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'E-government' to start in July

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

PHUKET CITY: The Phuket office of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa) has announced that in July it will launch a "one-stop" website that will allow people to conduct business with a number of government agencies in Phuket without leaving home.

Initially, the system will allow payment of electricity and some phone bills, and dealings with the Immigration and Transportation Offices.

Sipa President Manoo Ordeedolchest said that the website is intended to allow easy bill payment and other transactions with various government agencies, in line with the government policy to develop Phuket, Chiang Mai and Khon Kaen provinces as Information and Communication Technology pilot provinces, or "ICT Cities".

K. Manoo explained, "Suppose you have seven bills to pay at the end of each month. This service will allow you to conduct all of these transactions without having to go to seven different government websites."

Sipa's acting Manager in Phuket, Rattana Wetprasit, said users would also be able to carry out transactions such as renewing driving licenses or registering vehicles.

K. Manoo said he expected the service to be operational by the end of July. After a trial period, the website will be reevaluated, taking public feedback into account, and any necessary improvements made to it.

The website will use industry-standard architecture that will allow user-friendly yet secure information exchange, K. Manoo said.



Sipa President Manoo Ordeedolchest: Feedback from users will be used to improve the website.

Sipa has an initial budget of 4 million baht to develop the project, but will require an additional 2 million baht to set up the system in the three provinces.

The project is still in the software development phase and it has not yet been determined which banks will take part or what domain name the website will carry, said K. Manoo.

K. Rattana told the Gazette that the Phuket branches of five government agencies and state enterprises will be included in the system from the outset.

Assurances over flood control as rains arrive

By Siripansa Somboon & Naiyana Pattanapiboonpong

PHUKET: Last week's announcement by the Southern Meteorological Center (West Coast) that the rainy season had begun was followed by an advisory from the provincial government listing 69 areas across the island that are vulnerable to flooding.

Metha Mekarat, Chief of Phuket's Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office, told the Gazette that the list was the result of surveys conducted last year. He also announced that a flood emergency center is being set up.

K. Metha listed three areas as particularly vulnerable to flooding. These are: low-lying areas in Koh Kaew; Amphur Rd and Luang Por Chuon Rd in Phuket City; and the Baan Bor Kruad area of Tambon Thepkra-satti, in Thalang District.

K. Metha said that his office would issue flood warnings through local media and government offices when necessary.

He said a recurrence of last October's flooding was unlikely. "The main flooding in Phuket City last year happened because the water could not drain off through Klong Bang Yai fast enough.

"We have addressed that problem by dredging and cleaning the klong. We have also reduced the risk of landslides in high-risk areas by terracing slopes," he said.

K. Metha added that a Center for Flood Prevention and Relief would be set up soon at Phuket Provincial Hall and that a 50-million-baht budget has already been approved by the provincial government to deal with flooding emergencies.



ALL IN A GOOD CAUSE: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura digs deep into his wallet at the Life Aid Benefit Ball, watched by Scott Bamber of Unicef. The ball, at the JW Marriott on May 29, was held to raise funds for the Life Home Project. Some 370 people attended the fundraiser.

Dutch expert teaches police new investigation methods

PHUKET CITY: Thirty senior police officers from Phuket, Krabi and Phang Nga have completed a two-week course, presented by Dutch crime experts, in applying analytical techniques to crime investigations.

Pol Col Preecha Samuthporaya, Deputy Commander for Administration of Police Region 8, based in Surat Thani, told the *Gazette* that the main aim of the project was to reduce the number of wrongful arrests and incarcerations by encouraging Thai police detectives to take a more analytical approach to investigations.

The project, coordinated jointly by the Royal Thai Police and the Dutch government, was held at the Phuket Pavillion Hotel from May 15 to 28.

"The speaker stressed the need to follow step-by-step procedures and a scientific approach to weighing the relevance of all information in a case," said Col Preecha.

"In the past we didn't use such a systematic approach," he added.

Ton Bloem, Crime Analyst with the Amsterdam Police, told the *Gazette* that the course included both theoretical and prac-

tical material, allowing officers to practice applying the techniques they had been taught.

"It's the same course we run in Holland. It gives policemen the capability of using crime analysis techniques for a better understanding of information, so they can use it in their investigations to get better results. In the two weeks there is a lot of practice and theory."

He added that he was happy to have had the chance to exchange knowledge with Thai police and was thankful for the hospitality his group had received throughout their stay.

Bangkok backtracks on land paper cancelations

BANGKOK (*The Nation*): The Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO) in Bangkok, which rescinded *SorPorKor* 4-01 papers for 153 plots of land in Phuket belonging to 153 people who had allegedly misused the land, has announced that, after further investigation, it is recommending

that some papers be reinstated. Adisak Srisappakij, Permanent Secretary of the ALRO, told *The Nation* that he plans to ask the *SorPorKor* Land Commission to reinstate the papers of 31 people holding a total of 32 plots after further checks had shown that they had done nothing

wrong, and were genuinely poor farmers.

He gave a couple of examples. Saowapa Srisansuchart was originally included in the list because she had been accused of being the managing director of a private company (and therefore ineligible to hold *SorPorKor* land, which is reserved for poor people).

Further investigations, however, had shown that she was merely a shareholder in the company.

In another case, he said, Wichit Kaewpradub had been accused of selling his *SorPorKor* land when in fact he had not; he had borrowed money from a bank, using the *SorPorKor* paper as collateral.

"I would like to stress that the reason I have asked for these people to be taken off the list is because they have genuinely done nothing wrong," K. Adisak said.

"I am not doing it to 'help' specific people," he added.

Details are to be sent to the commission, which will make recommendations to Deputy Agriculture Minister Newin Chidchob later this month.



NOW YOU SEE IT, NOW YOU DON'T: British comedian Pierre Hollins tells a hair-raising tale to the packed audience at the Comedy Club staged at The Watermark restaurant at Boat Lagoon on May 26. The organizers have promised to bring more comedians to Phuket in September.

Piano concert for charity

PHUKET CITY: Renowned Thai composer and pianist Nat Yontarak and family will play a dinner concert in support of Wachira Phuket Hospital on June 6 at 6 pm at Baan Klung Jinda Restaurant on Yaowarat Rd.

All proceeds from the recital of piano works will go toward buying a dialysis machine for the hospital.

Tickets for this one-off performance are priced at 6,000 baht each and patrons are requested to wear either evening dress or Thai Prarachatan.

This evening will mark K. Nat's first professional visit to Phuket. In addition to works by Chopin, he will debut a number of his own compositions.

Contact Natnicha Boonya-



Nat Yontarak and his family will play works by Chopin and some of his own compositions.

nit at Baan Klung Jinda, at Tel: 076-221777 or Fax: 076-214040, for further details.

All the fun of the farm

CHERNG TALAY: Cherng Talay Municipality and the Thalang Agriculture Office will host the 3rd Annual Cherng Talay Agricultural Fair from June 18 to 20 at the Cherng Talay Wittayakom School.

Activities, which will take place daily from 9 am to 4:30 pm, will give fair-goers a chance to learn about local agricultural practices and take part in livestock and produce competitions.

Among the fun events plan-

ned are exhibitions of local fighting cocks and Siamese fighting fish and a durian-eating competition.

Fresh, organically-grown, pesticide-free produce will be available for sale direct from farmers and there will be an all-you-can-eat fruit buffet for just 50 baht a person.

Another highlight will be a demonstration of the preparation of goat curry by Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura.

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Sipa offers free computer animation course

PHUKET: The Phuket Office of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa) is offering a six-month course in computer animation to train young Thais to work in the country's nascent animation, multimedia and computer games industry.

Phuket is one of four provinces offering the course, which is limited to 40 students per province.

The course will be conducted in Thai, and all applicants for the Phuket course must be resident in southern Thailand.

The first half of the course in Phuket will run from June 14 to September 14, and will include instruction in the basics of the computer animation production process: modeling, key animation, the exposure sheet, character development and body movement, storyboarding, background design and 3D-modeling.

The training will also include working in an animation production workshop.

The second half of the course, in professional animation, will follow immediately, running from September 15 to December 15.

Six lecturers will conduct the training, among them Thai animators who have worked with Walt Disney and Warner Bros Studios, as well as contributors to the *Dragon Ball Z*, *Slam Dunk* and *Sailor Moon* cartoon series.

To try to ensure that all trainees complete the course, they must pay a 15,000-baht deposit before beginning. The money will be refunded in three 5,000-baht monthly installments during the second half of the course.

The deadline for applications is June 14. For further information contact Sipa's Phuket Office at Tel: 076-356039-40.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Sipa website at www.sipaphuket.org

Former Kathu police boss gets new post in Phuket

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET CITY: Pol Col Kokiat Wongvorachart, a former Superintendent of Kathu Police Station, returned to Phuket on June 3 as one of the four Deputy Commanders of the Provincial Police.

Col Kokiat has been appointed to replace Pol Col Apirak Hongtong, who took leave of absence from the police to pursue a seat in the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), running as Thai Rak Thai candidate.

Col Kokiat, who is 49, was born in Nakhon Sri Thammarat and was Superintendent of Kathu Police Station for four years before being promoted to Deputy Provincial Commander in Nakhon Sri Thammarat in November 2000.

Speaking to the *Gazette* on May 31 he said, "I'm happy to be returning to Phuket after about three and a half years. I was Superintendent of Kathu Police Station for about four years, so



Pol Col Kokiat Wongvorachart (left) returns to Phuket as Deputy Commander of police while Col Apirak Hongtong (right) is waiting to hear about his new posting.

people there know my abilities."

"I will work as hard as I can for the province and I believe I can achieve a great deal because when I was in Kathu, many people cooperated with the po-



lice. People trust me," he added.

Col Apirak failed in his *OrBorJor* election attempt and has now returned to the police, though he has yet to be assigned a specific post.

Actors sought for mining movie

PHUKET: Bangkok-based movie production company Hub Ho Hin Films has announced positive results from its May 29-30 casting call for its Thai-language movie *Muang Rae* (*Mining Town*), on which filming will begin in September.

Several key roles are still open for suitable actors in *Muang Rae*, and the company is also seeking extras for another production on which shooting has already begun.

Casting Director Jarupas "Jib" Padmasiri told the *Gazette* that more than 35 foreigners and about 15 Thais came to the first casting session and that the actor for one important role has already been chosen.

She said casting for the production in Bangkok, Phuket and Phang Nga would continue until the end of July in order to ensure that the best actors are selected.

Actors are still needed for two important roles – a large

Caucasian man, aged 50-55 years and preferably Thai-speaking, to play the role of the mining company owner; and a half-Thai/half-foreign Thai-speaking actor, about 40 years of age, to play the role of foreman.

She added that mining scenes will be shot in Phang Nga province, but other scenes in the movie will be filmed in Phuket.

Those interested in auditioning for these roles should contact K. Jib at Tel: 01-8026702 or to send their picture by email to jarupas@hubhohim.com

Hub Ho Hin Films is also casting for a film entitled *Jaew* (*Operation Maid*), the story of four women who disguise themselves as chambermaids and go

to work in a hotel, following a secret agenda. The company refused to give more specific details about the plot.

Filming in Bangkok began on June 2, and filming in Phuket will begin at the end of July at the Phuket Arcadia Beach Resort in Karon and the Kata Thani Hotel in Kata.

The producer needs 50 foreigners and 50 Thais, men and women aged 25-55, to serve as extras, playing tourists and hotel employees.

Those interested in acting in this production should contact Khun Maew at Tel: 01-7217218 or send their picture by email to j_boonsake@hotmail.com before July 20

—Anongnat Sartpisut

IN BRIEF

Dugong dies

CAPE PANWA: The young female dugong that staff at the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) had been trying for 10 weeks to nurse back to health has died.

PMBC biologist Kongkiat Kittiwattawong, explained, "She died from pneumonia and encolitis. She went into shock and drowned on May 20."

The dugong was initially discovered stranded in Klong Pa Khlok, in Baan Para, Thalang, on March 5. She had a large gash near her mouth, was bruised, underweight and weak.

Gambling still tops

PHUKET: Even without the Liverpool FC lottery, gambling is still Phuket's favorite vice, according to police crime statistics for May 1 to 25. Police arrested 169 unlucky punters during the period for betting illegally.

Being an illegal immigrant came second (56 arrests) followed closely by involvement with drugs (54).

Four murders were reported in the period, with two arrests made. However, police managed to make not one single arrest in the other physical attack cases reported in the period – one of attempted murder, 20 of bodily harm and four of rape.

However, five people were arrested for illegal possession of firearms and 13 for prostitution.

Police urge park closure

PHUKET CITY: Pol Col Paween Pongsirin, Superintendent of Phuket City Police Station, has made a formal request to Phuket City Municipality to close Rama IX Park (Suan Luang) between 10 pm and 4 am, because of the rising number of crimes committed in the park.

Wirun Hengsawas, the Chief Administrative Officer of Phuket City Municipality, said that he would discuss the issue with Col Paween.

English skills 'fail job seekers'

PHUKET CITY: Poor English and inadequate qualifications could mean that many of the 2,500 job seekers who registered at a mass employment fair last week may fail to find a new career.

At the fair, more than 3,800 positions were on offer from 143 potential employers.

However, Penchan Boonhok, Chief Placements Officer of the Phuket Department of Employment, told the *Gazette* afterward, "Feedback from the com-

panies is that the communication skills and qualifications of many of the the applicants was just not up to scratch.

"Almost every one of the companies at the job fair wanted staff with good English skills."

Makro, still under construction, was the employer with the most jobs – 450 – up for grabs, while Central Festival Phuket, which will open in August, had 250 vacancies. Representatives of the two firms could not be reached for comment.

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Queer News

Great ball of fire

KOH SIREH: When firefighters responded to a call from the 100-year-old Muslim community on Koh Sireh at about 4:30 on the morning of May 24, little did they know that they were about to witness a gaseous and ghostly apparition.

It took city and provincial firefighting units about 30 minutes to extinguish the blaze at 12/24 Soi Si Sena and keep it from spreading to other units in the long row of partially-wooden, two-story shophouses. Nevertheless, three shophouses reported damages estimated at a total of 2 million baht.

But that is only half the story. It was also reported that during the blaze firefighters were shocked to see a large fireball about one meter in diameter rise from the flames and hover above them momentarily.

And this was no ordinary fireball. In it could clearly be discerned the image of an old Muslim lady, recognizable as such because her weathered face and prominent nose were partially covered in a traditional Muslim headscarf.

A number of journalists from different newspapers picked up their cameras and tried to photograph the apparition, but only the reporter from the *Daily News* managed to get off a single frame before the fireball disappeared, evaporating into thin air and smoke just as mysteriously as it had appeared.

The image, which appeared in the May 25 edition of the newspaper, definitely resembled a fireball. But whether or not it was in the image of a Muslim lady is a matter of debate.

Some firefighters suggested the fireball may simply have been a ball of unspecified hot gas, but many residents of the predominantly Muslim community are convinced that the specter was that of the community's ancestral guardian spirit rising up to protect the current residents against the spread of the fire.

Yam Janjit, the Muslim owner of a used goods shop where the fire started, saw the blaze break out as she was getting up to perform her pre-dawn prayers. Seeing how quickly the fire was spreading among the piles of used paper and other scrap, she fled for her life. She said she suspected a faulty switch was the source of the blaze.

Source: *Daily News*

Don't stop the dance

NAKHON SRI THAMMARAT: A 17-year-old boy in Muang district's Pho Sadet village was stabbed to death after he refused to stop dancing at an ordination party.

The unfortunate incident occurred on the night of May 29, when teenager Palakorn Borirakthanakul had a bit too much to drink and started grooving to the music organized by a local bus company owner who was celebrating his son's ordination into the monkhood.

A group of relatives of the host found Palakorn's gyrations "impolite" and ordered him to stop. But Palakorn was willing to fight for his right to boogie.

A punch-up ensued, but ended when one of the relatives plunged a knife into Palakorn's back, severing a coronary artery and causing him to collapse to the ground in a pool of his own blood.

He was taken to Maharaj Nakhon Sri Thammarat Hospital where he later died. Police are now investigating the incident.

Source: *Siang Tai*

A hands-

For those of an etymological bent, the origins of the word spa are uncertain. It may derive from the Latin word *espa* (fountain) or possibly *spargere* (to bubble up). Other sources suggest that its origin is an acronym of *sanus* or *salut per aqua* (health or relaxation through water).

The town of Spa in modern-day Belgium was a popular destination for the Romans, and the concept spread through Europe, leading to today's health – and business – fascination with spas.

But one thing is clear: the word spa is linked inextricably with water.

This is certainly what the Phuket Provincial Health Office (PPHO) believes. It has been checking spas on its records and issuing certificates to those that meet its standards. Of 29 checked so far, three failed because there was not a sign of water treatment anywhere. The three have received instructions on how to improve. They remain open, pending re-evaluation.

The PPHO has recorded around 200 spas on the island, although a day's drive around the province could convince one that the number of unrecorded spas might equal in number, if not quality, their recorded peers.

In fact, there are no national standards for the regulation of spas, although the Ministry of Public Health has produced and circulated guidelines. Each province is responsible for drawing up its own criteria.

The PPHO began establishing its criteria in July 2003 yet did not start the process of actually evaluating spa service providers until January this year.

