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The Phuket Gazette

Volume 12 Issue 41

News Desk - Tel: 076-236555

October 8 - 14, 2005

Daily news at www.phuketgazette.net

20 Baht

The Gazette is published
in association with

The Nation

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Foreign forensic experts check a container full of tsunami victims at Mai Khao. Photo: Stephen Myles

Security boosted after Bali bombs

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn & Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: Police have boosted security across the island following the three October 1 suicide bomb blasts in Bali that claimed an estimated 22 lives and injured more than 100 people.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was reported October 4 as saying the government was prepared for any security threats after the Bali attacks.

Pol Maj Gen Decha Budnampeth, Phuket Provincial Police Commander, urged tourists not to be put off by the higher police profile on the street: "If seeing police working and checking places disturbs your stay, please understand that we are doing this for your own safety."

"Please help us by co-operating, and understand that our

main concern is security," he added.

Pol Col Teeraphol Thipjaroen, Superintendent of Kathu Police Station, confirmed that he had received orders from both Maj Gen Decha and Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura to increase security in Patong.

"We are setting up checkpoints at many places in Patong. I think the chance of a bombing here is very slim, but we are not taking any chances," Col Teeraphol said, adding that officers will co-ordinate regular inspections with entertainment businesses.

"We have asked them to report any bags or suitcases left unattended directly to the police. We already do not allow vehicles on Soi Bangla at night, which makes it safer for tourists."

Phuket Tourist Association President Pattanapong Aik-

wanich said he expected the bombings to have long-term effects on tourism in Asia.

"Australians are the main tourists in Bali. In the short-term, they will turn to other destinations, such as Phuket. However, this will have a negative long-term affect on tourism throughout the region. When tourists want to visit a country, they look at the image of the entire region, such as Asia. If they think it is not safe, they will not come," he said.

Siripakorn Cheawsamoot, Assistant Director of the Phuket office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), believes the bombings will not affect Phuket tourism greatly, however.

He also said more attention should be paid to the affect on tourism of the violence in the southernmost provinces.

TTVI center to close before December 26

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: The Chalong-based Thai Tsunami Victim Identification (TTVI) center will close some time before the anniversary of the Asian tsunami disaster on December 26, police say.

Pol Col Khemmarin Has-siri, Superintendent of the TTVI's Thai Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) unit, said that a written order from the Cabinet to close the center was received by the TTVI following a decision at the September 6 mobile cabinet meeting Phang Nga.

The exact date that the center will cease operations has not yet been announced.

The TTVI was tasked with identifying 3,777 corpses from the six tsunami-affected provinces. As the Gazette went to press, 2,363 corpses had been identified: "619 Thais and 1,744 foreigners," Col Khemmarin said.

PROFILES

Profiles for the remaining 1,414 bodies that include DNA and other forensic data have been drawn up, but have yet to match with information submitted by relatives, he added.

The easier cases of identification, such as those based on matching dental records, have largely been completed and the focus has now shifted to DNA and fingerprints.

Col Khemmarin said the TTVI estimates that about 500 of the as yet unidentified corpses are those of Burmese workers.

Last December 26 there were about 64,000 registered Burmese workers in the six provinces hit by the tsunami. Thus far only 30 Burmese have been identified, using computer fingerprint matching done in Australia.

All Burmese legally working in the country are required to give a set of fingerprints as part

Continued on page 2

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Tsunami victims ID center to close before anniversary

From page 1

of the registration process.

"As for the 30 Burmese workers we were able to identify, we notified the Myanmar Embassy in Bangkok and are still awaiting a reply," he added.

Despite fingerprints and information provided to the TTVI by the International Organization for Migration and other agencies, identifying Burmese victims has proved a daunting task.

"Some victims may have been working in Thailand illegally; others who were working legally and survived the disaster may have gone back to Burma without declaring themselves," he said.

Corpses that remain unidentified when the TTVI closes will be turned over to the Justice Ministry's Central Institute of Forensic Science, which will decide where to keep them when the TTVI morgue in Mai Khao closes.

Col Khemmarin said the identification process has been as stringent as possible in order to prevent the wrong remains being given to relatives.

He cited the example of a woman from Chiang Mai's Fang district who came to Phuket and positively identified a set of remains as those of her younger sister. She then returned to Fang and got a death certificate, allowing her to collect the body.

When the woman returned to Phuket, she didn't have the 50,000 baht necessary to transport the body home and asked for the TTVI to hold on to the corpse while she tried to raise the funds.

A subsequent re-check of fingerprint data revealed that the body was not that of her sister after all.

"We don't re-check the information in order to find fault with people or punish those who may have been involved in the misidentification, only to ensure that the work is as clean and complete and possible," Col Khemmarin said.

"Even though we have no past experience to use as a basis of comparison

in evaluating our work, I can say that we worked hard. Foreign DVI teams rotated in and out on a three-week basis, but the Thai staff have been working here non-stop since February 3."

He said that the TTVI's database would be available to the Central Institute of Forensic Science (CIFS) to make the handover as smooth as possible. The two agencies were involved in a dispute in February when the police ruled that the TTVI would take over identifying suspected Thai victims in Phang Nga, where the work had previously been led by forensics expert Dr Khunying Porntip Rojanasunan. She has now been promoted to CIFS Director.

Patong-Kamala work under way

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: Work on the long-awaited Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) post-tsunami redevelopment projects for Patong and Kamala Beaches gets under way this month, with first-phase landscaping work on both projects to be completed by the end of November, officials say.

On June 13, the TAT received approval from the Budget Bureau of 194.7 million baht for the three-phase Patong project and 96.7 million baht for the work at Kamala, which will be carried out in four phases.

Director of Patong's Public Works Division, Suwat Boonchanawiwat, told the *Gazette* that the Phase I landscaping work in Patong should be about 60% complete by the end of November.

The work involves removing what is left of the Loma Fountain and other damaged structures along the beachfront and re-landscaping the area to serve as a "multi-purpose" recreational area,

with shade to be provided by newly planted trees. Six statues of the endangered leatherback turtle will line the walkways and serve as a showcase for the public park.

Also included will be a large canvas-covered public pavilion, on the beach behind the police box at the foot of Soi Bangla.

Other work will include signs pointing out areas of interest to tourists and building new public bathhouses. New lifeguard towers, 4.8 meters in height, will be built along the beach, and signs indicating tsunami evacuation routes will be put up.

Kamala Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) President Jaran Sanrak said that the landscaping work there would include: clean-up and development of the banks of Klong Pak Bang to serve as a recreational area, increasing the number of tourist information signs, building public walkways, planting more trees and building a small park near the Kamala School.



The center will also issue the new 'Smart' government ID cards.

New 'Public Point' to ease pressure on govt services

By Ananya Hongsa-ngiam & Stephen Fein

PHUKET CITY: The Department of Local Administration (DOLA) and the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) have jointly opened a "Public Point" service center on the basement floor of Big C supercenter on the bypass road.

The center, open daily from 10 am to 8 pm, is connected to DOLA's online system and offers most of the same basic services as a normal District Office, including the issuance of birth certificates, marriage certificates and Thai ID cards.

Services are offered daily, except marriage licenses, which will be issued only on Saturdays.

The Public Point, one of 80 being opened in the country, is part of DOLA's nationwide ef-

fort to improve its services as part of its "Amphur Yim" (smiling district) campaign, launched to mark the August 12 birthday of HM Queen Sirikit.

The Big C branch was opened at a cost of 1.45 million baht, funded jointly by DOLA's Phuket office and the Phuket *OrBorJor*.

DOLA Director-General Siwa Saengmanee, a Phuket native, noted that the new center should take some of the pressure off the overburdened Muang District Office.

It will also give working residents the convenience of obtaining government services outside of normal government working hours, he said.

Non-Phuket residents can also use the service, which in the future will issue the new government "Smart" ID cards, he said.

HRH Princess Sirindhorn to visit Phuket

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PHUKET: HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn will visit Phuket and Phang Nga in October and November, Phuket Governor Udomsak Usarangkura has announced.

On October 26, Princess Sirindhorn will be in Phuket to take part in a *Tod Kathin* ceremony, during which people donate money to a *wat*, at Wat Luang Phu Supa in Chalong, residence of Abbot Luang Phu Supa. At 111 years old, he is the oldest Abbot on the island.

Princess Sirindhorn will be representing the Thai Red Cross in her capacity as Executive Vice-President of the society.

AQUARIUM

Afterwards, Princess Sirindhorn will visit Phang Nga villagers at Baan Nam Khem, Takuapa, Tai Muang, and Kuraburi District, before heading north to meet villagers at Haad Sai Dam in Ranong Province.

From November 12-14, the Princess will return to visit Phuket Aquarium at Cape Panwa, Satee Phuket School, Wachira Phuket Hospital and the Phuket Campus of the Prince of Songkhla University, as well as officiate at the opening of the Radi medical equipment factory in Pa Khlok.

She will also visit villagers at the Koh Yao Islands in Phang Nga Bay.

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New image planned as City takes control of bus station

By Athiga Jundee

PHUKET: Phuket City Municipality has taken over control of the Phuket City Bus Terminal from Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO) in an official handing over ceremony at the station.

In a nod to the PPTO, Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwanasuppana said she would like to maintain the terminal's "many good aspects" while carrying out extensive renovations in the hope of giving the station a "new image".

"The Bus Terminal is the first impression many first-time visitors to Phuket get, so we have to ensure that it is clean, well-decorated and provides good services," she said.

The Municipality will consider how to fund the overhaul once plans and a budget estimate has been drawn up by the Phuket

Public Works Department, which is responsible for the project.

Speaking on behalf of the PPTO, Chief Technical Officer Theerayuth Prasertphol said the handover was part of the constitutionally mandated government decentralization program.

As the PPTO would still be responsible for overseeing bus routes and setting fares, his office would continue to work hard to ensure adequate public transport during busy travel periods, he said.

He also ruled out any further increase in fares this year.

"Rates were increased just three months ago, so we will not raise them again this year even if fuel costs rise," he said.

When asked whether the Municipality had considered a proposal by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) to build a new bus terminal near Tesco-Lotus, on 10

rai of land to be donated by Boat Lagoon owner Kanit Yongsakul, K. Somjai said she had yet to discuss the issue with the *OrBorJor*.

In a follow-up interview with K. Theerayuth, however, the *Gazette* learned that the *OrBorJor* decided not to budget the 38 million baht needed for the project.

"We wanted Phuket to have two bus terminals, with the current station for non air-conditioned buses and the new site for air-conditioned buses and VIP coaches, but in the end the *OrBorJor* chose not to fund it," he explained.

The idea was to cut traffic congestion by reducing the number of buses that have to negotiate Phuket City's narrow streets to reach the terminal.

K. Theerayuth said he was confident that renovating the terminal would result in a new image for the facility.

Gambling tops crime stats again

PHUKET: Statistics released by Phuket Provincial Police show that gambling has once again topped the crime statistics, with 149 people arrested in August for the offense. Thirty-four cases involved the sale of illegal underground lottery tickets.

Eight murders were reported during the month, with four cases solved, resulting in the arrests of six people.

There were six cases of attempted murder with no arrests.

There were 27 reports of theft, with two people charged with snatch-and-run crimes.

Two cases of rape were reported, with one person arrested. One case is still under investigation.

Sixty-seven people were arrested for the illegal possession of controlled substances. Forty-one were charged with the possession of a total of 3,057 *ya bah*

(methamphetamine) tablets. Of the remaining drug arrests, 10 were for marijuana possession, three for heroin possession and one for *krathom* (an indigenous Thai plant that acts as a stimulant) possession. Twelve people were also arrested for substance abuse.

Fifty-two people were arrested for offenses related to prostitution.

Murder victim found in canal

KOH SIREH: Local villagers on September 27 found the body of an unidentified dead man floating in Klong Tha Chin, which separates Koh Sireh from Phuket. The body had 10 stab wounds to the neck and base of the skull.

The police believe that the victim, aged between 25 and 30, was killed more than two days

before his body was discovered. He was wearing a green shirt and green fisherman's pants.

Pol Lt Tiwakorn Kongpetch, of Phuket City Police Station, told the *Gazette*, "We have not found anything to identify the victim, but judging by where he was found and by his clothes, he was probably a Burmese fisherman."



VEGETARIAN FESTIVAL BEGINS

PHUKET: Phuket's Vegetarian Festival began on October 2 with the installation of *go teng* poles at each participating temple. Gods were then invited down the poles to join in the celebrations. Shrines around the island performed the ceremony at exactly 5:09 pm.

Minister of Energy Viset Jupibal chaired the opening ceremony at Phuket City's Jui Tui Shrine, with more than 1,000 white-clad devotees in attendance. Before raising the *go teng* poles, devotees affixed gold leaf to them. At midnight, nine lanterns were hung from the poles to signal the festival's opening.

Ceremonies during the October 3-11 festival include the invocation of the gods Lam Tao (god of the living) and Pal Tao (god of the dead), processions with the gods' images, and mediums bathing in hot oil, climbing sword ladders and walking on glowing coals.

The festival ends with merit-making ceremonies at each temple and a farewell ceremony for the gods on the last night.

11,000 hotel rooms for tsunami relatives 'difficult to find'

PHUKET (*Gazette/The Nation*): The Phuket Tourist Association (PTA) is unsure whether its member hotels will be able to provide the 11,000 hotel rooms requested by the government to accommodate family members of tsunami victims expected to attend the first-year memorial services in December.

The official number of tsunami dead in Thailand was 5,400 people, with about 3,000 more reported missing.

In Phuket, 279 died, with 620 reported missing.

Under the plan, one relative of each victim – as many as 2,400 people, but 3,000 fewer than the official death toll – and around 7,000 people injured in the disaster would be invited to stay as "guests of the government" in rooms at hotels classified as "3-stars" or higher.

The guests will be offered free return air tickets and two nights' accommodation (December 26 and 27).

The government will, reportedly, reimburse the hotels but the amount of the discount and

other details were still being decided by Cabinet, said PTA President Pattanapong Aikwanich.

Many rooms will also be made available for visiting dignitaries, including three heads of state, four presidents, 30 ministers and 64 other VIPs.

The island has a total of about 27,000 rooms, but the number of rooms in the 3-star and up category is only a fraction of that.

K. Pattanapong said it might be difficult to find the required number of rooms as the anniversary comes at a time when occupancy begins to peak.

– Anongnat Sartpisut



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One of the more poignant works on the beach, "Soul to Heavens" by Phaithoon Chongthong.

Artists hit the beach

By Anongnat Sartpisut,
Ananya Hongsa-ngiam
& Sam Wilkinson

There were some puzzled yet amused looking passers-by from September 24 to 26 on Patong Beach and in the beachside Loma Park.

A 25-piece exhibition stretching all the way up to Novotel entitled "Post-Tsunami Solidarity through Eyes of Artists" featured huge inflatable flora, a sea nymph kissing a legless man, what appeared to be a yellow public restroom made from plastic baskets, a metal sculpture of a man emptying his brain and a wooden altar resembling a child's climbing platform.

They're free spirits, these guys, and this was their chance to prove it with some 40 contemporary artists from around the globe co-operating on pieces, presenting solo works and generally letting their creative juices flow in an orgy of texture, form and color.

The event was organized by the Office of Contemporary Art and Culture (OCAC), and its aim was to represent the people of Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi and Trang provinces and to serve as a reminder of those who died in the tsunami.

The OCAC feels that the exhibition of contemporary art is a healing force that boosts locals' self-esteem.

It certainly helped liven up the beach. Uraivan Tianthong, Minister of Culture, presided over

the opening ceremony surrounded by colorful paintings, collages, cartoons and sculptures.

Prasit Vichaya, creator of "Sense of Awareness", a resin and terra cotta sculpture, says that the work is to remind himself of the volatility of life and its impermanence which he feels is the true nature of the world.

He told the *Gazette* that terra cotta represents people's bodies, as the material is made from the Earth. The blue resin represents water, and since water has no shape it is a perfect metaphor for the uncertainty of life.

Phaithoon Chongthong created "Soul to Heavens", made from resin, wood and iron. He said, "The tsunami disaster brought nothing but tragic loss to hundreds of thousands of people who were separated from their beloved families. Grief poured over me and I lamented for those who lost their lives and for their families left behind. This overwhelming feeling inspired me to express what I cannot express in words, by means of a piece of mine, 'Soul to Heavens'."

South Korean Choi Jeong Hwa exhibited his "Black Lotus". He believes the work symbolizes the world's pollution, diseases and cultural problems – all the result of over-development.

Mr Choi claims that the force that causes white flowers to become black is none other than the human race.

Another of his works, "Pleasure of Labyrinth" uses yellow plastic baskets to create a concept of Nature vs Artificiality and Meditation vs Labyrinth, while a third, called "Flower Flower", is made from water-proof vinyl.

Kittipong Suriyatongcheun presented "Mother's Smile".

"A smile usually reveals the feeling of the moment. However, at times, beneath the veneer of a smile, some people disguise their sentiments and keep their secrets locked within themselves," the artist said.

"I have seen many kinds of smile; smiles of sympathy and happiness; a seductive smile of irresistible charm; a denouncing smile of hatred and envy... Yet, only one kind of smile always impresses me every time I see it



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"Sense of Awareness" by Prasit Vichaya.



"Monstrous Wave" (Thongsak Hongpaeng, Muhammad Rojana-Udomsat).



"Flower Flower" by South Koean Choi Jeong Hwa points out that mankind cannot live without nature.

– that of a mother to her child. This smile, I sincerely believe, does not convey status, education, philosophy or any line of thought. It represents pure love, warmth and care, emanating directly from the instinct of motherhood. It's a love that is true and everlasting."

Jakaphan Vilasineekul, a lecturer at Silpakorn University, created a piece named "Lost Angels" that uses candles and bronze.

The art contains a four-meter-tall main candle and six

smaller candles and stupas that have Thai folk dancers inside. The piece is dedicated to all those who died in the tsunami.

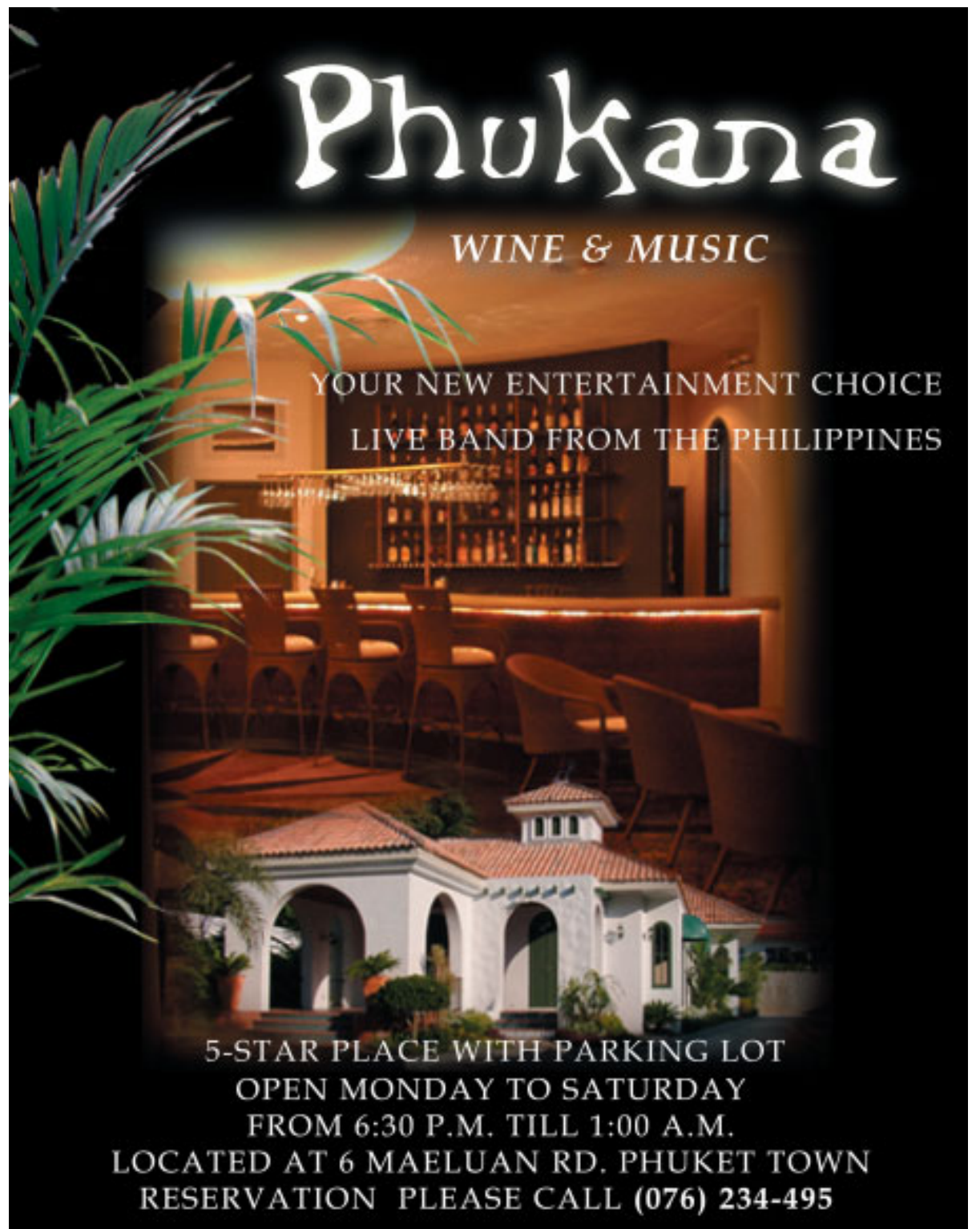
A swing made from metal and tires, by Italian Paolo Canevari, represents the plurality of religious faiths. Each religion gives a positive vision of our common belonging on earth.

If you happened to miss this eclectic, international and interesting collection, don't worry – it will be back at Patong Beach from December 1-31.

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Queer News

Monkey man says he's there to stay

KAMALA: A man living alone in a tree high up in the Kamala Hills has drawn so much interest that the local tambon president has had to order improvements to the path leading to his jungle hideaway, lest his many curious visitors continue injuring themselves in their efforts to reach him.

News of the modern-day Tarzan hit the headlines on September 21, when a group of rubber tappers working in a remote part of Ban Bangwan Village 1 reported him to the Kamala Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor).

