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NEW WARNING SIGNS POSTED ON THE BEACHES IN SEVEN LANGUAGES TO SAVE TOURISTS

Beach drownings spark tourist safety measures

Governor pushes for SMS surf warnings on all inbound tourist mobile phones

By **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

NEW signs warning tourists in seven languages of the danger of swimming in treacherous monsoon season surf have been posted along Phuket's southern beaches.

Meanwhile, the Governor is pushing for all tourists entering the country to receive an automated message on their mobile phones warning them also to beware the monsoon surf.

The move follows a spate of drownings in Phuket in recent weeks, including three tourists.

In Karon, which has consistently recorded the most drowning deaths in recent years, the municipality has posted 15 large warning signs at highly-visible locations along Kata, Kata Noi and Karon beaches. The warnings, clearly stating the dangers of ignoring red warning flags, are in seven languages: Thai, Chinese, English, Russian, French, Korean and German.

Supachai Janphet, chief of the Sea Rescue Center, wants tourists to understand the risks they are taking if they enter the surf where red flags are flying.

"Karon Municipality has put up big notice boards at the popular tourist areas for the past four years warning tourists not to swim in red flag areas. The signs also advise caution when swimming in designated 'safe zones' during this time of year," he said.

The safe zones, marked with yellow-red pennants, indicate areas where lifeguards are at the ready to assist...

Continued on Page 2



EMERGENCY BUDGET REQUESTED AS RAINS ARRIVE

A last-minute push to fix the Patong Hill road is underway as fears of another landslide on the traffic-heavy hill grow. Full story on page 3

Welcome to our new look Gazette

READERS will be quick to note that the *Phuket Gazette's* Andaman Edition has a new face this week. Now in our 20th year of publication, this change in design style does not foretell any change in editorial policy. Though we remain tabloid in physical format to ensure ease of handling for our readers, our editorial policy continues to 'say no' to flamboyance or sensationalism in news reports.

With 45,000 copies in circulation every week since the launch of our Nationwide and Airline Editions two years ago, the *Phuket Gazette* continues as the island's leading publication – not only in print, but also on line where we enjoy the highest rankings accorded by Google to any website in or about Phuket.

If you are reading this aboard any of the 11 major international airlines serving Thailand (see page 33), you know that the compact size of our airline edition is optimized for reader convenience, and that the content presented is strictly about Phuket. After all, it's this island that inspired you to pick up the *Phuket Gazette*.

Yellow shirts in Phuket

Democrat supporters staged a mass rally in Phuket Town last Friday to bolster support in their efforts to block the reconciliation bills they claim will allow Thaksin Shinawatra to return to Thailand a free man.

Full story on Page 3

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This Week



News

There are no winners in the battle for custody of a child. **Page 6-7**



Aviation

That Thai smile: Thai Airways' hybrid low-cost carrier. **Page 16**



In Focus

Hot Topic: The man in the incinerator hot seat interviewed. **Page 14**



Explore

Dragon Breath: How to breathe fire without burning. **Page 19**



Environment

Phuket's environmental decline in pictures by Chusak. **Page 20-21**



Property Watch

Why Pattaya is beating Phuket in the condo sales battle. **Page 30**

Saturday



33 - 24

Sunday



32 - 24

Monday



32 - 25

Tuesday



31 - 24

Wednesday



32 - 24

Thursday



32 - 25

New signs hoped to stave off drownings

From page 1

swimmers in distress. Lifeguards establish these zones after monitoring them for the presence of riptides. Although lifeguards try to warn swimmers by placing red flags along beaches, they routinely have to rescue overconfident swimmers who pay no heed to warnings.

"We often hear the excuse that they are an athlete or a strong swimmer," he lamented.

The latest victim in Karon, 33-year-old Denis Korobogatov of Russia, entered the surf at Karon Beach on the afternoon of May 31. He was quickly pulled offshore by the notorious "permanent rip" that forms offshore from the Thavorn Palm Beach Resort annually at this time of year.

Two lifeguards rushed to his assistance and pulled him ashore within about five minutes, but he was announced dead on arrival at hospital.

Meanwhile, Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha is working on a more high-tech approach to warn tourists. His office has been in communication with several telecommunications firms to find a way to develop automatic text



Red Flag: The sea is dangerous. You should NOT go into the water.

messages to greet tourists who arrive at Phuket Airport and activate their mobile phones there using "international roaming" services.

Information about dangerous surf conditions and other important information could follow the initial greeting, said the governor.

"I have discussed this with my IT team and I see a high possibility it could really happen. I also want tourists arriving in Phuket for the first time to get the impression this is a truly international destination," he said.

"I have also spoken with Phuket Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission, TOT and CAT

Telecom about this," Governor Tri added.

He also postulated that it might be possible to transmit similar messages to all mobile phone users as they enter the local network.

The initiative is just one of many technological solutions the provincial government is working on in the aftermath of two public panics that followed a pair of large earthquakes off the coast of Sumatra on April 11.

Confusion and panic resulted when a tsunami warning was issued, local mobile phone networks crashed, and the public were unable to get information through the state-run media.

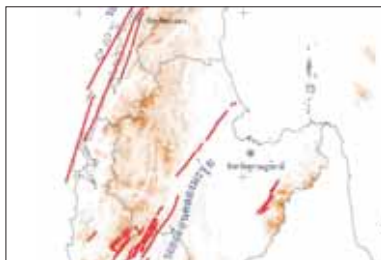
Ranong rattled by 4.0 quake

AN EARTHQUAKE registering 4.0 on the Richter scale struck Ranong province, to the north of Phuket, just before 1pm on June 4, shaking houses along the coast and scattering villagers in fear.

Ranong is best known among Phuket expats and long-stay tourists as the jump-off point for "visa runs" to Myanmar.

Paiboon Aiamsuwan, director of the Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) monitoring station in Ranong, confirmed that the epicenter of the earthquake was located under the beachfront area of Ngao in Ranong's Muang District.

"The quake was felt all over Muang District, but the strongest tremors were reported at the beachfront area near the moun-



The red lines show the fault line running along the Ranong coast.

tains in Ngao subdistrict," Mr Paiboon said.

The quake was the result of movement along the Ranong Fault, a series of subfaults starting in Prachuap Khiri Khan province that extend all the way south along the Andaman Coast, pass under Ranong province and end in the Andaman Sea, he explained.

Footballer accused of rape released on bail

THE professional footballer signed with Krabi FC who stands accused of raping an American exchange student has been released on bail, the *Gazette* has learned.

An officer at the Krabi Provincial Court confirmed that the man was presented to the court and released on bail, but the officer declined to give any further information.

"I was given orders not to reveal any information regarding the case. Previously he was held at the cells at the court. Police are now collecting evidence for their case," said Lt Col Amornrat Sudthigerd of Krabi City Police.

The man has reportedly denied the allegation, which claims he raped a 23-year-old American exchange student at the



tourist-popular Nopparat Thara Beach in Ao Nang on the night of May 31. He was arrested by Krabi City Police next day.

The woman was taken to a local clinic for treatment of injuries to her face.

Police visited the clinic and

found that the woman was still in a state of shock over the incident.

After giving police a detailed description of the man, the woman was sent to Krabi Hospital for an examination and further treatment.

"I was given orders not to reveal any information regarding the case. All I can say is that we held [the man] for 24 hours, in accordance with the law, and then sent him to Krabi Provincial Court," said Col Amornrat.

Although the alleged victim's name and the name and nationality of the accused were included in the original reports in Thai media, the *Gazette* is withholding the names until the victim chooses to be publicly known or police formally press charges against the accused.

- *Orawin Narabal*

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Rally against reconciliation

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

LEADING Democrat Party members arrived in Phuket last Friday to ramp up support in their fight to block the reconciliation bills the ruling Pheu Thai Party are aiming to pass through Parliament.

The gathering made Phuket the first province to rally against the bills, said Democrat MP Sathit Wongnongtoey.

More than 2,000 joined the rally at Queen Sirikit Park in Phuket Town, led by veteran MP Anchalee Vanich Thepabutr and MP Raywat Areerob. Also attending were Trairong Suwankiri and Suthep Thaugsuban, both Cabinet members in the former government of Abhisit Vejjajiva.

The rally was designed to put pressure on the Pheu Thai government to shelve the reconciliation bills. Democrats and other opposition groups recognize the bills as a strategy for clearing fugitive former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra of crimes he committed while in office and later convicted of by a Thai court.

"Phuket is the first province to throw its weight against the reconciliation bills," said MP Sathit.

"Songkhla and Rayong have joined Phuket," he added.

The protesters claim that the

Pheu Thai Party-led government has made every possible attempt to have Mr Thaksin acquitted and the 46 billion baht seized from him returned.

"The bills were written with the intention of clearing Mr Thaksin of all wrongdoing. When they are passed, he will be cleared of everything and so will his close followers who burnt down the provincial halls around the nation," exclaimed Mr Trairong.

MP Anchalee and MP Raywat took to the stage at the rally and spoke about yellow-shirted members of the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) blocking Pheu Thai MPs from entering parliament last Friday in hope of postponing the tabling of the bills.

"The passing of any of the [reconciliation] bills would be disastrous for Thailand," said MP Anchalee.

"Jatuporn Prompan [core leader of the National United Front of the red shirted Democracy Against Dictatorship, or UDD] is urging red-shirt supporters to go back to Bangkok. I believe he wants to create a mob-versus-mob conflict," she explained.

"We will have to see how Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra will manage this situation," she added.

On stage, Mr Suthep told the



Trairong Suwankiri encouraged those who disagree with the reconciliation bills to go to Bangkok and protest. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

crowd that the government had failed to listen to the people and do its job, so now the Democratic Party had to step up.

"We will do anything possible to stop the bills. We cannot let the

bills be passed; it will destroy the judiciary system," Mr Suthep said.

"We must go to Bangkok to show [the government] that we will not accept the reconciliation bills," added Mr Trairong.

Phuket PAD left out of protest loop

PHUKET PAD supporters returned from the Bangkok protests at about midday last Friday, but Phuket yellow-shirt coordinator Don Limnunthaphisit says he knew nothing about the Democrat rally in Phuket Town.

"We were not planning on holding a protest in Phuket. Instead we were just organizing a fundraiser. Just going up to Bangkok for the three days cost us 40,000 baht for each of the three buses," he explained.

Since the House Speaker Somsak Kiatsuranont called off the debate on the reconciliation bills (see page 11), Mr Don said his supporters had yet to confirm whether or not they would return to Bangkok.

He claimed the postponement was just a strategy. "The government knows we do not have much financial support... They know if they keep postponing, they will finally get to push the bills through," said Mr Don.

Mystery shrouds kitesurfer's death

THE American kitesurfer who died shortly after being pulled from the sea at Nai Harn Beach this week has been named as 45-year-old John Flicker, a long-term Phuket resident.

The cause of death remains unclear, but lifeguards who were on the scene have discounted drowning or jellyfish stings as likely causes.

Staff at Bangkok Hospital Phuket told the *Gazette* on Wednesday that relatives had been informed of his death, but had yet to make their wishes known concerning funeral arrangements.

Mr Flicker, an experienced kitesurfer, had been practicing his sport at Nai Harn Beach that day. According to witnesses, he was returning to the beach when he encountered difficulties.

"We saw him floating in the shallow water, maybe 20 centimeters deep, close to shore. He had yelled something, but we thought he was making a joke," said beach vendor Somchai Ketsiri.

"Then we saw him caught up in a couple of waves and we could tell that he was weak - then he was floating face down in the water," Mr Somchai explained.

Realizing that Mr Flicker was not joking, Mr Somchai rushed into the water and with a foreigner pulled him ashore.

Nai Harn lifeguard Charintorn



John Flicker was a well-known kitesurfer at Nai Harn Beach.

Naripen told the *Gazette*, "Four of us tried for 20 minutes to revive him before the ambulance arrived. We don't believe he drowned as he did not throw up any liquid. Also, he was very close to the beach when he raised the alarm.

"Although lately we see about five bluebottles [stingers] on Nai Harn Beach every day, we found no trace of them on him, so we're quite sure he didn't die from that," he said.

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Emergency fix sought for Patong Hill

PHUKET Governor Tri Augkaradacha is pressing the central government for an emergency 80-million-baht budget to shore up Phra Barami Road on Patong Hill, which is deemed at high risk of collapse from landslide due to heavy monsoon-season rain.

A section of the road, just west of the Chinese shrine at the top of the hill, is already earmarked for repairs under a project plan already submitted to the Highways Department. This section first collapsed during heavy rains last October, then again in early May with the advent of this year's monsoon.

The local Highways Department office expects to begin work on that project, using "soilnails" and sprayed concrete, some time this month.

However, a longer section of road on the Kathu side that slumped following a landslide in October last year remains at risk.

Governor Tri told the *Gazette* on Tuesday that he

is aware of the potential for disaster if the vital route became impassable.

"When we hosted the mobile Cabinet meeting in Phuket, I proposed this project for Cabinet approval. It was approved, but only under the budget for fiscal year 2013," said Governor Tri.

As fiscal 2013 begins on October 1, 2012, improvements to the road could not begin until at least the end of the current monsoon season.

"With the unexpected earthquake off Sumatra in April, we began to realize that this project could not be put on hold that long. We saw people try to evacuate Patong [after the tsunami alert] and we realized that this route is the main escape route from the Patong area.

"If there is another unfortunate event like a tsunami or earthquake, this road must be accessible during the ensuing turmoil," he said.

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Col Kittipong: no warning needed.

Patong bars fined for holiday trading

PATONG Police arrested and fined about 12 bar owners or their managers 1,000 baht each for selling alcohol on the Buddhist holiday Visakha Bucha Day on June 4.

Comments from bar owners that no warning was given for bars to close for the holiday fell on deaf ears, even though one bar owner pointed out that only months ago a senior police officer in Phuket was reported saying that closing on religious holidays was a formal "request", not a legal requirement.

Kathu Deputy Superintendent Lt Col Kittipong Klaikaew refuted this.

"Phuket alcohol retailers must know that the sale of alcohol is specifically prohibited on Makha Bucha Day, Visakha Bucha Day, Asarnha Bucha Day and Buddhist Lent holidays." The *Gazette* was informed that the bar managers were taken to Patong Police Station, released on payment of 5,000-baht surety which was returned when the person charged presented him or herself to Phuket Provincial Court on June 5.

"The fine was about 1,000 baht," said one bar owner.

"Of course we don't mind closing. We would just prefer to be informed first. But mostly it was the rough treatment of the bar managers that upset us. There was no need to place them in holding cells while they were waiting to appear in court," he added.

- **Chutharat Plerin**

Child protection still priority

Officials ramp up campaign to combat youth drug addiction

By Atchaa Khamlo

A SERIES of raids netting underage youths working at entertainment venues in Phuket Town has prompted Phuket authorities to ramp up their child protection campaign.

Members of various organizations involved in child protection met to discuss recent events and related what measures were being taken to curb the rising trend of youth drug-addiction and wayward behavior.

The meeting was to prepare a report on the current situation in Phuket for the Child Protection Agency's Coordination and Monitoring Implementation Committee in Bangkok.

"We have been working with the Office of Social Development and Human Security (SDHS-Phuket) and the Phuket Shelter for Children and Families to investigate places where young people assemble for unlawful purposes," said Kriangkrai Boonta, deputy chief of the Education Ministry's Semarak Center in Phuket.

The Semarak Center is responsible for monitoring student behavior and cooperating with other institutions to solve youth-related problems.

"After receiving complaints, we examined two bars in Wichit on February 11. At one of them, the Rong Tiam Bar, we found 18 young people; 12 boys and six girls," Mr Kriangkrai continued.

"Six were arrested for drug possession. Even though the others weren't charged with any offense, we recorded their names and gave them a stern warning," he said.

A search of the bar recovered bladed weapons and "baraku"



At the Andaman Bar officers found 11 boys and six girls, nine tested drug positive. Inset: School boys being given a stern warning.

(hookah water pipes) made from modified whiskey bottles.

Officers also suspect that the venue may have been used by youngsters as a secluded spot for sexual activities as they found used condoms on the second floor of the building.

The bar was shut down and the bar owner now faces charges under the Child Protection Act, B.E. 2546 (2003), which allows the prosecution of individuals who force, encourage or allow a child to adopt behavior and manners

which are inappropriate or likely to result in wrongdoing.

On May 2, officials raided the Andaman Bar in Phuket Town. They found 11 boys and six girls in the bar, nine of whom tested positive for drugs. All had warning letters sent to their parents instructing them to control their children.

Highlighting a third case study, Mr Kriangkrai said that during an investigation at Saphan Hin on May 12, his team found eight girls under 18 years old.

Drunk pedestrian killed

A BURMESE man was killed instantly when he was run over by a speeding pickup truck in a hit-and-run accident in Phuket's Koh Kaew subdistrict on June 1.

Arriving at the scene police found the body of the victim lying face-down on the median strip in front of the Supercheap mini-mart on Thepkrasattri Road in Bang Khu.

Witnesses at the scene told police that he was walking back

across the northbound lane unsteadily when he was hit by a white Toyota Vigo 4-door pickup travelling at a high speed.

The impact catapulted his body onto the median strip. It is believed he was killed instantly.

Witnesses were unable to provide the license number of the truck, but part of its bumper, dislodged during the collision, was collected as evidence.

- **Thavit Bilabdullar**

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Baby elephant DNA results to be announced

THE long-awaited DNA test results of three baby elephants seized from elephant camps in Phuket will be revealed next week.

The DNA tests were ordered to determine the baby elephants' mothers and, therefore, whether or not the infant pachyderms had been obtained legally.

Currently, the three baby elephants are at the Thai Elephant Conservation Center (TECC), a state-run enterprise in Lampang.

The penalty for guilty parties in this case could be up to four years in jail, a 40,000 baht fine, or both, in accordance with the Wildlife Preservation and Protection Act.

- **Orawin Narabal**

Games boy goes home

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE young Phuket Games athlete injured in a motorbike accident that claimed the life of his teammate driver was released from hospital and headed home on Monday.

Governor Tri Augkaradacha and Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) President Paiboon Upatising were at the OrBorJor Hospital in Rassada to see off Atthapong Noikhamsin, 13, and to wish him well.

Young Atthapong's next stop was Klang Hospital in Bangkok for additional treatment to his arm.

"I am getting much better... [but] The doctor told me it will take about a year before I can play sports again," Atthapong said.

"If I get the chance, I will be back in Phuket. I am very sorry about the accident. I was knocked unconscious and I can't really remember what happened," he said.

Hospital director Dr Vathit Wattanasap explained, "We x-rayed Atthapong's brain, as well as his neck. They are normal. We operated to reset his collar bone, which was broken.

"He needs some time to recover, then he will be able to play sports again," he said.

The incident devastated the boys' teammates, said Kingor Suansan, the boys' rowing team manager.

Atthapong was a passenger on a borrowed Honda motorbike on the morning of May 31 when his teammate lost control of the vehicle coming down a steep, curved section of the Baan Rawai - Baan Nai Harn Road, near the Rawai Cable TV office.

The bike hit a wall Sutthipong Laphutama, 18, who was driving without a crash helmet, died of



After being wished well by Governor Tri (2nd from right) and President Paiboon (right), Atthapong and his parents were taken by ambulance to Phuket Airport to catch their flight to Bangkok. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

massive head trauma.

"The team was shocked when they were told about the accident. Atthapong was a starting member of his crew and Sutthipong was a substitute for his team," explained Ms Kingor.

"I can't get it out of my head. I am always with the athletes. I never thought there would be such a serious accident. Today was the last day of the competition. We planned to head home today [May 31] after the races," she said.

Speaking to the press on Monday, Atthapong's parents, Wutthipong Noikhamsin and Sudawan Supramote, said they were thankful to all the agencies and government departments in Phuket for taking such good care of their son, with a special mention to the doctors and nurses at the hospital.

Mum collects her son's body

THE mother of Phuket Games athlete Sutthipong Laphutama, 18, who died in a motorcycle accident in Rawai on May 31, arrived in Phuket on the same day to collect her son's body.

Mr Sutthipong died after the motorbike he was operating crashed into a brick wall.

Also on the bike was 13-year-old Atthapong Noikhamsin.

"I can't believe it happened. I never thought he would leave me at such a young age," said Sutthipong's mother, Ms Atittaya Sopakul.

Ms Atittaya said that she had not talked to her son since he left for the games. "I did not call him because I was afraid it would disturb him and he would not have



Sutthipong told his mother he would be good.

the time [to talk] during the games," she said.

Ms Atittaya returned to Bangkok with her son's body on board a Thai Airways flight the following day.

At last report, funeral services for Mr Sutthipong were to be held at Wat Ang Kaew in Bangkok's Phasi Charoen District.

- Kritsada Mueanhawong

In brief...

Lee Aldhouse extradition from UK on hold

THE UK High Court has agreed to postpone the extradition hearing of murder fugitive Lee Aldhouse so that his lawyers will have more time to prepare a case.

Mr Aldhouse fled Thailand after allegedly stabbing American Deshawn Longfellow to death in August 2010. He was arrested at Heathrow Airport when he tried to re-enter the UK.

Mr Aldhouse lost his initial extradition hearing. Facing a return to Phuket to answer for murder charges, he filed an appeal claiming that conditions in Thai prisons infringed on human rights.

Since then UK Home Secretary Theresa May's decision to allow his extradition has been overturned by High Court judges who ruled that Mr Aldhouse's claims were at least worthy of being heard.

Inquest on Brit electrocuted in Soi Bangla says 'accidental'

THE coroner's inquest in the UK into the death of 21-year-old British tourist Charles Thomas in Phuket last year has ruled that his electrocution during heavy rain was an "accidental death".

Mr Thomas was electrocuted in Patong in August last year after accidentally placing his hand on the cover of an outdoor power socket fitted into the forecourt paving stones in front of the Ocean Plaza Patong shopping mall on Soi Bangla.



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No winner in battle

A local police officer with good intentions inadvertently placed himself at the center of a nasty domestic dispute between an Italian man and his former Thai girlfriend, both of whom claim legal custody of their 10-year-old son.
Phuket Gazette chief reporter Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai and News Editor Stephen Fein report.

THE saga of Thung Thong police officer Wattanatorn Bumrungrthin began on February 28, when he was contacted by Patong Police duty officer Jongserm Preecha. Capt Jongserm informed him that a woman named Sudjai "Bee" Chabantom would be coming to see him in order to get police assistance in finding her missing son.

"When Ms Sudjai arrived, she presented me with a Central Juvenile and Family Court ruling stating that she has full custody of Peter Guglielmi, who is the son of Ms Sudjai Chabantom and Mr Luigi Guglielmi," Lt Wattanatorn said. "Ms Sudjai knew Maj Jongserm, so she contacted him to help get her son back from Mr Guglielmi. He contacted me to help with the case, as Mr Guglielmi and his son Peter resided in Kathu Municipality, which is under the jurisdiction of Thung Thong Police," he explained.

"Maj Jongserm assisted in the

issuing of a warrant, which authorized Lt Nakorn Tangruamsap of Thung Thong Police Station to search Mr Guglielmi's condominium and instruct him to come into the station to discuss his son's custody with Ms Sudjai," he said.

The search warrant was signed by Lt Col Tassanai Orarikdej, Deputy Superintendent of Thung Thong Police Station, Lt Wattanatorn added.

"The police performed their duty as ordered by their superiors and went to search Mr Guglielmi's condominium. However, at the time they had only the mother's side of the story," Lt Wattanatorn explained.

"When they arrived, Mr Guglielmi was not at home, as he had gone to pick Peter up from school," he said.

Peter was enrolled as a fifth-year student at Phuket International Academy in Thepkra-sattri subdistrict, Thalang.

"The only person there was

Mr Guglielmi's girlfriend. The police officers asked her to tell Mr Guglielmi to come to Thung Thong Police Station to discuss the custody issue with Ms Sudjai," he added.

When Mr Guglielmi and Ms Sudjai finally met at the police station, Lt Wattanatorn, who was now officially in charge of the case, received a big surprise.

"Mr Guglielmi arrived at the police station with one document in his hand issued by the Sakon Nakhon Juvenile and Family Court. Once I read it, I realized he also possessed a court judgment granting him full custody of Peter," he said.

"So, I was then dealing with a case in which both the father and the mother produced documentary evidence stating they had full custody. One was issued in Bangkok, the other in Sakon Nakhon," said Lt Wattanatorn.

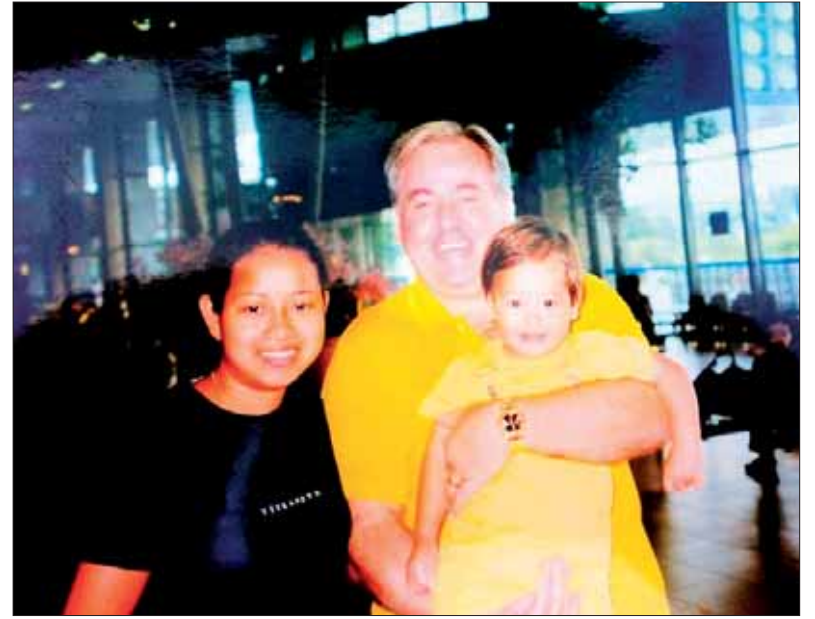
"I took a brief look and noted that Mr Guglielmi's document was issued before Ms Sudjai's document," he added.

"I asked the boy who he would prefer to stay with. He told me he'd rather be with his father. Ms Sudjai told me they used to live together in Bangkok, where Peter studied until last year. Then his father took him to Phuket. He had stayed with his father for more than a year, and it seemed like the boy had a better relationship with his father than his mother," he said.

At the station, the couple who were together for the first decade of the boy's life had a seemingly endless argument about the custody of Peter, both claiming they were in the right. Eventually realizing the couple would be unable to work out a mutually acceptable solution on their own, Lt Wattanatorn sought help from an outside agency.

