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Doubt lingers over the Legionnaire's 'outbreak' claims

By Gazette Staff

PATONG: Reports in the Finnish press of Legionnaire's Disease being contracted by a group of tourists staying at a hotel in Patong have yet to be confirmed, as tests are still being conducted by the Phuket Provincial Health Office (PPHO), Ministry of Public Health and the World Health Organization.

As of press time, no proof of the bacteria *Legionella* has been found at the Phuket Grand Tropicana Hotel, where a group of Finnish tourists stayed during a November holiday. In its most common form, the disease presents itself between two and 10 days after exposure.

However, it is still unknown if the tourists were staying at the hotel at the time of their exposure.

The Gazette has also been unable to confirm in how many patients *Legionella* has been isolated or who did the lab work.

Despite repeated inquiries, the management at the Phuket Grand Tropicana remained unavailable for comment. On condition of anonymity, however, a representative said, "It doesn't mean that we have the disease here, only that some guests [who contracted it] stayed here."

"It happened in November. Right now we still have guests as normal. An officer from the Health Department in Bangkok has already checked the problem here, so please contact them directly," the representative said.

Dr Wanchai Sattaya-



UNDER FIRE: The Grand Tropicana Hotel is under investigation to determine whether four Finnish tourists contracted Legionnaire's disease there.

wuthipong, Chief of the PPHO, told the Gazette that his agency reported the matter to the National Health Department (NHD), which sent officers to the site on January 12 to take air and water samples. The results have not yet been released, he added.

Pamuke Atchariyachai, Honorary Consul-General for Phuket by the Republic of Finland and Managing Director of the Kata Group of hotels and resorts, told the Gazette that he has not received any other reports of the disease in Phuket.

The Finnish Public Health institute reported January 9 that four tourists – two Swedish, one Finnish and one Norwegian – were hospitalized with pneumonia, a common presentation of the disease.

It also reported that Finn-

ish tour operator Aurinkomatkat has withdrawn all of its guests from the hotel. The Hong Kong government has also issued a travel advisory for Phuket.

K. Pamuke urges tourists and residents to remain calm. "For tourists, please understand that this disease is very rare," he said, adding that he hopes the Tourism Authority of Thailand moves swiftly in taking steps to set the record straight.

He added that he has heard no reports of tourists canceling vacations because of this scare.

Legionnaire's Disease is a water-borne bacteria spread primarily through air conditioning units, fountains or humidifiers. Once embedded in the fabric fibers of a building, complete disinfection is required for its eradication. The disease does not,

Continued on page 2

Warning from tsunami buoy would be 'too late' – Smith

By Stephen Fein

PHUKET: Because of its location, the lone tsunami direct detection buoy deployed last month in the middle of the Indian Ocean would offer little advance warning to Phuket in the event of a tsunami generated off the Indonesian Coast, Dr Smith Dharmasaroja, head of the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) in Nonthaburi, has confirmed to the Gazette.

Dr Smith said the location of the first buoy was chosen to provide equal benefit to all Indian Ocean Rim countries, not just Thailand.

"I made the suggestion that we put the first buoy there so that we wouldn't appear selfish by putting our own data needs before those of other countries in the region," he said.

He added that the location of the first buoy, halfway between Thailand and Sri Lanka and about 1,000 kilometers from Phuket, would give little advance warning to Phuket in the event of a tsunami generated along the fault zone that runs along Indonesia's west coast.

The buoy is located about the same distance to the west of the fault line as Phuket is to its east. As a result, by the time a west-moving wave were detected by the buoy, its east traveling counterpart would already be inundating Thailand's Andaman Coast.

Dr Smith said the former government had approved a budget to buy more three more buoys to be deployed between the fault line and Thailand, but he doubts the interim government would move forward with the project as it has not supported the NDWC's work.

See Inside Story, pages 4-5

WINE & DINE Dinner with Live Band from the Philippines
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Phukana
WINE & DINE

see more on page 19

Gambling still Phuket's top illegal pastime

PHUKET: With 62 cases resulting in 204 arrests from December 1 to 30, gambling remains the top vice in crim statistics released by the Phuket Provincial Police. Illegal lottery ticket sales counted for 44 of the arrests.

Drug-related cases totaled 105 with 125 people arrested. *Ya bah* (methamphetamine) was involved in 35 cases, with 53 people arrested and 938.5 pills seized.

There were 33 people arrested for sniffing glue or paint thinners, 27 for possession of cannabis and two for possession for Ecstasy.

The number of cases involving *krathom* continues to rise, with nine people arrested for possession and 10,151 leaves seized.

Arrests for prostitution were also on the rise with 110 arrests, compared with 69 arrests in November.

Twelve people were arrested for possession of unlicensed firearms.

There were four attempted murders with three arrests made. No arrests were made in three rape cases reported on the island.

Ten motorcycles were stolen with five arrests made. One car was stolen with police yet to apprehend the thief.

Legionella outbreak under investigation

From page 1

however, spread through human-to-human contact.

An engineering supervisor at the Grand Tropicana, who also spoke on condition that his name not be used because of the hotel's policy against speaking to the press, said that the air conditioners at the hotel are cleaned every month and have been cleaned as per schedule since the guests checked out.

About half of the rooms in the hotel use central air conditioning through a large unit, while the remainder have individual room units.

Former Sheriff robbed en route from Bangkok

By Dominic Earnshaw & Janyaporn Morel

MAI KHAO: A former Sheriff in San Bernadino County, California, had valuables stolen from his luggage while it was on an Orient Thai Airlines One-Two-Go flight from Bangkok to Phuket January 10.

Californian Larry Morgan, who is in Thailand on a month-long trip, said that he checked his bag in with One-Two-Go staff at Suvarnabhumi Airport about 7 pm on January 10. His flight, OG261, was due to depart at 8:15 pm, arriving in Phuket at 9:35 pm.

When he collected his bag in Phuket one of the zip tabs had been cut, leaving the zip free to be opened.

His video and digital cameras and mobile phone had been stolen, a loss of more than

US\$500 (18,000 baht), he said.

Mr Morgan reported the crime to the Orient Thai Airlines office at Phuket International Airport (PIA) and later with the Tourist Police in Patong.

He was given a "Property Irregularity Report" by the airline, but told that Orient Thai Airlines is not liable for losses of electronic goods, among a list of many other valuable items.

The airline initially declined any form of compensation, as according to their conditions of travel, despite the fact that Mr Morgan had no other travel insurance.

Two other passengers on the flight also complained of having their baggage tampered with, said Mr Morgan.

However, Adun Rattapalain, Orient Thai Airlines Phuket Airport Station Chief, said that those two complaints were about



ANGRY AMERICAN: Former Sheriff Larry Morgan furious after valuables were stolen from his backpack while en route from Bangkok.

damage to baggage, rather than theft.

K. Adun said that this was the first such case Orient Thai has had in Phuket. Orient Thai

is investigating the case and will send details to the airline's head office in Bangkok, he assured.

Although the airline does not usually compensate passengers for the loss of valuables in hold baggage, it might consider making an exception in this case, he said.

"We will have to inform our management board to consider [compensating Mr Morgan] as we are worried about damage to our good image," K. Adun said.

However, an angry Mr Morgan said, "I trusted that the airline employees would be honest and professional. I guess I was wrong."

"I couldn't believe that my personal belongings could be in jeopardy on a one-hour flight from Bangkok to Phuket."

"I now have to go up to Chiang Mai with only a disposable camera."

Karon desalination plant finally comes onstream

By Janyaporn Morel

KARON: The reverse-osmosis (RO) desalination plant on the Karon coast began supplying water to Kata-Karon on a trial basis on December 29, Phuket Provincial Water Supply (PPWS) Manager Sayan Wareearoonroj has told the *Gazette*.

On January 12, the plant began pumping 4,000 cubic meters to Patong and 3,000m³ to Kata-Karon, also on a test basis, K. Sayan said.

"We expect it to be running at its full capacity of 12,000m³ a day by the end of this month," he added.

During the testing phase, the PPWS has been mixing the purer RO water with supplies from Bang Wad Reservoir in Kathu. Despite the increase in water quality, consumers receiving the

RO water will continue to pay at the old rate for the foreseeable future, he said.

In Kata-Karon, reserves from the PPWS system will be used only in case of shortages, he said.

K. Sayan urged consumers to check their water pipes to ensure they can withstand the higher pressures that will be used with the new RO supply.

The RO water is potable, but people should ensure their storage tanks and plumbing are thoroughly clean if they plan to drink it, he added.

They should also wait until the PPWS has completely cleaned the municipal supply system by chlorination, he said.

There have been bureaucratic obstacles to the plant's operation because of the need to discharge processed water back

into the sea, but the plant should be granted full permission from the Ministry of Interior soon, he said.

The man responsible for building the RO plant, Jaturong Sa-duangkarn of REQ Co Ltd, told the *Gazette* that during testing the plant has taken in about 20,000m³ of seawater daily. About 7,500m³ of this is processed and the remainder drained back into the sea through a pipe that discharges about 800 meters off the coast at depth of about 16m.

Testing in the discharge area failed to find any difference in water quality there, he said.

Pamuke Achariyachai, Managing Director of the Kata Group of hotels and resorts, said the RO supply would come as a relief to long-suffering hotels in the area, which have for years been forced to buy supplies from water trucks.

K. Sayan said that areas relying on the main PPWS supply system needn't worry about shortages this dry season.

"Now Phuket has enough

water to get through the dry season. We face the same problem every year, so we know how to plan for it," he said.

The PPWS now has an additional 2 million m³ in reserve water supplies from the Hitlor and Manik lagoons in Tambon Srisoonthorn, which are now connected to the PPWS system via a 17-kilometer pipeline completed last year.

The PPWS has also signed an agreement with REQ to buy additional water, if needed. REQ maintains two water supply sources in Kathu and one in Chalong. Together these can supply up to 4,800m³ a day to augment PPWS supplies, he said.

Phuket City has its own municipal water supply system, which uses Bang Wad Reservoir and tin mines as sources.

Janpen Kotchakarn, who heads the municipal water supply's production unit, said her office would continue to monitor and adjust pressure rates to minimize waste while ensuring there is enough water to meet demand.

The Key Piece of the Puzzle

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Traffic jams mar one-way launch

By Supanun Supawong

PATONG: The January 15 launch of Patong's one-way traffic system passed without accident but was marred by early evening traffic jams along Thaweewong Rd.

"On the first day we had a few small problems with vehicles moving slowly due to drivers being unfamiliar with the system, but these are just teething problems and the one-way system will improve traffic problems in the long term," said Pol Col Teerapol Thipjaroen, Superintendent of Kathu District Police Station.

"In the evening from about 5 pm to 7 pm there were tailbacks on Thaweewong Rd - that is rush hour in Patong, when people finish work, tour buses take guests back to their hotels and tourists go out for dinner or to see a show. We will work on this problem," Col Teerapol assured.

"There were no serious accidents all day. There may have been a few instances of cars or bikes scraping each other, but nobody was injured," he said.

Col Teerapol admitted that the new system still lacks sufficient signs to direct traffic. "Be-



A CLEAR SIGN: One of the few new signs posted in Patong.

cause Patong Municipality has budget problems it may take a while until we have a full complement of signs in place," he said.

"Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd had no traffic jams; the only problem was on Thaweewong Rd. We experienced no problems with traffic driving on the right-hand side on [sois connecting Thaweewong Rd and Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd] such as Haad Patong, Sawatdirak, Bangla and Ruamjai.

"We designed the system this way because we didn't want cars to have to cross each other when turning onto and off Thaweewong and Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi

roads, which could have caused accidents," he explained.

"Now we have to improve traffic-flow control in the evening and increase the number and clarity of direction signs," he added.

"All in all, the first day of the one-way system in Patong was a 90% success," Col Teerapol concluded.

Reactions to the change was mixed among Patong residents. Pairoi Damrongratchasak, a travel agent on Thaweewong Rd for more than 10 years, said, "I think the one-way is an improvement. People can cross the road more safely now, as they don't have to look both ways.

"It should decrease traffic jams, though I did see problems in the evening when people were finishing work. I am confident in the system though and I didn't see any accidents [on the first day]."

However, Jaroen Trongjit, a motorbike taxi driver in Patong for more than 14 years, said, "The one-way system does not ease traffic jams on Phra Barami Rd.

"The one-way system will also mean I have to drive further and use more petrol. I prefer the old system", he complained.

Jungceylon borrows 2.6b baht for expansion

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PATONG: Suchad Chiaranussati, President of Jungceylon's parent company Phuket Square Co Ltd, has signed a six-year loan with the Bank of Ayudhya and Kasikornbank to secure an additional 2.6 billion baht to "expand" the shopping complex.

The money will be spent on the plaza area, decorations, a road expansion and to finish construction of the on-site hotel.

K. Suchad said that since

opening on December 20, Jungceylon has received positive feedback from tourists and residents.

They estimate about 10,000 people a day visit Jungceylon, and expect up to 50,000 a day after the grand opening in March.

Jungceylon is now 95% complete, and is expected to be fully operational by March.

Construction of the 400-room, five-star Millennium Resort Phuket, however, is 30% completed and expected to be finished by the end of the year.

Hotel thieves nabbed at airport

PATONG: A 20-year-old man and a 14-year-old girl were arrested at Phuket International Airport January 10 while in possession of more than 250,000 baht worth of Swiss francs and a digital camera they had stolen from a Patong hotel safe.

Kathu Police Duty Inspector Pol Lt Col Pisit Chunpet said that the thieves, who he declined to name, were from Bangkok and arrived in Phuket January 7.

They checked into Patong Beach Bungalows, where Hanh Rudolf Burkhard, 58, and his wife were staying.

Mr Burkhard and his wife discovered their hotel room had been robbed after returning from dinner shortly after midnight January 10, Col Pisit said. A

13,000-baht digital camera and the key to their safe in the hotel reception had been stolen.

The receptionist who allowed the thieves to open the safe said that he thought the couple were staying in the room since they had the key, Col Pisit said.

Police identified the thieves on the hotel's closed-circuit camera recordings, and discovered a photo of the man in a bag still bearing airport security stickers in the thieves' room.

The suspects were arrested at the airport just after 9 pm January 10. They were taken to Kathu District Police Station and both were charged with theft.

Mr Burkhard's money and camera were returned to him the same day.

Property expo expected to set record

PHUKET CITY: The Property Investment Exhibition 2007 (PIE), the annual property show staged by the Phuket Provincial Land Office and Phuket Real Estate Club (PREC), is expected to set a record 500 million baht in sales and reservations, Thanet Traiwut, Managing Director of exhibition organizer Delice Thai, has told the *Gazette*.

Most of the properties sold or reserved were valued at five to 15 million baht each, he said, with reservations of more than 50 million baht made during the show.

The expo, held at Central Festival Phuket from January 12 to 16, attracted some 50,000 visitors, he added.

However, he said that sales

of more than 500 million baht were expected within one month after the exhibition.

Last year, more than 300 million baht in property reservations were made as a result of the show.

PREC President Phumisak Hongyok, who is also Phuket's representative at the National

Legislative Assembly, told the *Gazette* that the expo was a good indicator for Phuket's property industry.

"This is evidence that the recent changes in government policy will have only short-term effect, but in the long term this policy will be transparent, just be patient," he said.

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FAULTY TOWERS?

Frankie Neo, Director of Singapore-based Kemi-links International Pte Ltd, one of the companies that cooperated to design, build and install tsunami warning towers for Phuket at their own expense, claims, "The [initial three] Patong sirens are now not working in the manner they were donated for, and they have not undergone the routine remote testing."

"[Raynart] cannot integrate [its systems] with our technology and so will have to switch out all the parts, except for the tower structure and exposed horns... the beach siren is designed to incorporate many levels of amplification, self- and remote-test features, 10KHz live sound test, and so on," Mr Neo told the *Gazette*.

"All these advance elements and circuitries will not be retained and will have to be thrown away. They cannot control the system, because they have no previous experience in Inmarsat satellite technology on which it is based," he added.

"SiRcom GMBH, Kockum-Sonics, Kemilinks and TMS International (Thailand) collectively donated and installed the system to work as a state-of-the-art warning system, performing at the highest standard."

"The Patong system was well-planned, designed, manufactured and installed to the satisfaction of Patong Municipality. They served wonderfully in various drills and activations, featuring widely in many media articles. So the public may still believe that the system will work like before," Mr Neo said.

The TMS consortium was one of three qualified bidders when the Thai government in August 2005 accepted online bids for the installation of 62 more warning towers, but the winning bid came from Bangkok-based



In April 2005 the region's first satellite-linked tsunami warning system was tested in Patong. Media reports of the event, attended by former PM Thaksin Shinawatra, were sent around the world with the message: Patong is safe for tourists.

But is it? *Gazette* News Editor Stephen Fein investigates claims by a representative of the donors that the Patong system no longer functions optimally – if at all.

Raynart and its partner ASC.

To integrate the three Patong towers into the new system, Raynart personnel modified the Patong system so that it would be compatible with Raynart's satellite-relay equipment linking it to

the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) in Nonthaburi province, near Bangkok.

But Mr Neo is concerned that the Patong system has been compromised as a result of its integration to the Raynart system, which he claims is inferior.

"The donors never had any intention to allow its competitors or unauthorized persons to gain access to the equipment, to tamper with or copy its technology and put it out of its original action. The public deserves to be informed that the system was never re-tested after being tampered with," said Mr Neo.

"Since the Patong sirens will not work as they did after they were donated, we have requested that all donated equipment be returned so that our names will not be tarnished if the system fails to work properly..."

ACCUSATIONS

"The other donors had no official notification whatsoever from the authority [about modifications] and we have to conclude that such actions can only be to circumvent the e-auction Terms of Reference (TOR) and constitute an unfair and unjust favor to the supplier," said Mr Neo.

In November 2005 he sent a seven-page letter to the Meteorological Department and Auditor General's Office on behalf of the consortium, charging numerous breaches of the TOR and requesting an investigation. Among the charges was the claim that ASC uses satellite communications technology to which Kemilinks had been granted exclusive rights.

Citing the Inmarsat satellite service provider's traffic logs and other sources, he says the system was never tested as required by delivery date specified in the TOR.

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Phuket ODPM Deputy Director Damri Sangsarb (left) and fellow ODPM staff attended the International Conference on Tsunami Preparedness of People with Disabilities at Royal Phuket City Hotel January 11 and 12. K. Damri told the *Gazette* that all 19 of Phuket's warning towers are functioning properly.

"This affects many lives, so our consortium is requesting the authorities put the sirens back to work in their original manner, return all the donated equipment and protect the donors' intellectual property rights and reputations. We request for a thorough investigation and verification that the TOR and e-auction terms were fair, equal and justly applied to all bidders," he concluded.

However, Raynart General Manager Aurasa Paenghom said her company had studied the TOR carefully and had successfully installed 62 towers at a cost of just 61.4 million baht, which was initially budgeted at 138 million baht.

ASC, which owns the technology Raynart uses, has 25 years' experience in disaster warning systems, she added.

"Since we were awarded the contract, Mr Neo has claimed that our system will not work except by linking through their system, since he has exclusive rights to use D+ terminals manufactured by Satamatics," she explained.

To refute this claim, she provided the *Gazette* with a copy of letter signed by Satamatics Global Unlimited CEO Peter Chisholm stating that both ASC and Raynart are licensed to use the network.

K. Aurasa said Raynart installed the first 24 of its 62 towers early in 2006. On March 20 last year, nine new towers in Phuket were tested to the satisfaction of the NDWC committee, and news of the successful test was carried in the media, she said.

SILENT TESTS

K. Aurasa said the NDWC conducts "silent" tests of every site every two days. "The NDWC sends the signal via satellite and the towers respond by reporting the status of the equipment. If any of the equipment is not functioning properly, such as having an open door or low battery, this will be indicated by a red warning sign. The system has an advanced design so that we do not need to cause undue public panic by [audibly] testing it," she said.

Organizing audible testing and evacuation drills was the responsibility of the local Phuket Provincial Office of Disaster Prevention Mitigation (ODPM), she added.

Phuket ODPM Deputy Director Damri Sangsarb told the *Gazette* that Phuket now has 19 warning towers, all of which operate properly and are routinely tested by the NDWC.

K. Damri said there were plans to conduct an island-wide audible testing of the towers and evacuation drill, but that a date has yet to be set. There are no plans to conduct an unannounced emergency evacuation in the province, however. "We lack the public relations necessary for that," he said.

In the hot seat, Patong Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukkaban admitted that he doesn't know with certainty whether the three towers in Patong function properly.

"It is all controlled by the NDWC in Nonthaburi. They can check it on computer. I have asked them a few times and they tell me it works, but I can't really

know until they [audibly] test them," he said, adding that he intends to ask for the towers to be tested in March.

He confirmed that his staff had given Raynart's technicians access to the towers and the control room, in a room at Patong Fire Station. "Two or three months ago they [Raynart] came to change the program... They said they wanted to change some electronic parts. After that I asked them if everything was okay and they said it was. Then they went back to Bangkok.

"They didn't test it audibly, but I think they can tell if it works from the control room in Bangkok," he said.

However, Dr Smith Thammasaroj, head of the NDWC, told the *Gazette*, "We cannot test the sound because the local authorities... don't want to disturb the tourists during the high season.

"We would like to test them [audibly] every four to six months, but we can check them [silently] from Bangkok. The system will report back and report any malfunctions to the center in Bangkok. Fortunately, we haven't had any reports of malfunctions from the towers yet. I think it is working okay, but I will double-check it," he said.

He added that the TMS consortium had long been critical of the NDWC system. However, he suggested that the TMS consortium direct any complaints to the Meteorological Department, which owns the equipment.

His comments came as no

surprise. Dr Smith has openly criticized the Chulanont government for derailing a plan to make the NDWC an independent body with its own budget. Instead, the NDWC has been placed under the Meteorological Department and its former mandate to install disaster warning towers throughout the country put on hold.

When told that the equipment donors had already written a letter to the Meteorological Department requesting the equipment be returned, he said, "They can take it away if they want to. That's okay, but they have to contact the Meteorological Department.

BUDGET

"We do not own the equipment yet, because the NDWC is not legally set up by the government yet. We cannot buy anything. Why don't they contact the Meteorological Department if it doesn't work? They could get a budget to fix it," Dr Smith said.

"If all the equipment belonged to the NDWC we would have a budget to fix it. But not now. I have a problem with this government... They do not appreciate NDWC work, so I cannot do anything now.

"Tell them [the TMS consortium] that if they want to take it back then that's okay, I don't mind... If they take it back we will have to buy another one to replace it, but I don't think it would be very nice of them to take it back," he said.

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Queer News

Brown nectar of the gods

PHRAE: Scores of villagers in Phrae were given a gut-wrenching shock when a "holy" spring they had prayed to and drunk from turned out to be the result of faulty plumbing rather than a gift from the gods.

The font was discovered on January 4 by Anong Kwanphetch, 52, in the middle of her lawn in Tambon Mae Jua, Denchai District. Noticing something unusual, she went to investigate and discovered water bubbling up from the ground. When she poked around to try and find the source of the water, it began to flow out even stronger than before. Amazed, she rushed to tell the neighbors about her discovery.

K. Anong thought the spring might somehow be connected to a vision she had the night before. Her late maternal grandmother had appeared to her in her sleep, saying she felt ill and needed paracetamol. When Anong returned from fetching the medicine, her grandmother had vanished.

Thinking that perhaps her grandmother's apparition was a hint that water from the spring could be carrying magical powers, Anong brought out flowers, candles and joss sticks to worship the spring, asking it to provide water for her to keep as a cure-all potion.

News travels quickly in rural Thai villages, and before long word of the phenomenon had spread

throughout the district and into neighboring ones. One neighbor, 66-year-old Thongin Konsin, said she had to wait in line for her chance to collect some of the miraculous elixir.

Like many others, she offered candles, incense, flowers and a 20-baht note. She was convinced that holy water was bound to be a gift from on high sent to reward their merit making and heal the infirmities of poor villagers whose conditions had not been healed by the government's 30-baht health care scheme.

The crowds around the spring grew quickly as some 1,000 villagers rushed to collect bottles of the bubbling broth. When some villagers called for the spring to perform a miracle and send forth bubbles, it immediately responded and answered their pleas.

Word of the find soon spread to district authorities and before long Senior Administrative Officer Rasi Srithammarat and Suthat Samon of the Denchai Public Health Office came to investigate. Unable to stop the villagers from acting on their beliefs, they allowed them to continue collecting the water but implored them to boil it before drinking.

K. Rasi decided to wait until crowds thinned before digging to find the source of the water. If they dug while there were still many people wanting to collect the water

and the water stopped flowing, he said, it could cause an even bigger problem.

The next group to arrive at the spring were Public Health Officers from Somdej Phrayupharach Hospital. When they tried to collect a sample of the water, the spring suddenly stopped and the ground became dry. Finally the officers had to beg a sample from one of the villagers. After about 20 minutes, the water began to flow again, leaving villagers suspicious that the officials' attempts to collect a sample had angered some deities.

Surin Niphayothin, Kamnan (tambon chief) of Mae Jua, finally got to the bottom of things. He and a group of villagers began digging for the source of the mysterious liquid and soon found a small, leaky PVC pipe. On further investigation, K. Surin found that the pipe led straight to the old toilet of a house no more than four meters away.

When villagers who had been drinking the "holy" water learned its true source, scores of them joined in a large mass vomiting session.

The owners of the pipe said they had been installing a new toilet and that the plumbing work must have caused the sewerage pipe to crack. They said they had no idea their old toilet could have been the source of the "holy" spring.

Source: Phu Jad Kan



1,000 WORDS

SIGNS OF CONFLICT: For at least the past month motorists have been confused by the two signs located on the bypass road in front of Central Festival that seemed to contradict each other. The lower sign, which was donated by DTAC and read "Phuket City Police Station", was removed January 15.