They feared that the man would either run amok and attack them or get hungry and steal their food.

The man has been identified as 37-year-old former construction worker Witthaya "Bao" Nuansri, whose given name means "science of the famed cream".

K. Witthaya told a reporter that he took to his arboreal lifestyle some two months before his discovery, after his adulterous wife left him, taking the couple's only child with her, and returned to their home village in Ranong.

Her departure caused K. Witthaya so much distress that his friends at work were unable to console him. Finally, he headed

for the hills, where he has somehow managed to survive on wild fruit.

When news of a "monkey man" appeared in the Thai press, however, so many people tried to scale the path leading to K. Witthaya's hangout that it soon became treacherously muddy; many would-be visitors lost their footing, rolled down the hillside and were injured.

Kamala OrBorTor President Jaran Sararak has been much criticized in recent months for the OrBorTor's delay in cleaning up after the tsunami.

But when word of K. Witthaya reached him, the reaction was swift: he ordered workers to cut steps into the hillside path in order to cut down on the injury rate.

He also told the workers to rig up a system of ropes so that K. Witthaya could hoist food brought to him by visitors up into his tree.

K. Jaran justified the work as a tourism promotion measure.

For his part, K. Witthaya said he had no plans to harm anybody, and wanted to thank the many people who had brought him food.

"I plan to stay in this tree for a long time," he said.

Source: Siang Tai

Marco Moncini collected his prize of a buffet lunch for four at The Metropole hotel, Phuket, from *Gazette* reporter Ananya "Phaeng" Hongsa-ngiam, for displaying a 'We Love Phuket' sticker on his Suzuki Caribbean.



'We Love Phuket' sticker campaign



Yaowalak Theva-Aksorn collected her prize of a Samsonite suitcase, donated by Central Festival Phuket and presented to her by *Gazette* programmer Wannachai "Chay" Jaidum.

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

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Seven troubled districts 'red-carded'

Authorities will assert more control over seven violence-plagued districts in the Deep South of Thailand in order to root out militants operating in the areas and prevent the indoctrination of villagers, Deputy Prime Minister Chitchai Wannasathit said.

The seven districts are Yaring in Pattani Province; Yaha, Bannang Sata and Raman in Yala Province; Rangae, Joh I-Rong and Sungai Padi in Narathiwat Province. They are all listed as "red zones" because of the escalating number of attacks that have occurred there over recent weeks.

District Chiefs, the military and police stationed there will be responsible for implementing a new plan for the districts, which is to be drawn up by the Southern Border Province Peace Building Command.

Officials are currently compiling a list of suspected militants in the areas and plan to enroll them and their supporters in "re-education programs", where they will be encouraged to cooperate with the government to contain the violence, he said.

The plan, which began on October 1, will be evaluated after three months, said DPM Chitchai, the Police General who masterminded the government's first "War on Drugs" in 2003.

Chinese salesmen slain: Motorcycle gunmen in Narathiwat's strife-torn Rangae District shot dead two salesmen from mainland China, Wang Jiangchun, 41, and Wang Guading, 35.

A third Chinese man traveling with the victims, Gwang Jiayong, 35, escaped unharmed.

Capt Songphon Chuymanee of Rangae District Police said four men on two motorcycles



THE AGONY AND THE ECSTASY: Former singer Worayos Boonthong-num, 24, better known as "Power Pat", is escorted from a courtroom in shackles after he was handed a 50-year prison sentence for possession of 2,989 Ecstasy pills, with intent to sell.

drove up to where the salesmen had parked their car and opened fire at close range with handguns. Both victims died from gunshot wounds to the head.

A handful of foreigners, mostly Malaysian tourists, have

been victims of bombings in the region, but the shootings of the Chinese were the first in which foreign nationals were specifically targeted.

The three men entered Thailand on tourist visas and had

rented a car to carry blankets for sale in the restive South, where more than 900 people have died in violent incidents since January 2004.

Drag strip: Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra demanded that Social Development and Human Security Minister Wattana Muangsook reconsider his plan to reduce illegal motorcycle street racing by holding legal drag races.

The first night of racing, held at "Bangkok Drag Avenue" in Pathum Thani on September 25, drew about 500 bikers – some as young as 11 years old – and a crowd of thousands.

PM Thaksin said he ordered K. Wattana to revise the idea, as in his view street-racing gangs are different from legitimate motorsport racers.

"Street-racing gangs also relate to other factors, such as the racers' ego and sexuality. We can see girls standing on the pavement waiting for racers to pick them up," he said.

K. Wattana admitted that bringing bikers to the race circuit was not a absolute solution to the problem of illegal racing on the streets.

His critics say his plan fails to address the crux of the problem: the racers want to be seen as defying authority by speeding on public roads.

Revolt behavior: Led by inmates high on glue, convicts at Lop Buri Provincial Prison staged a violent 14-hour riot to protest a decrease water rations at the facility.

The turmoil, which started with the torching of prison cells and smashing of window panes, was brought under control after Corrections Department Director-General Nathee Chitsawang

gave in to the inmates' demands and ordered two senior officials transferred from the prison and the removal of restrictions on water consumption. Two inmates were injured in the revolt.

K. Nathee vowed to punish the leaders and put an end to glue sniffing at the prison, which is home to some 1,400 inmates, most convicted on drug-related charges.

Lop Buri Prison chief Udom Rattanapokhin, one of the officials transferred, said he did not feel sad about the order.

"I am just glad that the riot has ended," he said, adding that restrictions on water consumption were just in the pilot phase and the inmates might have misunderstood the good intentions behind them.

Bikes pushed: The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) is building bicycle lanes along 11 routes in the capital to encourage residents to opt for the environmentally-friendly alternative to cars.

"The bicycles will reduce traffic congestion and reduce the air-pollution problem. It is also a good choice of transportation given the rising price of petrol," said Deputy Governor Samart Ratchapolsitte.

Work on the lanes has already started should be completed by early next year, taking the combined length of bicycle lanes in the capital from 20 kilometers to 85km.

K. Samart said the BMA would introduce even more bicycle lanes if the new ones proved popular.

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

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Juergen Seidel and one happy dog.



Chariots of the Dogs

By John Dalley

There are many people on the island who donate their time and money to helping the island's less fortunate canine population. Nobody, though, does it in a more unusual way than Juergen Seidel.

Juergen, originally from Rosenheim in Germany, has lived in Thailand for 17 years and on Phuket for the past four. The Evason hotel group's Chief Engineer applies his engineering skills to restore the quality of life of some of the island's most severely afflicted dogs – those

which have lost the use of their hind legs, principally through road accidents.

The Evason group, well known for its philanthropy, has worked closely in the past with the Soi Dog Foundation to control stray animal populations humanely. Now, the group fully

backs Juergen, paying for both time and top-quality materials to allow him and his staff to produce prosthetic wheels for dogs.

I asked Juergen, a life-long dog lover, what had prompted him to start such an exercise.

"My wife was in Phuket City one day when she came across a little poodle lying in the middle of the road after being struck by a car. Unable to locate the dog's owner, she took it to our local vet and, although the dog survived, its hindquarters were paralyzed.

"I began to think about how I could help this animal enjoy a better quality of life, and this led me to make the first set of wheels. The dog's life was indeed transformed, as she became able to run and play with my other dogs.

"Next, I asked my employers if they would be prepared to help me assist other such dogs and they immediately agreed, so I advised local vets of what we could do. We have now helped two further dogs and we improve on the wheels a little more each time."

The device is a simple set of wheels on a frame, with a har-

ness that straps around the dog's waist without interfering with its bodily functions.

"Anybody who has a paralyzed dog is welcome to contact me," Juergen said. "There is no charge for the service.

"Our latest case (featured in the photo), presented a slightly different challenge as the dog has had one leg amputated and has hardly any use in the other. This means we have had to make allowances for balance. Hopefully this dog, now that it can actually move, will eventually regain the use of its other leg."

Similar contraptions, sometimes called "dogcarts", are also custom-made in the US for dogs and cats unable to walk on all fours because of problems such as herniated discs, hip dysplasia or a stroke. The carts bring back fun as well as mobility to disabled pets, and even prove quite a hit at car shows.

For further information contact Juergen E. Seidel, Area Director of Property Maintenance at Evason Resorts & Hideaways and Six Senses Resorts & Spas, on Tel: 076-381010-7 or Fax: 076- 381018.

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Phi Phi cleanup continues

In June earlier this year I highlighted the efforts of Andrew Hewett, who was spearheading the cleanup of the waters surrounding the Phi Phi Islands after the tsunami. Mr Hewett has been on the islands for 12 years, and while fortunate enough to have survived the tsunami with this wife and children, he lost his home and business.

Mr Hewett started The Adventure Club six years ago. The club offers eco-tours around the Phi Phi Islands. Not only has Mr Hewett taken customers on shark watches, and cliff diving and night snorkeling tours, but he has also been active in educating tourists and residents alike on the need to preserve and maintain the environment.

Thus it was logical that he take the lead in the cleanup of the reefs and waters of Phi Phi by establishing the Phi Phi Dive Camp.

MILESTONE

The Phi Phi Dive Camp completed the first phase of its cleanup project on August 14. During the six months, almost 9,000 people took part, removing 250 tons of debris from the water and beaches. Nearly 2,500 scuba divers made some 7,500 dives.

Over the weekend of September 24, the Phi Phi Dive Camp, working in conjunction with the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR), launched a major effort to finish the cleanup.

The DMCR brought along 120 divers and were assisted by Scuba Kat, South Siam Divers and another 50 divers from Phi Phi. The DMCR provided a barge which was used to remove debris, some of which had been collected over the preceding months.

Some divers laid large nets on the bay bottom, while others were positioned at various spots along the beach of Tonsai Bay. Once the nets were filled with debris, they were raised using lifting bags.

Although most of the area had already been cleaned, Mr Hewett explained that the shifting sands of the rainy season had unearthed some new debris.

CORALS

The completion of Phase 1 of the cleanup will be followed by Phases 2 and 3 next month. Phase 2 will focus on restoring damaged corals at five different sites. A reef-monitoring system, called "Reef Check" will be implemented to teach divers the



Andrew Hewett (left), of the Phi Phi Dive Camp, watches on as fellow volunteers and workers from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources pile collected debris onto a barge. In six months some 250 tons of debris was collected in the cleanup.

need for maintenance of the reefs.

The DMCR is also in the planning stages of constructing an artificial reef outside the National Marine Park, to reduce the number of visitors to the dive sites.

Phase 3 will be to promote education on sustainable tourism. The Phi Phi Islands previously had a reputation for environmental degradation and unchecked development.

As Mr Hewett puts it, "Construction was seen to grow out of control," and companies "...were able to conduct their business in whichever way they wanted."

Part of the problem was lack of knowledge of the law, and even worse, no enforcement of it. Mr Hewett proposes to create and fund an advertising scheme

to promote the Phi Phi Islands as a clean, environmentally-aware destination.

Boat captains, tour operators and other businesses will be educated on the need to preserve the environment. If successful, Mr Hewett hopes to keep the island in a state of beauty it hasn't seen in the last 20 years.

Those interested in the activities of the Phi Phi Dive Camp can email Mr Hewett at: andrew@hidef.com

High alert: On September 23 the Governor of Krabi officiated at the first Krabi Tsunami Evacuation Drill at Ao Nang Beach.

Representatives from various government departments including the police, social and medical services and evacuation-response teams took part.

Alarms, placed at various locations on the beachfront were tested. Local business owners, residents and students were instructed on where to go in case of a tsunami. Signs have been placed showing evacuation routes, evacuation meeting points and evacuation shelters.

On the Phra Nang Inn side of Ao Nang Beach, the evacuation meeting point is in front of McDonald's. Ao Nang school, 2.3 kilometers up the road, is the



proposed evacuation shelter. On the other side of the beach, the evacuation site is the shopping mall directly across from the Krabi Resort.

Even though drills and alarm system testing are necessary to ensure the safety of all, let us hope we don't have to use them for real.



ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds

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When people ask me why I have lived on Phuket for so many years, I usually answer that it's for the cheap sex with an endless variety of partners. But the truth is that it's for the endless varieties of world-class cuisine offered everywhere from five-star resorts to the new neighborhood delicatessens that are springing up around the island.

Some new Western-style delis have opened on the island within the past few weeks. One of them, Food for Thought near Chalong Circle, promises good food, good reading and good company.

This authentic Irish deli is the result of collaboration between two of Phuket's most dynamic women, Hélène Fallon-Wood and Julie Hirunchai, who are now calling themselves Thelma and Louise, after the cult movie in which two women become outlaws and drive themselves over the edge of the Grand Canyon.

MEMORABLE

I'm hoping they don't attempt this from Laem Phromthep or some such local landmark, but you never know with these two. Hélène has been the fund-raising chair for Life Home Project and has produced some of the island's most memorable extravaganzas.

Julie is famous for her commitment to supporting the literary arts on the island with her book launches and author receptions at her former Good Earth Bookstore in Kata Beach.

She is also the adopted mother-confessor to a wide host of past-middle-age men who depend upon Julie to solve their problematic love lives.

Neither of these women is hesitant to give their opinions on any subject.

I expect their deli food to be just as colorful as they are, and am waiting for Julie to reopen her literary salon upstairs at the deli. This will be the newest place to find good food and good advice for those who live in the southern zone of Phuket.

The delicate essence of Phuket



Off the WALL

With Bruce Stanley



SUNDAY BRUNCH (from right): Hilton GM Peter Hourigan; Tony Lawson; Stefano Breschi; Mark Phillips; Martyn Smith.

Up at Surin Beach, Paula Ahtye, who has been supplying her wondrous breads to residents of the island's most exclusive villas, has decided to share her talents with the rest of us.

She is opening her own deli near Twinpalms and plans to call it "Paula's". But you'll know it from the lines of eager customers wanting to buy her artisan

breads made from a natural leavening or sourdough which gives them better flavors.

Paula learned her trade at the San Francisco Baking Institute.

She plans to offer what she calls comfort foods for island expatriates who miss their country's favorite dishes such as a creamy macaroni and cheese casserole.

Paula's will be open for breakfast and lunch only, and will serve fresh scones and crumpets and a selection of desserts including cheesecakes.

Eggs Benedict and scrumptious omelettes will be offered from Friday to Sunday.

Cha ne male: I am not the only one who lives on Phuket for the cuisine. There is a dedicated following of Phuketians whose lives seem to revolve around specialty menus and food events. Long-term resident, Lionel Cleary, is well known for his sophisticated palate.

I learned that he is part of an elite group, the *Chaîne des Rôtisseurs*, devoted to the finest dining experience.

They search the best restaurants for exquisite cuisine and Lionel is often joined by members of the local chapter.

Recently, I caught up with Lionel and friends who were comparing the new Sunday brunch offerings at the Sails restaurant in the Hilton Phuket Arcadia and the Sunday culinary event at Oriental Spoon in the Twinpalms Resort. Both brunches are priced at less than 1,000 baht.

The Hilton offers a very nice selection of Japanese sushis and sashimi, and quite a pleasant collection of fresh local seafood, Lionel judged, but at Oriental Spoon, I was totally seduced by the Stilton cheese, smoked salmon and superb oysters.

At both Sunday brunches, a complimentary bottle of wine is offered for each two guests. Both events are popular and early booking is advised to get a seat at these culinary celebrations.

PAWS for thought: October is an exciting month for special events on the island. On October 8, Athena and Howard Cant of the Phuket Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), will be hosting their annual fundraising gala dinner and auction.

It's an elegant affair at Twinpalms. PAWS has succeeded in equipping their mobile clinic so they can now travel around Phuket sterilizing dogs and cats. Call Athena at 01-5979416 if you want to help.

One of my favorite events of the year is the annual Food and Beverage Show which showcases the talents of Phuket's bartenders.

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THELMA AND LOUISE: Julie Hirunchai and Hone Fallon-Wood.

This competition, which draws a crowd of 1,500 participants and their fans, pits bartenders from most of the island's resorts against one another in a contest of who can make the most original or most outrageous cocktail, while juggling bottles, which are often set aflame.

Thai flair for decoration and excess is rewarded, based upon audience response and on the panel of judges who must sample each of the creations.

I was a judge for several years but had to stop as the week-long hangovers afterward got to me. Maybe it was all the Blue Curaçao, which seems to be the favorite local ingredient.

This year's show will be held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel from October 14 to 17 with the National Bartender Contest held on the last day.

The winner will represent Thailand in the World Bartender Contest to be held in Italy later this year.

Also part of the festival is a competition of flower arrangements, ice carvings and bed-making prowess.

Carmen get it: I hear from Zahid Ali, PR whiz at the Sher-

aton Grande Laguna Phuket, that the classic opera tragedy, *Carmen*, by Bizet, will be performed by the European Chamber Opera on the evening of October 23. It will be an unforgettable event under the stars, with three-tier prices starting at just 1,000 baht for general seating.

Tickets are available by calling Zahid at 076-324101-7.

Ba Ba, oh really: Also on October 23, for those of you shy of making a commitment to the one you love, the Phuket Cultural Street Revitalization Committee will be offering an irresistible opportunity to get married in a traditional "Ba Ba" wedding ceremony.

Ba Ba weddings involve a male immigrant from China marrying a local Phuket woman, with the festivities consisting of 12 days of feasting and firecrackers.

A traditional Ba Ba wedding costs US\$500.

Visit www.phuketian.com to register.

If you can't face getting married, then you can always wander over to Thalang Rd in Phuket City on any weekend this month and join in the local cultural festivities.

Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket



Suphan Sae-Jao and Sakchai Titapanya, who were married on July 8 at the Thavorn Grand Plaza Hotel in Phuket City.



Paritchaya Wongwaithaweewong and Kanin Semapakdee were married on September 16 at The Metropole hotel, Phuket City.

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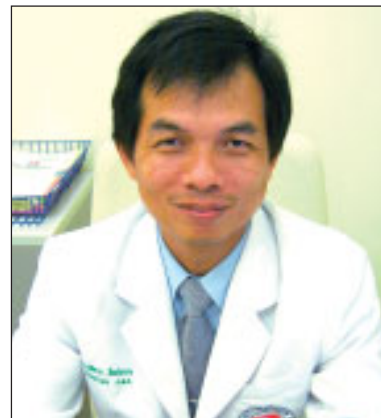
Why not stay the afternoon and relax by the pool or be pampered with a spa treatment! Valet parking available. Reservations are recommended for brunch and leisure activities, just call 076 396 433.





By Shiona Mackenzie

Walking on sunshine



Dr Panitan Suemanothom: beach injuries are easily avoided by wearing protective footwear

On an average day, our trusty feet bear the force of hundreds of tons yet, relatively minor problems like slivers, insect bites, blisters, ingrown toenails, warts and fungal infections are the most common afflictions the foot – a 26-boned biological wonder – has to endure.

Most of us would readily recommend a long, leisurely walk on the beach as a healthy activity, and so it is – as long as we protect our feet from sunburn, burns from hot sand and cuts from sharp objects hidden in the sand. These can be agonizing if you normally wear shoes and your feet are continually protected from the elements, even if your feet are stiletto survivors.

The most tender of tootsies – children's feet – grow at an amazing rate, reaching nearly half their full adult size in the first year, so it can be hard to keep them in well-fitting shoes. However, be-

cause their feet are extremely soft, children run the most risk of foot injury and infection.

Dr Panitan Suemanothom, a surgeon at Bangkok Phuket Hospital, has treated numerous foot injuries among tourists and residents of all ages on Phuket: "Among the most common foot injuries I have seen here are cuts from stepping on broken glass, pieces of tile or sharp shells on the beach, but people also accidentally kick stingrays in shallow water and step on sea urchins in deeper waters," he says.

"These injuries are extremely painful, requiring about a week of treatment, and are easily avoided by wearing protective footwear while swimming and

scuba diving. We should all work harder to keep our beaches clear of rubbish and debris; meanwhile parents need to provide suitable footwear for children at the beach."

So, before legging it to the surf or the swimming pool, take preventative steps, such as applying waterproof sunscreen from head to – literally – toe, putting on appropriate footwear for the beach and even for wading in the water. It may feel uncomfortable at first, but you'll quickly get used to it.

Soft, non-slip, rubber-sole beach shoes, sometimes called "aquashoes", are a wise and comfortable option. And footwear with velcro fasteners or slip-ons

are the best choice for ease and speed if you take them off and put them back on frequently.

Protective athletic shoes and "sport" sandals made of durable materials that allow the foot to "breathe" (not plastic or tightly woven synthetics) are recommended for children. Less pedestrian brands of sensible footwear include Teva, Ecco, Kushies, and Nike, priced at about 2,000 baht and up, although it can be difficult to find sizes smaller than US size 5 (Europe size 36) here in Phuket.

The advantage of sandals over athletic shoes is that they are lightweight and provide excellent ventilation.

If you find your feet too sweaty during the day, a dusting of talcum powder should help, and if the skin of your heels and soles tends to become too dry and cracked, a moisturizer containing lanolin usually puts things to rights again.

Of course, there's nothing quite like wriggling your toes in the sand, once you have made sure the area is hazard-free.

Having had your fun in the sun, always clean and inspect your feet, making sure that they dry completely, particularly between the toes, to avoid the dreaded itch of Athlete's Foot.

If you do bruise, cut or scrape your feet, apply some mild antiseptic ointment and a bandage.

But if the wound becomes swollen and increasingly painful, don't ignore it – many of the problems adults eventually suffer in their lower extremities originate years earlier.

And after a day of pounding the pavement in search of the perfect swim slipper, put your feet up.

As you place them in the expert hands of an expert reflexologist, you will feel your troubles melt away.

"One of the most basic things you can do to relieve sore feet is to soak them in warm water," Dr Panitan recommends – yes, perhaps with scented bath oil, bubbles and candlelight...

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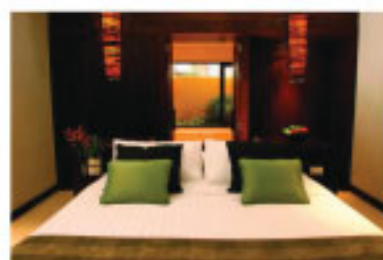
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TREE SCENE: China National Tourism Administration Chairman Shao Qi Wei (center) planted a "Song of India" during his recent inspection tour of Phuket. He is pictured here with (from left) Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Deputy Director of Tourism Products Santichai Euachongprasit, Trisara General Manager Anthony Lark, TAT Beijing Office Director Suwat Juthakorn, and Trisara Director Narong Pattamasevi.



