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Topless tourists cause confusion

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

PHUKET: Anyone aiming for an all-over tan could be fined 500 baht under Section 388 of the Thai Penal Code, which deals with "... shameful acts, ... indecently exposing his or her person, ... or committing other indecent acts".

However, local police officers are reluctant to enforce the law as long as the exposure occurs in public on a crowded beach rather than in a bar, particularly if the person on display happens to be foreign.

Toplessness came under scrutiny when a *Gazette* reader asked if topless sunbathing was legal. The police officer who responded for Issues & Answers referred to Section 388 but added, "We have never charged any tourist like this before because Phuket is a tourist destination."

Maj-General Panya Mamen, National Commander of the Tourist Police, had a different attitude. He told the *Gazette* that officers should enforce laws regardless of where the offense was committed or by whom.

He commented that responsibility for advising tourists and others on this matter should fall to the provincial government.

Provincial Vice-Governor Niran Kalyanamit admitted that this issue had not come up for discussion before but remarked, "If we enforce this law, we will do so fairly. There will be no double standards."

He conceded that enforcing the law might affect tourism but suggested that officers could warn people first before enforcing the law.

"We have a different cul-



Toplessness at Kata: The law appears to ban it, but official attitudes vary enormously. Photo by Kaniittha Thanthanasap

ture and laws from foreign countries, and visitors may not know what is illegal here."

V/Gov Niran told the *Gazette* that the matter would be discussed at a forthcoming provincial government meeting and added, "We need to have a public hearing as well."

Some Thai women have been upbraided in recent months for what they are, or are not, wearing. Widely-reported before last year's Songkran festival, for example, was the edict of the then-Culture Minister, Uraiwan Thienthong, telling women to wear a sarong rather than a spaghetti-strap top and shorts.

"We should get rid of some of the unwanted practices of recent years," she said.

The *Gazette* asked several

Thai women in Patong for their views. Most expressed a positive attitude to going topless – for foreigners, at least.

Maew, 35, from Srisaket, felt that going topless on the beach seemed "natural" and even gave parents – Thai or foreign – the opportunity to explain the difference between cultures.

Ae, 37, who works in a Soi Bangla bar, said, "I wouldn't dare go topless on the beach but it doesn't bother me that foreign women do."

Koy, from Chanthaburi, commented that toplessness now seemed normal in Patong, whether on the beach or in a bar. "There are predominantly Western styles here [in Patong] now and we just get used to it."

Editorial: Page 18

Laguna 'confident' over tin mine titles

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

THALANG: James Batt, Joint Managing Director of Laguna Resorts & Hotels, has hailed as "good news" the announcements by various officials that the land titles for the 13 plots on which the hotel complex is built are legitimate.

Both the Provincial Land Office and the provincial arm of the Committee to Solve Problems of Encroachment on State Land (*KorBorRor*) have told the *Gazette* that they consider the titles for the Laguna land, formerly tin mines, were issued legally.

Mr Batt told the paper, "We're confident now that everything seems to be settling down and no further damage will be done to Phuket's economy by these accusations, so hopefully, that will be good news."

The controversy over land deeded to Thai Wah Development, owner of Laguna Phuket, took a big step toward final resolution during a January 7 meeting in which the Phuket Provincial Land Office (PPLO) told the chief investigator of the *KorBorRor* in Bangkok, Pol Lt Gen Surin Pikultong, that the title deeds were issued legally.

The finding upholds previous rulings by the Land Office, although the PPLO added that further investigation into other aspects of the case might be needed before the matter could be put to rest.

PPLO Chief Suphot Suwannachote told the *Gazette* that his department concluded that all 13 plots, covering 400 rai, were issued in accordance with government regulations.

Continued on page 2



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Some were bubbling over with excitement (left) while other youngsters (right) had to take a break from time to time at the Children's Day celebrations organized by students at Rajabhat Phuket Institute on January 10. The event attracted more than a thousand children who could choose from a huge variety of fun and games to take part in. Similar parties were organized all over Phuket.

IN BRIEF

Vendors' chief 'being watched'

PHUKET: Police searches of six Phuket properties belonging to Patong Vendors' Association President Somwang "Lae" Wonghan, 39, have failed to turn up any illegal firearms, Pol Lt Col Chartchai Nikorthanon of Phuket Town Police Station, said.

Col Chartchai, who joined

the raids, said, "K. Lae is under police surveillance as he is considered an 'influential person'."

The searches followed the arrest of K. Lae on December 2 for carrying a pistol in public without a license, at the Chilli Phuket pub and restaurant in Phuket Town. He was fined 1,000 baht.

Japanese tourist drowns off Karon

KARON: A 30-year-old Japanese tourist drowned at Karon beach on January 6 about 6 pm.

The man, named by police as Kenji Maehama, went for a swim with a group of friends in

front of the Phuket Arcadia Beach Resort. Two got into difficulties. Beach guards were able to retrieve both, but Mr Kenji died on the way to Bangkok Phuket Hospital.

Restaurant destroyed in blaze

CHERNG TALAY: Tum Salathai, a seafood restaurant on the entry road to Laguna Phuket, burned to the ground in the early hours of January 7.

Police are investigating arson as one of two possible causes

of the blaze. Cherng Talay Police officer Pol Capt Prakob Boonkwan, duty officer at the time of the fire, said, "We are focusing our investigation on two possibilities – an electrical short or arson."



Reminder over foreigners' wages

By Dhirarat Boonkongsan

PHUKET: Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen, Deputy Inspector of the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office (PPIO), has reminded foreigners that, starting on July 10, new minimum wage requirements will come into effect for foreigners seeking one-year permits to stay on the basis of holding work permits.

He said the new rates, which will nearly double the minimum wage requirements for one-year extensions, are intended to further restrict foreign workers to specialized occupations.

Capt Krissarat said that the increases were announced a year in advance in order to give firms employing foreigners a chance to adjust to the change.

Starting July 10, applicants who wish to extend a visa by one year at their local Immigration office will be required to submit a copy of their *PorNgoDor1* tax report showing that their monthly income, including benefits and allowances, meets the new minimum wage requirement.

The increases are expected to cause problems for schools employing foreigners. The average salary of a foreign teacher employed by a state school is typically 25,000 to 30,000 baht.

The increases are expected to drive many teachers out of the country and force those who choose to stay to leave the country every 90 days – regardless of their teaching schedules – or be subject to possible arrest, detention and deportation.

The new minimum monthly salaries will be as follows:

- Japanese, American, Canadian, 60,000 baht;
- Europeans and Austrians, 50,000 baht;
- Koreans, Taiwanese, Hong Kong Chinese, British National Overseas passport holders, Singaporeans, Malaysians, 45,000 baht;
- Indians, Middle Easterners, mainland Chinese, Indonesians, Filipinos, 35,000 baht;
- Laotians, Burmese, Vietnamese, Cambodian and all Africans, 25,000 baht.

Newspaper journalists get a special deal. They will be eligible for one-year renewals with a monthly income as low as 20,000 baht – even less than that of Burmese fisherman.

Capt Krissarat added that employees of firms that hold contracts with the Thai government might be eligible for exceptions, and advised workers to contact their personnel departments to find out.

Laguna hails tin mine title news

From page 1

"Initially, we consider the deeds valid in terms of the legal procedures through which they were issued," he said.

He refused to give details, however, until after meeting representatives of the provincial *KorBorRor*, which he expected would take place this month.

K. Suphot said, "This [has been] a big problem, so we need to discuss it further in order to avoid making mistakes."

"The *KorBorRor* probably needs to consider other [non-procedural] aspects of the case too, such as by examining aerial-photographs."

The probe followed charges by a self-appointed Senate working group, led by Sen Pricha Pitanon, which complained that the original holder of the concession to mine tin along Bang Tao beach, the late Khoon Wisetnukulkij, failed to return the land to the state at the end of the concession, as required by the law.

Instead, the group charged, the 400 rai of land was improperly issued with deeds, which were upgraded and eventually sold to Singapore-based Thai Wah Development.

Visawa Sasismith, Phuket's Chief Administrative Officer, also told the *Gazette* that the disputed deeds were not actually on tin-mining concession land. He said that, in the past, concessions to mine tin were issued in two separate tranches.

"After the first tranche of concessions expired – but before the second was announced – many people were issued with land documents," he explained.

"Those areas weren't considered to be government or forestry lands at that time."

Many of Phuket's wealthiest families made vast fortunes through property holdings on land that was once mined for tin, leading many critics to believe that Thai Wah has been unfairly singled out because of its foreign ownership.

Thalang District Officer Kanthee Silapa told the *Gazette* that the PPIO needed to explain clearly to the public why it found that the deeds were legal. There was still much confusion, he said.

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Mystery over death of Russian girl

CHERNG TALAY: Mystery surrounds the death on January 12 of a 10-year-old Russian girl vacationing with her family at the five-star Dusit Laguna Resort Hotel.

Police said they suspected the girl might have been electrocuted, but a senior Dusit manager rejected this theory, saying the hotel was awaiting the conclusions of forensic experts in Bangkok.

The girl, named by police as Ksenia Drashinskiy, had been swimming in the pool and was found in a collapsed state nearby, witnesses told police.

"We've checked and there's no electrical problem so the swimming pool hasn't been closed," said Chatree Chuensuksinsap, Executive Assistant Manager at the resort.

He said that investigations were proceeding slowly because the girl's parents, who were still at the resort, could not speak English. It was not known whether Ksenia had a medical condition that may have contributed to her death.

Based on the comments of a bystander who touched the girl soon after she had left the water, Pol Maj Siritwat Inyim, Inspector of Investigation at Chong Talay Police Station, said he believed that an electric shock may have been responsible.

But the resort's K. Chatree said, "I can't offer conclusions because we are waiting for the [Dusit] legal department to come here."

"It happened about 10 am. She [the victim] went out to swim but nobody saw how it

happened at the scene so we don't know the real cause.

"The girl was swimming with other children, who then saw her lying beside the swimming pool. They thought she was kidding. But then people discovered she was unconscious and had a weak pulse. They asked staff to get her to a doctor," K Chatree added.

The girl was initially treated at a nearby clinic and then sent to Thalang Hospital and then to the Bangkok Phuket Hospital. She is thought to have died on the way.

The police investigation began at noon and continued until midnight. Officers returned to the resort the following day to try to speak with the girl's parents and representatives from the Russian Consulate in Bangkok.

Queer News

Horror of the morning after

PATHUM THANI: Some people may be familiar with the surprise of waking up on the morning of New Year's Day to find an unexpected creature lying beside them in bed.

Few, however, take the trouble to report such incidents to the police. Fewer still are the cases where police haul the offending bedmate off to jail.

Pol Lt Col Sarawut Netriyanon, Superintendent at Tambon Suan Prik Thai Police Station, was as surprised as anyone on January 1 when he was called to a rented room by 23 year-old Thip Nethip, who said that there was a monstrous creature asleep on his bed.

Investigations swiftly showed that the "monster" was a bright-green iguana, 50 centimeters long and weighing in at a meaty five kilograms. Not knowing what to do with the reptile, Col Sarawut took it back to the station.

Fearful that the vegetarian lizard might harm local children – iguanas have long, sharp talons – officers there locked up the creature in a prison cell while they waited for wildlife officials to come and collect it.

Source: Thai News Agency

IN BRIEF

Weapons recovered after anonymous tip

KATHU: Police recovered a briefcase full of explosives along a road in Kathu early on January 5 after receiving an anonymous tipoff.

Near an electricity pole along Phra Phuket Kaew Rd (the Samkong-Kathu road), police found a briefcase containing five M67 fragmentation grenades, two one-kilogram TNT bombs and 191 rounds of assault rifle ammunition. The bombs, grenades and ammunition were wrapped separately in three plastic bags.

'No problems' for visa runs via Narathiwat

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn & Dhirarat Boonkongsan

PHUKET: Despite continuing violence in the south of Thailand, the visa officer at the Thai Consulate in Kota Bahru, Malaysia, has insisted that the situation along the border is still calm and that many foreigners continue to arrive each day to renew visas.

Kota Bahru is the Thai consulate closest to Phuket, and one of a few in the region that has consistently issued six-month double-entry non-immigrant B visas, required by people who wish to work in Thailand.

Tour companies offer "visa trips" that involve being away from Thailand for just a few hours.

The southern Thai provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala have undergone serious violence, mostly attacks on local police, soldiers and schools.

An estimated 60 attackers poured gunfire into a police station in Betong, Yala, on January 7. No one was reported hurt in the 15-minute battle.

Pavinee Yuwaphan, Visa Officer at the Thai Consulate in Kota Bahru, told the *Gazette* on January 8 that security in Narathiwat and on the border was tight and tourists could feel safe.

"We still have a lot of people coming to see us every day," she said. "I am not worried. We have soldiers on guard around the border area and in each of the problem provinces. Security checks at the Thai border are very strict."

However, she added that

anyone still concerned about security "can go to renew visas [at the Thai consulate] in Penang which is also issuing six-month non-immigrant visas."

In Penang, however, an official at the Thai consulate said that non-immigrant visas were not automatic. "It depends on the documents the applicant provides," the official said, adding, on the bright side, that one-year non-immigrant B visas were available provided the paperwork is in order.

A Penang-based *Gazette* source with connections in the consulate said that, to his knowledge, the consulate was not issuing six-month visas, but that one-year multiple-entry B visas could be obtained by anyone holding a current Thai work permit.

Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen, of the Phuket Immigration Office, said, "You can go to any country you wish [in order to get a non-immigrant visa] but the validity of the visa depends on the discretionary authority of each consulate, which in turn depends on how much authority the consulate is given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs."

Meanwhile, the tourism industry in Phuket is naturally worried about the effect the violence in the South will have on business.

Phuket Tourist Association President Pattanapong Aikwanich, told the *Gazette* that he felt the role of the press was "most important" when it came to covering this sensitive topic.

"I think we should act

strongly to provide information to the public about what is happening in the three provinces.

"The government should work with the foreign media, such as CNN, to let them know the real situation. The government should take [the press] to the area and let them to see what is really happening."

Lt Cdr Boonchart Prompoon, Director of the Airports Authority of Thailand, Phuket, said that there are no flights to Phuket from Narathiwat, Yala or Pattani, so there has been no effect on the number of arrivals.

"Anyway," he added, "we continue to be very strict about the security of every flight. We also check runways, and we work closely with local authorities to exchange information."

A source at South Siam Travel Services, who asked not to be named, confirmed that inbound reservations are holding up and that there have not been any cancellations nor, indeed, any worried queries.

"The tour groups are coming here without asking about the circumstance in the three southern provinces," the source said.

Cheaper fares for Bangkok-Phuket flights

PHUKET: Thai Airways International (THAI) is offering a limited number of seats on its Phuket-Bangkok route at the low price of 3,400 baht return or 1,700 baht one-way.

The seats are being allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, and are most likely to be awarded to people paying for and collecting their tickets at least 48 hours in advance of a flight. They are neither transferable nor refundable.

Viset Sontichai, Upper-Southern Thailand District Sales Manager for THAI, told the *Gazette* that the precise number of low-price tickets on each flight varies, but that as many as 30 may be available on any one flight.

The promotion, which ends on March 31, is part of the airline's preparation for the launch of its a low-cost airline on April 1, K. Viset added.

— Dhirarat Boonkongsan

Glue sniffers come unstuck

PHUKET TOWN: Seven glue sniffers were arrested early on January 11 when police officers on patrol caught them enjoying their preferred form of substance abuse, inhaling the vapor of rubber-based glue.

A police patrol came across five youngsters sniffing glue in a dark corner on Soi Si Sena at 2 am. The youngsters bolted in different directions, but to no avail.

Just 20 minutes later, the patrol discovered another two glue sniffers by the banks of Klong Bangyai on Rattanakosin 200 Pi Rd.

Like their crosstown counterparts, the two ran off, but were later caught by the officers.

All seven were charged with substance abuse and were held without bail pending court appearances.

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Many new hotel projects have been confirmed for Phuket. Some are being developed by Thai companies, most notably the 500-room Bursari Hotel included as part of the **Jungeydon** mega-project in Patong, and the 400-room **Central Phuket Resort** on 41 rai of beachfront property in Karon, scheduled to open in mid-2007. Confirmed projects that involve international hotel brands include:

They're off

Raffles' first property in Thailand, a 79-room hotel and spa south of Kata Noi in Phuket, scheduled to open by the end of 2006.

Banyan Tree, adding 22 new villas to its current 108 at Laguna Phuket.

Alila Hotels and Resorts, based in Singapore, has an agreement with developers Acqua Phuket to brand Acqua's 78-villa hotel project in Kamala, which is now under construction and scheduled for completion this December. The hillside site covers about 37 rai and offers one- and two-bedroom villas.

Park Plaza Hotels, a division of hotel giant Carlson Hotels Worldwide, is developing a 99-room villa resort on Nakha Yai Island, to open early this year.

Hilton Hotels is rebranding The Phuket Arcadia Beach Resort, Phuket's largest hotel, as a Hilton Hotel property in October this year.

Hilton affiliate **Conrad Hotels** is investing US\$15 million (about 670 million baht) in the construction of 31 luxury villas and upgrades to the existing 79 rooms at the Panwaburi Resort & Spa, which will be rebranded this year as the Conrad Phuket at Panwa Bay.

Accor Hotels is expanding and upgrading the 77-room Panwa Beach Resort, which it is already being marketed under the brand.

Development executive Brian Deeson said the company was also evaluating and working on a couple of other projects, one a new venture and the other a refurbishment, although both are still being discussed.

"We are most eager to expand our presence in Phuket and certainly will be focusing on the area in 2004," he said.

US-based **Asia Properties** announced in February last year that it had signed a memorandum

The race for a place

of understanding to buy 116 rai of beachfront land along Mai Khao for US\$9.5 million (about 430 million baht) to develop a four-star luxury villa resort to be named the Royal Andaman Beach Resort.

The project's first phase of 150 villas is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of this year. Sources told the *Gazette* that the project was still in the "due diligence" phase of ensuring that all property title deeds were incontestable before proceeding.

Starter's orders

Didier Picquot, Regional Vice President and General Manager, **Four Seasons Hotel Bangkok**, replied to questions by saying, "We have not as yet secured a site in Phuket. When we do, I will certainly keep you informed."

Kristi Arndt, Director of Public Relations of **Carson Hotels Worldwide**, which includes the **Regent Hotel** brand, said, "Phuket is a strategically important leisure destination for [Regent] and we are looking at several opportunities there. However at this time, we do not have a signed deal to develop a Regent hotel in Phuket."

Holding back

Richard Greaves, General Manager of Grand Hyatt Erawan Bangkok, said that rumors that **Hyatt International** was planning a project in Phuket were untrue.

Sisadhi Christopher Reuben, Public Relations Manager at The Oriental in Bangkok, said parent company **Mandarin Hotels** had "no plans or projects to develop a hotel in Phuket".

Julia Record, Director of Corporate Public Relations of **Shangri-La International**, said Shangri-la "has no detailed plan yet to develop a new hotel in Phuket."

With at least 31,000 hotel rooms in more than 549 establishments, Phuket's hotel industry is second only to Bali's as a resort destination in Southeast Asia, and is Thailand's second largest hotel market, after Bangkok.