"As a policeman I had no right to decide who should get custody, so I decided to ask for help from the One Stop Crisis Center (OSCC) at Vachira Phuket Hospital, where they offer a 24-hour counseling service for women and children," he said.

"OSCC officers said that if neither the father nor the mother could come up with an amicable solution, the child would have to spend the night at the government's shelter on Koh Sireh for children and families in distress. They could then appear before the Phuket Juvenile and



HAPPIER TIMES: An old photo of Mr Guglielmi, Ms Sudjai and their son Peter when he was a young boy. The family lived together from 2000 until February 2011, according to the Italian.

Family Court the next day," said Lt Wattanatorn.

"Mr Guglielmi, feeling it wrong to send his son to such a place, allowed Ms Sudjai to have Peter for one night, but only on the condition that she sent him to school the next day and agreed to appear before the court and sort everything out. I recorded the incident in the daily report book and made two copies for each parent," he explained.

"After that the situation seemed less tense and everyone thought it would be sorted out," he said.

The next day, however, Lt Wattanatorn discovered that the situation had taken a definite turn for the worse.

"Mr Guglielmi returned to my office and told me Ms Sudjai had already taken Peter to Bangkok, and her phone was switched off. He blamed me, saying that I had guaranteed Ms Sudjai would return his son the next day. I was responsible as my signature was on the paper, he claimed," said Lt Wattanatorn.

"I told him I had nothing to do with the custody issue, which is a civil matter that could only be settled through mediation or, failing that, a court judgment. I was only trying to help by mediating an agreement the previous night," he added.

"The paper I signed was not a guarantee, but a copy of the events that transpired in the daily log. I signed in my capacity as the officer on duty at that moment. When I make a copy of the daily record book for someone, I have to sign that document in order to verify that it really is an official document issued by the Thung Thong Police. Mr Guglielmi misunderstood. He thought that the

paper I signed was a form of guarantee that Ms Sudjai would return his son the following day," he said.

Mr Guglielmi filed a letter of complaint with Phuket Provincial Police charging Lt Wattanatorn with failure to perform his duty, thus allowing Ms Sudjai to disappear with his son.

"I received a letter from Phuket Provincial Police saying Mr Guglielmi had filed the negligence complaint stating that I was derelict in my duty. Even though I did nothing wrong, I had to send a letter back explaining my actions and prove that I performed my duty to the best of my ability," he said.

"What happened was between two people that needed cooling down. A child should never be put in this kind of situation," Lt Wattanatorn explained.

After Ms Sudjai failed to return with Peter, Mr Guglielmi came back to Thung Thong

Police Station. Upset with what had happened, he vented his anger at the police. Thung Thong Deputy Superintendent Tassanai Orarikdej mediated that incident.

"Even though Mr Guglielmi was quite aggressive and yelled at police officers, we did understand how he felt," Col Tassanai said.

"This is a family dispute with no one in the right or wrong. They each have full custody of their son according to the law. The Juvenile and Family Court is the only authority who can decide on this matter," he said.

He added that a drawn-out legal battle might force the court to rule Peter be sent to a shelter until there is a final ruling.

"Taking their child away won't do either of them any good, [which is what may happen] if

'This is a family dispute with no one in the right or wrong. They each have full custody of their son according to the law.'

— Col Tassanai

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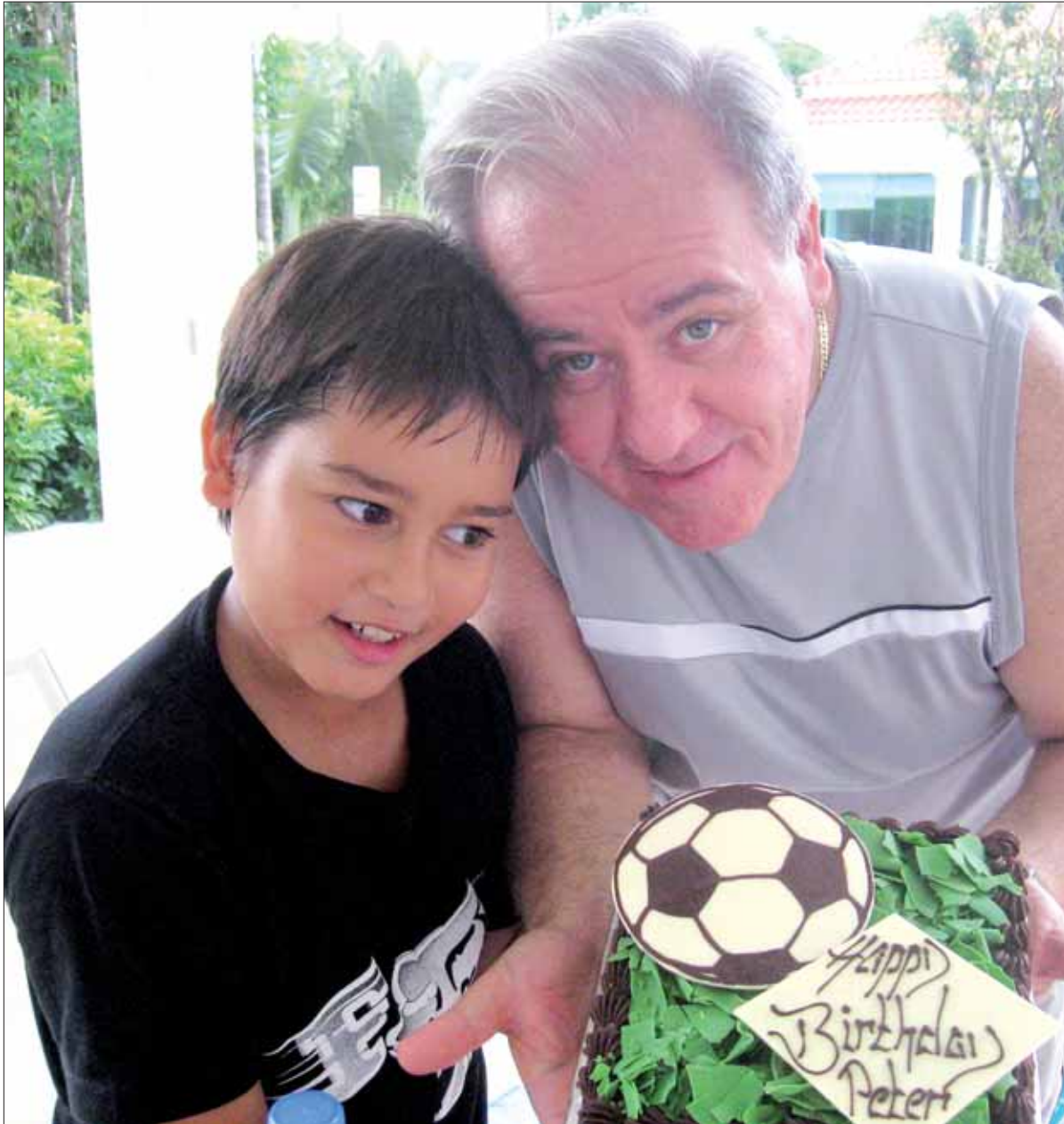
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for custody of child



TUG OF LOVE: Peter Guglielmi, a former student at Phuket International Academy, is at the center of a police search and legal battle between his parents, both of whom claim custody rights.

they decide to fight it out in court," he said.

"Ms Sudjai claimed that she raised her son until Mr Guglielmi stole him away from her more than a year ago. She came to Phuket to steal her son back from Mr Guglielmi. If the two refuse to find some kind of settlement, the problem might never end," he added.

Phuket Gazette spoke with Col Tassanai on March 26 to find out if there had been any progress in the case.

"After what happened I tried to contact Ms Sudjai many times, but was unable to make contact. It would appear that she had already deactivated her telephone number. So I contacted the Central Juvenile and Family Court in Bangkok and asked if there were another contact number for her. They gave me a contact number of someone Ms Sudjai had identified as a relative," said Col Tassanai.

He then contacted the relative, who denied knowing where Ms Sudjai was. However, she heard that Peter was homesick, not sleeping well and that Ms Sudjai planned to take him to hospital.

'They should care more about their son's feelings at this stage.'

- Col Tassanai

"I suggested the relative contact Mr Guglielmi so he could offer help and, hopefully, resolve the custody issue. The relative replied that when the boy's father took him away for a year, none of the authorities contacted by Ms Sudjai seemed to care or wanted to help. Given that, they asked me why they [the relatives] should want to help us now," he explained.

"I contacted investigation teams at other police stations in Phuket to help find Ms Sudjai. I don't know where she is at the moment, but I have to launch a search in order to get Ms Sudjai to come back and seek a settlement with Mr Guglielmi through the court," he told the Gazette in late March.

"Although Ms Sudjai and Mr Guglielmi are both doing what they believe is right for their son, they should care more about their son's feelings at this stage, because he will be the one who will suffer the consequences," he said.

"We are still working on finding Ms Sudjai so they can both sort this out and finally make the boy happy, wherever he prefers to be," Col Tassanai said.

As this issue goes to print, Mr Guglielmi continues to press the matter through the legal system, but without success. He told the Gazette on Tuesday that he had already spent half a million baht in expenses, much of it in legal fees to a Phuket law firm that specializes in family law.

In April, he travelled to Bangkok to file a second case of neglect of duty and abuse of power, this time against Col Tassani. The suit is intended to exert more pressure on police to investigate until the whereabouts of his son can be discovered.

The Phuket Gazette acknowledges that Ms Sudjai's side of the story has not been presented here and encourages her to contact the Gazette if she would like to exercise her right of reply.

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EDUCATION: A letter from Phuket International Academy provided by Mr Guglielmi. The father alleged that the boy's mother provided police with documents stating that her son was not allowed to study.

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Pullman resort prepares for grand opening

THE new Pullman Phuket Arcadia Beach Resort at Nai Thon Beach will stage a grand job fair at the Hafele Building opposite Big C on the bypass road from 9am to 7pm on June 15-16.

"Pullman Phuket Arcadia will leverage itself as a true cosmopolitan lifestyle hotel synonymous with working hard, and playing harder – we are looking for associates who can bring this to life through passion and attitude," said General Manager Brett Wilson.

"We are looking for energetic people to join our new attitude hotel by Accor... The theme of this recruitment is 'Get closer', meaning we want potential associates to touch and feel what Pullman stand for. This recruitment is about what Pullman can offer as a career path for them rather than what they can offer to us," he added.

The job fair is for all positions within the 'greensite' resort, including front office, sales and marketing, housekeeping, food and beverage, sport and recreation, spa, finance, human resources, engineering and security.

Boost in Chinese tourist arrivals to Phuket prompts consular concerns

By Chutharat Plerin

THE dramatic increase in the number of Chinese tourists visiting Phuket in recent years is causing problems and prompted Chinese officials to look into establishing a consulate on the island.

Xu Mingliang, the Consul-General of the People's Republic of China in Songkhla, in Southern Thailand, was in Phuket May 30 to hear tour operators' concerns first hand and to discuss the issues with Phuket Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada.

Only a few years ago the number of Chinese tourists visiting Phuket was between 80,000 and 100,000, said Kritcharoen Roongmongkolnam of the Phuket Tourist Association's Chinese and Taiwan marketing committee.

Last year that figure jumped to more than 400,000. This year that figure has already been surpassed.

"We presume that by the end of this year it will be more than 700,000," he said.

The skyrocketing number of tourist arrivals from China was



Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada (left) said he would pass on the representatives' concerns to Governor Tri. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

already causing problems, Mr Kritcharoen explained. "Last year, especially during the high season and Chinese New Year, Phuket was unable to provide enough accommodation," he said.

Mr Kritcharoen explained that

Phuket's tourism industry being seemingly unprepared to cater to the huge influx of tourists from China was allowing scam artists to target them and resulting in tourists being injured due to tired drivers.

In his view, the issues had to be resolved now or risk facing long-term problems.

Wannaprapa Suksomboon, Deputy Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) office in Phuket, echoed Mr Kritcharoen's concerns.

"The more people, the more problems," she said.

According to statistics accumulated by her office, Chinese tourists constituted the largest nationality group visiting Phuket last year, followed by Malaysians and Koreans, respectively.

"One of my suggestions is that Phuket International Airport should put up signs in Chinese language cautioning against unruly behavior at queues to the check-in counters," she added.

Mr Xu highlighted the growing need for consular assistance Chinese tourists required.

"As the volume of tourists grows each year, having a Chinese consulate in Phuket would be helpful in terms of coordination and providing faster assistance to Chinese tourists," he said.

Cleaning up Koh Racha's act

AFTER being lambasted by environmentalists last week, Phuket's conservation authorities were quick to promote the good work they are doing in repairing Koh Racha Yai's environment with the coral reef rejuvenation project and beach cleanup last weekend.

"This activity is part of a improvement project that we started last year. It aims to rejuvenate the coral reef... and strengthen the economy of coastal communities," said Boonchop Sutthamanswong, Director-General of the Coastal Resources Conservation (MCRC) who chaired the opening ceremony.

The coral bleaching in 2010 effected a large part of the Koh Racha Yai coral reef, said Mr Boonchop, who saw last weeks activities as a chance for everyone to help rehabilitate the beach and marine environment.

Over 100 participants from the government and private sector have volunteered to help with the clean up and reef renovation, which is designed to adjust the marine environment to provide con-



Boonchop Sutthamanswong (left) and Pitul Panchaiyaphum both want to return Koh Racha Yai to its once-pristine condition. Photo: Orawin Narabal

ditions beneficial to coral growth, said Pitul Panchaiyaphum, Director of MCRC in Phuket.

The Racha, one of the leading resorts of Koh Racha Yai, hosted the event.

"The Racha embraces and practices ecological and environmentally responsible and sustainable development. And in line with this, all our glass bottles and recyclable waste materials at the resort are sent to Phuket for

recycling," said The Racha Managing Director Daniel Lim in an email to the *Gazette*.

"The large pile of glass bottles pictured in the article [published on May 29] does not belong to The Racha, but to some of the local tourism operators on the island. Nonetheless, we have since sent our staff to clean up this pile of glass bottles as part of our community action for the island," he added.

Thais confident in English skills, but foreigners disagree

THE results of the latest *Phuket Gazette* online poll show that a strong majority of foreign and expat residents find English-language skills in the local tourism industry very poor – but the small fraction of Thais who took part tended to rate them quite highly.

A total of 1,864 people took part in the two-week poll launched on May 22, which asked readers: *Phuket is among the best-known international tourist destinations in Asia. As such, how would you rate the overall English-language skills of local people working in the tourism industry here?*

Overall, just over half of those who took part (51.3%) rated them "incomprehensible", while 22.7% rated them as "poor". Another 15.2% thought they were "fair", while only 6.9% described them as "very

good". The least popular reply was "excellent", at just 3.9% of the total vote.

There was a stark disparity among the three demographic groups: those who identified themselves as "Thais", "foreign local residents" and "tourists". Tourists had the least flattering assessment, with 65% choosing "incomprehensible" and 13% opting for "poor". Only 2% of tourists chose "excellent".

Of those identifying themselves as Thais, however, 44% chose "excellent" followed by 21% who chose "very good". Among those identifying themselves as expats, who accounted for almost half (48.3%) of the total vote, the most popular choice was incomprehensible (43%), followed by poor (33%), fair (18%), very good (5%) and excellent (1%).

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Democracy icon Suu Kyi kicks off world tour in Thailand

BURMESE democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi last week started her world tour in Thailand, addressing migrant workers at an industrial park in Mahachai on the outskirts of Bangkok. The visit marked the first time she had left her homeland for almost a quarter of a century.

Thousands of migrants turned out to hear Ms Suu Kyi speak from the balcony of a building in the park.

The politician, whose National League for Democracy party recently won land-

slide victories in recent by-elections, said she would work to improve life and conditions for Burmese workers.

"Don't feel down, or weak. History is always changing," she said, as reported by *The Guardian*.

Ms Suu Kyi said her visit was aimed at learning how she could help them.

"Today, I will make you one promise: I will try my best for you," she said.

Ms Suu Kyi spent most of the past 20 years under house arrest, unable to leave

her lakeside home in Rangoon.

During periods in which she was free, she did not leave Myanmar for fear she would not be allowed to re-enter the country.

But the past two years have seen dramatic changes in her home country under the leadership of reform-minded President Thein Sein.

Ms Suu Kyi returned to Myanmar on June 3. She has announced plans to travel to Europe in the coming months.



Aung San Suu Kyi reaches out to greet Burmese refugees. Photo: The Nation

'Trouble by mid-year' arrives

AROUND THE nation

THAILAND may have entered a new period of political strife as the ruling Pheu Thai Party's attempt to push through a reconciliation bill this week met fierce resistance from the opposition and the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD).

The Democrat Party's antagonism towards the proposed bills, which the party claims would whitewash the wrongdoings of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra and allow him to return to Thailand a free man, incited several Democrat MPs to disrupt parliamentary proceedings.

At the same time, around 2,500 PAD members, better known as "yellow shirts", surrounded Parliament, preventing MPs from entering.

The protesters, whose actions led to the downfall of two Thaksin administrations in 2008, blocked cars from entering the compound and forced some MPs to climb



Policemen clash with yellow-shirt protesters in front of the Parliament building on June 1. Photo: The Nation

through side entrances to get in.

The actions led House Speaker Somsak Kiatsuranont to suspend reading of the reconciliation bills.

"I have ordered the meeting to be postponed indefinitely to preserve the atmosphere and peace in the country," he told reporters,

with hundreds of riot police securing the area.

"We'll have to analyze the situation before determining when the meeting will be held again."

Abhisit Vejjajiva, leader of the Democrat Party, on Monday called for the government to end the

current parliamentary session to ease tensions.

Mr Abhisit noted that the Constitution Court had recently ruled that the government must end its attempts to push through the reconciliation bills.

He said he was concerned that

the legislature's failure to respect a court order could result in more chaos and impeachment of certain parliamentarians.

Meanwhile, on June 2, about 20,000 red-shirted members of the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) rallied at the Thunderdome stadium in Muang Thong Thani.

Red-shirt leaders told the crowd to resist any attempts to unseat the government while ousted and convicted former premier Thaksin addressed the red shirts through video link, alleging that the process to undemocratically oust the administration of his sister Prime Minister Yingluck had begun.

"Today, people know what is what. The process of robbing people has begun again," said Thaksin, wearing a red shirt. He stressed that power must belong to the people.

Thaksin also attacked the Democrat Party, telling the crowd, "In Parliament, there is no uglier party."

The red-shirt leadership urged supporters to fight what they claimed is the attempt to unseat the Yingluck administration through a coup d'etat or a Constitution Court ruling.

Dems claim media bias

THE Democrat Party this week accused mass media agencies, including television stations and newspapers, of bias favoring the government in coverage of recent political developments.

Trang MP Sathit Wongnongtoey has set up a media monitoring group to look for examples of skewed coverage in favor of the Pheu Thai administration led by PM Yingluck Shinawatra.

Mr Sathit claimed that Sorrayuth Suthasachinda of Channel 3 failed to properly examine the contents of the national reconciliation bills before parliament in his reporting.

The Democrats say the laws would amount to an amnesty that will allow former premier Thaksin Shinawatra to avoid court-ordered punishment for corruption.

Mr Sathit added that Channel 9 had continually attacked the Constitution Court's order to delay the House deliberation on constitutional amendment.

"The Democrat Party will



MP Sathit Wongnongtoey calls out the media. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

closely monitor the work of Channel 9 after Premkamol Tinnakorn na Ayutthaya became the president instead of Chakraphan Yomjinda. Premkamol is a lawyer in the same clique as Vichai Thongtaeng, a former lawyer for former premier Thaksin Shinawatra," said Democrat MP Boonyod Sukthinthai.

Mr Chakraphan was forced to resign after he refused to carry out the orders of some of the station's bosses, Mr Boonyod said.

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Wakeup call to the value of English

RESULTS of the latest *Phuket Gazette* online readers' poll indicate stark differences in perception among foreigners and Thais about the level of English-language proficiency among locals working in the tourism industry here. Most people who identified themselves as Thai thought these skills were good or excellent, while foreign local residents and tourists rated them as poor or incomprehensible. (see news, page 8).

Although the number of native English-speaking tourists who visit Phuket every year is not growing at the same rate as those who speak Russian and Chinese, few would argue that English will remain the most important medium of communication in the tourism industry in the foreseeable future.

Going back decades, the mainstream Thai education system has consistently failed to produce graduates with sufficient skills to effectively communicate in English. This failure is perhaps best demonstrated in areas such as Sukhumvit Road in Bangkok, where vendors selling knickknacks to foreigners are very often deaf mutes, whose ability to communicate through hand gestures apparently surpasses the English-language abilities of speaking people who might otherwise aspire to such work. Here in Phuket, of course, such jobs as "street touts" are more commonly held by people from neighboring states, even though such work is clearly restricted under Thai labor law to Thai nationals.

The sad reality is that in most government schools in the Kingdom, Thai teachers of English language themselves lack real communicative ability. The result is that in the classroom Thai language remains the medium of instruction, with incorrect pronunciation and word-meaning errors passed from one generation to the next, with further reinforcement through the mass media.

Fortunately, our increasingly cosmopolitan island is home to a large number and variety of privately-run schools that offer genuine alternatives. These start with nurseries and kindergartens that offer parents a way to expose their children to English as spoken by native speakers as early as possible, which is the best possible building block for future proficiency.

Unfortunately, this situation virtually ensures that English-language proficiency among Thais will largely remain where it has for decades: another privilege of the rich. With the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) economic integration scheme just two years away, this inequitable status quo is one we can no longer afford to maintain – and distributing tablet computers to six-year-olds is not the answer.

As to the poll results, we suspect Thais' strong sense of nationalism, and false positive reinforcement of the level of their English-language skills, may have skewed the results they delivered. The *Phuket Gazette* hopes this is the case, because the first step to solving a problem is to recognize it exists.



Face the firing squad

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket kickboxer Aldhouse extradition hearing postponed, June 1*

So they have time to work on his appeal? Really, isn't two years enough time? This is unbelievable! Dashawn [Aldhouse's alleged victim] didn't get more time – no, he is dead. Aldhouse needs to man up and face the charges in Thailand. I can't believe the British courts are allowing another delay.

Aunt Bobbi
Gazette forum

Jungle fever

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket Governor issues surf warning after Games athlete rescued, June 1*

The dengue fever case is very worrying. I had two friends catch it in the Kata area and it's not something to be taken lightly. The fact you can catch it in the daytime, as well as in the evening or at night, makes it very hard to cover up your arms and legs.

More needs to be done to try to stop the spread, both for the local Thai population and the tourist trade. It seems to have gotten worse over the past 10 years or so, and keeping quiet about it isn't helping.

Tony
Gazette forum

Oh, Phuket!

Having just returned home from a Phuket holiday, I have only two areas of complaint:

Firstly, there is a disco in Patong blaring loud music until 5am. The thumping bass is bad enough if your hotel is within 500 meters of the place, but *Duelling Banjos* at 4:45am!

You may want to ask police if the law is different for certain discos regarding opening hours.

Letters to the Editor

Second is the western "timeshare" touts. I quickly learned to answer, "No, I'm afraid I don't speak a word of it," when asked, "Do you speak English?"

Surely every week or two the police could walk a "tame" farang or two around and then sweep up the timeshare touts after they make their pitch to examine their work permits.

Having got the complaints out of the way, I'd like to say that Phuket is a beautiful place that has a huge amount to offer as a tourist destination and that the dental work I had done at Sea Smile dental clinic was top notch.

K. Metcalfe
Phuket

Keep a death count on the beach boards

Re: *Gazette online, Russian drowns in notorious Phuket rip, May 31*

The main problem arises from the incapacity of the tourists to sense the danger.

Placards explaining in English what a rip current is and also bluntly stating how many people drowned at this precise location in the past 12 months would work.

Claude
Gazette forum

New generation of addiction

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket Live Wire: Is the iPad rotting your child's brain?, June 4*

I have seen one-year-old kids

addicted to iPads, and it's frightening. When I compare the world today with my childhood, I see a lack of human interaction in everyday life and a growing arrogance toward strangers.

We have become a faceless community that prefers to hide behind tinted windows and emails.

I'm expecting my first child, and I will make sure that we have an old piano, crayons and Lego. My IT [information technology] work will remain in my office.

Itman1958
Gazette forum

Evason set an example

Re: *Gazette online, Evason Phuket opens books to prove 'no capacity to pay', May 29*

They've given the employees three months [notice] or more in some cases. They have followed the rules to the letter of the law. Employment law is very much biased towards the employees in Thailand. Compare this to the UK, where the government is proposing to give the employer more power to hire and fire their employees as they see fit, in order to boost the economy. I say don't pay. If you do, you will set a precedent amongst workers in Phuket.

Moneybags
Gazette forum

Thank you Woody

Khun Woody's column, *Live Wire*, is wonderful. It must be the most read column in the *Gazette*. It never feels biased towards advertisers and is always very informative. Thank you.

Boy
Phuket Town

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Features Editor: Marc Mulloy

Managing Director: Oranee Hildebrand

General Manager: Natthira Susangrat

Production Manager: Suchart Changate

Publisher: The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

Contact us:

Editorial: news@phuketgazette.net

Advertising Sales: adsales@phuketgazette.net

Classified Advertising: classads@phuketgazette.net

Website services: anna@phuketgazette.net

Gazette Guide: guide@phuketgazette.net

Events Sponsorship: events@phuketgazette.net

General: info@phuketgazette.net

Telephone: 076 273555 (10 lines) Fax 076 615240

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkrasatri Rd, T. Koh Kaew, A. Muang, Phuket

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Sorting our trash begins at home

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR



Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha, 60, started governing Phuket in October 2010. Not appearing on this year's transfer list, he now has until October 2012 to represent the island as Governor.

Here, Gov Tri talks about how the people of Phuket can win the battle against the island's growing trash problem.

THE top priority in our long-term-development plan for Phuket is dealing with the island's waste management issues. We have held many meetings aimed at finding solutions to this problem but the crux of the issue is really not on the management system side of the equation – it's from how each household deals with its trash.

All the trash collected across Phuket is supposed to be disposed of at the incinerator at Saphan Hin, which is operated by Phuket City Municipality's Environment Division. The new incinerator [see *In Focus report, page 18*] will be able to burn about 700 tons of trash per day. After the old incinerator has been fixed, both facilities will be able to burn a total of about 950 tons daily.

Having the capacity to burn off this volume of trash is more than enough to cope with the 500 tons or so of trash delivered to the incinerator each day. We can even start burning of the landfills at the back of the incinerator at Saphan Hin.

