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Water solutions on the way soon

By Anongnat Sartpisut & Stephen Fein

PHUKET: Deputy Interior Minister Somchai Sunthornvat is confident that the Thai Cabinet will approve a 4-billion-baht proposal to pipe water to Phuket from Chieo Lan Reservoir in Surat Thani as a long-term solution to Phuket's water problem.

The mega-project is just one of several schemes that were discussed during an inspection tour of Phuket's water supply sources by DM Somchai and other officials on September 17.

In the morning, the Deputy Minister, accompanied by Provincial Waterworks Authority (PWA) Governor Dr Prasert Chuaphanich and Phuket Vice-Governor Supachai Yuwaboon, inspected progress on Phuket's two new reservoir projects, the Bang Neaw Dum project in Tambon Srisoonthorn, Thalang, and the Klong Krata reservoir in Chalong.

From there, the team visited the Hitlor and Manik tin mine ponds in Thalang, and the Sri Suchart tin mine pond in Muang District. In the afternoon, they went to the Bang Wad reservoir in Kathu and Keng Nguan tin mine lagoon in Chalong, and inspected the Kata-Karon and Patong water distribution systems.

DM Somchai told reporters that, in addition to the pipeline project, which he fully expects to be approved and completed in about 18 months, the government was also taking steps to deal with the water supply problem in both the short- and mid-term.



Deputy Interior Minister Somchai Sunthornvat: 'The days of free water are in the past.'

In the short term, the PWA has already agreed to buy water from both the Keng Nguan and Sri Suchart ponds. These have storage capacities of 2,500 cubic meters and 3,000m³ respectively, and work is already under way on two 25-million-baht pipelines to connect them to the distribution system.

The PWA is also interested in buying some 3 million cubic meters of water from the Hitlor and Manik tin mines. Phuket PWS Chief Sayan told the *Gazette* that building a pipeline to connect the two mines to the system, to the south, would cost 70 million baht.

Negotiations with the owners of the Hitlor mine were already under way, he said.

In the medium-term, the

PWA is negotiating with REQ Water Services Co to build a desalination plant on a two-rai site between Central Karon Hotel and Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort to help relieve chronic water shortages in Kata-Karon and Patong.

"It is clear that Patong, Kata and Karon are far away from the main distribution system, so we shall build a reverse-osmosis treatment plant to serve those areas," DM Somchai said.

If negotiations are finalized soon, work on the plant could begin in October and be completed in about four months, after which time desalinated sea water would be treated and pumped into the PWS distribution system in the area.

REQ General Manager Jaturong Saduagkan explained that his company had originally planned to invest 600 million baht to build a plant capable of treating 12,000m³/day, but had since decided to downsize the investment to 500 million for a 9,000m³/day plant.

K. Jaturong said he expected the PWS to approve the project within a week, and that the plant should be up and running by March, with REQ selling the desalinated seawater to the PWA at 40 baht/m³, based on a contract of five to six years.

He added that the price could be lowered if the PWA board offers a longer-term contract, because the lifetime of such a plant is typically about 10 years.

DM Somchai said that Ka-
Continued on page 3

OrBorJor workers held in forest raid

By Anongnat Sartpisut

WICHIT: Phuket City Police on September 16 arrested seven Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) employees caught road building on national park land high up in the Nakkerd Hills in Tambon Wichit.

Pol Lt Col Chokechai Suttimart told the *Gazette* that four *OrBorJor* trucks and a backhoe were seized in the raid.

The work crew had damaged 16 rai of land by widening a 1,300-meter section of unpaved road to a width of 20 meters through the forest, which is listed as a "Zone C" water catchment area. There has been a moratorium on building in the area since rain caused extensive landslides around the island in October, 2002.

OrBorJor Vice-President Suthep Thepsakul told the *Gazette* that the whole matter was a misunderstanding. The Wichit Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) had asked the *OrBorJor* for vehicles to help widen the unpaved road, which had been there for a long time.

The *OrBorJor* complied with the request, but failed to check first that Wichit *OrBorTor* had approval for the work from the Provincial Forestry Office.

"We assumed Wichit *OrBorTor* had approval, but they didn't," said K. Suthep. "The *OrBorJor* never had any intention of encroaching on national forest land."

The case is now under investigation.



Members of the clean-up crew get down to work.

Kamala clean-up bags 40 tons of garbage

KAMALA: Despite tropical storm Vicente, the September 17 clean-up of Kamala Beach saw some 500 volunteers collect more than 300 large black garbage bags full of debris. The haul weighed 40 tons and filled three garbage trucks.

Among the items cleared by the volunteers from the five-kilometer stretch of beach were slabs of concrete, chunks of metal, tattered umbrellas, car parts, splintered chairs, fluorescent light bulbs, tangled fishing nets, smashed sunbeds, shoes, and broken glass.

The lagoon at the north end of the beach had also been full of junk, but by the end of the clean-up it was free of any hazards.

Dive crews, plus some 150 locals, including staff from the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization and Phuket FantaSea, worked alongside British Embassy staff from Bangkok to help the 300 students and staff from the British Cur-

riculum International School (BCIS), which organized the clean-up.

One Kamala resident said, "This event has made local people aware of the rubbish. The clean-up has helped the local community [realize how to] take care of their own environment."

A BCIS student added, "The atmosphere on the beach was great – young and old helped out, even though the weather was a nightmare."

The school's Creativity, Action and Service group (CAS), co-ordinated by art teacher Claire Lester, organized the event as part of the worldwide "Clean Up the World" day.

"CAS students will continue to clean up the beaches in Phuket and will continue to make local communities aware of the hazards of not disposing of litter properly," she said. "Let's hope that we can continue to work together as a community to keep Phuket clean." – *Shiona Mackenzie*

Gov urges police to work harder on drug cases

PHUKET: Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura has urged local police to concentrate their efforts in the war on drugs. He was speaking at a meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on September 19.

The Phuket Provincial Health Office (PPHO) reported to the meeting that most teenage drug cases involved two main drugs – *ya bah* (methamphetamine) and cannabis.

The National Command Center for Combating Narcotic Drugs (NCCD) Phuket Branch, reported that the island has an annual budget of 1.6 million baht to fund its anti-drugs initiatives.

The NCCD said that, in August, 55 people were arrested on the island for drug offenses and that there has been an increase in the number of users, especially in the Patong area. However, if looked at on a national scale, Phuket is not considered a problem province.

Gasohol goes on sale in Phuket

By Chris Husted & Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: Gasohol is now available at all 14 PTT gas stations on the island, Vichitpong Cheanthongsub, PTT Oil Phuket Depot Manager, has announced.

Gasohol, also known as E10, developed in Thailand by the Royal Chitlada Project, uses 99.5% pure ethyl alcohol sourced from sugarcane, which is blended with gasoline at the ratio of 1:9 to make gasohol, an alternative fuel with properties similar to 95-octane unleaded gasoline.

The PTT attests that the fuel can be used by any vehicles requiring 95-octane gasoline and can be blended with gasoline left in a tank without causing any damage to engines, with no engine tuning required. It is suitable for any gasoline-engined vehicle of less than 10 years old.

On a national scale, the PTT

says that using gasohol-blended fuel can reduce the amount of gasoline used by the country by 10%, or 2 million liters a day, saving some 10 billion baht a year in crop price support alone.

Until now, gasohol has been available only in Bangkok and its immediate surrounding provinces.

The new fuel retails for around 1.5 baht less per liter than 95 octane gasoline. A number of other gas stations are set to begin selling gasohol next month.

Low-cost airline announces plan to fly to Phuket

PHUKET: A Singapore-based budget airline is to launch a four-times-a-week service to Phuket from October 25, and will be offering special low one-way fares from the island state to Phuket of S\$22 (520 baht) until December 15.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) hopes the flights by Jetstar Asia, an affiliate of Australia's Qantas, will attract many Singaporeans to Phuket in the coming high season.

Suwalai Pinradab, director of the Phuket TAT Office, told the *Gazette* she expects tourism to Phuket to return to normal from October.

"Korean Air and Asiana plan to fly here from October 16, and we have 40,000 bookings already from Korea," she pointed out.



After winning the Phuket title, Aroonrat Sakulchit goes through to the national contest.

Aroonrat wins Teen crown

PHUKET: Aroonrat Sakulchit, 18, gracefully edged out 30 fellow contestants to win the Miss Teen Phuket 2005 crown on September 17.

The 30 contenders modeled products from the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) project before the judges selected 10 for the final round in which the girls wore traditional *YaYa* outfits and faced a question-and-answer session from the judges.

Phuket-born Aroonrat, who is studying at Phuket School of Technology, was asked, "How did you get involved in helping tsunami victims?" She confidently replied, "I helped homeless peo-

ple to find a place to sleep at Phuket Rajabhat University. I also helped clean up Patong Beach."

Aroonrat, who received a crown and sash, and 30,000 baht, told the *Gazette* this was her first beauty pageant, and she was very pleased with the result.

In second place in the competition, held at Central Festival Phuket, was Duangrat Dengpradap, 17. Third was Wilawan Chuthong, 17, while Kanittha Hongyot, 16, was voted most popular by the attending media.

Wilak Lohthong, Chairman of Miss Teen Thailand 2005, said Phuket will be the venue for Miss Teen Thailand 2005 in October.

Hotel expo opens soon

PHUKET CITY: The 22nd Food and Beverage Show and Hotelex Exhibition will be held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel from October 14 to 18. It will open from 10 am to 8 pm daily.

For more information, contact the Food & Beverage Managers Club at 183/33 Phang Nga Rd, Phuket City. Tel: 076-222801 or 01-9794244.

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Shrimp farmer and 'mule' netted in ya bah sting

PHUKET CITY: A joint sting operation carried out September 15 by Phuket City Police and Phang Nga police officers netted 1,100 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) tablets and two alleged dealers.

Phuket City Police Superintendent Col Paween Pongsirin told the *Gazette* that undercover officers, acting on information received, arranged a meeting at 1 pm with shrimp farmer Sanan Pandej, 50, from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, outside the Im-

perial 2 Hotel on Luang Por Rd in the city center.

There, said Col Paween, the deal was struck and Sanan drove the officers in his Isuzu pickup to Phuket City Bus Station, to await the arrival of the alleged "mule" carrying the drugs.

Col Paween said that Paison Tingson, 23, stepped from a Bangkok-Phuket tour bus with the 1,100 pills, then walked to Sanan's vehicle and into the police trap.

Both men were arrested and the drugs were seized, along with some 12,350 baht in cash, a 10-baht (750-carat) gold necklace, Sanan's pickup truck and two bus tickets.

According to the police, Sanan allegedly bought the tablets at 80 baht each from Khmer "drug warlords" in Baan Rong Krai, Sa Kaeo Province, in the east of Thailand.

He would then sell the *ya bah* to low-

level dealers at 150 baht a tablet, before they in turn would sell them to users for 450 baht apiece.

Col Paween said that both men had confessed and were currently on remand in Phuket Provincial Prison, pending further inquiries.

"We will continue the investigation to find everyone involved in their chain [of drug dealing]," Col Paween added.

— *Anongnat Sartpisut*

IN BRIEF

OrBorJor wins transparency prize

PHUKET: The Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) is one of only two *OrBorJor* in the country to win an award from the King Prajadhipok Institute, which monitors the progress of democracy in Thailand, for its "transparent" practices.

Senate President Suchon Chaleekrae handed the award to Phuket *OrBorJor* President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr at the Rama Gardens Hotel in Bangkok on September 5.

OrBorJor Vice-President Sutin Uthaitamrong said that the *OrBorJor* won the award because it practiced transparent processes and involved local people in the development and implementation of its policies.

"For example, when we need to buy or hire a contractor for any project of more than two million baht, we use e-auctions, in line with central government policy," he said.

The other *OrBorJor* to win the award this year was just south of Phuket, in Trang.

'Barbecued' dolphin found on Karon Beach

KARON: The charred carcass of a male bottlenose dolphin, believed to have been dragged ashore by fishermen hoping to barbecue it, was found on Karon Beach on September 13.

Kongkiat Kittiwattawong, a biologist at the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) at Cape Panwa, told the *Gazette* that the dolphin was male, and was about 20-25 years old. It was 2.5 meters long and weighed about 80 kilograms.

K. Kongkiat said that he believes the dolphin died from an illness before being dragged ashore.

ATM cash thieves arrested in Phuket

Duo robbed machines of B28.8m

PHUKET (*Kom Chad Luek*): Two Krung Thai Bank employees who allegedly stole a massive 28.8 million baht from ATM machines in Bangkok were arrested in Phuket on September 14.

The suspects, identified as Chatchai Jongsirirat, 32, and Pichet Kraibutra, 29, were employed by Krung Thai Business Service Co. Their responsibilities included refilling ATM machines with cash.

On September 5, Krung Thai Bank representative Wisan Supasombatoran reported to police the loss of more than 28.8 million baht from the bank's ATM accounts in Bangkok between August 23 and 25, the loss being discovered by the bank on August 27.

Upon learning of the loss, the finger of suspicion quickly pointed to Chatchai and Pichet.

Not only did the two have access keys and passwords for the machines, but they had also stopped reporting to work and could no longer be contacted.

A team of Crime Suppression Police detectives led by Pol Col Chonasit Wattawangkul managed to track the two suspects to a house in the government's Keha Housing Project in Tambon Rassada, Phuket City, where they were arrested.

Police also recovered 6.4 million baht in cash found in the house and seized two cars and a notebook computer.

The two confessed to the crime and gave the names of two accomplices, both friends of Chatchai and local government



Pichet (left) and Chatchai following their arrest in Phuket.

— Photo by *Kom Chad Luek*

officials in Phang Nga's Takua-tung District. They were identified as Arak "Dum" Mailaeiad, 30, headman of Village 1 in Tambon Krasome, and Somkiat Sonjai, 32, a member of the Tambon Krasome Council.

STASHED

Police arrested the pair in Phang Nga on charges of receiving stolen property, and recovered 12.5 million baht that been stashed away in a 50-gallon fuel drum.

After their arrests, Chatchai and Pichet told police they had been stealing money from the ATM machines for a long time — though only in amounts of up to 10,000 baht a time — to cover gambling losses, credit card debts and personal expenses.

They put the cash into the ATM machines according to normal procedures, they explained, then went back later, while off-

duty, to steal cash using their access to the machine.

They decided to make off with a big haul and escape to the South only after they learned they were to be transferred out of their positions servicing the ATM machines.

They used part of the stolen cash to buy cars and gave much of it to Arak and Somkiat for safekeeping, they said.

All four suspects were being in cells at the Rachada Criminal Court in Bangkok, and were denied bail, while police and bank officials continued trying to track down the rest of the missing money.

Water pipeline 'a done deal'

From page 1

ron residents would not see an increase in their water bills, as the cost would be passed along to hotels and businesses.

Phuket Tourist Association (PTA) President Pattanapong Aikwanich expressed his approval of the idea, saying that the presence of so many water trucks speeding around the area was harmful to tourism.

"Tourists aren't afraid of high water prices, but they are afraid of getting run over by trucks," he commented.

DM Somchai said the short- and medium-term measures would be sufficient to supply Phuket with water during the 18 months it would take to complete the pipeline from Surat Thani Province.

He said feasibility studies had already been completed for a pipeline capable of pumping up to 200,000m³/day to the island, four times Phuket's current consumption rate.

The pipeline could also be used to pipe water to parts of Krabi that face water shortages. Chieo Lan already serves as a water source for parts of Phang Nga Province.

DM Somchai appeared to have little doubt that the project would get Cabinet approval.

"We will start studying the plan soon. There is no need to worry about money," he said, adding that the PWA was willing to buy water from any other agency capable of supplying it.

"From now on, it will be necessary to buy water. The days of free water are in the past. Every drop has value now," he said.

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Lifeline for those who are 'sick and tired of being sick and tired'

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) was formed in the US in 1935 by a New York stockbroker and an Ohio surgeon who had both been "hopeless drunks".

The organization describes itself thus: "AA is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other [so] that they may solve their common problem and help others recover from alcoholism."

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions."

"AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes."

"Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety."

AA poses 12 questions to help people decide whether they are alcoholic or not. The organization points out, "If you can answer yes to any one of these questions, maybe it's time you took a serious look at what your drinking might be doing to you."

1. Do you drink because you have problems? To relax?
2. Do you drink when you get mad at

- other people, your friends or parents?
3. Do you prefer to drink alone, rather than with others?
4. Are your grades starting to slip? Are you goofing off on your job?
5. Did you ever try to stop drinking or drink less — and fail?
6. Have you begun to drink in the morning, before school or work?
7. Do you gulp your drinks?
8. Do you ever have loss of memory due to your drinking?
9. Do you lie about your drinking?
10. Do you ever get into trouble when you're drinking?
11. Do you get drunk when you drink, even when you don't mean to?
12. Do you think it's cool to be able to hold your liquor?

AA holds meetings on the 4th floor of Patong Hospital at 7pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday and at 8 pm on Friday.

In Phuket City it has meetings on at 7pm on Wednesday and Sunday on the 2nd floor of the Mission Hospital, and on Friday on the 3rd floor of the Bangkok Phuket Hospital. All meetings are open to everyone.

For more information, call Tel: 01-8954763, 01-4765808 or 01-8912895.

Thailand is an alcohol-friendly country. As a survey by the World Health Organization showed, the country is the fifth-booziest on the planet, with alcohol consumption in 2000 of 13.35 liters a year for each person over the age of 15. Of that amount, 12.45 liters was spirits. Such heavy consumption can exact a severe toll not only on drinkers themselves, but also on their families, friends and colleagues. *Gazette* Managing Editor Alasdair Forbes talked with two former heavy drinkers who were headed for oblivion, and who were saved only by their discovery of Alcoholics Anonymous.



The Quiet Drinker

'Joseph' from France

In my last year of drinking, six years ago, I would wake up at six o'clock every morning and the first thing I would do was take a drink to calm my nerves. I could not hold a cup of coffee.

Also I would drink to calm the pain in my gut. I was also taking Xanax and Prozac to calm me down.

Half of my brain would say, "You must stop drinking — you are making yourself sick." The other half would say, "You need a drink. Afterward, you'll feel better." I always listened to the second half.

I started drinking when I was young in France, going to discos. And later I had a large farm and a successful business, so I used to drink to celebrate success — every day a bottle of wine, maybe. It was all right. An aperitif, maybe, or two.

In the end I sold the business. It was not just the drinking — it was more complex than that. But my family — I had a wife and two wonderful sons — broke up. I lost everything in five years.

In Patong I was drinking so much that my bank manager told my girlfriend he had never seen anyone go

through money so fast — it was 10,000 baht a night I was spending, every night.

Often I would fall down in the street. But every night I would come back.

I was in hospital seven or eight times, and each time I got out I started drinking again. The

last time I was in the doctor told me I absolutely had to stop drinking. I was so ill I had already had the last rites from a priest.

But I said to the doctor, "I will stop for six months and then when my health has recovered I can start again. Is that okay?" She said, "If you do that you will die."

She introduced me to AA. That same day I went to my first AA meeting, in the hospital. Two nurses pushed me in my pajamas, in a wheelchair, into the meeting.

After about seven months I felt clever enough to take maybe one drink. I took one glass of gin and in one hour the bottle was finished. I could not drink one glass but I could drink a bottle, no problem. After that I never tried again.

I didn't hurt anyone when



I was drinking — I was quieter than I am now. My girlfriend sometimes says, "I wish you would start drinking again — you talk too much."

But today if you offered me one million dollars, to take a drink with you, I would tell you, "No thank you."



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THE DEMON AT THE END OF THE BOTTLE

The Binge Boozer

'Patrick' from Australia

I started drinking when I was 14 or 15, growing up in a place where everyone drinks. It wasn't very social if you didn't drink in Australia – you know, "Never trust a man who doesn't drink" sort of thing.

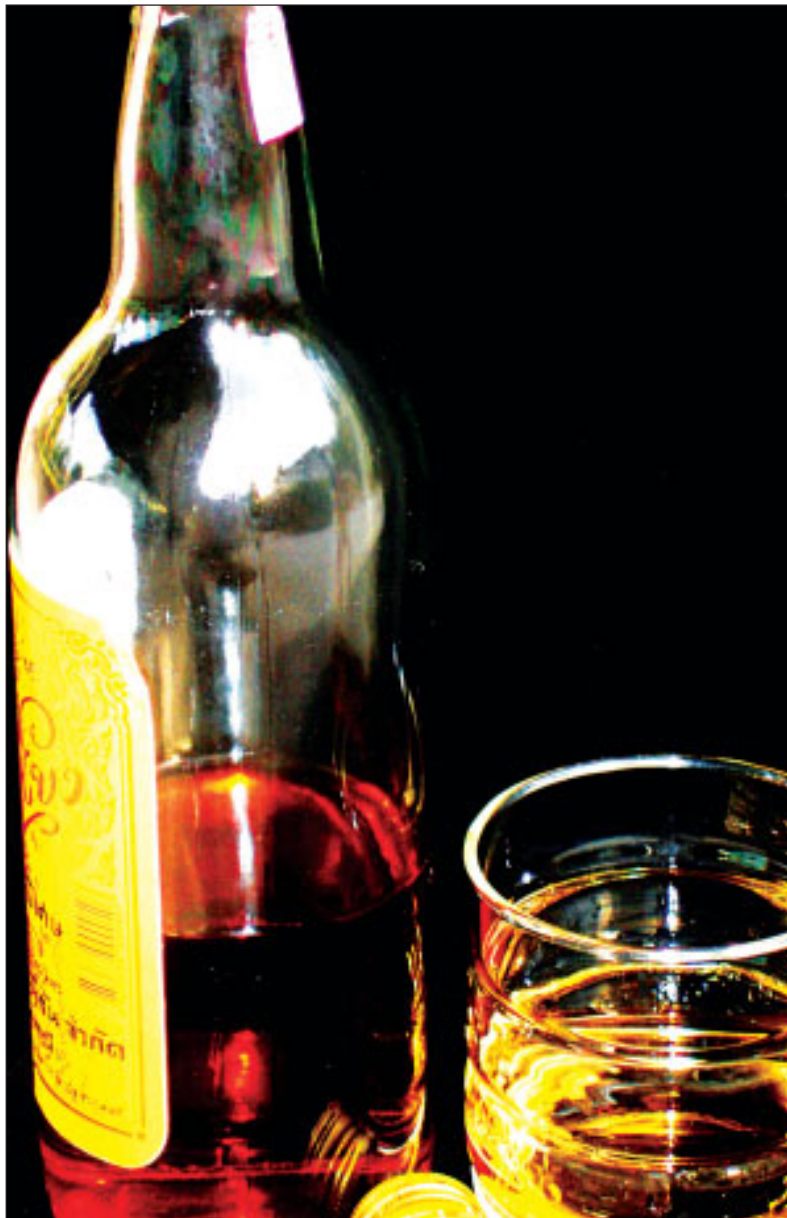
I think I moved here on what they call in the recovery business "a geographical" – moving from one place to another, leaving the wreckage of the past behind, moving on quickly to a new place to set up new relationships.

What made Thailand very attractive to me back then was that there is very little policing of drinking here and very little policing of drink-driving, whereas in Australia it's become very strict on drink-driving.

I didn't come here specifically because of that, but it was certainly one of the main factors that kept me here – the fact that you could party as hard as you liked and there wasn't any worry about being caught drink-driving or "drunk and disorderly". It's a great place for an alcoholic to live.

I spent 12 or 13 years just drinking and partying. I enjoyed all that very much – never once thought that I was an alcoholic because I was too well-educated and I had too much money to be an alcoholic – I had a good job, two cars in the garage and a wife and kids, and that didn't fit my mental picture of an alcoholic as the derelict by the side of the road.

