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Battle of the 'bad lands'

By Kamol Pirat

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura has slammed the investigation team from Bangkok, led by Crime Suppression Division (CSD) Chief Pol Maj Gen Kosin Hintao, who had inspected land plots on Phuket, Koh Racha and Koh Hei four days earlier.

"The police just stayed in their helicopter and pointed at developments on beautiful plots of land in the hills and near the sea," Gov Udomsak told the *Gazette*. "They presumed that the buildings were on state land. They said that more than 10,000 rai of government land had been encroached on."

"Their comments to the press were an exaggeration of the problem because they just saw the plots from the sky, and they may have misunderstood [whether the land was state land or not]. They should have checked the land plot by plot."

He warned, "The investigation team's actions will have a negative impact on Phuket's economy and that of the nation."

The governor explained, "We already have a special center for resolving land problems, with officials from the Governor's Office and from the Phuket office of the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry, to deal with cases involving possible encroachment on state land," he said.

"This committee also deals with cases involving 'flying' *SorKor 1* titles and falsified land titles, and verifies whether land being occupied belongs to the state or not. This committee asks



Pol Maj Gen Kosin Hintao: 'We have proved clearly that the land documents for [Samsara] are not genuine.'

the Phuket Provincial Land Office to check land titles and to prosecute people."

The helicopter-borne general also told the *Gazette* after his inspection flight that he would propose that the government seize the land on which the Samsara development is being built because it is state land.

Gen Kosin said, "We have proved clearly that the land documents for it are not genuine, and yet it was used for the building of million-dollar homes for sale to foreigners.

This land must be returned to the state."

As for the homes, he said, "It will be up to the Cabinet to decide what to do with them. But there is no way that they will become private property, even if they have already been sold, because the project is based on a breach of the law."

"The buyers of the houses can sue the project owner, Pacific Villa Co [PVC], to get their money back," the general said.

He added that executives of
Continued on page 2

Immigration clarifies 'cash on entry' rule

By Dhirarat Boonkongsan

PHUKET: Immigration checkpoints nationwide are free to enforce minimum currency requirements on foreigners entering Thailand at their own discretion, a top Immigration official confirmed on September 24.

Commenting on the posting of notices at several Immigration checkpoints in the north, Pol Col Chalermpong Vadhana-sukha, Deputy Superintendent of Immigration Division 3, in Bangkok, said, "It has been in effect since May 8, 2000, when it was signed into law by the then-Interior Minister Banyat Bantadtan."

The notices warn that the regulation would be enforced from October 1, and specify the following minimum amounts in cash, or equivalent, to be brought in by foreigners, according to type of visa:

- 30-day "on arrival" visa: 10,000 baht (20,000 baht for families traveling together);

- 60-day tourist visa: 20,000 baht (40,000 baht per family);

- Non-immigrant visa: 20,000 baht (40,000 baht per family).

Children under 12 are excluded from the requirement.

Col Chalermpong said, "It's an old law, but not every Immigration checkpoint enforces it strictly ... It is up to each one how it enforces this regulation."

"Real tourists do not have to worry about this, but people who repeatedly enter Thailand on 30- or 60-day visas will come under scrutiny," he added.

Asked if bank statements or ATM receipts would be accepted, Col Chalermpong said

Continued on page 2

Seized Boonkeng land goes back to the state

BANGKOK: Four plots of land seized from businessman Boonkeng Srisansuchart in June have been handed over to the Agricultural Land Reform Office (Alro) by the Anti-Money-Laundering Office (Amlo) in Bangkok.

Amlo confiscated the land – off the bypass road in the Panturat Hills – after the Phuket Appeal Court ruled that K. Boonkeng had wrongfully obtained it.

Amlo Deputy Secretary Pol Col Yuthaboon Disamarn told the *Gazette* on September 27 that his office had confirmed that all four plots were *SorPorKor* land.

This is land owned by the state but allocated to poor, landless farmers for use in providing for themselves and their families.

“Boonkeng was not entitled to occupy this land because the Appeal Court judged that he is not a farmer, as defined by the law on *SorPorKor* land,” said Col Yuthaboon.

“The land is being returned

to the state, to the control of Alro.”

It has been alleged that, in 1983, a provincial vice-governor allowed K. Boonkeng to take out a 30-year lease on the four plots, totaling 76 rai and comprising forest and agricultural land. K. Boonkeng was said to be planning to use the land to collect water for a development of prestige homes, but the properties were never built.

He is accused of obtaining *Chanote* or *NorSor 3 Gor* titles to the land with the help of corrupt staff in the Land Office.

Col Yuthaboon said, “The Amlo is continuing to investigate K. Boonkeng’s landholdings and continues to confiscate sites. We are also investigating corruption within the Land Office.”

He said that Amlo had already confiscated assets worth around 30 million baht from former land officers accused of producing fake land papers.

– Kamol Pirat

War of words over damage caused by land investigation

From page 1

PVC will be investigated and, if found to have broken the law intentionally, will be arrested.

After meeting with a committee headed by Deputy Prime Minister Thammarak Isarangura to discuss the findings of his trip to Phuket, Gen Kosin said, “We did not discuss [Gov Udomsak’s] remarks because there was no point.

“Quarreling in the press is the wrong way to go about things. It might cause my team and other people to be scared of performing their official duties.

“I won’t get into a debate with him. Let him talk on his own. I will continue working and, later, I will go to Phuket to arrest some other law-breakers. We will see whether the Governor still says the same thing.

“It is still my duty to solve the land problems in Phuket, and Gen Thammarak backs me up 100%,” Gen Kosin said.

The *Gazette* understands that although Gen Kosin now has a new job, he could still be assigned by Gen Thammarak to continue working on the Phuket land probe.

Daeng the dog has his day

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: In a judgment worthy of King Solomon, the Chief of the Phuket Provincial Livestock Department (PPLO) on September 23 defused a nasty dispute over custodianship of a dog being held at the infamous Middle Road Dog Pound.

His solution? The dog should decide.

Trouble erupted on the night of September 21, when Margot Homburg Park of the Soi Dog Foundation attempted to rescue the animal from the pound in order to place him with a new owner.

The dog – a no-name Thai ridgeback who for the purposes of this tale will be called Daeng (because he’s red) – had taken a shine to the animal activist on previous visits, so Mrs Homburg Park placed a picture of the dog on her website and soon secured a new owner.

Mrs Homburg Park explained to the *Gazette*, “I wanted to find a home for this dog because he would not survive in the pound.

“I was worried because the dog was not eating; he was very thin. He could have been dead in a couple of weeks. So I found him a new owner.”

So far so good, but no further. K. Waew, a worker at the pound, was not keen for Mrs Homburg Park to take Daeng; she was looking after the dog for its original owner, she said stoutly.



Daeng says farewell to a pal while Margot Homburg Park chats with Sunart Wongchawalit (right).

Words alone were apparently not enough to deter Mrs Homburg Park, who, with a friend, climbed over the fence in an attempt to grab the dog. K. Waew and a couple of colleagues, outraged at this invasion of their fiefdom, drove the activists off with sticks and stones.

K. Waew told the *Gazette*, “I was responsible for looking after this dog on behalf of his owners – who had come here three weeks ago to visit him. The door was locked when [Mrs Homburg Park and a friend] tried to come in. They climbed the fence, so our staff hit them to protect the dog.”

No bones were broken, but Mrs Homburg Park called the police.

Into this potentially explosive situation stepped the wise Chief of the PPLO, Sunart Wong-

chawalit, who decreed that the two opponents stand away from the cage while Daeng was released.

“Whoever the dog goes to,” he told the combatants, “gets to own him.”

Daeng wasn’t having any of it. Once released, he trotted off in the opposite direction, away from everyone.

After further discussion, K. Sunart made his final decision: Mrs Homburg Park could take the dog away, though on condition that if the original owners, K. Waew’s friends, wanted him returned into their tender care, she would give him up without demur.

Mrs Homburg Park said afterwards, “I know I was very emotional about it, but I honestly think something good will come out of this.”

Immigration clarifies visa hop cash rule

From page 1

that this, too, would remain at the discretion of each checkpoint.

He added, however, that any officer who refused to accept valid traveler’s checks as proof of financial status would be liable to prosecution.

Pol Col Sa-ngob Sun-udorn, Superintendent of Mae Sai Immigration, said on September 23 that his office was simply following ministerial regulations by enforcing the rule.

“Mae Sai Immigration was criticized by the Chiang Rai Governor, who asked us why there are so many strange cases of people

stamping in and out of Thailand on tourist visas – some for as long as 15 years. What are [such people] still doing in Chiang Rai?”

“We have to enforce this rule strictly in such cases, and we will begin to do so on October 1,” he confirmed.

However, Pol Capt Kris-sarat Nuesen of Phuket Provincial Immigration Office (PPIO) told the *Gazette*, “The PPIO is responsible for three checkpoints: Phuket International Airport, the Phuket Port Control Center at Chalong Pier, and the Deep Sea Port at Cape Panwa.

“We have not strictly enforced this regulation because [doing so] would cause long queues and we would be criticized.”

He added, however, that PPIO officers would not rule out

using the regulation in cases involving foreigners staying in the country for a long time on a string of tourist visas.

Pol Col Chawalit Busayarat, Superintendent of Ranong Immigration, has a similar view of using the regulation. “We do not enforce this regulation on all foreigners. We mainly check for people on the Immigration blacklist,” he said.

“We also check foreigners staying on tourist visas, who keep applying for extensions to stay. If they continue applying for extensions to stay, then we send their documents to Bangkok to be checked.

“Most of these people are Europeans and Americans. They keep applying because they have Thai wives and families here to support,” Col Chawalit added.

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Unexpected rise in tourist arrivals

PHUKET: The number of visitors arriving at Phuket International Airport in the year to date is up by 27% on the figure for the same period last year, astonishing and delighting tourism bosses.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket office had predicted that the number of passengers – foreign and Thai – arriving in Phuket would increase by 10% this year compared with 2003. But instead, arrivals have risen by 27%.

Napasorn Kakai, the Deputy Director of the Phuket TAT office, told the *Gazette*, “For the green [low] season, we successfully focused on tourists from Asia and the Middle East. We arranged roadshows and invited them to travel to Phuket.

“We have many charter flights that come to Phuket from the Middle East because people there want to experience the rain.”

K. Napasorn added that Phuket had become more popular as a “short haul” destination for people in Asia, partly because of terrorist attacks elsewhere in the world.

Visitor numbers could be boosted still further if an Australian Airlines Boeing 767 charter flight between Sydney and Phuket, which is being tested this month, becomes a regular feature of the green season.

However, said K. Napasorn, not all the passengers who arrived at Phuket airport actually spent their vacations on the island – some went direct to other destinations, such as Khao Lak or Krabi.

Government figures (which are counted by budget year – October 1 to September 30, rather than TAT figures, which are counted by calendar year) show that between October 1 last year and August 31 this year, 4.17 million passengers passed through Phuket International Airport, a rise of 30.41% compared with the same period in the previous 12 months.

The number of flights to and from Phuket during the same period also increased, by 21.89%, to 27,392.

No comparative figures were given on the average tourist's length of stay and spending habits in Phuket nor, indeed, on how many “quality visitors” were among the arrivals.

– Sangkhae Leelanaporn

Tourist stores caught up in Korean guide battle

PHUKET CITY: Choi Seong Ho, Managing Director of Korean tour company The Phuket Club Co Ltd, has claimed that his firm is being ostracized within the Phuket tour industry after committing itself to hiring only Thai tour guides.

The Phuket Club signed a benchmark Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Phuket Professional Guide Association (PPGA) on September 20, whereby it agreed to hire only Thai guides and to cooperate with the PPGA to teach Thai guides to speak Korean.

Mr Choi added that since August 30, Wang Talang duty-free store and Gems Gallery Phuket have refused to hire out their minivans to The Phuket Club to allow the tour company to shuttle its customers around the island – including to their own stores.

Mr Choi said he did not blame the two popular tourist shops. He said he believed they had been forced to boycott his company after complaints from other Korean tour operators.

Asked about the boycotts, Boonlert Koysiripong, President of Wang Talang International Lapidary Co Ltd, skirted around the issue. He told the *Gazette*, “I do business, I don't want to have enemies.

“With regards to this matter, I do not have an opinion. I don't know the cause of problem among Korean companies, so I cannot comment on it.”

The General Manager of Gems Gallery could not be reached for comment.

– Anongnat Sartpisut

Jeab murder case lodged with court

PATTAYA: The Provincial Court in Pattaya has renewed bail for Sam Van Treeck, the 24-year-old Belgian man accused of murdering Phuket-based divemaster Chompoonut “Jeab” Kobram, 23.

Van Treeck's bail was renewed on September 20, the same day as the police submitted their case to the court.

K. Jeab was found dead on June 25 in Van Treeck's apartment in Pattaya. She had been stabbed 48 times. Van Treeck was charged with premeditated murder but denies this, claiming K. Jeab was already dead when he arrived home.

The officer in charge of the investigation, Pol Maj Chalermkiat Sirimak, of Tambon Dong Tan Police Station, told the *Gazette* that the police and the prosecutor had lodged their case against Van Treeck with Pattaya Provincial Court.

“The investigation is finished and now it depends on the court when the accused will stand trial,” he said.

Maj Chalermkiat added that the last time he had heard about Van Treeck's whereabouts, the accused was staying at the Belgian Embassy in Bangkok. Van Treeck may be required, as a condition of bail, to report to court officials every 15 days or every month until the trial begins.

– Gategaeo Phetsawang

Govt sends Patong off to bed early

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

PATONG: More than 200 entertainment places in Patong are closing earlier, in the wake of a new order from the Interior Ministry.

The order means that many venues that previously could stay open until 2 am now have to close at 1 am, and in some cases, midnight, although the closing time on New Year's Eve will still be 6 am on January 1.

Businesses in the “entertainment zone” – which includes Soi Bangla, Thaweewong Rd, Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd and Sainamyen School intersection – are, in general, allowed to stay open longer than businesses outside it.

However, most of the entertainment places in Patong lie within this zone.

The order came into effect on September 17, but the President of the Patong Entertainment Association, Sompetch Moosopon, told the *Gazette* that most bar owners reluctantly fell into line with it from September 21.

K. Sompetch complained that even the previous closing time of 2 am had been too early for most people, as many tourists only began their nights out at midnight or 1 am.

He said the association was appealing to the Interior Ministry to reconsider the order before the start of the high season.

Leading businessman Chairat Sukbal, who owns the Safari Pub, told the *Gazette* that 99% of his customers were not Thai teenagers, but tourists, and they were struggling to come to terms with the new policy.

It could also discourage investment in Patong, he said.

“Having to close at 2 am was bad enough. Now our businesses are going to be even worse off.

“We have 24 hours in a day, but if we get revenue for only an hour or two a day, who will come to invest in this area?”

The new closing times are as follows:

• Opening and closing time for venues in category 3 (1), “dancing places”, such as disco-

theques and *ram wong*: in the entertainment zone, 9 pm to 2 am; outside the entertainment zone, 9 pm to midnight.

• Venues in 3 (3) (massage parlors): in the entertainment zone, from noon to midnight; outside the entertainment zone, from 6 pm to midnight.

• Venues in class 3 (4), (“entertainment venues”), places selling food (maybe) and alcohol and offering some form of entertainment, whether that be a show performed for customers, or allowing customers to sing or dance: in the entertainment zone, 6 pm to 1 am; outside the zone, 6 pm to midnight.

• Venues in category 3 (5), restaurants that provide entertainment and close after midnight (primarily upmarket venues with cultural shows) may open between 6 pm and 1 am.


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Queer News

The demon seed

NONG KHAI: An elderly man turned himself in to Srivilai District police on the morning of September 4 and shocked officers by confessing to the August 20 murder of his own son.

Kane Manorat, 70, left the monkhood after seven years to protect his family from his 38-year-old son Boonpeng, a glue-sniffing addict from the age of 15, whose sick behavior included raping his own sister and elderly mother.

Kane entered the monkhood seven years earlier to free himself of the mayhem in his life caused by his son – after Boonpeng raped his own younger sister, causing her to flee to Bangkok.

The elderly man entered the police station accompanied by his 62-year-old wife Khammee, who broke down in tears as she told officers how she had been repeatedly raped at knifepoint by her son over the last seven years – ever since her husband entered the monkhood, leaving her to cope with Boonpeng on her own.

“I am your mother. I gave birth to you,” I would tell him while he was raping me, high on glue. But all he would do was laugh maniacally and say, ‘I came from inside you, so why can’t I go back in?’” she said.

The parents explained that Boonpeng was the third of their seven children. He had been trained as a mechanic and even spent two years in the monkhood.

After that he got married, but his wife eventually left him after he kept stealing money from neighbors and using it to buy thinner. After huffing the solvent, he would run amok in the village, terrifying everybody. He had been in prison many times, but even that failed to straighten him out, said his long-suffering parents.

Not even barnyard fowl were safe from his depravities.

“He used to pick up a chicken or duck and hold it by the wings. Then he would use the other hand to close off its windpipe so it wouldn’t make too much noise. Then he would rape it violently until he reached orgasm.

Thinner, it appears, affects the brain more quickly than it does one’s libido.

“When he finished, sometimes the birds would be alive and sometimes they would be dead.

“Either way, he would then toss them on a fire and eat them, without even bothering to pluck it or remove the intestines first,” his parents said.

But Boonpeng’s reign of terror came to an end on August 20, when his father saw him sitting in a hut in a field behind their house inhaling thinner from a three-liter can.

When Kane ordered him to stop, Boonpeng attacked him, kicking him off the dyke between two paddy fields where he had been standing. As he rushed to continue his attack, Kane drew a .38 revolver and fired a warning shot.

That did nothing to stop the demented Boonpeng, who continued his charge. Kane then shot at him five more times, the hail of bullets killing Boonpeng on the spot.

The elderly man then dragged his son’s body back to the house. The next morning he reported that Boonpeng had been murdered – neglecting to mention that he himself was the killer.

After the body was cremated, however, the former monk’s conscience caught up with him and he decided to turn himself in to the police. He was released on bail after posting a Chanote land title valued at 400,000 baht.

Pol Maj Khwantong Fonglom said, “In this case, if K. Khammee had reported that her son was raping her, it might never have gotten to this point. But I understand why she didn’t, because of the great shame it would have caused.”

He said he sympathized with the family, but under the law he had no choice but to charge Kane with murder.

Public defender Mano Thongban of the Thai Law Association said that the only way Kane could avoid life imprisonment – or even capital punishment – would be if the court decided he acted in self-defense.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

Don't miss....
Issues & Answers
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issuesanswers/index.asp](http://phuketgazette.net/issuesanswers/index.asp)

Towards a

The idea of having a duty-free zone in Phuket is certainly not new; it has been considered for a long time because of the benefits it could bring, not just to Phuket but to the whole of Thailand. The concept is now back in the spotlight following a seminar held at the end of August at the Phuket Merlin Hotel.

