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Phuket votes 'yes' to new constitution

By Sompratch Saowakhon

PHUKET: In the August 19 national referendum of the draft constitution, Phuket residents overwhelmingly accepted the new charter with 88.9% of all those voting in favor compared with just 9.6% opposed.

The remaining ballots, just under 1.5% of the total cast, were deemed as spoiled.

The official results were posted by the Phuket Election Commission (PEC) on a board outside the PEC counting center at Saphan Hin Gymnasium 3 about 7:30 pm on the evening of August 19.

Turnout for the referendum, the first of its kind in Thailand's history, was slightly below the target figure 60%.

Some 57.6% of the island's 215,433 registered voters found their way to the polls, despite heavy rains throughout much of the day and the fact that the island's many entertainment establishments were operating as usual.

Island-wide figures had 109,493 in favor of the new charter and just 11,878 opposed, with 1,812 spoiled ballots.

In Muang district, 73,519 of the 130,805 registered voters (56.2%) cast ballots, with 65,044



Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit casts his ballot in the August 19 referendum on the draft constitution at the voting station at Phuket City Municipality offices. Photo by Yongyot Preuksarak.

voters in favor and 7,468 opposed. There were also 1,007 spoiled ballots.

In Kathu district, 17,272 of the 30,556 registered voters (56.5%) cast ballots, with 15,254 in favor and 1,797 opposed. There were 221 spoiled ballots.

In Thalang district, 32,392 of the 54,072 registered voters (59.9%) cast ballots, with 29,195 voters in favor and 2,613 opposed. There were 584 spoiled ballots.

The results were hardly surprising after the Democrat

Party, which has long held sway in Phuket and most other southern provinces, came out in favor of a "yes" vote in the run-up to the polling.

Nationwide, the charter passed with 57.6% in favor and 42.1% opposed.

A total of 25,978,954 voters (57.6%) of the kingdom's 45,093,055 eligible voters exercised their right.

Opposition was highest in Isarn and the North, where voters in some provinces opposed the constitution by a wide margin.

Dengue fever claims two lives in Phuket

PHUKET CITY: Dr Wanchai Sattayawutthipong, chief of Phuket Provincial Health Office, told the Gazette that there has been an outbreak of dengue fever in Thailand, with two confirmed deaths in Phuket this year. Both victims were adults aged between 25 to 35, he said.

Last year there were no deaths associated with dengue, although 136 people contracted the disease. As of mid-August this year, more than 200 people had come down with the viral disease.

"We have officers from the agency going around Phuket publicizing the dangers. We will also teach people about ways to protect themselves and their families from dengue fever.

"As the main carrier of this disease is a common mosquito, families must take care to disrupt their breeding cycles and protect themselves from being bitten in order to prevent this deadly disease from spreading," Dr Wanchai said.

— Sompratch Saowakhon

Murray released on bail

PHUKET: Six weeks after Englishman David Murray was charged with the murder without intent in the death of his eight-year-old stepson, Narid "Curry" Budtharai, he is out on bail with a court date yet to be set.

Angered by the slow response, Curry's natural father Pissanu Badtharai asked for support from the Bangkok-based Pavena Foundation for abused women and children. The foundation has sent a letter supporting K. Pissanu to the Provincial Police Region 8 Commander Lt Gen Thaneer Thawichsee.

The officer in charge of the case, Tung Tong Police investigator Lt Col Passakorn Sonthikul, told the Gazette on August 21 that a court date had yet to be set for Murray.

"The court has allowed David out on bail, but I'm still investigating the case and still questioning Ramida Murray [Curry's mother]."

It was K. Ramida who first told the police that her husband had killed Curry. In the police report she said that Murray kicked the boy in the chest, knocking him to fall to the floor. He lost consciousness when his head hit the floor and later died.

Mr Budtharai, an ethnic Nepali, said that he has taken his second son, who is autistic and shows scars and bruises allegedly caused by Murray's beatings, to another province to live with his grandmother.

Mr Budtharai said that one of his concerns was that the charges against Murray would be dropped because he is an English citizen. Because of that, the Pavena Foundation and Mr Budtharai also sent a letter to the British Embassy requesting support and fairness.

Thousands affected by flooding and landslides

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHANG NGA, SURAT THANI: Residents of Phang Nga and Surat Thani provinces were evacuated from their homes as days of continuous heavy rains and flash floods from August 16 to 19 caused extensive damage and prompted flood warnings in other provinces.

According to reports from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Office in Phang Nga, there have been no deaths in the province from the rising waters.

However, five of eight of the province's districts have suffered substantial damage.

More than 1,500 houses were flooded in Phang Nga province between August 16 to 19 with heavy winds and flash floods inundating Takuapa, Kuraburi, Koh Yao, Thap Put and Tai Muang districts.

In Kuraburi, 600 homes were damaged and 2,500 people affected when landslides blocked roads. Three schools in Takuapa were closed as a safety precaution.

Flooding inundated 152 homes in Koh Yao, displacing 570 people. Damage there is estimated at 500,000 baht.

Officials assessing the damage and related costs in other districts expect it to run into millions of baht.

In Takuapa, Tambon Tham Nam Phud Administration Organization President Don Pattanapichai and mitigation officials waded through two-meter-deep floodwater on the morning of August 21 to help evacuate over 300 residents.

Continuous rainfall and forest runoff from Nang Hong, Kratha Kwam, and Toy mountain ranges converged at Klong Phang Nga causing floods inundating people's homes, he said.

Loans offered for hard-hit shrimp farmers

By Anand Singh & Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: With shrimp prices still on the skids, the Phuket Internal Trade Office (PITO) announced August 15 that they will now accept shrimp as collateral for loans requested by registered shrimp farmers in Phuket.

During a Governor Meets the Press meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall, PITO Chief Somphot Sangkhapong said that the office will accept Pacific white shrimp, also known as white vannamei shrimp, for any farmer who wants a loan.

Deposited stock must consist of 40 to 60 shrimp per kilogram, priced between 105 and 140 baht per kilogram, with a total value

not exceeding two million baht. The deposit period will extend until October of this year, and farmers have four months to withdraw their stock after deposit.

The nationwide program will have shrimp stored in one of seven cold storage units around the country, but Phuket farmers must travel to the nearest unit, in Songkhla, to receive the loan.

K. Somphot said that about 109 tons of shrimp, valued at 15.3 million baht, have already been deposited from nine farmers in Phuket.

This is the latest scheme, following the Blue Flag Shrimp Festival, to help farmers hard-hit by lower prices this year.

K. Somphot said the shrimp festival,

which has been running for two months with three locations in Phuket, will continue until the prices rise. On average, the shrimp festival has sales of 1.5 tons per day, at an average price of 140 baht per kilogram.

The locations for the shrimp festival are:

- The Esso service station on Thepkasattri Rd, near Supercheap, open daily from 8 am to 1 pm.

- The Phuket Provincial Commercial Affairs Office, opposite Seng Ho Bookstore on Montri Rd in Phuket City, open Monday to Friday, 3 pm to 6 pm.

- The Moom Muang Market on Chao Fa East Rd, daily from 8 am to 6 pm, or until stock runs out.

US donates bomb blanket to Phuket

By Semacote Suganya

PATONG: A US Embassy official on August 15 presented a "bomb blanket" to Kathu Police Station in a ceremony attended by Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch.

Scott Bernat, Chief of the Naval Security Force Protection Detachment at the US Embassy in Bangkok, told the *Gazette* that the blanket – technically known as a "bomb suppression blanket" – is made of Kevlar and light enough to be carried and deployed by a single officer.