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PM urges youth: 'Refrain from sex'

Interim Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont has urged Thai youths to refrain from having sex until they are of an "appropriate age" and to practice the principle of His Majesty the King's self-sufficiency philosophy in making career choices.

During a meeting with 750 outstanding youths from around the country, PM Surayud said Thai youths should make sure their lives were on the right track and choose things they like to do as careers, as that would bring more chances of success.

They should not follow the example of Western culture in all things, he said, especially sex.

Young people should listen to their parents and young men and women should not to indulge in sex, but wait until the "right" time.

Social values differed in different societies and Western culture did not greatly value the virtue of virginity, he said.

PM Surayud urged Thai boys to act like gentlemen and not take advantage of girls. He also advised youths to apply the King's self-sufficiency philosophy as a practical guide to living their lives, following the motto, "Have virtue in the heart, practice self-sufficiency economy, and avoid all vices."

Blasted revenue: Thailand's tourism revenue in the first quarter 2007 will be slashed by 8 billion baht as the number of foreign tourists is expected to drop by 600,000 due to the bomb blasts in Bangkok, according to Kasikornbank's Research Center.



BIG PROMOTION: Actors promote Siam Commercial Bank's recently launched 100,000 'Naresuan' ATM cards, which give cardholders the opportunity to use Major Cineplex's platinum screen lounge.

It was originally expected that in 2007 Bangkok would welcome 15 million tourists, up 9% from last year. These tourists would spend 220 billion baht, according to projections.

However, the New Year's Eve bombings forced many countries to issue travel warnings. The higher number of patrolling police officers in the capital will also damage the overall environment.

"This should reduce the tourist arrivals by 600,000 in the first quarter, 17% down from the target," the center projected.

Booze battle, part two: Follow-

ing its failed bid to ban all alcohol advertising, the Public Health Ministry has decided to put graphic warning labels on all alcohol products similar to those already in use on tobacco products.

The committee tasked with controlling alcohol consumption is planning to include the step in its latest package of measures aimed at curbing liquor abuse, said Disease Control Department Deputy Director-General Dr Narong Sahamethaphat.

If endorsed by the Cabinet, warnings would be put on alcoholic beverages, including pic-

tures showing the risks and harm associated with drinking alcohol, and strongly worded text.

Dr Narong, a member of the committee, said the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) would draft this part of the proposal.

A source from the FDA said such a new measure would face numerous bureaucratic obstacles, including a requirement to circulate a draft of the announcement to member countries of the World Trade Organization for comment.

"It's quite the wrong way to go," the source said. "Drinkers tend not to pay attention to warn-

ing labels before buying or drinking."

Payback: The Student Loan Fund (SLF) plans to sue about 60,000 graduates for failing to repay loans that funded their studies.

Fund manager Prempracha Supasamout said that defaulters rarely even replied to repayment notices warning of possible legal action.

"We need to file the lawsuits by July 4 or else the statute of limitations for these cases will pass," he said.

The cases involved about 6 billion baht in principal, interest and fines, he said.

Amazing: The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) will drop its recently launched "Thailand Unforgettable" publicity campaign and resume the previous "Amazing Thailand" campaign, new TAT Governor Pornsiri Manoharn has announced.

The new campaign, initially intended to run for at least three years, was being withdrawn because it had received too poor a reception from the private sector. The decision is also in line with the sufficiency-economy philosophy of the government to save funds, she added.

K. Pornsiri said that the TAT would relaunch the "Amazing Thailand" campaign at the annual Asia Travel Forum in Singapore at the end of January.

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

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High-season brings chaos to Samui streets

A marked increase in traffic on Koh Samui is creating daily gridlock in the island's most popular areas and making the roads almost un-crossable for pedestrians, many of whom are visiting tourists.

Exacerbating the problem, traffic lights recently installed at major junctions were switched off by the Highway Department because of technical problems that they claimed could have led to serious accidents.

According to Baramee Patanasiri, Director of the Surat Thani Highway Department, Koh Samui Municipality installed the traffic lights to improve safety, but failed to use technical experts, which meant regular malfunctions.

The department chief also warned that Koh Samui's dilapidated road system is falling apart under the strain of the 22,000 cars that drive around the island every day.

The main ring road has been under serious stress for more than



FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

By Barry Singleton

five years, he said, and now needs a complete overhaul as several major sections have crumbled with heavy rains causing gullies and cracks to appear.

"When we repair one part of the main road, another part collapses," he explained. "It's time for Samui to demand a budget



GRIDLOCK: Samui's roads are struggling to cope with the large increase in traffic that the island has seen in recent years.

large enough to rebuild the road system on this island."

Fast-paced development has led to widespread construction on Samui and the roads were not originally built for the kind of heavy vehicles now using them.

If a major reconstruction project is not initiated soon to replace damaged stretches of road, transport officials say Koh Samui may face a crisis that could seriously damage the island's reputation and also the local economy.

Full shoot-out after Full Moon: On January 3, Pol Capt Thirapon Gunha of the Koh Pha Ngan police was called to the scene of a shooting, which took place in the island's main town of Thong Sala.

When he and his team arrived they discovered the body of Channi Thongmak, 47, who had been shot several times.

Channi was the owner of a local transport service that takes tourists from the pier at Thong Sala to the famous Full Moon Party on Haad Rin.

Just a few meters away lay the body of a second man, identi-

fied only as Sawang, who had also been shot dead.

According to witnesses, Channi was waiting in a queue with other drivers to pick up passengers from the pier. They told police that Sawang simply walked up to him and started shooting.

People standing close by panicked and ran. During the chaos that followed, another man appeared and shot Sawang before disappearing into the fleeing crowd.

Police believe Sawang was a hired gunman, who was shot to protect the identity of the person who hired him. They also believe the shooting was linked to a dispute over transport franchises on Koh Pha Ngan. Channi's brother was shot and killed in a similar incident last year.

Samui's new seasons: The Four Seasons Hotel is set to open on Samui in February, adding the location to the chain's luxury portfolio, which is already a considered one of the industry's best.

The resort is on the north-west coast of Samui and occu-

pies the spectacular Laem Yai peninsula. The 60 luxury villas offer one to four bedrooms and average prices will be between US\$450 and \$650 per night.

Clients are expected to come from around the world. According to General Manager Rainer Stampfer, who transferred from the Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles, the main target group on Koh Samui will be Americans, with other clients from Europe, the Middle East and Asia and major markets in Hong Kong and Singapore.

These clients are following a trend around the globe, he said, with clients looking for hotels and resorts that offer quality services but also respect the environment.

Mr Stampfer also said that the resort has been developed with ecology in mind. Most of the 60 villas are built on stilts amid coconut palms and fruit trees and a large part of the 100-million-dollar investment was used to blend the resort with the island's natural environment.

Many people in the hospitality industry see the addition of an internationally-acclaimed hotel brand on Samui as a significant development that will earn the island increased publicity and further its reputation as a quality holiday destination.

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73 teachers murdered since 2004

A female teacher who was the niece of exiled Muslim leader Wan Kadir Che Man was killed January 9 when suspected militants attacked a pickup carrying her and a group of colleagues plus a doctor.

Saimah Mayamae, an elementary teacher at the Toh Bala School in Pattani's Sai Buri District, died at the scene after being hit by two bullets fired at close range by a gunman riding pillion on a motorbike that pulled alongside the moving truck.

Police said the gunman targeted Dr Dohmae Pengla, a rural doctor attached to Sai Buri's Public Health clinic, who was driving three female teachers to their school.

Dohmae ducked for cover after the first shot nicked his neck. The gunman then fired two more shots, killing Saimah.

Born in Sai Buri, Wan Kadir has been living in exile for nearly two decades working as an academic.

Two years ago, Wan Kadir retired as the head of Bersatu, a longstanding separatist movement, and expressed his desire to return to Thailand to work toward reconciliation between ethnic Malays in the South and the Thai government.

His request was turned down by the Thaksin administration but Thai sources said senior Thai officials held a secret meeting with him to discuss various issues pertaining to violence in the Deep South.

Wan Kadir's niece Saimah became the 73rd teacher or education worker to have been killed since January 2004 when violence began escalating in Thailand's three southernmost provinces. More than 1,900 people, mostly local Muslims, have been killed.

The latest attack came



GOING HOME: Soldiers in Songkhla carry the coffin of "Khru Juling" Pangamoon, 24, who died January 8, onto a C-130 cargo plane to be flown home to her native Chiang Rai Province. Khru Juling had been in a coma since being beaten by a mob of angry villagers in Kuching Reupah, Narathiwat, last May.

amid a week of tension between police and villagers in nearby Kapoh District, who have been demanding the release of a suspected militant.

Secretary-General of the Internal Security Operation Command Region Four, Maj-General Chamlong Khunsong, vowed not to give in to villagers staging daily protests to demand the release of Sama-ae Jeha.

Chamlong accused the protest organizers of carrying out a number of attacks, including the shooting in Pattani, M79 grenade attacks on the Kapoh District Office and an attack on an army

outpost in Tambon Pong Hoi.

Aged assassinated. A former *kamnan* (tambon chief) of Haad Phan Krai, Chumpon, was shot dead as he was returning to his farm after morning coffee with friends January 12.

The victim, Sophon Janpranot, 62, had previously been named "Kamnan of the Year" and was the owner of a cattle farm. He was shot three times in the abdomen with a sawed-off shotgun.

Police collected three spent cartridges from the scene and found the gun thought to have

been used in the attack about 100 meters from K. Sophon's body.

Police believe that the motive for the crime is likely to be connected to a land dispute or to women.

Boy gunned down. A 15-year-old-boy was shot dead and two more teenagers injured by a gunman apparently enraged by the boys driving around and setting off cherry bombs in Cha-uat District, Nakhon Sri Thammarat.

When police from Cha-uat District Police Station led by Pol Cap Chakkrit Kongreuang arrived at the scene about 12:30 am, January 10, they found Surachet Khongrot, 15, and Chairat Thongchu writhing in a pool of blood alongside the body of Phrainarong Jewsook, 15.

Surachet, who was shot in the hip and kneecap, and Chairat, who was shot in the chest, were rushed to Cha-uat Hospital and later both pronounced in "safe" in condition.

The boys said that they had been riding a motorcycle, setting off cherry bombs along the way.

They heard six gunshots in quick succession and then Phrainarong, who was sitting on the back, fell off the bike. Surachet, the driver, then lost control of the bike and he and Chairat fell to the ground.

Neither of the boys could say from which direction the shots came.

Cap Chakkrit said that he could not yet be sure as to the motive for the attack but added that the gunman may have been someone annoyed by the boys letting off cherry bombs.

Cropped short. Border Patrol Police based in Nakhon Sri Thammarat seized a more than 400 kilograms of *krathom* (an indigenous plant that acts as a

mild stimulant) in two raids January 11.

The first haul was made at Baan Khok Khram Railway Station in Ron Phibun District, where, following a tip off, Border Patrol Police seized 200kg of *krathom* leaves packed into cardboard boxes.

Police then seized more than 200kg of *krathom* at a house in Nong La Ohn village in neighboring Chaleram Phrakiat District, where Nuphan Kaownuan, 52, was found packing *krathom* into plastic bags.

Nuphan told police that she was preparing the *krathom* in her house to be sold to tea shops in Nakhon Sri Thammarat for three to five baht a bundle.

She had collected the leaves from a nearby wild field, she said.

Nuphan added that many people in the village sold *krathom*. However, she denied any knowledge of the stash found at the train station.

She was taken to Chaleram Phrakiat District Police Station and charged with unauthorized possession, preparation and sale of a Class 5 substance.

Police are now hunting for the owner of the *krathom* seized at the railway station.

Pol Lt Col Pinphetch Chorkhong of the Border Patrol Police said that in the past the *krathom* was most commonly used unadulterated but now youths, especially in the three southernmost provinces, have begun to concoct narcotic mixtures by boiling the leaves with ingredients such as mosquito repellent, sleeping pills, cannabis and cough medicine, and then mixing the result with fizzy drinks.

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

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A new perspective on photos

By Suganya Semacote

Adding a new perspective to photography on Phuket, myClip Studio just south of Phuket City has introduced a new technology to the island – Foto Robot.

Foto Robot has a camera attached to a robot arm, which photographs a subject on a rotating platform.

Once the computer is programmed to take the desired photos, the platform turns and the robot arm moves to take photos from almost any angle.

“Foto Robot is probably the best equipment that you can find right now. It can take pictures constantly, and we can set it to take pictures from zero to 90 degrees.

“Its 17-million megapixels allow us to blow a picture up to even billboard size,” said Production Consultant Achirawit Churmung.

MyClip Studio in Phuket was originally a subsidiary of a company based in Munich, Germany.

The studio in Phuket, which opened about nine years ago, was relatively small until the head office decided recently to relocate its headquarters to the island.

It now has about 150 staffers offering complete around-the-clock service, depending on the project; providing photography in fashion, fine art, weddings, events, portraits and more, and now the Foto Robot.

MyClip Studio is hoping its new machine will help take its



Left: Achirawit Churmung in the new computerized FotoRobot studio.

Below: Sample photographs from the new system, which is capable of creating ‘three-dimensional’ views for use on the Internet.

business to a much higher level.

“There is heavy demand for photography in Phuket, it is time to take this opportunity and develop our skills, especially for Thailand.

“We started from nothing but we have a ‘can do’ mind set. We train our staff to improve their skills,” said Managing Director Adul Inna.

The Foto Robot was ordered from the Czech Republic early

last year. It cost 60,000 euros (about 2.8 million baht). The studio sent several staff members to Germany for training in how to use the robot. The studio believes that they are the only studio currently using this machine in Phuket.

“Next time you buy things on the Internet it could be possible for you to see the goods from all directions. It could be on top, bottom, left or right, so you can have a better look before you decide to buy.

“Our customers are from Germany and South Korea and soon we will have a new market in Japan,” said K. Achirawit.

myClip Studio is located at 40 Soi Palai 2, Chalong, Muang, Phuket 83101. Tel: 081-986-2547. Fax: 076-233325. Web-site: www.myclipstudios.com.



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It's not yet available – it should be brought to market in late 2007 – but the Volkswagen Tiguan would appear to be an ideal vehicle for the roads and countryside of Phuket. Think of it as VW's answer to the Toyota RAV4. Only a great deal better.

Based on the highly successful Golf, the Tiguan, albeit still in concept form, was displayed at the Los Angeles Auto Show in November, where it received universal acclaim.

Inevitably known as a “small Touareg”, Volkswagen's upmarket SUV, the new vehicle will feature all-wheel drive in most versions, while the model presented in Los Angeles featured a so-called “Clean TDI”, a diesel engine of the next generation. In this unit Volkswagen says it employs a modular concept of different systems to significantly reduce emissions.

One of the systems includes a NOx (nitrogen oxides) storage catalytic converter, reducing the nitrogen oxides by up to 90% compared with existing engines. This unit, says VW, meets the strictest emissions standards in the world.

The Clean TDI introduced in the Tiguan is part of the BLUETEC project initiated jointly by Audi, Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen. The idea is to establish a concept of BLUETEC as a uniform label for clean and low-consumption cars and SUVs with diesel engines. BLUETEC complies with even the strictest US emissions regulations.

The technologies used and individually developed by each manufacturer serve to reduce nitrogen oxides in particular – the only exhaust components that lie above the rates of gasoline engines, due to the conceptual de-



ROLLING TOUGH? The Tiguan's design is based on the RAV4, but VW wanted a 'tougher' looking SUV.

Popular concept

sign of diesel engines.

The overall design of the Tiguan is distinctive and surpasses the rather bland appeal of the RAV4, although probably Toyota would disagree.

“It was very important to us to have the car appear powerful. Muscular. For us that had a higher priority than anything else,” says Klaus Bischoff, head of design at Wolfsburg, Volkswagen's spiritual home and still its headquarters. The Tiguan, its makers say, transfers the Touareg idea of a capable sedan and SUV into a different class.

Of modest proportions, the new vehicle is just 4.4 meters long and 1.69 meters high. There is a distinctive hood feeding into the headlamps, while broad, powerful bumpers beneath the head-

lamps are completed by matching fog lamps.

“An off-roader needs a long hood and an upright position,” says Bischoff, “That lends the vehicle self-assuredness and power.”

Viewed from the side, it is clearly related to the Touareg; it

is also immediately clear that this is a European design. The 19-inch alloy rims with low-profile tires add to the Tiguan's image of muscle. These are expected to be carried over to become a production reality later this year.

The interior is much as you would expect, with comfortable

seating for five, while the rear seat backs can be folded asymmetrically to offer versatile cargo space. Fully folded, objects up to 2.5 meters in length can be accommodated.

There is a large panoramic roof, a full 1.34 meters in length, affording a great deal of light to the passenger compartment and it is anticipated this will be standard on all but the entry-level model.

The concept car featured silver instruments and door handles, while there was also a great deal of orange. Production models are likely to be rather more subdued.

While currently the Tiguan is to be built in Germany, speculation prevails that it may eventually be produced in Puebla, Mexico, where the Beetle is made, due to the inherent weakness of the US dollar. North America, of course, will become a major market for the new SUV.

More details of the exact specification of the forthcoming Tiguan are expected in the first quarter of 2007 – probably at the Geneva Salon de l'Automobile in early March – but if the LA exhibit is anything to go by, it is undoubtedly an ideal prospect for these shores.

Jeff Heselwood can be emailed at: jhc@netvigator.com.

BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

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MESMERIZING MAY

It's hard to miss May and her fellow dancers on Soi Bangla. They draw the biggest crowds, to the point that it's sometimes hard to pass Soi Moulin Rouge without pushing through the throng. The tourists are mesmerized by their large-plumaged costumes and table-top dancing, whether they know the girls' secret or not. May is a fixture, and a part of the Bangla culture, but who is she? Zach Fridell went to find out.



MIRROR, MIRROR... May has a striking presence, and is part of the culture on Soi Bangla. As a boy growing up in Haad Yai, May says, she always knew she wanted to work at a cabaret.

Since she was a child, Sulaiman "May" Chema knew she wanted to perform at a cabaret. When she saw the elaborate costumes, suggestive dance moves, beautiful makeup and lively atmosphere, she knew that's where she belonged. The only problem was that May was born a boy.

May never felt at home in her male body. She knew that she was a girl, and when she got the chance, she made sure the rest of the world could see her the way she felt.

Born to a Muslim family in the Deep South, May grew up in Haad Yai where the three cabaret shows in town grabbed her attention. She couldn't look or act like a girl while she was a student, but once she finished school

at age 15 she immediately began working for a local show. It was then that she started taking hormone therapy and began her transformation into a woman.

By the time she was 18, May had grown breasts. The hormones she still injects herself with every three days also give her soft, clear skin, she said, that she now protects by neither drinking nor smoking.

Her parents didn't initially approve of the vocation or the lifestyle May chose. They have yet to see one of her shows, but May said they are "about 80% okay with what I do, but not

100%." Because of that, she paid for all of her own hormone treatments and her parents know she's working at a bar in Phuket, but are under the impression that she's a waitress, said May.

When she visits her family, which she does about once a year, she wears her hair down and long – it would be hard to conceal – but dons no makeup and opts for T-shirt and jeans rather than her favored dresses.

"I look more like a boy when I wear those clothes," she explained, adding that it makes it more comfortable at home for both her and her parents.

Back in Patong though, it's all business. May moved to Phuket seven years ago after some friends told her that the work was better than in Haad Yai. She now performs nightly at the Moulin Rose Cabaret at the end of Soi Moulin Rouge. Bedecked in sexy outfits, May and her fellow dancers put on a choreographed cabaret show every night.

To dance at the cabaret, May wakes up around 4 pm and starts putting on her makeup at 7 pm. Makeup, she said, takes only 10 minutes, then she is ready to work the crowds, preparing them for the first show at 9:30 pm.

Other shows follow at 11 pm and 12:30 am.

May is one of the lead dancers in the show, lip-syncing popular songs while emulating the likes of Madonna and Britney Spears.

When she's not at work, May's favorite pastime is shopping for dresses and perfumes, but with only two days off a month, she doesn't have much time to herself, she said.

May said she is honest with men she meets about her status as a woman. She has never had surgery, and she does not intend to. Although some men have been surprised by her real gender, she said she has never suffered any violence against her by misguided men.

"I say to them, 'You know what I am? I am a ladyboy, not cut.' A couple of times men were surprised, when I thought they knew, but since I was never drunk it wasn't a problem."

She is also fluent in English, a language she started learning only when she came to Phuket. She has had several long-term boyfriends, including a Swiss man she saw for three years.

"But many men lie," she said. "They say 'I like you, I love you' but go home with another ladyboy, because I am too old."

At age 29, May repeatedly refers to herself as "old". She says she'll work at the cabaret as long as she can, but she doesn't have any plans beyond dancing.

"As long as I have enough energy, I have to work. When I can no longer dance, I will stop. But for now, at least, I have lots of energy," she said. "Maybe when I am 40 I will stop."

Until then, she dances on.

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Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket



Maneerat Wichaidit and Tawan Sukyiran were married in the Phuket Ballroom at The Royal Phuket City Hotel on December 8, 2006.



Piyanut Sukseri and Jens Buskies were married in the Pra Pitak Grand Ballroom at The Metropole hotel on December 29, 2006.



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This week



CENTRAL THANKS (above): Central Karon Beach Resort General Manager Christoph Spiess (2nd from left) joins (from left) Beat Schwager, Manager of Asian Trail Phuket; Christian Chevrier, Chairman of Phuket Receptive; Peter Weibel, Manager of Diethelm Travel Phuket; and Max Thammarakas from Diethelm Travel at the resort's recent thank-you party for travel agents in Phuket.

VIRTUOSO VIBE (left): Internationally-acclaimed solo jazz guitarist Jeff Linsky entertains guests at the Evason Phuket Resort & Six Senses Spa's beach concert on Koh Bon January 4.



YOU BEAUTY: James Firth (left) of Beautiful World Phuket joins fellow Beautiful World Directors (from left) Simon Hall from Pattaya and Karl Graham from Koh Samui, and Beautiful World Interior Designer Isabelle Robyns, at the recent opening of the Phuket branch on Chao Fa West Rd.



JUST A MOMENT: Ken Abday and Varaporn 'Map' Ponrit celebrate the opening of K. Map's *Moments of Color* art exhibition at the Watermark bar and restaurant at Boat Lagoon on January 4. The exhibition continues until January 30.



FAMILY FEALTY: Richmond Group CEO Graham Bibby (3rd from left) celebrates the recent opening of the company's office at Tinlay Place, Cherg Talay, with daughter Camilla, Managing Director Chomchanok "Nan" Suthumma, Sales Executive and son Nathaniel Bibby and Sales Executive Steve Wilbourn.



SUPREME SCRIBES: Mom Tri's Boathouse General Manager Louis Bronner (2nd from left) congratulates Chris Bonds (2nd from right), winner of the first annual Boathouse writing contest, and Andrew Dearden (left), who received an honorable mention. *Phuket Magazine* Editor Barry Daniel looks on.



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Policies for the real world

They really don't get it, they just don't get it. It is really quite extraordinary how far off the mark our leaders and politicians can get, whether elected, appointed or self-appointed. In Australia, a couple of politicians ran election campaigns on Queensland's Gold Coast based on eliminating prostitution.

It is extraordinary that these politicians actually believe they are going to become the first people in history to wipe out the "oldest profession in the world". The most recent success would have been the days of ancient Jericho, thousands of years before the most decadent periods of ancient Rome, when God decided enough was enough.

Where there is demand there will always be supply. So as a thousand world-problem-

solving pub conversations have concluded, it makes a lot more sense to legalize it, giving the government taxes and protecting the health of the consumer by mandatory health checks.

In Thailand it is mandatory for sex workers to produce doctors certificates to the police, who

I have seen regularly checking bars in Pattaya, which is interesting in itself because prostitution is illegal and, as a former police chief told us, there are no brothels in Thailand.

Naturally, none of the politicians want to lose women's votes, and coming out in support of legalizing prostitution could set off alarm bells with your average housewife, who sees additional expenditure to the already substantial pub budget going down the drain. However, the concept of wiping it out is ridiculous and

LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven



THE BANE OF BANGLA: Legalizing prostitution would not solve the problem itself, but it would at least be a step in the right direction toward solving the other problems it exacerbates.

impractical – it won't solve the problem or make it go away.

In Thailand, one of the biggest problems is underage drinking. A former Interior Minister wanted to solve the problem of Thai youth drinking by closing down tourist venues. Finally the government of the time came up with zoning, except they didn't include Sukhumvit area, which is by far the biggest tourism spending area in Bangkok.

The next "solution" was to stop the stores from selling alco-

hol between 2 pm and 5 pm. This only happens in the big supermarkets, where school kids wanting to buy alcohol don't go anyway, so all this did was annoy the legitimate customers and cost the stores income. The small mom and pop stores all sell alcohol – to anybody, anytime.

Then they came up with the idea of banning all alcohol advertising, thereby wiping out massive sports sponsorship [an irony in itself – Ed].

Surely, it would be more ef-

fective to increase taxes on alcohol and raise license fees, and use that money to set up a proper licensing branch with well-equipped squads that could enforce the law with all these stores.

Stores caught selling alcohol to minors should be fined heavily. This will not solve the problem but, to me, is the most effective way of reducing it.

A classic solution from this particular branch of government was to try to get the legal drinking age raised to 25, thereby creating another several million underage drinkers in one masterstroke.

This also would have effectively wiped out almost the entire nightclub industry, whose patrons average between 19 and 27 years, and about 30% of the tourism industry.

There was also the case of some young soldiers, who didn't really see why they should risk their lives to defend a country that wouldn't allow them to have a beer after the battle.

It really would be useful to have some people at the top who think things through before alarming everyone with some of these bird-brained ideas. Mind you, it could be worse, such as that South American country whose president seems to have decided that his friend Fidel was right after all and is now determined to kick his country back in to the dark ages of socialism and nationalization of 50 years ago.