Remarkably, however, only about 10 international hotel brands operate hotels here. But that seems likely to change fast, with several international chains confirming projects on the island and many more studying the market, seeking out properties to build, develop or manage.

Many industry analysts believe that while the rapid expansion in inexpensive and moderately-priced hotels has led to oversupply in those market segments, there is still potential for development in the five-star hotel sector – as shown by the growing interest of international hotel chains seeking a presence here.

Robert Hecker, Managing Director of tourism industry consulting firm Horwath Asia Pacific, told the *Gazette* that several potential new projects are in the planning stages.

Though he wouldn't name names – because they have yet to be confirmed – he did say the new projects could add more than 500 five-star rooms to Phuket over the next three or four years.

Horwath Asia, which released an in-depth market study on the Phuket hotel industry in 2002, believes Phuket is under-supplied with five-star hotels, especially when compared with Bali.

"We would expect Bali to have more, but the gap is considerable – particularly with regard to villa-type hotels. Before the Marriott opened in 2001, the last five-star opening in Phuket was around 1994," Mr Hecker explained.

"We're very optimistic about Phuket, and in fact Phang Nga Bay's whole future," he added.

"There is still more product diversification, access and overall inventory that can be improved. The demand is there to support it. Thailand has huge international goodwill. The destination has longevity right up there with the the Riviera and Hawaii," he said.

Bill Barnett, Managing Director of Phuket-based consultancy C9 Hotelworks, is equally optimistic about the potential for growth in the upper end of the market.

"Phuket remains a very at-

How TM Phuket is being BRAN

The era of small 'no-name' hotels on Phuket is giving way to a boom in big brands and big developments. **Stephen Fein reports.**

tractive hospitality investment," he said. "It has surpassed Bali as the region's leisure destination because of a favorable political climate, proximity to a major international air hub in Bangkok, and faster door-to-door travel from places such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

"It has long-haul and short-haul capacity and a vibrant domestic market that is growing apace with improvements in the Thai economy," he said.

Tourism Authority of Thailand figures for the 2003 January-March quarter reveal that Thais accounted for about one-quarter of the hotel rooms in Phuket.

Mr Barnett thinks international hotel chains investing here will do well.

"When it comes to returns on investment, most five-star hotels here attain more than 50% gross operating profit [before fixed and financial charges], which means they enjoy lucrative bottom-line results.

"With less than 10 international brands, there is great potential for growth. These brands will help the destination mature, ensure international markets are being hit, and improve service standards.

"Phuket should be able to see sustained short- and medium-term growth and remains a safe haven for investment and tour-

ism," he added.

Michael Cowan, another C9 Hotelworks Director, is currently doubling as interim GM at the 318-room Karon Villa, which was bought by LaSalle Investment Management and will be rebranded some time next year, though it has not yet been determined which international operator will be chosen.

"Jones Lang LaSalle Hotels is conducting this exercise with numerous international hotel operators showing interest. We expect the selection to be completed in early 2004," Mr Cowan said.

"The hotel will close in April 2004 for extensive redesign and refurbishment.

This program will deliver a first-class resort. LaSalle is proposing to retain staff during closure and embark on an intense staff training exercise," he added.

Jones Lang LaSalle, which released results of a Investor Sentiment Survey in December, reported that Phuket is the most sought-after market in Asia-Pacific for acquiring existing hotel assets and developing new projects.

Mr Cowan said, "C9 Hotelworks considers Phuket the best hotel resort location in Thailand in the long term. The provinces of Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi will develop into a regional tourist hub, but Phuket will continue to be the central destination.

"Regionally, Phuket is already well-positioned and will continue to improve through increases in direct international airline traffic," he added.

Typically, international brands do not invest in the projects they manage. They are usually hired to manage or "brand" properties that are most often owned locally.

The expansion of international brands therefore depends

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TWO FOR THE FUTURE: Artist's impression at left of a segment of Singapore-based Alila Hotels and Resorts' villa project along "millionaire's mile" in Kamala. And below, the plan for Central Phuket Resort.

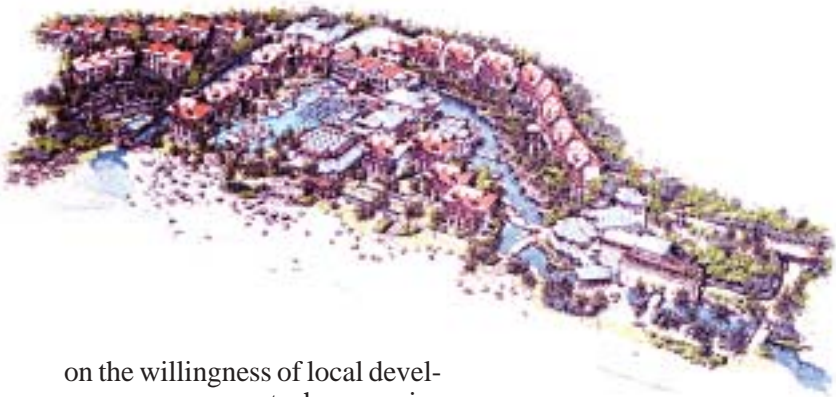
seems that issues relating to the confirmation of land title deeds continue to limit foreign investment and five-star hotel expansion in Phuket," he added.

With land ownership issues in Thailand problematic at best, and local hotel owners wary of turning control over to foreign managers, one approach used by the Best Western chain has been to brand properties under its name while leaving management in local hands, as it did with the Phuket Ocean Resort in Karon and the newly-opened Best Western Bang Tao Beach Resort and Spa.

With the range of alternatives for local hotel owners to brand themselves increasing, along with strong demand from international hotel chains to get a foot in the door, the upward swing in foreign investment in the Phuket market may be just beginning.

If the trend continues, the presence of international hotel chains could eventually reach a critical mass that would make it an embarrassment for big-name operators *not* to have their name on a property on the island.

DED



on the willingness of local developers or owners to have an international operator run the hotel.

Horwath Asia's Mr Hecker explained that, compared with their counterparts in Bali, developers in Phuket have traditionally been less willing to hire international operators.

Instead, they have preferred to build three- or four-star hotels, which are easier to operate effectively without a brand, and to rely on major tour wholesalers for marketing.

But there have been other

obstacles to international chains investing here.

"The availability and price of suitable sites have been the major obstacles to five-star development in Phuket," Mr Hecker said.

"While the Asian financial crisis and the resulting depreciation of the baht helped to reduce land prices and make them more attractive to foreign buyers, it

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The mystique of 'yang para'

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

To many Westerners, a rubber plant is something that grows in a tub and sits in an apartment corner, gathering dust on its leaves. The popular indoor plant is just a small part of the story of rubber.

On Phuket, latex from a very different kind of rubber tree – known in Thailand as the *yang para* – flows through the veins of the island's history. Even today, with tourism the local economy's main source of income, rubber remains a major export for the island and Thailand.

There was a time when rubber was seen by all as a miracle product, and while it is now treated as an ordinary component of

everyday items such as tires and gloves, it still retains mystique.

Making tourists and locals more knowledgeable about rubber and the industry that has grown up around it is the main aim of the new Agro Tourism of Phuket Service Center for Crops and Production Resources (SC-CPR).

The title may be a bit of a mouthful but the SCCPR's newly opened premises in Pa Khlok evoke the spirit of the rubber plant, sitting on 144 rai of mostly traditional plantation.

About 10 million baht has been invested in the project, according to Thanatsanee Sawatdirak, Chief of Phuket Agriculture and Cooperatives.

The location, once the of-



Rubber is a product that keeps on bouncing back, as can be seen at the Agro Tourism of Phuket Service Center for Crops and Production Resources.

iment Station, has been in the process of change since 2002 and was opened on December 18.

"We have kept many activities that revolve around the rubber tree," K. Thanatsanee said.

Discovery of the rubber plant in tropical Brazil in the 19th century was followed over the next few decades by exploitation of the plant's remarkable latex in plantations across Southeast Asia.

There are 173 varieties of rubber plant, each with different characteristics.

At Pa Khlok, visitors can see the whole process: from the tapping of trees, through the processing of the raw natural material, to the many rubber products that make life today more enjoyable or convenient.

There are delightful added attractions in the shape of 200 species of local plants, including forest orchids, palms, local varieties of fruit, flowers, herbs, trees and vegetables.

To fully absorb the tranquility and beauty of the plantation, visitors have the opportunity to stay in guest houses there for 50 baht a night each. The three guesthouses, with shower and toilet facilities, can each hold up to 10 people.

There are also 30 tents available with sleeping bags. Some tents can hold between four and six people at 100 baht a tent a night while smaller tents hold two or three people at 50 baht a tent a night.

A clean shower-toilet block

serves campers and there's a small restaurant to make campfire cooking unnecessary.

A conference room that can hold about 80 people is available, so the rubber expo is an ideal environment for combining relaxation with work or with school-related activities.

Entrance to the site is free. It is open daily from 8 am to 4 pm. Groups are recommended to book ahead.

The SCCPR is at 166 Moo 9, Thepkasatri Rd, Thalang, opposite the Khun Mae Jue Souvenir Shop, and before the turning to the Phuket International Airport. For more information, call Tel: 076-311997 or email phuketexpert_pk@hotmail.com

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SINGHA NEW LOOK

50,000 more joined sex trade in '03

The number of sex workers rose by 50,000 last year despite improving economic conditions and the government's war on poverty, according to a report by Chulalongkorn University researcher Dr Nitet Tinnakul.

His work showed that between 1999 and 2002, there were about 2.8 million sex workers in Thailand. Of these, two million were adult females, 20,000 were adult males and 800,000 were boys and girls under the age of 18. The number of sex service outlets was 60,000.

The 2003 survey, based on interviews with sex workers, showed that more Thais are turning to the sex trade to earn a living. He said the increase shows that the government's war against poverty has been ineffective.

War on drunk driving: The government has enacted five road-safety measures in a bid to prevent a repeat of the road carnage seen during the six-day holiday period, which resulted in at least 612 deaths throughout the country, along with 25,580 injuries and 3.4 billion baht in damages.

The new measures include: strict enforcement of traffic rules; penalties for police who do not enforce the law; empowering highway police to direct traffic on secondary rural roads; designating state employees as role models for road rules and a year-round campaign to raise road-safety awareness; and detaining drunk motorists overnight pending a court hearing.

Currently, penalties of up to three months in jail and a 20,000-baht fine for drunk drivers are seldom imposed because cases rarely reach court, one proponent of the new measures noted.



BOOK BURNING: Students sift through the charred remains of textbooks at Muang Narathiwat School, one of 20 public schools torched in the recent violence in Thailand's deep south provinces. At first blamed on bandits, the raids were later attributed to pan-regional Islamic separatists.

Forest food bank: Funds will be allocated to communities to reforest degraded areas with edible and medicinal plants and create local food banks, says Natural Resources and Environment Minister Prapat Panyachatraksa.

The project, intended to promote self-sufficiency through the use of natural resources, is designed to follow the government's fight against poverty by making rural Thais more self-reliant.

K. Prapat fears that opposition from the National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Variety Protection Department may be a major obstacle to the plan because senior officials in these departments do not believe communities are able to effectively manage natural resources.

Schoolboy hooligans black-listed: Following the worst-ever spate of violence among students

in Bangkok, vocational schools there have submitted lists of delinquents and students prone to commit offenses to Education Minister Adisai Bodharamik, as ordered.

Some 233 students were named on the lists, 163 of them from the area's 29 state vocational schools. Of these schools, eight submitted blank lists, saying they had no students in the two categories on their rolls.

The other 70 students on the blacklist attend private vocational schools. Of the area's 95 such schools, however, only seven submitted names, the rest insisting they did not have any students who brawl.

Starting over: The Permanent Secretary of the Justice Ministry, Somchai Wongsawat, said the ministry will seek "soft loans" for inmates to start businesses after their release.

K. Somchai said details of

conditions for the loans have yet to be decided, but they would be similar to the soft loans offered to small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

The announcement follows the government's recent decision to cut back its student loan program, limiting it to university students, after it learned that failure of younger students to repay loans was creating a mountain of bad debt.

Justice for all: The Administrative Court is considering waiving court fees for cases involving underprivileged plaintiffs.

Court President Akkrathorn Chularat said existing fees, calculated as 2.5% of the damages involved and not exceeding 200,000 baht, were minimal but still more than many people could afford to pay.

The new rules on court fees are expected to take effect this year, he said.

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

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Resort owners and tourists have been outraged by an order from the Khuk Kak Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) barring sunloungers and umbrellas from beaches.

It is great to keep beaches in pristine condition. But it is impossible to promote an area for tourism then ban what a would-be tourist in the depths of winter dreams about and yearns for: a sunchair, an umbrella and a cool drink on the beach.

If the *OrBorTor* succeeds with this ban, Khao Lak would be a rare beach in Thailand, one without sunchairs and shade. I asked tourists what they thought and among the responses were:

"We will not come to Khao Lak anymore if we cannot have a proper chair and sunshade on the beach. We are 65 and 67 years old and not willing to sit on a mat or towel while the sun fries us like chickens, without sunshades," said Michel and Marion Weller of Germany.

Paul Wells, 52, from England, remarked, "This is a completely stupid idea and I can hardly believe that this is true. No sunchairs? Why?"

"This is a tourism destination. If the government or *OrBorTor* wants to have an empty beach, they should close down all resorts and give the investors their money back.

"If this law is enforced, I'll go to stay in Phuket or Krabi in 2004, but not Khao Lak. I have also thought about investing here and perhaps buying a small house – now I will have to think about that again."

Other responses were similar. I hope that the *OrBorTor* reconsiders before Khao Lak's tourists and investors run away.

Sunlounger ban a hot topic



CLEAR THINKING: The ban on sunloungers and umbrellas may be keeping Khao Lak beaches clear, but many tourists are objecting to being forced to sunbathe on the sand and in full sun.

Gala gift that guests hated: Hotels and their restaurant managers had reason to smile over Christmas and New Year, thanks to some special arrangements that angered some guests.

These two special days turned out to be poor days for many restaurants in Khao Lak. All the tourists stayed at the resorts because of overpriced, compulsory Christmas and New Year gala dinners – charged to guests whether they wanted them or not.

A couple from Sweden, were outraged: "We wanted to meet friends at a seafood restaurant to celebrate in private.

"We told the resort management that we didn't want to participate in any gala dinner and that we were not willing to pay for

something we did not order and had no use for.

"After a long discussion that went from the front desk to the back office and all the way up to the owner, they agreed to return 50% of the gala dinner fee to us.

"But the whole situation left a sour aftertaste. In the end, we paid 2,800 baht for nothing. Without our complaint, it would have been 5,600 baht. For that money, you can have great dinners for two in a beachside seafood restaurant all week.

"Next time, we will book a small private bungalow. We will enjoy the freedom to come and go when we want and to eat and party where we want.

"We believe that many other guests are thinking the same, but are too frightened or too shy to discuss this issue with the resort management.

"Perhaps they fear it will make them look cheap. But this is not about the money, it is about the principle."

Tourists not buying: Although this season has been reported by some as the best ever, the reality is different. "The tourists [here] walk around and look, but they won't buy anything – or they buy very small, cheap stuff, perhaps a T-shirt or something equally inexpensive," was the chorus from my street and souvenir vendor research.

Dive shops and tour operators were less united. Some admitted it has been their worst season so far. Others said that even though it has been a slow start, the numbers for the second half of December leave room for optimism and may buffer the disappointing beginning.

Most restaurant owners said that numbers slowly went up to normal by the end of Decem-

ber. I hesitated to talk to resort managers because they always claim to be fully booked, regardless of the true numbers.

Overseas travel operators may have taken up allotments resulting in full booking sheets – but the many empty rooms, even in the bigger and more exclusive resorts, tell a different tale.

The potential is definitely there for a flourishing tourism market in Khao Lak. People like the area. Many say that they prefer Khao Lak to Phuket, Krabi and Samui.

Plenty of bums, no seats: Travel magazines and travel operators overseas have been promoting Khao Lak like never before, but visitor numbers have stalled. What's the problem?

One factor is that life is getting tougher in Europe, as reflected by last year's top sales slogan in Germany: "Geiz ist geil!" (stinginess is sexy). If having to count each penny twice is something that sexually stimulates a person, then there will be a baby boom in Germany in 2004.

But there is also the saying, "A good slogan can prevent thinking for more than 50 years."

And this is the one I believe in.

Even though less money in the pockets of Europeans may be part of the problem, limited flight capacity during peak season seems to be doing the most damage. People want to visit Thailand, especially

Khao Lak, but there are not enough birds to carry them here. It seems the airlines are too slow in reacting to supply and demand.

A Germany-based dive travel operator told me that it was very hard to get connecting and direct Phuket flights for December-January and that he had lost a lot of potential bookings because of the unavailability of flights.



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By Franky Gun

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This week



TENNIS TIME OFF: Thai tennis star Tamarine "Tammy" Tanasugarn (right) is greeted at Phuket FantaSea during her recent stay on Phuket.



GROOVIN' GRANNY: Pop/rock singer Todd "Tongdee" Lavelle (left) gets a senior citizen groovin' during his recent performance at the Phuket Home for the Elderly.



LOFTY BONDING: Paul Newson, the Managing Director of Thai Bondall (left), congratulates Dominick Mangiameli of the Hilltop Hotel in Patong at the recent grand opening of the resort.



NEW YEAR NUPTIALS: Rupert Fairfax (center) and British show jumper Vanessa Roberts (2nd from right) were married on New Year's Day by ordained minister Howard Digby-Johns, better known as the proprietor of The Green Man. Also at the ceremony, held at the Katamanda Estate Villas in Kata, were best man Richard Hunnisett and maid of honor Lisa Teng.



BOOK 'EM JIM: Author Jim Newport (in black shirt) signs copies of his latest book, *The Vampire of Siam*, for Julie Hirunchai (left) and guests at her Good Earth Tea Room & Wine Bar in Kata.



SING A SONG OF SATRIAS: Gerard Tan, General Manager of the BanThai Beach Resort (left), and Nasharuddin Mohammed Nor, Corporate Communications Manager of Proton Berhad, Malaysia, entertain diners by singing a duet at the Satria GTi Club's 2nd Rally dinner, held recently at the resort.



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Soul of

More than 20,000 people on Phuket are from the provinces that make up Northern Thailand and Kijja Pongprapas, 54, is the acting chairman of the Phuket Andaman Society of Northern Thais (PASNT), a club that aims to support and befriend Northerners in the south.

Chief Reporter **Sangkhae Leelanapaporn** asked him about himself and the club.

Gazette: Can you tell me a little about your background?

K. Kijja: I was born in Lampang and lived there until I was 20 before moving around the country – Bangkok, Nakhon Ratchasima, Pattaya, Chiang Mai and finally Phuket – as my profession in the hotel business demanded. I've been here for 25 years now and plan to stay here the rest of my life.

I first moved here as part of the management team for the Pansea – now The Chedi – Hotel. I then opened a restaurant called Mai Ruay Mai Lerk and, more recently, a seafood restaurant called "Lobster and Prawn".