A bomb blanket is designed to be used by first responders if there is a report of a suspicious package.

"It's a device that is used when you're not sure if an object is a bomb or not. The police can take it with them and spread it out over the top of the object."

If an explosion happens underneath before explosive ordnance people arrive to disarm or take it away, then it minimizes the damage that could be caused by the shrapnel from the bomb to people in the area," he said.

Bombs in Thailand are of-



US Embassy representative Scott Bernat (left) hands a bomb suppression blanket to Pol Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch.

ten packed with nails or other metal objects to maximize carnage, he said.

The 66,000-baht blanket is the third given by the US Embassy to police in Phuket, who have also received training in their deployment.

The other two blankets are large enough to be placed over motorcycles but are too heavy to be carried by a single person, he said.

Mr Bernat, who coordinates security efforts during port visits to Phuket and Pattaya by US Navy and Marine personnel, said there are currently no US Navy ships scheduled to come to port in Thailand.

Interest in bomb blankets has increased following the violence in the Deep South, where bomb attacks have become common.

In April, Narathiwat Provincial Police Deputy Commissioner Col Napadol Phueksomol lost his left leg while leading a bomb disposal unit to defuse a roadside bomb. He was unprotected at the time.

Free SME development seminar

PHUKET CITY: Intel Micro Electronics will join forces with TOT to present a free seminar titled "The key to SME development" at The Metropole hotel on August 31.

The seminar will provide information on how local small- and medium-sized enterprises can adapt and better compete in today's highly competitive economy.

Pavibee Hemvipat, project manager of In Marketing, told the *Gazette* that the seminar will be in two parts. In the early afternoon, the four speakers will be Umaporn Rattanaprakarn, business development manager of Intel Micro Electronics; Suganya Srisuthep, channel sales specialist from Lenovo; Narumon Petchnuam, marketing strategy department from TOT; and Tanet Tantipiriyakit, deputy chairman of Phuket Chamber of Commerce.

Later in the afternoon, three speakers from local businesses will give presentations on their experiences with successful SMEs.

The seminar will be from 1 pm to 4:30 pm.

Attendance is by booking only, with 150 seats available. Bookings must be made before August 29.

For more information or to book a place at the seminar contact Pavinee Hemwipart at Tel: 025-142330, 086-5335920 or Fax: 025-142329.

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Adisak Hemyoo (center), honorary secretary of Thai Rugby Union (TRU) is flanked by the TRU's Don McBain (right) and Patrick Cotter of the Phuket Vagabonds Rugby Club.

80-80 rugby to return to Phuket

PHUKET CITY: Adisak Hemyoo, honorary secretary of Thai Rugby Union (TRU), confirmed on August 16 that 80-80 rugby will return to Phuket with an international tournament on the island from November 16 to 23.

Teams from Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei and Sri Lanka, as well as from big guns Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, have all confirmed to take part, along with hosts, the Thai national rugby squad.

The world's first international 80-80 rugby tournament, in which all players must each not weigh more than 85 kilograms, was held in Phuket in 2005. Last year, the tournament in Phuket was canceled due to international concerns over the coup; a smaller tournament was held in Bangkok instead.

"Teams from Wales, England and France have also expressed serious interest in joining the event," said Don McBain, one of the key organizers of the event, adding that a team from Indonesia is also considering taking part.

Indonesia recently beat Brunei to win the Borneo Cup and the Asian Nations Series Competition.

"The quality of rugby is expected to be very high," said K. Adisak.

Although a venue has yet to be confirmed for the tournament, officially dubbed "In celebration of HM The King's 80th Birthday,

International Rugby-80 Tournament 2007", the preferred site is Karon Stadium, where K. Adisak inspected the pitch and facilities on August 16.

Concern was expressed over the condition the pitch at Karon will be in at the time of the tournament.

Karon Stadium is heavily used for local soccer competitions, but unlike in soccer, a poor-quality rugby pitch is likely to result in serious injuries.

K. Adisak said, "The 80-80 rugby tournament is not like other events where the pitch is used all day, every day of the competition. We will be playing only a few games on it a day. The pitch will get a rest on the lay days."

The unconfirmed schedule currently has teams playing on the Saturday, Monday, Wednesday and Friday of the event.

"In the competitions being held there now, they use the ground every day. If they do not allow the ground to be used before the event, the grass will grow back within two weeks," said K. Adisak.

K. Adisak will meet his counterparts in Japan and Korea next week to discuss details of teams from those countries taking part in the event.

The 80-80 rugby games will be televised in Thailand on True Visions, but broadcasts outside Thailand are still being brokered, K. Adisak added.

AOT cuts number of limos at airport

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: The Phuket Limousine and Business service Cooperative (PBC) is seeking support from the province after Airports of Thailand Public Co Ltd (AOT) slashed the number of vehicles allowed to operate at the airport from 150 to just 90.

At an August 15 meeting with Phuket Vice-Governor Tri Augkaradacha, PBC President Manode Chupak said the reduction would cause many PBC members to lose their livelihoods.

The PBC applied for a renewal of the concession so it could continue working at the airport after its existing contract expired on June 30. It is currently operating 150 vehicles at the airport, comprising 110 cars and 40 vans. All are allowed to continue operating there under a verbal agreement with AOT until the new contract has been signed, he said.

PBC pays 820,000 baht per month in concession fees to AOT, a rate which increases 10% annually, he said.

"After our contract ended, AOT asked us to submit a set of documents that included registration papers of all the PBC vehicles that we intend to operate at the airport. I sent a first batch of 90 registration papers, followed by the remaining 60 about a week later.

"The reason for the delay for those vehicles was that the registration papers were needed for insurance renewal procedures. The delay caused us to miss the due date," he explained.

Of the 60 vehicles that would no longer be able to continue service under the terms now being offered by AOT, 40 are vans and the other 20 are limousine taxis.

It is not yet clear whether the drastic reduction represents

a simple bureaucratic oversight by AOT, an attempt by that agency to force the PBC to improve its services – or some other cause.

"We received a reply from AOT stating that they agreed to renew the concession for 90 cars, but this letter does not represent a final decision on their part. We still can appeal. When we do, we will also submit a Memorandum of Understanding [MOU] signed by both the PBC and the Phuket provincial government promising to improve our services," he said.

PBC drivers have for years been a constant source of tourist complaints, especially against drivers operating its van service. Passengers have been routinely left to wait long periods at a location on the bypass road, where they were hounded by touts selling tours and other unwanted services.

To put an end to that, the PBC on August 12 launched a new 100-baht van service direct to Phuket City and threatened harsh disciplinary action against any drivers found continuing to allow tourists to be inconvenienced.

At the August 15 meeting, V/Gov Tri reiterated the need for the PBC to improve its service and invited local officials from the Tourism Authority of Thailand, AOT and Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO) to help find a solution.

Before petitioning the AOT to allow the 60 vehicles to continue operating, the PBC should first sign an MOU promising to upgrade its service, he said.

However, the decision whether to allow the 60 vehicles under the new concession would remain at the discretion of AOT management in Bangkok, he said.

Rubber vendor killed in mystery shooting

THALANG: In a crime that police have no suspect and no motive for, Chaipayat Poonma, 31, died after being shot in the back while riding his motorcycle on Srisoonthorn Rd on August 19.

About 3 pm, a local villager alerted police of a man lying on the sidewalk near the Heroines Monument. Police rushed to the scene and found the man still alive but barely breathing, next to a toppled black and red Honda Wave motorcycle.

He was rushed to Thalang Hospital, but died of his injuries on the way.

