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## IN THIS ISSUE

**NEWS:** Boys will be girls – the Phuket Pride parade; Airport sees record passenger traffic. **Pages 2, 3 & 4**

**INSIDE STORY:** Here we go again – the combatants in the Patong poll. **Pages 4 & 5**

**AROUND THE ISLAND:** A sure cure for Mr Sourpuss: the amazing miracle fruit. **Page 6**

**AROUND THE REGION:** Volunteers to boost security on Samui. **Page 8**

**PEOPLE:** Chalong's popular new police chief. **Pages 10 & 11**

**TALES OF A TRAVELER:** A melting pot called Melaka. **Page 14**

**STREETS OF PATTAYA:** Now what's all this about pigs and contortionists? **Page 17**

**NEW! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?** Strange and scary tales from readers. **Page 19**

**BUSINESS:** Central sets opening date for retail complex; Those sexy derivatives. **Pages 20 & 21**

**GOOD LIVING:** Classic Provençale food at La Cabane. **Page 25**

**PROPERTY:** Home of the week in Krabi; Graham Doven gets the wrong end of the pineapple. **Pages 26 & 27**

## PLUS

**AROUND THE NATION 7; HAPPENINGS 9; HOROSCOPES 12; KIDS 15; EARTHWATCH, FITNESS 16; BOOKS 17; EDITORIAL & LETTERS 18; ISSUES & ANSWERS 19; COMPUTERS 20; MOTORING 24; SPORTS 22 & 23; GARDENING 28; CLASSIFIEDS 29-35.**

# Shock for TRT as Prasit quits

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

PHUKET TOWN: The outgoing President of the Provincial Administration Organization, (*OrBorJor*), Dr Prasit Koeysiripong, dropped a bombshell at his farewell media appearance on January 30 when he said he would not be standing as a Thai Rak Thai (TRT) candidate in next year's parliamentary elections.

It had been widely anticipated that Dr Prasit would lead the TRT campaign in 2005, when the governing party will be trying to wrest control of Phuket away from the hands of its three current MPs, who are all members of the opposition Democrat Party.

Dr Prasit, 48, who first set up the TRT Cooperation Center in Phuket in 1997, said that he would continue to support the party from the sidelines, but would not stand for election.

"In the four years that I have worked for the *OrBorJor*, I have had to take part in 10 meetings or similar functions every day, which is too much at my stage in life," he explained.

"I have had to make sacrifices by sharing my time between the public and my family. Now it's time to give something back to my family."

"I confirm that I shall not stand in any political election," he said at the farewell event, held at the Pearl Hotel in Phuket Town.

He explained that he had at first been persuaded by senior TRT members to stand as MP for Phuket District 2. However, others were keen to see him stand for District 1, which en-



Dr Prasit: 'It's time to give something back to my family.'

compasses Phuket Town. "But I have always refused to stand for District 1 because there's a candidate for that area already," he added.

Local dentist and long-time TRT party organizer Dr Yada Palimaphan has been tipped to be the party's candidate for District 1 in 2005.

However, the *Gazette* understands that Dr Prasit's departure is prompting a major rethink of TRT strategy in Phuket.

"From now on," Dr Prasit said, "I'd rather concentrate on my own business. It will be bet-

ter not to write about me in terms of political issues, but as an ordinary citizen."

Asked about his specific plans, he said, "I may become a lecturer or launch my own monthly economics magazine."

Two candidates – Samroeng Chaisorn of the *OrBorJor Gao Mai* TRT ("New Step TRT") party and Wisut Santikun of the *OrBorJor Gao Mai Khonbaanrao* ("New Step Our People") party – will compete to take Dr Prasit's place in the *OrBorJor* in elections scheduled for March 14.

## Phang Nga avian 'flu outbreak contained

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn  
& Dhirarat Boonkongsan

PHANG NGA: Some 70,000 chickens and ducks were swiftly slaughtered after an outbreak of bird 'flu was confirmed on a farm in Takuapa District on January 29.

The Government has since lowered the alert status of Phang Nga from red to yellow, indicating that it believes the cull has stopped the spread of the H5N1 virus.

Pairat Dejsiri, Assistant Chief of Phang Nga Provincial Livestock Office (PNPLO), told the *Gazette* that chickens on a farm in Takuapa had been found to have died from the virus.

However, a five-year-old child who was hospitalized on suspicion of having avian 'flu has since been diagnosed as having conventional pneumonia.

K. Pairat explained that a poultry farmer had found about 20 of his ducks and 15 of his chickens dead. He reported the deaths to the PNPLO and the corpses were taken to the Southern Veterinary Research and Development Center, which confirmed the presence of the virus on January 29.

"We immediately reported this to the governor of the province and we declared Takuapa District a bird 'flu danger zone. All fowl within a radius of five kilometers of the farm were ordered slaughtered."

"We have set up checkpoints to prevent poultry from being moved in or out of the danger zone," he added.

Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura ordered a ban on

Continued on Page 3

## Queer News

## Fallout from chicken

UDON THANI: As 58-year-old village headman Boonchu Srisingha was leaving his home in tambon Chiang Yuen on the morning of 27 January, he noticed a white plastic bag hanging from the fence surrounding his home. Intrigued, he looked closer and spotted a note attached to it that read, "Please give the contents of this bag to Mongkol Singhamaw, aged 28, of 129 Moo 5."

As the bag was tightly wrapped in electrical wire and appeared to have a fuse, K. Boonchu suspected it wasn't a birthday present. Rather than contact K. Mongkol – a handsome construction worker recently returned from Israel and due to be married in a few days – he called the police.

When Muang district police arrived they were just as puzzled by the bag. They learned from K. Boonchu that K. Mongkol had already been the victim of numerous threats by a jilted ex-lover, and

they had to suspect the worst – a time bomb. A bomb squad from Border Patrol Police Unit 24 was called in.

Word travels quickly in a Thai village, and by the time the experts arrived, a sizable crowd had already gathered to watch.

The team X-rayed the plastic bag, but the results were inconclusive. For safety's sake they had to assume that it was a bomb. Thinking it would be too risky to move, they decided the best course of action was to detonate the bag in a "controlled explosion".

An explosive charge was placed near the plastic bag and set off. The bag's contents – putrefied chicken parts and human excrement – went flying in every direction, splattering the crowd of onlookers. Hopefully the incident will teach them to stand a bit farther back the next time the bomb squad pays a visit.

Source: Thai Rath

## The height of stupidity

PATHUM THANI: Michael Jackson may have dangled his infant son over a hotel balcony – but at least he didn't drop him. The same can't be said for a drunken man in Pathum Thani who plummeted four stories with his drinking buddy in his arms during a rooftop drinking session.

The two friends, 24-year-old Dumbwong Rattanajun (not the normal spelling, but phonetically correct and appropriate enough in meaning for this tale) and his friend Sompong Chaowmas, lived side by side in a pair of flats built on the rooftop of a four-story apartment block.

The two, who worked as delivery men for a local whisky supplier, were sitting together on the rooftop getting drunk on the afternoon of January 8.

Not everybody reacts to alcohol the same way. In Dumb-

wong's case the demon drink caused him to pick up his buddy K. Sompong, cradle him in his arms like a big baby, and swing him back and forth – all while standing just inches from the knee-high metal railing that marked the border between the rooftop and thin air.

Sensing danger, K. Sompong screamed, "Put me down! Put me down!" But his increasingly panicked entreaties only amused K. Dumbwong, causing him to swing ever faster and more wildly – until he lost his balance and both men plunged onto an aluminum awning covering the building's entrance.

The pair were critically injured from the impact and were reported as having blood running from their mouths as neighbors rushed them to hospital.

Source: Thai Rath



## Gazette Guide on sale across island

The *Gazette Guide 2004* arrived in Phuket on January 19 and within four days 8,000 hotel guest room and vendor copies had been distributed.

The *Guide*, a "Who's Who" of Phuket business, is now on sale at 65 outlets around the island.

Pictured, JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa General Manager Craig Smith (right) and Room Attendant Somying Johnvisett (center) take delivery of 270 copies of the *Guide* from John Magee of the *Phuket Gazette*.



Feathers, ruffles and sequins were the order of the day when the gay community staged its annual Phuket Pride festival in Patong.

## Boys will be girls...



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## IN BRIEF

**Kamala jewelry thieves net B1m**

KAMALA: Jewelry and cash totaling about 1 million baht were stolen from a Kamala house on the night of January 26 while the French owners – a couple in their 60s – were in Patong.

The couple, named by police as Mr and Mrs Gerard Bonnaval, left their home to go to their business in Patong at 7:30 pm and returned about 1 am to find a wooden door at the rear of the property had been forced and 10 pieces of jewelry were missing from a safe deposit box.

**Honeymooning tourist drowns**

CHALONG: An Indian who was on his honeymoon in Phuket drowned on January 28 while on an outing to Coral Island.

Pol Maj Anek Mongkol of Chalong Police Station named the dead man as Dusmyant Sharma, aged 30. The body was flown back to India the following day.

**Illegals top crime stats**

PHUKET TOWN: Statistics released by the Phuket Provincial Police for the January 1-25 period revealed that illegal immigration again topped the crime figures, with 211 arrests made.

Other common crimes were gambling (178 arrests) and possession or use of narcotics (60 arrests).

**Freeway murder suspect surrenders**

PHUKET TOWN: A man who has been sought for more than eight months over a double murder at the Freeway restaurant on Bang Tao beach surrendered to police on January 28.

Police issued an arrest warrant for Suwat Kaewkong soon after the double murder on May 10 last year and alleged that Suwat, who owns another restaurant at Bang Tao, had been involved in a dispute over land with

the murder victims, Suwim Noo-dang and his nephew, Pramote Choochat.

The two were gunned down as they ate supper at the Freeway by three men armed with assault rifles. K. Suwim's wife, Euangporn Tongpet, was shot in the arm but survived.

Suwat went to Phuket Town Police Station about 4 pm on January 28 with his lawyer. He denied any connection with the

killings. He told police that he had been in Malaysia and had not realized that he had been implicated in the murder case.

The Deputy Superintendent of Phuket Town Police Station, Pol Lt Col Samarn Chainarong, told the *Gazette* that Suwat was now being held at the station. He said two other suspects, whom he did not name, were still at large and urged them to surrender.

– Gategaeo Phetsawang

**Air passengers hit a record 500,000**

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

PHUKET: The latest figures on air passenger arrivals and departures show that Phuket is in the middle of a tourism boom with a record 509,841 visitors coming and going in January.

This is the first time the half-million figure has been exceeded in a single calendar month. The number represents a whopping 23% increase on the figure of 390,109 recorded in January last year.

The number of flights was also up, from 2,609 flights in January 2003 to 2,936 flights this year. Of these, 636 were charter flights – up from 542 the year before.

There were 1,225 domestic

flights carrying 268,079 passengers and 1,711 international flights with 241,762 passengers.

"Most charter flights are coming from Asia, especially Japan, Korea and China, and also from Norway and Sweden," said Lt Cdr Boonchart Prompoon,

Director of the Airports Authority of Thailand, Phuket. "Tourism is booming now, with good support from the government."

No figures were available for the average waiting time for tourists in the queues for Immigration counters.

**AirAsia launches Phuket service**

PHUKET: The first no-frills AirAsia flight from Bangkok to Phuket landed on February 3 with all 148 seats filled.

Thirty passengers aboard the Boeing 737-300 paid just 99 baht apiece for the one-way flight.

Marketing Manager of Thai

AirAsia Co Ltd, Saharat Vanchompoo, said that this full first flight was a good indication of how successful the venture should be.

Travelers are advised to check with the airline's call center at Tel: 02-5159999 to obtain the best price.

**Phang Nga bird 'flu outbreak contained by swift cull**

From page 1

all imports of chickens, ducks and eggs into Phuket three days before the Phang Nga outbreak was announced. It is hoped that Phuket, being an island, can keep the disease at bay.

Sunart Wongchawalit, the Chief of the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office (PPLO) told the *Gazette* that the PPLO was continuing a program of checks on the island's poultry.

"We are doing random checks on every place that has chickens – even the zoo and places where people keep fighting cocks. So far, I can say with

confidence that there is absolutely no sign of bird 'flu on Phuket."

"Our controls are the strictest in Thailand. Even those drivers who have paperwork to show that the chickens they are transporting are free of disease are being turned away [at Tah Chat Chai checkpoint]," he said.

He denied rumors that cases of bird flu had been detected on the island. Examination of birds found dead showed that they had died of poisoning, not the virus, indicating that some inhabitants had been conducting their own informal culls of birds – including a peacock.

K. Sunart said that other provinces have reported similar "vigilante" killings.

"I believe we have to be very strict in our controls – that's the only way we can be completely safe. The officers working to control the situation must be strict and honest."

He admitted, however, "I am worried that some people may try to smuggle poultry by boat. From Phang Nga it's easy to come in Phuket by sea."

Whether smuggling of poultry would be a profitable venture is doubtful. An ad hoc survey of restaurants by the *Gazette* re-

vealed that many have taken chicken and duck off the menu after kitchen staff refused to handle poultry. In those restaurants that are still offering poultry, few diners are tempted.

In a PR exercise reminiscent of the recent chicken-and-nothing-else dinner eaten by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his Cabinet, K. Sunart also announced that the PPLO is planning a free chicken feast on February 7 at Saphan Hin. The aim of the event is to tempt those now eschewing poultry back into the chicken-chewing camp. The feast will start at 5 pm.

**Missing karaoke girl found dead in alley**

PHUKET TOWN: Police have yet to determine whether a karaoke girl from Phang Nga whose body was discovered in a downtown alley on January 27 committed suicide by jumping from the car park of a nearby hotel – or whether she was pushed.

The body of 24-year-old Siri-jit "Aom" Chuwong was recovered from an inaccessible alley running between the Thavorn Grand Plaza Hotel on Chana Jaroen Rd and Kinnaree Karaoke, where the girl had been employed as a waitress.

Pol Lt Col Chote Chidchai told the *Gazette* the girl had been dead at least a week before the discovery of the body, which he described as having dyed red hair and a tattoo of a dragon on one thigh.

He said the girl's bra had been pushed up, possibly indicating that she had been sexually assaulted.

Her mobile phone was found next to a retaining wall on the third floor of the hotel car park, above where the corpse was discovered, indicating that she fell from there to her death. One leg was apparently smashed by the impact, he added.

Colleagues at the karaoke bar told investigators that K. Aom had had many problems with her relationship with her boyfriend, Weera Intaranon, 30, was miserable, and often discussed taking her own life.

Col Chote told the *Gazette* that, as of February 3, many people had been interrogated, but police were still no closer to unraveling the mystery.

He declined to give the names of those who had been questioned, saying that to do so might affect the ongoing investigation. He added that he was still awaiting autopsy results.

– Nonthawat Disayabutra



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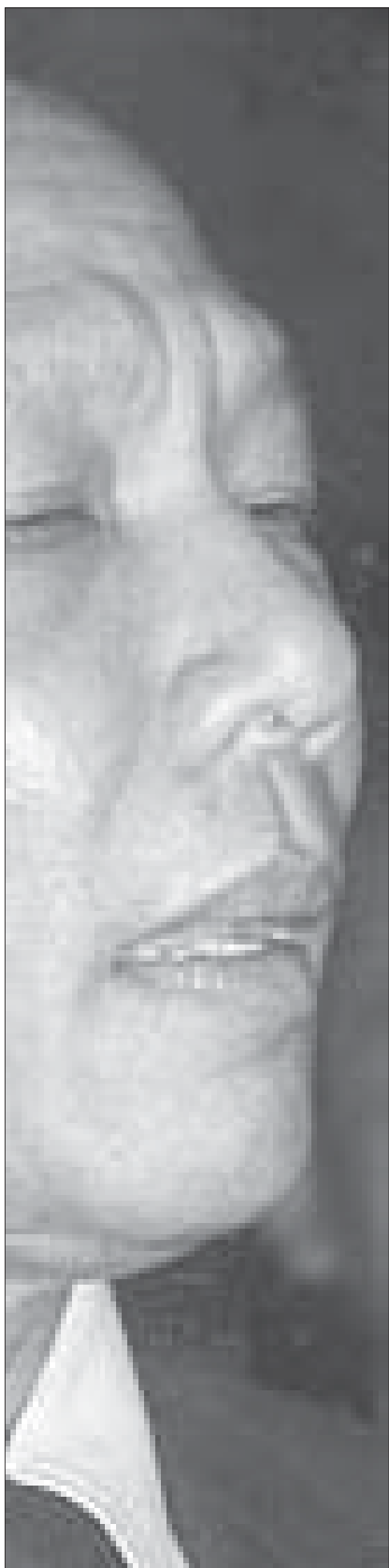


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Pian Keesin, Rak Patong Party leader.

**P**olls on February 8 will elect yet another municipal council for Patong. Two parties are vying for votes: the Rak (Love) Patong Party and the Patong Progress Party.

A total of 9,442 people are entitled to vote in the election which, for the first time, will be monitored by the Phuket Election Committee (PEC).

**The Rak Patong Party (RPP)** brings together the resources of three of the town's best-known figures: two former mayors, Pian Keesin and Surasak Maneesri, and the main spokesman of the entertainment industry, Chairat Sukbal.

Although the RPP has more recognizable faces than its opposition, many voters will be wondering how long it will stand united, given that K. Pian's ejection from power in October 2001 was engineered by K. Surasak, and that K. Chairat went up against both of them in the most recent election, in November 2002.

Many will wonder about the wisdom of voting for a party that includes K. Surasak, who was booted out of the mayor's seat by then-Interior Minister Purachai Piemsomboon and barred from holding a political post by the Constitutional Court after accusations of corruption against him were found to be proven.

K. Pian overcame a bid to have him barred from the election. A case against him for corruption, now before the National Counter Corruption Commission, is still being considered. But for voters, this raises another question: if K. Pian is found to have been corrupt, will this mean another election – the sixth in six years?

Even if he is not, the coalition between K. Pian and K. Surasak looks fragile – the two have fought bitterly and publicly over the past two years. Now they are campaigning together; but how long can the peace last?

Chairat Sukbal, the RPP's secretary, told the *Gazette*, "We are 120% sure we will win this election because the other team has no experience of management or politics."

