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## Chief 'satisfied' at police reform

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

PHUKET CITY: Six months after Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra called for improvements to police practices nationwide, the Commander of Police Region 8 says he is satisfied with the progress the region's police have made in their efforts to improve their public image.

Pol Lt Gen Somsak Buppasuwan, Surat Thani-based commander of Region 8, which includes Phuket, told the *Gazette* on June 25 that the results of a survey by a university research team indicate that the necessary improvements are being made in his region.

"The survey results are divided into two parts, the first being police officers' understanding of the required reforms and the second being the public's perception of the extent to which reforms have been achieved.

"The initial evaluation showed that police comprehension of our vision for re-engineering police operations is satisfactory, though only 60% of the officers understand our vision, which is less than the 70% we had targeted [by this time].

"But this is just the beginning of the reforms and it takes time to change people's behavior. We still have a year and a half to improve them."

As for public perception, he said, the research showed that the majority of people agree that the police have "re-engineered" themselves, with more than 70% of respondents saying they are satisfied with what the officers have achieved.

Referring to the faltering investigation into the murder of Pongtorn Hiranyaburana – the



Pol Lt Gen Somsak Buppasuwan: 'This is just the beginning of the reforms ... it takes time to change people's behavior.'

Deputy Chief of the Phuket Land Office who was shot dead on April 25 last year after he was ordered to check land titles – Gen Somsak said that although the murder was committed long before he was appointed Commander of Region 8, investigators are still following the case.

"We still lack clear enough evidence to take action," he said, adding, "I don't want to set a date

when the officers will solve the case because setting a deadline may result in mistakes in the investigation.

"But the officers certainly will not ignore this case."

Gen Somsak was in Phuket to preside over the installation of a new spirit house and of a small container of "prosperous soil" in the base of the new flagpole at the Phuket City Police Station.

## Democrats' Jurin slams Thaksin government

By Gazette Staff

PHUKET: Thousands of people who turned up for two Democrat Party rallies on June 25 and 26 heard a speech by Democrat Party Deputy Leader Jurin Laksanavisit in which he berated the Thai Rak Thai government as a failure, and outlined his party's platform for the upcoming general election.

The well-attended rallies were held on consecutive nights, the first at Saphan Hin and the second in a field opposite the Cherg Talay Tambon Administration Offices.

K. Jurin said that the Phuket events had enjoyed good public feedback. "People will understand the situation in the country better following this campaign.

"[One aim] is to make people aware of the failings of this government, especially [its] corruption. Now a single family has swooped in to take advantage of the whole country," he said.

K. Jurin added that the government's loan schemes had failed to solve grassroots economic problems and had turned Thailand into a nation of debtors – even as Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's business empire continues to expand.

He said the Democrat Party platform would strike at the root problems facing the nation and would focus on education reform.

Other issues in which the Thai Rak Thai party had failed its mandate included tourism and security, he said.

"Although the price of rubber has gone up, people no long-

Continued on page 2



## Thalang dam 'to be completed in 2006'

THALANG: The head of the Phuket office of the Royal Irrigation Project (PRIP), which is responsible for sourcing the island's public water supply, has confirmed that the new reservoir at Klong Bang Neaw Dum will be ready for use in 2006, despite a delay caused by a holdup in the land procurement process.

The head of the PRIP, Watchara Arepornsir, assured Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura that the project was moving forward during the Governor's June 28 visit to the project site in Tambon Srisoonthorn.

The 712-million-baht project has been approved by the Cabinet, with 405 million baht allocated for construction costs and 315 million baht for the purchase of 651 rai of private land.

When completed, the eight-meter-thick earth dam will be 860 meters long and 30 meters high, creating a storage capacity of 7.2 million cubic meters.

This is slightly less than the 8-million-m<sup>3</sup> capacity of the Bang Wad reservoir in Kathu,

which is currently Phuket's only major reservoir.

K. Watchara said the new reservoir will meet all the water needs of Thalang district, which has suffered worsening dry-season droughts in recent years.

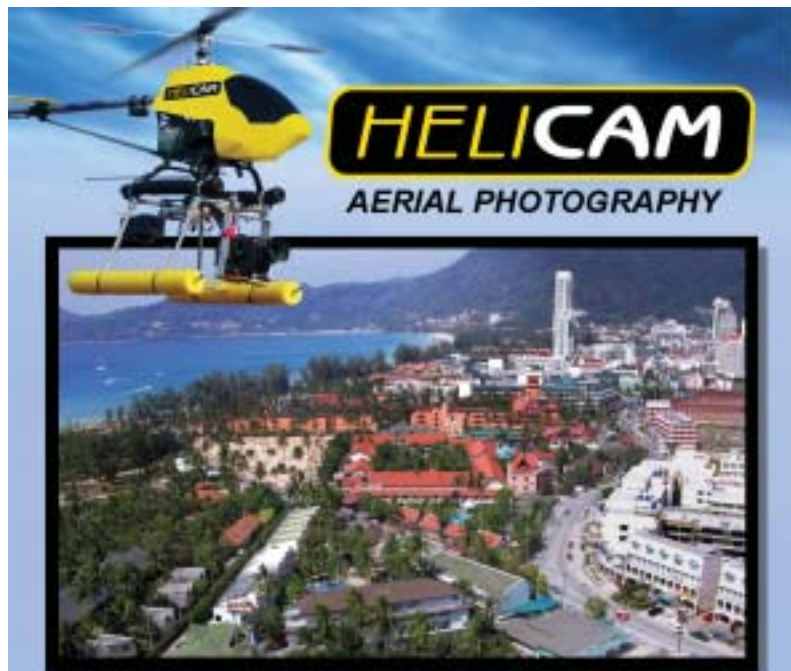
He admitted that the project has been held up by the unwillingness of the Aikwanich and Krua-sanee families to sell about 300 rai of land to the PRIP at the price offered by the government.

The land must now be acquired through a Royal Decree. K. Watchara expects it to take three to four months to gain approval from HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

As a result, a call for bids to build the dam, originally scheduled for 2005, has now been postponed to some time in 2006.

Governor Udomsak urged the central government to act quickly to expedite the dam construction because any delay will impact on the public interest.

— Kamol Pirat



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**June Bahria**

## Dive master murdered, ex-boyfriend arrested

By Gategeo Phetsawang

PATTAYA: Police in Bang Lamung District have arrested and charged a Belgian man for the stabbing murder of his ex-girlfriend, who was employed as a dive instructor in Kata.

The victim, 23-year-old Chompoonut "Jeab" Kobram of Buri Ram province, finished her PADI dive master course last May and was working for Nautilus Divers in Kata.

Pol Maj Chalermkiat Sirimak of Tambon Dong Tan Police Station told the *Gazette* that K. Jeab's ex-boyfriend, 24-year-old Belgian national Sam Van Treeck, had been arrested for the murder.

He is accused of stabbing K. Jeab 48 times with a short-bladed knife, Maj Chalermkiat said. Treeck has denied killing her, saying he found her body on June 25 in his apartment.

He was arrested and charged with the murder two days later.

Maj Chalermkiat said investigators are now reviewing a tape recorded by a video surveillance camera at the apartment building where Treeck lived.

Although hesitant to disclose too much information about the case while it is still under investigation, Maj Chalermkiat did tell the *Gazette* that investigators had recovered some strands of hair from the victim's hands. The hair is now being tested and the results are expected in about two weeks' time, he said.

K. Jeab's Canadian boy-



Chompoonut "Jeab" Kobram pictured with her daughter, Cherie.

friend Noah Meyer, 33, told the *Gazette* from K. Jeab's hometown, where he is attending her funeral, that he had been living with her in Phuket for about 18 months and that they were planning to get married next year.

He was informed of his girlfriend's murder by the victim's younger sister, who in turn learned about it from a newspaper.

"I talked to her for the last time on the phone on Friday afternoon [June 25] and asked what time I should pick her up at the airport, because she was supposed to come back on Saturday. She asked me to call her back, but [when I did] her phone didn't work," he said.

Police said that the murder

occurred between 4 pm and 6 pm on June 25.

"At first I didn't believe it. Then I looked and recognized the photos in the newspaper and I knew [it was true]," he said.

K. Jeab moved to Phuket in December 2002, Mr Meyer said. Before she became a dive master, she worked as a waitress in an Italian restaurant at Nai Harn Beach.

"She was extremely friendly and customers loved her. She was very thoughtful," Mr Meyer added.

"She went to Pattaya to help her friend Sam. He was her ex-boyfriend many years ago, before the two of us were together. He started to call her again three months ago. She went there alone because she was very independent. I trusted her to travel on her own," he said.

"I think he was hung up on her and still loved her," he said, adding that the alleged murderer had told K. Jeab that he was happy to have recently split up with his wife.

Asked what he thinks was the motive for the murder, Mr Meyer said, "I have no idea. It's still a complete mystery to me. I don't understand how anyone could do something like that."

Bryony Dalby-Ball, a friend of the dead woman, said, "Jeab was a beautiful woman, a great friend to have and I feel lucky to have known her. All her friends love her very much. We'll miss her."

## Jurin slams government's failures

From page 1

er feel safe going out to tap rubber [at night]," he said.

K. Jurin's speech also touched on the failure of the Thai Rak Thai-led coalition to address the ongoing violence in the Deep South.

He said he was optimistic about the potential for change. "We are ready for the next national election and expect to get

51 seats out of 54 [in the South]," he said.

Chalermklak Kebsup, Democrat MP for Phuket electoral district 2, said the events each drew about 3,000 supporters initially, but that the numbers swelled to about 7,000 as the evenings wore on and Thai country singer Akachai Sreevichai went on stage to give free concerts.

The rallies were part of the

Democrats' Meet the People campaign, which is aimed at increasing support for the party in the run-up to the next general election, due to take place in February next year.

In the coming weeks the campaign will hit a total of 400 electoral districts nationwide, with each rally featuring an address by a Democrat Party deputy leader.

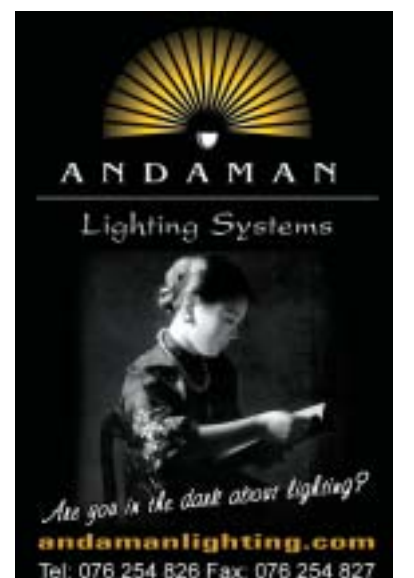


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# Patong police thanked for arresting B29m thief

PHUKET CITY: Pol Col Chalit Thintanee, Superintendent of Kathu Police Station, received a bouquet of flowers on June 23 in appreciation for the arrest of a postman from Sakhon Nakhon who had stolen 29 million baht.

The postal worker, Wirachai Gaiseeta, was in charge of the remittances sec-

tion of the Sakhon Nakhon Post Office, and diverted money intended for remittances into his own bank account.

After amassing sufficient funds, Wirachai apparently decided to take a vacation in Patong, where he was arrested.

The presentation was made at the ST Hotel by Kusol Yamyune, Surat Thani-

based Senior Director of Region 8 of the Thai Post & Telegraph Department.

At the same meeting, Wirat Bunchkaew, the Patong Post Office Chief, was asked about progress toward arresting his own thieving post office manager, Prawit Prateep Na Thalung.

He said that Prawit had been fired –

not for theft from the mail, but for failing to turn up for work for 15 days.

"Prawit was an employee of a state enterprise. He was fired because he did not come to work for 15 days," he explained.

On February 11, K. Wirat told the *Gazette* that Prawit was caught removing the contents of envelopes by a newly-installed security camera.

However, at the ST Hotel he said, "[Prawit's] crime was very minor because he took only five postcards which were not worth much. We arrested him and got the postcards back."

After his "arrest", Prawit walked out of the post office and has not been seen since.

Meanwhile, steps have been taken to improve the performance of the Karon Post Office, K. Kusol told the *Gazette*.

"Karon Post Office had a problem with delivering mail because there was too much work for the staff we had there, and employees were always quitting," he explained.

"Now we have hired more staff to deliver mail."

Editorial: page 18

## Planning key in OrBorJor's new agenda

By Siripansa Somboon

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr has targeted town planning as the key to the successful development of the island while at the same time preserving its natural beauty.

Speaking at a recent assembly of officers from the OrBorJor, the island's tambon Administration Organizations (OrBorTor) and municipalities (tessaban), K. Anchalee targeted Pa Khlok for preservation through planning, and said that it should be spared the fate that had befallen Patong.

She suggested that preserving the island's beauty could be coupled with other objectives, such as developing the tourism industry through projects such as building a historical park and village.

Focusing on Patong, she said the beach resort suffered from poor esthetics and that illegal guides operating in Patong needed to be dealt with.

She also said that the number of people living in Phuket but not registered as living on the island was creating problems, particularly for town planners and in terms of the trash produced in Phuket.

"About 270,000 people are registered as living in Phuket, but ... we don't know how many people are 'hiding' in Phuket, and that is creating problems for town planners," she said.

"Such people add to the garbage produced on the island, which will be a big problem because Phuket already produces about 350 tonnes of garbage a day," she added.

To help cope with disposing of the rising volume of trash, K. Anchalee suggested that "garbage bank" be built at Saphan Hin where recyclable items can be separated from trash to be incinerated.

She also said that she expected the problems of a shortage of teachers and poor quality education at schools on the island to be improved on, as well wastewater treatment systems so that "gray" water could be used to supplement water supplies and eke out the water held in reservoirs.

On the problem of traffic congestion, K. Anchalee cited the Darasamut School (Thainaan restaurant) intersection as an example area to focus on, and suggested that the Provincial Highways Department build an underpass at the junction.

"Although [an underpass] would cost about 20% more than an overpass, it would be preferable because an overpass will obscure the view," she said.

K. Anchalee said that now that the main principles have been laid down, a detailed plan will be completed by September.

She added that public hearings to gather feedback from Phuket residents will be held later, but did not specify when or where the hearings will be held.



## Digital wizardry

Digital photographic art by two local photographers in on show at the Public Library, on Phuket Rd, Phuket City, until July 30. Entry to the exhibit, by artists Soophareok Teepapan and Saran Sudduen, is free. The library is open from 10 am to 7 pm, from Tuesday to Friday and 10 am to 4 pm at weekends (it is closed on Mondays). Pictured above is *The Queen of Flowers*, by Soophareok.

## 16 killed on roads in May

PHUKET: Traffic accidents remain the No 1 killer in Phuket, with 16 people dying as the result of accidents on Phuket's roads in May. Twelve of the 16 who died were riding motorbikes.

According to the latest statistics from the three government hospitals in Phuket – Wachira, Thalung and Patong – 1,045 people were injured in road accidents in May. Of these, 932 were riding motorbikes.

In April, which includes the Songkran holiday period that is notorious for its road toll, 14 people died and 914 people were injured in traffic accidents.

The figures are an improvement on the period between April 20 and May 20 last year, when 26 people, all on motorcycles, died on Phuket's roads.

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## Queer News

## Scam of the week

BANGKOK: A daughter delivered her father's safe, containing more than 2 million baht in cash and valuables, to swindlers who called her and told her that her father owed them a lot of money.

Rapipat Surapipit, 57, Personnel Manager of Plaza Athenee Hotel in Bangkok, told police that his daughter (name and age unreported) was at home with the family's 24-year-old maid on June 16 when a woman called the house claiming to be a bank officer.

The woman told the girl that her father risked bankruptcy if he didn't settle up his debts. After asking the girl to describe the family's assets, she encouraged her to phone her dad to confirm that the story was true.

But when the girl called her dad's mobile, a woman who identified herself as Khun Ke answered the phone. K. Ke, who said she was K. Rapipat's secretary, told her that her father was too busy to take the call.

But, she said, K. Rapipat had left instructions for the daughter to deliver the family safe to a spot next to a public phone booth in front of the Carrefour Department Store on Lard Prao Road.

The girl believed the story, and in a move that she will no doubt regret for the rest of her life, she instructed the family maid, a young woman named Khamwan, to take the safe to the designated spot.

Good maids do what they are told, and K. Khamwan carried out the order. She told the police that a man of about 30 was walking around the safe as she left to return home.

When K. Rapipat came home he found his life savings missing. The strongbox had held land titles, jewelry, gold and cash worth over two million baht in value, he said.

Pol Maj Krit Jangsang of Toongsonghone Police Station revealed that this was the 10<sup>th</sup> such scam the swindlers have pulled off.

It likely won't be the last, either, as the gang is reportedly still at large.

Source: Daily News

Private motorists are, for the time being, the ones feeling the pinch from fuel-price rises; drivers of diesel vehicles – already favored by tax breaks – have yet to see a rise in prices at the pump.

Kanjit Pissawong, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Commercial Office (PPCO), said, "Private car drivers are feeling the direct impact of these price rises, but the commercial sector is pretty well insulated by the government's subsidy on diesel fuel."

"Everyone is aware of the serious impact that higher diesel prices would have on the cost of living. Bus tickets, food and many other items would rise in price."

K. Kanjit explained that her office regularly monitors prices and practices, both at gas stations and in the shops.

"We check the prices of food and other goods at the markets around the island and in the supermarkets three times a week. We check a random selection of fuel stations every week, and also monitor that the amount put into the tank is the amount the consumer is charged for," she told the *Gazette*.

"Some unscrupulous gas station staff have been caught not filling drivers' tanks but charging them for a fill-up," she said

## TERRORISM TAKES ITS TOLL AT THE PUMPS

The worldwide rise in oil prices caused mainly by terrorist activity in Saudi Arabia has resulted in a 1.20-baht-per-liter rise in the price of 91- and 95-octane gasoline at the pumps in a little over a month. At the end of May, 91-octane was selling at 17.20 baht a liter while 95-octane was pegged at 18 baht a liter.

By June, 9, the prices had risen to 17.80 and 18.60 baht respectively. Less than a fortnight later, the prices rose again, to 18.40 and 19.20 baht – equivalent to increases of 6.9% and 6.7% respectively.

Unless the upward trend in global oil prices levels off or reverses very soon, pundits expect both prices to exceed 20 baht. Here, **Anongnat Sarpisut** looks at how Phuket has been affected.

"We [the PPCO] have the authority to close these rogues down and have done so, though none since January this year."

K. Kanjit said that PPCO officers are vigilant about rising prices in the shops and although rises are permitted – the PPCO cannot interfere with natural market forces – they must be reasonable, and they must be displayed.

"Market forces are market forces, but we don't allow profiteering," she said. "No one should take advantage of a difficult situation, something of national concern, for personal gain."

In fact, K. Kanjit says, that price fluctuations – except in the case of fuel – have thus far been normal seasonal changes.

She also said, "We are keeping an eye on the situation and if prices do start to rise abnormally, or if a clearer long-term picture develops, we can set and implement plans."

The airline industry is, naturally, highly sensitive to the vagaries of the oil market. Airlines – which have seen the price of aviation kerosene rise by almost 60% in the past year – have

been cautious about passing on the burden to passengers.

But with oil prices hitting 13-year-highs, many carriers have introduced a "fuel charge", averaging around the equivalent of 300 to 700 baht per passenger. Thai Airways (THAI) has levied a fuel charge of 300 baht on routes to and from Asia and the Middle East, and 600 baht on intercontinental flights.


Viset Sontichai, Upper-Southern District Sales Manager for THAI, said that, unlike airlines in other countries, THAI has not introduced a surcharge on domestic flights. "Competition, since the introduction of 'no-frills' carriers, has become too fierce," he explained.

K. Viset said, "Fuel costs for airlines are anywhere between 15% and 30% of their total operating costs. We [THAI] are at the top end of this scale and fuel increases eat into our profit margin very easily."

"The additional fuel charge lessens the impact of higher oil prices. We will drop the extra charge once oil prices have stabilized."


He said that THAI will





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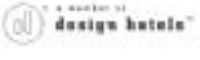
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The biggest losers so far are drivers of private cars, most of which are fueled by gasoline.

“fix” a ceiling price with fuel suppliers next year, which will, he expects, prevent surcharges being added. “We don’t like passing on these charges to our customers and the deal we are currently negotiating, for a median price between the highs and lows, should prevent this in the future,” he concluded.