K. Chaipayat, a resident of Thalang, was a self-employed liquid-rubber salesman.

Capt Sanit Nukong of Thalang Police told the *Gazette* that doctors at Thalang Hospital found two bullets in K. Chaipayat's body and two additional bullet wounds.

Capt Sanit said that police had no leads as to why Chaipayat was killed, but the deceased's friends would be questioned to find out if he had any enemies.

No witnesses to the shooting have been found at this time, he added.

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Cluttered and messy was how one lecturer described Phuket Rajabhat University (PRU) Phuket campus.

"Nothing falls into place," he said, declining to be named. "There are advertisements made of fabric that people have hung up all over the place, particularly around the main entrance."

"There are no enforced regulations as to what should be where. They look so messy and are horrible to look at when you're around the university's main gate."

The bad first impressions visitors to PRU receive are only the beginning of the problems. As well as layers upon layers of banners hanging around the entrance, the lecturer said that there are many problems with parking areas reserved for students.

"The parking spaces behind the science faculty have been reserved for large vehicles," he said. "But big vehicles are not parking in their designated spaces; they are instead parking in front of building number three, which has very little space. People park where they are not supposed to. Even the motorbikes are becoming a big problem because there are so many of them and they have no designated place to park."

Inside the university faculties, many of the buildings are filled with obsolete equipment, said the lecturer. "In the newest building at the university, building number 11, the projector screen is already broken and cannot be retracted. We have to just leave it that way. This is supposed to be the newest and most up-to-date facility in the university; poor equipment interferes with our teaching."

The lecturer went on to say that a number of projectors at the university are faulty. Lecturers sometimes have to resort to swapping the faulty projectors with working ones from other rooms when there is nobody teaching in them. As a result, lecturers often arrive at their class-

Rajabhat shamed

Phuket Rajabhat University has come under fire for poor standards of facilities, with students and lecturers complaining of foul odors, broken toilets, poor parking and outdated equipment.

The Phuket campus, founded in 1971 as a teachers' college and subsequently upgraded to institute and then full university status, sits on 354 rai in Rassada, just north of Phuket City.

Gazette reporters find out what has given students and lecturers cause for complaint.



LOCAL SLUMS: Abandoned neighborhood or university campus? Some of the roads and buildings at Phuket Rajabhat are in desperate need of repair.

rooms to find that the projectors they intended to use have been swapped for faulty ones. The lecturers then have to wait for other classes to finish before getting a projector that works.

"The classroom chairs are also a problem," said the lecturer. "We use folding chairs and many of them are old and battered, so they tend to be unstable. Students have to sit on these chairs while in lectures. It's very uncomfortable for them. Even the air conditioning units are faulty and have never been fixed or replaced."

In the canteen, where students take their meals every day, bird excrement can be found in

many places because of the large sparrow population that has made the canteen its home, said the lecturer. The toilets are similarly grim in places, with the toilets located in the building closest to the Dean's Office in building number one being the cleanest.

In stark contrast, the toilets of building number nine are extremely dirty, with out-of-order stalls, ineffective cleaning systems, foul smells, fungi on the walls and leaking pipes.

"Due to the leaks, some of the doors have got so wet that they have become swollen and can no longer be closed," said the lecturer.

"People have been constantly complaining about the toilets in building nine," he continued. "Sometimes the cleaners find it impossible to get rid of all the excrement because the cleaning

systems don't work, so the cleaners just leave it there for days. The smell is unbearable. There are good facilities on campus, such as in the library, but many still need to be improved."

Pharnutchacorn Yukhoonthon, 25, a second-year undergraduate student who studies on Saturdays and Sundays, told the Gazette, "Students in building number seven don't use all of the bathrooms. The problem is that the waterworks system is not working and women don't like to only use tissue when they go to the bathroom. There is always a bad smell and urine and feces stuck in the toilet. It makes me crazy."

"Most of the toilets still look new," added K. Pharnutchacorn, "but they just aren't clean."

"I would like to see the university improve the quality of the facilities," said the lecturer, who also called for better signposting as many parents and newcomers to the campus have been getting lost.

Praewwan Kitrungrwat-anakorn, a second-year Rajabhat

student, said, "There is a bad smell coming from the canal behind buildings number three, eight and 11. The toilets are clean, but on the forth floor of building number three there are large cracks in the walls. There are many areas of the university that are still dirty and that make the university look old."

Not everything at Rajabhat is bad, according to K. Praewwan. The computer room houses 80 computers and is open to all students until 10 pm, whereas up until 2005 there were only 40 computers and the computer room closed at 6 pm.

"On Saturdays and Sundays we have a market at the university. This gives the students a chance to make money for themselves without having to go to the weekend market, which is too far for us to go. There is some trash after the market closes, but it's not too much because all the students help each other clean up," said Praewwan.

Pharnutchacorn said that she has difficulty finding some-

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over shoddy facilities



MESSY (above): Students and lecturers at Phuket Rajabhat are fed up with the amount of rubbish left strewn around their campus.

TOILET TERRORS (left): The toilets in building number nine at Phuket Rajabhat are so disgusting that many students refuse to use them.

where to park her car. "Many of the students use a car. It's really hard to find parking spaces though; sometimes I have to park my car in an area near a forest. When the university holds events or activities there are a lot of students who bring their cars. You have to drive around about five times before you can find somewhere to park."

"I know the university has its own rules, but they don't work. Nobody wants to solve this problem; I really don't understand that," she added.

PRU Director Dr Chirawat Nitchanet said, "We have many ongoing projects to develop our university, such as the market for students to do business, which has a budget of five million baht from the Commission of Higher Edu-

cation. We invite local lecturers and business owners to teach the students about running their own businesses. This project has been going on for two years.

"I always remind students to clean up their areas and to not make traffic jams because there are many undergraduate students who come to study on Saturdays and Sundays. At the moment, we have a construction project going on in front of the university for 16 two-story shophouses which we will rent out as restaurants and shops to raise more money," Dr Chirawat continued.

"We have 12,000 students here, and there are 2,000 new students each year," said Dr Chirawat. "I asked for a budget for a new nine-story building and 2,500-seat meeting hall; we got a

budget of 120 million baht. We also have a project to paint the old buildings and we have a six-million-baht budget to improve the scenery, including walkways and toilets. Our university is 35 years old and some parts of it are worn out.

One of the assistant directors of campus management, who declined to be named, told the *Gazette* that there are plans to construct a new signboard on campus to better accommodate advertisement needs. The plan is to ban advertising signs in all other areas.

With regards to parking, the assistant director said, "We have designated parking areas for students, but they are far from the university faculties. Because of this, students do not always use

the designated parking spaces, but instead choose to park in other places. It is understandable, because when it rains or when students are running late for lectures, they will park anywhere.

At the moment, we are conducting a feasibility study for the construction of a new, three-story parking facility, to be built on campus close to the faculties."

Addressing the state of the toilet facilities, the assistant director told the *Gazette* that the drainage systems are old and were laid when the university buildings were first built. During the dry season, when there is less water, the valves fill up with debris, causing them to break. Water supply systems have not been updated because that would require the entire system in each building to

be replaced, which would be very expensive.

"Every time we propose this to the university's management committee it is rejected," added the assistant director.

"The university has just passed a budget to improve all of the teaching facilities. The main problem the university faces at the moment is that there are a lot of students and not enough buildings to accommodate them all. We are improving every year, however," she concluded.

"When I visited other universities," said K. Pharnutchacorn, "and saw that their facilities are clean, so different from ours, it makes me think that Rajabhat is just a big-name university that doesn't have the quality of the others."

