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B95m marina plan for Ao Por

By Kamol Pirat

PHUKET: Thailand's largest construction company, Italian-Thai Development (ITD), has unveiled a plan to invest 95 million baht to develop a new marina at Ao Por.

The project will be handled by the Ao Por Pattana Co, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ITD; this will be ITD's first development in Phuket.

Project manager Akaraphan Suwanchot said Ao Por Pattana already holds a 60-rai site at Leam Lhong, near the old Ao Por pier, where it proposes to build the marina. He said the development would cover 10 rai of land onshore and a similar area of sea.

Work is expected to start early next year and be completed by mid-2006.

The marina would have space for 100 yachts, but would have no facilities for building or repairing them, nor would it have a hotel or other accommodation.

The Chief Administrative Officer of Pa Khlok Tambon Administration Organisation (*OrBorTor*), Pranom Keawprang, said the plans had already been submitted to the *OrBorTor*, which is now awaiting the results of an environmental impact assessment (EIA).

The plans were unveiled four days after 55 members of the public voted at a meeting, organized by the *OrBorTor*, to back a proposal by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) to build a new pier at Ao Por.

The exact location has yet to be decided – the land around all the possible sites is in private hands.



Plenty of dredging to do: the site for the proposed marina does not look like much at present, but will offer easy access to Naka Yai Island and the scenic northern end of Phang Nga Bay.

The meeting was opened by Vice-Governor Niran Kalayanamit, and attended by Marine Department deputy head Sumontha Thongphat, *OrBorJor* President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr and staff from the Marine Department.

Marine Department engineer Pongwan Jarudecha told the meeting the proposed pier would be within 100 meters of the old one. It would be seven meters wide and about 500 meters long – about two thirds length of the Chalong Pier.

The proposal has already passed an EIA, and the 130 million baht cost will be included in the *OrBorJor* budget for the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

However, the *OrBorJor*

will have to persuade whoever owns the required land to sell it or lease it long-term.

"If the *OrBorJor* can get the four or five rai we need," said K. Pongwan, "the Marine Department will put the project out to tender next month."

"Building could start early next year and we estimate it will take 540 days to complete and will be ready in 2006."

Local people at the meeting recognized that a new pier will make it easier for them to travel to Koh Yao and other islands around Phang Nga Bay. At present larger boats must wait for the right tidal conditions before coming in to the existing pier. The new, longer pier would allow them to tie up at any time.

Fast visas and work permits coming soon, Sipa promises

By Gategao Phetsawang

PHUKET CITY: The man charged with transforming Phuket into a "cyber paradise" says procedures to fast-track visa and work permit approvals for foreign IT workers will start next month.

Dr Manoo Ordeedolchest, President of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa), has announced that applicants will be able to apply to the Sipa office, which will then coordinate with the Board of Investment (BoI).

Once applications are approved, the BoI will expedite procedures at the Immigration and Labor Departments. Applicants will know within about four days whether they are eligible for the red tape-cutting measures, he said.

He also told the *Gazette* on November 4 that the next six months will see his agency working hard on its "one-stop service" website that will allow residents to pay bills and conduct business with the Government on line.

If implemented, the service could put an end to the "take a number and wait in line" frustration of conducting business with government agencies.

The next step, he said, will be to get other state agencies to coordinate their efforts and share databases. This could take some time, he warned, as each government agency has to observe internal regulations – and many of the required changes involve lengthy approval processes.

Three companies, two foreign and one Thai, have now applied for BoI privileges as IT investors though the Sipa Phuket office, he added.

The benefits, which include tax breaks and duty-free import of hardware and software, became available in August.



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AirAsia expands Phuket-Singapore service

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: Low-cost carrier Thai AirAsia, an associate carrier of Malaysian low-fare airline AirAsia, on November 5 launched a daily, direct flight service between Phuket and Singapore, offering promotional fares as low as 1,200 baht for advanced ticket purchases made over the Internet.

Flight FD 3028 departs Phuket at 9:30 am and arrives in Singapore at 12:10 pm local time. The return leg, Flight FD 3029, departs Singapore at 12:45 pm and reaches Phuket at 1:20 pm.

Thai AirAsia CEO Tossapon Bijleveld announced the new service at a press conference at the Novotel Coralia Phuket.

He said the daily service was launched in response to increased customer demand, as the former twice-weekly flights were booked to almost 80% capacity.

K. Tossapon said the airline has also

added an extra flight from Bangkok to Singapore, raising the number of direct daily flights between the two capitals to three.

Currently, the Bangkok-Singapore route is operating at 40%-50% capacity, but K. Tossapon expects the new service and related promotions to increase the figure to 70%-80% within three weeks of the launch.

About 110,000 Singaporeans flew on AirAsia between February 16 and November 3, he said, adding that he expects bookings to increase as much as 30% as a result of the expanded Phuket-Singapore service, which will boost AirAsia's daily capacity between Thailand and Singapore to 4,144 seats.

Tickets for the flights range in cost from 1,200 to 3,500 baht, depending on how far in advance they are bought.

Tourism Authority of Thailand Region 4 Director Suwalai Pinpradab said that with the new service, the total number of incoming flights to Phuket between November and

March will increase 26% compared with the same period last high season.

"Last year only 40,000 Singaporeans came to Phuket. However, the availability of low-cost flights, coupled with TAT promotions, could turn Phuket into a popular weekend shopping destination for Singaporeans and Malaysians," she said.

The TAT will continue to market Phuket as a shopping, food, spa and health tourism destination, she said, adding that the agency plans to attract more women and well-heeled visitors from Indonesia.

K. Suwalai said that the overall number of tourists visiting Phuket, both foreign and domestic, was about 2 million during the first half of 2004 – an increase of about 15% compared with the same period last year. She expects about 500,000 more arrivals by year end, with Germany, Taiwan and the UK expected to be the three top sources of foreign tourists, respectively.

CAT planning to upgrade Internet connection

PHUKET: CAT has announced that it will upgrade its Bangkok-Phuket Internet connection, which is dedicated to providing CAT and TT&T's 1,000-baht-a-month broadband services.

The line, which serves CAT's Hi Net and TT&T's T-net services, will be upgraded from its current maximum rate of 8 megabits per second (Mbps) to 155Mbps.

The upgrade should, theoretically, greatly improve service for Hi Net and T-net users, who are currently offered a maximum connection rate of 2Mbps shared among a maximum of 50 users.

Since the launch in March of the Hi Net and T-net promotions as part of the government's ICT City project, users of the services have suffered considerable reductions in connection speeds because they have shared the same 8-Mbps connection to Bangkok.

The upgrade is expected to be complete next year.

Somyot Tanapirunthorn, Bangkok-based Assistant Vice-President of CAT Telecom's Service Development Department, also invited all other Internet Service Providers (ISPs) serving Phuket to have their connections upgraded.

Doing this, he said, would make it unnecessary to create a direct link to the Internet from Phuket, as was previously planned.

"With connection speeds of 155Mbps, the added distance of going through Bangkok will not make much of a difference when connecting to [distant] locations such as the US," he said.

CAT also plans to triple the transmission rate between Thailand and the US from 1 gigabit per second to 3Gbps next year through an upgrade in its "peer-link" with that country.

– Gategeo Phetsawang

Aboriginal art goes on display

KOH KAEW: Prints by some of Australia's most celebrated Aboriginal artists are currently on display at Dulwich International College, in an exhibition entitled "Dreamtime".

The exhibit, on loan from the Australian Embassy in Bangkok, comprises 23 linocut, woodcut and lithograph prints by Aboriginal artists including Jimmy Pike, Rover Thomas and Doris Ginginara.

It was due to be officially opened on November 9 by the Australian Ambassador, Miles Kupa.

The exhibition, in the secondary school foyer until November 17, is open to the public.

Between November 19 and December 5, it will be on display at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket.

TRT confirms its candidates for MP

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Thai Rak Thai (TRT) on November 4 confirmed that the party's candidates for the general election, scheduled to take place by February 13 next year, will be Dr Sriyada Palimapan and Wisut Santikul.

Dr Sriyada will contest District 1 (Phuket City and immediate vicinity), while former Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) Vice-President K. Wisut will contest District 2 (the rest of the island).

Both of Phuket's current MPs are Democrats.

Dr Sriyada told a press conference at the Town Inn Hotel that TRT had wanted to work for Phuket for the past four years,



It's official: Dr Sriyada Palimapan (left) and Wisut Santikul will run for Parliament.

and that the island has already benefited from initiatives from the ruling party.

These included the Andaman Tourist Rescue Project, Chalong harbor development, and infrastructure projects to improve road, traffic, and water and electricity supplies, as

well as educational projects and anti-terrorism and security measures.

The party's proposals for the future include the creation of a duty-free zone for tourists, the development of health tourism and support for a software park, the candidates added.

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French yachting industry checks out Phuket

PHUKET CITY: Representatives of French companies running up-market boating vacations have been in Phuket to investigate the possibility of bringing boats here.

Officials and members of the Fédération des Industries Nautique (FIN) – which represents more than 600 companies in the French marine leisure industry – met with Governor Udomsak Usawarakura on November 4 and talked with offic-

ers involved in the marine industry, including staff from Customs and the Marine Office.

Gov Udomsak told the *Gazette* that the visit followed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and his French counterpart, Jean-Pierre Raffarin.

FIN member Bruno Voisard told the *Gazette*, “Phuket is a good place to operate from because many French people visit

here, and the island also attracts visitors from Britain, Germany, the United States, all over the world.”

Mr Voisard said he and his colleagues discussed with government officials practical details of doing business in Phuket, including immigration procedures, taxation and labor law.

Franck Bauguil, Vice-President of Yacht Sales and Ownership of international yacht char-

ter company The Moorings, which despite being an American company is also a member of the FIN, said that his firm is looking to do business in Phuket.

“We operate more than 100 boats worldwide and we have seen a lot of destinations. Phuket – and Thailand in general – is one of the top attractions for sailors,” he said, adding that The Moorings is looking for a franchise partner in Phuket.

– Gategeo Phetsawang

Alleged jewel thief arrested on Koh Lanta

KOH LANTA: Anthony “Dirk” De Weirtdt, wanted for questioning in connection with missing jewelry worth an estimated 18 million baht, was arrested on Koh Lanta on November 5 following a tip-off.

De Weirtdt, a Belgian who was formerly the factory manager of Bangkok’s CB Fine Jewelry, disappeared shortly after precious stones and other items were found missing from the company’s safe on October 23.

Because of a public holiday, the missing items were not noticed until the following Tuesday.

De Weirtdt was arrested by officers from the Metropolitan Police Bureau Division 6 from Bangkok at 5 pm on November 5 in front of the Lanta Palace Resort on Koh Lanta.

He was taken to Bangkok and paraded in front of the media on November 6 and has, police said, confessed to the crime.

It appears that De Weirtdt gave some of the jewelry to his wife, 39-year-old Lalin Boonmee. She too was arrested.

De Weirtdt has been charged with robbery. Officers found passports in his possession in at least two other names – Dominique Jean Denis Verbestel and Richard P Branson – so charges relating to forged documents look likely to follow.

Police are also coordinating their investigation with the Belgian Embassy in Bangkok after a check on De Weirtdt’s background revealed that, while in Antwerp, he allegedly defrauded several gem suppliers.

On-Urma Chaisamroeng, secretary to the managing director of CB Fine Jewelry, said that the US\$50,000 (2.3-million-baht) reward offered by the firm will go to the arresting officers rather than to the person or persons who reported De Weirtdt’s whereabouts to the police.

De Weirtdt and Lalin remain in police custody in Bangkok.

– Kamol Pirat

WTO helps develop sustainable tourism

PHUKET CITY: Developing tourism as a sustainable industry for Phuket was the topic discussed by World Tourism Organisation adviser Hans Carl Jacobsen and local officials at a meeting on November 8 at Phuket Provincial Hall.

Joining Mr Jacobsen at the seminar were representatives of the Office of Tourism Development and the Ministry of Sports and Tourism, as well as Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura.

Mr Jacobsen has been commissioned to research and develop a national tourism development plan for Thailand, and the trip to Phuket was part of his remit.

He told his audience, “Thailand is a big tourism destination ... The issue is to make sure that tourism is sustainable.

“I want to formulate a plan to create a new product in Thailand.

“We need the cooperation of both public and private orga-

nizations to develop new products and new markets.”

To start with, Mr Jacobsen recommended that Phuket City should have more street signs, so that visitors can find their way around more easily, and that more be done to meet the needs of pedestrians.

He said, “Vehicles are the kings of the street. We need to think about pedestrians.

“Tourists want to come to a nice town, to a nice place, [so that is what] we need to create.”

Gov Udomsak said Mr Jacobsen’s final report on the tourism development plan should be ready early next year.

He added, “For Phuket, I recommend a strategy to develop five main [aspects of tourism]: health tourism, marina development, shopping, MICE [meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions] and IT.”

He said these would be considered along with Mr Jacobsen’s recommendations.

– Anongnat Sartpisut

Nong Poi wins world beauty title

By Gategeo Phetsawang

PATTAYA: Phuket-born Treechada “Poi” Petcharat has become the first Miss International Queen.

K. Poi – born Saknarin Malayapan – beat 23 other transgender contestants from 12 countries to win the competition, the first such international event organized by Tiffany’s Show Pattaya Co Ltd and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

The other contestants in the November 6 competition came from Indonesia, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malaysia, Laos, Germany and France.

K. Poi won US\$7,000 (about 315,000 baht) in cash, a crown, a trophy, gifts from the sponsors and a domestic airplane ticket. She also won the swimsuit competition, for a further US\$1,000 (45,000 baht) in prize money.

K. Poi told the *Gazette*, “It’s like a dream. I think the committee must have decided I really did



Nong Poi: ‘It’s like a dream.’

look like a girl and had a good shape in my swimsuit.

“I was asked, if I could change anything in the past what would I do? I said that I wouldn’t change anything.”

Second was Arissa Rani of India while Ma Cristina Dandan of the Philippines was third.

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Queer News

THE FINAL UPSHOT

BANGKOK: Police arrested a 27-year-old man after he was caught taking photos up a girl's skirt at a motor show at Central Plaza on Phra Ram III Rd last month.

Worakarn Jaruphat was collared by security guards after "Amp", a young woman taking part in the Miss Motorshow Contest, grabbed his wrist after she felt something touch her legs.

When police officers inspected Worakarn's gray knapsack, they found it contained a digital camera. A hole had been cut into the side of the bag, allowing the camera lens to zoom in and out.

Worakarn, who told police he was a researcher working for the Finance Ministry, claimed he had wanted to take some photos – but got caught before he had the chance. His camera showed otherwise.

He admitted to taking pictures up girls' skirts twice before – at Thammasart University. These photos, he said, had been for "personal use" only and he had not sold them. He was charged, nevertheless, with taking obscene pictures with intent to distribute.

Police kept the pictures of Amp's undies that were stored in Worakarn's camera – as evidence, of course.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

Thinner can be a blast

SAMUT SAKHON: As any drug-taker driven to extremes by the government's War on Drugs Part III can tell you, taking a few deep breaths of paint thinner can give you a buzz.

The downside of breathing in thinners is that it may also knock your judgment a teeny bit off kilter, to the point where you forget that it can also be dangerously volatile.

This, perhaps, is what happened to a crew of boatbuilders at the Mahachai Docks on the morning of November 2.

Three workers were putting the finishing touches to a 40-meter fishing boat, which was still in drydock, when they decided to take a smoke break in the boat's hold, where all the paint and thinners were kept. The resulting blast left two dead and one in a coma.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer with the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), is not convinced that ordering gas stations to close between midnight and 5 am has had much effect in Phuket.

"It may have saved some fuel, but I doubt it's saved much, because people are still using their cars just as they used to," he said.

Changes in Phuket are often measured by the effect they have on tourism, but K. Teerayuth says that the earlier closing of gas stations is likely to pass unnoticed by visitors.

"Many tourists – around 90% of them – travel during the day, when the gas stations are open.

"For residents, it's just that things aren't quite as convenient as they were before. It's still very much up to the car user whether to use the car less."

However, he added, since Phuket is quite a rich province, residents can afford to buy new cars, and when they do, they appear to be opting for models with lower fuel consumption.

In addition, figures collected from the island's 44 gas stations by the Phuket Energy Business Office (PEBO) show that sales of fuel have fallen by 5% since opening hours were restricted on September 9 this year.

PEBO officer Tongrat Vannach told the Gazette that before

Getting the

As the price of oil has soared on the world market, the Thai government has been subsidizing oil used in Thailand to the tune of around 120 million baht per day, or more than 10 billion baht between January 10 and June 1 this year.

At the same time, the Cabinet has instituted a number of measures aimed at reducing the amount of fuel consumed by the country, including ordering gas stations to close between midnight and 5am, the idea being that the less they are open, the less fuel drivers will buy.

But critics have argued that people are buying as much fuel as ever, they are just making sure they get to the gas stations before they close, and they are also continuing to buy and run private cars rather than use public transport, especially in places such as Phuket, which doesn't have an effective public transport system.

So how effective has the restriction on gas station opening hours been? The Gazette's Gategeo Phet-sawang and Sripansa Somboon find out.

the restrictions there were only around 10 gas stations on the island that were open 24 hours a day; these had been affected by the reduced opening hours, but, overall, the restricted hours had made little difference to the amount of gas they sold.

"That said," he said, "it's important to realize that reducing operating hours is just one

measure implemented by the government.

"Closing gas stations earlier saves electricity too. Each individual measure might save only a small amount of fuel, but that translates into a much bigger amount when added up across the nation as a whole."

He suggested that another way to reduce fuel consumption

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most out of Phuket's gas



Gas station operating hours have been restricted, but there seems to have been little impact on consumption by Phuket's motorists.

would be for people to use public transport more, but it would be difficult to change the habits of car users.

Wichitpong Chuenthong-surp, Director of Depot Management for PTT gas stations, said the company's eight stations in Phuket hadn't noticed a marked difference in sales in the two months since the shorter hours were introduced.

Limiting gas station opening hours might not alter people's consumption much, said, K. Wichitpong, but raising the price of fuel would.

He conceded, "Early closing has saved fuel, but only a small amount. There weren't

many drivers in Phuket who would fill up their vehicles between midnight and 5 am, and those people now come and get their fuel before we close.