Land and sea tour companies appear to be more shielded from rising oil prices by virtue of the fact that their vehicles – buses and boats – use diesel fuel, the price of which is currently subsidized by the government.

Paithoon Monthantong, Assistant Operations Manager of SEA Tours Co, told the *Gazette* that the contracts Sea Tours and some other operators hold with transport companies are fixed. “Customers shouldn’t see any rise in prices as long as our contracts are valid. But if the price of oil skyrockets, then we may have to think again,” said K. Paithoon.

However, one industry that has started to feel the squeeze is commercial fishing. Fleet and individual operators have been able to take advantage of government-supplied “Green Oil” – diesel dyed green and sold tax-free for use exclusively by the shipping industry – for almost three years

as a result of the government’s efforts to undercut fuel smugglers.

However, the price of the green oil, sold from tankers out in the Andaman Sea, is set by Singapore. Prices have risen by 25% from 10 baht to 12.5 baht a liter, and fleet operators who get through an average, for example, of 50,000 liters a month, have seen their bills increase from 500,000 to 625,000 baht a month.

Somyos Wongbunyakul, the Chief of Phuket Fishing Association, said, “The revenue of fishermen – and the supply of seafood – cannot now be predicted.

“These increases have hit our industry hard, and some operators are beginning to see their profits diminish to the point where they are actually considering not putting to sea any more.

“The demand for seafood isn’t going to stop – although it is the low season in Phuket at the moment – but with less boats putting to sea, fewer fish will be caught. Factor in the fuel price hikes and you can expect prices of seafood to rise,” he warned.

Back on land, the small fleets of metered taxis – which number just 33 vehicles in total – say they are also beginning to suffer. Up against as many as

2,000 tuk-tuks, they have been struggling since their introduction 18 months ago.

Adithep Sangthong, a driver with Phuket Taxi Meter, said that all of the taxis on Phuket run on 95-octane gasoline. “The average revenue for each taxi driver is around 1,000 baht a day,” he explained. “Up until recently, we were paying around 300 baht a day for fuel. We now pay somewhere between 350 to 400 baht a day,” he claimed.

Just how a 6.6% rise in fuel price results in taxi drivers’ fuel bills rising between 17% and 33% is not clear, but K. Adithep said that taxi drivers have suggested that the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), which sets and programs the fares into taxi meters, should increase the fares.

He explained, “Passengers are charged 50 baht for the first two kilometers and seven baht per kilometer thereafter for journeys up to 22 km.

“We [the taxi drivers] want the PPTO to increase the tariff from seven to 10 baht a kilometer. To compensate the passengers, we will drop the service charge which averages 200 baht a journey,” K. Adithep added.

But Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief of the PPTO, was quick to dismiss K. Adithep’s suggestion, which equates to a rise in the fare for a 10-kilometer journey, for example, of 23%

“It is impossible and currently unwarranted,” K. Teerayuth said.

“Taxi rates were reset last October. The increase then was from 30 baht to 50 baht for the first two kilometers and from four baht to the current seven for the next 22 km.

“I don’t know what the worst-case scenario is for oil price rises but even if the price at the pumps rose far higher, taxi drivers could still expect only a modest rise. If the situation deteriorates further, then we may look at this again.”

K. Adithep also questioned why cheaper fuels – such as natural gas – were not available in Phuket.

“The taxi industry in Bangkok has been well supported by the government and the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT) with the introduction of natural gas vehicles (NGV),” he said.

“Prices are much lower – seven to eight baht a liter – than diesel, which sells for around 12 to 13 baht. The gasoline we [Phuket taxi drivers] buy costs more than 19 baht a liter.”

The reason, Wichitpong Chuengthongsurp, Manager of the PTT Phuket office, explained, is simple economics.

“It costs around 10 million baht to open just one NGV sta-

tion,” he said. “In Bangkok there are more than 10,000 taxis. But it’s just not worth the capital investment for Phuket’s 33 taxis.”

He added that there would need to be at least 100 NGVs on the island before such a project would even be considered.

K. Wichitpong also said, “The oil price rises are due solely to external factors, threats of terrorism and the production capacity of Opec.

“The [Thai] government and the PTT are doing all that is possible to keep the prices as low as possible, especially for the commercial sector, hence the subsidizing of diesel prices.

“[The PTT] policy is to do what we can to benefit the Thai economy and those who depend on it, Thais or foreigners.

“Profit is not our motive. If it were, then prices would be rising without subsidy. But prices are going to rise, to at least 20 baht a liter,” he warned.

He said that research into other forms of fuel – such as “gasohol”, an ethanol-petrol hybrid derived from sugarcane – is continuing in Thailand, as is research into biodiesels derived from cooking oil.

Like natural gas, these alternatives are very “clean” fuels. The main drawback of gasohol, apart from the fact that it is still in the experimental stages, is that currently costs more per liter than its “dirty” equivalent, gasoline.

“It’s clear that we [Thailand] must look for alternative forms of energy,” said the PTT’s K. Wichitpong. “Fuel prices can affect everything from the cost of food in the shops to airline tickets. We are at the mercy of the international market and must do all that is possible to become less affected by these fluctuations.”

But for the private motorist, noticing that the gas-tank needle climbs a little lower every time he or she pulls in and asks for 300 baht worth of gasoline, there is little comfort or, indeed, sympathy.

K. Teerayuth of the PPTO said, “Drive more and you will pay more. Drive less and you won’t. I don’t worry much about private, non-commercial drivers. It’s a personal matter for them.”

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# Time machine in Samkong

By Anongnat Sartpisut

Time travel has long been a dream of mankind. After all, we are imbedded in four dimensions but can move with any volition through only three of them. Unfortunately, it seems that we are still a long way from developing the type of kind machine envisioned by HG Wells in his 1895 novel *The Time Machine*.

However, like old photographs, antiques can serve as virtual time machines that carry us back into the past – at least in the mind's eye.

For many of the island's older residents, the sight of an object from the past brings back memories of simpler and happier times when things were built to last – before the rise of plastic and the American-style throw-away society.

Bangkok's Chatuchak weekend market offers acres of old bric-a-brac, but the selection at Phuket's weekend market is less impressive.

For those who want a blast from the not-so-distant past without having to endure a journey to the capital, there is an interesting new shop in Samkong.

The proprietor is Bangkok-

born Gunn "Sonn" Tiensilakul and his shop, which is still unnamed, is located between the Siam Commercial Bank and Dairy Hut Restaurant, in the new row of shops that runs up the side of the Bangkok Phuket Hospital.

For K. Gunn, whose main business is property development, the shop serves not only as his home – he lives up on the second floor – but also as a way to display his interesting collection of items to the public.

He started out by opening an antique furniture shop in Bangkok, but when the first of his two children was born he began looking for a healthier environment than the capital in which to raise his family. He decided on Phuket, moving here about two years ago.

"The shop is just something I do in my leisure time. I began collecting old things in Bangkok. I moved to this neighborhood because it is near my children's school. At first, it was not a shop – just a home. But when I started decorating it with my collection, people began coming by and asking me about prices, so the business was born."

There is certainly an interesting and eclectic set of items to look over: a wooden fan, a



Gunn 'Sonn' Tiensilakul in his shop: 'Antiques are not only irreplaceable, but also require effort to maintain in good condition.'

bright red toy fire truck, old lanterns and glass bottles, a hand-made fish trap, an old-fashioned water cooler, a chalice that looks like the Holy Grail, an old tape recorder, flashlights and an old bicycle that looks like it came off the set of *PeeWee Herman's Big Adventure*.

Showing the *Gazette* an aging microphone, K. Sonn explained that some of the items were passed down to him from his father, who used to run a movie theater in Bangkok. His father used the mike to entertain moviegoers between reels.

Like many people who get

into selling antiques, K. Sonn learned the value of antiques when clearing out his family estate after his father passed away.

"Once, at an antique market, I noticed stamps similar to the ones my father had kept that were selling at 800 to 1,200 baht apiece. That's when I realized the potential value of old things."

But it isn't just for profit. "Times change, things change, but memories live on. When I look at this stuff I can still see the old theater as it was in the past, with its wooden fans and public address system," he said.

Back in the old days, packs

of cigarettes came not with disturbing health warnings explaining how the habit would diminish your libido and cause blood vessels in your brain to burst. Rather, smokers received collectible cards with each pack. The shop has over 50 such cards for potential buyers to look over, not to mention an even larger variety of old matchboxes.

"When I look at them it makes me compare the past and the present," said K. Sonn, letting out a puff of aromatic smoke from his pipe.

Showing the *Gazette* the workmanship of some old hand-made furniture, K. Sonn pointed out the contrast with today's mass-produced furniture, much of which is made of little more than particle board.

"In my opinion, we can buy new things anytime. However, antiques are not only irreplaceable, but also require some effort to maintain in good condition."

Not everything at the shop is for sale, but just about all of it is worth having a look at.

"Prices range from 50 baht to 10,000 baht, but everything is negotiable. Every piece is between 20 to 100 years old."

"The last item I sold was an old microscope that was designed for use in the mining industry," he said.

Most people find it hard to decide what to keep and what to throw away, and while the articles at K. Sonn's shop may not yet qualify as truly antique, the items on offer may make you reconsider what goes in the bin the next time you're cleaning house.

For more information visit the shop at 2/9 Hongyok-Utis Rd, Tambon Talad Yai, Phuket City, or call Tel: 076-254977.

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# Tourist condoms on arrival for Aids talks

Aside from the famous Siamese smile, tourists who enter Thailand from July 8 to 16 will be greeted with a condom to mark the Kingdom's hosting of the 15<sup>th</sup> International Aids Conference.

About 350,000 condoms are set to be given away during the period. On July 6, condoms will be distributed to motorists who use the expressways and travelers at Hualamphong Train Station, according to Senator K. Mechai Viravaidya, who is chairman of the Population and Community Development Association.

As part of the campaign, police officers will also distribute condoms to motorists stuck in traffic.

"The condoms will come in two sizes. The ones given away at the airport will be of a larger size. The others are to fit Thais," Mechai said, adding that if the number of condoms was not enough, more would be supplied.

**Social scheme:** People supporting elderly parents will qualify for a tax deduction of 15,000 baht per parent per year under a new government initiative, Finance Minister Somkid Jatusripitak said.

Financial donations to foundations that support the disabled, elderly or children operated free-of-charge by private organizations or the government will also qualify for tax deductions.

Individual donors will be able to deduct the amount donated up to the equivalent of 10% of their total income tax, while companies may deduct up to the equivalent of 2% of profits.

Money donated to privately run libraries, museums, art galleries, the Sports Authority of Thailand or provincial committees set up to promote sports activities will also qualify donors for deductions, he added.

**Superbug threat:** A disease that is resistant to common antibiot-



**BOVINE BOTHER:** Rescue workers try to save a pregnant cow after it fell into an open sewer at a housing estate in Ayudhya province. The cow sustained minor injuries after being trapped in the hole for about two hours.

ics, which is generating serious concern overseas, has been detected in Thailand.

Known as methicillin resistant *staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), the disease was first found in an elderly man from Chanthaburi. Later, Siriraj Hospital in Bangkok said up to 100

patients had been infected by the bacteria.

A pharmacist said doctors were running out of medicines capable of dealing with it.

The strain of bacteria has become resistant to the antibiotic methicillin and others such as penicillin and synthetic penicil-

lin, including cephalosporins.

Dr Kachornsak Silapaopasakul from Prince of Songkla Hospital said doctors were using Fosfomycin and Vancomycin to treat MRSA, but conceded that the disease could become more virulent in the future.

**Competitiveness central:** The National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) hopes to establish Bangkok as a regional networking center on issues relating to "competitiveness" with an annual international conference on the issue.

The first conference will take place from July 12, with more than 30 overseas experts speaking.

The conference, entitled "Competitiveness: Challenges and Opportunities for Asian countries", is being organized by *The Nation* newspaper. More than 800 leading business people and policymakers are expected to attend.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, chairman of the National Competitiveness Committee, will deliver the opening address. Among the speakers will be the futurist Dr Stan Davis, author of *It's Alive, Future Perfect*, and Richard Cooper, professor of International Economics at Harvard University.

**Prizefighting:** Muay Thai boxer Sanit Tiymetha was handed a suspended two-year jail term for taking a 200,000 baht bribe to throw a fight.

Sanit, known in the ring as Samson Look Chao Pho Mahesak, was found guilty of vio-

lating the Boxing Act by throwing his fight against Samnuan Sangpali at Lumpini Stadium last August, the Southern Bangkok Criminal Court said in its verdict.

"Sanit failed to put up a fight worthy of a professional boxer, prompting the referee to ask him to leave the ring," the verdict read.

Although the defense contended that Sanit's poor performance was the result of him not being in shape, the prosecution proved that he received a bribe payment from a punter named Naj Naman.

**Floodgates opened?** In a landmark decision, the Khon Kaen Provincial Court ordered Dr Tasanee Kovitsomboon and the Khon Kaen Ram Hospital to jointly pay 1.58 million baht in compensation for her negligent treatment of a baby who died seven years ago from complications arising from an extremely high level of yellow pigmentation, or bilirubin.

It was the first time a medical malpractice case has been won under Thai consumer protection laws.

The Medical Council will not investigate the doctor because the three-year legal limit on investigations into the ethics or conduct of doctors had passed. The case dated back seven years.

The hospital has indicated that it intends to appeal against the decision.

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



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# Heading into hibernation

By the end of June, Khao Lak finally surrendered to the low season and went into hibernation. Heavy rain seemed to fall continuously for about a week, turning Khao Lak into a big off-road track with huge puddles of water and red mud.

Now there is just a handful of shops catering to tourists still open here and there, while most restaurants have already closed and will stay shut until early November.

However, hardware stores and minimarts are still open to supply the construction workers and businesspeople who have realized that Khao Lak has a promising future as a place where money is made and spent.

Several rumors say that big changes are ahead, such as a gigantic golf course and so on. I have not been able to verify such rumors, so I guess it's best to sit back and watch what happens.

**Sporting start:** Just before the rainy season fell upon us, Khao

Lak's rather boring nightlife was enriched with the opening of a new establishment: The Sportsman Bar.

Located opposite the Khao Lak Minimart, on Khao Lak's main road, the bar offers daily news and sports events on a big screen with the chance to sip a beer or a cocktail while playing a round of snooker with friends.

Unfortunately, the gigantic rattan and bamboo seats are very uncomfortable. As no cushions are available, it is no wonder that few patrons stay long.

Comfortable seats and a bit of ambience would

have helped, as the roof and walls are rather basic. Well, there are five months of little business ahead, so that should give the owner enough time to fill in the blanks.

**Five-star-struck:** Khao Lak has finally become a five-star destination. The Sofitel Magic Lagoon Resort & Spa officially opened on May 1, making it the first internationally-managed



**The hole story:** The intersection leading to Bang Niang Beach is a potholed mess.

five-star resort in Khao Lak.

The luxury resort has 319 rooms and boasts the world's largest lagoon-style swimming pool, covering 14,008 square meters (8,755 rai).

On June 1, Le Meridien Khao Lak Beach and Spa Resort officially opened for guests. The resort offers five-star accommodation, services and high-tech

facilities. Its 13,056-sqm layout, exclusively designed as the pre-eminent destination for eco-tourism, features 243 bedrooms, 80-sqm lagoon villas and 15 pool villas.

**Pot luck:** Bang Niang, although a winner when it comes to business options, seems to be a loser when it comes to road maintenance.

While drains are being installed along the main road, the intersection of main road and the side road to Bang Niang Beach – and we are talking about a busy intersection that leads to several upmarket resorts – looks like the surface of the Moon.

Dozens of deep potholes decorate the intersection, providing unpleasant and dangerous obstacles to any car or bike entering or leaving the beach area.

It is very sad to see the local authorities, resort owners and businesspeople doing nothing to improve the junction.

Several accidents have happened there already, and surely more will follow as the road continues to deteriorate.

**New depths:** As the high season drew to an end, I thought it would be a good time to ask Khao

Lak businesspeople whether this past season has been a good one for them.

The answers varied greatly, with some saying that it has been their best season yet, while comments from others – especially diving operators – drew a very different picture.

It seems that the local scuba diving industry is saturated, and at least two scuba diving operators have closed their doors for good.

I can't understand why nobody seems to have a good idea about what businesses Khao Lak really needs.

So here are some handy hints for any potential investors in the area: Khao Lak needs a professional video/VCD/DVD rental store; a professional gym; a herbal sauna; good-quality, reasonably-priced restaurants serving European food; a professional bakery; a professional meat supplier; and more entertainment and nightlife venues.

There are many other businesses that could flourish in Khao Lak, as long as they are not related to diving. So, for the slow learners, I'll repeat: Khao Lak does not need more dive shops.

Oh, I almost forgot ... and no more tailor shops, please.



## ANDAMAN COASTING

By Franky Gun



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Puerk-lawan	112.6	11,850,000	100,000	3,455,000	8,295,000
Puerk-umpai	157.80	14,480,000	100,000	4,244,000	10,136,000



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## This week



**STOOPING TO CONQUER:** Li Tieying (center), Vice-Chairman of the 10th Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China received a garland from Meeya Phatanachinda at Baan Klung Jinda Restaurant during his recent visit to Phuket.



**A GRAND DAY OUT:** Wichit Village Seniors' Club enjoy an excursion to Laguna Phuket and present Suthasinee Rukmit (front row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from right), the company's Community Relations Manager, with a token of their appreciation.



**NOT FOR TURNING:** Famed *Satree Lek* (Iron Women) stars Sittichai Prachanun (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) and Chinnakorn Inntraphet (2<sup>nd</sup> from right) and teammates came first in the Municipal Beach Volleyball tourney held at Saphan Hin on June 19-20.



**MEATY, BEEFY, BIG AND BOUNCY:** (from left) Bruno Begni, General Manager of Locanda Churaskaia Grill in Kata, and friends Chris Hill, Jacquie and Mark Phillips, and Alun Gathergood at the restaurant's well-attended launch on June 18.



**THE LONG RUN:** (from left) Team leader Nick Baggaly, and fellow travelers Todd Borgie and Sue Mead pause for a moment in Phuket during their 50,000km round-the-world charity expedition by Land Rover. Taking in 34 countries, the trio aim to raise a cool US\$1 million for research into Parkinson's disease.



**R.E.S.P.E.C.T.** Alexander Seago (right), Coordinator of the Mini English Program, finds out what it means during Satree Phuket School's recent *wai kru* ceremony held to honor teachers. Roongmai Limworapitak is saying it with flowers.



**NURSING AN AMBITION:** Joan Watson (left), President of the Phuket International Women's Club, awards a scholarship to student nurse Anusara Huansi in memory of the late Emmy Spannagel, a much-missed PIWC member and former nurse. Brigitte Beck (right) and Olivia Krisnaj of the PIWC, stand by ready to congratulate Phuket's newest angel.



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# Fine-tuning a police

**Gazette:** How did you become involved in police work?

**Chakkit:** I didn't start out as a policeman. I was an engineering graduate and went to work in the US as an automotive engineer in Detroit, Michigan.

I returned to Thailand and got married, and went to work at the General Motors plant in Bangkok. At the same time, I also opened my own garage. I had an income of about 7,000 baht a month.

I had a friend who was a low-ranking policeman. He was making only 800 baht a month, so he asked me if he could live in my garage.

He saw me working hard all the time with two jobs, until one day he told me that the Royal Thai Police needed an engineer to look after 100 police pickup trucks. "Do you want to be a policeman?" he asked me.

I had never considered being a policeman. But one incident changed that. I hadn't been doing anything wrong, but police came to raid my garage because one of the cars I was servicing turned out to have been stolen.

Even though I had no way of knowing that, they tried [unsuccessfully] to charge me with possession of stolen property.

At that time the police were not polite and sometimes threatened people. They closed my garage and searched everywhere.

I also had pressure [from neighbors] who thought that my garage was noisy when I worked

**P**ol Lt Col Chakkit Srisuwan, Superintendent of the Tah Chat Chai Police District for the past two years, is not your ordinary Phuket cop. For a start, he is fluent in English and has extensive experience in international crime – having worked undercover overseas to help bust up international drug trafficking rings.

Now 55 and reaching the end of his career, he says he plans to resign from the Royal Thai Police before the mandatory retirement age of 60 and open his own consultancy – one which will provide free assistance to poor members of the public who feel they have bullied or unfairly treated by Thailand's national police force.