NO SCAREDY CATS: Dr Khunying Porntip Rojanasunan, Deputy Director of the Central Institute of Forensic Science, Thailand, and her daughter, Yarawee Rojanasunan, pose with a tiger cub during their recent visit to Phuket FantaSea.



BANYAN BIRTHDAY: Pancho Llamas (3rd from left), Area General Manager of Banyan Tree Phuket, celebrates the resort's 11th anniversary with Bernold Schroeder, Director of Banyan Tree Hotels, and his wife K. Amber (2nd from left); Susan Lo (4th from left), Assistant Vice-President Global Sales; and John Searby, Banyan Tree Phuket's Assistant Vice-President - Finance.



DRESS FOR SUCCESS: Management staff from Peach Hill Hotel & Resort and from Andaman Canesia Resort & Spa were in high spirits at a pre-high season staff party for the two resorts, staging a Miss Universe contest of their own.



DREAM LANDING: Phuket Vice-Governor Supachai Yuwaboon (6th from left), Serm Phenjati (3rd from right), Director of the Commercial Promotion Department of Thai Airways International (THAI), and THAI ground staff welcome Hoshino Katsushige (center), Chairman of Thai Honda Manufacturing Co Ltd, at Phuket International Airport. Thai Honda recently brought 1,000 staff members to Phuket to give a little boost to the island's tourism industry.



WELL PRESENTED: Stuart Bird (2nd from left) and Andrew Craig (2nd from right), of Watermark bar & restaurant in the Boat Lagoon, and guests enjoy a Presentation Night held recently at the restaurant.

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Drophead gorgeous

The star of the recent Frankfurt motor show, Europe's largest, was the Volkswagen Eos convertible-coupé, although the new Jaguar XK looked pretty tasty, too.

Going on sale worldwide in spring 2006, the Eos is based on Passat and Golf technology – the chassis and power plants – but is a standalone model that was designed as a dual-purpose open or closed car.

Wolfgang Bernhard, Executive Chairman of VW, said at the launch, "The Eos is not a compromise, a product that cannot make up its mind what it is. It is a real convertible and a real coupé."

VW plans to sell the new car on all continents bar Antarctica, and a simple name was considered essential.

The VW convertible-coupé follows in the tradition of the pioneering Peugeot 206 CC and the later Renault Mégane, but as this class of car develops, the exem-



BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

plars are becoming more sophisticated and better looking. Compare the bug-like 206CC with the sleek lines of the new Eos.

Its makers claim the Eos is the world's first four-seater with a five-section CSC (convertible-sliding-coupé) roof. Comprising steel and glass sections, the CSC roof is opened or closed in 25 seconds.

Safety within this type of vehicle can be seriously compromised, but VW has addressed the issue, with a roll-over protection system that shoots forwards above the rear headrests within a quarter of a second after a pre-determined level of lateral g-



SLEEK CHIC: The 3.2-liter V6 Eos, with its standard six-speed gearbox, will reach a maximum of 248kmh.

force is reached or severe vehicle inclination detected. Four airbags are fitted, including side head-thorax bags.

To propel the Eos there are four gasoline engines and one turbodiesel. Power outputs range between 113bhp (85kW) and 246bhp (184kW) for the gasoline engines and 103kW for the diesel lump.

The top-of-the-range 3.2-liter V6 Eos will reach a maximum of 248kmh where legal while the 0-100kmh sprint is achieved in 7.3 seconds. All engines are fitted with six-speed gearboxes, manual or auto, and drive the front wheels.

The Eos is being launched with only one – but high – level of equipment: electronic stability

control; alloy wheels; electric window are all standard, and options include a Dynaudio sound system with a 10-channel amplifier and 10 speakers producing 600 watts, bi-Xenon headlights and cornering lamps.

Electrically-operated "easy-entry" front seats are fitted to allow access to the rear; these move forward at the push of a button, but "remember" their previous positions for both driver and passenger, returning with a press of the same switch.

The trunk is reasonably large and even with the roof down will swallow a decent amount of luggage, although for obvious reasons the roof takes a chunk of cargo space when lowered. A power latching system for the

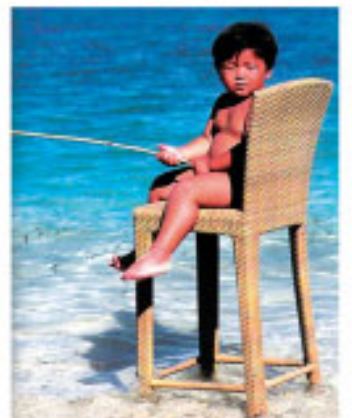
trunk closes the lid the last few millimetres, while there is a lockable through-loading aperture in the rear seat panel to allow longer items, such as skis, to be carried.

The Eos represents a departure for VW from its range of motors for the masses, but is nevertheless expected to be a huge success, notably in Europe where the weather patterns do not always lend themselves to a conventional convertible.

Prices are expected to be in the area of 25,000 euros (approximately 1.23 million baht) when it goes on sale in Germany next year.

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

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On the menu

with

Andy Johnstone



L'Orféo

It's always a treat when someone on Phuket does something to elevate the level of culture without the rest of the population releasing the safety catches of their Brownings.

There appears to be a bit of inverse snobbery here about art – the occasional opera put on tends not to be quite as successful as one would wish, for example – with culture generally viewed as something found in yoghurt.

L'Orféo, which is situated on the way to Nai Harn Beach, is an amalgam of a number of cultures and cultural references. One could say that L'Orféo is the Phoenix rising from the ashes of the markedly "casual" pizzeria that stood there until the day that Nikki and Gregg – from France and Belgium respectively – set eyes upon the site and decided that it would be ideal for their first foray into food.

Well, one could, except that the pizzeria didn't burn down but was dismantled, and "the Phoenix rising from the brick dust" doesn't have quite the same poetic ring to it.

L'Orféo is, of course, the name of an opera by Claudio Monteverdi, who, contrary to popular belief, didn't also design a range of late-'60s supercars.

This restaurant reference to opera in Phuket is not the only one; we already have Carmen, Puccini, and La Diva, and if I had bothered to call Prima Donna and La Scala, I might have mentioned them, too.

It does strike me as somewhat odd, however, that Phuket, with its plentiful supply of Europeans, does not have restaurants called Der Fliegende Holländer or Die Walküre. There are certainly a few Madame Butterflies here who might be willing to play a tune

A bite at the opera



This colorful and mouth-watering presentation, ladies and gentlemen, is just for starters...

on one's Zauberflöte, mind you...

Stepping in to L'Orféo is almost like stepping into another world. Not the underworld of the opera, though, quite the opposite. The walls are a sensuous maroon color, and carefully chosen silks grace the interior, as curtains and as cushion covers.

We recline resplendently on one of the sofas – ours is set on a stage – to choose our aperitifs and starters. I opt for a Ricard and water while my dining companion chooses a *porto*, her first. Cool jazz and chilled Latin beats play while we look around and soak up the atmosphere.

It's all rather sexy in here, actually, a pleasure dome for Phuket's pashas.

We choose L'Orféo's *mélis mélo* (230 baht), a hotch-potch, assortment, assemblage, medley of delights.

Ranking high among these are the quiche Lorraine (a note to trivia fans – Bruce Feirstein, who wrote the satirical novel *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche*, went on to write three James Bond screenplays), potato wedges and dangerously tasty chicken cooked with herbs.

There is also a refreshing peach stuffed with tuna and pleasantly peasant rösti-style dish of roughly chopped potatoes fried with bacon, and – joy of joys – both ingredients have that delightful nutty texture of long, slow frying. Utterly mouthwatering.

Nikki and Gregg are both former dive instructors – Gregg is also an ex-fireman and photographer – who wanted to turn their hands to something else after being on liveaboard diving trips for "... six days on and one day off each week, eating rice and pineapples."

As we plug our way through a carafe of house red (230 baht) Gregg points out that he and Nikki are not out to serve haute cuisine. As he puts it – rather modestly, I feel – "I just cook food; some Belgian food, some French, Italian... substantial food." And substantial the food is.

Gregg's culinary background was born of necessity. When on duty at the fire station,

responsibility for providing the evening meal often fell to him, and, with a little guidance from his mother – "She would suggest a little more of one ingredient here, a little less there..." he kept *les pompiers courageux* well-fed by dousing the fires in their bellies.

I didn't ask if barbecues were a specialty of his.

Nikki looks at us askance when we order our main courses, suggesting – wisely, as it turns out – that we might feel too full. Now, before anyone decries this as "nannyish" behavior, I am quite touched that our comfort is foremost in her mind. Pleasantly sated is good; stuffed like Mr Creosote is not.

We share a chicken fillet topped with medallions of a sublime *beurre maître d'hôtel* sauce – just butter, seasoning, lemon juice and parsley – dauphinoise potatoes, the mozzarella cheese is delectably caramelized, and carrots in a divine mustard, cream and parsley sauce.

A welcome pause – Nikki was right, we are rather full – before we choose desserts. Always partial to chocolate, cake and any combination thereof, I plump for a treat somewhere between a cake and a mousse, made with dark chocolate, although I eschew the offer of ice cream with mine.

Not too sweet but decidedly rich, it is just enough to fill the tiny space I have left, while my companion enjoys a *pommes fantaisie* on a homemade biscuit and topped with vanilla ice cream.

Again, it is not overly sweet, allowing the unadulterated flavor of the stewed apples to the fore. We round things off with a Benedictine coffee, made, as one might guess, with the liqueur produced by the followers of St Benedict, bless 'em.

My companion sips some, but claims that coffee makes her heart beat too fast. Now she tells me; I thought it was my charm. Never one to see something good go to waste, I finish hers too.

L'Orféo is a name that sticks in the mind, and the utterly pleasant evening spent there will draw us back.

L'Orféo Bar-Restaurant, 95/13 Soi Saiyuan, Nai Harn Beach Phuket. (Closed Wednesdays.) Tel-Fax: 076-288935. Mobile: 01-9560204. Email: lorfeorest@aim.com

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Surprises are the rule when nature is in charge

The 2005 Australia and New Zealand vintage is once again a record-breaker, with an above-average quantity of exceptional grapes. Reports from Chile and South Africa are also promising.

A plentiful crop of such a size, rather than creating a glut, should – hopefully – offset the effect on prices of transportation incurred by the rising price of oil, resulting in little or modest increases in the price of wine on the supermarket shelves.

Often, people ask me how there can be such large variation in the size of a harvest from year to year, and how a large harvest can yield good quality wine. The answer is complicated, so let me explain as best I can.

The size of harvest in any year depends upon, among other things, the grape variety and the quality of soil in a vineyard, how the winemaker prunes the grapevines, the weather during the current growing season, and the previous year's weather.

People are often surprised to learn that the weather during the previous year has an effect on the size of the following year's grape crop, but this is one of the most important factors determining the size of a harvest.

All the fruit a grapevine will bear the following year is determined in the current year. If you dissect a bud taken from a grapevine shoot and examine it under a microscope, you will see that the tiny grape clusters for the next harvest are already formed.

WINE



By Steven Roberto

Deciding how to trellis a grapevine and how many buds to leave after pruning determines the potential amount of fruit a vine can produce.

Pruning is one of a winemaker's most important

tasks because if too much fruit is left, it will not ripen.

However, if too little is left, the vine will produce excessive vegetative growth, mildew, unwanted herbal flavors and little fruit taste.

Some varieties, like Zinfandel, are prolific producers of fruit while others, like Viognier, produce little.

Each variety has its preferred climate, and since climate and sunlight varies from year to year, so too does quality and quantity.

Unexpected precipitation and frost at crucial periods, such as flowering time, can reduce the potential crop of grapes.

Soil quality and the amount of water available also determine crop size and quality. Too much

of both and there will be only a modest harvest. Not enough and the result is the same.

Surprises are the rule when it comes to winemaking, and predicting the size of a crop is almost by definition a journey into unpredictability.

Winemakers, like consumers, must wait to see what nature has in store, year to year. This relationship with nature's arcane rhythms is but one of wine's many mysteries.

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

PHUKET DIARY

Every weekend until November 6: Seven Weeks of Cultural Roads.

Thalang Rd, Krabi Rd and Dibuk Rd, the hub of Phuket City's Old Town, are the center of attention for a melange of arts, crafts, performances and food.

Set amid glorious Sino-Portuguese architecture, the festival begins at 7 pm and ends at 11 pm every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. China, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Iran, Portugal, the Netherlands and Britain are all represented, as is the culture of Phuket itself.

October 16: The Soi Dog Foundation Puppy Day

will take place at the SDF Clinic in Phuket City, from 11 am to 6 pm. Fun for all the family – including pets. There will be a puppy show, a demonstration by the Phuket International Dog School, as well as refreshments.

Visit www.soidog.org for more information, or Email: dalleyg@csloxinfo.com

October 23: 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 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 Karon Circle Pond (Nong Harn) and goes along the beach road right up to Kata Noi Beach and Kata Viewpoint.

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

November 26: Phuket International Soccer 7s.

The 3rd Phuket International Soccer 7s will be held in Phuket on November 26 and 27.

This is an invitation tournament that provides a socially competitive environment for players who approach the game with the right attitude and spirit.

This competition attracts about 20 teams from all over the world, and it is hoped that the event will become a major attraction in Asia for expatriate soccer players.

Teams come from Asian countries, Australia, New Zealand, and also Europe. Some teams from France and the United Kingdom have expressed an interest in taking part.

For further information please call Tel: 06-9998839 or Email: alain@reperages-thailand.com for more information.

November 26: Phuket International Women's Club's Annual Gala 2005.

The Phuket International Women's Club Annual Gala this year is "An Evening with the Stars" – a movie theme.

It will be at the Hilton Arcadia Resort & Spa, and starts at 6:30 pm. Come dressed as if you were going to the Oscars.

Tickets are 2,500 baht each, including a four-course meal and drinks. A well-known Lai Thai orchestra will provide entertainment throughout the night. Many prizes will be there to be won and other items will be auctioned off.

All profits will go to the PIWC education fund.

For further information contact Nor Moorhouse at Tel: 01-9581383, or Email: normoorhouse@yahoo.com

December 4-10: 19th Phuket King's Cup Regatta.

The 2005 Phuket King's Cup Regatta gets underway at Kata Beach Resort on December 4 with registration and the skippers' briefing followed by a

practice race off Kata Beach. Race Day 1 ends with a candle ceremony at Mom Tri's Boathouse to celebrate HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's birthday, followed by the prize giving.

More information and the event's full program may be found at www.kingscup.com

December 4: 12th THAI Airways Laguna Phuket Triathlon.

Some 250 athletes, including champions Craig Alexander and Nicole Hackett, have already registered for this international sporting event, which is expected to be the biggest triathlon on Phuket to date.

In addition to the main event starting at 8 am, while the triathletes are completing the cycling course, there will be a fun run starting at 9 am.

Some 200 people have already registered to take part in the fun run, but as runners must complete one lap of the six-kilometer course before the triathletes return, competitors must be aged 12 or older and the number of entrants is limited to 400.

All competitors must register in advance. For further information contact Paula Himel at Tel: 076-324060, or Email: triathlon@lagunaphuket.com



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Beirut – a gamble that is paying off

TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

Browse through a Beirut hotel postcard stand or flick through the Technicolor panoramic posters sold by the pavement vendors and the pictures are all of the city in the early 1970s. They show sunny, tree-lined, contented scenes that are a world away from the strife-torn metropolis made familiar to us today by television news. “War, what war?” the old images seem to ask. “We’re back in business.”

It is a similar situation when you speak about the events of the past 30 years to Beirut natives – charming, cosmopolitan, well-traveled, endlessly courteous and knowledgeable polyglots – and that’s just the taxi drivers. Mention of the conflict, which literally tore the “Paris of the Middle East” in two, is received with a



BACK IN BUSINESS: (above and above right) Much of the architecture that earned Beirut the moniker “Paris of the Middle East” has been rebuilt since the strife began 30 years ago.

smile, a shrug and a brief comment before the conversation moves on to the present and, more importantly, the future.

Make no mistake about it,

Beirut is rapidly rejuvenating itself. The Green Line, which divided Muslim West and Christian East Beirut during the civil war years, is now something of a tour-

ist attraction – and immediately to the north lies what must be the biggest reconstruction site in the world.

In addition to new hotels, shops and offices, the historical core, including Martyrs’ Square, has been almost totally restored. The old *souks* (markets) are thriving, residential neighborhoods are being preserved, and on the coast there is a marina with moorings for 1,000 craft.

The diaspora of yesteryear is now being reversed, with expatriates returning to Beirut in ever-increasing numbers. True, there is still some unease in the south of the country on the border with Israel, but there are few echoes of this in the capital. While this is still essentially an Arab city, the new blood is making its presence felt, and there is a new spirit afoot in more ways than one.

Situated on a promontory approximately half way down the coast of Lebanon, Beirut is bordered by mountains (there is skiing in winter only an hour away) and much of the city also enjoys splendid panoramas out over the Mediterranean.

Layered with history – the Roman ruins at Baalbek, outside the city, rival Pompeii or Rome – there is a strong sense of presence and authority.

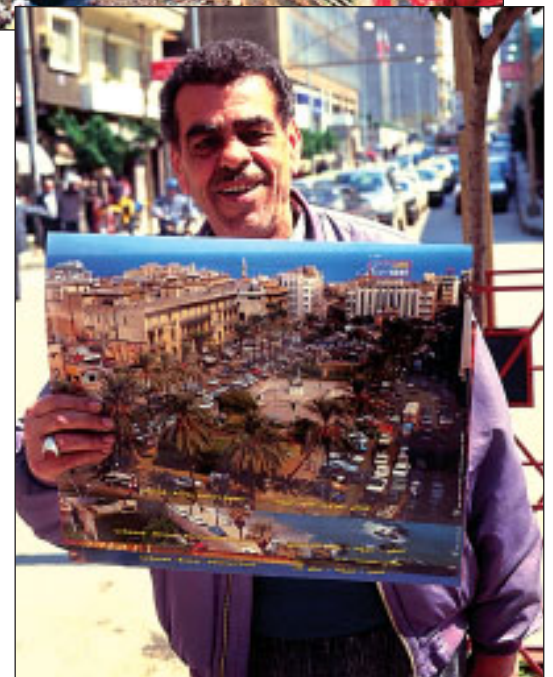
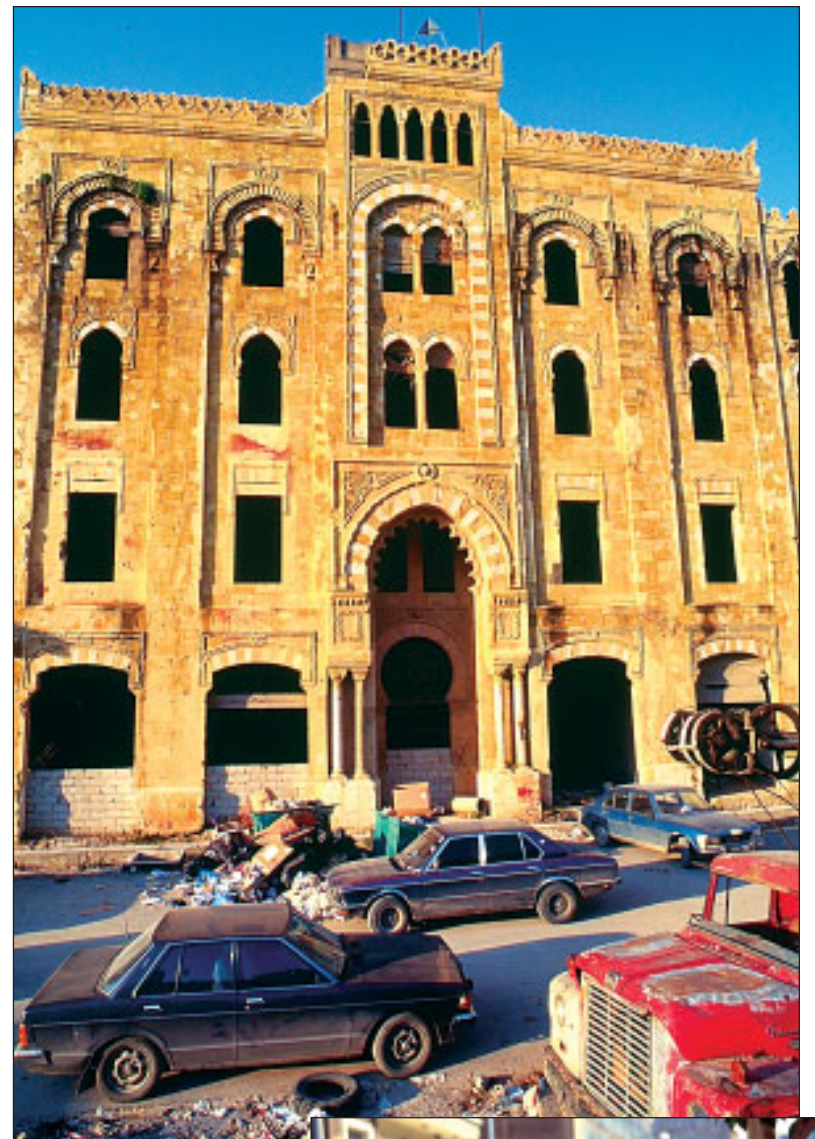
With a million or so inhabitants, the city is a fairly spread-out affair, but many of the businesses, embassies and government offices are concentrated near the old center in the Hamra district and the Ras Beirut district – home to the American Univer-

sity of Beirut – while just to the southwest is the seaside Rawche area, with its landmark Pigeon Rocks.

Perhaps the real sign that Beirut is up and sprinting was the reopening of the Casino Du Liban. It is a combination of “Cinderella” and “Alice in Wonderland”, with eccentric regulations (compulsory jacket and tie, no bank clerks admitted), sparkling over-the-top interior décor, and hordes of *hoi polloi* in the public gaming rooms.

Everybody entering anywhere except the slot machine area needs an ID card to register, but, for obvious reasons, they are keen to get you inside so this is the work of a moment.

