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Prepare for Oct weather – Gov

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn and Natcha Yuttaworawit

PHUKET: Following the recent downpours that caused minor floods and landslides around the island, Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura has warned officials to prepare at-risk areas for potential floods and landslides in October, when more heavy rains traditionally deluge the island.

The unusually heavy rain in Phuket in August has led forecasters at the Southern Meteorological Center (West Coast), based at Phuket International Airport, to predict the weather will only get worse in upcoming months.

"Officials must prepare for flooding soon and be prepared to pump out problem areas," Gov Udomsak said on August 30, adding that several areas were expected to suffer heavy flooding and advised officials in those areas to be especially vigilant.

"I'm worried about the Samkong area in Phuket City, especially at the Tesco-Lotus Intersection, because it has a lot of construction," he said. "Other places are the lowlands behind the Big C supercenter, and also Komaraphat Rd because there is always flooding there."

Heavy rains over the past week caused a minor landslide on Patong Hill and flooding around the go-kart track in Kathu. "There are other affected areas such as Karon, but the problems are not serious, and when the rain stops it will return to normal," Dumri Sungsarb, of the Phuket Provincial Defense Office, told the *Gazette*.

However, he added that if



FORETASTE: This small landslide on Patong Hill was quickly cleared up, yet still caused traffic problems.

the rains persisted he would expect more problems at Soi Siangtai, on Thepkasattri Rd, an area known for flooding and landslides.

"We are working with Phuket City Municipality to solve this problem. This is not easy, however, as water runs down Soi Siangtai and collects on Thepkasattri Rd, causing flooding," K. Dumri said.

"There are many houses in the area, which means that fixing the roads would be very inconvenient," he added.

• In an effort to minimize loss of life and property from flooding and landslides, the Phuket Office for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (ODPM) has set up stream monitoring stations in nine of the 21 areas in

Phuket designated as "risk zones" for flooding.

The monitoring stations have been given the nickname *Mister Tuenpai*, or "Mr Warning" in English.

ODPM chief Arun Keodsom said each of the nine stations, now up and running, automatically records water depth, volume and velocity, transmitting the data to the ODPM office via the Internet.

This will allow officials to issue warnings to local administrative bodies when there is a danger of flooding or landslides from heavy rain.

The areas at risk include several parts of the island popular with tourists, including Kalim, Kata, Karon, Laem Phromthep and Cape Panwa.

Jungceylon to open December 1

By Sompratch Saowakhon

PHUKET CITY: The long-awaited Jungceylon project will open for business by December 1, a top executive for project owner Phuket Square Company Ltd has told the Governor.

Prawit Janyasittikul, Deputy CEO of Phuket Square, visited Phuket Provincial Hall on September 1 to brief Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura on the progress of the project, located on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd in Patong.

Jungceylon, originally slated to open November last year, was halted after ballooning costs, liquidity problems and a legal dispute between its two principal investors resulted in project contractor Powerline halting work at the site for five months.

Work resumed April last year after former investor Manit Udomkunnatum's 53% share in Phuket Square was bought out by US-registered investment fund Real Estate Capital Asia Partners (Recap).

K. Prawit confirmed that work on the project was nearly complete and that the project would open for business on December 1.

Following the buyout, the cost of which he put at 5 billion baht, all available retail space has been reserved, he said.

One high-profile tenant, French hypermarket Carrefour, would open on October 15, he added.

With so many businesses preparing to open at one time, Jungceylon and its tenants need to launch a publicity campaign to find enough employees, he said.

Gov Udomsak told K. Prawit that he hoped Jungceylon would be a success, and raise the profile of Phuket and Patong among foreign tourists.



Your Piece of Paradise

Petty crime surges; 30 cops ask for transfers

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PHUKET: With the island apparently suffering from a major surge in petty crime, applications by some 30 police officers for transfer out of the province in the upcoming annual round of promotions and transfers, on October 1 have been approved.

The main reason put forward by the officers for the transfers: "overworked".

At his monthly meeting with chief officers on August 30, Phuket Governor Udomsak Usarangura called for Pol Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch, Commander of the Phuket Provincial Police, to have police step up their patrols and for officers to be more vigilant.

Gov Udomsak said. "[Police] officers should be ready and on the streets so that when a crime is reported, they can respond quickly."

Governor Udomsak identified Saphan Hin, Rang Hill and Suan Luang Park – all in Phuket City – as three areas where officers needed to be especially vigilant as they are popular places for the public.

He added that petty thefts weren't the only problem, and that police needed to step up their action against firearms as well. "If [police] find a person with a gun, they need to double check

that the person has a license to own that gun, and whether [he or she] is a police officer or not," he said.

Gen Decha acknowledged that Phuket's crime rate has increased but defended his officers, saying that they are understaffed. "We have about 1,000 police officers, but there are so many residents and tourists that we are overworked every day," he said.

He added that police often received reports up to five hours after a crime occurred, and that most thefts were being committed by youths under 18 years old, who, because of their young age, may not receive stern punishments.

Gen Decha confirmed that he has approved transfers out of the province for 30 police officers, most of whom cited "overwork" as their reason for wanting such a transfer.

In return, Gen Decha asked the Governor for stricter controls on people using police band radios that members of the force use to communicate with each other.

"Many gangs have walkie-talkies and listen to the police frequency, so they know what we are doing. Many times we have not caught criminals because they have had time to run away," Gen Decha said.



JD Pools Managing Director Thanusak Phungdet points out the differences in pool wall panels made by Desjoyaux Pools (Thailand) and his own company.

JD Pools to sue police, rival, for B100m

PHUKET: JD Pools has announced plans to sue both Desjoyaux Pools (Thailand) and the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) following a DSI raid of JD Pools' Phuket warehouse on August 18.

At a press conference on August 31, Thanusak Phungdet, Managing Director of JD Pools Group, said his firm will claim for damages arising from a distortion of the facts and defamation by a foreign company. The suit for damages will ask for "approximately 100 million baht" in restitution.

The August 18 raid followed Desjoyaux's filing of a complaint with the DSI, claiming that JD Pools were selling pool panels and filter products for which Desjoyaux have patent rights.

However, K. Thanusak explained to the press that the panels produced were of a different design.

JD Pools were distributors for Desjoyaux Pools in Thailand, but the two companies split in 2004.

Tax office take set to rise 25pc

PHUKET: The Phuket Area Revenue Office (PARO) expects to have raised 5 billion baht in taxes by the end of this fiscal year on September 31, an increase of one billion baht from last year.

PARO Chief Pensri Passakul said at Governor Udomsak Usarangura's monthly meeting with Provincial Chiefs on August 30, that between October 1 last year and July 31 this year her office collected 4.162 billion baht in taxes, an increase of 27% from the same period last year.

She added that in July this year 330 million baht in taxes was collected, 30% up on the 254 million baht collected in July 2005.

K. Pensri attributed the increase in revenue mainly to the booming property sector.

Supot Suwannachote, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Land Office (PPLO), reported to the Governor that from October 2005 to the end of July 2006 the PPLO collected 921 million baht of land transfer fees and 295 million baht in stamp duty.

—Sangkhae Leelanaporn

Mystery over Italian dead in smoldering bed

CHALONG: Mystery surrounds the death of Italian tourist Marco Oniga, 44, whose charred remains were found on the bed of his apartment in Chalong on the afternoon of September 1.

Mr Oniga's body was discovered at about 4:30 pm by one of the apartment building's maids, who smelled smoke coming from Room 312 and noticed that the locked door was hot to the touch.

She ran down to the office and returned with a master key, which she used to open the smoke-filled room.

Lying on the bed was Mr Oniga, face up on a badly-burned coconut husk mattress. Police found a cigarette butt on the bed, thought to have ignited the fire.

The walls and ceiling had extensive smoke damage, but the fire was contained to the bed and body of Mr Oniga, who was found dead with both fists clenched. One of his knees was raised; the other was flat on the mattress.

Staff at the apartment building said Mr Oniga rented the room and moved in on August 23.

Pol Capt Peerapun Mee-mak of the Chalong Police said it was known that the Mr Oniga suffered from epilepsy, but would not speculate whether this condition contributed to his death.

He also criticized a report in a Thai-language newspaper speculating that the death was a suicide. Such reports are unfair to the victim's relatives, he said.

Crime statistics: all the usual suspects

PHUKET: Crime statistics for August, released by the Phuket Provincial Police, show that the usual two crimes – gambling and drugs – yet again topped the list of offenses committed in the month.

A total of 181 people were arrested on gambling charges during the August 1-25 reporting period. Eleven of these were held for their involvement in the underground lottery.

Of the 57 arrests for drug

offenses made during the same period, 27 were for possession of marijuana, 19 for possession of *ya bah* (methamphetamine) and two for possession of *krathom*, an indigenous plant that has a stimulant effect. A total of 5,323 *ya bah* pills were seized.

Nine people were arrested for sniffing glue, paint thinner or other vaporous inhalants.

Three murders were reported during the period, with ar-

rests made in all three cases, and one person was arrested for manslaughter.

A total of 67 theft cases were reported, seven of which involved stolen motorcycles. Five people were reported for alleged fraud, 88 were arrested for working illegally and 11 for illegal possession of firearms.

A further 52 people were arrested for offenses related to prostitution.

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Dive operators push for simpler industry rules

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET CITY: Dive operators look set to stay away – for the time being – from registration under the provincial government's new regulations, in an effort to persuade officials that many of the new rules are unworkable.

The rules came into effect on August 25 after being signed by Governor Udomsak Usurangkura. Dive operators have until September 30 to register under the new system.

On August 29 a letter containing questions from members of the Dive Operators' Club of Thailand (DOCT) was submitted to the Governor.

DOCT President Phakdee Khruthanang told the *Gazette* that the letter requested an explanation of how the government will use the regulations to control the dive operators and how the government can guarantee the confidentiality of information submitted by dive shops.

"We sent one letter to the Governor on August 16, after he told us to share our ideas. In that letter we told him that we were happy that the government is taking care of the marine environment and is concerned about marine travel, but that we were worried that the new regulations duplicate the work of other government agencies," she said.

"We have all registered our businesses with the TAT, and we have to file paperwork for other government organizations for items such as boat registration, employment of foreigners, insurance, taxes and other related laws which we already follow, and the government can check on all of these.

"So we would like to suggest that the government create a one-stop service to make it convenient for the operators."

K. Phakdee said that the dive operators' letter also suggested that the Phuket provincial administration should have one government agency to regulate the dive shops, as well as provide them with service and advice.

"After the first letter, we received no response from the

Governor. But after he signed the announcement [that the dive rules were going into effect], some of our members still wanted to know how to follow some of the rules, and about the security of [corporate and customer] information.

On September 5, K. Phakdee said, "So far, we still have not had a reply to our [second] letter. It seems that they don't see it as a priority. I will talk to our members again, to see what they think. We still have time."

Originally, K. Phakdee wanted to register her own company, but she changed her mind, she said, because she and DOCT members worry that, if they register now, they may have to try to follow rules that are vague and difficult to comply with.

In addition, she said, "We believe that they violate the privacy of company information and of dive operator's customers. The Chief of the Phuket Marine Office says that all information will be kept confidential, but we are not confident about their ability to do that."

"If we do register, it means that we accept all the regulations [as they are now], but if the government can change the rules or put together new ones that are acceptable to both sides, we will follow them without any problem," she said.

"Some of rules are not clear. For example, they want [copies of] customers' dive certificates, but they don't specify what level of certificate they want to see, as well as copies of their passports.

"In any case, we don't even know whether our customers will bring their certificates with them, or whether they will allow us to take copies of their passports.

"There are other points that are 'fussy' and we worry that, if we do not comply on just one point [of the rules], we may lose our licenses.

"I think we need to talk with the government again, to tell them which rules we can accept and which we may not be able to follow.

"The government has appointed two representatives of the dive industry to the commit-

tee, but these two people did not help to draft the rules – if they had, the rules would not have come out as they did," she said.

"We would like to explain to officials that there are many details that they don't know about," she added.

So far, just two dive operators have registered. The boss of one of them, a foreigner who spoke to the *Gazette* on condition of anonymity, said he found the new rules irritating, but not impossible.

"I don't think they are very good; it's just a lot of extra work. But they are not hard to understand. It is the same documents as we already have."

"But," he added, "I think many [dive] companies are very worried because it's difficult for them to qualify, and the new rules are strict. Companies that are legal, however, should not be concerned."

He said that the rules were flawed because they were made without input from the dive community. "Some of the [officials] may not be so practical, so they're going to have to adapt how they operate," he said. "But for my firm, I don't think the new rules are going to be a problem."

Provincial Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Nivit Aroonrat said the Governor was reviewing the DOCT letter.

"We may include [K. Phakdee] in the committee [that reviews registrations], because she said that she would like to take part in any change to the dive regulations and she is a representative of the DOCT."



Suchon Chaleekrue, President of the Senate and Acting President of the Thai Parliament, speaks to reporters at the opening of a regional seminar to discuss security and counter-terrorism measures. The seminar, on September 1 and 2 at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort, drew parliamentary representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Thailand.

Gold shop robber too quick for police

WICHIT: A man armed with a pistol robbed a gold shop in broad daylight on September 2, making off with gold necklaces valued at about 470,000 baht.

Pol Lt Somsak Thongklieng, Deputy Inspector with the Royal Thai Police, (Forensic Science Area 44 Office), based at Muang District Police Station, told the *Gazette* that shopowner Thippawan Limthongnopakhun, 31, and her employee Kanok Joosakul were alone in the store at the time of the robbery.

The site of the hold-up was the BR Gold Shop, at the entrance to the Villa Dow Roong housing estate on Chao Fa West Rd.

"A large-framed man, aged about 25-30, wearing a black jacket, olive-green pants and a dark blue full-face motorcycle helmet rode a dark blue Honda bike with no plates up to the store, parking about 10 meters away.

"He then went in and robbed the store at gunpoint, telling the staff they would not be harmed

if they did what they were told," Lt Somsak said.

The robber quickly grabbed 27 gold necklaces and put them into a shoulder bag.

Police have little information to work with in trying to track down the culprit.

"The store's security camera stopped working a few days before the robbery, so we do not know what he looks like. All we can do is collect evidence and continue with our investigation. We have his fingerprints from the scene and descriptions of the gun and motorbike used," Lt Somsak said.

"He was experienced. He left the motorbike engine running, committed the crime and rode off within minutes – too fast for police from Wichit [Subdistrict Police Station] to get there in time," the police officer added.

Lt Somsak warned other Phuket gold shop owners to take precautions to protect themselves. – *Jenjira Ruengjarus*


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Depression is a serious, potentially crippling, illness. Though seldom viewed in the same light as physical illnesses, it can be just as debilitating. In the West, acceptance of depression as a treatable disease is widespread and anti-depressants, most notably Prozac, have become household names in recent years. The *Gazette's* Dominic Earnshaw and Suganya Semacote investigate problems faced by people suffering from depression in Phuket – and the help available to them.

DEPRE in par

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 25% of people develop some form of mental or behavioral problem at some point in their lives and that, in any given year, approximately 1 in 10 women and 1 in 20 men have a depressive episode.

In the past, mental illnesses were a cause for shame, something to be kept hidden and left undiscussed. Although there is still much more of a stigma attached to problems of the mind than of the body, attitudes are changing; treatments have entered into popular culture to the point where the therapy-addicted actor or the in-and-out-of-rehab model have become clichés.

Stripped of traditional support networks, such as family and long-term friends, many foreigners living in Thailand are particularly vulnerable to slipping into depression without anyone to pull them up or get them to treatment.

Patong-resident Ron Cavallo has dealt with clinical depression in both the US and Thailand. He is now starting an English-language support group for people here who have difficulties with depression, fear and anxiety.

Mr Cavallo believes that the major cause of depressive illnesses is genetic.

"My mother seemed to live in fear most of the time – she stayed basically in her home. On

my father's side, my grandfather was on one of the very first anti-depressants. My aunt on my father's side committed suicide.

"I've had a lot of bad things happen in my life, but those are not what caused it. What happens when you have a mental illness is that you really don't feel like you exist. You're not there. What you are is the person you're with. It's like you vanished. You don't want to be there," he said, trying to explain the feeling.

In its most severe forms, depression is a major cause of suicides; the WHO estimates that depression and related illnesses are responsible for 60% of all such deaths.

GENETICS

"Suicide is a very common thought that people have when they are suffering from this illness – I would be lying if I said I'd never thought about it – though I don't think I'm going to do anything about it now," said Mr Cavallo.

Although it is generally accepted that there is a strong genetic component in any person's proneness to depressive illnesses, environmental factors also have a strong influence.

"Usually it's a big event that sets off the hospitalization. When my partner of 13 years died, I sat on my stairs thinking 'There's just no point to this anymore.'

"I don't know how to explain it. I was empty, frightened,

alone, in a haze, a fog. I rehearsed a suicide; I put the gun in my mouth. Then I called a friend, which I think is what I intended all along. The police came and they put me in a hospital," Mr Cavallo explained.

"In my experience, people who deal with depression, anxiety and fear are usually extremely compassionate, caring, thoughtful, creative, kind, understanding people – because they have been through hell," he added.

Assistant Professor Ngamwong Jarusuraisin, Psychiatrist and Family Physician at Bangkok Hospital Phuket, deals with the mental problems of both Thais and foreigners. He is the only full-time psychiatrist at the hospital.

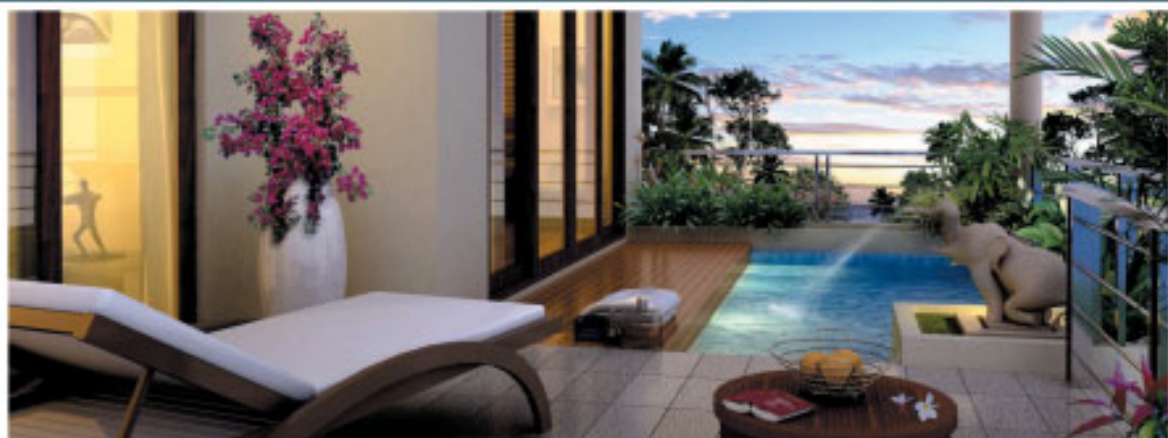
He calculates that he spends around 60% of his treatment hours with Thai patients and 40% with foreigners.

Prof Ngamwong believes that many people suffering from depression are not receiving treatment. "Many people, both Thais and foreigners, try to cope with and overcome their mental illness alone. Many of these people un-



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derstand what is wrong with them but do not want to see a psychiatrist or psychologist.

"They want to avoid the stigma, though nowadays it is more accepted in society than it was in the past, even in Thailand. In the past people would hope that their problems would disappear by themselves or would rely on religion and family [to pull them out of depression]," he said.

Mr Cavallo expressed a similar viewpoint. "What's sad is that there is still shame connected with it [mental illness]. My own mother has never mentioned it. People don't want to deal with it. A lot of it is hidden under the table," he said.

Prof Ngamwong explained that most of his foreign patients,

as in Mr Cavallo's case, had a history of mental problems before they came to Thailand. He agreed that most problems were due, in a large part, to inherited factors and family background.

Mr Cavallo added that he believed heavy drinking by a large number of expats in Phuket could be masking problems with depressive illnesses.

This is something Prof Ngamwong encounters often. "One of the main problems we deal with is substance abuse, by both Thais and foreigners; alcohol dependence, amphetamines, cocaine. Alcohol abuse is especially prevalent among men."

Other forms of self-medication are a problem in Thailand because of the ready supply of

SSION adise



Photo by Dan Miles

mood-altering drugs available over the counter at drug stores, legally or otherwise.

"Anti-anxiety drugs bought over the counter, such as Valium [Diazepam] and Xanax [Alprazolam], are often abused. This is very dangerous. Xanax, especially, is very addictive and can have unpleasant withdrawal symptoms," said Prof Ngamwong.

He explained that there is a monthly blip in the number of foreign patients needing treatment after the full moon party on Koh Pha-ngan, when mainly young travelers suffering from drug-induced psychosis are brought over from Surat Thani by the police for treatment.

These patients are usually kept in for a week of therapy and

anti-schizoid drug treatment before they are allowed to leave – after paying a hefty bill, of course.

Prof Ngamwong added that it was not only thrill-seeking backpackers who he had admitted with problems such as this; he also had richer, older patients coming in from five-star resorts with drug problems.

Treatment for depression, however, is not something that can be done in a week. Prof Ngamwong said that the standard course of treatment for a first episode of depression is around six months.

Treatment typically involves a combination of psychotherapy and medication. "Six months is long enough to treat the brain, we

can teach people to adapt to their condition and change their behavior," he said.

Treatment for a second episode usually takes much longer, he added.

Mr Cavallo said recovering from depression was akin to an athlete training for a competition; it takes focus and regular practice. If you let your routine slip for a while it can be back to square one, he said.

"A lot of people look for a quick fix. I saw one therapy course that promised to solve people's problems in six weeks. There is no way that this could help people long-term," he added.

Prof Ngamwong said that weather was a significant contributor to a patient's mental state.

"If there are a few days of rain in a row, many of my patients will feel lower than usual or suffer a relapse.

"This is particularly true of the Scandinavians, who come here for the sunshine, not for days and days of rain," he said.

PROBLEMS

Another option available for people who are seriously unhappy or feel they may be suffering from depression is the Samaritans. The charity, originally formed in Britain in 1953, has a branch in Phuket and also offers an English-language service from its Bangkok office every Thursday.

A volunteer from the Phuket branch said that most of the callers talk about financial and family problems. She said that volunteers initially just listen, letting the caller get things off his or her chest. They try to assess the mental state of the caller, assisting them however they can. Most calls last around an hour.

Aside from discussing their problems, Prof Ngamwong advises people suffering from unhappiness and depression to exercise and play sports. Women should dress up and make an effort with their appearance. Making an effort leads to a more normal life, he added. Not letting depression control their lives is of utmost importance for patients.

WARNING SIGNS

PSYCHOLOGICAL:

Continuous low, 'blue' mood or sadness;
Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness;
Low self-esteem;
Tearfulness;
Feelings of guilt;
Feeling irritable and intolerant of others;
Lack of motivation; little interest in coming to decisions and difficulty making them;
Lack of enjoyment;
Suicidal thoughts or thoughts of harming someone else;
Feeling anxious or worried;
Reduced sex drive.

PHYSICAL:

Slowed movement or speech;
Change in appetite and weight (usually decreased but sometimes increased);
Constipation;
Unexplained aches and pains;
Lack of energy;
In women, changes to the menstrual cycle.

SOCIAL/WORK:

Performing poorly at work;
Taking part in fewer social activities and avoiding contact with friends;
Reduced hobbies and interests;
Difficulties in home and family life.

(Source: NHS Direct: www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

Mr Cavallo warned, "You have to put your mental health first – actually No 1 – because if you don't have mental health, you really don't have anything."

Prof Ngamwong identified insomnia, loss of energy, slow movement, irritable moods, feelings of worthlessness, inability to concentrate and frequent

thoughts of death as the major symptoms of depression.

"If you have five symptoms or more for longer than two weeks, you may be suffering from depression and had better go see a psychiatrist," he advised.

"Depression is a treatable disease, it can be cured 100%," Prof Ngamwong concluded.

- Prof Ngamwong can be contacted at Bangkok Hospital Phuket, 2/1 Hongyok Utis Rd, Taladyai, Muang District. Tel: 076-254425.
- Ron Cavallo can be contacted about the support group by email to: grtemo@yahoo.com
- The Samaritans Phuket offer a Thai-language service from 5 pm to 10 pm, Wednesday to Sunday, and can be contacted at Tel: 076-255467. The English-language service is available every Thursday, from 8 am to midday, at Tel: 02-7136793.

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Queer News

HOME SECURITY OF THE SECOND KIND

PATTAYA: A group of five ladyboys took home security into their own hands in the early hours of August 25, beating senseless a drunken teenage punk who broke into their apartment and stole 2,000 baht from their communal piggy bank.

The story, reported by Banglamung Police Inspector Pol Lt Col Sutham Chaosrithong, made national news the next morning. The five triumphant "ladies of the second kind" got their 15 minutes of fame, while 27-year-old cat burglar Konchai Junwirote of Udon Thani was paraded beaten and disgraced before the national news media.

According to the report, 21-year-old Thai ladyboy Wirote "Nong Rose" Jitkhone (whose names means "light of the ancestral spirit") rented a room for herself and four ladyboy friends on the third floor of Palai Apartments on Soi PK, off Third Rd in South Pattaya.

After the bar closed down at 2 am on the evening of August 24, four of the ladyboys, all employed as dancers at an unnamed a-go-go bar, went out looking for a little fun; the fifth, 22-year-old Samraan "Nong Tum" (surname not reported), went home to get some beauty sleep.

When she reached the flat, however, she found the door open and a small candle burning near the group's collection of stuffed dolls.

The quick-witted Nong Tum immediately called her four flatmates. Aware that another flatful of ladyboys living on the fourth floor had been vic-

tims of a similar, unsolved break-in two months before, the four raced home.

Upon arrival, they saw that the room had been searched and their communal piggy smashed. Its contents were missing.

As luck would have it, another group of ladyboys living in the building called to them. They had spotted the likely thief: a young man, apparently high on drugs, who had sneaked into a storage room in the apartment block to count up some money – and he was still there!

Springing into action, all five beautiful boxers raced to the storeroom, where they grabbed the man, put him in a headlock and gave him a savage beating that left him unconscious, blood streaming from his mouth.

Police arrived soon after, saving Konchai from his attackers and placing him in custody. He later admitted to the theft, telling police he was unemployed, broke and behind on motorcycle payments.

To rectify his financial situation, he explained, he bucked up his courage by getting drunk, then prowled the area breaking into unoccupied flats, using a screwdriver, needle-nosed pliers and a large selection of skeleton keys.

