

The Phuket Gazette

Volume 12 Issue 14

News Desk - Tel: 076-236555

April 2 - 8, 2005

Daily news at www.phuketgazette.net

20 Baht

The Gazette is published in association with

The Nation

IN THIS ISSUE

News: Dengue fever reports 'are exaggerated'; V/Gov appeals for massive donations.
Pages 2 & 3

INSIDE STORY: Waiting for the diesel price rise to bite.
Pages 4 & 5

AROUND THE ISLAND: Starting small with nanotechnology.
Page 6

AROUND THE REGION: Water reserves drying up.
Page 8

PEOPLE: The inimitable Johnny Ball reveals all.
Pages 10 & 11

LIFESTYLE: Coconut cocktails and coffee makers.
Pages 12 & 13

TRAVEL: Captivating Koh Yao Noi.
Pages 16 & 17

FIRST PERSON: Why gov't building projects are so slow.
Page 19

BUSINESS: Sukko Spa takes industry to a new level; Money Talks; On the Move.
Page 21

SPORT: Khao Khat challenge; LPGC scramble; Lots of fun for kids at Loma.
Page 23

GOOD LIVING: A stately jelly pleasure dome.
Page 24

PROPERTY: Doven; Baan Cocoon emerging; Home of the Week: Kathu.
Pages 25, 26 & 27

PLUS

QUEER NEWS 4; AROUND THE NATION 7; HAPPENINGS 9; HOROSCOPES 14; KIDS 15; FROM THE STREETS OF PATTAYA 16; EDITORIAL, LETTERS, ISSUES & ANSWERS 18 & 19; BOOKS, COMPUTERS 20; GARDENING 28; CLASSIFIEDS 29-35.

Tourism industry puts on a brave face

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn & Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: There has been mixed opinion in Phuket's tourism industry over the effect the March 28 "great" earthquake off Sumatra will have on tourists.

The quake did not trigger a tsunami, but leading hotelier Pamuke Archariyachai, a dyed-in-the-wool optimist, said the warnings and evacuations that followed the quake showed tourists that if there were another tsunami, the tragedy of December 26 would not be repeated.

"This new quake could well affect tourism to Phuket, but I doubt it will do much harm, as we proved this time that we were ready for a tsunami," said K. Pamuke.

He did add, however, that the alert had highlighted some shortcomings in the new warning systems, such as there not being enough information on which places were thought to be safe, or how to get to them.

In addition, the quake happened at night, and it showed that thought should be given not only to evacuating areas when they



Idyllic scenes like this attract tourists to Phuket, but will they keep coming if they are not confident they are safe?

are very crowded, as Patong was at that time, but how to evacuate in safety large groups of inebriated people, he said.

The earthquake had not prompted anyone to leave his hotel nor had there been any cancellations of advance bookings, said K. Pamuke. He added that the hotel is currently about 70% booked for the Songkran holiday,

with guests coming mainly from Europe and parts of Thailand.

However, K. Pamuke was concerned that the quake may deter Asian tourists who visit Phuket during the "green" season, because they are "very sensitive", although a comprehensive tsunami warning system would reassure them, as it would other tourists.

Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura told the Gazette that the latest major earthquake – which measured 8.7 on the Richter scale and was centered only 200 kilometers from the December 26 quake epicenter – could be regarded as a chance to rehearse the province's disaster evacuation procedures, although these have not been fully implemented yet.

"One problem we had was with communications. We had trouble with the [overloaded] mobile phone [system], so we had to use walkie-talkies instead, and they were rather inconvenient," said the Governor.

He continued, "There will certainly be an effect on tourism, so we have to make sure that tourists know we have a good warning system. Japan often has earthquakes, yet it is still a major tourism destination, because there is a tsunami warning system."

He added, "I believe we will see some cancellations of bookings, but I also think that the next high season, starting in November, will be good."

Continued on page 2

Water rationing looming for Phuket City

By Benjamat Srisuwan

PHUKET: Phuket City Municipality is urging city residents to conserve water in the face of the on-going drought – the worst, it says, in the island's history.

The Municipality has already been informed by the Phuket Office of the Irrigation Department, which operates the reservoir at Bang Wad, that it will not be able to provide the city with water after May 1 if the drought continues.

Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwannapanna told a press conference on March 25 that dwindling supplies in the city's eight supply sources – most of them disused tin mines under the control of private businesses – warranted an initial 10% reduction in pressure, effective immediately, in order to make supplies last.

The pressure decrease will last until May 1. If, by then, supplies have not been replenished by rainfall, then the Municipality will begin rationing water.

The rationing would involve pumping water at normal pressure rates from 5 am-10 am and 5 pm-10 pm daily, with flow reduced to a trickle outside these hours.

The Municipality plans to set up three 24-hour emergency supply stations to help residents facing hardship during rationing. These will be located at the fire station at Phuket City Hall (Tel: 076-211111) and at two branches of the Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation located on Soi Paniang, off Yaowarat Rd, and on Kra Rd.

Dengue fever reports 'are exaggerated'

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: Dr Wanchai Sattaya-wutthipong, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Health Office (PPHO), on March 25 denied reports that 100 people in Phuket have contracted dengue fever already this year, saying that only half that number had been confirmed as having the disease.

The state-run Thai News Agency (TNA), an arm of the Mass Communications Organization of Thailand, reported March 23 that "Almost 100 people a month [are] now seeking treatment for the disease".

Dr Wanchai said, "Dengue fever has been spreading since the beginning of the year. We have had about 100 people report themselves as possible cases," he said. "But there have been only 50 confirmed cases, with none of them serious and no deaths."

However, the number of confirmed cases is still more than double the total number of confirmed cases in the whole of last year. "Last year we had about 20 cases of dengue fever," Dr Wanchai said.

He said he believed that that the rise in the number of cases was not due to the tsunami and its aftermath, but was part of a natural cycle.

"When healthy people are bitten by a mosquito carrying dengue fever, they usually develop immunity to the disease that can last up to about two

years, while unhealthy people contract the disease," he said.

Dr Wanchai added that the PPHO is taking steps to prevent an outbreak. "We have launched a campaign for people to rid their houses of the Asian tiger mosquito [which transmits dengue fever]. We are educating people about the mosquito and giving them insecticide to clean the water where the mosquito breeds."

"If we help people to take more care and to change the fresh water around their houses each week, it should be okay, because the mosquito breeds in fresh water," he said.

However, he added, "Anyone who develops a high fever should be given paracetamol. If their condition does not improve within 24 hours they should be taken to hospital."

Dr Wanchai also expressed concern that the incidence of diarrhea may rise on Phuket as the weather gets hotter, causing food to spoil faster than usual.

"People must eat clean food and [drink clean] water; they should eat at restaurants that have the PPHO 'Clean Food Good Taste' sign that ensures the restaurant serves hygienic food, and they should drink bottled water only," he advised.

Meanwhile, TNA has also reported that students at Mahidol University have developed the world's first dengue fever vaccine and expect to carry out large-scale tests on humans in 2008 to 2010.

Non-tsunami still causes tourism jitters

From page 1

The new Director of Phuket International Airport, Maj Pornchai Eua-aree, was surprised that the earthquake had not prompted a mass exodus.

He said, "I thought we would have many tourists wanting to leave Phuket, but in fact that wasn't the case. We still had the same number of arrivals and departures as usual."

Napasorn Kakai, Assistant Director of the local office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), believes there is much that must be done to instil confidence in tourists.

Noting that Phuket has six months to market the coming high season, she said, "I have suggested that the government install more alarm systems to increase the efficiency of the warning [and evacuation] system."

"Currently, it is chaotic. People didn't know where they should go, so everyone went to the same mountain area."

"That's with 50% hotel occupancy - what would it have been like, had there been 90% occupancy?"

"This is another lesson for the government to learn: earthquakes may happen at night."

She noted that information about the quake came initially from ordinary people who felt it. They contacted the media who in turn sought guidance from the authorities.

"We will continue doing roadshows and other kinds of marketing. But we urge the government to make the installation of an efficient warning system a top priority."

"When that is done, we can sell Thailand to tourists, because they'll feel safe."

Editorial: Page 18



SOCCER SUCCOUR

PHUKET: English Premier League soccer team Charlton Athletic has donated a team shirt signed by every member of the squad, plus manager Alan Curbishley, to be auctioned off in aid of Phuket's tsunami survivors.

The auction is being conducted by Chalong-based big-game-fishing company Wahoo.

Bidders should contact Wahoo at The Sea Center 48/20, Moo 9, Soi Ao Chalong, Tel: 076-281510, Fax: 076-280755, website: www.wahoo.ws

The deadline for bids is 5pm, April 18.

Mystery over murdered woman

RASSADA: Police are investigating the stabbing murder of an unidentified woman of about 40, whose decaying corpse was discovered near the Sri Suchart Grand Ville 2 housing estate, off the bypass road, on March 22.

Phuket City Police Investigator Pol Lt Col Tewet Preamsook told the *Gazette* that the discovery of the body was reported in a telephone call by Chalong resident Arkom Na Takuatung at about 6 pm.

The victim had been stabbed six times in the face and neck. One of two stab wounds to her forehead cracked her skull. Police estimated she had been dead about three days before the discovery of her body.

Col Tewet said his department had reviewed missing person reports, but had thus far been unable to identify the victim - making further investigation difficult.

The Best way for your life

Full range of hardware, accessories & supplies. Built to order, maintenance & network solution services.

IT Life Co., Ltd.
Near the Land Rover Phuket showroom
Tel: 076-236657-8 Fax: 076-236659
Email: itlifethai@gmail.com
www.phuketgazette.net/itlife

Skin Tightening and Contouring -without surgery-

with technology cleared by the US FDA
practiced by an American Board Certified Dermatologist

- Botox, Collagen
- Laser Hair Removal
- Mesotherapy

APEX

Only a single-treatment session

2nd Fl. Central Festival Phuket Tel: 076-249-0213 • Call Center: 0 2664-8807
3rd Fl. Emporium Tel: 0 2664-8803-4 • 3rd Fl. Siam Center Tel: 0 2668-1997

ANDAMAN Lighting Systems

Are you in the dark about lighting?

andamanlighting.com
Tel: 076 254 826 Fax: 076 254 827

Raksatt Pet Hospital (Kaorang) Phuket

Well Treated, Well Cared For One-Stop Service

- Treatment (Medicine & Health Care)
- Obstetrics and Orthopedics
- Teeth cleaning and scaling
- X-ray and Laboratory
- Home Service (Pet Ambulance)
- Microchip Center
- In-Patient
- Surgery
- Pet Hotel
- Grooming
- Pet Shop

Raksatt Dog Spa & Salon

The First Dog Spa in Phuket

- Pet Shop (Pet Food and Accessories)
- Grooming & Bathing
- Dog Spa
- Pet Hotel
- Pet Clinic
- Fashion Color Hair
- Highlight

Open Daily 9 am to midnight
14/4 Mae Luan Rd, Amphur Muang, Phuket.
Tel: 076-211549 Tel/Fax: 076-211606
www.pktanimalhospital.com
E-mail: info@pktanimalhospital.com

Open daily 10 am - 10 pm
At Car Park (P2) Central Festival Phuket
Tel: 076-209244-5
www.phuketdogspa.com
E-mail: info@pktanimalhospital.com

Plant Group Co., Ltd.

We supply cut flowers (Heliconias, Orchids etc.), foliage and potted plants directly from our nurseries in Phang Nga and Phuket to hotels, restaurants, offices and private homes.

Delivered by our own cooled truck to ensure fresh, long-lasting products.

Tel: 01-4945423 (Ivan) or 01-8671217 (Marcus), or
email: ivan@plant-group.com



The underwater walkway is expected to be a big draw.

Aquarium reopens April 9

AO MAKHAM: The Phuket Aquarium will reopen to the public on April 9, after being closed for renovations and improvements for two and a half years.

The management is marking the event by offering free admission to all on April 9 and 10.

Wannakiat Tubtimsang, Director of the Phuket Marine Biological Center, which runs the aquarium, told the *Gazette* that 81 million baht had been spent on improving the facility and adding an enclosed underwater walkway.

The nine-meter-long "underwater world" walkway running beneath a tank containing around 200 tonnes of water – and lots of fish.

"We expect that to be a real draw for visitors," said K. Wannakiat.

"We have more than 200 species of fish on show here, including some really big ones and some that aren't often seen in the Indian Ocean."

Information cards throughout the aquarium will carry descriptions of fish in Thai and English.

Sadly, the Mineral Resources Department in Bangkok, which controls the aquarium, has decided to adopt a two-tier pricing. Admission will be 50 baht for Thai adults, 20 baht for Thai children, and 100 baht for

all foreigners, though there will be a 50% discount for anyone visiting between April 11 and May 10.

The aquarium will be open daily between 8:30 am and 4 pm. For more information, call Tel: 076-391126.

V/Gov appeals for massive donations

By Rungthong Naknueb

PHUKET CITY: Vice-Governor Winai Buapradit has requested hundreds of millions of baht and practical support from foreign donors, the private sector and the Thai government to help Phuket recover fully from the December 26 tsunami.

During a meeting at Provincial Hall on March 24, V/Gov Winai outlined several situations in which the local authorities need help in repairing damage caused during the disaster.

The vice-governor said the province would like to give 150,000-300,000 baht to each of the 2,571 small traders, such as food vendors and hawkers, who have not received any public sector compensation so far. This

would amount to at least 386 million baht.

He also appealed for help from people who can give the traders advice on re-establishing and improving their businesses.

The Phuket Provincial Health Office proposes to build a 30-bed hospital and trauma center to treat victims of future disasters, said V/Gov Winai, although he said the details of this center – including the cost and sources of funding – had yet to be worked out. The same was true of plans to build a rescue center and helipad at Wachira Phuket Hospital.

In the immediate future, though, said V/Gov Winai, the province would welcome aid from psychiatrists and volunteers who can help children overcome

psychological trauma caused by the tsunami.

The Phuket Public Relations Department wants help in establishing and installing a communications system that could issue alerts during future crises. The province also needs a car equipped with satellite communication facilities, V/Gov Winai said. These are in addition to the much-vaunted disaster early warning system.

He also requested help for the 166 children orphaned by the tsunami, such as grants to cover the cost of their education, and support with general living expenses.

Phuket also needs foreign help – practical and financial – in surveying and restoring coral and other marine damage, he added.

V/Governor Winai's call for aid contradicts an assertion made just after the tsunami by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra that Thailand did not need financial aid. It also comes in the wake of increasing complaints that very little of the aid allocated by Bangkok is actually reaching victims.

Anti-terrorism system up and running soon

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Immigration should have a new international anti-terrorism database system in operation by mid-year, the head of Thai Immigration told a press conference on March 25.

Speaking at a gathering of provincial Immigration Police chiefs at the Phuket Immigration Office, Immigration Commissioner Lt Gen Amarin Niemsikul announced that Phuket would be one of three pilot provinces to get the new technology, donated by the United States government as part of its war on terrorism. The other two are Bangkok and Chiang Mai.

The new system will be based on Personal Information Evaluation and Comparison System technology (known as PISCIS) donated by the US at a cost of 500 million baht.

The system will allow Immigration officials to identify blacklisted foreigners, terrorist suspects and others threatening national security, even if they are traveling on fake passports, Gen Amarin said.

"If 70% to 80% of a passport holder's personal data points match [with information in the database], we will be able to identify that individual even if he is traveling on a forged travel document," he said.

He revealed that Thailand has over 10,000 people on its immigration blacklist, some for criminal convictions and others regarded as security threats.

The system will be set up in the three provinces by the end of April and should be operational by May or June.

– Anongnat Sartpisut

Your police force needs you!

PHUKET: A total of 127 people took part in a two-day course on March 28 and 29, intended to train them to be volunteer Tourist Police officers, capable of safeguarding the wellbeing of tourists.

Phuket Tourist Police inspector Pol Maj Bundit Khaosutham told the *Gazette* that he had hoped the course, at the Royal paradise Hotel, would attract 100 would-be volunteers, so 127 was "more than expected."

The course covered topics such as first aid and how to spot con men and others who may prey on tourists.

Foreigners were also invited to join the training program to become volunteer police. Fifteen turned up for the course.

SUWIT SERVICES AND SUPPLY
Services, Supply & Installation

- Main engine
- Generator
- Gear Box, Steering
- Shaft, Propeller, Winch
- H Y D Systems
- Pipe Line Systems

MAN CAT Mobil

DETROIT DIESEL ALLISON

VOLVO

All Engines
All Transmissions

Office: 23/125 Koh Kaiw Plaza,
Boat Lagoon, Muang, Phuket, 83200.
Tel/Fax: 66 (0) 76 273-384
Mobile: 66 (0) 9 195-9639
E-mail: suwitservices@yahoo.com

L Orchidee Residences

DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

- 28 two-to six-bedroom luxury villas with individual infinity swimming pools set on a large private terraced garden.
- Unobstructed views over beautiful Patong Bay.
- Residents' clubhouse providing full spa and hotel room services upon request.
- Holiday lettings provided for investors with guaranteed return on investment.
- 5-star villa and estate management together with 24-hour security provided by Knight Frank.

13/2 Soi Prabamee 4, Prabamee Road, Patong, Kathu, Phuket, 83150.
Tel: +66 (0) 76 290 405 • email: info@lorchidee-residences.com

Knight Frank

Tel: +66 (0) 156 9999 8

The Site & Sales Office:
Front Laguna Mangala
Novotel
Boat Lagoon
Patong

Queer News

Traditional remedy goes underground

AMNAT CHAROEN: A woman in this northeastern province was the latest to take a controversial folk remedy to cure herself of the effects of some poisonous mushrooms she gathered and ate.

She was recently pictured on the front page of a Thai-language newspaper buried up to her neck, mouth agape, as she underwent the treatment.

Before she was buried, villagers stripped copper filaments from electrical cables and ground them up in a mortar. The metal was then mixed with a variety of herbs and given to the woman, who ate the concoction.

She was then buried, which the villagers believe allows the surrounding soil to absorb the toxins released through the skin once they are liberated by the copper. After an unspecified period of time the patient was then dug up and, with a nod to modern medical science, rushed to hospital.

Local public health officials in the province have tried without success to dissuade residents from using this potentially dangerous treatment, but old habits die hard and local people still believe it is a miracle cure for mushroom poisoning.

Meanwhile, the officials can do little except warn against using the treatment and advise people to exercise caution when eating wild mushrooms.