Land in Prime Location for Development

<p style="text-align: center;">Laguna Land "The next possible 5 Star Resort off Laguna" (Bang Tao Beach)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Approx 72 Rai of land ◆ A large land plot excellent for any luxurious hotel or residential project ◆ Located near Laguna properties and 5 star hotels ◆ Excellent location with 2 big lagoons ◆ Easy access and a northeasterly aspect ◆ Great investment & development opportunity cool ◆ Only minutes to the beach, restaurant, golf pro shop and Laguna Hotels ◆ Reasonable price can be advised 	<p style="text-align: center;">Beachfront Land in Kamala Bay "Ideal for Resort & Hotel development" (Kamala Beach)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Approx 19.5 Rai of on hill slope ◆ Approx 300 meters south of Ayara Estate on Nakale Road which leads to Jomchang ◆ Many high-end projects are in the area, including The Plantation, Jomchang, Cape Sol, Andara, Ayara, Laemson, upcoming 6-star luxury hotel Alila Phuket. ◆ Easy access to Laguna Resort, Patong and Surin and approx. 30 km to Phuket Airport ◆ Surrounded by five star resorts and residential development 	<p style="text-align: center;">Natal Land "Absolute Seaview Beachfront" (Khok Kloy - North of Phuket)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Total land area approximately 19 Rai ◆ Located right next to the first pier handling exclusive boat trips ◆ Located just 20 minutes from Phuket International Airport ◆ Quiet and unspoiled beach ◆ A Gem of a place punctuated by high-end private villas and boutique resort ◆ All titles with Chanote category
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STAMPS



The Thailand Post has released a set of stamps to mark 120 years of relations.

Stamps to mark 120 years of Thai-Japanese relations

THAILAND: To commemorate the 120th anniversary of Thai-Japanese diplomatic relations, Thailand Post has released a set of stamps depicting Thai and Japanese cultural themes.

Sharing similarities in their affection for their respective patriarchs, heritage and social values, Thailand and Japan officially sealed diplomatic relations with a declaration of Amity and Commerce on September 26, 1887.

In addition to the colorful stamps, which cost three baht each, special events and street festivals are being held simultaneously in each country this year with a Thai Festival in Tokyo held in May and a Japanese Festival to be held in Bangkok in December.

The anniversary set of stamps contains four pairs of stamps, each one measuring 22.5 millimeters by 33mm. The pairs feature well-known national icons from each of the countries and include famous architectural works, traditional symbols of wisdom and strength; the elephant and dragon, famous flora, and the fourth pair features opera performers from both countries.

Queer News

Temples tricked by ladyboy's lies

SAMUT PRAKAN: The life of a Thai ladyboy is full of challenges that most members of Thai society could hardly fathom – let alone deal with. On the bureaucratic front, this can be seen from the current debate raging on whether to let those who have undergone “sex reassignment surgery” use the title “Miss” on their ID cards.

Before it even reaches this stage, however, the first bridge that has to be crossed is raising enough money for the surgery – not a small amount considering the work involves penectomy and construction of a vagina where none existed before, not to mention a host of cosmetic procedures to complete the look.

Earlier this month Aussie ladyboy Stefanie Imbruglia, a first cousin of pop star Natalie Imbruglia, told Sydney's *The Sun-Herald* newspaper that she was flying out to Phuket – recognized as a world leader in “sex reassignment surgery” – to take the final step into femininity at a cost of over 534,760 baht.

Easy enough for Stefanie, an architect in Sydney, but what about the typical Thai ladyboy?

With employment options often limited for those of the third sex, one ladyboy in Bangkok recently turned to crime to raise the funds needed for the surgery.

Unlike the rogue ladyboys who prey on foreign tourist through drink-drugging, pick-pocketing and other means, this ladyboy targeted temples in and around metropolitan Bangkok.

Her actions were brought to light when officers at Sam Rong Tai Police Station in Samut Prakan were tipped off that Sirisak “Tom” Ngamphanit, 22, was a drug user who had obtained



When police searched her home, 22-year-old ladyboy Sirisak “Tom” Ngamphanit (gray T-shirt, center) was caught red-handed with a variety of religious paraphernalia stolen from over 20 temples.

by deception a large amount of religious artifacts from local temples.

Police arrested Sirisak in Sam Rong Tai and took her to the station for drug testing. Sirisak's urine tested positive for the presence of illegal drugs, police reported.

Officers then set off to search Sirisak's room in Bangkok's Lat Krabang area. There they found brass gongs, meditation rugs for monks and many other articles from various temples – all still inscribed with the temples' names.

Under questioning, Sirisak admitted that the paraphernalia had come from more than 20 temples, most of which she could not remember the names.

Sirisak told monks at these temples that she wanted to hold a religious ceremony in her house and asked to borrow the necessary equipment from the temple. To demonstrate her good faith,

she gave the holy men a false name, address and telephone number. She then sold the items in secondhand shops in Bangkok's Prawet area and spent the proceeds on drugs – as well as saving up for her sex change operation.

Ten monks representing 10 temples came to the police station to claim the goods seized.

Phrakhru Sangkhalak, 53, Assistant Abbot at Wat Laem in Samut Prakan's Phrapradaeng District, said that Sirisak had come to the temple and told monks that she wanted to hold a ceremony at a house in Tambon Sam Rong Tai. As is the custom, she invited a full complement of nine monks to come and pray at the ceremony. She also asked to borrow equipment from the temple. Phrakhru Sangkhalak, impressed by Sirisak's faith, agreed to her request, asking only that she leave contact details.

“When it came to the day of the ceremony, the temple arranged a car to take the monks to the prayer site, following a map given to us by Sirisak. When we got there, however, we couldn't find the house indicated on the map. We tried to call Sirisak, but we couldn't get through.

“A few days later, Sirisak had still not come to return the implements she borrowed. We then realized that we had probably been scammed, so the temple management committee filed a report with Sam Rong Tai police,” Phrakhru Sangkhalak said.

Police said that Sirisak has been charged with both drug use and fraud. Police also called for representative of other temples who think they may have been victims of Sirisak's deceptions to come and look at the evidence seized from the home.

Source: Kom Chad Luek



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Discrimination against gays 'rife'

Thai Queer Resources Centre secretary Prempreeda Pramote na Ayudhya has published his research into discrimination against transvestites and transsexuals. Along with his findings, K. Prempreeda told the "Political Economy of Gender" meeting at Thammasat University's Tha Prachan campus Faculty of Economics he was out of pocket 200,000 baht because a bank teller refused to cancel an ATM card because of the discrepancy between his female appearance and identification documents identifying him as a male.

K. Prempreeda added that insurance companies did not allow homosexuals to take out policies, citing homosexual lifestyles as "risky".

"As for government solutions, I don't know whether we will get a final answer because, personally, I think it hasn't even begun to address the problems," said Prempreeda, who also charged past governments of destroying information about homosexual lifestyles.

Hole in the law. Despite concerns that the demand for the services of surrogate mothers will create a "wombs-for-rent" phenomenon, the government has yet to enact a controversial bill that would require surrogate mothers to agree to become pregnant for the purpose of gestating and giving birth to a child – not for financial gain.

Without legal conditions for foreign couples may flock to Thailand to hunt for a surrogate mother, said Nandana Indananda, a judge at the Central Intellectual Property and International Trade Court who heads a study project.

K. Nandana believes there are about 20 or 30 surrogacy cases each year in Thailand, but admits there are no official statistics on the issue.

