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Patong waste plant online

By Sompratch Saowakhon
& Noolek Karaket

PATONG: The drive to keep Patong Bay free of seaweed in the upcoming high season took a big step forward with the opening of a new wastewater treatment plant on October 12.

The center, built by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment's Wastewater Management Authority (WMA) with 13 million baht from Danish International Development Assistance (Danida), uses a constructed wetland to filter wastewater before it flows into the sea.

WMA Director Sarawut Srisakuna explained, "After the tsunami we received a message from the Danish ambassador saying that he wanted to help us improve our wastewater treatment capability by using 'subsurface wetland' technology developed in Denmark.

The WMA saw the opportunity to use land next to the existing sewage treatment plant to build a second treatment system in the hope of preventing the high-season seaweed growth that has plagued Patong Beach during the past few years, he said.

"Seventy percent of Patong's wastewater can be treated by the old system, but the other 30% comes from Klong Pakbang and Klong Paklak. This water contains a high concentration of organic wastes and chemical substances, such as detergents and shampoo. These are the nutrients the seaweed in the bay feeds on during the high season. Using the new plant we



SEAWEED DIET: At the 13-million-baht natural wastewater treatment plant, Canna plants will absorb much of the organic waste that used to flow into Patong Bay, feeding the seaweed there.

can treat much more of this water, which otherwise would flow into the bay untreated," he said.

Patong Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukbal said that the system is already working very well, but will take time to reach peak effectiveness at reducing the biological oxygen demand (BOD), a key indicator used to determine water quality calculated as milligrams of organic material per liter of water.

"The system is not yet 100% effective because we must wait three months for the system to reach maximum efficiency. Before we began using the system, the BOD value of the water dumped into the bay was measured at 40 mg/l. After the water first passed through the system, it was reduced to 3 mg/l. After three months it should go

down to zero," he said.

Moderately polluted rivers typically have a BOD range between 2 mg/l and 8 mg/l. Sewage is considered treated if it can be reduced to a BOD of 20 mg/l. Since this water flows directly into Patong Bay, the goal has been set at zero.

"This system is built specially to absorb phosphorus and nitrogen, which spur seaweed to grow in the bay. Small amounts of other chemicals might make it through, but it won't be dangerous for people," Chairat said.

Sarawut said, "The system will pump water from Pakbang and Paklak canals back to the station for treatment before it is released into the sea. The pumping system automatically turns off during high tide, when the sea

Continued on Page 2

Kiwi tourist killed in bar brawl

By Sompratch Saowakhon

KARON: New Zealand tourist Warwick Button, 32, died in the early hours of October 12 during a fight with bar owner Wayne Robinson, 40, and Anthony Quinn, 56, both from the UK.

Chalong Police Inspector Pol Lt Col Chokchai Sutthimek said that he was informed of an altercation among foreigners at the Dimension Bar on the access road to the Karon Whale Resort at about 1 am on October 12.

Arriving at the scene 10 minutes later, Col Chokchai found bar owner Robinson sitting on the victim's neck and back area and Quinn sitting on his posterior, both apparently trying to restrain the New Zealander, with whom they had been fighting.

Separating the men and turning over Button, who was lying face down, Col Chokchai found he had already died. Apart from a bloody nose and some bruises on his mouth and chin, there were no other signs of injury to the victim, he said.

Button's body was sent to Patong Hospital for examination.

Col Chokchai said that the victim's girlfriend, also from New Zealand, said her and Button had had an argument earlier that night, and he dropped her off at their hotel room about 11 pm before going out on his own.

Button was already very drunk, she told police, adding that she learned of her boyfriend's death only after waking up the following morning.

Chalong Police, treating the death as accidental, charged both men with manslaughter and released them on bail, the total amount of which was reported as 600,000 baht.

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Austrian

Wastewater treatment plant comes onstream

From Page 1

water reaches the canal. It reactivates when the water level recedes.

"This system can treat about 1,000 to 1,200 cubic meters of waste a day, about 200 cubic meters an hour. We will set it based on the tide schedule to avoid getting saltwater into the system," he said.

While the system will have pumps, it will mostly rely on a natural filtration system, much like the one rainwater goes through before percolating into wells. The water passes through increasingly small sediment layers before reaching the sea.

Danida offered its assistance to Thailand after the tsunami because of the large number of Danish citizens who visit and live in the country, but were barred from donating money by the Thaksin government.

Instead, they began devising ways they could assist in creating public works projects such as the water treatment center, he added.

"We received 13 million baht in support for the project from Denmark, which is also supplying an annual management budget of 500,000 baht for three years, a total of 1.5 million baht. During that time they will train Patong Municipality to take over system operations," he said.

Danida has funded a similar system in Phang Nga, at a cost of 4 million baht, and is providing 28 million baht for a third system now under construction on Koh Phi Phi Don.

"It is much more expensive there because we will have to ferry all the construction equipment to the island," he said.

The project in Phang Nga has reduced BOD levels to less than 5 mg/l after in months.

Chalong residents face year-long wait for flood works

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

CHALONG: Parts of Soi Sainamyen, behind Baan Chalong School, have flooded to a depth of one meter several times since August, say local villagers, and the road has been unusable for long stretches even when the rain has stopped.

The problems began when a local landowner landscaped his land, blocking the water flow out of the area. The road has been temporarily diverted through private property. One villager said she has contacted the Chalong

Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) for the past two years, but received assistance only in the past week, when government workers came to sprinkle gravel on the detour.

Chief Administrative Officer (*Palad*) Dechakanee Leelanont of *OrBorTor* Chalong told the *Gazette*, "If we dig a two-meter-wide storm drain beside the road to release the water, we will have to dig about three or four meters deep. But the land next to the road belongs to someone who will neither give us con-

sent to dig nor sell the land to us, so we will have to dig the drain directly into the road, which is only four meters wide."

If that happens, the drain will have to be covered by a metal grate to allow cars to pass.

"That looks dangerous, but it is the best way. We do not have any choice because this problem has been recurring for a long time," he said.

"However, I am afraid that if a truck drives on the grate, it will collapse. Also, if we use gravel to raise the road, people

will have to build their walls even higher to protect their houses from floodwater," he added.

"We have a budget of about 2 million baht for road construction and I anticipate we will be able to solve the problem by the end of next year. We can't start construction yet because the weather is making it very hard for work to be done."

Palad Dechakanee said that the diversion will have to suffice until the water dries up on its own and more permanent measures can be implemented.

Local firms to pay for security boost?

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: In a bid to increase security on the island, four of the island's top tourism business associations are planning to establish a fund to help pay for extra police work and equipment.

Phuket Tourist Association President Maitree Narukhatpichai told the *Gazette* that the idea sprang from widespread concerns about the possible effects of a terror act on the island's all-important tourism industry.

"It's just an idea at the moment, but I would like to see it realized. We can see the effect the Bali bombings had on the tourism industry there.... Hotel occupancy is still down because tourists are not confident to travel there," he said.

Many Australian tourists who used to vacation in Bali now come to Phuket, he noted.

Representatives of the four groups – the PTA, the Phuket Chamber of Commerce, the Southern Hotel Association and The Federation of Thai Indus-

tries, Phuket Chapter – will meet within the next few weeks to hash out exact details, but there is a general agreement that a fund should be established with a committee to oversee it, with much of the money used to pay for overtime work by police, he said.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pol Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch agreed with the idea, adding that it could help to prevent crime in general.

Under the Royal Thai Police budget there is no money to cover overtime work, he said.

Although police officers already work hard, many might appreciate the opportunity to do four hours of paid overtime on their day off, Gen Decha said. Most officers work an eight-hour shift daily with one full day off weekly, he explained.

"If my officers are prepared to do the extra work, then we can discuss the matter of funding further with the PTA to see how they can help. We can rely only on the officers who are prepared to put in overtime, however, because we cannot increase the total number of officers in Phuket," he explained.

There are currently a little over 1,000 police officers on active duty in Phuket province.

Spa exhibition in November

PHUKET: The Phuket Spa Business Club (PSBC) will from November 16 to 19 hold its "Andaman Spa Invitation 2006", an exhibition of the island's top spas and spa product suppliers.

The exhibition, with 38 booths for exhibitors, will be on the first floor of Central Festival Phuket from 10 am to 10 pm daily.

PSBC President Pakin Raktae-ngam said that the spa industry in Phuket is booming, with about 100 spas now on the island.

Of roughly four million tourists who visit Phuket annually,

some 1.5 million have a spa treatment, costing on average about 800 baht. This generates more than one billion baht annually for the local economy, he added.

Andaman Spa Invitation 2006 is intended to help bring the entire industry up to top international standards, introduce the slogan "Andaman Spa Retreat" to promote spa treatments unique to Phuket. Some 2,000 people a day are expected to visit.

For more information, contact Siriwan "Bee" Tongsritong. Tel: 083-1829002; Fax 076-222925; Email: prett21@hotmail.com.

Deadline for local telephone book

PHUKET: Businesses wishing to appear in the 2007 *Gazette Guide*, Phuket's "yellow pages", have until noon on October 28 to enter or update their listings. Any entries made after the deadline will not appear in the hard-copy book until January 2008.

Business owners are urged to update their listing details now in order to avoid the server outages experienced last year in the run-up to the deadline. This year's deadline cannot be extended as the *Gazette Guide* printing date cannot be altered.

The *Gazette* server has seen heavy traffic recently because of the need to revise more than 3,000 mobile phone numbers to comply with the new format requiring an "8" after the leading "0".

The *Gazette Guide* will be available in guestrooms of the island's leading hotels from January 12. It will go on sale at shops from January 15. As has been the case since the launch of the *Gazette Guide* 10 years ago, standard listings are free of charge.

To enter or update a listing, business owners or managers should access the form appropriate to their location – Phuket, Krabi, Phang Nga or Samui. The form is located at www.phuketgazette.net/guide.

To ensure that all listings are current and correct, only listing "owners" are allowed access to their data. Staff at the *Phuket Gazette* are not allowed to enter or make changes to listings.

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Dive operators fight new rules in the courts

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: After hearing opening arguments in a case lodged by the Thai Diving Association (TDA) against Phuket Province, the Administrative Court in Nakhon Sri Thammarat on October 12 requested more evidence from both sides.

The TDA is seeking a court order that would force the province to rescind strict new regulations that went into effect October 1. The new rules allow the province to closely monitor the business activities and environmental impact of dive companies operating in the province.

TDA Vice-President Pragon Geatgun told the *Gazette* that the TDA represents about 60 dive operators in Phuket.

These firms agree with the stated aim of the regulations – to protect the environment – but feel the reporting requirements fail to reflect this, are too time-consuming and infringe on privacy rights.

TDA attorney Pongsawan Sathatham told the *Gazette* that in its opening statement the TDA requested a letter from the court ordering a temporary suspension of the regulations until the court rules in the case.

The court agreed to give the TDA more time to prepare its case but deferred its decision to issue the requested letter, he said.

“At the hearing, I was asked by the judge what the effect of the new regulations would be on Phuket dive operators. I said that the main problem is that the [reporting requirements] are too de-

tailed, making it impossible for the dive operators to comply and therefore putting them at risk of having their licenses revoked.

“The second reason is that some of the information that must be reported is private business data. We question whether the province has put sufficient measures in place to ensure that it remains confidential. This is very important. We think the regulations infringe on individual privacy rights,” he said.

The judge also requested more information from the province, Pongsawan added. Once all the information is submitted, the court will decide whether or not to suspend the regulation while the case is being heard, he said.

“If the court rules in favor of the province [and throws out the case] we can appeal the ruling,” he said.

Provincial Attorney Aekachai Soonthorn, who also serves as secretary to Phuket Provincial Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Nivit Aroonrat, insisted that the regulation will remain in force until such time as the court issues an injunction.

“The court is still considering the case and has yet to make a judgment. But the court understands why the province has issued this regulation,” he said, citing the need to protect the environment.

“Even if the court rules to rescind the regulations, the province will still maintain the authority to check licenses, work permits and tax payment information of all dive operators, he said.



Phuket IT icon John Seebach dead

CHERNG TALAY: Island Technology founder John Seebach has died of heart failure at the age of 48.

John, who also wrote a bi-monthly column on information technology issues for the *Phuket Gazette*, died after giving his wife Autcharawan “Gay” Pratumwan a swimming lesson at the Banyan Tree resort at Laguna Phuket.

“He was teaching me how to swim like a professional, because he had a [swim coach]. He taught me for about 30 minutes, which is not long for him. Usually he swims for about one hour,” K. Gay told the *Gazette* through tears.

“He sat down and just passed out. I tried to help him, do CPR, everything... called the ambulance. The doctors tried to help for about three hours. Finally they had to let him go because his heart was not working any more.”

Bangkok Hospital Phuket’s Canal Village Clinic, an emergency medical response center based at Laguna, responded to the call at 7:05 pm on October 11.

Mr Seebach was taken to Thalang Hospital, then transferred to Bangkok Hospital Phuket in Phuket City, where he was pronounced dead. He had previously undergone heart surgery.

Tsunami orphanage remains open while fraud probe stalls

THALANG: The Barnhem Thai-Swedish Children’s Foundation home for tsunami orphans in Mai Khao will continue to operate as an investigation into fraud claims against the project has stalled, awaiting the return of the home’s founder Narin Dangtakote.

The investigators are now coming under pressure from the Interior Ministry to produce results following the Swedish Embassy last month urging the Thai government to discover the fate of millions of baht donated by Swedes to the center.

Complaints of fraud against the project emerged after Swedes who donated money came to see the shelter, established in early 2005 by Narin and his Swedish wife Maria Floren.

Claims were made that children at the shelter were not tsunami orphans, just underprivileged children from Isarn and, according to some reports, relatives of Narin.

Nikorn Torhirunyapreuk, Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) of Thalang District and head of the non-criminal investigation, on October 17 said that officials had questioned about 10 people, but have yet to contact the man in the center of the scandal, Narin.

“We heard that he is still in Sweden and all we can do is await his return. We can’t prevent him from leaving Thailand or traveling internationally because he has not been charged with anything. We will keep our eyes open for him and investigate him further when he returns,” Palad Nikorn said.

Price freeze ordered for Vegetarian Festival

PHUKET CITY: To prevent price-gouging in the upcoming Phuket Vegetarian Festival, the Phuket Internal Trade Office (PITO) has announced that they will inspect shops to ensure that prices of vegetables and other supplies are not above current market prices and that prices are clearly marked on all products.

Phuket Commercial Affairs Chief Thada Piyaporn said that more vegetables will be eaten during the festival, but that supplies may be limited because of flooding in north and central Thailand, tempting shop owners to raise their prices.

K. Thada said that the maximum penalty for selling produce at prices higher than the set ceiling is a fine of 140,000 baht. Shop owners who do not clearly label prices face fines up to 400 baht for individuals, and 2,000 baht for businesses.

The PITO will also host a daily fresh produce market Oc-

tober 20 to 30 at Queen Sirikit Park on Thalang Rd to allow farmers to sell their products direct to the public.

The price of vegetables, fruit and other products used in cooking vegetarian fare will be 10%-15% lower than market

price, said PITO Chief Sompoch Sungkapong.

For more Festival details see <http://www.phuketgazette.net/news/index.asp?Id=5286> For a list of the festival procession routes see www.phuketgazette.net/bulletins

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The latest initiative to clear vendors from the sands of Bang Tao Beach follows the establishment of a provincial committee, led by Thalang District Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Nikorn Torhirunyapreuk, who was given the job of finding a solution to the longstanding problem.

Assigned by Phuket Provincial Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Nivit Aroonrat, the seven committee members were well aware from the start that without a good deal of compromise from all sides there would be little chance of success and that the status quo would remain.

An inspection by the committee found 90 vendors encroaching along the entire length of the beach. Following a meeting chaired by Palad Nivit at Phuket Provincial Hall in early September, 48 businesses operating on the beach were served eviction notices giving them just one week to vacate – or face having their premises demolished. Some 24 clustered in front of Laguna Beach Resort were the first slated for removal.

After the eviction notices were served, Palad Nivit promised the vendors they would be provided with a new site – but he didn't say where. Instead, he called on the local community to help find a solution and to understand what the government was trying to achieve. Not surprisingly, the vendors – some of whom claim to have been there ever since the resort opened – said they wouldn't budge until an alternative site was not only found but also new premises built and ready to move into.

Although willing to compromise, Palad Nivit was firm about the decision. "The beach is public land," he said, "and it is illegal to set up stalls there – they must be moved," he said.

For their part, the vendors felt as if they had heard it all before; they have faced numerous

THE GREAT BANG

Scarred by decades of tin mining, land along Bang Tao Bay was, just a few decades ago, deemed to have 'no potential for tourism development'.

That was before Laguna Resorts & Hotels arrived in 1984 and invested 200 million baht, transforming the ravaged landscape into what is now Phuket's premier resort complex.

Business has boomed, and in Bang Tao this has taken the form of almost 90 illegal vendors who now encroach along the public beach, the worst cases blocking access to the beach by guests staying at Laguna Beach Resort.

With the formation of a provincial committee, new efforts are underway to move the vendors to new sites back off the beach. Will the start of the next high season see an end to beach encroachment at Bang Tao?

The *Gazette's* Jenjira Ruengjarus and Stephen Fein report.

threats of eviction over the years, but nothing ever came of them. This time, however, following a meeting between the committee and beach vendors on September 13, a reprieve was granted.

At that meeting, local villager and beach vendor Prajim Plodphai explained the vendors' plight. "I have lived here since it was a tin mine. We earn our living here, which was allowed by the local tambon [sub-district] office 14 years ago, and the OrBorTor [Cherng Talay Tambon Administration Organization] has also allowed it."

'I have to comply because I don't want to get taken to court or thrown in jail.'

Vendor on Bang Tao Beach

Santi Korkarvee, Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorTor) member for

Cherng Talay, said, "We should approach this seriously. The government should clear the beach and allocate areas [for vendors], and create a walkway about a meter wide [along the beach]. That would make it a great place to relax."

Cherng Talay OrBorTor Vice-President Wiwat Dorktien

suggested that at least some of the operators may be able to relocate to a nearby plot belonging to Laguna Resorts & Hotels (LRH). "Government officers should talk to [LRH] and survey the recommended sites," he said.

A representative of LRH said at that time that the request to have the vendors relocate to the plot belonging to the resort would be brought to his superiors' attention, though he added that consideration had to be given as to whether vendors at the

suggested plot would annoy guests or spoil the view.

Finally, following yet another meeting, government land was found – and not far away. A total of 35 vendors operating in front of and around Laguna Beach Resort agreed to move to an alternative site, located just off the beach and to the side of land

owned by LRH, bordered by the resort's wall.

The site, occupied by casuarina trees, a few dilapidated shacks and a dirt road, currently serves as an access road and car park for the beach vendors, most of whom park their motorbikes there.

Although it is just a minute's walk from the beach, many of the vendors fear that the site is too far out of view to pick up the kind of passing trade they now enjoy.

Under the original plan, that site was to be transformed into a sort of beachside arcade. There was to have been a walkway running along the path of the existing road, both sides of which would be lined with 38 stalls, each 2.5m wide and 2.0m deep – much smaller than the stalls currently occupied by most vendors.

The exact location to which each vendor would be relocated was to be decided by a "lucky draw" to take place at the Thalang District Office on October 10. However, on the day of the



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TAO CLEAN-UP



Above: The view enjoyed by patrons of Laguna Beach Resort's waterpark, where a beer costs almost four times as much as one sold by beach-encroaching vendors just outside. Left: Much of the beach is occupied by ramshackle construction down to the high-water mark.

bar, told the *Gazette* she had drawn one of the sites furthest from the beach, meaning that now tourists would have to walk past all the other vendors selling soft drinks before arriving at hers.

She explained that about four years ago she had paid 180,000 baht to the previous "owner" to take over the spot she now occupies. In the past, the *OrBorJor* had not only allowed, but even encouraged locals to set up their shops in the area, and a sort of "licensing system" had been in effect, she said.

She admitted that the stalls blocked ocean views from ground-level hotel rooms and gave the area a cluttered appearance, and she agreed that it was unfair to Laguna that hotel guests left the hotel to buy from the vendors at cheaper prices. The *Gazette* noted that a can of Heineken at her bar cost just 50 baht at,

compared with 195 baht from the hotel's poolside bar.

In the end, the committee realized that most of the vendors were unhappy with the single-walkway plan and agreed to go back to the drawing board.

Rather than one walkway, with all the choice spots at one end, an alternative scheme was to be drawn up. The new plan would arrange vendors selling similar wares in four or five rows, all running perpendicular to the beach, so that people shopping there could not only compare prices easily, but do so while still enjoying a sea view.

As this article went to press, however, the new plan had yet to be drawn up and there was still a great deal of confusion among the vendors and the committee members, not only about the exact shape the new plan would take, but also who would

pay for the construction of the new stalls.

"At the last meeting, we agreed with the vendors' request to build it before the arrival of the high season, but we have a problem with the construction budget," said Palad Nikorn, estimating that the new structures would cost about 50,000 baht each.

"We will try to fund the budget for them, but that is the best we can do," he added.

Most of the vendors agreed that it was time to clean up the area and said that they would go along with the plan, though many said they expected the change and the small stall size to make their lives more difficult.

"I have to comply because I don't want to get taken to court or thrown in jail," said one.

"I work every day and live from hand to mouth, making just 400 or 500 baht a day, which isn't

even enough to take care of my three children, but it is better than nothing and I don't have any alternative," she said.

One of the vendors, who identified himself only as "Daeng", said that his business, the "Armani Fashion" tailor shop as well as a tour company, has been operating on the beach for about 12 years and occupies the best spot, right at the entrance from the beach to the hotel.

"I'm not sure when the shops will be moved or when the government will have the new site ready. I went to the *OrBorTor* meeting that the Governor attended, when we were told we would have to move only after replacement stalls were built.

"But I didn't go to draw lots, because I thought it might be like past government announcements about cleaning up the beach. It's all talk and no action. This type of thing is almost getting to be like an annual festival, and I am getting sick of it," he said.

"I agree with the government that the beach should be cleaned up and I will agree to move, but they should have everything ready before they call us to come and draw lots - otherwise the whole thing is just a pie-in-the-sky dream," he said.

Kontee Warapitayut, who works for LRH's corporate arm and serves as its liaison with the government on this issue, said that he had passed along a request to help fund construction of the new stalls to LRH's management.

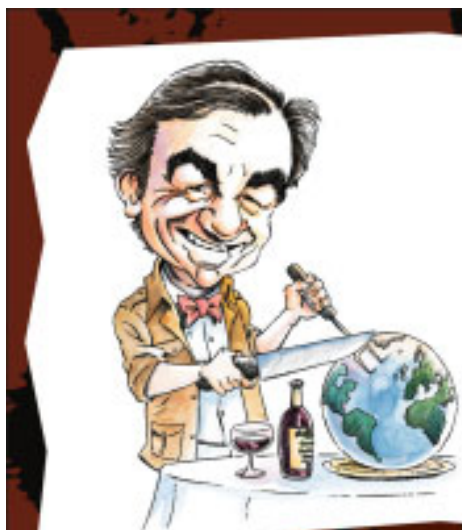
LRH is enthusiastic about the project, he said, but wants more specific information before it will commit funds.

"We want to know exactly what will happen with the money. The plan and information they have sent us so far is still somewhat unclear," he said.

Ironically, his concerns aren't much different than those of the vendor Daeng. "The deadline the committee set previously has already passed, but nothing has happened.

"I told my boss that all the vendors would be gone by now, but they aren't, so I am not so sure about this matter. What if we provide them with a budget and nothing happens then? What will we do?" he asked.

"However, if they come to us with a clear and specific plan about what they want to do, they can get the answer from us as soon as they want," he said.



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Queer News

A trio of transgressors

Three monks welcomed the end of Buddhist Lent, called *Ork Pansa*, with an over-indulgence in bad habits this year: one crashed his pickup drunk-driving, one forced himself on a young woman, and another shot and killed a fellow monk... all on the nights of October 7 and 8.

The first, a monk from Buri Ram, celebrated the end of Lent by drinking and driving to see his girlfriend in Nondang District. He ended his festivities in hospital after crashing his pickup into trees while fleeing from a police checkpoint.

Pol Lt Praman Junpakwan, duty officer of Lahansai Police Station in Buri Ram, and his Superintendent, Pol Col Prung Nakapok, arrived at the scene to find a gray Isuzu pickup that had crashed into trees about 500 meters from the Ban Kongmaidang police checkpoint.

LOST CONTROL

The front of the truck was crumpled and the driver still stuck inside. His body was covered in blood, his face and lips had been smashed on the steering wheel, several of his teeth were broken and his right leg was seriously injured.

Police at the checkpoint said they flagged the truck to pull over, but the driver ignored them and sped off. Officers saw that the driver was wearing a monk's robe and gave chase. The driver lost control on a curve and careened off the road. A search inside the truck turned up the monk's student ID card from a Buddhist university, a check for a large amount of money and a teen romance novel.

After questioning by police, the driver confessed that after Buddhist Lent ended, he had a few beers and decided to drive to see his girlfriend, but he panicked when he saw the police checkpoint and tried to drive away.

About 2 am the next day, Pol Lt Col Atikom Janin of Saraburi province, responded to a report that a girl's cries for help were heard coming from inside a monk's room at Wat Phuttanikom.

Police arrived at the *wat* and heard a girl screaming for help inside the room of Suttichai Jankeuw, a

23-year-old monk, who was with another man named only as "Sayan"; and a young woman.