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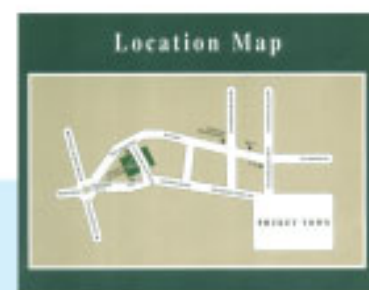
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You want to play? Get a toy



Clothing for fashion-conscious pups runs from 80 to 400 baht.

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

Dogs come in many shapes and sizes, but in Phuket the tiniest of dogs are becoming more popular.

At Pet Perfect & Cheez, on Yaowarat Rd opposite Tesco-Lotus, shop owner Sithithat "Nok" Ritthikraironnakan said that the most popular breed of dog he sees in Phuket is the pug.

"A pug is not too small and

not too big, so people can carry them around with them or even go jogging with them. Pugs also have short fur, which suits living in tropics," he said.

"Small dogs such as Shih Tzus and poodles are popular, especially with teenagers and young professionals. But most of my customers who are looking for small dogs are housewives who say they just want a friend while the husband is at work and the children at school."



Yoyo strides out in a smart yellow polo shirt with red accents.

It's not only that these pint-sized pooches are becoming popular in Phuket that's surprising, but also what they're wearing in addition to fur. At Perfect Pet & Cheez there is a huge range of accessories for canine companions.

Racks of overalls, jogging suits, costumes and shoes are all available designed just for your four-legged companion.

Among the array of pooch products is special doggy perfume, so your furry friend

can smell like one of your favorite fragrances – Ralph Lauren Polo, Romance and Calvin Klein One are all available for your – and your dog's – sniffing pleasure.

If your pup needs somewhere softer than the doormat to sleep, plenty of dog beds are available, too. And for canines always on the move there's a selection of dog carriers that look as fashionable as the latest designer purse.

"I love dogs, so I need to

stock as many things as possible available for people who love dogs like I do," said K. Nok.

Be sure to take proper steps and do your research before buying a new dog.

If you are considering having a canine companion you need to consider selecting a suitable breed. Vaccinations, grooming, training, feeding and exercise are just a few of the things you will need to consider.

Oh, and don't forget your new puppy's wardrobe.

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Oh to be a child again!



Children's Day, January 13, brought out the inner child in people of all ages as children's activities were held across the island.

At Phuket Provincial Hall, Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit welcomed children to his office and let them take in the view from his chair.

At Phuket Deep Sea Port the Royal Thai Navy allowed tours on board patrol boat *HTMS Phuket* (right), put on a parachute display and let the children get their hands on the controls of a helicopter – though all the flying was left to the adults.

The 22nd Air Defense Battalion, based in Phang Nga, gave junior guests the chance to sit in the control seats of anti-aircraft guns and dream of defending Phuket from marauding fighter planes.

Children were treated to entertainment, games, gifts and snacks at many other places on Phuket, including Laguna Phuket (left), Provincial Hall (below, left), Saphan Hin (below, right), Bangkok Hospital Phuket and Patong's Loma Park.



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Delicacies from downstairs

From his birthplace in Oregon, the unassuming Aaron Hooper, Executive Chef at Joe's Downstairs at Kalim Beach and the new Joe's South in Karon, has built a solid reputation in a career that has seen him take success in stride in his homeland as well as in Europe and Asia.

About six years ago, having returned from a stint in Switzerland working under Fabrice Stephany, Aaron graduated top of his class from the New England Culinary Institute. From there, he returned to the Pacific Coast, but further south, to California.

Often referred to as one of San Francisco's top five restaurants, Hawthorne Lane, in the city's lively South of Market district, was where Aaron really came to prominence for his art.

Hawthorne Lane has enjoyed rave reviews in Californian and nationwide media since it opened more than 10 years

ago, helped in no small part by Aaron's sheer passion and culinary skill in classic French, Asian, Italian and Californian cuisines.

Aaron then accepted an invitation from friend, master Italian chef and restaurateur Pino Spinoso, to open Bangkok's famed Tiramisu restaurant. Again, reviewers – and, more importantly, the diners – were delighted by Aaron's deft touch with Italian food.

Aaron also worked at Watermark Bar & Restaurant before taking on a consulting position in Shanghai.

He then returned to Phuket and joined the Baan Rim Pa Group, first as Executive Chef at Da Maurizio Bar Ristorante and, soon thereafter, Joe's Downstairs.

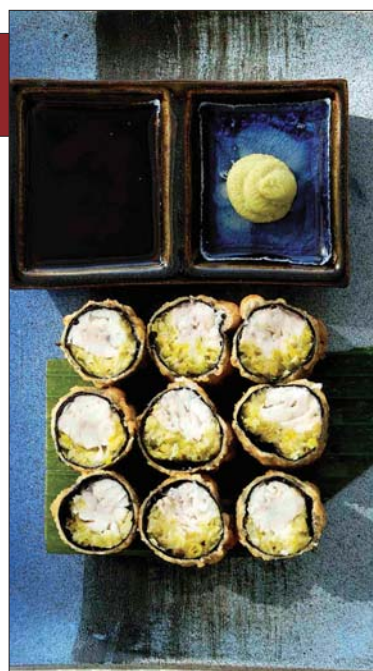
On this page, Aaron presents three dishes that showcase his exacting standards for nothing but the freshest ingredients and will make a delightful tropical meal.

Guest chef

By Patsy Kitsoff

White Snapper/Leek Tempura

Ingredients
100g white snapper fillet
2 pieces Nori (dry seaweed)
50g sautéed leeks
Tempura batter made fresh or store bought
Sweet soy dipping sauce:
Ingredients
2 cups soy sauce
1½ cup sugar
1 red chili
Juice of one lime



Method

Sauce: Combine all ingredients and reduce until it is a syrupy consistency

Snapper rolls: Place nori on sushi mat, then lay the snapper and leek on the nori and roll tightly. Place roll in tempura batter and fry roll in vegetable oil. Slice the rolls into bite-size pieces and serve with dipping sauce and wasabi.

Black Pepper Crusted Ahi Tuna Steak

Ingredients

160g piece of sushi-quality Ahi tuna
1 julienned Asian pear
1 julienned red bell pepper
1 julienned zucchini
1 julienned carrot
½ cup course ground black pepper

Method

Press black pepper into the Ahi tuna until it adheres well. Sear the tuna in a hot pan on all sides. Preheat oven to 260°C and place pan in oven for four minutes until tuna is cooked very rare in the center. Sauté all vegetables in pan until tender.

Put a spoonful of sautéed vegetables in center of plate, then slice the tuna on the bias and set atop vegetables. Serve with drizzle of sweet soy dipping sauce.



Peking Duck Spring Rolls

Ingredients

4 fresh spring roll wrappers
4 bite-size pieces of Peking-style duck meat
8 pieces pea shoots
8 pieces spring onion

Tamarind & Mustard Dipping Sauce

¾ cup sugar
1 cup water
1½ cup tamarind juice
½ cup Dijon mustard
½ cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Method

Sauce. Boil water and sugar to form syrup, then add the tamarind juice, cayenne and Dijon mus-



tard. Let cool before slowly whisking in vegetable oil to form an emulsion.

Spring rolls. Steam spring roll wrappers, then pan sear the duck meat. Roll the duck meat, pea sprouts, spring onion and a spoon of the sauce in the warm spring roll wrappers and serve with dipping sauce.


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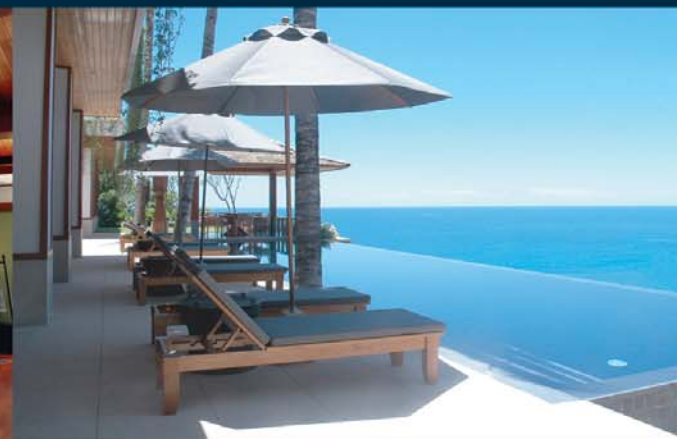
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It had been almost four years since my last trip to Lanta, and seeing that the island is now on the Tourism Authority of Thailand's (TAT) "emerging destination list" I thought it is time to check it out again.

So after an easy, three-and-a-half hour drive from Phuket, the aging car ferry slowly departs the jetty carrying an assortment of pickup trucks, cars, motorcycles and returning school kids. We are on our way.

I am pleased to see that the island's dirt track roads are all paved, and despite the usual dust bowls, are at least passable. Take care, however, as they are narrow and busy with laden pickups and motorcycles.

The main village on the island – Saladan – is home to the island's main port and is very busy. As it is the main shopping and commercial area, it also houses all banks, supermarkets, bakeries and other businesses on the island.

For the first night, we decide to head away from the main tourist areas of the west coast to Lanta Old Town, home to Chinese merchants, Thai fishing families and a Sea Gypsy community – who have all lived in harmony for more than a century.

Today the same daily activities and traditional structures, including the markets, longtail fishing boats and Chinese shophouses built over the sea, remain as they did when the town served as one of Thailand's busiest merchant hubs.

The town is accessible by a small road that passes through the center of the island. The road drops suddenly out of the hills and onto the small coastal plain, with its mangrove-covered coast and small farms.

Certainly worth a stop en route is the Viewpoint Restaurant, located high in the hills with



The sun sets over the pool at Pimalai; part of the resort's attraction is its stunning panorama.

stunning views over the east coast and the islands in the distance. There are few tourists here, most of them being the blond, tanned Scandinavians who seem to be everywhere these days.

There is even an accredited Scandinavian school on the island, which caters to the ever-increasing number of long-stay tourists who want their kids' education to continue while mum and dad go diving or take a tour for the day.

Our destination is The Mango House, a new and interesting twist to home stay tourism. On arrival at the Old Town we are greeted by our friendly host, Khun Yu. The Mango House is the dream of Canadian resident Duane Lenni, who fell in love with this charming village and has been living on

Lanta for the past three years.

All Mango House buildings have been converted from 100-year-old wooden Chinese shophouses, one of which formerly housed the local opium den.

The accommodation comprises three "over-the-sea" villas and two rooms located in the main

building. Large rooms with dark wood and rich silks provide simple yet elegant comfort, with views overlooking local street life.

The villas built over the sea offer stunning sea views and allow travelers to experience life in a small southern Thai fishing village. This place

is unique and well worth a few nights' stay.

Beyond the Mango Bar and Bistro, which serves Thai and Western favorites, there are two dining options: Beautiful Seafood or Fresh Seafood, both actual names of the only two eateries in this sleepy village.

Beauty won on this occasion. Seated in an over-the-sea sala at the restaurant, we are served some excellent local cuisine by Khun Kai, one of the most attentive and friendliest waiters we've met for a while.

After dinner we retire for the night. The village sleeps early, too – no night life here. And late risers beware, the locals get going just after dawn, so an early night is certainly encouraged.

The next day we head across to the west coast and that evening end up sharing a bottle of Pastis with my old friend Frank, General Manager of the Pimalai Resort.

The resort has now expanded, and even if you don't stay there at least head for the resort's stunning new restaurant, The Seven Seas, located high in the hills overlooking across the resort's secluded beach.

The restaurant is spectacular, especially with its sunset views and fine dining. The few glasses of excellent Pastis are wonderful, too. Thanks Frank, hope to see you again real soon.

Thailand TRAVELER

By Bill Owen

How to Get There

By car: Drive through Krabi and head south on Highway 4 toward Trang. After Huay Nam Khao turn right onto Route 4206 and follow the signs to Koh Lanta – Ferry. The drive from Phuket to the jetty takes about 3½ hours.

By ferry: Take the new hydrofoil ferry service from Kon-Tiki Divers, which departs Phuket Port daily at 8:30 am, and travels to Phi Phi Island and then onto Koh Lanta. Cost: 1,400 baht one-way. Kon-Tiki Diving & Snorkeling. 1/21 Moo 9, Chalong, Muang, Phuket 83130. Tel: 076-280366. Fax: 076-280357. Email: kontiki@loxinfo.co.th Website: www.kon-tiki-diving.com

Where to Stay

Mango House, Old Town Koh Lanta. Rooms at 2,250 baht a night (peak season). Tel: 075-697181. Website: www.bestofkolanta.com
Pimalai Resort. From 16,000 baht a night for superior room, with daily American breakfast (peak season). Website: www.pimalai.com



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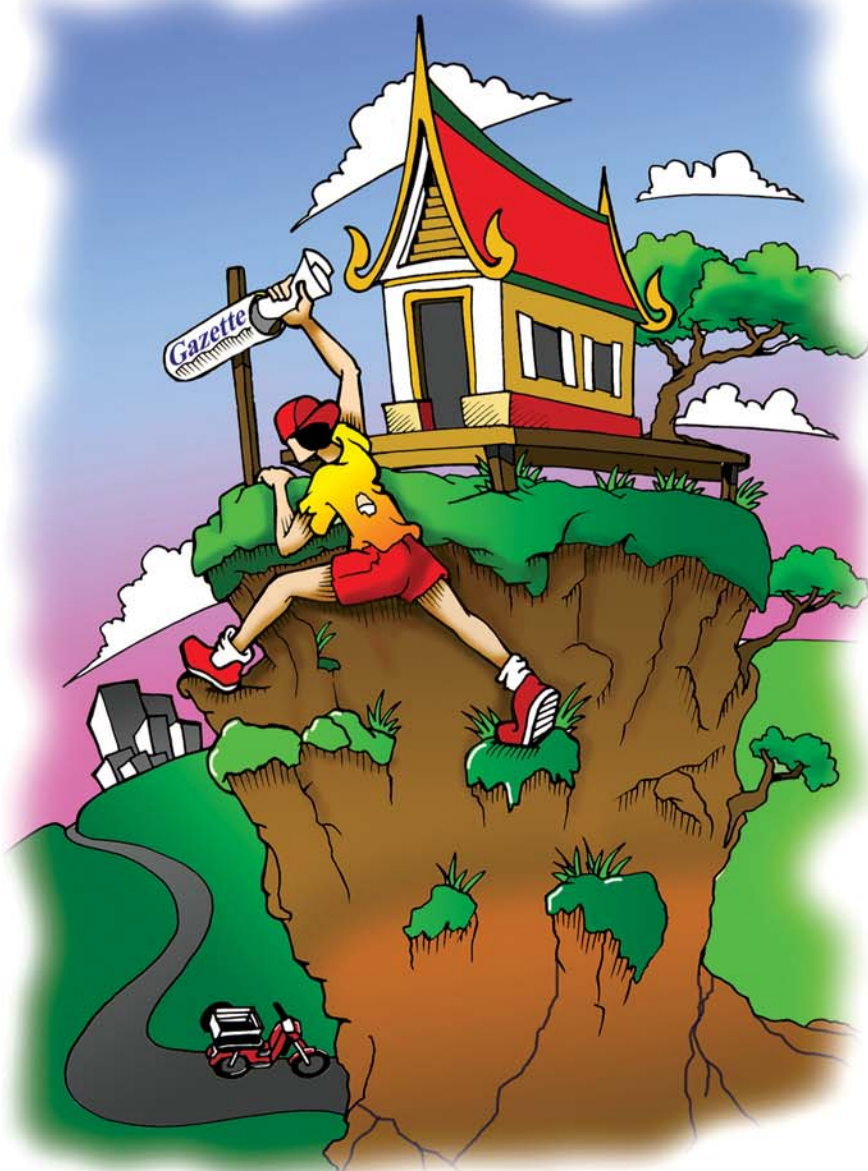


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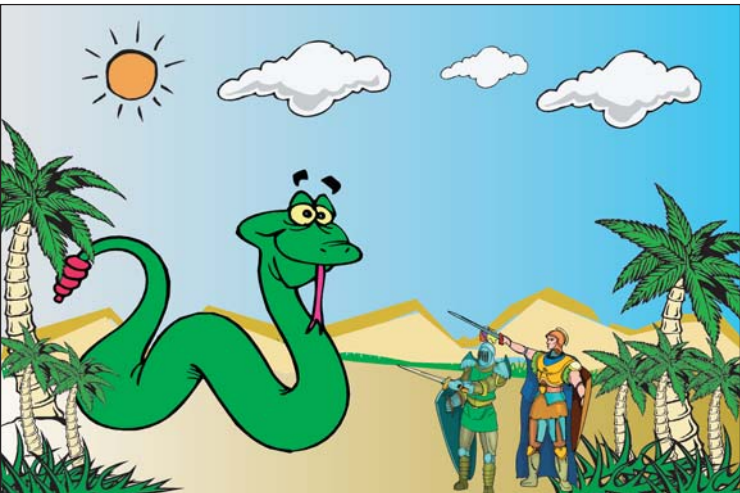
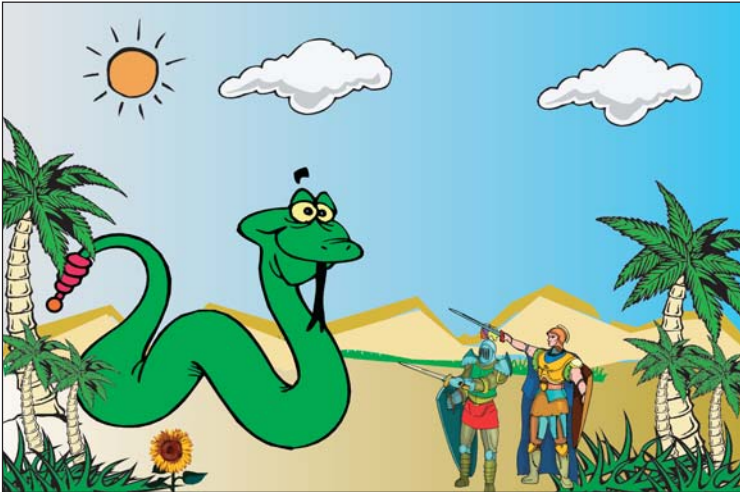
Puzzles

The Cryptic Crossword

Spot the Difference



Can you find the seven differences between the two cartoons below? And can you find them faster than the rest of the family?



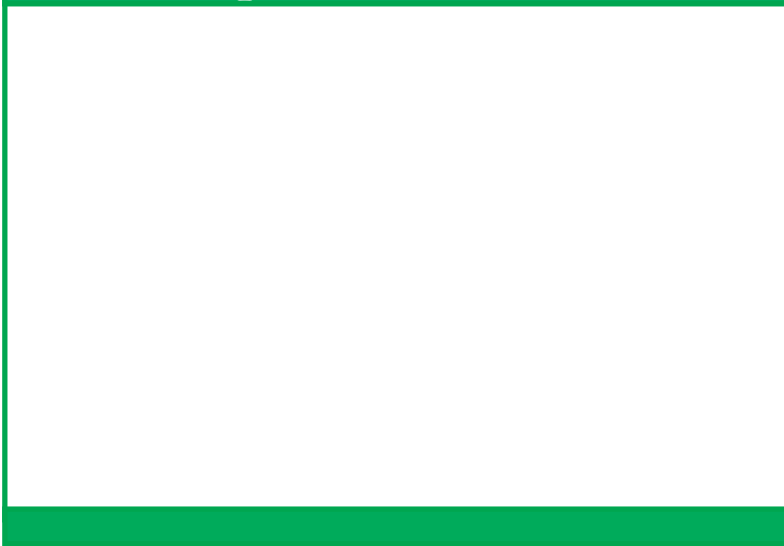
- ACROSS
- 1. Confusion, we hear, over young lady's capture. (15)
 - 9. Relative is more than nice. (5)
 - 10. Pushy bottom exercise – with credit notes? (9)
 - 11. Confession in commercial religious building. (9)
 - 12. Type the French, "light up". (6)
 - 14. Encroach on little devil in General Electric. (7)
 - 18. Ann's province. (3)
 - 20. Coerce mythical beast without love. (7)
 - 21. Particular note to microphone. (6)
 - 24. Watch second, for example. (9)
 - 28. A noisy gangster? (9)
 - 29. Doesn't work on bread point. (5)
 - 30. Weird Carolina got nuts? Felicitations! (15)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9					10									
11														
								12				13		
14		15				16								17
						18				19				
								20						
	21			22										
23						24		25				26		
28										29				
30														

Compiled by Tortuus. © 2007

- DOWN
- 1. Fix London, for example? Not the truth. (9)
 - 2. Cardinal's side in very hot water. (5)
 - 3. Nice prayers to worker. (8)
 - 4. Clergyman takes notes in area. (5)
 - 5. All of us, not animal type. (9)
 - 6. Anion, maybe? It's an idea. (6)
 - 7. One trick picture. (4)
 - 8. Unpleasant? Nay! Saint's in. (5)
 - 13. Jay's the French negative. (4)
 - 15. Got ready for trip, say. It's a deal. (4)
 - 16. Legalization of churned cement tan. (9)
 - 17. Agreement over prison headcount, say. (9)
 - 19. Help tamp bizarre leaflet. (8)
 - 22. Met cardinal or space rock.
 - 23. Rod back in charge of Greek dialect. (5)
 - 25. More bend in mushroom. (5)
 - 26. Time to muse. (5)
 - 27. Look over point container. (4)

Scribble Space



Solution on next page

su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

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

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

MEDIUM

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

EZ Trivia Quiz

- 1. Four calling birds; three French hens; two what?
- 2. What is the capital of Brazil?
- 3. Which hangs down: a stalagmite or a stalactite?
- 4. Which people toss cabers?
- 5. Which word can mean a bird or a flying toy?
- 6. What kind of fruit is a Granny Smith?
- 7. What are the colors of the Finnish flag?
- 8. What is a mattock used for?
- 9. Who currently has a hit single called *Don't Let Him Waste Your Time*?
- 10. Who has the title role in the movie *Miss Potter*?

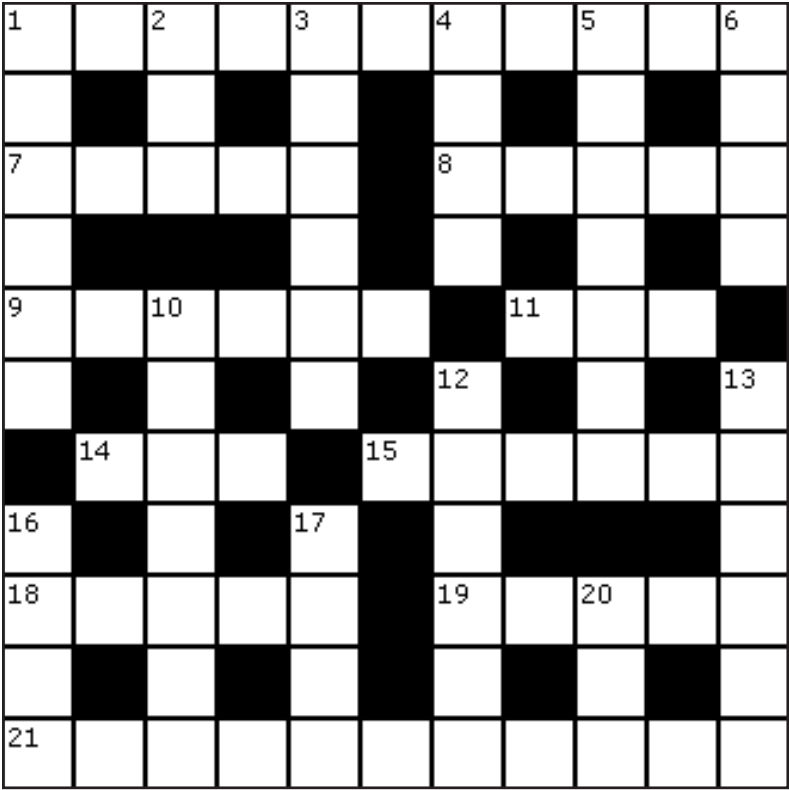
Answers on next page

Rhyme Time

The words or phrases described below all rhyme with "ring". What are they?

- 1. Wasp's dangerous part.
- 2. What every hip-hop lover wants.
- 3. Chinese capital.
- 4. What mommy's boy can't let go of.
- 5. He had a dream.
- 6. Object.
- 7. Crucial part of an aircraft.
- 8. Half of table tennis.
- 9. Playground equipment.
- 10. Stick tightly to.

Answers on next page

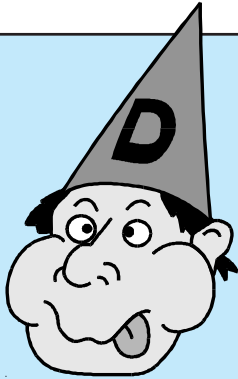


Quick Crossword

- ACROSS
1. Measure of light intensity.
7. Artificial fiber.
8. Of the moon.
9. Canoe equipment.
11. A small lie.
14. Little devil.
15. Goal.
18. Ire.
19. World's largest democracy.
21. Symptom of rabies.
- DOWN
1. Cocktail party snack.
2. Zero score.
3. Lacking companionship.
4. Top or bottom of the world.
5. Coming first.
6. Uncommon.
10. Not a full deity.
12. Root vegetable.
13. Layers.
16. Clean.
17. Threesome.
20. Apply by touching lightly.

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. Idared, Fuji and Pacific Rose are all types of what?

2. If something is acerose, what shape is it?

3. If brothers are engaged in adelphogamy, what do they share?

4. Which Alfred Hitchcock movie premiered in 1972?

5. Who made the first ascent of Mt Saint Elias in Alaska, in 1897?

6. Wormwood is the basis of which alcoholic beverage?

7. In which country are the
- volcanoes Acatenango, Fuego and Tacana?

8. Who or what is an accipiter?

9. What is the modern name of the capital of the ancient kingdom of Ga?

10. An ACE inhibitor is use to counter what?

11. What US administration post did Dean Acheson hold?

12. What is Adam's Ale?

13. Where is Admiralty Island?

14. What is the old name of the city of Edirne?
15. Between 1154 and 1159, what title did Englishman Nicholas Breakspear hold?