As you can see, the issue the island faces in dealing with its solid waste is not a problem on the management side. The real problem we have on the island is how unaware people remain of the seriousness of the trash issue and how difficult it is to get people to change their behavior.

The best way for us to win our battle against all this rubbish starts with the people of Phuket at the grassroots level.

If everyone sorted their trash into different categories it would make a big difference, but it is very difficult for people to change their habits and mindsets.

We have a waste separation system established, but most people don't cooperate or show the discipline necessary for it to succeed.

There is a unit for separating trash in each subdistrict, the local administrative body of which is responsible for collection. However, it is impossible for them to do so effectively or efficiently when households refuse to separate their trash before taking it out. Sadly, there are far more households that refuse to separate their trash than those that do.

Many Local Administration Organization Offices (*OrBorTor* and municipalities) in Phuket have

started trash separation campaigns. The Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) even ran a project to help eliminate lots of the organic waste by turning it into fertilizer.

Phuket City Municipality receives a budget of 30 to 40 million baht a year to manage all the incoming waste.

Phuket Municipality Mayor Somjai Suwansupana has guaranteed me that the waste problem will not be an issue for the next 10 years.

However, I want a long-term solution. We cannot just sit back and rely on a powerful incinerator. Much more must be done, especially when it comes to changing how the people of Phuket think about waste management.

We need a more efficient and sustainable way of dealing with our waste. The only way to make any system like this sustainable is to increase public awareness.

Same accident, but very different story

I HAVE noted many articles this week concerning the horrific motorcycle accident in Rawai that robbed one family of a young son and a put another boy in hospital, lucky to be alive.

One is a story of tragedy while the other has become a sickening episode of media hype and political gesturing.

More importantly, my initial understanding of the event, which was reportedly from eyewitnesses, police and rescue workers at the scene, was that 13-year-old Atthapong Noikhamsin was driving the motorbike that slammed into a roadside wall, killing the 18-year-old pillion passenger, Sutthipong Laphutama.

Somewhere along the line the story changed to the dead 18-year-old being the driver and the younger being the passenger. I for one have trouble believing this new version of events and suspect dark-dealing in the background.

The 13-year-old boy sustained non-life-threatening injuries and was treated at the *OrBorJor's* pride and joy "showcase" hospital. The *OrBorJor* president even managed to get a plug in to get more equipment for the facility.

The simple fact is that through one teenager's actions, another's life was brutally cut short. How can treating this boy like a celebrity be of any help to the victim's family or others who have lost loved ones on Phuket's roads? Will there be an honest inquiry, or will the story just quietly go away? I suspect the latter.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm extremely happy that the



Two families at different ends of the emotional spectrum. Photos: Kritsada Mueanhawong.

Island View

By Mark Dee

Do you have an opinion to voice? Email Editor@PhuketGazette.net

young man is alive and will make a full recovery. It's purely the sudden change of responsibility and disparity displayed in the treatment of the two cases that angers me.

The heralding of the survivor as some kind of hero with visits from all and sundry, just in case the Phuket Games were tarnished, I find insensitive to the extreme.

I truly hope my intuition is wrong. I also fervently hope that it was the case that the media were not around to witness the same high-ranking visitors consoling Sutthipong's family.

To that family I extend my most heart-felt sympathies.

Issues & Answers... ..asking the questions that affect you...

What to do with a counterfeit note?

What do you do if you think you have a counterfeit note?

Do you take it to the bank, who might just take it from you?

Or do you go to the police, who might just arrest you?

Richard Gazette forum

Boonlert Onklang, Chalong Police Duty Officer replies:

You will not be arrested for bringing suspicious banknotes to the police. However, if you try to use the counterfeit note and know that it is not legitimate legal tender than you will be arrested.

If you have a counterfeit note, and are able to tell the police where you got it from it is a big help in an investigation.

A person who intends to use a counterfeit note can receive one to 15 years in prison or a 20,000 to 30,000-baht fine.

The punishment for the production of counterfeit notes is a prison

Send us your queries and we'll ask the right people to respond to them.

Submit your issue at www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

sentence of 10 years to life.

Panicha Pradit, Siam Commercial Bank, Phuket Boat Lagoon branch Assistant Manager replies:

If you think you might have a counterfeit note, you should bring it in to us.

It is easy to spot a counterfeit Thai banknote. They are actually easier to recognize than counterfeit United States banknotes.

If it turns out that you do have a counterfeit note, but you still want to keep it, we have to stamp "COPY" on the bill, so that it can't be used.

Condo committee concern

I am a Patong condo owner and hold a long-term retirement visa extension.

Do I need a work permit to sit on my condo committee?

I can find nothing in the online Condominium Act of 2008 that says it is a prerequisite to sit on such a committee, only that you must be an owner.

Jim Mills Patong

Phuket Employment Office, Work Permit Division chief Jeeraphan Sookhwan, replies:

Whether or not you require a work permit depends on whether your intended activity actually qualifies as work under the Employment Department's existing definition.

Normally being on a committee involves attending meetings to make decisions and signing papers. In this case, you would need a work permit.



WHAT IS WORK? Even being a member of your local residential housing committee requires a work permit. Photos: Jerry Bunkers (left) and iMorpheus

If you want to apply for work permit you must have a non-immigrant "B" visa. You can not use your retirement visa to apply.

You can visit the Phuket Employment Office at 38/27 Rattanakosin 200 Pi Road during normal office hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm, or call 076-219660, 076-219661 ext. 13.

The *Gazette* adds: Our editorial offices have received numerous queries of this nature over the years.

According to the Phuket Employment Office webpage, the definition of work is: *The engagement in work by exerting energy or using knowledge for purpose of obtaining wages or other benefits.*

This includes charitable work. Even in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, foreign volunteers working in the relief effort were warned to get work permits or risk facing penalties of three years in jail, a 30,000 baht fine, or both.

Kasikorn: tourism sector to make B 140bn in 2012

Tourism Growth

PHUKET'S tourism sector will generate up to 140 billion baht in revenue with more than seven million tourists expected to visit Phuket this year, Kasikorn Research Center (KRC) has estimated.

In a report released earlier this week by KRC, a subsidiary of Kasikorn Bank Group, it was projected that the island will have

7.4 million tourist arrivals throughout 2012.

If accurate, the projection would equate to a 12.1% increase from 2011's figure of 6.6 million arrivals.

Of the two projections, KRC expects 86% (about 6.3 million) of tourist arrivals to be international (compared to 14% domestic), while 94% of the projected income (131.6bn baht) will come from foreign tourists.

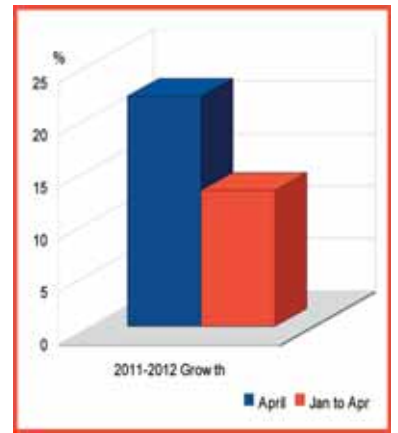
The report went on to highlight

a number of challenges and mishaps over the years that have "undermined its [Phuket's] lucrative international tourism business to a certain extent," including the earthquakes and subsequent aftershocks and tsunami alerts that struck the island in April.

"Despite this, Phuket's tourism industry has remained intact, as international tourists have not canceled travel plans to this island haven," the report stated.

Marking the success of major events at the end of April, including the MICE [Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events] extravaganza organized by Amway China, the report cited immigration statistics as a convincing indicator for stability and growth.

These include a 22% year-on-year increase in arrivals in April, as well as arrivals in the first four months of 2012 jumping 13% when compared to the same



ON THE UP: arrivals figures this year are looking promising.

period last year.

The report stated that the island's earnings account for 74.5% of all tourism income earnings in the main Andaman Coastal provinces of Ranong, Krabi, Phang Nga, and Trang.

- Phuket Gazette

Noose tightens for US assets abroad

INCOME and asset reporting requirements are tightening up for American companies and expatriates abroad as a result of new legislation drafted in the latest push by the US government to narrow its bulging deficit.

"Uncle Sam, in the guise of the IRS, is after high net worth American individuals overseas," says Paul Gambles, Chief Investment Officer at MBMG Asset Management.

"It's all because the Treasury is desperately trying to balance its budget," he added.

Effective from this year, the new FBAR (Foreign Bank Account Report) requirements include submission of the Statement of Specified Foreign Financial Assets, also dubbed the 'shadow FBAR' (IRS form 8938).

Meanwhile the new Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA), will oblige financial institutions to report foreign assets

US Tax tips

and income of individuals and corporations from 2013 onwards.

To ease the transition and narrow the impact, Bangkok-based MBMG Group has updated its suite of advisory and transactional services to ensure compliant tax reporting and legitimate minimization of tax liabilities for American entities across the kingdom.

The announcement of MBMG's new services come as a relief to US institutions, corporations and individuals across Asia who seek to minimize exposure, yet remain fully compliant with US laws and reporting obligations.

"The [current US Presidential] administration is following the thinking of Warren Buffett, who has advocated a minimum tax rate of 30% for individuals earning



Paul Gambles of MBMG Group.

more than a million dollars a year.

"The US Treasury hopes these and other tax proposals such as a 20% capital gains tax, a 55% gift tax and a general reduction of personal tax exemption, will raise an additional US\$ 36.7 billion a year to offset a rising budget deficit," explained Paul.

To avoid coming into conflict with US tax authorities, international banks such as UBS, Credit

Suisse, Deutsche Bank, HSBC and HypoVereinsbank will no longer accept private accounts of US nationals.

"Tax rates seem certain to increase and non-compliant assets, gains or income will become ever harder to hide.

"However, tax-planning opportunities continue to exist and are now more important than ever.

"Using compliant offshore and onshore vehicles and structures, MBMG can help overseas Americans minimize the pain."

Gambles believes that many banks, advisors and managers are treating US nationals "like pariahs" out of fear of FATCA.

"But if you do everything right then there should be nothing to fear. So MBMG's doors are very much open to all American individuals, corporations and institutions."

For practical steps, MBMG says that a number of legitimate

solutions exist to minimize exposure for American individuals and companies.

These include deferred variable annuities, private placement universal variable life insurance, direct investment into offshore funds, and IRA LLCs, all of which MBMG can advise upon from its Asia head office in Bangkok.

"Every crisis has its opportunities," says Gambles. "MBMG has responded by offering an enhanced range of financial solutions. These will minimize immediate and ongoing tax exposure and also develop efficient and robust longer term solutions."

"We want to help our current and future American clients sleep easily at night by reminding them that they have access to the best advice," he concluded.

For more information, see W: mbmg-international.com

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Commodity market report

| Item | Average Price (baht) | | Market/Vendor |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| | June 3 | May 28 | |
| Red Pork (thigh) | 130/kg | 140/kg | Tesaban 2 |
| Gutted Chicken | 70/kg | 70/kg | Tesaban 2 |
| Chicken Eggs (#2) | 3.1/pc | 3/pc | Tesaban 2 |
| Catfish (medium) | 75/kg | 75/kg | Tesaban 2 |
| Kale | 50/kg | 55/kg | Tesaban 2 |
| Coriander | 130/kg | 100/kg | Tesaban 2 |
| Chili Pepper | 46/kg | 55/kg | Tesaban 2 |
| Jasmine Rice 100% (Maboonkroong) | 215/5kg | 215/5kg | Topps Robinson |
| Granulated white sugar (Mitrphol) | 23.5/kg | 24.5/kg | Topps Robinson |
| Instant Coffee (Nescafe) | 120/200g | 120/200g | Topps Robinson |
| Dish Soap (Sunlight) | 28/600cc | 28/600cc | Topps Robinson |
| Toothpaste (Colgate) | 49/200g | 49/200g | Topps Robinson |
| Benzene 91 | 41.49/l | 42.09/l | Shell Pump |
| Gasohol 95 | 38.07/l | 38.67/l | Shell Pump |
| Diesel | 30.27/l | 30.87/l | Shell Pump |
| LPG | 14.01/kg | 14.01/kg | Shell Pump |
| Rubber (RSS3) | 102/kg | 103/kg | Phuket rubber trading |
| Liquid Rubber | 91/kg | 92/kg | Phuket rubber trading |

*Source: Department of Internal Trade

Shedding light on design

One of the island's most seasoned and savvy lighting designers talks about the essence and importance of "good lighting"

Feature by Steven Layne

"GOOD lighting can make ordinary things appear extraordinary," remarks Ian Potter of Andaman Lighting.

This trick of rays is reciprocal indeed. "People often spend a small fortune and considerable time in choosing their furniture, floor finishes, fabrics, art works and wall finishes.

"These items can usually be seen well during the daytime, but, if not enough thought has gone into the lighting, at night these 'aesthetic investments' could be missed out altogether," he explained.

While controlling sunlight is an arduous if not impractical task, manipulating artificial light at night – the preferred and prime time in Phuket to entertain – can be a powerful and useful art and science.

"By applying the right balance and angles of light, we can direct attention to specific points, accentuating special features in a space. Likewise we can direct attention away from things.

"For example, you might want your guests to focus on a statue out on the terrace, but not to notice the ugly pole or drain pipe nearby.

"By controlling the light carefully we can make you look at what we want you to see. Every space is unique and requires a tailored assessment," Ian explains.

With more than 15 years of service on the island, Andaman Lighting's extensive client list includes renowned luxury hotels, villas, restaurants, developments, golf courses and even yachts.

Distinguished hospitality and leisure brands the company has worked with include Holiday Inn, Banyan Tree, Le Meridien, Dusit Laguna, Loch Palm and Blue Canyon, among many others.

Apart from its impressive work on such projects, Andaman Lighting also specializes in design for the restoration of cultural heritage sites.

Through his international arm, CWL Lighting, a Hong Kong registered firm,

Ian has been involved in a handful of prestigious restoration and refitting projects in the region and worldwide.

Noteable highlights include the retro-fitting of Amanfayun, a traditional, boutique resort in Hangzhou, China; the famous 'Author's Lounge' at the historic Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Bangkok; and Amantaka – a colonial era hospital-turned-resort in Luang Prabang.

"These kind of projects are relatively complex because strict building regulations greatly limit what you can add or take away from a site," he said.

Asked about the most common design flaw in such projects, Ian replied: "With these older sites, elements tend to get added piece-by-piece over time.

"One year, there may be a plant in a hallway that the owner or engineer wants to highlight, then later it's moved but the light remains. After years of 'adding on demand', eventually you're left with a big mess. When we take over such a project, we prefer to strip out what we can and start from scratch, developing and keeping a bigger picture in mind."

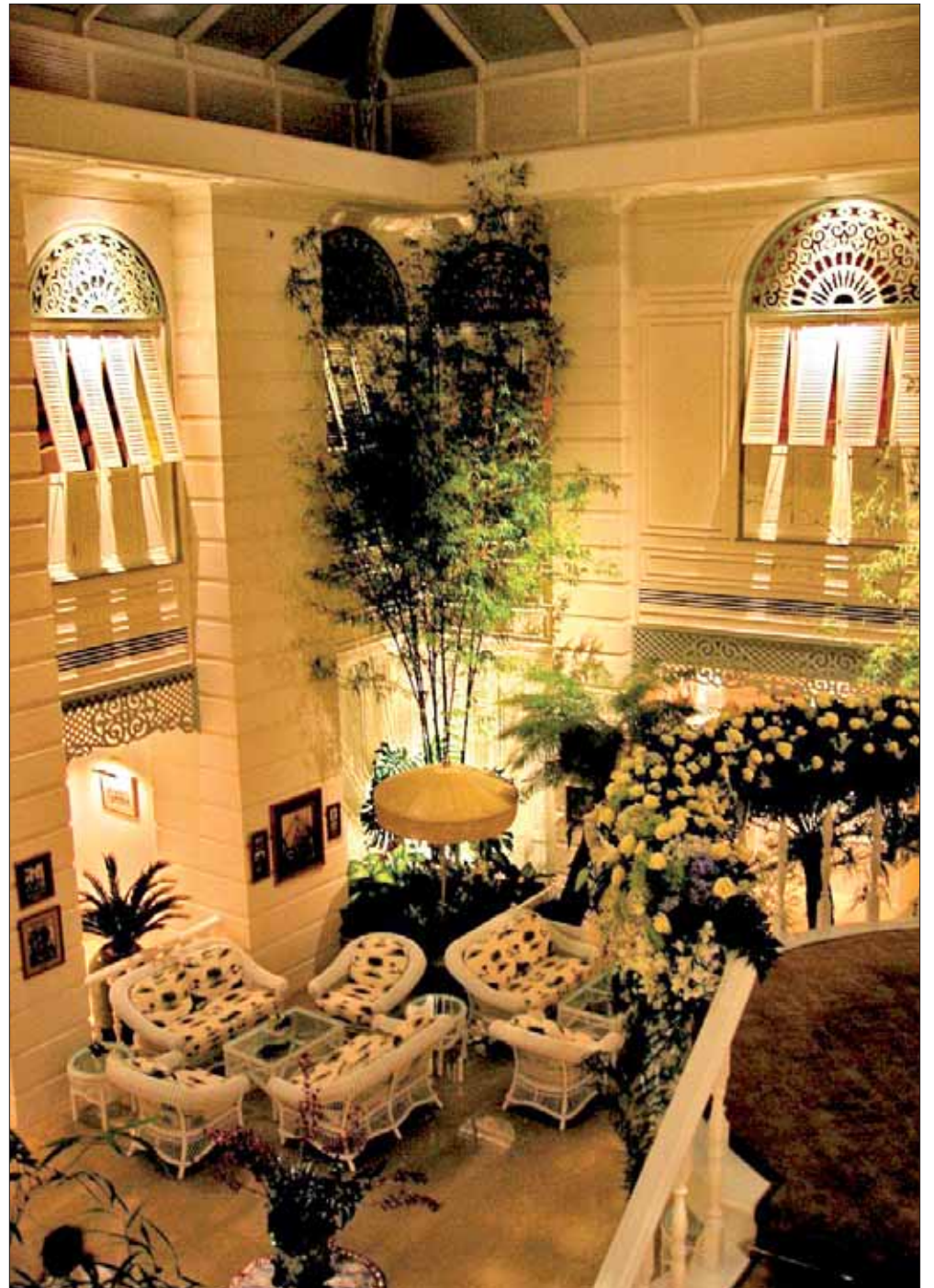
Though most of the projects Andaman Lighting has undertaken were tailored with highly-customized designs and engineering, Ian said that his firm is keen to work with and develop pre-existing themes as well.

"We work smoothly with architects, engineers and designers to mutually achieve a final product that is not only satisfactory, but superior," he said.

Ian concludes with an analogy to boiled rice and vegetables: "You could eat them everyday if you had to, getting just the right amount of nutrients to keep you alive.

"Lighting is the same. A simple lamp will enable you to read and write. But good lighting, however, is like that perfectly cooked, seasoned, spiced and overall wholesome meal."

For more information, see [W: cwl-lighting.com](http://W:cwl-lighting.com); Do you have an interesting product or service to feature? email: business@phuketgazette.net



BRINGING OUT THE BEST: Andaman Lighting's international arm, CWL Lighting, has restored a number of cultural heritage sites globally, including the Author's Lounge in Bangkok (above).

Small appliance sales dip in Q1

Consumer Trends: Southeast Asia

SALES of Small Domestic Appliances (SDA) in five key Southeast Asian markets dipped in the first three months of the year when compared to the same period last year.

According to tracking data from the GfK Group, one of the world's largest research companies, SDA sales throughout the first quarter (Q1) across Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam totaled US\$135 million, or about 4.27 billion baht.

SDA comprise four categories: food preparation appliances, irons, rice cookers and vacuum cleaners.

All in, 4.6 million SDA units were sold in Q1, slightly less

then the same period last year

While sales performance slowed down in a majority of the countries, an exception was Malaysia, which was the only country of those surveyed to show growth in the SDA sector.

"The region's SDA sector was boosted by Malaysia's upbeat performance of 8% and 7% growth in sales volume and value, respectively," noted Jasmine Lim, Account Director for Home & Lifestyle at GfK Asia.

"Due to the economic situation in Vietnam, where the market is experiencing the worst inflation in Asia, purchasing power has generally been reduced, naturally leading to more conservative spending behavior by consumers there," she added.

The star performing segment of the SDA sector was vacuum cleaners, with some 12,000 more units sold in Q1 this year than the same period last year.

As the smallest contributing segment in the sector, vacuum cleaners raked in 4% more in revenue to total US\$24mn (759.8mn baht).

To no surprise, the rice cooker remained the largest contributor to SDA in all the countries, with over 2.1 million rice cookers worth US\$55mn (1.7bn baht) sold.

"Average prices of small household appliance across the countries have registered slight variations compared to a year ago, from a reduction of 1% in Malaysia to jumps of 5% and 9% in Thailand and Vietnam," noted Ms Lim.

"The higher average appliance price in the case of Thailand was driven mainly by value growth in steam irons and steam iron systems – an indication of consumers' readiness to trade up from basic irons to more premium, higher-end models," she said.

As for the trend in the decline in

sales of irons, rice cookers and food preparation in Q1 this year compared with last, the report cited slower sales registered in January.

Sales momentum in the subsequent two months saw total SDA sales almost on par when compared against the previous year.

"We foresee some surge in demand in the vacuum cleaner and food preparation categories. We are noticing more product features and variations being offered in the markets," said Ms. Lim.

"Along with the increasing affluence and rising living standards in today's society [of Southeast Asia], we anticipate further growth of the SDA sector, propelled by the rising number of consumers seeking out products beyond the basic range which can help improve their quality of life," she concluded.

– Phuket Gazette

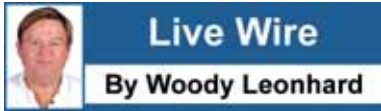


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Goodbye to CAT EV-DO



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

I REMEMBER the day well. October 1, 2007. The people at CAT let me take a sneak peek at their new "AirCard" service - the first wireless broadband service in Phuket.

I'm sad to say that, by the end of this year, that service will be officially phased out.

I call the service "EV-DO", although the technology is actually called "CDMA EV-DO Rev A."

Most of the people who bought into the service, in the early days, bought a Sierra Wireless AirCard ("AirCard" is a trademark of Sierra Wireless).

The AirCard plugged into a PCMCIA slot on your PC - back then, USB wasn't common at all, but almost all laptops had wide PCMCIA slots.

An AirCard cost 15,990 baht. Unlimited EV-DO service ran to

1,290 baht per month.

I recall being absolutely delighted at the time that my downloads of Windows beta test versions would only take hours, instead of days. I downloaded Vista Beta 5728 that week on my TOT line and it only took two days. If I'd had the AirCard at hand, it would've taken four to six hours.

It's hard to believe this was just five years ago.

Like the rest of Thailand, CAT has moved on to 3G. More accurately, to HSPA+, which is far faster and more reliable than EV-DO. The old CDMA network is being dismantled, and EV-DO will disappear along with it.

I asked at the CAT office in Central last week what would happen to the people who still have EV-DO AirCards. They didn't seem to be overly concerned: my guess is that only a handful of people in Phuket who are actually still using EV-DO.

The bad news is that CAT has

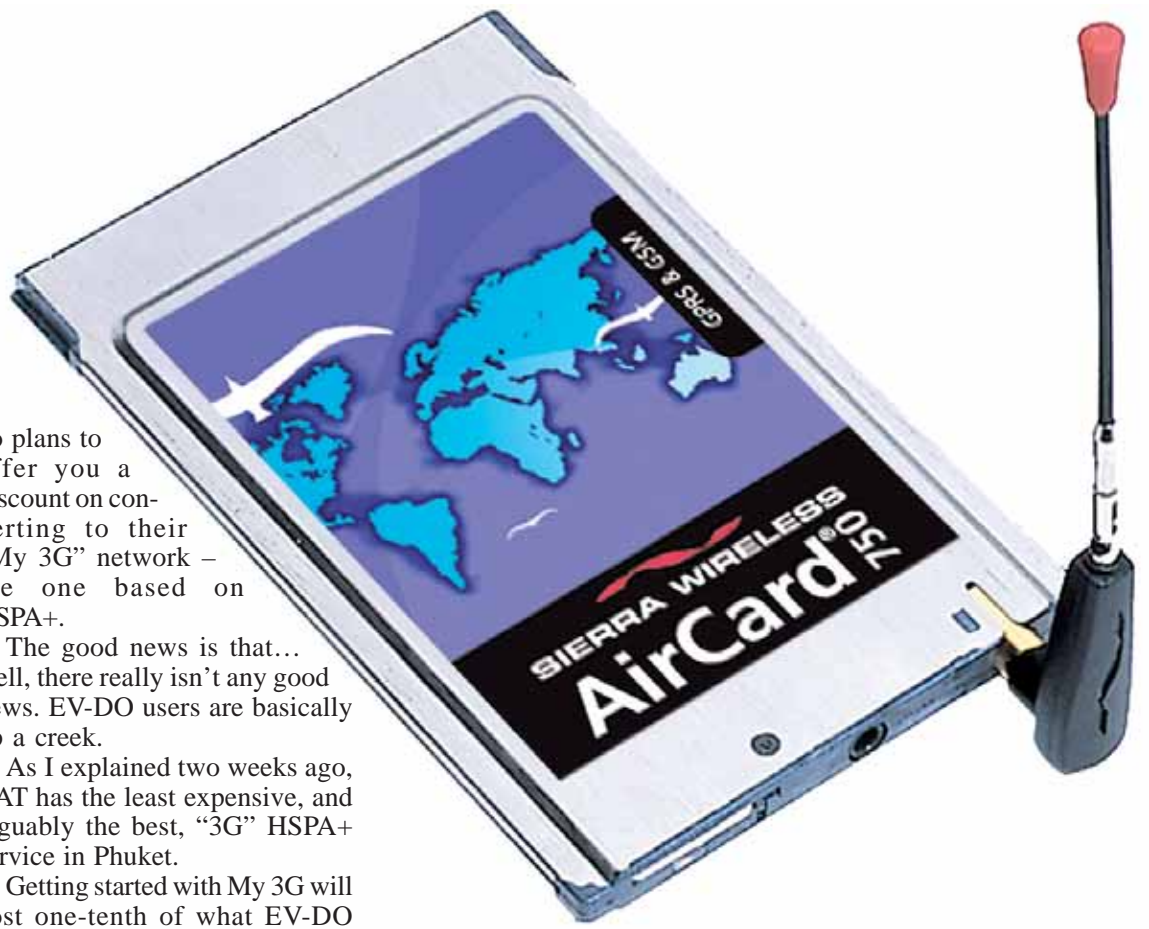
no plans to offer you a discount on converting to their "My 3G" network - the one based on HSPA+.