The consumption continued to rise and rise and I found myself justifying behavior, justifying doing things that I had never previously thought I would do – going out until five in the morning when I was working the next day, getting into street fights and pub brawls, waking up in the back of a pick-up truck to find I was being robbed by five katoeys – things I was "too well-educated and too well-off" to be doing.



I was also getting more and more nervous and more stressed out at work and in my relationships. I had no idea that I had already crossed the line into alcoholic behavior.

It's a threefold malady of the mind, body and spirit, and all three areas were suffering terribly from the amount of drinking I was doing.

I'm what they call a binge drinker, so I didn't need it every day. I could go weeks, months, even years without drinking, but I always knew I would drink again. I could turn my life around in those [abstinent]

times, but I never felt content.

I could enjoy just two or three beers in an afternoon but I couldn't relate those drinks to the oncoming debacle in four or five weeks. But you could almost set your watch by it – every six weeks or so I'd go on a two- or three-day tear.

Other things happened – blackouts – what Aussies call Craft Nights, for "Can't Remember A F*cking Thing" – but I had a vague feeling of impending doom, of things being dark. I'd wake up after coming out of a blackout and feel full of remorse and self-pity and gloom.

I thought it would do no harm if I went to an AA meeting. I'd bought a whole library of self-help books but I only needed one – the Alcoholics Anonymous book. I could have saved myself thousands of dollars. As soon as I opened the book I found myself immediately.

I realized, oh! I'm not terminally unique – as I'd thought I was – but I also wasn't too clever or too wealthy to be an alcoholic. Alcoholism is no respecter of race, religion, creed, education, anything – it's 10% of the population, across the board, so it was nothing to be ashamed of.

It's a disease. Ironically, it's the only disease that tells you you haven't got it. The only sure way you have of knowing you're an alcoholic is thinking you're not. People who aren't alcoholic don't think about it at all.

I learned in the AA meetings that I was very close to killing myself – driving while drunk or in a blackout, many times, with no memory of the drive home. There was also a much bigger possibility that I'd kill someone else in those situations.

I was close to drinking myself into what they call "wet brain" where you start to lose your mental abilities, you can't do short calculations and simple tasks.

My liver was near the bottom, near the end of its tether.

I was very lucky in that first meeting to be told that the bomb is in the first drink, that I could relate to the fact that the drink I was having this afternoon was linked to a debacle in five weeks' time, and that I might never have to drink again.

In the end I drank the fun out of it. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I wanted to change.

I didn't want to die.

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Queer News

The young lad and the sea

PATONG: A 15-year-old German boy tried to drown himself at Patong Beach after his parents forbade him to see again a ladyboy he had met on Soi Bangla.

On the evening of September 12, the boy – whose name was not released because he is a minor – was ordered to stay in his room by his parents, who feared that his new third-gender friend might take advantage of him.

As love-struck teenagers are wont to do, however, the golden-haired youth sneaked out of his room. But rather than seek out the object of his affection, he instead bought beer and a pair of handcuffs.

Brew and manacles in hand, he proceeded to the beach, where he bound his ankles with the handcuffs, took a last swig of beer – and began wading awkwardly into the monsoon-season surf.

While all sorts of unusual behavior takes place on Patong Beach after dark, the sight of the young German trying to end his life in this fashion was apparently enough to draw the attention of passers-by.

Soon police were at the scene, yelling at the boy to remove himself from the sea. But he was apparently unwilling – or unable – to comply, forcing them to wade into the brine and fish him out.

Back at Kathu Police Station, officers managed to remove the handcuffs from the boy's ankles. He told them he had decided to kill himself because his feelings were hurt when his parents ordered him not to see his ladyboy friend.

"We weren't going to do anything – we were only friends," he told them, adding that the ladyboy had always taken "good care" of him.

Source: Siang Tai

Taking pride in Phuket

Phaga Yosying (right) collected her prize, a golf umbrella from Super Sport, from Manasanan 'Jeab' Bunto, of the *Gazette* Advertising Sales team.



Suriya Kingkaew (right) collected his prize of a two-night stay in a deluxe double room at the Absolute Sea Pearl Beach Resort in Patong from Prasong 'Pomm' Pumsathit, Production Manager of the *Phuket Gazette*.

Kamala finally gets moving on repairs

KAMALA: More than eight months after Kamala was hit by the December 26 tsunami, Kamala Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) is moving to rebuild the beachfront.

Jirachai Suebsod, Chief of *OrBorTor* Kamala's Public Works department, told the *Gazette* that the Department of Local Administration had approved 42 million baht for Kamala *OrBorTor* to complete two main projects.

"We are widening the road along the beachfront and we will landscape the sidewalks on both sides so people can sit on public benches and enjoy the view of the sea," said K. Jirachai.

"We started at the beginning of this month, and we expect to complete it by the end of February, or perhaps even earlier," he added.

The other project, he said, was the building of a sea wall, which was started three months ago, to protect against erosion and to beautify the beachfront with landscaping, trees and flowers.

The wall runs along the beachfront side of the Muslim cemetery, near Kamala Police Station.

"The wall that was there was damaged by the tsunami.

"We plan to finish in December," K. Jirachai said.

Lottery draw comes to Phuket

PATONG: The October 1 draw of the government national lottery, which will be televised live round the country, will take place at the Graceland Resort & Spa in Patong.

Wallapa Pajareepong of the Government Lottery Office said that the lottery will be held in Phuket in order to promote tourism to the province. During the show, footage of popular tourist spots in the area will be shown.

She added that people who would like to see firsthand how the winning numbers are chosen can do so free at 2:30 pm, although they will have to present identification before being allowed entry.

K. Wallapa also said that the Government Lottery Office has organized a free mobile health clinic at Baan Mai Reab School, Kathu on October 1, from 8:30 am to 2:30 pm.

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



TRT MPs urge closure of pondok

A group of 25 Thai Rak Thai MPs came up with a surprising proposal to shut down Islamic boarding schools and create a militia to contain violence in the restive South.

The group, led by Udon Thani MP Vichai Chaichitvanichkul, was assigned by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to study the situation in the Deep South after Thai Rak Thai failed to win a single parliamentary seat there in February's general election.

The Ministers accused the schools, locally known as *pondok*, of teaching only Islam, thus rendering graduates unable to further their education in other fields.

It is widely believed among government officials that *pondok* are breeding grounds for the insurgency that has flared up in the region. It is common for Muslims in the three southernmost provinces to receive at least part of their education at *pondok*.

The Thai Rak Thai MPs also said they supported the use of the emergency decree and proposed the establishment of a government-supported private militia to contain the violence in the Deep South.

Opposition leader Abhisit Vejjajiva warned government MPs to be careful when suggesting measures to solve problems in the southernmost provinces. The culture and religions of the local people should be taken into account, he said.

Sex crime increase: A report by the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB) stated that the average number of 12 sex crime complaints filed with police every day in Thailand is likely only the tip of the iceberg, accounting for only about 5% of sex crimes that actually take place.

The number of reported juvenile sex violations increased 39% in the past year to 2,416. Around 80% of rapists and child molesters are close to their victims, who are often family members, relatives, co-workers and lovers, said NESDB Secretary-General Amphon Kittiamphon.

The number of trials for sex crimes has tripled in the past 10 years, and the rate of rape-and-murder crimes has also increased in recent years, he said, without providing statistics. Victims, who include men and boys, range in age from two to 80, he added.

Devil dog: A pet Rottweiler dog was shot dead by police in Tak's Muang District after it went berserk, attacked its owner and another man, and failed to calm down after 10 tranquilizer shots.

The dog's owner, Prayong Thepnikorn, 73, sought help from police after the animal attacked him and his nephew Khajorn, 25.

Police, along with rescue volunteers, went to Prayong's house and sent him and his



Onlookers peer at the wreckage of a pickup crushed by a Bangkok-Sungai Kolok train in Yala. Nine people died in the accident, eight of them students from Thammawittaya Islamic School.

nephew to hospital for treatment of minor injuries.

The dog, which was chained to a bed, lunged at police officers as they tried to subdue it with an anesthetic. When, after 10 shots, the dog showed no signs of calming down, the police killed it with three gunshots.

Battle of the bulge: The Health Department, Thai Health Promotion Foundation and the Nutrition Association of Thailand will jointly campaign to raise public awareness of the dangers of obesity, encouraging males not to let their waist measurement increase past 36 inches, and females not more than 32 inches.

The three organizations will also co-operate with schools across the country to identify the overweight and send them to weight loss camps, said Dr Somyos Charoensak, Director-General of the Health Department.

Obesity has become a critical health problem in Thailand over the past year, particularly among young people. Up to 13.4% of children at kindergarten and primary school levels are now considered obese, a figure not far behind the percentage of overweight children in the US, which has the highest percentage of obese people in the world, he said.

Just a dream? Somjai Prasootthawee, 57-year-old Director of the Sungai Kolok School in Narathiwat, hanged himself – apparently out of stress related to debts he ran up in trying to raise educational standards at the school.

Somjai's wife, K. Kritika, said the only serious problem her husband faced was the three million baht his school owed for upgrading teaching standards and the overall educational environment to acceptable levels.

The school is one of the 921 under the government's "One District One Dream School" project to raise educational standards. The Education Ministry is now reassessing the program in the light of K. Somjai's suicide.

Stand and deliver: Prime Minister's Office Minister Newin Chidchob will seek a Cabinet resolution ordering government offices to provide parking space for five to 10 taxis in congested areas of Bangkok as a way to improve traffic flow.

After consulting with representatives of 18 taxi organizations and related agencies, K. Newin learned that there are up to 60,000 taxis on the streets at any given time looking for customers, wasting money on fuel and blocking traffic flow in the process. The representatives suggested that the government provide them with specific parking and pick-up spots and expand bus stops so taxis could pick up customers there, too.

K. Newin said he would also ask for co-operation from the private sector in providing parking space for taxis free-of-charge.

Planes and drains: Thailand's top city planner expects the 350-square-kilometer Suvarnabhumi City to be known as "the Venice of the East" when it is turned into a state-of-the-art metropolis around the new international airport in the next few years.

Sawang Srisakul, Director-General of the Public Works and Town and Country Planning Department, said that because of its low-lying landscape, Suvarnabhumi City will be developed as a "water city" similar to Venice, with canals built alongside roads to prevent flooding and to channel water to the ocean.

The city development plan has been completed and it will be presented to PM Thaksin Shinawatra on September 26. The city will become the first in Thailand to apply a "specific town planning" concept that will restrict the individual design and color of every building, he said.

Construction on the new city is expected to begin by October, 2006.

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

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Five weeks to go and counting



**ANDAMAN
COASTING**
By Franky Gun

With only five weeks to go until the first high season tourists visit Khao Lak, the previously fuzzy line between dream and reality, as regards reconstruction since the tsunami, has become much clearer.

For several resorts, especially in the Nang-Thong Beach area, financial support from banks and insurance companies simply came too late to enable them to get back on their feet again before November.

I have good news for Khao Lak repeat visitors, though; the famous Gerd and Noi Bungalows will be open for business in time for the high season. Gerd and Noi was the very first backpacker resort in Khao Lak, and the owners were among the driving forces behind Khao Lak's success in the 1990s. After the tsunami, the resort was reconstructed from scratch in record time.

Although the increasing amount of reconstruction work along Nang-Thong Beach is reassuring, Bang Niang Beach will still be the winner of the race. Several beach resorts in Bang Niang are near completion, including La Flora and Mukdara Resort.

The "we can do it spirit" all along Bang Niang Beach is unbroken. It is unbelievable how



The caterpillars dig away stairs and shop entrances, leaving drop-offs of up to two meters in front of some shops and restaurants.

much blood, sweat and tears have been invested into reconstruction efforts by the tsunami survivors here, despite slow bank support, next to nothing in government support, and donation funds disappearing into black holes.

Another miracle is how fast the Ayara Villas Resort has been hammered back to life. This exclusive beach resort, featuring beautiful beach bungalows with Thai-style roofs on Bang Niang, was wiped out completely by the tsunami. Now it has reappeared, even more beautiful than before. The owner says that it will be fully operational by November.

The owners of Amsterdam Resort, the Sanuk Bungalows, Dream Beach Villas, Raveevans, Cousin and Ludda Resort also deserve much praise for their fighting spirit and reconstruction efforts, despite the many obstacles they have faced – and still have to deal with.

Yet there are eyesores too that need to be addressed in the Bang Niang area. During the official cleanup frenzy in January-February, structures with minor damage, such as the two two-story main buildings of Divers Land, were demolished without so much as consulting the owner.

It is therefore quite hard to understand why the caterpillars managed to steer around the Green Beach/Steirer Eck, next to the Thoop Thong apartment complex.

The Steirer Eck, or what is left of it, consists of an almost collapsed restaurant/apartment block and three twin-bungalow houses. The rooms still contain

broken furniture, rotten clothes, and personal items scattered all over the place.

While this particular resort has a very tragic story to tell, as the owners and all of their children died in the tsunami, it certainly does not help Bang Niang survivors at all to have the ruins still standing. They are currently being used as makeshift toilets by construction workers from nearby building sites. It would be great if Bang Niang survivors could combine forces to get rid of this eyesore and help close an extremely unpleasant chapter of local history.

Highway to hell: The ongoing expansion of Highway Number 4 (Petchkasem Rd), which runs through the very center of Khao Lak, has split local residents into two groups.

One (smaller) group believes the expansion to four lanes will result in proper pavements, making the area safer for pedestrians.

And while everyone gawks in disbelief as the caterpillars dig away stairs and shop entrances all along the road, leaving drop-offs of up to two meters in front of some shops and restaurants – and virtually burying the low-lying Khao Lak restaurant – this first group simply says, "Everybody who has a shop here should

have known this would happen sooner or later! The center of Khao Lak should develop closer to the beach and farther away from the highway."

While that statement might be correct, it is impossible for a center to develop closer to the beach, especially in Nang-Thong, as the area is simply too small and land prices are too high. Bang Niang Beach might be a potential candidate for a new center, because of a wider land area between the highway and the beach. But it is very unlikely that the owners of shops and restaurants along the highway will move to yet another location after all that Khao Lak has been through since last December.

The second (and larger) group is downright pessimistic when talking about the highway expansion. Escalating death tolls from road accidents all along the highway, Khao Lak center losing its dreamy village atmosphere, and a decrease in visitors are just a few of the fears that are being expressed here.

As the highway expansion work continues at full throttle, it is much too late to convince government officials to change their plans now. So all Khao Lak residents can do is to take this particular lemon and try to make lemonade out of it. Good luck to all of us.

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Traditional designs and images get a touch of Japanese style

By Anongnat Sarpisut

The owner of Nora Art at Tesco-Lotus Supercenter, Mallika Ngampichitchai, has discovered a new – though ancient to the Japanese – way of producing pictures that have that peculiar quality of making onlookers gaze in wonder at the “depth” of the image.

Using a Japanese style of picture-making pronounced “Ochi-e”, she creates images of three dimensions by adding layer upon layer of decoration.

Already competent in stitching patterns on leather goods and molding flowers from clay, and inspired by the need to explore her creativity, she learned *ochie* in Bangkok.

“It is truly challenging. It makes me think about what I want to create and what design I want. I can choose from a range of ideas about what I want the picture to look like, right down to the colors and the small details such as the clothes the images wear and make-up on the characters’ faces.”

K. Mallika applies the Japanese style to a range of traditional designs and images. In her work, Thai, Japanese, Hindu and Chinese influences can be recognized, including images of Japanese ladies in kimonos, Chinese ladies playing traditional musical instruments and Thai ladies in traditional Loy Krathong costumes.

COMPLEXITY

Completing an *ochie* style picture can take from a day to a week, depending on the image’s complexity. First, K. Mallika creates a small draft version of what design she wants to create, using a draft pasteboard, then creates a one-to-one version to base her final image on.

She then cuts out the shapes of her characters from cardboard, before decorating them with paint and sticking the completed images onto the baseboard.

K. Mallika says that the most important aspect is the characters’ “skin” and ensuring the complexion of the face is perfect for each character. “We need to understand the emotion the characters are expressing, and create that feeling so that people can understand it. We need to inspire the imagination. If the character is sad, we show that sadness with the eyes and the mouth, or if they are happy, a smile,” she explained.

“The completed work also shows the emotion of the artist. These images are not easy to make. If we leave out some details, for example a Thai angel without a headdress, the picture would not work, it would not be beautiful.”

K. Mallika said that although Thais recognize the characters from classic Thai tales, most foreigners do not and need to have hints included in the pic-

The art of adding extra dimensions



K. Mallika in her studio and (left) the reverse (top) of a finished Ochie dancer.

ture to allude to which characters they are and what they are doing.

The colors used are critical, too. “It is necessary to choose colors that match the character. Some colors may look great, but they might also be over-exaggerating, and thus detract from the image’s true beauty. You need to choose your colors well,” she said.

For K. Mallika, it is her traditional Thai designs that are the most popular.

However, such designs are intricate and contain a lot of small

detail, such as the headdress worn by Thai angels and the *kanok* design.

Expanding her artistic horizon, she is looking toward creating Western images, starting with cute cherubs shooting arrows of love.

Although she began creating *ochie* pictures in Phuket just two months ago, her work is already proving popular with restaurants, hotels and spas on the island.

“What is unique with this form of art is that the images seem alive,” K. Mallika said.

Mallika Ngampichitchai works out of her art shop Nora Art at 48/1 Moo 2 in Karon. To contact her about her art, or to take a course in creating *ochie* images, call Tel: 01-9871196 or Email: mamam10300@yahoo.com

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Recent weddings in Phuket

Masaru and Miho Akiyama from Yamaguchi in Japan renewed their vows at the Chapel On The Lagoon, the wedding chapel at Laguna Phuket, Cherng Talay, on August 31.



Rodsamalee Chuenpradit and Kreetha Petwaroon were married on August 14 at the Royal Phuket City Hotel in Phuket City.



Thanaporn In-Klub and Chudchawan Boonsri held their wedding celebration on August 18 at the Royal Phuket City Hotel in Phuket City.

MAKING PEOPLE

The Arts and World Spirits Museum, featuring life-size models of internationally renowned politicians, artists, athletes and philosophers, among others, is slated to open late next year.



A key feature of the planned 170-rai Phuket International Night Bazaar on Chao Fa West Rd, the museum will start out with some 200 resin-fiberglass figures – with more to be added on an ongoing basis – and is expected to attract more than a million visitors annually.

Featured hyperrealist artist Watchara Prayoonkum spoke with the *Gazette's* **Ananya Hongsa-ngiam** (above) about his involvement in the project and his career as a sculptor.

The six people whose images Watchara Prayoonkum has fashioned from fiberglass so far for the Arts and World Spirits Museum are Pablo Picasso; Auguste Rodin; Thai puppet master Sakorn "Joe Louis" Yangkeawsot; the Italian founder of Silpakorn University, Corrado Feroci, better known as Silpa Bhirasri; Vincent Van Gogh; and Salvador Dali.

Each figure takes K. Watchara between three and six weeks to make.

"My models give the public access to professionals and thinkers who can influence the next generation. They are on display in Chiang Mai until September 28. After that they will be shown in

Phuket, though I do not yet know exactly where or when," K. Watchara said.

"Like myself, most Thai sculptors come from the north-eastern provinces because, there, people eat sticky rice with their hands," Chaiyaphum-born K. Watchara grinned.

"Actually, I think it is because in that region there is so much fine clay begging to be used.

"When I was a primary school student I loved art, and drawing especially," he said, "and I always dreamed of growing up to be a sculptor."

K. Watchara became a versatile artist; working with plasticine or bronze was as enjoyable for him as using clay, he says.

At 40, K. Watchara is already famed for his bronze monuments of members of the Thai Royal Family, such as the Princess Mother HRH Princess Somsdej Phrarajchananee Srisangwan,

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Left, K. Watchara (center, in cream-colored T-shirt) with his team and, in the background, his sculpture of French sculptor Auguste Rodin.

Above, Sakorn 'Joe Louis' Yangkeawsot gets Elvis to sing.

located at Suan Somdej Ya Park in Pattani province; and King Prajadhipok Rama VII, installed on Hin Lek Fai Mountain in Prachuap Khiri Khan province.

"I consider my solo exhibition *Pradoot Fa Nom Soo Din*, (From Heaven to Earth) – plasticine sculptures of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej at various moments in his life – to be my greatest achievement to date," he says. These were showcased at the Open Arts Space in Bangkok in 2002.

The artist obtained a vocational certificate after three years at the Thai Vichit Silp School in Bangkok before passing the entrance exam for Silpakorn University. He

worked part-time to put himself through university.

"At Silpakorn, we followed a curriculum set by Silpa Bhirasri. In my first year I studied basic subjects and after two years I majored in sculpture. My thesis was on abstract art."

On graduation in 1986, he was hired as a sculptor by the central government's Fine Arts Department.

Subsequently, he worked with the eminent Thai sculptor Khaimuk Chuto for three years before going it alone, though, he notes, "I enjoyed col-

laborating with her on a monument in Ayudhya.

"Art is an international language – it connects East and West and can promote learning

and peace. I hope my fiberglass models help people to understand each other better," he said.



Surrealist Salvador Dali, as sculpted by K. Watchara.

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The first three of these vehicles' owners to contact us can choose from the following three prizes: one round of golf (18 holes) at Laguna Phuket Golf Club; or an Evolve Spa gift voucher for 2 persons (2.5-hour spa treatment and one-day free use of the gym and pool) at Treetops Arasia; or souvenirs from Desjoyaux Co., Ltd.

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When it's right to belt a child...

One frequently sees very young children crawling around inside a car as the vehicle is being driven; sometimes the child, barely able to stand, is supported at an open window or is even sitting in the driver's lap, hands on the steering wheel.

An unrestrained child in a car is, quite simply, a death waiting to happen.

Findings from research carried out by the UK's Royal Automobile Club (RAC) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) are alarming.

For example, in a 30mph (48.2kmh) crash, a young child can be thrown forward with a force equal to *thirty* times gravity, making the child, effectively, 30 times heavier.

PROJECTILE

So a child weighing 9 kilograms suddenly becomes a 270-kilo projectile, and the child can accelerate from a relative speed of 0kmh to 48.2kmh in a quarter of a second.

Looked at another way, if a car traveling at 48.2kmh impacts with a solid structure it will decelerate to zero in a quarter of a second and in 100 centimeters.

This is, of course, likely to kill the child, probably when it is thrown through the windscreen. The unrestrained "bouncing bomb" can also kill other occupants of the car as it exits or ricochets around the vehicle.

Merely holding the child is not enough, and child passengers have been known to die after

If you have an unrestrained child in the car and you have an accident, that child may not only die, he or she could also kill you or other members of your family. But potential 'bouncing bombs' can be defused by thinking 'safety first', and using a special car seat.

The *Gazette's* Andy Johnstone investigates.



Your child is precious, so safety on the road must be paramount: make sure you use the correct kind of car seat for age and weight.

crashes at speeds of as little as 5mph (8kmh).

Child car seats (CCS) can go a long way toward reducing the risk of death or injury, although it appears that Thailand has no legislation governing their use. "It

is the parents' responsibility to protect their children in cars," said an officer from Phuket City Police Station.

One piece of good news is that sales of CCSs in Thailand appear to be increasing. Staff of

Robinson Department Store told the *Gazette* that they now sell an average of two CCSs a week, compared with less than half that figure two years ago.

The store, as with a number of other shops in Phuket, sells

a bewildering range of seats, but which ones to choose, bearing in mind that the facilities of the *Gazette* do not stretch to crash-testing?

We took a look at four models of CCS available (see facing page).

Not a comprehensive test, admittedly, but food for thought for those not prepared to risk their child's life – or their own.