The girl explained that she had helped with a funeral held earlier at the *wat*, but could not go home after the ceremony because it started to rain. Sayan, whom she knew, suggested she stay in the monk's room until the rain stopped, she said, but once she was in the room the monk locked the door. He told her that he was afraid that they would get wet.

The girl said that Sayan told her to take off her clothes so they could dry. Then Sayan and the monk repeatedly attacked her and tried to undress her, she said, but she kept fighting them and screaming for help.

Suttichai later confessed that he had been a monk since the start of Lent and was supposed to end his monkhood with a ceremony at 5 am that morning. Police said that he will be charged with indecent assault and deprivation of liberty.

At 8 pm that night, 2/Lt Somran Wongchaiya at Pakhai Police Station in Ayudaya province, responded to a call and arrived at nearby Wat Pailom to find the body of a 38-year-old monk, Phra Nikorn, lying in the prayer room. He had been shot once in the chest. A shotgun cartridge was found near his body.

FIST FIGHT

Police later arrested Suchart Kongkatong, 37, a monk at temple, for the shooting. Police said that Phra Nikorn had earlier that evening stopped a fist fight between Suchart and his friend Prateung together against a third monk at the temple.

The temple abbot heard of the fight and summoned all monks involved to "receive instruction" from him in the prayer room.

During the instruction Suchart turned his anger to Phra Nikorn and attacked him, but was soon pulled off by other monks.

His ire not slaked, Suchart stormed off to his room and returned with a shotgun and blasted Phra Nikorn once in the chest.

Suchart and Prateung minutes later left the *wat* on two motorbikes brought by friends.

Source: *Kom Chad Leuk*



TRASHING Phuket



Once one of the loveliest pieces of road on the island, the seaside stretch of the Patong-Karon Rd just north of Relax Bay and Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort now features this unsightly mess, which even includes a broken toilet bowl.

Got a place where you dump your garbage at midnight (or midday)? Don't be secretive. Share it with the rest of us. Email a picture of it and a short description to dump@phuketgazette.net



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HEAVENS ABOVE

By Supanun Supawong

Thailand Glider Club members came to test the winds above Phuket during a paragliding demonstration at Laem Phromthep October 12 and 13, hoping to encourage paragliding tourism and to increase the awareness of their sport.

The demonstration was led by Narin Lotong, paragliding instructor and a founder of the Thailand Paraglider Club, along with two other instructors. The club is now headed by Khayan Suthumma in Bangkok.

Among the onlookers on the ground were Suwalai Pinradub, Director of Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Region 4 office, and representatives from the Phuket Provincial Organization Administration and the Rawai Tambon Administration Organization.

The Phuket Paragliding Club currently has two members, Somnuek Chuepoo and Dr Prasert Theplaong. It was founded by Narin, who years ago could be seen with fellow enthusiasts gliding around Laem Phromthep and the promontory with the windmill generators just to the north.

Dr Prasert, who spends his working hours as a local dentist but his spare time in the skies above Phuket, said that he hopes the demonstration would at least educate more local people about the sport – perhaps even inspire them to take it up.

"I just enjoy paragliding as a hobby. This sport is interesting, but it is also quite dangerous, so gliders should be very careful every time they go up," he said.

"This sport has been around a long time and is well-known to foreigners, and many of them



A DIFFERENT VIEW:
Paragliding above
the lighthouse
at Laem Phromthep.

come here to paraglide, but it is still relatively unknown to most local people."

Dr Prasert said that the demonstration was well-attended, but did not go exactly as planned.

"Many people, both Thais and foreigners, came to see our demonstration. On the first day we were able to fly, but [the next day] it was pouring rain so we couldn't go up again," he said.

Paragliding is a sport that uses large kites attached to the

flyer's body and relies on the wind for lift because there no engine is used. Paragliding therefore depends entirely on the weather, which must be slightly windy with no rain.

In learning how to paraglide, the club strongly recommends having an instructor accompany you on at least your first few flights. Equipment required for paragliding includes a helmet,

rucksack, harness and, of course, a "wing". Gliders should also wear boots and trousers with thick fabric to protect themselves during the landing.

The club rates Laem Phromthep as one of the best sites in Thailand for takeoffs and landings, along with Phureua in Loei province, Khao Sadao in Nakhon Sri Thammarat (rated the best site by local gliders), Khao Son in Ratchaburi, Khao Den in Phetchaburi, Khao Prang in Chumphon, Khao Prabaht in Nakhon Ratchasima and Khao Phanghei in Chaiyaphum.

K. Narin offers gliding lessons in Rayong, considered one of the best places in Thailand to learn to paraglide. The Full Certification Flight Package costing US\$800 (32,000 baht) gives you the skills and flight time needed for to fly solo at most of the prime sites in the world.

For those looking to just enjoy the ride, a tandem flight costs US\$80 (US\$100 on weekends).

For more information, call Prasert Theplaong at Tel: 076-255336 or 09-4695571, Narin Lotong in Bangkok at Tel: 081-8152702, or visit the website at www.thaiparagliding.com.

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Some Khao Lak expats asked me recently, "Franky, why don't you write something positive about Khao Lak? Why do you have to write about accidents, flooded roads and bad stuff all the time?"

To one I replied (that was some weeks ago), "Tell me something positive that has happened in the past four weeks then!" He stood there, gasping for air like a fish in a dried-out lake.

"See?" I said. Let's be honest. During low season, especially one as bad as this one, there is hardly anything positive to write about.

Frequent flooding of roads or whole villages is just something that happens, and why should I stay silent about the fact that Bangniang Rd is a total disaster during off season? Go and have a look yourself. One needs either a jet-ski or a 4WD adventure truck to get through from Petchkasem Rd to Bangniang Beach.

The sidewalk is collapsing due to supporting gravel and sand being washed away from under it as result of a non-existent drainage system. The trees planted in the sidewalk (or what's left of them) simply pose unnecessary obstacles to pedestrians.

So what positive things should I write about then, especially when it comes down to the Bangniang area these days?

I know. Maybe I need to view things from a different perspective. Well, when I look at the sinkholes in pavement, the patterns might be considered a type of modern art. Hmm, let me see... bumpy, curved, wet in most places, with holes and cracks in between. It looks a bit like rotting dinosaur skin, doesn't it? Obviously Bangniang Rd is an urban art project.

Well I totally missed that, sorry. Oh yeah, almost forgot – very close to the dangerous, washed out curve I mentioned in my last article, a fully-loaded six-

An Irish pub and a cinema? Things are surely looking up



Green and orange – it must be Irish. The interior of the new O'Connor's Irish Pub in Khao Lak.

wheel timber truck tipped over and crashed two weeks ago. I have the photo. Wanna see it? Oops, I did it again...

It appears that as every high season approaches, the general mood in and around Khao Lak lifts by the day.

Helping to get everyone – including myself – out of the low-season blues are the recent openings of new – and very much needed – nightlife venues like the O'Connor's Irish Pub and the revamping of the well-known nightlife hot spot, the Freestyle live music pub.

Both are located near Khao

Lak center on the right-hand side of Petchkasem Rd when driving toward Takuapa.

O'Connor's made its debut on October 5 with the pub's opening party. Besides Guinness on tap (an absolute must for any Irish pub), O'Connor's offers a mouthwatering collection of homemade food such as shepherd's pie, spare ribs and fish 'n' chips, plus a comprehensive whiskey collection (don't forget to bring your check book).

The interior is stylish and cozy, providing a warm and welcoming atmosphere. It is a pleasure to spend a night out among friends there. The music on offer includes several Irish insider goodies but also big names like U2, Jimi Hendrix and Pink Floyd. Live music is planned for the high season. The staff are very friendly and attentive.

All in all, O'Connor's deserves two thumbs up for ambience and variety.

The pub is open daily all year round from 3 pm until 1 am.



ANDAMAN COASTING By Franky Gun

It has a website at: www.o-con-nors-irishpub.com

The next day, on October 6, Khao Lak residents were in for a treat. The beautifully-revamped music pub Freestyle ran the annual Miss Khao Lak beauty contest.

So far, so good... but the contest came with a twist. Contestants were all male volunteers. The very hairy and raw-looking hunks, camouflaged with make-up, wigs and women's clothes, had chosen telling names such as "Anita Schlong" (you know it!)

and "Miss Chompoo" (Miss Pink) to underline their exotic appearances with a supportive brand name.

Contestants had to perform in five evaluation rounds including artistic performances, singing and oral exams ("What would be your dream man and how would you seduce him?").

Bonus points were given for "efforts at lady-like behavior". I can tell you that the latter faded with each passing hour and the volume of beer intake.

The final round seemed to have "bottoms up" as a secretly-agreed-upon theme, as a lot of skin was shown.

A Thai local with the stage name "Oh" was finally chosen as Miss Khao Lak 2006 after a breathtaking dance act, resembling the moves of the St Vitus' Dance.

October 6 at the Freestyle will most likely make it into Khao Lak history books as one of the funniest nights in the history of Khao Lak. The Freestyle staff and management are really doing their job well and the food is superb, especially the steaks. Freestyle is definitely worth a two thumbs up (eight if I were an octopus). To inquire about upcoming events or live music, call K. Tom at Tel: 081-4856394.

Let the good times roll. There is yet more positive news: two days later, Khao Lak's first cinema, the Cinemax, opened its doors to tourists and locals looking for distraction in our little nightlife-handicapped community.

Even though the Cinemax is not a pure nightlife venue – it is open from 3 pm until midnight – it is a welcome break in the repetitive rows of souvenir and tailor shops.

The cinema is near Bangniang Beach on the left hand side of Petchkasem Rd when driving toward Takuapa, near the Land House Pool real estate office.

Movie enthusiasts may choose between the bigger indoor "loft" cinema, providing ample space for groups, or the cozy jungle huts equipped with private TV-DVD player combinations, comfortable mattresses and pillows, and located in the cinema's back yard.

The management serves snacks, including the traditional German *currywurst* and *leberkaese*, and of course the all-time cinema classic – popcorn. Soft drinks and local beers are served as well.

There are more than 200 movies to choose from, many of them with German audio tracks. Smokers are welcome.

More information about the cinema and about diving in Khao Lak can be found online, in German, at: www.divemastersven.de.

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Public Health Minister Dr Mongkol Na Songkhla has announced that the 30-baht universal health care scheme introduced by the deposed Thaksin administration will be renamed and changed.

Dr Mongkol said that he wanted to do away with the scheme's "30-baht-cures-all-diseases" slogan, which he views as a marketing gimmick used by the Thai Rak Thai Party.

He saw no good reason to charge a patient a 30-baht fee, as the money was "almost nothing to hospitals in the scheme".

"They collect the 30 baht and have to write it down in three accounts while other patients wait in a long line," he said. "It's not worth it. Let them save time to treat more patients."

Dr Mongkol noted that some small health-care centers collected only 120 baht to 150 baht a day, yet had to spend a great deal of time doing the accounts.

He said he would discuss the matter with the National Health Security Office, which oversees the scheme.

Asked when the scheme would stop charging patients 30 baht per hospital visit, Dr Mongkol said, "Very soon".

The ministry is also considering canceling use of the "gold" ID card for patients registered in the scheme. Instead, people would just show their normal ID cards, he said.

Curtailed retail: The Internal Trade Department expects the new Cabinet to soon approve legislation aimed at curbing the expansion of retail giants nationwide.

The department has drafted a bill for newly appointed Commerce Minister Krirkkrai Jirapet to present for Cabinet approval, which the department expects to come by the end of this week.

The bill is an amended version of a draft first drawn up in 2002, but which never became law because the former Cabinet did not approve it. It calls for the Ministry of Commerce to issue eight regulations as urgent measures to protect small manufacturers and suppliers from retail giants.

A source from the private retail enterprise sector expressed concern about the legislation, calling on the government to hold a public hearing.

The legislation will affect all



Thai human-rights activists stage a mock execution outside Government House after submitting an open letter to Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont calling for the abolition of the death penalty in Thailand. The group, who said they represent the US-based Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, also called for a ban on long-term shackling of prisoners. The group said life imprisonment was punishment enough for convicted criminals – however violent their crimes.

B30 health scheme to be made free

members of society – not only small retailers, but also consumers and multinational investors, the source said.

Keeping abreast: A private hospital in Bangkok specializing in cosmetic surgery lost an appeal in a defamation case against a woman who accused it of botching a breast augmentation.

The Court of Appeal Region 1 upheld a Civil Court ruling to dismiss Bangmod Hospital's libel suit against 44-year-old Yasinee Thongsibjed, who had complained to the media about the breast job.

In its suit, Bangmod accused Yasinee of causing damage to its reputation through the media. Earlier, the Civil Court had ruled that Yasinee's interviews with the press were legitimate.

Six years ago, Yasinee told a newspaper she had a breast augmentation and surgery to correct inverted nipples at Bangmod Hospital in 1998. Her breasts later developed an infection, which

eventually cleared up – but the breasts were not the same afterwards, she told the paper.

Last call: All alcohol advertising and marketing campaigns will be banned beginning December 5, His Majesty the King's birthday.

Manit Arunakul, Deputy Secretary-General of the Food and Drug Administration, said the Ministry of Public Health would approve the ban and issue the new regulations by October 21.

The measure would ban alcohol advertising in all media, except sports events broadcast live on TV from foreign countries.

Posters, signs and other materials would be pulled down. Young women working at restaurants and bars to promote beer or liquor sales would be banned, with offenders facing legal punishment.

The new laws are expected to put alcohol industry players in the same boat that cigarette companies have found themselves in.

In showing his support for the proposal, Public Health Minister Dr Mongkol Na Songkhla said the ban is needed because of the toll alcohol abuse has taken on society.

"Alcohol has caused social losses to the country for a long time. It kills and maims people from road accidents. The ads prompt more youths to be new drinkers...When the laws are enforced, the death toll from road accidents during New Year and Songkran will definitely decrease," he said.

Critics have countered that a ban on advertising will result in a price war, with lower prices actually causing a surge in alcohol consumption.

The total advertising ban was put before the Thaksin government, but never approved by its Cabinet.

Contraband crocs: Customs Department officials on October 11 seized about 200 endangered crocodiles smuggled in from

Cambodia and destined for Chinese pots. The reptiles were seized in Sri Racha Port, Chon Buri Province, following a tip-off.

"They were being smuggled for export to China," Customs Department Director-General Sathit Limpongphan said.

Sathit said this was the first time officers had seized crocodiles brought in from a neighboring country. Crocodile meat is popular among Chinese because it is believed to help enhance male sexual potency.

The customs department has focused more on wild trade this year and have seized other endangered species, he added.

The crocodiles, worth about 600,000 baht, are to be transferred to the Royal Forestry Department.

Law and order: Five police officers based at Kalasin's Muang District Police Station have been linked to the mysterious death of a teenage boy, the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) revealed on October 10.

The DSI's conclusion came as no surprise, fitting widespread suspicion by locals and relatives of the dead boy that police in the province have been involved in numerous suspicious deaths.

Kiattisak Thitbunkhrong, 17, was originally said to have hung himself in a farm hut in the neighboring province of Roi-Et in July 2004, a day after he was arrested by a team of Muang District station officers for motorcycle theft.

DSI spokesman Piyawat Kingket did not identify the five officers allegedly involved in the death.

The autopsy report found that Kiattisak was killed eight hours before his body was hung at the hut, he said.

A DSI source said the boy was silenced possibly because he knew too much about gangs stealing motorcycles in the province.

Kiattisak's grandmother sent a complaint to His Majesty the King, which led to the DSI looking into the case.

She said she believed in justice and repeated her long-held conviction that officers at Kalasin city police station had something to do with her grandson's death.

Around the Nation stories are taken from the pages of The Nation newspaper.

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Another mayor shot dead

The caretaker mayor of Tha Phae in Nakhon Sri Thammarat was shot dead at a gas station as he was filling up his Mercedes-Benz on October 8.

A gas pump attendant reported that the victim, Capt Wacharasak Anasuwan, 65, drove into the Nakhon Service Oil garage in Muang District, Nakhon Sri Thammarat, and filled up with 1,150 baht of petrol.

When he got out of the car to pay, two men on a Suzuki moped with no license plate pulled up next to him. The pillion passenger then opened fire with a pistol at close range.

When police arrived at the scene, they had to push their way through a crowd of onlookers to where Capt Wacharasak's body was lying in a pool of blood.

He had been shot with a .357 round in the crown of the head; in the neck, rupturing a major artery; and in the left ear, with the bullet exiting through the right.

On Capt Wacharasak's waist police found a magazine for a 9mm pistol and an empty holster. Police suspect the killers took the weapon with them after the killing. However, inside the car they also found another pistol, fully loaded.

When Capt Wacharasak's wife, Sub Lt Siraphon, saw the body she broke down in tears before fainting and had to be assisted by relatives.

Capt Wacharasak's term in office as Mayor of Tha Phae ended on September 20 and he was campaigning for a second term at the time of his death. The previous holder of that office also had been shot dead.

A source close to the victim revealed that Capt Wacharasak knew he was in danger and would take two or three guns with him whenever he left the house. A few months ago someone had tried to hire a gunman to kill Capt Wacharasak, but the gunman had been helped by the captain in the past so he refused to take the job and instead warned Capt Wacharasak of the approach, the source said.

Another source in the police investigation team said that the victim was one of the most well-known people in the province and had built up a network of associates since the time when he was a Sergeant Major.

When Capt Wacharasak was serving in the Royal Thai Army, he had dealings with many business circles and had "looked after" the taxis running between Nakhon Sri Thammarat and Songkhla. When he retired from the army five years ago he entered local politics.

No other candidates had entered the race in the upcoming mayoral elections as they were too awed by his prestige, the source said.

Pol Maj Gen Sudjai Yannarat, Commander of Nakhon Sri Thammarat Provincial Police, said that police were concentrating their efforts on investigating personal and political disputes, of which the victim had many. The

gunmen were almost certainly hired killers, Gen Sudjai added.

Innocents attacked: Muslim insurgents are suspected of beheading a Burmese laborer and using his head to lure local officials to a bomb in the latest episode in the ongoing violence in the deep South.

The 45-year-old Burmese shrimp farm worker, known only as Yao, was killed on October 12 in Nong Chik District.

Villagers found his severed head beside the Ban Kaena-Ban

Tanyongpao road the following morning and reported their find to the local authorities.

When officials arrived at the scene in their vehicles a bomb exploded. No one was injured. Police later found a two-meter wide crater, three meters from Yao's head.

Among the shrapnel, police found pieces of a gas cylinder and 50 meters of electric wire that led off the road to a forested area.

Officials also found a leaflet stating, "All military must leave this region. Otherwise an innocent will be killed every week."

Yao was believed to be the 20th victim of decapitation since the new wave of violence broke out in the three southernmost provinces in January 2004.

Police believe Muslim insurgents are behind all the attacks. More than 1,700 people have died in bombings and shootings in the region over the past two years and nine months.

On the same day as the explosion, Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak said that Malaysia would consider hosting peace talks between the Thai government and separatist organizations.

"Only if we are invited: then we might consider it," said Najib, who is also the defense minister.

However, representatives of the Thai government remained non-committal about the future

role of the neighboring country.

But senior Thai security officials and rebel sources said the government did not consider Malaysia, or former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammed, to be a neutral third party because of geographical proximity.

Past meetings between Thai officials and separatist leaders, facilitated by former Prime Minister of Malaysia Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, were conducted in an informal manner.

Future discussions beyond this informal setting would have to be done outside Malaysia and without Kuala Lumpur's participation or interference, said one security officer on condition of anonymity.

"This is extremely sensitive for Thailand. The issue is one of internal disagreement," he said.

A prominent Muslim activist in the Malay-speaking south, Munsoe Saleh,

said European countries with experience in mediating talks between rebels and governments would be a better mediator than Malaysia.

Bull's-eye: The owner of a bull-fighting stadium in Trang was gunned down at the wheel of his pickup truck while driving back from a ceremony at a local temple on the evening of October 11.

Police at the scene found Bantun Khuthok, 62, as known as "Ko Jui", slumped over the steering wheel. He had been shot in the back of the head and in the chest. A passenger, Sayan Saksawat, 60, had been shot once in the right shoulder, while another passenger, Thanee Chanasak, was unharmed.

Witnesses reported that a motorcycle pulled in front of Ko Jui's pickup truck and the pillion passenger fired five shots from a pistol into the driver's side of the windshield. The motorcycle then turned round and the passenger fired another four shots into the driver's window. Police collected nine 9mm cartridge cases and five bullets at the scene.

Police said that they believe the motive for the assassination to be a personal dispute and not connected to the victim's bull-fighting stadium.

Around the South is taken from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek



Around 10,000 people turned out for the 'pull the monk' parade on October 8 in Songkhla. The parade is held annually to mark the end of Buddhist Lent (Ork Phansa).

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TALES OF A TRAVELER

By Ed Peters

Guam, they say, is where America's day starts. But for first-time visitors, it is also where an entrancing conundrum begins.

Is Guam really part of the US? The malls, fast food outlets and roaming military seem to say yes. Or is it actually a Pacific Island, as the rotund, easy-going, Chamorro islanders would have it? Or more improbably, an offshoot of Japan, as the flurry of kanji characters on storefronts and in hotels suggests?

You could drop Guam's 551 square kilometers in the middle of the US and it wouldn't even make a blip; the island is closer to Tokyo than to Washington DC; and its swaying palms and sandy beaches say "altered states" rather than "United States".

There is probably no definitive answer to Guam's elusive identity, but there is certainly much to be gained by searching for it.

Many of the threads of this quirky island's current persona run back through its history, which is one of recurrent migration at this Pacific crossroads.

Portuguese navigator and explorer Ferdinand Magellan made landfall in the 16th century, reporting that the laughing, care-free Chamorro men were handsome and powerful and that their women were "opulent, voluptuous and graceful".

Jesuit missionaries arrived in 1688, intent on proselytizing and restraining anybody who looked like being both too carefree and voluptuous at the same time.

By the end of the 19th century the Americans had moved in, only to be dislodged by the Japanese invasion shortly after the



Guam, the island of Chamorro today

attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. They, in turn, were driven out three years later.

The Japanese still come to Guam in their hordes, but armed only with camcorders and intent on carrying off booty that's duty free. Getting married also ranks as one of the more popular souvenirs.

Thus was the stage set for Guam's multi-cultural image today, one whose facets are reflected wherever you go on the island. Touring round, the road loops over bridges built two centuries before, past splendidly verdant golf courses of rather more recent construction, and waterfalls which have cascaded down

mountainsides for eons.

One of Guam's mini landmarks is the cave in which Sergeant Shoichi Yokoi of the Imperial Japanese Army spent the best part of three decades hiding and waiting for news of victory. Emerging in 1972, probably to a certain amount of disappointment but with a unique CV, he returned to Japan a hero. The tools he made to help him survive remain on display at a museum in Agaña.

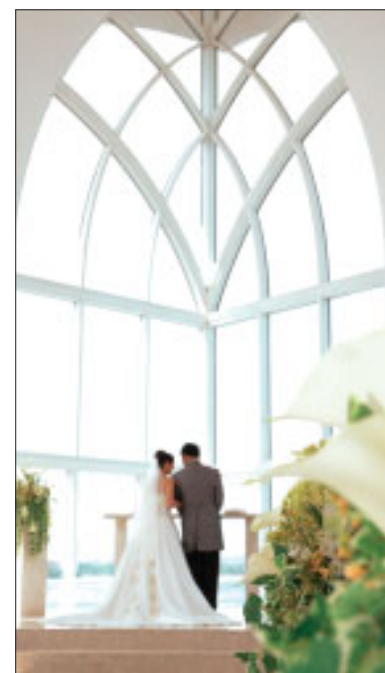
There is one place to stop for lunch in this neck of the woods, the slightly kitsch Jeff's Pirates Cove, a souvenir shop-cum restaurant-cum bar with Jolly Rogerish overtones. The best spot to sit is outside, with a

view of the sea which covers the edge of the Mariana Trench just offshore. The bottom of the trench is some 11,000 meters from the surface of the Pacific.

This also marks some of the best of Guam's scuba diving, with some 300 species of coral and more than 900 varieties of fish to be seen, including whales, sharks, and dolphin. Naturally, the fishing is good too – a record marlin caught here in 1969 weighed an astonishing 528 kilograms.

For all the outward vestiges of Americana, Guam still has a strong grip of its own history, and the natural attractions of the island are its greatest draw.

From Mariana to marriages, this is one paradise that is quite specific to the Pacific



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August 8, 2001 was a monumental day for Singapore's vibrant lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) community. It was the day that the city state saw its first private, well-publicized party for the LGBT community, the Nation party.

Last year the party, frowned upon by Singapore's straitlaced leaders, was staged in Phuket. This year it's back. The CEO of organizers Fridae.com, Dr Stuart Koe, spoke with the *Gazette's* Andy Johnstone in advance of the Nation VI party in Karon, and explained why this will be the last one.

GOING OUT WITH A BANG

From 2001 until mid-2005, the Nation party was the highlight of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) year in Singapore. "A gay party? Big deal," a person from the liberated Occident or indeed elsewhere in the Orient might be forgiven for thinking.

Yet homosexuality – described in Section 377 of the Singapore Penal Code as: "...voluntarily...carnal intercourse against the order of nature", that is, any form of sexual intercourse which does not have the potential for procreation, is illegal in the city state.

"Are you English, Andrew?" Stuart asks. "Well, Statute 377 – the anti-sodomy laws – are actually a hand-me-down from the British," he says politely, without any hint of recrimination.