"Patong belongs to the whole country, not just to the people of Patong. Just because your sister is the local MP doesn't mean you get to be mayor."

"K. Pian has a great deal of experience in politics. He has been a *phu yai baan* [village chief], a *kamnan* [tambon chief] and is also a former mayor of Patong."

The main planks in the RPP's platform are:

**Education:** "We would like to see schools in Patong teaching every student three languages [Thai, English and one other]. We

also want to teach people how to make products for the One Tambon One Product project. In addition, we want to expand and upgrade the local library."

**Tourism and activities:**

# PARTY TIME

Sangkhae Leelanapaporn reports on the twists and turns leading up to this week's Patong elections, and looks at the two parties' election platforms.

"Patong is a major center for international tourism. We would like to build a proper soccer stadium so that we can invite top soccer teams from around the world to come to practice and relax. This would help to promote tourism in Patong."

"We also want to organize other major events, such as a Phuket International Marathon or world-class windsurfing or jet-ski competitions."

"In the low season, perhaps, we could arrange events such as a jazz festival."

**Economics:** "The people of Patong are scared to invest in businesses because no one gives them guidance. We will support and encourage them to invest in businesses that will bring income from tourism."

"We would also like to establish links with other municipalities around the world. For example, I could introduce the Mayor to the Lord Mayors of San Francisco or Paris, so that we could form tourism links."

**Social, Cultural and Political:** "We will align our policy to dovetail with those of the province as a whole and with the policies of Phang Nga and Krabi."

"We have to bring order to Patong Beach by such measures, perhaps, as having tuk-tuk drivers in Patong wear the same color shirts and drive the same color vehicles. The same with the beach guards."

"We would also like to stage regular tourist 'camps' at which foreigners can meet Thai people to learn about the local culture."

**Information Technology:** "In line with the policy of the national and provincial governments, we also plan an 'e-Patong' project to give people access to up-to-date information, to receive suggestions from tourists, or to allow people to pay their taxes online, for example."

**Development:** "We want to improve town planning and the transport system, particularly for tourists who want to visit Phuket Town. We want to have a public bus service. We also plan to build more public toilets, underground, to serve tourists. Much of this could be built and managed by the private sector."

**The Patong Progress Party (PPP)** is led by Songserm Kepsap, 46, a Patong native whose younger sister, Chalermklak, is the Democrat MP for Phuket Region 2.

The biggest question in voters' minds is likely to be over the the PPP's lack of hands-on experience in running a town.

This is K. Songserm's first foray into politics; up to now he has worked in the family business. He said he had taken the plunge because people had urged him to end Patong's constant political instability.

His team includes a number of people who gained "backroom" political experience in K. Chelermklak's successful campaigns to be elected Mayor of Patong in 1998 and then, a year later, to become MP.

In its leaflets, the PPP writes that the main reason K. Songserm was standing was that "he cannot accept the behavior of some people in local politics who act like criminals and thwart the efforts of others in trying to develop Patong".

Kamneung Sing'iem, 51, the party's candidate for Deputy Mayor, told the *Gazette* that although few people in the PPP have experience of politics, most have their own businesses and have lived in Patong a long time. They therefore want to see Patong developed and managed better than it has been in recent years.

"K. Songserm never thought about going into politics because the family business was more than enough to keep him busy," he said. "I, too, was never keen to go into politics because I was a government official – a teacher."

"I don't really like politics, but I think it's time for Patong to develop and for that, it must have a good management team."

The PPP's main policies are:

**Corruption:** "The main policy of the PPP is to crack down on corruption in the town. Corruption stems from individuals, not from organizations. That is why the PPP carefully screens all those who wish to join the party. We want to be a good model for the next generation that will manage Patong, for example by encouraging teamwork through brain-storming. If we win, we plan to stay in power for only one or two [four-year] terms, then step down to allow the next generation to take over."

**High-priority projects:** We want to complete the wastewater system, introduce garbage separation, improve flood-relief and the roads, and build a municipal child care center and a sports arena."

**Other infrastructure:** "This would include improving public utilities to international tourism standards. For example: improving footpaths, putting electric cables underground, cleaning up the *klongs* and improving transportation."

**Economics:** "Our policy aims to bring greater stability and increased income in every occupation."

**Social development:** "We want to develop human potential, employ foreigners to teach English to

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both students and the members of the public, and improve and expand the library so people have good books to read."

**Transparency:** "We aim to improve the caliber of politicians and to make our management policy completely transparent. People will be able to share their ideas for development. We will work to strengthen the community and give everyone a chance to see and understand the workings of the municipality."

**Honesty:** "We will put 100% of our effort into winning. We have canvassed opinion on the current political situation, and most said they could not accept what has been happening."

"Two parties that fought one another constantly are suddenly holding hands for this election. Our question: Why are they doing that?"

"Local people know what has happened in the past. Some may still believe that it is a good idea to 'bring all the people with experience together in one team' but I think those will be few in number."

"If we lose this time, we will stay in politics and run again. We will not confront the winners, but we don't believe that they will be able to last the full four-year term."



Songserm Kepsap of the Patong Progress Party.

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# Sure cure for Mr Sourpuss

By Gategeo Phetsawang

Phuket might be close to paradise when it comes to the quality, variety and price of fruit on offer – and the choice continues to grow.

The latest taste sensation, straight from the Dark Continent, is the tiny fruit with monster

mouthfeel – miracle fruit or, in Thai, *ponlamai mahatsajan*.

Miracle fruit was first introduced to Thailand about 15 years ago by Africa-based Thai food specialist Professor Anon Aue-tragul, who brought a few samples back to Thailand.

He must have been aware that in a land where people smother pizza in ketchup and dump spoonfuls of sugar into noodle soup, anything that could up the sweetness ante would stand a good chance of success.

Seven years later, local resident Rattana Jiravitianr read a column about its amazing qualities in a Bangkok newspaper.

Her curiosity piqued, K. Rattana went to Bangkok and searched around the Weekend Market for hours before finally locating a few miracle fruit trees to bring back and grow in Phuket.

Now she has the largest miracle fruit garden in Southern Thailand, Suan Namsai, with 10,000 trees under cultivation.

One of the many interesting qualities of this strange fruit is that it can make sour fruits, including limes, taste sweet.

In Ghana, where sugar is scarce, people chew miracle fruit about 30 minutes before a meal to take advantage of its naturally long-lasting sweetness.

This quality has also been noted in the US, where just about every food seems to be laced with fat and refined sugar.

The American Medical Association, which has concluded that the fruit is free of toxins, is now touting miracle fruit as a natural sweetener effective in treating sweet-toothed sufferers of hypertension and obesity.

"I've heard that in America they have a project to plant more than a million miracle fruit trees," K. Rattana told the *Gazette*.

K. Rattana said she now buys her seedlings from a nursery farm in Rayong. They aren't difficult to grow in Phuket, she said, because of similarities between the climate here and the tree's native West Africa. Other large farms in Thailand are in Samut Sakhon and Bangkok.

Young plants need extra care in terms of weeding, lest they be overrun and choked off by more aggressive indigenous flora. Even under the best conditions, it takes a miracle fruit tree, aka *Synsepalum dulcificum Daniell*, about three months to grow just 10 centimeters high, and around eight years to reach their full three meters.

Given their diminutive proportions, miracle fruit are probably the most expensive fruit in Phuket by weight. At Suan Namsai, the normal price is 10 baht each. But because of their incredible taste – they are even more overwhelming than durian – just a few are usually more than enough for most people.

Not all miracle fruit are bought for consumption. "Some people buy them to get the seeds so they can grow their own miracle fruit, but others pick them up and give them away as fun gifts to friends who have never tried them," K. Rattana said.

Virgins to miracle fruit are usually given a single small fruit and told to chew it thoroughly.



Try it! You'll like it: K. Rattana offers a plate of miracle fruit at her garden, where the tiny-but-powerful fruits sell for 10 baht apiece.

Thirty seconds later, they are told to squeeze a fresh lime wedge into their mouth. But rather than turn them into a sourpuss, the lime juice actually tastes sweet.

And the powerful taste of miracle fruit is long-lasting, lingering on the palate for hours.

This ability to mask sour with sweet has not been lost on local wine lovers, some of whom pop a miracle fruit into their mouths before hitting the bottle.

K. Rattana said one regular customer used to spend a lot of his money on expensive imported wine – until he learned that for just 10 baht he could make a bottle of local rotgut taste like a fine European vintage.

One friend even accused him of pouring foreign wine into an empty bottle of Thai wine, opposite the normal practice.

When it comes to buying a miracle fruit tree, size does matter. At Suan Namsai, the smallest seedlings are just 20 baht, while a full-grown fruit-bearing tree can go for as much as 35,000 baht. With prices like that, it's no wonder so many miracle fruit junkies stick to homegrown.

Suan Namsai is located at 74/1 Thepkasattri Rd, near the tambon Sri Soonthorn administrative offices. For further information contact K. Rattana at Tel: 076-311041; 01-9783923.

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SINGHA NEW LOOK

# Thaksin's plan delights headmen

Counting avian flu and the violence in the South, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra urged *kamnan* – tambon leaders – and village headmen to play a greater role in sounding the alarm over potential problems before they erupt.

Speaking at a seminar, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra expressed support for a plan to scrap elections for *kamnan* and village headmen, much to the delight of his audience. Under existing rules, these local leaders must contest elections. The government plans legislation to appoint *kamnan* and village headmen, as they were in the past.

**Thai-in-the-sky:** Thai Airways International (THAI) has announced a joint venture in a budget airline with state-run Krung Thai Bank, CP 7-Eleven, Dhipaya Insurance, the Crown Property Bureau and the Government Pension Fund.

THAI president Kanok Abhiradee said the new budget airline – Sky Asia – would start operations in the second quarter, with the national carrier holding a 49% stake.

THAI hopes the new carrier will establish Chiang Mai as a regional aviation hub and help fight competition from Thai AirAsia, which will begin domestic operations this month, as well as other privately-owned domestic carriers.

**Shocking treatment:** The parents of a girl who has been in a vegetative state since receiving a severe electric shock from a metal railing at the state-run Chonburi Hospital last May demanded that the Public Health Ministry pay them 15,000 baht monthly for 40 years.



**HIGH WAI:** Drug convicts Pedro Ruyzina (left) and George Ofosuhene express gratitude over their recent release from Bang Kwang Maximum Security Prison in Nonthaburi. The pair walked free under a pardon granted by HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej following a state visit to Thailand by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands.

The girl's mother, Thanawadee Boontham, said the money would be used to take care of their eight-year-old daughter, Krisana.

A public health official received the request and offered them 2,000 baht to help cover their travel expenses. K. Thanawadee said she had asked for legal assistance from the Law Society of Thailand in the case.

**Lucky charms:** The National Buddhism Bureau said it would monitor newspapers to guard against monks advertising amulets or other items they claim have supernatural powers.

Bureau director Udom Charoen said initial checks found that several monks had advertised in newspapers and on radio that they had amulets or other religious

items that could protect or empower their owners.

Publishers of Buddha amulet journals responded to the proposed crackdown by warning that a blanket ban on the advertising of religious objects could hurt efforts to propagate the faith. The ban, if enacted, would cover print media and radio broadcasting.

**From closet to Cabinet:** The chief of Thailand's largest gay-rights group said Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra should hire gay activists to advise the government on gay and lesbian affairs.

Pakorn Pimthon, president of the Bangkok Gay Festival, said homosexuals were widely misunderstood – even though more of them were coming out of the closet.

K. Pakorn said that because PM Thaksin was educated in the United States, he should have the same attitude toward gays as leaders in the West, where gays are better accepted.

**Cancer-stick warning:** Following the approval of new regulations, about a year from now pic-

torial warnings will be printed on every pack of cigarettes sold in Thailand. The six approved warnings must be printed on both sides of the packet and occupy 50% of the total space.

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



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# 'Guardians' to boost Samui security

The government is calling for volunteer rescue workers to learn about security issues with the aim of forming a homeland security force of "Island Guardians" on Koh Samui.

The move comes amid fears that tourism on the island is suffering because would-be visitors are concerned about unrest in the South.

Island Guardians will be drawn from Samui's various volunteer rescue services and trained to spot potential dangers, preempt civil unrest, and generally make everyone feel safe and cozy.

It is not yet clear what equipment they will have issued to carry out their duties, but it is hoped that they will not include the knuckle-dusters, switchblades and stun-guns that are sold by street vendors each evening in Chaweng.

**Harbor Hoover:** Following local protests over sediment that will damage farmland during the con-

struction of an international harbor in Surat Thani, farmers from the Ta Phi River region were recently treated to a day out on Koh Samui to see the island's special suction dredgers in action.

A few bottles of *lao khao* and a seafood dinner later, they were all in agreement that a 30-kilometer long, 60 meter wide and 4m deep channel would be a marvelous boost for the area.

## FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND



By Commander  
Sammy Swan

**Koh Pha Ngan pollution:** The chief of the Koh Pha Ngan municipality, Khao Thana-wanichnam, says that pollution on the small isle is reaching intolerable levels. Waste is now disposed of by burying it in landfill sites. However, K. Khao says that the island badly needs an incinerator to cope with the usual 12 tons of waste a day.

An incinerator would cost 25 to 30 million baht to build, and the local authority believes that taking action now may avert an environmental disaster.



**ART ON THE MOVE:** Noted art teacher Sangkhom Thongmee, from Loei province, flew to Samui to be guest speaker at a training workshop from January 16 to 18, designed to train teachers from Koh Samui, Koh Pha Ngan and Koh Tao in how to teach art.

It is believed that most of the trash is due to the monthly Full Moon party, when as many as 20,000 revellers get inebriated and spread rubbish along the beach at Haad Rin. All party-goers are being urged to dispose of their vodka bottles, food wraps and rizzla packets in a more responsible way.

**Tourism exchange:** The Tourist Association of Koh Samui recently announced that it will join forces with its Krabi equivalent

to promote travel between the two popular destinations, and to attract new visitors.

President Ruengnam Jai-kwang explained that the idea was to link Krabi and the islands in the Andaman with Surat Thani and the islands in the Gulf of Thailand by offering packages at standardized rates. Koh Samui will be promoted as a health and spa destination, while Krabi and the isles in the Andaman will be promoted through the Unseen Thailand campaign. Packages for

both destinations will begin in April.

The idea should work, as long as representatives in each area resist the urge to add comments like, "but it is a lot more expensive over there" or "Watch out for the snakes" when promoting their competitors.

**Fake notes:** Ronnarong Sengaim, of the Koh Samui Chamber of Commerce, has confirmed that fake 1,000-baht notes are in circulation on Samui. There have also been several reports of tourists having their cash refused at shops and restaurants.

Real 1,000-baht notes include a woven silver strip and two watermarks depicting HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The number "1,000," printed in the top right-hand corner, is embossed. Fake notes, however, are made of flimsy paper and lack these features, usually because they are photocopied.

Banks and stores on Samui are using ultraviolet counterfeit detection devices to combat the fakes. People are advised to examine the contents of their wallets carefully before heading out to buy counterfeit CDs, DVDs, handbags and girlfriends.

*Cdr Swan is a writer with Koh Samui's community magazine.*



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# This week



**CARING COPPERS:** Pol Col Paween Pongsirin (checked shirt), Superintendent of Phuket Town Police Station, organized a combined New Year and Children's Day party at the Phuket Merlin Hotel for the families and children of his officers.



**FAIR FASHION:** Yodsoi Deechaiya (right), Head Reporter of Radio Thailand, Phuket, FM 96.75MHz, with top model Sara Malakul Na Ayuthaya at the recent Bangkok International Fashion Fair.



**REGATTA REWARD:** Dennis Bonutto (center), captain of *Hocux Pocux 2*, overall Racing Class winner of the Phang Nga Bay Regatta, receives his prize from QBE Insurance representative Lesley Beatty (left) at the award ceremony at Friendship Beach.



**SMALL SHOPPERS:** Nida Kaewnetr (2<sup>nd</sup> from right), Assistant General Manager of the Big C superstore, welcomes teachers and Kindergarten 1 students from Dulwich International College during a recent field trip.



**SAYONARA SATREE SCHOOL STUDENTS:** Yasuyo Nagata (with flowers), a volunteer Japanese language teacher, receives a fond farewell from her Satree Phuket School students as she leaves to return to her home country after spending three months teaching at the school.



**WATERCOLOR WIZARDS:** Kraiwut Sangunsin (blue shirt), Sakorn Dejpiuy and Sorawit Wangnao (in front) were winners of their respective classes in a recent water-themed painting contest sponsored by the Royal Thai Navy's Third Naval Command, the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization and Studio Line Agency Co Ltd.



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# Popular choice



Col Chalit: 'If we could stop people arguing we would have no more murders.'

**Gazette:** Why did you become a policeman?

**Col Chalit:** I was born in Tambon Klong Ray Kong, in Songkhla, which was a rural community where there was little justice.

That's why I decided to study law at Ramkhamhaeng University, in Bangkok.

At that time, most southern people were interested in studying law or becoming government officials, but no one else in my family, or among my relatives wanted to join the police.

**Gazette:** Why do you think so many people came to congratulate you on your first day as Superintendent?

**Col Chalit:** It may be because I have been working at Chalong Police Station for a long time and I know many local people, and maybe they appreciated my promotion.

Another reason I was promoted here is because I know and understand the problems in Chalong so I could continue working without having to take time to learn about the problems in the area.

Pol Col Chalit Kaewyarat recently became Superintendent of Chalong Police Station, taking over from the Col Sati Malakanond, lately transferred to Ao Luek Police Station in Krabi. When Col Chalit arrived at work for his first day as Superintendent, he was welcomed by about 500 wellwishers – many with flowers – who had gathered outside the station to congratulate him, an indication of the local community's thorough approval of his appointment. His promotion comes after 20 years' service in Phuket and Phang Nga, including six as Deputy Superintendent at Chalong. Here, **Sangkhae Leelanapaporn** talks with the 45-year-old law graduate with a knack for keeping in touch with the people.

**Gazette:** What are the most common problems in Chalong?

**Col Chalit:** The Chalong Police Station is responsible for three tambons: Karon, Rawai and Chalong. These include important tourist areas, such as Laem Promthep, Kata-Karon, Rawai, Ao Chalong and Wat Chalong.