Current laws recognize a woman who gives birth to a child as the mother of that child. Because the surrogate mother is usually a married woman, the child born from surrogacy is registered as the child of the surrogate mother and her husband.

Life sentence. A man was sentenced to life imprisonment on August 15 for stabbing a 12-year-old girl to death during a robbery in her home late last year.

The Criminal Court also ordered Natthasit Kamolsaard to pay 720,000 baht in compensation to the mother of the victim, Naruenart Phoprasert.

The judges initially sentenced Natthasit to death, but later commuted the sentence to life imprisonment citing his confession during the trial and his cooperation with police during the investigation.

According to facts verified in the verdict, Natthasit, 27, knew the victim well. He entered the girl's home on November 8 and



PUNCHING PAROLEE: World Boxing Council (WBC) light-flyweight champion Siriporn Thaveesuk came out swinging in her title defense against Japan's Anri Nakagawa to emerge the winner by unanimous decision at a makeshift arena at a Bangkok shopping mall on August 15.

It was the first fight outside of jail for the pint-sized "Samson Sor Siriporn", who became the first prisoner to win a world championship when she claimed the title in April.

The victory helped the convicted drug smuggler receive an early release on parole.

told her to take a shower while he began searching for valuables.

He later knifed the girl and slashed her throat after she came out of the shower early and discovered him in the act of stealing.

Natthasit, who fled with stolen belongings worth around

10,000, was arrested a few days later.

Manure mob. About 100 farmers rallied in front of Government House at noon on August 16 to protest against a bill that would increase taxes on chemical fertilizers.

The farmers said they disagree with the bill to set up a fund to promote and develop sustainable agricultural systems because the bill would impose taxes on chemical fertilizers ranging from 5% to 30%.

No formula for success. According to a survey by the Health Department last year, only 20% of babies nationwide received breast milk as their sole means of nourishment until the age of four months.

Those who were breast-fed until they turned six months accounted for only 14%.

"Breast milk is the best food for babies. It also bonds the tie between mothers and children," said K. Vallop during a ceremony at Wiang Pa Pao Hospital in Chiang Rai.

The hospital received an award for its outstanding mother-and-child healthcare services, which include promoting breastfeeding over the use of formula for newborns.

Deputy Public Health Minister Vallop Thaineua said his ministry had instructed more than 800,000 health volunteers across the country to promote breastfeeding.

Cash cows. The Cabinet has approved a new project to support farmers in raising Thai-bred cows and buffaloes, replacing the previous administration's suspended "Cows for One Million Families" project.

Deputy Social Development and Human Security Minister Poldej Pinpratheep said the scheme would be voluntary and would allow farmers to own the animals.

A pilot scheme will be run first, with the Budget Bureau analyzing budget details.

The Cabinet ordered the old project to be evaluated and terminated. The project, begun in 2005, has been criticized for having unrealistic goals and operational issues that did not respond to farmers' needs.

The farmers wanted female animals so that farmers could breed calves, but the project provided them with males instead, said government spokesman Yongyuth Mayalarp.

Power in numbers. To inspire collaboration among Thai communities around the use of high-performance computing (HPC), a group of Thai professors has been working to establish formal co-operation in the form of the Thai HPC Consortium.

HPC is the use of parallel processing to run advanced application programs efficiently, reliably and quickly.

The consortium was initiated by Chokchai Leangsuksun, director of Extreme Computing Research Group and associate professor of computer science at Louisiana Tech University.

Asst Prof Chokchai said the consortium was expected to be the basis for the collaboration of professors in universities throughout the country as well as having links to global universities.

The consortium, to be officially launched in the next few months, is intended to help academic communities take advantage of the use of high-performance computing technology and to encourage Thai researchers to share not only knowledge but also resources, both in research efforts and technologies.

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

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After two weeks of clear blue skies, calm seas and all-day sunshine, the latter half of August has seen Khao Lak battered by thunderstorms and heavy rain of epic proportions.

Strong winds broke trees and knocked down advertising billboards along Petchkasem Rd and of course there have been several accidents involving motorbikes and pickup trucks along the serpentine part of Petchkasem Rd near Khao Lak Lamru National Park.

It appears that local drivers find it almost impossible to drive safely in adverse weather conditions.

Since about 70% of cars in Thailand come in either silver-gray or Champagne color, the absence of common sense thoughts such as "Perhaps I should switch on my head lights, so other drivers can see me" greatly increases the risk of fatal collisions.

Tourists who take on the challenge of exploring Khao Lak on a rented motorbike or rental car be warned – it's a jungle out there! Please be extremely careful and alert at all times.

Don't expect other drivers to slow down to let you pass and watch out for those gray shadows approaching at 140kmh lest it be already too late by the time you realize they are oncoming vehicles hurtling toward you.

It is such a pity that after decades of road carnage in Thailand there is no road safety education being conducted. It would be so easy to do through TV.

Instead, it seems that most drivers believe that putting the ever-so-popular rescue bumper sticker – depicting a rescuer carrying an accident victim in form of an unconscious woman – is the magical cure to prevent accidents.

Switching on headlights in times of poor visibility would do the trick and costs nothing, but obviously this is not very hip in Thailand right now.

Actually, I'm not sure it ever was...

Water world: Bang Niang appeared to be in a state of hibernation during the first half of this

Gray skies falling on me



Every rainy season Bang Niang Rd, connecting Bang Niang Beach with Petchkasem Rd, floods. The lack of drains is being complained about by each and every person in the area, yet no steps have been taken to change the situation.



**ANDAMAN
COASTING**
By Franky Gun

year, but Khao Lak's second major beach now appears to be making a great leap forward.

Phase one of the newly

erected Emerald Shopping Plaza is close to completion, with many stylish shophouse units available for rent.

Phase two is expected to start soon. Once completed, phase two will almost connect Petchkasem Rd with the beach in the form of a long row of shopping and dining facilities.

Several dive shops will also return to Bang Niang Beach for the coming high season, since there are now enough resorts to accommodate a sufficient number of guests to make an investment at Bang Niang profitable.

Yet Bang Niang still has a

long way to go before it fulfills the promise of being an "exotic tropical retreat", as advertised in several overseas travel magazines. As in past rainy seasons, the beach road is flooded most of the time, making it pure water sports fun for tourists walking towards Petchkasem Rd.

The muddy, red floodwater eventually turns into red dust once the sun comes out again. Passing tourists are then welcomed by clouds of it since there is heavy traffic at all times due to all the construction going on in Bang Niang.

It is interesting to note that

the mighty owners of those five-star resorts along Bang Niang Beach who invest billions of baht in trying to attract wealthy guests from overseas obviously lack the power to pressure local officials into installing drains.

The inevitable flooding along Bang Niang Rd always makes me sit and wonder in awe.

Refugee haven: It appears that Phuket's tourism boom is finally taking its toll as more and more Phuket expats are giving a move to Khao Lak serious consideration.

A few weeks ago, I met a friend who manages a pool construction company in Phuket. He was looking around for a suitable office space, telling me that (putting it mildly) he was "just fed up with Phuket".

During the past six months or so I have met several people, whom I call FEPEs – short for "future ex-Phuket expats". Having been one of them since 2001, I truly understand what they are talking about.

My friend said that while business opportunities in Phuket are very good, the money does not compensate for the stressful, polluted and hectic lifestyle a Phuket resident must endure.

The result is that he plans to make Khao Lak his new home. Relative peace and quiet as well as the surrounding nature with four national parks – Khao Lak Lamru, Khao Nai Yak, Similan and Surin – along with five waterfalls and two golf courses with low greens fees appear to make Khao Lak the right place for him, and many others out to live the life most people dream about.

