**Tsunami drill ‘hit and miss’**

By Gazette Staff

PHUKET: Andaman Wave 007, the first regional testing of the 79 National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) tsunami warning towers along the Andaman Coast, was conducted on July 25, starting at 9:45 am, with mixed results in Phuket.

While impressive evacuation and emergency response drills were being staged for the media on the beach at the foot of Soi Bangla in Patong, residents in other risk areas — including much of Patong — complained that the sirens and recorded voice warnings were too quiet, with one sirens not making any noise at all.

The evacuation at Soi Bangla was reminiscent of the April 2005 evacuation drill, with Navy helicopters swooping into position within minutes of the siren sounding to stage offshore rescue maneuvers. Meanwhile, officers of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation and other agencies were on hand to assist the elderly and disabled in the evacuation.

The “disabled” participating in the exercise were actually able-bodied volunteers pretending to suffer from a variety of physical impairments, including one “blind man” with a walking stick and a motorcycle-accident victim covered in fake blood, feigning unconsciousness.

Ambulances were on stand-by from the outset to rush people away, based on a theoretical tsunami generated by an underwater explosion near the Nicobar Islands.

However, in Kalim, less than two kilometers to the north of Patong, the only signs of activity were at Ban Kalim School, where some 350 students and staff ran to the third floor of the school from the courtyard under a minute.

Other residents in the area disregarded the Kalim siren, including guests at the Sunset Beach Hotel, atop which Patong’s northernmost warning tower is sited.

Along most of the Patong Beach shoreline and Kalim, people said they could hear the sirens well enough but could not clearly make out the voice-recorded warnings.

In central Patong, people more than a few hundred meters back from the beach said they heard nothing at all, as the sounds were drowned out by the noise of passing traffic, strong offshore winds and construction projects.

Speaking from Nonthaburi, NDWC Director Dr Smith Dhar-namasroja said he was satisfied with the performance of the 79 towers, but displeased by the failure of local authorities in many areas to organize the evacuation drills.

At Baan Ao Por, only about 50 local people took part in evacuation drills, while even fewer took part in Chalong and Kamala.

Told that the warning tower at Baan Ao Yon on Phuket’s east coast had failed to sound, Dr Smith said that it was among 20 towers in the region that were installed by local authorities, not the NDWC.

"The new incinerator will take about two years to construct," she said.

Phuket produces 500 tons of garbage a day — twice as much as the island’s sole incinerator can handle — and it is estimated that by 2009 Phuket will request a 939-million-baht budget in October from the Ministry of Interior.

Fifty-five million baht will be allotted to increase the efficiency of Phuket’s landfill sites to deal with excess waste, should the budget be granted.

The remaining 884 million baht, if approved, will be used to build the island’s long-awaited second incinerator and improve the amount of garbage the current incinerator can handle, said Mayor Somjai.

“The new incinerator will take about two years to construct,” she said.

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHUKET: Top Phuket officials met the Deputy-General of the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP) Montip Siriattana Tabuagoon on July 27 to discuss possible solutions to Phuket’s escalating garbage problems — including a budget to build a second incinerator.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit and representatives from all 12 Tambon Administration Organizations (OrBorTor) and six municipalities attended the meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall where Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansassuk announced that Phuket will request a 939-million-baht budget in October from the Ministry of Interior.

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Chinese artists to perform at PSU

PHUKET: The Confucius Institute at the Phuket campus of the Prince of Songkla University (PSU) will be showcasing Chinese music and dance on August 14 with free performances of traditional Chinese musical instruments, such as the erhu and guzheng.

Thirty-five teachers and students from Guangxi Normal University in Guilin, Guangxi province, will perform at the Luang Anuphas Phuket-kam Auditorium at the PSU Phuket campus from 8 pm.

The Confucius Institute, a collaboration between the PSU and Shanghai University, was established in November 2006 with support from Hanban, China’s National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language. The aim of the institute is to facilitate cross-cultural exchange between Thailand and China.

For more information, contact Napporn Songkla (Tel: 089-8888415; Email: cip@phuket.psu.ac.th) or visit www.confucius.phuket.psu.ac.th

Governor calls for Phuket mobile CCTV

PHUKET: At the Provincial Security Committee Meeting at the Katina Hotel, formerly the S.T. Hotel, on July 26, Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit called for the local police to look into setting up a "mobile CCTV" unit to roam Phuket’s streets.

“I have seen this new technology on TV. It is used in England, where they use a mobile CCTV unit that drives everywhere and uses a wireless connection to link to the monitors in the control room,” Gov Niran told the committee.

“It would be good if we could also use this technology, especially in the high season. Such a vehicle could record everything and send it to the control room.

“This is a good example of something being used in a more developed country that we should use.

“I want to leave this to the police and the provincial administration to look into as an idea.

“It would be great if Phuket could have about three mobile CCTV units,” he said.

Kathu police chief inks deals to improve Patong

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

WICHIT: Speaking for the first time at a Phuket Provincial Security Council meeting on July 25, new Kathu Police Superintendent Col Grissak Songmoon-nark told Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit that he had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Patong business leaders aimed at lifting the town’s image among tourists.

Col Grissak, 46, said that he had invited representatives of various groups in Patong to attend a series of meetings at Kathu Police Station. Among the groups represented were the night entertainment industry, he said.

“I have signed an MOU with entertainment industry leaders in Patong. They have agreed to have their female service staff dress in a more modest fashion while on their way to work.

“Many of the female service staff wear revealing clothes on their way to work and are seen by students returning home from school. We don’t want students to get the feeling that this type of dress is normal,” Col Grissak said.

“Although nightclubs already check IDs, I would like to ask for cooperation in preventing minors from frequenting any areas where coyote dancing is going on. Otherwise they might try to engage in such behavior themselves,” he added.

Col Grissak also said that in the effort to crack down on the sale of illegal narcotics, night club owners had been asked to have their staff search customers and report any leads to the police.

Tuk-tuk and taxi drivers will soon be asked to sign an MOU aimed at lifting service standards, eliminating overcharging and limiting the number of taxis on the roads in an effort to relieve traffic congestion, he said.

The number of tuk-tuks in Patong swells to as many as 500 at night, when drivers who operate in other parts of the island tend to engage in such behavior themselves, he added.

Col Grissak also noted that during the day all converge in Patong, resulting in the number of taxis on the roads in an effort to relieve traffic congestion.

“This is one of the prime reasons for the very high accident rate in Patong,” he said.

The continued rise is attributed to the large numbers of tourists in the area, he said.

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Col Grissak also noted that during the day all converge in Patong, resulting in the number of taxis on the roads in an effort to relieve traffic congestion.

Among the changes he would like to see are having all drivers in uniform and having more designated parking areas.

As for the new one-way traffic system, the public still has until the end of the month to suggest further improvements, after which time the system will be finalized, he said.

Registered population continues to increase

PHUKET: The island’s official population climbed by 2,146 to 323,660 from June 21 to July 20, but the figure still under-represents the number of Thais calling Phuket home — not including the number of expats and low-wage laborers from abroad who have migrated here in recent years.

The rise is slightly lower than during the previous reporting period, when a gain of 2,976 was recorded from May 21 and June 20.

The biggest population increase was 1,441 in Muang District, followed by Kathu (405) and Thalang (300).

Blood bank collections hit the road

PHUKET: The blood bank at Vachira Phuket Hospital, on Yaowarat Rd, Phuket City, has announced its schedule of blood donation collections for August.

Blood donations will be collected on:

- **August 6** at Club Andaman Patong Beach Resort, from 10 am to 3 pm;
- **August 9** at Cheng Talay Municipality offices, from 10 am to 3 pm;
- **August 12** at the blood bank at Vachira Hospital, from 8:30 am to 3 pm;
- **August 17** at Radi Medical System Co Ltd, on the Ao Kung-Ao Por road in Pa Khlok, from 10 am to 4 pm;
- **August 21** at Phuket Wittayalai School, on Thepkrasattri Rd, Phuket City, from 9 am to 4 pm;
- **August 30** at Patong Municipality offices, 12/3 Ratpatanunson Rd, Patong, 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

The blood bank also accepts blood donations at its offices on the fourth floor of the Patient Building at Vachira Hospital, open Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 8 pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 am to 3 pm.

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Call for Phuket tourism businesses to go ‘green’

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHUKET: A Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) seminar at The Metropole hotel July 24 brought together academics and tourism representatives to discuss global warming effects in Phuket, where an estimated 344 million tonnes of greenhouse gases are produced every year, according to Nisanat Sathirakul, deputy secretary-general at the Office of Natural Resources and Environment Policy and Planning.

“World temperatures are higher than they were 100 years ago, and increasing development and production activities have caused climate change. Because of this, we now have higher levels of rainfall and the temperature of the water is changing,” K. Nisanat said.

Somkit Khokhiattwong, a biologist from Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC), explained that there is now a significant increase in the difference in temperature between surface water and water below the surface around Phuket.

“Higher water temperature leads to corals drying out and bleaching. Water currents are also changing, which could lead to coral bleaching. Water currents are face around Phuket. Nisanat said.

“Everything is changing, which could lead to a loss of beach land,” he added.

Assoc Prof Thon Thamrongnawasawat from Kasetsart University said, “Support has to come from three parts: the government should implement [green] policies, private enterprises should take action to preserve the environment, and academics should educate local people about [environmental] issues.”

K. Walaialik added, “In the long term we have to force the island’s businesses to protect and preserve the environment, and then we must evaluate the standards of the hotels with the Green Leaf Foundation.”

Established in 1998, the Green Leaf Foundation works in partnership with the TAT to certify hotels according to their levels of efficiency in managing resources and contributing to the upkeep of the environment.

Green Leaf Thaikits, issued every two years, are scored on a scale from one to five “leaves” in recognition of a hotel’s contribution to preserving the environment.

PHUKET: The Phuket Provincial Fisheries Office (PPFO) has given fishermen until August 28 to apply to continue using po traps, shallow-water fish traps made by stringing a net between stakes stuck in the seabed, although the traps have been outlawed since 1996.

The announcement follows the passing of the July 29 deadline set by the PPFO for a total ban on po traps – unless villagers’ claims that their traps do not harm sea turtles, dugongs, seagrass areas or coral can be substantiated.

PPFO chief Pairho Suthakorn announced that all po traps would be removed by authorities unless a written complaint was sent to the Fisheries Office.

Fears that the traps affect the habitats of sea turtles and dugongs prompted the initiative to remove them from Phuket’s waters, especially after a dugong was found dead in a po trap in Pa Khlok Bay in April.

However, following claims by villagers at Baan Para Moo 4, Pa Khlok, that their traps caused no harm, the PPFO set 33 specific zones spanning 1,530 rai in the area where the villagers are allowed to use po traps.

The proposed zones were approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Villagers from Baan Para Moo 4 claimed that they had been using the traps to make a living for years and that their traps had not been causing harm to the natural surroundings, including grazing dugongs.

“We are flexible. If there is an area where villagers have problems with the new rules then we can look into adapting the regulations,” K. Pairho said.

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Andaman Wave 007: Making

In the run-up to the “Andaman Wave 007” testing of the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) tsunami early-warning system on July 25, the Gazette asked readers to send in reports from their locales describing if and how the alarms sounded – and what evacuation drills took place, if any.

The following is a selection of the responses we received, along with reports by Gazette staff.

The Gazette thanks all those who contributed, including those whose accounts could not be included here.

Nearly all of the media attention in Patong centered around the mock evacuation involving some 1,500 volunteer evacuees running up Soi Bangla across Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd and up Soi Sansabai to safety.

After the drill was over, the government put out the message it wanted: media outlets from Bangkok to Boston reported that the exercise had gone according to plan and that all 79 towers had sounded successfully.

Speaking from the NDWC headquarters in Nonthaburi, where a Thai TV Channel 11 telecast of the Patong drill was being monitored by national and international observers, NDWC head Dr Smith Dharmasaroja said the exercises went according to plan and all 79 warning towers were found to be working well.

Although criticizing local administrations in the many areas that failed to conduct evacuations, he said some 40 international observers expressed their confidence and satisfaction, and some even wanted to use the system as a model for other countries.

In other parts of Patong, the scene was quite different, however. At Ban Kalim School, three yellow-shirted government observers – two from the Attorney General’s Office and a third from the NDWC – were on hand to witness the evacuation.

Apart from one Gazette reporter, there was no other media present. The Baan Kalim School evacuation began promptly at 9:45 am when the school director pushed a button to activate the school’s own siren simultaneously with that of the 79 NDWC towers.

In less than a minute, all 300 students and some 30 staff ran from their waiting place in the courtyard up to the third floor of the concrete school, rebuilt with private-sector donations to replace the wooden school that was destroyed by the 2004 tsunami.

After declaring the drill at the school a success, observers went about 100 meters to the north to listen to the signals being emitted from the NDWC tower across from the Sunset Beach Hotel.

As voice-recorded messages were being played in a variety of languages, most agreed they were only clearly audible from within a few hundreds yards of the signals – though the sirens sounds traveled much further.

DDPM-Phuket chief Aroon Kerdsom expressed satisfaction with the mock evacuation of about 1,500 volunteers up Soi Bangla to the safety of Soi Sansabai.

To find out how far the Gazette reporter walked all the way back over the hill to Patong, asking those he passed along the way what they had heard and seen.

A convenience store owner a few hundred yards down the road said she knew that the alarm had sounded, but she hadn’t heard it because she was inside the shop with the television on all morning.

Although her shop is in a low-lying area close to the beach, she said that, like other residents in Kalim, had not been asked to take part in an evacuation, but had only been told by officials not to panic when the alarm went off that morning.

“We keep the TV on almost all the time and we evacuate if we get reports of any big earthquakes in Indonesia,” she said.

Continuing south along the beach road and up the hill to a small sala where a number of motorcycle taxi drivers were resting, the Gazette was told that the siren, but not the voice-recorded messages, could be heard.

“Would you head for the hills if you heard the siren at another time?” the group was asked.

“Not right away,” one responded, as the others nodded their heads in agreement. “We were here for the last tsunami and now we know what to look for. If we hear the siren, we will keep our eyes on the water.”

“If we notice that it is treating then we will head up higher, but even where we are now is higher than where the last tsunami reached,” they said, while pointing down to the sea from their rocky viewpoint.

Continuing south to Patong, the reaction from people was largely the same, with some saying they had heard the siren, but not the voice-recorded messages.

Once into Patong, the Gazette reporter expected the response to be the same – but it wasn’t.

The northern end of the beach road is so busy with new construction projects and other noise that the sounds of neither the Kalim siren nor the one further along the beach were heard—even right on the beach.

A group of Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) lifeguards stationed at a watch tower on the beach opposite the Graceland Resort said they had listened closely for the siren – but hadn’t heard a thing.

“There is too much noise from the street and the wind blowing strongly offshore didn’t help,” one said.

A woman selling tours from a roadside kiosk on Haad Patong Rd also said the sirens were completely inaudible from her spot near the intersection with Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd.

After pausing to let the sound from a procession of three sound trucks touting Jatukham Ramathep amulets pass, she added, “One thing is certain: if the siren sounds at night, there is no way anyone will be able to hear it along Soi Bangla.”

The problem was much the same further south. The owner of a bar about 150 yards up the beach from Soi Kebup told the Gazette he had kept the windows to his third-story bedroom open all morning – but couldn’t hear anything out of the ordinary.

The same pub suffered extensive damage during the 2004 tsunami disaster, when the bottom floor was flooded by about one meter of water on its ground floor.

Another respondent from Patong wrote in this sarcastic remark: Here in Patong, All doors and windows open. Listening for it. Didn’t hear a peep. Either it’s the quietest system in existence or I have gone deaf.

At the very south end of Patong, a respondent who observed the drill from the same spot where he witnessed the tsunami on December 26, 2004 described the evacuation drill as “a well-orchestrated human circus act to please the press.”

Arguing that "you don’t exercise to impress – you exercise to improve”, he wrote:

“A helicopter from ITV was circling in the sky and observing the beach. Ambulances, rescue teams, police and the fire department were waiting, all lined up on a chosen spot to enter the scene on command.

Everyone was well-prepared and stationed where they would never be in case of a real tsunami. Just over the bridge, left from the entry of the Amari Hotel, about 20 rescue and emergency vehicles were parked – all awaiting their turn to enter the stage.

Every few minutes a new team was ordered to go – and yes, of course, they all arrived on time. I watched all this for about
the most of a media circus?

BLIND LEADING THE BLIND? A man pretending to be blind was one of many volunteer evacuees escorted to safety by rescue workers during the Andaman Wave 007 drill on July 25.

IT’S ONLY KETCHUP! Members of the Volunteer Tourist Police help evacuate to safety a man covered in fake blood and feigning serious injury.

half an hour, then went down the hill to the beach road to see the same “missing link” I witnessed on December 26, 2004: there were no police there to block the entry to the beach and no way out for those on the beach to leave.

There were big traffic jams everywhere in Patong. Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd was clear, but all the entry roads to the beach were jammed.

Like many of the people who reported their experiences to the Gazette, the respondent was a long-time resident who declined to have his name printed. He left this advice to the organizers of future evacuation drills:

Let’s confront the real problems that will occur if you want to move out the public in a hurry. Place some old cars in the way along roads as needed in an emergency.

To the north in Kamala, another area devastated by the 2004 disaster, only about 20 people took part in an evacuation drill conducted at the Prachanukrao School, which like Ban Kalim School has its own siren.

About 800m away, the NDWC tower was also clearly audible when the school’s siren was not sounding.

Over at Chalong Pier, expatriate resident and retired welder Jeffrey Powell, 67, joked of the siren there, “It could be someone’s kettle boilering.”

He sat in a roadside cafe about 200m from the pier, where offshore island speedboat shuttles dock.

Asked whether he was interested in the morning drill, Powell said, “It’s a waste of time and money, that’s my opinion.” He added that many marine vessels such as ferries have horns that emit a similar sound. “I wouldn’t get up because I heard that,” he said.

Testing of the tsunami warning system at Chalong Pier did not receive an emergency evacuation drill for tourists or locals because sound trucks had already announced the previous hour that, “Today the system is only being tested and there is no cause for alarm. This is only a test.”

When the first blast sounded at 9:45 am, a group of perhaps 15 people, evidently prepared by authorities for the test, ran from the sun shelters beside Kam Eng Restaurant towards Chalong roundabout. No one else among the scores of Thais and foreigners in the vicinity moved.

An English tourist was puzzled, saying, “They announced ahead of time that people needn’t participate in the drill.”

The horn’s blast was followed by announcements in Standard Thai, English, German, Korean, Chinese and Japanese that, “There has been an earthquake in the sea,” and that those in the area should immediately get as far away as possible from the beach. The horn blast and announcements were repeated during the next hour.

Chalong native and scion of one of Phuket’s oldest clans, Somsuk Prateep Na Thalang, 40, wondered why the announcement was not made in Southern Thai dialect. “People around here mostly speak Southern Thai,” he said.

Because many Chinese speakers speak differing dialects, the Chinese announcement began with the words “Go away!” in English, one observer who positioned himself close to the tower noted.

Not far to the north of Chalong Bay lies Ao Yon, where four lives were lost to the 2004 tsunami.

To prevent a repeat incident, one of Phuket’s 19 warning towers was installed at the Khao Khad viewpoint overlooking the bay. However, the siren there failed after only about five seconds — apparently from lack of battery power.