But I have now left my businesses in the hands of my family and I spend my time playing golf and painting watercolors – I am also chairman of the Phuket Amateur Watercolor Club and plan to open a gallery.

Gazette: What is the background of the PASNT? Why did you start the club?

K. Kijja: PASNT was set

up four years ago because I kept meeting people with a northern Thai accent and thought that it would be good for us to do more than just say "hello" once in a while.

The association is for Northerners to share their culture, to help one another with problems and to support each other's businesses.

Setting up PASNT has also given us the chance to support the Phuket community. We want to stay here and feel that we should give something back to our adoptive society. We concentrate mainly on raising funds for student scholarships in Phuket.

Gazette: How many Northern Thais do you estimate there are on Phuket, and what are their professions?

K. Kijja: Around 20,000 people from the north of Thailand live on Phuket but PASNT has only 600 members, each of whom pays 50 baht for a permanent membership. Most of the people we know of are employed by private companies or are govern-

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the North



Kijja Pongprapas: We want to stay here and feel that we should give something back to our adoptive society.

ment officers, or have their own businesses.

Gazette: What social activities has PASNT hosted in the last year?

K. Kijja: Most of our events are based on northern cultural themes, such as *Tan Kuay Salak* – the largest merit-making ceremony in the North.

We also held a *Khan Toke* dinner, a meal where everything – from food to clothing to dancing – is based on northern culture.

These events are not just for northern Thais but for everyone as we would like to promote our culture to as many people as possible. They are a little bit of luxury for us and it is wonderful

to see so many people in traditional northern Thai clothes.

Our latest event is *Kin Hom Tom Muan* – essentially meeting, eating and enjoying ourselves and having lots of fun.

Gazette: You obviously love the Northern culture. Have you considered going back there to live?

K. Kijja: I'm happy living in Phuket and don't think that I will leave here, but I do go back to visit my mother in Chiang Mai every year. I also make a special effort to visit an old teacher of mine up there, but I save those journeys for the hot season as I don't like the cool weather up north. The climate in Phuket is very good by comparison.

I like Phuket for other rea-

sons too, especially the people. Phuketians are plain-speaking, smart-looking and sincere – qualities I appreciate.


Gazette: Has the North seen many people travel to Patong to work in prostitution? Can this problem be solved?

K. Kijja: It is a problem, but I'm not sure what can be done about it. Perhaps these people have no other opportunities and have to survive somehow. Society hasn't helped them much and if they do not cause a problem for the wider community, then we are in no position to criticize them.

We would try to help them if they came to the club but they are too embarrassed about their job to join PASNT.

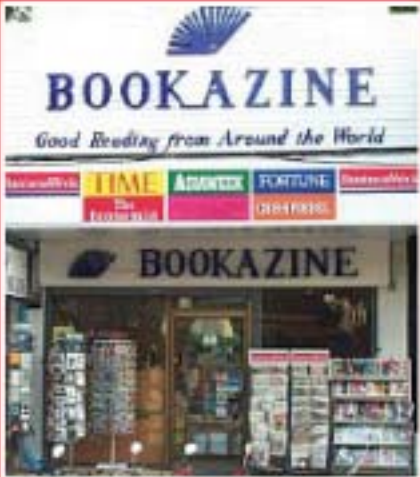
I used to tell them to come along and that we would befriend them but they never took up the offer. They are, at least, better people than those who are involved in corruption.

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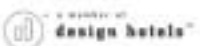
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CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): A magical week lies ahead for you, with the emphasis on love. A romantic wish might come true this weekend as a love interest that you thought was just a dream is now within reach. Don't delay in replying to communication from overseas; it could lead to financial benefit. The number 10 has special significance for you on Thursday.



AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): A romantic mystery starts to unravel and Aquarians in search of the truth will be tempted to dig deeper. Gemini can give you some clues about what's going on, but may need some persuasion to do so. Even if work is boring, this is not the best time to make changes. You will have an opportunity to branch out later in the year. A walk on the beach this weekend leads to an interesting encounter.



PISCES (February 20-March 20): As long as you're the one holding the reins in a romantic relationship, the course of true love is set to run smoothly. Allowing another to take control can only lead to collision in the



In The Stars

near future. Although Pisceans involved in a career change are in a good bargaining position, they should go over small print with a magnifying glass, or risk being caught in a Catch-22 situation.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): All your best intentions to start the New Year as you mean to go on are tested this week. You may need to compromise on some of your resolutions, but Arians should not see this as a drawback to the progress they are determined to achieve in 2004. Bureaucratic hiccups could be avoided if you use your common sense. New options are bubbling to the surface.



TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Serious romance appears to be on the cards for Taureans, but you are probably more open to the idea of having some no-strings-attached fun. People close to you are caught up in emotional turmoil and will be looking to you for down-to-earth guidance. A red flag waved on Wednesday will put your calm and easy-going outlook on life to the test.



GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Reason remains elusive when it comes to matters of the heart. If you can keep calm in the face of your partner's apparent irrationality, you should be able to ride out this storm without being washed overboard. Some Geminis may be surprised at what they determine to be most important to them in a relationship. Where business is concerned, you should remain firmly at the helm.



CANCER (June 22-July 23): Life should progress well for Cancerians this week. Good fortune ensures that whatever you wish for is within easy reach. This could be the perfect time to smooth over waters disturbed last year. Monday and Tuesday are good days for furthering your career. You will make the right impression at an interview. Wear sea-green to encourage positive energy to flow.



LEO (July 24-August 22): Although work opportunities continue to be thick on the ground, not all of them will

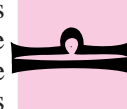


bear the fruit you would like to harvest. There are definitely a few people out there who would like to have something for nothing, and those born under the sign of Leo will need to filter through the offers. Emphasis on romantic partnerships towards the end of next week means that a new level of understanding can be reached.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Too much dwelling on the past could prevent Virgoans from seeing just how positive the future looks. While you won't have money to burn, finances are set to improve enough to guarantee easier times. However, it would be foolish to put too many eggs in the same basket. Keeping something aside for potential rainy days is advised. The number four has special meaning for you on Monday.



LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Stepping stones are being laid to guide those born under the sign of Libra towards a great opportunity regarding work and a possible career diversion. A slippery moment could



occur at the beginning of next week, when you will be tempted to take a wrong turn. Spending some quiet moments reflecting on what feels like the right decision to make should lead you back to the path of success.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): An exchange with a person of influence gives you new food for thought this week, but sensible Scorpios will play it safe before committing. A period of trial and error is about to start and you can avoid making serious errors by insisting on having enough space to make serious decisions. Friendships are subject to misunderstandings during the coming days; think carefully before giving strong opinions.



SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Your independent streak means that depending on others goes against the grain, but this weekend you will have no choice but to wait for somebody else to switch on the green light. Sagittarians whose over-indulgence during the holiday season has expanded the waistline will be thinking about getting into shape. Putting those good intentions into action should be your focus. Wear vibrant orange to encourage energy.



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‘There was an overwhelming enthusiasm that came through in every number.’

No riddle to the Sphinx's success

Put the words “entertainment” and “Patong” together, and what kind of image do you come up with? Sadly but inevitably, the words sleazy and tawdry usually spring to mind.

The Sphinx isn't like that. Actually, the Sphinx isn't like anything that Phuket has seen. The Sphinx is classy, innovative and refreshing and not the slightest bit sleazy or tawdry.

But then, if like the legendary sphinx you had the head of a woman and the body of a lion, you'd probably expect to stand out just a little, wouldn't you? And the Sphinx certainly does that – once you've found it.

When people talk about theater-restaurants, they usually mean places that serve up entertainment for an audience who half-watch the show while half-eating what passes for dinner. It's always a far from satisfactory arrangement. People often leave half-entertained and half-fed.

The Sphinx, however, is a restaurant *and* a theater – the restaurant downstairs, and the theater above. But blink as you drive along Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, and you may miss it.

There is no huge neon sign, no gaudy billboard, just a subtle frontage set well back from the street. As you enter, you begin to wonder, “Am I really still in downtown Patong?”

Inside, the question becomes even more relevant. About 30 million baht has been invested in the bricks and mortar makeover for the project, and it shows.

The restaurant, with room for about 60 diners, has an elegant bar in one corner and is decorated in a manner that reeks of quality. Yet – and it's a very big yet – the

prices have been kept within the 120-130 baht range for the mostly Thai dishes.

It's comparable to any classy restaurant on the island, although there are not too many up to this standard in Patong. However, the real delight for after-darkers comes upstairs, in the theater. For anyone who misses the kind of stage facilities that most big Western cities have, it's a discovery that should make them smile.

The body of the theater slopes down to a small stage, but you won't find any uncomfortable fold-down wooden seats here.

The choice is between two large, comfortable sofas where the stalls would normally be, or individual lounge chairs a little further back, with plenty of small drinks tables for those glasses of wine or Champagne.

There are two shows each night except Tuesdays, at 8:30 pm and 10:30 pm. And there's more good news: the early and late shows are different, so it's possible to catch the early one, then go downstairs and eat and come back up for the second show.

This sounds like a big invitation to freeloaders. When I put it to the Sphinx's David Shrubsole that someone could walk in, watch the early show, have a few drinks and a feed somewhere else, then come back and watch the second show for free, he embraced the concept enthusiastically.

“Yes!” he said, “That's fine. There's no charge for the show. People can enjoy themselves at no cost and if they want to come back, that's great, too.”

What's more, one of the shows changes every week, so Freddie the Freeloader can keep coming back on a regular



After DARK

By Alan Morison



BOWLED OVER: A scene from the Sphinx's staging of hits from *Cabaret*.

basis. Something for nothing – how's that for good value?

You may think that, at that price, the shows have to be fairly ordinary. Not so. I caught the late show, with the all-male troupe of dancers and mime artists performing an hour's worth of songs from *Cabaret* and *Evita*.

“What good is sitting alone in your room . . .”

There were all sorts of subtle Thai touches and costume changes and an overwhelming enthusiasm that came through in every number. The applause came easily and the hour passed all too fast. It was great fun, with an attentive waiter on hand to replenish drinks at speed.

The cast may have been all male, but Sally Bowles and Eva Peron were believably feminine and there was none of the gay posturing that can be so offputting. It was pure fun for all the family.

Mr Shrubsole, who worked on *Cats* and other big musical productions in Australia before moving to Thailand about 10

years ago, helps generate the energy that keeps the ensemble of 10 at their peak through five hours of rehearsals and two performances most days.

Coming up are shows that bracket tunes from *Miss Saigon*, *Cabaret* and *Chicago*, along with a new *Hooray for Hollywood* tribute to the movies, and a reprise of the Sphinx's popular New Year special, *Top Hat and Tails*.

The potential for intimate live classical music, jazz performances or stand-up comedy will not be lost on anyone who patronizes the Sphinx.

Restaurant manager Songsuwang “Mac” Reoriab and Mr Shrubsole, who is accurately titled Creative Director, deserve a round of applause – twice a night, except on Tuesdays. Even if the place is hard to find.

Sphinx Restaurant and Theatre, 120 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Andaman Promenade, Patong (opposite the Patong Bayshore). Daily 6 pm-2 am. Tel: 076-341500.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Deliveries of the Gazette Guide 2004, Phuket's English-language telephone book, will start on Monday, 19 January.

As always, full-page advertisers are entitled to two free copies of the Guide, and all other advertisers will receive one free copy. These will be delivered on or before Friday, 23 January.

Deliveries of all guest-room copies for the hotels will likewise be completed by 23 January.

Retail sales (at the cover price of 140 baht) will commence on Friday, 23 January. See back page of this issue of the *Phuket Gazette* for a list of authorized retailers.



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KIDS

THE FUN PAGE

FOR ALL

THE FAMILY

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 20 capital cities. 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.

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

Brain Buster!!

Q. What does this mean?

SSSSSSSSSSE

A. Tennessee.

Never a Cross Word!

Across

1. Sumatran or Balinese, for example.
8. Elephant's teeth.
9. Sound made by Sylvester's opponent.
10. He's wanted by movie stars.
13. Capital of Ukraine.
14. Dull pain.
16. Colorado ski resort.
22. Go into.
23. Angry.
24. Looking on the bright side.

Down

2. Bird's home.
3. Green place in the desert.
4. More than expected.
5. Concept.
6. It may be flat or sharp.

	1	2		3		4		5		6
7										
8						9				
			10		11		12			
13							14			15
			16	17		18				
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22						23				
24										

7. Unable to move.
10. Eggs, to a biologist.
11. National player's hat.
12. Hurried.
15. Young eel.
17. Get outta here!
18. Ramayana and Odyssey, for example.
19. Nil.
20. Coup d'**** (revolution).
21. Cab.

Solution next week

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz

1. Who rode naked through the streets of Coventry, England, in protest against taxation?

2. Who devised the philosophical or scientific principle that the best explanation of an event is the simplest one?

3. Who wrote, "Big Brother is watching you"?

4. Who created the engraving *Der Knecht, Tot und der Teufel*?

5. Who is generally credited with introducing cotton into Europe?

6. Whom did Michelangelo describe as "a horse modeler who couldn't cast a statue in bronze"?

7. Who was the first Buddhist ruler in India?

8. Whose troops shot the nose off the Sphinx?

9. Who was elected in 1900 as member of parliament for Oldham, England?

10. Whose lover was Grigori Orlov?

11. Who wrote *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*?

12. Who created the character Gargantua?

13. Who wrote *Electra* and *Orestes*?

14. By what name did Marja Sklodowska become better known?

15. Who devised the hot air balloon known as the aerostat?

16. Who won the battle of Actium?

17. Whose Antarctic expedition sailed in the *Terra Nova*?

18. Who is famed for having said, "*Veni, vidi, vici.*"?

19. Whose mistress was Madame de Montespan?

20. Which leader of Turkey died in 1938?

Answers next week

Solution to last week's Crossword

T		B		L		M
C	A	B	I	N	E	T
C		R		D		G
A	O	R	T	A		B
S		H		T		T
H	U	M	M	I	N	G
G		A		T		E
C	A	I	R	N		S
N		K		J		T
O	D			O	F	F
A				K		R

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. Blur; 2. The chemical lab at St. Bartholemew's Hospital; 3. Dr John H. Watson; 4. 4.75in (12.065cm); 5. Babylonia (in modern-day Iraq); 6. The Grapes of Wrath; 7. A breed of horse; 8. Beheaded; 9. Three meters; 10. A tuft of hair on the back of a leg of a horse or donkey; 11. Chorea; 12. Bacteria; 13. Russia; 14. J. W. Hyatt; 15. 1869; 16. Shoji; 17. Ionian Sea; 18. 18; 19. The two weeks preceding Easter; 20. Nostradamus.

ASK KHUN WANIDA! MOMMA DUCK

Problems with an extra-marital affair?
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HEARD & scene

The *Gazette's* Nonthawat Disayabutra and Supaporn Sriprom went out and about and asked, "If you were to be executed tomorrow, what would be your last meal and why?"



Petch Poomprasert
Age: 45
From: Suphan Buri
Occupation: Motorbike taxi

"I would have 10 kilos of pickled tamarinds because I love the taste of them and they help me feel awake anytime I have to ride my motorbike. Before being executed, I would order this to wake myself up before dying.

"I've heard that Petchabhun has the biggest tamarinds. So if I were going to die, I would ask the prison guards to take me there to taste them just once. And I would chew tamarinds while I was being executed, too. They would be very good for making me forget about the pain."



Sopa Truadpol
Age: 34
From: Chiang Rai
Occupation: Music shop owner

"My favorite dish is *yam woon sen* (spicy noodle salad with seafood). I would order a big plate of it, enough to feed 10 men. It would remind me of the tastes in my current and past lives, which have all been full of different tastes. The noodles would remind of the chaotic periods of my life.

"If that was unavailable I would order *som tam* (green papaya salad) – the spicier the better. I'd add chili to it. I wouldn't want to cry a river of tears because of a painful death, but a very spicy meal could bring tears to my eyes."



Wannachock Nookliang
Age: 37
From: Phuket
Occupation: Waiter

"I would eat all kinds of sour fruits from around the world, especially the Thai fruits *mayom* (star gooseberries), and *mamuang bao* (small sour mangoes) with salt and powdered chili. These tastes make my hair stand on end, and would give me a pleasant buzz before I died.

"If I had another choice I would cook my last meal myself I'm proud of my cooking. I would invite other prisoners to dine with me, and tell them that, if they escaped, they should tell their relatives and friends how delicious the meal was."



Jo Ryan
Age: 23
From: UK
Occupation: Law student

"I don't know where to begin because I really love food and there are a lot of things to choose from. But if I had to choose one last meal it would have to be my Mum's lasagne. It's the best – it's making me hungry just thinking about it.

"Mum would probably have to cook it for me, but although I really like her lasagne I wouldn't want to see her because she would probably give me an ear full for whatever I did wrong to end up on death row.

"I would just want to die in peace, please!"



Charito H. Helgason
Age: 30
From: Philippines
Occupation: Music programmer

"It's a hard decision to make but I would have sushi. I am an artist and sushi has a lot of art in its presentation, with all the different colors. It's not something that only tastes good, I like the art, too.

"I would probably want a glass of red wine to go with it. I don't think that wine and sushi always go together well, but it would be good to have variety ... especially before you died.

"The wine would be to remind me of my husband and a good, full, life despite knowing that I was about to be executed."

A card to bring balance to the world

In this imperfect world we live in, a crude dualism prevails. Every *yin* has its *yang*, every night has its day, every up has its down, every east has its west, every dog has its cat, every Tweedledum has his Tweedledee, and every George W Bush has his Saddam Hussein.

Sages tell us that the key to peace and harmony lies in keeping these opposing forces in balance. When the balance is violated, disorder will ensue.

Currently, Thailand is suffering from a gross imbalance. The government is offering the Thailand Elite card to rich foreigners who have a million baht



to throw around, but offers nothing to indigent foreigners who don't.

In its eagerness to kowtow to the rich and famous of the world – and, incidentally, to nick

a good chunk of their money – the government has unwittingly shattered the cosmic balance and knocked askew the *feng shui* of the nation.

Seeking to redress this imbalance and restore moral order to a society thrown wildly out of kilter, I propose to offer a card to impoverished foreigners that will serve as an indispensable counterweight to the Thailand Elite card.

I thought of calling this the Thailand Cheapskate card, or the Thailand Bottomfeeder card, or the Thailand Lowlife card, or the Thailand Dirtbag card. But I finally decided to call it the Thailand Scum card. It will be issued by my new company, Worldscum Unlimited.

This card will cost a mere 10 baht, because we know you're a cheapskate and so are we. It won't be made of glitzy plastic, but of austere recycled paper. Don't get it wet, or it will disintegrate. It won't have your photo, but just your signature (if you know how to write). If you really feel the need for a photo, you can draw a cartoon of yourself on the back.

What benefits will foreign scum get for investing their 10 hard-earned baht in our prestigious card?

Unlike the Thailand Elite

card, the Thailand Scum card will not entitle you (maybe) to buy property in Thailand, but it will enable you to hang around outside the moats, drawbridges, and crenelated walls of other people's property. You can try to peek inside, but be careful not to annoy any patrolling Dobermans or Gurkha guards carrying AK-47s.

