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Airport landing fees cut by half

By Gazette Staff

PHUKET: Airports of Thailand (AOT) is set to cut as much as 50% off landing fees for both international and domestic arrivals at Phuket International Airport (PIA) until December, in an effort to boost the region's flagging tourism industry.

The Director of PIA, Sq/Ldr Pornchai Eua-aree, confirmed that AOT had held a meeting in Bangkok to discuss the cut in fees.

However, he said, "We cannot do this [bringing back tourists] all alone; we need help from the Tourism Authority of Thailand, hotels and travel agents to boost arrivals in Phuket."

"The reduction of landing fees could help boost morale in terms of customers and businesses. [But] to bring tourists back to Phuket, we need the full cooperation of hotels and restaurants, through discounts and promotions," he said.

Meanwhile, on July 1, Thai Airways International (THAI) doubled the fuel surcharge on domestic fares, citing the continuing rise in the cost of fuel on the world market.

The increase took the surcharge for a round trip from 200 baht to 400. For a one-way journey it rose from 100 baht to 200.

THAI's District Sales Manager for Upper-Southern Thailand, Kalayapha Panich, told the *Gazette*, "We introduced the 100-baht-per-flight surcharge on May 1, but we have decided that we must increase it again."

"However, even if the price of fuel continues to rise, that does not necessarily mean we can increase the surcharge when-

Rice to visit Phuket



US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

- Photo by epa/Khaled El-Fiqi

PHUKET: US Secretary of State (foreign minister) Condoleezza Rice is to inspect reconstruction work in tsunami-affected areas of Phuket and Phang Nga Provinces on July 11, after being welcomed at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Sihasak Phuangkitkeow, Director General of the Department of Information at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told the *Gazette* that the US team - including Ms Rice - are due to visit four countries in Asia: China, Japan, South Korea and Thailand.

ever we like; any increase has to be approved by the authorities."

K. Kalayapha said that the number of flights between Phuket and Bangkok has been cut from around eight a day in the 2004 low season to five or six a day this year. This was partly

because of the tsunami and partly because it is the low season, she said.

"This compares with an average of 14 THAI flights a day in the pre-tsunami period of the last high season," K. Kalayapha added.

Bike racers suspected of burning police box

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PHUKET CITY: A second police booth has been destroyed by fire, leading police to revise their belief that an earlier, similar incident was due to an electrical fault.

Police received reports of the latest fire, at the police booth at the intersection of Wichit Songkhram Rd and the bypass road, at 2:30 am on July 3.

Pol Col Kokiat Wongvorachart, Deputy Commander of Phuket Provincial Police, told the *Gazette*, "It took about 20 minutes to stop the fire, and by that time we'd lost the TV monitor, the traffic light control system, seats and the air conditioner. The total damage comes to about 400,000 baht."

On June 18 a police booth burned down at the intersection of Patipat Rd and Bangkok Rd. At the time, police said they believed the fire to be the result of an electrical fault. Now, however, they believe an unsavory pattern is emerging.

"We now believe that both arson attacks were the work of members of a teenage bike gang," Col Kokiat explained.

"We have been staging roadblocks to prevent them racing on public roads and this has annoyed them."

"On Saturday night we set up a roadblock in the Saphan Hin area. Later, the teenagers gathered in front of Wat Sansuk on Ong Sim Phai Rd. Some of them must have gone from there to the booth and set it on fire."

He added, "Police found bottles of beer, a motorbike wheel and cigarettes near the scene of the crime," Col Kokiat added.

Sangkhae Leelanaporn
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'WE LOVE PHUKET' AWARDS



Fumiko Nakayama collects her prize of two bottles of Trivento wine, from Wine Connection, presented to her by *Gazette* Desk Editor Stephen Fein.



Gazette reporter Athiga Jundee (left) presents a voucher for a spa treatment at The Mongosteen Resort & Spa to Pimprapa Jankaow.

Volunteers sought for Samaritans' phone lines

KHAOLAK: The legacy of emotional trauma left by the tsunami is generally unquantified, but perceived to be widespread throughout the affected communities.

In response to this, the Samaritans of Thailand is seeking volunteers to man telephones at the Samaritans' office at the Mental Health Recovery Center in Khao Lak, answering calls from people in mental distress.

The Samaritans of Thailand – there are currently branches in Bangkok and Chiang Mai – is part of the international Samaritans network, which offers support to people in crisis.

Founded in 1953 in London by Chad Varah, the Samaritans believe that offering people the opportunity to talk about their problems in confidence and without prejudice can alleviate despair and suicidal feelings.

The Samaritans of Khao Lak hopes to find people able to converse in English or local Thai dialects to man its telephone lines for about four or five hours a day.

Those who feel that they can help should call K. Paweena of the Samaritans of Khao Lak at Tel: 076-423273-4 or 09-1394490, or Fax: 076-420676.

Alternatively, they can contact Thai Together by calling Tel: 04-0534283, 076-322064-8 ext 107, 076-322115 or 09-9932322.

Austrian Airlines plans Phuket flights

By Gazette Staff

PHUKET: Starting November 4, Austrian Airlines will operate non-stop direct flights between Phuket and Vienna.

Austrian Airlines' Chief Commercial Officer, Dr Josef E Burger, told the *Gazette* that the airline is expecting to carry at least 14,000 passengers a year on the route, generating revenue of as much as 500 million baht.

From November to December 10 the flights will be weekly, arriving in Phuket on Friday and departing Saturday. From December 12 to March 10 there will be twice-weekly flights, departing on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The airline will use Boeing 767-300ER aircraft that are capable of carrying 239 passengers; 36 in business class and 203 in economy. Flying time will be 12 hours.

A return ticket in economy class will be priced at 39,500 baht. Business class is priced at 93,000 baht. An introductory special offer package includes three nights' accommodation in



'We want to pursue a strategy that helps the tourist industry in Phuket.' – Austrian Airlines' Dr Josef E Burger.

Vienna and a sightseeing train trip.

Dr Burger said, "We consider Phuket to be a destination with potential growth

"But most importantly, at a time when other airlines are shying away, we want to pursue a strategy that helps the tourist industry in Phuket."

He explained that he expected 95% of the service's passengers to be European, mostly from East and Central Europe,

though the company will advertise its service in other parts of the continent.

Vice-Governor Winai Buapradit commented, "We'll be ready for tourists when the airlines operate regular services again.

"We have many packages on offer and the [tsunami] alarm system will be completed at the end of October.

"If we've done our job well here, I believe that people will come and Phuket will recover."

Suwalai Pinpradab, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Region 4, said, "Dr Burger visited us on January 3 and told us that friends who stick together in difficult times are real friends.

"We realize the importance of airlines; the main reason for the declining number of tourists is that many carriers have stopped flying here.

"In the past we had about 200 flights per week but now we have only 66," she remarked.

"This is good news and we will help to ensure that Phuket can welcome tourists in safety."

Exhibitions of art aimed at boosting tourism

PHUKET CITY: In an attempt to revitalize tourism, the Office of Contemporary Art and Culture (OCAC) is organizing a series of art exhibitions in Phuket between July and December.

"Unique Andaman", which will be held at Central Festival Phuket on August 27 and 28, will feature works entered in a contemporary art contest of the same name. The works that win prizes will be on display at Central from September 22 to 27.

This will be followed by the "Andaman Blossom Flower" exhibition throughout August, which will showcase works by artists who were asked to depict what they would like the Andaman region to look like as it recovers from the tsunami. It will be staged at Phuket Thai Hua School in Phuket City.

Patong will host "Arts on the Beach" from September 24 to 26, while Phuket Thai Hua School will be the venue for an exhibition of works inspired by Sino-Portuguese architecture from September 5 to October 5.

There will also be an exhibition of pavement art on Phuket Rd, Dibuk Rd and Thalang Rd, in Phuket City, from July 29 to 31.

The organizers hope that these events will attract tourists as well as artists to Phuket.

The director of the Art and Cultural Institute at the OCAC, Samart Chansoon said, "These [exhibitions] should be a great help to Phuket, as they feature rare works that can't really be seen elsewhere in Thailand.

"We hope they will attract art-lovers, artists and their relatives, both Thai and foreign."

He added that artists from all over Thailand are being invited to Phuket in July to discuss the development of the province's new art gallery, proposed in April by Provincial Administration Organization President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr.

Architecture, hotel show underway

PHUKET CITY: The Architect & Engineering Exhibition 2005 was due to be held July 7 to 10 from 11 am to 8 pm in the Grand Ballroom on the 2nd floor of the Royal Phuket City Hotel.

Organizers Delice Thai say this year's event will be bigger and better than last year's, featuring one-stop shopping for home builders and hotel managers, lightweight structural and roofing systems from Europe and America, artificial surfaces and nano-technology products, construction materials from more than 100 different manufacturers and importers, numerous pool and spa products, and more. Admission is free.

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Taiwan finally cancels its Phuket travel advisory

PHUKET: Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has finally lifted its "orange" alert, advising against travel to Phuket.

The Ministry announced on July 28 that it had received a report from Taiwan's representative office in Thailand confirming that Phuket's tourism facilities and transportation networks have been successfully repaired and rebuilt.

Daily living for locals has returned to normal, the report said, and tourists from North

America and Europe are returning to the island.

Panu Maswongsa, Vice-President of the Phuket Tourist Association, told the *Gazette*, "I am pleased Taiwan has now officially lifted the travel alert."

"However, the number of tourists visiting a place depends upon the availability of transportation. China Airlines of Taiwan suspended its regular flights to Phuket after the tsunami.

"Only a few airlines are still offering direct flights to Phuket,"

he said. "Since flying via Bangkok to Phuket is more expensive than a direct flight, it may take a while for tourism to recover."

"The government must tell Phuket's tourist markets how safe it is here," K. Panu said.

Suwalai Pinpradab, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand's office in Phuket, said that Taiwanese tourists are important to the island; about 200,000 used to come to Phuket every year.

— *Ananya Hongsa-ngiam*



Ram Kapse, Governor of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, shakes hands with his Phuket counterpart, Udomsak Uswarangkura, after the signing ceremony.

Phuket 'twinning' with Andaman & Nicobars

CHERNG TALAY: Delegations representing the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Phuket Province have signed an agreement "cementing the friendship" between the two geographic entities and effectively making them "sister cities".

The two sides also agreed to try to establish direct air links and promote regional tourism.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed June 29 at a late-afternoon ceremony at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket, consisted of two Articles.

The first states that "both sides agree to promote ... understanding and strengthen the relationship through tourism, education, culture, urban development, commerce and investment."

Article 2 states that both parties agree to undertake regular exchanges in four areas: tourism; education and culture; urban development, especially water supply issues; and solid waste management.

Ram Kapse, Port Blair-based Governor of the islands,

said after the signing that the MoU further strengthens the long-standing good ties between Thailand and India.

Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura told reporters that the two sides would now work on other issues, such as allowing Thai fishing vessels to work in the waters around the Andaman & Nicobars for more than the one month currently allowed.

Gov Udomsak also said both sides had agreed in principle to work toward establishing direct air links, saying that such a move would be particularly beneficial to the recreational diving industries in both places.

He noted that Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra discussed the issue with the Indian government during a recent visit to Delhi.

Gov Udomsak said they had also discussed linking Thailand's tsunami warning system to Port Blair through Phuket, as this would make tourists feel more secure when traveling in the region.

— *Anongnat Sartpisut*

**Holders
of prepaid
phone cards
'must register
by year-end'**

PHUKET: Phuket Vice Governor Winai Buapradit has urged all Phuket residents who bought prepaid Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) cards for their mobile phones before May 10, 2005 to register them with the government.

Registration began July 1 and phone users have until the end of the year to submit their registrations.

A source at the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MoICT) told the *Gazette* that those who have not registered by the end of the year will have their phone service canceled.

The move follows a May 31 Cabinet resolution calling for SIM card registration in the hope that it will prevent insurgents in the Deep South using mobile phones to detonate bombs remotely without fear of being identified.

The MoICT is responsible for organizing the registration effort. Those buying new SIM cards must now present identification at the point of sale.

The registration has been criticized by some groups as an infringement of human rights and by others as unlikely to prevent bomb attacks.

V/Gov Winai added that the public could register their SIM cards at most shops selling mobile phones or at any of the following locations: Phuket Waterworks offices; Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority Office; TOT office; District (*Amphur*) Offices; or any Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) or Municipal (*tessaban*) office.

Those registering must bring with them either a Thai ID card or, in the case of foreigners, a passport.

— *Sangkhae Leelanaporn*

Governor's environment watchdogs score arrest

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

KAMALA: The new special committee, set up by Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura to investigate land encroachment and abuses of environmental protection, has garnered its first arrest – that of Boonchuay Reungpetch, 40, on June 25, for encroaching on and building three homes on national forest land in Kamala.

The arrest came days before the Governor had even officially ratified the committee, which includes an officer from each District Police Station, District Office and District Forestry Office, members of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), as well as representatives of the Provincial Public Works and Environmental Protection Offices.

Committee head Thongchai Saowapong, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment, told

the *Gazette*, "We must investigate every complaint – whether anonymous or not, whether submitted by letter or by phone call – because we must be sure [whether the complaint is legitimate or not]."

"Many times [in the past] I have investigated complaints when, in fact, the landowners had genuine land documents."

"But even if [investigating each and every complaint] wastes our time, we must investigate. We can't choose which complaints to investigate," K. Thongchai said.

At the end of May, Gov Udomsak told the *Gazette*, "I would like the committee to be able to act as soon as it receives a report that someone is damaging the environment, especially when they are despoiling hills."

"I have had so many complaints from people about officers just standing by and letting commercial interests chop down trees or make a mess of hills."



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Queer News

Kata cat burglars get creamed in stakeout

KATA: An all-night police stakeout hit paydirt when a pair of cat burglars tried to rob a hotel room they thought was occupied by a drunken foreigner – but which was actually full of undercover officers lying in wait.

Montri Kasemsuk, 37-year-old owner of the Dreamy Bungalow residence on Kata's Koktanote Rd, notified police of a series of late-night burglaries targeting his guests.

A suspicious middle-aged couple had been spotted lurking about the grounds at around the times of some of the thefts, he told Chalong Police Superintendent Pol Col Chalit Kaewyarat.

The thefts seemed to be following a regular pattern, with the thieves arriving in the dead of night to enter the rooms of guests who had failed to lock doors and were apparently too tired – or too drunk – to notice their unwelcome guests.

This perhaps indicated that, like many criminals, the thieves compensated with boldness and overconfidence for what they lacked in creativity and common sense.

Knowing this, Col Chalit devised a cunning plan. He ordered Chalong Police Deputy Inspector Pol Col Pachai Mattayan to set up a stakeout using undercover police. After all, allowing the few tourists who are still on the island to be robbed is hardly going to be conducive to reversing the current trend in tourism.

As the Kata bars closed and revelers staggered their weary way back to their rooms, the door to bungalow unit 4A was purposely left ajar, and empty beer bottles placed outside in order to give the burglars the impression that the room was occupied by someone who had been drinking.

Undercover officers were posted in nearby units to provide surveillance, and although the hours passed with no sign of trespassers, the undercover cops kept up their vigil.

At about 4:30 am, the late-night, low-season silence was broken by the sound of a motorcycle pulling up and parking outside the bungalow colony.

The officers watched silently as the cat burglars stealthily went from bungalow to bungalow, slowly testing the doorknobs of each to see which hapless foreign tourist was destined to be that night's victim.

Lured to bungalow 4A like mice to a block of cheese, the burglars lost no time stepping inside and rummaging about for whatever valuables they could find.

At that moment, the police sprung the trap.

After their apprehension, the two thieves were identified as 43-year-old Khampon Sae Tang, 43, and his female partner-in-crime Meena Dotatamon, 41.

Police noted for the record that they arrived together on a dark blue Kawasaki Kaze, with a Phuket license plate.

Caught red-handed, there was little they could do but confess. The couple told police they had robbed tourists in Karon "many times", and always in the same way.

They kept a watch out for foreign tourists who liked to return to their bungalows and drink themselves silly, forgetting to lock their doors before they fell asleep. After that the pair would sneak into the bungalow and help themselves to whatever they could find. They were charged with breaking and entering, as well as burglary.

The stakeout was a long-overdue piece of good news for the Chalong Police, whose crime enforcement obligations stretch beyond Tambon Chalong proper and into Kata-Karon.

The last time they hit headlines was over an alleged extortion incident that resulted in temporary transfer for two officers.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

How long can

Superficially, it looked like the buy of the century: 10 pieces of land totaling just over 100 rai at Mai Khao Beach went up for auction on June 23, with the bidding started at just 64.32 million baht. Must be something wrong, right?

Wrong. It's a dream property: 504 meters fronting Phuket's last unspoiled beach, next to Sirinat National Park, comprising 10 parcels of easy-to-build-on flat land; convenient access from Mai Khao Soi 4; artesian water source; and all good title – eight *chanote* deeds and two *Nor Sor 3 Gor*, all issued in 1955 – 26 years before the troublesome National Park Act.

"I checked up on the land documents myself," said Bangkok Bank Business Center Account Manager Sakdadet Anumas. "There shouldn't have been any problems."

Bangkok Bank and the Phuket Legal Execution Office (PLED) sponsored the auction. They doubtless had high hopes bidders would fall all over each other for this unique presidential-sized property – in the government's coveted "yellow zone", thought ideal for tourism development – and priced at less than many a luxury home perched on a single rocky rai of cliff-side.

But they were wrong. In fact, only one person placed a bid on June 23, and that for just 102 million baht.

The distressed owner, Hong Yuan Enterprises, owed the bank 80.4 million baht, but did not even show up for the proceedings.

The bank, which wanted 330 million baht, declined the bid, hoping for more at the next auction on June 30.

Was it a sign the property market has turned belly-up with tourism? Hardly.

As K. Sakdadet explained, there is serious interest, but experienced punters apply poker-like strategies to the auction process, carried out by PLED on four consecutive Thursdays.

Still, he was less than wildly optimistic. "The bank may get its price, or less," he said, "or perhaps more."

How is the slump in tourism affecting the Phuket property market? **Tang Rob** looks at the odd case of a 100-rai tract of prime beachside property in Mai Khao that failed to find a buyer when it was first put up for auction, and what can be inferred from this about the property market in Phuket.



But for now, the property industry continues to look generally rosy, unusually low.

One had the impression the bank would seize anything above the asking price at the next meet.

"Money circulating here basically comes from tourism. Fewer tourists equals less money." – Bangkok Bank Business Center Account Manager Sakdadet Anumas.

"The owner will be there," he explained, "and I think the bank will let it go."

A number of factors account for this. The property, once developed into luxury homes or a five-star hotel complex (one suggested use) could easily be worth billions.

But undeveloped it is larger than most foreign developers want, and they lead the market.

"You want an investment where you're not up to your eyeballs in land inventory," said one local developer (who prefers anonymity).

He explained that home sales were always somewhat risky. "Say an investor has US\$8 million, he can put his money in blue chips: the first year he'd have US\$ 9.6 million.

"After the second year he would have US\$12 million – and with a lot less risk.

"The guys with money here are all doing projects of 15 to 20 houses, covering 12-20 rai," he said, the figures largely coinciding with developments listed on Phuket's property websites.

As for the market since December, his views dovetail with those of former Phuket City Mayor Phummasak Hongsyok, a large property developer and head of the Phuket Real Estate Club.

"Sales of high-end homes are growing at a stronger rate than tourism is," K. Phummasak told the vernacular press in May.

"Customers come from the south of Spain, Scandinavia and, most importantly, Hong Kong."

Home sales in the 10- to 100-million-baht range, he said, were strong; money was "pouring in."

While property prices have – thus far – weathered the tsunami after-effects, they are not indestructible.

Domestic capital accounts for little of the funding. "Interest is greatest in Tambon Pa Khlok and Phuket's south end. Many projects are going on there," he said.

For his part, the Bangkok Bank's K. Sakdadet noted that homes "priced up to US\$1 million" (45 million baht) were finding buyers easily. Properties with higher price tags, he

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property boom go on?

noted, were more problematic.

Of the housing market's low end, defined by K. Phummisak as the "million-baht plus" range, both he and K. Sakdadet say sales are falling.

Both agree on the reason – tourism's collapse.

The former Mayor observed that such homes were

"Fewer tourists equals less money."

The pullout of airlines from Phuket – only three carriers out of 20 still maintain scheduled flights – may be a harbinger of tough times. Hong Kong carrier *Dragonair's* pullout is particularly alarming, because much of the boom in the Phuket property market has been fueled from Hong Kong.

Yet the anonymous developer cited earlier remains optimistic. "My realtor just returned from Hong Kong – she says interest in Phuket is still strong," he said.

While property prices have – thus far – weathered the tsunami after-effects, they are not indestructible.

Threats other than the tourism drop-off could also shake them down: skyrocketing fuel costs or the specter of a world wracked by random acts of terrorism.

Thailand, a staunch US ally, is particularly vulnerable in the latter regard. Should the tide of the so-called "War on Terror" turn heavily against the US, Thailand may become a target – which cannot be healthy for a property market propped up by foreign investment.

But for now, the property industry continues to look generally rosy, especially with interest rates unusually low.

The dream property at Mai Khao did eventually find a buyer. In the June 30 bidding, and gave the PLED its biggest sale of the year so far – 258 million baht for the 100 rai at Mai Khao.

The buyer? Bangkok Bank itself. No one, it seems, not even the mortgage holder, wants to let such a nice piece of land slip by just now.



Should the tide of the so-called "War on Terror" turn heavily against the US, Thailand may become a target – which cannot be healthy for a property market propped up by foreign investment.



especially with interest rates

largely bought by hotel and tour-agency workers who now find themselves out of work or on half-pay.

"Money circulating here basically comes from tourism," K. Sakdadet agreed.

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By Orashun Sethichaiyen

Learning is a lyrical thing

Thailand's favorite *farang* singer, Todd "Thongdee" Lavelle, has published a book to accompany his 2003 CD, *Back to the Beach*, rated by MTV Trax as one of the 10 best of that year.

The book, *English By Song*, contains the lyrics to Todd's songs, in both English and Thai, with line-by-line explanations of the correct meanings in Thai, along with guitar chords.

But this is no ordinary songbook. The lyrics of each of the 10 songs are explained in five different ways, under the headings Song Story; Song Lyrics-Direct Translation; English by Song; Group English; and Beach Gems.

Todd told the *Gazette* that the CD-book project was inspired by his experiences on Koh Samui and southern Thailand. "I really wanted people to understand the stories and even learn about English and the creative process with this new package."

"So I broke the songs down into their stories, the language and [the] idioms I used to write them and then led the readers into new types of English ... as well as a few jokes they might share with foreigners."

"I want people to enjoy what I call 'Real Music for Real People' ... maybe we could call it 'deep fun!'"

Todd's fans have told him how much they learn from listening to the CD and reading the book.

"Feedback on the book and CD has been positive. People feel



Todd "Thongdee" Lavelle (left) has hit yet another high note, this time with his book *English By Song* (below, left), which includes explanations of the songs on his *Back to the Beach* CD (below) in Thai and English.



it's fun, quality ... and [they] want to hear more," Todd said.

"My songs, *Back to Samui*, *Horizon Eyes* and *LayDeeBoyZ* went to the top five of Fat Radio's List."

The book and CD are different from others on the market, he says, because they offer "songs, completely edited English concepts and superb packaging. This package is what I want people to get from my work – story, ideas. [It's] genuine 'edutainment.'"

Todd's target audience

ranges from students and young professionals to "anyone who likes a variety of new and interesting music with real stories about real people and nature."

"It's a celebration of the South. I hope readers will get good fun [and] inspiration to study and speak English, and begin to look for richer entertainment ..."