By the way, the padded covers on all these models are removable and washable.

All items discussed are available on the fourth floor of Robinson Department Store, Phuket City. Special thanks to K. Ying and K. Lamai.

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The Prim Kids EG Combi, which comes in at a hefty 19,000 baht, is easy to use and light, around 3.5 kilograms. It is, however, for children of one to 11 years old only, as is common with all CCSs that restrain children with the car's 3-point belt, rather than an integral multi-point harness.

The "Combi" part of its name refers to the fact that it can be used three ways for three age groups/weights of children: with extra padding, for children of around nine to 18kg or one to four years old; for children 15 to 25kg or three to seven years old; and removing the backrest and using it as a booster seat, for young 'uns of 22 to 36kg, or six to 11 years old.

The EG Combi scored a "good" rating in the 2003 US National Agency for Automotive Safety and Victims' Aid test. It must be used forward-facing only.



The Camera New-Safe costs 5,190 baht. This seat, which meets the European Union ECE R44/03 regulations for CCSs, uses a five-point harness. It weighs around 4.5kg and is designed only for children of around nine to 18kg.

One of the advantages of a CCS with its own harness is that the buckle is – generally – more difficult to unlatch than that of a three-point belt in a car, which children can undo quite easily. The buckle of the Camera New-Safe was very stiff and very shallow, however; long nails would make undoing this seat rather tricky.

All in all, though, it is a good design with clear instructions. It is well-padded, too, just right for junior to snuggle down in. It cannot be used as a rear-facing seat in the front of a car with a passenger airbag.



The Renka by Combi, at 8,500 baht, is suitable for infants from six months old (rear-facing) and 12 months to four years old facing forward. Again, it cannot be used in the rear-facing mode in a passenger seat with an airbag.

This CCS boasts a three-position recliner, which requires two levers to be depressed simultaneously, as well as three pairs of slots on the backrest, to allow the height of the harness to be adjusted as the child grows.

Robust in construction – it weighs around 4.5kg – and with its own three-point harness, the design allows the car's seatbelt to pass easily through the slots at the rear of the seat.

No labels were visible indicating what, if any, international standards this seat meets.



The Farlin model on sale in Robinson for 4,550 baht bucks the trend by being available in not only the near-ubiquitous gray-and-blue combination, but also in gray-and-red.

It, too, has a padded bar in front of the child, although apart from Junior using it as an armrest, its purpose remains unknown.

This model is well-constructed and also has a five-point harness, but the bar lets it down somewhat, simply because the buttons to release the bar to move forward as the child grows are too tricky to use. It was, in fact, impossible to get the bar beyond the second stage.

That aside, this is a good forward-facing seat – it meets US Federal standards – and is suitable for children weighing between nine and 18kg.

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This week



AMANTA A GOOD THING: Phuket Tourist Association (PTA) President Pattanapong Aikwanich (center), PTA member Krisada Tansakul (2nd from left), Patcharee Leung-On (left), Jaques Lefebvre and Oraual Paethong, MDs of Amanta House Boutique Hotel, celebrate their grand opening in Patong.



SLICK TREATMENT: Caltex Oil (Thailand) Chairman Ralph W Perry hands out toys to young students from Baan Pak Weep and Baan Bang Niang schools in Khao Lak.



SECOND WIND: Surrounded by friends, Jen-tom, son of Lumpoon and Frank Gunn, celebrates his 8th birthday with a huge puff and a blow.



IT'S A GOAL! Representative Genevieve Monney (in white) presents 40,000 baht worth of soccer equipment to Kamala Tambon Administration Organization on behalf of Axa Atout Coeur Franco-Suisse.



SENIOR SERVICE: Laguna Phuket recently invited 41 residents of Phuket's Home for the Aged to the cinema to see *The Tin Mine* followed by a special lunch at Laguna Beach Resort's Similan Room. Also present were Pijaya Vachajitpan and Dollaya Madcha (front row, center) who starred in the movie.



FAIR KOP: Margarita Bar owner Chris Koppers celebrates the opening of his Seafood Festival Bar & Restaurant with "Family" members Arunee Kottner and Amara Tontae, along with Paiboon Prayonghom (right).

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TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

Capitalism rules in China's wacky big theme park city

Shenzhen City, slap-bang next to the Hong Kong-mainland border, was always going to do well.

Nowadays its Mission Hills Golf Club, which embraces ten 18-hole championship courses (designed with help from the likes of Jack Nicklaus, Nick Faldo and Vijay Singh), is listed in the book *Guinness World Records* as the globe's largest.

Shun Hing Square in Shenzhen, some 384 meters tall, is the eighth-highest building in the world. Yet at the end of the 1980s, the vicinity was home to a farming community.

This is the new face of the People's Republic of China, where capitalism has been given pretty much a free hand after decades of communism.

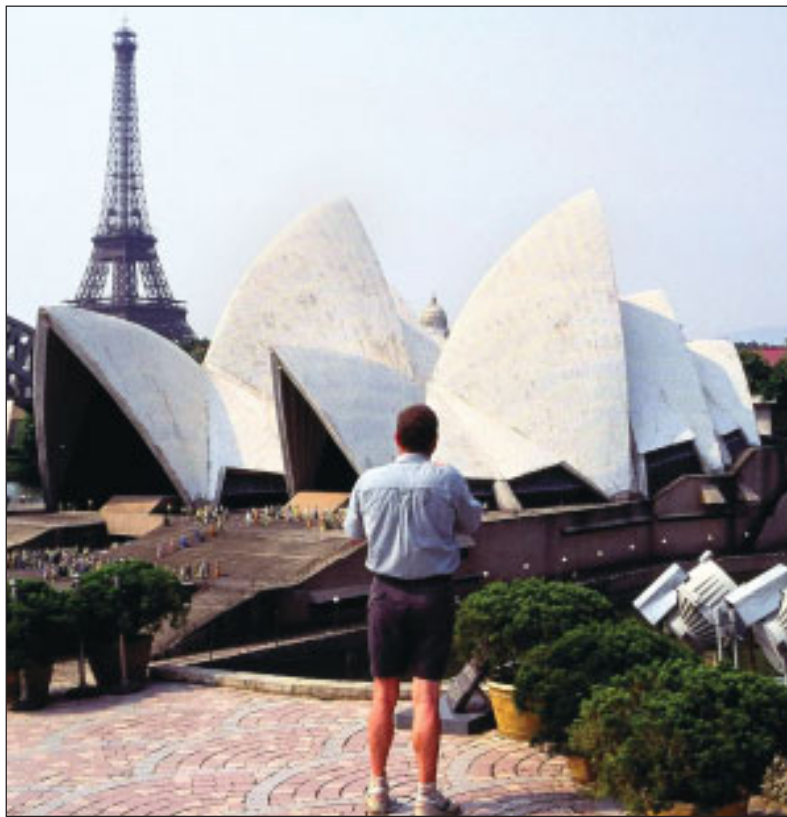
It is tempting to regard Shenzhen as one enormous wacky theme park, and there is certainly no shortage of the real thing. "Windows of the World" showcases facsimiles of everything from Thai palaces to Japanese teahouses – to say nothing of the Eiffel Tower.

SHOPPING

In a similar vein, "Splendid China" packs the whole country into one park: China Folk Culture Villages present 56 different ethnic perspectives; and – from the sublime to the incredulous – Minsk World is a 40,000-ton former Soviet aircraft carrier.

However, most people head to Shenzhen to shop. One of the most extensive retail romper rooms is Lo Wu Commercial City, next to the train station. Handbags, necklaces, leather goods, knick-knacks and a cornucopia of other merchandise is packed into tiny boutiques, one atop the other. Shops selling the same sort of items tend to cluster together.

The cardinal rule is to bargain fiercely. Offer less than half of the asking price and settle for no more than half. Although everyone will take Hong Kong dollars at par, they are worth marginally more than Renminbi, so pay in Chinese currency if possible.



Sydney Opera House with the Eiffel Tower in the background, while Mount Rushmore looks down over the Capitol and the White House.

'Windows of the World' showcases facsimiles of everything from Thai palaces to Japanese teahouses – to say nothing of the Eiffel Tower

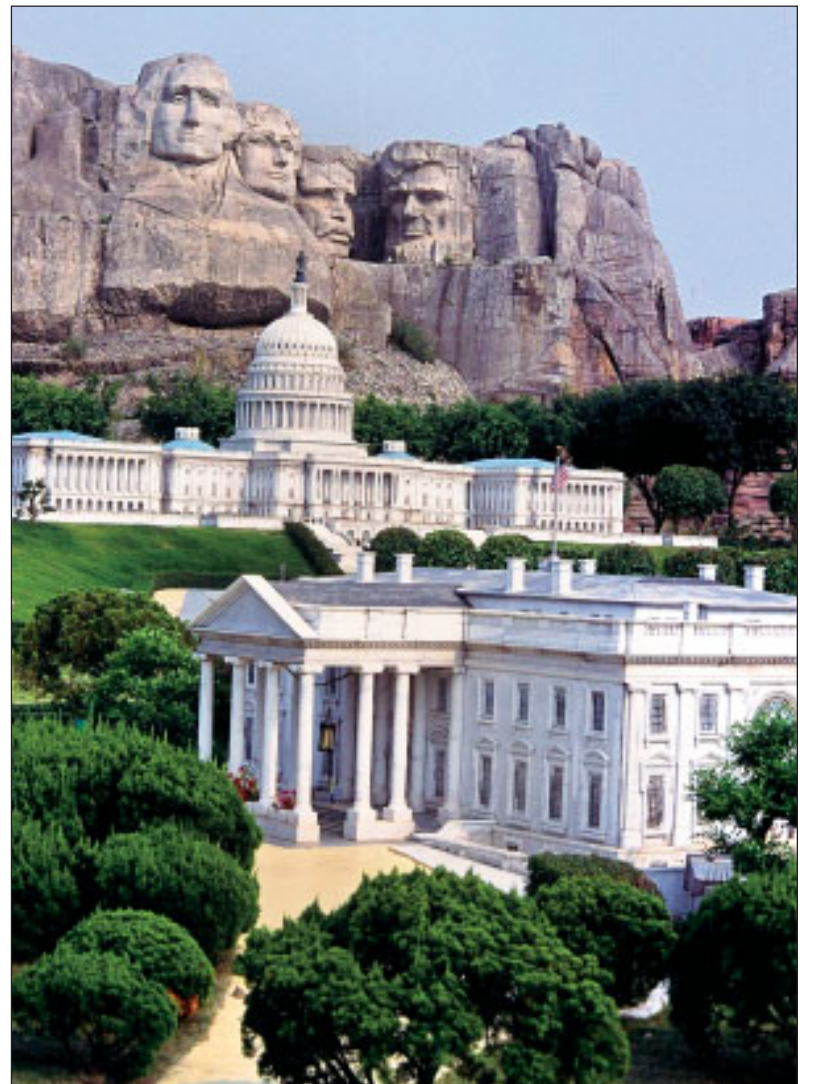
The best tailors in Shenzhen cluster together in Bu Cheng (Fabric City) in the open-air Dong Men shopping area. Customers are welcome to choose their fabrics in one shop and get them made by the tailor of their choice. A pair of trousers, for example, can be made in a week and should cost less than RMB80.

Shenzhen's main electronic goods stores, with names like

Electronic City and Aihua Computer City, are gathered around a single block on Huaqiang Bei Lu.

There is little difference in price as far as mainstream brands are concerned, but the bargains lie in domestically manufactured items. Of course, buyers should check the warranty before settling on a price.

Even half a day's shopping in Shenzhen is likely to take it out



Capitalism has been given pretty much a free hand these days.

of you, which is why some sort of spa treatment is a good half-time diversion.

Many of the malls include massage parlours and beauty salons – painting intricate designs on toe and finger nails is a speciality – and they usually have a bow-tied waiter on hand to supply refreshments.

If Shenzhen appears to be pretty wild during the day, wait

until the evening when the city reverberates with cheap, raw fun.

There are two main entertainment districts: Lo Wu, near the railway station, and Shek-O, a satellite town about 45 minutes away by cab.

But don't expect anything in the way of intimate little clubs – everything here is glitzy, in Las Vegas-style neon.

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Just be confident, despite the bitterness

One of the most confusing aspects of taste for wine lovers is understanding the difference between bitterness and astringency.

Bitterness is a taste sensation found in vegetables like endives, arugula, and radicchio, some herbs, spices, and even fruits. Some wines, especially young, barrel-aged wines with relatively high levels of alcohol, may taste very bitter.

Bitterness is sometimes confused with astringency because both interact similarly with food. I suppose the best way to describe astringency is a drying, shrinking, jagged feeling on the tongue and mouth. If you have ever chewed grape seeds you will know the physical sensation of astringency.

Tannins are a class of proteins found in the stems, seeds and skins of many plants, in-

cluding grapes. They are responsible for astringency in wine, increase a wine's body and weight, and are responsible for many of its healthful properties.

As wines age, tannins condense to become larger molecules that no longer irritate the mouth tissues, but instead produce pleasing sensations of smoothness. This is why age-worthy reds are so highly valued by collectors and connoisseurs.

Astringency is not only difficult to describe with precision, but it is also difficult to measure; even trained tasters may have difficulty distinguishing between bitterness and astringency. Because astringency is not a taste – rather it is a complex interaction between the tannins and the proteins in our saliva – when we taste wine its astringency tends to become stronger over time.

With each sip, astringency increases, reaching maximum in-

WINE



By Steven Roberto

tensity about 15 seconds later, then slowly decreasing. The consequence is that one wine influences our perception of the one that follows.

This is why tasters attempt to reduce the influence of tannin from previous wines by eating bread and drinking water between different wines.

Because saliva flow varies according to the size of the person, age, sex, race and physical well-being, women and short or small people typically perceive a wine as being more astringent than does someone larger or male.

Furthermore, wine stimulates our appetite because of its ability to increase salivary flow in the mouth. When enjoying wine, most of us repeatedly sip at short intervals, so we start to notice astringency more after a few minutes of tasting.

The interaction with food makes astringency even more complicated. Sour foods with high acidity increase our perception of astringency, as does hot or spicy food, while a touch of salt tends to reduce the effect of sourness and astringency.

Foods with high concentrations of glutamic acid, the basic ingredient of monosodium glutamate (MSG), react strongly with

astringent tannin to create a strong bitter or metallic taste. This is why tannic red wines do not work very well with most shellfish or in conjunction with soya sauce, for example.

Ultimately, I am not sure it matters whether or not we can tell the difference between bitterness and astringency, since most of us don't enjoy either sensation.

But an understanding of the interaction of wine chemistry and sensory perception gives us added confidence to explore wine, and that is what is important.

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

Phuket Diary of coming events

September 23-25. Seven Weeks of Cultural Roads: Thalang Rd, Krabi Rd and Dibuk Rd, which make up the heart of Phuket City's "Old Town", will be the center of attention for seven weekends between now and November 6.

A mélange of arts, crafts, performances and food – set amid the Old Town's glorious Sino-Portuguese architecture – begins at 7 pm and ends at 11 pm every Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

In addition to Phuket's culture, there will also be exhibits from China, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Iran, Portugal, the Netherlands and Britain.

September 25. Phuket Mountain Bike H3 (start 9 am, finish 6 pm): Go north through Kamala (from Patong), turn right at the sign just before Phuket FantaSea corner. After 1.1km, turn right at the sign on the left bend. Follow bitumen/track for another 300 meters. Follow the sign HHH (red letters on white).

Shower & BBQ available after the ride, which takes about one hour. Registration: 100 baht (incl soft drinks). BBQ: 100 baht. Beer: 50 baht. Minimum age: 18 years. Helmets required.

Bike Hash participation is at your own risk. Bring your own water bottles/hydration system.

First Aid kit a good idea. Also carry spare parts for your bike – puncture repair kit, pump, tools, etc.

For information contact Thomas Flindt at Tel: 07-8939464 or Email: thai-ex@swampthing.dk

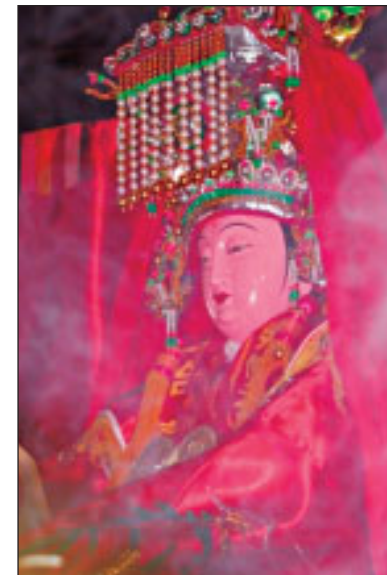
October 3-11. Phuket Vegetarian Festival 2005: The Phuket Vegetarian Festival 2005, which begins on October 2 with lantern-pole raising ceremonies at 13 shrines around the island, is expected to feature more than 1,000 mediums – 30 from Taiwan – possessed by the spirits of nine Chinese deities.

A copy of a *Mazhifu* (the Ruby Goddess) statue is already

in Phuket City, and can be seen at Navamindra Memorial Square. The Vegetarian Festival also features the usual acts of self-mutilation: bladed-ladder climbing and fire walking.

For more information, contact the Tourism Authority of Thailand Region 4 Office at Tel: 076-212213 or 076-211036.

October 23. Phuket International Mountain Beach Marathon: The Phuket International Mountain Beach Marathon will comprise a full 42-kilometer marathon, as well as 21-km and 10.5-km mini-marathons, and a 5-km fun run/walk. All participants will receive a T-shirt, a



The *Mazhifu* deity features in this year's Vegetarian Festival.

souvenir medal, free food and drinks, and the chance to enter lucky draws to win air tickets, hotel-stay vouchers, restaurant and bar vouchers, running gear and more.

The run starts in the early morning, 4 am, from the Nong Harn at Karon and goes along the beach road right up to Kata Noi Beach and Kata View Point.

For further information contact K. Jeerasak or K. Jaspal at Tel: 076-333362, Email: info@katakaron.com or check the website at www.katakaron.com

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On the menu



with
Andy Johnstone

Villa Royale

Finding myself at a loose end for another evening, I don my best bib and tucker while picking up the gauntlet – not easy to do both together – and head for the sunny side of the street.

The sunny-sided street happens to be in Kata, and leads directly to Mom Tri's Villa Royale. And just as well it's sunny – metaphorically speaking – for I have had a foul day.

I may be in high dudgeon, but I am also in a fast car and it does not take long to drive through the red mist.

I am greeted courteously by the Villa Royale reception staff in their dapper black uniforms and whisked – no, that implies haste – I am *glided* through the exquisite architecture to my table. My initial thought is that nighttime doesn't do the place justice, that there is too much to see here.

That's wrong, of course. Nighttime, with carefully-placed lighting, brings a new dimension to the architecture, the artwork, even the trees. The lighting picks out the details, bringing them into sharper relief than under natural light.

I sip my vodka martini, entertaining for a moment the notion that this is Casino Royale, not Villa Royale.

I check my watch. No, not because I am late but because my dining companion (DC) is. I decide to give the DC a little more time – say, 30 seconds or so – to arrive before firing a telephonic broadside.



Clockwise from above: aubergine starter, lamb spaghetti, rock lobster thermidor, and chocolate cake.



TRI'S COMPANY

The DC claims "illness" and will not be joining me. I suspect – at my most charitable – a general malaise, perhaps debility or, more likely, LMF (lack of moral fiber).

I react as one should in these circumstances – by wishing a speedy recovery while tacitly praying for a squad of squirrels to attack, and by demonstrating my frustration with the merest, almost indiscernible, tic of my left eyelid.

While I do quite like my own company, I am undesirous of being Billy No Mates tonight, even though the prospect of ordering food and booze for two and scoffing and quaffing the lot is really rather attractive.

Just as I'm planning what to order for my non-existent DC, Donna Tudge – who seems to do more or less everything at Mom Tri's Boathouse and VR, appears and asks when my companion will be arriving.

She is suitably sympathetic, and accepts my entreaty to join me for dinner.

Wasting no time, we order wine, opting to sample a number

of Villa Royale's house selection rather than just one bottle.

We kick off with a corker, a Kiwi Giesen Sauvignon Blanc 2002 at 380 baht a glass or 1,900 baht a bottle. This, I am told, is one of the wines that everybody goes for at Villa Royale, and it is easy to understand why. It's desert-dry, classy and oh-so-easy. The hint of apples remains pleasantly in the mouth.

Spoiled for choice with the menu, I select the aubergine roll (280 baht) for my starter while Donna almost follows suit by choosing an aubergine salad (240 baht). I ponder, "Will a roll be worth the extra 40 baht?"

As I begin to eat, I detect a look from Donna that asks if I am impressed. I send one back that says I am. I have fairly simple tastes, truth be known, and what could be simpler than aubergine, pine nuts, feta cheese and an apricot chutney?

It is outrageously good; the aubergine – served as a small column at each corner of the plate – is sweet and tender. The taste of this is wonderfully counter-

pointed by the slightly tangy, salty flavor of the feta, while the creamy texture of the cheese contrasts with the crunchiness of the pine nuts.

According to Homer, the Cyclops (and shepherd) Polyphemus was the first cheese manufacturer. It's a great story, and I suggest you keep an eye out or you may well myth it.

By this time, I have begun a new wine, Santa Alicia Reserve, Chardonnay from Chile at 300 baht a glass/1,500 baht a bottle. By turns juicy and with hints of mint, citrus fruits and flowers, it accompanies both my starter and my mood perfectly.

Pan-fried lamb chops with rosemary, garlic and a spicy spaghetti (790 baht) is almost too easy to choose as my main course, and I am not disappointed by the rich, sweet meat or the piquant pasta. That said, looking at Donna's rock lobster thermidor (hands up anyone who knows the origin of the thermidor sauce) generates an envious look.

Donna generously allows me a mouthful of her main course

with a smile that says, "I know you're going to like this." Utterly decadent in taste, a hint of brandy from the rich sauce remains, and few words can express how divine it is. At 700 baht a pop, it will be my choice the next time I dine here, perhaps as a member of Mom Tri's Gourmet Supper Club.

And should I be feeling flush, I will demand an entire bottle of the Meursault Tillets Verget, a sublime wine with aromas of orange and a smattering of tropical fruits.

Donna tells me that this wine (780 baht a glass/3,900 baht a bottle) is almost a prerequisite for eating at Villa Royale. Undoubtedly special, it trumps the other wines tonight.

Feeling rather adventurous when the dessert menu makes its appearance, I have little hesitation in choosing crème brûlée (200 baht), which is one of the desserts I use as a benchmark by which to judge an entire restaurant.

But this is no ordinary crème brûlée; it is flavored with – what else? – jasmine tea. The taste is curiously exotic and welcomingly familiar, rich and light at the same time, and the wafer-thin topping of caramelized sugar crackles tantalizingly on the tongue.

My dessert confirms, as if necessary, my thoughts about Villa Royale: sumptuous without being stuffy, elegant without being fussy, adventurous without being reckless.

Donna, meanwhile, has gone for a robust melting chocolate cake with green tea ice cream (240 baht), a combination that has me looking askance. And then I taste it, and immediately berate myself for having any doubts – for the combination works like a charm.

Too soon it is time to go after an evening of exemplary food and wine, although the lure of Villa Royale will, like a siren, call me back.

Mom Tri's Villa Royale, Kata Noi Rd, Kata Beach, Phuket, 831000. Tel: 076-330015; Email: info@villaroyalephuket.com or visit www.villaroyalephuket.com

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BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

The past few years have been somewhat difficult for DaimlerChrysler: its share price lost more than half its value after the takeover by the German company of its American counterpart in 1998; the Smart brand continues to lose money; quality problems at Mercedes-Benz resulted in the recall of 1.3 million vehicles; and, more recently, the thorny question of succession arose with chairman Jürgen Schrempp out and Chrysler boss Dieter Zetsche made head of the company.