Here he talks openly with the *Gazette's* Sangkhae Leelana-paporn about his unusual path into a career as a crime fighter and offers his insights into the role of the police in Thai society.

nights. In fact, I had all the permits I needed to allow me to [work at night], but an officer came back to threaten me again.

I began to think that Thailand was getting bad and I really wanted to know how our government system really worked.

So I applied for the police job and a month later they called me in for an interview. When I turned up, the secretary thought I was a salesman because I wore a necktie and was carrying automobile manuals and a briefcase.

**Gazette:** So how was your new job?

**Chakkit:** I had to train for six months, and my initial rank was Sub-Lieutenant. But it was funny because after I finished the training my boss put me out on patrol, and I didn't do much more work with cars.

At that time, Immigration [one branch of Thailand's na-

tional police force] was looking for officers who could speak English to man the checkpoint at Don Muang Airport in Bangkok. Of 220 officers who took the test, I was one of the 25 who passed, so I was accepted.

I have done my best not to let being a policeman change my behavior. I found it hard to accept the rules at the beginning, and the rewards were very different from those gained from working in the private sector.

**Gazette:** What problems did you have to deal with when working with the Immigration Police?

**Chakkit:** I worked with Immigration for 14 years, first in Bangkok then in Pattaya, where my last position was as head of Chon Buri Immigration police.

[Most of] the problems at that time involved drugs coming in from the Golden Triangle. I was involved with foreigners often because I had to search cruise ships entering Thailand.

One big case I was involved with at that time involved a manager at a Swiss bank who had embezzled money from the bank. He changed his name and came to stay in Pattaya. We were able to coordinate our efforts with the Singaporean police and arrest him in Thailand.

I later became the chief of



the Phuket Drug Suppression unit. That was 13 years ago, but there was already a problem with [foreigners dealing in] drugs here and the Royal Thai Police needed an officer who could speak English to make undercover contact with foreign drug dealers.

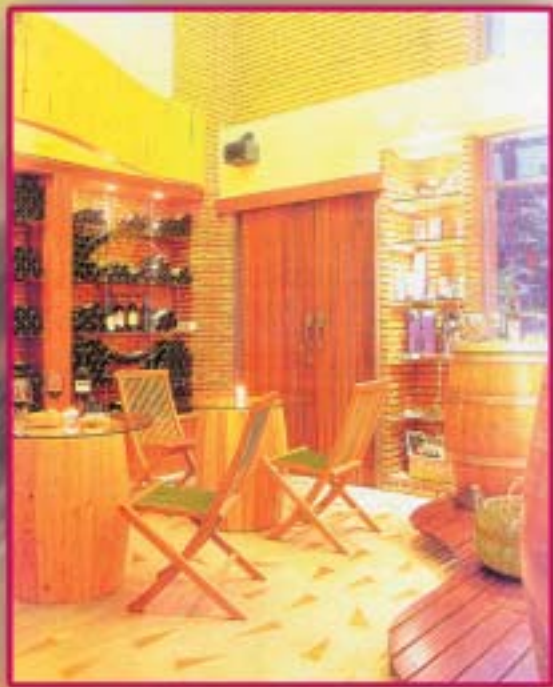
After that I was transferred to work as Inspector and then as Deputy Superintendent in many provinces, including Krabi, Surat Thani, and posted to my present position in Phuket.

**Gazette:** Tell me about your experience overseas.

**Chakkit:** I have been overseas more than 25 times to represent Thailand at various seminars, meetings, and also to take part in drug investigations, sometimes working undercover.

I have worked in Japan, Europe, Scandinavia, America, the Philippines, Singapore, Australia and Egypt. My proudest moments were representing

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# perspective

Thailand at a conference in Australia on international crime, and an anti-terrorism forum in Egypt.

**Gazette:** How would you characterize the difference between the Thai Police and other police forces you have worked with?

**Chakkit:** The structure of police forces differs greatly between East and West. Of the 189 countries in the world, no more than 10 are administered through a single national body [as it is in Thailand].

In my opinion, I think we should [try to] change the system so that stable and economically prosperous provinces such as Phuket, Chon Buri and Chiang Mai can enforce the law independently.

The central government could set law enforcement goals for these provinces and then evaluate the commanders' ability to achieve those goals.

If they couldn't carry out their duties to the satisfaction of the government, they could be

dismissed, just as in a company in the private sector.

In other countries immigration is not attached to the police. Police abroad focus more on protection of citizens and property.

But in Thailand, the police are responsible for everything, from black smoke [emitted by vehicle exhaust systems], to bad smells from factories, pollution on the beach, divorce and dead whales that wash up on the shore.

Police officers can't be experts in so many different areas, so we should let government officers who are experts in those areas be responsible [by authorizing them to enforce laws]. Then the police could get on with their own work.

**Gazette:** What do you think about Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's comments that the Thai Police have to improve because the people are dissatisfied?

**Chakkit:** I don't mind. We have to improve and modernize to keep up with changing times. We

should work in a transparent way and faster, and make better use of new technology.

People are not happy with the police because the police are responsible for all aspects their lives, from cradle to grave.

I don't think people want to come to a police station to read the newspaper or watch TV [so we shouldn't spend our budget on those things]. People want to meet with the police to consult, file complaints and have prompt action taken.

Also, people have to change misconceptions they may have about the police that are drilled into them from a young age. Thai parents always tell their children "If you don't finish your rice the police will catch you and send you to jail" or "If you don't go to school I will call the police".

Why don't parents tell them "If you don't eat enough you will get sick and have to go and see the doctor"?

**Gazette:** What are your plans for the future?



Pol Lt Col Chakkit: 'My proudest moments were representing Thailand at an international crime conference in Australia and an anti-terrorism forum in Egypt.'

**Chakkit:** I think I will resign in the near future. I won't wait until I am 60 to retire because I plan to set up a consultancy to help members of the public who feel they have been bullied or treated unfairly by police officers.

We will charge companies that use my service, but will work pro bono for the poor. We will be

able to give 100% assistance because [as a private company] we won't be constrained by government orders or regulations.

I'm ready to do it now – that's why I don't want to wait.

Col Chakkit can be contacted direct at Tel: 01-6775577 or at his office on Tel: 076-311242.

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## In The Stars

by Isla Star

**CANCER** (June 22-July 23): Cancerians celebrating a birthday this week will have other reasons to make merry. Good news will almost certainly reach you before the weekend is over, and this should help improve your finances.

You could well be in the mood to treat friends, but make a careful list of who to invite as there are signs that one friend is feeling excluded from your life.

**LEO** (July 24-August 22): A stormy outburst takes you by surprise mid-week. A person you had all ways considered to be pretty chilled-out will suddenly flare up and Leos on the receiving end will find this hard to deal with.

Refusing to be drawn into the thunderous atmosphere is your only option, unless you want to risk a permanent rift. On a brighter note, your partner is about to make a surprise romantic gesture.

**VIRGO** (August 23-September 23): New and exciting ideas have drawn your attention, which is possibly causing you

# What do the HEAVENS hold in store for YOU?

to forget about the needs of someone close to you.

Virgoans who truly care about their partners should find a way to include that important person in future plans. It takes two to tango, and unless you are ready to perform solo, a romantic disappointment is a strong possibility.

**LIBRA** (September 24-October 23): An unexplored jungle track looks very inviting, but could lead Librans on a safari that goes round in never-ending circles.

Those thirsty for adventure should seek out the safest option. Early this week, you should guard against letting a sensitive cat out of the bag. Financial affairs are looking up as an investment finally starts to pay off. Your lucky number is 9.

**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 22): This is an auspicious time to collaborate with others, and to make a dream come true you will need to share the burden of hard work.

Scorpios are prone to believing that they are capable of anything, but in this case it wouldn't be wise to go it alone. Solid foundations laid this month will result in profitable times later in the year.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 23-December 21): The stars are smiling on Sagittarians who have been working on their self-image. Your new-found confidence is noticed by others who can have a beneficial impact on your working life.

If you're not afraid to reach for the sky, anything is possible

this month. Doubts about a personal relationship reach a peak; you will need to make serious decisions this week. The color marine blue will boost strength.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 20): Your normally prudent handling of the purse strings evaporates this weekend. There are certainly one or two bargains to be had, but Capricorns should question whether they really need to succumb to every temptation.

Some rainy days lie ahead later this month, and it would be wiser to put some of your hard-earned cash into the piggy bank. On the subject of finances, Aries has a useful suggestion.

**AQUARIUS** (January 21-February 19): Aquarians are about to have a field day with business opportunities. Seeds sown last month will sprout faster than you had hoped, and a harvest should be ripe for reaping this week.

Your competitive edge is an advantage, but you may need to tone down your overwhelming approach. Romance is subject to rough seas. Don't try to convince yourself that all is plain sailing when it clearly isn't.

**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): This weekend brings a few ups and downs for Pisceans. An

awkward social moment on Saturday requires tact to handle successfully, but romance is well-starred on Sunday. Someone who has been holding a candle for you for quite a while finally makes his or her feelings known. Most Pisceans will be pleased by this revelation; if not, find a way to let the candle-holder down gently.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): Arians are advised to keep their options open early this month.

Unusual opportunities will gradually become apparent, and this week should allow you a glimpse of at least one of them. Remain patient until you are sure of the lie of the land. The color moss green will help you tune in to what is real.

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 21): Taureans will be looking at ways to lighten the workload, but should avoid breaking commitments. Someone is certain to feel let down if you don't keep a promise, no matter how casually it was made at the time.

Leave wild schemes on the back burner for the time being; this is not an auspicious time to leap into deep water. Where intimate relationships are concerned, partners will expect your undivided attention.

**GEMINI** (May 22-June 21): Career matters are subject to a sudden cosmic shift this week for those born under the sign of Gemini. Your natural ability to go with the flow and see possibilities where others are blind will serve you well.

There's a strong likelihood that you will soon be following a very different path. Friendships could throw up a challenge on Monday or Tuesday; ignore any inclinations to stir things up.

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# Happy rats in a preposterous maze

Every five years or so, a gargantuan best seller rears its head so high in America – Rosemary's *Baby*, *The Godfather*, *Jaws*, *Fear of Flying*, *The World According to Garp* – that it practically defines the country's zeitgeist. The quality of writing varies but all have in common solid plots and realistic, sympathetic characters.

The latest behemoth is *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown (Doubleday, New York, 2003, 489pp), which has spent 59 weeks on the *New York Times*' best-seller list, sold 7.3 million copies, has been translated into 40 languages (including Thai), and will soon be launched as a major motion picture by director Ron Howard.

It has also been the subject of an ABC news special, been parodied in the *New Yorker*, set off a furore among the Christian Right and is already the subject of three books of scholarly commentary.

How does *The Da Vinci Code* stack up against its monster mega-seller predecessors? The plot is preposterous and the characters cartoons. But who said comic books can't be fun? The plot can be compared only to the type of giant clock found in big city children's zoos with rotating ducks, dancing polar bears, spinning astrological signs and tea-drink-

ing Mad Hatters. Plot is all and the characters zip along its well-greased grooves.

So let's cut to the chase: what is the *Da Vinci Code*? According to the novel's conceit, Leonardo da Vinci was the Grand Master of a secret cult known as the Priory of Sion, founded in 1099. Subsequent leaders would include Sir Issac Newton, Botticelli and Victor Hugo.

The purpose of the cult was to guard the location of the Holy Grail – which is not the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper but something else entirely. Da Vinci left hints of this in his paintings.

The novel opens with the assassination of the current Grand Master, Jacques Saunière, curator of the Louvre Museum, by an albino ex-con from Andorra who is now a brown-robed member of the Catholic order Opus Dei (I told you about the cartoons).

In his death throes after being shot in the stomach, the curator manages to strip himself naked, assume the form of Da Vinci's *The Vitruvian Man*, the human pentacle sketch, on the floor of the gallery containing the *Mona Lisa*, draw a bloody star on his navel, use a black-light pen to leave a message summoning help from his police cryptologist

granddaughter and a visiting Harvard professor who specializes in art history and symbology, leave another message on the protective shield guarding the *Mona Lisa* and, finally, a high-tech key to a Swiss bank vault behind yet another *Da Vinci* painting.

I told you the plot was preposterous.

Sophie Neveu, the granddaughter, and Robert Langdon, the professor, go off in search of the murderers and the Holy Grail.

Along the way there are all manner of clues and discursions and flashbacks and red herrings (the Opus Dei boss is called Aringarosa – Italian for "red herring") involving numerology, anagrams, cryptograms, the Divine Proportion of Phi, the Knights Templar, the apocryphal gospels, pre-Christian fertility cults, modern pagan sex orgies and art history.

The big theological secret is the "sacred feminine". We

learn that not only was Jesus married ("Jesus was the first feminist") but so was his Father,

you get past all the springs and levers and open it up, there is nothing – no humanity – inside.

Yahweh; that the four canonical gospels were chosen by the Emperor Constantine in the 4<sup>th</sup> century while the real ones were suppressed; and that during some unspecified 300-year period of "Catholic Inquisition" five million women were burned at the stake on suspicion of witchcraft.

Anyone with the slightest knowledge of church history or Biblical exegesis will flop to the floor laughing.

Robert and Sophie gallop through a rotating round of narrow escapes. The bad guys get the drop on them with guns four times but they just manage to outwit them. Also, the good guys in the novel turn out to be the bad guys and the bad guys turn out to be the good guys.

*The Da Vinci Code* is like a beautifully crafted and fiendishly intricate Chinese puzzle box. Once

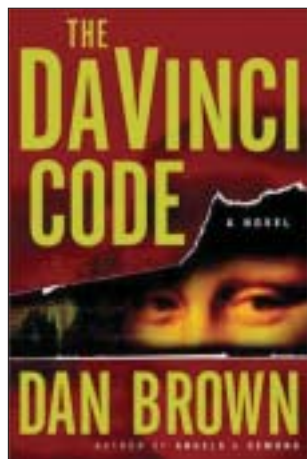


Dan Brown: his book has sparked a furore among the Christian Right.



## Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



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# Facing up to a good time

A mate of mine, who was a very successful nightclub owner in Thailand, spent a million dollars on the renovation of a nightclub in Bangkok. It was in a five-star hotel and in the '80s this venue was *the* place.

It was stunning, with great sound and lights, beautiful décor and utterly charming staff. His target was the hi-so Thai socialite crowd.

At this club I observed that Thai men like whisky and are willing to pay big bucks for it depending on the environment in which it is consumed.

I also noticed they were drinking a blended whisky and that the brand of whisky was indeed a matter of "face" – a concept that we Westerners (wrongly) assume we understand almost as soon as we get off the plane.

It is a lot more complicated than that, as this week's venue for review, Fantasia in Phuket City, demonstrates.

I asked my friend, since this was a whisky/face relationship, why did he not import a range of good single malts. After all, what self-respecting person of influence could possibly resist the temptation of showing off his vastly superior knowledge of the said face-giving nectar than by shelling out a huge wad on a decent dram from Islay?

Hey, the story of the whisky and what you should be tasting is right there on the bottle too, so it's a fine beverage and gives an anecdote too!

My old mate looked at me with a kind yet weary eye and



said, "You're potty, you." There was another word somewhere in that sentence too, began with F, I think.

He showed me a bottle of Johnny Walker Blue, with the name of a regular VIP scribbled on it. He then poured me a tumbler of it. He also poured out a tumbler of Johnny Red.

I tasted both neat and they were identical. My friend explained that the guy used to have the empty bottle of Blue topped up with

Red, with a little sugar added. "He's not buying whisky," my friend said. "He's buying face."

Fantasia is situated in the old flea pit that used to pass for a cinema in Phuket City. The décor is well thought out and completely right for the place – lush and comfy – and the seating is ultracool.

The sound system is one of the best I have heard and it is used responsibly. The light show, without blowing you away, has its moments too.

On the large stage there are two shows a night from a compact yet talented singing and dancing troupe and on the top tier of the stage is a huge band complete with brass section. The stage has risers in it too, whereby the artists emerge onto the stage at various appropriate moments. I couldn't stop myself from humming the *Thunderbirds* music every time another one rose up through the stage.

The two main Thai female



Big voices set the performances apart from others on the island – and without "I lub juu's".

singers were outstanding and were perfect on their pronunciation too, which is a treat to behold – no more "I lub juu's". There was also a fairly groovy miming *katoey* – I think they are insisted upon by the union these days – and she did "get 'em out", as we say in the trade.

The set is a mix of standards and alternates between a sad ballad (or bad salad) and a dance number, which slows the pace somewhat, but the troupe appears to be quite small and all the dancers are in every number except the ballads.

The girl dancers were outstanding but all but two of the guys appeared to simply to be going through the motions.

There was a total absence of smiling from any of them during any of the numbers, which is

a shame, for a smile would sell this show a lot better.

I wonder what the Thai is for that international choreographer's cry, "Tits and teeth, daaahlings"?

If you are a woman, accompanied or otherwise, there's a catch to this place: your first drink will be 300 baht. They seem to be trying to discourage women not associated with the venue from coming in.

One can request the company of a hostess and there seem to be dozens of pretty girls sat at the main bar. There are also private karaoke rooms in the same building fitted out with latest gear and the longest echo effect ever.

Serving the tables are about 100 uniformed male staff, all dressed in white shirts and bow

ties. I know it's a cliché but it still looks fabulous. Service was polite and totally efficient – pull out a cigarette and a lighter immediately appears.

I went there to be entertained and was entertained quite well though for some reason I did not seem to get as much out of it as the chaps sat at adjoining tables, and I would not hurry back.

It's not because there is anything wrong with the place – it is very well done – it's just that I was not in the market for what they sell.

This is an example of how little I know about the concept of face after many years here. I still don't get it.

A look around the crowd reveals that it is undoubtedly for sale here, for every table had a bottle of it complete with ice bucket, mixers and a bow-tied pourer.

*Fantasia Entertainment Group is located at 130/1 Phang Nga Rd, Phuket City.*



As this painting makes clear, there's no mistaking the preferred pour at Fantasia.

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# Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 25 pop stars or groups. 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.

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

# Brain Buster!!

Professor Bright calls the waiter to his table and tells him, "There's a fly in my tea." "No problem," says the waiter. "I'll bring you a fresh cup straight away." He goes away and returns with a cup, which he places on the table.

A minute later the professor shouts, "Get the manager! This is the same cup of tea!" How did he know?

The professor had already put sugar in his tea before sending it back. When the "new" cup came, it already tasted sweet.

Solution to  
last week's  
Crossword

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

# Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. Name the tax collector who forced William Tell to shoot an apple off his son's head.

2. The movie *Midnight Express* was set in which country?

3. Which Thai province is between Sukhothai and Nakhon Sawan?

4. Who had a sign on his desk stating, "The buck stops here"?

5. Who wrote of the "snotgreen sea"?

6. From which language does the word "avocado" derive?

7. Comedian Bob Hope was once a sportsman. In which sport?
8. Who composed *Pictures at an Exhibition*?

9. Who recorded a rock version of *Pictures at an Exhibition* in 1972?

10. Which US state takes its name from the Sioux for "south wind people"?

11. Which tough-guy actor was born Emmanuel Goldenburg?

12. Praia is the capital of which republic?

13. For which baseball team was Candlestick Park stadium built?

14. Francis Brebner of Scotland has been world champion seven times in which sport?
15. In which city was Mick Hucknall of Simply Red born?

16. Which R&B artiste recently held the top two places in the Billboard Hot 100 with *Burn* and *Confessions Part II*?

17. Damian Hirst scandalized the art world with art made from slices of what?

18. In computer technology, what does ASP stand for?

19. Richard Neville, Richard Walsh, and Martin Sharp were the editors of which infamous magazine?

20. What did Robert Metcalfe and David Boggs invent at Xerox PARC in 1973?

Answers next week

# Never a Cross Word!

## Across

1. Small whirlpool.

7. State between Kansas and Texas

8. Hydrochloric or sulfuric, for example.

9. Lime or lemon, maybe.

11. Money holder.

12. Negative answer.

13. Thus.

15. Native of New Delhi.

17. Northernmost ocean

18. Where to get a cup of coffee.

19. Brown-haired girl.

20. Salvador the artist.

## Down

2. Stalin or Mussolini, for example.

3. Swiss singing style.

4. Power.

1	2		3		4		5			6
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19										
							20			

5. Mr Butler in *Gone With The Wind*.

6. Cowboy's rope.

10. Illegal.

13. Latin music.

14. Really bad smell.

16. Cut into cubes.

Solution next week

## ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. *Washington Post*; 2. Abba; 3. 80; 4. Pickfair; 5. William Booth; 6. Judy Garland; 7. Pitcairn Island; 8. Channel Islands; 9. Ljubljana; 10. Craig Breedlove; 11. John McEnroe; 12. Medina; 13. Indian Ocean; 14. Lincoln's address at Gettysburg; 15. William; 16. He drove a truck; 17. Prachin Buri; 18. A bear; 19. Super Mario Brothers; 20. *The Duellists*.