Jurai Skulpuak, Head of the Health Consumer Protection Division of the PPHO, told the *Gazette* that although only 29 spas

Spas are a booming business in Phuket, and one that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and local resorts and hotels see as a good way to flatten out the dip in business during the low season. A new spa seems to spring up every day and the word "spa" is used to cover not only a wide range of treatments but also a wide range of premises. As the *Gazette's* Dhirarat Boonkongsaen found, it also covers widely differing standards and a large number of unregulated businesses.

have been evaluated so far, the remaining 170-odd establishments will be checked by July 13.

Speaking with the *Gazette*, Pakin Raktan-Ngam, Chairman of the Phuket Spa Business Club (PSBC) – which is working in conjunction with the PPHO to set standards – said, "Spas in Phuket range from those found in resorts to those offering more esoteric treatments – such as yoga and meditation – to the simpler day spas.

"All spas may offer these services in full, or elements of them," he continued.

K. Pakin said that 65 spa operators have joined the PSBC, which is also trying to set up its own spa resource center to provide assistance and training for the local industry. The PSBC is also working with the Prince of Songkla University, Phuket campus, to include spa management as a component of the university's tourism course.

Spas are undoubtedly big business. Nationwide, an estimated 2.6 million tourist-related spa treatments were carried out last year alone, generating some 3.6 billion baht in revenue.

K. Pakin claims that Phuket saw one million spa clients in 2003, each paying a minimum of 800 baht for treatment. He expects the market to increase by a massive 30% in the coming year.

Phuket is attempting to position itself in the next few years as the top spa destination of Thailand and one of the top three spa sites in the world.

K. Pakin said, "Resorts want to expand further into the [spa] market because it improves their overall image and makes them seem more luxurious.

"Wider markets can be tapped and better prices can be negotiated with agents world-



What every woman — or man — visiting a spa wants to see: a certificate offering a certain degree of protection.

wide. This will result in better accommodation prices for tourists," he added, though without explaining how this will come about.

"Phuket has long been famous for its 'Sea, Sun and Sand', but that reputation limits us in our goal of making the island a high-class destination.

"In the future, tourists will come to Phuket for another 'S' – spas. You can spend time in a spa even if it is raining," he pointed out.

But the rapid expansion of the spa industry on the island has a downside – as spas scramble to hire staff, the proportion of poorly-trained, inexperienced spa workers will inevitably climb.

A glance at the recruitment advertisements for spa staff in the *Gazette* shows that although most stipulate that experience is necessary, fewer than half require that applicants have any qualifications or certificates.

Lack of experience and training is plain in comments by regular spa-goers who talked with the *Gazette* on the grounds of anonymity.

One reported that it was all

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on job for spas



Jurai Skulpauk (above), Head of the Health Consumer Protection Division of the Phuket Provincial Health Office, is trying to ensure that the dream trip to the spa does not become a nightmare.



Left and above left: Everyone's image of the delights and tranquility of a modern spa.

too common for therapists to omit even the most cursory question-and-answer session before treatment.

"I visited a new spa in Karon. No one checked with me first what problems I had," she said. "I felt unwell afterwards when I should have felt relaxed and refreshed."

Another unhappy spa-lover said that she thought that her masseuse was "too weak and too inexperienced" to be able to massage properly.

"She used a different technique and I don't really know

what oil she used but my skin looked darker afterwards. I didn't feel as refreshed as I usually do after a spa," she said.

One service offered by some spas that is potentially very dangerous if administered by poorly-trained staff is "electric toning treatments".

Although operating at very low power levels, such treatments come with a number of caveats. Staying with the client at all times is one of them.

"I visited a spa to have electric therapy - it's just a light charge - on my legs," one local

resident told the *Gazette*. "They attached wires from the machine to my legs and turned on the power.

"The therapist left me alone for about 45 minutes, then came back and turned off the power. She had to help me to stand. I couldn't do it alone because my legs felt too weak."

Another unsatisfied customer related her worst electrotherapy experience:

"A female staff member applied electricity to my arms and was experimenting to see how much would be necessary. She turned the power up far too high and far too quickly. My arms went into spasm and shot straight up in the air.

"She panicked and said 'sorry'. She then did it twice more. She didn't learn after the

first or second time. I'll never go back there again," she concluded.

K. Pakin is convinced that such problems are a temporary phenomenon. "Standards will improve eventually," he said.

The PPHO's K. Jurai admits that the quality of spa staff can be a problem.

She explained what the inspectors look for when examining a spa. "We look at three main areas," she said. "We examine the spa and its buildings. We check whether it is sanitary and safe.

"We inspect everything from hygiene to the electrical system and from the massage tables to the structure of the buildings.

"Next, we look at the materials used for treatment. For example, we check the suppliers' description of the products, their origin and ingredients.

"The third thing we check is the staff.

"The first two areas are relatively straightforward. But spa operators are having problems recruiting qualified staff, and many staff don't meet the standards," she said.

"We expect that many places will not meet our standards. Some establishments offer risky services such as electrical treatment.

"They will not be allowed to operate," she said.

"The evaluation process is to ensure that a single set of standards is adhered to province-wide when classifying a business as a spa.

"We must have a minimum

standard for spas in Phuket," she said.

However, many of the chain or hotel and resort spas may circumvent this "one provincial standard" policy of the PPHO, because, according to K. Jurai, they will be evaluated as "entertainment venues", a catch-all phrase that includes some less-than-wholesome establishments.

"The therapist left me alone for about 45 minutes [of electrotherapy] then came back and turned off the power. She had to help me to stand. I couldn't do it alone because my legs felt too weak."

K. Pakin does not believe any PSBC member will follow this route. "I don't believe that our members do anything wrong, such as providing sexual services for clients.

"Nor, for that matter, do spas affiliated to the PSBC use poorly-trained masseuses or offer treatments that are

far removed from traditional European or Thai spas, such as electrotherapy."

The drive to make Phuket's spa industry more professional is moving fast.

Last month, the PPHO concluded its second training course for masseurs and masseuses and K. Jurai claims that some 300 people have now been trained.

She expects all spa staff eventually to be tested and regulated by the Ministry of Public Health.

The last word goes to K. Pakin, who expressed concern over the spas operating outside the PSBC.

"I don't even wish to comment on their standards of service but, for the sake of the industry as a whole, the PPHO must monitor them very carefully," he said.

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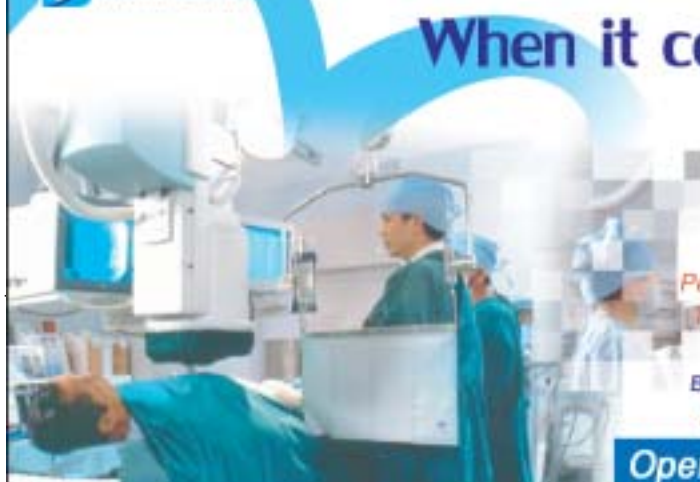
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Mark Horwood, the locally-based boat-builder and craftsman who produces the triumphant little Phuket Sport 8 sailing boats, has done it again with his latest creation – the 22-foot Asian Classic.

If you're lucky, you might spot the first of these sleek gentlemen's toys moored in Chalong Bay. But it's more likely you'll first see one being whipped around the outlying islands by wannabe James Bonds. We were lucky to find ourselves on board the prototype Asian Classic recently, the sleek and stylish *Jessica*.

The Asian Classic, based on a 1920s American design Mr Horwood saw in a yachting magazine, is the Aston Martin of the sea. It's fast, it's light, it's flash and it's the perfect accessory to a pair of Ray Bans and a bottle of Bollinger.

This classic-looking speedboat – the first of its type made in the region – is not only a pretty face. With its 210hp Mercury engine and matched Mercury Jet Drive and instruments, this baby can do an impressive 35 knots.

Jessica has a small, lightweight hull made from locally-sourced Thai timber, high-tech fiberglass, and West System Epoxy. These provide the classic look that harks back to 1960s Mediterranean – but without the maintenance hassles of a traditional wooden hull.

Despite the sexy body, *Jessica* is a functional vessel. She comes with a swim platform and integrated ice box as standard features, and can easily be towed on the optional custom-built trailer.

Mr Horwood's company, Latitude 8 Yachting, has already



Classy Classic: *Jessica*, with Mark Horwood at the helm. Mr Horwood already has orders for two more of the 35-knot speedboats. Photo by Tom Howard, www.sea-phuket.com

Just the thing for would-be 007s

taken orders from local residents for two more like *Jessica*, and more orders are on the cards.

"The Classic is proving to be a big hit with the boys, and I'm sure it will impress the girls just as much," said Mr Horwood.

"Apart from being good looking and fast, one of the best features about this craft is that she's fine in really shallow water. She's also highly durable and requires little maintenance," he continued. "She handles extremely well and can be pivoted in her length once the driver gets used to her," he added.

A self-confessed tradition-

alist, Mr Horwood named the first boat after a 60-meter, three-masted schooner he helmed some years ago in Phuket.

He has been building boats in Phuket for around four years, but has been in the business since his father got him into the profession by letting him help out when he was a mere five years old.

As a teenager in Australia he spend many happy hours creating model boats and reading about the seafaring life in the Asia-Pacific region. He decided to move to Thailand about 20 years ago. This is the man respon-

sible for salvaging and restoring *Seraph*. The gorgeous 18-meter Danish schooner is currently on charter in Pattaya but is due back in Phuket for its 100th birthday in three years' time.

Apart from the speedboat and the Phuket 8, Latitude 8 also builds catamarans in five designs ranging from 8.5 to 14.4 meters. These, too, have been a roaring success, scoring wins in the Phuket King's Cup and the Phang Nga Bay and Langkawi regattas.

Mr Horwood and his team are now working on an 8½-meter sports catamaran that will, as he puts it, "Blow the socks off all

the race boats in the Asia-Pacific area."

"There are a couple of these in Australian seas right now and they are doing extremely well," he said, grinning with obvious delight at the thought of getting back to the boatyard. A man on a mission. – **Seonai Gordon**

Budding Sean Connerys or Audrey Hepburns can order their own Asian Classic for 1.8 million baht direct from Mr Horwood (Tel: 01-7196240; 076-281299; Email: mark@latitude8yachts.com; Website: www.latitude8yachts.com).

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Southern negotiations now 'informal talks'

Political leaders and security chiefs now appear to be singing the same tune on the proposed dialog with southern Thailand separatist organization Bersatu.

Government spokesman Jakrapob Penkair quoted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra as saying the dialog would be informal and should not be considered a national-level "negotiation".

PM Thaksin and Defense Minister Chettha Thanajaro initially labeled the proposed talks "negotiations" but later renamed them "informal talks" following comments by Deputy Prime Minister Gen Chavalit Yongchaiyudh that the government risked humiliation if nothing meaningful came out of them.

K. Jakrapob said Bersatu leader Wan Kadir Che Man would not be welcome if he was going to talk about carving out a separate state in the Muslim-majority South.

But K. Wan Kadir told *The Nation* that Bersatu had given up its call for a separatist state and that he was willing to meet with government officials of any level with no preconditions.

However, he said he could not guarantee that Muslim separatist groups would stop their attacks because Bersatu did not have control over all of them.

Genius detector: Believing that every school in Thailand has at least one gifted student who remains unnoticed, Dr Usanee Anuruthwong has launched a special kit aimed at helping teachers identify young whizkids as early as possible.



HORROR SMASH: Rescue workers inspect the wreckage of a bus that crashed in Ayudhya's Phan Hai district. The wreck claimed the lives of 11 Buddhist food vendors on a pilgrimage from Ratchaburi to Wat Sai Kaew in Angthong province, where they intended to give food to orphans as a way of making merit.

Fifty other pilgrims on board the bus were injured in the crash. Police are investigating whether the driver fell asleep at the wheel.

Dr Usanee, former President of the Asia-Pacific Federation of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, said the kit was intended for testing primary students.

She spent five years developing the kit, which gauges children's aptitudes in nine categories, one of which is "thinking".

The kit consists of nine questionnaires and a CD with a program for calculating scores, which identifies the student as falling into one of three groups: above average, average and below average. Brilliant.

Capital crime: About 80% of illegal wildlife trading in Thailand occurs in and around Bangkok, according to a joint statement recently made by the Thai Forestry Police and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The WWF reported that about 97 million bahts' worth of protected wildlife was traded in Bangkok from September last year to February.

Forestry Police Commander Col Wichit Nanthawong said officers arrested 551 people in 656 cases of illegal wildlife trading last month alone, seizing 198,465 animals.

At the press conference, police also warned that piranhas had been released into Thai rivers and cautioned people to be careful when swimming in them.

Herbal hope: An extract from the Resurrection Lily has been shown to combat the HIV virus and could become a new alternative for patients from poor families, said Dr Sapon Rerngsamarn of Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Science.

Dr Sapon said that work conducted with foreign researchers proved that the extract had the ability to suppress Reverse Tran-

scriptase, an enzyme that the HIV virus needs to complete its infection of a cell.

He said that the extract was about 80% as effective as the commonly used anti-HIV drug AZT in inhibiting the enzyme, adding that although many HIV-positive patients had already expressed interest in trying the non-toxic extract, it would take a long time before it could be used on humans.

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

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Similans need divers



ANDAMAN COASTING

By Franky Gun

Hheavy rain and strong winds battered the coastline of Khao Lak during the last week of May, covering roads and beaches with debris and leaving big, muddy puddles everywhere.

Obviously, the rainy season has started and few, if any, tourists are seen in Khao Lak at this time of the year.

Despite the bad weather and high waves, some of the bigger Khao Lak dive shops remain open, always ready to take adventurous divers and snorkelers out to the Similans the instant the sun decides to appear.

Many of these dive operators deserve respect and a big "thank you" from the Khao Lak community, as they play a crucial role in keeping Khao Lak visitors happy during the low sea-

son. If all dive and tour operators closed their doors for six months, giving visitors no outdoor activity options during the low season, Khao Lak would not be what it is today.

The dive industry in Khao Lak is continually battered by raids to inspect work permits and licenses, as well as high taxes, expensive national park tickets and a slew of regulations.

On top of all this, dive operators may now be under attack from a new source. There are rumors that some clever people in Bangkok are considering closing the Similan Islands completely to divers and snorkelers, regardless of the negative impact on Thailand's tourism industry or the millions of baht the government collects from dive operators entering the marine national park.

At a guess, some officials may believe that closing the Similans to divers will help protect marine life. But the result is likely to be quite the opposite. Divers and snorkelers always alert marine park officials when



A nurse shark was found entangled in the fishing net left on a reef at Koh Bon.

they spot illegal fishing.

They also help marine park officials by removing fishing nets from reefs, even though it is the same officers who let fishing boats with fine-mesh nets pass through flourishing marine habitats, including Koh Bon, Koh Tachai, Richelieu Rock and the cherished Similans.

Investigating marine biolo-

gists claim that Chicken Hair Reef in the Similans is worse than ever despite a total ban on diving there for four years.

Why has the reef continued to deteriorate? Because fishermen do their dirty business there unmonitored by people who care about marine life protection.

More frightening is that several divers have recently noticed the increasing number of long-tail boats with compressors aboard. These fishermen are the worst; armed with crowbars and wearing shoes, they walk on the reef while breathing air pumped down through a rubber hose from above.

The damage done to a reef by them is irreparable. They break off whole coral heads with their crowbars to catch fish hiding under the coral.

In addition to alerting officers to the illegal activities of others, divers play an active role in reef protection, the latest example being in early May.

The Dive Operators Club of Thailand (DOCT) launched a rescue operation to free the north-

ern underwater pinnacle at Koh Bon from a 50-meter fine-mesh fishing net that covered nearly the entire northern wall of the pinnacle.

The net was spotted about April 25, and DOCT immediately launched an email campaign to assemble a team of divers to remove it.

The rescue team removed the net completely, and rescued several puffer fish, crabs and other marine animals in the process.

They were happy to report that the net inflicted only minor damage to the reef and that very few fish had died in the mesh.

While diving off Koh Bon the previous day to assess the damage, my buddy Tommy and I had the pleasure of freeing a two-meter-long nurse shark that had become entangled in the net.

Nothing is more rewarding than rescuing animals in danger. It was wonderful to see the shark swimming away, free to roam the sea once again.

But the shark was lucky to live. Nurse sharks are one of the few shark species that can breathe when not in motion. Had the shark been of another species, it would most likely have died in the net.



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Location Map



This week

Right: HRH Princess Ubol Ratana Rajakanya accepts a donation of 30,000 baht on behalf of the Autistic Foundation from the management team of The Evason Phuket during her recent visit to Phuket.

Below: Minister for Science, Technology and Environment Korn Dabbaransri (left) is greeted by JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa Director of Rooms Ty Collins and F&B Director Theera Kanjana (right and 2nd from right) at the recent Asia Nanotech Meeting held at the resort.



RIGHT: Billy Chima and wife Anjala (center, in black), owners of Khanasutra in Phuket City, and friends celebrate the restaurant's first anniversary on May 21 in a typically in-tents style.