There are four restaurants and a nightclub, although attention really is concentrated on the blackjack, roulette, poker and punto banco tables. Of course, the biggest wager has been placed by Beirut itself, gambling on its future: it is currently well ahead of the game.



Even the street vendors seem to be carrying the expression, ‘War, what war?’

Rak Mak! Awards

This week's lucky numbers:

กจ 3437
ภูเก็ต

Burgundy Lancer

ก 5858
ภูเก็ต

Black Toyota Vios

กจ 7985
ภูเก็ต

Gray Honda Civic

กจ 7706
ภูเก็ต

Silver Honda Jazz

กข 3524
ภูเก็ต

Navy Blue Ford

บต 260
ภูเก็ต

Green Nissan

The first three of these vehicles' owners to contact us can choose from the following three prizes: a one-hour refreshing spa for one at the Aspara Spa, at the Holiday Inn Resort Phuket; or dinner for two at Ka Jok See Restaurant, in Phuket City; or a Fusion Thai Set Dinner for two at Baan Yin Dee Boutique Resort Phuket.



Ka Jok See



The Aspara
Holiday Inn Resort Phuket



Please contact the Gazette quickly to ensure you get the prize you want.
First come, first served!

Email: LovePhuket@PhuketGazette.Net, or call K. Pam at Tel: 076-236-555.

Offers expire October 18, 2005.

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Jungceylon Plastic
Surgery Clinic



KATA GROUP
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PROMJAI DENTAL CLINIC
หรือคลินิกทันตกรรม



The Cryptic Crossword

Hidden Words

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

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

- ACROSS
1. Abducted child took 40 winks. (9)

6. Big hit for Greek writer. (5)

10. Pa airy, but sick – has hives. (6)

11. Serious length for a burial ground. (9)

14. I'm in the pound; leg it! (4)

17. Thanks at middle of, like, pretentiousness. (11)

21. A pose adapted by fabulous writer. (5)

24. Young Washington couldn't. (4,1,3)

28. Little demons found in limp skin. (4)

29. Flay southern relatives. (4)

30. Surgical procedure not on – note for singing style. (8)

33. Turn UK sod to get merit. (5)

36. Fat-free, guts churned by vote battler. (11)

40. Fake letter to bad actor. (4)

44. Harlot Beth has an engagement.

47. The French entered fair soccer team.

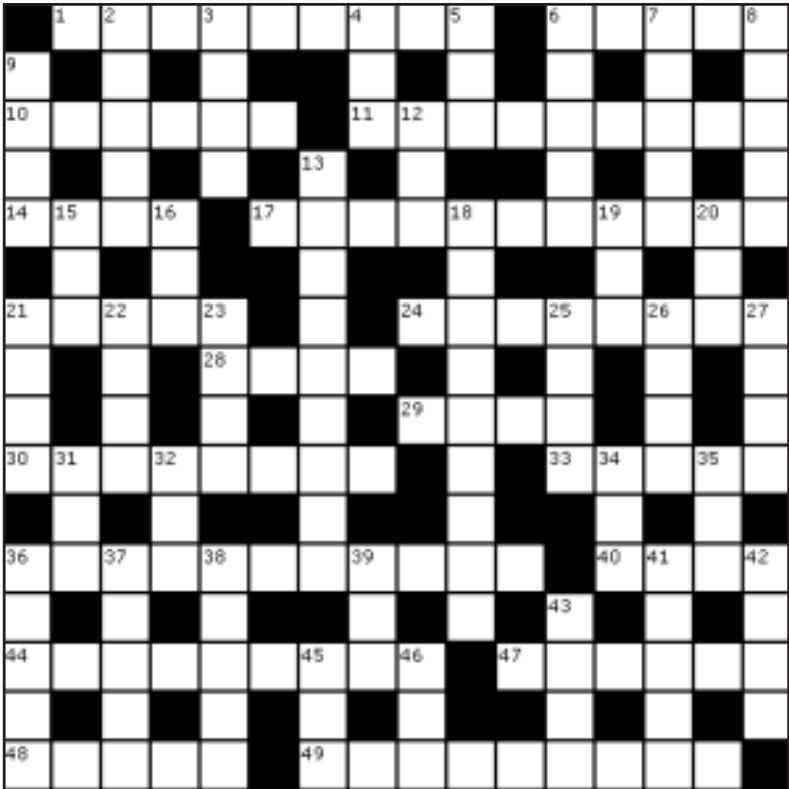
48. Put direction into oriental new year belief.

49. Will try a shirt after the chaps.

- DOWN
2. I do in one thousand, in a manner of speaking. (5)

3. Swot points to road. (4)

4. Coat hook is quiet, for



Compiled by Tortuus. © 2005

- example. (3)

5. Big number not applicable to inheritance from parents. (3)

6. Ha! Takes a wish to get a carnivore. (5)

7. 1,001 twice in a city. (5)

8. Dangerous gas promotion Ron holds. (5)

9. Kind of boy in the bedroom? (4)

12. Paddle, we hear, for caviar. (3)

13. The kids are going before
- summer. (9)

15. Mike drops Monsieur President-General. (3)

16. Frightener gets knighthood from book. (3)

18. The end game, examine spouse. (9)

19. Disturbed, ate a drink. (3)

20. Say yes to Marcel. (3)

21. Bullets? Morning, Doctor! (4)

22. Cheap way to go boating? (4)

23. Greek letter addresses California printer's points. (4)

25. Greasy North Korea follows Los Angeles. (4)

26. Praise the Lord, say.

27. Love god strangely sore.

31. Exercise you do a little in France. (3)

32. British pilots caught in air affair. (3)

34. American warship carries us to the bend. (3)

35. The eggs are finished, I'm told. (3)

36. Clog South African Bank of Thailand. (5)

37. To have fun outside mattress. (5)

38. Perch for jumper and saint. (5)

39. Basque terrorist's time of arrival? (3)

41. Quiet place may have a point. (5)

42. Pit's not yours! (4)

43. Cut off slime to become not fat. (4)

45. Get bowler back, thanks to hospital. (3)

46. Sal's back to Vegas. (3)

EZ TRIVIA

1. What is the name of the hurricane that hit the US states of Texas and Louisiana after hurricane Katrina?

2. How long have dinosaurs been extinct?

3. What does NASA stand for?

4. What does "2003 UB313" designate?

5. What is the name of cartoon character Tintin's dog?

6. How did Julius Caesar die?
7. Name two body parts that are also parts of a book.

8. What was France called during the Roman Empire?

9. What was the name of the rapid industrialization campaign by the Chinese Communist Party from 1958 to 1960?

10. What was the pseudonym given to a serial killer active in the White-chapel area of London in 1888?

Brain Buster!!

Fon, Lert, Bik and Nui went to the Mid Road Dog Shelter to rescue some dogs.

Frisky and Pal were black with pointy ears; Snoopy and Wiggles were white with floppy ears; Frisky and Snoopy were sleeping.

Fon didn't want a black puppy, and Lert didn't want a puppy with floppy ears. Bik didn't pick a puppy that was sleeping, and Nui took the puppy that Bik and Fon didn't want.

Who took which puppy?

Answer on next page

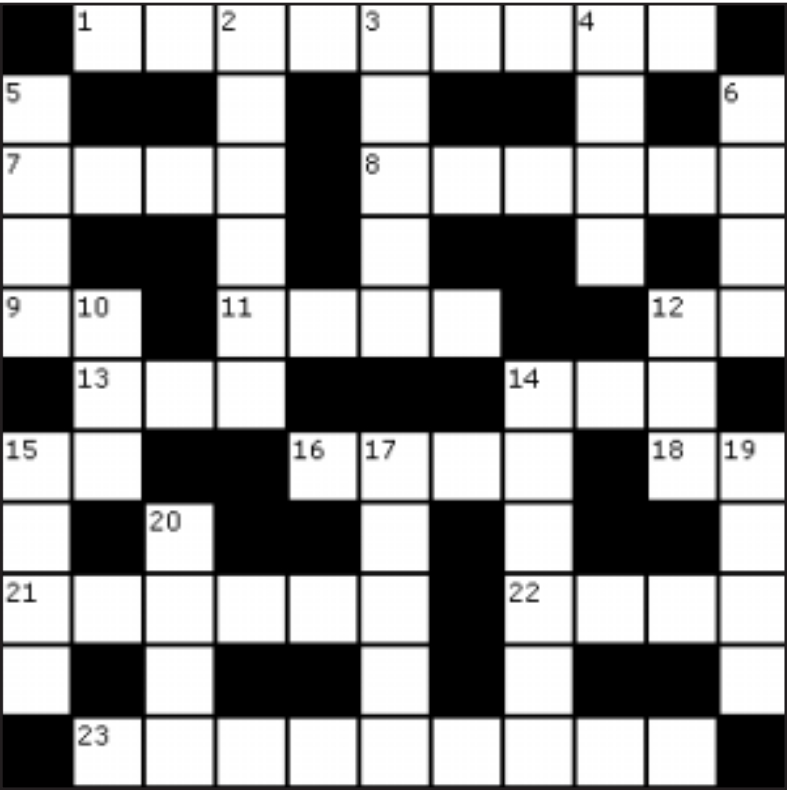


Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

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. Beware: there is only one solution to this puzzle, which is on the next page.

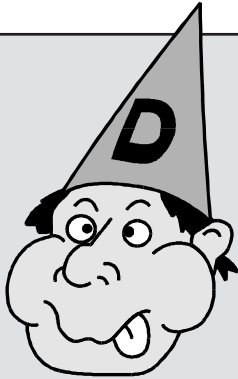




Quick Crossword

- ACROSS
1. Ums and ers.
7. Indian exercise regime.
8. Gas essential for life.
9. Belonging to.
11. Reverberation.
12. Saint, for short.
13. Not even.
14. Dove call.
15. You and I.
16. Operatic song.
18. Negative.
21. 1984 author.
22. Concept.
23. Harmless.
- DOWN
2. Trapped.
3. Molar or canine, for example.
4. Omelet essentials.
5. Printing mistake.
6. Clove hitch or bowline, for example.
10. Enemy.
12. Male offspring.
14. Gambling house.
15. Instruction to a horse.
17. Religious talisman, maybe.
19. Semi-precious stone.
20. Elegant waterbird.

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



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

1. Precisely what is measured in Scoville Heat Units on the Scoville Scale?
2. What are the two main ingredients of the baked dish "Toad in the Hole"?
3. If one has *mole* on one's food, which cuisine is one eating?
4. Where would one be if walking around Wyld?
5. What are chads?
6. Klemheist, Prusik and Monkey's Fist are types of what?
7. In aeronautics, STOBAR stands for what?
8. Sam Vimes is a character in which series of books?
9. Which French philosopher died October 8, 2004?
10. Which chemical element has the atomic number 23?
11. Who is the current Formula 1 world champion?
12. Who managed Manchester United before Sir Alex Ferguson?
13. What is the name of the lead singer of the Scorpions?
14. What animal lives in a sett?
15. Traditionally, what sort of dog hunted this animal?
16. Celine Dion won the Eurovision Song Contest in 1988 for which country?
17. What was the name of the middle-aged pedophile in Nabakov's classic book, *Lolita*?
18. What does a conchologist collect?
19. How many gallons are in a firkin of beer?
20. Which poet, engraver, artist and visionary was thought insane by his peers?

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Hidden Words Solution

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

EZ Triva Answers

1. Rita; 2. About 65 million years; 3. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (the US space agency); 4. It is the temporary name given to the 10th planet in our solar system, the discovery of which was announced in July, 2005; 5. Snowy; 6. He was stabbed; 7. Spine, appendix; 8. Gaul; 9. The Great Leap Forward; 10. Jack the Ripper.

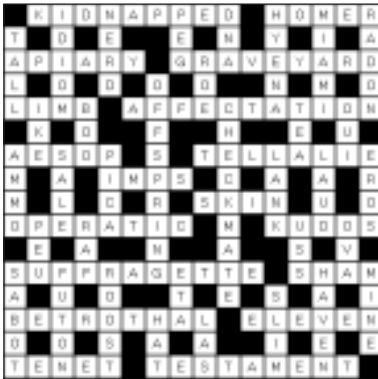
Monster Quiz

1. The spiciness of chili peppers; 2. Yorkshire Pudding and sausages; 3. Mexican; 4. On the far side of the Moon. It is a crater; 5. The paper particles created from the holes in punched cards; 6. Knots; 7. Short Take-Off But Arrested Recovery; 8. *Discworld*; 9. Jacques Derrida; 10. Vanadium (V); 11. Fernando Alonso; 12. Ron Atkinson (1981-1986); 13. Klaus Meine; 14. A badger; 15. A Dachshund ("badger dog"); 16. Switzerland; 17. Humbert Humbert; 18. Shells; 19. Nine; 20. William Blake.

Brain Buster

Answer: Nui took Frisky, Lert took Pal, Fon took Snoopy, and Bik took Wiggles. Hint: Fon wanted Snoopy or Wiggles while Bik wanted Pal or Wiggles, but neither wanted to take Frisky.

Solution to this week's Cryptic Crossword



Solution to this week's Quick Crossword



Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle



The food, the bad and the wobbly

There are so many clueless yet self-opinionated "experts" out there it is a wonder that PhD doesn't stand for "Perfectly hopeless Dolt".

With no qualms whatsoever, the writer at bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A113923 regales us with his homespun wisdom for which we all should be extremely grateful.

"Beaches should be almost deserted, with soft Latin or reggae music playing in the background, almost inaudible, from a shack. A shack is a beach bar where they serve drinks the way they should be – out of glass bottles, with a straw and a little umbrella. The sand is not dirty or gravelly, or has cans and seaweed embedded in it, but it's not pristine white either. It's just a toasty golden brown somewhere in between."

Now, we all feel so much the better for that, don't we? At least we know that a shack is a "beach bar."

OUTSIDE IN

By Lis Kinswoman

Once again, Lis Kinswoman lets her browser do the walking and sends it out for a bag of Internet chestnuts for you to enjoy. So put the kettle on, light a fire and roast a few of these little chestnuts. As usual, Lis quotes and does not embellish; daft spelling and all.

Peter Paranoia on his travels:

In foreign lands Peter can raise his ugly little head far more often than he should. Witness:

"Don't trust anyone! Everyone in Thailand is out to rob you. I got really bad advice from some co-workers, like to book my tour through TAT. In reality, there is no such thing as TAT Tourism, it's a front. That set me on a bad roller coaster of scams. I got ap-

proached by jewelry sellers, fake jungle tour guides, and many others who wanted my money. And on the last day my credit card got stolen, too, in my sleep. They'll think of a million reasons why you should give them your passport, too. Don't!"

And again: "Look both ways, look up, down and then both ways again and then go and find a bridge or an underpass because everybody in Bangkok with wheels is trying to kill you." virtualtourist.com/travel/Asia/Thailand/Warnings_or_Dangers-Thailand-R-1.html

Bon appetit: This poor dearie had just got over a bad bout of the runs and was on medication when the following happened at a Patong food stall. "Last night I dined at a cheap chicken-rice stall. I ordered the speciality, 'kow mahn gai' (chicken over rice), and when almost done eating it, in the dim fluorescent lighting, I noticed that the chicken was decidedly GREEN!!! Now, fluorescent lights give everything a rather greenish hue, thus my delay in noticing. But when I peered closely, I could definitely see green streaks running through

the meat. My girlfriend agreed. She said it was 'mai soht' (not fresh) and 'sokaprok!' (dirty!). Luckily my hotel was nearby. In five minutes I was bent over the toilet with my finger down my throat. With the antibiotics in my system I probably could have eaten out of a garbage can, but why take a chance?" stickmanbangkok.com/reader/reader304.html

Hamming it up? Even though naughty old Lis likes to rap the knuckles of the Internet food pseuds, she never thought she would be reading the likes of the following at <http://www.trv.net/trv98/diningout/burg2.htm>

She almost jumped out of her sensible shoes when she found: "It wasn't until 1997 that McDonalds put Phuket on the world map of burgers. Until then natives and tourists had to put up with seafood, steaks, soups, rice, spaghetti, croissants and all the other so-called 'cuisines'."

The Golden Arch of McDonalds changed all that. REAL FOOD emerged. Within weeks, Kentucky Fried Chicken and Burger King followed suit. A new age dawned. Stone-age

Phuket was transformed into the modern Phuket of today - with Burgers Unlimited."

More culinary adventures: "We were walking around near the restaurants about 5 o'clock afternoon. We were hungry, but not that much. Outside one restaurant two waitresses were trying to bring in punters. It looks nice enough, so we go in. We are the only customers. We have chicken fried rice each and two Fantas. As always I checked the prices off the menu before they are taken away. It should be 250 baht. We finish eating and I ask for bill. Waitress comes over with calculator and says '2,500 please'. I say, I think you made a mistake. 'No mistake sir, your bill is 2,500 baht.' I ask for the actual bill it reads - chicken fried rice twice and 2 Fantas - 2,500 baht. I ask to speak with boss. 'Boss not here today', (she's very angry now) Noi gives me her jai yen yen look. 'Look sir, your bill is 2,500 baht, please pay it.' I take 250 out, leave it on table and leave. If looks could kill."

<http://www.stickmanbangkok.com/Weekly/weekly217.htm>

A lame sequel to a genuine original

Two years ago, John Burdett wrote a genuinely original novel called *Bangkok 8*, lavishly praised by such masters of the detective thriller as James Ellroy and Carl Hiaasen. Burdett's Bangkok, in fact, bore many similarities to Hiaasen's Miami, both being cities of farcical extremes.

Burdett's sequel, *Bangkok Tattoo* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2005, 302pp) is a shambles. The clumsy plot spirals wildly out of control, and the characters are a dreary series of grotesques.

The main problem is one of narrative tone. The narrator is the same, police detective, Sonchai Jitpleecheep, but his attitude has changed. While *Bangkok 8* was chock-full of warmth and wacky humor, Sonchai is now peevish and preachy.

In the first novel, Sonchai used a female CIA agent as his sounding board to articulate his Buddhist perspective on life as opposed to a Western one. In the second, he addresses the reader directly as "farang". He is insufferably pompous and smug. His many rants against America, in particular, grow tiresome and gum up the plot. And the interminable fulminations against capitalism and Christianity do not sound as if they are coming from a Thai Buddhist at all, but from an arrogant left-wing Brit with an ideological ax to grind.

This aside, it is hard not to feel sympathy for Burdett, faced



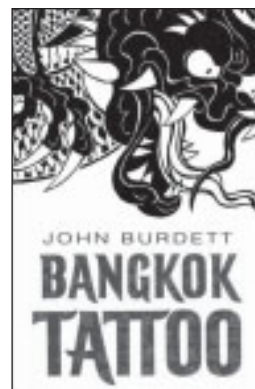
with the daunting task of topping *Bangkok 8*.

Sonchai picks up where he left off in *Bangkok 8*. His ex-prostitute mother and his police boss Colonel Vikorn are partners in a new bar on Soi Cowboy – The Old Man's Club, dedicated to geriatric tour groups gaga on Viagra.

At the beginning of this sequel, at least, there are flashes of his old exuberant humor:

"What we left out of account was that these sexta-, septa-, octa-, and even nonagenarians were not old men of the serene, humble, and decrepit genre we were used to in the developing world. No sir, these were former rockers and rollers, swingers and ruggies, ex-hippie veterans of Freak Street in Kathmandu, San Francisco (when there were beautiful people there), Marrakech, Goa before it went mainstream, Phuket when there were only A-frame huts to sleep in, the world when it was young and LSD grew on trees along with magic

The clumsy plot spirals wildly out of control, and the characters are a dreary series of grotesques



mushrooms and a thousand varieties of marijuana. Scrawny contemporaries of Burroughs and Kerouac, Ginsberg, Kesey, and Jagger (not to mention Keith Richards), these boys, doddering though they might appear, had once taken a tribal vow never to underdose. You're only supposed to take half a Viagra to enhance performance, but would they listen? The hell they would. Some popped as many as three or four."

Some suffer the inevitable heart attacks, but "The others uniformly declared they'd gone to heaven without having to die first."

The story opens when a CIA agent named Mitch Turner, last seen in the company of the star bar girl Chanya, is found dead in a hotel room near The Old Man's Club. Turner has been castrated, disemboweled and left with the skin stripped completely off his back. His last post was to skulk around Sungai Kolok in Narathiwat in search of al-Qaeda. The charmingly corrupt Colonel Vikorn wants the blame deflected

from Chanya and towards Muslim terrorists. Sonchai obliges in the cover-up, and then embarks upon an investigation into what really happened.

The beautiful bar girl Chanya grew up in Surin amid rice paddies and water buffaloes, built her poor mom a house with her earnings, and put her siblings through school – the curriculum

vitae of the heroines of at least 50 novels written by Westerners.

Chanya is a bit different because she has plied her trade successfully – making \$100,000 – in El Paso, Las Vegas and Washington DC. Washington is where she met CIA agent Mitch Turner and, to be fair to the author, their relationship is handled with some sensitive complexity.

But on their return to Thailand, we are back in cartoon land again. I will not belabor the creaky plot except to reveal that the tattoo of the title refers to the trade in human skin. Just another grisly detail in this sad sequel.

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Stool Pigeon



A message from Glasgow

In his first letter to me he wrote:

You at the Gazette have my full permission to print my name, I have done nothing to be ashamed of. Whilst I would like K. Ghee to make a full recovery, I have no regrets or feel no remorse...I was only defending myself. Trust me, you would have done the same. I know I can never return to Thailand. I will miss a lot of my friends in Patong. I have played darts [in the league] for 4/5 years, and I've never had any problems in Patong, only when your innocent Mr Ghee was about.

Every farlang in Patong knows the article is full of shit, I've even had friends in Patong telephone me, SMS me, and email me with their support. I've had the guts to give you permission to print my name so why don't you as a reporter grow a pair and report the truth?

*Yours truly,
TOMMY*

As for K. Ghee's side of the story, it seems we may never get

it – he still cannot speak coherently. He has been taken back to his home village, where his family is now taking care of him.

Ironically, his long-term partner K. Supin has opened a little bar on Soi Kebsup, just opposite the Piccadilly Bar, and only a few feet from where the sad incident took place.