Franky Gun is an expat writer, artist, designer, scuba diver and businessman who left Germany in 1991 to live in Thailand. He moved to Khao Lak in 2001 and has since called Khao Lak home. Franky can be contacted via email at: avalon@loxinfo.co.th



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A physical education teacher was shot dead while trying to protect his girlfriend from two armed men in a restaurant he owned in Trang Town. The girlfriend and the restaurant head waiter also both suffered bullet wounds in the attack.

Police received reports of a shooting at Deuan Khiang Dao restaurant at 11 pm on August 13. Arriving at the scene, officers led by Trang Muang District Police Superintendent Col Nukun Kraithong found the body of Aekachai Khwanklap, 24, lying near a service counter amid scattered chairs and tables.

A preliminary examination of the body showed that K. Aekachai, a teacher at Wat Khuanwiset Muniti High School, was killed when a .38 caliber bullet entered the back of his head.

Staff at the restaurant told police that two other victims, both with gunshot wounds to the chest, had already been rushed to Trang Hospital for treatment. They were identified as K. Aekachai's girlfriend Chuliphon Chu-en, 20, and the restaurant head waiter Anuphon Thongraman, 21.

Eyewitnesses reported seeing two men, one wearing a motorcycle helmet, walk into the restaurant and order beers. Staff said they recognized the pair, who had been in the restaurant before.

After drinking for a short while, one of the men grabbed K. Chuliphon with one arm and drew a gun to threaten bystanders who might come to her aid. He then attempted to drag her out of the restaurant, eyewitnesses told police.

K. Aekachai and K. Anuphon rushed to help her but were shot down by the man's accomplice. In the confusion, K. Chuliphon freed herself and ran. Her assailant gave chase and shot her once in the chest outside the restaurant. Both men then sped away on a motorcycle.

Later that night, police received reports of a man lying injured by the side of the road in nearby Tambon Nam Phut. At the scene they found Somphon Chuayphan, 44. He had been shot in the right arm with a .38 caliber pistol.

Police took him to Trang Hospital for treatment. Somphon initially denied any involvement in the murder of K. Aekachai, but after witnesses identified him he confessed to being one of the gunmen.

Somphon said that during the fracas, he had been hit by a stray bullet from his accomplice's gun. He refused to give any indication of the motive for the attack. Somphon has been charged with murder.

Doctors at Trang Hospital said that K. Chuliphon is out of danger but that K. Anuphon was still being treated in intensive care.

Sergeant sells sex: A police sergeant major and his wife were arrested in Haad Yai and con-

Teacher shot dead protecting girlfriend



HEWN HALT: A resident of Pattani's Yarang District helps officials saw up one of the trees felled onto a road by insurgents on the night of August 14.

fessed to running a brothel disguised as a karaoke bar.

At 2 pm on August 17, police led by Lt Col Sakda Charoenkul, an Investigating Inspector at Haad Yai District Police Station, led a team of officers to search Mermaid Karaoke on Chaiyakul Uthit Rd after being tipped off that sexual services were being offered.

In the bar they found 17 women aged between 16 and 25. Of these, 16 were from Burma and one from Cambodia.

The officers arrested the bar's owners, Pol Sgt Maj Jongrak Phrom-anumat, 34, a Squad Leader at Police Region 9 Investigations Center, and his wife, Chutiya Khamwisai, 30.

They were both charged with procuring women for prostitution.

The couple admitted to using the karaoke bar as a front for a brothel. They had also requested work permits for a total of 125 women, telling the Labor Department that the women would be working as laborers.

As well as offering services at the bar, Sgt Maj Jongrak would also take women on calls to customers around the city. His commanding officer has been informed of the charges and police disciplinary action will be brought, police said.

Pandering in Thailand is punishable by one to 10 years imprisonment and a fine of 2,000 baht to 20,000 baht.

Na Thawi under watch: The Army has placed Songkhla's Na Thawi District under close security watch following an increase of violence in the area, a senior army officer said on August 13.

Na Thawi District neigh-

bors Saba Yoi District and has been the scene of frequent insurgency attacks, Lt Gen Chamlong Kungsong, a Chief of Staff at the Internal Security Operation Command, said.

The army will continue offensive operations in Saba Yoi while closely monitoring activity Na Thawi, which they expect insurgents will use as a base for attacks against authorities and local people, he said.

Part of the successful operations against the insurgents had resulted from the cooperation of local villagers, he added.

The violence in Na Thawi was a "show of strength" by the insurgents, Gen Chamlong said.

Militants nabbed: Two suspected militants were seized August 15 when more than 200 troops and police raided a village in Narathiwat's Tak Bai district.

Police said an insurgent leader also present narrowly escaped.

Skipli Yamiti, 37, and Adinant Maiseng, 17, were taken into custody after armed officers searched six locations in Ban Padohmati in an operation lasting from about 4 am until 9 am.

The officials believe the two men are members of the Runda Kumpulan Kecil (RKK), an insurgent group blamed for violence and attacks in the predominantly Muslim region since the beginning of 2004.

However, the group's leader, Saman Yamiti, escaped, officials said.

Troops also confiscated some items found with their belongings, including PVC pipes – used for bombshells – two walkie-talkies and a cell phone.

A day earlier, a key militant was shot dead in Narathiwat province in what police believe

was a killing aimed at silencing him.

Marohpee Itae, 26, was found dead in front of his house in Rangae District. His body was riddled with AK-47 bullets. He had been granted bail while on trial in a provincial court in connection with violence in the region.

Lt Col Suthipong Sophonsukkul, deputy superintendent at Rangae District Police Station, said militants in the same cell as Marohpee might have wanted to silence him so that they would not be incriminated in court.

Violent night: Suspected militants killed three people in a series of attacks throughout the Deep South August 14.

A civilian was killed and another injured another in a gun attack in Narathiwat's Si Sakhon District.

Elsewhere the same night, insurgents staged attacks in about 20 locations in Songkhla and Pattani, police said. In the first attack, militants set fire to a school in Village 1 of Tambon Piano in Saba Yoi district, damaging three classrooms.

Suspected insurgents also set fire to the signal tower of a cellphone station in front of the Thepha District Hospital.

A mobile phone signal tower in Chanae district and two in Namom district were also set ablaze.

The five attacks took place almost simultaneously at 9:45 pm.

In Pattani, insurgents cut down trees in several locations to block the road between Pattani and Yala.

In another incident in Narathiwat, one person died and three police were injured when a motorbike bomb exploded outside a drug store in Sungai Padi district.

Police said the blast, ignited by remote control, also damaged a pickup truck and a sedan.

In Yala's Muang District, fruit merchant Muhama Sudee was shot dead while riding a motorbike.

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

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Power to Phuket people

By Nick Davies

Most of us can think of charitable causes or worthwhile community projects in need of funding or awaiting someone with the time, resources and inclination to get involved.

The people of Phuket are a generous bunch, donating to the island's numerous government foundations and independent charities; some for animal lovers, some for environmentalists and others run by good souls who wish to feed and educate the poor.

There are still many local challenges, however, which are not addressed, because either the government does not have the funds and people power to become involved or there is no charity organization set up to meet these challenges.

This is where the newly launched Phuket Community Foundation (PCF) comes in, which has been established to raise funds and make grants to those in need with community contribution in mind. It gives the people of Phuket a direct say in the development of projects to improve the local community and how funding is used for them.

The new foundation is completely independent of any political or religious affiliation and provides a channel for organizations, businesses and individuals to address local challenges and issues that remain outside the scope of registered charities and government funding.