BELOW: (from left) Michael Kelly of Fermoy Estate winemakers cracks open a bottle and a joke to Marriott staff Santika Pisalsupongs, David Bedinghaus, Tammasak Chootong, Chompoonut Suntornpong and Aekphon Phothiprom at the winery's recent winetasting dinner.



ABOVE RIGHT: Wearing their hearts on their sleeves, members of the Blackrose Motorcycle Club made a charity dash to Kokchang School in Phang Nga to deliver sports balls and to be beaten soundly in a soccer match against the students.

RIGHT: Cucina Italian kitchen was the setting for the first Phuket General Managers' luncheon. Craig Smith (3rd from right), hosted this first luncheon for 11 GMs, which is set to be a regular networking event on the local calendar.

LEFT: Nakorn Arunmesri (right) of VST Auto Sales congratulates the first Chevrolet Colorado owner in Phuket, Natthawut Cholchawalit of Phuket 4x4 Center.





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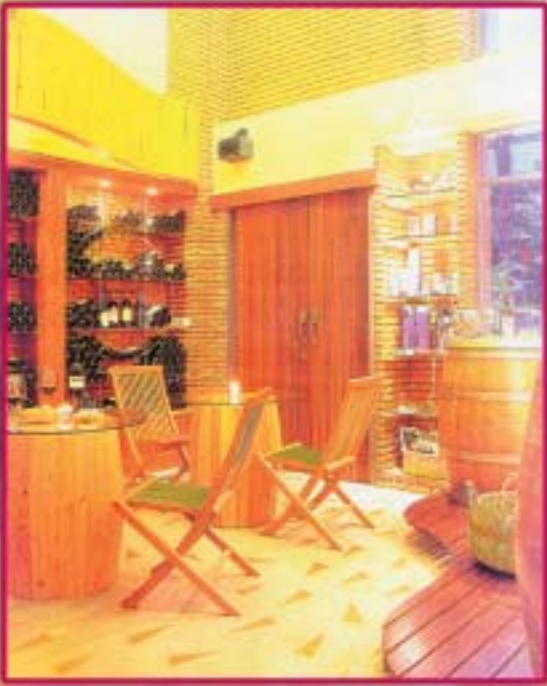
Above: The house in Kamala where the Young family lived in the early 1950s. Below: The main street in Kamala at about the same time.



Below: Tin dredger at work off Kamala Beach



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Dredging up

By Alasdair Forbes

Scotsman William Young arrived in Phuket recently on a mission to find out more about his father, a tin miner in Kamala before and after World War II.

Helped by local lecturer and historian Pranee Sakulpipatana, and former Thaisarco boss Davis Ratcliffe and his wife Cindy, Mr Young was able to collect clues that brought his enigmatic father into sharper focus.

He talked with the *Gazette* about his father, his own childhood memories of Kamala, and the mysteries that remained at the end of his trip.

Mr Young's father, also William – better known as Bill – was born in 1904 and left Scotland at age 25.

"There was no work in Scotland," William Young explained. "His elder brother went to Canada and got into oil refining, and he went east, joining the British India Steam Navigation Co as an engineer. He hated it, being in the bowels of a ship.

"He got into dredging in 1933 when he was involved in the building of the [British] Royal Navy base in Singapore. At some point he seems to have said to himself, 'I'm not going back. What's my next step?' He ended up somewhere in Thailand – not Phuket – and became involved in tin dredging.

"There's very little information about him between his arrival in Phuket and World War II. The only surviving document is his driving license, which expired in 1940. He was made a prisoner [by the Japanese] around that time.

"How the driving license survived is really a mystery. He must have given it to someone."

Bill Young refused to speak about his experiences on the infamous Death Railway the Japanese built in Thailand using prisoners of war and internees as expendable labor. But, said his son, he was able to glean some information.

"When it was obvious that Phuket was going to be occupied by the Japanese, a passenger liner came up the west side of Phuket and my father got all the Europeans off the island.

"For some reason he stayed behind. We don't know why. The



Fifty years on: William Young presents Pranee Sakulpipatana with flowers to thank her for helping him track down the past.

story is that he had a fast speedboat and he had something to do; whether he was going to disable some machinery or make life difficult for the Japanese, I really don't know, but he never got away.

"He went into the hills and managed to stay at liberty for six weeks, coming down at night to grab scraps of food.

"But the inevitable happened. He was interned and unfortunately was put to work on the Rangoon-Bangkok railway.

"He came back a shadow of his former self. Comparing the pictures from 1940 and 1948, he

became an old man in just eight years.

"He eventually died of wartime problems – a shrunken stomach and various ailments from the meager rations he had to survive on for four or five years. He also suffered from malaria.

"But he never talked about that time. He refused to speak about it."

After the war, however, Bill Young returned to Phuket "I have a feeling he missed the life out here," said William. Bill had married in 1945 and William was born the following year.

Mother and son joined Bill

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the past



A young William Young in the early 1950s, with the amah who used to get him to pinch his father's cigarettes.

in Kamala in 1950, staying for two years until Thai political upheavals caused Bill to send them back to Britain. He followed them home two years later, when the tin ran out in Kamala Bay.

William Young's memories of Kamala more than 50 years ago are sketchy, he admitted, though the *amah* – his nanny – is stuck firmly in his mind. "I think she was Chinese, maybe the daughter of the cook. She was obviously not of the best nature;

she used to get me to pinch my father's cigarettes. I ended up smoking at a very early age, and didn't give up till I was 40."

The photographs inherited from his father evoke a very different era and lifestyle from today. The house has gone; it was where the local school now stands. Names have changed; Bill Young always referred to Kamala as Kamra, for example.

But some older citizens still remember Bill Young. "By the



One enduring mystery is how Bill Young's Thai Driving license, issued before World War II, survived through his internment by the Japanese and his time on the Death Railway.

sound of things, he was well known around Kamala and was quite a task-master," said his son.

And one piece of local geography remains: the Kamala Tin Mine Cemetery. "The Kamra Tin Mine Co did bucket dredging in the bay – it must have been very close to the house. The company knew there was tin under the cemetery, and offered to move it [the cem-

etery], but the villagers absolutely refused, so I think that was the end of the company."

Bill Young returned to Scotland in 1952, then went out to Burma, where he dredged the Irrawaddy river until 1962. He then went home to Scotland and remained there until his death in his late 60s, a quiet but contented man, working in a local boatyard.

William, although he now knows more about his enigmatic father, said that the visit to Phuket had shed light on some mysteries but deepened others. He was not sure whether he would return to Phuket.

"I need to check some things at home first," he said. "And perhaps there are some things it is better not to know."

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In The Stars

by Isla Star

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Birthday celebrations are likely to be affected by a last-minute change of plan that won't please some Geminis. To avoid casting a cloud over the festivities, remain flexible and appreciate the good intentions of friends. A tendency to daydream mid-week could result in the loss of something important; endeavor to keep your mind on the business at hand. The number 8 has special meaning on Monday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Those born under the sign of Cancer will be tempted to do their usual side-ways dance when confronted with an awkward situation this weekend. Try to use this opportunity to practice tact instead of avoidance. Your partner is ready for some romantic adventure; there's something to be said for an injection of spontaneity. Single

Cancerians are looking in the wrong place for love – it's closer to home than you think.

LEO (July 24-August 22): A new interest takes up your time this week and you will have to decide what is most important. Friends who are intent on partying into the night could put pressure on you to join in the fun, but diplomatic Leos will find the right way to decline. A boring bureaucratic matter demands your attention on Tuesday or Wednesday; you should get a second opinion before answering a seemingly routine question.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Virgoans still weighed down with emotional baggage from a past relationship will need to find a way to shed the load once and for all. Someone is ready to move closer to you, but is getting tired of the constant raking-up of memories. A tricky task that you conveniently forgot to take care of last month rears its ugly head; this time you are advised to face the problem.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): A stroke of good fortune early in the week will be enough reason for Librans to push the boat out a little further. Your intuition concerning financial affairs is highlighted this month. This doesn't mean that everything you touch will turn to gold, but there will definitely be improvements. Capricorn has some interesting news to impart on Wednesday that will shed new light on business affairs.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): When your mind is set, there's little chance of

seeing the wood for the trees. Some Scorpios are in danger of missing the point this weekend, and should make every effort to alter their perspective. Someone close to you has been trying to state the obvious for some time now; when you realize that they've been right all along, an apology is in order. The number 4 will bring you luck towards the end of the week.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): You are holding the winning cards when it comes to business, but affairs of the heart could be another matter. Sagittarians who have been economical with the truth will find out that someone is not prepared to settle for less than a total commitment. If you don't have the courage to open up now, there's every chance that they will walk away into the sunset. The color sky blue will encourage clarity.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Try not to become impatient with slow-moving money matters this week. Everything appears to be going the way you would like, but delays are unavoidable. If your energy is at low ebb, ask a physically fit friend for exercise tips – some fine tuning of your lifestyle could bring almost immediate results. A career development is starting to bubble under; you will know more by the end of this month.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Your luck in love is gradually improving, but some changes of attitude are probably called for. Aquarians who have a tendency to take their partners for granted could

be receiving a dose of their own medicine this week. If your working life is not giving the stimulation you require, you should consider fishing for other opportunities. Thursday is an auspicious time to call in a favor.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): You will attract attention on the social scene this weekend, which could lead to a new relationship. However, next week could see the reappearance of an old flame and you are likely to be caught in some crossfire. Pisceans who are already emotionally committed will have to weather a minor storm, but the air should clear by Thursday. Make the most of high energy levels on Monday and Tuesday.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Someone who made a lasting impression on you is about to make a comeback. Single Arians who are ready to pair up will be kicking up their heels with happiness, and there doesn't appear to be anything blocking true romance. Despite likely wet weather, June should turn out to be one of the sunniest months for you. Wear red to attract more positive financial influences.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Despite last month's evidence to the contrary, the lives of most Taureans are set to offer the security they have been yearning for. The week should reveal a cast-iron opportunity to swell your bank balance. This won't mean that floods of money are about to come pouring in, but a reasonable income is forecast. Your naturally generous heart makes you subject to being taken advantage of, so be on your guard.

Perils of

Stool Pigeon



Recently, Stool Pigeon's Mom and Dad flew into Phuket on their first trip to Thailand. It was quite a momentous reunion for Stool Pigeon, who thought he had been disowned for having moved to the Land of Smiles some 14 years ago.

The warm fuzziness of greeting Mom and Dad at the airport soon gave way to logistical concerns: transport, hotel accommodation, sightseeing and food for my parents.

I quickly realized that most of my advance planning had been for naught. For a start, the taxi simply wasn't big enough to hold all the trinkets Mom had collected on her once-in-a-lifetime tour of Asia – not even close. So we had to hire two taxis just to get all the gear to their first hotel. And to the next hotel. And the next.

En route, the folks told me about their experiences in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, stating emphatically, "We don't want to see one more dancing or cultural show, temple, butterfly farm or anything else remotely similar." So much for Wat Chalong and Phuket FantaSea.

Food was a big issue, especially with Mom, who had put on a lot of weight since I last saw her. For me, food is the best part of living in Thailand.

But Mom, on the advice of doctors and friends who had never been to Asia, quickly nixed fish with heads still attached (too disgusting); anything with chili in it (too spicy); ice and all fresh vegetables (risk of bacterial infection); "street" food (same), and, because they arrived during the bird 'flu scare, no chicken.

That doesn't leave a lot, when you think about it.

The low point was a mountain of bland fried rice at Papaya in Karon that cost us 300 baht, enough for a banquet of Thai delicacies in many Phuket City restaurants. High points were dinners at Karon Café and the Hilltop, with its spectacular view overlooking Patong, candlelight and selection of white wines.

Against the advice of friends, I decided to show the folks the delights of Soi Bangla. They loved it, especially the katoys dancing at the end of Soi Moulin Rouge. When they later moved to a five-star hotel around Bang Tao for three days, they soon got bored and demanded to be taken back to Patong.

Alas, it wasn't to be. Stool Pigeon came down with food poisoning after an "international buffet" at the hotel restaurant.

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POCKET BOXERS:

For those who want to enjoy real Muay Thai, and not a dance show, the Phuket Boxing Stadium at Saphan Hin is the place to be on Friday nights. The entry fee is 500 baht, and the card usually has eight bouts. Get there early if you want to enjoy the little guys, as the weight classes go up as the evening progresses. You can smoke, drink and gamble there to your heart's content. Small bottles of Heineken are 70 baht, but please don't hurl your empties into the ring if you are unhappy with the judge's decision. Someone could get hurt that way.

The first time I've had anything like that in many, many years of eating everything on Mom's restricted list. Needless to say, Mom and Dad's stomachs were fine the whole time.

What a waste: Remember that beautiful Corvette Nicky of Nicky's Handlebar had for a while?

A friend of a friend of a friend came across from Samui to buy a Ducati but Nicky had already sold his. So the buyer ended up parting with 1.3m baht for the Corvette instead.

He later called his Phuket friend to say it had burst into flames on the way to Samui – and there wasn't a lot left. Another

good reason to stick to diesel engines, if you ask me.

From a reader: Anyone can tell a Hollywood wax from a Brazil wax, but what about a bikini line treatment from the brain down?

Expats in Karon who frequent Angus O'Tools are still chuckling about the young Brit who was playfully told before he left for his first holiday in Phuket that Thai women preferred "hair-free" gentlemen.

He proudly announced on arrival that he not only organized to have all the hair shaved from his crotch, but also had his chest shorn for good measure.

Were the ladies of Karon

impressed? Perhaps we will never know, but I expect if the lad came with a wallet stuffed so full of cash that he could fall off it, they would have found that more impressive.

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Life is a cabaret at Sphinx

Having driven past The Sphinx several times on my trips to Patong, I could not help but notice what a superb exterior the place has. It really has added a needed touch of class to the area.

Sphinx is situated about 200 meters past the Siam Commercial Bank, on the opposite side of the road, before the Soi Nam Yen/Soi Paradise junction.

After Dark is about where to go when the eating irons have been cast aside and serious hedonism looms. So I was intrigued to hear that the venue had an intimate 65-seat theater upstairs to complement its downstairs restaurant, which offers a selection of Thai and Western cuisine.

Sphinx has been open for six months now and so has had plenty of time to settle in and face the full scrutiny of the Sam Vimes squad.

The place was built by Irishman Ray and the restaurant is modeled on his award-winning eatery in Bangkok's Silom Soi 4 that bears the same name.

However, the theater concept is unique to Patong and re-

ally is something else. The manager is former San Francisco resident Jerry and the resident choreographer and director is an Aussie chap by the name of David.

I was delighted to be welcomed to the bar courteously and be served promptly in perfect English from a wide range of beers. This is a sure-fire way to get me in the right frame of mind. Do not limit my alco-magination to domestic beers, not everyone is a cheap Charlie, y'know.

And this place would certainly not be at home to said miser either – it is not expensive, yet the surroundings are truly plush.

Superb decor is everywhere, totally tasteful, without being so far over the top that you feel under-dressed.

There are two shows a night, the idea being that you take in the first performance, enjoy dinner downstairs and then return upstairs for a post-dinner show.

And what fabulous shows they are. From the decor alone I had kinda gathered that it would be a run-of-the-mill show featuring lip-synching ladyboys. I mean come on, this place could



A camped-up comic rendition of Marilyn Monroe's signature tune *Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend* (above) is one of the many highlights of the show now on at The Sphinx Restaurant and Theatre in Patong.

Below: Hit me with your rhythm sticks! No cabaret is complete without chorus girls – or boys.

out-camp a granny in a paper hat.

You and I have been to too many such shows. Been there, done that, right? Wrong.

This is a show I would be happy to take visitors to, again and again. It is on a completely different level of professionalism and the intimate and luxurious theater setting really adds to the magic.

On the night we visited, the opening number was a lavish Egyptian affair featuring real fire, the mesmerizing sight enhancing the sense of anticipation amongst the bedazzled crowd.

Seating, by the way, is on very comfy couches and drinks are served at your table, promptly and without fuss, throughout the entire performance.

I was deeply impressed by the quality of the music that accompanied each performance.

One of the first glimpses of

the high standard of entertainment at The Sphinx came in the second number, which was a sort of Bollywood-inspired boogie complete with limber dancers lining up and forming Shiva-type shapes with their long, slender arms as in the movie *Moulin Rouge*.

Halfway through the number an evil Kali-type creature takes the stage, peeling away the dancers like flower petals. I was loving it. The tune resolves into a Bangra'd-up version of *Diamonds Are Forever*, at which I exclaimed, "Shirley! Yes!"

The show continues with a cracking comedy take on *Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend*.

In between the set pieces are individual numbers of classic showtunes. All of these were delivered convincingly.

On the night I was there the theater manager was stepping in for a member of the cast who was away, and he had these tunes nailed. He even perfected that staring-away-in-the-distance-with-utter-conviction-and-hope facial expression which is de-

rigueur for Broadway tunes.

David told me they are committed to changing the shows regularly, so there is no need to worry about repetition. I have already booked my next visit.

There are actually three shows to see here. Two are the two cabaret shows, but the third show is the place itself. It's inspiring that one man had a vision and the balls to carry it off in an exceptional manner.

For those of you who moan that there is nothing special to do in Phuket, no place that warrants getting dressed up, then The Sphinx may be just the place for you. And it is absolutely perfect when you have visitors in town.