Source: Daily News

View Thailand's LARGEST portfolio of Classified Ads – over 2,000 of them – and place your ad for **FREE!** See the *Phuket Gazette Online* at www.phuketgazette.net

Phuket, just beginning to climb out of the economic hole left by the tsunami, has now been hit with another shock to its economy – the national increase in the cost of diesel, from 15 baht a month ago to 18.60, a rise of almost 25%. *Gazette* reporters asked a variety of businesspeople what effect this is likely to have on business, and on the average resident on the island.

If there is one example of how a rise in the price of fuel affects everyone in the country, it is rice. Just about everyone in Phuket – in the whole of Thailand – buys rice, and very soon they are going to have to pay more.

Tawee Chuaykeng of Namsaeng Kar Khao on the bypass road, the biggest rice dealer in Phuket, told the *Gazette* that the cost of rice will rise about 20 baht per 50-kilogram bag.

"Rice is selling very fast now – after the government announced the increase in diesel prices – because the small vendors [who buy from us] are worried about the future price and are buying our stocks of pre-increase rice."

"We haven't put up the price so far but I believe we will have to within days, because we can't shoulder the extra cost of transportation from Isarn. At the moment we are selling 50 kilos of jasmine rice for 830 baht, but I think it will rise to 850 baht a bag soon," he said.

He added that he felt people would not resent Namsaeng put-



Universal effect: The price of rice has not risen yet, but it will.

ting up its prices because "most people understood that this is the effect of the diesel price increase."

Indeed, not everyone sees the increase in diesel price as necessarily a bad thing, but more as an economic fact of life. Leading businessman Phummisak Hongsyok is going to feel the increase in all of his businesses – in his real estate development, at

How

his gas stations, in his Ford, Honda and Mazda showrooms, and even on the golf course at Phuket Country Club, where cutting the fairways and greens is going to cost more.

"We haven't raised our golf fees because the hotels in Phuket had already arranged special promotions with us to attract tourists back after the tsunami. I don't want to damage the atmosphere of tourism here, so we are swallowing the extra cost," he told the *Gazette*.

"I believe the cost of everything, especially real estate, will increase. The cost of steel keeps rising – it had already risen 30% before the diesel price rise."

He added that consumers may have to make some hard choices, as will property developers, who have received a

Patong Tower Condominium

FACING PATONG BEACH, PHUKET

Last chance to become an owner of Patong Tower, a condominium that's more than just an investment. Ready to accommodate the new face of Patong Beach.

STARTING FROM 2.3 MILLION BAHT



ALL PHOTOS TAKEN ON LOCATION

- PATONG TOWER, THE ONLY CONDOMINIUM TOWER ON PATONG BEACH
- PANORAMIC VIEWS OF BOTH THE HILLS & THE OCEAN
- A VARIETY OF SIZES, FROM 3-BEDROOM APARTMENTS TO 4-BEDROOM PENTHOUSE DUPLEX SUITES.
- CLOSE TO SHOPPING CENTERS, RESTAURANTS, ENTERTAINMENT VENUES, BANKS, HOSPITALS, GOLF COURSES, AND INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS.
- READY TO BE DECORATED & MOVED INTO. • AVAILABLE FOR OWNERSHIP TRANSFER.

for more information, please call at
076-341-369-72
01-552-6004, 01-550-1486



ASSET AUCTION CENTER
Tel. (+66 2) 651-9283-6
<http://www.assetauction.co.th>
e-mail: cs@assetauction.co.th,
assetauction@hotmail.com

Project Owner with 110 units: Divine Property and development Co., Ltd. Registered capital: 1,000,000 baht (fully paid). Address: 2 The Royal Place 1, G floor, room No. 2, Soi Mahadekluang 1 Rajdamri Rd, Lumpinee, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330. Managing Director: Miss Sirkul Sawatsit. Project size: One 32-storey tower containing 165 units. Land title deeds 2096, 2379, 2380, 2381. Project area: 1-1-32 rai. Part of the land is under obligation with Kasrak Finance Plc. Site location: Taweewong Rd, Patong subdistrict, Kato district, Phuket. Condominium registration No. 3/2540. Ready to transfer ownership within 30 days from the day of sale, providing full payment has been made.



For those who want to own condominiums with the most magnificent view in Phuket.



Auction Office VISIT THE SITE AND VIEW THE MODEL UNITS EVERYDAY (INCLUDING HOLIDAYS) AT THE AUCTION OFFICE, PATONG TOWER (LOBBY AREA) TAWEEWONG RD., TAMBOL PATONG, AMPHUR KATU, PHUKET. TEL. (076) 341-369-72
PHUKET
BANGKOK FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT THE BANGKOK'S BRANCH OFFICE AT THE ROYAL PLACE 1, GROUND FLOOR, SOI MAHADEKLUANG 1, RAJADAMRI RD., LUMPINI, PATHUMWAN, BKK. TEL. 02-651-9283-6, 02-650-5252

the diesel hike bites



Bus fares are expected to go up by 3 or 4 *satang* a kilometer.

double hit, from the tsunami and now from the diesel price hike.

But, he pointed out, "Even though diesel has risen to almost 20 baht a liter, it is still much cheaper than in countries such as Germany or Britain, where it costs the equivalent of about 50 baht a liter."

Thais should see the latest increase as a wake-up call, he remarked. "We still enjoy this advantage [over other countries] but the cost of everything will keep rising. We have to change our behavior so that we are better at saving money," he explained.

Eam Thavornwongvong,

President of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, said that there is no way that Thailand could prevent an increase in the diesel price because it was driven by Opec and world oil prices.

"Up to now government subsidies have kept the price of diesel lower than the real market price. Diesel consumers who benefited from this in the past now have to face economic reality."

The price increase, he said, will affect transportation costs, bus fares and consumer product prices. Consumers will bear the cost, but this is only fair; when the cost of production rises, so

must the price of the product.

Will the diesel price rise slow the recovery of Phuket's tsunami-battered tourism industry? K. Eam does not believe it will. "The price of everything here is still generally lower than in the tourists' home countries," he said.

Wichai Ruengjaruwatana, General Manager of Sunshine Tours Phuket Co Ltd, said that, in any case, tourism companies cannot raise prices immediately because of agreements signed before the price of diesel went up.

"We can't increase our rates because we set package prices before diesel went up. Many of

our costs have gone up, cutting our profit, though I believe hotels will not raise their rates."

However, he noted, if airlines were to raise their fares again, "we would have to increase the prices of our tours."

Despite his optimism about the tourism sector, K. Eam is far from complacent about domestic prices. "I am on the committee of the Phuket Commerce Office, which is responsible for controlling the prices of basic commodities to ensure there is no overcharging," he said.

"We believe that price increases will not be very different from those in the capital. We will

keep a watch particularly on basic products, such as pork, chicken and vegetables.

"I hope that the big shopping centers in Phuket will not raise their prices too much, and that vendors in general will not cause the consumer too much pain."

Some pain will be inevitable, however. A member of the purchasing staff of Super Cheap, speaking on condition of anonymity, told the *Gazette*, "Products are bound to go up in price."

"At Super Cheap, we are now selling products in stock so we are not raising prices. We will not know until we place new orders whether suppliers will charge more. If they do, then we will have to change our prices as well."

"Even if the suppliers' prices do not rise, there will almost certainly be additional freight costs, which will force us to put up our prices."

One group of companies that felt the diesel price increase immediately was the long-distance bus operators.

Somsak Piromsawek, Manager of Phuket Travel Service Co (PTS), which runs buses to Bangkok, said, "Both Central Tour and PTS are preparing to raise fares."

"The cost of a standard one-way ticket between Phuket and Bangkok is now 486 baht, while VIP tickets are 755 baht. We have not raised the fares yet because we have to wait for approval from the Ministry of Transportation, which is talking about [a rise of] three *satang* per kilometer," he explained.

The *Gazette* understands that the bus companies were aiming to get a rise of four *satang* a kilometer, or about 40 baht per passenger on the Phuket-Bangkok route. The Ministry decision was expected within days.

HOUSE & POOL
CONSTRUCTION CO., LTD. since 1995
Thai - German Management

* Private & commercial construction
* Renovation / alteration
* Swimming pools & Jacuzzis
* Architecture design
* Building permits

85/19 Moo 7 Sai Yaun Rob Koh Road
Rawai, Muang, Phuket 83100
Tel: 076-288845, 388078
Fax: 076-288846
English: 01-6087410 Thai: 01-7192819
E-Mail: info@siam-business.com
www.siam-business.com

Expert Property Advice

- Sales (land & property)
- Consultancy
- Rentals
- Estate management
- Rental management
- Relocation advice
- Maintenance, repairs & construction

Local knowledge.
Global presence.

LYNX management group **Chesterton** PETTY

076 239944 / 01 893 3434
info@lynxmgmt.com

Bangkok Phuket Joint & Spine Center

Keyhole Surgery
Minimal Invasive Surgery
Microlumbar Discectomy
Joint Replacement
Sport Medicine and Arthroscopy
Spine Surgery

Bangkok Phuket Hospital
076 25 44 25 www.phukethospital.com info@phukethospital.com

By Chris Husted

A few years ago, Andreas “just call me Andy” Ruthe had an idea. Like many other people, he had moved to Phuket and had built a home, which he naturally wanted to protect from the voracity of termites.

However, as he looked into the alternative strategies available locally, Andy found that the anti-termite products available here at the time were poisonous. Some were even banned in his native Germany.

“Most people don’t realize how many tons of poison goes into the island from this. I didn’t want to contribute to the problem. In a couple of years I want to be able to drink tap water, too, you know,” he jokes.

Unable to find a suitable solution on Phuket, Andy turned to the high-tech expos he had regularly attended in Europe as part of his previous career as a professional telemarketer.

There he found Woodbliss, a nanotechnology product that not only protects wood from termites but can also restore termite-riddled wood, and even make it stronger.

To explain in the simplest terms, a nanometer is one billionth of a meter. For those who failed to pay attention at school, seven to 10 atoms in a row would be about one nanometer long. To put this another way, the ratio between the size of a nanoparticle and a soccer ball is roughly equivalent to that of a soccer ball with the Earth. It’s at this submicroscopic level that nanotechnology products work – and produce some amazing results.

Andy brought Woodbliss to



Andy Ruthe doesn't need to wash his car any more; he just wipes the dirt off the mirror-like finish.

IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT

Phuket three years ago through his company TCM Asia, of which he is now Managing Director – but that was just the beginning. While looking for a solution to his termite problem, Andy discovered many other problems faced by Phuket homeowners that nanotechnology

could solve better than more conventional products.

TCM now offers a wide range of nanotechnology products, from car cleaners to wood protectors to non-slip sealants. However, Andy stresses, “Our main focus is to avoid damaging the environment.”

Of the range of products now available at TCM, Andy believes that the car cleaner, called Nano Dry Clean, will be one of the most popular – especially as water supplies around the island continue to dry up.

With Dry Clean, Andy explained, you no longer wash your car but simply wipe it clean. The solution is simply sprayed on from a small hand-held water bottle and the application is evened out with a special cloth. After a few minutes to allow the solution to permeate the upper level of the paint lacquer, it is simply wiped off – no water, no hose and certainly no elbow grease.

“You do not need to use one drop of extra water,” he says. “Afterward, to ‘wash’

your car you just wipe it with a damp cloth, and Dry Clean will leave no smears,” he says.

Andy also expects the “nano wood protector” to be popular. “UV [ultraviolet] rays combined with water are what damage wood the most. You can use the best lacquers, but UV rays will still burn right through them. But the nano wood protector bonds at much more basic level and contains titanium particles, just like the sunscreen that people use when they go to the beach. That’s why I call it ‘sunscreen for wood,’” he explains.

Andy explains that the wood protector also keeps out water, which means that no fungus will grow between the fibers. “Fungi cause wooden outdoor furniture to turn gray within months in Phuket,” he points out.

As the range of applications for which nanotechnology can be used continues to grow, more and more people are expressing interest in products that fit with their own particular lifestyles and needs.

These already range from a smear-free, spray-and-wipe glass sealant that “cleans itself” by not allowing grime or soap to stick to the glass, to a solution that rejuvenates teak to its original color without sanding, and a non-slip sealant for stone that has to be experienced to be believed.

What other examples of modern magic are in the works from nanotechnology? Andy says that a wipe-on anti-corrosion solution for stainless steel that can be used even on cutlery is on its way, and he is currently field-testing non-toxic antifouling solutions for boats.

For more information about TCM nanotechnology products, contact Andy at TCM Asia Co., Ltd. 78/32 Moo 1, Kamala, Kathu, Phuket 83120. Tel: 076279088 or 06-9439834. Email: ruthe@tcm-asia.com. Website: www.tcm-asia.com.

T D

THAI-DIEN
 Building Technology

Building & Construction
Chemicals Since 1994

- Waterproofing
- Structural repairs
- Concrete floor repairs & treatment
- All kind of sealants
- Vapour & radiant barriers
- Resin coatings
- Pool tile repairs

- Bitumen & polymer membranes & linings
- High-pressure foam injection
- Sales, consulting and application
- Experience, know-how & reliability
- Materials & work guaranteed
- Materials made by Fosroc, Sika, Cormix, Lanko, Drizoro and Henkel.

70/31 Pattana Thongthlin Rd., Soi Muangthong Uthit 1, Phuket, 83000.
 Tel: 076 242 025, 01-397 1567 Fax: 076 391 680
 E-mail: thaidien@hotmail.com www.phuketisland.info/thai-dien

O

NUMCHAI OCEAN TRANSPORT
 145 Phangnga Road, Muang District, Phuket 83000
 Tel: 076-225444, 212985 Fax: 076-211686
www.numchaiocentransport.com email: info@numchaiocentransport.com

Experts in logistics and a provider of first-class services in the Andaman Sea – including to Phuket and nearby islands – we offer a one-stop service for all your needs: offshore operations; a full range of tugboats; fresh drinking water; tanker-supply vessels; ships' chandler; garbage and waste-oil disposal; salvage; boat-building and sandblasting. We also supply various grades of construction hardware at the best rates in Phuket. Our service area extends from Phuket to the provinces of Ranong, Trang, Krabi, Phang Nga and Satun. We also sail and supply to Hedah, Penang and Lumut in Malaysia.

THE TASTE OF THAILAND

SILK

restaurant . bar

Phuket's newest award-winning restaurant

BAR . LOUNGE . DINING . TERRACE

5/50 cherngthalay phuket Tel 076 271 702 www.silkphuket.com

Govt: no dodgy diesel dealings

National Energy Policy Office (NEPO) Director Metta Bantherngsuk has denied claims that Thailand's six major oil companies were involved in unusual hoarding of diesel stocks before the government raised the price by three baht a liter.

The combined diesel stock of the six companies was 523 million liters the day before the hike, hence they stood to make a combined profit of 1.569 billion baht from the inflated price, NEPO data shows.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said he instructed Energy Minister Viset Choopiban to make public all figures related to diesel stocks to ensure transparency.

The PM's order followed allegations by Bangkok Senator Sophon Suphapong that the oil companies made windfall profits totaling 6 billion baht from the increase.

Sen Sophon demanded that the money be returned to the public, whose tax money had subsidized the fuel at the lower cost before the hike.

He also blamed the authorities for failing to check the diesel stocks of oil companies before announcing the price hike.

Dicey ice: Public Health Permanent Secretary Dr Wichai Thienhaworn said that with water reserves plummeting, the risk of ice makers and bottled water suppliers offsetting their losses by failing to filter their water properly was growing.

K. Wichai ordered all public health officers to be particularly vigilant, as contagious diseases transmitted through contaminated water are known to spread more quickly during times of drought.



Beating the heat: A young boy jumps from the old fortress wall in Chiang Mai into the water as his friends look on. The spot has become a popular playground for children seeking relief from the heat.

He said the quality of bottled water and ice were of particular concern, and warned that those distributing products in violation of health codes faced a prison sentence of two years, or a fine of 20,000 baht, or both.

No way out: A mentally-ill woman threw her five-year-old nephew and six-year-old niece to their deaths from the ninth floor of a Bangkok condominium before jumping herself.

The body of Patthra Sipasen, 35, was found near that of Suho Sipasen and her younger brother, Yuta, on a cement pad between two condominium buildings.

Patthra's mother, Plaeng Wisetmi, 55, said her daughter had been undergoing treatment for a mental illness.

K. Plaeng said Patthra had been upset because she had refused to give Patthra a gold necklace or lend her 5,000 baht, fear-

ing she would gamble the money away.

She said Patthra's condition was aggravated by stress linked to her large gambling debts, but added she did not expect that Patthra would kill both her nephew and niece, because Patthra loved them dearly.

Drunk flying: Two men escaped with minor injuries after a bizarre accident that left their truck perched on electrical wires above a road in Samut Prakan.

At 3 am, police found Dumwong Khamthiam, 36, and co-worker Chadjen Pongroen, 25, intoxicated and slightly injured in a wrecked pickup truck resting on electrical wires in a tree-

top four meters above the ground, where it landed after a collision with a larger truck sent it airborne.

Dumwong said he lost control of the vehicle on the way home from a night of singing at a karaoke bar.

He was charged with drunk and reckless driving, and causing damage to public and private property.

For the birds: Narathiwat Governor Pracha Therat vowed to continue with a controversial giant bird statue project - despite growing criticism from local Muslim leaders.

Gov Pracha said the project represented a "gesture of good-

will from the entire country" and would serve as a memorial to PM Thaksin's peace campaign that saw millions of paper birds dropped from military planes.

Muslim leaders said they were never consulted about the project and found it offensive. They pointed to Sura 105 of the Quran, which says that God punished his enemies by sending "flights of birds striking them with stones of baked clay" and "flattened them like blades of straw".

Gov Pracha said he could not understand what all the fuss was about and questioned the intentions of those who were objecting to the statue.

No gay curriculum: The gay-activist Bangkok Rainbow Group's drive to have classes on homosexuality as part of primary school curricula apparently hit a brick wall when Deputy Bangkok Governor Pensri Pichaisanit denied a report that the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) was considering drafting a syllabus for educational classes on homosexuality.

K. Pensri said, "The BMA does not intend to add such lessons because homosexuality remains a sensitive and contentious issue among Thais. Parents have expressed concern that lessons on homosexuality might confuse children".

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

M.C. HOME DESIGN

62/16-18 Vichitsongkrom Road, Muang, Phuket, 83000. (Next to Toka showroom)
Tel: 66 (0) 76 234 682
66 (0) 1 635 7468
Fax: 66 (0) 76 234 683
E-mail: mchomedesign@hotmail.com
www.mchomedesign.com



- Curtains
- Wallpaper
- Screens
- Slim Blinds
- Bed covers & cushions (made to order)
- Carpets
- Vertical Blinds
- Wooden / Bamboo Blinds
- Rollscreen Door / Window (mosquito)
- We provide cleaning services.

