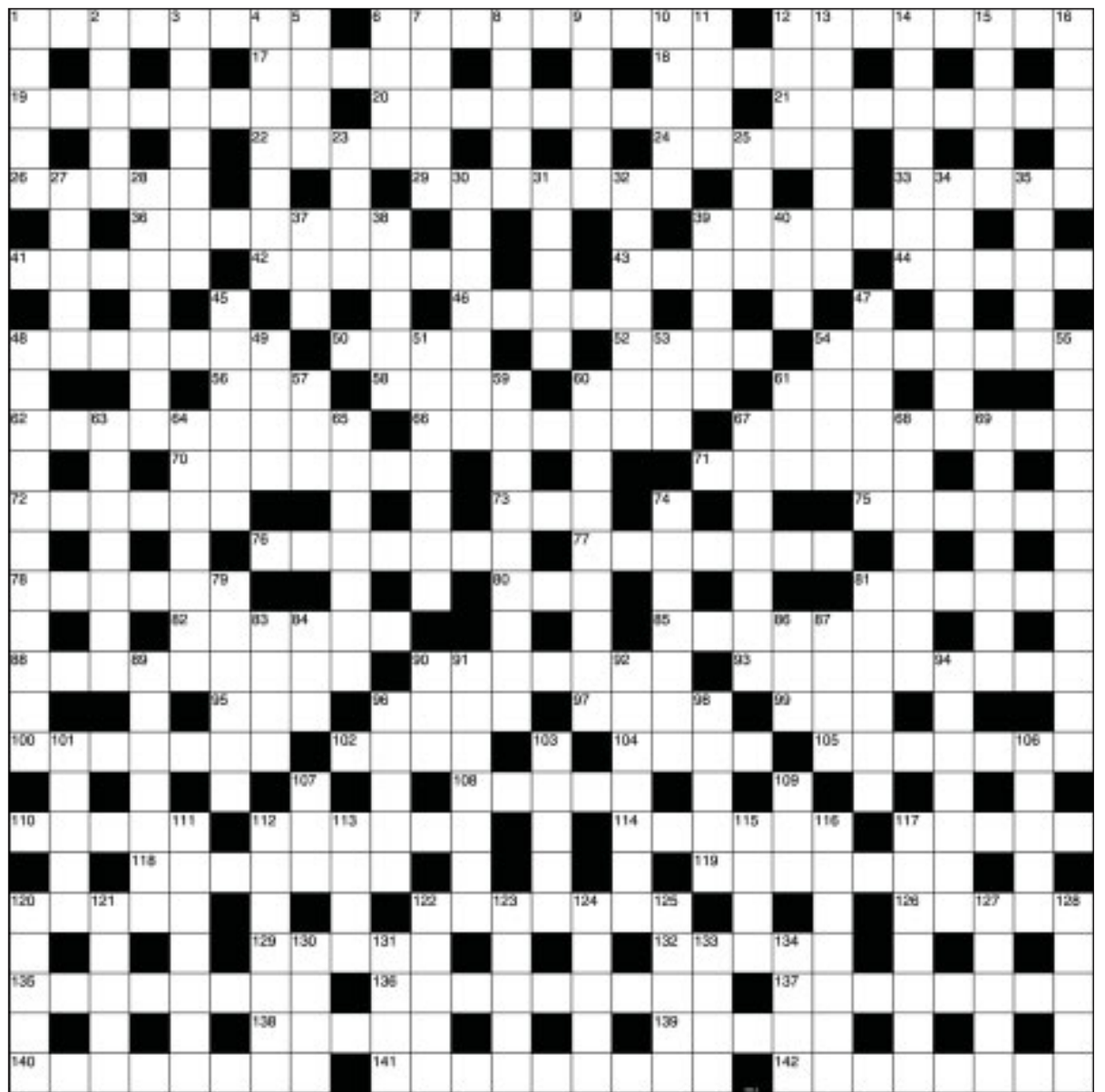
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Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

The principle of 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. Guess if you will, but each Sudoku puzzle can be solved using logic alone. Beware: this puzzle has only one solution, which is on the next page.



The BIG Crossword

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Across

- 1. Maritime (charts)
- 6. Most indecent
- 12. Overlooks (offence)
- 17. Explorer,... Polo
- 18. Dear Sir or...
- 19. Brief communications
- 20. Unfaithful partner
- 21. Free gift
- 22. Nursery verse
- 24. Valuable possession
- 26. Overthrow, coup...
- 29. One who interferes
- 33. Female equines
- 36. Poster
- 39. Wealthy
- 41. Shower
- 42. Away from home, far...
- 43. Moped
- 44. Indian prince
- 46. Additional
- 48. Chinese fruits
- 50. Italy's pre-Euro currency
- 52. Garden shack
- 54. More tender
- 56. Fifth month
- 58. Folk wisdom
- 60. Russian emperor
- 61. ... Zedong
- 62. Deformed
- 66. Guaranteed
- 67. Breathing
- 70. Alternatively
- 71. Swigged
- 72. Stockings
- 73. Burgle
- 75. Inkling
- 76. Music-roll piano
- 77. Tipped over
- 78. Trembled

- 80. Convent dweller
- 81. In flight
- 82. Mad dog disease
- 85. Latin American instruments
- 88. Intense dislikes
- 90. Sewing spikes
- 93. Declaration
- 95. Grandma
- 96. Combine
- 97. Gulf War missile
- 99. Ostrich-like bird
- 100. Villages
- 102. Be an omen of
- 104. Iridescent gem
- 105. Advance
- 108. Stoneworker
- 110. Horned animal
- 112. Frock top
- 114. First batsman
- 117. Contented cat sounds
- 118. Israeli lake, Sea of...
- 119. Evolve
- 120. Frolic
- 122. Building levels
- 126. Malta & Capri
- 129. Army clergyman
- 132. Creator
- 135. Postponement
- 136. Poorly recompensed
- 137. Ordinary
- 138. Horse straps
- 139. Actor, Jerry...
- 140. Corrupts
- 141. Roman XVII
- 142. Wednesday,...

- 4. The A of USA
- 5. Beat with whip
- 6. Swindle
- 7. Computer/phone link
- 8. Paved
- 9. Perfect
- 10. Vilification,... campaign
- 11. Surfaces (road)
- 12. Zoo enclosure
- 13. Left out
- 14. Impractical person
- 15. More modern
- 16. Eyelid inflammations
- 23. Cosmonaut,... Gagarin
- 25. Shortly
- 27. Hollow
- 28. Native American tribesmen
- 30. Makes beloved
- 31. Outstanding bills
- 32. As a group (2,5)
- 34. Plug converter
- 35. Escape
- 37. Towards stern
- 38. Demon
- 39. Grass-cutter
- 40. Fishing mesh
- 45. 24-hour car race
- 47. Resume (case)
- 48. Citrus drink (5,6)
- 49. Drains
- 51. Rude driver (4,3)
- 53. Owned
- 54. Pant
- 55. Grew back
- 57. Even so
- 59. Separated from spouse
- 60. Appeal boards
- 61. Actor Gibson
- 63. Retrieve (wreck)
- 64. Impedes

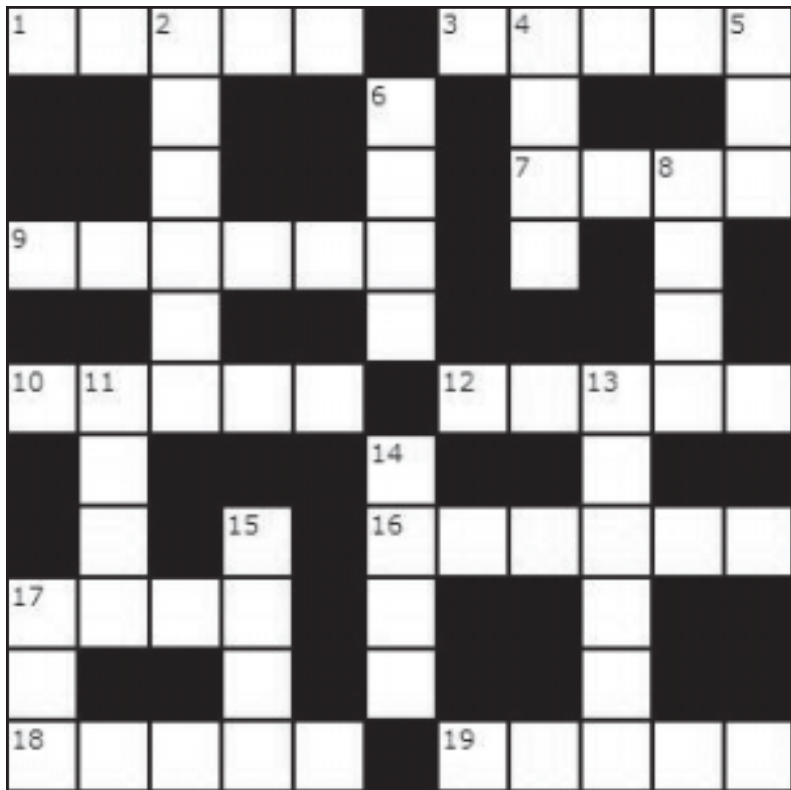
- 65. Contradicts
- 67. Steering blades
- 68. Worship
- 69. Impersonate
- 74. Joins forces (5,2)
- 79. Petite
- 81. Ripen
- 83. Constrictor snakes
- 84. Tavern
- 86. Had a meal
- 87. Pitch tent
- 89. Court judgments
- 90. ... Flanders
- 91. Heating bar
- 92. Cheap fare,... class
- 94. Experimental models (4-3)
- 96. Film
- 98. Stupefied
- 101. Hate
- 103. Michaelmas daisy
- 106. Eagle's nest
- 107. Khmer tyrant,... Pot
- 109. Engine turn
- 111. Acorn bearer (3,4)
- 112. Unimportant role
- 113. Act
- 115. Narrow guitar part
- 116. Rejuvenate
- 117. Actor, Sidney...
- 120. Discontented (3,2)
- 121. Deduce
- 122. ESP, sixth...
- 123. Too fat
- 124. Citizen living overseas
- 125. Grin
- 127. Mixed (with poison)
- 128. Shabby
- 130. Beers
- 131. Cricket scores
- 133. Yemen port
- 134. Radiate

Solution on next page

This week's cartoon



Phuket gaz



Quick Crossword

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Across | Down |
| 1. Diving | 2. Referee |
| 3. Untrue | 4. As well |
| 7. Earth | 5. Slippery |
| 9. Newspaper boss | 6. Graft |
| 10. From Greece | 8. Object |
| 12. For a picture | 11. Babe... |
| 16. Look around | 13. Every time |
| 17. We, you,... | 14. Competent |
| 18. One, two... | 15. Giga... |
| 19. Go and see | 17. Dynamite |

Solution below

Get your brain in gear with the MONSTER QUIZ

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. For which rugby team does Jonny Wilkinson play when not injured? | 8. What name is given to a young pilchard? | 14. In which Formula One team did Damon Hill replace Nigel Mansell? |
| 2. Which actor played Johnny Blaze in the 2007 superhero movie Ghost Rider? | 9. Who played David Addison co-owner of the Blue Moon detective agency? | 15. In which ocean is the island group the Maldives? |
| 3. From which flower do we get saffron? | 10. What was the name of the first dog on Blue Peter? | 16. Cats are indigenous to all but which two continents? |
| 4. Who was known as The Desert Fox? | 11. What were Benjy and Laska, which were sent into space in 1958? | 17. In computing, how many nibbles are there in one byte? |
| 5. If you wanted to visit the White House, which US state do you have to visit? | 12. What are the names of the three musketeers? | 18. In the film 'Cujo' what type of dog was Cujo? |
| 6. What is the name of the cape at the southern tip of Africa? | 13. Who took the photo which features on the front cover of Iggy Pop's album 'The Idiot'? | 19. On which island did the dodo live? |
| 7. Who wrote Dr Jeckyll and Mr Hyde? | | 20. Do rattlesnakes lay eggs or have live babies? |

Answers below

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Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

Monster Quiz Answers

- Newcastle;
- Nicholas Cage;
- Crocus;
- Erwin Rommel;
- Maryland (Washington DC not a state);
- Cape of Good Hope;
- Robert Louis Stevenson;
- Sardine;
- Bruce Willis (Moonlighting);
- Petra;
- Mice;
- Aramis, Porthos and Athos;
- David Bowie;
- Williams;
- Indian Ocean;
- Australia and Antarctica;
- 2;
- A St Bernard;
- Mauritius;
- They have live babies.