Despite wide-ranging discussions at the conference, there are still many issues to be resolved, such as: Why should Phuket have a duty-free zone or zones? How many should there be? What will the zones be like? How will they be run? Will Thais be able to buy items in them?

The *Gazette's* Kamol Pirat and Dhirarat Boonkongsan report on these issues, and what some key players in Phuket have in mind for duty-free on the island.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra is leading the government’s attempts to promote Phuket as a “shopping paradise”, in the hope of harnessing the power of the booming tourism industry to bring more money into Phuket and the rest of Thailand.

The government’s proposal is that the island province of Phuket have a duty-free zone modeled after Hong Kong and Singapore, where brand-name goods are subject to little or no duty.

The government has said it would like Phuket to have a duty-free zone by the end of the year and has charged the Finance Ministry with making this happen. The Minister of Finance, Somkid Jatusritipak, has set up a committee chaired by Deputy Minister Suwit Measinsee, to study and report to the government on how to create a duty-free zone in Phuket.

The committee’s draft plan should be ready for submission to the Cabinet next month.

In August, the committee recommended that Phuket should have a duty-free zone, particularly as it could attract more tourists to the island.

It could also be the first step towards making Phuket a duty-free province.

Then, if the Phuket project is a success, similar zones could

be established in other provinces.

It would be up to the Customs Department to alter the law to enable the creation of a duty-free zone in Phuket.

The basic principle of the duty-free zone is that it will offer much more than the duty-free shops found at most international airports.

The Chief of Customs in Phuket, Surachart Janthawat-charagorn, said he understood the duty-free zone would feature internationally-recognized shops, an international convention center and exhibition hall, a health center, an entertainment complex and maybe a hotel as well.

Goods imported from abroad and sold in the zone would be free of duty, so tourists would pay less for them than they would outside the zone.

Goods not exempt from duty would be: vehicles; spare parts and replacement parts; fuel and petroleum lubricants; explosive items and chemicals; and items prohibited by law, including pornography and goods that infringe copyright.

Entry to the zone would be straightforward enough for for-

Six private companies have already expressed an interest in managing the zone.

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duty-free zone in Phuket



FUNCTIONAL, FOR NOW: Pamuke Achariyachai's Kata Group has presented the government with its idea to set up a duty-free zone at the Phuket Deep Sea Port that would feature a duty-free shop, hotel, convention hall, exhibition hall, entertainment complex and restaurant.

foreign tourists: all they would have to do to shop there would be to prove their status by producing their passports.

However, the committee has yet to decide how Thai tourists would be able to shop there. It has already decided that Thais should have the right to buy duty-free food and drink or other goods – such as cigarettes – for consumption at venues within the zone.

But should they be able to buy goods and take them out of the zone? The committee has yet to decide on this.

K. Surachart and Pamuke Achariyachai, the Chairman of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, recently visited the duty-free zone in Johor Bahru, Malaysia. K. Surachart said Malaysian tourists pay customs duty when they take goods out of the zone, but at a lower rate than what would be normally added to the price at stores outside the zone. Something similar could be ap-

plied to Thais using the Phuket duty-free zone, he suggested.

However, he said, the committee is to submit three proposals to the Cabinet for consideration. The first would allow Thai tourists to shop in the zone if they stay more than two days in Phuket; the second would allow them to shop there just twice a year, and the third would allow them unlimited shopping there.

Apart from the Thai shopping question, there are still other issues to be resolved, said K. Surachart, such as who would ensure that goods sold in the zone comply with Thai law? For example, who would be responsible for making sure that food imported for sale there meets Thai food safety regulations? K. Surachart believes that regulating these issues should be the responsibility of the provincial governor.

Private companies interested in operating the zone should, in the first instance, ap-

proach the Phuket Customs Department or Governor Udomsak Usawarakura, but only companies with registered capital of at least 100 million baht and suitable facilities for storing bonded goods would be eligible for consideration.

Measures would be put in place to prevent imported goods from reaching the general market. The Customs Department is looking to combine closed circuit television and high-speed Internet to monitor the movement of goods into, out of and within the zone.

Customs officers would record on computer the amount and type of goods that tourists took into the zone, then compare that with the items they brought out to ensure they were not tak-

ing out more than they were entitled to.

Six private companies have expressed an interest in managing the zone, including Phamonkij Witsavakram, which has Phuket Provincial Administration Organization backing to refurbish the abandoned Lucky Complex at Saphan Hin as a duty free plaza; businessman Phummisak Hongsyok, who wants to set up the 1,600 rai "Chao Fah City" duty-free zone, and the Wang Talang company.

"The Central Group and the company behind the Jungceylon supercomplex [in Patong] are also interested, but they are awaiting the government's decision, as is King Power, which owns the duty-free shop at Phuket International Airport," said K. Surachart.

K. Pamuke said the Customs Department's requirement that only companies with more than 100 million baht in capital could bid to run the zone effectively barred

smaller and medium-sized companies, but, he said, it would cost a lot of money to establish the zone, and the government wants to ensure that the job went to a financially secure company.

He said, "When we went to Johor Bahru, I realized what a big business a duty-free zone can be, with an international exhibition center, convention center, hotel, restaurant and entertainment complex, plus duty-

free shops, all covering an area of 40 rai."

He added, "The customers came mostly from Singapore, attending meetings arranged by their companies. The zone is extremely popular as a place for meetings."

K. Pamuke's Kata Group has presented the government with its own ideas for a duty-free zone. Located at the Phuket Deep Sea Port, it would feature a duty-free shop, hotel, convention hall, exhibition hall, entertainment complex and restaurant.

He said the government's aim of establishing a duty-free zone was to increase Thailand's tourism revenue. According to Tourist Authority of Thailand figures, the average tourist spends around 3,600 baht a day. The duty-free zone would offer them a new activity – shopping – in addition to lying on the beach. It would also encourage Thai tourists who often go abroad to shop to buy locally instead.

K. Pamuke said he foresaw some difficulties with implementation, as some people still did not understand the meaning of "duty-free zone".

However, he said, "You can't fail to make more money from the tourist industry if you set up a duty-free zone and establish Phuket as a 'shopping paradise'. But the government has to be serious about this for it to be a success."



"I realized what a big business a duty-free zone can be, with an international exhibition center, convention center, hotel, restaurant and entertainment complex, plus duty-free shops, all covering an area of 40 rai."

– Pamuke Achariyachai
Chairman of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce

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Some sweet, sweet loving

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PHUKET: Phuket's chocoholics are about to discover whether it really is possible to have too much of a good thing, with the arrival on the island of its first chocolatier.

The Duc de Praslin Belgium shop, which opened on October 1 at Fisherman Way Business Center, Chao Fa East Rd, sells chocolates made from authentic Belgian chocolate and using traditional Belgian chocolatier techniques, but featuring Thai beans and peanuts.

The Phuket shop is one of 12 run by the GalloThai company, which was founded in 1993 by Jean-Louis Graindorge, who had previously run a family chocolate-making business in his native Belgium.

Charan Ampornklinkeaw, manager of the Phuket shop, told the *Gazette*, "We have two chocolate factories in Bangkok and employ about 200 staff.

"We import chocolate from Belgium, which is famous for making the best cocoa in the world. The beans are grown in South Africa."

The shop will sell more than 100 types of chocolate and chocolate products, including such wonders as chocolate pralines, truffles, and chocolate with nuts, including macadamias and almonds.

Also available will be cooking chocolate, or couverture, in chips, blocks and coins, and in three varieties (plain, milk and white).

The shop will also sell cocoa powder, along with chocolate chips for

baking.

K. Charan added, "We can provide customers with a chocolate buffet, featuring many different types of chocolate. Customers can order personalized chocolates for special events, too."

The GalloThai company has invested around a million baht in the Phuket shop, which will also have a 12-seat café.



Our slogan is: 'Chocolate is like love – you'll never get enough!'"

– Charan Ampornklinkeaw



The Duc de Praslin Belgium shop supplies the tourism market with its Thai souvenir boxes, above.

No Valentine's Day is complete without a box of fine chocolates (right).

K. Chalan is optimistic about the business. He said, "It's often said that chocolate can help people feel happier. Our slogan is: 'Chocolate is like love – you'll never get enough!'"

"We have three distinct target groups: hotels, retail customers and businesses such as bakeries.

"Our main strength is that we provide real chocolate to customers and don't dilute it with anything.

"The taste of our chocolate is very intense and we always use high-quality ingredients."

He continued, "Many five-



star hotels in Phuket have expressed interest in buying our chocolate. We have many kinds and we will offer special seasonal products in attractive packaging, suitable as souvenirs."

The company also aims to woo tourists by offering chocolates molded with Thai motifs

and packaged in special silk-lined souvenir boxes.

The Duc de Praslin Belgium shop is open daily from 8:30 am to 7 pm. For more information contact K. Charan (Tel: 076-282398-9; Fax: 076-282397 Email: phuket@gallothai.com).

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Activists slam PM's Italian prize

Human rights activists branded PM Thaksin Shinawatra's winning of the International Forgiveness Award by an Italian group as "ridiculous", saying the PM was a leader whose policies have led to serious human rights abuses.

"There is a consensus in the international human rights community, including the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights, that Thaksin's war on drugs has led to some of the worst human rights violations in Thailand's history," said activist Sunai Phasuk.

Last year, almost 3,000 people were killed during a three-month period after the government declared war on drugs. This year's prize was awarded to PM Thaksin for "his government's treatment of drug abusers as patients rather than criminals."

Good deed: Landowner Puangpaka Udom-ariyasap has decided to donate a 24-rai plot of land to the state — after learning that reports of dinosaur footprints found on the property were true.

"There are no conditions attached. I just want to see the site receive proper care and conservation," said the widow, who has already signed a memo detailing her intention at Tha Uthen District Office in Nakhon Phanom, where her late husband was once District Chief.

The site attracted media attention when paleontology expert Dr Warawuth Sutheerathorn complained that almost 1,000 dinosaur footprints in the area had been destroyed.

"I didn't know they were authentic dinosaur footprints until the story appeared in the media recently," K. Puangpaka said.

Travel tip: An academic at Chulalongkorn University has mapped out the riskiest districts in the southern border provinces, where separatist militants have been staging attacks.

Violence erupts most fre-



WHAT, ME WORRY? Army Major Chalermchai Matchaklam (in chains, left) leaves the Court of Appeals in Bangkok after being sentenced to death for the March 2001 murder of Provincial Governor Preena Leepatanapan.

The court also sentenced to death two of the officer's accomplices, who were earlier acquitted by the lower court.

The other man in chains is former Senator Sukhum Cherdchuen, who had an unrelated court appearance the same day. He surrendered to police in February 2001, confessing to masterminding the killing of his former business partner, Nitcharee Makornsarn.

quently in six districts: Yala's Bannang Sata and Muang Districts; Narathiwat's Rangae, Sungai Kolok and Sungai Padi Districts; and Pattani's Muang District, said Sombat Youmuang, chief of the university's Academic Service Center.

Pattani and Narathiwat have more than 20 vulnerable villages, he said. Ajarn Sombat suggested security agencies should ask high-ranking officials to travel in groups to allow the armed forces to provide adequate security for them.

Aids overstay: A German man accused of infecting his wife with HIV will be deported for overstaying his visa by three years,

police in Chaiyaphum said.

The man was arrested at his house and would be sent to Muang District Police Station for further processing, said provincial Tourist Police Chief Major Thanomsak Intabutr.

All schools in the province had been alerted about the man after his ex-wife warned that he had a habit of buying sex from students, said Udom Sangnak, a community leader.

The police action and the community's reaction of avoiding the suspected carrier came under criticism from Aids activists, who said such measures were ineffective at protecting people from infection — and were a violation of human dignity.

Technology Minister Korn Thap-paransi.

Dr Woranop Wiyakarn, a marine biologist at Chulalongkorn University, led the team. He has been invited by Japan's National Institute of Polar Research to accompany its team to Antarctica later this year.

The 50-kilogram robot, powered by three 12-volt direct-current motors, can move in any direction underwater.

Put a muzzle on it: Bangkok dog owners are now required to keep their dogs muzzled and on a leash in public places or face a fine of 5,000 baht, the city's Deputy Governor Pensri Pichaisanit said.

Under the new BMA directive, owners of dogs that require special control must use a leash of not longer than 50 centimeters. The person holding the leash must be over 15 years old and under 65.

A Health Office official said that under the directive, dog owners must register their animals with the BMA and pay for all necessary vaccinations.

"Each dog will be implanted with a microchip, identifying the owner in the event of an attack," she said.

We are all made of stars: Thailand is to get Southeast Asia's most advanced planetarium, to be sited at the Thailand Science Park in Rangsit, Pathum Thani.

It will be built using German technology by Advance Avionics & Aviation, which won the contract with a successful bid of 160 million baht to the Department of Non-Formal Education.

Around the Nation news roundup is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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New Surat Thani Governor to review plans

The Samui District Chief will propose a number of large new projects to the incoming Governor of Surat Thani next month. First, the chief said that many beaches on Samui could be made more attractive by clearing the dead coral and debris that has built up over the years.

He has already instructed the Harbor Department to survey the island and make recommendations on how to improve the island's less-visited bays. He will also propose further upgrades to the island's spa industry in order for them to achieve "world-class" status.

Meanwhile, water, electricity and telephone services on Koh Tao need improvements in order to accommodate the ever-growing number of tourists. All three proposals will be presented to the new governor in the coming weeks. If they are accepted, new budgets should begin flowing to Samui before year's end.

FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND



By Commander
Sammy Swan

Palm power: Following an article in the local press suggesting the use of renewable energy sources on Koh Samui, the Surat Thani provincial government recently announced a proposal for the construction of a palm oil processing plant that would produce biodiesel for vehicles used in the commercial transport sector.

Oil palm plantations cover an estimated 10 million rai in Southern Thailand, with more than 60 companies already involved in production and sale. An environmental impact study has been initiated in Surat Thani's Praseng District, along with an opinion poll to gauge public reaction.

The land and the plant, which would produce 20,000-30,000 liters of fuel daily, is estimated to cost about 70 million baht. The refining process is environmentally friendly, and the project would fit comfortably into the government's scheme to convert 3% of Thailand's fuel



Panita Phenkum (in orange blouse), who co-owns Samui's Ford Showroom with her partner Somkiat Sritaeaw, recently opened their new showroom in a spacious new location in Taling Ngam, which opened for business on September 10.

usage, or 2.4 million liters a day, to biodiesel.

Room boom: New upmarket resorts and hotels are under construction on Samui, with most due to open for Christmas and New Year. Among the most prestigious will be the Santiburi Group's second resort, the Bophutburi, and a refurbished version of the once-popular Euphoria Resort, which has been taken over by a large international chain.

In Chaweng, the Muang Thai Resort will open with 53 luxury rooms, while at the less-developed Maenam Beach, The

Napasai will offer 69 luxury rooms and the Amarin Victoria 46 rooms.

In total, Samui will have 750 additional rooms for visitors next year, and although is a positive development for the tourism sector, some hoteliers are concerned that there are not enough qualified personnel on the island to meet staffing requirements.

Rubbing it in: A delegation from Laos visited Samui recently as guests of the island's spa association. Laos is hoping to expand its spa industry, and is looking to use Samui as a model.

The delegation was shown spas and their design concepts, treatments and ingredients used in the therapies. Samui Spa Association President Khun Wilawan welcomed the delegation, who expressed admiration for Samui's successful and sophisticated approach and took copious amounts of notes during the tour.

Crime counts: Police statistics show gambling as the most common crime committed on Samui, with 40 people arrested during the August reporting period.

Possession of narcotics came second, with 20 arrests: five for possession of marijuana, with a total of 208 grams seized, and 13 for possession of *ya bah* (methamphetamine) with 77 pills seized. There were two arrests for possession of Ecstasy tablets, with 402 pills confiscated.

There were four murders on Samui during the period, with two arrests made. There were also three cases of attempted murder and seven cases of assault, with a total of three arrests made.

On a positive note, there were no arrests for prostitution – it's a good thing that that scourge has finally been eradicated from our tropical paradise.

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



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



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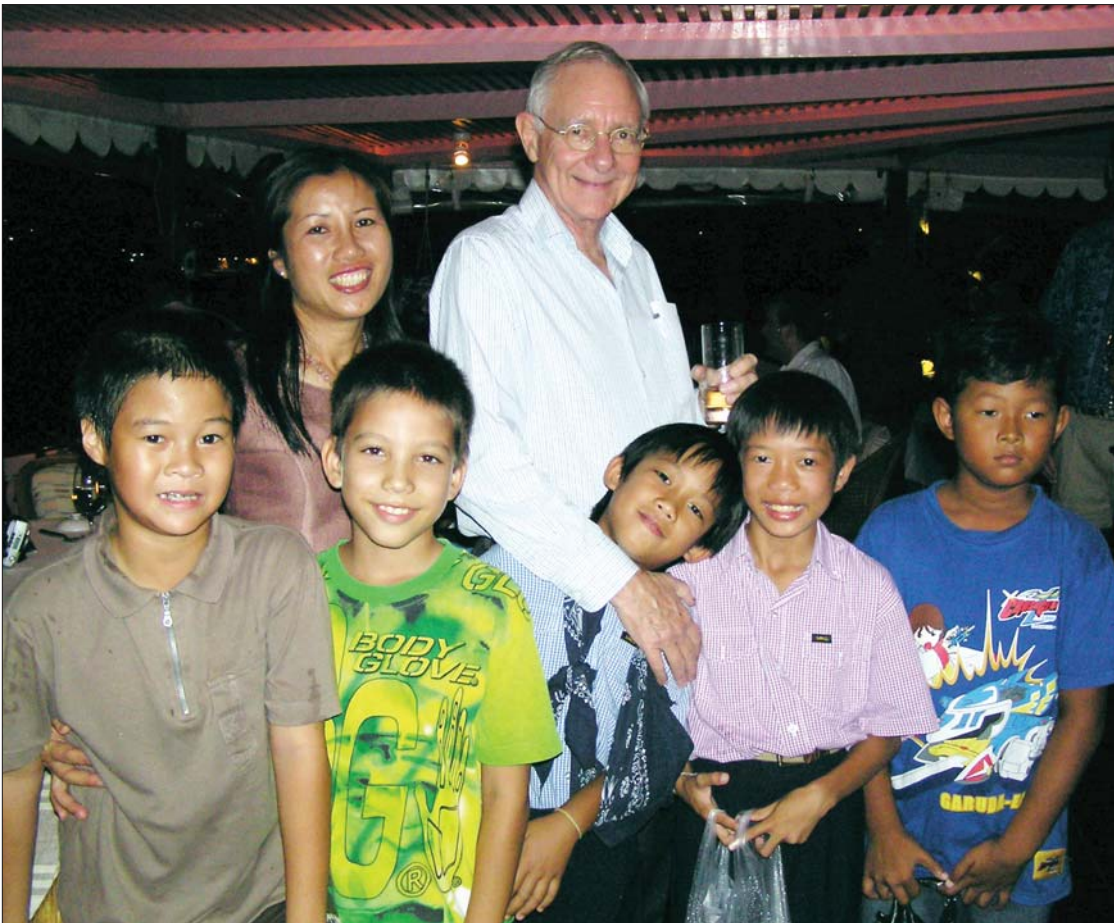
This week



HOT METAL: Readers of *The Nation Weekly Magazine* celebrate its 12th-anniversary birthday party at SFX Coliseum Cinema at Central Festival Phuket in the company of (from left): MP Suwit Sa-Ngiamkul; Phuket Vice-Governor Winai Buapradit; Phuket Senator Paiboon Upatising; and the Senior Vice-President of the Nation Multimedia Group, Prasai Kankriengwong.