"The government has been trying to subsidize oil prices, but I think this situation is more about politics than anything else."

He questioned whether reducing gas station opening hours really is the most effective way of persuading people to use less fuel.

"The number of cars on Phuket is rising," he said. "Look at the traffic jams outside Central Festival.

"If the government really

wants to save energy, it should increase the price of fuel. Forget about the subsidy, make the local price of fuel reflect the price in the real world.

"That would bring down consumption, as car users would make more of an effort to use their cars less – and so use less fuel."

But Wittaya Yukulthorn, the manager of Bangkonthee Petroleum's Bang Chak gas station in Rawai, believes the early

closing policy has made, and continues to make, a difference, because it is saving energy, as well as reducing costs for operators.

His station used to close at midnight, but now closes at 7 pm, because the number of nighttime customers has fallen.

"Since we have started to close early, we have saved money on electricity, as well as staff wages, but our sales haven't fallen, because customers make sure to fill up before we close.

"Drivers need to use fuel. Even if the price rises, drivers are still going to have to buy it."

Anurak Paosombut, the manager of Toongka Service Co Ltd, said early closing is really hurting his business.

He told the *Gazette*, "We used to open 24 hours a day, but since we started to close earlier, we have been selling 30,000 liters per month less than before.

"In October 2003, we sold 360,000 litres; in October this year we sold 330,000."

Government policy may be saving gasoline, but it's not saving large amounts because it's still up to individual drivers how much they use, and people continue to use their cars, said K. Anurak.

He said he is aware that some drivers buy black-market fuel from roadside vendors, but he said drivers probably bought it because it was cheaper, not because it is available when the gas stations are closed.

Somma Kruwattana Wong, manager of Ngan Tawee Service Ltd, supports the government's policy, even though sales at his pumps have fallen by 15% since early closing was introduced.

"It has saved gas and saved electricity," he said, adding that only a few people would use the pumps between midnight and 5am before early closing came in.

For Somchai Patum Ratanachoi, the manager of an Andaman Oil Ltd Caltex gas station, early closing makes economic sense, even though it has caused sales to fall by a fifth.

He said, "Our filling station has closed at 11pm for a long time. We don't really need to open later than that because, even though we lost 20% of our sales through closing earlier, it cost us more to keep the gas station open during the night than it does to open during the day, and we take more money during the day than we did during the night."

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By Dhirarat Boonkongsan

Elephants are known the world over for their size and strength as working animals and, in Thailand, as a dignified mode of transport for royalty and a crucial part of the army of the past.

More recently, since becoming largely redundant from the logging industry, they have become known more as a patient form of transport for tourists, or worse, as pitiful sights "begging" for food on the streets of Bangkok and other cities.

What they are less well known for are their skills with a paintbrush – an image that Phuket-based writer Jim Newport aims to change.

Mr Newport, the author of *The Vampire of Siam*, thought it would be a good idea to put together a calendar of elephant art and, with the help of Richard Lair, an adviser to the world-renowned Thai Elephant Conservation Center in Lampang province. And that's just what he's done.

It may be possible to persuade an elephant to hold a brush in its trunk, and even to get it to put that brush in contact with a canvas – but do elephants actually know what they are doing with the brush, in the same way a great artist does when creating a masterpiece? Mr Lair thinks so.

"A human chooses the colors, a human changes the brush, so what's left for the elephant to contribute? Only the use of the brush and the use of space. But that's a huge 'only', in the [same] sense that all you have to decide on when you do calligraphy is brushwork and space.

"Is it great art? I think it is, but not in the classical museum sense of the word. It's great deco-



Seven-year-old artist Luuk Kob approaches the canvas (left). After some deft brushwork, project organizers (from left to right) Jim Newport, Richard Lair and Patrick "Shrimp" Gauvin show off the painting that now graces the cover of the 2005 Thai Elephant Paintings calendar.

STARVING ARTISTS

orative art, and there is certainly nothing wrong with using art for decorative purposes."

Mr Newport said, "I asked Richard whether [elephants] really enjoy painting. He said he wasn't too sure, but he said they do understand work – the task. They think they are working, and they know when it's time to do a job."

An insight into the mind of the elephantine artists may be gained from the "orchestra" of elephants in Lampang, who have been trained to play musical instruments.

Mr Newport described watching the elephant orchestra at work. He said, "They played their instruments, they banged on

the drums ... when they did that, we pretended to go outside and left them playing music. We saw them get very excited.

"Their ears flapped and they raised their trunks. It was like they were talking, as if they were jazz musicians talking about the music they had just played. That was pretty cool."

As for their painting, he explained, "They obviously know in their minds where they want to put the colors, although we really don't know for sure if elephants can see in color. That's an experiment that has not been done yet.

"Richard is hoping to raise money for experiments to find out about this, but it costs a lot

of money."

Although the elephants' handlers control much of the process, isn't as forced as it may seem.

"Elephants are known to 'paint' naturally, by holding a nail and scratching it on a wall. They don't paint out of frustration. They paint the same way as humans did when they first started painting in caves."

The elephants also have freedom of expression, he said.

"Maybe every elephant can paint, but it's not every elephant that actually wants to paint. Not all elephants do well in a limited space and can ignore distractions. Not every elephant understands what they have to do

and only a few paint well," explained Mr Newport.

"If we put the brush in the trunk of an elephant, it may play around, but it should focus on what it is doing.

"I was once painted on by an elephant after he was given a brush with color on it. He looked at the canvas and looked at me, then he painted on my shirt, which we didn't want him to do; we wanted him to do it on the canvas."

He also recalled one artistic outburst while shooting pictures for the calendar.

"I had the idea to get all of these elephants to bathe in the water, and then get one of them painting – to make people think he was painting the other elephants.

"The elephant wasn't painting the picture at the time. He'd painted it already, but we put it there and gave him the brush.

"The elephant started moving the brush across the canvas, and as we were taking the photograph the elephant went a bit mad and started making loads of marks on the canvas."

The painting was later re-touched to repair the damage.

The calendar was painted in Lampang, but Mr Newport thinks a similar project could be tried in Phuket, where there almost 200 elephants.

"As we know, elephants are in trouble because they have been taken to cities like Bangkok to work, but this [painting] could really help them out."

The calendar, priced at 700 baht, is available at Divers Bar on Surin Beach; Mom Tri's Boat-house in Kata; Jackie Lease travel agency in Kamala, and Asia Books at Phuket Airport.

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Locals call for better dolphin protection

Following the recent CITES international environmental convention in Bangkok, which focused on the protection of endangered species in Thailand, environmental groups in Kanom, on the Thai mainland opposite Koh Samui, have stepped up their campaign to improve the protection of dolphins.

The CITES conference (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) saw dolphins classified as deserving "level 2" protection, meaning that they can only be disturbed subject to certain restrictions.

However, local environmentalists have appealed to the government for dolphins to have "level 1" protection, meaning that they, by law, must not be damaged or harmed, especially by commercial concerns.

Local environmentalists say the seas around Koh Samui once had a lot of dolphins, but unrestricted fishing practices and rising levels of water pollution have devastated the local population over the last few years. The number of dolphins in the waters around the islands is now thought to be very small.

The dolphin is already considered an endangered species in the Gulf, and the government is

FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND



By Commander Sammy Swan

now discussing new ways of protecting these enchanting creatures before they are rendered extinct in this region.

The Fisheries Department has been asked to look after dolphins, and owners of large fishing boats are being approached to support the campaign.

There is also a 10-million-baht project under consideration, which would involve creating artificial coral reefs to re-establish underwater flora and fauna.

Many local people on and



ALL FOR ORPHANS: The Rotary Club of Koh Samui sponsored a weekend retreat for 11- and 12-year-old children from the Mercy Center Orphanage in Bangkok on November 5-7.

Treats enjoyed by the children included bowling, trips to the Samui snake farm, the aquarium and the tiger zoo.

The Rotary Club of Koh Samui plans to make this an annual event. Anyone interested in joining this or other Samui Rotary Club projects can call President Paul Hawkins at Tel: 09-9098563.

around Samui fear that if the request for better protection for dolphins is not implemented swiftly, these delightful creatures may soon be just a memory in the Thai Gulf.

No fowl 'flu: Chan Naroong Puttikultasaem, a top veterinarian working for the government

in Surat Thani, recently announced that there have been no cases of bird 'flu in Surat Thani province.

Extensive research and observations were carried out, and not one case of the disease was found. However, the government is ready to act should any cases be uncovered, and any reports of

dead poultry are immediately investigated, with every chicken checked for bird 'flu before being released for consumption.

Over the OTOP: One Tambon One Product (OTOP) goods from Koh Samui are being rated in terms of one- to five-star quality in an effort to ensure only the island's best products are entered in a OTOP contest in Surat Thani.

District Chief Yumjut Lim-suwan said that stringent checks will be made to ensure products entered in the contest are of the highest quality, including the popular *kalamae*, a coconut paste used as the basis of many Thai sweets, which has been rated as a five-star product.

The famous Samui *langsaad* fruit has been rated a four-star product, as was batik made on Samui and a special herbal tea.

These four products will be the island's main contenders at the contest. If they do well in Surat Thani, they will be entered into the national contest which will be held in Bangkok later this year.

Meanwhile, officials are looking forward to feasting on the Thai treats as part of the testing process.

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

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This week



BRIDGE OF SIZE: Derek Priest (left), Director of the Phuket Bridge Association, presents a commemorative plaque to John Newman, Director of the International Bridge Club of Australia, at a recent tournament at the Phuket Merlin Hotel.



HIGH DIVES ALL ROUND: Managing Directors of Ocean Zone Pro Tech, Andrew Fortune and Mathew Partridge (standing, left and center) gather with friends for the company's grand opening on October 30.



AHOY! (above) Among those at the recent launch of the *Siam Marine* magazine at Jimmy's Lighthouse, were (back row, from left): Linda Dillingsley; MD of ArtAsia Press John Everingham; John Magee; GM of ArtAsia Press Ian Jamieson; and Lighthouse Manager Don Dillingsley; (front row, from left): Kanittha Thanthanasap, Nannapat Tanalert and Nuttibon Laodee.

COLOR-CODED MESSAGE: (below) Phuket City's latest nightspot, Barcode Pub and Restaurant, opened on October 27. Managing Director Bobby Tsang (in white shirt) and friends soak up the atmosphere.



A CHILLING SITE: (above) DeeDee Bunnag (2nd from left), Manager of Phuket City's Da Jam Pub and Restaurant, celebrates Hallowe'en with suitably attired friends.

THE THREE GRACES: (below) Art lovers Daojai (left), Tasha (center) and Tik amuse themselves at the recent opening of Galerie Martini at The Plaza, Surin Beach. Behind them is one of a number of pieces on display at the gallery by acclaimed Thai artist Budis.



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Sudsy stud settles in Spain

Is there happiness after moving away from Phuket? Apparently there is for **Gerard Cornelje**, founder of SEA Entertainment, who has moved his base of operations to Southern Spain.

He has been playing for celebrity parties, including Lionel Richie's recent birthday bash in London and a cocktail party for Tina Turner and Bill Gates – who are apparently good friends.

In his spare time, Gerard has been renting his hunky frame out as a male model and was used in a photo shoot where he was featured in a soapy bath with 17 young Romanian girls.

Larking about: Gerard is not the only one experiencing a bit of glamour. Last week Trisara, that much-anticipated new resort managed by **Anthony Lark**, opened to receive its first guests.

Most of us know Anthony from his years as GM at the Amanpuri. Originally from Sydney, Anthony was trained at the Wentworth Hotel and The Regent and spent his time cleaning rooms and bussing dishes before becoming one of Australia's youngest hotel managers.

In 1988, at just 27 years old, Anthony accepted an offer by Adrian Zecha to open a small, "eccentric" resort, which became the Amanpuri.

Four years ago, Anthony began work on the 33-room project that has become Trisara. With his considerable international contacts, he has brought together a team that promises to bring a higher standard of service to Phuket.

Sven Erik Krauss, who has joined Trisara as Executive Chef and F&B Director, was the opening Executive Chef at The Sukhothai in Bangkok and was last year voted Best Swiss Chef Overseas by the highly-respected *Gault Millau* restaurant guide.

George della Pietra developed the world-class Amanspa at the Amanpuri, which was given the distinction by the *Gallivanter's Guide* in the UK of being the "world's best hotel spa".

He's now joined Trisara and is using his many years of experience to create a healing retreat at Trisara.



ALL WRAPPED UP: Whether you're looking for a first-class cocktail or sexy sequins, Jenny Vild (left) excels at making both.

I spent a night at Trisara and I thoroughly enjoyed the old-fashioned hospitality matched with hip service. Anthony and his managers spend their evenings ensuring guests are totally pampered.

Vild Thing: While at Trisara I spotted **Jenny Vild** advising the bartenders on her distinctive, trendy cocktails.

Jenny, the well-known and gracious hostess at Laem Singh Beach, has kept rock stars and international models happy with her big smile and delicious cocktails.

She has advised the Watermark on their famous Friday afternoon drinks, as well as the Amanpuri and any other resort that wants sexy, attractive cocktails.

"My favorite is the passion fruit margarita," she offers, "and at Trisara I've introduced the Chili Moon, a martini-style drink with vodka, Cointreau, shredded kaffir lime leaf, chopped fresh chili and a dash of lime juice and sugar syrup."

Jenny has also developed her own clothing line, Shivadiva, a line of sexy sequined transparent gowns, perfect to wear over

a bikini or just as an aid in seduction.

"I love anything glamorous, including disco balls and sequins," she smiles. "And I've had a fantastic response both here and in Australia to my kaftans."

Her only problem is finding enough nimble fingers to sew on those sequins fast enough to meet demand. You can contact Jenny at jenny@shiva-diva.com if you'd like to look as good as she does in a Shivadiva.

Rockin' Rockfish:

The genial host at Rockfish restaurant, at the southern end of Kamala Bay, **Richard Anthony**, tells me that Sunday, November 14, is the launch of Soundwaves, Phuket's only daytime party venue, which will feature rotating DJs from Bangkok and samples from his superb menu.

"We plan to party every Sunday from 3 pm to 9 pm with

Thailand's hottest DJs. Expect sexy, deep funky sounds," Richard tells me, "and discounts on cocktails such as our Thaitini, a brisk combination of vodka, ginger and lemon grass."

Next Thursday, Rockfish will kick off the tourist season with a live band, Déjà vu, a French duo with back-up who play bossa nova, soul, reggae and anything else that gets you moving. It'll be the opening of the restaurant's dinner club and will feature an especially tasty menu.

Call Richard at 09-2873161 for more information.

Nile style: The Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC) gala extravaganza will be held on December 4 at the newly re-branded Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort and Spa.

This is the biggest costume party of the year and the PIWC has chosen An Evening on the Nile as the theme. Here's your chance to dress up as Cleopatra or Mark Anthony, or both. You can don the costume of King Tut or one of his slaves. For those of you with a past life in Egypt, this is your opportunity to relive those glorious days.

Maryanne van der Reijden, the event's organizer, explains, "The students at Dulwich College have made 94 meters of hieroglyphics for the big event.



Off the WALL

With Bruce Stanley

And this will be the first time that many people will see the considerable talents of the Pharaohs, the resident dancers at the Sphinx Cabaret in Patong Beach, who will be showing off their manly talents."

Christopher Stevens, Executive Chef at the Hilton, plans a feast of spicy lamb kofta, slowly baked fig and lemon chicken and desserts such as warm date and rice pudding. A full international menu will also be available.

Last year the event sold out early, so book your tickets with Maryanne at Tel: 06-1205413.

Capt Kiatkul Suwan, Commander Officer (CO) of the Naval Air Section, Third Naval Area Command of the Royal Thai Navy (RTN) casually describes his job as a "dangerous" occupation.

But ask Capt Kiatkul, who has overall responsibility for Search and Rescue (SAR) operations for Ranong, Trang, Satun, Krabi, Phang Nga as well as Phuket provinces – some 48,000 square kilometers – if he considers himself a hero and he says, "No, I'm not; I just do my job responsibly."

Ready to fly in all but the very worst conditions, his Sikorsky S-76B helicopter has an operational radius of 128 kilometers from its base at Phuket International Airport. Chopper and crew are on stand-by 24 hours a day, and can get to the scene of a problem within 30 minutes of receiving a call for help.

Capt Kiatkul, 38, was born in Lop Buri Province into a family of military aviators, and his joining the RTN in 1989 secured the family's relationship with the three main branches of the Thai military.

His father was an Army helicopter pilot and his brother trained as Royal Thai Air Force pilot. "However," says Capt Kiatkul, "just before my brother completed his five-year training program, he failed his final medical. It is really sad when so much hard work goes to waste."

Navy helicopter pilots follow the same path initially as all naval officers. But following a commissioning course at the RTN Academy School in Samut Prakan, they then choose which field they would like to specialize in. For Capt Kiatkul, this meant aviation.

To pursue his dream, he attended the Civil Aviation Training Center at Prachuap Khiri Khan before undergoing military aviation training and being stationed at an RTN base.

According to Capt Kiatkul, who has been in command of the Naval Air Section Phuket since October last year, "A pilot – a good pilot – must be an expert both at flying and understanding how his machine works, and not just from an academic perspective."

He draws an analogy with driving a car. However much you learn in a classroom about the

View over Patong. Photo taken by one of the Helicam Remote Control Helicopters

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A down-to-earth pilot

forces involved in making a car go or an aircraft fly, he says, theory is no substitute for practical experience.

"The big difference between a car and an aircraft," he says with a rare smile, "is that cars go forward or backward, left or right. Aircraft also go up ... and down."

Capt Kiatkul acknowledges that relatively few rescues take place around Phuket, but perhaps because of this, he and his team – he has 60 personnel at his disposal – train continuously.

Part of the training for all Naval Air Section personnel, and on occasion, civilians, is rigorous survival training, sea ditchings and how to live off the land should they make a forced landing in a remote area.

"The training is nerve-racking," says Capt Kiatkul, "but I look at it this way: my team have to practice – and pretend to be the victims – in more or less every rescue scenario that they may one day face for real."

"This way, they can empathize with the victims as well as learn how to perform almost instinctively. By the time my crew have been through the training, they have dealt with their fear; they can get on and do the job."