All those items were collected as evidence in the case, along with the candle he had used to illuminate the room.

Konchai, who confessed to several other break-ins in the area, was charged with multiple counts of burglary. *Source: KomChadLuek*




CHERNG TALAY: Reader Christy Sweet came across this mess at the south end of Bang Tao Beach, about 200 meters inland, and spent two weeks cleaning it up whenever the tide was full.


TRASHING
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Come across an interesting informal garbage dump? Not everyone may be as civic-minded as Christy, but at the very least, take a photo and send it to us at dump@phuketgazette.net




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Above: Typical of Helicam's work is this aerial shot of the Boat Lagoon at Koh Kaew.



Left: Philip Clarke prepares a helicopter for a job.

A business that's for the birds

By Suganya Semacote

When Philip Clark was 15, he used to fly radio-controlled model aircraft. "I would fly my remote-control airplane on the school field.

"One day, for a school project, I put a camera on the plane and began taking pictures," Philip Clark said.

Years later, in Phuket, Mr Clark is still flying radio-controlled aircraft with cameras attached, only now the aircraft are expensive helicopters and flying them is serious business.

FRIENDLY

Six years ago Mr Clark was creating advertising campaigns using graphic design and photography in Dubai when his brother suggested that he try his helicopter-and-camera business in Thailand because, as his brother put it, Thailand is a friendly place.

Mr Clark visited and decided his brother was right.

The business has been operating for two and a half years, but has grown to the point that Mr Clark hopes to expand it into a franchise.

"Our customers are mostly developers, real estate brokers, hoteliers and the TAT (Tourism Authority of Thailand)," he said.

Helicam offers four different products: photo libraries, virtual tours, still photography and video photography.

The helicopters mostly fly over Phuket, but Helicam will also be available for franchising in Australia and New Zealand.

"We will work anywhere our customers ask us to," Mr Clark said.

The company owns four camera-equipped helicopters, each costing as much as 550,000 baht. They have a radio range of 120 meters.

The quality of photography by the company is such that it has come to the notice of pirates.

In a very backhanded compliment, Helicam images can be bought on pirated postcards at various places around the island. The company does not publish any of its own postcards.

About a month ago, Helicam launched a website at www.helicam-asia.com to showcase its photos of Thailand. In the future it hopes to allow customers to buy the photos direct through the Internet.

Images from other locations will be added as they are taken, said Ding Sau Ching, a marketing representative.

Helicam's charges for still photography range from 16,500 baht an hour to 95,000 baht for a full eight-hour day. Video photography charges are 75,000 baht for four hours and 140,000 baht for eight hours.

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Economic impact of Yala blasts 'limited'

Business in Yala was brought to its knees after 22 banks were bombed in the province on the last day of August, but most officials and businessmen believe the national economy will continue to avoid havoc because the violence is thus far still contained in the Deep South.

One person was killed and 24 injured by small explosive devices smuggled into the banks, which were powerful enough to shatter windows, rip through walls and send furniture flying.

However, economists noted that the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET) index closed up 0.9% on the day of the blasts, which happened at around 11:30 am. The SET's muted response reflects the limited impact the bombs are expected to have on the national economy, analysts said.

However, Yala Chamber of Commerce President Pote Pai-boonkasemsut said the explosions exposed flaws in the government's ability to protect lives and assets. "Bombing commercial banks is like disrupting the body's blood vessels; this will sink the trade and investment sentiment in this province," he said.

Motherhood 101: After carrying out an in-depth study of mothers in several "emergency homes for girls" in Bangkok, researcher Passanant Assawarak of King Mongkut's University of Technology in Thon Buri reported that 78% became pregnant while still students.

Some 43% were between the ages of 14 and 20 and got pregnant after sex with high-school boyfriends.

A further 34.7% were under 14 and in primary education, while others were vocational students, university students, or uneducated.

The research, subsidized by the National Culture Commission (NCC), found that some 70% were first-time mothers, while 14% were victims of sexual assault.

Most of the mothers said they did not dare to have an abortion, while 21% admitted they had attempted to abort the babies, but failed.

Economics of love: Marriages between Thai women and foreign men are becoming better received in Thai communities, a recent NCC study has revealed.

Twelve Thai women from



RICE WORKERS: Long-neck Karen women smile as their village in Chiang Mai's Mae Rim District is raided by police investigating complaints that the people were being used to attract tourists. Their work permits allow them to work in agricultural jobs only.

Police found 18 of the long-neck Padaung people living in 10 bamboo houses surrounded by rice fields. Landowner Wibul Chaitham, 47, said he hired the Padaung legally, to grow rice, and allowed tourists to visit their village free of charge.

rural areas in Isarn took part in the study.

Most of the women married to Western men had been married before, to Thai men, and most had intentionally sought a foreign husband the second time around.

Following marriage, the women's financial status had improved, with foreign husbands bringing steady income to the family. The marriages also brought the women more respect, enabling them to move up the social ladder in their communities.

The marriages were accepted within the communities and even encouraged by the women's relatives, who saw them as a way to gain income. Foreign sons-in-law were better able to support the family than Thai husbands, the study found.

Unexpected oxen: Wild oxen resembling kouprey, a wild species believed to be the most endangered large mammal in the world, have been spotted deep in the jungle in Ubon Ratchathani Province, the head of the National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Variety Conservation Department said.

Damrong Phidetch said he

recently received a report that park rangers in Phu Jong Na Yoi National Park saw three wild cattle that looked like gaur but with longer, more beautiful and "fearsome" horns. Experts believed them to be kouprey (*Bos sauveli*), Damrong said.

The last time anyone saw one of the animals alive was in 1940, when a kouprey on display in the Vincennes Zoo in Paris died from starvation.

However, Surapol Duangkhae, Secretary-General of the Wildlife Fund Thailand, which uses a picture of the kouprey as its logo, said it was very unlikely that the oxen seen by the park rangers were kouprey. He called on the Wildlife Department to conduct an investigation.

Fare is fair? Air passengers will pay higher departure taxes starting from February 1 next year, Airports of Thailand Plc (AOT) has announced.

The international departure tax will increase by 200 baht to 700 baht, while domestic passengers will have to pay a 100 baht fee, twice the current 50 baht.

AOT said it had planned to introduce the new taxes upon the opening of the new Suvarnabhumi Airport on September 28.

Meanwhile, landing fees levied on aircraft using the new airport would be imposed from April 1, 2007, six months behind schedule.

AOT said the postponement was to attract airlines to Suvarnabhumi. The proposed new landing fee is 15% higher than that charged at Don Muang airport.

AOT explained earlier that fees at Suvarnabhumi had to be raised to pay for the greater amenities and facilities that would be provided. After 40 years in the making, Suvarnabhumi has cost 150 billion. It is scheduled to start full operations on September 28.

Dog contracts bird 'flu: Experts warned the public not to panic or abandon their pets after a dog in Suphan Buri Province contracted avian 'flu from eating infected ducks.

Following a seminar at Chulalongkorn University, Mahidol University veterinarian Rattathan Pattanarangsarn said it would be very difficult for infected dogs to pass on the virus to humans.

Dr Charal Trinvuthipong, an assistant to the Agriculture Minister, said news that a dog could contract bird flu was no surprise, given that the dog was a mammal.

"We have heard about tigers and a cat getting bird flu before," he said.

However, there have been no reported cases so far of the virus jumping from other mammals to humans, he added.

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

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Money transfer schemes crafty, yet comical

I am sure many of you receive e-mails from con artists, often from Nigeria, who tempt you with promises of enormous riches if you send them only US\$500.

These scams ask you to send them money to set up an international bank account so they can transfer their tens of millions of dollars that their late uncle, the ex-minister of oil, left behind upon his untimely death.

The letters are often comical, but obviously *someone* is sending them checks for US\$500, as the popularity of these letters shows no signs of diminishing.

Sadly, after the tsunami, many fraudulent emails were sent out soliciting funds for the victims of the disaster, which made it more difficult for the legitimate organizations to raise funds.

A new approach has recently been developed by these criminal masterminds, which is to approach mid-size resorts with promises of big business and quick profits.

The initial e-mail to the resort places a reservation for a good size group, usually referring to them as "delegates", "government officials", or even a "church assembly" to give the booking credibility.

The most expensive rooms are selected and are requested for a lengthy period – typically 10 to 14 days – a nice booking that the owner/manager will most certainly respond to.

The writer of the letter next explains that, since he cannot forward the money to the transportation company for the balance of the trip, he would be most obliged if the hotel would kindly do this for him.

Here's how the scam works: The booking is worth, say, 100,000 baht. The "customer" authorizes the resort owner to charge him 400,000 baht. He then asks the owner to forward 250,000 baht to the transportation company.

That, he says, leaves 50,000 for the owner to keep as thanks for his kind service.

The owner is instructed to send the 250,000 baht by Western Union to the "transportation company" which in reality is the "customer".

So the unsuspecting hotel owner gets the credit card authorization for the 400,000 baht charge and then proceeds to withdraw 250,000 baht cash to

send to the "transportation company".

Once the con man has received the 250,000 baht cash, he cancels the stolen/illegal/fake credit card.

The owner then gets a call from his bank saying the credit card charge that was just deposited into his account was fraudulent, and the 400,000 baht charge will be reversed, or charged back.

The owner is now short of 250,000 baht, as Western Union is a cash transaction and cannot be reversed.

The letters are easy to spot. Here is an example I received just this week:

"Hello, Kindly see attachment as per the authorisation form stating the total amount to be charged from my Credit Card.

"Do charge a total cost of 184,857.26 THB from my Credit Card.

"Deduct your 100% Deposit for our accomodation been 34000 THB.

"And send the balance of 150,857.26 THB via Western Union Money Transfer to the transportation consultant who shall be in charge of transportation logistic for guests and whose details shall be advised once the charges are made.

"Please do charge IMMEDIATELY and get back to me with the RECEIPTS as regards the charges made to my Credit Card.

"On confirmation of the charges, I shall advise the details of the transportation consultant for onward transfer.

"Your swift response will be appreciated

*"Regards,
[A really fake name]*

The giveaways are the hilarious names they use, and that the words "SEND RIGHT AWAY", "IMMEDIATE", "URGENT" appear prominently.

Any time anyone asks you to send them money by Western Union, loud alarm bells should ring.

And don't ever give them your phone number, or you will be getting phone calls from deep-voiced sinister-sounding men telling you to send that Western Union money-gram IMMEDIATELY.

Who, I wonder, will be the next target for these scamsters? Homes for the aged?



ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds

Great STEAKS!



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Police in record ya bah bust

Police in Nakhon Sri Thammarat province seized 20,000 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills – the largest drug haul in the province this year – and arrested both the dealer and the buyer during a bust carried out in front of the city's branch of Tesco-Lotus on August 29.

The drug deal was set up by the would-be dealer's younger sister, Chaorn Nakpan, 40, who was already in jail on *ya bah* possession charges.

The record seizure was announced by Nakhon Sri Thammarat Governor Wichom Thongsong at a press conference the following day.

At the press conference, Pol Maj Gen Sutjai Yahnarat, Commander of Nakhon Sri Thammarat Provincial Police, revealed that the arrests were the result of a long investigation that began with the arrest of another dealer, Manat "Chui" Rakkaew, who was caught in possession of 2,900 *ya bah* pills in May this year.

Manat told police that he had bought the drugs from Chaorn, who was then detained.

In the course of their investigation, however, police discovered that Chaorn still had 10 bundles, around 20,000 pills, of *ya bah* remaining.

Police kept a close watch on her, waiting for Chaorn to make her next move.

The next development came when police learned that Chaorn had given her younger sister, Bangorn "Bang" Ratana, instructions on what to do with the drugs during one of Bangorn's visits to prison.

Police were also able to find out the identity of the prospective customer.

Officers then followed both



Giant gecko: Residents of Nakhon Sri Thammarat have been swarming to see an over-sized house gecko (*jingjok*) caught in a house there. The gecko was more than twice the normal length for its species.

The unusual specimen was caught by Chamnan Janrueang, a local community leader, who killed it with a stick before soaking it in preservative. Word of the monster gecko quickly spread about the neighborhood and a crowd gathered at K. Chamnan's house.

All agreed that the lizard was the biggest they had every seen and was definitely a house gecko and not its larger cousin, the tokay. The specimen measured 19 centimeters from head to tail. Its body was 2.4cm wide.

To emphasize to the crowd just how unusual the lizard was, K. Chamnan shot down a regular-sized gecko with an elastic band and laid it next to the giant.

K. Chamnan revealed to a local reporter that this specimen was not alone; there was a whole family of super-sized

geckos living in his house, some of which looked even bigger than the one he had caught.

"When the neighbors heard the news, they all rushed over to see my giant gecko for themselves. They all said as one that they had never seen a gecko as big as this before. Some complained that it was a result of environmental change or the overuse of chemical agents. I think it's just one of those strange things that crop up in nature from time to time," K. Chamnan said.

parties until the handover at Tesco-Lotus, where police pounced.

A bad bet: The body of a second-year business administration student from Prince of Songkhla University in Haad Yai was found in the Khor Hong area of the city on August 29. The victim, Nawapat Krainara, 20, originally from Nakhon Sri Thammarat province, had been stabbed 10 times in the lower abdomen and slashed across the face.

Due to the severity of the attack and the fact that the attackers did not take Nawapat's motorcycle, which was found lying on its side near his body with the keys still in the ignition, police ruled out theft as a motive.

On searching Nawapat's room, police found a number of football betting stubs and a list of customers. The gambling connection was confirmed by peers of Nawapat at the university who told police that Nawapat had become involved with a football gambling syndicate in the city.

Police hypothesized that Nawapat had collected money from a customer for a bet but had not passed it on to the syndicate, and instead kept it for himself. When the customer came to claim his winnings and found that Nawapat did not have the money an argument ensued and Nawapat was killed, police speculated.

Bureau busts bent Benz: Police in Haad Yai have arrested an international gang of drug smug-

glers in possession of 40 bars (about 14 kilograms) of heroin with a street value of six million baht.

The gang – three Malaysians and two Thais – had stored the drugs in a hidden compartment in the back of their Mercedes-Benz. The arrests were the result of a long-term probe by the Thai Narcotics Suppression Bureau and Malaysian police.

Students under fire: A technical college student was killed and another seriously injured after they were shot on August 30 as they went to buy liquor to drink at a friend's birthday celebration in Trang Town.

The two were riding a motorcycle back from the bar where they had been drinking when two

youths on a motorcycle pulled up alongside and opened fire.

Chusak Chumsri, 20, who was driving, was hit in the abdomen and left wrist. His passenger, Adisak Sapphajak, also 20, was shot twice in the stomach and twice in his right leg.

K. Chusak accelerated to try to escape their pursuers. K. Adisak, however, lost a large amount of blood and passed out. He fell from the motorcycle, hitting his head on a power pole. He died instantly.

Pol Col Jakraphanu Reutisunthon, Superintendent of Trang Town Police Station, said police were still working to establish a motive for the crime but suspected the gunmen were probably rival youths from one of the many dormitories in the area.

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MINI MAKEOVER



By Jeff Heselwood

The 2007 Mini Cooper is due to arrive in major markets before the end of the year but, as usual, Thailand may have to wait a little longer. On the outside, this new generation car looks very similar to the existing one but under the skin, says maker BMW, there are a number of changes, most notably the power plant.

Out goes the Brazil-built engine and in comes a range of Peugeot-built petrol engines. The Mini motors, however, will be assembled at BMW's Hams Hall engine plant in Birmingham, central England.

The Brazilian engine plant, Tritec, was a joint venture established initially by BMW and Chrysler, before Chrysler's 1998 traitorous merger with Daimler-Benz, which, of course, owns BMW's arch-rival Mercedes-Benz. The plant shut down in 2001.

CLASSIC ICON

The original Alec Issigonis-designed Mini was launched in August 1959 to great acclaim. Here was a small, affordable car, with a wheel at each corner, an innovative transverse engine with the gearbox located in the sump and rather strange, rubbery suspension.

In no time at all, the Mini became a classic icon, with pop stars, actors, top models and other celebrities all driving Minis. Moreover, for the man in the street, it meant economical motoring with space for the family and even their luggage, as the trunk lid



The new Mini looks much the same on the outside but major changes have taken place under the hood and in the passenger compartment.

hinged at the lower edge, allowing extra bags to be carried.

The modern Mini was introduced in 2001 after BMW disposed of its shareholding in Rover for a token £10. Wisely, however, BMW retained the Mini design and brand. Manufacturing was moved from the Longbridge, Birmingham, site to a more modern facility at Cowley, Oxfordshire, where last year the company produced 205,000 Minis.

Before the launch of the new version, BMW will revamp the factory to raise output to about 240,000 cars a year.

Despite the visual similarity to the outgoing model, BMW

maintains that every body panel is different. The 2001 Mini was essentially designed by top stylist Frank Stephenson, who also had a hand in the 1999 BMW X5 SUV. But Stephenson has now moved across to head up Maserati's design studio, so the new Mini is more of an in-house committee expression.

The new 1.6-liter gasoline engines are offered in normally aspirated form, producing 120bhp, or turbocharged to push out an impressive 175bhp.

Torque output of both power plants is strong: 160 Nm and 260 Nm respectively. Torque comes in as low as 1,600 rpm on the

turbo model, and at 2,000 rpm on the regular version.

Fuel consumption on both models has improved dramatically, while carbon dioxide emissions have been reduced. Although no details have been released yet, a new 1.4-liter gasoline model will be introduced next year, along with a diesel Mini.

The interior has had a serious makeover, with a number of major changes. The most striking feature, the center console, now comprises not only the analogue speedometer but also the radio and navigation systems, while the area below this the center console is narrower to give

more room in the driver and passenger footwells.

There is an optional futuristic internal lighting system, whereby the color of the roof lights, the door storage compartments and grab handle recesses may be changed at any time in five stages, from warm orange to sporting blue, turning the car into an entertainment feature all on its own.

The 2007 Mini will go on sale in Britain and other major markets well before Christmas.

Jeff Heslewood can be contacted by email to: jhc@netvigator.com

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Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket



Ashley and Benjamin Davis from the US celebrated their wedding on August 25 on Kata Beach, in a ceremony organized by the Kata Beach Resort.



Wijittra Nasorn and Chalermkit Thanatchang were married in the Phra Pitak Grand Ballroom at The Metropole hotel, Phuket City, on August 12.

Mr Tourism

Maitree Narukatpichai may be Bangkok-born, but his family has been involved in Phuket's fishing industry for more than 40 years. "My family started in the fishing industry in other parts of Thailand before expanding their operations to Phuket, and then they finally moved here," he said.

The family started the well-known Por Pichai Fishery Co, which still operates its own fleet of fishing boats, a fish-processing plant and an ice factory, as well as several gas stations.

Entering Phuket's hotel industry was vision shared by his family. "We had never been in any business other than fishing, but at that time we could see that Phuket's tourism would grow. So my family started building the Phuket Arcadia Hotel [now the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa]," he explained.

RELUCTANT

K. Maitree graduated from the University of California with a degree in business management, and started working in his family's hotel in 1988, after it had been open for about six months.

"I did not learn business management especially for the hotel," he said. "My family asked me to come to work at the Arcadia; at that time I had graduated and was working for a restaurant in America."

He was not enthusiastic about coming back to Phuket to work in the family hotel because he had grown comfortable with the life he had started in the US, but he finally agreed to come home to Phuket.

Maitree Narukatpichai, 51, is the Owner's Representative of the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa, and recently was installed as the President of the Phuket Tourist Association (PTA), replacing Pattanapong Aekwanich.

A third-generation Thai-Chinese businessman, father to three daughters, a business management graduate from the University of California and soon-to-be Los Angeles restaurateur, K. Maitree was not at first enthusiastic about joining Phuket's hotel industry. But now it has become his lifetime career.

Here the *Gazette's* Janyaporn Morel takes a look at the man whose experience, gentle personality and smiling face personify the island's hospitality industry.

"I started working as a trainee because I had no knowledge of hotels. I was then trained in sales in our sales office in Bangkok. I worked as a trainee in sales for about six months, and then the Arcadia General Manager quit, so I was asked to take this position in 1991," he said.

Under K. Maitree's management, the Arcadia was expanded from 250 rooms to 470 rooms and then again to 695 rooms, and then finally Hilton was brought in to manage the hotel.

"I managed the hotel until 2003, then I decided to have Hilton help take over the management because I thought that, over 10 the years that I was doing the

job for Arcadia, it was successful enough and I just wanted to be an 'investor'," he said.

After Hilton came on board, K. Maitree had more free time. But instead of taking it easy,

he found he now had the time to pursue other ideas.

"I have never been 'free', because I still have the Arcadia on my mind, and we still have plans to expand it even more.

"I have also now just started a new pool villa resort with 28 one-bedroom and two two-bedroom villas in Chalong. It

'We have to accept that Phuket is growing up very quickly ... if we don't find more tourism markets, the [growing number of] hotels will just compete with each other for a slice of the same pie.'

will be a boutique resort.

"I'm also opening a new Thai-Japanese restaurant in the US with a close friend. It will be a big restaurant in northern LA.

In The Stars

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): You should have lots of new ideas this week. If you are celebrating a birthday you will be particularly creative when it comes to dreaming up new schemes. Start this year as you mean to go on, and all will be well. This is a good time for a serious review of finances. Living from moment to moment may be fun, but is not conducive to effective long-term planning.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Money prospects finally take a turn for the better. However, you are strongly advised to keep this information close to your chest. Someone close to you is poised to ask for a loan, which they have little intention of paying back. Business appointments are unlikely to run like clockwork this week; expect last-minute cancellations on Monday and Tuesday. The color apple green will calm your outlook.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Pieces of a puzzle fall into place. You may be tempted to use this information unwisely, but you are advised to let sleeping dogs lie and accept the truth, no matter how irritating it may be. Don't blow a fuse when a well-meaning Virgoan friend hints that you have been stuck in a rut lately. This is probably true but it shouldn't be difficult to do something about it.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): If you're inclined to achieve new heights career-wise,

you will need to make a decision mid-week. An opportunity for change is about to appear. Pounce on it before someone else does. Be prepared to break the ice this weekend; the other person concerned is too shy to show interest. If you are already committed you should make a spontaneous gesture to put some spark back into your relationship.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Honesty really is the best policy this week, though you are advised to choose your words carefully. Romance is within your grasp; Aries is waiting for the right moment to express their intentions. If you're interested only in a casual relationship, make this clear from the onset. An invitation from overseas could be just what you've been waiting for to break the tedium. The number 3 is lucky on Wednesday.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Trouble is bubbling up at work. If you have ignored the warning signs during recent weeks you could receive a shock this week. Having more commitments on your plate won't please your nearest and dearest, so find ways to delegate fast. Leo is waiting to be asked to help and can be trusted, but Pisces has other fish to fry. The color mahogany will help you remain down-to-earth.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): The secret that



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2006

We found that Japanese and Thai food are very popular there, so we are opening a Thai-Japanese restaurant with a Thai sala on the top floor. It will open next week," he said.

K. Maitree is also a father to three daughters. The eldest is 16 years old and the second-eldest 14 years old. They both attend a Catholic boarding school in Perth, Australia.

"I chose to send my daughters to this Catholic school as it is a girls-only school, and I feel they are safer there," he said.

The youngest, aged 10, lives with him in Phuket. Although the girls do not live with their mother, K. Maitree explained that they often spend quality time with her.

DEMANDING

"I have no plans for what careers my daughters should follow. I don't think parents these days should push hold their children to fulfill their own expectations. I just teach them to be good people.

"My children are lucky that our family has already created a good standard of living for them, and if they want to continue our hotel business, they can do so anytime," he said.

K. Maitree's duties as PTA President keep him on a demanding social schedule. "It seems that we have to maintain contact with every corner of Phuket society, but we have many Vice-Presidents who can attend functions. But if there's an event that I must go to, I always go," he said.

He added that being PTA President is a fulfilling role, using his skills and many years' experience in marketing.

"I can help the PTA with marketing promotions and roadshows to promote Phuket to other countries.

For a long time I was President of the Kata-Karon Hotel Operators' Association, which was set up more than 10 years ago. This association is very strong because the members are all hotel owners," he said.

However, K. Maitree worries that Phuket may be developing too fast for its own good.

"We have to accept that Phuket is growing up very quickly, and there are a lot of foreigners who come to invest in Phuket, as the real estate and hotel businesses are easy to enter – if you have the money, you can do it.

"This makes Phuket's hotel industry grow very fast. But if growth is too fast, I'm concerned that all the businesses will be the same, because Phuket tourism is such a safe business.

"If we don't find more tourism markets, the [growing number of] hotels will just compete with each other for a slice of the same pie," he said.

"Now the PTA and the provincial government are promoting tourism to the 'Andaman cluster' [of provinces]. Panu Maswongsa is the Vice-President responsible for tourism to the Andaman cluster, and coordinates cooperation between Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi provinces.

"If we can successfully promote all the cluster provinces as tourism destinations, I'm sure that tourism in the Andaman region will be stronger," K. Maitree said.



Maitree Narukatpichai: 'We have to maintain contact with every corner of Phuket society.'

by Isla Star

you've been carefully guarding is about to be found out. To avoid spoiling a relationship, you are advised to come clean about your intentions. When the other person understands why you behaved in a certain way, they will probably be ready to forgive and forget. Focus on long-term plans; at least one of your ideas has an excellent chance of success. The number 4 may bring luck on Sunday.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Some juggling will be necessary this week. If you really can't downsize your activities, expect to burn the midnight oil during the coming days. Romance is finally on the right path; the object of your affections is ready to put this relationship on a firmer footing. A dream you have this weekend holds the key to a long-standing dilemma. Wear the color sky blue to lighten your spirits.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): You should not listen to idle gossip this week. Wait until you are in possession of facts before deciding which way to turn. It's likely that people are making a fuss about nothing, simply because they're bored. Where intimate relationships are concerned, avoid making harsh judgments. You should know by now that the person concerned has your best interests at heart.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Money matters finally

settle onto a more even keel. An unexpected boost to your cash flow should arrive by the middle of this week. Getting cold feet about a new project should not be used as an excuse to prevent this from coming into fruition – your insecurity is probably being caused by someone else's doubt and this needs to be ignored. Romance with Libra is well-starred as long as you take things slowly and gently.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Don't allow yourself to be accountable for others' actions. You may well receive a wake-up call this week; this is your chance to realize that putting yourself first is not always a bad thing. The stars ensure that you have an extra boost of confidence this weekend, making it the perfect time to approach someone you've become romantically interested in. Tuesday is an auspicious day for investigating new ways to make money.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Your wish is another's command. You can expect to enjoy this advantage until the middle of September, so use it wisely to get what your heart truly desires. Travel will soon be on your mind, whether you want it to be or not. An overseas trip to attend to pressing family or business matters is forecast to take place in the near future. The color sea green helps you to be more flexible.



