

# The Phuket Gazette

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## Property boost: rates skyrocket

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: Property owners can expect higher land taxes in the new year after the Phuket Treasury Office (PTO) announced an island-wide average increase of 65% in government-appraised land values.

The new rates, which reflect the island's continuing property boom, will be effective from January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2007.

The Bangkok-based Valuation Authority, which is responsible for appraising land values nationwide every four years, reported increases in some areas over 100%.

Kathu district showed an average increase of 127%, while Thalang and Muang districts had increases of about 35%.

Tamrong Tongtan, new chief of the PTO, told the Gazette that the new figures reflected trends in Phuket's continuing property boom.

The most expensive land on the island continues to be along Rassada Rd in Phuket Town. Assessed values there were as high as 80,000 baht per square wah, the same as in the previous valuation.

The greatest recorded increase in Phuket Town was along Pra Phuket Kaew Rd, which runs between Kathu and Samkong. Prices here increased a dramatic 299%, with plots in some areas now going for as much as 50,000 baht/sq wah.

In Kathu District, land valuations along the beach road in Patong increased as much as 300% in some areas. The most expensive plots were valued at 50,000 baht/sq wah compared to 31,000 baht/sq wah previously.



Prices for land along Patong's beach road increased as much as 300% in some areas, with the most expensive plots valued at 50,000 baht per square wah (12,500 baht per square meter).

The lowest assessed prices in this zone are now at 20,000 baht/sq wah, a four-fold average increase over the previous assessment.

Assessed values in Thalang District remain, on average, the lowest on the island. Some areas along the Baan Don-Cherng Talay Rd doubled in value.

Similar increases were recorded along the road from Bang Roang-Ao Por, where land doubled in price from 1,000 baht a square wah to 2,000 baht, on average.

"The new appraisal values are now in line with actual costs," K. Tamrong said.

He added that the increases

would benefit landowners who wanted to use their property as collateral in obtaining loans or, if need be, to post bail with the court.

Nationwide, land valuations, were up by 14.4%, with Southern Thailand leading the way with a 24.1% increase, due in large part to the tourism boom.

The government land valuation differs from a private appraisal because the government does not take into account what the land might be used for. It is designed as a base from which to set taxes and other fees. Mortgage registration fees, however, are based on an agreement between buyer and seller.

## Get ready for a big food fight

PHUKET TOWN: The developers of the 1.6 billion baht Central Festival Phuket shopping complex are seeking local restaurateurs to add spice to what they say will be Southern Thailand's largest and most upscale food court.

Food is seen as a key drawcard if, as expected, intense competition develops with existing retailers once the 250-store complex opens in August.

Wallaya Chirathivat, Executive Vice-President for Business Development at Central Retail Corporation, told the Gazette that Central wanted local restaurateurs as well as national-brand clients, which include Oishi, KFC, Pizza Hut, Fuji, Zen, S&P and Au Bon Pain.

One well-known local Italian restaurant, Salvatore's, has already reached agreement to operate an outlet. Don Battles, owner of Don's Cafe, told the Gazette he is still negotiating and expects to make a decision after a meeting on January 7.

The three-story complex, set to open in August, is under construction on the bypass road near the Wichit-Songkhram Rd intersection.

Customers will be able to mix and match a wide variety of meals, either in a glass-enclosed, air-conditioned dining room with views of tropical gardens or in an outdoor terraced dining area.

K. Wallaya said the pavilion will stay open until 2 am daily and its design has been influenced by popular night entertainment districts in the region, including Shanghai Xintiandi, the Singapore Boat Quay and Lan Kwai Fong in Hong Kong.

- Dhirarat Boonkongsan



## Radio first: Governor starts show

PHUKET: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura answered questions from the island's English-speaking residents on December 25 during a new weekly English-language radio show.

The program gives listeners a chance to send or call in questions to local officials, with responses read out over the air, usually in a live format.

Vice-Governor Winai Bua-pradit said the program, which was launched on December 15, will serve as an important two-way avenue for communication between the Phuket government and the island's foreign community.

V/Gov Winai told the *Gazette*, "The program will highlight people, coming events and discussions about government policies that affect issues such as tourism and investment." The show, broadcast every Thursday night from 9 pm-11 pm on Q-FM (95 MHz), is hosted by Panutas La-onsuwan, better known as DJ Nikki.

People can send their questions to DJ Nikki (Tel: 076-258160; Fax: 076-258159; Email: qfm@radio.fm).

# Tourist numbers are tipped to rise

PHUKET: New airlines, new air routes and more charter flights should increase the number of tourists coming to Phuket this year by about 10%, Lt Cdr Boonchart Prompoon, Director of the Airports Authority of Thailand, Phuket, said on December 24.

He was speaking at the launch of an "All Smiles All the Time" campaign at Phuket International Airport, a promotion aimed at persuading tourists to

return because of their friendly experience on the island and throughout Thailand generally.

"The airport is the place where tourists arrive so we have to improve our services to impress them," Lt Cdr Boonchart said.

"Our staff will welcome passengers when they arrive at the airport, and it will be the beginning of this scheme."

He said the present number

of 3.6 million passengers was likely to increase by at least 300,000 in 2004.

"It's possible to reach that number because there will be new airlines, including Orient Thai Airlines and AirAsia," he added.

There had also been about 30 chartered flights already during December, he said, and in addition there were new routes being flown to Kuala Lumpur and Sweden.



## Death sentence for killer

BANGKOK: Bancha Noppawong, arrested for the 2001 murder of environmental activist Jurin Rachapol, has been convicted by a Bangkok court.

He was handed the death penalty but is expected to appeal the sentence.

K. Jurin was found shot

dead on land close to the Wachara Prawn Farm – where Bancha worked – in Pa Khlok.

A number of activists, including K. Jurin, had contested prawn farming in the protected mangrove forest.

Somsak Wongsawanond, the owner of Wachara Prawn

Farm, was also arrested in connection with this crime and charged with conspiracy to commit murder.

The case against him has been dismissed and he has now returned to his farm.

The *Gazette* spoke with Juroon Rachapol, elder brother of K. Jurin. He gave a cautious welcome to the verdicts by saying, "I understand that everyone involved in this investigation has done their best."

K. Juroon expressed some concern that he, his family or other environmental activists, might suffer violence in the future but added that he has confidence in the government's action on "influential people".

## Billboard boost for sea life

Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura, in uniform, poses with a miniature version of a new billboard that was raised near the airport on December 17. The huge sign greets new arrivals to Phuket and asks for their cooperation in preserving the island's marine resources. The caption reads: Please! Do Not Remove Shells, Plants, Coral or Marine Life. The actual billboard, which measures 10 x 20 meters, was paid for by Baan Rim Pa restaurant in Patong. Also pictured are restaurant owners Pensri and Tom McNamara (right) and General Manager Chalernpol Nanakorn (left).

## Rock Hard murder: man held



The suspect re-enacts the crime.

PATONG: The alleged murderer of a go-go dancer is now in Phuket Provincial Prison, following his December 23 arrest in Bangkok by a team of Kathu Police investigators.

The man, identified as 26-year-old Akharadech "James" Phusuwan, was arrested without struggle in his native Bangkok following an investigation led by Pol Maj Chawalit Petchsripia.

Akharadech was wanted for the August 20 stabbing death of 41-year-old Pranee Asari, an employee of the well-known Rock Hard A-Go-Go on Soi Bangla.

Pol Capt Sa-nguan Muanthum, of Kathu Police Station, told the *Gazette* that Akharadech had confessed to charges of murdering K. Pranee, his ex-girlfriend, after she refused to get back together with him.

Her body was discovered in her rented room by her niece, 22-year-old Pachanee Rattabhat, who went to check on her after learning that she had failed to report to work for two nights.

According to police, after stabbing the victim in the stomach, chest and neck on the evening of August 20, Akharadech fled to the capital, where he was finally taken into custody in a rented apartment in Bang Khloaem district.

Police said that they needed four months to have an arrest warrant issued and gather evidence while keeping track of Akharadech's movements. They said he had changed locations many times before finally renting the Bangkok flat.

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## MISSING DIVER CASE

# I was not involved, ex-husband tells Kathu officers

By Nonthawat Disayabutra

KAMALA: The family of missing divemaster Phikun "Nori" Srisaksungnoen traveled to Bangkok on December 22 and filed a missing-person report with the Crime Suppression Division (CSD), which is now investigating the disappearance independently of Kathu Police Station.

K. Nori's mother, 54-year-old Soi Mungpanklang, and her younger sister Thanachat Srisaksungnoen, 23, told CSD officials that the investigation by Kathu Police Station had stalled, and that they had reason to believe K. Nori's was murdered by her German ex-husband.

They fear that he disposed of her body by feeding it to one of the more than 200 snakes kept on his large hillside estate in Kamala – a claim that her ex-husband rejects.

The story has been widely and colorfully published in the Thai press, but police officers confirm that no charges have been laid. They say they have yet to discover meaningful evidence, and that the ex-husband had been cooperating with them in their investigations.

K. Nori, 25, was last seen at about 10 pm on November 29 at a bar in Kamala, where she had been celebrating with friends after a dive. Her family members, who also live in Kamala, said her disappearance was strange because she left behind her car and two children, who are now being cared for by their father.

K. Phikun ended the relationship with her husband about six months ago after 10 years of living together as man and wife in an unregistered marriage which began when K. Nori was just 15 years old.

Apparently the estranged couple continued to live on the same estate even after the marriage ended.

CSD interrogator Pol Capt Direk Chomyong told the *Gazette* that the family was concerned that K. Phikun's estranged husband might have murdered her in a jealous rage because she had taken a new lover. They also feared that he fed her body to a snake, adding that one of his three-meter pythons had gone

missing. Capt Direk quoted K. Thanachat as telling him that K. Nori and her ex-husband fought many times because he was jealous when she took a new lover.

They told the CSD that until late on the evening of November 29, neighbors often reported hearing screams coming from the house, but that after that there was only silence, and nobody had seen K. Nori since.

Kathu Police Station Superintendent Pol Col Chalit Thinthani told the *Gazette* that he had not yet been contacted by the CSD. He confirmed that a search of the grounds had turned up one of K. Phikun's shoes, which was stained with blood.

Col Chalit said, "[The husband] keeps more than 200 snakes in his home, but he denies killing his wife. He told us that K. Nori [probably] ran away with her lover. While we were there, he allowed the police to make a search."

Col Chalit said that a check had revealed that all of the snakes were legally registered and were used for educational purposes. He added that Kathu Police will continue to investigate.

"A few days ago somebody told us they saw somebody that looks like K. Nori walking along Patong Beach," he added.

Marcus Etter of Merlin Divers, where K. Nori had worked, described the missing woman as his business partner and told the *Gazette* that he had still not been contacted by her. He is offering a 50,000-baht reward for her return.

Anyone who has seen K. Nori is asked to notify his or her local police station, or to contact Mr Etter at 076-385518, 06-6829861, or infor@merlin-divers.com.



MISSING: Phikun "Nori" Srisaksungnoen

# New symbol will mark mayor's era



A model of the huge sea dragon that retiring mayor Phummisak Hongsyok hopes will come to be the symbol of Phuket Town.

PHUKET TOWN: Projects totalling 70 million baht – including a park, high-tech traffic lights and a new symbolic sculpture – are under construction in Phuket Town, marking the end of an era for retiring Mayor Phummisak Hongsyok.

A 10-rai site on Thalang Rd – once home to the Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority complex – is under development as a multi-use area.

The park will account for six rai with shops taking up another three rai. The new Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) office is expected to occupy the remaining land.

A 15-meter-long statue of a *hai laeng* (sea dragon) – expected to cost 5.5 million baht – is planned for the park entrance.

The announcements of these projects were made at a farerwell press conference on December 24 by K. Phummisak, who was standing down after 23 years in local government.

The park is due to open in time for HM Queen Sirikit's birthday in August and will be named Suan Chalermparakiat 72 Punsu Maharachinee BE 2547 Park.

Speaking of the sculpture, K. Phummisak said, "It will be the new symbol for Phuket Town."

– Nonthawat Disayabutra

# Tin mine probe's final days

PHUKET TOWN: The investigation into land titles covering 17 former tin mines has concluded, with titles relating to 663 rai expected to be revoked, Vice-Governor Pongpow Ketthong told the *Gazette* on December 24.

V/Gov Pongpow, who presided over the investigation, said that the results will be passed to Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura before New Year's Day, though he added that a time frame for any revocation of land titles has yet to be scheduled.

He said that investigating officers classified each of the 17 suspect tin mines into one of three groups:

- Five titles covering 663 rai

in Kathu, Kamala and Klong Tha Rua mangrove swamp, which V/Gov Pongpow expects to be revoked.

- NorSor 3 titles covering 32 rai – parts of which encroach on government land.

- About 300 rai spread around the island.

V/Gov Pongpow did not disclose the location of the land in the last two instances, nor whether revocation of titles for that land is expected.

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## Queer News

## F-eel-ing lucky

PETCHABURI: Cute and cuddly pets tend to be the order of the day but a fisherman in Petchaburi's Cha-am district has created quite a stir in his village by keeping one of nature's slimmest creatures – a bright golden eel – around the house.

Neighbors believe that the eel – now bearing the lofty title *jao Si Thong* (approximately, "The Golden One") – is an omen of good fortune, particularly for the Government's two- and three-digit lottery.

*Jao Si Thong* was discovered on December 9 by 58-year-old fisherman Chaliew Choorasri as he waded through coastal swamp in search of fish. He saw the exotic 68-centimeter eel slithering out from a nearby sandbank, grabbed it and took it home. The event must have stirred strong feelings of *deja vu* for the fisherman, who claims to have dreamed of finding just such a golden eel only a month earlier.

Returning to his home at 26 Moo 10 in tambon Khao Yai, he placed The Golden One in a tank. He said he had enjoyed an unprecedented string of good luck at work ever since – which presumably means he has been catching a lot of fish.

Word travels quickly in a Thai village and neighbors have been beating a path to K. Chaliew's door hoping to share in the good fortune by making devotional offerings to *Jao Si Thong*.

Incense sticks pressed between their palms in a *wai*, they scrutinize the movements of The Golden One as he maneuvers in his undersized enclosure. They hope he will twist his sinuous form into the shapes of the winning numbers in forthcoming lottery draws. Not surprisingly, numbers such as "602" and "698" were among the most popular bets.

Enterprising neighbor and government lottery sales agent

Noi Khlongkhlaew, 48, was quick to spot the potential and set up a table on the spot, reporting brisk business from villagers eager to place bets immediately.

Ironically, K. Chaliew himself said he had not made a wager as he had given up gambling. He also said he had no plans to sell The Golden One, even though a rice merchant from downtown Cha-am had already come and made him a generous offer.

His only reported plans for The Golden One are to build it a bigger and better tank. He estimated its age as between three and five years old and said it had absolutely no fear of humans.

Source: *Daily News*

## School for seeing double

SUPHAN BURI: Teachers at the U-Thong Secondary School in Saphan Buri's U-Thong district should be forgiven for thinking they are seeing double when they enter the classroom.

The teachers aren't drunk. They have merely been assigned to the school that probably has the greatest population of twins in Thailand – 18 pairs in all.

Rather than create confusion, school director Winai Chertchaweevan explained that the unusually high number of natural clones in the institution was actually pure coincidence.

"Having so many twins here is no problem at all," he explained. "We have 16 pairs of twins as students and then two more pairs who are teachers. It really is a lovely coincidence."

And it's a coincidence that has advantages. After grouping all the school's twins together for a photo on November 10, K. Winai explained that the look-alikes are invariably the stars of every student production, featuring prominently in school stage events on special days.

The twins have even spearheaded the school's efforts in the "To Be No 1" campaign to fight the drug menace.

Source: *Thai Rath*

KILLERS  
with time on their side

Some murders in Thailand are followed by a swift arrest. But what happens when the excitement fades and the media – and the police – move on? Last year saw the War on Drugs, with at least 1,300 and possibly more deaths nationwide, and a less-bloody War on Dark Influence.

*The Phuket Gazette* reporting team looks at the continuing investigations into several high-profile killings on the island.

**Pongtorn Hiranyaburana, Deputy Chief of the Phuket Land Office, was shot dead while driving between Krabi and his home in Surat Thani on April 25, 2003. His death came as he investigated irregularities in land title deeds on Phuket.**

THE SUPERINTENDENT of Investigation of Surat Thani Provincial Police Region 8, Pol Col Ronapong Saikaew, was given authority to supervise the investigation of this killing and several others. He told the *Gazette*, "There will be good news in this case after the New Year. I cannot disclose any further information as it may cause the suspects to flee, jeopardizing the case."

The *Gazette* suggested that the investigation was proceeding slowly, which Col Ronapong acknowledged. But he made the point that the arrest of those who sanctioned the killing, and not just the killers, was of equal importance.

"We take time with these important cases to make sure that we can obtain all the facts to make sure of a conviction," said Col Ronapong.

**The Freeway Restaurant murders at Bang Tao Beach on May 17, 2003, left Suwim Noodan, the owner of the restaurant, and his nephew, Pramote Choochat, dead from automatic gunfire. Three gunmen were involved.**

A LAND CONFLICT is believed to be the motive behind these murders and although one suspect has been arrested, the other two remain at liberty. One of them evaded police by running up a hill but officers – fearing he was

armed – waited for him at the foot of the hill. How he eluded police remains a mystery.

Three investigating officers were asked for their views on this case and most positive was the Deputy Superintendent of Phuket Town Police Station, Pol Lt Col Samarn Chainarong.

Speaking on December 23, he said, "Call me in a couple of days and we will have arrested those two killers." The *Gazette* called Col Samarn later that week, but he was unable to confirm further arrests.

Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander, Pol Col Apirak Hongtong, also expressed confidence that the case would soon close but had a slightly different view of how the situation would develop.

"We were told that one of the two remaining gunmen would give himself up to officers on December 24, but he didn't turn himself in," he said.

Col Ronapong was more cautious in his appraisal but gave additional information on the investigation. "They [the suspected killers] are believed to have fled to Nakhon Sri Thammarat and Phatthalung but you must remember, we have many other cases to work on besides this one."

Police said that the victims' families did not wish to speak to the press, fearing reprisals.

**Supachai "Chai" Udomdee, a reporter for *Crime* magazine, was murdered in his car in Phuket Town on April 17, 2003. He was shot more than 10 times by two gunmen.**

THE MOTHER of K. Supachai, Yupin Udomdee, indicated that his death may have been related to the murder of land titles official Pongtorn Hiranyaburana because her son was a land broker.

"Chai's business interests had earned him many hundreds of thousands of baht," she said. "I heard that he had a price on his head of 300,000 baht. Perhaps people were trying to get at his money."

K. Yupin also spoke of Chai's girlfriend, Nual, and said that witnesses reported hearing

her son arguing with K. Nual during a telephone conversation the last time he was seen alive.

"And no one has seen her since he died. She didn't even come to his cremation," K. Yupin added.

K. Yupin has also considered that her son's journalistic career may have been another motive for his murder.

She advised him to leave journalism.

"He knew so much about so many people. Perhaps that was why he was killed."

"Think about it, the man sitting next to my son in the car didn't get shot. If Khun ..." K. Yupin began but stopped mid-sentence, indicating that to say more might endanger her life also.

However, she did say that her son was "a good man with a good heart" and always ready to help his friends. "He never made me sad and was generous with his money to anyone in need, even his foreign friends," she said.

"Reports that say Chai was cheated and then hunted by foreigners are bull\*\*\*\*. A Swedish friend of Chai's heard about his murder and came to see me. He was welcome in my home," said K. Yupin.

K. Yupin said that life after Chai's death has not been too difficult in practical terms. She still works as a market vendor, which provides her with a sufficient income, even though she now has responsibility for her three grandchildren.

"I just hope that Chai's will not be one of these murders that the police forget about, where someone gets away with it. I want the killer and those behind it found."

Col Apirak knew, it seems, another side to K. Supachai.

"He [K. Supachai] was not really a reporter but my informant," Col Apirak said. "He was shot over some drug-dealing case or it might have been his own business. I don't really know."

"Mothers never say anything bad about their own children. They don't know if their son or daughter is a drug dealer or user," Col Apirak said.

"Parents only know their children superficially."

