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Underpasses plan shelved

By Kamol Pirat

PHUKET: Two proposed underpasses on the bypass road will not be built in the immediate future, Deputy Prime Minister Suwat Liptapanlop has announced.

During a recent visit to Phuket, DPM Suwat said the proposals for the underpasses – at the Samkong and Darasamut School intersections – will not even be considered until the widening of the bypass road is completed.

The Phuket Provincial Highways Office has pressed for the underpasses, arguing that they will relieve traffic congestion, but DPM Suwat countered that the road widening will solve the problems.

"Road widening will create more space on the road for traffic, and allow more vehicles at a time to pass through the intersections," he explained.

The Office of Transport and Traffic Policy and Planning (OTTPP) estimates that, even so, underpasses will be needed within three years.

DPM Suwat said, "The OTTPP will look this project closely in a couple of years. If there are still problems, the underpass project will be launched immediately."

During a flying visit to Phuket in August, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra rejected the proposals for the underpasses, describing the 800 million baht budget as "too high". He asked sarcastically, "Are they going to be decorated with pearls?"

At his meeting, held on



Deputy PM Suwat Liptapanlop believes the road widening project will solve traffic problems.

November 19 at the Pearl Village Hotel at Nai Yang Beach, DPM Suwat addressed another contentious issue, the continuing saga of where Phuket's proposed International Conference and Exhibition Center (ICEC) will be sited.

Little new light was shed on the issue, however. Indeed, if anything, things became murkier.

At the meeting, Santichai Euajongprasit, Vice-Governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), quoting the findings of a study conducted by a consultancy, said that existing land at Saphan Hin was the most

suitable site for the ICEC, with Mai Khao the second choice.

The proposal to reclaim land from the sea off Saphan Hin scored lowest in the report.

Proximity to city-center hotels as well as sea views were the deciding factors in the Saphan Hin proposal coming out on top.

K. Santichai was, however, unable to specify precisely which plot of land in Saphan Hin would end up as the site of the ICEC.

DPM Suwat said that Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawa-

Continued on page 2

Concern over German's visa-run crash hospital bills

By Gategeo Phetsawang

PHUKET CITY: Investigators from the Ranong Town Police Station came to Phuket on November 21 to question German Raoul Alexander Dieter Wildt and two Korean tourists who were injured in the November 12 collision between a water truck and a minibus carrying passengers on a "visa run" to the border near Ranong.

The driver of the water truck was allegedly speeding when he lost control and caused the accident. Mr Wildt, a dive instructor, was the most badly injured. He suffered a crushed leg that required amputation below the knee, a broken rib, spinal injuries and damage to his left arm and hand.

Two Koreans received lesser injuries, one of them requiring 44,000 baht's worth of surgery for a broken nose. This amount was paid out under the statutory insurance coverage on the minibus, said Kotchakorn Rattanaphan, Manager of the Ranong Office of the Andaman Club, which owns the vehicle.

Pol Sub Lt Chatchai Pongsingto, of Ranong Town Police Station, told the *Gazette* that the officers were still awaiting medical reports from Bangkok Phuket Hospital, where Mr Wildt is being treated, before filing charges.

Mr Wildt, who is uninsured, refused treatment at Ranong Hospital, where he was taken immediately after the crash. He told the *Gazette* he would have to remain at Bangkok Phuket Hospital at least three more weeks.

Medical fees have already reached 428,000 baht, and there is mounting concern over who will foot the final bill. Friends and colleagues have been raising funds.



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Russian star for Paradorn tour

PHUKET: Rising Russian tennis star Anna Chakvetadze has been confirmed as one of the players in the 2004 Paradorn Super Tour which stops off at Laguna Beach Resort this weekend (November 27 and 28).

Ms Chakvetadze, 17, replaces Karolina Sprem, who is

suffering from a persistent viral infection.

Moscow-born Ms Chakvetadze, who will play singles and mixed doubles matches against Tamarine Tanasugarn, defeated French Open champion and World No 4 Anastasia Myskina at this year's US Open.



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Apartments in Patong Tower up for auction

By Kamol Pirat

PATONG: Eighty apartments in the tallest building in Phuket, Patong Tower, will come under the auctioneer's hammer on December 12, some 13 years after planning permission for the 32-story block just off Thaweewong Rd was first given.

Siripong Chechang, chief of the Public Works Department of Patong Municipality, on November 22 addressed concerns by some potential buyers that the building was constructed illegally.

It was pointed out by some residents of Patong that the building is far higher than the limit set in a 1992 ruling by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE), which prohibits buildings more than 12 meters in height within 30m of the high-tide mark.

K. Siripong said, however, that Patong Tower does not break the rule because planning approval for it was granted in 1991 – the year before the MNRE's 12-meter regulation came into effect.

Explaining the long gap between planning permission

being granted for Patong Tower and the auction of apartments 13 years later, Benjaporn Panya-Ngarm, customer service supervisor for the new owners, Divine Property and Development Co, said that the property had for years been classed as a non-performing loan, or NPL.

"The original developer borrowed funds from Siam Commercial Bank and some [unnamed] foreign banks, but was unable to repay on schedule and [the Tower] was declared an

NPL. Divine Development and Property bought it from the banks this year."

The auction is due to take place on December 12 at the Aroonrat Hall at the Patong Resort Hotel.

Prospective buyers of the 80 units must deposit 100,000 baht to enter the bidding.

"We believe that this is the first auction of its kind in Patong," said K. Panya. "There will be no minimum bid and the auction will be clean," he promised.

Underpasses put on hold

From page 1

rangkura and Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwannasuppana – as well as state agencies including the TAT – had been given the task of finding suitable land at Saphan Hin and had been told to present their findings to him within a month.

The issue was further clouded when the Deputy PM ordered the TAT to investigate sites on state land at Mai Khao Beach, and to look at the possibility of building the ICEC at the proposed Chao Fa City.

Suwalai Pindrapab, the Director of TAT Region 4, suggested as recently as November 16 that the ICEC could be sited in the planned Chao Fa City.

DPM Suwat said, "The government already has the budget earmarked for the ICEC and if we find suitable land, then the project can begin immediately."

"If the private sector [Chao Fa City] can show why their site is suitable, then the government may consider their proposal at the same time [as the others]."

– Editorial, page 20



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Gunfight youths charged

PHUKET CITY: Phuket City Police have charged four youths in connection with a gunfight that took place outside Phuket Grocery Co, near Robinson department store in the early hours of October 31.

After a tip-off from an informant, police arrested Natee Srisamut, 20, and Niwat Sae-tan, 19, along with two youths aged 16 and 17.

After searches of the suspects' homes, one .38 pistol, one 11mm pistol, a sawed-off shotgun, a holster and a quantity of ammunition were recovered.

The four are alleged to be members of a gang which became involved in a shootout with a rival gang. They have been charged with firearms offenses and with disturbing the peace.

Police said the 16-year-old had been arrested in August last year on a robbery charge, and also in September this year for possession of illegal drugs, while Niwat had been arrested for drugs possession last year.

Government 'is monitoring early closing'

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura has said that the government is monitoring reaction to its controversial early-closing policy for entertainment venues, but that it is still "early days".

Speaking at his regular press conference at the Provincial Hall on November 15, the Governor also stressed that he did not have the power to alter the rules for Phuket.

Despite vociferous protests in Phuket, Gov Udomsak said that the law must be obeyed, but that the government would continue to evaluate its effects.

The law had been in effect only a couple of months, said Gov Udomsak, adding, "For the moment, we in Phuket have to obey the law."

B80m in prizes for sustainable construction

THAILAND: Architects, planners, engineers, and project owners in Thailand are invited to enter the 80-million-baht international Holcim Awards, a competition intended to promote innovative approaches to sustainable construction techniques.

Nomination of projects must be submitted to www.holcimawards.org before March 31 next year. The total prize money for the awards totals US\$2 million (80 million baht).



YOU MAY KISS THE BRIDE: Amanda and Steve enjoy their first married kiss, at the Kata viewpoint.

Stage of the union

KATA: Bride Amanda Gudgin and groom Steve Hancock, from Melbourne, made a small bit of history on November 18, when they were wed at the Kata viewpoint.

Ms Hancock, in a traditional white wedding dress, explained to the *Gazette* that her family used to live in Hong Kong. "We have been regular visitors to Phuket since 1977," she said.

Her father, Kim Gudgin, said proudly, "I think this is a romantic place, and I'm very happy today."

The Chief of Karon Mu-

nicipality, Tawatchai Tongmang, said that the modest ceremony, comprising a priest and a dozen or so relatives, was the first Christian wedding to be held at the Kata viewpoint.

"We couldn't allow them to hold the wedding party there because it's a tourist attraction, so they just had the wedding ceremony there," K. Tawatchai said.

However, he added, "We would be pleased if more lovers were interested in being married there."

— Siripansa Somboon

US gives B2m in anti-terror gear to police

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET CITY: As part of its fight against terrorism, the US Department of Defense has donated anti-terrorism equipment worth about 2 million baht to Royal Thai Police Region 8, which includes Phuket.

In a ceremony at Phuket Provincial Police Headquarters on November 17, David Turner, Chief of the US Defense Department's Force Protection Detachment at the US Embassy in Bangkok, presented the equipment to Provincial Police Region 8 Deputy Commissioner Pol Maj Gen Phuvadol Krasae-In.

The donation followed the successful completion in September of a five-day anti-terrorism training course organized by the US Defense Department. Fifty-seven police officers from Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi and Koh Samui completed the course, which was held at the Patong Resort Hotel.

Accepting the donation, Gen Phuvadol said that even though the possibility of terrorist attack in Region 8 is regarded as remote, his officers were not being complacent.

"After the training, the Defense Department donated this equipment so that we could

implement more effectively what our officers had learned during the course," he said, adding that it was the first time Region 8 police had had access to such equipment.

The donation included lights and mirrors to check under cars for bombs, hand-held metal detectors, and other equipment designed to thwart terrorists before they can strike.

"The Bali bombing made us aware of the need to prepare ourselves for any situation within our area of control," the general said, as he thanked the Defense Department for its support and vowed to include security aspects as a part of continuing police training.

Speaking in fluent Thai, Mr Turner said he had been honored to present Provincial Police Region 8 with the equipment, which would help ensure continued security in Phuket and other parts of southern Thailand.

He also said he was looking forward to continued mutual support and cooperation between the US Defense Department and the Royal Thai Police.

December date for travel trade show

PHUKET CITY: All 131 display stands at this year's Phuket and Andaman Travel Trade Show have been booked, according to Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Regional Director Suwalai Pinpradab.

The show is scheduled to take place at the Royal Phuket City Hotel on December 3-5.

On December 3 and 5 the show will be open to the travel industry only, but on December 4, it will be open to the public.

500 pray for peace in the troubled South

PHUKET CITY: About 500 people, including local leaders of the major faiths in Thailand, held a mass session on November 17 to pray for peace to return to the troubled provinces of Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat.

The congregation gathered at Phuket Provincial Hall in support of the government's call for mass prayer, which Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarakura explained was inspired by HM Queen Sirikit's speech on November 16 to more

than 1,000 people, including Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, the Cabinet and leading figures from throughout Thailand.

"Her Majesty wanted all Thai people to show they are concerned about [the trouble in the South] and that they want the area

to be peaceful again," he said.

After the Governor's speech, religious leaders representing Muslim, Christian, Sikh and Buddhist communities led prayers for peace in the South, and for innocent people to be kept safe from harm.

— Kamol Pirat

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Queer News

AFTER DEATH
DO US PART

BANGKOK: Not knowing what to do after her husband's sudden death, an elderly blind woman stayed with his body in their shed in Rat Burana District.

On the morning of November 22, neighbors and police found 67-year-old Muan Rungruang sleeping and hugging the body of her dead husband, Tieng Boonyong, who had died four days earlier. Their dog Jumbo was curled up alongside his deceased master.

K. Muan said K. Tieng, a stevedore, had looked after her since she lost her first husband. She has been blind since the age of 35, when sulfur splattered into her eyes from a fertilizer bag she was carrying. Her first husband had died in the shed as well.

She later met K. Tieng, who was working in the area. "He took care of me until his last breath. I loved him so much," she said, adding that K. Tieng had a chronic chest problem and died because they couldn't afford treatment.

"Before he died, he lay down on my lap when I was trying to give him some boiled rice. He got three spoons down before saying he couldn't stand the pain anymore," K. Muan said, adding that K. Tieng finally passed away on her lap.

She cried for help but nobody heard her in this rural area, where residences are far from each other. With nobody coming to her aid, she was forced to stay in the shed with her dead husband until neighbors and police came calling. K. Muan hadn't eaten since K. Tieng died. "All of our nine dogs ran away, except Jumbo," she said.

A social worker offered to take her to a welfare home for the elderly, but she refused. She insisted that she would live out the rest of her days in the shed with her loyal dog.

As K. Tieng's body was brought into the morgue for an autopsy, K. Muan wept, saying that she wanted to cremate him but could not afford it. So police and members of the press pooled their money together to pay for the funeral ceremony.

Source: *The Nation*

Stealer's
wheel

BANGKOK: Lingerie vendor Dusit Jansorn was taking no chances when he parked his 533,000-baht pickup overnight near his home in Bangkok. He put a lock on the brake and – just to be on the safe side – he removed the steering wheel.

But when 30-year-old K. Dusit returned to his parking place the following morning, there was no sign of his beloved pick-up.

K. Dusit and his girlfriend Orawan Auemkleub, 25, took the now-redundant steering wheel with them when they went to the police station to report the theft.

Police believe the vehicle was stolen by a gang of three thieves who, knowing K. Dusit's routine, had brought along pliers to hold the steering column in place while they drove the pickup to a place where they could attach a new steering wheel.

K. Dusit said he had worked hard for many years to be able to afford the pickup, and its theft had financially ruined him.

Source: *Khao Sod*

Laboring

Few residents may be aware of this, but one of the reasons Phuket City's streets have been relatively water-free this rainy season is that drains and gutters had been cleared by inmates of Phuket Prison. The prison regularly supplies work parties of prisoners to carry out public works.

Forget images of penal chain gangs, though: as the *Gazette's* Kamol Pirat and Sangkhae Leelanapaporn found out, everyone concerned is keen to highlight the role that such work can play in rehabilitating prisoners and preparing them for life outside prison walls.

The heavy door slams shut, and the prisoner thinks he has seen the last of the outside world for however many years he has been sentenced to.

But prisoners in Phuket may end up seeing life on the outside sooner than expected – if they choose to join one of the work parties Phuket Provincial Prison assembles to perform services to the community, such as cutting trees, clearing drains and cleaning roads.

Seree Udom, who became chief of the 997-inmate prison at the beginning of October, explained, "Prison policy is to work only with and for state agencies;

we don't do any work for the private sector."

Bodies such as Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), Phuket City Municipality and Phuket Provincial Highways Office will approach the prison and ask for prison labor.

If the prison decides to get involved with a project, staff select members for a working party – which has to be done carefully as it will mean allowing the prisoners to leave the confines of the jail.

Said K. Seree, "We choose only prisoners who have been sentenced to two years or less in jail, and they must not have com-

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for a new life outside



BACK ON THE CHAIN GANG: Prisoners get ready to clear out a klong to help ensure that monsoon deluges do not flood Phuket City.



mitted any drugs offences – government policy is not to allow drug dealers and addicts to join prison work parties. Government policy also says that women may not be in work parties.

“To be selected for a work party, a prisoner must have good behavior record, a registered address outside prison and relatives who guarantee that he will not run away.

“And he must want to be in a work party, because no one is forced to join; it is entirely voluntary.”

The prisoners receive compensation for their labor. Sometimes they are paid in cash, sometimes not, but each gets one day deducted from his sentence for every day he spends in a work party.

If the prison charges a public body for a work party's services, 80% of the money is passed on to prisoners. The remaining 20% is kept by the

prison, to cover expenses such as the cost of transport to the labor site, tools, food and allowances for the wardens who accompany the party.

Prisoners are not allowed to have cash while they are incarcerated, so the money they earn is kept in a special account and handed over to them when they leave jail at the end of their sentence.

Members of work parties must wear uniforms that make them easily identifiable if they try to escape.

Outside the prison they are accompanied by one warden for every five prisoners, but they are neither chained nor handcuffed.

Their movements are restricted, though. They must stay in the area where they are working; anyone who wants to leave this specific area must first get permission from the wardens.

Not that K. Seree sees there is much cause for concern. He

said, “I don't think the prisoners pose a threat to anyone, because they have no opportunity to commit a crime while they are out.”

He admitted, “Yes, prisoners have escaped from work sites in the past, but only a few, and they didn't get very far before the wardens caught them again.”

The *Gazette* talked to one prisoner who has been in a work group, who can be quoted only under the pseudonym “Ae”.

Ae said that after being in prison, and away from other people for such a long time, he found it difficult to adjust to being on the “outside”, even if it was for only the length of a working day. In addition, he was embarrassed and ashamed to be a prisoner.

He said, “It took me three or four days to adjust to being ‘out’, but now I am happy.

“After a week, I felt just like anyone else, and now I am proud to help the community by clean-

ing the roads or the klongs or other places. And the wardens let me talk to my relatives if they come to see me, too.”

Ae said he had chosen to join a work party and had been assigned to one because prison staff were satisfied with his conduct in prison. He could select which jobs he went on.

There are two main benefits of being in a work party, he said. The first is that it cuts the time he will have to spend in jail, and the second is that he is paid for working.

He said, “Being in a work party has changed me because it's taught me about what it's like to be an ordinary person, and to stick at a job.”

While women may not be allowed to join work parties, they are expected to undertake voca-

tional training, such as needlework and making fishing nets, while in jail.

Similarly, male prisoners are expected to take advantage of training in batik making, bamboo and rattan craft, decorative metalwork, welding and carpentry.

Items made by the prisoners are sold, and after the production costs are deducted, the profits are divided equally between the prisoners and the prison.

Prison chief K. Seree said, “Inmates

can be trained in many occupations while they are in prison. We want to give them skills to allow them to earn a living when they leave here.

“That way, we hope, they will have jobs and a good future and won't feel the need to commit crimes.”



‘No one is forced to join; it is entirely voluntary.’

– Seree Udom,
Phuket Prison Chief.

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By Gategao Phetsawang

With the boom in the island's spa industry, perhaps it was inevitable: Phuket now has its first full-service spa – for dogs.