Our main job is to ensure the areas are safe for tourists, both Thai and foreign, and to direct traffic to ease congestion. Everyone who arrives on Phuket visits

Wat Chalong and other Phuket landmarks. We have many VIP guests of the government who come to Phuket, too.

There isn't much crime in our jurisdiction, and most cases involving foreigners are about theft, cheating on land deals or conflict between themselves over business. But in all, there are not many cases involving foreigners.

We have about 130 officers at Chalong Police Station. That is not enough to cover all of the Chalong district, but the Royal

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# with the public

Thai Police will send more officers to help soon.

**Gazette:** Just before you were promoted to Superintendent, Teema Lakkoh, a 68-year-old woman, was murdered in Rawai. Has any progress been made in the investigation?

**Col Chalit:** We believe we know who the murderer is and we have applied to the court for an arrest warrant. Chalong does not often have this kind of murder, and the suspected killer in this case has a history of attacking women.

**Gazette:** How do you believe police officers under your command should perform their duties?

**Col Chalit:** As with other police officers in Region 8 and the Phuket Provincial Police, our officers should be honorable, full of good qualities and accepted by the people, society and the government.

The image of the police currently is not so good. We are looked down on by society. That's why we have to work toward restoring the good image of the police.

**Gazette:** In particular, what do you advise your officers to do?

'There should be two-way communication between police and the local people, and police should not act as if they are "above" other people.'

**Col Chalit:** I always tell my officers to treat people who come to the police station as a relative in a time of trouble.

I tell them, "Do not treat their problems as work because it is your duty, try to get into the spirit of police work and treat them as if they are a relative or a best friend."

I also tell my officers not to ignore people's problems. If someone calls the station because of an argument, officers should get to the incident quickly and stop it, because if we don't, they might kill each other.

I always pay attention to small problems, and always tell my staff not to overlook them. If

we could stop people arguing we would have no more murders.

**Gazette:** What do you see as the most important function of a Superintendent?

**Col Chalit:** I think that a Superintendent has to be down-to-earth, somebody the people can reach and criticize.

Sometimes, as police, we think that we are doing a good job, but local people might not think the same.

There should be two-way communication between police and the local people, and police should not act as if they are 'above' other people.

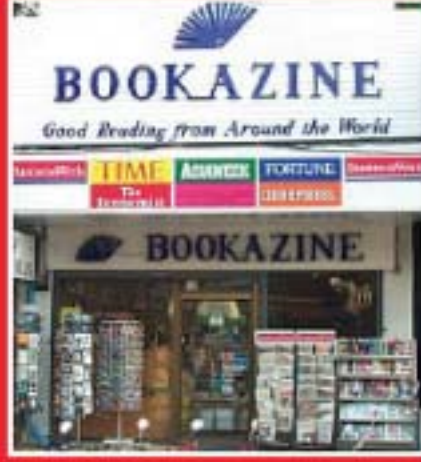
I'm not the kind of person to stay in my office. I always go out and talk with people and now many people call me on my mobile phone instead of calling [the emergency number] 191.

**Gazette:** What is your ultimate aim as a police officer?

**Col Chalit:** I want to see everyone who leaves a police station confident in the knowledge that the police are doing their best to help them. That would be a great feeling.

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**AQUARIUS** (January 21-February 19): Aquarians due to come of age this week should give the birthday blues no opportunity to linger. If you don't feel like indulging in wild celebrations, aim for a quiet party with close friends. Keep focused on a business matter. Even if it appears that little is happening at the moment, the pace will pick up before the end of February.



**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): Many Pisceans will bask in the sunshine of their success this week. Hard work last year will pay off, meaning that a long holiday could be on the agenda for those who can get away. The only shadow will be cast by someone in authority. The key to dealing with such irritating issues lies in your ability to remain calm. Your lucky color is ruby red.



**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): Problems are easier to alleviate than you imagine. Selective slashing and burning is the way to sort out useful endeavors from those that are a waste of time. Arians who tackle this task immediately will see benefits by the end of this month. Your natural ability to take each day as it comes can be put to good



## In The Stars

# Who knows what the future holds?

use as the week progresses, particularly concerning romance.

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 21): Your social scene will get livelier this week as your sense of style attracts new acquaintances, paving the way to future artistic projects. Work remains something of a gray area and you will need to draw on your reserves of patience rather than expect fast answers. Tuesday should bring news from abroad that will shed light on a pressing issue. Sunshine yellow will be your lucky color.



**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21): Don't sweat the small stuff when it comes to business matters – the big picture is what's important so leave the details to take care of themselves. Plenty of hot air is swirling around you at the moment, but cool breezes are set to calm things down. By midweek your suspicions may be aroused that a certain someone is only a fair-weather friend.



**CANCER** (June 22-July 23): You should nurture faith in your ability to make a good impression. Whether this concerns possible promotion at work, or a blossoming romantic bond, Cancerians who lack self-confidence are may end up simply blending into the background. Indulging in a makeover could lead you to the right destination. A friend with an attractive suggestion this weekend could lead to a impromptu decision.



**LEO** (July 24-August 22): Your choice of social outings this weekend could lead to a sore head come Monday morning. Try not to over indulge if you need to keep your wits about early in the week. Your position as king or queen of the jungle is compromised when a newcomer on the scene takes the limelight. Wear bright colors to stand out in the crowd.



**VIRGO** (August 23-September 23): Virgoans in the mood for some excitement will happily step

onto a trail of intrigue this weekend. As long as you wear a sunhat to keep a cool head, adventure is on offer. You are called upon to offer productive ideas about work, but don't let others benefit from your intuition. This is an auspicious time to negotiate for a better deal.



**LIBRA** (September 24-October 23): Librans are advised to keep crucial information to themselves. There is a strong possibility that you could be tempted to share one secret too many and lose control of an important situation. The ball is in your court at the moment and you will need to send it spinning in the right direction before the end of this week. Single Librans will receive positive signs where romance is concerned.



**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 22): You may receive news on the smoothing-over of a business disagreement, and if you are still frothing at the mouth due to unfair treatment, it's time to

swallow some pride. Other areas of your life demand attention this week, so devote some energy to these instead of dwelling on what could have been. This is an opportune time to remind a friend of a debt.



**SAGITTARIUS** (November 23-December 21): External interference could rock the romantic boat this weekend. Someone with nothing better to do would like to twist your words, but you are in an excellent position to have the last laugh. On the domestic front, if too much building work is encroaching on your personal peace and quiet, an expedition away from the concrete jungle could reveal a more tranquil option. Your lucky number this week is six.



**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 20): Capricorns will be forced to face up to a question left sitting on the back burner for too long this weekend. Look for help from someone someone with valuable personal experience with this problem and take their counsel. Remain focused on the positives in your life to add strength to your confidence levels. An opportunity to boost your income in an unusual way comes along early next week.



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# A melting pot called Melaka

**M**elaka used to be called Malacca and nowadays might as well be called Mixture. It's a quaint hodgepodge of a place, with ranks of modern condominiums looking onto the ruins of forts built by the Portuguese when the city was enjoying its heyday as a trading depot.

In those days, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur hardly made it onto the map. These days, people don't come to Melaka for business so much as to get away from it.

The town exhibits some sharp contrasts, always flavored with the melange of races who have taken up residence here. A stroll leads past Chinese and Muslim temples and on to Christian churches.

Old shophouses line the streets. Some are shuttered and barred, some resemble mini-

factories at ground-level, with families living upstairs, others have been converted into trendy cafés and art-and-craft boutiques.

Limousines driven by chauffeurs pull aside to let a trishaw packed with mothers and tots ease by. A cluster of schoolgirls, heads covered with the traditional Islamic scarf, pose with great hilarity in front of a marble fountain erected in 1904 to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

History, cultures and races mix and mingle here.

Melaka is not short of visitors. They put in an appearance in force around

Bukit St Paul's, a historic hill in the center of town. At Padang Palawan, the more daring can even take a ride in a bullock cart.

St Paul's Church, which gives the hill its name, is desolate



**NOT SHY:** Buildings in Melaka can be as colorful as the mixed population of the place.

## TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

now, unlike the Museum of Enduring Beauty on the lower slopes. Here, beauty is definitely in the eye of the beholder. The museum is gruesomely dedicated to depictions of tattooing, scarification and foot-binding that would not look out of place in any Chamber of Horrors. Melaka rarely passes up the opportunity to surprise.

For all its strange sights,

Melaka's two chief attractions are its river and its food. A 45-minute trip from the jetty – just by the Karyaneka Bridge – winds along the muddy brown Sungei Melaka, and through Little Amsterdam, the old Dutch quarter, with its red-roofed godowns.

The journey continues to the docks, which are filled with low-slung Sumatran schooners whose captains still sail without charts or compasses, and on past *kampongs*, where the fishermen work contentedly on their nets just feet from monitor lizards slumbering in the sun.

Much of Melaka's prosperity stemmed from the waves of immigrants from mainland China who started arriving in the 16th century. Many liked the place.

They prospered and took Malay wives, giving rise to a new ethnic group called Straits Chinese, or Peranakans, and producing a new culinary enterprise known as Baba-Nyonya, also a major influence on Phuket cuisine.

Chicken, fish and seafood form the mainstays of the cuisine, and pork also makes an appearance, unlike in Malay food. One of the most subtle dishes is laksa – noodles in spicy coconut soup, served with seafood and finely chopped beansprouts, lemongrass, pineapple, pepper, lime leaves and chili.

Adapting Chinese dishes, by cooking them Malay-style with coconut milk and sour sauces, is Melaka's signature cuisine, typical of the integration

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THE FAMILY

Spot the Difference



Can you find the seven differences between the two cartoons below? And can you find them faster than the rest of the family?



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A. When the trains meet, they will be at exactly the same point. Therefore, they will each be the same distance from the west coast.

Solution to last week's Crossword

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

Get your brain  
in gear with  
The Monster Quiz



1. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, European musicians played an instrument very similar to the modern trombone. What was it called?

2. In the Middle Ages, if a lady had a destrier, what did the knight have?

3. In Britain, what word would be used for a musical note described in North America as a "thirty-second note"?

4. What measure, equivalent to roughly 114 centimeters, used to be used to measure cloth?

5. Where was Henry Purcell's opera, *Dido & Aeneas*, first performed?

6. The author of *Ada* and *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* is most famous for which of his novels?

7. Before Eisenhower, by
- what name was Camp David known?

8. Gilbert and Sullivan collaborated on 14 comic operas. What was the last one?

9. In Greek myth, who invented the plow?

10. Which British World War II flying ace had no legs?

11. Who is credited with the discovery of the electron?

12. During which ancient Roman festival were slaves set free, albeit temporarily?

13. What is the name for the groove that appears in a horse's incisors when it is about 10 years old?

14. Which is the world's highest volcano?

15. In Arthurian legend, what
- does "Excalibur" mean?

16. Which islands were once known as the Sandwich Islands?

17. Who led a peasant rebellion in England in 1381, during which the rebels captured the Tower of London?

18. Ragtime composer Scott Joplin wrote a single opera, which was a flop. What was it called?

19. Which small, furry, fruit-eating animal of Africa and South Asia has the elephant as its closest relative?

20. Who first used ether as an anesthetic?

Answers next week

Never a  
Cross Word!

Across

1. Industrious little insect.
3. Its capital is Helsinki.
6. Mississippi or Missouri, for example.
7. Movie barbarian.
9. Good description for 1 across.
10. Japanese drama.
12. Home of the Globetrotters.
13. Mr Crosby.
14. Adam and Eve's fruity downfall.
15. Greenfly.
17. Sitting on the fence.
18. Sire's mate.

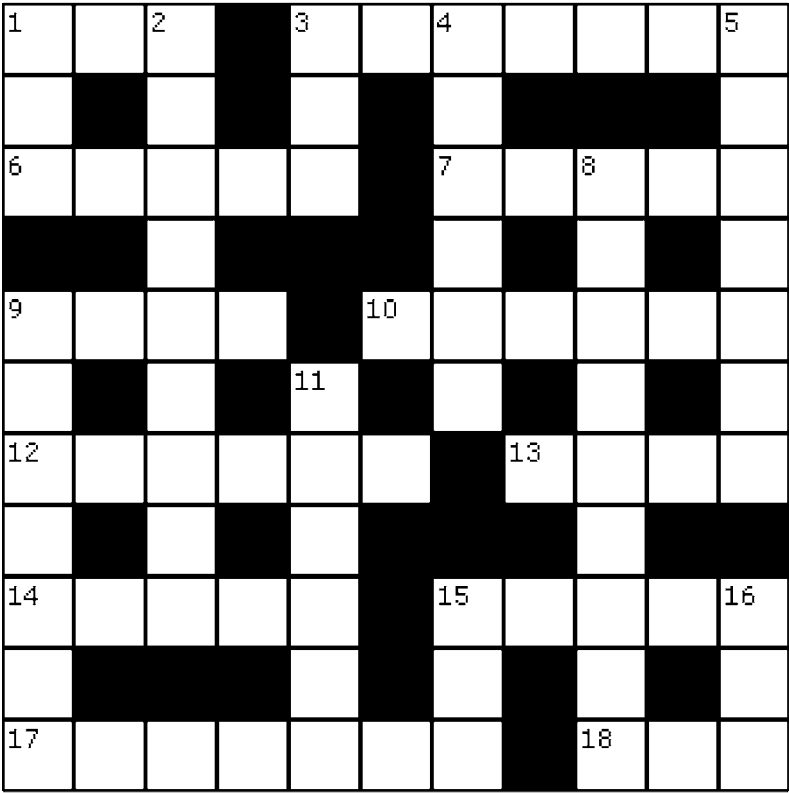
Down

1. Prohibit.
2. Listen surreptitiously.
3. Not near.
4. Sweet liquor from flowers.
5. Waltzing, for example.
8. Fed.
9. Its capital is Manama.
11. Shooting star.
15. Tutti.
16. Not too bright.

Solution next week

Answers to last  
week's Monster Quiz

1. Bach, Handel and Telemann; 2. 75; 3. Celtic *hovera, covera, dik* (eight, nine, ten); 4. Rhinoceros; 5. Mach 900,000; 6. Mathematics; 7. Sea-going vessel; 8. Uranus; 9. Deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics; 10. Treasure Island; 11. Uther Pendragon; 12. Edwin F. Land; 13. Cryptzoology; 14. He was a horse; 15. Outbreak of bubonic plague; 16. Franz Joseph Gall; 17. Mexico; 18. Gulliver's Travels; 19. Between the two halves of your brain; 20. Paris.



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# The alphabet of health and fitness

**H**ealth information is confusing. What was harmful may now be beneficial – in moderation – and vice versa. Over the next few weeks, we'll bring you the latest scoops from the worlds of fitness and nutrition – before the researchers change their minds again.

Don't forget, this information is a summary of what's around. If you are considering changing your diet, you should first seek medical advice, especially if you have an existing condition.

**Almonds** used to be considered fattening but current research suggests that they may help shed those unwanted kilos. Researchers found that people eating a diet rich in almonds lost more weight than those on an equivalent non-almond diet.

Other research indicated that systolic blood pressure (the higher figure) was reduced by as much as 11% in almond-eaters. Additional research has shown that people with type-2 diabetes on an almond-rich diet were able to reduce their medication more than the non-almond eaters. Remember, a handful of almonds has a place in a healthy diet. The whole can does not.

**Aspirin** seems like it has been around forever but it has a place in preventing heart attacks and strokes, and helping people survive them. Anyone with a family history of cardiovascular disease should perhaps take a daily dose.

More isn't better when it comes to aspirin; a "baby aspirin" tablet of 81 milligrams is just as effective as the standard adult pill of 325 mg. Speak with your doctor first to find if this the ap-

propriate for you. Aspirin may also reduce the risk of cancer of the colon, esophagus, stomach, rectum and prostate and possibly even Alzheimer's disease.

**Broccoli** as a cure for cold sores? Researchers have isolated a compound in it that may hold the key to thwarting HSV-1, the oral and genital herpes virus. Broccoli is also rich in *isothiocyanates*, which can stimulate the body's production of cancer-fighting substances.

A serving of boiled broccoli has as much calcium as a glass of milk; more vitamin C than an orange; and one medium-sized section has more fiber than a slice of wheatbran bread. Broccoli is also one of the richest sources of vitamin A, essential for normal vision.

**Berries** contain flavonoids, thought to fight the cell-damaging effects of oxidization, are found in lingon berries, cranberries, bilberries, blueberries, and blackcurrants. Berries also contain high amounts of vitamin C, and fiber. Berries are best eaten raw and fresh to preserve the antioxidants.

**Buckwheat**, a grain commonly found in *blini* pancakes and *soba* noodles, may help people with diabetes maintain healthy blood-sugar levels. Experiments have shown that *chiro-inostil*, an extract of buckwheat rarely found in other foods, lowered diet-related blood sugar levels between 12%-19%. Researchers say that if further studies confirm these results, buckwheat may be used as a nutritional supplement or incorporated as a food into the diets of people with diabetes to help manage the disease. It is not, however, a panacea.

**Cinnamon** is a spice researchers have long speculated may be helpful in treating diabetes.

Botanicals such as cinnamon can improve the metabolism of glucose and the overall condition of individuals with diabetes – improving cholesterol metabolism, removing artery-damaging free radicals from the blood and improving the function of blood vessels. Onions, garlic, ginseng and flaxseed are thought to have similar effects.

A control group taking three- to six-gram cinnamon tablets saw their cholesterol levels decrease by up to 26% over a 40-day period while LDL ("bad") cholesterol levels went down by between 10%-24%. Effects on HDL, so-called "good cholesterol", were minimal.

**Coconut oil** is one of the healthiest oils you can consume. It is rich in lauric acid – known for its antiviral, antibacterial and antifungal properties – and boosts the immune system. Applied to the skin, it can help prevent wrinkles. Coconut oil can also help you lose weight or maintain an already healthy weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, lower cholesterol, improve diabetes and chronic fatigue.

Sufferers of Crohn's disease, irritable bowel syndrome and other digestive disorders have reported improvements in their conditions through consuming coconut oil.