The PCF needs support from the local community to tackle issues such as poverty alleviation, environment preservation, education for children and adults, promotion of art and culture, preservation of architectural and historical heritage, improvement to public safety and boosting of public health.

PCF President, Niyom Tassaneetipagorn, who is also Managing Director of Laguna Phuket, outlined the foundation's goals during the charity initiative launch at Phuket Merlin Hotel on August 13. "The PCF is for the community, by the community and belongs to the commu-



ABOVE: Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit (seated, 3rd from left) joins the founding members of the Phuket Community Foundation at the launch at the Phuket Merlin Hotel on August 13.

RIGHT: PCF President Niyom Tassaneetipagorn explains the PCF's role in the community.



nity. It brings all layers of society together with a common goal to improve Phuket for locals and visitors alike," he said.

"We are confident in the community's ability to know itself and the problems that exist within it, and is therefore best suited to decide on the issues and challenges that need to be addressed. The PCF is but a small cog in the clockwork of the community, and all of us working in unison with ideas and donations is the the only way we will achieve success in improving Phuket," he added.

K. Niyom also stressed that the PCF welcomes support from anyone in the community, as the foundation is not only built on monetary support but local organizations and members of the

community can become involved by putting forward ideas, offering expertise, knowledge and skills, and by donating time to the various projects.

Although still in its infancy, public confidence in the foundation's transparent and independent objectives is high, already receiving a great deal of support from organizations and members of the community with numerous ideas, donations and pledges contributed to help improve Phuket.

One of the first community projects planned by the PCF is a public safety drive to replace defective rear light bulbs on motorbikes with the support of motorbike dealers and manufacturers, who are asked to supply free

bulbs. The bulbs will then be fitted by vocational college students onto motorbikes that have been pulled over by the police.

With clear objectives and unbiased approach to charitable funding of community projects, international philanthropic organizations including the Synergos Institute, an independent nonprofit organization which tackles the causes of poverty, and the Bernard Van Leer Foundation for children's rights and development are backing the PCF.

The *Gazette* is also pleased to be making a contribution as a founder donor.

As Honorary Patron of the PCF, Phuket Governor, Niran Kalayanamit also expressed his pleasure in welcoming a new

avenue for providing independent funding for local charity and social projects.

"The PCF is an initiative that will have great benefits for Phuket, not only in terms of helping the island's less fortunate people, but also for preserving our environment and culture, for supporting art and education, and for making the island a safer, more pleasant place to live," he said.

"When I was approached to become Honorary Patron of the PCF, I quickly became aware that this is an organization that truly belongs to the community. It will work most effectively if the community embraces it and participates in it," he added.

Businesses will benefit from making contributions as there are no taxes on donations made to the PCF.

Once the foundation has been in existence for three years, it will apply for elevated status, allowing charitable donations to be offset against the donor's taxes.

It's also a highly efficient way for companies to donate to causes and receive recognition without having to do all the administrative work.

The first priority for the PCF is to elicit ideas from the local community on what are considered the island's most pressing social issues and how to handle them.

In order to initiate this community involvement the PCF is holding a competition open to all Phuket residents, regardless of age, social standing or religion to submit their ideas for improving society.

Winners will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to observe the workings of a successful charity project in Thailand in the hope that knowledge gained will help PCF achieve its aims.

The deadline for entries is September 15 and winners will be announced two weeks later.

To submit your ideas or for more information about donating time, money or skills to the PCF, visit: www.phuketcf.org or contact K. Piyarat, Tel: 081-7190967, Email: kpiyarat2000@yahoo.com



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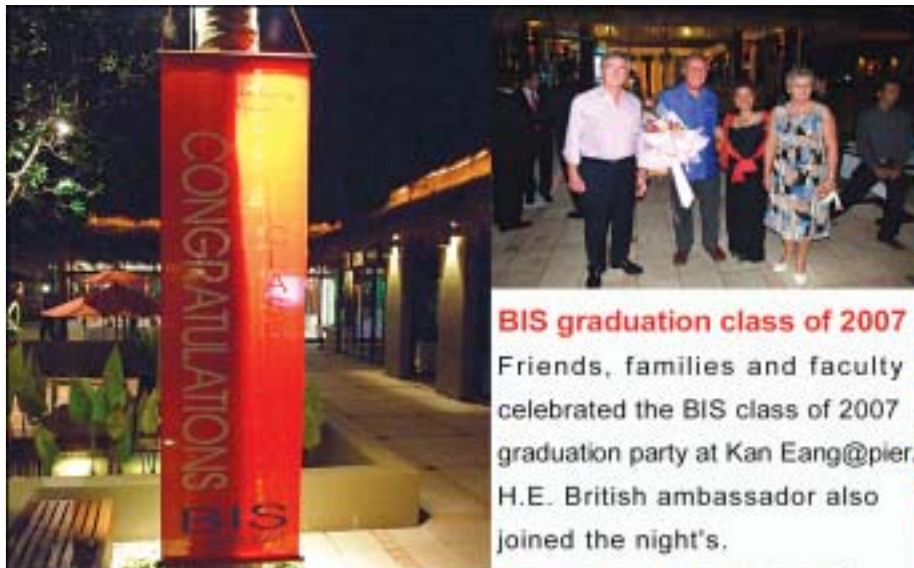
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Dr. Nirmala Menon, from Kuala Lumpur arranged the 50th Birthday party for her husband, Suresh, with 50 friends and families who flew in from KL for his special occasion. The celebration ended at midnight with a surprise firework show on the pier.



HP Gold Summit

A private function in early August for 100 top management individuals of HP Asia Pacific. Reservation was confirmed since the reopening of the restaurant. They flew in the famous drummers from Australia to provide entertainment for the night.

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Culinary Wizardry

With a boyish face, an impish grin and a Michelin star, Alfredo Russo is every inch the celebrity chef. Born in Turin, Italy, in 1968, his determination to succeed in the culinary world soon became obvious.

At 13 years old he decided that the life of a chef awaited and by the age of 22 he had opened his own restaurant. Three years later he won that coveted Michelin star.

More accolades followed, including the 2004 Espresso Guide's *Best Chef of the Year*. His restaurant in Cirie, the *Dolce Stil Novo* (which translates as "Sweet New Style", with a tip of the hat to Dante and fellow poets), is famous throughout Italy for putting the "wow" back into classical Italian cuisine.

This was Alfredo's third trip to Thailand, a country that he much admires. We met at Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club just before his guest chef appearance at the Regatta Italian restaurant on August 8.

Alfredo is proud of his heritage and is part of a movement to restore to glory the old residences of the Royal House of Savoy in Turin.

This desire to perpetuate is also reflected in his culinary philosophy of taking traditional recipes, reinventing them to excite contemporary tastes and thus, ultimately, to preserve them.

He also has a great sense of fun, something that we were to meet later at the dinner table in the guise of an *amuse-bouche*.

A slice of smoked salmon, a dollop of fresh cream with chives and a small cube of bruschetta served in a glass with a clear plastic lid.

Peeling back the lid, one's nose was assailed with the puff of smoke that had been sealed within. Little wonder the Yacht Club's Executive Chef Michel Roche calls him the "Harry Potter of the kitchen".

Alfredo's priorities are taste first, then texture.

His veal, with an infusion of carrot juice and finely chopped licorice elicited the desired "wow" from the many of us with outwitted palettes.

The cuttlefish appetizer lay in a sea of lentils – some boiled, some creamed and some roasted until crispy – that sent the teeth into delighted confusion.