One of the ironies of SAR missions is that the very same extreme weather conditions – thankfully rare in the waters of the Andaman Sea – that may cause a distress call to be made may also prevent the SAR helicopter from taking off.

"Our missions can be hampered by extreme weather and sea conditions ... it is frustrating when you have to sit just waiting for the weather to break so that



CAPT KIATKUL SUWAN: 'By the time my crew have been through the training, they have dealt with their fear; they can get on and do the job.'

you can go out," he says.

"We have to work fast," says Capt Kiatkul. "Our aircraft are fully fueled and ready to fly within 15 minutes – the time it takes for our pre-flight briefing – of a distress call coming through from the operations center at the Third Naval Area Command at Cape Panwa."

"We carry sufficient fuel for outward and return journeys of 15 minutes each – we must factor in 'loitering' time, the time it actually takes, if necessary, to hover and rescue people."

Capt Kiatkul gives an insight into the life-or-death decisions he, as captain, may have to make: "There was one mission where we were scrambled to res-

cue seamen from a fishing boat. The boat was pitching in heavy seas and the diver was sent down on the winch to rescue one of the crew."

"For a moment there was the danger that the sling might have become snagged on the superstructure of the vessel. If that happens, then obviously the helicopter cannot move. If the ship had sunk, we would have gone

down with it," he explains.

"The winchman has to be prepared – on my order – to cut the cable if the helicopter is in danger. We would then have to rescue both my crewman and the crew of the vessel."

In addition to the S-76B helicopter, the section also has two Dornier Do 228-212 fixed-wing aircraft. Their role is to perform long-range search missions, to locate and, if necessary, mark the rescue location by dropping marker dye or parachute flares, and to vector the helicopter crew to the correct location.

But the life of an SAR chopper pilot is not just about effecting daring rescues at sea. Says Capt Kiatkul, "Because I am the CO, I also have a lot of administrative work to do. It's stressful but it has to be done," he smiles.

In addition to his operational and training responsibilities, the SAR crew is also the first choice in southern Thailand when it comes to flying members of the Thai Royal Family.

This duty – "I feel honored to have this responsibility," Capt Kiatkul says – has seen him pilot helicopters for HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, HRH Princess Chulabhorn Valayalak-sana and HRH Princess Soamsavali on official engagements around the region.

As with most aviators, Capt Kiatkul is down-to-earth and al-



SKY CAPTAINS: (from top) The SAR chopper races to the scene of a simulated accident, before lifting the 'victims' to safety.

ways professional in his approach to life and his dream job. "If you ask me what constitutes a successful mission, the answer is simple: one where we get to the emergency, rescue the victim and get everyone back to base safely."

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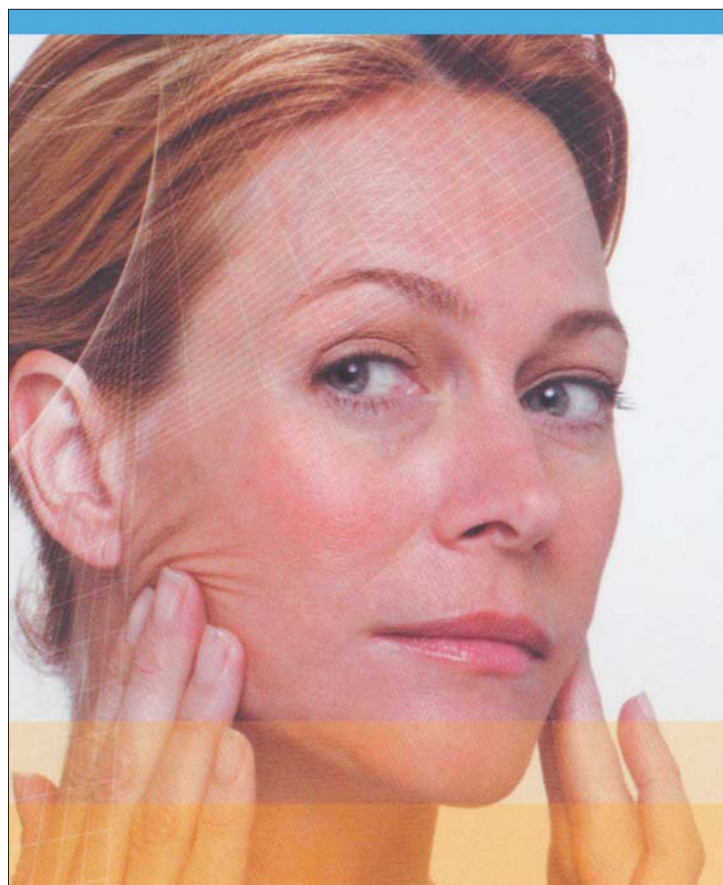
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EAR CANDY

by ANDY

The title track of Donald Harrison's recently-released CD, *Heroes*, is contemporary jazz stripped bare to bass, sax and drums and is perhaps not for the uninitiated.

But wake up to the shock of the new and it shakes the listener from the torpor of clichéd contemporary jazz, rewarding the ear with such attention to detail in its improvisation as to compel one to listen to the other 10 tracks on the album.

Post-bop alto saxophonist Harrison's approach to the standard *My Funny Valentine* with bassist Ron Carter – no stranger to regular readers of *Ear Candy* – is, by comparison, an homage. One can almost imagine Harrison sitting back during the recording to listen to Carter's stunning fretwork.

Almost two minutes of introspective bass solo transport the listener into places quite simply off the musical map; it's easily some of the most soulful bass

recorded by Carter in the past 20 years.

Track 7, *Candlelight* – a Carter composition – is the CD's most sensational piece. Harrison deftly brushes the keys and coaxes note after note from his soul. The style is playful, almost flirtatious at times, before developing an urgency and climaxing in glorious peace. Jazz as an allegory for sex? Oh yes.

Why Harrison – who came to prominence with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers in the 1980s – has not yet reached a wider audience with his personal and uncompromising, yet still accessible, style is hard to fathom.

Perhaps *Heroes* will set the record straight.

Heroes, Donald Harrison, Nagel Heyer NH 2041. Total playing time: 65 minutes, 5 seconds.

Cuban son singer Ibrahim Ferrer – a member of the Buena Vista Social Club (BVSC) – no doubt laughed when he received the "Best New Latin Artist" Grammy in 2000. He had, after all, been

singing professionally since 1941.

His recent album *Buenos Hermanos* is, like the 1998 BVSC album and movie that featured him and his septuagenarian and octogenarian colleagues, produced by the comparative youngster Ry Cooder.

Cooder's deft style – and sheer respect for his elders – shines through.

Many of the songs are from the '40s and '50s, and are delivered with the same easy grace by Ferrer. His voice is so languidly effortless as to bring to mind images of long drinks, white sand, palm trees and exotic women.

Thank God that Phuket has all of those things, too; I can't imagine the frustration one might feel huddling round a cigarette for warmth listening to *Buenos Hermanos* in a wintry Novosibirsk...

The title track of the album – which translates, appropriately enough, as *Good Brothers* – dates back to 1943. Sounding as spritely as Ferrer does, its passion is infectious. Who cares that the lyrics – *Me dejan las patas, me dejan los gordos, me*

dejan las tripas – refer to the parts of a pig left by his "good brothers" for him to eat?

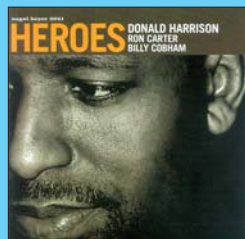
Track 3 – *La Música Cubana* – is a collaborative work between pianist and fellow BVSC member Chucho Valdés and Ferrer, and sings, you've guessed it, the praises of Cuban music and musicians.

The track ends with the names of some of the greats – among them Barbarito Diez, Paulina Alvarez and Pacho Alonso – being name-checked. But best of all, they simply jammed and ad-libbed the entire song in a just single take.

It's just as well that Ferrer was given a Grammy in 2000; this year the US refused to grant him a visa to attend the Grammys, mumbling something about "...detrimental to the interest of the United States".

Anyway, this album is delightful stuff from start to finish. Dig out the rum and cigars – and party.

Buenos Hermanos, Ibrahim Ferrer, World Circuit WC D065. Total playing time: 68 minutes, 23 seconds.



Not all car journeys are interesting, and while drivers must give their full attention to the road, there's sometimes precious little to keep passengers entertained.

This is where the new portable DVD players can be such a boon, turning any vehicle into a movie theater on wheels, in much the same way that most long-haul airliners these days have small screens in the back of each seat for showing movies.

One compact car-and-carry player is the Nextbase SDV756-B, which can play DVDs, as well as MP3s, CDs and VCDs.

The 5.6-inch TFT CD monitor has a resolution of 300,000 pixels and Kodak picture support, as well as a built-in Dolby digital sound system.

The player can be con-

GADGETS & GIZMOS

by Gategaeo

Mobile movies

nected to a computer, TV, projector, video, PlayStation and video camera.

Connecting the main unit to a compatible decoder or amplifier/speakers with a coaxial cable gives more powerful sound, although there is also an AV cable for connecting the player to a normal speaker system.

The player's basic functions are: play, fast speed, slow motion, repeat playback, zoom, specific scene search, subtitle selection, change of angle and change of soundtrack language.



BYE BYE BACKSEAT BOREDOM: The Nextbase SDV756-B can be fitted to the back of a car seat to entertain passengers.

The Nextbase player weighs only 900 grams, including the rechargeable li-polymer battery.

Optional extras include a

holder that enables the player to be fitted to the back of a car seat or to a wall. The player comes with an AC/DC adapter, mains unit, audio and video cable, battery, earphone, car bag, car power cable, card-type remote control unit and manual. It costs 9,900 baht.

Priced at almost double that amount – 18,900 baht – is the

Shinco SDP 1770, which has a larger, higher-resolution Panasonic screen. This active-matrix 7-inch LCD screen has a 600,000-pixel display which delivers bright, vivid, images. It is equipped with Dolby surround sound.

The player body is magnesium-alloy, and the whole thing weighs just 825 grams.

Play modes are: play, fast play, slow play, frame play, repeat play, specific scene play.

This "private cinema" is equipped with an anti-shock system and built-in stereo speakers. The package also includes an AV cable to connect the unit to a television, and a remote-control unit.

The lithium-ion battery gives a playing time of two to three hours, although there is an adapter allowing it to be run off a car's electrical system.

The Nextbase SDV756-B is available from King Yont Public Partnership Ltd on Thepkrasattri Rd, Phuket City, near the intersection with Dibuk Rd, Tel: 076-211935 or 076-218054.

The Shinco SDP 1770 can be bought at the booth next to the escalator on the ground floor of Robinson department store in Phuket City.

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In The Stars

by Isla Star

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Dare to push your luck where romance is concerned and you could be pleasantly surprised at the outcome. Shyness is not usually a trait associated with those born under the sign of Scorpio, but a certain someone is causing you to feel less than confident. You have good reason to be hopeful in other areas, though. A recent business disagreement is about to fade away into the sunset. The number 2 is auspicious.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): If you can't quite get into gear this weekend you should be content to coast along in neutral until a wave of energy comes your way on Tuesday. After that you will have no problems tapping into a source of creativity. A friend who has bitten off more sugar cane than he or she can chew asks for advice. In this case, honesty is definitely the best policy. Wear lime green to make a statement.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Fishing for compliments won't get you very far this weekend. Your partner has other things to think about, but probably won't want to open up. You are advised to find ways to widen that ever-narrowing social circle, which may involve taking up a new pastime. There's still time to get into better beach shape before high season, so consider a

What the week holds in store

sporting activity. Leo shares a secret on Sunday.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Aim to enjoy a quiet weekend away from the stresses and strains that have been bogging you down recently. Aquarians who are feeling frazzled should seek out a tranquil spot and meditate on problems that have been occupying too much energy. You will be able to see things more clearly at a distance. There are positive signs on the horizon, particularly when it comes to work issues. Wear lotus pink to promote peace.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): There's no avoiding the fact that it's time to incorporate more exercise into your daily routine. Pisceans who have been feeling sluggish during the recent rainy weeks should get moving before the high season starts. Early next week you will be over-sensitive, and on Monday someone's tactless words could upset you. Think about water rolling off a duck's

back to deal with this situation. Wear shades of turquoise to encourage more self-confidence.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Those born under the sign of Aries who are inclined to spill the beans too easily should guard their deepest secrets well this week. Someone is determined to find out important information that you hold the key to. Where business is concerned you may have to make a rapid adjustment to a new situation. Just take care that you don't lose control of the helm. Wear jungle green to promote harmony at home.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): This is a good week to implement changes in your working life. Although Taureans are usually unwilling to alter their habits, there is definitely room for improvement. Personal affairs are about to become smoother and friends will want to show how much they care. Midweek, you are susceptible to daydreaming; try to remain grounded and concentrate on fin-

ishing off an overdue task. The number 5 is lucky on Tuesday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): The planets are moving into an auspicious position for those born under the sign of Gemini to finalize agreements. If someone appears reluctant to sign on that all-important dotted line, you will need to put some pressure on. Business affairs should be tidied up before the end of this month as December will see you coasting on a wave of pleasureseeking. Your partner asks an unusual question on Sunday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): A game of cat and mouse occupies your energy this weekend. If you can't determine whether someone is genuinely interested in a romantic relationship, you may need to get outside advice. Playing with fire will certainly result in your claws getting singed. Where finances are concerned, trust a friend's advice on Wednesday - there is every sign that your bank balance will be

boosted by the end of this month.

LEO (July 24-August 22): You have an advantage that you are still unaware of, but all should be revealed before this week is out. Leos who are not afraid to put their cards on the table and call someone's bluff will be in a good position to do so. On Monday, Capricorn has a golden business proposal. Don't hesitate too long before agreeing; others are ready to jump at the chance.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): It's time to admit that a cherished plan isn't going to work out quite the way you wanted. There's no need to give up your dream entirely; a simple adjustment could be all that's needed to ensure plain sailing. The trick will be to see exactly in which way to tweak it. Your practical nature should enable you to make the correct decision. If not, seek experienced advice.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Risk-taking is the name of the game this week, but most Librans are loath to take anything but the safe path through the jungle. If you can overcome your fear of the unknown, there are rewards waiting at the end of the trail. Personal relationships are subject to stormy weather; there is a strong possibility that you have got hold of the wrong end of the bamboo cane.

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In a column a while back, I wrote about the rapid growth of exploration yachts as a class within the superyacht market.

At the time, the late arrival of publicity materials precluded us from featuring any shots of the yachts. One source in Florida was suffering under a string of hurricanes, while a yard in Europe was enduring the, er, hardships of the month-long summer vacation.

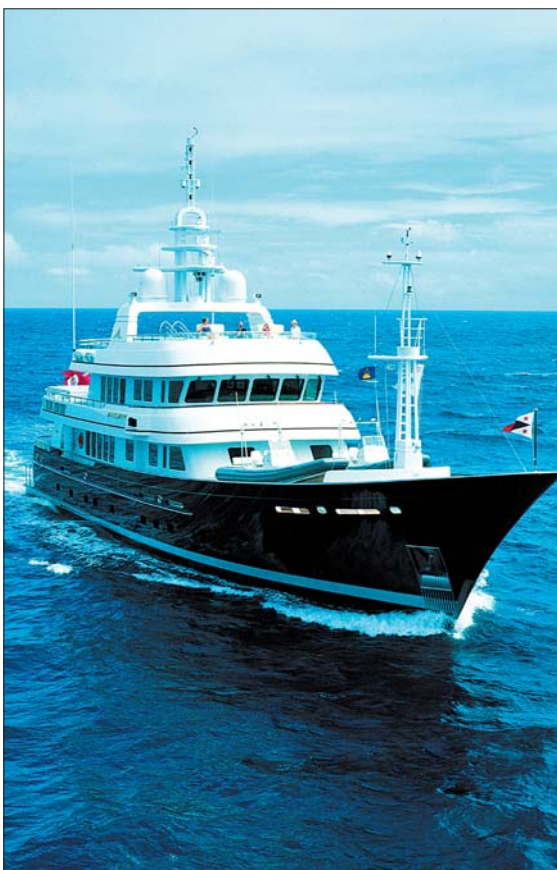
Here, however, as promised, are shots of the stunning exploration yacht from Feadship, *Andiamo*.

The 140-foot *Andiamo* is the first expedition-style yacht built by Feadship, arguably the builder of the finest yachts in the world.

Finished to an immaculate standard, with its hull strengthened to deal with ice, *Andiamo* has received a number of design awards this year, including Yacht of the Year in her class from *Show-Boats International* magazine.

While the exterior is rugged and purposeful, the interior is the epitome of understated elegance, as can be seen in the shot of the master cabin.

Exploring in style



Andiamo may look a little bit Jacques Cousteau on the outside, but the master cabin and state-of-the-art bridge tell a different story, of high luxury on the high seas.

Rain, rain, go away: Sadly, in a final act of spite, the monsoon season dumped the mother-lode of rain on Southern Thailand. Mudslides, flooding, roads washed away and, more tragically, lives lost.

But even in the middle of torrential downpours, one could feel the weather was unfamiliar. Rain clouds spewed incessantly and were static, hovering over the southern provinces until exhausted, remnants of a tropical storm that had tracked across Asia leaving a trail of devastation in its wake.

But virtually overnight, it was as if the weather gods had turned the dial to "blissful", and Phuket was magically transformed.

Gentle seas and soft breezes

accompanied by an instantaneous increase in the number of tourists (can somebody explain to me how this is so finely coordinated?) and the island is heading into high season...

As if to underline the change in fortunes, there, luxuriating in the bay, was *Naos*, the first superyacht of the season.

In fact, several large yachts passed through Phuket during the rainy season. As necessity dictated the need to find calm anchorage, the yachts moored in safety at locales such as the Yacht Haven, but I would argue the "Superyacht Season" only starts

when one of these sublime yachts is seen at anchor in one of Phuket's glorious bays.

So there was *Naos*, lying serenely at anchor in Kamala Bay, and, after months of superyacht withdrawal symptoms, everything was finally right in my little island world.

Naos, at 32.5 meters, is a beautifully streamlined cutter, built in the early 1990s at the CCYD shipyard in Italy.