The site is remote from the local community and only a handful of people turned up to hear it tested, one of them being Gazette Chief Reporter Saritkhae Leelapaporn.

“I feel sad that so much taxpayers’ money was spent on this tower that doesn’t even work. But even if it did, it is too remote from the Ban Khao Khad community to be heard there so I hope that they will link it to the community radio system when they come to fix it,” said local resident Sanam Kalasamut.

“It’s good that we know it doesn’t work because now we can fix it, but I still think they should take it down and put it somewhere where more people will be able to hear it,” said local resident Akaphol Nontri.

However, after the Ao Yon tower failed, the six or seven people could hear the very faint sounding of the tower on Koh Lone being carried across the bay by strong winds.

“You would never be able to hear that if it weren’t so quiet up here or if you were riding a motorbike,” one person remarked.

After the drill, Aroon Kerd-som, who heads the local Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM-Phuket) office, said that the exercise had mostly gone according to plan and that all the towers had sounded except for the one at Khao Khad.
Guns, drugs and an empty casket

NAKHON SRI THAMMARAT: When a funeral goes on for several weeks and is protected by a gang of armed men, you can usually bet that it’s for someone important.

But a funeral in Thung Yai held for a fictitious money-spinning witch doctor left villagers confused when the funeral’s organizers started selling “lucky” lottery tickets.

The funeral was reported to the Nakhon Sri Thammarat Damrongtham Center, which acts as provincial ombudsman, by a citizen who complained that a house in Thung Yai District’s Tambon Ku Rae had been holding a ceremony for almost a month.

Mourners were smoking drugs and a number of thugs were carrying guns at the funeral, said the concerned citizen.

The complainant said that according to organizers, the funeral was for a Cambodian witch doctor who used to predict lottery results. The funeral organizers were selling tickets for a Malaysian lottery on the premise that good fortune was destined for the whole village.

Nakhon Sri Thammarat Vice-Governor Wichit Chatphaisit was informed of the complaint on July 16 and immediately ordered the Srivichai Task Force to coordinate with the chief administrative officer (palad) of Thung Yai District and deputy superintendent of Thung Yai District Police Station to investigate the funeral.

V/Gov Wichit said that at the house where the funeral was being held, the investigation team found the ceremony in full swing with about 50 people milling around the premises.

“We found many tough guys walking around, patrolling the proceedings, all with pistols. The officials identified themselves and asked to search the property. They found many types of guns: the pistols that the tough guys were carrying, some more guns hidden around the house and yet more hidden in a banana grove outside,” said V/Gov Wichit.

“Officials also found three safes which the owner of the house at first claimed belonged to his daughter. The officers detained the organizers and took them to Nakhon Sri Thammarat Provincial Hall to record the arrests before questioning began,” he added.

Phemsak Leangsusunthorn, head of the Srivichai Task Force, said that when police questioned Amphon Amnuay, 61, the owner of the residence, he acted suspiciously and gave contradictory statements. Amphon also claimed to be on good terms with the governor of Chumphon Province and the chief of staff of Army Region 4.

Amphon stated that the funeral was being held for a Cambodian witch doctor who had died in Chumphon Hospital on July 5, said K. Phemsak. The Governor of Chumphon had conducted the funeral rites, Amphon added.

When asked the name of the deceased, however, Amphon was unsure.

Amphon said that he had brought the body to his house as the witch doctor could predict lottery results and the villagers might benefit from this power, K. Phemsak explained.

Amphon had told local residents that the safes in the house were full of money from winning lottery tickets, but he could not hand the money over before the funeral ceremony was over because the “winning” villagers would be cursed and go blind, added K. Phemsak.

When the safes were opened by a locksmith, they were found filled with bundles of paper cut to the size of a 1,000 baht note, each bundle covered with two real notes.

Upon opening the coffin, police found that there was no witch doctor – there wasn’t even a body.

A total of nine people were arrested and 13 guns, more than 100 rounds of ammunition and some cannabis-smoking paraphernalia were seized. All nine men tested positive for drugs and were charged with using illegal substances, fraud and firearms offenses.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

Queue News

Here’s an idea: Trash Site Tourism. Busloads of tourists could be entertained by taking them on a tour of Phuket’s favorite informal garbage dumping sites.

Preferably the buses should be open to the elements, allowing the occupants to get the full flavor of the various stops along the way, wafting through the vehicle.

Our vote for best Trash Tour route goes to Soi Panieng, which runs parallel to the bypass road, between Samkong and Koh Kaew. See the pictures above for four of the stops along the route.

The only question remaining is where to take the tourists for lunch afterwards. But then, they probably won’t have much of an appetite.

HIGHLIGHTS: Soi Panieng’s Trash Tourism sights, clockwise from top left: Opposite Rock Garden; in front of Srisuchart; near Baan Khunying; and in front of Topland Rassada.
Mayor leads bid to upgrade Samui’s official status

No longer a remote island in the Gulf of Thailand, Koh Samui is looking to upgrade its status officially from that of a sub-district municipality (tessabaan tambon) to town (tessabaan muang) status.

Leading the effort is Koh Samui Mayor Varakorn Rattanarak, who feels the greater fiscal autonomy that would come with the upgrade would give the administration greater ability to meet the island’s needs.

The blame for many of the island’s infrastructure problems and lack of facilities has been put down to inadequate funding; the island’s current status leaves it incapable of raising enough funds locally through taxes and fees.

“As a tambon tessabaan, there is little that the local government can do,” said Mayor Varakorn.

Samui population has grown with the island’s development into a top tourist destination. The rapid increase has resulted in an urgent need for funding to cater to the needs of the many new residents and to sustain growth in the tourism industry.

One local businessman commented, “The roads and schools here should be better and our standards should be higher. Other tourist areas in Thailand have better standards. I don’t know why the people of Samui should be left behind.”

Not only are island locals affected by the allocation of government spending, the tourism industry is also affected in many ways, especially by the ever-increasing number of traffic accidents and the high number of fatalities on the island’s notoriously dangerous main road.

Simon Milton, a vacationer from the UK, said, “It is like an obstacle course! Over our two-week holiday here, new potholes have seemed to form overnight. You can never predict where the next danger might be. I wouldn’t recommend driving a motorbike here to anyone.”

The mayor, along with other island officials, is looking toward the next election to start the process that will gain Samui rights, funds and new title.

**Teed off**: Samui is looking forward to the addition of another world-class golf course in the coming months, as the Royal Samui Golf and Country Club has announced it will hold its soft opening in September.

The announcement was welcomed by the local golfing community as well as vacationers looking for more than a beach to spend their days.

The founders of the 350-rai development, all golf enthusiasts, have combined their expertise to create a unique vision for the project.

The 18-hole course is located in a stunning hilltop location in the south of the island near Lamai that overlooks Samui’s premier stretch of beach in Chaweng. Many holes have breathtaking views of the beaches of Lamai and surrounding jungle.

The designers and planners have nestled the 72-par course among the natural surroundings and designed each hole to challenge medium to advanced golfers. Beginners will be well-advised to bring some extra balls!

The founders’ concept for the project stretches beyond providing lush greens and fairways for golf pros to smack a ball around. One of the founders, Kenneth Chung, said that one of the main goals is to break down commonly-held misperceptions that golf is an elitist sport.

The founders plan to add to the sense of community to the island, welcoming all walks of life to play. To achieve this, they plan to provide subsidies and “academy programs” that will allow anyone with a desire to play golf to give it a go.

The clubhouse is designed to reflect this “community theme”. The building, with impressive views over the course and its verdant surroundings, will include a spa, tennis courts, squash courts, gym, swimming pool, three restaurants, children’s center, pro shop and conference center.

The Royal Samui Golf Course will join Santiburi Golf Course, which opened in 2003 and is well known among Asian Tour players. Its developers hope Royal Samui will not be the last course to open on the island.

“We hope this will be just one of many golf courses to open in the future. Having four to five courses on the island would ensure Samui a spot as a top golfing destination,” said Patric de Richard, another partner in the project.

The group are proud of their project. Course designer Watchara of Fix Golf Company has worked on an impressive list of courses, including some of Thailand’s best-known fairways such as the Royal Ratchaburi, Evergreen Hills Golf Course and Resort in Kanchanaburi, Pattana Golf Resort in Chonburi and Loch Palm Golf Course in Phuket.

The first nine holes should be ready for action in September with the grand opening scheduled for December.
Ya bah junkie hacks his father to death

Bad bet: Trang Town Police on July 22 busted a gambling den operating in a suite of a well-known hotel in the town.

After being tipped off by an informant, Trang Muang District Police Superintendent Col Nu-koon Kraithong had a search warrant issued for a suite at the Thumrin Hotel, which was booked under the name Sakoophan Rongdej.

When police officers entered the first of the three rooms in the suite, gamblers rushed into another room and locked the door. Police attempted to persuade them to open the door, but to no avail.

After calling in a locksmith to open the room, police arrested 12 people, including teachers, government officials and businessmen. Col Kittichai explained. Police collected as evidence were three packs of phong thai cards that had been thrown out the window.

The suspects were taken to Trang Muang District Police Station, where they were charged with gambling without permission and obstructing a police investigation.

Dangerous game: Eighteen spectators at the Thung Song Games were injured when the grandstand collapsed beneath them at 10:30 am on July 25.

The spectators, all students, were cheering the athletics held at Sriwichai Technical College in Tambon Tham Yai, Thung Song district, when the steel-framed stand collapsed.

Of the 18 students sent to hospital, five were allowed to return home that day. Several schools withdrew their athletes from the games in protest of the poor safety standards.

The games, held from July 24 to 27, were organized by Nakhon Si Thammarat Provincial Administration Organization and Thung Song district with the aim of building unity among the people of the district.

Southern comfort: The Muslim Lawyers Association has called on the authorities to release or charge some 300 detainees still being held following the mass arrests in recent security sweeps in two districts in Yala.

The Army has released about 50 of the detainees, most of whom were found to be old, infirm or thought to have no connection to the insurgency, Army spokesman Col Acra Tiproch said.

However, a quarter of those arrested were “key members of the insurgent movement directly involved in a spate of violence in the region,” he said.

A total of 70 detainees are members of the insurgent group Rundi Kumpulan Kecil while another 23 are considered to be its spiritual leaders. The rest are sympathizers, the Army said.

Most will be released after 30 days, in accordance with emergency decrees imposed on the region since martial law was declared there in January, 2004.

The detainees would be re-educated and given an “attitude correction”, Col Acra said.

Col Acra defended the reliability of Army’s list of suspect ed militants. Intelligence sources used included information gained during suspect interrogations, forensics evidence and tip-offs by local people, he said.

The arrest campaign, dubbed Operation Southern Protection, will continue until violence is contained, Col Acra said.

He added that he believed the policy would help end the rebellion, now in its third year.

Security forces have expanded their latest sweep operation to include four districts of neighboring Narathiwat province: Sungai Padi, Chanae, Rangae and Joh I Rong.

Killed after prayers: Gunmen shot dead Sithisak Morobu, 48, a former member of the now-defunct New Aspiration Party, as he was walking home after prayers at a local mosque in Ya-la’s Yaha district on July 27.

The police report said a gunman walked up behind K. Sithisak and fired several rounds, hitting him in the head, left arm and torso.

Bystander Abdulwahae Di-madi, 28, was also injured in the attack. He was rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment.

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Around the South news round-up is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.
Child sex abuse ‘rampant across Isarn’

Sexual abuse of children is rampant in the Northeast, a seminar on child protection was told on July 23.

“Most abusers are the victims’ own family members, or teachers,” said Nathawat Bualaphrathum of the Center for the Protection of Children’s Rights Foundation.

In the Northeast, the abusers were often found in Buri Ram and Roi-Et, where the foundation was working to help them.

It is difficult to reach all victims because of the foundation’s limited resources, as well as the influence of certain individuals in each area, he said.

K. Nathawat was speaking at a seminar on human-resource development and the protection of children.

Another speaker, Khon Kaen University lecturer Dr Srijun Pairotekul, said sexual abuse of children was one of the country’s main problems.

In Khon Kaen alone, up to 106 children were sexually violated last year.

“Stepfathers, uncles and even biological fathers are among the abusers,” K. Srijun said.

Child abandonment is common in the Northeast as parents migrate to Bangkok for work and leave their children behind, she added.

Boys’ club: The Dalai Lama recently expressed support for the introduction of Bhikkhunis (female Buddhist clergy), according to Bkikkhuni Dhammananda, Thailand’s most well known female monk.

The continuous chain of Bhikkhuni ordination has been broken in more than 1,000 years in countries following Theravada Buddhism, such as Thailand and other Southeast Asian nations, and those following Mahasarasvati-tivada Buddhism, like Tibet, she said.

Since the presence of both Bhikkhus (Buddhist monks) and Bhikkhunis is required at the ceremony to fully ordain a Bhikkhuni, conservative Sangha in these countries say that women’s ordination is impossible.

The Thai Sangha still does not recognize Dhammananda and seven other Bhikkhunis, who were fully ordained in Sri Lanka as valid Theravada Bhikkhunis, Bhikkhuni Dhammananda, who runs a monastery in Nakhon Pathom, said she would use this international support to continue her work to introduce Bhikkhunis in Thailand.

Tongue Thaied: Children attending bilingual schools are deficient in Thai-language skills because parents force them to study in English more than in Thai, according to Deputy Education Minister Varakorn Samkoses.

After finding that more than 80,000 students at the third level of primary school could not read Thai properly or understand Thai fully, the ministry worries that children will grow up with poor Thai.

“I’m not worried about slang, because it soon goes; the important thing is Thai children using correct Thai grammar, communicating with each other in correct words and sentences,” he said.

“Children also do not use their brains to analyze, and there is a lack of writing and pronunciation skills,” said Kanthak Nak-sakul, president of the Association of Thai-Language Teachers.

She urged the government to reduce the tax on children’s books so that more parents could afford to buy them.

She added that the ministry should improve children’s books with larger type and more pictures. She insisted that teachers and parents must play an important role in helping children to learn and use correct Thai vocabulary.

Playstation nation: A poll has revealed that about one in every four youths plays computer games every day, even though they knew the habit causes them problems.

According to the Assump-tion Business Administration College (Abac) Poll Research Center, most young players admitted that they wasted their time and money, faced eye problems and more and more kids shunned fruit and vegetables.

The survey, conducted from July 8 to July 25, covered 1,441 youths aged between 10 and 24 in Bangkok and its surrounding provinces.

Weighty measures: Dr Wichai Ekpakong of Mahidol University said more fast-food chains were opening in rural areas with marketing schemes to promote consumption, especially among youngsters. He said parents bought the fatty food for kids without realizing health impacts and more and more kids shunned fruit and vegetables.

The survey found that more than 30,000 baht. We plan to lodge complaints with the courts, too,” K. Rasamee said her agency recently discovered many bizarre breaches of advertising-related laws as advertisers were apparently determined to become the “talk of the town”, regardless of the rules.

For example, a condom advertisement used children as presenters and also used sexually provocative messages, she said.

“It’s shocking to learn that advertisers admit they feel it is worth paying fines if they can get overwhelming media attention through the use of controversial advertisements,” K. Rasamee said.

Open-source initiative: The National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (Nectec) has cooperated with 25 open-source software users and developers to set up Open Source Software Network (OSSN) to promote the development and use of open-source software.

Nectec director K. Pansak Siriruchatapong said the collaboration would use the strength of open-source users and developers and encourage more local development in the area. OSSN will focus on four pillars of development: open-source software research and development, creation of awareness, policy development and building markets.

K. Pansak said Nectec, as the initiator and a facilitator, would feed money to the network. The center plans to allocate 6 million baht to open-source activities this year.

K. Pansak said the goal was to increase the number of open-source software users by 500%. Open-source users now account for only 0.01% of software users in the country, he said.

The network also plans to increase the number of open-source software firms from 10 to 50 in the next three years and then 100 in the next five years.

Open-source software is an alternative for the country to save the cost of importing licensed software while creating more jobs for Thai developers, he said.

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BOOKS BARGE IN: The Port Authority of Thailand has organized a library boat project to celebrate HM The King Shumbol Adulyadej’s 80th birthday this year. The vessel will cruise along the Chao Phya River with 1,500 books about His Majesty. The project was unveiled July 25 by Prime Minister HM The King Bhumibol Adulyadej this year. The vessel will cruise along the Chao Phya River with 1,500 books about His Majesty. The project was unveiled July 25 by Prime Minister
Bloomin’ marvelous

By Janyaporn Morel

If you are reading this August 4, you had better move quickly if you haven’t already visited the annual Phuket Flower Show – because today is the final day.

From July 26, some 80 stalls have been set up by garden centers at the show, which features a huge array of plants and flowers for sale and on display, and plenty of handy tips for budding gardeners.

Some of the participating vendors have traveled more than 1,000 kilometers to attend, including some from the farthest reaches of Isan. In addition to the usual range of plumeria, orchids, roses and lotus flowers, there are new breeds of flowers, including the yellow-orange Memoria Srivilas Gold, nicknamed “Bang Yai”.

The more common white or pink varieties of this flower are available at Supercheap at about 160 baht each, but these new Bang Yai can fetch 300 baht or more apiece, said Yanisa Dechkamhaeng, from Nakhon Pathom. At the fair they are a bargain at just 250 baht each.

Among other florals on show are bougainvillea, adenium (desert rose) and hibiscus. There are also fragrant flowering plants including a range of jasmine, or mali in Thai, as well as bread flower (Vallaris glabra, or rachawadee), and one species of star jasmine (Gardennia coronaria, or pudnambut) that blooms with three different colors on the same flower.

There are the more usual plants, including the Mai Mongkol that is popular because of its auspicious name, as well as many not-so-common varieties of ornamental plants, ferns and cactus.

One of the most popular exhibits is the “sky-high vegetable” display by the Phuket Provincial Agricultural Office (PPAO), which uses an unusual range of items to hang potted plants.

Agricultural equipment and garden accessories are also on show, and like most major fairs in Thailand pets, OTOP (One Tambon One Product) products and many other goods are available at discount prices.

Of course, there are food stalls throughout serving a wide variety of inexpensive dishes. Although the fair officially ends August 4, some vendors will stay for a few more days before moving on. The fair is open until 10:30 pm.
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Fed white and blue

I was in need of a drink, good dinner and plenty of cheer when I pulled up outside the unmistakable blue and white of Le Bleu et Blanc Grill.

Nothing is ordinary about this place. That’s how the owners like it and, judging from the enthusiastic comments in the guest book, the patrons appreciate the flair too.

A welcome just short of an embrace from the piano player and singer Laurent Tournaire led to an introduction to owner Valerie Sabbat and her fiancé of 26 years, Alain Fransen. (“We never quite got around to marriage,” they explained.) Lots of smiles, laughter and a feeling that I was among old friends cleared the dust from my day and we were set for what turned out to be a splendid, convivial dinner.

Valerie is from Lyon, considered by many to be the gastronomic capital of Europe, while Alain hails from Liege, Belgium. Valerie owned a restaurant in Belgium for six years and she and Alain have been coming to Thailand for 25 years, firm in their belief that they would never open a restaurant here. But it wasn’t until Alain retired from his job in late 1994 that their thinking changed.