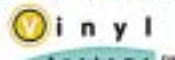
The current two shows begin at 8:30 and 10:30 every night and are just 300 baht per performance. With prices like that, there is no excuse for for not checking it out

The Sphinx Restaurant & Theatre is located at 120 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd in Patong. For more information call 076-341500 or visit the website: www.sphinxthai.com



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KIDS

THE FUN PAGE
FOR ALL
THE FAMILY

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 25 breeds of pedigree dog. The words may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. See if you can find more than your family or friends. Score: More than 10, good; more than 15, very good; 25 or more, excellent.

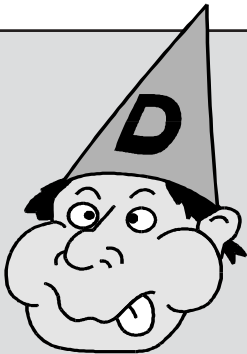
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C	U	N	B	R	E	X	O	B	P	O	O	D	L	E
B	U	L	L	D	O	G	M	P	V	H	S	J	L	V
B	W	Q	Q	V	Y	I	C	E	C	O	J	N	U	Q

Brain Buster!!

Sam Slug was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. While waiting on death row, he escaped, got hold of a gun, and managed to board a plane. Just before take-off, Sam hijacked the plane, and ordered all the passengers off. His next demand was for the police to give him \$500,000 in a heavy bag and a parachute. He then instructed the pilot to turn his radio off and fly at low altitude. When Sam saw the area he liked he strapped the parachute on and leapt from the plane. Unfortunately for Sam, in his excitement he forgot the money. When the pilot returned to the airport he reported to Detective Shadow that Sam Slug had made a successful escape but had left the money. Shadow immediately announced the case was closed. Why would Shadow not search for a convicted murderer?

A. Shadow knew the police had given Sam a parachute with a big hole in it.

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. Where would you find IM Pei's glass pyramid?

2. What is the official name of the Centre Beaubourg?

3. From which language does the word ukelele derive?

4. What is the correct term for a holder designed for a handle-less coffee cup?

5. Dancer Josephine Baker was once maid to which famous singer?

6. What did Admiral Horatio Nelson, inventor Guglielmo Marconi and actor Rex
- Harrison have in common?

7. By what name is Yvette Stevens better known?

8. Botanist Gregor Mendel is best remembered for his work in which topic?

9. Which Thai province is between Khon Kaen and Roi Et?

10. Which composer wrote *Appalachian Spring*?

11. Who was World Grand Prix Champion in 1958?

12. In 1987, Mike Tyson took the WBA world heavyweight title from whom?

13. Manama is the capital of which country?
14. Into which sea does the Volga flow?

15. Who went missing with Fred Noonan in 1937?

16. How many kilometers does light travel in one second?

17. In what year did the number of stars on the US flag reach 50?

18. In which city would you find the *Vasa*?

19. With which country did the US go to war in 1898?

20. In Japan, which historical period followed the Edo period?
- Answers next week.

Never a Cross Word!

Across

1. Major golf tournament (2, 4).
5. Leader of the Catholics.
7. Deep-south Thai province.
8. Encountered.
10. Exist.
11. Student tester.
12. Cosmonauts and astronauts.
14. To a printer, it's a double-en.
15. Crow's call.
16. Old name for Taiwan.
17. One 52nd of a year.
18. Guard.

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

Down

2. *Titus Andronicus* playwright.
3. Solo card game.
4. Japanese spy or assassin of old.
6. One who went before.
9. Spice made from tree bark.
13. Emotional states.

Solution next week

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. Krabi; 2. 1990; 3. St Lawrence and Ottawa rivers; 4. Yugoslavia; 5. Spruce Goose; 6. Birch; 7. Tennessee; 8. New Mexico; 9. Farsightedness; 10. Tom Wolfe; 11. 2003; 12. 1728; 13. John Le Carré; 14. 28 years; 15. Mozambique; 16. Babe; 17. Kerf; 18. It is four minutes and 33 seconds of silence; 19. Barometer; 20. Whale shark.

Solution to last week's Crossword

Due to a compilation mistake in last week's crossword, 9 Down was nonsense. The *Gazette* apologizes for any confusion or disappointment this may have caused.

P	E	P		A	S	T	O	U	N	D
U		E	W		H					E
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HEARD & scene

The *Gazette's* **Rittiwat Suwannarattaphum** went out and about recently and asked: "Who is the one person you would never like to meet, and why?"



Ratina Ooncham
Age: 25
Origin: Ratchaburi
Job: Beauty salon owner

I never want to meet my cousin Pen again. She has borrowed money from me repeatedly over five years and has never repayed it. I am afraid that if I met her again, she might ask me for an even bigger loan and make me bankrupt. Without her and her borrowing, my life would not now be hanging by a thread.



Andy Borham
Age: 24
Origin: England
Job: Teacher

I would never like to meet George Bush. I think we are at two ends of the scale; we are complete opposites of each other. The way he thinks and the way I think contradict each other, and a meeting would lead to a very big argument over at least seven things in which his unacceptable morals are involved.



Rattanaorn Polchai
Age: 25
Origin: Phuket
Job: Reservations officer

A person I would never like to meet again is Chai, my ex-classmate at primary school. He was sex-crazy and always trying to peek at girls' underwear. The worst thing he did was to stick a shard of mirror to his shoe just to find out what was underneath the girls' skirts. It would be so embarrassing to be his victim again.



Tony Carrick
Age: 39
Origin: England
Job: Designer

One person I would never like to meet is Tony Blair, because I am English and I support the Labour Party, but he turned the Labour Party into a "Conservative Party". As a result, there is no Labour Party in the UK anymore. I also don't like him because he loves himself so much and he sounds really arrogant.



Jhanthima Sac-Vun
Age: 26
Origin: Phang Nga
Job: Beautician

I never want to meet my ex-boyfriend, "X", again. I fear that if he came back holding a big bunch of exotic flowers and said, "Can we get back together again?" it would be too hard to resist and my heart might be dominated by his sweet words again. But this would probably result in nothing. Let's just let something that's over be over.

Coming soon to a theater near you

I hear that Hollywood has shot a movie about Alexander the Great – and part of it was filmed in Thailand.

I've always wanted to be a movie star. They picked Colin Farrell to play Alexander, but I wouldn't mind starting my career as an extra. Unfortunately, there aren't many "extra" roles for short, fat, bald-headed old guys. They'd have to rewrite the script to fit me in.

So I've scripted a scene that would give me a cameo role. (I know they wouldn't give me more than a cameo role because they wouldn't want me to steal the show.)



The movie will be called *Alexander*. It will be an epic drama that will cover Alexander's entire stupendous career of conquest, from Macedonia to the banks of the Indus. I'll need a Greek name based on my initial, Ess, so we'll call me Esson.

This will deal a hearty rebuff to the comedians who have suggested calling me Essole. In my cameo, I'll play the role of Alexander's chief aide and adviser.

The scene opens early in Alexander's career. He has just conquered Turkey, and is contemplating his next move in his tent at Alexankara (now known by its abbreviated name, Ankara).

Enter Esson.

Esson: My lord, your satrap, the Egyptian pharaoh Thaksin-hotep, humbly craves per-

mission to run "no-frills" camel caravans from Cairo to Athens.

Alexander (crossly): What is he doing running camel caravans when he should be devoting his full attention to running Egypt? Tell him to look at the map. It's quicker to go from Cairo to Athens by sea than by land.

(Enter Aristotle.)

Ah, here's Aristotle, my teacher, the smartest man in the known world.

Esson: Say something smart, Aristotle.

Aristotle: $E = MC^2$.

Alexander: By Zeus! Did I not tell you the man was smart?

Esson: Say something smart that we can understand, Ari.

Aristotle: Money is God.

Esson: I seem to have heard that before.

Alexander: This movie is boring. We need to stage a battle scene.

Esson: My lord, I have just received word that troops under the command of the beautiful but savage Queen Labia of the Fallopian are attacking our northern flank.

Alexander: Excellent! Slaves! My armor! My warhorse!

(Big battle scene ensues with lots of fighting. Lesser script-writers can fill in the de-

tails. Alexander returns to his tent, exhausted and blood-stained – but triumphant.)

Alexander: Boy, that was a hell of a fight. But we won. Bring in the Fallopian queen.

(Enter, in chains, Queen Labia, played by Angelina Jolie.)

Well, my proud beauty, I have defeated you. Now I shall take you as my concubine. You shall enjoy one night of passion with me – before I have you crucified.

Labia (tossing her magnificent head, her magnificent bosom heaving magnificently): You shall never humble me, Macedonian dog. I will never submit to your unholy lusts.

Alexander: Actually, you are probably too magnificent for me to handle. Besides, I'm gay. Well, I'll just crucify you, then.

Labia (magnificently): I have a deal for you, Macedonian pig. One word from me, and

my people will submit to you. A different word, and they will resist you forever. You can have a peaceful Fallopia or a Fallopia in constant rebellion. The choice is entirely yours.

Alexander: Hmmmm. What's in it for you?

Labia: Give me my freedom –

and the dwarf Esson to be my love-slave.

Alexander: What? Esson? He's just a short, fat, bald-headed old gnome. He smells bad, too. *[And he's a non-quality foreigner. – Ed.]*

Esson (deeply hurt): Please be more sensitive to my feelings, my lord.

Labia (magnificently): What you say is true, Macedonian cockroach. Nevertheless, I have conceived an insatiable passion for him. I know not why I wish to slake my lust on his deformed body.

Esson: It's my irresistible animal magnetism, my lord.

Alexander (irritably): Go, then! Tell your people to submit, and take the dwarf with you. He was getting ready to steal the show anyway.

Esson: I already have, my lord.

Labia (magnificently, but tenderly): Come, Esson. Away to my queenly bed, there to disport ourselves in an endless orgy of wanton passion.

Esson: Oh, boy! Goodbye, my lord. Have fun getting to the Indus.

(Departs with Queen Labia.)

Alexander (grumbling; sotto voce): I knew he'd steal the show. We should have got Danny DeVito instead.

S. Tsow can be flamed at stsow@yahoo.com, if you can ever get him out of the queenly bed.

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The perfect imperial thug

The title of Robert Bickers' biography, *Empire Made Me* (Allen Lane, London, 2003, 373pp) is an obvious reference to Graham Greene's 1935 novel *England Made Me*.

Greene's footloose fictional protagonist, Anthony Farrant, bounced around a good chunk of Asia as did Bickers' Richard Tinkler. But Tinkler – who was born in 1898 in Lancashire and died in 1939 in Shanghai – was real.

Bickers reconstructs his subject's life through the copious letters Tinkler sent back to his sister Edith, official records, newspaper clippings and interviews with people who knew him.

Unhappy at home, Tinkler lied about his age and joined the British Army at 16 to fight in the trenches of France. After World War I, he answered a newspaper ad and joined the Shanghai Municipal Police. He sailed to Shanghai in 1919, returning to England just once.

The author holds up Tinkler as the epitome of the low-ranking official who was both a product of the acutely class-conscious and racist British Empire and the type of cog that kept it running smoothly.

Tinkler was physically brave, cocky, irascible and full of hatred for the Chinese, Japanese, Jews, Sikhs and White Russians in Shanghai. He also hated both the Scots – who dominated the police – and the upper-class Brits who ran Shanghai.

He typified the type of imperial thug who was necessary for maintaining order in the Shanghai's International Settlement. He was indeed molded by the empire he served.

Bickers is on to a damn good story. For 13 years, like an obsessed detective, he tracked down every lead on Tinkler. He is also skilled in painting a picture of 1919 Shanghai:

"In romance Shanghai, in mythic Shanghai, the policeman walks the noisome streets, opium's scent extruding from shuttered shops and dank, dark alleyways. In the stark daylight shadows lurk the robber and the killer. The gunman fires without compunction so the policeman must fire first. Always at night there is a distant clatter of

Mahjong tiles, and the roulette wheel spins. Off duty, the good life swings. Women are laid out for the taking: buy your tickets for a taxi-dancer, take your seat for the cabaret floor show, make your way to the massage parlour. There are Russians, Americans, Japanese, Eurasians and Chinese. The cabarets are plenty, and the partying hard."

Tinkler was promoted to plainclothes inspector and became a dapper dresser, befriending a crew of hard-drinking American newsmen and aping their slang. He vacationed in Japan, Taiwan and Vietnam. Although his pay was meager and his social status low, these were his golden years.

It all ended in 1930 when he is demoted to uniformed sergeant on the beat after being caught drunk on duty. He resigned from the police, collected his severance pay and sailed to America, then still wallowing in the depths of the Great Depression. Unable to find his niche there, he returned to Shanghai. In 1934, he was sent by a Singaporean firm to close up and liquidate a rubber factory in Nanchang, 400 miles from Shanghai.

Accosted by Chinese police for ambling bare-chested down the street, he got into a fist fight and was deported from the city aboard a British gunboat.

He fetched up as a security officer at a cotton factory in Japanese-occupied Shanghai, living on the premises and earning £10 a month. Here on June 6, 1939, he finally found his 15 minutes of fame. Japanese marines bayoneted him to death

for threatening their officer with a pistol. The murder made headlines in England.

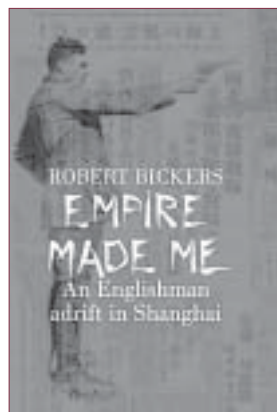
The then British Consul, AD Blackwood, added at the time, "It's a pity that so many of our disputes with the Japs are over such very vile bodies."

Bickers' judgement? "He [Tinkler] bullied and blustered, but now did so with the wrong people, at the wrong time, and in the wrong place. Shanghai 1939 was no longer a city in which the servant of the British Empire held sway by force. This city was gone, but it lingered in memory, sparking this furious, futile, fatal act."



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



Yahoo has just released the latest incarnation of its instant messaging program, "All-New Yahoo Messenger" – better-known as Yahoo Messenger 6.0. Last month, Microsoft added games to MSN Messenger 6.2. AOL's Instant Messenger last appeared as version 5.5, but rumor has it that an upgrade is on its way.

Many people use Instant Messaging (IM) to chat, talk (yes, using a microphone), send files and play games.

As the Internet connections in Phuket get faster, some will also use IM for video conferencing with live camera feeds, Microsoft Office application collaboration, whiteboarding, and more.

Three manufacturers dominate the IM market. AOL, with AOL Instant Messenger (AIM), was the first big IM player, and (depending on how you count) remains the largest. Yahoo has been gaining market share rapidly. And Microsoft's MSN Messenger has been leading the way in innovations for quite some time.

They're all free – but none of them works with the others. Thanks to a series of gaffes, lawsuits and downright brutal confrontations, neither AOL nor Yahoo nor Microsoft has seen fit to maintain any cross-communication links between the products.

However, Trillian, a small polyglot contender (www.trillian.cc) does talk to the big three plus the ICQ and IRC networks – at least it does this week. Trillian was recently denied access to the Yahoo network, twice, because of security upgrades apparently designed to do just that, but its creators managed to release a work-around upgrade the following week.

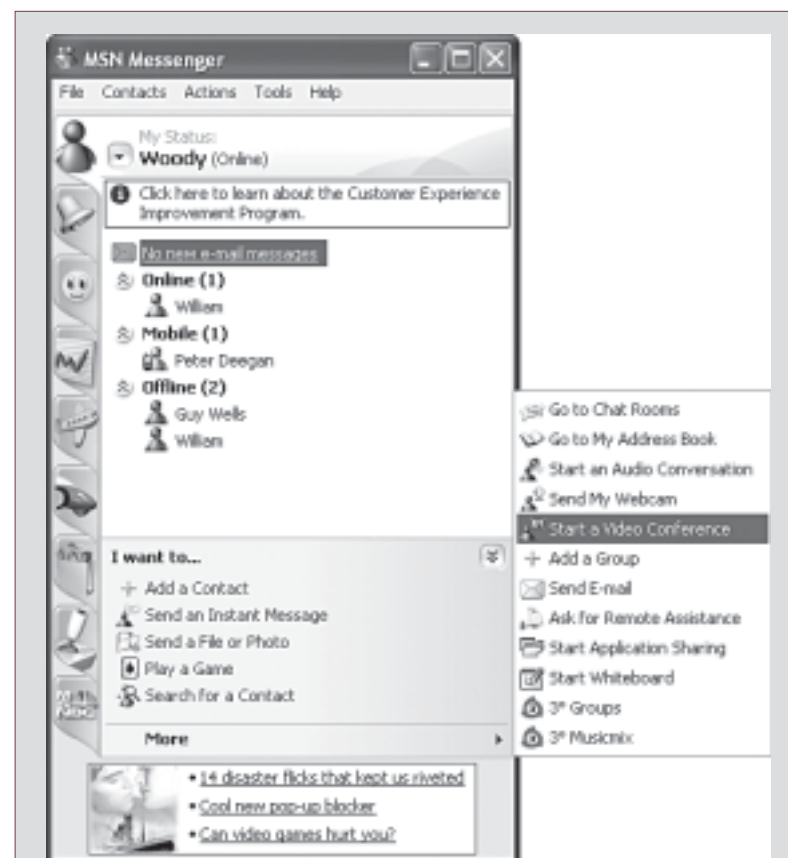
Anybody can download and install AIM. When you run AIM, you can chat with anyone else running AIM, which includes all of the people who use AOL. That's what makes AIM the largest.