The good news is that... well, there really isn't any good news. EV-DO users are basically up a creek.

As I explained two weeks ago, CAT has the least expensive, and arguably the best, "3G" HSPA+ service in Phuket.

Getting started with My 3G will cost one-tenth of what EV-DO cost back in the day, and the monthly charges run at 800 baht, for high speed downloads up to 4GB per month.

If you blow your monthly data cap, CAT throttles you back to a nominal 384 Kbps. (Don't whine about the data caps too much, folks - they are now a fact of



GONE WITH THE WIND: Aircard users will be left whistling in the breeze.

life everywhere in the world).

Of course, 3G in Thailand is in a state of massive upheaval and uncertainty. Just like it was five years ago, come to think of it.

Right now, as I also mentioned two weeks ago, there are rumors

that CAT may shut down its My 3G program - or someone may shut it down for them.

I figure that's unlikely to happen, simply because so many people depend on 3G. But, well, you never know, eh?

A passel of tips for all you iPad users

FRIENDS of mine wrote in with a bunch of questions about their new iPad. Here's what they said:

We have finally bought ourselves an iPad (the New...as there were no iPad 2s available).

Being very new to Apple technology we would appreciate your advice and tips on the following:

- Do we need to download any virus software?

- Do you use Safari or an Apple version of Firefox?

- Do you use a Dropbox program or use the iCloud?

- Any tips and recommendations regarding free downloads that are a must - or the ones that are a must to purchase.

- Do we need to register the iPad with Apple for the warranty (the staff in the Apple Store in Central

were not very helpful).

We would appreciate any advice/tips etc that you may have, if you have the time.

I'm not an iPad expert, but I'm certainly a fan. Here's what I wrote back:

There haven't been any viruses on iPads yet. But you need to keep your ears open, if one should appear.

I use Safari. I don't like it. I may switch to Chrome or Firefox, but haven't had the time to give it a run.

I use both iCloud and Dropbox, but for two completely different things. Unless you need to work with your PC-based documents on the iPad, iCloud is probably

all you need.

You need to realize that you don't need to hook your iPad into a PC any more, or download iTunes for your PC. You can connect your iPad directly to iCloud, and get everything from there. In my opinion, that's a much better alternative (although there are some cases where you might want iTunes).

Many people in Phuket don't realize it, but you can get a prepaid SIM card for your 3G iPad. Details and a lengthy discussion at W: thaivisa.com/forum/topic/552146-ipad-prepaid-3g-card/

Yes, you should register your iPad. If the locals won't do it, keep your receipt. Apple's good

about service.

Here are the sites I recommend for getting started:

W: apple.com/support/ipad/getstarted/

W: ipadinsight.com/ipad-tips-tricks/ipad-tips-getting-started-with-the-ipad

There's also a list of good iPad apps here: W: t3.com/features/best-ipad-apps

GoogleEarth is amazing, same with Flipboard, both free. But I wouldn't spend much money until you get a feel for it.... You're going to find that there's plenty to do and learn with just a plain iPad. - **Woody Leonhard**

Update on the PCs4Kids project

MANY of you may recall the PCs4Kids project, undertaken by Ross James and aided and abetted by a long list of locals.

The project's moving forward slowly. Right now Ross has an application in to Microsoft, asking for donated Windows 7 licenses for all of the refurbished computers. He reports that it looks like the licenses will be granted, but it's taking longer than expected.

A few of the computers have already been distributed to needy and deserving kids in Phuket, although most of them are still waiting for Win7 licenses.

Ross reports that they're going to expand the program a bit, to encompass local college and technology school students as well as

younger kids.

Ross says that they need monitors - any kind of monitors, but especially flat panels.

"I want to push for flat panels, but I don't want to turn anything down right now. Here is my angle: You are probably reading this on a screen that you will upgrade sooner or later. Why not do it now?"

"You will enjoy the hell out of your new 1080p 24-inch (or 32-inch), and someone else will get your old 19" with some life left in it. So what are you waiting for?"

Donations of used PCs, peripherals, screens, laptops (especially laptop batteries, working or not!), memory chips, working or not - are greatly appreciated.

Bring them by either of the Sand-

wich Shoppes, or drop me a line.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions every other Wednesday afternoon, from 1 to 3pm. If you have a Windows problem, drop by one of Seth's free afternoon sessions, or come to one of our free Sunday morning roundtables at Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. Details in the Events Calendar. Sponsored by the Phuket Gazette and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes.

Live Wire is *Phuket Gazette* columnist Woody Leonhard's weekly snapshot of all things internet in Phuket. Email him at Woody@KhunWoody.com, follow him on Twitter, @PhuketLiveWire, or "like" his page at facebook.com/SandwichShoppe.

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Why Facebook was never a sure thing

PERSONALLY speaking, I have never been one to jump on the Facebook band wagon. I just do not get the whole 'let the world know what you are doing on an hourly basis' scenario.

Don't get me wrong, this is a very useful application when, like ourselves, we enjoy the sun-soaked shores and we want to keep in touch with friends and loved ones back home.

Facebook has grown to become the largest social media network site in the world and, with over 900 million users worldwide, its potential seemed endless.

However, following its recent IPO, Facebook's stock price dropped in value. Was this unexpected?

Facebook, on one hand, would seem like an advertiser's paradise, access to 900 million people in one swoop. What went wrong?

We have to ask where do Facebook's profits come from? They don't charge subscribers so practically all their income

comes from advertising. The last time I logged on to Facebook, there wasn't the usual pop up's that you would normally get from other websites.

Initially valued at between US\$28-US\$35 per share, it seems that this valuation was severely overpriced and gave Facebook a value of US\$105 billion.

When the share price dropped as soon as it began trading, it was evidence that investors didn't believe Facebook is a US\$105 billion company.

If we look simply at Facebook's price to earnings ratio, at \$38 a share, Facebook has a P/E (a measure of how much profit a share buys) of almost 100 times the projected earnings for the next 12 months.

By comparison, Google Inc. trades at 13 times the projected earnings. Subsequently the initial IPO offerings saw the share price drop by 25% for some investors.

As the stock fell, there was a long list of questions, ranging

Island Investor

By Anthony Lyman

"It was just a poorly done deal and it just so happens to be the biggest deal ever for Nasdaq and they pooched it."

- Joe Saluzzi, Themis Trading



900 MILLION AND COUNTING: This social graph, created by Facebook intern Paul Butler in 2010, shows the social networking giant's worldwide connections. Stock buyers at the recent IPO, however, were more interested in income potential than how many cute puppy pics had crossed the international dateline.

from whether the underwriters priced the shares too high to how well prepared Nasdaq was to handle the biggest Internet IPO ever.

"It was just a poorly done deal and it just so happens to be the biggest deal ever for Nasdaq and they pooched it. That's the bottom line here," said Joe Saluzzi, co-manager of trading at Themis Trading in Chatham, New Jersey.

An IPO ought to leave investors confident that the system of share allocation is fair, the price is right, and the company is

forthright. The Facebook IPO achieved none of these goals.

The good news is that individual investors who were denied a piece of the IPO can now buy Facebook shares for about \$32 as of May 24th.

But, as with all stock picking, if this episode should teach us one thing, it is that due diligence needs to be done on any stocks that you may be intending to buy.

As this has shown us, even the largest of companies, and what many people deem as being a safe bet, isn't always a

sure thing.

There is no such thing as a sure thing. As markets remain volatile, there are still good stocks that can be had at the right price.

However, this is an area where expertise needs to be sought, as a few wrong picks could mean a significant loss.

For more information regarding this article please contact: Alyman@montpeliermalaysia.com Anthony Lyman is a Senior Financial consultant for the Montpelier Group

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THAI's new smile strategy



Aviation

By Alastair Carthew

THE inaugural flight of Thai Airways International's (THAI) new hybrid short haul regional carrier, Thai Smile, from Bangkok to Macau on July 1 (it should eventually service Phuket) intensifies the increasingly aggressive battle for a share of the lucrative and rapidly growing Asia/Pacific market.

Thai Smile will initially target regional hubs such as Hong Kong, Kyderabad, Kolkata, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Vientiane, all within a three hour flight from its Suvarnabhumi Airport hub.

Why an Asia/Pacific regional focus, rather than high volume tourist destinations like Phuket?

The answer is competitors like Thai AirAsia and SilkAir, the Singapore Airlines' hybrid on which Thai Smile is modeled after; also Cathay Pacific's Dragonair and Qantas's Jetstar. All these carriers are not traditional Low Cost Carriers

(LCC), but offer extra services such as Thai Smile's premium economy product, Smile Plus.

In addition there is Scoot, Singapore Airline's new low cost, long haul airline that will service destinations like Bangkok (starting July), Australia's Gold Coast, Singapore and Tianjin Binhai Airport in China. Scoot's inaugural flight to Sydney was scheduled for 4 June.

Thai AirAsia is probably Thai Smile's main competitor. It is no coincidence that Thai Smile's first services are twice daily flights to Macau, the gambling capital of Asia which is also Thai AirAsia's second largest port after Singapore with four daily flights.

In essence Thai Smile is an absolute necessity for THAI to cover a gap in its business plan: short haul Asian regional routes, that have been quickly filled by

its competitors.

An attempt last year to launch a true LCC, called Thai Tiger, failed to get government support.

THAI is, literally, surrounded by LCCs. They are AirAsia; Cebu Pacific; Jetstar Australia; Lion Air from Indonesia; Hong Kong Airlines; SilkAir and Tiger Airways from Singapore and Indigo and Spice-Jet from India. SilkAir's success in recent years is a role model for Thai Smile.

Phuket is likely, eventually, to be serviced by Thai Smile, but not until it has established its regional network, and THAI's own fleet refurbishment works its way through.

Thai Smile will fly 174-seat Airbus A340s, which would be ideal for servicing Phuket during off peak hours, but insufficient to meet passenger demand during peak hours, particularly during

the high season when THAI still uses the 400-seat Boeing 747s.

However, THAI is gradually converting its fleet to wide bodied aircraft to match its

competitors, a move that will, inevitably, force Thai Smile into greater use on the Phuket and other, less densely populated routes.

What would you get on Thai Smile compared to a true LCC? The operational side of Thai Smile has fewer staff, high aircraft utilization and a quick turn around to keep costs down. Inside the cabin there will be up to 30 premium economy seats, a tight seat pitch in economy class, meals for the premium passengers and snacks for the others with no complementary alcohol in either class and no in-flight entertainment.

The theory is that passengers do not need such "frills" for short duration flights. It will be worth watching if ThaiSmile maintains this policy as other carriers that started out as LCCs, such as Australia's Virgin Australia, fairly quickly started adding extras



SMILE YOU'RE ON AN LCC: The brightly colored Airbus A340s has thirty premium economy seats (below).



because of public expectation and to attract business passengers.

Scoot, the Singapore Airlines new long haul LCC, is also upgraded its LCC model so it can compete with AirAsiaX, AirAsia's long haul LCC, and Jetstar, a Qantas subsidiary which services Phuket. All fly wide bodied aircraft, such as the A330 or B777, have premium

class cabins and much larger seat pitches than the other hybrids mentioned (then again, they fly much greater distances). However, while Jetstar appears to have been a success story, AirAsiaX was forced to stop its Kuala Lumpur to London flights some time ago after announcing them with much fanfare. Scoot, with SilAir's renowned efficiency and powerful branding

behind it, should fare better.

It is quite possible that Phuket tourists from Australia's Gold Coast could fly to Singapore on Scoot and then on to Bangkok on Thai Smile, connecting through Suvarnabhumi Airport on Thai Smile to Phuket. The whole trip on two carriers being launched in 2012, an indication of just how important and competitive aviation is in this region.

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Burning issue: operating the new Phuket incinerator

By Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai

AFTER a long wait, with a few false starts, the second trash incinerator at the Saphan Hin waste management facility became fully operational on June 5, the Phuket City Environment Office has announced.

The incinerator, which was expected to be fully operational last month, encountered technical problems during its trial run and repairs needed to be carried out.

The timing was unfortunate. At the same time, the older number one incinerator also developed problems and had to be shut down ahead of schedule for maintenance.



IN THE HOT SEAT: Prachoom Suriya.

Prachoom Suriya, chief of Phuket City Municipality Environment Office took time to explain the process at the incinerator to the *Phuket Gazette*.

"Garbage from all over Phuket is coming to this incinerator. We charge each municipality or *Tambon* 520 baht per ton to deal with their waste.

"The [new] incinerator can handle at least 700 tons of trash per day. However during the trial period we were burning only 300 tons per day. Currently, we receive 640 tons of garbage every day. That's a nine per cent increase on last year's tonnage," explained Mr Prachoom.

Before the trash can be burnt, excess fluid needs to be drained off. This is done by storing the wet waste in the 7,000-ton-capac-

ity storage unit. When dry, the incinerator can then process the waste at a rate of 700 tons per day. The storage unit is divided into 10 bays, each of which can hold up to 700 tons of waste. From there, the garbage is transferred to the incinerator on a rota basis, the driest trash being stored for the longest period.

"About 60 per cent of all garbage arriving at the facility consists of organic waste, such as food scraps, leaves and tree branches. Not much in the way of recyclable garbage comes in, as it has an economical value and is separated from the rest before it arrives," he said.

In early May this year, local villagers and visitors to Saphan Hin Park filed complaints against the Phuket City Municipality Environment Office regarding noxious odor from the incinerator.

"The smell was caused by left over trash in the old incinerator that didn't burn. To add to that, the pollution filtration system fitted to the old incinerator wasn't functioning properly," he explained.

"The old incinerator was shut down on May 23. Since then, we've had to rely on the new incinerator burning only its 300 ton trial capacity until it became fully operational on June 5."

To solve the immediate problem Phuket City Municipality Environment Office had to pick the best



NERVE CENTER: A view of the control room at the new incinerator complex.

of some bad choices until the new incinerator could be brought online. They ended up reverting back to using the landfill site, which was already over-flowing.

"Since we had no properly functioning incinerators, we had to solve the problem by using the landfill. The smell was still really bad as the site had been full since March 14 of this year. Garbage arriving was just piled up at the landfill with no proper treatment," said Mr Prachoom.

"Weather conditions were another factor we had to deal with. On rainy days, the smell was even worse. However, we solved the smell problem by pouring over 1,000 liters of effective microorganism liquid (EM) over the trash," he added.

The landfill at the rear of the incinerator facility is where a vast amount of Phuket's rubbish is now being stored. These enormous piles of trash will be processed once the incinerator is up and running.

"We are slowly, bit by bit, getting rid of the garbage overflow, but there is a lot that needs to be burnt. Now that the new incinerator is fully operational, we hope we can get rid of it all soon," said Mr Prachoom.

The new incinerator was designed to be able to burn all kinds of trash as there is no formal separation process before it arrives at the incinerator facility.

"The separation process has to be conducted at the source, but I know that Thai people are not in the habit of sorting their household trash at home," lamented Mr Prachoom.

"Phuket people need to learn about garbage separation. We all need to take this more seriously. Previously, we ran a 10-million-



baht campaign to highlight the issue, but people continued putting all their rubbish in one bag."

"We used to have a trash type separation unit, but by the time the garbage arrived here, it was mixed



Outside the incinerator.

and contaminated. That is why our new incinerator is designed to burn all types of trash. With the heat at 960 degrees centigrade everything will be burnt, nothing will be left, including chemicals that can damage the environment," he said.

In order to solve the problem in the long-run, Phuket City Municipality Environment Office has planned to campaign for Phuket to be "greener".

"We have already planned a campaign for trash separation. The Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) will be in charge of the project, called 'Green Route'," said Mr Prachoom.

"The 'Green Route' project will involve sending out one truck to collect recyclable trash and a second for wet trash."

"The *OrBorJor* has proposed the project and requested a budget in order to build a factory with the capability to convert trash into fertilizer or bio-gas," he added.



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ARTIST: Though fire breathing can be a 'stupid-human trick' there is artistry. Photo: luc.viatour

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

THE smell of gasoline lingers on your hands after the flames have been extinguished, and the performance is over. But the smell itself is a little addictive, like a woman's perfume on the pillow of an empty bed – a reminder of a past flame.

A very talented busker (street performer) once took me aside and gave me a bit of advice, some insight that changed how I constructed my own street show: People don't want to see you get hurt, but if it happens, they don't want to miss it.

It was true. No one wanted to see the young American standing on the board walk of The Haag burst into flames, or drop one of the fire clubs he was juggling on the volunteer laying between his legs. But would they want to miss it? Would you?

Rasta bars and beach-side venues of Phuket are riddled with fire performers, some of them quite talented. The island's fire artists tend to rely on spinning arts, such as staff and poi.

Rarely do you see fire juggling, hula-hoop, fans or eating. However, you do see some fire breathing, which always draws impressive cries from the crowd.

Fire performing simply plays on people's perceptions of what is dangerous.

Surely flames spraying out of a man's mouth, stretching six meters in a steady burst, must be dangerous.

Even fire breathing, which is by far the most dangerous of the fire arts, isn't that dangerous.

As with every other instance when you've "played with fire", all you do is take precautions and actually think about what you are doing.

The only time I was ever legitimately caught on fire was when I hadn't thought about what I was doing all the way through.

The flame was to run up one of my trouser legs, across my crotch (sparkling idea) and back down the other. We did a quick test – no pain when we put a little lighter fluid on my jeans and burned it... The flaw in my logic at that moment is so excruciatingly obvious that I won't go into details, but I was very glad that there was a fire extinguisher on hand.



I learned fire eating and breathing from a book (setting a person's pants on fire was not one of the chapters).

The concept for quality fire breathing is simple: aspirate.

"Fire breathing" is a misnomer, it should actually should be called fire aspiration, which

is not nearly as sexy a name. Take any flammable liquid, from Bacardi 151 to gasoline, and instead of spitting it at the torch in your hand, you aspirate it.

It's like playing the trumpet. The liquid is sprayed out in tiny droplets allowing for the right mixture of air, fire and fuel.

Just a handful of safety precautions make

C'mon light my fire



such a dangerous stunt incredibly safe.

Perhaps the most important rule is never swallow. Spit it all out and rinse your mouth afterward.

Nipping at the heels of the "never swallow" rule (fire performing specific), is the obvious "never blow a flame into the wind" rule, because God's lungs are bigger than yours. Such a battle will singe your eyebrows at the very least and in a nastier scenario, after a trip to the hospital, you could easily end up a Voldemort look-alike.

Don't use gas. Yes, it produces the biggest flames, however 100 per cent pure paraffin is always a better choice, as it is less harmful if you do accidentally swallow a little.

Actually the best thing to do is to learn when you are sober and practice with water – yes I know it isn't flammable, but it helps a person understand aspiration.

But let's be honest, fire breathing is a standard "stupid human trick". I've seen drunks stumble onto the beach and give it a go with moderate success (this is by no means an encouragement for trying this). Yes, the more you practice the better you will get, but compared to the other fire arts, fire breathing is for barbarians. So instead of just being razzled by the big flames leaping from a performer's mouth, like hot air from a car salesman, pay attention to the athletic talent, creativity and showmanship that goes into the fire spinning that can be found on the island.

But no matter what part of a fire performance you enjoy most, from the intricate patterns of a poi master to the dragon bursts of a fire breather, remember, a change in the winds or a sudden gust could land them in the news – and you wouldn't want to miss that, would you?



HOT FOOD: The art of fire eating is rarely seen on Phuket, but the trick to the mostly painless act is simple physics. Heat rises, so the 'burn' stays away from the performer's mouth.

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Going, going, gone

An award winning Phuket photographer is recording Phuket's environmental decline for posterity

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

WORLD Environmental Day, which was on June 5, has a special meaning for Phuket-based photographer Chusak Uthaipanumas. Twenty years ago, on this day, he received an accolade at the quadrennial photo contest on the environment organized by United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP).

The photographer traveled to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, to attend the UNEP award ceremony. It was an event witnessed by many world dignitaries, the proudest moment of his working life.

Selected from more than a thousand international participants, Chusak's work entitled "Sorrowful Lifestyle", a moody and poignant depiction of two children sitting on the edge of a vast expanse of parched, cracked earth, won second prize in the "professional" category.

Chusak, now 53 years old, was no stranger to acclaim. Having worked as a photographer since the 1980s, he has amassed over five hundred national and international prizes. What marks the UNEP recognition out was the fact that it

acknowledged the drive and ideals behind the body of his work.

Chusak's style of working is to take many photographs of one place, a landscape for example, over a period of weeks, months and even years, covering the changes of the seasons, climate and environment, whether these changes are natural or man-made. His photo-documentary style tells stories of seasons, terrain and communities.

The award-winning picture, for example, was of a dry and cakey swamp, taken in Korat, in the northeast of Thailand, where the extreme heat of the summer usually takes its toll on the farmers there. Chusak explained:

"When I was in Rio to receive the award, people came up to me and asked if Thailand could be that dry. They associated this extreme harshness with parts of Africa and my photo came as a surprise to them."

He then proceeds to show me another picture of the same place, in the rainy season this time. It shows a large lake full of water, lotus plants in full bloom, and children frolicking joyfully. This picture won both the grand prize and the grand honorary prize



SILENT WITNESS: Photographer Chusak Uthaipanumas.



BELIEVE IT OR NOT: This flock of herons was photographed in Thalang's wetlands.

at the Ballantine's Photography Awards in England. He is the first person in the world to win both awards in the same year.

Chusak came to Phuket 25 years ago and says he was touched by the island's pristine beauty and

started to take many pictures of its scenery. He always took notes during the photo excursions to remind himself of any peculiarities he found in certain places – the angle of the sun, the times of the tides and any particular landmarks.

Chusak, who by now has become very familiar with the whole terrain, says he has witnessed many sad changes in Phuket's landscape, mostly due to human ignorance.

The most famous landmark of Phuket, Laem Promthep, is a case in point. Arguably, the most photographed spot on the island, the picture of the alluring sunset with silhouettes of palm trees, figures prominently on many tourist brochures and other promotional material.

The palms, Chusak says, died over the year, and changed the whole vista. "I noticed the change in my negative spaces." Concerned with the outlook of this iconic spot, the photographer took it upon himself to report this to the authorities in order to replace the dead trees with new ones.

"I don't see why we can preserve the old town and not Laem Promthep. This place is the identity of the whole island and should be kept that way."

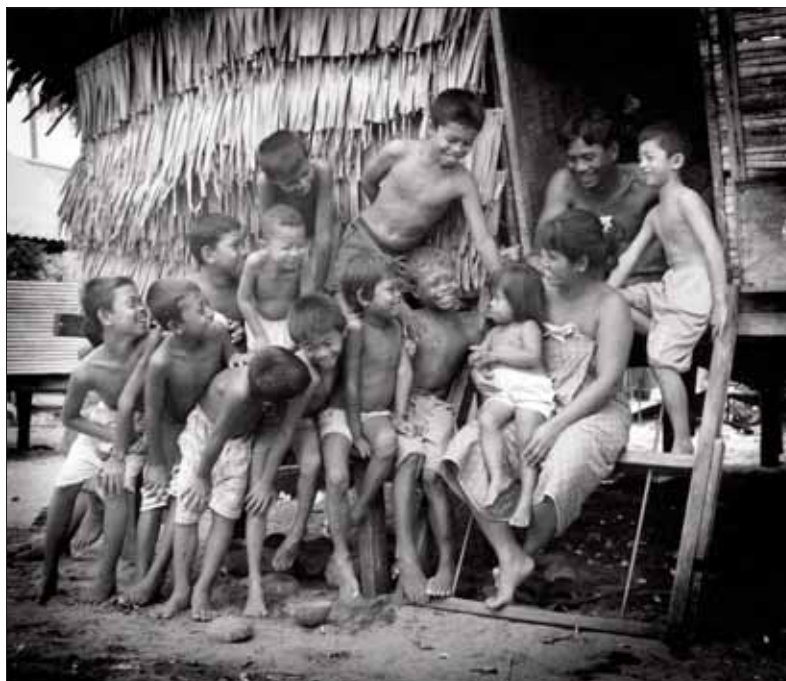
He also says that he doesn't agree with having shops there. Commerce, he says, creates its own set of problems. "Why do we always have to entice tourists to shop, anyway?"

Move over to another beach, the idyllic Rawai in southern of Phuket, home to *Chao Lae* or the Sea Gypsies of Phuket. Chusak has been taking photographs here since the 1980s when the *Chao Lae* children wore nothing and the women often went topless. His record of this community in the last decade, he says, was unique and might become important historical documentation.

Now the sea gypsies wear jeans and sport wrist-watches and the wood and thatch houses gave way



One of Chusak's most popular themes is Chao Lai children at play.



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SYMBOLISM: Laem Promthep with its dying palm trees.



SORROWFUL LIFESTYLE: Chusak's winning UNEP photo shows the ravages of drought in Issarn.



Universal themes like this mother and baby abound in his work.



ONCE UPON A TIME: A phuket farmer in his field. At least the hills are still there.

to brick and mortar construction. Satellite dishes are now very much part of the landscape.

"I don't blame the *Chao Lae* for wanting a better lifestyle. However, there must be a way to curb and manage the development in a way that still preserves their unique way of life. They are part of our society and as such we must all help them remain that

way. To me this is so much better than just building a museum to house their heritage. Their livelihood is a living museum."

In the light of the relentless changes that are happening all around us, Chusak will for now have to be content with doing what he does best - taking pictures to show the world that it's changing too fast.




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Amongst the maggot mob

CARL Hiaasen is an intrepid investigative reporter for the Miami Herald, exposing the many despoilers of Florida's remaining tropical wilderness.

In his novels, he takes a wild satirical slant, pitting the same greedy, grotesque developers against an avenging angel named Skink, a Medal of Honor winner in Vietnam and a former Florida governor who disappeared into the depths of the Everglades decades ago.

Hiaasen's eleventh novel is *Star Island* (Grand Central Publishing, New York, 2010, 354pp). This time he takes aim at the cult of showbiz celebrities and the paparazzi that surround them, known as the "maggot mob". Miami has become one of their seasonal stopovers and Hiaasen makes the most of it.

Fat, pathetic Bang Abbott is one shameless maggot. He got his start as a newspaper photographer by winning a Pulitzer Prize for a photo of a Canadian

tourist being attacked by a shark off a Florida beach. This happened after Abbott threw 'chum' in the water to attract the sharks.