Panida Sriaram, Owner of Raksatt Dog Spa & Salon, told the *Gazette* that dogs react to spa therapy and beauty treatments in much the same way that people do. They get a deep sense of relaxation in the spa, followed by a real self-confidence boost in the salon.

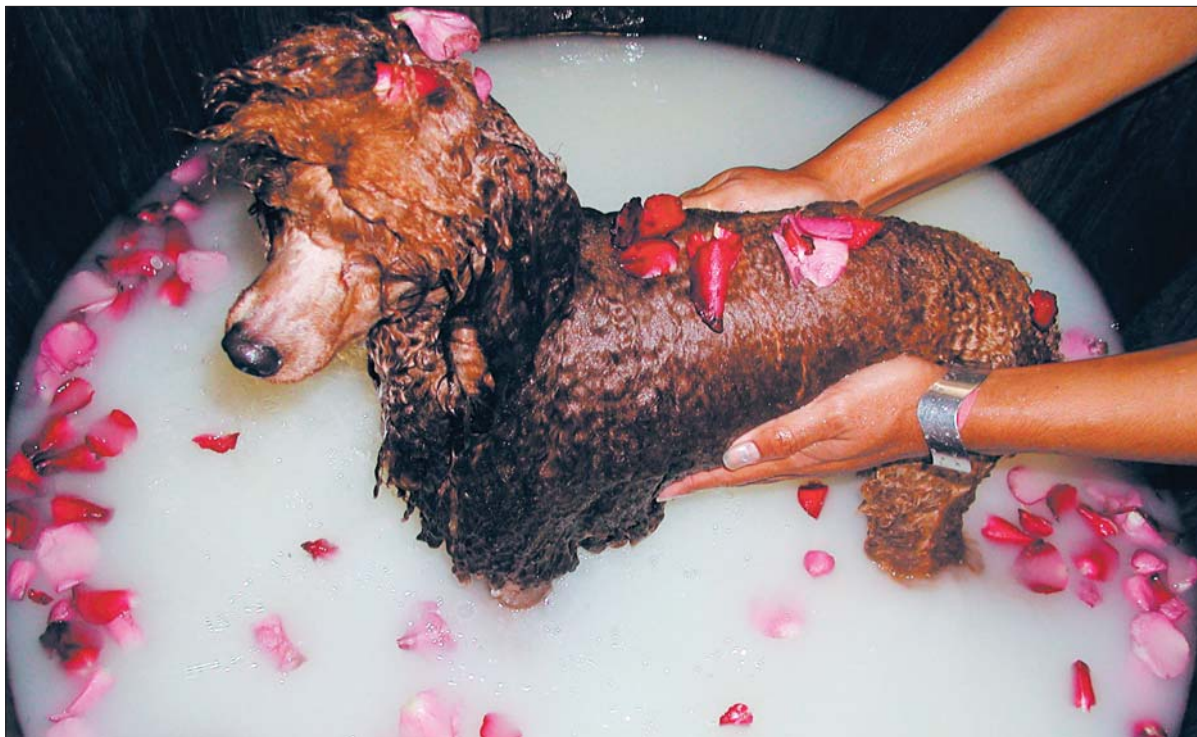
Some people might be appalled at the idea of a dog spa, but for many pet owners nothing is too good for the four-legged member of the family. Why, they reason, should the pleasures of spa therapy be limited to humans alone?

The *Gazette* visited the spa recently and saw Beckham, a 1½-year-old poodle, getting his very first spa treatment. First, he was gently immersed in warm bath, the water aromatic with the herbs selected specially for discerning canine tastes.

The massage therapist then gently massaged Beckham and poured warm water over his body. Beckham tried to climb up out of the oak tub at first, but he later calmed down and began to savor the experience of breathing in the combination of Thai and Chinese herbs and rose petals.

"The aroma bath comforts the dogs. First-time customers may squirm a bit initially, but before long they are soothed by the aroma and their stress levels fall," said K. Panida.

She explained that orange and lemon are two aromas that dogs seem particularly fond of, and that the herbal bath helps



Rose petals too: Toy poodle Beckham gets the full treatment during his first visit to the spa.

LIFE CAN BE RUFF

impart a healthy radiance to the dog's fur and skin.

"Every dog has its own natural, unique body odor. The bath reduces this natural odor somewhat, but our treatments help enhance the natural odor and make the dog more fragrant and the fur softer, silkier – and more huggable," she said.

After the spa, Beckham was removed from the tub for the next

phase of therapy – warm compresses of Thai and Chinese herbs applied by two therapists.

Next was stone therapy. "We press special stones and herbal powder upon the thighs and back," explained K. Panida. "There are eight different kinds of stone, each used to gradually relieve a specific condition.

"This therapy can be used in combination with veterinary

treatment to cure illnesses more efficiently," she added.

K. Panida recommends dogs come in for spa therapy about twice a month, though it depends on whether the dog is in just for relaxation or whether therapy for a specific condition is required, in which case weekly visits are recommended.

Another factor that may be worth considering when sched-

uling a treatment regimen for Fido is the cost. Like most luxuries, spa therapy for dogs does not come cheap: a basic one-hour spa course ranges in price from 800 to 1,200 baht, depending on the size of the dog.

The shop also offers a full grooming service. Raksatt's specialty is "fancy" styling and color highlighting, using a hydrogen formula imported from Japan.

The salon is not solely for cosmetic purposes, however: the dogs can also get a shampoo to help ward off fleas and ticks or chemical treatment for hair which has become damaged and coarse.

Owners of dogs with light-colored fur may like to try giving Rover a little more pizzazz by trying out the salon's popular highlighting service. But highlighting doesn't work well on dogs with dark fur, K. Panida said – it just turns them orange.

"Dogs are just like people. They like to be admired and are proud to show off when they know they are looking good. You can see it clearly during dog shows," she said.

Dogs have "bad hair days" too, she explained. Like humans, getting a bad haircut can totally put some dogs off being groomed, especially if someone tries to comb out tangled fur too roughly or accidentally cuts the dog's skin with scissors.

She recommends daily combing for long-haired breeds in order to familiarize the dogs with grooming and keep their coats up to snuff.

Raksatt Dog Spa & Salon, open 11 am to 10 pm daily, is at P2 parking area at Central Festival Phuket. For more information call Tel: 076-209244-5.

WARNING: SELLING ALCOHOL TO PERSONS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD IS ILLEGAL

*When the taste is perfect,
it can be the start of a friendship.*



'Cell phones for peace' idea slammed

A government campaign led by Deputy Prime Minister Wissanu Krea-Ngam to encourage young people in the Deep South to use cell phones to vote and play games during popular radio and television shows was slammed by southern residents.

DPM Wissanu instructed state-run radio and television networks in the region to create “phone-in programs” to encourage audiences to vote or comment on particular subjects, saying the form of local participation could help defuse the current unrest in the Deep South.

Religious leaders, however, wondered who would actually benefit from the plan.

"I don't know who will make money from the extra phone usage, but the parents of the children will definitely end up paying the bills.

"Why don't they initiate something that will be really useful for our children or make them more knowledgeable?" said religious leader Nimu Makajeh.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's family owns the biggest cell-phone operator in the country, Advanced Info Service.

Sin tax structure: Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Minister Surapong Suebwoonglee is pushing for a “sin tax” on online gaming similar to those levied on alcohol and tobacco.

Proceeds would be used to prevent and remedy the harmful effects from Internet addiction.



A girl waits patiently as her mother attends prayers to mark the end of the fasting period of Ramadan, at the Central Mosque in the troubled province of Pattani.

The Excise Department expects a feasibility study for taxing online games to be complete in a few months. The ministry is also seeking Cabinet backing to be given sole authority to regulate online-game providers and Internet cafés.

If it is granted the powers, gamers under 18 would be limited to playing online games to a maximum of three hours a day, while the 10 pm-to-6 am restriction for young players would remain in force to prevent possible addiction, K. Surapong said.

Running on empty: Natural gas reserves in the Gulf of Thailand will run out in 15 years if the Energy Ministry continues to depend on gas as fuel for new power plants, an official at the Energy Policy and Planning Office warned.

Between 2001 and 2015, about 18 power plants with a combined capacity of 13,000 megawatts are expected to come onstream.

If the government does not specify the type of fuel to be used by the new power plants, they

will turn to natural gas because of its lower cost. This will drain the country's reserves to the point where natural gas would eventually need to be imported, the source said.

Last month, Energy Minister Prommin Lertsuridej said that the country's natural gas reserves would last for more than 30 years.

Fair's fair: The Election Commission (EC) has ruled that the government's promotional fair at Impact Arena Muang Thong Thani earlier this month did not violate election laws.

The announcement came after both the Mahachon and Democrat parties filed complaints to the EC alleging that the five-day exhibition, during which free gifts were handed

out, was a ruse by the ruling Thai Rak Thai party to bolster its chances in the upcoming general election.

EC Secretary General Ek-kachai Warunprapha said the government had acted within legal parameters in using the national budget to publicize its achievements.

Take the money and run: More than 100 people – including several lottery winners – were evacuated from the Government Lottery Office (GLO) on November 17 following a bomb hoax. Officials evacuated the building after a woman twice called the GLO before noon to say a bomb would go off at 2 pm.

A couple who won a 50-million-baht jackpot showed up to receive their winnings before officials ordered the evacuation. The couple immediately cashed their check and deposited the money at a nearby bank.

A police bomb-disposal team, using three sniffer dogs, scoured the area but found no device. Police are investigating the incident.

Girls at risk: Public Health Minister Sudarat Keyuraphan said 60% – or 42,000 – of the 70,000 Thai youngsters aged between 15 and 24 who are infected with HIV are young women.

The sexual behavior of Thai girls and young women has changed rapidly, with 9% of girls aged 15 to 19 admitting to having had sex. Many young Thais engaged in unprotected pre-marital sex without fully understanding the potential consequences of their actions, she said.

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

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Nathon reclamation faces opposition

At the end of October the government released ambitious plans to reclaim more than 500 rai off the coast of Koh Samui's capital, Nathon. Many leading local figures have already spoken out against the proposal, which they see as unnecessary and potentially damaging to the environment in and around Nathon.

The government claims that the two-kilometer stretch of beach land that has been earmarked for the project is already seriously polluted and damaged, but many local citizens disagree.

The head of the Nathon Citizens' Club, for example, expressed concern that outsiders had been brought in to conduct the feasibility study. He pointed out that they would not be the ones who would stay to face its consequences.

FROM THE



By Commander Sammy Swan

"The sea and beach areas around Nathon have been a popular spot for more than a hundred years," he said. "There are still plenty of fish and crabs living in the waters there and this project would destroy the local fishing industry."

Before any construction starts there must be absolute guarantees in place that this will not happen."

Meanwhile, the head of the local office of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources on Samui said that land reclamation should be an option only after other ideas have been considered, and that the local people should ask themselves whether such an ambitious and expensive project is really necessary.

Water worries: Despite heavy spending on improving freshwater supply over the past few years, the Samui local authorities say that the island is still facing



SEA SAVIORS: Bangkok Marine Police trainers and officers recently held their annual seven-day course on first aid, CPR techniques and other crucial life-saving skills on Koh Samui. On the last day of the course, a real-life drama took everyone by surprise. No drill this – a swimmer was spotted in grave difficulties in the sea. He was rescued and brought to shore unharmed.

the possibility of serious water shortages during the dry season.

The Samui Waterworks Department has therefore signed a 15-year contract with the East Water Co, to buy water from a desalination plant that uses reverse osmosis to produce potable water from sea water. The supply will start flowing in March next year.

The target supply is 2,500 cubic meters a day, at a total daily cost of 114,000 baht, which will probably mean an increase in the cost of water to consumers. Water shortages are a recurrent problem on Samui, and visitors and citizens are continually being

asked to be prudent when using the island supply.

Governor's goals: Surat Thani's new Provincial Governor Vichit Vichaisan recently announced his priorities in dealing with the problems that he feels are of major concern to the province.

The three main issues he plans to address are waste disposal and cleanliness, traffic congestion, and underage drinking and revelry.

He said he will pay special attention to the introduction of recycling, especially with regard to fertilizers, and he will develop a program to improve local driving skills and therefore improve people's safety on local

roads.

Gov Vichit said that he also intends to place heavier restrictions on young people, banning them from places intended for adults only, and the authorities will crack down on establishments that allow youngsters to break the law.

He added that most adults in the province are particularly concerned that young local people are forgetting traditional Thai values, such as respect for the family and cultural traditions. He said he hopes to ensure that basic

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



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This week



MERRY MERIDIEN: Of the 300 or so guests at the November 13 grand opening of Le Meridien Khao Lak, in Phang Nga, were (from left) resort General Manager Jean-Louis Ripoché, guest of honor Arsa Sarasin, and resort owner ML Vitya Chakrabandhu.



WELL-WORN TRADITION: Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwannasuppana (2nd from right) was among the guests at the wedding of Chiravut Gornjaringkiet (2nd from left) and Pannaree Na Nakorn at the Royal Phuket City Hotel on November 16. The bride wore a gown that has come down through her family from 100 years ago.



BREEZIN' IN: BodyWize Club Manager David Weale (2nd from left), and Jill Robson, (seated) Spa Director of fitness-center operator Asian Wind, join forces at the recent party to celebrate the installation of Cybex fitness equipment at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort.



EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICULARS: Ray Berttula (left), Director of QSI-Phuket international school, and teacher Cindy Schade (2nd from left) drop in during the grand opening of Khun Woody's Bakery in Patong to check up on QSI-P student Justin Leonhard (right) – and to sample some of the famed cookies made by Justin's dad, baker and computer guru Woody Leonhard.



NO STRINGS ATTACHED: *Phuket Gazette* Managing Editor Alasdair Forbes welcomes to the *Gazette* offices (from left) Chintana Daengdej, Managing Director of Phuket International Night Bazaar, and Pisutr and Surin Yangkhiaw-sod, respectively Director and Artistic Director of the famed Joe Lewis Puppet Theater, which will stage shows at the Bazaar from



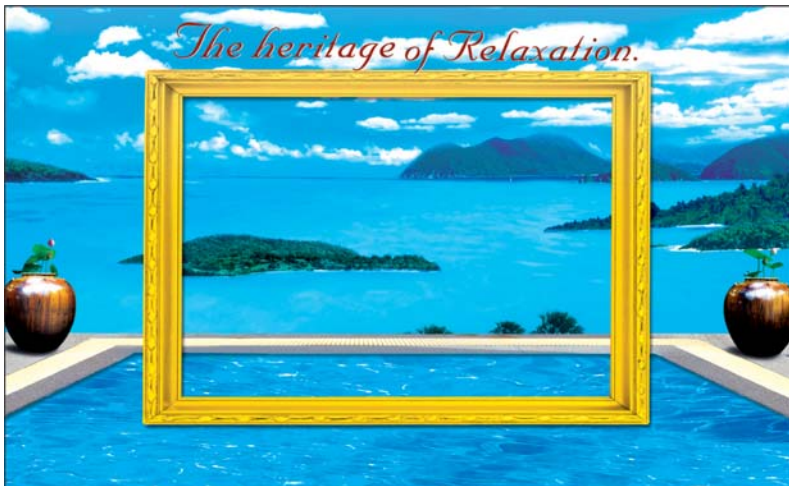
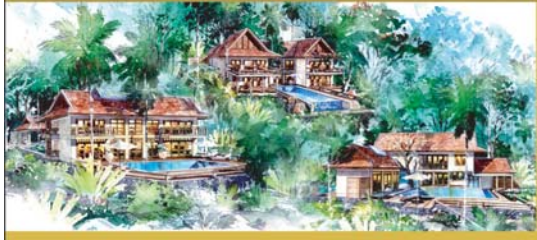

WELL-FURNISHED FRIENDS: Sumittra Nimkornchai and Vichaipol Narayam (3rd and 4th from left, respectively), owners of the Villa & Hut furniture store on Chao Fa West Rd, celebrate the opening of their store on November 14 with (from left) Chalermrat Dilokpat, Dr Sriyada Palimapan and Pol Col Chalit Thintanee, Deputy Commander of Phuket Provincial Police.



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THE QUIET CRUSADER

Taishiro Miyayauchi is fluent in Thai; indeed, it is easy to assume he is Thai. And he is, in a way – he was born in Thailand, to Japanese parents who ran a pearl and jewellery business.

His name is a bit of a giveaway, too: “The ‘Tai’ of my first name means ‘Thai’; my parents gave me that name because I was born here,” he explained.

After attending Japanese and international schools in Thailand, Mr Miyayauchi studied at Assumption Business Administration College in Bangkok.

He said, “While I was studying at college, I was also working part-time for a tour company in Bangkok. I became a full-time tour guide after I graduated, and worked mainly with Japanese people visiting Thailand.

“I also qualified as a dive master in Phuket, and opened my own business here seven years ago.”

Diving was second nature to Mr Miyayauchi. He explained, “I’d been used to being underwater since I was very young, because I used to dive with the staff at my father’s pearl farm. That’s why I was not afraid of diving, or of being underwater.”

In fact, that love of the water is one of the main reasons Mr Miyayauchi has settled in Phuket. He said, “I’m not really bothered whether I live in Bangkok or Phuket, but the thing about Phuket is that I’m close to the sea and can go diving.

“That said, if the traffic in Bangkok wasn’t quite so bad, I

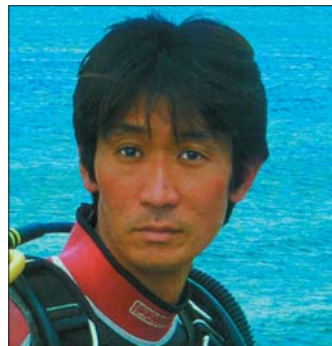
“I don’t presume to ask anyone to help me protect the sea, but if someone who knows better than me will tell me what I can do to help protect the sea, I will be more than happy to do it.”

So says Taishiro Miyayauchi, director of the Marine Project dive shop in Patong. Mr Miyayauchi, the first Japanese PADI Course Director in Thailand, is well known for his attempts to persuade locals and visitors to take more care of the sea around Phuket. He spoke with **Dhirarat Boonkongsae** about his crusade.

might be tempted to go back there, to be near my parents, who are getting older now.”

That love of the sea is also a cause of sadness for Mr Miyayauchi, as he has watched some of Thailand’s beaches deteriorate over the years.

He said, “I have been watching the beaches in Pattaya and Chonburi become more and more damaged since I was young.