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# HEARD & scene

The *Gazette's* Anongnat Sartpisut and Andy Johnstone went out and about recently and asked people: "What would you do with your last 1,000 baht?"



**Paddy O'Reilly** (Yeah. Right.)  
Age: 27  
From: Ireland  
Occupation: Editor

I would fulfill my lifelong sexual fantasy with my last 1,000 baht. I would pay an old lady to massage my body – using baked beans instead of oil of course – while I "fly my kite" and sing the Irish national anthem.



**Wipawadee Taluengjit**  
Age: 22  
From: Thailand  
Occupation: Call center staff

I would take out an advertisement in a newspaper to find the man of my dreams. He would be smart and good looking... Yeah, I would pay the last of my money to find the right man. I might keep some money to give to my parents.



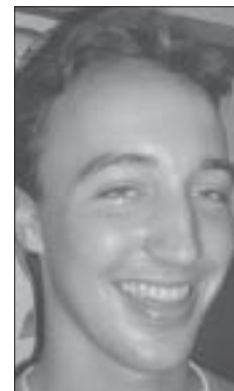
**Brett Ladin**  
Age: 34  
From: USA  
Occupation: Domestic engineer

I would treat my lovely girlfriend to a relaxing day at a herbal spa. She could enjoy a day of pampering and being spoiled while I just sat at home watching TV. She wouldn't then no longer be able to call me a "typical American".



**Penprapa Sanjankaew**  
Age: 27  
From: Phuket  
Occupation: Concierge officer

I would be really boring but practical, buying as much water and rice as I possibly could. That would help me to live long enough to find more money. But I would need money for gas to cook the rice, so maybe my plan isn't so great after all.



**Joe Sutherland**  
Age: 25  
From: USA  
Occupation: English teacher

Being a kind-hearted kind of a guy, the only decent thing to do with my last 1,000 baht would be to buy my girlfriend a new water buffalo. The best part is that she – the girlfriend that is, not the buffalo – isn't even Thai.

## The best places to go fly your kite

The human race is going downhill fast. In recent years, these august columns have featured items about a man who raped a dog, another who raped a chicken – and a third who took out his beastly passions on a pig.

Most recently, there was an item about a man caught masturbating at a Bangkok Skytrain station.

This confirms a long-held theory of mine that, on March 23, 1938, human evolution peaked. After exhausting itself by producing the finest, most noble and perfect specimen of which it was capable, the evolutionary urge began to decline in humans, and we have been on a downward slide ever since.



The astute and discerning reader will not be surprised to learn that I was born on that pivotal date.

Granting the ongoing degeneration of our species, important questions still remain. The increase in sexual deviancy should not surprise us. But why the preference for dogs? Why hens? Why pigs? Why Skytrain stations?

In an effort to answer these questions, I offered to interview the raped dog, but my puritanical editor sternly forbade me.

He wasn't keen on having me interview the man who raped the dog, either. I never asked about the hen.

Now, however, he has grudgingly consented to my writing about the Skytrain Wanker, so long as I "keep it in good taste." "In good taste."

Ha ha! Meditate on that phrase. How little he knows me, even after all these years of ribald camaraderie.

I have been unable to locate the Skytrain Wanker, so have been unable to interview him.

But I am puzzled by his predilection for masturbating at Skytrain stations, rather than in more prestigious Bangkok venues like, say, the Amarin Plaza, or the Emporium Department Store, or even at a respectful distance from the City Pillar (think of the symbolic significance).

It is possible that this poor fellow was unduly stimulated by the number of beautiful girls who ride the Skytrain. But beautiful girls can be found everywhere in Thailand, so the mystery remains.

I hasten to assure my chaste Phuket readers that Bangkokians do not normally masturbate at Skytrain stations. At least, I don't. Not yet, anyway.

Rajabhat University needs to conduct a poll to determine the favorite venues for Bangkok masturbators. Such information might lead us to a fuller understanding of this complex phenomenon.

We might then proceed to a wider-ranging investigation. It would be a matter of interest, for instance, to know which locations ardent Phuketians prefer to frequent when performing their masturbatory tasks.

This is mere speculation, but I would be willing to bet that the venue of choice for most Phuket-based devotees of the masturbatory arts would be a high-class place such as the swimming pool of a certain six-star resort that caters to bluebloods, pop and movie stars.

It would certainly please the guests of the resort to know that their swimming pool enjoys such prestige among discriminating masturbators. The resort's public-relations team could include this vital selling point in their advertising.

If this vice continues to spread, the government will have to take steps to get masturbators out of the Skytrain stations and swimming pools and into government-supervised wanking rooms (technically known as masturbatoria) where they can be monitored via closed-circuit TV cameras and observed by specially-trained masturbatologists.

Indeed, I believe that there should be such a room in every public toilet. Wanking rooms could be equipped with disposable towels, so as to maintain an acceptable level of hygiene.

The towels might be decorated with tasteful pictures of naked girls in erotic poses, so as to expedite the execution of the task in hand. Obviously, a special fee would have to be levied to maintain a romantic ambience. We could also have VIM rooms for Very Important Masturbators.

I urge the government to undertake this task speedily. If this vice cannot be brought under control, there is a danger that certain extremist political elements may decide to wage a War Against Wankers, along the lines of an earlier War Against Drugs.

While the war on drugs may have had some justification, the spectacle of the bullet-riddled bodies of dead masturbators piled up to the moon might conceivably draw the wrath of Amnesty International and other do-gooder groups. And that would be bad for Thailand's image.

On the other hand, it could inspire an Oscar-winning movie: *They Shoot Wankers, Don't They?*

S. Tsow can be flamed at [stsow@yahoo.com](mailto:stsow@yahoo.com), except when he's lurking furtively around the swimming pools of famous Phuket resorts.

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The official release of Windows XP Service Pack 2 (SP2) has been delayed yet again – and that's good news. It is currently available as a "Technical Preview Program", which is essentially late-stage "beta" testing during which programmers and specialists can independently test it and offer suggestions and "bug fixes" to Microsoft.

SP2, more than any of its predecessors, is a seriously risky patch job. That's because Microsoft's almost exclusive focus in SP2 is security. Security first, ahead of backward compatibility.

This means that I can almost guarantee that some users' existing applications are going to break when they install SP2. Some programs may break just a little and will be easily fixed; others will break in a big way. Even some hardware may not work correctly once SP2 has been installed.

The delays in SP2's release are good news,

as the extra testing will, one hopes, minimize problems when SP2 hits the real world. Don't think it's going to eliminate the problems – it won't – but Microsoft is doing the right thing by taking its time releasing SP2.

When it is released, you should ensure that any major programs you have are certified by the makers as compatible with Windows XP SP2, especially anti-virus, diagnostic, firewall or networking programs. Even Microsoft programs are not necessarily sure to be SP2-compliant at first.

So don't try the Technical Preview version unless you have a spare machine with Windows XP and nothing important on it; a machine with a drive that you're happy to reformat if necessary.

The first change you'll no-

# What's happening with XP Service Pack 2?

tice when you install SP2 is a new Security Center icon in the notification area of the taskbar. Right-click it and choose Open Security Center to check out the new operational headquarters for XP's enhanced security features.

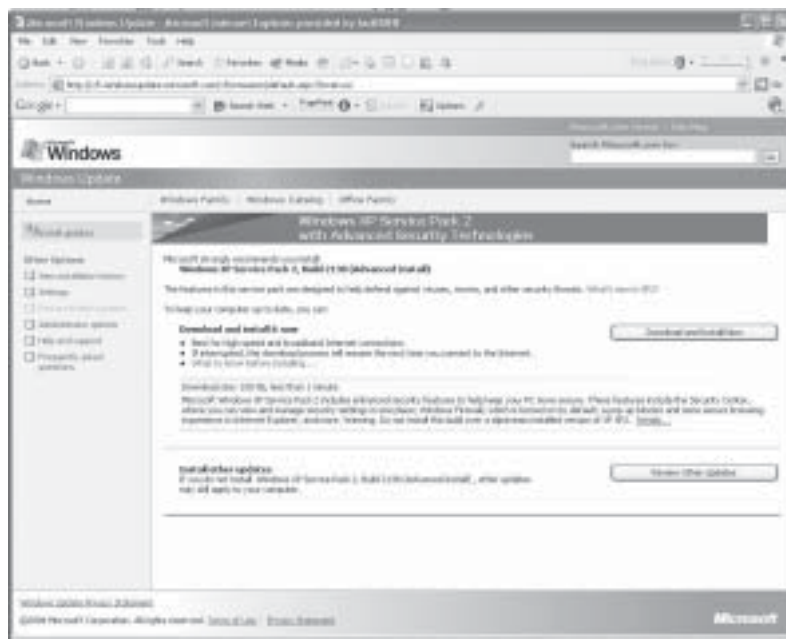
The Security Center owes a lot in looks to anti-virus and system utility software, such as Norton Internet Security and PC-cillin. At a glance you can see whether your firewall is on or off, whether Automatic Up-

dates are enabled, and the status of your virus protection. You can

also access security settings for your system and for Internet Explorer.

SP2 can recognize almost two dozen anti-virus programs, so the status displayed in the Security Center reflects how up-to-date your anti-virus software is. Or so the theory goes. In practice, it figured out I was using Norton AntiVirus, but couldn't work out its own status, such as whether I'd performed a full system scan recently. And it is truly clueless about non-Microsoft firewalls such as ZoneAlarm.

The default setting for many of the new security features is on, not off, something you need to be aware of if you already have alternative security measures in place. If you do, you're likely to need to make



Go here for the 'technical preview' of SP2 – but only if you are prepared to spend many hours fixing things that won't work after it is installed.

adjustments to ensure everything works smoothly.

The new Windows Firewall, formerly known as Internet Connection Firewall (ICF) is switched on when you install SP2. This is a "protect-the-newchums" setting, designed to maximize protection for the masses, but it is likely to cause its own problems.

Things to watch out for include clashes with any alternative firewalls and "disappearing" hardware, such as network print servers or storage devices.

Windows Firewall is much more configurable than ICF and

has the added advantage of springing into action during Windows boot-up, protecting your system from the start. It monitors incoming traffic and stops any that is either unsolicited or is not on an exception list.

And if you have multiple connections on your PC – both a local area network and a modem, for example – you can define global settings that will affect all connections or adjust settings for each connection.

A lesser development is the revamped Internet Explorer, which Microsoft has let languish for years. IE lacks basic elements

such as tabbed browsing, pop-up blocking and password management that most decent browsers wouldn't be seen dead without.

SP2 fixes some of that. At last, Internet Explorer automatically blocks pop-up windows and has easily accessible Information Bar at the top of the displayed web page.

It also blocks "software", such as ActiveX components and other scripts. This should put a major hurdle in the way of those websites that try to take over your browser or download spyware onto your computer.

Other subtler improvements include the reinforcement of browser zones and a new Add-On Manager to give you control over programs which change or expand IE's behavior.

No tabs, though; no password manager. IE still has some catching up to do.

Despite SP2's focus on security, more security "vulnerabilities" are likely to appear in Windows in the not-too-distant future. Microsoft knows that, too. That's why during installation SP2 prompts you to switch Automatic Updates on. Having it on will ensure you receive the latest patches and fixes as soon as they're released.

Other fixes and features in SP2 include an overhaul of wireless networking, making it much easier to set up a wireless network, and a more secure code base, with much of the code recompiled to help deflect the infamous buffers overruns which have been responsible for many security holes in the past.

Woody Leonhard has written a number of books in the "...for Dummies" series on computing. Readers can contact him at: [woody@khunwoody.com](mailto:woody@khunwoody.com)



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## THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS EXHIBITION IS COMING TO PHUKET!

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You absolutely should not miss this unique opportunity to look at an enormous variety of exhibits, ranging from construction materials, tools, architectural design to every type of home decoration need. Highlights of the show will include a special exhibition of ready-to-assemble Thai-style houses, the unique ceramic tiles, as fitted in the world's largest swimming pool – situated at the Novotel in Khao Lak and now featured in the Guinness Book of Records – and special construction techniques for building energy-saving homes, high-tech homes and low-cost homes.

Such an exciting display has not been seen in Phuket before, and it will be of great interest to individual home-owners, architects, engineers, contractors, foremen, hotel and spa owners and development companies alike.

After recovering from negative impact caused by the SARS crisis, Phuket and other provinces in the Andaman region remain the fastest growing area in Thailand. Apart from growth in the hotel and tourism sector, more than a hundred building projects are in construction at the moment, including luxury housing projects and large shopping centres such as Central Festival, Jungceylon (with 100,000 square metres of Life Style Centre), and the Macro megastore. The building boom is happening now and this exhibition provides the opportunity of seeing a wide choice of materials and techniques available.

As July is the low tourist season, it is the ideal time of the year to introduce new construction materials and interior design items to the building industry. Many home-owners, housing developments, resorts, spas and hotels will want to utilize this quiet period to build or renovate their properties, so that work is finished before the next high season starts in November.

Visitors to the exhibition are also cordially invited to attend three free seminars. The first, 'Asian Style in Modern Architecture', will be of special interest to developers and architects; the second, 'Professional in Construction Management', will be of special interest to engineers and contractors; and the third, '108 Problems with Air-Conditioning Systems' will be of special interest to engineers and contractors.



**The Phuket Gazette**  
- Since 1994 -

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## Postal service needs a good shake-up, from the top down

The history of the profession of postman or courier is a long and in many cases heroic one. As far back as 2,500 years ago, the government of the Persian Empire had a system of couriers on horseback who would carry messages across the empire, changing horses every 30 kilometers.

Ancient Greek couriers delivered messages on foot, as in the case of Pheidippides, who ran from Athens to Sparta (about 220 kilometers) to ask the Spartans for help in battling the Persians, then ran back again with the news that the Spartans didn't want to join in. He then fought in the battle against the Persians at Marathon, and ran to Athens with the news of victory, after which he dropped dead of exhaustion.

True, these early couriers were carrying messages for the government, not for ordinary people, but equally heroic deeds were recorded, for example, by the Pony Express in the US. Even today, the GPO building in New York bears the inscription, "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds."

What a sad contrast this glorious history makes when set alongside the postal service in Phuket.

The *Gazette* has recently received a wave of complaints from readers about the poor postal service. Householders' power or phones have been cut off because bills were never delivered. Parcels have been sent back without the addressees even knowing that they had arrived at the post office. Staff are seen as surly and uncooperative.

The attitude of the Patong Postmaster to the proven thefts in his post office was downright casual. He stated that the thief took only five postcards. How does the Postmaster know this? The thief could have been stealing for months or even years before he was caught. In any case, who in his right mind risks jail to steal five postcards? And why was the offender allowed to walk away from his "arrest"?

A very senior Post Office official, noting that there had also been problems at Karon Post Office, explained, "There was too much work for the staff we had there, and employees were always quitting."

Clearly, something is very wrong with management and morale, and a major shake-up of the island's postal service is long overdue, starting at the top.

- The Editor

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In association with The Nation Multimedia Group PCL

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## Letters

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

### At the dog pound, the horror begins

Sadly, and not for lack of effort to prevent it, Phuket's dog pound has been put into operation.

Many people, locals as well as expats, are up in arms about this, but catching and impounding, and dumping by owners, has begun, with already desperate situations created for many dogs, especially the many pups that have had to resort to drinking each others' urine because they are too small to drink from the water containers at the pound.

It has been proven that mass sterilization of all dogs is the only solution to an overpopulation of unwanted animals, and then only after at least 70% of all animals have been neutered. This point has been made time and again to the authorities, apparently to no avail.

Despite a disastrous previous attempt at impounding dogs at Wat Chalong, where 60 of 100 imprisoned dogs died, the lesson has not been learned.

What will happen will be mass starvation among the submissive dogs that are chased away from food by the aggressive ones; mass deaths from infectious diseases such as parvo and distemper (no vaccinations are given at the pound), mass deaths from fighting; and the misery of skin disease spreading from animal to animal.

The provincial government accuses local animal charities of not helping it to catch dogs for this project. That is entirely correct. No sane person would assist in creating what is without doubt going to be a total disaster. It is also clear that it will be

the charities that will be left to clear up the mess.

It is hard to imagine that the government wants to inflict so much suffering and distress on these poor animals as well as on the many people, Thai and foreign, who have helped these animals survive and get sterilized.

History shows that impounding dogs does nothing to reduce the problem of strays. The aim is to round up all stray dogs, but this will not happen, and the remaining uncaught animals will quickly fill the void by breeding.

The only solution that actually works is to sterilize all the female dogs in a particular area, both strays and owned dogs.

They will continue to live out their lives protecting their territory until, after a few years, the problem is virtually eradicated.

It is unfortunate that the authorities do not do more to support the charities in this effort, rather than wasting time and money on this killing field.

I urge readers, help by making your voice heard. Send letters of protest to the Governor of Phuket.

Margot Homburg Park  
Soi Dogs Foundation

### Election silliness just hurts business

So yet again the entertainment businesspeople of Patong have had to undergo two evenings of closure due to the re-election for Patong's Mayor.

All of the candidates claim, "We care about Patong." What bull\*hit. The word on the street is that most of them really care only about the benefits they can

gain from future deals such as construction contracts.

In the meantime, the people who do genuinely care and have invested here are left to put up with the closures and the repercussions of tourists leaving Patong, never to return, because no entertainment is available during their "dream" vacation.

If the election committee had any balls it would ban all the candidates for life.

It's just like a game of musical chairs. When will the music stop?

Disappointed and Tired  
Patong

### Ugly? You ain't seen nothing yet

So visitors have voted Phuket ugly [*Gazette*, June 12]. Are they crazy or what? Don't they know that *all* building sites are ugly?

But they can rest assured that Phuket is working flat out to finish its beautiful concrete jungle. Please be patient. It takes time to rid the island of all those ugly trees, and to make boring hills more interesting by cutting chunks out of them.

The really good news is that when construction is complete, coach firms will be able to arrange tours so you can gaze in awe at endless rows of empty shops that nobody wants, because the "quality" tourists and their euros, dollars and pounds have gone to pastures new.

Still, with a bit of imagination these empty units could be designated as monuments to Phuket's three patron saints: Stupidity, Greed and Corruption.

John  
Phuket

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 spas are fighting for recognition

## FIRST PERSON

The spa business in Phuket had been around in a very basic form for 20 years when I started up my business five years ago, and even then, it was still in its infancy. Tourists to Phuket had different lifestyle objectives even that recently.

I began by researching the subject, attending any seminars I could, reading about it, and practising until I became proficient in it.

It was around that time – two years ago – that the government first proposed making Phuket “the medical hub of Asia”.

Health tourism encompasses three quite distinct areas: medical and surgical services; spas; and the growing of herbs and the production of herbal remedies.

I consider spas to be the area with the most potential for growth. Phuket is not well known internationally for its hospitals and medical services and it will take a long time to build up a good reputation. As far as herbal remedies go, Phuket doesn't enjoy the right kind of climate to grow them.

Some years ago Dr Yada (now Sriyada) Palimaphan, who was an adviser to the then-health minister, set up a network of local spas which became the fore-runner of the PSBC.

However, there was confusion over what constituted a spa and some enterprises didn't really fit the profile of what we [legitimate spa operators] considered to be “proper” spas.

The network of spas in Phuket has helped the sector to develop more rapidly in the past five years than in the preceding 20. We share information within the PSBC and plan strategies for the sustainable development of the spa industry.



**Legitimate spa operators consider themselves as part of the health care industry, providing clients with physical and mental therapy. But many bureaucrats see the services spas provide as similar to those provided by massage parlors offering commercial sex.**

**As a result, spas were initially regarded as “entertainment venues”, which meant they were required to pay excise tax.**

**Here, Pakin Raktae-Ngam, Chairman of the Phuket Spa Business Club (PSBC), explains how the legitimate spa industry is battling to change bureaucratic perceptions, and addresses the problem of cheap spa operators who risk destroying all the work the PSBC has done.**

The industry, and the services and equipment offered, are changing rapidly. We need to keep abreast of all developments.