PIZZA THE ACTION: Salvatore Cossu (standing) and friends celebrate the opening of his new pizzeria, adjoining his popular Phuket City restaurant, Salvatore's, on September 16.



WAI WE DO IT: (above) Children in the care of Child Watch Phuket enjoy a day out with Courts Megastore staff (from left): Executive Director Steve Church; PA to the Directors Panit Khongmak; Operations Controller Nick Piper; and Senior Operations Manager Passaraporn Kaotan. Mascots K. Courts and Phi Chicky are also lending their assistance.

BAAN RIM PA-RTY TIME: (left) Brothers Anukul and Natdanai Arno-Magee (arm in sling and wearing pink shirt respectively) celebrate their birthday at Baan Rim Pa. Joining them are, among others, (from left): Pawis Sa-Ngiamkul; Janpen Arno; Jason Deknatel; John Magee; and Savattiphat Karuna.



DO IT CLEAN: Students and staff of Dulwich International College take a break during their efforts to clean five beaches around the island on Clean Up The World Day, September 18. Almost 700 students, staff and other volunteers filled 400 garbage sacks — together weighing around 5,000 kilograms — with trash.





FACTORY RECORDS: At the opening of the Laguna Factory Outlet and Laguna Collections at Canal Village are (from left): Pilanthana Charinkan, Operations Manager of Banyan Tree Gallery (Thailand); and Karyn Lim and Vinia De Garriz, respectively PR & Marketing Manager and Training Executive of Banyan Tree Gallery (Singapore).

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Learning all about Michael

Michael Learns To Rock is something of a phenomenon in Thailand and Asia generally. The group is reportedly the best-selling foreign act ever in Thailand. Although used to playing to audiences of up to 50,000 people, MLTR, as they are known, will be getting "up close and personal" with a more intimate gathering on October 10, when they play a concert at Laguna Phuket in aid of The Life Home Project. The *Gazette's* Andy Johnstone contacted Kåre Wanscher, MLTR's drummer, in his native Denmark and asked him about life in the band.

Gazette: I understand that the band is quite busy at the moment preparing for a new tour.

Kåre Wanscher: Yes we are. The tour starts in the first week of October and we're playing in Sri Lanka and Singapore before the concert in Phuket on the 10th. After that we play a couple of dates in South Africa.

Gazette: Do you have a big following in Africa?

KW: We do, in fact. We've played there a few times, in Johannesburg, Cape Town and a few other cities.

Gazette: Asia, however, seems to be one of your biggest markets and you have played here to great success on a number of occasions.

KW: That's right. We've played there many times, although it's been a few years – three I think; too long really – since we were there last. We have had a lot of great experiences and have many good memories of the region. We're really looking forward to going back. Asia is always special for us and the audiences are just great.

Gazette: What is the secret of MLTR's success in Asia, and especially Thailand?

KW: It's hard to pin it down to one thing. Our music started getting airplay in Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand around 10 years ago, and people just seemed to understand what our music was about. People in Asia have this tradition of simply singing along to pop music.

They really are great singers and very romantic people; they love ballads and gentle music. Our music just fitted in with the Asian taste perfectly. Once this started to happen, we played lots of concerts there and took that fan base seriously. But I can't pin it [our success in Asia] down to just one thing.

Gazette: It seems that your success here has been natural, organic almost, without the media hype associated with other bands.

KW: I'd agree. Interest in our music started slowly and without lots of PR. We were huge stars in Asia before we ever played there. It was really wonderful and we achieved it without spending lots of money on marketing and commercials. The music did it on its own.

Gazette: You're Danish, but you sing in English in markets, including Denmark, where many of your fans are non-native English speakers.

KW: We decided from the very start to write and sing in English only. At that time, 1988 or so, it was very rare for a Danish band to enjoy success outside of Denmark. This began to change around the time we formed and a [Danish] band could remain cred-

ible at home even if they sang in English. We were lucky that the alteration in people's attitudes happened at the same time as we started out. It allowed us to be successful at home and abroad. But still, the most successful bands in Denmark are the ones who sing in Danish. A band or an artist will always be more successful in their home country if they sing in their own language and you can't really compare them with international artists in that way.

Gazette: Although the band and its members have matured over the years, I notice that you haven't tried to tamper too much with your formula.

KW: Yeah, that's right. The music just comes out of Jascha's songs; he thinks music. He writes in a certain style and we have never

tried to change that. Nor have we tried to take the music away from its origins. But sometimes it would be wonderful to play something completely different for a while. Our music suits Jascha's songs; they fit together

Tickets for the MLTR concert, which is co-sponsored by the Gazette, are priced at 500 baht, 1,000 baht, 2,000 baht and 4,000 baht and are on sale at Laguna Phuket's Canal Village Shopping Centre office and at Pun Pun shake shop opposite SFX Coliseum Cinema at Central Festival Phuket. The 4,000 baht VIP tickets include an invitation to the after-concert cocktail party at the Dusit Laguna Resort and a chance to meet the band.

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Michael Learns To Rock on tour in Shanghai recently. From left, keyboard player, lead singer and composer **Jascha Richter**, drummer **Klre Wanscher** and guitarist **Mikkel Lentz**.

well, so why change it?

Gazette: If it ain't broke, don't fix it. That said, I'm interested to know a little more about the arrangement on the song Take Me To Your Heart.

KW: It is actually a Chinese song and it was our first cover version. It was first performed by Jackie Cheung [The King of Canto-Pop]. The song is about 15 years old and we first heard it in Hong Kong, really liked it and recorded it in English. The lyrics still sound very MLTR, but we kept the Chinese sound of the tune.

It's a wonderful song and really goes down well in Asia. We have played it in China and the reaction from the audience was great. They knew the tune and obviously the Chinese words, and it was really fun for us to see how they accepted our version.

Gazette: Your concert on October 10 is in aid of Phuket's Life Home Project; how much do you know about the HIV and Aids situation in Thailand?

KW: I know about the Aids situation in Asia in general, and of course around the world, but the media in Denmark tend to focus on the situation in Africa. The problem is huge. We're just happy to be able to give a hand and support the cause and the people affected by Aids. If our music helps people to get away from reality for a while, then great. Music is always a good way to do that.

Gazette: Even for a musician?

KW: Absolutely. When we play it gives us the opportunity to focus on something else apart from real life. We can deal with the music instead of thinking

about anything else. Playing live and feeling the energy from the crowd is payback for all of our hard work.

Gazette: Do you have a message for your Thai fans?

KW: Yes. We are really looking forward to seeing the country again. We're really happy that we finally have some time to spend over there.

It's always a great feeling when our fans take the time to wait for us and say hello. We may be playing a small concert this time, but we'd like to say to our fans that we hope to come back and play a large public concert there soon.

If an event isn't listed in the Gazette's *Events Calendar* it probably isn't one.

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Wardrobe

FASHION with Siripansa

Even in the workplace, where more formal dress is expected, it is possible for a woman to show her personality through her clothes, as well as her awareness of the latest fashion trends.

A suit may be a clichéd form of workwear, but it is possible for a suit to look trendy and also individual. It also boosts self-confidence.

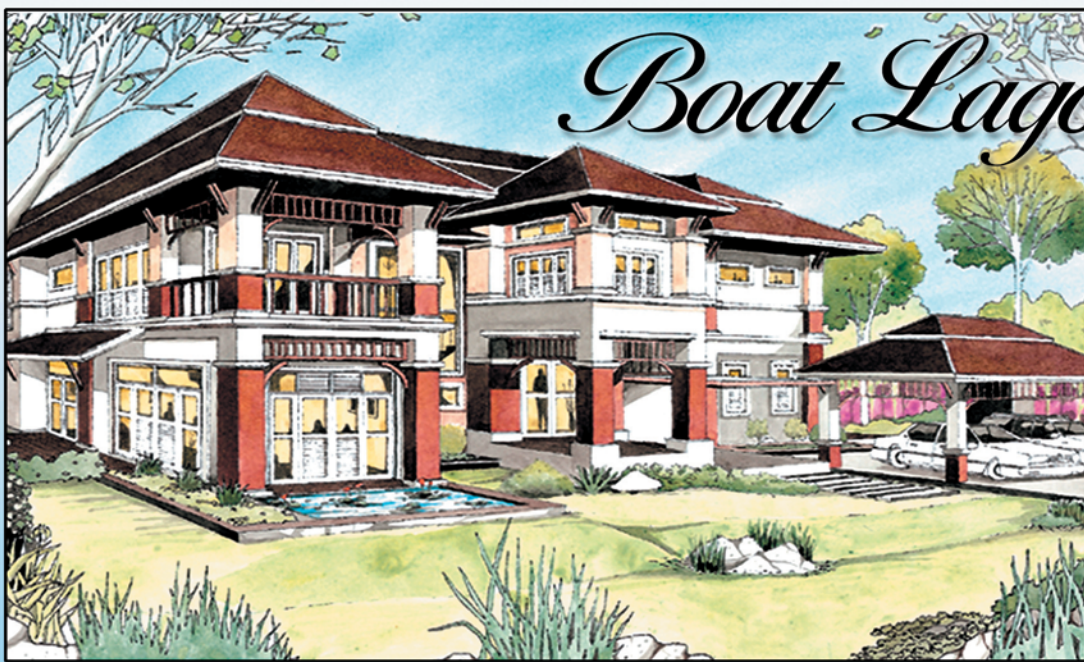
The jacket should be fitted, but not tight. A three-quarter length skirt is probably the most flattering (on most people); any longer and it may look dowdy, shorter and it can look unprofessional.

The blouse is a chance to add a little color. A shirt that contrasts with the suit is an eye-catching choice, as is a shirt with a pattern. It's often best if the pattern picks up the color of the suit. A patterned shirt with a patterned suit is a definite no-no. The look should be eye-catching, not eyesore.

As an alternative, a smart top and complementary skirt can give a little more freedom of expression yet still look professional.

Footwear should be smart, and whether you wear boots – highly fashionable right now – or shoes, they should be low-heeled and dark in color; black is trendy now.

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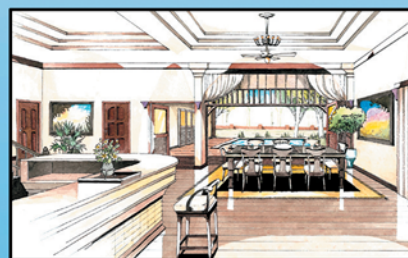
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that works



Guests join in singing *Auld Lang Syne* at the end of the General Aviation Co party.

Bell's beaux and belles

This year's Bell Helicopter Asia-Pacific Regional Sales Conference at the Sheraton Grande Laguna drew together some of the top names in business and society from the US and around the region. Our pictures were taken at a buffet dinner hosted by General Aviation Co, a subsidiary of Thai trading giant Loxley.

Center picture, standing, from left: Thawat Raktakanishtha, Senior Vice-President of Loxley PCL; Paisan Khonjampa, Marketing Support Manager of General Aviation Co; Apapat Mungthanya, MC; Col Nopparat Pankaeow; and Capt Nithit Kesangam, Executive Director of Blue Water Air. Seated is Col ML Pongchompunoot Thongtaem, Executive Vice-President of General Aviation Co.

Lower picture, from left: Max Wiley, Asia-Pacific Region, Bell Helicopter Textron; Suebtrakul Soonthornthum, Chairman of General Aviation Co; Denis Comeau, Canadian Ambassador to Thailand; Bob Fitzpatrick, Senior Vice-President, Marketing and Sales, Bell Helicopter USA; Roger Belanger, Commercial Counselor of the Canadian Embassy; Dhongchai Lam-sam, President of Loxley PCL; and Jocelyne Boulay.



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If Bali is the “Morning of the World” then Ubud is the island’s dawn. A little over an hour’s drive from the beaches and the resorts that hug the coast around Kuta and Nusa Dua, is the peaceful hill town of Ubud, a place devoted to the arts.

Following the horrific explosion that rocked the Indonesian island in 2002, Bali has gradually recovered, drawing inspiration from places like Ubud where commerce has yet to become an imperative.

You could argue that somewhere like Kuta Beach and its surrounds caters purely to the baser senses, and the five-star resorts of Nusa and Jimbaran appeal to the more refined ones. Ubud is Bali’s spiritual side.

Life here seems to move at the pace of the rice growing in the paddy. It is a place that has inspired generations of artists, not least of whom are its inhabitants, who paint and carve as naturally as they breathe.

A volcanic mountain chain runs through the center of Bali, separating the undeveloped north coast, where the foothills descend into the Bali Sea, from the busy south, where fields gently step down toward the Indian Ocean.

At its heart stands Ubud, which means “medicine” in Balinese. Large numbers of herbs grow wild in the lush surrounding forests.

This is no manufactured touristic enclave. Instead, the landscape erupts with rural ceremonies – cremations, weddings, births – celebrated by this distinctive and hospitable people according to the traditions of the island’s religion, Hinduism.

Temples come decorated with fantastic mythological friezes; the faint sound of music emanates from distant villages; wiry farmers stroll to work beneath heavy burdens; and the ho-



HEART OF ART

rizon is dotted with towering volcanoes.

Ubud Town is not overly large and has at its center a market that sells fruit and vegetables rather than so-called souvenirs churned out for the tourist trade.

For more than 100 years, Ubud has been Bali’s center of fine arts, dance and music. It initially attracted its

quota of backpackers, cosmic loonies, artists and posy bohemians, but now it’s garnering a reputation as a mecca for literati, glitterati, art collectors and connoisseurs.

Celebrities – Sting was a recent visitor – stroll its lanes to revel in the natural surroundings rather than pose for cameras. Stunning hotels and sprawling mansions now dot its outskirts, overlooking the best panoramic views in Bali.

Nonetheless, Ubud is still popular with ordinary visitors and has by no means been

spoiled; its character is too strong to be destroyed.

Apart from casual holidaymakers, it draws students who want to learn to paint, practice yoga, watch birds, go trekking or navigate its trails on mountain bikes.

Ubud, with its blend of culture, comfort, nature and inspiration, is probably the best place to use as a base for touring the rest of Bali. The town is surrounded by most of the things that bring people to Bali – and provides its most potent memories.

There is a wealth of accommodation in Ubud to suit all budgets, from *losmen* or family-run guesthouses, to resorts which are the last word in luxury such as the Uma Ubud,

which translates roughly as “the living home of medicine” – as good an indication as any of the area’s restorative properties.



TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

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KIDS

THE FUN PAGE

FOR ALL

THE FAMILY

Hidden Words

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

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

Brain Buster!!

Alison and her pet frog Jumpee were watching TV. Just after midnight came the weather forecast: "It is raining now and will continue to rain for the next two days." (This made Jumpee very happy.) "However," the weatherman continued, "in 72 hours it will be bright and sunny." Alison laughed. "Wrong again!" she said. She was right, but how did she know?

Because 72 hours after midnight is midnight again. So it can't be bright and sunny.

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. The knee; 2. 1828; 3. Doctors; 4. Fractions; 5. Roald Dahl; 6. Arabs and Israelis; 7. Braised in white wine; 8. A mountain in the Dominican Republic; 9. The Simpsons; 10. Nanometer; 11. Andorra; 12. 1215; 13. The 30 years war (1618-48); 14. Thomas Edison; 15. Catalonia; 16. Aegean Sea; 17. Oscar Wilde; 18. Global systems mobile; 19. Avery Brooks; 20. Werewolf.

SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

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

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz

1. What is the name of the gulf between Finland and Sweden?

2. What would you use a davit for?

3. Which three actors have played the part of Dr Jack Ryan in movies based on Tom Clancy novels?

4. In what year, and where, was the first manned hot-air balloon flight?

5. How many are there in a baker's dozen?

6. Who wrote *For Whom the Bell Tolls*?

7. What is the common name for the chemical compound NaCl?

8. What is the capital of Malta?

9. He used to be called Cat Stevens. What is his name now?

10. What is the correct word for the act of throwing something out of a window?

11. Navassa Island in the Caribbean was famed for its mines. What was mined there?

12. Roughly how many people live in Peru?

13. What is the unit of currency in Cambodia?

14. What brand and model of flying broom does Harry Potter use?

15. What symbol appears on the Lebanese flag?

16. The word "laser" is an acronym. What does it stand for?

17. What was the name of the first space shuttle to leave the Earth's atmosphere, and when did it take off?

18. Approximately how far did it travel during this mission?

19. Who is Wile E Coyote's sworn enemy?

20. What is the correct word for a female swan?

Answers next week.

Never a Cross Word!

Across

1. From then on.
7. Hit with an open hand.
8. Good place for a small dog.
9. Hawaiian island.
10. Over there.
12. From Seoul, perhaps.
15. Metered transport.
16. Convent inhabitant.
17. Eire's saint.
19. Part-owner of a company.

Down

2. Computer in *2001: A Space Odyssey*.
3. The eighth planet from the Sun.
4. Definitely not a friend.
5. Reigned.
6. Connection between web pages.
7. Hosiery.
11. Not artificial.
13. Oscar de la ***, haute couture label.
14. Under, in poetry.

Solution next week.

ASK KHUN WANIDA! MOMMA DUCK

Problems with an extra-marital affair?
Questions about Thai culture?
Having communications problems?
Need somebody to Love?

Read her advice in the *Phuket Gazette*.

Fax 076-213971 or email momma@phuketgazette.net

Confused about the price of love

Dear Momma Duck,

I became engaged to be married recently, and was told in advance that the "bride price" would be 200,000 baht in gold.

Before meeting with my fiancée's family, we agreed that I would pay 140,000 baht from savings over the seven months leading up to the wedding. My fiancée said she would come up with the rest.

As for the gold, she said she would borrow it from friends, trade it for new gold at a friend's gold shop so it would look new on the wedding day, and then return it after the ceremony.