The card doesn't give you access to posh golf courses, but it does entitle you to loiter beyond the outer perimeters in the hope of stealing a rare glimpse of some rich and famous holder of the Thailand Elite card scoring a birdie on the ninth hole.

You might be lucky enough to see a member of the illustrious Burmese military junta on holiday, taking a well-deserved rest from the stresses of crushing ethnic minorities, persecuting dissidents, and locking up the winners of democratic elections.

The card doesn't give you preferential treatment at immigration offices, but it does give you the opportunity to pick a number and wait your turn.

It doesn't give you preferential treatment at luxurious private hospitals, either, but does give you entry to the waiting rooms of spartan government hospitals, where the wretched huddled masses dumbly wait packed together for hours under sweatshop conditions in the fu-

tile hope of glimpsing the back of a passing doctor.

No discounts at the best hotels will be yours, but you will be entitled to pay a mere 250 baht per night at the famed Grotty Guesthouse in Banglampoo, which boasts an actual sheet on the bed and toilet facilities in a nearby alley. You won't find a complimentary floral bouquet on your pillow, though you might find a cockroach under it.

Our card doesn't give you hefty discounts on Thai International, but it does qualify you to hitch rides on Thai fishing boats.

When holders of the Thailand Scum card encounter holders of the Thailand Elite card, we will demonstrate our goodwill by courteously breaking wind as they pass by. While liveried footmen usher them to their chauffeured stretch limousines, we crouch serf-like by the gutter and wave our cards, in the hope that this display of cardly solidarity will inspire them to toss a few coins our way – preferably 10-baht ones.

In this way, we assert our dignity and proclaim to all the world that, although we are scum, we too have a card.

S. Tsow can be flamed at stsow@yahoo.com, except when he's crouching serf-like by the gutter asserting his dignity.

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Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

Piecing together a country

Last week I reviewed an excellent biography of William Adams, an Englishman who washed ashore in Japan in 1600 and prospered till his death in 1620.

Ian Buruma is another old Japan hand and his book, *Inventing Japan* (The Modern Library, New York, 2003, 194pp), covers the period from the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry's Black Ships to the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo which symbolized Japan's return to the community of civilized nations after its barbaric behavior in World War II.

Buruma is an unabashed liberal democrat and has little time for Asian authoritarianism. But such is the level of his scholarship that he is able to present an intimate account of the makers of militaristic Japan.

The leaders of the *Meiji* restoration, faced with the reality of Western power, found inspiration for plans of a modern nation in the Prussia of Otto von Bismarck.

"The *Meiji* oligarchs, despite some opposition even in their own ranks, chose to go the German route," Buruma writes. "This was partly because the oligarchs had come of age as warriors, for whom the notion of political liberalism or republicanism was alien. They knew a constitution and the semblance of political representation were necessary accoutrements of a modern state. But they struggled to solve a problem that many Muslim states are still facing today. They wanted to be modern and invoke ancient traditions at the same time. They achieved this by grafting German dogma onto Japanese myths. They shared the same mixture of military discipline, mystical monarchism, and blood-and-soil propaganda about national essences."

The military modernization worked well and, in 1904, enabled Japan to engage and defeat Russia on land and at sea. Later, Korea and Manchuria also came under Japanese control.

However, it was not just German technology that exerted such an influence on the future of Japan but an ideology that would come to pervade every level of Japanese society. "The most influential Japanese philosopher of the early 20th century was Nishida Kitaro," Buruma writes.

"Deeply immersed in German idealism as well as Buddhist thought, Nishida tried to articulate a new, uniquely Japanese way of thinking. Seeking the essence of Japaneseness was the Japanese version of German idealism. It emerged, like so many products of early modern Japan, as a hybrid in which Zen got mixed up with Hegel, Nietzsche, and, especially in the hands of Nishida's acolytes, Heidegger. The basis of Nishida's thought was the fusion of subject and object. What was needed was direct experience, unhampered by reason, a kind of melting of Buddhist *satori*, or instinctive enlightenment, and Hegel's 'absolute Spirit', where the individual is dissolved in the collective. This attitude would have been harmless had it been confined to the halls of Kyoto Imperial University. But it was not."

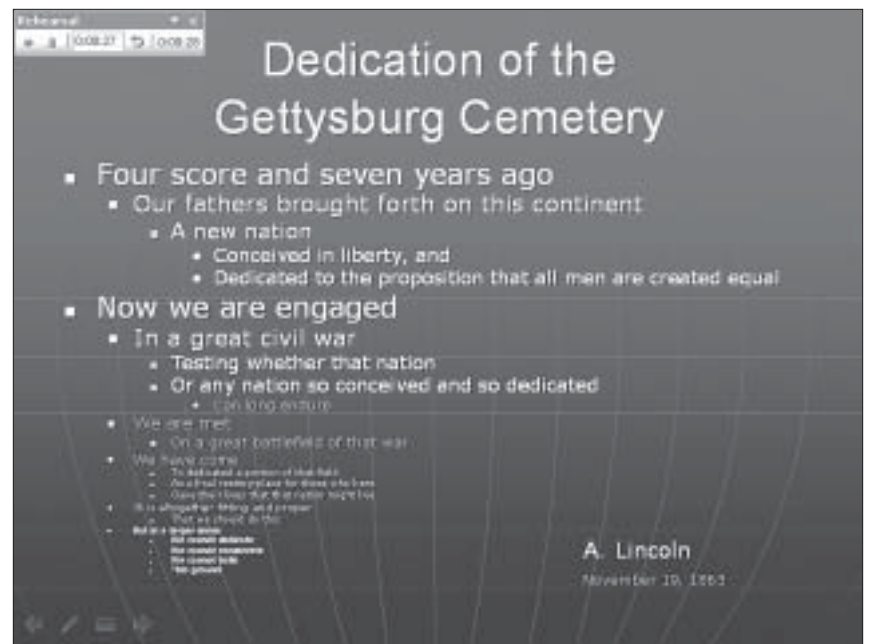
Japanese intellectuals described their joy when radios broadcast news of the attack on Pearl Harbor. "Never in our history had we Japanese felt such pride in ourselves as a race as we did then," wrote literary critic Okuna Takao.

Hiroshima forced something of an agonizing reappraisal. In his penultimate chapter, titled *Tokyo Boogie-Woogie* after Japan's 1947 hit song, Buruma details the wholesale shake-up of post-war Japan. When Gen MacArthur left, with war criminals executed and a pacifist constitution enshrined, it was up to the Japanese to reinvent themselves again.

By the 1964 Olympics, Japan was a confident industrial powerhouse. The radical Left had been subdued and the age of Japan Inc launched. In an epilog that brings Japan up to the present day, he writes of Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro, "People hoped he might be the Japanese Gorbachev, the reformer who brings down the system. It didn't happen. And public cynicism toward the politics and politicians grows by the day. In a young democracy, this is always ominous. Combined with frustrated nationalism and economic despair, it could nudge Japan once more into illiberal directions."

This is the most concise and illuminating history of modern Japan you are likely to find.

PowerPoint can be set to deliver a presentation unattended, with video clips, sounds, even your own voice narration. Record your slide show once and distribute it – you've become obsolete.



With what PowerPoint can do, who needs you?

I have just finished writing a new book. It's hard to describe how good it feels to escape that 16-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week agony. It took three months to write, and the publishers of the Dummies series, John Wiley & Sons, will take three more months to edit, lay out, publish and distribute the beast. Not bad for a 480-page book that's crammed with new tips.

In celebration, I figured I'd give you a sneak peek at the *Office 2003 Timesaving Techniques For Dummies* that the rest of the world won't see until April.

This timesaver involves setting up a PowerPoint slide show to run by itself. It's pretty cool, and I know many folk in Phuket who could use this capability.

No doubt you realize that PowerPoint makes it relatively easy to create slide shows that sizzle and zap. Even if you don't have much to say, PowerPoint can help you say it with panache. You can make individual bullet points whirl, blink or pop into place, accompanied by sounds or color effects.

Last year in this column I explained how to put together a graph that flies up on the screen bar-by-bar. You can even include video clips that launch as the slide comes up – full of sound and fury, possibly signifying something.

Few people realize that you can automate an entire presentation so it runs by itself: you start the presentation, and it goes through all your song and dance without any human intervention. When the presentation's done, PowerPoint starts over again.

You set the slide animations and timing in advance. If you want each bullet point to swerve in, with a five-second delay between appearances, PowerPoint can do it.

In broad terms, here's how to do it:

Create your presentation as you normally would and run a rehearsal timing by clicking Slide Show | Rehearse Timings. PowerPoint starts the slide show, and

KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER

puts a clock in the upper left corner. Run through the presentation at the same speed that you want it to run by itself – click to bring up bullets, to run video clips, or to do all the things you want the presentation to do.

You can monkey around with the clock if you flub a slide and need to re-set the timing, but it's much easier if you can simply run the presentation all the way through.

When the slide show finishes, PowerPoint asks if you want to save the new timings. If you're happy with the way the rehearsal went, click Yes. That's the key: it sets up the timings that PowerPoint will use to run the slide show automatically.

Finally, you need to tell PowerPoint to run the slideshow unattended. For reasons I've never completely understood, this is called "kiosk mode" in PowerPoint, although unattended presentations have plenty of applications outside of stand-alone kiosks. Regardless, to get PowerPoint in an unattended mood, click Slide Show | Set Up Show, check the box marked "Browse at a Kiosk (Full Screen)", then click OK.

From that point, to get the presentation running all by itself, just run the presentation normally – either open the PowerPoint file and click Slide Show | View Show, or right-click on the PowerPoint file and pick Show.

It will go through the presentation using all the timings from your last rehearsal and when it's done, PowerPoint will loop back to the beginning and start all over again. The mouse and keyboard are disabled, except for the Esc key. When you press the Esc key, PowerPoint stops the presentation.

It's amazingly easy to use PowerPoint to run customized, continuously looping presentations – and the presentations can include just about any kind of animation or sound, with or without the traditional PowerPoint bullet points.

The "kiosk" can run on a shop counter top, at a trade show, or even projected on a giant screen behind Thai pop star Tata Young at her next concert. Well worth the effort.

– Woody Leonhard
woody@khunwoody.com

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Fleshpots and flash spots: spot the difference

In the bars off Soi Bangla, police occasionally poke their heads through doors to ensure that no offending flesh is on display in possible contravention of the Thai Penal Code. Yet on Phuket's beaches, women tourists of all shapes, sizes and ages reveal breasts of all shapes, sizes and ages.

When officials are asked about this apparent double standard, the dodging and weaving is close to comical. Yet Section 388 states, "Whoever does any shameful act in public by indecently exposing his or her person, or by committing any other indecent act, shall be punished with a fine not exceeding 500 baht."

The law, like similar edicts in many countries, does not define "indecent". What it means is that it is up to the authorities to decide – and to make such a charge stick.

The government is plainly against the flashing of breasts, not only in a-go-go bars but even on the catwalks of Bangkok's top fashion houses. Yet when it comes to the beaches of Phuket, most officials seem terrified of banning exposed breasts for fear that the tourists will all run away.

This seems odd when one considers the Middle East state of Dubai. Although not a strict Muslim society, Dubai is definite about its laws on showing too much flesh. Yet Dubai still manages to attract about 3 million tourists a year.

This is not to say that the *Gazette* believes Phuket should follow Dubai's lead, only that the authorities should not use the danger to tourism as an excuse for the confusion in their minds.

The real question is whether bare breasts on beaches are indecent. Invoking the affront to "Thai culture" is spurious. Just 70 or 80 years ago, bare breasts were a common sight in Thai villages. Even today, elderly women can be seen performing their ablutions at the well topless, without the slightest care.

Is the nipple-flashing model any different from the Bangla bar dancer? Both aim to provoke a reaction – but in private. On the other hand, beaches are public places where a visiting preacher and his modestly-clothed family might be offended by the exposure of body parts. The same preacher and his family seem unlikely to pop into Playschool or Bunnies – a-go-go bars are not nearly as public as the beach.

Perhaps it is a case of looking at the motive of the exposé: for a suntan, or as a commercial come-on. Meanwhile, watching the fumbings of the authorities promises to be fine sport. – **The Editor**



Letters

The *Gazette* is pleased to receive mail from readers. Please write to us at 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000, fax to 076-213971 or send an email to editor@phuketgazette.net

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

Tough school rules cause suffering

No one could dispute that the level of proficiency in English among Thais in Phuket is low, and it clearly hampers the island's development in tourism and information technology.

Last year it appeared that the government was finally going to do something positive about this situation by encouraging schools to employ native-English-speakers to teach students.

However, problems began with a very unattractive employment contract from Bangkok that gave schools the opportunity to claim any spare moment of foreign teachers' time at a salary that is low compared with those being offered elsewhere.

Foreign teachers in Thai schools must pay for their own work permits and visa costs. We accept this, albeit with reservations, but are now extremely dismayed to discover that one-year extensions to stay will no longer be issued to us.

This will mean that, unless we can afford to return to the West each year where a one-year multiple-entry visa is more easily obtainable, we will have to make two trips a year to obtain double-entry visas in nearby countries, plus 'visa runs' to extend our permits to stay in between.

All of this will have to be paid out of our own pockets, together with a yet-to-be-confirmed increase in the cost of a work permit.

Many of us are starting to weigh up the options of working in other countries, where our

commitment and skills are actively appreciated.

The government should be doing much more to encourage native English-speaking teachers to want to stay and work in Thailand. Currently, they are only demonstrating that we are here on sufferance. Any attempt at reasonable discussion is met with the attitude, "If you don't like it, you can leave."

Concerned foreign teachers
Phuket

Carry on with what matters to you

As an active member of animal welfare support in Phuket for nearly a decade, I have witnessed extreme examples of human nature. In the space of 24 hours, these extremes were highlighted by the following story.

A kind but poor local man I have known for some time walked for over an hour in the blistering heat to my home to tell me about a dog he had seen in distress in his soi.

We drove back to the soi, to the home of a woman I had helped before. We found her dog with literally half its head eaten away by maggots and in obvious agony. She had a car, plenty of money, but was "too busy" to help.

The next day while I was helping animals at my local temple, a truly wonderful monk whom I have had the privilege of knowing for almost 10 years came to me and donated money, which he had been given to buy rice, to help care for animals.

These instances show that the good outweighs the bad. If

you focus on the negativity, apathy and cruelty of people then you can end up as miserable as they are, but if you focus on the caring and compassion of people who have so little but who are prepared to give so much, then it gives you the heart to carry on with what matters to you.

Leone Cousens
Rawai

Security at airport on a knife's edge

As I went into the departure lounge of Phuket Airport recently, I realized that I had a small Swiss Army knife in my jacket pocket.

I was worried about the fuss that would be caused upon its discovery but, because the knife has sentimental value, I didn't want to lose it.

I pushed my hand luggage into the X-ray machine and put metallic objects from my pockets, including the knife, in a basket for inspection.

I saw that just one person was on duty at the X-ray machine. She did not inspect the basketful of objects, which I blithely redistributed about my person before boarding my flight.

My knife could easily have been a pistol or a small bomb. A friend reported having his souvenir crossbow and bolts waved through. I have also seen airport security guards waving their mini-bus-driver friends into the arrivals area, for purposes unknown.

All Smiles All The Time? Perhaps Phuket Airport should concentrate on "All Secure All The Time".

Jim Turner
Rawai

The Phuket Gazette

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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.

Jet ski owners *do* put safety first

On Phuket there are 130 jet ski operators with 170 jet skis. One hundred operators have received stickers after registering with the Phuket Marine Office. The others need to present more paperwork – for example, those who have secondhand jet skis that have incomplete papers.

The Phuket Jet Ski Club covers three areas – Kata-Karon, Patong and Bang Tao. The club was set up in 1998. Before then, each of these areas had its own jet ski club.

Most of the jet skis are at Patong. Our club has organized the provision of floats to separate areas for swimming and for jet skis. We do everything to meet regulations.

There are not only jet ski operators on the beaches but other businesses including long-tails, parasailing and tour boats. We all share the areas so they are also elements of the problem – not just the jet skis.

In 1998, we put together a list of 13 problems concerning jet ski operation and proposed discussions with the provincial government to find ways to solve all these problems.

But we received no cooperation from officials. For example, many jet skis have come

to the beaches. We asked officials to check whether they were illegal, but they didn't.

The officers also provided no equipment for zoning the specific areas for swimming and jet skis. The club had to buy the floats.

Since 1998, a few serious accidents have occurred.

We have managed the zoning while the officers have never cooperated with us. They only talk and have never come to meet us or see what the situation really is.

Patong Municipality in particular has never supported us. They have never understood what we do. We have sent many letters to government organizations asking for cooperation but nothing happens. When there's a problem, they just come by to complain.

The provincial government always proposes something impossible. They don't really know about jet ski problems. They want to enforce a law that only people who have jet ski driving licenses can drive one [with tourists riding as passengers].

It's impossible for everyone who rents a jet ski to have a jet ski driving license. The authorities should look at other problems as well.

FIRST PERSON

Weerachai Tonghom, 45, is President of the Phuket Jet Ski Club, which is facing a ban on jet-skis within seven years following collisions that killed a 13-year-old German boy and a 19-year-old Swede. He puts his arguments in favor of the jet-ski operators.



It's the same as renting motorbikes. There are many road accidents for them to be concerned about – not just jet ski accidents, which happen only very rarely.

If people can't drive, we will have someone drive for them. I agree that children should not drive jet skis. The suitable ages for driving should be a topic to consider. I think that those under

16 years old should not be allowed to drive a jet ski.

We are willing to cooperate if officers really want to solve this problem. Our club also controls the number of jet skis in each area. We explain things to people before they rent a jet ski. For example, we tell them about specific areas where they can drive. But some people drive recklessly, which can cause ac-

cidents.

The Phuket Governor has said that jet skis should be phased out within seven years, but I think there are many other problems that need addressing beside jet skis, including the number of beach chairs, food vendors and beach encroachment by business people.

Most jet ski operators were once fishermen who became jet ski operators because Phuket was promoted as a tourist destination. They earned 100 baht a day from fishing but they can earn 1,000 baht a day from this tourism business.

I will stand up for their rights, even though I don't own a jet ski. I want justice for Phuket people who don't work illegally.

I grew up here. I know and understand what is happening on the beach. When there are problems, people usually assume that everything is wrong.

Within these seven years [announced by the Governor] we will do our best to comply with any regulations announced. When the seven years are up, and we have done really well, how can they take away our right to work in this business?

– *Compiled by Gategao Phetsawang*

Bar looks like a death trap

On my last trip to Patong I went to a bar that had just opened. I cannot imagine that this bar is built according to safety regulations.

Inside, it is square and can hold about 400 people but there are only two small tunnel-like entrances.

There is not one emergency door in the whole building and the two small entrances are not even a meter wide, which means they would very easily be blocked if there were some kind of panic.

I hate to think what would happen if there were a fire, because few people could get out and people would probably die.

I hope the authorities can take a look at this because it is very dangerous.

Kees Preims
Netherlands

Poonsak Naksena, Chief Administrative Officer of Patong Municipality, replies:

Officers have to check all premises for compliance with construction permission to see whether the structure has been altered or whether changes have been made that are not allowed in the building permit.