MANEE SAI

Open daily
Tel: 01 487 4139 Fax: 076 383 527
E-mail: manee_sai@hotmail.com

STONE MURALS & STATUES & MORE

Showroom 500 meters from Chalong Circle, Chalong to Rawai RD, opposite Chalong Post Office.

PHUKET COSMETIC DENTAL CLINIC

Come and enjoy the difference of our unique esthetic dental treatment.

- Tooth whitening by plasma arc
- Dental implants
- All-ceramic crowns
- Ceramic veneers

16/1 Hongyok-U-Thit Rd, T. Taladyai A. Muang, Phuket 83000 Thailand.
Tel: 0 7623 6823 Fax: 0 7623 6824
Email: info@phuketcosmeticedentalclinic.com
www.phuketcosmeticedentalclinic.com

TIMBER & STEEL TROLLEY BARBECUES - BUILT IN BARBECUES - MARINE BARBECUES

The Barbecue Store
Barbecue Grills & Accessories

"The largest range of top quality gas barbecues available Thailand-Wide"

www.bbqthai.com

Call Brad: 01 829 8417

PHUKET COSMETIC DENTAL CLINIC

Come and enjoy the difference of our unique esthetic dental treatment.

- Tooth whitening by plasma arc
- Dental implants
- All-ceramic crowns
- Ceramic veneers

16/1 Hongyok-U-Thit Rd, T. Taladyai A. Muang, Phuket 83000 Thailand.
Tel: 0 7623 6823 Fax: 0 7623 6824
Email: info@phuketcosmeticedentalclinic.com
www.phuketcosmeticedentalclinic.com

Water reserves hit critical lows

Patiwat Hiranpong, the head of the Koh Samui Water Authority, announced recently that water reserves on the island would last just 40 days if high season consumption rates continue.

With the dry season arriving earlier than expected and temperatures higher than in previous years, the water level in the island's largest reservoir – at Namuang – has dropped from four meters to just 1.5 meters, and a second reservoir at Krachut can provide only another 200,000 cubic meters of water for public consumption.

Koh Samui uses about 8,000m³ of water a day but this year, because of the increase in visitor numbers after the tsunami on the Andaman Coast, the figure has risen to around 11,000m³ a day.

A lack of rain toward the end of the last wet season has compounded the problem, as

have high temperatures, which have caused the water to evaporate more rapidly than normal.

The government recently invested in a machine to pump water from Chaweng Lake, but this will only be used in an emergency as the quality of the water is questionable, and the maximum supply would be just 2,400m³ a day.

A desalination plant will provide an additional 2,500m³ of water a day, based on an agreement signed between East Water Co and the government earlier in the year, but this will not begin producing water until the end of this month at the earliest.

Many of the island's hotels and bungalow resorts have wells on site, and although this may help, pumping from them could seriously deplete the island's water table, with potential ill effects on the island's natural environment.

Forged passports: Two French



HRH Princess Helen Rajya Lakshmi Devi Shah of Nepal is welcomed to Central Samui Beach Resort by General Manager Jacques Mury during her recent stay on Koh Samui.

citizens, Roland Francis Gabben, 40, and Ansis Chokher, 41, were apprehended at the Buddy bar in Lamai, after arranging to meet two undercover police officers they believed were going to buy passports from them.

The couple was escorted back to their house, where Gabben attacked one of the arresting officers and tried to escape. He was restrained and taken to the

police station for questioning.

Meanwhile, officers found 145 forged French passports in the bungalow. All had names written inside, but some were still without photographs. The couple were charged with possession of false documents, using false immigration stamps, and assaulting a public servant.

Gabben and Chokher refused to make statements, but

police say they have evidence that they were part of a larger operation in which passports are sold on the black market for US\$50 apiece. Investigators are continuing their inquiries in hopes of discovering more evidence.

Tsunami hoax: An anonymous fax was sent to several Samui hotels and resorts warning of an imminent natural disaster and possible tsunami that would hit the island on March 12.

Such a phenomenon is very unlikely due to Koh Samui's location, and when it was discovered that the fax originated in Phuket, the authorities decided not to make it public, as it was clearly a hoax.

Although the fax was later re-sent in English. Tirayut Eitrakul, the District Chief of Samui, recently said that the effect on tourist numbers was negligible.

Some people did take the warnings seriously, however, and left Samui for the safety of the mainland. Sadly, it was later reported that a group of migrant workers fleeing the "tsunami" were killed in a road accident.

Cdr Sammy Swan is a writer for Samui's community magazine.

FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND



By Commander Sammy Swan



ANOTHER QUALITY PROJECT FROM LAND & HOUSES Land & Houses Park Phuket



Pruerk-pirom

3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 298 sq.m.



Pruerk-lawan

3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 348 sq.m.



Pruerk-umpai

4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 382 sq.m.

Model	Area (sq.wa)	*Special price*(baht)	Deposit (baht)	Contract (baht)	70% Last payment (baht)
Pruerk-pirom	99.6	10,500,000	100,000	3,050,000	7,350,000
Pruerk-lawan	112.6	11,850,000	100,000	3,455,000	8,295,000
Pruerk-umpai	157.80	14,480,000	100,000	4,244,000	10,136,000



New lakeside homes

For further information please contact our office

Tel: 076-381150-2 Fax: 076-381111

Email: info@lhphuket.com

<http://www.lhphuket.com>

Free sports complex membership
(4 persons/1 unit)

Location Map



This week



THANKS FROM FINLAND: The Embassy of Finland, represented by Consular Officer Esa Johnsson (rear, right), organized a lunch for THAI Cargo staff including Smathi Piamsanga, the District Cargo Sales Manager, (left) to thank them for their post-tsunami assistance.



RISING AGAIN: Patty Smith (left) hands a check for US\$500 to Boonchoo Managaree, the Headmaster of Baan Kata School, on behalf of Ironwood Elementary School, Phoenix, Arizona. The money – to be used to buy books and other much-needed materials – was raised by the Phoenix school under the slogan "Kids Helping Kids".



WHEN THAIRISH EYES ARE SMILING: Everything went green on St Patrick's Day at O'Malley's Irish Pub in Phuket City with the pub's Scott Shaw (left, pale blue shirt) and friends settling into the Irish *craic*, and a few pints.



JUNIOR JAPANESE AMBASSADORS: The Phuket Branch of the Japan Travel Bureau (JTB) Thailand Ltd invited some 180 Japanese tourists and pint-sized goodwill ambassadors (pictured) to lunch at Phuket's Thainaan Restaurant to help promote Phuket and assist in the recovery of the tourism industry.



FRIENDS FROM FRANCE: Prof Modesto Casoni (3rd from right) from Grasse-Menton hands over equipment worth 200,000 baht to children at the temporary Home for Troubled Children and Families recently.



GAZETTE GROOM AND BRIDE PRIDE: *Phuket Gazette* Desk Editor Stephen Fein and bride Karnchana "Piya" Wongsuwan celebrate their wedding with their parents, friends and relatives at Tango Bar in Phuket City on March 18.

Can you afford to be without it?
It's only 500 baht! (plus VAT)

To get your card, e-mail
shopper@phuketgazette.net
or call Anna at 076-236555

It is impossible to define **Johnny Ball**, apart from in terms of the basics such as age, gender and nationality. This 67-year-old British chap was one of the most widely recognized personalities on British TV throughout the '70s and '80s, and his style revolutionized children's TV programming and the way that an entire generation thinks.

But there is more than just the rosy glow of nostalgia surrounding Mr Ball; further generations of children – and now, not only in the UK – are being encouraged to do just one thing: think.

The *Gazette's* **Andy Johnstone**, one of the earlier generation of British thinking children (so he claims), met the self-taught polymath after his recent appearance at the South East Asia Mathematics Competition at Dulwich International College (DIC).

An eddy of teachers, seeking further elucidation on a point of mathematics, swirls around Mr Ball. He makes a few quick strokes of a pen across a flipchart and the teachers nod, a look of "Ah! so that's how it's done," on their faces. Illuminated, they disperse, grinning at just how simple it was.

Mr Ball could have been talking about astronomy or lemon meringue pie, but he would enthuse – and be as knowledgeable – about whatever subject it was. Not bad for a man who describes himself as an "educational failure".

"I was top of my class all the way through primary school but ended up getting worse and worse as I got older," said Mr

Ball, who holds three honorary doctorates in science, is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, and was Lord Rector of Glasgow University.

"I left school with two 'O'-levels [a British examination], one of which was for math and the other ... wasn't, but as far as I know, I got 100% in math, because I could do it."

"Education – formal education – and I just didn't get on, so the thought that I would one day be involved in education just never entered my head."

Mr Ball joined the aircraft industry intending to be a cost and works accountant. Although he loved the job, he could not face the prospect of sitting more examinations. "I ended up play

Johnny's still



Left, Johnny Ball on the Dulwich campus during his recent visit. Right, My hero! A teacher from Harrow School in Bangkok poses for a photo with Mr Ball.

last show aired in 1994, he is still one of Britain's most enduring presenters, and his Carl Sagan-meets-Groucho-Marx-slapstick approach endeared him to millions.

He said, "It's really lovely that people remember me and my shows with affection. A charmed life, really. My telephone never stops ringing and so many people keep asking me to fantastic places like Thailand on the strength of it."

"And I get paid for it, which is nice."

Mr Ball may not be on British TV as much as he once was, but he is far from retired.

His schedule for the first half of this year is full; he has just launched a theater show, *Past Imperfect, Future Fantastic*, aimed at encouraging 16-year-olds to continue their studies in math, science and engineering, and his corporate talk schedule often takes him to a different town every day.

Although he had not seen any Thai children's TV programming, a brief description of the current output incensed him.

"It's the same the world over, but why do we do it?" he said. "The money that goes into producing mobile phones, GameBoys and all kinds of gadgets is phenomenal because they sell for a fortune."

"But for some reason, we don't put the same integrity into

ing snooker or the drums instead. There were girls, too..."

He started as a stand-up comedian in the '60s and toured with the Rolling Stones, performed at Liverpool's Cavern Club and appeared with the Sadlers' Wells Opera.

He became a regular on the popular *Val Doonican Show* and the *Harry Secombe Show*.

His appearances on the children's TV program *Play-school* – alongside Oscar-winner Jeremy Irons – led to Mr Ball writing the under-fives' Saturday afternoon sister program *Play Away*, before turning his talents to factual TV.

So by the time his first show, *Think of a Number*, aired on BBC1 in 1977, he was no stranger to TV.

He said, "I developed the idea for making math programs from watching TV science programs being made and realizing how ... ahem ... inept they often were."

"I knew I could do as well as that and no one really knew what we were doing until *Think of a Number* became a success. By then it was too late to stop it!"

Mr Ball became a prolific program-maker, writing and presenting 23 shows. Although his

RELIABLE SERVICE

NOTEBOOK
DESKNOTE
DESKTOP
PALM & POCKET PC
COMPUTER ACCESSORIES

Big C (Basement floor)
Tel: 0-7624-8699
Phuket Town
T: 0-7621-8936-7
F: 0-7621-8802
www.busc.computer.com
email: buscomp@j-net.com

BUS COMPUTER AND SERVICE CO., LTD.

KEEHIN Quality in products
Trust in service

● We sell and service electrical equipment, lamps, lightbulbs, air conditioners, communication systems, closed circuit television (cctv), security alarms, fire alarms, motors, generators, water pumps, washing machines, water filter tanks, hot water systems, electrical hoists, televisions, refrigerators, high pressure power-jet cleaners, power tools, transmission gears, valve equipment, etc.

● We design and install electrical systems, switchboards, air conditioners, dumb waiters, etc.

100/2 Moo 5 Chalemprakiat Ror 9 Rd. 1, Rassada, A. Muang, Phuket 83000.
Sales Tel: 076 261450 Fax: 076 261456-7 Open daily 8 am - 6 pm
Service Tel: 076 261460 Fax: 076 261464 Open Monday-Saturday 8 am - 5 pm
Email: keehin@loxinfo.co.th

House of sanitaryware and tiles

The most beautiful room in the house

Tel: 076 261 470-5 Fax: 076 261 477
E-mail: sanitary@loxinfo.co.th

Intensive ESL Program
Rawai Progressive Montessori School

To prepare children aged 6 – 8, with little or no English-speaking ability, for an education in English.

*A 10-week intensive English program of 4 hours a day plus afternoon integration into the regular curriculum.

*Students will learn to communicate in English: speaking, reading and writing, phonics and grammar.

*Students will also learn basic vocabulary and skills necessary for other academic classes in English.

**A maximum of 10 students will be admitted*
Enrollment starts April 20, 2005

Program runs from May 9 to July 15, 2005

14/1 Moo 5, Viset Road, Rawai, Muang, Phuket, 83130.
Please telephone 076-288923, 076-288281 or 076-289200 for more information.
Fax: 076-383201 E-mail: admin@montessori-thailand.com www.montessori-thailand.com

having a ball



work?" you tell them there and then and they will remember. All you have to do is judge the detail to put in appropriate to their age. That's the only difference."

Mr Ball feels his career as a comedian helped him make programs that educated as well as entertained.

"As a comedian, you must be able to paint a picture – metaphorically speaking – very quickly, and then turn it on its head. That's what comedy is."

"The editing required for stand-up comedy is perfect for any kind of TV, film or writing: get people where you want them, seeing what you, the performer, want them to see, and then give them the pay-off."

"That's what I brought to TV – not necessarily being funny but having a purpose for everything – every line, every sight gag."

It was, he said, "frightening" how many viewers wrote to him saying he had inspired them to want to be a mathematician, scientist or astronaut.

"In the end I had to stop reading [the letters] because I felt I was under too much pressure to write the next series," he said.

"I was at a horse race in Brighton last year and a guy came up and said, 'I'm a nuclear physicist because of you.' He had his mate with him – both of them were about 34 – and his mate said, 'You inspired me, too.'"

"I asked him what he did, and he said, 'I'm a bookie.'"

"Both – mathematically-minded, but in completely different areas. That was just lovely."

Mr Ball is not afraid of using his position as a popular corporate speaker to ask embarrassing questions. "I asked [people in] one giant company 'Why did you destroy [the reputation of] butter to promote a brand of margarine?'"

"Butter is a wonderful food, as long as you don't eat half a pound a day. And it is created by a cow, not a laboratory. The food technologists said, 'You're absolutely right, but...' Commerce, I suppose."

"I suggested that the scientists in the company – and others, in fact – should kick their industry into being more honorable, in scientific terms. Integrity is what it is all about."

He is, however, "very heartened by the way the world is going." More people around the world than ever are getting better access to more information, and this is bringing benefits, especially for the younger generation.

Mr Ball explained, "Employers often make these glib statements that their new recruits, who have a string of qualifications, can't write two coherent sentences or add three numbers together."

There is some truth in that, he admitted, but stressed that if you met those same recruits 18 months on, you would find they had educated themselves. "They are now going like steam and forging ahead much more than any previous generation."

"The reason behind this? Worldly education: TV, the pace of life,

the Internet, everything. They are not taught this, they just absorb it from the environment."

"The world is a smaller place; we're all in it together and, above all, we rely on each other."

"It's the New Renaissance, and the possibilities for the future are tremendous."

'The money that goes into producing mobile phones ... and all kinds of gadgets is phenomenal because they sell for a fortune. But for some reason, we don't put the same integrity into teaching and TV programs [for children].'

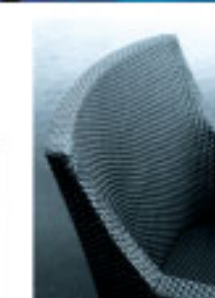
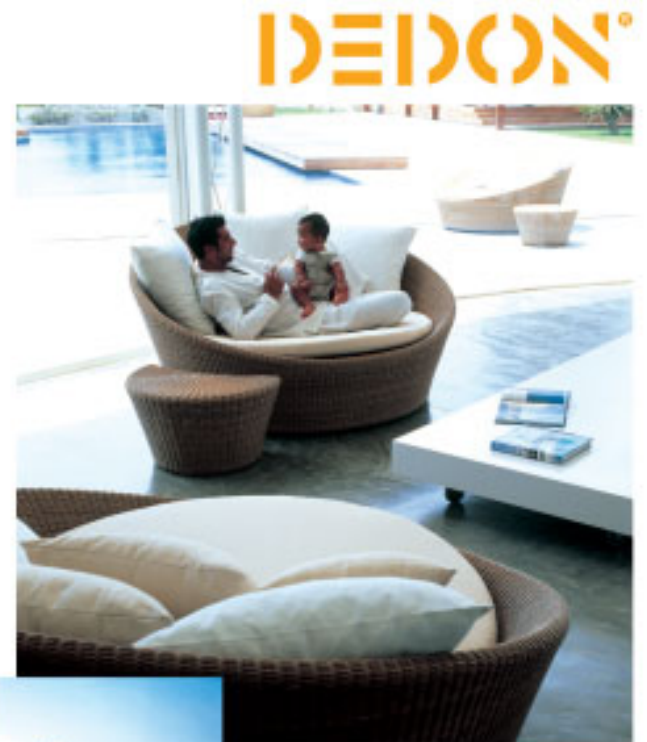
teaching and TV programs [for children].

"When I was making TV programs for children, I was part of the station's entertainment – not education – department."

That's why [my programs succeeded in being] educational – because the first priority was to entertain."

He continued, "If a child of any age asks 'How does this

The Leading Supplier of Outdoor Furniture



RESOURCE ASIA OUTDOOR COLLECTION CO., LTD.

Unit M6, The Plaza, 5/50 Moo 3, Srisoonon Road, Cherrng Talay, Thalang, Phuket, 83110, Thailand.

Tel: +66(0)76 271 626 Fax: +66(0)76 271 627

E-mail: mouse@resourceasia.co.th, sopit@resourceasia.co.th

Website: www.resourceasia.com.hk



Going coconuts

THE COCKTAIL HOUR
with Anongnat

If there is one image that conjures up the essence of relaxing on a tropical island it must be the idea of sipping a cocktail from a coconut while lazily watching a sun reflected off the glittering sea.

The Pondering Bar at The Evason Phuket Resort & Spa, in Rawai, is one of many places on the island where such self-indulgence can be enjoyed, but the Evason house cocktail perhaps makes sunset watching there even more special.

The cocktail won the resort's Bar Supervisor Naris Kawlkannet sixth place in the Southern Bartender Contest at the Royal Phuket City Hotel last September.

It is a creamy, transparent concoction of tropical fruit juices with Malibu and vodka as the active agents.

With coconut as the flavor, and in its natural container, there is no risk of tainting the taste. K. Naris said, "With the coconut juice poured out, only the smell of coconut and the alcohol remain. You eat the coconut flesh on the inside, too."