I find myself mumbling a bumbling-Brit apology, although Stuart readily says none is necessary.

"It's a throwback law; variants of it exist in many of the countries that were once part of the British Empire – India, Pakistan, Singapore and others, but not, for example Hong Kong or

Australia, which repealed its law three years ago.

"Singapore, unfortunately, hasn't, but that's due in part to the conservative nature of the government," he notes with a wry and slightly weary smile – he is busy making the final arrangements for this year's party, Nation VI.

Interestingly, Lord Thomas Macaulay, who drafted the Indian Penal Code – including the sections relating to sexual offenses – which served as the basis for most British colonial law, remained a bachelor, an unusual situation for a man in Victorian times.

The Nation parties from 2001 to 2004 were roaring successes, garnering as many as 8,000 partygoers – lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and straight – and heralded what many felt was a softening of the "benignly-dictatorial" government's anti-LGBT stance, which had grown harder in the preceding two decades.

"Then as now, people flew in from Hong Kong, Australia, the US, Thailand and many other Asian countries, as well as Europe," says Stuart.

A squad of uniformed police officers made a one-off visit

during the course of the evening, saw that there was nothing dreadful happening and left the 1,500 revelers to enjoy themselves.

There was some concern that, despite police acceptance of the first Nation party, and the big business sponsorship the event, the second Nation party might not go ahead.

Such fears were, in fact, unfounded; Nation.02 received some 2,500 guests and had sponsorship from such corporations as Qantas and Pepsi.

Nation.03 was an even bigger success. Figures for partygoers ran to some 4,500. It was also a watershed in terms of acceptance in Singaporean media.

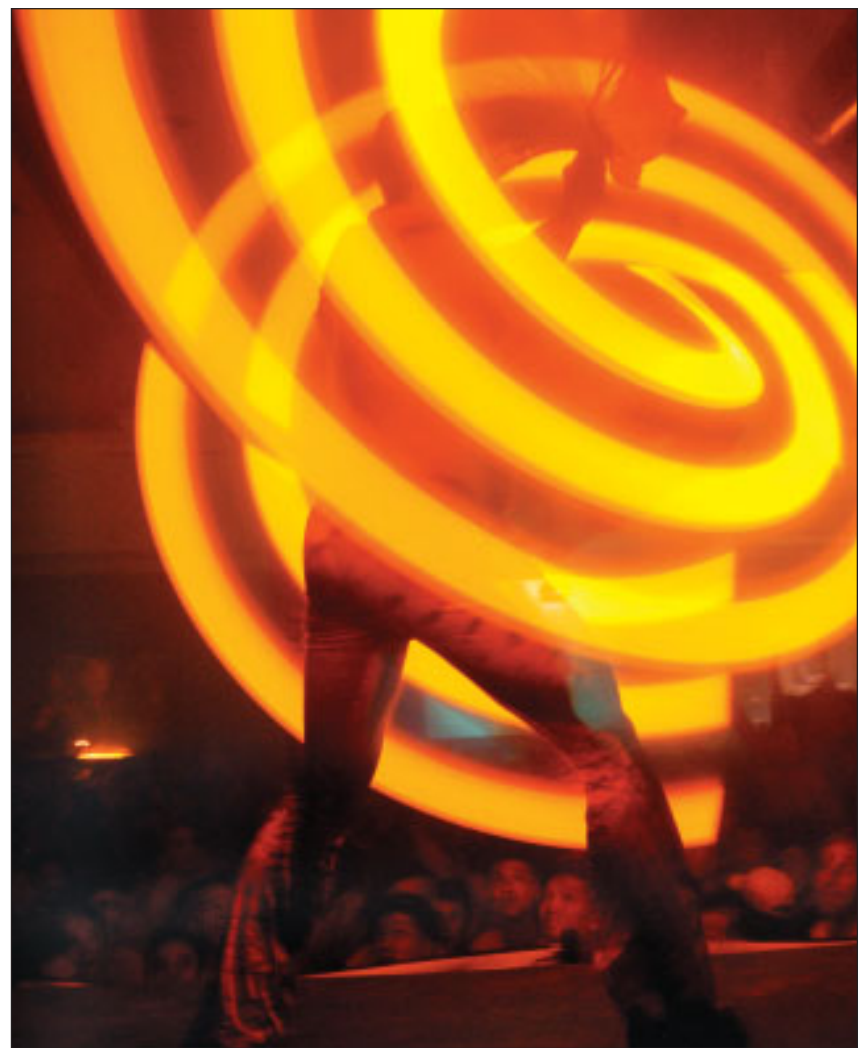
Scenes from the bash were shown on Singaporean TV and the event was portrayed in a positive light, with one TV station stating "Nation.03 can be seen as a gauge of Singapore's tolerance."

All went well until a few months after Nation.04, which attracted 8,000 fun-seekers, when the Public Entertainment Licensing Unit (PELU) of the Singaporean police refused to grant a license for the SnowBall party, which was due to have been held on December 26.

Remarks were made about the hypocrisy of the refusal, particularly as Nation.04 was nominated for "Best Event Experience" in the 2005 Singapore Tourism Awards.

In April 2005, the PELU rejected Fridae's application to host Nation.05, claiming the party to be "contrary to public interest".

Fridae upped sticks and



brought the party – as well as more than 1,000 revelers – to Phuket.

Despite some initial reluctance from the Kata-Karon Municipality, the party went ahead and was a success – all the more welcome for the island in the lean post-tsunami year.

Although Stuart says that the government's attitude toward the LGBT community in Singapore has not worsened, he ex-

plains that the community has been testing the waters and trying to be more visible.

"But we've found that there are limits as to how much public space the government is willing to allow us to have. [The government] has not clamped down on the community – so long as we are not too visible about it," he says.

"Nation was very visible, Fridae has been very vocal and I think the government was uncomfortable with that. The [gay] bars and clubs are still in existence, still operational... So long as the gay community doesn't have a voice in the public arena, then the government is fine with that."

In Stuart's words, "[The government] has actually gone ahead and silenced us in the media. For example, I specifically am not allowed to be interviewed by journalists [for broadcast in Singapore] on any subject. If I am interviewed, then I'll usually be cut out of the story. The media are not allowed to run any positive stories about the gay community."

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Dr Stuart Koe: 'Nation was very visible, Fridae has been very vocal and I think the [Singapore] government was uncomfortable with that.'

8,000 people attending – was not mentioned in *The Straits Times*.”

Despite this, Stuart is confident that the first four Nation parties demonstrated that Singapore is a different country from what most people outside the nation believed it to be.

“It has an awful reputation of banning chewing gum and caning vandals... Those are the soundbites you get outside Singapore.”

“But [the Nation parties provided] a breath of fresh air. Things were happening in Singapore that nobody expected.”

Stuart describes those years of the Nation parties as “...great PR for Singapore [outside the country],” before suggesting, “but

I don't think that Singapore itself viewed it quite the same way.”

Another obstacle for the gay community, Stuart said, were the Christian fundamentalists. “I'm not really sure how large that group is, or how powerful its voice is, but it is certainly a loud voice.”

But this, argues Stuart, is in contrast to what he views as a “surprisingly laissez-faire attitude” to homosexuality held by the majority of Singaporeans.

“I think that Asian culture – generally – views sexuality as a very private issue, not something that they talk about. In [Fridae's] dealings – as a company – yes, we have come across some individuals and companies that are



uncomfortable with the topic, but none that have demonstrated outright discrimination toward us,” he adds.

The attitude from the government appears to be rather confused, says Stuart, with Fridae enjoying good working relationships with the certain agencies.

“We've worked with the Singapore Tourism Board, the Ministry of Health, the National Arts Council... I suppose that these bodies are more pragmatic, and understand what the world is like.”

The problem in Singapore, he states, is that, “Different groups, different people do not have a voice to represent them. The gay community is disenfranchised; we don't really have a ‘champion’ to help us seek redress or get legal reforms.

“What Fridae tried to do is to mobilize the community to show that they can lead their lives in a more fulfilling, less fearful

way, but that was clamped down upon. We wanted to change things through the people, and not by, for example, lobbying the government directly.”

Any change, he says, will come from the top down. “It will probably be a rather arbitrary decision by someone in the government who says, ‘You know what? This doesn't really matter and we should move on.’

“It won't come through the voting process or by voices being heard. I don't think that any change will come within the next 10 years, but who knows?”

Yet the gay community does require its voice to be heard.

Stuart revealed that Nation VI will be Fridae's last event – the end of an era.

“When we first started throwing parties, the concept of a multi-day gay party with international DJs and punters flying in from around the world was fairly novel in Asia. Now, there are a

number of impressive party organizers in the region – it is time for Fridae to focus on empowering the Asian gay community through other means.

“Meanwhile, Fridae will remain committed to supporting and working closely with party organizers in the region as we have been.”

Fridae will focus on building its portal, with Version 5 and a new women's portal, Friday, due for launch in early 2007. Version 5 is expected to integrate many “Web 2.0” features such as blogging, photo and video sharing, as well as “innovative features to enhance the experience of Fridae's members”.

Based on audited traffic data from Nielsen/Netratings, Fridae.com attracts 380,000 visitors and 50 million page views every month.

“I think that this kind of traffic makes us the largest [gay interest] portal in the region, and we project that this will grow tenfold in the next few years,” adds Stuart.

In addition, Fridae plans to launch a new advocacy network of activists, legal counselors and support groups.

“Gays and lesbians in Asia continue to be subjected to institutional and political discrimination, homophobia and stigmatization. One way to overcome this is for the various stakeholders across Asia to come together, learn from one another, and collaborate,” says Stuart.

A smiling Stuart says, “Nation.VI will be the grand finale – going out with a bang.”

Nation.VI is being held at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa until October 22. Visit www.fridae.com/nation and www.twoqueensparty.com for more information.

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This week



MAN! ARE YOU HOT! Watermark General Manager Stuart Bird is chatted up by VJ Alex at an MTV Thailand event at the restaurant on October 6.



HIGH-SPEED TALKERS: Jirayut Rungsrithong (center), Assistant Managing Director of Finance, and Marut Buranasettakul (left) Assistant Managing Director of Marketing and Sales of CAT Telecom help to launch the company's new CDMA high-speed wireless multimedia system at Central Festival on September 30.



JEWELS IN THE CROWN: Hajo von Keller (center), Managing Director of The Mangosteen Resort & Spa; Azuan Noordin (left), the resort's General Manager; and John Sears, Chief Operations Officer of Boutique Hotels & Resorts International (BHRI), celebrate the resort being designated a BHRI Diamond Collection Hotel.



HOPE FLOATS: Ian Marsh, Executive VP and Managing Director, Asia Pacific, of Western Union, hands over a symbolic model boat to a fishermen's representative in Klong Tom, Krabi. After the tsunami, Western Union set up the Thai Tsunami Long Tail Fishing Boat Relief Fund, raising money worldwide to replace boats destroyed by the wave.



MOUNTAIN OF WINE: Snapped at the launch of the Sawasdee Khao Yai wine brand in Phuket are winemaker BB Groups Trading CEO Sorapat Tongprasroeth (left); WINE Co General Manager Thitima Tantivit (2nd from right); and Ekasit Sunthonnon, Chief Marketing Officer of BB Group (right), with wine-tasting guests. The launch took place at the Patong Resort Hotel on October 8.



STARS AFLOAT: Singer Patiphan 'Mos' Pataveekarn (2nd from left) and Actress Primmda 'Pim' Boriraksuppakorn (right) arrived at the Royal Phuket Marina on October 3 to film a segment of their lifestyle show, *Island Traveling*. They are pictured receiving welcome gifts from the marina's Director of Operations, Andrew Jordan (left) and PR & Events Manager Jeanette Skelton.

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I tell myself that punching the ATM won't help, but I do it anyway. I have just 518 baht to my name. I will have to budget fiercely and stop going out, it is time to be sensible and first thing tomorrow I must find a job.

About an hour and a half later I am dancing, pissed out of my noggin, next to a heavily-tattooed prostitute on a table at Lucifer Club on Patpong Rd.

Suddenly, I turn to find myself facing a very attractive, very well proportioned young Thai woman.

Of course, to the newcomer, almost all Thai women are very attractive.

But the bar is raised considerably when Thailand has been home for almost four years and you've become used to beautiful women being the norm.

OBSESSION

The type of women I find attractive are those who are objects of obsession with backpackers and objects of lust with expats.

They are heart-breakers and holiday spoilers – fashionably arrogant, cool-headed, cold-hearted bitches who know the final score before the game even starts.

This femme fatale looking at me across at the bar with a wry smile appears to be no exception.

She is eggshell-skinned,

round and buxom where women should be round and buxom, her provocative "come hither" eyes look hungry for adventure and give her face the kind of recalcitrant look that suggests that she was more than likely expelled from school.

"I've got no money and I'm not on holiday!" I shout above the din, hoping that I am not slurring. I don't think I am, but hey, who am I to judge?

She shrugs her shoulders and puts her mouth to the straw taking a slow slurp of her Bacardi Breezer without breaking eye contact.

"I just come here with my friend, I am not working same every girl," she says, lighting a cigarette.

"I never said you were," I reply, confidently sharp and

CAPITAL Letter

By Stiffy Rectangle

The *Gazette's* Man in the Capital meets the girl of his dreams. She's gorgeous, she's not a working girl, she has her own apartment and gives him her number. The dream, of course, does not come true.

pleased with my confidence and sharpness.

And so begins a conversa-

tion of sorts, a flirtatious but moderately intelligent conversation that is cut short some 20 minutes later when the lights go up and the music stops.

"Where are you staying?" she asks, and I realize with horror that I am wearing the oldest, ugliest, most wash-faded set of underwear that I own.

"With my friend," I reply, "Do you have a number – maybe we can meet for lunch tomorrow?" I cross my fingers hoping it works, it usually does... and it does.

"I am renting apartment not far from here," she says, looking over her shoulder at her friends who are waiting for her. "Wait for me downstairs. Five minutes, ok?"

Now this is great, but a little too good to be true so I don't ex-

pect her to be there five minutes later. Yet there she is, and five minutes after that we arrive at her modest rented apartment where I take a shower while she nips out to 7-Eleven, returning with two bottles of Spy Red and two toothbrushes.

What happens next is par for the course yet relentlessly baffling for one such as I who deep down longs to be a caterpillar but always ends up a butterfly.

MATING RITUAL

This is not so much out of choice but because it takes two to tango, and the dancing that goes on in Lucifer's is not the tango, more of a mating ritual, though to be fair this is true of discotheques the world over.

I live in hope that some kind of relationship could blossom from a one-night stand, and yet despite her ardor when we awake in the early afternoon, I have a hunch she will not be at her friend's café later – where we have arranged to meet at 5pm.

Sure enough, she never does show.

I figure that she is probably so modern that she'd simply wanted a one-night stand; a shame because she would have made a great 28-night stand or a stand for however long I was going to be stuck in this city while looking for a job.



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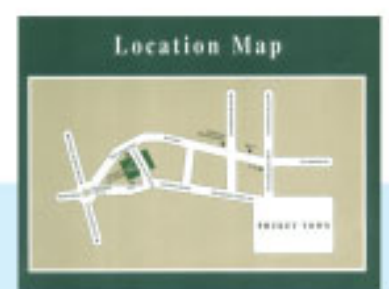
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Pruerk-Lawan	120.6	8,900,000	100,000	4,450,000	4,350,000
Pruerk-Pirom	99.6	9,900,000	100,000	4,950,000	4,850,000



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HOMEMADE ICE CREAM HITS PHUKET

By Tanisa Bunyasiwa
& Janyaporn Morel

Ice cream lovers may think that their delectable delight would be hard to find during these rainy, dreary months when demand is low and sun-baked beach tourists are scarce.

But if they are under that mistaken impression, they are missing out on Re Gelato, an Italian ice cream shop in Patong. The Italian ice creams found in Re Gelato are homemade in the same style as the thick treat that can be found in Rome.

Re Gelato owner Andrea Bouolis told the *Gazette* that there are about 50 different flavors of gelato available at the shop, which uses many different kinds of raw ingredients.

"It's not difficult to make the Italian-style ice cream here because we only had to import the machines, creams and powdered milk from Italy. The other ingredients, such as fresh fruits, we can easily find here.

"We use mango, banana, passion fruit, coconut, lemon, orange and other fruits that are available seasonally, and we also use non-native fruits such as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries and kiwi fruit, as well as chocolate," he said.



Doubly cool: Water melon ice cream from ViVa.

Andrea said that the Italian ice cream tastes different from its American cousin because it has less fat. Gelato has a maximum of only about 9% fat while American ice cream has about 13% fat. The gelato, however, is sweeter as it has more sugar.

Another difference from market ice cream is that less air

is added into gelato, only about 30%, compared with the 100% to 200% increase in air that regular ice cream includes. This means that gelato is thicker than American ice cream, said Andrea.

Re Gelato is in Patong, just in front of the Paradise Complex on Rat-U-Thit Rd. Outside it offers two sets of tables and comfortable chairs, while the inside features large windows to enjoy people-watching while you eat. Andrea said he hopes to open a second location in Patong within a few months.

In the shop freezer, there are 35-plus flavors to choose from, ranging in price from 60 baht to 200 baht, depending on the size of the order. One kilo



Just part of the huge selection of ice cream at Re Gelato.

takeaway orders are available at 500 baht.

Re Gelato allows its customers to mix and match their orders, and since the store uses a spoon instead of a scoop to dish out their desserts, any number of flavors can be mixed for either immediate consumption or takeaway.

Re Gelato is open daily from 9 am to 1 am, and will stay open until 3am in the high season. At night it is very popular with tourists as well as regular customers.

Another line of ice cream homemade in Phuket is produced by ViVa for wholesale, and then sold at hotels and stores across the island. ViVa uses an ice cream recipe from Vienna, Austria.

The ViVa homemade treat emphasizes healthy ice cream made from the many fresh fruits found in Thailand, much as Re Gelato does.

ViVa wholesales to restaurants and four- and five-star hotels on Phuket, including Pan Yaah Thai and Baan Rim Pa restaurants in Patong, Don's Cafe in Rawai, Wan Jai Restaurant in front of Phuket Rajabhat University, Tropical Kata Hotel and Surin Beach Resort.

ViVa Managing Director Jiravud Silpasophon became interested in making ice cream because it can be eaten year-round in Thailand.

"In Vienna, ice cream can be sold only four months a year, so I thought that if we can make Vienna-style ice cream here, and develop new recipes appropriate to the raw materials we have in Thailand, it would be a good business," he said.

"We have many kinds of Thai fruits to blend into the ice

cream, but it's a complex process making Thai-fruit, Viennese-style ice cream taste good.

"After some experimentation, we finally figured it out. The Thai fruits are more acidic and juicy, so some are not suitable for ice cream. But the others that we use are very delicious," he added.

ViVa has more than 50 flavors that can be made on demand. All fruits are frozen so they can be prepared in individual batches in order to keep the ice cream fresh.

"Thai fruits were selected as the core concept of ViVa, and now our *Ka Torn* (Thai fruit) Sorbet is a hot order.

"ViVa flavors tend to be more sour, less sweet, but very good smelling," K. Jiravud said.

ViVa also has many flavors of sherbets and other colorful desserts such as bombes (a combination of ice cream flavors) and pudding.

Customers can taste the delicacies at the mentioned restaurants or can buy it in bulk directly from ViVa.

Prices for the individual scoops depend on the venue serving it, but Jiravud hopes to open a retail store soon.

Re Gelato. 141/17 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong, Kathu, Phuket 83150. Tel/Fax: 076-340886 or Tel: 084-8498212 (Dararath Klongprong). Email: dararath2000@hotmail.com

ViVa Vienna Ice Cream. 12/47 Moo 2, Thepanusorn Rd, Vichit, Muang, Phuket 83000. Tel. 081-7470971 (Jiravud Silpasophon). Email: sophonexport@hotmail.com Website: www.vivaicecream.com

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Celeb watching goes realtime

Following the glamorous lives of Hollywood personalities and other global celebrities has long been a popular pastime for bored housewives and star-struck teenagers.

But thanks to recent developments in technology and media-gathering, the shenanigans of the rich and shameless are becoming impossible to escape.

Nowadays there's no getting away from the daily dose of celebrity news.

From the never-ending stories about the babies of TomKat and Brangelina – the Hollywood pairings of Tom Cruise-Katie Holmes and Brad Pitt-Angelina Jolie – to Mel Gibson's recent foul-mouthed drunken diatribe, not a day passes without some celebrity case making a splash in the public consciousness.

"We've always had an appetite for celebrity gossip," says Robert Thompson, Trustee Professor of Television and Popular Culture of Syracuse University.

"What's different now is that there are just so many other venues in which this stuff can play. Even if you're not interested, all these stories are shouting at you, its everywhere on TV and the Internet."

Driving the explosion of celebrity news is a new breed of website – celebrity blogs, devoted not to worshipping the famous, but to laughing at them.

The catty website thesuperficial.com says it all: "Our goal is to make fun of as many people as possible."

Many of these websites derive their information from the traditional gossip venues and the hordes of paparazzi they employ to track the every move of the beautiful people.

Newspapers such as the *New York Daily News*, the *National Enquirer* and the British tabloid *The Sun* can never get enough juicy stories about the stars. Then there are magazines such as *People*, *Us Weekly* and *Life & Style* that also have a voracious appetite for celebrities.

But while many of these publications work hand-in-hand with Hollywood PR honchos and are well-known for massaging the

When it starts to travel over into the Today show and CNN, and supposedly reliable and accurate news programs, then you just go, This is insane. People are getting fed a lot of bull.

– Jennifer Aniston talking about reports of her supposed engagement to movie co-star Vince Vaughn



Mel Gibson's recent drunken brush with the law made it into respectable media such as the BBC (above), but was first reported by celebrity-watch website TMZ.com

stars, many websites take the raw materials of pictures and sightings and mash them up into an altogether spicier product.

For the likes of gawker.com, thesuperficial.com, perezhilton.com or defamer.com, no photo is too nasty and no comment too inane to be splashed on a web page.

"It's way more satisfying," says self-described gossip addict Linda Cunningham, a loan officer in a Los Angeles bank.

"Instead of being these puff pieces about how wonderful everyone is, it shows the stars as the conceited egotistical maniacs that they probably are. That's what gossip's all about."

Another big change is the

immediacy of the news. Celebrity magazines like *People* or *Entertainment Weekly* used to hit the stands once a week, but the gossip cycle now takes place in real time.

"We don't have publishing cycles like magazines and newspapers, and we don't have time periods like TV shows," says Harvey Levin of TMZ.com, which scooped the world on Gibson's well publicized rant after he was stopped for speeding at the end of July.

"That gives us a huge competitive advantage when it comes to breaking stories."

Sites like Gawker and Defamer have other advantages.

They enlist the cellphone camera fans to send in sightings of stars going about their everyday lives.

Gawker goes a step further, by embedding the celebrity sightings into a Google map of New York City that shows at a glance where the stars are hanging out.

"These deputy paparazzis allow us to see celebrities behaving badly," Thompson says.

"With the penetration of that tech everyone with a camera is ready to jump into action."

The loose standards and sarcastic style of the celebrity watching blogs allow them to publish unsubstantiated rumors and hearsay with little danger of legal action.

The problem is when more reputable outlets seek to grab headlines by following the same stories and end up repeating fabricated nonsense.

According to Jennifer Aniston, the false report of her engagement to her Vince Vaughn, co-star in *The Break Up*, is typical of the symptom.

"When it starts to travel over into the Today show and CNN, and supposedly reliable and accurate news programs, then you just go, 'This is insane. People are getting fed a lot of bull,'" she told *People* recently.

The misleading information about her relationship signified a much deeper problem of mainstream media outlets spinning tales of their own.

"If we're listening to the news, we're supposed to be believing in the news," Aniston said.

"We need to trust what our newscasters are saying, when we have this horrific situation that's actually taking place in the world. I mean, we are getting [told] the truth, right?"

– Andy Goldberg, dpa

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Ocean
Life's pleasure

Happily losing the Battle of the Bulge

Jean-Marie Tilleul is almost as passionate about sailing as he is about baking. He sold his long-established and highly successful bakery La Bastogne in Brussels 12 years ago to sail around the world.

He began baking when he was 14, and went on to become a master baker. "That's 44 years ago," teases his bubbly wife, Josie "Josie" Ramaye, from Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean.

The two met in Mauritius two years into Jean-Marie's voyage. It was love at first sight and Josie, only 17 at the time, abandoned her studies to accompany Jean-Marie on the trip of a lifetime.

They stopped in the Caribbean for four years where they worked for Le Petit St Vincent Resort in the heart of the Grenadines. Jean-Marie trained the kitchen staff in baking, making

Guest chef

By Patsy Kitzoff

pastries, working with chocolate and making ice cream.

His excellence in these areas is plain to see at his bakery and café, also named La Bastogne, opposite Wat Chalong on Chao Fa West Rd. To listen to the constant Gallic chatter, you could be forgiven for thinking you were actually in Brussels.

Jean-Marie and Josie decided to give their sea legs a rest when they landed on Phuket's shores three years ago. About 18 months ago, they opened La Bastogne, making and selling a wide range of breads, pastries, cakes, tarts, biscuits, chocolates, baguette sandwiches and quiches.

Their fare is best washed

down with one of their delicious espressos or cappuccinos.

Jean-Marie named his bakeries after his hometown of Bastogne, which was destroyed during the eponymous battle of December 1944 to January 1945 that was part of the larger Battle of the Bulge.