**Caffeine** may stimulate the metabolism and lead to burning up more calories through thermogenesis – the production of heat. It may not all be good news. Some studies have shown a greater incidence of blood-pressure spikes and heart-disease-related deaths among coffee drinkers. Caffeine may also interfere with the action of insulin.

Yet research also shows that coffee may actually *reduce* the risk of developing type 2 diabetes independently of other lifestyle factors such as age and obesity, which tend to increase risk.

Coffee contains many other ingredients that could have beneficial effects in preventing type-2 diabetes, such as potassium, niacin, and magnesium, as well as antioxidants. Don't dramatically increase your coffee intake, especially if you already have a heart condition or diabetes. See your doctor first.

Look out for the next column when we'll continue our alphabetical exploration.

*Pensri & Joe Lewis are fitness and equipment consultants at Fitness R Us. Tel: 09-8663736 Email: jlewis@loxinfo.co.th.*



**Fitness FANATIC**

By Joe and Pensri Lewis

# Algae: a rootless population

**I** was exploring along a shoreline recently, looking for tiny critters hiding out in the seaweed – and watching predators stalk them. The algae clinging to the rocks appeared to be a species of *Chlorodesmis*, one of the many green algae found in Phuket waters.

Algae are non-flowering plants, among the most primitive life forms on the planet. They inhabit fresh and salt water, where they can be found from the surface to the greatest depths to which sunlight can penetrate. Some are even found in damp soil, snow, or growing on ships' hulls.

Algae are classified under a single phylum, which is subdivided into four: *Cyanophyta*, or blue-green algae, the *Chlorophyta* or green algae, the *Phaeophyta* or brown algae, and the *Rhodophyta* or red algae. All four kinds are found in Thailand.

Fossil algae date back to the Precambrian period, at least 900 million years ago. Blue-green were the earliest; next came green, then red and finally brown.

Algae come in a huge variety of shapes and sizes, from the microscopic to the giant kelp, which can grow to 60 meters in length. It was in such a kelp bed that I first learned to dive.

Under the correct conditions, algae can grow at impressive rates – sometimes even smothering or killing off a coral reef if uncontrolled.

In all algae, food is produced by photosynthesis – the conversion of light into nutrients. Chlorophyll is the driving mechanism, but these photosynthetic pigments vary somewhat among species and six different kinds are known.

Algae differ from most plants in their lack of structure. They have no true roots, stems or leaves. The plant body as a whole is known as a thallus. It consists of a "holdfast" that serves as its roots; a "stipe" that is analogous to a stem, and the blades or "lamina", which resemble leaves and perform the crucial task of photosynthesis.

Among the blue-green algae found in Phuket, three species stand out. *Brachytrichia quoyi* has a hollow thallus, more or less spherical and 1 to 5 cm in diameter. It is blue-green or pale green and grows on rocks in the intertidal zone.

Bright blue *Hormothamnium solum* is composed of tangled filaments and grows on coral fragments or reef flats, while *Symploca hydroides* forms spongy tufts of multiple filaments about 13 cm high, and can live on a variety of shallow water surfaces.

The green algae include *Acetabularia major*, which has an

umbrella-like thallus, cylindrical stipe and a lobed holdfast. It is bright green and grows by attaching itself to rocks and pebbles in shallow water.

*Avrainvillea erecta* has a fan-shaped thallus on a short stipe. The attachment is by interwoven rhizoids submerged in muddy sand in shallows that are exposed at low tide.

*Caulerpa racemosa* has a thallus with upright fronds. Bright green, it grows in mangroves and brackish water. It is used as a salad vegetable in the South.

*Chlorodesmis hildebrandtii* has a cushion-like thallus 4-5 cm high covered with bright green, erect, branched filaments. It grows on coral reefs.

*Valonia ventricosa* has a spherical thallus 1 to 3 cm in diameter. The cell wall is tough and shiny, dark green to grayish. It is the largest single-celled seaweed. It grows singly or in clusters attached to corals 3 to 4 meters below the sea surface.

There are many brown algae in Thailand. Examples include *Padina australis*, whose thallus is fan shaped. It grows in tufts 10-15 cm high. The lamina are thin with concentric lines on both surfaces. It grows on rocks and shells in intertidal areas.

*Rosenvingea intricata* has a hollow thallus about 15 cm tall. The top is composed of branches that are successively smaller. It is greenish- or yellowish-brown and is frequently found floating.

*Turbinaria ornata* has an erect thallus 6 to 13 cm high from which emerge nearly circular blades. It is light or yellowish-brown and grows on rocks and dead coral near living reefs.

Red algae include *Acanthophora spicifera*. Its thallus is 15 cm tall and loosely branched with branchlets arranged in spiral formations. It comes in a wide range of browns and grows in a variety of intertidal areas and conditions.

*Amphiroa zonata* forms dense clumps 3-4 cm tall, highly branched with rounded tips. It is pink and grows in subtidal areas often inhabited also by *Amphiroa fragilissima*, which has a dense clumping thallus with fine semi-upright branches. Easily detachable, it is pale pink and grows on muddy sand.

Algae provide food and shelter for fish and invertebrates. In Phuket, several species are eaten, while others are useful in agriculture as fertilizers.

*Robert Cogen is a well-known California lawyer and a broadly experienced naturalist with a degree in zoology. Email: indepth@asis.com.*



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# A winning hand

James McManus has written five novels, none of which I've heard of. But he has scored big with his latest book *Positively Fifth Street* (Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York, 2003, 422pp) which is subtitled: *Murderers, Cheetahs, and Binion's World Series of Poker*.

McManus opens with a meticulous nine-page description of a grotesque murder: "A nubile blond squats on her boyfriend's bare chest and he's too stoned to do anything about it. Nipple clamps? No sir, not this time. Even one would be, like, way generous. Seizing him by the neck with both hands, she raises her shins from the carpet and presses her full dead weight onto his rib cage and solar plexus, forcing more air from his lungs. How's that feel? As she rocks back and forth, they lock eyes. 'You like that?' she asks, flirty as ever. 'How come?'"

Her name is Sandra Murphy, ex-stripper and, for the past three years, live-in girlfriend of Ted Binion, heir of the Horseshoe Casino, former host of the World Series of Poker. Binion is in handcuffs and a massive amount of drugs has been forced down his throat by his close friend Rick Tabish, who then proceeds to make love with Sandra Murphy in front of him.

McManus is hired by *Harper's* magazine to cover the murder trial. Instead, he spends his US\$4,500 advance on the entry fee for the World Series of Poker. He feels fate is calling him to the casino table.

"That a jury should be deliberating charges of first-degree S&M murder against Ted's friend and consort one block away during the final week of the tournament his father invented – well, this is either too much of a muchness, tipping toward the implausible, or it's the shapeliest tragic construction since Aristotle laid down the rules for these things 2,370 years ago."

If you don't know how to play poker, forget about reading this book. McManus is particularly careful to analyze the nuances of the savage variant of poker that the title-seekers play:

No Limit Texas Hold 'em. It is a game that has spread far from its Texas saloon origins and Texan champions like Amarillo Slim have been overtaken by Jewish intellectuals, Pakistani computer geeks, Vietnamese and Chinese slickers, and even women.

"The World Series of Poker has evolved from its good-old-boy roots into a stronghold of, yes, functional multiculturalism, proving if nothing else that there is such a thing," McManus writes.

"Most of the academic versions, of course, have long since degenerated into monocultural zealotry, diverse as to race or gender but in almost no other respects. The term has even taken a pejorative cast of late, correctly associated with tenured politicians swimming in schools of resentment, apparently aiming to prove that ideology is indeed a form of brain damage."

I quote that passage at length to show how eloquent McManus can be in his frequent narrative tangents: the history and psychology of poker, the author's childhood, mini-biographies of the chief contenders. These are needed because, as McManus improbably advances to the final table of the World Series of Poker, the suspense becomes unbearable.

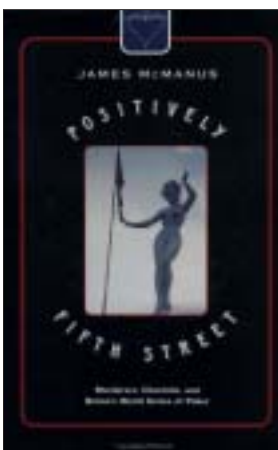
A bad early round "feels like my testicles have been lopped off, marinated with high-octane lead, lit up as *flambés rognons blancs*, then stuffed down my throat with a skewer". And faced with a crucial showdown: "Understanding my stupidity better than my brain does, my heart thumps out signals visible, I'm sure, all over my body – fingers, neck, pupils, complexion – of how petrified I am. (More specifically, this is my candyass limbic system, the neurones and hormone-secreting cells just below the putatively thinking portion of my cerebral cortex, all of them whimpering, 'Boo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo! Me scared!')"

McManus walks away with US\$247,760, and also gets on the inside track of the murder trial. A triumph all around.



## Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



# Pigs, a straightjacket and a contortionist

My good friend David Whataburke decided he would renovate and upgrade his apartment in North Pattaya. Employing only the best designers and contractors, he was told the job would be finished to his satisfaction in about six weeks.

Although he was warned that the workers would make an almost never-ending series of mistakes, he found that as each error was corrected, a new one would emerge.

This happened on a daily basis. It is now three years, four months and nine days since the renovation work started, and we are happy to report that David is expected to be released soon from the Straitjacket Wing of the Center for Inordinately Happy Persons, where his medication dosage is slowly being reduced.

I am sad to report the untimely demise of Ogden Thwaites following an accident at his condo in South Pattaya. Mr Thwaites's wife, Lek, told investigators that her husband had decided to take a deep breath of invigorating night air on the balcony, as was his nightly custom, when he appeared to become lightheaded, lost his balance, and pitched over the railing – plummeting 13 floors to the concrete below. Luckily, no one was passing underneath.

Police were at first puzzled as to why Mr Thwaites happened to have a sharp knife protruding from the base of his spine and that the autopsy reported barbiturates in the lining of his stomach. K. Lek, through a veil of tears and bursting into hysterics occasionally, stated that Mr Thwaites, aged 85 at the time of his plunge, was sprightly for his age and had been a renowned contortionist in his younger days.

He always had a fondness for sharp objects, she said, and



## FROM THE STREETS OF PATTAYA

By Duncan Stearn

was in the habit of showing Lek his party tricks involving knives. On the evening of his fall, Lek claimed, her husband had become confused and, after swallowing three or four sleeping draughts, decided to perform a daredevil stunt on the balcony with a knife.

Sadly, it all went awry and Mr Thwaites managed to skewer himself before toppling to his death. Police were more than satisfied with this highly plausible explanation and the case has been closed.

In other disturbing news, John Thomas was fined three million baht after an accident involving two motorbikes, a pickup and a truckload of pigs. Mr Thomas had just arrived in Thailand and at Don Muang airport negotiated with a taxi driver to take him to Pattaya. Tired from the long journey from his home at Bilious-On-Sea in Essex, Mr Thomas fell asleep on the back seat of the taxi.

He awoke some time later to a blaring of horns, a screech of brakes and the squeal of pigs. A split second or so later, the taxi in which he was a passenger ceased to exist as a viable form of transport as hefty porkers fell onto, into and in front of it.

The taxi driver was unable to flee the scene because he had

been almost smothered by a 300-kilogram squealer that had breathed its last as it came to rest atop the steering wheel, pushing it into the man's more tender nether regions.

Through clenched teeth, the taxi driver claimed he had been driving, albeit under the influence, at a sedate 90kmh when two motorbikes shot past him. After a pickup also raced past him, he decided to increase his speed as he felt his masculinity was somehow being called into question. He conceded that his manhood, such as it stood at this point, was very unlikely ever to compete with two motorbikes and a pickup again.

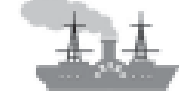
After speeding up, he drew alongside the pig-laden truck just at a time when the pickup decided, for some unknown reason, to cut in front of the ham carrier. This caused the driver of the truck to hit the horn and the brakes. Not being adept at doing two things at once, the truck driver lost control of the wheel, swerved and collided with the taxi.

Although the police determined that the truckload of future bacon bits had not been secured in a proper manner, it was decided that responsibility for the accident devolved to Mr Thomas. According to the police, the accident would not have taken place if Mr Thomas had (a) remained at his residence at Bilious-On-Sea or (b) gone to visit another country.

Had he insisted on coming to the Land of Smiles, he could have prevented the accident from taking place by (a) hiring a different taxi or (b) traveling to a more suitable destination, such as Ayudhaya or Chiang Mai, instead of Pattaya. As a form of protest against what he views as unfair treatment, Mr Thomas has vowed never again to eat bacon, ham or any other form of pig meat.

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## Clean up Phuket's act

The enduring violation of Phuket's natural beauty by the plastic bag is one of the sad mysteries of this island. It is also one of the most persistent threats to Phuket's image as a tropical paradise.

In this Phuket is far from unique. Sailors who have visited the Andaman Islands – about as far as it is possible to get from urban “civilization” – report that in the past five years, the plastic bag has also taken over there, blowing along the white beaches, bobbing in the aquamarine seas and snagging on coral reefs.

In Phuket recently, the Wat Chalong fair ended. The stallholders left behind them – you guessed it – acres of plastic bags and other garbage. Every time a *talad nat* (local market), is held, the site ends up looking like a garbage dump.

Why is it so hard for people to pick up their own waste? Lousy education? Bad upbringing? Poor examples set by those who should know better? A lack of ways to dispose of trash?

It's all of these, and probably more. As with so many of society's ills, there is no “magic bullet” that will fix everything with one shot.

In the 1960s, Britain gained a reputation as the grubbier country in Europe. It has taken 40 years – two generations – to reverse that opinion. Even now, it is still not the cleanest country, though it has certainly improved.

The “Keep Britain Tidy” campaign – which continues to this day – has been persistent and sweeping in its scope. It has included the provision of hundreds of thousands of trash cans on streets and in public areas of the countryside; long-running ad campaigns on TV and in other media; the involvement of schools; the promotion of recycling; the introduction of laws and local regulations governing garbage and recycling; and the introduction or alteration of taxes aimed at encouraging citizens to think about ways to reduce their output of trash.

Does any of this exist in Phuket? No. True, well-meaning volunteers conduct clean-ups, particularly of beaches. They deserve applause, but their efforts put only the smallest dent in the problem.

The lead, as is the case with so many social and environmental problems, needs to come from government, both local and national. Some attempts have been made by local authorities, but they are rarely sustained. Certainly, there is no sign of anything like the continuing campaign in Britain.

A long-term plan must be drawn up, and drawn up soon, if Phuket is to maintain its international reputation as a delightful place to visit and to live.

– The Editor

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## Letters

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

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

### After the flight, a fight to arrive

One morning recently, I arrived by TG406 from Singapore. I waited an hour and 45 minutes to get through Immigration – which is about 30 minutes longer than the flight from Singapore itself. Out of 16 counters, only seven or eight were occupied by Immigration officers.

The people waiting, mostly Scandinavian tourists coming from other flights, did not seem very delighted about the waiting time, especially after a 15-hour journey.

Do you think this is the right way to welcome the people who bring money to the island?

Resident of Patong

### Investment being held on the line

My telephone was out of order between January 19 and 23. Daily reminders to the local Telephone Organization of Thailand office to repair it were met with promises that it would be repaired the same day, which never happened. Last year, a neighbor had the same problem and even called the police in frustration.

If the authorities want Phuket to be a “Cyber City”, an Internet hub and a center of business, they must understand that communication is crucial for most businesses. If my overseas businesses had their communications cut off for a week, I would be out of business.

Putting red tape aside, anyone considering doing business here must think carefully – the

risks are great. Sadly, my businesses will remain overseas, and I will stick to the beach.

St John Campbell  
Karon

### Please show some R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Your front-page article “Topless tourists cause confusion” (*Gazette* January 17) makes me wonder why women traveling to Thailand don't do their homework first. Every guidebook published on the subject of Thailand's tourism states that topless bathing is an insult to the local culture. Topless bathing is also a slap in the face to everyone trying to control the sex trade. Culture and ethics aside, 90% of you really need to put your tops back on.

Laura Heber  
Vancouver, Canada

### Short but sweet relief

The article on the surge in driving licences issued on Phuket (*Gazette*, January 31) was most interesting. I will now feel much safer when driving near the Boat Lagoon knowing that some employees had a full two hours' training before being tested.

Stuart Hooper  
Patong

### Police do good turn in making U-turns

I would like to thank the Koh Kaew police for putting a traffic policeman on the U-turn junction on Thepkasattri Road just north

of the Boat Lagoon marina in the mornings.

For many months now there has been serious problems with vehicles trying to use the U-turn, creating traffic build-up. Vehicles would end up queuing out into the fast lane of the main road, causing congestion and creating a risk of accidents.

I would like to urge the police to continue this helpful service to ensure lives are not lost.

Gareth Twist  
Boat Lagoon

### Local boys big part of jet-ski problem

I am pleased that people are starting to recognize that jet-skis are annoying as well as being a hazard. Patong would be a much more pleasant beach without them. However, it's not tourists who cause most of the problems with jet-skis, but the Thai boys who play on them all day.

John Corman  
Canada

### Pristine site littered

I am a German tourist who visited Phuket in October and again in December. As a diver, I went to the Similans but in December it was not the beautiful place it had been in October.

Near Breakfast Bend there was garbage floating on the surface.

What a shame for a beautiful space, and in a national park.

Dr Georg Klima  
Germany

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.

## CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

## An incident tailor-made to tarnish tourism

Recently, while visiting a friend, I noticed that his son, who is about 25 years old, had a bandage around his hand. When I asked him what had happened, he told me a frightening story.

He and his son were serving a customer in their tailor shop in Patong when two men suddenly barged in.

One of the men, a tuk-tuk driver, was not happy about a car that was parked in the space where he usually parked his vehicle. It so happened that the car belonged to the customer who was in the shop at that moment.

The tuk-tuk driver demanded angrily that the car be removed from "his" parking space at once. My friend's son explained to the man, politely, that the cus-

tomers was about to be given his garments and the car would soon be gone from that parking space.

The tuk-tuk driver would not listen and again demanded that the car be removed at once. He was speaking very loudly and very rudely. The customer, a tourist, began to look scared.