Information sharing and cooperation are vital for the spa industry, if only to challenge some of the misconceptions about the business.

Spas were initially classed as “entertainment venues” and therefore came under the Entertainment Act 1966. Spa owners, naturally, did not agree with this definition and the irritating rules that went with it, such as forbidding those under 18 from being on the premises.

Without a clear definition – supplying neither medical nor entertainment services – spas fell into a “gray area” between the two, at least as far as legislation went.

It was obvious from the start that this

was wrong. I and other spa owners didn't want to apply for the same kind of licenses as discos, but the spas couldn't claim to be hospitals. This became frustrating.

However, by self-regulation, we found that we could demonstrate that this gray area was not the place for spas. The Public Health Ministry (PHM) gradually came round to our way of thinking and spas, previously classed as entertainment venues, now come under public health regulations.

Members of the PSBC refused to pay excise tax and other taxes levied specifically on entertainment venues (see *Gazette* June 26). We paid only corporate tax because we saw ourselves as part of the health – not the entertainment – industry.

I personally don't care about fines because I see no justification for paying

the tax. After all, PSBC spas don't offer treatment for entertainment, but for health purposes.

Every spa in the organization has invested more than 4 million baht to set up in business. They employ well-trained staff and use high-quality materials to promote health. Why should we have been forced to pay the same taxes as establishments defined as “massage parlors” under the Entertainment Act 1966?

In some ways, the spa industry is in danger of becoming a victim of its own success. There is a “brain drain” of qualified therapists out of Thailand – Phuket especially – to overseas, and increasing partial foreign ownership of local businesses.

On many occasions I have been approached by Singaporeans wanting to come in and not only manage my business, but also to export traditional Thai wisdom to Singapore. Some operators, frustrated by the annoying regulations of the entertainment act have sold out to such investors.

We – the PSBC and PPHO – have already trained hundreds of therapists, masseurs and masseuses to work in spas. We also plan to set up a spa management course at the Prince of Songkhla University, though this plan is still in its infancy.

I hope to see Phuket become the spa center of Asia, with lots of high-quality establishments staffed by dedicated, well-trained, professional therapists. This will be good for the island.

But controls must remain. I don't want to see the sector expanding too rapidly and becoming just another down-market business. High quality is the way forward.

## The tabien baan tangle

I understand that a *tabien baan* (house registration document) proves where Thais live, and that a Thai must be listed on a *tabien baan* in order to be issued an ID card, passport or driving license, to vote in the district where he or she is registered, and to have access to other government services.

The *tabien baan* also provides statistical data that is integral for making government decisions when planning roads, electricity, hospitals and so on.

As I understand it, there is a risk that people listed on a *tabien baan* may claim that they own the property, and that is why most property owners do not allow tenants to be registered on the *tabien baan*, even if the tenant has rented the property for years.

Is there a way to ensure that Thais are registered on a *tabien baan* if they only rent accommodation?

If not, how is it possible to do any town planning if the government does not know how many people actually live in the area? Is this one of the reasons why so few Thais in Patong vote and why so few have driving licenses?

Ulf Mikaelsson  
Patong

**Phonsak Naksena, Chief Administrative Officer of the Patong Municipality, replies:**

Only one person may be registered on a *tabien baan* as the owner of the property. All other people listed on it are registered only as living there.

However, for a person to be registered on a *tabien baan*, the owner of the property must sign the application to attest that the applicant lives at that address.

If the owner of the property refuses to sign the form, then there is nothing we can do to have the tenant registered on the *tabien baan*.

This is not a problem for most tenants as most property owners are willing to have tenants registered on the *tabien baan*.

The problem is usually with

the tenants themselves, who either do not have the time or simply cannot be bothered to get themselves registered on a *tabien baan*.

These people will have to go to where they are registered in order to receive government services.

There are currently 15,139 people – 7,629 women and 7,510 men – registered on *tabien baan* issued by Patong Municipality. However, we don't know exactly how many people actually live in Patong, and this is a problem when it comes to town planning.

When making such decisions, we estimate the population based on the most recent national census and on information from surveys conducted since then.

## Rules for teaching English

I would like to teach English in Thailand. I will be taking a TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language) certificate course, but I was recently told that to work legally in Thailand I need to have a degree, requiring two to four years of study. Is this true?

Sheri Hardy  
Canada

**Chian Srirueang, Director, Phuket Educational Office, answers:**

To teach English in Thailand you must have a minimum of a diploma in any field, and you must also have a certificate verifying that you have completed a course in teaching English as a foreign language.

## Issues & ANSWERS

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

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

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

## Making a 90-day report

I am working in Thailand with a non-immigrant type-B visa and a work permit. I have had many suggestions as to where I should report every 90 days, as required by Immigration.

The nearest Immigration office is 120 kilometers away. Can someone please give me the official answer?

Terry Gallagher  
Cha'am,  
Prachuap Khiri Khan

**The Phuket Gazette notes that the Phuket Provincial Immi-**

**gration Office website at [www.phuketimmigration.com](http://www.phuketimmigration.com), states:**

All foreign nationals staying in Thailand for more than 90 consecutive days must report to the nearest Immigration Office every 90 days together with evidence of their place of stay (Household Registration Document / “Tabien Baan”, lease agreement, etc.). For localities which do not have an Immigration office, such report must be submitted to the nearest Police Station.



# Land probe has done no harm to property market

I would like to counter comments that recent developments in the ongoing land investigation are related to anything other than normal police procedures.

The investigation has been conducted continuously and according to the law. It has taken some time, so it is only just now that the investigation has revealed that some plots were wrongfully acquired.

I don't think that the investigation will have any great effect on investor confidence [as many have claimed] and in fact we can see that the property market and land prices continue to enjoy healthy growth. Please don't worry about this.

[As a result of the investigation] I think investors will more carefully check title deeds on any land they intend to buy. This [due diligence] should be a normal part of any business practice. I believe buyers should always consult with lawyers when checking on land to learn about its ownership history [and the manner in which any title deeds may have been upgraded].

In the past, I have helped foreign investors who came to me with land title deeds and helped to verify their authenticity with the Land Office [because I am committed to maintaining a healthy investment climate].

**Aids workshop:** Regarding the upcoming 5<sup>th</sup> World Workshop on Oral Health and Disease, to be held at the Pearl Village Hotel from July 6 to 10, I have already met with the officials involved to prepare security and make sure everything runs smoothly.

The 300 people who will attend are mostly dentists, technicians and scientists who will discuss academic research into ways to prevent transmission of HIV/Aids. After meeting with us here in Phuket,

some will go on to attend the 15<sup>th</sup> International Aids Conference, which will be held in Bangkok from July 11 to 16.

I believe that this event will benefit Phuket tourism. Also, the organizers have invited Thai government officers, scientists, lab technicians and members of the private sector to join a seminar on July 10 to learn more about HIV transmission from experts in the field.

**Duty-free zones:** We already held three meetings on this issue, and we are now in the process of deciding which locations are the most appropriate sites for duty-free zones, which will provide new outlets for visiting tourists to go shopping and thereby increase the average daily expenditure of tourists visiting Phuket.

We could have more than one duty-free zone in Phuket, but it depends on finding suitable locations because we will need to conduct inspection on all entries and exits, install TV surveillance cameras and follow Customs Department rules and

procedures.

Currently, only the Wang Talang Company is setting up a duty-free zone. They have experience in this business. [They have operated a duty-free shop at Darasamut School Intersection, but are now building a larger duty-free "zone" on two rai of land near the Chao Fa West-Kwang Rd intersection.] We expect the shop to open within the two months.

Once it is established, we will allow Thai people from other provinces to make purchases at the duty-free zone, but only if they can produce evidence that they have stayed on the island for at least 48 hours. For example, they could produce a receipt for two nights' accommodation at a hotel in Phuket.

**Port Blair trip:** We did not sign any concrete agreements during our recent trip to Port Blair [in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands], as this was the first time the government leaders had had a chance to meet.

However, I think the private-sector

members of the delegation from Phuket, Krabi and Phang Nga provinces will be able to take advantage of trade opportunities with the Andaman Islands.

Among the most promising export opportunities are fruit and construction materials. Trade in these commodities could begin very soon.

On the government side, we expressed our interest in linking our tourism industries, especially diving. But they will refer some concerns they still have on these matters to their central government in New Delhi. They promised that they will present our ideas to their Minister of Tourism.

We are interested in importing fish from the Andamans too, because there are some types of fish that Thais enjoy but their people don't eat. For example, people in Port Blair eat only fish with white flesh. But here there is a market here for darker fish, such as tuna, so there is a possibility for trade in this area.

We are interested in establishing a direct air link between Phuket and Port Blair because this will facilitate trade and investment. But they would prefer to link Phuket to Chennai and New Delhi, using Port Blair as a stopover.

We have to discuss this issue further and let the central governments of the two nations decide. I will brief Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra on this and other issues related to Phuket-Port Blair links before he meets the Indian Prime Minister at the Bimstec meeting in Bangkok from July 8 to 10.



Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura



THE GOVERNOR'S  
LETTER

# Things people put into their bodies

We put amazing stuff into our bodies, and I am not referring only to the stuff that we eat. Over time, doctors, surgeons and dentists have used an amazing variety of products to heal people, make them look better – and in some cases even to control them.

On the dental side, most people probably have at least one amalgam filling. The amalgam filling, an alloy of silver, tin, cop-

per, mercury and zinc, has been around for more than 150 years.

Rather newer are composite, resin or white fillings also used in dentistry. Composite fillings are composed of an organic polymer and inorganic particles such as quartz, borosilicate glass and lithium aluminum silicate. Even the simplest filling has many components.

Also used in dentistry, usually for inlays, is porcelain. The disadvantage of porcelain is that

it can be brittle. It also costs more than amalgam or composite fillings. Gold, too, is used for fillings and inlays. This is not pure gold, which is too soft, but an alloy containing 75% gold mixed with copper, silver, platinum, palladium and zinc.

For women – and sometimes men wanting to become women – breast augmentation or breast enlargement typically involves two types of implant: silicone and saline.

These implants are also used in body shaping, with some surgeons performing bicep and tricep shaping, bottom shaping and even calf- and abdomen-shaping surgery.

Generally, neither type of implant causes problems – unless it breaks.

Saline implants are basically saltwater contained in a holding sack. If the sack breaks, the body will naturally absorb the salt and water but the sack has to be surgically removed.

With silicone implants, surgical removal of the implant is still required, and there may be further complications because of the silicone causing adverse reactions; the silicone may be de-

tected as a foreign substance and the body may reject it.

When an object or foreign material is placed into our bodies, our immune system will either accept or reject it. If it is rejected, infection is likely and the implanted object needs to be removed.

The infection can be severe enough in some cases to cause total body system failure and death.

Scientists are always looking for better materials from which to make implants. One new material that is proving very popular for bone implants is titanium.

Formerly, when doctors replaced hips and knees which had become dysfunctional due to arthritis or osteoporosis, stainless steel was used.

Titanium is now taking over. It is more expensive, but it is stronger and more durable. Previously, implants had to be cemented into the bone. With titanium, we have the option not to cement these implants in place, which reduces the amount of foreign material that our body may reject.

Cement used as a bonding agent between the implant and

bone can also deteriorate over time, resulting in a repeat trip to the operating table to have the loose implant fixed.

For hearts, implants include internal defibrillators, small machines with computer chips capable of automatically delivering an electric shock to the heart if its rhythm becomes irregular.

Heart valves, too, can be replaced when they become leaky, typically with a synthetic valve or one taken from a pig.

Human tracking implants are devices that are placed inside our body that use power generated from muscle movement to send signals to global positioning satellites (GPS) to keep track of where we are on the planet.

It is claimed that these implants will have beneficial effects in medical monitoring and in law enforcement.

Silicone computer chips and microprocessors have also been implanted, capable of communicating directly with computers from inside the body.

The future of implants is possibly limited only by our imagination.

*Peter Davison is Manager of International Services at the Phuket International Hospital. To contact him call Tel: 076-249400 or email peter@phuket-international-hospital.co.th*



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# Airport upgrade gets priority

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: The long-awaited plan to extend the runway at Phuket International Airport from 3,000 meters to 3,300m, at an estimated cost of 154 million baht, has been given priority on the orders of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Lt Cdr Boonchart Prompoon, Director of the Airports Authority of Thailand, Phuket (AATP), told the *Gazette* that the project was originally planned for next year but that the PM wanted to push it through early.

"I think we should be able to start construction in October and finish by the end of next year," Cdr Boonchart said.

The runway has to be extended because at present, although Boeing 747 aircraft can land at Phuket fully-laden, the runway is too short for them to

take off with a full complement of passengers, limiting the number of tourists the airport can handle.

Once the runway is extended, 747s fully laden with passengers, baggage and enough fuel to reach Europe will be able to take off from Phuket.

Although Cdr Boonchart denied recent reports in national newspapers that Phuket is to get a second runway in the near future, he added that the airport's long-term plan caters for construction of a 3,600-meter runway to allow 747s to take off for trans-Pacific flights to the US.

"We want to extend the current runway to 3,300 meters first, because our main market is Europe, but if, in the future, we want to handle direct flights to America, 3,300 meters would not be long enough," he explained.

Rather than extend the existing runway again, the long-term plan calls for a new, 3,600-meter runway to be built. The existing runway would then be used as a taxiway, although it could also be used as a standby runway in case of emergencies.

"If we want to build a new runway we have to buy more land," he noted, "because we have none to spare."

In addition to the extension of the runway, the airport is to get another four parking aprons at a total cost of 101 million baht.

Cdr Boonchart said he would like to see even more aprons built. "[When we were planning] we didn't know so many low-cost airlines would be launched. That is one reason the number of flights to Phuket - we get about 90 a day now - has increased.

"We also have many new airlines, such as Phuket Air and Orient Thai, who park their aircraft in Phuket because there is no more room for them to park in Bangkok," he explained.

He added that the AATP's main income streams are from landing and parking fees. "Our landing fees are lower than anywhere in Asia except Malaysia.

"The problem is the shortage of apron space. We have 11 aprons now and the plan is to increase this number to 15, but in fact I think we should have still more," Cdr Boonchart said.

He said that the number of passengers this year was up some 200% on last year "because last year we were affected by Sars (severe acute respiratory syndrome)."

But, he added, the general trend indicated a 20% annual increase.

## ON THE MOVE

Le Meridien Thailand Resorts has announced the appointment



of French-Canadian **Dominique La-pointe** as General Manager of Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club. Ms La-pointe has

worked for Meridien for more than 14 years, holding various executive positions throughout the world including posts in Montreal, Noumea in New Caledonia, Bangkok, Indonesia and London. Her experience includes opening and re-branding properties, operations, sales and marketing.

**Supreeya Jitrawiparat**, 33, has been appointed Marketing Manager at Tourism Malaysia's Phuket Office.

She has a management degree from Rajabhat University's Bansomdejchaopraya campus in Bangkok and previously worked as Marketing Manager at the Royal Phuket City Hotel.



Surat Thani native **Sansri Sangmontree**, 30, has joined the new



five-star boutique resort, The Aspasia Phuket, as Food and Beverage Manager. He has a degree in management from Rajabhat University's Surat

Thani campus and more than 10 years' experience in F&B. He was previously Restaurant Manager at the Banyan Tree Resort in Phuket.

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

# EU tax rules are bound to confound

The expected start date for the new European Union Tax Directive (EUTD) has been further delayed, and is now expected to come into effect in July next year. The EUTD will, by law, require all EU residents to pay the correct amount of tax on their income from savings anywhere in the world.

The EUTD will require all banks, building societies and other deposit takers to send all details of a customer's income on savings to the customer's "home" tax authority.

The relevant tax authorities will then check that the information matches details included in tax returns. In the case that no tax return has been lodged, or the information is incorrect or has not been reported, further action will be taken.

Investors can instruct their relevant financial institutions not to send the information. However, investors will have to pay a withholding tax on all interest earned. Currently this is set to start at 15% a year and rise over the next few years to 35% a year.

The EUTD is designed to affect only residents in the EU, Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man. People who originate from a EU country but are not resident

in the EU will not be affected, provided they supply proof of their non-residence.

In reality, however, this is going to be a total mess. Tax authorities will directly and indirectly pressure banks and financial institutions to divulge information. The direct approach will include blunt demands for information. The indirect approach will include methods such as having other government agencies obtain the information.

The US government is already using two such tactics against customers of Swiss banks. In the early 1980s, the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS), frustrated by its inability to obtain information from Swiss banks, came up with a novel idea. Under assumed names, IRS agents wrote to every branch of every Swiss Bank operating in Switzerland requesting account opening forms.

When they received the replies, their only interest was the postal franking number of each bank and branch. For example, franking number 12852 could relate to Union Bank of Switzerland - Lausanne, and 10712 to Credit Suisse - Geneva.

They then had all mail sent from Switzerland to the US di-



## MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

verted to their offices. If they saw that John Smith of Arizona had a letter bearing a franking number matching that of a Swiss bank, they simply noted the details and let the letter be delivered in the normal manner.

Later, John Smith would receive a letter from his local IRS office requiring his attendance at a specific date and time to discuss his account with, for example, UBS Zurich. One can imagine Mr Smith's reaction.

As it is not illegal in Switzerland for foreigners to evade paying tax to foreign governments, the IRS uses another very successful ploy: using another government agency to obtain information.

The US Drug Enforcement Administration approaches Swiss banks claiming that people have deposited profits from crimes. This has been very successful and the IRS has gained a lot of information even though some people investigated have had no involvement whatsoever with drugs.

Another potential problem for investors is that banks simply may not accept people advising them that they are non-residents, and in any case, information on their accounts will be reported to their "home tax authority" or the withholding tax will be levied.

There will also be problems with banks being inundated with information from customers, and the usual problem of everyday mistakes being made.

Many people believe that

they are safe when it comes to their banks divulging information. That is not always the case. Some years ago, a top Johannesburg lawyer who specialized in offshore matters told me that he once was walking through London when he met, coming from the opposite direction, the Manager of Exchange Control at the Reserve Bank of South Africa.

He asked the Reserve Bank manager what he was doing in London, and the manager replied by showing him a bank statement of an account at a Jersey branch of a well-known UK bank. He had simply flown to Jersey, walked into the bank and asked at the counter for a statement of someone they were investigating. No ID was requested, the bank statement was simply handed over. So much for security.

One UK bank with "off-shore branches" goes as far as suggesting that clients use insurance products and other investment products that are not covered by the EUTD's reporting requirements.

One thing is for sure, investors who have any relationship with the EU will now have to be extra careful about what constitutes non-resident status for tax purposes. This varies between EU member states, and even if an investor is exempt from income tax, that does not imply the ability to avoid inheritance tax.

I will explore more issues raised by the EUTD in later columns.

*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](mailto:imm@loxinfo.co.th).*

### VITAL STATISTICS: COMPANY REGISTRATIONS BOOMING

	May 04	May 03	% change
Limited company registered	91	53	71.70%
Limited companies increasing capital	15	7	114.29%
Companies deregistered	4	11	-63.64%
Limited partnership registered	26	24	8.33%
Limited partnerships increasing capital	2	4	-50.00%
Partnerships deregistered	10	8	25.00%

Source: Phuket Provincial Business Development Office

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# 2005 Sea Rally will be 'more competitive'

PHUKET: Organizers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Andaman Sea Rally (ASR), the Phuket-Port Blair-Phuket dash, to be held from January 4 to 20 next year, have announced a number of changes aimed at adding a more serious competitive element to the event than in the previous two years.

One change is the introduction of a sailing-only class, intended to encourage competition among serious offshore racers. Boats that resort to using engines during the ASR will be moved into the cruising class.

The organizers are also



**Stormvogel**, which took line honors in 2004, will compete against other IRC-rated yachts next year.

drawing up a new formula for the motoring hours equation to ensure fairer results.

Next year's ASR will also

boast a true IRC class, allowing crews of boats with IRC ratings to enjoy a more competitive race. Included in this class will be *Stormvogel*, winner of the inaugural 2003 ASR and runner-up in 2004.

Fees for next year's rally will be US\$450 for the boat and skipper, and US\$60 per crew member. Included in the fees are rally entry, clearance fees for Port Blair and entry to the all-important parties.

For registration forms and regular updates on developments and entries, visit the ASR website at [www.andamansearally.com](http://www.andamansearally.com).



## The point of the exercise

The Phuket Aerobic Dance Team beat five other teams on June 27 to win a dance competition at Lan Nawamin Park in Phuket City.