But one of the major conundrums facing DaimlerChrysler was how to better its top-of-the-range Mercedes-Benz, the hugely successful S-Class. Introduced in 1998, the S-Class has become the sedan of choice for heads of state, business leaders and even major criminals. It lends itself to armor-plating and rocket-propelled grenade protection, and also has a ubiquitous presence even in far-flung, Third World countries.

PLANNING

Launched this month at the important Frankfurt Motor Show, the 2006 S-Class demonstrates just how much thought and planning has gone into the new car. A host of innovative safety features has been included in a vehicle that almost thinks for itself when it comes to accident avoidance.

The brake-assist system, pioneered on Mercedes-Benz cars but now adopted by many luxury manufacturers, has been taken one step further with the adoption of an integrated radar system that registers vehicles ahead and gives a warning if the gap is too small or the closing speed too high.

If a collision is imminent, "Brake Assist Plus" calculates the ideal braking distance and makes this available immediately, even if the driver applies too little pedal pressure to the brakes. While all this is going on the brake lights flash to alert following traffic.

To complement the sophisticated braking set-up, Mercedes-Benz has come up with an occupant protection device that recognizes potential accident situations and tenses the front seat belts as a precaution, while inflating air cushions in the seats to support the driver and passengers.

The system also closes all the windows, although this feature is likely to be redundant in Thailand's climate.

An option is the remarkable Distronic proximity control apparatus which operates between speeds of zero and 200kmh, maintaining a safe distance between the car and the traffic ahead. It automatically brakes the sedan to

a standstill if necessary and accelerates back up to speed when traffic permits. The same radar

is used for the park assist which warns the driver of an impending bump.

The new S-Class is larger than its predecessor in all dimensions, offering more interior space and a larger trunk.

Air suspension is standard on all models, but now, at the touch of a button, the driver can select sport or comfort mode.

In sport mode and at speeds higher than 120kmh the suspension automatically lowers by 20 millimeters to improve handling, aerodynamics and fuel consumption.

The latest S-Class will be available in some markets in 2006 as a diesel-electric hybrid, an advanced system developed in conjunction with General Motors. Combining a V8 CDI diesel motor with twin electric motors, it delivers a maximum of 340bhp (241kW), a new record for a car with hybrid systems.

More conventional engines are currently on offer, beginning

with a 3.5-liter V6; a new eight-cylinder unit with a mighty torque figure of 530 Newton meters, on tap from just 2,800 rpm; a reworked V12 motor; and a new V6 CDI direct-injection diesel engine which will come on stream in early 2006. All V6 and V8 models are fitted with Mercedes' unique seven-speed automatic transmission.

The previous S-Class, which has been repeatedly voted Best Car in the World in polls, was clearly going to be a hard act to follow. Space prevents a more detailed account of the new car, but suffice it to say, Mercedes-Benz engineers in Germany have come up with something that will endure another seven years – and which will undoubtedly again be a top seller in the luxury segment. DaimlerChrysler can breathe a little easier for now.

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



New S-Class best car in the world?



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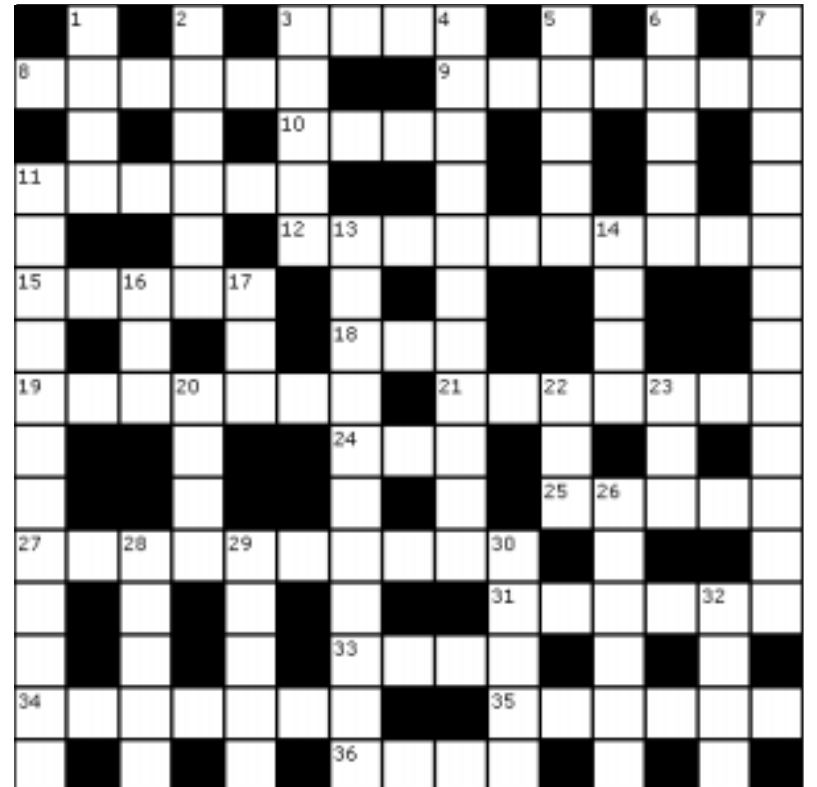
3				6		8	5
1	7		9			2	
		6		1	5	3	
7		1	4		3		5
		4			2		
	2		8		1	6	3
		3	5	8		7	
	5				2		1
9	4		1				2

The principle of Sudoku is very simple: each row, each column and each "box" of nine squares within the puzzle must contain all the numbers from 1 to 9 with, naturally, no repetitions. Guess if you will, but each Sudoku puzzle can be solved using logic alone. Beware: there is only one solution to this puzzle, which is on page 20.

The Cryptic Crossword

ACROSS

3. She's a complainer, we hear. (4)
8. Delete a Greek letter from the oracle. (6)
9. William has one charged particle – but that's a lot. (7)
10. North African found on a Yorkshire hilltop? (4)
11. Bomb atoll, in two pieces. (6)
12. Lend a relic cracked in a fairytale. (10)
15. On a liner, Mr Guevara is game. (5)
18. Clue: "Not left!" for actor's entry. (3)
19. Tool for online shopper or one who's "just looking". (7)
21. Liza gives direction to Milli. (7)
24. "You!" said the sheep. (3)
25. Sheriff's boys pose around the bend. (5)
27. Not eaten, it bothered the queen. (10)
31. Slice of tart is treat for painter. (6)
33. Drinks to take the Mickey, so to speak. (4)
34. Is Little Germany in this country? (7)
35. No! Yes! – five confused diplomats. (6)



Compiled by Tortuus. © 2005

36. Drinks rounds. (4)

DOWN

1. Shop for a delicate part. (4)
2. Greenflies hid in parts of apse. (6)
3. Copy 1,001 twice, plus 100. (5)

4. Condensing social worker constrains bridge – and me. (11)
5. Pilot's pamphlet. (5)
6. Virgil has no right to watch. (5)
7. Stubborn in transit, holding information. (12)
11. Piece of luck in backing tough. (12)
13. Scatter earl in cement, little by little. (11)
14. Fencing implement gives exercise in two ways. (4)
16. Nothing follows two notes – Me! Me! (3)
17. Call for help from steamer outside the circle. (3)
20. Western Australian firm in Texan town. (4)
22. Bite a drink. (3)
23. The Spanish in glossary. (3)
26. Covet a strange set of notes. (6)
28. Gnat returns to ring to dance. (5)
29. Nitre compound is non-reactive. (5)
30. Reduces tension, as in directions. (5)
32. Initially, starts out yielding arable bean. (4)

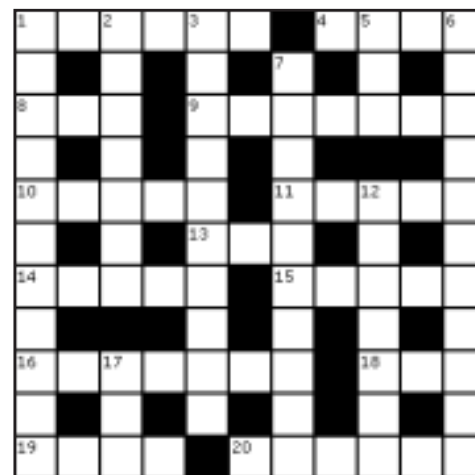
Solution on page 20

Solution on page 20

Quick Crossword

ACROSS

1. Part of a jacket.
4. 10 baht, for example.
8. Not him.
9. Piece of clothing.
10. Eight-piece combo.
11. Final resting place?
13. Fire residue.
14. Leisure craft.
15. The sum.
16. Chase and catch (3,4).
18. Monk's female equivalent.
19. Time to make good buys.
20. Principles.



DOWN

1. Scholarly playgrounds.
2. Unpredictable.
3. Greenery.
5. One more than 17 dn.
6. The Low Countries.



Scribble Space

The Monster Quiz

1. Which author won the 1997 Booker Prize with a novel about a diminutive deity?
2. Who is the only author to have won the prize twice in the past 20 years?
3. Which country uses the Lek as its unit of currency?
4. What is a hare's home called?
5. What is the correct term for a baby dragonfly?
6. What is the fifth letter of the Greek alphabet?
7. By what name is Paul Hewson better known?
8. Which musical films were Oscar winners in 1964 and 1965?
9. What was Superwoman's real name?
10. What was the Beatles' first single called?
11. In *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, who plays Tara Maclay?
12. Which band, in 1991, released the album *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*?
13. No 6 John Arne Riise plays for which English Premiership football team?
14. Which King of the Franks died September 24, 768?
15. Who succeeded him in 771?
16. Mafia Island can be found in which body of water?
17. The "Articles of the Barons", sealed by King John of England in 1215, is more commonly known as what?
18. Before his acting career took off, what was Steve Buscemi's job?
19. Which US states are directly to the north and west of Washington State?
20. What is the correct term for a wall at the end of the garden that is designed to be invisible?

Answers on page 20

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SOLUTIONS AND ANSWERS. Due to pleas from readers for instant gratification, all solutions and answers will be published in the same issue as the puzzles. This week, therefore, we publish solutions for last week *and* this week.

The Cryptic Crossword

Solution to puzzle of September 17

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

Solution to this week's puzzle

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

su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Solution to puzzle of Sept 17

8	2	6	7	5	3	1	9	4
7	1	3	8	4	9	5	6	2
4	5	9	2	1	6	3	8	7
6	7	5	3	9	4	2	1	8
2	8	1	6	7	5	4	3	9
9	3	4	1	8	2	7	5	6
3	6	7	5	2	8	9	4	1
1	9	8	4	3	7	6	2	5
5	4	2	9	6	1	8	7	3

Solution to this week's puzzle

3	9	2	7	4	6	1	8	5
1	7	5	9	3	8	4	2	6
4	8	6	2	1	5	3	9	7
7	6	1	4	2	3	9	5	8
8	3	4	6	5	9	2	7	1
5	2	9	8	7	1	6	4	3
2	1	3	5	8	4	7	6	9
6	5	7	3	9	2	8	1	4
9	4	8	1	6	7	5	3	2

Quick Crossword

Solution to puzzle of Sept 17

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

Solution to this week's puzzle

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

Brain Buster!! Monster Quiz

Answers to quiz of Sept 17

1. A cat; 2. Photography; 3. Sir Stirling Moss and Damon Hill; 4. Mexico; 5. Coffee; 6. *The Tragedie of Richard the Third*; 7. 1866; 8. Bolivia; 9. 5%; 10. Newkirk; 11. *Three Men in a Boat*; 12. Montmorency; 13. Jerry Hall; 14. *Obsession*; 15. They were all invented by women; 16. Honey; 17. Malta; 18. Sub umbra florio (Flourish under the shade); 19. In 1440, by Henry VI of England; 20. Six.

Answers to this week's quiz

1. Arundhati Roy with *The God of Small Things*; 2. Peter Carey; 3. Albania; 4. A form; 5. A nymph; 6. Epsilon; 7. Bono; 8. *My Fair Lady* and *The Sound of Music*; 9. Linda Lee Danvers; 10. *My Bonnie*; 11. Amber Benson; 12. Red Hot Chili Peppers; 13. Liverpool FC; 14. Pippin the Younger; 15. Pippin the Younger; 16. The Indian Ocean; 17. Magna Carta; 18. New York City firefighter; 19. None. Canada is due north, the Pacific Ocean due west; 20. Ha-ha.

EZ TRIVIA ANSWERS

Sept 17: 1. Mule; 2. 193; 3. United Kingdom; 4. A signet; 5. A giraffe; 6. Santiago de Chile; or just plain Santiago; 7. Take That; 8. Alexander Graham Bell; 9. *The Daily Prophet*; 10. Tyrannosaurus Rex.

This Week: 1. Tin; 2. Maple leaf; 3. Santa's plait; 8. Umbrella; 9. 7; 10. A receipt.

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 25 islands in the Phuket-Krabi-Phang Nga area. The names may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. See if you can find more than your family or friends. Score: 15 or more, good; 20 or more, very good; 25 or more, excellent.

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

Sorry, no solution can be published for this. You're on your own.

EZ TRIVIA QUIZ

1. What metal, with the designation Sn on the periodic table of elements, was once mined in great quantities on Phuket?
2. What kind of leaf appears on the Canadian National Flag?
3. What was the name of the Simpsons' dog?
4. What did Little Cat Z have under his hat in *The Cat In The Hat Comes Back*?
5. What do we call molten rock when it is still under the ground?
6. What is the name of the lake that flooded New Orleans?
7. What does RSVP stand for?
8. Joke: What can go up a chimney down, but can't go down a chimney up?
9. How many children are there on the back of a 100-baht note?
10. What do you call the small piece of paper a shop gives you after you buy something?

Answers on this page – don't peek

Brain Buster!!

Mae is preparing breakfast for her three sons, Art, Boon and Chai. Each boy wants her to toast one slice of bread for him. The family's toaster holds two slices of bread but toasts only one side at a time.

The person who toasts bread has to toast one side of a slice of bread, take out the slice, turn it over, and put it back in the toaster to toast the other side. It takes exactly one minute to toast one side of a piece of bread, turn it over and put it back in the toaster.

Mae has figured out how to toast three slices on both sides in only three minutes. How does she do it?

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The splendid battling Bettas

Siamese Fighting Fish have long been a feature of home aquariums. I have never kept them, but I can watch them to my heart's content as they swim in the little klong that runs just beyond our patio.

Siamese Fighting Fish are known by the scientific name *Betta splendens*. They are found throughout Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and parts of China. Members of the family *Belontiidae*, they are often referred to by aquarium owners simply as Bettas, after the genus to which they belong.

Bettas may be blue, purple, red or white, and have large diaphanous fins that wave in the current. These colorful fish thrive in warm fresh water and particularly like rice paddies and shallow ponds. They generally grow to seven or eight centimeters in length, but genetic mutations have created giant Bettas that can grow as large as 18 centimeters.

Males stake out separate territories. Two males will fight until one becomes submissive; occasionally, they fight to the death if confined to the same area, such as in an aquarium.

Females are less aggressive than males. They do fight once in a while, nipping each other's fins, but rarely do they inflict serious wounds.

Their fins are considerably shorter and their colors are not quite as bright as on the males. However, a breeding female in good condition may display horizontal

stripes not found in males.

In the wild, they eat live food, mainly insects such as mosquito larvae. In captivity, they will also eat flake fish food and some frozen food.

People capture or buy Bettas, but typically make the mistake of keeping them in a small bowl, where they do not survive for long. In an appropriate environment, such as an aquarium containing at least four liters of water and only one male, Bettas will typically live for two to three years.

Their water must be kept warm – between 24° and 26° Celsius. If the temperature drops below 22°, the fish become lethargic and soon die.

Siamese Fighting Fish have a special respiratory organ that allows them to



EARTH WATCH

By Robert Cogen

breathe air from the surface of the water in addition to the oxygen absorbed through their gills. This unusual ability also means that Bettas must have access to the surface to get enough oxygen. They need as much oxygen in total as other fish but, thanks to this ability, they can get along in water that has less dissolved oxygen.

Bettas lay eggs in bubble nests which are constructed by a male when he is ready to breed. Bettas prefer to breed in subdued light. Bright sunlight or arti-

ficial light (shining into an aquarium) inhibits courtship and breeding.

The male and female circle each other over the nest. Their colors may deepen and vertical stripes appear. The

male may nip at the female; she may lose some scales and suffer minor damage to her fins. The female rolls onto her back and the male couples with her, fertilizing the eggs as they are produced.

The male then pushes or uses his mouth to squirt the eggs into the nest. He tends the nest and the eggs. In an aquarium, it is a good idea to remove the female after she lays her eggs, because the male may attack her while protecting the young.

After the eggs hatch, the young fry hang in the water tails down and feed off the yolk for a day or two. Once they become free-swimming, the father should be removed to keep him from eating them. At this point, if you are keeping them in an aquarium, you should feed the babies krill or other small bits of baby fish food, twice a day.

Bettas have several natural enemies. Catfish and other larger predatory fish eat them, as do snakes, particularly cobras and water snakes, large toads and frogs. Egrets and herons stalk through our pond and along the klong, preying on all manner of water creatures including Bettas.

I particularly like watching this beautiful species in the wild, feeding, swimming surfacing to breathe, and fighting to maintain their territory.

Robert Cogen is a well known California lawyer and a broadly experienced naturalist with a degree in zoology. E-mail: indpth@asis.com

Improved sanitation only solution to strays

The Mid Road Dog Shelter in Thalang hit the front page yet again two weeks ago, this time concerning a debate over whether it should close or not. In its editorial, the *Gazette* called for the pound to be closed.

Top Dog does not believe that this is going to happen, which is unfortunate. One obvious problem would be what to do with the dogs that are there now.

In the same issue of the paper, Dr Sunart Wongchawalit, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office, wrote that they would be returned to where they came from, but nobody knows where that was, as the animals are not tagged or chipped.

In the "First Person" column, Dr Sunart goes on to defend the pound. But it is hard to take much of what he says seriously, particularly when only a few weeks ago he announced that it had run out of food and money.

He refers to the pound as a shelter. This conjures up images of a refuge, yet anyone taking up his offer to visit the place will find it more akin to a concentra-

In the Middle Ages in Europe, cat pogroms helped to accelerate the spread of black rats whose fleas carried bubonic plague.

tion camp. About 300 dogs are housed there, and many more have died from disease or injury.

Dogs have often been seen dead on the road, having escaped, because there were gaps in the fence through which small dogs could crawl, and the fences were also low enough for large dogs to leap over them.

Dr Sunart talks of the facility being suitable for 2,000 animals, and at a public meeting last year he announced he would put every stray dog [in Phuket] there. The pound's current manager has worked hard to improve conditions, but is constantly frustrated.

Dr Sunart is correct in saying that the decision as to whether to close the pound or not is one for the Governor to take, not foreigners. But there is no loss of face in learning from the experiences of others.

The fact is that no incarceration or extermination program anywhere in the world, directed at any fast-breeding mammal species has ever achieved more than short-term results.

Two ecological laws work against successful extermination. First, Nature abhors a vacuum: clear a habitat by killing the occupants and something else will promptly fill it.

Second, mammals raise litters that vary in size according to food availability. Lowering food competition accelerates the fecundity of the surviving population, meaning larger litters are born and that more offspring in each litter survive.

What usually happens is that exterminating the mammals merely results in proliferation of their major prey species, such as

mice and rats, followed by reoccupation of the habitat by more of the same species that were just removed, moving in from neighboring areas.

Anybody doubting this should visit Wat Cherg Talay or Saphan Hin, or any of the wats in Phuket which were cleared of dogs to populate the pound. In every location there are as many dogs as before, if not more.

If nothing had been done the population would not have increased, because most of the dogs that were removed had already been sterilized.

NEW YORK EXAMPLE

The New York City animal control statistics offer an excellent long-term illustration. From 1895, when records were first kept, until 1962, no US city exterminated strays more vigorously.

Yet the number of animals killed rose every year, topping 100,000 for the first time in 1908 (after 75 years of killing strays and 13 years of record keeping). The numbers continued to rise in New York every year, peaking at 250,000 in 1962 and remaining at that level until 1966.

In 1957, Friends of Animals and other charities began high-volume sterilization surgery in and around New York City. After 10 years it was fixing enough animals each year to stop the growth in the number of strays.

From 1967 through 1995, the number of animals killed fell every year, hitting a low in 1995 of 40,000.



By Top Dog

Street dog and feral cat populations can be eliminated – by sterilizing them, and allowing them to hold their habitat with diminished reproductive capacity while addressing the conditions that permit them to proliferate.

RAT EXPLOSION

In the long run, the only really effective way to eliminate street dogs and cats is to eliminate their food sources by improving public sanitation, getting rid of uncovered garbage dumps.

Unless this is done what will result is an even greater problem – an explosion of the rat population. History shows us what can happen then. In the Middle Ages in Europe, cat pogroms helped to accelerate the spread of black rats whose fleas carried bubonic

plague. Even after the Black Death killed a third of the population of Europe, the error of trying to exterminate cats was not understood, and the civic officials of London repeated the same mistake about 300 years later.

I would agree with Dr Sunart's plea for more cooperation between foreigners and locals in order to address the problem, but sniping at the Soi Dog Foundation – which is doing more than anybody to address the problem seriously – is not going to help.

Leave them and PAWS to sterilize the animals – more than 5,000 already this year – and in the meantime let the government concentrate on clearing up the garbage problem. Maybe then Phuket will be freed of unwanted dogs and cats.

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Entertaining ride with the Bard of Avon

Stephen Greenblatt, editor of *The Norton Shakespeare* and author of *Hamlet in Purgatory*, is one of the great Shakespearean scholars. He is University Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University, but his prose is blessedly free of the arch and stuffy rhetoric of run-of-the-mill academics. He tackles his subject – the secret life of William Shakespeare – with vigor.

Will in the World (W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2004, 430 pp) is subtitled *How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*. It's a daring and imaginative attempt to discover how a glove-maker's son from Stratford-on-Avon rose

to become the toast of the London theater and the towering giant of English literature.

It's a great paradox that we know almost nothing of the author of so many masterful plays and poems. He left behind not a single letter, anecdotal tales of his life are rare, and the only evidence of his handwriting is a few pages of a play, *Sir Thomas More*, later aborted.

Yet Greenblatt is undaunted. Marshalling prodigious historical scholarship with an encyclopedic knowledge of the entire Shakespearean canon, Greenblatt presents a plausible portrait of the playwright – with what degree of accuracy we will never know, although it's a very entertaining ride.

Greenblatt presents a good case that a teenage Shakespeare was first employed as a teacher in the household of a hugely wealthy Catholic landowner in Lancashire, Alexander Hoghton, who also supported a theater company comprised of the very actors – Will Kempe, Thomas Pope, John Heminges – who would later become Shakespeare's colleagues in London. In his last will and testament, Hoghton

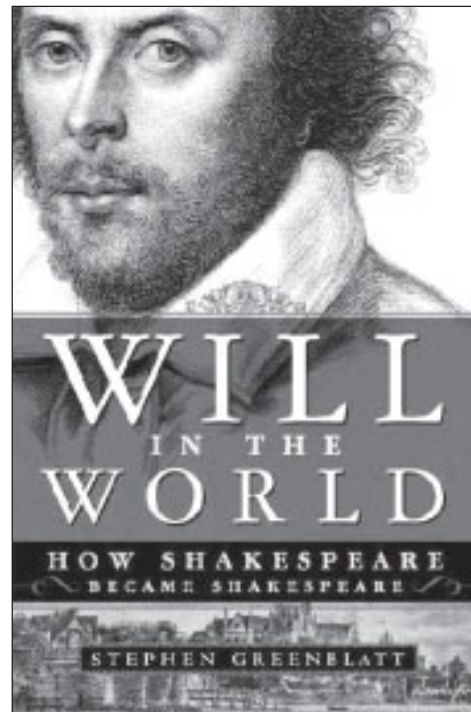
wills musical instruments and stage costumes of a household retainer named "William Shakespeare", which, given the vagaries of spelling at the time, may well be the future playwright.