16. Who wrote, "Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker"?

17. Who was the second person to walk on the moon?

18. Which Apollo mission was that?

19. In mathematics, what is the first transfinite number?

20. Who or what is an alewife?

Answers below, left

Puzzle Solutions

Monster Quiz Answers

1. Apple; 2. Needle-shaped; 3. A wife or wives; 4. Frenzy; 5. Luigi Amadeo, Duke of Abruzzi; 6. Absinthe; 7. Guatemala; 8. A type of hawk; 9. Accra, Ghana; 10. High blood pressure; 11. State; 12. Water; 13. Off Alaska; 14. Adrianople; 15. Pope Adrian IV; 16. Ogden Nash; 17. Edwin Eugene "Buzz" Aldrin; 18. Apollo 11; 19. Aleph-null; 20. A fish related to herrings.

Solution to Cartoon Puzzle

EZ Trivia Answers:
1. Turtle doves; 2. Brasilia; 3. Stalactite; 4. The Scots; 5. Kite; 6. An apple; 7. Navy blue and white; 8. Digging; 9. Jarvis Cocker; 10. Renee Zellweger.

Rhyme Time Answers:
1. Sting; 2. Bling; 3. Beijing (Peking); 4. Apron string; 5. Martin Luther King; 6. Thing; 7. Wing; 8. Ping; 9. Swing; 10. Cling.

Cryptic Crossword Solution

Quick Crossword Solution

Sudoku solution

Roddy Doyle was a high school English teacher in Dublin when he found his literary voice with three thin, screamingly funny novels – *The Commitments*, *The Van*, and *The Snapper* – a trilogy about a sharp-witted, foul-mouthed, working-class Dublin family.

He followed this up with a heartbreaking novel, told from the perspective of a child who is watching his parents break up, *Paddy Clark Ha Ha Ha*. This most deservedly won the Booker Prize.

His tone turned even more sombre with *The Woman Who Walked Into Doors* told in the voice of Paula Spencer, the alcoholic battered wife of a violent drunk.

Paula Spencer (Jonathan Cape, London, 2006, 277pp) is back now in this eponymous novel.

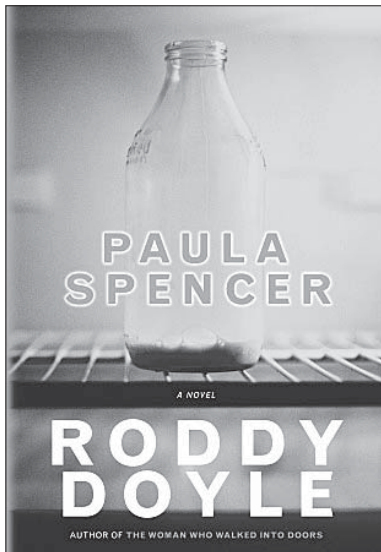
Her husband's been dead for nearly a decade. She's 48 years old, still a cleaning woman, and sober for four months and five days. Her elder daughter, Nicola, is a success, her elder son, John Paul, a recovering heroin addict.

The two youngest, Leanne, 22, and Jack, 17, still live at home with her. Leanne shows signs of turning into an alcoholic herself. They've all been damaged by a violent family history. Paula is trying to make up for it day by day.

Dublin has changed too in the last 10 years. Ireland has become the "Celtic Tiger". Paula is paid in euros.

She takes solace in a newly opened Italian cafe. All the cashiers in the local supermarket are Nigerian women. Her next door neighbors are Polish. The office

Confessions of an alcoholic mother



cleaners she now supervises are Romanian and Bulgarian men.

She uses a mobile phone and sends text messages. She's saving to buy her son a computer for Christmas.

The local Christian Brothers school is no longer staffed by Christian Brothers: "They're all dead or in jail".

This is a tale told in short,

plodding sentences, just as Paula lives her life:

"She's on her way home from work. She's walking from the station. There's no energy in her. Nothing in her legs. Just pain. Ache. The thing the drink gets down to.

"But the drink is only part of it. She's coped well with the drink. She wants a drink. She doesn't want a drink. She doesn't want a drink. She fights it. She wins. She's proud of that. She's pleased. She'll keep going. She knows she will."

You would think 277 pages of this would soon grow boring, and the endless litany of complaint does indeed grow tiresome at times, but what holds this novel together is the fierce sense of family shot through with brilliant flashes of comic dialog.

Paula is trying to knit together her fractious family while constantly tormented by flashes of painful memory:

"She hates Christmas. She always has – or since she was a

few years married and she realized she was poor and she was always going to be . . . She remembers going through the supermarket with a trolley full of six-packs and mixers and the rest. She couldn't make the trolley go straight. Jack was in the carrier part. She was afraid the whole thing was going to topple over. Leanne was pulling on the other side of it, asking for every biscuit and family pack they passed. And she actually – did she? – she smacked Leanne, until she let go of the trolley. She tried to smile through the whole thing, piling the stuff onto the conveyor. She threw a few bars of chocolate

onto the pile, to make it look more normal, the expensive black chocolate kids don't even like, and Jack was trying to climb out and Leanne was snuffling and refusing to look at her. A chicken instead of a turkey and four bottles of vodka on the table. This was Christmas."

The comic highpoints of the novel are the gab sessions among Paula and her two raucous sisters, Carmel and Denise. The married Denise confesses to an affair with a married man and this leads to 20 pages of ferociously bawdy dialog. In a later session, Carmel even wrings desperate humor out of her diagnosis of breast cancer. The family is indomitable.

The novel ends a year later with Paula still sober. She's even met a man. You root for her all the way.



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

PHUKET DIARY Upcoming events on the island

To January 30: Moments of Color art exhibition

This exhibition, at The Watermark Bar & Restaurant in the Boat Lagoon, shows the work of local artist Varaporn "Map" Ponrit. Daily from 10 am until the bar closes. No entry fee. To contact the artist call Tel: 081-6963901 or email: art@phuketlifestyle.com

February 16-17: 2nd Phuket International Blues Festival.

Eight to 10 Thailand-based acts will perform at the festival during two nights of great blues, R&B and rock 'n' roll.

The headline band on the first night will be British legend Victor Brox, while the line-up on the second night will be headed

by the Rich Harper Blues Band from the US.

Other acts already confirmed include Kyla Brox (Victor's daughter), Phuket's own Groove Doctors, The Blues Machine from Pattaya, and Blue on Blue, Cannonball and the Soi Dog Blues Bank from Bangkok.

Tickets are 500 baht for one night or 800 baht for both nights. For more information see the events website at www.phuketbluesfestival.com or contact Andy Andersen by email at phuketmusic@yahoo.com or by calling Tel: 086-6822639.

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A sounding off that deserves to be heard

After sending a vehicle in for mechanical adjustments or retrofitting, a car owner is justified in asking the garage owner for a chance to test drive the vehicle to ensure everything is in proper working order before paying the bill.

In the case of Patong's tsunami warning system, however, that test drive has not taken place. According to allegations by several members of the consortium that donated the first three towers, the system has been modified and may not work properly following adjustments to it by a rival firm that won a government contract to construct 62 more tsunami towers in the region [see Inside Story, pages 4 and 5].

Determining the extent to which these claims represent a valid concern for public safety – or stem from a case of corporate “sour grapes” – will have to be determined by technical and legal experts.

The fact remains, however, that the Patong system hasn't been audibly tested since April 2005. Such a test is overdue, especially since the system was modified by a company different from the one that designed and installed it.

Dr Smith Dharmasara, who heads the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC), says the sirens should be fully tested every four to six months, but that local authorities fear creating a panic during the peak of the high season for tourism.

The *Gazette's* stance is that in order to maintain public confidence in the face of such allegations, the system should be tested as soon as possible. More frequent testing is also needed to ensure that the public is familiar with the sounds the sirens emit.

This is particularly true in Patong, with so many tourists, thumping sound systems, sound trucks and other contributors to the cacophony.

Patong was spared from a much larger loss of human life on December 26, 2004, by the fact that the tsunami hit in the morning, when the beach was relatively empty. Should another tsunami strike Phuket, Patong might not be so lucky.

Despite all the fanfare, the single direct-detection buoy now sitting at the middle of the Indian Ocean will afford Phuket little or no protection. By the time it detects a tsunami wave produced by an earthquake along the Sunda Trench, another wave propagating eastward will already be bearing down on our island.

Given this fact, it is crucial that any warning the NDWC sends out be heard and acted upon as soon as possible. To be sure that will happen in Patong, the warning towers there must be put through regular, thorough testing.

– The Editor

The Phuket Gazette

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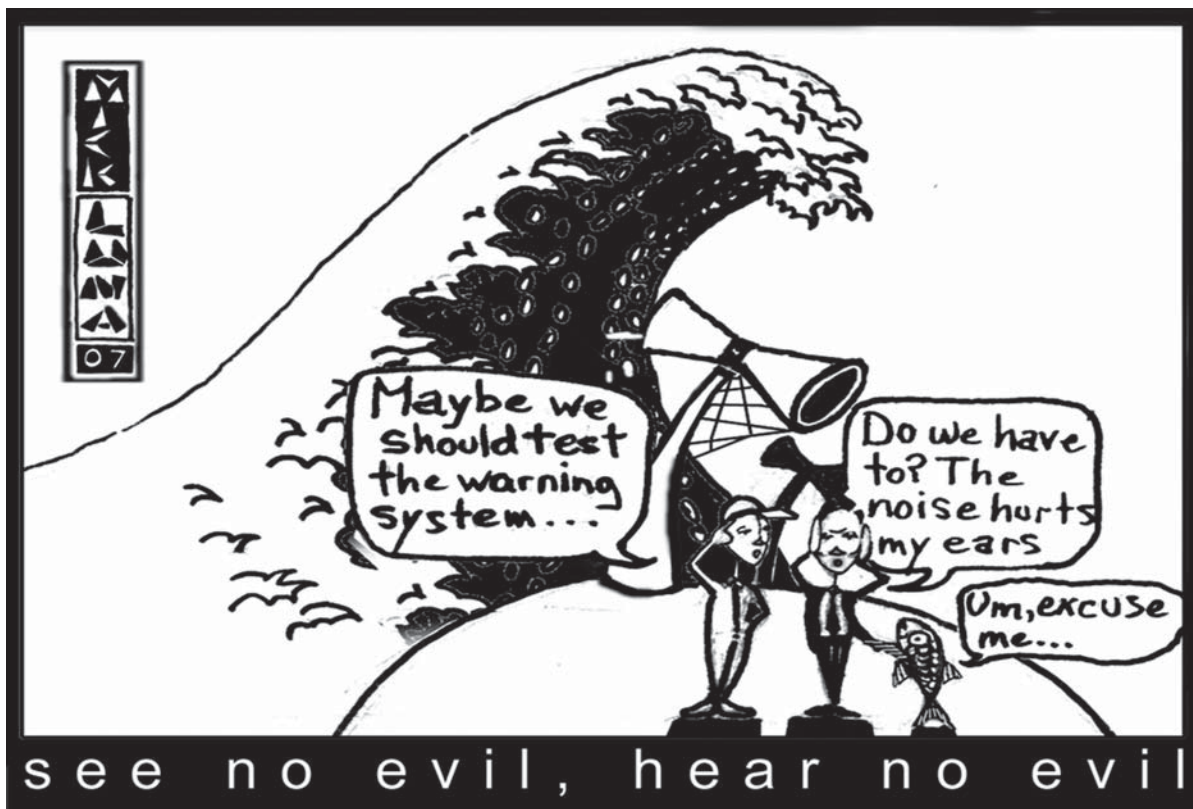
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Letters

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.

Taking on the tuk-tuk mafia

Who does not know that there is a tuk-tuk mafia in Karon that has made unreasonable profits from tourists and Thai inhabitants? They are opposed to any public transport links between important tourist spots. I have watched the scene for more than 10 years and can verify that you pay 100 baht for only 500 meters along the Karon beach road.

N Heinrich Bussert
Germany

For all readers: Please post your opinion!

Rob
By email

...and don't forget Kata to Patong

We would like buses to also run from Kata to Patong. It's a short distance, so why do taxi drivers want 200 to 250 baht for the fare? I think it is too much.

Tourists should be given the same facility to go from Kata to Patong as from Karon.

Disha Sadarangani
Phuket

Get on the bus

The dream of a bus connection between Patong and Karon has been a fantasy of many tourists and local Thais for years now. Good to hear that Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukkaban supports this bus connection, too.

Fear of reprisal from those who will lose income is, in my opinion, the only reason the bus is not yet running.

Tourists these days are not amused by the fares tuk-tuk drivers are asking for this trip.

Also, the driving by some of these drivers leaves passengers wishing for a safer drive at a more reasonable price.

It probably won't be hard to get a petition for this service signed by half of Patong's inhabitants, Thai as well as foreign. But will it be possible to protect the entrepreneur?

I hope these days Phuket has become a place where democracy is stronger than the power of a few people's influence.

Maybe the *Gazette* can help by collecting as many as possible positive reactions on this issue.

Free the beaches

While exploring some of the island's lesser-traveled beaches I recently came across Nui Beach, in the south of the island.

When I got to the beach I was stopped by a man who said it would cost me 250 baht to sit there. I thought that beaches are public and no one can “own” the beach or charge for access, unless it's a national park.

Granted, this guy did offer me a chair and a complimentary drink if I paid up, but I didn't want a chair or his drink. I wanted to sit on the sand, go swimming in the water and enjoy the beach.

I called the Tourist Police, who told me it is illegal for a person to charge for going on the beach, but that he had heard of it happening there before.

However, he said that he couldn't help me; I would have to go to the Provincial Office.

Is something going to be done about this? Or am I just going to keep being passed off?

Beach lover
Phuket

Thanks, Gazette

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We are students from Nan Christian School. We would like to thank you very much for the *Phuket Gazette*.

It's very nice of you to send your newspapers to our school. We read and learn from them. It has helped us gain a lot of knowledge. Thank you very much.

This year we wish for you to live a long life with your family.

Nan Christian School
Nan Province

Insecurity measures

Following the New Year's Eve bomb attacks in Bangkok, obviously security measures around the country will be tightened.

At Central Festival Phuket, however, the decision to make all motorbikes park outside means that many people have to do at least one lap of the complex before being able to park, all so that the management can claim they have tightened security.

A motorcycle bomb, such as those commonly used in the Deep South, in the underground car park would do no more damage there than if it were detonated by the front entrance where tourists get off their buses.

Cars, which can conceal a much more damaging device, however, are still allowed to park underneath.

Hopefully, after this latest attack, some thought will be put into new measures rather than just rushing in ineffective shows to soothe the minds of officials and the terminally nervous.

Trevor Phithakthawee
Mai Khao

Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials or business owners are published as *Issues & Answers* in the *Phuket Gazette* Online.

Wishlist for Patong

We send all the garbage Patong Municipality collects to the incinerator in Phuket City, where we have to pay 200 baht per ton, I think, to have it burned. In Patong now, in the high season, we have about 80 tons per day.

I have talked to people who work for the Governor's office and complained that it isn't fair, because they only support us based on the registered population of the municipality, which is about 16,000 people. How many more people are unregistered? Probably about 100,000. And how many tourists?

So we have a lot of garbage, and we have to collect it every day. My staff are tired. They never have a day off. They have to work every single day, even New Year's Day, Saturdays and Sundays. They work 24 hours.

For many tourists, Patong is the first impression they have of Thailand, so we have to keep it clean, even though our staff are sometimes very, very tired.

I try my best, but sometimes business people in Patong get angry with me, even for putting up announcements asking for a public hearing so we can ask them when is a good time to collect their garbage.

It really should be easy. I ask what time is good for them, not for us. I give them many choices, especially along Soi Bangla and Thawewong Rd. I would like those roads to be very

clean, because there are pedestrian areas.

They select the times – once in the morning, then at six in the evening – but they still don't put out their trash at those times, so we have to go collect it every two hours. We collect at 10 pm, midnight, 2 am and 6 am.

But then there is the problem that many, many people who live in other areas, such as Phuket City, come and go through the garbage to remove items for recycling. The people who put the rubbish out for collection have already bagged their trash properly, but these people come with a knife and cut open the garbage bags. This is very bad.

When I catch them in the act I say 'Don't do that, you're making it very difficult for my staff.' Then they complain, saying I am not helping the poor people. I understand they are poor, but they should still do the right thing. If you don't teach them what to do, they just do whatever they want.

Many of these people are not Thai. There are Burmese and Cambodians too, and many of them don't even live in Patong. They come over in a *salaeng* (motorbike with sidecar), cut open the bags and leave a big mess.

As for the mess at the end of Nanai Soi 2, that is private land. They put all the garbage back there and sometimes they try to burn it, which makes a bad smell that bothers people. I have tried to stop them many times already.



FIRST PERSON

Patong Deputy Mayor **Chairat Sukkaban** has a lot on his hands, with one of his major responsibilities being keeping up the appearances of Patong. Better garbage collection, moving power cables underground and clamping down on noisy promoters are just a few of the proposed solutions, but to achieve these he says he needs the help of business

owners and additional government funds. Here he explains what he would like to achieve in Patong and why.

Advertising is a big problem too. People put up posters everywhere – on power poles, on telephone booths. I tell my staff to pull them down from places like that and the advertisers get angry with me, saying that I am trying to persecute them and their businesses.

Another thing I don't like is the boxing advertising, such as 'Tonight! Tonight!' I get a lot of complaints about this from tourists. The [promoters] pay a tax, so they have permission to adver-

tise, but they are only allowed to do it from 10 am to 6 pm, and not so loudly.

It's not only boxing. You have Rock City, Saxophone, all these people. Even Jungceylon and Central Festival do it. The sound trucks cause traffic congestion, too.

I was not born here, but I have lived here almost 30 years. My job is dangerous, because some of these people are aggressive. My mom asks me, 'Why do you want to die early?' There are

many problems in Patong. My god, I am getting a lot of gray hairs. My aunt told me, 'You used to be good looking, but now after two-and-half years in this job you look very old.' [laughs]

I say, 'I can't help it. I have already come so far, so now I have to finish the job.' But I can't do it alone. There are so many problems, but we have had some successes too. For the environment, we have ISO 14001 certification; we are the only town in the south of Thailand that has it.

One month ago I took 10 of my staff, my boss's secretary and the rest of the team to Singapore. I wanted them to spend a week-end there to see how clean it is.

Another reason I took my staff [to Singapore] was to see how the electricity supply is done there. In Patong there are electric wires hanging down everywhere. It looks bad and it's dangerous.

We had a plan to install them underground, but after Thaksin didn't win any MPs in the election, he didn't support it. Before he wanted to support it, but he didn't after that.

Here in Patong we make a lot of money for the country, but we don't get the support we need from the central government. They must do better. If they support us with the infrastructure, Patong will look a lot better. It would cost a lot, but it is a one-time investment and one that would benefit the country in the long run.

Compiled by Stephen Fein

What can I do about a noisy karaoke?

I live near Rung Arun Karaoke, opposite Soi Thanuthep, on Chao Fa East Rd. The karaoke stays open every night until 1:30 am or 2 am. It is just a wooden hut, so the loud music carries throughout the whole neighborhood.

My kids go to school early in the morning and so need their sleep, as do the elderly and the sick people who live nearby.

How can a karaoke, 800 meters from Chalong Police Station, be so noisy and be allowed to operate so late?

Sleepless in Chalong

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

Before issuing permits to entertainment venues, the provincial authority must inspect entertainment venues to verify whether or not they comply with the law.

If the venue disturbs people in the neighborhood, people can file a complaint with the police. However, the complaint must be filed in person. You are welcome to join us when we investigate your complaint.

Issues & ANSWERS

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

Thank you for informing us. We always keep an ear out for noisy venues that disturb other people. If we find that the noise is too loud, we will notify the entertainment venue owner that he or she must reduce the noise being created or improve the building so that the noise is contained.

If the owner does not comply, he or she will be fined up to 1,000 baht per offence.

Wanlapa Jeenloy, an officer at the Phuket Provincial Public Health Office, replies:

By law, the noise should not reach more than 90 decibels for more than eight continual hours. But it's quite difficult to measure how disturbing the noise is, because noise affects many different kinds of people in different

ways. For example, a house where patients, old people or children live might not be able to bear loud noise for long periods of time.

If the noise is very disturbing, people can file a complaint at the local administration office or at the local police station, and the officers will then instruct the entertainment venue to make improvements, such as improving the sound insulation.

The local officers might have a public hearing for people in the area and then send the entertainment venue a notice to decrease the noise created.

If the venue does not comply the police can fine the venue, and possibly have the venue ordered closed, but it might take time for police to do that.

'Private beaches' in Thailand?

Recently I tried to go to Karon Noi Beach, between Karon and Patong.

A hundred meters or so along what I thought was the access road I was stopped at a checkpoint. The uniformed guard there told me that it was a private road leading to private beach that belongs to Le Meridien Phuket Beach resort.

I have been told by local people that this is not true and that the hotel has decided to make it their own private beach, when in fact it is a public beach. What is the true situation?

John McDonough
Phuket

Narumon Chansriharaj, Senior Sales & PR Manager at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort, replies:

All beaches are public in Thailand. However, land access

to Karon Noi Beach is through hotel property, which is controlled for security reasons, like access to any other hotel – and especially beachfront hotels.

Entrance is not denied in general, but certain rules apply during certain periods. However, there could have been a language barrier here resulting in misinterpretation of the reply of the Thai security staff.

The beach is also accessible by sea. Yachts can moor in front, subject to local regulations.

For an access to the hotel, a day-pass program including lunch is available during off season. You can also buy a membership to our fitness center, which includes usage of our pool and beach facilities.

For more information, contact the hotel or call Tel: 076-370100.

In The Stars

by Isla Star

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Motivation comes from taking a break from your usual locations. If you are ready for a challenge you will soon be rushed off your feet. If you are content with your current situation you will be faced with some change of direction during the coming days. Boredom is certainly not on your agenda. If you're coming of age, a surprise guest at the celebration rekindles passion.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Love could cause you some worries on Sunday; if you learn that someone really can't be trusted, it's time to reconsider this affair. Where work is concerned, you may be pleased at a promise of promotion, but don't sell yourself short; more responsibility should include greater rewards. An event this weekend turns out to be lots of fun. Number 1 is lucky on Wednesday.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Your fast reflexes ensure that a tricky problem is solved. You are advised to think outside the box when it comes to business dealings. A canny Cancerian will attempt to scuttle out of an agreement; Tuesday is the most auspicious day for setting up a meeting to sort this out. The scent of roses encourages romance.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Plans take on a momentum of their own. If you have worrying whether you have made the right decision you will be reassured this week. You can expect valuable support from a surprising source. Spend time cleaning out unused possessions on Sunday; creating

more space will enable energy to flow more freely. Wearing a piece of jade encourages a wiser understanding of relationships.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): You should be generous when someone admits they've made a mistake. Your usual easy-going nature is put to the test during the final days of January, so don't sweat the small stuff. Monday is the best time to schedule important appointments, as your patience will be stronger then. An intimate relationship benefits from a secret session this weekend. Number 8 is lucky on Thursday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): A funny incident this weekend should remind you of the healing power of laughter. Take tips from a light-hearted Gemini friend. Where romance is concerned, your partner is about to reveal a previously unseen side of their character. The color coral pink encourages healthier finances.

LEO (July 24-August 22): If you have been feeling down in the dumps since the New Year began, you will start to see you have distinct advantages over others. This is particularly relevant to new business ventures. A wish is due to come true, which could mean you will soon move to your dream house.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Work will demand most of your attention this week. If you feel others are starting to take too much for granted you must find a way of making this clear. A Sagittarian friend makes a statement this weekend that encourages you to believe there is light

at the end of the tunnel of love. Schedule financial appointments for Tuesday and wear the color copper to be taken seriously.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): If you have recently become single you will be happy to embrace your freedom. You will realize that nursing a broken heart is wasting precious time. Those in a committed relationship can expect to arrive at a crossroads before the month has ended. On a business level, make deals before Thursday or delay until next month as crossed wires will be an unfortunate feature of the last few days of January.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): You can certainly run away quickly when you need to, but this week you will learn that it's impossible to hide from the one situation you'd like to avoid. Aries is preparing for a confrontation, but you will feel much better when this is over. Legal matters are highlighted until the end of the month and you can look forward to things going your way.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Rewards for hard work should start coming your way. You will be delighted to discover it's pay-off time. An intimate encounter with Taurus this weekend puts a spring in your step and ensures that a tiring business meeting on Monday is easier to endure. The number 7 can bring luck on Thursday.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): You must make at least one serious choice between now and the end of the month. If this relates to a personal relationship, refrain from asking advice from others, but should your dilemma relate to work, an astute Arian can provide the answer you need. The color amber will help dissolve pointless worries.

Last chance

The Bangkok incentives planner called with distress in her voice. "What can I do? My corporate group wants to see the bay, but the entire area is over-developed. What's happening to my country? Don't they know they are killing Thailand? I can't bring quality people here anymore. My business is doomed," she said.

She wasn't the first Thai agent to ask me if there's anything left to enjoy.

I had to say no. With an absence of master planning, the Phuket-Phang Nga-Krabi triangle is rapidly becoming another "tourism gone wrong" scenario.

The next day I attended an event-planning meeting. When introduced to a speedboat operator, I mentioned four-cycle engines. It's meaningless to talk "environmental" to a speedboat operator, so I emphasized profits.

"Four-cycle reduces repair and petrol costs, and eliminates two-cycle oil." His eyes clouded over, unreceptive to change even when cutting costs.

The next day, my guests brought plastic bags emblazoned with a big blue speedboat logo. I wondered how many of these bags end up in the sea, killing turtles, porpoises, even whales and whale sharks.