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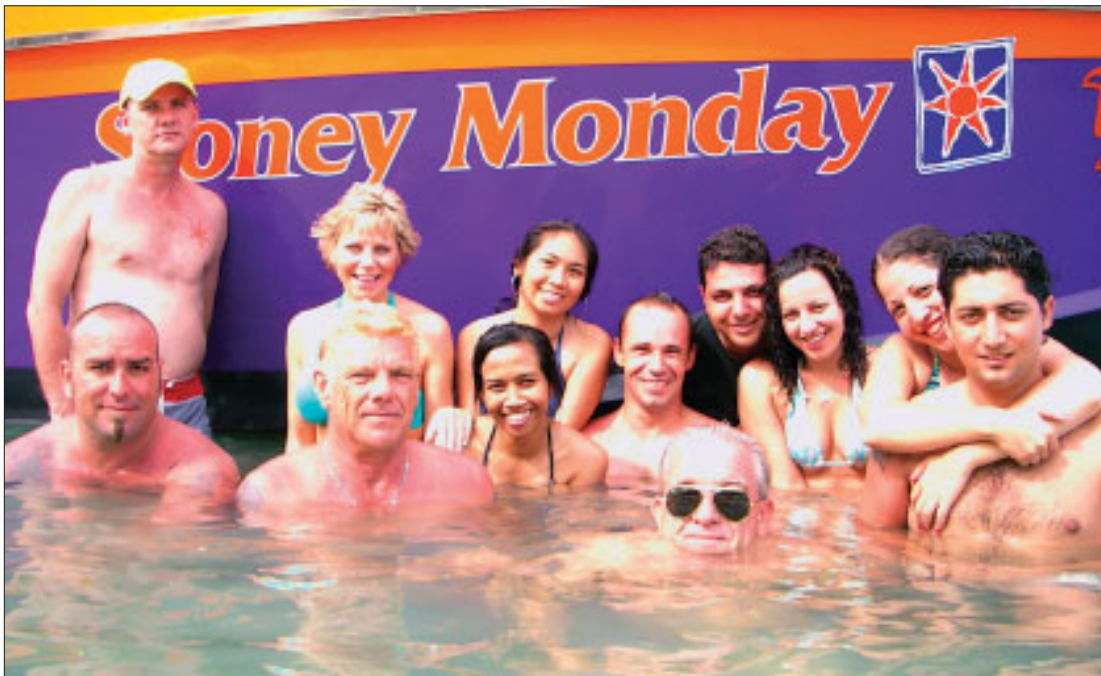
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This week

GRAND CRU CREW: ML Tri Devakul (left), his wife Khun Hataitip (2nd from left), and Adisuk "Dan" Pitukrojananonton (seated, 2nd from right), General Manager of Mom Tri's Villa Royale, celebrate with guests the launch of Mom Tri's Villas Grand Cru project on August 18.



ROCK ON: Rell Hayes (standing), Director of the Stoney Monday hotel and property development company, with Ken Peirce, David Serra, Thomas Everist and Ratee Prasankarn of the property arm of the company, and guests from the Stoney Monday Oasis Hotel in Patong, celebrate the recent launch of MV *Stoney Monday*.



SOUTHERN STOPOVER: M Makmun Chalifah (center), Consul and Head of Chancery of the Indonesian Consulate in Songkhla, is welcomed to the *Gazette's* offices during his recent visit by (from left) Chief Reporter Sangkhae Leelanaporn, PGTV Executive Producer Marc Mulloy, *Phuket Gazette* Managing Editor Alasdair Forbes and Senior Reporter Janyaporn Morel.



LEX-APPEAL: Charnchai Mahantakhun (in black), General Manager – Sales & Marketing of the Lexus Auto City Co Ltd Ramintra branch in Bangkok, joins promotion hostesses at the recent Phuket launch of the Lexus IS 250 at Central Festival Phuket.



EXECUTIVE PARTY: Jan von Hildebrand (seated, center), Events Executive of the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket, celebrates his birthday on August 27 with friends at the Lemongrass restaurant in Phuket City.



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A place where the sybarite can find lots of little temptations slithering about – veritable buckets full, in fact – is Lava, the latest enterprise of Phil St Hill, creator of Jammin' (now under new ownership but still a Phuket City hedonist hot spot).

One year ago, Phil, a former Cathay Pacific Airways pilot, futilely imagined he would sell out, abandon Phuket's high life, and return to normality on his native island of St Vincent.

Discovered by Columbus, that sultry volcanic pile, formerly British, covers 133 square miles in the eastern Caribbean, just west of Barbados. Its legitimate claims to fame are in the production of arrowroot, and of an especially distinctive, fancy type of molasses.

The island is also home to a nasty volcano, Mt Soufrière, which blows its top in a big way every 80 years or so; the last disastrous eruption was in 1898; the most recent big one in the late '70s.

Was it with anticipation of another in the back of his mind that, after a short visit home, Phil returned poste haste to Phuket, where the only volcano is an attraction at Dino Park made of reinforced concrete, and "fired" by dry ice?

"I don't know – maybe," he said, laughing. "But I named it because of the decor. I thought it looked a bit like lava."

SOPHISTICATED

The pub is at street level in the Royal Phuket City Hotel on Phang Nga Rd. The area is an emerging entertainment center: south a few doors is the newly popular Red Bubble, a suave chill-out joint; east lie several Thai pubs and karaoke bars; down the street and around the corner is the center of the island's jazz scene, Jeffrey Sevilla's Music Matter.

All draw much the same clientèle: sophisticated, well-educated, well-dressed, well-heeled – and ready to party.

Lava is the biggest of the bunch, seating 184. Including standing room, it will "carry a good party of 350," said Phil. Featuring rough lava rock-like walls the pub is spacious and evidently intended to resemble a large cave.

On one wall is the giant video projection screen; on another the well-appointed stage; in the center, a circular bar. Those fatigued momentarily by the high-energy scene indoors can take a break on the terrace outside, where there are several tables, a video monitor, a popcorn stand, and fresh air.

Phil's achievement in building Jammin' into one of Phuket's top night-time destinations must be set in perspective to be appreciated.

When he started, seven years ago, the scene in town could be divided into four categories: sing-a-song joints; Thai folk-rock band bars; fashion dance pubs; and Timber Hut, which held sway

TEMPTATION

Who can turn it down?



Hot stuff at Lava: singer Ja turns up the temperature.

– Photo by Dan Miles

among tragically hip natives and international party animals.

All were Thai-owned and operated; most had short life spans; and, with the exception of Timber Hut, which remains an important entertainment landmark, none attracted more than a few foreign patrons.

The emergence of Jammin' broadened the scene considerably, making Phuket town "safe", as it were, for foreign investors. Now there are many.

About his decision to open Lava, Phil said: "I'd come back [to the East] to fly for Korean Airlines, but then this came up; and I figured that with my contacts and experience I'd be able to run something successful."

Lava, he thinks, will attract a still larger expat crowd than his previous operation: "We have access to the full hotel services, menu, better drink selection, wines, security.

"With thousands of people lining up at Surin Beach and in Cheryn Thalay, this is a place

they can bring the wife without feeling like they're going into a backstreet club."

Far from it – Lava has a distinctly up-scale ambiance, while remaining comfortable and friendly. Service is without peer in town. But mightn't it be perhaps a bit too upscale for the market?

"There may be that perception," said Phil, "but it's actually cheaper than anywhere else in town. That's an idea I have to get across."

Prices are indeed competitive: full mugs of draft Heineken are 70 baht; tropical cocktails 100 to 120 baht; for those ordering a bottle of spirits there is a complementary set of mixer and ice. There is no corkage charge for those who bring their own and no cover charge.

Ladies receive two free drinks Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 6:30 to 10:30 pm. The pub also has discount promotions on various popular bottled spirits, such as Chivas and 100 Pipers.

But Phil doesn't rely on pricing to pull in patrons: "If there's one thing I know, it's how to pick a really good, rockin' band." That, he feels, is his pub's strong point – and it is.

The Lava Band is on fire all the time, pumping out a mix of tunes that visibly impels even staid business types to fling themselves about the dance floor in happy abandon, at the same time attracting crowds of nubile minxes with no inhibitions about doing the bump-and-grind.

Lava's sound system is superb, with every nuance – from Arm Yumai's gut-thumping bass to Ler Khumhom's splashy guitar riffs – clear in the mix, undistorted, and thankfully free of the painfully sharp attenuation that mars many a venue.

The seven-member band is a mix of veterans and newcomers, led by Boonyeam, well known as one of the island's top rock drummers. "This is a new

band," he said during an interview, "but we're getting better all the time."

In fact, they're tight already: the three singers – beautiful Ja Khongdee, 26, Jiew Kongsakol, 27, and Jolly Pineda, 32 – interact on vocals in way that is irresistibly fun.

The two men, Jiew and Jolly, have good strong voices – Jiew's is deep, rather like Billy Idol's; Jolly's soaring, like Freddy Mercury.

Ja pours her feelings into each song, the better to bring out its meaning. The group's ability to harmonize is plain impressive, an aspect that sets them apart from the crowd of bands with singers who sing only solo.

The song mix includes everything from Talking Heads to hardcore, Dolly Parton to Rod Stewart; and occasionally one of bassist Arm's compositions: "Jiew and I have a CD," he said, "I guarantee it's worth a listen."

Holding down the rhythm section, aside from Boonyeam, Arm and Ler, is keyboardist Is Rayen, 39, who used to play jazz at Chalong's Green Man pub. "I studied classical guitar in college," he said, "and took up keys when I was 24. I play all styles, but actually I like jazz."

Although open less than two months, Lava, on the strength of this band and their infectious fun, is attracting good weekend crowds. For Phil, who in his salad days regularly took a lot of flak while flying cargo planes over war zones, the challenge is to fill the place every night.

"So tell us, Phil," he was asked, "which is harder, flying C130s through the flak or running a pub in Phuket?"

"This is," he replied. "At least, flying, I knew what I was doing. But hey, I'm a West Indian ... I have a good time. Perhaps that translates into atmosphere – and if people are having a good time, then everything will go well."

Lava Phuket & Thailand is in the Royal Phuket City hotel at 154 Phang Nga Rd, Phuket town. Email: lava_phuket@yahoo.com.

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By Adrian Byzant

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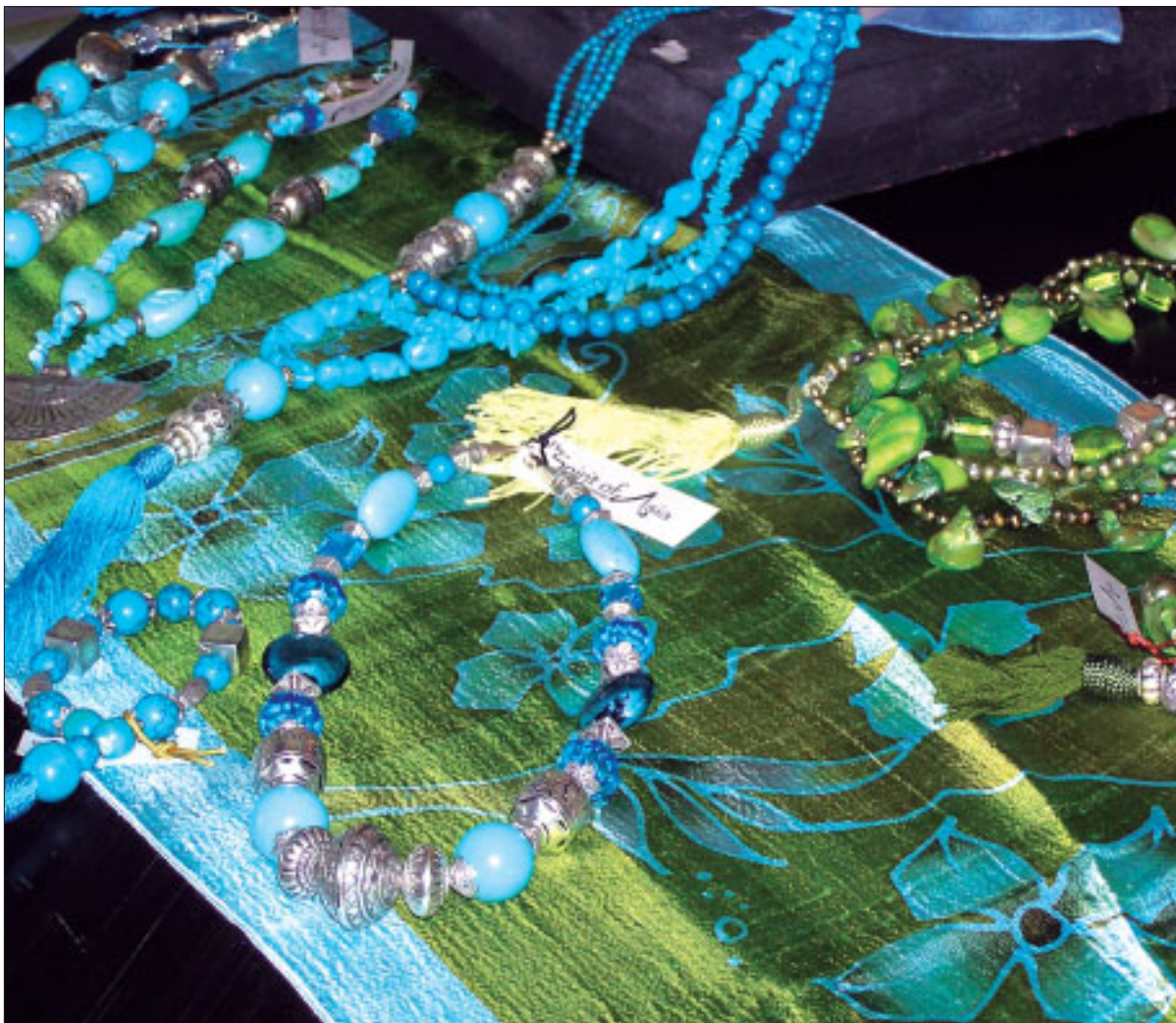
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Above: Get the blues with turquoise necklaces and bracelets. Below, stone necklace from the Glam Pink Collection, 2,850 baht.



Below: topaz, tourmaline and peridot ring, 42,000 baht.



How to be the BELLE of the bauble

If you're looking for a bauble to match your dress for a gala dinner – and there are a couple coming up in Phuket very soon – a good place to start is the Seduction in Black jewellery collection that uses a combinations of onyx, tiger eyes, and blown glass from Italy.

Or, if you want to stand out, you can go to the Glam Pink Collection, a mixture of Western and Asian styles.

On the other hand, for a bit of good luck on your big night out, you might look at the Jaipur Collection that features precious stones said to bring luck to the wearer.

To survey this wide variety

of jewelry all you need to do is walk a few paces around Ulla and Helga's Boutique, a fashion jewelry store that also sells souvenirs and Buddha paintings.

The new boutique, which had its grand opening September 1, also houses the French-designed Spirit of Asia collection.

The hand-made jewelry is created in Phuket by Diane and Danny B from stone, shell, coconut husk, onyx and turquoise. The stones are sourced in Taiwan, China and India.

Ulla & Helga's Boutique is at 95/15 Saiyuan Rd, Naiharn Beach, Phuket. Tel: 01-397-5437 or 06-7888080. Open daily from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Chinese-style handbag and bead necklace, 800 and 2,700 baht respectively.



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From the Jaipur Collection, brilliant amber-colored stone necklace. 1,650 baht.



Above, mother of pearl necklace, 2,850 baht. Left: Jade necklace 3,300 baht, handbag 780 baht and bracelet 450 baht.



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Flat screen TVs just keep on growing

Flat-panel televisions, which keep growing bigger, are now taking their place in the forefront of the television market.

Industry leaders say that the standard size most shoppers currently plump for is the 32-inch diagonal, but that the day when the 42-inch set will be the "usual size" of flat panel will inexorably come.

Japan-based Sharp, which says it has predominantly sold 32-inch sets in Europe in the past year, sees the trend approaching 37 inches as manufacturing costs for the liquid-crystal-display (LCD) technology fall. LCD sets generally outsell plasma displays.

The technology is moving so fast that big 42-inch or 52-inch LCD sets are no longer unusual.

Panasonic has now developed a genuine 103-inch television. Peter Weber of Panasonic Germany said that, even a year ago, such an appliance would have needed a huge hump of electronics to work. Today it is flat.

Hans-Joachim Kamp of the German consumer electronics association GFU says this year's football World Cup drove flat panel sales, with first-half sales of LCD screens growing 130% year-on-year and sales of plasma screens up 80%.

The new displays are rapidly replacing old-fashioned cathode-ray-tube televisions, which some premium brands are no longer manufacturing.

Many shoppers say that after deciding a size and a price, it is difficult to choose a flat panel from the many on offer – they all seem pretty much the same.

Manufacturers are striving to get across the message that there are differences in quality. Improvements to the image are

often the result of software refinements, as well as higher performance semiconductors. Makers are particularly trying to eliminate the comet-like trails that sometimes follow fast-moving objects.

Sharp, for example, is marketing several models that include a technology it calls "Quick Shoot", which is designed to counter the comet-trail problem.

Customers have generally accepted the insistence of the industry that an "HD ready" sticker is a quality standard, although high-definition broadcasts the sets are supposed to cope with are available only intermittently in some countries – and not at all in others.

Many premium sets will boast an even higher standard: "Full HD", meaning the display is physically made up of 1,080 horizontal lines. Some "HD ready" devices have only 720 lines in the panel.

"Full HD is relatively expensive to make, so the sets do cost more," notes Panasonic's Weber.

A German industry newsletter, *C'net*, reports that Panasonic commissioned a study in the United States that found most buyers of "HD ready" sets have little clue what all this means.

Most had never seen high-definition television (HDTV). A quarter of those questioned mistakenly believed that the sets would turn traditional television broadcasts into high-definition images.

The electronics in the sets can in fact smooth out the images, adding extra lines by a process known as interpolation, but they cannot add any more detail to standard broadcasts than is in the incoming signal.

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The restaurant that redefined Thai cuisine in Bangkok is now in town!

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On the menu

WITH
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Siam Indigo

Talent and artistry display themselves in myriad forms but certainly one of the most satisfying must be fine dining. How else can one “consume” art – not only metaphorically, but in fact?

Take Chef Zico's Lamb Beignet at Siam Indigo, on Phang Nga Rd, in the heart of Phuket's old town: although a mere appetizer, one bite reveals it is also a delicious work of art.

This new restaurant is much more than just another place to fatten up. It's a veritable temple of culinary and associated arts.

Aesthetes will admire the good taste: the eclectic selection of piped-in jazz; broad teakwood tables and chairs; indigo-colored silk place-settings and lace runners; 13-foot ceilings; arched portals; subdued lighting; romantic garden; and thoughtfully chosen artwork.

Nothing has that bought-off-the-shelf look; every nook is plainly a labor of love.

The restaurant is housed in three shophouses that date back to Phuket's boom-town era.

Instead of obscuring the restaurant's antique charm with anachronistic bric-a-brac, the owners let the old boards, beams, bricks and mortar display themselves sans modern adornments – barring two notable exceptions.

The bar is an impressive pile of textured oblong blocks such as no Chinese tin baron dreamt of; and interrupting the broad expanses of whitewashed plaster are the austere post-modern sculptures of Sandra Marquis, in high-relief, and the colorful, ethereal paintings of Kathy Manthei, both resident Phuket artists.



Some of the dishes at Siam Indigo: Crabmeat and Lettuce and Moo Hong.

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

The real business of the place, however, is food and drink. Managing partner Celine Masson bills it as an “exotique bar and restaurant” and aims at affording customers real freedom of choice: “We don't impose anything on the diner,” she said; and indeed, even the sauces can be ordered à la carte. Experimentation is definitely encouraged.

Celine is a Breton, from the ancient and scenic city of Rennes. Bretons famously combine the spirit of enterprise with traditionalism. Thus her entry into the competitive Phuket restaurant business is not the result of whimsy, but the logical outcome of a career in hospitality.

A woman of considerable mental and physical charm, Celine studied in Switzerland, then came as front office chief to Patong's Phuket Cabana, where she remained eight years. That hotel is famous for both its service and its fine dining, so it is no surprise that Siam Indigo excels at both. Outside the restaurant, Celine is wife, mother and artist.

Our dinner started with an *amuse-bouche* of fried crab patty topped by organic lettuce and Bechamel sauce, another of Chef Zico's creations, evidently French-influenced. (*Amuse-bouche* recipes change daily.) Zico, from Nakhon Phanom, a city on the Mekhong River, combines Thai and Vietnamese heritage with a passion for creative cooking in consonance with Phuket's increasingly sophisticated entertainment milieu.

Although only 34, Zico has already had an impressive career – Chinese food chef at a five-star Bangkok hotel; four years at a top Chinese restaurant in Malaysia's Johore Bahru; with another four years divided equally between French and Italian restaurants.

In the meantime he mastered the peculiarities of Phuket's traditional dishes, which derive from Chinese cooking – and can make the finest of their type available in any restaurant.

“When I get an order,” he explained, “I want to make it as fresh as it can be.”

Similar emphasis is placed on quality of ingredients (organic vegetables, Australian beef, New Zealand lamb, Norwegian salmon, etc.) and presentation.

The menu is divided into three: tapas and appetizers; Siam Indigo creations; and items from the grill. Note that the divide is not, as elsewhere, between Thai and international dishes. The restaurant displays its own style, even in traditional dishes; so, the *larb*, a Thai dish found everywhere, is redolent of duck meat and shallots – a recipe found nowhere else. Sauces, likewise, are uniquely Siam Indigo's.

Among dishes we tasted:

Amuse-bouches:

- Crabmeat and Organic Lettuce salad (140 baht): The organic lettuce is grown in Phuket; served with croutons, cherry tomatoes and heaps of blue crab meat. This rather resembles a Caesar salad, but, with balsamic vinaigrette, tastes nothing like.

- Seafood Bisque (140 baht): Crustacean carapaces are



Lamb Beignet and Grilled Duck Breast.



cooked for long hours; to the result is added whipping cream, cuttlefish, prawns, and clams. Zico's rendition is strongly characteristic and not buried in spices.

- Lamb Beignet (140 baht): Lamb meat formed by hand into sausage-like rolls, flavored with Provençal herbs and topped with lettuce, tomato and creamy French dressing. This is superb and enormously satisfying.

- Goong Sarong (150 baht): A favorite dish in Phuket. Siam Indigo's are finger-sized, wrapped in vermicelli, and fried. The serving is not niggardly; the prawns are firm; the result is excellent.

Main courses:

- Grilled Duck Breast (290 baht): Zico has surpassed himself on this difficult dish: the duck is remarkably rich and tender – made so by being marinated in olive oil, pepper and salt; served with scallop potatoes and bacon-wrapped asparagus.

- Moo Hong (130 baht): A traditional Phuket dish. Pork is stewed till a deep brown, flavored with cinnamon and bay seeds: “The more you cook it the better it is,” said Celine. Slightly sweet, but delicious; a bargain.

- Masaman Neua (150 baht): The popular, savory, slightly sweet Muslim curry, this version having a decidedly continental influence, served with shredded beef: “Shredding the beef ensures tenderness,” said Zico. Excellent.

- Brochette of Seafood (360 baht): This big brochette is a meal in itself; with butter rice and crisp, cooked vegetables.

Desserts:

- Mango Cream Brulee (140 baht): Cooked mango reduced to a paste and topped with home-made Italian ice cream – wonderful.

- White Chocolate Mousse (140 baht): Artistically presented, also with Italian ice cream and also a fine dessert.

Miscellaneous addenda: Siam Indigo's cocktails are as fine as the food; try the Mango Daiquiri (140 baht) or Piscoutinou cocktail, with cranberry juice, lime and Triple Sec.

House wines include Alange 2004 Syrah from Alvear Winery in Spain's Extremadura, my favorite (140 baht per glass), and 2004 Cape Gold Cinsault-Ruby Cabernet, a well-made hybrid from South Africa's Cape region (160 baht per glass). The wine menu contains 13 whites, 17 reds, one rosé and four sparkling wines, most within the 1,250 - 1,500 baht range per bottle.

The food menu has 36 items, the most expensive – Beef Tenderloin – being 620 baht. The restaurant seats up to 150; with a classic garden perfect for parties.

Twice-monthly set menus with pop-jazz artists Jimmy and Anne at 700 baht a head are a real bargain.

Siam Indigo is at 8 Phang Nga Rd, Phuket City (near the intersection with Yaowarat Rd). Tel: 01-892-4885. Website: www.siamindigo.com. Open 6pm-10:30pm for dinner; closed Tuesday. The restaurant will open at lunchtime after October 31.



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Cue the Yuffies

When my teenage son recently asked me to help him get rid of all the pornographic pop-ups on his PC (yes, honestly), I realized something that is becoming increasingly obvious: society is bored of in-your-face sex.

People are becoming tired of seeing topless models, bored of live sex shows in you-know-where, and bored of starlets' slutty dresses slashed to the thigh and slit to the waist.

Even my son is now totally numbed by video clips of Paris Hilton's nocturnal activities dropping – ping! – into his inbox.

Sex has become unerotic, unappealing and, well, unsexy.

I think it all reached saturation point when Janet Jackson flashed a limp brown breast live at the American Super Bowl. Goodness, was it two years ago already? How time flies. With a piece of twisted, star-shaped metal crudely stuck on her nipple, Janet's poor mammary gland didn't stand a chance: it was probably one of the most revolting images of 2004.

CLEAVAGES

Every social event that I try to avoid – but end up having to go to for one reason or another – seems to be filled with a room full of women dressed as if they are ready for bed.

Pushed-up cleavages served on a bed of Wonderbras, see-through "gypsy" skirts revealing tacky white thongs... the list of clothing disasters reads like a tacky mail-order catalog.

The saddest thing is that most of the women look like the cabaret girls they criticize, and all of them are over 40 years old. Well, enough is enough. Far from turning us on, this constant sexual bombardment has actually succeeded in turning us off.

According to a survey in a UK women's magazine, one in four women now prefers cleaning to lovemaking, and married women have less sex than their 1950s counterparts. Everyone may be flaunting it, but that hasn't made us feel like getting it.



Wow! Bare shoulders.

Thank goodness, then, that the tide is finally turning. At the catwalk shows I attended at the beginning of the year, as if by magic, the divine and demure looks of past decades were reborn.