“We moved to Phuket and Alain was happily playing golf and sailing his yacht, but I really needed something to keep me active and get me out of the house,” explained Valerie. “We decided to open a restaurant that would be a bit different, cater to our friends and allow us to gain our freedom.” Alain and Valerie are now proprietors of Le Bleu et Blanc Grill, which opened on January 28 this year.

A focal point of the dining room is the baby grand piano in the corner. Laurent plays for the diners every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, and a pianist from the Philippines plays on the other days except Sunday, when the restaurant is closed.

Singers and musicians among the diners are encouraged to join in, and apparently many take up the offer. A 72-year-old lady had sung herself into Laurent’s admiration the night before and he was still in raptures over her voice this evening.

When it comes to food, value for money is the philosophy at Le Bleu et Blanc – or BBG, as some of the younger customers have nicknamed it, to the slight irritation of Valerie.

House wines are served at 100 baht a glass, bottles from 950 to 3,850 baht. The restaurant features a menu that is stunning not only for its offerings, but its amazingly reasonable prices. Profit is far from the major consideration, and it shows.

We began our meal with a splendid amuse-gueule of chicken “cake”, as the talented Chef Daniel Peletier described it, with tarragon and coconut sauce and a glass of house Chardonnay to ease its passage.

The entrees arrived with the timing of a well-managed kitchen and we dug into a plate of Les Gambas aux Parmfurs d’Asie. Three very large prawns cooked in cream with a touch of orange juice to glaze and, quite amazingly (to me at least), a sweet and sour Thai sauce for chicken, nam jum gai, straight from the bottle. I shouldn’t have been so shocked; it worked a treat.

Le Foie Gras Poele aux Pommes, duck liver pan fried in butter with apples, honey and Calvados apple brandy, served with sliced and diced apples, simply melted in the mouth.

Here we switched to vino rosso with a fresh and light Le Notti Bardolino DOC Classico 2005, which held its own through the huge flavors of the main course.

BBG – sorry, Valerie – is a grill restaurant and as such it has a impressive stainless-steel barbecue at the entrance. Anxious to sample as large a range of meats as possible, we chose the Royal Mixed Grill.

This is trencherman territory. These are large pieces of beef, chicken, veal, pork, homemade sausage and pork rib threaded on a steel skewer large enough to do duty as a javelin. To complete the taste it was accompanied by four sauces; chili, garlic, curry and tarrare, with a dish of potatoes dauphinois.

The beef is from Argentina, as is all BBG’s beef with the exception of the local tenderloin (which is Argentinian), as is all BBG’s beef with the exception of the local tenderloin.

To be honest I would, definitely should, have stopped after this, but Alain had already mixed therouille and croquettes into La Soupe de Poissons and gave me a mouthful before whisking it off at all for the first 15 minutes. As to value for money – close to half a kilo of top-grade meat, well cooked and with a choice of rice or potatoes for 425 baht – it’s exceptional.

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The desserts were positive –ly sinful. If the crème brulée and crème caramel were excellent, the mousse au chocolat was outstanding. No added sugar, just dark chocolate and orange. I am going to need a regular fix.

BBG’s first food promotion in June was so successful that Valerie and Alain are planning something special in September. I am bidden to secrecy, but I can say that it’s going to be a hit with the Thai ladies, all ladies actually, but especially ladies with a lean towards the rod. Fishing rod, that is.

Le Bleu et Blanc Grill. 39/18 Wiset Rd, Nai Harn, on the road between Kata and Rawai, near the junction with Satsuwan Rd. Tel: 076-388395 or 083-1768818. Open daily 7 pm to 2 am except Sundays. Average cost for two people is about 2,000 baht, excluding wine.

Email your restaurant recommendations, suggestions and comments to Alistair Why at alistairwhy@gmail.com
Six bubbly Italian beauties pulled up at the Mitsubishi showroom on Mae Luan Rd last week in a convoy of bright red bright Triton pickup trucks as a part of an Italian television show.

The road-trip “reality” show will showcase the women traveling from Kuala Lumpur to Brunei over a 13,000-kilometer trek.

The test of endurance – both for the women and the cars – will span eight countries in 100 days. During their brief stopover in Phuket the women witnessed the tsunami drill at Patong Beach on July 25 and pitched their tents for an overnight stay.

The contestants will be featured in the Donnavventura Grand Raid reality show, now in its 19th year. Previous shows have featured girls traveling through Africa, Australia and other parts of the world.

The drivers and film crew began the journey in Kuala Lumpur before driving north through Malaysia and into Thailand. They will now continue on to Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Singapore and Brunei before returning to Kuala Lumpur for the grand finale.

Aspiring to become travel reporters, the team will be sharing their expedition experiences with viewers as they make on-the-move video documentaries featuring 12 episodes of exhilarating adventures, the first set to air in Italy in early 2008.

Qualifying for a place in the Grand Raid was not easy. After submitting a video of themselves to the show’s judges, they were put through their paces in tests of physical and mental endurance with outdoor activities including rock climbing, diving and of course, tests of their driving skills.

On the road there is little glamor – and very little time to relax. Rising early, they have just a few minutes to themselves in the morning before climbing into the trucks and heading off for the day’s activities.

Asked if they’d had any hair-raising moments on their travels so far, they said that apart from a sheared wheel bolt on one of the trucks, it’s been miles of smiles for the adventurers.

Meet the team: Taking part in the Donnavventura Grand Raid for the second year running and leading the pack this year is 25-year-old Stefania Donati.

With her experience from last year’s adventure across Australia, it is Stefania’s job to keep the rest of the team on track and to ensure that daily progress targets are reached.

She is also playing the role of producer for the video documentary this year.

Her life philosophy is simple: practicing strict discipline and allowing nothing to get in the way of her dreams.

Gutsy Giusy Criscuolo is 29 and no stranger to theater. She has a degree in cinema history and teaches theater for the Culture.
and Tourism Promotion Board in Calabria.

Giusy loves sailing and spends more than two hours a day exercising. She loves solving problems and faces challenges with a positive outlook.

Talking of her adventure with Donnavventura, she says, “This isn’t just a game, but an opportunity to try your best and prove you can make something of yourself.”

At 36 years old, Jenny Viant Gomez from Havana is the oldest of the six-pack. She has a multicultural background and has traveled extensively around the world, including Brazil, Argentina, Australia, South Africa, China, Tunisia and Egypt.

When she’s not behind the wheel with Donnavventura, Jenny works as a multi-lingual translator and teaches Spanish.

“I live a very fast-paced and varied life, and this is the kind of thing I really enjoy,” she said.

Benedetta Delogu, at 24, is the youngest member of the team but is well on the way to establishing her dream of becoming a journalist by working for a local newspaper and broadcasting company at home.

Benedetta describes herself as an active person who believes that determination and persistence are the keys to achieving personal goals.

Asked what she is getting out of this adventure he replied, “This is giving me valuable experience for my chosen career as a journalist and I am enjoying pushing myself to the limit. But I do miss my dog, Rock, and good homemade pasta.”

No-nonsense Elisa Grazzini, 29, has just completed a law degree. Keen on travel and documentaries, she is also an avid swimmer and lover of nature. “I’m really excited about having the opportunity to see a variety of wildlife and spectacular scenery on this adventure,” she said.

Yanne Mattei, 30, is happiest living a simple life, ready to pack up and move on at a moment’s notice. Having spent a lot of her life living on an island in French Polynesia, she loves the sea and relishes adventure. “If you want to get on in life and discover your true self, you have to leave behind things such as makeup and designer clothes,” she said.

Follow the dream team’s Donnavventura Malaysian Grand Raid adventures on the official, Italian-language website at: www.donnavventura.com
LIFEBLOOD: Above, Phuket Red Cross Vice-Chairman Wipapan Khusawan (back row, 3rd from right) and Red Cross representatives join Prince of Songkla University (PSU) Phuket Campus Deputy Director Wiroj Pootong (back row, center) and PSU students at the launch of the Red Cross nationwide organ-donation project.

CAED MILLE FAILTE: Right, Dubliners Ron Corley (left) and his son Tom (right), owners of the Irish Times pub at Jungceylon, pose with staff at the recent opening of their pub.

CLEAN SWEEP: Kajonkietsuksa School took home three first place prizes from the Regional Student Handicraft Art 2007 contest held by the Office of the Basic Education Commission. Nina Maria Barvormotsakul (left) claimed top honors in the Level 2 English-reading contest; Piyapat Attanatkun won in the Level 2 public speaking in Thai contest; and Pawida Moriggi (right) won the singing competition.

GRANDE OL’ TIME: Jan von Hildebrand (in red shirt), events manager at Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket, celebrates with family and friends at a birthday party for his father, Alexander (in yellow shirt), at The Watermark bar and restaurant at Boat Lagoon.

RED CARPET: Celebrating the opening of Saman Carpet Phuket, located on the bypass road, are (from right) owners Boonmai Kulabwan and Kongkiat Kiatkikul; K. Kongkiat’s mother K. Sewkin; Labor Court Region 8 Chief Justice Pemsak Saisritong and his wife, K. Orachorn.

ON SHOW: Debuting their latest exhibition, entitled ‘Rattanakosin Spiritual Poetry’, at Vichen Gallery in Bzenter mall, Rawai, are artist Apinan Toyankasame (2nd from left); Somkid Huangtanapan (center), owner of Bzenter mall; Somnuek Huangtanapan (2nd from right), founder and curator of Vichen Gallery; and Pakpicha Huangtanapan (right), manager of Bzenter mall.
Bill Padley, one of the UK's most prolific songwriters, with four No.1 hits to his name and two Ivor Novello nominations (the UK music industry's equivalent of a Grammy) has been entertaining lucky guests at Misty's Bar at the Burasari resort in Patong Sunday lunchtimes and Monday evenings.

You'd be forgiven for not instantly recognizing the singer-songwriter's name, but once you hear some of the pop songs he's written, you'll be ashamed for not knowing who he was in the first place.

Bill Padley is the talent responsible for the huge success of the pop stars who sing his songs, seldom appearing on stage himself. It's a rare treat for anyone who can get down to Misty's bar between now and the end of August to hear the voice of the man behind some of the world's most played songs in recent years.

Bill has co-written hits including the Christmas 2005 No.1 That's my Goal performed by Shayne Ward. The song, written specifically for the popular UK talent show X-Factor, spent four weeks at the top spot in the UK, selling 1.2 million copies and making it one of the fastest selling British singles ever.

Bill also co-wrote and produced Whole Again for Atomic Kitten, a song that gave him two Ivor Novello nominations, while the single went on to sell more than two million copies worldwide.

So what's a world-class songwriter with four number one hits to his name and platinum records hanging on his walls doing twice a week at a hotel in Patong?

It all started in January when Bill decided to take a well-earned break from the stresses of London life. He chose Burasari, where he could keep up with events at home via the resort's Wifi and, being an avid fan of another British legend, Keith Floyd, could also check out Floyd's latest brasserie.

After the pair met, Keith persuaded Bill to buy a guitar and play a few popular numbers on the brasserie's opening night. Perched on a bar stool, playing acoustic versions of his favorite hits, Bill took a trip down memory lane to his days of playing the pub and club circuit in the UK with nothing but a great voice, a guitar and a whole load of character.

"Playing here was quite a revelation for me and reminded me of why I got into the music business in the first place; playing songs live again, instead of sitting in front of a computer pressing buttons," Bill said.

Bill is driven by passion and emotion – "life's too short" is one of his favorite sayings. His career in pop music and broadcast radio – singing, writing and producing for over 20 years – has brought together his musical talent and ability to recognize what audiences want.

Despite being the man who has shaped the careers of high profile artists like Atomic Kitten, Westlife, Ronan Keating and Liberty X, Bill is probably one of the most down-to-earth guys you could ever meet.

Watching him play and interact with the audience at Burasari, it was obvious that Bill was in his element in front of a crowd; and he did it all without an ounce of the overzealous ego you might expect from someone of his stature.

Bill was a great crowd pleaser, throwing out sarcastic remarks to the audience between songs and talking to everyone like he'd known them for years.

Give yourself a rare treat and something to talk about when you get home by taking the chance to listen to the man who has done so much for British pop and radio.

Bill Padley is playing at Misty's Bar on Sundays 1 pm to 3 pm and Mondays 8 pm to 11 pm until August 27. For more information, call the Burasari resort at 076-292929 or visit www.burasari.com.

The enigmatic Bill Padley plays his light, catchy tunes at the Burasari in Patong Sunday lunchtimes and Monday evenings.

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Location Map
I t's all rakes on the catwalk, with belts for blouses and minuscule miniskirts on the models. When that happens we have to try and give the customer confidence, because if she won't come out of the dressing room big is she going to go outside and walk down the street?” she added.

Prawepayom Aikwanich, assistant advertising manager of Asia Web Direct, said, “I've been coming to this shop since it opened. I used to go shopping in Bangkok to buy dresses because there were no suitable shops for me in Phuket. But now I just tell K. Pah Kam what I need and she will do it for me. She loves to make us happy and feel proud about who we are.”

When a new dress style arrives at Oops!, K. Pan sends out a short SMS message to all her customers.

“Big girls have money and they want to buy clothes, but not many people really understand them,” said K. Pah Kam.

- Natcha Yuttaworawit

Oops! is on Tilot Uthit 2 Rd near Expo. It is open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 9 pm, and on Sunday afternoons. For more information call 076-232465.

**Method:**

The most complicated, yet most important stage is the making of the rock melon juice. The rock melon fruit should be set aside to create the garnish that accompanies the drink.

Once you have your juice, put it in a shaker with the other ingredients, shake and serve in a cocktail glass.

“I have showcased the “Melon de Ouse” in about five competitions this year and the next competition I will bring it to will be in Singapore in September. I plan on doing my homework on this Thai style and presenting it in a new way. The new creation will not stray far from the existing one. It will just incorporate new elements into it.” K. Tong said.

The runners-up at the Finlandia Pure Bartending Competition 2007 were second-placed Anucha Channak, representing Phuket’s La Casa restaurant, and third-placed Pongpan Sangthai, representing Bed Supper Club in Bangkok, who took home first place in last year’s competition.

- Semacote Suganya
Despite the heavens opening on the first day of the Halal Food Hilal Town festival in Thalang on July 27, throngs of people turned out for the biggest celebration of Muslim culture on the island.

The five-day festival, opened by former Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai, featured activities including art and culture displays, food stalls with halal cuisine, and a local Muslim gourmet cooking contest.

There were contests for Quran reading, a traditional dress fashion show, zebra dove bird-singing contests, career-training programs and a theatrical performance of folk songs in Di-Ke Hulu style, performed with singers sitting down, clapping rhythms and making hand gestures to help relate the tale.

Throughout the grounds were displays highlighting aspects of local Muslim life, including a huge fishing boat clad in batik with Muslim motifs and illuminated from within to beautiful effect, as well as similarly-decorated minarets. Lining the entrance were empty bird cages used as lanterns to signify freedom.

Local Muslim people in their finest traditional dress paraded the streets, past the stalls selling cloth in a vast array of colors and food vendors making local Muslim delicacies, including one favorite, roti.

Each night featured a spectacular light and sound show telling the tragic story of the legendary Princess Mahsuri, a Muslim Siamese princess who was put to death in Langkawi after being falsely accused of adultery.

The story explains that as she died, she placed a curse on the island so that the land would not prosper for seven generations. Playing the part of Princess Mahsuri was Kamala native Sirintra Yayee, who is believed to be the seventh-generation descendant of Princess Mahsuri.

This was the third year that the Halal Food Hilal Town festival had taken place, with the festival growing in popularity each year. Next year’s event is likely to be even bigger, and should be well worth attending if you missed out on this year’s festivities.
GETTING HIGH: Dalat from the summit of Lang Bian. Below: Now where did I put my water wings? Allan makes a river crossing.

W hat was planned as an adventurous week’s mountain biking trip to Dalat followed by another week on a Sunsail yacht out of Nha Trang turned out to be more than an adventure. It was an eye-opening experience of Vietnam and perfect break from Phuket.

I had always thought Communist Vietnam would be a rather drab and mundane place, reminiscent of a trip I once did across Russia and China in the early 80s.

I was in for a pleasant surprise. My first impression of Hanoi was one of vibrancy, as the city is an eclectic mix of the chunky Russian/Chinese architecture entwined with the elegant tree- and café-lined French-style boulevards. I was also impressed by the helpful and friendly people I met, many of whom spoke English.

With our mountain bikes disassembled and placed in large bags, my friend Allan and I left our wives at 5 am after one night in the comforts of the Somerwell Apartments, bang in the middle of Hanoi.

As we rushed to catch an early flight to the mountains of Dalat, the whole city appeared to be awake and exercising on the streets.

Dalat, the cool summer retreat of colonials, is spread out over many square miles full of fields of veggies, fruits and flowers, much of it under plastic. I had never seen such enormous cabbages, and was delighted to eat fresh strawberries again. Every square inch of the fertile soil is cultivated. The people are industrious and “colorful”, like most mountain people.

To the amusement of the locals, we assembled our mountain bikes on the street in front of our small hotel. Once ready to roll, we met up with Dung, our guide at Phat Tire Adventures, to plan the next seven days of our off-road mountain-biking odyssey into the unknown.

Every day was different and challenging. Following trails and tracks through beautiful, untouched coniferous forests, rustic villages, farms and bags, across and through rivers and along ridges. The rugged and hilly terrain took us up and down 1:1 slopes, some with potentially deadly obstacles such as rocks and tree roots. Most days we covered about 30 kilometers by lunchtime, which was enough considering the steep terrain. Lunch was always fresh baguettes with Red Bull, cheese and salad.

Route names like “Skid Marks” and “Crazy 8” sum up the experiences. A two-day circuit covered my favorite route, the “Hilly Billy”, a circumnavigation of an entire valley that included an overnight stay in mountains huts at Lang Bian. There we were surprisingly entertained by a Saigon company in the middle of a leadership-training course along with local gong dancers all on a concrete circle. It would make a perfect location for a Hash House Harrier “On! On! On!” session.

Getting covered in mud and falling off the bikes were part of the deal, especially on the second-to-last day when on a steep and slippery downhill slope I parted company with my bike, ending up on my head in a pool of blood!

Undeterred, I patched up and continued for four hours before I reached the local hospital, where I received two stitches. While I was in a dentist’s chair, I saw my first bust of the highly revered Ho Ch Minh, the modern-day savior and hero of all Vietnamese. Our post-cycling massages in a separate medical spa were both rejuvenating and unique, as the facilities there are complete with jacuzzi, steam bath, sauna and cubicles with ceiling racks to support the white-uniformed nurses as they tramped over our backs.

After a day’s rest, we cycled 110 of the total 140 kilometers of blacktop to Nha Trang on the coast. The ride started in cold, wet and cloudy conditions at 1,600 meters but ended in hot sun, with speeds reaching 65-70 km/h.

Before long we were away from the mountains and into the hustle and bustle of Highway 1 and eventually Nha Trang, where we met Susan and Claire. They appeared to have been talking and drinking continuously since we left them a week before.

After a good reception by Sunsail’s Morgan and Mel we had several beers in the Brewery and Sailing Club before setting off for six nights on Constanza, a 46-foot Sunsail yacht. Luckily we were upgraded from a 36-footer we had originally booked because the fridge on that boat was causing problems. The bigger boat meant that each couple had the luxury of two double cabins.