The Hong Kong expats complained, "The trip was horrible. They overloaded the boat, fed monkeys and tried to sell us expensive junk food for lunch. Even the kids didn't eat it."

"We all cried when we saw Phi Phi. We felt like criminals for buying that trip – contributing to the problem."

They won't be returning to Thailand.

Looking at that killer plastic bag, I decided this week to recap my "Gray Area" effort over the

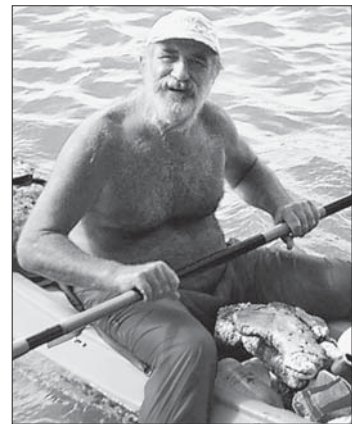
past year. I felt like we were being offered a last chance to do something before we kill the goose that laid the golden egg. So, throughout last year, I ran through the following points:

• **Don't feed the monkeys.**

Last year, monkey feeding increased. Russians and Scandinavians are as guilty as East Asians – because they don't get environmental briefings, and we can't expect untrained 150-baht-a-day guides to speak Russian, German and/or Swedish. European tour

wholesalers must take responsibility and fill the void.

THE GRAY AREA



By John 'Caveman' Gray

• **Respect the sea.** The ocean isn't our natural environment, so take the sea seriously. When we don't, people die. How many more unnecessary deaths must result from a lack of respect for the sea?

• **No dumping.** Phuket is doing better regarding

litter. Some back streets are still makeshift dumps, but there isn't much to complain about on main roads. We're doing a better job – it's just a matter of civic pride.

• **Naked truth.** We need more trees planted to rehabilitate bare land. A century ago, Phuket was thick jungles, running streams and heavily wooded flatlands. Phuket has no water lens, so we need to reclaim as much watershed as possible. With crowded development, quality off-island incentive planners now offer environmental rehabilitation projects for their Phuket activities. That's great, but also sad. Perhaps a tree-planting festival would fit the bill.

• **Twofer.** Two-cycle engines are still the top choice for local seamen. Astounding, since four-cycle engines would save money. Just Google "speedboat tours" and ask yourself why Phuket is

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to save Phuket. Any takers?



A monkey eating a banana given to it by a tourist. This is not a file photo; it was taken January 3.

the world leader in this devastating activity.

• **Flotsam jettisoned.** There are now fewer plastic bags floating down from James Bond Island, so perhaps the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) actually reads this column. If so, thank you.

Sea canoe operators no longer throw their day's rubbish into the bay. However, the new small plastic drinking cups being used may be virtually invisible in

the water, but they still block a dolphin's throat same as the bigger bottles.

Styrofoam from shrimp farms and ice coolers remains an eyesore in famous Phang Nga Bay, and it simply is not biodegradable.

• **Man's best friends.** We now take street dogs to the pound, but how many people adopt a dog? Rehabilitated street dogs are loving animals with good health and colorful coats.

However, every day I'm saddened by the white belly sea eagle displayed in a front yard for sale. The police drive by it every day, but do nothing.

• **Whale of a time.** Dunderheads in Japan, Iceland and Norway refuse to accept whales as anything but raw meat. When will they stop whaling? Australia and New Zealand activists boycott Japanese goods, but I don't advocate boycotting smaller Iceland and Norway. It makes more

sense to visit and patronize anti-whaling establishments, giving these governments the finger wave directly from their own soil.

• **Catchall.** The use of drift nets and longlines throughout East Asia is destroying our seas in long swaths of death and destruction. If we don't stop these irresponsible "Fisheries Research" practices the world's pelagic fisheries will soon disappear.

• **Bamboozled.** Why do we build with concrete? Concrete is a heat sink demanding air conditioning. A modern, wooden Thai-style house does use electricity, but is fan-cooled and draws water from a well.

Then there are homes made from properly-cured bamboo that last at least 40 years, even longer with silicon solar panels and solar hot water heaters forming the roof.

• **It's a gas.** A friend recently nailed me for the emissions of my wife's 4X4 idling while I ran into the bakery. I agree. I hate RV's but she bought it for protection in Phuket's crazy traffic. But there's no excuse for leaving any engine running while shopping – or picking up punters. Let's make the very Thai practice "socially undesirable".

• **Planned action.** Thai travel agents complain, development has gone too far. Like so many destinations, we overdevelop without thinking. Responsible master planning is the answer.

Except for North Phuket, that means full-stop on development around the Gulf of Phuket.

Tourists don't come to see beautiful islands tainted by over-development. They move on to another of the world's 200 tropical destinations. We can't force their vacation decisions, but we can offer good planning balancing economics and natural beauty.

• **The Battle For Koh Yao.** The hotel plots are sold but all is not lost if Koh Yao is developed thoughtfully. But will you bet money on responsible, low impact development?

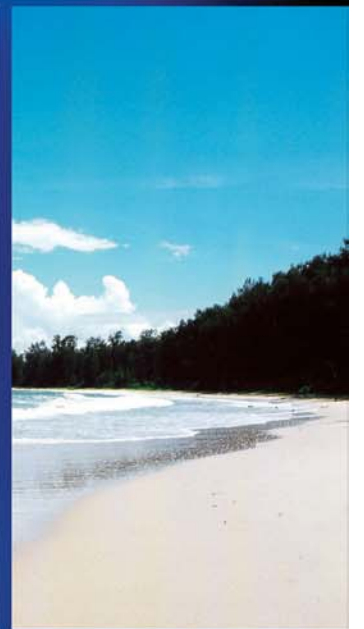
Koyao Island Resort can't be seen from the sea, blends with the local culture and doesn't use aircon, but the mainstream resorts built and under construction are typical mainstream on an island that isn't. The first mainstream hotel mishandled local relations in almost every way possible, setting a sad stage for future development. The second resort has typically large infrastructure.

Let's hope future developers do a better job of blending with the island's sleepy culture and beautiful topography.

What comes next? With thoughtful creativity, we can balance development with economic benefit. But with we must put more effort into realistic planning driven by reality, not corruption and short-term thinking.

Time is getting short. Phuket is still a beautiful place – let's keep it that way.

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KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER

Which Vista is which?

Windows Vista will launch on January 29, at a gala ceremony in New York. Boxes of Vista and Microsoft Office 2007 should be widely available worldwide shortly after.

My first Vista book, *Windows Vista All-In-One Desk Reference For Dummies*, hit the stands just before Christmas, and promptly sold out. The second printing will be on store shelves in North America and Europe by the time you read this.

Last week I wrote about the "Time Stopper" cracked version of Vista, which was widely available in Bangkok in mid-December. Microsoft has fixed that crack and no new pirate versions seem imminent – but you never know, eh? Chances are good that, if you want Vista, you'll have to pay for it.

Blech.

Unfortunately, Vista comes in eight different versions. Fortunately, choosing among the versions isn't as difficult as it first appears:

Windows Starter 2007 (Microsoft won't even call it "Vista"), like Windows XP Starter Edition, is available only in specific developing countries, where the price of Vista generally exceeds the country's average monthly gross income.

The concept of a "starter" edition of Windows originated in Thailand, and it's likely that we'll see one here. The starter edition will come only bundled with new computers – and it's so restrictive that I bet almost everyone who gets it will waste no time at all wiping it off their hard drives.

Vista Home Basic Edition is directed at first-time home computer users who are looking for a

bargain. In my books, I call this the "Bait and Switch Edition". Microsoft created it to keep the price of cut-rate consumer PCs deceptively low.

When you decide that you can't live with the bare bones – you don't even get the new "Aero Glass" interface, for heaven's sake – Home Basic gives you the, uh, opportunity to buy an upgrade to Home Premium – the version you should've bought in the first place.

All it takes is a credit card. Microsoft gives you a new key, and that's it: no new CD, no new box, nothing. The new key unlocks the Home Premium bits that are already on your hard drive. Leave it to Microsoft to find yet another way to milk that old cash cow.

Vista Home N matches Home Basic, except Windows Media Player has been removed. Microsoft only makes this version to comply with EU restrictions.

Vista Home Premium Edition has all the features home users want and need, as well as many features that appeal to folks with small businesses. It includes Windows Media Center, which was a separate product under Windows XP. Unless you're fabulously wealthy and don't mind opening a vein to buy Vista Ultimate, this is the version you want.

Vista Business Edition aims for small business users – those

who work for companies without computer departments – who have no interest in the fun side of PCs. Really. There's no Media Center, no DVD video burning and no Photo Gallery, among other restrictions.

Vista Business N includes everything in the Business Edition, except for Windows Media Player. I think Microsoft plans to sell two copies of this version, both to EU litigators.

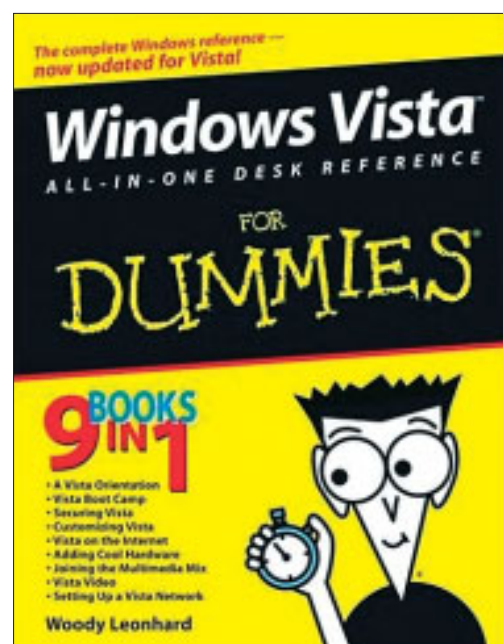
Vista Enterprise Edition has all of the extra bells and whistles needed to attach the PC to a large corporate network, plus enhanced security features. If you have a "domain" running Windows 2003 Server or slated to run Windows Longhorn Server

sometime later this year, you will want to get Vista Enterprise.

Vista Ultimate includes everything in both the Home Premium and Enterprise Editions, plus extra goodies that may change from time to time. So far, the only goodies that have been announced are Hold 'em

Poker (I don't make these names up...), a "really cool" utility for using movies as Windows wallpaper (I swear I don't make this stuff up) and a program that makes it possible to run BitLocker drive encryption on the hard drive you use to boot up.

Only you can decide if the



Woody's newest Vista book hit the stands in North America and Europe just before Christmas – and sold out immediately. A few copies are available in Asia, though none of them seem to have reached Phuket yet.

goodies are worth the added expense, but few people need them.

Is Vista worth the upgrade? For some people, yes, but in the vast majority of cases, I don't think so. By and large, Vista just isn't that big a deal.

I suggest you wait until you buy a new computer. When you get the new computer, make sure it has Vista Home Premium; don't fall for the Vista Bait and Switch version. Until you get a new computer, Windows XP works just fine.

D.O. KEEPS DOIN' IT

More praise for CAT's EV-DO, in this case from reader Leonsk: "I bought the adapter at your Sandwich Shoppe so I could plug the CAT card into my desktop computer. This morning I took the

computer – complete with monitor, keyboard and mouse – to the CAT office.

"At first, the girls behind the counter didn't know what to do; they'd never seen a PCMCIA adapter in a desktop. They were quite amazed when I popped the Sierra card into the adapter.

"Following the Sierra Wireless instructions, I inserted the installation CD and followed the Sierra script. When the driver install was complete, the wizard told me to insert the card. I pushed the card in, the monitoring program went to work and the rest was almost foolproof. No special assist required from CAT.

"I dropped my 16,000 baht on the table and headed for Loch Palm for the site tests. First was my current house, on the hillside just to the west of the golf course. Got a strong signal on first try. With a little repositioning of the PC to reorient the antenna it read all bars.

"Packed up my rig and drove to my new house on the hillside overlooking the northern end of the golf course. There are many low hills around there, but all turned out very, very fine. Max signal bar strength from the first, and no change when I twisted the unit around.

"So the unit is a keeper, even if it is officially obsolete and no longer supported by Sierra Wireless. The world refuses, Thailand uses.

"The 16,000-baht price tag is steep, but the technology is rock solid, and the 590-baht monthly charge is reasonable. In the next couple of years, 3G 'dee-oh' wireless broadband will be widely available in North America and Europe. In Phuket, we have it right now."

Woody Leonhard can be contacted at woody@khunwoody.com, or visit his web site at www.askwoody.com

The new key unlocks the Home Premium bits that are already on your hard drive. Leave it to Microsoft to find yet another way to milk that old cash cow.

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MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

In my column in the November 18, 2006 issue of the *Gazette*, I pointed out, as in previous articles, that it is safer to use the "cocktail" approach to invest in Asia, and investors in Asian equities using the "cocktail" approach found 2006 to be a very profitable year.

Singapore reached new record highs as did the Hong Kong and Chinese stock markets. India also pushed strongly, after a mid-year correction and broke new records. Japan disappointed, yet still made the highest closing in years.

However, the big question in Asian investment still remains: whether to include Japan in an Asia fund or exclude it. In reality, because of the size of the Japanese stock market, almost every fund that invests in the region allocates 40% or more of the assets to Japan.

The fund industry, when it comes to equities, is measured by indexes. Whether a fund manager follows the Morgan Stanley or Financial Times (FT) indexes, or those of any other group, has to be legally declared. The two measurements of any funds are how well it performed compared with its benchmark index and how well it performed against its peers.

The fund industry is competitive and aware that superior investment performance brings in more assets and profits. The reverse also holds true. For the investor the choice is simply to use a fund that includes or excludes

2006: A good year for an Asian 'cocktail' mix



Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister MR Pridiyathorn Devakula answers questions from the press after a meeting with foreign investors at Government House on January 10. MR Pridiyathorn said that most foreign companies would not be affected by draft legal amendments of foreign business laws. But foreign investors are staying away in droves.

— Photo EPA/RUNGROJ YONGRIT

Japan. Often, the same investment house will offer both options.

Long-established fund management group JF offers an Eastern Fund that excludes Japan, and a Pacific Securities Trust that includes Japan. Investors can hold both funds or use any combination of other investment houses.

The investment strategy is going to vary for each investor.

Many people choose not to invest in Asia, and a significant number are reluctant to enter markets anywhere.

The massive shakeout of most of the world's stock markets from 2000 to 2003 resulted in many investors viewing stock markets as risky assets in their portfolios.

The Thai stock market is a small player in terms of "market capitalization". Few foreign asset managers have large investments in Thailand; it is usually a small component in an Asian fund, maybe 1% to 2%. Therefore, regional and even global funds that are exposed to the Thai market

feel very little of its impact on their overall performance.

Thus, in the 1997 Asian financial crisis, broader ranging funds easily outperformed funds that targeted only Thailand. It is a small market and this adds to its volatility; thinly-traded markets react more strongly to intraday pressure than their larger brethren.

The technical foundation of the Thai stock market is attractive, Price Earning Ratios (PE) at just over eight are very cheap. However, at least in the short term, there are too many political and economic problems for this market to move ahead.

Capital controls are also having a strongly negative effect. For example, an island resident transferred about 900,000 baht from his overseas bank to invest in the Thai stock market. The transfer was initiated before the new year; the funds arrived in Thailand at the beginning of January.

The individual had the Bangkok head office of a large Thai bank call me to negotiate on his behalf. The bank's position was that the client should already have documentation in Thailand to substantiate his investment.

The individual intended to invest the capital via a "SET Index Tracker" fund run by another major Thai bank. The bombing in Bangkok caused the stock market to fall and the client wanted the market to settle before placing a buying order.

The head office of this Thai bank did not fully understand the issue. The staffer who called me had to continually refer to higher authority as she herself had no answers to my questions. Eventually, the bank maintained that 30% of the money was to be deposited with the Bank of Thailand in a zero-interest deposit for one year. The individual simply reversed the investment.

These recently enacted regulations are supposed to encourage stock market investment; the reality is that they are hurting it. Bloomberg quoted credit rating agency Standard & Poors on January 8, 2007: "Thailand's business conditions worsening".

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: 081-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th

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THE SHUTTLE HAS LANDED: Destination Air's Cessna 206 float plane, the smaller of the new airline's two aircraft.

Seaplane company set for take-off in Phuket

By Suganya Semacote

PHUKET: Destination Air will become the only operating seaplane company in Thailand when it launches an air shuttle service 12 times a day from Phuket International Airport on February 1.

The company, trading under the name Destination Air Shuttle, will begin flights to Ranong, the Phi Phi Islands, Krabi, Koh Lanta and Koh Mook (Trang), with flights departing Phuket Airport every two hours.

The company plans to expand services from October 2007 through to May 2008 to include the Similans, Koh Racha, Khao Lak and mainland Trang.

Amante C. Amante Jr, Director of Corporate Communications for parent company Destination Properties Co Ltd, told the *Gazette* that Destination Air Shuttle "will connect with the international airlines by providing door-to-door service to most major hotels and resorts on various islands when guests arrive on Phuket."

"It will reduce the travel time to these resort destinations from the usual half-day overland trip to less than 13 minutes to Phi Phi, 20 minutes to Krabi and 30 minutes to Koh Lanta."

"We are also working with hospital groups to provide emergency service in the future. With this cooperation, if a tourist has an accident around the island, doing diving or water activities, for example, we can immediately pick them up and take them to a hospital in Phuket."

Destination Air has invested US\$3 million (about 108 million baht) in the operation and bought two Cessna seaplanes from North America. "We plan to increase that to six planes within this year," Mr Amante said.

Passengers will board one

of Destination Air Shuttle's amphibian aircraft that take off from the runway and land in front of their island resort," he added.

"Destination Air's fleet includes Cessna 208 and 206 aircraft, which are rated as the safest light aircraft in the world and can accommodate four to eight passenger seats."

"Our aircraft are flown by experienced international foreign pilots," Mr Amante said.

Tickets will cost between

6,000 baht and 7,000 baht each way.

Destination Air will also offer day trips snorkeling off the Phi Phi Islands, with the package costing about 20,000 baht per person.

Destination Air will be the third company to launch a seaplane shuttle service in Phuket.

The most recent, Blue Water Air ceased operations about two years ago, though not because of the tsunami.

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ON THE MOVE

Wiwin Ong, from Indonesia, has been appointed Director of Sales and Marketing of Le Meridien Phuket Yacht Club. She graduated with a degree in economics majoring in management and has two post-graduate diplomas in people development and human resources management from Singapore Institute of Management. Ms Ong has worked at several five-star hotels & resorts, including the Sheraton Towers Singapore, the Four Seasons Hotel Singapore and Hotel Padma Bali.



Ekachai Charoenwiwatchai, from Bangkok, has been appointed Marketing Manager at Phuket Laser Center. An economics graduate from the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce in Bangkok, K. Ekachai has worked as Procurement Manager at Saval (Thailand) Co Ltd in Bangkok, as Project Coordinator at Federal Logistic Systems (Thailand) Co Ltd and as Marketing Manager of Xstream Co Ltd.



Phuket native **Wanwisa Na Takua-thoong** has been appointed Assistant Customer Relations Manager of Club Andaman Beach Resort. She has a master's degree from the Faculty of Political Science at Ramkhamhaeng University and a business management degree from Rangsit University in Bangkok. Before moving to Phuket, K. Wanwisa worked with Air Andaman as ground staff in Phuket and Bangkok for three years.



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Thailand's best boxers in 2006

By Scott Mallon

Last year was Pongsak-lek Wonjongkam's year. He racked up four title defenses, broke the record for consecutive title defenses by a flyweight and successfully made his 16th straight defense in November.

Former champion Yodsanon Sor Nanthachai stayed busy against decent opponents while Sirimongkol Singwancha fought just twice, both times against fighters who had little chance of winning.

Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym came up short against Vladimir Sidorenko in his bantamweight title fight and Veeraphol Sahaprom was stashed in nine by Japan's Hozumi Hasegawa in their rematch.

Wandee Singwancha won the WBC's light-flyweight interim title, then promptly lost it on the scales in his next fight.

Somsak Sithchatchawal made it to the top of the mountain when he defeated Mahyar Monshipour, only to be sent crashing three rounds later by Celestino Caballero.

Grizzled veteran Ratanachai Sor Vorapin came back from his November 2005 loss to Jhonny Gonzalez to win all four of his fights in 2006.

Another female prisoner failed in her bid to win a world title and in doing so had her life story chronicled in a movie, *Fight for Freedom*. She'll get another crack at a title early next year.

Thai Fighter of the Year: Wonjongkam (63-2, 31 KO's) hasn't lost for 10 years and is Thailand's lone world champion. No active Thai fighter comes close to besting Wonjongkam's accomplishments so he is my pick

for Thailand's fighter of the year.

Wonjongkam defeated South African fighter Monelisi Myekeni in November to make his 16th successful title defense in a row, and he plans to make four more before retiring.

He needs a marquee fight or two in order to be considered among the division's all-time greats and may get his chance late in 2007 if a rumored bout with Vic Darchinyan comes to fruition.

Thai Promoter of the Year: Virat Vajiratanawongse – how can you not give him the award? He's guided the career of Wonjongkam and has another flyweight, Panomroonglek Kratingdaenggym, waiting in the wings to take over the flyweight championship once Wonjongkam calls it quits.



Clockwise from above: Somsak Sithchatchawal, Manny Pacquiao and Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym.



Fight of the Year: Sithchatchawal vs. Monshipour – The bout wasn't high profile, but it was high energy and high drama: my run-away pick for fight of the year.

Gutsiest Performance: Sithchatchawal – in the fight of the year with Monshipour. Although hurt several times throughout the bout, he stayed upright long enough to finish Monshipour in the 10th round. What a fight!

Mismatch of the Year: Sirimongkol Singwancha (54-2, 32 KO's) vs. Lito Gonzaga (24-24-1, 8 KO's).

S Singwancha is a former WBC Bantamweight and Super Featherweight belt holder. Gonzaga had dropped 13 of his last 14 fights and had only fought once

in eight years. He did not belong in the ring with S Singwancha, period. The Games and Amusement Board had not issued a letter of clearance for Gonzaga allowing him to engage in the bout, yet the Thai promoter and matchmaker went ahead with the fight.

Gonzaga was disposed of in three rounds. When asked about the bout, one WBC official stated, "It was really just a sparring session. It wasn't even like Singwancha went at it with him."

Despite that, it was an official bout and not an exhibition. Need I say more?

Fortunately and to his credit, Singwancha didn't totally obliterate the Filipino, but it's unlikely this bout would have ever made it past a boxing commission in the US, the UK or the Philippines.

Upset of the Year: Lito Sisnorio (5-3-1, 2 KO's) TKO5 Fah-petchnoi Sor Chitpattana (13-1, 9 KO's).

Ranked fifth by the WBC at the time, undefeated flyweight and WBC Youth title holder Sor Chitpattana of Thailand met unranked Filipino Sisnorio in what was expected to be an easy win for the Thai.

Sisnorio came with guns blazing in round one and promptly dropped Sor Chitpattana. He put him down again in round two and for the third and final time in round five.

The fifth ranked-flyweight in the world (the WBC's that is) had just been destroyed.

Sor Chitpattana dropped to the WBC's 11th spot while Sisnorio moved to 21st. The Thai has yet to fight since losing the contest and is currently ranked eighth by the WBC.

Most Overrated: Kratingdaenggym (15-0, 8 KO's) and Prawet Singwancha (30-2-1, 18 KO's).

Kratingdaenggym is somehow rated first by the WBC. Out of his 15 wins, he's beaten three fighters with winning records. Three, count-em. He's beaten no one ranked in the top 20 but is somehow worthy of the WBC's number one spot. What would justify him being ranked first?

P Singwancha, rated number one in the lightweight division by the WBA, has somehow managed to wangle a shot at Juan Diaz's title in February. He is unranked by *Ring Magazine* and *Fight News* and is ranked 98th by BoxRec.

He holds victories over Dennis Laurente and Nonoy Gonzalez, which means very little unless you're on the WBA's rating committee. If you consider winning the PABA title deserving, then you can somehow justify his number one ranking.

Where Is He Now Award: Ratanachai Sor Vorapin – He's still fighting and has won his last four fights, all by KO, but is a ring-worn 30 years old. His clock is ticking and with 75 fights already on his ledger, 2007 is a make-or-break year.

Asian Fighter of the Year: Pacquiao: He's not Thai but Pacquiao may very well deserve the top pound-for-pound spot and is undoubtedly the top fighter in Asia.

He's got a host of sensational bouts ahead of him; Barerra, Marquez, Valero and he looks to provide fans at least a few more years before calling it quits.

Scott Mallon is a member of the Boxing Writer's Association of America, Ring Magazine's Ratings Advisory Panel and the International Boxing Research Organization. He lives in Bangkok with his wife and two children.

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NOT RESTING ON THEIR LAURELS: The Sharks will return from the UK to defend their Phuket title.

Sharks to defend Rugby Tens title

By Chris Husted

KARON: The Fifteen 7 Sharks from the UK have confirmed they will be back in Phuket to defend their title as Phuket International Rugby Tens champions at this year's event, to be held at Karon Municipal Stadium May 26 and 27.

Also confirmed to return are last year's runners-up Moorabin Rams, who this year will play under the name Melbourne Rams.

In addition, 14 other teams out of a possible maximum of 24 have confirmed or have reserved to play in the tourney, which is in its ninth year, in hope of lifting the Clive Williamson Memorial Trophy. They are: Phuket Vagabonds RFC and British Club Bangkok; The Bucks from Singapore; Dubai Hurricanes, Bahrain RFC and The Frogs Dubai (United Arab Emirates); Shanghai Hairy Crabs (China); the Pot Bellied Pigs and Old Bill (Hong Kong); Doha RFC (Qatar); Arabian Gulf Vets and Penang All Blues.

Two teams to watch out for this year, said tourney organizer Patrick Cotter, are Aussie Armed Services, which will comprise players from the Australian Army, Navy and Air Force squads, and Devon RFC.