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**UNSOLVED**

The busy intersection where Jutha Na Thakuatoong and his driver were shot dead.

Sayan "Maew Bohnam" Somnam and Viboonsak "Ko Kee" Bangniew Pechonchaisith were gunned down in separate incidents on February 9, 2003.

THE MOTIVE for these killings is obvious to at least one officer. "Maew and Ko Kee were involved with drugs and lots of murders this year [2003] and their deaths were 'silence killings,'" Col Apirak ventured.

"Major dealers were afraid that they would be informed on by the smaller dealers, so they had them executed," he continued.

Col Apirak again expressed confidence that suspects would be arrested "... in the next few days."

Relatives of K. Sayan and K. Viboonsak were unwilling to talk with the *Gazette*.

**Prasert and Thavorn Trairat, the parents of Thepkrasattri mayor Prasong Trairat, were shot dead at their shophouse in Thalang on May 5.**

ONE OF THE PEOPLE first accused of the murder, Suchart Maneesuwan, was "probably a scapegoat," said Col Ronapong, who has also been assigned to oversee this case.

"The suspect produced evidence indicating that he had been beaten by persons unknown to confess to the crime. K. Suchart also claims to have been at a party at the time of the murder

and has witnesses to prove this," Col Ronapong said.

Another prime suspect, Wichian Pakdeewanich, was found to have been in prison in Songkhla at the time the murder took place.

Both men filed complaints to both the Police Region 8 and the Crime Suppression Division.

Col Ronapong said that Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra had taken an interest in this case and ordered officers to complete their investigations soon, and thoroughly.

Other people have been arrested in this case, including Wipa Jantong and her husband Sompong.

They were released after posting bail of 1.5 million baht each and have denied any involvement, asking that the police investigate on their behalf.

Pol Sgt Maj Chalaw Ngamduang, formerly of Sikow Police district in Trang, is suspected of carrying out the killings while army sergeant Sorapong Yaodam is alleged to have driven a motorcycle to the scene of the crime and identified the victims.

Col Ronapong said, "It's very likely that these two people were involved in the case. After we interrogated Sorapong, he named other people but both of them have alibis for their whereabouts at the time of the murders.

"We believe that Surapong is trying to protect the mastermind behind this crime. This is not an easy case for us to solve," he concluded.

**UNSOLVED**

Reporter Supachai 'Chai' Udomdee, shot more than 10 times.

Col Apirak does not seem to share his colleague's view that the wrong suspects were arrested, despite one of them being incarcerated at the time.

"Phuket Provincial Court issued the correct arrest warrants. If Col Ronapong has more information then he should let us know."

Sensing an opportunity for a joke, Col Apirak laughed, "We have never been issued with warrants to arrest scapegoats, only suspected criminals."

Col Apirak claimed that some people had even implicated him in the murders, suggesting that he had hired the killers.

"We will get to the bottom of who organized these murders and why. Important people, with important connections, are involved," he said.

**UNSOLVED**

Prasert and Thavorn Trairat, shot dead at their shophouse.

Jutha Na Thakuatoong, owner of a dive shop and tour company, and his driver were shot dead while waiting at lights at the junction of Wichit Songkhram Rd and the bypass road on October 8.

SOME CLUES have been found. Col Ronapong told the *Gazette* that they have found some clues as to the identity of the gunman but did not wish to disclose any further information as it may jeopardize their investigation.

**Hareed "Bangdol" Lanson, owner of the Malaithip Drinking Water Company on Sri Soontorn Rd, was shot on April 9 as he left his office.**

KILLERS on motorcycles are hard to catch. Pol Capt Passakorn Sonthikul of Phuket Town Police Station told the *Gazette*, "We still don't have a suspect or a motive for this murder. Some people say that it was a private disagreement while others suggest it was drugs-related."

He also said that the only witnesses were children who could not identify the killer.

The family of K. Hareed said that they knew of no business conflicts that could have caused his death.

"We have so little to go on in this case that we could have arrested the killer for another crime and not realized it," admitted Capt Passakorn.



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# Divers plan to restore the coral reefs

By Dhirarat Boonkongsan

In a first for Thailand, the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) is attempting to regenerate the coral around Mai Thon Island, off Phuket. Years of study and planning led to action this week, with hundreds of concrete pyramids and thousands of marine creatures being placed in the sea.

A coral reef provides a marine ecosystem that sustains a wide variety of aquatic life. There are about 153 square kilometers of coral reef in Thailand, 75 sq km in the Gulf of Thailand and another 78 sq km in the Andaman Sea.

A study in 1999 found that 50% of all Andaman coral beds had been destroyed, either by natural forces or human intervention. But it may not be lost forever.

The PMBC (now under the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources) has been pursuing solutions since 1982. Under the right conditions, coral can be rehabilitated.

Coral researcher Nalinee Thongtham told the *Gazette* that



**THE SPECTACLE RETURNS:** Restored coral like this is what volunteer divers hope to achieve by placing concrete pyramids on the ocean floor so a safe, protected environment can encourage growth, marine life and, eventually, tourists.

testing on degraded coral reef areas northeast of Maiton island, where the coral was destroyed by a great storm in 1986, showed that coral can return, given the right environment.

The area was once alive with staghorn coral.

"At the same time, the fish

that also disappeared with the coral have started coming back," she said. Nine years after the first artificial substrates were placed on the ocean floor as "building blocks," the area developed a cover of coral similar to natural patches of reef in nearby areas.

"Another point of the study is coral transplantation. It includes transplantation of staghorn coral, that has a growth rate of 10 centimeters a year and massive coral, which grows at about 4 cm a year. It's appropriate for degraded areas where substrates and the environment seem to be suitable for coral growth, but no coral 'reanimates' or live coral fragments are present," she said.

"What's important is protecting the reefs and reducing the breakage that causes degradation



of corals and starts the process of destruction," K Nalinee concluded.

The project is being paid for by the Phuket Administration Organization, which has contributed 1.5 million baht.

Under 10 pontoons, volunteer divers are placing 700 pyra-

mid-shaped pieces of concrete on which the young coral can grow. The official opening ceremony will be held on January 8.

"We are also releasing 80 spotted sand sharks – harmless marine creatures – and 3,000 immature giant clams to add to the environment," she said.

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# Border crunch for gamblers

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra ordered that video cameras be installed at border crossings with neighboring countries in an effort to stem the exodus of gamblers during the New Year holiday period.

He warned prospective gamblers that not only might they lose money in the casinos, most of which are found on the Thai-Cambodian border, but that their winnings could be seized when they tried to re-enter the country if they exceeded currency import limits.

The PM also sent a stern warning to immigration officials who allow gamblers to cross the border freely without verifying travel documents. "We will send out undercover officers," he said.

**Taxi terror:** In an effort to better protect foreign tourists, the government is considering a proposal that would require all Bangkok taxis to have English-language registration plates and be equipped with global-positioning technology. The changes would make it easier for foreign taxi passengers to report crimes committed against them by drivers and help police to track down perpetrators.

The scheme comes in the wake of two violent attacks on female tourists in the capital and was announced by a deputy government spokesman during a meeting attended by Deputy Prime Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh and representatives from the Transport Ministry and police.



Phra Kru Pista Wiriyakhun and followers arrive at the Criminal Court in Bangkok. The ex-abbot was found guilty of embezzling 37 million baht from the Bueng Thanglang Temple. His initial sentence, 40 years in jail, was reduced to a suspended sentence because of his age, 76, and the fact that he returned the funds. He was allowed to remain in the monkhood.

**Heavyweight healthcare:** Nursing schools will not include specific weight criteria in their 2004 admission rules following the controversial disqualification of an overweight applicant in 2003.

The Nursing Council of Thailand's President, Tassana Boonthong, said the change was made because most Thais don't consider obesity a disease. The council resolved not to specify a weight ceiling, but instead to appoint a committee to determine whether each applicant met the physical requirements for the profession. She added that applicants could still be turned down if the committee ruled their weight was a hindrance to their studies, training or ability to treat patients.

ing or ability to treat patients.

**School of hard knocks:** The Education Ministry is inviting parents to add their definitions of inappropriate behavior by students to its draft list by posting their comments at [www.moethaiteen.com](http://www.moethaiteen.com).

Dr Charuayporn Thoranin, Deputy Permanent Secretary, said a panel had already identified 16 acts as improper for students.

They include breaking school dress codes, having dyed hair, skipping class, theft, making rude gestures, going out between 10 pm and 4 am, and smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol or using illicit drugs.

Also listed were: hanging out, gambling, visiting adult entertainment venues or brothels, having sex, carrying weapons, damaging property, brawling, extortion, and intimidation. The final list will serve as a guideline for schools across the country and will be distributed to students as part of a handbook.

distributed to students as part of a handbook.

**TAT targets 12m tourists in 2004:** Having recast Thailand as the "Heart of Asia", the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is aiming for 12 million tourist arrivals and 384 billion baht in foreign exchange this year.

TAT Governor Juthamas Siriwan said that although the lingering effects of the turmoil in the

Middle East, global terrorism and Sars are all expected to put pressure on the sector, the TAT would use hard-sell tactics in its marketing campaign. Eighteen major trade shows are planned. The TAT forecast that 2003 tourist arrivals would total 9.9 million, bringing in 297 billion baht.

**Micro-management:** The Cabinet approved a strategic plan aimed at guiding the nation toward developing itself in the emerging fields of biotechnology and nanotechnology. PM Thaksin said that while the One Tambon One Product scheme could help the economy in the medium-term, future business and investment would depend heavily on the two new technologies.

The technology will be integrated into various national policies, such as making Thailand the "kitchen of the world" and an Asian health hub.

The government spokesman who made the announcement said that the Thai premier put technologies on the agenda after reading a book entitled, *The Next Big Thing is Really Small*, by Jack Uldrich and Deb Newberry.

*Around the Nation news round-up is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.*

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The holidays are here, but there doesn't seem too much to cheer about. Hoteliers in Krabi are complaining that they are running at below normal occupancies.

Given that a large number of rooms have been added to the hotel inventory in the area, this shouldn't be a surprise. Are the hotels' expectations too high, or are we facing another weak season?

Whatever the case, empty rooms at Christmas is a first ... yikes!

Restaurateurs seem busier, but the honest ones will tell you their numbers are down from last year. Some of the usual popular spots seem to be doing okay while many others seem to be struggling.

Booking and tour agents are complaining of price discounting of tours, to the point where there is little or no profit in selling a tour. As local businesses scratch their collective heads and wonder what is happening, the peak season is already upon us and it's no more "Just wait, things will pick up soon." Soon is here.

**Home, sweet home:** Georgia, the famous blues singer from Bangkok has moved her home (temporarily) to Ao Nang to entertain locals and tourists for this high season.

The versatile singer kept the crowds bopping at the Ad Here Blues Bar in Banglampu for years, but will be belting out favorites at the Encore Café this high season. She is a welcome addition to the local music scene – check her out before she heads back to the big town.

# A vacation with vacancies



Famous blues singer Georgia is taking a break from performing in Bangkok to bring a touch of the blues to the Encore Café in Ao Nang.

**Early closing:** All the talk from Bangkok politicians about closing the bars earlier and earlier has local bar owners worried. In the beer bars at Centre Point, the local police recently announced all the bars must be closed by 1 am.

That new closing time did not last long. The bars started opening late again when the police stopped checking. Many bar owners were skeptical that the law was real, thinking it was another attempt for the local powers to be to line their pockets by

giving "allowances" to stay open late.

The most recent mandate from our local men in brown is that all music and lights must be turned off by 1 am, but the bars may remain open until 2 am.

So even as much as the bar owners are confused as to what their hours are, the customers certainly don't know either and are off to other destinations where the laws aren't so strictly enforced.

**Sidecar saturation:** I have commented on the number of taxis that took over the Ao Nang beachfront. Add to this congestion the sidecar taxis cluttering the area and you have the beachfront road impassable at various times of the day.

Apparently, these sidecars are technically illegal, and they were banned for several days around the HM the King's birthday. There were rumors they may not return or be limited in number – no such luck.

They are back as before, in

every nook and cranny of the beachfront area. While they do provide a necessary service ferrying customers on short haul trips in Ao Nang, it would seem that some sort of regulation is needed.

**Southern comfort:** The Woodstock Restaurant on the Ao Nang beachfront has opened a small Mexican cantina on the site of the old Sea of Love, next to the Full Moon Bar and Restaurant. While they have only a seven-month lease, the popularity of their Mexican food at Woodstock has given them the idea to open a separate all-Mexican eatery. If it is a hit, most would expect this to be a permanent addition to the Ao Nang restaurant scene.

**Jam spread:** Over the years, I have talked about the impact of the growing numbers of longtail boats in the local area. What once was the idyllic scene of a few longtails anchored by the beach in Ao Nang has been transformed into mass parking.

Boats jam the beachfront, making it unusable as a swimming area, and certainly not enhancing the beauty of the area.

The latest rumor, however, is that the longtails will be moved to the cove just over the bridge at Haad Nopparat Thara.

Presumably, there will be some system to ferry customers there from Ao Nang, but the end result is that

hopefully, Ao Nang beach will be reclaimed for the beach lovers.



## ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds

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## This week



**ZA GETAWAY:** Ray McDonald (right), host of the iTV show *We're Za*, is welcomed to the Burasari Resort during his recent stay on Phuket.



**SEASON'S GREETINGS:** Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawangkura (center) receives a gift basket and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from Suwit Auttayamavitaya, General Manager of The Metropole hotel (2nd from right), and the hotel management team at the Governor's office on Christmas Day.



**KIDS COOK:** Students of Kajonkietsuksa School's English program get ready to eat the fruits of their labor at one of the Friday Club's recent cooking classes.



**AMPED REVAMP:** Renowned guitarist Boonkurt "Kurt" Payangkachavana (red shirt) entertains guests at the grand opening of his new venue, Pub Phuket, at Poonphol Arcade in Phuket Town, on December 19.



**SAYING IT WITH FLOWERS:** John Everingham, Managing Director of ArtAsia Press Co Ltd, and Nuttibon "Rose" Laodee, ArtAsia's Sales and Marketing Manager, celebrate the company's 12th anniversary at a party held recently at the company's offices in Baan Prangthong, in Wichit.



**NOT A DAY OVER FIVE:** *Phuket Gazette* Chief Reporter Sanghae "Oy" Leelanaporn (front, left) and Distribution Manager Passara "Mem" Kaewbumroong (front, 2nd from left) with *Gazette* staff celebrate five years of working at the *Phuket Gazette*.



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His last deep-water dive, in February, was ill-fated and left him injured for many months. It slowed him down but it certainly did not stop him.



# Taking the PLUNGE

The Gazette's Supaporn Sriprom dives into the mind of underwater world-record setting Briton, Mark Ellyatt.

Being the world record holder for anything means going where no one else has gone before. For Mark Ellyatt, it has been more than excitement and discovery. It has been a means of proving to himself what his capabilities are.

As of December 18, Mr Ellyatt holds the world record for the deepest solo scuba dive. He went down to 313 meters, just off the west coast of Phuket.

Now we get to take a dive into his mind.

For 10 years, his passion has been diving. His previous job as a salesman, with his feet on solid ground, didn't seem to trigger as much excitement as exploring the depths of the ocean.

After he became a dive instructor and started doing serious dives, setting a few records along the way, he decided to attempt to dive much deeper.

His last deep-water dive, in February, was ill-fated and left him injured for many months. It certainly slowed him down but it did not stop him.

Mr Ellyatt, now the Technical Instructor Trainer at Scuba Cat, strongly believes that a making a world-record dive is more mental than physical. As he

firmly put it, "You've got to want to do it."

Conditions may not have been the best on his world-record dive. As Mr Ellyatt recalled, one of the reasons he did not go even deeper was because he was confronted by a two-meter-wide jellyfish. He believed that if the jellyfish had taken a greater interest, it could have caused him deep trouble.

Since his record dive, the media worldwide has had his telephone ringing around the clock. Mr Ellyatt said, "When I do these deep dives, it's mildly entertaining for me."

Well, what about a deeper dive? "I hope not!" he said quickly, adding that he would leave his options open. "I quite enjoy doing them, but I don't want to be a circus performer for free."

Not at all taken with the idea of being the ultimate risk-taker, he said, "I don't mind taking measured risk. The ascent was the only real unknown."

The dive to below 300 meters was quick, taking just 12 minutes. Coming up was the hard part. The ascent took well over six hours and for some people, six hours of solitude would be an unbearably long time.

Mr Ellyatt said that he was so focused on every breath that he took and passed the time thinking of how he would handle another hazardous situation, of the kind he faced in February.

Some people may wonder why he does it. Mr Ellyatt said, "Doing a dive like this successfully will only benefit the sport. There is no competition in diving. The competition is with yourself, so when you fail you either come

High and dry: After 10 years, Mark Ellyatt is hooked on his sport and takes the record dives as a challenge.

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**WHAT GOES DOWN:** At the bottom, one minute was enough time for Mr Ellyatt to grab the 313m tag and start his long ascent. Other divers could accompany him to 90 meters to bring more tanks. He used 30 tanks. The tanks were filled with a mixture of gases. The rope with meter-markers was weighted at the end before putting it in the water, to reduce bias.

out badly injured or dead."

Just as the relatives of mountaineers climbing Everest await news from the summit, so the diver's clan hangs on word of a safe return.

"I have my mom concerned and other people concerned, but I still need to do it," Mr Ellyatt said. "I know that some people don't have to have excitement other than the things that they like, and I like this."

In the past few years, he has decided that he doesn't need too much excitement from diving because, he said, "I'm not invincible. I don't want to live the rest of my life in a wheelchair with diving injuries."

Nevertheless, while he is determined to avoid the "raptures

of the deep," otherwise known as nitrogen narcosis, which is triggered by ascending too fast, he appears to be enraptured by diving.

"Diving is a complete experience and everything has to go right," he said.

"In a marathon run, if you can't go on then you just fall over. But in diving, you only get one shot. It will either work or not."

While he dives solo, he is not alone in his fascination with the deep. Italian divers Stefano Di Cagno and Paolo De Gennaro say they reached 320 meters together in a dive mid-year.

If Mr Ellyatt abandoned diving, he would find an alternative that involved a fair amount of activity. "My outlook in life is

thinking that the future will be how it is," he said.

"I would rather have a more interesting present than plan for the future."

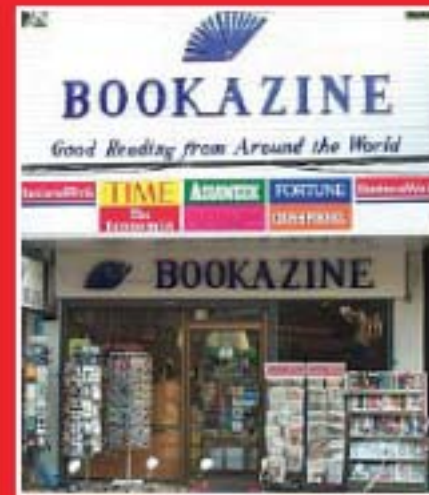
After the near-disastrous dive in February, people were saying it would be madness to try to go deeper. "You can talk yourself into not doing it," he said.

"If a thousand people keep telling you that you're mad or crazy then it eventually starts to slow your confidence in doing it." However, his mind was made up and to go where no man has gone, well, that can be pretty tempting.

But for now, with his feet dry and his head above water, it may be a while before Mark Ellyatt's next world record attempt.