Solution to this week's BIG Crossword

N	A	U	T	I	C	A	L	S	M	U	T	T	I	E	S	C	O	N	D	O	N	E	S	
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T	H	E	Y			L				A	
N			T			E				Y	
T	H	R	E	E		V	I	S	I	T	

Solution to this week's Quick crossword



Off the SHELF

Paul Dorsey

Albert Einstein once got within 1,400 kilometers of Bangkok, a short distance (in terms of relativity) for someone who traveled little. Having missed out, we can still get to know him quite well in this hefty biography by former journalist Walter Isaacson.

It's recorded elsewhere that Einstein and his wife Elsa arrived in Singapore via Ceylon (Sri Lanka) on November 2, 1922, and did a little fund-raising among the local Zionists for a Hebrew University in Jerusalem before setting sail again for a lecture tour of Japan. Virtually the whole Jewish community of Singapore, numbering around 600, boarded his steamer to greet him.

One week later, Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for his explanation of the photoelectric effect – not for the general or special relativity theories that by then had made him famous.

He had already been given the pop star treatment on his first visit to America in 1921, but his ideas weren't yet ripe enough for the judges in Stockholm. It was with the cultivation of these greater, unawarded notions that Einstein

Up and atom

would wrestle for the rest of his life.

For most of the 20th century he was the measuring stick by which genius was tallied. By the 1950s his face, framed in a froth of white hair and capped by the diagram of an atom, was in every schoolkid's science textbook. Every micron of his being has been analysed so much that you'd think they'd have cloned him by now.

But Einstein's ultimately fruitless quest for the unified theory that would meld gravity and electromagnetism led him into the wilderness, where he was watched from afar and with pity by mainstream physicists.

All of his scientific efforts after moving to the US in 1939, Isaacson writes, were devoted to "his own white whale, which he pursued not with the demonic drive of Ahab but with the dutiful serenity of Ishmael".

He had "no compelling physical insight ... to guide his way, so his endeavors remained a groping through clouds of mathematical equations with no ground lights to orient him".

It was a Greek tragedy, and Isaacson goes to great lengths to explain why the square pegs would no longer fit in the round holes. But he still sums up Einstein as "the locksmith of the mysteries of the atom and the universe".

Not entirely comfortable with his subject, the author comes across as a CNN cinema correspondent, or one of those old-

style reporters at Time. (He's held lofty positions at both.) He can be trite as well as repetitive and vague, as when he says certain childhood books "appear to have been influential", only to report Einstein's own words on the next page, "They were a great influence."

He sandwiches three pages of careful explanation about Einstein's photoelectric idea with the words "spooky" and "eerie". Neither one applies. But there are great moments as well.

Isaacson recounts the way Einstein worked out his general theory of relativity while he was giving four weekly lectures in Berlin. Presented in exciting "you are there" fashion, it's not quite front-page stuff, yet he gives it the impact of breaking news.

Those were the glory days. Einstein's quaint and quirky youth and early career had put him permanently outside the box, which was of course where he almost always did his best thinking, and gave him the decidedly anti-social, rebellious thrust to break free of Newton's shackles. He saw things differently.

Even explained in colorful "thought experiments", like the blind beetle on a curved branch, relativity has never been fully understood by the average layman – the calculations are just too dense – and the misunderstanding has been dangerously edged.

Beginning with Germany's post-World War I anti-Semitism and continuing to this day, relativity

has often been confused with relativity. Einstein never suggested that nothing was absolute, only that time and space weren't. But his proposition happened to coincide with the upheavals of psychoanalysis, art and literature, and it did seem at the time that mankind could no longer cling to anything for certain.

Still, the struggle to correct the public perception was a mere diversion for Einstein compared with his long battle against quantum mechanics, which was ironically based on his photoelectric theory.

This was after the revolutionary had become a reactionary, a transformation that fuels one of the best parts of the book.

Much to the fury of Neils Bohr and other progressive physicists, Einstein felt the theory of quantum mechanics was incomplete and violated common sense. In the place of cause and effect stood randomness, and Einstein didn't believe that God would stand for that. "God doesn't play dice," he famously declared.

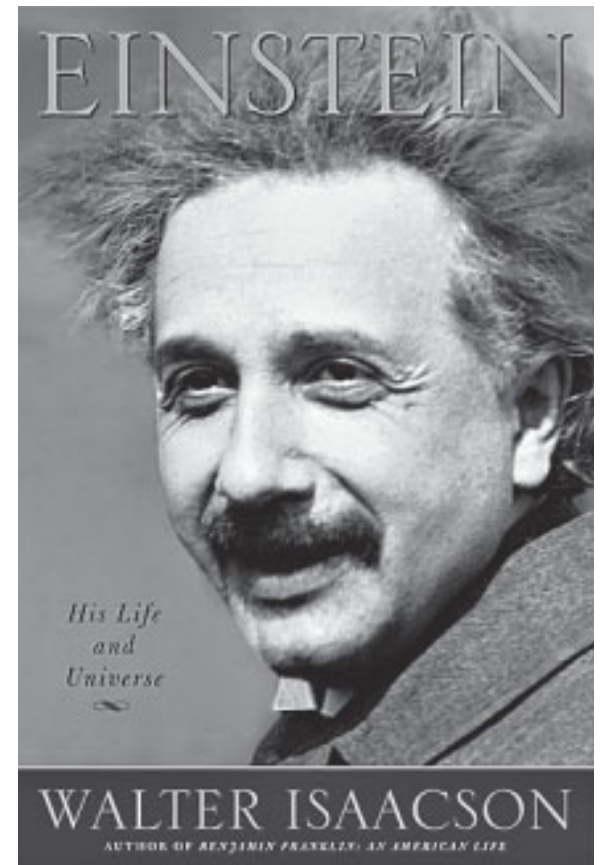
Beyond the science, there

is the great puzzle of Einstein the man, particularly in politics and in the public eye.

You have, for example, the professor raising money for the United Jewish Appeal's refugee work after World War II by counter-signing donors' cheques – so they would be left the "autographed" stubs.

This was the man whom Time magazine named in 1999 the "Person of the Century". He is a topic as big as the universe.

Einstein: His Life and Universe by Walter Isaacson and published by Pocket Books, is available at Asia Books for 550 baht. Source: *The Nation*



Barbara Wallraff is a weekly syndicated columnist for *King Features* and a contributing editor and words columnist at *The Atlantic Monthly*, where she has worked since 1983.

Q: This is a complaint about the use of the word 'Belgium' as an adjective, instead of 'Belgian'. Restaurant menus almost universally refer to 'Belgium waffles', and recently a writer for the Free Press described trying to reproduce her mother's 'Belgium chicken'. I also have been exhorted to purchase 'Belgium chocolate.' It is driving my wife and me crazy. Please help!

Loren Mannino, Michigan

Barbara replies: It's true that we eat 'French fries', not 'France fries'. We enjoy the company of 'Irish setters' and 'Af-

Welcome to Word Court, where Barbara Wallraff unravels some of the mystery that shrouds the English language, debunking confusing usage and clearing away the clutter that stops clear understanding – all by answering readers' questions.

ghan hounds', not 'Ire-land setters' and 'Afghanistan hounds'. On the other hand, what about 'California wine', 'Canada geese' and 'India ink'? And 'china plates'? China – porcelain – got that name because of where Europeans originally imported it from. Confusingly, one place can spawn both kinds of adjectives: 'Canada goose' but 'Canadian bacon', 'china plate' but 'Chinese food'.

As for Belgium, you're right that the usual adjectival form is 'Belgian'. Those delicious sweets are properly 'Belgian waffles' and 'Belgian chocolate'.

Professional copy editors all over the English-speaking world agree with you and me that far. But when it comes to a family recipe, the only real experts are members of that family. I called Laura Varon Brown of the Free Press, who wrote about 'Belgium chicken', to inquire. She told me, "That's what my mom called it, and my dad's family was from Belgium. Mom had it written down that way too."

Unfortunately, the original name for the dish is no help at all: in Belgium, it's called *waterzooi*.

Q: Could you please write about the uses of 'when ever' or 'whenever' and 'where ever' or 'wherever'?

James Vorndran, Wisconsin

Barbara replies: If you want a simple rule, it's this: always write 'whenever' and 'wherever'. You'll never be out-and-out wrong. The one-word version is informal anywhere you could have written just 'when' or 'where' instead, but it's acceptable English. If you want to make a distinction, though – and I do, since the two-word forms also can be correct, and they allow different meanings to look different – then write 'when ever' or 'where ever' in those spots where you could use the shorter word.

In such cases, 'ever' is an intensifier, making 'when' or 'where' more emphatic. For instance, consider the line, "When will they ever learn?" from Pete Seeger's song *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* Of course, that fits the meter of the tune better than "When will they learn?" but it also expresses a stronger sentiment. "When ever will they learn?" is equally strong. That's

the kind of place to write 'when ever' as two words.

Now, let's contrast that with Metallica's song, *Wherever I May Roam*. Here the word means not just 'where' but 'anywhere'. The 'anytime' and 'anywhere' meanings need the one-word versions: 'when-

ever' and 'wherever'. Much the same goes, by the way, for 'what ever' versus 'whatever.' I feel a song by Oasis coming on. "I'm free to be whatever I whatever I choose" is how the song *Whatever* starts. That's written properly – except for the repeated words.

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Road deaths can be reduced

Once again the festive season is upon us, bringing perhaps a tinge of homesickness to some expat residents unaccustomed to spending the holiday season in a land of coconut trees, beaches and balmy weather.

Here in Phuket it seems we never pass on a chance to party, even if it means embracing traditions that are actually quite foreign. Christmas probably has its roots far back in pagan rituals practised in ancient Europe, yet that doesn't stop local retailers from jumping on the bandwagon with a gusto that would make a Madison Avenue executive blanch.

It doesn't stop with Western cultural imports, either. In addition to an imposing agenda of annual Thai traditions like Loy Kratong, Thais also embrace a number of Chinese holidays and customs – including some local hybrids such as the Phuket Vegetarian Festival. Indeed, Thailand may be the only country in the world that so enthusiastically celebrates no fewer than three New Year festivals in the course of a single calendar year: Western, Chinese and Thai.

With alcohol a mainstay during these merrymaking activities, it comes as no surprise that the “demon drink” is associated with a surge in road accidents and fatalities during over-long weekends and holidays, especially during the Songkran Festival and Yuletide period we now find ourselves in. On average, 84 people nationwide died in road accidents each day during previous New Year holidays. Of those, 76.9% were victims of drunk driving. Outside of festive seasons, the average road toll is 35 lives a day.

Notably, statistics over recent years indicate that this effect is less pronounced in Phuket, where the three and six road deaths reported over the last two New Year periods, respectively, fall well within the normal range for a seven-day period.

Despite actively embracing Western New Year, Thai society and its law enforcement community appear to be remarkably resistant to adopting more effective, Western methods of reducing the number of road accidents and deaths – such as promoting the use of “designated drivers”. A more effective strategy than setting up predictable holiday-season “checkpoints” in the same locations year-in and year-out would be better enforcement of traffic laws for moving violations like speeding and driving on the wrong side of the road, as well as drunk driving.

After all, it is the people who commit these offenses who pose the greatest threat to fellow road users – far more than people who lack the common sense to don a crash helmet before getting on a motorbike or forget to carry their license, for example.