The project developed from shows and talks in schools and clubs around the country over the course of three years. Todd says that the stories and music are the culmination of all his concerts and travels.

Meanwhile, he has just completed his "Six Cities" tour

of the US in support of tsunami victims and the rebuilding process.

"I am amazed at the second wave of kindness and giving that has brought people from all over the world to rebuild this area. It will be a slow process, and tourism will take a long time – maybe never – to recover to its pre-tsunami levels."

Tsunami victims, he said, could be helped by people going

to affected areas and sharing "time, money and experiences with those who have lost so much [but] still have so much to give [in terms of] the unique ways they live their lives, and the rich natural and human resources that are still on offer there."

"I believe pain and loss are opportunities. I've lost brothers to car accidents, a father I loved so much to alcohol. Through all of this, I see that we cannot bring back the people or the things we once had. But we can keep them alive in the love we give [to] others – and the decisions we make from now on."

"The tsunami has given us a chance to completely re-think the whole tourism industry in the

South, the entire fishing industry, and to re-affirm our belief in love of every color. Love defeats death, hands down! I am certain of this," he adds.

"It is the center of my work, from

Back to the Beach to my

TV show, *Oh, My God!* to simply talking with kids around the country. Life is a very good thing."

English By Song is available at 155 baht from 7-Eleven stores across Thailand. For more information, Tel or Fax: 02-7332709, or call K. Am at Tel: 06-5713309.



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War on drugs not over yet

The government's "very successful" war on *ya bah* (methamphetamine) is not over yet. Police say they are now targeting large-scale drug dealers.

Officials stopped counting the number of deaths related to the drug trade two years ago, said a senior official at the Office of the Narcotics Control Board (ONCB).

"We use the same strategy now as then. If they [the suspected drugs dealers] are killed by officers, it means that they were violently resisting arrest," said ONCB Deputy Secretary-General Chartchai Suthiklom.

K. Chartchai did not provide a figure for the number of people killed in the war on drugs, but noted, "murder cases somehow [still] occur [and] police will have to take care."

One indicator of the success on the war on drugs is the price of *ya bah*, which rose from 100 baht before the initiative began to 300 baht today. Production has also decreased in the Golden Triangle area and drug trafficking is conducted in smaller quantities today.

"Success" in quelling the drug trade also means that there are 200 dealers currently on death row, he said.

Infanticide thwarted: Two motorcycle taxi drivers in Bangkok saved the life of a newborn baby they found abandoned at a shopping mall. Pichit Duangpakdi, 30, and Thawin Lao-ard, 34, told police that they heard a baby crying under an exit ramp at the Tesco-Lotus store in Bang Kapi District.

Searching for the source of the crying, they found a tightly-knotted plastic shopping bag.



Thousands of farmers from all over the country gathered at the Royal Plaza in Bangkok to "remind" the government about its election promise to ease their debt burden.

Opening it, they found a baby girl inside, with her umbilical cord still attached and mosquito bites covering her face and body.

When they saw that the infant was still alive, they rushed her to the nearby Vejthani Hospital, where doctors were able to save her life.

Police launched an investigation to determine who abandoned the baby, saying that the culprit would be charged with attempted murder.

Mind of a lunatic: After a week-long nationwide manhunt, serial killer Somkid Phumpuang, 41, confessed to killing five sex workers in Mukdahan, Lampang, Udon Thani and Buri Ram Provinces.

Somkid, captured in his girlfriend's house in Chaiyaphum's Muang District, admitted to killing them, saying that he had killed them during arguments over fees for sex.

"I killed them out of anger because sometimes they over-

charged me after I had sex with them ... I spent the money that I robbed from them to buy more sex from prostitutes," he told reporters calmly. He is also under investigation for the June 11 killing a traditional Thai massage practitioner in Trang.

Moral high ground: Privy Councillor Kasem Wattanachai expressed deep concern about the country's future after a survey revealed that more than half of the students at Bangkok's top schools believe that corruption is part of everyday life.

He said a survey of 4,000 students at 30 prestigious high schools found that 51% view corruption as "common". At the same time, more than 40% had never visited a temple.

"It shows that morality is losing its strength in society. People are now placing capitalism before principles," he said, adding that parents apparently teach their children less about values and more about material

success.

"They are eager to take their children to tutorial classes, but not temples," he said.

Home-grown terrorism: At least six people were beheaded in the Deep South in June, the last a Buddhist waterworks foreman who was decapitated in Narathiwat's Rangae District.

The headless body of Surin Somjit, 59, was found in a rubber plantation in Tambon Borngor's Ban Anae village in the afternoon.

K. Surin was supervising 19 workers laying a pipe in the village when an unknown number of assailants shot him three times in the head. The workers ran for their lives while K. Surin's body was dragged into a wooded area and decapitated. A note was found near his body saying: "You kill one of us, we'll kill 20 of you."

His head was found by the side of a road seven kilometers away, police said.

My wife's a cow: Sa Kaew Province will host the world's first wedding of a pair of dwarf Brahman cattle on July 10, when two of the rare animals will be married with much pomp and circumstance.

The wedding came about when Amphol Wangboon took "Thong Khaow", his 18-month-old white Brahman cow, to the Sa Kaew Cattle Market. At just 70 centimeters tall and weighing 50 kilograms, Thong Khaow is about the size of a large dog.

Brahman cows at that age normally stand two meters tall and weigh about a ton.

At the market, farmer Krachang Kanokprasert from nearby Prachinburi Province, whose

dwarf Brahman bull "Thong Kham" had previously made headlines, rushed to see Thong Khaow – but his offer to buy the cow to mate with his bull was turned down.

After an hour of intense negotiation, K. Krachang pulled out 100,000 baht in cash and proposed that the cattle be married.

K. Amphol accepted and the two farmers announced the bovine engagement.

Lack of confidence: A poll of 5,771 respondents by Rajabhat University's Suan Dusit Campus in Bangkok found sagging confidence in the government's ability to tackle economic problems, from higher oil prices to the rising cost of living.

Faith in the economy fell 10 points, from 100.13 in May to 89.87 in June.

The mean standard used in the survey is 100, with respondents rating performance either above or below that mark.

On the cost of living, the confidence index fell by 8.5 points, from 95.03 to 86.55, while the public's sense of well-being was down by approximately seven points, from 99.07 to 91.82.

Respondents also showed a decrease in confidence in the government's ability to control the rising cost of goods and services. The score fell by four points, from 83.04 to 76.28.

"The survey results confirm the state of the economy ... that it is languishing," said Sukhum Chalo-eyup, Director of the Suan Dusit polling body.

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

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Full moon parties face clean-up

A press conference held recently at the Chai Resort on Koh Phangan brought together members of the media to assist in the fight against drugs on the island, home of the infamous full moon parties.

According to Pornlert Chokchai, the island's Chief District Officer, print and electronic media, with their ability to disseminate information quickly, can play an important role in educating the public about the dangers of drugs.

K. Pornlert asked those in attendance to do their part in combating the drug scourge and identified foreigners as the main source of drugs on Koh Phangan.

He also invited officials and reporters from Bangkok to visit the June 21 full moon party to see the extent of the problem first-hand.

He noted that local police constantly make drug-related arrests, but that most of those apprehended are caught with small amounts only.

The scale of the debauchery attendant on the full moon parties last caused a fuss when a woman senator reported in early May that one stretch of beach on the island had effectively become

"ground zero" for what she euphemistically described as "heavy petting".

"I have no intention of undermining the tourism industry, but it should be promoted in ways that are compatible with Thai traditions," she said.

Naturally, other officials and the press corps were keen to come down and see for themselves on the next full moon.

Love that dirty water: A wastewater disposal notice recently issued by Samui Municipality states that most of the smelly, stagnating water on the island comes from households and

businesses that do not dispose of it properly.

Sewage from many places simply pours onto roads or is piped into public water-courses, such as rivers and streams, or straight into the sea. The authorities plan to be much more strict on this issue in the future, saying they will send out inspection teams and impose 10,000-baht fines on violators for each infraction.

Those found to have improper wastewater disposal facilities will be given 30 days to upgrade before facing another fine.

Trash pickers trashed: Koh Samui Municipality recently announced that the island is getting dirtier because of people picking over trash looking for valuables to keep or sell. The pronouncement notes that garbage pickers



Mu Ko Ang Thong National Marine Park (left) was subject to a mass cleanup operation on June 15, when local officials, a number of local organizations and interested citizens – and scores of schoolchildren – descended on Koh Mua Ta Lap for a dive clean-up, beach rubbish collection and to put the region's famous Tiger Claw shells back into the sea.

FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND



By Commander Sammy Swan

often spread rubbish around in areas where it had been neatly piled for collection.

To curb this trend, the authorities have decided to forbid meddling with rubbish that has already been placed on the street.

According to officials, it does not matter if people use what they find or sell it for cash. From now on, anyone wanting to sift through trash must have a license – and anyone found rummaging through trash without one will be prosecuted.

Models of efficiency: Surat Thani Governor Vijit Vichaisarn has designated July as the beginning of a new campaign to save national resources, such as energy and water.

Like any government campaign, it began with a series of meetings. In this case, the gatherings were intended first to find ways to achieve major energy savings – and then to figure out

ways to get the general public involved.

Twenty-six different government agencies will take part in the initiative. They have been asked to set an example to the public by their own use of resource-saving procedures.

Each department will have to prove that it carried out the energy-saving activities as agreed by submitting electricity bills for inspection and comparison.

Those that are successful will get a budget increase commensurate with the amount of energy saved.

The overall goal is to achieve a 5% reduction in the use of resources by government agencies. The agreed ways to do this include paper recycling, turning off air-conditioning during meal breaks, and using vehicles less often. A treasurer will be appointed to report back monthly on the success of the project.

Clean living: Koh Samui resi-

dents on June 15 joined in a mass clean-up of Mu Ko Ang Thong National Marine Park, to the west of Samui and Koh Phangan. The effort was part of a nationwide effort to "clean house" at national parks, both underwater and on land.

The slogan for the day was "Green Forest, Clean Water, White Beaches", the idea being to increase awareness and ultimately minimize pollution in all the country's national parks.

The main activities of the Ang Thong clean-up took place on Koh Mua Ta Lap and included a dive clean-up, beach rubbish collection and putting the region's famous Tiger Claw shells back into the sea.

Taking part were local officials, a number of local organizations and interested citizens – along with scores of schoolchildren pressed into service.

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

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This week



KEEPING SHIP SHAPE: Pictured at the Phuket Marine Center are Assistant Managing Director Sukitja Taraporn (left), Giorgio Favia (3rd from left), Director Julian Hill (3rd from right) and Tim Lincoln (right), celebrating the grand opening of their new marine equipment retail center near Boat Lagoon.



BANG THE DRUM: (from left) Masashi Ono, President of the Japanese Association in Thailand (JAT); Kazushi Miyashita, President of the Phuket chapter of JAT; Phuket Governor Udomsak Usvarangkura; Japanese Ambassador to Thailand Atushi Tokinoya; and Kenji Shirasaki, President of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in Thailand, beat a ceremonial Japanese drum to open the "Japanese Love Thais" festival at the Royal Phuket City Hotel.



WELL BUILT: Thai Tanics, a group of foreign and local volunteers, celebrate the completion of their tsunami rebuilding project at Mai Khao Beach Bungalows Resort.



FUND-RAISER ROYALE: A gala charity art auction recently held at Mom Tri's Villa Royale raised more than 100,000 baht for scholarships for children affected by the tsunami. Pictured (from left) are Nick Paul, Phuket International Women's Club President Cindy Ratcliffe, John Lindsay and Carole Marco.



TO THE MAX: Suroj Lamsam (3rd from left), Senior Vice President, Marketing and Services Group and Product Development Group of TT & T, and fellow representatives visit the *Phuket Gazette* on June 24 to meet Managing Editor Alasdair Forbes (2nd from right) and spread the news of the launch of their high-speed Internet connection package, MaxNet.



DUBAI DIVERS CLEAN UP: A group of 27 volunteer divers from the Emirates Diving Association, Dubai, and representatives from Thai Airways International join the underwater clean up project, "Loving Phuket, Reviving Andaman" in Krabi and Phuket.

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On Film

BIG CATS: Lions Club of Phuket Pearl President Dr Supaluck Methakul (2nd from left) and fellow Lion Yupa Boonyokbundit congratulate Olinto Barletta (left) on becoming the new President of the Lions Club of Andaman Sea Phuket, at the Deevana Patong Resort & Spa on June 30.



GLAD TO BE BACK: Mark Spiers, PADI course director and General Manager of Scuba Cat Diving (center), Scuba Cat Manager Jamie Parker (left) and Instructor Sarah Kench are all smiles at the PADI Asia Pacific annual meeting, which was held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel from June 21-23. PADI delegates came from throughout the region for training seminars and to promote worldwide the fact that Phuket and Phang Nga are ready to receive tourists. The Scuba Cat shop in Patong sustained substantial damage from the tsunami.



SPONSORED SCHOOLING: Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC) President Cindy Ratcliffe (middle row, center), with former PIWC President Linda Cumming (middle row, left) and Scholarship Secretary Olivia Krisnaraj (middle row, 2nd from left) pose with Phuket Vocational College Deputy Director Wimolwan Chareon (middle row, 2nd from right), and some of the 46 students who each received a 10,000-baht scholarship from the PIWC on June 28 at the Phuket Vocational College.



A state

Pakawin Sangkong, or Chet as he prefers to be called, talks with the *Gazette's* Rungtip Hongjakpet about his work with a sore issue in Thai society – stateless Thais. Working for an NGO, he is experiencing things that most people wouldn't have a clue how to deal with or even care about.

Pakawin "Chet" Sangkong is originally from a farming family of 10 in Patthalung, but chose a different way of life.

"I got a BA in community development from Rajabhat Songkla University. I have been working with NGOs since 1985," K. Chet said.

He looks much the same as most Thai men, not too tall, brown skin – but he possesses a personality that touches people. Let's just say that he is not your typical pushy NGO type. He explains that he was once married and has two children but the marriage has been over for some time. He now focuses totally on his work.

After gaining experience with several local and international organizations, he is working on his own project which receives funding from three sources: the Community Organization Development Institute, the Chumchon Thai Foundation and the Thai Health Promotion Foundation.

"I'm working on something called 'The Project for Improving the Lifestyle and Living Standards of Local Communities'. The main aim behind this is to help people learn their basic rights and make their community stronger, along with better living standards.

"I'm not talking about poor people in slums who need new housing. They might need it alright, but what I think they need more is to make their surroundings and atmosphere better.

"To achieve that goal, they need to work together. They have to know how to save some of their income. My job is to guide them in how to do all this. I have

been doing this kind of work for three years and working with stateless Thais is part of the project," K. Chet said.

Stateless Thai people or *Khon Plud Tin* in Thai, are those who were born and who grew up in Burma before emigrating to Thailand.

Typically, they are from Tavoy, Mergui and Tenasserim. These Burmese border towns were Thai during the Sukhothai period (13th to 15th centuries AD), and were disputed for centuries until the British annexed Burma and definitive borders were set.

The result was that Thailand lost forever some of the disputed towns. The populations of these border towns were traditionally mixed, with Thai, Chinese and Shan people predominating.

K. Chet explained that he runs his project to help stateless Thais because he believes these people are truly Thai. "Yes, they were born in Myanmar [Burma], but that does not change the fact that they are Thai.

"They are Thai in almost every respect. They speak Thai, eat Thai food, go to Thai Buddhist temples and dress like Thais. They have the same culture as southern Thais," he explained.

According to K. Chet, there are many stateless Thais living in Thailand, though no one really knows how many. They are centered mainly in Tak, Ranong, Chumphon and scattered throughout the south.

In Phuket, there are about 200 or 300 of them, most of them working in construction.

In Burma, these people are treated as a second-class citizens.

'What is life if you don't have basic human rights?'
– Pakawin Sangkong

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of grace

The Myanmar government views them as Thais and they don't have Burmese ID cards.

Yet when they move to Thailand, here too they are classified as foreigners. They are refused Thai ID cards and do not have the right to own property or get higher education. They can-

not even move from one province to another without permission.

K. Chet says that these people sometimes are abused by some local leaders. Their children can't go to school because they don't have proper documentation.

If they wish to travel from village to village, they have to ask permission from the head of village and if they need to travel to another province they must first obtain higher-level permission. "What is life if you don't have basic human rights?" he asked.

The main problem, he be-

lieves, is that some Thais think of this group as Burmese because they do not have Thai ID cards.

"We overlook the fact that they are Thai, from an area that used to belong to Thailand.

"On top of that, Thais do not like Burmese in general. I think it's because of the history of war between the two countries," K. Chet added.

"Don't forget that there's [also] money involved. Some stateless Thais are approached by corrupt people who promise to get a Thai ID card for them.

"They ask for an under-the-table 'fee' that varies between 500 and 20,000 baht per person. Some fall into the scam and try very hard to save up to pay for this. I see that there will be more problems in terms of corruption in the future," said K. Chet.

Working with such sensitive issues is not easy and unpopularity is part and parcel with the job.

"Many times, when we're supposed to have [stateless Thai] meetings, the people in charge of the venues come to tell me that we can't hold a meeting there anymore because certain 'officers' have asked them not to coordinate with us or there will be 'problems'.

"I'm the main person dealing with this issue. I have been trying very hard to recruit staff, but it's difficult to get people and I've been looking for almost three years.

"It is hard, because it's not ordinary charity work. Any prospective helper would have to have a lot of understanding about the topic. The work is all about doing whatever it takes to make people smarter because, if they are educated, they will know their basic rights," K. Chet commented.

"I have to say that things are getting better. There are many organizations interested in this issue.

"I have also received cooperation from certain government officers and academics and I've witnessed some stateless Thais receiving Thai ID cards issued by the Thai government.

So it's actually not all that bad."

"But I believe that just obtaining Thai ID cards for them is not the end of my work.

"As long as they are still ignorant and don't know any better, they will go on facing problems.

"I'm 40 years old now and I see my work as a long time commitment with no ending."

Pakawin Sangkong can be reached at Tel: 09-5971175 or Fax: 077-813535.

The Community Organization Development Institute (Public Organization), Tel: 02-7180911; Chumchon Thai Foundation Tel: 02-7165610, www.chumchonthai.or.th



"The work is all about doing whatever it takes to make people smarter because, if they are educated, they will know their basic rights," said K. Chet.

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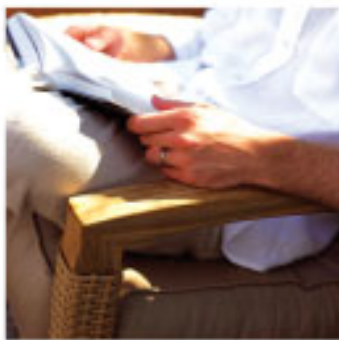
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Taking liberties

Ear Candy

with Andy

If, as Paul Simon sang, *Every generation throws a hero up the pop charts*, then every now and again, a bad boy or two is thrown up them as well.

The jester stealing the crown held for some years by Oasis's feuding Gallagher brothers, and latterly Eminem, is young Pete Doherty, once of the now disbanded neo-punk band The Libertines.

Doherty and co-frontman Carl Barât had, in the best tradition of British music (think Jagger and Richards, Daltrey and Townsend, Liam and Noel, and Strummer and Jones), a tempestuous relationship fueled, on Doherty's side, by drugs and drink.

Doherty was even once a "guest" at Wat Thamkrabok, the Thai monastery famed for its drug-detoxification program. He absconded.

Almost perversely, The Libertines' second and final al-

bum, is self-titled. It was produced by The Clash's Mick Jones and draws heavy inspiration from The Buzzcocks, The Jam, The Clash, The Kinks and The Who.

One does not have to be British to enjoy it, but it does help. Cockney rhyming slang, other patois and references to Brit culture abound.

It is also replete with perfect punk tunes, wit, and memorable lines.

On Track 1, *Can't Stand Me Now*, Doherty sounds not unlike The Cure's Robert Smith as he sings, "*Cornered the boy kicked out at the world...the world kicked back, a lot f*cking harder.*"

Doherty is adept at pithy throwaway lines and neat rhymes, such as "*I'll confess all of my sins after several large gins...*" on the song *Music When The Lights Go Out*, which is a valediction to his youth, Barât, and The Libertines.

But he also has a point to make about prejudice and hypoc-

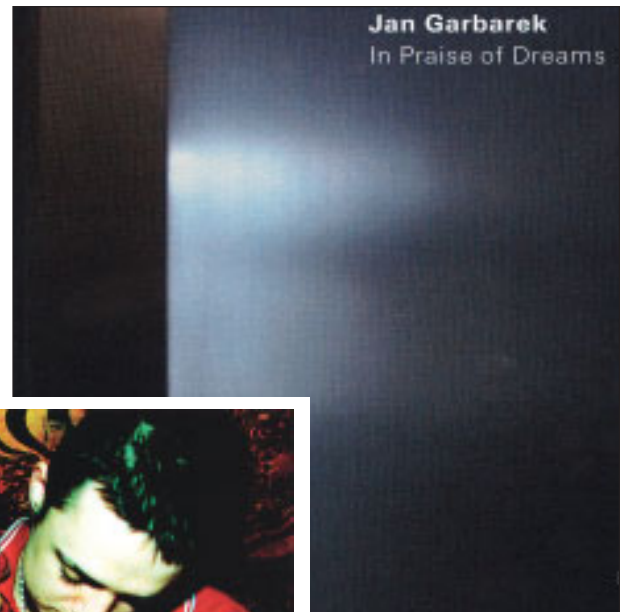
ris, especially on the blistering *Arbeit Macht Frei*, about a World War II veteran, with its final line "*He don't like blacks or queers yet he's proud he beat the Nazis.*"

The final listed track, *What Became Of The Likely Lads* (there is a final hidden track, *France*) is a gentle nod to one of the classic British sitcoms of the '60s and '70s, *The Likely Lads*, a show about two pals in the grim north of England, who see their lives not shaping up quite the way they had envisaged.

"*What became of the dreams we had? What became of forever? We'll never know!*" Autobiographical lyrics that never descend into melancholy and self-pity.

This is almost a life-changing album and is certainly energizing driving music, evoking as it does the heady whiff of stale ciggies, staler lager, spliffs and sweaty nightclubs.

This album is the perfect



lush keyboards, and hypnotic loops, its warmth counterpoints the Nordic chill and the piece comes close to falling into a soul-jazz groove.

The interplay between Kashkashian and Garbarek on the title track offers rounded, multi-dimensional plan-

gencies winding through the intro before spilling out into a side-by-side melody.

The repetitive keyboard line and Katché's mantra-like drumming under the loops draw the listener inside the song's heart.

The restrained romanticism shown by Kashkashian on her nocturnal solo intro to *One goes there alone* is breathtaking.

As it gives way to the tune itself, it is slow, reflective, and rooted deeply in the tension created between the percussion and Garbarek's minimalist backing response lines.

When he solos later in the tune, he is clearly blowing blues into her elegiac line.

Things become more speculative on *Scene from afar* and *Cloud of unknowing*, but it hardly matters since these song forms are nonetheless immediately recognizable.

The same speculative tone emerges again with *Conversation with a stone* and whispers to a close with *A tale begun*, a mantra-like duet that closes this strong set.

Poetic, moving, and marvelous, *In Praise of Dreams* is a welcome return for the saxophonist who makes music for the unknown films of the mind.

It will undoubtedly garner Garbarek some new fans, keen to explore the man's extensive back catalogue.

In Praise of Dreams Jan Garbarek. 53 minutes, 25 seconds. ECM Records ECM 1880.

antidote to the morning drive to work and will have you drumming the steering wheel like a demented *ling*, much to the amusement of other road users.