Everything worked well on the boat and we had good winds, even a 40-knot squall! The superb cruising was interspersed by a variety of fun experiences: sailing, excellent drinking and dining on board and ashore, snorkeling in clear waters, walking over huge sand dunes and visiting fishing villages and resorts.

We spent most of our time in Vong Tong Bay, home to many small fishing boats and mobile fish farms. Alternating easily between the many exotic day and nightanchorages, we enjoyed impressive views with extensive mountain and sand-dune backdrops.

One of the highlights was visiting Markus, a talkative and interesting 80-year-old Croatian married to a local girl. He had recently finished construction on his paradise resort on a beach in a record time of just 48 days from start to finish – and at a price that would make Phuket developers very envious.

Two further nights of discovery in Hanoi, while staying in the plush 5-star Melia Hotel, completed an excellent overall view of the varied attractions the country has to offer.

My final impression of Vietnam was that it is a nation with a buoyant, free-market economy within a thriving communist society, run by hard-working people proud of what they have achieved after the years of hardship under the colonial occupations of the past.
What’s in a smell?
The sea breeze so thick with salt that you can taste it; the mingling scents of men and women looking for love on Soi Bangla; or the pungent aroma of cilantro, Thailand’s most opinion-polarizing herb – you can’t get away from Phuket’s smells; some for the better, some for the worse.

Spas are no exception, so for my spa assignment I wanted to sniff out the best treatments for an assault on the senses.

I found just the place at The Royal Spa, at the Homduang Bel Air Panwa Hotel on Cape Panwa. As soon as I walked into the spa I was overcome by a host of odors, most of them pleasant, some of them made me feel sleepy, others awakening.

As for the spa, here are the vital statistics, as told by Spa Manager Wanwisa Hasup: there are seven The Royal Spa branches in Thailand; at the spa at the Homduang resort at Panwa are six therapists and six beds for foot massage, and five treatment rooms and five rooms for Thai massage.

When you go for a scrub at the spa, you get to choose your favorite smell. My favorite smell? Wow, that’s a tough choice. Chocolate? Emporio Armani? Somtum? Honey scrub is great for dry skin, K. Wanwisa said, but I opted for a salt scrub, the ideal option for exfoliating the skin.

Oil massages at The Royal Spa come loaded with a cocktail of scents. The spa has its own in-house massage oil, which is a blend of frangipani, lavender and fruit oil with mandarin and chamomile. Each ingredient can be used less, more or not at all, depending on a customer’s desires, said K. Wanwisa.

I never realized that people could be allergic to lavender, but I can’t get enough of the stuff and was pleased that after my oil massage I ended up smelling just like the flower.

The two-hour Wondering spa package for men, including a herbal steam or sauna, foot bath, Andaman salt scrub and Essence of Spirit Massage costs 3,100 baht. A three-hour Relaxing package for women, including a herbal steam or sauna, foot bath, green tea scrub, Royal Experience Massage and after-sun facial will set you back 4,500 baht.

My sense of smell sated, I left The Royal Spa with my nose tingling and my body radiating vitality and rejuvenation.

The Royal Spa, open 9 am to 8 pm, is located on the second floor of Homduang Bel Air Panwa Hotel. The spa has been open for almost two months after taking over the location of the hotel’s former spa, Frangipany Spa. For further information call Wanwisa Hasup at 081-0877050.
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- 013311 M
- 590
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- 10%
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- 20%
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- 20%
- 30%
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- OKI
- Nike
- Adidas
- Only 1 pack worth 500-
- Up
- Only 1 pack worth 500-
- Up
- Only 1 pack worth 500-
- Up
- Only 1 pack worth 500-
- Up
- Only 1 pack worth 500-
- Up

Supersports The Biggest Sporting Goods Store in Phuket with 5 Branches @ Robinson Phuket, Ocean Plaza Bangla, Phuket Step Building, Central Festival Phuket and OUR NEWEST BRANCH JUNGCEYLON PATONG PHUKET.

*Selected items
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.

Across
1. Saw in favor of word. (7)
4. Quietly recede before the French stones. (7)
8. Encounter reverse swarm. (4)
9. Laid up? Use the phone! (4)
10. In the sun at southern town. (5)
13. A carrot sits badly with peers. (11)
16. Weaving tapes? Try. (8)
19. Do they follow heads? (5)
21. I have a rat returning about headgear. (5)
22. It’s instrumental in the way Tom takes right corset part. (8)
26. Wishing evil to male rodent, point to a couple of keys. (11)
29. Little old guy is alter ego with half a mind. (5)
32. Strangely quiet steak. (4)
33. The only fish? (4)
34. Nearly tried, but in testimonial. (7)
35. Give now! (7)

Down
1. Irishman has wild parties for country lovers. (8)
2. Works in La Scala. (5)
3. Skin condition from Rhyme Time
4. Cops put little politician on ice. (6)
5. Electrical conductor in public transport. (3)
6. The fate of a biblical character. (3)
7. Cardinal beneath split. (6)
8. Oddly, enlist Mr Singer. (8)
9. Gryffindor, Slytherin, Hufflepuff and…? (8)
10. What is the name of Harry Potter’s owl? (4)
11. Appropriate and able. (3)
12. Nearly tried, but in testimonial. (7)
13. A carrot sits badly with peers. (11)
14. Scary AI supplying weapons. (8)
15. Cannon fire wrecks ovals. (5)
16. Prim about southern optical device. (5)
17. Still, nearly mythical animal. (3)
18. Penny shelter, say? Sorry. (8)
19. Flat clean fish. (7)
20. Surgical material to scan belly. (6)
21. Disliking a bit of poetry. (5)
22. Direction to jog when you run away together. (5)
23. Mia’s back in goal. (3)
24. We say yes in Marseilles. (3)
25. Bird in the museum. (3)
26. Wishing evil to male rodent, point to a couple of keys. (11)
27. Little old guy is alter ego with half a mind. (5)
28. Strangely quiet steak. (4)
29. The only fish? (4)
30. Nearly tried, but in testimonial. (7)
31. Give now! (7)

Solution on next page

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?

The words or phrases described below all rhyme with “weight”. What are they?

1. Guess too low.
2. Famous bridge.
4. Honest and direct.
5. Narrow sea channel.
6. Pal.
7. Work in a restaurant.
8. Cargo.
9. Lure.
10. Fire support.

The principle of Suduko 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 Suduko puzzle can be solved using logic alone. Beware: this puzzle has only one solution, which is on the next page.

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

The Cryptic Crossword

Across
1. Saw in favor of word. (7)
4. Quietly recede before the French stones. (7)
8. Encounter reverse swarm. (4)
9. Laid up? Use the phone! (4)
10. In the sun at southern town. (5)
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19. Do they follow heads? (5)
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21. Disliking a bit of poetry. (5)
22. Direction to jog when you run away together. (5)
23. Mia’s back in goal. (3)
24. We say yes in Marseilles. (3)
25. Bird in the museum. (3)

Solution on next page
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. In 1939, how many Oscars did Gone With The Wind win?
2. Which was Ronald Reagan’s last movie before entering politics?
3. Which city served as the backdrop for An Officer and a Gentleman, Harry and the Hendersons and Little Buddha?
4. Who was the first black actor to win an Oscar?
5. How much did Sylvester Stallone earn from his work on Rocky?
6. Which was the first British movie with sound? Who directed it?
7. Which movie launched Richard Dreyfuss and Harrison Ford?
8. King Kong was released in 1938. In which year was the sequel, Son of Kong, released?
9. How many movies did Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers make together?
10. Which 1954 movie was banned in Britain because of its violent content?
11. Which movie had the working title The William Munny Killings?
12. Which Arnold Schwarzenegger movie was banned in 54 Arab and Muslim states?
13. What is a movie’s chief electrician known as?
14. Which author said, “Having your book turned into a movie is like seeing your oxen turned into bouillon cubes”?
15. How many kilometers of film does a two-hour movie use?
16. Which actor died of a heart attack during the filming of Gladiator?
17. How old was Julie Garland when she acted in The Wizard of Oz?
18. Which actor’s scenes were cut entirely from ET, the Extra-Terrestrial?
19. In the James Bond movie, what is Goldfinger’s favorite drink?
20. Who defined a movie director as “a man who presides over accidents”?

Across
1. Island province. 16. Salad ingredient.
2. Eating plants only. 17. Sports channel.
3. 1,000 grams. 18. A little drunk.
5. Flower with thorns. 20. A little drunk.
15. *** and arrow. 16. Salad ingredient.

Down
2. Eating plants only. 3. Mortise and ****.
15. *** and arrow. 16. Salad ingredient.

Solution below, right

Quick Crossword

ACROSS
1. Island province.
2. Eating plants only.
3. 1,000 grams.
4. Mortise and arrow.
5. Flower with thorns.
6. Balanced left and right.
7. Emerald Isle.
8. Cheeky little chap.
10. Yes, in Spain.
11. Vote for.
12. Sea beast with sharp teeth.
15. *** and arrow.

17. Sports channel.
18. A little drunk.

DOWN
2. Eating plants only.
3. 1,000 grams.
4. Mortise and arrow.
5. Flower with thorns.
6. Balanced left and right.
7. Emerald Isle.
8. Cheeky little chap.
10. Yes, in Spain.
11. Vote for.
12. Sea beast with sharp teeth.
15. *** and arrow.

Solution below, left

Cryptic Crossword Solution

Quick Crossword Solution

Sudoku solution

Answers below, left

Monster Quiz Answers


EZ Trivia Answers:


Rhyme Time Answers:


Solution to Cartoon Puzzle

Solution below, right

Puzzle Solutions
Basil Fawlty in Pattaya

Here you are, an overweight, mid-dle-aged Brit with a Thai wife, two sons and a packet of cigarettes, stacked away from London real estate deals. How better to spend your golden retirement years than supine in a hammock, basking in the sun in Pattaya? You simply turn an apartment block you own into a 23-room boutique hotel! Haw! Haw! Haw!

The laughs are already coming. Hiring incompetent staff? Dealing with shady contractors? Coping with lunatic guests? Basil Fawlty, welcome to Pattaya.

Kevin Meacher has written an hilarious account of his tribulations as a hotel owner: Riff-Raffles (Bangkok Books, 2007, 207pp). Bug-eyed bewilderment, obsessive account of his tribulations as a hotel guests? Basil Fawlty, welcome to Pattaya.

Kevin Meacher has written an hilarious account of his tribulations as a hotel owner: Riff-Raffles (Bangkok Books, 2007, 207pp). Bug-eyed bewilderment, obsessive account of his tribulations as a hotel guests? Basil Fawlty, welcome to Pattaya.

Meacher plunges into heavy construction work while his wife Sajinda (“Mrs Boss” – a steely-eyed Thai version of Sybil Fawlty) handles the hotel staff on the first four floors.

Following the tsunami, the hotel is packed with displaced tourists, and when the room maids quit, the couple begin changing sheets themselves.

“I am especially fond of finding used condoms under the sheets, that really sets me up nicely for the day, I can tell you,” Meacher writes.

“I am considering giving some of our guests hygiene lessons, or better still, simply popping the old secondhand Johnny into an envelope and mailing it to their home address. Well they were obviously so attached to the bloody things that they could not bring themselves to dispose of them appropriately!”

What fun it is to watch him learn.

August 5, Wine Connection lunch & dinner.
The wine bar and bistro at Wine Connection in Chalong will host an open lunch and dinner every Sunday starting August 5. Any party size can be accommodated. For further information call Pascal at 087-8896704 or email: fh.phuket@wineconnection.co.th

August 6-11, YRock Summer Music Camp at Laguna.
Free workshops open to any act, talent or audio-visual crew, including musicians, bands, singers, DJs and media jocks. Live performances at the Laguna Beach Resort. For more details email: info@mangosteen-phuket.com

August 10, Party at BYD Lofts.
DJ Eddie plays his music as usual, scores of gorgeous ladies and passable dudes strut their stuff. Heineken draft beers at 90 baht net. All other libations at net prices. Exquisite free tapas, free occasional shooters. Thaai.

First two groups of three to six ladies qualify for the usual free bottle of wine or shot and mixers. Prize for most weirdly decked-out personality. Great for networking, meeting cool people, old friends, new friends and so on. 8 pm to 11.30 pm.

For details contact Stephan at 076-3430247, email: manager@bydlofts.com or visit www.bydlofts.com

August 12, HM The Queen’s birthday – Public Holiday.
HM The Queen’s birthday is also known in Thailand’s “Mother’s Day”. Since this is a Sunday, the following day will be a public holiday.

August 19, Meditation retreat.
Free monthly meditation retreats on the third Sunday of every month from 1:30 pm to 3 pm at Wang Kung restaurant, located behind Suan Luang Park in Phuket City. For more information call 081-3704005, 089-6476424 or 087-2838185; email: mananya@hotmail.com or poolskul@asianpremier.com; or visit www.meditationthai.org

September 5-7, KTO Junior Golf Challenge 2007.
The inaugural KTO Junior Golf Challenge will be held at the Laguna Phuket Golf Club. This international tournament is open to children 6 to 17 years of age who hold a current golf handicap card. Registration is US$285 (approx 9,975 baht) per player, including welcome reception, three-day greens fees and caddy fees, awards luncheon and more. Registration closing date is August 19.

September 6-9, 8th Phuket International Beer Fest.
a celebrates of probrews and gastronomical rents. “Such were the ridiculous demands made, I had been thinking that perhaps whilst asleep someone had tattooed COMPLETE TOSSEr across my forehead.”

Back at the hotel, two fat drunken louts in their underpants, merly shrieking obscenities, have tossed a pair of glass balcony doors to the sidewalk four floors below. Just a normal day.

Meanwhile, the couple go looking for a temporary home and are astonished by the noise and forms so quickly and easily on the faces of Thai people that is famous the world over, this is the grin of stupidity. This grin appears whenever you suggest to someone that they have made a mistake. Their head will drop, their eyes will be fixed to the floor and then every few seconds they will look at you with this grin. It is as though they are mocking you.

Inevitably, Meacher eventually begins to loosen up and roll with the punch.

“I have changed and, I believe, changed for the better,” he writes in his introduction. “I have become more tolerant and I have started to understand a new and very different culture.”

What fun it is to watch him learn.

After three months on the job, Meacher reflects, “The behaviour of farangs [foreigners], unfortunately the English in the bar-baric […] The Thai people here are also driving me around the bend. Their work ethic is non-existent and they live in a bubble. They are bubble people.”

And off Meacher is on a rant about his sublimely oblivious hotel employees. He’ll tell someone to do something. The employee will nod his understanding and do the complete opposite.

This leads to a towering temper tantrum. Which leads to tears and a disappearing act.

“The other character trait guaranteed to have me climbing up the wall is the commonly seen inane grin,” Meacher writes.

“…no, this is not the beautiful smile that sometimes appears whenever you suggest to some- one that they have made a mistake. Their head will drop, their eyes will be fixed to the floor and then every few seconds they will look at you with this grin. It is as though they are mocking you.”
A tsunami warning, loud and clear

While the “Andaman Wave 007” testing of the 79 warning towers installed by the National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) may have been successful in sending out the message that Phuket’s Andaman coastline has a tsunami early warning system in place, the reality is that numerous obstacles need to be overcome before the system can be considered truly effective.

The well-orchestrated and broadly-publicized media event at the beach end of Soi Bangla on July 25 (see News Pages and Inside Story, pages 4-5) stood in sharp contrast to what was happening at most other risk areas on the island at the same time – or to be precise, what was not happening.

In Kalim, the only evacuees were the 350 students and staff at the rebuilt Baan Kalim School. In Kamala, Chalong and Ao Po there were even smaller turnout. In other locations there were no evacuation attempts and at Ao Yon the sirens failed to emit any sound at all.

Reports indicate that the response was much the same throughout the region, though events in Krabi the evening of the following day – when seven sirens sounded false alarms – demonstrated that the system can be considered truly effective.

On the technical side, while most of the towers emitted sirens sufficiently loud to be heard throughout the areas they were designed to cover, in some areas – notably Patong – ambient noise levels were just too high for the warnings to be heard clearly.

While noise is unavoidable in a busy area such as Patong, the recent tsunami tower tests provide yet another good reason to limit unnecessary additional noise, such as the din from road-clogging soundtrucks endlessly repeating the same tasteless messages at full, ear-splitting volume.

The Gazette is pleased to receive mail from readers. Please write to us at 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Ampher Muang, Phuket 83000, or fax 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.

Letters

Chilling story

Kudos to Marque A Rome’s admirable powers of deduction in pinning down the evils of chilli consumption in exposing how people who eat chilli are duller than most (“Stupid Food”, Gazette July 21).

However, if his demagogical theories were to be mercilessly followed through, a rather chilling (such) fact emerges about the author of the piece himself.

It would become plain that an overwhelming majority of mass murderers, despotic dictators and all-around booves from the past century have sported conspicuous and – some would say – silly mustaches.

Sam Wilko Rawai

Dog fight

While I appreciate the efforts that the SDF Foundation (SDF) makes toward reducing the size of the street dog population, I don’t like the way the recent Making Tracks article presented facts many points that are highly debatable.

Without reference to any actual scientific studies to support his claims, Top Dog states that without a population of “street dogs” our island would instead be overrun by cats, monkeys, rats or even pigs, all feasting on our refuse.

Top Dog asserts – again without any evidence to back up his claim – that these “street dogs” are “quasi-feral” and that some “may not have had an ancestor that was a pet in 4,000 years”.

I would like to know just where these assertions come from. Has some university undertaken a major DNA study on the island that I haven’t heard about?

You can tell from a glance that most have domestic pet genes somewhere in their recent ancestry.

Rather than fitting the description of “quasi-feral” animals that Top Dog ascribes to them, the vast majority of dogs in my neighborhood would be much better described as “freelance pets”. Almost all of them interact closely with humans and are played by humans as puppies.

These dogs thrive on our streets not because they are “better equipped” as scavengers (rats would beat them hands-down in an even competition), but through the mercy of the local residents who have known them since they were pups.

While the number of street dogs seems to have decreased in recent years, is it really all because of sterilization campaigns?

Might not the dramatic rise in the number of vehicles on the roads be at least partly responsible?

Although I prefer the more humane sterilization methods used by the SDF, the fact is that killing street dogs is an undeniably effective way of reducing their numbers – just drive down to Malaysia and see for yourself.

Charles McBride

Chalong

Bus bumps

It seems to me that the Phuket authorities are missing the point.

For years there have been complaints from locals and tourists about the state of public transport in Phuket. The well-known tuk-tuk offenders, the ridiculous taxi schemes, the thoroughfares riddled with dangerous obstacles... and now last week on your front page I see the Phuket Provincial Transport Office has decided to make a big change!

But what is their change? Not fixing the problems that actually beset travelers, but moving the bus station out of town.

This move, to a less-centralized location near the warehouses on the edge of town, will cost 80 million baht. Just imagine what could have been accomplished with that money if it had been put to a good use.

I noticed that the only stated reason given was to reduce bus traffic downtown, but moving the location will force travelers to rely even more on the shoddy local bus system or shell out even more on tuk-tuk and taxis.

The authorities had better not read Top Dog’s article from last week too closely or they are bound to start shipping in rats to get all of these pesky dogs!

Soon to be Stranded

Middle of Nowhere

Totally stoked

I enjoyed your article (Gazette issue of July 28) regarding the surfer group known as the Kata Crew. I’ve been curious about surfing since my recent move to Phuket, but before my move, I read in a variety of sources on the Web that Phuket was not a place that one can enjoy surfing.

