

Phuket Gazette

August 15 - 21, 2015

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■ 'THE ISLAND IS EXCEPTIONALLY FERTILE FOR CORRUPTION'

Understand island corruption



Dr Surin is collecting data to better understand Phuket's corruption.

■ Police ranked as 'dirtiest' officers serving province

By Chutharat Plerin

THOUGH the recently deceased Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) President Paiboon Upatising will no longer be called to task for alleged corruption in the development of the PPAO Hospital, the case will continue, confirmed Preechanun Pumlek, Chief of the Phuket office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC).

To see the much-loved elected official removed from office through Article 44 might have come as a surprise to those new to the island. However, seasoned expats, frequent visitors and local Thais know the island is rife with corruption at all levels. Nonetheless, prior to his death from colon cancer, Mr Paiboon was sure that the charges levied against him by the Auditor General Office (OAG) would be swept away.

Corruption is not unique to Phuket, or even Thailand, which was recently ranked 85 out of 175 countries by global corruption watchdog Transparency International (TI). However, rampant corruption in Phuket is driven by several unique qualities of the province that aren't seen to such a degree elsewhere in Thailand, explained Surin Bamrunghol, founder and president of the Phuket Anti-Corruption Network.

"Three major factors continue to contribute to corruption on the island: the tradition of illegally fast-tracking projects, which has been around since the tin mining era; the vast amount of money flowing into the island via the tourism industry; and the nationwide standardization of government employee salaries regardless of the cost of living," said Mr Surin.

"Perhaps the largest issue of the three comes down to income. Officers do not make enough money to live in Phuket, as it is significantly more expensive to live here than any other province. Additionally, Phuket often attracts high-ranking officers from

outside the province, who the local officers have to host and support with money from their own pockets."

From 2007 to 2012, overall inflation in Thailand was measured at about 16 per cent, but Phuket saw a 5-year inflation rate of 26 per cent. In other words, during that period, the cost of living in Phuket rose about 60 per cent quicker than Thailand as a whole. Nonetheless, government officers are paid based on their rank and position, with no adjustments made for location.

To better understand corruption on the island and to highlight which offices are the 'most corrupt', Dr Surin began a three-part, Thai-language corruption survey in 2013. He was not yet ready to release the results for 2015, which explore solutions for corruption on the island. However, he did go into detail about last year's results.

From May 2013 into 2014, 1,200 surveys were handed out to students, government employees, local business owners and residents of all ages. The team received 611 responses

"The questionnaires asked participants to rank the top ten ...

Continued on Page 5

Beach chair judgment day on horizon

THE island's beach chair dilemmas will reach one final meeting, where empirical data on the controversial subject will be presented to help finally settle this burning issue, Governor Nisit Jansomwong said in an exclusive interview.

Full story Page 3

BUSINESS



Boat Arcade: Entertain the children and the parents will come.

PROPERTY



Vorasis Issara sees growth in the Asian-American market for Phuket.

LIFE & STYLE



Craig Burton reveals the magical fruit that does not make you toot.

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Gunman shoots one at crowded Chinese shrine

POLICE are hunting a gunman who shot a man during a crowded ceremony in front of the Guan Yu shrine in Chalong on Sunday night.

Rescue workers and police arrived at the scene to find Teearapon Ponsamak, 24, crying in pain from a gunshot wound to his abdomen.

“Mr Teearapon’s friends told us that he was at the shrine celebrating Guan Yu’s birthday with more than 300 other people when he bumped into a rival,” said Lt Cholada Chokdeesrijan of Chalong Police. “They ended up arguing and eventually the man pulled out a gun and fired one shot.”

So far, the shooter has only been identified by his nickname, ‘Tua’. The suspect dropped the gun and fled the scene with a number of other people, confirmed Lt Cholada.

Mr Teearapon was taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital.

– *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Thousands join royal burial ceremony for ‘Pink Panther’

THOUSANDS of people turned out to mourn the death of former Phuket senator and suspended Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (PPAO) President Paiboon Upatising as he was laid to rest at a Catholic graveyard in Phuket Town on Monday, following a long battle with colon cancer.

Adviser to the Minister of Interior Siwa Sangmanee attended the funeral as the guest of honor and headed the cer-

Phi Phi Police unaware of gibbon touts’ return



Phi Phi Police and national park officers vow to hunt for a pair of gibbons and their touts, following a Phi Phi tourist snapping shots of them pushing the primates onto tourists in the popular island destination of Ton Sai. For the full story, visit PhuketGazette.net. Photo: Gazette reader

emony of putting ‘*Din Praratchataan*’, funeral soil given by the Bureau of the Royal Household, on the grave.

– *Chutharat Plerin*

Tourist helps rescue young sea turtle

A TOURIST saved the life of a

LOCAL NEWS Briefly

sea turtle on Lay Pang Beach by alerting lifeguards after finding it entangled in a discarded fishing net last week.

The approximately one-year-old turtle had already suffered wounds, most likely while trying to free itself from the netting, explained Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong, head of the Phuket Marine Biological Center’s Endangered Species Unit. – *Thawit Bilabdullar*

Illegal drugs continue to arrive by post

ILLEGAL drugs are continuing to be delivered by the Thai Postal Service, despite concern being raised nationally early last month, said the Thalang District Chief last week.

The confirmation came on August 8 as officers arrested Siriphop Jaitrong, 35, when he was picking up 5.4 kilograms of *kratom* leaves from the Pa Khlok Post Office. After searching Mr Siriphop’s home police also found an illegal firearm and five rounds of ammunition.

Mr Siriphop was charged for the possession of a Category 5 drug with intent to sell and the illegal possession of a firearm and matching ammunition. – *Kongleaphy Keam*

Man arrested for stealing school laptops

POLICE arrested a Myanmar national last week for swiping laptops costing an estimated 240,000 baht from Satee Phuket School’s science and math center last month.

The suspect, named only as Mr Lek, was arrested at a worker camp with 10 stolen laptops and a video converter. Mr Lek was charged for the

theft and for illegally entering Thailand. Police continue to hunt another suspect thought to have taken part in the crime.

– *Chutharat Plerin*

Virgin Australia flight retractions not to affect arrival numbers

PHUKET tourism and arrival numbers will not be affected by Virgin Australia cancelling flights to Phuket and Bali from Adelaide, Melbourne and Perth, Director of Phuket International Airport Monrudee Gettuphan confirmed today.

Virgin Australia will replace services with its offshoot Tigerair in a bid to stem bleeding from international operations, where losses widened to AUS\$69 million for the year, reported *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

– *Kongleaphy Keam*

Heavy weather warning to last until August 14

THE Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) issued a new flash flood, landslide and heavy weather warning on Tuesday for an additional four days.

“We are anticipating heavy rains, which could lead to further flash floods and landslides from today to August 14,” said DDPM Phuket Office Chief Santhawat Riweung. “Please be careful out there.”

The DDPM has already issued letters to local authorities urging them to keep an eye out for debris blocking drains.

– *Kongleaphy Keam*

Facebook post helps identify body of woman

FACEBOOK users were able to identify the woman who plunged to her death off Rawai Pier last week, after pictures of her body were posted on the social media platform.

Witnesses saw Sriwann Sarapoo, 49, walk down the pier in the heavy rain at about 8:30am. Police were told that she walked to where the waves were reaching about two meters, and then jumped in.

Ms Sriwann’s body was discovered a couple hours later.

– *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

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Beach chair judgment day looms

By Chutharat Plerin

THE island's beach chair dilemmas will see one final meeting before the controversial subject is laid to rest, Phuket Governor Nisit Jansomwong told the *Phuket Gazette* in an exclusive interview.

"Prince of Songkhla University [PSU] Phuket campus will present their results to me on August 20," Governor Nisit said. "We will consider the information they bring to the table and balance it with other factors that will weigh into ensuring the greatest benefit to the public."

Gov Nisit launched what was to be a three-month trial for a beach management system in December that only allowed 10 per cent of the sands to be zoned for vendors, and saw a complete ban on beach chairs of all types.

The following month, he was forced to take a strong public stance against those who opposed the policy.

"I would like to make it clear. We will continue to strictly enforce the rules pro-



A final decision on the fate of Phuket's beach chairs is coming soon. Photo: Gazette file

hibiting beach chairs on Phuket sands," he said at the time.

The governor's statement flew in the face of Patong Mayor Chalermluck Keksup's call for a compromise following several incidents on Patong Beach during which tourists became outraged after police asked them to remove their sun loungers from the sands in

compliance with the no-chair policy.

"This is about changing the behavior of both beach vendors and tourists who have gotten used to occupying the beaches with sun loungers over the last 30 years," Gov Nisit said.

In June, the governor downplayed his strong stance against beach chairs, saying

that he would rely heavily on a study being conducted by PSU.

"We have the initial results already. We need to study and analyze specific aspects of the findings, especially how it pertains to environmental issues, economics, tourism and social management, so that our research is more valuable and conclusive," Dean of

Faculty of Technology and Environment Pun Thongchumnum told the *Gazette* shortly after the governor made it clear that the study would play a large part in his decision.

"After the new plan is set, local government will work on making the zones more attractive for tourists, and of course, no ownership. The locals who service umbrellas can help tourists with setting the umbrellas up in the zone. But the umbrellas must be put away as soon as tourists leave the beach," Mr Pun said.

"We have come up with a suggestion based on five essential factors: legality, preventing the use of public land for profit, creating harmony between all parties, creating more income and environmental friendliness," he said.

"We have come this far. I expect the best solution will be a long-term plan to help Phuket achieve a bright future."

However, the bottom line for the management plan will be what makes the most people happy, Gov Nisit confirmed.

Drug dealer gives police the slip

POLICE are hunting for an armed drug dealer who managed to flee his home before officers arrived to seize a cache of drugs worth more than 5 million baht and a number of firearms.

"When we arrived at the suspect's home at Si Suchat Grand View 5 in Rassada, the air conditioner was still on and there was freshly prepared food in the kitchen, but the man was gone," said Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Pinit Sirichai. "We assume that the suspect was tipped off about the raid."

Prior to the search, police had yet to identify the man operating out of the house.

"During the raid, we were able to find the ID card of Anuwat Thongtan, 31, as well as numerous bank cards in his name. We suspect that he is the man we are looking for and will ask the court to issue an arrest warrant," Col Pinit said.