Tight below-the-knee pencil skirts and jackets with nipped-in waists revived the Hitchcock heroines of the '50s and anointed a new erogenous zone – the ankle.

What the Yuppies were to

the '80s, the Yuffies (young, urban females) are to today. For this, the latest demographic group to be discovered by the marketing men, the aspiration is to become a born-again virgin. To do so, apparently, they have to ab-

stain from sleeping with men for a whole year.

Don't get me wrong, it's not sex itself that's the problem. It's how it's sold to us. We don't want everything to be given away on the packaging. We want frisson, we want suggestion, atmosphere, tension and flirting.

It's no coincidence that the most fun you can have in London right now is speed-dating in the dark, or that the sexiest film in years was the one where Bill Murray whispered something into Scarlett Johansson's ear (for the sad people who missed it, it was called *Lost in Translation*). We don't know what he said, but we can imagine.

"Sexiness is a complicated thing, but it's private, too," said the very clever Italian fashion designer Miuccia Prada.

Privacy is much more interesting than the declared and obvious, and if you want to know what is going to happen next in the fashion world, you would do well to listen to her.

So girls, leave the miniskirts and nipple-revealing T-shirts to the teenagers. Put your designer thongs in the back of the drawer.

From now on, the lady is no longer a tramp. Instead, she's after the thrill of the chaste...

Suitcase savvy: After years of traveling, I have learned to treat packing as the first step in any journey. It should never be a chore, so remember the following tips and stop moaning about having to sit on your suitcase to shut it.

Plan your outfits. Instead of just throwing clothes into your case, pick out a series of outfits. If it doesn't travel well, don't pack it. Could you do without that chiffon dress? That linen jacket? If so, do. You don't go on holiday to spend every night ironing, so be realistic. It's why fabrics like jersey, Lycra and crinkled silk were invented.



Hang up your hangers. How many times have you taken a pile of clothes hangers in your suitcase "just in case", only to find that there are plenty in your hotel or apartment? The same will happen this time – and if there aren't any, talk to the owners who, I'm sure, will be happy to help.

One exception, please note, is the skirt hanger. Pack one

You've heard it before, but it's true: if you put aside everything you are planning to pack, and then reduce it by half, you'll still have everything you need, minus the backache from carrying all that extra weight.

The same goes for non-clothing items. Will you really need six novels? Take three and swap with fellow travelers if you run out.

Stay smooth. Tissue paper is a fussy waste of time. To stop special outfits from creasing, wrap them up using plastic bags instead.

Those plastic supermarket bags – you have hundreds of in the kitchen drawer – will do. Better still, use dry-cleaning bags or bin liners.

On the way home, when it doesn't matter about creases, you can use the bags for keeping dirty clothes and shoes separate from the rest of the suitcase. Voilà!

Ambrosia Sakkadas, a London-born Greek Cypriot and graduate of Central St Martins College of Art & Design in London, is an artist, designer and newspaper columnist.

PHUKET DIARY of coming events

September 30: The 7th Phuket International Beer Festival at The Watermark.

This year the Phuket International Beer Fest will take place on the opening day of the Munich Oktoberfest.

The venue? Where else but Watermark Bar Restaurant at the Phuket Boat Lagoon Marina.

It is a festival designed for drinking copious quantities of the amber nectar; but to avoid it seeming like a mere slosh-up, it

is loosely disguised as a competition – a competition of beer hyping, heckling, drinking and sloppy judging.

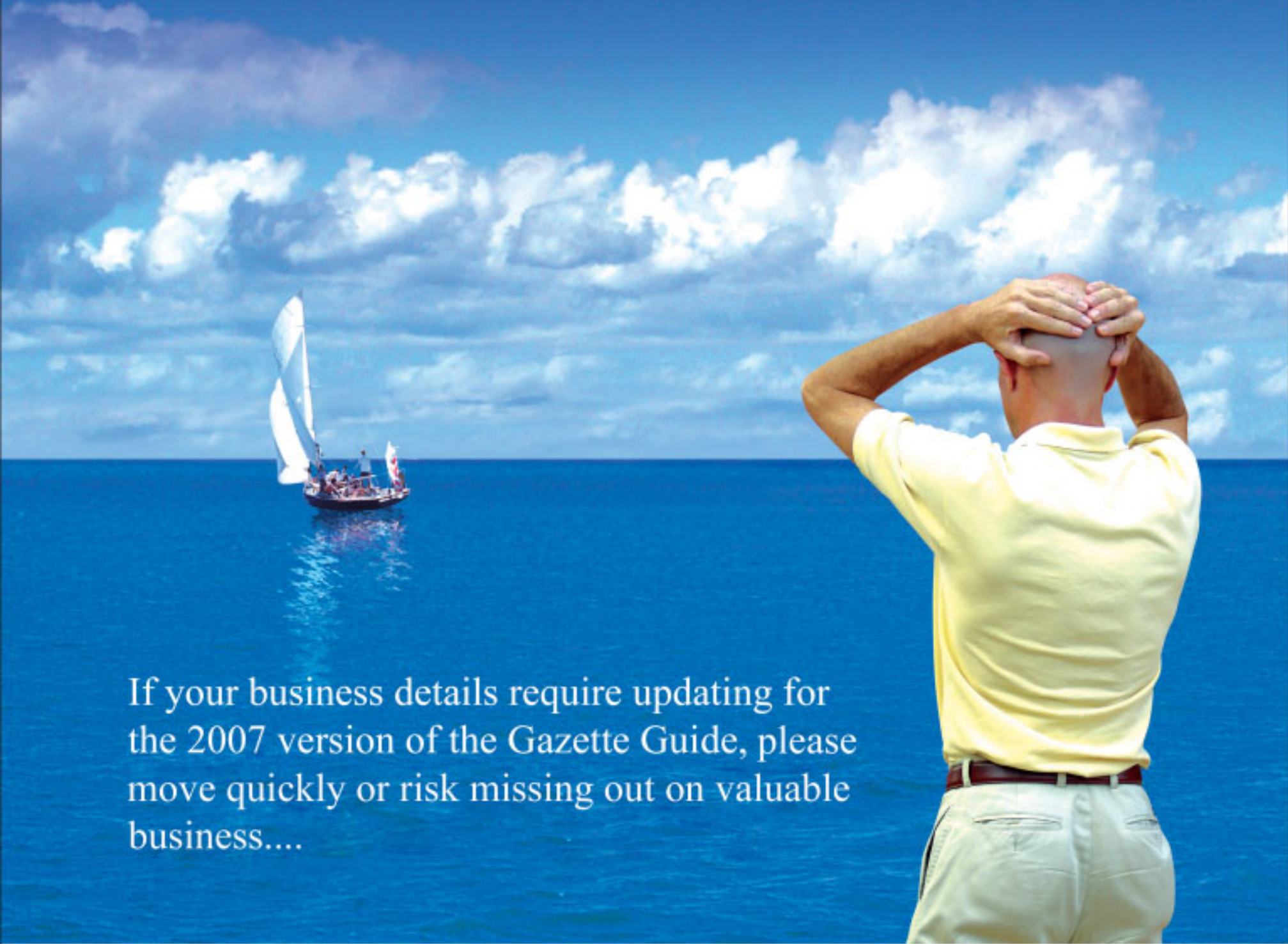
Entry fee: 800 baht covers 12 beers. To register for the competition (or just for the drinking) contact Stuart Bird at Tel: 01-7376184.

September 24: Ramadhan.

Islamic holiday to mark the beginning of the one-month annual fast. Not a public holiday.

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The Cryptic Crossword

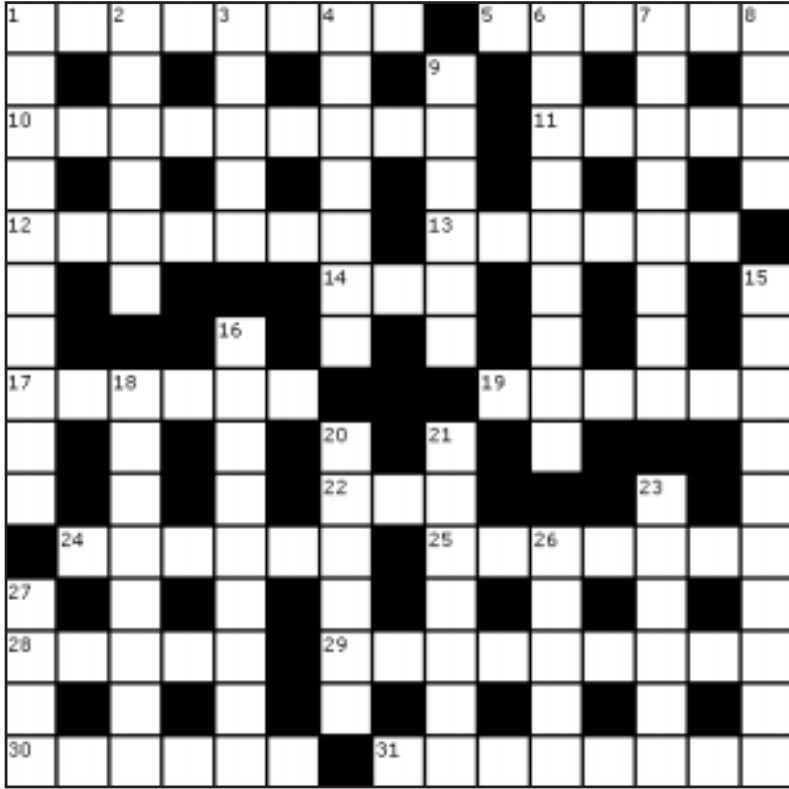
Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 20 words related to guns. The words may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. Score: 10 or more, good; 15 or more, very good; 20 or more, excellent.
Solution on the next page.

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

ACROSS

1. Slice incorporated, I take direction with particle. (8)
5. Relies on illegal business agreements. (6)
10. Dog disease explains Di's bad mood. (9)
11. Needle-wielder beneath the street? (5)
12. Bewilder no indefinite number more. (7)
13. Examine for every exploit. (6)
14. Make last mouse reaction, they say. (3)
17. I'm ready to go on vacation, so to speak. That's a blow. (6)
19. Arthropod in religious group. (6)
22. Behold, O British wash-room! (3)
24. Portal scattered military group. (6)
25. Forum in wrecked military outfit. (7)
28. "Hot stuff", said American state. (5)
29. Have girl scout reserve tourist's necessity. (9)
30. Quiet little Simon made a loan. (6)
31. User of staff. (8)



Compiled by Tortuus. © 2006

Down

1. One's in India, north, or closer to Phuket. (10)
2. Sign together, say, triangle ratio. (6)
3. Charm? Explain letter by letter. (5)
4. Is against small operation and attitudes. (7)
6. Holds back the remainder before wet season. (9)
7. Hello! Saw a direction to Scots river. (8)
8. Royal address, father. (4)
9. Doctor with assault in cloth dealer. (6)
15. Creator of Lucifer and marriage broker. (10)
16. Instrument deal. I am on after. (9)
18. Tail a pal, oddly, to be palace-like. (8)
20. Accuse? Everyone on edge, we hear. (6)
21. Trip is meter of Phuket's concern. (7)
23. Punctuation mark? Yes, in part of empire. (6)
26. I buy and sell perfection. (5)
27. Play parts in biblical book. (4)

Solution on next page

Scribble Space



su|do|ku
© Puzzles by Pappocom

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

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

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.

EZ TRIVIA QUIZ

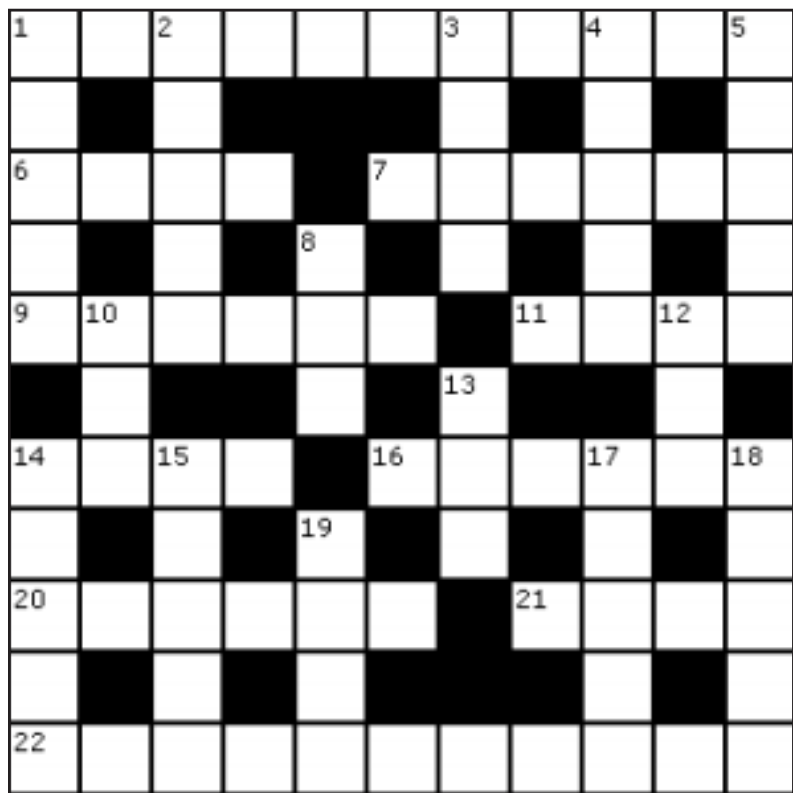
1. Lisbon is the capital of which country?
2. John Mark Karr hails from which US state?
3. Recently deceased monarch Dame Te Atairangikaahu was the queen of which people?
4. What is the largest species of penguin?
5. Petrology is the study of what?
6. The story of Noah and the great flood is contained in which book of the Bible?
7. What was the first single released by The B-52's?
8. The Bonneville Salt Flats are found in which US state?
9. The European Commission (EC) headquarters are located in which city?
10. What color has been described as "pink trying to be purple".
- Answers on next page

Rhyme Time

The words described below all rhyme with 'post'. What are they?

1. Brag.
2. Proceed without power.
3. Largest amount.
4. Grilled bread.
5. Absorbed.
6. Specter.
7. Cook in an oven.
8. Figured out the illness.
9. It's his party.
10. Mail.

Answers on next page



Quick Crossword

ACROSS

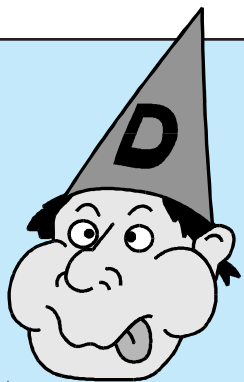
1. A form of art.
6. Leave out.
7. Leg joints.
9. Hansel and *****.
11. Crooner **** Williams.
14. Apple or Earth center.
16. Manner of speaking.
20. Old name of Indian city.
21. Tiny particle.
22. Youngsters.

DOWN

1. Part of fork.
2. German river.
3. Hair on horse's neck.
4. Synthetic fabric.
5. Homework?
8. Bo Derek movie.
10. Carnival city.
12. Lair.
13. Top card.
14. Snake.
15. Shakespearean character.
17. Consumed.
18. 10 am and 4 pm, eg.
19. Copenhagen native.

Solution below right

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. Who said, "A man in love is incomplete until he has married - then he's finished"?
2. Which organ in the body stores blood, disintegrates old blood cells, filters foreign substances from the blood, and produces lymphocytes?
3. What was US President Lyndon Johnson's middle name?
4. With which country did Spain go to war in 1898?
5. Which disease is also known as "breakbone fever"?
6. From which language does the disease's name originate?
7. Denzel Washington won an Oscar in 1989 for his performance in which movie?
8. Poilu, askari and sepoy are all types of what?
9. When did Brunei become independent of Britain?
10. In Germanic myth, who was the leader of the Valkyries?
11. Where would one find the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes?
12. Waldemar the Great was king of which country from 1157 to 1182?
13. Who was the first composer of ragtime to have his music published?
14. Who founded Bank of America?
15. Where would you find Quiché spoken?
16. Bes, Set and Nut are all what?
17. From which animal may people catch the disease Tularemia?
18. Who supposedly gave Midas the power to turn everything he touched into gold?
19. In which sport would you come across the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim?
20. Which amendment to the US Constitution states that no person may be forced to testify as a witness against himself?

Answers below, left

Puzzle Solutions

Monster Quiz Answers

1. Zsa Zsa Gabor; 2. The spleen; 3. Baines;
4. The United States. 5. Dengue fever. 6. Swahili (ki-dinga); 7. *Glory*; 8. Soldiers; 9. 1984; 10. Brunhild; 11. Alaska; 12. Denmark;
13. Scott Joplin; 14. Amadeo P. Giannini; 15. Guatemala; 16. Ancient Egyptian gods; 17. Rabbits; 18. Dionysus; 19. Ice hockey; 20. The fifth.

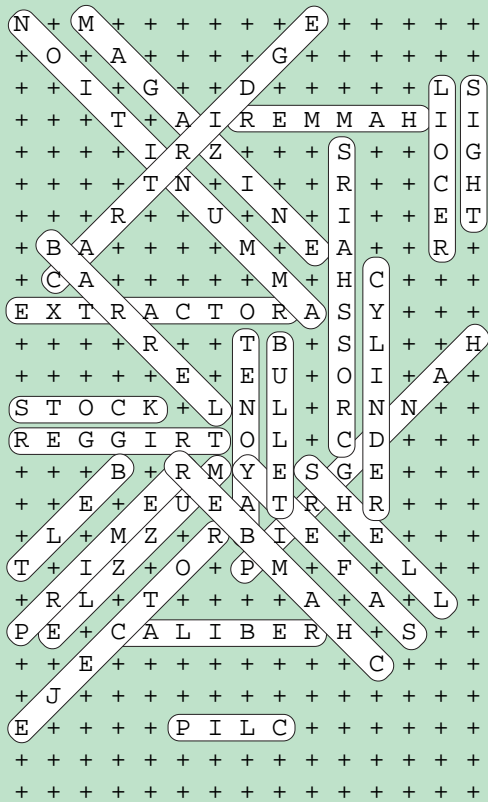
Rhyme Time Answers

1. Boast; 2. Coast; 3. Most; 4. Toast; 5. Engrossed; 6. Ghost; 7. Roast; 8. Diagnosed; 9. Host; 10. Post.

EZ Trivia Answers

- Answers: 1. Portugal; 2. Alabama; 3. The Maori people of New Zealand; 4. Emperor Penguin (*Aptenodytes forsteri*); 5. Rocks; 6. Genesis; 7. Rock Lobster; 8. Utah; 9. Brussels; 10. Mauve.

Hidden Words SOLUTION



Solution to this week's Cryptic Crossword



Solution to this week's Quick Crossword



Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle



Curtain call for cockroaches

Some time ago, a columnist in *The Nation* wrote about a problem she had: cockroaches had infested her kitchen, especially the cupboards and drawers.

She had been advised to poison the cockroaches. The problem was that she had several cats, and they might get into the cupboards and drawers and eat the poison.

She was at a loss. It seemed to me that the solution to the problem was self-evident. What she should have done was sic the cats on the cockroaches and let them fight it out.

In any fight between a cat and a bunch of cockroaches, I'd bet on the cat every time.

Regularly scheduled cat-and-cockroach fights would give the cats good exercise and provide marvelous entertainment for the columnist and her friends.

It would give her plenty of material for her column, and she could even charge admission.

But maybe she had pacifist cats who would refuse to fight. They might even establish an alliance with the cockroaches. Then she'd be in trouble.

When I was living in Taiwan, we devised a solution to this problem that I highly recommend to this good lady and to

anyone else who is in the same plight: hold cockroach-bashing parties.

The procedure is simple. First, invite a bunch of your friends over for a cocktail party in the evening. Eat, drink, and be merry.

When night falls, go into the kitchen, open all the drawers and cupboards, and deposit a large pile of sugar in the middle



Problems with pesky pests? Get smashed – and then do the same to them

of the floor. Then turn out all the kitchen lights and go back into the living room.

Continue to party, being careful that the sounds of revelry do not alarm the hungry cockroaches.

By now they will be assembling in your kitchen. They will crawl out of their hiding places and swarm greedily about the pile of sugar on the floor.

After fifteen minutes or so, arm everybody with rolled-up magazines. Tiptoe into the kitchen with your guests, surround the pile of sugar on the floor, and turn on the lights.

Wham! Wham! Wham! Startled by the sudden light, the cockroaches will attempt to flee; but they will be no match for the drunken humans who, in a frenzy of blood-lust and cockroach-hatred, will bash them right and left with their rolled-up magazines and fierce, bellowing cries of conquest.

The carnage will be terrible, and the subsequent clean-up very icky. But your kitchen, for a brief time at least, will be free of cockroaches. If they start to become a problem again, hold another party.

To make the battle more sporting, try mixing the sugar on the floor with Mekhong whisky. That will get the cockroaches as drunk as the humans who are bashing them. It will also be more merciful. Even a cockroach would agree that it's better to die drunk than sober.

Connoisseurs will argue about the best kind of magazine to bash cockroaches with. I favor a thick magazine of heft and substance.

Don't use *Playboy*, though, because you might get the pictures dirty.

Whatever magazine you use, make sure you finish reading it before bashing cockroaches with it.

Otherwise, turning the pages could get extremely gross.

Cockroach-bashing parties not only get rid of cockroaches, they also promote human solidarity, enrich participants' social skills, and provide wholesome exercise in a simulated combat setting.

If conducted with suitable imagination and panache, they can steal the show from lesser social events and become the undisputed highlight of any social season. They are a thrilling new form of entertainment that will stir the passions of the most jaded Phuketian. Some may even find them addictive.

The only problem is that they may arouse the wrath of the animal-rights activists.

To show that I bear deceased cockroaches no ill will, I have composed the following ode dedicated to their memory:

ODE

(to a cockroach; upon contemplating its crushed carapace)

O little cockroach on my floor,
You'll soil my cupboards nevermore.
I didn't invite you into my kitchen;
Your foul excretions left me bitchin'.
It grieved my heart to hear you scream
When I bashed you with my magazine.
Now that you're dead, please rest in peace.
I hope your excretions now will cease.
I raise my glass in a farewell libation,
And wish you a happy reincarnation.

S. Tsow can be flamed at stsow@yahoo.com, except when he's writing poetry to cockroaches.



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

Frank McCourt led the obscure life of a high-school English teacher in New York for 30 years. Part of his stock in trade was to tell stories of his impoverished childhood in Limerick, Ireland.

After retirement he wrote his stories into a book called *Angela's Ashes*, published in 1996 when he was 66 years old. It shot to the top of the best-seller lists, won the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Critics Award, and was translated into 30 languages.

"I never expected *Angela's Ashes* to attract any attention, but when it hit the best-seller lists I became a media darling," he writes in the prologue of his third book, *Teacher Man* (Scribner, New York, 2005, 258pp). "I was a geriatric novelty with an Irish accent."

He followed up with a book about his life in America called *Tis*, and it was a complete disaster: self-absorbed, whiny, repetitive and, worst of all, unfunny.

Now he has redeemed himself with his third book, finding his own voice and those of his New York high-school students in

Teacher Man. The result is an exuberant, seamless web that jumps quickly back and forth from the thoughts and feelings and sassy speech of both sides of the classroom wars.

For every reader, McCourt will bring back memories of a typical high-school class: the mouth, the brain, the jock, the hood, the beauty queen, the sissy, the religious fanatic.

On McCourt's second day in class, Joey Santos is the mouth whose job is to distract McCourt from actually teaching English. He asks if McCourt is Scotch or somethin'? McCourt eliminates quotation marks, allowing him to jump from one point of view to another.

No I'm not Scotch. I'm Irish.

Joey looks sincere. Oh yeah? What's Irish?

Irish is whatever comes out of Ireland.

Like St Patrick, right?

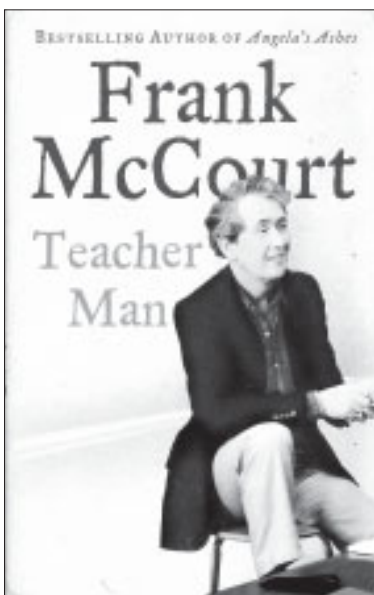
Well, no, not exactly. This leads to the telling of the story of St Patrick, which keeps us away from the b-o-r-i-n-g English lesson, which leads to other questions.

Hey, mister. Everyone talk English over there in Ireland?

What kinda sports didya play?

You all Catlics in Ireland?

Don't let them take over the classroom. Stand up to them.



Show them who's in charge. Be firm or be dead. Take no shit. Tell them. Open your notebooks. Time for the spelling list.

Aw teacher, aw, Gawd, aw man. Spelling. Spelling. Spelling. Do we haveta? They moan. B-o-r-i-n-g spelling list. They pretend to bang their foreheads on desks, bury their faces in their folded arms...

So, mister, did you go out with girls in Ireland?

No, dammit. Sheep. We went out with sheep. What do you think we went out with?

The class explodes. They laugh, clutch their chests, nudge, elbow each other, pretend to fall out of their desks. This teacher. Crazy, man. Talks funny. Goes

out with sheep. Lock up your sheep.

Excuse me. Open your notebooks, please. We have a spelling list to cover.

Hysterics. Will sheep be on the list? Oh, man.

I've quoted this lengthy chunk of dialog so you can see how effortlessly McCourt brings you back to high school. There is a steady stream of hilarious scenes, though the book does sag in the middle, when McCourt details his family problems and his listless two years in Trinity College in Dublin.

But once he is assigned to teach creative writing at New York's elite Stuyvesant High School, the book takes off again.

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This is a school where 13,000 candidates sit for the admissions test and 700 pass. They are the cream of New York's immigrant community: Korean, Chinese, Hispanic, West Indian, plus doggedly determined native whites and blacks. If they can make it here, they are off to America's best colleges and a giant leap up the rungs of the ladder of life.

McCourt's challenge is to channel their fierce ambition into genuine love of language. Although he often tires of the little bastards, his love comes through in the telling of their many life stories. It's almost enough to make you want to be a teacher. Almost.

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Taxing time for hotels?

Once again the controversial hotel rooms tax is in the spotlight, with Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr issuing stern warnings that her council will take legal action against any hotels that refuse to pay up.