Now, however, she seems to be renegeing on her end of the deal. She told me that my ability to come up with the entire amount will be a test of my ability to serve as the "root" of our family. She also suggested that I beg my family for money, which I refuse to do.

I told her I would not be tested in this way and said I wanted to break off the engagement. She backed down, saying that her comments were only intended to give me *kamlang jai* (fighting spirit), and that, no matter what, we would get married – even if it had to be without her parent's permission.

Actually, we are now getting along fine and we haven't talked about the issue of money since. Should I continue just to ignore what might be a major problem looming? Is this a common thing leading up to a wedding?

Getting married was her idea in the first place and I don't regard this "bride price" as among the most charming of Thai customs.

Confused,
Kuku

Dear Confused,

The expression "bride price" is not really correct. It's really a dowry for the bride's parents and was a very common

custom in many European and other cultures in the not-so-distant past. It's a custom that varies from region to region here, and it is changing, especially in urban areas.

In Bangkok, a prosperous family may demand millions of baht from the groom or his family. The main purpose of this dowry is to pay for the "worth of the mother's milk" and often all or part of the money is kept aside for the bride in case there is a problem in the couple's relationship. If this happens, the parents will then give the money to the daughter to support herself.

In some rural areas, all that is required is for the groom or his family to throw a huge wedding party to show off to the bride's neighbors and friends.

You'll notice that the underlying theme is family-oriented, not individual. This focus on family is very strong in our culture and seems to have been lost in many European and North American cultures. In your case, we might say that "You can take the girl out of the village but you can't take the village out of the girl."

Nowadays, many Thai girls marry foreigners. About 30 years ago, there was a rather widespread prejudice in Thailand against mixed marriages but this has changed in the past couple of decades, as a result of many Thais studying abroad and millions of tourists coming to Thailand.

Many rural villagers still believe that all foreigners are wealthy because they can afford to visit Thailand and buy houses and cars. This is partly because of movies and the media showing a wealthy style of living in the West.

There is little knowledge of your cul-



Momma DUCK

By Wanida Hongyok
momma@phuketgazette.net

ture, including the lack of a dowry system, and the independence Westerners have in making their own choice of life partner.

This may be why your fiancée couldn't understand your reluctance to ask your family for money, which is a common practice in Thailand, and shows that the man's family agrees with the marriage.

I don't know if the money issue will become a "major problem looming" but you'd better come to a clear agreement, because unresolved assumptions in cross-cultural marriages have a habit of becoming big problems, regardless of which cultural norms are used to resolve them.

I must say in closing, that I get rather upset when foreigners start describing, as you did in your last sentence, which parts of my culture you like and those you wish didn't exist.

If I had taken the same attitude when I lived abroad in several foreign cultures, I would have made myself a rather unhappy lady. You cannot pick and choose if you wish to live in my culture.

It's a package-deal old boy. If you don't like it, please feel free to return home.

Dear Momma Duck,

I know that it's customary to erect a small spirit house or shrine along high points in the road, but is there a similar tradition which involves leaving used footwear on the roadside? When I'm out driving, it never ceases to amaze me how many sandals, shoes and flip-flops there on the roads.

Just curious,
Kathu

Dear Just curious,

As you may have guessed, it is modern motorcycles, cheap petroleum and rubber-based products, and not Thai tradition, that are mainly to blame for all that footwear you describe.

Most people wear sandals, flip-flops or cheap slip-on shoes in our hot and humid weather. Our footwear must also be easy to remove when we go into a house or temple.

I don't know how many times I've seen a pillion rider, often a young child, losing a flip-flop. I've also seen crash helmets go flying from the front basket, which is ridiculous, if you think about it. The helmet is supposed to be on the head, but "safety" and "prevention" are not very strong concepts in Thai culture.

The easygoing attitudes which make my country so popular with foreigners have their positive and negative sides. We love to solve problems after they have occurred.

There is one situation, however, when this does reflect our beliefs and that is when there has been a fatal road accident.

The body of a person who dies in a road accident is not brought home, and any items of footwear or clothing left at the site are usually considered unlucky.

The remains must be taken to a hospital and then to a funeral ceremony at a temple. On the day of the funeral, family members will often pay a visit to the scene of the accident, placing fresh flowers, candles and joss-sticks there to invite the spirit of the deceased to return to the body at the temple. Otherwise, we believe that the spirit will wait there until it can find somebody else to replace it at that spot.

In the good old days, I don't recall seeing many things left on the roadside, but consumerism and the "throw-away" society are now firmly entrenched in Thailand, along with a huge population increase in Phuket.

Lest we forget, let's start looking toward the future

On September 11 we commemorated the vicious terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001.

Internationally, we remembered all those innocent individu-

als who lost their lives either in the attacks – whether they were in the twin towers of the World Trade Center, on the aircraft or in the other buildings attacked – or because they were among the brave souls who went into the

buildings afterwards and died trying to save those inside.

Our eyes were opened to the reality of the troubles and destruction that humanity inflicts upon itself, and the "war on terrorism" began, led by – as might be expected – the United States.

Then came a war like no other: Iraq. On March 20 2003, the United States and its allies invaded Iraq, arguing that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction in the country, but the war met immense opposition from other nations.

The war created a deep humanitarian crisis in Iraq and a deep political crisis in the international system.

It has been a year and a half now, and yet it still isn't possible to turn on the TV news without seeing some mention of terrorism or the "Conflict in Iraq". Wherever we look, we can't seem to get away from politicians talking about how they are combating terrorism, and we're starting to



Youth 'n ASIA

By Lauren Moorhouse

get weary of it.

The Olympics brought two weeks of international unity, when people didn't have to think about the atrocities that go on around the world.

Bearing this in mind, I decided to ask people between the ages of 16 and 21 what they

thought. The consensus was not that good. According to people of my age group – including Americans – President Bush in some ways takes things too far, and the conflict seems to have become a matter of national pride rather than protecting the interests of the country.

When asked about the war on Iraq, the big issue was the legitimacy of the invasion. It appears, from material that has come to light since the war, that it is possible that there were no weapons, and many feel the invasion was more of an attempt to control the oil that Iraq has.

I think it's time we stopped thinking about past events that we can do nothing about and looked to making the future safer by trying to protect all people of the world from terrorism.

I'm not saying we should forget the people who lost their lives, but we shouldn't dwell overmuch on the past; it's time to look to the future.

If an event isn't listed in the Gazette's *Events Calendar* it probably isn't one.
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In The Stars

by Isla Star

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): This is a good week to trust in Lady Luck. Many Librans will be surprised at how much goes their way during the first few days of October. A slight downward dip could occur after Wednesday; if you're feeling off balance then, take a few hours out to pamper yourself at the spa. Someone close to you is in an impish mood this weekend – there's no need to overreact to innocent leg-pulling.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Some Scorpions appear to be going overboard where someone interesting is concerned. Overwhelming them will probably scare them off faster than a rearing cobra, so keep your cool. If anyone can plan an impossible-to-resist seduction, it's you, so start scheming. If you're unattached, true love is just over the horizon. At work, start setting your sights higher. Wear shades of citrus to create a sharp impression.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Sagittarians with emotions as tangled as mangrove roots should ask themselves if a rocky relationship is worth the stress. It's likely that friends have been dropping hints for a while, but love has probably been blinding you to the truth. October is likely to hold much soul-searching. You will soon be putting career matters under the spotlight, too.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): If you are inclined to do nothing more than watch spiders weave their webs this week, don't fight the lethargy. Capricorns are advised to slow down to the rhythm of low season so they can conserve energy for the busier months ahead. The end of the year promises to be the busiest period of 2004. You will soon be making Christmas travel plans.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Your powers of intuition are sharp this week, but this could lead to a discovery that rocks your sea of contentment. If someone's been playing hide-and-seek in the jungle, you are about to find out why. Some Aquarians will be tempted to set a trap, but there's no need to go that far. A simple confrontation will prompt immediate confession. Wear sunburst gold to brighten your mood.

What the heavens have in store for you

PISCES (February 20-March 20): The wet weather due in October won't do anything to dampen Pisceans' spirits. If anyone's going to be singing and dancing in the rain, it'll be you. Good news is on the way regarding a business or work-related deal, and romance looks set to flourish. On Monday, your luck regarding money is especially good, so dare to tread a previously unexplored path. The number 8 will be of interest on Wednesday.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): If last month presented a disappointing lack of spicy opportunities in your life, prepare for some tempting delights to be offered in October. This week, those born under the sign of Aries should already start to notice a more upbeat mood affecting their social lives. However, when it comes to a special someone who has caught your attention, you may get caught up in some rivalry. The color ice blue will help you to keep your cool.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Taureans can be confident of success regarding new endeavors that set sail this week. Even the most bizarre ideas have potential to become that elusive money-spinner you've been dreaming of. Where romantic interests are concerned, try to keep expectations realistic; if you give someone a chance to show what they're really made of, you could be pleasantly surprised. The number 7 has positive implications on Wednesday or Thursday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Cross-currents are likely to affect close relationships this weekend. Geminis who wish to avoid uncomfortable atmospheres are advised to let their partners have plenty of space. In other words, this is the ideal time to go off on that solo fishing trip you've been contemplating for some time now. By Monday, all should be sweet again in the Garden of Love. Single Geminis will be subject to an attraction of the opposites.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): A budding romance still needs to be carefully nurtured. Interference could come in the form of a blast from the past, and you will need to wear silk gloves when dealing with this particular hazard. On a brighter note, news is winging its way towards you regarding a long-forgotten investment. Financial affairs are generally looking healthy; this is

an auspicious time to investigate ways of planning for the future. Another Cancerian has beneficial advice.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Those born under the sign of Leo should guard against being defensive when a mistake is pointed out at work on Monday. If the fault was genuinely yours, the only thing to do is to make

amends. But if someone else was responsible, you must ensure that they don't lose face. As the week progresses, a more harmonious atmosphere prevails and you will feel that mountains really can be moved.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Despite what you may think, all your earthy qualities have not been going unnoticed lately. Single Virgoans are about to receive an interesting proposal that could be just what is needed to make life less monotonous. As if this weren't enough excitement, there are also going to be some changes on the work front. Don't pounce on the first offer that comes your way, as others are bound to follow before the month is out.



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Governor deserves applause

As anyone living in Phuket well knows, the property industry has blossomed into a mainstay of the island's economy, exceeded only by tourism. Yet every time a high-profile investigation team descends on the island, it shakes the industry – and therefore the entire island's economy – to its foundations.

It was therefore most refreshing to see Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura's comments to *The Nation* and the *Gazette*, complaining about "irresponsible" statements "with no information or evidence" to back them up.

Few would dispute that prosecution is essential when private individuals conspire with government officials to pull off crooked land deals. In times gone by, however, cases of encroachment on state land, "flying *SorKor 1*" titles and other such criminal activities were dealt with quietly and sensibly.

This has all changed. The government crest atop the *Chanote* has been devalued, slipping from a symbol of trust to a symbol of doubt, and it is now being suggested that not only the perpetrators of the crime be punished, but also the victims.

In Phuket, the three-ring circus starring investigators of every stripe flying around in helicopters, parading suspects and making grandiose off-the-cuff pronouncements may have made for dramatic headlines.

But it has done (and continues to do) severe damage to thousands of innocent people – landowners, developers, home buyers, building-supply companies and gardeners, to name but a few.

It has also caused many potential investors put their money back in their wallets until they feel less nervous about the hidden risks of investing in Phuket or anywhere else in Thailand.

The Governor has stated that he will file a complaint with Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra against the powerful head of the Crime Suppression Division, Pol Maj Gen Kosin Hintao.

This is a brave step, especially in the face of what many people believe to be a politically-driven pogrom aimed at damaging the Democrats in the run-up to next year's general election.

It is also a very unusual step for a career civil servant to take. Provincial governors, with a couple of exceptions, are all appointed by the central government. Very rarely do they come from the province they preside over. They have little incentive to stick their necks out on behalf of local people.

Yet this, it seems, is what Gov Udomsak is doing. For this he deserves the province's applause, thanks and unbounded admiration.

– The Editor

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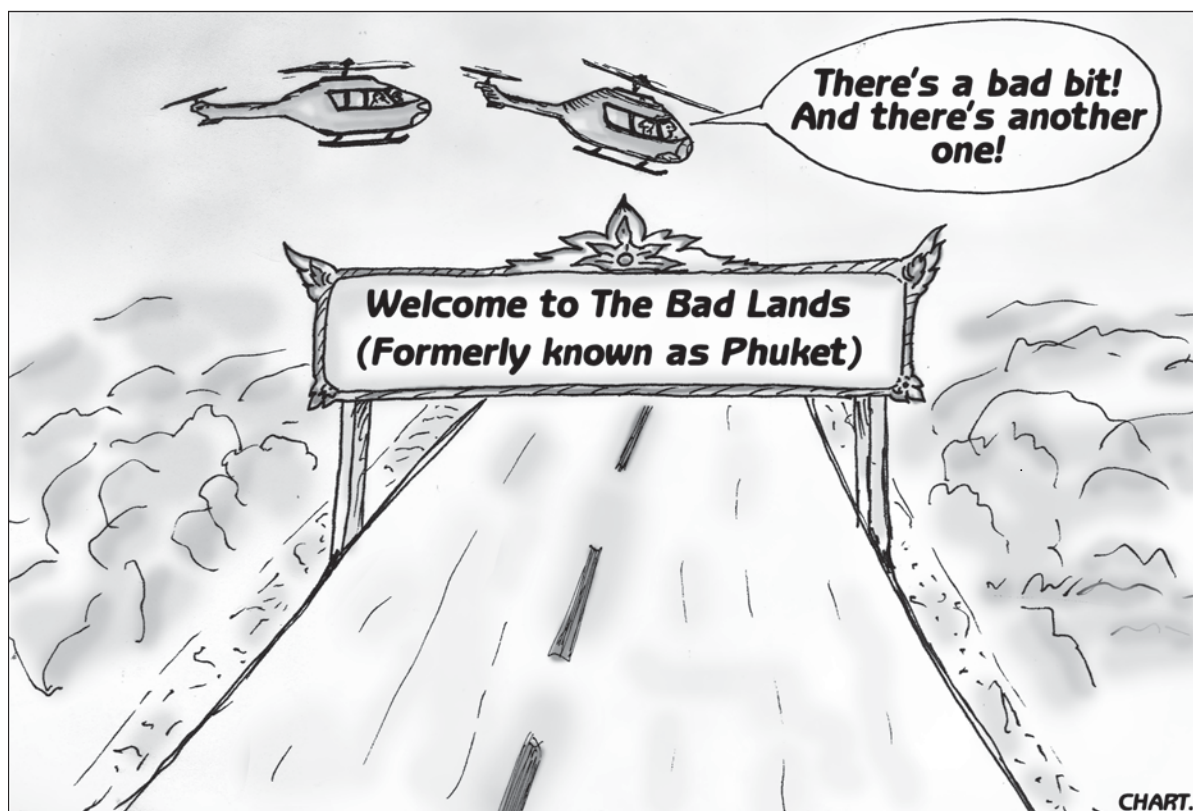
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Letters

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

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

Just a little local mistake? Hardly

So far, officials investigating land abuses in Phuket have received 357 complaints about the unlawful issue of land titles in Phuket and have had a lot of disputed plots of land to inspect.

Criminal charges have been laid in seven cases against government officials and other implicated people.

Someone expressed a remarkable opinion (*The Nation*, August 21) that, "The latest proposal by [Agricultural Land Reform Office (Alro)] Secretary-General that the [central] government should buy back land from property speculators and influential figures who have obtained land unlawfully is an unspeakably disturbing suggestion ... The proposal is a manifestation of the total failure by the authorities to address unlawful land-title issuance and the management of a sound land-reform policy..."

"In fact, in some southern provinces, even though the authorities fully realized the unlawful ownership of several plots of land, they continued to allow these ineligible landholders to reap the benefits of their crime."

Recently, the Phuket Alro cancelled *SorPorKor 4-01* papers on seven pieces of land, after it was revealed that the plots were already covered by *SorKor 1* documents.

The Chief of the Phuket Alro, when asked how the occupiers had managed to get two sets of papers for one piece of land, responded, "It was just a little mistake." (*Gazette*, July 23).

Injured third parties, who have acted in good faith, along

with the general public, will undoubtedly have a different view, something along the lines of, "Little mistake? No! It was a mega-mistake, belittled."

Sura Pattanaprachaya
Phuket

You can't see the wood, but the sea

The long line of fir trees between Rawai Beach and the road, where the restaurants used to be, are currently being trimmed.

Strangely, the trees right at the end of the beach road – the last 30 meters or so before the turning to Laem Phromthep – have been lopped by at least half, to about 15 meters in height.

Coincidentally, this now gives a new house being erected nearby a nice view of the bay. How convenient.

Tree Hugger
Chalong

Unreality TV

Why does Thai television mask out smoking on television programs? Does the government really believe that viewers won't know the actor is smoking?

There is smoke visible on the screen when the pixellation is taken away. Perhaps providing education on the ill-effects of smoking would be a better approach?

Also, why is it acceptable to show women being beaten on television, as happens in Thai soaps daily? I feel that airing this type of activity on television is a lot more harmful to people than smoking.

Censorship Priorities
Phuket

Not fair to disturb this heaven on earth

I visited Patong in July and found Phuket – with its rich culture and traditions – to be heaven on earth. The island obliges a person to respect its beauty and innocence of things Western, which makes it extra-special.

As someone from a mixed background – I am half Jordanian, half Russian and have lived in Germany and the USA – I oppose the idea of a British-style funfair in Rawai (*Gazette*, September 25), because it will detract from the sense of being removed from the West and will give *farang* a green light to import their ideas into Phuket.

A British funfair is a part of British culture that is lacking in taste and richness. It is based on having fun spending money, causing noise pollution and cost and strain on the local government, who have to make sure that it is always clean and doesn't consume too much electricity.

This letter comes from the heart and out of concern about not wanting bad Western culture – based on pure consumption and money-spending – to find its way slowly into Thai culture.

Throughout history, wherever British and American people have settled, they have brought bad influences to the locals and introduced pollution in all forms without respecting the local environment. Bringing modernization is different from bringing Western culture.

I hope this letter will influence the people who will make the decisions. The funfair should not be approved.

Zeid Malhas

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.

Planning the key to Phuket's future

I have been to Phuket many times for work, and it seems to me that the city is starting to suffer from what has been called the "doughnut effect", whereby a ring of shopping centers develops around a town or city center, creating an empty "hole" in the middle.

An example of the doughnut effect is Washington DC in the US. In the daytime, it is busy because of all the people who work there, but in the evening all the workers leave the city center and go home. When the downtown area is so quiet, that's when crime becomes a problem.

Without proper planning, "ring" development could cause many problems in Phuket. An obvious one is traffic congestion downtown. Phuket should start looking into developing a mass transit system; this could help solve the traffic problems, as most vehicles on the island are privately owned.