Soon after this, his newspaper sent him to cover a Hannah Montana concert in Tampa, "...an assignment he'd correctly perceived as punitive. Afterwards he'd gone out for drinks with a group of paparazzi who were pursuing the young singer and had listened with hungry fascination to their lurid battle tales. It had dawned on Bang Abbott that he could make more dough with one titty shot of a wayward starlet than he would busting his hump for six months on a newspaper salary."

A host of underhanded tricks soon bring him paparazzo success. An outraged Charlie Sheen once urinated in his ear.

Abbott's prey now is Cherry Pye, a 22-year-old pop singer on a similar Sheen-style downward trajectory of drink and drugs. His ambition is to snap a revealing portfolio of Cherry Pye before her inevitable early, and lucrative, death.

This brings predator and prey together in a fancy Miami hotel. But, after Cherry's latest overdose, Bang Abbott is diverted by a body double who is whisked away in an ambulance as Cherry is hauled through a rear exit. The double is Ann DeLusia, an aspiring actress who is hired by Cherry's parents to impersonate their daughter at media events for which she is inevitably indisposed.

Cherry's parents send her off to another bout of "rehab California" while Ann DeLusia takes off on vacation to Key West.

At night on a deserted road, she crashes her rental car and is rescued by Skink who uses her as bait to kidnap a busload of investors in a fraudulent and highly illegal development scheme that has denuded acres of coastal mangroves.

As an object lesson, Skink affixes a sea urchin to the scrotum of the slime ball property developer, one Jackie Sebago.

Meanwhile, Cherry Pye has escaped rehab, hitches a ride to the airport with Bang Abbott who has been stalking her, and the two fly off for Florida in a private jet with the singer introducing the paparazzo to the joys of the Mile High Club. Once in Florida, she dumps him, after stealing his cameras

"It had dawned on Bang Abbott that he could make more dough with one titty shot of a wayward starlet than he would busting his hump for six months on a newspaper salary."

Books

By James Eckardt



HERO-FREE FICTION: Even Carl Hiaasen seems bored with his characters.

and his Blackberry full of sleazy contacts. In revenge, Abbott kidnaps her, only to find that his victim is Ann DeLusia. Which brings Skink back into the picture.

Cherry, meanwhile, has a new bodyguard named Chemo, a six-foot-eight convicted murderer. "Among his murder victims had been the doddering dermatologist who'd fried his face during a botched electrolysis procedure, and the crooked plastic surgeon who'd falsely promised to repair the damage."

Murder, though, is one thing, mortgage fraud another. "Like many inmates, he changed in prison, although in his case the

Bible played no role in his conversion. It was instead a more slender tome called *A Snake's Guide to Milking the Mortgage Trade*, which preached a strictly nonviolent philosophy of fraud and subterfuge."

With the demise of the crooked mortgage market, Chemo has turned to free-lance bodyguarding. He has replaced his missing left hand, bitten off by a barracuda, with a weed whacker.

The climax is a muddled confrontation at a trendy Miami club called Pubes. Rather lazily, Hiaasen rounds out the action with an epilogue on each of the characters. By then, he, and us, have had enough of them.

Classic Bush

Music

By Marc Mulloy

RELEASED at the end of 2011 Kate Bush's tenth album (and her first new album in six years) is heavily influenced by – you guessed it – snow.

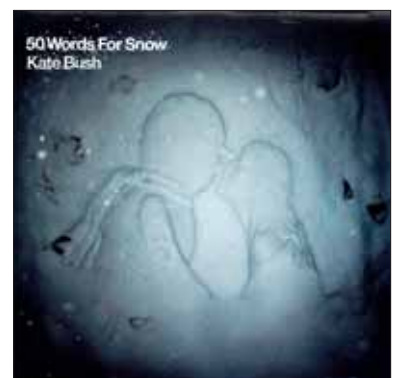
As anyone who watches the TV quiz show *QI* will tell you, the Inuit language does not actually have 50 words for snow. But the album's title track obliges with a flourish as Kate Bush goads the *QI* host himself, Stephen Fry, to compile 50 words for the cold white stuff. Sparse funky electronics and a driving, shuffling beat rise in crescendo as words like "ankle breaker", "Icyskiski" and a personal favorite "mountain sob" are coined one after the other.

Apart from Stephen Fry, Ms Bush also sings with Elton John in *Snowed in at Wheeler Street*, an eerie duet with Bush's teenage idol

about a couple who have literally "been in love forever" from ancient Rome to World War II to 9/11, always losing each other along the way.

But how do you define Kate Bush's indefinable music? *50 Words for Snow* is classic Bush as it has characters and stories from the elusive Abominable Snowman in *Wild Man* to a torrid affair with a real snowman in *Misty* (so torrid it melts the poor fellow). *Snowflake* chronicles the life of snowflake falling to the ground and *Lake Tahoe* tells of a watery spirit searching for her dog. The album ends with *Among Angels*, which, instead of going for the obvious crescendo sees Kate Bush going back to the piano for a mood piece and delivering the starkest song of the whole record.

The seven tracks are long (the shortest is seven minutes) and are propelled by Bush's languid piano and the jazzy drumming of Steve



Gadd. Andy Fairweather Low is another guest musician who appears on the record.

There's an appealing creepiness that runs throughout and the best words to describe it would be atmospheric, subtle, sophisticated and understated. It's an intimate recording that grows on you and takes you to another place. This is a mature album, with themes that are even deeper than the astonishing records that she made over thirty years ago. At 53-years-old this extravagantly gifted songwriter keeps surprising her audience with her original music which gets better with age.




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ML Sukhathai Chumbala

THE view across Chalong Bay, as seen through the massive French windows of *Cloud 19 Beach Retreat*, changes quickly. In a matter of minutes, blue skies turn dark and stormy. Soon sheets of rain are beating down on the murky sea.

"I like this kind of weather. There's beauty in drama," remarks Mom Luang Sukhathai Chumbala, the owner of the stylish *Cloud 19*, a boutique hotel converted from a family home, on Ao Yon, just west of Cape Panwa.

Sukhathai, known affectionately as 'Mom Pump,' has reason to be cheerful; his hotel has just won the Tripadvisor 2012 Award of Excellence, thanks to many satisfied customers who, having spent their time here, posted their favorable reviews on-line.

"The idea of holidaying in a friend's home is appealing to many people and we try to re-create that kind of atmosphere. Couple that with excellent and friendly service and you have a winning formula. Honeymooners, in particular, like to come here and we organize many weddings a year," says the 43-year-old hotelier and entrepreneur, adding that *Cloud 19* is a play on words.

"Why have cloud 9 when you can have 19?" Nineteen refers to the number of rooms available at the hotel.

Prior to this, Sukhathai was a successful property developer. His high-end Dhani Condominium

THAI gallery

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

occupies the a prime area of Sukhumvit 59-61. *Cloud 19* was born out of the desire to try out something different.

"Running a hotel is another learning curve. It's quite different from looking after serviced apartments. Hotel work demands day-to-day attention. You also have to watch changes in season and adjust your marketing ploys accordingly."

Born into a privileged class (he can trace his ancestry back to King Rama IV), Sukhathai is surprisingly humble about his upbringing, dismissing his years at an English public school as "one of those things people did back then."

He added that: "The time spent in England gave me a good chance to see Thailand from a different viewpoint. From that perspective, I felt incredibly lucky having been born a Thai."

After the sixth form he decided to leave England because he was "fed up with the gloomy weather," and headed west, to Hawaii, where the climate was more clement. Four years of study at the Chaminade University earned him

a BA in economics and a Masters in Japanese Business Studies.

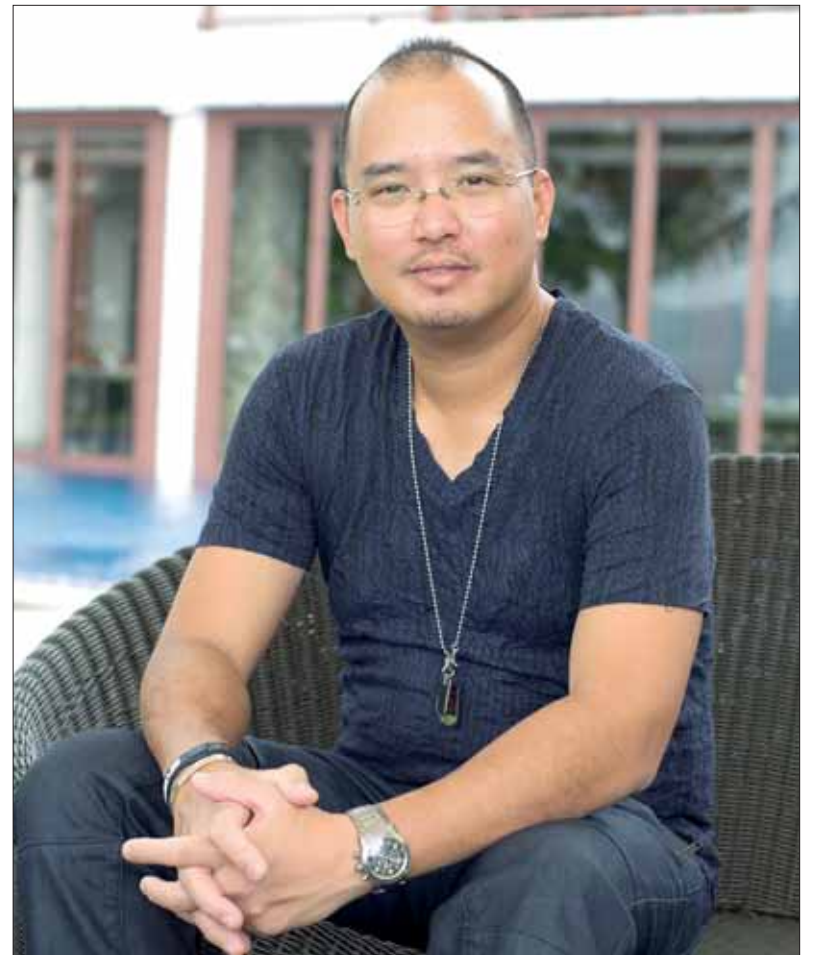
A short period in Japan on a work placement as part of the course has enriched his knowledge of and the love for this country and its culture. He was impressed, he says, by the way the Japanese pulled themselves up after the war, and emerged as one of world's economic leaders through sheer determination and hard work. The Japanese work ethic has become a model by which he lives and runs his business.

After graduation, Sukhathai spent a year travelling around the world. Back home in 1992, he was ordained as a monk for one *pansa* (a lent period of three months) under the HM the King's patronage.

"I wanted to know why we pray and make merit, and during that short period, I truly understood the core of Buddhism.

"This religion is a science that can be quantified. The law of karma is a case in point. You make merit, either giving food to the poor or feeding stray dogs, and immediately you feel good about it. It's instant gratification. The philosophy and teachings of the Buddha are simple to understand and to practice."

Sukhathai is married with two children. While his 14-year-old son in studying in the UK, the rest of the family, who still live at *Cloud 19*, enjoy welcoming guests to this smart resort they also call home.



About Thai Gallery

The individuals profiled in "Thai Gallery" are chosen on the basis of their contributions to Phuket as an international community, and, often, for having made those contributions through successful social and/or working relationships with foreigners. This implies some foreign language skills and an interest in interacting with different cultures. They are people who in our experience help make the lives of expats far more enjoyable here than might be the case without them.

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PPAO President Paiboon Upatising makes merit during Visakha Bucha Day on June 4. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong



JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa held a charity brunch at Lotus Pavillion as part of the 8th Turtle Fun Run and Mini Marathon 2012. From left; Kewalin Sukujittanon (Marketing Communications Manager - JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa), Sareepab Meekaewnoi (MD - Phuket Best Group), Pantawee Kaewchaiyo (MD - Radio Trip 89.75), Oscar Chitamitree (Station Manager - Blue Wave 90.5FM) and Michelle Currey (Director of Sales & Marketing - JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa).



FINAL FAREWELL: Friends of recently deceased Phuket expat, Brian "Scotty" McCormick-Kid, congregated at the Ao Chalong Yacht Club last week to give him a musical send-off.



KEEP ON TRUCKIN': Central Festival Phuket held an event entitled "Isuzu Wonderful Day" on June 2 with special promotions from Isuzu, a dance competition, a concert and a Thai Boxing show.



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June 8-10, 1-5pm: The Laguna Phuket International Marathon 2012

Saturday, 9 June
 10am - 5pm Registration and Expo (Big Marquee)
 5:30pm -9pm Pasta Party (Latitude Marquee)
 Sunday, 10 June
 4 - 4:20am VIPs and Media at VIPs' Marquee
 4:30am Marathon Start
 6am Half Marathon Start
 6:30am 10.5 Km Run Start
 7:10am First Finisher of 10.5 Km Run
 7:20am First Finisher of Half Marathon
 7:45am First Finisher of Marathon
 8am 91.5FM Phuket 5km Community Walk starts
 8:30am Prize presentation ceremony
 8:40am First Finisher of 91.5FM Phuket 5km Community Walk
 9am Awards collection and Kids Run start
 Call 081-902 9219 or e-mail laurence@goadventureasia.com. Visit W: phuketmarathon.com. The *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV are proud sponsors of this event.

June 11, 6pm-1am: Surfnight at Two Chefs Kata Beach

Every Monday we are setting up a great BBQ-Buffer. Filled with loads and loads of food. There will be juicy steaks directly from the BBQs, a big variety of sauces and much, much more. There will be nice and pleasant live music performed by one of the members of the Two Chefs house band. The best with this is that it only costs 495 baht for all of it. For more information please visit us at W: twochefs.com.

June 11, 7-8:30pm: New Exhibit - My Abstract Life by Chris De Meo at VR Gallery Mom Tri's Villa Royale

Mom Tri's VR Gallery welcomes

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

the first solo exhibit of artist Chris De Meo. He has been invited to exhibit 'My Abstract Life' from 11 June to 11 July. Opening reception June 12 at 7pm. It will be predominately large abstracts. Chris began painting over a year ago in 2010, having waited his whole life to allow himself his true passion. VR Gallery is the successor to the mini gallery that existed at Mom Tri's Boathouse for many years. The Boathouse gallery served as a venue for local and visiting artists. The new VR Gallery will continue in this tradition.

June 15, 7-10pm: Indian Night at Les Anges, Royal Phuket Marina

Phuket's best Indian buffet is back with a new chef and a new menu. Special promotion at just 449 baht. From 5-9pm buy one get one free for the drinks. Reservations recommended. Call Mr Murat on 081-797 3364.

June 15, 7-11pm: Curry Fridays Phuket at Navrang Mahal Indian Restaurant, Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa

We present Curry Fridays at Navrang Mahal India Restaurant. Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish Indian Curry Buffet every Friday. All-time favourite Chicken Tikka Masala, very hot Mutton Vindaloo, succulent Kebabs, Goan Fish Curry and much more... served with Nan bread and Basmati rice.

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on beverages. Venue: Navrang Mahal India Restaurant at Karon. For reservations please call: 076-286464, ext 4

June 16, 4-7pm: Phuket Academy Dance 2012 at the Hilton Hotel

Song and Dance spectacular - Ballet, Jazz and Tap by students from across the island. For more details call 076-288525 or e-mail lecumming@gmail.com.

June 21, 11:30am-2pm: Phuket International Women's Club Monthly Lunch at Tawaii Restaurant, Cherng Talay

The Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch will be held at Tawai restaurant in Cherng Talay. All are welcome but prior registration is essential. Members 500 baht, guests 650 baht. Contact info@phuketiw.com.

June 22-23, 10am-3:30pm: Social Media Marketing (Facebook) Beginner's Course at the Sandwich Shoppe-Chalong

Looking to expand your marketing plans by utilizing social media for your business but don't know how? Take this two-day compact social media training course focusing on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest and learn how to easily maneuver your pages to get your brand out to the online community. Cost per person will be 4,000 baht and the course will start with a minimum of four persons. Sign up today by emailing us at info@awpr-phuket.com! Registration ends on June 17.

June 23, 12-3pm: Saturday Brunch at Two Chefs Kata Center

Saturday brunch at Two Chefs Kata Center. Every Saturday we are setting up our brunch

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buffet, filled to the limits with home made delights. In our smoke house, we smoke all of our fish and meats by ourselves, and in the bakery we bake all our bread. With very well trained chefs and a Swedish head chef, we can promise you that you won't leave hungry or thirsty. All this for only 395 baht, and if you add an extra 300 baht you can choose to drink what you want from our free flow alternatives. For more info, please visit W:twochefs.com.

Event Announcement
 The Boat Lagoon Weekend Market has been temporarily closed during June to November 2012 due to rainy season. The Re-Opening is on December 1, 2012 with the improvement of the dry foundation lawn space, rain and sun protection, as well as the welcoming of the 2013 high season. For further information and boot rental, please contact 088-768-0471, 083-508-5823, 090-337-4693. Alternatively E-mail: chompoo@bmseven.com

Phuket Afternoon Computer Clinic

Is Windows driving you nuts? Looking for a good internet connection? Need to know how and where to get your PC repaired, or your confounding questions answered? Drop by the new Afternoon Computer Clinics, hosted by Woody Leonhard and Seth Bareiss. Bring your computer. Bring your questions. Bring your sense of humor and let's see if we can solve your PC problems. Second and fourth Wednesday of every month, 1-3pm, at the Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. Sponsored by Woody's Sandwich Shoppes and the *Phuket Gazette*.

Free Computer Clinic at Sandwich Shoppe Chalong - June 13, 27, 1-3pm

Contact at 076-282403, Woody@KhunWoody.com or visit KhunWoody.com

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PROPERTY Gazette

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Oceanic's award-winning Kata Ocean View Condos

Oceanic Management's Villa Neptune project overlooking Chalong Bay recently won "Best Property Single Unit in Thailand 2012-2013" at the Asia Pacific Property Awards. Here, Oceanic's **Patrick Catellani** talks about the project and the company's success.

PHUKET Gazette: What makes your Kata Ocean View condominiums stand out from similar projects?

Patrick Catellani: Apart from the great location, sea view and value-for-money with regards to construction quality and standards, I believe that our strongest selling points are the after-sales services such as tailor-made management and a very efficient rental program. Most buyers only come to Phuket one or two weeks a year, therefore they need to rely on us for the maintenance and care of their property. Our team is made up of 35 people who look after a total of 93 units completed so far. With this ratio of 2.5 units per staff member we can assure a prompt response to all our buyers' needs.

PG: What is your target market?

PC: In such an unstable world

economy we must be very flexible and quick to switch from one market to another. When I started to build in 2006 I was mainly targeting Europeans. At that time I was selling 4 units per month. In 2008 it all changed and we moved away from the European market and started to promote in Russia and China. Right now I mainly focus on the Chinese market, though Thai buyers come to us by word of mouth. The majority of our buyers are foreign families who buy as an investment.

Only recently I have noticed that some Europeans are starting to look again at the possibility of investment, but for relocation purposes. Therefore we've decided to team up with law firms and consultancy agencies who are able to create a package for those in need of these additional services.



The one billion baht project is looked after by 35 staff

PG: What are the demographics of your existing clients?

PC: Currently we have 20 % Thai nationals, 20 % Chinese, 15% Russians, 25% South Europeans (France, Spain and Italy), 10% Americans and 10% Australians.

Most of the buyers are buying for investment and let us handle the rentals. Our rental program is very strong and gains are averaging 5% NET per year.

PG: What is the ratio of freehold vs. leasehold titles?

PC: Approximately 40% foreign

freehold, 20% Thai freehold and 40% Leasehold.

PG: Can you comment about your recent award?

PC: There were about 650 participants in total and in the "Best Property Single Unit" award category about 50. Only ten, from different countries, got into the finals. I think we won for two reasons. Firstly because of the design, with its unique modern and clean lines integrating innovative construction technology, energy efficiency and

eco-friendly concepts and hidden security applications. The second reason, I think, is because of the unique way we marketed and pre-sold the villa to the first investor. We appointed a Chinese advertising and marketing agency instead of a real estate agency.

Just for the record, the Villa was sold off-paper at a one night event organized by the agency in a famous disco-club in Shanghai.

I did not expect to win but I was sure that our project would have ranked among the best in this market bracket.

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Rust never sleeps, or does it?



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

SUNDAY is on my mind, as short bursts of staccato motorbikes fire down the road outside. A little early morning surfing brings up a concert review in the LA Times of the Van Halen reunion concert which even brought back David Lee Roth into a revival of arena rock.

The writer's closing epitaph somehow resonates by saying "nostalgia, by definition, seldom moves a person forward, rarely satisfies in the long run..."

I've recently done a series of market research projects in Pattaya. Oooosh, there it goes, that long sequential silence that is often accompanied by strange looks, eyes turn downward and the dirty little secret is out of the box.

What is it about the very word Pattaya that causes such a catchism of shame and discomfort? Is it that the destination is still stuck in the 60s and 70s, when it started as a Vietnam R'n'R center for soldiers? Or is it that the collective mindset of the masses is still entrenched in the past.

By numbers alone, the resort destination is a shining star on Thailand's tourism scene. This year it's expected that over 8 million hotel guests will spend a night in Pattaya. More startling is the fact that in-

ternationally operated hotels hit a 74% annual occupancy in 2011, 8% up over the broader market.

Tracing the turning point takes you back to 2008 when things got ugly. First with a slap in the face from the Global Financial Crisis (GFC), and then in the ensuing year came the start of Thailand's political woes. A kick drum thump sparked the upturn in 2010, when tourist arrivals doubled from those dog days in 2008.

What changed the destination?

A number of things. Certainly the development of Central Festival's Shopping Mall which is touted as Asia's largest beach fronting retail complex. As Suvarnabhumi airport further developed traction along with

the impressive roadway system to Bangkok, domestic visitors were the primary drivers of demand.

In the aftermath of the GFC there was a spike in Asia's middle class growth and that was the sweet spot. Regional tourism also rose, and Eastern Europe become Thailand's "go to market" with charters flying into nearby U-Tapao International Airport. Passenger traffic between 2010 and 2011 grew by 39% at the latter facility.

A spin off beneficiary of the tourism boom to the area was residential property, which has been a true success story over the past few years. Pattaya real estate has been traded fast and furious, and,

"If you say to a casual observer that hotels in the market have strong corporate demand, you often get a look of disbelief..."



Pattaya beach. Photo: Sergey S. Dukachev

outside of Bangkok, has the highest level of market transactions of residential property in Thailand.

While foreign dominated markets such as Phuket and Koh Samui went quiet for longer than I'd like to think, Pattaya geared up with domestic demand supplemented by overseas buyers of smallish condos in high-rise complexes.

Of course the makeover remains a work in progress these days, but looking at what is creating a new market includes the economic activity in the Eastern Seaboard. After Japan's tsunami, automobile and automotive parts manufacturing have continued to grow in scale and exports from this sector have

continued to surge.

If you say to a casual observer that hotels in the market have strong corporate demand, you often get a look of disbelief, but the facts on the ground bear this out. A few key players have balanced segmentation between leisure and business guests.

Looking into the future, what bodes well for Pattaya is a strong investment pattern of international tourism attractions into the catchment area. The Cartoon Network branded theme park is coming and a number of large water parks will also be debuting soon.

While the destination's inventory of accommodation stood at

49,348 units at the close of last year, the incoming pipeline is under 5% of this number. Phuket on the other hand, which is of similar scale, is expecting a 14% rise in hotel rooms and is in greater danger of oversupply.

So there you have it – Pattaya is shifting its act and drawing from a new bag of tricks. While Neil Young said "it's better to burn out, than to face away", this destination looks to buck the trend and has taken on a whole new attitude in the current decade.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through W: C9hotelworks.com

In brief...

W Bali hit by zoning controversy

IN A continuing crackdown over building infringements by resorts and restaurants on beach areas in Indonesia's premier tourism destination, online news site Balidiscovey.com has reported that the upscale W Retreat in Seminyak has been cited.

Key to the controversy is that regulations have been allegedly been infringed upon by the resort's swimming pool and bar area.

In the nearby Batu Belig area four beach clubs and restaurants have been demolished with the fate of a Karma group developed property still unknown.

Bali is continuing to grapple with a similar onslaught of building similar to Phuket as both location shift into urban resort models.

Outlet Mall group expands into amusement centers

The Thai developer behind a chain of premium-outlet malls throughout the country has opened a new expanded amusement concept in Cha-Am. Christened as Santorini Park the

theme is based on a Greek island by the same name.

Stories in the Bangkok business daily have quoted the developer as saying other outlet malls, in locations such as Phuket, may be expanded in a similar fashion.

Adds-ons to the Cha-Am development include a waterpark and mid-market hotel.

The group's business model, is unlike urban locations in that the malls are strategically located near transportation access with lower land than found in central business districts. Hence the real estate model contains more flexibility, with low-rise building and income derived from rental of retail and other space.

While the concept is nothing new in the USA or Europe, in Asia with a rising middle class and looming tourism numbers, these mass models have a tremendous upside.

The rise and fall of the Thai baht

IT WASN'T that long ago that a strong appreciating Thai baht was causing concerns in many of the country's business circles.

For the key Thai export sector, there was worry about losing out to cheaper labor markets.

While for hotels and property, where most transactions are denominated in local currency, value for money remained a strong negative perception.

In the latest reversal of fortune, Asia has seen marked declines in other currencies.

Is this bad or good for Phuket? The likely answer is both. Lower costs stimulate the proposition of sales but take a step back and many realize that the entire region may hit the skids.

Exports may be cheaper but where are the markets to sell them to? The expected continued upward climb in volume tourism could spiral if domestic growth slows down.

Perhaps most important is the impact to Thailand's domestic sector from a falling stock market and pressure on the Bank of Thailand to defend the value of the baht at some point down stream.

Ultimately the best thing is for a stable baht, which appears to be an impossible task at present.

– Bill Barnett

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Beyond expectations: A new Krabi getaway

KATA Group Resorts Thailand recently opened the doors to its latest modern upscale beach resort, Beyond Resort Krabi.

Situated across the Phang Nga Bay from Phuket, Beyond Resort Krabi compliments the group's initial Beyond Resort development in Khao Lak.

According to promotional material, the development was "designed around romancing nature and the beach, representing closeness with nature's own perfect provision."

The beach resort looks out to many islands in the Andaman Sea from its seat on the scenic Klong Muang Beach, 38 kilometres from Krabi International Airport.

The resort integrates nature's elements with its own lush greenery and hillside location, offering simple luxury within a most natural environment.

The development's "Romancing the beach" concept is about reliving unforgettable moments and creating intimate memories at the beach.

It is where one finds rejuvenation, inspiration, romance and love all over again. Beyond offers simple, understated and indulgent hospitality that makes romancing the beach an evocative experience.