If the situation sounds vaguely familiar, it should. Just before the tsunami at the end of December 2004, the *OrBorJor* was threatening to do just the same thing. However, after the disaster the *OrBorJor* correctly decided to waive the tax for 2005 as a way of helping hotels to get back on their feet.

Now, more than five years since its inception, it is time for something to be done about the rooms tax issue. There are currently some 580 accommodation establishments on the island, comprising more than 32,000 rooms. It is simply unfair to the half who do pay the tax that those who choose to ignore it have been getting away scot-free.

However, when a voice as respected as that of Phuket Chamber of Commerce President Eam Thavornvongwongs comes out against the tax, his arguments deserve careful consideration.

K. Eam, whose Kata Group of hotels are among the many that have defied paying the tax since its inception, cites a lack of budgetary transparency by the *OrBorJor* over what it intends to do with the collected funds. He also calls for a committee chaired by non-*OrBorJor* officials to ensure all matters related to the tax are conducted fairly.

Additionally, he correctly points out that the hotel industry already shoulders more than its fair share of our community's tax burden. Hotel food and beverage outlets, for example, are already put at a considerable disadvantage against ordinary restaurants in having to charge customers the dreaded "plus, plus" surcharge – a 10% "service" charge added to the bill, which then in itself becomes subject to 7% value added tax.

K. Eam is right that the *OrBorJor* needs to improve its public relations and increase fiscal transparency. Setting up a committee or advisory board that includes hotel associations would certainly be a good first step in that regard.

However, after five years of essentially allowing hotels to pay the tax on a voluntary basis, something has to be done. It is essential that tax assessment and collection be done fairly and firmly, with legal action awaiting those who refuse to pay.

Thus far, however, the *OrBorJor's* approach to collecting the tax more closely resembles that of a person collecting donations for a temple fund-raiser. That approach will never work. If people – or hotels – can get away without paying their taxes, that is exactly what they will do.

– The Editor

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Letters

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

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

Something rotting in the state of paradise

What is wrong with this place? When I came here in December last year the weather was perfect: sunny and dry with zephyrs off the sea that kept the temperature just right. I bought a house and moved into it in March.

But now look at it: storms, gales, downpours, floods and landslides that block the very roads I want to use. And when it stops raining and the sun comes out, there's no wind and the humidity soars to really uncomfortable levels.

I have mold all over my clothes and my bedding. My shoes have gone green. This place is supposed to be a tropical paradise, not some dank island where everything rots.

I feel very disappointed that no one told me about this. Surely would-be home owners should be warned. The *Phuket Gazette*, too, has a responsibility to let people know about this before the island's reputation is irreparably damaged.

SK Walker
Kata

Printing rubbish

Please, instead of getting on your high horse every week and showing a picture of some rubbish, why don't you try to be a community newspaper and tell the [people of the] island where they can take their rubbish to dispose of it.

Alan Vacquier
Patong

You could start by putting garbage in the bin that is supplied to all households, on request, by the local Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*).

If you have too much garbage to fit in the bin, call the *OrBorTor*. They will collect the rubbish, but will charge for it.

As for "informal" dumps, if you come across one that particularly offends you, take a photo and give it to the *OrBorTor* or municipality responsible for that area, along with directions as to where it is.

They will check whether it is on public land or private land. If public, they will clean it up. If private, they will contact the owner of the land and charge him or her for cleaning it up.

– Gazette

Riotous assembly

I have always had my doubts about the general quality of education in Phuket, but an article in your paper last week has confirmed my fears.

While math, reading and arithmetic are all important subjects, a well-rounded education should include physics and physical exercise.

How am I to believe that these courses are adequately covered when, right on your front page, it tells us that youths, attempting to make a political statement regarding the unequal enforcement of law (a valid dissent) were unable to complete their act of protest because of poor physical stature or a lack of understanding in the most basic physics?

These students showed up at the police station in Phuket City and attempted to lob indicators – in the form of empty beer bottles – of their distress at the offending members of the bureaucracy.

Their brave attempt at political dissidence, however, was

stymied by the distance the indicators had to travel, as the students were "too far away to hit the building or any vehicles in the parking lot in front of it."

I intend to raise my children with the fortitude to raise questions against their own government, but they will require a school system that gives them the necessary background to make their voice heard – and that does not seem likely here.

Cynthia Smanks
Phuket

Villa California screaming

Earlier this year, traffic lights were installed at the Chao Fa West Rd exit of Villa California housing estate, a safety measure that I applaud; motorists tend to scream along that straight section of road.

However, drivers in both directions often drive at speed through red lights at that junction because they either don't see it or choose to ignore it. I've had a few close calls already when I chose to obey the red light and stopped at the junction. Checking the rearview mirror, all I could do was close my eyes and pray as pickups whizzed by.

I understand the need for traffic lights there, but surely there must be a safer solution. Perhaps installing a sensor so that the lights change only when vehicles are waiting to exit the estate would help.

Until then, however, I'm not so sure I'll be risking my life by obeying the rules of the road at that junction.

SS
Chalong

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.

The importance of strict immigration controls

In my opinion, the foreign criminals who enter or pass through Thailand are very harmful for our country, especially when they stay in Thailand for long periods of time. That is why it is very important to vet every visitor and check their backgrounds for any criminal records.

Besides checking to make sure the documents are in order, we also stay in contact with foreign agencies. Most of the foreign criminals – we also have major problems with prostitutes, illegal workers and drug addicts – who visit Thailand come from the Middle East and Asian countries including Korea and China.

Although our country may look dangerous to foreign eyes, the government officers are hard working and if the police report any problems to the Immigration Office we will immediately check it.

The first place we check foreigners is when they arrive in the country. Phuket International Airport, for example, has a so-

FIRST PERSON

Pol Col Bunphot Kongkrachan has been the Acting Superintendent of the Phuket Immigration Office since April of this year, and as head of the Immigration Office he says that the most important part of his job is to prevent foreign criminals from entering Phuket, and by extension, out of the Kingdom.

By using high-tech scanning technology and improved passport checking processes, Col Bunphot hopes to make Phuket Immigration the model checkpoint of Thailand in the fight against international crime.



phisticated machine to check the passports and records of any foreigner who looks suspicious. This

is especially important because passport forgers are using increasingly high-tech methods of

creating false documents, and it is becoming all too easy to enter and exit countries.

However, if we have any doubts about the passport, we can check the passenger's fingerprint files because fingerprints cannot be copied.

Moreover, we have contact with the embassies of each country to maintain a current list of warrants so that if a person is wanted for criminal activity in another country, we can arrest them as they attempt to enter Thailand.

Luckily that doesn't happen too often in Phuket. Since Phuket is a popular place we have been given a budget to build new offices, order upgraded scanning technology and hire a larger workforce.

Using upgraded technology improves our checking system and makes it much easier to check for fake passports both at Immigration and outside of the country. So if we have the support of the government and good liaison with the provincial police and embassies, we will be very effective and Phuket will not have to worry about foreign criminals.

Which passport should I use?

I have dual nationality, Thai and Dutch. I entered Thailand on my Dutch passport, in which I had a visa that expired on February 15 this year. Six weeks later I was issued my Thai ID card. Does this count as an overstay?

My questions:

1. If I go to Immigration now will I have to pay the 20,000 baht overstay? Will I be "sent home" to the Netherlands?

2. If I have to go back to the Netherlands because of an emergency, I presume I cannot use my Dutch passport [to leave Thailand] because it shows an overstay of six weeks, and I will have to pay 20,000 baht at the airport. Is that the case?

3. It looks as though, whatever happens, I may have to pay the overstay fine? Is that true?

4. If I go back to Europe and get a three-month Thai visa, should I show my Dutch passport or my Thai ID card when entering Thailand?

Concerned
Phuket

Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen of the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office (PPIO) replies:

You certainly will have to pay the overstay fine because you used the Dutch passport to enter

Thailand and you still have the immigration stamps and the arrival card in that passport.

The fine will not be just for the six-week period you mention, because the fact that you have since received a Thai ID card does not come under consideration; we check only the immigration date on the stamps in your passport.

So you will have to pay for the overstay period between February 16 and the day you leave – up to a maximum of 20,000 baht.

So, when you have to go back to Europe, you should show both your Dutch passport and your Thai passport and pay the overstay fine of 20,000 baht.

Don't worry – you will not be "sent home" or blacklisted, because you are a Thai citizen.

When you return again to Thailand, you can enter with your Thai passport, so you do not need to get a visa in the Netherlands. Each time you travel between the Netherlands and Thailand, you should carry both passports. This will make it easier for you.

Just use the Thai passport when you enter Thailand and the Dutch passport when you enter the Netherlands, and show both passports to Immigration at either end.

Will my computer work in Phuket?

I would like to come to Phuket, but I have some questions about what computer capabilities will be available. I use a Dell laptop running Windows XP and I was wondering if there are any special adapters or converters I need to buy.

My work is on my computer and I also need to have Internet access 24 hours a day. I can't use the computers at Internet cafés because I need to transfer Word documents.

I would greatly appreciate your help because my decision whether or not to go to Phuket hinges largely on this information.

Eve
By email

Woody Leonhard replies:

Yes, some of us do work with computers. Phuket undoubtedly has more world class computer geeks than native simians.

Chances are very good that your Dell laptop is dual voltage, but to be sure, take a moment to inspect the "brick" attached to the power cord.

The brick should say some-

thing like INPUT: 120V-240V AC. As long as the power supply can take 220 volts, you're fine.

Depending on where you're coming from, you likely also need a wall converter to plug your laptop in. Thailand uses outlets with two round or flat prongs. This kind of outlet is catered for by most universal adapters.

I would recommend the Universal Plug Adapter by APC. It has everything you need and, more importantly, its thin profile makes it easy to pack. You can find it on Amazon or other online retailers for about US\$17.

Getting onto the Internet can be very easy – or very difficult. Most hotels now have either wired (LAN) or wireless (Wi-Fi) Internet access for guests. In some cases it's free.

In other cases, it costs two arms and two legs, so check with your hotel before booking: the cost of Internet access can add 25% or more to the price of your stay.

The speed of Internet service also runs all over the map, and can be affected by the time of day you log on, the amount of

local Internet traffic, or, seemingly, whether or not it's raining.

There are many wireless hotspots around the island, but most of them are pricey (say, US\$2 to US\$4 an hour).

I keep promising to update my old "warchalk" listing of free hotspots on the island (see also page 30 in this issue), but haven't had the time.

Ji-Wire (www.jiwire.com/browse-hotspot-cafe-thailand-th-phuket-3599.htm) also lists Happy Days café on Chao Fa Rd near Chalong; Basecamp café in the Paradise Hotel complex in Patong and Starbucks in Patong and Central Festival.

Many – but not all – Internet cafés will allow you to plug your computer into their Internet connection, for a fee. There are hundreds of Internet cafés in Phuket, many are open 24 hours.

I will continue gathering information about free Wi-Fi hotspots on the island, and promise (some day!) to update my warchalk list.

If any readers know of a free hotspot, please shoot me mail to woody@khunwoody.com

Issues & ANSWERS

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

Just one more little wafer

It was just a lazy Wednesday. I'd finished work for the day and decided it was about time I took a stroll around the wide thoroughfares and bustling sois of vibrant, cosmopolitan Pattaya to see what artistic and cultural delights were being offered.

There are those, mostly living in Bangkok, who would snicker and mumble something like, "bet that took all of five minutes."

In fact, it took almost eight.

When I'd finished checking out the copy-artists galleries and the tailors' shops I went and had a refreshing ale at the Cat With No Knickers Bar in the French quarter of Walking Street.

I left there and sauntered casually past the Dog With Large Bollocks Bar, the Constipated Turk Bar, the Erotic Elephant And Mad For It Mouse Bar, and a few other centers of cultural activity.

I was starting to feel hungry so I stopped at the first place that looked appealing: Gonzo's Coffee Shop. There were a few foreigners sitting outside chatting and reading newspapers, so I sat down and decided to order some food.

The menu was longer than a Tom Clancy novel. The pretty pictures were so

enticing I ordered scrambled eggs with bacon and a plate of fries.

Full and happy, I wandered down the street and came across a tiny bakery called Buns and Huns. The German flag hanging outside didn't deter me, nor did the clearly faux-Pickelhaube helmet being used to hold receipts and the like, although the framed portrait of Hermann Goering was a little disconcerting.

The cake counter had more tarts than a busy go-go bar on Saturday night, so I ordered a strawberry version and demolished it in seconds. Talking of seconds, I then ordered a chocolate mousse cake and polished it off in a few minutes.

And then, of course, I couldn't bring myself to leave without buying a take-away strawberry cheesecake.

Now fully sated, I ambled out into the bright sunlight and had wandered about 100 meters or so when I began to hear music coming from the Pickled Parrot Wine Bar And Eatery.



**FROM THE
STREETS
OF
PATTAYA**
By Duncan Stearn

I dropped in for a quick look and, feeling peckish, ordered a plate of raw prawns. They were delicious, especially washed down with a carafe of the house red.

Off I stumbled into the mean sois and noticed the fairly new Cream Your Jeans Naturally shop. Well, it's hard to miss; the shopfront looks like the result of an accident between a multi-colored tour bus and revelers from the Rio Carnivale.

At any rate, the ice cream in this place is to die for. I just had to have a combination coconut-and-papaya double cone topped with cherry sauce and, still feeling the urge for something cold and sweet, I snaffled a chocolate-chip-and-avocado smothered in Worcestershire sauce (don't knock it until you've tried it); although I could only manage a single cone.

Some readers may think me a glutton. I have to tell you, maintaining myself in the peak of physical condition is very difficult in this climate, surrounded by so much culinary and liquid temptation.

I may be no more than 168 centimeters tall (that's 5'6" in real measurement), but my 145 kilogram frame (that's around 300 pounds, give or take a few Big Macs) has taken many years of careful nurturing to reach this level. Not for nothing am I referred to around town as "that well-known danger to shipping".

I was walking about as fast as a snail with piles but couldn't help but pop in to Cum-A-Lot, a real trendy pub/restaurant. The crowd there is a bit gay, but the snacks are a real attraction.

I sipped on a Long Island ice tea while demolishing a plate of spare ribs and the savory salmon mousse.

This was my big mistake; I think the mousse reacted faster than a chicken vindaloo on the average senior citizen.

My sphincter began to pucker and my cheeks started to contract, and so I knew it was time I either went home or found a suitable place with bathroom facilities.

As it was, I managed to keep myself contained until I reached the comfort of my own bidet. I won't go into detail about what happened next as I would hate to be held responsible for an overloading of Pattaya's fragile sewer system.

The dung beetle – more than a mouthful

By Peter Janssen

Ancient Egyptians revered the dung beetle, believing a divine scarab rotated the world like a giant dung ball, but in rural Thailand – most notably by our northeastern cousins in Isarn – the insect has traditionally been valued for its more mundane uses. It's a popular delicacy..

So popular is it that farmers in the past were known to stake claims to buffalo droppings as their private property to protect the valuable beetles burrowing away inside, making dung balls and, ultimately, baby dung beetles.

Dung beetles are best eaten as pupae, their inactive state when they have stopped being

larvae munching on the inside of their dung balls, or as adults, after they have been purged in water for a few hours.

With the advent of mass tourism in Thailand, dead dung beetles have become a popular souvenir item, sold to foreigners for as much as 400 baht each.

Unfortunately, this excellent source of protein – 100 grams of dung beetle has 17.2 grams of protein – and extra income for Thai farmers is swiftly disappearing, according to Leela Kayikantanta, a senior scientist and expert on "commercial insects" at the Forestry Department.

For the past three years, K. Leela, who studied termites at the Holzbiologie Institute in Hamburg and bees at the Forest Entomologie Institute in Vienna, has been devoting her time to understanding the life cycle of the *Heliocopris bucephalus Fabricius*, Thailand's biggest dung beetle.



Just rolling along: dung beetles are very easy to breed. Photo: dpa

"There are 237 dung-beetle species in Thailand, but this one is the biggest and most beautiful and most popular as a souvenir,"

K. Leela says. The *kudjee yak*, or giant beetle, can grow up to 57 millimeters and has a life cycle of nearly 20 months.

Although no scientific studies have been conducted on the declining numbers of the giant dung beetle, upcountry villagers say they are getting harder to find in the wild.

To reverse the trend, or at

least stop farmers from hunting the giant dung beetle to extinction in the wild, K. Leela has studied the insect's breeding and reproduction cycle and written an instruction manual on how to successfully raise dung beetles in captivity as a sideline for farmers or rural entrepreneurs.

"Actually, they are very easy to raise," she said, "Anyone who owns a buffalo can easily raise dung beetles."

Animal-protection groups in Thailand are supportive of dung-beetle farming and other insect-raising efforts as a means of protecting bugs in the wild while satisfying local tastebuds.

"Cricket raising has become a real big cottage industry in Thailand," said William Schaedla, an entomologist who works at Wild-Aid, a wildlife-protection group devoted to cracking down on illegal traffic in protected species.

Fried crickets, like dung beetles, are deemed a delicacy in rural communities, as are bamboo caterpillars, red ants and a host of other insects.

Schaedla noted that for dung beetles, there is also a growing Internet market in the souvenir and pet trade. Dead dung beetles from Thailand sell for about US\$25 on eBay, and there is a huge market for pet beetles in Japan. The trade in insects is remarkably unregulated as long as they aren't classified as pests.

As to his own culinary preferences for insects, Schaedla admitted, "They don't taste bad if they're prepared well, but I draw the line on dung beetles, or anything else that lives in shit."

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Kick the bucket. Buy the farm. Bite the dust. Pop your clogs. Push daisies. Meet your maker ... Sorry to start off on such a morbid note, but there's no escaping it: sooner or later we are all worm fodder.

Given the relative simplicity of death, it is surprising how many catch-phrases there are to describe it. Think about it: "To die" is just the opposite of "to be born", yet we don't need 50 phrases to describe the process of coming into the world.

If we did we'd have to put up with people saying things like: "I opened my account back in 1963" or "I fought my way out back in the '40s". Isn't the simplest way the best?

Of course it is – when we are on a pleasant topic. But death is something we go out of our way to avoid, so we start inventing all these euphemisms. And with such a selection, the ones we choose to employ say a lot about us, too: who we are, where we live, how we think.

A group of Trekkies might refer to their recently-deceased friend Poindexter as having "beamed up". Members of a theater troupe would be more likely say a fellow thespian "shuffled off this mortal coil". The Marlboro man might say his partner "hanged up his tack".

HEAVEN

So what do we expats in Phuket, circa 2006, use to describe the moment when a mate goes belly up – or even to refer to our own impending doom? We need a phrase that is uniquely expat Phuket, especially as many of us GOMs ("Grumpy Old Men" for you newcomers) are already "over the hill" and it won't be long before we go to that happy hunting ground in the sky.

You know the place I am talking about, too. A place like Soi Bangla, but where the bar pays you for your time when you take out one of the hostesses for a midnight snack. Wouldn't that be just fine?

Perhaps our catch-phrases for death should have something to do with Immigration. After all, they control our movements so well in this world, why should we not expect them to be there in the next? Who knows, perhaps it is not a lifetime without sin we need to get into heaven – just a valid visa.

The thought that the afterlife may bear some resemblance to the current one is not without historical precedent. The ancient Egyptians used to entomb themselves with everything they thought they would need in the afterlife – from coins and jars of honey down to their favorite slave-girls, or boys.

Even back in the days of Cleopatra (the Egyptian Queen, not the massage parlor), honey and money were known to be keys to happiness – not just in this life, but also in the next.

So rather than expecting to meet St Peter at the Pearly Gates, wouldn't it make just as

From cradle to grave – and beyond



ROSY OUTLOOK: This advertisement entertains passengers as they wait for their luggage in the arrivals area of Phuket International Airport.

much sense to expect the keeper of the Gateway to Paradise to be a winged character, adorned in brown polyester and chest salad, using his infinite wisdom and discretion to decide just who should be granted right of passage into that Nirvana that awaits those with sufficient bank savings?

The gatekeeper would also of course decide who, failing to pass muster because they happened to show up wearing shorts and sandals, must descend into that bottomless pit of mega-longstay misery.

Getting back to the topic of needing a catch-phrase for death, perhaps we could say: "He's made his last visa run" or "His permit to stay was permanently revoked" or even, "He overstayed his visit and was assessed the maximum fine".

Anyway, for those of you still under the delusion your Immigration ordeals will be over once you kicked the oxygen habit: guess again. You might be gone, but your Immigration paper trail will live on. If you don't believe it, just check out this entry* reproduced in all its unedited glory, in the Immigration Bureau's website, posted by someone identifying himself as Administrator/Hero Member:

In case the alien is dead

If the alien, who obtain temporary enter permit in the Kingdom, is dead in the Kingdom, the person who concerned with such alien for example relatives, or officer who concerned with his/her death shall notify to the immigration officer for more procedures.

1. Required Documents
- 1.1 Death Certificate

1.2 The alien's passport or document used in lieu of passport

1.3 Letter from the concerned officer or interrogation report of the reporter.

2. Procedures

2.1 The officer must check detail in the death certificate and passport to confirm there is the same person.

2.2 In case the officer who concerned with the alien's death

is unable to find the alien's passport, the interrogation of the reporter shall be made.

It goes on and on and on – as these things

tend to – but I think you get the point.

Rest in peace!

Inflation: "We have been informed today that the new visa fee for Myanmar [Burma] opposite Ranong will increase on September 1, from US\$5 to US\$10." (Received by email. Thanks to Executive Visa Run for letting us know.)

Bangla round-up: A pair of true blue Aussie blokes have taken over the Octopus at the end of Soi SeaDragon. Chicago Music Café has opened, under the same ownership as the nearby Living Room, between Tiger and Hard Rock.

There is apparently a limit to everything. With so few visitors making their way down to the end of Soi Viking, most owners of the beer bars down there are reportedly desperate to get out.

The former site of TJ's Monkey Bar, at one time an a-go-go establishment, was reportedly going to re-open as a full-on girly bar with the name Erotica

and "professional dancers" down from Bangkok.

Now there are rumors that a different theme is under consideration, although some form of live entertainment is still anticipated.

Rico's Restaurant has taken over a 27-room hotel at the end of Soi Viking, former site of the Viking Restaurant, after which the soi was named. Maybe we will have to start calling it Soi Rico in the future...

Now is the time to buy if you have aspirations to be a Patong bar owner: Still up for sale, last I heard: Amigos (Soi SeaDragon, call Bez at Tel: 07-8838721); Sporting Chance Bar (Soi Dongtan, call Brian at Tel: 06-8528256); and Katoys R Us (next to Tiger).

Large William, for years DJ

at Rock Hard, told Stool Pigeon he is negotiating a deal to get involved with running the restaurant at the Hilltop, on 50 Pi Rd. He hopes to kick it off with his 59th birthday party on October 9.

Those who don't want to wait can get food made to his Italian-American, Tex-Mex and other recipes at freezer section of The Deli. All done by his girlfriend Flower, the fare is described by Bill as "P*s-Head Hunger Chow when you're too lazy or drunk to cook, and take-away takes too long or it's too late!"

ALFRESCO

Closed since Songkran, the elegant Home Bar lounge on Sea Viking has now re-opened as an upmarket café on the ground floor, with the lounge upstairs expanded with more seating.

Owner Peter told Stool Pigeon the huge black doors have been replaced by an up-market alfresco café, spilling out onto the soi and offering a full menu.

• In Phuket City, meanwhile, Michael's Bar & Restaurant on Takuapa Rd looks bigger and better after a 1.3-million-baht upgrade that had the bar closed for over a month.

Rotarian and man about town Arnaud Verstraete has teamed up with English owner Michael Laurence, and the dynamic duo's new-look pub will have "pub grub" such as curries and pies out of the new kitchen in about a week.

They also have free ADSL and Wi-Fi for laptops, two 42" plasma TVs showing sports from UBC and much more. Low-season happy hour, through October, has all beers at just 55 baht between 4 pm and 8 pm.

* www.immigration.go.th/forum/index.php?topic=129.msg131#msg131

Comments, queries, criticism to: stoolpigeon@phuketgazette.net

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KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER Q&A

Q I often copy text from a website. I paste the text into a Notepad file to get rid of most of the unwanted formatting. I then copy the text from the Notepad file and paste it into a Word document.

Occasionally, however, I find that the text in the Word document retains the "soft returns" (the returns entered by pressing Shift + Enter) instead of the normal "hard" returns (entered by pressing Enter only), which are what I want. I often end up having to replace the soft returns with hard returns, manually, line by tedious line.

As I'm a fairly ordinary user, I'm wondering if there is an easy way to replace soft returns with hard returns, say by using a formatting function or some other fairly easy, non-geek way?

John Crawford
UK

A To replace soft returns with hard returns in Microsoft Word, try this:

Open the file in Word.

Click **Edit | Replace**.

In the "Find What" box key in: ^11

In the "Replace with" box type: ^13

Click **"Replace All"**.