‘People seem to be ... treating the sea with more respect.’ – Taishiro Miyayauchi

“I have seen unspoiled beaches ruined by the rubbish thrown on the sand and in the sea, and by untreated wastewater being discharged into the sea.

“Now the same thing is happening in Phuket. The first time I came here, about 14 years ago, I saw beautiful beaches and this miraculous underwater world. But it’s all so different now.

“I’ve decided to speak out about protecting the beaches because someone has to do it and as no one else seems prepared to do it, that someone has to be me.”

The garbage isn’t just unattractive, it’s also downright dangerous, particularly for marine animals such as sea turtles. Mr Miyayauchi said Mr Miyayauchi. “The turtles see a plastic bag floating in the water and think it’s a jellyfish, and as jellyfish are part of the turtles’ diet, they’ll eat the plastic bag. And chances are, it will kill them.

“Untreated wastewater can be toxic to fish.”

As a dive master and the owner of a diving business, he always tells his customers and students to treat the marine environment with respect.

He said, “They are close to the coral, and they should act responsibly towards this natural resource, but even if tourists do damage coral, the harm they do is nothing compared to that caused by anchors dropped by irresponsible crews of fishing boats and pleasure craft.

“We have come across so many yachts where the crew really couldn’t care less where they drop anchor; we’ve even met crews who prefer to stop over a reef because they can hook the anchor into the reef, so there’s less chance of the boat floating away in the night, which they say might happen if they don’t anchor properly in the sand! Not surprisingly, that’s

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Taishiro Miyayauchi takes time underwater to contemplate the state of Phuket's marine environment.

caused an awful lot of damage to the coral.

"Once, when I saw someone doing that, I went to them and tried to make them understand why they shouldn't be doing it. But they didn't listen. Instead, they shouted at us.

"So, later, we dived down and quietly moved their anchor off the coral.

"That was the most drastic

action we have taken, but the boat was out of the jurisdiction of the police, so we had to take care of the situation ourselves.

"If the sea became too polluted for my dive business to continue, I could find other ways of earning a living easily enough, but I still feel someone should be making a fuss about protecting the sea. I'm not even asking people to be active in doing any-

thing, just not to do anything that will harm the sea."

There may be hope for the future, though. Said Mr Miyayauchi, "The Thai tourists of today seem to be different; in fact, many Thai people have changed

or are changing their ways. "In the past, we could tell where a boat had stopped because we would find garbage, plastic bags, glass bottles, cans, all sorts.

"But recently, people seem to be improving their behaviour and treating the sea with more respect.

"We've just done some work at Koh Racha with a sea conservation group, from Bangkok, of all places.

"We're also often asked to do work with Phuket Marine Biol-

ogy Center (PMBC), which sometimes asks us for help if they don't have enough staff to do some underwater work.

"We're happy to help, although we do sometimes ask for money to cover our fuel costs."

Most of Mr Miyayauchi's paying customers are from Japan, because, he says, Thailand offers diving that is superior to Japan's.

He explained, "The water in Japan is so cold, it's not good for diving, plus there is no beautiful coral to see as there is in Thailand.

"Phuket might not be Australia's Great Barrier Reef, but it's still second-to-none in the world as a diving destination."

He continued, "The Maldives have some very beautiful reefs too, because they are protected by strict laws and everyone cooperates to enforce them, but, that said, I think people's attitudes are far more important than any laws.

"We have laws for road users, but we still have lots of car accidents. Only when people realise that bad driving causes accidents will they stop driving badly. I hope they'll soon have a similar realisation about protecting the sea."

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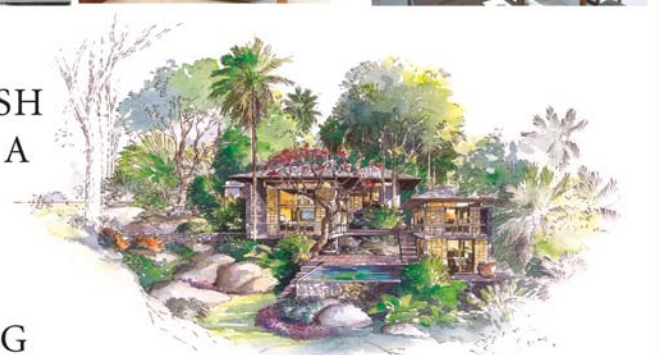


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One for the ladies

It may not be a *khunying* and I might not have been on holiday, but I certainly felt like both after sampling "Khunying on Holiday", one of the speciality cocktails offered at Malina's Bar at the Aspasia Phuket Resort.

A *khunying* is a distinguished lady, and there is something about this fruit-and-almond concoction that sets it apart from the masses, while at the same time having a relaxing effect, putting one most definitely in a holiday mood, but without rendering one incapable.

And what better place to appreciate the delights of a "Khunying on Holiday" than its (her?) birthplace: Malina's Bar, with its stunning view of Kata Beach?

Like a *khunying* herself, the cocktail is rich, fragrant and well put-together. Sansri Sangmontree, the resort's Food and Beverage Manager, explained, "The main alcohol is Bacardi, but there's also Amaretto, which is sweet and has a taste of almonds and chocolate and a fragrant aroma."

"There's also orange and pineapple, and these, combined with the Amaretto, mean there is no need to add syrup."

The cocktail is served in



a wine glass, which is appropriate, because, like most fine wines, it is not strongly alcoholic and is best appreciated when sipped slowly rather than knocked back.

And that's exactly what I did, enjoying the warming effect of the alcohol as my taste buds were entertained by the flavor, which was sweet and sour, yet at the same time refreshingly bitter.

Khunying on Holiday **Ingredients for one cocktail:**

1oz Bacardi;
½ oz Grand Marnier
½ oz Amaretto
3oz orange juice
3oz pineapple juice

To decorate:
1 pineapple slice
lime leaves
mint leaves
1 Maraschino cherry.

Method:

Put the ingredients in a cocktail shaker with three or four ice cubes and shake until well blended.

Pour into a wine glass and decorate with the pineapple slice, lime and mint leaves, and Maraschino cherry.

— Anongnat Sartpisut

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Catching the wind



After even the most stressful day, there is something relaxing and calming in the tinkling of a windchime moving in a breeze.

And as this is the time of year when Phuket is supposed to be at its breeziest, what better excuse is there to invest in a windchime?

Windchimes make different sounds, according to what they are made from – shell, metal, terracotta, wood, or dozens of other materials.

Whether made from bamboo or coconut shell, wooden windchimes stirred up by a breeze can make a sound like flowing water, bringing a sense of nature into the home.

Metal chimes, on the other hand, make a more lively, tinkling sound.

It's easy enough to find a windchime that appeals to the eyes as well as the ears, as there

are so many designs to choose from.

There is probably not a room in the home where a windchime would be out of place.

Some people have a tinkling wind-chime on their balcony, while others hang a soothing wooden chime indoors, above a door or window, where it can be caressed by a zephyr.

Think again about mobiles; they are not just to be hung above a baby's crib for the delight and amusement of infants.

Toyed with by the lightest of currents, a mobile can bring a visual delight to a room, and can be found in charming and intricate designs and in everything from earthy tones to vivid, eye-catching hues.

Birds and other animals, geometric patterns, and even mobiles of happy Thai hill-tribe folk are some of the amusing designs available in Phuket. Catch sight of their silent beauty as they catch the high season breeze.

A selection of windchimes and mobiles can be bought from the following stores: Ban Hutthakam, 9/23 Moo 1, Chalermprakiert Rd, Kathu; Shinawatra Homemart, 29/1-4 Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang; and Chang Thai, Boat Lagoon, 23/113 Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Phuket.



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In The Stars

by Isla Star

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Birthday celebrations go off with a bang for those celebrating coming of age this week. You will be particularly impressed by a generous gift that comes from an unexpected source. On Wednesday you may be subject to a bout of absent-mindedness, so note appointments carefully and take extra care of personal possessions. Romance has the opportunity to come alive this Saturday, but you need to put in extra effort.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): You can expect to enjoy golden opportunities during December. The only thing that can hold you back from making gains is low self-esteem. Meditate on how much you have achieved this year and you will realize that there have been definite improvements in all areas of your life. Taurus holds the key to a mystery, but is unwilling to reveal details. Some gentle persuasion should work wonders.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): No matter how tempted you are to capitulate in an ongoing dispute, you are advised to stand your ground. Others may be trying to move the goalposts, but justice is on your side. Personal relationships are well-starred; if you are unsure about

how someone really feels about you, good news will add sparkle to the weekend. Wear the color sky blue to cultivate an airier attitude toward life.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): A spot of beachcombing this weekend is likely to be beneficial in more ways than one. Your sense of fairness will be affronted toward the end of next week, but you should refrain from highlighting others' greed; what goes around will eventually come around. Although you are not usually too concerned about material gains, it will be impossible to refuse the offer of a lifetime on Monday. The number 8 is lucky.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Arrange to spend this weekend with people you feel most comfortable with. An edgy mood can be soothed by seeking a relaxing atmosphere and avoiding challenges. On Monday, expect a welcome breakthrough regarding money. As the week progresses, most Arians will notice improvement in their finances; so will others and you can expect to be ap-

proached for a loan on Thursday. Pisces is about to declare a romantic interest.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Taureans have a week of twists and turns ahead. Luckily, your energy levels are high as the month ends and you will be able to coast effortlessly through the coming unpredictability. You may, however, be starting to wish that someone special would act more reliably. A romance recently begun is not likely to turn into the committed relationship you were hoping for, but the sea is a fertile place.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Losses and gains are very much on the agenda this week. Your natural ability to go with the flow should enable you to regard events philosophically; you may rest assured that the balance will end up very much in your favor. On Wednesday or Thursday you will have to be patient when dealing with a friend who has a chip on his or her shoulder.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): It will

be necessary to show respect in the right places early next week. Many Cancerians will come up against red tape when negotiating agreements and you should be prepared to stand back while the wheels turn slowly. A wave of creativity causes you to take an objective look at your immediate surroundings this weekend; if redecorating is on the agenda, incorporate earthy tones to tune into nature's rhythm.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Completing assignments and meeting deadlines occupies your time for most of the week, but tying up loose ends now will enable you to relax more next month. This is an auspicious time to chase up unpaid debts; others are starting to feel guilty about not paying, so strike while the iron's hot. Plan a shopping spree for Tuesday when your bargaining skills will be hard to resist.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): You will hold the trump card this weekend. Knowledge gained now will stand you in good stead early next year, particularly

where a tricky business deal is concerned. For the time being, be content to remain camouflaged in the background. Aquarius has something to confess on Monday which will come as a big surprise. Later in the week the number 9 may bring luck.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): December will be the month for working toward your financial goals. Stumbling blocks that have hindered your path during November will be bulldozed away, leaving the way clear for smooth progression. Use the coming days to prepare a detailed plan, asking for professional advice if in doubt. Librans presently enjoying a shower of romance will not be cooling down for the foreseeable future. Wear citrus shades to sharpen your senses.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Those born under the sign of Scorpio would do best to contain their emotions this weekend. A heated domestic atmosphere can easily blow up into a crackling bonfire if you're not careful. If you've recently begun an exercise routine take care not to overdo things as physical vulnerability is likely during the coming days. You are advised to sit on the fence for a while longer before committing to a business agreement.

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Doing the Jakarta Jive

Anyone who has seen the movie *The Year of Living Dangerously* – with a slightly wobbly performance by Mel Gibson as the Australian journalist caught up in the final throes of the Sukarno regime – might not count Jakarta among the list of must-sees. More recent events have put the Indonesian capital in the news for all the wrong reasons.

But step into Sailendra at the JW Marriott – which bore the brunt of the car bomb of just over a year ago – and the restaurant is all smiles and clattering cutlery and the heady aroma of open-kitchen fusion.

Security has been stepped up, of course, but the boys in the peaked caps deliver a broad grin as they inspect the soft underbelly of your taxi with a mirror.

And everywhere else in the city there's a spirit of renaissance, epitomized by a building mania that seemingly wants to convert every spare square centimeter into yet another shopping center.

Jakartans love nothing more than strolling around a mall, occasionally dipping into the food court but otherwise simply hanging out.

And with the city's traffic mired in *macet*, as gridlocks are termed, every neighborhood needs its own retail romper room. Which is not to say that traditional markets are disappearing – if anything they seem to be enjoying a similar boom.



Two areas that reward extended exploration are Merdeka Square, where Bung (it means "brother", as opposed to "bribe") Sukarno erected a massive monument to independence.

The bauble at the top is supposed to be either solid gold, or coated with gold leaf, or just something shiny.

Ordinary citizens of a cynical frame of mind are wont to say it describes their condition in life – with wealth permanently out of reach. Jakarta's sense of humor remains untarnished, whatever the political situation.

With a new president now

get your bearings. On the south side of the square is the history museum, while on the west an entire four-story mansion is given over to a puppetry expo at the Museum Wayang.

To the east, Bafai Seni Rupa houses fine arts and there's also an interesting display of ceramics.

If all this sounds like too much culture-vulturing, remem-



Above: Climbing to the top of the Monas monument affords the best views of the city. Top left: Shopping malls are springing up everywhere, but traditional markets still do a roaring trade. Left: Jakarta's few remaining lakes and parks act as the city's lungs.

safely installed, the country is hopefully forging into a profitable future, yet one of the most interesting parts of town is Kota, the old Batavia where the colonial Dutch used to hold sway.

Head for the former town square to

TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

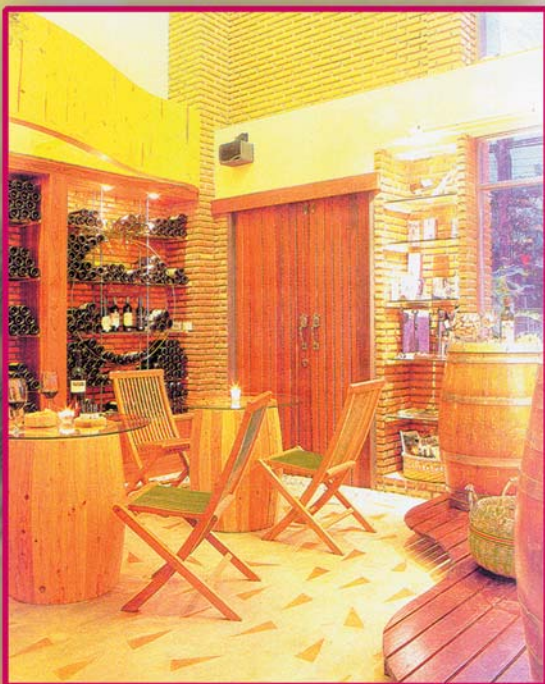
ber they are all a short stroll from each other, and admission charges are so low you can dip into each for a mere half an hour or so.

If you fancy whetting your whistle, the Café Batavia on the north side of the square never closes, and is famed for its international dishes, its photo gallery of Hollywood stars, and the mirrored urinals in the gents' lavatory, though not necessarily in that order.

And if doing the Jakarta Jive gets to be too much – town planning still remains something of an abstract quality – there is always an avenue of escape at the city's biggest amusement park, Taman Impian Jaya, which translates as "Dream Land".

Its rides, parks and lakes are open 24 hours a day – though many attractions close at night – and all for a mere 7,000 rupiah – about 30 baht.

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Hidden Words

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

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

Brain Buster!!

Jim went to a party and drank some of the fruit punch. He then left early. Everyone else at the party who drank the punch subsequently died of poisoning. Why did Jim not die?

The poison in the punch came from the ice cubes. Gradually it melted, poisoning the punch.

SOLUTION TO
LAST WEEK'S
CROSSWORD

		B	E	E	F	E	A	T	E	R
M		U		X		A			A	
A	T	T	I	C		T	I	A	R	A
T		T		E		E		N		N
A	B	E		L	I	N	C	O	L	N
D		R			R			N		U
O	F	F	I	C	E	R		Y	E	A
R		L		Z		O		M		L
S	T	Y	L	E		D	R	O	L	L
	E			C		E		U		Y
N	E	I	G	H	B	O	R	S		

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. Who was the first president of America?

2. What animals did Lincoln keep on the White House lawn?

3. Which bird did Benjamin Franklin suggest should be the national emblem of the USA?

4. Who coined the following words: disgraceful, hostile, obscene, puke, perplex?

5. Which book was the first to be written using a typewriter?

6. How many paintings did Vincent Van Gogh sell in his lifetime?
7. Which two Beatles are still alive?

8. Who said, "To punish me for my contempt for authority, Fate made me an authority myself"?

9. Which is the most densely populated place in the world?

10. What is the highest peak in the USA?

11. Which sport was originally called mintonette?

12. What weapon in the Philippines evolved into a popular toy worldwide?

13. What is the fastest-growing plant?
14. John Dunlop, who invented car tires, was what by profession?

15. Which fictional character was based on surgeon Joseph Bell?

16. In which year was the first plastic material produced?

17. How many quires are there in a ream?

18. The oceans hold what percentage of the Earth's water?

19. What, to the nearest 10 years, is the typical lifespan of a crocodile?

20. Who killed Jesse James?
- Answers next week

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

Never a Cross Word!

Across

1. Act as referee.

6. Protect against disease.

10. Born, in France.

11. Not at all well.

12. *Odyssey* or *Beowulf*, for example.

15. Sole.

17. You can't have it and eat it too.

18. A space.

19. Watcher of sports.

22. Starts.

Down

1. Probe into.

2. Computer key.

3. Phang Nga Bay transport.

4. One essential of Morse code.

5. They bill and coo.

7. One-eyed giant.

8. Put a spell on.

13. Italian river.

14. Very big.

16. Pleasure craft.

20. Seamstress's essential.

21. Japanese airline (initials).

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ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. Charles Lindbergh; 2. Nahuatl; 3. Microwave oven; 4. Kathleen Turner; 5. The International Golf Club in Massachusetts; 6. Empire State Building; 7. William Henry Harrison; 8. Van Rijn; 9. Coca-Cola; 10. Outer space; 11. Israel; 12. Former Russian Premier Nikita Krushchev; 13. Tennis; 14. 1929; 15. Ichthyology; 16. Ophthalmologist; 17. Strawberry; 18. 33; 19. 1981; 20. California – the original name for Los Angeles.

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An Orwellian nightmare

In *Secret Histories* (John Murray, London, 2004, 232pp) Emma Larkin sets out to retrace the footsteps of Eric Arthur Blair, an imperial policeman in Burma from 1922 to 1927, who would later become George Orwell and write of his experiences in the novel *Burmese Days*.