But, even if you work at home, still take it for a spin.

The Libertines The Libertines. 42 minutes, 4 seconds Rough Trade RTRADCD 166.

It's been nearly six years since Norwegian avant-garde saxophonist/composer Jan Garbarek released the mesmerizing *Mnemosyne* his second collaboration with The Hilliard Ensemble, the ancient-music group.

He returns with another masterpiece, *In Praise of Dreams*.

Garbarek enlisted violist Kim Kashkashian and long-time collaborator Manu Katché on drums for this outing. Garbarek plays saxophones as well as a host of keyboards and percussion, while Katché plays acoustic and electronic drums all accompanied by Kashkashian's viola.

Although Garbarek has long had a reputation for producing inaccessible music, this outing is far from impenetrable.

Indeed, *In Praise of Dreams* is arguably the warmest and most accessible of Garbarek's collections. Even though there are no vocals, Garbarek has clearly written "songs" for this set, with identifiable structures that are followed almost throughout.

Beautiful, soulful lines underscore and recontextualize the saxophonist's trademark Nordic icy tone on Track 1, *As seen from above*.

His playing reminds one of the sharp-edged tones and keening, sustained notes of Islamic prayer calls, although he is not afraid to employ – and bravely – generous dollops of silence.

With spiraling soprano sax,

Even though Garbarek has long had a reputation for producing inaccessible music, this outing is far from impenetrable.

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Small and beautiful, but practical?

Gadgets on the go with Mayo

Whereas most of us are choosing ever-larger TV sets for our homes, Korean manufacturer MPIO – which is pronounced “em-pee-oh” – has just launched a combined flash drive multimedia player with a 25-millimeter screen for watching movies on the move anywhere.

The MPIO-One, which comes in at a featherweight 34.5 grams and measures a purse-sized 32x15x55mm, can display up to 65,000 colors at a resolution of 96x64 pixels on its tiny screen.

This latest “must-have” gadget supports all video, image and audio formats, including MPEG-4 files as well as MP3, OGG and WMA files – and can store up to 1GB.

Not only can you listen to music on and download movies to it, but it also functions as an

FM radio, a mass-storage device – capable of storing photos, for example – and as a voice recorder. It connects to a PC via a USB 2.0 interface.

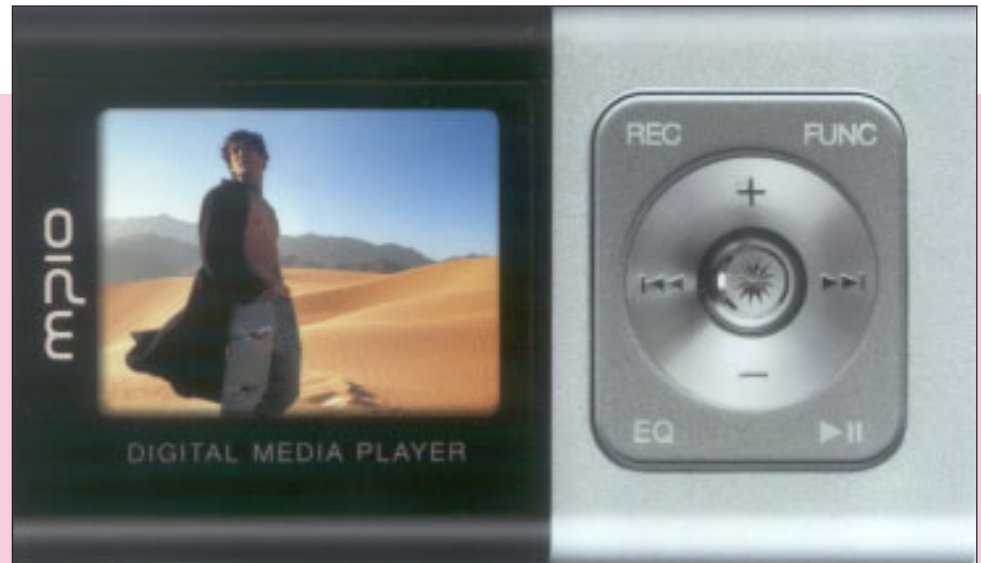
The MPIO-One uses lithium-polymer rechargeable batteries that can play music for 15 hours or play video for two.

It boasts a sleek design and comes in a number of eye-catching colors, including crimson, blue, silver and black.

Although no date for a Phuket launch has been released, the MPIO-One will be available from IT malls in Bangkok in July.

Prices are expected to be pegged at 7,990 baht for the 256MB version, 8,990 baht for the 512 MB and 9,990 for the 1GB model.

Contact Four Systems Co Ltd. at Tel: 02-7912100 or Spark Communications Co Ltd at Tel: 02-6352717-9 for more information.



The MPIO-One is certainly a trendy item to have, but with just a 25mm screen, will buyers ignore the device's shortcomings in favor of fashion?



While the screen may be on the small side, the MPIO-One can store up to a whopping 1GB of music, images and other data.



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Spa MAGIC

By Alison Winward
Aspasia

The Aspasia may be perched over a lovely bay in Thailand – Kata – but one wouldn't know this from the architecture, which is all Mayan-inspired cubes of dark green and sepia, with not a pointed roof in sight.

And this lack of concession to the "Thai style" so beloved of many of Phuket's hotel builders and housing developers continues into the spa.

There are no "Mayan-inspired" touches in the spa, though. Once through the unmarked entrance, next to one of the resort's two pools, it is all European-style blond wood flooring, contemporary/'60s-style furniture and walls of frosted glass reminiscent of a traditional Japanese home.

By Phuket standards, this spa is relatively small, with four treatment rooms – three single rooms and a spacious double suite with its own bathroom and two Jacuzzis – and four therapists.

The spa menu, too, is compact. It is heavy on massage – nine options – and offers four facial treatments, manicures and pedicures. Body scrubs are offered too, but only as packages with the massages (dubbed "scrubbages").

The "Positively Sinful" scrub sounds like one of the most delicious on Phuket, including the use of chocolate, oatmeal and orange juice.



The compact menu of treatments includes the "Positively Sinful" scrub, which involves chocolate, oatmeal and orange juice.

Something different

The menu was devised by Aspasia General Manager Alis-tair Why and Operations Manager Khun Noot.

Mr Why is said to be a regular user of the spa, and a good proportion of the customers are male; indeed, while my colleague and I are in the reception area, a

woman came in to confirm her husband's appointment for his massage later that afternoon.

"In the past, I think men were a little embarrassed [about using a spa], but I think most of them now know more about spas," says Spa Manager K. Thidarat, who used to work at the famed Banyan Tree, as did two of the other therapists. "Many men, after they have been once, come back again and again."

My colleague and I both opt for an "Aloha! State Magic" massage, which, so the menu tells us, is "borrowed from Hawaii" and uses pressure from thumbs, palms, forearms and elbows. My colleague's therapist is K. Ploy, mine is K. LeeNa.

The treatment rooms are



Although the Aspasia Spa is relatively small by Phuket standards, it does have a spacious double suite with its own bathroom and two Jacuzzis.

light and airy and have their own sinks and showers – full marks for providing a "rainwater" shower head (very large) and a conventional shower head, for higher water pressure. It is easy to get the water temperature just right, too.

Admittedly, it is somewhat unnerving that the back and front walls are made entirely of glass, but heavy blinds ensure that the treatments remain private affairs, rather than entertainment for those in reception.

The furniture is simple and contemporary; it's nice to see the brush, comb and cotton buds vanity set alongside the artfully-arranged leaves and flowerheads on the "dressing table", and, for some reason, the heavy, blond wood coathangers where I hang my clothes are a joy to handle.

The hangers are out in the open, though; it would be nice if there were some kind of receptacle where those of us who prefer to reveal their underwear only

when they choose to could "hide" it during the treatment.

After giving me a lime footbath, K. LeeNa leaves me to change into a damask cotton robe; a short time later, when I lie on the couch for my massage, she covers me with a damask sheet – a nice change from the towels or batik covers prevalent elsewhere.

The sheet is refreshingly cool, but despite that, and despite the refreshingly zingy lemongrass essential oil K. LeeNa uses for the massage, it is difficult to stay awake during my one-hour massage, especially as she goes about her work so silently.

But all too soon, she taps gently on her little gong and tells me my treatment is over. It's back to the real world.

The Aspasia Spa, 1/3, Laem Sai Rd, Kata Beach. Tel: 076-333033. Website: www.aspasiaphuket.com email: spa@aspasiaphuket.com. Aloha! State massage (one hour) 1,600 baht++.

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Help yourself, help Phuket

With some fine weather and an all-time low low season – which means that resorts are offering exceptional deals – what better time to take a short break close to home, especially if the kids are off school?

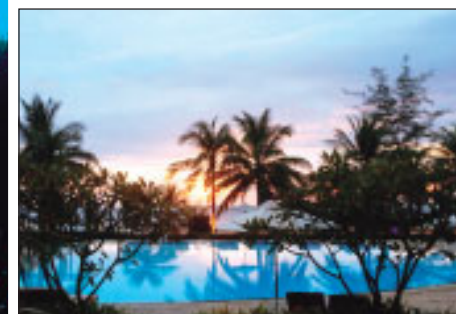
A weekend away is always fun and allows time to relax, switch off and get life back in perspective – which is what I and my companion have been doing recently.

Our first stay was a weekend at the Rydges Amora Beach Resort, which is hidden away to the south of Bang Tao Beach and its better-known neighbors in the Laguna Phuket complex.

This excellent three-star resort is a great weekend retreat. Set in its own shaded grounds close to the beach, it has two great pools, lots of cool areas under swaying casuarinas and some of the best watersports equipment on the island.

Huge rooms and friendly staff ensure that this is a relaxing hideaway; just turn off your mobile phone for instant relaxation.

We decided on a more up-



With tourist numbers down, now is perfect time for a break at Bang Tao (left) or at the Hilton in Karon (above).

beat location for the next weekend, and spent a couple of nights in Patong.

For the more budget-conscious, the Burasari Resort – tucked away in a small side street next to the Holiday Inn – is a delightful, trendy boutique hotel.

Burasari offers excellent accommodation – especially in

the poolside rooms – great food in its small terrace restaurant, and first-rate service.

It offers has one of the best breakfasts on the island. Taking the advice of the resort's GM, Mike Inman, I plumped for the Eggs Benedict, which is a meal in itself.

This enabled me to save money on lunch, although at 99 baht, the resort's current lunch promotion is a bargain anyway.

Burasari is well worth a visit, especially for those seeking a haven in the center of Patong.

The second – and now very affordable – option is the Holiday Inn's Busakorn Wing.

For its combination of stunning pools, excellent rooms and exceptionally high level of service – a combination that is really hard to beat – congratulations must go to GM Wolfgang Meusburger and his team. It is little wonder that this hotel is one of the island's all-time favorites.

After seeing the plans for

the refurbished main wing, its beachside gardens and new restaurants, I'm certainly hoping I will be invited back again and soon.

The final choice of the past few weeks was in Karon, at the Hilton Arcadia Resort and Spa. With its magnificent gardens, refurbished rooms and myriad facilities, it is the complete resort.

The newly-opened spa village is certainly worth a mention, as is the spa restaurant, which boasts a great variety of special fruit shakes.

Thailand TRAVELER

By Bill Owen

A SELECTION OF DEALS FOR LOCALS ON PHUKET

Rydges Amora Beach Resorts, Bang Tao

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Tel: 076-324021 or visit www.phuket-rydgesbeachresort.com

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Busakorn Wing, Holiday Inn, Patong

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Hilton Arcadia Resort and Spa, Karon

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All rates quoted above are for single/twin room per night and, apart from where indicated otherwise, include breakfast. Please note all these special offers are for Thai citizens or residents only, so ensure you are able to provide proof of residence here, such as a Thai ID card, driving license, work permit or social security card.

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THE TIME machine

News from the past

Jewelry shop fake gem problems continue

Phuket Gazette, July, 1995

PHUKET: The Tourist Police have reported several more incidents of local jewelry shops selling imitation or low-quality merchandise.

A number of tourists have come to the police with complaints of being deceived into buying merchandise that was either not what it was purported to be or was of lower quality than had been represented by shop staff.

Some local jewelry shop owners say that they adhere to all regulations of Civil Law, but Officer Viroj Manorat of the Tourist Police says that there have been recurring complaints against certain shops.

If violations can be proved, the owners will be prosecuted under Section 217 of the Criminal Code, he warns. The Tourist Police have offered to investigate and say that they are willing to act as the plaintiff on behalf of the angry tourists.

Niti Kongkrut of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Phuket Office, has repeatedly stated that the private sector and government agencies must work together to stamp out jewelry fraud.

If the scams and sharp trading practices were simply allowed to continue, Phuket's reputation as a worldwide tourist destination would be severely damaged.

Roof workers find old papers in attic of Provincial Hall

Phuket Gazette, July 1-15, 2000

PHUKET TOWN: Workers fixing the roof of the Phuket Provincial Office made an extraordinary find in mid-June in a corner of the building's attic: four stacks of documents dating back as long as 80 years ago.

Astonishingly, the find came just a few days after another group of roofing workers found similar documents under the roof of the Phuket Provincial Mineral Resources Office. Initial research indicates that these papers, too, date back between 50 and 80 years.

"The documents are in poor shape," said Chamroen Tankasem, chief of the Directing Division of the Provincial Office, which handles planning and administration. "Even opening them [without damaging them] is very difficult."

K. Chamroen says the documents, which include correspondence between the Governor's office and Bangkok, as well as interdepartmental memos, may throw light on forgotten aspects of Phuket's history.

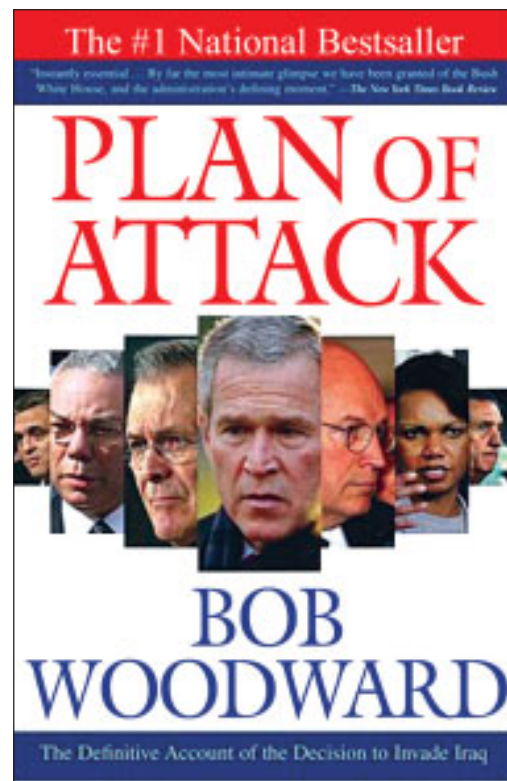
All the documents have been sent to the National Archives in Trang Province for preservation and analysis.

A Confederacy of Dunces



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



Former CIA Director George Tenet recently admitted that the stupidest words he'd ever said in his life were, "It's a slam dunk," spoken to George W Bush when the president asked him about the probability of finding weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq.

Of course, we wouldn't even know he said those words if it were not for Bob Woodward's *Plan of Attack* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 2004, 467pp).

Bob Woodward is an institution, and has been ever since *All the President's Men* helped instigate the fall of Richard Nixon. Woodward was given unparalleled access to Bush and his advisers in *Bush at War*, about the attack on Afghanistan, and he has been given the same access for its successor, *Plan of Attack*.

"The aim of this book is to provide the first detailed, behind-the-scenes account of how and why President George W Bush, his war council and allies decided to launch a preemptive war in Iraq to topple Saddam Hussein," Woodward writes in his introduction.

On December 18, 2002, Woodward attended a huge White House Christmas Party. Bush remarked that *Bush at War* was at the top of the bestseller list and asked if Woodward was going to do another.

"Maybe it will be called *More Bush at War*," Woodward said.

"Let's hope not," Laura Bush said almost mournfully.

Preparations for war in Iraq, in fact, were already going along full tilt, under the auspices of an ideological quartet set on war ever since September 11: Vice-President Dick Cheney and his deputy Scooter Libby, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and his deputy Paul Wolfowitz.

They insisted, using dubious intelligence, that Iraq's Saddam Hussein was linked to

al-Qaeda and was hoarding stocks of WMDs. Secretary of State Colin Powell and his deputy Richard Armitage, on the other hand, just did not buy this.

"Powell, the proud former general and now chief diplomat, was troubled by what he was seeing and hearing. He had served two tours in Vietnam as a junior officer, where he'd seen failure up close. Generals had not spoken the truth to the political leadership, which in turn had not been sufficiently skeptical of the generals ... Powell knew deeply, intimately, that war is fought by kids, even teenagers, who would die because of decisions made in Washington. The top echelons of the Bush administration were noticeably free of those who had seen combat."

But Powell, unlike the war party led by Cheney, had not developed a personal relationship with President Bush. "As secretary, he found himself often frozen out by the White House – in the 'icebox' or the 'refrigerator' as Armitage and he often joked."

The upshot was that Rumsfeld was given a free hand to micro-manage preparations for war in Iraq. The general in charge was Tommy Franks, a colorful Texan who characterized Douglas Feith, the under-secretary of policy in the Pentagon and a Rumsfeld favorite, with these words: "I have to deal with the f***ing stupidest guy on the face of the earth almost every day."

The dullest patches in this book are descriptions of the plans that Franks drew up, and the accounts of how Rumsfeld tinkered with them and how they went to a meeting of the "principals" and then back to Franks and then back to Rumsfeld, who tinkered some more...

In the end, of course, all the pieces were in place and Bush was supposed to decide whether to invade or not. By this point, the plans of attack were ready, so there was no longer any choice. Bush would look like a coward if he did not give the go-ahead.

The most rousing parts of this book are the descriptions of CIA officers in the field tracking down Saddam Hussein and his sons. The most entertaining are the battles royal between State and Defense.

After the war, a new appointee to "State" from a conservative think tank tells Armitage he thinks he can act as a bridge between Defense and State.

"You're on our team," Armitage replies. "You don't bridge shit. I've known all those f***ers for 30 years. You ain't bridging shit."

Wordly wise

"I will not be sad if he is executed. I would also like to thank the police for arresting him. The arrest will ensure that he won't be able to kill any more people."

– Kling Kingkaew, uncle of Somkid Phumpuang, who has confessed to murdering five sex workers, after hearing of his nephew's arrest in Chaiyaphum Province on June 30.

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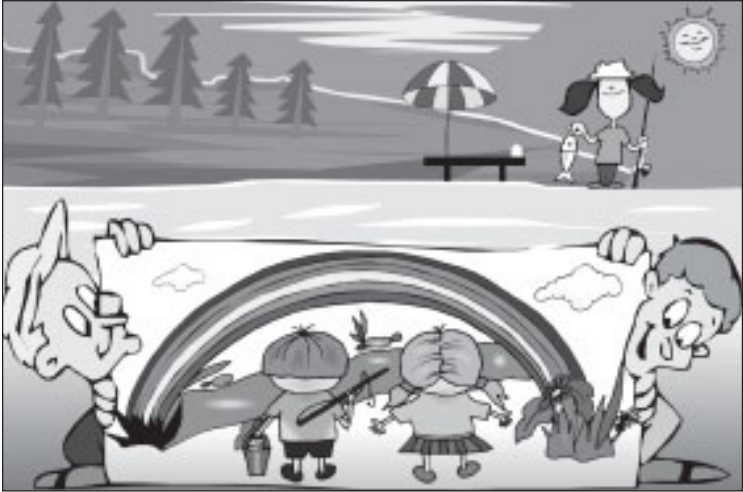
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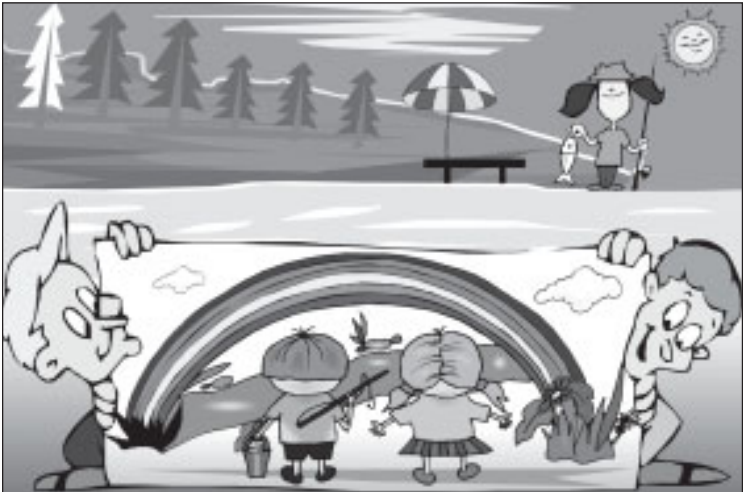
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Spot the Difference



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1 stands for I or A; 2 stands for B or W; 3 stands for C or T; 4 stands for E or K; and 5 stands for L or H.
The five-letter code word 25134 can be decoded into two English words with opposite meanings. What are the two words?

A: "Black" and "White".

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. American Larry Walters, a.k.a "Lawnchair Larry"; 2. Susan B Anthony, 1979; 3. Asafa Powell; 4. The first month of the calendar; 5. Happy Tree Friends; 6. Boy bands; 7. July 2 (182 days fall before and after); 8. Children's literature; 9. Cynthia Kadohata for Kira-Kira; 10. An early type of firearm; 11. Versailles; 12. Drupe; 13. Intestines of a sperm whale; 14. Chile; 15. Donna Karan, New York; 16. Pope; 17. He made wigs; 18. 1984; 19. Shanghai (14 million); 20. They are all landlocked.

Get your brain in gear with
The Monster Quiz



Kids! Ask Mum and Dad to help you find the answers to these questions. They're not easy, but if you do some research you should be able to find the answers to all of them.

1. Which actor, famous for roles in *Big* and *Toy Story*, was born July 9, 1955?

2. Who was the first Olympian to swim 100 meters in less than 60 seconds?

3. He later found movie fame portraying which fictional character?

4. Which ornithologist wrote *A Field Guide to the Birds of the West Indies*?

5. In medical terms, "pulmonary" refers to what organ?

6. Shiva and Vishnu are among the many gods in what religion?

7. Which US President had to leave office as a result of the Watergate scandal?

8. What is the capital of the Faroe Islands?

9. The word "chocolate" is derived from which native American language?

10. Which chemical element has the atomic number 50?

11. What is the collective noun for a group of apes?

12. And for cockroaches?

13. What does a plangonologist collect?

14. Who is the current editor of *The Times* of London?

15. How many US presidents preceded George W Bush?

16. The product Marmite is named after a French word meaning what?

17. Which actor appeared in the following movies: *Kingdom of Heaven*, *Troy*, *Lord of the Rings* and *Black Hawk Down*?

18. Which band was formed first: Led Zeppelin, The Who, The Sex Pistols or The Clash?

19. Who plays Bill in the Quentin Tarantino movie *Kill Bill Vol 2*?

20. What is the postal address of Fawlty Towers?

Answers next week

Never a
Cross Word!

- ACROSS
1. It falls from the sky.

7. Really huge.

8. Fall over something.

9. Accomplished public speaker.

11. Zig-zag ski run.

12. George W Bush's country.

13. Indefinite article.

15. Excitement.

17. Stellar twins.

18. Pull abruptly.

19. Good snack for a hot day (3,5).

20. Where bits of string run out.

- DOWN
2. 747 or A330, for example.