Yahoo has a large base of users, but they can talk only to other Yahoo Messenger users. Yahoo has the unique marketing advantage of being, uh, neither Microsoft nor AOL. Talk about damning with faint praise.

Microsoft is in the odd position of shipping two very different IM programs. Windows Messenger comes with every copy of Windows XP.

It's stodgy and lacks many features – Microsoft hasn't updated it in ages – but it's also very stable, and it's the only IM program that works with Microsoft Office.

For example, in Outlook



MSN Messenger, like AOL Instant Messenger and Yahoo Messenger, includes support for group discussions, video conferencing, exchanging files and much more. It can even tap into Microsoft Office and other applications.

So why can't I chat with anyone I like?

2003, if you use Windows Messenger you can see if someone who sent you an email message is online, so you can chat with them immediately.

MSN Messenger, on the other hand, comes packed with all the latest features. You have to download it and install it separately. It's updated frequently and, for that reason, sometimes has stability problems.

But MSN Messenger does not work with Office. In most cases, people using Windows Messenger can "see" people using MSN Messenger and vice-versa, but that isn't always the case. Windows Messenger and MSN Messenger co-exist: you can install both on one machine with no ill effect, although you can run only one at a time.

So which one is the best? From what I can

tell, there isn't a hair's bit of difference in features among the three big manufacturers. Any feature that appears in one package will soon show up in the others.

That said, I've seen quite a big difference in stability. AIM (www.aim.com) always seems to be the last kid on the block with the shiny new features – but when a new version comes out, the AIM software runs like a well-tuned Mercedes. Or at least a Mira.

On the other hand, MSN Messenger (www.messenger.

msn.com) flakes out so frequently that Microsoft has withdrawn new versions within days of their release. Yahoo (www.messenger.yahoo.com) runs somewhere in the middle. Windows Messenger, by contrast, is solid as a rock – and just as boring.

Which one should you use? Go for Trillian, if you like, but bear in mind that the Big Three will make it increasingly difficult for the little guy.

Alternatively, ask your friends – the ones you want to chat with. Use whichever program they have, and you won't go wrong.

– Woody Leonhard
woody@khunwoody.com

Woody Leonhard has written a number of books in the "...for Dummies" series on computing.

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Glimmer of light for investors

It was heartening to read Gov Udomsak Usawarakura's remarks about foreign investors in his Governor's Letter (*see page 20*).

His comment – “Other countries need investors, but we keep pushing them back and saying, ‘No’.” – hit the nail on the head. Other countries benefit every time an investor becomes completely frustrated at the lack of transparency, the intransigence, the confusion or the plain corruption that must be surmounted in order to get a project off the ground here.

The Governor goes on to note that although the authorities must be constantly vigilant for “bad investors”, they must also help good investors. It is sad that this has to be stated; there is an underlying implication that “foreign” often means “bad”.

Sadder still is the fact that “bad investors” may have a better chance of getting projects off the ground because they are more prepared to slide money under the table to cut the Gordian Knot of bureaucratic obfuscation.

Those who want to do everything above-board face a much harder road. They require enormous patience, probably more money than they initially expected to invest, and a disposition sunny enough to withstand microscopic scrutiny of their activities.

A previous governor, after launching stringent new measures to control work permits for foreigners, was asked by the *Gazette* why he was going after people who were trying to do things right instead of hunting down those working without permits.

“You tell me where these bad foreigners are,” he replied, “and I will arrest them.” In the meantime, the “honest” foreigners continued to have a hard time.

Now, however, we seem to have a Governor more sympathetic to foreign investors. His remarks were addressed primarily to the sub-districts – the *OrBorTor* and municipalities, but they could – and should – apply equally to all branches of the government.

Transparency is the key. If foreign investors can obtain complete, clear and accurate information about what is required in order to start a company, get a work permit, build and own business premises and so forth, Thailand will become a much more attractive place for investment. Jobs will be created and the economy will be boosted generally as a result.

The main stumbling block is that transparency is not in the personal short-term interests of those manning the gates leading to investor success. Until bureaucrats can be persuaded to put the country's interests ahead of their own, and to curb their xenophobia, the foreign investment outlook remains bleak.

– 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.

Democracy – or a case of bureaucrazy?

I noted with some amusement that Phuket City Municipality had issued an invitation to “all area residents” to attend an open meeting on June 2 to voice their concerns and comments over how the city budget would be used.

Listed among those who would speak were the Governor, a vice-governor and the city's Chief Administrative Officer (*palad*) – all of them appointees of the Interior Ministry and unelected career bureaucrats.

Meanwhile, the results of Phuket City's last municipal elections, held on April 4, have yet to be confirmed by the Election Commission. As a result, the new municipal government cannot convene.

One has to wonder if the unconfirmed winners will even be invited to attend the hearing. Maybe they can just go along as “area residents”.

It seems to me that one branch of the bureaucracy, the Election Commission, isn't doing its job quickly enough while another branch is overstepping its authority.

Or perhaps the whole thing is part of a complex plan to ensure all branches of government, no matter how far from Bangkok, remain firmly under the control of the central government. So much for the new constitution.

When the generals overthrew Chatichai Choonhavan's elected government in 1992 they said it was necessary to remove what had become a “dictatorship by democracy”. It seems to me that what we are seeing now is

akin to “dictatorship by bureaucracy”, or perhaps that should be “bureaucrazy”.

What better word could there be to describe a situation in which a government seriously proposes using taxpayers' money to buy a stake in an English Premier League soccer team? The mind boggles.

Soomchi H
Thalang

Heart attacks in store for shoppers

To the manager of Robinson Department Store: Yet another of my friends recently went shopping at your store and left with elevated blood pressure. The reason for this is the fact that the sales personnel stuck to him like glue when he simply wanted to have a leisurely browse round the shoe department.

This “shadowing” has happened to me on every occasion that I've gone to Robinson's and it is irritating for two reasons.

First, yours is a self-service-style department store and customers would, I am sure, prefer to be left in peace to look around with the option of asking a member of the sales staff for assistance when and if necessary.

Secondly, your staff have little or no English language skills, so their attempted interference with the browsing process is of no benefit and only causes frustration on both sides.

I realize that your employees must be working on a commission-based salary, but do you realize that you actually lose customers because of their behavior?

Joanna Lewis
Chalong

Hillside construction must be controlled

We in Karon have watched recently all the dirt coming down the hill from a project called Karon Bay View, filling the drains and emptying into the sea.

Haven't they ever heard of compaction? I am sure the sea creatures are very happy to have all that wonderful dirt to eat.

This project has dumped mud and other debris across Patak Rd three times and still they are working on it. Why are there no fines for this kind of infraction? How many more times will this happen before something is done?

Tom Notaro
Karon

Slalom course is potentially deadly

On my way back into town along Chao Fa East Rd recently, I was astonished to come across the chicane/slalom next to the Morning Star School, where Chao Fa East Rd meets the recently completed road that goes through to Chao Fa West Rd.

The planners, it seems, forgot to advise the electricity company about the new road, with the result that the power poles that used to line the old road now stand in the middle of the new one, forcing drivers and motorcyclist alike to zigzag wildly through the obstacle course.

One hopes this situation will be remedied immediately, before people are killed by running into the poles, or each other.

James Fergus
Phuket City

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.

Why Phuket needs a Free Trade Zone

FIRST PERSON

Much has been written over the past 20 years about the benefits of FTZs and how they stimulate local and national economies of developing countries.

One of the most successful is the Jebel Ali Free Zone in Dubai. Established in 1985, it was viewed with great skepticism by major local business players and neighboring countries who considered inviting foreigners to set up businesses without the usual bureaucracy as "selling the family jewels".

The Dubai government realized that its dependence on mineral wealth had a limited time span, and plans were put in place to stimulate alternative sources of income.

Today, the plans laid down some 20 years ago are reaping distinct benefits for Dubai and the neighboring emirates that have followed Dubai's example.

The FTZ and supporting infrastructures now contribute significantly to Dubai's move away from its reliance on oil exports, and as little as 3% of Dubai's revenue is now generated from oil.

More than 2,500 firms are operating at the Jebel Ali Free Zone, employing some 100,000 people. Most of these companies are either logistics or assembly-process industries – there are hardly any medium- or heavy-industrial plants – with labor forces predominantly from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

However, Dubai has become a victim of its own success. As a result of the rush by people to become the "new rich" of Dubai and to live the liberal lifestyle of the UAE, prices have begun to soar and risk pricing the Emirates out of the FTZ game.

Tony Restall is the Managing Director of Development Services International Ltd, and has spent the past 34 years in the marine, port and free-trade zone (FTZ) industries, mainly in the Middle East.

He has set up FTZs in the UAE, Nigeria, Egypt, Eritrea and South Yemen. He will be leaving Phuket soon for Oman to set up another FTZ there.

As an indication of the volume of business a FTZ can generate, the one in Dubai's Jebel Ali Port now hosts 2,500 companies employing more than 100,000 people. Mr Restall explains here why he believes Phuket would be an ideal location for an FTZ.



But why has Dubai succeeded where others have failed? Anyone considering establishing a business in an FTZ must compare its benefits with that of the many other FTZs around the world.

These benefits should include:

- Competitive logistics (air, sea, road links);
- Telecommunications (fax, telephone, high-speed Internet access);
- Suitable workforce;
- Government determination to support the FTZ;
- Medical facilities;
- Educational facilities (international schools);
- International banking facilities (international transfers, ability to open letters of credit and so on);
- Office space, warehouse space and developed land;

• Utilities (electricity, water, waste treatment);

• Legal framework to protect investment in FTZ.

• Lifestyle.

Anyone visiting Phuket cannot help but observe that the Phuket economy consists almost entirely of tourism. Being reliant on one particular industry leaves an economy open to risks from events such as terrorism, Sars and the more recent chicken 'flu epidemic.

Providing a much needed alternative economic input to Phuket, and other parts of Thailand, may seem a difficult subject to tackle; governments are usually very slow to recognize the economic value of FTZs and the contribution they make to many areas of the economy.

However, time has proved conclusively that an FTZ not only provides

much-needed employment opportunities across a range of educational qualifications, but also strengthens the national economy.

There has already been much discussion about a "Phuket Enterprise Zone" – and other monikers for a Phuket FTZ.

It could be set up without massive funding from the government and bring almost immediate benefits to those in the local workforce who, for whatever reason, cannot find jobs in the established tourism industry.

One of the main factors that determine whether a business will be set up in a certain FTZ is lifestyle. Dubai scores very high for this, but most people would agree that Phuket is an even better place to live.

Another important factor for the potential FTZ investor is the ability to develop his business.

In most cases, companies start small and expand as they become more confident that the host country can provide support, such as easy international banking, "no hassle" customs processing and easy resident-permit procedures.

Key locations where a FTZ could easily be established in Phuket are at the Deep Sea Port and at Phuket International Airport. Both are secure areas that are easily controlled by the Thai Customs Department, and both provide easy access to logistics.

An estimated 10,000-20,000 jobs could be generated within eight years by establishing an international-standard FTZ in Phuket.

Once it is established, the benefits will be immense. So what is Phuket waiting for?

Discrimination left bad taste at buffet

Recently my Thai wife and I went for a lunch buffet at the Thavorn Grand Hotel in Phuket City.

When we went to pay for the buffet, we were informed by staff and then again by management that there was an extra charge for my meal because of my white skin.

Isn't racial discrimination illegal in Thailand? If so, which government office is responsible for processing complaints?

Danny B
Phuket

Nopparat Thongsong, Assistant Food & Beverage Manager at the Thavorn Grand Hotel, replies:

This was a promotional buffet to celebrate the Thavorn Grand Hotel's 13th anniversary. We had a special offer for Phuket people of 199 baht for two people. Both people had to be local people (for their children it was 100 baht for two).

In addition, we had a special rate for government employees of 199 baht for two or, in the case of parties of 20 or more, 159 baht for two.

But for people not from Phuket – or for people from Phuket coming on their own – the price was 199 baht each.

An official of the Damrongtham Center, which addresses complaints by the public, replies:

If you have a receipt showing what you paid for your meal, you can bring it to us and we will look into the matter. You can call us on Tel: 076-213203.

Where's my bank gone to?

I opened an account at the UOB Bank, Samkong branch, a few years ago because it was the nearest bank to my home.

When I went to get some money last week, I was surprised to see that the entire bank was gone, lock, stock and barrel – ATM machine too.

My experience with Thai banks is that if you want to get anything done, such as closing an account, you have to go to the branch where the account was opened.

How can I close my account now? What happened to my bank and my account? Who can I contact? Why wasn't I notified that the branch was closing?

Doughboy
Samkong

Manit Pipatanapiwong, Manager of UOB Radanasin Bank's Phuket Branch, replies:

Your bank branch has been closed, but the bank did send out letters to all customers in advance of the closing.

We also posted a big announcement in front of the bank two or three months before it closed.

The sign was in Thai language only, so maybe that's why you didn't know about it. I would like to apologize about that.

If you would like to make any transactions or take other action on your account please visit our branch at 60 Rassada Rd, Phuket City, near the entrance to the Phuket Shopping Center.

Issues & ANSWERS

Want to know how to get something done? Can't understand some of the dafter things that seem to go on in Phuket? Want to pitch an idea to Phuket's authorities or institutions? Then this is the forum for you.

Submit your queries or suggestions to us and we'll ask the appropriate people to respond to them.

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

Unpleasant encounter on Nui Beach

Recently, I decided to go to Nui Beach to take some photographs of the sunset.

It was almost 6 pm when I reached the beach. A man of about 25 ran up to me and told me the bar was closed. This was not a problem because I had not come to drink.

I started taking pictures but the same individual ran back to me shouting, "No photographs! No photographs!"

In the face of such hatred and worried that the situation might come to blows, I left, frightened and disappointed.

Are the beaches of Thailand not public property? Can someone refuse access to them?

Richard Market
Chalong

Chaiwatt Suphantakit, Chief Administrative Officer of Or-Bor-Tor Karon, replies:

All beaches in Thailand are public. However, access to Nui Beach passes through private land. As a result, the owner of the land can charge you a fee for crossing the land, or can bar you from crossing it.

But if someone tries to hurt you, you should call the police.

Foreign investors need our support

At the beginning of May we started a new project whereby I coordinate central government policy with initiatives at sub-district and municipality level.

Funds that low-level administrations collect locally should be used for projects that are in line with central government policy, such as developing Phuket, solving problems, supporting tourism or at the very least, not creating any more problems.

I have to inspect these bodies myself because if there are policies that they are not following, then problems, such as poor management of beaches, do not get fixed.

One main policy that needs following up is helping [foreign] investors. Local municipalities should not make problems for investors before they even get their businesses started.

Other countries welcome investors, but we keep pushing them back, saying "No". If you keep saying no to investment, then a local administration will have no income to develop the area.

We have to understand that foreign investors come because the central government has invited them to invest. We

are their hosts and have to take care of them, though we must still ensure that they do not break the law.

There are good and bad investors. If investors are bad, the local administration has the authority to take action, but if they are good, we must support them.

Duty-bound: Over many years, many unsuccessful attempts have been made to set up a duty-free zone in Phuket. Last month Suwit Mesinsri, Assistant to the Finance Minister, and Chavalit Sethameetee, the Director-General of the Customs Department, came to investigate whether Phuket is suitable for such a zone.

In Phuket, we have duty-free shops at Wang Talang, in Phuket City, and at Phuket International Airport. This time we are looking to set up a duty-free center. We will look at making a Phuket port a duty-free area in the future.

The government will aid in the development of duty-free businesses by establishing the regulations and enforcing



THE GOVERNOR'S
LETTER

them, but the investment to set up the center will have to come from the private sector.

We have set ourselves a deadline of three months from now to set up the center. I have already set up a committee, led by Vice-Governor Winai Buapradit, to investigate potential sites and to develop a plan for setting up the center, including the finer details such as the conditions for selling duty-free goods and which kinds of goods may be sold duty-free.

At this stage, it seems likely the center will be at Wang Talang's new building on Chao Fa West Rd, because it is already under construction.

I think the people who should be allowed to buy duty-free goods at the center should be tourists with foreign passports and Thais from other provinces who stay in Phuket for more than 48 hours.

I don't plan to seek any more public opinion about setting up a duty-free zone. The law already allows duty-free goods to be sold in Phuket, and there has been

too much talk about this in Phuket for too long, but without any action.

I don't think that this project – or any others – will be successful if we are timid.

Westerward-bound: On June 11, a delegation of about 80 representatives from Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi and Bangkok, led by Interior Minister Bhokin Bhalakula, will travel to Port Blair [in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands] to discuss the development of trade links.

The main issues to be discussed will be tourism, commerce and investment, air and sea links, and information technology. Investors who have operations in Bangalore, [India's IT city], will take part in the meetings to give their opinions on investing in the software industry in Phuket.

Customs and immigration procedures are among other issues we will discuss. In addition, Phuket Air will be consulted about the possibility of operating direct flights between Phuket and Port Blair.

Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura

Bringing some color to your cheeks

Color has a major effect on our lives. It has many meanings and associations – "seeing red", "turning green with envy", "feeling blue", "scarlet woman" and "red-light district" for example.

Certain colors stir up certain emotions. A blue room may induce calmness, while a navy blue suit might give a sense of power.

However, there is much more to color than meets the eye; using color can heal and bring balance to our lives.

Color has been used as a form of therapy for thousands of years, including in temples in ancient Greece and Egypt.

Today, color is used by many psychologists and therapists as a way of identifying

imbalance or disharmony in a person's psychological state.