However, while this island might not be a hotbed for the sport, it certainly has good conditions on a seasonal basis. I’m hoping to introduce myself to the sport before the season is over and I will surely use your references for more information.

Hopefully the Kata Crew are a patient bunch since I’m a novice who has never shredded a wave before.

Paul Ramone

Phuket City
Hope for more and more customers entering the door – hope indeed that they’ll pour in endlessly – is a typical business ambition.

Some well-heeled companies, especially, achieve the dream and some are so savvy, in fact, they can’t avoid attracting customers. Wherever they set up, John Q Public, his wife, kids, extended family and acquaintances follow.

It is not mere sour grapes to say that such success sometimes creates a public nuisance, especially when traffic is so great that transportation arteries clog. It becomes a problem of life and death when those desperately in need of a physician can’t get to hospital because the road is blocked by people buying cigarettes and beer.

“That could be a problem,” observed a plump, prosperous, middle-aged tuk-tuk driver seated with his fellows at the Chalong Pier taxi shelter. Next to the shelter carpenters, electricians and store employees worked feverishly to install another of the ubiquitous 7-Eleven convenience stores.

“Just one minute, they say, is enough to make the difference.”

The driver’s shiny red tuk-tuk – red signifying good luck – was pulled up on the footpath.

“Parking spaces around here are hard to come by these days, especially on the pier road,” he said.

“The streets are narrow; the intersection is not well-engineered. If a car parks over there,” he pointed directly across from the need, “footpaths and buses can’t make the turn.”

Clogging of the intersection could become literally – a vital issue because the Provincial Administration Organization (Or-Bor-Jor) Tourist Rescue center, with the island’s most modern ambulances, is located only a few hundred meters down the beach road. When the intersection clogs, ambulances can’t pass – and U-turns are often not an option because the road is so busy.

The center, despite its name, serves the general public. So if zoning regulation ever seemed called for, this is the place.

“Just this morning,” the driver noted by way of illustration, “police had to sort out an 18-wheeler that knotted up because a parking pickup too close to the intersection.”

Although a large lot nearby is paved over, it forms part of the pier’s tourism infrastructure and, during daytime, fees are charged for parking. At night, it is posted off-limits – but might anyway become a popular after-hours gathering spot for idle youth once the store opens.

“Expect to see racers carreering around the harbor and the odd gang fight.”

For those in a hurry – as convenience store customers mostly are – the lot, lying 20 meters off, is not close enough to the door. So they’ll crowd their vehicles close as they can to the entrance.

“The controversy harbor expansion project and tourism growth can only add to the traffic. The road is already almost impassable in later afternoons during the tourist season. Every motor, car, truck, pedestrian, bicyclist, construction vehicle, cement mixer, rickshaw packed into eight 80-gallon barrels of benzene fuel; all the tourist vans, gigantic two-story buses and even larger power boats being ferried to and from the sea must use the five-meter-wide road. Thirty-five mile-ups are not unusual.

“Describe in shape a U, the road runs from Chao Fa East Rd, down residential Soi Suki to the beach, where there is a 90º dog-leg. Providing the only access for every business along the strand, the road collects vehicles from several crowded sois before emptying at the Chalong roundabout.

The 7-Eleven intersection is another tight dog-leg, and traffic using the road mostly passes that spot – which doubtless explains the store’s placement. Thousands of people – many hot, tired and eager for cold drinks to take along on the bus – flow past daily, and the programs of zoning standards is not appropriate to every locale.

Alas, parking availability appears an unimportant consideration for 7-Eleven’s real estate mavens in Phuket. Street-side stores located on the corners of narrow sois – there are many – cause traffic hazards. Vehicles frequently block the road, for example, in traffic lanes on fast-moving Chao Fa East Rd near Wat Thepnimit in Wichit. Many other examples can be cited and 7-Eleven, of course, is not the sole transgressor – only the most obvious.

“When doesn’t the Or-Bor-Jor just re-locate the rescue center?” wondered an American Chalong Plaza karaoke bar owner. Good question – but it must be recalled that government budgets are slow in coming; and land either scarce or too expensive to buy.

In this case, the center requires a seaside location to handle marine disasters.

So how many shall suffer needlessly, be permanently crippled or even die because Or-Bor-Jor ambulances become tied up on the pier road? How many speeding rescue vehicles will crash because of congestion? These are valid questions – as may be easily adduced: wasn’t more months ago that a rescue vehicle and a private car collided fatally – around 5 am when traffic is light – at the bypass road well-lit Tes-Losco intersection?

Zoning, then, is an obvious answer to traffic congestion caused by convenience stores and other businesses too successful for the infrastructure around them; and clearly one generic set of zoning standards is not appropriate to every locale – a concept fundamental to traffic-flow design.

Alas, it is a concept yet to take hold on Phuket, where our living space is increasingly chaotic. The war may perhaps avoid crashing; Others may be less lucky.

Perhaps the best we can do is – like the tuk-tuk drivers – paint our vehicles red and hope for the best.

**One zone for all and no zone for anybody**

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**When does the 90-day visa clock start?**

I entered Thailand on March 23, 2006 and was given a permit to stay that expired April 21, 2006. I later applied for and was granted a retirement visa and my permit to stay was extended to March 22, 2008. I was told I had to return to an Immigration office in Thailand every 90 days, starting from the date the retirement visa became effective: March 22, 2006.

I did as instructed, checking-in at Immigration on June 22, 2006; September 22, 2006; December 22, 2006; March 22, 2007; and most recently on June 22, 2007.

On June 22, 2007, I was told by an Immigration officer that I would be fined 2,000 baht because I was late and should have presented myself to an Immigration office on June 15.

This he said while stabbing his finger at the date of issue of my retirement visa, March 15, 2007.

I protested by saying that I had always turned up on the 22nd of the month, or the day before if Immigration Office happened to be closed on that day.

I also showed him the supporting entries stamped by Phuket Immigration on a document stapled by Phuket Immigration into my passport.

His solution to this problem was to remove the form with my contact information, staple it and replace it with another.

The man was unwilling to hear any appeal against his decision; repeatedly stabbing his finger at the retirement visa page.

It was a case of pay the 2,000 baht fine – or else.

So I paid up. My understanding is that any document affixed to a passport becomes part of that passport and to remove it is considered an offense.

Also, if the officer is right, then why was I originally told 90 days from the 22nd – and nothing was said until my fifth appearance?

Can and I get my 2,000 baht back?

John Wright Wichit

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**Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen of the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office replies:**

For foreigners who are in Thailand on an extended permit to stay and must register at an Immigration office every 90 days, the period is counted from the last date of entry into Thailand.

In this case, I can only assume that you left the country and the officer counted from the date on your most recent entry stamp.

However, this is only conjecture and I cannot give you an exact answer without first examining your passport.

For a full explanation, bring your passport and the receipt for the 2,000-baht fine that you paid so you can show them directly to Phuket Provincial Immigration Superintendent Pol Col Ittipon Atchariyapradit.

If he determines that the officer dealt with made a mistake the fine will be refunded.

As for the removal from the passport of documents [stapled therein by our officers], this is allowed if the documents are expired or otherwise deemed invalid.

If you have any other questions or require further explanation please call our office at 076-221905.

The Gazette notes:

From your description, it sounds as if you entered Thailand on a non-immigrant visa and were granted a permit-to-stay that was extended for one year on the basis of your retirement.

This differs from being granted an O-A retirement visa, which can only be issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs though one of its embassies or consulates abroad.
With the broiling sun and excruciating pace of life around Phuket, you sometimes find yourself in need of a cold beer or three at the end of the day.

Good lord, why not? It’s say’s a Friday night and you’ve slaved all week on the golf course and you now find yourself in a bar of some sort not a million miles away from Soi Bangla.

It seems to be the nature of cold beer that when combined with hot humans enjoying the convivial company of the natives in this part of the world, that what starts out as a civilized “few” can quickly turn into a full-blown session with amazing results.

Of course you never actually own beer, you only rent the stuff for a short while. Very soon the time arrives when you have to return some of your purchases. In Thailand, this is often where the trouble starts.

You stagger off through the happy evening throng in search of the bathrooms. After a few distractions, you find them in a pair, one male and one female, as they often seem to be. Bathrooms are a bit like marriage partners used to be, one male and one female, before the world got politically correct and morally corrupted.

But that’s a different rant.

Back home in “normal” Western society what you’ll find on the doors of bathrooms are clearly semaphore signs alerting you to which portal is best suited for your particular gender.

Possibly you’ll find a moustached, pipe smoking, lumberjack for the “boys” and a daintier, pony-tailed little minx for the girly-kins. This system presents no problem for even the most beer-added brain.

But as much in Thailand, this straightforward way of doing things would be just a little too easy.

In these parts you often find yourself confronted by two very similar pony-tailed and panta-loom-wearing androgynes, one on each of the doors. As a result you have no idea which door is supposed to belong to your gender.

By now you are getting desperate.

Then you’re thrown a life-line. A tall stunning creature in a red mini-skirt breezes through one of the doors. Clearly as a chap, your gender belongs through the other. Inside the second door you plunge, only to be confronted by the screams and shouts of about a dozen startled females.

“Ha ha! Thailand has caught you out yet again!”

In your haste you’d forgotten that in this confusing country often the most beautiful “girls” are in fact expert gender benders. If their great journey of self-discovery is as yet incomplete, many still choose to relieve themselves just as often she will subsequently plunge, only to be confronted by the screams and shouts of about a dozen startled females.

“Ha ha! Thailand has caught you out yet again!”

In your haste you’d forgotten that in this confusing country often the most beautiful “girls” are in fact expert gender benders. If their great journey of self-discovery is as yet incomplete, many still choose to live in this wonderfully consid-erate and accepting country.

The number eight is lucky on Monday. The number five is lucky on Tuesday.

The number ten is lucky on the golf course and you now slaved hard all week, but that’s a different rant.

Now that’s what Soapbox Sid calls customer service and it is one of the many reasons that despite his tendency to have the occasional rant, he still chooses to live in this wonderfully considerate and accepting country.

Leo (July 24-August 22): Look before you leap this week. As August gets underway you are bursting with enthusiasm to get delayed projects off the ground. However, you will need to be patient to achieve success. Take a tip from Virgo, but don’t listen to Capricorn’s ramblings. If you’re coming of age this week, expect the year ahead to provide you with some useful tips, but Sagittarius will remind you that has been left on the back burner. The stars will support your efforts. Cancer can be helpful this weekend as long as you are prepared to listen. Use red for inspiration.

Libra (September 23-October 21): You should be feeling perkier since your efforts. A break from daily life will set you up for the rest of the year. Money matters are healthier than you believe; an overdue debt is forecast to be repaid by the middle of the month. Romance continues at a snail’s pace, but you shouldn’t be in a hurry for commitment.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21): Magic is in the air this week. After a couple of quiet months, the pace of life picks up and the focus falls on socializing. Even if you aren’t prepared to be a party animal, you will be happy to make new friends, particularly if an attractive Piscean makes their interest clear. Wear marigold orange to enhance your charisma.

Capricorn (December 22-January 20): You are likely to receive words spoken in the heat of the moment this weekend. If you find it difficult to keep your emotions in check sometimes and are advised to concentrate on practi-
cal matters to avoid losing face. A stumbling block at work can be navigated by allowing others to pick up the pieces. Romance continues to be a ray of sunshine even when the weather is gloomy. The number eight is lucky on Monday.

Aquarius (January 21-February 19): You will discover some pearls of wisdom this weekend. If you have been looking for the answer to a business-related dilemma, you will now find out what you need to do. You should be able to resolve this matter by the middle of the month, which will leave you free to pursue a hot tip that is forecast to be revealed by that time. Wear light jade to promote positive expectations.

Pisces (February 20-March 20): The limelight shines on you this week. You might find it challenging to deal with so much interest in you. Taurus, in particu-
lar, really wants to find out what makes you tick. If you’re mak-
ing romantic contact with some-
one new, don’t dwell on the past as this will guarantee failure. The color salmon pink boosts confi-
dence.

Aries (March 21-April 20): Leaping around in circles isn’t as much fun as it used to be. During August, you will start making se-
rious plans for fast progress dur-
ing the rest of the year. Friends could find it hard to deal with your unusually serious attitude to life, but you will discover who is worth knowing. The number five is lucky on Monday.

Taurus (April 21-May 21): The stars will smile on your efforts to reinvent yourself during August. Those of you who have been in a rut recently will emerge with new direction. Money and housing matters are well-starred. If a change of residence is due, you will be happy with your new address.

Gemini (May 22-June 21): Treading water is the recommended during the first half of August. If you dive in too deep too quickly, you will probably miss a better chance. Aries has some useful tips, but Sagittarius would like to put you off the scent. Wednesday is best for talking money matters and Thursday for heart-to-heart talks with your partner. The number nine can bring modest luck this weekend.

Cancer (June 22-July 23): A brighter mood is forecast for those who have been down in the dumps lately. Good financial news from overseas will bring a more posi-
tive outlook. A personal situation is also due to improve; plan a spe-
cial date for Sunday night, when the stars will shine on romance. Wear the color spicy cinnamon to boost your charisma.
Low season is in full swing, which is great news for some residents, but not so great for the business folk who have to struggle through lean times in the hope of a few more baht to pay the rent until the next high season.

For me, it’s a time of quiet reflection, lower prices and the chance to roam free around Patong without feeling resentment towards European lager louts dragging their knuckles along the pavement.

Patong and quiet reflection in the same sentence? Of course, where have you been? You may or may not know of the little Windsulf Thai restaurant set in an idyllic spot at one of Patong’s most southerly points.

To get there, go over the bridge at the southern end of Patong Beach and head toward Tri Trang Beach for about two kilometers through the winding hills. After you see the Merlin Beach Resort on the left, continue about 500 meters and you will find Windsulf on your right, nestled against the ocean.

Don’t get it twisted – if your looking for five-star cuisine and art deco you’ve taken a wrong turn. Windsulf is basically a shack with a few tables and chairs, but this simplicity is reflected in the pricing of the quality food and always-welcome cheap beer.

**Meditations on Bangla**

TRAWLIN’

By Alas Swan

It’s a perfect place to have a couple of drinks unwinding with friends, taking in the sand and sea with beautiful views of Patong and reflecting on the great life you have.

Holy road. Quiet reflection does not, however, describe the road construction that has Nanai Rd up in knots. By trying to avoid the one-way system and police, I’ve had the misfortune of being trapped behind the rush-hour traffic in the construction zone and it added 15 minutes onto my journey.

I understand the need to maintain Nanai’s decaying road surface, but this is just a warning to anyone thinking of taking the same route.

However, the one-way system is a blessing in disguise, and anything the tuk-tuk drivers despire I enthusiastically accept with open arms.

When the high season finally arrives, I believe Nanai Rd will become the place for expats to escape the drama of Soi Bangla. With new restaurants and bars popping up all over the place and the area behind Jungceylon seeming to grow bigger at every bat of an eyelid.

I have many favorites on Nanai, including the long-standing Offshore Bar, which attracts expats all year round and is a great place to make some new friends.

If you enjoy a drink with a female companion or two, you can’t go wrong with a small bar named Highway 61 Re-Visited at the north end of Nanai.

In my previous article I mentioned the Market Bar at the back of Jungceylon; this is a perfect area to bar-hop, especially if you don’t have a motorbike, as there are many bars and eateries within a short walk, stagger or roll.

The prices are cheaper on Nanai than on Bangla, but another benefit is that the touts aren’t jumping in your face – you are never harassed into buying pieces of wood that make frog sounds. Though, if someone has a frog that sounds like a piece of wood, I might be interested.

Fish and chips anyone? Ting Tong Chips, around the corner from the old market, is my favorite English-style fish and chip shop in Patong.

The taste of good old-fashioned mushy peas, authentic chip-shop gravy, pies and pasties, plus battered fish, all make the mouth water.

Ting Tong’s is open 4 pm until late, and deliver free to the surrounding area.

If you have any meditations on Patong you’d like to share, or information regarding upcoming events, send an email to Alas Swan at wasnotwass@gmail.com

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During the past month, the Thai computer community has been buffeted by a series of new laws, rumors of new laws, explanations of rumors of new laws, denials about rumors of laws, relaxations of laws, relaxations of denial of explanations of rumors of laws. And not necessarily in that order.

Let me skip through the list lightly. Let’s start with the YouTube quandary.

On March 8 of this year, Thailand’s Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) blocked all access to YouTube again because some idiot posted a 44-second clip insulting HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Since then, various news outlets have said that YouTube access would be restored, and others said it would not. On July 21, I suddenly discovered that I could get onto www.youtube.com from Phuket.

On July 24, the Web site BoingBoing.net posted a message from “Thai blogger Myo Kyaw Htun” (www.myokyawhtun.com) saying that he could access YouTube from Thailand. (Myo is actually Burmese, but he was online in Thailand.) YouTube came back online on March 10. Then on April 3, the MICT blocked all access to YouTube again because some idiot posted a 44-second clip insulting HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Since then, various news outlets have said that YouTube access would be restored, and others said it would not. On July 22, I suddenly discovered that I could get onto www.youtube.com from Phuket.

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Predictably, on July 26, I couldn’t get through, and haven’t been able to get through since. YouTube doesn’t appear to be blocked, but all of my attempts to visit the site time out.

I have seen no announcement about the government un-blocking YouTube. The last time I heard anything about it, Thailand’s MICT was demanding that Google (which owns YouTube) provide the IP addresses of the people who posted the insulting clips. Presumably MICT could then use the IP addresses to (try to) identify individuals.

On July 18, Thailand was treated to a comprehensive new law – the Computer-related Crimes Act – that “allows police officers or government inspectors to seize computers on private premises suspected of containing pornographic material or evidence in connection with either general criminal activity or cyber crime... Impostors using others’ identities to send slanderous messages, or those who flood information on discussion forums are also subject to criminal penalties under the law” (Nation).


For example, there are penalties for importing to a “false computer, data in a manner that is likely to damage the country’s security or cause a public panic,” and importing to a computer system “data of a pornographic nature that is publicly accessible.”

It isn’t clear to me if the seizure provisions are merely a meatspace codification of an electronic “probable cause” law (where police officers can confiscate equipment if they have probable cause to believe that a crime has been committed, subject to court review), or if they can open up the front door of everyone who owns a computer.

I particularly enjoyed the bit that states that “[a]ny person who illegally commits any act that causes the working of a third party’s computer system to be suspended, delayed, hindered or disrupted to the extent that the computer system fails to operate normally shall be subject to imprisonment,” particularly because of the recent spate of botched Microsoft patches.

I do know that Internet cafés are supposed to keep logs of everyone who uses a computer on the premises, including making a copy of customers’ ID cards. It’s hard for me to fathom how firms with wireless access could possibly comply.

I’ve heard nothing new about the proposed law, circu-lated last month, that would make it illegal to hide your IP address. That law may have been absorbed into this new Computer-related Crimes Act. That IP address bill sent a shiver down my spine because of an avalanche of side-effects that would occur.

For example, Virtual Private Networking (VPN) – a technique for accessing a company’s network via an Internet connection – is used by almost every major company in the world, including hundreds (if not thousands) of firms in Thailand.