Bar bells: Most foreigners who decide to invest in a business in Patong gravitate towards the bar trade, many with visions of sugar plums dancing in their heads. After months of having to spend most of their waking hours in the bar, however, many wake up one day to find that these visions have disappeared – and the only thing left resembling a sugar plum is their Chang-sculpted physique.

Those seeking to invest in a healthier lifestyle choice might want to stop in at the Fit Club gym, run by the friendly Jennifer and Rudopho.

Located on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd opposite Soi Patong Resort, Fit Club is now up for sale at two million baht. All the equipment is

by Seara and is still under warranty. A daily pass to work out there is a very reasonable 120 baht; far cheaper than hotel gyms, and includes a towel and locker. Fit Club also has a juice and nutrition bar, a nice atmosphere, and also offers classes in Yoga, Tai Chi and martial arts.

The only problem the place now faces is the construction of a three-story shop house about 10 inches from its balcony, that wipes out the gym's once-impressive view of the main road and, in the distance, the stately pink walls of Christin Massage Parlor. For information call 076-294109.

Banglaphobia: Am I the only one that finds it hard to get used to walking down the middle of Soi Bangla after they close it off to traffic in the evening?

Tourists seem to blissfully stroll up the boulevard without a care, happily engaged in playful banter with the many touts and flamboyant cross-dressers who operate there. Young children on tricycles pedal aimlessly up and

down the street, seemingly without a care in the world. But even after months to adapt to the change, I still can't get used to it. Something, an instinct or irrational fear, keeps me on the sidewalk, where there is – thankfully – more room to maneuver than there used to be.

Shot down: Big Pete at Jug & Crocodile, home of the largest beer condom on the island and what might be the only stuffed badger in Thailand, has a special offer on for his guests. Whoever can drink seven shots in under 15 minutes walks (or more likely stumbles) away with a free T-shirt courtesy of the bar, which is on Soi Sea Dragon.

For some, 15 minutes is way more time than they need – the current record for downing all seven shots now at under seven seconds, he told Stool Pigeon, who declined to take a shot (or several) at bettering that time.

Send questions, comments and queries to: stoolpigeon@phuketgazette.net

May the (Royal Air) Force be with you

From: Sqn Ldr Raymond F Hucker DFC, BO, VD, STD (ret.)

To: Grp Capt Arthur "Todger" Knobrot DFC, BO, VD, NSU and bar (ret.)

Well, chocks away old boy, it's been such a long time since we've chewed the old fat I thought I'd drop you a line and give you an update on what's been happening here, in my stomping ground – sunny Pattaya in Siam.

It's jolly hard to believe that it's been more than 60 years since we were scrambling and taking our kites up against Jerry, what? We had our share of prangs, but I think you'll agree we had a rollicking good time of it overall.

The bally weather gets a spot on the hot side at times, but my little place has air-conditioning, and a pink gin or two on the balcony watching the sun go down is just what the doctor ordered.

The condo – a blasted Yank word they use here for flats – is as well fitted out as the luxury maisonettes we had back in Chelsea.

Of course we don't have the likes of old Mrs Fizzlestick twitching the kitchen curtains, watching the comings and goings, and maybe that's just as well given some of the things I've been privy to here. Make your hair stand on end. That's if I still had any, of course.

Late each afternoon I take a good long stroll down the prom-

enade; reminds me a lot of Bournemouth, although the local City Hall (another blasted Yank phrase) keeps digging up the pavement. Worse than Burke and Hare.

The lasses milling about the place have got to know me over the years. They're a rum lot; a few good types among 'em. I have a good old chinwag with a couple of the dearies and they can't believe I'm pushing 85. Of course, I've been blessed with dashed good health over the years and I've always kept myself in the pink.

I have to say the lasses are really fascinated with my moustache. I've kept the thing well-maintained and I believe it's still the biggest and best set of handlebars in all Siam.

It's a right talking point with the ladies, and I can tell you they enjoy coming over and giving it a bit of tweak.

There are some distinctly NQTD types wandering about the streets here, and I've always got my old swagger stick under the arm; helps keep the riff-raff in line. I get a few sniggers from the slovenly chaps lounging about the place drinking Lord-knows-what.

A word to the wise though; the place is positively awash with "tail-end Charlies". They pretty much keep to their own, but a cove has to keep his wits about him and not bend over in the

wrong place at the wrong time.

You'll have to make an effort to come and visit me here, old chap. This place is just your cup of tea with all those dusky maidens willing to do just about anything for a spot of remuneration.

Speaking of which; the old pension goes a lot farther here than in Blighty, let me tell you, and you've got all the mod cons: hot and cold running water, some places even have a bath (no need to stock up on coal). We've got the pictures, although sadly they only seem to show blasted American shoot-em-up or horror films and the locals can't seem to shut up for a minute during them.

Just a nod and a wink to the good old boy, but even at my age it's possible to have a little bit of female companionship any time you feel a stirring in the flannels.

The jolly old blue pills help keep the plumbing up to the task, and I have to say most of the ladies are a damned accommodating lot of troopers.

Always thought that side of things was over when Olive passed away. To be frank, it'd been over for years, long before she turned up her toes. She used to say to her chums at bridge, "The squadron leader never interfered with me after Cecilia was born."

Of course it's not all beer and skittles; the language barrier is a bloody nightmare at times. I speak slowly and clearly, but some of the dears just don't have the education to understand what I'm on about. The Siamese have trouble understanding the Queen's English, even when I shout.



FROM THE
STREETS
OF
PATTAYA
By Duncan Stearn

You'll probably be amazed to know that Binky, our old batman, is not only alive and well, but living right here in Pattaya. The blighter must be 90 if he's a day.

I ran into the cove coming out of a dancing club here late one evening. Always was a dasher for the ladies was Binky, and advancing years haven't slowed him down a bit, although I think doing the Lambeth Walk and keeping his Knees Up with Mother Brown are a bit beyond him now.

Had a right little lass on his arm, actually two lasses, one for each arm. Don't know how he does it. Medication, I wouldn't mind betting.

Righto, Todger old chap, better sign off, I've got a big evening ahead: off to the Wednesday Quiz for a couple of hours (keeps the old brain box active), a quick pint with the young lads in the Barking Snail – rum coves the lot of them – and then a wander down the prom for a chinwag with the ladies; some of the poor dears have so little in the way of clothing they'd catch their death if they had to live in Merrie England.

Then off home for a hot toddy and a good lie down.

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In The Stars

by Isla Star

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): If life has been influenced by doom and gloom recently, you will soon receive proof that things can only get better. Benevolent astral conditions prevail during the rest of October, particularly if you are celebrating a birthday this week. Virgo has some down-to-earth advice to offer on Sunday. Reserve judgment about a business dispute; you are not yet in possession of all the facts.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Your main problem is that you are currently looking back too much. This negative trait is preventing you from taking a small, but important, step forward. Where romance is concerned, you really need to scratch the surface of a new partner's character more deeply. There are indications that a certain amount of silk is being pulled over your eyes. The number 6 holds promise next Thursday.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Take a bracing walk on the beach if you are suffering from the wet weather blues. Fresh air will blow the cobwebs away, enabling you to see the way out of pressing problems. October will still bring some twisty turns, but nothing that you cannot handle. Don't worry if romance is not happening; a meeting in November will set your senses afire.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): The domestic atmosphere is liable to be clouded by a partner's moodiness. Don't allow this to affect your energy outside the home, as work colleagues will be looking to you for inspiration. Put proposals forward on Tuesday and reserve Thursday for a heart-to-heart talk. Wear scarlet to give yourself courage to say what is really on your mind.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Some self-sacrifice will be called for this week and while most of you won't have a problem doing so, others may. While it is unlikely that money is involved in this issue, be on the lookout for someone trying to edge a price higher than it should be. Accept an invitation for a social outing this Saturday; it will be more fun than you expect.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Some flotsam and jetsam is due to wash up at your door. This weekend is the ideal time to deal with murky issues that you have been doing your best to ignore. Early next week, don't make the mistake of thinking that people are deliberately misleading you; they genuinely don't know what they are talking about. Get professional advice if you are in doubt about a property matter. Pay attention to a dream on Monday night.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Investments in your career made before the end of October will pay off. If you have been considering learning a new skill, then begin immediately. Romance will best grow in a laid-back climate; trying to turn the temperature up too quickly will spoil it. Wipe the slate clean on minor disagreements with a friend, but a major fallout requires a serious discussion.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Fresh starts are highlighted during the second week of October; a recently abandoned project is worth a second look. Midweek, a mystery begins to unravel; don't dig for the truth unless you are emotionally strong enough to handle it. Remind yourself that when you don't really know what to do, it is better to do nothing. Wear the color peppermint green to stay cool in heated moments.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Confidence breeds success this week. A financial windfall is due to arrive, making this the ideal time to take a gamble in business; the ball is in your court when it comes to making lucrative deals. Someone catches your eye this weekend, but it will not be easy tracking down this person. Enlist the help of a Libra to speed matters along.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Take care of personal possessions as an item is likely to go missing. Work relations are a little sticky early in the week, but your patient attitude will prevent molehills becoming mountains. Wednesday is the best day for negotiating new contracts; wear the color aubergine to create the right impression. Aquarius is beginning to find you intriguing, but is waiting for the right moment.

LEO (July 24-August 22): An atmosphere of tranquility helps soothe fraught nerves. Where work is concerned, a chain reaction is started by one brief meeting and you could soon find yourself inundated. Single Leos who would like to meet their match should ask friends for an introduction. You will be delighted to discover that a bill is lower than expected, but avoid living beyond your means. The color lime green enhances your energy.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): You will be inclined to over-dramatize situations this week. Control your hot temper and exercise to let off steam. A chance conversation with a stranger midweek will be educational and could lead to new directions. Technical hitches are likely on Thursday, so stay away from equipment you do not have an affinity with. The number 5 is lucky on Sunday.

Hello from the Far West

LARGER
THAN
LIFE

By Graham Doven

"Thailand," said the lady to her friend, looking at our display at the London property exhibition last month, "You wouldn't want to go there. They just have wars all the time there, nothing but wars."

"Really?" said the friend. "I didn't know about the wars. But I do know about the drug business. Everyone knows about the Golden Triangle. That's in Thailand."

The chances of these two thinking about buying a property in Phuket is, of course, zero. Anyone with their level of gray matter would be unlikely to have the resources to buy anything at all.

I don't wish to travel too far down that road, however, as this is basically a report on a venture into the British property market, with the object of selling Phuket projects therein. To that end, we will be looking closely at the property market and the most effective way of getting to potential buyers.

There is no doubt that there is interest in the UK in the Phuket property market. This expedition was basically one of research, conducted in the heart of Britain at a big London show.

There were those present who knew Thailand and had a good grasp of the investment opportunities here, especially given the strength of the British Pound. These are mostly people with some prior connection to Asia, many through frequent holidays in Thailand and others who worked or had family members working in Hong Kong, Singapore or the Middle East.

The majority of those who attended the show, however, were looking for holiday homes close to the UK. Spain is old hat now and has become expensive. Eastern Europe seems to be on the go, with Balkan countries such as Croatia and former Soviet satellites, such as Romania and Bulgaria, offering projects, such as one apartment-block-on-the-beach called "Fort Noks".

The big exhibitions are a good opportunity to compare the property market in different countries, but they do not provide a

large number of potential Phuket buyers because most visitors are simply unaware of Phuket as a holiday home option.

I suspect that we may have to look at more targeted ways of reaching potential buyers, such as holding smaller, more focused events in areas where the type of people who like to invest in Asia work and live.

Many Europeans, while dreading the cold winters, are reluctant to sever their ties with the old country entirely. For those who want to continue living in the UK or Europe, but who like to have a holiday home abroad, Eastern Europe or the Mediterranean is still the best option.

Our market, though, is more attractive to those who sell up and move out here for good, or for those lucky enough to have the means to spend the summer in the green fields and head off to the sunnier climes for the winter.

I was going to say "the Far East" instead of "sunnier climes", but these days that's apparently not politically correct. Far east of where? Not Australia, that's for sure. Compass points aside, many English still think of England as the center of the universe.

Stray dogs in wat reprieved

From the Phuket Gazette, issue of October 1-14, 2000

PHUKET TOWN: A committee of monks from Wat Langsarn, on Narisorn Rd behind the Provincial Courthouse, recently wrote a letter to the Phuket Town Municipality complaining about nearly 30 stray dogs living in the wat's compound, and asking that they be "removed".

"They say that many of the stray dogs are diseased. A lot of children and elderly people walk around the area, and the monks have complained that several children got skin rashes after coming into contact with the dogs," said Udom Tansakul, a Municipality official.

But, he said, there is little

the Municipality can do right now. "We can't take the dogs away because there's no place yet we can take them to."

"After the incident at Wat Wichit Sangkharam a couple of months ago [in which, as reported in the *Gazette* of August 1, 12 dogs were killed after the Municipality received a similar complaint from monks] the Governor of Phuket ordered us not to kill any dogs except those that pose an immediate threat to the public, such as rabid dogs, or those that attack people."

In the meantime, the monks at Wat Langsarn have little choice but to wait.

THE TIME
machine

News from the past

Issue of October, 1995

Grateful Gunter

TRANG: Someone losing his wallet on a train whose passengers are poor would not have much hope of seeing it again, especially if it had 300,000 baht in it.

But German businessman Gunter Giess was lucky when he reported his loss on the Bangkok-Trang line and got it all back. Prani Potiwichit, head of the baggage department, turned the wallet over to the office of the Mayor of Trang, Tien Sehtiri, who returned it to a grateful Herr Geiss.

The Phuket Gazette
- Since 1994 -

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Vegetarian Festival should focus on faith, not freaks

As this year's Vegetarian Festival draws to a close, it's worth reflecting on what the event has come to mean to the island's tourism industry.

It is generally accepted that the tradition dates back to 1825, when a visiting Chinese troupe fell ill and went on a vegetarian diet to appease their gods in the hope of a divine cure. Less is known, however, about how the festival's more bizarre aspects, particularly the ritual self-mutilation that figures so prominently in Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) promotions.

While the festival's roots rest firmly in Taoist beliefs, there seems to be no equivalent in China, present or past, with the type of self-mortification that has come to characterize the modern-day festival.

Before this year's festival got under way, Phuket Governor Udomsak Usarangkura correctly urged the *mah song* ("entranced horses" as the mediums are known in Thai) to tone down their displays, as they could put off the public and shift focus away from the pursuit of personal purity that is – or at least should be – the festival's central theme.

Unfortunately, it seems that an element of competition has crept in among the different shrines. Each year they present ever more outrageous displays, perhaps aimed more at keeping themselves in the spotlight rather than at bringing good fortune to the community.

Allowed to continue, this one-upmanship risks causing Phuket City's signature cultural event to degenerate into something more like the Jim Rose Circus.

It is interesting to note that rather than travel to Phuket for the festival, many ethnic-Chinese Thai communities in other parts of the country are instead choosing to hold their own vegetarian festivals. Bangkok's Vegetarian Festival continues to grow yearly – without sensational *mah song* displays.

The people there are perhaps more interested in the idea of self-purification and celebrating their Chinese roots than in the need of traveling to Phuket to watch a *mah song* walk along the road with a sword through his cheeks.

Phuket has made progress in styling itself as a "medical hub" and the "spa capital" of Asia. Without sacrificing any of the festival's spiritual aspects, it is time the Phuket Shrine Association and TAT sat down to rein in some of the more outrageous behavior.

The images of bloodied *mah song* that are annually beamed around the world from Phuket at this time of the year pose a threat to the island's aspirations of selling itself as a "wellness" center.

– The Editor

The Phuket Gazette

In association with The Nation Multimedia Group PCL

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Letters

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

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

Toying with us

The *Phuket Gazette* [issue of October 1] ran an interesting comment from a tourist seeking sex toys/marital aids in Thailand and discovering the laws banning them.

My immediate question is: are Thai men not endowed very well and this is the reason for the ban? Thailand deprives women, while men still enjoy readily available sex toys – known as "women".

I am astounded that Thailand's major corporations advertise in newspapers for managerial positions with the express restriction: "Females Need Not Apply".

No wonder prostitution is rampant, illegal, but overlooked because it certainly benefits Thailand economically as hordes of visitors descend on the country in search of sex.

I encourage all women to ignore the pressure, reinforced from the pervasive sexism still rampant in all cultures, that allows men to rule our lives, sexual and otherwise.

Christy K Sweet
Florida

Three cheers for welcome AA article

I was pleased to see the article [*Gazette*, issue of September 24] about Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) in Phuket, as it has been helping many but is not so well known on the island. I hope that your article is just the start to increasing awareness among Phuket's Thais and foreigners, residents and tourists. The meetings are free and open to anyone.

There are also Narcotics Anonymous meetings in Phuket for anyone who may have a problem with drugs. These meetings are also free.

In the past, a few Thais came to our meetings; unfortunately they did not keep coming back.

The meetings are in English but I hope that in the future more Thais will become involved and conduct Thai-language meetings, as is the case in Bangkok.

The 12-step programs are all-inclusive and can work for anyone, regardless of nationality or religion. Anyone who wants help can call or just show up. I believe AA ads are still running in the *Gazette* with the local contact information.

Clean and Sober
California

Animal crackers or Animal Farm?

I find it very sad that Thailand appears to be going down the road of silencing critics of its policies. Surely freedom of the press and the right to criticize and debate government policies is a basic right in any democracy?

I read of the senior Thai politicians refusing to answer questions about policies, and only inviting sympathetic reporters to news conferences.

On a lesser scale, here in Phuket, Sunart Wongchawalit, the Chief of the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office, ordered the closure of the Soi Dog Foundation (SDF) sterilization clinic because criticism about the misguided dog pound was posted on the SDF website more than a year ago.

The only losers in this are the people of Phuket who will see a

slow-down in the numbers of animals being sterilized, the local Thai people employed at the clinic who face losing their jobs and the many dogs and cats who were also being treated there for injuries and disease.

I am not an SDF member, but if I were, I would consider transferring its resources to another area where its work would be appreciated.

M Simmons
Phuket

Seoul feud brewing

In the debate over soi dogs, which overrun Phuket like vermin, why has no-one considered their export potential?

It is not unknown for Koreans and Chinese to eat dog meat, which, although taboo to Western sensibilities, is no worse than eating horse, rabbit, prairie dog, kangaroo, beef or guinea pig.

Indeed, once when traveling through St Gallen in Switzerland, I was told of the canton's long-established history of consuming dog meat.

As long as only healthy stray dogs in Phuket, and Thailand in general, were slaughtered – and without cruelty – I see no reason why dog meat could not become a useful addition to the country's list of exports.

Pause, too, for a moment to consider that there are many hundreds of thousands of starving people around the world who would be grateful for food of almost any description. Consider their circumstances and anyone with reason and humanity should see that the plight of a few thousand dogs in Phuket is nothing compared to their suffering.

Roger Thornhill
Seoul

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

Gazette dogged by canine issues

Over the past months the *Phuket Gazette* has run more and more stories about “soi” dogs and the conditions at the Mid Road Dog Shelter in Thalang.

While I think it is most commendable that people share a deep-rooted love of man’s best friend, a trait that should be cherished and encouraged, I find it difficult to reconcile how care for fellow animals seems to be more important than care for fellow human beings.

Stories of rape and murder are left hanging, leaving me with no idea if the alleged murderers and rapists may still be at large on the island, but I can find comfort in knowing that positive steps are being taken to solve the unfortunate plight of stray animals on the island.

Not to mention that no one seems to notice the appalling conditions people live in, in the slums dotted around Phuket City and other parts of the island.

I’m not saying the problems of stray animals should be ignored, but surely issues about people are more important?

Randall Jennings
Chalong

Water worries make us all less well-off

There are several water issues I feel constrained to bring up. Last week it rained heavily – something for which we can all be thankful.

Within 10 minutes the canal outside our office was overflowing and the street was flooded under six inches of water. But after the rain had stopped the water drained away to go where? Out to sea; wasted, unused and no doubt to be sorely missed come the high season.

Along our soi in Rawai someone has dug an ad hoc well. On an almost hourly basis, trucks pull up, draw out thousands of liters and go off to sell the water to well-less people. This is on public land, using the same water table as us. When a neighbor complained to the police about what is literally daylight robbery he was told that he himself could face arrest for creating “public disorder”.

Water is one of our most precious commodities, and yet property developers (you know who you are) continue to denude hillsides that previously hosted flora that can prevent flash floods. Untreated water flows unhindered into Patong Bay and golf courses use millions of gallons to keep their exclusive greens from fading.

There’s something seriously wrong with a tropical island that has the ways and means to avoid water shortages easily – but constantly suffers from them.

Tempest Fugit
Rawai

Dr Sirichai wrong about mortgages for foreigners

I read the “First Person” article headlined “Mortgages for foreigners may be the top of a slippery slope” (*Gazette*, issue of September 17-23) several times, and if I had not known Dr Sirichai Silapa-archa for more than 10 years I would have thought that he hates foreigners.

He starts with his understanding that the banks are looking for new customers but then he disagrees with banks offering loans to foreigners because he thinks the banks will offer them easier terms. Wrong, Dr Sirichai. I don’t believe that any bank will take more risks offering mortgages to foreigners than they would with Thais.

What he did not mention is that foreigners can apply for the new mortgages only outside Thailand. It has nothing to do with trust; the guarantee must be in order with the rules of the bank. I have worked for more than 15 years with a bank in my home country, and I don’t believe that the banks in Thailand operate differently.

Dr Sirichai is correct in that these mortgages will affect the price of condominiums, just like the price of land in Phuket increased when foreigners started buying it.

For this he has to complain to his own people, because the people who own the land that is being sold are Thais, and they are asking more for it every day.

He continues by saying that foreigners are buying land in Thailand in the names of anonymous Thai partners.

Wrong again, Dr Sirichai. Any person who buys land or property cannot remain “anonymous” because he or she must show an ID card and house registration to the officer on duty at the Land Department when the land is transferred to a new owner.

What he perhaps also does not know is that foreigners cannot lay any claim to land being

In the *Phuket Gazette* of September 17-23, outspoken Dr Sirichai Silapa-archa argued against allowing foreigners to have access to mortgages from Thai banks, in the belief that such a move could merely be the thin end of a wedge leading eventually to the country being “bought out from under our feet”. Dr Sirichai, a doctor of urology at Wachira Phuket Hospital, and also Secretary of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, has views that many see as controversial. Jochen Schmitz, a Dutch citizen who has known Dr Sirichai for more than a decade, gives his response to these views.