Although Orwell died in 1950, 12 years before General Ne Win seized power in Burma and led it down the disastrous "Burmese Road to Socialism", his novels *Animal Farm* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* are regarded by Burmese intellectuals as prophetic of their nation's fate – the first two parts of a dark trilogy.

"The towns and cities where Orwell was posted span the geographical heart of the country and, in a sense, it is still possible to experience Burma as Orwell knew it – almost a half century of military dictatorship has given it the air of a country frozen in time," Larkin writes in her prologue.

"But a journey through Orwell's Burma would lead through an even eerier and much more terrifying landscape:

a real-life *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where Orwell's nightmare visions are being played out with a gruelling certainty."

Thus, Larkin journeys through Mandalay, the Irrawaddy Delta, Rangoon, Moulmein and the hill station of Katha, which formed the backdrop to *Burmese Days*.

Larkin was uniquely equipped for the task, having mastered the Burmese language at London's School of Oriental and African Studies. Her visits to Burma spanned nearly a decade, during which she spun an ever-denser web of contacts. She combines great sensitivity toward her interview subjects with highly poetic arts of description.

The book's subtitle – *Finding George Orwell in a Burmese Teashop* – is apt, as Larkin spends a lot of time in the ubiquitous teashops, talking with educated Burmese. In Mandalay, she is even part of an impromptu Orwell Book Club.

Traveling as a single, Burmese-speaking woman, Larkin meets a wide range of people: students, professors, journalists, booksellers, pastors, engineers,

vendors, waiters, retired Anglo-Burmese teachers, the many policemen who are keeping track of her, and even a sinister Burmese army colonel.

In a second-hand bookshop, she meets Kyaw Thein, an elderly poet. "He was one of those courtly old Burmese gentlemen I met from time to time in Burma who spoke a quaint old-world English and had an air of sadness that lingered around them like cigarette smoke. Kyaw Thein recited a few of his poems to me there in the dingy upper reaches of the market, within the stench of an overflowing rubbish bin. They were beautiful and simple verses about love and loss and loneliness. 'I can only write love poems,' he said with some embarrassment. 'The censors warned me away from writing about anything else. They told me, "Bawa akyauing m'yah neh" – "Don't write about life."'"

Orwell once wrote about totalitarianism: "If you want a vision of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face – forever." There is a dreary sameness in the stories that Larkin's subjects tell, a constant refrain of futility and despair. But

day-to-day life still goes on:

"Dugout canoes glided along the river," she writes of the Irrawaddy Delta. "Bamboo groves were occasionally revealed, producing patches of luminous green light. A gaggle of people scampered across one opening, bright pink and purple shoulder bags hung like sashes across their torsos. Naked boys wearing cloche

hats made of palm leaves slid with whoops and shouts down a muddy embankment into the river. A lone woman wrapped in a lilac *tamein* knelt on a stone in the canal with her back toward us, slowly combing her waist-length hair."

Massacres of minorities, forced labor, rampant drug trafficking, political prisons, economic destitution, rigid censorship, the complete ruin of education and medical care – it's all true. But Larkin is struck by the normality of life in Burma, people going about their business, laughing, talking, smoking cheroots, going to the movies.

"What did you expect?" a Burmese friend asks her, "That we would all be sitting around on the pavements crying?"



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

Why CAT's service is kitty litter

Lately, my email inbox has been overflowing with questions about the recent announcement by the Communications Authority of Thailand (CAT) about its so-called "high-speed" Internet service – HiNet.

The questions below, and my replies, pretty much sum up what I and other HiNet users think of the service

(megabits/second). That's a typo, right? Shouldn't it be 800 Mbps?

PS
Kamala

KHUN WOOD'S COMPUTER

Nope. As I understand it, right now there's only one line between Phuket and Bangkok carrying traffic

for the CAT's HiNet and T-Net services from TT&T – and that line runs at 8 Mbps.

To put this in perspective, realize that anybody in Hong Kong who signs up for ADSL broadband automatically gets an 8-Mbps line. It's installed in days, sometimes hours, almost anywhere in greater Hong Kong, for the equivalent of a few hundred baht.

By comparison, all of Phuket's HiNet and T-Net bandwidth combined – for the entire island – matches the bandwidth doled out to a single apartment-dweller in Hong Kong. Koreans get more. Singaporeans get a little less.

That same article says that CAT is planning to boost the connection speed for that line to 155 Mbps, sometime next year. Consider this: if the average apartment block in Hong Kong has 20 units on each floor, the implication is that Phuket's entire HiNet/T-Net connection will (some day) have about as much bandwidth as one apartment building in Hong Kong.

TT&T and CAT have been selling a 2-Mbps service to consumers in Phuket for the past six months. How can they sell hundreds of 2-Mbps lines here in Phuket, but only connect them to one 8-Mbps line that runs off the island? Isn't that fraud?

JL
Patong

new ADSL lines. I'm also getting rebuffed on all attempts at installing TOT lines, and would venture to guess that TOT is suffering from the same problems.

What can we do about it this ridiculous situation?

If you have HiNet, and it keeps dropping out on you, I've found that simply unplugging the ADSL modem, waiting 15 seconds, then plugging it back in again will bring the line back, at least occasionally. Other than that, I don't have any good suggestions.

About 16 months ago, prominent Bangkok politicians promised the people of Phuket that they would receive cheap, reliable ADSL as a "Christmas gift". Although ADSL didn't arrive on the island until long after Christmas 2003, for six months or so Phuket really did have cheap, fast, reliable Internet access. Now we're staring at the Ghost of Christmas Past.

From what I've seen, demand for reliable broadband on the island is almost infinite – if the government can get its act together, the people of Phuket will rapidly absorb every avail-

able baud. We haven't even tweaked the nipple of the iceberg.

Most disappointing, from my point of view, is the idea that some people actually believe (as CAT's spokesman asserted) that one 155-Mbps line from Phuket to Bangkok will "make it unnecessary to create a direct link to the Internet from Phuket, as was previously planned."

From what I've seen, demand for reliable broadband on the island is almost infinite – if the government can get its act together, the people of Phuket will rapidly absorb every available baud. We haven't even tweaked the nipple of the iceberg.

As many of you know, an Internet backbone line passes within a few kilometers of Phuket. Patching into the line would require Herculean political effort, but if it were to happen, Phuket would suddenly be on a par with other Asian computer hubs. It'd put us on the cyber map. As long as we're tethered to a wimpy Bangkok link, we'll all get third-class service.

In the meantime, the companies that were competing to bring cheap Internet access have been shoved out of the way. The government's 1,000-baht-a-month offering simply sucked up the entire bottom end of the market.

Right now, I'm looking at Island Technology's ADSL service, as well as the ones from JI-Net and CS/Loxinfo. None of the options are cheap. But at least



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No person I have spoken to knows how many HiNet accounts have been sold in Phuket. I'm not a lawyer, but the whole situation stinks. My HiNet service has bobbed up and down for weeks. Much of the time, my nominal 2-Mbps line delivers only 300 Kbps – 15% of the rated speed. Sometimes I get 500 Kbps; sometimes HiNet simply doesn't work.

It now appears that TT&T and CAT have stopped installing

As it seems that this government has no intention of changing its views on entertainment venue closing times any time soon, it looks like Phuket's fun spots are simply going to have to find ways to cope – just as they appear to be doing in Bangkok.

Up in the capital recently, Stool Pigeon noticed that the closing times were being strictly enforced in two of his old haunts: Nana Entertainment Complex and the dingy but lovable Washington Square area.

The action around Nana has spilled out from the Entertainment Complex right onto Soi Nana, where a number of new beer bars (new to Stool Pigeon anyway) now get going in the late afternoon.

When Stool Pigeon lived in Bangkok, the idea of heading down to Nana before 10 pm was unthinkable, but that was before they had the BTS – and it was also back in the days when most bars would, as a point of honor, stay open all night if just one punter chose to remain.

Although Nana bar owners are complaining about the 1 am closing, commerce in the area seems to have adjusted to accommodate the change: there were far more streetwalkers, touts, food vendors, flower children and time-share hustlers crowding the sidewalks than ever before.

Business appears to be booming, even before sun-down. And what was once hidden away from view now represents an in-your-face obstacle course for innocent schoolchildren trying to make their way home through the already difficult

urban terrain of downtown Bangkok. Some kids were even peddling trinkets to drunk foreigners while still in their school uniforms.

But unlike Phuket, where questions about the early closing times elicit responses ranging from bewilderment and confusion to fury and indignation, in Bangkok many customers at least seem to be taking it in their stride.

A bargirl: "I like knowing I can leave at 1 am, it gives me more time with my kids."

A foreign customer: "I don't like paying bar fines – and now I don't have to." (Bar fines

Let the good times roll...

Stool Pigeon



in Nana now cost up to 600 baht, but I was told far fewer of them were being paid.)

When returning from Washington Square, my taxi turned into the bedlam of Soi Nana at closing time. The road was impassable.

Tuk-tuk drivers in Patong are unanimously opposed to early closing, and most even took part in the failed protest last month. But that doesn't seem to be the case with their counterparts in the capital, where tourists make up a considerable – but not an overwhelming – majority of fares:

My taxi driver: "The early closing times are good. Thaksin is right. He's the strong leader we have needed all along. People who fight the government, like the terrorists in the South, have all been brainwashed. How would you like it if your country looked like this?"

An interesting question, and one well worth pondering. I'm not sure whether I would mind it or not, but I am sure that my mother wouldn't approve.

Rare bargain: After quite a bit of pavement pounding I think I may have found the best value accommodations in the Nana area: It's called Orchid House, and at 550 baht a night you get UBC TV, hot water, a fridge, a king-size bed with a firm mattress and, best of all, no disgusting mite-and-fungi-infested carpeting on the floor. Just nice, clean tiles.

Cyber surcharge: The Orchid House is a rare bargain in the

Nana area, where ripoffs and outrageous overcharging tend to predominate. One Internet shop there has the audacity to charge 50 baht for 15 minutes – yet it was packed with foreigners.

When one considers that a good Internet café in Phuket City, like the plush AK Internet in Samkong, charges just 15 baht an hour, the price differential works out at a factor of more than 13:1.

But that's only half the story. The connection speed at AK Internet is also about 10 times faster than its competitor in the capital. Calculating the difference in megabytes/second/baht (if such a unit exists), the factor would have to be more like 130:1 – nothing the Nana shop can justify by having to pay higher rent.

InterNanational: But that's why Nana continues to boom: it has established itself as a central point in Bangkok where naïve foreigners, who either don't know or don't care that they are being ripped off, tend to congregate. Many of Patong's residents would feel right at home there.

The Nana area does have its positive points, though. The Thai word *nana* can be translated as "various" or "different".

In the case of Soi Nana, it is almost certainly an abbreviated form of the word *nanachad*, which means "international".

The name is apt. On any given day, there are probably more international "financial transactions" taking place within a one-kilometer radius of the Nana Intersection than there are in the entire American state of Minnesota.

It's all pure foreign income, and it just keeps rolling in – no matter what the government does to try and regulate it.

Slow but steady

Just about everybody I talk to these days knows and understands the importance of a regular fitness program, and many dream of being strong, fit and healthy.

But one of the biggest myths doing the rounds is that one must exercise every day in order for it to be beneficial.

"Keep moving and be active," say the experts. "Daily activity is good for you." Of course it is, but for some people this appears too much of a daunting task and, consequently, they do no exercise at all.

So just what should you do?

First of all, let's back up and deal with starting a fitness program.

Unless you have some past experience in fitness and have your own gym equipment, I recommend you join a fitness club or hire a personal trainer to help get you started.

Just as important is to talk to the club manager, fitness instructor or personal trainer first. Ask what regime will be set for you in order to for you to reach your goals. Yes, you must have some goals – so write them down.

Twice-weekly fitness program: One of the most common mistakes made is when people join a club and jump in way over their heads by training every day – sometimes for several hours a day – for a couple of months. They then giving up because they haven't seen much improvement and because they feel tired.

Giving up is a often a direct result of having undertaken the wrong fitness program. The body cannot take that degree of exercise day in, day out. People

miss a day's exercise, then two days, then a week and before you know it, a month has gone. Then they stop altogether.

Good results can be achieved by doing just two 30-minute workouts each week. This regime may not get you fit enough for the Olympics but it will make you fitter and leave you feeling good about yourself. More is better – obviously – but twice-weekly exercise works and it may prompt you to do more when you are ready for it.

A typical twice-weekly program should feature:

- 18 minutes of weight training including one or two sets of 12-15 reps of compound exercises – such as squats, deadlifts, lunges and bench presses – to work the major muscle

groups;

- 12 minutes of cardiovascular exercise such as treadmill, bike, outdoor running, brisk walking or swimming.

Start off with a few minutes rest between the weight-training sets if you need to. You will notice that as your fitness improves you will need less rest between sets.

You can effect a noticeable change in the exterior of your body in just 30 days, with reduced body fat and increased muscle strength.

There should also be some very positive changes going on inside you. These should include a lower resting heart rate, lower cholesterol, lower blood sugar levels and lower blood pressure – to a name just a few.

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



Fitness FANATIC

By Joe and Pensri Lewis



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Ignoring markets may be fatal

Phuket's Malaysian rival, Langkawi, opened its 71,400-square-meter Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre (MIEC) next to the island's airport some 15 years ago. Like the proposed Phuket International Convention & Exhibition Center (ICEC), it can host meetings of up to 3,000 people.

But apart from the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition once every two years, a travel show and a car show, the MIEC has seen very little business – hardly the way to recoup the millions of ringgit the government invested. Had this been a private-sector project, one suspects it would have been mothballed long ago.

The MIEC is perhaps an extreme example, but it does provide an example for those who believe that Phuket only has to build the ICEC to entice hundreds of thousands of people from around the world to line up and book space.

That dream is unlikely to be fulfilled. For a start, Phuket is coming from way behind. It would have to compete with such regional expo giants as Hong Kong and Singapore, which have spent decades building up their clientele and refining their products. Phuket would also face competition from Bangkok, with its well-established expo facilities, not to mention excellent facilities further afield in South Korea, China and particularly in Japan.

All these rivals have well-established supporting infrastructure – local transport, international flights and accommodation. Phuket does not. The roads to the favored sites are small and clogged. The airport cannot accommodate flights by the largest aircraft, so many visitors must come via Bangkok, adding hours to the journey.

The major concentrations of hotels in Phuket are nowhere near the proposed sites. Only one hotel near the Saphan Hin site could be described as being of international standard. The same is true of Mai Khao Beach. The proposed Chao Fa City site has, as yet, no hotels at all. Putting conventioners up in hotels on the west coast would create a logistical nightmare.

It also has to be realized that the MICE (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions) industry is at least as vulnerable – probably more vulnerable – than the tourism industry. While there will always be tourists who will brave or ignore economic uncertainty, health scares or terrorist threats, conventioners and exhibitors stay at home in times of uncertainty.

Thus far, all discussion of the ICEC has been about the potential benefits to Phuket, but little has been heard about market research. That's an omission that must be rectified before the project goes any further.

– The Editor

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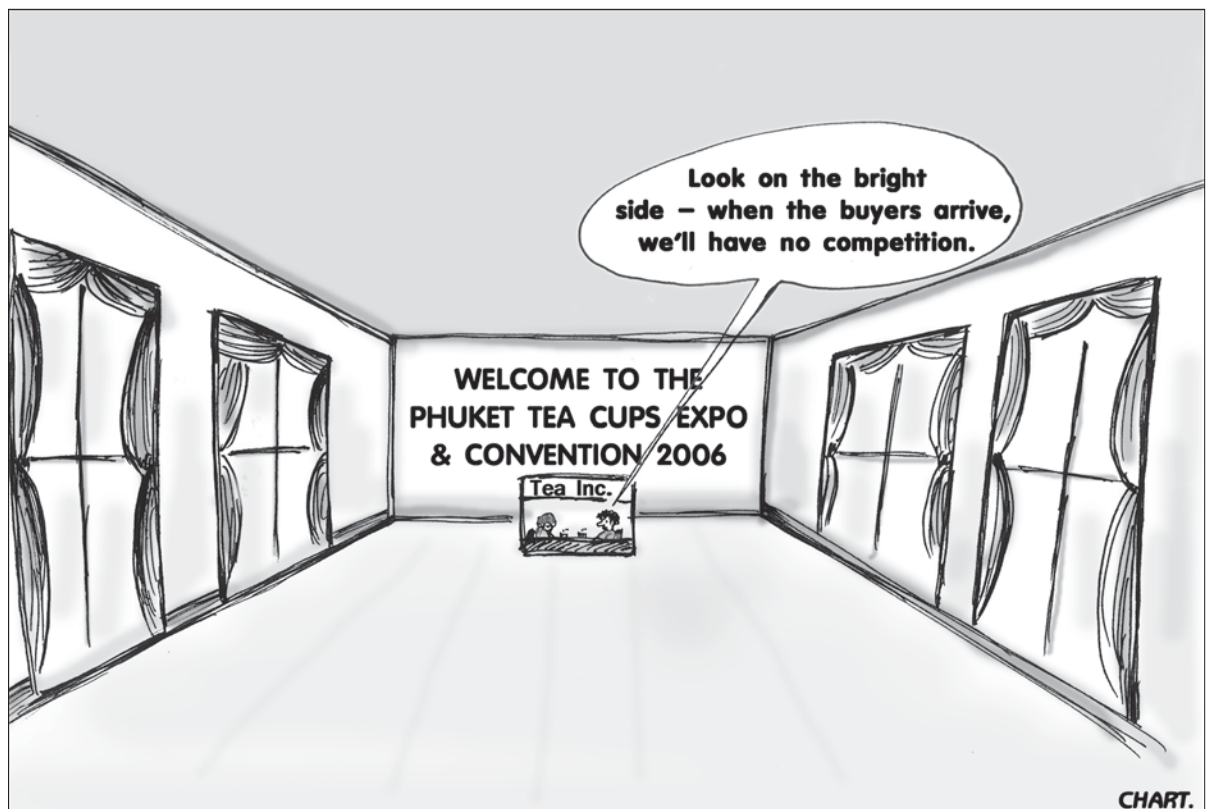
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Letters

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

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

Driven off the beach by howling jet-skis

On my second day in Phuket, I went to my favorite beach in Thailand, Karon Beach – emerald-blue sea, like a painting, and astonishing sunsets, just awesome!