If the officers find that illegal alterations have been made, those responsible will be charged

with offenses under the Building Control Act.

Anyone wishing to file a complaint about a bar suspected of contravening the regulations can contact Patong Municipality or send a letter to Patong Municipality, Kathu, Phuket 83150, or call us at Tel: 076-342079.

How good is bank security against hackers?

When I use an ATM machine, I keep the withdrawal slip that the machine spits out.

Last week, when I was checking off my withdrawal records against my Krung Thai savings book, I noticed that the entire account number is printed on the slip. The same was true of the withdrawal slips from my Siam Commercial Bank account.

I appreciate that banks have safeguards against unauthorized people using this information at the bank counter. But what security is in place to stop a hacker trying to log into an account that has online banking access?

I feel secure, because I destroy my ATM slips. But, judging from the ground around most ATMs, some people should definitely be concerned.

Concerned in Kamala

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

Nimit Harnpipatpongsa, Deputy Manager of Siam Commercial Bank, Chao Fa Rd branch, replies:

The account number shown on the ATM slip is to confirm that the correct account has been accessed.

This is evidence that confirms your transaction, and every bank account holder should keep the transaction slip safe.

There is no danger to their accounts at all, however, because every bank operation is backed up by security systems such as the ATM user's PIN code.

As for the imagined hacker, the bank has a strong security system to protect against hacking, even when (using some types of card) people reveal their account number to buy something.

Pongsak Kanghae, Deputy Manager of Krung Thai Bank, Phuket Town, replies:

The full bank account number is printed on the ATM slip to confirm to customers that they are dealing with the right account.

I have never heard of a hacker accessing an account. Usually when there is a problem of theft from an account it arises from the account holder being careless about his security.

Everyone should be security-conscious. When you have finished using the ATM, keep the slip so that you can verify account transactions – then, if there is a problem you can bring the slips to the bank to check.

Otherwise, you should destroy the slips, not throw them away, as they carry details of your account.

Helmets for big heads

Where can one buy a full-face motorcycle helmet suitable for a rider with quite a large head, who rides a racing bike? A make such as Shoei or Arai would be best.

Paul Smyth
Rawai

Taweesak Saelim, owner of TS Trading, replies:

We have many styles and makes of helmet in our shop – and in all sizes. We also have brochures from leading manufacturers enabling the customer to order from these if our stock is not to his liking.

TS Trading is on Phuket Rd, near the junction of Ong Sim Pai Rd. We are open every day from 8 am to 8:30 pm and you can call us at Tel: 076-223495.

Hefty import taxes

I had some goods shipped here via UPS. The value was about 4,500 baht and shipping cost a further 4,500 baht. The import tax I paid was calculated as 30% of the value of the goods plus shipping – 3,700 baht. Is this correct?

David Johnson
Rawai

A Phuket Customs officer responds:

Yes. The 30% is calculated on the value of goods plus shipping and insurance.

Accounting for the damage from adultery

Mr A, who married a Thai citizen abroad and had a child with her, has lived and conducted business in Thailand for many years. His wife was also an employee of his business, liaising with customers.

One day, while cleaning out his office computer, Mr A found that his wife had been using the computer for her private email. He found messages that indicated she was involved in a liaison with another man, Mr B.

Mr A then became suspi-

cious about his wife's appointments outside of the office. After an investigation into her outings, Mr A came to the conclusion that his wife was indeed having an affair with Mr B. He filed for divorce. The court granted the divorce and granted Mr A custody of the couple's child.

After considering certain factors, such as his belief that Mr B had met his former wife in full knowledge that she was married, and had still pursued a liaison with her, Mr A consulted legal coun-



LAYING DOWN THE LAW

With Friedrich 'Sam' Fauma

sel to see if he had any recourse against Mr B for breaking up his family.

He was told that he did indeed: under the Thai Civil and Commercial Law, Section 1523, it is possible to sue for compensation, which Mr A did.

Section 1523 states: "In case of divorce by judgment of the Court ... the husband or wife is entitled to compensation from the husband or wife and other woman or adulterer, as the case may be. The husband is entitled to claim

compensation from any person who has wrongfully taken liberties with his wife in an adulterous manner, and the wife is entitled to claim compensation from other woman who has openly shown her adulterous relations with the former's husband."

After hearing both parties' arguments, the court decided that, as Mr B had an extramarital relationship with Mr A's wife, he must pay damages to Mr A, and set a six-figure amount.

Mr B may appeal the decision.

This column is compiled from the collective experience of the partners in the International Law Office, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-222191-5. Fax: 076-222-196. Email: interlaw@loxinfo.co.th.

Tackling the misery of period pains

For a few days every month, almost every woman in the world experiences the discomfort of period pains, or *dysmenorrhea*.

European studies show that 70% of young women regularly take analgesics for dysmenorrhea and at least 50% say that the pain often disrupts their lives.

Women are expected to simply grin and bear menstrual pain. This expectation that dysmenorrhea is normal may explain why it takes – on average – eight years for the commonest cause behind severe period pains, a condition called *endometriosis*, to be diagnosed.

Endometriosis occurs when some of this lining (*endometrium*) is found outside your uterus in other areas of the body such as the ovaries or bowel. This bleeds during your period causing pain.

The pain of periods is caused by contractions of the womb, similar to those of another pain

that women suffer – labor.

Mild contractions constantly pass through the muscular wall of the womb, but usually go unnoticed. During menstruation, these contractions are more pronounced than normal (during labor they are stronger yet).

Each contraction causes the womb's blood supply to be temporarily reduced as the blood vessels in the muscle wall are compressed. As the tissues are starved of oxygen, pain-triggering chemicals are released.

At the same time the body is also releasing a hormone called *prostaglandin*, which induces stronger contractions, which may directly cause pain in the womb. As the contractions get stronger, so the pain increases.

The aim is to help the womb shed its delicate lining (as a period) allowing a new lining to be grown each month ready for a fertilized egg to implant itself. This is an essential part of female fertility, but pain can result.

The cause of dysmenorrhea should always be investigated but,

As a very rough guide, suffering from severe period pains since menstruation first started means that it's less likely that a particular cause will be found.



HEALTH WATCH

Dr Wanpen Ungpinitpong

as a very rough guide, suffering from severe period pains since menstruation first started means that it's less likely that a particular cause will be found. Even if this is the case, other factors, especially stress, can make the pain more difficult to cope with. Treating these contributory elements may reduce the pain.

There are many exceptions to this guide, and conditions such as endometriosis can sometimes cause severe pain from an early age. Other causes of period pains include fibroids, pelvic inflammatory disease or a narrowing of the cervix.

The best guide to seeking help is when the pain really begins to interfere with your life. The first step is to try some simple treatments to see which works for you.

• **Exercise:** you may not feel like it but it's a natural way to ease pain. Try gentle walking, swimming or cycling.

• **Complementary therapies:** try herbal treatments such as evening primrose oil capsules, raspberry leaf tea or mulberry tea (*ton mon* in Thai) throughout your cycle.

But if neither of these controls the pain, then you should talk to your doctor, who may try one of the following:

• **Painkillers:** always take them as directed by your doctor. Mefenamic acid and ibuprofen can be effective, as can aspirin – itself an anti-prostaglandin – but which should not be taken in combination with mefenamic acid.

Take them regularly throughout the day; don't wait for the pain to become unbearable.

• **TENS:** Transcutaneous Electronic Nerve Stimulation is a technique to control period – and other – pains.

Small electrodes are placed on the skin to stimulate nerves in the pelvic area in a way which reduces pain.

This technique, popular in Europe, is little used so far in Thailand.

• **Hormones:** prescribed progestogens or combined oral contraceptive pills can work extremely well but there may be some cultural problems in their use here.

Women are expected to simply grin and bear menstrual pain. This expectation that dysmenorrhea is normal may explain why it takes – on average – eight years for the commonest cause, endometriosis, to be diagnosed.

If these measures fail to control the pain or your doctor thinks that endometriosis or other conditions may be a possibility, then more detailed investigations may be recommended.

Ultrasound tests or minor laparoscopy may be used to determine the cause.

Surgery to remove the endometrium – although not generally considered a cure – can bring long-term relief.

The final, most drastic, option for some women who find period pain unbearable is hysterectomy.

Next time, Pre-Menstrual Tension, described by one wit as "experienced by women, suffered by men".

Dr Wanpen Ungpinitpong is a doctor at the Mother & Child Center of the Bangkok Phuket Hospital, 2/1 Hongyok Utis Rd, Phuket Town, Tel: 076-254421, email: info@phukethospital.com

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VITAL STATISTICS: PASSENGER AIR TRAFFIC INCREASES 17PC

	Nov 2002	Nov 2003
Passengers		
International	105,149	138,659
Domestic	183,421	198,972
Total	288,570	337,631
Cargo (tons)		
International	1,481	1,600
Domestic	1,145	1,031
Total	2,626	2,631

Source: Phuket International Airport

Recently, I have noticed increasing interest in investment in Thailand's improving stock market. The rise in the Thai stock market looks set to continue as a number of factors support this scenario.

The most important is continued economic growth. Thailand is likely to show growth of at least 7% for 2004. In addition, low interest rates, subdued inflationary pressures and rising corporate profits are also positive factors.

For the individual investor, Asia is not the easiest region to put money into. It is essential that an investor have in-depth knowledge of the economy and political situation in the country where it may appear attractive to invest.

However, conducting research on individual companies in Asia can be a daunting task, made more difficult by local accounting methods that have little similarity to global norms.

Insider trading is an everyday consideration in many Asian countries and very often there is inadequate supervision by national authorities. China, for example, has only 10 people to su-

Cocktail recipe for safer plays

pervise all the stock exchanges and all companies operating in the country.

The solution to such problems is to use a mutual fund, unit trust or offshore fund. The fund should ideally invest in a number of countries. This allows the fund managers to partially or completely remove investments from countries in Asia or to concentrate investment in preferred countries.

Using a fund to invest in several countries is known as the "cocktail" approach and certainly reduces risk. It also offers a wider choice of good investments than those available through a single-country fund.

Where a fund invests in one country and the fund manager is unhappy about that country, it is standard practice to convert up to 30% of the assets of the fund into cash. It is very unusual to increase the cash component beyond 30% for several reasons. First, the fund manager is not being paid management fees for



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

having the investment sit in cash. The investor can do that by himself without paying management fees. Second, a fund manager might be wrong; sometimes he is simply too close to the situation and lacks perspective.

Investment funds that cover Asia fall into two major categories: those that include Japan and those that do not. This is a vital factor as all investment funds of reasonable standard are required to choose an index so their performance can be measured. Japan has the largest stock market in Asia – in terms of market capitalization it is the second largest in the world.

Where a fund includes Japan as a possible investment destination, the fund will usually

closely follow the index. Merely because of the Japanese market's size the percentage of the fund invested in Japan will always be high.

However, unlike most of Asia, Japan is not an emerging market. It is a first-world economy and its growth and stock market performance have been generally poor for more than a decade. Should this continue it will affect investment performance compared with investment funds that exclude Japan. A number of indices offer the choice of including or excluding Japan.

Many investment funds that cover Asia do not include India, which is a mistake. The Indian stock market is long-established and the underlying economy is robust with many quality companies in which to invest. It virtually doubled in value in 2003 and economic growth rates for 2004 currently look likely to exceed 6%.

At present, Asia appears the most attractive area to invest in as the region is enjoying the fastest economic growth in the world.

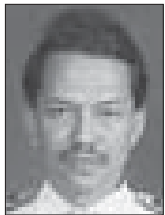
But Asia is not for the faint-hearted; investment returns can be spectacular in the good times, but when the party comes to an end there are likely to be some sharp losses in investors' portfolios.

Asia still affords good value to investors and it can be reasonably assumed that this will continue for some time. However, it is worth bearing in mind the old adage that an investor has made a profit only when the holdings have been sold and converted to cash.

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

Thongchai Wichaidit, 49, from Surat Thani, has been appointed the new Chief of the Phuket Provincial Industrial Office. K. Thongchai graduated from the National Institute of Development Administration with a master's degree in Public Administration. His experience includes six months as the Acting Chief of Surat Thani Provincial Industrial Office.



South Africa-born Australian national **Geoffrey Bennun**, 53, has taken the position of General Manager of the Sila Evason Hideaway on Koh Samui, overseeing the final months of development ahead of its opening in June. Mr Bennun, who studied hotel management in England, was previously General Manager at the Evason Hua Hin. He held the same position at the Media Village during the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.



Wichet Suyanan, 30, from Phang Nga, is the new Deputy Administrator of Muang District, Phuket. K. Wichet, a graduate in Political Science from Ramkhamhaeng University, held similar positions in Ranong and his home town for eight years.



Been promoted? Made a career change? Know someone who has? Let us know by email to onthemove@phuketgazette.net.

New cruise line sails into Andaman market

PATONG: Luxurious surroundings and every convenience for a pleasant and relaxing stay are nothing new for holidaymakers in this part of the world, but a fly-sail-hotel package seems to be something of an innovation.

ADIAcara, a 200-meter-long, 38,600-ton cruise liner, began operations in the Andaman and Gulf of Thailand in November last year and now visits Phuket every fortnight, plowing the seas between here and Laem Chabang in Chon Buri province.

Catering to an almost-exclusively German clientele, **AIDAcara** will steam the Mediterranean between April and October each year then travel east to allow passengers to escape the European winter.

AIDA is a subsidiary of Seetours, itself under the aegis of the mammoth Carnival Group, which also includes the Cunard and P&O cruise lines.

AIDAcara, launched in 1996 from a Finnish shipyard, has 650 cabins accommodating 1,100 passengers, served by a crew of almost 700.

Raymond Honings, Managing Director of AIDA in Asia, explained, "Around 900 passengers fly to Thailand – Bangkok or Phuket – by charter aircraft every Thursday and board the ship either in Laem Chabang or Phuket."

"Another 100 to 200 begin or end their journey in a Phuket hotel, so it's always around 900 passengers whom we fly in or out each week."

The price for the flight, week-long cruise, and hotel stay of up to a fortnight in a Phuket hotel is around 2,000 Euros (ap-

proximately 100,000 baht) but, as Mr Honings explained, the choice of cabin, single-person supplements, and hotel options can affect the price.

Most passengers, he said, prefer resorts such as the JW Marriott, Merlin Beach, Kata Thani or Rydges, with all-in costs obviously higher for the more up-market resorts.

Mr Honings told the *Gazette* that most of the customers know about AIDA from the Internet, or from brochures and tour agencies, though only in Germany. About 95% of the passengers are German with most of the remainder coming from neighboring European countries. Cruises are not directly reserved or sold in Thailand.

AIDAcara is not the only liner cruising these waters and the *Gazette* asked Orachorn Saisritong, local manager of Star Cruises, whether the **AIDAcara** will affect that company's cruise business.

"I don't think it will as AIDA and Star Cruises cater for different clients," said K. Orachorn. "Most of our passengers come from India, Singapore and China. In fact, it is very rare to see a non-Asian aboard one of our vessels."

K. Orachorn also highlighted a difference in the type of ship operated and said that AIDA opts for luxury fitments and facilities while Star Cruises, while still very comfortable, opts for a larger passenger capacity.

"Some of our ships carry 2,500 or even 2,800 passengers in high season, more than double AIDAcara's capacity," she said.

– **Dhirarat Boonkongsan**

Thai Marine Leisure

(bold listings are Thai flagged boats)

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38 Ft 2000	Flybridge Watertaxi Yamaha, 2 x 200 Hp	THB	2,700,000
37 Ft 1996	Searay 370 Mercruiser, 2 x 350 Hp	USD	175,000
30 Ft 1990	Bayliner Sunbridge 2855 New King Cobra 7.5 L	THB	1,900,000
29 Ft 2003	Prowler 9000 Honda 4-stroke, 2 x 50 Hp	Price on Application	
28 Ft 86/02	Italian Open Sportfisher Yamaha 200 Hp	THB	1,500,000
18 Ft 2000	Skip Jack 18 Yamaha, 2 x 85 Hp	THB	750,000
Sail			
60 Ft 50/03	Indian Dhow Isuzu 84 Hp	THB	4,500,000
57 Ft 1985	B. Roberts motor sailor Ford, 120 Hp	US\$ ONLY	100,000
56 Ft 1973	Classic Corten Steel Ketch Perkins, 64 Hp	US\$	70,000
48 Ft 83/03	Frers 48 Perkins, 87 Hp	US\$	88,000
46 Ft 1981	Heresch off Ketch Ford, 80Hp	US\$	127,500
42 Ft 1987	Westail 42 Perkins, 50 Hp	Euro	80,000
41 Ft 1978	Bluewater 41 Ford Lees Marine, 72 Hp	US\$	128,000
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READY, SET, GO: All lined up, racers prepare to enjoy the thrills and spills of the first day of action in a test of the new 1.8 kilometer Phuket Town motocross course.

Time for sport boats to race

The King's Cup committee has made strenuous efforts during past regattas to encourage sport boats but alas, entries remain slim.

These smaller, more realistically-priced yachts give more people a chance of participating in the cup.

Perhaps the existing Sport Boat division should expand into a Day Boat division? While perhaps less than ideal for true sport boat enthusiasts, it would broaden the entry base.

Sponsorship would enable a sports boat or class to compete within this division.

It would give the organizers a little more work but the trade-off – a greater number of entries – would be compensation aplenty.

It would bring a lot to the event if boats such as the Phuket 8 and Platu were racing for their own trophies, while having enough

entries from Mumm 30s and other day boats to put a significant fleet on the starting line.

The changing face of ocean racing: A fleet of fewer than 60 yachts in the recent Sydney-Hobart race signified a new low compared with the 180-boat fleets of 20 years ago.

Here are my suggestions: modern racing yachts are more at home around the buoys than in trying conditions offshore. Production yachts have taken a huge share of the market away from the one-off or semi-custom yacht industry.

Events such as the Andaman Sea Rally will continue to rise in importance as other races – such as the Sydney-Hobart – attract fewer entrants.

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New ball game for a Phuket winner

PHUKET: Thailand already has a tennis idol in Paradorn "Ball" Srichaphan, and with his success has come greater interest in the game.

It may come as a surprise to some that there is another form of tennis, called "soft tennis." It's run by the Soft Tennis Association of Thailand (STAT) in Bangkok, and there is one Soft Tennis Club on Phuket.

Doing her bit to promote the game in the same way that Paradorn has lifted awareness of the "hard" version is Withita "Tangkwa" Jang-Iam, 18.

Phuket-born K. Tangkwa has already managed to take third place in a soft tennis tournament in the Philippines and made it into the final 16 in the 12th World Soft Tennis Championships in Hiroshima, Japan, early in November. She also came ninth in the world youth rankings.

On January 24 and 25, she will be competing in a tournament in Chiang Rai as a lead-in to a tournament in Phuket on April 3 and 4. Leading players in that competition will qualify for the national finals in Bangkok.

For the uninitiated, K. Tangkwa explained these basic characteristics of soft tennis:

Soft tennis includes singles and doubles. The ball (which is made from rubber) is filled with air and because it is soft, it can be hit extremely hard. This is one of the charming features of this fast-moving yet precise game.