Judges said that the team – (from left), Kreutiya Pakdeewan, Petcharat Pattanajak, Pranee Dokmai, Chantarat Pasee and Natcheunthip Fa-phet – impressed them with their energetic routine, which received the highest score of 936 points out of a possible 1,050.

The event was sponsored by the Phuket Tourism Sports and Recreation Center.

## Happy Days threaten darts league leaders

PATONG: While Champs and In-Between share the top of the Patong Darts League table with 29 points each, Happy Days now has 28 points and are piling up the points at such an impressive rate that they seem poised to take the lead.

With three weeks of play left, Offshore are also still in contention after a three-point win at home against In-Between.

Resurgent Shakers have pulled themselves up from the bottom of the table, leaving that dubious honor to the boys at Didi's, who risk relegation to the pool league if they don't win points this week at home against Amigos, who will be playing without league organizer Bez.

**Results of June 22 matches:** Amigos 2 Happy Days\* 7; Shak-

ers 5 Didi's\* 4; Piccadilly 3 Valhalla\* 6; Offshore\* 5 In-Between 4; Football Crazy\* 8 Champs 1. (\* Winner of beer leg.)

**Results of June 15 matches:** Offshore 8 Amigos\* 1; Didi's 4 Happy Days\* 5; Football Crazy 4 Shakers\* 5; Piccadilly\* 2 In-Between 7; Valhalla 3 Champs\* 6.

**Overall standings after June 22:** In-Between (29pts); Champs (29); Happy Days (28); Offshore (25); Football Crazy (21); Valhalla (18); Amigos (16); Shakers (16); Piccadilly (15); Didi's (13).

**July 6 matches:** Didi's at Amigos; Happy Days at Valhalla; In-Between at Football Crazy; Shakers at Piccadilly; Offshore at Champs.

## Beware those muddy bottoms

In response to the number of emails prompted by my previous column about tides, I'll address three scenarios where the application of tide data is critical.

**Passage Planning:** Quite often, tidal heights of 1.5 to two meters will enable safe passage through an area or channel that will not be accessible at low tides.

I suggest erring on the side of caution, especially in areas with sandy or muddy bottoms such as Phang Nga Bay, where local depths can vary due to currents that are themselves affected by the weather.

At low tide, a charted depth of one meter and a low-tide height of one meter would, theoretically, mean a boat with a 1.8-meter draft could proceed safely.

Assuming, say, a tidal rise of 1.8 meters, waiting a few hours until a mid-tide depth of around



2.8 meters (1 + 1.8 meters) will provide an adequate safety margin.

**Steering a Course:** What follows are rough estimation techniques for those who cannot – or can't be bothered to – practice coastal navigation.

Any component of tide will effect your speed and direction over the bottom.

Tide *with* you will mean you approach turning points and hazards more quickly than you would expect.

Conversely, a tide *against* will slow you down.

If you know the distance between any two objects you are passing, note your average speed and the time taken to sail between the two objects. The difference between your boat speed and the calculated speed is a good indication whether the tide is with or against you.

You must also factor in the effects of any crosscurrents to ensure that you sail an approximately straight course. To do this, apply a correction to the course being steered against the current.

And as soon as possible after establishing your correct course, find two fixed objects – one in the foreground and one in the background – that line up or are close to lining up. Adjust your heading into the tide so these objects stay in the same position relative to one another.

A benefit of this technique is that allowances for variations in current speed and direction can be calculated with relative ease.

**Anchoring:** Remember to allow for the tide's rise and fall when anchoring. Ascertaining this correctly will help prevent too much rope being paid out, thereby reducing your swing diameter.

If you cannot determine the height of the tide, then you should assume that you are anchoring at low tide. Add the tide height – actual or hazarded – to your assessed depth.

Sailing queries or news may be sent to [yachtpro](mailto:yachtpro) by email to: [rob@sailing-thailand.com](mailto:rob@sailing-thailand.com)

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## Five-goal hero nails 5-a-side tournament for PoSuanJit

## PIYA PRESSURE

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: Piya Pakpoom was the undoubted hero of the 5<sup>th</sup> Wichit Cup 5-a-side Soccer Tournament, banging in five goals to give PoSuanJit a 5-2 Men's Open victory over Nong Bank.

Five weeks of hotly-contested play among 122 entrants – 69 in the Men's Open division and 53 in the Under-15s – led up to the eagerly awaited final on June 27 on the pitch at Wichit Songkram School.

In a match as wild as the day's weather, the first 20-minute half saw most of the action taking place in the center of the pitch. But Nong Bank – who had the upper hand and were awarded three corners for their spunky play – let control slip to PoSuanJit on two occasions, with disastrous results.

The first came in the fifth minute, with Piya slamming the ball into the Nong Bank goal. He scored again in the final minute of the half with a fine volley.

From the opening whistle of the second half, the pressure was on Nong Bank to start placing the ball in the back of the net, but once again Piya's golden boot sent the ball into the back of the Nong Bank's net for a hat trick.

Nong Bank finally broke



Victorious PoSuanJit celebrate their win with man of the match, Piya Pakpoom (front row, right).

their duck when Sukchai Kaotan scored five minutes later, and the match appeared to be swinging Nong Bank's way when Somsak Sritong took the score to 3-2 in the 33<sup>rd</sup> minute.

But there was no stopping Piya as he shot from the half-way line just one minute later, hitting the back of the net.

Tempers flared and the referee had to resort to yellow-carding a PoSuanJit player, for aggressive blocking of an opponent, to calm things down.

The game was as good as over when man of the match Piya scored his fifth goal, putting the result beyond dispute and win-

ning PoSuanJit the trophy and 20,000 baht in prize money.

Baan Don beat J&MB 7-4 to take third place in the Men's Open.

Yaowachon Dappreng beat Surakul B to take the Under-15 title, with Nakha Sport coming in third and Kingkaew Sangsan fourth.

## Special deal offered to early entrants in Langkawi regatta

LANGKAWI: Early entrants in the BMW Royal Langkawi International Regatta 2005, to be contested from February 27 to March 5, will get the skipper and two crew registered free with each boat entered.

The deal applies to registrants who pay in full before September 30. After that date, the yacht entry fee of RM450 (about 4,856 baht) will cover the skipper and only one crew member.

Each additional crew member entered will cost an extra RM200 (about 2,158 baht).

The yacht-entry fee also

includes berthing for eight nights at the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club, including electricity and water, and entry into the prize-giving dinner parties held at a different venue on each day of racing.

Entry to the parties for non-crew members costs RM300 (about 3,235 baht) a head.

The final deadline for entry in the regatta will be February 27, 2005.

For more information or to register online, email: office@langkawiregatta.com or visit www.langkawiregatta.com.

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# The key to Honda's success

**H**onda is making serious inroads into the Thai market with its excellent 2004 Civic. Major advances in terms of technology and equipment position the Civic way above any of its immediate competitors, while a choice of engines and transmissions means there is a Civic to suit just about anybody.

The Civic made its debut in the early '70s and has consistently been one of the best-selling cars worldwide. Challenging established so-called "super-minis" such as the Volkswagen Golf and Peugeot's excellent 205 and 206 ranges was never going to be easy, but the fact that the Civic is still around, in much improved form, 30 years on, says a great deal about the quality and reliability of Honda's offering.

The latest Civic is available in three-, four- or five-door body styles and there is a choice of a diesel engine or a particularly frugal gasoline engine. The three- and five-door versions are offered with a 1.7-liter common-rail diesel while all styles can be equipped with either a 1.4-liter or 1.6-liter gas motor. The 1.6 features variable valve technology which greatly improves the torque output.

Power from the gasoline engines peaks at 90 and 110bhp respectively (66 and 81kW), while the diesel produces exactly 100bhp (74kW) but has an impressive torque figure of 220Nm.

All models are available with either five-speed manual or four-speed automatic gears, in-



The modest Honda Civic has been a consistent best-seller worldwide since its debut in the early 1970s.

corporating a "lock-up" torque converter to boost fuel economy.

There are numerous improvements to the interior of the latest cars, including, on the three-door, a sports steering wheel, while the five-door gets a two-tone instrument panel. Cos-

metic, yes, but still pleasing on the eye.

Honda grew out of a defunct piston-ring manufacturing company that had been destroyed during the war. In 1946 Soichiro Honda began making motorized bicycles, gradually moving into dedicated motorcycle design and production, and by 1962 Honda was the world's largest manufacturer of motorcycles.

The first four-wheel Honda also arrived in 1962, a small truck with a tiny 356cc engine.

In 1964 Honda produced the S600, its first vehicle to be exported to Europe, followed by the fabulous S800 sports car which revved to an incredible 8,500 rpm. This amazing engine speed was achieved by using lightweight pistons and roller-bearing big-ends. It sounded a bit like a sewing machine, though, and was not a huge success, disappearing from the line-up in 1970.

Honda's main priority at the time was the domestic market and, because the Japanese tax system favors smaller engines, the first four-seater sedan was powered by a minuscule 354cc air-cooled motor.

The first decent-size Honda, developed for the European market, was a 1,298cc, four-cylinder, air-cooled model, produced in 1969, but it was the introduction of the Civic that put Honda on the map.

Initially the Civic was introduced with a four-cylinder 1,169cc engine and front-wheel

drive. Standard was a four-speed manual gearbox, with the unique Hondamatic offered as an option. The initial model had just two doors, but demand soon resulted in a three-door hatchback, followed later by a five-door version.

It was the success of the Civic that caused Honda to produce larger and more varied models, to the extent where it is now performing strongly in all sectors of the car market.

In the US, the Honda Accord frequently tops the sales lists, beating home-grown models from the US Big Three, while its NSX coupé is a viable alternative to a Ferrari and the Honda-owned Acura brand challenges some of the Lexus models.

And it is all thanks to the remarkable little Honda Civic all those years ago. Quite an achievement, really.

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



By Jeff Heselwood

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# Winemaking: the agony and the ecstasy

For most people, wineries and winemaking are an unexplained wonder – like plastic, or what's inside the Earth or why ice is slippery. Having worked in some of the largest and the smallest of wineries, I can assure you working with wine is much more pleasurable than most jobs.

In a small winery, a winemaker's life is usually preoccupied with hands-on work such as sanitation, barrel management, and the transfer of wine from tank to tank. In larger wineries, work can more closely resemble a desk job, with primary tasks including making sales forecasts, cost accounting and marketing.

Whether a winery is large or small, work is driven by the fact there is only one harvest a year. Winemakers have only one chance to get their product right

and this absence of margin for error in everything they do causes a great deal of stress, as even a small mistake has the potential to bring disaster to the wine and financial ruin to the winery.

First, the winemaker must bottle enough older wine to create enough space to receive the year's grapes. Bottling is a boring struggle that seems to go on forever.

After months of overtime, the monotony may even cause employees to go berserk. I will always remember walking into the bottling room once and seeing the workers throwing glue at each other after a festering disagreement over break times had gotten out of hand.



By Steven Roberto

But once the wine is out the door everyone can begin to look forward to the harvest. There are a million things to do at harvest and it is easy to forget something in the rush. I still laugh about my winemaker friend who once forgot to buy yeast – without which wine production is impossible – until after the grapes had arrived.

Harvest is exhausting and the hours are long, with staff often working more than 16 hours daily for two or three months. A friend of once slept standing up for more than two hours while cleaning the winery floor during harvest.

But all the hard work pays off. Once the wine is produced and safely in barrel,

wonderful parties are held to celebrate the success, with employees treated to barbecues, music and, of course, wine, as reward for their contribution.

If you have never been to a winery I recommend you include a visit to one as part of your next holiday. Most wineries are open to the public and many offer tours. Buying wine from wineries is less expensive and more enjoyable as you can taste before you buy. You will find a winery visit to be educational, fun and rewarding. Who knows, you might even apply for a job.

*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*

My mind wanders – a not uncommon occurrence – as I consider the name of this restaurant. I toy with the idea that it may be dedicated to the now-rehabilitated Colonel Muammar of the same name, the occasionally eccentric leader of Libya and proponent of the anti-West Third Universal Theory.

Alas, there is no smiling plastic mannequin of Colonel G bidding us welcome to his eatery outside, but there is a chatty Indonesian lady – Montha Nanchan – who coyly avoids answering just about the only question I need to ask her, to what, her age.

The other question I am keen to ask – but do not – is just how she keeps her headscarf so brilliantly white through hours of cooking. Mysteries of the Kitchen No 149.

I do glean from her – her English is very good – that she spent years cooking in Holland, where she practiced her culinary art professionally, using skills learned from her family.

As Montha explains aspects of the preparation of Halal food, to the strains of the muezzin coming from the mosque across the road, an intrinsic yet sadly-forgotten aspect of Muslim culture is apparent: hospitality.

The food offered at Ghadafi

## Muslim hospitality

is not exclusively Arab in origin. Rather, it takes a little from here and there in the Muslim world. My dining companion (DC for short) and I choose chicken dopiaza, beef massaman, Arabic salad, yellow rice, and lamb chops.

Drinks are, naturally, non-alcoholic and we plump for fresh orange juice and fresh mint tea served strong with lots of sugar.

As we order, Charin Jampada, the owner, arrives. K. Charin is, to put it delicately, a man who enjoys his food and, as my DC and I wait, we ruminate that we are starving hungry.

Our host, a Phuketian, provides a quick explanation as to the origin of the restaurant's name. Following what seems to be fast becoming a tradition in Phuket restaurants, Ghadafi is named after his son.

Our food begins to arrive and we begin to devour. The yellow rice is no simple dish but resembles a byriani. Fried onions and spices – a hint of cardamon, saffron and turmeric – garnish the dish and go well with the two quite different curries.



Well-scented but with a typically fruity tang: the dopiaza.

The massaman (80 baht) has a dry aromatic taste and the beef – from Australia – is very tender. K. Charin travels the world – Boston and Singapore most recently – sourcing his supplies, and it shows.

The dopiaza (80 baht) is equally well-scented but has a typically fruity tang; Montha's experience is as obvious in her cooking as in her conversation.

The Arabic salad, a mere 70 baht, is a simple affair, just tomatoes, lettuce and cucumber but with lashings of lime juice and mint, good for cooling the palate.

The New Zealand lamb chops at 200 baht are a delight. Grilled Moroccan-style, heavy on the pepper and a mix of other spices, even the thin layer of fat is laden with juices and, well, to

Hell with the cholesterol count for the night.

More rice is ordered – the sauce from the two curries is too good to waste – and our hosts attend immediately. K. Charin's father-in-law, just back from evening prayers, joins in the conversation – in Thai at least – and a few other diners drift in and out as we eat.

Are we some of the first farang, some of the first non-Muslims to eat at Ghadafi? Quite probably, but after the first vaguely quizzical look, we are accepted as readily as the next customers.

The surroundings are, admittedly, quite ordinary. But the taste of the food and the hospitality more than make up for it. My little eye spied a hookah (very popular with the Kuwaiti diners) in the corner and Montha's entreaties for a return visit may put that on the menu as well.

*Ghadafi Halal Food Restaurant, 178 Phra Barami Rd, Patong. Open 8 am to 11 pm everyday to eat in, take away or for home delivery. Tel: 076-340639 or 076-342324. Gazette Shopper Card holders are offered a 10% discount.*

### On the menu

with

Andy Johnstone

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Home of the Week

Kathu

# On par with the country life

**I**t is rare for villa this large to become available for sale within the boundaries of the Phuket Country Club in Kathu. The house and the one it stands on are next to the ninth hole green, with a magnificent view overlooking much of the golf course.

The house itself is imposing, with more than 500 square meters of living space. The ground floor has a large terrace at the front, and inside the house, the layout is very much open-plan with a large lounge, a dining area, a fully fitted kitchen with breakfast bar as well as a guest bedroom and two large bathrooms.

The stairway to the upper floors is made of the highest-quality teak and has feature windows looking out to the rear of the home. On the second level, separated by a large hall, are two spacious double bedrooms both with large en-suite bathrooms.

The stairway continues to the next floor where there is a large open-plan room with shelving and cupboards. This room would be ideal as the homeowner's office as it offers privacy from the rest of the home and a superb view to aid a contemplative mind, though it could easily be used for other purposes.

The entire interior features natural wood and is decorated throughout to a high standard.

The extensive grounds are landscaped and fully fenced. At the rear of the property is a separate guest lodge with a double bedroom, sitting area and separate bathroom.

Next to the guest lodge are



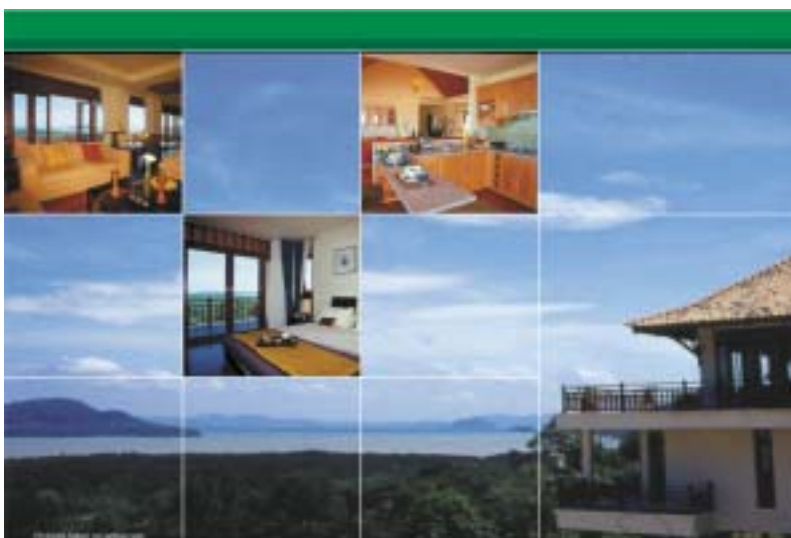
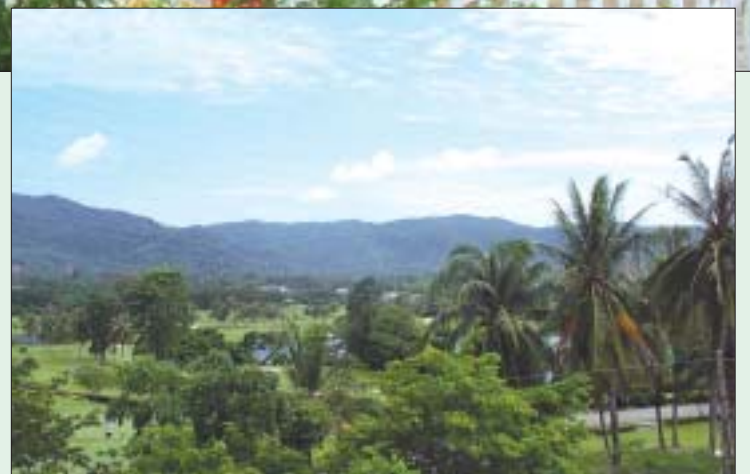
separate maids' quarters with two bedrooms, a bathroom and a Thai-style kitchen so that strong aromas can be created outside of the main house.

The grounds also have a large driveway with parking area, a gazebo on the front lawn and plenty of room to expand the house if required.

This house has been valued at 16.5 million baht, but the

owner has had to relocate quickly and unexpectedly, so it is on sale for 13 million baht, including freehold title and two memberships of the Phuket Country Club.

For more information contact Rudi at House and Villa Sales Phuket. Tel: 076-345081 or 01-9241447. Email: [info@houseandvillasalesphuket.com](mailto:info@houseandvillasalesphuket.com)



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Josh Lee of Lee Marine:  
"There were several cases  
in which the previous  
boat taxes frightened  
potential buyers away  
from buying homes."



# Boats help to keep the property market afloat

Do people come to Phuket by boat or stay here because of boats, and then decide to buy a house? Or do they come to Phuket, like it here, buy a house and then decide to buy a boat?

Either way, one industry often affects the other, which from a property perspective begs the question, "To what extent do factors such as the removal of import duties on boating in Thailand contribute to investment in real estate here?"

A number of well-known businesspeople in Phuket arrived by boat. Neil Cumming, the founder of Phuket Dot Com, arrived in Chalong Bay during a trip around the world, and never left. Andy Dowden, former president of the Phuket King's Cup Regatta organizing committee, dropped anchor here more than 20 years ago. Vincent Tabuteau, Managing Director of East West Siam and a director of Thai Marine Leisure, arrived here delivering a boat.