I have been to many places, but in my opinion Karon is one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. It's a jewel.

I fell in love with the beach four years ago, and despite what a foreigner once said in the *Gazette* about people coming to Phuket not for its beauty and pristine nature but for something else (he probably meant the bars in Patong), I still think Phuket has nature worth protecting. Let the barflies hang around in Pattaya or Patong, because the alcohol has blinded them to their beautiful surroundings.

But when I returned to my favorite beach, what did I see? Jet-skis and parasails, sights I hoped I would never see at Karon. I knew they were in Patong, but I was happy they were kept out of Karon.

During my previous visit earlier this year, things were still peaceful. Now it's all screeching, like I would hear if I was in the dentist's chair having my teeth drilled, and the stink of gasoline everywhere, and why? Just to let some local fisherboys have their own business and a higher income?

A few jet-skis now dominate the whole beach. Even if they have no customers, the operators are on them the whole time. It's terrible. I cannot believe the stink, noise and disturbance.

How many of the visitors to Karon are so blind, deaf and un-

caring about anyone and anything but their own fun? Not many, I'm sure.

Now I will have to look for another destination, after four years of good holidays. I'm disappointed.

K Kollitsch
Amsterdam

Morality in an evil environment

As a Thai woman who is not in the sex business, I suggest that the real cause of the "flesh trade" is not easy to resolve – or even to see, and many people don't understand what the real roots are.

I don't mean to offend anyone who says education and better social security will help with this [Letters, *Gazette*, October 30], but education isn't necessarily the answer. It's more about morals – people must know how to weigh the good and bad, then choose to do good rather than bad.

Students nowadays are happy to do whatever it takes to buy the latest fashion accessories, so long as they don't have to use their brains or work for them.

These students are educated people, and educated people don't use labor, they use brainpower to find work that doesn't require their physical labor.

Why? Because they think that as their bodies are theirs, that they have every right to do whatever they want with them – as long as it doesn't harm other people.

As reported in a Thai newspaper recently, high-school girls are offering live Internet shows

for a 300-baht phone card. The more you pay, the more you see. Pay enough and you can ask the girl out.

Why are these girls doing this? Because they know they are good looking and they exploit their looks to the full.

"Who cares?" they think, "I'm not hurting anybody, in fact, I'm making people happy. It's easy, fun and I get money for it."

Believe me, morality is the only solution to the flesh-trade problem.

How can you remain good when the goodness in your heart is up against an evil environment?

How far can your strength and determination go to win out against evil?

These are the real questions – and when we find some answers to them we will be able to solve the problem.

Sinee Hans
Koh Kaew

Not so intellectual property

We live on an island with one of the most dynamic – and certainly most fascinating – property markets in the world.

However, when turning to the property section of the *Gazette* of November 13 for insight and information, we find instead almost an entire page devoted to a pointless rant [Graham Doven's Larger Than Life column] about how Aussie women with a job to do are seemingly unwilling to make themselves window dressing for ogling men – and other drivel.

What a shame!

Lana Willocks-Chanhom
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.

Police need to smarten up their act

Traffic police in Phuket don't care about their duty. They turn up to direct traffic in front of schools in the morning, then they just disappear all day before returning when the schools get out.

Yes, they set up checkpoints [to collect fines], but they don't make a sustained effort at enforcing traffic law, which is their duty.

Senior police don't monitor on-duty traffic police these days. In the past, Superintendents had to make inspections every morning and find ways to solve traffic problems. I think every traffic police box should be monitored by senior police officials.

Ensuring that every driver has a licence is one requirement, but currently many police neglect to do this. It's common for officers to stop motorists, collect a fine, and then send them on their way. Some officers even say it's not their responsibility to keep unlicensed drivers off the roads – that the Transport Office are responsible for this.

But that's not true. Police have a duty to check all vehicles for this and other violations.

The majority of drivers here have little knowledge of traffic law. When issuing fines, police should educate violators as necessary, otherwise they will just keep making the same mistakes.

In my day, police were able to control traffic to a reasonable degree. I understand that there are a lot more cars on the roads now, but I still think they should be capable of carrying out their duties in this regard. Why shouldn't they? There are more road signs in Phuket now than ever before.



FIRST PERSON

Phuket native Pol Lt Col Wijiit Sanguansak, 78, retired after 58 years of service in the Royal Thai Police, where he served as an Inspector in Chumphon before finishing his career as Deputy Superintendent in Surat Thani. He is now on the Kusornlatham Foundation committee and also sits on the Governor's advisory committee.

He is now a vocal critic of local police, who he feels are failing in their responsibility to keep local roads safe.

He is also dismayed that the Chalong police have failed to investigate the destruction of a section of wall constructed by the Kusornlatham Foundation around the controversial 'paupers' graveyard' at Friendship Beach.

Also, police aren't sufficiently committed to punishing serious offenders, such as those who flee accident scenes. Police should investigate, pursue and arrest such offenders. They have the responsibility and authority to do this, but they seldom exercise it.

When I was stationed in Chumphon, I once arrested a policeman who ran over someone, killing him. I made the arrest myself, but when I took him in to the station, I was asked by the Superintendent to sign off his release on bail.

But I didn't do it because I didn't think it was right and might affect the investigation. After that, everybody understood that I did things by the book and left me alone.

But here there are seldom any arrests for hit-and-run drivers who kill people, and this just encourages people to flee accident scenes – because they aren't worried about the police.

And when the police do

catch people who cause accidents, they only fine them. It's no wonder there are so many repeat offenders.

The whole thing boils down to the police not being serious about controlling traffic. Last December, I was pulled over for not wearing a seatbelt. I had just pulled out of the Wachira Phuket Hospital parking lot when my mobile rang, so I hadn't buckled up yet.

I showed the low-ranking officer my old police ID card, but he gave me a 200 baht ticket anyway. When I got to the Phuket City Police Station they told me I didn't have to pay the fine, but I insisted on doing so just to show them up.

Although I am an adviser to the Governor and have other important connections, I never try to use them in cases like this.

Another bad point of the traffic police is that the careers of officers who issue the most fines are fast-tracked. This creates a temptation [to write out as

many tickets as possible, in the easiest way possible].

Nowadays, the police are setting up more checkpoints than ever and fining traffic violators. They should also take away their licences and keep them until the violator has passed a test on traffic regulations.

When I was a police officer, we had to follow the regulations closely when issuing fines – and produce evidence. Nowadays it seems that everything is left up to the officers' discretion. And nowadays just about every officer has his own private car.

On television, police are always complaining that they don't get enough cooperation from the public. I don't think that's true. Most people are willing to give cooperation to government officers, as long as they get some back.

It's a two way street. If you aren't good and fair to people, how can you expect them to cooperate?

I was assigned to Chum-

phon, Takua Pa and many other places where I didn't know anybody. I was even sent off to deal with communist insurgents, but I never had a problem establishing a rapport with the locals based on good faith.

Nowadays, [the police] are not creating public confidence, but rather resentment and even hatred.

I feel sorry when I go to meetings and the subject of the police is raised. When I say bad things about the police, they ask me "Hey, you were a police officer – why are you always saying bad things about them?" I reply that I am just speaking truthfully and fairly.

I have heard many visitors from Bangkok and other places complain about driving skills in Phuket. They wonder why people don't follow the traffic rules here, passing wherever and whenever they want and failing to stay in their lanes.

The police must get serious about their duty [and crack down on moving violations] here.

The other big problem is police don't bother making out reports for people – because they are too lazy. They only enter the evidence in the daily log "as evidence" [that something happened].

If I went to report something to the police and they refused to make out a full report, I would charge them with dereliction of duty under section 147 of the penal code.

But most people are afraid to charge police, because nowadays you see a lot of stories about police involved in crime and murders to silence witnesses. This is also a big part of the problems in the Deep South.

What should a copy of my passport show?

I was interested and disturbed to read in Issues & Answers in the *Phuket Gazette* of September 23, 2004, about the need for all visitors to carry their passports, or a copy, with them at all times.

I must confess that I was totally ignorant of this requirement, though I have been travelling to Thailand annually for the last 15 years or so.

I should welcome clarification on the following point:

Is it necessary for the copy of the passport to be made once one is in Thailand, so as to show the immigration stamp and date of entry? Or is it sufficient for a copy to be made outside Thailand, which would of course provide all the other identification details, as well as the visa?

Mark H Burrill
Honolulu

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

You should get the photocopy of the passport made after you come into Thailand. That way we can check everything – name, nationality, date of entry, expiration date of visa and passport, last destination and so on. If you make the copy before you come to Thailand, we cannot check all this information.

If you are worried about losing your passport, you can leave it in the hotel and have the front office manager or another person in authority sign the photocopy and write his name and position on it to verify it is an accurate copy.

However, the *Gazette* notes that the "photocopy rule" appears

not to apply everywhere. Pol Maj Phanthana Nuchanart, of the Bangkok Investigation Tourist Police (Division 2), stresses:

Tourists must carry their passports with them at all times. This is an international rule.

A passport is like an ID card; if you don't have it with you, the police may arrest you.

I went to Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO) and took along all the documents the chief said I would need when he replied to my previous question about buying a car as a tourist. But the man behind the counter refused to complete the transfer because I was a tourist.

How can I now proceed, given that officers at the PPTO won't do as their chief has publicly stated?

Steve
Phuket

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer of the Phuket

Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), replies:

It is possible that the officer you saw didn't realize that a tourist may own a car. You should bring the documents I referred to earlier [see *Phuket Gazette*, September 18] and ask for me at the PPTO.

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

Buying a car as a tourist

Are the old traditions dying out?

Dear Momma Duck,

Before I came to Thailand three years ago – the first time I had ever visited the country – I tried to learn as much about the culture as I could from books and the Internet.

I don't know whether I misinterpreted the information I found, whether it was simply wrong or just out of date, but there were a number of Thai societal norms reported that I have rarely seen put into practice.

One example was to do with the eating of rice. I recall reading that it was customary to acknowledge the importance of rice by – almost as a way of saying “grace” – eating one spoonful of plain rice before launching into the rest of the meal.

In my time here, in many different settings, in restaurants and in the homes of Thai people all over the country, I have yet to see a single person do this. Is that custom simply “old-fashioned” now?

I also read that both the very young and the very old – but particularly the aged – are venerated in Thai culture. Apart from certain ceremonies carried out at Songkran, I have rarely seen the elderly being given a great deal of respect.

Doors are not held open for

them, drivers do not stop for them at pedestrian crossings and they are often left sitting alone in restaurants while their families carry on around them. “Respecting the old” appears to be little more than empty words.

In contrast, during the times that I have enjoyed the company of bargirls for the night, hardly one of them has not, before retiring to bed, bowed and touched her head to the pillow thrice, as, I understand, practicing Buddhists are supposed to. However, the number of Thai girls I have known who did not work in bars never did this.

Isn't it ironic that these “working women”, sometimes thought of as pariahs, are in fact keeping alive some of the old traditions, while the “good people” ignore them?

Thomas Fowler, Phuket

Dear Thomas,

Your observation is quite acute. I feel that during my lifetime there have been many changes in our practices, although the underlying beliefs remain similar. I suppose the activities you describe can be considered part of the “old fashioned way”.

In the archaic form of Thai language, rice is called *Pra Mae*

Prosop, which means “Mother Rice”, and the ritual you describe was to show respect and think about how much effort and pain it takes for a farmer to grow rice.

Today, we still teach our children about the way to eat rice but the practice of eating a spoonful of plain rice to start a meal has fallen by the wayside, at least in the urban areas.

Another factor is that most of the new, urbanized generation of Thais have never planted rice – or any other crop – and have probably never even seen farm work firsthand. They simply have no idea about the back-breaking work of planting and harvesting rice.

In Phuket, active rice fields are disappearing at an alarming rate and I can think of only a couple of places where you can still see rice in the fields.

With this lack of reality for urban Thais to witness, we cannot really blame them for not un-

derstanding the importance of rice. When I was young my mother always reminded me to finish the rice that was left on the plate, but the “throw-away” culture has certainly arrived, with little concern about taking only what you can eat. It bothers me

when I see the amount of food wasted at big weddings in fancy hotels.

As for the practice of respecting the elderly, that varies very much from one person to another, but I do agree that it is slowly disappearing.

However, as you have probably noticed, there is a big difference between the respect and politeness

Thais exhibit face-to-face with people they know and their behavior in public with people they don't know.

All the examples you gave are from the “public” arena where we are often not as polite and respectful as you might see in the cultures of northern Europe or the Americas.

We don't stop for anyone at pedestrian crossings, much less for old people to cross. Indeed, you could easily cause an accident if you happen to stop abruptly at a pedestrian crossing, so make sure that you check your rear-view mirror first.

We're also not very good at queuing, although the idea is catching on in some banks and other places.

However, at home and in family groups and at occasions such as weddings or funerals, you'll see us being very respectful to the elderly

Regarding your comment about the seemingly unusual traditional behavior of bar-girls, the answer is really quite simple – they tend to come from poor rural areas where most ritual traditions are still practiced.

Urban Thais tend to regard such practices old-fashioned, and not trendy.

My perspective is that what is in your heart and the way you live is much more important than simply going to the temple regularly, but traditional rituals have an important place in binding a community together.

And yes, I do indeed think that some bar-girls are “good people”. They can be as “good” as any other group.



Momma DUCK

By Wanida Hongyok
momma@phuketgazette.net

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Building cost hike led by steel shortage

By Kamol Pirat

PHUKET: Every first-year economics student knows that the primary cause of inflation – regardless of the commodity involved – is too much money chasing too few goods.

Phuket's current housing boom is a case in point and the same immutable law of inflation is having an effect on the prices of construction materials themselves.

According to Ratree Dubsoke, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Internal Trade Office (PPITO), the prices of many construction materials have risen by at least 5% in the past year.

In some cases, the rise in prices has been spectacular. Steel, particularly reinforcing bar, or rebar, has risen in price by around 38% in Phuket, with a

10-meter length of 12mm rebar that sold for 87 baht last year now selling for 120 baht.

Figures from MEPS (International) Ltd – a UK-based steel industry consultancy company that monitors steel prices and trends – show that the price of rebar worldwide increased by more than 45% in the first four months of this year. The price has since fluctuated but without stabilizing.

Indices for the Asian rebar market echo this, showing an increase of 34% in the year to April, with prices continuing to fluctuate since then.

A recent headline at the MEPS website, www.meps.co.uk, sums up the situation by saying that steel prices are "...unparalleled in recent history".

K. Ratree attributes the rise in the cost of rebar to increases

in the costs of the raw materials required for steel production. There has been a worldwide shortage of coke, necessary to fire the furnaces, and steel producers have passed on their increased costs to consumers.

But demand remains high in almost every market, especially Europe, Asia and the US, and the consumer is paying.

K. Ratree said the PPITO has checked with five steel-products suppliers in Phuket – those known to have supplies in excess of 100 tons of steel – and found that none of them is stockpiling rebar or other building materials in an effort to drive up prices artificially.

There has also been significant increases in the costs of other building basics, including one item commonly used in the Thai market – the 10m x 22cm x

22cm concrete foundation pile.

Prices in 2003 were 1,596 baht per unit, but 2004 has seen the price rise to around 1,703 baht, an increase of around 7%.

Although standard-sized concrete blocks of 39cm x 19cm x 9cm are, at 10 baht apiece, one of the cheaper essentials of most buildings, this price still represents an 11% increase on 2003 prices.

Surprisingly, the price of cement has not increased at anything like the same rate. "Tiger" brand cement, manufactured in Thailand by the Siam Cement Group, still retails at 122 baht for a 50-kilogram bag, the same price as last year, while the company's "Elephant" brand Portland cement sells for 137 baht per 50kg bag, an increase of less than one baht from last year.

The increased prices will

inevitably be passed on to the consumer, pushing up the prices of new homes.

One project manager, Kieritichai Keawbumrung, of the Royal Estate Park housing project, acknowledged the rise in prices of almost all raw materials, including wood, which, he said, had increased by between 30% and 40%.

"These rises have definitely had an impact on the cost of building, and the increased price of each [new] house will be have to be borne by the buyers."

"The government should help the construction industry by stabilizing the prices of, for example, steel and oil. This will help the industry and the consumer," he said.

Whether the government will heed such calls remains to be seen.

ON THE MOVE

Lenka Juraskova, from the Czech Republic, has been appointed Marketing Commu-



nications Manager of the JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa. She has a master's degree in English,

American studies and philology from Charles University in Prague. Her experience includes working as spokeswoman and Marketing Director for the Prague International Music Festival, and as a translator and interpreter for the Czech government.

Somphop Vilailert, 41, from Ayudhaya, is the new Food and



Beverage Manager at Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club. K. Somphop graduated from Khoo Khaeng Business Institute

with a mini MBA. His experience in F&B includes working as Manager of Henry J Bean's Bar and Grill at the Amari Watgate Hotel, and with the Dusit Thani Hotel and the Regent Bangkok hotel, all in Bangkok.

Siripen Amornsirichutipon, from Phang Nga, has been appointed Spa



Manager of the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa. K. Siripen has a degree in communication arts from Sukhothai

Thammathiraj University in Bangkok. Her experience includes working as Assistant Spa Manager at the Banyan Tree Phuket, and as Spa Manager at the Rayavadee Resort in Krabi.

Europe will suffer from weak dollar

Last week's article covered, among other things, reasons for the current weakness of the US dollar. It was interesting to note that after that article was written, US Treasury Secretary John Snow came out with a statement on the eve of a 10-day visit to Europe and made the same points.

To recap, the US is not concerned with the rise of the euro against the dollar. The euro zone must do more to stimulate domestic demand by implementing structural reforms, especially to labor laws, as well as reduce taxation, stimulate private initiative and address the pension problem.

These are vital requirements that need to be addressed urgently. One look at the zone's economic growth statistics bears this out. The latest figures for the third quarter of 2004 show that the German economy grew by just 0.1% in the quarter and the Euro zone as a whole by only 0.3%.

Japan has announced its growth for the third quarter and it mirrored Germany, a meager 0.1%. This was well below expectations, but as machinery orders and industrial production figures had also caused disappointment, the lackluster GDP figures were no surprise.

However, while Mr Snow is correct in what he says, that is not the whole story. Certainly, most of the US current account deficit can be explained by low euro zone and Japanese domestic demand. This does not affect exports to the US, but it does affect exports from the US to those economies.