– The Editor

Do you have an opinion you want to share?
Email editor@phuketgazette.net

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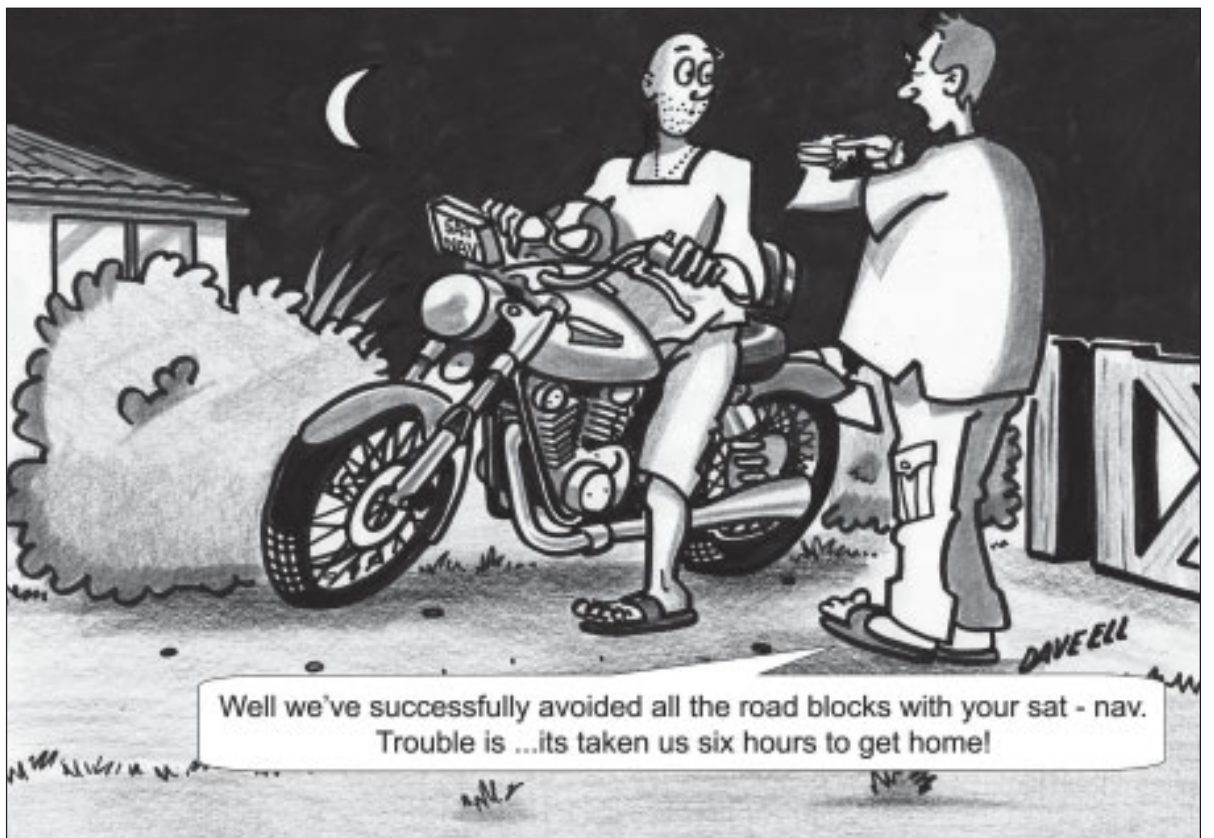
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Letters

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.

'1337' service not fit for English speakers

Having already discovered the futility of calling the police or foreign police volunteers for help should I need it, I was elated to hear about the '1337' number that can be dialed for emergency aid.

Most English-speaking foreigners are familiar with a 3-digit emergency number, (911 in the USA), which immediately dispatches police, fire or Emergency Medical Services (EMS). I write this in the hope that they do not restrict aid calls to this number, as the wait could be fatal, (heart attack, hemorrhage etc.).

Coming home from a Pattaya Expatriates meeting the other day, I saw an unconscious man, lying amidst some debris, with blood on his face. I called 1337, punched #9 for English and tried several times to explain the situation, with the usual response being “what?” Finally, getting nowhere, I gave up.

This emergency number, advertised everywhere, is probably fine for Thais but not for English-speaking people.

Don Aleman
Pattaya

Noise ruining Phuket

Having read your recent editorial on noise pollution I am surprised that more readers have not written in to confirm the trend. I for one have noticed with dismay that noise on the island has increased enormously in the four years I have lived here. Near my home, which I chose as it was in a quiet forested area, there is now the constant sound of mechanical saws, which I re-

cently discovered emanate from a ramshackle furniture factory that was recently set up. The nearby shop wakes everyone up with loud Isarn music at 6 am and the dogs and fireworks seem to go on until midnight. On Saturdays no matter which shopping center we go to the sound is deafening and it appears to me that there is no longer a quiet place to escape to. Many would say that this is all part of living in Thailand but at this rate I feel that the noise in Phuket will soon drive people away, myself included.

Barnaby Oliver
Chalong

K9 Karaoke

In reference to your recent editorial concerning noise pollution in Phuket, I would like to suggest that far more troubling than the noise encountered in the island's malls, is the endless disturbance caused by the incessant yapping, howling and barking of the thousands of dogs that appear to be holding some kind of endless canine karaoke contest outside my bedroom window.

Sleepless in Surin

Police give criminals a head start

Congratulations on the great PR work by Phuket's finest. Now all the bad guys pretty much know not only where but also what hours not to pass by a checkpoint.

Chai Yo! Another anti-crime blitz well done!

Eric
Phuket City

Bah humbug

It's that time of year again, and I thought that I'd escaped. But it seems not. I was in a department store the other day and there they were, polluting the air, sickly sweet and oh-so-over-familiar: *Merry Christmas Everyone*, *All I Want For Christmas Is You* and jazz versions of *Frosty the Snowman*. There was no respite. One would have thought that a Buddhist country where Jesus's birthday is of little import might be free from the sound of sleigh bells and children's choirs, but no. It's enough to make you do your Christmas shopping over the internet.

Bah humbug.

Scroogey McGrinch
Phuket Town

Good will to all mankind

Having moved to Thailand just two months ago, I was a little nervous about spending my first Christmas in the Kingdom. I knew that a number of expatriates live here but was unsure how Christmas would be celebrated in Phuket and as a Christian religious festival whether it would be tolerated let alone welcomed.

How delighted I was, therefore, to see how many Thais have adopted our tradition of celebrating December 25, doing so with such gusto they put most westerners to shame. It's reassuring to know that in this age of intolerance people of vastly different cultures can still enjoy celebrating together and that Thailand's reputation for hospitality grows ever stronger. I can't wait until 2009.

Bob McSheffrey
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.

The challenges of helping children in need

Director of the Asia Center Foundation



FIRST PERSON

Roelien Muller is director of the Asia Center Foundation which provides education and healthcare services for the underprivileged in Phuket. Currently, the ACF provides help to 200 students through its various projects. It focuses on helping children at risk of exploitation due to family circumstances: poor students, children from single-parent families and children in the care of old people who are no longer able to work for a living. Unfortunately for organizations like the Asia Center Foundation, it is becoming increasingly difficult to continue operating because of spiraling costs. Here, she talks to the *Gazette* about her work with the Asia Center Foundation and the challenges that lie ahead.

I came to Phuket from South Africa in 2000 to work on a project with ACF founder Dr Danny Martin. Originally planning to stay for a year, I have been here ever since. My background was in marketing, public relations and psychology, but I came to Thailand looking for a change of career and wanted to focus on doing something worthwhile that could make a difference. When I saw the conditions in which some of the children in Phuket were living I felt I couldn't just sit by and do nothing, so I started the daycare center.

The work of the Asia Centre Foundation –led by Board Chairman Eam Thavornvongwongse – was underway by 2002 and did a lot of work in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, in particular with a scholarship programme for tsunami affected students and their families.

At the time of the disaster, shocking images were broadcast throughout the world, which resulted in a lot of funding being made available for many affected areas.

However, while for many the tsunami has now become a distant memory, there are some for whom it can never be so easily forgotten.

Some families have moved on and are now doing well, but the scars of the tsunami will never fade in the memories of the families who have lost someone.

We are doing all we can to help those children focus on their futures and give them hope.

Many people responded generously to the crisis in 2004 and much of that financial support has sustained us until now because we managed it very carefully.

Unfortunately, the world economic downturn and other crises have since shifted the focus away from the tsunami victims.

The work the foundation does in helping children, however, is by no means restricted to victims of the tsunami. Any child in need of financial assistance for education can apply for help from the ACF regardless of their religion, race, age or sex. If funding is available, the ACF will allocate a sponsor to help.

Originally located in Patong, the daycare center moved to Kathu in 2006. It provides daily pre-school education to 60 children, aged three to six. This service is provided free of charge to the families, and the children also receive food and health care.

The Asia Center Foundation currently receives support from a variety of sources, including the World Children's Fund, which provides help with two of its projects; the annual International Rugby Tens competition organized by Patrick Cotter from the Phuket Vagabonds, which raises funds for the ACF Scholarship Program; and the Samaritan's Purse from Canada, which has been instrumental in helping with the ACF's youth programme.

However it is still in need of funding, in particular for the Safe House project, which is expected to run out of funds by the end of January. This project, which was started two years ago, is for children from very difficult family situations. It aims to provide a safe family environment for pre-school children attending the Patong Childcare Center who are unable, for whatever reason, to live at home. Parents might be either alcoholics, physically abusive, or single parents who work at night in the bar industry and have no-one to take care of their children. There are currently eight students in the Safe House project, all of whom have been looked after by the ACF in some capacity for more than four years.



Kids Club students giving a big 'Thank You' but without the help of donations where would these children be?

The change we have observed in all the children is amazing and it is one of our most successful projects. We only provide this service to children who we have a longstanding relationship with and whose parents sign an agreement allowing their children to stay with us. We encourage family contact by requiring parents to take the children during weekends, but for some of them even that is not a possibility. The Safe House is managed with the help of a full-time Thai houseparent couple and we rent a house for the project.

Unfortunately, the original

sponsor for the project has not been able to continue to support it and we fear that, due to lack of funding, we will have to close it down.

Everything we do here has been so fulfilling that I wouldn't dream of exchanging my life here for anything else."

Anyone wishing to help support the Asia Center Foundation can contact either Roelien Muller at roemuthai@gmail.com or the ACF office on Tel: 076-319535. For further information visit: www.asiacenterfoundation.org.

I need some advice on buying a boat

I intend to buy a five-meter rigid inflatable boat with a 115hp outboard engine.

I live in Phuket on a retirement visa and the boat will be for leisure and private use only.

Does it need to be registered? If yes, how do I do it?

Do I need a boat license? Would there be distance restrictions on the use of such a boat around Phuket?

Daniel Pasquelin

Sakorn Poodum of Phuket Marine Office 5 replies:

Your boat purchase will fall into one of the three following categories:

1. If you buy a new boat in Thailand, you must register the boat at your local Marine Office.

2. If you buy a boat in Thailand from another person, you have to transfer registration at your local Marine Office.

3. If you buy a boat in another country and bring it into Thailand, you have to pay tax at a Thai Customs Office and then come to the Marine Office to register.

Before operating your boat, you will also need to obtain a boat license, which you can do by taking a test at the Marine Office. You may be restricted on the distances you can take your boat from the area in which it is registered.

For us to provide you with information on distance restrictions, you will need to take all documentation relating to your boat to the Marine Office, which

is located at 88/5 Sakdidet Rd, Tambon Wichit, Muang, Phuket 83000. Tel: 076-391174. Email: md5phuket@md5phuket.go.th W: www.md5phuket.go.th.

Issues & ANSWERS

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Write to:

The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at www.phuketgazette.net

Is it possible to transfer a land title deed to my daughters?

Our home and land, with Chanote title, is registered in my Thai wife's name. We have twin daughters, aged seven, who were born in Australia but also have Thai citizenship.

If my wife passed away, could the ownership be transferred to them, with me as their guardian (I have a retirement visa), until they reach the legal age?

Would a will stating my wife's wishes be legal?

Name supplied

Mr Somchiy Chisri, Head of the Registration Department at the Land Office replies:

As your daughters are Thai citizens, they automatically have the right to take ownership of the land registered in your wife's name in the event of her passing away.

To transfer land ownership to your daughters, they would have to make changes in related documentation, which is done at the Land Office. For more information contact the Land Office at Tel: 076 213646.

In The Stars

by Isla Star

Birthday Capricorns kiss some bad habits goodbye during the year ahead

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Your energy levels remain well-balanced and the days leading up to New Year will be rewarding. Those born under the sign of Capricorn will benefit strongly from encouraging astral influences during 2009. There is strong focus on your ability to multi-task; those already with one business concern are likely to take on another which has good luck written all over it. If you're single, a stranger from overseas comes into the picture, but this could lead to a dilemma regarding relocation. Capricorns celebrating a birthday this week say goodbye to some negative traits during the year ahead.