The son continued trying to negotiate with the tuk-tuk driver, telling him that he had no right to barge into the shop and create such an uproar.

Both of them were business people, he said, and the tuk-tuk driver should have some respect for the customer in the shop.

That must have offended the tuk-tuk driver because his friend stepped behind the young man and grabbed his arms. The tuk-tuk driver then began beating the poor

guy, inside his own shop, in front of his horrified father, his screaming mother and the customer, who was scared out of his wits at the barbaric scene.

When they had finished, they swore at the young man, who was now curled up on the floor in pain, and left the shop.

As they left, they even dared the family to call the police, as if they knew that the police had no authority over them and were scared of them.

The young man suffered a number of broken fingers. As for the customer, he got into his car quickly and disappeared.

He had ordered some clothes and even though he had already paid the money, he never came back to collect them. I would not be surprised if this was his last visit to Thailand.

This is not the first time that I have heard of tuk-tuk drivers terrorizing locals and tourists in Patong, Kata and Karon, but this latest example shocked me, particularly because it happened to someone close to me.

These people act as if we are in the Wild West and there is no law. Does the Governor know what's going on or is he, like the police, intimidated by the tuk-tuk drivers?

Phuket's main industry is tourism and a lot of its locals depend on tourism for their living. If we do not make Phuket a safer, more civilized safe place, we might eventually lose tourism. Something must be done.

RS  
Patong

## More detail on foreigners getting married in Thailand

I have some questions about your Issue & Answer on the requirements for foreign marriages (See <http://www.phuketgazette.net/issuesanswers/details.asp?id=134>).

The Issue and Answer says that a foreigner must provide "a certificate provided by the Embassy of the foreigner's home country that proves the applicants are not already married. This certificate must be translated and the translation must be verified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand."

It also states, "[at the interview before a wedding] both a translator and a witness must be present."

My questions are:

1. How do I get the translation "verified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs"?

2. Can a friend who speaks fluent Thai be both our witness and our translator at the interview?

3. Are we given a Thai marriage certificate when the process is complete?

SFC  
Phuket Town

**Karnjana Hongboonyanurak,**  
Registration Officer, Phuket

## Issues &amp; ANSWERS

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

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

**Town District Office, replies:**

1. For the translated version of the certificate verifying that you have not been married, there are many translation services near our offices that can provide an official translation recognized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

If need be, our officers will be happy to direct you to an appropriate business.

2. Yes, one person can act as both translator and witness at the interview at the District Office.

3. When the process is complete, you will receive two copies of your Thai marriage certificate, one for the groom and the other for the bride.

**The Phuket Gazette notes:**

When you go to the embassy to obtain the certificate stating that you are not already married, it is worth asking embassy officials if they can supply you with an official translation into Thai. Many embassies provide this service for their nationals.

## Getting rid of pests – before they become pets

I recently bought a glue-tray to trap mice in my home. It worked well – in one night I caught six mice.

But now I don't know what to do with the mice I caught. I feel guilty about throwing live animals in the trash, and I think it would be a health hazard.

Can I hand them in to the Public Health Department? If I do, will the mice be released into the wild?

Please answer my question soon because I have started to feed them and I am afraid I will begin to think of them as pets.

Somchai H  
Samkong, Phuket Town

**Aree Harnchang, Chief, Disease Control Center, Phuket Town Municipality replies:**

If you are uncomfortable with disposing of the mice yourself, you can hand them in to the Phuket Town Municipal Disease Control Center (DCC).

We are conveniently located near the municipality incinerator, and we will dispose of the mice for you.

The DCC uses strychnine in its continuing campaign to rid Phuket Town of vermin.

You are welcome to collect some strychnine from us and use it as an alternative to glue-traps.

To collect strychnine from us, contact the DCC, Section 3, which is responsible for the Samkong area.

The DCC is located at 155/3 Kra Rd, in Phuket Town. Tel: 076-354501.

## Opening a real estate agency

I would like to know if any special license is required to open a real estate and business services company in Thailand. How do I go about it?

Christopher  
Phuket

**Veerachai Tantiwathanaval-**

**lop, Director of the Phuket Business Development Office, replies:**

You can register a real estate and business services company as you would any other Thai company.

You will need to come to the Phuket Business Development Office (BDO) to fill out the appropriate forms.

You will need to present your ID card or passport, and pay a fee of 50 baht per 100,000 baht of paid-up capital.

**The Phuket Gazette notes:**

For more information about the requirements for setting up a company, see [www.phuketgazette.net/issuesanswers/details.asp?id=165](http://www.phuketgazette.net/issuesanswers/details.asp?id=165).

Alternatively, you may contact the Phuket BDO at Rattanakosin 200 Pi Rd, Phuket Town. Tel: 076-217406. Email: [phuket@thairegistration.com](mailto:phuket@thairegistration.com)

## Donating garbage bins for public parks

Every morning I take my dogs for exercise in Suan Luang Park, on Chao Fa Rd in Phuket Town.

It is a well designed park with beautiful scenery that many people enjoy.

However, there are usually piles of garbage lying around, especially after each weekend and particularly near the lakes.

In the whole park I have counted only two green garbage

bins. I would like to donate more garbage bins to the park, as soon as possible.

Who do I contact, and where can I buy sturdy garbage bins?

Alistair Beveridge  
Chalong

**Daorudee Leelatham, Secretary to the Mayor of Phuket Town, responds:**

To donate bins for use in the park, contact Wiran Hengsawad, the Phuket Town Municipality's Chief Administration Officer (and currently Acting Mayor of Phuket Town).

To make an appointment to see him, call Tel: 076-211174.

**Jate Pattamaroj, Manager, Jetika Supply Co Ltd.**  
Jetika Supply Co Ltd sup-

plied the bins currently used in the park.

Our shop is near Villa California and the 7-Eleven store on Chao Fa Nai Rd, south of Phuket Town.

The company in Bangkok we buy the bins from is Siriwan Supply Co Ltd.

To contact that company we suggest you call K. Kib at Tel: 01-4411838 during office hours.

# Exposing Word files' dirty secrets

If you've been around Microsoft Office long enough, you've no doubt developed a good sense of self-preservation: Office is full of holes, bugs and other things that seem to defy explanation.

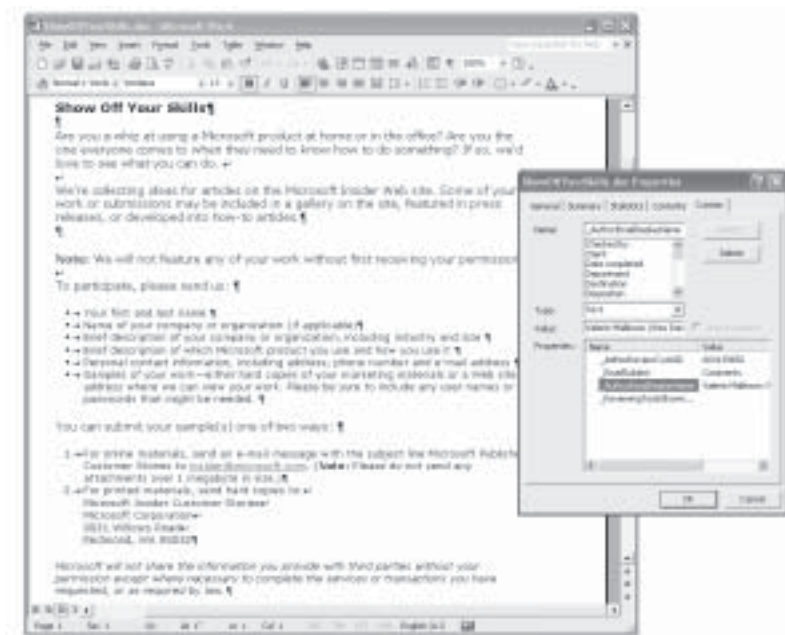
One of my favorite topics is how Word documents can contain hidden information that you may not want the world to see. Ask Tony Blair, whose governing team in the UK was shaken – not stirred – with revelations gleaned in part from information hidden in a publicly posted Word document.

On January 30 last year, the UK government published a white paper called *Iraq – Its Infrastructure Of Concealment, Deception And Intimidation*, which was posted as a Word document on Mr Blair's website, [www.number-10.gov.uk](http://www.number-10.gov.uk).

The so-called "dodgy dossier" teemed with plagiarized passages and dubious self-serving enhancements, and buried in the file was a list of the people who modified the document.

Alastair Campbell, the Director of Communications and Strategy at that time, took the bullet. He resigned, and data hidden inside a Word document was part of his undoing (see the analysis by Richard Smith at [www.ComputerBytesMan.com/privacy/blair.htm](http://www.ComputerBytesMan.com/privacy/blair.htm)). You will no doubt read more about the "dodgy dossier" as it continues to dog Mr Blair's political career.

There are hundreds of thou-



sands of Word documents posted on the Internet that contain hidden data – and if you have Word, you can go spelunking inside the documents to see what they contain. Here's how:

First, find a document that looks juicy. I like to use Google's Advanced Search. Go to [google.com](http://google.com) and click the button to bring up the Advanced Search page. Type a topic or the name of a company in the first Find Results box, and choose Microsoft Word (.doc) in the File Format drop-down box. Press Enter, then download any likely looking files.

To see some of the information hidden in the file, open it with Word and click File | Properties | Custom. If the file was ever attached to an email in Out-

look 2002 or 2003, Outlook would have "branded" the file with the sender's name, email address and the subject line of the email.

To see more information buried in the same document, close it, then click File | Open. In the Files of Type box, choose Recover Text From Any File, then navigate to the file and open it.

Down past the lists of font names, near the end, you will probably see a list of all the people who made changes to the document, along with a list of where the document was stored when they changed it.

How embarrassing is this information? Mr Campbell's office certainly was stung; there was enough information in the "dodgy dossier" for one analyst to tell when a copy of the file was spun off for US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

The Associated Press nail-

This document, supposedly from a Mac user who switched to Windows, was written by a Microsoft PR agency hack. The Associated Press nailed Microsoft for lying yet again, by tracking down the data "hidden" inside the document.

ed Microsoft for pulling yet another dirty trick (see picture). I caught Microsoft with its corporate trousers about its knees and discovered a dirty document from the camp of Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the US House of Representatives.

Microsoft recently posted on its website a program that strips out much – but not all – of the information hidden inside Office XP and Office 2003 files. Unfortunately, Microsoft has reported 14 known bugs with the tool, not including the fact that it has not been tested on Windows 2000, and there's nothing similar available for Office 97 or 2000.

– Woody Leonhard  
[woody@khunwoody.com](mailto:woody@khunwoody.com)

# Central

PHUKET TOWN: The Central group has revealed details of its new retail complex for Phuket and has set an opening date – August 12, birthday of HM Queen Sirikit.

Wallaya Chirathivat, Central's Executive Vice-President, told the *Gazette* that Central Festival Phuket will be biggest shopping center in Phuket and southern Thailand, spread across 30 rai – or 48,000 square meters – at the Thai Naan intersection.

While Central officially rejects the notion of being in competition with other large retailers, the date does give it a five-month headstart on the Jungceylon complex now being built in Patong.

Central will be targeting people "who lead a modern lifestyle and enjoy family life" – both visitors and locals.

"Our customers are middle-class to upper-class, as we have already discovered at other centers," K. Wallaya said.

The complex will have four zones: Rake Na (earth) for fash-

# Sexy investment

One in the wide range of choices available to investors these days is what is called a "Fund of Funds". This investment structure comes in two formats.



## MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

In the first, the management group invests only in its own funds, whether they be mutual funds, offshore funds, unit trusts, or whatever.

In the second, it picks from outside management groups to achieve the desired grouping. This might encompass equities (shares), bonds, or managed funds, varying in risk from cautious to aggressive.

When a fund management group or other entity – for example, a bank, an insurance company or even a research house – enters this field, it is usually able to provide good reasons for its approach.

This is especially true when outside funds are being selected. It is then possible to state that the "Fund of Funds" managers are completely unbiased and are able to select the best funds available in every sector.

Some then go on to mention that they enjoy a good relationship with the top fund managers

in every selected area. They can supposedly monitor their performance – and often even know when a fund manager is considering moving to a rival company before the fund manager's own employer is aware of the intended change.

This is because when the fund manager moves, he wants to be able to retain the business he has been getting from the "Fund of Fund" managers.

About three years ago, I had a meeting in Phuket with the Asian Director of one of the better known "Fund of Funds" management groups.

I watched an impressive presentation. I asked the presenter to send me various pieces of information. It seemed that the group was very successful.

After a while, when I had heard nothing from the company, I telephoned the director. He seemed to have completely forgotten about the details I had requested.

Undeterred, I decided to look at the company's website, as well as unbiased data sources. To my disappointment, I found that the company's performance was substandard compared with the performance of individual fund managers.

All the good reasons for using a "Fund of Funds" manager had become a theory that did not translate into real investment performance.

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#### 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 Sirikom 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:

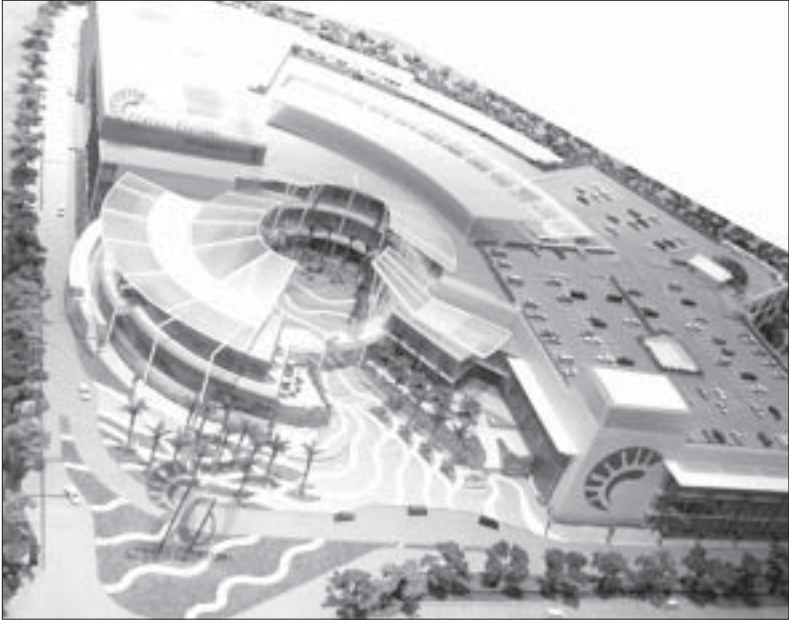
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Email: [portrait@nationgroup.com](mailto:portrait@nationgroup.com)

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

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# sets Aug 12 launch date



Architect's model of the new Central complex in Phuket.

ion and brand-name goods, Lay Nai (water) for outdoor activities Lan Lom (wind) for relaxation and Talung (fire) for entertainment and cinema, she explained.

There will be 125 brand-name stores, she said. Among the labels to open in the complex are

some that will be appearing in Phuket for the first time – including Cartier, Ferragamo, Burberry and Hugo Boss – as well as others that already have outlets in other Central stores.

There will be five banks – Siam Commercial, Bangkok

Bank, KasikornBank, Bank of Ayudhya and BankThai – plus postal services, tour agencies, car rental companies, currency exchanges, airline agencies and internet cafés. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) will have a presence.

Other familiar names will include Pizza Hut, Dairy Queen, Fuji, Zen, S&P, Hajibang, Au Bon Pain and Black Canyon. Well-known local brands, including Robinson and Ocean Shopping Mall, will be part of the mix.

Central is still looking for more local retailers who might be interested in joining the project including specialists in clothing, food, entertainment and services such as wedding shops and beauty shops. Investment capital is available for suitable businesses, K. Wallaya said.

On February 3 the Jungceylon group was scheduled to launch its lineup of brands for the January opening of its Patong retail and lifestyle complex.

– **Dhirarat Boonkongsan**

## On the Move

**Kim Bhagat**, 49, from the United Kingdom, is the new Financial Controller of Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort. Mr Bhagat, who has more than 20 years' experience in the hospitality industry, has worked throughout the Middle East, Africa and Europe. His most recent appointments were at Le Meridien Nirwana on Bali and at the new Meridien hotel in Kuala Lumpur.



**Umavadee Suramanont**, 42, from Nakhon Sawan, has been appointed General Manager of PR agency Image Impact Co Ltd. Currently studying for her master's degree in marketing consulting at Assumption University in



Bangkok, K. Umavadee has worked in the hospitality and service sector for over 20 years. Her most recent appointment was as PR Director of the Fortune Hotel in Bangkok.

**Samart Jantasuwana**, 24, from Songkla, has been promoted to Event Sales Manager of the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket. K. Samart has degrees in hotel management and business administration from the Prince of Songkla University Phuket campus. He began his career with Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket two years ago.



NOTE: Due to erroneous information supplied to the *Gazette*, **Achim Brueckner** was described in the issue of January 24 as Resident Manager of Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort. His title is Hotel Manager.

# tools that can go wrong in a very big way

One factor did emerge from using a "Fund of Funds" management group – increased costs. As well as charging an initial 5% fee, there was also a 1.5% annual management charge.

Now there is a more modern twist available to the investor – the "Fund of Funds" hedge fund.

Some readers may not know what a "hedge fund" is, so here's an explanation: the genesis of hedge funds lay in the fact that normal "funds" can make a profit only if whatever they invested in continues to rise in value.

When stockmarkets fall,

for example, then the value of the units in a fund also suffer. The laws in most countries allow fund managers to short-sell – but only to the extent of covering the value of the portfolio.

This is commonly referred to as "portfolio insurance" and, as with all insurance, there is a premium to be paid. Fund managers who invest in this traditional manner are referred to as "long-only managers".

Obviously, there was demand for a fund that could not only buy in the hope of a rising asset price, but could also profit when prices fell. This situation

led to the creation of the hedge fund industry.

It is important for investors to realise that all hedge funds are not created equal.

For example, some hedge funds target only individual equities, indices, bonds, or currencies. Some will encompass all of these, and also venture into such areas as commodities.

The financial instruments commonly used by hedge fund managers are termed "derivatives".