Many participants in the early King's Cup Regattas, such as Hong Kong businessman Henry Kay and Hong Kong lawyer Merv Owen, arrived here to enjoy the sailing and ended up moving in.

Phuket's boating industry started to develop as new property developments arrived and as yacht charter companies such as Sunsail and The Moorings began to establish themselves.

**PROPERTY  
&  
HOMEZONE**  
By Graham Doven

Then the bureaucracy stepped in. Somebody high up in government circles in Bangkok decided that all people who owned boats were rich, therefore the Customs Department could boost government coffers with taxes on boats.

In some cases, boat owners avoided paying the taxes directly, and instead took advantage of other forms of payment. These boat owners often found themselves later answering to another official, who in righteous indignation at finding out that the government had not received its proper dues, demanded that the owners cough up again.

The taxes on importing boats rose to an unbelievable 230% and the hopeful government found itself with 230% of nothing instead of a reasonable percentage of something.

It took a lot of lobbying by people in the boating industry before the current government saw the light and realized that Thailand was losing out to Malaysia, particularly Langkawi. The duties were not just reduced; they were dropped entirely.

Joshua Lee, Managing Director of Lee Marine, says that the new laws are a major boost

for the industry. "It opens up a whole new world of tropical lifestyle," he says. "Many people who have an interest in boating in Phuket are now considering buying homes."

"Likewise, many who already own a house in Phuket have bought or are planning to buy a boat."

"There were several cases in which the previous boat taxes frightened potential buyers away from buying homes, but clearly the new laws are causing the situation to be reversed," he adds. "We have sold 12 boats to customers since then."

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## Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

# WHY SIZE DOES MATTER

**B**ig is good. I like any thing that's big. Well, almost anything. I like big cars, music from big stereos, and I'm even a little big around the midriff. I even sneeze big. Big is certainly good.

Plants are no exception. There are some gardeners who spend their lives nurturing a tiny tree so that when they die they can be proud of having the smallest bonsai in the world. I have never quite understood that.

Let it grow. Wouldn't it be a lot better to have the *biggest* bonsai in the world after 70 years of nurturing it? At least you'll have something to show for it.

A few weeks ago, a Phuket resident who recently bought a new house in Chalong contacted me for some advice. He wanted to know what he could plant in his back garden to add a bit more privacy to that provided by the five-foot wall surrounding the property. The house next door was still being built, and was rising by the day. He felt, quite rightly, that a building site wasn't exactly the ideal view from his new home.

I told him that there's only

one logical choice in this part of the world: the ashoka, or mast tree would do the job perfectly. The ashoka, or *asoke* in Thai, is the kind of tree that looks as if it's a bit taller than it should be – its height is totally disproportionate to its width.

I said I like them big, and these things get huge – up to 15 meters high or more. They're found everywhere that needs something tall, bushy and green, such as in a garden to act as a divider or to hide a particularly ugly wall. The most common variety doesn't produce any flowers, doesn't have impressive leaves, doesn't smell good or do anything that's in any way distinctive – apart from growing skyward. This really is the Michael Jordan of the plant world.

There's more that a bit of a clue to the ashoka's origin in its Thai name. In its homeland of India and here in Thailand, it is regarded as a lot more than a big tree. It features significantly in Buddhist ceremonies and is planted in many monasteries, as it was named after an ancient Buddhist ruler in India. Some



**Hey, Big Boy – the ashoka is ideal for blocking unwanted views.**

believe that the Lord Buddha was born under an ashoka tree.

Many Indians also believe that the ashoka can be used to treat various mental conditions, especially depression. Ashoka is Sanskrit for "without sorrow", and it is claimed that "a profound

inner state of joy, harmony and wellbeing is produced" by ingesting various parts of the tree.

Our Chalong homeowner needed no encouragement to go out to his nearest garden center and buy a few of these giants, although they were less than gar-

gantuan when they were first delivered. Half a dozen gardeners descended on his back garden and dug a neat hole for each, setting them as they should, about a meter apart.

Some shade is better for the ashoka, and ideally the soil should be rich, moist and well drained. Having said all that, let's face it, how many of us analyze the composition and water content of the ground before we dig a hole in it and stick something in it? "Rich, moist soil" is just gardener-speak. As long as you don't drown it, and you're not trying to plant it in sand, the ashoka will be happy wherever it grows.

If you need to hide yourself from your neighbors, or you don't want to see what's going on next door, and aren't that keen on a vertical slab of concrete, then the ashoka is what you need.

As for that certain Chalong home, I would predict that in a couple of years someone will be perched at the top of a ladder with a saw in his hand, lopping the tops off a row of a dozen trees. They'll be big.



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32 rai at Layan Beach for sale at 4.5 million baht per rai. Features road, electricity, creek and lake. Possibility to add another 13 rai at 3 million baht per rai. Please email for details. Email: worldconsultman@yahoo.com

### MISSION HILLS

Serviced buildings on 1-rai, ocean-view lots facing 9<sup>th</sup> tee of Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course. Tel: 09-9725226. Email: bgbphuket@yahoo.com

### PRIVATE SALE

Nice blocks of lawn. From 1 rai to 20 rai. Located at Soi Saliga, Rawai. No brokers please. Tel: 076-288422.

### BOAT LAGOON LAND

640-sqm canalside frontage. 30m access to all facilities in marina and resort. Build your dream home in Phuket. Please contact for details. Tel: 09-8739947. Email: info@andamanproperty.com

### OCEANFRONT AO POR

23 rai of land with 250m of beach frontage for sale. Has big trees. Please call for details. Tel: 01-5388276.

### HOUSE IN PATONG

Fully furnished house in Patong with 4 big rooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 aircons. Quiet and secure, own satellite TV, phone and fax. Best in Nanai Rd. 3 million baht. Call for details. Tel: 06-2775547.

### CONDO 4 SALE

Patong Beach 1-room apartment for sale. Cash: 550,000 baht; or deposit 250,000 baht and pay 4 yearly payments of 100,000 baht. Freehold title, fully furnished. Please contact for details. Tel: 09-474-0227. Email: su\_kingsuwan@hotmail.com

### Sea View Villa for Sale

For sale by owner/builder. New luxury 3-bedroom, 5-bathroom, Thai-style detached homes in Khao Kha with spectacular views over Chalong Bay and the southern islands. 1.5 rai (2,400 sqm) of land. Swimming pool, landscaped garden, maid's quarters. Modern maintenance-free construction. Thai-style, in 3 separate buildings.



Contact James at 07-2659977 or email: jimmys@loxinfo.co.th

### FOR SALE

1. Phuket City area 1.25 rai with house-pool Rawai 300 sqm living space. Price: 13 million baht.
  2. Land-1 rai Chalong. Price: 2.5 million baht.
  3. Land-2.75 rai Thalung. Price: 2.5 million baht.
  4. Villa 2 house 35 sq wah. 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom. Price: 1.6 million baht.
  5. House Rawai 80 sq wah. 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms. Price: 3.3 million baht.
- Please call for more details. Tel: 076-263478. www.thaichanote.com

### GOLF VIEW LAND

Prime building plot overlooking Loch Palm Golf Course. One of the best building plots available. 2 rai with freehold title. Please call for details. Tel: 06-9405187.

### KATHU HOUSE

for sale. 5 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, 2 kitchens, 2 bathrooms, 2 terraces, 3 aircons, 2 telephone lines. Fully furnished and has a little garden. No dealers. Located near Loch Palm Golf. Price: 3.8 million baht. Please contact. Tel: 076-202725, 01-8916632. Fax: 076-202725. Email: golflandview@gmx.de

### 2.5 RAI IN RAWAI

2.5 rai in Rawai. New concrete road and electric. Price: 1.4 million baht per rai. Urgent sale. Please contact. Tel: 06-5950188. Email: nsupin@yahoo.com

### POOL VILLA AT SAIYUAN

Private villa with swimming pool, fully furnished, with UBC and much more. 5-star decoration and the best quality construction. Ready to move in this month (July 2004). For sale at 5.5 million baht. Tel: 01-5711009. Fax: 076-236398. For further details, email: tee@roof.co.th or please see our website at <http://www.oystercove-phuket.com/villas3.html#villab>

### VILLA IN KAMALA

for sale. 2 large bedrooms, swimming pool, Chanote title. 300 sq wah of land. Tel: 06-2741048.

### LAND FOR SALE

600sqm in a quiet area near Wat Chalong, 1,500m to Chalong Circle. Ground water and electricity on site. Construction plans already approved with government permits. Price: 999,000 baht. Please call 07-2531426 for more information.

### 4 RAI IN RAWAI

300m from Rawai Beach and 400m from Yanui Beach. Price 2.8 million baht/rai. Call Tel: 01-3762920 for more information.

### LAND FOR SALE

2 rai of land for sale in Cherng Talay, located close to Laguna Phuket and the beach. Please email for detail. Email: jgkg24@hotmail.com

### SEAVIEW LAND

Beautiful view at Layan near Laguna and beach. 5 rai. Email: sudaves2002@yahoo.com

### NEW HOUSES

for sale in Phuket from 1.6 million baht with shared pool, to 15 million baht on golf course with pool. Payment by installments possible. Please contact for details and location. Tel: 07-8947406, 07-8917041. Email: jrspro2000@yahoo.com

### PHANG NGA LAND

4 rai of elevated land now cleared flat. Located 5 mins to Tai Muang, 10 mins to Khao Lak, on made road used for access to waterfall. Chanote title, water and power available. More information and photos on request. Priced to sell at 1.5 million baht. Tel: 01-8957727. Email: info@axiominvestments.com

### WATERFRONT LAND



11 rai of flat land - which includes road & electricity - perfect for small development or private home for sale at 2.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 09-1959574, 01-9793369. Email: achara@phuketrealty.net

### CHALONG LAND

plot for sale. 1-1.5-rai plot on Chalong hillside. Good for residential development. 15 mins to Lotus, Kata and Karon, 20 mins to Dulwich. Electricity, paved public road, Chanote title. Tel: 09-4746899. Email: sakthong@ji-net.com

### ANUPHAS GOLF VILLE

House in Anuphas Golf Ville for sale. 4 bedrooms, 5 aircons, built-in furniture in every room. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 07-2836716.

### SEAVIEW LAND

Fenced 305 sq wah at Boh Rae, Ao Makham, 60m to sea. House plans available with building permit. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 07-2728261.

### RAWAI-NAI HARN

18-rai in Rawai-Nai Harn for sale. 1.5 million baht per rai. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-5388276.

### APARTMENTS 4 SALE

in Patong. 12 rooms, fully furnished, minimart and 15 computers for Internet. Price 8.5 million baht. Urgent sale. Tel: 07-2799500. Please email queries to: baanputtarat24@yahoo.com

### CONDO FOR SALE

in Boat Lagoon. 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, aircon, Jacuzzi, with granite/marble and teak finishing. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-8739947. Email: info@andamanproperty.com

### PATONG HOUSE

A semi-detached house on a private road off Nanai Rd for sale. 4 big rooms, fully furnished, 3 bathrooms, 3 aircons. Price: 3 million baht. Tel: 06-2775547.

### PATONG CONDO

Great opportunity: mountain view, freehold title, 300m to beach, 1 bedroom, living room, 2 balconies, 1 toilet. Price: 1.05 million baht. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip\_5@hotmail.com

### LAKESIDE LAND



Beautiful piece of land, direct to the main road. Only a few hundred meters from Mission Hills Golf Course, 8 mins to airport and Nai Yang Beach and 20 mins to Dulwich. Ideal site for luxury development. 15 rai with 2 rai of lake in the middle. Chanote title, ready to build. Price: 2.5 million baht a rai. Tel: 06-000-0788.

### LAND FOR SALE

directly on Banyan Tree Golf Course (Laguna property). 1,050 sqm/262.4 sq wah. Price: 7.872 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-239864. Email: hktmkt@ksc.th.com

### 36 RAI OCEAN VIEWS

at Ao Por. Almost 36 rai of Nor Sor 3 title land. The cape's natural wonders provide the most wonderful panoramic view over Phang Nga Bay from the eastern side of the island. Price: 5 million baht a rai. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-5375970. Email: info@phuket-land.net

### ANUPHAS GOLF VILLE

A villa next to Phuket Golf & Country Club, Kathu. A house, featuring 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, staff quarters, Western kitchen, living/dinning room, double carport, 10 x 5.5m swimming pool and garden (550 sqm of land). Price: 10.5 million baht. Please call for details. Tel: 09-7247211. Email: julien@phuketimmo.com. Please visit a website: www.phuketimmo.com

### EXCLUSIVE

Beautiful new 4-bedroom villa. 350-sqm living space. Top quality, including pool. Price: 11.5 million baht. Please call for details. Tel: 01-8916143.



### APARTMENTS



Sea view, walk to beach or "in the hills". PRICE: From 4.5 million baht

### SAI YUAN



Brand new value-priced homes in security estate. Inspection a must. PRICE: From 5.6 million baht

### LAGUNA



Absolute top notch project with "special" opening prices on selected lots. PRICE: From 12 million baht

### SURIN



Four-bedroom mansion, breathtaking ocean views, infinity swimming pool. PRICE: US\$950,000 (including all transfer taxes). Tel/Fax: 076-345707, 076-345709. Mobile: 09-2889317, 01-6963539, 01-4791012. Email: info@phuketonerealestate.com. www.phuketonerealestate.com

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# Property Gazette

## Property Wanted

### WANT TO BUY HOUSE

I want to buy a house with a sea view, or near the beach. Looking to pay 3 - 4 million baht. Please contact me by email at: bluelakayaine@hotmail.com

### APARTMENT WANTED

Apartment with telephone, view and kitchen wanted for long-term rental. Prefer in Kata or Patong. Tel: 09-5116408. Email: kevinan2001@yahoo.com

### HOUSE WANTED

I would like to buy a 2- or 3-bedroom house in Banprangthong Villa for under 5 million baht. No agents, please; I want to deal directly with the owner. Please email me with details. Email: lorisdb@hotmail.com

### LAND NEAR MAIN RD

I am looking to buy from 1 to 2 rai of land on any main road - with or without property already - to build a house, office and furniture workshop. Prefer the bypass road, Chao Fa East or West Rds, Ranong Rd or main road from Phuket to Patong, but any other location considered for the right price. Must be very reasonably priced. Please send details by email with size, location, price and pictures, if any, along with your phone number. Tel: 09-7299747 or 01-676-4849. Email: amono@loxinfo.co.th

### SELL YOUR HOUSE

or villa. If you urgently need to sell, please contact me with details of your property. I am looking to buy now. Turn your house into cash today. Please contact me with details. Tel: 01-8921199. Email: cadillac@loxinfo.co.th

### SHOP WANTED

Shop wanted in Karon, Kata, or Patong. Minimum 50sqm. Rent or lease for long term. Please email details of properties to: shop\_wanted@hotmail.com

### SMALL SPACE

I'd like to rent a space of about 7-9 sqm in front of a building or a shop, or share in a commercial property for a tour service counter in Patong. It should be on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd. Need at least a 2-year contract. Please email to: benyapa2000@hotmail.com

## Accommodation Available

### 2 BEDROOM APTS

Fully equipped apartments for rent. Rates for long-term rent: 40,000 baht up to 60,000 baht a month. For short-term rental rates and for more details, please see our website: www.residencephuket.com Email: g.van.hal@12move.nl

### PATONG LUXURY

Central Patong. 1- & 2-bed apartments. Email for info & photos. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

### ATSUMI VILLAS

Peace and quiet in tropical garden setting near Chalong. 1 bedroom, lounge/kitchen. Fully furnished and equipped. Aircon, hot water, UBC TV, motorbike, massage and Internet available if required. Price: 600 baht/night or 12,000 baht/month. Tel: 01-2720571.

### APARTMENT 4 RENT

at Surin Beach. 65sqm, aircon bedroom, living room and open-plan kitchen, hot water shower, no furniture. Rent: 6000 baht a month. Tel: 01-7885419. Email: tomshut@hotmail.com

### STUDIO APT PATONG

Living room with kitchenette, separate bedroom with bath. Aircon, telephone, UBC. Quiet, clean, European-standard, furnished. Long-term rental preferred. Rent: from 8,000 baht a month. Tel: 076-292345, 01-0833071.

### ROOMS FOR RENT

Beautiful Shanti Lodge at Ao Chalong. Low season rate from 3,500 baht a month, including a pool, sauna and electricity. Please call for details. Tel: 076-280233.

### ROOM IN PATONG

Fully furnished "as new" room in Patong with aircon, near Siam Bank. Rent: 7,500 baht a month. Please call for info. Tel: 01-8922824, 01-895-5242.

### BEACHFRONT

rooms. Perfect rooms with aircon, cable TV and balcony with views to the beach for rent in Patong Beach. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-292241, 01-0881456. Fax: 076-292241. Email: office@viennasguesthouse.com Please see our website at: www.viennasguesthouse.com

## Accommodation Wanted

### HOUSE OR APARTMENT WANTED

3-bedroom house or apartment - with air conditioning and satellite TV - in central Patong for one month from December 12, 2004. Willing to pay up to 75,000 baht. Email: drkbkr@aol.com

### LOOKING FOR HOUSE

Need to find a house by the end of August. Areas of preference: 1. Chalong 2. Chao Fa Rd (Chalong-Phuket City) 3. Rawai/Nai Harn. Requirements: 2 bedrooms, telephone line, partially furnished and minimal mosquitoes. Budget: 7,000-10,000 baht (will consider higher price if house is in good condition, has nice furniture, etc). Email only with photos and maps if possible. Email: pantomine\_horse@yahoo.com

### PATONG GOOD VIEW

Looking for a nice, comfortable apartment in Patong or Patong area. Must have a good view and be in a safe and quiet area. Swimming pool access and own phone line would be great. If you know of such a dream location in Patong, email me with and details, including price. I will arrive in Phuket in July. Email: neighbor007@yahoo.com

### LOOKING 4 HOUSE

I am looking for a house with 3 bedrooms and a fenced garden in Karon, Kata, Chalong or Rawai. Contract for 6 months or 1 year, starting from mid-July. Please contact with details. Tel: 01-2787117. Email: unicolli@hotmail.com

### PATONG OR NEARBY

Good-quality house or apartment with 1 or 2 bedrooms and cooking facilities wanted for next January-February. I would like to stay in Patong or nearby but I am willing to live in other areas. Email: gary8lw@yahoo.com

### NEAR PHUKET CITY

house wanted. 1- or 2-bedroom house or apartment near Phuket City for long-term rent. Must have aircon. Would like UBC, pool, kitchen, etc. Will consider anywhere within easy reach of Phuket City. Please reply me to email above. Email: khun\_shane@yahoo.com

### CONDO WANTED

1-bedroom condo wanted in Central Waterfront tower. Prefer one on the upper floors. Please contact with details. Tel: 09-4742579. Email: reservation@theoldphuket.com

### ACCOMMODATION

Upmarket accommodation with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms required for holiday from Dec 19, 2004 to Jan 2, 2005. Must be close to beach and have sea view. Prefer Kata, Karon, Patong or Kamala areas. Email: wimo@mweb.co.za

### BUNGALOW 4 RENT

Urgently need to rent unfurnished 1- or 2-bedroom small bungalow or house on long-term/yearly basis. If one bedroom, also need a room to use as office/storage. Must also have living room, bathroom, etc. Most locations acceptable; detached preferable. Looking to pay 6,000 baht a month. Tel: 06-2813502. Email: kds@loxinfo.co.th

### HOUSE OR APT

in Patong. We are 5 persons who want to rent a house or apartment in Patong for 1 month - January, 2005. Close to beach preferred, but other locations considered. Email: anjaajala@broadband.net

### WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

Disabled people are looking for wheelchair-friendly hotels, resorts, rooms and guest-houses. Please email to: admin@phuketdeafagle.com

## Building Services

### phuket home services

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and other work done by our professional team.

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Fax: 076-263204  
Email: p-con@chaiyo.com

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### SPAS R US

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. Please call for more details. Tel: 076-263269, 09-1950610.

### ONE STOP SERVICE

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Would you like to keep up on what's happening in Phuket - the good, the bad and the bizarre?  
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**Events Calendar**

it probably isn't one.