"We will also be running the 'coffin dodgers' old boys' tens competition during the weekend. We have had a lot of interest in this as players get older and slower, so we may have to start proceeding with that competition on the Friday afternoon, depending on the number of teams," Cotter said.

Already signed up to take part are Phuket Viagrabonds, Magnificent Oldies Rugbeers from Malaysia, Bangkok Bangers, Ye Old Gulls from Aus-

tralia, Bahrain RFC, Arabian Gulf Vets and Doha Dogs.

Game format will be tens played under international rules, with referees again under the scrutiny of David Viccars and Matthew Oakley – both International Rugby Board referees.

Although the tourney is being touted as going ahead at the preferred pitch at Karon Stadium, Cotter admitted that the ground had yet to be finalized.

"The pitch at Karon Stadium is to be recovered, funded by Patong Rotary Club," he said. "But they're already getting quotes to turf the pitch, so it's looking promising that it will be Karon Stadium."

If Karon Stadium is not ready in time, the tourney will be played at the alternative venue at Sanaam Chai in Phuket City, he added.

Entry fee to either competition is 16,000 baht per team, of which 4,000 baht will go toward the Ronda Butler orphans scholarship fund, which is run in conjunction with the Asia Center Foundation.

"So far we have raised close to one million baht, so this year we want to push as hard as we can to raise more money for the kids," Cotter explained.

"To that end players and guests will be treated to a welcome party on the Friday evening as well as the main party on the Saturday evening, featuring the second Tour Virgin Beauty Pageant," Cotter said.

"Where we have had assurances that Sabine, who was last year's runner-up, will not let any shemale stand in her/his way to win this year's pageant," he added.

"We will be holding a fund-raising dinner for teams who are still in town on the Sunday evening,

with the aim of continuing the scholarship program, which is coming into its third year now," he said.

"We will be auctioning off rugby and sports paraphernalia during the evening, and we hope to have a surprise guest speaker to entertain," Cotter said, adding that more details about the social events will be available later.

He hinted that former British Lion Gareth Chilcott may well be the guest speaker at the dinner this year.

For more information email Patrick Cotter at phuketrugby@gmail.com or visit www.phuketvagabondsrfc.com

Cricket League returns

PHUKET: The Island Furniture Cricket League returns for its second season. Four local teams will play 12 round-robin matches to decide who is in the final.

Games are 11-a-side, 35 overs and will be played every Sunday during the season. Spectators and anyone interested in umpiring or scoring welcome.

The four teams will be Patong Cricket Club, The Cricket Club Phuket, Island Cricket Club and the Phuket Academicals.

For more details email Mark "Scarfy" Whetton at scarfy@loxinfo.co.th, call Tel: 086-1208346 or visit www.phuketcricket.com.

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

Queen Mary shakes things up

PATONG: With the first half of league play finished, Queen Mary jumped into first place from third with a 3-point win at Valhalla. In that match, a Danish showdown, Queen Mary closed five singles, two doubles and the beer leg on first available dart.

Helping Queen Mary into the top spot were former first-place team Coyote, who lost all three points on the road at defending champs Didi's, and Piccadilly, who lost a 5-4 match at home to a resurgent Offshore side.

Funky Monkey has closed, but its darts team will continue to play using Beach House as their home venue. They seemed to find their new digs much to their liking, beating Beach House 6-3 before losing the beer leg. Darren from Funky Monkey had the hot hand, making both 180 and 174, just to have some competition for the high score!

The thirsty team in the first

half of the league was Didi's, who took seven out of eight possible beer legs. They were followed by Valhalla and Queen Mary, with five and six beer legs respectively.

Teams are encouraged to send any match information they want to appear in the column to: darts@phuketgazette.net

January 9 results: Didi's* 7 Coyote Bar 2; Piccadilly* 4 Offshore 5; Valhalla 1 Queen Mary* 8; Beach House* 3 Funky Monkey 6 (* = Winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Queen Mary (17 pts.); 2. Piccadilly, Coyote Bar (16); 4. Didi's (15); 5. Dog's Bollocks (14); 6. Offshore (10); 7. Valhalla (8); 8. Beach House (7); 9. Funky Monkey (5).

January 23 matchups: Dog's Bollocks v Piccadilly; Beach House v Queen Mary; Didi's v Valhalla; Coyote Bar v Funky Monkey (home teams listed first).

Tessaban team scoop futsal contest

PHUKET: Tessaban Muang's team polished off 11 competitors during the annual Children's Day futsal competition at Saphan Hin January 13.

The under-12 competition began at 8:30 am at Saphan Hin gymnasium, with 12 teams playing games of 20 minutes apiece. The final match came down to Tessaban Muang versus Dragon Junior N, with Tessaban winning 1-0. The first place team earned 1,000 baht, while second place received 500.

The Chris Koppers team beat Mae Jo B for third place.



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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel

Kan Eang gets B20m makeover

CHALONG: Construction work underway since May last year at Kan Eang 1 restaurant in Chalong – one of the island's longest-serving seafood restaurants – is almost complete and is scheduled to reopen under the name Kan Eang @ Pier next month.

Wallee Pachantabutr, Director of Phuket Kan Eang said that the improvements are necessary to keep up with the growth of tourism in Phuket.

"We have been rebuilding the Kan Eang 1 restaurant since May last year. We have just extended the land lease for another 25 years, so we decided to beautify the restaurant as well," she said.

"The Pachantabutr family, led by my husband K. Chamnan, ran Kan Eang 1 restaurant for more than 30 years and Kan Eang 2 for about 25 years. Kan Eang means 'feel at ease' and we started out as a simple local Phuket restaurant beside Chalong Pier.

"We buy fish and other seafood from local fisherman and we sell freshly-prepared seafood dishes back to local people," she said.

All the old buildings on the 3½-rai plot have been demolished, and the 20-million-baht redevelopment will see the introduction of the Bay Bar, the K1 Kaffé coffee shop and a souvenir shop measuring nine meters by 12m called "SSS".

"The Bay Bar will have a terrace for up to 20 people to enjoy cocktails or other drinks and snacks on, and will be open from 11 am to 1 am. K1 Kaffé, will be open from 6:30 am to 1 am to serve tourists taking boats from the pier, or anyone else wanting a simple breakfast, lunch or din-



Each of the dining sala (above) will seat 40 people and the revamped Kan Eang @ Pier restaurant will have a capacity of 400 diners.

ner here," K. Wallee explained.

At the main entrance will be a sala displaying live fish, lobsters, shrimp and crabs from which guests can order their meals. Next to this will be another sala, this one displaying wine from Wine Connection in Chalong.

A third sala will feature displays about local Phuket food.

Yet another sala will be des-

igned as a music pavilion and will house a sound system and Thai musical instruments.

Next to the music pavilion will be four dining pavilions, each 4m by 10m, three enclosed by glass windows and one open air. Each of these will seat about 40 diners.

Another pavilion of similar dimensions will serve as another dining area.

The kitchen and toilets will be in their own separate buildings

"We invested a lot in building our new kitchen as we will have a seating capacity for up to

'We want to become a 'must restaurant to visit' for everyone who visits Phuket'
– Wallee Pachantabutr.

400 people per sitting," K. Wallee said.

"It has been a large-scale renovation to give our restaurant a whole new look. As Phuket people, we aim to keep local customers as well as attract Thai and foreign tourists.

"We want to become a 'must restaurant to visit' for ev-

eryone who visits Phuket," K. Wallee said.

We are also targeting incentive group customers and staff and wedding parties," she added.

The new restaurant design is by Habita. The landscape design is by PL Design, and the interior decoration is by Movida.

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Decor

by Nat cha Yuttaworawit

Kolorful rooms 4 kidz

Decorating a child's room is an ongoing task. It's important to do, but it can be tricky to get the right balance of size and maturity. Before long, it's time to move from baby bed with pink and white to a full-size bed with posters of Tata Young.

For a small child's room, safety, not color and style, should be the main concern. Paritchawan Kraiponrak, the Furniture Buyer-Product Manager at Courts Megastore, recommends, "When buying a bedroom set for children, parents should try to select something functional to match the personality of the child.

"Also, if they only have one child, they might want to buy a bedroom set, but if they have more than one child they should buy furniture sold by the piece.

"A set includes a bed, a wardrobe, a table or computer desk and a shelf. We also have bunk beds suitable for two children," she adds.

Bedroom sets at Courts range from 12,000 baht to 23,900 baht.

Matthias Ludecke, father of a six-year-old daughter, says, "When I buy furniture I focus on safety, and I make sure it doesn't have any harmful chemicals."

K. Paritchawan also says that it's important to consider the future when buying furniture for children.

"As the child grows older, parents should begin to choose more mature furniture that is not overly colorful. That way they



BEST OF BOTH WORLDS: Safety and long-term use are important considerations in choosing furniture for children's rooms, but that doesn't mean you can't brighten the room up with some vivid colors.

can use the same style until the child is at least 15 years old.

"Our bestselling furniture is in neutral colors, either brown or dark colors, because most parents want to be able to use the same furniture until the children are older.

Mr Ludecke adds, "It's also important that the cabinet and bed are not too big and not too small," so that it is easy for children to use and not dangerously oversized.

However, just because the

room features neutral colors doesn't mean it has to be dull, K. Paritchawan says.

"Our staff suggest that if customers want to buy dark furniture they should use a colorful cushion to help liven the atmosphere in the room, and that advice has received good feedback from customers.

"Sometimes parents don't know how to decorate their children's rooms to make their children happy, so we give suggestions," she adds.

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Idling among the alders

I'm all for the easy life. Some would even call me idle. Anything that involves physical effort is just a little too much. I've never quite understood why people would ever want to do more work than they needed to.

I have to admit that I'm a bit of a gadget man; anything to pander to my idle side and make life a little bit easier. Electric toothbrushes are superb – they even do a decent job when you come home from the pub a little the worse for wear.

I even came across a battery-operated, remote-control drink caddy recently. How much better can it get than a machine that brings your beer to you? The downside is that you have to be in a pool (it's inflatable, and only works on water), and someone else has to take the beer out of the fridge and put it in the caddy. Hopefully the second version will have wheels and a fridge-door-opening-and-take-beer-out-of-fridge attachment.

Casting my mind back to my childhood, I recall that eating an ice cream cone was often a sticky, messy affair. It was made far more sticky and messy if I didn't remember to turn the cone on time, and lick the other side, as it were. Tropical heat introduces equally perilous ice cream hazards, which is where the automated ice cream turner comes in. All you have to do is lick.

Sorry for sounding like one of those cheesy infomercials, but there's more. Those electric fly swatter things that look like cheap little tennis rackets are brilliant. Rather than having to expend hundreds of kilojoules of energy by wafting a daft little plastic swatter around trying to bring about the demise of one irritating mosquito, wave this thing in the air and just wait for it to come to you.

Why would you want to bother swatting at bugs when you can electrocute them? That "zap" noise is particularly satisfying, and you can put the saved energy to much more sensible use by lifting a beer to your mouth.

Then there's the body drier. Sopping towels and elbow cramps could be a thing of the past with the ceiling-mounted, remote-controlled body dryer – this has to be the future of unbridled idleness.

Some gadgets I don't understand, though. The Segway is a good example. It's basically a pair of wheels with a handle, which you stand on and it moves. I just don't get it. Am I supposed to believe that standing up, balancing and pushing a big handle is going to be easier than walking? I'd far rather get on a motorcycle; at least I can sit down while traveling from A to B.

A popular dining experience in Asia involves going to a restaurant, telling a waitress what raw ingredients take your fancy,



The alder we get, the better we were: The *baan chao* is a determined breeder.

then putting them all in a big pot in the middle and doing the job yourself. Why?

It's the same with gardening. There are those types around who like to make life as difficult for themselves as they possibly can. They choose the most fickle plants that require the most precise conditions and treatment.

Not me, given my relatively high score on the idleness chart. First, if it's an ugly plant, it's out. If it behaves like a grumpy old woman if it doesn't receive just the right amount of sympathy on demand then it's also a plant that won't be in a Bert garden.

The best plants for me pretty much look after themselves. About the one concession I will make is watering. At least that doesn't require any expenditure of energy beyond pointing the hose in the right direction once a day.

One of my favorite self-sufficient plants is the yellow alder, or *baan chao* in Thai. It's not the most spectacular plant in the world, but it really is perfect for

the idle gardener, as water is all it needs. Other than that it will pretty much look after itself.

Its dark green foliage sets off the bright yellow flowers, which are produced on a daily basis. The blooms are normally 5 to 6 centimeters across and the compact, woody shrub can reach up to about a meter tall.

It can do several jobs in the garden. It does very well in mass plantings, as a border or hedge, or as ground cover. The yellow alder can become a bit straggly and leggy if it isn't pruned fairly regularly, but unlike many other plants it will bloom without pruning anyway.

The yellow alder seems to grow best in full sun. Its ability to withstand high temperatures means that it's perfectly suited to Phuket island life. Even the soil doesn't really matter. It will put up with most soil types, from sand to loam and clay. About the

only request it will make is good drainage.

The yellow alder has got it all worked out. The bright yellow flowers only appear during the day, when the insects they attract (there's one in the picture) can do their job. There's no point in staying open at night, so they don't bother. By early evening you're unlikely to see a yellow alder with its flowers open – they're far more likely to have shriveled up to virtually nothing by that time of day.

According to the experts, the yellow alder is "propagated by seed, cuttings or division". Here in Thailand, you really don't need to bother with any of those methods. Just leave it. Do absolutely nothing apart from giving it plenty of water.

In no time at all you'll have a number of smaller seedlings appearing nearby. I had one of these in a pot, and no nearby pot was safe from its desire to reproduce. Initially I just thought that it was an area of the garden that was especially prone to weeds, until I missed one of them for a couple of weeks and it turned out to be a brand new yellow alder. In other parts of the world they require careful nurturing and tender care – here they reproduce like hyperactive rabbits. There's no stopping them.

To get started though, you'll need some initial plants. Go down to your local garden center and ask for a few *baan chao*. This is certainly not the most expensive plant in the world; presumably the price is an indication of how ludicrously easy they are to grow. Believe it or not, a 30cm tall specimen will set you back the grand total of 10 baht.

Gardening with the minimum of effort that costs next to nothing financially either; how much better can it get? Time for another beer. Now where's that remote control so I can summon up the electric beer trolley...

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?
Email Bloomin' Bert at: bert@bloominbert.com

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Home of the Week

Kata

This Kata property offers residents a relaxed lifestyle as well as ocean views with stunning sunsets. The two-level home is built on more than 800 square meters of hillside land with stone retaining walls that impress as well as support.

The property is accessed by a concrete road that leads to a two-vehicle parking space. The path under the main structure of the house leads to the garden and 40sqm swimming pool, which is surrounded by sandstone paving, palm trees and impressive panoramas.

Through the wooden doorway that is the main entrance to the home is the large living and dining area and adjoining Western-style kitchen.

Also on this level is the maid's room, laundry room and two bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms.

Downstairs is another bedroom with en-suite bathroom, while upstairs the main feature is a veranda running the width of the house which can be used for dining, hosting gatherings, as living space or just for relaxing.

The entire house has been decorated with local artworks and wooden design touches to create a Thai ambiance.

Four air conditioning units cool the whole house as ceiling fans spread the cool air. Most of the flooring throughout the house is either marble or hardwood.

Utilities include UBC TV, telephone line, broadband Inter-

Kata hillside sunsets



net connection, water heating and filtration, and three-phase electricity. The property is protected by a home security system.

This home is available freehold with Chanote title at 26 million baht.

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

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Property Gazette

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11-villa project, large communal pool, secluded area close to beautiful Nai Harn Beach. Starting from 8.3 million baht. Tel: 076-381490. Email: info@sea-property-international.com

RAWAI: 2 PLOTS OF 1 RAI

2 plots of 1 rai between Rawai and Chalong, quiet location, large coconut palms. 5 million a rai. Direct from owner. Tel: 089-874-8804. Email: rat_phuket@yahoo.co.uk

LUXURY FAMILY

House for sale in Chalong. 2 stories, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, secure quiet location, 2 kitchens, laundry room, full aircon, double garage, etc. Area: 292sqm. Teak curved staircase, spa, solar hot water, nice gardens, river views. 7.9 million baht. Chanote. Tel: 076-383193, 089-7245655. Please see our website at www.phukethouse4sale.com

SEAVIEW 2-BEDROOM

2-bedroom seaview houses with large swimming pool and European kitchen in the best area in Patong "Baan Suan Kamnan". 17.5 million baht. Tel: 086-2706454, +44778-9995522 (UK), 089-4727588. Email: djjudges@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE



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PRIME LAND ON PHUKET



On hill, very beautiful overlooking sea on east coast & west coast, and 2 golf courses (Blue Canyon & Mission Hill). 19 rai. Wholesale: 2.5 million baht a rai. Partial sale: 3 million baht a rai. Has Nor Sor 3 Gor and no obligation (price negotiable) Tel: 081-893-6355.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Patong. 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms. Contact for further information. Tel: 089-662-0804. Email: renoothailand@gmx.net

HOUSE FOR SALE

Tel: 087-2799500. For details, please see our website: www.baan-phuttharat-phuket.com

VILLA FOR SALE NEAR LAGUNA



Newly built. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Open-plan kitchen, living room. The villa is fully airconditioned and furnished. Built on 360 sqm. 176sqm living area, with a beautiful garden. The location is only 10 minutes to Bang Tao Beach and 5 minutes to Laguna. 7.8 million baht. Tel: 089-813-1447. Email: kwanphuket@hotmail.com

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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. Price: 8.5 million baht. Tel: 081-8928526.

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UNIQUE OFFER, KATHU

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SHOPHOUSE

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Property Gazette

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SHOPHOUSE IN

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1 RAI PLOT RAWAI

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1.02RAI : RAWAI

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Property Gazette

HOUSE IN KATHU

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MUST SELL, KAMALA

New house in Kamala. 4 bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms. Master bedroom has Jacuzzi. Quality build inside & out. Solid wood floors & ceilings. Western kitchen, pool. Detached 2-car garage with studio above. Interior over 300sqm, walled-in plot. 50% financing over sale 15.5 million baht. Rent (min 6 months) 90,000-120,000 baht a month. Contact Boomer. Tel: 086-2878966. Email: boomerkamala@hotmail.com

HALF RAI IN RAWAI

300 meters from Rawai Beach ideal for development. Tel: 087-8938147.

FURNISHED HOUSE

5 minutes to Laguna Phuket. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, UBC, ADSL, solar water heating, 3 aircons, living room, large hall area, pool 5 x 10, usage area 310sqm, land 1200sqm. Price: 13 million baht. Tel: 089-8738295, 086-594-8426. Email: tomasflet@hotmail.com

TWIN HOUSE 2.95M

New 2-story house in Bann Manee-kram. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. 44sq wah. Great value. Tel: 089-7292313.

RAWAI ECO-COOL THAI HOME



The open-air design of this award-winning home affords a true tropical lifestyle. Traditional Thai design and modern materials are combined to beat Phuket's tropical heat without aircon. A large, naturally cool patio surrounded by a pool and a cooling lotus/fish pond. Priced at only 9.9 million baht, this large 3-bedroom 3-bathroom, plus office area (240sqm) home sits on a 400sqm lot. Features: modern kitchen, designer bathrooms, hardwood floors. For more information contact Gary at Tel: 087-987062. Email: www.eco-coolthaihomes.com

SEAVIEW 2-BEDROOM

houses. With large swimming pool and European kitchen in the best area in Patong "Baan Suan Kamnan". 17.5 million baht. Tel: 086-2706454, + 44778-9995522 (UK), 089-4727588. Email: djudges@hotmail.com

BEACHFRONT LAND

295sqm Nor Sor 3 Gor. Has road between land and beach, located at Kevin Beach Ao Por. Price: 1.55 million baht. Tel: 081-1719705. Email: atetayap@yahoo.com

KOH YAO YAI



East coast, 8 beachfront and 5 oceanview plots available, already subdivided, Nor Sor 3 Gor land title deeds. From 2 to 6 million baht a rai. Tel: 076-381490. Email: info@sea-property-international.com

HOUSES FOR SALE

Or rent. 2 or 3 bathrooms and bedrooms. 5km from Heroines Monument toward Mission Hills Golf Course. Tel: 089-7298009. Email: clickphuket@gmail.com

13 RAI LAYAN BEACH

13 rai with great sea/sunset views. This plot is ideal for an apartment project. Land titles checked! Tel: 076-346346, 086-2726508. Fax: 076-346263. Email: info@phuketrealestate.com

LANTERN PROJECT

Near BIS. Must-see show house! 450sqm, water concept, 3 bedrooms, private lift and pool. SMEG kitchen, penthouse office with panoramic view. Completion: June 2007. Available for rent at: 70,000 baht a month. Please contact for more details. Tel: 081-8779-292. Fax: 081-8779292. Email: prakaisriroj@hotmail.com Please see our website at: www.gracegardensphuket.com

CEDAR SHINGLE ROOF, NAI HARN



Last house is for sale in a boutique development of 5 houses in Nai Harn. Beautiful roof of cedar shingles. Pool, 2 bedrooms, 3 toilets. Thai-Bali style and well-known architect with highest quality. Near beach and restaurants. Special price for last house: 8.5 million baht. Tel: 081-8447408. Email: viktoys@loxinfo.co.th Please see our website for more details: www.nchantra-property.com

LAND 1 RAI

At Kho Ta Node. 1-2-39.9 rai, Chanote, next to new high-end project & near Laguna properties. Road & electricity, suitable for private villa or small project. 5 million baht a rai. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-325-411, 081-3701189. Fax: 076-325413. Email: phudtheera@phuketrealty.net

SEAVIEW LAND

In Ao Por. Nor Sor 3 Gor. 380sqm. Price: 1.55 million baht. Tel: 081-1719705. Email: atetayap@yahoo.com

KAMALA 1 1/2 RAI

house. Near beach, great opportunity, 10 million baht. Tel: 076-292596, 086-2678477. Email: tourniechristian@hotmail.com

NICE PATONG CONDO

With pool. 60sqm, fully furnished. Please contact for more details. Tel: 081-7727-100, 081-5657427. Email: snonticha@hotmail.com

HOME IN KHOK KLOI

118sqm, 3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom with 904sqm garden, sandwash walkway & patios, with 2-car covered parking, deep well with water tank. 2.6 million baht. Tel: 081-7284821. Email: elevendigits@yahoo.com

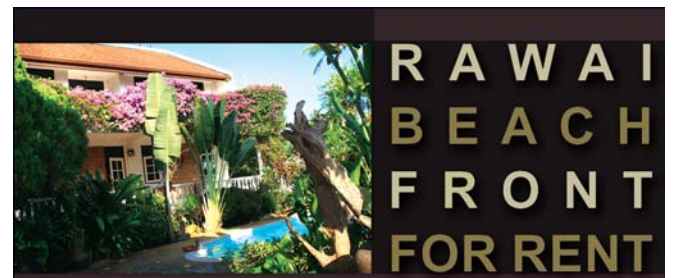
OFFICE BUILDING

Executive office building for sale. 102sq wah. Includes aircon, security system and private carport. 15 million baht. Tel: 076-282211, 081-958-0815. Fax: 076-283251. Email: moo@mintcard.net

PATONG HOME OFFICE

Or shop. Modern and luxurious design. 3 stories, 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms. 2 units available, each on 120sqm of land with 175sqm of living area. 300m from the sea. On Phra Barami Rd, between Rat-U-Thit Rd and the beach road. Freehold with Chanote. 18.5 million baht. Tel: 081-8936630.

Property For Rent



RAWAI BEACH FRONT FOR RENT

3 bedrooms,
furnished,
aircon 1 year.

Tel: 089-6499939



HOUSE FOR RENT 25,000/MONTH



For one-year contract rent, including furniture, 2 aircons and hot water. 5.9 million baht for sale (land and house) 80sq wah (320sqm), 2-story house with 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, one big store room and a large garden in a nice tranquil area. 10 minutes to Nai Harn or Rawai beach and 15 minutes to Phuket City. Please call for showing by owner. Tel: 084-9916654.

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT



3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms at Pa Khlok, just 700 meters from monument. Furnished, near international school. 15,000 baht a month. Tel: 084-8516115. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

ONE-BEDROOM

condominium. In Patong Tower with beautiful mountain views. Fully furnished, Cable TV, telephone etc. Available for long-term letting. Please contact for full details. Tel: 089-6519872. Email: oswald.spiess@aon.at

BUNGALOW, RAWAI

2 bedrooms, aircon, cable TV, ADSL. Quiet location. Please call for more information. Tel: 086-2790837.

BOAT LAGOON HOUSE

4 bedrooms ensuite with Jacuzzi, pool, garden, water views, across from Watermark. Full kitchen, very nice. 90,000 baht a month, 1-year lease. Call for more details. Tel: 084-6280290 (English), 085-9136578 (Thai).

LARGE HOUSE

For rent, Kathu. 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom furnished house for long-term rent. Telephone line, UBC, garden etc, close to golf course & international school. Located on quiet private road 25,000 baht a month. Tel: 076-323663, 089-8752532. Fax: 076-323663. Email: paulstrong23@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

Located in secure estate. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, dining room, living room, study, fenced garden, UBC, ADSL. For rent long term. 30,000 baht a month. Tel: 084-843-9579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

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Property Gazette

LAGUNA TOWNHOME FOR RENT



4-bedroom. 90,000 baht per month. Contact Amber. Tel: 089-2001681. Email: aabsxx88@truemail.co.th

4-BEDROOM VILLA

Rawai. Luxury villa. Large swimming pool, UBC, ADSL. Available Feb for long- and short-term rental. Tel: 086-2790837.

9 RAI FOR LEASE

Located in Kathu. 2 minutes from Central. Suitable for long-term investor. For more info email: leekuab@yahoo.com

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

Rent room. Daily or monthly 3,000 to 9,000 baht. Aircon, safe, ADSL, UBC. Tel: 084-3079909. Email: dyotachan@yahoo.com

FOR RENT

Boat Lagoon. Large, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, townhouse on Canal. 1 year min. Furnished. 33,000 baht. Tel: 086-2820567.