VPN works with a mechanism known as “IP tunneling,” which, most excessively and intentionally, hides a user’s IP address. It’s hard to fathom how a bill that bans IP translations could make it through any well-informed political body.

There’s more news: According to the Sydney Morning Herald (www.smh.com.au), on July 21 three hackers cracked the MICT’s site, www.mict.go.th, and posted photos of Thaksin Shinawatra. The prank, some¬times about the MICT’s com¬mitment to security. Subsequent press reports said that MICT of¬ficials declared that the attacks “were launched from three coun¬tries, one of them Germany.”

Personally, I find it hard to believe that the site was attacked simultaneously from three different countries. I also wonder if MICT officials have ever heard of the term “IP spoof¬ing.”

Finally, on July 27, the pro-Thaksin site, www.truthaksin.com, appeared on line, and was quite deliberately not blocked by the MICT. I found the site more than a bit, uh, revisionist, but you might want to drop by and see for yourself. It’s very slick – obviously well designed and well executed by an anonymous firm that knows what it’s doing.

I bet it costs hundreds of thousands of dollars, probably ob¬viously been under development for a long time. A couple of tell¬ling details: The main graphic is a map of India, and only a tiny pixilated rendition of Thailand (I wonder if the designer even knows where Thailand is); and on the launch date, the “The Truth Shall Set You Free” site (odd slogan, eh?) was only available in English. If you look at the source code for the site, there are two comments in Thai.

As a best I can tell, the Sierra Wireless AirCard 580 isn’t available anywhere in Thailand. If you own a modem that isn’t a new wireless Internet service, commonly called EV-DO, you’ll have to wait until CAT gets more cards. I have no idea if CAT will bring in more AirCard 580s, or if they’ll move on to a newer generation. I heard a rumor that a few AirCard 580s were left at a shop in Central Festival, but a check there turned up nothing.

Want to know more about Thailand’s computer laws? Or do you just want to get your %$#@! Internet connection to work? Join us for the PC Group Therapy session on Sunday morning (August 5), 10 am to noon, at my Sandwich Shoppe in Patong. Email me for directions.
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ON THE MOVE

Phuket businesses scoop top awards

By Matt Crook

PHUKET: Phuket’s hospitality industry received a major boost last week with the announcement that three prestigious awards had been won by local companies.

Mom Tri’s Boathouse & Villa Royale in Kata was awarded Wine Spectator magazine’s Best of Award of Excellence for the second consecutive year, maintaining its status as the only establishment in Thailand to receive the coveted award.

The Award of Excellence is given to establishments that offer a well-chosen selection of quality products, with 3,131 awarded this year.

Meanwhile, Phuket hospitality firm C9 Hotelworks was rewarded for its commitment to hospitality and destination marketing when it secured the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Award for Hospitality Marketing, announced July 25, in recognition of the Phuket Perfect campaign.

Launched in March, Phuket Perfect was a joint venture with Bangkok-based media company Delivering Asia Communications that sought to highlight Phuket’s idyllic nature and market 30 resort apartments at the Movenpick Residence at Karon Beach.

This year’s PATA Gold Awards received an unprecedented 339 entries from 28 categories, making it one of the strongest selections of candidates in the history of the awards, said Peter de Jong, PATA president and chief executive officer.

C9 Hotelworks and Delivering Asia Communications worked together on a 10-second vignette that aired on prime time CNN television programming asking people to visit www.phuketperfect.com, a website showing the best of Phuket living and how such a lifestyle is attainable by buying one of the 30 resort apartments.

A worldwide YouTube video competition, sponsored by Phuket Gazette and Thailand Public Relations Corporation, was then held in which the public were asked to upload their videos of the perfect lifestyle in Phuket to a dedicated YouTube page.

“The campaign really put Phuket back on the map in terms of people’s perception of the destination,” said C9 Hotelworks Managing Director and Gazette columnist Bill Barnett.

Mark Armsden, Delivering Asia communications director, said, “I think the strongest message we delivered during the campaign was we were not just about highlighting the product but also marketing the destination and the lifestyle the product afforded those who invested.”

Another company taking top honors at this year’s PATA Awards was Six Senses Resorts and Spas, Thailand, which won a PATA Grand Award for its Social and Environmental Conscience program.

Six Senses Resorts and Spas, which manages Evason Phuket, used the program to enhance the environmental performance of all Six Senses-managed properties.

The program included raising the environmental awareness of hosts and guests; the involvement of guests in activities such as mangrove planting, local school visits and visits to charities; and the founding of the Social and Environmental Conscience Fund, which will see 400,000 baht spent on social and environmental projects.

Winners of the PATA Gold and Grand awards will be honored at this year’s PATA Travel Mart 2007 in Bali September 28.
The Manx connection

A European visitor to my office told me that he had recently had a meeting with a financial advisor who recommended the Isle of Man as a financial base.

My visitor was unimpressed with this suggestion – he knew little, if anything, about the island and presumed it to be a place of little consequence or sophistication; basically, some sort of financial backwater.

I had to tell him that the opposite is true. The Isle of Man is one of these “tax havens” at the forefront of first-world and first-class financial bases.

It is perhaps as well known than the main Channel Islands, Jersey and Guernsey, but it has become a popular hot-spot for financial matters.

The Isle of Man is said to be the longest continuous democracy in the world and has had its own Parliament – the Tynwald – since at least 979 AD. Most elected members of the Tynwald are independents who in turn elect their own prime minister.

The Isle of Man is not, and has never been, part of the UK, but Queen Elizabeth II of Great Britain is the head of state and, should you send a letter to the island, the address will be “Isle of Man, British Isles”.

The Isle of Man is independent from the UK but has a long-standing agreement with the Kingdom in that the latter provides defense and diplomatic services in return for an annual fee.

The Isle of Man also holds associate membership in the European Union.

Located in the Irish sea, it is 50 kilometers from Ireland and the same distance from the UK. It measures a mere 572 square kilometers; about the same as Phuket, but the population is only 79,805, making it much less densely populated than Phuket.

The currency is the pound sterling, but the Manx (Isle of Man) government issues its own bank notes and coins with a par value to the pound sterling.

As a major financial center, the Isle of Man routinely offers banking and other financial services in all major currencies.

The island also has its own dialects of English and Gaelic, though standard English is more commonly spoken.

In 1982, in its early days as a financial center, the Isle of Man suffered a catastrophe: the collapse of a small local savings bank, the Isle of Man Savings Bank. The bank left losses of UK£38 million.

This ill-fated bank had no relationship to the Isle of Man Bank, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Royal Bank of Scotland.

The Manx government, realizing the importance of financial services, vowed that there would never be a repetition of this disaster.

To ensure that, they introduced what is possibly the best compensation scheme for investors I have ever seen. It gives investors a government guarantee of up to 90% of the amount lost, regardless of how much is involved.

There is also a fund to which all financial institutions must contribute. Although to date these extra funds have never been tapped, they are in place so that, in the event of a financial crisis, investors will receive 100% compensation.

The Isle of Man learned a tough lesson in 1982 and has gone to considerable lengths to ensure it shall not happen again.

The island enjoys a triple-A credit rating – the highest – from both of the world’s leading credit rating agencies, Standard & Poor’s and Moody’s. In our part of the world, only Singapore enjoys this rating.

Regarding communications, the island is credited with having installed Europe’s first all-digital fixed network and the first commercial 3G mobile network outside Japan.

It is now investing in what is expected to be Europe’s first HSDPA (3.5G) mobile network, according to the Manx Government. Normal telephone access is via the UK’s country code, +44, and the Isle of Man is part of the UK’s numbering range.

The Isle of Man won’t appeal to those with ill-gotten criminal gains. Money laundering regulations are stringent. All countries are ranked on the quality of their compliance regulations and listed in tiers.

For example, the Isle of Man is in tier 1, alongside the US, the European Union, Japan, Canada, Singapore and so on; tier 2 includes Malaysia and South Africa; tier 3 contains Thailand, and members of tier 4 are basically untouchables such as North Korea, Syria and Iran.

The Isle of Man plays host to a wide range of financially-related businesses, including banks, building societies, insurance companies, asset and financial management groups, custodians and stockbrokers.

Many offshore insurance companies have their international headquarters on the Isle of Man and it is common for even senior level staff from, say, Hong Kong, to travel to the island for training purposes.

The island is also a leading center for the formation and management of companies and trusts. People who use Isle of Man trusts find themselves in a secure environment; the legal and administrative systems are first-class.

In the case of trusts, no trustee will ever divulge information to another party without first receiving an Isle of Man court order, and these are rarely granted.

Full accountancy, tax and audit facilities are available to all members of the Isle of Man. Every day, people use the Isle of Man’s financial structures to access investment opportunities worldwide.

Richard G Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial-planning service. He can be reached at Tel: 076-381997, Fax: 076-383185, Mobile: 081-8014611. Email: info@loxinfo.co.th Website: www.global-portfolios.com
TOKYO: Pongsaklek Wongjongkam had been winning for so many years it seemed inconceivable that he could ever lose.

His last defeat came in an astonishing 11 long years ago – a defeat he later avenged. That’s a long winning streak by any standard. But on the evening of July 18, his 56-fight streak finally came to a halt when he dropped a hard-fought, 12-round unanimous decision to Daisuke Naito of Japan.

The two fighters had met twice before, with Pongsaklek winning both bouts: the first by a first-round, one-punch, 34-second knockout and the second by seventh-round technical decision. But just as Joe DiMaggio’s hitting streak eventually came to an end, so did Pongsaklek’s reign as the WBC flyweight champion.

When Pongsaklek signed on for the third fight with Naito in Tokyo, it perhaps seemed inevitable that he would walk away the winner once again – but this time would be different.

The bout was close for the duration, but in the final three rounds, when Pongsaklek needed one final push to retain his title, he had nothing left to give. Naito landed more often – and sailed harmlessly past his head. Perhaps the Thai, for whom winning had become second nature, came into the bout slightly overconfident. Overconfidence and complacency, no matter how slight, is all it takes to lose a world title against a hungry opponent.

Pongsaklek began training in muay thai at the age of 12, fighting on a monthly basis in small villages throughout the country, sharpening his skills and learning his craft. For five years he plied his trade, building a 40-10 record and eventually fighting in Bangkok’s famed Lumpini Stadium.

He turned to boxing when it became apparent he was a better boxer than muay thai fighter. He made his professional boxing debut on December 21, 1994, scoring a third-round KO of veteran Jerry Pahayahay of the Philippines.

Three fights later, Pongsaklek suffered a knock out in the first and a more seasoned and better-prepared Pongsaklek won a 10-round decision.

“Pahayahay was a very experienced and crafty veteran, and I was really still a baby in boxing,” said Pongsaklek. “Even when I finally defeated him two years later, he was still a difficult fighter for me.”

Throughout his career, he’s rolled over his majority of his opposition, rarely coming close to losing a bout.

The likes of Hussein Hussein, Moneloses Myekeni, Trach Nakanuma, Hidenobu Honda, Malcolm Tunacoo and Noriyuki Kamatsu all fell by the wayside – as did Everardo Morales, Gilberto Keb Bass, Tomonobu Shimizu and others too numerous to list here.

Despite his overwhelming success, Pongsaklek suffered criticism along the way – some warranted, some not – and much of it due to the unfamiliarity of his opposition to fans in the West, where the largest and most high-profile fights take place. Regardless, he’s always been a model of discipline and hard work and will certainly be remembered as one of the greatest of Thai champions.

After the bout, the always classy Pongsaklek gave his conqueror due respect.

“I admit I was beaten today. In any sports, sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. Naito was the same boxer I fought before, except now he is mentally stronger. It’s disappointing to lose the title, but I’m going to keep fighting in this weight class for three more years.”

Pongsaklek is still young and although ring-worn, he is far from finished. Just how much he has left remains to be seen, but if he can re-motivate himself, his chance of winning another world title is good.

A rematch clause was written into the contract and Pongsaklek’s promoter fully intends to make full use of it.

The bout will reportedly take place somewhere in Thailand.

Scott Mallon is a Bangkok-based freelance boxing writer and a member of Ring magazine’s ratings advisory committee.

July 24 results: Valhalla 2 Dogs Bollocks* 7; Simply Red 2 Piccadilly* 7; Offshore* 5 Queen Mary 4 (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings with 2 games left:
1. Dogs Bollocks (30 points.); 2. Offshore (23); 3. Shakars (22); 4. Queen Mary, Beach House (21); 5. Piccadilly (18); 7. Valhalla (8); 9. Simply Red (4).

August 7 matchups: Offshore v Piccadilly; Dogs Bollocks v Shakars; Queen Mary v Valhalla; Simply Red v Beach House (home team first).
Duncanson aims for 2 in a row

PHUKET: Local sailor Australian Scott Duncanson, better known in Phuket as owner and skipper of Somtom Express, which won Phuket Raceweek regatta last month, has compiled a crew to defend the title of National Platu champion at the national finals in Pattaya on August 13 and 14.

The crew are using the National Platu finals as a springboard for training for the Platu 25 World Championship 2007 to be held in Neustadt, Germany, from August 24 to 31.

Duncanson, an Australian who, while onshore, is Southern Regional Manager of PCS (Property Care Services), will again helm, while fellow Aussie and Phuket resident Anthony Gates, a professional yacht racer, will be the navigator and trimmer.

Retired engineer Brit Kevin “Ferret” Scott will run the fore-deck of his 25-foot, Farr-design boat, also called The Ferret, that the crew will use.

An underwriter and Bangkok resident, Ferret provided the crew will use.

An underwriter and Bangkok resident, Ferret provided the boat The Beaver on which Duncanson and crew won the championship last year.

Australian Jerry Chase, a consultant for international law firm Siam Premier in Bangkok, will be on the mainsheet, while fellow Aussie and Bangkok resident Trent Petersen will work the halyards.

“We’re not entirely the same crew who won the championship last year as some of the previous crew are not able to make the trip to Germany. New crew are Trent and Jerry, both are very experienced Platu sailors,” said Duncanson.

“We are using the nationals as a warm-up for the worlds,” he said.

PCS is sponsoring the crew in both the national finals and the world championship.

As the national finals and the world championship are strict “one-design class” competitions, Duncanson explained, there will be no technical advantage over other competitors.

“We do, however, have a brand-new set of Quantum Sails bought especially for the Nationals and the worlds,” he added.

In the national finals, Duncanson expects the toughest competition to come from the Thai South East Asian (SEA) games, sailing on Naiad.

“We have been acting as ‘tuning partner’ for them for most of this year. They have been training six days a week for the past two months and have a professional coach from New Zealand, John Weston,” Duncanson explained.

“They have improved immensely and have beaten us in the past two Ocean Marina mini-regattas in Pattaya. They will also be competing in the worlds, in Germany,” he added.

As for preferred conditions during the finals, Duncanson said, “Moderate winds of 7-12 knots are expected. However, as our total crew weight is right on the class limit of 400kg, we prefer fresher conditions of 12-17 knots.

“All competing crews are weighed before the event so most of the Ferret crew have been off the booze and on strict diets since Phuket Raceweek,” he said.

Joining the crew for the world championships will be New Zealander Aaron Taunt as tactician.

“Aaron often sails on Somtom Express. He is a former Etchells 22 champion and he has a wealth of big-fleet experience that our crew would otherwise lack,” Duncanson explained.

Looking forward, he said, “I guess it will be bloody cold! But seriously, as we will be sailing a chartered boat, are not local to the area, will be competing in the worlds, in Germany,” he added.

Haad Yai dominates

Prince of Songkla (PSU) Phuket campus cheerleaders took to the field during the opening day of competition between five PSU campuses to determine which teams will advance to the ’Universiade’ games held in Neustadt, Germany, from July 12 to 20.

Budding athletes from six municipal schools – Piboon sawaddee School, Wat Kajorn Medium and Surakul Stadium from Pattaya on August 13 and 14. Shown here is last year’s crew on The Beaver. A few crew members and the boat have changed, but Duncanson expects a strong showing both in Thailand and the world championships in Germany.

Plookpanya the golden school

PHUKET: Students from Plookpanya School topped the medals table with 146 medals at the annual Phuket City Municipality Games held at Saphan Hin Stadium and Surakul Stadium from July 12 to 20.

Budding athletes from six municipal schools – Piboon sawaddee School, Wat Kajorn Runsong School, Bangnew School, Samkong School, Plookpanya School and Muang Phuket Municipal School – took part in the event, which was organized by the Phuket City Municipality.

Students aged from 8 to 16 years old competed in a variety of sports, including football, takraw, volleyball as well as track and field.

Looking forward, he said, “I guess it will be bloody cold! But seriously, as we will be sailing a chartered boat, are not local to the area, will be competing against many previous world champions and America’s Cup crews, it will be an uphill battle for us. We are hoping to finish in the top half of the fleet and will be absolutely delighted with a top 20 finish,” he added.
This week’s Home of the Week is a stylish modern villa on the hillside overlooking Patong Bay. The property, which has a total land area of 330 square meters, enjoys panoramic views of the bay that can be seen from inside the home, but are best viewed from the rooftop terrace.

The spacious property, with 280sqm of interior space, has garage parking for two cars, air conditioning and a private swimming pool that also has bay views.

Inside are three large bedrooms with private en-suite bathrooms and either built-in or walk-in wardrobes. The master bedroom has a large whirlpool tub in which residents can soak away their worries before heading out to the buzzing nightlife of Patong.

Stylishly furnished throughout, the villa comes with satellite TV, telephone, Wi-Fi Internet access, water heating and is located within a secure estate.

The property also includes maid’s room, laundry, outdoor bathroom and a Western-style kitchen.

Ideal as a holiday rental unit, the two-story property comes with services such as maids and cleaners ready to take care of tenants.

Utilities include well water, electricity, telephone line, mains drainage and a septic tank.

The property is available freehold. Asking price is 26 million baht.

For more details contact Richard Lusted at Siam Real Estate at Tel: 076-288908, visit the website at www.siamrealestate.com or by email at info@siamrealestate.com
Long lines and rich inspiration from nature are the guiding components of the Laguna Dusit Villas, designed by Dusit’s in-house team of architects.

The plans for the villas took two years to develop and with the beauty of the nearby environment in mind, the design team wanted to make every view count.

Dan Simmons, director of sales and marketing, explained the design to the Gazette: “The style is Thai contemporary. Basically the layout is based around Laguna’s environment.

We wanted to build the villas without obstructing the view of the environment, and we actually increased the number of trees in the area as we built.

“Even the government is impressed by what we have created around the lagoon,” Mr Simmons said, explaining how the property was once barren due to tin mining but was revived by the Laguna development.

“Now there are more than 60 species of birds in the lagoon and more than 30 types of fish.”

Mr Simmons explained that the layout of the villas was designed so that views of the sea can be seen from the master bedroom, which is partly why the design process took so long.

“The way it was laid out so each one is very private, so you don’t see your neighbor and your neighbor doesn’t see you, but the view outward is beautiful,” he explained.

The 28 units, spaced around the banks of the lagoon, are three stories each and all face toward the water.

The units, which are selling for 32 million to 48 million baht, are expected to be finished in mid-2008.

For more information contact the Laguna Phuket sales office at Tel: 076-324366, Email: property@lagunaphuket.com, or Website: www.lagunaphuket.com.