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

[www.phuketgazette.net/calendar](http://www.phuketgazette.net/calendar)



# Island Job Mart



This well-established deluxe resort on Koh Lanta Yai, Krabi, is seeking for candidates with the following qualifications:

## Chief Engineer

- Male, over 35 years old
- Bachelor's or master's degree or higher in engineering.
- At least 5 years experience in a similar position, preferably in a resort environment
- Strong ability in leading a team of 30/35 engineering & gardening staff.
- Good command of written and spoken English.
- Computer, Internet and emailing proficiency.
- Able to work under pressure and handle multiple projects simultaneously.
- Hard working, dynamic, hands on and highly responsible.
- Experienced in resort opening will also be an advantage.

## Front Office Manager

- Male or female, ideal age 30-35 yrs.
- Sound knowledge of all front-office and reservation standards, operating procedures with good financial understanding.
- Computer literate in Fidelio, MS Excel & Word.
- Fluent in Thai and spoken English, written English also preferred.
- Must have worked in international-standard hotel, preferably a resort.
- Minimum 2 years as an Asst Manager/Duty Manager, including reservations training.
- Must lead by example, be hands on and create a pro-active team environment.
- Ability to train and develop staff at both supervisory and entry-level staff.

**Other position available:** Guest Service Officers, Cooks-Thai/Western cuisine, Engineers/Technicians, Boat mechanic, Boat captains, Reservation officers (Koh Lanta & Bangkok office), H/K supervisor, Purchasing officer (Bangkok office).

**For All applicants:** Outgoing personality, self-confident and with an eye for detail. Must also be able to adapt and live on an island. All positions are open for Thai nationals only with excellent benefits and a salary appropriate to the applicant's experience and abilities.

Interested candidates, please submit, resumé, recent picture and expected salary to:  
Fax: 075 607 998 or Email: hr@pimalai.com. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

Pimalai Resort & Spa, 99 Moo 5, Ba Kan Tiang Bay, Koh Lanta, Krabi 81150, Thailand  
A member of Small Luxury Hotels of the world

## Baan Thai Surin Hill

Baan Thai Surin Hill, a planned unit development of luxury view villas based in Surin Beach, Phuket, is currently looking for enthusiastic to fill available various positions and join our successes.

### Construction Department

1. Site Civil Engineer (Male/2)
2. Plumbing Foreman (Male/3)
3. Electrical Foreman (Male/2)
4. Finishing & Architectural Foreman (Male/2)
5. Structure Construction Foreman (Male/3)
6. Office Clerk (Female/1)
7. Warehouse Officer (Male/1)
8. Construction Heavy Machine Operator (Male/2)

### Real Estate Services & Management

1. Villa & Customer Services Manager (Male or Female/1)
2. Secretary of Directors (Male or Female/2)
3. Purchasing Officer (Male or Female/1)
4. Housekeeper Chief (Male or Female/1)
5. Driver (Male/2)

### Design & Architectural Department

1. Site Architect (Male/3)
2. Draftsman Structure/Architectural (Male/3)

Applicants are welcome to apply in person or sending your resumé at:

## Baan Thai Surin Hill

92/5 Baan Had Surin, Srisoonthorn Rd., Chertngalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110.

Tel. 076-325-880 for check the location only.

(10.00 - 17.00 Mon. - Sat. During 26 June - 26 July 2004)

## ACQUA Procurement Officer

### Requirements:

- Good command of written & spoken English
- Bachelor/Diploma graduate in related field
- Good working knowledge of accountancy
- Possess excellent computer literacy skills in Microsoft Office
- Strong organizational/communication, liaison and negotiation skills
- At least 2-3 years' experience in related field
- Highly motivated and ability to work in a team environment

ACQUA Co., Ltd.

T: +66 76 325667-71 Email: info@acquaphuket.com

## Island Retail Manager

The Jim Thompson Thai Silk Company is looking for a dynamic individual to join our team as Island Retail Manager for Phuket and Samui. This position entails leading a team of staff and supervisors to improve our retail shop presentation, customer-service skills, inventory management system and after-sales services.

### Requirements:

- Bachelors degree or higher
- Age 35 years' and up, male or female
- Good command of spoken and written English and some spoken Japanese
- Minimum 5 years' managerial experience in retail, hospitality or service industries
- Self-motivated, energetic and assertive.
- Successful candidate will be located in Phuket but must be able to travel

We offer an attractive salary and fringe benefits. Interested persons please send your application letter with full resumé, university course results transcripts, certificates and one recent photo to:

The Personnel Department Division Manager

The Thai Silk Co Ltd.

9 Surawong Road, Suriyawong, Bangkok, Bangkok 10500

## SALES & MKT MANAGER

We welcome applications from candidates eager to join our team as Sales & Marketing Manager based in Phuket. Qualifications: Minimum of 3 years' experience in hotel sales; Excellent communication skills; Dynamic, energetic and open-minded; Highly responsible and able to deliver results. Interested candidates can send their resumé, including a recent photograph and salary expectations, by email or fax and for the attention of the Human Resources Manager. Tel: 076-279801. Fax: 076-279818. Email: gmkbtr@kamala.co.th



KATATHANI  
PHUKET BEACH RESORTS

Katathani Phuket Beach Resorts is currently seeking highly-qualified professionals with relevant experience for the following positions:

### 1 Local Sales Manager

#### Qualifications:

- Male or female, minimum age of 25
- 2-3 years' experience in hotel sales and marketing
- Bachelor's degree or higher
- Fluent in written and spoken English, other languages will be an advantage
- Applicant with personal vehicle is preferable
- Outgoing personality and pro-active

### 1 Assistant Food & Beverage Manager

for our extensive Food & Beverage operation with 7 outlets and several bars

#### Qualifications:

- Thai national, male or female, minimum age of 28
- Fluent in written and spoken English, other languages will be an advantage
- Minimum 5 years' experience in a senior Food and Beverage position in a 4-5 star hotel with several outlets
- A natural, highly-motivated leader with great communication skills and good personal relationship skills
- Good analytical and coordination skills
- Experience in ISO 9000 / ISO 14001
- Strong skills in administrative work
- Pleasant and service-minded personality which is creative
- Pro-active management style

Please contact Personnel Department  
14 Katanoi Road, Karon, Muang, Phuket 83100  
Tel: 076-330124-6, E-Mail: personnel@katathani.com

## Limestone Adventures

### Executive Assistant

Limestone Adventures, Phuket's leading provider of luxury powerboat charters, based in Boat Lagoon, seeks an Executive Assistant with the following experience.

- Minimum 2 years' experience in tourism sales & marketing
- Excellent English conversation & writing skills
- Experience in processing company invoices & receipts

Please submit salary expectations and CV to  
ftb@limestoneadventures.com  
Fax: 076 270 648, Tel: 01 801 5068



Phuket LandSearch Ltd, the leading property agency in Phuket, is expanding. We are therefore urgently looking for Sales Representatives with the following qualifications:

- Male or female
- Fluent in English and Thai
- A minimum of 2 years' experience in sales
- Good presentation skills
- Good interpersonal skills and good team spirit
- Good computer and email skills
- Highly self-motivated, as will work on site as well as in the office

Basic salary and commission dependent on experience.

Please send your CV to:  
Bob Andrews, bob@phuketland.com  
Phuket LandSearch

247/2 Prabaramee Road, Kalim beach, Patong, Phuket 83150 Thailand  
Tel: 076-290509 Fax: 076-340426

## ASSITANT MANAGER

Thai female, aged 25-35 years, needed to help operate a new food business shop in Central Festival. Must speak English, and must be healthy, active and able to interact with customers. Please send CV. Tel: 01-7370885. Fax: 076-248458.

## TEACHERS WANTED

We are looking for well qualified and experienced teachers. Full-time and part-time position required for immediate start. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-282-232. Fax: 076-381447.



The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd is seeking creative, motivated Thai nationals to join our team. The ideal candidates will have the following qualifications:

### ARTIST 2 POSITIONS

- Graphic design skills and knowledge of Illustrator, PageMaker, Photo shop and Dreamweaver programs are required
- Freehand drawing and web design skills are a plus
- Responsible, hard-working, attention to detail
- Able to work in a fast-paced environment and meet deadlines
- Good communication skills, team player
- English speaker

Please send your CV to the Personnel Manager.  
Tel: 076-236555. Fax: 076-213971. Email: mem@phuketgazette.net



# Recruitment



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:

**Asst. Sales Manager (2 positions), Sales Representative (5 positions)  
Outside Personal Contact (6 positions) and Telemarketer (3 positions)**

Applicants should meet the following criteria:

- Self motivated and enthusiastic
- Able to communicate effectively in English (other languages would be an advantage)
- Interested in earning a lot of money
- Experience preferred but not essential (full training given)
- Truly passionate about representing the best product in our industry
- Outside Personal Contact & Telemarketing 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 resumé, 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, Chongtalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110  
Tel: 076-324416-7 Fax: 076-325002  
Email: sunisas@lagunaphuket.com or avcmkt@lagunaphuket.com

## Brand new luxurious 5 star Layana Resort & Spa Opening November 2004 on Koh Lanta, Krabi



We invite candidates with 5-star hotel experience and excellent English communications skills to join our team in the following positions:

- ❖ Resort chief engineer
- ❖ Human resources manager
- ❖ Assistant training manager
- ❖ Assistant reservations manager
- ❖ Assistant restaurant
- ❖ Assistant housekeeper
- ❖ Executive sales
- ❖ Chef de Partie
- ❖ Spa personnel

3 years' experience minimum requirement for all positions.  
Salary and benefits commensurate with ability are negotiable.

Please send resumé with present salary and salary expectations plus recent photograph and contact details to:

General Manager, Layana Resort and Spa,  
272 Moo3 Saladan, Koh Lanta 81150 Krabi Tel: 075 623 654 Fax: 075 684 314 Email: personnel@layana.in.th  
We invite walk-in candidates for all hotel positions to apply at the Layana pre-opening  
Office from July 1- 30, Monday to Saturday, from 10 am to 5pm,  
Golden Hill Hotel, 16 Chalanarum Rd, Krabi.

### SUPERVISOR

Reservations Supervisor is urgently required. Wired Destinations, an online hotel reservation service, is currently seeking a Reservations Supervisor. We provide online hotel reservation services and operate over 160 travel portals, covering over 5,000 hotels in 31 countries. The position is open to Thais and foreigners. Candidates should have a minimum of 3 years' experience in the hotel industry; must have a well documented management background; must have excellent English skills (ability to read and write); must be able to use the Internet (email and chat). The successful candidate will have to work shifts (our offices are open 24/7). Monthly salary on offer ranges from 20,000 baht to 50,000 baht plus commission (based on experience). Please submit your resumé by email only to apply and please include a recent photograph and references. Tel: 076-254766. Fax: 076-254960. Email: james@wired-destinations.com

### CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

Qualifications: B.A. in Accounting; min 5 years' experience in hotels; fluent in English. Tel: 075-637015. Fax: 075-695497. Email: savika@krabilaplaya.com

### URGENTLY REQUIRED

Avantika Boutique Hotel is looking for a Receptionist, a Front Cashier and Reservations staff. Must be able to speak English and have a good personality. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-292801. Fax: 076-292808. Email: admin@avantika-phuket.com

### ESL TEACHERS

ESL teacher needed for English Summer Camp in July at Dulwich International College. Please contact Paul Redfern for more details. Tel: 076-238711, 09-6480752. Fax: 076-238750. Email: predfern@dulwich.ac.th

### INTERNET CAFE

Staff wanted for Patong Internet cafe. Please apply. Email: simon47phuket@hotmail.com

## Employment Wanted

### MULTILINGUAL STAFF

A young and energetic professional, fluent in Spanish, Portuguese and English, is looking for work, preferably in the hotel industry. I have 3 years' experience as a Public Relations person for an international designer-label company, and one year as a marketing & sales assistant manager for a bluechip company. Any offers considered. Please contact for any more details and a recent photo. Tel: 04-0578981. Email: ms\_mw@myway.com

### DIVE INSTRUCTOR

I am a South African national and I am coming to Phuket in July and I am looking for work during my stay. I am a qualified NAUI dive instructor and want to do my PADI crossover course but would like to work while doing the course. Please contact me by email to arrange an interview or for more details. Email: hilibly@webmail.co.za

# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

## Articles for Sale

### RESTAURANT EQUIP

for sale. Dough mixer, bench with fridge, deep fryer, cutting machine, double oven and more. All electric and in good condition. Tel: 07-2665965.

### POOL TABLE 4 SALE

6-month-old pool table – in Patong area – for sale. Must go ASAP. Call Gerry for details. Tel: 06-7888080.

### NORDICTRACK

Nordictrack "Ellipse" exercise machine for sale. Computer controlled. Paid price: 22,000 baht; asking price: 14,000 baht. Tel: 076-289244, 01-7470941. Email: lamsai@yahoo.com

### OVERHEAD DOOR

Standard steel overhead door, 2 pieces with man door for sale. All associated pieces bundled together. Gray color, perfect shape. Price: 4,000 baht. Tel: 076-289244, 01-7470941. Email: lamsai@yahoo.com

### DIVE GEAR

Large Scuba Pro Classic BCD with Scuba Pro regulator and air. Good bargain at 4,000 baht, includes two 7kg soft weights. Tel: 076-296747, 01-2717658. Email: ron@siamflowers.com

### CIGAR HUMIDOR

New cigar humidior. Holds about 20 cigars and comes with humidifier and hygrometer. Tel: 01-0862772. Email: bigbill947@yahoo.com

### METAL DETECTOR

Whites Surfmaster Pulse PI Diver metal detector, can be used on land, on the beach or up to 30 meters underwater. Very powerful, with all accessories: rechargeable batteries and charger, coil cover, carry case, manual and booklet on metal detection techniques. Gold detection no problem. Price: new: 40,000 baht; will sell for 30,000 baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 01-8945809. Email: hayroof@yahoo.co.uk

### TV & PLAYSTATION

New Samsung 21" Plano TV. Price: 6,900 baht ono. New Playstation Xbox with 2 controllers and 4 games. Price: 15,000 baht ono. Buy both items together for only 18,000 baht ono. Contact now for details. Tel: 076-279481 or 09-9093178. Email: supanneedonatelli@hotmail.com

### POLAROID CAMERA

Polaroid Spectra Image System instant camera with Auto Focus and image controls. Big lens, big flash, foldable luxury camera. Price new: 4,990 baht; selling price only 2,400 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-8266655. Email: speicherplatz@yahoo.com

### BABY ARTICLES

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29-ft fiberglass motor yacht with Thai registration. 2 x 280hp Mercruiser engines. Price: 3.5 million baht ono. Tel: 076-239-864. Email: hktmkt@ksc.th.com

### CANOE FOR SALE

Plywood and fiberglass canoe with paddles. Made in Phuket and in very good condition. Cost 10,000+ baht to build; selling for 7,000 baht. Tel: 01-8945809. Email: hayroof@yahoo.co.uk



# Tout, Trader & Trumpet

## Business Opportunities

### Want a "hole-in-one" life?

Scandinavian partner in Nordic Golf Group (Thailand) Co Ltd, which runs golf tours, tournaments, and sells golf course residences in Thailand. Do you have 2.5 million baht? Are you serious and business-minded and ready for an exciting life with big profits.  
Email: nordicgolf@nordicgolf.co.th

### GUESTHOUSE

A well established guesthouse at an up-and-coming Patong hillside area for lease. Accommodation comprises: 1 seaview penthouse; 2 seaview apartments; 3 hillside apartments; 1 studio apartment. Ready to start, fully staffed, furnished and equipped, with kitchen, satellite TV and car park. 35,000 baht/month plus 200,000 baht key money. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-296621, 01-6916147. Fax: 076-344689. Email: info@phuketforsale.com

### BEST BAR IN PHUKET

Almost on the beach, this bar has almost 2 years left on its lease with the possibility to renew for a further 3 years. Price: 2.4 million baht ono. Complete with equipped kitchen, and enjoying very good turnover. Tel: 09-809-3566. Email: lennartviberg@hotmail.com

### RESTAURANT 4 SALE

on the main street on Phi Phi Island. Please call. Tel: 01-8942874.

### EXPORT LICENSE

Thai-registered company (Amazing Thai Arts Co Ltd) with registered capital of 2 million baht, export license and bank account with credit card payment facility. All tax cleared. For sale at 70,000 baht. Tel: 01-8927847. Email: colonapt@loxinfo.co.th

### BUSINESS OFFER

US company - established for 30 years - now in Thailand and offering unlimited earning potential. No experience required. Please email for more info. Email: tedsynergized@yahoo.com

### PARTNERSHIP

A German, working in a specialized banking business for over 30 years, internationally successful, etc, offers partnership for the right person. Terms: must have English-language ability and be computer literate; 50% partnership for 25,000 euros. Start now, without wasting time. Possible to operate in all parts of the world. Fax or email for more information. Fax: 001-1-320-2139083 (USA). Email: passport@diplomats.com

### CHALONG CIRCLE

1. Restaurant: 2 units. Living accommodation. Includes pool table.

Price: 2.8 million baht.

2. Beauty salon: 2 units. The upper floor is for massage.

Price: 1.7 million baht.

3. Internet cafe and tour operator: 1 unit. Includes dive equipment and 7 computers.

Price: 1 million baht.

Tel: 076-263478. For further details, please visit our website at www.thaichanote.com

### OFFICE FOR SALE

Near Seng Ho Book Store, center of city. Ready-to-use office. Please call for more details. Tel: 01-8927604 or 09-4740363.

### NICE BAR FOR SALE

Nice bar and restaurant, in good location in Rawai. Please call for more information. Tel: 06-2810205.

### OFFICE FOR RENT

in good area on Soi Watana, Patong. Well-equipped and ready-to-use office. Please call 01-7371901.

### MLM LEADERS

US\$4 billion healthcare company seeks quality distributors. Unlimited income potential. Contact for more details. Tel: 02-7269918, 06-341-8781. 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. Tel: 09-8677969. Email: bangla\_04@yahoo.com

### GERMAN RESTAURANT

A well-established German restaurant with firm clientele at best location now offered for sale. Tel: 076-280455, 01-2738160. Fax: 076-280-431. Email: ppe@loxinfo.co.th or visit our website at: www.phuket-con.com/loamarest/sale/english

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1,299 baht. Includes visa stamp fee, insurance, trip by boat and minibus (both in good condition), and lunch with soft drinks. Daily trip starts at 7 am at KFC at Tesco-Lotus supercenter. Please contact us for reservation. Tel: 076-289201 or 01-5352637. For further information, please visit our website: www.phuketdir.com/expressvisaextension

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### NOTEBOOK

Compaq Presario 2100, used for 11 months. 20GB HDD, 384 Ram, CD ROM, FDD, Athlon 1400. Works perfectly. I do not need it anymore. I have 3 other computers. Price: 28,000 baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-280590. Fax: 076-281024. Email: eric@insurance-in-thailand.com

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Qualified teacher available to teach Italian to students or staff in the tourism industry. Call for more details. Tel: 09-7278209.

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## Personals

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players wanted for some exciting games. Please call or fax for more details. Tel: 076-386113 or 01-577-8443. Fax: 076-386114.

### SEEKS LADYBOY

I am a 42-year-old farang living in Thailand. I am seeking a ladyboy between 20 and 40. Please reply with photo. Anywhere in Thailand considered. Email: paulwww2003@yahoo.co.uk

### THAI GIRLFRIEND

I am a single Dutch farang, 33 years old, and hoping to meet a nice Thai holiday girlfriend. Email me so we can get to know each other a bit by chatting on MSN or Yahoo Messenger. Email: farang\_nl\_72@yahoo.co.uk

### DIVING BUDDY

Female dive buddy wanted by tall, fit English guy for regular dive trips. I live in Malaysia and dive in Thailand on a regular basis. If you are beautiful, single and a good diver, I will cover all your costs. Please email me to get to know each other. Email: jimwebster34@hotmail.com

## Pets

### ALSATION PUPS

Dog and bitch remaining out of litter. Father imported from UK. Call for further details. Tel: 076-344745, 09-470-1860. Fax: 076-344745. Email: colin@phuket.ksc.co.th

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Dog kennel wanted for small dog. Tel: 076-282848. Email: regnsanspain@hotmail.com







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**Phuket International Hospital**  
on Fri at 7 pm

**Patong Patong Hospital**  
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**Package Excludes:**

- Roundtrip airport transfer
- Airport tax and insurance (International route)

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**Historical Prague**  
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**Package includes:**

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- 2 nights accommodation at Merkur Hotel in Prague
- 1 night accommodation at Mercure Europaplatz in Vienna
- Tour: City tour of Prague

**Package Excludes:**

- Roundtrip airport transfer
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