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# Thailand TRAVELER

By Bill Owen

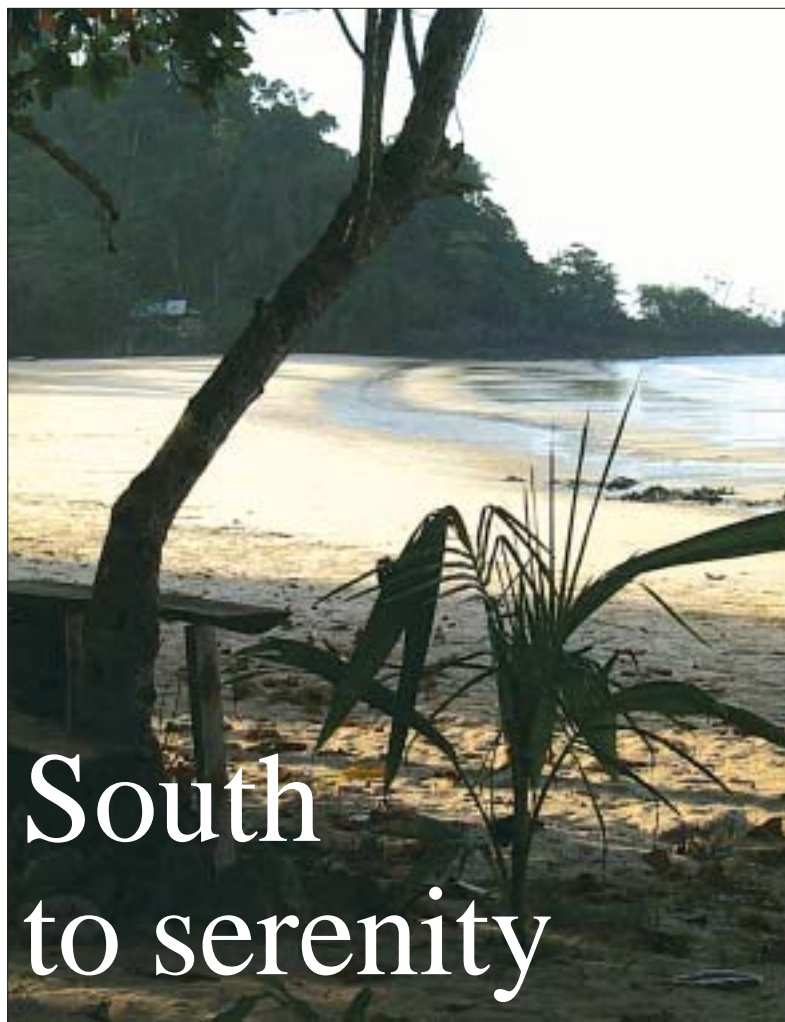
With Phuket gearing up for Christmas and New Year, it was time to head off ... south this time, to Trang. With the new highway to Phang Nga complete, Trang can be easily reached in less than four hours.

En route we made what we thought would be a short stop at Wat Tam Sua, the hillside Temple just east of Krabi Town. Feeling fit that morning, we decided to explore this magnificent temple.

One hour, four bottles of water and 1,272 steps later, we made it to the small temple and the viewing gallery. Dripping in sweat, hearts pounding, we were rewarded stunning views of the Krabi coastline and the islands beyond, including the Phi Phi Islands.

As we stopped on the way down to wonder at the construction of the temple and the effort it must have taken to etch out all the steps from the rock, we met an old monk slowly going up.

We asked him how he was managing. He smiled, took a little sip of water, and said the first climb in the day was comparatively easy, the second in late af-



## South to serenity

Peaceful Koh Mook.

Photograph: Alasdair Forbes

ternoon was harder. He also said on special days he made the climb three times. He smiled, waved his hand, and continued his climb.

Shaking our heads, we stumbled downward and set off

with the air conditioning on full blast.

An hour and a half later, we were in Trang. Our first stop was to check in at the new Amari Resort on Changlang Beach,

## TRAVEL TIPS

### How to get there:

Drive south via Krabi on Route 4 or catch an air-conditioned coach from Phuket Town to Trang – they depart every hour until 3 pm. A trip costs 180 baht each way and takes five hours.

### Where to stay:

Amari Trang Beach Resort, deluxe room, 4,500 baht. Tel: 075-205888.

Pak Meng Resort, small and quiet superior air-conditioned rooms, from 1,200 baht. Tel: 075-274112. Fax: 075-274111.

about 40 kilometers east of Trang Town. This four-star resort is Amari's newest property.

The beaches here are estuary-style and not the best for swimming, but they are wonderful places to take a stroll and explore, and they are covered in beautiful spiral-shaped shells.

Swaying casuarinas line the shore and keep the whole area cool, with not a tourist in sight. Except for the wind in the trees, it's refreshingly quiet and deserted.

That afternoon we explored further south and visited several other equally deserted beaches: Yao Beach – the ideal place to explore mangroves by boat or canoe; Chao Mai Beach, with its stunning 30-meter cavern at the base of a cliff; and Yong Lin Beach, beside a beautiful pine forest and the best beach in the area for swimming.

Dinner that evening was at a small restaurant at Pak Meng Beach: excellent fresh seafood, fish, mussels and the obligatory bottle of Sangsom, plus soda and Coke. Next morning it was time to visit the nearby islands. Thankfully, the hotel allowed us use of their new speedboat – and we were soon skimming off across the bay to our first stop at Koh Kradan.

This is certainly the most beautiful of all the islands in the area – stunning white beaches and crystal water – so get there fast before the big resorts inevitably arrive. A few small resorts are already there, with simple rooms and basic facilities.

From there it was on to Koh Mook, second-largest island in the Haad Chao Mai National Park.

This island is famous for its *Morakot* (Emerald) Cave. The entrance to the cave is on the west coast, and is low-set and hidden from view.

The tide was dropping and we were given life jackets and dropped off from our boat. Following our guide with more than a little trepidation, we swam through the dark 80-meter tunnel, emerging in a stunning lagoon with a small white beach, surrounded by lush undergrowth and towering cliffs.

A spectacular place and well worth the visit, despite the rather arduous entry and exit ... no sea canoes here.

*Bill Owen has lived and worked in Phuket for more than 15 years and is manager of Diethelm Events, which organizes corporate events, team building and incentive travel.*

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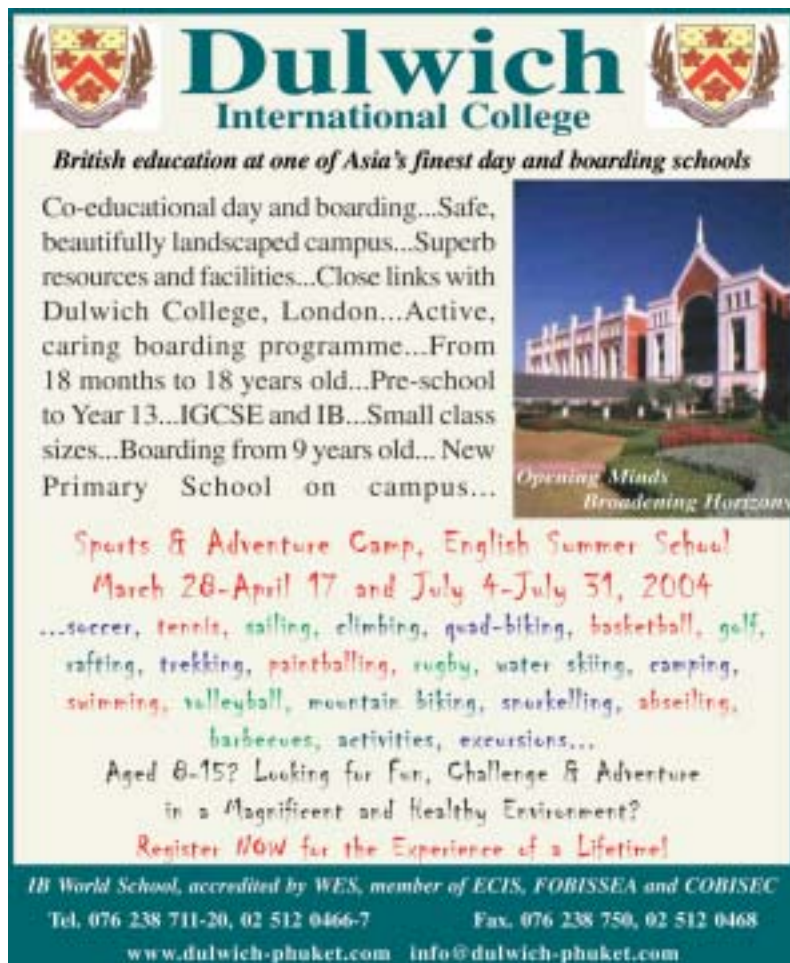
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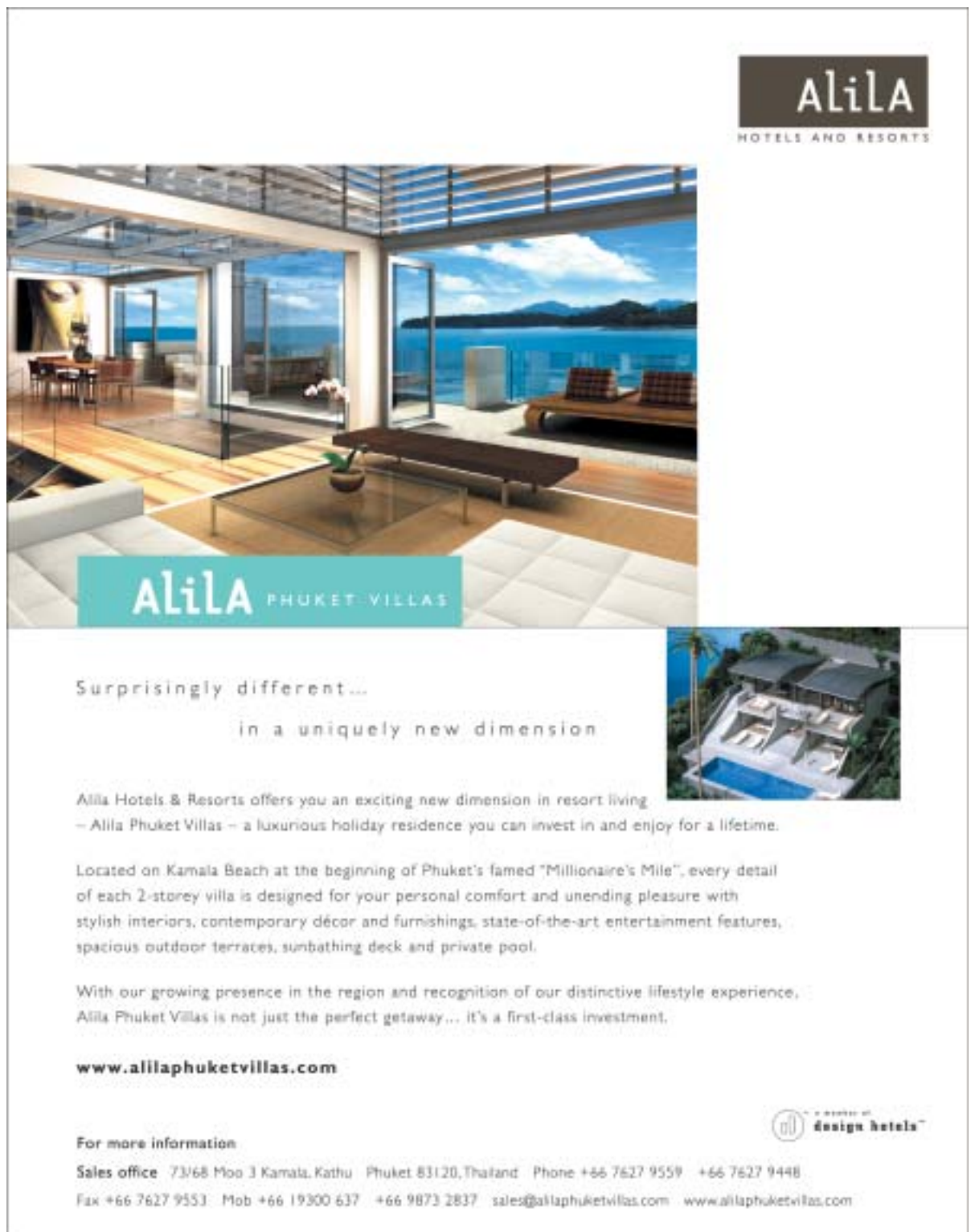


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# HEARD & scene

The *Gazette's* **Nonthawat Disayabutra** went out and about and asked,  
*What is the most extreme thing you have ever done to show off to the opposite sex?*



**Ratima Jongchansitho**  
Age: 20  
From: Phuket  
Occupation: Student

"I stopped at a red light in Phuket Town. In the car alongside me was a very handsome man but it was impossible to talk. When the light turned green, I turned and hit him. I volunteered to pay to have his car fixed.

"It was worthwhile, but I don't plan to do it often. It cost a lot of money."



**Pornperm Lertwittayawiwat**  
Age: 20  
From: Haad Yai  
Occupation: Student

"Many times, when I go camping with friends, I always volunteer to join in activities such as playing games or dancing. With my dance steps, no other girl can equal my dancing. Men like to dance with me. It is good to show off to encourage young freshmen. Good things come to those who are daring."



**Chitpol Watcharapann**  
Age: 20  
From: SuratThani  
Occupation: Student

"I went to a computer expo once and I saw that one of the staff was very cute. My hand, which held a glass of soft drink, slipped and the drink spilled onto a computer. He came up to me and said, 'What the hell are you doing, man?' Lots of people crowded around. I said, 'You're so cute, man.' Then sadly, I ran away."



**Sebastian Del Minoz**  
Age: 26  
From: Chile  
Occupation: Café proprietor

"As a high school boy, there were 22 students in my class: 20 girls, one gay and me. I loved the girl next door who also went to this school. Every class had to join a gospel singing contest. My girl said it was so sexy when a man sings gospel, so I did it. I came 21<sup>st</sup> out of 21 students, and she never talked to me again."



**Kasima Ongpaitoon**  
Age: 19  
From: Songkhla  
Occupation: Student

"I went on a camping trip for four years straight and I fell for a guy who was handsome and very kind. I planned a way to get some time alone with him. Friends said I should pretend to be possessed by ghost. About midnight, I started to scream and acted like I was possessed. He ran away. Lots of ugly men came to help."

## In the Stars

by Isla Star

**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 20): Capricorns this week should guard against believing what appears to be a plausible story unless they can handle being taken for a bumpy ride. A

sudden change of heart could lead you into an enticing new romantic direction. If freedom is high on your list of personal priorities, make this clear from the outset.

**AQUARIUS** (January 21-February 19): A sudden shower of affection causes you to be suspicious about someone's motives. Events towards the middle of this week will prove that remaining cautious was the right approach. As the New Year starts to unfold, many Aquarians will realize that their long-term prospects are looking better than expected.

**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): When a friend who is feeling stuck in a rut comes asking for advice, prudent Pisceans will refrain from offering anything but vague ideas. The best intentions are bound to backfire, which could lead to a permanent rift.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): The New Year has Arians feeling strong and confident. This is a good time to take on something

that you've never done before because your power and popularity should guarantee success. Not everyone will live up to expectations this week, but you are right to set your sights high and refuse to settle for second best.

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 21): This year will see many changes for those born under Taurus who are ready to escape from suffocating situations. You will need to make some difficult decisions during the first months of 2004, but the choice is yours. Mid-week, you receive proof that one ambition is about to be realized.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21): Those born under Gemini should have no trouble saying "yes" this week. You will be amazed by an offer that could lead to a new career with the strong possibility of travel. The only thing delaying you from packing a suitcase will be a personal involvement.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 23): The year begins with a positive astro-

logical influence on intimate relationships. An encounter this weekend should be sufficient to convince Cancerians that they haven't quite burned a romantic boat.

**LEO** (July 24-August 22): As the New Year starts, those born under Leo will find it hard to resist the temptation of lying around and watching the orchids bloom. A lazy mood sets the scene for this week. Luckily those around you are no more motivated to leap into action. Long-distance travel plans are brewing in the background.

**VIRGO** (August 23-September 23): It's time to stop banging your head against that coconut palm and enjoy the feeling of relief as you are released from a situation that has been spinning round in never-ending circles for too long. Selective meditation can enable you to gain a clear vision.

**LIBRA** (September 24-October 23): A cosmic plan is unfurling on your behalf and Librans should

refrain from trying to influence the future in ways that are alien to their need for balance. This is definitely not an auspicious time to consider any out-of-character risks, no matter how golden a picture someone tries to paint.

**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 22): Those born under Scorpio who are guilty of placing unfair demands on others will have a wake-up call this week. You could find yourself on the receiving end of an assertive refusal. As the week progresses you learn of a way to boost your bank balance.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 23-December 21): Just because someone hasn't returned your calls, there's no need to assume that a promising relationship has foundered. You should learn the reason for recent distance before the end of the week. Sagittarians will be altering their perspective on life this year, which will lead to a stream of previously unconsidered possibilities.

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# Hidden Words

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

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

# Brain Busters!!

Q. Put a coin in a bottle and then plug the opening with a cork. How can you get the coin out of the bottle without pulling out the cork or breaking the bottle?

A. Push the cork into the bottle, and shake the coin out.

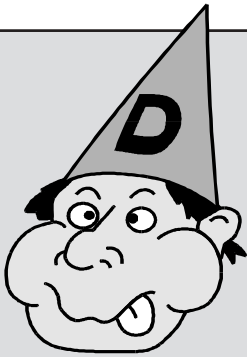
## ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

- Feast of Aesculapius; 2. Greece; 3. Babylon; 4. They laugh; 5. Celtic; 6. Mistletoe; 7. Waldorf Astoria, New York; 8. Frankenstein; 9. Orange; 10. Hogmanay; 11. Julius Caesar; 12. Pope Gregory XIII; 13. He had two faces; 14. March 21; 15. Sylvesterklauses; 16. Tet Nguyen Dan; 17. 1907; 18. 12,000; 19. The Netherlands; 20. Alfred Lord Tennyson.

## Solution to last week's Crossword

S	T	R	U	H	M
N	E	W	Y	E	A
A	I	V	L	L	A
K	I	T	T	E	N
E	L	P	E		
S	O	B	E	R	A
H	O	P	S	F	E
A	A	A	N	O	I
R	E	S	O	L	U
K	S	E	S	T	T

# Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. Which two countries are separated by the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel?

2. The apostle Paul was from which Greek city?

3. Who was the last shogun?

4. When was he forced to cede his military and administrative powers to the then Japanese emperor?

5. Who crossed the Atlantic in a man-powered papyrus boat in 1969 and 1970?

6. What was Four Seasons singer Frankie Valli's original name?
7. In art, what are macaroni?

8. From which country was racing driver Juan Manuel Fangio?

9. What does "a cappella" literally mean?

10. Where would one find the Waddenzee?

11. The earliest-known New Year festival dates back to which civilization?

12. What was the name of Hanna and Barbera's first cartoon?

13. How many Otto the Greats ruled the Ottoman empire?
14. Midas was the king of which ancient kingdom?

15. Where would one find the ruins of his kingdom today?

16. What does "Mardi Gras" literally mean?

17. Who was first to reach the South Pole?

18. Who wrote *The Three Musketeers*?

19. What did Walter Brattain, John Bardeen and William Shockley invent in 1947?

20. A jabiru is what type of bird?

Answers next week.

# Never a Cross Word!

## Across

- Stick together.
- Please reply, in French.
- Not in.
- Rational.
- White herons.
- Singing couplet.
- Typing speed.
- Apprehended.
- Peaceful and prosperous.
- Mohammed the boxer.
- Commoner.
- Each.

## Down

- Brings to an end
- Jabba's race.
- Associate.
- Give in.
- Become uninteresting.
- Years gained.
- Push back.
- Feline fetish.
- Respect.
- Young fellow.
- Catcher in the \*\*\*.
- Honest President.

Solution next week.

1		2		3			4	5		6
						7				
8				9						
10		11					12			
						13			14	
	15				16					
17				18						
19								20		
21					22					

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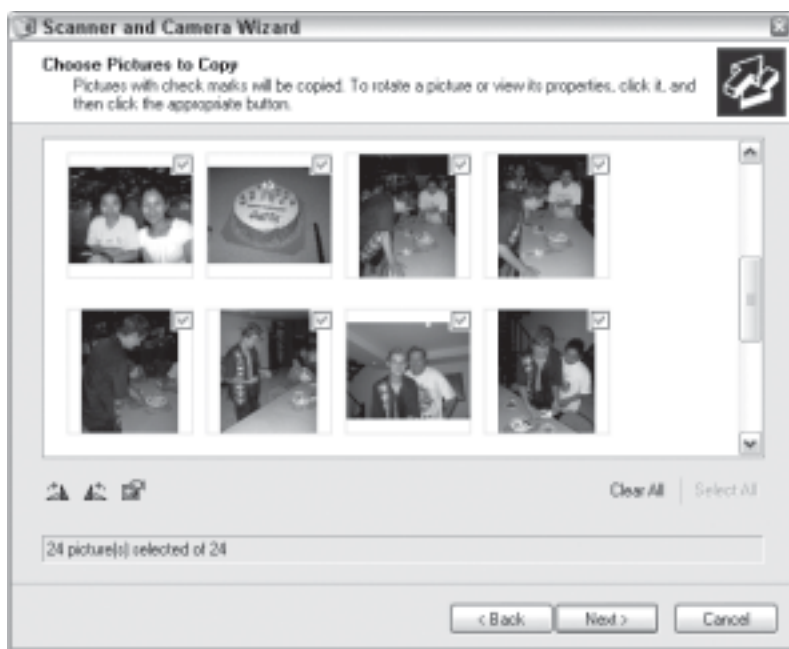
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Windows XP's Scanner and Camera Wizard works like a champ. Transferring pictures from a digital camera to a WinXP PC takes just a few seconds – unless you have some other program getting in the way.