The long lines of the Laguna Dusit Villas allow for unobstructed views out to the sea and plenty of living area, as seen in this computer-generated impression of the dining room.
Someone from Samkong had a go at me in the letters page a few weeks ago. I can’t really blame him – I mean I’ve had a pop at a few people in this column over the years, so I suppose it’s only a matter of time before they bite back.

I bet he was Welsh. “Pithy observations”? No, he’s got to be French. This week, I’ll do my best to expand my subject matter beyond the benefits of beer.

Here we go then – just for you. For some reason you mentioned vegetables. I’m not sure why, but it would appear that there are people around who actually like these things. Am I the only person in the world that thinks vegetables are just plain dull?

In fact, vegetables annoy me. They just sit there on the plate staring up at you, with their irritating blandness almost reaching out and tapping you on the shoulder. If they were human, they’d have a comb-over style haircut, say “isn’t that fascinating?” a lot, and they’d probably be fans of Milton Keynes.

Vegetables don’t actually do anything. They just occupy space on the plate that doesn’t have any meat on it, really. The vast majority certainly don’t taste of anything more interesting than water. We need to cook them and add some proper flavoring to them to make them even remotely palatable. What’s the point? It would be easier not to bother!

You can take a chunk of any meat, chuck it on a barbecue for a few minutes, take it off again, and consume. Job done. Follow the same procedure with vegetables and what do you get? Exactly the same blandness, but a bit hotter than it was before. In fact it’s probably burnt, so inedible anyway.

Scientists can clone sheep and send messages to the far corners of space. They can create computers the size of a grain of salt and generate energy from cow farts. In these days of the hybridization of plants, why can’t anyone invent a vegetable that actually tastes pleasant? Surely they could come up with something more exciting that the standard, familiar “grass” flavor?

At least fruits, which can usually be eaten without having to do something to them first, actually taste of something. It’s a shame they can’t be pre-peeled though – that can be hard work at times. If somebody else can do all the hard work for you then you’re all right.

Salads mystify me. You’re supposed to take a collection of completely tasteless leaves and throw them together in a bowl and enjoy it? It does become vaguely pleasant once a liberal dose of dressing is splashed on top, but then whatever health benefits may have been enjoyed have quickly disappeared. Cabbage, a salad mainstay in this part of the world, is even more mysterious. You can add whatever you want to that stuff and it still tastes of moldy charcoal.

Should you feel the urge, you have plenty of vegetable choices here in Thailand. Yes, I know I’m not a fan, but those who are claim that Thai-grown vegetables are among the best in the world.

Yard-long beans (thua fak yao in Thai) are one of the most common. They’re a bit like the green beans we see in the West, but a lot longer. The succulent green pods are only up to about half a yard long, strangely.

The young pod has fairly crisp flesh and smooth skin (the ones you dunk in that spicy sauce), while the mature pod is a lot tougher and usually cooked. The skin is wavy and fairly rough, with kidney-shaped seeds inside. The plant is propagated through seeds. It can be eaten with soup or fried with other vegetables. They’re a kind of health food, as the fiber in them is thought to help reduce cholesterol.

The small, red or green bird chili (or pek khee noo snow in Thai, literally “garden rat poo chili”) is actually a fruit, if you want to get technical. It’s diminutive in size, just three to four centimeter in length, doesn’t affect its potency – it’s fiery hot. Even the skin, without the seeds, is spicy. These tiny “vegetables” are not only superb, but an essential part of Thai cuisine and ridiculously easy to grow from seed.

Lemongrass (takrai) is another fundamental component of Thai cooking. It’s a long thin grass with leaves at the top and a solid, almost woody portion several inches long at the bottom end. It’s the lower portion that’s sliced up and used in cooking. Fresh stalks and leaves have a zingy lemon-like aroma because they contain some kind of oil. Lemon grass is used in all sorts of Thai dishes (a tom yum goong without lemon grass just wouldn’t work) and it’s also extracted into oil.

There are a couple of types of basil (kapow) here too. I’m sure that someone will write to me explaining that strictly speaking herbs aren’t vegetables, but I don’t care to be honest. Basil stays.

Holy, or “sacred”, basil is a small annual plant with flowers that grow along the end of the stalks. I didn’t even bring up the topic of beer. Whoops – I just mention flowers or ornamental plants.

Sweet basil is hairier overall and it comes from a plant that reaches three feet in height. The leaves are dark green with a smooth surface and a pointed tip. The white flowers grow on long stalks in several layers at the end of branches. The young leaves can be eaten fresh or added to food to give a pleasant aroma.

This is the one they use in minced pork with basil (kapow moo sap).

Okra (aka lady’s finger, bhindi, or bhambu) is a tall, warm-season, annual vegetable that grows into a bush. The green pod is long, tapered, covered with soft down and has a jagged ridge throughout the pod. The young pod has crispy flesh which becomes tougher as it ripens. Once cooked it has a weird, greasy consistency. Okra is a powerhouse of valuable nutrients, though. The greasy gums and pectins are thought to lower serum cholesterol, thus reducing the risk of heart disease. Research suggests that the fiber helps to decrease the risk of some forms of cancer.

There you go, my fan from Samkong. A whole article about vegetables, for your delectation and delight. I even managed to get all the way through without mentioning flowers or ornaments. I didn’t even bring up the subject of beer. Whoops – I just did. I’m sure you’ll forgive me.
When it is finished in 2009, the 800-million-baht Lakeside condominium development will cover 5.2 rai and owners will enjoy views overlooking the tin lagoon at the end of Soi Ton Bodhi in the Tung Tong area of Tambon Kathu. The five condo blocks, each seven stories, will house a total of 226 condo units in a wide variety of designs. Prices will range from 2.6 to 12 million baht.

The project, to surround a 55-meter-long swimming pool, will also feature a large archway spanning two of the blocks and housing more condo units at three stories and above.

Grenville Wilson, managing director of Phuket PRD Properties Co Ltd, noted that the central location near the Tung Tong junction is less than a kilometer away from the Phuket Country Club and “provides easy access to all Phuket has to offer”.

In an effort to make use of all the available space in each unit, there will be 23 different designs, including 24 penthouses. Each design has been tailored to expand outdoor balcony and terrace areas as much as possible.

Units range in size from 62 square meters for a single bedroom apartment to 200sqm for a three-bedroom penthouse. About half the units are 67-sqm double-bedroom designs.

“We maximize the space wherever we have the opportunity, by adding additional balconies or making rooms larger. This provides variation, even though all the units share common design traits,” Mr Wilson explained.

“In grassy areas, we created garden apartments to optimize the view and maximize usable space for residents,” he added.

“On building corners we try to put wrap-around balconies and terraces so people will get the maximum view as possible,” said Mr Wilson.

The four archway apartments, located on the fourth through seventh floors, will have prime views because they will sport windows looking out both directions. These 120-sqm apartments will have two bedrooms, two bathrooms and two terraces — one for each side.

The Lakeside project will feature full facilities, including parking areas in the basement of each building and a large fitness club and reception area on the main floor. There will also be a coffee house and a restaurant built on the property.

The buildings, all sporting “Lakeside” names such as “Lakeside Views” and “Lakeside House”, will surround the focal point of the property – a freeform swimming pool that aims to mimic beach-side swimming by creating a slope into the water. There will also be a waterfall and a plunge pool on a different level.

“We will offer rental return management to our buyers. With our project’s location we think it will appeal to people who want to play golf, have a night out in Patong or Phuket Town, or whatever activities they can think of. We expect it will serve people from Singapore and Hong Kong, though we also have several interested buyers from the UK,” he said.

Mr Wilson said that he kept UK buyers in mind when creating the project and made pricing a major consideration.

“To be frank, the key to our approach to the UK market was to make sure we had something with a starting price under 50,000 pounds sterling, which is basically 3.5 million baht. This will be an attractive selling point in the UK market,” he said.

“We will also have an official business center and we will provide shuttle buses to take residents to places like Phuket Town, Central Festival or golf courses, which are all very close by. Or we can take them to Patong in the daytime on the beach, or at nighttime for whatever other activities. We will offer housekeeping and all normal facilities through our management service,” he added.

Lakeside condominium was designed by an architect from Studio 906 Co Ltd who has been involved in many condominium projects in Bangkok and Hua Hin. Construction is expected to begin in December.

For more information, contact Phuket PRD Properties Co Ltd, 62 Lagoon Road, Cherngtalay, Thalang (Tel: 076-271773; Fax: 076-271418; Mobile: 086-2715319; Email: info@phuket-prd.com).
**Property Gazette**

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Sell: 2.9 million baht. Nai Harn, Soi Naya, 65 talang wah in quiet area. Call for rent pricing. Tel: 087-0261381. Email: pakadog@gmail.com

### ADO NANG/KRABI
500sqm of land for sale, public road, water, electricity, Chanote. Company owned building permit for 3-floor guesthouse. Asking price: 4.5 million baht. Contact for more information. Tel: 079-357258, 089-5873533. Email: j.aonang@gmx.de

### OCEANVIEW SHOPHOUSE CHALONG
Fantastic location near Chalong Pier with sea view from top floor and road access. 3 stories with shutter gate. Tel: 081-5544140. Email: gunnar@oilcanvas.com

### LAND AT SAI YUAN
Sea view over Rawai Beach with private access. Nor Sor Sam Kor. 7.3-81 rai at 6.5 million baht per rai. Contact Tel: 081-53384889. Email: mnbnorth@hotmail.com

### BLUE CANYON CONDO RESALE
Freehold ownership, 3 bedrooms, furnished. Comes with one club membership. Urgent sale. Please contact via email: nitya@aol.com

### NEW 3-BEDROOM HOUSE FOR SALE
Near Chalong Pier, private road, swimming pool, parking, garden. Price: 6.5 million baht. Tel: 086-2817830. Email: nigelpxie@yahoo.com.au

### LAND WITH VIEWS
Quiet, green area. 970sqm plot. 2.5 million baht. 732sqm building land. Price: 8 million baht. Tel: 086-2817605. Email: nigelpxie@yahoo.com.au

### HOUSE FOR SALE
New 2-story house with open-plan kitchen, dining room, living room plus 2 separate living rooms, 4 bedrooms, 3 ensuite bathrooms, laundry room, big verandas, 2 carparks. Chalong area. Call Frank. Tel: 086-6831964.

### KATHU HOUSE NOW ONLY 3.2 MILLION
NICE 2-story house with open ground floor, European kitchen with ceramic cooking plate, dining, living, bath- room, storeroom, terrace and balcony. The upper floor has 3 bedrooms with balcony, 1 aircon. Bathroom. Garden around the house, carpert. Fully furnished. 4 mins to Big C and Lotus. Big house, small price. Only 3.2 million baht or best offer. Email: shd11@planet.nl For additional details, please visit our website: http://home.planet.nl/~duang000/house.htm

**LAND IN KAMALA**
All with Chanote. 5.5 rai in the most exclusive area near Kamala center on flat land: 8.5 million baht per rai. Also, 2 rai with good sea view: 6 million baht per rai. Both rai with best sea view in Kamala: 6 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-2742308. Email: kim@kamalafalls.com

**NEW SEAVIEW CONDO**
60sqm apartment at Rawai Beach. Big living room with sea view. 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, big balcony, aircon. Price: 1.8 million baht. Contact Tel: 086-9685963. Email: m@bayproject.com Please visit our website: www.bayproject.com/invest/index.htm
**Property Gazette**

**PATONG SHOPHOUSE**
Sol Rico Bangla road area, 4 floors, 6m x 14m per floor. Price: 12 million plus. Tel: 087-8817600.

2 rail, hill views, Chanote, wall around land. Price: 5.9 million baht. Call Tel: 086-2746511.

**CHENG TALAY-MANIK**

150 ra, Chanote, panoramic sea view. From 2.3 million baht per rai. Contact for more information. Tel: 081-5974756. Email: se.rimi@hotmail.com

**RAWAI POOL VILLA**
2 bedrooms, 150sqm, furnished, needs to move in. Price: 4.3 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 085-7539062.

**BAAN SUAN KAMNAN**

5 bedroom house, 150 meters from main road, 15 mins from Phuket City, 756sqm in Jomthong village, 2.5 plots: 3 million baht. All of them Chanote. Please contact Tel: 081-0825707.

**RAWAI 2-STORY HOUSE**
140sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, close to the beach. 1.5 million baht. Call Tel: 084-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

**KATU HOUSE**
For sale. 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, lounge, dining room, big kitchen, corner house. Firm price: 1.55 million baht. Tel: 085-4733409.

**LUXURY VILLA AT KATA HILL**
Set in the exclusive gated estate of Beverly Hills, this villa comes with a pool, 3-5 bedrooms, modern Western-style kitchen, etc. Show house is now open. Only one villa left with completion due in September. Price: 15 million baht. Contact Tel: 084-0639223, 081-7888280.

**LEAMSORE LAND**
1.5 plots: 1.4 million baht. Tel: 089-7241140. For photos, please contact Jihshand@gmail.com

**SEAVIEW APARTMENT**
2 bedrooms, fully furnished, aircon, Western-style kitchen and pool. Asking 5.5 million baht. Tel: 086-6749080. Email: millcarpenter@hotmail.com

**NAI YANG LAND**
For sale. 1km to the beach. 3 plots: 20m x 22m (440sqm each), road access. Price: 140,000 baht. Please contact Tel: 087-7241140.

**PROPERTIES FOR SALE**
Condos, apartments, and townhouses. From 3.7 million baht. Tel: 087-2650118. Email: ant.p.clark@yahoo.co.uk For additional information and photos, please visit our website at http://housesforalephuket.blogspot.com/

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**C L A S S I F I E D S**

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Gazette Classads - they work! ...because they’re real.
## Property Gazette

### Classifieds

#### BEACHFRONT LAND

Koh Yao, Chonburi. Half the land is flat with 300 meters of beachfront and behind a calm river crossing. Ideal yacht pier. The rest of the land has a little slope with nice sea view. Thai owner. Price: 3.5 million baht per rai. Contact Sakorn at Tel: 087-6050365. Email: tim.kamalaparadise@hotmail.com

#### BEACHFRONT HOUSE

With sea view. All land has a fantastic sea view and good road access. Chonburi. Land can be sold in divided plots. This owner. Price: 4 million baht per rai. Contact Sakorn: Tel: 087-6050365. Email: tim.kamalaparadise@hotmail.com

#### PRIVATE LAND CAPE YAMU

1.5 rai of secluded flat land (2 adjoining 3/4 rai Chanote plots). Ideal for private villas. Tel: 076-239432, 081-0879237 (Thai and English). Email: crobb58@gmail.com

#### LAND FOR SALE

7 Rai coconut farm near Tapee River in Surat Thani. 80m wide. Electricity and water. Price: 4.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-0927697. Email: matklang@hotmail.com

#### INEXPENSIVE LAND

1/2 rai to 2 rai near Mission Hills golf course. 10% commission. Please contact Tel: 081-2704291.

#### HOUSE FOR URGENT SALE

Rawai area. 2 bedrooms, 105sqm, swimming pool. Only 4.3 million baht. Call Tel: 085-7839062.

#### BEACHFRONT HOUSE

At Kamala. 2 bedrooms, 2 stories, last one. Only 15 million baht per rai. Please call Tel: 085-7839062.

#### RAWAI POOL VILLA

New resort of 6 villas for sale. 4.5 million baht each. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

#### ANDAMAN BEACH CONDOMINIUM

1-bedroom unit for sale. 88sqm. 10th floor, sea view, fully furnished. Freehold. No brokers please. Contact Songpan at Tel: 081-7378662.

#### LARGE THAI HOUSE

Expression of interest in removing large Thai concrete-framed house (700sqm interior) with pool, located at Yamu village. To be removed and relocated to a leveled and level left tidy. House complete with tiled roof, teak floors, windows and grand balcony staircase, chandelier, 6 Yorke aircon units, 2 pool pumps and ancillary electrical and plumbing fittings. Interested parties should call Harry Usher. Tel: 081-2731740. Email: harry@baanyamu.com

#### LAND FOR SALE

61 rai. 3 million baht per rai on Thepkraasrit Rd. Tat Chaturai area, next to new check point. 1km to JW Marriott, 15 minutes to Phuket airport. Call: Tel: 089-0927897. Email: matklang@hotmail.com

#### URGENT SALE

Khao Lak. Bang Niang bungalow-apartment resort. 5 bedrooms with 2 rooms and 2 bunkbeds with 3 rooms. 6m x 12m swimming pool. Sauna, Jacuzzi, restaurant. All rooms with aircon, color TV, DVD player and ADSL. Parking available. Price: 9 million baht. Tel: 076-346065, 081-891484. Email: joerg@phuket.ksc.co.th

### Properties for Rent

#### BRAND-NEW HOUSE

Fully furnished, 2-story 3-bedroom, large living areas & patios, yard, bright & quiet central location between beaches and Phuket City. Must see! 40,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-0882179.

#### KARON WATERFRONT

Sea view from everywhere. 102sqm. Minimum 6-month lease: 40,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8928208. Please visit our website: www.phuketfurnishedapartments.com

#### ANDAMAN HILLS

Andaman Hills, Patong. 300 sqm house with amazing views. 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 10% commission. Please contact Tel: 081-2704291.

#### PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

Duplex renovation project directly on 15th fairway. Tel: 081-9732917. Email: brunuiviv@hotmail.com

#### BIG HOUSE FOR RENT

3 big aircons, fully furnished bedrooms, beautiful garden but no fence, near Chalong Bay. Price: 30,000 baht per month. Includes electric and water. For more details, call Tel: 081-8924311.

#### PATONG APARTMENT

300m to the beach, clean, modern decor, aircon, pool, fridge, double bed, parking. Tel: 081-0825707. Visit our website: www.phuketaccommodation.info

#### B.L. APARTMENT

New in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, car park. Price: 8,000 baht per month. Contact for more information. Tel: 081-8923163.

#### HOUSE FOR RENT IN CHALONG

Fully furnished house for rent in Chalong. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms and 2 aircons. The house is 2 years old, set in the quiet and beautiful Ban Maneekram Estate. The home comes with its own private garden, TV, DVD, fridges, microwave, washing machine, telephone line and internet access, etc. Rent is 15,000 baht per month, with minimum 6-month contract. For more details, please email Marc Husted or call Marc Husted after 7 pm. Tel: 087-8874659. Email: marc_husted@yahoo.com

#### PALAI, GREENHOUSE AND BIG GARDEN

Fully furnished, 2 aircons, 2 bedrooms, hot shower, living room, kitchen, garage. Price: 11,000 baht per month. Palai area. Contact for more information. Tel: 081-8924311.

#### BEACHFRONT HOUSE for rent, 1-4 bedrooms. Contact for specific details. Tel: 076-381118, 076-381119.

### Properties For Rent

#### HOUSE FOR RENT

2-story furnished house, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2-km from Lotus on the way to Patong. Located in safe ville. Tel: 089-6455843.

#### PALAI, GREENHOUSE AND BIG GARDEN

2 aircons, 2 bedrooms, hot shower, living room, kitchen, garage. Price: 11,000 baht per month. Palai area. Contact for more information. Tel: 081-8924311.

#### BEACHFRONT HOUSE for rent, 1-4 bedrooms. Contact for specific details. Tel: 076-381118, 076-381119.
RAWAI FLAT
for rent. 2 bedrooms, 2 bath-
rooms, Internet, cable TV, fully
furnished. Tel: 081-6067410.