Doubles, in particular, requires a high level of skill and good communication between players. Soft tennis players need not only good technique, but also physical and mental strength to combine effectively with their partners.

Partners alternate the serve

SPORTS profile

By Nonthawat Disayabutra



K. Tangkwa in action.

after every two points.

Matches usually consist of either seven games (the first team to win four games wins the match), or nine games (the first team to win five games wins the match).

One game consists of four points but if the score is tied at three points apiece, the game continues until one team is ahead by two points and wins. In the decid-

ing game, however, there are seven points (with deuce at six all).

International rules governing singles were established in 1993. Since then, tournaments have been held at national and international level.

K. Tangkwa began playing seriously two years ago, though she had been practising tennis for up to two hours a day, under her father's tutelage, since she was eight.

In the 12 tournaments she has played since, she has won several first prizes, including one tournament in Bangkok that she still ranks as her best performance.

"I still have to learn more about the game's rules and the various styles. The racket and ball are softer and lighter than normal tennis, which makes control more difficult," Tangkwa said.

K. Tangkwa is a first-year medicine student at Chiang Mai University and believes soft tennis is good relaxation.

"I think if I have been practicing hard and my dad says it's okay to join the national team, I will do it," she said.

Nipon Jang-Iam, Tangkwa's father and coach, said, "The future is up to her. If she wants to play professionally, I will support her. She is now ranked ninth in the world and first in Southeast Asia."

Big events coming up this year include an important tournament at Surin in June, the Soft Tennis Masters in Bangkok in August, and the Asian Soft Tennis Titles in Chiang Mai in December, featuring competitors from 17 nations.

Phuket contact: Nipon Jang-Iam, Tel: 01-6779619.



About 50 racers turned out to test a new motocross track on the bypass road near the Ong Ngen Isan Restaurant on January 11.

Starts produced plenty of excitement and flying dust. The course included twists and turns, a jump ramp for adventurous riders – and plenty of mud. Each lap covered 1.8 kilometers and racers revved through three laps.

One of the racers, Wichai Sukpratueng, told the *Gazette*, "The test today made me realize this motocross business isn't so easy."

"It looks easy but it was really hard to keep control of the handlebars. Anyway, it was challenge and exciting."

A date for the first race meeting is expected to be announced soon.

Event Everest to be scaled by local golfers

KATHU: Local golfers have a new event to look forward to on Sunday, January 25, at Phuket Country Club – with a new Ford Everest as the hole-in-one prize.

More than 100 golfers from Phuket and Krabi have registered for the tournament, to be played under the Callaway handicap system with competitors classified into four flights.

Celebrities have been invited, including famous Thai comedian Charnarong "Tik Klinsee" Khanteetao and former mayor of Phuket Town, Phummi-

sak Hongsyok. Anyone interested in playing is invited to call Anuphas Ford at Tel: 076-355747/8 or K. Prajuab at Tel: 01-6072672 by January 23.

This year's Blue Canyon Golf Open will be held on February 7 and 8, with sponsor Nike holding a club demonstration day on February 6.

The amateur tournament is open to men with a handicap of 18 or less and women with a handicap of 28 or less.

The first round will be on the Lakes Course, with day two on

the Canyon Course. To enter, players must register before noon on January 23.

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Serious S80 shows its age



By Jeff Heselwood

Spotted along the Chalong-Karon road shortly after Christmas was one of Volvo's top-of-the-range sedans, the luxury S80.

It was an unusual animal to see on the highways and byways of Phuket, as this model is somewhat expensive and is not generally considered to be on a par with an equivalent Mercedes-Benz or BMW.

Launched to the world in 1998 and face-lifted in 2001, the S80 is, however, a car worthy of a closer look, and has scored some success locally as the choice of various high-end hotels for their fleets.

Volvo claimed that the S80 featured the world's first transversely-mounted six-cylinder engine, conveniently (though perhaps justifiably) forgetting the truly awful Austin 18-22/Princess of the mid-'70s which featured a transverse six.

The original S80 came with a 2.9-liter six producing a modest 204bhp (150kW) while five-cylinder models were available in 2.4- and 2.8-liter options borrowed from the smaller S70. A turbocharged six developing 272bhp (200kW) was available and a five-cylinder diesel from Audi powered later models. A



SUPREME SWEDE: Although built to withstand impacts, the S80 has never severely dented the Mercedes-Benz and BMW market.

five-cylinder gasoline turbo version with all-wheel-drive is also on the market.

Automatic transmission is standard – four- or five-speed according to engine choice – and features an adaptive shift pattern that recognizes a driver's style and shifts up or down accordingly.

The S80 is built on a lengthened version of the versatile S70 platform, which forms the basis for both the S60 sports sedan and the luxury 4x4 XC90.

Produced at the Torslanda

factory in Sweden, the S80 was Volvo's first challenge to the established luxury makers, but it failed to live up to expectations.

Peter Horbury, who designed much of Volvo's current range including the S80, now heads Ford's Premier Automotive Group (PAG), which comprises Jaguar, Aston Martin, Volvo and Land Rover. His colleague, Henrik Fisker of Aston Martin, was responsible for the recently-launched Aston Martin DB9 (*Gazette*, November 15, 2003).

In a recent interview, Mr Horbury said, "Certain things are expected of certain marques and you have to maintain that identity."

What people expect from Volvo appears to be solidness and safety. The S80 offers a full raft of safety features, with full-length air curtains, side-impact bags for both driver and front passenger as well as dual front airbags,

three-point seat belts for all five occupants and energy-absorbing materials throughout the passenger compartment.

Additionally, the body consists of a unique safety cell that distributes impact energy evenly through the vehicle to dissipate destructive forces and protect passengers.

The vehicle's structure – including the roof pillars and transverse roof profiles – keeps the passenger compartment intact, absorbing a great deal of the forces if the vehicle starts to roll. The most crucial parts of this protective web are made of high-strength boron steel.

In a side collision, the Volvo Side Impact Protection System (Sips) helps to distribute the energy across a large part of the car's body reducing – in theory – the trauma suffered by the occupants.

Many of the systems and designs incorporated at Volvo

have now been extended to other parts of the PAG empire.

Mr Horbury believes car firms are now more adventurous and sees more niche models and crossovers than in the past.

"Design matures," he says. "I cannot be creative 24 hours a day. But national identity is the strongest identifying point. Ford has been smart by putting all the marques under the Ford Motor Company banner. This has lifted Ford's perceived value by association."

But whether Horbury and his team will attempt a successor to the S80 is another matter.

Volvo is likely to concentrate on its highly successful XC90 and its smaller cars in the future.

The S80, good but not great, has never achieved the success hoped for.

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

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Guest chef

By Jenna Wise

The road between Karon and Patong, high above the sea, offers some wonderful views. One place to enjoy a good meal along this stretch, perhaps while watching the sun set, is the Central Karon Village, Phuket.

The resort has individual bungalows built on verdant jungle cliffs and two restaurants: The Cliff which is just below road level, and The Bayview, situated closer to the sea.

Sixteen years of cooking has made Chef Danai Thotrakan – who has worked at Central Karon Village since it opened in 1999 – a master in the kitchen.

"I'm very keen on fusion food because the possibilities are endless," said Chef Danai.

While The Cliff restaurant features Mediterranean-Asian fusion cuisine, the choice at The Bayview is Thai or international.

"Most guests want to eat Thai dishes while on holiday here and these three dishes are always popular."

He recommends a small, colorful side salad to add vibrancy to these dishes if you are not able to recreate the intricately-carved vegetables.

Deep-fried white snapper with tom yam sauce

One person

Ingredients:

1 whole white snapper fish, weighing about 500 grams;
60 grams chopped mushrooms;
10 grams julienne of lemon grass;
1 kaffir lime leaf, torn into shreds;
2 grams julienne of galangal;
5 grams sweet chili paste;
20 grams fish sauce;
30 grams fresh lime juice;
4 fresh chilies, crushed;
1 teacup of chicken stock;
Oil.

Method:

Deep-fry the white snapper until it turns golden brown – about seven minutes – then remove from the heat and drain. Put the remaining ingredients – except the mushrooms and crushed chilies – into a clean pan and heat



Over the edge at The Cliff



Deep-fried prawn cake with green curry paste

One person

Ingredients:

100 grams fresh prawn meat, finely chopped;
2 spring onions, chopped small;
1 medium-sized coriander root, chopped small;
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped;
3 kaffir lime leaves, finely shredded;
10 grams green curry paste;
1 beaten egg;

until the mixture is simmering. Add the mushrooms and chilies after a few minutes and continue to simmer for another minute or two, before placing the fish on a serving dish. Pour the sauce over.

Method:

In a large bowl, mix all the ingredients and add the egg when everything else is well blended. Chef Danai makes one large prawn cake, but you could use the mixture for several smaller ones. Deep-fry the cake for about five minutes, drain well and place on a dish with a side decoration of

your choice. Serve with plum sauce.

Soft-shell crab soup with coconut milk and galangal

One person

Ingredients:

Soft-shell crab weighing about

100 grams, broken into 4 pieces;
2 small red onions, peeled and finely sliced;
1 stalk of lemon grass, cut into two-centimeter pieces;
3 large slices young galangal;
3 kaffir lime leaves, torn in half;
3 fresh chilies, whole;
20 grams straw mushrooms;
1½ cups coconut milk;
2 teaspoons lime juice;
2 grams salt;
10 grams smoked chili paste.

Method:

Put all the ingredients – except the crab, lime juice and mushrooms – into a large pot and slowly bring to the boil. Simmer the mixture for about five minutes, then add the crab pieces. Simmer for a further five minutes before stirring in the lime juice and mushrooms. Continue cooking for another three minutes and remove from the heat. Serve immediately with steamed rice.

The Bayview restaurant at Central Karon Village, Phuket, 8/21 Moo 1, Tambon Karon. Tel: 076-286300/9. Chef: Danai Thotrakan. The Bayview restaurant, open all day from breakfast to dinner. The Cliff, open for dinner from 6:30 pm to 10:30 pm.

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Home of the Week Kata

With construction to begin soon on the Raffles resort and the success of The Breakers at the opposite end of the bay, Kata has now joined the ranks of Phuket's prime real estate locales.

For some, this was never an issue. High-end property has been available in this small and relaxed bay for some years now.

The first villas of the Katamanda project were completed about two years ago. Over the past few years, the development has slowly grown into an impressive spread of properties cascading across the southern end of the bay, overlooking both Kata and Kata Noi beaches.

In this collection of individual yet pleasingly complementary villas, it is difficult to single out one. However, high among the sprawl is a villa that is notable not just for its elevation, but also for being the home of one of Katamanda's chief project managers.

As the man responsible for six of the other villas there, as well as a great deal of the infrastructure planning, it is hardly surprising that this formerly Bangkok-based gentleman should fall for the grand Andaman vistas and decide to make a home among his work.



Special attention to detail, tempered by experience and rendered by one of Bangkok's best construction companies, has cre-

ated a remarkable home.

From the double carport, a twist of steps leads up to the pool patio, which is also home to the

guest suite. Here, tall, flowering shrubs and palms create a cozy privacy and peacefulness, but it is upon rising to the next level that the true beauty of this home begins to unfold.

The side stairs run past a gently bubbling waterfall circulating between two lotus ponds and lets out onto yet another patio area, this one graced with a comfortable sala and the full grandeur of that expansive view.

Glass-panelled doors front the formal lounge and dining room that opens onto one side of this patio, while the family room sits comfortably to the other side.

While the front of the house benefits from the warmth and brightness of its exposure, the rear rooms – hard against the hillside – remain cool and calming.

Here are the study-office and the kitchen, decked out in quarry tile and Teka appliances. An additional alfresco "Thai" kitchen adjoins its Western cousin.

The top level of the home is taken up by two large, identical bedroom suites. Even their bathrooms are virtual doppelgängers, and the only thing that sets the master bedroom apart from its twin is an enormous balcony.

The advantages and attractiveness of this home are only matched by the benefits that come with being a part of a development of Katamanda's standard.

Clubhouse, restaurant, conference room and fitness center make this a choice locale for either homebody or holiday renter. And with a new and redoubtable management team in place, this development is certainly ready to match Kata's newly acquired high-end status.

For more information about this week's home, please contact Andrew Park. Tel: 076-354016.

The writer, Simon J Hand, is Associate Editor for Asia-Pacific Tropical Homes. If you have a property you would like featured in House of the Week, email editor@trophomes.com

Gardening

Why can't flower names be easy to say or remember?

A rose is always a rose, a daisy is a daisy, and an orchid is always an orchid. Well actually, sometimes it's not, but that's the point. Flower names are so complicated in this part of the world.

The cream-fruit plant even has two names in Latin – *Strophanthus gratus* and *rouPELLIA grata*. A Thai friend of mine, who gives me the name in Thai for many plants, was struggling to provide a simple translation.

The best she could come up with was *nang yeng peenang* – presumably a reference to the Malaysian island somewhere in the dim and distant history of the plant.

However, the cream-fruit plant is originally from much further afield. Its ancestral home is tropical West Africa, and it was brought to this part of the world by early explorers.

Its glossy, evergreen leaves are thick and leathery, and it bears terminal clusters of waxy, bell-shaped, purple and white flowers that resemble begonias but are fragrant at night with the smell of roses.

The smell reminds me of the rather inexpensive perfume that my elementary school teacher used to wear. Not exactly Chanel No. 5, but fragrant enough.

The flowers that follow the deep purple buds that initially appear are certainly an unusual shape. Five petals surround an inch-deep center, with a long pollen-covered stamen in the middle.

The open central part is surrounded by a dozen or so vertical "spikes", in contrast to the delicate petals around them. Even after they're cut, these flowers last several days and are great for floral displays.

The folk-healers of tropical West Africa have found many uses for the plant. They make a rubbing compound from its leaves to reduce fevers; they mash the leaves to treat various skin problems and wounds and make medicines from the leaves to treat

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with Bloomin' Bert

Unmentionable? We can, and do

more “unmentionable” problems.

A substance known as *ouabain* can be obtained from the seed of *strophanthus* – the most common use in its native land was as a source of arrow poison, both for hunting and for warfare. It was this use that brought the plant to the attention of Western science.

In 1861, the famed explorer and missionary Dr David Livingstone observed native peoples hunting with a poison that had been made from the seed of a closely-related plant (a vine called *strophanthus kombe*) and he later reported the substance as an apparent cardiac stimulant. This led to the investigation of many similar species, and *strophanthus gratus* turned out to be the most valuable.

Africans who later heard that the British were using the poison from the seeds in a pure state as a medicine concluded that the Brits were indeed mad. They may still be right to this day.



Be careful how you handle the cream-fruit plant.
Picture courtesy of Kazuo Yamasaki.

As it belongs to the same family as the allamanda, the sap of the plant is fairly poisonous.

Just before I sat down to write this, I picked a cream-fruit flower from my garden, and it seemed quite keen to secrete as much sap on my skin as it could.

If you do handle this plant, make sure that you wear gloves, or at least avoid touching the sap.

This plant adores the sun. It will survive in shade, but the more sunlight it gets, the more flowers it will produce. More flowers also appear when the plant is drier, so it shouldn't be over-watered.

To propagate the cream-fruit plant, all you need to do is

snip off a fairly woody cutting and stick it in some moist compost. It will take root and grow fairly quickly.

The cream-fruit is a smelly plant that looks good, too. Just be careful if you use it to treat your “unmentionable” problems.

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Construction Update

Index makes a home in Phuket

SAMKONG: Furniture retailer Index has scheduled a December 2004 opening for its new superstore on the bypass road, just north of Phuket International Hospital.

When completed, the Index Living Mall will join soon-to-open Central as well as the Tesco-Lotus and Big C supercenters in what is shaping up as a shopper's dream area.

Index Living Mall will sell an extensive range of furniture, housewares and hardware, and anticipates upwards of 200 customers a day.

Kijja Pattamasattayasonthi, managing director of Index Living Mall told the *Gazette* that he is confident that the store will become popular among higher-earning Thais and locally-resident foreigners.

Index is investing some 250 million baht in developing the 10-rai site into its sixth furniture superstore in the country.

Plans are afoot to continue the expansion throughout Thailand and Southeast Asia.

The first Index in Indonesia will open in three months while Chiang Mai is the next target area in Thailand.

— **Nonthawat Disayabutra**

Before you buy, check and check again

In the past two columns I have detailed the different types of titles to land, buildings and condominiums, and the methods by which a foreigner may acquire ownership or lease rights on these properties.

You may now feel confident to begin the search for your dream home. Please start, by all means, but first pause to consider what you are doing.

While most developers and private vendors are ethical, there are, as everywhere, a number who are not, and caution must be exercised.

Ask to see an accurate translation of the front and back of the land or condo title deed. This will show the current owner, any endorsements or liens the property has, its shape, area and orientation, and any borders to public property, such as a road, stream or the ocean.

Use a measuring tape and compass (or a steady pace and the location of the sun) to ascertain if the title accurately represents the offered property. Be sure you are dealing with the rightful owners of the property or their appointed representative.

A highly-publicized though small number of land titles were considered suspect last year and prudence suggests that you have

a lawyer conduct due diligence on the title's veracity and history.

This is especially important if your intended purchase borders – or apparently stands alone within – government and particularly Forestry Department land. A cautious approach may save tears later.

In the case of a building under construction or land undergoing subdivision, look carefully at the provisions for issuing a title and easement rights. Also, look out for a clause providing for the sale price to be adjusted pro-rata with the final titled area. There have been instances in which vendors deliberately understated the area of a property.

If the property in question is not adjacent to a public road, it is essential that there is evidence of a registered easement for vehicle access and all utility connections. It has been known for vendors to grant an easement for vehicular access and then later, when the property is developed, refuse to allow the connection of electricity cables until further payments are made.

It may sound obvious, but do read the contract. I am amazed how many people sign first and ask questions later. Un-

like many other countries, Thailand has effectively no consumer protection, so *caveat emptor* is the order of the day. If the contract is not in English or a language that you understand, insist on a translation by a competent, independent professional.

If you see a clause which you don't understand, seek professional advice. If you see a patently unsavory clause, such as, "During the period of this contract the Buyer may not take legal action against the Seller" (which, amazingly, more than a few people have signed), stop! Don't overlook the precautions you would take in your home country just because you are in negotiation with a seemingly friendly vendor here.

Remember, some condominiums qualify for 100% foreign ownership but others are restricted to 49% of the units in the block. Be sure that the unit you are buying is covered under this allowance.

There are ways that the rights to the units outside the 49% allowance may be offered. Make sure you understand how this system works and look closely at the total number of units sold.

Be particularly mindful if less than 50% have been sold and management is still in the hands of the developers. With majority votes, a bad manager can be removed by owners, but in a building still majority-owned by the developer, you may be stuck with his choice of manager.

None of the above is intended to warn you off making an investment in property in Thailand. With due diligence you will be able to acquire a trouble-free and secure investment that will bring you great rewards.