# Digital pic tricks for your computer

**D**id you get a new digital camera for Christmas? Are you struggling with the one you already have?

In this column I'll show you how to hook up a digital camera to your PC, so you can transfer pictures from camera to hard disk in a New Yawk minute.

The only requirement: you must be using Windows XP. Trying to get a digital camera to talk to Windows 98 is like trying to get Arnold Schwarzenegger to talk to Sean Connery.

Here's how you connect your camera to your PC:

Start by taking the "driver" CD out of the box that your camera came in, and throw it away. You don't need the camera manufacturer's drivers. If your PC came pre-loaded with some fancy imaging software, or if you accidentally installed the camera manufacturer's programs, get rid of all of it (Start | Control Panel | Add or Remove Programs).

Believe it or not, Windows XP handles digital cameras with amazing ease. The camera connection is one of the few parts of WinXP that works right, in every situation I've ever encountered – as long as you get rid of the other junk.

When you're ready to

## KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER

transfer pictures, turn off the camera and turn on the computer. Dig the cable that came with the camera out of the camera's box. That's what you need to connect the two.

Next, plug your camera into your computer. The camera should have some sort of cover over an electrical plug (probably a little D-shaped thing). Pop off the cover.

Stick one end of the cable that came with your camera into the camera, then plug the other end into one of the USB ports on your computer. (A USB port is rectangular hole in the computer.)

Don't worry. The cables can only go one way, and you can use any USB port.

Finally, turn on your camera. Windows XP almost always brings up a box that asks what you want to do with your pictures.

Click the line that says Copy pictures to a folder on my computer using Microsoft Scanner and Camera Wizard.

In the rare instance that the Scanner and Camera Wizard

doesn't start by itself, click Start | My Pictures and in the upper left corner click Get Pictures from Camera or Scanner.

When the Scanner and Camera Wizard starts, click Next to get things started, then wait for Windows XP to read inside your camera and show you thumbnails of all the pictures you have stored.

You can click on the pictures that show up sideways and rotate them with the rotation buttons. Choose to transfer all of the pictures to your hard drive – camera memory is expensive, hard drives are cheap.

The Wizard lets you specify a name for a group of pictures, so if you say you want to call these pictures My Birthday, Windows automatically names the pictures My Birthday 001.jpg, My Birthday 002.jpg, and so on.

Tell the Wizard which folder you want the pictures to go into, check the box marked "Delete pictures from my device after copying them," click Next a couple of times, and Windows handles the whole thing.

Your files are copied and renamed, with no more trying to figure out what DSCN01703.JPG means, and they're deleted from the camera's memory, so you have room to take more pictures.

When you're done, click Finish, turn off the camera and unplug it. That's all.

A note from the bleeding edge ... a company called Bredbandsbolaget just announced 100 Mbps always-on Internet connections in Sweden for 895 kronor (about 4,800 baht) per month. Interesting math. 100 Mbps is 400 times faster than 256 Kbps, the fastest Internet connection commercially available in Phuket.

Happy New Year, everybody. I hope that 2547 brings you happiness and prosperity – and a reliable, cheap, fast, always-on Internet connection.

– Woody Leonhard  
– Justin Leonhard  
woody@khunwoody.com



## Beautiful survivors of bygone days

**Y**ou wouldn't know it, but there are some still glorious old homes in Bangkok. Most were razed over decades of savage greed and development, starting in the 1960s.

The most egregious act of official urban vandalism was the wholesale destruction of Sathorn Rd in 1976, when the stately trees that lined the canal were cut down and the few remaining mansions razed in favor of glass skyscrapers.

But protected by royal connections or diplomatic immunity or dumb luck, enough mansions have survived to fill a book. *Treasured Homes of Thailand* (Asia Books, Bangkok, 203, 192 pp) belongs on every coffee table.

The fluid text is written William Warren, who has lived in Thailand for 43 years and has written as many books.

The gorgeous color photography, surprisingly, is by Manit Sriwanichpoom, who made his name as a black-and-white documentary photographer in the style of Philip Blenkinsop with whom he mounted several joint exhibitions. His flair for sumptuous, detailed architectural photography shows a whole new direction of his art.

"The houses in this book cover a wide range," writes Warren. "Some are literally palatial, having served as the residences of Thai royalty, while others are comparatively simple but display certain architectural or historic features that make them worthy of recording."

"One thing they all have in common, however, is the simple fact that they have survived in the face of considerable economic and social odds and this alone, in the context of modern Thailand and especially of Bangkok, makes them exceptional."

Two buildings, Suan Pakkad Palace and the home of MR Kukrit Pramoj, were created out of old Thai structures and moved to their present sites.

Of the rest: "The majority were erected in the early decades of the twentieth century, using plans drawn up or inspired by foreign architects living in Thailand at the time, and are similar to those found in neighboring countries colonized by Europe-

ans, though a few display the Thai penchant for blending assorted styles such as Tudor, Gothic, Venetian, and Art Nouveau."

Eighteen buildings are profiled in this book, with Warren giving the relevant historical and family details. Many have royal connections. Asdang House, of teak panelling and stained glass, was built in 1887 by the seventh of Rama IV King Mongkut's many sons.

Kromprachadandhaburi Palace, built in the late 1920s, with curved walls facing the Chao Phraya River, was a wedding present for the mother of HM Queen Sirikit, born in 1932.

Mahanak Palace was built for the 17th son of Rama V King Chulalongkorn in 1900 and is in the Western style of the time, with high ceilings and jalousie windows.

One of the few survivors on Sathorn Rd is Plodpai House, built in 1936. The architect was

Chitasan Apaiwongse, who was educated in France and designed the official buildings along Rajadamroen Rd and Democracy Monument. A unique cantilevered staircase is in the Art Nouveau mode.

Some buildings are obscure. I lived near Khao San Rd for five years and never saw the House on Khao San Rd. It was built in 1907 as a wedding present for the director-general of the Fine Arts Department.

His daughter studied under Silpa Bhirasri and painted the ceiling designs of one room, while Silpa Bhirasri himself painted the frescos of the Egyptian Room.

A more familiar landmark is on Wireless Rd: the home of Prince Rangsit Prayurasakdi. Built in Tudor style, the palace is still the family's and contains a great collection of Thai art.

Besides greed, Warren mentions other factors for the extinction of the grand houses. "Despite their size, many of them contained remarkably few rooms, much of the space being devoted to such features as lofty entrance halls and verandas that now, instead of the breezes they once encouraged, were more likely to attract dust and noise from neighboring markets and businesses."

## Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt





# A big, bold agenda for the New Year

**GUNS:** I ordered the provincial police to wipe out guns for the New Year period – particularly in Patong – and any visitors to the island traveling through the Tah Chat Chai checkpoint may still be checked for weapons.

Only the Governor and the district chiefs are able to grant permits allowing a person to own anything classed as “assault weapons” – large-caliber handguns and upwards – and I will continue the ban to make the province gun-free.

My proposal for a weapons depository at Tah Chat Chai will probably help because it isn't necessary to bring guns to a tourist destination like Phuket. Anyone found with a weapon will be considered guilty and my simple advice is to leave your gun at home.

I have given responsibility for weapons issues, and the continuing project to improve road safety, to the police and the Phuket Provincial Administration Office (*OrBorJor*).

**JET-SKIS:** I have ordered Vice-Governor Pongpow Ketthong to deal with the jet-ski problem and to enforce all appropriate laws strictly, which is not what used to happen.

If possible, we will permit only those people with a license to use a jet-ski, either solo or with a passenger. The driver will now become responsible for the passenger's life and we will enforce this.

A jet-ski operator's license is valid for seven years and we shall let all current ones expire without renewal, and no more will be issued.

Subsequent governors of Phuket will also carry on this measure.

We shall also begin inspecting the mechanical condition of jet-skis around the island.

**LAND INVESTIGATION:** On tin mine concessions, we are checking if the land titles have been issued legally or not. For example, if a land title such as a SorKor 1 or a NorSor 3 was issued before tin mine concessions were granted



## THE GOVERNOR'S LETTER

for the land in question, it can be issued other kinds of land titles as well.

But land titles cannot be issued if there wasn't a land title before the tin mine concession for the property was granted.

Land titles also cannot be issued on forest reservation area and public land.

I expect more than 100 parcels of SorPorKor land to have titles revoked once the Land Investigation Team – as ordered by Newin Chidchob, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives – completes its investigation and its findings are checked.

The evidence must be clear in all cases. Titles involving so-called “flying SorKor 1” land are also under consideration of this central committee.

Vice-Governor Pongpow is presiding over the committee.

**NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION:** I am due to sign an agreement with Deputy Prime Ministers Somkid Jatusripitak and Wissanu Krea-ngam in Bangkok.

This agreement is my pledge to govern according to the strategies proposed to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra at my appointment and to reach certain goals before September 30 this year.

A committee will grade my efficacy – and project results to September 2004 – in the following categories: the “three provinces” – Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi – strategy; Phuket-alone schemes; and national policies such as corruption, illegal drugs and poverty.

The committee will also inspect my local management of various government departments including hospitals, the police, land office and social welfare.

My New Year's resolution is to concentrate on these issues.

Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura

Some time ago, I wrote an article on the amazing facts about our bodies. It received positive comments, with quite a few people requesting more information.

There are 2.5 trillion (give or take a few) red blood cells in your body at any given moment. To maintain this number, about 2½ million new ones need to be produced every second by your bone marrow.

They live for an average of 120 days and the blood cells can circumnavigate your body in less than 20 seconds.

Your heart pumps about 1 million barrels of blood during an average lifetime – that's enough to fill more than three super tankers.

Our lungs inhale more than 2 million liters of air every day – and we do not even think about it. If we placed every cell of our lungs on one layer and spread them out, they would cover the area of a tennis court.

When we sneeze, we generate wind at a velocity of 166 kmh and a cough moves air out at 100 kmh. It's also impossible to sneeze with your eyes open and when you sneeze, all your bodily functions stop – even your heart.

How about our eyes, which never grow after birth? We blink about 25 times a minute, which equates to more than 6 million times a year.

If you could save all the times your eyes blink in one lifetime and use them all at once, you would see blackness for 1.2 years. When we wink, we move more than 200 muscles and when we smile, more than 30 muscles are activated.

Our eyes can distinguish up to 1 million colors and take in more information than the largest telescope known to man. People are also the only animals

MORE  
amazing  
facts about  
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in the world who cry tears. In space, astronauts cannot cry, because there is no gravity, so the tears can't flow.

The average human body contains enough sulphur to kill all the fleas on an average dog, enough carbon to make 900 pencils, enough potassium to fire a toy cannon, enough fat to make seven bars of soap and enough phosphorus to make 2,200 match heads.

Humans are also the only primates that don't have pigment in the palms of their hands. There are more living organisms on the skin of a single human being than there are human beings on the face of the Earth.

There is more bacteria in your mouth than the human population of the US and Canada combined. Every square inch of the human body has an average of 32 million bacteria on it.

**HEALTH  
WATCH**  
Peter Davison

If Barbie were life-size, her measurements would be 39-23-33. She would stand seven feet, two inches tall and have a neck twice the length of a normal human's neck.

In your lifetime, you'll produce enough spit to fill two swimming pools and you will burn more calories sleeping than you do watching TV. As a baby, you will have dribbled 120 liters of saliva well before your first birthday.

By the time you were two years old, you would have crawled, on average, 150 kilometers. You also spent about half an hour as a single cell.

The length of your foot is also the same as that of your forearm between your wrist and the inside of your elbow. Don't believe me, measure it.

The human gut contains about a kilogram of bacteria. In fact, there are more bacteria growing in and on the body than there are human cells. In a lifetime, a human being will grow six feet of nose hair and shed 19 kg of dead skin.

For all you drinkers ... we will consume about 60,000 liters of water in a lifetime, passing most of it through our bladder which, when full, can hold more than a liter of urine.

And finally, I bet you didn't know that humans and dolphins are the only species that have sex for pleasure. According to the World Health Organization, there are approximately 100 million acts of sexual intercourse each day. That's a lot of pleasure.

Enjoy, and have a safe New Year.

*Peter Davison is the Manager for International Services at Phuket International Hospital. Questions or comments may be sent by email to peter@phuket-inter-hospital.co.th or by fax to 076-210936.*

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*Riding a  
motorcycle?  
Please...*



**Thai law requires that motorcycle drivers and passengers wear a safety helmet with the chin strap fastened at all times – 24 hours a day.**

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## Early bedtime no social cure

In airing his views about Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's plan to close nightclubs earlier, Safari Club owner Chairat Sukbal [See *First Person* on facing page] raises some important points. Among them is that the government hasn't fully considered the effects such a move would have on Thailand's all-important tourism industry. If such a plan were implemented and enforced, no province would suffer more than Phuket.

The vision of Soi Bangla deserted at midnight may seem more like a scene from a Fellini film than a potential reality, but if 2003 taught anything, it is that PM Thaksin is prepared to back his crack-downs with action.

Like most industries, international tourism is demand-driven. Success in this highly competitive market requires a keen understanding of what attracts foreign visitors. Phuket's success has come by allowing market forces to meet the needs of a wide range of tourists, including backpackers, diving enthusiasts, package tourists, yachtsmen, bar flies, golfers and well-heeled visitors who enjoy the finest hotels on the island.

If there is one thread that ties together these diverse groups, it is that they enjoy Phuket's world-famous nightlife. There are dive sites, golf courses and five-star hotels the world over, but the nightlife is one of Thailand's strongest selling points. To curb it would be, as K. Chairat points out, "killing the goose that lays the golden eggs".

Moving the closing time to 1 am would cripple the industry; a 10 pm closing time would probably kill it altogether – and the sales of One Tambon, One Product goods could never make up for the lost jobs and revenue.

The idea that crime, drugs and sexual promiscuity can be reduced by closing nightclubs earlier is similar in its naivety to the approach Bangkok Governor Samak Sundaravej took early last year in dealing with a case of corruption.

When Bangkok city officials were shown on iTV accepting bribes from street vendors, Governor Samak did not punish the officials. Rather, he sent a team of workers to rip up the sidewalk where the incident took place. He later told the press, "Don't you get it: no vendors, no bribery?"

Such ham-fisted attempts to cure social ills are not only doomed to fail, they can actually exacerbate the problems they are meant to solve – by sending a clear message to the populace that a quick fix, backed with brute force, is the best approach to solving a complex problem. It is in such a social climate that crime, drug abuse and "influential figures" thrive.

– The Editor

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## Letters

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

### Deck-chair tyrants taking over beaches

Phuket's pristine beaches have become choked over the past six years. Sun umbrella-chair combinations now stretch the entire length of most of the popular beaches. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, to have a beach picnic.

My Thai wife and children enjoy going to the eastern end of Nai Harn beach. Only three years ago this beach, had no sun chairs or umbrellas.

One weekend, we parked our car and walked to our favorite spot. The tide was in. As usual, we took our beach mats down to our little picnic spot near the outlet from the reservoir.

We had been there just a few minutes when a man came down and told us we could not set our things in this place because he was about to set up three umbrellas and chairs.

This was right at the waters edge. The usual "chair line" is further back, some 20 meters from the high tide mark. As the man started to set them up, our things were in the way.

I spoke to him politely, explaining that the beach is public land and should be accessible free of charge, at all times. While we were swimming, he came down and removed our mats and picnic items by roughly throwing them on some nearby rocks. He then proceeded to set up his chairs in their place.

I told him that I would report his actions to the Tourist Police, but he simply laughed and walked away. After we left the beach, we did go to the Tourist Police Office, which, incidentally,

is a long way from Nai Harn.

The police were polite and agreed there was a problem. The Captain instructed two officers to return to Nai Harn Beach where the officers agreed that umbrellas and chairs should not have been set up where they were.

After further discussion, it was agreed that we could set our picnic things in this place at any time we chose.

I tell this story because I feel that the "umbrella creep" we are witnessing needs to be addressed. The beaches of Phuket are in danger of becoming like those in Spain, Italy or Florida.

I would like to see the Tourist Police impose and enforce regulations that restrict deck chair touts and others from setting up businesses on public land. Our matter was finally settled with hand shakes and "wais" all round; but this will do little to address the larger issue.

John Darroch  
Chalong

### Vodka and water a bitter mixture

Three friends and I were drinking at the Black Rose Bar on Soi Eric in Patong on the evening of November 27.

One of my friends started buying vodka shooters for two attractive bargirls. They made faces to show that the vodka burned going down. My friend had already bought them about three rounds each before ordering another. One girl brought out the shots, left them on the table, and said she would return soon.

For fun, I sampled the vodka

– only to find out that it was just water!

We refused to pay for all the shooters we had ordered, but did pay for our beer – before leaving.

This was my seventh trip to Thailand. Perhaps I have been lucky on past visits, but this incident was a first for me. It will not stop me from returning to Thailand, but it has left a bitter taste in my mouth – no pun intended.

Gilles Lemieux  
Canada

*The Gazette sent a copy of Mr Lemieux's letter to the bar's management.*

### Bar's response:

I read your account with dismay and disgust. That "someone" could write such a story is laughable. That you deem such unsubstantiated claims fit to print reflects on your publication.

With 70% of my business derived from return customers, of all nationalities, such a practice would be suicidal. In contrast, my customer base has been steadily growing throughout the seven years I have been in charge.

If such events took place, why was I unaware? I am there every night and the cancellation of any bill would require my authorization. In addition, why, on questioning, do none of the girls remember these customers?

I am led to believe the answer lies in short-term memory loss from excessive intake of alcohol, not something my staff are being accused of.

Manager  
The Black Rose Bar

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



# Social order – a plea for sanity

Some governments have good ideas but just go about them in the wrong way. This government, for example, seems to think that shutting down entertainment venues at 1 am or even at 10 pm will provide an instant solution to misbehavior among the young and improve social order.

I was both fed up and saddened when I heard this proposal. The government only seems interested in finding instant solutions to problems, and does so without first consulting the public or business operators that will be affected. As tourism is Phuket's selling point, we also have to consider what it is that tourists really want.

This government goes by the slogan *khit mai, tham mai* [new ideas, new actions] but it increasingly seems that there modus operandi is *khit aeng, tham aeng* [think and do whatever we want].

Mind you, the government is right to be concerned about drugs and crime and what young people get up to after dark. But will closing entertainment venues earlier provide an instant solution to these vices? Of course not.

Parents should control young people who misbehave, not governments. In a democracy, it is the ultimate responsibility of



## FIRST PERSON

**Safari Club owner Chairat Sukbal has been involved with the entertainment business in Patong for more than 20 years. He thinks the government's suggestion of closing venues at 1 am or even earlier would be disastrous, especially for tourism.**

parents to control their kids.

If there was a sudden increase in traffic accidents, this government would blame the cars and order them off the roads, rather than re-educating the drivers.

As for crime and drugs, it's hard to imagine how anyone could seriously argue that closing entertainment venues earlier is going to solve anything.

Tourism will play a key role in Thailand's future development, yet these kinds of suggestions only undermine this increasingly important industry. Closing entertainment venues earlier and earlier is a classic case of killing the goose that lays the golden egg.

If this government took the trouble to consult people in the

entertainment industry before acting, they would quickly get a complete picture of the real situation – along with some practical ideas about how to solve some of the problems.