FIRST PERSON



bought by Thais, even if they have provided the funds for the land to be bought. The new Thai owner must sign a land office document attesting that the money being used to buy the land is his or hers, which ensures the land will belong entirely to the Thai person or company.

Why would foreigners do this? Because foreigners cannot buy land in their own names, not even to build a family home on. What about foreigners who have retired and do not have large amounts of money, but what they have they spend in Thailand? Even this kind of foreigner cannot buy a small plot for a family home. They have to use similar tactics just to provide a home for their family to live in, and Dr Sirichai wants them to pay more than Thais just because they are foreigners – that is pure discrimination.

I am also a little confused about Dr Sirichai’s fear that in the future foreigners will be able to privately own condominiums – I can buy a condominium already, and land through my company or my Thai partner. Please tell me what’s wrong with this. The land will still be in Thailand. I think Dr Sirichai is too worried over nothing.

Of course Dr Sirichai is correct in pointing out that there are bad foreigners, but it is the responsibility of the police to remove them from Thailand, and I believe that the rule requiring every foreigner to report to Immigration every three months makes it difficult for bad foreigners to stay in Thailand.

I also think Dr Sirichai is too worried about his example of foreign dominance on some Caribbean islands through tax laws and tax breaks. Such laws were

passed not only in the Caribbean, but also in many small countries, which allowed people to launder money. Now, with stronger controls and agreements between governments, it is not possible to transfer money without a guarantee by the foreign bank that the money is clean and can be transferred to a Thai bank.

As for his view that foreigners should not be allowed to invest in local businesses, and his comment that there isn’t anywhere in the world that allows foreign companies to invest in local businesses, where did that information come from? Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra wanted to buy a controlling share of an English Premier League football club. He didn’t as a matter of choice from public pressure, not because he wasn’t allowed to.

There are many other rich Thais who invest and buy a lot of properties in other countries, and they have no problems and the same rights as the local people. When everyone follows the law – in Thailand as well – then there will be no problems.

In my home country, the Netherlands, many local businesses in Amsterdam are owned and run by Chinese. They have the same rights as Dutch people, and the government is not afraid if they buy land because they cannot take it back to China.

Please, Dr Sirichai, rethink your comments, and please forget about the extra “staying fee” for foreigners who already spend a lot of money here.

You are a good doctor – I have known you for 10 years – but as Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce in Phuket, your knowledge of economics and of what really happens in other countries is not great.

I’m sorry if my comments seem harsh, but I cannot accept it when all foreigners are painted with the same brush and blamed for the wrongdoings of a few.

Can minors buy and consume alcohol in Thailand?

I may be going on holiday to Thailand. What is the legal age limit is to buy and drink alcohol?

Although I have heard that there is no limit at all, I have also been told that while there is no limit at what age you can drink alcohol, to buy it you have to be at least 18 years old.

Nick
England

Primprao Jitpenthom, an Officer of the Phuket Provincial Health Office, replies:

There is no age restriction on alcohol consumption in Thai-

land. However, people under 18 years of age cannot buy alcohol or cigarettes.

Anyone caught by the police selling alcohol to a minor is punishable by law – liable for up to three months in jail or a fine of no more than 30,000 baht, or both. Nightclubs and discothèques may allow entrance to people aged 18 and older only.

When the police catch under 18-year-olds buying alcohol, they inform the minor’s parents and the culprit is assigned to do 15 days to three months of public service.

Issues & ANSWERS

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

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

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ON THE MOVE



Englishman **John Morris Williams**, 42, has been appointed General Manager of Kandaburi Resort, Koh Samui, part of Kata Group Resorts, Thailand. His earlier hotel experience includes GM of the Dusit Rayavadee Resort, Krabi and Resident Manager at the Sila Evason Hideaway & Spa, Koh Samui.



Michel Gaultier, from France, has been appointed Manager of Desjoyaux Phuket, Ltd, Krabi branch. His previous experience includes 13 years in real estate maintenance and construction. For two years he was also Head Office Project Manager (Technical Commercial Manager) in Thailand.



Bangkok-born **Prasong "Pomm" Pomsathit**, 29, is the Assistant Production Manager of the *Phuket Gazette*. A graduate of Rungsit University, he also holds a certificate in graphic design from Santa Barbara City College, California. Previously he was graphic designer for *Thailand Opportunities Magazine*.

KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER

So many of you had questions during my extended absence that I've only managed to find time to research a few of your problems. In general, if you have computer questions, you're more than welcome to consult my website.

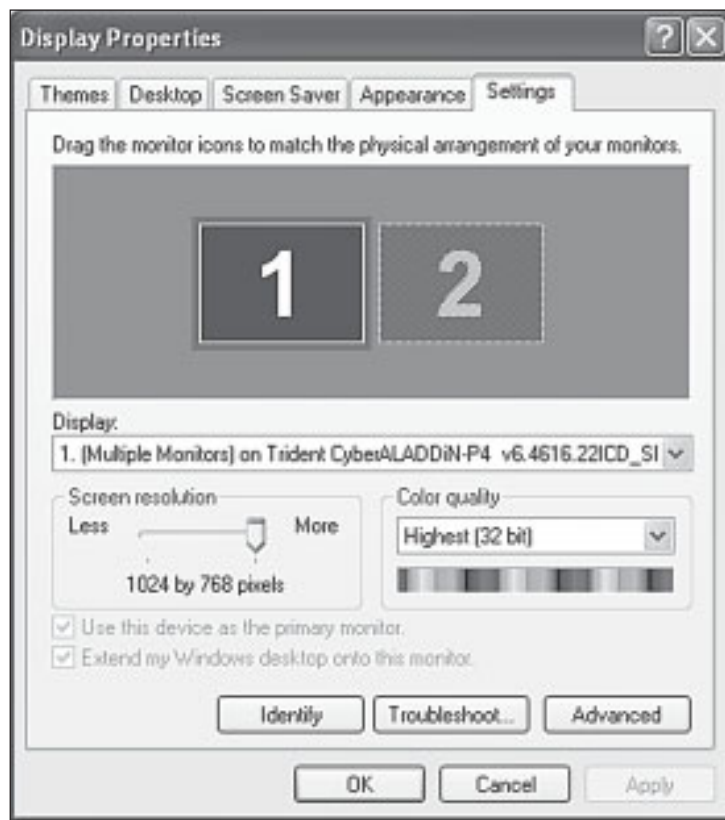
Click the tab marked Ask for Windows & Office Help. Hundreds of people on Woody's Lounge, from all over the world, answer thousands of questions every month. Free. It's all-volunteer, all the time.

Q: I am having trouble using our company's laptops with a big plasma display screen. We have four laptops, all running Windows XP. For some reason, only one laptop shows the same picture on both the laptop screen and the plasma screen. The other three machines show the desktop wallpaper on the plasma screen, but no icons.

On the good machine, I can run a PowerPoint presentation on the laptop screen and it shows up on the big plasma screen, just as you would expect.

On the other three, I can only get the PowerPoint presentation to show up if I click Slide

Q+A: multiple monitors and mangled ADSL



Show | Set Up Show and select the Display Show on the No 2 monitor option in the Multiple Monitors box.

Other Windows programs are not showing up on the big screen. What are we doing wrong?

JD, Chalong

A: Not too long ago, a monitor plugged into the back of a laptop always displayed the same picture as the laptops screen, only bigger. Times have changed.

The three PCs that are showing empty, icon-less desktops on the plasma display are running in multi-monitor mode.

Multi-monitor mode is great if you want to edit one part of a document while looking at another. There are also games that work across two or three monitors.

PowerPoint supports multi-monitor mode by letting you show a presentation on one monitor while looking at your presentation notes on the other.

Multi-monitor was introduced with XP, but various video card drivers implement it in various ways and some older video cards do not have it at all.

The three misbehaving PCs are acting that way because at some point (probably when the manufacturer put them together) they were set up in multi-monitor mode. That's a very rude thing to do with a portable.

People almost never want portables to run in multi-monitor mode. If you want your portable screen and plasma screen to show the same picture, then you want to get out of multi-monitor mode and into something called "clone mode" where the second monitor is simply a clone of the

If you plug a monitor into the back of your laptop and the monitor doesn't show the same image as on the laptop's screen, then you must switch to clone mode.

send gets stuck in my outbox. What did I mess up?

CD, Patong

A: You didn't do anything wrong. I lost hours on this problem, too. On September 8, my Outlook outbox got backed up, just like yours. At the same time, my TOT ADSL line went from slow to brain-dead.

I couldn't pull more than 60Kbps from my 2,000Kbps line, even early in the morning. I tried every trick in the book to unstuck my outbound messages and finally just gave up. At one point I was copying urgent outbound email messages into Hotmail, and sending them from there.

Several days later, I was told that Pacific Internet, the Internet Service Provider for the 1,000-baht-per-month TOT H-mail service, screwed up something on its server that afternoon.

It took almost a week before my TOT ADSL lines functioned properly and I could send email again. Neither TOT nor Pacific Internet notified its customers. No phone call, no email, no nothing and I didn't see anything posted on the Internet.

How does the government's telephone company get away with such shoddy service?

If you have an answer, please tell me.

Q: What is Generic Host Process for Win32 Services what does it do, and why does it need to connect to the Internet? Will my computer work if I deny it Internet access? This has to be one of the Net's biggest mysteries.

SR, Kamala

A: Generic Host Process (svchost32.exe) is a wrapper program that runs other programs. There is no way to tell what program is really running. In general, you should let the program run and use some other tool to catch malware (malicious software).

I talk about the Generic Host Process in my new book, *Windows XP Hacks & Mods For Dummies*, which is on the printing presses in New York at this very moment. It is complicated.

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

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

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Seatran opts for Samui after double whammy

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: Phuket Seatran Travel Co Ltd is switching focus and marketing itself in the Gulf of Thailand, moving two of its ferries to Koh Samui.

In 2001 Seatran secured a 90-million-baht, 30-year tender to operate out of Phuket's Rassada Port, from where it runs ferries to the Phi Phi Islands.

Recently, however, it dropped its Patong-Similan Islands route because of a dramatic plunge in the number of tourists and the rising cost of fuel. The two vessels used on that route will be based at Samui from next month.

'TWO-FACED'

"We were in a shocking situation for the first three months after the tsunami because Phi Phi itself hadn't had a clear answer from the government regarding renovation," Tanan Tanphaibul, Seatran Managing Director, told the *Gazette*.

"We haven't raised our prices, even though the cost of fuel is rising every day. The government has asked us not to raise fares in order to encourage tourists to

come back, but that's two-faced; why not ask the oil companies to stop raising their prices as well?"

"The government can't control oil prices and cannot subsidize us. I don't think the government can help us so they should not tell us to keep our prices down. This is costing us a lot," he added.

K. Tanan said he appreciated the fact that the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) slashed the monthly port levy of 250,000 baht to 25,000 baht after the tsunami. The levy is reviewed every three months.

He added that since the tsunami, not many people have wanted to travel to Phuket and have shown little enthusiasm for traveling by sea.

"It's like we've been hit twice in a double whammy – by the tsunami and by fuel price hikes.

"We can't even leave port to go to Phi Phi unless we know we have at least 30 passengers on board because that's the minimum number to cover the cost of fuel. I think Phi Phi will take about two to three years to recover completely and to have the same number of visitors as before," he said.

The price of a round trip to Phi Phi is 1,500 baht per passenger.

Seatran Express has four boats in its fleet, each capable of carrying 200 passengers, but K. Tanan now plans to move the two that were used on the Patong-Similans route to Koh Samui instead.

"We plan to start in Samui in November. We'll be transferring tourists from Samui to Koh Pha-ngan and to Koh Tao. We'll also run ferries to Chumpon for passengers seeking a more direct route to Bangkok. At the moment only one other company does that. It's a busy route and it's lucky for us that we're able to change and move our boats around, unlike catering businesses that are stuck in one place," K. Tanan said.

"I think the immediate future of Samui-based businesses looks better than those in the Andaman area. I don't think the Andaman is a good location to work from for at least the next two years, because even if the tourists do come back they will still have reservations about sea leisure activities," he added.

Seatran also ferries passengers from Donsak Port in Surat Thani Province to Koh Samui.

"After the tsunami the other operators amalgamated and shared profits. We didn't do that as our target customers are different, plus we are more expensive. We also reduced our service from daily ferries to two or three times a week," he said.

"Right now we are just about staying alive and are just able to pay salaries and rent. We're making absolutely no profit. We've already had to let security and cleaning people go, and their tasks are being performed by staff members.

"We haven't let full-time staff go, but some have been rotated to work in Samui. We're staying away from out-and-out tourist-related work as the market is too sensitive.

"In the next six to eight months we plan to run a ferry between Rassada Port and Koh Yao Noi, which will take about an hour. Our target customers are tourists and local people. We're doing this because Koh Yao was unaffected by the tsunami and I believe it has a great future," he said.

In 2003, 265,823 passengers used Rassada Port, and 371,962 used it last year. From January 30 to August this year the number dropped to 90,595. In January, only 128 people were registered as passengers.

Regular readers of this column will recall that I have frequently written about Brandeaux Ground Rent and Student Accommodation Funds, which are mutual funds/unit trusts.



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

The great attraction of both of these different types of investment is that – because these funds are not stock-market related – they continue to rise in value regularly and predictably.

The returns are excellent. All of their funds have returned, on average, more than 9% a year. Not one has ever dropped in price. How many fund managers can make that claim?

I first encountered Brandeaux during a meeting with a regional sales manager of the UK-based assurer Royal & Sun Alliance, in mid-1996. He explained their inclusion of the Brandeaux Ground Rent Fund on their list of approved investments.

I realized that I was looking at an investment that was not at the mercy of economic cycles or asset prices but was an investment that actually had been around for between 400 and 500 years in the UK.

It was with considerable interest that I heard from John Kennedy, the International Sales Manager and one of the original founding staff members of Brandeaux, that the founder and CEO of Brandeaux, Kay Brandeaux, was coming to Phuket. Would I like to meet her? "Yes!"

American Kay Brandeaux can best be described as a dedicated and focused businesswoman. It is very easy to see how she was able to build a successful business from scratch. She describes herself as a fund manager and she is one who knows the investment business of every asset class in minute detail.

She described her constant search for the highest reward combined with the lowest risk over many years: risk, to a professional investor, is simply a measure of volatility.

Kay first came across the concept of UK ground rents through contact with a UK pension fund in the early 1990s. She ran a subsidiary fund consisting entirely of ground rents with only UK£4 million to £5 million.

She ran it as a trial for several years. Noting its success, she recognized the enormous inherent potential and launched the Brandeaux Ground Rent Income Fund on 29 February, 1996.

The Managing Director of Royal & Sun Alliance International also saw the potential and an alliance was made between the two firms. This gave Brandeaux a marketing and sales outlet, since Brandeaux, by nature an institutional fund manager, does not deal with the public.

Several ground rent funds were introduced and all have performed well.

Their "flagship" fund, the Brandeaux Ground Rent Income Fund, has, from its inception on February 29, 1996, until September 2, 2005, achieved an annual compound return of 10.04% after all fund charges. In the past 12 months the fund is up to 10.60%.

On December 31, 1999, Brandeaux launched its second type of investment – the University Student Accommodation Fund – initially, again, in conjunction with Royal & Sun Alliance International. Student accommo-

Brandeaux – predictably attractive

dation in the UK varies in style, but many students live in halls of residence, usually comprised of blocks of individual rooms with communal areas.

In September 2005, contracts were signed for accommodation in Aberdeen and Glasgow – their first forays into Scotland – and a second development in Manchester. The value of these new additions is about UK£60 million (around 4.5 billion baht.)

Brandeaux has at times found itself in a situation where it has attracted more money than it can deal with comfortably. When this happens, the company simply caps its funds and closes them to new money. Brandeaux refuses to allow any dilution of returns to investors by being greedy, knowing that if the returns are high, there will always be investors.

The company's priorities are to keep up returns, to operate in

an ethical manner, to provide a good service for students and to maintain an excellent relationship with universities.

Kay and her husband, Roger Boyland, both agreed that they work very hard to achieve this.

Englishman Roger is a chartered accountant (in US terms, a CPA) and was founder and Executive Director of Capital and Regional Plc, substantial players in the British commercial property market.

In the 1980s he was involved in forming Centerpoint Properties, a US real estate investment trust, which has become one of the largest and most successful in the US.


In 2001, he was involved in creating two retail property funds with Morley Fund Management, the property arm of Britain's largest assurer, Aviva and Capital & Regional.

Roger joined Brandeaux in 2002 and is now a director of Brandeaux Advisers UK Limited. Chairman of Liberty, which manages all the student accommodation for Brandeaux and has its own website that deals directly with students, Roger is also Chairman of Chancery, which deals with all ground rent properties.

All the major Brandeaux Funds are currently open to new investments, available in pounds sterling, euros or US dollars.

For more information visit www.brandeaux.com (Password: investor), or the Liberty website: www.libertystudents.com or give me a call.

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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Andy Johnstone gets low down and dirty in Thrills, spills and belly laughs

Anyone remember Flanders and Swann? Oh come on, you must do. They were a couple of frightfully clever composer-singer chaps popular in Blighty from after World War II until the partnership split due to irreconcilable differences, namely Michael Flanders' death.

Flanders and Swann songs are characterized by wit, satire, complex rhyming schemes and memorable choruses including, from *The Hippopotamus*, "Mud, Mud, glorious mud. Nothing quite like it for cooling the blood! So follow me, follow/down to the hollow/And there let us wallow/In glorious mud."

I doubt that Flanders and Swann went in for off-roading in any way, shape or form, yet the chorus above is entirely apropos for the gentlemen of the Chao Fa Off-Road Club.

These gents meet every Sunday at the club's headquarters on Kwang Rd – which links Chao Fa East and West Roads – at around 1 pm, or a bit later. It's rather casual there, you see.

Boasting some 20 members or so, the club's unwritten constitution dictates that meetings begin with a replay of the last off-road expedition – there is always a videographer on hand, usually one of the spouses of the mostly all-male club. They are occasionally bought along for ballast, too.

And then, according to Jackie and Jack, brothers and ad hoc spokesmen for the club, the route for the day's sortie into the wilds of abandoned tin-mine land is discussed, vehicles are given the once over, and then it's off –



HIPPO BATHDAY TO YOU: Wallowing in the glorious mud at the end of a day's off-roading – literally in the Tiger's case (right).

in convoy – to a vast area of clay, ravines, clay, hills, clay, jungle tracks, and yet more clay.

The vehicles range from the diminutive but omnipresent Suzuki Caribian to the doughty Land Rover to top-of-the-range Japanese pickup trucks as well as a Jeep Cherokee, the heaviest vehicle in the club.

In fact, it is the sheer mass of the Cherokee that makes it such a useful machine, Jackie says: "When the ground is soft, the Jeep compacts it down, making it easier for the smaller vehicles – Caribians, for example – to grind their way up slopes without digging themselves in, which means that we don't have to dig them out."

It's a very friendly club. Any age or nationality is welcome to join – there are already a number of foreigners in its ranks – but the one proviso is that no one ventures out into the wilds

without some basic training first.

Taking the wheel of a modified Toyota Tiger – the first time I have been behind the wheel of an off-roader since driving the company TUM (Truck Utility Medium) Wolf, a Land Rover Defender 110 which also had some useful traffic-clearing devices, a few years ago – fills me with a little trepidation; it's not my vehicle for a start.

I'm at the base of a slightly slippery rutted incline, which although a mere eight meters long is also at an angle of around 40°. I have the windows open, ready to take advice from Jackie.

First gear of the low-ratio box is selected, and my foot is hovering above the clutch.

I am unable to see the top of the slope from where I am, but I know that half the club is up there, the other half near me at the base.

The advice comes in just



three words: "gas, left, right."

The cheers when I crest the top of the slope after a couple of ahem, practice runs are almost deafening.

Then it's a swift 180° turn and down the decline.

One thing I remember is that using the brakes when going down a hill are a no-no. Jackie tells me the same, and I keep the Tiger in first gear, with my feet off both the accelerator and the brakes, letting the engine do all the work.

Easy, and there are hearty *chaiyos* from my new best friends.

Jack is at pains to point out that Chao Fa Off-Road Club members do not simply drive willy-nilly through virgin forest. "We drive only around abandoned tin mines, which were already turned into these peculiar moonscapes years before any of us were born.

"With the permission of the owner, we explore these areas – on foot first sometimes; the tracks are so covered with dense foliage.

"We cut back the bushes on either side of the old tracks, but only as much as we need to."

The club, like many other off-road organizations, also holds "family days", when wives and children come along too.

"It then becomes something of a safari, especially for the children," says Jackie.

"We see flowers and plants, and birds and animals that hardly anyone sees these days. A rare species of monkey is found around here, and there are even pygmy deer living wild in the forests near the tracks."

Today's caravan of 10 vehicles tackles a few of the muddy areas, although, notes Jack, it's not as muddy as it should be. "Too little rain," he says. "It's a worry."

One Land Rover 90 – today's "tail-end Charlie" – is making heavy work of it. Ruts deeper than the axles have been made, and the Landy's tires are clogged with mud.

Tracking sideways through the mire, the driver takes several attempts to traverse the soft ground but does so smiling, as we all are.

Although everyone is keen to move on to the next challenge – the typical route is around 15 kilometers long – the entire convoy waits until all are through before moving on.

"Leave no man behind" is the club's unofficial motto, even if that means waiting until 10 pm to carry out emergency repairs.

Handing control of the Tiger back, and holding on for dear life as we disappear down gul-



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the mud

lies, thwacked by branches recoiling on us, the world suddenly becomes inverted.

Earth is where the sky should be and vice versa. We have rolled into a ditch. Jackie laughs and explains that this happens to at least one vehicle per excursion.

Clambering through the passenger door, which is now more like a hatch on a submarine's conn, I see there are no broken windows and no injuries but – amazingly – big smiles all round still.

After a brief confab, the simplest course of action – winching the seemingly endangered species to safety – is taken. Two minutes later, thanks to the torque of the Cherokee's winch, the Toyota is back on four wheels again, albeit with a stoved-in driver's door.