Beyond Resorts is Kata Group's luxurious offering, and encompasses two new resorts that are positioned to become leading properties in two very popular destinations in Thailand.

Beyond Resort Khao Lak caters to the adult market, and has a no-children policy making it ideal for couples looking to enjoy their romantic time together.

In contrast, Beyond Resort Krabi is suitable for all sectors of the travel market, including families and couples. All Beyond Resorts offer a range of facilities to help guests revitalize and rejuvenate, so that they can create their most memorable experiences; immediate beach access, quality spas, beautiful infinity pools, international cuisine, beach bars and beach activities to ensure guests make the most of their time

with the sand and sea.

The Beyond Resorts service philosophy is respectful of privacy, delivering efficient services that simplify the customer experience.

About the developer

Kata Group Resorts Thailand is a renowned hospitality company with a 32-year reputation for offering high-quality, affordable resort destinations in Phuket and Koh Samui. Its president, Pamuke Achariyachai, has pushed to ensure that the Kata name and logo become synonymous with quality and appeal.

The developer and property management firm currently owns and operates six resorts in Thailand: Kata Beach Resort & Spa, Phuket; Karon Beach Resort & Spa, Phuket; Phuket Orchid Resort & Spa, Phuket; Kandaburi Resort & Spa, Koh Samui; Beyond Resort Khao Lak, Phang Nga and Beyond Resort Krabi in Krabi.

For more info, visit [W: katagroup.com](http://W:katagroup.com).



FAMILY FRIENDLY: In contrast to Beyond Resort Khao Lak, designed exclusively for couples, Krabi's offering welcomes families and couples.

New challenges posed by AEC

THAI architecture, engineering and construction companies will have to develop and revise their standards when the Asean Economic Community (AEC) comes into effect in 2015.

Former president of the Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage, Taweejit Chandrasakha says that the AEC will directly affect the property sector and related businesses, especially in security standards for residences.

"Earlier, when we built residences, we were concerned about design, functionality, and the direction. But under the AEC, we have to be concerned about the raw materials [used] to build safe houses.

"For example, when architects select floor tiles, they are interested only in the design. Under the AEC, architects will have to follow the standards of the Asean Architects Council," he said.

Companies that can develop their systems to meet standards will be the ones to benefit from the AEC. If they do not make this investment, they will find themselves facing heavy competition, not only from domestic players but from elsewhere in Asean as well, he added.

Prasong Tharachai, former president of the Engineering Institute of Thailand, said the AEC would bring "pluses and minuses" for the construction business.

The most obvious benefit is the market will be larger. However, at the same time the AEC will also open up the Kingdom's market to foreign firms that can meet international standards in engineering, architec-

ture and construction – in other words, more fierce competition.

On the other hand, many property firms believe that AEC will provide opportunities for them to expand regionally, while creating more demand for residences in Thailand as they believe business personal from across the Asean region will opt to buy a second residence in Thailand.

Pruksa Real Estate chief executive officer Thongma Vjittpongpan said the company was interested in investing in AEC countries, especially Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, which have the population base to support demand.

Land & Houses Senior Vice president Naporn Soonthornjitcharoen, who has prior experience investing in the Philippines and Indonesia said his company would study the legalities of regional investment after the AEC goes into effect.

SC Asset Corporation chief operating officer Kree Dejchai said Thailand's market will not be affected by the AEC because it would [still] be difficult for foreign developers to expand into this country.

Supalai Managing Director Atip Bichanon said there would also be demand in provinces close to neighboring countries: "We are interested in expanding in Udon Thani to serve both locals and foreigners who marry Thais, and foreign investors who will use that province as a gateway to Laos," he said.

Other listed companies are also interested in investing in Udon Thani province, such as Land & Houses.

– *The Nation*



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Changing from red to amber



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

THE light has changed to amber. Time to stop dawdling, to drive on, and seek shrubs of a different hue. But since there are red plants aplenty that have escaped our scrutiny, here are some we should have noticed on our travels.

The most stupendous scarlet bloomer of all is the flame tree (*delonix regia*). Right now, one is illuminating the main road at the end of my *soi*. Sadly, it's too big for the average garden.

A less prolific bloomer, the African tulip tree has, as you might expect, tulip-shaped red/orange flowers up to seven inches wide at the end of the upper branches.

The *caesalpina* (peacock flower) and the geiger tree are smaller – in reality, large shrubs rather than trees – but both bear clusters of orange flowers. The peacock tree blooms more prolifically; the geiger has the advantage of being immune to salt-laden winds.

The fire-bush (*hamelia patens*), seemingly unfazed by the recent rain, is displaying its tubular, orange florets near my gate. Not so the wax rose, a cactus which will wait for a prolonged dry spell before producing its single rose-like blooms.

Other ladies-in-waiting are potted plants such as the desert rose or *adenium* (available in vivid red), and crown of thorns (*euphorbia millii*). These are succulents that struggle to flower effectively with-



GOLDEN MARVEL: Allamanda (above) changes the tone and hue of a garden,

out a daily dose of sunshine.

Among climbers, two tick the right red boxes: One, *mucuna bennetti* (the red jade vine or *phang komen*) is a spectacular and vigorous shrub with hanging tubular florets. I have only ever seen one specimen in Phuket.

Another, also rarely seen on the island, is *ipomoea quamoclit*, or cardinal climber. Normally considered an annual, it will grow here as a perennial.

As an unusual member of the

morning glory family, it is worth considering on account of its vivid, red, star-shaped flowers and distinctive, ferny foliage.

A native of Mexico and popular in southern USA, it is extremely easy to grow from seed, germinates in only four days, and will speedily cover a trellis without taking up all the available space and light.

Some plants have a wide spectrum of colors, but do include distinctive red varieties. The canna lily is one such plant: its pink, yellow or white bracts are now supplemented in local gardens by a brilliant vermilion variety.

Our old friend the bougainvillea, traditionally pink, purple or magenta, is available in vivid orange or blazing red.

Heliconias, which used to be principally employed in clumps as bedding plants, replete with huge sword-shaped leaves and relatively insignificant, upright orange or red/yellow bracts, are now – with cultivars such as *rostrata* – joining the ranks of genuinely exotic plants.

Huge pendulous red and yellow bracts up to a foot long make this an ornamental plant to be cherished. Moreover, it is thriving in the present watery environment.

I have dwelt at the red traffic light longer than I anticipated. Only now do yellow – yes, yellow – flowers come into my field of vision and there is time only to mention one – the allamanda. Why? Because it still heads my list of top twenty shrubs.

Right now, despite its predilection for tropical sunshine, it is still igniting my front wall. True, it needs some support, because all parts of this vine are substantial and lack tendrils – branches, shoots, leaves and flowers. But it is a golden marvel of huge, trumpet-shaped blooms and glossy

green foliage.

Allamanda flowers all year round and is impervious to disease of any kind. My kind of shrub? Certainly. If you don't possess it, drive through the green light and get one.

If you have a question or a garden that you would like featured, you can email me anytime at: drpaccampbell@gmail.com.

TRAFFIC LIGHT SPECTRUM: Right, (from top to bottom) are poinciana (*delonix regia*); peacock flower (*caesalpina*); African tulip tree (*spathodea campanulata*); red jade vine (*mucuna bennetti*) and cardinal climber (*ipomoea quamoclit*).



Photos: Francis Martin, Tatiana Gerus, Arun Prabhu, Mauroguanandi, Natalia Kourlovitch and Mike Epp.

Tip of the week Plant Migration

While many of the plants in your Phuket garden will be indigenous to South-East Asia, or even to Thailand, many will have arrived here from other parts of the world. Take the chili.

This pungent spice was unknown outside tropical America before Columbus made his voyage to the New World near the end of the 15th century.

Ironically, he was searching for the source of black pepper, then a commodity as valuable as gold dust. Chilies and peppers probably came to Thailand much later. One wonders how Thais managed without *nam prik* (chilli paste) for so long.

Evidence of this great botanical migration is all around us. Cannas, bougainvilleas, heliconias, flame trees, acacias and allamandas are just a few of the shrubs and trees visible from my window – all of them imports from other parts of the globe.

Foreign plants, some as yet without local names, continue to appear in garden centers.



CHILIS: The original exotics. Photo: Chrissy Olson.

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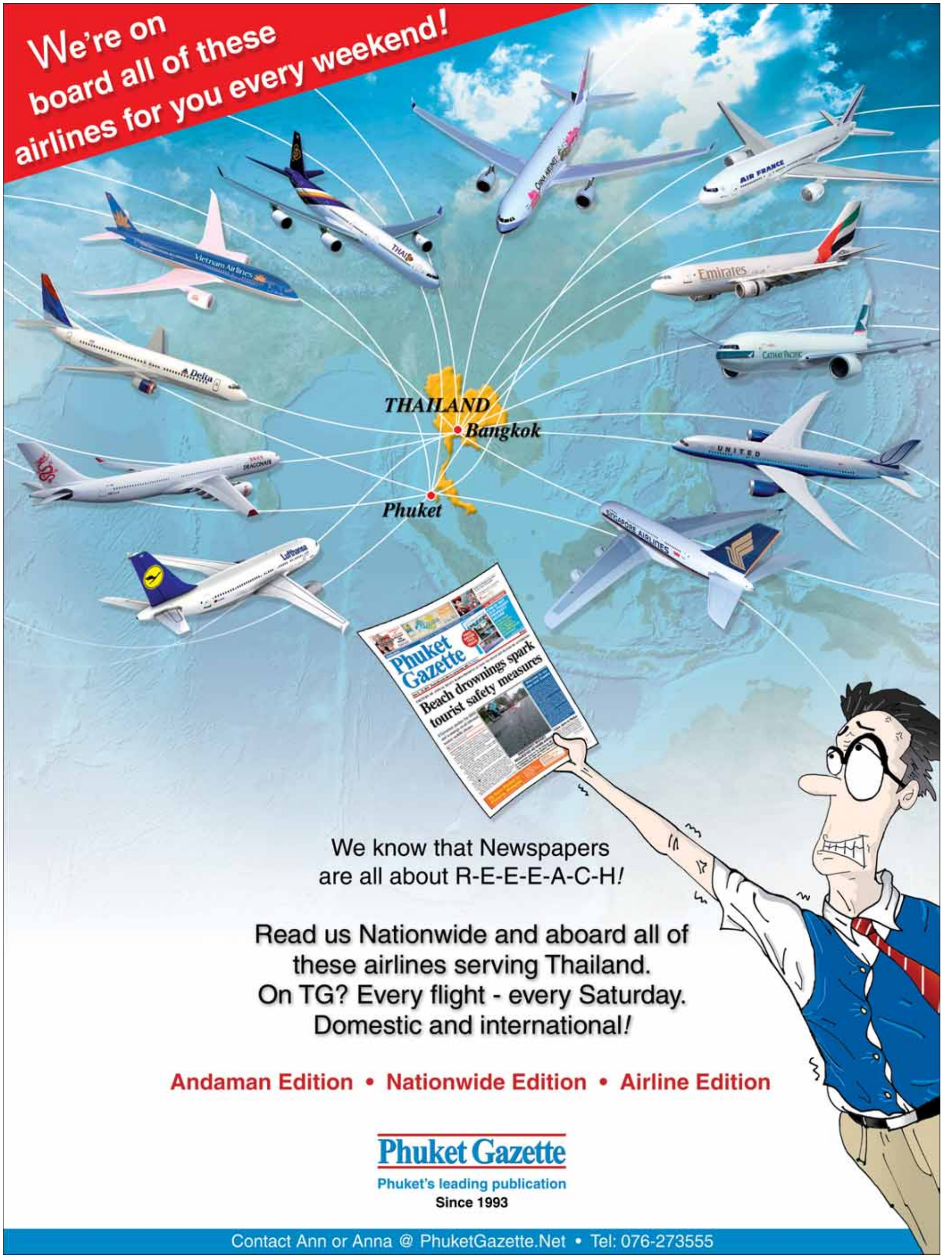
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Near the main road to Baan Don-Cherng Talay. 68sq wah. 1.1 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118. Email: honda.1437@yahoo.co.th

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Pa Khlok. 2 rai 32sq wah, 60m wide. Chanote. Located on Tha Ruea-Pa Khlok-Muang Mai Rd. 11 km from Heroines' Monument. Price: 7.8 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118. Email: honda.1437@hotmail.com

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CONDO IN SUPALAI PARK



for sale. Near Seng Ho Bookstore in Phuket Town. Studio, 30sqm, floor 15, sea view, aircon, furnished. Price: 1.9 million baht. Ready to move in July 2012. Tel: 089-472 9118.

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GROUND FLOOR KAMALA HILLS
Superb, economic 3-bed ground floor apartment for rent in stunning setting in Kamala Hills. UBC, internet and parking space. Tel: 081-397 7598 (English & Thai). Email: kajoda1954@yahoo.co.uk

RAWAI BEACH HOUSE
65,000++. 6-month lease. Tel: 081-397 6309.

GREAT LOCATION GREAT PRICE
Home secure estate with 4 bedrooms en-suite. Fully furnished with pool and sala. Located opposite golf course, 10 mins to most places (BIS, Central, etc). Available now! 55,000 baht per month, minimum of 6 months. Tel: +61-8-6161 2691, +61-43-592 2900 (English), +61-46-831 5377 (English & Thai). Fax: +61-8-6161 2691. Email: jenjira5@hotmail.com

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW

Comer unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

PATONG NEW 2-BED CONDO
Best view. 80sqm. Parking. Security. Long lease. 25,000 baht/month, Elec+bond. Private. Tel: 087-372 6770.

POOL VILLA FOR RENT
In Bangjo, near Laguna, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, fully furnished, security. Price: 68,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-9791 994. Email: tuaandta@gmail.com

LUXURY POOL VILLAS
Private pool, located in Rawai, quiet area, near the beach, 3-4 bedrooms. For rent or sale. Tel: 087-893 8747.

BEACH HOUSE FOR RENT

Kamala. 48,000 baht per month. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Western amenities. 2 storeys with decks looking out onto Kamala Beach. Minimum 3-month lease. Available now. Contact Jean. Tel: 088-447 7631 (English). Email: ayearlikenoneother@gmail.com

POOL VILLA RENT/SALE RAWAI
Available for short or long-term rental. Now offer special rate for low season. Tel: 089-472 9870. Email: dchaibut@gmail.com

BALINESE POOL VILLAS
Luxury boutique villas available for short or long-term rent. Swimming pool, two or three bedrooms. Rates from US\$89 per night. Tel: 076-384691, 087-264 9695. Email: enrico@easyhomephuket.com For further details, please see our website at: http://villasuksan.com/gallery.htm

CONDO AT ROYAL PLACE

Condo at Royal Place Project, Bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 37sqm, 2fl, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, cable TV, 24 security with key card etc). Pls contact for more details. Tel: 089-469 1813, 086-476 9612.

PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE

For Sale. Price: 4.2 million baht. No agents!, not furnished, with 4 aircons, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and car park. Behind Kajonkiet International School on Chao Fa West Road, 5 minutes to Central Festival. For short or long term rent, 16,000 baht per month. Call to see 087-270 9093.

2-BEDROOM HOUSE, BANG TAO

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, terrace, living room, parking, fully furnished, cable TV, internet, 2 aircons, hot water. Only 5 mins to Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach and Lotus Cherg Talay. Tel: 089-470 7488. Email: nattamon.m@gmail.com

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Residences/Phuket Condo unit, half of a deluxe twin house, fully furnished and equipped, set direct on the picturesque lagoon with balcony right over it. 3 bedrooms each with shower/bathroom roof terrace. Long-term rent or sale. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

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Studios and one-bedroom apartments for rent at Phuket Place and Patong Tower. Tel: 081-892 1621.

DETACHED HOUSE IN THALANG
3 b/r, 2 baths, modern design. On Thepkrasattri Road, 15 minutes to Surin and Bangtao Beach. 20,000 baht per month. Minimum of 6 months. Tel: 081-958 3421 (English & Thai). Email: kjarrukirati@gmail.com

LUXURY POOL VILLA FOR RENT
Located just outside Laguna, this new three-bedroom pool villa is available for long and short-term rent. Tel: 081-891 1826 (English), 081-891 2926 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-238940. Email: kevinq@loxinfo.co.th

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A private villa in Thalang is looking for a female villa attendant who can do housekeeping, cooking, service and flower arranging.

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- ▶ Thai female with pleasing personality
- ▶ Communicate very well in English
- ▶ Team player, honest and flexible
- ▶ Previous experience working in the hotel or villa is an advantage

A very attractive salary is awaiting the right candidate.

Contact person: Khun Tararat
Email: tah@shangdumail.com
Tel: +6676 338 490

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Yacht agency and service company is looking for organized staff to join a growing team. Basic accounts and administration in a busy and friendly team. Office assistants looking to develop careers will enjoy this position. Tel: 076-206 707, 084-844 6246 (English). Email: rogerg@seamarineservices.com

RECEPTIONIST KATA

Hotel needs reliable Thai female. Salary: 12,000 baht per month. 2 days off a week. Tel: 081-892 1621.

WOMAN WANTED

for "Weissbier & Wine" restaurant in Patong to cook European food or to be trained. Evening working hours. Tel: 087-273 6427(Thai), 086-268 8061 (English).

Villa Manager

- Excellent English communication
- Knowledge of Villa hospitality
- Experience of working in villa/ live in
- Leadership, teamwork
- Experience of housekeeping, food, maintenance
- Driving license, own car



Contact: hr@phuketvillasandhomes.com
Tel: 076-527633
Mobile: 087-8810003 HR

Grace Garden Management Ltd.

Grace Garden Management Co., Ltd. is going to launch a top class dining restaurant on the east coast of Phuket, The Breeze @ Cape Yamu

We are looking for competent, enthusiastic and highly qualified individuals for the following vacancies to join our business:

Cook 1 Position

- at least 3-4 years experience, fusion cooking, international cuisine.
- be able to manage of supplies and inventory

Bar Manager 1 Position

- 1 year experience in beverage section, control the bar system, mix drinks and create cocktails

Waiters or Waitresses 3 Positions

All above position should be able to communicate in English
Please send your CV to Human Resources Department

222 Moo 7, Paklok Sub-district, Thalang District, Phuket 83110
Email: annie@campbellkane.com
Tel: 089 4741268, Fax 076 529673

SUN PARADISE®



Sunparadise (Thailand) Co., Ltd., is a manufacturer of the highest quality aluminum window and door systems from Switzerland which began operating in Thailand in 2001. Due to our business expansion, we are looking for highly motivated candidates to join our team.

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Position Requirements:

- Male/Female bachelor degree in any fields
- Computer literacy (MS Word, Excel, etc.)
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- Able to provide quality service and support to customers at all times
- Enjoy dealing with people in a warm and outgoing manner
- Valid car driver's license will be an advantage.

Interested candidates are invited to send a full resume, stating current and expected salaries, with a recent photo to: supapatr@sunparadise.co.th

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Sales and marketing roles. Native English speakers or other nationals with fluent English-speaking skills. A proven track record in sales is a must. Send CV & recent photo to Email: careers@pp-intl.com

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We are looking for a nanny and a cleaning lady for our nursery school. Call for interview. Tel: 076-521 550, 084-847 0732
Email: info@smiley-kidz.com

NANNY/ HELPER WANTED

Nanny needed to look after 8 month old full time and 3 year old after school. Live out or in. Tel: 088-167 6140, 081-737 2814 (English). Email: gillian_notley@yahoo.co.uk

SALES EXECUTIVE

Looking for a Thai lady with spoken and written English and Russian. Tel: 081-787 2155 (English & Thai). Email: Jantira@hotmail.com

JAPANESE STAFF

Wedding coordinator: Japanese female, good English and computer skills. Sa-mer Wedding (Boat Lagoon). Email: info@sa-mer.com Website: www.sa-mer.com

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Family need a driver with experience, English skills. Salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-719 3470.

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Company requires enthusiastic, motivated individuals to join our well-established and successful team. English speaking. Full training, great commissions & startup / entry packages available. Email: jengore@hotmail.com

KARON HILLSIDE HOTEL

Looking for the following positions no English is required: Gardener, Handyman. For the following positions English is required: Bar and restaurant service staff, Reception staff, Night reception. Good starting salary and service charge. Only Thai nationals. Please contact Sandy on 082-281 4394. Email: info@karonhillsidehotel.com

ACCOUNTANT

Elite Yachting at Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket is looking for a Thai accountant with a bachelor's degree and min 3-5 years experience. Good knowledge of Quickbooks, well organized and fluent in spoken & written English. Responsible for invoicing, payments, VAT, w/t, salaries, income/expense statements for yacht accounts, etc. Interested. Tel: 081-978 6086 (English). Please send your CV to jurg@phuket-yachts.com

RECEPTION STAFF

Responsible Thai female needed for reception at Patong hotel. Monthly salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-892 1621.

TEFL TEACHERS WANTED

Newly opened language school in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-083 5735. Email: michael@misterenglishschool.com

CLUB ASIA FITNESS

Club Asia Fitness - Phuket's leading fitness centre requires an Operations Manager & Sales Consultant. Requirements: Thai National with degree and ability to communicate in English. Please submit your CV to Email: info@clubasiaphuket.com

ENGLISH HOME TUTOR

Native English speaking female home tutor for assistance with primary level homework and further learning. Must be employed as a teacher in Phuket, flexible hours after school, maximum two hours per day during week days only. Rate negotiable. Email: morganiain@hotmail.com

NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS

Brainy House is a private English-language school. We are looking for native English teachers to start ASAP. For children 6-8 years old. We offer an excellent compensation. Please send a cover letter and CV to: info@brainyhouse.com Tel: 080-907 7466 (contact Sasi).

THAI STAFF WANTED

Work on shifting schedule, can speak English, customer service. Good salary with bonus. Patong. Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT KAMALA

For Trading company in Kamala. We is now seeking an experienced Senior Accountant. Must know Express software, English, and understand the import business. Salary starts at 25,000 baht transportation + accommodation + BUPA health insurance. Work 6 days a week. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-322663, 086-773 4538 (English). Fax: 076-322 664. Email: skgf@skgf.asia

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Looking for full-time young Thai staff, fluent in spoken and written English with real estate business experience. Tel: 084-060 7050. Please send an email with a photo to info@moloko.phuket.com For further details, please see our website at http://moloko.phuket.com

BOAT CREW WANTED

Looking for experienced crew for 6 months to cruise Phuket / Borneo / Phuket on comfortable 20m trawler yacht. Tel: 082-806 9104 (English). Please send CV to boatjob1234@gmail.com

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Looking for the following positions no English is required: Gardener, Handyman. For the following positions English is required: Bar and restaurant service staff, Reception staff, Night reception. Good starting salary and service charge. Only Thai nationals. Please contact Sandy on 082-281 4394. Email: info@karonhillsidehotel.com

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Serenity Resort & Residences Phuket is an up-market residential development with 77 apartments and pool residences located in Chalong bay on the south east coast of the island. We are now looking for an experienced property sales executive with following qualifications:

- Thai national
- Excellent command of spoken and written English
- Preferably female
- Experience in resort style real estate sales in Phuket (no time share!)
- Outgoing and friendly personality
- Understanding of western culture and mentality
- Able to work on weekends if required.

We offer a basic salary and commission on sales plus attractive benefits. Please send your application together with CV and recent photograph to Email: tae@serenityphuket.com
For further details, please see our website at www.serenityphuket.com

PROPERTY SALES EXECUTIVE

We are looking for an experienced property sales executive with the following qualifications:

- Thai national
- Preferably female, 25 – 40 years old
- Excellent command of spoken and written English
- Outgoing and friendly personality
- Self-confident in communicating with foreign nationals
- IT literate with experience in Microsoft Word/Excel/Powerpoint
- Office skills
- Basic accounting knowledge is preferred
- Ability to adapt to multiple tasks

We offer basic salary and commission on sales. We are based in Rawai. Tel: 087-267 3747. Please send CV to helena@welco metothailand.si
SloCon Andaman Agency Co.,Ltd

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- 2-3 years experience in demonstrating website & SEO improvement for client sites
 - Wordpress CMS system
 - Both on-site and off-site, SEO work
 - Working knowledge of HTML, CSS, and PHP coding will be beneficial
 - Good English (written)
- We offer 30-50,000 baht per month, depending on experience. Tel: 076-324184, 082-255 7507 (English & Thai). Please send your CV to orn@imarketingonly.com

Authorized Agents for Classified Advertising:

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- **Julapan Stationery** (Chao Fa East Rd) Tel: 076-282254
- **KL Mart** (Patak Rd, Chalong Circle) Tel: 076-280400
- **Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe** (Fisherman's Way Business Center, Chaofa East Rd) Tel: 076-282403

PATONG

- **Taurus Travel** (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: 076-344521-2
- **Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe** (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: 076-290468
- **Deli Supermarket** (Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd) Tel: 076-342275

PHUKET CITY

- **Earth Language Training Centre School** (Phang Nga Rd) Tel: 076-232398
- **Sin & Lee** (Thalang Rd) Tel: 076-258369
- **iTree complete printing service** (Tesco Lotus Phuket Town) bank zone Tel: 076-255425

CHERNG TALAY

- **Chaba Supermarket** (at the Laguna gateway) Tel: 076-325586

RAWAI

- **The Network property office** (Saiyuan Rd) Tel: 076-613173

KARON

- **EuroStyle Tailors** (Luang Por Chuan Rd) Tel: 076-396911

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General Classifieds

Articles For Sale

COFFEE TABLE

Bamboo coffee table for sale. Excellent condition. 110cm square with inset in center (for flower decoration, etc). 10,000 baht ono. Email: beijingmarcher@yahoo.com

7KW. 3-PHASE WATER PUMP



Barely used (10 hours). Have 2 units for sale. Price: 15,000 baht each. Contact Margy on 089-908 7486.

NEW INVICTA WATCH FOR SALE

Very large Invicta Men's 6913 Corduba Collection Interceptor Chronograph Blue Polyurethane watch, comes with box and guarantee. Tel: 076-319699. Email: sun parasol@gmail.com

HIX HEAT PRESS DUAL PADS

I am selling my Heat Press Made in USA, very highly used (about 60 t-shirts), like new. I bought it in Bangkok. Paid 125,000 baht, selling 60,000 baht. Tel: 076-283004, 086-742 3437. Email: joelvdo@hotmail.com

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FURNITURE AND MORE

Furniture, sofa, TV and bookcase, chairs, lamps and more. All in good condition. Please call or email for photos. Khun Arno. Tel: 087-827 4991 (English). Email: arnyfirst@hotmail.com

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Quality Chinese tea for sale. Contact Peter to arrange a free tea tasting. Tel: 082-278 1575.