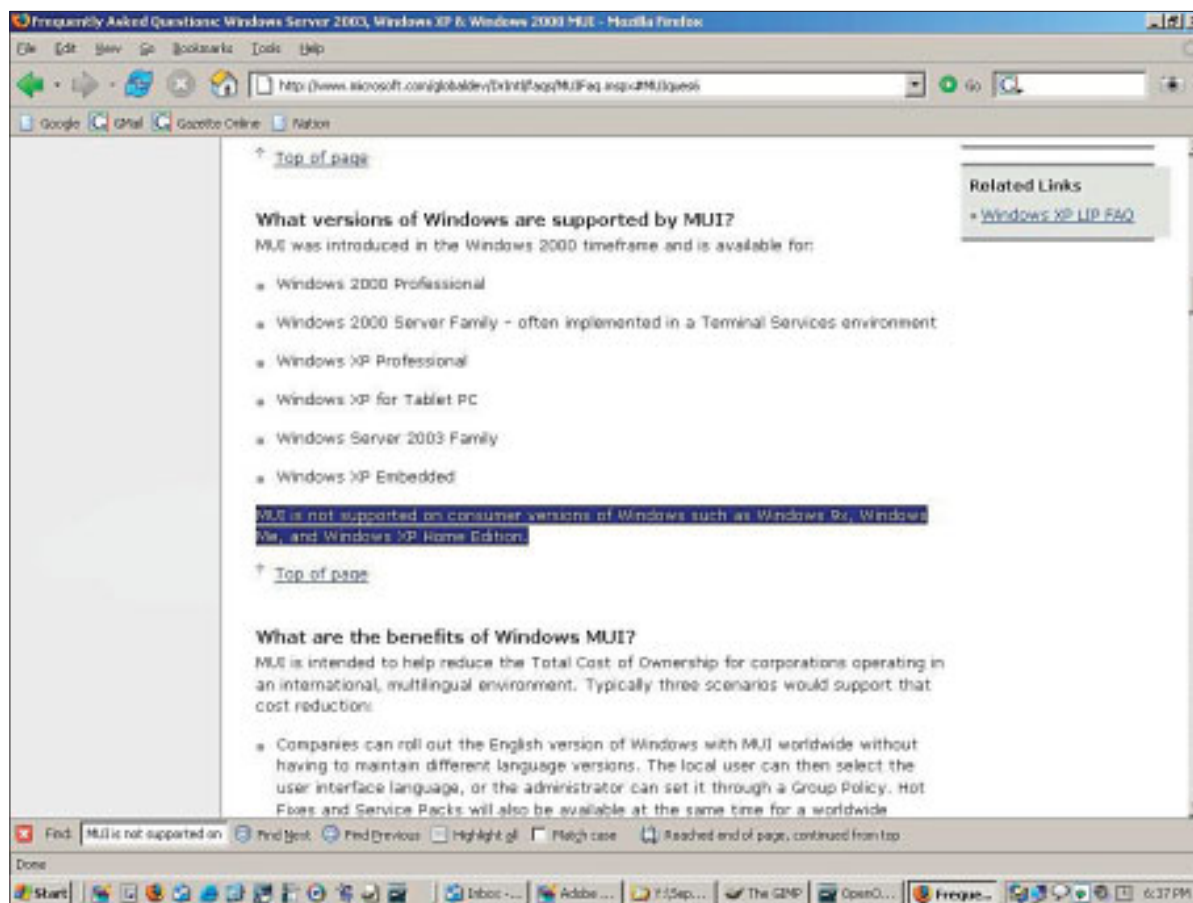
I know that's inscrutable geek stuff, but you're replacing character number 11 – which is usually the soft return, depending on the font used – with character number 13, which is always a hard return regardless of the font used.

The caret (^) character tells Word that you're using character numbers instead of real characters.

Q I would like to set my computer up not only so that a user can type in Thai, but ideally so that all the Windows instructions and MS Word menus are in Thai, too.

I work at a Thai school and all the menu tabs at the top of MS Word are in Thai. Maybe this is something to do with which language version of Windows I am using?

I know I am asking this for



NO GO: Microsoft makes it clear that Multilingual User Interfaces, or MUIs, are not available to retail users of Windows.

Getting rid of those pesky soft returns

my own benefit, but I think that many other people who read the *Gazette* will benefit, too. Most of the long-term expats living on Phuket who I know of have a Thai partner, who I think would find this useful.

Mark Goodman
Phuket City

A There's a *huge* interest among *Gazette* readers. You can set up your computer with two user accounts: one that allows typing in English only, and another that allows typing in Thai.

As an aside, all versions of Windows XP run on a base version that is in English. So no matter which language you want to use to type, you will always be able to set Windows so that you can type in English.

First, set up a new account for the Thai-speaking person, if you haven't already:

Click **Start | Control Panel**

| User Accounts | Create a New Account.

Follow the Wizard to set up an Administrator account for the Thai-speaking user.

Log off of your account (**Start | Log Off | Log Off**). Click on the Thai-speaking user's account name.

Here's how to add Thai-language support to this account:

Click **Start | Control Panel | Date, Time Language and Regional Options | Add Other Languages**.

Check the box marked "Install files for complex script and right-to-left languages (including Thai)", then click OK. You'll be instructed to insert the Windows XP CD ROM.

Continue with the installation instructions, and when Win-

dows is done, you must re-boot your computer.

After you've re-booted, choose the Thai-speaking person's account.

Click **Start | Control Panel | Date, Time Language and Regional Options | Add Other Languages**. (You've been here before, eh?)

Click **Details**. Click **Add**.

In the dialog box, choose Thai as the input language, and choose Thai Kedmanee as the keyboard layout. Click OK.

From that point on, you should be able to switch from inputting English to Thai and back by clicking on the "EN" or "TH" box in the system tray (bottom right, near the clock).

Note that this changes only the keyboard mapping (which

character is displayed after a key is pressed) and the language being typed. It does not show menus or help, or anything else in Thai.

To have menus, help files and the like displayed in Thai requires a plug-in called a Multilingual User Interface (MUI) Pack.

But, according to Microsoft's Knowledge Base, "MUI is not supported on consumer versions of Windows such as Windows 9x, Windows Me, and Windows XP Home Edition."

In addition, Microsoft says, "The Windows XP/2000 MUI is sold only through Volume Licensing programs such as the Microsoft Open License Program (MOLP / Open), Select, and Enterprise agreement (or with a new computer as an OEM version at customer request). It is not available through retail channels."

This means your computer either has it or it doesn't – and you cannot buy a copy to install – at least, not legally.

The good news is that MUIs are supported on Windows XP Professional and Windows 2000 Professional. For more information about the Windows XP MUI, see: <http://www.microsoft.com/globaldev/DrIntl/faqs/MUIfaq.mspx#MUIques1>

There are even free updates for the Windows XP Service Pack 2 MUI posted at: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/841625/>

More good news is that MUIs for Microsoft Office, of which MS Word is a part, are available free.

For more information about MUIs for Office 2003, see: <http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=843187>

To download Office 2003 MUIs see: <http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?familyid=F682AB1C-5BE8-476D-B439-196412223CDA&displaylang=en>

And for the MUI that includes Thai language (11.9MB), click on "Download" beside the entry "MUI2003SP1CD6-kb843187-client-enu.exe" at the bottom of the web page.

Contact woody by email to woody@khunwoody.com

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Phuket Animation Festival 2006

PHUKET CITY: The Phuket office of the Software Industry Promotion Agency is staging its Phuket Animation Festival 2006 on the third floor of Central Festival Phuket until September 9.

The show, which is open from 11 am to 6 pm, includes displays of computer-generated (CG) animation, an IT job-search service and speeches by experts in CG animation, including Komin Kemkamnerd, Director of the popular Thai animated movie *Khan Kluyay*.

On display are the top three entries in the My Portfolio computer animation contests of the past two years, with the aim of inspiring budding animators to join

this year's national contest, with a top prize of a Notebook laptop computer worth 50,000 baht.

This year entrants are asked to submit an animated movie in MPG2 format exactly one minute long, including five seconds for credits, with the theme "Thai Fantasy".

Prizes for winners of the Southern round are 20,000 baht for first place, 15,000 baht for second, 10,000 baht for third, and 5,000 baht for fourth.

Other contests include a character design contest in the theme "Heroes of Asia", for which entrants must create a 2D computer-generated graphic of an original Asian hero character.

ARE YOU HOT?

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• **Sandwich Shoppe, off Rat-U-Thit 200 Phi Rd, Patong.** (Near Andaman Beach Suites and Patong Language School.) ADSL speed. 24/7.

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ON THE MOVE

Pattama Daraboth Yoshimura from Bangkok has been appointed Director of Rooms of Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club. Ms Yoshimura is a travel industry management graduate of Mahidol University International College. Before joining Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club, she was Front Office Manager at the Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit in Bangkok. She is also a certified Tourism Authority of Thailand professional guide, and was named Trainer of the Year by Sheraton in 2003.



Frenchman **Olivier Belliard**, 32, has been appointed Executive Chef at Le Meridien Khao Lak Beach & Spa Resort. While training as a chef, Mr Olivier worked at the Michelin-star Auberge du Dauphin, in Le Breuil, France, then at the Pullman Hotel, in Cobourg, also in France.

He started the expatriate life in Lebanon in 2002, then went to Kuwait to work for a member of the Kuwaiti royal family. Last year, he was appointed Executive Chef in Charge of Food and Beverage at the new Sheraton Pattaya Resort.



The Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket has appointed Malaysian **Lillian Tan**, 33, as Director of Events. A hotel management graduate of the Singapore International Hotel and Tourism College in Kuala Lumpur, she worked from 1994 to 2003 at the Shangri-La in Kuala Lumpur as secretary to the Director of Catering, then as Events Executive, Events Manager and Senior Convention Manager. From 2003 to 2006 she was Assistant Director of Catering and Conventions at The Westin in Kuala Lumpur.



By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: Bangkok-based Destination Properties is investing US\$35 million (1.3 billion baht) to buy and refurbish the abandoned Kamala Bay Terrace Resort. The 200-room boutique resort is expected to reopen in the middle of next year, rebranded as the ALiLa Phuket.

Kamala Bay Terrace, at the beginning of what has come to be known as "Millionaires' Mile" was hit by the 2004 tsunami. The Indonesian owner – who had also suffered losses in his home country – had no choice but to put it on the market.

RIGHT TIME

Gary Murray, CEO of Destination Properties, explained the company's reasons for investing in Kamala. "Phuket has always been a very strong destination for hotel and resort investments.

"Following the success of the Hilton Hua Hin Resort & Spa, Destination Properties have long had Phuket in mind for our investment plans.

"The acquisition of the Kamala Bay Terrace Resort came at the right time; the Phuket market is staged to make a strong comeback this year and we expect this to continue into 2007 and onward.

Kamala resort to aim at 'romance' market



The Kamala Bay Terrace Resort is set to be reborn as the ALiLa Phuket.

"The property is unique – at the heart of the island's famed 'Millionaires' Mile' [with] great sunsets, spectacular views, and beachfront – a superb combination.

"It definitely matches the quality of resort properties that we are investing in right now in Thailand."

For ALiLa, the project represents another chance of getting

into the Phuket market. The Singapore-based company runs several successful high-end hotels and resorts in Bali and Jakarta, but its first venture in Phuket was, like the Kamala Bay Terrace, affected by the tsunami.

This was the ALiLa Villas Phuket project, later sold to Hong Kong businessman Alan Zeman for his Andara project. The company also had a brief association with the Kirimaya Golf Resort & Spa in Khao Yai.

"We are excited to have ALiLa Hotels and Resorts manage this property on our behalf," said Mr Murray. "They have an outstanding reputation in the lifestyle sector and the source markets of our future customers. We talked to many hotel operators and decided on ALiLa as they have the track record of delivering a great product offering in the boutique segment."

Once the resort's makeover is complete, it will have 208 rooms ranging in size from 42 to 70 square meters, an 80-meter sand-based infinity-edge pool, a beachside restaurant, a lounge

and bar, and a "spectacular sky-high" restaurant at the highest point of the hillside site.

Rooms and suites will feature "minimalist Zen design" with open double-bathtubs for two and open showers. Many suites will also have private infinity plunge pools.

Mr Murray added, "We've known Mark Edleson, President and CEO of ALiLa, for a long time, both as [head of] ALiLa and with Mandara Spa – Mark was one of the founders of the very successful Mandara Spas in Asia.

"For us, ALiLa brings a real special touch to the project – ALiLa Phuket will become the benchmark for romantic getaways for couples and honeymooners seeking a special exotic experience.

Doris Goh, ALiLa's Corporate Director, Sales & Marketing, said, "Phuket is a magnet for the young, restless, rich and famous, and is already drawing visitors from an established international market.

"We see more and more lifestyle-oriented guests coming to Phuket. We see this as our primary target. We also see a big honeymoon market in Phuket – our resort is being designed for romance."

AFFLUENT

She said she foresees guests coming not only from ALiLa's existing client base in Australia, the UK, Germany, France, Netherlands and the US, but also from among affluent locals and from South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong.

Mr Edleson remarked, "We envision ALiLa Phuket as being one of a kind in Phuket."

Destination Properties owns the Hilton Hua Hin Resort & Spa, the Sriracha Golf Club and Shambala Villas in Samui.

It is also planning to launch Destination Air, a seaplane shuttle service based at Phuket International Airport, flying passengers to Krabi, the Phi Phi Islands, Koh Lanta and other destinations in the area.

In addition to its new venture in Phuket, ALiLa is planning expansion to the Maldives, China, Vietnam and the Middle East.

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Markets fail to find new directions

Investors in financial markets will notice that most markets are failing to find new directions. There are many reasons for this, but one of the most important is interest rates.

In the US, August saw the first pause in a two-and-a-half-year period in which the US Federal Reserve raised rates 17 times in increments of 0.25 points, moving the Federal Funds rate from 1% to the current 5.25%.

The US Federal Reserve is acutely aware that the US economy is moving into a period of slower growth, with overall inflationary pressures still modest. Many Americans, citing rapid rises in college fees, gasoline and so on, are correct in saying that their "personal inflation" is much higher than official statistics.

Britain presents a slightly different picture; interest rates had been cut from 4.75% to 4.5%, but recently the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee returned the rates to 4.75%.

In both economies, the central banks are trying to engineer a perfect "soft landing", whereby inflation remains moderate but economies are still able to achieve growth.

Rising oil and energy costs have made this more difficult to achieve because they have increased inflationary pressures, while simultaneously reducing the amount of discretionary spending available to the consumer.

In both countries, consumers are holding record levels of debt. This has been spurred, to a great extent, by rising home prices, which have led to a feeling of affluence.

Residents of many states in the US are starting to see what is so far a modest reduction in sales, of both existing and new houses.

Optimists are saying that new home sales are merely reverting to the long-term average of 1.7 million new homes a year.

MONEY TALKS



By Richard Watson

Pessimists, however, predict a crash.

In Britain, the situation is different. One reason is immigration. The expansion of the European Union over the past decade to include countries such as Po-

Since Poland joined the European Union, Poles have been flocking to what they see as the blue skies and definite opportunities of Britain.
— Photo EPA/Alan Crowhurst

He had sold several properties to Polish professionals, he said, and they cared little about the purchase price. They simply wanted a place in the UK property market.

In 2007, the EU will see the entry of two new member countries, Romania and Bulgaria, and no doubt the labor migration will continue, although politicians in the UK are trying to change EU regulations to slow the influx.

There is another group that has also increased purchases of UK property, mainly in London and the surrounding areas: buyers from the Middle East oil countries.

These people are beneficiaries of rising oil prices and the resulting economic boom enjoyed by some Middle East countries. These buyers are mostly targeting high-end properties for holiday homes or investment.

On a recent visit to Penang, Malaysia, I noted that there is also a significant demand for Malaysian property coming from the Middle East. Again, price is of little importance to this group.

The Malaysian property market is also attractive to another entirely separate group: the wealthy of Bangladesh and Indonesia, who seek a country that offers political stability and freehold titles.

In continental Europe, Germany is starting to record increased economic growth. As a result, German government finances have improved and the German budget deficit has moved below the EU stability pact ceiling of 3% of GDP for the first time in several years.

The skeptics point out that two short-term factors may be bolstering the economy at the moment: the gain from the soccer World Cup and consumer buying ahead of a projected 3-

point VAT hike – from 16% to 19% – due to be implemented in January next year.

The VAT increase was proposed simply as a way to cut the budget deficit, but perhaps it would be better to cancel it, as it will only damp down domestic demand.

Germany is still very dependent on its export sector and there are valid concerns that a slowing US economy may have an impact.

There is a strong hope that global economic growth will counter any modest US slowdown. Unemployment is also falling in Germany, giving a boost to the economy in terms of increased domestic consumption.

France is also enjoying increased economic growth. In fact, France recently reported that GDP figures for the second quarter of 2006 show the most rapid increase in 20 years. Again, unemployment is falling.

This whole scenario is giving financial markets a lot of information to digest. In any event, those markets are just starting to emerge from the summer doldrums.

Risks abound, but so do opportunities. Currency markets are wary about the effects of a US dollar that may weaken. Currencies are different from stock markets in that the latter can rise or fall in tandem. Currencies can

move only in relation to each other.

The current Euro Zone nightmare scenario involves the Euro rising substantially against the US dollar. This would hurt the Euro Zone, as most other currencies would track the US dollar, leaving Euro Zone exports too expensive to compete globally.

In Thailand, the Central Bank is trying to stop the baht from rising significantly against the dollar and is trying to keep the baht in a general trading range with its neighbors.

The Thai Stock Exchange is currently at very cheap valuations: an overall price-earnings ratio of 8.4, which is at bargain basement levels. Countering this good news, however, are other factors including corporate profits and economic and political uncertainty. In this market, the investor needs a good crystal ball.

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

In both the US and Britain, the central banks are trying to engineer a perfect 'soft landing'

land has led to a substantial number of people being able to relocate easily within the EU.

The Polish government is worried about this situation because it estimates Poland is suffering "brain drain", losing around 200,000 of its "brightest and best" people every year. The target destination for most of these is the UK.

One UK property developer I spoke to was very enthusiastic about this "new market".

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PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

Didi's stretch lead with victory over Amigos

PATONG: It's starting to look doubtful that any team will catch defending champs Didi's, as the boys from Soi Sansabai keep piling on the points and stretching out their lead.

They are now a full six points ahead of the pack after week 13 of the 22-week league. On the road at Amigos, they won 8-1, taking the beer leg for good measure.

If any team can catch Didi's, it may be Coyote, who are on a hot streak and are now tied with Piccadilly for second on 26 points. Coyote enjoy one game in hand, however, after their August 29 match with Dog's Bollocks was postponed.

In a make-up match against Queen Mary, Coyote won 8-1, taking all three points.

Another hot side are Jungle Juice, who won all three points on the road against Piccadilly; and Shakers, with a 3-point win on the road at OffShore.

Team captains are request-

ed to send match results to league secretary Steen as soon as possible after matches. Send any additional match information (including digital pix of the final scoreboard) to: darts@phuketgazette.net

August 29 results: Queen Mary 5 TaiLife* 4; Amigos 1 Didi's* 8; Valhalla 7 Footrot Flats* 2; Piccadilly 4 Jungle Juice* 5; Offshore 3 Shakers* 6 (* winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Didi's (32 pts.); 2.= Coyote Bar*, Piccadilly (26); 4. Offshore (23); 5. Amigos (21) 6.= Dog's Bollocks*, Valhalla (18) 8.= Shakers, Queen Mary (17); 10. Jungle Juice (15); 11. Footrot Flats (10); 12. Tailife (8) (* = one game in hand).

September 12 fixtures: Queen Mary v Didi's; Dog's Bollocks v TaiLife; Amigos v Footrot Flats; Valhalla v Shakers; Piccadilly v Coyote Bar; Offshore v Jungle Juice (home team first).

Canadian clobbers Tuktuk into TKO

PATONG: Canadian Rob MacGregor from the Rawai Muay Thai camp overpowered his Thai opponent, Tuktuk, to win by a technical knockout (TKO) in the second round of the 154-pound weight category at Patong Thai Boxing Stadium on August 31.

Neither boxer was pulling any punches; both men waded straight into a furious exchange of blows that quickly broke down into a grapple at the beginning of the first round.

As soon as the fight was

restarted, MacGregor got in two well-placed right jabs to his opponent's head and then followed this up with a close-quarter attack, driving Tuktuk around the ring.

In the second round, Tuktuk came out looking revitalized, trying to make up for a disappointing first round. A roundhouse kick failed to connect with MacGregor's head, but the punches that followed all found their target.

Tuktuk was unable to keep this up, however, and was soon back on the ropes. He was knocked down three times in quick succession, the third time following a barrage of punches and knees to the head.

After the restart, MacGregor launched another knee to the head of his opponent, making his size advantage pay. He then barged the woozy-looking Tuktuk into a corner and pounded him until the seemingly-inevitable knockout.

After the fight MacGregor told the *Gazette* that he had trained in Japan for a year before honing his skills for a month at Rawai Muay Thai.

When asked why he had chosen to come to train in Phuket he replied, "Because they're the best fighters in the world." He added that he would be returning to Japan three days after the fight.

The 143-pound encounter



between Saifa from Phang Nga and local boy Dindaeng, from Kathu Gym, was billed as the main fight for the night.

It proved, however, to be a disappointment. Just as the fighters appeared to have warmed up, the fight was canceled in the second round after Saifa caught a glancing blow that opened up a cut above his eye and he was forced to sacrifice the bout.

In the 140-pound fight, Yaiyo, another Phuket fighter, this time for Pakphlee Gym, knocked out Praedam, from Phang Nga, in the second round with a lightning-fast uppercut that seemed to come out of nowhere.

In the 115-pound match, Suetai from Sor Phanthip camp in Phuket defeated Petmanee from Krabi with a fourth-round TKO, while in the 110-pound bout Petanan from Phang Nga defeated Prakrypet from Nakhon Sri Thammarat following a decision by the judges.

— Dominic Earnshaw

Cricketers gear up for new season

PHUKET: Phuket Cricket Union (PCU) umpires, captains and players in the Island Furniture Cricket League are invited to a pre-season meeting at the Surin Bay Inn at 11:30 am on September 10.

Expected to be on the agenda are the format of the game, the points system, team fees and player recruitment.

As a lead-up to the Phuket cricket season, the PCU committee is also looking for eight players to represent Phuket in the Hong Kong Sixes Tournament from November 17 to 19.

The PCU announced in a press release that it will pay the

US\$800 team fee, but airfares and accommodation costs will be the responsibility of the players.

The eight will face up to a number of big-name players who have confirmed that they will attend, including former Test cricketers John Emburey and Derek "Deadly" Underwood, Sir Richard Hadlee, Heath Streak and Rizwan Sattar.

For more information about the Hong Kong Sixes or to confirm attendance at the PCU pre-season meeting, contact Mark "Scarfy" Whetton at Tel: 086-120 8346 or Email: scarfy@loxinfo.co.th.

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Rob MacGregor walks away after flattening Tuktuk.

— Photo by Dan Miles

Kata Group plans 900km Bangkok-Phuket relay

PHUKET CITY: To celebrate HM the King's birthday, 45 runners from the Kata Group of hotels and resorts will take turns running two kilometers at a time over five days and four nights, eventually covering 900 km non-stop from Bangkok to Phuket.

The run will begin at Supachalasai Stadium in Bangkok at 9 am September 10 and will conclude in the Karon Stadium, Phuket, at 3:30 pm September 14, it was announced at a press conference September 1 by Phuket Vice-Governor Pongsak Playmek; Assistant Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Southern Office, Runjuan Tongrut; and Chairman of Kata Group Phuket, Pamuke Achariyachai.

The runners will be divided into two groups on separate buses. After the first runner completes 2km, a runner from the second bus will take over, and the two buses will alternate throughout the route.

Golf tourney to mark Rajabhat birthday

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Rajabhat University will hold a golf tournament on September 17 at Phuket Country Club to celebrate the institution's 35th anniversary.

The competition will be divided into individual and a four-person-team events. Entry fees are 2,500 baht for the individual

competition and 10,000 baht for teams.

Entries may be made at Phuket Country Club, Tel: 076-321038-40, Phuket Country Club Driving Range, Tel: 076-321547, or at Phuket Rajabhat University PR Office, Tel: 076-222370. The deadline is September 13.

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Mövenpick Residence completed

Construction of the 30 apartments that comprise the Mövenpick Residence, Karon Beach Phuket ended late in August, marking Mövenpick's entry into Phuket's managed-property market.

The development, situated on approximately five rai adjoining the Mövenpick Resort and Spa Karon Beach Phuket, brought together some of the big names in quality development,

with K-Tech taking on the construction, Jones Lang LaSalle acting as Project Manager and Phuket-based architects Bishop International Group creating the seaside resort's modern flair.

The project comprises five three-story buildings with two apartments per floor. Each unit, with an area of about 125 square meters, contains two bedrooms, two bathrooms, living area, kitchen and a large balcony, with the two units on the top floor of each

building dubbed penthouses, due to them offering the best views from the development.

All of the apartments have sea views, and in four of the five buildings all apartments overlook the communal swimming pool.

The Mövenpick Residence will be managed by the adjoining Mövenpick Resort, which will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the development. Residents are entitled to 60 days accommodation each year in their apartment with full access to all facilities contained in the resort, including the tennis courts, spa and restaurants.

Bill Barnett, Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks, which is responsible for the development and marketing of the Mövenpick Residence, says the Mövenpick's management of each investor's apartment affords investors a larger rental pool as it



is part of a global hotel reservation and booking distribution chain.

With the combination of an established international hotel brand managing the apartments, a beachfront location and double-digit capital appreciation in Phuket since 2004, investors can expect a 6% to 8% annual return on their investment, he says.

"Initial international re-

sponse to the Mövenpick Residence Karon Beach Phuket has been positive due to the multiple advantages a project of this scale and quality brings.

"The Phuket property market is as robust as it has ever been with many major institutional investors entering the sector and this, combined with a boom in the Phuket travel market, points to internationally-managed apartment ownership being a sound investment choice," Mr Barnett says.

"The fact that the Mövenpick Residence Karon Beach Phuket has a beachfront location – along with all of the advantages of being a component of a major luxury resort – makes this investment opportunity just that bit more enticing."

The apartments start at 13 million baht.

For more information contact Isara "Liz" Pangchan, Sales & Marketing Manager, Mövenpick Residence Karon Beach Phuket. Tel: 076-396146. Email: sales@residencekaron.com

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Home of the Week

Rawai



Contemporary by the bay

A short distance from Friendship Beach and Chalong Bay, this recently-constructed contemporary-style family home comes with swimming pool and established gardens.

The house has a saltwater swimming pool surrounded by sandstone features and an outdoor terrace. The living and dining area can be reached directly from the pool deck.

The ground floor features a bedroom with an ensuite bathroom facing the swimming pool, a separate bathroom, a Western-style kitchen and maid's quarters.

Upstairs, there are two more bedrooms with

ensuite bathrooms and the master bedroom. The balcony from the master bedroom affords views over the garden and the nearby mountains.

The house has a telephone line, three-phase power, heaters and well water. It is situated on a 450-sqm plot.

The price is 10 million baht. The land has Chanote title and freehold purchase terms are available.

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



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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Do you ever ask yourself, "What's the point of that?" I mean, you look at something and desperately attempt to figure out the purpose of its existence?

Those black and white markings that transect many roads in this corner of the globe, at random locations, are a classic case in point.

In England we call them zebra crossings, which are understood safe zones where pedestrians can cross the road in the knowledge that, in all likelihood, motorists are going to stop and allow them safe passage.

Here in Thailand, the purpose of these markings is far less clear. Perhaps they're put there so that the likely targets for less-than-forgiving drivers are all grouped together. Or perhaps white paint is a cheap way to cover surface blemishes on the roadway.

BALLET

Whatever the reason, these stripes certainly have nothing to do with a safe place to cross the road. Getting to the other side of the street in this region can involve some intricate dance steps along the way.

And that's another thing: ballet. What's the point? Really, I ask you. It's a bit of a silly art form involving lots of prancing about on tiptoes (someone should tell those ladies that they're tall enough without that nonsense) and blokes chucking women into the air for no particular reason. Yet these acts are guaranteed to evoke enthusiastic applause from people in tuxedos and furs.