The sweet aroma of the coconut offers the first impression, which is followed by the velvety



taste of the coconut milk, but after that the sourness of the lime and and pineapple sharpen the senses in time for the alcoholic taste that follows.

However, K. Naris said, "It's not strong in alcohol. There's only an ounce of vodka and a half-ounce of Malibu in it. So, mostly ladies prefer it – though men can enjoy it too, whenever they want a refreshing taste."

Another attractive feature is that the cocktail's decoration is based on the hotel and its surroundings, such as the radish carved in the shape of a coconut tree, the logo of the hotel.

Ingredients

One coconut
Vodka 1 oz
Malibu [liquor] ½ oz
Canned coconut milk 1 oz
Pineapple juice 2 oz
Lime juice ½ oz
Sugar syrup ½ oz
Decoration: carrot, radish, pandanus leaf (*bai toei*)

Method

Cut out the top of a fresh coconut and empty out the coconut juice. Then put all the ingredients together in a shaker with 3-4 ice cubes, shake for about 40 seconds until well blended.

Decorate the coconut by putting onto a skewer a radish carved in the shape of a coconut tree, then half a slice of carrot to provide the image of a setting sun, finally adding three pandanus leaves, then pin the skewer into the top of the coconut.

Pour the cocktail into the coconut and serve with a straw or two.

Moka Java, espresso, breakfast, French ... there is a bewildering range of coffee blends out there and, as anyone who has contemplated buying a coffee maker will know, there are almost as many ways of brewing coffee as there are blends.

So how does someone not looking for the most straightforward method of making coffee – placing ground coffee in a glass, pouring on water, maybe adding a little milk, and drinking it, grounds and all, as seen in Poland – or the more exotic rituals such as are involved in making Middle Eastern coffee – choose which method, and maker, to go for?

A convenient electric filter machine, a simple cafetière or a stylish espresso machine?

If anyone should know, it's Torsten Richter. Originally from Germany – a land of "real coffee drinkers", he says – Torsten is Food and Beverage Director at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket, and is used to assessing the merits of various coffeemakers.

A self-confessed "French-press [cafetière] fan", Torsten says, "Filter coffee usually has a completely different flavor than French-press."

"Filter makers are the most popular for coffee in the mornings, but in my opinion, if you want a nice quality of coffee, switch over to a cafetière; it makes a milder, fresher coffee than coffee run through a filter machine."

"Coffee for a filter machine is usually coarser than that used in a cafetière – because if it's too



fine it gets through the wire net on the plunger – and that adds flavor.

"Also, with an [electric] filter maker, the coffee can sit around for hours, while with a cafetière, you make the coffee as you go along – two cups, four cups, 10 cups – and that ensures your coffee is always fresh."

He continued, "A cafetière looks nice on a breakfast table, so you get 'added value', too, even though it is possible to buy a cafetière really cheap."

"Cafetières require less maintenance than filter machines

118/1 Yaowarat Rd., Muang, Phuket 83000

Timber Hut

Tel: (076) 21-1839

YAMYEN SEAFOOD LAEMPANWA

(Near Phuket Aquarium)
SAKDIKET ROAD, PHUKET
Tel: (076) 391103

PATONG LANGUAGE SCHOOL

TEFLPlus®
Teacher training

Your first choice for language classes on Phuket island, with branches in Patong, Kata/Karon and Chalong.

Thailand's best value TEFL course at only 35,000 baht.

Patong Language School
Aroonsom Square, Patong, Kathu, Phuket 83150
Tel 0 7634 0373 Fax 0 7634 0873

Karon Language School
Karon Plaza, Patak Road, Karon, Phuket 83100
Tel 0 7639 8282 Fax 0 7639 8283

LinguaPlus Language Centre
86/6 Wiset Road, Chalong, Phuket 83000
Tel/Fax 0 7628 0368

TEFLPlus Teacher Training
www.teflplus.com info@teflplus.com
info@phuket-languageschool.com www.phuket-languageschool.com

KARON LANGUAGE SCHOOL

LinguaPlus®
Language centre

SHADE SAILS
for wherever your imagination can use them

Now manufactured right here in Phuket to Australian specifications

resorts
pools
patios
gardens
shops
schools
car parks
restaurants
bars
walkways
playgrounds

SHADES (Thailand) Co., Ltd.
Tel: 076-323600 www.shades.co.th
Call us for an obligation-free design & quote

AUTHANOP ENGINEERING

- ▲ House service
- ▲ Pool service
- ▲ Design service
- ▲ Buy, sell or rent scaffolding, steel formwork, u base, jack base (new and secondhand)

AUTHANOP ENGINEERING CO., LTD
23/110 T. Ratchada,
A. Muang, Phuket, 83000.
Tel: 01-8950750, 09-5924488

GROUND RULES



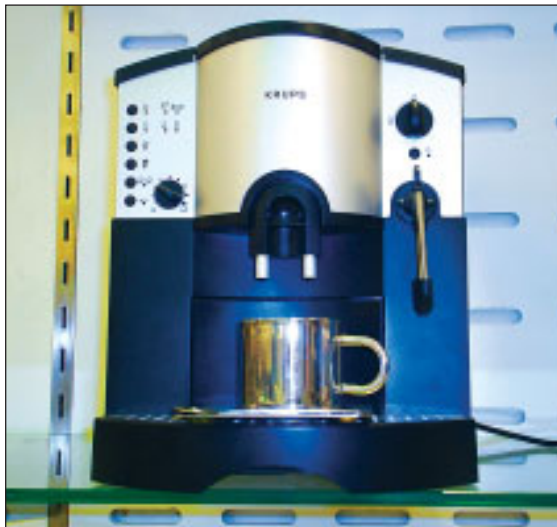
By Alison Winward

Left, large and small cafetières, 592 baht and 422 baht from Big C.

Right, Krups cappuccino machine, on special offer at 44,000 baht from Central Festival.

Above, 500ml coffee or tea infuser, 99 baht from Super Cheap.

Far right, Philips filter coffee maker: 1,390 baht from Central Festival.



and, as they are just a glass jug with a plunger, they are likely to last longer."

These days, though, caffeine consumers have a whole new option: the home espresso/cappuccino maker.

The rise of coffee shops, whether Starbucks, Black Canyon or independent concerns run by enthusiasts, has inspired coffee

drinkers to try "home brew". Many may quickly decide that "tamping" the coffee [pressing it into the little basket] and frothing the milk just right are too much of an art form for them, and head back to their favorite coffee shop.

But for anyone who is capable of mastering tamping and frothing, and patient enough to

go through the whole rigmarole, an espresso/cappuccino machine must be the ultimate home-brew experience.

Says Torsten, "An espresso machine is for someone who really enjoys coffee ... I'd say that, for a coffee-ophile, buying an espresso machine is like an oenophile investing in a very special bottle of wine."

To ensure you find the perfect home

www.phuketimmo.com 076-249-315

A UNIQUE SHOPPING DESTINATION



เดอะ พลาซ่า สุรินทร์

THE PLAZA

SURIN

Aleenta
Lamont
Fine9design
Lola
Cocoon
Indigo
Namsang
Tamarine
Soul of Asia
Sivalla
Candere
Everything Underthesun

FASHION . FURNITURE . ANTIQUES . ART

5/50 cherngthalay phuket Tel 076 271 241 www.theplazasurin.com



*Celebrating fifteen years.
More beautiful
and delicious than ever.
New Mom Tri's décor.
New chef Tammanoon's menu.
New award-winning wine list.*



Mom Tri's Boathouse Wine & Grill is honored by Wine Spectator for having one of the most outstanding restaurant wine lists in the world.



*Same Top Service
Please come & enjoy!
Reservations are recommended.
Mom Tri's Boathouse.
Wine & Grill.
Kata Beach.
Tel: 076-330015
www.theboathousephuket.com*

In The Stars

by Isla Star

ARIES (March 21-April 20): If it's your birthday this week you won't be disappointed by the festivities organized by close friends. The year ahead will be a definite improvement on the one that's just passed, particularly in financial terms. Those with long-standing debts will finally see a way to resolve them. However, you are advised to hack your credit cards to pieces and pay only in cash for the time being.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): The focus is strongly on fun this week. Your sometimes serious attitude to life and responsibility takes second place to carefree enjoyment. Throwing caution to the wind may be scary at first, but encouragement from a special someone will make it easier. If you think this relationship is only of the holiday variety, think again. Number 8 looks lucky on Monday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Many Geminis have reached a crossroads as regards work. If you're not sure whether to proceed in the direction you've been going in since the beginning of

this year, or whether to choose another way, the coming days will bring answers. Island life is bound to proceed slowly until next high season, so jump at any chance of expanding your interests. Nocturnal meditation focused on the moon will light your path this week.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): You will be brimming with confidence this week. While others are convinced that their cup of green tea is half empty, you know that yours is half full, and about to be topped up. With such beneficial astrological conditions working to support you, dare to go where no one else is tempted to tread. Love also swings round in your favor as Capricorn states an interest.

LEO (July 24-August 22): A steamy weekend is forecast, and this has nothing to do with humid weather conditions. Passion is fuelled when your partner makes a surprise romantic gesture. If you are unattached, expect that situation to change in the immediate future. Pisces has a strange story to tell on Wednesday – while you will be inclined

to take this with a pinch of salt, remember that there's no smoke without fire.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): If you have been considering a change of location you will find it hard to turn down a generous offer this week; someone who knows that you're ready to head for greener pastures is about to dangle a juicy carrot in front of you. If family needs to be considered before accepting the bait, some opposition is likely but can be overcome. Number 4 is lucky on Sunday.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): A problem at work that has been preventing you from moving on will dissolve into thin air this week. You will probably be left wondering what all the hot air was about. If you're newly single, a mysterious stranger offers temptation, but all is not what it seems. Allow plenty of time to get to know this person. The color cherry red will encourage money to flow in.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): You are advised to think things through from different

perspectives. It seems that you are about to try to move mountains, which is certain to be impossible. Focus first on rearranging areas of your life that won't require too much upheaval. Change is definitely coming and you will receive clear signals when the time is ripe. Aquarius has interesting information to impart on Tuesday.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): There will be no love lost between you and a fair-weather friend this weekend. Unspoken gripes are brought to the surface, but you should see this as an opportunity to set matters straight. You are advised to take each moment as it comes this week, as most days won't go according to plan, though some of the surprises in store will put the spring back in your step.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Your problem-solving skills are in great demand this week. While others can't see the wood for the trees, you can usually find answers straightaway. Be careful that you don't give away too much of your precious time for nothing; there is weed-

ing to be done in your own backyard as well. Allow extra time if traveling on Monday or Tuesday – delays are highly likely.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Attempting to remain as cool as cucumber as the heat builds up will be a challenge. Your sense of justice is rattled early next week, but don't be too quick off the mark with comments. Trouble is brewing in an intimate relationship – it seems as though you've been taking a lot for granted. Start showing some appreciation, and tension will ease. The color turquoise encourages clarity of thought.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Your talent for spotting a bargain will come in handy this weekend. A routine shopping trip could yield more than you were expecting to buy. Home improvements are highlighted – if you are considering spending time indoors decorating, to choose cool shades, such as ice blue and white. Your partner has more on his or her mind than is apparent. Overcome your fear of heart-to-heart discussions and find out what's happening.



Tai-Tan Boutique Court

Ready to move in. Just bring your luggage - everything is provided
Promotional price for opening period only.

We offer 22 fully-furnished rooms in Phuket City. We are located in a nice and quiet residential neighborhood of Vichit District. Our room rate is 6,500 baht/month.

In-room facilities

- Fridge/TV, hot-water shower, air conditioning
- Including unlimited Internet access (wired 100-baseT)
- Built-in wardrobe
- Cable TV

Common facilities

- Washing machine
- Convenience shop
- Rest area
- Key-card building access



Contact Passakorn Hongsyok
Tel: 09-1885300
Email: Passakorn@tairancourt.com
www.tairancourt.com





A rare opportunity to buy a value-for money, brand-new, fully-furnished villa...

14,900,000 baht




Visit our website: www.zarpazohouseofthemonth.com
Tel: +66 (0) 4051 9677, +66 (0) 1583 5169
Another masterpiece from Zarpazo...

TAWAN CRUISES

Experience the best...



Brand new, fully crewed Riviera motor yachts for charter

Discover exotic destinations in air-conditioned luxury

Enjoy 5-star service and dining from our hostesses

Go game fishing, snorkeling or simply enjoy Phuket's idyllic scenery



For information and reservations, call our sales office, located at the Boat Lagoon on 076239710 or 018943234
www.tawancruises.com

KIDS

THE FUN PAGE FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Spot the Difference



Can you find the seven differences between the two cartoons below? And can you find them faster than the rest of the family?



Brain Buster!!

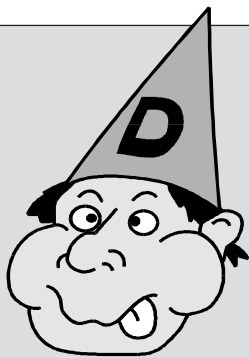
If a kilo of tea has twice as much caffeine as a kilo of coffee, and is enough to make 160 cups of tea, while a kilo of coffee is enough to make 40 cups, and a can of cola has about one quarter as much caffeine as a cup of coffee, how much caffeine does one cup of tea contain compared with a cup of coffee, and compared with a can of cola?

Answer: A cup of tea has half the caffeine that a cup of coffee has, and twice as much as a can of cola.

SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

B	E	W	I	C	H		F	E	B
A		A	I		A		L		E
H	O	R	S	E		V	I	O	L
U		D		A		R			V
S	T	A	G		O	N	L	I	N
E		D		B		A		D	R
V	O	O	D	O		H	A	T	S
E		R		N		A			E
N	A	I	L	S		V	E	G	A
T		N		A		I		E	A
H	O	G		I	N	V	A	L	I
D									

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. Who was proclaimed Emperor of Ethiopia on April 2, 1930?

2. Italian poets Dante and Petrarch are often referred to as the "Fathers" of what?

3. Who wrote *The Great Gatsby*?

4. Tabla, kettle and bougarabou are all types of what?

5. Ed Rush, Funky Porcini and Wagon Christ perform what type of music?

6. In Greek mythology, who was the muse of heroic poetry and history?

7. Which airport has the IATA code BCN?

8. The British honor abbreviated to KCMG stands for what?

9. Which bridge links Copenhagen and Malmö?

10. Which is the oldest .com domain in existence?

11. When was it created?

12. What is the boiling point of helium in degrees Celsius?

13. Who was recently awarded the Victoria Cross for his heroism?

14. Why was this award significant?

15. What are Fraktur, Century Gothic and Gill Sans?

16. What can be a type of fish, a hairstyle or an unusual heraldic star?

17. The Hakkoda mountain range lies south of which Japanese city?

18. What, traditionally, is the principal ingredient of the dish *saltimbocca*?

19. Post-rock band Sigur Rós come from which country?

20. What was the title of the band's 2002 album?

Answers next week

Never a Cross Word!

Across

1. Sorry, sorry.

7. Gambler's paradise.

9. All that glitters is not this.

10. Every one.

11. Sea between Turkey and Greece.

13. Mr Pound, poet.

16. British blue-blood.

18. From Gdansk, perhaps.

19. Parisian water.

20. Fencing sword.

21. Rock from the heavens.

24. Doctor.

Down

2. Fairytale princess's bruise.

3. Hawaiian garland.

4. Reaction to a bad pun.

5. Bird of prey.

6. Mafia boss.

7. Never-ending.

8. Sweetener.

12. Commercial, in short.

14. Its capital is Kinshasa.

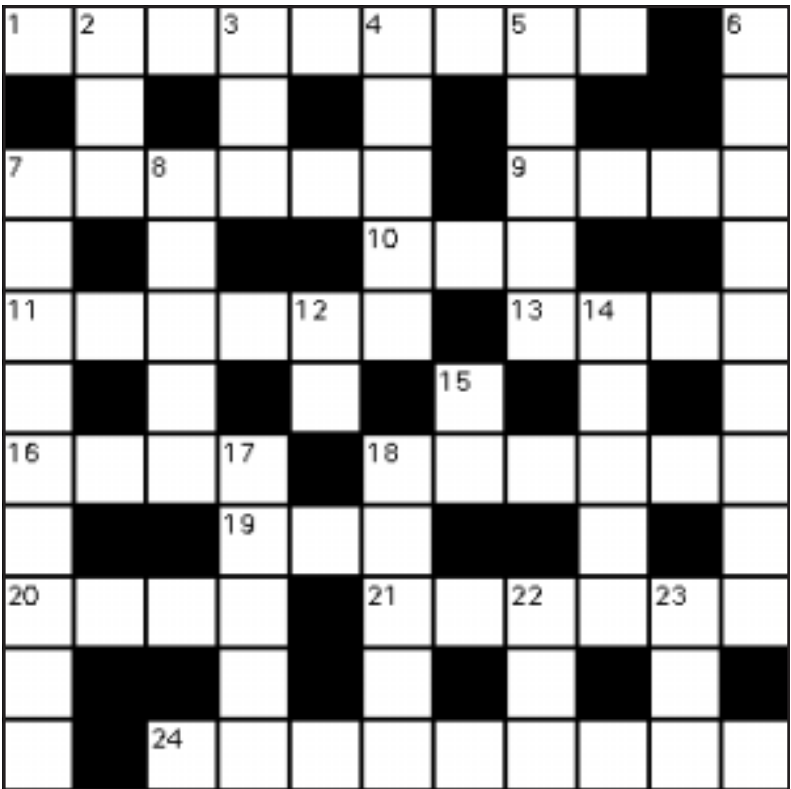
15. Negative!

17. Blood-sucker.

18. Dancing shoes, maybe.

22. Tic *** toe.

23. Roman eggs.



ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr; 2. The Rumble in the Jungle and the Thrilla in Manila; 3. Stig Dagerman; 4. Gulf of Bothnia; 5. Canada; 6. *Feel Good*; 7. .gg; 8. Condé Nast Publications; 9. Joey Jordison; 10. Federal Chancellor of Austria; 11. Missouri; 12. Morning Musume; 13. Battle of the Herrings; 14. Embrasure; 15. Alnitak, Alnilam and Mintaka; 16. Atlantic Ocean; 17. *Great Expectations*; 18. Tupac Shakur; 19. A steel/psychic Pokémon; 20. Sitar.

Solution next week

Phuket Property Consultants Company Limited

New

single house for sale/rent in Soi Sai Yuan. 500 sqm, 3 bed, 3 bath, private swimming pool & Jacuzzi and green garden. 8.8 million baht.