But color can be used for much more than that. Color is the key to our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual coding, and is one way of unlocking energy within.

There are two forms of color healing used as therapies today: Aura-Soma and Aura Light.

Both deal with balancing a person's aura, which, as explained by Aura-Soma practitioner Teena Alicea, is an electromagnetic field that surrounds each living being and which carries that being's entire history, along with its present state of being.

Aura-Soma and Aura Light are also both the result of experiments in the UK in 1984 by

Not everyone believes that Western medicine or conventional exercise regimens have all the answers to maintaining good health.

Many alternative forms of therapy are advocated by a variety of people in Phuket. Here is one such view.



**ALTERNATIVE
HEALTH**
By Rhonda Ann Clarke

Vicky Wall, a blind chiroprapist, pharmacist and herbalist, then aged 66.

She experienced a series of meditative visions and was told to "go and divide the water". She went into her lab and began formulating mixtures using the most natural ingredients she could find.

Vicky could not see what combinations of colors she had created, nor did she understand their purpose. However, when she completed making the mixtures, which had two distinctly different layers, she felt the power they emanated as they radiated in the sunlight.

Over the following few years, Vicky studied why people reacted to particular colors, how they felt and why people chose certain color combinations.

Eventually, she was able to confirm that "color speaks a language of its own".

When Vicky died in 1991, Tony and Marion Cooper, who

worked with her during the early stages of her research, moved back to Australia and created Aura Light.

Both forms of color healing use the same principles, but Aura

Light combines products mainly from local Australian oils, crystals, vegetable dyes, herbs, mineral water and water, while Aura-Soma uses ingredients found in the UK and neighboring countries.

When you visit an Aura-Soma or Aura Light practitioner, you are asked to choose four bottles from a range of more than 100.

Each bottle has one or two colors. The first bottle represents your true purpose, the second reflects issues from the past; the third represents what you're currently experiencing; and the fourth concerns your future.

When you choose the bottles you use your left hand. By using your left hand, you tap into the intuitive right side of your

brain to select a color or combination of colors reflecting your conscious and subconscious energies.

Each bottle will reveal what is happening in your life on a physical, emotional, mental and spiritual level.

The colors relate to your chakra energy system (discussed in the April 24-30 issue of the *Gazette*). For example, if you chose red, this would relate to your base chakra, your connection to the earth. If you chose violet, this corresponds with your crown chakra.

The practitioner will then give you one or more bottles, depending on his or her interpretation of your selection, to take home and apply to a particular chakra area.

Before applying the liquid, shake the bottle and mix the water-based top layer with the oil-based bottom layer.

Aura-Soma and Aura Light liquids affect you on a cellular level. The colors work mainly with the subtle energy body, shifting cells and renewing the energy pattern of your chakra. As a result, they harmonize you.

This shift in energy directly affects your body, because you have created a new relationship between your thinking and your feelings.

Color helps us to remember our true nature and our connection to our universal self.

A course in Aura Light readings will be held at the Movement Center in Chalong from June 14-20. For more information, see www.phuketmoves.com or call Rhonda Ann Clarke at Tel: 01-7975065.

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Tourist industry backs ICEC

By Anongnat Sartpisut
& Stephen Fein

PHUKET: Progress on the Phuket International Exhibition Center (ICEC) remains stalled in a political tug-of-war about where the project should be sited.

But those in the tourism industry appear to agree overwhelmingly that such a center is needed if Phuket is to capitalize on expected growth in the regional market in meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions, collectively labeled as Mice.

Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Governor Juthamas Siriwan admitted last month that his agency was still undecided on how the center would be developed. He said there were three options: set up a new company to develop the center; form a joint venture with a private firm; or hand the whole project over to the private sector.

Udom Metatamrongsiri, executive director of the TAT's tourism-development department, said Mice arrivals continue to rise and would account for 15% of the total number of tourists visiting Thailand within three years.

TAT statistics show that some 10 million tourists visited Thailand last year, about 10% of

which were Mice visitors. This was a 23% increase over 2002.

The TAT figures also show that Mice arrivals continue to grow annually, despite world events that have shaken confidence in regional travel in past years. In 2002, 72,598 Mice delegates visited Phuket, up about 2% from 2001.

Gerd Steeb, Executive Vice President of the Central Group of Hotels and Resorts, told the *Gazette* that Phuket definitely needs a large convention facility.

"The existing facilities are on the small side – a convention of 800 people is considered small-to-medium. Considering Phuket's growing international status, it really needs a much larger facility. Such a center would also help it attract visitors during the long low season."

Mr Steeb also told the *Gazette* that, when complete, the planned new Central Hotel at Karon Beach will have 300 rooms and conference facilities for about 600 people. Work on the project is likely to begin late this year or early in 2005, he said.

Currently, all major convention facilities in Phuket are located in hotels. The largest of these is at the Phuket Arcadia Hotel in Karon, which plans to expand convention capacity to

seat 1,000 delegates when its refurbishment and rebranding as a Hilton property is complete.

Kobkeaw Narkrod, Assistant Director of Sales at the Royal Phuket City Hotel, said Phuket attracts Mice groups in the 100-300 range year-round. Royal Phuket City hosts four or five such groups monthly, but has hosted gatherings of up to 800 in the past. Revenue from Mice groups increased 5-10% over the past year and now accounts for 50% of the hotel's income.

"In my opinion, Phuket needs a big convention center for more than 1,000 delegates, something comparable to the Impact Arena or the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center in Bangkok," he said.

Robert Frei, Manager of Pearl Village Hotel in Nai Yang, confirmed that Phuket is experiencing rapid growth in the regional Mice market. The island is accessible from around the region and enjoys cost advantages over places such as Singapore and Hong Kong. Building the ICEC would further encourage growth, he said.

Worapot Srabua, Managing Director of event organizing firm Oriental Leisure, which handles many Mice groups, said his company's revenue was up 50% compared with last year.

He said his firm was organizing an event in 2006 for 850 people, but that it will have to build a "temporary hall" in order to accommodate them. This is proof that the ICEC is needed, he said.

"Meeting customer expectations is important. Sometimes we have inquiries, but when the representatives come to Phuket and see the lack of a large convention facility they take their business elsewhere," he said.

TAT Region 4 Director Suwalai Pinpradab agreed that a 2,000-3,000 seat facility, such as is proposed for the ICEC, is needed in light of the large number of hotel rooms in Phuket – 30,000 to 40,000.

The incentives market is one in which Phuket has a particularly strong competitive advantage over rival destinations, she added.

She expressed confidence that the island of Phuket is not too far from a large population center to support such a facility.

Other projects that have been mooted, such as a duty-free zone, along with projects now under construction such as Jungceylon and Central Festival, would also help establish Phuket as a "world class" destination and increase the number of Mice visitors to Phuket, she said.

ON THE MOVE

Michel Cottabarren, 39, from France, has joined the new 5-star



boutique resort, The Aspasia Phuket at Kata Beach, as Director of Culinary Operations. Mr Cottabarren received his formal training through an apprenticeship in

a small hotel specializing in regional cooking in southwest France, before going on to work in Britain, the US, Indonesia, Taiwan and China. Before joining The Aspasia Phuket, he was Executive Chef at the Hong Qiao State Hotel Shanghai, in China.

Sayan Siributr, 44, from Bangkok, has been appointed Executive House-

keeper at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort. K. Sayan graduated in General Management from Baan Somdej Chaophraya Teacher's College in Bangkok. He previously held posts at the Rayavadee Krabi, the Banyan Tree Phuket, the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket and Le Royal Meridien Baan Taling Ngam on Koh Samui.



Samlee Samchuencham, 28, from Bangkok, has been appointed Reservations Manager at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort.



She is a graduate of the International Hotel & Tourism Industry Management School in Bangkok. Before joining Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort, she was Front Office Manager at the JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa.

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

Odds of casino success are high

Over the past 25 years, the tourism industry in Phuket has changed in many ways. Some, no doubt, will look upon tourism as causing a loss of Phuket's former charm.

Tourism has brought great economic benefits to Phuket including – but by no means limited to – improved roads, hospitals, schools, employment and business opportunities.

It even helped Phuket escape the worst of the 1997 financial crisis, when tourism and foreign investment combined to give Phuket a boost just when it needed it the most.

But thanks to the weather, Phuket has, in reality, only a five-month tourist season.

This stop-start situation affects many Phuket businesses and their employees. Just as when a stone is thrown into a pool of water, the effects ripple right through the local economy. Nothing can be done to change the weather, but this does not mean the tourism industry must operate only half the year.

The solution is simple: introduce another activity that brings tourists to Phuket, regardless of the weather. One answer is gambling – well, at least it is an indoor activity.

Some readers will have noted the May 19 opening of the Sands Macao Casino. The ca-

sino-hotel was mobbed by an estimated 35,000 people on opening day. It cost about US\$240 million (about 10 billion baht) to build and the developers have already announced that they intend to start work immediately on several more casinos nearby, with a total investment of around US\$1.2 billion (55 billion baht).

Not only is gambling's contribution substantial, it is also not subject to the seasonal vagaries suffered by hotel profits.

Casino hotels on Phuket would bring many benefits, including the construction of more major hotels, increased employment and a substantial increase in tourism year-round.

It would also bring a huge increase in revenue for local government. The biggest problem would be stopping too much of this money going one-way to Bangkok. Properly approached, gambling would transform the local economy.



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

There have been two major objections raised to the introduction of gambling to Phuket. First is the potential negative social effect on the local population. Second, as one local politician said when interviewed on the subject last year by the *Gazette*, "There is no demand."

Regarding the negative social effects on local people, one solution would be allow entry only to people with foreign passports. Any deviation from this rule could cost the casino operators, say, a million-baht fine.

Monaco faced this problem and has used the foreign-passport rule successfully for decades. In any event, if Thais wish to gamble, there is a casino

hotel in Burma, west of Rangoon, that has been open to them for years.

As for the argument that there is no demand, it seems obvious that if there were no demand for casinos then gambling wouldn't be illegal.

Give me the sole rights to open casinos in Thailand. I'll be happy to take a gamble on success.

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.

VITAL STATISTICS: DOMESTIC PASSENGERS JUMP 17%

Type	Apr '03	Apr '04	% change
Domestic passengers	157,381	227,271	44.4
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Source: Phuket International Airport

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Royal relay to pass through Phuket

PHUKET: As part of celebrations for Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 6th cycle birthday on August 12, Phuket Province is organizing the local leg of a nationwide relay run that will cover all of Thailand's 76 provinces.

The run started in Thailand's southernmost provinces on May 24 and will pass through Phuket June 8-9.

Vice Governor Niran Kalyanamit explained in a press release that the baton will reach Phuket from Phang Nga province at the Tao Thepkasattri Bridge at 10 am on June 8.

Gov Udomsak Usawarangkul will run the first leg, followed by other bureaucrats. The run will go through all of Phuket's three districts by the following route:

Southward along Route 402 to Baan Bang Ku junction (near Boat Lagoon), then along the bypass road to Dara Samut School (Thainaan restaurant) Junction. Northwest along Wichit Songkram Rd to the Kathu district offices. West along Phra Barami Rd, then along Thawee-wong Rd, Soi Bangla and Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd. From there to Karon Beach, Chalong circle, Chao Fa East Rd and ending for the day at Saphan Hin.

Starting at 6 pm at Saphan Hin there will be live music and dance performances staged by local entertainment venues and educational institutions.

At 8 am the following day, the baton and flag will set off north again, eventually leaving Phuket and being handed over to runners from Phang Nga on the far side of the Sarasin Bridge. From there it will continue though Phang Nga and Ranong provinces on its way to Bangkok and points further north.

Christinas win Phuket Rugby 10s

KARON: Christina Noble Children's Foundation, from Dubai, beat The Jailers, from Rugby, England, 17-12 to win the 6th Phuket International Rugby 10s, held at Karon Municipal Stadium on May 29 and 30.

The Cup final for the Clive Williamson Memorial Trophy on May 30 was a tribute to the top-quality rugby played throughout the tournament, with the "Christinas" lifting the cup in their second appearance in the Phuket 10s.

The first few minutes of play saw both teams settling in with some clean rucks and probing runs. Determined to show their opposite numbers how to "clean out" a ruck and maintain possession, big forwards on both teams put in crunching tackles and strong charges up the center of the field.

The Christinas found their way across the try line first after some quick passing and several phases of flowing rugby, finally scoring through Wayne Marsters on the right wing.

Throughout the rest of the first half, The Jailers struggled to contain the Christinas' star backs, borrowed from semi-final teams to make up the squad.

Five minutes later, the Christinas' Nnambi Ezulike found space down the right wing and sprinted down the sideline at a blistering pace to score the Christinas' second try, which was converted for an extra two points.

He was followed just two minutes later by Jean-Pierre O'Reilly, who scored after a fine



CRUNCH TIME: An Old Bill winger (No 14) is wrestled to the ground by the Melbourne Rams defense in the Plate final. The Rams won the match by three tries to two.

solo run, breaking through The Jailers' defense.

The second half opened with breaking runs and well-placed kicks, resulting in creative and entertaining end-to-end rugby. The Jailers were eager to put points on the board and the Christinas were just as keen to increase their lead.

Three minutes into the sec-

ond half, quick passing saw the Christinas charge upfield only to lose possession with a fumble just yards from an open try line.

The Jailers punished the mistake immediately with a strong run downfield ending with a pass to Scott Fitzgerald, who scored jubilantly between the posts and converted the kick for two more points.

Now inspired, The Jailers played some brilliant rugby down the left flank and after five phases of play scored again through skipper Mathew Davis.

The Christinas replied with more crunching tackles, only to have the compliment returned by Jailers' forwards. The referee, ruthless all afternoon in penalizing any handling errors, added at least an extra four minutes to the second half for clock stoppages to allow players regain their feet and clear vision.

The Jailers, now dominating all facets of play, went for a last charge for a try, only to run out of time. Final score: Christinas 17, Jailers 12.

Earlier in the afternoon, the Melbourne Rams beat the Old Bill from Hong Kong by three tries to two to win the Plate final in another entertaining exhibition of individual skills and team play – and more crunching tackles right through to the final whistle.

Crowd favorites in the Bowl final were the British Club Bangkok's second-string team, BC Pinks, whose wholehearted play against the much bigger Pot Bellied Pigs from Hong Kong had the crowd on their feet cheering. The smaller Thai players did well not to be injured in the Pigs' tough tackles, and proved convincingly that a clean pair of heels is mightier than mass by winning the match 26-0.

Patong Darts League Table

Results for May 25: Didi's 0, In-Between* 9; Happy Days 8, Champs* 1; Piccadilly 6, Football Crazy* 3; Shakers 2, Off Shore* 7; Valhalla 5, Amigos* 4. (* = winners of the beer leg.)

Overall standings as of May 25: 1. In-Between (26pts); 2. Champs (23); 3. Off Shore (17); 4. Football Crazy (15); 5. Happy Days (14); 6. Piccadilly (12); 7. Valhalla (11); 8. Amigos (10); 8. Didi's (10); 10. Shakers (9).

June 8 match-ups: Amigos v Football Crazy; Happy Days v Off Shore; In Between v Champs; Piccadilly v Didi's; Shakers v Valhalla (home team first).



Property agents and their potential clients alike found the Phuket & Samui Property Expo in Singapore in March both fun and informative. Don't miss the next one in Hong Kong in November.



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A Bangkok Bank player scores in the nail-biting penalty shootout against Siam Commercial Bank in the Bank Cup final. Bangkok Bank won 6-5.



Bangkok Bank wins in sudden-death shootout

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Bangkok Bank beat Siam Commercial Bank 6-5 in a nerve-racking sudden-death penalty shootout to win the final of the 6th Bank Cup at Surakul Stadium on May 29.

Nine teams took part in the seven-a-side soccer tourney, which began on May 22.

In Group A were Bank of Ayudhya, Thanachart Bank, Bangkok Bank and Kim Eng Securities, while in Group B were Kasikorn Bank, The Government Savings Bank, Thai Military Bank, Siam Commercial Bank (SCB) and Siam City Bank.

From the start, both Bangkok Bank and SCB battled to dominate the match.

Bangkok Bank scored first with a goal in the 5th minute by Sakchai Teekul.

SCB responded by scoring a goal of their own, by Preecha Seangthong, in the 15th minute.

Throughout the remainder of the first 20-minute half, the teams were evenly matched with both sides creating many scoring opportunities, but neither managing to find the back of the net.

SCB dominated the second half, but failed to score.

With the score level at 1-1 at full time, players lined up to take their shots at goal in a sudden-death penalty shootout.

The first players on both teams each scored, but the second players both missed. The third and fourth players to take penalty shots all scored, but hearts went racing when the fifth players both missed.

Next up, the sixth players of both teams scored, but it was Bangkok Bank goalie Theerasak Phromphet who scored next to break the deadlock, taking the score to 6-5.

Theerasak then stepped into the goal and saved the next SCB

penalty shot to win the game.

Bangkok Bank fans cheered for their team, who entered the tourney as underdogs and had yet to win the Bank Cup.

Hero of the day, Theerasak was also declared player of the match.