Another potential problem is the effect these big shopping centers could have on the lives and livelihoods of the small shopkeepers and traders inside the "hole".

Yet another problem is the effect this has on the environment, such as the amount of garbage produced every day. There has to be some kind of plan to deal with that. The government can't stop the private sector from growing or the city from developing, but we have to work out how we are going to solve the problems these cause.

I believe Phuket will not decline as, say, Detroit in the US has, because of Phuket's architecture and atmosphere, and the

Urban designer Tranai Tannagamtrong, 37, is the Managing Director of town planning consultancy ASIS+XS.S Co Ltd in Bangkok.

He has two master's degrees from the US, one in architecture and urban design from Cornell University, in New York, and one in architecture from the University of Colorado (Denver).

K. Tranai has taught at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning in New York, and worked as an architect for Kaplan McLaughlin Diaz in San Francisco and Coop Himmelblau in Vienna, Austria. In March, he spoke at the *Gazette*-sponsored seminar on zoning in Phuket.

Here he explains what he foresees as the potential consequences of Phuket's rapid development if planning and the authority to deal with problems locally are not given prominence in determining the island's future.

nature of its people. If businesses here move in the right direction, the city would not just survive, it would thrive.

The next parts of Phuket likely to experience major development are Chao Fa West Rd and Ao Phuket (off Saphan Hin), where the central government wants to build the International Convention and Exhibition Center (ICEC). Developing either of these will take Phuket one step closer to being a Doughnut Town.

Think about it: there are the supercenters on the west side of the city, and Ao Phuket to the east. To the south, there is Chalong and to the north, Rang Hill. It's already like a big doughnut around downtown.

The roads in the city center are very narrow, and they have to cope with a lot of traffic. It is unlikely that people will change

their lifestyles and walk or cycle more, so Phuket should really be looking to develop an effective mass transit system.

If there is development closer to the airport or in Mai Khao, would it benefit Phuket City, or would it benefit Phang Nga, in particular Khao Lak? I suspect the latter. Abroad, development around an airport generally creates a "sub-center".

Someone should be asking the government some important questions about private investment, such as whether there is sufficient infrastructure to support these developments, or what long-term effect they will have on the future of Phuket.

I doubt that downtown Phuket City will deteriorate too much in the near future, but it could happen over the next 20 years, if more is not done to pre-

FIRST PERSON



serve it and to regulate development around it.

If I had a business in downtown Phuket, I would try to offer something that isn't available in the suburban malls, because any shop that sells the same merchandise as is available at the malls will die. The key is to provide something that the malls don't.

Businesspeople downtown have to work together to adapt their businesses to meet the challenge of out-of-town development. Perhaps they could make downtown into a "living museum", where tourists could learn about life in old Phuket.

There are five areas that could be developed in Phuket. The first would be Thalang and the Heroines Monument, the oldest parts of Phuket; the second would be downtown Phuket City; and the third would be "beach

towns" at each of the tourist beaches.

The fourth would be an "airport town", near the airport, and the fifth could be a "government town", an administrative center containing all the local offices of central and local government.

Each "town" should have its own budget and the authority to tackle local problems, such as traffic jams. The central government has a policy of balancing jobs and residential development. We should have the same in each "town".

I don't think that building more and bigger roads is necessarily a good idea: it will change the character of many areas, which should be preserved.

Enlarging roads won't ease traffic problems: look at Bangkok. People drive cars now for reasons such as social status, and attitudes like that are difficult to change. But we can make some roads more pedestrian- or bicycle-friendly. That's my dream, but then I am part of the new urban generation.

We have to discuss Phuket together, not to complain about what has happened or is happening, but to plan what will happen in the future – we should be united. Many people have moved from other provinces to live in Phuket, and many seem to think, "I'm from Bangkok; I will do whatever I want to do here and who cares about anything else?"

But I have seen the number of foreigners who live here, who love the island and are really concerned about what the government has planned for Phuket, especially the environment.

Should I carry my passport at all times?

It was recently reported in the Thai national newspapers that on August 16, police raided a Bangkok nightclub popular with foreigners, tested more than 300 people for drugs, and then fined many for not carrying their passports.

They prevented customers from leaving the venue and administered urine tests on 373 people.

After failing to find anyone testing positive for drugs, the police rounded up 104 "criminals" and took them to the police station for not having their passports with them.

In most countries police advise tourists to keep their valuables and passports in a hotel safe and not to leave them on the beach while swimming. But not having your passport with you at all times is a criminal offence in Thailand, so what should I do when I go to the beach for a swim?

Do the Tourist Police recommend that visitors to Thailand leave their passports on the beach while swimming? Or take the

passport for a swim as well? Or perhaps not swim at all when in Thailand?

Thomas Jefferson

Pol Lt Col Panudej Sookwong, Superintendent of the Phuket Tourist Police, replies:

The law here is that all foreigners must have their passports on hand when the police ask for them. Foreigners being in possession of their passports is similar to Thai people having identity cards – they must keep their ID cards with them for when police want to check the holder's identity.

However, if you are worried about losing your passport you can make a photocopy and carry that instead. At present we have problems in this country with international criminals, so inspection of passports is essential for safety and security reasons.

When urine tests are conducted in Bangkok it is normal to check passports. I believe that many foreigners are happy to cooperate because they understand that we are serious about preventing drug use.

When police check for passports and people don't have them, they must pay a fine.

How do we register our foreign marriage in Thailand?

My wife is a Thai national and we married in Australia under Australian law. She currently resides in Australia on a "spouse temporary visa". We will be returning to Thailand very soon and would like to register our marriage at the local District Office so her ID card and passport can be changed.

What procedure and paperwork will be required to do this? Will the documents required need to be translated into Thai?

Colin Davis

Karnjana Hongboonyanurak, Registration Officer at Phuket City District Office, replies:

The Thai embassy in Aus-

tralia must verify that your marriage documents are genuine and were issued legally in Australia. The documents must then be translated into Thai.

The embassy may be able to do the translation, but if it cannot, you can have the documents translated when you return to Thailand, although the transla-

tion must be checked and approved by the Consular Affairs Department of the Foreign Ministry.

Your wife must bring the marriage documents, her ID card and house registration papers with her when she comes to register the marriage at the district office.

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

How can terrorists have a website?

How can terrorists have websites that no one can trace? The authorities can listen to your mobile phone calls, they can read your email, they can spy on you from satellites at hundreds of kilometers above the Earth, but they can't find a website? How could that be possible? To have a website you have to have a service provider. If your website is a secret, who would know about it? So why can't the authorities track down these killers? Amazing.

SR, Kamala.

It is amazing, even horrifying. Here's how the system works, and how the cowards get away with it.

Once upon a time, a company called Internic registered every domain name. Internic's primary responsibility was to make sure no two organizations registered the same domain name.

Internic also became an arbiter in deciding whether applicants "deserved" to have a name: the site mickeymouse.com, for example, could be claimed only by Disney.

Over the past decade, Internic's monopoly has disappeared, with hundreds of registration companies now in the business. Today you can register a domain name online for less than 250 baht, and the domain will be available almost immediately. Although you're required to provide a contact name and mailing address, for all practical purposes the address could be anywhere at all.

Once a person or organization has a domain name, they can either connect a computer directly to the Internet or they can hire a company to host their domain. Few website hosting com-



Most terrorist videos or images on the Internet come from videos delivered anonymously to news organizations or websites, such as aljazeera.net, which last month included a download link to the video showing the beheading of American Eugene Armstrong.

COMPUTER Q&A

By Woody Leonhard

panies tolerate anything even remotely like promoting the acts of terrorists. If a terrorist organization listed their domain with a reputable hosting company, they'd be pulled down so fast it'd make your teeth rattle.

However, if a terrorist group has its own server directly connected to the Internet, the process of pulling them off the ether is far more complicated. In most cases it's very difficult to figure out where the server is physically located. While it's technically possible to "pull the plug" on a domain and take it off the Internet, in much the same way that the telephone company can disconnect your service, there's no single Internet governing body that I'm aware of that routinely

tackles the question of how and when to take offenders off the Internet.

Most terrorist videos or images you see on TV or snapped in newspapers don't come from terrorist websites. They usually come from either videotapes delivered anonymously to various news organizations or from news websites, frequently those run by television stations in the Middle East.

Government authorities and journalists' organizations all over the world abhor and condemn the actions and their graphic images, but the images are, without any doubt, "news". I'm not aware of any news organization that's been pulled off the Internet for running graphically violent news video.

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

Raising Hellé in a racing car

Miranda Seymour's *The Bugatti Queen* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 2002, 301pp) – subtitled *In Search of a French Racing Legend* – is the fascinating story of Hellé Nice.

A high-living Frenchwoman famous in the 1920s and '30s, Hellé died in poverty and obscurity in 1984 and she might well have been lost to history except for the quirks of fate that set Seymour on her trail.

There are huge gaps in the story, but Seymour unabashedly fills them with conjecture. Born Hélène Delange in 1900, the daughter of

She lived lavishly, traveling widely – Spain, Italy, Germany, Morocco, the US – and tearing through lovers, many of them fellow racers who would meet horrible deaths.

Hellé kept smiling. Most of the 73 photos in the book show her posing beside her race car in helmet and overalls, her face blackened with exhaust, head thrown back with a grin.

On July 12, 1936, on the final lap of the Sao Paulo Grand Prix, she crashed into a mob of spectators. She was in a coma for three days. Three months later, she returned to Europe and, in May 1937,

she was back driving race cars.

But the German invasion of France put an end to racing. Seymour can find no trace of Hellé during the war years, except for the fact she moved from Paris in the autumn of 1943 to a luxury villa in Nice with her lover, a young Swiss mechanic named Armando Binelli. What did she do during the war?

Seymour can provide no answer. But at a party for race car drivers on the eve of the 1949 Monte Carlo Rally, Hellé was confronted by driver Louis Chiron, who loudly accused her of having been a Gestapo agent.

"I was so staggered to hear myself being called an agent that I simply didn't know what to say. I didn't even react," Hellé would recall.

It was the end of her racing career. Defrauded and deserted by her lover, she sank into poverty, eking out a miserable, lonely existence for nearly 40 years in a slum in Nice. When she died, her newspaper clippings, photos and letters disappeared.

Until, that is, one of her cuttings books turned up in a sale in an orchard near St Tropez, where it was seen by a friend of Seymour's. It took Seymour a while to track down this book, and a second collection.

These led her to Nice, where she traced the daughter of the landlord of the now-condemned house where Hellé had spent her last years – and who had a trunk of letters, photographs and papers about her.

"When I walked through her door she said, 'All these years I've been waiting for a biographer to come and find me.' It was one of the most wonderful moments of my life," Seymour told Australia's ABC radio in May.

Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

a small-town postmaster, Hellé ran off to Paris in her late teens, where her flashing smile and lithe body were soon appearing on nude postcards and in cabaret dance routines.

Hellé had an astounding number of lovers and she kept track of her conquests in a little black book. She was also a fearless Alpine mountaineer and skier and it was an accident on the slopes that turned her from a career as a nude dancer to an absurdly dangerous one as a racing car driver.

Having injured her knee, Hellé went to work for race car designer Ettore Bugatti. She soon adapted herself to the rigors of the trade.

"Preparations were intensive and exhausting," Seymour writes, "She needed exercises to strengthen her torso, waist and shoulders for full control of the wheel, to harden her thighs and calves for braking and to toughen her palms."

Nonetheless, old nocturnal habits were hard to break. Hellé turned up for her first Grand Prix after a night of dancing: "A green-eyed boy, a friend of one of the costume-makers at the casino, had stayed the night. A mixture of morphine, champagne and sex had left her wanting to crawl into a coalhole when she woke up ... She pulled her white beret down over her ears, lit a cigarette, stubbed it out. Her hands, she noticed, were shaking."

Hellé placed 15th in that race but won her next four. Along with a handful of other women, she was soon competing with the best male racers in the world. With her dyed blond hair and photogenic smile, she was worth a fortune in publicity for the Bugatti company and she featured in newsreels and advertisements and on front pages.

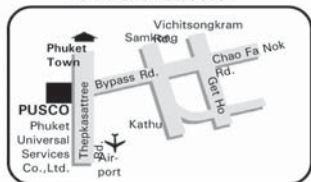


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Cheap air fares batter bus companies

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: There has been a dramatic fall in the number of people using long-distance bus services due to the availability of cheap airfares.

Travelers who previously used VIP buses are now taking advantage of the cheap flights being offered by an increasing number of airlines, and enjoying much shorter traveling times.

A one-way bus ticket from Phuket to Bangkok costs 755 baht, while the same journey by air may cost as little as 300 baht. Even the full air fare on budget airlines is around 1,300 baht, just 545 baht more than the bus ticket costs. And whereas the bus may take as long as eight hours to get to Bangkok, an aircraft makes the

trip in around one hour.

Kulwadee Anuntakool, of Phuket Central Tour Co Ltd, said, "We've had a 50% drop in customers compared with this time last year. Previously, airlines catered only for high-end customers, while [long-distance] buses catered for those who couldn't afford airfares.

"But when there is only a small price difference, people opt for air travel, because it's more convenient and saves time.

"Until recently we had three buses serving Bangkok from here, now we have two, and even those are not full. We couldn't operate with just one bus because it wouldn't be profitable."

K. Kulwadee said she would like to see the government help the bus companies, perhaps

with some form of subsidy.

"The prices we charge are not much above our costs, so margins are small. We will probably increase the frequency of our 36-seater buses with tickets priced at 486 baht," she explained.

Somsak Piromsawek, Manager of Phuket Travel Service Co Ltd said, "The number of people using VIP-standard buses has fallen by about 10% since April, compared with the same period last year.

"Last year, 24-seat VIP buses were traveling full, but at present there are four to six unsold seats each day. But I believe the Department of Land Transport is going to launch a new bus policy which will allow us to run bigger buses with more and big-

ger seats, and at a lower price."

Sirapat Pinthong, Senior Ticket Reservations Officer of Orient Thai Airlines (Phuket) said, "Our flights are full nearly every day and our sales strategy is to sell every seat at the same price. We launched a fare of 1,150 baht for a one-way ticket to Bangkok in April. Our company's target market is business travelers, but many people have switched from bus travel to flying."

Pakorn Panthawi, Marketing and Distribution Director of Thai AirAsia, denied that his airline had specifically targeted bus users, but agreed that this market segment was "definitely benefiting" from cheap air fares.

"In the seven months from February to September, more than 600,000 passengers used our

flights between Phuket and Bangkok. Our strategy is to continue offering low-cost fares and we will be increasing the number of destinations served."

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO) said that there was no plan to aid the bus companies.

"The PPTO can't do anything about this situation," he said. "Bus operators all over the country have been affected – the [low-cost] airlines don't just fly to Phuket.

"We can make requests to Bangkok on behalf of the bus industry, but first the operators have to come to us and suggest changes in the regulations. To date, we haven't received any complaints from them."

ON THE MOVE

Chia Ai Lian, of Singapore, has been appointed General Manager



and Director of Sales & Marketing for Treetops Arasia. She has 18 years' experience in the hospitality industry.

Her previous position was as Director of Sales, Resorts, for Hilton Worldwide Resorts Asia, based in Singapore, and overseeing sales and marketing for the Middle East and Asia-Pacific.

Lin Newton, 43, from Australia, has been appointed Manager



of Club Asia Fitness, a unit of Asian Wind Co. A business college graduate, Ms Newton has had a diverse career spanning 22 years, working predominantly in administration or guest contact areas of the fitness and service industries. She holds internationally accredited certification as a personal trainer.

Volker Kallenberg, from Germany, has been appointed Executive Pastry Chef at JW Marriott



Phuket Resort and Spa. Mr Kallenberg has won four awards since 1991

for his excellence in pastry craftsmanship. He started his career in Europe, working in Germany, Britain and Switzerland. Before moving to Thailand, he worked at the Ritz Carlton Hotel, Dubai, as Head Pastry Chef.

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

Choosing an investment that fits

Readers of this column often ask me, "What's your favorite investment?" Unfortunately, there is no quick answer. There are a variety of investments I strongly recommend but, as always, one's choice depends on a variety of factors.

Obviously, an investment suitable for a 35-year-old who is not intending to retire for 20 years will be different from one for someone aged 60, who has retired with limited means.

Investment planning is highly personal. For example, I have clients who are interested in investing only in Asia. They view this part of the world as having the highest potential for economic growth and want to profit from it.

I also have clients who have come to Phuket to retire and want their income or capital gains to accrue from more traditional sources based in US dollars, sterling or euros. My recommendations therefore vary considerably to fit individual needs.

I'm often asked about investing in Thailand. Investment here is normally limited to two areas: property and the Thai stockmarket on the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET).

I have covered property before and my main advice here is to do a lot of research about the legal difficulties involved and to understand the variety of land titles before even considering buying property. Also, will the property be held in a company, in the name of a Thai or on a 30-year lease? These issues require considerable thought.

When it comes to placing any asset in another person's name there is an old saying, "I once had money and a friend. I lent my money to my friend and now I have neither." Obviously, where a marriage exists between a foreigner and a Thai the situation is different, but the end result may be the same.

The 30-year-lease option, I believe, is not an investment, because the full value of the property is not realizable. It's only really an option when the party entering into the lease intends to remain in the property for their lifetime – or 30 years. The problem with this approach is that life often throws us curveballs and the future can turn out to be very different from what we expected.

Investing in the Thai stockmarket is another popular option and the best approach here is to simply "buy the SET index". Siam Commercial Bank offer a SET index fund which has very modest buying and selling costs, and can be bought directly through most branches of the bank at the bank's investment desk or through a stockbroker.

The bank requires a minimum investment of 100,000 baht, and a stockbroker is unlikely to want to deal in amounts of less than a million baht. This investment has its attractions and the SET index can be viewed live on Thai TV channels or on CNBC.

The advantage of using a stockbroker is that Siam Commercial Bank's SET Index Fund is an exchange-traded fund and by watching the movement of the SET Index, one can simply telephone the stockbroker with orders to buy or sell. It's the ultimate in couch-potato investing. The alternative of using the bank requires visiting the branch in person to give instructions.

Investment in the Thai stockmarket requires a "wealth warning": You should be aware that its value can rise or fall. This type of investment requires an active, flexible approach and the concept of "buy and hold" is not

MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson



recommended. For example, an investment in the SET 10 years ago would be worth less than half of its original value today.

For those interested in Asian investment on a broader scale, using a mutual fund/unit trust is still recommended, as buying individual shares involves higher risk. Standard & Poors commissioned research on corporate disclosure by Asian companies some months ago and the results, including those for many for Thai companies, indicated that there is, shall we say, room for improvement.