Mobile: 09-4744622

Walk this way, please

How many times has someone said, "I knew it was you. I'd know that walk anywhere"? If there is one, occasionally defining, aspect of a person's character it is their walk.

George Bernard Shaw wrote a play entitled *Pygmalion*, which was made into the movie *My Fair Lady*, and was based around the theme of turning an ill-educated working-class girl into the sort of society lass that men of wealth and breeding would fall over themselves to marry. One of the keys to the success of this training was teaching the girl how to walk like a lady.

Thai girls do not walk like catwalk models. Then again, no-one, other than catwalk models, people on bad acid trips and some of the mentally disturbed, walk in that fashion. I don't understand why modelling agencies teach girls to walk as if they're trying to get chewing gum off the bottom of their shoes.

What is apparent from close observation of the denizens of Pattaya is there are a lot of persons with a farming heritage – and Thai buffaloes are wide in the rump.

The most obvious effect of this farming background and close association with bovine-like creatures of some bulk, is the haemorrhoid walk.

This is characterized by the left leg looking as though it's fighting with the right leg, causing many girls to walk in the fashion of one who has had a chrome pole shoved up the clacker.

Others seem to have just finished a particularly grueling driving lesson aboard the largest buffalo in Chon Buri.

A friend of mine once pointed out the unusual gait of a Thai lady of short stature ambling

ahead of us one sultry evening. He remarked casually, "She walks like a duck."

She did indeed resemble the sort of life form generally found in a farmyard, being not much taller than a chicken, with the figure of a goose, a face like a squirrel and a walk that would embarrass any self-respecting duck.

Then there is the amble. This walk is peculiar to the majority of Thai females and involves nothing more strenuous than placing one foot in front of the other at a pace only seen during the Slow March at state funerals.

To be truly defining, this amble must be accompanied by the wobble. The wobble is the action of slowly ambling in anything other than a straight line thereby causing pedestrian traffic to build up behind you.

Then there is the shuffle, or "pretend run". It's not generally known that Michael Jackson developed his now world-famous Moon Walk during secret visits to Thailand.

My sources tell me that, apart from trying to entice young monkeys out of trees to look at his latest operation scar, Jackson spent time observing the way Thai girls performed the pretend run, then put it into reverse gear.

The pretend run involves what appears to be a lot of forward motion but in reality the lass merely advances at a pace not much faster than a person who's undergone lower back surgery.

She actually shuffles in a forward direction but tries to give the appearance of urgency. The girls who do this best are mostly former street sweepers.

Then there are those people who are long past worrying what kind of a walk they have. They are approaching their dotage and

will look for the easiest way to get themselves about Fun Town. This is generally done by getting other people to do their walking for them.

In Western society, entrepreneurs long ago recognized that, as people got older they found walking difficult. This gave rise to the invention of the Zimmer frame.

The designer was Hieronymus von Zimmer, an octogenarian former U-boat commander from Stinkenfurt, who found he kept falling headfirst onto the sidewalk, even though the walkways were as smooth as a billiard ball.

His daily intake of 16 large steins of lager contributed to this tendency to fall over, but he realized he was getting old and his legs weren't quite what they used to be.

So, von Zimmer retrieved his welding gear and created a simple four-post iron frame that he could push from behind and thereby propel himself forward.

Not only did it stop him falling down (unless his beer intake exceeded 20 steins), but he found he could push dawdling children, giggling schoolgirls and pregnant women out of the way with impunity.

The Zimmer frame was an instant winner across the civilized world, made von Zimmer millions and enabled him to buy his own *bierhaus*, where he proceeded to drink himself into oblivion.

In Thailand, the Zimmer frame hasn't caught on, and aging Thais are forced to become a little more inventive.

The best I have seen is a woman who owns the fittest chair in Pattaya. The old lady takes her daily constitutional around the back sois propelling a swivel chair ahead of her. It performs the same function as a Zimmer frame and is certainly more stylish and practical.

At least when she gets tired of walking, she can just sit down and relax. Try doing that with a Zimmer frame.



FROM THE STREETS OF PATTAYA

By Duncan Stearn



As he welcomed us on board, the skipper of our boat said, with a grin, "Your life jackets," and we were on our way to Koh Yao Noi.

Visions of high winds, huge waves and overcrowded ferry boats suddenly popped into my mind. The captain, smiling even more broadly this time, turned to us and said, "Please hold tight; it may be a little bumpy today."

"Could it happen to us?" was the collective thought, but with just six passengers on board this private boat, a trip to Davy Jones's Locker was unlikely.

But both our captain and the specially-designed longtail boat – powered by a 200hp engine – turned out to be the best, and the 60-minute trip halfway across Phang Nga Bay was at once relaxing and fun. The bay continues to be a most magical place.

And then we were there, the boat turning past a towering headland to the northeast of Koh Yao Noi heading for a large, sandy cove. Spying the thatched-roofed villas nestling in the verdant hills, we knew we had arrived at the Paradise Koh Yao.

It certainly looked as if it would live up to its name, and we were not disappointed once we had checked in; we found the resort – ignoring a few teething troubles – every inch a real tropical hideaway.

The ingeniously-designed rooms offer extremely comfortable accommodation, giving very good value for money. Some boast their own plunge pool; others have private Jacuzzis on their open balconies.

The resort faces east and most rooms also have some of the

most stunning views I've seen for some time, easily some of the most spectacular in southern Thailand.

The plan for what to do after lunch included a motorcycle expedition to rediscover the island, but this was quickly forgotten – it was hot, it would be dusty and it was Saturday afternoon for goodness' sake, so a more serene

tour of the coastline by canoe or Hobie Cat seemed a better proposal.

The motion was carried unanimously –

until we saw the hammocks tied between the coconut trees and the fabulous pool. We stayed there for the rest of the day. With such a relaxed ambience, cool breezes and even cooler beer, what more could one ask for?

That evening, we dined on the beach in one of the several open-air salas. It was a real treat and the pizzas were simply wonderful.

The island does not have a wild nightlife – no beer bars here – so it was soon time for bed. And what a time to retire. We just managed to watch Wales win their first rugby union grand slam since 1978. Come on you Dragons!

After rising early the next day to catch the sunrise, which was well worth it, we did consider the pool again and though we might perhaps even try out the spa. However, our old friend Bang Mut, the MD of Sea Canoe Thailand, and a native of the island, arrived to meet us.

After a delicious breakfast – one of the best omelets ever – we jumped into his jeep and were off to explore some of the west-coast areas of the island.

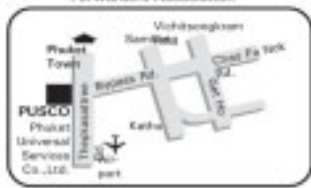
After a few kilometers of

Phuket Universal Services

"Professional sea, air and land freight forwarder on this island!"



Thai International Freight Forwarders Association



**WORLDWIDE TRANSPORT
SHIPPING AGENCY
TRUCKING / COURIER
WAREHOUSING / PACKING
CRANES / FORKLIFTS
CUSTOMS CLEARANCE
PROJECT LOGISTICS**

TEL: (076) 238822, 238824-6 FAX: (076) 238823, 238927-9
http://www.phukettransport.com E-mail: pusco@phuket.ksc.co.th

SIN & LEE

49 Thalang Road,
Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-211230

ON SALE:

GERMAN WURST
DUTCH CHEESE
ITALIAN SPAGHETTI
ROASTED & GROUND
COFFEE
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE

**CAR PARK
FOR CUSTOMERS**



AN ISLAND IDYLL

Above, left, The Paradise has spectacular views of the bay; right, the pool is a delightful place to laze away the day; below, even the bathrooms have a natural feel.



very rough action off the beaten track, we realized what folly it would have been to have attempted this excursion on a normal motorcycle.

K. Bang Mut proudly informed us that it took almost two years to build the 6.5km road through the hills and to connect mains power to the resort where we were staying. It was also necessary to lay some 2.5km of piping to ensure an adequate supply of fresh, if not potable, water.

After 25 minutes of bouncing around, we arrived at K. Bang Mut's little place, the small bungalows at Baan Tha Khao.

Here we met two German guests who had just arrived with building materials and paint from Phuket. They were returning guests, this was their eighth visit, and had come to help several of their friends on the island who had suffered due to the tsunami.

It's still great to meet such open-hearted and giving people,

people who had collected around 150,000 baht from friends at home and had gone to Koh Yao Noi to help out.

It was time to head further south. En route we passed other small resorts until we reached the main village of the island. We noticed how quiet the island was; there were very few tourists around.

K. Bang Mut showed us the location for the new Evason Hideaway Resort, the first major five-star retreat on the island, which will soon be under construction. Is this the way forward for Koh Yao Noi?

Despite all these new developments, the island seemed as it always had been, a very quiet backwater inhabited with some of the friendliest people in the south of Thailand.

The island is a marvelous antidote to the modern world and, despite my own preference for the luxurious trappings of air-conditioned rooms, infinity pools, and gorgeous cocktails, I do hope that this delightful island can maintain a good balance of the new with the old, the five-star with the homely.

Bill Owen, who has lived in Phuket and worked in the island's travel industry for more than 17 years, is General Manager of Oriental Leisure Co Ltd, a leading event management company in Phuket. He may be contacted at: bill@oriental-events.com. The firm's website is at www.oriental-events.com

How to get there:

By public ferry from Bang Rong Pier on the northeast coast of Phuket. Ferries depart every two hours from 8 am onward.

After the recent ferry disaster, we were informed that the boats are being carefully controlled, with passengers-only boats now in operation, which are not overcrowded and have a life jacket for each passenger. Fares will soon be increased to 80 baht per person, one way.

The Paradise Resort runs its own transfer service from the Yacht Haven. Departure times vary, depending upon the resort's bookings. Please contact the resort (below) for full information.

Where to Stay:

The Paradise Koh Yao. Special family-package rates now apply of 6,640 baht a head. Children go free if sharing the same room as their guardians. The price includes all transfers, breakfasts, use of spa, watersports equipment and mountain bikes. Tel: 01-8924878. Web: www.theparadise.biz

Baan Tha Khao Bungalows. Small, basic bungalow resort. Rooms have fans only but are comfortable, clean and the service is friendly. Prices begin at 500 baht per room per night. Great local Thai food is also available. Tel: 01-6767726 or 076-212172. Website: www.kohyabungalow.com



Siam International
38/54 Nanai Road,
Patong, Kathu, Phuket 83150

Siam International

❖ Legal consultation Contact:
❖ Company formations Tel: 076 346 149
❖ Notarial Fax: 076 346 150
 certifications Email:
❖ Contracts siamint@loxinfo.co.th
❖ Work permits
❖ Bookkeeping
❖ Visa service
❖ Translations

The Phuket Gazette
- Since 1994 -

367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur
Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-236555
Fax: 076-213971
Email: info@phuketgazette.net

Working warning system is now top priority

How things have changed. Back in 1998, the former head of Thailand's Meteorological Department, Smith Dharmasaroja, issued a warning that the Andaman coast provinces, including Phuket, were at risk from tsunamis.

A small minority of people, believing that K. Smith meant, "There's a tsunami coming now," ran for the hills, but most simply didn't believe him. K. Smith came under fierce attack for damaging tourism – he was branded a "mad dog" among other things – and eventually forced out of office.

After seven years in the wilderness, and in the aftermath of last December's devastating tsunami, K. Smith was called back into government by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and given the task of setting up an effective warning system.

The first test of the system, which is far from ready, took place on Monday this week. Once again, K. Smith issued a warning of impending doom. Once again, the tsunami failed to materialize.

Should he have given the warning? The answer has to be an absolutely unequivocal "Yes". K. Smith made the right call. Better to disrupt people's sleep (or late-night revels) for a few hours than to risk the horrible loss of life that followed the inexcusable failure of K. Smith's successors at the Meteorological Department to warn anyone on December 26.

Will Monday night's drama affect tourism? Undoubtedly. The message the world has been hearing for the past three months is that history shows that a tsunami in the Indian Ocean is something that happens only once in 150 years.

But history, as any historian will agree – and as Monday nearly demonstrated – is no guide to the future.

What is essential now is that K. Smith, with the full backing of the government, gets Thailand's warning system up and running as fast as possible.

The patchwork of TV alerts, sirens in Patong, people knocking on doors, phone calls to friends and SMSs appears to have worked well enough. But this was, in all senses of the word, a dry run. It took almost an hour before the sirens sounded in Patong, and 90 minutes had elapsed before the Governor managed to assemble an emergency committee – far too late to do anything practical.

Only when the vulnerable coastline is fully covered by a system that issues alerts within minutes of a "great" earthquake under the sea will tourists feel safe in coming to Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi.

– The Editor

The Phuket Gazette

In association with The Nation Multimedia Group PCL

Editor: Rungtip Hongjakpet

Managing Editor: Alasdair Forbes

Deputy Editor: Chris Husted

Chief Reporter: Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

Editorial Team: Stephen Fein, Andy Johnstone, Anongnat Sartpisut,
Alison Winward

Managing Director: Rungtip Hongjakpet

Marketing Manager: Oranee Pienprasertkul

Website Services Manager: Natthira Susangrat

Distribution Manager: Passara Kaewbumroong

Publisher: The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

Contact us

Advertising Sales: adsales@phuketgazette.net

Classified Advertising: classads@phuketgazette.net

Website Services: anna@phuketgazette.net

Shopper Card inquiries: shopper@phuketgazette.net

Gazette Guide inquiries: guide@phuketgazette.net

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

The views expressed in the Phuket Gazette are those of the writers and contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher, the editor, the shareholders, or the directors of The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd.

Copyright © 1994-2005 The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd



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.

Dirty phone calls

If the government wants to improve Patong after the tsunami, instead of worrying about the colors of the umbrellas on the beach it should tackle the problem of garbage.

For the first time in 13 years I visited Pattaya for four days before coming back to Patong in February. I did not see any garbage in Pattaya's Walking St. It was a lot cleaner than Patong's beach road and Soi Bangla.

We tourists think that the small glass enclosures along Soi Bangla are telephone booths, but we are wrong: they are signs indicating the place to dump your garbage. Otherwise, why would everybody drop their garbage there?

Last year I even witnessed a Thai woman open the trunk to her car, take out her garbage and dump it on the road. Try doing that in Europe or North America.

Perhaps Governor Udomsak Usawarangura should inspect Soi Bangla and see for himself the garbage piled against the phone booths.

Alain Van Mullem
Belgium

Sense – and water – drying up

It seems that the climate in Phuket is becoming drier as the years go by, and water shortages are becoming increasingly common.

This year the shortage could be particularly severe, with Phuket facing drought conditions along with much of the country.

Despite the fact that we are facing a water shortage, the building boom continues, with new hotels or extensions under

construction, new villas with swimming pools being built every day, and proposals for a conference center well advanced.

It would seem obvious that there should be a moratorium on all new luxury construction until such a time as a second reservoir is operational and there is sufficient water for existing residents.

Otherwise we may end up with beautiful buildings that cannot be used.

Nicholas Bennett
Phuket

Ms Mallows' taste is not shared by all

I disagree with Marcia Mallows's assessment of the quality of the *Phuket Gazette* and the integrity and values of its editors [*Gazette* Letters March 12].

Are you able to back up your claim, Ms Mallows, that the *Gazette* is edited exclusively by men? No, I didn't think so.

The editors walk a fine line every day with regard to our local hosts and how far they can go, and priority has to be given to that rather than making sure the *Gazette* is politically correct.

The reporters and columnists are professionals and add variety to the paper and, believe me, they are not in it for the money: the hours are long and the pay is low. Fact.

The *Gazette*, however, reflects Phuket's flavor and reality: a little sun, a little sex and an occasional dead body. Furthermore, some of the stories are meant to be humorous and different and to reflect life in Southeast Asia, not in the UK or US.

We (I have a wife and three children) moved here to get away from dull, politically-correct, countries.

Why don't you, Ms Mallows, consider relocating to Malaysia or the Philippines? They aren't too far away, and they have clean, censored papers, although I suspect you may find there are other small inconveniences, such as rebels or not being made to feel particularly welcome.

Having lived there, I know that those places have more sex and bodies than Phuket.

But look at the big picture, Ms Mallows: we need to recover from a serious calamity.

We should be concentrating on helping others, and leave the editors to do their job, which is not to censor the paper, but to push and drive issues that require attention, such as the tsunami, the ferry that sank, the environment, and local and national politics.

They are gutsy professional and run one of the finest papers [in the region].

S. Herbet
By email

Praise Queen Air's conscientiousness

I would like to say a big thanks to the staff at Queen Air Booking Center travel agency in Patong.

Following a mix-up with my flight schedule, the manager exhibited some splendid detective tendencies by tracking me down to a bar in Rawai to ask for my ticket so that it could be amended – free of charge.

I still do not know how they found me when all they had was a copy of the front page of my passport, but I thank them for it, and give them 10 out of 10 for effort.

IA Moncrieff
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.

The reasons for slow but steady progress

There are two main reasons why government construction projects move so slowly.

The first is the existing infrastructure. If we are widening a road, for example, we have to have all the existing services, such as electricity cables, water pipes, telephone lines and underground cables, cleared away.

The providers of each of these services have their own procedure for moving their utility.

We have to wait while each one finds the budget to move its service, then we have to wait while each one actually does the work. Moving power cables and water pipes is especially time-consuming.

A private contractor who bids for a project can be pretty sure how long it will take. This can be calculated by engineers, who take into account all the factors, including the weather.

We can do this too, although we can get caught out if the monsoon is particularly heavy or there is a prolonged period of flooding. But the difference between us and private companies is that, if need be, they can bring in more equipment and recruit extra workers in order to complete a project during the dry season.

The biggest single cause of

FIRST PERSON

A common complaint about government construction projects is that they move too slowly, and often take far longer than they are supposed to do.

Is this down to poor planning? A lack of organization? Laziness on the part of the workers?

Not according to **Boonyakiat Kongketyai**. Originally from Kanchanaburi, the 53-year-old is currently an engineer with Phuket Provincial Highways Department and Head of the Bypass Enlargement Project. He has 25 years' experience of state construction projects across Thailand.

delays to government projects, though, is land ownership. I'd say land ownership issues account for 80% of the delays to government projects, and they are even more complicated to resolve than the infrastructure problems.

If we need to use land that is in private hands and the owner doesn't want to let us use it, we face having to go through a long, complicated procedure in the courts to get the land from the owner.

Sometimes, to finish a project by the deadline, we have to carry on building while at the same time negotiating with reluctant landowners.

Sometimes, owners won't hand the land over to us because

they are unhappy with the price offered to them by the government, even if the price is set by a committee which calculates the value according to land prices supplied by the Provincial Land Office, and taking into account things like amenities, local development and appreciation.