BAN SUAN KAMNUN
In a very nice, green, quiet area. Just outside
Patong. On hill overlooking Patong Beach, available for
long-term only. 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Furnished, ADSL, aircon, UBC. Call Edwin. Tel: 069-7886650.

SECLUDED VILLA
One of three sharing a beauti-
fully swimming pool, tropical
garden near Rawai Beach. 2
bedrooms, full aircon, furn-
ished, UBC, TV telephone. Monthly minimum lease. Price: 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2810452, 087-8931110.

2 SHOPHOUSES FOR RENT
Best location in town, 115sqm,
newly renovated office. First floor: 3 rooms + 3 offices almost finished. Second floor: 4 rooms to reno-
vate. Third floor: 4 apartments to renovate. 30,000 baht per month. Call K. Phap at Tel: 089-6188894 (Eng).

KATHU
3-bedroom house (w/aircon),
den/study, 2.5 bathrooms, stor-
gage room, washing machine,
UBC, DSL, 15 minutes to BIS and Patong, 2 minutes to Central. Fully fur-
nished. 18,000 baht per month. Contact for more in-
formation. Tel: 086-261-
062, 086-8194737. Email: csav11@swiftmail.com

HOME FOR RENT/SALE
Located on quiet, private es-
tate on a mountain. 3 bed-
rooms, 3 bathrooms, pool, hot/cold shower, 4 aircons, Western
kitchen, pool, garden, fully furn-
ished, laundry, office, ADSL, 24hr security, 2 car parks. Tel: 064-3449576. Email: kurn kho89@yahoo.co.uk

SHOPHOUSE FOR RENT
Good location at Chalong
circle. 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-7850074.

CHALONG COUNTRY HOMES
Single house for lease: 2 floors, 4 airconditioned bedrooms with bathrooms w/o hot water, living + dining room, European
kitchen. Fully furnished, phone/ fax. Please make an offer. Available immediately. Email: mpgagar@fedex.com

BEACHFRONT CONDO
Kalm Patong, high standard.
fully furnished, 2 bedrooms, kitchen, pool, many facilities. For more details, call Tel: 081-
8920038.

VILLA FOR RENT
Beautiful boutique villas with
private pool, 2/3 bedrooms, available on daily, weekly, or monthly basis. Contact: Tel: 076-282394, 086-0043008. Email: info@ayudhya.net

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Thai-registered wooden boat for sale or rent. 65ft long, 18ft wide, 30 tons. Email: shaanxi.xian@vipmail.hu or p.atiss@freemail.hu

63-FT LUXURY
power cruiser. Fully equipped, water maker, aircon, GPS, radar, life jackets, tender, full galley, bedding, towels, plus much more. All for a very low price. Must be seen. Tel: 081-939-0176. Email: beaver@tsff.net

9M CATAMARAN
for sale. No engine, no mast and no sails. Price: 270,000 baht. Call for more information. Tel: 087-8919620.

NEW FISHING BOAT
Take a look at our Gazette homepage banner ‘Boating & Fishing Help’ for info. Email: makocraft@hotmail.com
Classifieds

Island Job Mart

Phuket Branch
We are looking for open-minded people who are seeking a challenging role within their career. Join our well-established international team and work for one of the world’s market leaders in real estate. Our Overseas Chain of Estate Agents Network gives you the chance to enjoy both a successful career and a dynamic lifestyle. You will be working with our worldwide offices and global property exhibitions program.

Opportunities Available

- **Restaurant manager**
- **Captain**
- **Sales & marketing**

You should be motivated, service-minded, pleasant personality, some English language skills. Email your resume and recent photo to: sinthavee@hotmail.com

**ABSOLUTE TELEMARKETERS!**

Absolute is currently recruiting Thai nationals for a new telemarketing department based in Patong. Successful applicants must speak fluent English. Salary and commission. Email: thailandjobs@clubabsolute.com

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Required full time for retired businessman in Chalong. Must have own transport and speak English. Duties include general running of house, bill paying, cleaning, ironing, some cooking, etc. Excellent wages given to right person. Email: verhar@yahoo.com

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Required for a New Charitable Initiative In Phuket

The Phuket Community Foundation is looking for a full-time person to run its operations in Phuket City.

The PCF will be officially launched in August with the aim of raising and distributing funds for worthwhile projects in the following areas: Poverty alleviation; Education (of both children and adults); Art and Culture; Architectural and Historical Heritage; Public Safety; Public Health; The Environment.

The Board expects that the PCF’s work will expand rapidly, and will hire more staff to cope with this expansion. To start with, however, we need a real go-getter who can help to ensure that the PCF’s assets and donations grow rapidly and that worthwhile projects are targeted and implemented with minimum waste and the maximum effect.

The ideal candidate will be:

- A Thai citizen;
- Fluent in Thai and English (spoken and written);
- Aged 30 to 45;
- An energetic self-starter;
- Full of ideas;
- Able to work independently;
- Not afraid of taking responsibility;

The post will carry a salary commensurate with the successful applicant’s experience and reflecting the hard work and responsibility that will be required of him or her.

Specific responsibilities will include:

- Working with the Board of the Phuket Community Foundation to ensure timely implementation of the board’s policies and decisions;
- Providing overall direction, coordination and implementation of the Foundation’s fundraising activities, and independently identifying new sources of donations;
- Representing and serving as spokesperson for the foundation to the general public and other organizations or entities;
- Making suggestions to the Board for the making of grants, and ensuring timely, transparent implementation of projects for which grants are approved;
- Developing and managing budgets, taking day-to-day responsibility for financial management;
- Overseeing all PCF staffing and administrative functions.

Details of the post will be explained to those called for interview.

Applications, in English and including resume, scans of ID card and education certificates, and the names of two relevant referees should be submitted by email to: Alizada@phuketcity@yahoo.co.uk

Looking for a job? www.phuketgazette.net/
Assistant Project Manager
- Male Thai national.
- Over 30 years old.
- Bachelor degree in construction, structural engineering or Quantity Surveying.
- At least 5 years experience in a management role.
- Responsibility includes construction management, contractor management, negotiating and holding the ability to deliver desired support between sub-contractors and architectural firms.
- Support information, controlling and evaluation of project progress.
- Excellent spoken and written English.
- Positive and flexible approach to all aspects of work.

We are recruiting for a hard working, committed and experienced, Assistant Project Manager to join our team on Phuket island. The successful candidate will report directly to the Project Manager and together will be responsible for the successful delivery of the project. This is a demanding and challenging role that will require full commitment to any task assigned.

Island Job Mart

We are an international property consultant having 200 offices worldwide providing property agency services, asset valuation, property and facilities management, research and consultancy, due to our rapid expansion, we are looking for qualified personnel to join our company as follows:

**MAINTENANCE CHIEF**

* Experienced in all areas of maintenance with ability to lead a team, develop maintenance schedules, plan preventative work & use budgets.
* The job covers a small condo block, the marina & offices. Must have English language skills.
* Tel: 076-206704. Fax: 076-206706. Email: zara@yacht-haven-phuket.com

**NANNY WANTED**

We are looking for an English speaking nanny in Patong. Please contact Nicolle. Please call for more information at Tel: 084-6470462.

**SALES/RESERVATIONS/OPERATIONS**

Destination Air is seeking ten new team players for sales, operations, and reservations at Phuket International Airport. Applicants should be male/female, Thai nationality, with previous experience, excellent interpersonal skills and service minded. Fluency in English and proficient computer skills are a must for these positions. Salary based on experience. Interested persons, please send CV to Tel: 076-328638. Fax: 076-328598. Email: hrda@destinationair.com

For more details, please visit our website at http://www.destinationair.com

**KINDERGARTEN / G 1 TEACHER**

Small international school needs qualified kindergarten/grade 1 teacher for one-year position starting Aug 22, 2007. Curriculum planning experience and PYP training preferred. ESL teachers need not apply. Tel: 081-8942560. Email: pamela@horizons-phuket.com

**PERSONAL ASSISTANT**

Thailand required part time with very flexible hours. Must have good English and computer skills. Please contact Tel: 086-2790837.

**ITALIAN CHEF NEEDED (EXPAT)**

To work for hotel’s restaurant in Bangkok - Room accommodation
- We shall assist with obtaining your work permit
Please contact Mr. Chirinet. Tel: 02-8614572, 081-6517867.

**SALES/RESERVATIONS/OPERATIONS**

Destination Air is seeking ten new team players for sales, operations, and reservations at Phuket International Airport. Applicants should be male/female, Thai nationality, with previous experience, excellent interpersonal skills and service minded. Fluency in English and proficient computer skills are a must for these positions. Salary based on experience. Interested persons, please send CV to Tel: 076-328638. Fax: 076-328598. Email: hr@destinationair.com
For more details, please visit our website at http://www.destinationair.com
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BYD Lofts, Patong, features 19 ultra-modern, 5-star, 1 & 2-bedroom hotel apartments. Spa and restaurant. We urgently need an experienced receptionist/GSA. Comanche system familiarity, team player, good English skills, proactive, helpful personality. Tel: 076-343027, Fax: 076-343028. Email: reception@bydlofts.com

**NANAI ROAD BAR**
Pool table, dartboard, 42” Plasma TV, own sound system, ready to open. Now bargain price: 350,000 baht. Call Tel: 084-8520862.

**INVESTOR WANTED**
for beachfront condo complex. Your 8-million-baht investment will yield a net return of 50 million baht. Tel: 084-4422510. Email: admin@thaisunshine-developments.com

**KAMALA BAR AND RESTAURANT**
Newly renovated in Dec 06, all moveables are new, great location. Price: 550,000 baht. Tel: 089-5911407. Email: Gordianne@hotmail.com

**PHUKET GAZETTE**

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following positions:

**Advertising Sales**
- Thai national with an outgoing personality
- Good command of written and spoken English
- At least 26 years of age
- Driver’s license and own car

**Administration Assistant**

The successful candidate will be a Thai national with an outgoing personality. Also essential are experience in sales and administration, a good command of written and spoken English, good management and organizational skills, and knowledge of FagaMaker and Office software.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to ann@phuketgazette.net

**Business Opportunities**

- **DANISH GRILL/BAR**
Selling franchise. Price: 800,000 baht. Contact email: admin@ideacon.biz
For details, please visit our website: www.ideacon.biz/dansk_grill_bar.htm

- **ESTATE & BUSINESS BROKER**
Price: 300,000 baht. Email: admin@ideacon.biz
For additional details, please visit our website: www.no1phukethomes.com

**FENDER AMP**
for guitar. 100W. Great condition. New: 20,000 baht. Sell: 12,000 baht. Call Tel: 085-7649413.

**DIVING COMPRESSOR**
Coltri-Sub MCMC with Honda engine. Portable. 3.5cfm. Price: 80,000 baht. Call Tel: 084-0047326.

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**RESTAURANT**
for sale in Kata Beach area. 4 bedrooms, 3 TVs, pool table, fully stocked, seats 80. Contact for more information at Tel: 089-5880839.

**HIGH INTEREST**
Earn 10-15% interest per annum. Invest 200,000 baht to 1 million baht. Contact Tel: 086-2879866.

**PIPW GALA BALL**
The Phuket International Women’s Club announces the most prestigious event this year - the annual Gala Ball on Saturday, November 24th at the Indigo Pearl in Nai Yang Beach. Watch for more details. Tickets will be in great demand. Contact Carol at Tel: 087-4178860, email: carol@aplusplussoftware.com or Sue at Tel: 087-2776948, email: arnulphy@loxinfo.co.th

**KAMALA BAR AND RESTAURANT**
Newly renovated in Dec 06, all moveables are new, great location. Price: 550,000 baht. Tel: 089-5911407. Email: gordianne@hotmail.com

**RESTAURANT FOR SALE**
100-seat restaurant on two floors, 2 bars and beer garden. Operating since May 2000. Additional room of 7m x 14m for staff or rental. Recommended by all leading tour operators. 4.6 million baht. Tel: 076-637258, 089-5873533. Email: j.aonang@gmx.de

**INVESTOR WANTED**
for beachfront condo complex. Your 8-million-baht investment will yield a net return of 50 million baht. Tel: 084-4422510. Email: admin@thaisunshine-developments.com

**NANAI ROAD BAR**
Pool table, dartboard, 42” Plasma TV, own sound system, ready to open. Now bargain price: 350,000 baht. Call Tel: 084-8520862.

**PIZZA RESTAURANT**
plus bar for sale on Nanai Rd. Ready to open. Now bargain, low-season price: 150,000 baht. Call Tel: 084-8520862.
**Business Products & Service**

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26 Hongyok-Utit Rd, Talaad Yai, Samkong, Phuket. Associated with Advocates and Solicitors Bangkok, Phuket and UK. We provide a wide range of high-quality and specialized legal services to individual and corporate clients.
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**pets**

**SIBERIAN HUSKY**
Brown/white. Beautiful Sibe-Rian Husky dog. 1 year old, brown and white thick coat, has inoccupation history from local vet. Excellent temperament and obedient. Has completed 2 months basic training and obedience course at Phuket International Dog School (PIDS). For sale to Farang.
Tel: 081-5778443.

**ENGLISH BULLDOG**
Brown/white. Beautiful English bulldog puppy. 6 months old, very playful and active. Big heads, beautiful and lovable. Contact at Tel: 086-4780074. Email: netbreed@yahoo.com

**COMPANION/ASSISTANT**
Retired American businessman wants to hire an intelligent, educated female companion/assistant. Good compensation for the right person. Tel: 02-777-7774, 02-777-7775. Email: lteens@aol.com

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Specific designs for villa and real estate complexes, quiet, safe and simple to use. Computer controlled, 19 kVA with 1000 kVA installation to all provinces.
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**VISA RUN**
Visa Run to Penang, 4,500 baht; Penang to Phuket, 3,000 baht.
Visa Run to Penang, 7,250 baht; Penang to Phuket, 3,000 baht.

**CHIROPRACTIC**
Dr. Richard Crockett.
Tel: 076-330889.
www.chiropractic-phuket.com

**PERSONAL COMPANION/ASSISTANT**
Retired businessman looking for backgammon players in Phuket.
Tel: 081-5778443.

**CAMERA & EQUIPMENT**
SAMSUNG CAMERA
7.2 megapixels, 2-months old. New: 14,000 baht. Sell: 9,000 baht. Also, Nokia 6020 for only 3,000 baht. Please contact for more information.
Tel: 086-2767510.

**PERSONAL SERVICES**
**LOVELY GIRL**
A Thai lady is looking for a Farang. 30-40 years old.
Email: innocentpretty20@yahoo.com

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AKC English bulldog puppies. Very playful and active. Big heads, beautiful and lovable. Contact at Tel: 058-4760291. Email: netbreed@yahoo.com

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Nokia 8800, brand new model, perfect condition. 20,000 baht. Please contact for more information.
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5 showhouses with accommodation. Includes restaurant, beauty shop. Low rent, well-established business center, fully equipped. Selling everything due to relocation. Contact Tel: 086-7850074. Email: tonydudley@eznet.co.nz

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Ontime phone booth, 7,900 baht.

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Tel: 086-2767510.

**PERSONAL COMPANION/ASSISTANT**
Retired American businessman wants to hire an intelligent, educated female companion/assistant. Good compensation for the right person. Tel: 02-777-7774, 02-777-7775. Email: lteens@aol.com

**PERSONALS**
**LOVELY GIRL**
A Thai lady is looking for a Farang. 30-40 years old.
Email: innocentpretty20@yahoo.com

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- **TOYOTA COROLLA 1995**
  - 1.5L, manual, 140,000km. Well-maintained and serviced, good condition. Price: 105,000 baht. Must see. Tel: 087-2709093. Email: s.anut@hotmail.com

- **CHEVROLET FOR SALE**
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- **TOYOTA COROLLA**
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ISUZU CAB 4, 4WD
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Green, VB, 36,000km, first owner, excellent condition, fully serviced. 770,000 baht. Tel: 076-296231, 089-9705265. Fax: 076-296541.

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2004 Evolution 2. This is a 2.8L turbo. Only 3 years old, 80,000km. Just serviced with new tires. One owner, one year tax and insurance. Asking price 275,000 baht. Please contact for specific details at Tel: 081-0894514, 089-4594143. Email: jspichert@o2.co.uk

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2000 Softail standard, 44,000km. Price: 690,000 baht. Tel: 076-388311, 086-1206896.

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Good reliable transportation. Why rent when you can buy? Black, fully-covered, removable extended body, 4x4, 1,300cc, CD player, speakers, well maintained, 5-speed, aircon. Price: 95,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-7917900.

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Great custom chopper, well maintained with green book, tax and insurance. 265,000 baht. Tel: 085-2994353.

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30,000km. Runs great. Price: 21,000 baht. Please contact for additional details at Tel: 081-2994541.

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1994 low-rider evolution, A1 condition, fully restored with over 200,000 baht spent on restoration. Also has over 200,000 baht extra original parts. Taxies paid, insured with book, custom and blue plate 11, Bargain, must sell due to company tax. 600,000 baht. Bike located at free-wheeler Harley Davidson saloon on Soi Sainarnyen in Patong. For info, please contact K. Roy at Tel: 089-8597808 K. Rung. Tel: 089-9896467. Email: royccutler@2o2.co.uk

HARLEY-DAVIDSON
1997 Softail model. Excellent condition, plenty of chrome, great looking, 17,200km, Screamin’ Eagle pipes and camshaft, Kurykuy air cleaner, Rare in Thailand. 950,000 baht. Tel: 076-283017, 081-9251482. Email: dodcan@trueemail.co.th

YAMAHA NOUVO
15,000km. Runs great. Price: 21,000 baht. Please contact for additional details at Tel: 081-2994541.

HONDA WAVE 125
2005 model: 10,000 baht. 2002 model: 10,000 baht. Please contact Tel: 076-388311, 086-1206896.

HONDA WAVE 110CC
2000 model: 10,000 baht. Good deals. Long-term rentals: 12,000 to 20,000 baht per month. For more information and details, please contact Tel: 089-8314703. Email: acarrent@myway.com

HONDA SHADOW 750CC
Good condition, only one owner, blue & silver. Price: 310,000 baht. Contact Alan at Tel: 089-4727588.

YAMAHA MIO TOP CONDITION
8,700km, mag wheels, weather cover & helmets, runs great. Asking price: 30,000 baht. Tel: 089-8483503.

HONDA PHANTOM 200CC
Very good condition, 2 foreign owners, well cared for. Price: 44,000 baht. Contact Tel: 085-0649881.

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10,000 - 14,000 baht per month. Full insurance discount for long-term. Please contact Tel: 089-4727094.

FORD RANGER 4-DOOR
4x4, Cariboy, 1 owner, very good condition. Price: 325,000 baht. Contact for more information. Tel: 084-4435833.

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Super clean and meticulously maintained. Fantastic family vehicle. Very cold aircon (front and back vents). Seating for 7 with seat belts and plenty of luggage space. 2,000cc, 4-cylinder gasoline engine with 5-speed transmission. Price: 250,000 baht. Tel: 087-9268852. Email: david speights@hotmail.com

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New cars for rent. Short or long-term rental at special rates. Please contact for additional details at Tel: 081-6078567. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

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New Brenderup, 204cm x 116cm. 40% import tax paid. Includes fittings, 56,000 baht. Please contact Tel: 076-296231, 089-9705265. Fax: 076-296454. Email: a1carrent@myway.com

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