They are often highly complex financial instruments. It is no coincidence that many fund man-

agers in this field have masters' degrees in mathematics.

Sadly, an ability in mathematics is not the only requirement for success as a fund manager; nor is an outstanding knowledge of economics sufficient alone.

Knowledge of economics was the specialty of the two people who were the driving force behind US hedge fund giant, Long Term Capital Management (LTCM).

The two individuals were not only economists; both held Nobel prizes in this field. However, currency markets are often

irrational and LTCM was wiped out, losing as much as US\$100 billion (about 4.2 trillion baht).

The Federal Reserve – the US central bank – intervened because of worries about the impact on the country's financial system after such huge losses.

Next week: Are there any successful hedge funds?

*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.*

## Notice to Canadians

Canadian citizens residing in Thailand are invited to register at the Canadian Embassy, either in person, by e-mail, by phone, or by fax. You may also register online at: <http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/sos/rocapage-en.asp>

For those already registered with the Canadian Embassy, we wish to confirm your presence in Thailand. Please provide your current contact information to the Embassy no later than February 29, 2004.

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## Avis aux citoyens canadiens

Les citoyens canadiens résident en Thaïlande sont invités à s'enregistrer auprès de l'ambassade du Canada soit en s'y présentant en personne, soit par courriel, par téléphone ou par télécopieur. Vous pouvez également vous inscrire en ligne à: <http://www.voyage.gc.ca/main/sos/rocapage-fr.asp>

Les citoyens déjà enregistrés auprès de l'ambassade du Canada sont priés de confirmer leur présence en Thaïlande. Veuillez s'il-vous-plait nous communiquer vos coordonnées au plus tard le 29 février 2004.

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See *ISSUES & ANSWERS* at [www.phuketgazette.net](http://www.phuketgazette.net)

# Out of the fridge and into the sun

**E**scaping subzero conditions back home, 25 top young swimmers from Sweden and Norway recently spent two weeks in intensive training using Dulwich College's Olympic-sized swimming pool.

Thorbjorn Holmberg, coach of the Oslo-based Norwegian Top Athletes Center and Gymnasium (NTACG) said, "Thailand provides excellent weather at this time of year, a welcome contrast to the icy conditions back home. The 50-meter pool at the college is perfect for us."

The NTACG swimmers, aged 16-18, trained five hours a day in addition to doing 30 hours of schoolwork via the Internet.

The goal for each of

the youngsters is to make the Norwegian national Team and – they hope – the next Olympics.

Joining them were members of the Tureberg Swim Team, a 30-year-old club from Stockholm with nearly 800 members.

Sixteen of its most promising swimmers, aged 15 to 20, attended the team's first training camp in Thailand to prepare for the Swedish Youth Championships and other national competitions.

Tureberg coach Bengt Svensson was equally impressed with the camp, saying that the fine weather and excellent facilities were a real motivation for his squad during their gruelling training regimen.



## Doubt over Under-19 Women's World Cup

Nonthawat Disayabutra

PHUKET TOWN: Phuket's bid to host qualifying rounds of the FIFA Under-19 Women's World Soccer Championship in November is in doubt because of the cost of improving Surakul Stadium.

A meeting on January 28 of the leaders of the organizations involved failed to come up with a solution to a budget shortfall of 38 million baht.

The President of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), Dr Prasit Koeysiripong, said that the *OrBorJor* wondered whether Surakul should be overhauled or whether it would be better to build a new stadium.

The cost estimate for the upgrading demanded by the organizers of the competition is 50 million baht but, Dr Prasit said, "We can provide only 12 million baht."

For Surakul to qualify as a venue for the competition, the team changing rooms must be rebuilt, a new pitch must be laid, entrances must be improved, and new lighting and sound systems must be installed.

Pushing for the upgrade to go ahead, Eam Thavornvongwong, president of the Phuket Soccer Association, said the tournament would provide an economic boost for Phuket.

"We are working on rebuilding Surakul, which will take six months to finish [February to September]. This is a very important chance to show we have the capacity to host a world-class tournament," K. Eam said.

He suggested it might be possible to seek contributions from hotel owners to meet the budget shortfall.

Contributing hotels could be recompensed through advertisements that would be seen on TV

and in newspapers around the world, he said.

Vice-Governor Winai Bua-pradit, who chaired the meeting, took a more cautious line. He said that Phuket should not risk its reputation by rushing and making promises that it couldn't keep.

"If [the representatives of the contest organizers] come back and find that what they requested hasn't been done, Phuket will be rejected," he pointed out.

He said it might be wiser to look into the future and focus on building a new stadium in Phuket, in the meantime letting the 2004 Women's Under-19 World Cup go to a venue in Thailand that already has appropriate facilities.

Participants agreed that another meeting would be held, at a date yet to be decided, at which a decision would be made on whether Phuket should withdraw its bid to be one of the hosts of the 2004 competition.

## Laguna golf gets into full swing

CHERNG TALAY: Frank Serio and Hong Shen won the low gross in flight A and Rebecca and Mario Martinelli took out the low gross in flight B of the Laguna Phuket Golf Club weekly challenge.

Played every Wednesday, the friendly competition, in which combined handicaps are used, has Flight A for pairs with handicaps of 45 and under and Flight B for handicaps of 46 and over.

**January 28 Results:** Flight A, Low Gross: Frank Serio and Hong Shen. Low Net: Beverly Ng and Kim Ng.

Flight B, Low Gross: Mario and Rebecca Martinelli. Low Net: Monika and Siegfried Klein.

Long Drive, 2<sup>nd</sup> Hole (women): Parichart Cathy; Long Drive, 5<sup>th</sup> Hole (men): Richard Patrice. Closest-to-pin, 3<sup>rd</sup> Hole: Jayes Lockhart, Straight Drive, 4<sup>th</sup> hole: Monika Klein.

## Big cricket, rugby contests for Phuket

PHUKET: Local sports fans are in for a double treat over the next few months, with two international sporting fixtures to be held on the island.

The new event – long overdue on the island – is the First Phuket Invitational Cricket Sixes, scheduled for April 1 to 3.

A joint effort between the Asian Cricket Sixes Tour and the Green Man Pub, the competition promises plenty of excitement as "Sixes" is a faster game than traditional 11-a-side cricket.

Sixes matches, by contrast, are limited by the number of runs that may be scored, although most other laws of cricket are followed.

In Sixes, a batsman must retire at 30 runs. However, he may complete all runs possible off

the final shot that takes him to or past the 30.

In other words, if he is on 29, then hits a boundary for four more, the full score of 33 will be recorded. If he is able to run additional runs past 30 off the last ball, those too will also count.

The friendly tournament will be played at the Karon Municipal Stadium while the serious business of socialising will take place at the Green Man.

The full list of teams and invited players has yet to be announced but former Essex County Cricket Club skipper Paul "Pablo" Prichard has been confirmed as a player.

He will also play in a Sixes tournament at the Chiang Mai Gymkhana Club immediately after the Phuket tournament.

Meanwhile, May 29 and 30 have been set as the dates for the Sixth Phuket Rugby 10s, also to be played at the Karon Municipal Stadium.

Up to 24 teams will take part in the event, hosted by the Phuket Vagabonds RFC. The winning team will take the Clive Williamson Memorial Trophy. The Phuket 10s has in the past attracted teams from Asia, Australia and as far away as Britain.

Readers interested in the Sixes tourney should contact Douglas Hedley at [dhedley.padmire@bigpond.com](mailto:dhedley.padmire@bigpond.com), or the Green Man at Tel: 076-281445-51. Rugby fans should contact the Phuket Vagabonds RFC at [phuketvagabondsrfc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:phuketvagabondsrfc@yahoo.co.uk)

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# Phuket juniors swim into second

PHUKET TOWN: The Phuket Town municipal team came second in a two-day swimming meet that attracted 480 junior athletes from 14 southern provinces to the Saphan Hin Pool on January 31 and February 1.

Local swimmers Pinjida Dilokpat, 11, and Wansida Chamason, 7, were among 20 prize-winners.

In the Under 8s, Phuket-born Wansida took five gold medals, three silver medals, and two bronze medals.

Pinjida, in the Under 12s, took seven golds and three silvers.

Nakhon Sri Thammarat

turned in the top performance in the 202-event swim meet to beat Phuket, with Songkhla coming third.

Narongleark Dilokpat, Vice President of Phuket Swimming Club, said, "The kids from Nakhon Sri Thammarat were very strong and well-trained. They deserved to win those medals and to be champions this year."

"Next year we'll see them again, with better-trained kids."

— *Nonthawat Disayabutra*

Pinjida Dilokpat, 11, racked up a personal tally that included seven gold and three silver medals.



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# Classics under the hammer

Christie's, long regarded as the world's most influential auction company, will hold one of the most important automotive sales of recent years in Paris next week – the Exceptional Motor Cars and Automobilia sale.

Lots on offer include the last production Bugatti Type 55, finished in the classic yellow and black of this beautiful model. The 1935 Type 55, designed by Jean Bugatti, son of founder Ettore Bugatti, is expected to fetch at least 1.6 million euros (76.8 million baht).

Star of the sale, however, is a rare ex-Vic Elford/Gerard Larrousse Porsche 917K, similar to the Le Mans-winning short-tail 917. The 1969 Porsche is expected to sell for upwards of 1.8 million euros (89.6 million baht).

The 917 was introduced in 1969 as a way for Porsche to take on the might of Ferrari, principally at Le Mans. Powered by a 4.5-liter flat-12 engine that produced 580 bhp (426 kW), it was capable of a staggering 380 km/h.

In 1970, the 917 won every major sportscar race but three, and in 1971 it scooped the lot. In 1972 it was further developed with the addition of a huge turbo-charger, chucking out a stupefying 1,000 bhp.

By then, it had a stiffer chassis and superior aerodynamics and in the CanAm sportscar series in North America, it blew the opposition away. So superior was the Porsche in its time that the authorities rewrote the rule



**Yours for around 90 million baht: The Porsche 917K swept away all opposition 45 years ago.**

book, effectively barring it from competition.

The Bugatti models, on the other hand, are vintage cars. Ettore Bugatti was born in Milan in 1881. His father was a furniture designer, while one of his brothers, Rembrandt, became a successful sculptor.

But Ettore had a passion for things mechanical and, moving to Alsace in eastern France, he went to work for car-builder the Baron de Dietrich.

Bugatti designed five cars for the baron, including an unusu-

al racing car in which the driver sat behind the rear axle. This was disqualified from the 1903 Paris-Madrid race because, it was argued, the driver could not see where he was going.

The young Italian genius went on to work for Mathis and Deuz, both small producers of motor cars, before establishing his own manufacturing plant at Molsheim in 1909.

The bumper years for Automobiles Bugatti were 1925-30, but in 1932 Bugatti produced the Type 55, similar to the offered lot

at Christie's.

This used a supercharged 2,262 cc engine from the Type 51 Grand Prix car, developing an impressive 160 bhp and giving the car a top speed of 180 km/h.

The body, a sleek two-seater, was designed by Jean Bugatti, who became a significant force in the company in the 1930s. It was Jean who introduced a twin-cam engine to Bugatti and who, until his death in a testing accident in 1939, was responsible for many more automotive innovations.



By Jeff Heselwood

Christie's has held several motoring-related auctions over the years, but the auction house was established as far back as 1766, long before the motor car was a reality.

James Christie, the founder, made his name when he negotiated the sale of Sir Robert Walpole's art collection to Catherine the Great of Russia in 1778.

Other more recent milestones include the 1970 sale of Velasquez's *Portrait of Juan de Pareja* for a stunning £2.3 million (158 million baht) and the 1990 sale of Van Gogh's *Portrait of Dr Gachet* for US\$82.5 million (3.2 billion baht), the most expensive item ever sold at auction.

At next week's Paris sale, other notable cars on offer are a 1929 Bugatti Type 51; a 1950 Abarth 205, a race-winning sportscar built in Turin; and a 1965 Aston Martin DB5, similar to James Bond's in *Goldfinger*.

The Type 51 is expected to bring around 500,000 euros (24 million baht), while the Abarth, a rare example of the breed, is expected to fetch a paltry 120,000 euros (5.7 million baht).

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## Guest chef

By Jenna Wise

Fresh and simply-prepared ingredients are key to traditional Niçoise cuisine, the signature food of La Cabane restaurant on Viset Rd, Rawai.

Chef and General Manager Philippe "Buddha" Lemaire is reticent about himself – he would rather let his food do the talking.

Here are three classic Niçoise recipes served up to appreciative diners at La Cabane.

### Salade Niçoise

For 2 people

#### Ingredients:

100 grams washed mixed salad greens, torn into pieces;  
1 hard-boiled egg, quartered;  
4 anchovy fillets;  
½ tin tuna;  
8 black olives;  
1 large tomato, sliced;  
8 slices of cucumber;  
¼ red bell pepper, sliced thinly;  
¼ green bell pepper, sliced thinly;  
2 radishes, sliced;  
1 celery stalk, finely sliced;  
1 onion, thinly sliced.

#### For the dressing:

¼ cup olive oil;  
¼ cup red wine vinegar;  
Salt and pepper to taste.

#### Method:

Lay the salad leaves on a platter with the tuna and anchovies in the center. Put the other ingredients around the fish. Blend the dressing ingredients well and drizzle over the salad.

### Fillet of Dorade Provençal style

For one

#### Ingredients:

1 dorade (sea bream, or *plata-pian*) fillet, weighing 100-150 grams;  
1 sliced tomato;  
1 medium potato, sliced thinly;  
1 sprig of fresh rosemary;  
1 sprig of fresh thyme;  
1 clove garlic, crushed;



# Urbane CABANE

1 tablespoon olive oil;  
Salt and pepper;  
½ lemon, sliced thinly;  
1 tablespoon white wine.

#### Method:

Parboil the potato, drain well, and place on a sheet of aluminum foil. Place the fish on the potato slices and cover with sliced tomatoes, garlic and herbs. Drizzle the wine and oil over, placing the sliced lemons on top. Season, and form the foil into a "packet". Steam for about 10 minutes.

### Beef stew with red wine sauce

For 2 people  
Ingredients:

300g beef shank, sliced into 3 pieces;  
1 large carrot, cut into 4 chunks;  
1 cup mushrooms, chopped;  
1 clove garlic, crushed;

1 large onion, chopped;  
1 tablespoon tomato paste;  
3 glasses red wine;  
2 tablespoons olive oil.

#### Method:

Fry the beef with the garlic and onions for about 10 minutes. In a separate pan, reduce the wine slightly then add it to the beef, stirring in the tomato paste. Simmer on a low heat for about 1½ hours, then add two glasses of water with the carrots and mushrooms. Simmer for another 90 minutes before serving with boiled potatoes or steamed rice.

### Ratatouille

For 2 people  
Ingredients:

½ small eggplant, sliced;  
½ small zucchini, sliced;  
¼ red bell pepper, sliced;



Classic Provençal cuisine: Top left, Beef stew with red wine sauce. Above: Filet of Dorade. Left: Salade Niçoise.

¼ green bell pepper, sliced;  
1 small onion, sliced;  
1 garlic clove, chopped;  
½ tin plum tomatoes;  
5 tablespoons olive oil;  
5 or 6 fresh basil leaves;  
Salt and pepper.

#### Method:

Heat the oil and soften the onion and garlic for a few minutes before adding the other ingredients,

except the tomatoes and basil, and cook for 10 minutes on a fairly high heat.

Add the tomatoes and simmer for 20 minutes, adding the basil and seasoning just before serving.

La Cabane restaurant, 47/3 Moo 5, Wiset Rd, Rawai. Tel: 09-2900484. Open daily, 2 pm to about midnight.

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## Home of the Week

Krabi



The luxurious swimming pool provides the ideal setting to relax.

## A pleasing addition to the landscape

The Krabi area is known for its spectacular beaches, caves and dramatic cliffs, yet only in the past few years have large up-market resorts been developed there. Visitors can now stay in a four-star resort and enjoy some of the most beautiful scenery Thailand has to offer.

The long-term and residential property market has lagged

in upgrading to Western standards so finding a luxury house to rent has remained a difficult task until now.

The Baan Oriental Resort is changing this. Completed in November, their first villa is a cut above other rental properties in the area.

Just minutes from Ao Nang beach, this luxury destination – available for daily or long-term

rentals – is proving to be a popular alternative to the big resorts.

Built of the finest materials, the three-bedroom, 300-square-meter home sits in a private 1,600-sqm garden setting. The rooms are large and airy, and the open feel gives the impression that the house is even more spacious than it is.

It sleeps eight comfortably and is suitable for a two- or three-family party looking for a relaxed and secluded stay.

The kitchen is well-equipped and can accommodate large groups or families with ease. The living room – fitted with a stereo system and portable computer – overlooks the swimming pool and Jacuzzi.

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## Singapore show wins go-ahead

SINGAPORE: The first Singapore Phuket and Samui Property exhibition will be held at the Raffles City Convention Centre in the Swissôtel The Stamford, Singapore, from March 5 to 7.

Exhibition Director Graham Doven said, "We have been under constant pressure from many major developers in Phuket and Samui to get to Singapore, which has shown strong growth over the past year. We can't afford to let the opportunity pass, especially in such a good venue."

Although confirmation of the venue has come quite late, all advertising and marketing will be in place, he added.

Similar exhibitions of Phuket and Samui properties are planned for later for Almaty, in Kazakhstan, which now reportedly has a fast-growing market of expatriates, along with Dubai, Shanghai, Moscow, Bangkok and Hong Kong.

For details of the exhibition contact Mr Doven at Tel: 01-897-0225 or email jade@aapress.net.



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# Getting the wrong end of the pineapple

Once upon a time, I visited friends in Bangkok and told them that they should come to Phuket. The reason, I explained, was that there were many people from across the sea who wanted to buy houses on Phuket so they could live happily ever after on a tropical island, with no ice or snow.

I persuaded my friends that we could make some money – and live happily ever after – if we built nice houses for the people across the sea at reasonable prices.

They agreed it was a good idea. As the chief of our company was a very important Thai person with good connections, we thought that everything should go ahead without any problems.

We bought nice land in a convenient area and set about building a road and some houses to sell. Lawyers checked everything to ensure that people had not paid anybody to make a fake certificate for the land title.