3. Himalayan kingdom.

4. They pull trains.

5. Jordanian capital.

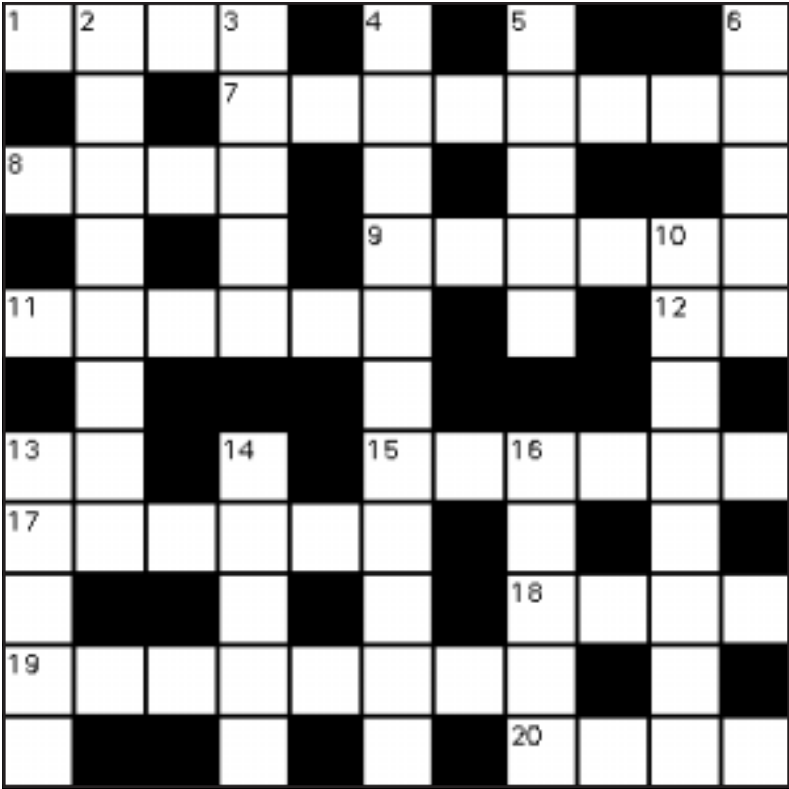
6. Employers.

10. Sketched.

13. Encore.

14. Sister's daughter.

16. Poets make frequent use of this.
- Solution next week



SOLUTION TO
LAST WEEK'S
CROSSWORD

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

In The Stars

by Isla Star

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Those who truly believe they will get what they deserve are most likely to be on the receiving end of a wonderful gift. Those who still think that it is always others who get the good luck can continue wishing in vain. Self-confidence should be your byword for the remainder of July, and this applies to romance as well.

LEO (July 24-August 22): People around you are not as flexible as you might hope this week. Someone seems particularly rooted in his or her concrete opinions on Monday. However, by using all the charm for which your astrological sign is renowned, there is a strong chance that you will be able to convince him or her of the benefits of seeing things your way. Changing weather conditions could be having an adverse effect on your health; eat plenty of fruit to combat fatigue.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): You are advised to swallow your stubborn pride and listen to the voice of experience this weekend. A project that you have been planning appears to be hampered by factors beyond your control. There is a way around this problem, but you will not discover it alone. Romance brings joy on Sunday when your partner springs a sensual surprise. If you are single, Capricorn would like to make contact.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Acting on impulse this weekend is certain to bring new opportunities. You normally prefer to take the tried and trusted route, but the stars are encouraging you to throw caution to the wind for once. A jealous friend is poised to throw a spanner in the works next Wednesday, but you will see this one coming from quite a distance. The number 4 is lucky on Thursday.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): The domestic atmosphere is still looking unsettled and you are advised to wear kid gloves when handling disagreements. A heavy-handed approach will definitely widen the gap; keep lines of communication open and do not expect to have things all your own way. Single Scorpions could be dazzled by a

What your stars foretell this week

new admirer, but should not be so blinded by love that they ignore potential problems. By all means have some fun, but this person is not your soul mate.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): The wet weather is making you more inclined to curl up at home, but those who wish to make romantic contact should get out and about more. Turning down an invitation could cause you to miss an auspicious meeting this Saturday. Work conditions will change due to a last-minute intervention from those higher up. If you handle this well, promotion is on the cards.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Your private life is highlighted this week; benevolent astral conditions will enable new friendships to be made and current ones to be strengthened. Harmony prevails on the home front as well, when your partner reveals a secret goal that you will be happy to share. A business offer that you were previously skeptical about starts to look more attractive, but do not share this news with others in the same field.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Your ability to make even the most mundane task appear exciting comes in very useful early this week. Aquarians who have been disappointed recently by lack of cooperation at work will find that colleagues are now more willing to pull their weight. Difficult decisions are

best left on the back burner until later this month. Cancer is impressed by your cool-as-a-cucumber demeanor at a social function this weekend.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Many Pisceans will be faced with a difficult choice during the coming days. This will most likely be connected with your personal life. If so, make your decision on your own. But if it concerns work, trusted advice will help you turn in the right direction. Dress to impress this weekend when new contacts will have a positive impact on your future; the color moss green attracts the right kind of attention.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): If you have begun to suspect that you may have drawn the shortest straw regarding a recently made deal, you will have an opportunity this week to rectify the situation. Thursday is your best day for initiating talks to sort things out. This weekend, you should have a whale of a time if you accept an invitation to party. The number 3 can bring good luck on Tuesday.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Those born under this sign are advised to accomplish as much as possible this weekend. After Monday, the unexpected is certain to occupy your attention; you will have to do some schedule juggling next week to get everything done. The stars promise to shower you with energy during July. Do not waste any time trying to advise a friend who is simply ignoring the obvious. The color sky blue will lighten your outlook.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Many Geminis will be susceptible to the butterfly treatment during the coming days. Keep your emotions on an even keel to avoid being disappointed in love. Where business is concerned you should not put all your eggs in one basket; diversify interests to guarantee at least one scheme coming to fruition. Monday is the best day for investigating new possibilities. The color indigo blue will encourage a more serious outlook on life.

RETURN OF THE

Back in the 1990s, a new phenomenon emerged: the proliferation of management gurus. They attained fame and fortune by writing quick-fix managerial cure-alls with titles like *Re-Engineering the Corporation*, *Mega-trends Asia*, and *The Pursuit of WOW!*

When the American economy slumped and Asian economies were flourishing, the management gurus slithered over to Thailand to sell their ideas in pricey seminars. Here, they taught Thai businessmen the same innovative management skills that had brought the American economy down.

And when the Thai economy tanked in 1997, they slithered away.

The moral is clear: when the economy is booming, management gurus will come swarming to our shores; when it crashes, they will flee.

So we must be doing something right, folks, because the management gurus are back, with a whole new vocabulary of managerial doublespeak to dazzle us – and, just possibly, to set the stage for the next crash.

Spearheading their return is Dr Silvan Sleekmanner, author of the smash bestseller *Paradigmatics: Reconfiguring the Corporate Ethos*. I recently interviewed him in his posh suite at the Bacchus Epicureana Resort.



By S. TSOW

Q. Dr. Sleekmanner, what is – or are – “Paradigmatics”?

A. “Paradigmatics” is a holistic set of integrated managerial skills that completely reconfigure the corporate environment to meet the challenge of constantly shifting paradigms in today’s highly competitive macro- and micro-economic climate.

Q. Gosh. Uh, what sort of skills are we talking about here?

A. Well, let’s say you have a dysfunctional company. You have to de-dysfunctionalize it.

Q. How do you do that?

A. You first jumpstart and then implement continual upgrades in the refunctionalization process. This, together with an ongoing restructuring of the corporate environment, will optimize institutionalization of creative and innovative strategies for achieving maximum corporate profit, individual personal enrichment and better orgasms.

Totally classic Thai takeaway

It has been one of those weeks. Amid a multitude of disasters of different proportions, two things stood out as worse than the others.

One was having the electricity cut off at my house. This was annoying, especially as I had personally paid the bill – which was not overdue – the day before.

The other was being obliged to eat a meal in a chain restaurant located in one of the big shopping malls.

Even after many years in this country there are a few things that I do not understand, especially when it comes to food.

Eating is an integral part of life in Thailand. It is not possible to travel more than a few meters in any city or town without encountering people devouring food.

Bowls of noodles with seafood or chicken or pork or beef. Sometimes noodles with noodles. Occasionally even noodles *without* noodles, which is actually

noodle soup but with no noodles, and must be part of the no-carbohydrates Atkins’ Diet.

Then there is sticky rice with *somtam* and barbecued chicken. There is fried chicken, duck soup, fried rice and all sorts of other goodies – most of it excellent.

Thailand is justly famous for its cuisine, with most of it available at very reasonable prices. In many cities of the world, people pay a lot of money to eat in Thai restaurants, and Thai

food, I am told, is now the most popular Asian cuisine, having usurped Indian and Chinese.

So why is it that so many of my Thai friends, including my dearly beloved, are prepared to sit in a chain restaurant in a noisy shopping mall, devouring substances that resemble cardboard covered with tomato sauce?

Even the coffee in the place was appalling; I think it had been stewing for a month. Not only that, but people are prepared to



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LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

MANAGEMENT GURUS

Q. Gosh. Uhhhh...better orgasms?

A. Yes. My own personal guru keeps recommending that I make my presentations sexier. You can't get any sexier than better orgasms.

Q. I guess not. Now, some people say that management gurus are nothing more than snake-oil salesmen – fast-talking scam artists who delude the gullible with verbal smoke and mirrors.

A. That is a base canard. These strategies I'm offering result in an ongoing enhancement of the optimization process. They are time-tested, proven methods of upgrading management and production competencies to meet – and, indeed, even surpass – world-class standards so that companies that adopt them can keep ahead of fast-changing developments in our increasingly competitive world. My holistic, paradigmatic approach leads to an integrated restructuring of corporate systems to produce a win-win situation for those companies that commit to it.

Q. Gosh. Do they pay you by the word?

A. Yes. Now, in addition, there must be a readjustment of the relationship between management and labor. We must forge a new corporate ethos: to involve the entire workforce in a powerfully synergistic, com-

pany-wide effort to reshape production methods, marketing techniques and managerial systems; to unite management and labor in a grand coming-together, a root-and-branch reconceptualization of their relationship, resulting in an intimate bonding, a functional and organizational confluence, a proactive process that will lead to maximum corporate profit, individual personal enrichment and better orgasms for all.

Q. Gosh. Which means?

A. Management screws labor.

Q. Oooh. Sir, do you have a quick and easy way to remember the amazing principles you're advocating?

A. Yes, I do. I have five simple, easy-to-remember slogans that will enable any organization to outstrip its competitors, stomp them into the dirt, rip off their faces, tear out their hearts and livers, and leave them crushed and prostrate in the mud. I call them "Sleekmanner's Five Principles of Paradigmatics".

Q. Gosh. What are they, sir?

A. One, efficientize the environment. Two, institutionalize innovation. Three, streamline strategies. Four, profitize production. And, five, maximize marketability.

Q. Oooh. That's cool.

A. Yes. And these five slogans can all be summed up in my

personal and corporate motto: "Realign the Paradigm". You see, the problem with most companies is that managers are way behind the times. They have to realign the paradigm, to reconfigure the configuration, to optimize the optimization, to talk the talk and walk the walk, to jive the jive and dive the dive. They've got to do the do and poo the poo.

Q. Which means,

in plain English?

A. They've got to work their butts off, boy.

S. Tsow can be flamed at stsow@yahoo.com, except when he's jiving the jive, diving the dive, and doin' the Harlem Shuffle.

'Paradigmatics is a holistic set of integrated managerial skills that completely reconfigure the corporate environment to meet the challenge of constantly shifting paradigms in today's highly competitive macro- and micro-economic climate.'



It's a mystery why anyone would eat in a chain restaurant when there's so much good food outside.

pay three to four times the price of an excellent meal in a normal Thai eatery for the privilege of enduring such an unpleasant experience.

What is it that makes modern Thais patronize these chain restaurants?

You can understand Americans being happy with most of the chains, they are as good as it ever gets there – but Thais, they must really be susceptible to advertising.

It is not only the taste either. When I came to Thailand in the '80s, you never saw fat children.

Now, obese offspring are everywhere, although the noodles are still the same as they were then, I believe. It's a mystery.

Meanwhile, someone was, equally mysteriously, messing with my electricity.

Somebody called my office and said that he was at my house and was going to remove the meter. My secretary told him that we had already paid the man on the motorbike and that I would be there in 10 minutes and show him the receipt.

He said he could not wait, and promptly took the meter

away. I went to the electricity department and showed them the receipt. They agreed that I had paid the most recent bill, but pointed out that the one for the previous month had not been paid.

I did not have a receipt for the month before, so I paid them. Half an hour later, the man came and put the meter back. Would a little note in the letter box explaining the problem not have been a far more efficient use of everyone's time? But that would probably be too simple, wouldn't it.

From Bangla to the blues

This week I am happy to report that Soi Bangla has not yet turned into another Patpong and that the amount of street vendors has been kept to a minimum. Phew.

I am also happy to report that the Winchester pub's previously excellent music policy has been restored to normal. Little Stevie has assured me that on my two visits last month when I heard Hip Hop were an aberration.

After three random spot checks I can confirm that Tamla and indeed Motown is playing, and not just your normal soul hits, but a wide selection of top stuff for the soul aficionado.

On my final visit, the night before I wrote this column, I had a jolly time watching the Robbie Williams Rat Pack DVD on their excellent big screen. As always, I'll give credit where its due: Stevie, well done, son.

Crocodile rocks: Is it me or is Crocodile really kicking everyone's ass? In a quiet time for Toon Town they are perpetually "rammed to the tits", as they say in club-speak.

Cor blue me: Plans are afoot for the Island's first ever Blues Festival. Organizers hope it will take place around November this year.

Among the bands being approached are the Rich Harper Band (from the US) and legends Victor Brox and Norman Beaker from the UK.

Brox was Jimi Hendrix's

favorite singer and Tina Turner stated that "his is the best white blues voice ever."

Norman Beaker is currently Chris Farlowe's main backing muso and has played with everyone several times over including Clapton, Robert Cray, BB King, Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker.

The organizers are looking for local and national sponsors to help make this event start with a bang. The front-running venue is The Green Man.

Brekker recce: It's nomination time again for the best breakfast in Phuket. A few places are in the running for it this year and our most frequent winner, the Legendary Fiddy's, has serious competition. I reckon that the Surin Bay Inn will be up there this time, as will Two Black Sheep.

If you think your breakfast deserves a mention, email me and I'll give it a whirl.

Steaking reputations: Happy to see the Holiday Inn is almost fully fixed. I hope that Sam's Steakhouse is part of the new look.

And on the subject of steak, the New York Steakhouse at the Marriott in Bangkok has quickly become a must for the island's well-heeled when on trips to the Big Durian and I cannot recommend it enough.

Main courses start at around 1,200 baht. A straw poll indicates that no matter how good the food was, no one would get away with charging that much in Phuket. Sad but true.



By Konrad Stalin
(Konradstalin@hotmail.com)

Itinerary Visa Run Trip (Hadyai)
NO.1 Daily Trip
By Phuket Air
(Start at 11.05am. to 18.00pm.)
ONE DAY ONLY

11:05AM. Departure by 9R522 to Hadyai
12:05AM. Arrival Hadyai International Airport
Transfer to Border (Thai-Malay)
Sadao-Changloon (SIC)*
13:10PM. Immigration process
14:10PM. Transfer back Hadyai International Airport
15:10PM. Hadyai International Airport, Check in, Leisure at Airport and wait for the flight
16:50PM. Departure by 9R525 to Phuket

End of Program

PRICE	PAX
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CHILD(2-12YRS)	1,550
INFANT	

Program Includes:
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*Transfer From Hadyai Airport to border, roundtrip, (SIC) (*Seat in Coach)

Excludes:
*Visa fee

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The Phuket Gazette
- Since 1994 -

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More creativity needed to promote Phuket to the world

Phuket is now in a cause-and-effect spiral leading, it would seem, nowhere but down. Falling demand for flights to the island, whether direct from abroad or via Bangkok, has resulted in some airlines suspending flights altogether and others cutting back services.

As it becomes more difficult to find flights to Phuket and more time-consuming to get to the island, thanks to more roundabout routes, demand will fall. And as demand falls, the airlines will cut back services further. And so on.

Aggravating the situation, the prices of the flights that remain have been climbing as airlines pile on fuel surcharges to offset the rising cost of oil. This in turn will make flying in general less affordable – and flying to Phuket less attractive.

The news that Airports of Thailand plans to cut landing fees at Phuket in half offers a glimmer of hope, but if airlines have no passengers to carry to Phuket, then the issue of landing fees is moot.

What is needed is a major campaign to boost demand. This is the job of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). So far, its performance had been less than inspiring.

One senior figure in Phuket's tourism industry was recently in Britain, visiting major tour companies. They were puzzled, he said; they had been visited and lobbied by the Maldives and Sri Lanka, both countries trying to get tourism going again after the tsunami. But they had seen and heard nothing from the TAT.

Instead, it appears that the TAT is chasing Asian markets such as Taiwan, which until only a few days ago was warning its citizens not to go to Phuket unless they absolutely had to.

It has been chasing markets where large numbers of people believe that the island is choc-a-bloc with the ghosts of tsunami victims, all wanting to drag tourists to their deaths.

It appears that someone at TAT headquarters said, "That's the steepest, rockiest, most torturous route; we should climb that one first. Strap on your crampons, chaps."

Meanwhile, the headlines about Phuket are being created by others, such as Kruse Motorsports, whose "Visit Phuket" Le Mans car attracted lots of attention, or the Phuket Tourist Association, which hired a Japanese TV star to promote the island in her home country.

These are creative ideas. The TAT, in contrast, seems to believe that huge discounts on shopping are the way to go.

If ever there were a time for the TAT to pull out all the stops, to spend every *satang* it has on marketing Phuket, particularly to Europe and North America, this is it.

– The Editor

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Letters

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

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

Khao Lak a long way from paradise

I refer to the article by Franky Gun [*Gazette* July 2] in which he states: "... Khao Lak will most likely be a colorful and tropical paradise again by the end of the year."

After driving around there yesterday I find it a disgrace that someone could make such a comment.

It is sad to say, but a big chunk of Khao Lak still looks very much as if the tsunami happened yesterday. I cannot understand that this is still the case six months after the tsunami.

If people continue to prefer to lie in the shade or only care about their own plot of land instead of cleaning up all the debris, then the tourists will not come back or, if they do, then at the most only once. Irresponsible statements like the one above are not going to help the situation.

In my opinion, the only way to get tourists back to Phuket [and the affected provinces] will be when nothing remains to remind them of the tsunami and the terrible tragedy that happened.

There has been enough money spent to make that possible.

Hans van den Berg
Laguna Phuket

Tsunami had its 'good' points

Isn't it about time to ease-up a bit on CNN and BBC [*Gazette* Editorial, July 2]? Those folks are not in the business of promoting Phuket tourism; that's someone else's obligation.

The news outlets have a

duty to focus on the angles and items that appeal to their audiences, not to the people who are the subject of their presentations.

Besides, by damping down tourism appeal the networks are actually helping to make Phuket a better and more liveable place.

Merchants may miss Asian tourists for their money, but does anyone else?

Are you – as a resident, not as a businessperson – sorry that there are not more bus loads of Taiwanese fouling the air and the ambience?

Do you actually miss rubbing shoulders with drunken sailors, Singaporeans, or the roughly 25% of Thais who've moved on to more lucrative pastures?

I don't. The tsunami wasn't all bad; in the weeks following it had the effect of purging the island of the worst of its permanent and transient population.

Traffic is better; parking is better; the environment is better – Phuket is a better place now.

So Mr Businessman, your customers aren't here; so what? They'll go somewhere else; you may have to follow them. What's wrong with that?

Roger Fox
Phuket

Who benefits from cheap holidays?

As a fan of Phuket, and a *Gazette* reader, I avidly read about all of your efforts to get the island up and running again.

While I generally applaud the efforts and initiatives being tried to encourage the return of the tourists, I would like to sound a small warning.

As a retired hospitality manager, I know how risky it is to cut margins, and the pressure

that it puts on management and staff alike.

But who benefits from the promotions and cut prices, the agent or the tourist?

I intend to return to Phuket this year, however it appears to be far more expensive [to holiday there] than last year, even allowing for the increase in fuel prices.

Bear in mind that costs saved by the tour agent benefit the agent, but that costs saved by the tourist benefit Phuket

Jim Gregge
Aberdeen, Scotland

Ethical treatment – or hypocrisy?

Here is some advice for the Soi Dog Foundation. Perhaps they should take a page from PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

The blogspot of American journalist William John Hagan recently reported this: "...unknownst to most Americans and PETA's charitable donors, it is a common practice for PETA to euthanize healthy companion animals.

"In fact, it was discovered that over a six-year period, of the 12,735 animals obtained by PETA's Virginia headquarters only 2,540 had actually been adopted out while the remaining 10,195 were destroyed.

Daphna Nachminovitch, Director for PETA's Domestic Animal and Wildlife Department, conceded the following in an interview with Fox News: 'Did we euthanize some animals who could have been adopted? Maybe.'"

Ignacio Esteban
Singapore

Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials or business owners are published as *Issues & Answers* on the facing page.

Don't kick us when we're down

It doesn't make sense for taxi meter drivers to take customers out of their way rather than direct to their destination – once we get over a certain distance, we charge only one baht a minute, and that isn't enough to make it worth our while to keep driving.

We'd be far better off heading back to the airport to pick up another fare.

The Transport and Communications Ministerial Notification of August 10, 2003 states that all taxi drivers registered with the airport must charge a 100-baht surcharge for all journeys to and from the airport.

As regards the fares themselves, the fare is 50 baht for the first two kilometers then seven baht per kilometer after that, up to 22km, and six baht per kilometer up to 50km, then five baht per kilometer after that to the end of the journey.

This means that the maximum fare from the airport to Patong should be 420 baht, to Kamala 340 baht, Kata 470 baht and Phuket Town 360 baht.

Because of the fare structure, though, the longer the journey, the less the passenger is charged per kilometer, so there isn't any point for us to take pas-



FIRST PERSON

Earlier this year, Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura announced he was going to war against the province's "taxi mafia".

Although he said Phuket should have more meter taxis, he also criticized meter taxi drivers who operate from outside Phuket International Airport, saying that tourists had complained that drivers were refusing to use the meter, or were taking them out of their way to bump up the fare.

Phuket-born **Suwan Tam-choo**, the President of the Phuket Private Taxi Meter Association, however, says that this is not the case, and that meter taxi drivers are just trying to earn an honest living.

sengers on unnecessarily long journeys.

As for what the Governor said about us refusing to use the meter, well we can't. When we enter the airport we get a special ticket. When we leave we must hand part of the ticket in to the car park attendant, and they check that the meter is switched on. If it isn't they can report us to the airport authorities.

In addition, the "for hire" sign in each taxi is connected to the meter – the sign goes out when the meter is switched on. If the police see that we are carrying a passenger but the "for

hire" light is still on, they can arrest us.

The only time we do not use the meter is when the passenger wants to go to another province – then we have to agree a fare with him beforehand.

Whether we use the meter or not, we have to treat passengers like gods, because if they decide our service is not good, they may refuse to pay at the end of the journey; if they book a limousine from the airport, they have to pay in advance.

In addition, passengers tend to watch the meter like hawks – many times I have had to switch

off the meter when I stopped at a filling station to get gasoline, or to go to the toilet – the fare has asked me why I didn't do all this before we started out.

Right now there are about 30 of us operating meter taxis from the airport every day between 8 am and 9:30 pm; any driver who breaks the rules can be suspended for anything from seven days to a month.