Jean-Marie and Josie hope that readers of the *Gazette* and patrons of their bakery will not have their own "Battle of the Bulge" to contend with.

Here are three recipes from Jean-Marie. La Cramique, Belgium's famous loaf, is traditionally accompanied with a cup of hot chocolate and is a typical indulgence at Christmas or Easter.

La Bastogne. Opposite Wat Chalong on Chao Fa West Rd, Chalong. Open 7 am to 6 pm, closed Sundays and Mondays. Tel/Fax: 076-381461.



Broccoli Quiche Makes 8 small quiches

Ingredients:

500ml whipping cream;
250g Gruyère or Emmenthal cheese, grated;
6 whole eggs;
150g steamed broccoli florets;
Salt, pepper and thyme to taste;
Enough pastry dough to line eight 10cm-long baking tins.

Method:

Line each baking tin with a single,

thin layer of dough. Place the broccoli florets on the bottom. Place a layer of cheese on the broccoli.

Add the rest of the cheese to the eggs and whipping cream, then mix together.

Fill the pastry lining with the egg, cheese and cream mix, nearly to the top, place the baking tins on a baking tray and put for 10 minutes in an oven preheated to 220°C. Reduce to 200°C and bake for a 20 minutes more.

Eat hot or cold, ideally with a green salad.

La Cramique (traditional Belgian loaf) Makes 8 small loaves

Ingredients:

1kg strong flour;
200g butter;
100g fine white sugar;
5 whole eggs;
300g golden dry raisins (to personal preference);
6ml warm milk;
1 teaspoon dry yeast;
1 teaspoon salt.

Method:

Mix the yeast, warm milk and about 60g of flour in a bowl, and leave covered overnight. Early the next morning, add the sugar, butter, eggs and salt. Fold by hand or very slowly in a dough mixer to make a dry – not sticky – dough.

Cover the bowl and leave to rise for half an hour in a warm place.



Add the raisins to the dough. Cut into 250g portions and roll before placing into baking tins. Leave for one hour. Bake for five minutes in an oven preheated to 220°C and then 10 minutes at 190°C.

Mousse aux deux Chocolats (Sponge cake filled with 2 chocolate mousses) Serves 8 people

Ingredients for the sponge cake:

8 whole eggs;
250g sugar;
250g sifted plain flour;
1 glass of dessert wine (optional).

Method:

Whisk eggs and sugar together with an electric mixer until they have doubled in volume. By hand, gently fold in the flour until the ingredients have completely blended, then pour into a deep, lined, 20-cm cake tin. Place in an oven preheated to 190°C for 15 to 20 minutes. Turn out onto a wire cooling rack when baked.

Many sponge cake recipes call for the addition of baking powder or another raising agent. Jean-Marie omits these, consid-



ering that the air incorporated into the egg mixture is sufficient for a good rise without the need for extra raising agents.

Ingredients for one mousse:

6 egg yolks;
200ml whipping cream;
300g chocolate (white or dark, depending on which mousse

you are making);
300g sugar;
300ml egg whites.

Method:

Melt chocolate in a bain-marie (a Pyrex bowl floating in a pan of gently boiling water will do) and leave to cool. In a mixing bowl, whisk the egg whites with a third of the sugar until stiff. Then beat whipping cream with another third of the of sugar until thick, and beat the egg yolks with the remaining portion of sugar until they become glossy and slightly frothy.

In the mixing bowl, add the melted chocolate mixture to the egg yolks and mix with a spatula before adding the whipping cream. Mix them all together by hand before gently folding in the egg whites.

Cut the cake into three layers, pouring the dessert wine – if used – onto each layer of sponge as the cake is built up before sandwiching them together again with the two chocolate mousses.

Cover the top and the sides with the remaining mousse and decorate with shavings of white and dark chocolate.



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Laugh? I could have cried

OK, guys, tell us the truth. What do you think puts a woman in the sexy category? being a model? An actress? Having a Lara Croft body complete with matching collagen lips?

What do females really need to do to grab a guy's attention? Phuket has an abundance of women sitting prettily in hotel restaurants, spending hours in the spa, and driving round in fancy cars. Does this impress you and send your pulse racing? Is it enough to put a woman on your "most wanted" list? I think not.

The sexiest women in Britain, apparently, are comedienne Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders. Why? Because they are funny. Nothing is more appealing than a funny woman, according to a survey of British men in their 30s. Laughter is apparently a much deeper thing than, for example, saying a woman has the perfect bottom or is really stunning.

If a woman can't make a man laugh she's got no soul. I think it's easier to impress a man by making him laugh than it is to spend hours looking perfect and then not having anything interesting to say all night.

The male is a simple competitive being, like a greyhound – he just wants to catch the rabbit, eat it and then go to sleep.

AMBROSIA'S

ambrosia@phuketgazette.net



SECRETS

Satire, parody, ribald rhyme, wit and jokes about a certain part of the anatomy are definitely one way to a man's heart. The key is not being afraid to say what you think. Isn't that what a sense of humor is, the freedom to recognize this and to crack a joke, no matter how inappropriate?

Women also put humor high on their list when asked what they want in a man. You can't admire someone for a lifetime just for his or her looks. Take Greta Garbo, for example. She may have been a screen goddess, but Greta wasn't exactly known for her rollicking party pieces. She just

"vonted" to be alone. And ven you're alone, the whole world does not laff viss you.

However, some guys feel threatened by any woman with a sense of humor; men often see humor as a weapon. This is because the male is a simple competitive being, like a greyhound – he just wants to catch the rabbit, eat it and then go to sleep.

I suppose some boys can't deal with the fact that there are some women out there who are funnier and much more subtle than they are. Men are very sensitive about being laughed at. Each possesses a large and frag-

ile ego, much like a Ming vase, but not as rare or attractive. The problem is that they want women to hold their vases, fondle them, and praise them for being so bulbous.

Joking apart, though, and without shattering too many ego-vases, we really have to take into account that guys who are insecure weaklings just can't stand women to be funnier than them. I refer to chaps who guzzle Chang, wear football kit in public and have shaved heads. They can only have meek doormat girlfriends. My advice is to give them a miss. Such men are bound by outdated tradition and are afraid of strong women.

You can see the importance of laughter in a happy relationship.

It is more important than, say, a prenuptial agreement – an idea I have never understood. We get married and if I don't like you in two months, I still get to keep the Merc. Hardly the stuff of traditional romantic novels, is it?

A prenuptial laughter agreement makes much more sense. I hereby promise to stop doing the squirrel noise after two years and you swear to come up with new jokes to replace all those vicar-

shagging gags you learned down the pub with your mates.

Think of all the relationships that could be saved if couples could surprise each other with fresh stories. Can you imagine having to sit through Richard Gere's laugh-packed Dalai Lama anecdotes for the hundredth time? No wonder Cindy Crawford left him.

Women are naturally funny because they have to be. They suffer more than men, they work harder, and they endure more physical pain.

Humor is the great leveler that reminds us we're not here for a long time, we're here for a good time. There are degrees of "serious", and that is what defines us and separates us.

Men are gradually learning to accept funny girls. At long last some of them are beginning to see the light. Humor makes for understanding and love. It's also less painful and lasts longer than collagen implants.

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.

The following is from an official Malaysian government document called *The Malaysia My Second Home Program*:

"The Malaysia My Second Home program is an immigration scheme open to nearly all foreign citizens wishing to retire or live in Malaysia on a long-term basis. Your spouse and children can also immigrate.

"Here are some of the key benefits of the program:

"You can buy two houses or apartments with a free-hold title.

"You will receive a 10-year Visit Pass and Multiple-Entry Visa, renewable every ten years.

"You can import your car or purchase a new car, tax-free and enjoy other tax incentives.

"You can invest and own businesses in Malaysia.

"You can enjoy a luxury lifestyle at a fraction of the cost of living in the West. It is a very affordable place to retire early.

"You maintain your original citizenship and are free to travel as often as you like."

It's interesting to have a country right next door to Thailand that is inviting foreign investment – and foreigners – to enjoy the benefits of a sophisticated, modern country with an equally sophisticated, modern foreign investment scheme that is already both implemented and guaranteed.

"Why would you want to live in Malaysia?" says the odd imbibor in the local. It's a funny thing, most people who say they wouldn't live in Malaysia have

Is Malaysia truly Asia?

LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

never been there. The few people I know who have spent a bit of time there seem to think it's pretty good.

I'm not drawing attention to this with the specific purpose of promoting Malaysia; it's more in the hope that somebody *here* (in Thailand) in a position of influence, might happen to notice that people in a position of influence *there* (in Malaysia) seems to have organized themselves.

They have, possibly, recognized that in order to get foreign-

ers to invest money in your country, you must be able to explain the laws of your country and the conditions and regulations that apply to the potential investor.

It seems that there are people who are seriously considering their positions. At least one long-term expat resident and businessman here in Phuket is seriously considering basing his official residence in Malaysia.

"I'd still spend most of the time here in Phuket, but my official address would be Such and Such A Country Club, KL. At least I know that I won't have to leave my home for three months."

In Thailand, many people are being forced to stay out of the country for 90 days at a time.

This is supposed to be aimed – partly – at bar owners, who stay here on tourist visas and don't have work permits or pay taxes.

The authorities have a point, but let's not lose sight of the fact that the bars are a major attraction and a major source of jobs and foreign exchange earnings.

Wouldn't it make more sense to give the bars a way to do business legally? Wouldn't the country benefit from collecting taxes, issuing proper work permits and business registrations and keeping the cash in the country?

I was out in Pattaya last week with a couple of friends from the Immigration Department. "What's going on?" I asked. "I wish we knew" they said. "Crazy," said one. "Have some more Black Label."

Stop!!!!

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The Cryptic Crossword

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the names of at least 25 flowering plants. The names may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. Score: 15 or more, good; 20 or more, very good; 25 or more, excellent.

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

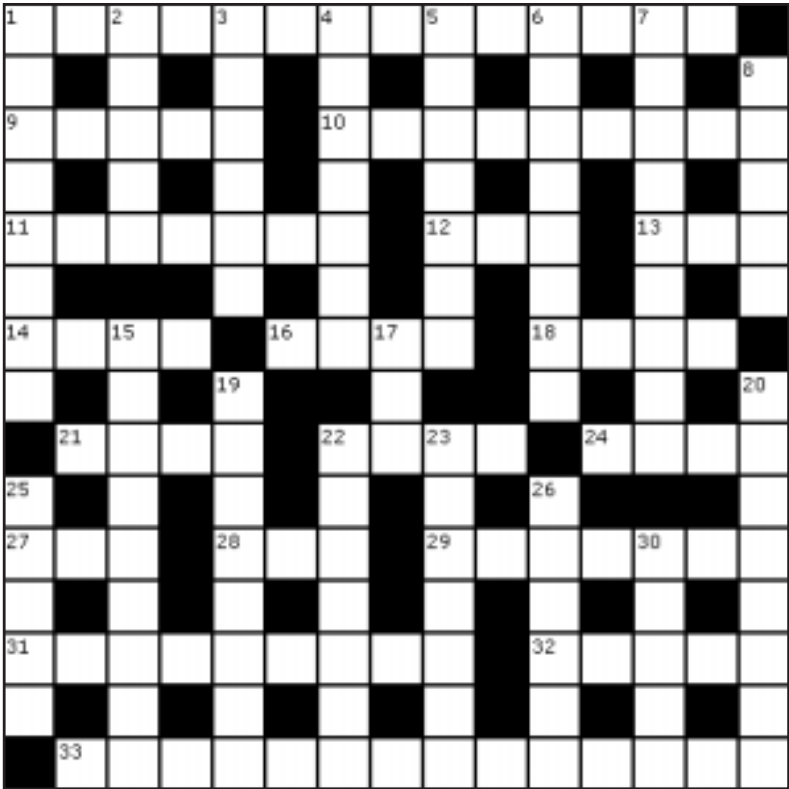
Solution on next page

ACROSS

- Hiring of Diana is a let-down. (14)
- Sorceress is almost completely round. (5)
- Carol set a damaged form of transport. (9)
- Fire – and look down on – young lady. (7)
- Love God has no right to Dawn. (3)
- Tear death wish. (3)
- Northeast road to computer lover. (4)
- Lord is equal. (4)
- Note: Back to school. (4)
- Run rings about southern learner. Capital! (4)
- I am, note, a foot. (4)
- Cardinal and 12 mixed oil company. (4)
- Prohibit Patong establishment. (3)
- Tree may have a bit of diesel mix. (3)
- Order! Order! Edit cat! (9)
- Reverses finished goes. (9)
- Took horse to ring for event. (5)
- Almost falling, stop obstacle. (9,5)

Down

- Mostly decadent, he’s dead. (8)
- Flies high, we hear, and wounds. (5)



Compiled by Tortuus. © 2006

- Repair in advance, a bit in front. (6)
 - Be in charge; it’s finished, see? (7)
 - Explosive type of family? (7)
 - Lo! Back in the crowds is syrup. (8)
 - Having bad reputation is not alternative to promissory notes. (9)
 - Blow up point, quiet in rut. (5)
 - Surge in landlord’s price; it’s coming back. (9)
- Baseball statistic: time. (3)
 - A second hesitation? Keep it going. (8)
 - Look out! Put a padlock on hair. (8)
 - Living forever without shirt is sinful. (7)
 - Avenue for ads. I’m no mixture. (7)
 - Monk in lab bottle. (5)
 - Southern Carolina has Arab beetle. (6)
 - German car has no sound system. (5)

Solution on next page

Rhyme Time

The words described below all rhyme with “boat”. What are they?

- Fill up with gas.
- Express malicious glee.
- Weasel relative.
- Make your mark.
- One way to remember.
- Lecher.
- Castle defense.
- TV controller.
- Spywear?
- Young pig.

Answers on next page

Scribble Space



EZ TRIVIA QUIZ

- In which country is Transylvania?
 - Who is President of Zimbabwe?
 - What is one tenth of one tenth of one hundredth of one million?
 - In which year are Phuket’s Heroines believed to have beaten the Burmese?
 - What is the US President’s residence called?
- How many items are there in a baker’s dozen?
 - Nephritis is a disease affecting which part of the body?
 - Which Paris landmark was completed in 1889?
 - Which civilization built Machu Picchu?
 - In which mountain chain is it located?

Answers on next page

su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

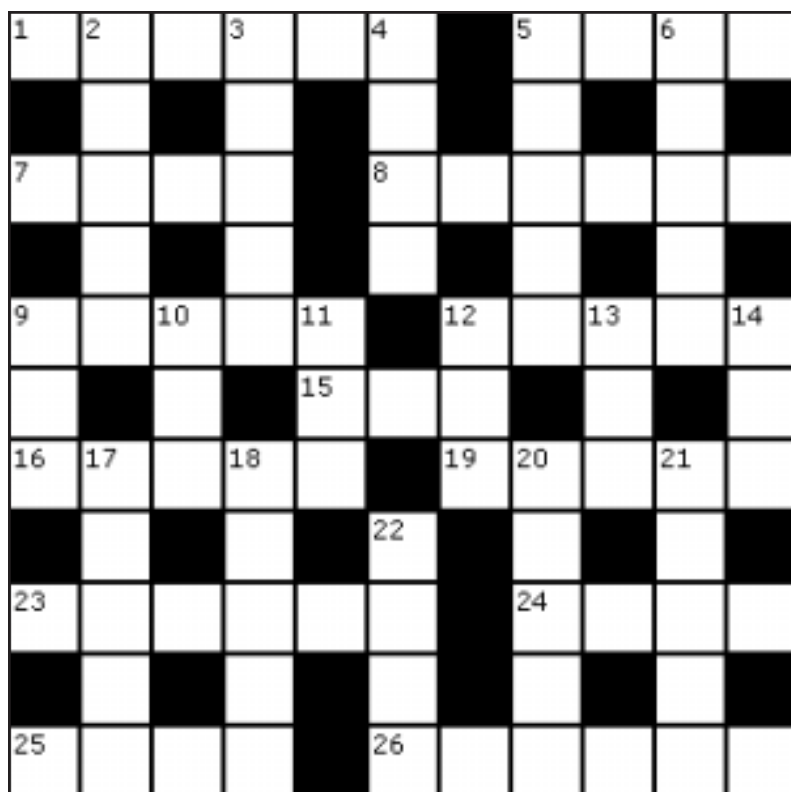
Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

EASY

#15

Sudoku is very simple: each row, each column and each “box” of nine squares within the puzzle must contain all the numbers from 1 to 9 with, naturally, no repetitions. Beware: there is only one solution to this puzzle, which is on the next page.



Quick Crossword

ACROSS

1. Shake with cold
5. It causes poor visibility.
7. Big cat.
8. European river.
9. A little drunk.
12. King with the golden touch.
15. Expected time of arrival.
16. Seafood delicacy.
19. Brought to heel.

23. Informer.
24. Tree output.
25. Hello! at sea.
26. Essential gas.

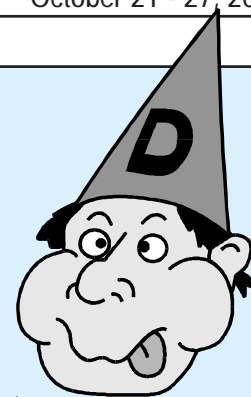
DOWN

2. Dominican Republic's neighbor.
3. On which grapes grow.
4. Impolite.
5. Language of India.
6. Striped horse.
9. Gratuity.

10. Green legume.
11. Japanese currency.
12. Where the cat sat?
13. Reservoir wall.
14. Unhappy.
17. Cattle farm.
18. Cleverly funny.
20. Mix of metals.
21. Rub out.
22. Go away!

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. What is the correct term for singing without musical accompaniment?
2. How many meters per second per second is acceleration expressed as 1G?
3. Gabbro, also known as norite, is a type of what?
4. In which island group would you find Texel?
5. Which form of poetry has three unrhymed lines of five, seven, and five syllables?
6. Who said, "You can't be a Real Country unless you have A BEER and an airline"?
7. What was actor Efrem Zimbalist Jr's father noted for?
8. Which region of Antarctica is between Queen Maud Land and Wilkes Land?
9. Who played Al Pacino's love interest in *Sea of Love*?
10. The *Hadith* is a collection of what?
11. Otto Hahn won a Nobel Prize in 1944 for his work on what?
12. In which country would you hear Chagga spoken?
13. In Islam, what is a Hakim?
14. What style of architecture did Inigo Jones introduce in England?
15. Which was the first asteroid discovered?
16. The sextant replaced what earlier instrument?
17. In which modern country was the ancient state of Latium?
18. Who wrote *Desolation Angels*?
19. How many grands prix did Jackie Stewart win?
20. Name Carol King's 1971 hit album.

Answers below, left

Puzzle Solutions

Monster Quiz Answers

1. A capella; 2. 9.8 meters; 3. Rock; 4. Frisian Islands; 5. Haiku; 6. Frank Zappa; 7. He was a concert violinist; 8. Enderby Land; 9. Ellen Barkin; 10. Sayings of the Prophet Mohammed; 11. Nuclear fission; 12. Tanzania; 13. A physician; 14. Palladian; 15. Ceres; 16. The astrolabe; 17. Italy; 18. Jack Kerouac; 19. 27; 20. Tapestry.

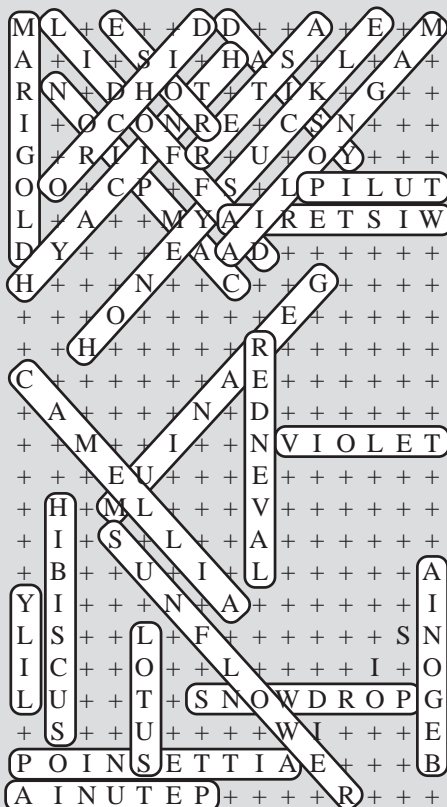
EZ Trivia Answers

1. Romania; 2. Robert Mugabe; 3. 100. 4. 1785; 5. The White House; 6. 13; 7. The liver; 8. The Eiffel Tower; 9. The Incas; 10. The Andes.

Rhyme Time Answers

1. Bloat; 2. Gloat; 3. Stoat; 4. Vote; 5. Rote; 6. Goat; 7. Moat; 8. Remote; 9. Trench coat; 10. Shoat.

Hidden Words SOLUTION



Solution to this week's Cryptic Crossword



Solution to this week's Quick Crossword



Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle



Burned-out Son of the South

As a young *Newsweek* reporter at its Atlanta bureau in early 1961, native Georgian Karl Fleming found himself enmeshed in the heady early days of the American civil rights movement, living daily on an intimate basis with Martin Luther King, James Forman, John Lewis, James Bevel, Medgar Evers and the other giants of the era.

Subtitled "*An Uncivil Memoir*", *Son of the Rough South* (PublicAffairs, New York, 2003, 432pp) is his personal account of a turbulent, inspiring, violent and highly dangerous time.

Over the next seven years, he would cover marches and street demonstrations in Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi before being badly beaten – ironically enough – by a black mob during a street riot in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles in August 1965.

"I'd worked on four Southern newspapers before going to *Newsweek* and my private sympathies were entirely with the black people," he writes in his first chapter.

"I had from my earliest days seen the humiliation and cruelty visited upon them. I was some-

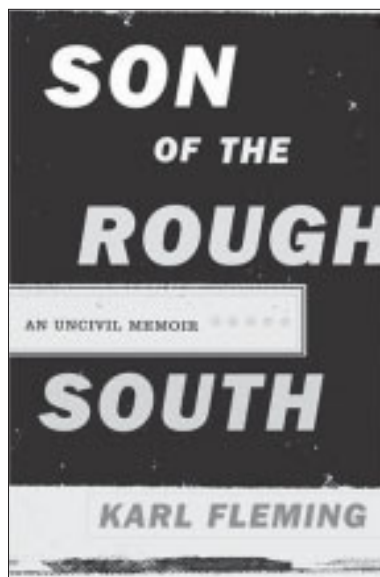


times sick with shame and anger at what I saw and what I knew was happening out of my sight. I was proud to be a reporter...

"Reporters were outsiders, a special breed, poorly paid and proud of it, poorly schooled, usually, but highly educated in the school of hard knocks – hard-drinking, hard-living 'ink-stained wretches' on the side of the underdog and the outcast but ruthlessly fair."

For the next seven years Fleming would cover the rise and fall of the civil rights movement.

The first thing he did in Atlanta was to befriend the leaders. This led him to his "first man-to-man conversation with a black person, one equal professional talking to another."



That person was James Foreman, executive secretary of the year-old Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), founded by the leaders of the first student sit-ins. Forman immediately attacked him for working for newspapers without a single black reporter. Eventually they would become friends. "He could be just as abrasive and confrontational as I was turning out to be."

Fleming was there for the first unsuccessful civil rights demonstrations in Albany, Georgia.

In a little church in Albany, New York, he has an epiphany: "Something was pulling me back to childhood and the small country churches where I had sat among poor white people as they sang songs of hope and listened to promises of a better life.

"And I felt something else, too: a sudden strong recognition of how much I identified with these people and their yearnings and how much I actually envied them and the pure fight against fear."

In 1963, he was in Birmingham, Alabama, when Public Safety Commission police chief Bull Connor unleashed fire hoses and attack dogs on protest marchers and four little girls were killed in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church.

He was there too for Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech in Washington, DC.

Two years later, he was in Selma for the March on Montgomery when state troopers gassed and clubbed peaceful demonstrators on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. This widely televised horror led to the passage of Lyndon Johnson's National Voting Rights Act in August, 1965,

which enfranchised many black citizens and led to the redrawing of America's political map.

Fleming was in Mississippi in the summer of 1966, for the aftermath of the shooting of James Meredith who had integrated Ole Miss – the University of Mississippi – three years earlier.

The subsequent March Against Fear provided the launch pad for Stokely Carmichael's Black Power movement which capped an era of peaceful protest with mass riots ignited across the major cities of the North.

The irony was that all the turmoil led in 1968 to the election of Richard Nixon "who had run a 'law-and-order' campaign and talked about 'the forgotten middle class' (translation: white people).

Nixon handily won the South, playing on whites' resentment of the civil rights movement and the Democratic Party's support of it.

From then on, the region the Democrats had always banked on as the Solid South became, in fact, solidly Republican."

It was an end of an era for Karl Fleming too: "I was just sick of it all. I was totally burned out."

PHUKET DIARY

www.phuketgazette.net/calendar

October 28: W4: Watermark's 4th Birthday Party.

First there was IUP, then 2DOWN, then last year they thrilled with WOW – the White On White party. If you remember the legendary white party you won't want to miss this one. W4: Where Cowboys & Angels ride together.

Let the halos slip and the stetsons slide, it's time to kick it up with Bangkok's finest DJs, great decor, great fun, beautiful people and the chance to win a 100,000-baht party.

Then...the After Party on October 29 is SoundWaves Sunday with DJs Tommy T and Taz on the decks from 3pm, or come early for the Moët brunch.