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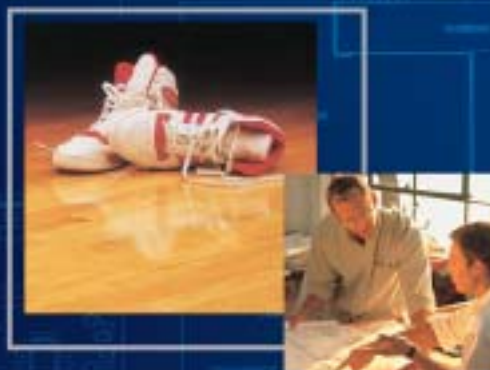
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The new sports car from Stuttgart is very innovative – and very quick

Merc's latest: as smooth as SLK



Above: The design of the new SLK clearly grew from its predecessor, but the new model is more roomy. Below, features inside include steering wheel controls for the seven-speed gearbox.



The new, second generation Mercedes-Benz SLK Roadster was launched earlier this year. Although similar in size to the previous model, the new SLK has more legroom as well as greater trunk space, thanks to a redesigned folding roof and slightly larger exterior dimensions.

The biggest improvement is in shoulder room, which was at something of a premium in the old model. Head room is also greater than before.

The original SLK, introduced in 1996, was the forerunner of the folding steel roof concept, now copied by a number of other auto makers.

In the intervening years, more than 300,000 SLKs were delivered and the car received an impressive 40 international awards, marking it as a breakthrough in automotive design.

With lines similar to the Mercedes-McLaren SLR, itself styled on the McLaren Grand Prix cars with their pointed noses, the new SLK is built on a

similar platform to its predecessor, but with a variety of improvements and a couple of real innovations.

The new SLK is available with a choice of three engines. Top of the line is the amazing 5.5-liter AMG version producing a mammoth 360bhp (265 kW) and a massive 510 Nm of torque.

This model tops 250 kmh and will reach 100 kmh from rest in a shade under five seconds.

It features the new 7G-Tronic seven-speed automatic transmission, the world's first seven-cog box for a passenger car.

Two other engine options are available: a 1.8-liter Kompressor model and a 3.5-liter V6. The smaller unit comes with a six-speed manual gearbox as standard or an optional five-speed automatic box, while the SLK 350 can be ordered with the seven-speed transmission.

The SLK 350 is likely to be the most popular engine option. The V6 develops a healthy 272 bhp (202kW) at 6,000 rpm, and a gutsy 350Nm of torque at engine speeds as low as 2,400rpm.

Variable valve technology and inlet tract control are instrumental in achieving these power figures. Noise levels are low, a tribute to the Mercedes engineers' constant efforts in this area.

The four-cylinder supercharged Kompressor motor delivers a respectable 163 bhp (120kW) but at the expense of some noise, although vibration is reduced by twin counter-rotating Lanchester balancer shafts.

When the SLK was first

introduced the folding roof caused something of a sensation. The design has been revised and the latest version opens and closes in just 22 seconds, three seconds faster than the old model.

In the trunk there is more room for luggage because of to a remarkable rear window design: the

glass swivels so that the window nestles inside the curved surface of the roof, leaving much more trunk capacity than before.

Another feature is the Air-

scarf, a unique innovation – although not very useful in most of Thailand – that enables the SLK to be driven with the roof down even in chilly weather.

Warm air is emitted from small vents in the head restraints at the touch of a button, swirling around the occupants' neck, throat and head.

Controlled by a micro-processor, the system varies blower speed depending on ambient temperature and speed.

Another development is the Mercedes-Benz Thermatic climate control system. Sensors and an electronic control maintain the interior temperature at a constant level, while the system cools the air flowing into the car, also removing any moisture. Separate controls for driver and passenger are fitted.

Finally, the SLK uses a unique paint finishing system. Developed by Mercedes-Benz in 2003, the clear-coat finish offers improved scratch resistance and ensures a glossy sheen on the bodywork.

The new SLK is on sale now in Thailand at around 4.25 million baht, depending on specification.

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

BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

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Reading material for wine beginners

Q: Which book about wine would you recommend?

The best book for beginners is the revised edition of Hugh Johnson's *How to Enjoy Your Wine*, published by Simon and Schuster.

It spells out the basics in straightforward terms and has many photos and diagrams to illustrate the main points.

Q: Wine often seems to taste "flat" or very dilute after I drink Champagne. Why?

Sparkling wines are very acidic but you would not notice because the bubbles and lower alcohol level disguise its sharp taste. When you drink wine after drinking sparkling wine, the wine seems much less acidic, and therefore tastes "flat".

This is known as "the contrast effect", but it goes away after a few minutes after our taste buds adjust.

Q: What are your favorite red and white wines?

Asking about favorite wines is like asking about favorite children; how can you have a favorite child? You love them all even though they are different.

But, if I were to go on the TV show *Survivor*, I would not be concerned about the outcome if I had a good stash of Riesling from Austria and Pinot Noir from California's Russian River Valley hidden away on the island.

Q: I read a lot about tannins in wine being good for you and making wine taste good. What exactly is a tannin?

Historically, plant extracts used to waterproof animal hides were referred to as "tannins". Plants use tannins as a natural defense, a good example being the ac-



By Steven Roberto

tive tannic substance found in poison ivy. Tannins are toxic in high concentrations, but are a healthy supplement for humans if consumed in low concentrations.

In nature, most tannins are proanthocyanidin, condensed molecules that give wine its supple texture. Condensed tannins are common in plants, including in oak trees used to make wine barrels and in the seeds of grapes used to make wine.

Other tannins found in wine exist as esters, ethers and acids, such as coumarin and cinnamic acid found in white wine. Esterified acids and proanthocyanidins contribute directly to the flavor of wine.

Q: You really seem to like your job. What are the worst and best things about working with wine in Thailand?

The worst thing is the distribution. Some distributors view wine as just one more thing to sell and don't know much about their products, nor do they seem to be concerned about service or proper storage and handling of their wines. At times they can take the joy out of wine.

The best thing is the Thai people. I get so much happiness helping them learn about wine and how to work with it professionally. When I see the staff I train becoming more knowledgeable, it makes me very happy.

If I can help Thailand catch up with nations that have more advanced appreciation of wine, then maybe I will have done something useful.

Steven Roberto is a winemaker and restaurant consultant from California. He is the Wine and Beverage Director for the award-winning Baan Rim Pa restaurant in Patong. Email: stevenroberto@lycos.com

One could hold up the Spanish siesta and the Thai national pastime of sleeping as an area of similarity between the two nations but, to this reviewer, the abiding sympathy between Thai and Spanish cultures is food – not necessarily the type of food eaten, but the enjoyment and near day-long grazing, be it the ubiquitous *somtam* in Thailand or *tapas* in Spain.

El Rincon near the Chalong circle is one of a handful of Spanish restaurants in Phuket and, according to husband-and-wife team Juan Manuel Molina and Ana Guerrero Salvador – from Barcelona and Almeria respectively – there are only 10 Spaniards living on the island.

All credit to Juan and Ana, then, for giving islanders another taste of Europe, doubly so as neither of them is a professional chef. Learning the art of cooking and the pleasure of eating came from their families.

Almost as soon as we sat down, my dining companion and I were brought a glass of chilled, young red wine, Spanish of course, and a not-insubstantial *plato de tortilla de patatas*, better known as a potato omelet.

It is heavy, fragrant with olive oil, crumbles in the mouth and makes the taste buds pucker. A perfect example of *tapas*.

We chat and we drink and, as we do, the entire Spanish

You say patatas...



SPANISH SUCCULENCE: Clockwise from left, saffron-infused *paella*, *almejas* in wine, sangria, *calamares fritos* and *tortilla de patatas*.

population of Phuket – all 10 of them – seem to descend on El Rincon and include us in their conversations.

The evening is sultry, but we eschew air conditioning for the genial revolving conversation outdoors.

The world's two common currencies, alcohol and cigarettes, are consumed in typically Southern European style as we sit in what is as close to a sidewalk open-air *merendero* as you are likely to

find found this side of the Balearic Islands.

After ordering *paella*, we are left to indulge in the other *tapas*: *calamares fritos* (fried squid); olives; *almejas* (clams) in wine, olive oil, parsley and heaps of garlic; more *tortilla de patatas*; sardines; *chanquetes* (similar to whitebait); *jamón serrano* (cured ham) and sangria.

Although rather full by the time we polish this lot off, and with much bread soaked in the delightful fusion of oils and juices left on the plates, we await the *paella* with bated breath and sharpened senses.

It arrives, and I quiz Juan on his source for the saffron so essential for this dish. He grins and says he won't tell me. He

keeps his counsel equally when quizzed about his other suppliers, too. So much for helping this amateur epicurean.

The *paella* is rich in flavor and color, full of chicken and seafood, and eaten in a flash.

It is 11:20 pm. My companion and I head towards the door just as Ana and Juan, leaving the washing up for others to do, emerge dressed up to go out for their fun. We are invited to join them but – *maldito sea!* – our days begin too early.

The music, ranging from the Gypsy Kings to Euro-pop, finished playing ages ago, but as we leave, Mink DeVille's *Spanish Stroll* is happily playing in my head.

El Rincon, 2/9–2/10 Moo 5, Wiset Rd, Rawai (just south of the Chalong Circle). Open daily 11 am–11 pm. Tel: 06-2815587 or 06-2816453.

On the menu

with Andy Johnstone

El Rincon

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Kazakhstan: land of promise

**PROPERTY
&
HOMEZONE**
By Graham Doven

Phuket's international-standard educational facilities were one of the island's many facets that caught the interest of people in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

As in Thailand, many families in Kazakhstan send their children to Britain to be educated. More recently, however, the idea of sending them instead to school in Phuket has become increasingly appealing.

Phuket is an opposite in many ways to Almaty, Kazakhstan's biggest city, but with one exception: both places are in beautiful locations.

The sun is shining as I write this and I am wearing the same clothes as I would in Phuket. However, just two hours ago, snow was falling on the Tian Shan Mountains, a mere 15 kilometers away and less than 40 minutes from the center of Alma-



Dulwich Headmaster David Cook (right) with Ron Trouard, President of Crown Services, pictured in Almaty.

ty, where the temperature is currently around 28°C. The city is surrounded by snow-covered mountain peaks and is one of the most stunning I have visited.

Signs of new wealth are everywhere. Ron Trouard, President of Crown Services, says, "Two years ago there were very

few modern cars around, just old Ladas and the like."

Now, the latest and most expensive marques are everywhere: Lexus, Audi, BMW and every other top-end brand you can think of.

Development continues apace. Modern shopping centers,

restaurants and bars – including themed Irish and Scottish pubs – are springing up everywhere.

While old-style bureaucracy and corruption from the Soviet days still hamper development, massive foreign investment in Kazakhstan's natural resources is generating new wealth that is filtering down through the economy.

There is no doubt that Kazakhstan is emerging as a potentially huge market for Phuket's education, property investment and tourism sectors.

The Kazakhs don't know much about Thailand yet, but it is obvious that many are finding out about the rest of the world very fast, and have the money to do so.

The next two or three years will see continuing growth in Kazakhstan, and Thailand could benefit from this.

Indeed, both countries could benefit in the long-term. A simple example: many Thais love to go to the snow, and travel as far as New Zealand or Switzerland. Almaty is in the same time zone as Thailand and only a six-hour flight from Bangkok.

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Panoramic views over Patong Bay are one of the benefits of this four-bedroom villa. Access to this house – which sits on a 1,050-square-meter plot surrounded by stone walls – is via a private road into the Patong Hills Estate. Living space, totaling a comfortable 450sqm, is on two stories.

On entering the property, one walks into a spacious open-plan lounge and dining room with a separate TV and enter-

tainment room to the side. Both open onto the terrace and pool. The kitchen is of the highest quality and has every appliance needed for cooking.

The ground floor has a guest bedroom with en-suite bathroom. All rooms face the terrace and pool, which are surrounded by landscaped gardens.

Three bedrooms, with walk-in wardrobes, en-suite bathrooms and balconies, are on the second floor. A separate

large bathroom is also on this level.

This property, from the gardens to interior finishings and the views, must be seen to be truly appreciated. It is stylishly and thoughtfully finished throughout and priced at 27 million baht.

For more details or to view this home contact House and Villa Sales Phuket on Tel: 076-345081 or 01-921447, or email: info@houseandvillasalesphuket.com

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Sowing the seeds of idleness

I hate sounding like a gardener. Real gardeners use rather confounding phrases such as "alluvial loam" and "pH balanced nutrients". They like to use all sorts of complicated phraseology, and refuse to call plants by their common names.

These are people who will call an orchid "a member of the *orchidaceae* family" rather than an orchid. They'll call a coconut palm a *cocos nucifera*. What are they on?

One really does have to wonder just what they might be growing in their garden.

Normal people haven't got a clue what they're talking about, and I'm not sure that such gardeners themselves actually have much more of an idea.

One of their favorite words is "propagation". To you and me they're talking about making new plants. Oddly, this is one of the few occasions when I am actually in favor of the "proper" gardening term, which is rather frightening – they'll be calling me a real gardener next.

Propagation is the scientific name for the reproduction of any living thing. We all know how the birds and the bees do it, but plant

nooky is a bit different, and nowhere near as much fun. With plants, it means making new plants either from seeds or from parts of existing plants.

In tropical climates, such as the one we enjoy here in Phuket, it's usually ridiculously easy to make new plants.

Like teenagers topped up with hormones, they're practically begging to reproduce and are willing to make life as easy as they can for you to help them on their way.

This is probably the main reason why my previously ambivalent feelings towards gardening changed after I left the dreary drizzle of the United Kingdom and arrived in tropical Thailand.

The sheer fecundity of this island makes gardening here a rewarding pursuit, and not the exercise in frustration and humiliation that I had come to expect from gardening in England.

If we're going to talk about propagation, we should first look at the most obvious method – sowing seeds.

There is a huge variety of plants that can be propagated by sowing their seeds. Flowers, foliage and berry plants generally work in this way. Others include

palms, ferns and insect-eating plants, as well as cacti and other succulents (oops, getting overly technical again, that should be "plants that store large amounts of water").

The principle is the same with all of them. Whatever the type of plant, seeds need three basic conditions to encourage germination: moisture, warmth and air. We don't need to worry about too much about any of those requirements here, as they're there in abundance around us.

In practical terms, just put the seeds on a seed compost, or even damp cotton wool, which both retains moisture and allows air penetration, and place them either on a window sill or in a quiet corner of the garden. They'll germinate.

I'll let you in on a secret that most gardeners cringe at the thought of admitting to others : growing from seed is just too much hard work.

I'm more than a little lazy when it comes growing seeds, and most of the time I just can't be bothered. The only time I grow seeds is when I've been eating rambutans or some other kind of big-seed fruit plant, and even then that's usually because I throw them in the nearest plant pot rather than walk all the way to the bin.

Occasionally, I have a burst of energy and lay the seeds carefully on a pad of soaking wet cotton wool and wait a few days for them to do their thing, but usually not. The casually discarded ones in the pots outdoors usually fare better anyway.

Far more often I'm content to leave all the hard work to the



Ferns are among the plants that can easily be propagated from seed – if you can be bothered with the long wait while they grow.

helpful little man at the garden center. He's much better at it than I am. And let's face it, he has a lot more patience.

I'm quite happy to let him do all the preliminary stuff for me, and I just march in and pay him

30 baht for something he's probably sweated over for about a year. Now that's *real* Phuket gardening.

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and soil investigation. Water quantity, guaranteed 1-year service warranty. Soil profile and analysis by professional geologists and engineers. Tel: 01-9788847.

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Steam room/sauna and accessories, and portable hot tubs from USA. Quality equipment, designed and installed for your needs. Business and residential. California Spa Design.
Tel: 076-263269
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Events Calendar

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List **YOUR** event now - **It's free of charge.**

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Island Job Mart

GRAPHIC DESIGNER NEEDED

Graphic Designer needed for Ritz Phuket Spa. Mature Thai male must have 3+ years' experience in graphic arts with knowledge of Microsoft Office programs as well as Photoshop and Quark Express, experience in Dreamweaver a plus. Ritz Phuket offers a comfortable work environment and competitive salary. Please apply in person with CV and portfolio or mail to Ritz Phuket Spa and Golf, 84/2 Patak Rd, Rawai, A. Muang. Apply in person between the hours of 10 am to 2 pm Monday thru Friday only. No phone calls please.

QUANTITY SURVEYOR

and office secretary are required for our Phuket office. Must be Thai nationals, fluent in written and spoken English; good computer skills. Please submit your CV to PO Box 65, Patong Post Office, Kathu, Phuket 83150.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

Master paintings and antiques gallery requires 2 Sales persons to work in Khao Lak. Excellent English, service-minded, computer literate. Please send application, resum  and recent photo by email. Tel: 076-211122, 01-7872155. Fax: 076-256-726. Email: info@soulofasia.com

OFFICE CLERK

An international company is seeking to employ an Office Clerk/Assistant. Applicants should be Thai nationals, high-school graduates and have computer skills in Word and Excel. Please contact to apply. Tel: 076-354762 or 01-5692282. Fax: 076-354-726. Email: sth_phkt@phuket.ksc.co.th

STAFF WANTED

A foreign company is seeking to employ a Thai national with a bachelor's degree; must be fluent in English and computer literate. Tel: 076-346218, 06-5101745. Email: pommejoh@yahoo.com

PROGRAMMERS

required. Must speak English and Thai, have VB, ASP and .NET experience, ERP is an advantage. Please email your CV to apply. Email: sismith999@yahoo.co.uk

SECRETARY

and coordinator required. Must be a foreign national and have experience in sales. Please contact us for more details. Tel: 076-355945. Fax: 076-355693. Email: sales@phuketgreenland.com



The Allamanda Vacation Club, based in Phuket and an integrated part of Laguna Resorts & Hotels, is currently looking for enthusiastic individuals to fill several available positions of:

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Applicants should meet the following criteria:

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- Interested in earning a lot of money
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- Truly passionate about representing the best product in our industry
- Outside Personal Contact & Tele-Marketing positions reserved for Thai only.