We are just trying to make an honest living as meter taxi drivers, but sometimes we feel as though we are treated like dirt.

Just after the tsunami, we provided free transportation for

tourists, taking them to and from the airport, and we carried donated supplies everywhere too; we are proud of that, and we think we deserve some credit for what we did.

Since the tsunami, things have been especially difficult for us – sometimes we have just one fare between the 30 of us, whereas before we could each get three or four fares a day. At the same time, the price of gasoline seems to rise every day.

So all in all, the last thing we need is someone saying negative, and untrue, things about us. If no one supports us, I can see there being a day when there will be no meter taxis in Phuket.

Government officials say they will support us, but I think it's all just talk.

If they are serious, they have to decrease the number of influential people.

In the immediate future, though, one thing that would help us is a small counter inside the airport building that would tell arriving passengers that they have the option of taking a taxi meter from the airport.

At present we feel like the children of a *mia noi* [minor wife] – we exist, but no one wants to publicly acknowledge that fact.

What are my transport options from the airport?

Can I take a *songthaew* [a basic and privately-operated bus] from the airport to Phuket City?

Juha Itha
By email

Nattawut Sirijun, a service officer from Phuket International Airport, replies:

There is no *songthaew* service serving the airport, but *songthaews* do run between Nai Yang and Phuket City. It's about 100 meters from the airport to the road they run along.

The fare from the airport to Phuket City is 20 baht, and the journey will take up to one-and-a-half hours.

There is also a minibus service from the airport to some major tourist destinations.

The fare to Phuket City is 100 baht per person; to Patong 150 baht; to Kata, Karon, Kata

Noi and Karon Noi 180 baht per person and to Merlin Beach, Baan Yin Dee 250 baht per person.

[Editor's note: on May 30 this year, the Gazette reported that Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura had ordered an investigation into claims that a minibus company that had secured the right to collect passengers from the airport had been taking them to an office on the bypass road and intimidating them into buying highly over-priced package tours.]

There is also a limousine service from the airport. The fare to Phuket City is 400 baht, or 800 baht for a "VIP" service (a bigger, nicer car); to Patong 550 baht, VIP 1,100 baht, and to Kata-Karon 650 baht (1,300 baht VIP).

It is also possible to book an airport meter taxi from a

counter inside the airport. Usually, the meter starts at 100 baht, although some companies, such as Tawat Taxi, start the meter at 50 baht.

The standard price from the airport to Phuket City is 350 baht, to Patong 500 baht, and to Kata and Karon 550 baht.

Suwalai Pinpradab, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand's (TAT) Region 4 office in Phuket, replies:

There is a rank for ordinary taxi meters on the road outside the airport, but these vehicles cannot be booked from inside the airport, and they cannot pick up passengers inside the airport itself. The only taxis and limousine which can pick up passengers inside the airport are those with green "Taxi" or "Limousine" signs.

Are webcams in bars legal?

I have noticed that some bars in Patong have hidden web cameras in the bar, feeding direct to the Internet. Is this okay according to Thai law?

Not public
Phuket

Pol Lt Col Teeraphol Thipjaroen, Superintendent of Kathu Police Station, replies:

It is legal according to Thai law unless the images shown online are immoral. This technology is used worldwide to promote places and products, but if the pictures are illegal, such as pornographic pictures, then it is undoubtedly against the law.

If the bar owner uses a web camera to promote his bar or for a commercial purpose and the

pictures are not immoral, then it is legal.

However, if a person [say, a customer] hides a camera in a bar and puts images online without the permission of the bar owner, then that is illegal. The bar owner or other people who feel they have been wronged may file a complaint with the police.

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

Can I rent a safe-deposit box?

I would like to rent a safe-deposit box for my three-month visit to Phuket. Can I, and if so, how much will it cost?

Anne-Lie
Sweden

A spokesman for Bank of Ayudhya replies:

Priority for renting safe-deposit boxes is given to existing customers of our bank, and we don't rent safe-deposit boxes to tourists because they are here for such a short time and we have no control over the items they put in them. Tourists should leave valuables in their hotel's safe-deposit box instead.

If a foreigner wants to rent a safe-deposit box in Phuket, they must provide evidence – such as a work permit – that they are here long term. They must also have a minimum of 25,000 baht in

their bank account, and the bank will deduct the box rental from their account each year.

The fees are 300 baht and 400 baht for a small and a large box per year. Users must also pay a 3,000-baht deposit for the key.

Arree Wannoppakun, Business Officer, Siam Commercial Bank, Patong Branch, replies:

To qualify for use of a safe-deposit box, a customer must have had a savings account with us for at least three months. There is no minimum bank balance required.

A large safe-deposit box costs 2,000 baht a year, a medium-sized one costs 1,500 baht a year and a small box costs 1,000 baht a year. All charges for safe-deposit boxes are subject to 7% tax, and 4,500-baht deposit is required for the key.

ON THE MOVE



Erwann Mahe, from France, has been appointed General Manager of the Panwa Beach Resort, Phuket. Mr Mahe joined Accor in 1998 at the Novotel Senart in France and later spent two years at the Sofitel in Houston, Texas. He was most recently Executive Assistant Manager of the Sofitel Magic Lagoon Resort & Spa in Khao Lak, which was heavily damaged by the tsunami.



Phuket-born **Piyyarat Kulvanich** has been appointed Deputy Branch Manager of Phuket's Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa). K. Piyyarat has a master's degree in business administration from Kasetsart University and an MBA in marketing from Western Colorado University. She also worked as Director of Sales and Marketing at Phuket Health & Travel Co, a subsidiary of Bangkok Phuket Hospital.



Tasha Armatmuangbang has been appointed Sales Manager at the Cape Yamu property development. Bangkok-born K. Tasha moved to Phuket four years ago. She graduated with a diploma in food and beverage from the Cordon Bleu College in Paris, France, and worked as executive assistant manager of Indigo Real Estate, Phuket, for two years.

Why broadband is so often so narrow

Depending on where you are in or around Phuket, your Internet connection can range from quite impressive to almost useless. Depending on the time of day, you may get a drop in performance of as much as 80%.

Depending on a host of other factors, you may not even be able to connect at all.

The sorry state of broadband on the island is the result of many factors and on any given day they can all add up to a very frustrating online experience. This week's article aims to shed some light on the Internet conditions that plague us in Phuket and surrounding areas.

Everyone has experienced good and bad Internet days; whether your connection is Dial-up, ADSL or a fiber optic leased line, many of the variables that affect your Internet performance are the same.

As a provider of ADSL and broadband, our company faces a number of challenges daily. These range from sub-standard telephone cables and infrastructure to the high cost of supply from "manufacturers" and from antiquated equipment at the telephone companies to a general

lack of technical expertise and support from those who govern Thailand's Internet connectivity.

Let's look more closely at these factors.

High cost of raw materials: All of us who supply Internet access are in the same boat: the price of "bulk" broadband is far more expensive than in most other countries – about 100 times more.

It's anybody's guess as to why it is so expensive but this is the fundamental reason for Phuket's over-priced (and under-performing) Internet services.

All Internet Service Providers (ISPs), sub-ISPs and Reseller Agents are paying very high prices for their raw materials. Let's face it; if you're overpaying for cake mix then you'll be selling expensive cakes.

It's not really here: Another challenge is that all of the broadband in Phuket and surrounding areas comes from Bangkok, Surat Thani, or Haad Yai, and, sometimes, from all three.

What results is some pretty long cables connecting Phuket to the national "source" of Thailand's Internet.

The combinations of hardware and software that connect these long cables to the Internet Super Highway are called "gateways".

Since Phuket is more than just a few kilometers away from the gateways, and because most cables are rather short and require multiple splices (connections), and because the cables used are of poor quality, and because there is no quality control of workmanship on the splicing, and because ... well the list goes on, but I'm sure you get the picture. We have all seen how well telephone cables are strung across the country – sometimes even without the use of telephone poles.

Interference: This cause is a little less widely known, but is certainly a major source of local Internet problems. Whenever a telephone cable is poorly spliced or is too close to a power cable, there is significant electrical "noise" transferred between the power cable and the telephone cable.

Normally this noise results only in that annoying background static (crackling noise) that you hear when trying to speak on the phone with someone, but in the digital Internet connection world, this interference can be crippling.

If you are having a conversation with background noise, you can ask the other person to repeat themselves or speak louder.

Computers, however, are not so smart; they need to get every last bit (and byte) of data and, if they don't get it all, then no sense can be made of any of it.

This, in turn, requires the whole thing to be sent again and again until, finally, all the ones and zeros are received and the data can finally reach your screen.

Just imagine how many chances there are for a cable between Phuket and Bangkok to pick up noise – rain, animals, and even the occasional cement truck

– or to suffer damage due to poorly spliced connections and proximity to power lines.

Depressed yet? It gets worse.

Short straws: This is the biggest reason for our connectivity problems. The Internet – more specifically, our local connection to it – is like a giant glass of water. The glass can only hold so much Internet (water).

If too many people put their straws in and start slurping at the same time, the result is that there is simply not enough water to go around.

This is commonly called "oversubscribing" and it is the main problem here in Phuket.

All Internet providers pay (basically) the same amount for a "glass" of Internet and all consumers demand cheaper Internet. The only available solution is to combine certain "groups" of consumers into specifically priced "packages", such as ADSL, and to allow them to share the cost.

The sharing may be of a connection to Bangkok, or the gateways, or corporate accounts, or the connection to your office building, or the ADSL telephone switching equipment. You can be sure that all the Internet in Phuket, at some point or another and at some level or another, is shared.

The key is to work with a quality Internet provider who tells you the real story and allows you to choose your price point. Be sure the provider monitors all traffic daily to ensure that the glass is always big enough and stays full.

If not, streaming music (or radio), movie downloads, video chat and Voice over IP (VoIP) – all of which require some pretty big "straws" – can combine at any given time to produce poor Internet performance.

ADSLow: There is still another challenge when using ADSL. You may have heard about "DSL Internet". This is usually pretty

good, but notice the lack of the letter "A".

The difference is that DSL uses direct cable connections between the ISP and the user. ADSL however, goes through the local telephone company's infrastructure.

The result is a lot of low-quality, noisy phone cables connecting you to antiquated telephone switching equipment that connects you to under-sized gateways that connect you to over-priced access to the International Information Super Highway.

Looking ahead: What is the future of broadband in Phuket? Nothing to email home about. There are three major challenges facing us:

- The high costs (government-controlled) that all ISPs must pay for connecting to the gateways.

- The quality and condition of our national communications infrastructure, including electrical and telephone cables, and the equipment used to distribute signals.

- "Truth in advertising": If some of these so-called ISPs continue to market 1 megabyte for 800 baht per month, promising that it performs as well as a dial-up connection, but without telling you that it is oversubscribed, then the entire industry loses credibility.

The outcome harks back to the days when miracle tonics and cures were sold by street peddlers to unsuspecting and trusting consumers. In the end, everyone loses.

Next week, I'll offer some tips, tricks and best practices that will improve your Internet connection.

John Seebach has more than 25 years' consulting experience in Management Information Systems and Business Process Re-engineering. His company, Island Technology, offers IT solutions and broadband services throughout Southeast Asia. Contact john@islandtechnology.com for more information.



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Oil hikes expected to inflate car prices

By Athiga Jundee

PHUKET: Rising prices at the pumps have forced prospective car buyers to rethink what kind of car to buy, many opting for smaller, more fuel-efficient models. So far increased car production costs due to the higher fuel costs have not had an effect on the base sticker prices in Phuket showrooms – though it is only a matter of time before they do.

Sudarat Seaeaw, Sales Manager at the Anuphas Vividhkar Honda Dealership on Phang Nga Rd, told the *Gazette* that price adjustments related to the oil increase would come into effect in August, although the amount of the increase has not yet been determined.

She stressed that the 2.5% increase in base prices of the Jazz Safety, Jazz Cool and new-edition Accord models that went into effect June 1 were not a result of the rise in oil price, but reflected an increase in the number of standard features on these models.

Montri Hongsyok, the dealership's Managing Director, said that even with the higher fuel costs, Honda showrooms across Phuket were unable to keep enough vehicles in stock to meet high customer

demand, especially given the range of colors and other options available.

As a result, most buyers place an order with the dealership, which in turn orders the car from Bangkok. Customers typically wait about one month for delivery, he said.

He explained that Anuphas Vividhkar targets hotel employees and other tourism-industry workers. Despite the woes in this industry, the observable drop in the "buying power" of this segment has only been slight, he said.

Like most car dealers, K. Montri expects higher pump prices to shift demand way from larger, less fuel-efficient models to those with engines smaller than two liters.

Although hesitant to speculate, when pressed, he said that price increases, to be announced August 1, could be in the vicinity of 20,000 baht per car.

Like Honda, most other car dealerships are still awaiting orders from Bangkok as to whether they should raise prices, and, if so, when and by how much.

Piriya Tantipiriyakij, Managing Director of Muang Mai Motor, said that any increases in the base prices for the Volvo and Land Rover models sold by his deal-

ership may take some time to come into effect, as most of the vehicles are imported.

"The main headquarters in Bangkok have yet to send a signal to raise prices, and we hope there won't be any within the next two months," he said.

"Volvo and Land Rover may be forced to raise their price eventually, but it won't happen until the current stock runs out, which won't be any time soon. Also, it's difficult to raise prices when the [local] economy is in such a poor state," he said.

"As most Volvos and Land Rovers are imported, any price rises are more likely to depend more on economic circumstances in the country of origin," he said, adding that exchange rate fluctuations also play an important role in costs.

He admitted that new orders for Volvos and Land Rovers from the principal target markets – upscale hotels and other tourism-related businesses – had fallen off with the post-tsunami tourism slump.

Some orders placed during the motor show at Central Festival Phuket in May were canceled when consumers reassessed their financial situations, he said.

K. Piriya also noticed a shift away from gasoline-powered models, with more buyers now opting for vehicles with more fuel-efficient diesel engines.

Phaisan Treepijak, Sales and Marketing Manager at Isuzu Andaman Sales Co Ltd, said he doesn't expect Isuzu headquarters in Bangkok to raise prices within the next two months.

Sales are good and bookings for pickup trucks by families and small businesses remain strong, he said, with 10

new vehicles booked at the May Motor Show at Central Festival Phuket alone. The effect on sales of the tsunami has largely passed, he said.

Vitoon Leethanasak, Sales Manager of Toyota Pearl Phuket, told the *Gazette* that there has been no instruction from Toyota headquarters to raise prices this month; such an instruction is expected in August or some time after that.

When pressed, Montri Hongsyok said that price increases, to be announced August 1, could be in the vicinity of 20,000 baht per car.

Getting to grips with the oil business

The focus of the world's financial markets these days is firmly on the price of oil. The supply of oil is tight, but even worse is the capacity to refine this commodity, which is now being severely tested.

Refineries are a problem because nobody wants one near where they live. The environmentalists scream opposition to construction of any proposed refinery and the local population join in.

The result has been that no new refineries have been built in the US for more than 20 years, and for almost the same period in Europe. Every local politician knows that the route to instant popularity is to oppose strongly the construction of any new refinery.

Oil analysts frequently tell us that another problem with oil supplies is location; politically-safe areas, such as the North Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, which are also easy to get to, have finite reserves of oil.

Unfortunately, oil is located – and new discoveries are being made – in places that are anything but stable. Current supplies from, say Nigeria or Venezuela, cannot be depended upon, and with such tight capacity constraints it will take little to create a worldwide crisis.

Russia is, potentially, capable of substantially increasing its oil production, but suffers from a credibility problem.

Vladimir Putin, President

of the Russian Federation, executed a *de facto* nationalization of Russia's largest domestic oil producer, Yukos, which produces around 20% of Russia's supplies and 2% of world supplies.

It is believed by some that President Putin's attack on Yukos was motivated by the fact that the company's boss, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, once Russia's wealthiest man, was a political rival who was contributing heavily to almost every political party except Putin's.

A US\$936-million tax bill was levied on TNK-BP, a joint venture between – respectively – a Russian oil producer and its British partner, which showed that even foreign oil companies are not exempt from becoming targets [in Russia].

The net result has been that Russia's oil production has not increased. Oil companies are very experienced in operating in difficult political environments, but they do like to be able to operate within parameters of "acceptable risk".

The squeeze in oil production cannot be alleviated by simply building more refineries, and in any case, refineries take time to build – around four to seven years.

Even before construction starts, however, a delay is caused – in any reasonably advanced country – by the obtaining of environmental permits.

US President George W. Bush proposed a very sensible



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

solution to the US refinery problem: to build new refineries on decommissioned US military bases, which remain federally-owned land.

There is a common perception that if Americans drove energy-efficient vehicles, the problem would be solved. This is simplistic and inaccurate. Much of the demand for oil is for heating and electricity generation.

World demand for oil is increasing rapidly, and the demand is being led by countries such as China and India, which are experiencing rapid economic growth and have huge populations.

China alone plans to build 250 nuclear-powered electricity plants within the next 10 years. That may help slow the increase in demand for oil, but the overall demand will still rise.

Financial markets, to the surprise of most analysts, virtu-

ally ignored the rise in the price of oil as measured by Nymex (New York Mercantile Exchange), while light sweet crude rose to more than US\$50 a barrel.

There is, however, wariness starting to appear as oil touches US\$60 a barrel.

The increase in the oil price is having a serious impact on Thailand's trade balance. April's trade deficit was more than US\$1.5 billion (60 billion baht) and May's was bigger, at US\$1.75 billion (70 billion baht).

Thailand can live with these figures in the short term, but if oil prices stay at current levels for any length of time, there will be problems.

The first point of impact will be the currency; it is already obvious that the Bank of Thailand – the nation's central bank – is intervening to support the baht.

It is understandable that it is taking this action because every drop in the value of the baht against the US dollar means another rise in the cost of fuel, which is priced in dollars.

Thailand has already spent

more than 80 billion baht in diesel subsidies, a course of action that cannot be sustained. The government has already cut the subsidies and plans to drop them altogether.

It is to be hoped that US\$60 will be the high-water mark in the price of oil. The predictions from oil-industry analysts – when they dare to make them – vary widely.

The highest prediction for oil prices by the end of 2005 came from an analyst at Goldman Sachs, who suggested US\$105 a barrel.

I do hope that the analyst will be proved wrong.

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.

Airport traffic plummets in May

PHUKET: Passenger numbers on international flights in and out of Phuket International Airport between May 1 and 30 plummeted by 62.43% compared with the same period of 2004.

Statistics from Phuket International Airport show that in May the total number of flights dropped by 25.33%, from 2,582 last year to 1,928 flights this year.

International flights were down by 37.77%, from 1,218 in May last year to 758 this year. The number of domestic flights also fell, by 14.22%, from 1,364 flights last year to 1,170 this year.

International passenger numbers dropped by 62.43% from 129,451 to 48,635 people this year, while the number of domestic passengers dropped by 19.79%, from 185,464 in May 2004 to 148,760 this year.

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Designs on what makes a good hole

In recent times golf architecture has gained an increasing share of publicity in the golf media. No doubt this is partly to do with the media's insatiable appetite for content to fill its pages and screens, but there is also an undeniable fascination among golfers with the thinking behind the game's courses.

Why all the fuss? Who gives a mashie niblick what a course looks like, where its bunkers are positioned, or whether the designer has devised an intriguing puzzle for players to solve?

Surely, the game is the same for everyone. Our golf ball doesn't know whether it is being caressed around Augusta National or beaten black and blue on Bognor Public Golf Course, does it?

Good players will almost always claim that the surroundings of a golf hole don't make a difference. Yet, Pebble Beach and Augusta National always come out at the top of tour players "Favorite Course" polls.

For a hacker having a particularly disastrous round, the beauty and serenity of the surroundings may be the only enjoyable feature of the day.

On the playing side, I believe the majority of golfers can "feel it in their bones" when they are standing on the tee of a really well designed golf hole, regardless of whether the venue is Pebble Beach with its inspiring backdrop of Pacific Ocean surf pounding Monterey peninsula's beautiful beaches – or Hartlepool Power Station's cooling towers.

Closer to home, who wouldn't go weak-kneed on Blue Canyon's island green 14th? And what on earth does one do when confronted with Phuket Country Club's 10th – a drivable par 5! Or is it?



Just as most players recognize a good golf course, so can they recognize a good golf hole. After all, a good golf course is mainly defined by the quality of its individual holes.

The average golfer may not know much about golf course design, but this does not mean that he or she doesn't know what's good.

So, what makes a good golf hole, and why does it matter?

A good hole is the essence of golf's attraction; it makes it absolutely clear, to players of all skill levels, which shot selections make sense from tee to green and even on the green, given each player's appetite for risk.

Consequently, when a golfer can correctly execute the selected shots, the pleasure experienced is far greater than when he or she hits a fine shot at a hole that neither rewards nor punishes to an equitable degree.

Truth be told, there are no blueprints for great holes. Great holes are invariably blends of art and engineering, nature and man, tradition and heterodoxy, inspirational genius and dumb luck.

A good hole is one where the fundamentals are right, where the implicit strategy of the hole is apparent from the tee, where the ground determines the play, where the hazards are visible (or plainly imaginable) and where there is a variety of fairway lies and stances.

A good hole presents the right kind of difficulty – allowing skill generally to triumph over luck – where brain can compete with brawn, where the game is not yet over when the players have hit the green.

A good hole teases rather than tortures; it possesses a beckoning spirit of adventure; it lures players into its labyrinth of possibilities and leaves them wanting to come back again and again.

Few sports enjoy such a vast array of different playing fields and surfaces. Golf is played at around 30,000 courses around the world. Even allowing for the odd sprinkling of nine-hole lay-outs, that amounts to roughly half a million golf holes.

Despite the awe-inspiring number of holes on our planet, and despite the current trend to build "replica" holes, no two are exactly the same. Yet the world's great holes share certain undeniable qualities.

First among them is the element of strategy. They say "play me this way, or maybe that way if you're so inclined. But you'll pay the price if you can't play the way you think you can."

Then there are holes that say, "If you really think you're up to it, Big Boy, try to play me way over there." If you succeed you'll have picked up at least a shot on the meeker, milder golfer. These are "heroic" holes.

Finally, there are golf holes that refuse to compromise. "You will hit the ball well, and if you don't I'm going to have you for lunch."

These holes don't care if you're Tiger Woods or Gerald Ford (clue: one of these two gentlemen is not known for his golfing ability). They are our third category, the "penal" holes.

In my next three columns, I will discuss golf's three major hole types in more detail, outline how these holes are best integrated into a great golf course and attempt to identify what I believe are the merits of Phuket golf's best examples.

There are currently just 117 holes on Phuket Island to choose from (136 holes if we include Thai Muang Beach and 155 holes if Tab Lamu is listed). Golf holes in the Strategic, Penal, and Heroic design schools make up almost all of these

holes; most holes are, in truth, combinations.

Though some come close, I don't believe any holes on Phuket's golf courses fall completely outside the three groups. A totally monotonous hole where all categories of players have nothing much to do other than swing at the ball without particular fear of punishment or hope of reward, is hard to imagine.

In fact, a designer would be hard put to it to create a hole that didn't have one simple feature that requires at least some degree of thought and accuracy during play.

In my next column, I'll share my views on strategic holes, and choose which, in my view, is Phuket's best (and worst) strategically-designed golf hole. Do you take the black route, the white route or one of the dozens of routes tinted in shades of gray?

Great holes are invariably blends of art and engineering, nature and man, tradition and heterodoxy, inspirational genius and dumb luck.

Phuket to host three sports in Asian Indoor Games

PHUKET CITY: Three of the nine sports that will make up the 1st Asian Indoor Games, to be held in Thailand from November 12 to 19, will be contested in Phuket.