For more details contact Stuart Bird at Tel: 081-737-6184 or by email to: info@watermarkphuket.com

Until December 30: Art sale at keimandrian 26 café gallery.

Art sale by local artists Sam Fruin, Cindy Shaw, Claire Lester and Kathy Manthei.

Work includes photos, paintings and screen prints. Also on sale are Christmas gifts and crafts made by people living at the Life Home Project.

Comfort food and drinks available. Come in and chill. Call K. Rinat Tel: 084-1935124 or see: www.keimandrian26.com

October 22: 2nd Phuket Int'l Mountain Beach Marathon.

The day's events include a full marathon, a half-marathon, a mini-marathon and a 5km fun run/walk.

Accommodation packages for competitors in 2-5-star hotels are available.

There will also be raffle draws with prizes such as hotel stays, dinners at restaurants, bar vouchers, and many more.

For information contact K. Jeerasak at Tel: 081-8912663 or by email to: info@katakaron.com

October 22-30: Phuket Vegetarian Festival.

This nine-day festival is renowned for its colorful, noisy processions and Chinese temple ceremonies during which *mah song* (mediums) pierce their faces with a variety of sharp objects.

October 23: Chulalongkorn Day – Public Holiday.

Chulalongkorn Day celebrates the reign of Rama V, best remembered for abolishing slavery in Thailand.

October 23: Hot Seminar – The Foreign Business Act.

Foreigners doing business in Phuket are invited to a half-day seminar on the Foreign Business Act with officials of the Commerce Ministry, including Senior Trade Official Preecha Hantongtut.

The seminar, at the Royal Phuket City Hotel, will be conducted in English.

For details contact K. Sriruan at Tel: 076-212989 or 089-

4743694, or by email to: info@thaiaccounting.com

November 1-4: Annual Game Fishing Competition.

The Unofficial Phuket International Tournament (UPIT) is the replacement event for the Phuket Classic Tournament.

Team registrations (Max: 4 anglers per team) at the Tamarind Bar on the evening of November 1, from 7pm.

Fishing days are November 2-4. Trophy presentation and party will be on the last day.

For details contact Uwe Schitteck at Tel: 081-7195766 or Email: uweschitteck@yahoo.com

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Keep the ball rolling at Bang Tao

The positive thread running through this week's Inside Story (see pages 4 and 5) is that all sides involved agree that something must be done to improve conditions on the beach in front of Laguna Beach Resort, where encroachment by vendors has left the seaside looking more like a third-world bazaar than the natural wonder it is.

Given that the vendors themselves have – albeit reluctantly – agreed to be moved to a new site nearby, the high-profile committee appointed by Phuket's Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Nivit Aroonrat has no time to lose in pressing forward with the relocation as quickly as possible. Any delay in action could allow inertia to set in, consigning the matter to the back burner of bureaucratic limbo, like so many other contentious issues that the province has taken on but failed to resolve over the years. These include, but are not limited to, the diving industry regulations, the shanties along Soi Phra Barami 8 in Kalim, the investigation into alleged improprieties at a tsunami orphanage in Thalung, and the now 15-year-old blight of jet-skis off the island's beaches.

Unfortunately, there now seems little hope that the relocation can be carried out before the start of this year's high season, as originally hoped. The plan hit a major stumbling block when the committee agreed to two demands made in mid-October by the vendors: first, that the relocation site be ready to occupy before their existing stalls are demolished; and second, that the new site create not just an orderly appearance, but also be a level playing field, whereby vendors' livelihoods will not be badly compromised by an unfortunate result in any future "lucky draw" used to assign stall locations.

It is in the nature of compromise in contemporary Thailand to allow those encroaching on government land to lay down demands to stop doing so, as is abundantly evident in the current situation at Bangtao Beach. It is understandable, then, that Laguna, having invested hundreds of millions of baht to be on Bangtao Beach, wants the view over, and unfettered use of, that strand returned to the tourists – even if it means paying out a few million more baht to fund the construction of stalls at another location.

But Laguna is reluctant, also understandably, to simply hand over a blank check to the committee, especially given that some of the committee members come from the same local administration organization whose neglect allowed the existing illegal structures to spring up in the first place.

Perhaps the best way forward would be for the committee to propose the plan; to have the vendors agree to it in writing; and then to allow Laguna to provide the new site(s) and build the stalls themselves.

– The Editor

The Phuket Gazette

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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.

Gazette provides life-saving service

I am writing in great appreciation of the Inside Story article – Who you gonna call? – of the October 14 edition of the *Gazette*.

It highlighted a very dire situation in Phuket for foreigners who may not even have thought about this issue until the most critical moment, but thanks to this article, at least we have a direction.

As no one really plans for when things go wrong, I never thought about how important it was to have these telephone numbers until an incident last month.

My husband and I were driving around Kathu when we witnessed a motorbike accident. A car was turning out of Phuket Country Club and collided with a motorbike going along the main road.

People stopped to look and a few came to help. My husband and I parked the car because we wanted to help, but, because of the possibility of spinal injuries, we were rather wary about moving the victims.

We called, or rather, tried to call for the emergency services. We dialed 191, which we know connects to the police.

The woman who answered spoke barely understandable English, so I did a half-English, half-Thai account of what had happened, stating that we needed an ambulance.

She said that she could not dispatch an ambulance because she was in Bangkok.

Apparently our 191 call was connected to the main dispatch center in the capital. We asked if she could provide a number for the police in Phuket. She said that

she did not have the number and could not help.

To her credit, she did sound very apologetic, but I became paranoid about what might happen if, next time, I am the one in trouble and need help. I discovered the number of my local police, and thanks to the article you published, I feel relieved that at least now I know who to call.

Mayrene Chester
Phuket

Gazette 'sucks'

Your newspaper is a joke. Your Issues & Answers and Queer News are as old and boring as the people who are probably running your business.

What's wrong with you people? You used to have a decent publication but now it really sucks. Come on; get it together.

Wiener Snitzel
America

THAI a waste of time

So I follow THAI Airways International's advice and check-in at Phuket International Airport three hours before my flight's scheduled departure. Then what?

I could spend a good chunk of change being charged exorbitant rates to use the Internet café there, or I could indulge in the fine nearly-fast food available at the similarly overpriced outlets in the concourse. Perhaps I should get Patong-reminiscent drunk at the only establishment serving alcohol on premises, then take a ride on the vibrating massage recliners.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not complaining about the prices at the establishments at the air-

port or the range of services there – though both can be much cheaper and improved. My point is that extending the check-in time to three hours is a horrible way to start a long, long journey home.

Come on THAI, get your act together.

Patience of a Padawan
Phuket

Care less driving

I suppose I was surprised to read Peter Marwood's letter ("Drive hard – with a vengeance", October 14) highlighting the poor driving habits of farang, when they are surrounded by locals, many of whom drive cars and motorbikes with little awareness of their own or others' safety. But I do appreciate his point.

During my five years here and in my (I believe) considerable efforts to fit in, rather than be viewed a distant Westerner, perhaps it's inevitable that I would acquire some negative habits. I am not proud of the fact that my reaction to someone else's dangerous or inconsiderate driving, evaluated mainly on 30 years of driving experience in England, has been less than calm. I must do better. But I cannot help feeling that the "sabai sabai" attitude exuded by Thais can sometimes be translated as, "I just couldn't care less".

Brian Davis
Bang Tao

A reader writes

Attention all resort owners, property developers, and Patong businesspeople. I, Wok, a long-time resident of Patong, warn you that in exactly 8 years I will again

Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials or business owners are published as *Issues & Answers* at www.phuketgazette.net.

Letters

write to this newspaper to declare that Patong Beach is now the same as Pattaya Bay.

It will be just as toxic and no longer safe to swim in. That is, unless you people who depend on the beach for a living wake up to the problems and do something about it.

The cost of beach chairs is irrelevant when the beach is too filthy to be a tourist attraction.

Take a break from your moneymaking and take a look at the disreputable condition of the beach that you have relied on for so long.

Also, can the *Phuket Gazette* please ban adverts from people who are trying to make money breeding and selling "pedigree" dogs? This is ridiculous given the number of stray dogs on the island.

Who are these soulless people anyway? What makes someone so snotty they need a pedigree dog under these circumstances?

A stray dog is no longer a stray if you give it a home. Stray dogs turn into great pets. You can even go to one of the organizations who will give you a clean, sterilized and vaccinated pet, and there are hundreds to choose from. Shame on you if you do anything else.

Finally, because of the consistently filthy state of Patong Beach, my girlfriend and I often prefer the resort pool next to our condo to the beach.

It's even possible to buy an overpriced breakfast at the resort for less than breakfast and chairs at the beach. If they can double their beach chair prices, the beach chair operators should then be fined if their section of the beach is covered in washed-up litter.

Failing that, they should pay a specific tax to fund a clean-up crew to do the work.

Five baht per chair would cover it and more.

Wok
Patong

A challenging time for the nation

I retired from politics a few years ago to spend more time with my family, but this appointment is an exceptional opportunity to serve the needs of the country, though I still have no desire to return to politics.

The NLA is a specially selected legislative body that will work to solve the problems that have developed over the past year. In total, 242 members have been selected representing various sectors of Thai society.

The NLA will take over the roles of the house of representatives and the Senate.

Members of the body will be able to propose a motion for debate and discuss the performance of the Cabinet, and will be able to function as a check on the government's work, though we will not be able to hold a vote of no-confidence.

Our first task will be to elect a President of the Assembly.

I think the year of interim government will be a challenging undertaking.

We will try to do our best and lay the groundwork for a smooth transition to more representative government.

The drafting of the new constitution is obviously of key importance. The document must be able to ensure democratic rule and represent all the people, not just a select few, however. It is still too early to say what specific changes need to be introduced from the suspended 1997 Constitution, however.

I do not think the change in government will have any major effect on business in Phuket. The Cabinet is already reassuring the

FIRST PERSON

Leading Phuket businessman **Phummisak Hongsyok** is the CEO of Anuphas group of companies, President of the Phuket Real Estate Club and has served three terms as Mayor of Phuket Town.

He has now been selected by the Council of National Security to serve on the National Legislative Assembly (NLA), the new body acting as house of representatives while a new constitution is drafted.

Here he explains what his role will be.



outside world that the situation is stable. However, it is still of prime importance that we work to get the message over to neighboring countries and major powers that we had to take one step back to move two steps forward and restore democracy under a constitutional monarchy.

I think I was selected to serve in the body because of my background in local politics. I

hope that I can use my experience to inform the assembly of the mechanisms of local government and budgeting.

From the beginning, I was against the "CEO" system of governance and the entrenched centralization it represented. I believe control over local issues should be invested in the hands of local people. Maybe some groundwork for increased decen-

tralization could be laid during the NLA's term in office, though we will have to wait for an elected government to push through any real changes.

An important part of my role will be to serve as a relay between Phuket and the central government in Bangkok. Every month I will brief the press and local bodies on the situation and listen to any suggestions.

Is it possible to hangar my aeroplane at a local airport?

Can a private pilot hangar or "tie down" a private aircraft at either Phuket International Airport (PIA) or Krabi Airport?

In the US, pilots can pay a monthly rental fee to keep an airplane at an airport.

The rental arrangement is either with the government entity that runs the airfield, or with a private operator who holds a master lease enabling him to operate a business on a part of the airport.

I am moving to Thailand next month, and would like to buy an airplane for private use in the region, provided I can keep it at

one of the two airports.

Bill McDougall
US

Phuket Airport Director Sq/Ldr Pornchai Eua-aree replies:

PIA does not accept long-term parking for any private aircraft because we do not have enough space.

We suggest you ask the airports at Haad Yai, Ranong or Surat Thani.

In the past we allowed big aircraft, such as Boeing 737s, to park for a maximum of about 15 days. They have to pay a daily

fee; we do not allow monthly rental.

Regardless, we do not have the capacity to allow private aircraft to be kept at the airport long term.

Krabi Airport Director Pisan Jinacharn replies:

Krabi Airport is currently under expansion, which is due to be finished within two years. We currently do not have space to keep aircraft here long term.

We can allow private aircraft to park at the airport for short stays only, say, a maximum of one week.

Issues & ANSWERS

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Overcharged for my electricity?

My monthly electricity bill was 21,000 baht, yet the average is around 1,200 baht. I think it is wrong. What can I do?

Frazzled
Phuket City

Ladda Pattaratamrong, Administrative Assistant, Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority, replies:

Report the bill at our office

as soon as possible, and we will check it out as quickly as we can. It might have been a mistake by the officer who wrote down your meter reading, or your meter might be broken. If that is the case we will fix it.

Please do not hesitate to report this bill by either calling us at tel: 076-223726 or in person at our office at 58/16-20 Thep-krasattri Rd.

Learning about Birds and Bees

Today I'm going to tell you how I learned about the birds and bees, a phrase that is a euphemism for: sex.

I do this not for purposes of titillation, but as a matter of historical interest.

All you young whippersnappers out there need to know how we learned about this important topic way back in pre-Jurassic times, even before the Rolling Stones.

Nowadays it's easy for a young person to learn about sex. All you do is log onto the Internet and download porn.

But I grew up in the 1940s, when we didn't have the Internet. We didn't even have television. All we had was the radio.

In case you don't know what a radio is, young people, it is a machine that produces only sound.

I know that is unbelievably primitive. You cannot download porn from a radio. That was one of the many areas in which my peers and I were culturally deprived.

Information about sex was hard to come by in those days, partly because I lived in New England. My ancestors were the Puritans.

These were the guys who burned the witches. They were stern moralists who forbade smoking, drinking, dancing and music, and spent eight hours in church every Sunday.

They may even have worn hairshirts to torment the flesh and curb sinful desires.

The Puritans would have felt right at home in the New Im-



proved Thailand that is now taking shape.

"No smoking?" the Puritans would have enthused. "Swell. No drinking? Far out! Now if you'll just ban music and dancing, institute compulsory eight-hour prayer services every Sunday, make everybody wear hairshirts and burn a few witches, we'll be happy to move in and show you how to run a *real* fun society."

Thailand would be a far more moral society if the Puritans were in charge. Everybody would leave.

My parents had come a long way from the days when our ancestors burned witches. My father had an earthy sense of humor, smoked a pipe, liked his beer and loved to sing.

Even so, there was a residual Puritanism in the New England air, and my parents were reticent about sex.

They figured I'd find out about it by talking to my dirty little friends. And that's exactly what happened.

I had a dirty little friend named Bobby Wentworth, and when I was nine or 10 years old, Bobby undertook to bring me up to speed on the disgusting aspects of human nature.

He had two older brothers who had passed their sophisticated knowledge on to him. One day Bobby explained to me, in graphic detail, how humans reproduce.

I was horror-stricken and disgusted. "My father would never do anything like that to my mother," I huffed.

Bobby cautiously ventured the opinion that, since I had a younger brother and sister, it was likely that my father had not only done "that" to my mother once, but three times at the very least, and possibly even more, just for the fun of it.

I returned home in shock, my prepubescent perspective shattered.

So it was not true about the stork! Parents in those days told their children that babies were delivered by a stork, who pre-wrapped them in swaddling clothes and deposited them on the relevant doorstep.

Instead of this chaste introduction to life, it now transpired that babies were conceived in a sordid exchange of bodily fluids by two human beings locked in a sweaty embrace, squealing and grunting and thrashing like pigs.

Then, after months of gestation, the resulting homunculus was squeezed forth from an unmentionable orifice in an efflux of blood and slime.

And it got worse. Not only did human beings commit this revolting act whenever they wished to reproduce – they did it with unspeakable frequency just for fun. I could not imagine how anybody could derive pleasure from such filth.

Later I grew up and found out. It is a tribute to human resilience that the trauma of discovering our true origins is quickly dispelled when we make further discoveries of an entirely benign nature in this fascinating field.

So that's how I found out about the birds and bees. It would have been a lot easier if I could have downloaded porn.

S. Tsow can be flamed at stsow@yahoo.com, except when he's trying to download porn from his radio.

In The Stars

by Isla Star

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): If you are celebrating a birthday this week, you have an exciting year to look forward to. Travel is strongly indicated and you should check the validity of your passport sooner rather than later. After recent ups and downs, Make this Sunday a time to pamper yourself and ignore others' needs.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): The wind of change is blowing strongly in your direction. An unexpected financial windfall will open up a range of possibilities, but you should make no spontaneous moves. A challenge that would allow you to use dormant skills is forecast to be offered next month. Romance with Gemini might be fun for a while, but will not take root.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Avoid undue stress by not believing everything you hear this week. Someone suffering from jealousy would love to set the cat among the mynah birds by spreading stories. Communication is better after Thursday, so don't start discussions before then. Money matters require serious attention on Monday; keep records of transactions to avoid misunderstandings. Wear the color jungle green to help maintain a low profile.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Don't worry so much about others. You have made yourself an easy target for those who need a shoulder to cry on; you need to move on. It's time to concentrate on your life, which is looking positive for the foreseeable future. A new relationship with Leo has astral backing. Number 3 could be lucky on Tuesday.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Someone will demonstrate that they are impervious to your charms. This will come as a disappointment to you but you should let the matter drop. Where finances are concerned, expect to be offered an investment chance this week. You can trust Virgo's integrity, but there's something fishy about Cancer's proposition. Wednesday is the best time to conduct a tricky meeting.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): A bout of activity early in the week sees you accomplishing more than they could believe possible. If in a relationship, you will appreciate a surprise gesture your partner makes this weekend – show your gratitude in an equally creative way. If you're single, you should be pleased to discover that Cancer thinks that you are hot stuff. Wearing a combination of earth tones and turquoise will encourage your energy to flow.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Where business is concerned, this is a week when you shouldn't necessarily trust your instincts. Excitement in your personal life is likely to cloud your judgment. If you're in the market for a bargain, go shopping this Saturday, when having a silver tongue will guarantee you get what you want at the right price.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): An argument has been brewing for you and is likely to come to a head by the middle of the week. No matter how strong the temptation is to pour out your frustrations, this would be the worst thing you could do. On a lighter note, you will be the center of attention on Sunday. Scorpio is certain to appreciate your charisma.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Playing by the rules will get you much further than trying to sidestep bureaucracy. If your patience levels are running low, then take several deep breaths and be prepared to wait. Sparks are set to fly between you and an attractive Sagittarian, but enjoy light-hearted flirtation before making serious arrangements. The Number 4 can be lucky on Thursday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Focus on keeping plans realistic. You will be tempted to mistake fantasy for something that is feasible. As to work, Virgo makes a sensible suggestion next Monday. It may involve more work than you would like, but the results will be worth the temporary exhaustion. Sunday is the most auspicious time to ask Pisces out on a date.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Hold off accepting any more responsibilities until you have more information about potential changes in your present working situation. Ensure that you have some spare time to enjoy fun in the sun. Wear the colors gray and azure blue when negotiating with important people to encourage them to take your opinions seriously.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): A Capricorn friend is intent on sharing cares and concerns with you next week, but you may be too busy to want to listen. An intimate relationship will benefit from some straight talking; beating around the bush can only lead to misunderstandings. Avoid temptation to spend cash you can ill afford by entertaining friends at home this weekend.

I returned home in shock ...
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This month I take a final look at the effects of development and progress on Phuket's environment.

That development and the growing tourism industry have affected marine life is indisputable.

The dozens of shrimp farms along the eastern coast have caused irreplaceable areas of mangrove to be destroyed.

Increasing demand for seafood has led to overfishing and the virtual disappearance of some species.

The famous Phuket lobster (tasteless, I am told) you see offered for sale at many seafood restaurants at exorbitant prices is unlikely to have originated from the sea around Phuket.

Ask any diver how often they see a lobster on the reefs around the island, and I can guarantee the answer will be "rarely".

Illegal fishing – including dynamiting – in national parks continues as fishermen seek out ever-dwindling supplies.

The use of very fine-mesh fishing nets sees millions of young fry that would have developed into much larger fish hauled out of the water each year.

Fishing nets are not designed to be selective, and countless larger species, such as sharks and dolphins, are also victims.

Coral reefs are under pressure. The southern end of Bang Tao Bay formerly had a thriving reef, and although there are signs of recovery it still resembles a coral grave yard.

Similarly, I am told that – believe it or not – 20 years ago there was a beautiful reef in Patong Bay.

Deforestation also has a big impact on offshore reefs. Take a flight across Sabah in Northern Borneo and you will see that every river is disgorging vast quantities of mud miles out to sea covering everything in its path. Although the felling of trees for development on Phuket is on a much smaller scale, it all adds to the pressure, as does the increasing amount of waste that ends up in the sea.

The increasing popularity of scuba diving provides mixed blessings. On one hand, the demand for good dive sites puts

The price of progress

pressure on the authorities to protect them; on the other, damage caused by inexperienced divers is increasing. One misplaced kick of a diving fin can break off a piece of coral that has taken years to grow.

By improving regulations, some of the issues mentioned above can, hopefully, be reversed. Nature seems to have amazing powers of recovery.

One species for which the future looks very bleak, certainly in Phuket, is the sea turtle.

The critically-endangered leatherback and green sea turtles used to be frequent visitors to our beaches, primarily on the long sandy beach of Mai Khao and the beaches north of the Sarasin Bridge, where they would come ashore to lay eggs.

Such visits are, these days, very rare. The fact that the discovery of a leatherback's nest on Mai Khao Beach was reported in *The Nation* and worldwide by AFP shows that such an event is a newsworthy item.

To understand why property development is having such an effect, it is important to

understand something of a turtle's life history.

Turtles are born in clusters of 80 to 100 in a nest dug by their mothers on deserted beaches. Only two or three will survive until adulthood. The lucky ones will spend the next 30 years or so wandering the world's oceans. Having bred, females will, through means discovered only recently, find their way back to the same beach where they were born, and repeat the cycle.

Herein lies the problem.

Even if she can get past the batteries of fishing nets lying off Phuket's coast, and does not, mistaking it for a jellyfish, eat a plastic bag which will choke her, she will come ashore only if the beach is dark and quiet.



The Royal Thai Navy is heavily involved in turtle protection; officers are seen here releasing young turtles into the sea. But numbers of turtles breeding on Phuket are still dangerously low.

Take a look at the property ads in the *Gazette* and the news stories announcing projected new resorts, and it is clear that the Mai Khao area and indeed the beaches just north of Phuket are the next boom area of the island.

What a baby turtle making its way to sea today will find in 30 years' time is anyone's guess, but a deserted beach seems unlikely.

There are many initiatives already in place to try and halt the disappearance of the sea turtle in Thailand's waters.

A group of villagers in Mai Khao are doing their best to protect turtles that come ashore, and guard their nests against poachers. The JW Marriott Beach Resort & Spa has done its utmost to negate the impact of the hotel on turtle nesting, and has established a sea turtle conservation fund.

Laguna Resorts & Hotels holds an annual sea turtle conservation day, where young turtles are released into the sea off Bang Tao Beach, and the Phuket Marine Biological Center raises young turtles at its facility until they are six months to three years of age, in the hope that their chances of survival are increased. It is these turtles that are released at the Laguna event.

Whether turtles released at this age still return to the beach where they are released is not yet clear, and if they do, then I cannot imagine any turtle coming ashore on bustling Bang Tao Beach.

The benefit of such events for the long-term future of sea turtles is questionable, to say the least. I believe it equally unlikely that all other developments will

show the same concern as the Marriott resort.

Real conservation of sea turtles can be achieved, but it requires government intervention.

A classic model of this can be seen in Malaysia off the northeast coast of Sabah.

Selingaan Island is one of three tiny islands comprising a protected national park, and I mean protected. It is a great example of eco-tourism in action.

Malaysia's army guards the islands. Visitors are welcome and are allowed to sunbathe or snorkel among the coral offshore, but at night a strict curfew is enforced, and after dinner it is a case of waiting until a guide comes to collect you to witness the first of that night's turtles laying eggs. The eggs

are collected and taken to a hatchery to protect them from monitor lizards and other predators.

Because turtles come ashore at Selingaan almost every night, baby turtles are also hatching every night and you get the privilege of helping release them into the sea. This, too, is done at night to give the young turtles the best chance of survival.

This tour is recommended to anybody interested in sea turtles or wildlife in general. The fees paid by tourists pay the running costs of the park and it is a great example of how tourism can benefit the environment rather than destroying it.

Sadly, preserving the environment for future generations appears to be low on Phuket's list of priorities, and the days when turtles were regular visitors here seem to be gone forever.



By Top Dog

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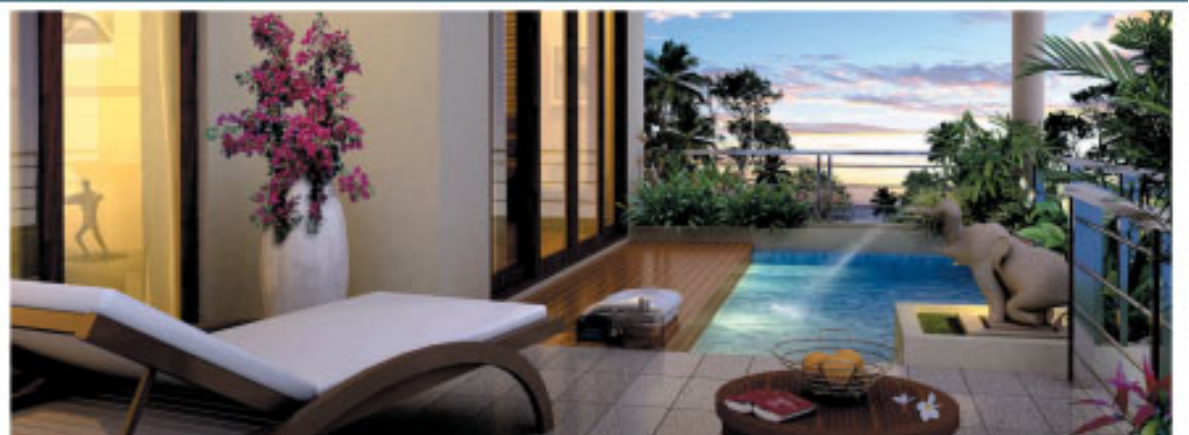
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EV-DO is hot, but does it work?