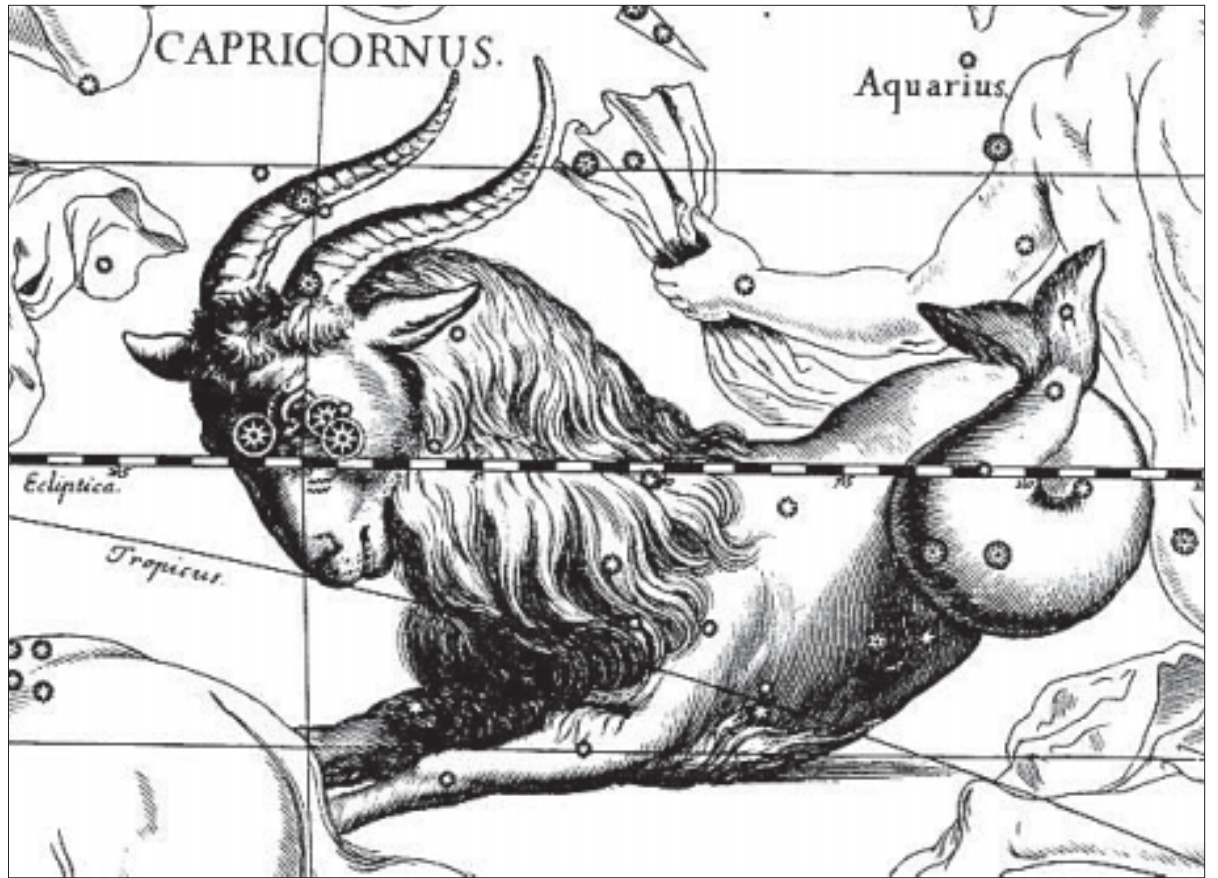
AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Take time out to compose your resolutions this weekend. Serious changes are in the air for Aquarians during 2009. This is your year to shine in an area that truly appeals. Remember that it's better to be on the bottom rung of a ladder you are enthusiastic to climb than half way up one that has no appealing view from the top. Taking a few backward steps in the world of work will eventually lead to fulfilling progress. Where love is concerned, some soul-searching during January could reveal that a current casual relationship isn't really what you want.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Pisceans who have survived an unusually busy Christmas period should pace themselves until New Year. Celebrations could last well into the first week of 2009 and you will be running short of good cheer by then. Friends will continue to demand your support and understanding during the first two months of next year, but the more you allow them to take advantage of your sympathetic ear, the longer it will continue. A romantic tryst during the holidays may be put on hold until summer, but the stars suggest that a reunion will be worth the wait.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Relationships are subject to disruptive astral influences during the first part of 2009 but understandings are easier to reach after March. Work will also require careful communication, particularly with those who have more influence than you do. Branching out on your own is a serious possibility during the summer months when a Sagittarian colleague from your past returns to the scene with an innovative idea. Travel is more strongly highlighted in the last quarter of the year, although a spring break to recapture romance is likely. Investments should be handled cautiously, particularly when Gemini asks you to come on board later in January.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Endless possibilities lie in store for Taureans who are ready to embrace them. Your priorities alter during 2009, with more emphasis on living in the moment, with less focus on worrying what the future may bring. The possibility of relocation comes suddenly in summertime, but actual moving could be delayed until later in the year. Certain friends may react jealously to your good luck and you will discover who really has your best interests at heart. Romantic affairs also benefit from your diminishing need for emotional security and the stars indicate that you will be spoiled for choice.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Those born under the sign of Gemini could feel the need to get away during January. This will be made possible by an invitation from a Leo friend overseas. There will be a tendency to try to have your cake and eat it, too, as summer approaches and listening to family will be vital if you wish to avoid a rift. Romance doesn't go quite according to plan, but Cupid's help comes in the nick of time during February. Your money tree provides a healthy harvest later in the year,



thanks to sensible investments made around the time of your birthday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Spreading your wings may be the last thing that Cancerians feel like doing during the first part of 2009, but the stars are set to encourage you to come out of your shell of security and travel to new places. Someone born under the sign of Leo will have influence on more than one area of your life during the summer months, but you could be led astray by another water sign. Money trickles slowly in your direction until later in the year when a windfall could change your lifestyle. Love remains low-key until you discover that opposites attract in March.

LEO (July 24-August 22): The world is your oyster during summer months, but the first part of 2009 will see those born under the sign of Leo staying close to home. Extra family responsibility is indicated to encourage you to look at new sources of earning power, but this will prove to be the trigger you need to climb out of a familiar rut. Where romance is

concerned, a rushed affair later in the year could cause more stress than it's worth. Your social circle expands during the summer months when a long-lost friend makes contact. New hobbies are highlighted in January and February.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Most Virgoans will be motivated to shoot for the moon in the first two months of 2009. Not all your efforts will yield lucrative results, but lessons learned during this period will be invaluable. The fruits of your labors will become visible during summertime. Those who haven't had much romantic luck in 2008 can expect better results in April and May when love is well-starred. Family overseas gives cause for concern in autumn – a Piscean friend will offer the support that you need. Creativity is strongly highlighted as winter approaches; you will become surprisingly proficient at new skills taken on board.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Your knowledge and experience turns out to be worth its weight in gold during the first half of 2009. Many Librans will be able to adapt to most challenges thrown their way, but must spot the ones that are impossible. Time-wasting is forecast to cramp your style – listening to friends who know you well is highly advisable. Children are highlighted during the summer months. If you've been hoping to expand your family, this could well be the time when it happens. Savings are affected by auspicious astral conditions in the autumn, with October being a

star month for profit.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Your New Year resolutions could be compromised by what transpires in January. Those born under the sign of Scorpio who were aiming to further their business ventures are likely to be disappointed by another water sign's lack of cooperation. Someone born under the sign of Gemini is forecast to offer an alternative solution, but you will need to ensure that agreements are firmly made. Family commitments become less stressful as autumn approaches and you find new leisure pursuits to fill your free time. Money matters are well-starred during summer months, but you have less to spend as winter begins.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Sagittarians starting the year with negative equity are advised to be more ruthless when it comes to family outgoings. Start as you mean to go on by drawing up a sensible budget, and by March the situation will improve. A work-related problem that has refused to go away during the last part of 2008 will be resolved in January. You can expect a glowing employment opportunity to arrive in the summer months, but delaying a decision for too long will result in it being swept from under your feet. Those who are single fall head over heels in love during September.



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Singapore Shopping



Sim Lim Square in Singapore draws bargain seekers from all over the world who are looking for computer bargains.

I'm just back from Singapore and my trip to Sim Lim Square unearthed a few surprises that, if you're in the market for a new computer or camera, you may find useful this holiday season.

If you've never shopped at one of the Asian computer megamalls, prepare for a mild shock. Mongkok Computer Center in

Hong Kong, Panthip Plaza in Bangkok and Sim Lim Square in Singapore offer floor upon floor of electronic goodies at cut-throat prices. Most of the big computer malls in Asia, and indeed many of the smaller ones, teem with buyers frequently standing shoulder to shoulder in pursuit of the latest merchandise at a steep discount. Imagine a cross between

a geek-fest and a Great White feeding frenzy and you'll begin to comprehend.

While the big retail chains in the US, including Costco and several establishments in Europe may offer equally enticing prices, they can't possibly match the unbridled 'techie' zeitgeist of an Asian computer mall.

Last time I wrote about Sim Lim, I came to the conclusion that it just wasn't worth the money to fly to Singapore to buy electronics. Phuket wasn't much more expensive. Yes things have changed, but to what extent?

Variety is a major reason for flying to Singapore to get computer equipment. Sim Lim has floors of laptops, giant displays of competing monitors and so many hard drives, video cards and printers it'll make your head spin. One netbook, the brand new Lenovo S-10, in Sim Lim really impressed me. Amazingly, Singapore had it before it was widely available in the US or Europe. Two weeks later, the S-10 turned up at Power Buy in Phuket.

Computer companies in Sim Lim constantly advertise their prices. Walk down any aisle of the computer sections or pick up any flyer and you can compare prices on Samsung 225 BW monitors, Kingston 1 GB DDR2 memory cards or Asus Eee 10 PCs to name but a few commodities. As a result, shopping for any common computer item in Sim Lim is surprisingly efficient. If, however, you want a camera, telephone or an MP4 player, life is not so simple. You have to ask again and again, and then bargain hard.

The bottom two floors of Sim Lim Plaza house consumer electronics. Locals call them the tourist floors but if you want a

camera at Sim Lim, you have to run the gauntlet. I swear the cloying salesmen learned their come-on patter on Patong's Beach Road.

Before you shop at any Asian electronics mall, be sure to do your homework. If you're looking for a camera, narrow your choices down to one or two models and stick with them. If you show any hesitation the salesmen, smelling blood, will get you to buy their highest-markup products, albeit in a most sincere and charming way.

Approaching Sim Lim, with the intention of buying a new digital camera, I had narrowed down my choices before leaving Phuket. Leaning toward the Canon IXUS 780, the best price in Phuket was 13,700 baht which included a 1 GB Kingston memory card.

Checking a dozen different shops, I finally settled on a place that offered the IXUS 870, a 2 GB Kingston memory card and case for 11,800 baht. A saving of 1,900 baht, albeit with twice as much memory and a nondescript camera case, is hardly a sensational deal, but arguably worth the effort.

When you're comparing prices, beware of being ripped off. Your camera should come with an international warranty and you should get an original battery from the manufacturer. If the dealer offers an upgraded memory card, make sure you've heard of the brand. Expect to pay an additional 1.5 to 3% to use a credit card - always a good idea, in case something goes wrong.

The dealer will charge you 7% Goods and Service Tax and give you a form to claim a refund. When you present this to Customs at the airport, you subsequently lose 25-35% of your refund for "fees". Quite a scam indeed.

Friends tell me there are places in Singapore with better prices but a spot check has kept

me coming back to what I know. Many of the other outlets have fixed prices - a blessing to some - but if you're willing to bargain, Sim Lim's got the goods. In general, I found computer and computer paraphernalia prices in Sim Lim to be 20% or so lower than those in Phuket.

Was it worth flying all the way to Singapore to save 1,900 baht on a camera?

No way. The selection is fantastic but prices in Singapore aren't much better than in Phuket.

Fortunately, I had another reason for the trip; buying walnuts. But that's a story for another day.

PC Group Therapy

Join Woody and other Windows victims at his Sunday morning Group Therapy sessions, co-sponsored by the Phuket Gazette. On December 28, we meet at the Sandwich Shoppe Chalong, one km north of Chalong Circle, next to Wine Connection. On January 4, we'll be at Sandwich Shoppe Patong, in Aroonsom Plaza, not far from Andaman Beach Suites. And on January 11, we'll meet at Sandwich Shoppe Laguna, just before the main entrance to the Laguna complex. PC Group Therapy Sessions are designed to help everybody - even (especially!) complete computer novices - and they're absolutely free.