Police also discovered four handguns, one silencer, 400 rounds of ammunition, 2.15 kilograms of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) and 1,469



Police seized more than five million baht worth of drugs.

ya bah (methamphetamine) pills, along with a number of other assets believed to be linked to criminal activity.

During the raid, a man claiming he was a taxi driver appeared at the home. However, he denied having any involvement with the drugs and explained that he had only come by to talk to the suspect

about fixing a car, Col Pinit said. Police declined to name the man, but took him to the Phuket Provincial Police Station for further questioning.

Col Pinit expects to charge Mr Anuwat with possession of a Category 1 drug with intent to sell and illegal possession of firearms.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Demolition comes to end

TWO days of demolishing illegal buildings on Phuket's west coast came to an end with officials vowing to return and remove any other illegal structures.

"The owners of two venues were fully aware of the orders to vacate the premises and tear down the structures," said Thalang District Chief Veera KerdSirimongkol. "The Sakoo OrBorTor [local administration organization] had already officially notified them that they were encroaching on national park land and to remove the buildings – but the owners ignored the government's request."

Mr Veera explained it was necessary for the government to step in and do it for them.

"We will rid the island of buildings encroaching on public land," Mr Veera said. "However, it is our job to ensure that laws are being followed as we do so, which means it is not always a quick process."

– Chutharat Plerin

Python caught at sacred Phuket shrine

A LARGE python was discovered seeking highland near a Phuket shrine permeated with local lore.

The estimated three-meter-long snake, weighing about five kilograms, was quickly bagged at the Baan Toh Sae shrine in Kathu Wednesday, Kusoldharm Foundation rescue worker Kasun Naepnean told the *Phuket Gazette*.

The shrine was built in honor of the legend of Toh Sae, who arrived on the almost entirely uninhabited Phuket island in ancient times, or so the story goes.

Toh Sae had sailed from Malaysia and Indonesia with his two brothers, Toh Ya and Toh Phra Thaeo, all of who are considered gods to believers.

When they landed, the three men split ways. Toh Ya went to the west coast near Surin and Kamala; Toh Phra Thaeo went to Thalang, where there is now a shrine erected in his name;



Rescue workers catch the python at Baan Toh Sae shrine in Kathu. Photo: Kusoldharm Foundation

and Toh Sae, went to Mueang – his first stop being Khao Toh Sae, commonly known as Monkey Hill.

Some locals believe that shortly after arriving, Toh Sae performed a miracle to help a marooned fisherman survive. It is this alleged miracle that

continues to inspire some people to make offerings at the shrine in which the snake was found.

The python was released at Bang Wad Dam in Kathu.

A bigger reptilian surprise arrived in a Phuket bathroom on August 3, when rescue workers

were forced to wrangle with a 20 kilogram monitor lizard.

"There are many reports of dangerous animals everyday. Therefore, if you find one in your home, please do not hesitate to call us 24 hours a day at 076-246 301," Mr Kasun said.

– Kongleaphy Kearn

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By Dr. Mingkhwan Tippayawong, Pathologist

Topic 4:
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By Dr. Sirisak Rojanaprasertkij, Medical Oncologist

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Reviewing corruption data

From Page 1

...most corrupt offices in Phuket in order. Additionally, they sought information about the type of corruption perceived or witnessed," Dr Surin said.

A number of studies have called into question the validity of survey-based data collection methods. Probably the most widely debated issue, with regard to corruption surveys, is the relative value or reliability of perception-based versus experience-based data, reports TI in its 'Gateway Corruption Assessment Toolbox' publication.

"While there is far from a consensus on the issue, experience surveys are usually considered more reliable to measure petty corruption, while perception surveys are deemed more appropriate for shedding light on the prevalence of grand corruption (policy capture, nepotism and so on). Furthermore, while there is some good evidence of a strong correlation between corruption experience and perception, this trend is uneven across countries," the publication states.

"There may, in some cases, be increased levels of tolerance toward corruption in areas where corruption experience is high, or conversely, heightened awareness of corruption in areas where there is a greater focus on tackling corruption by authorities.

"Other factors which may affect the perception of the level of corruption in a country, regardless of actual experience, include economic development, trust in government institutions, press freedom, population size, education... or the business environment."

The business environment in Phuket is exceptionally fertile for corruption, said Dr Surin.

"The island is developing rapidly, with new businesses opening all the time, bringing in fresh money," Dr Surin said. "Additionally, more and more people are moving to the island to take advantage of the economic growth, despite the increased cost of living. These factors make it a prime location for continued growth of corrupt practices."

The top ten 'most corrupt' offices out of the 25 options



Money games galore on this paradise island, says Phuket Anti-Corruption Network President. Photo: Isaac Stone Simonelli

presented on the survey were the local police; the Land Department in Phuket Town and Thalang; local government bodies; Thalang District Office; Muang District Office; Kathu District Office; Phuket Immigration Police; Natural Resources and Environment Phuket Office; Phuket Tourist Police; and Satree Phuket School.

As the survey was only in Thai-language, it was not sent to international tourists or members of the expat community, noted Dr Surin.

A number of corrupt activities were flagged in the survey as regularly occurring. They ranged from getting students into well-established schools, to officers making payments to higher-ranking officials in order to secure better positions.

"The list of forms of corruption is extensive. However, expediting services is a commonly cited form of corruption, as is paying bribes. There were also allegations of medical equipment purchases being centered around the medical company providing free overseas to doctors," said Dr Surin. "However, corruption in the police forces is by far the worse problem."

In general, commanders are effectively in charge of controlling their officers, explained Dr Surin.

"And ultimately, money buys loyalty," he added.

Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Peerayuth Karajedee was not surprised when confronted with the results of last year's survey.

"I cannot deny that there is a problem with police corruption throughout Thailand," Col Peerayuth said.

However, the results ultimately are not helpful to police attempting to rein in corruption, said Col Peerayuth.

"The results show overall perceptions, but fail to provide the leads necessary for us to take action," Col Peerayuth said. "We need everyone out there to help us ensure government officers are fulfilling their responsibilities."

Dr Surin hopes that his anti-corruption network will continue to strengthen, in order to take more direct action and support the police officers who are attempting to curb corruption.

"At a national level, we already have organizations that do this. However, having our own anti-corruption network on Phuket is more effective," he said.

Dr Surin explained that one of the largest battles in the war on corruption is against apathy.

"Some people think that corruption has nothing to do with them because they do not see how they are directly affected," Dr Surin said. "However, we are all affected by corruption. We pay taxes and our taxes must be spent for the benefit of our society as a whole, not just to be put into some individuals' pockets."

/ And ultimately, money buys loyalty. /

– Dr Surin, president of Phuket Anti-Corruption Network

/ I cannot deny that there is a problem with police corruption throughout Thailand. /

– Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Peerayuth Karajedee

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Porn star gets slay on the wrist

The Phuket Gazette

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'I had hoped that the Chetwynd-Talbots had heard the last of him but once again, he has been using our family name.'

'Of course I didn't want to kill her. I was going home with her in two days' time. I had no intention at all of killing her.'

'He was a terrible thief, always stealing money from my wallet and his grandmother's purse.'

Murder suspect awaits trial date

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PATONG: Paul Chetwynd-Talbot, accused of murdering Briton Debra O'Hanlon, 31, will remain in a Kathu Police Station cell until preliminary hearing at Phuket Provincial Court on August 20. A date is expected to be set for his trial to start.



Happier days: Paul Chetwynd-Talbot photograph believed to have been taken before the murder.

It is expected that the 32-year-old Briton will then be remanded in custody at Phuket Provincial Prison until the trial begins.

Ms O'Hanlon's remains were taken to Bangkok on August 4 for autopsy, although at the time of going to press the *Gazette* was told that the procedure had not been completed.

Pol Col Teeraphol Thipajien, Superintendent of Kathu Police Station, told the *Gazette* on August 2 that an initial examination of the body suggested that Ms O'Hanlon had been struck in the face with a blunt object and that her neck had been

life by making a number of cuts to his forearms, resulting in substantial loss of blood.

Airport limo...

Teen queen delivers the bear necessities

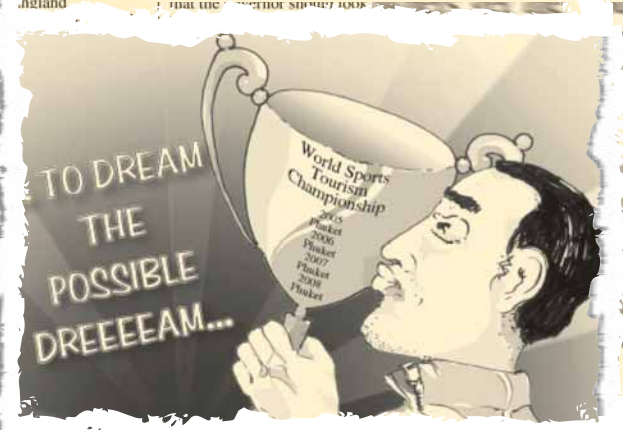
Alleged killer cop turns himself in

Jungceylon 'still on target for opening in November'

Why Ya Nui is a mess



No thanks: Gov Udomsak grins as he declines to accept a bouquet from some limousine drivers.



Committee treatment for limos

THE murder of Debra O'Hanlon dominated the news a decade ago.

A picture of the smiling 31-year-old and her boyfriend at the time – the confessed killer – was page one of the August 13-19 issue of the *Phuket Gazette*. In hindsight, it is hard not to find yourself searching their eyes and faces for some hint of what was going to come during their time on this paradise island.

Not only was the case on page one, it was also the 'Inside Story', as the *Gazette* sat down for an exclusive interview with the killer, Paul Chetwynd-Talbot. Mr Chetwynd-Talbot was later sentenced to 10 years imprisonment.

However, it was not all doom and gloom in the news – though there seems to be a worldwide pertinacity for it. Luckily, there also seems to be rays of good news in every issue of the *Gazette* – like the warm sunshine on Kata Beach, after high tide has re-

ceded and the rubbish has been picked up, during the southwest monsoon season. There is clearly a push for more good news in every issue of the *Gazette*.

Nonetheless, the senseless violence that occasionally sheds blood on this island, such as the man being shot in the stomach as hundreds celebrated the birthday of Guan Yu last week, seems to always find itself column inches.