The US has two areas it must address. First: the budget deficit. This was acceptable in 2001 and 2002, and maybe in 2003 when the US economy was in a tight position and govern-



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

ment spending was a useful stimulus.

However, those days are past and government spending must fall so that the national debt does not spiral out of control. Many people point out that the war in Iraq is an expensive business, but at a projected cost of US\$130 billion for this year alone, it goes nowhere near explaining the massive deficit.

The second problem is social security costs. Mr Snow is correct that euro zone states must deal with the public pension problem. European demographics are frightening – and combining an aging population with a low birth rate and unemployment benefits for an average of 9% of the working age population, it is no wonder that the three largest economies of the zone are running unhealthy budget deficits.

France, for example, is trying to curb its budget deficit by using the proceeds of privatiz-

ation. However, that is akin to using savings to maintain lifestyle. The long-term solution must be to increase income or reduce expenditure.

Returning to the US social security problem, the US is seeing its "baby boom" generation approach retirement. The US demographic situation is not as bad as that of most European countries, but it is still serious.

The US Federal Reserve has now released its minutes from its meeting on November 10. These, too, reveal concern about social security and the budget deficit, and this is not for the first time.

The real problem is that both the Republicans and Democrats continually avoid these issues because they do little to gain votes in an election.

At least in the US they have good economic growth, and that brings in government revenue in many ways, including higher corporate tax receipts. That said, the growth is still going to be insufficient to cut the budget deficit to a reasonable level.

In the meantime, the US dollar will continue to suffer.

European finance ministers are now muttering about intervening in currency markets to support the dollar, not because they want to save America, but because they are terrified that export demand could dry up with an expensive euro.

If the US dollar continues its slide against other major currencies, it is likely to fall further than most analysts are currently predicting. This is because markets tend to overreact, and currency markets are no exception.

In addition, many hedge funds and other currency participants are already "short" on the dollar, betting that it will fall further, and will increase their financial commitments if it proves to be a successful strategy. In fact, there may be a role for central bank intervention to boost the value of the dollar if only to create a two-way market and cause some speed bumps to appear on this downhill dollar road.

Richard Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial planning service. He can be reached at Tel and Fax: 076-381997, Mobile: 01-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th.

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Plis Play leads **Hocux Pocux 2** as she heads to victory in last year's King's Cup Regatta. **Plis Play** is staying away this year, while **Hocux Pocux 2** will be competing in the premier cruising class.
— Photo by Guy Nowell

59 yachts registered for King's Cup

PHUKET: At least 59 yachts are expected to race off Phuket and surrounding islands in the 18th Phuket King's Cup Regatta, which will be held from December 4 to 11.

At the time of writing, notable absences from the list of starters were *Plis Play*, which won last year's King's Cup less than two weeks after being launched in Malacca, and Ray Ordoveza's *Clariden-Karakoa*, which came second.

However, Neil Pryde, in *Hi Fidelity*, will be back vying for another King's Cup trophy to add to his collection, as will Peter Ahern in *Yo!*, which won top honors in 2002.

Ruby Tuesday and *Di Hard* will also be back to compete in

the IRC class, as will Viroj Nualkhair in *Octopussy*, which last year came second in the class, though it seems *La Samudra* will not be back to defend her title as IRC champion.

Other local favorites already entered in the regatta are Scott Duncanson's *Somtarn Express* and Stuart Crowe's *Cinders*, both of which are expected to do well.

The number of boats registered so far is considerably less than the numbers that competed in the past couple of years.

However, the regatta's organizers say that they expect the pattern of previous years to be followed, with a hefty number of last-minute entries.

— **Chris Husted**

Aussies dominate Laguna triathlon

By Dhirarat Boonkongsan & Gategaeo Phetsawang

CHERNG TALAY: Australians dominated the Laguna Phuket Triathlon 2004 this morning, taking the top three places in the men's professional competition, and winning first place in the women's professional category.

2002 winner Craig Alexander, from Sydney, crossed the finish line first, completing the course in 2 hours 33 minutes 7 seconds. Hot on his heels was last year's winner Simon "Tommo" Thompson, from Canberra, who crossed the line just 53 seconds later.

Fellow Aussie Richard Cunningham came third, completing the triathlon in 2:36.50.

Speaking with the *Gazette* after completing his third Laguna triathlon, Alexander said, "Two years ago I won by four to five minutes. I had a large lead going into the run, so I could afford to take it easy. I think this one was definitely harder."

"What can I say? That was hard work. That was definitely a very hard-fought victory."

Australian Nicole Hackett, in her first Laguna triathlon, won the women's professional category, completing the course in 2:53.06. Hackett already has an outstanding athletic record; she



Craig Alexander (left) and Simon Thompson cool down after taking first and second places in the triathlon.

was a member of the Australian Sydney 2000 Olympics squad, 2000 Women's World Champion, and has been ITU World Champion three times.

2002 and 2003 women's professional champion Carol Montgomery, from Canada, came second in 2:54.53, followed by American Barb Linguist who finished in 2:57.46.

The first Thai across the finish line was Chadarak Chai-gamjorn, who completed the course in 3:09.36 to place 30th. The next two Thais to finish were Wuttipat Bunjang (3:15.59), who came in 38th, followed by Santiti Untabal (3:18.40) in 45th place.

The Phuket Hash House Harriers – with swimmer Lee Horwood, cyclist K. Kirkkong and runner K. Annop, were the fastest team in the competition, completing the course in 3:06.12.

Fellow Thai team SGLP II, comprising Torsten Richter, Sukchai Kaotan and Andrew Jessop, came second (3:10.02), while the Phuket Water Taxi team of Bill O'Leary, Pichet Ponglang and Thomass Flindt, with a combined age of 103, finished in third place with a time of 3:21.52.

The first individual from Phuket to complete the course was Priwan Inkaew (3:26.31), who came in 74th overall.

Offshore go 2 points ahead in darts league

PATONG: In a top-of-the-table showdown, OffShore Bar downed Happy Days 7-2 to go ahead by two points at the top of the standings.

Happy Days salvaged a point by winning the beer leg.

November 16 results: Fat Boy Saloon 0 Nag's Head* 9; Happy Days* 2 Offshore7; In-

Between* 5 Champs 4; Piccadilly 5 Amigos* 4; Two Black Sheep* 3 Didi's 6; Shakers v Valhalla postponed; (*Winners of beer leg).

Standings after November 16: 1. OffShore (33); 2. Happy Days (31); 3. Piccadilly (29); 4.= Champs, Didi's, Nag's Head (27); 7. In-Between (26);

8.= Amigos, Two Black Sheep (19); 10. Shakers (10); 11. Fat Boy Saloon (9); 12. Valhalla (1).

November 30 fixtures: Amigos v Valhalla; Champs v Didi's; Happy Days v Two Black Sheep; In-Between v Fat Boy Saloon; OffShore v Nag's Head; Shakers v Piccadilly (Home teams first).

300,000 join in mass aerobics

PHUKET CITY: An astonishing 300,000 people in Phuket took part in mass exercise sessions around the island on November 20 to honor Their Majesties the King and Queen.

The Chief of Phuket Provincial Health Office, Wanchai Sattayawutthipong, told the *Gazette* that Phuket came second in terms of turnout out of 30 provinces with populations of 500,000 or less. Samut Sakhon was first.

At Surakul Stadium, Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura and 5,000 students, government officials and others gathered to get some exercise and, immediately afterwards, to mark the opening of the Phuket Games.

The Games are being held to decide which youth teams will compete in 22 different sports in the 21st National Youth Games, to be held at Chaiphaphum from March 20 to 30.

A total of 1,324 athletes



Gov Udomsak goes for the burn in the mass aerobics session.

from 14 southern provinces are taking part in the Phuket Games, competing in athletics, badminton, basketball, boxing, bike racing, dancing, golf, handball, Thai boxing, pétanque, rugby, *takraw*, snooker, soccer, swimming, table tennis, tae kwon do, tennis, volleyball, beach volleyball, shooting and weight lifting.

— **Gategaeo Phetsawang**

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BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

Watch this SPACE

Mitsubishi Motors, along with its Thai subsidiary, Mitsubishi Motors Thailand, is to launch the locally-produced Grandis minivan under the name Space Wagon.

This will be the first time this model is produced outside Japan for the local market and for export.

The high-roofed "people carrier" was introduced by Mitsubishi in 1983. Confusingly, it was known as the Chariot in Japan, the Colt Vista in the United States and the Space Wagon in Europe.

The original Space Wagons had engines ranging from a modest 1.6 liters to 2 liters, but the latest model boasts a 2.4-liter unit producing 165bhp (121kW) with maximum torque of 217Nm.

Driving the front wheels, the power plant is mated to either a five-speed manual or a four-speed automatic transmission with "sports" mode. The shift lever is dash-mounted, so as not to encroach on passenger space.

Seating up to seven in comfort, the Space Wagon is unusual in that there is actually space for everyone – not the case with most of its rivals, in which the third row of seats is generally both near-inaccessible and suitable only for very short journeys.

The 2.4-liter motor features gasoline direct injection (GDI), a system pioneered by Mitsubishi and now licensed to a number of other major manufacturers.

Advantages of the GDI engine are improved power deliv-

ery, reduced emissions and lower fuel consumption.

It took Mitsubishi engineers several years to perfect the ideal combustion chamber and

piston shape to ensure full burn, and they had to try a variety of inlet tract designs before arriving at the optimum length and configuration.

In independent tests the GDI motors were found on average to improve fuel economy by an astonishing 30%. In addition, torque was increased by as much

as 10% and carbon dioxide emissions were reduced by 30%.

All of this seems too good to be true, but Mitsubishi stands by the figures and claims its GDI engines will meet standards as far ahead as 2010.

In terms of safety, the Space Wagon has been criticized by the influential EuroNCAP authorities, doing badly in the frontal impact tests, with the driver's airbag striking the occupant before it was fully deployed.

The latest Space Wagons are equipped with dual front airbags and front seat belt pretensioners.

The car scored well, however, in side impact tests, with the testers noting that "its occupants sit above where a conventional car may strike" and the Space Wagon "came close to scoring a maximum in these tests". It was also rated highly for pedestrian protection.

The Space Wagon is built at Mitsubishi Motors Thailand's plant in Laem Chabang, in Chon Buri, and the company aims to sell 400 vehicles a month in the Kingdom, with the rest of production being exported.

Mitsubishi Motors Thailand's President and CEO, Hisayoshi Kumai, said, "The new vehicle has been developed to meet the demands of a new generation of customers."

"It is the culmination of years of effort by our engineers, who have produced a car that offers emotional design, smart performance and stylish utility."

He added, "Thailand presently manufactures and exports the Strada and Lancer, and with the addition of the Space Wagon we are planning to begin exports as early as next year."

Obvious rivals to the Mitsubishi are the Honda Stream, (*Gazette* October 23, 2004) and the Ford Focus C-Max, although the latter is considerably more expensive.

The Space Wagon, however, was one of the first in this compact MPV segment and shows no sign of losing its dominant position in the market.

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



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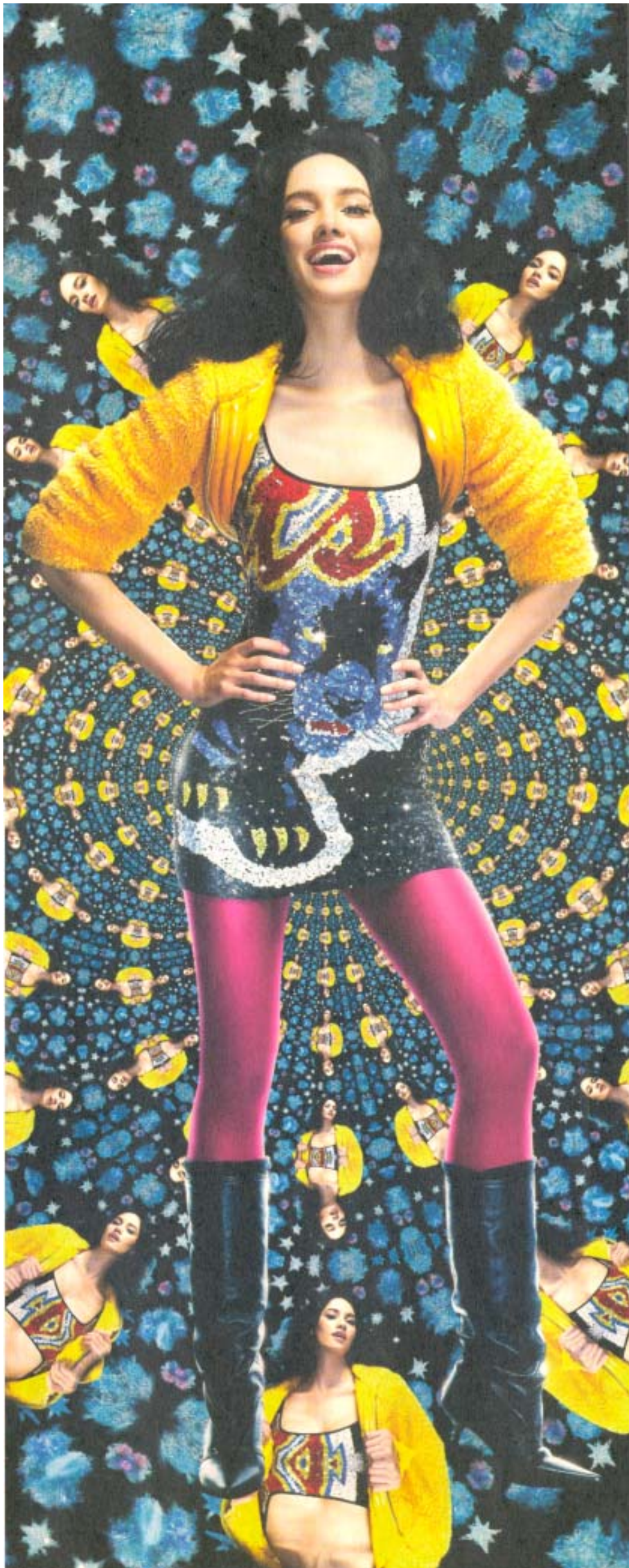
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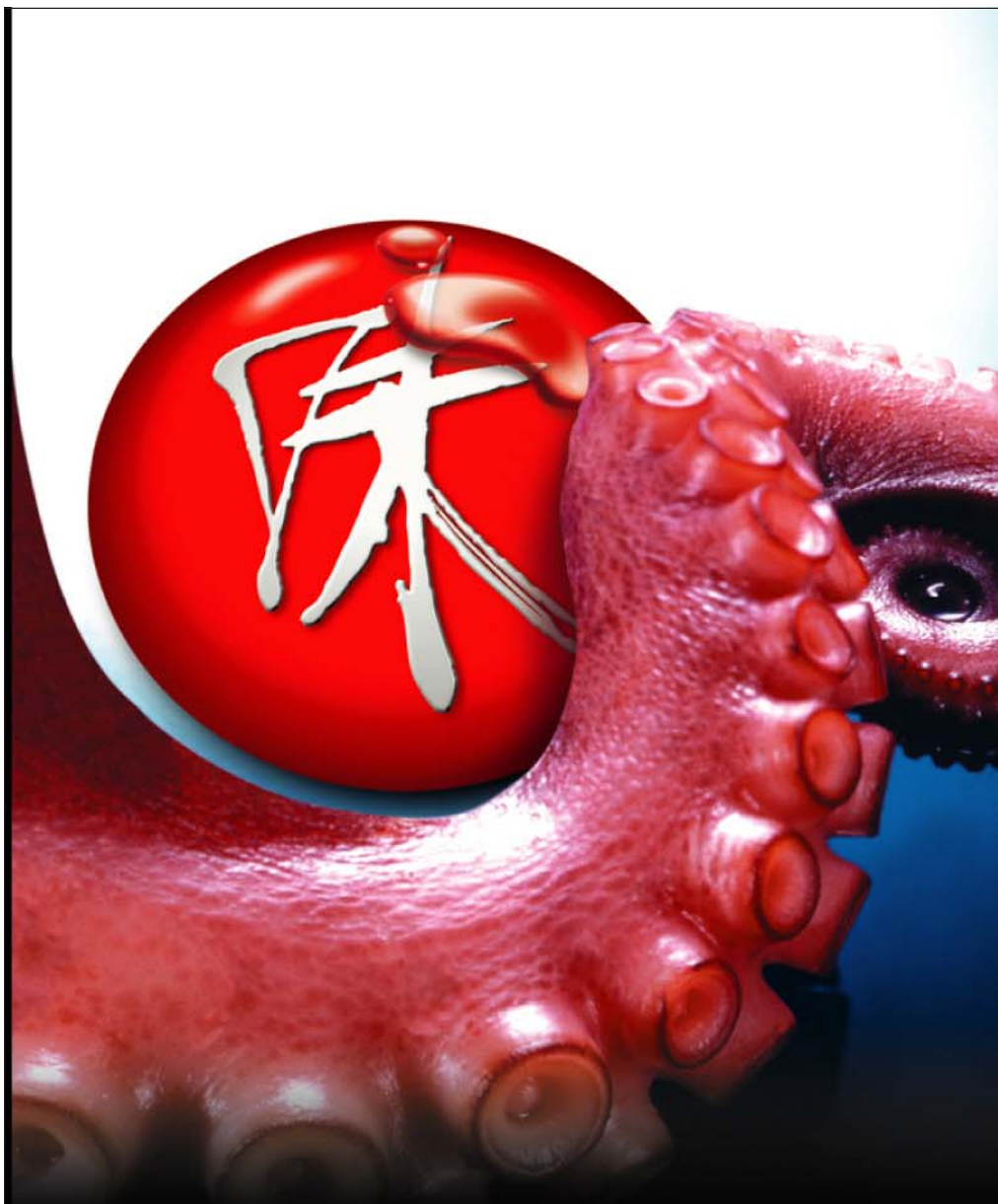
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Guest chef

By Jenna Wise

For luxury dining right by the beach, the Gekko Steak & Seafood Lizard Lounge at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket is a wonderful setting.

Executive Chef Glen Roberts, from Australia, had worked in six other countries over 22 years before arriving at the Sheraton a year ago, but had never worked in Asia.

"I was pleased to have the opportunity to come to the Sheraton because I hadn't been to Asia before," he explains.

"I have worked a lot in Australia, where I prepared food for visiting prime ministers and royalty, including the Queen of England."