And then, like so many hipopotami, the assembled vehicles follow me down to the hollow and careen through the muddy, knee-deep water for a bath, Chao Fa Off-Road Club's traditional end to an expedition, before heading back to the clubhouse.

POST-MORTEM

There, the afternoon is rounded off in top style when someone produces a bottle of Mekong and amid the "cheers" and the "chok dee", the post-mortem into the past few hours is held.

Although not necessarily a rich man's pastime, it is, as Jack says, as expensive as you want it to be: "You can buy a Caribbean for 100,000 baht and they're a good entry-level vehicle, easy to maintain and adapt – all of the club members are hard-working guys, many in the hard-hit tourism industry."

Rich or not rich, they are as gentlemanly a group as one could ever wish to find, as friendly and welcoming as the day is long, and always happy to see a new face wanting a muddy good time.

Chao Fa Off-Road Club. Tel: 01-9565619



Those young players who turned up received the full attention of the country's top football stars.

Poor turn-out mars national team's youth football clinic

By Anongnat Sartpisit

PHUKET CITY: Young players have again had the chance to attend a two day-clinic hosted by the Thai national football team, but, disappointingly, fewer than 100 youngsters took part.

The October 1-2 event at Surakul Stadium was organized by the Phuket Sports Association (PSA) and the Kata Group.

Phuket was one of three southern provinces slated for the national team's touring program in preparation for the Southeast Asia (SEA) Games in the Philippines from November 27 to December 2.

The team has already visited Surat Thani and went on to Krabi October 3.

The clinic gave locals the chance to meet some of the team's stars, including Teerathap Winothai, Chachris Buathong and Sompong Sora-ad. The Head Coach of the Thai team, Chanwit

Polchivin, told the *Gazette* that the tour provided a warm-up before the SEA Games.

"We can do something for society by helping youngsters meet the national team," he said. "This could inspire them to become keener players and maybe to even make the national team," he said.

"The Football Association of Thailand is under the patronage of His Majesty the King and we would like to see the development and expansion of football not only in Bangkok, but also in other areas in the country," he added.

K. Chanwit said that youngsters attending the clinics are trained in basic football techniques such as controlling, passing and shooting. Each trainee also spends one-on-one time with the players, learning specific skills.

On the team's prospects at the SEA Games, he said, "We've been champions six-times for this

tourney, so why not go for the seventh? The players need to work hard to get fit and we need a lot of work in our attacking techniques, but we've been training for five months now so we're hoping for gold."

He added, "Kids have to start off with strong basic skills and play with as many people as possible to gain experience."

Eam Thavornvongwongse, President of PSA, said, "It is a sad day when so few seem interested in the clinic."

"We are disappointed at the small number of players who turned up to train with the national team."

"As sponsors, we need to think again whether to organize big events like this in the future."

However, K. Chanwit said, "Phuket has good football pitches to train on, and in the future we can bring good teams to train and stimulate interest in football in the area."

Phoonperm is Go champ

PHUKET: Phuket's own Phoonperm Rungrojsorn outmaneuvered Thailand's second-ranked player Salatoon Na Songkhla to win the final of the "Phuket Open", a tourney pitting some of the best Thai players of the ancient board game Go.

The two-day tournament, held at Rajabhat Phuket University September 26-28, was organized by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization, Thailand Go Club and Phuket Go Club.

FINAL RESULTS

High Kyu Division, levels 1-4: 1) Pholperm Rungrojsorn; 2) Salatoon Na Songkhla; 3) Nattapong Amuttaporn.

Low Kyu, levels 5-8: 1) Panot Kingkaew; 2) Teeraphot Itsarachote; 3) Anawat Singhajanu-song.

Friendship Division: 1) Dumrongsak Prueksakit; 2) Sorawit Kingkaew; 3) Chalermwit Kit-tiria.

The top three players in each division won 3,000 baht, 2,000 baht and 1,000 baht respectively.

Patong Darts League

September 27 results: Queen Mary 4 Nag's Head* 5; Dog's Bollocks* 6 Coyote 3; Amigos* 5 Didi's 4; Valhalla* 7 Two Black Sheep 2; Piccadilly* 6 African Sport 3; OffShore 5 Shakers* 4. (* = winner of beer leg)

Standings: 1. Amigos (25pts); 2. Shakers (24pts); 3.=Valhalla, Piccadilly (21pts); 5.= Queen Mary, OffShore (18pts); 7.=Nag's Head, African Sport (16pts); 9. Dog's Bollocks (11pts); 10. Two Black Sheep (10pts); 11. Coyote (5pts); 12. Didi's (4pts).

October 11 fixtures: Queen Mary v Didi's; Dog's Bollocks v Nag's Head; Amigos v Two Black Sheep; Valhalla v Shakers; Piccadilly v Coyote; OffShore v African Cafe. (Home teams first)

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The entrance to the property, built as an extended family home, is through a high wooden gate in surrounding walls and a private driveway, ensuring good security.

The estate comprises two principal, fully equipped, air-con-



ditioned and furnished residences, each of which features a large, high-ceilinged master bedroom and ensuite with imported European fittings including whirlpool bath, shower unit and twin wash basins. Teak is used throughout,

bringing a pleasant naturalness to the modern amenities.

The main residences also have a fully equipped modern kitchen, dining area and separate living room that opens onto a covered patio.

The lounge areas are comfortable and relaxing.

From the outdoor entertaining areas, the view spans landscaped gardens with lawn, well-placed mature trees, water and stone features, and the central, free-form swimming pool, down to the beach and to the sea.

Altogether, there are 10 bedrooms, seven bathrooms, seven kitchens, four dining rooms, four living rooms, plenty of office

space, a wine cellar, a snooker house, covered parking for three cars, staff quarters and covered salas.

In addition to all this, there are two guest houses on either side of the property.

Each has two double ensuite bedrooms and a separate kitchen and dining/lounge area, allowing guests a high degree of independence from the main residence.

This magnificent, Chanote-titled property has been granted permission for further extension and development. The price is US\$2.5 million (approx. 102.4 million baht).

For further information, contact Clearwater International Group Limited at Tel: 01-539 8118 or email martin.phillips@clearwater-group.com

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Decor

by Ananya Hongsa-ngiam

Overflowing with delight

Although most houses in Phuket do not have the space – and the island generally does not have the water – for fountains on the scale of the Jet D'Eau in Lake Geneva or the Fontano di Trevi (who can forget Anita Ekberg frolicking in that famous Roman fountain in the film *La Dolce Vita*?), there are alternatives.

For some, a small-scale indoor fountain is simply a charmingly natural decoration, but for others, especially believers in *feng shui* – the Chinese art of living in harmony and prosperity – a soothing water feature serves to attract “life force” and good luck into the home.

At **Chokekongkum Earthenware**, fountains and artificial waterfalls abound, priced according to size, from about 3,000 baht to 4,000 baht, including water pumps.

Delivery service is available. The shop, open every day, is located in the Expo on Tilok Uthit Rd, Taladyai, Phuket. Contact K. Bum at Tel: 06-6483585 or Email: chaiyasuk@yahoo.com for more information.

Stone and cement sculptures of dolls, mermaids and other fantastical creatures, costing from 2,000 baht to 3,500 baht including water pumps, are available at **Holly Stone**, 23 Hongyok Uthit Rd in Samkong. The shop is open Monday through Saturday from 10 am to 9 pm. Call K. Siriroj at Tel: 01-7559593 for details.

Suan Samkong is another shop that sells mainly large cement fountains, suitable for outdoor use, but also attractive when placed in a large room. The cost of these fountains ranges between 2,500 and 9,500 baht.

The store is at 256 Yao-warat Rd in Samkong, and it is open Monday through Saturday, from 8 am to 5 pm. Free delivery is offered. Contact K. Tanyaporn at Tel: 076-216696 or 01-9702655.



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Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut

Dartmouth comes to Nai Harn

A DEVON-SENT DEVELOPMENT

NAI HARN: Dartmouth Villas – the name refers to the holiday town in Devon, in southwest England – are described by the CEO of the development, Nick Fawcus-Robinson as “very private full-facility, single-level houses that will also be ‘wheelchair friendly’.”

Each of the 10.8-million-baht units will boast not only the usual accouterments of a swimming pool and a fitted kitchen, but also features such as wider doorways and ramps to enable those in wheelchairs to move around with little hindrance.

The houses will be suitable, said Mr Fawcus-Robinson, to be used for owner-occupation or to be let as long- or short-term rentals.

Privacy will be a major feature of the 147-square-meter villas, each of which will sit on its individual 400sqm plot.

“Looking around at other developments on the island,” said Mr Fawcus-Robinson, “I noticed that many of them were open,

allowing anyone to see into the garden.

“Foreign clients want privacy, and we have focused on this in our designs.”

To this end, all of the properties are separated by a 3.8-meter-high wall. There are three homes in this phase, construction of which began two months ago and is scheduled for a March 2006 completion.

Quality is also a key factor in the construction of the L-shaped houses. High-grade marble and granite, and Cotto tiles will be used.

Doors will be of teak and non-slip tiles will surround the 28sqm pool, providing 54sqm of entertaining space.

American Standard sanitaryware will come as standard, and the “Balinese-style” roof will have a special heat-reflective covering and large, overhanging eaves.

The houses will have three bedrooms. The master bedrooms will have a whirlpool bath and a



One of the swimming pools under construction (above). Developer Nick Fawcus-Robinson says the project focuses on privacy.

shower overlooking the pool. The second and third bedrooms are also ensuite.

The living room will also have views to the pool, and there will be a maid’s-cum-storage room, and a carport.

The open-plan kitchen will have a hob and an oven, a microwave, dishwasher, a washing machine, and a fridge and freezer.

For those buyers who wish, Mr Fawcus-Robinson said that an 800,000-baht “furniture package” is available, which will include a television set, pictures, blinds, beds and kitchen equipment.

The gardens will be landscaped to incorporate a lawn, climbing plants and an automated irrigation system.

Rooms will have fans and air conditioning, hot water will be supplied to all basins and showers, and a “piped” pest-control system will be employed.

Mr Fawcus-Robinson said, “Our target customers are Japanese, Swedes, Australians, English and Thais.

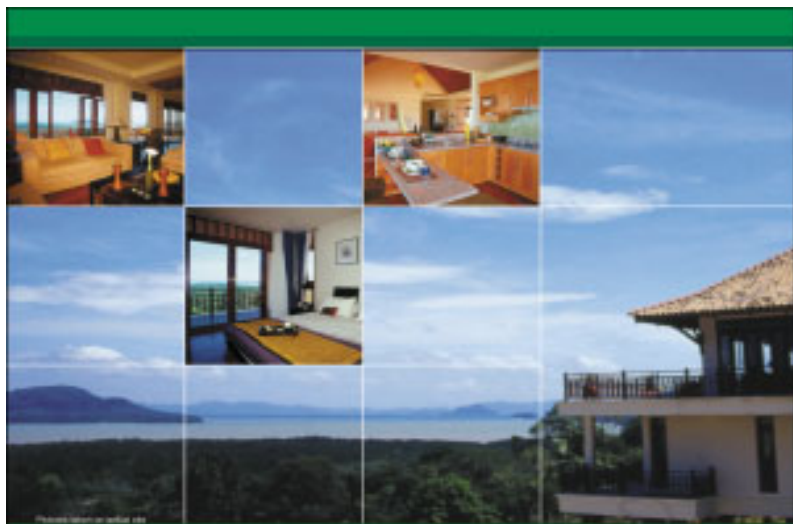
“Feedback has been positive; customers are excited with



this project, and we have three [potential] customers flying here in November or December to

come look at the development.”

For more information, Tel: 04-0579081 (English), 09-647-4383 (Thai) or Email: dartmouth_villas@yahoo.com



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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Gardening ABC made EZ

There is a lot of complete nonsense spouted in the world. Much of it comes from the mouths and word processors of those who are trying to sound more intelligent than they actually are.

They are, perhaps, under the illusion that those whose attention they are able to attract can decipher what on earth they are trying to communicate.

Americans are masters of the art, I think.

"Yo dude. Woowoo. How's it hanging? Give me some skin. Wazzup?" translates as, apparently, "Good day to you. Are you keeping well? Is life treating you kindly?"

At this stage, I have a confession to make. I have actually spent some time in the good ole US of A.

And the confession? For my first three months there, I drove around the place thinking that EZ was a huge national chain that owned all manner of businesses all over the country.

NUMPTY

I really thought they were called Ee-Zed after a Donald Trump-like gentleman called something like Eduardo Zambucci, or something of that ilk.

It was not until somebody suggested that I rent a trailer from a company called Easy Haul and I found an "EZ Haul" sign on the front door that I realized what a numpty I had been.

That is the point, really. Things that some people take for granted as common knowledge are complete mysteries to others.

That's why this week I thought I would have a look at a few words that gardeners bandy around and expect the rest of the world to know.

You will have heard a lot of them, but are you 100% sure what they really mean?



Bertilizer: it does exactly what it says on the bag.

I therefore give you Bert's A to Z of gardening, even though it's not all there, as I couldn't think of any words for some of the letters:

Air layering: A specialized method of plant propagation involving cutting into the bark of the plant to induce new roots to form.

Annuals: Plants whose life cycle lasts only one year, from seed to blooms to seed.

Bedding plant: Plants (mainly annuals), nursery-grown and suitable for growing in beds (minus the quilt). Quick, colorful flowers.

Biennial: A plant that usually only lives two years, normally producing flowers and seeds the second year.

Bonsai: The art of growing carefully trained dwarf plants in containers.

Bract: A modified leaf growing just below a flower, which is often confused with the flower itself. Have a look at the Bougainvillea, quite common in Phuket, to see it.

Chlorophyll: The green pigment in leaves. When present and healthy, this usually dominates all

other pigments that might be lurking around.

Cutting: A method of propagation using sections of stems, roots or leaves.

Dead head: The process of pinching off spent blooms to keep the plants well-groomed and to prevent them from setting seed. This will promote continued bloom and has no connection with a tie-dye-wearing chemical-fueled rock band fan.

Dibble stick: A pointed tool used to make holes in the soil for seeds, bulbs, or young plants.

Double digging: Preparing the

soil by systematically digging an area to the depth of two shovel heads.

Drip line: The circumference of an imaginary line below the tips of the outermost branches of a tree or plant.

Epiphyte: A non-parasitic plant which grows on another plant but gets its nourishment from the air and rainfall. It does not damage the host plant.

Fertilizer: Organic or inorganic plant foods, which may be either liquid or granular, used to feed the soil in order to improve the quality or quantity of plant growth.

Forcing: The process of hastening a plant's growth to maturity or bloom. It's cheating, really.

Fronde: The term used to describe the branch and leaf structure of a fern or members of the palm family.

Frost: The condensation and freezing of moisture in the air. This phenomenon tends to be found in the cooler parts of the world.

Germinate: The process of the sprouting of a seed.

Grafting: The uniting of a short length of stem of one plant onto the root stock of a different plant. This happens to a lot of trees here, with Lantana being a common example. It also describes the act of gardening without a beer in one hand.

Ground cover: A group of plants usually used to cover bare earth and create a uniform appearance.

Well, I have reached "G", and have run out of space. If you can stand the excitement, I will return with a vengeance next week with the second installment.

In the meantime, I am trying to find some appropriate language to describe myself, as in a week I probably will be looking for a new job. Vibrant and dynamic? I don't think so. Does anyone want to hire a balding, overweight Yorkshireman who is partial to the occasional beer?

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Property Gazette

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Property Gazette

Property Wanted



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HOUSE/APARTMENT

House or apartment wanted to rent by German couple from November 1, 2005 to April 30, 2006. Must have aircon, TV, cooking facilities and a telephone. In Patong, Karon, Kata, Nai Ham or Rawai. Email: w.ludwig.bbr@online.de

BOAT LAGOON CONDO

Wanted: 2-/3-bedroom condo at the Boat Lagoon, Phuket – with small mooring facilities. To be used only as a holiday home 2-3 months a year. Budget depends upon payment schedule. Tel: 97-15062403. Email: garry@fibrepros.com

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APARTMENTS

with pool. Large apartments, fully furnished, available at a good price. Quiet and private living on a cool hillside just 3 minutes to the beach and downtown Patong. Tel: 076-296621, 01-6916147. Fax: 076-344689. Email: info@baansuanvilla.de. For further information, please see our website at: www.phuket-patong.com

KATA BEACH

The brand-new Southern Fried Rice Guest House and Restaurant is now open. Three minutes' walk to the beach, some rooms with a sea view. Opening promotion: rooms from 300 baht per night. All rooms have air conditioning, cable TV, fridge, safe and hot water. Hi-speed wireless Internet throughout the building. Cheap motorbike rental for guests. Thai language lessons available in an air-conditioned classroom. Home of the Phuket Chess club, open every day. Our restaurant has a top chef, Gee – one of the best on the island. Kata Night Bazaar, 100/14-15 Kata Road, Kata. Tel: 01-8948446, 01-597-2213. Email: sfrkata@hotmail.com. Please see our website for more details: www.southernfriedrice.com

Accommodation Wanted

ACCOMMODATION AROUND KAMALA

3 x 2-bedroomed or 2 x 3-bedroomed houses wanted to rent for two months in Kamala area from December 21, 2005 to February 27, 2006. Must be furnished and have aircon, kitchen facilities, and satellite. Apartments considered. Tel: +44 19645-32801. Email: debbos123@aol.com

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Property Gazette



2 BEDROOMS, 3 BATHROOMS, PARKING

New development 2 minutes to Karon Beach. 2-bedroom townhouses, currently under construction. Some sea view glimpses. Well-priced and an ideal small investment. Prices from 3 million to 4 million baht. Once construction is finished, expect a 20% rise in sales price. Very good buy for location and quality. Price: 3 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



THE LOFTS APARTMENTS

Surin, Phuket. The Lofts, arranged over five floors and superbly located less than 100 meters from Surin Beach, overlooking green parkland. Priced from 5.5 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



BOUTIQUE HOTEL - 8 ROOMS

Karon, Phuket. The hotel consists of 8 nicely furnished rooms, a bar and a laundry. The hotel is fully furnished and located 2 minutes to the beach. Hill views. Price: 14 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



4-BEDROOM HOUSE WITH SEA VIEW

There is a private gated entrance way with 24 hour security to ensure your utmost safety and privacy. Services included within the estate are gardeners, a private water system. All windows and floors are made from solid teak wood which give the home a warm cozy feeling. The master bedroom feature a massive bathroom with an open air Jacuzzi with impressive views across Patong bay. The kitchen is made of all imported materials and includes a centre island design as well as a full range of appliances. The house comes with its own private salt water pool powered by the latest filtration system to ensure low maintenance and high reliability. Price: 35 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



TROPICAL RESORT

This resort is build in the year 2000 and is located on a tropical island just out of Phuket. It is a well maintained property with a nice sandy beach. The ideal place for relaxation. The resort comprises, 9 bungalows with outdoor bathroom, 1 house with 2 bedrooms, 1 main house with 3 bedrooms, living and dining room, kitchen, store room 3 bathrooms, toilet, and all build inside with hard wood and teakwood. Reception and restaurant with fully professional equipped kitchen. Staff quarters with 7 rooms. Generator house with two generators for electric supply and 4 water wells for the water supply. 1 pool. The beach front is about 150 meters and has white sand. Price: 70 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



1 RAI WITH UNDERGROUND INFRASTRUCTURE



14 x 1-rai plots of land (5 sold) at Ao Yon, with sea views to the east, south and west. All infrastructure is in place, including internal 6-meter-wide road with gutters, underground electricity (no power-line views), water supply and telephone. The land is ready to build on and the area boasts some of the most expensive housing on the island. A very good investment; a beautiful area with nice, quiet beaches. 10 mins to major shopping centers and schools, golf 15 mins away and great seaside restaurants only 5 mins. Price: 8 million baht. Tel: 09-8715192.



5 RAI, 3 NGAN + WITH SEA VIEW

Kata, Phuket. This beautiful land with sea view is located in the hills behind Kata. The views towards Kata are magnificent. Surrounded by forest and a waterfall, the plot is very well priced - 1-rai plots in this area are selling for 8 million per rai. The land is a nice square shape and has a gentle slope. The size is 5 rai 3 ngan 43 talang wah, with Nor Sor 3 Gor title. Water and electricity available from over the road. Price: 24 million baht. Tel: 09-8715192.



3 BEDROOM VILLA WITH SEA VIEW

Patong, Phuket. This Bali-style villa is located in the south of Patong and has a beautiful sea view. It is surrounded by a tropical garden and has 24-hour security. The villa comprises 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, a Western kitchen, living-dining room, and 2 terraces where you can relax and see the sunset. It is fully furnished. Price: 15 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



15 BEDROOM GUESTHOUSE

Patong, Phuket. This 15-bedroom guesthouse is located in the heart of Patong and 2 minutes' walk from the shopping area and the night life. It comprises 10 large rooms, 4 small rooms and a suite room, reception, storeroom, small kitchen, laundry room and a video library. There is also a swimming pool available for guests. Price: 24 million baht. Tel: 06-2726508.



2 APARTMENTS WITH SEA VIEW

The location of the apartments is in the hills near Patong, with great sea views. The ground-floor apartment is 128sqm and comprises 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a kitchen, living room, laundry room and a 32sqm terrace. Price: 7.2 million baht. The first-floor apartment is 128sqm and comprises 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a kitchen, living room, laundry room and a staircase to a 64sqm roof area, where you can relax and enjoy the sunset. Price: 7.5 million baht. Both apartments are fully furnished. Tel: 06-2726508.



1 RAI IN PATONG

Unobstructed 180-degree views of Patong Bay, 1,816 square meters, beautiful sunsets and the sea. Underground utilities with cement roads. Privacy and security only minutes to the restaurants, shops and Patong Beach. Price: 12.5 million baht. Tel: 09-8715192.

16 x 2-BEDROOM APARTMENT BLOCK

This 16-unit apartment building is located in a quiet area in Chalong: 5 minutes drive to Big C and Central, 10 minutes to Phuket City and 15 minutes to Nai Harn, Karon and Kata Beaches. All apartments have 2 bedrooms, a bathroom, kitchen, living and dining room, and are fully furnished. It has an office, manicured gardens and the property is very well maintained. 20 million baht. Very good rental returns. Tel: 06-2726508.