Although the exact location of the Phuket series has yet to be confirmed, at least 32 of the 45 participating nations will compete for sport aerobics, dance sport and kick-boxing honors on the island.

Chon Buri will host indoor athletics, Suphan Buri will hold extreme sports, while futsal, cycling, swimming and hoop

takraw will be played in Bangkok.

Songsak Kitikarnkul, Chief of the Sport Authority of Thailand (SAT), said that around 300 athletes would take part in the competitions in Phuket.

According to the SAT schedules, sport aerobics will be held in November 13-15, the dance sport competition will held November 15 to 16, while kick-boxing will held November 13 to 18.

For more information visit the Games website, at www.ocasia.org/liag.asp.

Chang Beer puts off Everton youth trials

PHUKET CITY: Chang Beer abruptly canceled its trials for young soccer players from southern Thailand hoping to be sent to a training camp with Chang-sponsored English Premier League side Everton.

The trials were scheduled to be held on July 2 and 3 in Bangkok, Chiang Mai and at Phuket's Surakul stadium. Twenty-five of the young players from the South, aged 16 or 17, were to have been chosen to go to Bangkok for a play-off to decide which three would go to Everton.

However, Chang announced just two days beforehand that it was holding trials only in Bangkok, and that the Phuket and Chiang Mai trials were postponed.

Eam Thavornvongwongse,

President of the Phuket Sports Association (PSA), told the *Gazette* that he could not say why the trial had been postponed.

He added that the PSA did not know when the competition would be held in Phuket.

On the brighter side, however, coaches and players from Everton and two other English Premiership teams, Bolton and Manchester City, are still scheduled to come to Phuket for a one-day kid's soccer camp on July 21. Each team will send three coaches and two players.

Phuket will also play host to two matches between the Thai national women's soccer team and their Canadian counterparts at Surakul Stadium on July 5 and 7. Both games will begin at 5 pm. Entry to watch the matches is free.

Offshore celebrate darts league victory

PATONG: OffShore Bar breezed to a 10-point win in the recently completed Patong Darts league, winning 56 of a possible 66 points from 22 matches to take the league title.

Second and third were Queen Mary and Shakers with 46 and 39 points, respectively.

The new league got underway July 5 with a slightly different format. Singles matches, formerly of 301, will now be 501. Doubles matches, formerly to 501, will now be played to 701.

The league also welcomes its newest entry, the Coyote Bar on Soi Sea Dragon. Pickles Bar will remain in the league, but will now play under the slightly more exotic name African Café.

July 12 fixtures (home teams



OffShore members (from left) Sean Rothwell, Richard Smyth, Ian Hertbertson, Gary Strike and Billy Hollows celebrate winning the Darts League with a party on June 28 at their bar on Nanai Rd.

– Photo by Murray Scaddan.

first): Nag's Head v Queen Mary; Two Black Sheep v Valhalla; Shakers v OffShore; Didi's v Amigos; African Café v Piccadilly; Coyote Bar v Dog's Bollocks.

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Ozzie Oggi wins Kalim surf contest

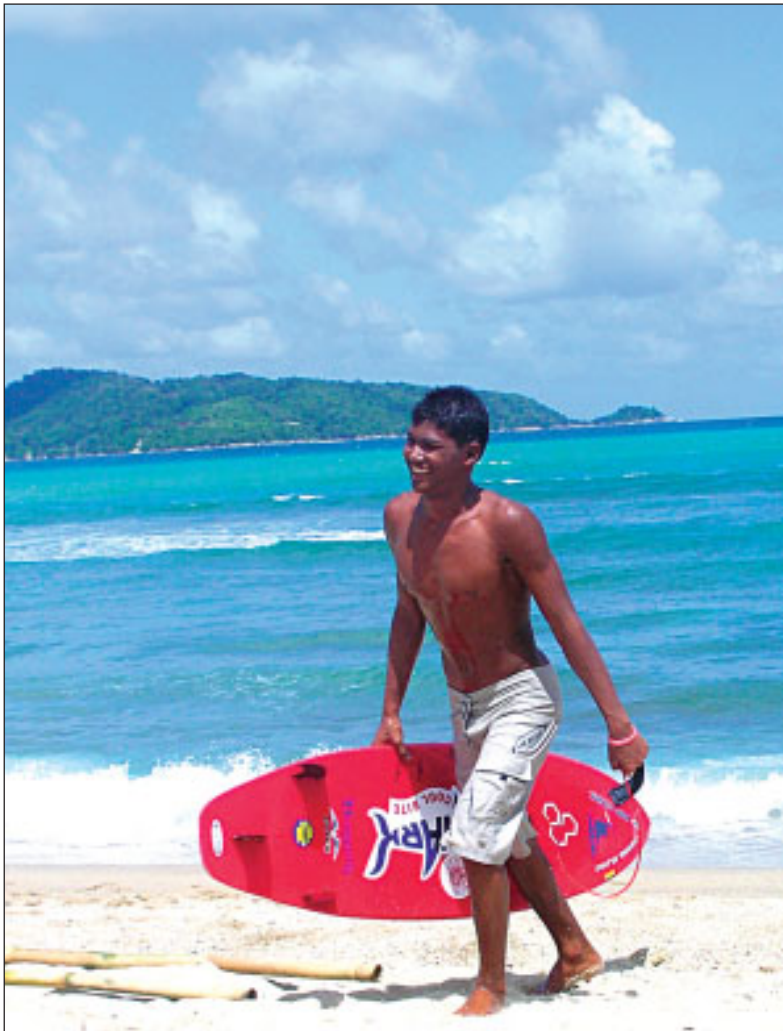
PHUKET: Patong-based Australian surfer Andrew "Oggi" Fallon made the most of three- to four-foot waves to take top honors in the Open Division of the first Kalim Surfing Contest held July 1 to 3 at Kalim Beach.

The event, organized by the Phuket Board Riders Club (BRC), saw a total of about 20 competitors take to the surf in two divisions, Open and "Grom", for surfers under 14 years of age.

Under the competition's rules, four surfers competed in heats of 20 minutes, with a panel of judges awarding them points for style, wave height chosen and difficulty of the maneuvers attempted.

Judges communicate time remaining to the surfers through the use of different colored flags and by sounding a horn.

Phuket Board Riders Club President Chanin "Joob" Aiyarak told the *Gazette* he was pleased by the turnout and interest in the event, which was meant to encourage low-season tourism and keep youngsters off drugs. He said the BRC's next competition, at Kamala Beach, will take place August 20 and 21.



The grin says that this surfer reckons he made all the right moves

Open Division Final Results:

1. Andrew "Oggi" Fallon (Patong); 2. Ekkarat "Lim" Sriden (Kamala); 3. Noppasit "Ko" Boonchouy (Kata); 4. Santi "Ipnie" Hasan (Kalim); 5.

Pongsiri "Pong" Sakdasawit (Kamala).

Grom Division Final Results:

1. Yothin "Rogib" Thongyon

(Kalim); 2. Dawut "Dawut" Pantip (Kalim); 3. Anucha "Wa" Yadee (Kalim); 4. Abubug "Bubug" Pounnun (Kalim); 5. Kit Donahue (Patong).



Above: The judges sat out under the sun all day – and note, not a sign of a beer can.

Right: Proving that you don't have to be big to take on the might of the ocean is this little entrant in the Grom Class.



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UNHERALDED GRENACHE

Despite the fact one rarely encounters it as a varietal wine, Grenache is the second most widely-planted grape in the world. Normally, the grape variety is encountered as a component in blended wines.

Grenache is ubiquitous in France's southern Rhône Valley, where it is blended to produce the wines of Châteauneuf du Pape. It also constitutes the basis for much of the well-known rosé wines of Tavel and Lirac, in France.

Grenache is also the primary component for much of the red wine of the Rioja and Priorato regions in Spain, where it goes by its Spanish name Garnacha.

One finds Grenache in these sunny and dry regions principally because the grape is drought- and heat-resistant. It also withstands the cold, springtime *mistral* winds of the Rhône Valley and those of the Spanish plain.

Grenache makes a fruity, spicy, medium-bodied wine with surprisingly firm tannins. Although the color is usually

lighter than that of other red wines, the tannins and flavor are often brawnier.

Perhaps the most unique characteristic is its aroma, which is aromatic and resembles balsamic. At times its aroma can even be so powerful that it loosely resembles the ethyl acetate in nail polish remover.

Grenache wines, being hearty, demand equally hearty cuisine, and are best with smoky grilled foods and tangy barbecues.

Grenache grapevines are long-lived and don't begin to produce quality fruit until they are around 20 to 30 years of age.

This is one reason why so little varietal Grenache is to be found; few wineries have the patience to wait that long.

Few winemakers have mastered the craft of varietal Grenache or are dedicated to showcasing the grape as a single varietal wine. One of the few, and one of the

WINE



By Steven
Roberto

best, is found in Australia, where Grenache has, ironically, been almost entirely eclipsed by Shiraz.

The greatest examples of varietal Grenache, however, come chiefly from the Paso Robles and Santa Barbara regions of Southern California, in the US.

Alban Winery produces tremendous varietal Grenache that is enormously complex, rich and flavorful. Its wines showcase spicy black cherry, wild berry, leather, anise, game and floral aromas, with dense and

chewy tannins.

Beckmen, from the Santa Ynez Valley, is another star producer of Grenache. Its wines are fruit-forward, with animated aromas of black raspberry and vanilla, backed with intriguing spice and chocolate notes.

Better known for its Zinfandel, but worth seeking out for its Grenache, are

Ridge Vineyards in Dry Creek Valley. Their Grenache sports a rustic texture and rich plum flavor that exhibits enormous concentration.

In Australia, the king of Grenache is Clarendon Winery. Although generous, its Grenache wines showcase supple texture and great subtlety. The wines also feature lively and tangy cherry favors with mineral and chocolate notes.

Another superb Australia producer is d'Arenberg, whose McLaren Vale Grenache sets the standard for lean but generous Grenache that brims with spicy fruit and polish texture.

And despite its large size, Yalumba also produces small quantities of expressive Grenache with a very soft and supple texture.

Steven Roberto is a winemaker and restaurant consultant from California. He is the Managing Director of enVision Phuket, a Phuket-based wine importer and consultant. Email: stevenroberto@lycos.com.

Teak seats and a bit of bottom-fishing

The San Francisco Chronicle – sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article – brings the Bay Area up to date with Patong's latest happenings. Well, just about.

"Patong is planting new palm trees along the beach. They could break up wave surge and give people something to grab on to – and [the town is] working to reduce the number of beach chairs and umbrellas, which became deadly projectiles during the tsunami."

"City officials are meeting resistance from beach vendors, but in the meantime the heavy teak chairs that did so much damage have given way to presumably less lethal plastic chairs."

Heavy teak chairs? And how come there's no mention of the solid gold ashtrays or platinum-coated beach brollies for

Welcome to *Outside In* on World Juggling Day unless, that is, they have dropped it again. Here is the *Gazette's* weekly peek at the Worldwide Web to see how others see the island, through sometimes cynical, jaded, wondrous and, sadly, sometimes downright pesty eyes.

OUTSIDE IN

By Lis Kinswoman

which Patong Beach is so well known?

No corruption please, we're monkeys: "Some monkeys earn more than a bureaucrat" chatters cnn.com/travel/destinations/9901. "Monkeys can pick up to 200 to 500 coconuts a day and, in the process earn more than a government official." Yes, but do they take bribes?

Getting the message through: "I prefer to lie down by the beach but then all these people will come and ask you whether you

want a foot massage," grumbles Malaysian visitor Adam at hi.okla.blogspot.com.

Greedy boy: "Phuket: The Island of 10,000 whores" dribbles travelersdigest.com/ph. "A thousand bars and 10,000 bar girls all in a 5-block radius. What more could anyone possibly ask for?" Yes, you guessed it: "11,000 bar girls".

Speaking of hookers... "Phuket" says bluewatermag.com, "is not the best fishing in the world but it's the best place to go fishing."

We can see why, at harrysfishing-phuket.com, where things get decidedly lubricious.

"Phuket is famous for the Big catch ... you don't need to be an expert ... bait and lures ...

trolling for action ... delicious bottom fish." Oooh, ducky!

That's the spirit: "There are no ghosts in Patong ... I swam after dark many times ... no problem," advises a fearless contributor to stickmanbangkok.com, writing on post-tsunami ghost sightings.

Thai psychologist Wallop Piyamanonth, at book-of-thoth.com, agrees, after a manner.

"People who claimed to have seen ghosts first-hand were people that mental health specialists would be paying particular attention to."

Maybe Dr Wallop should pay particular attention to Jinda, a witness of the paranormal, at ghosthounds.com.

"The next week the dead boy returned to the damaged hotel," says K. Jinda. Wearing the same dark-blue shorts he had on when he

died, the ghost of the black-haired 10-year-old was "...running around, playing," says the 40-year-old desk-clerk. "Then he disappeared."

With all this talk of the tsunami ghosts on the net, it's little wonder that Ann at asiannews.

net/level3 shivers before her visit to Phuket.

"I imagined dark, deserted beaches tortured by the howling wind, haunted by lost souls," she says.

Jiangtuo at twitchfilm.net concurs. "Jiangtuo here, reporting from Phutek [sic] Thailand. If you want to find ghosts come here. Getting off in the Phuket aeroport you can feel something in the air."

Slippery stuff: There's a lovely Freudian slip in this unsubstantiated bit of urban mythery at friskodude.blogspot.com. "Our ladyboy friends down there on Phuket are well-known for one thing ... and that is flashing their... 'parts' at pedestains [sic] walking by ..."

"The Patong police decided to make such an offence illegal and posted up a few warnings in the Thai lingo to the likes of 'Any ladyboy caught flashing her watermelons in public will be prosecuted and fined 500 baht.'"

Can anyone confirm this? Hmm, thought not.

'Monkeys can pick up to 200 to 500 coconuts a day and, in the process earn more than a government official.'



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www.phuketgazette.net

BEHIND WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

Mazda has begun production of the latest, third-generation Mazda MX-5 at its plant in Ujina, Japan, which has been refurbished after being devastated by fire late last year.

Launched at the Geneva show in March, the new MX-5 is much the same as the outgoing model, but with greater refinement and more power.

Additional safety features and a bigger engine have added only 10 kilograms or so to the overall weight of the two-seater, but performance is enhanced by the newly developed two-liter, all aluminum power plant.

A lighter flywheel and a stiffer drive shaft contribute to greater responsiveness and a feeling of a more direct connection with the road.

Maximum power is a healthy 157bhp (118kW) while the torque output is 188Nm at 5,000 rpm. Although this is a high engine speed at which to peak, the torque graph is almost linear and in no way detracts from the car's ability to storm hills or perform rapid overtaking maneuvers.

No performance figures are given, but expect the new car to top 220kmh, with a 0-100kmh sprint time in the region of seven seconds – not phenomenal figures, but adequate for what is, essentially, a fun machine.

Six-speed manual or automatic transmissions are available, while the brakes are discs all round, unlike the original which, in 1989, had a rather inadequate disc/drum set-up.

The discs on the new model are larger than before, with stiffer calipers to provide a greater, more precise brake pedal response and a high degree of linearity.

Aluminum is used for some suspension components and chassis parts in order to minimize unsprung weight, while the rear suspension cross member is attached directly to the unibody with no rubber insulation, greatly enhancing rigidity.



The new version of the highly popular Mazda MX preserves the car's character but beefs up safety and extras.

MX REMIX

Newly designed aluminum multi-spoke wheels are fitted with ultra-low-profile tires.

The MX-5 (known as the Miata in the US) was first introduced at the Chicago Auto Show in February 1989.

It immediately caught the imagination of sports car enthusiasts as a simple, no-frills two-seater, which sold for a reasonable figure and would be both safe and reliable.

When production of the second generation ceased in April 2005, 718,954 cars had been delivered, making it the best-selling two-seater sports car in history. It has even earned its own place in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for this feat.

The latest version features a wider track – an added 75mm at the front and 55mm at the rear – and, consequently, more pronounced fender arches.

The interior has received a makeover and now has larger-volume head airbags to complement the side airbags. New ven-

tilation outlets and a choice of tan or black leather upholstery on the top models offer a feeling of luxury within the cramped cockpit. The base model comes with black cloth upholstery.

Five round gauges on the dash are fitted with non-reflective glass to maintain legibility even in direct sunlight.

An automatic climate-control system keeps passengers cool even in Thailand's temperatures, while there is a premium Bose sound system fitted to the top-of-the-range models.

There is a choice of eight

exterior colors and three interior-trim packages. There are many storage compartments, including a lockable one with space for up to 10 CDs in the rear compartment, and a bottle holder in the door panel.

The 2005 MX-5 is a great improvement on its earlier cousins, yet maintains the simplicity and 'fun-to-drive' element of the

original. Mazda has resisted the temptation to move away from a highly popular format and there is no reason why the MX-5 should not lead the market for another 16 years.

It goes on sale worldwide in the second half of the year.

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

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Decor

By Alison Winward & Jaratsri Surat

A RICH NICHE FOR KITSCH



How easy is it to create the perfect garden in Phuket? Plants don't just grow here, they thrive. Garden tools are relatively inexpensive, and garden furniture and the like is plentiful.

There are so many shops here selling decorative terracotta water jars it's amazing the island hasn't sunk under the weight.

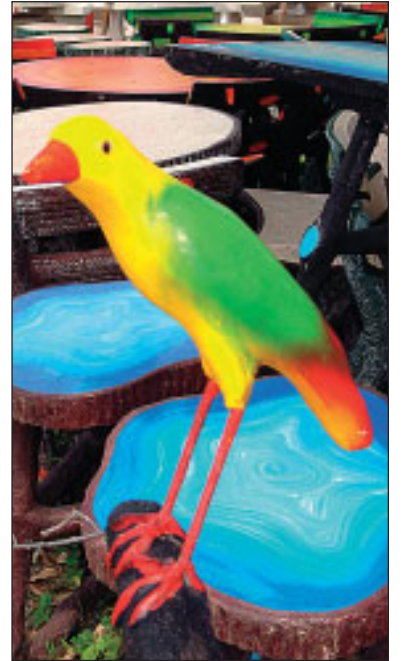
Restrained water features – all polished stone spheres and gently bubbling water – are everywhere, as are reproductions of bas-reliefs and statues from Prasat Phnom Rung and the like in muted earthy tones. It's easy to get an elegant sala for any size of garden.

But what if your taste veers more towards Vegas than Lanna?

If you're more ultra-violet than shrinking violet? What are the chances of creating a garden to match your taste?

Well, the good news is that the raw material can be found, if you know where to look. Actually, it's pretty hard to miss, as our pictures here demonstrate, bringing joy to the hearts of all those who want their garden to be a rich niche for kitsch.

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Bright bird from Priroj Nana Pan; Gorilla and fountain from Nang Lai Mai; zebra from Boon Pratangporn; deer from Jit Narin.

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Construction Update

By Anongnat Sartpisut



Above and below: Computer-generated views of the Patong Harbor View Condominiums project.

Work to begin soon on Patong condo project

PATONG: A 73-unit condominium development on three rai of land at the southern end of Patong Beach, will combine both traditional and contemporary Thai design with modern facilities equal to a five-star resort, say its developers.

Construction of Patong Harbor View Condominiums' 73 units, all with pool and town, mountain, and/or harbor views, is scheduled to begin in November, with completion at the end of next year, Scott Riefler, Project Manager, told the *Gazette*.

Patong Harbor View will comprise three seven-story buildings.

These will contain four 198.5-square-meter penthouses selling at 10.55 million baht each.

There will also be 18 two-bedroom units of 146 to 154sqm, ranging in price from 6.1 to 8.1 million baht per unit, and 51 one-bedroom units of 95 to 103sqm, priced at 3.9 to 5.1 million baht.

Each condominium will include a storage room, a home office nook and a sala with a day bed on a private terrace. All kitchens, living rooms and bedrooms will have wood floors; outdoor areas will be sandstone-tiled.

Mr Riefler said that the



units will be unfurnished, but will have fully-equipped kitchens, and air conditioning throughout.

The development's shared facilities will include a large fitness center, a swimming pool, a conference room, a games room, a salon and a restaurant. High-speed Internet access, satellite TV and a mail room are among the services that will be provided.

"This project is geared towards a younger crowd that prefers modern amenities and fun facilities, such as our spa, barbecue area and pool bar. Our activities director will plan non-stop

fun throughout the day," Mr Riefler said.

"The response has been excellent," he added. "Three of the condos are reserved already."

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Home of the Week

Rawai

This four-bedroom home in Rawai may be new, but its design was inspired by the art deco style so popular in the early part of the 20th century.

The three-story property, which has internal space of 660 square meters, stands on a plot of 1,800sqm just five minutes from Nai Harn Beach.

The huge windows and high ceilings mean that the home is light and airy, and it is positioned so that it catches the breezes from different directions – so successfully that it does not need air conditioning.

The property is surrounded by a high white wall, and access is via a covered aluminum carport, also in keeping with the art deco style.

The windows and doors, and the fronts of the kitchen units and wardrobes, all feature silver aluminum, while the floor tiles throughout the ground floor have a mock aluminum finish.

The ground floor kitchen is Western-style, covering 30sqm and well equipped with modern appliances. Adjoining it is a large laundry room and a wine cellar/larder.

The kitchen opens onto an 84sqm open-plan living area, which overlooks the terrace and its 52sqm pool.

Off this living area are two guest bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms and built-in aluminum wardrobes.

At home in the past



Inspired by art deco style, the home sports a 30sqm Western-style kitchen (above), a 52sqm pool (below), and the top level offers 360 views of the surrounding fields and mountains.



On the middle floor there is an office and a third bedroom, also with en-suite bathroom, as well as a white-tiled roof terrace with 360° views of the surrounding fields and mountains.

The top floor contains the master bedroom with an en-suite

bathroom and another large white-tiled roof terrace.

The windows all have secondary sliding aluminum doors fitted with mosquito screens and Venetian blinds, and the house is equipped with many aluminum wardrobes and cupboards.

In the grounds are quarters for two maids and there is space for several cars, bikes or even a boat to be parked on the back terrace.

Utilities include a well and hot water, UBC TV, two telephone lines and a three-phase power supply.

The house is in an area popular with expatriates, close to restaurants and local amenities. It is 15 minutes from Phuket City,

20 minutes from the major shopping areas and hospitals, and 40 minutes from Phuket International Airport.

The land title is Chanote, and the asking price is 18 million baht.

For more information, contact Richard Lusted at Siam Real Estate, Tel: 076-288908, website: www.siamrealestate.com, email: info@siamrealestate.com



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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Well, in the past few weeks I've had a go at Americans, Brits, Canadians, Lancastrians and Patong street vendors. This time round it's the turn of the fairer sex. Specifically, wives.

They have a lot to answer for. Apart from having difficulty in figuring things out for themselves and not being able to admit they need help, they seem to have an innate ability to limit the freedom of their chosen partner, whether they know it or not. They're rather good at that, wives.

By the way, I got the above female character descriptions from a good friend of mine who happens to be female, believe it or not. We got onto the subject of wives one evening.

She's not married to her partner as yet, but even she was forced to admit the truth of what she was likely to become, once she'd decided to tie the knot.

She even mentioned that, according to Greek mythology, the gods created women as a punishment for man. They called them a "beautiful evil" as they were pleasing to the eye but had the effect of making men lose control, as the life was extracted slowly from them.

I certainly wouldn't go so far as to agree with the Greeks' view, but there may be a kernel of truth in there.

I have several married friends who simply aren't allowed out at night without asking permission first. "I'll just check with the wife," is the usual response when one asks a married man if he fancies a quick beer after work.