The Ron Holland-designed *Naos* was originally commissioned for a couple who wanted to circumnavigate the world with their family; how can

you not love a yacht built with such good intentions?

Less than 48 hours after dropping anchor in Kamala, *Naos* was gone. As she had arrived a month before one would normally expect superyachts to make an appearance, let us all hope that she is the forerunner to the best yachting season Phuket has seen in years.

Kings Cup classic: A special thanks to Henry Kaye and Lies Sol for getting me up to speed on a spectacular yacht that should arrive in early December to attend the Kings Cup Regatta.

Si'lolona, launched earlier this year, is a traditional Indonesian Pinisi of 145ft, three years in the making by a team of 90

specialist shipbuilders from Sulawesi and Flores.

To all outside appearances she looks like a classic Indonesian commercial vessel, but as her designer, Michael Kasten, jokes, 'a very well maintained one!'

In *Si'lolona's* case, appearances are very deceptive. The exterior disguises the fact that she is a truly sumptuous vessel built to German Lloyds specifications, with luxurious cabins for 12 guests, an extensive array of diving equipment.

This seven-sail vessel is an absolute beauty, and will feature in *Superyacht Watch* in the coming months.

Hold your breath: In a move that has left many megayacht fans scratching their heads, German shipyard Blohm + Voss recently announced that it had received *Pelorus*, the queen of Roman Abramovich's fleet, into its yard for an "extensive six-month re-fit".

Pelorus, a visitor to Phuket earlier this year, is regarded by many as the most beautiful yacht in the world, so it is to be hoped that no external details will be altered.

One rumor has it that a second helicopter hangar is to be added. The first is located right in the bow, and it's impossible to imagine a second being added without altering some aspect of the deck lines ... a thought that makes many yacht esthetes shudder.

Boys love their toys, and one other possibility could be a berth for a mini-sub placed into the hull, à la *Octopus*.

On Paul Allen's thumper *Octopus*, an underwater chamber floods and a little mini-sub farts out, James Bond-style, to do some underwater exploring.

A question: With *Octopus* being a stonking 400ft plus, with helicopters landing left right and center, why play "hide the submarine"?

Superyacht WATCH

By Dominic Stroud

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

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz

1. “Harelike impalas sew” is an anagram of the name of which celebrated playwright and poet?

2. The tolar is the currency of which country?

3. Warsaw sits astride which river?

4. Who is credited with inventing, in 1591, the flushing toilet?

5. In which modern country was the ancient kingdom of Lydia?

6. Who conquered Lydia in 546 BC?

7. What is the Tweede Kamer?

8. Where would you find the Vinson Massif?

9. Who were the two stars of the 2001 film *Moulin Rouge*?

10. Which volcano in Colombia erupted on November 13, 1985?

11. What is the deepest hole ever made by man?

12. How deep did it go?

13. Which four forces act on powered aircraft?

14. Which scientist said, “If I have seen a little further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants”?

15. Quentin Blake has achieved fame in which field?

16. What is a *paupiette*?

17. When a US president flies in a military aircraft, it is known as Airforce One. But by what name is it referred to if it is a civilian aircraft?

18. Who provides the voice for Oscar in the movie *Shark Tale*?

19. When and in which city was Kylie Minogue born?

20. Who is the lead guitarist of Cold Play?

Answers next week

Never a Cross Word!

- Across
1. Duplicate.

3. Norwegian marine inlets.

8. Maybe.

9. Metal once mined in Phuket.

10. Internet address.

11. It makes you sick.

15. Specialist.

18. Run at a leisurely pace.

20. Goal.

22. Painkiller.

23. Colorado capital.

24. Notion.

1		2			3	4		5		6
				7						
8								9		
10					11	12			13	
										14
	15			16		17		18		
19										
20		21		22						
23								24		

- Down
1. Nicosia country.

2. Puzzle.

4. Mr James, train robber.

5. Rodent.

6. Despatched.

7. Batman would be no crusader without this.

12. Sea, to Marcel.

13. Hurt.

14. Its capital is Kampala.

16. Dodge.

17. Sort.

19. Remarked.

21. Chaps.

Solution next week

Brain Buster!!

Explain this: A boy and his father are injured in a car accident. Both are taken to a hospital. The father is dead on arrival, but the boy lives and is taken to surgery. A grey-haired, bespectacled surgeon looks at the boy and says, “I can’t operate on this boy -- he’s my son.”

A. The surgeon is the boy’s mother.

Answers to last week’s Monster Quiz

1. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; 2. Edvard Munch; 3. Kofi Annan; 4. Jordan; 5. Fiji; 6. Kazakhstan; 7. Space launch center; 8. Prince Norodom Sihamoni; 9. Professor Moriarty (Sherlock Holmes); 10. Idaho; 11. Kara Sea; 12. North Island; 13. Neil Armstrong; 14. Sea of Tranquility, on the Moon; 15. Men’s tailoring; 16. The number 13; 17. Alexander the Great; 18. Leeks and potatoes; 19. The Ox; 20. Take That.

Solution to last week’s Crossword

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

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A turbo boost for Benz



The Mercedes-Benz C200 Kompressor is currently supercharged. That will likely change as the company introduces turbochargers, in the name of quietness and efficiency.

Mercedes-Benz has taken the decision to phase out all its Kompressor models and replace the supercharged engines with turbo units.

Superchargers and turbochargers perform the same function, compressing the air flowing in to the engine, significantly boosting power.

A supercharger is powered by the engine, usually through a belt-and-pulley system. Turbochargers, however, are powered by gases from the exhaust system.

More than 35% of the en-

ergy released by an engine during combustion is lost in the exhaust. Between 1909 and 1915 a Swiss engineer, Alfred Büchi, developed the first turbocharger to recover and use some of this wasted energy.

The appeal of turbocharging is based on the "something-for-nothing" principle whereby energy that what would otherwise disappear through the exhaust system can be harnessed to improve an engine's power output.

While turbos have been widely used only in the past 30 years, superchargers had been used in car engines for at least

80 years and were employed extensively on racing cars between world wars, one famed example being the 4.5-liter Bentley "Blower".

So successful were superchargers that, in 1950, the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile, Formula One's governing body, stipulated a maximum capacity of 4.5 liters for normally-aspirated engines and just 1.5 liters for supercharged engines. The rules changed again in 1954, limiting the engines without superchargers to 2.5 liters and just 750cc for supercharged models.

Turbocharging came to the fore during World War II, when aircraft engineers began turbocharging piston engines to produce sufficient power for aircraft traveling at high altitudes. The Pratt and Whitney engines of the Consolidated B-24 Liberator

bomber were both super- and turbocharged.

It was not until 1977, however, that the first turbocharged F1 car, the Renault RS01, driven by Frenchman Jean-Pierre Jabouille, made its faltering debut in the British Grand Prix. Renault claimed 500bhp on tap but the engine proved unreliable. It was a full year before a turbo car would actually complete a Grand Prix.

By the early 1980s, virtually all Grand Prix cars were turbocharged and capable of producing enormous amounts of power on specially-developed fuels. Specially boosted for the qualifying heats, these tiny 1.5-liter engines were chucking out in excess of 1,000bhp, though they frequently blew up after a handful of laps.

Nelson Piquet – in a turbocharged Brabham BMW – won the 1983 World Drivers' Cham-

pionship, the first to win it using a turbocharged car.

To curb power outputs and speeds, turbos were phased out toward the end of the 1980s, and F1 cars currently run normally-aspirated three-liter V10 engines.

For road use, however, Mercedes-Benz (which supplies engines for the McLaren F1 team) continues to produce a number of supercharged models, including the C-Class, the SLK and the latest CLS 55 AMG.

One of the more popular supercharged models in Thailand is the C200 Kompressor, featuring a 192bhp (141 kW) four-cylinder engine complete with counter-rotating balancer shafts and an intercooler.

Thanks to the use of a forced-induction system, the C200 accelerates from rest to 100kmh in just 8.1 seconds, and has a flat out speed of 240kmh.

The C-Class was launched four years ago but has this year been significantly upgraded in terms of technology and equipment. Since its launch, Mercedes-Benz has delivered more than 1.26 million C-Class cars and the facelift model is likely to further improve that figure.

At present, only one Mercedes-Benz model is turbocharged – the super-luxury V12 Maybach, which has twin turbos to produce its massive 550bhp.

This is likely to change. Turbos, Mercedes-Benz argues, are quieter and more efficient than superchargers, and it will be replacing supercharged engines with high-performance turbo options in the near future.

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



By Jeff Heselwood

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Pattaya has been undergoing structural changes so colossal they rank right up there with those experienced by cashed-up ladyboys who go under the surgeon's knife to have a lump of meat and a couple of rissoles removed.

For those of us who've been living or coming here for some years it's been a rapid transformation.

It seems almost everything is in a state of flux. Let me illustrate with some recent examples.

One of the city's most photographed tourist attractions is a temple: Wat Chai Mongkol on South Pattaya Rd.

One of the hidden delights of the temple used to be a relatively small, dark-green, brackish pond, almost hidden behind a row of gnarled trees and a dusty trail.

Stretching out into the water was a narrow wooden walkway and platform popular with locals who would buy a loaf of bread at the entrance to the wat and then throw pieces of bread into the water, which would suddenly come alive with hungry turtles and catfish. There were also some ducks, lurking at the edges of the pond.

I don't know how anything actually managed to live in the water, which looked more like a biological warfare experiment than a home for turtles and catfish.

In the middle of last year, the building and renovation mal-

aise that has held Pattaya in its pile-driving grip must have overwhelmed the saffron-robed ones, because the rustic pond and its surrounds have now been transformed into a paved, multi-purpose facility: a car park one day; a fairground and concert arena the next.

I suspect the architect of this cementing frenzy was an Italian immigrant relocated to Fun City from the western suburbs of Sydney.

Anybody familiar with that part of suburban Australia will be aware that it's easy to spot the homes owned by Italians: every possible square centimeter of ground is covered in concrete.

Remarkably, the pool on the temple grounds remains, but now it is reminiscent of a concrete-walled storage tank for sewage or industrial waste; I imagine you'd find something very similar hidden behind the nuclear facility at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania.

Of course, the saffron-robed ones can't be blamed.

It's not their fault that Pattaya is starting to resemble a prosperous, bourgeois Club Med-style resort while the major center of worship still has that rustic



**FROM THE
STREETS
OF
PATTAYA**
By Duncan Stearn

charm only appreciated by unwashed backpackers and people with Burmese walking sticks.

Travel writer Edith Wharton once described the Swiss countryside as looking like "the landscape of a sanatorium prospectus".

But she would never apply that description to Pattaya, which is starting to resemble Beirut circa 1978, although the damage here is being wrought by people with hammers and chisels rather than AK-47s and mortars.

The sleepy fishing village of the 1960s is now well and truly woken each morning by the sound of industrial drills.

While go-go bars may be viewed as dens of iniquity by many – most often those who are unhappily married and therefore prevented from indulging in the joys of ogling – the owners of one such establishment, named Planet Rock, once tried to attract a better class of clientele by offering a magic show for assembled patrons.

Not just any magic show, however. They went to the trouble of engaging the services of a man who called himself Zorro (albeit he came from Singapore, not Mexico).

He was ably assisted by a young sylph-like creature who bore about as much resemblance to Sergeant Garcia as Elle McPherson does to Lassie.

Zorro was a closet pyromaniac with a penchant for teasing farmyard friends. He was also somewhat of a masochist, gargling with razor blades: good for removing impurities, like tonsils.

Zorro used to set fire to a box, from which he would later extract a rabbit, live, not barbecued.

The show has long since departed and Planet Rock is the poorer for it.

At the north end of town

there used to be a place called the Elvis Pub. No, it is not run by the original Elvis Presley, who we all know didn't die of hamburger overdose in 1977 but is in fact running a pizza parlor in Lithgow (New South Wales, Australia, a.k.a. the butt-hole of the world).

This Pattaya Elvis Pub featured a former heavy-metal rocker called Richie Newton, a German who grew sideburns, slicked back his hair and transformed himself by way of a jumpsuit into an incarnation of Elvis.

The only place that doesn't seem to have changed in any way at all is the Hopf House, a German micro-brewery and boozatorium.

It features not only yard glasses of amber fluid, but also an Italian singer named Enzo (sounds like the name of a headache medication) who sings opera like Pavarotti, rock like Freddie Mercury (before he died) and love songs like Barry Manilow (OK, not everyone's perfect).

As Britain's Prince Philip is said to have remarked when he was asked what he thought of Hong Kong, "It'll be nice when it's finished."



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Phuket beaches need your help

With the high season for tourism officially upon us, Phuket is geared up for what everyone hopes will be a banner year, with a record number of tourists and no disruptions – real or imagined – to scare away potential visitors.

While it is still early, there are reasons for optimism. Advance hotel bookings are strong and the increased availability and lower costs of both domestic and international flights to the island has greatly ameliorated the long-standing air transport bottleneck.

Despite the obligatory assurances from government and tourism industry officials that Phuket is perfectly safe from terrorism and bird 'flu, these continue to be concerns that remain, to a large degree, beyond local control.

However, Phuket's beaches, which remain our single greatest tourism asset, are not a matter beyond local control – quite the contrary – and the state of the beaches is a problem that most island residents can play an important role in solving.

The situation is not good. Earlier this year, the national Pollution Control Department surveyed Thailand's 14 premier tourist beaches and found that none were being managed in a way that met its highest "five-star" standard for environmental sustainability.

Only one Phuket beach included in the survey, Karon, got a four-star rating. Patong came in at three stars – which was probably generous (the presence of freelance prostitutes, touts, hawkers, jet-skis, parasail boats and mangy stray dogs was not factored in).

The *Gazette* has frequently called for local government officials to enforce regulations that are essential to maintaining the health and attractiveness of the island, including its beaches. Still, unfortunately, very little happens.

But the public can still play an important role, by quietly cleaning up the beaches themselves. This might take the form of nothing more than removing one's own garbage from the beach or taking care not to trample the *pak boong talay* that still grows along many beaches and that plays an important role in preventing erosion.

Whether the reader is a long-time resident or a visitor reading this column for the first time, we all have a role to play, not only on the days when beach clean-ups are organized, but every day.

The best hope for the island's beaches depends on their being viewed not simply as an economic resource to be exploited in the short term by people who consider themselves, through birthright or through investment, as having proprietary rights over them, but as part of humanity's shared natural heritage – something we all have an obligation to preserve.

– The Editor

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Editor: Rungtip Hongjakpet

Managing Editor: Alasdair Forbes

Deputy Editor: Chris Husted

Chief Reporter: Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

Investigation Team: Dhirarat Boonkongsan, Gategao Phetsawang, Kamol Pirat, Anongnat Sartpisut, Siripansa Somboon

Desk Editors: Stephen Fein, Andy Johnstone

Managing Director: Rungtip Hongjakpet

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Website Services Manager: Natthira Susangrat

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Financial Controller: Benjawan Lukthan

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Contact us

Advertising Sales: adsales@phuketgazette.net

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Telephone: 076-236555 (10 lines) **Fax:** 076-213971

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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.

Use of helmets on bikes is all in vain

It is becoming more common to see cyclists in Phuket – particularly those on racing bicycles – wearing helmets. However, I am sure that most of these cyclists go from riding their cycles with a helmet to riding motorcycles *without* similar protection.

As safety does not seem to be very high on the agenda for most people, perhaps the authorities should adopt a new approach: promoting traffic safety through fashion and vanity.

Anders Palm
Chalong

Time to rid Patong of streetwalkers

Prostitution has at last been acknowledged as a major problem in Patong [*Gazette*, October 23], and by someone in authority, namely Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura.

How is it possible to have, on one hand, thousands of "service people" (ie prostitutes) freelancing on the streets and in the discos of Patong while the town is being promoted as a family and shopping paradise? It does not make sense.

The Jungceylon project – with its two five-star hotels – is just a hundred meters from bars with girls selling sex. This would not work in any other country, so why should it be allowed here?

This high season will be the turning point for Patong. The number of families and Asians arriving this year will exceed that of previous years and the sex tourists are moving elsewhere.

But more "freelancers" are arriving, and they don't want to work in bars. What they want to do is to walk the streets looking for a quick, tax-free score.

The time has come to rid Patong of this blight. Let the people who are looking for cheap sex find it elsewhere, perhaps in their own countries.

"Frank Sinatra"
Patong

If the locals won't do it, who will?

In response to the letter of Khun Laosuwan [*Gazette* letters, November 6], we would like to say that K. Laosuwan has the right to write a letter, but should be better informed before putting pen to paper in the future.

The "foreign women" that K. Laosuwan refers to only feed, sterilize, vaccinate and care for about 180 dogs on a daily basis. For the rest of the time, they have full-time jobs, and so don't have the time to disturb government officials and so on.

The foreign lady [who climbed over the fence at the dog pound] is a completely different person. She is also our friend, and while her actions are maybe not "Thai style", she is doing a real good job.

She and her dog charity have sterilized this year more than 1,000 dogs and cats on Phuket, preventing an extra 3,000 or so puppies and kittens being born.

Please let us know when local people can take over these jobs, so that we can relax ... and not disturb you any more.

Yvonne
Phuket

Airport chaos is all relative

I have yet to experience the "chaotic scene" at Phuket International Airport (PIA) as described by Disenchanted Resident [*Letters*, Oct 16]. On the occasions when I have landed at PIA after international travel, I have been met with courtesy and had a relatively easy time getting through Immigration.

This is in contrast to Bali, where I was charged US\$25 for the privilege of waiting for over an hour in a noisy, poorly air-conditioned immigration hall.

It would have been nice to think that a proportion of this visa fee was going toward improving the facilities at Bali. However, it would appear that this is not the case, as the immigration hall – though fully staffed – was under-equipped, poorly-managed and too small to cope with the influx of tourists.

To put things in perspective, arrivals in Bali currently stand at less than a quarter of PIA's, while the airports are roughly the same size.

Also, Thailand still does not charge for visas on arrival, as many other countries in the region do.

Airport chaos is, I suppose, relative, depending on time of arrival and departure; I would much rather be flying international to and from Phuket and I wish that there were more direct flights.

If "Disenchanted" really wants to see chaos in its ultimate manifestation he should try Don Muang on a Sunday.

Simon J Hand
Chalong

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.