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26ft long, 7ft 4in wide, draught 18in. Based on a proven commercial design. Hand-built fiberglass sea-going powerboat combines fun, performance and economy. 7-year structural hull warranty. Positive buoyancy flotation, self-bailing cockpit. Easily trailed. Special introductory offer: new Pegasus 8.2, plus new Yamaha 85hp outboard, plus new trailer. 595,000 baht, plus VAT. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-239800. For further details, please see our website at: www.pegasusmarine.com

TRAVELING

surfboard. Carl Pope Travel Board (comes in half), 10' long, 22" wide, 3 1/8 inches thick. Harbor design, excellent nose rider. Has its own travel bag and registration papers. I paid US\$1,100 from Pope's factory 2 years ago. Yours for US\$500. Excellent condition. Surfed Phuket many times, and Vietnam. Airlines usually let it go like a set of golf clubs. Please contact for more info. Tel: 02-6829652, 06-171-2972. Email: kukui@lava.net

UNDERWATER VIDEO

equipment. For sale: Underwater video gear comprising:

- Sony Handicam PC120 recently serviced by Sony
- Ikelite underwater housing, recently serviced
- red filter
- Firewire, USB & TV cables
- carry bag
- 2 batteries
- 1 cleaning tape

Everything for 65,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-7888912. Email: fabienbelleinguer@fundives.net

BOAT 'VISA' TRIP

to Langkawi. Taking my boat overnight to Langkawi in the next 3 weeks to "renew" the boat's papers. Will cruise at 30+ knots, depending on weather. Any other boats making the same trip in order that we might travel together? Tel: 971-5055938. Email: stuart@sahmnet.ae

SWITLICK 6-MAN LIFE RAFT

Aries vane, 18' parachute anchor with 600" 1" nylon, avon dinghy, radar reflector, radar mount, band-it kit. Tel: 076-200477. Email: balboa@procom.in.th

NEW AND USED BOAT STUFF

- Hydraulic Navtec backstay and boom vang, new
- Bronze turnbuckles, different sizes (8)
- Lots of rope, 8, 10, 12mm; 15-35m long
- Sailomat windvane (own rudder)
- Aluminum Spinnaker poles (2): 6.5m and 15cm diameter
- Two-blade pitch prop
- Autohelm 2000, like new
- Norseman fittings 8, 10, 12mm and bigger
- Stainless tanks, different sizes
- Lots of stainless bits and pieces

Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-383-080, 06-9401860. Fax: 076-381934. Email: bigasail@samart.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: 07-067-3360.

HOVERCRAFT OPERATION

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 will be considered. Tel: 01-078-7795. Email: a.bolle@siam-interact.com

FISHING BOAT

19ft fiberglass, with trailer. Has center console with permanent shade cover and plenty of rod holders. Has a very clever shade extension too. As new for 250,000 baht. Does not include motors as I am selling the hull and trailer only. Best value for money in Phuket. Please contact for more information. Tel: 06-9724805. Email: nervobe@hotmail.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: tailor@loxinfo.co.th



Find more classified ads
"Boats & Marine"
at www.phuketgazette.net!

Island Job Mart



Kamalaya - a new destination and the first dedicated health resort for well-being on Koh Samui is opening in December 2005 and is seeking employees to join our team. Applicants must be Thai nationals, fluent in written & spoken English, computer literate and must be self-motivated. Interviews are to be conducted on Koh Samui.

Positions

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Sous Chef (Thai nationality) | 7. Restaurant Manager |
| 2. Assistant to Executive Chef/F&B | 8. Restaurant Supervisor |
| (Female, Thai nationality) | 9. Captain |
| 3. Chef De Partie | 10. Bartender |
| 4. Demi Chef | 11. Waiter/Waitress |
| 5. Commiss I | 12. Chief Steward |
| 6. Bakery | 13. Stewards |

Position Requirements

- Male or Female, Thai nationality
- Good spoken and written English (For Positions 1, 2, 7, 10)
- Each position requires a minimum of 2 years' experience in a hotel/resort
- An understanding of guest services in related fields is essential
- Computer literate (for Positions 1, 2, 7, 10)
- Mature and able work under pressure
- Willing to work on Samui

We offer a competitive salary, an attractive remuneration package and opportunities for career advancement to the successful candidates. Interested applicants should send an application letter giving details of their career development at this time, as well as their future aspirations.

For further information please send a detailed CV including references and a recent photograph to: Human Resources Kamalaya Co., Ltd., (K. Chantira Thongiead), 102/9 Moo 3, Laem Set Road, Na-Muang, Koh Samui, Surat Thani, Thailand, 84140. Tel: +66(0) 7723 3390-3, Fax: +66 (0) 7723 3389 or by email to chantra@kamalaya.com



Lifestyle & Leisure (Thailand) Ltd.

A property developer located in
Phuket seeks:

Senior Project Manager (Construction)

Qualifications:

- Minimum 15 years' experience.
- Asian experience a must.
- Ability to manage site and office responsibilities.
- Contract management and construction management a must.

Attractive package: starting salary 250K + management benefits

Financial Manager (Real Estate)

Put together investment proposals, negotiate with banks, feasibilities, investor relations, supervise project finance.

Qualifications:

- Finance and accounting degree (preferably an MBA)
- Minimum 10 years' experience
- Experience in the real-estate finance field
- Knowledge of how to put investment deals together

Site Supervisor/Design Coordinator (Construction)

Responsibilities include: Site Supervisor with emphasis on architectural finishes and coordinating design issues between consultants and contractors.

Qualifications:

- Qualified architect/engineer.
- Good written and spoken English.
- Minimum 5 years' experience.
- Computer skills including AutoCAD.
- Must have own transport.

Please submit resumé to hr@lifestyleandleisure.com

ACCOUNTANT / BOOKKEEPER

Small hotel in Patong seeks female accountant with good command of English, computer literacy, and ability to handle payroll and tax computations. Please contact K. Jip. Tel: 076-340464, 076-340434, 07-8871733. Email: whharris042004@hotmail.com

HOAGEN-DAZS

Sales Manager. Male or female, between 25 and 35 years old, with:

- Degree in any related field;
- Experience in sales & marketing, hospitality or related field;
- Good knowledge of hotel and restaurant industries;
- Good English communication skills;
- Pleasant personality, good interpersonal skills;
- Own car or car driver's license is preferable.

Send a full, detailed resumé stating current and expected salary, together with recent photo or contact for more information. Tel: 076-292801. Fax: 076-292808. Email: admin@avantika-phuket.com

STAFF WANTED

A male or female Thai guide - 1 position. Good English communication skills required. Please contact Phuket One Plue One Co., Ltd. Tel: 01-0887200. For further details, please see our website at: www.primavilla.co.kr

WANTED

We are looking for a skipper and a hostess who have worked on boats. Please call for more information. Tel: 09-8663738, 06-9404316.

ENGLISH TEACHER NEEDED

Urgently needed: part-time Thai & foreign English teacher to teach children and adult classes. Please call Mr Dusit at Tel: 09-6524747 or 09-4745669.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

A small boutique resort with a warm family environment is looking for qualified candidates to fill the following positions:

- Cost controller (1)
 - Personal Assistant to Chief Accountant (1)
 - Assistant FO Manager (1)
 - Guest Relations Officer (2)
 - Cook - European and Thai food (3)
- Please submit your resumé and photo by email or contact for more information. Tel: 076-345345. Fax: 076-345099. Email: agm@clubbamboo.com

ADMIN OFFICER

We are looking for a woman who has fair English and admin skills, and 1 year of experience. Salary: 8-12,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-263737, 01-5354108. Fax: 076-224-113. Email: recruitment@bowentraining.com



Can You Make It Happen?

Whether it's a group or one-on-one... for business or pleasure... the Crowne Plaza Karon Beach Phuket is the ideal place to meet... smart, contemporary styling... friendly, efficient service... And that's where you come in.

The Crowne Plaza Karon Beach Phuket is opening soon. We want to hire:

Administration Dept.

- Rooms Division Manager

Recreation Dept.

- Recreation Manager • Kids Club Manager

Front Office Dept.

- Guest Relation Manager • Front Office Supervisor • Business Centre Supervisor
- Guest Relations Officer • Guest Service Agent
- Airport Representative
- Business Centre Attendant • Bell man

Food & Beverage Dept.

- Restaurant Manager • Restaurant Supervisor
- Restaurant Captain • Hostess
- Waiter • Waitress • Bartender • Bartender
- Bar Captain • Cashier

Kitchen Dept.

- Sous Chef • Chef de Partie
- Demi Chef de Partie • Commis 1 • Commis 2
- Butcher • Steward Supervisor

Sales & Marketing Dept.

- Asst. Director of Sales • Graphic Artist

Housekeeping Dept.

- Asst. Executive Housekeeper
- Floor Supervisor • Uniform Attendant • Florist
- Room Attendant • Laundry Supervisor
- Washer Machine • House man

Engineer Dept.

- Director of Engineer • Shift Supervisor
- Shift Technicians KC & Laundry
- Light & Sound Technicians
- A/C & Mechanic Technicians • Room PMM
- Public Area PMM • Electrician Technicians

Human Resources Dept.

- Human Resources Officer

Please send your CV with a recent photograph to: the HR Department

Crowne Plaza Karon Beach Phuket, 509 Patak Road, Karon Beach, Muang, Phuket, 83100 Thailand. Tel: 076 396139 Fax: 076 396122

Email: somnuk.chapin@ichotelsgroup.com



MASSAGE THERAPIST WANTED

Professionally trained massage therapist wanted for a privately-owned villa, from November through February. Must be on call. Generous salary offered to the qualified candidate. Please submit your resumé to apply or contact. Tel: 01-895-9144. Email: ptack@loxinfo.co.th

PROGRAMMER/ WEB DESIGNER

Resort Hotel Network, a successful online reservation company, requires:

- 1 programmer, (PHP)
- 1 web designer, and
- 2 website administrators.

Please submit your resumé to apply or contact. Tel: 076-261382, 06-6823672. Fax: 076-261383. Email: pomme@resorthotel.net

PROPERTY SCOUT

Thai person with good written and spoken English to follow up listings for houses and land. Must have transport, a pleasant personality and enjoy traveling around the island. Good basic salary plus commission. Tel: 076-288908. Email: nice@siamrealestate.com For further details, please see our website at: www.siamrealestate.com

STAFF WANTED

An international company wants office staff, part-time staff and promotion staff (Thai only). Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-296295, 09-4499022. Fax: 076-296-295. Email: premiumbsp1@yahoo.com

Island Job Mart

Manathai Resort, Surin Beach

Career opportunities

MANATHAI
HOTELS AND RESORTS

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 7627 0900, 0 9831 1568

Or

Apply in person with your CV at Manathai Resort, Srisunthorn Road, Surin Beach, Cherng Talay from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

W
watermark
bar restaurant

MODERN CUISINE
CONTEMPORARY DESIGN
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Service is not a job – it's a way of life.

It's a professional commitment to satisfy individual needs. It's a commitment to make someone smile, to create the ultimate experience, to surpass expectations. If you have this commitment, this is your opportunity.

Watermark is currently offering opportunities in these positions:

- o Assistant Manager
- o Sous Chef
- o Supervisor
- o Yacht & Restaurant Hostess
- o Guest Relations

Excellent English skills, great personality, inspired attitude & service-mind required in all positions.

watermark bar restaurant
Phuket Boat Lagoon
22/1 Thepkasatri Rd, Muang, Phuket
For interview send resumé to info@watermarkphuket.com
tel: 076-239078

BAAN COCOON PROPERTY

Anuphas Pirom Resort Co Ltd, a real estate company developing luxury houses at Phuket Country Club Golf Course, is currently seeking qualified candidates to fill the following positions:

1. Sales 1 Position

- Female, age between 23-27 years.
- Min. 1 year's experience in sales.

All positions require

- Bachelor's degree or higher in related field.
- Good command of spoken and written English.
- Salary negotiable

Please send your CV and recent photo to:

Mrs Kantheera Rungsang-anotai
97/4 Moo 7, Wichit Songkram Rd
Katu District, Phuket, 83120.

☎ 076-202189, 076-321815, ☎ 076-321811

✉ info@anuphaspiromresort.com

www.anuphaspiromresort.com

CROWNE PLAZA RESIDENCES
KARON BEACH PHUKET

Crowne Plaza Residences

is looking for a self-disciplined and motivated **Accountant** with the following qualifications.

- Thai national with a minimum of 3 years' experience in a related field
- Degree in Accounting
- Knowledge of taxation
- Experience in Quickbooks is a plus

Please send your CV with a recent photograph to: The HR Department

Crowne Plaza Karon Beach Phuket

509 Patak Road, Karon Beach, Phuket 83100 Thailand
Tel: 076-396142. Fax: 076-396122
Email: somnuk.chapin@ichotelsgroup.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

DIVE INSTRUCTOR

We are looking for 2 PADI instructors (couple) for our busy 5-star dive center on Phi Phi Island. Salary plus commission, food and accommodation for the right couple. Email: tony@diveh2osportz.com

PARADISE COMPLEX

Patong TORSO, a new cafe-guesthouse-restaurant at 125/13-14 Soi Paradise Complex (next to "My Way") seeks: 6 Waiters, 2 Cooks, 2 Busboys 1 Maid. Please call K. Nee at Tel: 06-2827779 or K. Kim at Tel: 06-0140220. Email: kim.blokbo@gmail.com

LOOKING FOR MAID

We are looking for an in-house maid to stay with us full time. The maid will need to cook, wash and clean, and must be able to drive a motorbike. Please contact for more info. Tel: 01-9795624. Email: tom@bootlegonline.com

RACHAKIRI RESORT

The Rachakiri Resort and Spa, a 4-star resort, is looking for a hotel manager and F&B manager with 5 years' experience in a related field. Please submit your resumé and photo by email or contact for more information. Tel: 02-8611861, 01-875 0842. Fax: 02-8611862. Email: sales@rachakiri.com

SECRETARY

age 20-25, with basic computer skills. English, spoken and written, is required. Full-time contract in charge of our sales office. Initial salary: 8,000 baht. To apply, or for further information, please contact us. Tel: 06-6895837.

KARON PROPERTY

office in Karon requires (Thai nationals): office staff and a property scout. Please email: phil.collier@karonproperty.com

2 PROGRAMMERS

Core tasks are to mass import data. Requirements are English, PHP, MySQL, XML. Email: siamuk@loxinfo.co.th

ASSISTANT NEEDED

Patong company requires a bookkeeper with knowledge of the construction industry and good English. Tel: 07-0778454. Fax: 076-292-073. Email: solitude001@aol.com

WEB GRAPHIC

designer wanted part-time. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

Island Job Mart



Experienced Real Estate Sales Professional Wanted

GARDEN ISLAND requires a dynamic, attractive, well-presented individual, aged 20-30, in our Patong office.

Requirements:

Proficiency in English language, computer skills and results-orientated. Duties will include property scouting & real estate sales. Must have own car & phone. An attractive salary & commission package is offered.

Please forward your CV by email to:
info@gardenislandphuket.com



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 - 07-0490726

THE VILLAGE COCONUT ISLAND

This exciting new project of luxurious villas in their own unique village on Koh Maphrao (Coconut Island, 15 minutes from Laem Hin Pier), is looking for highly motivated, experienced and professional personnel to join our team.

The following positions are now available:

1. General Manager (1 - Thai or foreign)
2. Project Manager (1 - Thai only)
3. Sales and Marketing Executives (2 - Thai only)
4. Accountant (1 - Thai only)

All positions require excellent English and computer skills with a minimum of 3 years' experience in a similar field. If you are interested in these exciting positions, you are invited to apply with full resume, stating present and expected salary and enclosing a recent photo to: Coconut Island Holdings Co., Ltd. 23/10 Moo2 Boat Lagoon Phuket, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200 Thailand. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 01-8912926. Fax: 076-273393. Email: coconut@thevillagecoconutisland.com

URGENTLY NEEDED

Five-star spa company is looking to recruit high-performance staff to join our team:

1. Spa Supervisors, 3 positions, based in Bangkok, Karon and Phuket City;
 2. Spa Receptionists, 3 positions, based in Karon and Patong;
 3. Senior/Chief Accountant;
 4. Spa Therapists, 5 positions, based in Karon and Patong;
 5. Administration Assistant.
- All candidates may apply in person at 3rd Floor, Royal Phuket City Hotel, or contact for more information. Tel: 076-354027. Fax: 076-212-901. Email: info@asianwind.biz

Employment Wanted

EXPAT SEEKING PERMANENT JOB

My previous 25 years of experience in F&B includes managing a German restaurant and bars in HK and Malaysia. I am looking for a permanent position (until retirement) on Phuket, from December 2006. Email: hakdagdo@yahoo.de

Looking for a job?
www.phuketgazette.net

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Births



CONGRATULATIONS

to new mother Jaree "Nok" Makchan, *Phuket Gazette* Classifieds Assistant Manager, and proud father Sumran Thongsawang for the birth of their daughter *Arthitaya Thongsawang* on September 19.

Bulletins

PHUKET CHESS

Club. Open every day, at Southern Fried Rice, Kata. Tournaments on Wednesdays at 7 pm and Saturdays at 2 pm. Please call Tel: 01-894 8446.

SUNDAY BIKE RIDE

Ride. Open to anyone with a road bike who would like to join other cyclists on a Sunday training ride in the Phuket area. Please contact. Email: info@onetecdiving.com

Business Opportunities

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

Serviced Office Center
Receptionist Provided
Excellent Location
Tel: 076-239967

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 a month. Tel: 04-8448381. Email: garyone1@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT

for rent. A fully equipped restaurant is for rent on 1 rai in a great location in Rawai, next to a 300-room hotel and spa. It has a capacity of 100 pax. A good price for interested buyers. Tel: 06-2761831.

BUSINESS

in Patong. Restaurant and seaview rooms for 90,000 baht a month. Asking price: 1.2 million baht, negotiable. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-9701283. Email: casaniaphuket@yahoo.com

BAR AND ROOM

for rent on a 55-year contract. In a good location, brand-new, close to Jungcelon and Bangla - a must-see. Tel: 07-038-2627.

HOTEL HOT SALE

Freehold hotel-bar-restaurant-Internet cafe in a prime Patong location for sale. Asking 18 million baht. Tel: 01-894-0580.

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. Tel: 01-8267129.

KITE SURFER

+ maker. Looking for a partner to run the only kite school in Phuket. Tel: 01-0811369. Email: thai kite@hotmail.com

LAST SHOP

to take over. Main road, Kamala. 2 floors, aircon. Tel: 076-279265, 09-4704478. Email: av58@phuket.ksc.co.th

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

SHOP FOR RENT

in a good location, opposite The Dinopark Minigolf. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-3151383.

RESTAURANT

and guesthouse. Available for 6-year lease in Karon. European-style kitchen, 36-seat air-conditioned restaurant, two TVs, UBC & sound system. Five air-conditioned guest rooms with hot water, TV and full UBC satellite system. Small staff room and office. Thai registered company included, ready to start your business now. Tel: 09-591-4044, 01-8936072. Email: kanhathamyorn@hotmail.com

O'MALLEYS IRISH PUB

Small business, big opportunity! Recently refurbished pub & restaurant, located in Phuket City. Close to major hotels, shopping area and tourist attractions. Package includes all paperwork, visas, 2 work permits and all licenses for a smooth takeover. 400sqm, live music stage, sound and light system, projector UBC TV, 3 new pool tables (including pool room), 15 tables, 40 bar stools, 5 fridges and freezers, new kitchen equipment, 2 phone lines and over 300 taxi-bikes with "O'Malleys" vests driving around the city. Tel: 076-220170, 09-7292846. Email: scottshaw77@lycos.co.uk

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.

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.

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. Please call K. Anong at Tel: 01-7378612 for more information.

TRAVEL AGENCY

needs Thai staff, who are able to speak English and have good computer skills, to work in head office and our tour information center. Please call or send resume. Tel: 076-282906. Email: info@phuket-excursions.com

WAITRESSES

wanted. Women, 20-26 years old, with English skills wanted for Patong beachfront restaurant. Good salary offered. Tel: 01-8173190.

GUTTER FITTER

Man with experience in installing gutters needed. Good salary offered. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-264025, 01-7372973.

LAWYER NEEDED

Knightbridge Law is extending its Bangkok Offices to include an office in Phuket. We are currently seeking staff for that office. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-0845704. Email: skheffe@knightbridgecredit.com

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Complete Magical Entertainer
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- ★ Childrens Parties, etc.

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Discounted hotels
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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.

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- Company Registration 2,229 baht;
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 - UK & US Visa 16,999 baht.
- No more visa runs – get a one-year visa! Establish your Thai company today! Property title search and sales contract. Thailand's LARGEST legal service network. Tel: 076-345277. Email: dennis.siamlegal@hotmail.com www.siam-legal.com

PRINTING AND ADVERTISING

For all your printing needs – from T-shirts to brochures and caps to catalogs, any quantity. Call Dream Team Tel: 076-344366 or visit us at 204/38 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Soi Ladiva, Patong.

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, 04-0068736.

Mobile Phones

WANTED: ORANGE SIM CARDS

Our company would like to purchase several 100 pre-paid SIM cards and airtime vouchers for Thailand. We prefer Orange Just Talk. We can pay via bank wire. Please contact and put ATTENTION KEN in the subject field. Tel: 858-2742-686, 85-8255755. Email: sales@telestial.com For further details, please see our website at: www.telestial.com

BLACKBERRY 7230

Never-used Blackberry 7230 still in the box, comes with belt clip, headset, travel charger, desktop stand, 2 USB cables, and software. Price: 20,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-330710, 01-597-4218. Email: raoulwildt@gmx.net

Personal Services

ORIGINAL

Christians pray. Original Christians pray – CHRIST HEALS! Worldwide, for those who are ill, in distress or in need. Free, with no obligations. For information and reports on healing, please visit the website below. It's in 9 languages. Simply write and send a picture: Worldwide Center of Prayer and Healing of Jesus, the Christ, P.O. Box 5643, D-97006 Wuerzburg, Germany. Email: hansgerodetti@yahoo.de For further details, please see our website at: www.heilzentrum.cc

Personals

LADIES ONLY

Tony – a good looking guy, 32 years old – will escort you to any event. Call me at Tel: 04-0511582.

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