LAND IN PATONG

For long-term lease. 2.5 & 3.5 rai. 200 Pi Rd. Tel: 081-6424280 (No brokers).

HOUSE + BIG GARDEN

Fully furnished, 2 aircon bedrooms, hot shower, living room, kitchen, garage. 11,000 baht a month. Palai, Chalong. Tel: 081-8924311.

VILLA FOR RENT

Beautiful new 2-bedroom villa with private pool in walled garden. Close to Rawai and Nai Harn beaches. Fully furnished, aircon, UBC, pool and garden maintenance included. 35,000 baht a month. Tel: 081-9701716.

HOUSE FOR RENT

Located in secure estate. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, dining room, living room, study, fenced garden, UBC, ADSL. For rent long term. 30,000 baht a month. Tel: 084-843-9579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

CHALONG NEW HOME

For rent: 2-bedroom villa with swimming pool, aircon, UBC TV & telephone line. Tel: 089-6521473.

LAGUNA AREA

House with pool, spa, poolside bar, aircon, large garden, like resort. Lease: 39,000 baht a month. Tel: 089-5944067.

FOR RENT KATHU

2-story aircon restaurant with seating outside in busy area opposite Caltex Garage. Fully equipped with modern appliances. 1 year old. 300,000 baht + 12,000 baht per month for rent. Tel: 084-1935124.

BANG TAO

Bungalow. Fully furnished, 2 bedrooms (1 with aircon), hot shower and bath, phone. Quiet. Rent: 15,000 baht a month (4 month min). Utilities. Call Betty at Tel: 076-210312 or Khun Tee at Tel: 086-2786465.

BUNGALOW RAWAI

2 bedrooms, aircon, Cable TV, ADSL. Quiet location. Tel: 086-2790837.

KAMALA BEACH

Nice apartments or houses for long-term rental, furnished or unfurnished, 2 or 3 bedrooms. 20,000-25,000 baht a month. Tel: 084-3059606.

2 BEDROOM HOUSE

In Patong, sea view, 2 bathrooms, lounge + kitchen. For rent 4 Feb. Tel: 087-870-0434.

ONE-BEDROOM

Condominium. In Patong Tower with beautiful mountain views. Fully furnished, Cable TV, telephone etc. Available for long-term letting. Tel: 089-6519872. Email: oswald.spiess@aon.at

LONG-TERM RENT

Minimum 1 year, 1/2-rai complex in Kamala. Total 7 units, which consist of 2 x 2-bedroom apartments, 2 x 1-bedroom apartments, 3 studio rooms. Swimming pool, Jacuzzi, landscaped gardens with barbecue, etc. Private road, 5 mins from beach with amenities close by. Tel: 086-2733437. Email: kamalarob@yahoo.co.uk

HOUSE IN RAWAI

3-bedroom, 2-bathroom European-style house. Fully furnished in rural Rawai on 780sqm. Large master bedroom with ensuite, walk-in closet and aircon. Modern Western-style kitchen with granite tops and built-ins throughout. UBC & phone line. Big breezy veranda, carport and established garden. Chanote title. 8.3 million baht. Tel: 087-8919349. Email: phuket-house@hotmail.com

SURIN APARTMENT

Modern, well-furnished, 2-bedroom 100sqm apartment including: 42" Plasma TV, washing machine, SMEG ceramic hob, breakfast bar. Great views. Available long term for 30,000 baht a month. Tel: 085-8882022. Email: sleeves@slee.com For details, please see our website at: www.slee.com/photos/LersuangApartment

VILLAS FOR RENT



Ban Phrangthong Villa Estate, 4 bedrooms, fully furnished, pool, security, close to beaches. 80,000 baht a month, long term only. Chalong, direct beachfront villa, fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 70,000 baht a month, minimum 1-year contract. Tel: 076-381490. Email: info@sea-property-international.com

LONG-TERM RENT

Chalong. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, car park, furnished. Tel: 089-7288311.

HOUSE FOR RENT

Newly built, fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. 1km to Phuket & 7km to Patong Country Club. Available Feb 1 for 1 year rent. 27,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-090-4786. Email: malkham0614@yahoo.com

BUNGALOW

For long-term rent in Karon Beach. 2 bedrooms, living room, kitchen, bathroom, terrace, 2 airconditioners. Fully ready and fully furnished! Quiet location near the beach. Monthly rent: 7,000 baht. Take-over of furniture is wanted; let's speak about the price! Ready to move in on 1st March 2007. Tel: 087-0066263. Email: peterkaron@gmx.de

BANG TAO

Bungalows for rent at 15,000 baht a month + utilities (6 months minimum) or 22,000 baht a month, or 7,000 baht a week. 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom with hot water, telephone line. Car park, gated, quiet, 3km from Surin. Call K. Tee at Tel: 086-2786465 or Betty at Tel: 076-270377.

LOVELY, 4 BEDROOMS CHALONG

4 bathrooms, spa, aircon, pool, garden, UBC. 800sqm. Quiet area. 65,000 baht a month. Call for more details. Tel: 086-2817605.

KATA PENTHOUSE

And rooms to rent near beach. Swimming pool, cable, TV, fridge, etc. Clean views. 7,000 baht a month. 400 baht a day. Tel: 086-276-6597.

BUILDING SHOP

For rent, 1,000sqm, fully furnished & car parking area. Located near Heroines Monument. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-471-1585. Email: theveewan@yahoo.com

PATONG TOWER

Sea view. 1-bedroom apartment, 100 meters from beach. UBC, pool, parking. Tel: 084-8473304.

NEW KATHU HOUSE

For rent or sale. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, furnished, garden, aircon. Near Lotus, Central and Patong beach. For rent at 25,000 baht a month. For sale at 4.5 million baht. Please call Khun Yupa for more details. Tel: 081-735-6684, 084-1871939.

SURIN BAY AREA

Big garden. Long-term lease now available on 3-bedroom house with aircon, 2 toilets, outdoor kitchen, opening up to 1.2 rai of screen-fenced garden. Unfurnished or partially furnished as required. Good for pets, kids & privacy. Large covered outdoor area. Garden maintenance provided. 27,500 baht a month. Tel: 086-9410410, 086-269-2020. For more details and photo please see website: www.phuket_house.here. fastmail.fm/Surin_Beach/Surin%20House%20-%20Details.doc

RENT, BOAT LAGOON

Large, 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom townhouse on Canal at Boat Lagoon. 1 year minimum. Furnished. 33,000 baht a month. Tel: 086-2820567.

SHOPHOUSE BLOCK

5 terraced houses for rent on the bypass road. 35,000 baht a month. Please call K. Vachira for more information. Tel: 081-3269495.

HOUSE FOR RENT

Beautifully-furnished, 2-bedroom house in Kathu. Aircon, UBC, telephone line and kitchen. Long term only. Tel: 081-3673106.

LOFT-STYLE FLATS

Kathu. 4 large, quiet, central flats. 6-15,000 baht a month long term. Tel: 081-968430.

AMAZING SEA VIEWS

Large villa in Cape Yamu set in delightful gardens surrounded by rolling hills and countryside. Superb views out to Phang Nga Islands. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, lounge, dining and snooker room, maid's room, kitchen, study, sauna and swimming pool, furnished, UBC, Internet. 80,000 baht a month. Tel: 086-2796283.

RENT A HOUSE

Beautiful house, views of elephants and nature, big terrace, 130sqm basement, garage, full aircon, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. European style. Long-term rent: 30,000 baht a month. Come look. Tel: 081-2711082. Email: happyjo@procom.in.th

DETACHED HOUSE

For rent. In gated estate close to British International School. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, well maintained with nice garden. 35,000 baht a month. Available Jan 07. Call Piyanute at Tel: 081-8926991 or David at Tel: 081-8500911.

LAKEVIEW APT/LOFT

Office. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 floors, near Lotus. Furnished, cable, phone, aircon. 20,000 baht a month. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-8928208.

FOR RENT OR SALE

In condotel Sky Inn. 2 single rooms/1 double room. Tel: 089-8756803. Email: hebo41@gmail.com

3-BEDROOM HOME

Chao Fa Rd, 207sq wah, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, nice living room, good kitchen, cool garden, parking for 3 cars. Fully furnished. For rent at 40,000 baht a month or for sale at 6.7 million baht. Please contact for further details. Tel: 081-5978315. Email: phuket8@hotmail.com

SEAVIEW PATONG

Luxury 2-bedroom apartment. European kitchen, aircon, UBC, ADSL, large swimming pool. Available for long- or short-term rental. Tel: 086-2790837.

HOUSE FOR RENT

Land & Houses Park Chalong. New house, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, furnished, aircon, free access to pool, fitness 400 Gym. Tel: 081-7884655.

BUNGALOW

For rent. Fully furnished. 2 bedrooms with aircon. Nice, quiet & safe Chalong area. 22,000 baht a month. Tel: 081-6064279.

BUNGALOW

1 bedroom bungalow in front of Chalong Bay beach for rent. Has terrace, kitchen, aircon, car park 15m from house. Fully furnished. 12,000 baht a month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 084-658-4437, 089-7297978. Email: property1998@hotmail.com

HOUSES FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 1 pool, ADSL, UBC, aircon, Rawai, available from February. 40,000 baht a month. 2 bedrooms, ADSL, aircon, in Kata. 17,000 baht a month. Tel: 081-7371687, 086-9544155.

NEW HOUSE

Phaklong, Thalang. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, furnished kitchen. 13,500 baht a month. Palm Garden 56/6. Tel: 081-6063525.


DETACHED HOUSE

For rent or sale. Just 7 minutes from international school. Fully-furnished house with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and ready to move in. Rental price: 20,000 baht a month. Selling price: 2.45 million baht (negotiable). Please call for more details. Tel: 081-5399269.

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OCCASION IN THAILAND

Sealine T52 Motor yacht, 1999. Outstanding, maintained in a nearly like-new condition, 16 meters, 2 x 600hp Man engines, 15 KW Kohler generator, tropical air conditioning, ice-maker, flatscreen TV, Dolby surround system, 3 cabins, Thai tax paid/registered. Owner wants to buy a bigger yacht. 22.8 million baht, must be seen! Please call for more information. Tel: 081-8629710 (English, German, Thai).

SPORTFISHING CHARTER BOAT

40ft charter boat, 2 x 185hp inboards, powerful generator, boatyard re-fit completed, TV, DVD, galley, 4 cabins, sleeps 8 comfortably, power shower, electric toilet, large fishing deck, fly bridge fitted with seating, GPS, fish finder, VHF. Sensible offers considered. Please contact for more information. Tel: 085-7143656. Email: crew@cruise Phuket.com For further details, please see our website at: www.cruise Phuket.com

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SAILING BOAT
Maxi 95 MD11, GPS autopilot and more. In very good condition. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-0815947.

Boats & Marine

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Deep V speedboat. Choose your engines, paint scheme, cushion colors, etc., and complete this first product from AMT for your customized use. 33 feet, sexy, fast boat, capable of 50+ knots. For fishing, fun, tours, island transfers, marine ambulance, diving, etc. New high-tech construction, composite-built in Phuket with 5-year warranty and full factory support. Contact Steve at Tel: 089-2878667. Email: stephenday@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at: www.amtechnik.com Factory visits welcome.

DAY CRUISER 36FT

Steppa 36ft boat for sale. 2 x 200 hp Yamaha engines with new gear boxes. 28 knots. Registered for 17 pax. Price: 1.25 million baht ono. Tel: 081-5848502. Email: info@philkade.com

PEGASUS 38

38ft - 10.5ft Beam fiberglass tour/dive boat. Up to 25 passengers plus crew. Center console/deck house models. 2X200 hp = 34 knots. Tel: 076-527129, 086-5950978.

YACHT FOR SALE



Fairways Freedom 25. Very seaworthy, just finished full refit including new rigging, sails, engine, etc. She's a lovely little ship, reasonably priced. Tel: 081-9252155. Email: no1paul@gmail.com

AVON DINGY

English, 4-meter, wooden floor, 5hp Johnson outboard. 150,000 baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 089-8733952.

63' POWER CRUISER

Complete new refit, built for luxury, 4 double cabins, Twin Cummins engines, full galley, water maker and huge top deck. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-939-0176. Email: beaver@tstf.net

DINGHY NEEDED

Need a dinghy in good condition with outboard engine at a fair price. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-2739279. Email: info@avaloncreations.com

FFAST BOAT

Donzi Z 33 deep V fast boat is for sale 2 x 200hp Yamaha 40+ knots. Reg for 11 + 2 pax. Recent rebuild (2005) like new. Call Phil for more details and test drive. Price: 3.2 million baht or decent offer. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-8934186.

SAILING DINGHY

Last chance to buy before export to Australia in new year. As new condition. Buy at 60% of cost to buy + ship. Call Phil at Tel: 081-3970905, or Robert at Tel: 081-539-9560.

TANKER VESSEL

For sale. 1.5 million baht with Thai registration. Width 4.9m, length 24m. 150,000 liters. Please call Surin for more information. Tel: 081-891-2333. Email: surin123@csloxinfo.com

ELECTRICIAN

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Semi-rigid catamaran with 8hp, 4-stroke Honda. 65,000 baht. Ready for fun! Please call for more information. Tel: 086-9724805.

Island Job Mart



Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club, managed by Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, a member of leading hotel of the world, located on Nai Harn Beach at the southern tip of Phuket Island, is now looking for competent individuals and active professionals to join our team in the position of:

Based in Phuket

- RESORT HOSTS (FRONT OFFICE DEPARTMENT).
- WAITERS/WAITRESSES
- RESERVATION MANAGER.

Based in Bangkok

- SALES EXECUTIVE



Applicants must be self-motivated, pro-active, and confident with excellent interpersonal skills.

A high degree of proficiency in English is necessary.

Candidates with the above requirement and qualifications are invited to send a resume with a recent photograph to:

Director of Human Resources
Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club
Nai Harn Beach, Phuket 83130
Tel: (076) 380200, Fax: (076) 289212
Email: annop.petcharoen@lemeridien.com



Operations

Qualifications:

- Minimum 1 year experience in travel agent or transportation company
- Good knowledge of written and spoken English
- Computer literate, Microsoft Office knowledge
- Good personality
- Willingness to work in shift duty
- Ability to negotiate with lead and assign free lance tour guides
- Enjoy working with administrative duties such as preparing lists, etc.
- Experience to communicate and to work with foreign nationals

Interested applicants shall send their curriculum vitae indicating their work experience, a recent photograph and the present and expected salary to:

Khun Thomas Berlin
C/O Phuket Grand Tropicana Hotel
48 Ruam Jal road, Patong beach
A.Kathu Phuket 83150. **LTU Asia Tours Co.Ltd.**
Fax: 076-344573
Tel: 076-345808-9. 344403



ACCOUNTANT/

Sales. A little English experience, knowledge of Phuket and flexibility preferred. Good salary, great future. Send CV by email or contact. Tel: 081-5376866. Email: info@phuketlanddeals.com

RESERVATION STAFF

Diethelm Travel is looking for highly-qualified and service-minded operations staff. Good command of English and computer skills are required, experience in tourism is a plus. Tel: 076-209163.



Tropical Landscaping International is an international standard, full service landscaping company that has recently opened a new office in Phuket, Thailand and are looking for intelligent, energetic and qualified staff to join our exciting and growing team. All applicants should be Thai National, speak and understand English and Thai, and be suitably qualified and experienced for the position applied for. The positions available are:

Landscape Architect
Assistant Manager
Engineer
Horticulturalist
CAD Operator
Gardener

TUI will offer a competitive salary, bonuses, and career progression for suitable applicants. Please provide full resume, including evidence of qualifications, references, expected salary and experience in confidence to info@tropical-landscaping.com or contact Chanya Chumanut, Office Manager - Phuket on 076 325 003 for further information.

Professional Property Management Solutions



Phuket's premier property management company is looking for suitable, qualified candidates for the following positions:

Operations supervisor 1 position

PIPS offers an attractive salary & service charge with good career development opportunities.

- Experience in hotel or property management and good computer skills an advantage.
- Good command of written and spoken English essential.

Please send your application with a recent photo to Human Resources Dept. Phuket Island Property Services Co., LTD (PIPS)
452 Saeonthon Road Chalongay, Thalang, Phuket 83110 Tel : 076 270 750 Fax : 076 270 751
Email : hr@pipsp Phuket.com

OFFICE STAFF

For new pool company near Laguna. Receptionist, admin & secretary. Good English & computer skills. Pool designer and estimator. Visio & Autocad helpful, good English. Contact Gary for more information. Tel: 085-7952552. Email: warton.gary@gmail.com

DRIVER/HANDYMAN WANTED

Personal driver wanted. Need to work as a handyman and gardener too. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-384025, 081-8261330. Fax: 076-293151. Email: jcjbreed@yahoo.com

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

- Minimum 3 years' experience
- CPD certified
- Good English an advantage
Please contact:
Personnel Manager
Asian Wind Co Ltd
Tel: 076-381338,
081-8957908.

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY IN SALES

Attractive, very experienced sales lady required in Phuket. Should be 25-30 years old and have excellent presentation skills. Must have good command of spoken and written English. Candidates with their own car will have an advantage. Please contact for more information.

Tel: 087-8974541.

Fax: 076-221598.

Email:

gary@team-euro-asia.com

PORTUGUESE TEACHER NEEDED

Can you teach Portuguese to GCSE Standard? If so contact Gary for more information. Tel: 085-7952552. Email: warton.gary@gmail.com

HOTEL STAFF

Urgently in need of 1 receptionist with good English skills and 1 housekeeper for 27-room hotel in Patong. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-8921621.

Island Job Mart



Codex Asia Co. Ltd is a branch of the Codex Holding Group based in Switzerland. We have branches in Switzerland, France, Germany and Thailand (Phuket).

We are looking for motivated IT- Analyst -Programmers in order to develop and maintain our main product: the ERP-Software proAlpha.

We offer an interesting and modern job for programmers with Thai nationality and a good command of English.

Any knowledge in the programming language PROGRESS 4GL or in ERP-Business is a big advantage.

We offer an attractive salary for motivated employees as well as many advantages such as trips to Europe and other destinations.

Must: good command of English (German or French is a plus).

Must: qualified IT-Analyst-Programmer (minimum bachelor's or master's degree).

Knowledge of ERP Software Programming or ERP-Business is an advantage.

Knowledge of operating systems like Windows, Unix, Aix or Linux.

Motivated, hard working and team friendly.

Geographic flexibility (able to travel abroad).

Working place is in Phuket.

Send your resume/CV with your salary expectations to franco@lemonsurf.com.

LUXURY VILLA PROJECT – WEST COAST PHUKET

High-end, mid-size villa development with panoramic views of the Phuket west coast is seeking a qualified professional to join the hands-on team.

M & E ENGINEER

Looking after all aspects of M & E design/installations as well as infrastructure related areas of the mid-size villa project. Geared to achieve the required high standards of installations

Highly-motivated personality/leader, directly reporting to Project Director

- Degree in Engineering or related field
- At least 5 years' experience in similar project
- Good command of English language/able to communicate with expat project director
- Able to achieve high-level quality control
- Able to coordinate in-house construction team/outside contractors
- Possible profit share/performance bonus
- Thai National, male

Attractive remuneration package will be offered to the right candidate
Send your resume with recent photo to email: joe@thevillasoverlookinglayan.com



Amanresort's flagship property recently voted Asia's Best Leisure Hotel by Condé Nastle is currently recruiting highly motivated and service-minded individuals for permanent and casual positions. A host of excellent benefits are guaranteed including a generous service charge.

FULL TIME POSITIONS

RESTAURANT SUPERVISOR

You must have the ability to provide the finest guest dining experience in each of our F&B outlets whilst leading a highly motivated and guest-service focused team. You are a strong, outgoing and young individual with a passion for service. You must have:

- Fluency in English and effective communication skills
- Impeccable presentation and an exceptional eye for detail
- 4 years experience within the F&B department of a 5-star international hotel
- At least 2 years fine dining restaurant leadership experience
- Previous experience in an Italian restaurant, with good wine and bar knowledge

BAR SUPERVISOR

You must be an enthusiastic and proactive individual who enjoys being front of house and talking to guests whilst being professional and passionate about bar service. Effectively in charge of any of the bar outlets assigned to you, you must take ownership of all operational aspects under your responsibility and lead a highly motivated and guest-service focused team. You must have:

- Fluency in English and effective communication skills
- Impeccable presentation and an exceptional eye for detail
- 4 years experience within the F&B department of a 5-star international hotel
- At least 2 years beverage outlet leadership experience
- Good wine knowledge and a sound knowledge of cocktails

FURTHER FULL TIME POSITIONS:

- SECRETARY TO CHIEF FINANCIAL CONTROLLER
- SECURITY PERSONNEL
- FRONT CASHIER
- FURNITURE CRAFTSMAN
- PURCHASING DRIVER
- VILLA HOUSEKEEPER
- CRUISE HOSTESS
- WAITER/WAITRESS
- LIMOUSINE DISPATCHER

TEMPORARY POSITIONS

We are also looking for the following temporary positions and would offer the right candidates an opportunity to become fully employed in the future. Experienced preferred, but a willingness to learn with good enthusiasm and customer service oriented mind and good English language skills essential.

- BEACH BOYS
- WAITER/WAITRESS
- COOK HELPER
- ROOM BOY

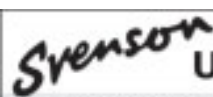
Please send your resumé with a recent photo, or apply in person to

amanpuri

po box 196 • pansea beach • phuket 83000 • thailand
phone 076 324 333 • fax 076 324 100/200
email pn@amanpuri.th.com

THAI OPTICIAN

Preferably woman, experience is a plus and must speak English. Tel: 089-874-6170.



URGENTLY REQUIRED

An international company specializing in sales of unique and exclusive products/services has vacancies for

FEMALE SALES CONSULTANT <PHUKET BRANCH>
EARN 40,000.00 - 80,000.00 BAHT PER MONTH

Qualifications:

- 25-35 years of age, Thai nationality
- Must speak English
- Self-motivated, self-confident and able to sell
- Experience with cosmetic products or other types of personal selling could be useful but is not necessary
- Selected candidates will receive high earnings and full, comprehensive training

TELESALES / RECEPTIONIST

EARN 15,000.00 - 20,000.00 BAHT PER MONTH

Qualifications:

- Thai females
- Able to speak, read and write English
- Able to use computer (MS Office program)
- Work experience in sales/telesales
- Good personality and service-minded
- Interpersonal skills and enthusiastic

Please submit application in English only, with curriculum vitae and recent photo, to:

Svenson Hair Center Thasia Ltd.
Central Festival Phuket, 2 RD Floor Room No. 209 A
74-75 Moo 5, Chalermpakiat Rama 9 Rd, T. Vichit, A. Muang,
Phuket 83000 Tel: 076-249657-60, 089-4492500.



URGENTLY WANTED

Purchasing Staff 2 positions

- Male/Female age 22-30 years old.
- Degree in any field.
- High responsibility and active.
- Good command of English and computers.
- Experience in interiors decorating and furniture is an advantage.

Estimating Staff 1 position

- Male/Female age 25 years and older.
- Knowledge of lay out drawing design.
- Able to interpret drawing/lay out

Experience in any field is an advantage.
Contact **SM Interiors and Furniture Co.,Ltd.**

35 Moo 3, Thepkasattri Rd.,
T.Thepkasattri, A.Thalang, Phuket 83110
Tel: 076-311146, 275278, 081-9279328. Fax: 076-275279.

Email: admin@s-m-interior.com



MODERN CUISINE
CONTEMPORARY DESIGN
COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

Service is not a job – it's a way of life.

It's a professional commitment to satisfy individual needs. It's a commitment to make someone smile, to create the ultimate experience, to surpass expectations. If you have this commitment, this is your opportunity.

Watermark is currently offering opportunities in these positions:

- Restaurant Supervisor
- Restaurant Hostess / Guest Relations
- Waiter / Waitress
- Bartender
- Cook Helper
- Yacht Hostess
- Event Catering Supervisor

Thai nationals only.
Excellent English skills, great personality, inspired attitude & service-mind required in all positions.

watermark bar restaurant
Phuket Boat Lagoon
22/1 Thepkasattri Rd, Muang, Phuket
For interview send resumé to tong@watermarkphuket.com
Tel: 076-239078, 081-8941657

PHUKET FREE PLUS
Marketing Co Ltd. We are looking for sales and marketing staff. Thai nationals. All customers will be Thai but some English will help. Experience preferred but not necessary as full training will be given. Top salary and excellent commission. Tel: 076-245971.

SITE MANAGERS
PCS Phuket urgently requires experience in the janitorial field. Preferred applicants are aged 30 years or up, computer literate and have basic English-speaking skills and a drivers license. Tel: 076-224658-9. Fax: 076-254774. Email: scott@pcs.co.th

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles for Sale

DARK BROWN

Bedroom set. Queen size with mattress, wardrobe and dressing table. 11,000 baht. Tel: 081-9701070.

TAYLOR MADE IRONS

Complete set graphite R5 men's irons, flex R, with Titleist bag + putter, like new. New: 41,000. Sell for: 25,000 baht. Tel: 081-9701070.

WINDSURF BOARD

Windsurf beginner board, sail rig new, still packed. 50% price. Kawasaki KSR 110, Mongoose mountain bike, aluminium. Near new. Tel: 087-8888244.

LATEX MATTRESS

King-size Lady Americana full body comfort for sale. 25,000 baht. Tel: 081-9701070.

CLEARANCE SALE

Mountain bike Trek 3900, large, 28 gears. 6,000 baht. Large, Leeco fireproof safe. 8,000 baht. Swiss weight bench. 8,000 baht. Vintage Honda motorbike original working 90 cc. Collectors item with book. Contact K. Tony. Tel: 089-5934193.