Applicants are invited to apply in person at Allamanda Vacation Club. Office is located in Canal Village (shopping area) at Laguna Phuket. Or send a full resum , detailed qualifications and experience with recent photo to:

Group Director of Human Resources
Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co Ltd
390/1 Moo 1, Srisoonthorn Road, Cherngtalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110
Tel: 076-324416-7 Fax: 076-325002
Email: sunisas@lagunaphuket.com or avcmkt@lagunaphuket.com

ITALIAN TEACHER

Prince of Songkla University is now looking for a part-time Italian teacher to teach 10 hours each week. Email: randles@fsi.psu.ac.th

PROPERTY

Copywriter required. Native English-speaking copywriter required part-time to write up property listings. Must have good written English. Based in Chalong, would suit retiree. For further details, please see our website at: www.siamrealestate.com Tel: 076-280805, 01-271-0496. Fax: 076-280805. Email: info@siamrealestate.com

TUTOR NEEDED

for 18-year-old American to study in high school, or for the equivalent certification of General Education Diploma, mainly Algebra. 1 or 2 days/week in Kamala. Please contact for details. Please call 07-1024507, 01-8894796. Email: dhinphuket@yahoo.com

EXCELLENT BENEFITS

and salary. We are a growing company and require more staff. If you have a minimum of 2 years' experience, an excellent command of written and spoken English, and good computer skills, please contact us. The positions are available for immediate start: Shop Manager, Accountant, Sales staff. Please submit your application with resum  to Khun Wanida Thiprat at Island Pools Co Ltd. 100/15 Srisoonthorn Rd, Cherngtalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110. Tel: 076-324478, 01-9585023, 09-8742205. Fax: 076-324-478. Email: islandpools@hotmail.com

TECHNICAL STAFF

We have 2 positions for experienced staff at Andaman Lighting Systems: AutoCAD operator and Electrical Technician. Based at our bypass-road office, English-speaking preferred. Please call or email for more details. Tel: 076-254826, 01-8937027. Fax: 076-254827. Email: ianpotter@hotmail.com

NANNY/HOUSEMAID

required for English couple with 2 children. Work 5-6 days/week. Live-in preferred, and must speak some English. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-0090404.

SECRETARY

We urgently require a secretary. Must speak and write English, have a good personality and be friendly. Age between 20-28 years old. Tel: 076-273379, 09-4741246. Email: nid@octopusasia.com

ASSISTANT GM

Assistant General Manager position available in a boutique resort. Successful applicant will be responsible for daily operations and human resources. Thai nationals only need apply, and by email only. For more information or to apply. Email: jobs@opensthe.net

PROPERTY SALES

Property Sales staff: 3 positions available. Must speak English and have own transport (motorbike okay). Salary: 10,000 baht. Please contact for more details or to apply. Tel: 076-345707. Email: info@phuketonerealestate.com

TEACHERS REQUIRED

We are looking for 3 positions for Thai English-language teachers and 2 positions for native English-speaking classroom teachers to teach kindergarten and primary level students. Please send your CV via email or fax. Tel: 076-248975. Fax: 076-248976. Email: info@kajonkiet.com

URGENTLY REQUIRED

We urgently require many part-time English teachers for English classes and English-speaking Thai teachers for teaching both Thai and English classes. Please contact Text and Talk Academy for more details. Tel: 076-346188.

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on 076-263737.



is looking to recruit for the following positions:
3 Sales Representatives for Scuba Diving Equipment

- Thai National Male/Female, age over 25
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- Proven experience in a sales background
- 2 years' experience in a similar position
- Salary 12,000 baht, with Diving Experience 15,000 baht and up

If you think this is you, please contact Khun Pen on 076/342511 or send email to info@diveasupply.com



Dive Supply is a leading importer for Scuba Diving Equipment located in Phuket and we are looking to recruit for the following position:

Assistant Manager

Are you an all-rounder? Can you manage a company with 20 or more employees?

- Foreign National preferable native English, age over 30
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SEA Entertainment is currently looking to recruit quality acts. Applications from musicians, dancers, entertainers, DJs and MC's should be emailed to: manager@phuketentertainment.com

Contact us for all your entertainment needs: cocktail parties, functions, events, weddings etc. Tel: 076 271077
Email: manager@phuketentertainment.com

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Issues & Answers

www.phuketgazette.net/issuesanswers/index.asp

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles for Sale

CLOSING DOWN SALE ON 06.11.04

Everything must go!

"One Day Only" We sell on Friday June 11 04 from 9 am to 5 pm. Pabx computer printer, scanner, aircon, ups, shelf, chairs, desk, table. At Simple computers Co Ltd, 210 Prabamee Road, Patong

PHILLIPS TV

Phillips Power Vision 29-inch TV for sale. Excellent working order, genuine reason for sale. 5,000 baht. Tel: 076-216619, 09-8735947. Email: stoohooper@hotmail.com

DIVING TANKS

We are selling 20 aluminium diving tanks for 3,500 baht each, including valves. Email: holiday@liveaboard-thailand.com

MOUNTAIN BIKE

Small bike suitable for persons up to 170cm and also for child. Black and red with 10 Shimano gears. Good condition. 1,500 baht obo. Email: kris@csloxinfo.com

UW CAMERA

Nikon F90X. Nikon SLR camera with 28-80mm Nikon lens and Ikelite underwater housing. 40,000 baht or best offer. Tel: 06-5953210.

LIVING ROOM SET

Rattan couch, two chairs, two foot rests. One glass coffee table with solid brass stand, white cushions, and two matching standing lamps. All for 15,000 baht. Can send pictures by email. Tel: 09-8681804. Email: travisns@yahoo.com

TWO MOBILE PHONES

Siemens S57, five months old. GPRS, color screen, Java, detachable camera, computer cable, polyphonic ring tones. Have software for computer. 5,000 baht. Nokia 8310, GPRS, FM radio, hands-free mic, infrared, still with box and user manuals. 3,500 baht firm. Tel: 09-8681804. Email: travisns@yahoo.com

DRUM SET, 5 PIECES

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1,500L WATERTANK

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UBC RECEIVER

Complete and used for only 3 months, sale for 6,000 baht. Giant MTB new 20,000 baht, will sell only 5,000 baht. Tel: 01-8950886.

RISOGRAPH

GR1750 plus interface for sale. Please contact for more details. Tel: 06-7417260.

HOUSE CLEARANCE

All my house contents for sale. Furniture, electrical appliances, kitchenware, general household items, some dive equipment, a few books and CDs. Too much to list; please contact me to view. Tel: 09-2111363. Email: iyflynden@hotmail.com

RACKETS FOR SALE

Two FBT aluminum badminton rackets, black (no. FBT 7100): 700 baht. Call 076-330710 or 01-5974218. Email: raoulwildt@gmx.net

ELECTRIC SLICER

Mainly used to slice bread, but can be used for anything. Made of steel, and from Germany, but not the same as used in a butcher's shop. This is a smaller, simpler version with very sharp stainless-steel blade. 2,000 baht. Tel: 076-330710, 01-5974218. Email: raoulwildt@gmx.net

SATELLITE RECEIVER

Dish and digital receiver with about 50 English-language channels and 16 radio channels. In very good condition with a year's warranty. Email: rubina682003@hotmail.com

GOLF SET FOR SALE

Callaway X-16, brand new, 14 clubs, 2-ball putter, with golf bag and travel bag. Price: 40,000 baht. Email: sainamyen@hotmail.com

DISPLAY DOLLS

for men's shop (mannequins) - different models. Also have hangers and racks for sale. Tel: 01-7881466. Email: richard_melen@hotmail.com

ORIENTAL RUGS

Personal collection of Oriental rugs for sale. Imagine a beautiful handmade rug in your home, office or shop for a reasonable price. Call for information. Tel: 01-8447549.

DIGITAL CAMERA

Sony's smallest Cybershot, model dsc-u20, 2.0 megapixel, 8MB memory stick. Rarely used, fits in any pocket, and easy to use. Blue color. New price last year: 14,000 baht. Sale for 8,500 baht. Tel: 01-8926534. Email: jbierwolf@yahoo.de

ELECTRIC TABLE GRILL

with a stand. Can be used indoors and outdoors. 1 year old. Price: 2,000 baht. Tel: 01-5974218.

Articles Wanted

PADI ENCYCLOPEDIA

Divemaster manual wanted. Please leave your contact number. Email: michael_b_w@yahoo.co.uk

DVD/UBC/TV

I am looking for a TV and DVD player, as well as UBC. Please email or call me and let me know what you have. Tel: 06-9516593. Email: teflsteve@yahoo.co.uk

PIANO WANTED

I am looking for a second-hand upright piano in good condition, suitable for beginners. Would prefer older, less expensive piano, but anything considered. Email: stewart@loxinfo.co.th

KITCHENWARE

Gas stoves, deep-fat fryer for French fries, and oven good for baking at hotter than 300°C. Other stuff also welcomed. Hood, fridges, freezers, bar stools, cocktail shakers, etc. Needed in about one month. Must be in correct working order. Contact Victor by email. Email: av58@phuket.ksc.co.th

POOL TABLE

Secondhand pool table required for a new bar. Call or email for details. Tel: 09-5943209. Email: olebay_th@yahoo.co.uk

MOBILE PHONE

I want to buy a cheap phone. Do not need anything advanced. Need only SMS features. Mail me your offer. Prefer Nokia but other brands also of interest. Tel: 076-248626. Email: lovinda1@hotmail.com

Boats & Marine

SPORT-FISHING BOAT

12-meter Thai sport-fishing boat with working flybridge. Price: 500,000 baht. Tel: 06-2674400.

EXPEDITION KAYAK

Feathercraft K2 Expedition double, collapsible kayak. Meets airline requirements, includes 2 spraydecks, 2 seasocks, 2 collapsible paddles and wheelcart. Please contact with best offer. Email: maurinquina23@hotmail.com

URGENT SALE

Thai 41-foot sport-fishing boat with a 300hp Hino diesel. Thai-registered for charter. CB Radio, color fish finder. Needs some wood repair. For sale at 400,000 baht. Email: sveisko@ksc.th.com

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LIGHTHOUSE FOR SALE

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37-FT BOAT FOR SALE

Custom-built, 37-foot wooden speedboat for sale. Built extra-strong to an unusual but beautiful design, it can take 3 outboards. Asking price 650,000 baht. Call to arrange viewing. Tel: 01-5365900, 01-6931425.



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2 Mains, 17.20m/4.95m; 2 Mains, 8.30m/2.5m; 1 jib, 5.00m/2.45m. All sails are dacron or mylar. Also have a self-steering windvane for boats 40-65ft. Offers, please. Tel: 076-383080, 06-9401860. Email: bigasail@samart.co.th

OUTBOARD 3.5HP

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BOAT STUFF

New, heavy duty, flexible marine coupling, for 1.5-inch shaft. Contact for details. Tel: 06-9401860. Email: bigasail@samart.co.th

Business Opportunities

MASSAGE SHOP

in Kata area for sale - only 150,000 baht. Great business, including all equipment. Please contact for more info. Tel: 06-6863210. Email: andrewcampbellthailand@hotmail.com

BAR/CAFE WANTED

Must be in Patong area. Beachside or good location preferred. Please contact with details. Tel: 07-815-8653. Email: patcha_h@yahoo.com

GUESTHOUSE & RESTAURANT

for sale. Located in the middle of Patong on busy Soi Bangla, just opposite Ocean Shopping Center. Price: 2.2 million baht. Contract valid until 2007. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-292523, 07-2822917. Email: sale@patong.biz

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Would you like to own a hotel, restaurant and rental shop on Karon Beach? Easy foreign ownership and rapid company transfer. Please contact us for further information or see our website at www.geocities.com/hotelinparadise or call us. Tel: 01-6931136. Email: hotelinparadise@yahoo.com

MLM LEADERS

US\$4 billion healthcare company seeks quality leaders. Unlimited income potential. Email for details. Tel: 02-7269918, 06-3418781. Fax: 02-7269917. Email: makelifegood@aol.com

SPORTS BAR

and restaurant. Great location in central Bangla area. Max 1 pool table, darts area, stereo/DVD/satellite radio, 3 (UBC) TV sets, 3 aircons, modern kitchen, living area upstairs. Upmarket bar with long lease. Please contact for more details. Tel: 09-867-7969. Email: bangla_04@yahoo.com

OFFICE FOR RENT

Fisherman Way Business Center office for rent. 6m x 10m, with aircon and 3 telephone numbers. Tel: 076-381181, 076-381189.

VERY NICE BAR

Very nice bar/restaurant for sale in Nai Harn. New kitchen and pool table. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-0887971.

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

TAT REG CO LTD FOR SALE

TAT-registered limited company. Clean balance sheets and work permit. Would suit expat looking to stay in Thailand. All offers considered. Tel: 076-286471, 06-595-0450. Email: floglog2003@yahoo.com

PUB FOR SALE

Popular pub and restaurant in Khao Lak for sale. Best location, turnkey with everything: company; popular website; 2 stories; 3 rooms; 1 aircon; 2 toilets; kitchen, fully loaded bar; stereo; pool table; darts; TV and excellent landlord. Price: 1.5 million baht obo. Tel: 01-3267683.

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at a dramatically reduced price: was 7 million baht, now only 4.5 million baht. Please call or email for details. Tel: 07-2837161. Email: jon.gibbons@karonproperty.com

RESTAURANT/BAR

Restaurant/bar on Taina Rd, in Kata, for rent. Good location next to guesthouses with a lot of regular customers. It has been in business for 6 years. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-284049, 01-9585528. Fax: 076-330-086. Email: finn@phuket.cscs.com

GUESTHOUSE 4 SALE

Renovated 10-room guesthouse with new bar in Patong, for sale. Only 200m to beach, central location, lease 5 years plus 3. Rent: 38,000 baht a month, plus key money of 3.4 million baht. Tel: 07-2793453. Email: hotrubin@hotmail.com

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- visitthailand.net,
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GOLF MEMBERSHIP

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Computers

PC FOR SALE

Computer with Windows XP, monitor and printer HP690. Price: 6,000 baht. Tel: 076-200730, 01-0841704.

Personal Services

SWIMMING LESSONS

Vita Ltd offers swimming lessons in your private pool or in a choice of public pools. An English-qualified instructor. Tel: 076-388095, 07-0732516 or view our website for more information at: www.vitagroup.net

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license. 10-20-year international driving license available. 100% legal. 10 years: 4,500 baht. 20 years: 6,000 baht. 50% deposit required. Please call for more details. Tel: 04-0068736.

COMPUTER REPAIRS

New and used computers, sales, tuition. Call out service, English technician available. Tel: 09-4735080.

ATSUMI HEALING

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Personal Services Wanted

NANNY & MAID

Urgently needed for the month of June: 1 nanny for my 2 grandchildren, ages 1 and 3 (some English necessary); 1 maid. Required to work in Nai Harn area. Please call Mirjam Van Der Putten at Tel: 01-9202849.

PIANO TEACHER

Teach my wife and daughter at our home in Kamala. Reasonable command of English essential. Hours flexible. Email: stewha@loxinfo.co.th

Personals

BACKGAMMON

players wanted for some exciting games. Please call or fax for more details. Tel: 076-386113 or 01-577-8443. Fax: 076-386114.

THAI FEMALE

Canadian male seeks nice Thai female for long-term relationship. I am 45 years old, 165cm tall and nice looking with a great personality. Contact me if you are interested. Email: dj3252@hotmail.com

SEEKS LADY

I am an Englishman, mid-50s, and would like to meet a genuine Thai Lady to look after me when I come to Thailand in September. Someone special for a special man, please. Please send email and photo to Robert Paulett. Tel: 01-7199750. Email: kingrobert@phuketsun.com

SEEKING GIRLFRIEND

Nice man, 30 years old, from The Netherlands, is visiting Thailand in July. I am looking for a nice and intelligent lady to be a girlfriend who can give me good company. Please feel free to contact me. Email: leuke_man_8@hotmail.com

SPECIAL LADY

wanted. I am an intelligent professional man looking for an attractive, honest Thai lady who is employed and looking for a special man. I have lots to offer the right person. I am not looking for a lady of high morals. I am a very young mid-40s guy, considered handsome in looks, soul and body. Please contact me, send your photo and more information about you. Email: steve.vv@westnet.com.au

COMPANION

I am visiting Phuket for a couple of months. I am American, 37 years old, and looking for a beautiful Thai lady who can speak good English. Please respond with recent photo and a description of yourself. Email: sehk@yahoo.com

SEEKING GIRLFRIEND

I am looking for a Thai girlfriend or future wife. I am 40 years old and from Sweden. Please email: olegott@hotmail.com

Pets

COCKER SPANIELS

There are 5 cute cocker spaniels for sale. Reasonable price at 3,500 baht each. Contact for details. Tel: 01-2779588. Email: ratcha_2001@yahoo.com

GOLDEN RETRIEVER

Looking for a full-bred male golden or light-color retriever as a mate for our 2-year-old female golden retriever. Please email us if you have such a dog. Email: svweet_angel_lo@hotmail.com

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