Remember, there's no such thing as a dumb question - only easy answers. Come early to make sure you get a seat: several recent events have been standing room only. Driving instructions at www.Woody.info.



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How to fly a kite and look cool doing it

By James Goyder

You might consider the age-old pastime of flying kites to be about as exhilarating as grouting the bath. However, you might wish to reconsider, for this venerable pursuit has now been given a new lease of life with the invention of kitesurfing.

All but consigned to the childhood memories of those born before the days of Grand Theft Auto 4, the magical ingredients of wind and water have dragged 'kite flying' kicking and screaming on a white-knuckle ride into the 21st Century.

Kitesurfing, also known as kiteboarding, is a water sport that harnesses wind power to pull a surfer across the water on a small surfboard. A kitesurfer uses a board with foot-straps or bindings combined with the power of a large, controllable kite to propel themselves across the water. According to Willy Kerr, the founder of Kitesurfing Phuket, it is one of the fastest growing sports on the planet. "The manufacturers recently made the kites much safer, which has made them more popular. The kites are



so safe now that anyone can use them. We've got a 68-year old man who has had a triple heart bypass. His doctor told him to get more exercise and he had flown a kite on land so he decided to give it a go. Now he's doing somersaults," he said.

What's more, for the part-

time sports enthusiast, you do not have to be in peak physical condition to learn the basics of kitesurfing. Willy said, "The board can go in both directions so it's not like wind surfing where you have to jibe, it's very, very easy. The strain on the body is much less than people think. In fact its

mainly middle-aged to elderly men who are taking it up."

Robert Hein, from Denmark, took up kitesurfing a few months ago and quickly became hooked. "I like it because it gives you a kick. I used to play football but that just wasn't doing it for me. It took me about 10 hours to learn but I think anybody can do it. I do it whenever there's wind, about twice a week. I would definitely recommend it to other people but I am still learning. You won't be an expert after 10 hours."

Willy believes Phuket's climate is ideal for kitesurfing. "The conditions here are perfect. The wind is light so it's very forgiving and you can learn in shallow water so you are not going to drown," he told the *Gazette*. Willy, originally from Ireland, got into kiteboarding on land, using a skateboard instead of a surfboard, but found that this wasn't possible in Phuket. "The beaches weren't long enough so I decided to give kitesurfing a try and I just fell in love with it," he said.

There are a number of kitesurfing schools in Phuket but Willy insists Kitesurfing Phuket is

the only one which is accredited by the sport's governing body. "We are registered with the International Kitesurfing Organization (IKO) and all our instructors have undergone a full examination. It's a lot like the PADI system with scuba diving. There are three levels and you get a card to show what level you are. Some beaches won't even let you surf without that card," he said.

Kitesurfing Phuket uses two different venues to make the most of Phuket's seasonal climate. From November until the end of February they use Friendship Beach in Chalong and then from June until the end of October they are based in Nai Yang.

It costs 11,000 baht per person to learn to kitesurf, based on two people doing a three-day course together. It costs 3,500 baht per day to rent the equipment, although, according to Willy, most people eventually buy their own. A kitesurfing kit can cost a minimum of 45,000 baht, but it should last for a few years.

For more information about kitesurfing in Phuket visit www.kitesurfingphuket.com.

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KARON: Karon Municipality teamed up with the Kata-Karon Hotel Association and the Beach Boy Club to stage the 4th annual Karon Mountain Bike Race on December 21.

Starting amid the breathtaking scenery of Karon Viewpoint, the event got underway at 9 am and was divided into three separate races: 30km, 25km and 10km. A total of 176 participants – 163 men and 13 women – competed for top honors and the 184,500 baht in prize money.

The Karon Mountain Bike Race is aimed at promoting tourism to the area as well as encouraging local youngsters to take up the sport.

Winner of the 30km race and the 20,000 baht winner's cheque was Police Captain Tawatchai Maseh of the National Police Office. On a good day for 'law and order', Surachet Singjui, also from the National Police Office, triumphed in the 25km, winning 3,000 baht.

In the 10km race, which was restricted to children aged 12 or under, Tanawat Uraikit from Nakhon Sri Thammarat claimed the 1,500 baht first prize.

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A host of new hotels coming in the 'Phuket 2.0' development pipeline

Despite a global recession and recent political unrest, investment in the Phuket tourism industry continues to forge ahead. From 2009 until 2011, at least thirty new hotels and around 4,900 rooms are due to flood the market.

The island currently has close to 40,000 registered "tourism accommodation units," rooms in establishments ranging in scale from small guest houses and bungalows to hotels, resorts and luxury properties.

Of the existing inventory about 25%, or 10,000 units, are rated as international standard. Thus, the new units look to add over 50% new inventory within a fairly short time frame because of these units 47% are upscale and luxury hotels.

The rest are classified as midscale (41%), budget/economy (9%), with 3% extended-stay accommodations, such as villas and condos.

Over the next two years, 2009 is set to see the largest surge in new supply, with 38% or 1,850 new rooms expected to open.

Reflecting at year end, 2008 saw the opening of many important new properties. These include the Minor Groups Anantara Resort, adjacent to the JW Marriott and designed by design guru Bill Bensley.

Joining the Courtyard Phuket Surin are two other properties operated by Marriott, in Kamala and Patong, both developed by Thailand's Destination Properties.

The inclusion of the Hard Rock Café at the Patong Marriott



Overlooking Karon, the Centara Grand Phuket Beach Resort looks set to offer the kind of sea-front access that few hotel properties in Phuket can provide.

marks an exciting fusion of entertainment in a traditional hotel setting.

Over the last year Phang Nga bay has seen two impressive new entries with the Six Senses Hideaway on Koh Yao Noi and Six Senses Destination Spa on Koh Naka Yai, proving that Phuket's east coast is a burgeoning hotel destination.

Another significant trend has been the increase in the number of Thai entities, both publicly listed firms and private individuals, developing new hotels.

Much of this can be attributed to the domestic liquidity situ-

ation and the greater availability of credit.

Branding of hotels is also on the rise, with 27 of the 30 prospective hotels to be operated by international or domestic chains.

In past economic downturns, branded hotels have outperformed independent properties. This fact has been acknowledged by investors, though certainly there are exceptions – such as the notable successes of young entrepreneurs driving projects such as Sri Panwa, Aleenta, The Sarojin, and Burasari.

Looking to the future, the Mai Khao beach area seems to be approaching critical mass. Thai group Seacon's Renaissance and Bangkok's Narai Hotel group are opening a second Holiday Inn in Phuket. West

Sands Resort is joining hands with Hawaii's Outrigger brand, plus building a high-quality water park, to emerge as a serious competitor to the long-

established Laguna Resort in Bang Tao.

In Kamala, a trio of properties is joining millionaires' mile. Alan Zeman's Andara Resort Residences, Cape Sienna's hotel and ocean-front villas and Destination properties Marriott at Kamala Cove have all reached advanced stages of construction. Patong, Phuket's most famous destination, is burst-

ing at the seams and new projects are spilling over into the Kalim area.

A bright new entry for 2009

is the Thai owned boutique B-Lay Tong, which is aiming to co-habit the niche that Twin Palms has garnered further north. Hong Kong's rapidly expanding Langham Hotel International has combined with prominent architect Clint Nagata of the Blink Design Group to com-

mence development of an upscale pool-villa resort with captivating west coast views.



PROPERTY WATCH

By Bill Barnett

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Finally, the Wyndham looks to tap into the growing vacation ownership market currently dominated by Marriott, Laguna and Absolute.

Just over the hill going into Karon, the Centara Grand looks to be replicating its successful formula in Krabi by developing an oceanfront offering in a pristine small bay. Further south, the island's second Ibis budget hotel will take up residence in Kata.

Last year the purchase of a villa by Formula One superstar Kimi Raikkonen generated overseas media attention and the addition of Hawaii's Outrigger management company has added glitz and glamor to Rawai's Serenity Terraces. Moving further up the coast, branded giants Regent, Sheraton and Radisson all look to add new properties.

The successful Twin Palms management team, led by Olivier Gibaud, will be offering high end residences for rent as hotel units.

This looks to be a growing trend with Bangtao's Palm Beach Club and Kamala's Andara also looking to tap into this unique hotel market. As we move into a new decade of Phuket tourism, condominiums and villas are poised to be direct competitors of mainstream hotels and will look to offer niche products as holiday alternatives.

Despite the numerous new developments, some projects have encountered difficulties. The Four Seasons, slated for Rawai, faces an uncertain future



Hotel Name	Area	Rooms	Opening
Anantara Phuket Resort & Spa	Mai Khao	83	Oct 2008
Renaissance Resort & Spa Phuket	Mai Khao	150	Oct 2009
Holiday Inn Phuket Mai Khao Beach Resort	Mai Khao	266	Q4 2010
West Sands Outrigger Resort Phuket	Mai Khao	433	Q4 2009
Dewa Phuket Resort	Nai Yang	96	Dec 2008
Hyatt Regency Phuket Resort and Spa	Nai Yang	151	TBA
Angano Phuket Resort & Spa	Bangtao	134	2011
Shangri-La's Phuket Resort & Spa	Bangtao	315	2010
The Palm Beach Club	Bangtao	42	Q2 2009
Dalai Resort Bangtao Beach	Bangtao	200	Dec 2008
Courtyard by Marriott Phuket at Kamala Beach Hotel	Kamala	180	Dec 2008
Andara Resort Residences	Kamala	37	Q4 2009
Cape Sienna Phuket Hotel and Villas	Kamala	148	Mar 2009
Phuket Marriott Resort & Spa at Kamala Cove	Kamala	202	Q3 2009
Langham Place Mira Resort & Spa	Kalim	78	2010
Wyndham Vacation Resort Patong Phuket	Kalim	65	Q1 2009
Courtyard by Marriott Phuket at Patong Beach	Patong	390	Dec 2008
B-Lay Tong Hotel	Patong	125	Q2 2009
Ibis Kata Phuket	Kata	200	Q1 2010
Centara Grand Phuket Beach Resort	Karon	262	Q1 2010
Outrigger Serenity Terraces Resort Phuket	Rawai	78	Q1 2009
Taj Exotica and Spa Resort Phuket	Koh Loe	79	2011
Westin Sray Bay Resort & Spa, Phuket	Koh Sray	258	Jan 2010
Radisson Plaza Resort Phuket Patong	Patong Bay	217	2009
Regent Phuket Cape Panwa	Panwa Bay	106	Mar 2009
Four Points by Sheraton, Makhae Bay	Makhae Bay	200	Jan 2011
Jumeirah Private Island Resort	Koh Ruet	107	Q4 2011
The Yamu	Cape Yamu	91	Q4 2009
Baan Yamu Residences by Twinpalms	Cape Yamu	62	Q4 2009
Raffles Phang Nga Resort & Residences	Bo Dan Phang Nga	197	2011

due to the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers. No announcement has been made on a Park Hyatt project and while Royal Phuket Marina looks to move forward with its upscale condominium hotel, it remains in the planning process.

The entire development pipeline appears to be full of challenges and exciting prospects. Most of Phuket's 2.0 develop-

ments appear to constitute stimulating additions to Asia's premier resort destination. With supply on the rise, demand will increase due to the emergence of additional recognized international brands. However, the island's long-term tourism infrastructure development and overseas promotion remain keys in keeping pace.

As Phuket 2.0 emerges from a past where Amanpuri and

more recent rival Triasara have battled for top billing in the luxury market, in the coming years three new entries look set to challenge.

The Yamu dream team of Philippe Starck and Jean Michel Gathy, Dubai's Jumeirah Hotel Group and Taj Exotica from Thailand's own Lek Bunnag will look to attract new jet-setting visitors and create enviable world class destinations.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks (c9hotelworks.com), a Phuket-based hotel and residential property consulting firm. With more than 20 years' experience in the region, he has played an active role in some of the island's biggest developments.

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Available off-plan for purchase or lease over a 90-year period are 11 plots of land that offer prospective buyers a choice of house size and price. The sum of 29.5 million baht will secure a, "Type A," 540sqm house, fully fitted with an impressive two million baht's worth of furniture. "Type B," at 490sqm and 25 million baht, is also available fully furnished. Should you decide against purchasing a furnished villa, the cost of your preselected furniture will be deducted from the total price.