However, a decade ago, the good news was Jungceylon.

Yes, that iconic shopping mall complex that has become the center piece to the island's premier party town had yet to open its doors. However, developers confirmed to the *Gazette* that it was 'still on target for opening in November'.

Jungceylon already had its opening date postponed due to a shortage of la-

The gift of hindsight

bor during the post-tsunami recovery period.

Unlike the people behind the numerous unfinished objects [UFOs] seen scattered along the

Andaman coast, here was one set of investors whose confidence has panned out like a gold digger's just prior to the 1848 rush in California.

"The management of Jungceylon is confident that the complex will help attract tourists and investors both from Thailand and around the world to come and witness the opening ceremony," the *Gazette* wrote, attributing this confidence to Rena Undomkunnatum of the management firm Phuket Square.

Eventually, Jungceylon would benefit the whole tourism industry in Phuket, she said – and boy, was she right.

The editorial in the August 13-19 issue also had a positive tone to it, as the island helped organize the 'highly entertaining World Boxing Organization title fight between Ratanachai Sor Vorapin and Panamanian challenger Mauricio Martinez' – anybody remember who won?

The fight for the island though was not the boxing match, it was the push to develop Phuket as a sport tourism destination, which has largely been a success due both to private investments by Laguna Phuket, Thanyapura and a number of other businesses, as well as the heavy marching by the government sector.

Where those who have heavily invested in Phuket and those charged with the governance of the island will lead us ten years from now is difficult to foresee. However, at least one week 10 years ago, there seemed to be a positive outlook for our future.

– Isaac Stone Simonelli

Women face charges for 'dirty' dancing in temple

TWO women, who were captured in a video clip dancing provocatively in skimpy red dresses at Ayutthaya's Wat Chaiwatthanaram, surrendered to police on August 8 and apologized for their behavior.

Models Thannicha Nampanya, 27, and Nithikan Chotithanapongsathit, 30, told reporters that they went to Ayutthaya for a photo shoot on June 12 in exchange for 10,000 baht. After the shoot, the two claimed they decided to record a clip of them dancing on one of their personal phones for fun.

The video later went viral.

Schools urged to review tattoo, piercing ban

THE Education Ministry has urged private vocational schools in Bangkok and nearby provinces to reconsider their

Groom gives bride coffin

THE cliché for weddings around the world is that 'diamonds are forever'. However, the Thai groom from Leoi Province had a different wedding gift idea that would be 'forever' – a coffin.

Yes, a man named only as 'Diao' by Kapook.com dug in deep for a coffin for his bride-to-be for what he thought would be a valuable, lasting life lesson.

Mr Diao explained that he thought that during their life together money would only get spent, eventually leaving the couple broke. However, the coffin would stay with them forever, housing them for an eternity after death.

The Edgar Allan Poe-like dowry gift shocked a number of people on Facebook, after pictures were posted by the bride under the Thai username *Amp Poo Rak Sat See Ka Kang Thanon* (Amp the lover of four-legged animal on the side of road). Lucky for Diao, he found a woman who didn't get cold feet at what could have been mistaken as a thinly veiled threat or poor taste.



new admission standards, which bar students with wide ear-piercings and clearly visible tattoos.

The Association of Private Technological and Vocational Education Colleges proposed the new admission standards earlier this month and unless changed, they will be implemented at the start of the next academic year at all of the association's private vocational schools in the area.

Wide ear-piercings and tattoos are just the fashion for teenagers and do not reflect a person's behavior, so it is improper to deny them access to schools, noted Education Ministry Permanent Secretary Kamjorn Tatiyakavee.

Special court divisions to combat three key crimes

THE Criminal Court's special divisions on human trafficking, corruption and misconduct of state officials, as well as narcotics, were officially launched on Monday.

These divisions have been created to ensure cases related to these three crimes can be tried effectively, the Criminal Court's Chief Judge Athip Chitsamrerng said.

The moves were part of the effort to reform the process of prosecuting human-trafficking cases after the United States decided to keep Thailand on the

NATIONAL NEWS Briefly

lowest level of its 'Trafficking in Persons' (TIP) report, suggesting that Thailand's work on combating this problem was not effective enough.

Hefty illegal fishing penalties now enforced

ILLEGAL fishing vessels and equipment will be seized or destroyed and vessel owners could be jailed for up to five years under a new order by the National Council for Peace and Order, issued under Article 44 of the interim charter.

The fines for such offenses will range between 100,000 baht and 500,000 baht.

People in the fisheries industry have continued to claim that the law has been implemented too fast and warned that many operators will be forced to close.

Use of 'sin tax' to be reviewed

DEPUTY PRIME Minister Yongyuth Yutthawong is backing a watchdog committee's decision to investigate the funding of three public organizations that get money from the 'sin tax' on alcohol and cigarettes.

The agencies referenced were Thai Health Promotion

Foundation (ThaiHealth), Thai Public Broadcasting Service and the National Sport Development Funding Office, which all have been given full use of funds from the tax without going through the bureaucracy.

Bomb kills marine, injures three in South

ONE Marine was killed and three others seriously injured

when a bomb planted in a cooking cylinder exploded as an eight-strong patrol team passed through Narathiwat's Bacho district on August 5. The team was providing protection for teachers.

The marines engaged the assailants in a brief gunfight before the bombers retreated into the forest. Police found spent M16 and AK-47 cartridges at the scene.

A national-security source at Chulabhorn Military Camp said the attack, believed to be part of ongoing unrest, was allegedly carried out by a Bacho-based insurgent cell led by Rormeulee Kajaekaso.

Pay-outs made to cyclists' families after drunk slaying

AN INSURANCE firm agreed on August 4 to pay 1.2 million baht to the families of three cyclists killed in a car accident.

The victims were riding with friends in Chiang Mai province when a drunk university student ploughed her car into their group at 6am. The accident killed three cyclists and injured two others.

The driver was covered by mandatory and voluntary car-insurance policies from Mittare Insurance.

The firm has agreed to pay 200,000 baht from the mandatory policy and 1 million baht from the voluntary policy.

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After the flood

RECENT flooding in many parts of the island will come as little surprise to long-time Phuket residents, who have witnessed so many of the island's natural drainage courses bulldozed and covered with concrete and asphalt over the years.

Even worse, Bangkok is reportedly sinking under its own weight due to factors that include excessive groundwater pumping, decades of over-construction and poor land use management – not to mention the inherent impracticality of allowing a metropolis to develop atop an alluvial floodplain just above sea level. Adding in the specter of rising sea levels due to climate change, some have predicted that large parts of the Thai capital could be submerged in just 15 years' time. So potentially dire is the situation that the government is seriously talking about construction of a massive protective seawall with an equally massive price tag. The initial estimates are sitting at about half a trillion baht.

Global warming, El Nino and other global hydrologic effects are indeed very worthy of serious study, consideration and concern. But the recent flooding here in Phuket has little, if anything, to do with these phenomena – and everything to do with shamefully poor land use planning, a lack of construction oversight and basic common sense.

Patong is the perfect example. In its natural state, it is an almost perfect flood-proof catchment area. Backed by the jungle-covered hillsides of the Nakkerd Hill Range, the copious amounts of water brought in annually by the southwest monsoon could have easily run back into Patong Bay through natural channels – until 'development' arrived.

Over the years, an endless series of poorly-planned projects has created the chronic flooding problem we witnessed yet again last week. It is perhaps ironic that the worst-affected area nowadays is home to many of the town's most vital public services: the tessaban office, the local police station and Patong Hospital, to name just a few.

Recent reaction to the flooding situation in Patong has been sadly predictable: more pumps, more pipes – more budget.

Better enforcement of the island-wide ban on new permanent structures 80 meters above sea level, sensibly introduced in 1997, could have alleviated many problems we see today.

It is too late to rectify the past, but it's time to seriously consider a moratorium on new developments that could exacerbate existing flooding problems – at whatever elevation they happen to be.



Taking responsibility for Phi Phi trash

As a long term expat living in Phuket for 20 years I can remember when the beaches on the surrounding islands of Phuket were in pristine condition.

Having just returned from a long weekend at the Phi Phi islands with my family, I was literally horrified by the amount of garbage floating in the sea in Maya Bay, along with heaps of rubbish on both Pileh Cove and Monkey Beach.

I was charged 400 baht per person to set foot on Maya Bay beach, yet the National Park Rangers did nothing to clean up the beach or the garbage floating around in the bay.

This needs to be publicized and brought to the attention of the public and the National Park Authority of Thailand that it is simply not good enough.

I spoke to many holiday makers staying on Phi Phi Don and the message was loud and clear, 'the Phi Phi Islands are beautiful, however, we will not return as it is covered in rubbish.'

If the Phi Phi Islands are a national treasure of Thailand, then the National Park Rangers need to act accordingly.

These Thai National Park Rangers are employed to keep the national park looking beautiful – picking up the rubbish is part of this. Please write a story on this as the rangers need to answer for their unbelievable laziness and lack of caring for one of the most beautiful island chains anywhere in the world.

It was really embarrassing to see so much litter scattered throughout the park.

Giles Howle

Letters

to the Editor

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

Kind and helpful people on Phuket

As a born and bred Bangkokian, who only moved to Phuket seven weeks ago, it has struck me how different people on the island are compared to suave urbanites in the capital.

A memorable experience was when a supermarket cashier questioned whether I really wanted to buy an imported nail cutter for 160 baht. Of course she was alluding to the fact that I could get one for one-third of the price at a convenience store, because they did not have anything cheaper.

I bought the imported one anyway, but really appreciated how kind she was in trying to help me save some money. This sort of a thing would seldom, if ever, occur in Bangkok, or most other mega-cities.

Then again, while shopping for a particular brand of vitamin, the sales girl at the pharmacy told me that they did not have this variety but their competitor across the arcade would.

City-slickers rarely help the competition, as this island girl did.

To me, Phuket is not only a beautiful place, but the people too are amicable and kind-hearted.

Newcomer
Phuket Town

Finding the will, to help find the way

Re: Gazette online, Post Office continues to deliver illegal drugs to Phuket, August 10

A sniffer dog at the main post office along with a scanner is not that difficult to implement if the will is there.

A second dog to be deployed at Tat Chat Chai checkpoint would be a bonus. A third dog would allow flexibility and random searches at other checkpoints.