Returning to Stratford-on-Avon, 18-year-old Will Shakespeare entered into marriage with 26-year-old Anne Hathaway, who was three months pregnant. After squiring three children,

Shakespeare made his escape to London, probably with a traveling theatrical troupe. The point is that he was no rube when he entered London, but was skilled in high diction, poetry, fencing, music and dancing – all the trappings of a gentleman. He was soon competing with the "university wits" from Cambridge and Oxford who then ruled the stage.

Greenblatt goes on to draw the historical background to Shakespeare's rise. In what circumstances did that amazing group of Elizabethan playwrights – Marlowe, Jonson, Kyd, Nashe, Watson, Peele – come to be?

"In late-sixteenth-century London those circumstances included the phenomenal growth of the urban population, the emergence of public theaters, and the existence of a competitive market for new plays. They included too an impressive, widespread growth in literacy; an educational system that trained its students to be highly sensitive to rhetorical effects; a social and political taste for elaborate display; a religious culture that compelled parishioners to listen to long, complex sermons, and a vibrant, restless intellectual culture."



Shakespeare also turned his hand to poetry under the patronage of various aristocrats, especially at times when the theaters were closed under threat of bubonic plague. Greenblatt makes a convincing case that the young man to whom Shakespeare addressed his early love sonnets was Henry Wriothesley, the then 3rd Earl of Southampton. The long-haired effeminate earl was disinclined to marry, prompting concerned family members to

pay Shakespeare to write sonnets to the earl in favor of marriage. Shakespeare became smitten instead.

One reason for Shakespeare's rise to pre-eminence among his playwright peers was simple longevity. His was a prudent life compared to those of his riotous colleagues. His greatest rival, Christopher Marlowe, died at the age of 29 in a tavern brawl. But another was a deepening of his talent following the death of his son Hamnet and the writing of his masterpiece *Hamlet* in 1600, at the age of 36. Here Greenblatt shows his mettle as a literary critic:

"Tearing away the structure of superficial meanings, he fashioned an inner structure through the resonant echoing of key terms, the subtle development of images, the brilliant orchestration of scenes, the complex unfolding of ideas, the intertwining of parallel plots, the uncovering of psychological obsessions."

In the space of three years, Shakespeare followed with *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, for which all lovers of the English language remain eternally grateful.

In The Stars

by Isla Star

What the heavens have in store for you

LIBRA (September 24 – October 23): You are not programmed to enjoy confrontations, but the stage is set for a heated discussion this week. As long as you stick to the facts that you know to be true, the stars will be on your side. It is high time that you became more assertive. On Sunday, a meeting of the minds with Scorpio can lead to a romantic attraction. If you are celebrating a birthday, drop loud hints regarding suitable gifts.

SCORPIO (October 24 – November 22): Those born under the sign of Scorpio can look forward to a challenging week. The final days of September should see you taking great strides forward to accomplish a long-term dream, but be prepared to surrender free time. Where romance is concerned, a previously cloudy situation suddenly becomes crystal clear. Single Scorpions could find their status gradually changing during the next few weeks. Wear crimson to make a lasting impression.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23 – December 21): Suppressed feelings of resentment start to rise to the surface this week. If you feel

that your kindness has been taken advantage of recently, it is time to start laying down some ground rules. Where business is concerned, the most direct path up the mountain is not necessarily going to take you to the top more quickly. A romantic let-down has a silver lining that you will see later on.

CAPRICORN (December 22 – January 20): Some twists and turns are forecast for you this week. As the month of September draws to a close, you will be forced to realize that at least one plan is not as viable as you hoped it would be. Aries has some very practical advice to offer, but Scorpio's ideas are banana pie in the sky. Missing pieces of a romantic puzzle will come to light this weekend. Wear sunflower yellow to encourage happiness.

AQUARIUS (January 21 – February 19): Your finances are looking a little shaky. An investment you recently made has not quite produced the returns that were promised, but there is still potential for improvement. A blast from your romantic past is about to make a surprise appearance that will not be appreciated by every-

one. This will be a sensitive situation and you should take care not to make ambiguous remarks. The number eight looks promising next Thursday.

PISCES (February 20 – March 20): Your tendency to live in the past could land you in deep water this week. Focus on the here-and-now and start planning more for the future. On Tuesday or Wednesday, be on the look-out for financial mistakes. Monday is your best day for fixing important appointments; the stars will provide an auspicious atmosphere for finalizing business deals. Leo is becoming interested and could pounce when you least expect it.

ARIES (March 21 – April 20): Financial fluctuations begin to stabilize during the final week of September. Money will flow more in your direction next month and you should start to think about adopting a savings plan. Personal relationships also begin to go more smoothly, but be aware of a snake-in-the-grass who is jealous of your luck in love. If you are single, you will benefit from a change of social scene. The number three is auspicious next Thursday.

TAURUS (April 21 – May 21): The sky is the limit for those of you who would like to channel their creative talents into money-making endeavors. From now until the end of the year, you would be foolish not to take advantage of the strong support the stars will offer. Ask Capricorn for advice on how to market your ideas. Romance is starting to simmer gently; do not rock the boat by trying to rush things. Wear emerald green to attract interest.

GEMINI (May 22 – June 21): Those of you who are ready to take a walk on the wild side should enjoy the week ahead. If you are unattached, this is the perfect atmosphere in which to really appreciate your freedom. Those in a committed relationship are advised to include their partner in social outings. Pisces' flirtatious manner could be hard to resist. Tuesday is the best day to tackle a tedious financial discussion.

CANCER (June 22 – July 23): Do not be fooled into thinking that any money you have been making is just a drop in the ocean. This week, you will realize that you are better off than expected. There are bonuses in the pipeline,

too, but you will not learn details until later in the year. Where romance is concerned, you won't be surprised to find out that you are not the only crab on the beach.

LEO (July 24 – August 22): Cosmic forces are working hard on your behalf during the coming days. If you have been waiting for the right opportunity to head off in a fresh direction work-wise, you will receive good news. Grab this iron while it is hot, because if you do not, someone else will. After Monday, you will be caught up in a whirlwind of activity relating to all areas of life. Wear the color orange to encourage extra energy.

VIRGO (August 23 – September 23): You should start the week feeling refreshed. After the hectic atmosphere lately, you will immediately notice a calming wind of change in the air. Give party-animal friends a wide berth for the time being to avoid disturbing your mellower mood. There are plenty of ways of having fun without waking up hung over. Libra can help you find ways to encourage healthy relaxation. Wear white to purify your thoughts.

Sex and the single island

By way of introduction we have the definitive definition from Dr Pseud on the sex life of islands at fitnezz.net/link.asp?TOPIC_ID=106&view=lasttopic. Read on...

"What makes an island sexy? Cut off from the mainland, these are places where inhibitions are shed as easily as sandals. There is a sense of freedom, of independence, of being beyond the bounds of everyday life, which is chief among an island's attractions.

"Shoes become optional. Alarm clocks don't exist. Food tastes better. People come here to leave behind their normal cares and worries, allowing themselves to dive into a world of sybaritic pleasures.

BRONZED BODIES

"Besides their natural beauty, these islands offer plenty in the way of man-made fun: nightclubs that swing until daylight, magnificent yachts, beautiful people, plentiful champagne, decadently indulgent resorts and charming villages filled with chic shops and local restaurants.

"Another great attraction is that islands offer 360 degrees of shoreline. Ocean, beach, cool breezes and bronzed bodies are never more than a short drive away. If you want seclusion, there are usually plenty of empty stretches of sand. If you are feeling more social, just follow the noise.

"During the season, depending on which hemisphere and month you choose, parties seem to occur on a 24-hour basis. What also adds to the sex

OUTSIDE IN

By Lis Kinswoman

After weeks of hard work and no play, Lis Kinswoman decided to go out and look for sex. On the Internet, that is. There has to be a positive and sexy side to Phuket's image, and she decided to find it for you. Enjoy.

appeal is a whiff of danger, or the forbidden."

Dr Pseud has a point, even if he drones on for far too long and is blissfully ignorant of the role alarm clocks play in the life of us mere island mortals.

And the amount of "sybaritic pleasure" Lis gets from commuting daily through grinning road madness, only to bash a computer

keyboard for eight hours a go, is anyone's guess.

No matter; let's manfully plough on in our quest for sexy Phuket, shall we?

Pure porcine passion: "The tour organisers had generously organised drinks and food at a bar called 'who cares' or was it 'I can't recall'?"

"Anyway it was the only bar in Soi Sea Dragon with no hostesses. In fact the only female in the bar was armed with a big wooden spoon and she was not afraid to use it.

"Her mission (and she chose to accept it) was, from 8.00PM onwards, to prevent 20 or so hungry Pigs from taking food from the buffet until 10.00 PM when it was to be officially served." – potbellies.org/Tours/PastTours/MainToursPhuket03.htm

Hmm. This seems a far cry from Dr Pseud's "nightclubs that swing until daylight" and "beautiful people" with "plentiful champagne". Maybe a look elsewhere would help.

Even the fish are sexy: Let's have a word from Dr Travel: "And yes, islands are sexy. Not only are inhibitions shed, so are clothes. Shoes become an afterthought, and tanned skin is proudly displayed. On some islands, in fact, clothes become purely optional, and bikinis seem modest.

"Then there is the nightlife. During the high season, the beautiful people – young and old – drawn to an island's beaches and blue water, often behave as though life is so marvelous they don't want it to end. They carry on late into the night, whether at a pulsating nightclub or a local taverna.

"For people who prefer quieter evenings, there are nights filled with fish newly caught by local fisherman, bottles of honest wine and skies full of stars. What could be sexier than that?" – lists.topica.com/lists/voyages/read/message.html?mid=811385260

Clothes, my good doctor, are not "optional" on this island; not unless you fancy a tango with the

tamruat. And you should see Lis in a string bikini.

Anyone of a reasonably inquisitive mind would ask who else is going to catch fish if the "local fisherman" isn't going to, and why only one? Still, "inhibitions shed"? "Tanned skin proudly displayed"? That sounds like Phuket to a tee, right?

Wrong.

"The Culture Ministry will ban spaghetti-strap tank tops and hot pants in the upcoming Songkran [Thai New Year] celebrations – despite protests from young women. 'Wear a simple sarong,' Culture Minister Uraiwan Thienthong said yesterday.

HARASSMENT

"Uraiwan will seek cooperation from major agencies to enforce the ban in all areas popular for Songkran water fights. 'Revealing clothes may induce sexual harassment,' she added.

"We will show foreign tourists what the real Songkran is all about. We need to get rid of some of the untoward practices we've seen in recent years,' the minister said." – thaivisa.com/index.php?514&backPID=10&tt_news=226, [quoting *The Nation* in 2003]

Cave-speak: On a last note I think we'll throw in Nean Derthal at phuket.as/guestbookread.php who manages to articulate in a nutshell what doctors Pseud and Travel were struggling to say. "I BEG UNA I DON THROW HERE OOOOOOOOOOOO PHUKET IS A VERY NICE PLACE TO BE ESPECIALLY THE SEXY LADIES."

Silly problems for Phuket

Phuket has been through some fairly difficult periods over the past few years. At the moment the island is still suffering the financial and physical scars from the tsunami, but there is a feeling that things are improving.

Generally it seems that things in Phuket are going along fairly comfortably at the moment. The headline in the *Phuket Gazette* last week – "D-Day Looming For Dog Pound" – suggests that there are not too many major dramas, which is a good thing for this island.

When affairs at the local dog pound make it onto the front page, it seems safe to assume that matters on the island are pottering along fairly comfortably. I'm taking this issue of the paper to the property exhibitions in London next week.

There are many serious issues that do need urgent attention, but the newspaper cannot write about the same things every week.

The fact that we are in the middle of the wet season and the island's main reservoir is dry and I don't have water at my office is an appalling situation (See page 1 – Editor). In another two

months or so, the wet season will be over and Phuket will be in deep trouble if the current lack of rain continues.

The rapidly increasing population, the growing construction industry and influx of tourists and workers is going to bring the island to crisis much faster than most people realise.

Ron Amos, a project manager based in Phuket, who was formerly with the giant Tyco Corp, points out, "Water tables – the underground water storage that nature provides – can easily be undermined on an island if the level gets too low. Many islands have suffered from salt water encroaching in to the fresh water tables as the levels got lower."

The cost of bringing water onto the island for the next five years will be phenomenal. It didn't have to be this way.

An international company offered to build a water storage system for Phuket that would have served the island for many years to come.

This company offered to build the system at a cost of about US\$80 million (about 3.2

billion baht), operate it for 30 years and sell the water to Phuket at a very reasonable rate, and then hand the whole thing over to the island at the end of the 30-year period.

This idea was quashed at the last moment by certain local influential people who had their own water supplies to sell.

Speaking of Phuket and its troubles, over the past year haven't we had enough bad press to last a century without having an airline that has the island's name on its aircraft but, number one, doesn't fly to Phuket and, number two, doesn't fly very well anywhere, it seems?

The planes have been locked up with mechanical problems, or locked up for not paying bills, or are hanging over the end of the runway at Tak airport.

All over TV programs and newspapers, the name Phuket appears again in a bad light. Call it anything else, Patpong Air or Nana Plaza Air, maybe.

On second thought, I like Patpong and Nana Plaza. We'll have to come up with something else.

Plan to build billion-baht Kathu-Patong tunnel

From the Phuket Gazette, issue of September 15, 2000

PHUKET: Local authorities are working on plans to build Phuket's first road tunnel, between Kathu and Patong, cutting out the twisting, dangerous road that currently links the two towns.

The municipalities at either end see advantages for everyone, says the Mayor of Patong, Pian Keesin, who is optimistic that the project will get the go-ahead.

Not least of these, he told the *Gazette*, will be a reduction in the number of road accidents. About 20,000 vehicles use the Patong hill road every day, and

there are 3,000 road accidents a year.

"It is going to be an improvement in many ways; in time, in lives, and in energy – because traveling through a tunnel will definitely consume less gasoline than going up the hill," Mayor

Pian explained.

"With the tourism boom of the past 20 years, Patong has become another city.

"The number of people living or working in Patong is continually increasing. We need better transportation."

THE TIME machine

News from the past

Local Bus Goes Belly Up

From the Phuket Gazette, issue of September 1995

TAMBON CHALONG- A local bus went belly up in the rain about 9:15 a.m. on August 10. The accident happened on a curve near the top of the hill (not far from the Hayashi Hotel) on Patak Rd, the road from Kata to Chalong Circle to Kata.

Several passengers, all women, suffered minor injuries.

Patak road has one of the highest accident rates in Phuket Province, and Phuket, in turn, has the highest accident rate among Thailand's seventy five provinces.

The Phuket Gazette
- Since 1994 -

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Water problem will not be solved by a few showers

Weather-related stories are always a gamble for a newspaper, especially a weekly publication like the *Phuket Gazette*.

On Friday last week the *Gazette* hit the streets with a front-page story about the shortage of water on the island. The following day rain arrived – a 36-hour torrent that would have had Noah racing for his hammer and saw.

So now we can all sit back and relax. More rain will surely come. There will be water in the faucets. The much-hoped-for tourists will be able to wash the sea salt from their bronzing bodies. The grass will grow green on the fairways of the island's five golf courses. No problem, right?

Wrong. Each year the problem worsens. Each year, there is much discussion about building new reservoirs and, more recently, a desalination plant. Yet, for one reason or another, nothing gets done, and we seem to be getting further from a long-term solution as the rapid pace of development increases demand.

Even if more reservoirs are built, are they the solution? Or do they simply put off the day when the island's water resources will, once again, be insufficient for its growing population?

There has been talk of building a pipeline from the Chieo Lan Reservoir in Surat Thani Province to feed growing demand, but one suspects that approval for the approximate 3.9-billion-baht cost of laying 190 kilometers of pipe will take a long time.

Indeed, if a decision is ever reached, the pipeline will probably cost a great deal more than that; if there is one certainty in the world of infrastructure, it is that prices never fall.

In addition, the longer a water pipe, the more wasteful it is likely to be. Pipes leak. Phuket City loses about 20% of the water in its distribution system to leakage. On a world scale, that is actually a low number, but it still means that 700,000 cubic meters of the water the city has drawn from the Bang Wad Reservoir this year simply disappeared into the ground. Another area that deserves attention is the amount of water lost to evaporation and the possibility of including covers into the design of any new reservoirs in order to minimize its effect.

Perhaps most importantly, legislation must be introduced requiring new buildings to have rainwater collection and storage systems.

While this would add to the cost of construction, it is worth remembering that rainwater is not only free – it's delivered right to your door.

– The Editor



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.

Bouquets – not brickbats – for the baht buses

I have often wondered why the baht buses that run between Patong Beach and Phuket City do not stop directly outside shopping centers like Big C and Tesco-Lotus.

It would make it easier for Thais and tourists alike to do their shopping.

Also, when are the airport buses going to extend their services to western beaches like Patong, Kalim and Karon?

Overall, I think the public buses are doing a great service.

Peter Kaufmann
Perth, Australia

Have farang become crime targets?

I have been living and working in Phuket for a few years now and I am beginning to see an increase in serious criminality over the past months.

Last week I was robbed after a night out. This was on the road between Patong and Kamala. This road has been left in the dark for a long time now, and so has the police box situated there.

Three people on two motorbikes came after me and one tried to kick me off my bike. As I slowed down going up the hill, I dropped my bike and the thieves took my phone and money. I was totally surprised, but feared for my life, too.

Because of this I didn't even think of taking their license plate numbers.

A friend's house was burgled that same night. The day

after that, another friend discovered a stranger in his house.

Foreigners really seem to be the target lately. Are the police going to do something soon, especially now we are getting closer to high season? Patrols on roads between the towns should be more frequent, even late at night.

The situation really worries me. It has also made me angry. If this happened to me again, I do not know what my reaction would be. Fight it off or just let it happen another time?

Many would choose the latter option. A life is worth much more, isn't it?

Remy
Kamala

Canine shelter gets a caning – again

In response to the First Person article in the *Gazette* of September 10, I would like to make the following comments to Sunart Wongchawalit:

The idea that 2,000 dogs can be decently accommodated on two rai of land is ludicrous. It would be kinder to (humanely) euthanize all these animals instead of considering such a plan.

The pound is certainly not a place that Phuket should be proud of. I have been there to assist at one of the sterilization clinics organized by the Soi Dog Foundation (SDF) and [found that] many of the animals were in need of medical treatment.

Representatives of the SDF have been to the pound on numerous occasions to supply food and take sick animals to vets in Phuket City.

A friend who visited the pound recently to assess condi-

tions found that female and male dogs (unsterilized) were confined together, thus ensuring that yet more unwanted dogs will be produced.

As practically all of the animals arrive sick, unvaccinated and unsterilized, illness is certain to spread fast.

Even if staff at the pound have maintained records of where dogs came from, which is doubtful, it would be impossible to put them back in their original places should the dog pound close.

Other dogs would have marked that territory in the meantime and would not accept new arrivals.

This leads me to the next point: until local people begin to take more responsibility for their pets by getting them sterilized and not regarding them as disposable commodities, there will always be strays in Phuket.

Thanks to the selfless work done by SDF and PAWS (the Phuket Animal Welfare Society), the [stray canine] population is decreasing, but some sort of public awareness campaign regarding the importance of sterilization must be implemented by the Thai authorities.

Elsa Fox
Rawai

Bravo Laguna!

The sign at the entrance to Laguna – “Phuket is Back” – is bold and positive, and gave me a sense of pride.

We are well into our recovery and should be set for a high season.

Well done Laguna!

Stephen O'Brien
Knight Frank Phuket

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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.

Letters

What price respect?

The topic of farang complaining about Thai ways and Thailand is a common one, whichever side of the fence you wish to be on.

However, it is less common to find farang complaining about the habits of other farang residents of Phuket. I am prompted to write about at least two businesses, which show less than reasonable respect for the island.

I noticed the first example about a week ago, while walking through Kamala.

A number of trees along the Kamala Beach Village Road had bright yellow plastic signs firmly nailed to them. These signs were advertising a housing development, apparently by Swedes for Swedes.

According to the website, obtained from the sign, the development is located in an area of Phuket island other than Kamala. Therefore, can I assume that these people have also put up signage elsewhere on the island?

The other business that has nailed signs to trees in Kamala is a Danish restaurant. I saw signs nailed up in the local park and on trees at various points along my drive between Surin and Kalim.

Now these may be nice people, doing good things in their respective communities.

But I'd like to ask the owners of these businesses one question: would you be allowed to stick signs on trees in Sweden or in Denmark?

No, you would be arrested and fined in about five minutes – and you would be ostracized by the communities you lived in.

So what makes you think you can come here to Thailand and do something you cannot do in your own country? Abusing nature and making it ugly to look at for other people?

Don McMahon
Kamala

Decadent Patong

I was in Patong Beach for a five-day holiday recently and noticed that it is becoming ever more decadent.

The situation with illegal jet-skis is dangerous, especially in high surf conditions when the drivers cannot see swimmers. I wonder if perhaps someone is being paid off to tolerate this business?

Tuk-tuk drivers there appear to be a "mafia". They demand extremely high prices and are not open to negotiation.

One cannot take two steps in peace in Patong before being tugged on the arm by a touting shopkeeper.

And the beach umbrellas are rusty and torn – they were probably fished out of the water after the tsunami.

Tourists are not chickens to be plucked, and if they are treated in this fashion they will not come back.

Patrizia Starace Zanchetta
Switzerland

Airport buses no threat to traditional songtaew

I would much prefer if the [local] government were to announce its plans regarding transportation development before implementing new services.

[If that were to be done, then] the private sector and other entrepreneurs could voice their opinion on the subject. It can only be a good thing if we are all informed, otherwise people become very confused.

I talked to the representatives of Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO) about the airport bus service and they explained

that their goal is mainly to meet the needs of tourists.

But when the government wants to do something, it should announce [the plan] to people in the transportation business beforehand, shouldn't it?

As a result, for me, the airport bus service is neither here nor there as we run a completely different sort of business when you look at it, after all, *songtaew* aren't even air-conditioned

Of course, it's really for the passengers to choose how they travel. However, I do think that the airport limousines and metered taxis will be strongly affected.

Our target group is substantially different from that of the



am from the airport. The last trip will leave from the airport at 8:30 pm and from Phuket City at 9:30 pm. Fares will start at 8 baht for one stop to 52 baht for the entire run. Students will get a discount upon production of suitable identification.

Wanchai Lertsiri, who owns Phuket Dern Rot, a *songtaew* (a rather basic type of bus) transportation company, comments.

airport bus service and even though we both aim at the school-child and student market, I don't think there will be any trouble.

Our main target group is students who study at primary and secondary levels, transporting them in the morning and evening, because of most parents know the drivers and trust that the children will get to school and back home on time by using our service.

The next group of clients is made up of merchants and market people who need to transport large volumes of goods such as uncooked foodstuffs. I don't know if they will be allowed on the airport bus or not.

With other *songtaew* com-

panies you can see students fooling around in the back, swinging like monkeys and climbing on the roof – and the driver doesn't even stop them!

On the other hand, my company follows the Department of Land Transport regulations and pays its taxes and we insist that our drivers are in possession of a public transportation driving license.

I think the airport bus service will be like the shuttle buses in Bangkok that pick up passengers from the airport and take them downtown.