These are the type of people who go home to their little houses in Surbiton (a place nearly as boring as Milton Keynes), arrange dinner parties and spend the night discussing philosophy – another pointless topic if ever there was

What do plants do, exactly?

one. Lots of boring people arguing about things that nobody actually understands with no eventual "winner" because none of them are right—or they are all right. Complete twaddle.

Back to Thailand. What's the point of those little plastic pull-tabs on those cheap, five-baht bottles of water? If you're adventurous enough to try to open, you know full well that by the time it's halfway off the pull-tab will snap and you'll end up ripping the top off with your teeth.

There are even cynics who question the whole point of plants. After all, plants just sit there and look green, and never get involved in philosophical discussions at dinner parties. Not the parties I've been to anyway.

Plants are one of things that are always there but don't seem to do a great deal for the world. Rooted as they are in the ground, a lot of people think of plants as leading sedentary, vegetative, passive lives. But there's a lot more to them than that.

First, lots of plants work closely with members of the Animal Kingdom. Flowering plants require insects, bats or birds to transfer pollen from the stamen, or male portion of the flower, to

the stigma, or female portion. Animals getting involved in plant nookie – who'd have thought?

Many species of plants have evolved closely with specific animals to get the job done. For example, many species of rain forest plants can be pollinated only by one particular species of insect, bird, or bat.

Then there's the food web – nothing to do with the Internet. Because plants are autotrophs (a way too-technical word for organisms that are able to manufacture their own food), they are the foundation of the food web.

The seeds, fruits and leaves that plants produce are eaten by many animals (including people). Insects, bats, hummingbirds and small mammals feed on nectar, a sweet liquid produced by many flowers or on the dusty pollen grains in lots of flowers.

CARNIVORES

Plants are first fed upon by herbivores, which in turn are fed upon by carnivores. Then there are the decomposers, which act upon all levels of the food web.

The bottom line is that the bigger animals (including us) wouldn't exist if plants weren't there in the first place.

How about plants and humans then? Wheat, for example, has been cultivated as a food source for more than 9,000 years. It's gone through a few changes in the process of its domestication, right through to the relatively modern modifications which produce the large-grained wheat used to make most pasta, as well as high-gluten bread wheat.



It's all about nookie:
A lily displays
its stamens and stigma



Flowers can even be
passionate: the passion flower.

From the prehistoric beginnings of agriculture until recent times, only a few members of the total plant species have been taken from the wild and refined to become primary sources of food, fiber, shelter or used in the manufacture of medicines.

This process of plant cultivation and breeding probably began by accident, possibly when the seeds of wild fruits and vegetables, inadvertently discarded near human habitation, sprouted and were crudely cultivated.

It doesn't sound that different from the way things grow in my garden, to be honest.

Plants can even control mosquitoes, believe it or not. Well not directly, other than a few rare carnivorous plants, but they still have the desired effect. If you have a pond in your garden, you'll probably find that it's a magnet for mozzies.

So what do you do? Put a few fish in there to eat the larvae before they get a chance to ap-

pear. Apart from a few larvae every now and then, what do the fish eat? Water lettuce are ideal – throw a few of those in and you'll never need to feed them again. The fish will chew on the roots ad infinitum.

The flowering parts of plants play several roles in the lives of humans, too. Wild and cultivated flowers are everywhere – in our homes, parks and roadsides. The fleshy fruits flowers produce, such as apples, strawberries and oranges, are eaten around the globe.

People even eat unopened flowers, such as those of broccoli and cauliflower.

Botanists with a lot of time on their hands to count these things estimate there are more than 240,000 species of flowering plants in the world – they are more widespread than any other group of plants.

They bloom on every continent, from the bogs and marshes of the Arctic tundra to Phuket, just about in the middle, down to the barren soils of Antarctica.

So there is a point to plants then. We wouldn't be here without them. No doubt the philosophers of this world would do their best to argue that point.

Probably the best way to deal with them would be to blindfold them and point them towards an Asian zebra crossing? Philosophize that.

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Above, Intricate carving from Sakthong.



Right, plant motifs feature large lotus in a gable end from Kaew Furniture.

FABLED GABLES

Take a look up at the roofs of temples, palaces or Thai-style homes and you'll often find elaborate woodwork under the eaves, on support beams and on top of the gables.

The woodwork, usually in teak or another hardwood, has become an art form that now adorns both the inside and outside of homes.

Kam yan, or *tao kann*, are the names used to describe the supports that hold up the long eaves on Thai-style houses, while *kan touy* is the woodwork on palaces or temples. The eave supports began as a necessity; without them, the long eaves on Thai houses would break off under their own weight.

The same artistry is applied to *kalae*, the decorative gables from northern Thailand. The origins of these gables are also rooted in practicality, as a way to keep birds off the roof.

Kaew Furniture and Antiques is the one of many shops on Bypass Rd that sells such carved wooden ornamentation. The shop employs about 15 artisans from northern Thailand.

Kaew Kavijai, the owner of the shop, said all of her products are made from teak so that they can withstand the weather.

The price of the roof decorations depends on the size and design. Unpainted carved wood

is, naturally, cheaper than the painted versions. One *kalae* measuring about a meter long costs 1,000 baht.

Sakthong House, also on Bypass Rd, about a kilometer away, also creates intricate wood carvings for both indoor and outdoor areas. Cheun Thathong, from Nong Khai, has 10 years' experience as a carpenter and works alongside craftsmen and craftswomen from Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai.

"Our roof decorations are made of teak. The top-selling pieces have Thai flowers carved on them," he said. "Both Thai and foreign customers come in to buy roof decorations for their homes."

The pieces range in price from 500 baht to 10,000 baht. Clients may also order custom-made decorations.



Angels from Kaew Furniture.

• *Kaew Furniture is on the bypass road opposite the Nissan Showroom. Open every day from 8 am to 6:30 pm. Free delivery in Phuket, Phang Nga and*

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Condominiums are located on a headland overlooking Patong's white beach, colorful sunset. Fully furnished, quiet area, just a few steps to swimming pool and short walk to shopping and nightlife, aircon, parking.
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Kata - Block 32 rooms
Built on a gentle slope overlooking Kata beach. Very convenient location in town, near supermarkets, markets, etc. Opposite hotel, needs taking over. 3 years old.
Price: 15 million baht.

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Phuket Real Estate THIS WEEK'S HOT PROPERTIES
Real Estate - Construction - Architects - Legal

Karon Beach - Two bedroom apartment. The last available luxury unit with sea views. Completion Aug 2007. Fantastic value, fully furnished. Only 9.75 Million Baht

Patong - The Best views in Patong. This one-bedroom apartment must be seen to be believed. Totally refurbished with spa on balcony and ultra-modern kitchen. Fully furnished. MOVE IN TODAY. Only 9 Million Baht

Rawai - Land. This almost-5 rai plot is located in between Rawai and Naiharn beaches. The plot has sea views to the south, and all land can be built on.
Price: 22 Million Baht

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Property Gazette

LAND FOR SALE 5 RAI



Chalong. Electricity, water, road access. Price: 2.7 million baht/rai. Tel: 087-889-6074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

HOTEL FOR SALE



Naka Island. 200m beachfront, 80 villas, total 120 rooms. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

NEW LUXURY HOUSE FOR SALE



In Srisuchat Grand View, close to SuperCheap. 280sqm. 2-story, detached house, including 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3x7m swimming pool, living room, kitchen, 3 air conditioners, tastefully decorated. Chanote title. Please contact for more information. Call K. Nut at Tel: 084-0933310.

HOUSE FOR SALE



Rawai. 150sqm, communal pool, 3 bedrooms, absolute privacy and security. 6.2 million baht. Tel: 087-889-6074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

LAND FOR SALE



Boat Lagoon, 159sqm, 8 million baht. Tel: 081-952-1950. Email: aristotravel@yahoo.com

HOUSE IN KATHU

In sought-after small development in private cul-de-sac. Nearly completed. 9 mins Patong. Located near 2 golf courses. 3-bedroom house, 3 bathrooms, living room, kitchen/diner, laundry room, large enclosed veranda/patio. Walled plot approx. 340sqm. Sale price 4.5 million baht. Principals only please. Tel: 084-8439579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

BEACHFRONT LAND

for sale. 1,125 sq wah, 30m x 130m, with Nor Sor 3 Gor. Koh Sukorn, Trang. Price: 1.6 million baht. Tel: 084-851-6845. Email: odo_jp@hotmail.com

KOKTANOD, 6.5 RAI

Next to Laguna, 2 access roads. 3.8 million baht/rai. Tel: 076-325411, 081-9793369. Email: phudtheera@phuketrealty.net

LAND OPPOSITE BCIS

10 - 20 rai, Chanote, opposite BCIS (Dulwich), road & electricity on site. From 3.2 million baht per rai. Tel: 076-325-411, 081-9793369. Email: phudtheera@phuketrealty.net

BALI-STYLE VILLA

1-story, fully-furnished Bali-style villa for sale in Kathu. Price: 6.3 million baht or nearest offer. Good location. Tel: 081-4945423, 086-279-4757.

LAGUNA 2.9 RAI

Next to Laguna, hilltop, Chanote. 4.5 million baht/rai. Tel: 076-325411, 081-979-3369. Email: phudtheera@phuketrealty.net

KATHU HOUSE

for sale. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, secure estate, lovely hill views, garden. 4.75 million baht. Tel: 076-321-138, 087-8876101.

50 RAI, SEAVIEW

Sea and hill views, Baan Manik, Nor Sor 3 Gor, 2 million baht/rai. Tel: 076-325411, 081-9793369. Email: phudtheera@phuketrealty.net

340-SQM PLOTS

5 plots of 85 sq wah in Soi Yon, Rawai, for sale. 1 million baht/plot. Tel: 089-6492947.

PATONG, 3 RAI, 12 MB

Nor Sor 3 Gor. Just off Sai Nam Yen Rd. Sea view from half of land. Already split into smaller land titles, so good for development of small homes. Can sell in smaller plots from half a rai. Tel: 085-8882022. Email: slees@slees.com For further details, please see our website at: www.slees.com

CONDO FOR SALE



Rawai sea view, 126sqm living space, common pool. 4 million baht. Tel: 087-889-6074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

LAGUNA, 1 RAI

Next to Laguna, Chanote, full infrastructure. 4.2 million baht/rai. Tel: 076-325411, 081-9793369. Email: phudtheera@phuketrealty.net

Rambutan Residence, Seaview Condominiums for Sale. An Investment in Paradise



Rambutan Residence offers 20 luxury freehold fully furnished apartments for sale. Located in Soi Playboy just off Nana Rd at Patong Beach, Rambutan Residence offers wonderful sea views from the three upper floors overlooking Patong Bay. Prices start at 2.7 million baht.

Please contact Peter at Tel: 01-8928526 For details please see our website at: www.phuket-besthomes.com



Surin Beach—Modern Seaview Apartments for sale

Within 100 metres of the beach. 80 sqm. of living space. One bedroom, living room, European-style kitchen, fully furnished, air conditioning, hot water system, home security system, internet connection, television and satellite TV. The price starts from 6.5 million baht for the first-floor apartment.

Please contact Ann 66 1 868 7676 or email: ann@mms.ais.co.th

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Properties for Sale



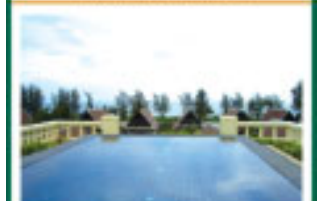
- 4 b/r villa sold fully furnished
- 363 sq.m. living space
- Sea views & pleasant breeze
- Freehold with Chanote title

Baht 33 Million



- 2 b/r villa with private pool
- 254 sq.m. built up area, 4/f
- Location in Laguna area
- Managed by Richmond group

Baht 19.5 Million



- 4 b/r deluxe penthouse
- 550 sq.m., ocean & sunset views
- Private plunge pool on roof
- Large communal pool

Baht 28.95 Million



- 87 rai + 1 rai waterfront land
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- Few min. to golf course & airport

Baht 3.5 Million/Rai

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Property Gazette

ABSOLUTE BEACHFRONT FOR SALE



2.2 rai of absolute beachfront land with Chanote title at Khok Kloy. 25 mins from Phuket International Airport.

No agents please.

Please contact. Tel: 07-8891717.

Email: wayne_phuket@yahoo.com

STUNNING LAND

in Rawai. Land with 8m-wide road, underground electricity, quiet, 2 minutes from beach. 3.8 million baht; pay half, half on finance. We can do construction or you can do it yourself. Please call for more details. Tel: 089-6525664.

CONDO STUDIO

Furnished. 32sqm, pool, corner unit, ocean view. 2.2 million baht. 5 mins to Bangla. For sale by owner. Email: guntmit@aol.com

1 RAI NEAR BEACH

Chalong, 4.5 million baht. Near marina. Great plot, quiet, but not expensive. Housing area perfect for water sports. Tel: 086-2670898.

BARGAIN HOUSE

In popular small development in Kathu. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, large living room, kitchen/dinner, laundry room, covered patio, private parking, walled garden. Nearly completed. Rural setting though close to all facilities. 4.5 million baht. Tel: 084-8439579. Fax: 076-323421. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

FOR SALE: 32M BAHT

On one plot: 5-bedroom, 5-bathroom villa plus one building with 15 apartments (35-75sqm) and a pool. Soi Veerakit, Patong. Tel: 081-737-6479. www.residence-edouard.com

RAWAI SMALL PLOT

Electricity, road. 620,000 baht. The last plot will sell fast. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-5376866.

WANT SOME LAND?

I want to sell some of mine, so come and pick a piece. Call for details. Tel: 06-6831964.

3 HOUSES ON 2 RAI

Chalong tropical garden. 2 wells great for spa or beauty farm. 12.9 million baht. Call owner. Tel: 081-5376866.

NEW SEAVIEW APARTMENTS



Located on Patong hillside on Nanai Rd. 1-bedroom, 47sqm apts; 2-bedroom, 72/95sqm apts; and a 172sqm penthouse. Prices from 2.25 million baht. Tel: 084-7085253. Email: bertheike@aol.com For further details Please see: www.blue-ocean-view.com

NEW CONDO

for sale at Blue Canyon Country Club. One condo, number 102. 265sqm, 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Priced at only 55,000 baht per sqm. Tel: 081-6971154. Email: non_siwa@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

New house, 1,496sqm, 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, located close to bypass road with Lagoon views. Close to Tesco-Lotus and Central. 20 million baht. Tel: 081-537-5284 or 089-7291066.

AO CHALONG

5 rai, 135sqm of beachfront land near Chalong. Price: 10 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-6939571.

SEAVIEW RESORT

for sale. Good location. Sea view, Chalong Bay, 18 bungalows with swimming pool area. 11 rai, on the main road to Kata. Price: 65 million baht. Tel: 086-7406156.

BEACHFRONT CONDO

Kalim, Patong. High standard, fully furnished, 2 bedrooms, kitchen, pool, many facilities. Short term. Please call for details. Tel: 081-8920038.

LAND FOR SALE

in Tai Muang, Phang Nga. - 62 rai, 7.7 million baht. Concrete road, front, electricity, well water. - 12 rai, 6 million baht. Petchkasem roadside, beautiful pond, very scenic. Sale by owner. Contact Khun Apple. Tel: 081-8601464.

Properties For Rent

VILLA FOR RENT



275sqm living space, 1,200sqm of land, 10m pool, 3 bedrooms. Fully furnished. Nai Harn. 70,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

HOUSE + BIG GARDEN

Fully furnished, 2 aircon bedrooms, hot shower, living room, kitchen, garage. 11,000 baht per month. Palai, Chalong. Tel: 081-8924311.

BOAT LAGOON

and Patong. - 17 rai: Boat Lagoon, sea view, 2.5 million baht per rai. - 5 rai: Patong, 5.5 million baht per rai. - 3 rai: Patong, 5 million baht per rai. Tel: 087-8942337.

BIG SHOPHOUSE

for rent/sale. Located in Soi Patong Resort, off Soi Bangla, the commercial hub of Patong Beach. Approx 180sqm on 2 open-plan floors. Suitable for commercial use. Unfurnished. Tel: 076-340290. Email: paciugo89@yahoo.com

HOUSE FOR RENT



A superb 2-story house, with 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, large living areas, kitchen and a large 8m x 4m swimming pool, is now up for rent, partly furnished, ready to move in. A nice area of Cherng Talay. 5 mins from Bang Tao Beach and Laguna. Very private, long-term rental only to a respectable person or family. Soi Pasak 13, Cherng Talay. Please call for viewing or inquiry. Tel: 081-7344324.

NEW 2 BEDROOM HOUSE

Unfurnished but 2 beds, hot shower, big veranda, quiet area. Muangtong 1. 3km to town, 2km to beach. 6,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-8855415.

PATONG, 2-BEDROOM

Patong hillside, luxury 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom apartment. Fully furnished, large pool, aircon, satellite TV, etc. ASDL (if required). Very clean and private apartment in desirable area. Long-term rental @ 25,000 baht/month. Tel: 076-346158, 085-071-7134. Email: robinsonkevin@mac.com

KATA LUXURY

apartment. 2 bedrooms, furnished, ADSL, aircon, teak kitchen, huge terrace, 2 bathrooms, quiet area. Available Sep-Oct. Fully serviced @ 1,800 baht/day; or available non-serviced. Tel: 089-592-6890. Email: north8west98@yahoo.com

AO MAKHAM

beachfront. Condo apartment on beach. Your garden, your beach. Includes yacht. It may have a high price, but there is no better deal, and no better property. Please call for more details. Tel: 087-8938747.

TOP SEAVIEW

apartments in Kata. Unbelievable quality and space. 2 bedrooms, only 4 million baht. Tel: 086-2670898.

BEACHFRONT

Apartment. Includes yacht. Top of the range, 220sqm high-end quality, 16m boat in front. All new interested buyers get good price. No brokers. 1st to see will buy. Tel: 087-8938747.

LAND FOR SALE

4 rai 351sqm near Marriott resort in Thalang. 3 million baht per rai. Please contact for more details. Tel: 089-2891502, 089-9915502.

HOME SWEET HOME

New, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, tastefully furnished, Chanote. Asking 3 million baht. Tel: 089-5926482.

NEW HOUSE

in Kamala. Small 2 bedrooms. For quick sale at 1.25 million baht. Good area. Tel: 081-8928208.

220-SQM HOUSE

Balinese style. 7.5 million baht, newly built on 500sqm plot including pool, furniture and garden. Tel: 087-8938747.

HOTEL FOR SALE

Top quality, great design, unbelievable gardens. Only buyers please, no brokers. Tel: 06-2670898.

HOUSE KATA

New. 2 rooms. Big, nice, top quality. Only 7.9 million baht. Come and look and have free coffee. Tel: 087-8938747.

RESORT FOR SALE

Top income, newly built, lower price range. Please call Tel: 089-6525664.

YANUI BEACH, 1 RAI

Stunning hill view, great for villa. Chanote title. 4.3 million baht. Can build for you under your supervision. Tel: 081-5376866.

1.5 RAI FOR SALE

Only 1 million baht per rai. Near Heroines' Monument, 10 minutes to British curriculum school. Tel: 089-8731019.

RAWAI, 800 SQM

Only 1.8 million baht. Nice area, good infrastructure. Electricity, road. Tel: 081-5376866.

NEW HOUSE FOR SALE - CHERNG TALAY

Cherng Talay area. 61 sq wah, 2 floors with 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 200 meter from Redroom Restaurant. Price: 4.2 Million Baht. Tel: 09-9089829. Email: jitboon_19@yahoo.com

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Property Gazette

Property Service

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Property Wanted

LARGE-SCALE LAND

Wanted: Big piece of "rough" land, size approx 50-150 rai, minimum 400m x 400m. Phuket or Phang Nga. Must be in a remote area or former open-cut mine. Valley site preferred. Should be suitable for outdoor sports field. Land titles must be ready for purchase. Email: jibjoyly@hotmail.com

1-STORY SHOP

We are looking for a 1-story building suitable for a small shop. Seeking locations in Phuket City, Kathu, Chalong and Patong. Please contact us if you have property like this available at very reasonable rent. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-214000. Email: info@siamquick.com

WANTED: SHOP SPACE IN KAMALA

I need to rent a shop for a restaurant in Kamala. Must be in a good location. Please contact for more information. Tel: 085-7866596. Email: roger_sommer1@hotmail.com

SHOP IN BANGLA ROAD PATONG

I am looking for a shop on Soi Bangla. Must be at least 4.5m wide and 5m deep, and near the beach. Prefer long lease (3+3 years). Will be prepared to fly in from Australia after talking. Call Tel: +61 425 7778-98 (Australia). Email: madler51@hotmail.com

GUESTHOUSE

and restaurant in Patong, Karon, Kata or Phuket City. Please email if you have or know of something appropriate. Email: chrillearning@hotmail.com

BEACHFRONT WANTED

Looking for a beachfront restaurant or business property to buy or to lease. Tel: 089-0543505.

HOTEL WITH BEACH/SEA VIEW

Looking for a hotel to buy. Must have a beach or an amazing sea view. Email: franco@lemonsurf.com

NEED SEAVIEW LAND

I am looking for prime seaview land at Patong Beach. It must overlook the bay and town. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-0540120. Email: richard.market@gmail.com

1 RAI +

Looking for Chanote land with a sea view, up to 2 rai, preferably on the west coast of Phuket. Must have road access and utilities. Email: ulrichkuhl@gmail.com

HOTEL WANTED

Small hotel/resort wanted on Phuket or nearby island. Email info/pics to Alan. Please contact by email: movinlos@yahoo.com.au

SEAVIEW LAND

wanted. I'm looking for 1-2 rai of seaview land in the Ao Makham area. Tel: 085-032-7100. Email: saze@gmx.net

LAND IN KATA/KARON

I am interested in buying 1.5-2 rai of land in Kata or Karon. Must be suitable to build house on. Email: sverker_gustafsson@yahoo.com

LAND WANTED

Seaview, beachfront land in Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi. 10-100 rai. Tel: 081-6936437, 086-6841260.

HOUSE WANTED

Looking to buy a 2- to 3-bedroom house in Phuket or Krabi. Maximum price: 4 million baht. Email: wanphenstephen@hotmail.com

BUNGALOW RESORT

or guesthouse. I am looking to rent a bungalow resort or guesthouse in the Rawai or Chalong areas. Please contact via email: tomDEXTER2001@yahoo.de

SEEKING HOUSE

to rent. German family is looking for house to rent near international school. Min 1 year. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-188922.

LAND TO BUY 1 RAI

I would like to buy a plot of around 1 rai in a nice, quiet area. Price should not be over 1 million baht. Please contact for more information. Email: idcpetere@csloxinfo.com

AUDITION ROOM

I am looking for an audition room to rent. The room must be at least 7m long and 4m wide, with white walls (for background). One of the short walls should be without windows (background). With aircon would be great. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-6285292.

Accommodation Available

PATONG LUXURY APARTMENTS

Central Patong 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Email for information and photos. Please contact for more information. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

PATONG

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KATA BEACH

New guesthouse with everything. Facing the beach, only a 5-minute walk, without traffic, to beach. Please see: www.southernfriedrice.com Tel: 081-8948446.

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Central Karon, 50 meters from the beach. Newly furnished & renovated 2-room apartment with 2 balconies, cable TV, Wi-Fi, aircon. 19,000 baht per month. Long term only. Tel: 086-2718254.

PATONG LUXURY APARTMENTS

Central Patong 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Email for information and photos. Please contact for more information. Email: suites247@yahoo.com

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Fully furnished, short/long term, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 balconies, TV/music. Move in! Please contact for more info. Tel: 084-8519072. Email: goodtasteforgoodlife@yahoo.de

LOFT STYLE

apartments Kathu. 4 large apartments, 6,000-15,000 baht a month. Contact for more info. Tel: 081-9684230. Email: hkmsn@yahoo.com

4-BEDROOM HOUSE + OFFICE SPACE

Luxury 2-story building - 4 bedrooms, 3 aircon, 3 toilets, kitchen. Office space. 13,000 baht a month. Tel: 076-288542, 086-683-7162. Email: somthawin_pvw@hotmail.com

LUXURY 3/4-BEDROOM HOUSE W/POOL

Private luxury house with private pool, tropical garden, fully-fitted Western kitchen, etc. Tel: 081-7722300, 081-6764849. Fax: 076-378360. Email: w_amonoo@yahoo.com

PATONG SEAVIEW CONDO

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SERVICED APARTMENTS

in Chalong. Spacious studio suites with rooftop spa and pool garden. Aircon, Wi-Fi, sat TV, kitchenette, house-keeping. From 9,000 baht a month. Tel: 086-2826221, 081-8938592. Email: saneroad@yahoo.com

2 BEDROOM HOUSE

in Kathu. Fully furnished, 2 mins from Phuket Country Club. 12,000 baht a month. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-296301. Email: sittipom_tong@hotmail.com

HOTEL PROMOTION

Long stay incl ABF: 18,000 baht monthly. Beachfront, pool and spa, free Wi-Fi. Tel: 081-8920038. Email: anthony_sharman2006@hotmail.com

Accommodation Wanted

AIRCON ROOM

in Patong. Wanted to rent from December 11-20. Need daily cleaning of room and change of sleeping clothes. Must have fridge, and be in walking distance of Bangla and the beach. Please contact via email: erik_eriksen@yahoo.com

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Email: broker@asia-marine.net

www.asia-marine.net

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27FT SPEEDBOAT
Located in Chalong Bay. Wood/epoxy covered, bottom renewed and Mercury 225hp engine, fully repaired in Feb 2006. Thai captain takes care of the boat. Price: 850,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 084-628-8630. Email: vesa.ankio@suomi24.fi

FERRY FOR SALE
Jet cruise 1. 244 passenger capacity. Length: 30.73m. Gross: 322 tons. Two 1,540KW MTU engines. Docked at Rattanachai slipway. Phuket price at 12.2 million baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-4084991.