There have been some significant *ya ba* finds lately, but how much is getting through due to the government's archaic practices?

Mister Ree
Gazette forum

Giving the tourists what they expect

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Governor announces beach chair judgment day, August 8

I have many friends in the pensioner age from Europe who can afford five-star resorts and who used to come regularly to Phuket. They told me they won't come again until the beach chairs and umbrellas are back.

To have a good holiday, it's necessary to provide proper, clean beach facilities with beach chairs, umbrellas, food, drinks, clean toilets, lifeguards, etc. If tourists don't get what they expect, they will go elsewhere.

Tourist needs
Gazette forum

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Phuket's aspirations call for new projects

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR

Currently, Phuket doesn't have a low season. I am surprised that hotel occupancies are very high, especially at the five-star and four-star hotels. Most are at about 85 per cent occupancy, both in the southern and northern parts of the island.

It is also abundantly clear that we are now seeing better quality visitors, as Phuket is more welcoming to free independent tourists (FITs).

According to statistics from January to August 4 this year, there have been more than 7.5 million people visiting the island, compared to 6.7 million last year. This is an 11.9 per cent increase.

Our tourists are from so many different countries, and, to my knowledge, the Chinese are the largest group. We are aware that the total number of Russian and European tourists is decreasing compared to previous years. However, the volume of Chinese tourists coming to the island is filling the gap.

We are also starting to see tourists coming from the Middle East and Vietnam. Overall, I am confident that Phuket is doing well in the tourism market.

However, Phuket must open its eyes and see what should be changed or adjusted for these tourists. For example, as we have more tourists coming from the Middle East, we should have more halal food and prayer rooms available in hotels.

Phuket and its people are now learning how to provide world-class service. Both the



Nisit Jansomwong, 52, from Ratchaburi, landed on the island in October to take up the position of Phuket Governor. He has a master's degree in administration from Chulalongkorn University, where he graduated with honors. Before coming to Phuket,

Governor Nisit was governor of Ratchaburi province for a year.

Governor Nisit is pushing mega infrastructure projects in Phuket in order to welcome tourists from around the world in hopes of Phuket becoming a world-class tourist destination.

government and business owners have to drive Phuket forward together.

We are now in a transitional period. Tourists want cleanliness, convenience and safety, with safety being a must for both land and marine tourism, so better transportation has to be provided.

The island requires many changes. We have received a large amount of money, almost 2 billion baht, to develop our infrastructure. The contracts for two of Phuket's new underpasses have been signed and construction has already started.

Future plans include an underpass at Mueang Mai Junction, near Phuket International Airport, two flyover projects, one just north of Thalang Town and one in front of Baan Jee Teng.

It takes time to improve all the infrastructure on the island. For years we did not have any mega

projects in the works. We must be patient for a better future.

I would like to apologize for any inconveniences that these projects cause. The government has given us the budget and I am making sure that the projects are well taken care of by the construction companies, are kept on track, and are safe.

Please understand that we are now trying to improve our island. Phuket earns a lot of money for the country and now the government is giving back and trying to help us grow.

I know it is easy to complain about the projects, but we need to be considerate of the people who are working their hardest to make Phuket better for everyone. At the same time, we encourage everyone to keep an eye on the projects and let us know how we can improve them and keep them safe. We will work together to drive our island forward.



To understand natural beauty, just read Dr Suess. Photo: Dave Matos

I write for the trees

CONSTRUCTION is underway for much anticipated and loathed underpass at the Bang Khu intersection with cranes in full swing and excavators making their rounds on what little patches of green still left.

While recently sitting at the red light, I was daydreaming of the beautiful new home that all the little shrubs, flowers and bushes would be sent to.

No sooner had my thoughts fully formed than an excavator drove over a very large, healthy shrub and started digging up a patch of smaller shrubs.

I hadn't been that bewildered or caught off guard since the day I found out that my parents' names were not actually 'Mom' and 'Dad'.

Although I hail from Vermont, I am no 'tree hugger'—I drink my fair share of things from plastic bottles, constantly forget to bring my own bag to the grocery store, and most recently killed my beloved patio plant because it got too much rain, but I did find it surprisingly offensive when I saw perfectly healthy plants that could be transplanted elsewhere, being dug up without any regard to the purpose and beauty that they could serve someone somewhere else.

On one hand, beach chairs and buildings are being torn down and taken away to pre-

Island View

By Katie P Arnold

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

serve Phuket's natural beauty, while on the other hand, natural beauty is being ripped up and put into a dump truck to support Phuket's ever-worsening traffic, an equally unattractive deterrent for tourists and residents alike.

There are constant PR campaigns, with abundant numbers of press photos of people planting mangrove trees in honor of a person or a special day. Why can we not transplant what we already have for the fact that it is honoring the environment, Phuket and the plants themselves?

I fear that no good will come from taking away all the lovely greenery in the middle of the island so that more people can go see the natural beauty of the beaches on the outskirts.

It's like ordering an amazing looking cheeseburger only to find that it is actually made of sous meat.

I am not an expert on this subject by any means, so I will leave you with the words of the good doctor: 'No more trees. No more *Thneeds*. No more work to be done.' — Dr Suess.

Words from the Wise

"Most artists try to avoid clichés, but it's pretty hard to avoid them if you yourself end up being one."

— Daryl Hall of Hall & Oates

"Love of beauty is taste. The creation of beauty is art."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Eternity is a mere moment, just long enough for a joke."

— Hermann Hesse

Issues & Answers

How do I get an international motorbike licence?

HOW can I get an international motorbike driver's licence if I only have a Thai motorbike driving licence?

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

Submit your issue at:

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Mr Konlayut Jattutasri, License Registrar, Phuket Provincial Land Transportation Office (PLTO), replies:

You must come to the Phuket Land Transport Office (PLTO) for this, as rules and regulations often change. However, in order to get an international driver's licence right now, you must have a valid five-year Thai driving licence.

If you have a five-year licence, you need to prepare a copy of the licence, your passport, visa,

work permit and any other documents needed to prove that you are legally staying in Thailand. This should be submitted to the PLTO with the correct form, which you can only get by visiting our office.

If you do not have a five-year licence yet, you can prepare all the same documents and present your case to the PLTO.

The fee to get an international licence is 505 baht.

The PLTO is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 4:30pm.

Time to reinvest bank stocks, ETFs



Finance

By Don Freeman

BOND yield curves have grown steeper and this means it is a good time to take a closer look at investing in bank stocks or bank ETFs but risk-averse investors will still need to be selective when choosing what to invest in.

STEEPER CURVES ARE GOOD FOR BANKS

To begin with some investing basics, short-term interest rates are set by central banks but longer-term rates are determined by the market even though they can also be affected by long-term inflation expectations and central bank activities.

A yield curve is simply a line plotting interest rates [at a set point in time] for bonds having equal credit quality, but differing maturity dates. The most frequently reported yield curve, popular because it is used to benchmark other debt, such as mortgage or bank lending rates, compares the three-month, two-year, five-year and 30-year US Treasury debt. The shape of this yield curve is closely analyzed to help predict future interest rate changes along with the direction of the overall economy.

This yield curve will usually have one of three types of shapes: Normal which indi-

cates that longer maturity bonds have a higher yield compared to shorter term bonds; inverted, pointing to shorter term yields being higher than the longer term yields and is a sign that a recession could be coming; and flat, indicating that shorter and longer term yields are very close to each other and is a sign that some sort of an economic transition is coming.

Any rise in long-term rates can be viewed as an indication of an improving economy and this is reflected by a steeper yield curve.

Bank stocks of all sizes along with their margins and bottom lines will usually gain from steeper yield curves because they can borrow on lower short-term rates or use shorter term deposits to lend on higher long-term rates. In addition, lending growth generally picks up when jobless rates fall while deal-making activity, which yields big fees for investment bankers and larger banks, also heats up when corporate executives feel more confident about the economy and financial markets.

A GOOD CASE FOR REGIONAL BANKS

Given the steady drumbeat of negative news or uncertainty surrounding China, the Euro/EU, Greece and now Puerto Rico which appears to be heading in the same direction as Greece, risk-averse inves-



Risk-averse investors may be hesitant to invest in bank stocks with a global footprint. Photo: Halfd

tors might be hesitant to invest in bank stocks with a global footprint or direct exposure to these troubled countries or territories.

Moreover, many global banking behemoths have underperformed due to regulatory fines and new rules put in place since the financial crisis that have tended to decouple their financial performance from the actual economy. Large banks have also searched for growth by bulking up potentially risky trading businesses or they have embarked on big cost-cutting or restructuring initiatives.

Given the problems and

risks associated with larger banks, investors should take a closer look at regional banks operating in one region of a country, for example a state, or within a group of states, but not internationally.

While there are many good regional bank stocks to consider, the SPDR KBW Regional Banking ETF (NYSEARCA: KRE), which tracks the performance of the S&P Regional Banks Select Industry Index and comes with a 0.35% expense ratio, would be the easiest way to gain exposure to the sector. KRE's shares are also up over 9% YTD, 14% over the past year and 90% over

the past five years plus the ETF has a yield of around 1.6%, which is better than most banks in developed countries are paying on deposits.

Don Freeman, BSME is president of Freeman Capital Management, a registered investment adviser with the US Securities Exchange Commission (SEC), based in Phuket. He has over 15 years of experience working with expatriates, specializing in portfolio management, US tax preparation, financial planning and UK pension transfers. Call for a free portfolio review. Don can be reached at 089-970-5795 or email: freemancapital@gmail.com.

Market not yet at bottom

THE bottom is still eluding the stock market while the economy does not stand a chance of expanding more than 2 per cent in 2015, so investors have to be more defensive and selective, according to SCB Asset Management (SCBAM).

The main index has been resilient this year amid external turbulence – Greece's debt crisis and China's stock market meltdown – because

of low foreign holdings in both stocks and bonds and the country's strong financial fundamentals.

"If you ask me where the bottom of the index is then I have to say that I cannot see it right now as we are looking for it," Narongsak Plodmechai, senior executive vice president and chief investment officer at SCBAM, told reporters last week.

– The Nation

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Brokers urge strict share transfer rules

AN ASSOCIATION of brokers is seeking stricter regulations related to the transfer of stocks through securities firms in order to prevent fraud.