Q I read your last column and can't wait to get my hands on an air card. Wireless broadband would really help me. I live in between Kata and Chalong.

Do you have updated info if CAT's EV-DO service is available all over Phuket? Where do I buy an air card?

I use GPRS now – via dial-up Internet over a mobile phone – and it drives me crazy. I get maybe 30 Kbps, which is painfully slow.

The CAT air card should run 600 to 800 Kbps. Back home in Sweden they talk about having 100 Mbps (100,000 Kbps) connections, while I can't even get a phone line. It's not fair.

MK
Kata

A I dropped by the news conference at Central Festival Phuket last week and had a chance to talk with many people from CAT who are involved in the 7.2-billion-baht project rolling out EV-DO all over Thailand.

They advertise the service by its generic name, CDMA. Bob Metcalfe, the guy who invented CDMA, would get a chuckle out of that.

The people in charge say that Phuket has "quite good" coverage, which is why they staged the first publicity event here. In particular, the folks at CAT say you can get EV-DO signals at the airport, in downtown Phuket and along main roads.

I'm skeptical, although I've verified that many parts of Patong can get EV-DO. CAT says that it will be deploying EV-DO service inside buildings in the next round of expansion.

However, CAT doesn't yet have a web page in English that describes the services offered and the prices.

The flier I've seen lists unlimited Internet service at 1,290 baht a month, which is very reasonable – if the service works at a consistent 600 to 800 Kbps.

Like all digital signals, either your connection works or it



doesn't. You won't see "gray areas" with partial, degraded reception.

If the service bogs down, it will be because CAT's network cannot handle the load. For now, at least, that isn't a problem, and I'm optimistic that they'll be able to keep ahead of the demand.

As I understand it, you must get the air card itself from CAT. The card plugs into a laptop computer's PCMCIA slot. CAT is currently offering only the Sierra Aircard 580 (See www.sierrawireless.com/products/ac580.aspx), which is the least-capable Aircard that Sierra sells, but it has a good reputation as a reliable workhorse.

You can buy the Sierra 580 from CAT at 15,990 baht, but there appear to be cheaper options that involve signing up for a fixed period.

I don't understand the price sheet that CAT distributed, but I hope the English-language web page will bring sudden enlightenment.

CAT has just teamed with Hutch to start 3G telephone ser-

vice in Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Phuket, Khon Kaen and Phistanolok, since 3G telephones and EV-DO air cards use the same network. 3G phones will be expensive, but if the initial three-month experiment works, you may discover that you won't need that telephone line in Kata after all.

A 3G base station inside your house would look and work just like a regular phone, except you will not have to plug it into a phone jack. No doubt CAT will have a few tricks up its sleeves, too – with 3G telephones and CAT's connections, very-low-cost international telephone service must be on the drawing board. Think Skype, using your home or office phone.

You will also be able to use a 3G phone as a "modem" for your computer, similar to current GPRS connections, but at 20 times the speed – and 100 times the reliability. CAT advises that the 3G "modem" service will be

CAT and Hutch have launched 3G mobile phone service in a three-month pilot program. That bodes well for computer users throughout Thailand because EV-DO wireless broadband (using "air cards") comes along for the ride.

billed by the byte, which is like paying for water by the drop.

The face of 3G – and thus of EV-DO – is changing rapidly. Last month, Thailand's National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) was given the go-ahead by the current government to start granting 3G licenses.

That is a remarkable development. Thailand has been stymied for years by the previous government's inability (or unwillingness?) to appoint a National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), which would have the authority to allocate the communication channels that 3G needs to operate – a process similar to allocating TV channels or radio station frequencies.

Even Cambodia has allocated 3G communication channels, for goodness' sake. After five years of infighting and political maneuvering, tinged no doubt with enormous profit motive, the new government simply cut the Gordian knot by declaring the NTC could move ahead without an NBC.

If all works as currently planned, in my next column I'll have an exhaustive list of the places I could find in Phuket with EV-DO service. With luck, I'll also have a definitive list of CAT packages and prices. Meanwhile, if you feel so inclined, drop by your favorite CAT office and sign up. Make sure you can return the air card if you can't get a signal at your home or office.

Q For years I have been sending emails to the same UK address, but since July every message to this address has been returned undelivered. I phoned the intended recipient and he told me his address is the same.

I have complained to my ISP, CS Loxinfo, which I have used for six years with pre-paid accounts, and eventually on August 15 they told me that the receiving ISP has blocked the CS Loxinfo mail server but they would co-ordinate with the receiver to unblock it.

On August 24, after further complaints, I was told that the other ISP will not unblock its server, with no explanation, and that I should use a free email service to get through. I find it unacceptable that after taking my money, CS Loxinfo cannot supply a basic email service. Is this a common problem? Is there no regulatory body to ensure that ISPs deliver the service paid for?

WB, Patong

A I feel your pain, but I also sympathize with Loxinfo's problem.

Apparently somebody has unleashed an enormous volume of spam, using Internet addresses owned and controlled by Loxinfo. Anti-spam companies block incoming messages based on all sorts of criteria. Some anti-spam software blocks email from specific IP addresses – particularly those known to generate spam.

Most ISPs can work with the anti-spam software makers and get their IP addresses taken off the blacklists. But some anti-spam vendors are inflexible, particularly if they and their customers have been burned many times. And some ISPs won't institute controls that the anti-spam software vendors insist upon, rightly or wrongly, to prevent future abuses.

On the bright side, no anti-spam software company dominates the market, and most inbound mail isn't subject to blocking by anti-spam software. So being on one company's blacklist doesn't necessarily mean that you're on another company's blacklist.

Unfortunately, you're caught in the middle. The Internet is, with very few exceptions, quite unregulated. You could complain about your ISP, but it won't do much good: everybody knows that spam is a problem, and everybody knows that the spam-blocking companies blacklist ISPs with thousands of "good" customers.

Your friend has a valid beef, too: if your mail isn't getting through to him, he should wonder what other valid email also gets zapped.

If you don't want to use a free online service such as Gmail, Hotmail or Yahoo Mail, and your friend doesn't want to change to an ISP without an anti-spam "feature", your best bet is to change providers. There are dozens of good ISPs in Phuket who will give you free email accounts.

Gmail is worth considering, even if you don't like the idea of using an online email service. There are many benefits to being able to access email from anywhere, on any PC, and Gmail works great.

Or you can do what I do – get your own domain (such as KunWoody.com) and take your mail into your own hands. It's easier and cheaper than you think, and you'll never be at the mercy of an ISP again. Take a look at www.godaddy.com and walk through their demo.

Woody Leonhard (woody@kunwoody.com) writes no-bull books about Windows and Office, including Windows XP All-In-One Desk Reference For Dummies, Windows XP Time-saving Techniques For Dummies, and Special Edition Using Microsoft Office.

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ON THE MOVE

Martin Raich, 39, from Austria, is the new Hotel Manager of Le Meridien Khao Lak Beach and Spa Resort. Among his credentials, Mr Raich has a Master Certificate in Essentials of Hospitality from eCornell University.

His experience includes working as F&B Manager at Sheraton Heathrow in London, as Director of F&B at Sheraton Amsterdam and at St Regis Beijing, and as Executive Assistant Manager at The Westin Bellevue Dresden for five years.

Before moving to Khao Lak, Martin was Director of F&B for The Westin Denarau Island Resort & Spa, Sheraton Fiji Resort and Sheraton Denarau Villas, all in Fiji, where he lived for over two years.



Austrian **Michael Vorderleitner**, 33, has been appointed Director of F&B at Dusit Laguna Resort. Mr Vorderleitner, who holds a master's degree from the Bavaria College for Tourism, has 15 years' experience working on cruise ships and in five-star hotels in Europe and the Middle East.

Before joining Dusit Laguna, Michael was F&B Director at Iberotel Hotels and Resorts and with InterContinental Group of hotels in Egypt.



Waraporn "Lek" Phetdecha is the new Executive Personal Assistant to the General Manager and Managing Director of The Mangosteen Resort & Spa Group. A graduate of the Hotel & Tourism Industry faculty at the Rajabhat University campus in Surat Thani, K. Lek has more than 12 years' hotel experience in Surat Thani and Phuket, including working at Central Karon Village. Before joining The Mangosteen, Waraporn was Front Office Manager at BanThai Beach Resort & Spa in Patong.



Typical living room in the new Laguna Holiday Club Phuket Resort.

Laguna opens new resort for Holiday Club members

LAGUNA: On October 15, Laguna Phuket opened the Laguna Holiday Club Phuket Resort, a new resort dedicated for members of the Laguna Holiday Club.

The resort is the sixth hotel situated within the 600-acre Laguna Phuket complex, joining Banyan Tree Phuket, Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket, Dusit Laguna Resort, Laguna Beach Resort and Allamanda Laguna Phuket.

The resort features 79 suites in three room types: junior suite, one-bedroom suite and two-bedroom suite. These range in size from 65 to 113 square meters. All suites have a sofa-bed and can accommodate four to six guests, depending on room type.

All suites overlook the Laguna Phuket golf course and have separate living and dining areas, as well as a fully-equipped kitchen, allowing guests to prepare meals themselves or use the



A spacious bedroom in one of the new units.

resort's restaurant and room service.

Resort amenities include a swimming pool with waterslide, pool bar, restaurant, kids' area, game room, and Internet access in every suite plus free wireless Internet connection in the lobby area.

The resort's restaurant, named "At Seventeenth" because it faces the 17th hole on the golf course, will be managed by Banyan Tree Phuket and have a 114-guest seating capacity. Offering all-day dining, the restaurant features a tapas bar during dinner, as well as hot stone plates on which guests can cook their own meals. In addition to the extensive wine list, guests may bring their own wines without having to pay a corkage fee.

Laguna Holiday Club Phu-

ket Resort has been designed as a family-friendly venue, with the Kids' Club play area open from 8 am until 10 pm daily, entertaining children with games and activities.

Roland Svensson, Laguna Phuket's Assistant Vice President-Hospitality Services, said that in addition to the offering high-end accommodation and resort amenities, the resort takes pride in providing personalized service to its guests. "Being an all-member resort, there's no VIP category. Everybody is on an equal footing," he said.

"We have a very strong guest history database. We have so much information about our members that we can really personalize our service. We'll treat them so they feel that this is their home away from home," he said.

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VITAL STATISTICS Company registrations plummet

Type	Sept '04	Sept '05	Sept '06
Limited companies registered	132	135	76
Limited partnerships registered	30	42	32
Limited companies restructured	230	290	363
Limited partnerships restructured	28	56	35
Companies deregistered	15	15	17
Partnerships deregistered	12	8	8

Source: Phuket Provincial Business Development Office

Guinness Flight fund a consistent star

A few readers may have heard of the Investec Global Strategic Value Fund from the Investec Group. Investec was, originally, a South African Bank, although not the type of bank with a large network of branches providing, for example, basic savings and current accounts.

It specialized in certain areas, such as corporate finance and lending to professional people including doctors, dentists and lawyers.

These days it also finances property development and it is involved in such activities as trading in gold. Its involvement also stretches to wholesale money market investments and it has extended its South African operations to include asset management. Investec has also been running a number of mutual funds and unit trusts with a great deal of success.

The company has been a quoted share on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange for several decades, and for its shareholders, it has been a pleasant experience. Investec is a well-managed group and profits were always noted for rising at a much higher rate than most of their competitors. They rapidly gained a reputation for being a competently-managed group. My business dealings with Investec started in the early 1980s.

In Britain, also several decades ago, Tim Guinness and Howard Flight formed an asset-management company – Guinness Flight.

It too quickly gained a reputation for being a well-managed company with above-average investment abilities. From its operations in London and Guernsey, in the Channel Islands, it concentrated on managing a range of unit and mutual funds. It also offered trust and other services via a small bank it owned in Guernsey called Guinness Mahon.

Guinness Flight may not be one of the giants of the industry, but it is nonetheless well respected. Every offshore company includes it on its list of approved fund managers and many of the offshore insurance companies also created “mirror fund” links with Guinness Flight to enable their pension and regular savings customers to access Guinness Flight products.

In the late 1990s, Investec

was able, because of more relaxed South African exchange control regulations, to expand its operations internationally. One of its first acquisitions was Guinness Flight. It was a perfect fit for Investec.

Normally, acquisitions result in the disappearance of the previous directors, but Investec was not just buying assets; it was also acquiring human skills. At least two of the active directors, Tim Guinness and Philip Saunders, are still managing funds.

The other founding partner, Howard Flight, well before the Investec takeover, had decided that a career in politics was more appealing and could be found on the front benches in Westminster. No prizes for guessing his political party.

[He was a Conservative Party MP for eight years before falling out with the party's leaders last year. The then-leader of the party, Michael Howard, announced that Flight was no longer an approved candidate and could not contest the Arundel and South Downs seat as a Tory candidate at the 2005 general election. Flight is the author of *All you Need to Know about Exchange Rates* and is a contributor to the book *The City in Europe and the World*. – Ed]

I began my business dealings with Guinness Flight some 15 years ago and have always found our interactions to be both pleasant and profitable.

During the 1990s, I was in frequent contact with Saunders, who specializes in currencies and bonds and has always been a very helpful and insightful person.

Guinness Flight was considered by the industry as not only a

Guinness Flight may not be one of the giants of the industry, but it is nonetheless well respected. Every offshore company includes it on its list of approved fund managers and many of the offshore insurance companies also created “mirror fund” links with Guinness Flight to enable their pension and regular savings customers to access Guinness Flight products.

good asset manager, but also a good company in every respect.

The Bank of Yokohama (BoY), Japan's largest regional bank and at that stage the 19th largest bank in the world, took a 20% shareholding in Guinness Flight.

Intrigued, I asked the marketing director what role BoY played. His answer was to the effect that the BoY had several staff from Japan in Guinness Flight's offices, but nobody knew what they actually did.

This is quite typical in the financial world; large institutions take a financial interest in another group then tend to forget what rationale was behind the decision.

But let's return to one of the group's funds: the Investec Global Strategic Value Fund.

This has been an interest-

ing and profitable choice for investors. It has not only easily outperformed its benchmark index, the MSCI (Morgan Stanley Capital International) world index, but also achieved the same result against the average fund in its sector.

The fund aims to provide long-term capital growth primarily through investment in companies from around the world that are expected to enhance underlying profitability and shareholder value through operational or structural improvements to their business.

Each prospective investment needs to meet the fund's strict criteria of a history of value creation, attractive valuation, an improving earnings outlook and upward momentum in the share price.

Tracking the performance of the fund from September 2001 reveals the history both in good and bad times. Whereas the average fund in its sector lost 13.83% between mid-2001 and mid-2002, this fund fell only a modest 1.14%. Each year thereafter the fund has outperformed its peers by a substantial margin.

Looking at the cumulative results over the past five years, the fund has gained 121.93% to August 31 this year compared with an average return by its peers of 43.25%. This is an independent assessment from Lipper Analytical Services.

The fund is spread widely on a geographical basis: USA: 36%; Europe (excluding UK): 31%; Japan: 12%; UK: 10%; emerging markets: 7%; Asia: 3%; and cash and others: 1%.

By sector breakdown, the largest holdings are in: financials: 25%; non-cyclical consumer goods: 21%; cyclical services: 13%; and resources: 13%.

The entry charge is 5%, but this can be discounted to almost nothing by using an institutional entry approach. It is a sensible addition to any balanced portfolio.

Standard & Poors opinion as of July 2006 was, “This fund has one of the strongest track records in our global equities peer group... The fund comfortably retains its AA status.”

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.



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

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Deadline for Triathlon entries fast approaching

CHERNG TALAY: With 500 triathletes and 40 relay teams already registered, organizers of the Laguna Phuket Triathlon are urging those wanting to take part in this year's event to sign up fast as the number of available entries are quickly filling up.

Organizers anticipate a sold-out event again this year, and expect to attract some 1,400 competitors for the race, to be held on December 3.

The race is limited to 750 triathletes, 50 relay teams and 500 fun runners.

Last year's champions, Greg Bennett from Australia and Samantha McGlone from Canada, will return to Laguna Phuket to defend their titles and compete for a share of the US\$20,000 prize purse.

Adding to the pro athlete line-up are 2005 women's runner-up Laura Bennett of the US; Italian Massimo Cigana, who placed fourth in 2005 men's event; New Zealander Terenzo Bozzone and newcomer Leanda Cave from the UK, who recently won the Australian Triathlon Championships.

The event consists of an 1,800-meter two-part swim, the 55-km bike course, which has earned a reputation for being extremely tough, and the 12-km run course that winds through the Laguna complex, including, this time, the Laguna golf course.

For online registration or further information and updates, visit the website at www.laguna-phuket.com or email: triathlon@lagunaphuket.com.

ChildWatch golf tourney returns

THALANG: The annual Child-Watch Charity Golf Tournament, organized by the British Business Association - Phuket (BBAP), will be played on the Canyon Course at Blue Canyon Country Club November 4.

The tourney has been an increasing success over the past six years, due to the generosity of the sponsors and those who donated prizes for both competition winners and auction.

At least 20 international and local companies have confirmed sponsorship for this year's event, which can accommodate a full field of 128 golfers.

Since the event was launched seven years ago, the BBAP have been involved in the presentation of the event, which has benefited a number of charities and organizations in Phuket, in particular ChildWatch.

Blue Canyon Country Club Chairman Sia Leung Yuen came up with the idea of the scholarship fund, with 50% of competitors' green fees going to Child-Watch Phuket. Last year's event raised 1.2 million baht for Child Watch.



After receiving scholarships, children from ChildWatch Phuket pose with (back row, from left) Tim Haddon from Blue Canyon Country Club, Mark Phillips and Martin Carpenter from the British Business Association - Phuket, and (center in the 2nd to last row) Lillian Carpenter and ChildWatch Phuket President Dr Supaluck Kanjanamethakul (in red top).

Entry to the tourney costs 2,600 baht for BCCC members and 4,300 baht for non-members, and includes greens fees, dinner and caddy fees.

For more information and entry details of the event, send Emailto: childwatchcharitygolf@bluecanyonclub.com.

New game, same results

THALANG: The most recent week of play in the Nike Golf Canyon Team Challenge involved an interesting event called "Flag Day." The idea was to carry your team's flag as far as possible using only a specified number of shots.

Although the concept was different, the results remained the same. Winning their third event out of the four played thus far were the Fabulous Fore, who managed to carry their flag past the 18th hole back down the first again.

The only team to give them

a run for their money was the Arahmas Killer Bees, who finished second again this week. There are two events left on the schedule, but it looks like Fabulous Fore have stitched up the win unless they decide to not show up for one of the final events. The other eight teams are still fighting it out for an honorable second place.

The next events will be a scramble format followed by individual play for the last week, when the winning team will be crowned Nike Golf Canyon Team Champions.

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

It's down to Coyote and the Didi's to fight it out

PATONG: With just three matches left in the 22-week season, Didi's pulled out yet another three-point win, this time with a 5-4 win over a much-improved ThaiLife squad.

Third-place Piccadilly, mathematically eliminated after a 7-2 loss on the road at Dog's Bollocks, came back from nearly 600 points down to win the beer leg. The Piccadilly side noted that the meatballs served were absolutely, er, the dog's bollocks.

Coyote, the only other team left with a shot at the championship, were set to play Didi's last week. The results of that match will be included in the next edition.

We are not alone: Results of the Patong Dart League, available at www.phuketgazette.net, are now also being carried by the Thai Darts Association on its website, www.tdadarts.com.

The website is a good source of information about darting activity all around Thailand.

The next big event in Thailand is the TDA & J.GAT Darts Open 2006, to take place November 11 and 12 at the Electric Gen-

erating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) headquarters on the banks of the Chao Phraya River in Nonthaburi.

For those who have never been there, EGAT headquarters are a darter's delight, with very cheap brew and dart boards in a huge, circular pavilion.

We pray it will still be there after all the flooding in the North and Central Plains.

For all information about the tournament, check out the TDA website.

October 10 results: TaiLife 4 Didi's* 5; Amigos 5 Queen Mary* 4; Piccadilly* 2 Dog's Bollocks 7; Jungle Juice 5 Funky Monkey* 4; Coyote Bar* 8 Shakers 1; OffShore* 8 Valhalla 1 (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Didi's (49 points.); 2. Coyote Bar (42); 3. Piccadilly (39); 4. Offshore (36); 5. Dog's Bollocks (31); 6. Amigos (30); 7. Shakers (26); 8. Queen Mary (25); 9. Valhalla (22); 10. Jungle Juice (20); 11.= TaiLife, Funky Monkey (11).

October 24 matchups: Dog's Bollocks v OffShore; Amigos v Piccadilly; Valhalla v Queen Mary; Shakers v Jungle Juice; Didi's v Funky Monkey; Coyote Bar v TaiLife (home team first).

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Harry Usher's *Eos* flies her new Lady Pie spinnaker on her way to winning the Cruising class in the ACYC regatta on October 15.

Light winds add edge to ACYC regatta

AO CHALONG: Light breezes, gusting up to seven knots at times but dropping to zero air movement at others, made for some interesting battles on Chalong Bay in Race 12 of the Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC) Keelboat and Multihull Race Series on October 15.

Race officials chose wisely to keep the regatta confined within the bay.

In the Multihull class, Mark Pescott on *Summersalt* showed his experience with the fickle breezes on the bay, crossing the finish line ahead of *X-Catriot*, though only seconds ahead on corrected time.

Charro, once she resolved her helming inadequacies by putting seven-year-old William Smit in charge, finished third.

Fidji edged out season hotshots *Minx* in Racing class to take top honors, winning also by seconds after handicaps were applied.

John Fenn on *Four Winds* was given a special mention for having hauled himself out of bed at 4 am to single-handedly launch his yacht from the beach. Despite his huge effort, he failed to out-class Harry Usher's *Eos* sporting a new Lady Pie spinnaker in the Cruising Class.

The next ACYC Race will be on October 29, but those who can't wait till then can take part in the next of the Family Sailing Days on October 22.

ACYC have assembled four dinghies for the event. All members and their guests are welcome to join in.

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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel



Above: *OrBorJor* President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr (left) inspects progress on the Gateway project. Right: the distinctive row of pillars, each of which will deliver a lesson about Phuket.



Gateway 'ready for HM's birthday'

The 46.7-million-baht "Gateway" project by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) is now 95% complete, with the entire six-building complex expected to open in time for the celebrations of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's birthday on December 5.

No official date for dedicating the complex has yet been set, however.

Project contractor DN Constructor Co Ltd began work on the project November 29 last year.

The originally scheduled

completion date of September 24 this year was pushed back due to construction delays resulting from rainy weather.

Built on 25 rai of land near Sarasin Bridge at the northern tip of the island, the complex comprises six buildings, 29 seven-meter-tall concrete pillars arranged in a straight line, and a larger 21.8-meter granite pillar, the top of which will be sculpted to resemble a lighthouse.

Behind the buildings will be a large parking lot to provide room for cars and tour buses.

It was decided to build 29

smaller pillars because 2 represents Phuket's two heroines, Thao Thepkasatree and Thao Srisoonthorn, while 9 was chosen in honor of HM The King, the ninth ruler in the Chakri Dynasty.

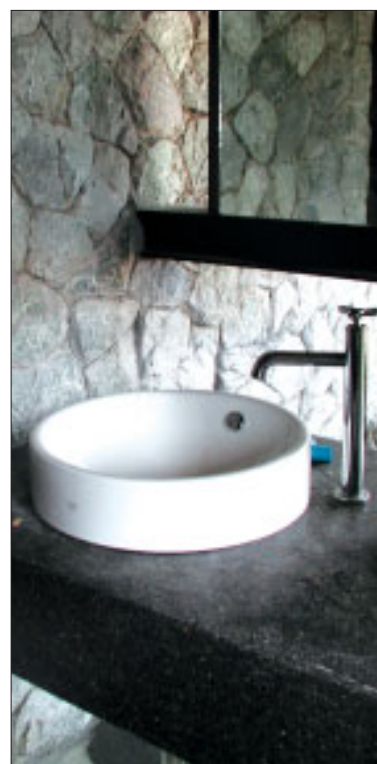
Each of the 29 pillars will be inscribed in Thai and English with information about the island's history, going back to the colonial-era tin mining days and extending through to the island's emergence as a major tourist destination in the closing decades of the 20th century.

The information to be used will be provided by Phuket Rajabhat University Professor Sommai Pinphutthasin and members of the Phuket Historical Society.

The first of the six buildings will serve as a tourist information center.

The second will be a meeting room, designed to accommodate one large meeting or two smaller gatherings.

The third building is a dou-



Classy pitstop: design of the restrooms has plainly taken a queue from upmarket resorts.

on sale. Next to this is a large public restroom facility. This will comprise separate restrooms with four stalls for men, six for women and one for disabled people.

The fifth building will house *OrBorJor* administrative offices, while the sixth building will have a first aid facility and offices for the Tah Chat Chai Police and Phuket Livestock Office, both of which operate checkpoints to inspect vehicles coming onto the island.