MOVING SALE

Contents of Internet Cafe, computers, desks, routers, modems, fans, lights, discs, signs, drawers, filing cabinets, plus restaurant tree-stump style furniture, beautiful. Call Tony. Tel: 089-5934193.

KITE SURFING

15m Globberider Curl. Kite Airush board, control bar, seat harness. 34,000 baht. Call K. Aidan. Tel: 087-8984125.

SONY 27" TV TRINIT

DRC complete with stand. Cost: 39,000 baht. Used only 3 months. Bargain: 16,000 baht. Pioneer DV266 DVD player included. Tel: 081-8947595.

Bulletins

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Mission Hospital
Phuket City
Wed and Sun 7 pm
Bangkok Phuket Hospital
Phuket City
Fri 7 pm
Patong Hospital Patong
Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun
at 7 pm and Fri at 8 pm
Chalong Health
Clinic-near Chalong Circle
Tues 1 pm
For Phuket info (English)
call 081-9564031,
081-8912895
Scandinavian speaking Group
Wat Karon School-Karon
Tue and Sat 7 pm
Tel 081-2732053 (Nor)
087-2795636 (Nor)
086-7458910 (Swe)

For info on other Thailand
AA meetings inquire
at Tel: 02-2318300
(for Thai language press 3)
www.aathailand.org or
email info@aathailand.org

Business Opportunities

PATONG BEACH

For rent prawn fishing business, 3-year contract or more. 900,000 baht + 18,000 baht per month. Includes all inventory, 3 staff rooms, 1 small 2-room apartment with bathroom + aircon. Good profit.

Call Michel.
Tel: 085-7962790.

MASSAGE + BEAUTY

Kata beach, 3 + 3-year lease. Fully equipped. For sale: 1.5 million baht. Tel: 089-471 7629. Website: www.phuket-beautymassage.com

SHOPHOUSE

For sale. 2 1/2 stories, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Near Kaneang 1 Chalong Bay. Tel: 089-4736886.

BAR FOR SALE

Karon. Fully-equipped bar for sale in Karon. Call for details. Tel: 089-5879551

BAR FOR SALE

Soi Gonzo Bangla Rd. Priced for quick sale. Call Tel: 085-7826492, 085-7571301

BAR/RESTAURANT

Popular business on Nanai Rd. Good quality equipment less than 1 year old. Live-in, 3-story building. Urgent sale. Offers over 500,000 baht. Tel: 084-8478469. Email: ptpbar@yahoo.com.au

RESTAURANT KATA

Restaurant in Kata for sale. 60 seats, quiet location, cheap rent, 30-year contract possible. Please contact. Tel: 086-1203660. Email: chilligarden@hotmail.com

TWIN BANGLA BARS

Rare opportunity to lease twin bars (Angels & Swingers) on Bangla. Seats 50, fully-equipped, ready to run. Prime location next to Seduction Disco. Offers over 1.6 million baht. Call Danny Tel: 084-8379068 or Sakorn Tel: 089-9546433.

BUSINESS COMPLEX

For sale. Includes two restaurants, beauty salon, Thai massage and accommodation. Fully stocked in best Chalong location. Low lease, well-established. Price for everything: only 2.68 million baht. Tel: 089-5934193. Email: nydudley@eznet.co.nz

FOR SALE

Guesthouse and restaurant. Located opposite the main entrance to Royal Paradise Hotel. 6 guest rooms with shower, aircon, TV. Luxury, beautiful restaurant with kitchen, high standard. 14 million baht. Tel: 081-8956587. Email: rudolfoan2@hotmail.com

SHOPHOUSE FOR SALE



Between Patong and Phuket City. Only minutes from Central Mall. 2 shophouses, 3 floors, 10m x 18m. 6 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, granite floor. Very reasonable price. Call Tel: 089-9662994 (English), 081-5974835 (Thai). Email: nengrich@gmail.com

KAMALA

Restaurant & bar. Famous for pizza & Tex-Mex. 40 seats, air conditioning, equipment, stock and furniture. For sale at 500,000 baht + rent 6,000 baht a month. Contact for more details. Tel: 086-287-8966. Email: boomerkamala@hotmail.com

HAVE AN INCOME

Regardless. Earn a living regardless of tourism and other people. Learn online option trading with a private tutor, and trade the world's biggest financial markets safely and profitably from home, with a small account. Zero experience required. 100% serious. Limited places. Detailed proposal available. Tel: 081-7373958. Email: info@optionwvok.com

CHALONG RAWAI RD

Established restaurant for sale. 395,000 baht. Rent 8,000 baht/month. With 2-bedroom house + 1,320sqm, more than 100 banana trees. Please contact. Tel: 089-6467176, 089-1662804. Email: asoke_chatterjee@yahoo.com

BAR FOR SALE

Popular and successful. Amigos bar on Soi Seadragon for sale. Pool table, darts, own sound system. Price negotiable dependant on length of lease required. Tel: 087-8838721.

300,000 BAHT

Reward. If you send us a property buyer. Just call for more information. Give name, telephone from you and buyer. Easy money! Contact. Tel: 085-7838062. Email: docucolums@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT

For sale. In the heart of Patong, all furniture and materials with company, low-rent 3 + 3-year lease. Reasonably priced at 1.9 million baht. Tel: 084-8500375. Email: wilhelmdeutsch@gmx.at

TSBA

Selling Going Concerns

Guesthouse/
Restaurant Patong
Great Revenues
Excellent lease terms

If you want to buy
or sell a business

Call Kevin 084-7300190.
Email: kevin@tsba.info
www.tsba.info

PIRATE SHIP



We have the 35m pirate ship Hispaniola from the film Treasure Island cast in Krabi area 8 months ago. The ship needs extensive repairs, since there were some explosions in the last scene. We need to sell urgently, all offers are welcome. If you are interested for this chance of a lifetime, please contact Nathalie. Tel: 085-1111155, 081-666-6622. Email: alexanderkbh@gmail.com

BUSINESSES WANTED

For our busy website. Call Tony. Tel: 089-5934193. Email: tonydudley@eznet.co.nz

VERY POPULAR B&B

Rated "Best in town" by Lonely Planet. Teak & redwood, 2-story house with 12 rooms. Granite & marble floors, baths & kitchen. Center of Phang Nga. Busy all year. Only 9.9 million baht. Tel: 081-0882179.

REGGAE BAR KOH PHI PHI

Unique opportunity to take over this famous and profitable PP business. The bar sits on 1,100sqm of leased land with 12 + 10 years remaining. For sale at 49.5 million baht, including all equipment, stock and experienced staff. The owners are retiring after 12 successful years. Email for more info. Email: reggae_bar@hotmail.com

BAR FOR SALE

Patong Nanai Rd. Contract left: 1 year 10 months. 36sqm, have everything, pool table, UBC, TV, etc. 500,000 baht offer. Tel: 084-8483657.

BEER BAR

1.6 million in central Bangla location. Call Kevin at TSBA Tel: 084-7300190.

GO GO BAR

Bangla Rd. Restaurant and guesthouse has become available in Patong. Call Kevin at TSBA Tel: 084-7300190.

OFFICE FOR SALE



Fully-furnished office. 5m x 12m located in Chermg Talay area in a good location close to main road, opposite the bank. Nice office furniture, aircon, high-speed Internet and garden area, ready to move in. Price: 450,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-5399269.

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.

Business Products & Services

House & building construction. Renovation, Repairing, Maintenance.

REPAIR MAINTENANCE
roofing, terrace, floors, walls, tiles, ceiling, bathroom, tub, toilet (surface tank), odors, bathroom, kitchen and all pipe systems (water drain)

WE MAKE YOUR HOUSE BEAUTIFUL
Painting-wall paper furniture-stonework

ALL WORK GUARANTEED FOR 3 YEARS

70/105 Soi 8/3, Mooban Phuket Villa 3 Chao Fa Rd, T. Wichit, Muang, Phuket 83000

email: info@phukethousedoctor.com
www.phukethousedoctor.com
www.phuketindex.com/housedoctor

TEFL LANGUAGE

School. International sales marketing seminar by Graeme Rumble to improve sales. Techniques and new ideas in selling. March 26, limited seats. TEFL teacher training book now for Feb 04. Tel: 076-219241. Email: TEFL@loxinfo.co.th

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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, 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. Please contact for further information. Tel: 076-345-277. Email: info@siam-legal.com

www.siam-legal.com

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VISA RUN TO ANDAMAN CLUB
(Only EVE)
1,500 BAHT

RENEW VISA FROM PENANG
4,900 BAHT

CALL... EVE

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Tout, Trader & Trumpet

PHEN PET visa run

RANONG VISA RUN

Leaves everyday. Big and spacious air-con bus. Only 1500 baht!!! Everything incl. With Personal DVD Player for just 100 baht extra!!!

PENANG VISA TRIP

Weekly 3-day trip to Penang departs every Sunday night. Air-con bus, excellent hotel, food and snacks incl. Only 4800 baht!!!

ENGLISH STAFF: 083-1057-398 or 085-7855-389

VISA RUN PENANG

MALAYSIA 4,800 BAHT

- Leaves every Sunday night
- Return Tuesday night
- 48 hours return
- Price based on twin sharing
- Including all transport/stay hotel continental
- Swimming pool/ hotel breakfast/ hotel lunch on departure food on route
- Special discount with this advery small size
- NO FRILLS transport & Oriental hotel only 3,950 baht

Tel: 085-7954768 AGENTS WELCOME

Penang Visa Run 4,900 baht

Non-immigrant B and O visas (90-day stay, multiple entry) 60-day tourist visas (1, 2 or 3 entries)

4,900 baht - includes hotel, food and drink (NOT INCL VISA FEE)

Travel by 9-seat VIP minivan - movies, music, etc. Departs from Tesco-Lotus on Sundays, 11:30 pm

Tel/Fax: 076-263475, 076-264476
Mobile: 081-892 9960

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

JEAB'S JUMPING CASTLES

8 models.

For children's parties.

Tel: 081-8939742.

www.

phuketjumpingcastles.com

PARTY OR WEDDING

Kois bar has 2 bars/restaurants in Kamala and can provide an excellent location for your function's buffet for 20+. From 2,000 baht. Tel: 087-9037933 Eng/Thai.

TITLE SEARCH

Protect your investment. Check the land title before you buy. We offer full legal services including purchase agreement, lease and land registration. Free consultation. Tel: 076-345277. Website at: www.siam-legal.com/land

BEST VISA & ACCOUNTING

Prices in Thailand! With guarantee! Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-0808557. Email: info@no1visa.com

Miscellaneous for Sale

INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION OF FOREIGN DRIVERS LICENSE

- ◀ 5,000 baht, valid up to 10 years
- ◀ 6,000 baht, valid up to 20 years
- ◀ 100% legal
- ◀ Sole agent in Thailand Internationally recognized & accredited.

Address: Baan Suam Place, 38/3 Moo 5, Soi Bang Yai, Phuket.
Tel: 084-0068736 Fax: 076-209058.
Email: iaa@intllicense.com
www.intllicense.com

ALLAMANDA LAGUNA

One night's accommodation worth 17,000 baht. Unwanted prize. Bargain at 5,000 baht. Please call Tel: 081-8947595.

Musical Instruments

KEYBOARD TEACHER

Needed Saturdays and Sundays for two hours each day to teach two children, ages 10 and 12. Location: Laguna Homes, Cherng Talay. Tel: 081-7191705. Email: john@phuketgazette.net

Personal Services

ENERGY MEDICINE

Success when all else fails. Allergy, asthma, migraine and more. Money back guarantee. Please contact for more details. Email: bioenergymed@gmail.com

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. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-7971497. Email: churee77@hotmail.com

MASSAGE

In your home or hotel. For men by a man - only. Please contact for more details. Tel: 089-2228206.

THAI LESSONS

I am a Thai teacher. If you want to learn Thai or your friends want to learn English, I can teach privately at your place. Please call for more information. Tel: 084-9925882.

TEACHING GERMAN

Reasonable price at your time convenience. Please contact for more details. Tel: 084-1849828.

WE WILL TEACH YOU

English, guaranteed! 5 lessons for the price of 4, will travel. Private/group lessons, 3 qualified ESL teachers. Please contact for more details. Tel: 084-9584255.

Personal Services Wanted

TEACHER REQUIRED

Japanese teacher needed for private lessons. Please contact for information. Email: josethai@mac.com

Personals

BACKGAMMON

Retired businessman looking for backgammon players on Phuket Island. Tel: 076-386-113, 081-5778443.

FARANG GUITARIST

and singer looking for someone to play with. Call Kevin. Tel: 084-7300190.

LOOKING FOR GIRL

33-year-old Italian man now in Phuket seeks pretty Thai girl for companionship and travel to London, UK, for a few months. Email: maxc@london.com

Pets

AMERICAN PITBULL

TKC registration, 4 generation pedigree. 3 males, 2 females. Call Steve. Tel: 086-1206934.

ENGLISH BULLDOG

Female English bulldog for sale. We have beautiful AKC English bulldog companions. Home-raised, vet examined, shots and de-wormings current to age. Health guarantee. Shipping and delivery available. Tel: 415-415775303 (Switzerland). Email: petbreed11@yahoo.com

1st December, 2006

Public Apology

Clearance of Public Land at Bang Tao Beach

Dear All,

For all of our wrongdoing and defamatory actions in circulating wholly unfounded and incorrect information in a series of emails regarding the clearance of public land at Bang Tao Beach, Phuket, we write to express our sincere apologies.

We especially apologize to The Palm Beach Club, GST International Co Ltd and a Swiss investor for spreading false and defamatory rumors and remarks regarding their role in the beach clearance.

The information we obtained regarding the role of the The Palm Beach Club, GST International Co Ltd and a Swiss investor and the beach clearance in general has been proved to be wrong, and the way we communicated such incorrect information to the public was defamatory to The Palm Beach Club, GST International Co Ltd and a Swiss investor.

Again we sincerely apologize to the management of the Palm Beach Club, GST International Co Ltd and a Swiss investor for all our wrongdoing and defamatory actions in spreading false rumors and remarks about their company and their project at Bang Tao Beach.

Axel Schuh and Renu Khrekaeo

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Saloon Cars

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VIP 1,800. Farang owned. Bought for 890,000 baht new in July 2004. 22,000km, gold color, MP3, leather interior. 480,000 baht or best offer. Contact for more details. Tel: 076-379681, 089-8540277. Email: dxjav@loxinfo.co.th

AUDI A6 2.4 1997
2 owners from new, very good condition. Dark blue, gray leather, full options. Price: 395,000 baht. Tel: 081-0874743.

1967 VW BEETLE 1300
Black/white two tone, CD, aircon, black glass, nice condition. Much admired. 165,000 baht to a good home. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-2670102. Email: paul@reefframmer.com

2005 HONDA CITY ZX
Sport package, chrome wheels, 27,000km, excellent condition. 500,000 baht. Tel: 076-360943, 084-8519795. Email: phuketproperties@gmail.com

SPORT MAZDA ASTINA
Sport Mazda Astina F323, Silver, year 1995, 1800cc. Registered in your name & fully insured. Payment options: (1) cash 215,000 baht; (2) down payment of 110,000 baht and 6,250 baht a month for remaining 19 months. Must see to appreciate. Tel: 087-3809066. Email for photos and more details. Email: phuketislander@yahoo.com

JAZZ COOL II
190,000km, used for 6 months. Excellent condition, full insurance. Contact for more details. Tel: 087-3829407.

CRV + VIOS
Honda CRV, 2003, red, 27,000km. Asking: 700,000 baht. Toyota Vios 2003, auto gold, 52,000km. Asking 400,000 baht. Contact for more information. Tel: 089-4744704. Fax: 076-284198. Email: p_eamso@hotmail.com

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For sale, Nissan Cefiro 1992. In mint condition. 150,000 baht. Power steering and windows. Leather seats. If interested, please contact me on my cellphone. Cheers! Tel: 076-215829, 089-7764200.

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TOYOTA COROLLA

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BMW 530i. 6,000km, like new inside and out. Excellent condition, have always used car cover. Has had 3 oil changes. Price: 2.7 million baht or best offer. Call for more details. Tel: 076-280709, 085-7950779.

BLUE TOYOTA ALTIS

1.8l, top line. 57,000km, year 2003, original farang owner. 575,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-2698492.

SAAB 900 4-DOOR

195,000 baht. Model '93. Nice condition, 5 speed, aircon, 140,000km. Foreign owned for three years, very reliable. Best offer! Contact for more details. Tel: 077-826355, 087-0403007. Email: tomcox100@hotmail.com

TOYOTA VIOS TURBO

TRD limited edition. 143hp, black, full options, 40,000 km, 09/04 Toyota warranty til 09/07. Paid: 830,000 baht. Sell: 580,000 baht. Tel: 084-0603477.

TOYOTA AVANZA

End of 2004, auto, full options, 62,000km. 445,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 084-8411438. Email: happyone@ji-net.com

NEW YARIS LIMITED

Top spec auto airbags. Down 290,000 baht and 36 x 12,500 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-0918908.

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1975 Coupe. 1,800cc, 5-speed manual, original parts, good condition. 125,000 baht. Tel: 076-345018, 081-903-9862. Email: yourplace_06@yahoo.com

MERCEDES 280SE

LPG GAS! 2jz, automatic, full options, perfect condition. 215,000 baht. Tel: 086-9488139. Email: jefdejong@gmail.com

TOYOTA CAMRY

2003 special edition. 30,000km only, mint condition, every extra, garaged. 950,000 baht. Tel: 081-5975091.

OPEL ASTRA

Hatchback. GL 5-door, auto, 1.6i, year 1995, green, good condition. 120,000 baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-8920618.

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30 DTL automatic best model. New Price: 850,000 baht. Now need to sell fast: 615,000 baht. 13,000km. Like new Kawasaki Zephyr 1100, excellent condition, sell 150,000 baht. New shocks, tires. Have to see it! Tel: 084-8798243.

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NISSAN NV 1600 CC

2 seats, custom-made tarp. 2 new tires, taxed & insured, recently serviced. Excellent condition. 130,000 baht. Call for more information. Tel: 089-6489694.

TOYOTA HILUX

X-tra Cab, 1997 model, very good condition, 2.8l engine, 155,000km. 150,000 baht ono. Leaving Thailand so must sell urgently. Contact for more information. Tel: 076-288500, 087-8957810. Email: t_cosens@yahoo.com

NISSAN NV

With cab. 5-speed manual gears, 90,000 miles, year 2000. 180,000 baht. Tel: 086-9270293. Email: mikejnorth@hotmail.com

FORD RANGER 2002

60,000km, carryboy, chrome, big stereo. First hand, good condition. Farang owned. 370,000 baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 081-8954112.

NEW VIGO HILUX



D4D, 1 month old, 2,000km. Reason for sale: no longer needed. 530,000 baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 076-323214-5, 081-0803414.

4 x 4s

JEEP WILLY RENEGADE



For sale. Jeep Willy, totally renovated and modified 1 year ago. White mother-of-pearl color. White interior. Servo steering. Price: 350,000 baht or best offer. Need to sell urgently. Call Alexander. Tel: 081-6666622.

ISUZU D MAX, LS



4X4, 4-door, Jan 04, ABS, airbags, wide alloy wheels, MP3. Only: 620,000 baht. Contact for more details. Tel: 089-9662994. Email: nengrich@gmail.com

TOYOTA VIGO 3.0G 4X4

Black, 4-door, 18 months old, only 12,000km. Also has first-class insurance. A1 condition: 700,000 baht. Call for more details. Tel: 089-7292846.

MAZDA TRIBUTE 3.0 V6



2004, full options in top condition. White + two tone. Only 45,000km. Full insurance. Price 815,000 baht ono. Please contact. Tel: 087-2709093, 081-9562406. Email: s_oranut@hotmail.com

TOYOTA VIGO 4X4

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JEEP TOYOTA 2600 CC

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2002 FORD RANGER XLT 4X4

4-door, turbo, farang owned, only 19,600km, with carryboy, silver, immaculate condition, looks and smells like new. 490,000 baht. Contact for more details. Tel: 077-248188, 086-268-9460. Email: sateebonsamui@yahoo.com



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2003, black color, ABS, airbags, leather seats, MP3 player. 715,000 baht. Tel: 089-8192313. Email: peterc_33@yahoo.com

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HONDA CRV 34,000KM

Black metallic. 800,000 baht. Woman owner, first-hand. Call for more details. Tel: 087-8822462.

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: bjarneagaardhansen@hotmail.com

MITSUBISHI 4X4

Mega cab. 1999, 2-door, 5-speed, aircon, foreign-owned, very nice condition, never used for work, 100,000km, CD. 375,000 baht. Tel: 077-826355, 087-0403007. Fax: 077-813145. Email: tomcox100@hotmail.com

TOYOTA FORTUNER

2005. 3.0D for trade for auto gear or for sale. Tel: 089-0219504, 086-2791602.

CHEROKEE FOR SALE

Jeep Cherokee, 4l, auto, cream leather seats. Lady-owned, good condition. Maintenance by Mercedes service. For quick sale: only 320,000 baht. Tel: 081-3430777. Email: montha-phuket@yahoo.com

TIGER SPORT CRUISER

2002 LTD. Good condition, blue, one owner, 110,000km, full service history, many extras, 4-door, 4X4, leather interior. 550,000 baht ono. Contact for more details. Tel: 081-7817250. Email: harvey-nolanhn@hotmail.com

NASTY ISUZU

2-year-old D-max loaded, 31,000km. 6-disc stereo, hard black cover. This is a strong & beautiful truck. Must see. Please contact for more information. Tel: 084-5078966.

HONDA CRV

Aug 2002. 75,000km. Silver, auto, 1 owner, full options. 650,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-8736533.

TOYOTA SPORT RIDER



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KIA 20 SPORTAGE FOR SALE

For quick sale, KIA 20 Sportage 4WD, 137,000 km, good condition, year 1996. Price: 285,000 baht. Tel: 081-0868044. Email: salg@zarazin.com

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HARLEY DAVIDSON



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For sale. Honda VLX 400. New engine, perfect condition with book. 150,000 baht. Tel: 083-3908639.

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Top condition. Ups/down fork, 98 HP, green book. 115,000 baht. Call for more information. Tel: 089-6487547. Email: Damianlivesey@gmx.net

YAMAHA TENERE 750

1995, green, 22,000km, with book, perfect condition, 200,000 baht. Tel: 089-9715664.

HONDA CHOPPER

Phantom 200cc with only 950km. 3 months old, used occasionally. 68,000 baht (new: 90,000 baht). Tel: 086-5948543.

YAMAHA 400CC CHOP

Bills for 60,000 baht. VGC complete engine, paint. 85,000 baht. K. Tom. Tel: 087-1789273.

BMW F650 GS 1997

Black, 16,000km with book, perfect condition. 230,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-9715664.

KAWASAKI BOSS 175

2006 with only 600km, excellent condition. 65,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-9715664.

KAWASAKI KSR 2006

110cc with only 900km, excellent condition. 48,000 baht. Tel: 089-9715664.

HONDA MAGNA 1998

250cc, silver, 21,600km, perfect condition. 140,000 baht. Tel: 089-9715664.

HONDA CBR 1,100XX

2002 model, black, Phuket plate, like new, only 200km. 295,000 baht. Tel: 081-5376465, 081-8924077. Email: Franks@divesupply.com

HONDA WAVE 100CC

20,000km, 2 years old, very good condition, regularly serviced, black color. 16,000 baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 087-1789273.

CHOPPER FOR SALE

Yamaha Virago 750, nice. Modified. 100,000 baht. Contact for more details. Tel: 087-1466622.

SUZUKI BEST 110

1 lady owner, year 2000, electric start, serviced at Suzuki. 15,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-2689123. Email: jamescawood@hotmail.com

Vans

VIP MINIBUS

Toyota commuter, 2002, grade A, 97,000km. Price: 790,000 baht or best offer. Tel: 076-388256, 089-5941540.

Rentals

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Auto, CD, aircon, fully insured. Camry also available. Tel: 076-282781, 081-1965212.

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New Jazz for rent. Short or long term. Please contact for more information. Tel: 084-8516121, 087-3829407.

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And taxi service. Toyota Wish, Camry, Vios, Yaris and Honda Jazz for rent. Short term or long term. Minibus on tour, taxi service. Call for more details. Tel: 087-2646808, 083-1743880.

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Honda 90 baht day. Yamaha Mio for rent: 2,900 baht a month. Honda: 2,300 baht a month. Contact for more details. Tel: 076-288542, 086-6837162. Email: somthawin_pw@hotmail.com

CAR FOR RENT

9,500 baht. Daihatsu Mira, good condition, easy to drive and economical. For rent, 9,500 baht a month. Tel: 081-5371050.

NOUVO & MIO & CAR

For rent or sale. Nouvo 1 year old: 40,000 baht or 4,800 baht a month. Mio 7 months old: 35,000 baht or 4,500 baht a month. New car: 17,000 baht a month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-5885692.

BP RENTALS

Suzuki Caribians for 10,000 baht a month. Discount for long-term rental or limited mileage. Full insurance. Call for more information. Tel: 089-4727304.

SUZUKI CARIBIANS

For rent with full insurance. 600 baht per day. 3,500 per week. 11,500 a month. Call Kois Bar Car Rent, Kamala. Tel: 087-9037933.

MITSUBISHI CEDIA

2003. 1.6L, auto, dark blue, good condition. Available for long-term lease with 1st-class insurance for 15,000 baht a month. Contact for more information. Tel: 076-239820, 081-7373720. Fax: 076-239828. Email: chaiyaphong@dewaphuket.com

TOYOTA VIGO PICKUP

For rent. 3l turbo/intercooler, fully insured, long-term rent only. 15,000 baht a month. Call for more details. Tel: 076-355488. Email: agogniat@loxinfo.co.th

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and Grand Cherokee. Please call K. Puk with any information. Tel: 081-6774545.

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