At the Sheraton, Glen recently prepared a meal for Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmed Badawi.

They were doubtless impressed by both the choice available from the eclectic menu and the contemporary style of the restaurant, reflecting the natural beauty of the sea and sand in the background.

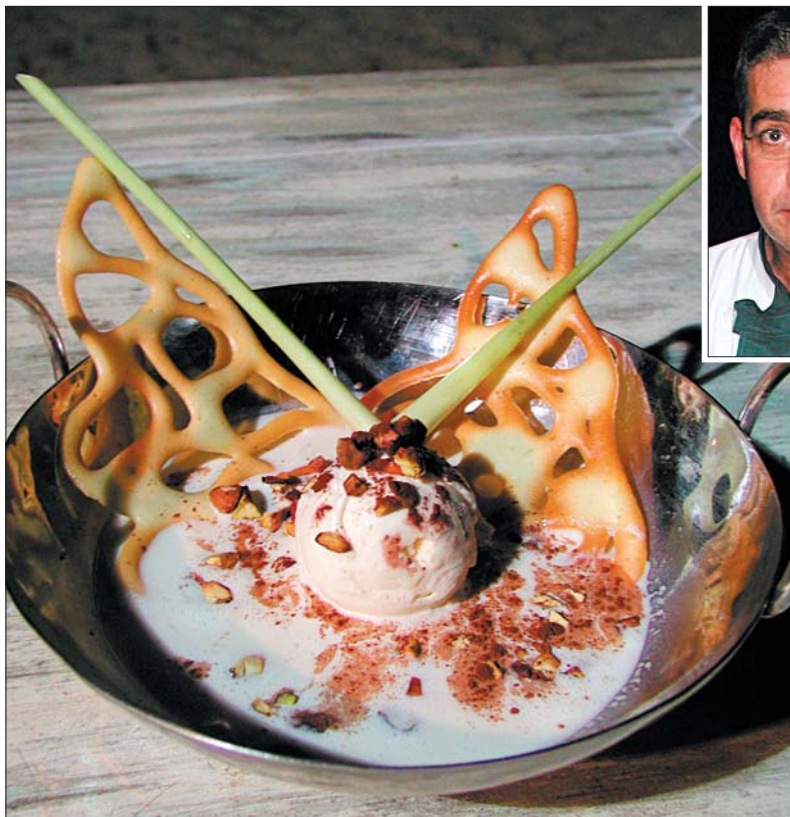
Guests can cook their own barbecue from noon until 8 pm every Sunday, for which four different styles of menu are available. Another popular option is the "choose your own salad", where staff bring a wide selection of fresh salad ingredients to the table and guests choose their favorites which are then freshly tossed and served with special dressings.

Naturally, however, there are also items on the menu that require diners to do nothing more than eat. Here's how to make a couple of them.

Lobster and Avocado Tian with Tropical Fruit Chutney For eight people

Ingredients:

800g Phuket lobster;
320g avocado;
160g onion;
240g tomatoes;
240g double cream;
40g finely-chopped garlic;
160ml white wine;
oil for frying.



Left, Lemongrass Soup with Pistachio Ice Cream; Center, Executive Chef Glen Roberts; Right, Lobster and Avocado Tian with Tropical Fruit Chutney.

For the Tropical Fruit Chutney:

300g diced papaya;
300g diced pineapple;
200g diced mango;
200g diced red onion;
20g finely-chopped coriander;
6 teaspoons lime juice;
3 teaspoons fish sauce;
3 teaspoons sugar;
Salt and pepper to taste.

For the lemon dressing:

15g plain yogurt;
5g chopped coriander;
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice.

To decorate:

2 wonton skins;
30g lettuce;
Fresh coriander.

Method:

Make the tropical fruit chutney by combining all the ingredients; leave at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving.

Make the lemon dressing by blending all the ingredients together well.

Poach the lobster, drain well and cut the meat into 1-inch cubes.

Cut the onion, tomatoes and avocado into 1-inch cubes. Mix these with half of the lobster meat

and the garlic, cream and white wine.

Cut each wonton skin into two triangles and fry in hot oil until golden brown.

Place a small cake mold or other cylindrical object measuring about 3-4 inches in diameter on the plate and lightly press the mixed fruit chutney and lobster into it.

Remove the mold carefully and put the remaining lobster meat on top.

Decorate with the wonton skins, fresh coriander and lettuce leaves, with lemon dressing drizzled on the side.

Lemongrass Soup with Pistachio Ice Cream For four people

Ingredients:

680g lemongrass soup;
240g pistachio ice cream;
40g mango;
40g strawberries;
40g kiwi fruit;

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8 ice cream wafers;
4 fresh mint leaf;
8 stalks lemongrass.

To make the lemongrass syrup:

250g water;
150g sugar;
100g lemongrass stalk.
(This aromatic syrup will keep well in the fridge to use for other desserts).

To make lemongrass soup:

500g good quality vanilla ice cream;
100g lemongrass syrup.

Method:

To prepare the lemongrass syrup, flatten the lemongrass stalks with a hammer. Put the stalks in a large pan with the water and sugar.

Bring to the boil and simmer gently for about 30 minutes

with the lid on. Let it cool and then strain.

To prepare the lemongrass soup, simply add the syrup to the ice cream and blend well so that it becomes foamy.

Cut the mango, strawberries and kiwi fruit into bite-sized pieces. Put these into bowls and cover with the lemongrass soup.

Place the wafers in the bowl against the side, and float a scoop of pistachio ice cream on top of the soup. Decorate with lemongrass stalks and a mint leaf.

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Home of the Week

Patong

Three years old, this five-bedroom, three-story house with northerly views across Patong Bay is a well-designed example of the "modern Thai-style" house.

The lowest floor has a bedroom and a bathroom and, upstairs, the second-floor living and dining areas feature an attractive combination of marble and wood floors.

This floor also has a well-equipped Western-style kitchen with granite work tops, a two-door fridge-freezer and a granite and wood breakfast bar.

There is also a second bedroom with en-suite bathroom located on this level as well as doors to a terrace and the gardens at the back of the property.

The gardens, although not large, feature fresco walls, palm trees, a lawn and a sala for escaping from the sun.

The terraces and outdoor areas are paved in sandwash and ceramic tiles, and are both cool underfoot and pleasing to the eye.

The remaining three bedrooms, each with an en-suite bathroom, are on the third floor.

Top-quality fittings are used throughout, including wooden window frames, furniture and bathroom cabinets. The interior design makes much use of local materials. Ceramics and



sanitary ware are all of high quality and attractive design, as are the door and window drapes.

Although the house is designed to allow plenty of natural

ventilation, it also has air-conditioning and ceiling fans.

Additional features include a maid's room and a gym. There is undercover parking, UBC TV,

well water and single-phase electricity.

The house is offered for sale, fully furnished, for 20 million baht. The title is Chanote.

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



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Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut

Rising in the East

CAPE YAMOO: Putting and chipping greens, tennis courts, massage and sauna facilities, and a restaurant and bar are just a few of the amenities that will be available to residents of Grove Gardens on Cape Yamoo, on Phuket's east coast.

Built as a "resort-style" residential development, Grove Gardens is close to both the Boat Lagoon and the Royal Phuket Marina, and all properties offer views of the islands of Phang Nga Bay.

Construction of the 36-home development – which comprises 12 two-bedroom apartments, 12 three-bedroom apartments and 12 three/four-bedroom townhomes – begins next month with an expected completion date of April 2006.

The two-bedroom apartments – built in three blocks with two units upstairs and two downstairs – will provide 95 square meters of air-conditioned space comprising a living and dining area, kitchen and bathroom and 12sqm of balcony. Apartments also have common access to a roof terrace.

The three-bedroom apartments – built in a similar format – will have 150sqm of air-conditioned living space and a 20-sqm balcony. The ground-floor units will have private gardens while the upstairs apartments will have individual roof terraces.

The townhomes will each have a total area of 330sqm. This will be made up of 220sqm of living space, 64sqm of terrace – including a 12sqm plunge pool – a balcony and a 46-sqm roof terrace.

Lars Ydmark, managing director of developers Lertsat Phuket Co Ltd and property management company Tri-Asia, said that the properties should appeal not only to people looking for a home but also to those looking to invest in the vacation rental market. Tri-Asia will market the



properties as vacation or long-term lets.

Fifteen of the 36 units have been sold off-plan, with demand being strongest for the 5.5-million-baht two-bedroom apartments – seven have been sold so far. The three-bedroom apartments are offered at 9.5 million

baht and five sales have already been made. The townhomes – three have sold so far – are for sale at 13.5 million baht each.

For more information, call Tel: 076-239820 or Email: lars@tri-asia.com or visit www.grovegardensphuket.com

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Pride of place on Nai Harn Beach

The Bert belt has had to be loosened in recent times, and by quite a few notches. Some of my so-called friends have even accused me of becoming a bit of a bloater.

I feel that I have a valid excuse – I put it down to my recent change of allegiance from Heineken to Tiger.

The more cynical of those with whom I have been known to quaff the odd polite beer seem unconvinced by this argument, and put my ever-expanding girth down to the sheer volume of the stuff I consume, rather than quality or brand.

Whatever the reason, enough is enough – I finally had to admit that I needed some exercise. So I got off my behind and went over to Nai Harn for a walk along the beach, bound for the source of inspiration of this week's column – Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club.

I was met on arrival by K. Papan, the bell captain, who was keen to show me around the grounds. I was immediately struck by how proud he was of the gardens and everything that surrounded him.

This is a hotel where gardening has been transformed into



Every nook and cranny of Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club is filled with plants.
Photo by Andy Johnstone

a passion, with the full-time gardening staff of 10 people working flat-out to keep the grounds – and everything else – looking spectacular.

All the hotel's rooms are set into the side of the hill, each with a sea view. Nobody likes hotel rooms that all look exactly the

same, and the Yacht Club has overcome this through the liberal use of bougainvillea (*fueng faa* in Thai). Every balcony has two or three of them, all in full bloom but in different colors.

The variety of colors on the balconies lifts every corner. This has got to be the plant that domi-

nates the hotel – it's everywhere. I'm sure the hotel has every bougainvillea hue that's ever been invented.

As we continued our tour, it became apparent that not a single part of the grounds has been left untouched. They've even put plants on the roofs.

There are heliconias (*thammaraksa*) by the thousand. Not the quiet, subtle ones, but the vivid, dangling zig-zag ones that grab your attention whenever you turn a corner. You can almost hear them snickering.

Even rock walls don't escape. Ferns and other bromeliads have been encouraged to grow in the most unlikely places. There are walls that you would assume contain nothing of any nutritional value, and yet the gardening staff have been able to convince ferns that survival is actually possible. Indeed, these plants aren't just surviving – they're thriving. They look as though they're enjoying every minute of it.

The trees weren't touched when the hotel was built, with the result that there are now some majestically mature specimens around the grounds. Bromeliads have been introduced to these too, with some incredible ferns and spectacular orchids clinging on in the most natural way possible. These people know what they're doing.

Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club has a rather unique

way to honor its special guests – it buys them a plant, and puts it in the garden with a name plaque. K. Papan told me that some guests who come back year after year always enjoy seeing how "their" plant is doing.

In addition, just about every different species of plant is marked somewhere in the gardens with a plaque giving its name in English. Good idea.

There is one corner that has been devoted to more "useful" plants. Lemon grass, kaffir lime bushes and pandanus all grow with enthusiasm.

Guests are actually encouraged to sample them, and it's not unknown for the kitchen staff to pinch the odd pandanus leaf to wrap food.

There is also an area of aloe vera. Apparently, the hotel staff are quite used to acting as herbal therapists, dispensing cut leaves to those guests who have spent a little too long baking on the beach. A little of the gel from inside the leaves, when rubbed onto the skin, gives instant relief from sunburn.

At night, the gardens come alive in a very different way. Lights have been put inside many of the larger plant pots to amazing effect – *fueng faa* fully floodlit from the inside out.

I should do this more often. Who knows, I might even lose a little weight in the process. Where's next?

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Property Gazette

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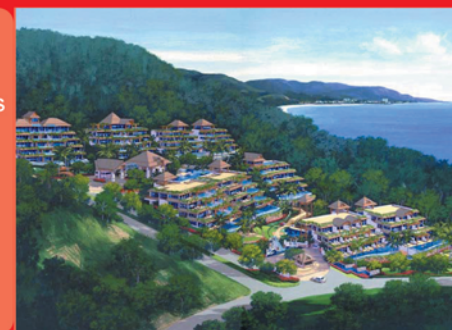
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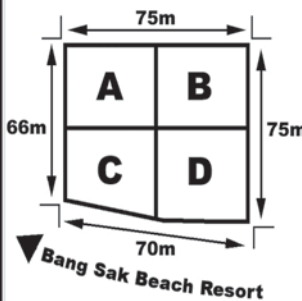
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Long-term lease now available for a 3-bedroom house with aircons, 2 bathrooms and an outdoor kitchen opening up to 1.2 rai of screen-fenced gardens. At present, unfurnished or partially furnished as required. Good for pets, kids and privacy. Large covered outdoor area and separate bungalow. Garden maintenance provided. Offers over 30,000 baht/month considered. Interested parties please call. Khun Shirley. Tel: 06-2692020. Email: surinhse@phuket.ksc.co.th

Do Not Drink Tap Water!

Bangkok

Get your Phuket Gazette from these outlets in the capital:

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Se-Ed, Silom Complex, 4th floor, Silom Rd, Bangrak

Tel. 02-2313244

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Tel. 02-6581153

Se-Ed, Panthip Plaza, M-floor, Petchaburi Rd, Rajathewee

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Tel. 02-6736342

Q Mart, Grand Hotel, Sukhumvit Rd, Soi 11, Klongtoey

Tel. 02-6511200 ext. 3452

C Mart, Centre Point, Petchaburi Rd, Soi 15, Rajathewee

Tel. 02-6536690-8 ext. 4030

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www.cbre.co.th

Island Job Mart



Embark on a challenging career with the newly opened The Racha in Phuket, a deluxe resort located on Racha Island, featuring 69 spacious villas. We are now looking for enthusiastic and passionate individuals to join our management and resort team.

- Financial Controller (§ 60,000 up)
- Food & Beverage Manager (§ 45,000 up)
- English Teacher (native speaker)
- Mainland Operations Manager (§ 20,000 up)
- Asst. Front Office Manager (§ 20,000 up)
- Asst. Exec. Housekeeper (§ 20,000 up)
- Restaurant Manager (§ 20,000 up)
- Chief Gardener (§ 20,000 up)

- Reservation Supervisor (§ 12,000 up)
- Duty Managers Reception (§ 10,000 up)
- Accounts Receivable Officer (§ 10,000 up)
- Operations Technician Supervisor (§ 10,000 up)
- Boat Captain Supervisor (§ 10,000 up)
- Restaurant Supervisors (§ 10,000 up)
- Laundry Supervisor (§ 10,000 up)
- Guest Service Officers (§ 7,000 up)
- Spa Therapists (§ 7,000 up)
- Restaurant Captains (§ 7,000 up)
- Boat Captains (§ 7,000 up)
- Food & Beverage Attendants (§ 5,500 up)
- Pub Attendants (female, § 6,000 up)
- Drivers (§ 5,500 up)
- Carpenter & Mason (§ 5,500 up)
- Sport & Activity Attendants (§ 5,500 up)
- Boat Crew (§ 5,500 up)
- Steward Attendants (§ 5,500 up)

You will be a part of our team of like-minded colleagues sharing the same passion for true hospitality. The Racha is managed by Sanctuary Resorts and aims to be one of the premier resorts in South East Asia. We provide a full training program and a competitive remuneration package. Please submit your letter of application together with your CV and a recent photograph to:

The Racha
 General Manager (for management positions)
 gm@theracha.com
 or
 Personnel and Training Manager (for other positions)
 hr@theracha.com
 P.O. Box 213, Muang, Phuket 83000
 Tel: 0 76 355 455 Fax: 0 76 355 240
 www.theracha.com, www.sanctuaryresorts.com



Marbury, an international jewelry trading company, is currently expanding its company base. We are now looking for self-motivated, dynamic, enthusiastic and responsible persons to be part of our team.

Urgently Required

ACCOUNTING OFFICER

5 Positions

Nature of candidate

Gender: Any
Age: Between 25-35 yrs

Main responsibilities

- Monthly inventory control
- Daily cashier operation
- Taxation: tax withholding and Social Security preparation
- Closing internal financial statement (Balance sheet & profit and loss)
- Fiscal stock summary report
- Proper control of documentation system
- Monthly summary report of income - expenditure

Expectations required

- Bachelor's degree in accounting
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Good typing skills in both English and Thai
- Computer literacy; Microsoft Office and familiarity with accounting software package would be a plus
- Able to run data input operation

Please send your application with photo and relevant information to

Marbury Co. Ltd.
 156/22 Phang Nga Road, Phuket, Thailand 83000.
 Telephone: (66) 76-232-988, (66) 76-232-989 Fax: (66) 76-232-990
 Website: www.marbury.com Email: info@marbury.com

LIVE-IN HOUSEKEEPER needed for retired gentleman. You can have your own bedroom, bathroom and motorbike. I need you to help me walk my dogs three times a day, clean the house, cook some meals and run a few errands. One day a week and some afternoons off. Some English and a driver's license would be helpful. Contact for details. Tel: 076-381648. Email: frankvisakay@hotmail.com

WEB / GRAPHICAL DESIGNER

Important Phuket company is looking for: Web designer or Graphic designer or IT professional. Important: must be able to speak English well! Please contact for more information or to apply. Tel: 07-6281510. Fax: 07-628-0775. Email: daniel@informaticplus.com

AGENTS WANTED

Real estate company based in Chalong needs (Thai and English-speaking) agents looking for new properties, mainly in the north of Phuket. For more info or to apply please call Tel: 076-381772, 04-0535780, Fax: 076-383756, Email: info@ayudhya.net or see our website at http://ayudhya.net

Be Part of Our Winning Team

Le Meridien Khao Lak Beach & Spa Resort, a new five-star property situated in Khao Lak, Phang Nga province, is now looking for energetic people to join our team:

- Kitchen & Pastry Staff
- Beautician
- Guest Service Agents
- Villa Guest Relations
- R&B Chef/ Sous Chef
- F&B Service Staff
- Reservation Agent
- GRM/Call Center Manager

Qualifications:

All applicants must have previous experience in the hotel industry, a good command of English and be service-minded. Please send a letter of application with your updated resumé and a recent photograph to:

Human Resources Director
 9/9 Moo 1, Tambon Khuk Khak
 Amphur Takuapa, Phang Nga 82190
 Fax: 076-427501
 Tel: 076-427500
 E-mail: hrmgr@khaolak.lermeridien.co.th

Please note that these positions are open to Thai nationals only.