These husbands are simply helpless. They're at their wives' mercy, suffering slow interminable strangulation. Sadly, they don't stand a chance – the women are always right. It's one of those inevitable rules of nature.

The only equivalent in the plant world that even comes close is one that you wouldn't even think of as a plant in its own right – the strangling fig.

This type of fig tree is a common sight in Thailand, though not in the guise that most of us would recognize. It isn't a neat little tree that sprouts a few fruit here and there, which we can

Strangled for life

After years of squeezing the life out of its victim, the strangling fig claims victory: the host tree dies and rots away, leaving behind a mass of tendrils entwined about thin air.



munch on, or throw into a Jamie Oliver recipe. Those appear more in other parts of the world. The strangling fig has earned its sinister name through its survival tactics.

What this nefarious, cunning plant does is to choose a totally innocent victim. This is usually a healthy tree which is quietly minding its own business, growing in the contented way that only a happy tree can.

If the tree were a beer drinker, it would probably be the type that spent most nights in the pub with its tree mates.

Along comes the strangling fig, rubbing its roots and shoots together with glee, its victim in

sight. The tree doesn't even see it approaching, and has no idea of the trauma that's yet to come.

Some stranglers climb up around the original tree, wrapping tendrils around the hapless trunk as they climb, like aliens from a science fiction 'B' movie. Others, in seed form, hitch a ride with a bird to the top of the tree and grow down.

The tendrils often form a criss-cross pattern all the way up (or down) the trunk of the host. One of the unusual things about this scheming member of the plant world is that, rather than overlapping, and passing each other politely, the tendrils fuse with each other when they meet

up, forming a solid mesh of growth.

After a number of years, the original tree has long since given up the struggle with its unwelcome guest, and lost the will to live. At this stage, the strangling fig claims victory.

Once dead, the original tree slowly rots away, leaving a bi-

zarre cylindrical mass of thick, entwined growths, wrapped around thin air.

This whole process can take a lifetime, so if you plant one of these, expecting this process to happen in your back garden overnight, you'll be disappointed. Be prepared for a long, long wait.

I'd love to be able to give some handy hints for the nurturing of strangling figs, but I can't, for a couple of reasons. First, as far as I know, nobody has ever grown one of these for fun – they just kind of appear without being invited. Initially they'll look like a kind of unwanted, spreading weed that you'd normally remove from the trunk of your otherwise pristine tree.

Second, they take too long to grow. I'm not sure that anyone would have the patience to spend a lifetime watching one plant slowly strangle another to death. Or maybe some would.

You may well have guessed that I'm single, and somewhat enjoying it at the moment. The sad thing is that any potential "significant other" reading this may not be particularly impressed, so my marital state could well remain as it is for some time to come.

Oh well, so be it. At least I can go out for a beer after work tomorrow. I'm still available by the way!

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?

Email Bloomin' Bert at: bloominbert@hotmail.com

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Property Gazette

Properties For Sale

PATONG SEA VIEW

Beautiful sea-view land in Patong. 1,608sqm. Land in Thalang only 1.4 million baht a rai. Plus many land parcels for sale. Condo at Patong Tower, private ownership. Beautifully renovated 3.75 million. Tel: 07-8893838.

DO YOU LOVE GOLF?

Do you want to live on the lovely Phuket Country Club Golf Course in Kathu? We are building 3 detached villas and are pre-selling now! You can choose the design and interiors! For details, call Rudi Tel: 01-9241447. Email: mail@villa.co.th Website: www.houseandvillasalesphuket.com

VILLA IN NAI HARN

Villa, 275sqm living space, 1,000sqm garden, 10mx5m pool, 60,000 baht rental income per month until March 2006: 10.75 million baht. Tel: 01-8916143, 07-8896074. Email: norbertfun@hotmail.com

NAI YANG

Small development of 5 houses; 2 under construction and ready to move in to in August. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, large living + dining room, European kitchen, laundry, verandah all round, boundary wall, electric gate, carport, landscaped garden. Living area: 153sqm, land: 532-740sqm. First house for sale at 7.3 million baht. Tel: 076-328424, 01-8953481. Email: golddigger-phuket@hotmail.com

EAST COAST LAND

4 rai plus on Cape Yamu. Great location, sea view, road access. Three-phase power supply. Asking 3.6 million baht per rai. Email: ya_moo@hotmail.com

MISSION HEIGHTS LAND FOR SALE

Fully-serviced building plots (underground 3-phase electric, free water, 8-meter concrete roads). From 2.25 million baht; 10% deposit, 18 months to pay. There is no better place to retire. Tel: 01-3444473, 01-8298101. Please see our website at: www.missionheights.com

TOWNHOUSE

for sale or rent. Kamala Beach house – ready to move in to – with 2 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms, for sale at 4 million baht or rent at 17,000 baht/month. Contact K. Ploenta. Tel: 07-9795048.

BAYVIEW PALMS

Patong. 6 luxury apartments with stunning sea views. 180 sqm, with master bedrooms and whirlpools. Guest bathroom, spacious lounge, American kitchen, large balcony, large common gardens with swimming pool, car parking. Price from 7.5 million baht. Tel: 07-8893838, 09-2911112. Email: bayviewpalms@yahoo.com

BANG TAO BEACH

124sqm & 240sqm furnished apartments, 1 min from the beach. 6.5 million baht and up. Tel: 07-8849288. Website: www.bangtaobeachgardens.com

RAWAI VILLA

and company for sale. New project with land: 400sqm, 350 meters from the beach. Price: 2.6 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

PATONG CONDO

Sea view, beachfront, 56 sqm, freehold sale: 1.4 million baht. 350 meters from beach. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

DIVIDED LAND

for sale. Plots with seaview: 238 square wah, 185sqw, 267sqw, etc. Asking 15,000 baht/sqw. Tel: 07-2674342. Email: agentsmith@ji-net.com

RAWAI CONDOS

with sea view. 27, 54 and 81sqm. Priced from 450,000 baht. Financing for 3 years available. Foreign freehold. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

RAWAI TOWNHOUSE

140sqm sale 1.2 million baht. Price includes owning company financing 3 years. 400 meters from the beach. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

HIGH QUALITY,

low cost. New house for sale, alongside hills behind Patong, convenient golf courses. Part of small private development. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms (1 ensuite), large living room, kitchen/diner. Courtyard-style verandah/patio. Approx 140 sqm on 340sqm land. Parking area. Price: 3.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-321954, 04-8439579. Fax: 076-323-421. Email: somsrijenner@lycos.com

KOH SAMUI

Beautiful land for sale. 4,500sqm on Maenam Hill. Views in one direction of Koh Pha-ngan and in the other, the valley and the golf course. 2 Chanote titles. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-3675416. Email: tseti@loxinfo.co.th

CHALONG CIRCLE

near pier. One rai, 300 meters to pier and beach. Chanote, water, electric; perfect for 20-unit apartments or 1 to 3 nice homes. Within walking distance to restaurants and businesses. Asking 4.2 million baht per rai. Tel: 06-5950188. Email: nsupin@yahoo.com



Best Sea View in Phuket the Doa Tiam project above Mission Hills Golf Course, 85% of the view land sold already. The only land I know of with a complete view of Phang Nga Bay 1,2,3 rai and up lots available. Chanote title 3.2 million baht/rai for view land and 2.2 million baht/rai for flat land. You can play all year on Phang Nga Bay when the West Coast is closed for 6 months due monsoon storms
Tel: 06-5950188 E-mail: nsupin@yahoo.com

BEACHFRONT HOTEL

61-room hotel on the beach for sale. Contact for more info. Tel: 01-8918082. Email: seagullphuket@hotmail.com

1 RAI

plot for 1.999 million baht. Plot located in Mission Heights, a luxury development, with underground electricity, and security, 10 minutes from the airport and 20 minutes to Central. Asking 1.999 million baht baht. Tel: 01-2712825.

MISSION HILLS

1-rai, fully-serviced lots with view, next to golf course. Tel: 07-8849288. Email: bgbphuket@yahoo.com

GOLF COURSE LIVING

1-rai fully-serviced lots, exclusive gated community. Tel: 07-8849288. Email: bgbphuket@yahoo.com

2 RAI AT MISSION

Hills – only 1.3 million baht per rai. For sale by owner. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-8950711. Email: japamala2002@yahoo.com

MOST BEAUTIFUL

sea view. Chalong. Easy access, electricity; best plot on the island. 3.6 million baht per rai. Call now! Tel: 01-5376866.

1, 2, 3 & 4 RAI

Rawai plots available from only 3.45 million baht per rai. Chanote title, road access, electricity and water. Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-5950188. Email: nsupin@yahoo.com

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to sell. Direct owner sale of new 170sqm, two-level, 3-bed, 3-bath homes with new furniture, appliances and Chanote title. Tel: 076-290-465. Fax: 076-345493. Email: opp@mangonation.com

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per rai. Lowest price for Patong land, minimum 2 rai purchase. Tel: 09-6491963. Email: ctmrn@yahoo.com



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Property Gazette

AMAZING PRICES

for land. Land in Rawai, Nai Harn, and Chalong areas available. Asking from 2.1 million baht per rai with sea view. Tel: 09-6525664.

LAND FOR SALE

370 Talang wah (1,400sqm) on Soi Saliga, in Rawai. Asking 3.7 million baht. Call for more details. Tel: 076-288422.

BALI-STYLE

Beautiful, brand new Bali-style house in Chalong. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3.9 million baht. Tel: 01-9680309. Email: gazette@houseinphuket.com See: www.houseinphuket.com/go.php?house=78

SEA VIEW PROJECT

in Kata. 12-rai project with 4 finished houses with complete infrastructure to be sold fast at 10 or 15 million baht each. For the whole project, asking 85 million baht. Potential profit of 100 million baht to be made by new owner of the project. Open to offers. Tel: 07-893-8747.

AO MAKHAM

seaview. 5 rai, flat land 2.8 million baht per rai. Tel: 01-5376866.

3 RAI WITH SEAVIEW

in Chalong. Asking 2.7 million baht a rai with sea view. Also have 3 rai with stunning sea view in Chalong and complete infrastructure, 3.3 million baht per rai. 5 rai of flat land close to a main road, asking 2.4 million baht per rai. Tel: 09-6525664.

HOUSE IN PALAI

Lovely. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, lounge, kitchen, dining room, office, outside workshop, sandstone swimming pool with waterfall, garden with sala, 6ft wall and electric gate. Price: 10.5 million baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-282848, 07-8958911. Email: regnsanspain@hotmail.com

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in Paradise Complex for sale or lease. Please contact for details. Tel: 06-2827779 or please see our website at: www.phuketdir.com/pranee

Properties For Rent

ATTRACTIVE VILLA



for rent. Villa at Blue Canyon Country Club: 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, kitchen, laundry room, maid's room, car park, living area and pleasant garden. Asking 50,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-261857-8.

BUNGALOW

for rent. Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, aircon, tel line, prime location. Chalong area. 22,000 baht/month. Call for more info. Tel: 01-6064279.

PATONG APARTMENTS

Clean, comfortable, aircon, TV, big fridge, pool, parking. Tel: 01-0825707. Please see our website at: www.phuket-accommodation.info

OFFICE FOR RENT

Office for rent on the bypass road. 180sqm. Email: scphuket@yahoo.com

BEACHFRONT CONDO

Kalim, Patong. Fully furnished, high standard. 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, pool, many facilities. Tel: 01-8920038.

KAMALA RENT/SALE

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HOUSE FOR RENT



New house by the lake in Land & Houses Park. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished. UBC, Telephone, aircon. Pls call for more info. Tel: 09-8718327.

LONG-TERM LEASE

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

WANT TO RENT

a house? Maybe I can help you. I select "houses for rent" that I see on the street. Tel: 01-9680309. Email: info@houseinphuket.com For further details, see my website at: www.houseinphuket.com

LONG-TERM RENTALS

Quiet, fully-furnished apartments available for long-term rent at Baan Suan Villa, in Patong. Swimming pool, car/bike parking, serviced, Satellite TV, DVD, private phone line available. 45sqm studio 8,500 baht. 60sqm 2-bedroom studio 15,000 baht. 75sqm apartment 17,500 baht. Tel: 076-296621, 01-6916147. Fax: 076-344689. Email: info@baansuanvilla.de

PHUKET CITY

luxury condo. Bedroom with aircon, kitchen, fully furnished, built-ins, hot/cold water, 24hr security, big pool, cable TV, TV & DVD, refrigerator, keycard entrance system, elevator, and much, much more. Contact for details. Tel: 076-324199, 01-7371688. Fax: 076-324099. Email: info@phuket-suriyaestate.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

2-bedroom house with 2 bathrooms, air conditioner, hot water, UBC TV, phone line, furniture, storeroom and a garden. Asking 20,000 baht a month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 04-062-7404, 01-7377719. Email: josefran26@hotmail.com

SEAVIEW & POOL!

Green oasis. Nice apartments, just outside lively but hectic Patong, in a green residential area. See the sea, and have a look first. Take the beach road toward the Amari. Over bridge, left; after 500m turn right; follow arrow on sign Baan Suan Kamnan. Amenities include ADSL, phone, safe, satellite TV + DVD. Aircons and all comforts. Safe area. Tel: 06-7866350. Email: buurmanb@hotmail.com

PHUKET PALACE

condo. Lovely condo in Patong: beautiful pool, sea view, aircon, minibar, TV, security. Large room. Long term: 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-344154, 07-0738433. Fax: 076-341312. Email: info@phuket-palace.com For further details, please see our website at: www.phuketpalace.com

BOAT LAGOON

rental. 2-bedroom apartment at Boat Lagoon for long-term rent. Newly-fitted kitchen and aircon throughout. Handy for Central and British International College. Call Don at Tel: 01-8337836 or Email: barkwill@tm.net.my

PATONG STUDIO

Apartment for rent, 350m to the beach. 6,000 baht/month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

NEW, FURNISHED

2-story townhouse in Patong for rent or sale. Fully furnished with 2 aircon bedrooms, large living room, kitchen. Opposite Govt Savings Bank. Tel: 01-9684081. Email: tamonwan_opas@yahoo.com

CHEAP HOUSES

for rent. Kata, Karon, Ao Makham, all near the beach. Tel: 06-9488139. Email: lovephuket2000@yahoo.com

LUXURY, PRIVATE

3-bedroom house with 16 x 25 sqm pool in luxurious private community (Grace Garden) near British International College. For rent at 60,000 baht a month. Rent includes 24-hour security guard, garden and pool maintenance. Tel: 076-239838, 01-877-9292. Fax: 076-239838. Email: prakaisriroj@hotmail.com

Properties Wanted

HOUSE IN NEED OF RENOVATION

Must have large garden - at least 1,000 square meters. Could be anywhere in Phuket. Tel: 012-4834992, 77-36375645. Fax: 012-4831352. Email: anthony_andrews@btconnect.com

LAND WANTED

Approximately 4 rai of land wanted at the north end of the island. Contact by Email: info.x@thecourtyard-phuket.com

CONDO WANTED

I would like to buy a condo apartment of about 50sqm with security and services. Email: mariorio@hotmail.com

LOOKING FOR LAND

I am looking for approx 15 rai in the northeast of Phuket (Pa Khlok, Ao Por, Pa Khlong Cheep, Bang Rong). I will be in Phuket at the end of July, coming from Germany. Please contact me by email if you have or know of anything that might be of interest. Tel: 69-5975777, Fax: 69-597-1777. Email: hhrackwitz@hotmail.com

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HOUSE IN KARON

Looking for a 2-bedroom house in Karon from November 1, 2005 to April 25, 2006. Would be great if it is near Luang Por Chuan Rd. About 6,000 to 7,000 baht/month. Please email if you can help. Email: picassocat@hotmail.com

OFFICE SPACE

I am searching for a 60sqm office for rent with a phone line set up and working. The phone line must be ready to receive ADSL. Air conditioning is also necessary. The office does not have to be on the ground level as we do not sell anything - just work through the internet. Budget: 10,000 to 15,000 baht per month. Contact for more info. Tel: 04-8484006. Email: staff@mynewserver.com

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Property Gazette

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1-BEDROOM - KATHU

1-bedroom apartment in Kathu: 8,000 baht/month. Furnished, aircon, fully renovated, 4th floor, golf course view. 55sqm. For long-term rental only. Tel: 076-319003, 01-8932575. Email: pjsunset@samart.co.th

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Your own hot shower, ground-floor rooms & windows. 10 mins walk to beach. 24hr security. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-342280, 01-9781956. Email: palm@phuket.ksc.co.th

PATONG LUXURY

apartment. Central Patong, 1- & 2-bedroom apartments. Email for info & photos. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

Accommodation Wanted

LONG-TERM RENTAL

55-year-old French couple looking for a nice furnished house or apartment in which to live for about two years in a calm and beautiful environment very close to a nice beach. We are looking for a peaceful place with high-speed Internet access. Now at Kata Beach until July 15, when we would like to look at new possibilities. Beginning of rental could be at any time this year, depending on availability. Please contact me if you have something you think might be of interest. Tel: 078-921979. Email: phdesbordes@laposte.net

LONG LEASE

wanted. Two profesional Phuket residents looking for 3-4 bedroom house north of Phuket. Ideally furnished, but pool, ASDL and privacy a must! Realistic rent for a long lease (1-3 years). Email: vokman@yahoo.com

RENTAL WANTED

Two male travelers will be in Phuket from July 14 through August 9, doing volunteer work. We need housing. All accommodations will be considered. Email with specifics. Email: benjamin.hewitt@colorado.edu

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tracks and brackets. Approx 38m for 9 windows. Call for window sizes. 12,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-288050, 04-1898419. Email: albertjames1940@hotmail.com

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Baloma gas stove, for sale at half-price. Double burner, no rust. 600 baht. Tel: 09-291-3641. Email: sayan40@hotmail.com

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Sharp shower heater. A few months old. 1,000 baht. Tel: 09-2913641. Email: sayan40@hotmail.com

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The Gazette Online is always at the top of Google when using key words such as "phuket", "phuket news", "phuket events", "phuket classifieds", "phuket yellow pages", etc, etc. That's why we receive an average of 30,000 to 35,000 visitors a day.

Can your business afford not to be on board with



and 53 other of Phuket's finest names?

Please contact Anna for details.
Tel: 076-236555 Mobile Phone: 09-4691813
Email: anna@phuketgazette.net

Boats & Marine

LEE MARINE
International Marine Brokerage

REVIERA FERRETTI YACHTS PERSHING JEANNEAU

Thailand's premier yacht sales company



Sun Yachts IMP 55 (2001)

\$595,000 USD

- 2 x Perkins 4-324 engines
- Fischer Panda 6 Kva genset
- 8 Kva Perkins air cooled genset
- Washing machine and dishwasher
- Sea Recovery watermaker
- Cetrek instruments
- Standard VHF
- Icom SSB
- Furuno Radar
- Leica MK 420 GPS
- Toshiba Laptop with C-map system
- Full safety equipment



Roberts 46 (1993)

\$77,000 USD



Steel 40 ft Sloop (1991)

\$85,000 USD



Sea Ray 330 (1991)

3,700,000 THB



Hi Tech 50 (1990)

\$295,000 USD

www.leemarine.com

Dealership Office
The Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket
Contact: Andrew Holmes
Tel: 076 238 803
Fax: 076 273 319
Email: info@leemarine.com

Brokerage Office
The Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket
Contact: Andrew de Bruin
Mobile: 01 894 1530
Tel/Fax: 076 239 729
Email: brokerage@leemarine.com

Yacht Haven Marina Office
The Yacht Haven Marina Phuket
Contact: Jim Poulsen
Mobile: 01 891 3237
Tel/Fax: 076 206 260
Email: yachtaven@leemarine.com

Gulf Craft Inc.

The Dolphin SD 31

Now in stock!

This boat is a one off custom model built to specific customer needs. This boat will seat 11 people with ease, plus allow sunbathing on the two forward sunbeds.

This boat is now available to us at a great price delivered to Phuket.

Come and enquire about this great new boat. This will be the only one offered to this specification, so come on and stand out from the crowd! Price delivered to Phuket includes shipping, road transport, 7% VAT, sales commission and sea trials with new owner.

Offered at Sale 1.776 million baht

Go Boating (Thailand) Ltd.
14/1 Phuket Boat Lagoon, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200
Tel: 076 239986 Fax: 076 239987
Email: goboating_th@yahoo.com
www.gulfcraftboats.com www.gulfcraftinc.com

THAI MARINE
leisure

www.thaimarine.com

HUNTER Nautitech Lührs DUKES YACHTS Foundation Yacht

A Marine Industry Leader in Thailand since 1990



Built 2003 Prowler 9000

THB 5,500,000

Composite & light. Excellent for cruising in local water.



Destiny

Offers invited

Well proven Jeanneau design, Strongly built Excellent condition.



54 Ft Bayliner 4788

US\$ 345,000

Launched 1995 Generator, aircon 3 cabins, 2 bath, owner maintained



1996 Hunter 430

US\$ 125,000

Aircon, Genset fully equipped for cruising/chartering.

Selected Brokerage Listings

Power	Sail
58 Ft 2003 DeFever Trawler, Perkins 2x225 Hp	63 Ft 1993 Wooden Perini Ketch, 1xIsuzu 115 Hp
49 Ft 1991 Grand Banks, Cat 2x385 Hp	60 Ft 1982 Wooden Perini Ketch, 1xHino 175 Hp
46 Ft 6798 Dutch Pilot, Def 2x140 Hp turbo	57 Ft 1996 Lagoon 57, Yanmar 2x45 Hp
39 Ft 90100 Searay 390 Custom, Cat 2x385 Hp	44 Ft 1976 Peterson 44, Yanmar 1x45 Hp
36 Ft 1994 Island Gypsy, Perkins 2x225 Hp	38 Ft 2003 Athena Cats (2 sister boats), 2xYanmar 19 Hp
P.O.A.	US\$65,000
US\$450,000	US\$51,000
US\$150,000	US\$950,000
THB7,300,000	US\$85,000
US\$169,000	US\$245,000

Please contact Tel: 076-239111 (brokerage only) Email: broker@thaimarine.com

ASIA PACIFIC
QBE THAILAND

We are QBE Agent for Marine Insurance in PHUKET
FOR A FREE-OF-CHARGE INSURANCE QUOTE FOR YOUR BOAT, COMMERCIAL OR PLEASURE
Tel: 076-239111 Fax: 076-238974 Email: insurance@thaimarine.com

ROYAL PHUKET MARINA

YACHT SALES



220 Dauntless

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



Savage SL 500 Aluminum Runabout

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

SOLE DISTRIBUTORS

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

DORADO

This famous 60ft charter fishing cruiser is for sale. Not damaged in the tsunami, *Dorado* is up and running and ready for work every day of the week. The associated website has a good Internet presence and the business has many repeat clients. The boat is also suitable for conversion to dive boat. The accommodation is very spacious and the current licence is for 12 passengers, 4 crew. Sale includes a 9-meter longtail boat as tender. Boat, local and Internet business registrations, logo, etc, as a going concern: 3 million baht. Boat alone: 2.6 million baht. Serious inquiries only, please. Tel: 076-202679, 01-9703526. Fax: 076-202679. Email: dorado@phuket.loinfo.co.th For further details, please see our website at: www.phuket-fishing.com

PHUKET RACE WEEK 27/7-1/8

Need experienced crew and sailors for Phuket Race Week 27/7 - 1/8/05 to sail on Swan 55 (new rig and sails). Offer package deals (transfer/bungalow/racing). Contact Horst. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-383080, 06-940-1860. Fax: 076-381934. Email: bigasail@samart.co.th

WOODEN BOAT

Takean Tong wooden boat in progress, to be finished October/November 2005. LOA: 24.5m. Beam: 5m. Twin 420hp hinos. One genset 4.5 million baht without interior. Builder will build interior to your specs for additional cost. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-0789397. Email: hpihemp@hotmail.com

TEAKWOOD VESSEL

23m teakwood boat with Hino engine. Ideal for conversion to tour or dive boat. Seller can assist with design and construction. Offered as is, at 1.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-6500957. Email: thavorn@andamandolphin.com

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10,000 readers every day

FISHING BOAT

for sale. 15 meters long, 2.6 meters wide, made from one large tree. 6-cylinder engine, about 8 years old. Price: 150,000 baht. Please call Khun Kob for more information. Tel: 09-8731019.