Perhaps the government should consider zoning entertainment into specific areas, as is done in some other countries. But bringing forward closing times will simply force people to entertain themselves on the streets, as happens now in Patong after 2 am.

The government just doesn't seem to understand why tourists go on vacation. If I go to Paris, will I only look at the Eiffel Tower, do some daytime shopping and sightseeing? Of course not. I will have some fun at night, too, by seeing how the French enjoy

themselves after dark.

Will tourists still want to come to Phuket if they are told by the government that they need to be in their hotel bed by 10 pm each night? No. They will go somewhere else, where the government does not prohibit fun.

Since the government ordered entertainment venues to close at 2 am, our businesses have been suffering. Regular visitors who used to come every year are not coming back. They prefer countries that do not control what they can and cannot do and at what time of day or night.

Closing earlier and earlier also means that more jobs will be lost. Hard-working, law-abiding Thais will find themselves out of work, and no longer able to sup-

port their families. Can we go back to growing rubber? I don't think so.

How does this inevitable loss of jobs fit in with the government's proclaimed aim of reducing poverty? Not very well.

What this proposed edict seems to suggest is, "Let the tourists drink on the beaches in the dark." But will earlier closing times actually cut crime, or will people simply gather in less secure or even downright dangerous places?

I believe that most people disagree with this idea. I think if it were put forward in a referendum a large majority would be opposed to it. The government is simply trying to seek simple solutions to complex problems.

It's interesting that Phuket is being promoted as a potential regional business hub to rival Singapore. Tourists from Singapore tell me that in their country entertainment venues are open 24 hours, and that nobody there suggests that crime and delinquency can be solved by closing clubs early.

Why should Thailand be so different? If the government were to close entertainment venues at 10 pm, I for one would find another industry as fast as possible – because it would be the death of tourism in Phuket.

## Helmets not seen on drivers' heads

As of October 1, anyone on Phuket riding a motorcycle, including passengers, must wear a crash helmet. So why are there are still many people on motorcycles not wearing helmets in and around Patong?

Tim Patong

**Pol Capt Teerawat Liamsuwan, Chief of Traffic Police, Kathu Police Station, replies:**

We are very strict about setting up checkpoints at many places in Patong and arresting people breaking traffic laws, especially Thais, and especially for not wearing a helmet. It now seems better in Patong with almost 100% of people wearing helmets in the daytime. During the New Year holiday period we will be more strict on checking for drunk drivers, too.

## Can I rent a bike to take the driving test?

I need to take a test to get my motorcycle driver's license but my bike is unregistered and has no inspection sticker. I am trying to get this but have been held up by paperwork as the bike is still in the name of its owner, who lives in another province. Can I still use my unregistered bike for the test? If not, can I take the test on a rented motorcycle?

Somchai H

**Chariyut Dumchaom, an officer at the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office, replies:**

The officers aren't strict on the documents but they are more concerned about inspecting the bike's roadworthiness to see if it's suitable for a driving test. Examinees can use anyone's motorbike in the test, even a rented one.

## Issues & ANSWERS

Want to know how to get something done? Can't understand some of the dafter things that seem to go on in Phuket? Want to pitch an idea to Phuket's authorities or institutions? Then this is the forum for you. Submit your queries or suggestions to us and we'll ask the appropriate people to respond to them.

Write to: The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at [www.phuketgazette.net](http://www.phuketgazette.net)

## Boss going too far?

My Thai girlfriend started a new job at the beginning of December. Her salary is about 5,000 baht a month.

Now her boss says that he will deduct 500 baht each month from her salary to cover her social insurance, and that the total amount deducted monthly might even be 2,000 baht.

If there is a scam, as I believe, who should she contact? She is too shy to ask about this.

I think this happens all the time as many young girls are too afraid of their superiors to ask.

Cheated Rawai

**Sakchai Sukpaladisai, Chief of**

**the Phuket Labor Protection and Welfare Office (PLPWO), replies:**

Your girlfriend should first ask her employer to explain the amount being deducted from her salary.

If she still believes that she is being cheated, she can file a complaint with the Phuket Labor Protection and Welfare Office at Tel: 076-211995 or 076-220760.

If, after investigating, officers believe her employer is deducting more than the law specifies, the employer will be charged with cheating. If found guilty, he will be fined up to 100,000 baht, or be jailed for up to six months, or both.

## What's the reality of minimum salaries?

I work for a Thai government school under a 30,000-baht-a-month contract. As a Canadian, the minimum wage requirement will rise to 60,000 baht next July. Of course I would love to have my salary doubled, but I don't think the school can afford to do this.

Will there be an exception to the minimum wage law for teachers, or at least teachers at government schools?

Worried Ajarn Phuket

**Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen, of the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office, replies:**

The 60,000 baht monthly salary refers to the amount of money you need in order to get an extension for a one-year permit to stay.

You may still stay and work in Thailand with your income of 30,000 baht but without a 60,000-baht monthly income you will not have the convenience of extending your permit to stay without having to leave the country every 90 days [on 'visa runs'].



# Lots of pain, little gain for Patong

Is your arse being kicked? It may well be. Despite as much pushing and promoting as possible, many business operators in Patong are not yet reaping the rewards of this much-touted "record" high season.

In fact, a few people I know are really struggling. We are reassured, however, by reports that hotel bookings are marvelous and the airport is chockablock 24/7 with punters just waiting to give us their money.

As it's a far sight cheaper and much less annoying than hiring a tuk-tuk in Bangla, I recently decided to get on shank's pony and conduct a pub crawl, er sorry, make that "sustained research field trip", to see where all these tourists bloody well are.

The normal hot spots are busy, and quite rightly too, because most of them work hard to keep them that way. Tai Pan, Bananana (I always know how to start spelling banana but never know when to stop) Molly's and Scruffy's are "rammed to the tits" as we say in the business.

The new Jammin' is performing very respectably for a new venue and Tiger is full. Star World still needs some sort of spark, but is never empty. Beer bars look a lot less busy than in previous years, but go-go bars seem to be doing okay.

I was surprised and delighted when I hit the beach road. Patong, it occurred to me, differs from most other seaside resort towns, where the nightlife tends to be centered as near the shoreline as possible.

The design of the beach road in Patong, however, seems to lead away from the all the fun. What should be the hottest entertainment real estate on the island is instead taken up by sports shops, dodgy watch vendors and



By Konrad Stalin

travel agents. I wandered up towards Mc's to grab a cardboard burger and to see the very excellent Nina, Manolo and friends – the world's first Thairish band. I was drawn a little further past the road when I heard the Beatles being played at decent volume, through a good sound system.

Investigating further, I emerged into a beer garden that was as full as a seaside loo on a bank holiday Monday.

I am referring to The Port at the Banthai Beach Resort. The place was rocking, full of couples and families having a top time.

Service was superb and the place is large and well-lit. The band opened with a tune that has been a big hit in the US and Europe for the last few months, the superb *Where is the love?* by LA hip-hoppers Black Eyed Peas.

Patong's DJs will start to play it in about six months, one would expect, and once they do they will never stop. Some bands in Patong that seem to think that learning one new tune a year is a bit too much, but here was a band that covered not just one, but several current Western chart-toppers in one night.

Their other material was groovy, so I even forgave them for the ultimate sin: playing the dreaded *Hotel Bloody California*. The Port looks like the future of Patong, folks.

The DJ did not play a single wanky R&B song all night and I was glad for that because the hottest tunes with local DJs seem

to be anything with the word m\*\*\*\*\*fu\*\*\*r or "pimp" in them – not exactly the kind of language most parents want to expose their kids to, and there were many children present at The Port that night.

Perhaps other venue owners could learn something from this. Hopefully some will take back control of their sound systems from bargirls and DJs, because playing appropriate music is important if the aim is to attract families and couples.

I went up to Bangers recently. Panthip is still a bit reserved software-wise, and I have yet to see the hordes of school-girls in very tight blouses as reported in the *Bangkok Post*. Where are they?

The huge new development on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd in Patong should have a big impact on Fun City.

Depending on which barfly you get your information from, it is variously reported as going to include a bowling alley, a Hard Rock Cafe, a 10-screen movie theater, a shopping complex, several hotels, a supermarket (Lotus, please) and a million other things.

I believe that the developers are not asking for key money either, which does my heart good. Paying too much up-front stifles creativity and risk-taking, in my opinion.

This is the main reason why so many of the island's entertainment options are such a homogeneous lump of similar products. It is also rumored that the new project may even have a big car park. Hurrah.

There are already plenty of parking spaces in Patong, of course, but unfortunately these are all taken up by the endless rows of motorcycles and jeeps for rent.

Despite what has been a disappointing season so far, the best-ever news for Phuket is the arrival of the new budget airlines.

My feeling is that we are sitting on a place that is really about to boom. It is now possible to fly from Bangers to Phuket for the same price as a taxi from Bangers to Pattaya and to neighboring countries for peanuts.

This is no doubt bad news for the one-day visa run guys, but great news for those of us who are getting bored with Burma and Haad Yai.

The impact of this dramatic cut in fares will be the making of Phuket. Open an offshore account, because we're all gonna be rich.

I am sure that the local authorities are well aware of this too and are right now preparing their budgets to improving infrastructure, transport options and beach safety.



## A cool Yule

### EDGEWISE

By John Gilpin

An Aran islander, who by now would be long since dead, told me he had never left the island in all his life, never traveled abroad, never visited another part of Ireland, not even mainland Donegal. (Aran Island off Donegal, by the way, should not be confused with the three Aran Islands off Galway.)

"And why should I be wanting to go away?" he said, seeing my surprise.

"Like your good self now, the whole world comes over to visit us here."

Living here I sometimes feel like that old islander – the whole world seems to be flying into Phuket at this time of year.

I had an email from an old friend, who I hadn't seen for years, saying that his brother, who I hadn't seen for decades, would be staying at the Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort with his family. I emailed back my telephone number.

Now why should I want to see that person, or he want to see me, when we lived in the same country for centuries without bothering to look each other up, just because he happens to be visiting Phuket? I have no idea. But get in touch we did, and very pleasant it was, too.

Sadly, the old friend had a minor stroke while he was here, which made me realize that if we didn't see each other the next time for as long as it had been this time, we would never see each other again.

"Keep in touch," I said as we parted. I doubt that we will.

Another old friend with whom I had long been out of touch came here to do a diving course. We had dinner one night in Kata.

The course was going well, he said, but one evening driving

his motorbike over the hill to Chalong he had skidded on an icy road and fallen off.

Icy roads in Phuket? What was he talking about? Had my old friend gone crazy?

"Very icy indeed," he continued. "Ice all over the road. Very dangerous."

I was dumbstruck.

"Must have fallen off the back of a lorry."

Friends of friends, who were here recently for three weeks, divided their time between a tailor's shop in Karon and the Tamarind Bar in Chalong.

After they returned home I received an email saying they had supplied all their friends and family with new wardrobes and would I please "say hello to the Tamarind from us – we miss those late night sangsomsodamanaws. We'll be back next year". Perhaps they should try the beach for a change.

The beach? Yes, well, we still don't know where and how we're going to celebrate Christmas this year; at the time of writing there's still a few days to go.

We could book a table at a fancy restaurant and stuff ourselves with turkey and Christmas pudding and jolly ourselves up with expensive wines.

We could try to recreate Christmases gone by with crackers, silly hats and slurred speeches. Just the thought of it makes me feel both nostalgic and nauseous.

Instead, if the weather's good, we will take off for a beach in a longtail with our snorkels and masks. Some barbecued chicken on the sand and a couple of cans of Carlsberg will suit me fine.

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# Survey shows pickups 'most reliable'

THAILAND: An insight into customers' perceptions of reliability for new cars – and possibly their buying habits – is provided by a Thai survey published this month.

The 2,200-strong sample taken in the JD Power Asia Pacific Thailand Initial Quality Study involved 32 different vehicles from 11 different marques, all aged two to six months old.

Four main categories of vehicle – pickup truck, saloon, sports utility vehicle (SUV) and MPV – were included in the survey, conducted between January and July last year.

The survey covers 135 potential problems over nine of the vehicles' systems, including features and controls, engine, ride, handling and braking, and transmission.

The study found that pickup

truck owners reported fewest problems, with 241 per 100 vehicles (PP100) – or 2.41 per vehicle – while MPV owners reported 410 PP100. Saloon-car and SUV owners reported 259 and 263 PP100, respectively.

Isuzu's D-Max version of its top-selling Spacecab pickup, launched mid-2002, ranks highest in initial quality, with 193 PP100. The Isuzu D-Max Spark and the Mazda Fighter come respectively second and third.

The Honda Civic ranks highest in initial quality in the mid-size saloon car segment for the second consecutive year at 252 PP100. The Civic is followed in the rankings by the Toyota Corolla, Altis and the Honda City.

Sanjay Ralhan, Manager at JD Power Asia Pacific, said that according to the survey, 29% of

owners had not experienced a problem in the two-to-six month initial phase.

At the other end of the spectrum, he reported that 20% of new-vehicle owners experienced five or more problems in the same period.

The study suggests a strong corollary between brand loyalty and perceived initial quality. Almost half (48%) of owners who did not report a quality problem stated that they would consider buying the same vehicle, or another from the same stable, in the future.

However, this figure relates only to the 29% of owners who reported no faults – in other words, just 14% overall. The feelings of the remaining 86% are unknown.

Perhaps surprisingly, 27%

of owners who reported five or more faults (20% of the total survey) said that they too would buy the same brand again. Looked at another way, 5% would continue to buy vehicles from the same company even having had negative initial experiences. Again, the opinions of the other 95% were not disclosed.

Thus, overall, only 19% of respondents said that they would consider buying from the same marque again, whether they had reported faults or not.

If this survey is in any way representative of the Thai new-vehicle market as a whole, then a huge 81% of potential buyers are perhaps waiting to be enticed by the newest model with the best marketing strategy. Reliability may come low on their list of priorities.

## Happier new year, but no promises

The global economic outlook for 2004 is positive. Obviously, there are exceptions, but for the major economies, the situation has improved substantially over the past 12 months.

The US economy has improved dramatically throughout 2003. First quarter growth was at an annualized rate of 1.4%, and by the third quarter this had risen to a staggering 8.2%.

No one expects that to be maintained. It would be impossible because at some stage inflationary pressures and short-term interest rate rises would choke off this phenomena.

However, growth in the US for 2004 could easily reach 4%. The US Federal Reserve, noting that inflationary pressures are largely absent, has in its usual "central bank speak" made it clear that it is not intending to raise short-term interest rates in the immediate future.

As for the decline in the value of the US dollar compared with many other currencies, from an American perspective, this is not a problem. In time, it will help reduce the deficits on the current account and trade.

To most American residents, it is a matter of little, if any, interest. Most Americans will notice the weaker dollar only if they wish to travel to countries with "stronger" currencies or buy something from these countries.

Probably the area of great-

est concern is consumer debt, which is the highest it has ever been at this stage of the economic cycle. US, UK and Australian consumers are carrying the highest debt load. Taking incomes into account, Australian consumers are actually carrying one third more debt than the average American.

For US investors who place their money in other countries for investment purposes, 2003 has often delivered currency gains in addition to normal investment gains.

British and Euro investors with US assets have found 2003 to be a difficult year, with gains in the US often lost entirely because of currency movements.

UK domestic investors who placed too much of their funds in the FTSE 100 index (the "Footsie") will have noted that 2003 gains have been reasonable but lagged behind other markets.

Footsie investors have also underperformed domestically. The FTSE 250 index has returned almost three times as much as the FTSE 100 index.

This may seem strange, but there are two sound reasons. First, the FTSE 250 index is a "mid-cap" index whereas the FTSE 100 is an abbreviation for a company with a large market capitalization, in other words, a large company. A "mid-cap" is a medium-sized company.

The two reasons for the



## MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

domestic underperformance of the Footsie are that of the 100 companies in this index, at least 40 are highly dependent on the fortunes of their US operations. The Sterling's strength against the US dollar has seriously undermined profits from this source.

Second, the Footsie has a much higher percentage of financial stocks, such as banks and building societies, than the FTSE 250.

The UK economy also looks set to deliver reasonable economic growth for 2004 – not as high as in the US but probably in the range of 2.5%-3.5%.

The International Monetary Fund has recently raised two concerns about the British economy. First, it is concerned that government spending is too high.

Second, it is concerned about a residential housing market "crash". Interest rates have started to rise in the UK and, with 92% of mortgages being adjustable, homeowners are already noting the increase. An adjust-

able-rate mortgage means that every time the central bank raises interest rates, the rate rise is passed on to the homeowner.

Over the past few years, UK house prices have risen at an incredible rate, so any substantial increase in interest rates will cause a lot of pain for many people.

Investors in UK commercial property, outside of office blocks in the city of London, have not seen huge price rises and are less likely to feel the pain. This is assuming that they have invested via a commercial property fund.

In the Euro zone, there are still signs of economic growth for 2004 but for most countries it will be under 2%.

Asia, in general, is enjoying good economic growth and for most of the major markets, this will continue into 2004.

All of these predictions are based on the current world situation. Obviously, other unexpected factors can intervene. At this stage, 2004 looks promising.

Richard Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial planning service. He can be reached at Tel and Fax: 076-381997, Mobile: 01-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th.

## On the Move

**Panjit Pisawong**, 45, from Bangkok, has been appointed the new Chief of the Phuket Commercial Affairs Office.

K. Panjit has a master's degree in economic law from Chulalongkorn University and a degree in law from Thammasart University. K. Panjit has 21 years' experience with the Ministry of Commerce, first as a Senior Trade Officer in the Department of Foreign Trade and most recently in a similar position with the Department of Trade Negotiations.



**Tamrong Tongtan**, 42, a native of Phuket, has been promoted to Chief of the Phuket Treasury Office (PTO).

K. Tamrong, a law graduate from Ramkhamhang University in Bangkok, was deputy chief of the PTO for a year and also worked for two years with the Secretary of the Director-General of the Treasury in Bangkok.

**Tara Boonprasom**, 27, from Bangkok, is the new Graphic Designer for the Phuket Gazette. K. Tara is a science graduate from King Mongkut's Institute of Technology in Bangkok and joins the Gazette from the Water Port View Partnership on Phuket. K. Tara also had his own graphic design business in the capital.

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Been promoted? Made a career change? Know someone who has? Let us know by email to [onthemove@phuketgazette.net](mailto:onthemove@phuketgazette.net).

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Cars with capacity for no more than 7 people	141	180
Cars with capacity for more than 7 people	4	1
Pickup trucks	157	115
Meter taxis	-	-
Motorcycles	1,447	1,293

Source: Phuket Provincial Transportation Office

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# Flying high, the ultimate pie plate

American football, with all its bulky gear, may not work so well in Phuket's heat and humidity. A football helmet probably weighs a kilo and the sweat wouldn't make it more bearable. That's why the ultimate alternative is a game of ultimate Frisbee – and the less you wear, the better.

Ultimate Frisbee is not a widely-known sport in Asia but, according to Chris Fisher, an ultimate fan, it is becoming more and more popular in many places, especially North America.

The Frisbee was supposedly invented at Yale University, by students slinging around tins from Mother Frisbie's Pies. They have evolved a long way from there.

A game of ultimate Frisbee is easy to arrange. Ideally, there should be seven people on each of two teams but if your friends are drowsy that day, then five a team works just as well.

The pitch is about the size of an American football field and set up with two end zones for scoring. Players may not run with the Frisbee and have 10 seconds while in possession to throw it to a teammate. If the Frisbee is intercepted or not caught, then possession goes to the opposing team.

"Touchdowns" are scored when a player catches the Frisbee in the opponents' end zone.

Pretty straightforward – and this is a non-contact sport, unlike American football, so injuries should be limited. If you happen to grab an opposition player or have an urge to crush them in a tackle then don't forget that, in this referee-free sport, the other team members may call the fouls.

The first team to score at least 15 goals and go at least two goals clear of the opposing team wins the game.



Watch out for a flier! Chris Fisher about to Frisbee it up.

Playing ultimate Frisbee is great outdoors. Imagine, you can bathe in the sun, develop a ferocious tan and burn calories. You may say that's possible to do in basketball, tennis and other sports, too. But a game of basketball or tennis requires a hoop or net and a court.

All you need for the ultimate game is a Frisbee, 10 players on a field or indoor court, and lots of water.