The safest investment route in Asia is via the "cocktail approach", whereby the fund manager is able to choose investments from a wide range of countries. The choice available is huge but be careful to avoid comparisons where results are quoted only on, say, a one-year, three-year or five-year basis. These can hide high volatility. A far better comparison is to study performance graphs.

When making decisions on Asian investment one always has to consider whether or not to include Japan. Should you select a fund that includes Japan as part of the investment, you will generally find that Japanese holdings will form a significant part of the total invested. This is simply because Japan, as the world's second-largest economy and stockmarket, will feature significantly on any index that the fund manager is legally required to relate to, although in practice the weightings may differ.

One can include or exclude Japan, even if using the same fund management group. If Japan is an attractive investment market there is a wide choice of funds that deal solely with that market.

I will cover more investment options next week.

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.



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Youngster from Rawai plans to take motocross world by storm

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: Riding a big motorbike at speed in competition is a great challenge, requiring skill and endurance. It's difficult enough when the rider is big and strong, but with enough heart, even a little guy can make a mark.

Phuket-born Surapan Jandee is 11 years old and lives in Rawai. He's a young motocross rider who has done very well at 80cc-junior level, placing second, third and sixth in recent competitions.

His interest in the sport began when his father, Sompon Jandee, took him to see motocross racing in Phuket. When K. Sompon saw that his son enjoyed the sport he asked him if he would like to try it. Surapan started riding motocross when he was just nine years old and began racing a year later.

"Motocross riders must be strong in mind and body and need to practice regularly," K. Sompon said. "Surapan started in 65cc motocross. He could already ride a bicycle and it took him only five days to learn to ride the motorbike. We supported his enthusiasm and sent him to Bangkok for training and experience. It was also a good way for him to get to know people in the sport."

"Bangkok is the center for motocross riders in Thailand. He may be the best in Phuket, but he could not compete at the same level as riders in Bangkok. Currently, he would rank about sixth or seventh there."

"Early this year I hired a coach and former motocross champion from Bangkok to teach him how to ride properly."



Surapan Jandee: 'Riding a big bike is difficult, but it's great fun.'

"Then I started to teach him myself. He has also learned by watching other riders, though he still lacks the experience required to win big competitions. His small size is a disadvantage, making it difficult for him to control a big bike."

Surapan's day starts early in the morning with a 3km run to build up his strength. "I take the motorbike and follow him," K. Sompon said. "After homework, he can practice riding for an hour on weekdays and two hours a day on weekends."

Surapan says his favorite rider is Arnon Thepanich, the Thai champion in grade-B motocross. "He's a 15 year-old from Saraburi who has great technique and never gets tired. He's my role model," he said.

Surapan has suffered a broken hand and has also been knocked unconscious in training, but you will never see tears in his eyes.

"I get hurt sometimes, but men don't cry. I enjoy it so much and it's great fun," he says.

K. Sompon added, "It was just an accident and not life-threatening. Motocross is much safer than riding a bike on the road. The riders are better and safer drivers."

"Also, I believe that young people who are involved in

sport are more family-oriented and avoid bad influences and drugs."

Surapan says he wants to become a motocross professional but his father feels that it's better to leave that to the future.

K. Sompon said, "I'll wait until he reaches the age of 14 or so, because when he's 15 he will have to ride a bigger 125cc bike. If he's too small, he may not be able to ride a bike of that size."

Of his son's ambitions Sompon said, "Surapan is brave, but can be hot-tempered. Motocross riders need to have cool heads and strong concentration to win."

Surapan himself says, "Riding a big bike is difficult, but it's great fun and I have made so many new friends."

Local athletes benefit from national stars

PHUKET CITY: A total of 192 budding sports stars had a chance to benefit from the skills and experiences of some of Thailand's best athletes during four days of training sessions funded by Phuket City Municipality.

National coaches or national team members led training sessions in volleyball, football, sepak takraw and athletics at Saphan Hin Sports Complex and Surakul stadium between September 21 and 25.

The current coach of the Thai national women's volleyball team, Nattapon Srisamutnak, led the volleyball training, while the young footballers were trained by former Thai national player Sumet Akarapong.

Warrin Khaowthong, of Phuket Youth Center, said, "This is the fourth year that we have arranged such training."

"The results of this annual training can be seen in the success of local athletes."

K. Warrin added that Phuket's young athletes are currently preparing for the Regional Municipality Sport tournament, due to take place in Trang between October 22 and 28.

PATONG DARTS

PATONG: Play on September 21 saw six 3-0 sweeps and sorted out some of the congestion at the top of the league table, with Off Shore breaking away from the pack by one point thanks to a solid 8-1 rout of Champs. Happy Days were in good form too, with Oggie, Mutt and the boys dishing out a 7-2 drubbing of Piccadilly.

Standings as of September 21: Off Shore (16pts), Amigos (15), Happy Days (15), Nag's Head (15), In-Between (14), Didi's (13), Piccadilly (12), Champs (12), Two Black Sheep (9), Shakers (7), Fat Boy Saloon (3), Valhalla (1).

October 5 fixtures: Amigos v Nag's Head; Fat Boy Saloon v 2 Black Sheep; Happy Days v Shakers; Off Shore v Didi's; Piccadilly v In-Between; Valhalla v Champs.

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Pongsaklek title fight called off

PHUKET CITY: WBC world flyweight champion Pongsaklek Wonjongkam's October 8 title defense against 15th-ranked challenger Carlos Bouchan was called off after the Mexican challenger suffered a training injury.

The Asian Boxing Council (ABC), an affiliate of the WBC, has instead organized a non-title fight on the same date, featuring Pongsaklek against Randy Manabat of the Philippines.

On the same fight card, to take place at Phuket Arcadia Hilton Hotel, will be an ABC championship bout between Thai pugilists Denburapha Twin-special and Panomrunglek Kratingdaenggym, both 112-pounders, and a WBC Youth Championship encounter pitting 105-pounders Oledong Kratingdaeng-

gym and Jay Herla, also of the Philippines. Admission to the event, which starts at 3.45 pm, is free.

ABC President Pol Gen Kovid Bhakdibhum told the *Gazette* that WBC rules precluded a title defense for Pongsaklek on October 8. "This will be a warm-up fight to get him ready for his next big title defense, which will take place in Japan on January 3," he said.

Japanese boxing promoter Akihiko Honda, who is expected to attend part of the five-day WBC Annual Convention, will announce Pongsaklek's next opponent at that time.

The convention, to take place at the Phuket Arcadia Hilton Hotel from October 4 to 9, now has more than 500 con-

firmed attendees – among them controversial American slugger Mike Tyson and retired heavy-weight champion Lennox Lewis. Thai boxing promoters Weerapon Nakornluang and Sirimongkon Singmanasak are also expected to attend.

Conventioners will discuss and vote on ratings, mandatory title defenses, medical and safety issues and much more. Because it is open to the public, the convention represents an unprecedented opportunity for island residents to witness the inner workings of one of prize-fighting's largest sanctioning bodies.

Sharing the spotlight will be Deputy Prime Minister Suwat Liptapanlop, who has been invited to preside over the opening.

Fifa praises Phuket efforts

PHUKET CITY: Fifa officials are satisfied with Phuket's preparations to host matches in the Women's Under-19 World Soccer Championships in November.

Among the officials who visited Surakul Stadium for an inspection tour on September 25 were Fifa Events Manager Rhiannon Collins, Chief Media Officer John Schumacher and Asean Football Federation Technical Director Windsor John.

Mr Schumacher said he was confident Phuket would host five Group C matches, although its selection could only be announced following the next Fifa meeting on the issue. Other group matches will be played in Chiang Mai and Bangkok, with the final rounds being played in Bangkok.

Giving credit to the Deputy Chairman of the Phuket Sports

SCHEDULE OF MATCHES

South Korea vs USA	Nov 11, 5.00 pm
Russia vs Spain	Nov 11, 7.45 pm
USA vs Russia	Nov 14, 5.00 pm
Spain vs South Korea	Nov 14, 7.45 pm
USA vs Spain	Nov 18, 5.00 pm

Association, Eam Thavornvongwongse, and the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization, Mr Schumacher described the progress made on the stadium since the last Fifa visit in June as "tremendous" and said the Fifa officials were impressed by the quality of the work.

He said the newly-installed lighting was up to Fifa standards and that the new seating was also high quality.

He also expressed satisfaction with ongoing work on building media facilities, a VIP lounge and roofing to cover sections of the grandstand.

"I have no doubt that everything will be ready in time. We are looking forward to some very exciting matches." The entry fee for matches will be just 20 baht.



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"...Enjoy The Game of Life..."

Sad to say, this is one automobile you will almost certainly never see in Phuket; probably not even in Bangkok. For a start it is available only with left-hand drive. It is also ridiculously expensive.

That said, it is one of the most amazing cars to be launched in recent years.

The machine in question is the magnificent Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren, a true supercar, built in England by the world-famous F1 team in partnership with its 40% owner and Grand Prix partner, DaimlerChrysler.

Launched at the end of 2003, the SLR McLaren is now in full production at McLaren's new technology center in the south of England, though the engine and running gear come mainly from Germany.

Designed by McLaren's Gordon Murray, who was responsible for the previous McLaren supercar, as well as the championship-winning Brabham of Nelson Piquet, the SLR has been developed jointly by McLaren and Mercedes-Benz.

Powered by a supercharged 5.5-liter V8, the SLR is good for a top speed of around 330kmh and will reach 100kmh from a standstill in a neck-straining 3.8 seconds. The AMG-developed V8 engine produces a staggering 626bhp (460kW), together with a maximum-torque figure of 780 Newton-meters. At just 1,500 rpm the motor is pushing upwards of 600Nm.

But only part of the performance of the SLR is due to the remarkable engine. The lightweight carbon-fiber body minimizes the overall weight, while contributing immensely to the safety of one of the quickest cars on the planet.

The link between this SLR McLaren and the legendary SLR of the mid-'50s is sufficient to reminisce about a bygone era. Juan Manuel Fangio, Stirling



TO THE BATMOBILE!

Moss, Karl Kling – just three of the men who wrote motor-racing history – helped make the Mercedes-Benz 300 SLR one of the most successful sports racing cars of all time.

With its eight-cylinder, 2,982cc engine developing up to 310bhp, the Silver Arrow, as it was dubbed, was capable of a maximum speed in excess of

300kmh – enough to power it to glory in all the top road races of 1955. The Mille Miglia, Targa Florio, Tourist Trophy, Eifelrennen and the Swedish Grand Prix – the 300 SLR won them all.

Sadly, the 300 SLR never made it into production, Mercedes-Benz feeling that the economic climate was not ready for such an outstanding machine. To further stress the historic connection, the latest McLaren SLR has upward-opening gull-wing doors, just as the original did back in the '50s, although the old ones were aluminum, while the new ones are carbon fiber.

To aid control at high speed,



By Jeff Heselwood

the body shape has been developed in a wind tunnel, while there is a six-channel rear diffuser to bond it to the road. Stopping is not a problem either, as the SLR features large fi-

ber-reinforced ceramic disc brakes all round.

Stopping is also aided by an adaptable spoiler – known as an airbrake – in the lid of the trunk.

If the driver presses heavily on the brake pedal, the rear spoiler rises to an angle of 65°, boosting the braking effect by producing greater aerodynamic drag. When braking from high speeds, it also adds to the stability of the SLR.

Inside, the SLR is a mix of polished aluminum, carbon fiber and high-quality leather. The steering wheel, too, is modeled on that of an F1 car with a variety of buttons and switches, including a manual-shift mode for the five-speed automatic transmission. The price for this beautiful machine, if you can find one, is in the region of 27 million baht.

It's a remarkable car and surely one of the classics of our time. And there is a link, however tenuous, with Thailand. McLaren's major F1 rivals, the dominant Ferraris of Michael Schumacher and Rubens Barrichello were designed by South African Rory Byrne, and he has a home in the Kingdom.

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

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Guest chef

By Jenna Wise

About three kilometers south of Patong Beach, The Merlin Beach Resort has a well-deserved reputation for serving food of a consistently high quality.

"Our four restaurants are always busy," says Group Executive Chef Robert Riedo. "Even previous hotel guests who have decided to stay in another part of the island on a return visit often come back to our hotel to enjoy a meal."

"We have 72 people working in the kitchens here, preparing food for around 500 hotel guests in high season. We also hold a lot of private functions for large groups."

Since embarking on his culinary career, Robert has worked in some 25 hotels. He has been based in Southeast Asia since 1983, when he joined the Dusit Thani in Bangkok.

He came to the Merlin Beach Resort three months ago and was immediately impressed by the high level of teamwork in the kitchens.

"We have a winning combination here," he explains, "People pulling together to serve meals prepared with the freshest ingredients obtainable."



Robert Riedo (above), Group Executive Chef of the Merlin Beach Resort, and his Pan Fried Scallops on Grilled Zucchini with Warm Vegetable Vinaigrette (top), and Parma Ham and Greek Salad with Mosaic Fingers (right).



Salt and pepper to taste;
1 ml lime juice;
200 ml salad dressing of your choice.

For the Mosaic fingers:

400g soft cream cheese;
100g tomato pesto;
100g green pesto;
500g white bread slices, lightly toasted.

Method:

To prepare the mosaic fingers, first remove the crusts from the bread. Set aside one in five slices to use as a top layer.

Blend the tomato pesto with half of the cream cheese and spread on half of the remaining bread slices; blend the green pesto with the remainder of the cream cheese and spread on the other half of the remaining bread slices.

Stack four bread slices on top of one another, alternating a red layer with a green layer, and finish with an "unspread" top layer slice. Then cut each stack into finger-sized strips.

Wash the lettuce and arrange on plates. Mix the feta cheese cubes, cucumber, onion rings, cherry tomato halves, parsley and olives well together with the salt, pepper, lime juice and dressing.

Spoon this mixture on top of the lettuce and arrange the asparagus tips and curls of Parma ham on top. Decorate with the bell pepper strips. Place the mosaic fingers in separate bowls and serve.

Pan Fried Scallops on Grilled Zucchini with Warm Vegetable Vinaigrette

For 10 people

Ingredients:

1kg scallops;
10 scallop shells;
800g yellow zucchini;
800g green zucchini;
100g mixed yellow and green zucchini julienne;
600g (when cooked) linguine pasta;
800g whole baby sweetcorn;
Salt and pepper to taste;
40g butter;
20g fresh mint leaves;
50g carrot brunoise (diced very finely);
50g cucumber brunoise;
30g onion, chopped small;
10g fresh lemon thyme;
100g tomatoes, peeled and diced;
10ml white wine;

5ml balsamic vinegar;
50g almond slivers;
4 large potatoes;
1 bunch spring onion flowers;
olive oil.

Method:

Peel the potatoes and slice into strips. Deep fry the strips until they are golden brown. Leave on one side to drain. Clean and wash the scallops, dry them and pan fry in olive oil for 1-2 minutes.

Wash and cut the zucchini lengthways into strips about 2cm thick. Season with salt and pepper, then sear them in a very hot pan. Place four strips onto each plate and put the scallops on top.

Sauté the carrot, cucumber and onion in a little olive oil mixed with half of the butter. Add the lemon thyme, tomato, some salt and pepper, almond slivers, white wine and balsamic vinegar. Simmer for a few minutes and pour over the scallops.

Heat the rest of the butter in a pan and sauté the linguine with the zucchini julienne. Place a portion of this into one scallop shell for each serving.

Decorate the finished meal with potato strips, mint leaves and spring onion flowers. Slice the baby corn lengthwise, grill lightly and lay on the side of the plate.

Parma Ham and Greek Salad with Mosaic Fingers

For 10 people

Ingredients:

400g Parma ham, thinly sliced;
200g coral lettuce;
400g cucumber, sliced;
600g cherry tomatoes, cut into halves;
100g black olives;
100g stuffed green olives;
300g onion rings;

300g mixed (three colors) bell pepper strips;
300g feta cheese, cut into small cubes;
200g asparagus tips, lightly steamed;
50g curly parsley, finely chopped;

Merlin Beach Resort, 99 Muen-Ngoen Rd, Tri Trang Beach, Patong, Phuket 83150. Tel: 076-294300. Four restaurants open all day until 11 pm.

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Cherng Talay

Luxury by the fairway

Two villas, each boasting 420 square meters of living space and overlooking the Laguna Phuket Golf Club (formerly the Banyan Tree Golf Club), have just been released to the market.

The two four-bedroom properties in the Fairway Villas development are built on freehold land in a small community of exclusive homes bordering the 5th and 6th fairways of the highly exclusive golf course, and are only a short distance from Bang Tao Beach.

The living space in each home is spread over two floors. On the lower floor there is a large reception room, looking out over a 60-sqm outdoor pool set in lush landscaped gardens. The dining room overlooks the pool and Balinese sala, and adjoins a fully fitted kitchen.



There is also a utility room and self-contained staff quarters, along with several spacious terraces and balconies totaling 150 sqm of space. Each villa sits on a plot of around 1,320sqm.

The upper floor features a galleried family or TV room, which overlooks the ground-floor living room, along with four bedrooms, each with a large private balcony and an en-suite bathroom.

Work on the second phase of the development – two three-bedroom, two-story villas each



with a total covered area of around 500sqm – will start shortly.

All the villas are to be fit-

ted out to a high standard using the finest materials, with teak and granite floors and European-style hand-built kitchens.

Villa buyers will become eligible for free membership of the golf club and have access to the internationally-renowned Banyan Tree Spa, along with a resident's privilege card, offering discounts at more than 30 restaurants and bars, boutiques and spas in Laguna.

The villas are covered by Laguna's established infrastructure, including 24-hour security, guaranteed utilities and free transport within the complex.



The land title is Chanote, and the price is 35 million baht.

For more information, contact Richard Lusted at Siam Real Estate, Tel, 076-280805, website, www.siamrealestate.com, email, info@siamrealestate.com

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Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut



MODEL HOME: A model of one of the six split-level, 241-sqm properties that will be built during the first phase of Baan Rim Tarn, located close to Laguna Phuket.

Development aimed at holiday home market

CHERNG TALAY: A 23-rai plot near Laguna Phuket is being transformed into a housing development aimed largely at foreigners looking to own second homes in tropical Phuket.

Baan Rim Tarn is surrounded by mountains, creeks and a rubber plantation. The entrance lies just 600 meters from Laguna, on the Baan Don-Cherng Talay road.

Development will be in three phases. The first comprises 21 homes. Construction began in August and should be completed by next March.

Phase one will consist of three types of home. The first type will be single-story properties of 200 square meters each, with two bedrooms, a living room, dining room, maid's room, kitchen and parking space for two cars. The developers plan to build three of these homes.

The second type, of which there will be six properties, will also consist of one level, but spread over 241sqm. These homes, too, will have two bedrooms, a living room, dining room, maid's room, kitchen and

two-car parking space, but the master bedroom will be split-level.