Averting disaster all in a day's work

Phuket city was the area worst hit by flooding in 2003 although the damage was limited to the economy rather than to buildings.

The experience we, the Phuket and Kathu municipalities, and the Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) gained from this and the measures we introduced to prevent it happening in the future are now being applied to Patong.

Klong Bang Yai, which snakes its way from Kathu through to Phuket City has now been almost completely dredged. Clearing this canal helped Phuket City cope with last month's heavy rains.

But it seems as if the gods knew that we had concentrated our flood-protection efforts on Phuket City and decided to hit Patong instead.

I suppose that we ignored Patong; in fact, I admit that we had not organized any form of protection scheme there; we didn't consider the area to be at risk.

The Department of Mineral Resources surveyed Phuket Island and highlighted 28 areas at risk from flooding. Patong was found to be one of the places least likely to be flooded. Consequently I didn't worry too much about Patong.



FIRST PERSON

Former Phuket Vice-Governor Pongpow Ketthong has recently been promoted to Deputy Director-General of the national Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Department (DPMD), where he has been acting Deputy Director General since June 2003.

While the construction boom in Phuket has been a boon for many on the island, the deforestation of the hills and lack of enforcement of building regulations has taken its toll on the environment, with flooding being the most recent reminder of their effects.

Here he explains why the flooding of the past few years should soon be a thing of the past.

But parts of Patong and the Kalim-Kamala route have now been reclassified as high-risk areas.

Many of the natural and man-made water courses in Patong have been blocked by the sheer number of buildings and roads being constructed in and around Patong. Trees and other vegetation – the roots of which hold the topsoil in place – are cut down to make way for new buildings.

Patong Mayor Pian Keesin is part of an ad-hoc committee looking at short- and

long-term solutions to the problems. One of the short-term strategies put forward is to demolish any construction that blocks a natural waterway, unless the developer has re-routed the waterway. Five buildings in and around Patong have so far been demolished.

Longer-term solutions include dredging Klong Pakbang and surveying all of the natural and man-made waterways in and around Patong.

Property development is a problem, and it has changed Patong's natural environment

forever. The existing laws and regulations that are supposed to control the development of land are not strict enough.

Reserves of low-lying land have been used up and houses are creeping further and further up into the hills surrounding Patong. The cycle of deforestation and flooding carries on.

In my opinion, the fault for the recent flooding lies with all of the different municipal and governmental departments with responsibility for the areas affected.

We had not prepared for the

combined effect of weak regulations, massive amounts of property development and heavy rains.

It's easy to say that we are learning to our cost now – the recent flooding caused damage and lost business of approximately 22 million baht – and I suppose that it's a case of "closing the stable door after the horse has bolted".

The situation in Patong was worse than perhaps it would have been otherwise because this municipality had no mayor, no organization and no budget for months.

However, the experience we have gained from the recent flooding has been invaluable. We can apply this experience to Patong, Kalim and Kamala, three areas we now know to be at particular risk from landslides as well as flooding.

It was encouraging to see how well the local community pulled together during the recent floods. Everyone was busy, but they also acted as a team.

I don't suppose that we can ever completely eradicate the risk of flooding but what we can do is to employ technology – for example, sluice gates and locks along the canals – and to learn from the past.

How can I make my motorcycle legal?

I bought a secondhand motorbike in January 2004 and I received the green log book, photocopies of the previous owner's identification papers and a signed consent form.

When my girlfriend checked the logbook, though, she noticed that the bike was registered as red, although the bike I had bought was blue.

She told me that I couldn't have this information changed, but the previous owner could. So I took the log book back to the previous owner, who agreed to change the color for me.

Unfortunately, I haven't seen him since (I believe he has left Phuket). Now, my tax and insurance discs have run out, but

no one seems to know how can I obtain a copy of the log book or how I can get the tax and insurance disks without the log book.

I do have the signed consent form and the photocopies of the previous owner's documentation; I have not stolen the motorbike.

Also, I have been fined for not having my documents in order, but I have been fined different amounts in different places: 300 baht at Patong police station, 500 baht in Kata and 900 baht in Kathu. I realise that I am committing an offence – which I am trying to rectify – but I don't understand why I am being fined different amounts.

Mr J Karon

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer of the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), replies:

You should bring a copy of the previous owner's ID card, the signed consent form, including the contract of sale, your passport, your work permit and confirmation of your address in Phuket (ask at the Immigration Office for this) to the PPTO.

If you bring all these documents, you should be able to declare the old log book lost and at the same time change the documentation regarding the motorbike's color.

Pol Lt Sutham Rattanasawangwong, Deputy of Traffic Police of Chalong Police Station, replies:

Traffic police have the authority to fine people at their discretion. According to Thai law, anyone who has a vehicle that is not taxed can be fined up to 2,000 baht, and up to 10,000 baht if the vehicle is not insured.

The Department of Insurance at the Ministry of Commerce has been recommending to police stations that they adopt a set 500 baht fine for a first offence, but the final decision lies with each police station.

There are no regulations concerning treehouses, but it's best if you check with the local authority where the structure will be located, such as the municipality or local tambon administration organization (*OrBorTor*), for safety reasons.

You can also ask PWTCP officers to check your plans to ensure the treehouse will be safe.

Can I build a treehouse?

I would like to build a child's playhouse in a tree on land that I lease. Are there any restrictions or regulations concerning this?

R Crusoe
Phuket

Tawee Homhuan, engineer at the Phuket Public Works and Town and Country Planning Office (PWTCP), replies:

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

What is 'paid-up capital'?

When it comes to setting up a business in Thailand, what exactly does "paid-up capital" mean?

B Knight
England

Phongphan Jianwiriyanphan, Director of the Business Supervision Bureau, Business Development Department, replies:

"Paid-up capital" means the amount of shareholder capital that has been paid in full by shareholders.

For example, this word is used in the balance sheet, perhaps as "Issued and paid-up share capital" which details the amount of stock that has been sold and for which the company has already been paid.

Why's there no cable TV in Rawai?

I would like to know why cable TV is not available in Rawai. It would be good to enjoy what people in Patong and Phuket City have for 500 baht a month, rather than UBC's 1,506 baht for repeat programs.

Is cable TV coming to Rawai? If so, when?

Neville Scorer
Rawai

Thanawat Surachetkomsan, managing director of Phuket Cable TV, replies:

We plan to make cable TV available in Rawai at the beginning of next year. However, I can't say yet how much we will charge. We charge different rates for different areas, according to how much it costs us to set up a cable TV service there.

A parade of horrors and heroes

Aidan Hartley's *The Zanzibar Chest* (Harper Perennial, London, 2004, 446pp) is both magnificent and horrifying. Hartley grew up in bucolic East Africa and cut his teeth as a journalist in all the major hellholes: Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda.

His big book is many things: childhood memoir, detective story, collection of dispatches from war zones.

Over a couple of hundred years, Hartley's ancestors served in the far-flung outposts of the British Empire. His father, the last of the imperial servants, worked as an agricultural officer in Tanzania and Yemen for three decades until, in 1951, he married and settled down to farm in East Africa.

It was a bad time to be a white farmer: he was driven out of Kenya by the Mau Mau, then his second farm in Tanzania was confiscated by the bone-headed socialist Julius Nyerere and destroyed by neglect.

Still, Aidan Hartley had an idyllic childhood in Africa, and raced back to Kenya as soon as he graduated from

London's School of Oriental and African Studies in 1988.

He was taken on as a stringer by Reuter, rented a house in Nairobi with two other journalists, and went off to cover the wars.

"It all comes back to me," he writes. "Overnighters, all-nighters, hitching rides on tanks busting down palace gates, sipping dictators' champagne, scoops and whores and house arrests, herograms, smelly socks and Caterpillar boots, the shits, deadlines, dead on arrivals, bouts of amoebae and malaria remembered fondly as adventures, beriberi, organ failure, Stalin's organs, brain damage, gas gangrene, coke cut with pig laxative from condoms smuggled in the bowels of living men, oral rehydration salts, satellite feeds, food aid, baby milk, mass burials through a Nikon lens, Huey chopper rides, the pure adrenaline of being in fallen cities decorated with floral mortar bursts and tracers in the sky."

Interspaced with the war stories is a journey through Yemen inspired by the Zanzibar chest of the title in which, after his father's death, Hartley found the di-

ary of his father's best friend, a political officer named Peter Davey.

Davey converted to Islam and married an Arab, and Hartley retraces the myriad routes that led to his murder by a tribal chieftain in Yemen.

The desert journeys provide some respite from the relentless gore the other side of the Red Sea that culminated in the genocide in Rwanda. Hartley writes of marching in a Tutsi column that eventually captures the capital, Kigali. From then on it's just one massacre after another, meticulously described – an eye-popping Heart of Darkness horror.

In the process, he immortalizes his journalistic comrades, all wildly eccentric, living on the edge of terror, cutting the adrenaline with massive doses of booze, drugs and profligate sex. Many were killed.

Hartley writes about how certain friendships fade with age and then observes: "Dead friends are different. Death gives us a permanent loyalty. Our intimacy is frozen in memory at the instant they lost their lives. I mourn the old ages they will never have, but I will know

them as young and beautiful for as long as I live."

For years, Hartley had an on/off love affair with an American photographer named Lizzie, until it petered out because of too much frenzied time in war zones. He eventually found some peace on a remote farm in Kenya and settled down to write this book in the company of his Anglo-Indian-Chinese wife and two children.

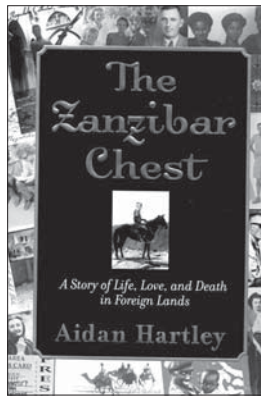
The Zanzibar Chest succeeds on all counts: as a personal memoir, as witness to African history, and as a eulogy to Hartley's war correspondent comrades – the best account on this subject since Michael Herr's *Dispatches*.

"Like our colonial ancestors, we were just meddling in the tragedies of foreign lands and this was always going to be dangerous," he reflects. "But in my brightest moments I believe that our colleagues were among the biggest heroes ever in the news business. They genuinely did die trying to draw attention to the plight of the suffering in the forgotten countries of the world. Journalism gave us comradeship, a purpose in life and some form of honour."



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



Time to get radio-active – for free

You may not realize it, but if you have an unlimited-access Internet account and Windows XP, it's easy to receive the world's best radio stations, right there on your PC.

If you follow Microsoft's instructions, in the latest version of Windows Media Player, you'll probably end up paying to get decent radio broadcasts, but if you know the right trick, an enormous amount of free radio programming is just a few clicks away.

You don't need any fancy hardware, a big antenna or one

of those outrageously expensive digital radio players, all you need is your PC, Windows XP and an Internet connection that's fast enough to keep up with the music. If you've never heard radio over the Internet, it's well worth spending the five minutes or so

it takes to give it a go.

If you have installed Windows XP Service Pack 2 (and if you haven't, I strongly recommend that you do so, pronto), the latest version of Windows Media Player, called WMP 10, came along for the ride.

To crank up WMP, click

Start | All Programs | Windows Media Player. WMP10 is immediately distinguishable from its predecessors by its buttons at the top – Now Playing, Library, Rip, Burn, Sync, Guide, Music and Radio. Older versions of WMP show the buttons on the left.

You might think that the best way to listen to radio over the Internet is to click the button marked Radio – and you'd be wrong. Microsoft uses that button to try to sell you an upgraded version of Microsoft Network, using one of the most underhanded tricks in all of Windows.

First, Microsoft has collated the play lists from hundreds of well-known radio stations. Instead of playing a live feed from a well-known radio station, Microsoft advertises that it has a station that "sounds like" the well-known station.

It then plays the same songs as the ripped-off station, but without the DJs, without the advertising – and without compensating the ripped-off station. The big question is how can Microsoft get away with it? Several legions of attorneys are asking that same question.

Second, Microsoft offers free broadcasts of scratchy near-AM-quality versions of many of the ripped-off stations, while dangling the possibility of hearing CD-quality music from all of the ripped-off stations, for a small fee.

If you click the WMP10 Radio button expecting Internet radio, you obviously underestimate Microsoft.

But WMP10 does offer good quality, free Internet radio – you just have to know where to find it. If you click the Guide button, WMP10 brings up the main page from www.windowmedia.com (the site being a subsidiary of Microsoft, of course).

Look hard at the list of options on the right-hand side of the web page. Click on Radio Tuner. That takes you to a series of pages where you can find free radio stations, many of which are worth a listen.

WMP isn't the only game in town. In fact, most Internet radio stations simply have their own websites. You may need WMP 9 or 10 in order to play their music, but you don't need to use WMP to find the station – a quick search through Google will do the trick.

Radio stations are usually delivered by streaming – the process of sending an audio or video file over the Internet to your computer so you can play it, but at the same time make it very difficult for you to capture and keep the file.

Stations are frequently rated by their streaming rate: a station that streams at 24 kilobits per second (Kbps), for example, sends a file that's small enough to fit on a dial-up Internet connection – but the sound quality is very similar to scratchy AM radio.

Streaming at 100Kbps, on the other hand, takes a well-endowed ADSL line, but the music coming out your computer ap-

proaches (or in some cases exceeds) CD quality.

A friend of mine asked me why Virgin Classic Rock (which has become my favorite Internet radio station – www.smradio.com) kept dropping out: the songs will play fine for a while, then all of a sudden the line goes dead, only to come back a few seconds later.

There are three reasons why an Internet radio station will go dead. First, the station itself may not be broadcasting – some "real" radio stations (such as www.kbco.com) are required to switch to silence when certain advertisements play in the studio. Second, the computer that's sending out the broadcast may not be able to keep up with the demand and may crash or become overloaded. Third, and most likely, you're Internet connection isn't keeping up.

If you get silence too often, try switching to a slower streaming rate: most stations' Web sites have a button you can click to switch to "modem" or "56K" streaming rates. Failing that, rail against your ADSL gods, or buy a faster connection.

With thousands of top-name radio stations now broadcasting live over the Internet, no matter what your tastes in music, what language you speak, or when you want to listen, chances are very good you can find a station (or two or 200) that play music you like – and they won't cost you a satang.

– Woody Leonhard
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Shophouse boom continues – for now

By Dhirarat Boonkongsan

PHUKET: The proliferation of shophouses, possibly Phuket's oldest form of commercial property, continues, though developers are now introducing value-add design modifications and improved aesthetic appeal to entice buyers.

Indeed, Thanit Prateepnathalang, the deputy president of Phuket Real Estate Club, told the *Gazette* that 2004 is a boom year for property developers, particularly those with shophouses in their portfolios.

The Phuket Provincial Land Office (PULO), he said, had collected 900 million baht in taxes so far this year, compared to 200 million baht for the whole of 2003, with shophouses featuring significantly in the "boom".

According to K. Thanit, of the 50 or so construction projects that have been approved by the PULO this year, 10 are shophouse developments.

K. Thanit is also project manager of the Billion Plaza development, which is located opposite the Tesco-Lotus supercenter on the byapss road. Phase I of the

project is currently under construction at a cost of 300 million baht.

Some 25 of the 64 units – around 40% – were sold between August and the time of going to press, at prices between five and 10 million baht apiece.

"The key to a successful shophouse development", according to K. Thanit, "is to build in public amenities as well as shops."

He went on to explain that some 3.2 rai of the eight-rai site has been set aside for public use, mainly in the form of roads and parks. "This will help support the businesses in the project," he said.

On the west coast, the Kata Night Bazaar, located about 200 meters south of Kata Center, comprises modern-design shophouses and is being postured as an "entertainment complex".

Construction of the 21-unit development began in June and is expected to be complete by January 2005.

Karn Prachumpan, managing director of Kata Night Bazaar developer Phuket Golden Place Property Co Ltd, said that of the 90-million-baht project – 60% of the capital came in the form of a loan from

Siam Commercial Bank – hopes to feature bars, pubs, discotheques and guest-houses.

Jirapachara Jankaew, project assistant at the Ananda Garden Hills scheme in Chalong, said that the single most important factor in selling property remains the age-old maxim, "Location, location, location".

As testament to her belief, shophouses at Ananda Garden Hills – located around a kilometer north of Chalong Circle on Chao Fa West Rd – sold out within four months of going on the market in June this year.

"If the location does not suit the business that people wish to conduct there, the properties will not sell," she said.

Warintorn Muensen, sales and marketing manager of the Sri Patak project in Karon, agrees. "Location is a big factor in this business, because people will be living and working in the same place."

"Many of our units have been taken for use as offices, and it's important that they can be seen from the road."

Of the 38 shophouses at Sri Patak – being built on a site about 200 meters west

of Chalong Circle on Patak Rd – 24 have been sold in the past four months at prices between 2.5 and 4.5 million baht.

However, K. Warintorn warns that over-supply could soon become a problem. "The number of projects should depend on demand," she noted sagely.

However, she does not envisage any low-quality shophouse developments in Phuket because land prices here are rising too fast. "That will make any developer think twice about having a low-quality development. Nobody wants to be saddled with a project that has cost a lot to build but has a bad reputation."

Tanit Leepanichayabutr, project consultant of SCT Grand Place, in Phuket City, agrees, and predicts that demand for shophouses will reach a plateau in 2005.

"Demand remains high at the moment because of the [commercial] growth of Phuket," he said.

However, he added, "The rate of growth of shophouse-style businesses will not be so high in 2005 because there are many projects under construction this year and the number of suitable sites for development is decreasing."

Dragged through the hedge – forwards

Last week's article covered the role of George Soros and his Quantum Fund in forcing a new direction for Britain's management of its currency. However, the Quantum Fund achieved more than just a currency adjustment; it brought attention to what, until then, was a little-known class of investment: the hedge fund.

In the past 12 years or so, assets invested in the hedge funds industry have grown from less than US\$100 billion (about 40 trillion baht) to almost US\$1 trillion (around 400 trillion baht).

There are too many types of hedge fund to allow a comprehensive description; they differ widely in terms of both investment style and asset class. However, most hedge funds will target areas such as stockmarket indices, currencies, bond markets or commodities, or a combination of any of these.

Some operate on what are commonly called macroeconomic situations. For example, a hedge fund manager may believe that the Japanese Yen is about to rise against the US dollar. To take advantage of this situation, investments will be linked to appreciate in value if this occurs.