My company has problems at the moment with the Transport Company Ltd buses that pick up passengers for long trips and it's

a problem because they use exactly the same route as us.

We're responsible for the Phuket-Sarasin Bridge route only, and we have an extremely hard time at the moment because of [the] low fares [we charge] and [upwardly] spiraling fuel prices.

I'm trying to promote Phuket's culture because *songtaew* hold an important place in the history of Phuket.

We'd like to retain the old look of our vehicles to conserve Phuket culture in the face of government initiatives to modernize everything.

Some tourists take rides with us because they like the quaint look of the *songtaew*. Some tourists even photograph them.

How can I stop my neighbor's vicious dog?

A neighbor of mine has a particularly vicious dog. Over the past two years the dog has attacked four pets – all requiring stitches – and one child.

Recently my Jack Russell was mauled by this dog again, and again required stitches.

The owner, a foreigner, has refused to muzzle the dog or walk the dog elsewhere.

Do I have any legal rights to stop the dog from harming more people and pets?

James Mortimer
Rawai

Sunart Wongchawalit, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office replies:

You can report a vicious dog to the Chalong Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBor-*

Tor). Although the *OrBorTor* has no legal authority to punish the dog or its owner, it can help you and your neighbor to find a solution to this problem.

Pol Col Chalit Kaewyarat, Superintendent of Chalong Police Station, replies:

You can report the dog to the police. People who do not maintain control over their dogs can be punished under Section 377 of The Penal Code of Thailand, which says, "Whoever, having in his care a ferocious or vicious animal, allows it to wander about alone in a manner likely to cause injury to a person or things, shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding one month or a fine not exceeding 1,000 baht or both."

What rules for dermatology clinics?

My daughter is a Thai-French dual national and she is studying in France to become a dermatologist. She would like to open a dermatology clinic in Phuket. How does she proceed? Are there particular rules to adhere to in Thailand for her to do this?

Senateur, Kamala.

Dr Wanchai Sattayawutthipong, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Health Office, replies:

For your daughter to open a dermatology clinic in Phuket, she must become a member of the Medical Council of Thailand.

Becoming a member requires her to graduate from a university that is recognized by the Council and she must pass

Issues & ANSWERS

Do you have a question about how things are done in Phuket? Do you have a suggestion for the powers that be?

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both a 750-question multiple-choice exam and a practical test set by the Council.

In addition, your daughter must be a registered Thai citizen.

If your daughter satisfies all the Council's criteria, then she will be certified and permitted to open a dermatology clinic in Thailand.

ON THE MOVE



Joseph Zitnik is the new GM of the Crowne Plaza Karon Beach resort. He has been GM at three other Crowne Plaza properties, and also worked as GM at Banyan Tree resorts in the Philippines and Bali, at the Hard Rock Hotel in Bali, and from 1992-1998 was GM of the Allamanda Phuket. He joined InterContinental Hotels, owner of Crowne Plaza resorts, in 2000.



Pongsiam Khamsoithong, 31, from Chon Buri, has been appointed Project Manager of BMS Event Organizer Co, Ltd. A graduate of Ramkhamhaeng University, Bangkok, he worked as a Machine Room Assistant at SoHo Asia Co Ltd for one year and on the staff of VC Spot Production Co Ltd for three years before moving to Phuket.



Suphasak Borwornsethanant, 33, from Bangkok, is the new Manager of the Thai Ceramic Company's Cotto Tiles Library outlet at Central Festival Phuket. He graduated from Chulalongkorn University and worked as Art Director of Advertising & Promotion for Thai Ceramic Co Ltd for 10 years before relocating to Phuket.

Around the world in 80 nanoseconds

KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER

I've been out of the country for most of the past two months, getting my son settled in at college and putting the finishing touches to a new book. Justin is now in his first semester at an American university in Europe – the best of both worlds, if you ask me. The book is due out in a couple of weeks. All is right with the world, to a first approximation anyway, and it is absolutely great to be back home.

I want to thank John Seebach for so graciously – and competently – taking over the reins of this column for the past couple of months. John and I will be writing on alternate weeks for the foreseeable future. That should work well. John has his finger on the pulse of the local computer scene, and I'm more of a professional Dummy. Together we'll give you different perspectives on the wild and wacky world of computing.

So much has happened in the past two months that it'd take a few dozen columns to cover the big points: Microsoft announcing that the next version of Windows, though due more than a year from now, will be called "Vista", of all things; countless security

scars; a Moroccan teenager and a Turk arrested for creating the Zotob worm; more Desktop Search versions for both Google and Microsoft/MSN; Microsoft blocking downloads of patches for pirated versions of Windows (only a Microsoft marketing droid would have thechutzpah to call the blocker "Windows Genuine Advantage"); and so on.

Along with all of the ho-hum junk, I've discovered a few jewels, and I've had a chance to work with three products that are truly breathtaking: Skype, Google Desktop Search and Google Earth. They work wonders, and they're all free.

Skype, which was being bought out by eBay at the time this article went to press, employs classic Napster-like technology to provide free phone calls, all over the world.

If you and the person you are calling have a decent Internet connection, Windows XP and a 200-baht microphone, you have everything you need to make phone calls that are just as clear as direct-dialed phone calls. Anywhere. Free. I'll talk more about Skype (www.skype.com) in my next column.

Google Desktop Search and its kin, including Microsoft's also-ran MSN/Windows Desktop Toolbar, creates an index of everything on your computer, and keeps the index updated while you're working.

When you want to find something on your computer, bring up Desktop Search, type the text you want to find – just like Google – and in a fraction of a second all of the matches appear, sorted and ready for you to look through them.

Windows has had indexing capability for many years, but has yet to hit the mark in reliability and results. The folks at Google beat Microsoft at its own game, creating a product that has become an integral part of my life. Interested? See desktop.google.com.

Then there's Google Earth, which completely blows me away.

You've probably worked with Mapquest or one of the other road map sites on the Internet. Google Earth takes Mapquest into the third dimension, with in-



Incredible: a screenshot of part of the center of Phuket City, taken from Google Earth.

credibly detailed satellite photos all stitched together in a way that makes it easy to zoom in or out, pinpoint a location, or even – you have to see this to believe it – angling the view from the tops of buildings down to look at the side of them, or even take in long vistas with mountains, rivers, trees and superhighways.

The debate continues over whether Joe Public should have access to such detailed satellite imagery, with both Thailand and South Korea calling for at least some censorship of photos of national defense installations.

That said, Google Earth's (earth.google.com) pictures of Phuket are about a year old, and the west coast shots suffer from some very low resolution.

Still, you'll be absolutely floored by the ability to, say, type "Phuket, Thailand" in the search bar, and watch as the image of the Earth rotates, and then you zoom in until finally you can see Phuket. Then you can "grab" the map and zoom in further on, say, the bypass road, and identify landmarks as you "fly", and "tilt" the camera so you see the tops or

different angles of the fronts of buildings.

The screen shot on this page shows the Clock Tower Circle in Phuket City. Yes, you can zoom in and see cars, or zoom out and look at the roads, lakes, hills, intersections, construction sites, even patches of undeveloped land.

Google Earth satellite photos cover most of the inhabited parts of the world. Most of Europe and North America boast incredibly high-resolution photos. If you like, metropolitan areas can have the outlines of roads superimposed on the photos, with road names clearly marked.

No matter how you slice it, Google has trumped Microsoft again and again. They have created incredibly useful programs and given them away for free. Microsoft's feeling the heat.

At its most basic, gut-wrenching level, Google has shown the world that the Windows/Office monopoly may represent the past, and that "the platform" (meaning your PC) isn't nearly as important as the Internet.

Last November, a very talented Microsoft employee named Mark Lucovsky quit the 'Softies and went to work for Google. Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer (and Bill Gates's boss) set up an exit interview. Steve B asked Mark why he wanted to leave Microsoft, and where he was going next.

When Mark told Steve B that he was heading to Google, Mark says (in a sworn court deposition) that Ballmer threw a chair across the room, and shouted: "F***ing Eric Schmidt [Google's CEO] is a f***ing p***y. I'm going to f***ing bury that guy, I have done it before, I will do it again. I'm going to f***ing kill Go-ogle."

Methinks he doth protest too much.

– **Woody Leonhard**
(woody@khunwoody.com)

Woody's next book, *Windows XP Hacks & Mods For Dummies*, will be on store shelves all over the world in a few weeks. He continues to hold Microsoft's feet to the fire at his website, www.AskWoody.com.

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Profits flow freely for bottled water company

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: The government is considering contracting a private firm, REQ Water Services, to build and operate a reverse-osmosis water treatment plant to desalinate seawater and increase the island's water supply.

If the idea comes off, the plant will not be the first of its type on the island, however. There are now at least three companies on the island using the technology to make highly purified drinking water for the local market.

The first of these, SPA Drinking Water Company, was established in 1999 by Managing Director Somboon Pinchaisiri, an economics graduate from Thammasat University.

K. Somboon, a Phuket native, told the *Gazette* that his company now has a 60%-70% share of the local market for highly purified drinking water, which, at SPA, is achieved by first treating the water through reverse osmosis and then again with ozone.

As a water source, the company has its own 17,000-cubic-meter pond, which it excavated close to a number of unused tin mines. When water is pumped out of the pond for treatment, a gradient in the local water table is created that quickly recharges the pond.

SPA sells drinking water wholesale



A man with a lot of bottle: Somboon Pinchaisiri's product is popular with hotels.

at 50-55 baht for a pack of six 1.5-liter bottles and 68-72 baht for a 12-pack of 750-centiliter bottles. It also has 600-cl bottles and 18.9-liter water-cooler jugs.

The company also supplies small paper-sealed plastic cups for use by the public transport industry, such as airlines and bus lines.

K. Somboon explained that although his marketing originally targeted restau-

rants, over time the hotel industry has become his greatest source of customers. Many hotels are attracted not only by the purity of the water – which many foreign guests demand – but also by the attractive, hotel-branded labels, which SPA makes at the same plant in Thalang where it manufactures plastic bottles.

Among the 60 hotels in Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi that make up SPA's growing client list are the JW Marriott,

Treetops Arasia, and Le Meridien Khao Lak.

K. Somboon said SPA was the first company in Phuket to use reverse-osmosis technology for drinking water. Although it now has two competitors using this technology, K. Somboon said demand for his water continues to grow. The company currently treats and bottles about 120 m³ of water a day.

SPA recorded sales of between 40 and 50 million baht last year, K. Somboon said, with sales growth of around 30% to 35% over each of the past three years. He expects a further increase in sales of 20% to 25% by the end of this year.

The current water shortage on the island had no effect on his pricing policy, he said, but rising transport, labor and packaging costs associated with the increase in oil prices would necessitate a price increase that will go into effect October 1.

Although he did not say how much the cost of SPA products would increase, he said it would not be more than 10%.

SPA plans to list on the Stock Exchange of Thailand, and K. Somboon said that he believes the company has a clear enough business plan and sufficient profit margins to be accepted by the exchange commission.

"Water is a necessity in daily life," he added.

Another BRIC in the investment wall

The latest global investment theme is BRIC. This has nothing to do with bricks and mortar: it stands for Brazil, Russia, India and China.

One prominent fund manager that has moved into this area is banking and asset management giant HSBC, with the launch of its HSBC Freestyle BRIC Fund. This is available from HSBC and also, by arrangement between the two groups, as a mirror fund by Friends Provident International. All the other offshore assurers will be able to access this fund at the normal discounts.

However, to return to the aims, objectives and management style of this fund, HSBC believes that, as long as the BRIC economies are channeled productively, they could generate 45% of global growth by 2025. Real gross domestic product (GDP) growth of BRIC in 2003 and 2004 was more than double that of the rest of the world.

The inclusion of Russia on the list may surprise many. It was only in 1998 that Russia was last in a financial crisis, and the Yukos affair hardly added to its reputation as a friendly investment destination.

The Russian investment story is an interesting one, as the country has enormous reserves



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

of oil, natural gas and a huge variety of metals. Almost all of these commodities have seen a vast rise in value recently, and this is likely to continue. Russia's finances have improved dramatically, with a very substantial current account surplus, foreign exchange reserves

have rocketed, and the economy is enjoying its first boom in history.

The stockmarket has enjoyed some very impressive gains,

but until now there have been only two ways of effectively entering this market.

Firstly, via an eastern European fund that includes Russia on its list of investable countries and, secondly, directly into a Russian investment trust. The first approach means that returns are likely to sag when eastern European countries' stock markets peak, and the second approach can mean sleepless nights.

The HSBC approach gives a Russian inclusion, combined with other emerging giants. The term "freestyle" in the fund's name shows a fresh and commendable approach to investment. Fund managers, as they are

required to measure investment returns against a benchmark index, frequently end up almost giving a mirror image to the investment content of the fund. This has advantages in established markets such as the UK and the US, but the opposite applies in "new markets" such as China and Russia.

The fund aims for strong returns over the medium term, by seeking out companies with excellent cash-flow generation potential, at attractive valuations. This type of freestyle investing aims to generate total return without reference to market index weightings, and by investing across a range of market capitalizations.

Russia, for example, has recently enjoyed substantial stock market gains, but price/earnings ratios are about four, which is at bargain basement levels. The US, in comparison, has price/earnings ratios of about 16.

It may not be a fund for widows and orphans, but it does look very interesting for part of a portfolio. Good work, HSBC – innovative thinking.

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

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One for the ladies at Phuket Country Club

KATHU: December 15 to 17 will see as many as 132 female golfers – including 19-year-old Thai-Korean twins Naree and Aree Song, Malaysian Lim Siew Ai and Simi Mehra of India – playing in the Phuket Thailand Ladies Masters at Phuket Country Club for a US\$150,000 (6-million-baht) purse.

Sponsored by the Tourism Authority of Thailand, the tournament is open mainly to Asian professional female golfers although quotas – not available at the time of going to press – will permit players from other tours to attend.

The organizers have scheduled a pro-am tournament on December 14, with proceeds going toward the education of orphans from the tsunami.

The Phuket Thailand Ladies Masters will be broadcast in Thailand by UBC and overseas by the Ladies' Asian Golf Tour's own network.

For more information, email to: talga_golf@hotmail.com, talga_golf@yahoo.com or info@thailadiesgolf.org, or visit www.thailadiesgolf.org/main.php

GOLF TIPS



SWING AND YOU'RE WINNING

Following on from our first series of Golf Tips, Learning the Basics, we're now going to tackle Building the Swing.

It is often said that the first six inches of the golf swing are the most important. This is true in the sense that we are striving for a single, cohesive action.

A great exercise that helps to obtain this desired fluidity is to

place a second golf ball some 10-12 inches directly behind the ball at address (above, left).

Now, by simply rotating the shoulders and stretching the arms out – keeping an even, smooth tempo – try and push the second ball back (above, center).

The wider the arms are kept into the backswing – by keeping the shoulders back and the arms straight – the greater the weight

transfer that is created. This equals more potential energy being stored and ready to be released (above, right).

The halfway-back position of the club should reveal that the club is parallel to the intended target – the ball – with the shoulders having rotated anti-clockwise by approximately 45°.

This platform will put you in good shape to build to the top of

the swing, which will be the next golf tip.

For more information on learners' and improvers' courses at Laguna Phuket Golf Club, contact British PGA Professionals Bruce Whitehead or Andy Combe at Tel: 076-270991-2 or Email: golfteaching@lagunaphuket.com

Patong Darts League: Adios, Amigos – Valhalla strikes a hammer blow

Thor's hammer came down hard on league leaders Amigos when Valhalla, playing at home, stomped on the league leaders 7-2 and then went on to win the beer leg for good measure. Meanwhile, perennial mid-tableers Piccadilly went down to defending league champs OffShore 6-3, but managed to win the beer leg when Martin (aka "Tigger") checked out on a double 16.

At Winchester Bar, Nag's Head and Two Black Sheep, both apparently short-

handed, played to a first-ever draw, each getting a point. Nag's Head took the beer leg.

Amigos stays atop the standings, though as usual there are lots of games outstanding – including four by OffShore. Team captains are encouraged to play their makeup games as soon as possible.

It looks like Did's have dropped out as they postponed again last week.

A decision is expected soon on whether all postponed and remaining

games against Didi's will be scored as 3-point walkovers.

September 13 results: Valhalla* 7 Amigos 2; Nag's Head* 4 Two Black Sheep 4 (draw); Coyote* 4 African Sports 5; OffShore 6 Piccadilly* 3; Didi's v Shakers, Dog's Bollocks v Queen Mary = postponed. (* = Winners of beer leg)

Standings after Sept 12 play: 1. Amigos (22pts); 2. Shakers (20pts); 3. Valhalla

(18pts); 4. Queen Mary, Piccadilly; African Sports (16pts); 7. Offshore Bar (14pts); 8. Nag's Head (13pts); 9. Two Black Sheep (8pts); 10. Dog's Bollocks; 11. Coyote; Didi's (3pts).

September 27 fixtures: Queen Mary v Nag's Head; Dog's Bollocks v Coyote; Amigos v Didi's; Valhalla v Two Black Sheep; Piccadilly v African Cafe; Offshore v Shakers (Home teams first).

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Protests mar Saphan Hin race weekend

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: A crowd of around 2,000 people braved the wet and blustery conditions to watch the fourth event in the Toyota Moto Sports series, staged on a special street track at Saphan Hin on the weekend of September 17-18.

At the time of going to press, however, the final results in the Vios One Race B and C categories were still not known because of protests over the results.

Because of the slippery road conditions there were several accidents over the two days of racing, but none of the drivers was badly injured.

A special, temporary, 1.42-kilometer track was created for the event, which saw 30 competitors battling it out over 25 laps.

STARS

Heats were held on September 17, and the finals a day later saw Thai superstar actors and racers, including Ray McDonald, Pete Thongjua, Louis Scott, Ummarin "Um" Nitipol, Araya A "Chompoo" Hargett and Supaksorn "Kra Tae" Chai-mongkol, all taking part in the Vios One C race.

Because the first and second places in the Vios One B and C categories are being disputed, the official results for these two categories were still to be finalized.

In the Vigo Triathlon, the final results in the B category saw Sakkarin Tassanaviriyakul and co-driver Somkiet Noi Chad win with 132 points. Anucha Pandan and Supakit Kittipan took the Vigo Triathlon C with 124 points.

The category winners each received 30,000 baht and a trophy. The fifth event in the series will take place at Nakhon Ratchasima on October 8 and 9.



Wet and wild: Toyotas tear round the Saphan Hin track as hardy spectators try to keep dry under their umbrellas.

Aussies and Yanks dominate Kata surfing contest

KATA: Australians and Americans continue to rule the Phuket surfing scene, with the Aussies dominating the short board competition and Americans the long board division in the 4th Annual Phuket Surfing Contest, held at Kata Beach during the wet and windy weekend of September 16 to 18.

About 120 contestants entered the three-round competition, and a team competition pitting surfers from three localities: Patong-Kalim; Kata-Karon and Kamala-Surin.

Australian "Kyle" won the short board competition, defeating by just two points his friend and compatriot Andrew "Oggie" Fallon, who has already won two surfing competitions in Phuket this year. Neither surfer was entered in the team competition.

In the long boards, Americans swept the top three places, led by overall winner Aaron Wright.

However, the only competitor to do well in both divisions was Thai - Noppasit "Kho+" Boonchouy from Kata.

The effects of tropical storm Vicente, with 23-knot winds, whipped the surf up to waves almost three meters high, for many competitors the biggest surf they had ever tried to deal with under competition conditions.

While there were some sensational wipeouts as a result, no major injuries were reported.

FINAL RESULTS

Short Board: 1. Kyle (Aus); 2. Andrew "Oggie" Fallon (Aus); 3. Jimmy (Kata); 4. Noppasit

"Kho+" Boonchouy (Kata).

Long Board: 1. Aaron Wright (USA); 2. John Darroch (USA); 3. Bob (USA); 4. Noppasit "Kho+" Boonchouy (Kata).

Grommet: 1. Dawut Pantip (Kalim); 2. Anucha "Wha" Yadee (Kalim); 3. Kit Donahue (Patong); 4. Yothin "Rogib" Thongyon (Kalim).

Beginner: 1. Ying (Kata), 2. Chatree (Karon); 3. Jade (Kata); 4. Surachate (Kata).

Winning Team Overall: Patong-Kalim.

MINI-MARATHON 'HEALTH' RUNNERS BRAVE STORM



Somchock Jangwang with his trophy as overall and men's winner in the 10.5-km race.

PHUKET CITY: Despite heavy rain, 117 people took part in a "Mini-Marathon for Health" organized by Phuket Rajabhat University on Sunday.

Competitors included 71-year-old Yongyuth Jitkeau. The runners started from Suan Luang Park at around 7 am, then split

into two categories - those covering a 3.5-kilometer course and those competing in a 10.5-km race along Chaofa East Rd to Baan Ao Nambor School and back.

The winner of the men's 10.5-km competition was Somchock Jangwang, while Sudarat Pindub won the women's prize.

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Home of the Week

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This newly built, well-presented property is a Thai-style home, with gleaming teak used in the floors, walls and ceilings.

It is situated on a 544-square-meter plot just minutes from the beach, local shops and cafés.

In quiet, green surroundings, the easy-care garden features a 4- by 8-meter swimming pool.

The house itself comprises four spacious bedrooms and three luxury bathrooms, as well as large living and dining areas and a Thai-style kitchen.

There is undercover car parking and the garden is fully walled to provide privacy, while the terraces and balconies invite open al fresco living.

RENTAL

The home is available partly furnished and comes with four air conditioners to keep the house cool during the hotter months of the year.

The utilities include mains water supply with water-filtration and hot-water systems, and three-phase electricity.

Besides being ideal for family living, this home also offers good rental opportunity.

The land title is Cha-note and the property is available at 11.5 million baht.

For more information, contact Richard Lusted, Siam Real Estate, at Tel: 076-288908, email info@siamrealestate.com or visit the website at www.siamrealestate.com



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Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut



Construction of the Baan Vighit homes is now well under way, with three different styles available.

Tropical houses on the hill

PA KHLOK: Work on a new project of two-story tropical homes on nine rai of land among the hills of Thalang began in January, aimed at foreigners who want to buy either a holiday home or a permanent residence.

Pongsura Kupongsakorn, Managing Director of Baan Vighit, told the *Gazette* that the project is expected to be completed by early 2007. The homes are designed in such a way as to take advantage of open spaces and fresh air, and are bordered by tropical gardens. The houses are painted green to blend better with the environment. Baan Vighit comprises eight shophouses and 35 two-story homes.

K.Pongsura said, "Our target market is foreigners who come to do business in Phuket or who want to buy a holiday home. Feedback so far is positive. All the shophouses have already been sold, as has one house."

There are three different styles of house available, each on

240 square meters of land:

Ploy Vighit (nine units) has 150.5sqm of living space, including three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, a living room and one car parking space. It is priced from 2.75 million baht;

Nin Vighit (14 170sqm units) has three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a kitchen, a living room and one parking space. It costs from 2.8 million baht;

Manee Vighit (12 units of 188.50sqm each) has three bedrooms, three bathrooms, a kitchen, a living room, a family room and one car parking space, and costs from 2.85 million baht.

All construction materials have been selected for their durability and suitability for a tropical climate, say the developers. Roofing is made from CPAC Monia, the ground floor is granite, bedroom floors are parquet, and sanitaryware in the bathrooms is by Cotto.

Services include 24-hour security and termite protection for

all units. Each house will have water from a well and mains electricity. For the first year after completion, developers Chaimee Co. Project will look after garbage collection, the roads and cleaning of the public areas.

"Most of the houses in the Pa Khlok area are semi-detached," K. Pongsura said. "But our project offers two-story standalone homes at a reasonable price. Our project is 350 meters from the Heroines' Monument, which is recognized as a convenient location."