The call came after fraud was suspected in the transfer of about 300 million baht worth of late construction tycoon Chuwong Saetang's shares. The billionaire was killed in a car crash under suspicious circumstances late June.

His family has been pushing for closer investigation into the businessman's death, which came just days after he allegedly transferred the shares to two women, who claim they were intimately involved with him.

Pattera Dilokrunthirapop, chairwoman of the Association of Thai Securities Companies, told Nation TV on Friday that the brokers' group wanted to see some changes to the



Alleged share transfers made just before the suspicious death of Chuwong Saetang (R) sparked the push for strict rules. Photo: The Nation

current regulations.

She said that only customers with legitimate accounts should be allowed to transfer their shares through brokerage companies, and the transfer of shares to anybody other than the shareholder's legal spouse or child should be prohibited. Evidence of family relationships should also be required along with the request for share transfers.

Ms Pattera acknowledged

that existing regulations were already strict, with every transfer signature being examined by two brokerage officials and the transfer being confirmed by telephone with the account holder. However, judging from the suspicions surrounding Mr Chuwong's case, "there are still risks that could lead to problems," she warned.

– The Nation

Prepared for community boom

Boat Arcade focuses marketing on children needs to draw families

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

THE Boat Arcade will continue to focus on children's activities and their needs in the second phase of the project, following the recent completion of the first phase, where the area has been developed as the 'East Coast Edutainment & Family Center', confirmed Kanittha Prasopsirikul, managing director of 'By Kanittha' Company and Boat Arcade's public relations representative.

The marketing strategy focuses on the simple fact that a child's well-being and happiness is the bottom line for most families.

"A kid is like a king of every family, a real boss. If you get a kid, you get the whole family," Ms Kanittha told the *Gazette*. "After the huge success of the first phase, we are launching the second phase of Boat Arcade with many more attractions."

The 50,000 square feet of retail space in the first phase is already 100 per cent occupied by 25 shops, many catering specifically to children's needs, and Villa Market.

"As you can see, we are really transforming Boat Lagoon from a working marina to a lifestyle marina and village. We called it the 'New Boat La-



Taekwondo is one of the many skills that children and adults can learn at the new facility.

goon',” Deputy Managing Director of Boat Development Company Boon Yongsakul said during his opening speech last week.

“From our market research, we strongly believe that the new community on both sides of Thepkasattri Road, with many new, big housing projects, will generate traffic

and become a new community of its own. Therefore, our Boat Arcade will be ready to serve this new exciting neighborhood and community.”

A large part of the foundation of the targeted community in Koh Kaew is derived from the British International School, Phuket (BISP).

“Twenty years ago, when

British International School, Phuket was built, much of the surrounding area was still farmland and forest,” BISP Marketing and Communications Manager Simon Ostheimer told the *Gazette*. “In the intervening two decades, Koh Kaew, and the east coast of Phuket in general, has seen an explosion of housing com-

plexes – including the arrival of big developer names like MBK, Land & Houses, and Sansiri – and, in more recent years, increased shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities.

“With its family-friendly mix of shopping, dining and edutainment, Boat Arcade is a great addition to the Koh Kaew area. I know that our parents, students, staff and the entire BISP community will be pleased to have additional offerings like this on our doorstep.”

Boat Arcade will bring a number of features to the east coast community when it officially opens next month. There will be an indoor adventure playground, music and language schools, as well as art and martial arts classes.

Among the professionally-run learning centers are Babies Genius, a branch of Phuket Academy of Performing Arts (PAPA), Dragon Taekwondo School and Yu Music Academy.

There are also a number of boutique shops, dining venues and other draws for parents.

Ms Kanittha added that details of the project's second phase would be announced in the fourth quarter of this year, but it is already 60 per cent sold out.

Better profits via social media



Business Buzz

Simon Wetherell

WHEN trying to increase profitability, it is best to ascertain a company's sales funnel, break it down into a process map and then analyze each of the sales procedures to see where the good and bad results are, as this will help in working out the changes needed to increase revenue in each area.

Even a small tweak improving 1 or 2 per cent at each process point could lead to a massive increase in profitability.

To put this into a simple situation, say 1,000 people see an advertisement placed in a newspaper. Imagine that a hundred people take action and go to the website, then 60 people enter their details on a contact form, 30 of them respond to an email, 20 people schedule a sales call, 10 people make the call and finally three people buy.

Now imagine if results could

be improved at each step.

How should this be done? It is actually easier than you think.

By designing a post with the outcome in mind, it can help reach your goal. So, if you want people to like your page, ask them to. Everything we do should have a call to action.

If we want them to comment, make it clear and ask a question. If we want them to visit our website, encourage them to click on the link to receive a benefit.

This is all very basic, but 90 per cent of people fail to do it.

If you do it right, I bet you can make a huge difference to your business. So leave a comment with your thoughts.

Simon Wetherell is a social media expert, lawyer, best-selling author and international speaker. He now resides in Phuket where he trains businesses and individuals on how to profit from the use of social media. For more information go to <http://PhuketOnlineMarketing.com> or call him on 095 085 3355.



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Malaysian Sultan at Movenpick



Welcoming HRH Sultan Mizan Sainal Abidin (right) upon his arrival at the Movenpick Resort & Spa at Karon Beach, for lunch and a hotel tour during his recent visit to the island, is the resort's popular general manager Hansruedi Frutiger. Photo: Movenpick

Hot Thai star visits island

Heads turned when Nadech Kugimiya, the super famous Thai actor and model (who is of Thai and Austrian descent), strode into Twin Palms Phuket's Palm Seafood restaurant, together with his family for a special dinner on July 28.



On hand to welcome Nadech (center) are Somjai Tungkoo, Twin Palms Group Executive Manager (left), and Sittichai Jienatham, Twin Palms Phuket's Hotel Manager. Photo: Twin Palms

Lotus super cars invade Phuket

PHUKET was in for a treat last weekend when 30 magnificent Lotus machines arrived on tour from Kuala Lumpur. The event, titled 'The Lotus Experience Phuket', was organized by Chris Poon of Malaysia's Toycarz Private Garage.

At right: Four of the 30 cars, led by Malaysian legend and motorcycle racing champion O Kah Beng (4th from right), shocked onlookers when they demonstrated a few high-speed, tire burning drifts in the parking lot at Phuket FantaSea.

The three-day event was covered in depth by the Gazette's 'Phuket Today' show. Each weekly show airs nationally, twice daily for seven days. See the cars on MCOT, True Visions and Phuket Cable, starting on August 21.

Photo: KC Khor



Congratulations to Bangkok Hospital Phuket

Bangkok Hospital Phuket received the 'Outstanding Entrepreneur' Award for this year (2015) in labor skill development, from Thailand's Department of Skills Development.



Displaying the award are (from L-R) Nartkamol Chamratkan, manager of the hospital's Total Quality Center; Chaowalit Laoprasertsiri, manager of human resources; and Pilailak Jongcharoenwattana, director of the nurse division.

A memorable elite event



Merriment filled the air at the Blue Elephant Phuket on July 28, when Mekhong's Brand Ambassador Anuchit Jureegasa presented pairings of Mekhong cocktails with Thai food to a large crowd attending the 'Mekhong Elite Table' event. Photo: Blue Elephant

Events in Paradise

Boat Arcade community mall

Boat Lagoon executives and VIPs attended last week's press conference for the brand new Boat Arcade community mall at the Boat Lagoon Phuket. Guests were able to meet the new mall's tenants, who will be offering a host of new edutainment, shopping and dining experiences at Phuket's liveliest east coast marina.



Boon Yongsakul, Deputy Managing Director of the Phuket Boat Lagoon (left), and Somkiat Sangkhaosuttirak, Vice Governor of Phuket.



ALL SMILES: (From L-R) John Magee of the Phuket Gazette; Boon Yongsakul, MD of Boat Development Company; and Santi Kanchanabandhu, organizer of the prestigious annual Phuket King's Cup Regatta.



Kanittha Prasopsirikul, Managing Director of By Kanittha (left) who organized the event, and Chawalit Rat of the HOCK Noodle Bar.



HAVING FUN: (From L-R) Panisa Thin, owner of the Incense Spa; Nicolas Monges of the Singapore Yacht Show; Pimlaphat Tae and Witoon Chanchumrat, owner of the Boat Lagoon's popular dockside restaurant Les Diabes.

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Phuket International Women's Club gives away B2mn in scholarships

THE Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC) will reach out to yet another flock of young minds with more than 2 million baht worth of scholarships on August 19.

"We want to give a better future to students in financial need. We work closely with schools, colleges and universities as we move through the selection process," said PIWC Scholarships Chairman Wipa Tanmanatragul.

"Once the facility selects those they believe are in need of the support, we will interview the students."

This year PIWC will hand out 165 scholarship for secondary schools, vocational college, Phuket Rajabhat University and universities outside Phuket. The total number of scholarships issued each year is dependent on the financial needs of those receiving them and the success PIWC has with fund-

raising programs, confirmed Ms Wipa.

"The students must be doing well academically, and really be in need of financial help to continue their studies. The most important element is their need, though their attitude is also important," Ms Wipa said. "They must be willing to learn and try hard to make a better future for themselves."

PIWC started handing out scholarships more than 25 years ago, and now

is even receiving some support from students previously awarded the scholarship, each giving what they can. However, such return is not expected by PIWC members, said Ms Wipa.

"We don't want anything in return from the students. We are proud of them and we will try harder to continue granting these scholarship," Ms Wipa said. "We just want them to be good people."

— Chutharat Plerin

Local swimmers make splash at FINA

Community

Phuket Gazette

FUTURE Olympians, who are on a year-long FINA swimming scholarship at Thanyapura while they prepare for the Rio Olympics, stormed to victory in the pool in Kazan, Russia breaking a total of eight national records from four different countries.

"The debut of the 'FINA Road to Rio' group has been such a success so far, with five swimmers from four different countries contributing to eight new national records so far at the FINA World Championships. I am so proud of all of them," Thanyapura's Head Swimming Coach Miguel Lopez said.

Nepalese swimmer Sofia Gadegaard Shah, who just three months ago spent a while living in her car after the devastating Nepal earthquake, placed an in-



Sofia Gadegaard Shah, 17, broke a national record for Nepal at the FINA World Championships.

credible first in her heat in the Women's 200m freestyle race, beating the Nepalese record with a time of 2.18.93. Later that week, she broke another Nepalese national record in the 50m freestyle event.