Nothing fancy, but everything is action-packed.

The only equipment you need is a Frisbee, which will cost between 50 and 600 baht.

The sport involves heavy physical activity and if you're looking for a calorie burner, then look no more. It's not hard to learn if you're looking for some fun. As Mr Fisher says, "People of all ages can play and it's great for exercise."

– Supaporn Sriprom

*Fans play ultimate Frisbee at Dulwich International College three times weekly. Monday and Wednesday games are played inside the gymnasium from 7:30 pm to 9:30 pm. Sunday games are played outdoors on the soccer field, from 3 pm to 5 pm. For more information call Chris Fisher at Tel: 06-2786574.*



The Phuket Badminton Club attracts fans from all walks of life, including Deputy Prime Minister Korn Dhabaransi (standing, in gray shirt).

## The Generation Game

Nonthawat Disayabutra

Phuket Badminton Club (PBC) was established in 1962 to bring together local badminton enthusiasts and to establish Phuket as a contender in national tournaments.

Poon Ongsaranakom, locally-born but a member of the then national badminton squad, founded the club 41 years ago but the original objective, to promote enjoyment first and win matches second, hasn't changed with the passing of the years.

But a new generation of players, under the stewardship of president Suthipong Thanpongcharoen and vice-president Kowit Suandee, are guided through the game's finer points with a higher degree of competitiveness.

K. Kowit, a veteran player of more than 10 years with the PBC, recently told the *Gazette* of part of this next generation: his daughters. "Patara (14) and Pataraporn (12) started to play badminton when they were nine and eight years old. They have joined another 200 players here, at least 22 of whom are at tournament level."

K. Kowit explained that although all of the players exhibit great enthusiasm for the game, not everyone has the skill to go on to match level.

However, the club boasts two coaches, Somboon Suesakulpaisarn, and Pramote Benjawarangkul, both of whom were in the national youth team and are on hand to aid their fellow club players every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 8 pm to 10 pm. Training sessions are also arranged for Saturday mornings between 9 am and noon.

"But," continued K. Kowit, "K. Somboon and K. Pramote have full-time jobs and having our own dedicated daytime coaches

wouldn't be feasible. Our annual club fees are between 200 and 500 baht a year per player for administration, gym rental and all accessories," he said. "We can't afford professional coaches."

The training and effort is producing results for the club, said K. Kowit, particularly with the rising stars of the new generation. Recent PBC winners include Maneepong Jongjit, 12, who won an individual male national title in Trang and received his trophy from HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

Maneepong was paired with K. Kowit's daughter Patara, then 12, in the 2002 Teacher Council of Thailand (TCT) youth badminton tournament in Bangkok, coming in at a very creditable third.

Speaking with pride, K. Kowit related how Maneepong and Patara achieved second place in the 2003 Mall Merlin Championship Under-14s finals.



Maneepong Jongjit (front, left) and Patara Suandee (front, right) with PBC Vice President Kowit Suandee (right).

Showing no signs of sibling rivalry, Patara graciously stepped aside and let younger sister Pataraporn pair Maneepong to third place in the Thai Cement Badminton Tournament in Bangkok in 2003. Maneepong and Pataraporn are due to play this tourney again in February in Khon Kaen.

K. Kowit said that PBC could be one of, if not the best, in the country, "But we need more support from the Phuket government," he said.

## Baan Samkong bounces out of Aerothai volleyball finals

BANGKOK: Baan Samkong's volleyball team brought back little from the Aerothai Mini Volleyball tournament finals at the Hua Mark Stadium – apart from their team spirit – after facing one of the strongest teams in the opening round.

The Under-13s contest saw the finalist teams allocated into four groups. Among Baan Samkong's first-round competitors was Baan Pluak School from Songkhla – last year's runner's-

up in the national tournament.

Baan Samkong lost to Baan Pluak 0-2 but won with their own 2-0 score against Klong Nu School from Haad Yai.

Another 2-0 score, this time in favor of Baan Khon Haad School from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, saw Baan Samkong out of the contest.

Defeated but undaunted, Baan Samkong are already eyeing the 2004 championships.

– Nonthawat Disayabutra

## Muang Thalang shine in school championships

PHUKET TOWN: Muang Thalang School were the overall winners of the recent Phuket Town Athletics Championships, coming first in six categories.

Fifteen Phuket schools took part in the three-day-event held

at Surakul Stadium, on Wichit Songkhram Rd, with Piboon-sawasdee School winning the Under-9s female and Darasamut School taking the top prize in the Under-11s male group.

Muang Thalang won both

male and female classes in the Under-15s, Under-17s and the "Best Cheerleader" prize, and shared the Under-19s honors with Open-class winners Phuket Wittayalai School.

– Nonthawat Disayabutra

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**NOT WINNERS, BUT GRINNERS:** A Patong Municipality Team member (in yellow and black) holds aloft the runners-up cup for the Open division of the Phuket Futsal Tournament.

## Full-time for Rajabhat futsal tourney

Dhirarat Boonkongsaeen

**PHUKET TOWN:** The Phuket Futsal Tournament held at Rajabhat Phuket Institute saw the Sit Kathu team winners in the Open division and Team Sarin taking honors in the Under-17s, in the finals held on December 28.

Both teams took home a cup and 7,000 baht in prize money, in addition to the glory.

A total of 82 teams – 40 in the Under-17s and 42 in the Open class – competed in the nine-day event.

In the Under-17s finals, Phuket Niti team came a creditable third with a trophy and a cash prize of 2,000 baht while the fiery Borrae Sports Center Team came second, receiving 4,000 baht and the second-place cup.

The finals of the Open class saw Sit Kathu pitched against the Patong Municipality Team. Prachaya Hongthong put Sit Kathu ahead after five minutes but

Patong Municipality equalized a minute later with Sumet Burarak's only goal of the match.

Anucha Thanomhrian then struck a second for Sit Kathu, pushing them back into the lead and securing them their first place and 7,000 baht prize.

Excitement was on offer in

the battle for third place with the Nong Tan and Model teams level at 3-3 when the final whistle blew. The game went to a dramatic penalty shoot-out with Model and Nong Tan matching each other goal-for-goal before Nong Tan missed allowing Model to win 16-15.

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The Alfa Romeo 147 has been around for a few years now, but Alfa has injected new spirit into the car with a GTA version. Better performance, bigger brakes and stiffer suspension, plus luxury extras, put the GTA in a different category.

Alfa Romeo created the title GTA in the mid-'60s when it wanted to compete in touring car racing. At the time, drivers such as Jimmy Clark, Sir John Whitmore and Andrea de Adamich were dominating the sport and Alfa wanted to be part of it.

To do so, Alfa Romeo enlisted the help of tuning company Autodelta, headed up by the talented engineer Carlo Chiti, a man who had previously been a designer at Ferrari. Chiti's new model was a development of the Alfa Giulia GT and was christened the GTA.

The GTA won races straight out of the box, and at Monza in 1965 it took the first seven places. The GTA rapidly became the car to beat, surpassing the dominant Lotus Cortinas of the day.

In 1968, Alfa introduced its new GTA 1300 Junior, with the racing version giving 160 bhp (118 kW), a 50% increase in power on the road car.

The GTA's superiority lasted until 1970 when the GTAm was launched, a development of the 1750 GTV but with a 230 bhp, two-liter engine. Dutchman Toine Hezemans won the European Touring Car Championship at the wheel of a GTAm in 1970 and 1971.

Alfa Romeo began racing as far back as 1920 and achieved significant Grand Prix victories over the years.

Its drivers have included some of the all-time greats of motor sport.

Juan Manuel Fangio, the legendary Argentine, signed for Alfa Corse when the team began racing again in 1950, the beginning



## The little red rocket



By Jeff Heselwood

of the world championship as we know it today. Fangio came second in the title race that year to another Alfa Romeo driver, also a legend, Giuseppe Farina.

But the man regarded by many as the greatest driver of the pre- and post-war periods was Tazio Nuvolari.

Born in 1892, Nuvolari joined Alfa Corse in 1930. He won the Mille Miglia and the Ulster TT, and in 1932 took several Grand Prix victories.

He also won the Le Mans 24-hours race a year later, demonstrating his versatility in all forms of motor racing.

Indeed, Alfa Romeo won Le Mans for four consecutive

years between 1931 and 1934.

So what does all this sporting heritage have to do with the little 147 GTA? Alfa Romeo is still involved in touring car racing in Europe and an Alfa 147 was on pole position for the 2003 Guia race at the Macau Grand Prix, so it is obviously pretty potent.

The 147 GTA retains the standard blunt body, the styling of which you either love or hate, but under the bonnet is a massive – for the size of car – 3.2-liter, 24-valve V6 unit.

Alfa Romeo claims it is the most powerful in its class, with a stunning 250 bhp (184 kW) on tap.

A top speed of 246 kmh and a 0-100 kmh time of 6.3 seconds are the result.

The suspension geometry and settings have been changed to cope, while the latest vehicle dynamic control system is also a standard fitting.

Larger ventilated discs give better stopping power, complete with four-pot Brembo callipers, while there is a roof spoiler, side skirts and a special deep front spoiler.

Inside the 147 GTA there are sports seats – leather or fabric, as you wish – aluminum pedals, a thick-rimmed leather wheel and leather gearshift knob.

There are dual airbags and front side bags, as well as a full-length air curtain to prevent injury in side impacts. A premium Bose sound system with eight speakers and a sub-woofer is standard.

There are other creature comforts, such as a rain sensor, a mist sensor and, mysteriously, an odor sensor. Quite what the latter does is not explained.

The 147 GTA is an exciting machine and there will probably be very few seen in Thailand, but if you can get your hands on one, you can dream of all those racing victories of days gone by.

It's a little piece of history in a thoroughly modern package.

Jeff Heselwood may be contacted by email at [jhc@netvigator.com](mailto:jhc@netvigator.com).



It's a beauty: One of 78 Porsches seen on Phuket streets last month.

## Talking Porsche in Phuket

Patong in early December, a place with beautiful, curvy models lined up along the side of the road. Beauty indeed, but something of the beast there, too.

They were, of course, Porsches. Boxsters, 911s Carreras and 914s in yellow, red, midnight blue and the classic German racing silver.

This bevy of beauties belonged to Porsche owners from throughout Southeast Asia who were holding a gumball rally from Kuala Lumpur to Phuket, bringing to the island the largest collection of Porsches to date, including the new Cayenne off-roader as the support vehicle.

The rally included members from Porsche clubs in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. Seven Hong Kong enthusiasts and a lone Japanese aficionado had their cars flown to Singapore – even Porsches can't match an airliner for speed – before driving to Kuala Lumpur to join 70 other vehicles.

Michael Vetter, the Regional Sales Manager for Singapore-based Porsche Asia Pacific, pointed out that the rally was purely the result of the owners'

initiative, chiefly Eddie Keng, the President of the Porsche Club of Singapore.

While here, rally participants raised 262,000 baht for needy students of Baan Noak Na School on Koh Kor Kao, 30 kilometers offshore from Takuapa in Phang Nga province.

Monies raised were placed in trust to be managed jointly by the Dusit Laguna Resort Hotel and the clubs involved. The Dusit will continue to contribute to the fund through other charitable activities throughout the year.

While most of the rally drivers and their grand-tourers stayed at the Dusit Laguna, a smaller contingent were encamped at the BanThai Beach Resort in Patong, where they held a farewell dinner on the eve of their departure.

The rally had gone without a hitch since this caravan of love left the Malaysian capital.

The next morning, however, a forgetful Deputy-President of the Porsche Club of Malaysia, Roland Chan, locked his key in the trunk of his Porsche, giving the specialist mechanics their first challenge of the rally – unlocking a Porsche without a key – and without scratching the paintwork.



The first test for mechanics: a boot break-in.

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Guests at the Dusit Laguna Resort will certainly be spoiled for choice by the selection of fine cuisine available, but they may also wonder what kinds of meals are provided for the staff.

In March last year, the staff canteen was upgraded to a cafeteria – and the new, improved dining facilities have been so successful that weight gain is now becoming a slight problem among the workers at Dusit Laguna Resort.

Chef Chairat Jongkraichak originally worked as a bartender at the hotel, but as cooking was his hobby, he asked to be trained in the kitchens.

"I learned from the other chefs for a few months," he explains. "Then I came to work at the staff cafeteria, which I'm really happy about, and so are all the staff."

"They seem to enjoy the food I prepare so much that we are thinking about starting an exercise program."

All staff at Dusit Laguna Resort can eat and drink at no cost whether they are on duty or not. About 600 meals are served there each day. There is a committee to receive feedback and to advise the chefs which dishes are the most popular or if anything needs to be improved.

Besides the main meals, there is also a fresh salad bar, fruit juice dispensers and an espresso coffee machine. Dessert is usually a choice of ice cream or fresh fruit.

The main course food is generally Thai, which suits everybody, but occasionally K. Chairat prepares Italian dishes, such as spaghetti. He also makes sure that Muslim workers have an alternative and cooks vegetarian food during the Vegetarian Festival.

The menu is rotated on a daily basis, and the following recipes are for dishes that were on offer for lunch on a Wednesday when the *Gazette* visited the cafeteria.

If you have a recipe you would like to share with our readers, please email [chef@phuketgazette.net](mailto:chef@phuketgazette.net).

# Where the <sup>Guest</sup> chef in-crowd dines

By Jenna Wise



Chairat Jongkraichak was a bartender with a liking for cooking. Now the staff of the Dusit share a liking for his cooking.

## Gaeng Som Goong For 4 people

### Ingredients:

200 grams fresh prawns;  
2 stalks *chon* (a vegetable that looks like taro);  
½ pineapple, cut into chunks;  
¼ average size papaya – half-ripe, cut into chunks;  
3-4 pieces *som kaek* (a dried spice available from fresh markets or local shops);



50 grams orange curry paste;  
10 grams shrimp paste;  
1 teaspoon Aroma sauce.

### Method:

Bring ½ liter water to the boil, turn down to simmer and mix the curry and shrimp pastes in. Put the prawns in and simmer for about five minutes before adding the *chon*, *som kaek*, papaya and pineapple. Simmer for three more minutes, stir in the Aroma, remove from the heat and serve with steamed rice.

100 grams squid;  
100 grams fishballs;  
5 teaspoons black soy sauce;  
2 teaspoons sugar;  
1 teaspoon Aroma sauce;  
1 teaspoon crushed garlic;  
1 egg (optional).

### Method:

Heat some oil in a wok and fry the prawns, squid and fishballs with the crushed garlic for about three minutes. Add the noodles, stirring well, then mix in the sugar, soy and Aroma sauces. Cook for a three more minutes before adding the Chinese broccoli pieces. If you want to add an egg, stir this in at the same time. Continue frying for another three minutes, then remove from the heat and serve.

## Pla Jim For 4 people

### Ingredients:

½ kg monkfish, cut into 8 pieces;  
4 big red chilies, sliced;  
½ cup sliced ginger root;  
3 stalks lemongrass, cut into 2-inch lengths;  
½ cup tamarind paste;  
1 teaspoon crushed garlic;  
1 teaspoon sugar;  
5 teaspoons fish sauce.

### Method:

Heat some oil in a pan and fry the fish pieces until they are nearly cooked. Turn off the heat and leave on one side.

Put some oil in a saucepan and heat gently, then fry the ginger, lemongrass, tamarind paste, sugar, fish sauce and garlic. Stir well on a low heat for a couple of minutes.

Put the sauce onto the fish pieces and fry together for about five minutes. Remove from the heat and place in a serving dish. Decorate with the chili slices. Serve with steamed rice.

## Pad Si-Euw For 4 people

### Ingredients:

300 grams wide noodles;  
2 stalks with leaves of Chinese broccoli, cut into bite-size pieces;  
200 grams fresh prawns;

*The Staff Canteen at the Dusit Laguna Resort, 390 Srisoontorn Rd, Cherng Talay, Thalang. Tel: 076-324324.*

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## Construction Update

# Projects target locals



**PA KHLOK:** Good Built Good Company has announced that the first phase of its Baan Pernja residential development is 95% complete and work is now underway on the project's second phase. Baan Pernja, about six kilometers from the Heroines' Monument along Route 4027, is aiming to offer affordable housing for workers in Thalang's expanding tourism sector. Baan Pernja is near the new Mission Hills Golf Course, which is expected to open soon.

Project Manager Kiertichai Keawbumrung told the *Gazette* that the entire project, which has an entrance near the Phuket Provincial Special Education School, covers 8.5 rai. All homes are single-story bungalows ranging in price from 920,000 baht to 4.3 million baht.

The first phase comprises 28 duplex units and five detached homes ranging in size from 36 to 280 square wah. Work on the second phase, which began last November, is now estimated at about 30% complete. The second phase comprises four detached homes and two duplex units.

**PHUKET TOWN:** Phuket Boom Property Co is clearing land and grading roads at its Baan Nernkhao Phuket Sea View housing project, which it expects to complete by June this year.

On Ruampattana Rd in Wichit, Baan Nernkhao comprises 13 two-story homes ranging from 52 to 120 sq wah. The development's three-rai hillside location provides a distant sea view. All public utilities will be provided by the developer.

Phuket Boom President Korkiat Limpraphat told the *Gazette* that total investment is about 40 million baht. Units range in price from 2.95 to 4 million baht. K. Korkiat added that because home costs are relatively inexpensive, he expected all units to sell quickly. The project is targeted at local workers, such as government officials.

"In clearing the land for construction we have tried to keep as many trees as possible. The architectural style will be compatible with the surrounding environment," he said.

**Two views of Baan Pernja: The project will house workers in Thalang's expanding tourism sector.**

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## Home of the Week Chalong



# Space and harmony

**S**et in a quiet soi in the foothills near Chalong about one kilometer from the main road, this large house is blessed with sea views, two rai of land and a separate guesthouse.

A secluded property, it boasts an automatic gate and large walls that open to a gravel road and immaculate gardens. The gardens, containing many types of plants and trees, provide a wonderful display of color. They give way to a circular driveway with a feature fountain in the middle and a well-built carport to one side.

A grand entrance to the 550-sqm house leads to a spacious open-plan area – similar in size to that of a hotel lobby – with high ceilings, a generously-sized kitchen, breakfast bar and dining area.

This large open room, with windows on three sides, is also light, cool and airy, and has other applications apart from merely dining. A well-proportioned bedroom has an en-suite bathroom, with an office or additional bedroom, and an ample storage area adjacent to this room.

There is even a meditation room with WC, which could be used as an office.

The stairway to the first floor takes visitors to a expansive open-plan living area, with a triangular skylight and fans in the lofty teak ceiling.

This room – as throughout the house – has marble floors and part-teak walls which blend perfectly with the walls, themselves a hue somewhere between sand and mustard. In all, the décor is faultless, with attention to detail and taste being paramount.

In the corner is a well-equipped Western kitchen, serving a second dining area. The room has superior sliding aluminium doors and windows leading to the terrace that surrounds the entire first floor.

The terrace and windows afford wonderful views and permit refreshing breezes to permeate the 123-sqm room.

A second stairway leads to the upper floor where the master and third bedrooms – both with en-suite bathrooms, superior fittings and walk-in wardrobes – are situated. The exterior terrac-

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**CHALONG HAVEN:** Behind stone walls lies a secluded property with a circular driveway and spacious open-plan living.



ing, balustrades and steps are finished in a sand pebble-wash counterpointed with turquoise tiles that harmonize with the green roof.

Beyond the swimming pool, itself to the left of the main house, is a two-story guesthouse with one bedroom and en-suite bathroom, and a separate WC. Sliding doors permit entry into an open kitchen with sufficient space for a living room.

Additional storage space, dog kennels and an exterior cooking area are behind the main residence. This property also has two wells and a water filtration system.

The property – with full Chanote title – is ideal for a large family and exceptional value.

Price: 26 million baht.

For details, contact Richard Lusted at Siam Real Estate on 076-280805, or go online at [www.siamrealestate.com](http://www.siamrealestate.com)

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The names of some of the plants that thrive in this part of the world are often quite difficult to tie down. You can spend hours going through a book to decide whether a plant's leaves are long enough, or if it has the right number of petals. The usual answer is that it's just another variety of a plant you already know well.

Try to work out the various identities of the plants, for example, is an art in itself. There are hundreds of them, and you wouldn't know that a vast majority of them were even in the same family.