The majority of the homes – 12 in all – will be two-story properties of 290sqm, with three bedrooms, a living room, dining room, maid's room, kitchen and two-car parking space.

A swimming pool can be built by the contractor, Civil & Interior Co Ltd, for an additional 500,000 baht.

The estate will have 24-hour security, and each home will have a termite-protection system.

Phuket sales manager of estate agents CB Richard Ellis (Thailand), Khanitha Jarukirati, said, "The location is very accessible, just 15 minutes from the airport or Laguna Phuket Golf Club. It is also convenient for shopping in Phuket City and the Laguna area itself.

"These are suitable for holiday homes. It is possible to buy a condominium for a similar price, but these are spacious homes that are good value for money."

She continued, "The developers are using quality materials and this is a great location, the

Laguna area, where prices are usually 10 million baht and upwards, but these homes are in the 6.25- to 10.5-million-baht price range.

"Our target customers are foreigners who would like to have a second home in Phuket. These homes are at a price they can afford."

The development was first unveiled in the *Gazette* in July 2003, but since then the developers, Phuket Estate Consultant (2002) Co, have decided to change the name and the design concept.

This is the company's third project on the island. It has completed the three-phase Varanee Bypass project and is currently heavily involved in construction of the Kamala Plaza and Resort.

More information is available from CB Richard Ellis (Thailand) Co Ltd. The CB Richard Ellis Phuket Office sales office is on Highway 4030, Cherng Talay, Thalung, Phuket 83110. Tel: 076-270737, 09-7298804. Email: baanrimentarn@cbre.com. Website: www.cbre.co.th

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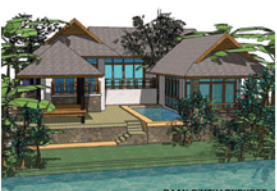
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Sneering with sexy contempt

It is not easy writing gardening articles. I'm not looking for sympathy, but I have to sit down each week and think of something to say. There are a lot more productive things I could be doing with my time. Enjoying an ice-cold Heineken would be one. Actually, I've already got one...

Every seven days, I have to come up with something to talk about. There is certainly plenty of plant life to choose from in Phuket: we're not exactly in the most barren corner of the globe; that privilege would probably be reserved for Grimsby, England.

Some plants are more obvious than others. Hibiscus, the plague of Hawaiian shirts the world over, is an obvious example. Bougainvillea, with its multicolored leaves masquerading as sprays of flowers, is also found all over the island.

Then there are the more subtle flowers that seem to blend into the background and quietly keep us amused without making a show of it. But there is another category, one which is so odd that it's easy to forget that it's a flower at all: the king of the bizarre world has to be the heliconia.

I think we all have an idea

of how flowers are supposed to look and behave: they should be neat and conformist, and have uniform petals around a central point on the end of a stalk that's growing dutifully skyward.

The heliconia is a definite exception. It's as if the creator of this plant got hold of the rule book for everything that had gone before and sneered with utter contempt.

I have the feeling that by the time he got to this one, he was a bit bored and was just having a laugh, hoping that nobody would notice.

This oddity is everywhere, and most of us probably have at least one variety somewhere in our gardens. The flowers appear in a kind of abstract zig-zag arrangement, and weird as the plant is, there are still dozens of varieties in the family. Most of them grow vertically, but the flowers on the various species either grow straight up or dangling down.

There are some amazingly dramatic forms, mostly various shades of yellow, orange or red,



The heliconia looks as if its creator got hold of the rule book for everything that had gone before and sneered with utter contempt.

but always incandescent, almost Day-Glo in brilliance.

Despite its striking looks,

caring for the heliconia couldn't be easier. Once it's planted and it has taken hold, the average gardener will have more problems slowing down its spread than worrying about how best to care for it. It starts off in a tidy clump, where it was put in the first place. It soon becomes clear, though, that the heliconia has other plans on its mind.

It appears without warning, like a naughty mole with a mischievous grin on its face, in the middle of a previously neat, well-controlled section of the garden. This is often in the most inappropriate spot in the middle of the lawn, some distance from where it started, and it can be several weeks or months after you

thought it had disappeared forever – a healthy rainy season is a perfect jump-start.

Most varieties grow to around a meter in height, although some can get as big as three meters. The smaller sizes can vary to the same degree. Many of the vertical growers are quite dainty, relatively speaking. Some of its dangling cousins are absolute monsters, but all share the same dramatic, "Hey, look at me, I really am a flower" colors and lack of conformity.

All it really needs to stay healthy is plenty of water in soil with good drainage and lots of sun. It's happiest if a stalk is cut back to the base as soon as it's finished flowering, as it flowers only once. There's a reason for this – stopping the flow of nutrients to a part of the plant that's already done all it's going to do means that there's more for the rest of the plant.

The heliconia has a variety of names as incredible as the plant itself, from Suriname Sassy to Sexy Pink. (At last! I've been trying to get the word "sex" into a gardening column for years.)

If you're feeling particularly keen on this rebel plant with no regard for the rules, there's even a "Heliconia Society International". Who knows? You could sit around with other lovers of this particularly odd plant and out-odd each other.

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?
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Property Gazette

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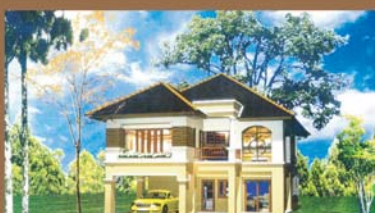
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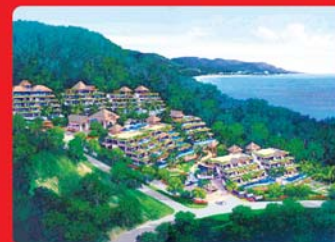
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Property Gazette

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- Female, age 26+, bachelor's degree in the secretarial, administration or related fields.
- At least 3 years' admin experience.
- Good numerical, planning and organisational skills are essential.

Administration Assistant

- Female, age 22+, educated to high vocational education certificate or bachelor degree level.
- At least 1 years' admin experience.

Site Manager

- Male/female, age 28+, educated to high vocational education certificate or bachelor degree level.
- At least 3 years' client-servicing/management experience.
- Good communication, planning and organisational skills.

Janitorial Service Manager and Security Service Manager (2 positions)

- Male/female, age 35 years+, educated to high vocational education certificate or bachelor degree level.
- At least 7 years' janitorial or hospitality/security experience.
- Good planning and organisation skills are essential.
- Good time-management skills, with the ability to handle many contracts.

Please send your resumé along with covering letter in English and 3 recent photos to:

Property Care Services (Thailand) Co. Ltd.,
371/21 Yaowarat Road, Tambon Taladyai, Amphur Muang, Phuket, 83000
Or for more information please contact: Stephen on 06 1755881
email: stephen@pcs.co.th www.pcs.co.th



We are an ISO 9001-certified hotel in Phuket and are looking for qualified, hard-working, highly-committed persons to join our management team in the following positions:

-F&B Manager -Personnel Manager

Interested persons are invited to submit an application and full resumé to:

Personnel Department
THE ROYAL PARADISE HOTEL
135/73 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Road, Patong Beach, Phuket, 83150
Fax: 076-340565 E-mail: info@royalparadise.com

URGENTLY REQUIRED

EARN 30,000-50,000 BAHT PER MONTH

An international company specializing in sales of a unique and exclusive product/service has vacancies for

FEMALE SALES CONSULTANT PHUKET BRANCH

- 25-35 years of age
- Must speak English
- Be self-motivated, self-confident and able to sell
- Experience with cosmetic products or other types of personal selling could be useful but not absolutely necessary
- Selected candidates will receive high earnings and fully comprehensive training

Please submit an application in English only with curriculum vitae and recent photo to:

Svenson Hair Center Thasia Limited
2nd Fl, Room No 209A, Central Festival Phuket, Tambol Vichit, Muang, Phuket, 83000 Tel: 076-249657-9

SECRETARY

required. Secretary – aged 30 to 40 – required for an import/export company in Phuket. The successful candidate will hold a BA in administration, be fluent in English and have computer and Internet skills. Very good salary offered. Pls contact for details and to apply. Tel: 076-342687. Email: mhosoapon@hotmail.com

SALES & MARKETING

Manager. A small boutique resort is looking for a foreigner to be responsible for online reservations, updating allotments online, preparing contracts for travel agents, handling guest comments and being aware of all the tours available in Patong. Please respond by email only. Email: doubledutches@yahoo.com

URGENTLY REQUIRED

1 GM (1 Position)

- Male aged between 35-45 years
- Fluent English
- 5 years' experience in F&B

2 Sales Manager (1 Position)

- Male or female
- Fluent English
- 3 years' experience

3 Sales Coordinator (1 Position)

- Male or female
- Fluent English
- 2 years' experience

If interested, please call:
Human Resources Department
Tel: 02 5834540-2

ROYAL BAVARIAN BEER HOUSE

in Rawai is looking for friendly, experienced young Thai nationals to work in the following positions from November: Restaurant Manager; Marketing/Events Organizer; Cashier; Service staff; Bartenders; DJ-technician; Cook (European Cook); and a Cleaner. We offer a very good working atmosphere, regular working hours and good rates of pay. Technical experience and good English knowledge are requirements. Please call for more info and to apply. Tel: 07-8339484, 06-2818739.

SALESWOMAN

required for property developer in Phuket. Fluent in Thai and English, and computer literate. Pls send CV and photo by email to apply. Email: sales@thaistylehouse.com



Restaurant and Theatre

120 Rat-U-Thit Road,
Patong Beach,
Phuket, 83150
www.sphinxthai.com
0 7634 1500

Sphinx operates first-class restaurants in Bangkok and Phuket.
We seek to fill the following positions in our Phuket branch.

Senior waiter/waitress

The senior waiter/waitress shall supervise junior waiters and ensure a high level of service to our customers.

Requirements:

- Male or female, aged 25+
- Very good English communication skills
- Outgoing and friendly personality
- Previous restaurant experience, preferably in a supervisory position

Waiters/waitresses

Requirements:

- Male or female, aged 20+
- Good English communication skills
- Outgoing and friendly personality

We offer generous salaries, service charges and excellent fringe benefits.
Please call or submit your resumé and recent photo to the address above.

International Law Office, Patong Beach

Administrator

Qualification:

- Bachelor's degree
- Age 25 years plus, male or female
- Excellent command of the English language
- Pro-active management style
- Pleasant and service-minded personality

If you are interested, please contact us at E-mail: interlaw@loxinfo.co.th

**Head Office: 17/6 Chaofa Road,
Talaad Nuea, Muang,
Phuket 83000**

STAFF REQUIRED

The following staff are required: Waitresses – (2). Basic understanding of both spoken and written English required. Previous experience an advantage. Positions carry good salary and healthcare insurance, and are based on a 6-day working week. Tel: 01-5353220. Email: mrd68@yahoo.com

SECRETARY/SALES

Assistant. Property development company seeks a hardworking Secretary/Sales Assistant with excellent written & spoken English, computer literacy – including Excel and Word – the willingness to take responsibility and work under pressure. Tel: 01-8916143. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

RECEPTION INTERNET

café. We're looking for a Thai national, woman, to work as a cyber café receptionist. Possibility of lodging. The applicant must speak English. Patong area. Please contact Khun Yupha by Email: reservation@liontchai.com

RECEPTIONIST

required. Experienced female receptionist required by a hotel in Patong. English speaker a must. Pls call to apply. Tel: 01-8950231.

PROPERTY CAREER

A Sales & Admin Manager position is available for a bright and motivated person. Salary and commission is dependent on experience and performance in pursuit of company objectives. Tel: 076-236616, 01-8952206. Email: siamuk@loxinfo.co.th

HAIRDRESSER

wanted. Hairdresser – who can cut and color hair, and do nails – needed for a beauty salon. Please call for more details. Tel: 07-8977249. Email: topriya@hotmail.com

SECRETARY

English-speaking secretary needed to work in our Cherng Talay office. Pls contact to apply. Tel: 076-270913-4. Fax: 076-270870. Email: grantatz@ksc.th.com

SECRETARY TO MD

A luxury resort 200 kms from Phuket needs an experienced secretary with good computer literacy and translation skills. Tel: 01-9156879.

CARER FOR ELDERLY

person. Need reliable, compassionate, skilled full-time caregivers for combative dementia patient. Some English required. Interviews in Karon in mid-October for immediate start. Email: catmilan@aol.com

ASSISTANT GENERAL

Manager. We are now seeking a highly qualified, ambitious and committed Assistant General Manager to strengthen the team at our small boutique resort in Phuket. The AGM will represent the Hotel and should have managerial experience and knowledge of the modern hospitality industry. S/he will be responsible for running all related business activities. S/he will be in charge of people management so as to provide and maintain sustainable, skilled and motivated employees, as well as keeping the organization up-to-date in terms of hospitality trends. Our preferred candidate has a university degree in hospitality, and at least 3 years of experience in the hotel/hospitality industry in managerial positions, preferably in an international environment. S/he should be a Thai national and fluent in English. Her/his strengths are excellent interpersonal and communication skills, and a pro-active entrepreneurial and operational attitude with a hands-on approach and decision-making ability. The ideal candidate is also a team player, responsible and reliable with good motivational skills. In return we can offer you an attractive salary with many other benefits, all in a friendly and pleasant working environment. Email: doubledutches@yahoo.com

SALES STAFF

wanted. We are looking for a sales person with English skills and sales experience to market our product. Tel: 01-9795624. Email: tom@bootlegonline.com

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Island Job Mart

The Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following positions:

I. ACCOUNTING MANAGER

This is a new position in a rapidly expanding company. Qualified candidates will be Thai, aged at least 28, and have:

- ▶ A Bachelor's Degree or higher in accounting
- ▶ Minimum 2 years' experience in accounting management
- ▶ Knowledge of tax and other statutory filings
- ▶ Ability to communicate effectively in English

The successful candidate will be the chief financial manager of the company. Salary and benefits will be commensurate with the importance of the position, which reports to a major shareholder.

II. IT TECHNICAL SUPPORT OFFICER

Responsibilities:- The Technical Support officer will focus, at least initially, on hardware, system maintenance and networking issues (TCP/IP, LAN)

- ▶ Male or female, Thai nationality
- ▶ Diploma or degree in computer or related fields
- ▶ At least 2 years' experience in networking and hardware maintenance
- ▶ Good interpersonal skills
- ▶ Good command of spoken English would be an advantage.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Rungtip Hongjakpet, Managing Director, by email, fax or post to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

367/2 Yaowarat Rd, T. Taladyai, A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Fax: 076 213971 Email: rungtip@phuketgazette.net

A boutique resort in Phuket is searching for

- * Front Office Manager and Assistant
- * Reservation Manager and Clerks
- * Receptionists (female)
- * Executive Housekeeper and Assistant
- * Thai Guest Relations Officer (female)
- * Expat German/Scandinavian nationals (female) for full-time or part-time guest relations positions
- * Waiters/Waitresses/Captain/Hostess/Bartender

Please send your resumé to
e-mail: acc9107177@csloxinfo.com
Fax: 076-292531

SECRETARY/SALES

assistant. Property development company seeks a hardworking Secretary/Sales Assistant with excellent written & spoken English, computer literacy – including Excel and Word – the willingness to take responsibility and work under pressure. Tel: 01-8916143. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

RECEPTION INTERNET

café. We're looking for a female Thai national to work as a cyber café receptionist. Possibility of lodging. The applicant must speak English. Patong area. Please contact Khun Yupha by Email: reservation@liontchai.com

DRIVER WANTED

Siam Diving Enterprises requires an additional driver. Position is based in Chalong but will be required to drive outside of Phuket. Applicant must hold current driving license. Tel: 076-281401-2, 01-0794137. Fax: 076-281400. Email: sdephuk@loxinfo.co.th

SALESWOMAN

required for property developer in Phuket. Fluent in Thai and English, and computer literate. Pls send CV and photo by email to apply. Email: sales@thaistylehouse.com

RECEPTIONIST

Premier project-management firm in Cherng Talay is looking for a receptionist to start immediately. The successful candidate will be fluent in Thai/English and highly organized, with skills in computers and client relations. Experience in a hotel or foreign company preferred. References required. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-325402. Email: tum@dmg-thailand.com

Employment Wanted

EUROPEAN HOTEL/

resort. 12 years in Thailand. Hotel management training. I am looking for suitable management position in the south of Thailand. Very strong on customer service and understanding the bottom line. Salary negotiable. Tel: 04-7457024. Email: kingrw80@hotmail.com

Looking for a job?
www.phuketgazette.net

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles for Sale

ERICSSON P900

for sale. 3-month-old Ericsson P900 for sale for 20,000 baht. Pls call. Tel: 07-8870520. www.thaichanote.com

BEAUTIFUL WORLD

Furniture. Beautiful World Furniture now open offering new stock from India, a selection of water hyacinths, Chinese furniture, ceramics, wood carvings, rugs & carpets, Balinese furniture and lamps. Show room: 106/74 Chalempriak Ror IX Rd (the bypass road), Rassada, Muang, Phuket, 83000. Open every day from 10 am to 7 pm. Tel: 076-261886. Fax: 076-261887. Email: info@beautifulworldthailand.com

3-DOOR FRIDGE

for sale. Almost new. Only 20,000 baht. Price for new one: 30,000 baht. Great for restaurant or supermarket. Call or email for details. Tel: 01-8924885. Email: info@phuket-catering.com

GARAGE SALE

in Kamala. Beautiful tea pots and paintings from China. Also some furniture and flower vases. We are located in Kamala, near Phuket Fantasea. For more details, pls call Jenny Brun in Kamala. Tel: 076-279075, 01-4761415. Email: fbrun@loxinfo.co.th

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Small pocket silver colloid maker, to clean your drinking water wherever you are, any time. Up to 100 liters with 1 silver rod set. Only 5,800 baht. Tel: 06-0015641. Email: eric@silentsoundcentre.com

AIRCON

Mitsubishi, hardly used, perfect condition. Only 12,000 baht. Tel: 07-2679780. Email: kris@csloxinfo.com

UNDERWATER

camera. Nikonos 5 with Sea & Sea TTL flash. Asking price: 25,000 baht. Tel: 076-245318, 06-6821310. Fax: 076-245318. Email: gshphuket@hotmail.com

GOLF CLUBS

Set of 11 Lady Shantha graphite shaft clubs in excellent condition. Perfect for someone taking up the game. Photo available on request. 8,000 baht. Phone Andrew or Donna Tel: 01-8941530, 06-120-0752. Email: awatea@loxinfo.co.th

FURNITURE FOR SALE

I'm going to move house and want to sell some SB-brand furniture, as follows: twin bed (dark brown), big sofa (in cream), drinking bar (dark brown), 2 night (side) tables (dark brown), and 2 mirror closets (wardrobes). All look new. For sale at only 35,000 baht. Tel: 06-6897113. Email: psonthikun@yahoo.com

MINI GRAND PIANO

for sale. Used Kawai mini grand piano. Beautiful black color, with heater and hygrometer built in. Looks like new. Only 150,000 baht. Free delivery. Tel: 06-6897113. Email: psonthikun@yahoo.com

Articles Wanted

TELEPHONE LINE

Urgent need of a telephone line in Nanai 2, Patong. Seller must be somewhere near Nanai 2 area. Email: dreamy_dove2003@yahoo.com

SAXOPHONE

Alto saxophone wanted. Secondhand and in good condition. Prefer well-known brand such as Yamaha. Please call Donna (06-1200752) or Andrew (01-8941530), or email: awatea@loxinfo.co.th

POOL TABLE

wanted. Minimum 8' x 4'. American-type preferred but not essential. Slate must be in good condition, but otherwise condition not too important. Tel: 06-6826828. Email: mark.stevens@jci.com

WANTED

in Thailand. Where can I find a source of vermiculite in Thailand? I have looked everywhere. Thank you. Tel: 045-651310. Email: kamniam2@hotmail.com

Boats & Marine

SPEEDBOAT

for sale. Fiberglass, Yamaha 115 outboard. Seats 4/6. For sale or long-term rent. Price negotiable. Cost 450,000 baht last year and has had little use. On trailer, ready to tow and use. Fully serviced. Email: adrianbrydson@yahoo.co.uk

BRAND-NEW

wooden boat. Newly-built wooden passenger boat, antique look, 23 meters long, 4.8 meters wide. Made of *mai takian thong* timber. Can take 60 passengers. Hino 420hp engine. Selling at 5 million baht. Boat is still under construction and will be finished in October. Tel: 02-5592936, 01-8159207. Fax: 02-5592543. Email: yhwang@asianet.co.th

BOAT FOR SALE

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

25-FOOT SAILBOAT

Thai-registered fiberglass 25-footer – with lots of extras – for sale. Can be used for charter. US\$20,000. Please contact for more details. Tel: 06-9401860.