Following Sofia's incredible run was a double whammy by Kimiko Raheem and Cheran de Silva of Sri Lanka, who contributed to the 4 x 100m individual medley relay record. Following this, Kimiko cel-

ebrated once again after she broke the Women's 200m backstroke record with a time of 2.21.1.

A day after Nepal celebrated Sofia's glory, team mate Sirish Gurung smashed his own na-

tional record for the Men's 100m freestyle with a time of 58.22, but the records didn't stop there.

The Maldives was cheering at the FINA World Championships when Aminath Shajan beat her current Women's 200m breaststroke national record by two seconds.

Indian swimmer Sajan Prakash broke the 1,500m freestyle national record and earned himself a B qualifying time for the 2016 Rio Olympics.

The six swimmers are part of the 20 scholars from all around the world who are on the year-long FINA scholarship at Thanyapura to swim in the Olympics.

The scholarship applicants were selected from Thailand, Nepal, the Maldives, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Myanmar, Timor Leste and Rwanda.

BISP boys spend summer with Brazilian champions

THIS summer, eight boys from the BISP Cruzeiro Football Academy based at British International School Phuket (BISP) trained at the home of Brazilian champions Cruzeiro EC to learn about the facilities, watch training sessions, and meet the players.

Cruzeiro International Development Coordinator Adriano Queiroz explained that the Phuket-based student-athletes were invited to spend a month in Brazil, where they participated in various activities in the city of Belo Horizonte, home of Cruzeiro EC.

"These athletes are part of the Cruzeiro Academy program in Thailand, where they train with our methodology," said Mr Queiroz.

"It has been a great opportunity for them to meet with and learn from our professional players, the president, and ev-



BISP boys travel to Brazil to learn from Cruzeiro EC.

eryone associated with the club," Mr Queiroz added.

The BISP Cruzeiro Football Academy was established in August 2014 as a partnership between Cruzeiro EC and British International School Phuket. The agreement has already seen great results, including winning gold in three different categories at the 13th edition of the BISP Soccer Sevens, held in November last year.

— Phuket Gazette

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

August 16. Bike for Mom

The Bike for Mom event will take place on Sunday, August 16, from Phuket City, to Kathu, to Saphan Hin in honor of HM Queen Sirikit's 83rd birthday.

The bike event is aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle throughout the island.

Activities include traditional and aerobic dancing at Phuket City Hall, tree planting in Kathu and musical performances and activities at Saphan Hin.

September 5-6. Fourth Bohemian Workshop

Phuket's very own Adriano Trapani will be holding the fourth edition of his 'Bohemian' signature photography workshop on September 5 and 6 at Banyan Tree Phuket, co-hosted by Sony Ambassador for the Philippines Manny Librodo. For more information contact

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October 23. Chulalongkorn Memorial Day

Chulalongkorn Day commemorates the reign of Rama V, who is best remembered for introducing many progressive reforms and for

the abolition of slavery.

December 5. HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Birthday

HM The King's birthday is also marked as Father's Day in Thailand, with festivities taking place throughout the country.

Saddle up to 'Bike for Mom'

PEOPLE throughout Thailand, including Phuket, will mark the auspicious occasion of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 83rd Birthday with a mass bicycling event entitled 'Bike for Mom 2015' on August 16.

The event is being held in response to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn's wish to express his gratitude and loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen on this special occasion, said Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha.

His Royal Highness the Crown Prince will lead one of three processions in Bangkok. It will consist of 400 people, including the Prime Minister, members of Cabinet, the President of the National Legislative Assembly, the President of the Supreme Court, permanent secretaries and deputy permanent secretaries of various

ministries, the Bangkok Governor, military leaders and the Commissioner General of the Royal Thai Police, as well as members of the private and civil sectors.

Thai people are ready to unite in the activity to express love and loyalty to the monarchy. This [cycling event] also yields benefits to the majority and creates an atmosphere of people's unity and reconciliation that the National Council for Peace and Order and the government aim for.

– Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha

The second procession will be led by Her Royal Highness Princess Bajrakitiyabha. It also comprises 400 people.

The third procession will be joined by about 20,000 members of the public.

In Phuket, the 26-kilometer route will start at Phuket Provincial Hall, journey through Phuket Town and

other communities in the central section of the island, and end at Saphan Hin.

"The participants should ride slow. This is not a race. We will boost safety along the route by arranging more police officers to supervise," Phuket Governor Nisit Jansomwong said follow-



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn wishes to express his gratitude and loyalty to Her Majesty the Queen. Image: Phuket PR

ing a successful practice ride on July 19.

The event is also aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle throughout the island. Activities include traditional and aerobic dancing at Phuket City

Hall, tree planting in Kathu and musical performances and activities at Saphan Hin. The event will run from 3pm to 6pm.

– Gazette Staff

Phuket comes together to honor HM the Queen



Gov Nisit and his wife Nutsaree honor HM the Queen. Photo: Phuket PR

CELEBRATIONS of the auspicious occasion of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 83rd birthday, which is also National Mother's Day, began early Wednesday morning.

At 7:10am, Phuket Governor Nisit Jansomwong led the island's top officials in offering alms to 84 monks at Sanam Chai near Provincial Hall. Those attending the special occasion dressed in blue in honor of HM Queen Sirikit.

After the alms-giving ceremony, Governor Nisit, his wife Nutsaree, and other officials attended a ceremony at Phuket Rajabhat University, where they joined well-wishers in signing a congratulatory book for Her Majesty

the Queen.

Phuket officials also celebrated Mother's Day by releasing 83 turtles at the Royal Thai Navy Third Naval Command in Cape Panwa.

Finally, at 7:10pm, Governor Nisit led a homage-paying ceremony at Sanam Chai, including the lighting of candles and singing of the Royal Anthem.

Meanwhile, blood donors were given a t-shirt emblazoned with 'Blood for Mom' for their donation at the Phuket Regional Blood Center (PRBC). A total of 400 t-shirts were given away in honor of HM Queen Sirikit's birthday.

– Chutharat Plerin

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Phuket Gazette

Better biking with Olympian Nick Gates



AT THE end of 2014, Than-yapura Phuket launched their Cycling Academy headed up by former Olympian and Tour de France star Nick Gates.

Nick hails from Sydney and has over 15 years of experience in pro-mountain bike, adventure, track and road racing. He twice competed in the Tour de France for the Lotto-Domo team and has won the Commonwealth Bank Classic and the Australian national road race title.

"The Cycling Academy is an extremely impressive addition to our host of international-standard sports facilities and programs," Than-yapura Chief Executive Officer Philipp Graf von Hardenberg said at the time. "Given the increasing popularity of cycling, we realized the need to cater to that demand by providing elite coaches and facilities for cyclists, as well as a pristine environment at the foothills of a national park, which features numerous scenic and challenging training opportunities."

I caught up with Nick over a healthy lunch of avocado salad and health-boosters drinks at Than-yapura's appropriately-named DiVine Restaurant.

I asked Nick how we mere cycling mortals could become fitter, stronger and healthier cyclists, thereby increase our enjoyment of the sport.

"If I had to use just one word to help you to be a better cyclist, it would be 'consistency'," Nick said.



Many people who start cycling recreationally start thinking about joining competitions as they get fitter.

"Regularity of your cycling is far more important than the total time, distance or effort you invest. Your body loves exercising regularly, that's how you break down muscle fibers on an ongoing basis and your body then replaces them with stronger more abundant muscle tissue. In this way, you progressively become stronger, fitter and healthier over time.

"Also, as you become stronger, you will find you quite naturally want to increase the length and intensity of your rides to keep challenging yourself and developing greater fitness. It's a natural, virtuous progression."

Nick also said that rest and recuperation are very important, as this is when the muscle

tissue repairs and building is happening, so it's very important to match your increasing riding schedule with enough time to recover between each outing. And don't forget that quality sleep is of paramount importance.

I asked Nick about diet and he made the very good point that it is actually ongoing lifestyle, of which food is a component, which needs to evolve to complement your increased cycling activities.

Personally, he eats all sorts of foods, but makes sure it is all high quality, clean, fresh and organic where possible.

He said that a six hour 180 kilometer ride, as the regular cyclists at Than-yapura achieve on many Sundays, will burn about 5,000 calories.

Naturally, one is very hungry after riding, but Nick said to be sure that all the foods you choose are rich in vitamins, minerals and micro-nutrients. High quality, low fat, proteins and carbohydrates are the order of the day with lots of fruit and veggies plus drawn-out rehydration with electrolyte drinks.

"Just drinking water alone will flush not only toxins, but minerals from your tissues, so you need to replace the minerals you sweat out when riding in Phuket's heat with an electrolyte drink, such as Gatorade," said Nick.

I asked Nick about cycling for those who have lapsed from regular exercising or are getting on in years.

"Cycling is the ideal way to

get back into regular exercise, as it is non-stressing on the joints, muscles, tendons and other body parts. Additionally, you can start gradually, then build your time and distance progressively," Nick said.

"Again, for older riders it is an ideal type of exercise. Unlike running, it is smooth and non-jarring on the body and it can be enjoyed as a social activity, which makes it more fun than a solo exercise, such as swimming. Cycling in a group helps to motivate you and keeps you engaged over the long term and, of course, you have the shared meals and a few beers to look forward to after you finish a ride."

Nick said that many people who start as recreational cyclists start thinking about joining competitions as they get fitter and stronger. Here, Than-yapura is pioneering a number of events, of varying intensity and distances that everyday cyclists can join.

On November 15, they will stage a Cycle Classic event with a 40km, all age group ride; a 40km mountain bike challenge; and a more intense 90km event. If you're really getting into your training by then, you have the Laguna Triathlon the following weekend.

Nick Gates is certainly an inspirational figure and we are privileged to have him helping us become better cyclists here in Phuket.

As Nick said in conclusion, "I call cycling the best free investment on the planet, making participants fitter, healthier and happier."

Teacher uses performance art to help students

SITUATED in the heart of Bangkok, the Klong Toei slum has always been a 'black hole' of social ineptitude fuelled by drugs, poverty and broken families. However, a remarkable teacher from nearby Sunruam Namjai School has been using performance art to keep her students away from drugs by boosting their self-esteem and fostering the familial love that was lacking in their hopeless lives.