Articles Wanted

FULL-SIZED USED BATH WANTED

Looking to find an old plastic or stone full-sized bath to use in a pet washing parlor - something large enough to put big dogs in the wash them. Please email gone2thedoggies@gmail.com with photo

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BAR AND POOL ROOM

For sale. Fully fitted bar and pool room in Soi Sai Nam Yen, Bel Air Hotel. Sports bar set up with cable TV and internet. Must be seen. For More information please contact Sonya (Thai and English). Tel: 082-289 5636.

GASTONE PIZZERIA RESTAURANT



For sale: new Italian pizza restaurant at Kata Beach. Fully equipped with latest-generation pizza oven, great location, attractive price. Contact Claudio. Tel: 081-270 9698 (English). Email: claudiothai@hotmail.it, www.restaurantgastonephuket.com

HOTEL SALE/ LEASE

Newly renovated 12-room towners suite, has bar and restaurant. Great location in Ao Nang, Krabi, lots of potential, Aussie owner retiring (again). Tel: 080-693 4362 (English). Email: austhaihotel@hotmail.com

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Phang-nga Inn, 14 guest rooms, 15 million baht. Tel: 081-892 1507. Email: phang-ngainn@hotmail.com

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SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLES

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| | R | | R | | R | | L | | R | | A | | O | | I | | 11 | F | | |
| 12 | N | O | O | N | 13 | B | E | N | I | G | N | 14 | R | E | M | O | D | E | L | |
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| | |
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 Please contact for more information. Aircraft is based at Klong 15. Tel: 081-840 8418.



Notice from Thai Flying Club: There is a very nice Piper Cherokee airplane at the Thai Flying Club (TFC) in Bang Phra. It has fallen into disrepair. Someone took out the seats and some other parts... and then went away.

Owner Wichai Pettongkam loves this airplane and wants to get it back in the air. If you like flying and might want to be a partner in the plane, please come to the TFC to have a look, or contact **Khun Tom** (email tom@thaiflyingclub, Tel: 089-092 2711). Or talk to **Khun Wichai** directly on 081-633 7082.

Khun Wichai does not want to sell the plane, but would welcome a partner who can help to get it flying again. This could be a very good opportunity for someone to get a share in a nice airplane for a very good price. All negotiable.

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International Sport

Behaving badly

Formula 1
By The Digby

ROLL up, roll up for the Canadian GP at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve.

The track, on a man-made island in the St. Lawrence River, is a series of straights held together with a few strange curves and a magnetic wall. It's a power circuit, which has been dominated by Mercedes engines in recent years, so McLaren should do well.

Red Bull is never going to be favorite and the FIA's *sotto voce* post-Monaco ruling that they have behaved badly, and that their floor is illegal will not help. The Monaco win is not affected by the ruling, and a new floor for Montreal will probably not be critical either.

Lotus is well overdue a win, and Kimi Rikkonen would dearly love to fulfil that ambition, but Sky Sports has reported rumors of dark spirits at Lotus. At Monaco, many teams used a special steering rack with a greater lock to cope with

the tight corners. Kimi, who is rumored to have been behaving badly over steering all season, asked for a new steering rack which cost Lotus much time and money. He then refused to run more than an outlap in P1 with the new rack claiming the car was undrivable.

The story is that Lotus begged him to run the rest of P1 so that they could get tyre data, but Kimi was unmoving. By the time mechanics changed back to the standard rack, P2 was rained off, so Lotus was in a sad position. The team is blaming Kimi for the uninspiring performance in the race. This bodes ill for Montreal.

It is reported that Sauber is also murmuring about bad behavior. Ever since Perez won at Sepang, it is said, he has become demanding, and with the problems at Ferrari perhaps offering him an opening, he has an

inflated opinion of his standing, while team morale is low.

Ferrari is riding high, but the team has made it clear that Felipe Massa has to continue with his return to form or they will change him. Ferrari has said it will not make the decision until the second half of

the season, so somewhere around the Hungarian and Belgian GPs is "M"Day. So he has only this race, Valencia, Silverstone and Hockenheimring to prove his worth. He is going to try very hard indeed.

Nature has been behaving badly.

Ferrari will be having an online auction for the victims of the two earthquakes in the Emilia-Romagna region. A V8 engine, helmets and suits from Fernando Alonso and Felipe Massa and a 599XX Evo, valued at €1.3 million will be amongst the offerings.



THAT'S NICE: Ferrari is auctioning a 599XX Evo to help quake victims in Italy.

And there is some other interesting news. Perhaps buoyed by the publicity received by protesters in Bahrain, Montreal students are behaving badly to protest fee hikes, and are planning to disrupt the GP. Their planned all-night protest before the race was banned by the government, and that brought into play the online bad boys "Anonymous". They hacked the FI sales site, sent messages to those who had booked, and published their details online. Now the students are to gather at 10.30am on race day for an undisclosed action thereafter. This adds significant spice to the *Cajun Boudin* now simmering. The suspicion is that the Quebec authorities may be less efficient at

containment than the Bahrainis.

Unhappily the race is at an unseemly hour. It is almost as if the Canadians do not take our comfort into their considerations.

Qualifying is on Star Sports at Saturday midnight, and the race is at 1.00am Monday, programming starts Sunday Night.

All races are shown live on The Big Screen at the Green Man in Chalong.



Eight of the best at Euro 2012

Football

WITH the 2012 Euro's under way, most eyes will be on the likes of Wayne Rooney, Cristiano Ronaldo and Robin van Persie as Europe's heavyweights slug it out for the right to claim to be the continent's best. Here we have a look at eight players who may have been flying under the radar, but who we think will play an important role in their country's campaign:

Christian Eriksen (Denmark)
At the center of everything that makes Ajax Amsterdam tick, and coming off the back of an impressive 2011/2012 season, at only 20 years old Eriksen will be the main man for the Danes.

Comparisons have been made to Xavi and Wesley Sneijder. Eriksen is a "traditional number-10", a player who links midfield and attack perfectly. If Denmark are to survive the "Group of Death", Eriksen will need to shine.

Yann M'Vila (France)
Frederic Antonetti (manager of Ligue 1 side Stade Rennais) perhaps best summed it up

when he said of M'Vila: "He reads the game like Makélélé, has the presence of Vieira and can pass the ball like Yaya Touré".

Not bad for someone who is only 21. He was named in the 2011/12 Ligue 1 team of the season and will provide the foundation for a talented French attack to flourish.

Danny Welbeck (England)
With Wayne Rooney missing the early part of the tournament through suspension, the "Three Lions" will need someone to step up. Welbeck has shown he is more than capable of leading the line, or playing as a second striker if Andy Carroll is needed.

He is athletic, quick and has an eye for goal. If Welbeck can start firing early, England may just cause a few surprises.

Robert Lewandowski (Poland)
A lethal finisher up front, and handy in the air, Lewandowski's goals for Dortmund this season is one of the major reasons they are German champions. The world's eyes will now be on the youngster and with his Polish side being drawn in a favourable group, as well as having the entire country behind them,

they will have a real fighting chance of progressing. How far that is depends on the form of the main man up front.

Alan Dzagoev (Russia)
At just 21-years-old, Dzagoev has played over 100 league games for CSKA Moscow and has three full seasons of Champions League football behind him. Another young player that could potentially benefit from the comfort of Group A, this pacy winger should have little trouble against the fullbacks from Poland, Czech Republic or Greece.

We all remember the effect of Arshavin in Euro 2008, and the CSKA winger could potentially do the same.

The only issue may be an injury that has hung around for a while.

Mario Balotelli (Italy)
You just never know which Balotelli will show up on any given day. You can get the irresistible, unstoppable force that is one of the most naturally gifted players in the last 50 years. One who can turn a game on its head with the slightest touch or deftest finish. Or you can get the egocentric maniac who can be more trouble than he is worth. For Italy's sake, as well as the tournament's, let's hope for the former.

Mats Hummels (Germany)
Hummels is a rarity in football; a young center back who is actually pretty accomplished.

Well that's a bit of an understatement as at 23-years-old he already has 13 caps for his country and looks certain to start at the heart of a defence that has a long and proud history of producing some of the world's finest defenders.

With 11 goals in 94 appearances for Dortmund (a decent return for a center back), Hummels has shown he has another side to his game. With Manchester United amongst those interested, it could be a big summer for the young German.

Joe Hart (England)
A team with a solid goalkeeper is a team with just one less thing to worry about. With Hart in goal, that means one less headache for Roy Hodgson who will have plenty of those as he tries to end England's trophy drought. Hart is commanding in the air, accurate with his distribution and undoubtedly of the best shot-stoppers in the game.

With a recent history of "keepers bottling" it in major tournaments, Hodgson will be praying Hart can continue his City form.

- Phuket Gazette

SPORTS briefs...

TENNIS: World number one Novak Djokovic will be aiming to become only the third player in the history of professional tennis to hold all four Grand Slam titles at the same time after victories in London, New York and Melbourne.

Djokovic, at the time of writing, was gearing up to face Roger Federer in the semis after a fortunate win over Jo Wilfred Tsonga, who had hoped to become the first home winner at Roland Garros in 29 years.

Federer will be grateful for the two days of rest after his 5-set victory over Juan Martin del Potro.

STRANGE SPORTS: This weekend sees Nathan's famous hotdog eating competition roll its way to Tempe, Arizona.

Joey Chestnut of San Jose is hoping to retain his title after consuming 62 hotdogs in the allotted 10 minutes last year.

In recent years, an estimated 40,000 fans have watched the event in person, with the live ESPN telecast of the event last year drawing an audience of 2 million viewers.

It was the highest rated telecast since ESPN began broadcasting the event in 2004.

FOOTBALL: In one of the worst kept secrets Shinji Kagawa has all but signed for Manchester United, the club stated on its website.

Kagawa has been impressive for Borussia Dortmund in recent seasons helping them to back to back domestic titles.

United have struggled with consistency in the midfield and had to recall Paul Scholes out of retirement. Kagawa could be the answer as his mazy runs and goals have helped the German side to the titles, something that United's midfielders were unable to do last season.

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KRABI FC consolidated their claim to being the best football team in the southern region with a 4-0 pummeling of fellow Division 1 side Phatthalung FC last Wednesday in Krabi Town.

The mid-week match, the twelfth fixture of the season for both sides, was played on a waterlogged pitch in front of about 3,000 enthusiastic fans at Krabi Central Sports Stadium.

After some evenly-matched play in the first half, the two sides went to the locker room tied 0-0.

The ice was broken just five minutes into the second half, when Krabi's Anuwat Phomsakun scored his first of two goals. He went on to double the lead with a second goal in the 75th minute.

Akkapan Nuikhao scored the match's third goal with only two minutes remaining in regulation time, while Somkid Chamnamsilp drove the final nail into the Swiftlet's coffin by scoring in the second minute of added time.

A game in hand and in 5th place after 7 wins, two draws and three losses, Krabi are followed in the table by fellow Southerners Songkhla FC who have won five, drawn three and lost five.

Following their loss at Krabi, Phatthalung went on to lose at home to PTT Rayong



HOLDING GROUND: Krabi FC's fanbase is growing. Artwork courtesy of Ponrob Tumrongchai

FC 1-4 on Sunday and drop further down the table into 12th place.

FC Phuket, still winless at home and sitting in 16th-place in the 18-team bracket, had their league match postponed while Surakul Stadium hosts the 28th National Youth Games being held in Phuket through June 5.

At the time of going to press, FC Phuket were near the Cambodian border to play Sa Kaeo City FC in a Toyota League Cup match.

The Southern Sea Kirin are set to return to league play against 10th placed Royal

Navy in an away fixture in Chonburi province on June 9, before returning to Phuket to play Bangkok FC on June 13.

On the same day Krabi will host table toppers Ratchaburi, while Songkhla will host neighbors Phatthalung in what is expected to be a packed derby match crowd at Tinsulanonda Stadium.

In another highly-anticipated Southern derby fixture, Phuket will host Krabi at Surakul Stadium on July 7.

— Steven Layne

| YAMAHA ONE LEAGUE TABLE | | | |
|-------------------------|----|-----|-----|
| TEAM | P | GD | PTS |
| 1 Ratchaburi | 13 | 23 | 31 |
| 2 Bangkok Utd | 13 | 11 | 26 |
| 3 Suphanburi | 12 | 12 | 25 |
| 4 PTT Rayong | 13 | 11 | 24 |
| 5 Sriracha | 13 | 10 | 24 |
| 6 Krabi | 12 | 9 | 23 |
| 7 Songkhla | 13 | 1 | 18 |
| 8 Khon Kaen | 13 | -1 | 18 |
| 9 Korat | 13 | -4 | 18 |
| 10 Royal Navy | 13 | 0 | 15 |
| 11 Saraburi | 13 | -2 | 15 |
| 12 Pattalung | 13 | -6 | 14 |
| 13 Bangkok FC | 12 | 2 | 13 |
| 14 Air Force | 12 | -2 | 13 |
| 15 Rajpracha | 13 | -10 | 10 |
| 16 Phuket | 11 | -8 | 9 |
| 17 JW Rangsit | 12 | -14 | 9 |
| 18 Chanthaburi | 12 | -32 | 2 |

Sea Kirin vow to prevail in next six

FC PHUKET Director Soranan Sanae announced earlier this week that his boys would strive to go undefeated in the final six matches of the season's first leg.

Speaking to Siam Sports' reporters, Soranan said that if such goal is met, the Southern Sea Kirin would definitely be clear from the danger of relegation zone – the last five places in the rankings table.

After 11 matches this season, Phuket have only nine points having lost four, drew six and won only one – an away fixture in Nakhon Ratchasima back in March.

While other teams in the 18-team league have played 12 and 13 fixtures already, Phuket postponed two matches in the past two weeks, citing inconveniences due to the 28th National Youth Games, which was held across Phuket from May 24 to June 5.

Soranon said that the two week break has allowed his team to rest up and make their goal more achievable, adding that the team looks to climb up into the mid-table zone by the seasons halfway-point.

Phuket are next scheduled to play their

first non-league, non-friendly fixture of the season, a Toyota League Cup match against division 2 upstarts Sa Kaeo City FC. Kickoff for the away fixture, to be played in Sa Kaeo, an Eastern Thailand provincial capital near the Cambodian border, will be at 3:30pm on June 9.

After the cup match, the squad will immediately resume league play with remaining games in the first leg comprising four home matches and two away matches, as listed to the right.

— Steven Layne

FC Phuket's Upcoming Fixtures

June 13: vs Royal Navy (away)

June 17: vs Bangkok FC (home)

June 24: vs Chanthaburi FC (home)

July 7: vs Krabi FC (home)

July 18: vs PTT Rayong (away)

July 22 vs Songkhla (home)

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Swiftlet president, benefactor resigns

PHATTHALUNG FC football fans became distressed when Sanan Suphanchanaburi earlier this week announced his resignation as Club President.

Mr Sanan was quoted in a Siam Sports report as saying that he had become overwhelmed over the past six months from being the Swiftlets' sole benefactor, costing him 1.2 million baht every month with "absolutely no help from anyone".

As part of the decision, Mr Sanan signed waivers allowing all of the team's players to become free agents and sign with other teams at their own will.

Without its players to play in upcoming matches, the team risks losing its right to compete in the Thai Yamaha One (first division) league, and could be relegated to Division Two, or even dissolved altogether, the report said.

Just a day after the bad news broke, team executives gave fans a dose of hope, announcing that they were currently engaged in discussions with new potential investors from Bangkok.

Withholding specific details, executives said the new investors were prepared to cover as much as 1.5mn baht in monthly team expenses.

— Steven Layne

Sport

Local players shine bright

AS HOSTS of the 28th National Youth Games, Phuket athletes raked in an impressive 60 medals.

These include 18 gold, 16 silver and 26 bronze. As rankings were determined Olympic-style by the number of golds, Phuket finished in 7th place according to the official tally.

However, in terms of relative finish, Thailand's largest island, and second smallest province by area (Samut Songkhram being the smallest), Phuket topped the table – by far, with an average of five gold medals for each 100,000 persons of its registered resident population (353,847 as of December 31, 2011).

Also worth mentioning, neighboring Southern province Ranong, being the least populous province in the entire country, yet raking in seven gold medals, came in second in the *Gazette's* per-capita calculations. See tables to the right for complete tally.

Following is a list of Phuket's "Golden Heroes":

Golf Male Team: Wacharathon Chiraphatsin, Sarawut Butnongsang, Waikun Khethom, Panthamit Wananuphat

Karate-do Male Team (9-14 years) Thanagorn Kaeosamut, Thannakrit Kaeosamut, Papop Pannyasirikul

Karate-do Female Team (15-18): Chalane Khreuyot, Pimpakarn Kaney, Jirapha Kumban

Karate-do Female Team (9-14): Monsicha Tantawiwong, Pawarisa Sae-oeung, Warisara In-at

Karate-do Female Single (9-14) Monsicha Tantatwivong

Karate-do Female Singles (15-18) Chalane Khreuyot

Karate-do Female not more than 53kg (15-16): Pimpakarn Kaney

Cycling Male In-line Race (140 km) Taikhom Chittamat

Soft Tennis Female Team: Kanokporn Phromrak, Busarin Raktaengngam, Woralak Krikchakan, Sutaphat Kongkaeo, Pichakorn Karnkanok

Taekwondo Female (< 55kg): Duang Samorn Chuaikaeng

Tennis Female Singles: Busarin Raktaengngam

Bowling Male Total Points (all Event): Somkiet Krairisombat

Bowling Male Singles: Somkiet Krairisombat

Pencak Silat Male Singles Class B (39-42kg): Sompan Thongsidam

Pencak Silat Female Singles Class G (54-57kg): Angka Pankhwan

Pencak Silat Male Singles, Battle Dance: Anas Si-seng

Go Male Doubles: Krit Jamkhajonkiet, Panode Kingkaew

Phuket youth athletes also took silver and bronze medals in Karate-do, Soft Tennis, Table Tennis, Swimming, Wushu, Go, Track, Golf, Cricket, Soft Ball, Cycling, Taekwondo, Bridge, Bowling and Pencak Silat.

This was the second time the National Youth Games were held in Phuket. The first time was in 1990.

At the conclusion of this year's event, officials announced that next year's Games will be hosted in Maha Sarakham Province, in the heart of Thailand's Northeast.

– *Phuket Gazette*

| | Gold | Silver | Bronze | Total |
|----------------------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| Bangkok | 102 | 72 | 73 | 247 |
| Chiang Mai | 29 | 38 | 43 | 110 |
| Chonburi | 28 | 30 | 37 | 95 |
| Nakhon Sri Thammarat | 28 | 25 | 20 | 73 |
| Suphan Buri | 26 | 33 | 39 | 98 |
| Nonthaburi | 22 | 18 | 28 | 68 |
| Phuket | 18 | 16 | 26 | 60 |
| Samut Prakarn | 17 | 21 | 31 | 69 |
| Nakhon Ratchasima | 17 | 20 | 26 | 63 |
| Khon Kaen | 17 | 20 | 24 | 61 |
| Ubon Ratchathani | 17 | 16 | 29 | 62 |
| Sri Saket | 17 | 11 | 19 | 47 |
| Surat Thani | 16 | 12 | 17 | 45 |
| Chanthaburi | 12 | 9 | 17 | 38 |
| Lampang | 8 | 9 | 11 | 28 |
| Pathum Thani | 7 | 9 | 12 | 28 |
| Trang | 7 | 7 | 14 | 28 |
| Phatthalung | 7 | 5 | 4 | 16 |
| Nakhon Sawan | 7 | 4 | 12 | 23 |
| Sukhothai | 7 | 4 | 9 | 20 |
| Ranong | 7 | - | 1 | 8 |
| Nakhon Pathom | 6 | 11 | 19 | 36 |
| Phitsanuloke | 6 | 8 | 10 | 24 |
| Nan | 6 | 6 | 6 | 18 |
| Chaiyaphum | 6 | 6 | 1 | 13 |

WINNERS: The above table shows the top 25 finishing provinces, ranked based on gold medals, not total medal tally.

| | Gold per 100,000 |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Phuket | 5.09 |
| Ranong | 3.81 |
| Suphan Buri | 3.08 |
| Chanthaburi | 2.32 |
| Chonburi | 2.09 |
| Nonthaburi | 1.96 |
| Nakhon Sri Thammarat | 1.83 |
| Bangkok | 1.8 |
| Chiang Mai | 1.76 |
| Surat Thani | 1.58 |
| Samut Prakarn | 1.41 |
| Phatthalung | 1.37 |
| Nan | 1.26 |
| Sri Saket | 1.17 |
| Sukhothai | 1.16 |
| Trang | 1.12 |
| Lampang | 1.06 |
| Khon Kaen | 0.96 |
| Ubon Ratchathani | 0.94 |
| Phitsanuloke | 0.7 |
| Nakhon Pathom | 0.69 |
| Pathum Thani | 0.69 |
| Nakhon Ratchasima | 0.66 |
| Nakhon Sawan | 0.65 |
| Chaiyaphum | 0.53 |

REAL WINNERS: Based on population, Phuket had the highest gold per capita count.

Dare to dream

TRENT Morrow is just an average Joe, or whatever the Australian equivalent is, being a national sales manager for a consumer goods company by day, however come the weekend he dons his lycra and Marathon Man is here!

Trent has completed at least one marathon a month, including the epic "Marathon Des Sable", almost 23,000 kilometers since 2008.

Funds raised from his exploits go to "Facing Africa", a charity that assists children who suffer from Noma, an acute and ravaging gangrenous infection affecting the face.

So when you see Marathon Man at the Laguna Phuket event this weekend give him a wave and the encouragement to continue, as he is a real-life Superhero!



"Dare to dream, start to believe and you will achieve - anything is possible!"
– *Marathon Man, a.k.a. Trent Morrow*

SPORT

Phuket Games played out



A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE: Taekwondo (left), Tennis (center) and Karate-do (right) were among some of the popular sports of the Phuket Games that attracted large crowds of spectators.

TENS of thousands of athletes and spectators packed their bags and bid farewell to Phuket as the 28th National Youth Games came to a close earlier this week.

Despite the squalling rain that swept over the island in the past few weeks, Thailand's largest sporting extravaganza for young-

sters indeed proved to be a memorable event for athletes, coaches, organizers and families alike.

From the first competitions held on May 24 to the dazzling closing ceremony at Surakul Stadium on June 5, a total of 1,838 medals were contested.

These included 535 gold, 538 silver and 765 bronze, with athletes traveling from as far as Nong Khai, Chiang Rai and Pattani to answer the national call of duty. (For further details on medal count, see page 47)

Phuket businesses, officials and residents also answered a call – one asking them to

greet with open arms the demand for a warm and impressionable reception.

Indeed, Phuket showed to its fellow countrymen – many of whom had stepped foot on the island for their first time – why people from all over the globe love this island. *– Phuket Gazette*

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Project Owner: Boat Development Co., Ltd.
 Managing Director: Mr Panupong Kritchanarat
 Registered Capital: 20 Million Baht
 Location: Laguna area, Chermg Talay Rd, Thalang, Phuket.
 Financial Institution: Siam Commercial Bank Public Co., Ltd.
 Construction Start: June 2012

PRICE START: **8.9 MB**

CONTACT: 081-477 2125, 081 086 1881

PHUKET PROPERTY REVIEW

June 2012

PhuketGazette.Net



By Bill Barnett
Phuket's property expert and Managing Director of C9HotelWorks.com

COMMENT

The Phuket real estate cycle has come full circle in the past decade. Trends in the 2012 residential market indicate the swinging buyer pendulum between investment and lifestyle (end user) has stopped on the side of the end user. More people want to invest and live here year-round.

Improving infrastructure – schools, hospitals, roads, flights, malls and leisure facilities – is the driving force for a permanent move to Phuket.

We saw this demand for a year-round place to call home in the early 2000s – and this trend is back with us today.

The number of new international schools in recent years has broadened Phuket's allure with domestic and overseas buyers. Education is a profound aspect of Phuket's appeal, and why we trump Bali in this key investment factor for many people thinking of a move to the island...

Continued on page 2

> **SANSIRI SIZES UP MID-MARKET**

> **THE CONDO SALES SURGE**

Another free Phuket Gazette supplement for you.

Back to basics

'Investors want to live in Phuket all year'

CONDO CONCEPT:
 Sansiri's latest dcondo project in Kathu.
See page 11

All the latest island property news inside

There will never be a better opportunity to own such a unique asset in such a prime location!

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Our supplements for any season, rain or shine

Phuket Property Review is the latest newspaper supplement published by the *Phuket Gazette*. There will be many more to look forward to in coming months: Phuket Life & Style, Luxury Living, Best of Phuket, All At Sea as well as Christmas and Valentine's Day specials.

Managing Editor
Phuket Property Review
 Fraser Morton
 editor@phuketgazette.net

Advertising
 adsales@phuketgazette.net

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Five Phuket property agents, five market opinions

Amy Koh, sales manager at Engel & Volkers Phuket



"The mid-range residential market is improving with emphasis on pool villas (20 to 30 million baht). Today, buyers are getting great value for money on property sales in Phuket. We have more Asian and expat buyers from Asian countries, especially now during low season."

engelvolkers.com/th

Wayne Graham, managing director at East West Properties



"Due to the Euro crisis, the market has remained soft with European buyers looking carefully for properties priced at good value. In today's climate new properties have to be priced competitively to sell."

east-westproperties.com

Continued from page 1

Economic tourism growth is spurring the job market, especially in the hotel, yacht and service sectors.

Employment is on the rise and the number of new business start-ups mean more people are relocating to the island to work and to live.

This means more couples and families are moving to the island with lifestyle, not investment, in mind when searching for property.

The oversupply hangover of units where development started in the boom of 2006 and 2007, which were completed in subsequent years, is today being absorbed by buyers. This bodes well for development launches in the tail end of this year. Sales are shifting into a higher gear, and this looks set to continue.

As the residential market goes back to basics with end users, it's a very different story for hotel-

managed properties. They have hit a rough patch and sluggish trading in these type of properties looks to continue, unfortunately.

The influx of domestic buyers pouring money into properties located in the inland areas of Phuket has been a success story in recent years, but how deep the pool of buyers goes is yet unknown.

When the Thai-listed condo projects from developer Sansiri reach completion in the next year in Phuket, future growth and sustainability of the condo market will depend on how fast resales are picked up.

A return to the strongest demographic (end-user buyers) is a great thing for the market and a sign of better times ahead.

For more on Sansiri's major Phuket expansion plans see page 11.

In the digits

51

Number of villas sold in Phuket in Q4, 2011 (most profitable quarter).