OrBorJor President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr, for who the construction of the Gateway was a key campaign promise in her 2004 election victory, said that the only work remaining involves interior design, landscaping, exterior electrics and lighting, completing pillar inscriptions and associated work, building access roads to the nearby highway, and work on parking and traffic flow, such as line painting.

Most of the project will be in southern "Taksin" style. Other aspects of the design are described as "unique", including the landscape design and sculpture work by Thana Laohakaikul, Dean of Silpakorn University's Faculty of Painting, Sculpture and Graphic Arts.

The *OrBorJor* will also spend an additional 10 million baht to install closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras around the complex for security purposes.

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Design

by Noolek Karaket

When moving house means moving the house



A show home from CEC's range. The company has two other models.

Building a home in Phuket is a dream for many – but it can also be a nightmare come true for those who don't take the time to research, plan and find the right people to do the work.

For those who want a little place to call their own, but who don't want to deal with all the related hassles, a prefabricated home might be just the answer.

Ready after only 15 days from the date of order, a prefabricated home by island newcomer CEC-Phuket in Chalong can cost as little as 450,000 baht and comes with a three-year performance warranty.

Perhaps best of all on an island where laws prohibit foreigners from owning land is the fact that these prefabricated homes can be moved easily – or even warehoused – when circumstances demand.

Find your 30-year lease isn't being rolled over as promised? Wife run off with a jazz musician? Find your new neighbors unbearable? Just pack it up and move on with your life – and your home. For just 60% of the original purchase price, CEC-Phuket will take care of everything for moves inside Phuket or to a surrounding province – though there

may be an additional fee if you decide to move to, say, Isarn.

Made of a special steel alloy and rust-proofed, the funky-yet-durable dwellings resist damage from the elements, including corrosive sea spray.

Three models are available, all of which can be converted for use as an office, guesthouse, coffee shop or other small business, depending on the need.

As this goes to print, several units are being prepared to be sent to Koh Yao Yai, where they will serve as rental bungalows.

Prices for a model with a total area of about 43 square meters, including a balcony, start at about 450,000 baht and range up to 590,000 baht, depending on the model chosen.

CEC-Phuket is a subsidiary

of Bangkok-based Civil Engineering Company Co Ltd, which spent about three years in product research and development before launching its prefab home business here in Phuket.

For a look at how cool and comfortable a prefab home can be, just stop by CEC-Phuket's sales office, which also serves as a model home.

CEC-Phuket Marketing Manager Patcharanan Rattirawiroj told the *Gazette* that initial response has been good, with 10 homes already sold. A marketing campaign beginning in January will include expansion into nearby provinces such as Phang Nga.

For more information contact CEC-Phuket (Tel: 076-891424-5; www.cec-phuket.com).

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

I like a good mystery. The old Loch Ness Monster theory is all well and good, but you know that regardless of how many years they spend looking and how many millions of pounds they spend on the latest high-tech monster-spotting gadgets, they'll never find a thing.

Some mysteries are solved, though. Going back a few years, Britain was plagued with crop circles that appeared in the middle of corn fields all over the country seemingly overnight. Aliens were initially blamed, as they were an easy target – no aliens popped up to deny it.

It wasn't until a bunch of university students admitted to trampling cornfields with wooden boards that people realized they'd been completely fooled. Aliens from outer space coming down and sending messages to us in our fields? Total bunkum.

What I find even more fascinating are the mysteries that will never be solved. I'm talking about situations such as that annoying noise coming deep from within the bowels of the engine compartment of your car that's driving you completely up the wall. Your tolerance for this interminable noise finally reaches breaking point.

You drive into your local garage to let an expert pinpoint the problem, fix it and put you out of your misery once and for all. But what happens? The noise mysteriously disappears as soon as you drive in, and all that you can really say is something pathetic like, "Well it normally makes this loud 'eek eek eek' kind of sound."

You then drive away feeling more than a little ridiculous, with that infernal noise inevitably returning soon afterwards.

There are more mysteries in the field (sorry) of gardening than I'd care to consider, but there is one, involving the omnipresent



Roots above ground, roots below ground: it's all quite simple, so don't let anyone palm you off with mysterious twaddle.

COCONUT MYSTERIES

coconut tree, that has only been solved for me in recent years. I could never work out why the base of a coconut tree often has the start of its roots above ground.

The answer to this question became apparent after I conducted a small experiment in my front garden a few years ago. I claimed a couple of coconuts that had fallen from a nearby fully-grown tree, and dug a hole for one and put the other on top of the ground.

With nothing more than water, both grew, but the difference was that the roots of the tree

that appeared from the buried coconut were below ground and a lot neater; the one that started off above ground had six inches to go down first, which is where those weird, bicycle spoke roots appear from. That's the way they grow in the wild, of course – mystery solved. Obvious when you think about it.

This plant probably best symbolizes tropical spots such as Phuket. Picture a beach anywhere in the world, and what's drooping majestically over it? A coconut palm.

In the race to develop the island, build bigger and more palatial hotels and to construct more holiday homes for our visitors, what's the first thing to go? The trees that have happily sat there for years making the island look like a tropical paradise – precisely why we came here in the first place.

It's a serious shame, but everyone here can help redress the balance by planting a coco-

nut palm in their own yards. It can be anywhere to be honest, in your own garden, the unattended garden next door, or even in the corner of your landlord's garden – I'm sure he won't mind.

It's not exactly a complicated process – here are some instructions:

1. Go outside.
2. Find the nearest coconut that has fallen from the nearest tree.
3. Shake it and make sure it makes a swishing sound.
4. Take it home.
5. Put it on a wall or in a corner on the floor – it doesn't really matter.
6. Do absolutely nothing.
7. Wait for a shoot to appear, which will rise naturally skyward.
8. Wait a bit longer, and another shoot will start to grow downwards.
9. Put it in a hole in the soil. If you can't be bothered with

the exertion of digging a hole, then don't. Just leave it on the ground. It'll grow anyway.

10. Have a beer. You've earned it.
11. Water it (the coconut, not the beer).
12. Keep watering it (if you can summon the energy).
13. Wait.
14. You've got a coconut tree.

There isn't anything more to it. The hardest thing you'll need to do is walk out of your front gate, bend over (watch your back – you don't want to over-exert yourself) and pick up a coconut. Those with heart conditions should obviously consult their doctors before undertaking strenuous activity, so perhaps this part of the process should be delegated.

Long-term, your biggest consideration won't be the maintenance of the coconut palm, as it pretty much looks after itself. The main problem will be where the coconuts will fall if they're not regularly harvested. How many cars, buildings and Phuket residents have sustained serious damage from falling coconuts over the years? Countless.

Full sun? No problem. Sandy soil, or soil lacking the nutrients for most normal plants to grow? No problem. High winds? These will survive a hurricane, and still come out smiling.

Plant a coconut tree for yourself. Sorry if I sound like one of those really bad DIY TV programs, but Phuket will look all the better for it.

You'll probably have to stock up your fridge with beer though, as you'll have plenty of spare time. No mystery there.

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Home of the Week

Kata

Kata viewpoint

Positioned high on a hillside in Kata, this villa overlooks one of Phuket's most popular and picturesque beaches.

The rear of the property makes full use of the view, by incorporating a 41-square-meter swimming pool and surrounding terraced area of 40 square meters.

A sala, built so that it is suspended over one end of the pool, allows people to swim underneath or rest in the shade.

The 396sqm interior area includes a living and dining area that open onto the terrace through several sets of floor-to-ceiling glass sliding doors. White-tiled floors help to keep the house cool, as does the ducted air conditioning throughout the home.

The villa has four bedrooms – three with en-suite bathrooms – all with wooden flooring and built-in furniture. Bedrooms are on both levels, with rooms on the top floor enjoying views. On the lower level is the entertainment center.

The Western kitchen, which is on the main level, features a gas cooker, white cupboards and black granite counter tops, along



The sala is cantilevered over one end of the pool

with a water-filtration system.

The home also features UBC TV, an Internet connection and a single carport.

The property is located within an estate that features a gym, communal swimming pool and estate security.

The property has Chanote

title and is available freehold, unfurnished, at 34 million baht.

For more details contact Richard Lusted at Siam Real Estate at Tel: 076-288908 or by email to: info@siamrealestate.com or visit the website at <http://www.siamrealestate.com>



The view of Kata Beach from the rear of the property.

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THAI VILLA FOR SALE



Thai villa, located down the Panwa Peninsula overlooking beautiful Chalong Bay. This Thai-style residence has 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, a Western-style kitchen, living room and a large swimming pool. 19.5 million baht. Tel: 081-897-4180. Email: gay@islandtechnology.com

HOUSE IN KATHU

2-floor villa for sale in nice village between Patong and Phuket. European kitchen with dining/living room. 2 bedrooms, air conditioned. Fully furnished, mountain view. Price: 4.2 million baht. Tel: +31-703552321. Email: shd1@planet.nl

KHAO LAK & PHUKET

Khao Lak is back; bigger, better & more beautiful than ever. We have oceanview & beachfront land on offer. Tel: 081-8931360. Email: noi@phuketproperties.com For further details, see our website at: www.khaolakland.com/land.htm

PRIME LAND IN NAI HARN AREA

Plot 1: 25 sq wah (100 sqm), approximately 2km from Nai Harn Beach, close to the main road. Ideal for a business location or for shophouses. Price: 1 million baht. Land with title deed.

Plot 2: 90 sq wah (360 sqm), approximately 1km from Nai Harn Beach. Perfect for building your dream home. Price: 2.4million baht. Land with title deed.

Plot 3: Square plot of land of 80 sq wah (320sqm), approximately 4km from Nai Harn Beach. Perfect for building your dream home. Price: 1.6 million baht. Land with title deed.

Please contact for any further information. Tel: 081-8921057, 081-6919679. Email: angela_prajantabut@hotmail.com

FOR SALE

7.5 MILLION BAHT

140sqm townhouse in Boat Lagoon Marine Residence. Water view, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, maid/utility room. Fully furnished, washer & tumble drier. Very good condition. Free use of gym and 50m pool. Restaurants, hotel, bank, supermarket and more. New medical center opening soon. Close to international school and all major shops. 24-hour security. Tel: 086-2820567.

SALE OR LEASE

2,500sqm Thai-style villa, built 1999, with panoramic sea view. Located on Cape Panwa. For sale at US\$4.5 million or for lease at US\$39,000 a month. Call Mr Abdulloh at Tel: 081-569-7220. Agents welcome.

KATHU TOWNHOUSE

New 2-story house with 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, car park, gates and security. Price: 1.7 million baht firm. Tel: 087-8822462.

PATONG SEAVIEW BEST PLACE

A tall and beautiful house with private pool and great seaview. 70 meters above and 100 meters away from the sea. In the best neighborhood, no better, the best on Phuket. Baan Suan Kamnan, a quiet, green residential area on a hill just outside Patong. Enjoy the benefits of being close to the action but leave the noise behind. 5-bedroom, 4-bathroom house on Chanote land with many extras and optional 2 separate apartments next door (Buy house or company). Tel: 086-7866350. Email: buurmanb@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website: www.patongbluepoint.com

2.5 M BAHT RAWAI

2-bedroom, 2-bathroom house in quiet location in Rawai. 2.5 million baht ono. Tel: 076-388685. Email: info@andamanthaiproperty.com For further details please see our website at: www.andamanthaiproperty.com/atp_property_396.htm

MAI KHAO 1 RAI

Cheap. 1,820sqm. Flat, access to hill, road and power supply. 2 million baht. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT AND PUB

Main street, 400sqm, renovated last year, long-term lease. Tel: 081-0894964. Please email for further details. Email: janco2002@hotmail.com

PATONG CONDO

Brand-new freehold condo for sale. 900,000 baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

RAWAI CONDO

for sale. Sea view, freehold. 450,000 baht. Tel: 086-686-5567. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

PRIME LAND FOR SALE

Ao Makham - 1 rai, 1 ngan (2,000sqm). 25 metres of the land faces the main road and the back of the land is close to the sea. Price: 6 million baht. Nor Sor 3 Gor title.

Rawai - 2 rai, 70 sq wah (3,408sqm) on Wiset Rd (the main road to Rawai). 70 meters of the land is on the main road. Ideal for business or seaview condominiums. Price: 19million baht. Nor Sor 3 title. Contact for more details. Tel: 081-8921057, 081-6919679. Email: angela_prajantabut@hotmail.com

SUVARNABHUMI

condo. 60sqm, fully furnished. For details please contact K. Paiboon. Tel: 081-772-7100, 081-5657427. Email: snonticha@hotmail.com

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

Buy or lease new house including registered company. 400sqm and large concrete road. Price: 5 million baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 086-6865567. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

In Land & Houses Park in Chalong. One story, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with furniture. Asking 4.5 million baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-8512280, 081-0919180 (Thai).

STUNNING SEA VIEWS: ANDAMAN AND PHANG-NGA

Seaview land in Mai Khao. Hurry! Only last few rais left. Price from 2.5m - 3m baht per rai. Please contact PPH for more details. Tel: 086-9060166.

LAND FOR SALE

2 rai in Soi Palai for 8 million baht. Please contact K. Kwanpanyadee for more details. Tel: 081-3048932. Email: orkwanpanyadee@yahoo.com

PATONG VILLA FOR SALE



Very exclusive, completely furnished new villa with swimming pool in best residential area of Patong. Two floors, three bedrooms with aircon, three bathrooms, jacuzzi, Western kitchen and dining area. Living area: 200sqm. Freehold land: 150sqm. 8.5 million baht. Tel: 081-892-8526. Please see our website at: www.phuket-besthomes.com

CHEAP LAND

in Rawai 570,000 baht. Chanote title land in quiet but convenient location in Rawai. 12m x 15m plot, approximately 180 sqm. Desperate! Relocating to Tokyo and need money to do so. 570,000 baht ono. Rare find! Will sell for less than I paid. Great plot on which to build a 100sqm 3-bedroom house. Road access, electricity, well water, phone line access, ADSL area, etc. Call for more information. Tel: 086-7428743. Email: jesse_in_karon@yahoo.ca

500SQM SMALL PLOT

Quiet area in Rawai. Good for house or bungalow. Chanote title. Come and look Tel: 01-5376866.

1 RAI IN RAWAI

Beautiful area, flat land, easy to build, quiet, perfect spot. Asking 4.7 million baht, Chanote title. Tel: 07-8938747.

HOUSE FOR SALE

2 floors, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, one big store-room and a large garden on an 80 sq wah, (320sqm) landscaped plot. It's on Saiyuan Rd, 10 minutes to Naiham and Rawai Beaches. Direct sale for 6.5 million baht net including 2 aircons and some built-in furniture. Tel: 084-9916654.

GEOFFS Co.,Ltd.

LAND FOR SALE IN KATHU



5 rai 50 sq wah with Chanote title, good area, great canal at the back, 5 minutes to Big C & Central, perfect for private complex, 8 million baht / rai.

HOUSE FOR SALE IN KATHU



At Anupas Golf Villa, with Chanote title, lake views 3 bedrooms + maid, 3 bathrooms, aircon, hot water, curtains, kitchen units, land area 75 sq wah 3x3.5 meter, pool & jacuzzi 7 million baht.

HOUSE FOR SALE AT PHUKET



At Phuket Country Club Golf Course, near clubhouses 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, aircon, kitchen units with hob, hood, oven and dishwasher. Land area 175 sq wah with Chanote title, 7.3x12 meter pool & jacuzzi. Nice & quiet, beautiful golf views, 17 million baht.

Please contact: Mr. Geoff Curry
Mobile: 08-8540061.
Tel: 076-323214, 08-0803414. (K.Ning)
Fax: 076-323215.
Email: mgeooffcurry@yahoo.com

Seaview Condominiums for Sale Rambutan Residence An Investment in Paradise



Rambutan Residence offers 20 luxury freehold fully furnished apartments for sale. Located in Soi Playboy just off Nanai 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

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Property Gazette

APARTMENT FOR SALE



Kata seaview. 90sqm, 2 bedrooms, absolute privacy and security. 3.48 million baht. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

STUNNING SEA VIEW, KATA



400sqm, Chanote title, road, electric. Come and look, coffee for free. Tel: 089-6525664.

VILLA FOR SALE, BEACHFRONT



700sqm living space, 900sqm land, pool, absolute privacy and security, 35 million baht. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

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KATA SEA VIEW



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STUNING LAND

in Nai Harn. Near main road, good for business and development. Area is 1 rai. Call us. Tel: 087-8938747.

BIG HIGH-END VILLA

4 bedrooms, pool, 520sqm living space. Come and see, no better house on the island. The best for a great price. Includes car. Tel: 089-652-5664.

RAI RAWAI

Chanote, electricity, water supply, top location. 3.2 million baht. Tel: 089-6525664.

NEW POOL VILLA

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Rawai, cheap, Chanote title near main road. Beautiful sea view. Tel: 089-6525664.

PATONG VILLA LAND

Stunning 750sqm villa with a further 900sqm of landscaped garden area for sale. 30m from front gate to Nanai. 2 roads, all facilities connected, prime for development. Chanote. 20 million baht. Tel: 084-847-8414.

CHALONG-016

Sea view. 8 rai for sale by owner. Tel: 081-8976230.

HOUSE FOR SALE



Surin, Lersuang village, 120 sqm, 2 bedrooms, absolute privacy and security. 4.99 million baht. Tel: 087-889-6074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

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The only stunning house and land in the best location, overlooking Patong with a 180 degree view of Patong, Tri-Trang and Kalim beach. Buy now and move in, please contact. Tel: 081-8921108. Email: info@grottino-beach-inn.com

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LAND FOR SALE



Seaview 10 rai, Chalong, electricity, water, road access. Only 2.7 million baht per rai. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

SPANISH-STYLE

villa with pool. Opposite Loch Palm Golf. 13.7 million baht. Land: 800sqm. Please contact for more details. Tel: 086-7418345. Email: nutch@manmueng.com

LAND FOR SALE

130 sq wah. 4 plots, garden view on 2 sides. Manik, Cherg Talay. Call for more details. Tel: 089-8749823.

PATONG TOWER

1 bedroom, sea view, UBC, DVD, aircon, pool, parking, 100 meters to beach. Tel: 084-8473304.

KARON SEAVIEW

Seaview villas in only quiet, top spot in Karon. Starting from 9.9 million baht. Tel: 086-2670898.

SMALL PLOT

in Rawai. Sea view, asking 900,000 baht. The last plot in Rawai, 200 meters from beach. Tel: 081-5376866.

PATONG HOUSE

for sale. 2-story house. 3 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, dining, 2 bathrooms, 1 kitchen. Fully furnished. Tel: 076-292387, 089-7298852. Email: butt_mamoon@hotmail.com

SMALL PLOT RAWAI

524sqm, sea view, nice and quiet, Chanote title. 2.5 million baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 086-2670898.

BEAUTIFUL PLOT

In Naiharn, 400sqm, Chanote title, road & electric. Good for building a house. Only 2.7 million baht. Tel: 081-5376866.

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



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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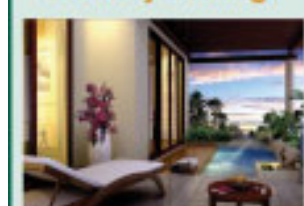
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Property Gazette

LAND FOR SALE



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RAWAI POOL HOUSE

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SMALL PLOT

in Rawai. 200sqm, perfect for small house. Chanote title, road access & electricity. Only 650,000 baht. Come & see. Tel: 086-2670898.

CAPE LAEM KAD

9 rai: 15 million baht. Tel: 081-1719705. Email: atetayap@yahoo.com

AO CHALONG

5 rai, 135sqm of beachfront land near Chalong. Price: 10 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-6939571.

HOUSE FOR SALE

cheap. Unfinished 2-story house for sale near Phuket Country Club. Quiet area, 18 wah, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Near all shops. Asking 850,000 baht. Tel: 087-127-3272. Email: ken@loxinfo.co.th

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BEAUTIFUL PLOT

in Nai Harn. 400sqm, Chanote title, road access & electricity. Good for building house. Only 2.7 million baht. Call now. Tel: 081-5376866.

CHALONG NEW HOME

This elegant, 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom home with large living area, separate office, air conditioning & telephone is a must-see. Tel: 086-6521473.

BALI-STYLE VILLA

Kathu. One-story, fully-furnished, Bali-style villa for sale. Price: 6.3 million baht ono. Good location. Please contact for more details. Tel: 081-4945423, 086-2794757.

TOWNHOUSE NANAI

House number is 69! 2-story house, 90sqm in beautiful "Manguiers" residence. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, kitchen, living room, garden, pool, security, furnished. No brokers. Price 3.3 million baht. Call William. Tel: 081-9796220.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Nanai Rd, Ka Semsab 1. House no. 56/3, 5 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 1 living room, 1 kitchen, 250sqm living area. 7.9 million baht. Contact K. Joy at Tel: 081-8931191.

EAST-COAST OFFICE

or shop with 2 bedrooms upstairs. 1.7 million baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-8918689.

CONDO FOR SALE



Rawai, sea view, 126sqm living space, communal pool. 4 million baht. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: info@sea-property-phuket.com

CONDO FOR SALE

On the 8th floor of Sky Inn in Patong. Also 122 sqm house for rent at Pa Khlok Pleonuan. Tel: 081-5354177.

SEAVIEW RAWAI

2½ rai, almost beachfront. Great for apartments, yellow zoning. You invest, we build, manage, and sell. Guaranteed to triple your money. Tel: 087-8938747.

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for sale in a prestigious location in Phuket. Prices range from 4 to 11 million baht, with bank financing available. For more information please call. Ask for Miss Am. Thai & English. Tel: 087-3826258, 081-5270527.

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for sale. 60-, 3- and 20-rai plots on ring route (San Peesua). Good for big-project property development. Direct sale from owner. Tel: 081-7212736. Email: ty-pretty@hotmail.com

HOUSE IN SAI YUAN

Address: Soi Kiumyang Nuati. 200 sq wah. Price: 14 million baht. Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully-fitted kitchen, living room, swimming pool, and one car parking space. Tel: 081-2733303, 081-9684125.

PATONG APARTMENT

Luxury apartment, Square Place, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, European style. Fully furnished, pool. 2.7 million baht. Tel: 081-8940580.

HOUSE IN SAI YUAN

Go down Soi Tristar for 500 meters and turn right, then continue for 100 meters and the house will be on your left. There is a "for sale" sign. It's 108sqm and has 2 air-conditioned bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room and a fitted kitchen. There is also a big garden and a swimming pool (and a parking space). Tel: 081-2733303, 081-968-4125.

BEACH-FRONT LAND

for sale. 1,125 sq wah, 30x130 meter with Nor Sor 3 Kor. Sukorn Island, Trang. Price 1.6 million baht. Tel: 084-8516845. Email: odo_jp@hotmail.com

NEW HOUSE

in Nai Harn. Hill view, just a few minutes to the beach, Chanote title. Over 1,600sqm, including the house. Fully landscaped garden. Tel: 081-7371688. Fax: 076-273083. Email: info@phutawanresidence.com

SEAVIEW LAND

Gated community. Nearly 2 rai, Bang Tao, infrastructure complete, ready to build. 7.9 million baht. Tel: 086-267-0157. Email: bannuaton@yahoo.com

BIG HOUSE

in Kamala. On 2 ngan, beautiful place, large kitchen and living room. 7.6 million baht. Tel: 087-2827357.

HOME IN PATONG

350m from beach, 3 floors, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. 7.5 million baht. Direct from owner. Tel: 085-7839062.

NEW TOP VILLA

for sale. Top view overlooking lake and golf course, 4 minutes to BIS. 70sqm pool, 5 bedrooms. 19.5 million baht. Tel: 087-0911552.

SEAVIEW DESIGN

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for rent. 3 bedrooms, 1 study, tastefully furnished, serviced. For long-term rent. Close to school and everything else. Available Nov 1 for 60,000 baht a month. Tel: 081-078-0014. Email: bjarneaagaardhansen@hotmail.com

RENT A HOUSE

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PATONG TOWER

rental. Available from December 10th. Newly decorated 16th floor corner unit, beautiful sea view, one/two people only. 150 meters to beach. Email: coasters@earthlink.net Please visit at: www.patongtower-rentals.com

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PATONG BANGLA

area. Commercial residential use. 140sqm, 2 floors. Price: 250 baht per sqm a month. Tel: 087-8817600.

APARTMENTS

and houses in Patong and Rawai from 10,000 to 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-686-5567. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

VILLA FOR RENT

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LAKEVIEW APT/LOFT

office. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 floors, near Lotus. Furnished, cable, phone, aircon. 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8928208.

APARTMENT

for rent. Fully furnished, 1 bedroom, 1 livingroom, kitchen, bath room, terrace. Quiet location. South Hill Patong Beach. 15,000 per month. Tel: 087-5073909. Email: tauchlehrer64@hotmail.de

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Property Gazette

BEACH HOUSE



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NEW VILLA TO RENT

Best view of golf, lake & valley. 3 bedrooms with pool near BCIS. 80,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2698492.

RAWAI LUXURY

villa. Long-term rent. Furnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, garden, covered 2-car carport and terrace. Rawai Beach. 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

LOFT-STYLE FLATS

Kathu. 4 large, quiet, central flats. 6-15,000 baht a month long term. Tel: 081-968430. Email: hkmsn@yahoo.com

NEW 2-BEDROOM

house. Unfurnished apart from two beds. Hot shower, big veranda, quiet area. Muang Tong 1.3km to town, 2km to beach. 6,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-8855415.