Both villa types are designed to be set into the hillside and surrounded by lush, green vegetation. Designed over three



The Villas Grand Cru showhome is perched on the slope with a view of Chalong Bay.

floors, a Villa Grand Cru home offers an aesthetic infinity pool and terrace on the ground floor, easily accessible through the bottom floor guest bedrooms. Moving through the house, up onto the second floor, the stylishly crafted living area reveals a panoramic view of Chalong Bay. Level two

is completed by the dining and kitchen facilities and adjoined by ample car parking space. The third floor is dominated by the master bedroom complete with its own private terrace.

Each villa boasts a list of facilities worthy of a millionaire's hideout. Fully air-conditioned, LCD TVs with DVD and stereo systems grace nearly every room. All bedrooms come en suite with individually controlled hot and cold water from Siemens.

The pool area features a chill-out zone with terrace and a mini bar, whilst the kitchen contains enough utensils and gadgetry to make even Gordon Ramsey smile.

Once completed, the private luxury villas will be complemented by the facilities of the Boat House and Villa Royale resorts.



The 3-storey villas can be bought fully furnished and decorated in Mom Tri's modern tropical style.

Amenities planned for the future include concierge service, restaurants, spas, wine cellars, libraries and fitness centers, giving the development the feel of a luxury resort.

The developer, Mom Luang Tri Devakul, or simply Mom Tri, is a pioneer of luxury property and accommodation in Phuket. Mom Tri sees private villas in Phuket gradually become the preferred accommodation alternative for seasoned international travelers who demand privacy

and personalized service.

Villas Grand Cru also offers a rental program supported by the marketing network of Mom Tri's Villa Royale.

For more information contact Project Manager Phimphan Tantipirijakij at Tel: 081-8959955 or 076-285281. Web: www.villasgrandcru.com Email: info@villasgrandcru.com or sales@villasgrandcru.com.



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Legal

Kert Stavorn

New regulations tighten Land Office's grip on leases

Over the past year Thailand has seen tighter restrictions being imposed with regard to the registration of leases by foreign nationals.

Traditionally, leases were considered the simplest and most straightforward option for foreign nationals looking to acquire and secure their proprietary rights in Thailand and were believed to be the most secure method for non-Thais who decided to invest in property here in the Kingdom too.

Foreign nationals would often register for the maximum period of 30 years at the land office and add contractual obligations to apply for further extensions after the initial 30 years had expired.

This became common practice when setting up companies to own freehold properties became overly complicated. Taking a lease on property in Thailand is now seen as the norm for many foreign buyers.

However the perception of leases may change in the near future. We are now seeing the tightening of the interpretation of the law by individual land registration departments throughout the country, particularly when it comes to leases. The discretion that individual land offices enjoy in Thailand remains important as public administrative law is quite flexible.

This has its fair share of advantages and disadvantages. The most obvious disadvantage is that such discretions could lead



It has now become standard practice that every foreigner who wishes to register a lease on a property prove that the funds have been sent from outside Thailand, similar to the requirement for foreigners purchasing a freehold condominium. *Photo: Siam Real Estate*

to a significant imbalance of power. With the Thai constitution currently on a roller coaster ride, the 'separation of powers' doctrine is still considered a sensitive issue in Thai politics. As things stand, it would appear public administrator powers do carry some weight, at least at the local and provincial level.

One of the many new regulations currently being imple-

mented involves the refusal by the land office to accept renewal clauses in lease agreements. This will mean that only the first 30 years of the lease will be recognized and the subsequent renewal terms are not even contractually acknowledged.

There have been cases where such renewal clauses had to be crossed out before the land officer would register the lease. The main issue of contention here is that leases, according to Section 540 of the Thai Civil and Commercial Code, can in fact be renewed by law as long as it does not exceed 30 years from the time of renewal. What authority public administrators have in interpreting codified laws remains to be seen, but it would seem prudent that this discretion be left to the judiciary system.

Another new requirement at this time is that companies with foreign shareholders or directors wishing to lease property will require the Thai shareholders of the company to undergo stringent checks in order to ensure that they are legitimate stakeholders

in the company as opposed to being possible nominees for the foreigners.

This rule has been introduced for companies buying freehold property for quite some time now. Recently, this has been implemented for the acquisition of leasehold rights if the land officer believes there is some commercial interest to the company in securing the lease.

This legislation has made it more difficult for foreign nationals and companies to obtain a lease in Thailand. The rule is to some degree flawed because there are no restrictions anywhere, including the Land Code, which restrict foreigners from acquiring a leasehold property in the first place. Indeed foreign-registered companies can still be granted leases here in Thailand.

It has now become standard practice that every foreigner who wishes to register a lease on a property prove that the funds have been sent from outside Thailand. This is similar to the requirement for foreigners purchasing a freehold condominium.

This means that funds have to come from abroad, which may be an added burden to some foreign nationals residing here in Thailand.

It would appear some of these new rules, which have been introduced by the department heads at the land office, are made on an ad hoc basis and are unlikely to last once the legislative assembly makes some inroads in stabilizing the economy and the political situation.

The impact it has had on the property market is not too positive and with the property and construction sector contributing a large percentage of Thailand's GDP, it is very likely that legislators will tighten up these ad hoc discretionary powers of the bureaucracy in order to get it in line with more positive and drastic fiscal and monetary policies which are likely to be indispensable by next year.

Kert Stavorn is a property expert at Siam Legal International. Email: kert@siam-legal.com

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Gardening

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Pink Pampers, Pride and Lady

Pink says a lot where I come from. We have the pink pound, the pink market and pink pride. We clothe our daughters in pink dresses and wrap our baby girls in pink blankets. Even their disposable nappies come in pink wrappers. What is it about pink, then? Why does such a simple, unassuming color have so many associations and connotations? We in the West have a lot to answer for.

For some reason, the vast majority of the Western population consider pink the perfect color to represent anything even vaguely feminine. I'm not even sure that it's the females that have made this decision – perhaps it's the red-blooded macho blokes from my side of the globe that have made this seemingly strange decision.

It is probably the fault of all parents in the West, to be honest. They bear a child who happens to be of the female gender, and what's the first thing that Dad does well before the little darling arrives home? Paint the bedroom walls pink. Fairly standard practice.

Then there are the stories of parents who have had another one of those scan things done (does anyone really recognize babies in those black fuzzy splodges?), and it transpires that the first doctor missed the image of the rather important part of the anatomy that identifies a son. Panic ensues; the bedroom was



The giant spider lily grows well in coastal areas, and while it's fairly tolerant you'll need to make sure it's kept away from direct salt spray.

Painted months ago.

The father can't possibly put his future son and heir in a pink room – perish the thought, he might be scarred for life. A quick visit to the Western equivalent of HomePro later and he's armed with a few gallons of blue to chuck on the walls to keep his son on the straight and narrow. I'm surprised the more radical types haven't accused these parents of being discriminatory.

So why on earth is it blue for boys and pink for girls? Who decided that pink was a bit on the limp-wristed side in the first place? What about orange? Or purple? Thais have got it absolutely right in this regard – they simply don't care. You see strapping lads the size of brick out-houses wearing the brightest gayest pinkest shirts you could ever imagine – try going up to one of them and telling him his shirt's a bit suspect. I dare you.

The other day I went past a school whose students had a particularly distinctive uniform –

purple nylon sports trousers with bright pink shirts. And why not?

In my youth I used to think I was hugely daring when I bucked society's rules in deepest darkest Yorkshire by occasionally wearing pink Dayglo socks, as we all did. After all, we were hip and cool. Oh dear.

Nowadays I have a pink T-shirt that sits at the bottom of my clothes pile here in Phuket, occasionally working its way to the top. By the way, do all blokes wear what's at the top of the pile that day, rather than going through the girly process of actually choosing? Anyway, every time I go out wearing it, merciless jibes are the inevitable result. I should be a little more willing to wear pink, I suppose, but then again blue is my favorite – it's a boy's color. Some things just never change.

Back to pink then, and something more gardening-related: *crinum amabile*. I wanted to call this week's plant the pink spider lily, but it's more commonly

known as the giant spider lily, or swamp lily. This particular epithet is perhaps a little unfair, given how little it looks like a swamp dweller; it would be more at home in Kew Gardens, or in the grounds of a royal palace somewhere.

In Thai it's known as the *phlap phleung*.

The giant spider lily is what the scientific types with questionable facial hair and bow ties refer to as 'a herbaceous perennial'. All that means in more normal language is that it doesn't have any woody parts to it (it's mainly water) and it lasts for more than two growing seasons.

Those so-called 'experts' in the botanical field are thrown into disarray when it comes to this plant. They've found *crinum amabile* hard to categorize and confused it with other similar plants in the past. As far as most of them are concerned now, it's a distinct species, but is considered by many to be a hybrid between a couple of other *crinum* species that would be too tedious to list.

The sword-like leathery leaves grow in a kind of rosette shape. They are a deep, greenish-red and reach a length of around a meter.

Now this is where the pink connection comes in – you knew there had to be one somewhere. Pink, fragrant flowers with small, red stripes sit on top of a succulent, cylindrical flower stalk which is up to about a meter tall.

A 15cm-long floral tube bears six petals and sepals, and rosy stamens appear from the throat of the tube. These dramatically striking, fragrant flowers appear during most seasons of the year.

The fruits of the swamp lily (or whatever you want to call it) are lobed seed capsules that are 3 or 4cm thick. The mechanics of growing are fairly unusual, too – it appears from large bulbs that protrude above the soil line.

They may well need a little attention once in a while. The flowering stalks can grow a bit too enthusiastically for their own good and become top heavy, so they might need a little extra support in the form of stakes or something similar. Also, as the blossoms fade, the stalks should be removed back to the bulb. The only other thing you'll need to do is remove yellowing leaves throughout the growing season. They like it like that.

I know this is a bit of a familiar refrain with me, but propagation of the *crinum amabile* is dead easy: all you need to do to start new plants is to divide older clumps. Literally grab bunches of the things, with their bulbs, and move them to their new home. They'll start producing clones of themselves in no time.

This lily is happiest in soils that are moderately moist, so irrigation during the dry season is a good idea. If you plant it in full sun to partial shade, it will give you maximum growth and flowers. The giant spider lily grows well in coastal areas (Phuket being no exception), and while it's fairly tolerant you'll need to make sure it's kept away from direct salt spray. Not a beach lover.

Apart from planting these things, it's good to see that Phuket is doing its bit to change the image of the color pink, anyway. Besides the odd *crinum amabile* dotted around, some businesses are trying hard too.

It would seem that the Pink Lady, a gentlemen's entertainment establishment in the center of Phuket Town, is hardly the sort of place that's associated with anything even remotely 'light in the loafers' as they say.

Perhaps I'll pop in for a pink gin later. Cheers.

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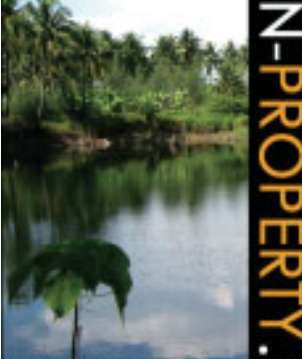
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- 20 minutes to Phuket Town, Central

No Agents

- Plot A: 982 sqm. 4,985,000 baht
- Plot B: 1,054 sqm. 5,289,000 baht

Mobile: +66 (0) 81 370 789 3 Email: jackfruit@gmx.net



TOWNHOUSE IN THE PROJECT 'THE INDY'



at the entrance to BIS. Townhouse is at the corner and adjacent to the project's public garden. 2 floors, 6.5 meters wide, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Land: 32sq wah. Tel: 089-472 9118.