Some are easily identified simply because they're weird enough to qualify as a member of a particular group. Any flower that you see with zig-zag flowers, growing either skyward or towards the ground, has to be a heliconia, which is the rebellious punk rocker of the plant world. If it could walk into a barber's shop, it would get a Mohawk every time.

There are other plants that have only one persona – no impossible cousins to lead you up the garden path (I've been dying to get that line in for weeks). You look at it, and instantly know what it must be.

A few weeks ago I wrote about the bottle palm, named purely because its trunk looks like,

## Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

# Identity crisis? Not for this rebel

Picture courtesy of David Lunsford, at [www.AlmostEdenPlants.com](http://www.AlmostEdenPlants.com)



well, a bottle. There is an even more common plant living and growing in Phuket with an even more predictable name.

This is one that anybody would look at and say that the bits dangling down look a lot like cats'

tails. It doesn't take a genius to work out where I'm going with this – the cat's tail, or chenille plant, is exactly that – a shrubby plant with hundreds of small "cat's tails". It is also known as *hang ka-rok* in Thai.

The bright red tails, or inflorescences, to use the proper term, are actually comprised of tiny flowers, and can grow as long as 50 centimeters. These flowers appear continually, and it's an ideal plant to use as a border or

hedge. It grows very quickly with little effort.

The only work required on the gardener's part is frequent pruning. A plant will soon start to look a bit straggly before it reaches its full height of five to six feet, but attack it with the secateurs and it will thank you in the long run. Older plants can grow even taller, but as with their human equivalent, they need something to support them.

The chenille plant is quite content in most types of well-drained soils. It grows and flowers best in full sun, with little care other than water needed to maintain the plant once it's established, and only when the soil begins to dry.

The only potential problem is where you put the water. Try to keep the water off the flower spikes if possible because this helps to prevent disease problems.

It's even easy to propagate. A healthy cutting in compost will quickly turn into a clone of its parent.

Attractive as the cat's tails might be, this probably isn't the ideal plant for a children's play area. All parts of the plant are poisonous if ingested.

The names of some plants, you just know. Some you can figure out. The cat's tail really couldn't be called anything else.

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2-rai in Rawai. If you build a 2 story house, you will have 50% sea view. With a roof deck, 100% sea view. Tel: 076-288422.

### NEW SEAVIEW HOUSE

2-bedrm, 2-bathrm house with sea views over Nai Yang Beach. 3.3 million baht. Estate project. Tel: 01-891-8689.

**POWER PACIFIC FOR SALE**

**BAAN THAI CHERNGLAY**

Magnificent Thai villas with panoramic ocean views

**THE BREAKERS**

Luxury 2-bed apartments, ocean views, exceptional quality & design.

**BANGTAO VILLA**

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**LAGUNA PHUKET**

Private villas and land lots, superior designs with privacy and high security in a highly-desired address.

**LUXURY GOLF CONDO**

Fully-furnished & completely refurbished to the highest standards, the ultimate in luxury.

**AND MANY, MANY MORE FOR INSPECTION CALL**

Tara : 01 787 4233  
01 893 6052  
Office : 076 325 426

[www.powerpacific.com](http://www.powerpacific.com)

### 1-RAI PLOTS OF LAND

Nice land in Thalang. 1-rai plots (50m x 32m), for sale direct from owner. Chanote title. Ready to build on. Only one last plot available. Price: 850,000 baht/rai. Tel: 06-000-0788.

### HOUSE FOR SALE

2 bedrooms in Chalong, recently renovated. 2 large bedrooms, living room, Western kitchen, 2 bathrooms, aircons, 2 telephone lines, carpark, living area. Tel: 01-8947569.

### 3-BED BUNGALOW

New bungalow with double car port, large rooms and extra large fully-fitted kitchen. Must sell. Open to offers. Tel: 076-288249, 01-8953979. Email: [bdandy@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:bdandy@loxinfo.co.th)

**YA-NUI RESORT**

**A TOTAL OF 26 APARTMENTS**

**HAS For SALE**

- 1 restaurant with detached apartment
- 2-bedroom apartment of 105 sqm
- 2 apartments - each 84 sqm
- 1 apartment of 75 sqm

All fully furnished, satellite TV, handmade Chiang Mai furnishings, marble or granite floors

Managing shareholder of YA-Nui resort would like to sell this package for 13.5 million baht or best offer.

For more info please call 076-289046, 09-8681934.

**Noi Supin & Andrew Greenlay**  
Real Estate Consultants

**Land For Sale for All Needs**

**Residential & Commercial Sales**

Tel: 076-288766  
Mobile: 07-2747470  
Email: [nsupin@yahoo.com](mailto:nsupin@yahoo.com)

### 3-BEDRM HOUSE

3-bedrm house for sale in a quiet and tidy villa with good security. Tel: 01-0891149. Email: [yumikoa@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:yumikoa@loxinfo.co.th). Please see our website at: <http://momochidori.at.infoseek.co.jp/phuketproperty/>

### BARGAIN HOUSE

2.5 million baht. Just 9 mins from Patong and between 2 golf courses, this 3-bed house in a small, new development in Kathu makes an ideal 2nd or retirees' home. Large living room, kitchen, 2 bathrooms, private parking and 128-sqm interior space. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 076-321954. Email: [pjjenner@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:pjjenner@loxinfo.co.th)

### GOLF COURSE LAND

Beautiful half- or 1-rai plots of land, ready to build on, for sale direct from owner. Within walking distance of Mission Hills Golf Course, 5 mins from the airport, 8 mins to Nai Yang Beach and 15 mins to Dulwich. Special price for first 7 plots only 1.5 million baht/rai. Tel: 01-3430777.

### LAND FOR SALE

on Tri-Trang Beach, Patong. 19 rai for sale, direct from owner, has beautiful sea view of the emerald bay. Electricity and water available, has building and swimming pool permit. Price: 8 million baht/rai. Contact: Mink at 01-6971154.

### CHRISTMAS HOUSE

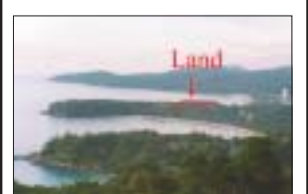
Rawai. Positioned in a quiet and clean villa cul-de-sac at Happy Home Village, this majestic 195-sqm shell of a house sits on 468 sqm of beautiful land. This palace is on offer for 3.1 million baht. Tel: 076-388380. Email: [dusitha@phuket.ksc.co.th](mailto:dusitha@phuket.ksc.co.th)

### BEACHFRONT

neighbors. We possess one of the most beautiful and best-positioned 12-rai beachfront land plots on the award-winning, marvellous and unspoiled Koh Yao Noi. We intend to subdivide our well-maintained property into 4 or 5 separate land plots for sale and invite interested parties to ask for our attractive sales prices. Please understand that we're offering dream land to pleasant, reliable and trustworthy future neighbors only, and, as a result, money-power alone will not be the decisive factor in our final choice. Please contact me by email in the first instance for detailed information. Email: [dusitha@phuket.ksc.co.th](mailto:dusitha@phuket.ksc.co.th). Tel: 076-388380.

### SEAVIEW

and lakeview plots. For sale: 16-rai plot. 1 with spectacular sea views. 2-, 3-, 4- and 5-rai plots with lake views. Please contact for more details. Tel: 01-7371688, 01-3973267. For further details, please see our website at [www.phuketgazette.net/landlayan](http://www.phuketgazette.net/landlayan)



### 4 RAI OCEAN VIEW

for sale at Kata. One of the few plots on Lamsai Cape. Chanote title, views to Kata and Karon bays. Great location, infrastructure and ready for development. 48 million baht/lot, ono. Please call 01-7192821. Email: [kriepob@hotmail.com](mailto:kriepob@hotmail.com)

### LAND IN KATA

1 rai, quiet location, 2.6 million baht. Tel: 01-8916143.



# Property Gazette

**A la Carte**  
Kamala main road, Cherng Talay



# Property Gazette

## Properties Wanted

### LOOKING TO LEASE

rai. Looking to lease rai of land on the bypass road for commercial shop. Owners kindly contact me - no agents. Tel: 01-5353120. Fax: 076-344847. Email: kamontip@hotmail.com

### OFFICE WANTED

We are looking for an office location in Patong. If you have any ideas for us, please let me know. An office big enough for a few tables (for a travel agency) would suffice. Email: wantedinpatong@hotmail.com

### BEACHFRONT HOUSE

Seeking a house on the beach in Phuket for long-term rental of 6-36 months. Will consider a house with breathtaking mountain views and/or private swimming pool. The property must be in quiet surroundings with neighbors at least 30m away. Will pay up to 50,000 baht/month. Please email pics and details. Tel: 09-4700319. Email: peter.persson@prefimek.se

### KARON RENTALS

House/condo apartment wanted, December '04. Fax: 076-288681. Email: olav@siam-business.com

### HOUSE WANTED

to rent. Accommodation with 2-3 bedrooms and preferably pool wanted. Email: jonahship1@btopenworld.com

### HOUSE WITH GARDEN

and pool. Dutch/Thai couple is looking for a nice house with private garden and a swimming pool. We have dogs so a fenced garden (or a place in which it would be easy to make a fence) is desirable. We are interested in a long-term rental (a year or a little bit longer). Willing to pay the complete year when entering the house. Price range: 50,000 to 70,000 baht a month. Good neighborhood and good views are a must. Tel: 06-7866350. Fax: 076-385805. Email: buurmanb@hotmail.com

## Accommodation Available

### PATONG LUXURY APT

Central Patong location, 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Please email for more information and photos. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

### KATA HILL RENTAL

Large bungalow with sea view, only 5 min from the beach, up to 1 month. Please call 09-5944017.

### KATA BUNGALOW

Sea sunset view. 1 large bedroom, 1 bathroom. On hill. Please phone 09-5944017.

### SINGLE HOME

on Chao Fa Rd. Located in the Prangthong estate. Fully furnished, 3 bedrms, 3 bathrms, 5 aircon, a solar heater, a kitchen w/ oven, and living room. Safe and quiet location. 35,000 baht/month. Tel: 01-7872201. Email: phuket8@hotmail.com



### PHUKET BEVERLYHILL

We offer Exclusive Residences at Beverly Hills in Patong. Beautiful Town House with Superb Ocean Views.

For more details call 076-341871, 01-9241447, 01-5697616, 09-7762591

E-mail: sales@phuketislandrealestate.com  
Website: www.phuketislandrealestate.com

### PENTHOUSE

Penthouse to let at Patong Beach. Minimum 2 weeks' let. Tel: 09-9723861. Fax: 076-342713. Email: kiwi@e-mail.in.th. For further details please see our website at: www.kiwbrian.com

## Accommodation Wanted

### HOUSE IN KATHU

wanted. Looking for 1- or 2-bedroom house for long-term stay (minimum 1-yr contract) in Kathu. Should have basic furniture, garden, telephone line and cable TV or UBC satellite. Tel: 01-7378523. Fax: 076-385956. Email: roithmayr@loxinfo.co.th

### YOGA INSTR SEEKS

housing. Reasonably priced live/work space for 6-month term preferred. Nothing fancy, but clean and quiet are priorities - otherwise I'm flexible (no pun intended). Unfurnished ok, need only cooking facilities. Tel: 09-5522641. Email: rajayoga411@yahoo.com

### APARTMENT

wanted from first week of March for 3-6 months. Must be in good condition with the usual facilities. Prefer Patong but will consider anything that's close to Patong. Please send an email with details of price and pictures. Email: james@bentleycc.fsife.co.uk

### 2-BEDROOM HOUSE

wanted. Would like a 2-bedroom house in Land & Houses for 15,000 baht/month. Tel: 07-8893675. Email: jefftd77@hotmail.com

### APARTMENT/ROOM

wanted for long-term rental from January. Should be in Patong, Kamala, Kathu or Karon. Fully furnished and with fan ok. Max price 5,000 baht. Tel: 05-1601670. Email: paulivarlarsson@hotmail.com

### HOUSE FOR RENT

Looking for accommodation from March 29, 2004. Email: polymath2002@hotmail.com

### WANTED IN FEB '04

A 3-person family is looking for a quiet, 2-bed house with pool from February 10-21, 2004. Budget around 50,000 baht. Not Patong area. Email: rolfkranepuhl@aol.com

### ACCOMMODATION

wanted in Kata for 3 months from Jan 10. Preferably a good, cheap guesthouse. Please email: perfrostholt@hotmail.com

### NEED ROOM

or house. Expat seeking room or house. Furnished, phone line, fan/aircon, 7,000 baht or less. Let me know what you have. Email: rogerthai@hotmail.com

### NAI HARN

bungalow wanted. Bungalow wanted by expat in Nai Harn area for an initial period of two months. Please email details to: beachcomberwa@yahoo.com.au

### VILLA/APARTMENT

wanted. 2 bedrooms, with view, and located close to Patong. Tel: +479 0012055. Fax: +479 4091217. Email: reidar@sundoya.no

### WANT TO RENT

a room with aircon for 500 baht per night. Email with full details as soon as possible. Email: r\_solli@yahoo.no

### ON THE BEACH

Beachfront house needed with swimming pool. Email: micks\_2003@yahoo.com

## Property Services

### HARDWOOD FLOORS

Change your old floor to new-look hardwood floor in 1 day. It's pre-vernished, real hardwood, no dust, easy to install. Teak, maple, maka, etc. Prices from 900 baht/sqm. Tel: 01-4241354. Email: vira@tropical-decor.com

### THAI KITCHEN

outside, original building plus equipment. Tel: 06-276-1504. www.sea-business.com/Thaistyle

### FURNITURE

We can make furniture for your house or office. Email: marwaziismail@yahoo.com

## Property Services Wanted

### FOREMAN WANTED

We are in need of a good home construction foreman. We have contracts for four houses and want to proceed immediately. Must be able to communicate in English, build in concrete and building blocks and be willing to learn. Tel: 076-254752. Email: tsc\_phuket@yahoo.com

### REAL ESTATE

agency wanted. I would like to list. Tel: 01-8921199. Email: rockhard@loxinfo.co.th

## Household Services

### Safeway Storage

For furniture, office equipment, surplus stock, car, boat, bike or tools. From 620 baht to 2,200 baht per month. Tel: 01-1251873 01-8924804

### HELP WITH

the house. Now available! Full-time or part-time maid, gardener, babysitter or engineer. All with experience. Chalong, Nai Harn, Rawai. Tel: 06-276-1831.

### THAI COOKING

Thai cooking workshops in small groups with Thai teacher. Tel: 09-7097482.

### INSURANCE SERVICE

For travel, accident, car, home, business, health & life. Email: agentsmithr@hotmail.com. Tel: 076-344-521.

## Household Services Needed

### CLEANER WANTED

Part-time cleaner wanted 4 days a week for 3 hours a day at a private apartment. Tel: 09-9723861. Fax: 076-342 713. Email: ba@kiwibrian.com

## Building Services

### Container Storage

Secure storage for: tools, stock, building equipment, shipping containers. Your site or ours. 2,000 baht per month. Tel: 01-8924804, 01-1251873.

### EQUIPMENT HIRE

Generators, jack hammers, concrete cutting saws, welders, pressure cleaners, scaffolding, containers, etc. Tel: 01-1251873, 01-892-4804.

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

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

YES, I want to receive the PHUKET GAZETTE for a full year - 52 issues!

To ensure clarity, please *airmail*. Do not Fax!

I hereby authorize payment against my Visa ☐ / Mastercard ☐

☐ Thai Baht 2,800 for a domestic subscription (any province except Phuket)

☐ Thai Baht 8,000 for an overseas subscription (any country outside Thailand)

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\*This is the number on the back of the card, just above the signature.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Last 3 digits only)

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Deliver To:

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State or Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Sorry, no subscriptions within Phuket province!



# Island Job Mart



The Islandia Resorts Group & Spa is currently looking for qualified and dynamic persons to join our team:

1. Executive Assistant Manager or Rooms Division Manager
2. Executive Housekeeper
3. Asst. Executive Housekeeper
4. Chief Engineer
5. Purchasing Manager

Experience: at least 5 yrs for position 1, and 3 yrs for positions 2-5.

Please send your CV with recent photo to the General Manager at 502/3 Patak Rd, Karon Beach, Muang, Phuket 83100 Fax: 076-396207 Email: gm@islandiagroup.com

## VACANCIES AT LAYAN RESORT

Layan Beach Phuket. A prime resort seeks to fill the following positions: Sous Chef, Food & Beverage Supervisor, Activity Supervisor, Waiter & Waitress. Applications should be submitted by fax or email to the H.R. Department. Tel: 076-313412. Fax: 076-313415. Email: mkt@layanphuket.com

## VACANCIES AT LAYANA SPA

Layana Spa Co Ltd offers the following positions for its further expansion: Spa Manager, Business Development Executive, Accounting Officer, Spa Service Attendants, Spa Therapists. Please send your CV with photo by email or fax for an interview. Tel: 076-313412. Fax: 076-313415. Email: mkt@layanphuket.com

## NANNY REQUIRED

Thai national over 40 years of age required to look after a 4-month-old baby girl. Live-in position and an excellent salary for right person. Please contact Khun Ratre for more details. Tel: 07-2196726. Email: mriley42602002@yahoo.co.uk

## EXECUTIVE ASSIST/

Office Administrator. A Hong Kong company requires an assistant with good English, secretarial and admin skills for their new branch in Cherng Talay. Salary between 20,000 and 35,000 baht. Please call or email to apply. Tel: 076-263737. Fax: 076-224113. Email: recruitment@bowentraining.com

## HOTEL STAFF

needed. 4-star hotel in Kamala requires: Guest Service Agent (male), Assist Restaurant Manager, Restaurant Supervisor, Waiter/Waitress, Bar Supervisor, Bartender, Chef de Partie (Italian), Cold Kitchen Commis, Steward (kitchen). Please send your application by fax or email. Tel: 076-279801. Fax: 076-279818. Email: kbstaff@ehotelier.com

## WAITRESS WANTED

Small restaurant at Chalong bay needs a waitress and help in the kitchen. No experience necessary, but must speak some English. Free room available. Please call 076-281318 to apply.

## SALES STAFF

wanted. Sales Manager, 1 position. Minimum 2 years' experience and good English skills required. Sales Executive, 1 position. Minimum 1 year's experience, some English an advantage. Great package for the right people. Please apply by email or call K. Siriporn. Tel: 076-354027. Fax: 076-233384. Email: info@asianwind.biz

## INTERNET STAFF

New shop looking for a tall lady to take care. Good spoken English is required. Tel: 09-5944017.

## PRESCHOOL TEACHER WANTED

Seeking a native English speaker with nursery or teaching qualifications and experience with children under three. Please email or fax CV with letter of interest. Tel: 01-8942560. Fax: 076-238756. Email: pamelagreenhouse-phuket.com

## EXHIB PRESENTER

Suriyaphu Land Development Co., Ltd. is looking for 2 self-motivated Thai nationals with pleasant personalities and fluent English to represent us at major department store presentations in Samui and international exhibitions in Bangkok and worldwide. Candidates will have experience in sales and promotion of real estate and holiday resort concepts. They must have the skill to present at an international level. We offer work on Koh Samui, international travel, a competitive salary and great prospects with a fast-growing company. Email: samrongit@loxinfo.co.th



www.lagunaphuket.com

The largest hotels and resorts group located in Phuket and a listed company on the Stock Exchange of Thailand is currently seeking qualified candidates to fill the following positions:

## SALES REPRESENTATIVE

- ▶ A minimum of 2 years' experience in sales (preferably in vacation ownership or hotel industry).
- ▶ Enthusiastic, service-minded, good presentation skills and team spirit with excellent interpersonal skills.
- ▶ Highly self-motivated with good personality.
- ▶ Fluent command of English and ability to speak Cantonese or Mandarin, Russian or Japanese required.

## OUTSIDE PERSONNEL CONTACT

- ▶ Thai national.
- ▶ A minimum of 2 years' experience in off-site sales and tele-marketing (preferably in vacation ownership or hotel industry).
- ▶ Enthusiastic, good team spirit with excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- ▶ Highly self-motivated with good personality.
- ▶ Fluent command of English.

Applicants are invited to send a detailed resumé in English stating current and expected salary together with recent photo to:

Group Director of Human Resources  
Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co., Ltd.