Le MERIDIEN
 KHAO LAK BEACH
 & SPA RESORT



HR/ADMIN - URGENTLY REQUIRED

- Responsible for the recruitment/training of all workers and to provide office admin support.
- Female 25+, outgoing personality, good planning, computer and organizational skills are essential.
- Good command of English is essential. Full training will be provided.

Other jobs available: Pest control/hygiene operators, cleaners and English speaking security guards. Samui positions also available.

Good salary and allowance. For more details contact: Stephen on 06-1755881, stephen@pcs.co.th, www.pcs.co.th

A New Coffee Shop in Patong

Urgently Requires

1. Experienced cooks; 2 positions
2. Shift managers; 2 positions
 - Fluent English (speaks & read)
3. Kitchen workers; 10 positions
 - Basic English
4. Customer service; 6 positions
 - Fluent English

For more information, please contact K.Kung
Tel: 07-9290328 Fax: 076-383418



Dive Supply is a leading importer of scuba diving equipment located in Phuket and we are looking to recruit for the following position:

Sales Representative

- Foreign National, must speak German, English, age over 25
- Experience in scuba diving, divemaster or instructor certificate
- Sales experience for at least two years
- Friendly and outgoing personality, flexible and energetic

We offer a good salary and excellent benefits such as; long-term employment, work permit, one-year visa and many more. If you think this is you, please send your resume to info@divesupply.com

EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTOR

Dive Asia is looking for a Sales Manager for our Patong office. Successful applicant should be a diving instructor, be fluent in German and English and have previous experience in sales. Dive Asia offers a competitive salary and will supply a work permit. For more information, please call Tel: 076-330598, Fax: 076-284033, or Email: juergens@diveasia.com or see our website at: www.diveasia.com

ADMIN STAFF

required. Applicant must have experience in accounting, working on a computer, and be able to speak English. Pls contact for info. Tel: 076-281401-2, 01-0794137. Fax: 076-281400. Email: sdephuk@loxinfo.co.th

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Inbound tour operator is seeking office assistant to join our team. Applicants must be able to speak and write English. Computer knowledge required. Thai nationals only. Please contact for more info. Tel: 01-5535002. Email: sales@thailandholidays.de

MARKETING / BIZ

relations. Bluesky Alliance, a growing travel service company, is seeking qualified staff for marketing/business relations. Applicants must meet the following qualifications:

- Exceptional communication and negotiation skills in both English and Thai.

- Ability to build business relationships and solve problems.

- Self-driven and ability to work independently under minimal supervision.

- Working or trained experience in the hospitality industry.

Please email or fax your resumé for consideration. Tel: 076-248459, 09-4740065. Fax: 076-248754. Email: career@bluesky-alliance.com

SECRETARY NEEDED

for dive center in Karon. Must have good English skills and a car driving license. Tel: 076-398040. Email: info@sunrise-divers.com

SEEKING A NANNY

Part time, also some cleaning. Childcare experience & references are necessary. Must speak English and have own transportation. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-2760141. Email: kat@helcam-asia.com

SALES EXECUTIVE

Invited to apply for a challenging position in Phuket. Franke (Thailand) will open soon in Phuket and we need a colleague to handle and expand our business. Requirements include: at least 1 year of sales experience, preferably in kitchen equipment or sanitary ware, Thai nationals only, bachelor's degree, aged up to 40 years, and have a good command of written and spoken English. Please email resumé and cover letter to: FTH-info@franke.com www.franke.co.th

ADMINISTRATOR,

secretary. Coordinate and administer a small, smart office with a Western manager. We would like candidates who can organize information for easy access. Pls contact for more details. Tel: 076-236616, 01-8952206. Fax: 076-236617. Email: siamuk@loxinfo.co.th

PINATA

(party supplies). Shop assistant urgently needed. For more information or to apply please call Tel: 09-4824668 or 06-5933276, or Email: muggymind@hotmail.com For more info about Pinata (party supplies), please see our website at: www.pinatapartyplace.com

Island Job Mart



Islandpools.co.ltd,

Islandpools.co.ltd, has extensive experience in the swimming pool industry in Thailand and Australia. We are now looking to recruit staff for the following positions:

PROJECT COORDINATOR

- 10 years' experience in construction with 5 years in a management position
- University degree in engineering or business management
- Good command of written and spoken English
- Must have computer skills
- Thai Nationality

OFFICE MANAGER/SECRETARY

- 8-10 years' experience
- Diversified import business
 - Distribution
 - Construction
 - Servicing
- Growth management skills
- Good command of written and spoken English

SALES EXECUTIVES

- 5-10 years' experience handling key accounts
- Wide customer base in Thailand
- Large product range; local & imported products
- Good command of written and spoken English

The above positions offer excellent benefits and salary appropriate to the applicants experience and abilities. For consideration, please forward your resumé to:

moose@islandpools.co.th or islandpools@hotmail.com

Islandpools.co.ltd.

53/83-84 Thepkrasattri Rd, Srisoontorn, Thalang, Phuket, 83130

Tel/Fax: 076-273087

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 and system maintenance, and networking issues (TCP/IP, LAN).

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

III. ASSISTANT DISTRIBUTION MANAGER

- ▶ Male or female, Thai nationality
- ▶ Bachelor's degree in any field
- ▶ Strong command of English would be an advantage
- ▶ Able to work as part of a team

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



PHUKET ONE REAL ESTATE, EXCLUSIVE SELLING & MARKETING AGENTS FOR 15 HOUSING PROJECTS IN PHUKET, REQUIRES QUALIFIED STAFF TO JOIN OUR EXPANDING COMPANY. THE POSITIONS ARE BASED IN PHUKET AND ALL POSITIONS REQUIRE A HIGH LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH.

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THAI NATIONAL, EXPERIENCED IN ESTATE MANAGEMENT, PREFERABLY IN PHUKET.

PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO SALES MANAGER

THAI NATIONAL, MUST SPEAK & WRITE ENGLISH WELL, WILLING TO TRAVEL.

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SALES CONSULTANTS

THAI NATIONALS, EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY; CAR REQUIRED; SPEAK & WRITE ENGLISH WELL.

PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES REPLY TO KHUN RATTIYA SUPPLYING RESUME, RECENT PHOTO & PHONE NUMBER.

Send to: info@phuketonerealestate.com

CHEFS, COOKS & ADMIN STAFF REQUIRED

Molly Malones Irish Pub requires skilled chefs, cooks & administrative persons with experience in western/Euro-style cooking and restaurant administration respectively. Please apply in person or send your CV by email or post to: Molly Malones Irish Pub, 94/1 Thawee-wong Rd, Kathu, Patong Beach, Phuket 83150. Tel: 076-292771, 076-296706. Fax: 076-292-774. Email: mollymalones@loxinfo.co.th

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

The Mangosteen Resort & Spa, the 5-star luxury boutique resort in Rawai, is looking for a Chief Accountant with at least 5 years of hotel experience. English-language and computer skills are needed. Please submit your CV by post or email. Tel: 076-289399. Fax: 076-289389. Email: myfuture@mangosteen-phuket.com

TEACHERS REQUIRED

English, Spanish, Chinese, Math, Physics and Chemistry teachers required till end of May '05. Pls call for more information. Tel: 076-282-232, 01-9794140.

MESSAGE THERAPIST

Well-established (10 years) health spa is looking for male and female therapists specializing in Thai massage and traditional treatments. Please contact us for more information. Tel: 673-279-0051, 67-38814180. Fax: 673-2790053. Email: cantikbeautyline@hotmail.com

Employment Wanted

LIVE MUSIC DUO

Music and songs from Spain and Brazil by international guitarists from Europe. Ideal for your high-class restaurant. Pls call for more information. Tel: 01-2720571.

PEOPLE-RELATED

work sought. Articulate, flexible Englishman with extensive experience in hotel and tourism industry looking for related opportunities in Phuket. Guest relations and sales and marketing a forte. I have a BA in Thai Language and Southeast Asian studies. Tel: 053-810352. Email: saxbyalex@hotmail.com

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The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

367/2 Yaowarat Road, Phuket Town

Tel: 076-236555 Fax: 076-213971

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles For Sale

USED OFFICE

equipment. Aircons: Saijo Denki 26,000 BTU, 25,000 baht; Uni Air 18,000 BTU, 6,000 baht. Desk + counter showcase, very low price. Pls call Tel: 01-8931739.

SNOOKER TABLE

Full-size snooker/pool table with all accessories. As new. Pls call for details. Tel: 09-9725226.

ROYAL-CLASS RATTAN furniture, opposite Phuket Shooting Range in Chalong. Please call for details. Tel: 076-280415, 09-7255194.

Boats & Marine

MOTOR BOAT 27FT

Fiberglass, 2x120 hp Nissan diesel, Thai flag, trailer and dinghy. 300,000 baht. Pls call for details. Tel: 09-7275673.

SAILBOAT

Thai-registered, 25ft sailboat for sale. Has about US\$4,000 in charter bookings currently in hand. Asking US\$20,000. Best offer gets the boat. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 076-383080, 06-9401860. Email: bigasail@samart.co.th

BOAT FOR SALE

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

SPEEDBOAT

for sale. 256 Mercury engine, holds 8-10 people. Price only 300,000 baht. Please call for info. Tel: 06-9511366.

DIVE EQUIP 4 SALE

BCD Sea Quest, size M/L, wet suits. Long, short & ABC stuff - only used 2 seasons. Pls call for info. Tel: 01-0844032.



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076-273464



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This new 2005 model is one of Boston Whaler's most versatile boats on the water. The Dauntless 220 is rigged for all activities, sports fishing, waterskiing or just island hopping. With the inclusion of the T-top, deck shower and portable head you are ready for anything. This boat is now on the way from the Boston Factory. Contact us now and be the first Dauntless on the water!

Savage SL 500 Aluminum Runabout

NEW ARRIVAL TO PHUKET
Royal Phuket Marina Yachts are pleased to announce the arrival of Australia's favorite recreational toy, the Savage Aluminum Runabout. This boat is great for all level of users and is practically indestructible! The complete package include, trailer, VHF radio, 4150 fishfinder & cockpit carpet. Nothing left but to "JUST ADD WATER"

Royal Phuket Marina Yacht Co., Ltd.
68/1 Moo 2 Thepkasatthi Road, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket, 83200, Thailand.
Tel: +66 (0) 76 239 762, +66 (0) 76 239 755 Fax: +66 (0) 76 239 756
Craig: +66 1 970 0583
craig@royalphuketmarina.com, yachts@royalphuketmarina.com
www.royalphuketmarina-yachts.com

Bulletins

Archery

We are exploring the possibility of setting up a small Archery Club on Phuket.

Interested latent Robin Hoods, with or without experience, should contact . . .

archery@lagunaphuket.com
or telephone Little John at 076 271 006

Alcoholics Anonymous

is holding meetings in English at the following places:

Phuket City
Mission Hospital
on Wed and Sun at 7 pm
Bangkok Phuket Hospital
on Fri at 7 pm

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

For more info, please call
01 273 2053 and 07 279 5636.

Business Opportunities

PATONG GUESTHOUSE

for lease. 10 min walk to the beach. 10 rooms with kitchen, office, pool table & sat TV. 6.5-yr lease, asking 3 million baht. Pls call for pics and info. Tel: 076-342280, 01-9781956. Fax: 076-290-383. Email: palm@phuket.ksc.co.th

RESTAURANT: B10K

Restaurant with equipment for rent in Chalong. Close to main road and has a sea view. 10,000 baht. Contact for details. Tel: 09-2917162. Email: somthawin_pw@hotmail.com

SAFE PATONG

investment. Consistent income all year. Easy to manage building with a mix of tenants. 5-year lease with fixed low rent. Key money only, 1.8 million baht. Exceptional value. Tel: 01-9241447. Email: junaworn@hotmail.com

FACTORY 4 SALE

Drinking-water factory - 450 sqm - on Koh Lanta, Krabi, for sale at 1.2 million baht. Pls call Tel: 01-8931739 for details.

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: + -1-320-213-9083. (USA) Email: lifestylexl2001@yahoo.de

BAR FOR SALE

Located in Kamala. 350,000 baht. Tel: 04-0631041. Email: longmadoogil69@hotmail.com

LIMOUSINE

concession. Profitable limousine operation for rent at an established resort in Phuket. Requires professional limousine operators with a minimum of 2-3 recent-model sedans to be standby, uniformed drivers. Available from December 1, 2004 onwards. Interested parties please email for terms of reference. Email: gmseasia@gmail.com

SPA FOR RENT

Profitable spa operation for rent at an established resort in Phuket. Requires renovation and professional management. Available from February 2005 onwards. Interested parties please email for terms of reference. Email: gmseasia@gmail.com

BEAUTY SALON

for sale. Completely remodeled and fully equipped. Great location, low monthly rent & good profits. 240,000 baht for quick sale. Tel: 07-897-7249. Email: tipriya@hotmail.com

PUB FOR SALE

Thai pub with live music everynight. Fully equipped, good profits & low rent. 395,000 baht for quick sale. Tel: 07-8977249. Email: tipriya@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT

Baitong Restaurant in Karon is now for sale. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-323334, 09-7244307

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

GUESTHOUSE 4 SALE

near the Sheraton, Sofitel and central Krabi. 70 meters from the beach. Pls call for more info. Tel: 01-3703109.

DISTRIBUTOR

Work on your own. Freedom, health and good earnings with Herbalife. Pls call for more info. Tel: 07-8054344.

BUSINESS WANTED

Looking to rent an inexpensive bar, restaurant, shop or guesthouse in Patong with excellent potential in a good location. Pls call for more information. Tel: 01-8162066.

PHUKET CITY

Well-known, successful food outlet with solid expat customer base. Unique, easy to run and good turnover. Quick sale due to other commitments. Pls call for more info. Tel: 07-2736315, 01-893-5135.

Business Products & Services

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Self store with 24-hr security from 600-2,200 baht/month. For more info call Tel: 01-8924804, 01-1251873 or visit www.safewayphuket.com

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Rawai yard with covered parking for boats & cars. We can customize your shelving needs in our assorted sized lockers. 100 baht per cubic meter. Call Tel: 09-9088675.

RANONG DAY TRIP 1,300 BAHT

Tour bus (not minibus). Big seats, price includes lunch, dinner and snacks. No extra charges. Please contact us for details. Tel: 04-7457024. Email: kingrw80@hotmail.com

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RAWAI PROPERTY

shop. Let us help you to sell or rent your property. Please call us to list your property in our office and on our website or visit www.ourphuket.com for more info. Tel: 06-6831147.

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camera. Sony Mavica CD300. 3.3 Megapixels, 6x zoom. As new, perfect condition. Cost 42,000 baht; selling for less than a third of that: 11,000 baht. Please call Tel: 01-8922824 for more information.

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in Surin Tues at 6:30 pm.
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I am looking for a native-speaking Russian for conversation, two hours a day. I will be in Patong for 2 months, from December 04 to January 05. Please send me your details. Email: ivangrozni@libero.it

Personals

AREE ("TIP") PORNSAWAS

I need to contact Aree Pornsawas, nickname Tip, of Songkhla Province. Her last known address was/is Amphur Thalang, Phuket. Any family or friends knowing where Khun Tip is, please contact Arthur with her new phone number. Please, Tip, it is urgent that I contact you. Email: fourseasons@dodo.com.au

BACKGAMMON

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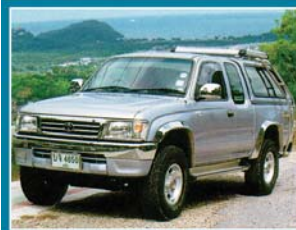
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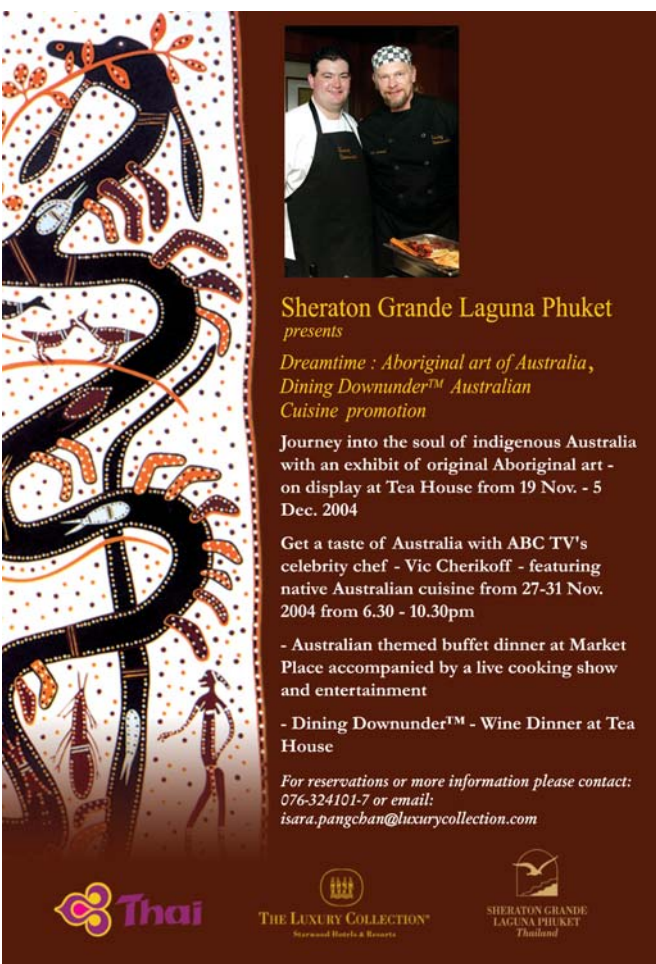
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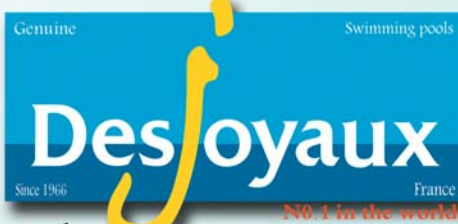


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