The committee includes the chief of the district concerned, the chief of the Highways Office, land officers, and local leaders such as *kamnan* and *phu yai baan*.

Officers try to ensure that people are properly recompensed for losing their land. For example, if the committee values a plot at five million baht, but the owner says he paid 10 million baht for it; if the owner can pro-



vide a receipt to prove he paid tax on 10 million baht, then the officers will agree to pay 10 million baht.

The problem is that some people, when they buy land, tell the tax people that they paid less than they actually did, in order to pay less tax.

And then they get cross because they feel they aren't being properly compensated for their land, even though they can't prove how much they really paid for it.

This isn't a problem in Phuket alone; it happens everywhere.

We also try to be reasonable. For example, if we need only 150 square meters of a

180sqm plot, then we will buy the whole 180sqm from the owner, because we know there's not much the owner could do with the remaining 30sqm.

We tend not to have quite as many problems buying houses or other buildings, though, as people seem to feel that the government is offering them a fair price for their property.

In addition, if the house is used for business as well – as a restaurant or a shop, say – our officers will offer them extra money as compensation for the loss of their business.

But problems do happen. If things get too difficult, we may try to put pressure on owners who don't want to sell their land or property, by putting up signs telling everyone that construction is taking so long because we are having problems with people refusing to hand over their land.

We don't give house numbers or owners' names, but we reckon people can work out who we're referring to.

That said, the majority of people are okay about handing over their land once the officers have explained to them why the development is important for the future of their community and the island as a whole, and we have reassured them that we will give them time to find somewhere else to live and to move there.

Which documents do I need in order to get married?

I am American and my fiancée is Thai. I understand that getting married in Thailand is relatively simple, but I have several questions.

I know that I need to have a translator present when I go to the district office to register the marriage, but I speak and read Thai fluently. Do I still need a translator, if so, an "official" one?

Second, I have been told that I will need documented proof from my embassy that I have never been married. How long will that take? How much will it cost? Does it need to be translated into Thai? If so, can I do the translation by myself? Does it need to be certified by an agency? If so, which one and where is it?

When I go to the American Embassy to get my document proving that I have never been married (*bai sod*), will I be the subject of a CIA or FBI investigation?

End of the barrel
Phuket City

An officer at the Muang District Office, Phuket, replies:

If you can speak and read Thai, you don't have to bring a translator, but there must be two witnesses present to sign the marriage certificate. These can

be Thais or foreigners. Your wife will need to show her Social Security Card and House Registration Form, and provide copies of both.

Once you receive the *bai sod* from your embassy, take it to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nonthaburi for certification. Only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is authorized to issue the stamp certifying that the document has been translated accurately.

Sudhisarn Vibulyasek, of the Legalization Division of the Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, replies:

You have to bring your passport, a copy of your passport, and a translation of the *bai sod* to the Legalization Division of the Department of Consular Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is on Chaeng Wattana Road, Laksri District, Nonthaburi, near the Communications Authority of Thailand headquarters. The telephone numbers are: 02-5751057-59.

You can get there from central Bangkok by taking the skytrain to Chatuchak Station, then catching the 52 bus, which passes right by our office.

You can also take any mini-

bus going to Pakkred from Chatuchak Station.

Our division is the only place authorized to certify the translation; but you can do the translation by yourself.

The process takes two days, and the fee is 200 baht for each of the two certification stamps required, or a total of 400 baht for both documents. If you require same-day service, however, you can pay twice that amount and the documents will be ready for you within two hours.

An official with the US Citizens Services Division of the US Embassy in Bangkok replies:

You need only come to the Embassy and sign a sworn affidavit stating that you have never been married. There is no extensive background check.

The charge is US\$30 and you can get it issued immediately. You cannot have the document issued through the mail. You must come to the embassy in Bangkok.

The Gazette notes:

Each country sets its own rules in regard to issue of the *bai sod* document. Nationals of countries other than the US should therefore check with their own embassy for details.

Issues & ANSWERS

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

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

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

What are the tax rules for importing boats?

I would like to bring my 20-foot motorboat to Thailand in the near future, but I am a little confused and have some questions.

If I transport my boat in a container to Songkhla, would I then be able to go the port myself and pay the VAT before driving the vessel to Phuket on the back of a trailer?

Does the zero-rate tax rule apply to both the boat and the engine, and if so, must the engine be installed or can it be separate?

Morten
Denmark

Theera Paeprasathithavorn, Deputy Chief of Phuket Customs Office, replies:

You can pay the VAT yourself, or you can appoint a representative to do it for you at Songkhla, because the vessel is considered a legal import.

Other taxes – such as import duty, excise tax and Ministry of Interior tax – will be levied at zero, on both the boat and the engine, though the zero tax only applies to the engine if it is part of the boat and not separate from it.

O'Rourke on the loose again

PJ O'Rourke used to be the fresh pest voice in American journalism, covering war-ravaged foreign countries with blithe courage and humor in such books as *Holidays in Hell* and *Give War a Chance*. In his last couple of books – *Eat the Rich* and *The CEO of the Sofa* – he has been content to stay at home and pontificate.

But in *Peace Kills* (Atlantic Books, London, 2004, 197pp), O'Rourke is back on the road again. The subtitle is: *America's Fun New Imperialism*.

He opens with a chapter entitled "Why Americans Hate Foreign Policy", which condemns former President Clinton and the Democrats in general for being "peace mongers". How much better was the Bush forthright destruction of Saddam Hussein's Iraq?

"Instead, we blew the place to bits. And a mess was left behind. But it's a mess without a military to fight aggressive wars; a mess without the facilities to develop dangerous weapons, a mess that cannot systematically kill, torture, and oppress millions of its citizens. It's a mess with a message – don't mess with us."

The first two places he visits are Kosovo and Israel and he does his usual shtick, cracking lame jokes at the absur-

dities of UN peacekeepers and the multiple pilgrimage sites of Jerusalem. He's 58 and showing his age.

He comes into his own, though, with his "9/11 Diary". He is at home in Washington when the Pentagon is attacked and he keeps his head, setting out with a woman neighbor on a walking tour of the capital's center. This is observant journalism at its best.

He flies to London 12 days later and the plane is half empty. He is a guest on a BBC radio phone-in talk show.

"A woman named Rhona called and said we didn't have enough empathy for the poor people of the world. We're so rich and they're so poor, no wonder they're angry."

"I told her that was a slur on poor people. And anyway, Osama bin Laden is a rich twit."

He flies back to Washington and has a great time observing a peace rally: "Most of the demonstrators were of college age with subdermal ink, transdermal hardware, and haircuts from the barber college on Mars. But people my age were present, too, and beginning to resemble Bertrand

Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

marches are what bullfights were for Hemingway.

Then he pens a short essay entitled "Thoughts on the Eve of War".

"Not that I disagreed with everything said by the people who opposed the war with Iraq. As a *casus belli*, weapons of mass destruction did seem like a pair of pants cut to the size of North Korea

and into which Iraq was being stuffed. And claims that Saddam Hussein was cooperating with Osama bin Laden smelled of something found on the Internet late at night along with proof that the Jews and the Rotary Club control the World Bank."

But he bumbles off to war in Kuwait

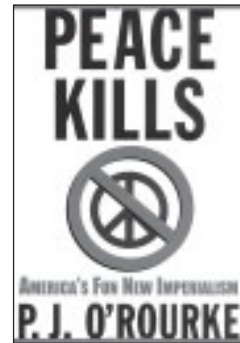
and Iraq during the months of March and April, a 40-page section that shines with O'Rourke's powers of observation coupled with a complete opacity of purpose. At one point, observing the vast American armada gathered in the Kuwaiti desert before the invasion of Iraq, O'Rourke frankly observes: "Military force extended from me to the horizon in every direction, 360 degrees of war. It is much cheaper to buy oil than to steal it."

He is not "embedded" with the troops and spends much of his time before the invasion in Kuwaiti hotel rooms and, afterward, in the ruins of Baghdad Airport.

Again, he vividly describes the waste, desolation and frantic despair of the Iraqi people – a mob of men and boys storming a relief truck opens this chapter – but seems not to give much thought to

what end.

And one wonders what he thinks now, nearly two years into what he cheerfully describes as "a mess". He is a natural contrarian when it comes to peace marchers, but is he still a cheerleader for the neo-con hawks?



Hitches mar Firefox browser upgrade

The Mozilla Foundation on February 24 released a major security upgrade for version 1.0 of its Firefox browser, which is growing in popularity around the world – Mozilla claims that more than 27 million users have downloaded it since its release on November 9 last year.

However, the release of the upgrade, called version 1.0.1, didn't go off without some hitches. Mainly, the automatic updater – which shows a green icon with an arrow for small upgrades and a red one for critical upgrades in the top right corner of the screen – failed to indicate that the upgrade was available until about a week after its release.

Mozilla claimed that this

was intentional. It wanted to avoid the bulk of its 27 million users trying to download the 4.7MB upgrade at the same time, only later making the upgrade openly available.

Immediately after its release, there were rumors that it was necessary first to uninstall the existing version on the computer before the upgrade could be installed. However, it has since become clear that this is necessary only if the existing version was installed from a "zip" file. It is not necessary to uninstall the existing version of Firefox if it was installed from the setup "exe" file.

Mozilla, perhaps taking a page from Microsoft's cover-your-ass-just-in-case handbook, says on its release notes webpage, "To avoid this crash and other problems, do not install a new version using the installer into the same folder as an older zipped installation."

That said, I have installed 1.0.1 without uninstalling the existing version on my computer

and have had no problems at all. All bookmarks (Favorites to IE users), History, Passwords and privacy and security settings were all preserved.

Mozilla claims that 1.0.1 features some 650 bug fixes, including about 25 security fixes, and more than 130 stability and data-loss fixes. The most important one, however, is the guard against a fault in showing Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) in the URL address bar.

The release notes explain that IDNs allow non-English speakers to use domains in their local language, but because many characters are similar to others (if not identical in some fonts) there is the possibility this could be used to construct perfect, indistinguishable phishing sites.

The 1.0.1 upgrade automatically switches off IDN and instead displays domains in their raw "punycode" form. In his review of 1.0.1, Editor of online Windows Secrets Newsletter (WindowsSecrets.com) Brian Livingston explained simply, "The address bar can appear to show 'paypal.com,' for example, by composing a domain name of look-alike Unicode characters."

"Some registrars, unfortunately, are selling Unicode domain names that look identical to ASCII domains. Firefox 1.0.1 cures this by displaying all Unicode in 'punycode,' a plain-text equivalent. The punycode for the PayPal fake wouldn't fool anyone: 'www.xn—pypal-4ve.com'."

COMPUTERS

By Chris Husted



Before installing Firefox 1.0.1, read the release notes to make sure the installation goes off without a glitch.

For a list and explanation of the other major security bugs fixed by 1.0.1, see <http://www.mozilla.org/projects/security/known-vulnerabilities.html>

Another problem, though not a bug, is that 1.0.1 does not yet support all extensions (custom-designed plug-ins that perform specific tasks) or themes (the way you want Firefox to look, such as larger icons, non-standard toolbars, and so on).

You may need to re-enable or re-install one or more extensions after installing 1.0.1. So, before making the upgrade, in your existing version of Firefox click Tools | Extensions and note any extensions installed.

After the install is complete, click Tools | Options and select Advanced. In the Software Update section, place a tick beside "Periodically check for updates to Firefox". Click the

"Check Now" button. If a window pops up with the message that an upgrade is available, click the download button and install the new extension.

A final note: Firefox is available in 28 languages, so make sure you get the correct version by downloading from the All Downloads page at <http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/all.html>

The hiccups that many people experienced with installing 1.0.1 show that Mozilla definitely can improve on making sure that any future upgrades – and information in release notes – are more straightforward.

Nevertheless, this is an important and much recommended upgrade. A last note: as with any new software – including upgrades – you should back up important data before going for the upgrade.

NAT
Providing the best business solutions

World-class
Accounting Software

QuickBooks **sage**

HIS
Accounting & Tax Services

Thai Tax Courses (in English)
Tax Clinic (For your tax solutions)

Phuket: 076 212989

Bangkok: 02 5137151
Pattaya: 03 8378178
Koh Samui Branch: 07723 8831

info@thaiaccounting.com
www.thaiaccounting.com

PHUKET ALPHA



Authorized Reseller

Email: info@phuketalpha.com
2nd FL CENTRAL FESTIVAL PHUKET, Tel: 076-246720
201 Thalang Rd, Muang Phuket Inn, Tel: 076-215796

Big bang in spa boom

By Rungtip Hongjakpet

PHUKET: The number of tourists visiting spas in Thailand has tripled in just two years, says Sunai Wachirawarakarn, a fact he discovered while doing research for setting up the Sukko Spa, of which he is general manager.

The 400-million-baht spa, another venture of businessman Tachaporn Thepabutr and his family, is currently under construction on a 30-rai site off Chao Fa West Rd. It is due to open in September this year.

"Spas have become really trendy," says K. Sunai. "In the United States, for example, spas rank in the top three service industries in terms of what Americans are spending their money on. And in Thailand, while only 10% of tourists visited a spa in 2002, by last year that had jumped to 30%."

K. Sunai claims that the 160-bed Sukko Cultural Spa and Wellness centre will be the biggest "first class" spa in Thailand, although he is careful to stress that the company is not aiming to create a mass-market product.

He hoped that the spa will be set apart from other similar ventures by its emphasis on Thai culture.

"We are different from the Angsana or Banyan Tree spas – or any other top-of-the line spa – because we offer customers Thai culture. We define ourselves as a 'pure Thai' spa," he said.

"For example, our architecture is inspired by Mount Sumeru, which is the center of the universe in Thai [and Hindu] cosmology.

"No other spa features Thai culture as such an important aspect of the product," he said.

The spa, which will be aimed at affluent Europeans, Japanese and Hong Kongers, will offer health therapies based on Thai Ayurvedic medicine as well as recreational activities reflecting Thai culture, such as exercise routines derived from Thai boxing.

The company will start recruiting staff this month; therapists will be given around 600 hours of training before the soft opening in August this year.

The project was officially launched at last month's International Tourism Bourse in Berlin.

K. Sunai says the company has already been approached by the owner of a hotel in Europe interested in taking out a franchise.

"We didn't expect that at all," says K. Sunai. "It came as a nice surprise, but it does show that our concept is viable."

ON THE MOVE

The new Chief of the Phuket Provincial Highways Office is **Thanit Sakiya**, 55, from Chachoengsao Province. The holder of a degree in construction management from Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, K. Thanit was Deputy Director of the Trat Provincial Highways Office for three years before coming to Phuket. He has been working for the Ministry of Transport for about 35 years.



The new Chief of the Phuket Office of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (ODPM) is Surat Thani native **Nakorn Tipsat**, 54. The holder of a master's degree in public administration from the National Institute of Development Administration and a degree in law from Ramkhamhaeng University, K. Nakorn was Director of Training at the ODPM's regional headquarters in Surat Thani for six months before coming to Phuket.

Sunai Wachirawarakarn has been appointed General Manager of Sukko Spa Executive Co Ltd. K. Sunai holds a master's degree in hospitality and tourism management from the Prince of Songkla University, Phuket Campus, and a degree in business administration from Assumption University in Bangkok.



Evita and the dangers of bondage

Many investors are attracted to bonds, which pay a guaranteed interest rate, with the capital being returned to the investor at the end of the term.

Bonds, when compared with fixed deposits, have other advantages: they can be sold at any time or, at the other extreme, can be held for a longer period of time than a fixed deposit.

People who require a guaranteed income, such as the retired, are enthusiastic purchasers of bonds, and people who are risk-averse usually invest in government bonds.

But many people are looking for something that offers more than bonds do. After all, if you invest in a 10-year US Treasury Bond, you will earn only 4.5%.

If you factor in inflation – even if it averages just 2.5% over the period of the bond – your actual earnings are just 2% a year. Over the 10-year lifetime of the bond, that 2.5% inflation translates into 30% of the capital returned (2.5% compounded over 10 years).

The prospects are even worse for investors in the Euro Zone. Yields on government bonds there are around 3.75%, and 2% is lost to inflation. The Japanese have to live with yields of 1.5% on their government bonds, though they at least do not have inflation.

Happily, investors in the bond market have alternatives. The first is the corporate bond market.

Corporate bonds are issued by companies and operate in a manner identical to government

bonds, but there is a risk: will the company be able to maintain its interest payments and repay the capital on maturity?

Answering these questions is not always as straightforward as it might seem, so the following example may be useful.

General Motors (GM) is the world's largest automobile manufacturer. Five years ago, its bonds were an attractive proposition. But times change, and in March 2005, the company issued a profit warning.

This might have come as a surprise to the public, but in fact the company's finances had been looking miserable for some years, and the major

credit ratings agencies had steadily been downgrading GM's rating.

At the time of the profits warning, one agency had gone even further, downgrading GM's credit rating from the lowest investment grade to "junk". Others immediately warned that they were reviewing their assessments of the company, and the outcomes are unlikely to be positive.

In all cases, the reviews will see GM's debt being reduced to "junk" status.

The reaction of Joe Public might be "so what?", but, for the company, the change has serious implications.

Bonds come in two basic categories: "investment grade" and "junk". The higher a bond's credit rating, the lower the interest rate the company must pay, which is only fair and rational.

But if a company – or country – starts to slip down the



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

credit-rating ladder, it becomes more expensive for it to borrow money.

When a borrowing entity, in this case GM, is demoted from "investment grade" to "junk", something else happens: almost all the pension funds that are holding GM bonds are forced to sell; they are simply not allowed to hold junk bonds as assets.

This mass selling drives down the price of the bonds substantially, as well as making it much more expensive for the company to borrow money in the future, thereby adding to its balance-sheet woes.

Investors have commonly thought that the alternative to buying corporate bonds is to buy government bonds, especially from governments that offer that little bit (or even a lot) extra.

They might not want to invest in another government's domestic currency, but if that foreign government has gone to the trouble of issuing bonds in the investor's own currency and is so generous, why not?

This was what lured investors into the waiting arms of the government of Argentina.

Sixty years ago, Argentina was a prosperous, middle-class country. In 1945, when much of the world was trying to recover from World War II, Argentina was an oasis of peace and prosperity.

Then along came one General Juan Peron and his glamorous wife Eva. Readers are no doubt familiar with the hit musi-

cal *Evita*, about her and her turbulent life.

Juan and Eva were a lovely couple, with imaginative economic ideas such as "inward industrialization". This piece of absolute stupidity involved Argentina effectively isolating itself from the world with the aim of developing domestically and thus becoming an economic superpower.