In addition, "leveraging" (borrowing) will usually be employed to maximize returns.

Most hedge funds run multiple positions simultaneously, to diversify the total investment. Some hedge funds are intended to hold their positions for reasonably long periods of time, while others specialize in very rapid changes of holdings.

Before the arrival of hedge funds, fund managers tended to hold assets such as shares, bonds and perhaps property. The public was generally led to believe that

there was merit in the philosophy of buy-and-hold.

Indeed, the conventional wisdom went further than that; those who changed their investments were frequently viewed as being slightly unstable – probably the sort of person who "job-hops".

For those who still believe in the buy-and-hold philosophy, the events of the past five years in the financial markets should have provided food for thought.

Attitudes have changed rapidly. Increasingly, investors want to see a profit on their investments each year, regardless of what direction financial markets are taking.

This may seem almost ridiculous, but it has led to a new class of investment funds known as "absolute returns". The aim of these is to produce a positive return whatever may be happening in underlying financial markets.

Some months ago, this column featured Orbis Investment Management and its "Optimal Equity Fund". When almost all investors in global equity mar-

kets were losing money in the early 2000s, this fund was making substantial gains.

The reason was simple: the fund was selling shares "short". In other words, investors were profiting when share prices fell.

Instead of taking the traditional view of "long" only, and buying shares hoping they will rise, an active "absolute return" manager is seeking to profit in all situations.

Absolute return funds are a very important part of the hedge-fund industry, as investors cannot assume that their assets will always appreciate in value. Even in reasonable times there are good shares and there are shares that should be avoided. That said, if a company's share price is down, why not profit from the situation? It is not immoral,

though it does carry risks.

If a company's share price is falling, it is often the fault of the management. In such situations, the board of directors may well appoint a new chief executive officer with a track record of reviving ailing companies.

Alternatively, a low share price may well attract a predator intent on taking the company over. Both of these scenarios are dangerous to "short sellers" as they can lead to rapid rises in share prices.

Despite these and other threats to a hedge fund's performance, the industry has attracted many of the most able managers in the world.

Most hedge funds (though not Orbis) levy, in addition to management fees, a substantial charge on profits achieved. This will usually be about 20%-25%, a not inconsiderable sum. However, if the manager produces high returns, then maybe a share of the profits is justified. When a manager can earn millions of dollars a year, he certainly has an incentive to excel.

This has been a difficult year for many hedge funds for the simplest of reasons: volatility, or rather, the lack of it. For the best part of 2004, most financial markets and major currencies have experienced much less volatility than usual.

Hedge funds generally can make money on rising or falling markets, but when the markets are stuck in tight "trading ranges", there is little scope for profit.

I can imagine that in the quiet of their offices, many hedge fund managers are muttering, "Where is Osama bin Laden when you need him?"

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.

MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson



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Paradorn returning to Phuket

PHUKET: Thai tennis superstar Paradorn Srichapan, currently ranked 26 in the world, will be bringing the 2004 Paradorn Super Tour to the island's Laguna Beach Resort on November 27 and 28.

The tour, which features exhibition matches, tennis clinics and autograph signing sessions, starts in Bangkok on November 22 and moves to Nakhon Ratchasima before coming to Phuket.

At Laguna, there will be four matches, with play starting at 4 pm on both days, and some of the action is scheduled to be broadcast live on Channel 3 TV.

Paradorn will take on Nicolas Kiefer of Germany, who is currently ranked 18 in the world, in a men's singles match.

He will also pair up with Thailand's number 1 female player, Tamarine Tanasugarn, to take on Kiefer and Croat Karolina Šprem, currently ranked 17 in the world, in a mixed doubles match.

Tamarine will play Šprem in a women's singles match, and in a men's doubles match Paradorn and his older brother Naratorn will take on Kiefer and the very experienced 39-year-old Rick Leach, who has won 45 doubles titles throughout his career.

Please note that the visiting players are subject to change, depending on availability and level of fitness. For the latest status call the Ticket Office at Laguna's Canal Village Shopping Centre at Tel: 076-324453 ext 228.

Tickets, which provide entry to both days' play and are priced at 3,000 baht, 1,000 baht and 500 baht, are on sale at Canal Village. The 3,000-baht tickets include entry to a post-match "Meet the Players" cocktail party on November 28.

In Vino, very fast: ACYC final round

AO CHALONG: Josh Lee and his crew on *Vino* held on to their early lead to win the final race of the Ao Chalong Yacht Club Keelboat and Multihull Race Series 2004 on November 7.

Helping out on *Vino* was Scott Duncanson, whose *Somtam Express* had already racked up enough points to seal the championship without even taking to the water.

"It makes a change to be at the sharp end instead of the blunt end," he remarked.

In a day marked by breezes that were light to non-existent – the start was delayed by 30 minutes due to lack of wind – *Vino* went ahead of Racing Class rival *Minx*, skippered by Kevin Gillow in his first ACYC race this year.

Vino easily led the flotilla for the remainder of the shortened course and crossed the finish line at about 2 pm.

Struggling in the light

winds were Mark Horwood and his crew on *Attitude 8*, who finally retired without finishing, having succumbed to the stifling heat out on the near-windless bay.

In the Multihull Class, Henry Kaye on *Cerberus* managed to fight off repeated challenges from Mark Pescott on *Summersalt* to cross the line first in a tight finish, making it his second consecutive win in the ACYC race series.

The tightest contest on the bay, however, was between regatta stalwarts Al Boone on *Blue Moon* and John Fenn on *The Four Winds* in the Cruising Class.

Both drew on their long experience to mount and fight off challenge after challenge, with Al Boone proving the better on the day, finishing with Fenn in his wake as he crossed the line.

The shortened course proved to be a good move by race officials – a storm crossed the bay, with winds gusting to about 25

knots, just as the last of the yachts finished the course.

The overall results of the ACYC Keelboat and Multihull Series 2004 are:

Racing Class: 1. *Somtam Express*, Scott Duncanson (36 points); 2. *Vino*, Josh Lee (26); 3. *Attitude 8*, Mark Horwood (15).

Multihull Class: 1. *Summersalt*, Mark Pescott (33); 2. *Cerberus*, Henry Kaye (20); 3. *Charro*, Tim Milner (16).

Cruising Class: 1. *Blue Moon*, Al Boone (41); 2. *The Four Winds*, John Fenn (31); 3. *Fidji*, Nick Band (11).

Prizes and trophies will be presented to the top three winners in each class at the ACYC clubhouse, on the beach 300 meters north of Chalong Pier, on November 27, starting at 7 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Korea

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: Thai hopes of winning the Fifa Under-19 Women's World Championship 2004 soccer tournament on home soil got an unpleasant reality check on November 5, when the Thai side were demolished by South Korea 6-0 in a warm-up match at Surakul Stadium.

Korean striker Park Eun Jung was the star, completing a hat trick for the Koreans even before the two sides went into the locker rooms for the half-time break.

The match was played before a highly partisan crowd, many of them schoolchildren bussed in by school administrators into serving as spectators. But despite their support, the Thais were completely dominated by South Koreans. Faster and better organized than the home team, the Koreans penetrated the Thai defense seemingly at will, creating havoc in the penalty area.

It wasn't long before the

Just 14, but Sydney's a

PHUKET: Sydney Leroux is a 14-year-old soccer sensation whose heroes are Pelé and Manchester United's Christiano Ronaldo and who is playing in a national team, in an international competition, with and against footballers up to five years older than she is.

And Sydney is a girl. She's in Phuket with the Canadian team competing in the Fifa Under-19 Women's World Soccer Championship. She's also the youngest player in the tournament.

Her team has beaten Russia twice, 2-0 and 2-1, and Sydney has already garnered fulsome praise from the Canadian coach.

"She had a big, big impact," Canadian coach Ian Bridge was quoted as saying by Canada.com News.

"Literally every time she got the ball, she was dangerous," Bridge said of Sydney, who turned 14 in May. "They couldn't handle her speed. She is so brave and aggressive, and wants to score goals."

Sydney started playing soccer when she was just five years old. By the time she was 12, she was in the British Columbia provincial Under-16 team. After taking part in a training camp with

the Under-15 squad she was approached to join the Under-19 national squad heading for the world championships in Thailand.

She said, "I never expected to be here, because of my age. I'm in grade nine, but most of my colleagues are in grade 12, or at university or college. So, this is very exciting for me and I am very happy."

Team members trained for four hours a day, every day for two months before leaving Canada for Thailand. Said Sydney, "We trained hard and we practiced hard and we want to win."

The heat of Phuket has come as a bit of a shock. Sydney said, "I didn't expect it to be so hard. Compared with Canada's weather it is intense here, but I really like it."

On the pitch, too, she is having fun. She said, "We're showing people that girls can play soccer, that women are getting better and better at the sport, and right now we're doing a very good job," she told the *Gazette*.

While the Russians will play their tournament matches here, the Canadians will play all their matches in Bangkok.

– Anongnat Sartpisut

Patong Darts League

PATONG: In the only make-up game yet reported, OffShore clobbered Piccadilly 8-1 on November 5 to pull away from the pack with a lead of 31 points.

Standings after week 13: 1. OffShore (28 points); 2= Champs, Didi's (25); 4= Nag's Head, Happy Days, Piccadilly (24); 7. In-Between (23); 8. Two Black Sheep (18); 9. Amigos (17); 10= Fat Boy Saloon, Shakers (8); 12. Valhalla (1).

November 16 fixtures: Fat Boy Saloon v Nag's Head; Happy Days v OffShore; In-Between v Champs; Piccadilly v Amigos; Shakers v Valhalla; Two Black Sheep v Didi's. (Home team first.)

In other darts-related news, the legendary John Lowe will be the special guest at a dinner at the Green Man on November 30, when he will throw some arrows and field questions about his darting exploits.

Anchor, Amigos hoist mugs

PATONG: The Anchor Bar, winners of the recently concluded Phuket Pool League, hosted the award presentation night at their bar in Kata on November 4.

Also receiving a trophy on the night were Amigo's Bar, who won the League Cup competition by beating Pickles in the final.

The high score award went to Anchor Bar's Titipong "Ball" Phetlolaen.

The new league is already underway with two new teams competing: Fat Boy Saloon and Dog's Bollocks.

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crush Thailand 6-0



Cha Yun Hee of South Korea blocks a tackle from Thailand's Phavinee Nethip

first goal came, in the 11th minute, when Park Eun Jung struck from 10 yards out. Three minutes later, Thailand's continued failure to mark attackers deep in their own territory resulted in a desperate foul in the Thai pen-

alty area, with Kim Ju Hee converting for a 2-0 lead.

At 37 minutes, Park Eun Jung dashed up the right wing and blasted the third goal, again from 10 yards out.

Then, just minutes before halftime, Cha Yun Hee went into a pack of several Thai players and somehow wrested control of the ball with an impressive tackle.

She then dribbled the ball up the right side and crossed it to Park Eun Jung, who deftly headed the ball into the net to complete her hat-trick, putting the Koreans 4-0 up at half-time.

The rout continued unabated in the second half, with Park Eun Sung taking a feed from deep in the backfield to beat the Thai goalkeeper from 20 yards out.

The last goal of the match came when the Thai goalie – quite possibly shell-shocked by this point – miskicked on a routine clearance. Park Eun Sung pounced on the errant ball, slid-

ing it into the net for her second goal and rounding the game off with a convincing 6-0 scoreline.

After the lopsided match, Thai team manager Narumon Siriwat, said, "I am not satisfied with today's game. There was no system, no concentration. The midfielders and defenders looked like they were just standing in a line. We need to get more practice and better teamwork to get our 5-4-1 formation to be effective."

She played down the chances of Thailand pulling off any major upsets during the tournament. "Even though we have trained for six months, we are less experienced than the other 12 teams in the tournament. We are still in the building stages. For us, just winning one match would be a success."

Meanwhile, teenage girls from two of the world's coldest countries, Canada and Russia, got down to action in two fittingly-entitled "warm-up" matches played at the seaside stadium in Karon. The Canadians took both matches, winning 2-0 on November 4 and 2-1 on November 6.

The November 6 match was a nail-biter. Canada's Aysha Jamani opened the scoring in the 32nd minute, only to have the determined Russians equalize three minutes later. The tense deadlock was finally broken after 80 minutes, with a score by Canada's Jodi-Anne Robinson.

After the match, Canadian Coach Ian Bridge said the game had been good preparation for the upcoming tournament matches.

"We are happy to win. Both teams played hard, so it was a good test for us. This is an important game to win because it keeps up our momentum going into the tournament."

He said that the marked increase in "physical play" in the second meeting was normal when two sides meet twice over such a short period of time – and tempers sometimes flare.

"As for the tournament matches, we expect to do well. It was difficult for us two years ago. We came second. We got the silver medal. We have a talented team and intend to work very hard for success."

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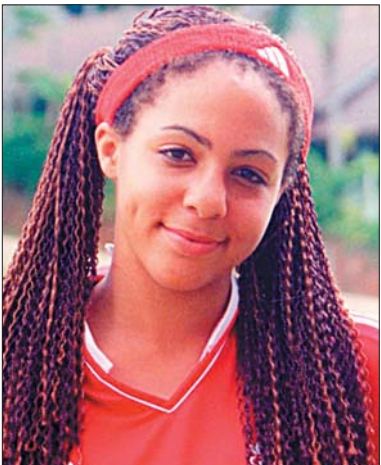
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Vietnam puts the past behind

TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

For decades one of South East Asia's most beautiful countries, Vietnam, was synonymous with one of the most horrific armed conflicts of recent times.

No more. Economic reform – *doi moi* – and gradual and peaceful national rehabilitation are turning 'Nam and its broad verdant landscapes into one of the most attractive holiday destinations in the region.

Of course, you can't move an inch in Vietnam without being reminded of some aspect of French or American colonial influence. Your taxi at Ho Chi Minh Airport could well be a good ol' 1959 Dodge Royale, a thundering gas guzzler that leaves the city's myriad mopeds in its wake as it bombs down the boulevard.

The demilitarized zone – surely one of the great misnomers of all time – is still cluttered with military debris. Board a cyclo in the broad, tree-lined avenues of Hanoi – still more of a provincial town than a national capital – and you can take in the graceful colonial architecture, with the characteristic ochre walls contrasting stunningly with the surrounding vegetation.

One of the great pleasures of Vietnam nowadays is that it is so much easier to get around than in the past. The Reunification Express still grinds its way up and down the coast, but now the domestic airways are expanding and – in an incredible development – the road network can almost be described as comfortable.

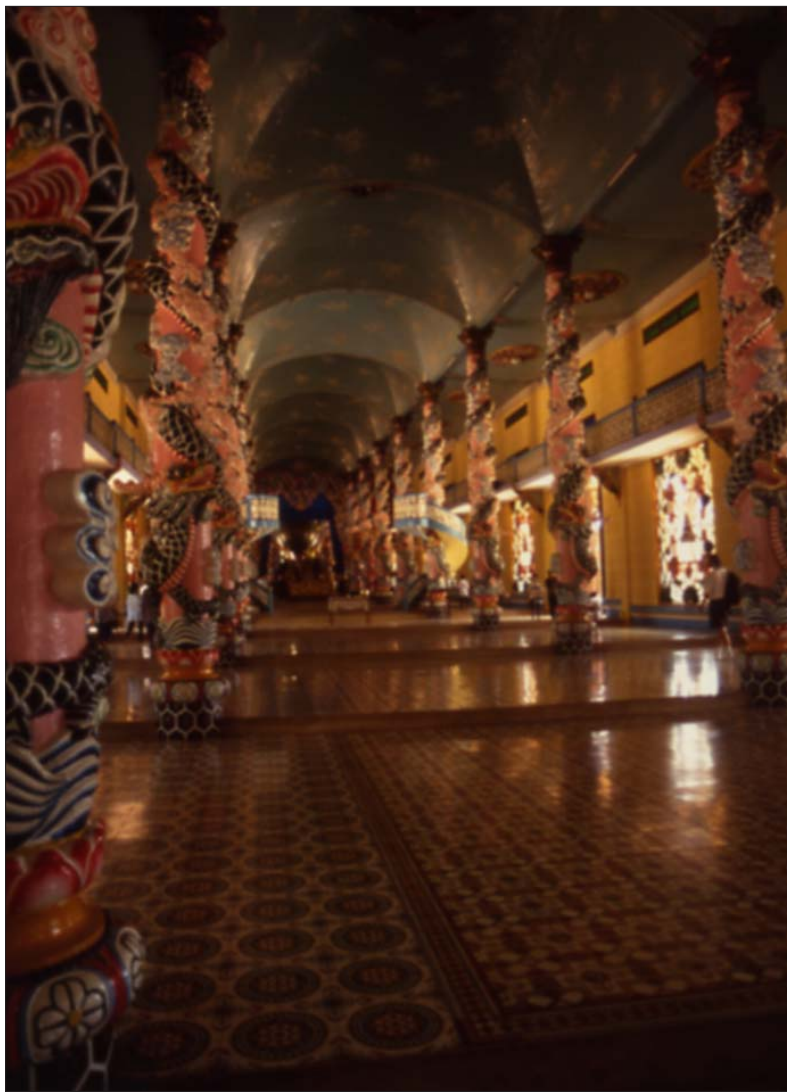
You can travel easily between Saigon and Hanoi within a week, with enough time to stop off at many picturesque destinations along the way.

Nobody in Vietnam actually calls Ho Chi Minh City anything but Saigon. This is not out of disrespect to the father of the country, but more likely because



Colonial echoes (above) in the Hôtel de Ville (city hall) in Saigon. Below, the astonishingly ornate Cao Dai Cathedral in Tay Ninh. Right, life on the water – a lake on the road from Saigon to Dalat.

– Photographs by Alasdair Forbes



this is a city that is constantly on the move – and two syllables are quicker than five.

Skyscrapers are now visible behind its iconic Hôtel de Ville

– the city hall – and cathedral, but Saigon still operates at street level, with stools and tables cluttering the sidewalks and citizens relaxing over cups of coffee.



Going north, both the main road and railway follow the coastline, passing seaside resorts such as Danang and Nha Trang, and providing a near-continuous view of the emerald sward of rice fields that is a constant backdrop just about anywhere you go in the country.