William Pinsent has lived in Phuket since 1981 and is a director of Phuket Land Ltd. More articles by the author can be found at www.phuketland.com/gaz/gazmain.htm



Ask WILLIAM

By William Pinsent

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Property Gazette

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PAIR OF HOUSES

Ideal for home and income. Adjacent but in own gardens and in quiet area. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon. 1 year and 4 years old. 5 million baht for both. View now. These houses will sell quickly. Tel: 076-388308, 07-2710955.

NEW HOUSE 4 SALE

at Nai Ham. 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. 400sqm. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 01-752-0275. Email: comfortablynumb_18@hotmail.com

HOUSE IN RAWAI

2 bedrooms, good location. Tel: 076-388073, 01-9792-901. Website: www.siam-business.com

1.25 RAI KAMALA

Panoramic views over Kamala valley. Quiet location, not overlooked. 2.75 million baht. Tel: 01-7374295. Email: stevebragg28@hotmail.com

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GENEROUS VILLA

3 bedrooms, spacious living plus dining, terrace with pool. 980sqm. Chanote land, near Nai Ham, quiet location. Tel: 01-9792901, 076-388073. Website: www.siam-business.com

KRABI 2.5 RAI

Filled land in a good area in Ao Nang. The land is 50x80m and 40m from main road, water and electricity. There is a 4m-wide road from main road to the land. Location: 400m from Thai Village Resort, 400m to beach. Land title: NorSor 3 Gor. Tel: 06-2744976. Email: grus35@hotmail.com

4.5 RAI AO MAKHAM

4.5 rai of quiet, titled land in Ao Makham. Sealed road, electricity, all land flat and can be built on, nice area. 6.75 mill baht. Tel: 09-8715192. Fax: 076-244561. Email: info@phukethomes.com

400M OCEAN FRONT

This large parcel of land is available on the east coast of Koh Yao Noi with magnificent views to islands and Krabi. The land is 30+ rai with NorSor3 Gor title and 40+ rai with TorBor 6 title. The land has 400 meters of beachfront and seafront and has 24-hour high water and road access. All the land can be built on and is available at a very cheap price for this area/island: 40 million baht. Expected to be popular, so please inquire soon. Tel: 09-8715192. Email: info@phukethomes.com

KATA HILL

New house. 3 bedrms, 2 bathrooms, 4 aircons, great view, 800m from Kata beach. Sale or 3x30-yr lease: 2.9 million baht obo. Tel: 01-0918908.

12 RAI SEAVIEW

in Kata. This 12-rai plot in Kata has private concrete roads, underground power, guttering, lighting, 4 houses plus a maid's home. The houses are very well-constructed with Western finishes. 3 houses consist of 100 sqm and 1 house is over 400 sqm. The land has views to Kata and the sea. Sale direct from owner at 65 million baht. Tel: 09-8715192. Email: info@phukethomes.com

BOAT LAGOON



New canal-side apartments for sale. 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms. Finishing in marble, teak. Roof terrace and Jacuzzi. Tel: 01-9794193. Email: info@andamanproperty.com

3 RAI BEACHFRONT

Beautiful NorSor 3 Gor land, 3 rai, on Krabi beachfront with road access and electricity, for sale. 6 million baht. Tel: 075-632624. Email: somcpier@hotmail.com

5.3 RAI FOR B7M

Nice land, 600 meters from Mission Hills Golf Course. Ideal for small project, ready to build. Tel: 01-5371050.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Western-style house with 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms and Chanote title. Email: dr_fuchs@arcor.de

RARE FIND

at Cape Yamu with Chanote. 2.2 rai and just 50m to canal. Has paved road, power, beautiful large trees. 2.25 million baht per rai; or will subdivide into 1.1-rai parcels at 2.5 million baht per rai. Full commission paid to realtors. Tel: 06-2786574.

1-RAI PLOTS OF LAND

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21 RAI

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Property Gazette

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Properties Wanted

THALANG RURAL

land wanted. Seeking 0.5-1 rai of NorSorGor or Chanote land in Thalang District. Must be in a very rural location but still accessible via public road or track. Electricity not required but do need water supply (spring). Email: simon@link77.com

RENTAL SOUGHT

for late January. I am looking to move to Phuket at the end of January. I am initially looking for clean, inexpensive living in the Patong area, preferably with swimming pool (or access to one) and aircon. Will start with a rental of 1-3 months, and thereafter a yearly contract. Email: yakuza@gol.com

LAND NEEDED

in Phuket. We need land in Rawai, Nai Harn, Chalong and Cape Panwa. Also any beach-front land or seaview land 15 minutes from Dulwich or Phuket Town. Please email photos, description and price. Agents also welcome. Tel: 09-871-5192. Fax: 076-244 561. Email: info@phukethomes.com

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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

LOOKING TO LEASE

Looking to lease 1 rai of land on the bypass road for commercial shop. Owners kindly contact me - no agents. Tel: 01-5353120. Fax: 076-344-847. Email: kamontip@hotmail.com

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Accommodation Wanted

OFFICE NEEDED

I am relocating to Phuket at the end of January and am looking for a small office (1 person) to rent with a good quality broadband connection. Email: hongkongpneumatics@hotmail.com

HOUSE IN THE NORTH

wanted. Looking to rent long-term a house in the north of Phuket island - Surin/Cherng Talay area. Must have telephone, garden and aircon and be secure for a 30-year-old (not near a main road, for instance). Willing to pay up to 15,000 baht per month (no deposit, you never get 'em back). Will sign long-term contract for the right place. Tel: 01-5351754.

KATA CENTER

Single male requires bungalow accommodation in Kata/Karon area from last week of January for about 6 weeks. Location important as I have no wish to hire a car or motorbike. Must be about 20 minutes' walk from Peach Hill in Kata. Email: pmarkcrotty@btinternet.com

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. Unfurnished ok, need only cooking facilities. Tel: 09-552-2641. 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.fslife.co.uk

NEED ROOM, 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

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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

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: rolfrkranepuhl@aol.com

ACCOMMODATION

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

2-BEDROOM HOUSE

wanted. Would like a 2-bedroom house in Land & Houses Park for 15,000 baht/month. Tel: 07-889-3675. Email: jefftd77@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

Looking for accommodation from March 29, 2004. Email: polymath2002@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/mth. Tel: 05-1601670. Email: paulivarlarsson@hotmail.com

Property Services

HARDWOOD FLOORS

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

RENOVATE

plus repairs. For home, office, garden. Call 06-276-1504. www.sea-business.com/renokit

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.

Household Services

INSURANCE SERVICE

For travel, accident, car, home, business, health & life. Tel: 076-344521. Email: agentsmithr@hotmail.com

Building Services

THAI KITCHEN

Original build plus equipment. Call 06-2761504. www.sea-business.com/renokit

phuket home services

Repairs and maintenance. Air conditioning, woodwork. Pressure cleaning. Painting, plumbing. Electrical, ponds, stonework. Metalwork, glazing. Window cleaning, renovation, interior design.

Tel: 076-324400
Mobile: 07-2820200

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!

I hereby authorize payment against my Visa ☐ / Mastercard ☐

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please Deliver To:

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City State or Province Zip Code

Country: _____

Sorry, no subscriptions within Phuket province!

Island Job Mart



PHUKET ARCADIA
BEACH RESORT
Operated by Hilton International

Phuket Arcadia Beach Resort is expanding its leisure facilities and services.

We are looking for talented, experienced and enthusiastic instructors in Tai Chi, Yoga, Meditation and Aerobics, on a freelance, commission basis.

We now also have openings for 2 experienced hairstylists. These positions are for full-time employment.

Please send your resumé to: Personnel Manager
Email: recruitment@phuketarcadia.com
Phuket Arcadia Beach Resort, Karon Beach, Phuket 83100
Tel: 076-396038-44. Fax: 076-396136



The Islandia Resorts Group & Spa is currently looking for qualified and dynamic people 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

Sales staff required (Various Nationalities)

Full training provided. No experience necessary. Visas plus work permits provided. O.T.E. 3K-6K US\$ per month.

For local interview call Michael Wood
at 076-294341, 076-294335-7
Email: ivo-thailand@adsl.laxinfo.com
michael@royalperspective.com



Island Technology, the leader in Smart Homes, Broadband Internet and IT Solutions throughout Thailand and Southeast Asia, has the following exciting opportunities in Phuket, Thailand

Accountant	1 position
Sales	5 positions
Project Management	2 positions
Technicians	3 positions

Qualifications Required

1. Degree or 2+ year's experience in related field.
2. Must be willing to live & work in Phuket.
3. English skills-written & spoken.

Come join our leading team of professionals in Phuket!!
Please send resumé with salary requirements to
jobs@islandtechnology.com

STAFF REQUIRED

The following staff required urgently: General Manager: hands-on manager with 5 years' experience, knowledge of computers/networking and customer service, fluent English, Thai an advantage. Admin Officer (Thai national): experience in purchasing/stock control, English communication. Please call or email your CV to apply. Tel: 076-290225. Email: chatchada@phuketinternet.com

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

needed for new marina development. Female Thai national with good English and computer skills, and willing to take responsibility for overall administration. Excellent salary for the right applicant. Please email CV to: paulj@royalphuketmarina.com

SECRETARY WANTED

for a tour company. Must have experience of Internet, and speak English. Should be tall with an outgoing personality. Tel: 09-5944017.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

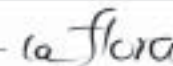
We are now seeking a Hotel Manager to manage our boutique ocean view resort and spa with 84 rooms and 13 villas at Hua Hin. Our soft opening is scheduled for later this year. Qualifications: strong F&B background, min 10 years' experience in resort environment, excellent leadership skills, good command of written and spoken English. Good salary package and benefit will be provided for the successful candidate. Email your resumé and expected salary to K. Verawat at: verawat@majorcineplex.com

PROPERTY

secretary needed to coordinate between owners, government departments and various professionals. Required: skills in English, Excel and Word, and own transport. Salary 9,000 baht. Tel: 01-8913039. Email: siamuk@loxinfo.co.th

STAFF NEEDED

for resort on Koh Yao Yai. Required: male for guest relations officer and one waitress. Tel: 09-4743463.



Khao Lak's new luxury resort managed by Sanctuary resort requires enthusiastic employees to join our dynamic international team. We are looking for all positions in the following departments:

Front Office
Food and Beverage
Kitchen
Sales
Engineering
Housekeeping
Personnel
Spa
Accounts
Purchasing

Experienced personnel as well as people excited to start a new career will be considered.

Send your resume with photo to
laflora@sanctuaryresorts.com
Fax 076 423 501
www.sanctuaryresorts.com

ONLINE SALES

Dot com business in smart office in Phuket Town requires online sales staff. Required: speak English, own transport, experience, flexibility. Typing 45 words/minute, computer skills on Word, Excel, database. Tel: 01-8913039. Email: siamuk@loxinfo.co.th

OPERATIONS

supervisor. Position for Thai male/female with good spoken and written English skills, leadership, team interaction, delegation, and basic computer knowledge is essential. Excellent package including service, fuel and phone allowance. Tel: 076-270750. Email: info@pipsphuket.com

Employment Wanted

DRIVER AVAILABLE

Looking for a position of driver. Please contact me. Tel: 09-5930153.

MAINTENANCE

man available. Looking for a maintenance job in Chalong or Rawai. I am a Thai man, 29 years old. Tel: 01-8953185.

QUALIFIED ENGLISH

teachers. Canadian couple are seeking part-time or full-time teaching/tutoring positions for February/March, anywhere in Southern Thailand. Rhonda has 25 years' elementary school experience (English as second language specialist). Michael teaches adults (TESOL certified), including Business English/Computers. Email: michaelawson@rogers.com

FUN THAI LESSONS

A fun and experienced Thai national woman with excellent spoken and written English is ready to teach you fun Thai lessons. Time is negotiable. Tel: 06-8544295. Email: seafoam2002@yahoo.com

MC FOR HIRE

A fun and experienced Thai national woman, with excellent spoken and written English, a sense of humor and conscientious, is ready to work as an MC for any occasion. Tel: 06-8544295. Email: seafoam2002@yahoo.com

PART-TIME JOB

I am looking for a part-time job. I am a Thai female, written and spoken English and have computer skills. Tel: 09-4695164. Email: oh_aoh@yahoo.com

In addition to 60 retailers in Phuket, The Gazette Guide 2004 goes on sale 23 January at:

Krabi/Phi Phi

Ao Nang Supermart.....	164/5-6 Moo 2, Ao-Nang. Tel: 075-637341
Ao Nang Tourist Center.....	172 Moo 2, Ao Nang. Tel: 075-637551
Kong-Peng Bookstore.....	Muang (downtown). Tel: 075-611307
Ocean Mart.....	121/1 Moo 2, Ao Nang. Tel: 075-637527
Seng Ho Bookstore.....	6 Maharat Soi 7, T. Pangnam, Muang. Tel: 075-622951
The Books.....	78-80 Maharaj Rd, Muang (downtown). Tel: 075-612693

Phang-nga/Khao Lak

Bangniang Beach Resort.....	Moo 5, Kuk-Kak, Khao Lak. Tel: 076-420175
Coconut Minimart.....	Khao Lak Laguna, Kuk-Kak. Tel: 076-420221
Nang-Thong Minimart.....	13/9 Moo 7, Kuk-Kak. Tel: 076-420092

Suratthani/Koh Samui

Atlas Minimart.....	162/49 Moo 2, Chaweng Beach, Koh Samui. Tel: 077-413234
Bookazine Samui.....	Chaweng Beach (opp McDonalds), Koh Samui. Tel: 077-413616

Bangkok

Bookazine Sukumvit.....	Nai Lerd Building, 87 Sukumvit Soi 5, Klong Toey, Wattana, Bangkok.
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For a list of guide retailers in Phuket, see back page of this issue of the Phuket Gazette.

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles for Sale

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@cscoms.com, wattana@rothermannthai.com

KENNEL

Big, strong kennel for sale. Brand new and unused. Price: 6,500 baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 09-8730758.

LCD PROJECTOR

and Nokia phone for sale. If you want to see the BIG picture, call me. Price: 55,000 baht or best offer. I am also selling a Nokia 8910i to the best offer. Tel: 06-9433556. Email: s_solla@hotmail.com

LADIES GOLF CLUBS

Almost new set of graphite shaft Shantra clubs. 2 woods, 8 irons and putter. No bag, 10,000 baht or best offer. Call for more details. Tel: 01-8941530. Fax: 076-238803. Email: awatea@loxinfo.co.th

ANTIQUE FURNITURE

Antique wooden small bed with posts for mosquito netting. Very heavy style, no mattress, price: 40,000 baht. 2 chaise, newly covered in gold/yellow teakwood frame. Price: 18,000 baht each or 30,000 baht for both. Antique wood desk, very large. Price: 42,000 baht. Also some other items of furniture. Please contact. Tel: 076-383794 or 01-0816862. Email: belindarevett@hotmail.com

AUDIO SPEAKERS

Norh 5.1 solid wood loudspeakers. Perfect for home theatre or stereo use. Tel: 076-323242, 01-8934661. Email: valiant@loxinfo.co.th

DVD PLAYER

including 100 DVDs for sale. Just 4 months old, plays VCD and has karaoke facility. Fully-boxed and with 3-year-warranty. Price: 13,000 baht. Tel: 06-2813354.

THAI KITCHEN

Original built plus equipment. Call for more information. Tel: 06-2761504.

DIVE GEAR

for sale. BCD US Divers Aqualung reg. 3,000 baht. BCD Cressi Sub Titan first stage Aqualung; 2nd and Oc Compass SPG Aqualung; Mares fins; Av4 booties; Cressi mask; short and long John 5mm knee pads, wrist and ankle zips. All not even 3 months old; for 35,000 baht. Tel: 01-0853429. Email: mppjo@hotmail.com

Articles Wanted

COIN OPERATED

pool table. Secondhand coin operated pool table wanted. Please call or send email with offers. Tel: 01-958-1055. Email: pauljames@expathotel.com

SPORTS GEAR

wanted. I am looking for the following items: man's mountain bike, for tall person, longboard (8'-8.4') windsurfer not older than 3-4 years, free weights, strong ocean kayak. All gear should be in good shape. Please contact me by phone or email. Tel: 076-282-199. Email: unomarcopolo@hotmail.com

OLD PIANO

wanted. Nothing expensive considered as it is to be our (5-year-old) daughter's first introduction to music. An old and perhaps unwanted piano is what we are looking for. Please contact Stewart or Ha. Tel: 076-279379. Email: stewha@loxinfo.co.th

PLAYSTATION 2

wanted. Does anyone wish to sell one? Please contact us by telephone or email. Tel: 07-2773917. Email: stewcliff@myway.com

AIR CONDITIONERS

and wardrobes wanted. Good used air conditioner(s), wardrobes, vanity table with mirror, water heater for shower, and other furniture (but not sofa, etc). Please contact via email. Email: phim@thai.com

Boats & Marine

SPEEDBOAT

for sale. 36 feet long, 2x200hp Yamaha boat with cabin, kitchen, WC. Price: 650,000 baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 06-2713407.

RIGID DINGHY

wanted. Looking to buy a small 6-10-foot fiberglass dinghy (2-3 meters), in any condition. Please phone or email with offers. Tel: 09-9726017. Email: asiasail@yahoo.com

ANCHOR WINCH

Manual anchor winch suitable for 3/8" long-link chain and rope gypsie. Heavy duty unit, very strong. Price: 30,000 baht. Tel: 09-5997463. Email: info@fitoutmanage.com

SPEEDBOAT 4 SALE

Fiberglass speedboat. Length: 5 meters, for 6 people. 70 hp Yamaha. Price: 230,000 baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 06-2713407.



Omega 56
Mercedes engine
Cruiser/Racer
US\$ 150,000
contact
info@thaimarine.com
076-239 111



Hatteras copy
50 ft Motor Yacht
Ford Diesels
US\$ 165,000 only!
contact
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

BOAT FOR SALE

29-foot fiberglass motor yacht with Thai registration. 2 x 280hp Mercruiser engines. Price: 3.5 million baht ono. Call or email for more details. Tel: 076-239864. Email: hktmkt@ksc.th.com

16-METER LUXURY

sail yacht. Dutch-built, steel, custom yacht, cutter ketch. 16.2m LOA. Owner from new now resident in Spain, and S/Y Pegasi in Malaysia. Looking to sell her at a huge loss. I am unlikely to ever have time for her. She was on the market at US\$280,000. I will let her go for US\$120,000. She has spent the last 2 years on the hard near Langkawi in Malaysia. She needs a new owner. For further information, please see my website at http://194.106.24.44/yacht/pegasi.nsf. Email: mike.scott@es-eclipse.com

BULLETINS

Win a trip to Dublin! Junior IMPAC Dublin Literary Awards for Thailand

Topic: "Portrait of a Young Thai"

Write either a factual or fictional account that draws on your experience of life as a young Thai; or, for foreign writers, your perceptions of life of a young Thai.

Language: English

Length: 800-1,200 words

Age: Between 14-18, up to April 1, 2004

Closing Date for submissions: February 27, 2004

Prizes:

The winning essay in each of the two categories (Thai and non-Thai) will earn the author and one parent a trip to Dublin where they will attend the senior International IMPAC Dublin Literary Awards ceremony, which confers the richest literary prize in the world, and take part in a reading with the winning author.