Contact Baan Vighit, Moo 5 Tha Reua-Muang Mai Rd, Tambon Srisoonthorn, Thalung, Phuket 83150; Tel: 076-273367; Fax: 076-273368; Mobile: 09-7243888, 01-9588294; email: info@baanvighit.com or visit www.baanvighit.com

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Decor

by Ananya Hongsa-ngiam

HOUSES OF THE HOLY

Seen outside many houses and businesses in Thailand, the *san phrapoom* or spirit house is another facet of Thai culture that intrigues the casual tourist and long-term expatriate.

We have all seen them, we may even have them at our homes, but do we know what they are? They are, effectively, a miniature temple or shrine to the animist spirits found in Thailand, and keeping on the right side of these spirits by making offerings of food, water and even alcohol is rather important.

The purpose of a *san phra-poom* is to provide a welcome shelter for the many spirits who would otherwise live in the heavens or occupy every thing, from trees to rocks, and from water to flowers.

The spirits can be classed as good or evil, but really they are benign, beneficial or – rather than

downright bad – simply mischievous.

Where to site a spirit house is a matter for much deliberation by a Brahmin priest, who will also select the most auspicious time and date for the ceremony, usually soon after a house has just been completed.

However, it is not uncommon to see a *san phrapoom* by a lake that is especially good for fishing, for example.

Driving through Phuket, one also sees them by the side of the road.

These spirit houses have been placed there either because it is thought that the location is cursed – perhaps it is an accident blackspot – or because the owners of the *san phrapoom* have gone through a period of change and have been advised by a priest to replace their spirit house while disposing carefully of the old *san phrapoom*.

One particularly poignant spirit house can be found atop Doi Inthanon in the Shan Hills in Chiang Mai.

A Royal Thai Army (RTA) helicopter crashed there killing all on board some years ago, and the RTA and the families of the servicemen erected a special *san phra-poom* at the crash site.

As well as the traditional figurines of Poo and Yaa, the grandmother and grandfather guardian spirits, model helicopters and army trucks were also placed in the spirit house.

Alongside the holders for incense and votive candles are small ledges where the families – or any visitor – can place lit cigarettes for the servicemen, all of whom, apparently, liked to smoke.

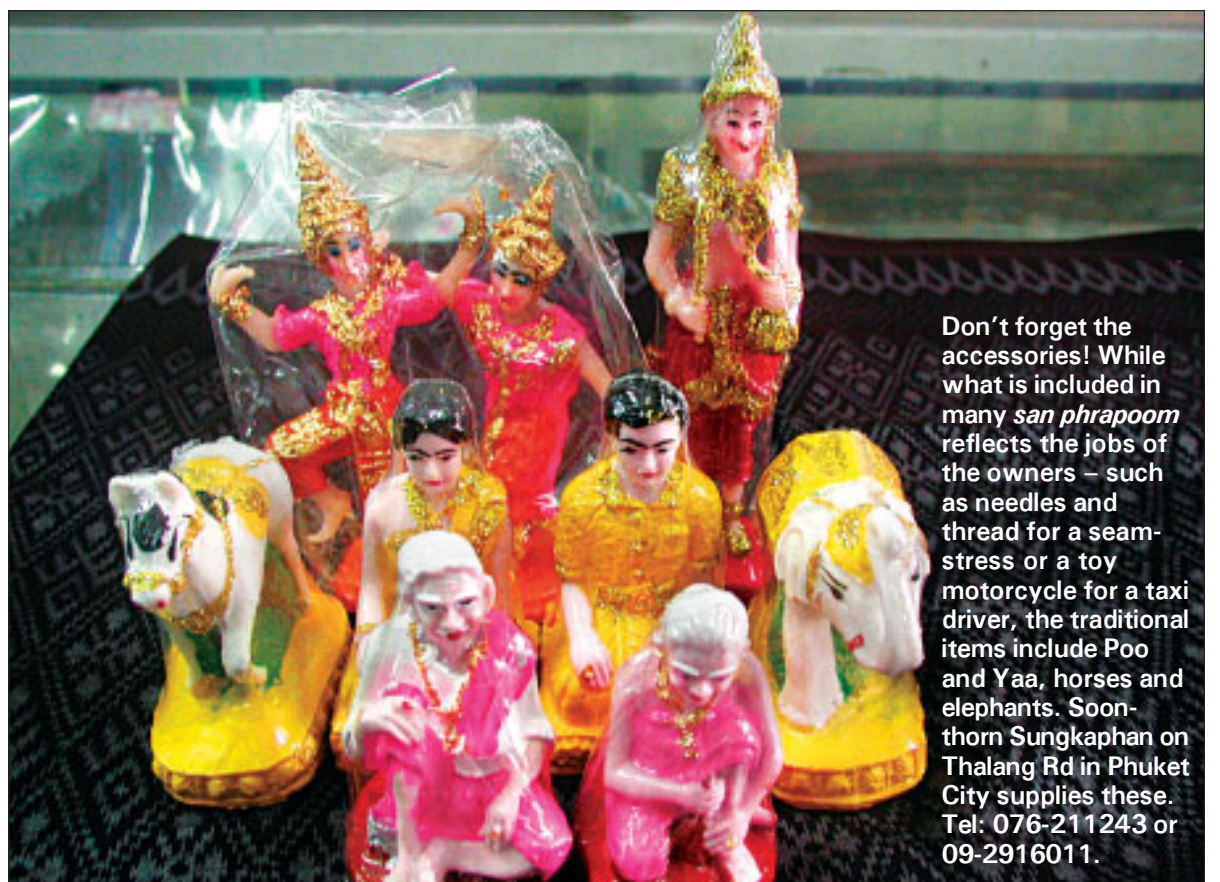
Not a believer? Well, since when did a little added insurance do any harm?



Sakthong House along Chalermprakiat Ror IX Rd (the by-pass road) crafts a number of different styles of spirit house. This one is available for 19,900 baht. Tel: 076-254700-1 or 01-6065369.



Wattana Furniture of Chao Fa East Rd sell a number of styles. The models shown here (from right) cost 8,500 and 7,500 baht respectively. Prices are negotiable. Tel: 076-383264 or 01-8923766.



Don't forget the accessories! While what is included in many *san phrapoom* reflects the jobs of the owners – such as needles and thread for a seamstress or a toy motorcycle for a taxi driver, the traditional items include Poo and Yaa, horses and elephants. Soon-thorn Sungkaphan on Thalang Rd in Phuket City supplies these. Tel: 076-211243 or 09-2916011.

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I want to be a nymphaea maniac

Some names are cool, and that's a fact. Some aren't, and frankly, never will be. If your middle name was "Cyril", after the great-grandfather you never knew, would you advertise this fact to the world, or would it become an innocuous "C" in your signature?

Then there are the Shanes and the Kirstens, Bretts and Melanies – these names conjure up images of youth and exuberance. They're cool. Unfortunately my transatlantic cousins have a different view in this regard – they still consider using names like "Chuck", "Chip" or "Hank". Don't they realize that they just sound daft?

In a recent investigation in New York State, a researcher managed to get hold of a three-inch-thick list of every name given to a child in the state during 1994. In that statistical swamp he discovered the most popular names for girls that year. The second most popular was "Ashley" with 2,151 babies registered under that name. But the most popular? Believe it or not, 2,516 girls were named "Female".



Her name is Lily, and she must be one of the easiest plants in the world to grow.

PATTERN

There are also some names you just don't see very often nowadays. My grandmother, for example, was called "Ada". What ever happened to that name? The fact that she was born in the 19th century probably answers that, I suppose. There are many more that fit into that particular category – "Iris" and "Rose" to name a couple.

There's a pattern developing here – old ladies named after plants by their long-departed parents. My favorite, for no particular reason other than the plant is one of the most well-known on the planet, is "Lily".

The water lily is one of those plants that doesn't really need a description – everyone just knows it.

Its official name is the *nymphaea*, or *bua pouen* in Thai. But you know I'm going to describe it anyway.

Water lilies are probably the quintessential aquatic garden plants; for many people the water features in their gardens are simply "water-lily ponds".

These ubiquitous plants quite rightly deserve their popularity.

They're hardy (more important in other parts of the world) and long-lived, and have blossoms of almost every color.

Though there are about 65 species found worldwide, the genus *Nymphaea* is the genus of modern water lilies, in the similarly named family *Nymphaeaceae*.

It's probably no coincidence that their Latin name derives from Roman minor goddesses who inhabited fountains and rivers.

It was a French bloke, Latour Marliac, who was responsible for the hybridization and introduction of 90% of existing

hardy water lily varieties from 1885-1890; but water lilies had already been kept by the Chinese, Persians and Egyptians for thousands of years.

The size range of lilies is somewhat surprising. They span from the tiny pygmaea from China, with blooms the size of a ten-baht coin, up to Victoria lilies with pads so large (several feet across) that they can support a human. Probably not a beer-swilling gentleman of my girth, though, even if I do put down my beer for a minute.

Distribution of the original *nymphaea* species is virtually worldwide in tropical and temperate freshwaters.

There are water lilies that hail from Egypt, Australia, southern Africa, India, and even the US. Many mutations and hybrids (variously named by their originators) have been introduced ev-

erywhere non-frozen water and human beings are present.

The leaves are very buoyant, circular and come with a deep notch where the leaf stalk attaches.

The flowers float or stand above water on stiff stalks. Blooms appear year-round and may be white, yellow, copper, pink or red, depending on the cultivar. Most hardy water lilies require at least six hours of sunlight, although some will flower with less.

Hardy water lilies must be one of the easiest plants to grow in the world.

All you need to do is to press a good few inches of the sprouting root or rhizome into the soil, leaving the growing tip above, and cover with sand, gravel and possibly a stone to prevent the plant floating out. Or you can just go to the local garden center and buy them – they're not expensive.

The latter, predictably, would be my choice.

Most varieties of water lilies can be grown in very small pools or even large, water-filled pots or urns. The lily in the picture is quite content in a little urn (which has absolutely nothing to do with Eric Morecambe and "Ernie" Wise) outside a garden center north of Chalong. They are also very much at home in lakes, ponds and slow-moving streams. Most of them are happy even in the smallest pools, since the tubers will root in mud when covered by a mere three inches of water.

The only thing you should be careful of is not to over-plant your pond or urn with too many lilies. They don't particularly like feeling restricted, and need plenty of room to spread out. Leave some room for water to show between the leaves.

Ideally, try not to cover the water's surface any more than 60 to 70%. Also, position the plants where the water is relatively untroubled, as the lilies resent constant jostling from waterfalls or fountains. They'll appreciate the peace.

BASICS

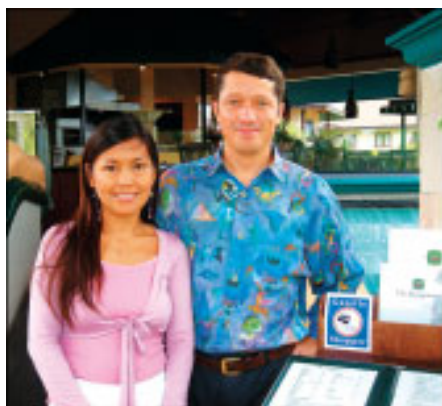
The basics of water lily care are a minimum three or four hours of direct sun (which isn't usually a problem in Phuket), decent water quality, and the removal of any dead leaves.

An obvious sign of the leaves' demise is when they turn a yellowy-brown color.

I suppose I'm rather partial to lilies, but probably not the human type, as most would have been pensioned off 20 to 30 years ago.

I'd like to call myself a *nymphaea* maniac, but unfortunately I don't have any water in my garden to pursue such lily-like activities.

Such is life.



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NAI HARN LAND

2-rai plot ready to build for 6.5 million baht. It has electricity, water and a wall around the land. Can be sold with a company title. No agents. Please call for info. Tel: 09-5944017.

VILLA IN NAI HARN

275sqm living space, 1,000 sqm garden, 10mx5m pool, 60,000 baht rental income per month until March 2006. 10.75 million baht. Tel: 07-8896074, 01-8916143. Email: norbertfun@hotmail.com

KATA COTTAGE

for sale. Patong houses, hotels and land for sale. Please contact for details. Tel: 04-630-1770.

RAWAI LUXURY VILLA



A 144sqm house 350m from the beach with 400sqm of land for sale. The house has 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms. Asking 2.8 million baht. Tel: 01-476-3623. Email: free_holdprop@yahoo.com

PATONG CONDOS

Condos with a sea view, 28 and 56sqm, for sale. Priced from 650,000 baht. Near bank and post office. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

LAND FOR SALE

5 rai (41 square wah) for sale at Pa Khlok. Asking 1.2 million baht per rai. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-4695164. Email: oh_aoh@yahoo.com

NEW RAWAI VILLA

2-bedroom, 144sqm house with 2 bathrooms, kitchen and living room, on 400sqm of land. 400m from the beach. Asking 2.8 million baht. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

HILL-VIEW PLOT

1 rai for sale: 25m frontage x 68m deep. A corner plot with Chanote title on Soi Baan Krang, in Chalong. Asking 4 million baht, negotiable. Tel: 076-216260, 07-8945321. Email: prporter56@yahoo.com

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KATA SEAVIEW 2 RAI

Asking 4.7 million per rai. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-5376866.

NEW HOUSE FOR SALE



A 250sqm house of European standards, on 75 square wah of land with Chanote title, for sale in Kathu, Phuket. It has a lake view, 3 bedrooms, 1 maid's room, 3 bathrooms with hot water, air conditioning, curtains and a fitted kitchen with hot water. The location is 10 minutes to Patong and Phuket City; 25 minutes to the airport. Two golf courses are close by. Asking 6 million baht. Please contact Mr Geoff for more information Tel: 01-8540061, 076-323214 or Fon at Tel: 01-8937585, 076-323215.

PHANG NGA LAND

A 3.2-rai seaview plot on Haad Tub Tawan Rd, north end of Bang Sak Beach; 120m to the beach road and power. 68m driveway, 75m frontage; 18km south of Takuapa. 75km from Phuket International Airport. Please call for info. Tel: 01-8947644.

SINGLE HOUSES

for sale. Last three houses of 204sqm each for sale, located on Chao Fa East Rd. Each has 3 bedrooms, 2 restrooms, 1 kitchen, 1 living room. Asking 2.05 million baht per house. Tel: 01-5973398. For further details, please see our website at: www.phuket-kthome.com

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CHALONG HOUSE

for sale in a small, quiet, exclusive estate. The house is 212sqm, with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, an American-style kitchen, a living room, pool and spa, a storeroom, 5 air conditioners and 1 covered parking space. I am asking 6.5 million baht. Please call for details. Tel: 01-8913740.

RAWAI CONDOS

with sea view. 27, 54 and 81sqm. Priced from 350,000 baht. Financing for 3 years available. Foreign freehold. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

3-BEDROOM

Chalong house for sale in a small, quiet, exclusive estate. The house is 360sqm, with 3 large bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 1 storage room, an American-style kitchen, a large living room, air conditioning, pool and spa and 2 covered car parking spaces. I am asking for 12 million baht. Please call for further information. Tel: 01-8913740.

HOUSE IN KATHU

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, built-in kitchen, great location, large garden. Chanote. 3.7 million baht. Please contact for details. Tel: 09-9725576. Email: jaswilliamson2@yahoo.co.nz

NICE LAND FOR SALE

Flat land at Pa Khlok. Hill view, 6km from Heroines' Monument. 9 rai at 750,000 baht per rai = 6.75 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-8731019. Email: saovalakcat@yahoo.com

CHEAP LAND FOR SALE

Land at Phang Nga, half an hour from the airport, 15 minutes to the sea. 7 rai at 250,000 per rai = 1.75 million baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 09-8731019. Email: saovalakcat@yahoo.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

10 minutes to Patong. New, single-story house near completion, with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and hot water. Asking 3.45 million baht. Please call K. Yupa. for further information. Tel: 01-7356684.

1.5 RAI IN CHALONG

This perfect plot has a road, electricity and a Chanote title. Asking 2.9 million for all. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-5376866.

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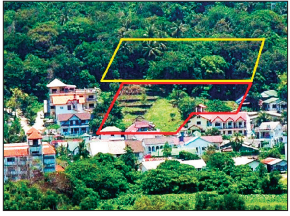
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Property Gazette

2.5 RAI SEA VIEW PATONG



The land, although located in the heart of Patong, is very quiet, green and has great sea views to Patong. The plot has electricity, water, road access and building permission to 23 meters. Tel: 09-8715192.

81 RAI IN MAI KHAO



An 81-rai plot is for sale with 300 meters of beachfront land in Mai Khao. It is ideal for a 5- or 6-star resort or villa project. Tel: 09-8715192.



1 RAI WITH EXCEPTIONAL VIEWS

14, 1 Rai plots of land (5 sold) located in Ao Yon area. The land has ocean views to the East, South and West. All infrastructure is in place, such as. Internal 6 meter wide road with guttering, underground electric, underground water and telephone. "The land is ready to build and the area boast some of the most expensive housing on the sand (circa US\$3 million). A very good investment, a beautiful area with nice quiet beaches, 10 minutes to major shopping and schools. Golf 15 minutes and great seaside restaurants only 5 minutes. Tel: 09-8715192.



GREAT VIEWS OVER CHALONG BAY

61 rai with magnificent views over Chalong Bay. The land is one of the last big plots left with an exceptional sea view. It has a slope and a roadway has been dug. At the bottom, a large sales office has been built. The Chanote title land has been cleared by the owner and is ready to use. Great for a villa development. Price: 5 million baht per rai. Tel: 09-8715192.

2 BEDROOM TOWNHOUSES



New development in Karon Beach. Currently under construction. Some sea view glimpses. "Well priced and an ideal small investment. Prices are from 3-4 million baht. Once building is finished, expect a 20% rise in sale price. Very good buy for location and quality. Tel: 06-2726508.

2 BEDROOM VILLA WITH POOL



The villa is located in Patong with amazing hill and valley views. The property comprises 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room-dining room, kitchen, guest toilet, swimming pool with sala, where you can enjoy great views. 12 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



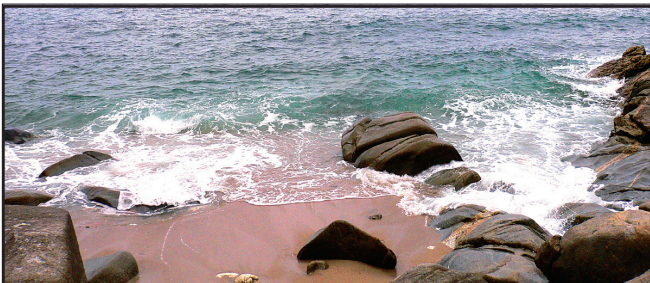
33 RAI, PANORAMIC VIEWS

A lovely 33-rai plot on Phuket with panoramic east-west sea views. Surrounded by high-end developments in the 60-million-baht price range. The land has sealed road access, electricity and a bore can be sunk for water supply. This is a developer's dream plot. Price: 99 million baht. Tel: 09-8715192.



20 RAI WITH SENSATIONAL VIEWS

20.29 rai = 32,460.80 sqm. The land has a new sealed road access, electricity and the some of the best views in Phuket. The land would be ideally suited for a housing development or for the ultimate home. You can never loose your view as the land is on the high side of the area. A must see plot! 3 million baht per rai. Owner will consider cutting into smaller plots. Tel: 09-8715192.



20 RAI WITH PRIVATE BEACH

20 rai with a private beach, located close to Patong. All infrastructures are in place and it is well-located for a luxury resort or high-end development. The land has a waterfall running down one boundary and a small beach (only accessible from this plot) with white sand and nice feature rocks. One of the last great plots and priced lower than all surrounding land. A truly wonderful piece of land! Tel: 09-8715192.



6 RAI BEACHFRONT

This is one of the best plots on the beach in the Cape Panwa area. It is flat land on the beach with slope in the back. It has road access and water and electricity are available. Ideal for a small resort or villa development. Tel: 09-8715192.



SPECTACULAR DEVELOPMENT LAND

39 rai of development land with a 360-degree sea view, a private beach, electricity and a government road. An access road is already in place. Land is ready for building. A must-see for all developers! Tel: 09-8715192.



HOME WITH STUNNING SEA VIEW IN PATONG

This house with stunning sea view is located in the hills of Patong. It comprises Ground floor:kitchen, living - dining room, pool, terrace, sala, guest toilet, carport, small garden First floor:2 bedrooms with bathrooms en-suite. 1st apartment: 1bedroom, bathroom, outside living and dining areas, kitchen and terrace. 2nd apartment: small, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, terrace. Tel: 06-2726508.



1 RAI, SOI NAYA, NAI HARN

A rare plot (I think there are only two left on Soi Naya), with sealed road, electricity, plenty of water and direct access to Nai Harn Beach (same road). Build your dream home 2 minutes from beautiful Nai Harn Beach. Tel: 09-8715192.



3 BEDROOM HOME ON A GOLF COURSE

This newly-built villa is located near a golf course in a secured area, and comprises 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, dining room, living room, kitchen, maid's room, guest toilet, car park and garden. It is well constructed and is located close to Lotus, Big C, international school and 10 minutes to Patong. 6.5 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.

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Thai business partner/investor wanted for a hovercraft business in Phuket/Phang Nga. The flying craft can be used as a rescue vehicle as well as a tour boat, moving over all terrain (beach, water, swamp, rivers, etc). Only serious offers considered. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-0787795. Email: a.bolle@siam-interact.com

SPEEDBOAT NEEDED
to rent. Urgently required for 1 to 3 months rental: Speedboat or fast boat with 2 motors in excellent condition, fully licensed for 20-50 passengers, enclosed seating and capable of withstanding occasional rough seas. Please contact for more information. Email: bill@siaminter.net



THAI MARINE
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A Marine Industry Leader in Thailand since 1990



High Tech Carbon Catamaran 105'
Price on request!

A very successful charter yacht in Mediterranean & West Indies Could easily operate in Asia! For discerning owners.



AZ 62'
Euro1,300,000

One of the very few pre-owned AZ62 available on the market. Vessel kept in good condition appropriate for family cruise and / or charter. 2 x 914hp MTU, Year 2002



Penisi Ketch
Asking price Euro 45,000

Refitted 2003, Thai flagged.