The jewel in Vietnam's crown is the old trading port of Hoi An, which predates entrepôts like the more well-known Macau and Melaka, and is graced with some lovely old buildings.

A covered bridge, built by the town's Japanese community in 1593, still stands and numerous temples and pagodas dot the shoreline and quay areas.

Local residents maneuver their craft along the river, probably in much the same way their ancestors did four centuries ago.

Hanoi – with its French co-

lonial Opera House and plenty of open spaces – must rank as one of the most delightful of Asian capitals. The streets of its old quarter, north of Hoan Kiem Lake, are a cornucopia of cafés and shops selling everything from pirate CDs and silks to tombstones – a one-of-a-kind souvenir if ever there was one.

In bygone days, French colonials ventured off into the hills surrounding Sapa to escape the heat – reveling in the refreshing climate and the colorfully dressed hilltribe people, whose weekly markets remain an important event in the local social calendar even to this day.

While Vietnam is modernizing rapidly, many of its traditions and much of its landscape remain charming and untainted. It is still most definitely worth a visit.

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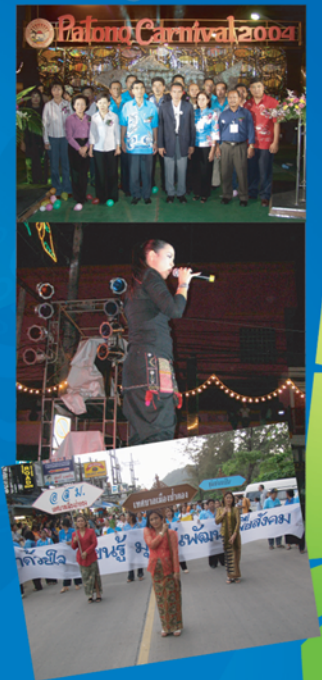
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Before coming to work at the Impiana Phuket Cabana resort in Patong, Filipino Ronnie Macuja lived in New Zealand for 12 years.

"We were very happy there," says Ronnie. "Although we missed our families in the Philippines, my wife and I had planned to stay in New Zealand for the rest of our lives."

But the owner of the Impiana Phuket Cabana, on a visit to Auckland, was so impressed by Ronnie's culinary skills that she managed to persuade him to come to Phuket.

Five years later, Ronnie is still here. These recipes reflect his passion for inventive fusion food, a passion that has won him several national prizes.

Oysters deep-fried in Singha beer batter with Sabayon sauce To serve 4 people

Ingredients:

24 fresh oysters;
Grated zest of 1 lime;
Rock salt and pepper.

To make the beer batter:

2 cups all-purpose flour;
2 cups cornstarch;
2 teaspoons baking powder;
60 ml olive oil;
1 small bottle Singha beer;
Salt.

To make the Sabayon sauce:

700 ml dry white wine;
500 ml fish stock;
Juice of 1 lemon;
50 ml Champagne or white wine vinegar;
10 peeled shallots, finely diced;
6 egg yolks;
500 ml olive oil;
Salt and pepper to taste;
5 ml champagne.

Garnish:

Garlic-toasted baguette slices;
Sprigs of fresh dill.

Method:

To prepare the Sabayon sauce, sauté the shallots in olive oil until glazed. Add the white wine, vinegar, fish stock and lemon juice. Bring to boil and reduce to half of the original amount.

Remove from heat and allow to cool. Measure 100 ml of this reduction and whisk it with the egg yolks in a stainless-steel bowl over a low heat until it is smooth and creamy.



Chef Ronnie Macuja and his mouth-watering Oysters deep-fried in Singha beer batter with Sabayon sauce (left) and Open Rock Lobster Lasagna (below).



Fantastic fusion

Guest chef By Jenna Wise

Remove from the heat and gradually whisk in the olive oil and Champagne. Season and keep at room temperature.

To prepare the beer batter, mix the two types of flour and baking powder together in a stainless-steel bowl. Stir in enough beer to form a smooth batter. Add the olive oil and season with salt. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve.

Remove the oysters from their shells and wash well. Season with rock salt, pepper and lime zest. Heat enough oil in a pan to deep-fry the oysters. Dip them first in flour, then in the batter. Deep-fry until they are golden brown.

Serve the prepared oysters in their shells, with a small side dish of Sabayon sauce. Garnish

with garlic toasted baguette slices and fresh sprigs of dill.

Open Rock Lobster Lasagna For 4 people

Ingredients:

400 gm rock lobster meat;
160 gm mashed potato, seasoned with nutmeg, salt, butter and chopped chives;
4 lasagna sheets, blanched and cut into halves;
8 steamed baby carrots;
8 steamed ears of baby sweet-corn;
8 steamed wingbeans;
12 steamed asparagus stalks;
Butter, for frying.

For the fish cream sauce:

100 ml dry white wine;
150 ml fish stock;
100 ml cream;
6 minced cloves of garlic.

For the Court bouillon:

3 sliced leeks;
1 large sliced carrot;

1 sliced celery stalk;
4 sliced shallots;
1 lemon;
2 pieces star anise;
2 cloves of garlic;
50 ml dry white wine;
1 sliced fennel bulb;
1 sprig fresh thyme;
1 sprig fresh parsley;
250 ml water;
Salt and pepper to taste.

8 spring onions.
Fresh basil leaves.

Method:

Put the ingredients for the Court bouillon into a large pan and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 minutes, then remove from the heat and strain. Put back onto the heat and cook the rock lobster meat in the bouillon for about 4 minutes. Remove and rinse the lobster meat in cold water.

To prepare the fish cream sauce, put the wine into a pan and add the fish stock. Bring to the boil and reduce. Add the cream

and garlic, stir well and add the pieces of rock lobster. Simmer for a minute or two.

Briefly sauté the steamed vegetables in butter and arrange in the middle of each plate. Put a helping of mashed potato on top and cover with one lasagna sheet.

On top of this, place some rock lobster and cover again with a lasagna sheet. Put some mashed potato on top to stabilize the arrangement.

Decorate with spring onions and fresh basil leaves before serving.

Sala Bua restaurant at the Impiana Phuket Cabana, 41 Thaweewong Rd, Patong, is open 6:30 pm to 11:30 pm every day. Tel: 076-340138.

If you have a recipe you would like to share with our readers, please email: chef@phuketgazette.net



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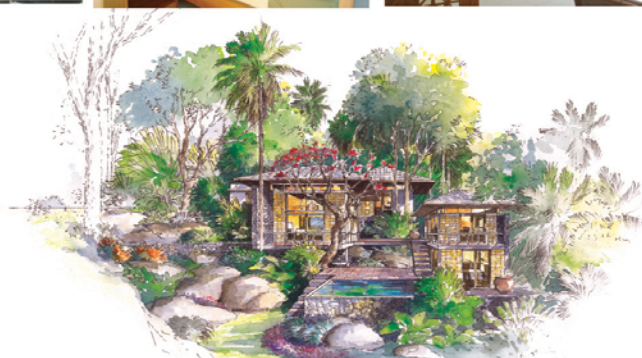


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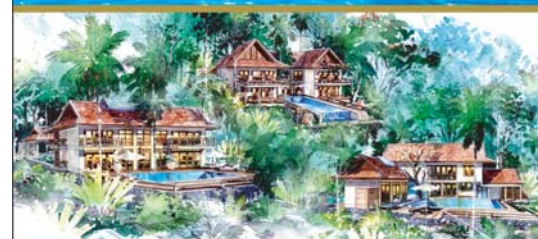
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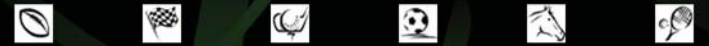


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Home of the Week

Kata

An air of difference at Kata

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Although all five houses will lie in a secure gated compound, each will have its own separate entrance via an electrically-operated gate and will be completely self-contained.

Each property is being built to a different design. This first house, which has 300-square-meter internal area, has five bedrooms, five bathrooms, a swimming pool, a garden and parking for three cars.



The walls are double-thickness, the floors are Italian granite – except the living room which has a hardwood floor – and the windows are of laminated security glass.

On the ground floor, there are three double bedrooms and one single, each with its own marble bathroom. The two master bedrooms open onto the swimming pool and the 100-sqm patio.

The house has been designed so that these four bedrooms can be an integral part of a family home, or can be rented out as separate rooms, for which there is great demand in Kata during the high season.

On the upper floor, there is an open-plan living area with a luxury kitchen, dining and sitting room areas and a 9-by-5-meter covered balcony that looks out onto Kata Beach. It has a high, vaulted, wood-paneled ceiling to



Set on a hill behind Kata Beach, this house enjoys superb views of the Andaman Sea.

make maximum use of sea breezes.

On this floor, there is an additional bedroom, which could also be used as an office/computer room; it is currently served by a 2Mbps ADSL line.

There is also a system fitted to protect against termites, and carbon water filtration delivering potable water to all taps. There is a PABX telephone exchange, five telephone sockets and three TV sockets.

In the garden there is a teak sala and a number of mature shade trees.

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I wonder why foreigners choose to live in Asia, and then complain roundly about the experience. "Things don't happen this way back home," they whine.

They must have left wonderfully organized societies, paradises even, to come and live in places as difficult as the Philippines or Thailand. It's incomprehensible.

I recently went back to Australia – my own wonderfully organized country of origin – touching down in cold, wet and miserable Sydney at 6:30 am.

I went to hire a car. The chap behind the car rental desk told me that the charge for the rather average sedan I wanted was A\$105.

This was almost double the price I had paid for an identical car just six months earlier in Brisbane, so I asked him why it was now so expensive.

"Supply and demand, mate. We've only got one car left," was his response. Given no choice, I agreed to rent the one remaining vehicle, and offered my credit card to pay for it.

The card was rejected. "But it worked in Brisbane," I exclaimed.

"We've only got an old machine here," the car rental guy explained.

So no rental car. Off I trudged to the taxi rank, which was easy to find as there was already a crowd of a hundred or

THE WHINGER OF OZ

LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

so people in line snaking through a drafty shed that offered scant protection from the elements.

"Me cows get a better deal than this," remarked a gentlemen of ruddy complexion and generous proportion.

The reason for the slow processing of the taxi queue soon became apparent. Airport officials, generally women wearing men's trousers – in fact, most officials and airline staff in Australia are women wearing men's trousers – stood around asking the potential taxi passengers where they were going and whose turn it was before deciding which taxi would be most suited for the task.

They also tried to divine whether the taxi driver could speak English, and if he understood just where he was supposed to take the hapless passenger.

The driver for my journey railed – in a Lebanese accent not actually too dissimilar from the Italian grocer near my mother's

house – about the traffic in Sydney, the unpleasantness of his domestic situation, the economy and the government ad infinitum.

I presume he meant the government of Australia but his accent was a shade too strong to be sure.

We got to the hotel. There was no trolley for my copious luggage and when I asked for a porter I was told, "We don't have one."

I dragged my bags up to my room, which was freezing cold. I couldn't find any knobs that seemed to warm it up, so I called reception. The young woman there told me I had to turn the system to "heat". I did. Nothing changed.

I went down to reception. "This is impossible," I told the

young lass. "It's freezing up there." Another person at reception agreed. "My room's freezing, too," she said.

The receptionist called the hotel engineer.

"Sorry," she said, putting the phone down. "There's nothing we can do. The season's changed. It's now officially summer, so the engineer's switched the whole hotel from heating to airconditioning."

Brisbane was an improvement. The Queensland weather was warm, the scent of spring was in the air and my credit card worked at the car rental desk there.

I headed off to my "local" for a libation with a few mates and was pleased to see that the girl behind the bar was blonde, attractive and possessed a slim figure sheathed, not in men's trousers but in a short skirt.

At least one thing was right in the land of Oz.

My mates were in their usual corner, whinging as ever

about the state of the economy, the government, the drinking laws, and taxes.

That made two things still normal in the land of Oz.

I decided to buy a hands-free set for my mobile phone – there is a A\$200 fine for using a mobile while driving without one. I went to the automart and found one but it appeared not to have a microphone. I asked for help, and the conversation went something like this:

Me: "Does this need a microphone?"

Shop assistant: "Yes."

Me: "So where is the microphone?"

Shop assistant: "I don't know."

Me: "Does anyone here know?"

Shop assistant: "No."

I decided – with her permission – to take it to the car to see if it worked anyway. She followed me outside in the company of a chap, possibly the manager, who then said, "You can't take that outside without paying for it first."

I will never know if that gadget would have worked, but I was happy to get on the airplane back to Thailand, where being misunderstood is a lot more fun. The whingers are still here, but then, whingers are to be found everywhere.

Let's enjoy life while we can; you never know what real problems may lie ahead.



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Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut

MOROCCAN MAGIC

KARON: One aspect of the Yamawadee project that will set it apart from other developments in Phuket may well be the panoramic sea view it will enjoy from an elevated position in the hills of Karon.

But what makes the project unique is the use of Moroccan design elements throughout the villa interiors.

Karn Prachumpan, Managing Director of project developer Phuket Golden Place Property Co Ltd, explained, "Our concept of luxury villas set in tranquil surroundings truly exemplifies the name Yamawadee - 'Yama' means the third level of heaven.

"From this tranquil location, one has easy access to both Karon Beach and central Karon," K. Karn said.

He explained that the development will have 24-hour security, a spa, a restaurant and a laundry, as well as central management to maintain common areas, including gardens.

"The infrastructure being installed includes underground power lines and an eight-meter-wide concrete road.

"We also have natural well water, which can be used year-round," he added.

Living space offered by the villas will range from 380 to 430 square meters, with each home



Hilltop retreat: The Yamawadee site offers panoramic views.

featuring three bedrooms, three bathrooms, two living rooms, a fitness room, a kitchen and parking space for two cars. In addition, each will come with a private swimming pool overlooking Karon Bay.

The exteriors of the villas will feature elements of traditional Thai design, while the interiors, making use of wood and stone, will have touches of Moroccan flair throughout.

"Each villa will also have three phone lines, ready for owners who want to use the Internet," K. Karn said. "And if owners want personalized decoration and

fittings, we can include those during construction."

Prices have been set to match the quality of the project, with villas costing from 45 to 65 million baht apiece.

Construction of Yamawadee began in December last year and is expected to be complete by the end of next year.

For more information contact Phuket Golden Place Property Co Ltd at 121 Moo 4, Patak Rd, Phuket 83100. Tel: 076-333488. Fax: 076-333499. Mobile: 01-8927406. Email: info@ktggroup.com. Website: www.ktggroup.com

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Have you ever tried to buy a jar of English marmalade in Thailand? Or a jar of Vegemite (only Australians really understand that stuff)? How about a Range Rover, or a Lay-Z-boy reclining chair?

All of these products are imported and can cost you two or three times their prices in their countries of origin. Whacking huge duties on imported products certainly works, and when it comes to the stage of parting with your cash, it becomes abundantly clear which products didn't originate in the Land of Smiles.

So some foreign manufacturers have done the only sensible thing – they just make them here. No confusion – it's simply a product originally from overseas that's now made in Thailand.

Plants – in some ways – are no different. A huge number of the plants we have here aren't native to Thailand. The clever thing is that it doesn't take free-trade agreements, government incentives or international corporations with multi-million-dollar factories to get them going. Once here, they just quietly get on with the business of growing, looking good and reproducing.

It would seem that it was

Bloomin' foreigners

the Europeans who started it all.

The first international botanist, by all accounts, was Christopher Columbus. Ironically, he went off into the Atlantic partly in search of plants to take back to Europe. The idea was to cultivate them in an effort to lower the prices of spices that had, until then, been imported from India at enormous cost.

What he first "discovered" on his celebrated jaunt to the New World were pineapples and chilies – neither of which was in any way unknown to the locals of South and Central America, who had been enjoying them for thousands of years.

But they were new to Europe, whose later explorers introduced the plants to Southeast Asia where they flourished.

The ti plant, or cordyline (*maak-phuu-maak-mia* in Thai), in its original green-leafed form, came from the Pacific islands of Polynesia, where the locals made their traditional skirts from the leaves. At some stage, somebody



Surrounded by interlopers: Ixora, at least, is a native of Thailand.

obviously thought it would be a good idea to start introducing the ti plant to other tropical parts of the world.

Many years on, the original long green leaves have become a multitude of shapes and colors, to the extent that it's now barely recognizable as a single species.

In 1768, Frenchman Admiral Louis de Bougainville began his long journey to the Pacific Ocean and discovered the vine that now bears his name – bougainvillea, known here as *fueng-fa*.

He took it home and it quickly spread to just about every warm corner of the globe. Through the following years, this distinctive Brazilian beauty has assumed its rightful place as one of the most popular tropical plants in the region.

Nobody seems to know how it spread so far so quickly.

The same mystery surrounds the king of the "smelly" trees, the frangipani, or *Plumeria* (*lanthom khao*). Perhaps a Portuguese or Spanish ship brought the first cutting over from Central America. Over the years it's become a common sight in Buddhist and Hindu gardens and temples all over Asia. All we do know is that it was named after a

French botanist called Charles Plumier.

The poinsettia, or *kissemass* in Thai, is another plant whose name hardly requires a broad imagination. It first appeared in the US in 1825 after it was brought back by Joel Robert Poinsett, the first US ambassador to Mexico.

He took cuttings from a beautiful shrub he found growing next to a road in the wilds of southern Mexico, and took them back to his greenhouse in South Carolina. The Thai name gives the game away – it's now the unofficial Christmas plant in many parts of the world where holly and ivy aren't options.

Gardens in Thailand, of course, really don't care where their inhabitants originated. No visas required. We're just as likely to find heliconia from South America, plumbago from South Africa, or peacock flowers from Madagascar as we are to find something which is native to this region, such as the *ixora*.

To be honest, nobody really cares any more. Does it really matter where a plant originated? We should probably keep fairly quiet about this; who knows, if we ask too many questions, we may find that we're liable to import duty on our gardens.

Let's keep all this between you and me, shall we?