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

New house including registered company for lease or sale. 400sqm and large concrete road. Price: 5 million baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 086-6865567. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

KATA LUXURY

apartment. 2 bedrooms, furnished, ADSL, aircon, teak kitchen, huge terrace, 2 bathrooms, quiet area. Fully serviced for 1,800 baht a day; or available non-serviced. Tel: 089-5926890. Email: north8west98@yahoo.com

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This charming house with spectacular sea views has 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, lounge/dining room, kitchen, snooker room, study, sauna, swimming pool, all located in outstanding gardens. 10 minutes to BCIS, 1 minute to sea. 80,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-2796283.

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The Village-Coconut Island is recruiting for a Boat Driver/ General Assistant

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- Running general duties for the administration team when required.

Essential requirements:

- Male
- Thai national.
- Proven experience as a boat driver.
- Proven experience in boat maintenance.
- Confident spoken and written English skills.
- Proven experience in a Customer Service role.
- A flexible and outgoing approach.
- A clean driving license.
- Smart and professional appearance.

A generous package is available to the successful applicant, depending on experience. Please send resume and cover letter to phorn@thevillage-coconutisland.com. www.thevillage-coconutisland.com or call 081-970 4419



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Please send your application with a recent photo to Human Resource Dept. Phuket Island Property Services Co. LTD (PIPS)
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SECRETARY /

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Interested candidates, please send a CV and a recent photograph by email to: info@phuket-receptif.com. Tel: 076-261195 for more information.

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Must write, read and speak English fluently and be able to use Microsoft Office. Salary range from 8,000-15,000 baht a month, depending upon experience. Tel: 076-296617, 086-2810515. Fax: 076-296617. Or email: contactus@kdbusiness.com

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needed. Must have very good English communication skills. Tel: 076-2647702. Fax: 076-264773. Or email: info@kajonkiet.com

PERSONAL TRAINER

required. The position of lead trainer has become available at the Vita Personal Training Centre. Candidates should hold international qualifications and experience and be fluent in English. Work permit is provided. Please call for more info. Tel: 081-0880422. Email: alun@vitagroup.net

COOK WANTED

All year round. English needed, easy job. Chalong. Call 087-8939464.

2 SWEDISH GIRLS

We are 2 girls from Sweden, age 33, going to Patong in January. We are looking for almost any kind of job except dishes, laundry, cleaning, etc. Can start next February. Please email if it sounds interesting. Email: pillan30@hotmail.com

HOUSEKEEPER

Part time. Available for European clients only. I speak English and work Monday to Friday 9 am till 3 pm. Prefer not to live in. Please call for more information. Tel: 086-9469997.

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Articles for Sale

SONY 42" TV

Projection TV, boxed, as new, can be delivered. 25,000 baht or best offer. Tel: 081-906-6243. Email: jon@freedomsurfing.com

POOL TABLE

12,000 baht for quick sale. Tel: 086-1203660. Email: chilligarden@hotmail.com

ROLLER BLINDS

Four new roller blinds. Navy blue cotton, 80cm wide by 195cm long. Still in packaging. 1,000 baht each. For sale because I bought wrong size. Tel: 087-2747648. Email: debspatterson@gmail.com

FURNITURE

Concrete furniture. 8 sets consisting of 1 oval table, 2 two-seater and 2 one-seater chairs. Available at less than a third of the original price. Can be viewed at the Islander Bar in Rawai, or contact Neil at Tel: 076-289182, 084-8507206. Email: islanderbar3@hotmail.com

DIGITAL SCALE

Bizerba 8000 with printer. 18,000 baht. Call for details. Tel: 086-1203660. Email: chilligarden@hotmail.com

MOVING SALE

In Nai Harn on October 28th.
- Siemens fridge: 12,500 baht
- Single bed: 2,500
- High chair for child: 2,000
- Bosch drill: 1,000
- Mattress: 750
- Standing fan: 700
- Wall fans: 300/500
- Table: 350
- Mirror: 350
Plus lots of cheap items and free gifts. Please call for info, directions and early bird purchases. Tel: 084-1917736.

RECLINING CHAIR

Dark blue lazyboy, as new, never used. 20,000 baht. Tel: 081-9583513.

LONG WETSUIT

Bare Velocity 3/2mm, long wetsuit. Bought less than two months ago. (I have the original invoice.) Done 20ish dives with it. Size MLT (ML for tall people, but I'd say it's more an L size) All black, pristine condition. Asking 4,500 baht. Hurry up, I'm leaving soon! Please contact via email: a_barreira_sevillano@hotmail.com

Articles Wanted

TREADMILL FOR FITNESS WANTED

Not too big. Any type considered. Up to 15,000 baht. Can collect. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-8954480. Email: Guardian@loxinfo.co.th

Bulletins

Alcoholics Anonymous

is holding meetings in English at the following places:
Phuket City
Mission Hospital
on Wed and Sun at 7 pm
Bangkok Phuket Hospital
on Fri at 7 pm
Patong
Patong Hospital
on Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun at 7 pm and on Fri at 8 pm
(Scandinavian Meeting)
Karon
Wat Karon School
on Tue, Sat at 7 pm
For Phuket info, Please call 08-19564031, 08-18912895 or 08-12732053 (Scandinavian)
For info on other Thailand AA meetings inquire @: 02-231-8300 (for Thai language press 3) www.aathailand.org or email: info@aathailand.org

Business Opportunities

KITCHENS

Showroom renovation. Must sell old kitchens now as new ones to arrive in October from Malaysia and Germany. Hurry. Contact RS Venture Phuket. Tel: 081-8046354. Email: rafael.veiga@rsventure.co.th

GUESTHOUSE

in Patong for sale with company. 208sqm with Chanote title, 150m from Jungceylon. Option to open 3 shops. Can be extended to 7 floors. Reasonable price at 25 million baht. Please contact for more details. Fax: 076-345554. Email: philipp@loxinfo.co.th

BAR / RESTAURANT

and guesthouse. In Kata center, 40 seats, fully furnished + 3 rooms for rent. ADSL/cable TV. 2.5 million baht for quick sale. Must sell. Tel: 084-6894033 (French), 081-9560204 (English).

CABARET BAR

We will NOT sell all; but will sell up to 50% to a suitable partner as Ning-Nong will stay to ensure Katoys "R" Us Cabaret & staff continue. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-8955242. Email: junaworn@hotmail.com

BAR FOR SALE

Popular and successful Amigos bar in Soi Seadragon for sale. Pool table, darts, own sound system. Price negotiable dependent on length of lease required. Tel: 087-883-8721.

KAMALA

restaurant & bar. Famous for pizza + Texmex. 40 seats, air conditioning, equipment, stock and furniture. For sale at 500,000 baht + rent 6,000 baht per month. Tel: 06-287-8966, 06-9451642. Email: boomerkamala@hotmail.com

BOOK SHOP FOR SALE

Patong OTOP book shop & Nanai book shop. 2 shops for 980,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 084-1705552.

BAR FOR SALE

Located in Soi Gonzo, 2 years left on lease. Please call for more information. Tel: 085-7826492.

PARTNERSHIP

available. Successful bar-restaurant. Prime location in Patong. Sell 50% investment for 2.2 million baht. Tel: 087-2706297.

RENT FREE FOR 5 YEARS

10-year lease, large restaurant/bar in Kata/Karon area in the heart of commercial spots. Capital required: 3 million baht for 49% share. Call Peter. Tel: 089-2892297. Email: peterjones100@hotmail.com

BUSINESS IN PHI PHI

island. Now for sale in a top location. Fast food corner and Internet business, plus owner's room with balcony. 14-year contract and low monthly rent. Call for more details. Tel: 081-0820039. Email: asiantips@gmail.com

GUESTHOUSE LEASE

Great location in Patong. Buy before high season! Long established, 9 rooms, restaurant, bar, family run, good future. Tel: 089-6489932.

BAR WITH TERRACE

For sale, big bar and large terrace in busy hotel area on the beach road, 200sqm. Possibility to take separate kitchen also. Very good food sales and catering for other bars. Fully fitted and furnished with 2-year lease, with 3 more years possible. Please call for more info. Tel: 087-2706297.

NO 1 PATONG

seaview. Looking for investment partner for newly-built, hillside restaurant & bar opening December. 40 rai, best location and beautiful for building bungalow, apartment, hotel or villa. Tel: 089-4713610. Email: citadella.phuket@mailbox.hu

RETIRE ON ROCKET

science. On-line option trader offers private tuition. Learn to trade the financial markets safely and profitably from home, with a small account. You will be amazed that it's not rocket science. Zero experience required. Have an income in the tropics regardless of other people. 100% serious. Limited places. Tel: 081-7373958. Email: info@optionwok.com

THE BEST SITE IN NANAI ROAD



Bar restaurant. In front of the road of Bansaana fresh market and Jungceylon (Carrefour cinema) opposite 7/11 and FamilyMart) 80sqm. All furniture and material new. Very nice decoration and design. Good conditions. Can start serving immediately. Tel: 076-346004, 081-17972173. Email: georgeslancry@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT

for rent. On main beach road, 2 floors. Rent: 20,000 baht a month. Tel: 081-7977199, 086-6830786, 076-294082.

MASSAGE / NAIL

salon for sale. Busy massage and nail salon near Bangla. Thai owner moving to America. High season is almost here. Tel: 089-046-8603. Email: chokdeemak@yahoo.com

BAR / RESTAURANT

for sale on Nanai Rd. All fittings and furniture just 6 months old. 20 years left on lease with further options. Very profitable business. Genuine reason for sale. 1.5 million baht (negotiable). Buy now and enjoy the high season. Contact for more information. Tel: 084-8478469. Email: ptpbar@yahoo.com.au

MUSIC LOUNGE/BAR

Investment opportunity in Patong. Newly-renovated music lounge & bar for sale in Patong. Will sell up to 37.5% stake, but will not sell all. 1.7 million baht, but up for negotiation. Contact for more info. Tel: 083-1804103. Email: pamorales83@yahoo.com

BEAUTY SALON

Beauty salon for sale, Kathu. 150,000 baht or for rent. Please contact for details. Tel: 084-8448589. Email: bb-anaiya@hotmail.com

NEW COMPANY

Looking for investor/s. Profit: 3 million plus per month. Looking for total investment of 6 million baht. Tel: 085-888-0636.

SPA AND BAR

in 1 rai with garden and swimming pool. We are looking for someone interested in building a spa and bar around the swimming pool in tropical garden area of our resort. You would have a long-term lease from us. For further details, please contact me. Email: janco2002@hotmail.com

GUESTHOUSE AND

restaurant. In Patong. Nanai Road, good location - opposite Mae Ubol Market. Long-term lease 3 + 3 years. Fully furnished, everything brand new. 5 rooms with A/C, fan, big fridge, cable TV, hot/cold shower. Separate small room for staff available. Restaurant with 36 seats, kitchen fully equipped. Including Thai company Ltd. and all necessary licenses. Ready to operate from first day. Asking price 3 million baht, no key money! Price includes prepaid rent until July 2007. For further information please call. Tel: 087-1203082. Email: kai_taurus@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT

for sale. Bar and restaurant in Surat Thani. Urgent sale: 2.8 million baht. Tel: 081-540-1267. Email: jungpernod@yahoo.com

LADIES FUN FITNESS

circuit. For Clubs, Spas, Hotels. Get ahead now! 800,000 baht. Tel: 076-321402, 081-7372177. Email: nikki.indigo@siam@gmail.com

CASH FLOW

problem. For the moment (divorce). European needs 250,000 baht till end of the year. I will pay back from my fixed deposit/savings book. I have evidence of these. Good interest and lawyer contract. Living over 6 years in Thailand with yearly visa and work permit. Business possibility together; if you want, we can start! Please contact via email: Zukunft@hotmail.com

VCD RENTAL

business for sale. Established business, good location. 695,000 baht ono. Tel: 086-7423014, 084-0627129.

RESTAURANT & BAR

for rent. Klong Dao Beach, Koh Lanta. 27 seats inside, 12-16 outside. 20 m from main road, 140 m to the beach. Lease is until March 31, 2009. Rent is 200,000 baht a year. The price includes the 1st year's rent. Asking price: 450,000 baht. Please contact K. Conny Tel: 089-9858309. Email: crockstrom@hotmail.com

HOTEL FOR SALE

in Patong. 14-room running hotel is up for quick and urgent sale due to owner's sickness. Email: info@thaorientalinn.com

SUCCESSFUL BIZ

Monthly net profit 165,000 baht. For sale at 1 million due to relocation. Tel: 076-280-447, 081-0808557. Fax: 076-280447. Email: info@no1visa.com

BAR FOR SALE

Located in Soi Gonzo, 2 years left on lease. Please call. Tel: 085-7826492.

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Month	September 2006	October 2006	November 2006	December 2006	January 2007
Date	3,10,17,24	1,8,15,29	5,12,19,26	17	7,14,21,28

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bikes + one 25cc quad bike.
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We make & fit wardrobes, dressing tables, drawers, etc. Please call for more details. Tel: 084-8473304.

PENANG VISA TRIP
Every Sunday, return Tuesday. Incl transport, hotel, food on route. 4,900 baht (twin sharing), single supplement 800 baht. Visa run Ranong daily incl transport, visa fee, lunch, coffee/water, 1,500 baht.
Tel: 084-7457024.

VISA RUN TO ANDAMAN CLUB
Only Eve, wow! Low season price 1,500 baht only. Includes transfers, insurance, breakfast, soft drink, visa fee, lunch at hotel luxury boat. Call K. Eve. Tel: 081-5352637, 076-289201.
www.evevisarun.com

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Design and construction. Top-quality, materials and workmanship. Very competitive prices and excellent references from Phuket customers. Please call for further details. Tel: 086-7645285.

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VISA & LEGAL SERVICES



Company registration 2,229 baht; one year visa 5,999 baht; retirement visa 5,999 baht; work permit 5,999 baht; UK & US visa 16,999 baht. No more visa runs - get a one-year visa for only 5,999 baht. Establish your Thai company today to buy land or start your business for only 2,229 baht! Property title search, sales contract and land registration. Thailand's largest legal service network. Always low prices by our licensed Thai lawyers. Tel: 076-345277. Email: info@siam-legal.com
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G4S. Security system promotion for October. Control panel with keypad, siren and strobe box, 4 infrared sensors, battery backup and FREE installation, now at 39,999 baht; or call for a free quotation. Tel: 076-262101, 081-9586805. Fax: 076-262104. Email: kris.derveduwe@th.g4s.com

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For all that you want to advertise and organize. Moreover we can silkscreen or embroider shirts for your team. Just opened! We will give you a very special price. Please call for further details. Tel: 076-225800, 086-9473123.

Club Memberships Available

GOLF MEMBERSHIP
Phuket Country Club for sale. Offers over 425,000 baht. Tel: 087-2705514.

Club Memberships Wanted

TIMESHARE 2ND HAND
Looking to buy or rent a 2nd hand timeshare or holiday club membership. Any location in Thailand considered. Please contact for more information. Email: richardrichards1234@yahoo.com

PHUKET COUNTRY
club. I am looking for a PCC membership. Best offer considered. Tel: 086-9432078. Email: mdefeo@gmx.net

BLUE CANYON
Wanted: Blue Canyon membership. Please contact if you have or know of one for sale. Tel: 081-9066243. Email: jon@freedomsurfing.com

Computers

APPLE MAC G5
computer. Apple Mac G5 desktop with 17" screen. 12 months old, as new, boxed, and still under warranty. 28,000 baht. Tel: 08-190-66243. Email: jon@freedomsurfing.com

WIRELESS ROUTER
Netgear WGR614 V6. WiFi compatible and will work perfectly with the modems provided by TOT, etc. It has a 4-port router as well as wireless. Never used, as I do not have the right modem. 2,000 baht ono. Tel: 089-8715642. Email: termalou@loxinfo.co.th

FUJITSU 17"
monitor. 3 years old. Comes with the appropriate cables. Excellent condition. 1,500 baht. A/V wireless camera with receiver. Never used! 1,000 baht. Call for more info. Tel: 09-6521799. (eves/weekends) Email: robbiesan2@yahoo.com

PRINTER + SCANNER
Lexmark Z53 inkjet printer. Works - only needs new cartridges. Mustik scanner, 1,200 dpi, USB powered, no need for separate power cable. 500 baht each, or 800 for both. Please contact by email and I'll reply as soon as possible. Email: gunthergenesse@gmail.com

WANTED: BROKEN
laptops. I'm looking for a few laptops with broken screens. The computer itself needs to be in good working condition, but the lid or screen can be cracked or otherwise, uh, indisposed. The brand, model, CPU, memory, hard drive, etc, aren't important, as long as everything except the screen is working. Please send email with details and asking price. "Khun Woody" Email: woody@khunwoody.com

Miscellaneous for Sale

96 RED MAKARA RARE



Hardwood columns, approx 130 cubic meters. Various sizes: 3.2-7m long X 40-80 cm. Tel: 081-7472033.

KITEBOARDERS
9m meter, 4-line kite in perfect condition. Comes in carry bag with brand new harness and bar. Perfect for beginners or the more experienced. 15,000 baht. Tel: 081-0914244. Email: jameswebster1982@hotmail.com

MATERNITY
clothes. Nearly new. Cotton and linen skirts, trousers and tops. UK size 14, Mothercare and Mamas & Papas brands. Tel: 07-2747648. Email: debspatterson@gmail.com

Miscellaneous Wanted

WHEELCHAIR
Used wheelchair urgently required - buy or rent - can collect. Tel: 076-282283, 087-8977083. Email: pjpkth@phuket.ksc.co.th

Mobile Phones

NOKIA 8800
New UK phone, dual band, GSM. 20,000 baht. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-386118, 084-0513473. Email: cain@phuket.ksc.co.th

Musical Instrument

DRUMMER AND
bassist wanted. If you love to play musical instruments because you love music and not the booze, you're welcome to meet me in person for more details. Call for more info. Tel: 089-6549654. Email: jams-aid@rockinangels.com

Personal Services

LEARN THAI AT HOME
Charming Thai lady teacher gives Thai lessons at your home. Full course with conversation practice and home study material. Beginners or more advanced. Tel: 081-7971497. Email: churee77@hotmail.com

RUNNING COACH
You'd like to run, but it is difficult to start? Experienced runner with coaching license can help beginners in theory and practice. Advanced runners can be lead to a half marathon. Tel: 085-7875300. Email: m.harnischfeger@vr-web.de

STUDY THAI
language. I live in Karon and would like to teach Thai to foreigners. I also provide translation service (only English) for all kinds of letters and documents. Feel free to contact me on my mobile phone. Tel: 087-8965192. Email: babee51th@yahoo.com

Personals

BACKGAMMON
Retired businessman looking for backgammon players on Phuket Island. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-386113, 081-5778443.

LADY WITH TATOOS
and piercings wanted. If you have many, a retired German is a fan of yours. Please call for more information. Tel: 086-0824833.

KIND WHITE MALE
If you are a charming lady looking for a pleasant, educated and passionate man, let's meet up. Email: laxa_blue@yahoo.com

COM TEACHER
I'm looking for a computer teacher (can be a student) to help me with the first steps and more in Adobe Photoshop CS2. I speak German, English and a little bit of Thai. Please contact me by mail or phone, and thanks in advance. Tel: 087-2702047. Email: videomotion@gmx.de

Pets

GOLDEN RETRIEVERS
Nice pedigree puppies for sale. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-383-628, 089-5877114. Email: prs@concept-by.com

Deadline for Wheels & Motors page: Saturday 12 noon.

Wheels & Motors

FORD RANGER TDXLT
38,000km, 2003, 4 door. Full history + insurance + extras. 500,000 baht. Farang owned from new. Tel: 087-8831756.

ISUZU 4-DOOR
pickup for sale. 3.0 diesel, 15,000 km, full guarantee, quick sale. 585,000 baht. Price new 690,000 baht, be quick. Tel: 084-6433915.

NISSAN NV 2002
Farang-owned, 5-speed manual, Carryboy, electric windows, aircon, Queen Cab, 64,000 kms, excellent condition. Price: 245,000 baht. Tel: 086-7392220.

NISSAN NV FOR SALE/RENT
75,000km, year 2000, alloy wheels, stereo. 230,000 baht, or rent long term at cheap rate. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-3670991.

NISSAN NV
2001 model with low km. Queen Cab. Good condition, lady owner. CD player. First-class insurance 'till Sep 2007. Sell 250,000 baht or trade for bigger truck up to 350,000-375,000. Tel: 081-8954480. Email: Guardian@loxinfo.co.th

MAZDA TRUCK 93
Small, reliable, economical. 1 year's tax & insurance. 95,000 baht. Tel: 089-8682563.

NISSAN NV AUTO
2005, low mileage, gold. Price: 320,000 baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 089-8314703.

FORD RANGER TURBO
37,000km, 5 years old, 4 doors, full history and insurance. Farang owned. Immaculate, with extras. 500,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-2732429.

FORD RANGER
Open cab, 2006. 395,000 baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 089-8314703.

FORD RANGERS
1) 4-door, 2006: 395,000 baht. 2) Extra Cab, 2006: 350,000 baht. Please call Tel: 089-8314703.

MITSUBISHI STRADA
2.5 turbo, 2-door pickup. Sept 2002. 67,000km. Good condition. 375,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-0879983.

NISSAN NV AUTOMATIC
Expat owner. Year 2002 1.6 SLX. Metallic gold. Very good condition. 57,000km. 2-door Queen Cab. Price: 250,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-2712758. Email: davidan dannatandy@hotmail.com

4 x 4s

MITSUBISHI STRADA 4WD
Excellent condition, full service history, many extras including new tires, Carryboy, roof rack and bull bars. 410,000 baht ono. Call Tel: 081-8928208. Or email: stevendjohn@yahoo.com

HONDA CRV 34,000 KM
Black metallic, 800,000 baht. Woman owner, first-hand. Tel: 087-8822462.

MITSUBISHI
G-wagon. Auto, 2004, 1 owner, white, excellent condition. 650,000 baht. Must be seen. Tel: 086-2825107.

TOYOTA FORTUNER
3.0 D4D. All options, silver. Cash: 500,000 baht or credit: 37 x 21,663 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-0918908.

TOYOTA VIGO 3.0G 4X4
Black, 4 door, 18 months old, only 12,000 km. Also has first class insurance. A1 condition: 700,000 baht. Contact for more details. Tel: 089-7292846.

HONDA CRV
Auto, 2003, 1 careful lady owner, black, 70,000 km. Full insurance, no accidents. 750,000 baht. Call K. Yao. Tel: 081-0790688.

CARIBIAN FOR SALE
Suzuki, 1994, gray. 110,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-6078567. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

MAZDA FIGHTER
Year 2006, extra cab, central locking, electric windows, CD player. 425,000 baht. Please contact for more info. Tel: 089-8314703.

TOYOTA VIGO ECTi
2005 Toyota Vigo ECTi 3.0. 4-door, black, cream leather interior, 50,000km, Lenzo alloys, full Toyota service history, 1 lady owner from new. 650,000 baht. Tel: 076-386118, 084-0513473. Email: cain@phuket.ksc.co.th

KIA SPORTAGE 4X4
Reliable, comfortable car in good condition. Genuine off-road 4x4. Tel: 081-5399560. Email: oystcove@loxinfo.co.th

TOYOTA HILUX
X-tra Cab 1997 model, very good condition, 2.8-liter engine, 155,000km. 150,000 baht ono. Leaving Thailand so must sell urgently. Tel: 076-288500, 087-8957810. Email: t_cosens@yahoo.com

CHEROKEE, 4.0L
Bronze, perfect, new Sony stereo, new paint and leather seats. All services by Benz. 91,000km. Only 420,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-0780014. Email: bjarneaagaardhansen@hotmail.com

TOP OF THE RANGE
Ford Ranger 2001, 4WD, 4 doors. New respray, 56,000km, white with black leather, CD, power steering, etc. Lady owner. Never used commercially. Reason for sale; have new SUV. 375,000 baht. Tel: 081-8111067.

Motorbikes

HONDA 110
25,000 kilometers, well maintained and reliable. 18,000 baht. Tel: 084-0520380. Email: mickgave@hotmail.com

HONDA WAVE 100 - 11,000 BAHT
Green Honda Wave 100cc, 8 years old: 11,000 baht. Also Dream 100cc 6 years old: 13,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-6837162. Email: somthawin_pw@hotmail.com

KAWASAKI Z-1000
Green. Year 2004. 8,500 kilometers. As new condition. 380,000 baht. Tel: 076-386118, 084-0513473. Email: cain@phuket.ksc.co.th

POWERBIKE HONDA VALKYRIE
2002 model, black, 10,000 kms, reverse gear, 1520cc, flat six, 120hp. Many accessories and lots of chrome! Bike looks like new! 590,000 baht. Call for more information. Tel: 076-388633, 086-6829709. Email: weidner@loxinfo.co.th

HONDA SUPERFOUR
Only invoice, good condition, new tires, shocks, brakes, 40,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 085-7959160.

YAMAHA FAZER



As new, 2004 model. 1,000cc. Only 10,700km. 298,000 baht. Tel: 081-5370331. Email: phuket@cbre.com

HONDA 110
25,000km, well maintained and reliable. 18,000 baht. Tel: 084-0520380. Email: mickgave@hotmail.com

CHOPPER FOR SALE
Yamaha Virago 750, nicely modified, must be seen. Tel: 087-1466622.

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