Unique Opportunity
US\$ 550,000

The world famous Turkish Gullet style yacht

Selected Brokerage Listings

Power	Sail
58ft 2003 DeFever 58 Perkins 2 x 225Hp US\$799,000	42ft 1980 Swanson Ketch Volvo 75Hp AUD\$160,000
45ft 1990 Carver 45 Cat 2 x 205Hp THB6,500,000	40ft 1991 Steel Sloop Yanmar 50Hp US\$90,000
31ft 1997 Fountain 31 Mercury 2 x 225Hp THB2,950,000	39ft 1996 Prout 39 Catamaran Volvo MD2030 US\$199,000
21ft 2003 Sea Ray Laguna MarinerEFI 200Hp THB1,200,000	33ft 1984 Reinke, Ali Cutter Volvo 21Hp THB1,350,000
18ft 2000 Skip Jack 18 Yamaha 2 x 85Hp THB750,000	26ft 1975 Marneholm 26 Johnson 6Hp THB1,650,000

Please contact Tel: 076-239111 Email: broker@thaimarine.com



WE ARE THE OBE 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

INFLATABLE DINGHY
5.8m inflatable dinghy with fiberglass hull and 115hp Yamaha outboard, fuel tank, etc. In good condition; any reasonable offer considered. Please contact for more info. Tel: 01-8955538. Email: bob@fareastoriental.com

CATAMARAN WANTED
I am looking to buy a catamaran, either secondhand or to build a new one. Make an offer. Email: daniel_lienhardt@hotmail.fr

SURFACE-SUPPLIED
air diving. Hookah diving systems from USA Clear (transparent) Sea Canoes. Please contact for more info. Tel: 09-4694844. Email: bstrahle@aol.com For further details, please see our website at: www.krabidaycruise.com

OUTBOARD MOTOR
Wanted: new or secondhand outboard. 150hp, 2- or 4-stroke. Please contact with full details. Email: s.gurnham@net2000.ch

TEAK BOATS
Thai-Chinese boat more than 40 years old, 5.5m wide and 17m long. For quick sale, 2 vessels for 900,000 baht. Contact K. Joe. Tel: 01-693-6437. Email: joe_mooky@yahoo.com

NEW WOODEN BOAT
LOA: 18m. Beam: 3.2m. Built in 2004-5 with Takeah-Tong, 420hp Hino-engine. Asking 380,000 baht. Tel: 09-4710655. Website: www.gardenislandphuket.com

41FT FIBERGLASS CABIN CRUISER



2x330hp Mercruisers (fully overhauled by manufacturer - 20 hours). All seats renewed. Sun deck, toilet, freshwater shower. Capacity: 22 + 3, ample for business or private use. Equipment for 10-12 divers (20-tank holder). Can be seen and tested in Koh Samui. Asking price: 2.8 million baht (69,000 euros, US\$84,000), negotiable. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-2836 262. Email: jareden75@yahoo.fr

FAIRLINE TARGA 52 (2003)



Twin 715hp Volvo sports cruiser in as-new condition. Very well equipped. Must sell. Offers encouraged. US\$720,000. Please contact for more information. Malaysia Tel: +6012-297-1364, 06-2674998. Email: simon.theseira@simpsonmarine.com For further details, please see our website at: www.simpsonmarine.com

TANKER VESSEL
Thai-registered tanker vessel for sale:
- Capacity: 50,000 liters
- Length: 22 meters
- Beam: 4.9 meters
- Engine: 1 Hino diesel
- Price: 2.1 million baht.
Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-244-820, 01-8912333. Fax: 076-244823. Email: taylor@loxinfo.co.th

DIVE/CRUISE BOAT
A one-time only opportunity to buy a 53ft boat licensed for 40 passengers. It has twin Hino 265hp diesel engines. Pay 2.25 million baht in cash and 2.25 million Bartercard trade baht, with trade baht interest-free, to be repaid from charter income. Tel: 07-0673360.

Island Job Mart



The Racha is Thailand's premier deluxe island hideaway, where people can balance body, mind and spirit in an environmentally friendly space. We are now looking for enthusiastic and passionate individuals to join the team for our deluxe 70-villa resort The Racha to re-open within the next months.

Chief Engineer	(Thai, min. B 50,000 up)
Sales & Marketing Manager	(Thai or Expatriate)
Chief Accountant	(Thai, min. B 25,000 up)
Asst. Executive Housekeeper	(Thai, min. B 20,000 up)
Restaurant Manager	(Thai, min. B 20,000 up)
Chief Gardener	(Thai, min. B 20,000 up)
Pastry Chef	(Thai, min. B 25,000 up)
Junior Sous Chef	(Thai, min. B 15,000 up)

You must be able to live and work on Racha Island, which is around 40 minutes away from Phuket by our own speedboat. You must have previous experience in an international deluxe or first-class hotel or resort, good command of English and computer skills in Word, Excel and the Internet. Racha Island is a challenging work environment without much infrastructure but with one of the most beautiful beaches in Thailand.

Our team is young, open-minded, flexible and creative, and we all share the same passion for true hospitality.

The Racha aims to be one of the premier resorts in Southeast Asia and we provide a competitive remuneration package and benefits.

Please submit your letter of application together with your CV and a recent photograph to:

The Racha General Manager gm@theracha.com	42/12-13 Moo 5, Rawoi, Muang, Phuket 83130 Phone 0 76 355 455 Fax 0 76 355 637	www.theracha.com
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www.lagunaphuket.com

The largest hotel and resort group in Phuket, and a listed company on the Stock Exchange of Thailand, is currently seeking qualified candidates for the below positions:

Assistant Chief Engineer

- Male, age 28-35 years old
- Bachelor's degree or full experience in the field or position
- Minimum of 3-5 years experience in a similar 5-star hotel & resort
- Good command of English
- Strong communication and leadership skills
- Able to work under pressure
- Computer skills: Microsoft Office, Auto Cad

Airport Hospitality Center Officer

- Female, age 23-28 years old
- Bachelor's degree or full professional qualification
- Minimum of 1-2 years of experience in the field
- Very good command of English
- Positive attitude and outgoing personality
- Able to work under pressure

Group Director of Human Resources
Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co., Ltd.

390/1 Moo 1, Srisoonthorn Road, Cherngtalay, Thalang,
Phuket 83110, Thailand
Tel: 076 324444 Ext 16, 17 Fax: 076 271718
Email: sunisas@lagunaphuket.com

FITNESS INSTRUCTOR REQUIRED

Must be enthusiastic, customer-oriented and hard working, with a background in fitness, sports and/or recreational activities. Incentives available. Please contact Khun Amp for more information. Tel: 076-354027. Fax: 076-233384. Email: clubasia@asianwind.biz

LAWYER NEEDED

Knightsbridge Law is extending its Bangkok Offices to include an office in Phuket. We are currently seeking staff for that office. Tel: 09-084-5704. Email: skheffe@knightsbridgecredit.com

ARTIST NEEDED

Talented artist/illustrator needed for work on several interesting projects. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-8958629.

2 PROGRAMMERS

Core tasks are to mass import data. Requirements are English, PHP, MySQL, XML. Come work for a smart, reputable company. Email: siamuk@loxinfo.co.th

WEB GRAPHIC

designer wanted part-time. Each job will be paid in advance. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com



Marriott's Phuket Beach Club is operated under the banner of Marriott Vacation Club International (MVICI), the vacation club Ownership division of Marriott International Inc. Marriott Vacation Club International is the recognized worldwide leader in Vacation Ownership with 53 resorts in 29 destinations. We are presently looking for additional qualified and experienced professionals to join our dynamic team.

Position:

Assistant Financial Controller	1 position
Phuket Marketing Representative	1 position
Marketing Coordinator Event (Based in Bangkok)	1 position
Marketing Coordinator OPC	2 positions

Qualifications:

- Male or female
- Good communication skills (clear and professional)
- Asst Financial Controller/any nationality required
- Excellent presentation skills
- Ability to work with people at all levels in an organization
- Strong communication skills
- Positive attitude
- Customer service, hospitality experience
- Highly PC literate
- Must be able to work flexible shifts

If interested, please submit application to:
Marriott's Phuket Beach Club, Human Resources
Jintana Mahattanapak
Tel: 076 338200 Fax: 076 348379
Email: jintana.mahattanapak@vacationclub.com

Staff Required

- 1 x Office Administrator
- 1 x Boat Hostess

A luxury motor yacht charter company is looking for 2 English-speaking Thai national staff to fill the above positions. Office administrator - should have office experience and hold a driving license. Hostess - a background in five-star service is essential as is a fun personality.

Please contact
prue@tawancruises.com or phone 018 943 234 for further information.

Urgently required

S.M. Interiors &
Furniture Co.Ltd.
Phuket

We are a interior fitout company and require the services of a Site Supervisor. The person for this position must be a self-starter, able to plan and work to a schedule.

English writing and speaking skills are required.

If you are the person for this position, please email:

lek_thaiaccount@hotmail.com
or phone 076-261931-2
from 8 am-5pm.

FAST-GROWING PROPERTY

company in Samui seeks a qualified accountant. Candidates must be computer literate, with a good command of English; have a university accounting degree and a minimum of 3 years' experience performing all accounting work, including monthly VAT, withholding tax, social security reports and general ledger entries. Please contact for more information. Tel: 077-458-195. Email: nikilai@solymar.co.th

2 ADMIN OFFICERS

We are looking for females w/ fair English and admin skills. At least 1 year of experience is required. Salary: 8-12,000 baht. Tel: 076-263737, 01-5354108. Fax: 076-224-113. Email: recruitment@bowentraining.com

RACHAKIRI RESORT

and Spa. This 4-star resort is looking for a hotel manager and F&B manager with 5 years' experience in a related field. Please submit your resum  and photo by email or contact for more information. Tel: 02-8611861, 01-875 0842. Fax: 02-8611862. Email: sales@rachakiri.com

PHP & MYSQL

programmers. Vertigo Co Ltd (sister company of DNHOST Ltd - Europe) is a software development company for the Web. For its e-commerce solutions and its recent accreditation as an EU registrar, we need: 3 experienced PHP/MySQL programmers. Candidates may apply by email or by phone. Tel: 076-383432, 04-8484006. Email: staff@mynewserver.com

OFFICE MANAGER

Thai national, over age 35, required to manage small but busy office in central Patong. Must be a strong leader and have good communication skills, in both Thai and English. Would consider a husband and wife team, with possible free accommodation for the right candidate(s). Email: andrew@newspaperdirect-phuket.com

ASS'T SPA MANAGER AT KATA BEACH

Assistant Spa Manager & Cleaning Attendants. All experienced, reliable and English speaking. Only Phuket residents need apply. Please send resum , photo and expected salary or contact for more info. Tel: 076-330914, 06-5413629. Fax: 076-333233. Email: terapi@post.tele.dk For further details, please see our website at: www.phuket-massage.com

OFFICE

Administrator. Siam Real Estate requires a reliable, experienced, Thai, Office Administrator with excellent English. Very good future prospects to grow with the business. Salary based on experience. Tel: 076-288908. Email: nice@siamrealestate.com

Island Job Mart

Manathai Resort, Surin Beach

Career opportunities



Manathai Hotels and Resorts is a fresh, new brand in South East Asia. Our newest, contemporary Thai resort is ready for opening at Surin Beach. Qualified and experienced Thai national candidates with good English language skills and a keen service attitude are invited to apply for the positions below:

Guest service

Receptionists
Reservation officers
Bell captain and bellboys

Housekeeping and engineering

Room attendants
Public area cleaners
Pool attendant

Food and beverage

Sous chefs
Chefs de partie
Commis chefs
Stewards
Bartenders
Waiters and waitresses

Administration and accounting

Personal assistant to the Creative Director
Secretary / telephone operator
Cashiers
Accounts officers
Drivers

Manathai offers excellent compensation and benefit packages, with great career prospects as we expand our hotels portfolio in Thailand.

Applicants may send their CV to the General Manager:

Email: corporate@manathai.com

Fax: 0 7627 0911

Tel: 0 9831 1568

Or

Apply in person with your CV at Manathai Resort, Srisunthorn Road, Surin Beach, Cherng Talay on Monday and Tuesday from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

26 and 27 September 2005



British
Curriculum
International School, Phuket



VACANCY FOR PART-TIME PRIMARY ESL TEACHER

The British Curriculum International School invites applications from motivated and skilled teachers, to work closely with a well-established team in the Primary ESL Department. The successful candidate will be required to teach small groups of highly motivated pupils in the upper primary age range.

Applicants should have previous experience of ESL teaching, preferably in the primary age range, an internationally recognized ESL/TESOL qualification and a Bachelor's Degree.

Candidates should email a short letter of application, CV, recent photograph, and email, fax and telephone contacts of referees to:
E-mail: kanitthas@bcis.ac.th
Website: <http://www.bcis.ac.th>
59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200.
Tel: (076) 238-711-20, ext. 1121.

The closing date for applications is 8 October 2005

MARKETING

assistant. Siam Real Estate requires a Thai person with transport, good English and a good personality, who is used to dealing with foreigners and has marketing experience in PR, Internet and off-page advertising. Good salary and commission offered. Tel: 076-288908. Email: nice@siamrealestate.com

LES ANGES BAKERY

Royal Phuket Marina requires the following staff: a pastry chef, baker, pantry chef, kitchen staff; and service and shop staff. Tel: 076-239755. Email: acecourtchef@yahoo.co.uk

STAFF WANTED

Thai secretary between 20 and 40 years of age is urgently needed. The candidate must have poise, be able to speak and write in English, deal well with people and have good computer and secretarial skills. Tel: 076-344180-1. Fax: 076-340767. Email: bernd@phuket-realestate-law.com

The Phuket Gazette

Join the team that brings Phuket the real news.

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

REPORTER

The successful candidate will be a Thai national with initiative, an outgoing personality and plenty of curiosity about the world and how it works, and a keen interest in sports. Also essential are the ability to communicate in English, both spoken and written, and a car driver's license.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Passara Kaewbumroong, Human Resources, by email, fax or post to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

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

WANTED

We are looking for a skipper and a hostess who have worked on boats. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-8663738, 06-9404316.

ASSISTANT NEEDED

Patong company requires a bookkeeper with knowledge of the construction industry and good English. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-0778454. Fax: 076-292-073. Email: solitude001@aol.com

KARON PROPERTY

staff. The following positions are now open for Thai nationals at our new office in Karon: office staff and a property scout. Please send resum , current salary and photograph by email to: phil.collier@karonproperty.com

**Find more Recruitment Classifieds at
www.phuketgazette.net/**

Island Job Mart

Tout, Trader & Trumpet



LEISURE COMPANY LIMITED

Tai Life is a new leisure spa and restaurant opening soon near Patong Beach. We urgently require the following staff and we are offering very good salaries for all positions.

Accountant

Responsible for accounts and admin systems set up and application. Degree in accounting with minimum 5 years' senior experience. Good spoken English.

Executive Chef

To head kitchen operation and assist manager with menu design. Minimum 5 years' experience as executive chef in high-class hotel.

Restaurant Manager

Responsible for set up, launch and management of poolside/indoor restaurants. Minimum 5 years' experience in high-class hotel. Good spoken and written English.

Reception/Membership Sales

Reception duties plus membership sales. No sales experience required. Good spoken English, personality and appearance required.

Call K. Manida - 07 049 0726



Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany in Southern Thailand
Honorarykonsul der Bundesrepublik Deutschland für Südthailand

The German Consul in Phuket is seeking a Consular Officer to take care of administrative office duties weekdays between 9.00 am and 2.00 pm

Applicants

- must speak, write and read German and Thai
- must be PC literate
- must have an outgoing, friendly personality

Please send your application to dirk@junkseilon.com or phone 0 9668 3635 for an interview.

CUSTOMER SUPPORT

Asia Debit – provider of international Internet merchant accounts and online secured credit card payment solutions – is seeking qualified candidates for Customer Support.

Qualifications:

- Male/female, age not over 30
- Strong self-initiative and creativity, independent worker, fast learner
- Able to work with internet and standard computer programs
- Excellent command of written and spoken English is a MUST
- Able to clearly and professionally communicate in English, orally and in writing
- Must have own transport

Interested candidates are requested to send a cover letter, resum  and salary expectation via email or contact for more information. Tel: 076-282 211. Fax: 076-283251. Email: oil@asiadebit.com

SCHOOL STAFF

needed urgently. Three staff needed: Thai nationals only, please. One language school principal and two experienced English plus Thai language teachers. Must have degrees. Prior language school experience preferred. An excellent salary will be offered for qualified persons and happy working conditions. Email your application letter and CV now to: director.school@gmail.com

Employment Wanted

GERMAN COOK

coming to Thailand in November and looking for job in the gastronomic field in Phuket. I speak English, Thai and Spanish. Please contact. Email: peter.oahburner@freenet.de

HOTEL MANAGER

Manager/Director (F&B, EAM, RM and GM (smaller hotel below 150 rooms) is looking for a new challenge. Worked with several SLH hotels, hotel openings, good Thailand experience. Customer and staff orientated, good trainer, creative and innovative. I am a true boutique hotelier. If you have any leads or interest, please email for a detailed CV and other details. Email: hotelexecutive999@yahoo.com

COOK/WAITRESS

Urgently needed for small restaurant in Karon. Please contact for details. Tel: 01-891-4019. Email: tkoschig2000@hotmail.com

SECRETARY

wanted in dive shop. Do you speak English? If yes, just call us. Please contact. Tel: 09-8749147.

GUTTER FITTER

Man with experience in installing gutters needed. Good salary offered. Tel: 076-264025, 01-7372973.

SALES PERSON/

housekeeper. Island Living requires a Thai person with transport, good English and a good personality, who is used to dealing with foreigners and has marketing experience. Internet and Microsoft Office knowledge a plus. We are also looking for a housekeeper. Pls send resum  with photo by email or call for interview. Tel: 076-223025, 07-2792785. Fax: 076-223018. Email: info@islandlivingcompany.com For further details, please see our website at: www.islandlivingcompany.com

Articles for Sale

FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Exercise bike like-new, with computer and low back support and an 18-exercise multigym in excellent condition. Paid 12,000 baht each, selling for 9,500 each. Call K. Mark. Tel: 076-411963.

FOR SALE

Brand new, gray "Trek" mountain bike, size 54.5-inch, for sale; brakes, levers: Shimano Deore XT; free "can-tainer" by Minoura. Asking 45,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-9092265.

Births



New Arrival!

Jitrarat "Tik" Perirerk of Marriott's Phuket Beach Club and Pieter Willaert of Travel Magazine Belgium are all smiles after the arrival of *Evi Apitchaya Willaert*, who was born 9 September at 3:41 pm at Phuket International Hospital. She weighed 3,095 grams and was 51 cm tall.

Business Opportunities

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

Serviced Office Center
Receptionist Provided
Excellent Location
Tel: 076-239967 - 9

phuket@cbre.com
www.cbre.com CBRE CB RICHARD ELLIS

CAFE, TEA ROOM, RESTAURANT

Very close to the beach, 45 seats, nice kitchen, 3 rooms, fully equipped, everything new. Lease: 5 years. 1.3 million baht + rent at 35,000 baht per month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 04-8448381. Email: garyone1@hotmail.com

BARS FOR LEASE

15 beer bars for lease near Simon Entertainment on Soi Bangla, next to Tiger discotheque. 3 + 3-year contract. All new, opening November 15. Please call Mr Kees for more information. Tel: 01-8267129.

PIANO BAR IN KARON

Restaurant for rent on a 3-year lease for 10,000 baht per month. It has 3 bedrooms, plus shower rooms and toilets. Asking for 950,000 baht in key money. Please call K. Tony for more information. Tel: 01-4778744.

INVESTOR/PARTNER

wanted for a good, new restaurant & beer garden. Email: phuketopportunity@hotmail.com

GUESTHOUSE

for sale or lease. The guesthouse, located only 10-minutes' walk to the beach, has 9 rooms; a kitchen, office, lounge area, pool table and a quiet garden. Tel: 076-342280, 01-9789156. Email: palm@phuket.ksc.co.th

RESTAURANT FOR LEASE



A fully furnished and equipped 30-seat restaurant (Pam's) at Warika Place in Karon is for lease (1- to 3-year contract). Call K. Pam at Tel: 01-8105559 for more information.

UNDERWATER VIDEO

company. Successful Co Ltd, established 5 years ago, has video contract with the largest diving school on Koh Samui. Good price as fast sale required due to relocation of partner. Turnkey. Tel: 077-427047, 01-1700201. Email: andy@idmthailand.com

KATA BEACH

Brand-new guesthouse in the Kata Night Bazaar. Rooms from 360 baht. Name our place and get 1 night free in a luxury room for two with breakfast from October to November. Promotion all rooms: aircon, TV, fridge, wireless ADSL access. We also provide Thai-lessons in an air-conditioned room. Southern Fried Rice restaurant and Phuket's first Chess club. 100/14-15 Kata Rd. Tel: 01-8948446, 01-5972213. Email: sfrkata@hotmail.com Website online in October.

LIVE AND WORK

in Thailand. For the past 2 years I have been running a very successful business on Koh Samui that is ideal for replication in other tourist areas of Thailand. Contact for details and a business plan. Tel: 01-0888156. Email: superstar_photo@hotmail.com

BEAUTY SALON

New fittings, room for sleeping, Western fit-out. Cheap rent, aircon, etc. Tel: 04-842-6293. Email: dflavel@csloxinfo.com

PROFESSIONAL

hairdressing salon for sale. Many regular customers, very good location in Patong. All income details can be proved. Tel: 07-8984338. Website: www.phuketdir/houseofbeauty.com

SOI ERIC BAR

Good location, in the center of soi. 33-month contract. Email: peternumber2@hotmail.com

SHOP OR OFFICE

near 7-Eleven and Laguna, brand new 5m x 15m. 2,000 baht per month plus building costs. Call K. Anong at Tel: 01-7378612.

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

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Complete Magical Entertainer
(with Vern the Bird)

- ★ Stage Show ★ Close Up Magic
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By Dave "Paul" Jones

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Phuket Promotions
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HOTEL COSTS GOT YOU DOWN?
Discounted hotels in all the holiday destinations you want to be.

HotelTravel.com
Book online and save time & money

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

Do you want information? Check the background of your girlfriend, boyfriend, spouse or business partner. We do background checks and surveillance on persons or businesses. Thailand's largest legal service network, Siam International Legal Group. Law Office License No. 6155/2548. Call 24 hours. Tel: 076-345277, 04-0219800. Email: admin@siam-legal.com For further details, please see our website at: www.siam-legal.com

VISA SERVICES

Tired of visa runs? Get a one-year Thai visa, or visas for every country - USA K1/K3 visas, UK Visitor and Spouses visas. Free initial consultation at Thailand's largest legal service network, Siam International Legal Group. Call 24 hours. Tel: 076-345277, 04-0219800. Email: admin@siam-legal.com For further details, please see our website at: www.siam-legal.com

DO BUSINESS

in Thailand. Register your Thai limited company; apply for a work permit or Thai visa through Thailand's largest legal service network, Siam International Legal Group. Law Office License No. 6155/2548. Business licenses, contracts and property transactions by legal professionals at reasonable fees. Call 24 hours. Tel: 076-345277, 04-0219800. Email: admin@siam-legal.com For further details, see our website at: www.siam-legal.com

Miscellaneous for Sale

INT'L DRIVER'S LICENSE
For 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. Contact Christine. Tel: 04-6906612.

Personal Services

ENGLISH TUITION

Private lessons available with TEFL-qualified native speaker. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-8887676. Email: homeawaypatong@hotmail.com

TEACHING ITALIAN

Qualified teacher available to teach Italian to students or staff in the tourism industry. Please contact for more details. Tel: 01-2716990. Email: tutoring_3@hotmail.com

WANT TO TALK ?

I want to listen! Canadian university counseling student requires volunteer native English-speaking Western clients. Let's take positive psychology into action! I will help you to explore problem areas in your life - big or small - AND your hidden strengths and opportunities. Excellent problem-solving skills building for ANY farang! Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-2838313. Email: scotthgoodman@gmail.com

Personals

HANDSOME

Sporty 50-year-old gentleman from Finland is looking for a girlfriend. Email: risto.salonen@kolumbus.fi

BACKGAMMON

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

BUSINESSMAN

seeks Thai lady. Professional, semi-retired American businessman - 41 years old, nice looking, loves sports, travel, and fine dining - seeks smart, intelligent, romantic, affectionate, passionate Thai lady for friendship or companionship. She must be 20 to 30 years old, slim and pretty. Please send email and pictures. Email: diver10@02.ie

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 extras to pay, all-inclusive. Only 1,500 baht. Every Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sunday. Tel: 04-7457024.

FANTASTIC OFFER

for whoever can use it. Feel secure forever! 6 electrical shutters, 1.3mm steel, for your house, office or shed to be built. Tel: 09-6518106, 09-6518107. Fax: 076-388098. Email: weberton@hetnet.nl

CONTAINERS WANTED

Paying cash for shipping containers or used site offices. Ones in need of repairs are ok, too. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-281283, 01-892-4804.

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