LUXURY ESTATE
 Ocean front villa in Phuket. Impressive property, fully furnished. Freehold, 4 million Euros. No agents. Tel: 087-284 9541. Villa@Phuket-No1.com

VILLA IN NAI HARN
 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, western kitchen, aircon, room for pool. 3.9 million baht. Tel: 076-288047, 081-894 1660. Email: cottrell@ttmaxnet.com

HOUSES, BANGTAO
 for sale. 2-3 bedrooms, from 3 million baht to 14 million baht. Tel: 087-268 8752. For further details and photos, please visit our website at www.phukethome.ws

OFFICE FOR SALE IN PATONG
 Serviced offices with long lease for sale at Patong Beach. Prime location with sea views, 500 meters from the beach and Bangla Road. Total area 460sqm. Ready to move in. Would suit real estate office/exhibition center. 1.5 million baht. Tel: 076-292255, 087-015 9206. Email: david@freedomleisuregroup.com

SARIYA HOUSE



320sqm plot. 2 story luxury villa with sea view. 3 bedrooms (1 pool-side and 2 with balconies overlooking pool), 3 en-suite bathrooms, fully-fitted kitchen with top-line convection oven, spacious open-plan living and dining area, large jet stream swimming pool, roof-terrace with stylish sala & double car-port. Fully furnished with air-conditioning.
 - Price: 13.6 million baht
 - Type: Villa
 - Location: Soi Kery off Sai Yuan Rd., Rawai/Nai-harn
 - Contact: Khun Kob
 Tel: + 66 (0) 895892662.
 Email: sariyapat-t@hotmail.com
 Website: www.siriyahouse.com

NAI HARN POOL VILLA SALE!
 Beautiful house, only 5 years old, on 850sqm of land. New 60sqm swimming pool, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, European kitchen, living room. Fully furnished. Two terraces, garage, carport, nice tropical garden. Very quiet location. Chanote land title. 6.9 million baht. Tel: 076-388633, 086-682 9709. Email: wweidner@loxinfo.co.th

SEA VIEW 3.2 RAI
 at north end of Bang Sak Beach. Take Thap Tawan beach road to Bang Sak Beach Resort, 6km south of Takuapa. Tel: 081-894 7644.

Your Total Property Solutions

Buy-Sell-Rent Properties



<p>Condo in Blue Canyon Home 1</p> <p>Location : Thalang Type : Condominium Area : 254 Sq.m. Br/Bth : 3 Brs 3 Bths Price : THB 17 M Remark : on the hills and sea view.</p>	<p>Royal Phuket Marina</p> <p>Location : Koh Kaew Type : Condominium Area : 154 Sq.m. Br/Bth : 2 Brs 2 Bths Price : THB 19.5 M Remark : Fully furnished, sea view.</p>	<p>Baan Suan Neramit</p> <p>Location : Rawai Type : Thalang Area : 540 Sq.m. Br/Bth : 5 Brs 5 Bths Price : THB 12.8 M Remark : 3 minutes from Heroines' Monument</p>
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- Land at Baan Don
 Thalang
 170 Sq.w.
 land for sale located in Laguna area.
 Price THB 3.5 M
- Sea View Land at Por Bay
 Por Bay, Phuket
 4.4 Rai
 Panoramic sea view land.
 Price THB 8 M per Rai
- Vacant Land
 Mai Khao
 6-1-6 Rai
 Good location in quiet area.
 Price THB 4 M per Rai

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Property Gazette

NEW 1 BEDROOM APARTMENT IN KATA CENTRAL
 60sqm. furnished. Use of swimming pool, parking & restaurant.
Only 2.9 million baht.
Tel: 084-0639223 or 081-7888280

PANORAMIC SEA VIEW



Karon land for sale. 15 rai. Chanote title. Hillside, panoramic sea view, quiet area. Very good location for business. 15 million baht per rai. No agents. Please contact by email: allservices29@gmail.com

LAND MUST SELL



190 metres of beach frontage, 7 rai (can split) with view of Yacht Haven Marina, secure title. Road access, electricity, water, ready to build. Best investment. For sale at only 35 million baht or best offer. Must sell. Tel: 081-343 0777.

AGRICULTURAL LAND for sale. 120 rai of agricultural land for sale, 20km from resort area of Khao Lak. Total price 3.84 million baht. Please telephone 087-020 0191 for further information.

QUICK SALE
 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms at 4.5 million baht. Tel: 081-894 2009.

FREEHOLD FOR SALE
 New 46sqm studio with pool. Fully furnished. 3 million baht. Patong. Tel: 089-728 4005. Email: antoniocpala@yahoo.it

URGENT SALE
 Mai Khao, 700 metres to beach. Near West Sands. 2.3 million baht per rai. Tel: 083-633 4994.

LAND AT PA KHLOK



49 rai, nice flat land. Chanote, 2.5km from Heroines' Monument. 1.7 million baht per rai. Tel: 083-180 2143.

PATONG BEVERLY HILLS
 Luxurious villa for sale, Nanai Rd, close to Patong Beach hillside. Big pool, fantastic sea view, 2km from the beach, 5 bedrooms, 650sqm living space, huge private garden, very large spa house, walled property, fully furnished. No agents. Only 65 million baht. Please contact via by email: allservices29@gmail.com

MAI KHAO HOUSE for sale. One-story single house, 3 bedrooms with built-in furniture, big dining room and kitchen, large garden with big trees, area 305 sq wah. Only 5.5 million baht. Tel: 089-697 0928.

COCONUT ISLAND LAND




for sale. 4.5 rai. Chanote, hillside panoramic sea view, close to beach. 14 million baht. Please call K. Bouddha Tel: 089-290 0484.

BIG HOUSE, HONEST PRICE
 3 bedrooms, pool, 700 sqm of land. 6.5 million baht or nearest offer. Must sell. Tel: +66-86-683 1964. Email: franklee200@hotmail.com

HOLIDAY HOME 499,000 BAHT
 Fractional ownership in high end apartment on Koh Lanta. Great opportunity for an excellent holiday home. From only 499,000 baht! Tel: 089-839 8255. Email: info@lantaestate.net

INEXPENSIVE HOUSE LOTS
 Chanote titles. East side, electricity, 1/3 to 1 rai, price from 850,000 baht. Tel: 086-942 1930.

Beautiful House



40% financial support

- 540sqm land plot and nearly 330sqm indoor area, located 3 mins from Heroines' Monument.
- 5 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms, all with hot water.
- Separate living, European kitchen and dining areas.
- 4.5x12m swimming pool with turbo jet (partially indoors).
- Timber sala with waterfall wall feature.
- Fully built-in furniture in all rooms.
- 8 aircon units, 3 ceiling fans, landscape lighting and sprinkler system for garden.
- 1 Jacuzzi and 1 bathtub.
- Indoor carport with automatic gate.
- Water tank and pressure tank for water supply.
- 3-phase electricity, tel. True TV, ADSL.
- Good quality of finishing materials after refurbishment to new condition.

Price = 12.8 million baht. Call (081) 895-7310.

CHALONG SEA VIEW
 2-story twin house, 36 sq wah, 3 bedrooms with airconditioning, garden, sea view and mountain view. Only 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-697 0928.

HOUSE IN KATHU for sale. 2 bedroom, aircon. Moo 6 Katha. Price 1.2 million baht ono. Call (Eng) 085-1407826, (Thai) 087-8846572.

LAND BETWEEN CHALONG/RAWAI for sale. 2,788sqm with chanote title. Price 6.8 million baht. Tel: 089-885 4517.

QUICK SALE
 Only 5.1 million baht, near Laguna. Thai-style home. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, living room. Tel: 087-8938590.

AGRICULTURAL LAND for sale. 120 rai of agricultural land for sale, 20km from resort area of Khao Lak. Total price 3.84 million baht. Please telephone 087-020 0191 for further information.

COMMERCIAL RAWAI
 88 sq wah, 32 meters frontage on busy Sai Yuan Rd. 4.9 million baht. Good investment. Tel: 085-794 2675.

The BEACH FRONT villa



- 3 bedroom all wood floor finished
- 4 bathroom
- 2 car park
- Infinity swimming pool 4x7 m.
- 500 sq.m. for villa area
- 19 sq.wa for plot land area
- Nor sor 3 kor Document
- All material is high quality
- 3 min. to Ao Por Grand Marina
- 10 min. to Mission Hill Golf Course
- 20 min. to the airport
- 25 min. to shopping center.
- All 4th Floor Level
- Privacy beach front
- Privacy your villa
- Prime location for relaxation with your lifestyle

THE BEACH FRONT

It's a favoured pastime of people to dream of that perfect getaway villa, ocean views, only a few steps from the beach, and of course on some paradise isle! Here in Phuket we turn dreams in to reality

Phuket is now well known as one of the world's most popular tourist destinations, and we offer beach front villas of 3 stories, each with rooftop terraces that provide 360° panoramic views of the surrounding mountains ranges, beautiful ocean, and islands of Ao Bay.



THE LOCATION

The location of the villas ensures an international port Ao Por Marina, Ao Por Pier, Mission Hills Golf Course, Phuket International Airport and various shopping malls as other well known Phuket attractions are all easily accessible.



CONCEPT DESIGN

Ao Por is largely untouched by development, so a villa here ensures both serenity and privacy, with the sound knowledge that your investment has strong potential for growth. As the villas are completed investor peace of mind is assured and for those looking to live the dream you can even move in!

Certainly an offer worth considering-should you wish for more information please contact the project's owner Khun Thanya Jitboon directly at +66(0)89 908 9829



The **BEACH FRONT** villa
 95/14 Moo 6, Ao Por, Pa Khlok, Thalang, Phuket, Thailand
 Thanya Jitboon Mobile: 089-9089829 Office: 076-529035 Email: jitboon_19@yahoo.com

Property Gazette

Properties For Rent

POOL VILLA RAWAI



Beautiful 2 bedroom villa with private pool. Close to Rawai and Nai Harn beaches. Fully furnished, aircon. Price: 35,000 baht per month. Available from mid February, min 6 months. Please call at: 081-970 1716.

NEAR CHALONG CIRCLE

New, quiet, 2-bed property with pool. Beautifully furnished, aircon, phone and UBC. 30,000 baht per month, long term only. Tel: 089-652 1951. Email: phuketsuperhome@gmail.com

LUXURY MANSION

for rent in Rawai. 4 large bedrooms. Fully equipped, Western and separate Thai kitchen. Full aircon, huge indoor and outdoor living area with private pool. Tel: 085-783 1890.

SERVICED OFFICES FOR RENT

All inclusive! Starting at only 13,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-574 7799. Email: mike.thailand@hotmail.com

CHALONG NEW HOME

2 bedroom home with telephone, UBC and aircon for rent. Tel: 089-652 1473. Or send an email to: anandaestates@yahoo.com

ROOMS / CONDO FOR RENT

I have rooms from 18,000 baht per month. Call me (Maria) or email for details. Tel: 084-845 0003. Email: m@bayproject.com

NEW HOUSE IN KATHU



for rent. 3 bedroom, 3 bathroom, European kitchen. 5 minutes to Patong, close to Loch Palm Golf course. Fully furnished, 2-story, big balcony. Tel: 081-440 0101. Email: nahja@yahoo.com

SPECIAL FOR HOME LOVER

4 bedroom villa with private pool. Available for rent for 6 months from Jan 2009. Tel: 076-273466, 081-968 9046. Fax: 076-238948. Email: webmaster@phuketpropertytrip.com For further details, please see our website at www.phuketpropertytrip.com

LUXURY POOL VILLA

2,000 baht daily. Laguna, furnished, Jacuzzi, BBQ, security. Has everything. Tel: 089-594 4067.

NEW CONDO

28 sqm, furnished, 1 bedroom, aircon, TV, ADSL, fridge, kitchen. Great location on Thepkrasattri Rd. 12,000 baht per month (negotiable). Tel: 076-310334, 081-893 6414. Fax: 076-310296. Email: bb_powerz@yahoo.com

HOUSE IN KAMALA

2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, fully furnished, aircon, short or long-term rent, near beach. Tel: 086-277 3381.