In actual fact, the opposite occurred: starved of new techniques and interaction with the outside world, Argentina became an industrial and commercial backwater. Naturally, the Perons had an active military and secret police to assist in the process of turning Argentina into a mess.

After the ejection of the Peronistas, Argentina stumbled through various administrations and military juntas until the ill-fated invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982.

Despite the claim that this was about reclaiming sovereign Argentinian territory from perfidious Albion, the invasion was in reality a desperate attempt by the military junta to shift the focus away from Argentina's economic plight; the country, by then, was suffering from hyperinflation and economic decline.

After defeat in the Falklands and the fall of the junta, attempts by the International Monetary Fund to stabilize the Argentine economy during the 1990s seemed to work, but this stability was just an illusion.

Despite Argentina's geographical distance from here, a number of people here have unfortunately invested their capital in that country's bonds. I will conclude this story next week. I just wish that I could be the bearer of better news.

I will also cover a case that is looming somewhat closer to home.

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: 01-081-4611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th.

TRUEMAN
RENOVATE, REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

- WATERPROOFING
- INTERIOR & EXTERIOR DECORATING
- EXTENSIONS
- DOORS & WINDOWS
- SANITARY WORK
- M & E WORK
- TOILET SYSTEMS
- ROOFING
- KITCHENS
- CEILINGS
- ALUMINIUM & GLASS WORK
- CONCRETING
- FENCING

100/362 CHALERMPRAKIET RAMA 9 RD,
T. RASSADA A. MUANG, PHUKET, 83000.
TEL: 076-376053, FAX: 076-376054
MOBILE: 01-9046930, 09-2656006,
01-9046812.

AM Production
DIRECT EXPORT

Made to Order
New T-Shirt

European Quality:

- Polo shirts
- Sweatshirts
- Baseball caps
- + Embroidery
- Pens, Lighters

Tel: 076-321850
Fax: 076-321851
Email: info@best-t-shirt.com
www.best-t-shirt.com
Ask for: Mr. FRANZ

Don't miss it !



Phuket & Andaman REBUILD

- ◆ New Construction Technology for Housing Projects, Hotels & Resorts
- ◆ Intelligent Homes/Fast Construction Tools & Materials
- ◆ Hi-tech Hotel & Restaurant Equipment

FREE ENTRANCE

11.00-20.00

7-10 **U.S.**
Apr.
2005

Royal Phuket City Hotel



DELICE THAI

Managed by **DELICE THAI Co., Ltd.**
109-111 Satun Road, Muang, Phuket, 83000
Tel. 076-258 417-8 Fax : 076-210 320
Mob. 06-682 3770



Seminars organized by
: Phuket Real Estate Club
: Andaman Architect Group
: Association of Phuket SMEs



Phuket & Andaman REBUILD

Construction Materials & Hotel Equipment Exhibition



SEMINAR

RSVP 076 258 417-8

7 April 2005

FREE

- ◆ Direction of real estate business and investment in Andaman 2005-6 after the Tsunami

Organized by: Phuket Real Estate Club

13.00-16.30

8 April 2005

FREE

- ◆ Meeting of purchasing managers from hotels and property projects

13.00-15.30

9 April 2005

FREE

- ◆ How 6 government policies affect construction rules and regulations in the Andaman

Keynote speaker: Assoc. Prof. Manop Bongsadadt from TV11 Property Talk

Organized by: Andaman Architect Group

13.00-16.30

10 April 2005

TICKET 399 bath

- ◆ Talk Show - Revive SMEs in southern provinces

Keynote speaker: Mr. Pansak Leelawankulsiri, Senior Vice-President of SMEs Business Development Group

Organized by: Association of Phuket SMEs

13.00-16.30

◆ New Construction Technology for Housing Projects, Hotels & Resorts
◆ Intelligent Homes / Fast Construction Tools & Materials ◆ Hi-tech Hotel & Restaurant Equipment

Patong Darts League

PATONG: With an 8-1 drubbing of Amigos, last season's champs OffShore extended their lead in the Patong Darts League to five points over second-place Queen Mary.

Both OffShore and Queen Mary have a game in hand over Pickles and Didi's, which are tied for third.

In a scheduling note, this week's match between Two Black Sheep and Piccadilly will be played at Piccadilly following a gentlemen's agreement between the captains.

Piccadilly was unable to host its previous encounter due to tsunami damage and the match was held at Two Black Sheep.

Happy Days has closed down and Dog's Bollocks will take their place in the league.

March 29 results: Didi's 3 Valhalla 6*; Queen Mary v Dog's Bollocks Postponed; Offshore 8* Amigos 1; Piccadilly 4 Pickles 5*; Two Black Sheep 3 Shakers 6*; Champs 7 Nag's Head 2* (*=winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. OffShore (21 points); 2. Queen Mary (16); 3.= Pickles, Didi's (14); 5=. Amigos, Shakers, Champs (13); 8. Valhalla (12); 9. Piccadilly; 10. Nag's Head (8); 11. Dog's Bollocks (6); 12. Two Black Sheep (3).

April 5 fixtures (home team first): Pickles v Dog's Bollocks; Champs v Amigos; Nag's Head v Didi's; Shakers v Queen Mary; Piccadilly v Two Black Sheep; Valhalla v OffShore.

Winners are gridders

PATONG: The second annual Loma Games for students at Patong Municipal Kindergarten was held on March 25 at the football field on the beach road.

The objective was to develop the youngsters' mental and physical abilities and to promote teamwork through running, throwing and jumping events.



A scramble for honors

THALANG: Some 40 players overcame stiff breezes and dark clouds on March 26 in the Laguna Phuket Golf Club (LPGC) Texas Scramble.

The Scramble format involves teams of four with each member playing a ball, but with each shot coming from the same spot. The best of the four drives from the tee is chosen, and all four team members then hit from where that ball lands, and so on.

In a Texas Scramble, at least four drives of each member of the team must be used during the course of the round, thereby ensuring that even the weakest

driver on the team contributes.

Team results were as follows: 1st Joseph Bailey, Joanne Bailey, Richard Anderson, Sirada Panpetch; 2nd Ubon Phupaden, Janpen Arno-Magee, Noi Vallant, Arunee Raess; 3rd Anton Suppan, Hannefloore Suppan, Rudy Schneidewind, Doris Schneidewind.

Other prizes were awarded for the following: Men's longest drive: Hole 15, Stephen Baxter (220 yards). Women's longest drive: Hole 4, Janpen Arno-Magee (170 yds). Closest to the pin: Hole 7, Richard Anderson; Hole 11, Susan Arnulphy.

Khao Khat mountain bike race

AO MAKHAM: Some 96 cyclists joined the first Borrae- Khao Khat Mountain Bike Ride on March 27, to help raise funds for education grants for local children.

Open-class winner Kerkkong Siriwan was the first to complete the 17-kilometer course, followed by Prasert Chitmart, Pongsakorn Noonsung, Rachan Rukcheep and Somyot Puangjit.

Phuket marine Electronics Supply, Service & Installation

**RADAR, RADIOS, AUTO PILOTS,
GENERATORS, ALTERNATORS,
LIFERAFTS, SAFETY EQUIPMENT.**



63-367-368 Mca Y Srauthad Rd,
T. Ratsada, A. Muang, Phuket, 83000.
Boat Lagoon Plaza 22/123 Thepkasatri Rd,
T. Koh Kaeo A. Muang, Phuket, 83000.
E-mail: phuketmarine@hotmail.com
More info visit: www.phuketmarine-81.com
Tel: (081) 252638-9 Fax: (076) 213267
Mobile: 01-8937503

FOR HOME AND HOTEL FOR ALL YOUR FITNESS NEEDS

**Brand-new arrival....
Body Charger Cardio Machine**

Special reductions on opening stock.
Save up 40%. Limited offer.



SPORTathlon Tel: 076 356 273 Fax: 076 356 274
www.sport.co.th E-mail: phuket@sport.co.th

Seara
SPORTS SYSTEMS

From the **START**, to the **FINISH LINE...**



**SEARA PLANS
for your
project's success**

Seara plans, builds and services international-standard, quality sports and athletic facilities across Asia, working in partnership with you, to match your exact needs and budget.

PLANNING, BUILDING AND SERVICING ASIA'S
RECREATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE
PHUKET
Tel: (66-76) 335 040 Fax: (66-76) 335 039
E-mail: Phuket@searasports.com and cj@searasports.com
BANGKOK
Tel: (66-2) 382 1722 Fax: (66-2) 382 1729
E-mail: info@searasports.com

www.searasports.com

QUALITY BOATS BUILT HERE

We build 100% fiberglass 'Steppa' boats right here in Phuket.

- 18ft open-bow 'Barracuda' is great for skiing and is the perfect family boat.
- 22ft center-console 'Skip-Jack' is excellent for diving and game fishing.
- 30ft and 36ft 'Flying-Fish' are popular for all commercial applications.

ALL OUR CUSTOM BUILT BOATS HAVE

- ★ a deep-V forward with outboard engines giving cruising speeds of over 30 knots.
- ★ easy, cheap and legitimate Thai registration. (built in Phuket)
- ★ very shallow draft for easy beach and Boat Lagoon access. (no need for a dinghy)
- ★ excellent stability and payload capacities (simply safer boats).
- ★ the option of being stored at home on a trailer (avoid expensive marina fees).
- ★ low ongoing maintenance costs due to our excellent supervised fiber construction.

PHUKET WATER TAXI
Anywhere...Anytime...
Since 1990



TEST DRIVE A DEMO OR VISIT OUR FACTORY.
Call 076-270379 or 01-8912688

Originally from Germany, Felix Mueller has spent 25 years as a master confectioner in a variety of places around the world.

Having finished his apprenticeship at Café Peters in Lippstadt, Germany, Mr Mueller continued to study further in order to perfect his art.

He has also completed courses in subjects such as "sugar drawing, casting and blowing" and "praline production".

Having worked in Germany, Switzerland, Britain and Cyprus, he arrived in Thailand in 2001. He worked at the JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa until 2004, when he decided to branch out and open his own business, Cake & More.

"I could see that the need for really top-quality cakes and pastries was growing in Phuket," he explains.

The Cake & More bakery at Rawai supplies cakes and pastries to several businesses in Phuket, as well as to the Cake & More cake and coffee bar at Central Festival Phuket.

Mr Mueller also hopes to open a cake and coffee shop at the Fisherman Way Business Center in Chalong in the middle of this year.

The following recipe is an example of a Western-style cake incorporating Thai ingredients, and is reasonably straightforward to prepare.

Chiang Mai Strawberries in Thai Fruit-Wine Jelly For 8 portions

Ingredients:

Cookie crust base:
65g crumbly cookies (butter or coffee flavor);

18g creamy, soft butter;
3g cake flour.

Wine jelly:

250ml Thai fruit wine of 10% alcohol by volume (choose a white wine, such as lychee, passion fruit or pineapple);
120ml drinking water;
75g pure honey (longan honey from Chiang Rai is good);
1 stalk lemon grass;
1.5cm piece of cinnamon stick;
1/8 of a lime, cut in a wedge;
1/8 of an orange, cut in a wedge;
5g fresh ginger root;
18g gelatin (about six leaves);
400g fresh strawberries;

8 pieces of physalis or *pum-pin* (an edible fruit commonly found in fields in Phuket);
whipped cream to decorate (optional).

80mm diameter cookie cutting ring;
8 dome-shaped molds – 80mm wide and 40mm high.

Method:

For the cookie crust base, coarsely crumble the cookies and mix well with the butter and flour until you have a semi-firm mixture.

Roll this flat to approximately 5mm thick and, using the

80mm diameter cookie cutter, cut eight circles.

Place the crust circles onto a sheet of baking paper and bake in an oven pre-heated to 180°C for about 8-10 minutes. Remove from the oven and set aside until needed.

Soak the gelatin leaves in cold water for about 10 minutes. Squeeze the juice from the lime and orange wedges; also cut zests from the skins for later use.

Finely chop the lemon grass stalk and peel and cut the ginger root into very small pieces. Pour the fruit wine, water and honey into a large cooking pot and heat.

Remove from the heat before the liquid comes to the boil. Add the lemon grass, cinnamon

Guest chef

By Jenna Wise

stick, lime and orange juice and zests and put a lid on the pot.

Allow this mixture to stand for 30 minutes, then pour through a fine-mesh sieve. Add the soaked gelatin leaves and stir well until they have dissolved.

To assemble the cakes, remove the stalks and leaves from the strawberries and wash well. Cut them into halves, or quarters if they are large. Arrange the strawberry pieces in the eight dome-shaped molds. Place a wire rack over the top of the molds before pouring the lukewarm wine jelly over the strawberries. Transfer carefully to the refrigerator and leave to set for four to five hours.

To release the jellies, place the molds in warm water for a few seconds and then turn them over. Using a spatula, carefully place the jellies on the prepared cookie bases. Decorate each cake with whipped cream, if desired, and a *pum-pin* or a strawberry.

Note that these fruit jelly cakes should be eaten on the day they are made. You can also use other fruit, such as grapes or other berries, instead of the strawberries.

Cake & More, shop: 3rd Floor, Central Festival Phuket; bakery: 18/15 Moo 2, Wiset Rd, Rawai. Tel: 076-289561, Fax: 076-289563, Email: gm@cakeandmore.info



JELLY GOOD: Although Felix Mueller (above) created the recipe on this page for dome-shaped molds, any shape will do so long as the cookie base matches it.

Skiff Asia

Ao Yon Phuket
(west side of Cape Panwa)

www.skiffasia.com
info@skiffasia.com
phone 06 954 1915

Come Sailing Today!

New performance sailing dinghies

- 4-day learn-to-sail package.
- Racing, instruction and scenic fun-sailing around Cape Panwa and Chalong Bay.
- New clubhouse facility has showers, views, beverages, sailing books and DVDs.
- Youth sailing program.

Intro "have-a-go" day for 2,000 baht. Resident prices from 1,800 baht per session.

NOON

JAPANESE RESTAURANT.
106/27 Soi Sathu, Sathu Beach,
1 Chong Takas, A Thalang, Phuket
Tel: 09-7301002
Next to Tropicana Hotel
in front of Sathu Beach Resort

Your cargo doesn't have to be expensive to be treated as precious.

Not everything we carry is priceless but everything is precious. Regardless of whether you're sending hundreds of kilos of fresh succulent fruits or just a few carats of precious gems, you can rest assured your cargo is being handled with the very highest quality of care. For every kind of cargo, put your trust in THAI Cargo.

For more information, please visit www.thaicargo.com or Thai Cargo Terminal, 2nd floor, Room CA 209, Phuket Airport
Tel: 076 261226 Fax: 076 327155

It's a bit confusing when you work in the property industry in Phuket. If you're a property agent, you make your living – you hope – by selling property and being paid for your services.

This can work well if the agent makes an agreement with the property owner to pay a commission in return for finding a customer. In a perfect world, the transaction would go something like this:

Customer: I want to buy a house.

Agent: What sort of house do you want and how much money have you got? (You may want to be a little more subtle, but you get the drift.)

Customer: I want a nice house with a swimming pool, an ocean view, a cat in the roof and a concrete pig, and I'll pay up to 2 million baht.

Agent: Follow me!

And off you go to the house. The customer emits a cry of, "Perfect", embraces you and hands over the cash. You hand the money to the owner, who gives you your commission.

If only it were that easy. The Phuket property boom has spawned a massive number of agents, many of them taxi drivers with a friend of a friend who has a plot of land to sell.

The agent's lament



Bob Andrews (seated, left) with his sales team,

LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

Agents typically expect a 3% commission for the introduction but many never see their money. People are very good at making promises when they want something, but not quite so good at delivering when they've got it.

There are a number of legitimate agents. For example, Phuket Land, established by William Pinsent more than 22 years ago, is probably regarded as the most established brokerage on the island.

A couple of years ago, Bob Andrews joined the firm, and became Managing Director of Phuket Land-search Ltd.

"There are many issues regarding commission that we have to deal with," said Mr Andrews. "For example, we took one client to see a house, but when we arrived there, the owner said, 'I'm sorry, but this client is already registered with us.'"

Mr Andrews asked the client if he had been shown this house. The client said, "Never".

"When we checked on this 'registration'," said Mr Andrews, "we discovered that an employee of another agent was privately registering every customer who walked into her office with every developer on the island."

He continued, "There is a duty on the part of an agent to register a client properly."

"When you've been dealing with a potential client for a couple of months and you arrange for him to see a property,

you need to keep the developer or seller informed of your dealings with the customer."

Mr Andrews noted that a lot of effort is often invested in a potential client even before he arrives on the island, and that an agent will often have identified several suitable properties.

"The problem is that there are plenty of 'goal hangers', op-

portunists who don't do a great deal of work but wait for an opportunity to grab customers. This creates many problems between the client, the developer and the appointed agent," he explained.

Mr Andrews and a number of other brokers are in the process of setting up a property agents' association in Phuket which, they hope, will be able to come up with a set of guidelines for standards in the industry.

The establishment of the association is definitely a step in the right direction. Let's hope it works out.

Maan Tawan and Chom Tawan - two superb developments located in an area of stunning natural beauty on Phuket's north west coast. Comprising an inspired collection of luxury villas, apartments and penthouses for the discerning buyer and set amongst extensively landscaped gardens in a private, managed estate, the homes are of the highest quality design and construction.

Our show property is now complete and ready for viewing.

☎ +66 076 271 188

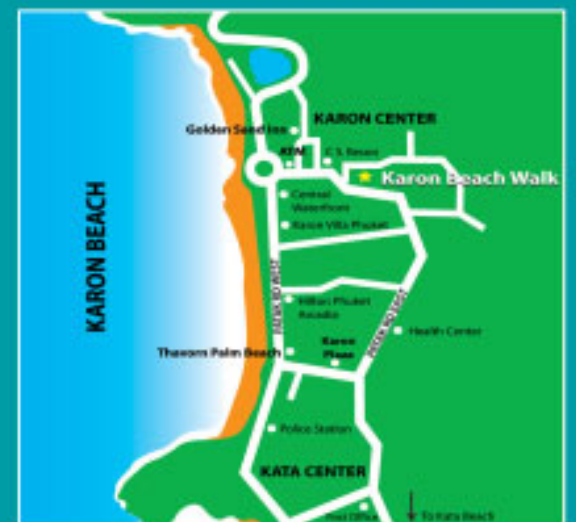
🌐 www.tawanproperties.com ✉ sales@tawanproperties.com

Looking Forward...

Karon Beach Walk Project



Where the sun sets twice,
the rainbow doubles
and the living is beyond paradise.



Resort homes in the heart of Karon Beach beginning from US\$250,000.