181

Total number of villas sold in Phuket in 2011.

43

The percentage of Phuket villas sold in 2011 priced below 15 million baht.

144

Number of villas sold in 2010.
 Source: cbre.co.th

11

Villas sold worth more than 90 million baht in 2011.



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Richard Lusted, Siam Real Estate CEO



"The Phuket market for off-plan villas and condos has become more competitive, with developers building lower-priced units of smaller size to meet buyers demand. We see a bright future for compact villas under 12 million baht."

siamrealestate.com

Prakaipeth Meechoosarn, director of CB Richard Ellis Phuket



"The majority of our enquiries are about the five to 15 million baht market, particularly for one-to two-bedroom sea-view condos. West coast properties under construction, and resales, remain the focus for buyers. We see this segment to be the most active in sales."

cbre.co.th

Nitchapak Panjamakitti, branch manager at Plus Property



"The Phuket market between five and 10 million baht is doing very well and we have had a surge of interest from Russian and Chinese investors. Condos are selling fast and the number of new condo developments to meet demand is evidence of this."

plus.co.th

KBank ready to cash in on urbanization

The growing economy in the provinces from increasing urbanization is creating new opportunities for investors and financial houses alike, according to Kasikornbank.

Investment story of the month

Vasin Vanichvoranun, executive vice president, said the bank was catching up with the urban migration last year after seeing more real estate activity moving out of Bangkok, the reduction in unemployment in the provinces and rising household income.

The urban migration has sparked greater demand for foreign investors and local investors, which means they are expected to require financial facilities.

He said the servicing value chain was the first business to cash in on the urban migration because of the

relationship with personal consumption. KBank expects the investments in real estate, modern trade and medical care and from automobile dealers will grow in line with the urbanization.

"We saw that SMEs in provinces have upgraded to corporates, and many corporates in Bangkok, including foreign investors, are expanding their businesses to the main provinces," he said.

According to KBank, nine provinces – Chon Buri, Phuket, Khon Kaen, Surat Thani, Chiang Mai, Nakhon Ratchasima, Udon Thani, Rayong and Songkhla – have shown greater economic growth, with combined business value of 534 billion baht.

The annual economic growth of the nine provinces was 10 per cent on average, against 6 to 7 per cent in Bangkok, he added.

KBank has picked five main business hubs – Nakhon Sawan, Nakhon Ratchasima, Bangpakong, Laemchabang and Haad Yai – to capture the nine provinces, offering total solutions in terms of pre-finance and post-finance and complete packages to business partners for the entire supply chain.

The bank expects the loan proportion in the provincial

market will significantly increase over the next three years. Of the total, outstanding loans were 359 billion baht, while loans in the provincial market were tens of billions of baht.

"We target to increase market share in the provincial market to 25 to 30 per cent within three years from 10 per cent," he said.

He said property, construction materials and automobiles are expected to drive growth in major provincial areas.

Logistics is the next key driver of the provincial economy.

Vasin said the bank would seriously penetrate provincial markets and shift focus to capital instruments besides corporate loans in a bid to diversify risk from the corporate-loan competition and also boost fee income.

The loan growth of corporate customers this year should not be more than 8 to 9 per cent because it will give more importance to acting as a fund manager and financial adviser to two companies launching infrastructure funds worth a combined 10 billion baht, he added.

– *The Nation*



88

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The 'Onyx', one of the home designs at the 88 Land and Houses development.

'88' gets sister project

By Fraser Morton

Land and Houses is drawing up plans for three further residential projects in Phuket – and they are heading for the hills to do it.

General manager Ruksapong Khumkhuangjum said the stream of Thai and foreign investment flowing into the mid-range Phuket residential market is driving their expansion.

"Today the market in Phuket is growing rapidly. Many developers have launched new projects: Pruksa Real Estate, Sansiri, Supalai as well as local projects like Phanasorn. Although we cater to a different market segment, we are looking forward to seeing some interesting projects hit our market soon," he said.

"We want to continue to

develop high-quality homes for customers while maintaining our popular community management schemes," he said.

The first of the projects, 88 Land and Houses Hillside Phuket, will be built behind the companies current "88" project in Chalong, named so because the developers think the number is lucky. The Hillside project grand opening will take place later this year.

"The project will have resort-style-homes with swimming pools and fitness areas, similar to the former '88' project, but it will be located in the hills with great views," he said.

Prices start at six million baht.

Further details for the other two Phuket projects will be announced by the developer in coming weeks.

Current Phuket properties include, 88 Land & Houses, launched in March last year. Set on 100 square wah in Chalong, the development features 63 three-bedroom units priced between 5.9 and 8 million baht. Units sizes range from 150 to 180 squaremeters.

The company's first Phuket development was Land & House Park, the massive gated community in Chalong completed in 1996.

LH Muang Mai Co Ltd is the joint venture of Land & Houses Public Co Ltd and Muang Mai Property Co Ltd. The companies develop projects under the name "One Project, One Land & Houses" in the south of Thailand.

lhphuket.com

Raimon Land win favor with Private Residence Club

Thai-listed real estate firm Raimon Land is finding their increasingly popular PRC (Private Residence Club) at Northpoint in Pattaya is attracting a steady stream of interest.

Currently Raimon have two products, one in Pattaya and the other at their River upscale condominium in Bangkok.

While Pattaya continues to see volume in both the tourism and property sectors, the PRC offering has successfully been able to attract buyers with Special 3 and 4 night Discovery Packages.

Fractional ownership has yet to take off here in Phuket, but on Thailand's Eastern Seaboard the market seems much more tuned into the product

– thephuketinsider.com

What's App'ning on the tech-front at Siam Real Estate?

By Fraser Morton

Siam Real Estate's new selection of iPhone, android and smart phone Apps for local property services has created quite a buzz since going live.

In the two months since launching the Apps – which feature more than 5,000 listings, maps, advanced searches, images and nifty icons and features – the Siam team have reported a surge of interest.

CEO Richard Lusted said the company's "Near Me" App, which allows users to pinpoint property searches based on the phones current location, and then refine the search to as near and far as the users wants, has proved popular.

"We strive to stay ahead of the curve, and smart phones and social media are the future for all business, including real estate. We are the second agent (CBRE has similar technology) to develop such Apps in Thailand," he said. "If you are traveling around an area, you can get an idea what property is available and immediately view it on the App and send an enquiry, or call us for viewings."

In further tech-news from Siam Real Estate, the company will launch a new website with "bags of new features, such as street views, members area and more".



Supalai moves into foreign markets

Listed Thai development company Supalai Plc is looking to diversify overseas.

As Bangkok continues to be saturated with new properties – as does the country's main provincial cities – the company is looking further afield.

It was recently reported that the firm is considering Indonesia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and the Philippines, among others. It may look to joint ventures to spur growth and move into new markets. Mitigating risk in Thailand's politically volatile climate may be one reason the company is looking to other markets.

In the run up to the 2015 Asean Economic Community, expectations are that more domestic Thai firms may start to look abroad to stimulate growth.

– thephuketinsider.com

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Project : dcondo creek, Address : Kathu Sub-District, Kathu District, Phuket Province The Owner : Anawat Limited, Company's registered no. 0105564144865, Head office located at no. 475, 12th floor Sripinya Building, Sri Ayudthaya Road, Thanon, Phayathai Sub-District, Rajbnewi District, Bangkok, Registered capital (Baht) : 10,000,000, Paid up capital (Baht) : 10,000,000 (information as of 11 May 2012), The President : Mr. Srittha Thavilin, The Project will be constructed as a Residential Condominium of 8 storey(ies), 4 building, total of unit(s), 806 of residential 806 unit(s) and - of commercial unit(s) or office unit(s), on the land title deed no. 14800, land no. 257, survey no. 91111, Kathu Sub-District, Kathu District, Phuket Province, total of 1 plot(s), approximately land area: 8-3-66.40 Rai, under the titles of the Project Owner and have been mortgaged with Siam Commercial Bank Public Company Limited. Now The project is in the process to submit the building permission and the period of construction is approximately 15 months, commencing from October 2012 and expected to be completed in September 2013. The project will be registered as the condominium after the construction is completed. The unit owners must pay common property expenses, tax and fee at the rate as stipulated by the Project Owner or in accordance with the Regulation of the Condominium Juristic Person under the condominium law.

Welcome to the Anantara club

Construction workers ride out the rain at Mai Khao's latest property development

By Fraser Morton

Few people on Phuket welcome the low-season torrent of storms, but the landscaping team at the construction site of Anantara's Vacation Club don't mind the downpours.

They say the rain has made planting 100 palm trees and landscaping at the Mai Khao site easier.

The Phuket club will be a shared-ownership property, where investors can use a flexible-points system which can be used at other Anantara properties and through partner programs.

The company aims to set new standards of vacation clubs in Asia and have enlisted the help of development consultants Stephen O'Dell, Soda Thai Architects, Lincolne Scott and Warnes Thailand.

The Phuket development will comprise 70 one-, two-and-three bedroom suites and 30 one-and-two-bedroom pool villas with lagoon pools, a kids club, gym and restaurant.

Construction is on track to launch phase one (luxury villas) in December this year.

Contractor World Construction & Engineering aim to finish the remaining phases by April next year.

The construction of the villas – which are built in clusters of four – are well underway after the Environmental Impact Assessment was approved in April.

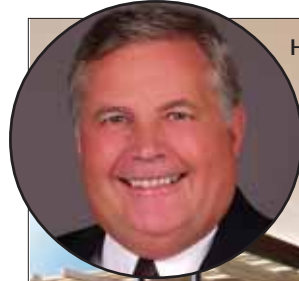
The reception building, sales office, staff and engineering buildings are all also under development and ground work on the main swimming pool, restaurant, gym and the kids club will begin next month.

Harold Derrah, CEO of Anantara Vacation Club, said the new development would add flexibility to their points-based holiday ownership program, which includes the company's Koh Samui and Bali properties.

"The location and high-quality product is definitely a unique selling point for us as we continue to expand our footprint across Asia," he said.

There is a vacation club preview center at Turtle Village, Mai Khao where a two-bedroom display villa showcases the Phuket development. Additional centers are located in Koh Samui and Bangkok.

Over the next five years, Anantara will add 10 more resorts to its portfolio and expand further into Indonesia, China and the Middle-East. anantaravacationclub.com



Harold Derrah



SHOW OF STYLE: Anantara's show unit at the Turtle Village in Mai Khao.

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INSIDE: The Lounge in the two-bedroom condo



NEW TO RPM: Phase three condominiums

View to thrill at RPM's new phase

By Fraser Morton

Royal Phuket Marina is sweetening their sales packages for their new condominiums with a subsidy on tuition fees at British International School Phuket. From now until August, investors with children who buy two-bedroom condos at La Reserve Residences are eligible for the school deal.

For two years the offer halves the annual school fees, which start from 244,000 baht for kindergarten to 533,000 baht for secondary school. Entrance fees of 149,000 baht per child are also waived.

RPM chairman Gulu Lalvani said the response to the school incentive package has been excellent and highlights the importance of responding to the needs of the property market.

Buyers of the new condos fall into two categories: investment and lifestyle.

Sales for investment buyers begin in October, with condo prices ranging from 4.99 to 7.99 million baht.

"These are the lowest-priced properties at RPM that include all marina facilities."

It's the market that is driving RPM's new pricing strategy and the lingering hangover of 2008 crash which has cast a long shadow over Phuket property investments.

"This is where the market is going, into condos with the emphasis on value. As we know, many assets were lost in the financial crisis," he said.

"Phuket developers have done their research. They know people still want luxury lifestyles. The marinas are full, but people want to be selective now about their investments. You can't rely on a handful of wealthy investors. The majority of people want value – something extra," he said.

Phase three of development was unveiled at SMART investment and international property expo Singapore in March.

La Reserve features 40 one-and two-bedroom condo units (ranging from 527 to 678 square-foot indoor space) in two blocks, each with their own rooftop swimming pools.

Two-bedroom condos of 893 to 1507 square-foot of indoor and outdoor space feature ensuite bathrooms in the master and guest bedrooms, spacious kitchens and dining areas.

Ground-floor units have their own private gardens. Upper-floor units have views over Phang Nga Bay as well as the marina and waterways.

Phase three of the marina's development

follows sellout success of the first two phases – launched with 66 luxury condos and penthouses in phase one.

Phase two followed with 15 Aquaminium condos, with one of the world's first private drive-in boat-berths, five palatial Royal Villas and the Grand Villa, all with five bedrooms, private swimming pools and doorstep yacht moorings.

The La Reserve project also adjoins a kid's club, which has swimming pools, play areas and entertainment rooms with games for children and a lounge with restaurant and bar for parents.

As phase three of construction at RPM nears completion – a 78-room hotel is coming soon – phase four, expansion of the marina, is due to start next year.



Gulu Lalvani

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Thinking outside the box

The Boat Avenue – featuring Thailand’s first container mall – is on track for opening next year in Cherng Talay, Phuket

By Fraser Morton

The developers of Phuket’s Boat Lagoon have gone inland with their latest project – and they’ve taken a few boat-themed ideas with them.

Brightly colored ship containers will be the first sight residents will see occupying a patch of land close to Laguna in Cherng Talay over the next few months as the 250 million baht Boat Avenue complex takes shape.

Construction work on phase one of the massive 10-rai mixed-use complex – home to the container mall, shophouse complex and residential estate – is scheduled to start this week.

Thai Developer Boon Yongsakul said almost all units for phase one have been sold or reserved for rent, including 12 two-bedroom home-office units priced at 8.9 million baht, 15 container shop units and 24 additional commercial units.

At the time of writing, only eight rentals for commercial spaces of 50 squaremeters were available for rent.



The sales window for 12 shophouses in phase 2 will open on June 16.

“There’s room for expansion too. We are currently only developing 10 rai of a total 27 rai land area which we have a title deed for,” said Khun Boon.

“We firmly believe in Boat Avenue’s potential and that the development will benefit the community facilities in the Cherng Talay area.”

The look of Boat Avenue will be striking when completed, a modern beacon of color, ingenuity and design which its developers hope will lure big crowds.

The container mall will no doubt be the section of the complex which draws the most attention.

The container idea came from a similar project, the Cashel Mall in Christchurch, New Zealand, which was established as a temporary mall after the area was hit by two devastating earthquakes last year.

Khun Boon knows Christchurch well, having attended high school and university in the city.

“The Christchurch container mall was made out of necessity, but we liked the idea.” – Developer Boon Yongsakul



PROJECT A GO-GO: Concept images of Boat Avenue, due to be completed late 2013.

“The Christchurch container mall was made out of necessity, but we liked the idea. The obvious link to our mother business – Boat Lagoon Marina on Phuket’s east coast – was another nice touch,” he said.

Lavished with bright paint and trimmed with neon lights, the

containers will add color to the multipurpose complex and have another bonus: They’re cheap, clean and easy to maintain.

Year-end 2013 is currently penciled in for completion of the first two phases.

For more sales information email panuk88@gmail.com.



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OVERVIEW: Mandala Condominium in Bang Tao and (right) an inside peak at the interior.



Sales surge continues at Mandala Condos

By Phuket Gazette

WITH two sales in just over a month, Mandala Condominium has just six units – one penthouse – left on the market from its 24-unit development in Bang Tao.

Launched in December 2010 by Swedish builder-developer Staffan Nordstrand, Mandala created a buzz by being built without any pre-building or off-plan sales.

Investors could buy their Mandala condo and move in the

next day – a different approach to sales.

Industry expert Bill Barnett, Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks, said: “The Mandala Condominium developers set a trendsetting launch proposal by actually completing a project at the same time as going to market.”

Punctuating the trendsetting point, Mandala was named Best Condominium in Phuket at the 2011 Thailand Property Awards.

“We call it the Mandala

difference,” says Tom Travers from Indigo Real Estate.

“There is nothing for sale in Phuket that compares with these two-bedroom apartments in terms of their spacious design, quality construction and location. It’s also a risk-free investment because the project is completed and free-hold foreign condominium ownership is still available.”

The condos are sizeable units. The main indoor-outdoor living space is 24 by 5.8 meters.

The main indoor area starts at the entrance by the storage and guest bathroom and flows through the kitchen, dining-living room area with 3 meter high ceilings (7 meter in the penthouse), then out huge sliding glass windows, onto the outdoor deck with the private pool and garden.

This doesn’t include the two large bedrooms with private en suite bathrooms that enter from the main indoor area.

The design includes features

like double-insulated walls and everything is built to exceed ISO international building standards.

Mandala is located 350 meters from Bang Tao Beach in the Laguna area.

Mandala is within walking distance to two of the island’s top beach clubs, Bliss and Xana, with Nikki Beach Club scheduled to open on Bang Tao next year.

The six remaining units range in price from 19 to 25.9 million baht. baanmandala.com or call 087-034 2090

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Mega condo to launch near Central

Mass condominium projects in Phuket remain the trend of the broad real estate market.

Supalai Park@Phuket City has launched 504 condo units, priced under 2 million baht close to Central Festival.

The 15-storey complex has an estimated development cost of 900 million baht.

Meanwhile, in Singapore a movement is afoot to address the surge of “shoebox” units, which are deemed in some quarters to have a negative impact on the real estate market.

In Phuket the mix of buyers in these projects continue to be a mix of end users and speculators.

Over the next 12 to 18 months, when completion is expected on a number high-density condos, it will be interesting to see how the resale market reacts.

- thephuketinsider.com

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Sansiri corners Phuket market

Sansiri Timeline

October 2011

Sansiri launches its first development in Phuket, dcondo Kathu, with a total value of 560 million baht, comprising three eight-storey buildings housing 556 units. Prices started at 999,000 baht. The development was sold in half a day of the sales window opening.

January 2012

The 800 million baht dcondo Kathu-Patong launches. Again, three low rise eight-storey buildings, but this time housing 663 units. The development sold out in one-and-a-half days.

February 2012

Following the success of its two dcondo condominium developments, the group launches a housing development under the Habitia and Habatown brands. Habitia Phuket – a 244 modern semi-detached housing development targeting working professionals and business owners, is located in Koh Kaew, near British International School.

Prices started from 2.9 million baht. Half of all units were sold in the first week of going on sale. In the same month, the company opened the pre-sales for their first townhouse project, next to Habitia, under the Habatown brand. Habatown comprises 228 two-storey townhouses with prices starting from 1.9 million baht.

New in 2012

Sansiri will launch their third condominium development dcondo Creek later this year. Located in Kathu in the vicinity of the previous two projects, dcondo Creek will open for pre-sales in June 2012.



SANSIRI IMPRESSION: dcondo Kathu-Patong concept images.

“From a property storyline, the successful debut is a key sign of the times towards a continued surge by the domestic sector.”

– Property expert Bill Barnett

By Fraser Morton

Sansiri’s success in the Phuket mid-market continues to gather speed, with more investment penciled in for later this year.

Professionals and business owners are the clientele – and they are investing in Sansiri in droves.

“The company is confident and committed to expanding the company’s portfolio on Phuket further,” said Suriya Wannabuit, executive vice president of project management and marketing.

Since entering the Phuket market in October last year with dcondo Kathu, dcondo Kathu-Patong and now Habitia and Habatown Phuket, Sansiri has welcomed over 1,300 families into new properties.

Following Sansiri’s launch success of dcondo – selling out 556 units in half a day – property expert and managing director of C9HotelWorks, Bill Barnett, reported: “From a property storyline the successful debut is a key sign of the times towards a continued surge by the domestic sector.”

“The speculative nature of Bangkok’s domestic entry level

condos has now veered south to Phuket investors rather than end users. Relatively small down payments are made with the bulk of the purchase due on completion. Speculators hedge to sell on prior to handover and look to take profit at prevailing market pricing at the finishing stage.”

As one of Thailand’s largest real estate developers since 1984, the Bangkok-based company is extending its portfolio of condos and mid-range housing projects.

Construction is well underway at the company’s 46 rai Habitia and Habatown starter-level home project in Kathu near the British International School.

The 244 semi-detached homes in the Habitia project are scheduled for completion by 2014. Habitia prices start from 2.99 million baht and 1.99 million baht at the Habatown project.

The 663-unit dcondo Kathu-Patong launched in January this year, with prices starting at 999,000 baht per unit.

dcondo Creek is the next Phuket project scheduled to launch later this year, with pre-sales starting later this month.



Habitia project in Kathu

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Underwood exports his Phuket design team to Norway

By Fraser Morton

TRY say this name: Bryggerikjelleren, Lillehammer. No easy task, but when a phone rang at Phuket's Underwood design factory nine months ago, that was the name of the Norwegian client on the other end of the line.

The client had a design request: "Re-build, and re-design our resto-bar."

Underwood Phuket – established by Australian designer John Underwood (above) in 1999 – got to work on the Norway project with 50 designers, artists, welders and sculptors pouring nine months' sweat into the awesome re-fit of the underground Norwegian resto-bar (pictured).

The last LED light, final rivet and patch of leather was fitted two weeks ago by the Phuket team, who sent a trio of



designers to the resto-bar to brave the cold and finish the job.

"We were very happy with the result," said managing director John Underwood.

"Our business is a rare species. We are in the boutique market and because we can offer radical designs we can create something truly different for our international clients.

"The phone is always ringing with people looking for the Underwood vision," said marketing and project manager Andrew Pragnell.

"The Norwegian clients were very happy with the end result – they even came to visit us last weekend in Phuket."

Underwood is currently working on a design project for the Ritz-Carlton, Puerto Rico. Clanging can be heard all day at his factory on the bypass road.

Underwood-phuket.com

Ideas



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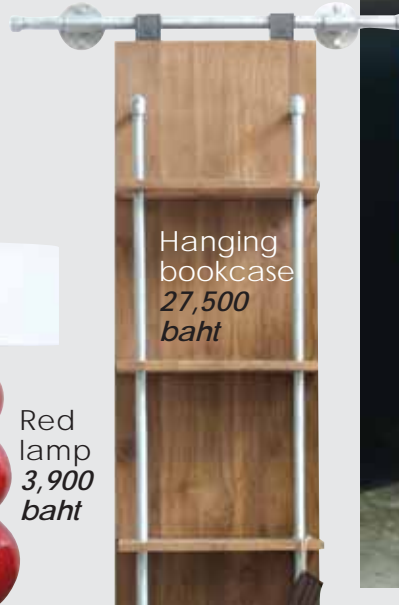


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Courtyard house in Modern Zen design

The construction site as it looks today

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Location: 2km from Nai Harn beach.
Development background:
: 5th project of Nai Harn Baan-Bua Development.
: Part of a 12-year sustainable growth development.
: Lots of privacy and secure gated community project.
: Tranquil environment with total land area of 240,000 sqm (150Rai).
: Well-maintained property management program.



Jones Lang LaSalle's Phuket plan

Since 1990, Jones Lang LaSalle has morphed into one of the largest property specialists in Thailand, with more than 1,100 staff and five million square-meters of properties under its management belt – from Phuket to Pattaya to Bangkok. **Fraser Morton** gets the latest company happenings straight from director's desk.



VIEWS: The Nchantra @ Sirey Beach

The MD's word

Suphin Mechuchep, Managing Director (nationwide) Joined the firm in 1991. Appointed MD in 2004.



Q> Can you outline your company's plans for expansion in Phuket over the next decade?
A> Jones Lang LaSalle provides a wide range of services from research, valuation and investment services for project management clients in Phuket. We opened our office on the island in 2007, initially focusing on property management, the business area where we have seen rapid growth. We now have a portfolio of 19 luxury residential estates. These include villa and condo developments such as The

Cape at Yamu, Malaiwana, Kamala Beach Estate and Blue Canyon Homes. Over the past five years we have also developed our residential sales and lease capabilities in Phuket. We decided to expand into the residential sales business on the island early this year. Shortly after, we secured two major agency appointments including The Nchantra @ Sirey Beach and Absolute Twin Sands Phase two.

Q> What does Jones Lang LaSalle offer Phuket investors over its rivals?
A> While our internationally branded competitors are franchise businesses, Jones Lang LaSalle in Thailand is 49 per cent owned by Jones Lang LaSalle Inc, and as a result is strongly committed to meeting the firm's worldwide business disciplines, ethics and standards. We have support from our global and regional network including best practices, world-class technology

platform, research and marketing resources. This is also beneficial to our clients in Thailand as the services they receive here are of the same quality and standard as those in other markets around the globe.

Q> Many high-end villa Phuket developers are moving into the mid-range condo market. What is your company's view on this?
A> They are making the right move. Like Bangkok and Pattaya and other major cities in Thailand, the Phuket market comprises low, mid and high-end segments and none should be overlooked. While the high-end market may offer more attractive margins to developers, demand in the market is relatively more vulnerable. This is because demand in the high-end market relies on overseas buyers looking to acquire a property as a holiday home or as an investment, while the mid-range market covers Thais who are moving to Phuket to work and live.

From the Phuket office
Dexter Norville, director of Property and Asset Management (six years)



Q> What are you currently working on in Phuket?
A> Our focus is on expanding our service reach in Phuket and surrounding areas. This means increasing our estate management portfolio, particularly in luxury resort condos and villa developments. We are building our residential sales service. In other areas we have recruited a team of rental experts to boost our capabilities in the rental services market. We recently launched retail marketing and management services in Phuket


where, we believe the retail market is currently under-supplied.
Q> Where does the firm see opportunities in Phuket? Is the high-end sales market boom or bust?
A> We feel there is good potential in all segments of real estate. It is typical that some sectors will fare better than others. The high-end market has neither been boom nor bust in Phuket and we see it as an area which has a longer sales cycle than others. Developers in this segment need to understand this. There are always buyers in this sector, but the volume is not as high as the lower-priced segments. Sansiri proved the appetite local buyers have if a developer builds a good product for a specific market. Similar developments that appeal to the local market will do well in the future.
Q> Can you describe trends in the market you have seen? What do you think will happen over the next decade?


A> Phuket has seen shifts in trends in real estate and as you can imagine these follow the pattern of hotel trends. There are more mass-market tourists visiting the island now, so mid-range developments are better suited to the potential buying power of these visitors. The arrival of vacation clubs and fractional ownership products on the island has been another trend we have seen. High-end developments have continued to be built, which is good for the kudos of Phuket real estate. In this market we can see a trend where developers may link with world-renowned designers and brands to spur interest. I believe in the next decade that Nai Yang and Nai Thon will see interest from developers due to the amount of available land. However these areas will need other infrastructure and services to be built to sustain any growth.
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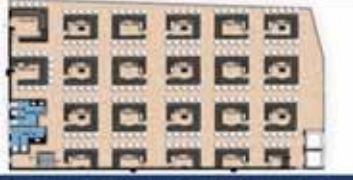
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