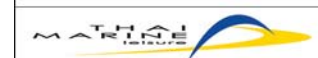
Newly built
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27-FOOT BOAT FOR SALE



British-built, 27ft aluminum commercial or recreational boat, with Perkins 80hp marine engine. 1.5 million baht. Contact for details. Tel: 07-2659977. Email: jimmys@loxinfo.co.th



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Bulletins

Alcoholics Anonymous

is holding meetings in English
at the following places:

Phuket City

Mission Hospital
on Wed and Sun at 7 pm

Bangkok Phuket Hospital
on the 3rd floor on Fri at 7 pm

Patong

Patong Hospital
on Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun
at 7 pm and on Fri at 8 pm

For more info, please call
01 895 4763 and 01 891 2895.

SAME-DAY INT'L

papers. Same-day, latest-edition international newspapers from 52 countries available in Phuket now. From all of Europe, Australia, USA, Russia, Japan, Singapore and more. We deliver to your home or hotel upon request. Tel: 076-346218, 06-6916530. Fax: 076-346232. Email: info@newspaperdirect-phuket.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.newspaperdirect.com>

THAI LANGUAGE

course. One or two persons wanted to share cost of a beginner's Thai course in Patong. Tel: 07-0779816.

Business Opportunities

Investment Opportunity- Jungceylon!

The project owner plans to site Thailand's first 3D motion-ride simulator in a prime location within the new Jungceylon Entertainment complex in Patong. He is now seeking business partners willing to invest a minimum Bht 6.3m.

Investors can realistically expect full repayment of their financing within 18 months, plus an average annual return rate of 60% on their investment. Detailed business plan and projections available.

Deadline approaching!

Contact John Virgo today on 09 287 2415

BUSINESS OPP

Bungalow resort in Chalong with 9-year lease for sale. Pls contact for more details. Tel: 09-0385184.

INT'L NEWSPAPER FRANCHISE

We are looking for ambitious partners in new areas: Hua Hin, Cha-Am, Krabi and Khao Lak to print and sell same-day editions of international newspapers. These are from 52 countries and include more than 240 different titles. Email: g.van.hal@12move.nl For further details, please see our website at <http://www.newspaperdirect.com>

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Thai businesses - bars, restaurants, nightclubs, hotels and resorts - for sale at prices to suit all budgets. Tel: 02-2318190, 07-034 0568. Fax: 02-2318121. Email: phil@thaisunshinebusinessadvisors.com or for more details, please see our website at <http://www.thaisunshinebusinessadvisors.com>

30 MIN & US\$5 = US\$15,000. The fastest and cheapest way to make money online. Email for info. Email: c_boedker@hotmail.com

SEEKING MLM

leaders. US\$4 billion health care company seeks quality leaders for network launch in Thailand. Email for info. Tel: 02-7269918, 06-3418781. Fax 02-7269918. Email: makelifegood@aol.com

PATONG BAR

for sale. Includes all stock, furnishings, licenses and sound & light system. Bar has dance area/stage with mirrors and 4 aircon units. The property is double-width, on 2 levels and has a patio. Price: 29,900 euros (20,000 GBP/36,500 USD) for purchase + 700 euros rent. 5-year lease. Email or call for details. Tel: 06-9486850. Email: patongbar@yahoo.com

THAI RESTAURANT

for sale. Fully equipped Thai restaurant, 2 staff, laundry included, low rent, great location, only 250,000 baht for quick sale. Owner too busy with other businesses. Tel: 07-8977249. Email: tipriya@hotmail.com

Business Products & Services

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5,000 baht, valid up to 10 years; or 6,000 baht for validity up to 20 years. Sole agent in Thailand. Please call for more details. Tel: 04-0068736.

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service. Fiancé, settlement and Schengen visas: 6 years' experience. Looking for a Thai girlfriend? Tel: 076-248626, 07-2679780. Fax: 076-248626. Email: admin@phuketdeafeagle.com

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English Computerman - new & used PCs, repairs, parts, accessories & software. ADSL Internet - no phone, no problem. Pls call for more info. Tel: 09-4735080.

PRESARIO 1725AP

notebook. Slim Compaq. 1.2 PIII Processor, 40 GB HD, 256 MB RAM, CD-W/RW with DVD ROM. Windows XP Pro, Office 2003 and all Macromedia MX Products. Paid 92,000 baht brand new 11 years ago. Will sell for 30,000 baht or best offer. Tel: 01-2718961. Email: shayne@mindless.com

COMPAQ PRESARIO

notebook. For sale: Presario 1500AP notebook. 2.25Ghz Pentium 4 with new 40GB hard drive. DVD/CD writer. Windows XP with original system disks. 2 years old. Always used with external monitor and keyboard, so internal screen and keyboard untouched. 30,000 baht. Tel: 01-9782025. Email: tonydaniels@email.com

Personal Services

NIA: GET FIT THE

body's way. Nia classes at The Movement Center, Chalong, every Monday and Wednesday at 6:30 pm, and at the Alba Wellness Center at TwinPalms Phuket, Surin, every Tuesday and Thursday at 6:30 pm. Visiting practitioners coming from Sept to March. Tel: 01-7975065. Email: phuketmoves@yahoo.com

PHUKET STORAGE

Store your car, boat or container at a safe and secure yard in Rawai. We also do small lots. Call for details. Tel: 09-9088675, 01-5971140

LEARN THAI

Conversation and lessons in your home with charming Thai lady teacher. Tel: 01-7971497. Email: churee77@hotmail.com

GOLF TIPS

Learn how to hit perfect shots within 1 day and and lower your handicap to zero for life. Contact genius golfer by email only to arrange meeting. Email: amorn9999@yahoo.com

Personal Services Wanted

CARER FOR ELDERLY

person. Need reliable, compassionate, skilled full-time caregivers for combative dementia patient. Some English required. Interviews in Karon in mid-October for immediate start. Email: catmilan@aol.com

LOOKING

for Russian speaker. I am looking for a native-speaking Russian for conversation. I will be in Patong for 2 months, from December 04 to January '05. Please send me your details. Email: ivangroznii@libero.it

Personals

LOOKING

for pretty lady. German businessman in Phuket, good looking, 49, is looking for *mia noi* to have fun. If you are interested and speak reasonable English, please reply with photo. Email: klaus120355@yahoo.com

MAN SEEKS SEXY

girl. Dutch man, 30, is thinking of visiting Thailand soon. I am therefore looking for a sexy female travel companion who speaks good English. Email: doeidoeduizend@hotmail.com

THAI FRIEND

Looking for a Thai friend to show me around Phuket from 1st-3rd November 2004. Email: avun@asianet.co.th

BACKGAMMON

partners. Retired businessman is looking for playing partners on Phuket Island. Please call if interested. Tel: 076-386113, 01-5778443.

GERMAN SEEKS



true love. Are you the one who I can make happy forever? Then take the chance and let's go ahead with a great future for both of us. My name is Norbert; I'm 44 years old but feel much younger. I am 184cm tall, sporty and very healthy. I like the mentality of Thai women; you have great character and good family lives. You are tall, sporty and highly educated. Would you like to visit the university here in Munich, Germany? Maybe you have a good job at a bank or are a doctor? Why not have your career here in Germany? I am looking for a very long-term relationship and more. I want to make a family with you. So, if you are interested, please write to me and include your photo: Norbert H. Metzen, Koenigsberger Str. 8, 82110 Germering, Germany. Best regards to Thailand, Norbi. Email: info@metzen-athletic.de

SEEKING

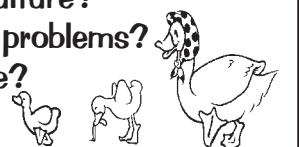
new friends. Educated Thai woman is looking for new friends. Actually, I prefer farang who use English language to Asian, but all nationalities are welcome. If you would like to have a new friend who is good-looking, good-natured, generous, funny and caring, don't hesitate. Go ahead. Email: kruee@hotmail.com

FRENCH BLUEFLOWER

French blueflower waiting for nice lotus flower, 30/35 years of age, to share life in Phuket. Pls contact. Email: bob9a@hotmail.com

ASK KHUN WANIDA! MOMMA DUCK

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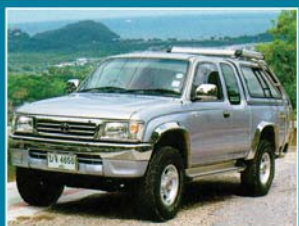
Read her advice in the *Phuket Gazette*.

Fax 076-213971 or email momma@phuketgazette.net

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HYUNDAI ACCENT

7 years old, 126,000km, well maintained by single farang owner. Body needs slight repaint but interior and engine still excellent. Lowest price: 190,000 baht. Pls call for more info. Tel: 076-279723. Email: phuket-thailand@web.de

CHEAP PEUGEOT 305

White Peugeot 305 for sale. 1985 model but in very good condition, fully serviced and looked after. Aircon, radio, manual gears (5-speed), full service history and car manual in both Thai and English. Buying new car, hence this sale. You're welcome to come and take a look. Price: 85,000 baht or nearest offer. For more info Tel: 01-6939495, 01-6919825. Email: seanjose2@hotmail.com

CITROEN AX 1.4

Five-door hatchback. 1995, very good condition, electric windows, central door locking. 120,000 baht; no offers. Please call for more info. Tel: 076-288047, 01-8941660. Email: cottrell@loxinfo.co.th

4 x 4s

KIA SPORTAGE

1997 Kia Sportage 4x4, Alpine CD, alloys, many extras. Nice. 320,000 baht. Tel: 04-0542891. Email: fishphuket@hotmail.com

TOYOTA

Sportrider 4x4. December 2000, Sport SR5, 95,000km, gold & silver color, every extra, excellent condition, full Toyota service history. Private sale at 595,000 baht. Tel: 01-968-1106. Email: petemolyneux@hotmail.com

SUZUKI CARIBIAN

4-wheel drive, 5-speed Suzuki Caribbean with air conditioning for sale. Reg until July 2005. Tires 90% unused. Price 185,000 baht. Call for details. Tel: 07-2760529.

JEEP CJ6

Rebuilt in 1999. Sound 2.5 turbo diesel Toyota engine. Excellent 5-speed transmission and 4x4. Pls call for more info. Tel: 07-9376961.

ISUZU 2800 TURBO

Isuzu 2800 Turbo (4WD). 2001 model, 154,606km. 450,000 baht ono. Pls call for info. Tel: 076-238303, 06-6307014.

LAND ROVER V8

Discovery. 1998 ES model, black, automatic, leather. 599,000 baht. Tel: 01-6912881.

Pickups

2003 TOYOTA

pickup truck. 2003 Toyota 4-door pickup truck. Has covered 20,000km and is in excellent condition. 750,000 baht. Pls contact for details. Tel: 07-8870520. Website: www.thaichanote.com

MITSUBISHI 4-DOOR

pickup. 1995, 4-door, 2500cc Mitsubishi pickup truck for sale. In white and good condition. Price: 200,000 baht. Pls call for more info. Tel: 09-8718727.

ISUZU WEGA

for sale. Isuzu 2800 Turbo 4WD in blue – 1999 model – available. Pls call for details. Tel: 01-9590060, 09-474-0269.

1999 TOYOTA TIGER

2WD Hilux 3-liter automatic. Fully serviced by Toyota. 320,000 baht. Please contact for full details. Email: info@natureofthai.com

NISSAN NV 2003

December 2003 model, auto, silver color, with CD player. Has covered 16,000km. 75,000 baht. 8,700 baht for 40 months. Tel: 09-731-7410. Email: lagunajidan@yahoo.co.kr

Motorbikes

JRD 125 SURF

Blue JRD 125 Surf motorbike 1 J. 5,000km, electric starter, disc brake and ABS. Asking 29,000 baht. Tel: 076-242-091, 01-7370557. Email: dive_block@web.de

HONDA DREAM

Exces. Electric starter, very reliable. A little tatty, but a great runaround for only 15,000 baht. Tel: 01-9681106. Email: petemolyneux@hotmail.com

HARLEY DYNA

Harley Dyna Super Sport, year 2000, low mileage, well maintained, never rented. Phuket registration. 600,000 baht ono. Contact Andy. Tel: 076-296160, 01-8913466. Fax: 076-296160. Email: antc@phuket.ksc.co.th

HONDA NOVA RS

Dash. 125cc, 2-stroke, 6-speed. 7 years old. 13,000 baht. Tel: 076-423315. Email: mike@ethailand.com

MOTORBIKES

for sale. JRD storm 125cc: 37,000 baht. JRD Surf 110cc: 16,000 baht. Honda Smile: 13,000 baht. Pls call for info. Tel: 01-7471862.

HARLEY FATBOY

Year 1997, black. Just spent 200,000 baht on chrome, Barnett clutch, new handlebars, mirrors, longshots and much, much more. Normal price about 850,000 baht, but I need quick cash so now only 750,000 – or give me an offer. Call quickly. Tel: 09-8093566. Email: lennartviberg@hotmail.com

BLACK HONDA BROS

650cc. Urgent sale. Never rented out and in very good condition. Asking price 63,000 baht. Please contact to arrange a viewing. Tel: 07-284-9679. Email: phuket_fresh@hotmail.com

Vans

CHEVY VAN TIARA

Model Tiara, 6/7 executive seats, ABS, airbags, automatic gears, overdrive, power steering, electric windows, TV, too many extras to mention. 9 years old. 670,000 baht. Must be seen to be appreciated. Pls contact for info. Tel: 04-7457024. Email: kingrw80@hotmail.com

TOYOTA MIGHTY X

2500cc diesel automatic Carryboy van. 90,000km. 2 aircons. 235,000 baht. Tel: 06-8202663. Email: colombattofabio@hotmail.com

Rentals

A1 CAR RENTALS

4-door Isuzu High Lander auto: 28,000 baht/month. New Toyota Altis auto: 28,000 baht/month. New Toyota Vios auto: 22,000 baht/month. Toyota Soluna: 15,000 baht/month. All insured and special long-term prices offered. Please call for details. Tel: 09-8314703.

MOTORCYCLE

rental. New automatic Yamaha Millions, Honda Waves and Honda Dreams for rent – short or long term. Best rates. Please contact. Tel: 09-6476628. Email: jrrentals@dorber.net

MERCEDES C220

for rent. Mercedes-Benz C220, dark blue, cream leather seats, auto CD, etc, very good condition with first-class insurance, for rent. Price: 39,000 baht per month or 15,000 baht per week. Tel: 01-3430777.

DAIHATSU MIRA

for rent. Daihatsu Mira – very good condition and easy to drive – available for long-term rent at 9,900 baht/month, including insurance. Pls call for details. Tel: 01-5371050.

NEW MOTORBIKES 4

rent. Yamaha Nouvo Automatic, Honda Wave 125s, Honda Wave 110s, Honda Phantom (new model). Call or email for the best price. Tel: 076-296443, 09-7258575. Fax: 076-296443. Email: office@gasserweb.com

MOTORBIKE: 100

baht/day or 2,800 baht/month. Tel: 09-4730463. Email: sunisadia@hotmail.com

Wanted

ACCORD OR CAMRY

wanted. I want to buy a Honda Accord or Toyota Camry as a second car. If you have one for sale, please get in touch with photos, price and contact details. I am a serious buyer and the cash is waiting. Email: jdm_c@hotmail.com

NEED A NEW RIDE

We are looking for a new ride. At least 400cc. Hope to year from you soon! Email: tammy_teacher@yahoo.com

HONDA 400 CBR

wanted. Must be in good condition with all paperwork and not an ex-rental. Email: acorngray@aol.com

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a motorbike. I am looking for a Honda Wave or Yamaha Nouvo. Must have electric starter. Will pay good price in cash! Tel: 01-6912881.

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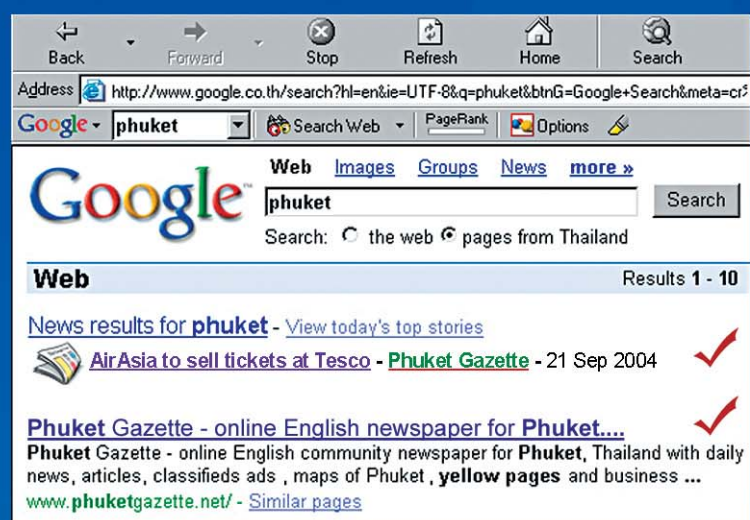


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