Contact information

Cellphone: Ying 09-158-9614

Sam 04-063-5480

Website: karonbeachwalk.com

E-mail: info@karonbeachwalk.com

Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut

Baan Cocoon no longer under wraps

KATHU: Two show homes of the Baan Cocoon development of luxury fairway homes at Phuket Country Club are expected to be complete by the end of this month, and about 20% of the 49 units have been either sold or reserved, Project Manager Montavee Hongsyok has told the *Gazette*.

"Every day we receive many emails asking for more information about this project," he said.

K. Montavee said that he expects all units in the 58-rai project to be sold within three years. "We have had plans to build properties since we opened the golf course 15 years ago. When we saw the property market boom, we spent a year drawing up plans for this project and then launched it."

He explained that there are four designs available, though buyers can modify the interior design to their needs.

The "Single Level" design offers three to four bedrooms with at least 678 square meters of living space, while the "Dual



An artist's perspective of a Dual Level home at Baan Cocoon.

Level" version will have two floors featuring four bedrooms and at least 795sqm of usable space.

Also available are two "Two Story" designs, one with four bedrooms and at least 837 sqm of usable space and another with four or five bedrooms, with at least 1,177sqm of usable space and panoramic views. Each home will have its own swimming pool.

Prices for the Single Level,

Dual Level and the smaller Two Level designs range from 30 million baht to 40 million baht, while prices for the larger Two Story design start at 50 million baht.

K. Montavee explained that the materials being used to build the homes are of high quality, such as the imported Swedish pine for the pool terraces.

All the major infrastructure has been installed underground, including electricity and telephone cables and mains water

supply. Each home will have a 5,000-liter water tank with an automatic pump as a backup water supply.

Besides being just strides away from a golf course, the other features attracting buyers, K. Montavee said, were the fact that the clubhouse has a restaurant and shops, and that the location provides easy access to Dulwich International College and to the major shopping attractions in Phuket City and Patong.

A development management company will be appointed to maintain common areas and coordinate onsite services.

K. Montavee said that Baan Cocoon is aimed at three target markets: retirees, business people in Asia looking to invest in a second home, and Europeans who want to move to Phuket because of the relatively low cost of living compared with Europe.

For more information contact K. Montavee at the Anuphas Pirom Resort at Tel: 076-202189 or 076-321815, Fax: 076-321811, Email: info@anuphaspiromresort.com

Home of the Week

Lifetime membership of Phuket Country Club golf course is a perk that comes with this 21-million-baht luxury home in Kathu.

The solid, double-brick house stands on 1,008 square meters of Chanote-title land on the grounds of Phuket Country Club.

It has three bedrooms, all with en-suite bathrooms (one with a Jacuzzi); living, family and dining areas; maid's quarters; a laundry room and a large European-style kitchen.

There is also an office/study, which has teak folding doors opening out onto the terrace and pool area. The 8m x 3m infinity-edge swimming pool is set into the terrace and is overlooked by a sala with a circular sunken lounge and a central fixed table, and edged by palm trees.

The balcony of a bedroom at the rear of the house has a view of trees, a large lily pond and, beyond, the golf course.

The property has a two-car carport, fitted with timber-doored storage cupboards, and there is under-house storage as well.

Utilities include telephone, UBC cable TV, mains water and well water, a water heater, 3-

Sai Taan

Luxury Villas For Sale/Rent

Tel: +66 (0)7627 1255 Fax: +66 (0)7627 1256
Email: info@sai-taan-phuket.com
Web: www.sai-taan-phuket.com

KAMALA NATHONGHOUSE

Your last chance to live in our secure community with local and international neighbors.

Club house : Swimming pool, fitness room, sauna, steam room, mini-bar, international management.

80% of the villas have now been sold. Don't miss this opportunity to view the last few remaining villas.

Visit our sales office.

For details call 01-8162156 E-mail: kim@kamalanathonghouse.com
99/119 Moo 3, Tambon Kamala, Amphur Kathu, Phuket, 83120, Thailand. Tel: +66 76278 150 Fax: +66 76278 151
Web site: http://www.kamalanathonghouse.com

the PLANTATION

The Plantation, Kamala Bay, Phuket.
Experience The Luxury Of Nature

Now Introducing The TERRACES...

FOLLOWING THE PHENOMENAL SUCCESS OF *The APARTMENTS*, *The PLANTATION* NOW BRINGS YOU *The TERRACES* - 17 LUXURIOUS TERRACED APARTMENTS OVERLOOKING KAMALA BAY AND THE SURROUNDING COASTLINE...

A Natural Paradise... Designed for Living

PRICES FOR *The TERRACES* START FROM 13,000,000 Baht

www.theplantationphuket.com

VISIT *The PLANTATION* SHOW APARTMENT

Phuket Office:
17/37 Moo 6, Kamala, Kathu, Phuket 83150, Thailand
Tel: +66 76 386040-2 Fax: +66 76 386043
E-mail: info@theplantationphuket.com

Bangkok Office:
Somkid Place, 6 Soi Somkid, Ploenchit Rd. Lumpini, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Tel: +66 2655 1970-4 Fax: +66 2655 1976
Website: www.theplantationphuket.com

*Details subject to change.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH **PACVEST GROUP**

Kathu



The home overlooks the fairway at Phuket Country Club, to which the new owner will receive a lifetime membership as part of the purchase.

Living the fair way

phase electricity, and gas and electric cookers. The home is air-conditioned, and has ceiling fans as fitted well.

Fully furnished with modern furniture, the house is close to Phuket City and to the major shopping centers on the bypass road.

For more information contact Mark Clifton of Pacific Paradise Group. Tel: 076-313298 or 01-6776103. Fax: 076-313319. E-mail: info@paradisepg.com Website: www.paradisepg.com



ONE OF A KIND



WATERFRONT LIFESTYLES

A NEW KIND OF INSPIRATION... the Aquaminium has arrived

The Aquaminium is destined to change the face of waterfront living around the world. Now you don't just live on the waterfront...you are part of it.

The Aquaminium's revolutionary design incorporates an absolute waterfront condominium of exclusive apartments with private boat berths into an exhilarating concept layout. Step from your home to your boat and on to the island paradises that surround you...in minutes. Life has never been so good.

The Aquaminium is just one of the fantastic features you will find at our super-chic tropical marina. A residential resort community with everything for the individual or family with style.

Even if you've never owned a boat, yacht charters are delivered to your front door, and our never-ending array of lifestyle facilities—set around a beautiful tropical marina—is guaranteed to inspire you for life!

Show apartments now open

For further information contact us directly: Royal Phuket Marina.
68 Moo 2 Thepkassatri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200, Thailand.
ph: + 66 (0) 76 239 762 paradise@royalphuketmarina.com
www.royalphuketmarina.com



RESIDENTIAL, RETAIL, ENTERTAINMENT.

Exclusive Residences at Phuket's Finest Address



Discerning design that blends tradition with contemporary living. Choose a home to suit your own Laguna Phuket lifestyle:

Two-Bedroom Pool Villas: Invest in the Banyan Tree lifestyle

Condominiums: One and two-bedroom Allamanda suites

Townhomes: Spacious two-storey semi-detached homes

Residences: Elegant one-and two-storey private villas

laguna
PROPERTY

Sales Office at Canal Village
Tel: 66 (0) 76 324 366 Fax: 66 (0) 76 324 065
E-mail: property@lagunaphuket.com
www.lagunaproperty.com



A Natural Paradise in Phuket Town

BAAN
Rommai
Chai Lay

Baan Rommai Chai Lay Co Ltd: 79/4 Moo 3,
T. Rasada, A. Muang, Phuket 83000.
Tel: 0-7624-0991-2 Fax: 0-7624-1287
www.baanrommai.net
E-mail: info@baanrommai.net
Open Daily 9 am - 7 pm

Baan Rim Tarn Chertgtalay



- 2/3-bedroom villas, private pool
- Close to Laguna Phuket

- Contemporary style
- 15 mins to airport

SOLE AGENT
CBRE
CB RICHARD ELLIS

09 729 8804
076 270 737

baanrimtarn@cbre.com
www.cbre.co.th

Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Most people who know me would probably describe me as a little predictable. Actually, no, they'd probably describe me as *completely* predictable.

I'm the sort of person who tends to eat at the same restaurants on a regular basis, even ordering the same dishes on arrival. Come to think of it, some of the waitresses don't even bother giving me a menu now.

While we're on the subject of restaurants, I'd like to know before I decide to visit a restaurant that it's going to be open – and that the owners have not decided to take the night off to go and visit Uncle Somchai because there's a "Y" in the day.

The plant world enjoys predictability, too. But not all plants are as predictable as others. They're usually known for the particular flowers or fruit that they produce, or leaves that set them apart from all other plants.

In terms of appearance, the golden dewdrop, or *tien thong* in Thai, is one of the oddest plants around. It doesn't seem to have decided what it should be known for, so it kind of has a go at everything – speedy growth, flowers, berries, the lot. It goes by many other names, including skyflower and pigeonberry.

It's a fairly fast-growing plant that can reach heights of a couple of meters.

My little golden dewdrop

A dewdrop is most certainly a dainty thing – beautiful, delicate and petite. The "dewdrops" that appear on this adventurously named plant are far from delicate, though. Perhaps "golden dewdrop" isn't the ideal name for a plant whose fruit look more like bright orange peas.

The flowers, however, are quite cute – tiny, vivid, lilac and hanging in spectacular clusters. Their appearance is followed swiftly by the loose clusters of orange berries, which almost look good enough to eat.

Eating them is not the most sensible thing to do, however – like many other plants in Thailand, the golden dewdrop's berries are poisonous (they contain hydrocyanic acid), so it's probably a good idea to keep this plant well away from children's play areas.

The berries appear in such quantities that they actually cause the branches to arch downward, the limbs looking as if they can hardly cope with the weight. On most plants both berries and flowers are displayed at the same time, in a never-ending cycle.

The golden dewdrop grows at an enthusiastic pace and, if not regularly attacked with secateurs,



DANGEROUS DEWDROPS: Although attractive, the orange berries of the golden dewdrop are poisonous.

soon becomes a straggly bush – making it a superb hedge or effective windbreak at the edge of your garden. With regular pruning it grows even denser.

If you train it well and use a few bits of wire, you can even get it to grow into almost any shape you want. It's a plant that will do as it's told once it receives instructions. Topiary starts here.

Unlike in England, where in winter it's cold and in summer, it's hot (well, less cold), here we have a somewhat different cli-

mate. European plants reflect their seasons. In spring, blossoms appear on fruit-bearing plants, which all dutifully drop off en masse when it gets a bit warmer, to be replaced by the fruit.

Not so in Phuket. Plants seem a little more casual because of the lack of dramatically different seasons. Perhaps this is why plant life in Southeast Asia is so much more spectacular than the somewhat tedious flora further north. The golden dewdrop is a solid example of such careless display.

Like so much of the vegetation that thrives in Thailand, the

golden dewdrop will put up with virtually any kind of treatment. It's happy both in full sun or partial shade, though it will produce more flowers and fruit in full sun. It needs a fairly moist, well-drained soil, but doesn't need too much water.

Perhaps because of its virile nature, in other parts of the world the golden dewdrop has actually been declared a menace, probably because of the way it propagates itself. In the US, it's been officially labeled as one of Hawaii's most invasive horticultural plants. Even its scientific name, *Duranta erecta*, conjures up images of virility and staying power.

Life would probably be fairly dull if everything was totally predictable, like me. Flowers and poisonous berries? Why not? And if you see Uncle Somchai visiting the kitchen in my favorite restaurant carrying a bowl of what looks like orange peas, please let me know. After all, there was a "Y" in the day yesterday.

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?

Email Bloomin' Bert at: bloominbert@hotmail.com

Property Gazette

Properties For Sale

ONE-STORY HOUSE

in Anupas Golf Ville. 4 bedrooms, 5 aircons, kitchen with dining room & built-in furniture in every room. Price: 5.7 million baht. Tel: 07-2836716.

RAWAI TOWNHOUSE

for sale: 650,000 baht. Freehold, 400 meters to beach. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

PATONG CONDO

Studio, 28sqm, freehold, 490,000 baht. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

SEAVIEW LAND

10.7 rai at Nai Thon Beach, 750 meters to the beach: 45 million baht. Call for details. Tel: 09-7298365.

65 RAI BEACHFRONT

land for sale, Chalong area. Perfect for a villa or marina project. 180 million baht. Please call. Tel: 01-8916143.

CONDOS FOR SALE

1) 25sqm room, balcony, TV, washing machine, cooking facilities: 650,000 baht. 2) 50sqm room, balcony, TV, music, kitchen, nice bathroom, mountain view, fully furnished: 1.5 million baht. In Rawai. Tel: 04-0659943. Email: markustawai@yahoo.com

BEAUTIFUL LAND

Chalong. 3.28 rai on rising ground and commanding extensive views, in a secluded area, cultivated with many tropical plants. Chanote title, water, tel line and fully fenced. Tel: 09-7245979, 09-812-9441. Email: jayma79@yahoo.co.uk

LAND FOR SALE

Near Dulwich. Please call for details. Tel: 01-9888180.

TOWNHOUSE

for sale. 2-stories, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, one aircon, carport. In Anupas Manohrom project, near Central. Price 2 million baht. Tel: 09-7298365.

GOLF COURSE LIVING

1 rai, fully-serviced lots, exclusive gated community. Tel: 09-9725226. Email: bgbphuket@yahoo.com

SEAVIEW CHANOTE

land, with well water and road, located in Ao Makham, 1,220 sqm, 60m to the sea and a small harbor. Property is surrounded by a solid wall and is ready to build on. Must see to appreciate. Price: 5.7 million baht. Tel: 07-2728216.

PATONG SEAVIEW

3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms. 8.5 million baht. 500sqm land, option for extra land. Tel: 01-4775306. Email: patriklambert@hotmail.com

LAND FOR SALE

Kho Ko Khao Island, 12km from Takuapa. 3 plots - 3rai, 6rai, 5rai - by the beach. Price: 1.2 million baht per rai. Tel: 06-9431430.

PATONG SEAVIEW

Old Thai-style house on 1,224 sqm of land, with stunning sea views. 5.9 million baht. Tel: 09-2911112, 06-2707228.

KATA BEACH LAND

For sale: 1.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-0918908. Email: katabeachestate@hotmail.com

THALANG LAND PLOTS

Chanote title. Secure, quiet & private location. Road & electricity. Price: from 1,000 baht/sqm. Call Jonny at Tel: 09-2911112, 06-2707228.

NAI HARN LAND

Soi Kok Makam. 2-rai at 3.8 million baht/rai. No agents. Tel: 09-5944017.

HOUSE FOR SALE

49sq wah. Mini bar, built-in furniture, ADSL Internet, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Price: 3.5 million baht. Contact Khun Louis. Anuphat Villa Phase 1. Tel: 09-6455044. Email: louis_k97@hotmail.com

SEAVIEW LAND

1-6 rai elevated land on island off the coast of Phuket. Stunning sea view, 15 mins to Phuket City: 2.5 million/rai. No agents. Tel: 076-292874, 06-9520772. Email: kamala@phuket.ksc.co.th

NEW HOUSE

for sale. 1 floor, 3 beds, 2 baths, 260sqm with garden, 2 new aircons, water heater. Only 3 million baht. Neramit Homes Project. Contact for more info. Tel: 01-4215751. Email: mt_c@hotmail.com

BANG TAO BEACH

124sqm & 240sqm furnished apartments. 1 min to beach. 6.5 million baht and up. Please call for more info at Tel: 06-2806624 or visit our website: www.bangtaobeachgardens.com

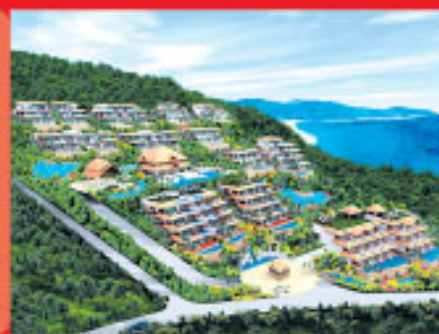


EXCLUSIVE TO PHUKET ONE!! ON-SITE SALES OFFICES NOW OPEN



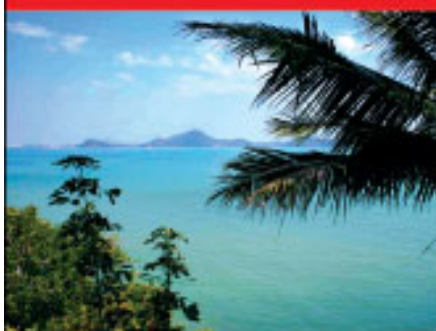
CHALONG

Walk to the beach from these value-priced homes in a great new estate. Show house open daily. **PRICE:** From 3.3 million baht.



KALIM

Real value freehold apartments with modern design, large terraces and breathtaking sea views. Incredible value for new apartments based on recent auction results. **PRICE:** From 57,000 baht per square metre.



CAPE PANWA

Absolute waterfront luxury villas with breathtaking views across Phuket Bay. Display home now open to view. **PRICE:** From 25 million baht.



KARON

Value for money pool villas within walking distance of Karon Beach. Quality fit-out includes air con, wardrobes and European kitchen. **PRICE:** From 8.13 million baht.

Tel/Fax: 076-345707, 076 290 550 Mobile: 01-5354546, 09-5862959.
Email: info@phuketonerealestate.com www.phuketonerealestate.com

ANDREW PARK

Property Agents & Consultants

Sales and Rentals

Over 9 years' sales experience in Thailand

We can answer all your questions

Call us now at
01-8923633

E-mail us at
phuketsales@andrewpark.com
www.andrewpark.com



Imagine a view like this...
we have many seaview properties for sale. Call now to see the sunset.

We have homes in every price range. This large 2-bedroom home is priced to sell fast at only 3.8 million baht. Don't miss it, call now.

CBRE

CB RICHARD ELLIS

Professional real estate advice for those looking for property in Phuket

Residential Sales & Leasing
Property Management
Villa Rentals
Research & Valuation
Development & Design Consultancy

TEL: 076 239 967-9
E-mail: phuket@cbre.com
www.cbre.co.th



RESORT APARTMENTS & SUITES AT LAYAN
FROM 3.5 MILLION BAH

Telephone (076) 271 535 www.oceanbreezephuket.com

SIAM REAL ESTATE
DUE TO EXPANSION WE HAVE
MOVED TO OUR NEW HQ
OFFICE AT RAWAI

36/ 8 Moo 2,
Viset Rd., Rawai,
Muang, Phuket, 83130
Tel: 076 281543, 076 288908
email: info@siamrealestate.com
www.siamrealestate.com

For other issues, deadlines for Classified ads remain as before.