Everything was fine. At first.

Then one night, a man came onto our land and planted a crop of pineapples. We told him to take them away but he told us that he had signed a contract with the former owner to grow crops for five years.

He showed us a paper to prove this and the police told us that we couldn't touch the pineapples. We decided that, as we owned the land, we would move the pineapples anyway. The pineapple man came with the police and stopped us.

Off went the expensive lawyers to the court, where the judge was very annoyed because the pineapple man had planted pineapples on other people's land before.

The judge thought that his court had many other more important matters to rule on than the pineapple man and his efforts to

## PROPERTY & HOMEZONE

By Graham Doven

use other people's land to make farms for himself, and so asked the pineapple man how much money he wanted to go away. The pineapple man decided that the pineapples on our land were worth about six times the highest market price recorded in history.

We would not pay this extortionate amount, so we decided to go ahead and remove the pineapples from our land.

The judge didn't care what we did, he just wanted the pineapples out of his courtroom so he could attend to more serious court business. This was important to us as well. Our project had now been held up for six months and was costing us money and time. So the bulldozer headed off to the pineapples and the pineapple man came again with the police, who stopped us again.

The next day, we burned the pineapples and the pineapple man came and smashed some motorcycles belonging to our staff.

The police took the pineapple man to prison but let him go again because they were very bored with him. Eventually, the pineapple man agreed to remove his pineapples and to take no money if we didn't sue him for the money and time we had lost.

It looked as though we were off again. Wrong. The electricity authority was bringing the power lines to our project when they were stopped by a neighbor.

"If you put the power poles on my land, I will sue the company," he said. This was another amazing mystery, until we were told that he had built his wall one meter inside the boundary of his

land. If somebody put poles beside the fence, they would be on his land.

"What do you want?" we asked. You know the answer to that, of course. The odd thing was that this neighbor was one of the people from across the sea.

There are many traps for the aspiring land buyer or developer. Beware – even with the solid backing of a reputable company, we still had to deal with serious problems.

There are potential pitfalls for the inexperienced developer or land buyer. We finally sorted it out. If you work hard to get it right, Thailand will protect your rights as well as – or better than – anywhere in the world.

But, as anywhere, if you try to have a go on your own, there will still be somebody or something trying to knock you down or take something from you that they didn't earn.

We probably can't change that. They say it's "human nature". It's just another day in paradise.

And I get heartburn from pineapples anyway.

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With the little rain that has fallen on Phuket since the new year, everything that was once green is starting to look a little parched. Most plant life here just accepts the fact that it's going to be dry for a while and quietly sits and mopes – looking a bit depressed, and generally become brown and seemingly thoroughly miserable.

Not so the bougainvillea, known in Thai as *fuang fah*. It happily sneers at its less hardy cousins and is rather proud of its ability to withstand droughts. In fact, it rather enjoys them.

It's one of those plants that performs best when it's a little stressed, a bit like the company accountant. Unlike a company accountant, however, the drier it gets the more vivid its colors become.

When Louis Antoine Bougainville discovered the vine that now bears his name during his round-the-world voyage from 1766 to 1769, it was a botanical highlight of the voyage. Throughout the following years, this distinctive Brazilian beauty has become one of the most popular plants in Southeast Asia.

Now that it's been mixed and matched to produce hundreds of variations, the variations of colors of this plant are amazing, go-

# The king of the dry season



## Gardening

## with Bloomin' Bert

ing from pale green to white, orange, purple and crimson. Some variations even have two colors on one stalk.

Surprisingly, the brightest parts of the bougainvillea aren't flowers at all – they're bracts, or leaves of a different color, clustered together. It does have flowers, but they are fairly pathetic

and insignificant, tiny white tubular things that pale in comparison with the brightly-colored leaves.

There are two types of bougainvillea – those that grow at the speed of a bat out of hell, and those that grow at a more sedate rate. While the latter just quietly get on with it, the bougainvillea Ferraris really go for it. I've got one at home that despite constant pruning is growing so fast that I'm

going to have to put in a cage – literally.

These cages trains plants to grow straight up, then at a certain height allow them to spread out like an umbrella. They look a little strange in the plant's early stages, but later on, when the plant starts cascading down over the umbrella frame's edges, the results are awesome.

Bougainvilleas can grow into

**ABUSE ME – I LOVE IT:** The harsher the conditions, the more spectacular the bougainvillea's display.

– Photo by John Udart, [www.eline2000.com](http://www.eline2000.com)

spectacular trees that put your average tree to shame. Some gardeners who are serious about growing bougainvillea trees take a small tree that is near the end of its days and stick a bougainvillea cutting into a nick they make in the end of a severed limb.

After a few weeks of the cutting and the tree being bound together, the cutting will start to grow into its new home. Voila! Plant transplants.

Apart from being quite content not to see a watering can for extended periods, bougainvilleas also accept regular attacks with the pruning shears, and return the compliment with even more color when the limb grows back. Larger cuttings can be planted in the ground and, with a little patience, will start the cycle all over again.

A bougainvillea must be one of the easiest plants in the world to grow – look at the magnificent examples flourishing all over the island. What could be better than a plant that thrives on neglect?

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# Property Gazette

## Properties For Sale

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directly on Banyan Tree golf course (Laguna property). 1,050 sqm/262.4 sq wah. 7.872 million baht. Tel: 076-239864; Fax: 076-239865; Email: hkmkt@ksc.th.com

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1-rai waterside plot on cliff at Chalong. Incredible views. Tel: 06-5950188. Email: nsupin@yahoo.com

### PANORAMIC VIEW

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### LAND FOR SALE

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### KATA SEA VIEW LAND

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condos. Studio apartments of 28sqm for 760,000 baht. Also have large apartment of 1 bedroom, living room, bathroom and kitchen for 1.3 million baht. Sea views. Tel: 06-9484490. Email: chotip\_5@hotmail.com

### LAND AT SAI YUAN

with Chanote. 161 sq wah, ready to build, very private area. Adjacent public area with big trees. Bargain at 1.95 million baht. Please call for details. Tel: 01-7973603, 01-6971605. Email: phuketgam@yahoo.com

### BEACH CONDOS

Patong. 92 or 120 sqm. Fantastic view. 300 meters from beach. Price 2.2 million baht. Tel: 06-9510053.



# Property Gazette

## Accommodation Available

### SEA VIEW ROOMS

in Chalong. New rooms available, located near Ao Chalong pier with sea view. All rooms include aircon, hot water and furniture. Available for monthly rental at 10,000 baht and daily at 800 baht. Tel: 076-280922. Fax: 076-280331. Email: scubagear@scubagear-asia.com

### PATONG LUXURY

apartment. Central Patong 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Email for info and photos. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

### PENTHOUSE + CAR

rental offer. Penthouse to let on Patong Beach. Minimum 2 weeks' let. Deal includes Kia 4WD car. Please contact me for more details. Tel: 09-972-3861. Fax: 076-342713. Email: ba@kiwibrian.com. Please visit my website at www.kiwibrian.com

### HOUSE FOR RENT

House for rent. For further details, please see our website at www.emedicalbooksonline.com/house.htm

### NANAI RD, PATONG

2-bedroom townhouse on Nanai hillside. Fully furnished, phone, cable TV. Min 1 year rental. 22,000 baht/month. Tel: 076-294363, 01-2705374. Fax: 076-294363. Email: orcella@phuket.ksc.co.th

### ON THE BEACH

Kim's Club in Patong offers luxury rooms, motorbikes, tours and a bar open till late beside Baan Boa Resort. See you there! Tel: 01-0881456. Fax: 076-292241. Email: office@knyss.com

### AIRCON ROOM

25% discount on room with air conditioning: 580 baht/night. Room with American breakfast: 640 baht. Email: paradizo@paradizo.com. Please visit our website at: www.paradizo247.com

### CLICK AND FIND

your apartment. Fully furnished apts, from 1-bedroom studio to 75 sqm. Sea view penthouse, quiet and cool Patong hillside location, for long- or short-term rent. Swimming pool and poolside bar. Tel: 076-296621, 01-9785501. Fax: 076-344-689. Email: baansuanvilla@hotmail.com

### 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: 076-344847. Email: kamontip@hotmail.com

## Accommodation Wanted

### NEED HOME/CAR

Need home and car for 15 days, starting from February 8. I am an American tourist and photographer who will be driving to and from Krabi, using Phuket as a base. Please make contact if you have a nice home or car for me to rent. Email: stevestras@excite.com

### CHEAP HOTEL

in Ao Nang. We are looking for a cheap and nice place to stay in Ao Nang, Krabi. We would like a hotel room with double bed, air conditioning and balcony. We will arrive on February 10 and will stay for 4-5 days. Please email me if you have a good choice, including daily rates. Email: liljedahl77@hotmail.com

### PATONG BEACH

I am looking for room for rent in Patong from March 9 to April 22. Email anything interesting: mats.sioland@ocom.se

### NICE HOUSE

urgently wanted. We are looking for a nice 3-bedroom house in Patong, Kamala, or Surin area, with a lease of 1-3 years. Up to 50,000 baht per month is acceptable. Call K. Sand Panit. Tel: 076-255389, 09-6521525. Fax: 076-354-724. Email: pkhongmak@courts.co.th

### PATONG/ KAMALA

I'm looking to rent an apartment, preferably quiet. I'm planning to be in Phuket for a minimum of 2 years, so I'm hoping to find a place for approx 5,000-7,000 baht. Please email any offers to: teflsteve@yahoo.co.uk

### 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/ROOM

Looking for long-term rental apartment or room. Should be in Patong, Kamala, Kathu or Karon. Fully furnished and with fan ok. Max price 5,000 baht/mth. Tel: 05-1601670.

### 2-BEDROOM HOUSE

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

### HOUSE FOR RENT

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

### KATA CENTER

Single male requires bungalow accommodation in Kata/Karon area for about 6 weeks. Location is important as I have no wish to hire a car or a motorbike. Accommodation must be about 20 minutes' walk from Peach Hill in Kata. Please email any offers to: pmarkcrotty@btinternet.com

### QUIET HOUSE

or apartment wanted in Phuket Town or very near, for 6 months from April. Please email offers to: eunson101@yahoo.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

### APARTMENT

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

### 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

### 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: rolfrankneuh@aol.com

### NAI HARN

Expat is seeking a to rent a bungalow in the Nai Harn area for an initial period of two months. Please email details to: beachcomberwa@yahoo.com.au

### VILLA/APARTMENT

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

### APARTMENT IN BKK

needed. Need long-term contract for rental of 2-3 bedroom apartment in Bangkok. Bangna Trad area, Thana City preferred, or any apartment that has easy access to expressway. Please email, preferably with photo. Email: chatchada@phuketinternet.com. Tel: 01-8946403.

### 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

## Building Services

phuket home services

repairs • maintenance  
renovation • building  
air conditioning  
woodwork • stonework  
metalwork • electrical  
plumbing • gardening  
pressure cleaning  
window cleaning

Tel: 076 324 400  
Mobile: 07 282 0200

### THAI KITCHEN

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

### EQUIPMENT HIRE

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

Electrical engineering ; Electric Installation  
Lighting ; Grounding ; Alarm systems  
Telephone systems ; Network Cabling

swisselec  
engineering co.,ltd.

152 Yaowarat Rd., Phuket 83000  
Tel: +66 76.258.399, Fax: +66 76.355.573  
eMail: info@swisselec.com Website: www.swisselec.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. 01-4241354. Email: vira@tropical-decor.com

## Property Services Wanted

### FOREMAN WANTED

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

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!

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

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Sorry, no subscriptions within Phuket province!

# Island Job Mart

## SECRETARY NEEDED

Looking for a fun job? A new up and coming advertising and marketing company requires a Thai national with good English capabilities to act in the role of office secretary/assistant to manager. Good salary on offer. Must have experience with Microsoft Office and have driving license but no marketing experience required. Tel: 01-7372812. Email: andrew@leemarine.com

## ACCOUNTANT

required. We are a tour agency and we urgently require an accountant. The successful applicant must have a degree in accounting, 1-2 years' experience, and a fair command of English. Please call Khun Nicha to apply. Tel: 076-261195. Fax: 076-261197. Email: info@phuket-receptif.com

## MARINA OFFICE

Assistant. Thai female, 25+, fluent in English, computer literate, with Excel and basic accounting skills, required. Outgoing personality and marine industry/front desk service experience preferred. Please call, email or fax to apply. Tel: 076-206704. Fax: 076-206026. Email: zara@yacht-haven-phuket.com

## URGENTLY REQUIRED

We are an international training company with its Asian base in Thailand. We are looking for female staff, with good English skills and bright personalities, for the following positions: Office Assistant, Training Assistant. Please send CV to apply. Tel: 076-263737. Fax: 076-224113. Email: recruitment@bowentraining.com

## ACCOUNTANTS NEEDED

We are a US franchise that provides accounting and tax services to foreign companies in Phuket. Due to rapid expansion, we need to fill the following positions: Accountant (3 positions), BA in accounting/finance, age not over 25, 0-3 years' experience in accounting, good command of English; Clerk (5 positions), vocational certificate in accounting, age not over 23, 0-3 years' experience in accounting. Please apply by email. Tel: 076-234993. Email: recruit@thaiaccounting.com

## WHITEBAY

International, the most successful vacation ownership company in Thailand, is currently recruiting sales reps for our Phuket venue, The Andaman Beach Suites. Quality leads, up to 15% commission, relocation benefits. All nationalities are welcome, especially German speakers. Please call or email for further details. Tel: 076-341474, 076-341427. Email: hr@vipphuket.com

## NETWORK

and computer techs. Siam Wireless is still growing. Join the leading team deploying the latest technology. Five new positions open for network and computer tech support persons. You must have more than 3 years' experience in IT and strong working knowledge of networking. Top pay for the right persons. Please send CV by email to request an interview. Email: info@siam-wireless.com

## SALES EXECUTIVE

Fagor European kitchen appliances distributor is looking for the right candidate to join our team. The successful applicant will be male, over 25, and with a degree. He should have a good command of English, a car and driving license, and be able to work on Samui. Tel: 076-234695 or 01-8091386. Fax: 076-234240. Email: fagorpkt@phuket.ksc.co.th

## RECEPTIONIST

and secretary wanted. We require a computer-literate, Thai female with good written and spoken English for our Bang Tao-based company. Please email or fax to apply. Fax: 076-325277. Email: info@asiaislandhomes.com

## DIVING COMPANY

We are seeking a young ambitious sales and admin person. Must be enthusiastic, confident, have good presentation skills and team spirit. Written and spoken English is essential, sales experience preferred. Basic computer knowledge needed. Thai nationals only. Please contact Mary at Tel: 076-340625-6.

## URGENTLY REQUIRED

Web Designer/Graphic Designer (female). Must have computer degree or certification, creative and artistic ability, and basic English skills. Marketing/Customer Service (female), must have English and computer skills, enthusiasm and a driving license. Please contact Khun Kai for more details. Tel: 076-342270, 01-8957590. Email: kai21@phuket.ksc.co.th

## SECRETARY NEEDED

Secretary needed for tour company. Must have Internet experience, good English ability, an outgoing personality and enjoy sports. 5-day working week. Please call for more details and to apply. Tel: 09-5944017.

## PART-TIME ART

teacher required. The Rawai Progressive School (a bilingual Montessori School) is looking for a part-time art teacher. Please contact us for more details. Tel: 076-288923. Fax: 076-289200. Email: info@montessori-thailand.com

## RESTAURANT STAFF

Male reception staff required for a restaurant in Patong. Good spoken English is essential. Good salary and commission for the right person. Call for further details. Tel: 01-0817223. Email: andjb@pc.jaring.my

## ACCOUNTING

software. Accounting software demonstrator wanted. Phuket Programmers, based in Thalang, urgently requires staff with a good knowledge of accounts, fluent in English and an outgoing personality. Good salary depending on experience. Office junior also wanted: will train. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-313137. Email: admin@phuketprogrammers.com

## SATREE PHUKET

Satree Phuket School requires native-speaking teachers to teach English, maths and science. Please contact Ajarn Jansri for more details. Tel: 06-9480303. Email: jansri26@hotmail.com

## RESERVATIONS/

Sales Manager required. WiredDestinations online hotel reservation service is currently seeking staff for Reservations/Sales Manager. We provide online hotel reservation services and develop and operate over 150 online travel portals with over 5,000 hotels live for 21 destinations. Responsibilities include: CSA (Customer Service Agents) supervision; to ensure that CSA respond to clients via the Internet according to set quality standards; to coach CSA into meeting set revenue targets; to ensure prompt and professional communication with international suppliers. All communication is done via email, phone, chat or call-back services (in English). The candidate will have to work on shift. The candidate should have extensive experience in the travel industry. Must have excellent English skills (read, written and spoken). Must have excellent communication skills. A good understanding of e-commerce is an advantage. Should be familiar with reservation systems and have a strong management/leadership background. Must be performed/result-oriented with a proven track record. For the right candidate, we provide excellent salaries and a great career opportunity. Please send your resume to apply by email only. Email: heiko@wired-destinations.com

## HOTEL STAFF

New 4-star hotel in Karon is looking for English-speaking staff to work in office, reception and restaurant. Please send CV by email to apply. Email: job@karon-phuket-hotels.com

## ADMINISTRATION

Manager required. Siam Wireless requires the talents of an experienced person to handle admin responsibilities. Person needs: high level of written and spoken English, basic accounting knowledge, and familiarity with tax laws and computers. Great pay for right person. Send CV with email to request an interview. Email: info@siam-wireless.com

## BOOKKEEPER

required. We are seeking a young enthusiastic bookkeeper to maintain the company's accounts. Must have excellent organizational skills. Experience in a related field is preferred. Basic computer knowledge needed. Written and spoken English is a must. Please contact Mary: 076-340625-6.