PATONG APARTMENT

300 meters to the beach, clean, modern, comfortable. Aircon, TV, fridge, big bed, pool, parking. Tel: 081-082 5707. For further details, please see our website at http://www.phuket-accommodation.info

PATONG TOWER CONDO-A BEAUTY



Beautiful Patong Tower beach condo with stunning 280° panoramic views of the sea, hills and town. Large outdoor patio and wrap-around balcony. Comes completely renovated, with Internet and washing machine. Available from October 12. Tel: 011-86-13816344147. Email: txxtz@yahoo.com For further details, please see our website at www.patongtowerrental.com

3 BEDROOM HOUSE

fully furnished, aircon, ADSL, near Heroines Monument. 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-277 8461. Email: brunuiviv@hotmail.com

NEW VILLA FOR RENT OR SALE

610sqm, 4 bedrooms, swimming pool and garden, 1,000sqm. The villa is located next to Loch Palm Golf Course. Rent weekly: 130,000 baht; monthly, 300,000 baht. Or for sale at US\$ 1.35 million. House agents welcome. Please contact Mr Tuan. Tel: 089-652 3148. Email: pratuan@solicitorthai.com

PATONG TOWER

1 bed nice condo on beach road. Tel: 084-847 3304. For further details, please see our website at www.selectphuket.com

LAGUNA TOWNHOME

Long-term only, on golf course, 4 beds / baths, includes privilege card. 85,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-873 6151. Email: stuartr@lagunaphuket.com

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RAWAI BEACH POOL HOME STAY



Private bedroom, bathroom, aircon, ADSL, Wi-Fi, cable TV. 3,500 baht weekly. Tel: 086-940 8914. Email: rawai1@yahoo.com

RAWAI HOUSE / FLAT

for rent. Fully furnished, swimming pool, ADSL. Direct from owner. For further details, please see our website at www.ferienthailand.com

SINGLE HOUSE

for rent. Thalang monument, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Tel: 081-537 0033.

NEW HOUSE (BANDON)



for sale/rent near Laguna. 2 bedrooms, fully furnished, just bring your bag. Price negotiable, 1-year contract. Tel: 089-874 2960. Email: pwarunee@hotmail.com Website: www.phuket-on-tour.blogspot.com

SHOP FOR RENT AT PATONG

One shop at Jungceylon & one shop at Patong beach front. 24sqm. Rent 26,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-328 7376. Fax: 076-271 1110. Email: sohailnoshad@hotmail.com

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NICE AND COZY HOUSE FOR RENT



Furnished and excellent location, 5 mins from Rawai and Nai Harn beaches. 162sqm. 2 bedrooms with private bathrooms. 1 guest toilet. 3 aircons. Large living-dining room. Telephone line with ADSL. Free water supply and garbage collection service. Please contact K. Nui. Tel: 087-383-0936.

RAWAI BEACH POOL VILLA



1, 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms, bathroom, aircon, ADSL, cable TV. 24,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-940 8914. Email: rawai1@yahoo.com

KAMALA BUNGALOWS

First class furnishings, gated private estate. ADSL, True, plasma TV. Long term only. Tel: 081-811 1067.

KATA LUXURY APARTMENTS

New, fully furnished, 1 or 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, full aircon. Large Western teak kitchen and bath, 130sqm, large seaview terrace, pool, parking. Weekly, monthly and long-term rates available. Serviced also available. Tel: 089-592 6890. Email: north8west98@yahoo.com

FOR RENT PATONG BEACH

Condotel 56 sqm, nice apartment, 7 floors 1 bedroom, kitchen, living, aircon, TV, cable, ADSL. Tel: 081-891 3740.

KAMALA BEACH

New apartments & houses for rent. 2 to 4 bedrooms, furnished, quiet & secure. Close to beach 5,000-20,000 baht per month. Tel: 082-421 9169.

1 BEDROOM APARTMENT KATA

New building includes elevator, pool, restaurant, gym and parking. Walking distance to beach, shopping and nightlife. For rent or sale. Tel: 085-783 1890.

B.L. APARTMENT

New in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, car park. 8,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-692 3163.

LUXURY POOL VILLA

3 bedrooms, 5 min to Boat Lagoon & BIS. 70,000 baht per month. simon@worrall.info

PROPERTY RENTALS

For further details, please see our website at www.kingdomvillarentals.com

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Property Gazette

Property Wanted

WANTED: HOUSE FOR RENT

with pool long-term for swiss-couple, no children no dogs, no noise, max. 30,000 baht/month we take care. Tel: 087-380 9181

FLAT OR HOUSE

from October 8 until March 2009. Could be in Phuket or Krabi, including Koh Lanta. The important things are seaside (or at least sea view) and a swimming pool. Two bedrooms, for a couple. No pets and no parties. Can be a quiet location. Email: office@neubrasilien.at

APARTMENT SWAP

I am looking to swap rental of my Sydney 2 bedroom apartment for a Patong apartment from December 15 to March 27, 2009 - or part thereof. My apartment has aircon, cable TV, and Internet. Five mins to city and beaches. Tel: +61-2-9904 2073, +61-430-218110. Email: mbohlsen@gmail.com

Property Services

ORIENTAL REAL ESTATE

Don't miss out. Buy now! Sale, rent, buy, house & land. Tel: 083-103 6578. For further details, please see our website at <http://www.oriental-realestate.com>

VILLA MANAGEMENT by self-employed person. I have 7 years' experience with real estate and property management in Australia. Have worked with hotel management in Phuket resorts for 3 years. I provide high-quality service and villa management at fair prices. Can carry out professional duties set out in the management agreement, including housekeeping & maintenance of property. Can organize flight tickets and activities as well as other requests. Tel: 087-100 6111. Email: luckypam@gmail.com

WWW.MAPHRAO.COM

Dream sea view, east of the island, approximately 400sqm from 1,990 baht per sqm, 796,000 baht for 30-year lease, longer lease available. 12 houses have been built so far. We speak German and English. Tel: 081-891 8930, 087-060 8400.

Accommodation Available

NEAR CHALONG CIRCLE

New, quiet, 2-bed property with pool. Beautifully furnished, air-con, phone and UBC. 30,000 baht per month, long term only. Tel: 089-652 1951. Email: phuketsuperhome@gmail.com

APARTMENT & ROOM IN PATONG

Apartment for long term rent. 16,000-20,000 baht per month. Rooms from 800-1,500 baht per night. Tel: 076-512151 or 089-290 9567. Or send email: lars.micksater@comhem.se For pics, see our website at: www.brommathaihouse.com

HOLIDAY APARTMENT

Quality apartment in Patong for rent. Visit our website at www.patongapartments.com

PATONG LUXURY APARTMENT

Center Patong, 1 and 2 bedrooms. Tel: 076-341827 or email for info and photos. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

APARTMENT IN PATONG

for rent. New studio, 46sqm, in Patong. Fully furnished, pool. For rent daily and monthly. Tel: 089-728 4005. Email: antoniocpala@yahoo.it

2 APARTMENTS

for rent. Location Thalung with swimming pool, 5 rooms also long term rental. Tel: 085-691 9351.

ROOMS / CONDO FOR RENT

I have rooms from 18,000 baht per month. Call me (Maria) or email for details. Tel: 084-845 0003. Email: m@bayproject.com

KATA DELUX 2 BED DUPLEX

Minimum of 6 months. 28,000 baht per month. Please contact for additional details: Telephone: 081-270 5374. Email: orcella@phuket.ksc.co.th

BAAN PANYAH APARTMENT

Cheap and new, daily, monthly rate in Kathu. Tel: 076-319739, 081-8923583. Email: info@baanpanyahroom.com www.baanpanyahroom.com

SPACIOUS 2 BED SEAVIEW CONDO

Come stay in a spacious 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom condo overlooking Patong Beach. Still available over New Year. Tel: +85-2-2813 6093, +85-2-6100 4034, or fax: +85-2-2813 6083. Please see our website at: <http://www.phuket-patong-condo.com/>. Email: eddy.amaro@rbs.com

LUXURY 3 BED VILLA & POOL

Luxury, brand new villa on small estate close to Laguna, available for short term let. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, modern, well-equipped kitchen and living room. 2 large screen TVs and Satellite. Free WiFi, pool, BBQ, and small garden area. Fully equipped with high quality furnishings and daily maid service. Rates from US\$240 to US\$600 a night, depending on time of year. Discount for bookings of 7 nights or more. Calls after 4 pm please. Tel: 081-788 6639. Fax: 076-238721. Email: scubamatt72@gmail.com

QUIET GUESTHOUSE near Bangla. Rooms, pool, fitness, sauna, garden. European standard. Tel: 081-084 3415.

Accommodation Wanted

WANTED FOR RENT

Condo/ appt/ villa, Kamala, Surin, Bang Tao area, 2 bedrooms, fully furnished, Western kitchen, phone, wi-fi, pool. 3 Months from 10th Jan, 25-35,000 baht. Email: patprice52@hotmail.com

3 MONTH RENTAL

I am looking to rent a modern apartment larger than 50sqm in or near Patong with a/c, cable TV, ideally views + pool, for 3 months from December 16. Up to 25,000 baht per month. This is for one person. Tel: +61-2-9904 2073, +61-430-218110. Email: mbohlsen@gmail.com

TO RENT HOUSE / CONDO

Looking for a house or condo with pool for a month from Dec 19. Rental must be less than 18,000 baht. Responsible guests; we rent out property ourselves in Seoul. Tel: +82-2-3675 5537. Email: tamarackeast@hotmail.com

LONG-TERM RENTAL

Looking for a long-term rental (one year). Seeking a stylish condo, apartment or house with 2 bedrooms. Location: Thalung, Bang Tao or Surin. Renting from November 1. Budget: 25,000 - 30,000 baht maximum per month. Email: Gordonray@mac.com

VILLA / CONDO LONG TERM

2-3 bed modern villa or condo required immediately for rent. Must be furnished and secure, and should have sea view, terrace, pool, internet, and cable TV. Location could be Kamala, Patong, Kata, Karon, Chalong, Rawai, or Nai Harn. Needed for a minimum of 6-12 months. Tel: 085-666 5504. Email: vishalsood@msn.com

Building Products & Services

QUALITY BUILDING SERVICES

Renovations, construction, carpentry, real wood, parquet, painting. Contact K. Pueng for additional information at Tel: 087-270 9093 or K. Ne at Tel: 087-689 9679 (English/Thai). Email: allservices29@gmail.com

Household Items

OUTDOOR FURNITURE

Table with 6 folding chairs + 4 bar stools + sun lounger. 1 year old. Was 50,000 baht. Now 15,000. Will sell separately. Tel: 084-058 3190.

LOVELY TEAK BED

Queen-size bed. Main base and slat supports. Blank wall mount headboard so that you can fit your own design fabric into it. Made in Chiang Mai. Barely used. 20,000 baht. Tel: 076-282605, 085-069 1327. Email: john867332@yahoo.com

MODERN WARDROBES

2 modern wardrobes for sale. Each 260x235x60cm. 20,000 baht each. Tel: 087-265 1477. Or simply send an email to: johnnydejong@hotmail.com

3 PIECE SUITE

3 seater sofa, 2 arm chairs, Italian suede leather, removable cushions. Aquamarine color. Original cost: 280,000 baht. Will sell for 20,000. Tel: 076-279346, 081-597 9744. Fax: 076-279346. Email: peterb@ji-net.com

DISHWASHER

A little bit old but it works well. Price: 1,000 baht. Email: pn_guesthouse@yahoo.com

SAMSUNG MICROWAVE

New, hardly used. Asking 2,500 baht. (New price: 5,000.) Urgent sale. Tel: 080-520 2520. Email: jaco.vntr@gmail.com

BEACH/DECK CHAIRS

2 Beach/Deck chairs for sale at 500 baht each. Tel: 080-520 2520. Email: jaco.vntr@gmail.com

Household Services

BAAN SIAM

Construction shop. Fitting renovation, wood work. English/Thai. Tel: 084-455 3536.

PHUKET HOME MAINTENANCE

Construction, renovation, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, painters, tilers, gardening service, sand wash and gutter. Contact K. Rin. Tel: 084-193 5124. Email: phukethomemaintenance@yahoo.com

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Classified ads are charged per line. Each line is 120 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (heading included) per ad.

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Construction, renovation, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, painters, tilers, gardening service, sand wash and gutter. Contact K. Rin. Tel: 084-193 5124. Email: phukethomemaintenance@yahoo.com

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YACHT-ROD SAILING CATAMARAN

Fun Performance Cruiser. Tel: 089-587 1862. Email: mmcgrath2@hotmail.com See website for more details. <http://www.typhoonsails.com/stiletto.html>

FISHING BOAT

43ft Thai fishing boat. Hino Diesel engine, Borg Warner trans (new), outriggers and more. For quick sale, a bargain at 300,000 baht. Pic available on request. Tel: 076-388478, 083-520 7308. Email: gerrybfoster@hotmail.com

SPORT FISHING BOAT

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By order of The Board
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