Natchata Thamthanakom realized that extreme poverty and the lack of familial support was a recipe for disaster in the slum.

"When I first came to the school 31 years ago, I was stunned by the environment and the slum nearby. Poor and shat-

tered families lived together in the crowded, unpleasant place that was ravaged by drug problems. Within a few days of my arrival, my pocket was picked by one of my students," Ms Natchata recalls.

"I finally found out who picked my pocket but rather than punish him, I realized how desperate these children were and knew they needed help to improve their lives. This is why I try to bring what I teach to save these children from going down the wrong path and let them recognize how important they are and how far they can develop themselves," she explained.

Ms Natchata, who is a win-



Ms Natchata helps children through performing arts. Photo: The Nation

ner of the Kunakorn prize, explained that many slum children get involved with drugs and drug dealing because they are poor and most of them are raised by their relatives rather than their

own parents. The financial situation and lack of care and happiness in the family drive them toward a destructive existence because they can make quick, easy money from drugs.

But providing a space for the students to improve their abilities and develop their personalities is not what sets Ms Natchata apart from other teachers, it is her willingness to love and care for her students. "I always hug my students as it is the best way to show them that they have someone who loves them and cares for them because most slum children do not live with their parents and they lack the love that only a family can give," she said.

Even though drug problems still exist in the slum community, she said her performance art classes have brought purpose to the lives of many of her students.

- The Nation

Avocado: Earth's magical fruit



Excuse Buster

By Craig Burton

RETURNING back to the island from a holiday in Chiang Mai with five kilograms of Thai avocado is truly a nutritionist's version of bringing souvenirs home.

This fruit is without doubt at the top of my 'favorite foods' list for health and taste. Right now all avocado fans in Thailand are blessed as the Thai avocado season is in full swing and they have been ripening well.

Despite keeping some of these avocados next to bananas in a box, so far they all have turned out well, taste amazing and are a fraction of the cost of the imported varieties. So it is time to stock up, enjoy them now and freeze as much as possible, guacamole style, while the good times last.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF AVOCADOS

What do the clinical studies tell us? A simple PubMed search will deliver a vast array of clinical studies on the health benefits of avocados.

The result of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 2001–2008 says that: "Avocado consumption is associated with better diet quality and nutrient



The Thai avocado season is in full swing. Don't miss out on its wonderful benefits. Photo: CIAT

intake, and lower metabolic syndrome risk in US adults.

"Avocado consumers tend to consume significantly more of key shortfall nutrients – dietary fiber, vitamins K, and E, potassium, and magnesium – in their diet than non-avocado consumers."

GOOD FOR YOUR HEART

The high carb, low fat standard western diet full of breads, pasta, starchy carbohydrates, which is still to some degree recommended by many conventional nutritionist, is in my opinion a disaster for most people. Good fats like those in avocado

are essential to health and critical to every diet as agreed by the following finding:

"Studies suggest that avocado-enriched diets have a positive effect on blood lipids compared to low-fat, high carbohydrate diets or the typical American diet."

Inflammation is slowly getting recognized as being at the root of many diseases like heart disease and the humble avocado could play a significant role in putting out those fires.

"Avocado oil decreased hs-CRP levels [an inflammatory marker], indicating that inflammatory processes were partially reversed," the same report said.

WILL NOT MAKE YOU FAT

Fortunately many people today have come to accept that a low fat diet is a disaster for health. One reason is that fats make hormones and are an integral part of the cell wall so they are our building blocks.

Fats do not have to make you fat, on the contrary they can help you lose weight by helping fat-loss hormones and through simply making you feel full and satisfied after eating. This is unlike eating sugar and too many processed carbohydrates, such as breads and pastas that convert to sugar quickly making you feel hungry soon after eating.

According to a key study, 'avocado consumers have higher HDL-cholesterol or good cholesterol, lower risk of metabolic syndrome, lower weight, BMI, and waist circumference than non-consumers'. Additionally, 'the subjects did not gain weight when avocados were added to their habitual diet'.

BOOST BRAIN POWER

This may be news to many people but David Perlmutter, author of Grain Brain, revealed the following important information in last January's issue of *Scientific American* magazine:

"The brain thrives on a fat-rich, low carbohydrate diet, which unfortunately is relatively uncommon in human populations today.

"Mayo Clinic researchers showed that individuals favoring carbohydrates in their diets had a remarkable 89 per cent increased risk for developing dementia in contrast to those whose diets contained the most fat. Having the highest level of fat consumption was actually found to be associated with an incredible 44 per cent reduction in risk for developing dementia."

So, I hope I have sold you on the benefits of a daily avocado if you were not already a convert.

Phuket to be medical tourism hub

PHUKET Governor Nisit Jansomwong is ready to help local hospitals make a push into the medical tourism industry as millions of baht flow in for eye-care centers.

"More than 30 million baht has been approved for eye-care centers at public hospitals, specifically Vachira Phuket Hospital and Patong Hospital," Governor Nisit said in an exclusive interview with the *Phuket Gazette* last week.

"Many tourists come to Phuket. If government hospitals here can provide services that meet tourists' needs, it will be a very important move for promoting Phuket as a medical tourism destination."

The eye-care center will be a great alternate choice for patients, explained Patong Hospital Director Sirichai Silpa-archa.

"Currently, we have an ophthalmologist from Vachira



More than 30 million baht has been approved for public hospital eye-care centers. Photo: Les Black

Phuket Hospital running a clinic here once or twice a week. However, we will soon have our own ophthalmologist," said Dr Sirichai.

"Having this center will improve our services and make it

convenient for patients who normally have to drive to Phuket Town for their eye care.

"I believe having this service available will open new doors at our hospital," Dr Sirichai added. – *Chutharat Plerin*

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VISA

Going up: Baba's five-bedroom villas

By **Nina Suebsukcharoen**

KICKING into gear on Na Tai Beach, across the bridge in Phang Nga, is Charn Issara Development Plc's riveting joint-venture project Baba Beach Club. The sales gallery has now been built and construction crews are busy building five-bedroom villas.

Vorasit 'Wan' Issara, managing director of Sri Panwa resort, said that Charn Issara, which is developing the 42-rai project with its China-based partner Junfa Real Estate Company, will soon set the date for construction of the beachfront hotel.

"It will be very high-end and of the same quality as Sri Panwa, just at a different location," Mr Vorasit said.

Around 60 per cent of Baba Beach Club's residences will be sold to the public and include six five-bedroom pool villas, 36 two-bedroom pool villas, 28 one-bedroom pool suites, 68 Baba suites and eight two-bedroom penthouses.

"There will be cabana villas around the pool that can be rented on a daily or weekly basis and a restaurant behind," said Mr Vorasit. "We are going

to have DJs and entertainment there, so it's going to be lively. We will have DJs coming to visit us from Ibiza, Miami, among other places, and also have shows every other day."

A survey by the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce has shown that consumer confidence has dropped for seven months in a row and hit the lowest point in 14 months in July.

Despite the Thai economy being less than rosy, Mr Vorasit remains unperturbed about how this large project will fare, pointing out that his company only has about a hundred residences to sell.

"We believe that we can sell all one hundred units, and if we fail to sell them, we can attach them to the hotel," Mr Vorasit noted. "Also, we have our Chinese partner Junfa, which is one of the biggest developers in China."

Mr Vorasit added that Sri Panwa is attracting Chinese guests, and while none have bought a villa at the Cape Panwa estate, he is confident that some will purchase at Baba Beach Club.

"Right now our biggest group of visitors is Thai, then



Mr Issara is seeing an increase in third and fourth generation Asian-American clients to the region.

Chinese, followed by Europeans. Behind them are the Australians and Americans," said Mr Vorasit.

Although the decline of Americans vacationing in Thailand over the years is noticeable when compared to other key markets, Mr Vorasit

has observed that things are changing, as Asian-Americans are now staying at Sri Panwa.

"I think third and fourth generations of Asians living in America are now coming back to their roots in Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam, but just for a holiday."

Charn Issara is also getting ready to start building the second phase of Sri Panwa in December with the proceeds from a new real estate investment trust (REIT) that it plans to introduce, in addition to the Sri Panwa Property Fund (SPWPF) started in 2013.



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Modern architectural masterpiece



Phuket Pads
By Patrick Lusted

LOCH Palm Golf Course's five-bedroom villa has got to be the most unique and unusual property in Phuket, breaking every design and construction norm.

Architecturally, the conceptual inspiration was drawn from the site and situation. Located on the edge of the Loch Palm reservoir and golf course, the site is positioned between two geometrically flat, level surfaces and is an edge site between water and earth.

A moment of tension occurs where the two meet – before the wind and metaphysical forces create a 'fold' in space. The structure is inspired by, and is seamlessly fused with, the landscape rather than an unyielding, dispassionate object forced into its surroundings.

The design is a 'topographical dialogue', a collision between the flat placid reservoir and the flat golfing fairways of green grass resulting in an origami like form of folding planes. There are no windows, only spaces between folded massing. The angular lines carry the eye through the internal spaces, across the lake and beyond to the distant Red Mountains.



The unique and unusual design includes large angular roof shapes that form dramatic interior spaces.

Around 150 tonnes of steel fabricated into four trusses form the structure, touching earth at four points only. Two dominant triangulated forms are a 1:1 ratio of earth and lake and form

the essentially H-shaped plan with four triangulated courtyards at the perimeter. The house is split level creating terraced internal spaces.

The angular roof shapes

form dramatic interior spaces with all internal rooms opening to the garden and pool terraces. The living room and master bedroom, placed at the two lake corners, are terrace

fronted and project over the water's edge.

The second bedroom also fronts the pool terrace; the third bedroom is within a dynamic triangulated and sky-lit space with views of the lake. The upper level fourth bedroom has views over the angular roof to the lake and mountains. A wine cellar, gym and mechanical spaces are located on the lower level.

The exterior is clad in kiln-fired cement shakes. Large pivoting doors and windows that open entirely to the lake are clear tempered glass in powder coat finish and aluminum frame. The salt water pools are hand-cast Thai tiles trimmed in polished black stone. The interiors are fitted with teak paneling cabinets and doors, Shiva black granite tops and tile flooring. State-of-the-art electrical and mechanical systems are provided and lighting systems are automated.