25' SPORT FISHING / DIVE BOAT
Wood core/fiber/epoxy, in and out. Built March 2006. Yanmar 85 (30 hours). Teak deck, fast (26 knots), fuel efficient, strong. 880,000 baht. Thai registered. Please contact for more info. Tel: 087-132-3150. Email: skiyemen@yahoo.com

TANKER VESSEL
for sale. Thai registered, 150,000 liters, width 6m, length 23m, ready to move. 1.6 million baht. Contact. Tel: 081-8912333. Email: surin123@csloxinfo.com

SPORT FISHING CHARTER BOAT

40ft charter boat, 2x185hp inboards, powerful generator, boatyard re-fit completed August 2006. Air conditioned, TV, DVD, galley, 4 cabins, sleeps 8 in comfort, power shower, electric toilet, large fishing deck, fly bridge fitted with seating, GPS, fish-finder, VHF. 4.8 million baht. Tel: 085-7143656. Email: crew@cruise Phuket.com Please see our website at www.cruise Phuket.com

2 X BRAND-NEW SUZUKIS
Four-stroke engines with gauges, etc. Still in boxes 1.35 million baht ono. Tel: 086-2781291.

AUSSIE CENTER CONSOLE
Super-heavy-duty aluminium 6m "MakoCraft". Thai-registered, import docs 100% and in rare Commercial Survey. Demo model available at huge saving! See Home Page Banner. Tel: 076-292746, 081-8922824. Email: junaworn@hotmail.com

SEA-DOO F16
jet boat. Top condition, new engine 2001, Thai registration. Bargain at only 250,000 baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 089-6525664.

Island Job Mart

Carrefour



Carrefour the world's leading retailers

We are an international company with branches in more than 30 countries in the world. We have a vast amount of experience and expertise in running global retail businesses. We are now ready to offer a fantastic opportunity to join us and have the career you want. We are seeking bright, enthusiastic and experienced people with a positive spirit. If you are one of the new generation these are the positions we are looking for:

Section Managers

- Dry food / Consumer Products
- Bazaar Product (Kitchenware/ Furniture/Entertainment CD VCD/ Stationary/ Leisure/ Gardening/ Toy/ Sport)
- Home Appliances / Electronic Products
- Textile Products

(Please specify your expertise)

Qualifications

- Experience in retail business or direct line products
- Good management skills
- Analytical skills and strategic planning skills

Section Managers Western Delicatessen/ Western Chef or Cook

Qualifications

- Experience as Western food chef or assistant chef, in a Western restaurant or related fields
- Good management skills
- Analytical skills and strategic planning skills

Secretary to Store Manager

Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree or higher in Secretarial, Management, Business or related fields.
- At least 1-3 years' experience as a secretary.
- Good communication skills
- Must have initiative, independence, and dare to be responsible for own decisions

Customer Services / Information Counter

- Experience in Hotel or other service business
- Experience in other businesses involving contact and communication with foreigners
- Communication ability in Chinese, Korean and Japanese an advantage
- Excellent command of spoken English

*** Ability to communicate in English is necessary for all positions ***

To apply please send your application together with a cover letter, resume (in English), expected salary and recent photograph to:

Head Of Recruitment (Carrefour Phuket)

No.11, G/A Floor, South Sathorn Road,
Tunkmahamek, Sathorn, Bangkok 10120

Or Send your Resume by email (Preferably MS word) to Recruitment Department
(Carrefour Phuket)

Phuket_store@hotmail.com and Recruitment_TH@carrefour.com

For more information, please call Carrefour Temporary Office, Patong
Phuket. Call: 076 293 272, 01 420 6308



BANYAN TREE
HOTELS
AND RESORTS

Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts is a leading upscale resort owner, developer and operator in Asia Pacific with a number of highly acclaimed and multiple award-winning resorts and spas throughout the region. The Banyan Tree Group operates, to date, 16 resorts, 45 spas and 50 retail galleries in 19 countries worldwide. To cope with our rapid expansion, we are now seeking qualified and enthusiastic individuals to join our teams in the following positions:



Banyan Tree Phuket

Banyan Tree Phuket is now welcoming applications for the upcoming new villas and restaurants in the following positions:

Kitchen:

Sous Chef 1 position
Jr. Sous Chef 1 position
Chef de Partie 2 positions
Demi Chef 7 positions
Commis Chef 4 positions
Cook helper 5 positions
Night Cook 1 position
Villa Chef 8 positions
Steward 5 positions

Food & Beverage:

Restaurant Manager 2 positions
Restaurant Supervisor 3 positions
Waiter/ Waitress 25 positions
Barman 2 positions

Front Office:

Night Manager 1 position
Villa Host 3 positions
Resort Host 2 positions
Bell Captain/ Bellman 5 positions

Engineering:

Villa Maintenance Program Supervisor 1 position
Duty Technician 1 position

Training:

Training Coordinator 1 position

& more ...

Guest Service Agent 1 position for Allamanda
Executive Secretary 1 position for Allamanda
Recreation Attendant 1 position for Allamanda
Sale & PR Executive 1 position for Allamanda

Please submit your application and full resume with recent

photo to: Ms. Prapaipan Reingpat

prapaipan.reingpat@banyantree.com

Director of Human Resources

Banyan Tree Phuket

33, 33/27 Srisoonthorn Road

Cherngtalay, Talang, Phuket 83000

Fax: 076 325 013

www.banyantree.com www.angsana.com www.coloursangana.com
www.allamanda.com www.lagunaphuket.com

Travel back in time to the enchanting world of Lijiang's old town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Discover the luxury of Chinese courtyard living at Banyan Tree Lijiang. Visit www.banyantree.com

SUNWING RESORT & SPA

Sunwing Resort & Spa, Phuket
72/11 M. 3 T. Cherng Talay, Talang,
Phuket 83110
www.sunwingphuket.com

Fully contained family resort with its own restaurants, entertainment programs and a host of activities for all ages is looking for highly-motivated and service-minded individuals committed to growth within the expanding Ocean Resort Group

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| ▪ Chef | ▪ Bartender |
| ▪ Sous Chef | ▪ Waiter/Waitress |
| ▪ Chef De Partie | ▪ Front Office Manager |
| ▪ Cook | ▪ Guest Relations |
| ▪ Restaurant Manager | ▪ Reception |
| ▪ Restaurant Supervisor | ▪ Housekeeper Supervisor |
| ▪ Captain | |

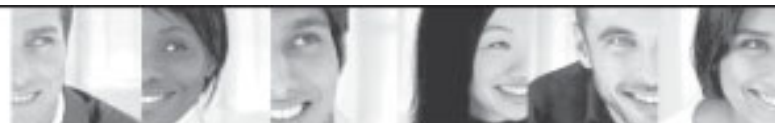
APPLICANTS FOR ALL OTHER POSITIONS ALSO WELCOME

Candidates should send a detailed resume starting current and expected salary and telephone number together with a recent photograph to:

Personnel Department

Ocean Resort Group: 562 Patak Rd, Karon Beach, Muang, Phuket 83100, Thailand
Tel: +66 (0) 76 396599-601 Fax: +66 (0) 76 396470, +66 (0) 76 396177

Email: wisaroot@oceanresortgroup.com



Your Smile, Your Future

Opening November 2006

Sofitel Phokeethra Krabi Resort & Spa - Perfectly set right on the quiet shores of Klong Muang beach in Krabi, newly built resort of choice for high-end leisure travelers and a perfect venue for international MICE segment, as well as local conferences.

276 rooms including Presidential Suite, 7 honeymoon suites, 3 restaurants, first in Asia Le Spa, diving center and a 7,000 sqm swimming pool. We are looking for

ASST. F/O MANAGER, GUEST SERVICE, RESERVATION, BELL MAN, DRIVER, SPA RECEPTIONIST, SPA THERAPIST, SPORT & RECREATION OFFICERS

HK. SUPERVISOR, ROOM ATTENDANT, PUBLIC AREA ATTENDANT, GARDENER

F&B MANAGER, RESTAURANT MANAGER, REST. SUPERVISOR, BARTENDER, WAITER, WAITRESS

CHEF DE PARTIE, SENIOR COOKS, COOKS, STEWARDS

ASST. CHIEF ACCOUNT, GENERAL CASHIER, ACCOUNT OFFICERS

ENGINEERING SUPERVISOR, GENERAL TECHNICIANS

SECURITY SUPERVISOR, HR OFFICER, SECURITY OFFICERS

Pre-opening Offices: Human Resources Department
Sofitel Phokeethra Krabi Resort & Spa, Klong Muang Beach,
T. Nongtalay, A. Muang, Krabi 81000 Tel: 09 724 3935 or

Thai Nakorn Patana Building, 4th floor 94/7 moo 9 Soi Yimprakrop
(Ngamwongwan 8) Ngamwongwan Rd., Muang District, Nonthaburi 11000
Thailand. Tel: +66 2555 9999 ext 1154 Fax: +66 2589 2729
E-mail to: hrrm@sofitelphokeethrakrabi.com



SOFITEL
ACCORD HOTELS & RESORTS



A new perspective on our Hotels and Services

Island Job Mart



www.lagunaphuket.com

Laguna Holiday Club, a vacation ownership business is a part of Laguna Resorts and Hotels, which includes Asia's first integrated resort situated in Phuket. We are currently seeking an energetic and dynamic individuals to join our team in Bangkok and Phuket. We invite highly driven and dynamic professionals to apply the following positions:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| 1. RECEPTIONIST | 2 Positions |
| 2. MARKETING OFFICER | 2 Positions |
| 3. OUTSIDE PERSONAL CONTACT | 5 Positions |
| 4. OPERATION OFFICER | 2 Positions |
| 5. CONTRACT OFFICER | 2 Positions |
| 6. CONTRACT CO-ORDINATOR OFFICER | 1 Position |
| 7. ACCOUNT RECEIVABLE | 1 Position |
| 8. SALES REPRESENTATIVE | 10 Positions |
| 9. IN-HOUSE SUPERVISOR | 2 Positions |
| 10. IN-HOUSE SALES REPRESENTATIVE | 12 Positions |
| 11. MEMBER SERVICE OFFICER (PHUKET) | 10 Positions |
| 12. MEMBER SERVICE OFFICER (BANGKOK) | 2 Positions |
| 13. GUEST RELATION SUPERVISOR | 2 Positions |
| 14. SECRETARY TO REGIONAL MARKETING DIRECTOR | 1 Position |

The remuneration package and benefits will be commensurate with the qualifications and experience of selected candidates.

Interested applicants are invited to fax or e-mail with your full resume, details qualifications and experience with recent photo to:

Human Resources Department
Laguna Holiday Club Co., Ltd.
390 /1 Moo1, Srisoontorn Road, Chongtalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110 Thailand
Tel: 076 270 941 ext.33, Fax: 076 271 765
E-mail: srimab@lagunaphuket.com



FINANCIAL ACCOUNTANT REQUIRED - PHUKET, THAILAND

Protocol Design Co is part of a group of companies that provides design and telecommunication services on a global basis.

Protocol Design Co is looking for an experienced, hard-working accountant, with a minimum of three to five years' proven accounting experience. Must have full knowledge of Thailand Revenue and Taxation Laws.

General Requirements and Key Duties

- Proficient in both spoken and written English and should have worked in a position previously for foreigners.
- Familiar with accounting for a group of companies
- Proficient in accounting packages, such as Quick Books.
- Able to prepare financial statements, including Profit and Loss, and Balance Sheet.
- Can control expenditure, including budget preparation and implement a time-cost system for staff,

Salary

Negotiable, depending on skills and experience.

Contact

Please forward your C.V. with a covering letter to Eric Allan, Chief Financial Officer at ea@protocolsuite.com.

URGENTLY REQUIRED

Asian Wind Spas are currently recruiting for the following positions:

Administrative Assistant
Spa Supervisor
Spa Therapists
Spa Receptionists
Good command of English Language, spa experience would be an advantage.
Asian Wind Spas Tel: 076-233348, Fax : 076-212091
info@asianwind.biz

2 TOUR GUIDES

Thailand Holidays needs 2 professional tour guides. Speaking German is a must. Please call for more information. Tel: 02-5742192.

RESTAURANT STAFF

needed for well-known restaurant in Nai Harn. Front (2 positions), kitchen (1 position). Salary about 10,000 baht a month. Tel: 08-19560204.

HOUSEKEEPER & COOK

Cook (Thai food), and housekeeper wanted urgently. Prefer live-in. If interested, please contact. Tel: 076-260468-70. Fax: 076-260440. Email: admin@tacticalcapital.net

BLUE FROG RAWAI

Looking for full-time cook for foreign and Thai food, must speak English. Up to 25,000 baht per month depending on experience. Call Pavel at Tel: 086-2832279.

ONLINE SALES

is fun. Advance yourself in a fun, friendly, smart office. Must have good English skills. Salaries from 12,000 baht plus commission. Start now. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-236616, 081-8952206. Email: jobs@globalonlinereservations.com

RENTALS MANAGER

Siam Real Estate requires a Thai rentals manager for holiday and long-term rental business. Must have good English, sales experience, and own car. Must also know the island and be computer literate. Good salary and commissions. Tel: 076-288908. Email: patrick@siamrealestate.com



Improving Patient Care
Phuket, Thailand

Radi Medical Systems conducts applied research as well as develops, manufactures, markets and sells its own innovative technical medical products and services within the field of interventional cardiology.

Radi was founded in 1988 and has grown successfully through the years. Average number of employees in 2005 was 300 worldwide. A major part of these are located in our headquarters in Uppsala, Sweden. Net sales 2005 were more than 2 billion baht. In 2003, a new subsidiary was started in Phuket, Thailand and Phase 1 of the manufacturing plant for our products was finished in 2005. The plant comprises Radi Medical's regional head office for sales and marketing in Southeast Asia. Our operations in Phuket, Thailand as well as in Asia in general, are growing rapidly. Our scope of operations as well as volume of production is increasing continuously.

We are looking for the following positions to join our team:

Position: HR MANAGER

Radi Medical Systems in Thailand has now reached the point where an experienced person is needed to professionally take care of the HR management. Our employees are our most important resource and the globally company policy is to take good care of our employees. Radi Medical Systems is also aiming high in the area of business ethics, living up to legal demands and also fulfilling regulatory requirements. As HR manager, you will be responsible for labor legislation, medical insurance, recruitment, personnel files related to quality systems, development of personnel policy, salary systems, and routine care related to personnel, etc.

- Male/Female with bachelor's degree in related field
- At least 5 years experience as HR manager or personnel manager
- Strong computer knowledge and skills
- Good knowledge about Thai labor laws and regulations.

Position: Production Manager (Urgently Required)

As production manager, you will be responsible for managing the entire production including material and production planning, manufacturing related engineering, quality assurance and safety. In addition, you will also be involved in production development and improvement.

- Minimum Bachelor's degree in electrical, electronics or mechanical engineering
- At least 5-10 years of experience in production management
- Knowledge of quality systems such as ISO, GMP, etc.
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Computer literate
- Excellent English and Thai

Position: Production Engineer (Electronics, Fine Mechanics)

Our production plant in Phuket is producing medical devices for interventional cardiology. The main product is a guide-wire-mounted micromechanical pressure sensor (Pressure Wire 58). The main challenge for the position is to strengthen our organization in terms of knowledge in product specific production engineering.

- Female/Male, age 25-35 years
- Electrical/Mechanical engineering degree
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Knowledge of Microsoft operating systems and Microsoft Office applications
- Experience in programming will be an advance (LabView, C#, C, C++)
- Some experience in manufacturing will be an advantage

Positions: PHASE 2 CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The company is now starting the Phase 2 construction and requires a professional construction team to prepare the infrastructure and buildings for the next phase of expansion.

1 M&E engineering:

- Male, Bachelor's degree in Electrical/Mechanical engineering.
- 7 years work experience.
- Have experience of design, cost and site construction.
- Good computer skills.
- Good command of English.
- Good relationship, enthusiastic and honest.
- Leadership skills, good in problem solving, responsible and decisive.

2 Infrastructure Inspector:

- Male, Bachelor's degree/diploma in surveying or related field.
- 7 years work experience with infrastructure construction projects.
- Surveying and AutoCAD skills.
- Good computer skills will be an advantage.
- Good command of English.
- Good relationship, enthusiastic and honest.

3 Civil & Architect Inspector:

- Male/Female Bachelor's degree/diploma in related field.
- 5 years work experience with hotel and resort construction projects.
- AutoCAD skills will be an advantage for civil. AutoCAD skills necessary for architect.
- Good computer skills will be advantage.
- Good command of English.
- Good relationship, enthusiastic and honest.

4 M&E inspector:

- Male, Bachelor's degree/diploma in related field.
- 5 years work experience with hotel and resort construction projects.
- AutoCAD skills will be an advantage.
- Good computer skills will be an advantage.
- Good command of English.
- Good relationship, enthusiastic and honest.

All positions are full time and for Thai nationals based in Phuket and require good command of English, pleasant personality & attitude, enthusiasm and honesty

Interested applicants are invited to submit their CV with photo, letter of reference(s) with salary expectation to sue.prapapan@radi.se by September, 30th 2006. For more information call Sue at 01-8938265 or visit our website www.radi.se

ACCOUNTANT

& bookkeeper. Siam Real Estate require an experienced English-speaking accountant who uses Quick Books and can provide monthly figures and advance tax planning. Please send CV or contact. Tel: 076-288908. Email: richard@siamrealestate.com

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Honest, hard-working staff under 30 years needed to be trained for managerial positions in Krabi business. Must have excellent customer service skills, supervisory ability and good English skills. Please call for more information. Tel: 084-0646590.

RESTAURANT

manager. Experienced English speaking manager required for new Indian restaurant in Laguna area. Good salary and share of profit for the right person. Please apply with your details, including expected salary. Tel: 081-8937028. Fax: 076-254827.

Island Job Mart

INDIGO PEARL phuket

Not all gems come in a little box

Indigo Pearl is a unique design hotel in Phuket, Thailand. Architecture inspired by Phuket's tin mining past. Modern décor evoking a Thai factory of a century ago. Extensive, imaginative gardens.

The resort is currently seeking professionals who share enthusiasm for creating a one-of-a-kind experience for all guests – an experience as rare as an indigo pearl.

Highly talented individuals are invited to apply for the following positions:

Training Manager

- Experienced in developing and delivering training programs in any service or hospitality environment.

Public Relations Manager

- Exceptional English writing skills, creative and good press contacts.

Reservations Manager

- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple methods of distribution successfully.

Chief Concierge

- Top attention to detail, preferably a Les Clefs D'or member or planning to become one.

In Room Dining Manager

- Good English, Western and Thai food knowledge, organized.

Assistant Executive Housekeeper

- Very organized, attention to detail, good English and computer skills.

Restaurant Manager - Grill

- Attention to detail, great host and good wine knowledge.

Assistant Managers - Front Office

- Well presented, confident, good English, front office experience.

Applicants should also demonstrate the following:-

- Positive attitude
- Excellent grooming and presentation
- Good communication and leadership skills

Apply in person or send your resumé to:

Director of Human Resources

Indigo Pearl, 116 MI T. Sakoo, A. Talang, Phuket 83110

E-mail: samran@indigo-pearl.com Web: www.indigo-pearl.com



LIFESTYLE & LEISURE (Thailand) LTD.

Real Estate Sales & Marketing Manager

We are a successful high-end villa development company based in Phuket. Currently, we have developments under construction, and are in the design stage for our newest project. As a result of continued expansion, it has become necessary for us to set up a broader sales and marketing department.

The successful candidate will be responsible for setting up this department and would be responsible for selling the remaining units of Laemsingh Villas, and all the units of the new development. You would also be involved in marketing including property exhibitions, advertising programs, etc.

All our villas are in the high-end market, therefore require a sophisticated individual with experience and an understanding of the clients in this range of the market.

The financial gains are very attractive. The person we are looking for should be:

- Female
- English as a first language
- Minimum 3 years experience in real estate sales
- A captive personality and presentable appearance
- Possess Management Skills
- Able to live in Phuket
- Speaking Thai would be an advantage

Interested candidates should send their resumé to hr@lifestyleandleisure.com
website: www.lifestyleandleisure.com
Developer of LAEMSINGH VILLAS

Green Heritage (Holdings) Limited,

A Phuket-based property developer and management company is looking for the following staff:

1. Sales staff. Senior and junior positions, with good salaries and sales commissions. Good English and office skills essential.

2. Receptionist. Some hotel/hospitality and office experience required. Must speak English well.

3. Pool technician, gardener, cleaner.

Please email resumé/C.V., with photo, to marketing@katamanda.com or call 076 333251 for further details.

Professional Property Management Solutions



Phuket's premier property management company is looking for suitable, qualified candidates for the following positions:

- Operation Supervisors
- Rental Operations Coordinator
- Villa manager
- Receptionist

PPS offers an attractive salary & service charge with good career development opportunities.

- Experience in hotel or property management and good computer skills an advantage.
- Good command of written and spoken English essential.

Please send your application with a recent photo to Human Resource Dept. Phuket Island Property Services Co., LTD (PPS)

452 Sinoonthorn Road Chongalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110 Tel: 076 270 750 Fax: 076 270 751 Email: hr@ppspkphuket.com

We are international property consultants with over 200 offices worldwide, property agency service, asset valuation, property and facilities management, research and consultancy, due to a rapid expansion, we are looking for qualified personnel to join our company as follow:



Estate Manager:

- Age over 28 yr
- BA in management or related fields
- At least 2 yr experience in building/estate management level or 3 yr in management level
- Knowledge in Juristic Person Acts is an advantage
- Strong leadership, good problem-solving skills and able to work under pressure

Chief Engineer:

- Male, age over 25 yr
- BA in Electrical or Mechanical Engineering
- At least 2 yr experience in building services
- Knowledge of systems maintenance management is an advantage

Project Coordinator:

- Age over 22 yr
- BA in related fields
- Self motivated and possess good coordinating and problem solving skills with service-mind

Administrator:

- Age over 22 yr
- BA in related fields
- Basic computer and office automation skills
- Good interpersonal skill, detailed, service-minded and well-organized

Technician:

- Male, age over 25 yr
- Vocational or higher in Mechanical/Electrical
- At least 1 yr experience in system maintenance

Remark:

- Thai national only
- Position 1-4 a good command of spoken and written English and computer literacy is essential
- Male applicants must have completed or be exempt from military service
- Knowledge of Real Estate is an advantage

Interested candidates are invited to write in with full resumé, stating present and expected salaries, and enclosing a recent photo mail to:

Knight Frank Phuket Co., Ltd.

1 Piazza Del Mar Building Room No. 109-111 and 201-202, Pasak-Koktanod Road, T. Chongalay, A. Thalang, Phuket 83110
Tel: 0-7631-8151-58 Ext. 102 Fax: 0-7631-8159-60 Email: chutima.ninlawan@th.knightfrank.com

SUPERVISOR FOREMAN

We are looking for a male who is fluent in English and Thai for our modular building dept. Applicant must have leadership and hands-on experience. Tel: 076-281283, 081-8924804. For further details, please see our website at: www.safewayphuket.com

SECRETARY

Needed: Thai female with English and computer skills. Call Brian. Tel: 087-06-73360. Email: brett@phuketrealestate.com

ADMIN ASSISTANT (THAI ONLY)

International Recruitment Company based in Phuket town requires Thai admin assistant for general office duties. Excellent opportunity for young, university-educated person to work in an English-speaking environment with a dynamic team. Unbeatable working conditions and salary, 5 days per week, 6 weeks holiday per year. Suitable for graduate with BA in English or equivalent. Email: ian@evocation.net

FARANG CHEF POSITION

The Harvest Bar & Restaurant is searching for a European Cook/Chef to join our Thai staff and kitchen team to develop/manage our catering/events dept and restaurant. Please send CV. Email: theharvest_foods@yahoo.com or theharvest_food@gmail.com

MARKETING

We are looking for open-minded people who are looking for a career in marketing. You need to have good spoken and written English and experience in the tourism industry. Own transportation and computer skills needed. Please send CV with photo. Tel: 084-8490443. Email: clechrit13@hotmail.com

UK RECRUITMENT

consultants. Native English speakers with degree required for the Phuket office of an international recruitment agency. Experience in Sales preferred. Excellent basic salary, uncapped commission earnings, plus 7 weeks holiday per year. Apply with cover letter & CV for further details. Email: ian@evocation.net For further details, please see our website at: www.evocation.net

RAILE BEACH CLUB

is looking for excellent people for the following positions:

- Accountant
- Front Desk/Office Assistant

The qualified candidates will have a diploma or degree, or equivalent experience. Must also have excellent English skills (both spoken and written). We offer a competitive salary and compensation package. Please contact K. Anurat. Tel: 075-622582, 086-6859359. Fax: 075-622-596. For further details, please see our website at: www.railebeachclub.com

HOUSEKEEPER

and cook wanted urgently. Prefer live-in. If interested, please call K. Nee at Tel: 081-9281530 for more information.

OFFICE ASSISTANT

Aquamarine Divers Co Ltd, an operator of live-aboard diving cruises, is looking for an

OFFICE ASSISTANT

- Female, Thai national
- Beginner or first experience in diving/tourism business
- Computer skills (a must)
- Basic accounting skills (a plus)
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent
- Good command of English
- Pleasant personality.

Long-term career prospects for motivated and capable candidates. Please contact for details. Tel: 076-383083. Fax: 076-280397. Email: admin@philkade.com

SALES & MARKETING

assistant. Real estate company urgently requires an active and motivated sales & marketing assistant. Good knowledge of written and spoken English is a must. This person should be computer literate (MS Office & Email), be able to organize and work independently, be service-minded, willing to learn and have excellent communication skills both in person and by Email. Thai nationals only. Good salary for the right candidate. Please contact. Tel: 076-340792, 087-8822856. Fax: 076-340-693. Email: luc@phuket-tropical-realestate.com

KITCHEN/BEDROOM

fitter. Must be reliable and experienced with own transport & tool kit. Contact Alan for more information. Tel: 084-8473304. Email: select-kitchens@hotmail.com

Tout, Trader & Trumpet



Senior Reporters - Phuket Television

The *Phuket Gazette*, publisher of Phuket's weekly English-language newspaper, has launched PGTV on all Phuket cable television networks and on the Web, reaching up to 60,000 viewers a day - locally and worldwide. Our content focuses on Phuket NEWS and includes daily information on the development of the island province in all aspects.

We are seeking energetic and well-rounded Senior Reporters, as follows:

- Male/Female, Thai nationality
- Minimum of 3-5 years experience in NEWS reporting
- Inclined to work with a high sense of urgency
- Focused on quality
- Reliable and pleasant personality
- At least a Bachelor degree and fluency in English
- Ability to relocate to Phuket immediately

Multimedia skills would be an advantage. Salary is negotiable.

Please submit resumé and photo to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

367/2 Yaowarat Road, Muang, Phuket 83000

Fax: 076-213971

Phone: 076-236555 (10 lines), attn K. Chutimon, ext 122

Email: Chutimon@PhuketGazette.Net



LIFESTYLE & LEISURE (Thailand) LTD.

A high-end property developer, with offices in Laguna area, Phuket, seeks a dynamic and self-motivated person for the following position:

Senior Accountant

Qualifications:

- Thai national male or female
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|-------|----------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
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