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Property Gazette

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Issues & Answers

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home. Spacious 530-sqm home on 2,016sqm of land tucked away in a quiet soi near Chalong circle. 3 bedrooms, living room, dining room, family room, study/office, kitchen, storeroom, 3.5 baths, and 2-car carport. At the rear of the house is a large roofed-in terrace with an outside kitchen overlooking a 6x12-meter swimming pool and a separate guest room with bath. Complete with appliances, teak and rosewood furniture and many extras. Nothing compares to the quality of this 1.5-year-old home. Price: 23 million baht. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-281381, 01-2737184. Email: bodell@loxinfo.co.th

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AC001	Chalong Circle	2.4m x 4.8m
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Property Gazette



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New, fully furnished house in Palai Green with 2 aircon bedrooms, hot shower, kitchen, living room, garage and beautiful garden. Located in a quiet area near Chalong Bay. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-8924311.

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for sale or rent. Brand new, with 6 bedrooms, all en-suite, in a great location. Inexpensive opportunity to start new business. Pls call for info. Tel: 07-0170135.

PATONG

Apartment for rent. Long- or short-term, 5 minutes' walk to the beach. Pls call for details. Tel: 072-760529.

Properties Wanted

WANTED: HIGH END

rentals. Siam Real Estate requires long-term rental properties over 25,000 baht per month for current and future clients. Tel: 076-280805. Email: richard@siamrealestate.com For further details, see our website at: www.siamrealestate.com

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Located in Chalong, 1 bedroom, living room, kitchen, 2 aircons, terrace, patio, shared pool/sauna. Weekly at 7,500 baht or monthly at 25,000 baht. Pls contact for details. Tel: 09-5943209. Email: olebay_th@yahoo.co.uk

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At least 2 years' experience at management level, strong leadership and problem solving skills, and the ability and to work under pressure.

◆ Officer & HR Manager (Phuket)

Qualifications:

Thai nationality, over 30 years old

Bachelor's or Master's degree in management or related fields

Have knowledge of Thai labor laws

At least 5 years' experience in managing a corporate office environment at management level.

◆ Sales Assistant/Sales Assistant Manager/Villa Rental Manager (Phuket)

Qualifications:

Bachelor's or Master's degree in sales and marketing or related fields

Strong leadership and good interpersonal & management skills at management level

Strong selling skills, self-motivated and able to work independently

Ability to travel to key markets such as Hong Kong, London and Singapore and committed to success.

◆ Marketing and Sales Support Staff (Bangkok & Phuket)

Qualifications:

Thai nationality, over 27 years old

Bachelor's degree or higher in sales and marketing or related fields

Good interpersonal skills, service-minded, self-motivated and able to work independently.

◆ Assistant Accountant (Bangkok & Phuket)

Qualifications:

Female, over 25 years old

Bachelor's degree in accounting

At least 3 years' experience in overall accounting and finance.

◆ Administrator (Bangkok & Phuket)

Qualifications:

Thai nationality, over 22 years old

Vocational degree or higher in related fields

Basic knowledge of computers and office automation

Good interpersonal skills, detailed, service-minded and well-organized.

◆ Technician (Bangkok & Phuket)

Qualifications:

Thai nationality, male, over 22 years old

Vocational degree or higher in mechanical/electrical engineering

At least 3 years' experience with high-rise buildings or villas.

◆ Messenger (Phuket)

Qualifications:

Thai nationality, male, over 22 years old

Vocational degree or higher

Good knowledge of Phuket Province

Own transportation with driving license.

Positions 1-6 require a good command of spoken and written English and computer literacy. Males must be exempt of military service.

Knowledge of real estate is an advantage for all positions.

Interested candidates are invited to write in with a full resumé, stating present and expected salaries, and include a recent photo. Please send mail to:

Knight Frank Chartered (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

Central Waterfront Suites 16th Floor, 224/21 Moo1 Patak Road, Karon Beach, Phuket, 83100.

Fax: 076-396786 E-mail: waraporn@knightfrankthailand.com www.knightfrankphuket.com

Wired Destinations, one of Asia's top hotel reservation companies, is expanding and seeking new, qualified staff to join its team. We are taking applications for the following positions:

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The positions are based in Phuket and require candidates who possess the following:

- Experience in the hospitality industry is a plus
- BA degree or higher
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Please contact for an interview:

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Interested candidates please contact 01-4043030 or visit our office at 346 Phuket Rd., T.Taladyai, Muang, Phuket, 83000. Email: phuket346@yahoo.com

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2. Receptionist
3. General Engineer

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- Fluent English

For information, please contact K. Piraya. Tel: 076-385858, 06-5676816. Fax: 076-385858. Email: pirayapower@hotmail.com

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I need a native Norwegian to do secretarial work, 20-30 hrs in November, to write correspondence to the Norwegian government, police, Nordea bank, lawyers, the press and embassies. Call 06-2672161 or post application to: Tarjei Lodden, P.O. Box 173, Phuket City 83000.

PROJECT ENGINEER

Engineer cost controller wanted for 21-villa real estate project. Start now. Pls call for info. Tel: 07-8938747.

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ACCOUNTANT NEEDED

M/F, Thai, over 25 yrs old. At least 4 years' experience in accounting, finance and taxation. Good command of written and spoken English. Driving license will be an advantage. Tel: 076-292402. Fax: 076-292401. Email: phuket@divemaster.net

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required. Male, Thai national with a good command of the English language. We are based in Central Festival. Pls contact K. Poom for more info. Tel: 07-264021.

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Phuket based graphic design company is looking for a young, creative-minded graphic artist to work under a chief designer and account director. Applicants should have a good knowledge of the following programs: Photoshop, Illustrator, Dreamweaver & basic HTML knowledge. A reasonable level of English is also required. Please also have ready a folio of any previous work for consideration.

Sales Co-ordinator

A local media company is looking for a bright, young, energetic sales person to handle media sales for a number of Asian based publications. Previous sales experience would be preferred. Must have a high level of English and be able to prepare and present sales proposals. Applicants with a car are also preferred. Drivers license is essential.

Account Co-ordinator

Phuket based advertising company is looking for a junior client services co-ordinator. Marketing education or previous experience will be favoured. Applicants need to have a good level of English, bright personality and be good at working with other members of a team. Working under an account manager, you will be required to assist in the day-to-day running of the company and client work. Must have a drivers license.

Applications should be sent to Khun Mink at mink@leadingedge-media.com or Tel: 076 239 746 to arrange an interview.

Leading Edge Media Co., Ltd

Phuket Boat Lagoon 22/1 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Muang, Phuket, 83000.

MARKETING

manager. Real estate company requires a Thai person with good English and marketing experience with website knowledge. Good prospects, salary and incentives. Car driver's licence is an advantage. Contact for more details. Tel: 076-280805. Email: richard@siamrealestate.com

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Female, good English skills, email, computer literate, able to process all office documents. Please contact for info. Tel: 076-280397, 01-5848502. Email: admin@philkade.com

PROPERTY MANAGER

Thai Property Manager wanted. Min 3 yrs' service industry or related experience, own car, written and spoken English, MS Word, Excel and email. Must have good communication skills and be a team player. Excellent package: salary, fuel/phone allowance, service charges + +. Contact for more info. Tel: 076-270750, 01-7370722. Fax: 076-270751. Email: allan@pipsphuket.com

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 - Corporate & MICE International Markets
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- Crowne Meetings Director (Convention & Meetings Director)
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- Director of Revenue *
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* Please Contact Hotel For Qualifications *

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- Professional and friendly in individual
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- Self starter, with the ability to work independently with minimal supervision

Qualifications and Experience:

- A university degree or higher in a related discipline
- Working experience in the role applied for within the hospitality industry.
- Fluent English is essential for all positions
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Applications

Please forward your detailed resumé together with a recent photograph to:

Crown Plaza Karon Beach Phuket (Attn: General Manager)
509 Patak Rd., Karon Beach, Phuket, Thailand 83100
Tel: 076-396142 Fax: 076-396122
E-mail: info@crowneplazaphuket.com



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10 Positions

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- Excellect working conditions, benefits and opportunities for the successful candidates. Tel: 076-239078, Fax: 076-273-390. Email: admin@ocean-catering.com For further details, please see our website at: www.watemarkphuket.com

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NORWEGIAN HOTELIER

I am a 36-year-old Norwegian (currently residing on Cyprus). I am a professional hotelier and have experience managing a 5-star ultra-deluxe Caribbean boutique hotel, as well as sales and marketing management at the only 5-star apartment-hotel (1,100 suites) in Spain. I have also personally hosted British royalty, and US and European superstars. As I would like to relocate to Thailand, I am looking at possibilities of obtaining a position as Resident Manager or General Manager for a small 4- or 5-star boutique hotel/resort. As I am well off financially, my services are offered at a rate well below that of what one normally would have to pay for a European with my experience and education. No expat package required apart from a work permit. I could also be interested in partnering in the future. I am professional, honest and hardworking, and I place full guest satisfaction as the most important aspect of running a resort. I am well-versed in managing a multi-cultural staff, and have certificates both for Training and "Train The Trainer" courses. I speak and write the Scandinavian languages and English fluently, have moderate knowledge of verbal and written German, and speak some Spanish. I can provide top international professional references on demand. I am available on two weeks notice, and if there is a genuine interest on your behalf, I am willing to travel for an interview. I have a clean medical record and no criminal record. Please contact me for further information. Yours faithfully, Frode Sund. Email: fsund@runbox.com

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

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

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Bulletins

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archery@lagunaphuket.com
or telephone Little John at 076 271 006

SCANDINAVIAN CLUB

Meeting on Saturday, November 13, at 5 pm, at the Thavorn Hotel, Rassada Rd, Phuket City. Info from Lions Club of Phuket Pearl; and about hospitals, sailboats, work activities, Phuket tours, peace work, *farang rak Thai* issues. Want to organize and promote social clubs worldwide? A Phuket Peace Center? Call Tarjei for more details. Tel: 06-2672161.

Business Opportunities

FACTORY 4 SALE

Drinking-water factory - 450 sqm - on Lanta Island, Krabi for sale at 1.2 million baht. Pls contact for details. Tel: 01-8931739.

SPORT SHIRT

Profit from official grand prix motorcycle and sport shirts. Wholesale discount to sell in UK. Please call for information. Tel: 076-388051, 01-8081804.

MESSAGE BIZ

with "coffee corner" in Patong for sale. Free advertising, good location and regular customers. Offered at 500,000 baht. Pls contact for more information. Tel: 07-8984338.

BAR IN KATA CENTER

Good location, 600,000 baht, 6,000 baht/month. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 078-814415. Email: christophuket@hotmail.com

PARTNERSHIP OFFER!

I am a German businessman offering a 50% partnership in a newly established Ltd Co. in Phuket (Holiday Ownership). I have 15 years' experience in Europe and Thailand and good connections here in Thailand. Work permit is no problem! Business begins immediately, all prepared, no waiting time! Participation: 25,000 euros. Pls contact for more info. Fax: 001-1-320-213-9083 (USA). Email: lifestylexxl2001@yahoo.de

Find more classified ads at www.phuketgazette.net/

O'MALLEYS

Irish pub. Small business, big lifestyle opportunity! Recently refurbished restaurant & pub for sale, located in Phuket City, close to major city hotels, shopping areas and main tourist attractions. Package includes all paperwork, visas, 2 work permits and all licenses for a smooth hassle-free takeover. 400 sqm, fully equipped: live music stage, sound and light system, projector UBC TV, 15 tables, 50 bar stools, 6 stainless-steel refrigerators and freezers, new kitchen equipment, 2 phone lines, fax and 270 motor bike taxis with O'Malleys vest's driving around in the city! Asking price: 2.1 mil baht. Pls contact for more details. Tel: 06-6864170. Email: omalleys@thai.com

TRIBAL CARPETS

Genuine investments from Iran, Afghanistan and India, with original certificates of import. Original, handmade, many sizes, must be viewed. Future value increase. Pls call for info. Tel: 076-388051, 01-8081804.

BAR IN RAWAI

For pictures or more information please call Tel: 06-6831147 or visit our website: www.ounphuket.com

EASY BUSINESS

Small bungalow resort on Koh Lanta for sale. 10 years left on lease. Pls email for more info. Email: tc@papillonlanta.com

BRAND NEW BAR

Never-opened, fully-fitted bar and restaurant with living accommodations. Includes shop/office, car park, brick BBQ, pool table, new sound system and flat-screen TV with UBC. Too much to list, must be viewed. Ill health forces reluctant sale. 3-year lease, 900,000 baht. If genuinely interested, act quickly! Please contact for more info. Tel: 09-2892297. Email: bountyasia@yahoo.com

SMALL INVESTMENT

Very solid income all year round from easily managed building. Mix of tenants. 5-yr lease to start. All P & Equip 1st class. Only 1.5 million baht (UK 35K/AUS\$50K). Contact Rudi. Tel: 01-9241447. Email: junaworn@hotmail.com

INVESTMENT OPPTY

Long-established hotel and bungalow complex for sale with Chanote title. Available for immediate ownership as owners are relocating. 90% occupancy during high season. Priced at 69 million baht, negotiable. Fantastic opportunity for either owner/occupier or investor. Please email for more information. Email: resortinvestment@hotmail.com

ROYAL PARADISE BAR

Must sell. Please contact for details. Tel: 06-9486850. Email: patongbar@yahoo.com

RESTAURANT 4 SALE

Baitong Restaurant in Karon, Phuket, Thailand. Tel: 076-323334, 09-7244307.

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

KATA MASSAGE

shop. Great business. Easy to run. Low overheads. Only 180,000 baht. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 06-6862389. Email: andrewcampbellthailand@hotmail.com

BUNGALOW RESORT

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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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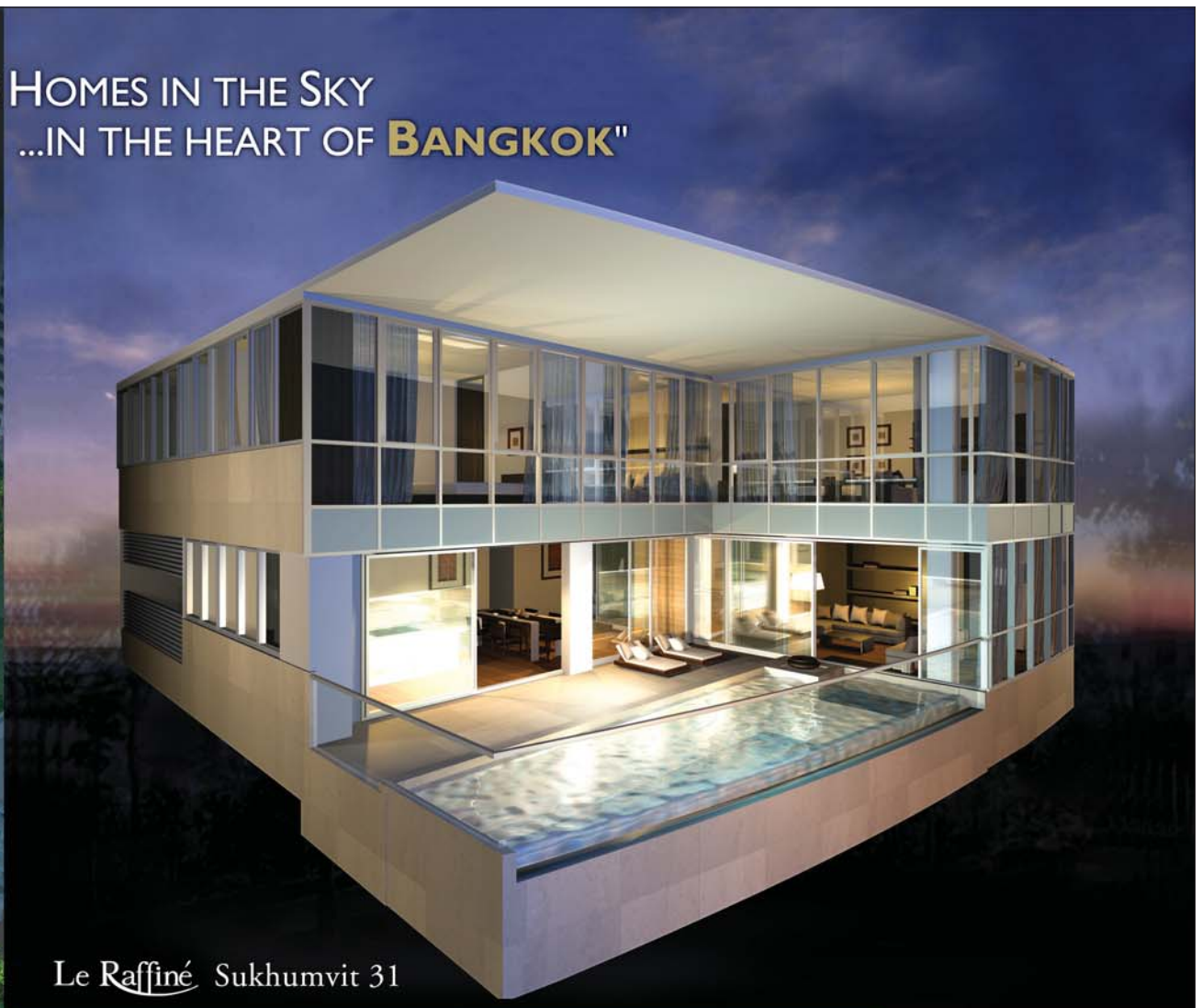
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- Staircase

2nd Floor (Upper Fl.)

- Master bedroom+Master Bhr
- 2 Bedroom+2 Bhr
- Family area

Construction already commenced at Sukhumvit 31



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Note : computerized generated picture

Le Raffine Sukhumvit 31 Project developer and owner: Le Raffine 34 Company Limited. Registered capital 350,000,000 Baht (fully paid up). Office location: 54 Sukhumvit Soi 24 (Kasem), Sukhumvit Road, Klongton Sub-District, Klongtoey District, Bangkok 10110. Managing Director: Pimpai Vajrabukka, M.D. Residential condominium 30 floors with 45 units. Site location: On title deeds No. 2635, Klongton Sub-District (South Bangkok), Phrakong District (Bangkok), Bangkok. Land area: (Type 1-1-98) approximately 598 square wah. Project encumbered and supported by Krungthai Bank Plc. Building construction permit has been approved: # 401/2547. Construction begins: July 2004. Completion expected: December 2006. The project shall be registered as the condominium after completing the construction. Common area fee will be paid by buyers in accordance with regulation of condominium juristic person.