## Employment Wanted

## JOB WANTED

Thai man who has ability in speaking Swedish, English and Thai, and has international experience, is looking for a job and to assist developing your business. Tel: 01-3081026. Email: jayphuket@hotmail.com

## HOTEL MANAGEMENT

Looking for a hotel management position. I am 33, have been in Thailand for 8 years, and a honors graduate in hotel management with General Manager and Marketing Manager experience in a 3-star hotel. Knowledge of Fidelio and Comanche. Please contact for more info. Tel: 06-5964268. Email: executives@ehotelier.com

## Clubs & Organizations

### ROTARY CLUBS, PHUKET TOWN

The Rotary Club of Phuket holds meetings in Thai on Wednesday at 7 pm at the Pearl Hotel. Tel: 076-211044. The Rotary Club of Tungka has meetings in Thai on Thursday at 7 pm at the Phuket Merlin Hotel. Tel: 076-210444.

### THE ROTARY CLUB OF PATONG BEACH

holds meetings in English every Tuesday at 7 pm at the Aloha Villa Hotel in Patong. Call Sam on 076-222191 or visit www.rotarypatong.org.

### LIONS CLUBS OF PHUKET

The Patong-based Lions Club Andaman Sea meets in English every Tuesday at 7:30 pm at the Tropicana Restaurant. The Phuket Town-based Lions Club Pearl meets in English on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7 pm at the Phuket Merlin. Call Lion Adrienne on 01-4770342.

### THE AO CHALONG YACHT CLUB

holds monthly races for members. Other local residents and visitors welcome. Ring Commodore Al Boone on 076-381488.

### DIVE OPERATORS CLUB OF THAILAND

deals with current issues concerning the dive industry. Anyone welcome to join. For more details call Alistair on 076-280319 or email: info@doct-phuket.org.

### THE PHUKET INT'L WOMEN'S CLUB

meets on the 3rd Thursday of the month for lunch and has coffee mornings on the 2nd Thursday in the Royal Phuket City Hotel. Call Linda (01-8937749) or Joan (01-0814611).

### INT'L BUSINESS ASSN OF PHUKET

For details, call O. B. Wetzell on 076-325402 or visit www.ibap-phuket.org.

### SOI DOG FOUNDATION

Assist volunteer vets in the capture, neuter and after-care of Phuket's stray dogs and cats. Contact Margot on 09-8959965 or John on 01-9704772 or visit www.soidogfoundation.org.

### THE SKOL CLUB

holds regular monthly meetings. Contact Rene Hardmeier on 076-294300 or email: hardmeier@phuket.ksc.co.th.

### ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

meets Sundays and Wednesdays at 7 pm at the Mission Hospital, Fridays at 7 pm at Phuket International Hospital, and Fridays at 8 pm at Patong Hospital. Call 076-324258, 01-8954763 or 01-8944370 for details.

### PHUKET ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

Animal welfare volunteers always needed. For details, call 076-263737.

### AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Phuket Group holds regular meetings to discuss human rights issues worldwide. Contact Donna Stephens or Andrew de Bruin. Phone 01-8941530 or email awatea@loxinfo.co.th.

### THE MULLIGAN GOLF SOCIETY

meets Tuesdays at 12:30 pm at the Blue Canyon Country Club. For membership and playing details please email: toto@phuket.ksc.co.th or telephone 01-8930692.

### THE HASH HOUSE HARRIERS

meet Saturdays at 2:30 pm at the Expat Hotel, Patong. Transport to the run departs at 3 pm.

### NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

meets every Thursday at 7 pm in the conference room at Patong Hospital. Tel: 01-7372246. Email: phuketna@hotmail.com.

### THE VAGABONDS RUGBY CLUB

trains regularly at Dulwich College. Call Patrick Cotter (076-341927), Ben Hennessy (01-8919307) or Mike Spackman (01-4774792).

### ASS'N OF FILIPINOS IN THAILAND

Southern Chapter. For more details on meetings and events, call President Bernadette Sanchez on 01-9798846.

### DIDIT

Dogs in Distress in Thailand. To volunteer, call Eric or Linda Wells at 076-321789 or email: diditstrays@hotmail.com.

### THE BRITISH BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

meets on the second Thursday of every month. Details may be found at www.bbap.org.

### THE SWISS SOCIETY

Meets every last Friday of the month. For further details or program email to ssp@loxinfo.co.th or write to Swiss Society Phuket, P.O. Box 405, Phuket 83000.

### THE PHUKET EXPAT GOLF SOCIETY

promotes golf in Phuket. For full information visit www.expatsgolf.com.

### PHUKET CONTRACT BRIDGE CLUB

Anyone welcome to join us. We play every weekend. Tuition available. Contact Dr Kamthorn (076-212274) or Derek Priest (076-203001 or priest\_derek@hotmail.com).

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

This notice board is for non-commercial announcements by clubs, chambers, associations and other affinity groups.

# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

## Articles for Sale

### 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

### BEST THAI SILK

for wholesale and retail at low prices. Call Khun Wa at 09-8742960. Email: pwarunee@hotmail.com

### CAKE BOX

for sale. Secondhand cake box, just two months old, as new. Tel: 01-6931391.

### SCUBA SET

Secondhand scuba gear set for sale. BCD, regulators and SPG (no depth gauge). 70% condition, one owner used with good care, maintenance and annual inspection. Price: 32,000 baht. Tel: 076-283-013, 01-9200907. Email: saransudduen@yahoo.com

### COMPLETE GOLF SET

Fiber-shaft golf set for sale. 25,000 baht obo. Includes drivers and golf bag. Tel: 09-0610204. Email: chelda@home.in.th

### KENNEL FOR SALE

Big, strong kennel for sale. Brand new and unused. Price: 6,000 baht. Tel: 09-8730758.

### CHIANG MAI SILVER

Everything for 16 baht a gram. Please contact for more information. Tel: 075-631994. Email: colombattofabio@hotmail.com

### DRINKING WATER

filter for sale. Aqua Flow 4 system plus ceramic filter. All completely new. New: 2,600 baht, will sell for 1,990 baht. Tel: 06-1010477. Email: mly003@yahoo.co.uk

### SAMSUNG TV

for sale. 15-inch screen, 6 months old. 2,800 baht ono. Tel: 075-631994, 06-820-2663. Email: colombattofabio@hotmail.com

### JVC STEREO

JVC FS series bookshelf stereo, turntable style, single CD with glass top for sale. Wood speakers with ceramic woofers and remote control. Very stylish design. Paid 16,000 baht, will sell for 6,000 baht obo. Tel: 09-8681804. Email: travisns@yahoo.com

### BABY EQUIPMENT

Baby-feeding equipment, chair, car seat, stroller, toys, etc, all for sale at reasonable prices. Please contact us for more details. Tel: 06-2723885.

### SCUBA DIVING

regulators. Scuba Divers – Poseidon Cycklon regulators for sale. Brand new and never been used. Complete with reg bag, instructions, spares and tool. New 30,000++ baht. Will accept 22,000 baht. Tel: 01-8644490. Email: pjsbkk@hotmail.com

### MOVING SALE

For quick sale: washer/spinner, kitchen cabinet, various shelf units, foam chair, single iron bedframe/mattress, and other household items. Tel: 076-381469, 09-5896515. Email: mewalsh7@yahoo.com

### LCD PROJECTOR

LCD projector for sale. Only 2kg, easy to use anywhere. 2m x 2m picture from TV, video or computer to wall from only 2m distance. Can also use during the day. Price: 50,000 baht or best offer within 3 days. Tel: 06-9433556. Email: s\_solla@hotmail.com

## Articles Wanted

### MOBILE PHONE

wanted. Want to buy secondhand Nokia, model 3310, 3315. Must be in good condition. Tel: 06-6837162. Email: somthavin\_pw@hotmail.com

### DARTBOARD

Where can I find a proper sisal dartboard and tungsten darts in Thailand? Please call for more info. Tel: 07-2825008. Email: peteralbrecht@hotmail.com

### SECONDHAND PHONE

wanted. Preferably Nokia 3310 or 3315. Price not more than 1,000 baht. Please contact with details. Tel: 01-8918689. Email: bemarko@hotmail.com

### MODEL SAILBOAT

I am looking for a remote-controlled model sailboat, about 50cm to 1m long. If you have one for sale, or if you know where I might find one, please email me at: bjarnehansen@inet.uni2.dk

### COMPUTER MONITOR

Computer monitor wanted for my child's computer as the last one broke. Please contact: 06-6331207. Email: jl8778@hotmail.com

### LOOKING FOR LNB

I need LNB for UBC satellite dish. It can be used but must work. For offers, please contact by email. Email: phuket-thailand@web.de

### GPS WANTED

Only to hire/ borrow. Need a GPS or altimeter for a very short period that can tell distance above sea level. Want to simply check some land plots to establish 80 meters height. Tel: 06-2747434. Email: mail@seftonhanley.com

## Boats & Marine



**Beneteau  
First 35s5**  
1990, impeccable  
**US\$ 70,000**  
contact  
info@thaimarine.com  
**076-239 111**



**Thai Flagged  
48 ft Motor Yacht**  
2 x 425 Volvo P  
**THB 5,750,000**  
contact  
info@thaimarine.com  
**076-239 111**



### BOAT FOR SALE

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

### 7.7M SAILBOAT

7.7m sailboat (Maxi 77) with 8hp Yamaha outboard engine for sale. New set of sails (including spinnaker), many extras, in excellent condition. Fully insured, can be used for charter, Thai registration. Asking price: US\$20,000. See our website for further details: www.big-sailing.com Tel: 076-383080 or 06-940-1860. Fax: 076-381934. Email: bigasail@samart.co.th

### SAILING BOAT

for sale. S/Y Tabata steel sailing boat for sale. Thai registered, length: 10.5 meters, breadth: 3.2 meters, draft: 1.6 meters, fully sandblasted and painted, 3-cylinder Yanmar engine, 120L diesel tank, 120L water tank, depth sounder, GPS, dinghy with 3hp outboard. Very strong boat for journey around the world. No interior yet. Can be seen at Yacht Haven (berth 15). Asking price: US\$30,000. Tel: 01-8927847. Email: colonapt@loxinfo.co.th

**BOAT MAINTENANCE/** project management, repair and refit. Tel: 01-2717423. Email: danmarinephuket@hotmail.com

## Business Opportunities

### MASSAGE BUSINESS

for sale. Nice new shop on the main road. Complete with 3 new aircons. All else needed. Price: US\$18,750. Please call or email for more details. Tel: 06-6828010. Email: pritchah@hotmail.com

### COMPANY FOR SALE

Profitable company, located only 150 meters from Phuket's longest beach, for sale. 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 details. Email: hotelinparadise@yahoo.com

### CAFE FOR RENT

Nice cafe in good location with counter bar and chairs, bedroom upstairs and equipped kitchen. Ready to open. Tel: 07-0198019.

### BAR, RESTAURANT

and accommodation for sale. All-year trade, accommodation for live-in or rent, pool table, aircon, television, 28 covers, 5-6-year lease, no payment till November 2004. Asking price: 2 million baht ono. Tel: 09-9097949.

### BUSINESS PARTNER

required for thriving company to assist with exciting new project. Not tourist- or food-related, minimum capital required 4.5 million baht. Information by interview only. Tel: 01-8924804.

### GUESTHOUSE AND GAY SAUNA

Profitable business for sale in Paradise Complex, Patong. Building has 8-year lease. For more information, see our website at: www.aqurius-sauna.com Tel: 01-7881466. Email: richard\_melen@hotmail.com

### PRIME LOCATION

Bar in the middle of Soi Bangla in Patong for sale. Immediate takeover possible and seller can accept downpayment. For further information, call or email, or please see our webpage at http://phket.loxinfo.co.th/~bajen Tel: 076-292523. Email: cal@algonet.se

### BAR FOR SALE

The Viking Bar, in the middle of Soi Seadragon, in the center of Patong, is for sale. Everything included: UBC, HiFi, VCD. 1.1 million baht. Please call for more info or visit me at the bar. Tel: 09-5881401. Email: sheva1974@libero.it

### FOR SALE OR RENT

Restaurant, fully furnished, in Patong. Contact Khun Mike at Tel: 01-8289329.

### BOOMING AREA

Very nice bar and restaurant for sale. Located in Nai Harn, must see it. Tel: 07-8860295.

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# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

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## BUSINESS SALES

Good locations and profits. Tel: 01-9792901, 076-388073. Website: [www.siam-business.com](http://www.siam-business.com)

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in Karon area, near the temple. Available from today, low price. 6,500 baht per month. Bed, refrigerator, table. Tel: 04-0219670.

## PUB/RESTAURANT

bar, big kitchen and 3 nice apartments in nice location. Price: 780,000 baht. Email: [thomaspatong@gmx.de](mailto:thomaspatong@gmx.de)

## HIGH PROFIT

Candle business for sale. Workshop in Patong and shop on Soi Bangla. Call Mr Ocean at Tel: 01-7475874.

## RENTAL BUSINESS

for sale. Jeep and bike hire; rooms and bar/diner in Chalong. Call Billy for more details. Tel: 01-9560377.

## BAR & RESTAURANT

for urgent sale. 3 years' established business located near Robinson in Phuket Town. Very good business location, heavy pedestrian traffic. Price is open to offers. Tel: 01-6931391.

## THAISTOCKS.COM

Unbiased and objective investment research. Email: [contact@thaistocks.com](mailto:contact@thaistocks.com)

## RESTAURANT 4 SALE

in Kata. Tel: 09-5426218.

## Business Services

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### BUYING OR SELLING A BUSINESS?

Are you looking to buy or sell a business in Patong? We can help free of charge. We also offer website design and web space so your company can be seen on the Internet. To place or view ads, contact us at Tel: 076-292523 or by email at: [webmaster@patong.biz](mailto:webmaster@patong.biz), or visit our website at: [www.patong.biz](http://www.patong.biz)

### 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](mailto:caribbean@financier.com)

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## Membership wanted

### WANT MEMBERSHIP

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## Personal Services

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Nia Yoga Pilates at the Movement Center. See our website at [www.phuketmoves.com](http://www.phuketmoves.com). Please call or email for further details. Tel: 076-282408, 01-7975065.

### THAI CONVERSATION

Learn Thai at home or as part of a fun excursions to the market, shopping, island trip, etc. I'm Joy, I will be your teacher and guide. Also coursework, home study material. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-7971497. Email: [churee77@hotmail.com](mailto:churee77@hotmail.com)

### THAI COOKING

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Yoga workshops with visiting practitioners at the Movement Center. Breathwork classes with Italian master, 6 classes until February 26. Join top Nia trainer from Canada in her classes from Feb 2-6 at 5 pm followed by "The Energetic Face of Nia" playshop on Feb 7. Thai Yoga Massage with Irish teacher from Feb 13-15 and "The Power is Within You" regression-transformation seminar with renowned Australian healer on Feb 21. Please contact for more details. Tel: 01-7975065. See more information in website: [www.phuketmoves.com](http://www.phuketmoves.com)

### INSURANCE AGENCY

offering 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](mailto:euthai@web.de)

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## Personal Services Wanted

### TEACH ME THAI

Seeking a Thai language instructor to teach me Thai. Tel: 01-4760830. Email: [pg@japanappy.com](mailto:pg@japanappy.com)

### TAXIDERMIST

A little bluebird crashed into my window and died. I am seeking a taxidermist to stuff him. Email: [pg@japanappy.com](mailto:pg@japanappy.com)

### LOOKING FOR

Thai teacher. I am a Thai female (36 years old) with a little knowledge in reading and writing Thai. I want to become fluent in both. Who can teach me? Probably three times a week. I stay in Bang Tao (Cherng Talay). Please call and ask for Noy. Tel: 076-270377, 01-0827703. Email: [dellapietra@mysunrise.ch](mailto:dellapietra@mysunrise.ch)

### CHINESE TUTOR

I would like to learn to speak Mandarin - preferably somewhere around Patong. Email: [aparna\\_rd@yahoo.com](mailto:aparna_rd@yahoo.com)

### PHOTOGRAPHER

Need a photographer to take photos of boats. Anyone with experience and is interested, please contact me. Tel: 07-0576017. Email: [faasaii@hotmail.com](mailto:faasaii@hotmail.com)

### GERMAN SPEAKER

I am looking for a German-speaking woman to teach German to my lovely 3-year-old daughter. Just a couple of hours a week. Please contact me if you are interested. Tel: 076-292319. Email: [richi.s@bluemail.ch](mailto:richi.s@bluemail.ch)

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### MALE COMPANY

Farang woman living in Phuket is looking for male to spend time with. Age 35-45, any nationality. Please email me with contact details. Email: [linaab28@hotmail.com](mailto:linaab28@hotmail.com)

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If you are looking for someone who is loving, kind, good looking, has his own business and lives in tropical Florida, USA. I am searching for a good looking woman, age 20-40, attractive, and speaks some English. Email: [bestnumberone@hotmail.com](mailto:bestnumberone@hotmail.com)

### AUSSIE MAN

seeking friend. I am 22 years old and looking for a Thai girl for Internet friendship. I am planning to travel to Thailand to learn the language and learn about Buddhism. Send your recent photo by email. Email: [cameronb@dodo.com.au](mailto:cameronb@dodo.com.au)

### SEEKING THAI LADY

I am from Germany, 38 years old, single. I am looking for a nice Thai lady. I will come to Phuket in March and would like to meet you. Please email me with a recent photo. Email: [bittmann1@gmx.de](mailto:bittmann1@gmx.de)

## Pets

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Looking for new home. Tel: 01-9792901, website at: [www.siam-business.net/catscorner](http://www.siam-business.net/catscorner)

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Price/person	@GENTING		Kuala Lumpur	
	Theme Park	Resort Hotel	Impiana	Swiss Hotel
<b>Twin</b>	15,990	16,750	19,830	21,850
<b>Single</b>	17,990	19,600	24,000	28,400

- Airline Ticket HKT-KUL-HKT by Malaysia Airlines
- 3 nights accommodation+ABF at select hotel
- Airport tax (KUL)+insurance
- Return airport transfer on arrival & departure
- 2 days on 20-21 March Circuit Shuttle Pass
- Formula 1 Ticket (Hill stand C2-2Days)

### SELF DRIVE PACKAGE

Price/person	Twin	Single
<b>@GENTING</b>		
Theme Park	7,100	9,200
Resort Hotel	7,800	10,600
Kuala Lumpur		
Impiana	10,990	15,150
Swiss Garden	12,990	19,550

- 3 nights accommodation+ABF
- Formula 1 Ticket
- (Hill stand C2-2Days)

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