There will also be five merit awards worth Bt10,000 each. All prizes will include a certificate.

Judging Panel:

1. Her Excellency Sinkorn Maneerin, Deputy Education Minister of Thailand
2. His Excellency Daniel Mulhall, the Irish Ambassador to Thailand
3. Assistant Professor Chusak Pattarakulvanich, English lecturer and critic, Thammasat University
4. Ms Ngarmphan "Jane" Vejajiva, writer and translator of the Harry Potter series
5. Mr Pana Janviroj, editor, The Nation

The contest is open only to children (Thai or non-Thai) attending schools in Thailand. Entries should be sent to:

Portrait of a Young Thai
Office of The Editor
The Nation
44 Moo 10, Bangna-Trad Highway 4.5 km
Bangkok 10260 or
email: portrait@nationgroup.com

Please include your full name, address, telephone number, email address (if any), and the name of your school and the address. The results will be announced in The Nation, Nation Junior, Krungthep Turakij, KomChad Luek, and Phuket Gazette newspapers at the end of March, 2004.

Computers

LAPTOP, PC PARTS

Compaq Presario 2500, P4 (2.66 GHz), 40 GB, 512 DDR, 15" XGA, Firewire, 3 USB 2.0, wireless LAN. 44,000 baht obo. P4 (1.6 GHz), 4,000 baht. Motherboard, 2,500 baht. 3x256MB SDRAM, 6,000 baht. Tel: 01-8921097. Email: colan@ksc.th.com

INTERNET ANYWHERE

Mobile USB modem now available. Works anywhere with no telephone line needed. Also computer repairs and sales. Call now. Tel: 09-4735080.

IBM LAPTOP PARTS

5-year-old IBM Thinkpad laptop, no longer working. Good for parts. As-new battery worth 6,000 baht. The lot for 3,000 baht, in Phuket Town. Interested? Contact Jack at Tel: 06-8472731 or by email at: jackflinders@hotmail.com

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Present your Shopper Card; and
Pay for the ad at our offices,

you'll enjoy a 25% discount* AND have your ad appear free of charge in the Gazette's Island Trader Online.

With more than 10,000 visitors a day, the Island Trader Online is Thailand's most active classified marketplace.

*Ads may be submitted in person or online (phuketgazette.net/classifieds), but must be paid for at the Gazette offices. The discount is not available when payment is made at our agents.

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367/2 Yaowarat Road, Phuket Town
Tel: 076-236555 Fax: 076-213971

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Business Opportunities

PUB FOR URGENT SALE !

THE FAMOUS OCTOPUS PUB IS IN A VERY GOOD LOCATION AT THE CORNER OF SOI SEA DRAGON, FACING ONTO BANGLA ROAD, AT PATONG BEACH.

450 M², 3 FLOORS TOTAL 1350 M². THE FIRST AND SECOND FLOORS HAVE THE BAR AND DANCE AREAS, THE THIRD FLOOR HAS AN APARTMENT. THE PRICE INCLUDES ALL FIXTURES, FITTINGS AND FURNISHINGS.

TO ENQUIRE PLEASE CONTACT:
19-21 SOI SEA DRAGON BANGLA RD, PATONG PHUKET
MOBILE: 09-1965448, 01-3970192, 01-3970029, 01-3970192

BAR ON KOH LANTA

On the main road, 100m from the beach, with views of sunset and sea. Land 0.5 rai with a 9-year contract. Price: 2 million baht plus 5 years rent free. Including all equipment. Ready to open and complete with free space to build bungalows. Contact for more details. Tel: 06-0560642. Email: jobrittan@hotmail.com

BAR FOR SALE

The Viking Bar, middle of Soi Seadragon, in the center of Patong, is for sale. UBC, HiFi, VCD, all staff and everything included. 1.4 million baht. Please call for more info or visit me at the bar. Tel: 09-5881401.

CANDLE BUSINESS

for sale. Very profitable, high-quality, hand-carved candles. Work and retail shop in Patong, all for only 2.4 million baht. Please call Mr Ocean for details. Tel: 01-7475874.

NICE RESTAURANT

for sale. Fully equipped and furnished European-style business. Call between 8 am and midday for details. Tel: 076-386046.

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 to expand. Priced for a quick sale. Please email for more information. Email: hotelinparadise@yahoo.com

RESORT FOR LEASE

Resort with 8 bungalow apartments, swimming pool, bar and restaurant for lease. No key money, annual lease in advance. Please email for details. Email: resortforlease@hotmail.com

RENOVATION

company for sale. Large range of new tools including new 4WD Toyota. 13 employees and contracts for at least the next 2 years at least. Please contact for more details. Tel: 01-8921250.

BAR, RESTAURANT

and accommodation for sale. Year-round trade with live-in or rent-out accommodation. Has pool table, aircon, 28 covers, 5-year possibly 6-year lease. No payments until Nov 2004. Offers of 2 million baht ono. Call 24/7 to discuss. Tel: 09-9097949.

BAR/RESTAURANT

for sale. Located by Kata Beach. Price: US\$40,000. Please contact for more information. Email: clivenesher@hotmail.com

MASSAGE SHOP

in Kata for sale. 225,000 baht. Tel: 06-6863210 (English) or 06-5936779 (Thai). Email: andrewcampbellthailand@hotmail.com

BAR/RESTAURANT

for sale. Bar, restaurant and guesthouse. Good business. Please call or see our website for further information. Tel: 076-388073 or 01-9792901. Website: www.siam-business.com

BUSINESS IN PATONG

The Son Company, shop and 8 bedrooms, for sale or lease. 80% financing available. No key money. Tel: 09-474-0227. Email: thesonapt_2536@hotmail.com

ROTATING

restaurant with magnificent ocean views located on the main road of Kalim Beach (near Patong) on 2.5 rai of land. Fantastic opportunity to own the first rotating restaurant in Phuket. Investment approximately 8 million baht. Tel: 01-8911905. Email: alain@phuketinternet.co.th

RESTAURANT

for lease. Ready-to-open restaurant with fully equipped European kitchen, and beautiful apartment upstairs for lease. 1 million baht, monthly rent: 30,000 baht. One year's rent in advance. Please contact to discuss. Tel: 01-3976590.

KAMALA BAR

A fully equipped bar in Kamala for sale. 250,000 baht. Tel: 01-7374295, 01-8929524. Email: stevebragg28@hotmail.com

PRIME LOCATION

Bar in the middle of Soi Bangla in Patong for sale. Immediate takeover possible and seller can accept downpayment. Call or email for info. For further details, please see our webpage at <http://phket.loxinfo.co.th/~bajen> Tel: 07-292523. Email: cal@algonet.se

PUB FOR SALE

in good location in Kata. Ready to go with aircon, pool table, darts, music, PC, kitchen stuff and stock. Features 3-bed apartment. 900,000 baht. Tel: 07-2775455. Email: pub867@yahoo.no

GUESTHOUSE, BAR

and restaurant. Beautiful little guesthouse near Ya Nui Beach, 2 work permits. Call Jochen for more details. Tel: 01-2724648. Email: osbornjo@loxinfo.co.th

BAR/RESTAURANT

with 6-room guesthouse for sale. Rent: 25,000 baht/month, 5-year lease. No Key Money! Located in the center of Karon Beach with 7-Eleven and ATM next door. Only 2 minutes' walk to the beach. The business has been running since 2000, it has a fully established website with on-line booking facilities. The bar has a pool table with a lounge area and all music is computerized via MP3, which is interactive for customers. Asking price is 2.8 million baht. Contact Marc. Tel: 09-9085343. Email: karonbeach@hotmail.com. See our website: www.baanmaipai.com

DIVE CENTER

sale or partner. French managed dive center on the beach on Koh Samui for sale or 50% partnership on offer. Includes 42-foot American speedboat, big office and new equipment. Tel: 01-8331508.

THAISTOCKS.COM

Unbiased and objective investment research. Email: contact@thaistocks.com

COMPANY & BOAT

for sale. 55-foot junk boat, imported to Thailand for use as charter boat. Company ready and work permits can be arranged. Estimate daily rental in peak season 10,000-16,000 baht. Can buy outright or be partner. Outright offers accepted in region of 1.5-2 million baht. Finance available to right person. Owner relocating to Bangkok to take up new position. Email: millsdean@hotmail.com

BANGLA BAR

for sale. 2.5-year lease on offer at 1.8 million baht. Tel: 01-0880353. Email: barrest67@hotmail.com

ONE GREAT DEAL

New business, bar, restaurant and 2 apartments. One-year lease, close to the beach and fully equipped. Sale due to relocation. Price: 1.5 million baht. Tel: 06-7257591 or 01-0880353. Email: barrest67@hotmail.com

PATONG BAR

for sale. Includes UBC, sound system, and all stock and fittings. Price: 700,000 baht ono. Please call for more details. Tel: 07-2701932.

RESTAURANT 4 SALE

Well-located restaurant in Patong. Price: 299,000 baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 06-7096415.

Business Services

BUSINESS SERVICE

Company, visa, work permit. Tel: 01-9792901, 076-388-073. www.siam-business.com

SPECIAL PRICE 699 BAHT ONLY

Eve Express Visa. Extension in one day at Ranong, including insurance. Best service and safe trip. Available now. Daily trip, start 7:30 am, at KFC Lotus. Tel: 076-289201 or 01-5352637. www.phuketdir.com/expressvisaextension

INTERNET UNPLUGGED

We have excellent options for wireless Internet access and we offer the best proven service. If you want a better, faster, more reliable connection than a phone line, call or email for a free and no-obligation demonstration on your PC or laptop. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-8957727. Email: john@axiominvestments.com

BUSINESS

consulting. The Eu-Thai Business Group Co Ltd can do company formations, investments, contracts, work permits and accounting. Please contact to inquire. Tel: 076-296594. Email: euthai@web.de

CARIBBEAN BANK

account. Can be opened using your real name or stay anonymous. Operative within 2 working days and major credit cards, business or private, are available. Please contact for further information. Fax USA: 001-1-4354174354. Email: caribbean@financier.com

INSURANCE AGENCY

Offers health, accident and travel insurance with no age limit, and property insurance. Please call or email for details and quotation. Tel: 076-296-594. Email: euthai@web.de

OBITUARY

Maurice Patterson

It is with the deepest regret that my good friend Maurice Patterson passed away in Bangkok Phuket hospital early on 6th January after a short illness, and aged only 60. Our sincere condolences go to Debbie his devoted wife, and his family in UK. I had only known Maurice for 3 years, in Phuket, however in that time got to know him well and regarded him as a true gentleman. He had been a career soldier who worked his way up through the ranks to become a Captain in the British Household Cavalry serving in many parts of the world. On retirement from the army he set up his own investment company in Singapore, then after 5 years there, moved to Phuket where he and Debbie had just completed their dream home in Rawai. We shared several common interests including birds and shooting - he was a crack shot which he proved several times at the clay pigeon range in Phuket. He was also an accomplished diver, a sport he only started about 4 years ago, in which time he completed over a 100 dives. His memory will remain with us forever.

HU

Personal Services

NIA YOGA PILATES

Nia Yoga Pilates at the Movement Center. See our website at www.phuketmoves.com. Please call or email for further details. Tel: 076-282408, 01-7975065.

THAI COOKING

Workshop in small groups, Thai teacher. Contact for further information or see our website at www.siam-business.net/cook. Tel: 09-7097482.

SEY SPA

at home. We provide spa services at your home: Thai massage, aromatherapy, body treatments, and nail care by professionals. Please contact us for appointment. Tel: 09-4745428.

OSTEOPATHIC

treatment. Classic massage and osteopathy in the comfort of your hotel, gym or home. Call for further information. Tel: 07-8900914.

Personal Services Wanted

SHOW ON STAGE

We are looking for persons who have any kind of show to be on stage in our new cabaret. If you are a magician or have any experience, please contact us. Tel: 01-8926142. Email: rivieraph@hotmail.com

NANNY FOR BABY

We are looking for a live-in nanny to take care of our 19-month-old son. Excellent salary and benefits will be offered to the right person. Tel: 01-8933571.

ENGLISH TEACHER

I would like to learn English conversation privately at home in Chalong. Tel: 076-254342. Fax: 076-254341. Email: wilalook@yahoo.com

BABYSITTER

wanted. We need a full-time babysitter. Accommodation and meal provided. Tel: 01-8918082. Email: dianagohlf@yahoo.com

Personals

ADOPTION

English/ American family visiting Phuket and looking to adopt a baby. Please contact us. Tel: 001-817-9219433 or 076-284413. Email: marius_juno@sbcglobal.net

BACKGAMMON

players wanted for some exciting games. Please call or fax for more details. Tel: 076-386113 or 01-5778443. Fax: 076-386114.

SPECIAL LADY

Retired Canadian gentleman needs a special lady as a permanent companion. Must be attractive, 25-50 years old, cheerful, and willing to travel. Will offer financial security. Email: svvalm@hotmail.com

NICE GENTLEMAN

Wish to meet a presentable lady for friendship or life partnership. I am an attractive, polite, caring man who has a good and steady life. Email: patrik269@yahoo.com

AUSSIE GUY 40

Nice, open, honest and romantic guy hoping to meet a special lady for friendship and maybe more if we are suited. Your personality is far more important than what you look like or how old you are. Email: handyman218@hotmail.com

SWITZERLAND

Handsome European man is looking for a young, sexy ladyboy. Please apply with picture. Email: zumikon_ch@hotmail.com

THAI LADIES

Place your details onto the Internet for free and find a friend, penpal or maybe even the love of your life. No membership or sign up required. Just send your details and photo by email to: contact@thai-connexion.com

Pets

LOVELY PUPPIES

for sale. 2 very nice puppies, white - brown color, 9 weeks young, looking for a good new home, single or together. Tel: 01-8945061. Email: pointner@loxinfo.co.th

The Gazette Guide 2004 goes on sale 23 Jan at:

41 Minimart	At the entrance to Laguna Phuket. Tel: 076-325436
A-One Market Place (opposite Police Station)	3/5 Moo 9, Chaofa Rd, Chalong. Tel: 076-381526
A La Carte	75/12 Moo 3, Kamala Main Rd. Tel: 076-278019
Albatross Leisure	Canal Village, Laguna Phuket, Cherngtalay. Tel: 076-270958
Bangkok Phuket Hospital	in the cafeteria. Tel: 076-254421
Bay Mini Mart	94/13 Moo 3, Kamala Beach. Tel: 076-271062
Bookazine Patong	18 Bangla Rd, Patong Beach. Tel: 076-345833/4
Bookstore at Robinsons	Phuket Town. No direct telephone.
Choice Foods Thailand Ltd	19/3 Moo 8, Chaofa Rd, Chalong. Tel: 076-283158/9
Deli Supermarket	17/30 Rat-U-Thit Rd, Patong Beach. Tel: 076-342275
Dok Ya Bookstore	43/1 Phang Nga Rd, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-258040
Dok Ya Bookstore	399/24 Yaowarat Rd. Tel: 076-218214
Don's Caffe & Mart	53/5 Soi Saiyuan, Moo 7, Rawai. Tel: 076-288229
Dorn's Place	67/3 Wichitsongkram Rd, Muang. Tel: 076-222210
Flintstone Bakery - Dulwich International College	59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew. Tel: 01-8922392
Gift Shop - Andaman Beach Suites	60/12 Rat-Utit Song Roi Pee Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-341879
Gift Shop - Kata Beach Resort	5/2 Patak Rd, Muang. Tel: 076-330530
Gift Shop - Merlin Beach Resort	Tri Trang Beach, Patong. Tel: 076-294300
Gift Shop - Novotel Phuket Resort	Kalim Beach Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-342777
Good Earth 2nd Hand Bookstore	114/52 Patak Rd, Kata Beach. Tel: 076-288643
I.L.C. Language School	107/13 Patak Rd, Chalong Circle. Tel: 076-280433
Julapan Bookstore	16/6 Chaofa Rd, Chalong Circle. Tel: 076-282254
K. Supermarket	245 Koktanod Rd, Karon. Tel: 09-7298991
K.L. Mart	107/4 Moo 4, Patak Rd, Rawai (at the Circle). Tel: 076-280400/3
Kanda Bakery	33 Rasada Rd, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-223410
Kata Pharmacy	59 Taina Rd, Kata Center. Tel: 076-330898
Koh Kaew Supermarket	22/1 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd (in Boat Lagoon). Tel: 076-238950
La Boutique	Le Meridien Phuket. Tel: 076-340480-5
M & G Star Mart	51/135 Moo 6, Vichisongkram Rd, Kathu (in Caltex station). Tel: 076-254199
Ma Nop Bookstore	146 Rat-Utit Song Roi Pee Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-295480
Mike's Bikes	Chaofa Rd, (opp Flintstone Bakery), 999 meters from Chalong Circle. Tel: 076-282354
Nai Indra Bookstore	304-306 Phuket Rd, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-256220
Nai Indra in Black Canyon	Coliseum Theatre Building, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-256336
Office Xpress	19/49 Moo 8, Chaofa Rd, Chalong, Muang. Tel: 076-282403
Panwa Minimart	31/3 Moo 8, Sakdidet Rd, T. Wichit. Tel: 076-391927
Phuket International Hospital	Opposite information counter. Tel: 076-249400
Rim Haad Minimart	Near Roberta Restaurant, Beach Rd, Kamala. Tel: 076-389313
Rung Napa Supermarket	75/23-25 Patak Rd (Chalong Circle). Tel: 076-280989
P.N.S. Supermart	52/8 Moo 6, Rawai. Tel: 076-288044
Sawasdee Minimart	30-32 Jedkwan Rd, Karon. Tel: 01-6767049
Se-Ed Book Center	Big C Supercenter. Tel: 076-249422/3
Se-Ed Book Center	Tesco Lotus. Tel: 076-255118
Seng Ho Bookstore	2/14-16 Montri Rd, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-211396
Siam Daily	JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa, Mai Khao. Tel: 076-338000, ext 3403-5
Sin & Lee	49 Thalang Rd, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-211230
Star Photo Lab	Corner of Bangla Rd and Beach Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-340107
Sunrise Coffee House	43/44-45 Moo 5, Wiset Rd, Rawai, Muang. Tel: 076-280962
The Bakery & Fresh Juice Bar	Phuket Boat Lagoon. Tel: 076-238941
The Books - Phuket Town	53-55 Phuket Road. Tel: 076-224362
The Books (Kamala)	127/1 Moo 3, Kamala. Tel: 076-385154
The Circle Cafe	8 Rassada Rd, Muang. Tel: 076-355233
Top Ten Supermarket	68 Ranong Rd, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-212091
Used Books	7 Chaofa East Rd, Chalong. Tel: 01-9568659
Whispering Cock	Tinlay Village (at entrance to Laguna Phuket). Tel: 09-8721398
Yacht Haven / Haven Restaurant	Mai Khao. Tel: 076-206652 / 076-206651
Yacht Haven Marina's Office	Phuket Island Marina Co Ltd. 141/2 Moo 2, Mai Khao, Thalang. Tel: 076-206652



For a list of guide retailers outside Phuket, see page 32 of this issue of the Phuket Gazette.