TOURIST BUSINESS

Wanted: tourist boat operation with room for expansion. Phuket and surrounding islands. Email Wayne at: vmole@bigpond.net.au

YAMAHA OUTBOARD

Looking for Yamaha outboard of 5 to 10hp. Must be in excellent condition. Tel: 06-9401860. Email: bigasail@samart.co.th

Find more classified ads

"Boats & Marine"

at www.phuketgazette.net

Boats & Marine

C & C MARINE
Marine Engineering Specialist
 "SERVICING ALL YOUR MARINE ENGINEERING NEEDS"
 Dealers For




BOAT SALES
BARRACUDA COMMERCIAL BOAT RANGE

DIVE / SNORKELING BOAT	10.6m (Only 1,750,000)
PARASAIL BOAT	10.6m (Only 1,975,000)
FERRY INTER-ISLAND TRANSFER BOAT	10.6m (Only 1,700,000)
CENTER CONSOLE FISHING BOATS	8.8m (Only 1,550,000)

PRO'S

- COMMERCIAL DIESEL ENGINES.
- 50% BETTER FUEL ECONOMY AGAINST STANDARD OUTBOARDS.
- CRUISING SPEEDS OF 27+ KNOTS.
- REBUILDS ONLY EVERY 3,000 HRS.
- COMPLETE SERVICE BACK-UP PLAN.
- FINANCE AVAILABLE THROUGH CORRESPONDING BANKS.

SPECIAL: Newly arrived 8.8m centre console 170hp Mer-Cummins Diesel Engine, complete with Navman 8800 GPS/Fishtrack Nav system, VHF Radio, Vacuum flush Head, Bimini with Thai registration. Price includes 10 months' berthing in the Boat Lagoon. "Complete Package" 1,850,000.

C&C MARINE
 Contact: Craig Holmes +66 (0) 76 273247
 The Marine Center, 16/2 Moo 4, Soi Nana, Thepkasatri Rd.,
 Koh Kaew, Phuket 83200, Thailand
 Email: cholmes@candc-marine.com Website: www.candc-marine.com

NEW SAILBOATS FOR SALE

We build any custom boat up to 45 ft in wood epoxy, fiberglass, composite materials. Vacuum infusion process available (service in situ for boatbuilders available also). Naval engineer from Italy available for design, 3D modelling, calculation, scantling, speed prediction, stability etc. Pls contact for more information. Email: info@andamanboatyard.com For further details, please see our website at: www.andamanboatyard.com

SPARES

for sailing boat.

- 35 m/m propeller
- jib
- canvas for boom
- shackles
- charts of Indian, Atlantic, and the Med
- Iridium telephone
- Furlex profurl

Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-4154398. Email: namphonie@procom.in.th

JETBOAT

(super toy). Searayder, Thai registration, built in 2000. New 135hp engine (no hours on it); can see the bill. 5 seats. In great condition. Very fast - put on your driveway and go to the water. Easy to handle and no marine fees. A bargain at 430,000 baht, including trailer. Be fast, go fast. Please contact for more info. Tel: 01-082-3240, 01-5376866. Email: bigbhouda5@hotmail.com

QUALITY WOODEN

boat. Superbly-built 4-year-old boat with excellent stainless railings. Licensed for 150 pax - ideal for day trips or convert to live-aboard. 2 engines, 2 gen sets. First to see will buy. A bargain at 6 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-281526, 09-9720423. Fax: 076-281527. Email: dougi@divejohnsandy.com

20M LIVE-ABOARD CRUISER



MV Ariel has been fully refitted and refurbished. She is licensed by the Harbor Department for 40 pax. She is currently based at Koh Chang and can be inspected there. All details are available on our website. Offers over 5 million baht are invited. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-7253960, 06-8871-196. Email: derek.levitt@onetel.net For further details, please see our website at: www.ariel-cruises.com

TOURIST BUSINESS

Wanted: tourist boat operation with room for expansion. Phuket and surrounding islands. Please email as much information as possible to Wayne at: wmoie@bigpond.net.au

Island Job Mart



RICHMOND GROUP ASIA PACIFIC Co., Ltd.

Richmond Group Asia Pacific is a leading property investment, management and development group with major portfolio in Phuket. The Company owns and manages luxury villas in Bang Tao, Kamala, Chalong beach. We are now looking for high-caliber personnel for the following positions:

Property Sales-Manager 1 position

This candidate should possess the following:

- Minimum 6 years' managerial experience in sourcing business deals, including property development and investment projects, in Phuket or other Asian markets.
- Experience in Europe, Southeast Asia property markets is an advantage.
- Supervising and managing a diversity of sales executives on property development projects.
- Good communication and negotiation skills in dealing with buyers, investors and property agents.
- Proficiency in written and spoken English.

Property Sales-Executive 5 positions

This candidate should possess minimum 2 years' managerial experience. Other qualifications same as above.

Lively Bar & Restaurant Manager

Fashionable Restaurant and lounge seeking trendy, dynamic manager. Must be very active, with marketing as well as service to our clients. Love of music also important, as well as good knowledge of the best foods and wines.

Salary and benefits will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. Please send a full resumé with current photo and expected salary to our Group Human Resources Manager at: hr@richmondth.com or fax (076) 270 781.



Normeca Asia Pacific Co Ltd belongs to the Normeca Group in Norway, one of the leading suppliers of mobile hospitals and clinics in the world. You can find more information about Normeca Group at www.normeca.no

We now need the following staff in Phuket:

Accounting Manager

You must have at least 3-5 years' experience in accounting, fluent spoken and written English and know how to use a computer. You also need to know Thai law and rules for accounting, taxes, VAT and so on. Good salary for the right the person, starting A.S.A.P.

Maid/Housekeeper

We need someone to take care of our house in Phuket, including cleaning, laundering and preparing food some days a week. You must speak English.

Gardener/Driver

We need someone to take care of our garden. You must speak English and have a driver's licence, since we also need a driver from time to time.

Please call Ronny Karlsen at 05-1213179 for more information or send an e-mail including CV and picture to ronny.karlsen@normeca.no

ACCOUNTING MANAGER WANTED

Asiadebit Thailand is looking for an accounting manager to handle accounting issues for our Thai operation. The applicant must have the following qualifications:

- Good spoken and written English
- Ability to work independently
- Thai accounting license
- Internet experience

The right person will be working with an energetic team and have great possibilities and new experiences. Please send your CV to Khun Oil. Tel: 076-282211. Email: oil@asiadebit.com

URGENTLY NEEDED

Housekeeper/cook; gardener/driver/maintenance man; English-speaking language teachers for Spanish, French and Thai lessons; music teachers for guitar, piano and singing lessons; personal fitness instructor. Excellent conditions and pay. English-speaker required. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-787-1752, 01-9784773. Email: mjoneilluk@yahoo.co.uk

MANGOSTEEN

marketing team. The Mangosteen sales department is looking for several assistants with excellent English skills and computer knowledge. Experience in marketing in the hotel and real-estate business required. Please submit your CV (with income requirement) by email, or by fax or contact for more information. Tel: 076-289399. Fax: 076-289389. Email: opsmanager@mangosteen-phuket.com

PROJECT

coordinator needed. Fluent in Thai and English; computer literate, with excellent secretarial skills. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-325-667, 01-9145119. Fax: 076-324313. Email: info@acquaphuket.com

GAY MALE FOR HOTEL

in Portugal. Looking for gay young Thai male to work in a gay guesthouse in Portugal. Gardening, swimming pool handling, cooking, receiving guests. Please send background information and photo. Tel: 351-284434-105. Email: quintadafe@clix.pt

SECRETARY/PA

Looking for office assistant for hotel & real estate sales. Must speak good English and have computer and accounting skills. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-0778454.

Island Job Mart



We are an established group owning and managing hotels and resorts in Thailand and Malaysia. With presently 2 resorts in Thailand - Impiana Phuket Cabana in Phuket and Impiana Resort Samui in Koh Samui, we are looking for applicants to fill the following vacancies:

BASED IN PHUKET (at Impiana Phuket Cabana)

RESIDENT MANAGER

Applicants for this position should possess more than 6 years' experience in managing resort hotels and currently be holding a senior management position. Preference will be given to applicants who have experience in pre-opening resorts/hotels, with strong skills in Sales & Marketing, F&B operations and activities, and possess good interpersonal and leadership skills. Interested applicants are invited to submit their resumé not later than 30th July 2005 to the General Manager at: cabana@phuket.ksc.co.th

DEPARTMENT HEADS: Food & Beverage, Front Office, Engineering, Spa, Sales & Public Relations

Applicants must have a bachelor's degree with minimum 3 years' experience in the same position. Good command of written and spoken English, with strong leadership skills.

ASSISTANT LEVEL: Chief Steward, Bar Manager, Night Manager, Reservations Manager, Events Sales Manager, Credit Manager

Applicants must have experience in a similar position. Good command of written and spoken English. Good interpersonal and leadership skills.

OTHER POSITIONS:

F&B Department (Service) : Bar Supervisor, Captain, Hostess, Waiter, Waitress, Bartender
F&B Department (Kitchen) : Pantry, Thai Cook, Cook's Helper (European), Bakery Supervisor, Bakers, Steward Supervisor and Steward

F/O Department : F/O Supervisor, Chief Receptionist, Receptionist, Operator, Bell man and Driver

Housekeeping Department : Office Clerk, Room Maid, Room Boy, Cleaner, Gardener

Engineering Department : Engineer (specialist in mechanics & air-conditioning)

Accounting Department : Purchase Supervisor, A/C Receivable, Front Cashier, Night Audit, Restaurant Cashier and Checker

Spa Department : Spa Receptionist, Therapists

Applicants must have minimum 2 years' experience in a related field, good command of written and spoken English, strong customer service skills and a good personality.

BASED IN KOH SAMUI (at Impiana Resort Samui): Executive Sous-Chef and Lady Chef
 Experience in fusion cuisine; good command of English and able to create and design menus and recipes. Pleasant personality and good management skills with strong leadership approach.

BASED IN BANGKOK (at Regional Sales Office, Sukhumvit Road): Sales Manager
 Bachelor's degree minimum 3 years' experience, good command of written and spoken English, excellent communication and interpersonal skills, self-motivated, result-oriented and able to work independently.

Interested candidates are invited to send their resumé a recent photo to the address below:
 Personnel Manager Impiana Phuket Cabana
 41 Taweewong Road, Patong Beach, Phuket
 Tel: 076 341494 Fax: 076 344310 or Email: pncabana@samart.co.th

azure holdings co. ltd. KOH SAMUI

All our vacancies are based in Koh Samui and are open to Thai nationals and foreign workers, depending on individual job requirements.

CURRENT VACANCIES

- English teacher, foreign female, bachelor's degree, English native
- Architect, Bachelor's degree very good skills and good English, spoken Thai or Foreign nationality
- Italian chef, foreign, must have experience
- Restaurant Manager
- Marketing Assistant, female, very good skills
- Project Secretary, female, very good skills
- Officer Assistant, very good English
- Warehouse Manager, male, very good skills and spoken English
- Kitchen Assistants
- Bartenders
- Waitresses/waiters
- Dishwashers
- Runner

EMPLOYMENT AGENCY LOCATED IN CHAWENG, KOH SAMUI

For details call
 Tel: 01-7285475
 or 07-8955774
 Tel/Fax: 077-230980
 Info@azurejobs.com
 www.azurejobs.com



Construction Quality Manager

J.D. Pools is the premier swimming pool company in Thailand. We are currently seeking a Construction Quality Manager to set the highest standards on the construction site.

Requirements:

Minimum 3 years' working experience in construction, preferably in pool building, degree in construction, good leadership and motivational skills, ability to manage construction projects and to focus on customer expectations. Good command of spoken English.

Please send your CV and recent photograph to norbert@jdpools.com or call direct 01-8916143.

NANNY/MAID

required. Live in. Must speak fluent English. Good pay and conditions. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-7025479.

LAW FIRM

Looking for secretary and paralegal. Send resumé for appointment. Please Email: scphuket@yahoo.com for more information.

WEB DESIGN, SEO,

PHP work. Require experienced web designer with SEO expertise and PHP programming skills minimum. Either full-time job or company that can provide these services. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-288908. Email: richard@siamrealestate.com For more details, see our website at: www.siamrealestate.com

SPA MANAGER

We are looking for a Spa Manager and female Receptionist. Nationality not important. Please call for more information. Tel: 04-8478352.

HOUSEKEEPER

needed. Pa Khlok area. Can live in. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-273-427, 01-8295388.

PHUKET ISLAND

Living is opening in Phuket. Showroom/office manager: bachelor's degree with a major in English an advantage; 3 years or more experience in secretarial work or office administration; excellent command of spoken and written English; accurate typing skills; able to operate MS Office. For more information, please contact Khun Wassana Devore at Tel: 01-7005549 for more information.

SECRETARY NEEDED

Looking for a Thai female or male secretary, who speaks good English and has a driver's license and computer skills. Must know Excel and be able to move to Pattaya. Salary 4,000-5,000 baht/week. Non-smoker only. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-248827, 04-7444807. Fax: 076-248826. Email: toddteal@mail.com



Attractive female staff required for promotion and presentation of luxury 6* resort in Phuket. Must be good looking, very presentable, speak fluent English, and have an outgoing, persuasive personality. Please send CV with photo to ph@puravarna.com

PCS PROPERTY CARE SERVICE (THAILAND) CO., LTD.

The leading property facilities service provider for all property-related services, such as cleaning, security, pest control, hygiene and electronic security systems, now requires the following positions:

Both positions require excellent command of both spoken and written English, knowledge of Microsoft Office, sales experience and a valid driving license.

TECHNICAL SALES OPERATOR: PEST CONTROL / HYGIENE

Salary: 20,000 baht +

• Overall service management of pest control and hygiene operations.

• Growth of pest control & hygiene business in Phuket through securing new sales (target & commission based).

• Female, age 25 +, bachelor's degree, some pest-control experience would be useful, but training will be provided.

SALES PERSON: INTEGRATED SERVICE

Salary: 15,000 baht +

• Growth of the integrated services products in Phuket through securing new sales in cleaning, security and other related products (target & commission based).

• Female, age 23 +, bachelor's degree, must have own car.

Property Care Service (Thailand) Co., Ltd, 371/21 Yaowarat Rd, Tambon Taladyai, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000.

Please send your resumé along with covering letter in English and photo to the address above or to:

Tel: 076-224658-9.

Email: stephen@pcs.co.th



Chandara Resort and Spa, a unique five-star resort of 51 villas located at Ao Por on Phuket's northeast coast, is scheduled to open soon.

We are looking for suitable, qualified persons for the following positions:

- Spa Manager, Therapist
- Assistant Front Office Manager
- Bell Captain, Bell man/Driver
- Restaurant & Bar Manager, F&B Coordinator
- Waiter/Waitress, Bar staff, Sous Chef
- Room maid
- Assistant Accounting Manager
- Cost Controller

All positions are for Thai nationals only.

Please send resumé with recent photo and expected salary to:

Chandara Resort and Spa

99/1 Moo 6, Ban Ao Por, Pa Khlok, Thalung, Phuket, Thailand 83110

Tel: 076 317800 Fax: 076 317850

Email: admin@chandara-resort.com www.chandara-resort.com

Looking for a job?

Still haven't found the perfect candidate?

Find more Recruitment Classifieds at www.phuketgazette.net!

Island Job Mart



The Banana Fan Sea Resort, a leading 4-star resort on Koh Samui's famous Chaweng Beach, is looking for new associates to join our existing team, who will work hard together to achieve new standards of excellence in our resort.

We are currently seeking:

1. Executive Secretary
2. Executive Housekeeper
3. Restaurant Manager
4. Assistant Front Office Manager
5. Bartender

For Position 1

- Fluent English is required
- Applicants interested in this position should submit a resumé directly to the General Manager: gm@bananafansea.com

For positions 2, 3, 4

- English Knowledge is required

For positions 5

- Basic English is required

Qualifications

- Experience in similar position
- Good personality and presentation skills
- Strong leadership and communication skills

For all positions a complete resumé should be sent either by mail or Email to:

Banana Fan Sea Resort
201 Moo 2 Chaweng Beach Road, Tambon Bophut, Koh Samui, Surat Thani, 84320.
Tel: 077 413483-6 Fax: 077 413487
Email: info@bananafansea.com

Employment Wanted

SALES + MARKETING

Director. International Sales and Marketing Director (40) is looking for a new challenge. Great experience in building up and leading efficient teams with "Must Win" attitudes and - working in developing countries - Building up new branches/subsidiaries - Implementing channel strategies - Introduction/establishment of new products - Working in start-up situations, and - Developing new markets. I am a team player with strong ability to motivate and develop people. I speak English and German, and have working experience in Asia and Europe. Please contact for more information. Email: muenchen1@gmx.net

PROPERTY SCOUT

If any company needs a property scout, please let me know. I'm available now. Thank you. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-286071, 09-1968429. Fax: 076-286071. Email: amorn9999@yahoo.com

GERMAN LAWYER,

age 43, is looking for a job in Thailand, especially Phuket. Not necessarily in law business. I also have experience in commerce/trade, diving and semi-professional German cooking. Always willing and able to try something new. Please contact me. Email: jobinlos@gmx.de for more information.

NANNY/COOK

I can make all types of Thai food and some European food. I was cooking on a dive boat before the tsunami. I have also worked in Holland. Please let me know if you might have any work for me. Please call or send me an email for more information, if you are interested. Tel: 076-202816, 01-6067417. Email: watchreec@yahoo.com

SWEDISH LESSONS

Do you or your kids want to learn Swedish or English? I can help you with that from November 1, 2005 - April 1, 2006. Please call or send me an email for more information, if you are interested. Tel: +46-467063737. Email: picassocat@hotmail.com

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles for Sale

DVD COLLECTION

Over 100 DVDs. Must sell. Please call for more info. Tel: 04-8106205.

RESTAURANT

furniture and equipment. Brand-new restaurant furniture and equipment for sale. Great prices - everything must go. Tel: 07-9795048.

Bulletins

Everyone is invited every Friday night at 18:15 for services followed by a lavish Shabbos meal at Chabad House.

52/32 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd (opp. Patong Post Office) T. Patong, A. Kathu, Phuket, 83150. For more information Tel: 04-1303770. Email: clthailand2@yahoo.com

"Have a good Shabbos"

Business Opportunities

CAFF FOR SALE

Trendy caff at Surin Beach with all assets for sale. Selling due to family commitments. Tel: 01-8636294.

FOR URGENT LEASE

One-floor, three-room shop-house now for lease in Kata business center. Please call Khun Sinny for more information. Tel: 01-9798540.

RESTAURANT

and guesthouse available for 6.5-year lease in Karon. European-style kitchen, 36-seat air-conditioned restaurant, 2 TVs, UBC & sound system. 5 air-conditioned guest rooms with hot water, TV and full UBC satellite system. Small staff room and office. Thai registered company included, ready to start your business now. Tel: 09-591-4044, 01-8936072. Email: befeater_karon@hotmail.com

WORKING SHAREHOLDER

Wanted: Working investor to join highly successful technology-based company in Phuket. Established 6 years with 2 shops and 16 employees. You must:

1. Be living in Thailand
2. Have experience in business
3. Have some Thai-language skill
4. Be prepared to work hard
5. Have between 4 and 10 million baht, subject to amount of investment, for which you will receive a work permit, car and medical care, and a good salary with a high return on investment.

This is a very serious offer, so I would appreciate serious replies only, please. All replies by email at: louj@mail2world.com for more information.

SHOPHOUSES

for sale. 3 floors, 160sqm, located opposite Simon Cabaret on busy road between Patong and Karon. Asking 4.2 million, for quick sale. Tel: 01-9684575.

OFFICE FOR RENT

2-story office with 15 computers for rent opposite Robinson. Tel: 076-250538, 09-8751166. Email: ppcabana@dreamwiz.com

INVESTOR

Active investor or silent partner sought for beer garden and for beach bar. Email: phuketopportunity@hotmail.com

PATONG

Guesthouse for sale with Chanote: six rooms, living quarters and minimart. Asking 4.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-8887676. Email: homeawaypatong@hotmail.com

NEW RESTAURANT

for lease. 60-seat, air-conditioned restaurant for lease in 3-story, new building, fully equipped, in Phuket City. Tel: 01-7872869.

NIGHTCLUB

for sale. Exclusive nightclub in central Patong; fully equipped with stage, professional DJ equipment and VIP lounge. Contract until 31-12-2009. Before 2.5 million baht, now 1.7 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-292523, 06-6911516. Email: venus@patong.biz Website: www.patong.biz/venus

Business Products & Services

DAY TRIP TO RANONG

New double-decker tour bus (not minibus), non-smoking and smoking areas, toilet, films/music, snacks and drinks, on-board buffet lunch. No extra to pay, fully inclusive. Only 1,300 baht. Every Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sunday. Tel: 04-7457024.

LEGAL SERVICES

Register your Thai Limited Company in just two hours through Thailand's largest legal service network, Siam International Legal Group. Business Licenses, contracts and property transactions by legal professionals at reasonable fees. Call 24 hours. Tel: 076-345-277, 04-0219800. Email: admin@siam-legal.com For further details, please see our website at: www.siam-legal.com

HANDMADE

oriental carpets. We deal in handmade carpets and kilims from Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan. We specialize in washing and repairing carpets. Free pick up and delivery. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-261-349, 01-9563061. Fax: 076-261349. Email: sohail_carpet@yahoo.com

Computers

COMPUTER SERVICES

New + used. Repairs, GPRS, ADSL, WLAN. No phone Internet - no problem. English computerman. Please call for more information. Tel: 09-4735080.

Miscellaneous for Sale

INT'L DRIVERS LICENSE

5,000 baht, valid up to 10 years, 6,000 baht valid up to 20 years. Sole agent in Thailand. Free pick up & delivery, open 365 days a year. Please contact Khun Christine for more information. Tel: 04-0068736.

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formation and accounting services. We can set up a registered limited partnership with work permit for 20,000 baht (no hidden extras). Over 50 and need a one-year visa? 12,000 baht yearly; company accounts 12,000 baht. We also take care of your monthly tax and social contributions. Contact us if you have problems, we are pleased to help you. Tel: 04-7457024. Email: kingrw80@hotmail.com

VISA FOR THAILAND

Tired of visa runs? Get a one-year Thai visa. Free initial consultation at Thailand's largest legal service network, Siam International Legal Group. Call 24 hours. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-345277, 04-021-9800. Email: admin@siam-legal.com For further details, please see our website at: www.siam-legal.com

LEARN THAI

at home. Conversation and coursework with a charming Thai lady. Course books provided free. Also basic English lessons for Thai spouses. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-398157, 01-7971497. Email: churee77@hotmail.com

Personals

BACKGAMMON

Retired businessman looking for backgammon players on Phuket Island. Please call if interested. Tel: 076-386-113, 01-5778443.

Deadline for Wheels & Motors page: Saturday 12 noon.

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