390/1 Moo 1 Cherngtalay, Talang, Phuket 83110

Tel: 076-324 416 Fax: 076-324 061 Email: recruitment@lagunaphuket.com

## EVENTS SECRETARY

SEA Entertainment are looking to recruit an events secretary. Must be fluent in English and have an excellent telephone manner, outgoing personality and good organization skills. Thai nationals only need apply. To apply, please email: ceo@phuketentertainment.com

## HELP WANTED

Computer work from home. Excellent pay and training is provided. Please see our website for more details: www.mypgglobal.com

## INTERNET STAFF

The following positions are needed for a new European-style café/bar in Kata Beach: Bartender (1), Waitress (3). All positions carry good salaries, healthcare insurance and are based on a six-day working week. Please telephone or email for further details. Tel: 01-5353220. Email: mrd68@yahoo.com

## SEEKING RIGHT JOB

Language & cooking teacher and a translator. Bachelor's degree, 5 years' experience. Thai, English and German, spoken and written. Looking for work in hotels, schools or office. Tel: 01-0853429. Email: hugbou@yahoo.com

## LOOKING FOR WORK

Portuguese, Spanish and English spoken and written, conversational Italian and Thai, professional dive instructor. Looking for work in Southern Thailand. Open to any offer of work. Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-6822607. Email: mppjo@hotmail.com

## Employment Wanted

## EUROPEAN HOTELIER

Long work record in SE Asia. hotelmanager@bigfoot.com

## Clubs & Organizations

### ROTARY CLUBS, PHUKET TOWN

The Rotary Club of Phuket holds meetings in Thai on Wednesday at 7 pm at the Pearl Hotel. Tel: 076-211044. The Rotary Club of Tungka has meetings in Thai on Thursday at 7 pm at the Phuket Merlin Hotel. Tel: 076-210444.

### THE ROTARY CLUB OF PATONG BEACH

holds meetings in English every Tuesday at 7 pm at the Aloha Villa Hotel in Patong. Call Sam on 076-222191 or visit www.rotarypatong.org.

### LIONS CLUBS OF PHUKET

The Patong-based Lions Club Andaman Sea meets in English every Tuesday at 7:30 pm at the Tropicana Restaurant. The Phuket Town-based Lions Club Pearl meets in English on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Phuket Merlin. Call Lion Adrienne on 01-4770342.

### THE AO CHALONG YACHT CLUB

holds monthly races for members. Other local residents and visitors welcome. Ring Commodore Al Boone on 076-381488.

### DIVE OPERATORS CLUB OF THAILAND

deals with current issues concerning the dive industry. Anyone welcome to join. For more details call Alistair on 076-280319 or email: info@doct-phuket.org.

### THE PHUKET INT'L WOMEN'S CLUB

meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month for lunch and has coffee mornings on the 2nd Thursday in the Royal Phuket City Hotel. Call Linda (01-8937749) or Joan (01-0814611).

### INT'L BUSINESS ASSN OF PHUKET

For details, call O. B. Wetzell on 076-325402 or visit www.ibap-phuket.org.

### THE ATIGARO PROJECT

Assist volunteer vets with the capture, neuter and release of the island's stray dogs and cats. Phone Eddie on 09-5910223 for details.

### THE SKOL CLUB

holds regular monthly meetings. Contact Rene Hardmeier on 076-294300 or email: hardmeir@phuket.ksc.co.th.

### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

meets Sundays and Wednesdays at 7 pm at the Mission Hospital, Fridays at 7 pm at Phuket International Hospital, and Fridays at 8 pm at Patong Hospital. Call 076-324258, 01-8954763 or 01-8944370 for full details.

### PHUKET ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

Animal welfare volunteers always needed. For details, call 076-263737.

### AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Phuket Group holds regular meetings to discuss human rights issues worldwide. Contact Donna Stephens or Andrew de Bruin. Phone 01-8941530 or email awatea@loxinfo.co.th.

### THE MULLIGAN GOLF SOCIETY

meets Wednesdays at 3:30 pm at the Laguna Phuket Golf Club. For membership details, please email: mulligangolf\_society@hotmail.com or call 01-8930692.

### THE HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

meet Saturdays at 2:30 pm at the Expat Hotel, Patong. Transport to the run departs at 3 pm.

### NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

meets every Thursday at 7 pm in the conference room at Patong Hospital. Tel: 01-7372246. Email: phuketna@hotmail.com.

### THE VAGABONDS RUGBY CLUB

trains regularly at Dulwich College. Call Patrick Cotter (076-341927), Ben Hennessy (01-8919307) or Mike Spackman (01-4774792).

### ASS'N OF FILIPINOS IN THAILAND

Southern Chapter. For more details on meetings and events, call President Bernadette Sanchez on 01-9798846.

### DIDIT

Dogs in Distress in Thailand. To volunteer, call Eric or Linda Wells at 076-321789 or email: diditstrays@hotmail.com.

### THE BRITISH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

meets on the second Thursday of every month. Details may be found at www.bbap.org.

### THE SWISS SOCIETY

Meets every last Friday of the month. For further details or program email to ssp@loxinfo.co.th or write to Swiss Society Phuket, P.O. Box 405, Phuket 83000.

### THE PHUKET EXPAT GOLF SOCIETY

promotes golf in Phuket. For full information visit www.expatsgolf.com.

### PHUKET CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

Anyone welcome to join us. We play every weekend. Tuition available. Contact Dr Kamthorn (076-212274) or Derek Priest (076-203001 or priest\_derek@hotmail.com).

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

This notice board is for non-commercial announcements by clubs, chambers, associations and other affinity groups.



# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

## Articles for Sale

### ORCHIDS

Professionally handmade imitation Thai orchids. Look real, made from long-lasting materials, enhances the beauty of rooms or reception areas. Reasonable prices. Display service for hotels. Shipping possible. To view completed designs and work in progress, call artist Khun Mieal. Tel: 01-4155807. Email: tonyandmiealphuket@hotmail.com

### IMPERIAL VASES

Pair of Chinese imperial vases, (41cm tall) Guanxu period (875-908). Serious inquiries only please. Tel: 09-6467176.

### GENERATOR

from Germany, secondhand, 125KVA, 225KVA, top condition (90%). Contact for further information at Rothermann 1998 (Thailand). Tel: 02-618 5925 or 01-6176313. Email: roterman@cscs.com, wattana@rothermannthai.com

### RATTAN FURNITURE

New sofa, two armchairs and large coffee table for 20,000 baht. Tel: 05-1630756.

## Articles Wanted

### IRISH HARP

and mandoline. Who has an Irish harp and would let me exercise on it a couple of times between January and May? I have to prepare myself for a concert in May and don't have my instrument here. Also looking for a mandolin for same purpose. Please ask for K. George. Tel: 076-270377. Email: dellapietra@mysunrise.ch

### HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

wanted. Need 1 or 2 wardrobes in good condition, chest of drawers, kitchen cabinets, and double bed with mattress in good condition. Email: phim@thai.com

## Computers

### DELL 600 MHZ

desktop 5000BT. Office Xpress has 8 Dell Optiplex desktops left. These refurbished units have P-III 600 Mhz CPU, 192 RAM, 4 GB HDD, and LAN card. Add a used 15" monitor for 1,200 baht, a GPRS card for 11,200 baht, or external CD-ROM for 3,000 baht. Call today. Tel: 076-282403. Email: mike@officexpress.org

### SQL SERVER

expert needed. I need an SQL server expert for just one day. Please contact me by email. Email: jb@jbxel.com

## Boats & Marine



Thai Flagged  
Speedboat  
2 x 450 Johnson  
**THB 850,000**  
contact  
[info@thaimarine.com](mailto:info@thaimarine.com)  
**076-239 111**



Thai flagged  
**Frers 48**  
refitted 2003  
**US\$ 80,000**  
contact  
[info@thaimarine.com](mailto:info@thaimarine.com)  
**076-239 111**



**FOR A FREE  
OF CHARGE  
INSURANCE QUOTE  
FOR YOUR BOAT,  
COMMERCIAL  
OR PLEASURE**

Please contact:  
Tel: 076-239111, 076-273320  
Fax: 076-238974  
Email: [insurance@thaimarine.com](mailto:insurance@thaimarine.com)

### SUPER DEAL

liveboard. Can take 16 passengers, aircon cabin and saloon, just finished shipyard services. Length: 22 meters. Beam: 5 meters. Engine: Hino 285 EK HP x 2 (diesel). Water supply: 7,000-liter tank. Special price: 2,650,000 baht, including generator, 2 compressors, kitchen equipment, TV, etc. Tel: 01-8948508. Email: boat\_phuket@yahoo.com

### BOAT FOR SALE

Thai registered 12-meter boat with sonar and 185 Hp Hino motor. Tel: 076-282300 or 07-8868938.

## BULLETINS



### BIFF & BIL 2004

Bangkok International Fashion Fair  
Bangkok International Leather Fair

Trade: 15-17 January 10.00-18.00 Hrs  
Public: 18-19 January 10.00-21.00 Hrs  
At BITEC. BKK. Thailand



The Department of Export promotion, Ministry of Commerce of the Royal Thai Government, cordially invites you to see one of the great events in the Asia-Pacific region, The 19th Bangkok International Fashion Fair 2004 and The 17th Bangkok International Leather Fair 2004 (BIFF & BIL 2004), which will be held from January 15 to 19, 2004 (Trade days: January 15 to 17, 2004/ Public days: January 18 to 19, 2004) at the Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Center (BITEC), Bangkok, Thailand.

More Information, Please Contact

Tel: (662) 511-6020-30 ext. 740-4  
E-mail: [biff@depthai.go.th](mailto:biff@depthai.go.th), [bil@depthai.go.th](mailto:bil@depthai.go.th)  
Website: <http://www.depthai.go.th>, [www.thairaed.com](http://www.thairaed.com)

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## Business Opportunities

### GUESTHOUSE/BAR

for sale. Located 150m from the beach, it has 4 new rooms, new bar, plus pool table and dartboard. 6-year lease. Please contact for further information. Tel: 01-6151643. Email: dannyhoorne@yahoo.com

### BUSINESS IN PATONG

The Son Company, shop and 8 bedrooms, for sale or lease. 80% financing available. No key money. Email: thesonapt\_2536@hotmail.com. Tel: 09-4740227.

### CAR RENTAL

business. Established car rental business for sale, including 2-bedroom company house in quiet soi. Room to expand - 3 letting rooms. 4 million baht capital, work permits. Tel: 01-9560377.

### GREAT BUSINESS

opportunity. Large seafood restaurant, Kor Kung Pao & Beer Park, seeks partner to join at 2.5 million baht, or outright sale at 4.5 million baht. The owner has many businesses and has no spare time to take care of the restaurant. Interested? Contact Somkiat on 01-8919686 or Bee on 09-8713360 or 076-254653.

### COMPANY

near beach for sale. Profitable company, located 150 meters from Phuket's longest beach. Buildings and land have freehold title (Chanote), with easy foreign transfer. Includes a 20-room hotel, 25-seat restaurant, several rented offices, 3 work permits and space to build owner's quarters or expansion. Priced for a quick sale. Please email for more details. Email: hotelinparadise@yahoo.com

### HOTEL FOR SALE

Hotel for sale in central Karon. Visit [www.maid-in-phuket.com](http://www.maid-in-phuket.com) for more details.

### BUILDING

in Soi Bangla to lease. The best location in Patong. Commercial building, 2-story, 8m x 12m (192sqm) available to lease. Call for more details. Tel: 01-8911905. Email: alain@phuketinternet.co.th

### THAISTOCKS.COM

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### MAKE YOUR DREAM

come true. Fully-established restaurant/bar for rent. Furnished, equipped, 10-year contract, satellite TV, snooker table, 2 mins to beach, central Nai Harn. Please call for more details. Tel: 06-2761831.

### RESTAURANT

partnership. Newly-opened Swedish restaurant and bar, well located in central Karon. Seeking partner for around a 20% stake. Good opportunity to own a restaurant. Please call for more information. Tel: 07-8871675.

### RESTAURANT 4 SALE

for urgent sale. Located near Robinson department store in Phuket Town. 2-story building, aircon. Asking price 800,000 baht obo. Tel: 01-6931391.

### CANDLE BUSINESS

Very profitable candle business in Patong. Price 2.4 million baht. Call Mr Ocean for more information. Tel: 01-7475874.

### COMPANY FOR SALE

2-million-baht company for sale at 30,000 baht. Work permit included. Please contact for more info. Email: pcphuket@hotmail.com

### FOR SALE

Bar/restaurant by Kata Beach. Price: US\$40,000. Please contact for more information. Email: clivenesher@hotmail.com

### BAR & RESTAURANT

Good business, good location. Tel: 01-9792901 or 076-388073. Website: [www.siam-business.com](http://www.siam-business.com)

### RESTAURANT 4 SALE

European-Thai known restaurant on the Kamala Beach road for sale. Perfect location and decoration. 50-seat bar, modern kitchen, luxury toilets. There are more than 3 years left of renewable lease. This 5-million-baht restaurant, now only 2 million baht. Tel: 01-3675048 (English) or 01-8914478 (Thai). Email: sissel66@ji-net.com

### SALALOY LOBBY BAR

for rent. Good location at Rawai beach. Contact for more info. Tel: 06-6831147.

### GUESTHOUSE/BAR

6-year lease. Just 150 meters from Patong Beach, completed with 4 new rooms, snooker and dart facilities. 6-year lease. Please contact by phone or email for more information. Tel: 01-6151643. Email: dannyhoorne@yahoo.com

### BAR & INN

Nice bar including land, new company and 1 work permit. Tel: 01-9792901, 076-388-073. Please see our website: [www.siam-business.com](http://www.siam-business.com)

### CENTRAL CHAWENG

Beach. Three garden bars with 5-year lease. Construction begins in April 2004. Tel: 01-8957276. Email: gringos@isdn.loxinfo.com

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for golf and spa. Interested in advertising at domestic airports? Suitable for golf and spa operators. Call or email for further information. Tel: 01-8924735. Email: noksk@samart.co.th

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Nia Yoga Pilates at the Movement Center. See our website at [www.phuketmoves.com](http://www.phuketmoves.com). Please call or email for further details. Tel: 076-282408, 01-7975065.

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at home. Informal conversation for beginners or advanced speakers from charming Thai lady. Tel: 01-7971497. Email: churee77@hotmail.com

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and successful? More income, more fun and more success. Is that possible? Yes, and we will show you how, at our information meeting in December. Date, location and time will be provided only by email. Please contact us for more info. Email: thaifan1@loxinfo.co.th

### LEATHER FACTORY

West Coast leather factory. Made to order in 2-3 days. Please contact for more info. Tel: 01-6919346.

## Personal Services Wanted

### ENGLISH-SPEAKING

nanny. We are looking for a nanny to take of our 18-month-old son. We are willing to pay good salary, bonus and medical package for the right person. We live by the lake in Chuan Chuen Lagoon. Live-in preferred, but will consider live-out. Please call to apply and for details. Tel: 01-893-2833.

### WANT TO LEARN

Thai language. Seeking native Thai private person who is willing to teach me Thai language in a professional way. Email: chmlitoo@hotmail.com

### PIANO LESSONS

wanted. I am looking for a professional piano teacher for private piano lessons for my children, who are 11 and 7 years old. Email: jgkg24@hotmail.com

### THAI TEACHER

wanted. Thai female is looking for private Thai lessons. I just learned basic in reading and writing and would like to proceed and go on to the next level. I might also be interested in English lessons. I also speak English and would like to learn to write and read English. I am fluent enough in Thai. Contact: 076-270377. Email: dellapietra@mysunrise.ch

### HOUSEKEEPER

wanted. Need a housekeeper for cleaning of house in Boat Lagoon, taking care of small garden, laundry, payment of electric, telephone and other bills. Occasional babysitting. Must be honest and reliable. Must be able to communicate in English. Must have email address and bank account. Working days are 6 days per week, holiday with salary paid. Salary starts at 6,000 baht per month and 1 month bonus per year. Please contact for application. Email: bjhjersey@yahoo.com

## Personals

### BACKGAMMON

players wanted for some exciting games. Please call or fax for more details. Tel: 076-386113 or 01-5778443. Fax: 076-386114.

### WHERE IS MY

dream woman? I am looking for relationship with a nice lady in Phuket (slim and not older than 25 years, speak little English is okay). I am a 32-year-old Swiss guy, and now staying in Patong. Don't be afraid of a farang, just call me, I am waiting for you, my dear. Tel: 09-5593161. Email: 095593161@gmx.ch

### BANGKOK

countdown with you. Beautiful woman, age 35 years old, MBA, is looking for someone for New Year's Eve and the beginning of the new year. Really don't want to be alone. You should be warm with a good sense of humor. See you there. (Please send picture and brief detail about yourself). Email: wimon\_discovery@yahoo.com

### SEEKING MISS RIGHT

Attractive guy from Europe, qualified, good-hearted, well-positioned, looking for very nice, pretty female to be friend or life partner. I would like to share thoughts, feelings and good life with a lovable, gentle and sophisticated lady. Email: otter\_234@yahoo.com

### GAY MALE

I want a man for long relationship. I am very lonely. I want a friend – good man, heartfelt. Please call me, I'm waiting to meet you soon. Tel: 01-3972421. Email: watchreec@yahoo.com

### HAWAII GUY

seeking Thai girl. I am here in Thailand for 3 months and want to meet a genuine Thai girl under 32 for friendship and maybe marriage. I want someone to speak Thai with and go out together. I am in Patong now. I am a musician, author and astrologer. I am looking for someone who is stunningly beautiful and who is not a bar girl. Looking for someone who is happy-go-lucky like me and does not get angry over little things. I am a vegetarian and do not smoke. I drink alcohol very rarely. Drop me a line. I'm slim and 5'7" with blue eyes. If you can send a picture, that would be better. Email: martyhari@yahoo.co.uk

### LOOKING FOR

nice guy. Hi, I'm a decent, graduated, very nice Thai lady with cheerful personality and fluent English. Would like to meet a genuine and honest guy for friendship or perhaps serious relationship. Please reply with photo. Email: be\_my\_prince78@yahoo.com

### KIND FAMILY MAN

Honest, educated, nice-looking and financially secure man seeks sincere and traditional Thai beauty for good and serious relationship. If you are cute, caring, polite and considerate, please reply with photos. Email: tane\_li@yahoo.com

### LET'S MEET IN KRABI

I'm Thai, working and living in Krabi. I'd like to have foreign friends (male or female) to enjoy Krabi with and to learn more English. If you're working in Krabi too and want someone to go places with, please contact me. Email: wonderfukrabi@hotmail.com

### NICE MAN

Honest, stable, sincere, family-oriented man of 52 years seeking slim, attractive Thai or Chinese woman of 20-45 years of age for correspondence leading to friendship and marriage. I am waiting to hear from you. Tel: (505) 358-1051. Email: wesvaughn@yahoo.com

### ENGLISHMAN

searching for a kind-hearted, attractive lady. My name is Peter. I'm 52 but still young. I'm single, honest, educated and faithful. I like to travel. Loving but lonely. Seeking a nice, gentle lady to share my life. Please contact me at: pjtdubai@yahoo.co.uk

### GOOD LADY NEEDED

Hi, I'm Tom, 50, from London, England, and from Jan 5 will be visiting Phuket for a month. I am looking for a good, well-educated, English-speaking lady over 30, for friendship and possibly relationship. If you feel that you fit these criteria and would like to find out more. Email: tom\_woods6@hotmail.com

## Pets

### DOG TRAINER

required. Professional dog trainer wanted to provide basic lessons to a 10-month-old Rottweiler (world champion breed). Please email or call with details. Tel: 01-0798065 (English/German) or 09-0806458 (Thai). Fax: 076-344852. Email: thaigerd@ji-net.com



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Lost dog. Reward, no questions asked, of 25,000 baht for the safe return of our small, white, poodle-like dog. His name is Bentley but he is 80% deaf, and was taken from a vehicle in Lotus car park on December 23 at 1 pm. Bentley has been our baby for 13 years and he needs monthly medical treatment. We miss him terribly. Please let Bentley come home. Tel: 07-887-0950. Email: Bentley2222@yahoo.com

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