House details include: Indoor area 790 sqm, total area 1,905 sqm, swimming pool 126 sqm, seven baths, five ensuite, leasehold, 78 million baht.

For more information contact: Patrick Lusted at Siam Real Estate, quote reference number: HSIL7591. T: 076-288 908 www.siamrealestate.com

Land appraisal value to rise 25 per cent next year

LAND Transfer fees for developers and home-buyers will increase by an average of 25 per cent next year, the same as the rise in appraised land values, property experts said.

Transfer fees are based on appraised value as determined by the Treasury Department of the Finance Ministry, not actual market prices. So, for example, if a buyer pays 1.5 million baht for a plot appraised at 1mn baht, the transfer fee will be 2 per cent of the latter figure, or 20,000 baht. But if the appraised value of that same plot rises by 25 per cent next year, to 1.25mn baht, the transfer fee will rise accordingly, to 25,000 baht.

Kanda Group Chief Executive Officer Issara Boonyoung, who is also director of the Housing Business Association, said it was not unusual for actual land prices to be much higher than the appraised value.



Rising fees make this year a better time to buy. Photo: skitterphoto

For example, land in Bangkok's Ploenchit Road is appraised at 200,000 baht per square meter, but the market prices in this location are among the highest in the capital, averaging 475,000 per square meter.

The Treasury Department will announce the new land appraisals at the end of this year, and they will become effective on January 1, 2016.

Chakkrit Parapantakul, director-general of the Treasury Department, said the new ap-

praisals would remain in effect until December 31, 2019. On average, the appraisals will increase by 25 per cent, but for land close to the mass-transit system, they will increase by around 100 per cent.

A source in the property business said that although the new land appraisals would still be lower than the market prices, the transfer fees would rise in parallel next year, so this year is a much better time to buy. – The Nation

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Our shabby-chic design integrates seamlessly with the surrounding beauty of the natural environment. The resort's 'barefoot luxury' philosophy is complimented with a fully equipped yoga sala and activity center.

We are currently looking for a highly motivated professional to join our dynamic team at Koh Yao.

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Duties:

- In charge of day to day operations, Internet marketing/revenue management, operational accounting, social media/guest feed-back management, as well as resort based PR
- Natural leader personality, creative, and dynamic, following new industry trends/innovations
- Guest service oriented – in direct guest contact

Background:

- 3 - 5 years experience in equivalent property
- GM / Resident (EAM) background
- Hotel school graduate or similar diploma
- High level of English proficiency, German/Thai knowledge an advantage
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We are looking for active colleagues to work in our team department as a "Senior Graphic Retouching" and "Text & Content Editor". Interested candidates must be fast learners, self-motivated, creative and keen to learn new things.

Senior Graphic Retouching

Job Description:

- ▶ Ability to use Adobe Photoshop, Indesign, Illustrator, etc.
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Job Description:

- ▶ Knowledge of German language
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- ▶ Work with editing text program
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- ▶ Experiences as a text editor would be an advantaged

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- ▶ Male/female, Thai national
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- ▶ Salary, social security insurance, tax, food, etc.
- ▶ Incentive and bonus: depends on quality, skills and experiences
- ▶ Training and work full time locally or in an oversea country (Germany - Hong Kong)

Interested applicants should submit resumes stating qualifications, previous work experience and position, desired salary along with a recent photograph to:

VS Asia Co., Ltd. (HR Department)

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Tel: 076-380600 Fax: 076-380605
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Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

CLASSIFIEDS ADMINISTRATION 2 POSITIONS

Qualified candidates will be:

- ▶ Thai national, aged 22 years up
- ▶ Service-minded with an outgoing personality
- ▶ Able to work well with large numbers of advertisers, both foreign and Thai

and should have:

- ▶ A Bachelor's Degree from a recognized university
- ▶ A good sense of organization and respect for details
- ▶ Knowledge of basic office software, InDesign and PageMaker would be a plus.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Diao@PhuketGazette.Net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

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Wyndham Vacation Ownership welcomes CLUB WYNDHAM ASIA to Phuket in 2015.

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- Global career advancement opportunities
- Excellent company benefits
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If you are outgoing, motivated and passionate about holidays, then register your interest for one of the above roles by sending your CV to HumanResources@hr@wyn.com

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MARKETING MANAGER

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EMPLOYMENT WANTED

EXPERIENCED ITALIAN CHEF

50 years old, expert in modern and international cuisines, looking to relocate to Phuket. If interested, please contact me for full CV. Kuala Lumpur. Tel: +60-017-620 7226 (English) Email: zanza64@hotmail.com

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Hacking density laws with mixology

By Katie P Arnold

TOM Auttayamatavittaya, also known as Tom Funk, won first place for Thailand, top ten in Asia Pacific and 49th in the galaxy out of 8,500 contenders in the bartending competition Bols Around the World 2015.

He recently moved house, so to speak, from Yaowarat Road in Phuket Town, to a bigger venue on Phang Nga Road, and is now defying the laws of density with experimental cocktails and shooters at Zimplex's mixology laboratory.

Before returning to Phuket from Bangkok to open the bar in 2011, Tom worked as a copywriter at an advertising company for 10 years.

When asked why he decided to come back he said, "I set a work goal for myself to win an award at Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, sort of like the equivalent of the Olympics for advertising. And I did, I won the gold medal. So, I quit and moved back to Phuket."

Once settled, he opened Zimplex, which was originally

designed as a place to hang out with friends, party and dance to music played by none other than DJ Tom Funk.

Since then, Tom has hung up his headphones and branched out into the world of mixology, and, as can be seen, is shaking things up.

"It all started when my friend bought me a skull shot glass. My girlfriend Nann asked if it was possible to make a shot that looked like it had brains in it. At first I thought it would be impossible, but then we went out and bought different types of liqueur and experimented. It took about 20 tries to get it right."

After that, Tom and Nann began experimenting with different, colorful shooters – science, space and galaxies were their inspiration. Think northern lights meets disco ball.

"Art is also a big inspiration, and Nann is extremely artistic. She is the one person who inspires me the most."

Without any prior knowledge of bartending, Tom and Nann decided not to look up any recipes online or read any books on how to mix cocktails.

"We sat down and cataloged all the tastes and densities of different liqueurs and found out through trial and error what tasted good together and what layers we could create by 'hacking' the density when they are combined."

With signature shooters entitled 'Nebula Jellyfish', 'Master of Density' and 'Parallel Universe', these beautiful, glowing works of drinkable art are truly sights for sore eyes and perfectly depict their namesake.

But don't expect to find out the recipe.

"I know 200 different cocktails and shooters by memory. Only Nann and I know the recipes, but once in a while I write one down. Eventually, I want to make a cocktail book and collaborate with a publisher from the UK or United States."

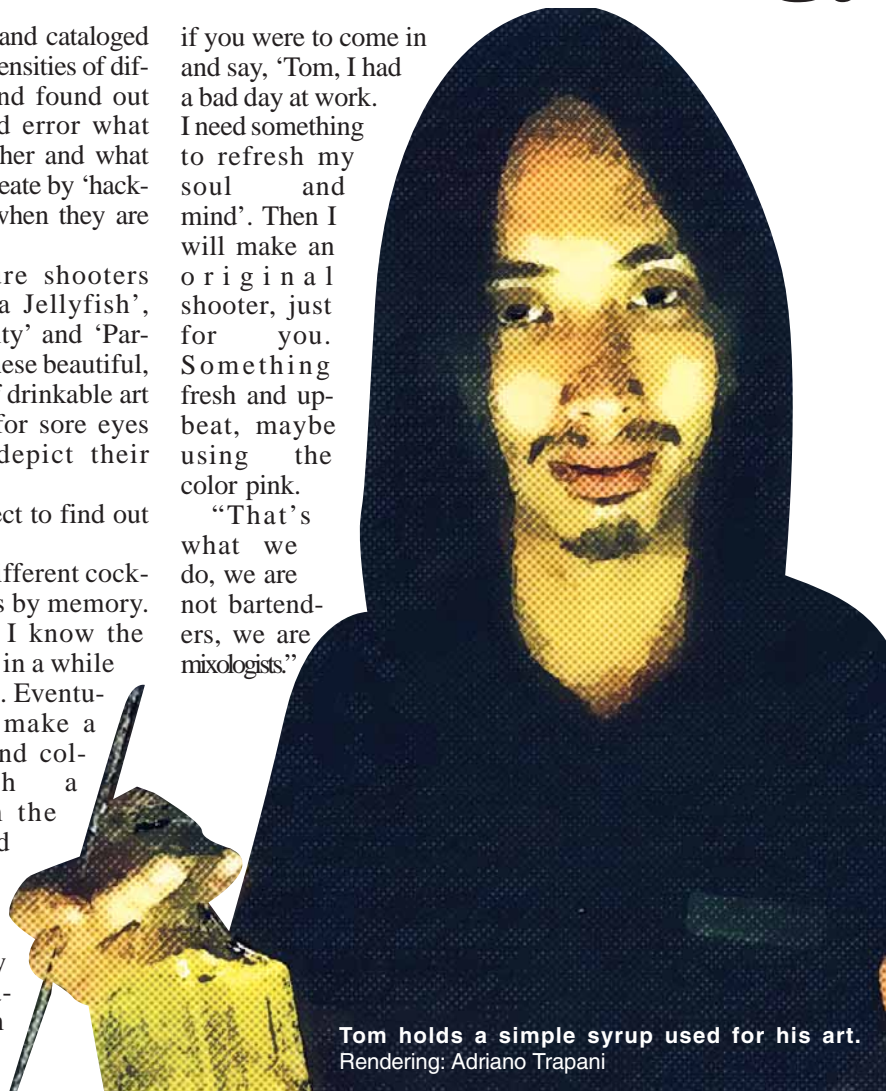
Part of Tom's genius is that he is constantly sourcing inspiration from customers.

"For example,

if you were to come in and say, 'Tom, I had a bad day at work.

I need something to refresh my soul and mind'. Then I will make an original shooter, just for you. Something fresh and upbeat, maybe using the color pink.

"That's what we do, we are not bartenders, we are mixologists."



Tom holds a simple syrup used for his art. Rendering: Adriano Trapani



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