Any influences on his style



Guest chef
By Alistair Why



Michelin star chef Alfredo Russo (3rd from right) shares a smile with Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club culinary team, led by Executive Chef Michel Roche (2nd from right).

over the years? "Everybody and nobody – I am a naturally curious person and I seek to understand before I implement. That is my style."

However, while Alfredo was happy to talk about general influences on his creations, he

was uncomfortable with divulging details about his recipes than the palate revealed.

Yet, would he open a restaurant in Phuket? "If given the opportunity, certainly," Alfredo said eagerly.

Then with a grin, "Make

sure you mention my email address." Easy: info@dolcestilnovo.com

Email your restaurant recommendations, suggestions and comments to Alistair Why at alistairwhy@gmail.com

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Happily Ever After

Recently married in Phuket



Chotiwan Tanwattananikul and Wittaya Jarupongsopon were married at the Pra Pitak Grand Ballroom of The Metropole hotel on August 16.



Ruangrong Thongtan and Premchai Tangtipongkul were married at the Phuket Ballroom of the Royal Phuket City Hotel on August 14.

Thinking back to your days as a student, there were probably a few times when some madcap idea for world domination popped into your head. You thought you could change the world, and if given the right circumstances and opportunities you might have been able to.

Hiroyuki "Hiro" Nobuto is one such student; a man on a mission, looking to do his bit to make an impact and be remembered. Whether an art project in Phuket can lead to world domination remains to be seen, but given the 10 years he has set aside to complete his goal, anything is possible.

Hailing from Osaka, 24-year-old Hiro first came to Phuket in September 2003 as an exchange student. He fell in love with the place, the people, the proximity to nature and the parties – nothing out of the ordinary there.

It wasn't until 2004 when he began studying hotel and tourism management at Prince of Songkla University, Phuket campus, that Hiro's moment of inspiration came. After the tsunami struck, Hiro saw his favorite island in turmoil, awash with grief, sadness and despair.

As he walked around the areas affected by the disaster, devoid of tourists and filled with debris and destroyed scenery, Hiro asked himself, "What can I do to bring happiness back to this island?"

Feeling overwhelmed by the amount of destruction and distraught that his beloved Phuket had been so ravaged by nature, it wasn't until August last year that Hiro found a medium through which to channel his good will.

On a night out with close friend Hirofumi Tanigami, the idea of a decade-long art project was conceived.

"People don't smile so much in Japan," said Hiro, "but in Phuket, people smile a lot more. When there was the tsunami, people stopped smiling, and I wanted to do something that could make people on the island happy again."

"I want the people in Phuket to wake up to art. I want to give them something new; something they can do; something that will be interesting to both locals and tourists. With this project, I want to create and increase the artistic potential of this city," he added.

With a madcap idea must

Japanese

How do you bring more art to Phuket? This interesting conundrum is now being tackled by an unlikely art-project curator – a student from Japan studying hotel management in Phuket.

Gazette Desk Editor Matt Crook talks to Hiroyuki "Hiro" Nobuto about his plans to bring art to the island – and help residents still recovering from the devastation of the 2004 tsunami.



Hiro tries to memorize a series of movements performed by Japanese contemporary artist Mika Arashiki during a workshop held at Bo(ok)hemian Arthouse in Phuket City.

come a madcap name: Platr (pronounced "platter") means both a large plate and the part of a turntable that spins a record. Not an obvious connection to Phuket until you find out that the aim of the project is to "spin" life with art and culture.

Platr also stands for "Phuket life access tracking", which refers to the mini-projects of Platr that will be used to track the success of the project and how it affects people's lives.

The first project served up by Platr is ndl, pronounced "needle". In keeping with the theme, ndl is also an acronym for "nesting diaries in the loop".

Unfazed by reactions to his liberal usage of terminology, Hiro explained that ndl is an artist-in-residence program that started in December last year.

Through ndl he aims to bring a number of Japanese artists to Phuket to contribute to the community.

By giving the artists the chance to live in Phuket and enhance their creativity, the artists will in turn be able to share their experiences with the community through exhibitions, talks and workshops.

Central to the project, each artist who visits Phuket is required to keep a diary of his or her trip, an idea that Hiro and Hirofumi came up with. Hiro hopes that these diaries will record the artists' inner thoughts during their stays in Phuket. The diaries will double as pieces of art, as each artist tackles the task in his or her own way.

While Hiro is evidently proud of his concept, the future of the diaries remains uncertain.

"We're planning to display them around April at the Japan Foundation in Bangkok. The diaries will also be displayed on our website. They will be printed in hard copy if we can raise the money," said Hiro.

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artists invade Phuket



Japanese student Hiroyuki Nobuto is hoping people in Phuket will 'wake up' to art with his 10-year art project.

On the subject of money, Hiro said that most of the project is funded by individual donations totaling more than half a million baht.

Other sources of income are the artists themselves (who pay a required contribution), the Royal Thai Consulate in Osaka, and a special government fund for activities marking the 120th Anniversary of Japan-Thailand Diplomatic Relations. Unfortunately, the budget for this year is still 150,000 baht short of planned spending.

One might assume that for such an artistic project, the man behind it would be an artist, but not so in Hiro's case. An avid fan of art? Not quite. A vague interest? Almost. "I don't really have

much interest in art itself, but the project is not just for art. It's created by art, but it's for the people," revealed Hiro.

"I don't have an artistic background," said Hiro, "but a lot of my friends are artists and I have seen that art can be something constructive that can motivate people.

"Like I said, this project is for the people. I do want to learn about art, and I have set myself the goal of learning about it through this project. Every artist who comes here for the ndl project gives a number of talks."

The first artists who Hiro arranged to visit Phuket were photographer and videographer Shunsuke Takawo, who was on the island December 21 to 29, and

videographer Shigeo Arikawa, who visited from January 17 to February 10. Filmmaker Noriyuki Kimura was here in April, while more recently, contemporary dance artist Mika Arashiki gave a talk and workshop at Bo(ok)-hemian Arthouse in Phuket City on August 4.

The talk was largely attended by Japanese people, with one Caucasian girl and a few Thais also present. Mika gave a talk in Japanese that was translated into Thai, much to the dismay of the farang girl.

In presenting videos of her work, Mika gave the audience a visual display that needed no translation. Though considered dance, Mika's shows would perhaps be better described as "ar-

tistic movement", as they are often performed without music.

During the workshop segment, Mika invited the 30 or so people in attendance to engage in some artistic moving. The language barrier proved too much for some of the Thais in attendance, who were left confused about what they were being asked to do.

The Japanese contingent were more forthcoming, pairing off with enthusiasm. At one point, Hiro joined Mika and the two stood side by side, performing variations of a *wai*; Hiro's face remained a picture of astonishment and bemusement.

The latest artist to come to Phuket is videographer and poet Takaki Sudo, who arrived August 7 and will be on the island until August 31. Takaki told the *Gazette* that he hadn't yet had time to think about what form his work on Phuket was going to take. "I don't want to hurry," he said.

Takaki said that people will see the end product of his time in Phuket in two to three months. He plans to make a video of interviews with Phuket people, although at this stage he still needs time to think about what questions he wants to ask those people.

After he returns to Japan the video will then be edited and distributed – although Takaki was uncertain by what means.

Such uncertainty is a strong theme throughout the Platr project. Hiro said that at some point there will be an exhibition of the work of all the artists who visit Phuket, but he hadn't been able to find a place on the island suitable to hold such an event.

The exhibition will likely happen in Bangkok, he added.

Ndl is just the first installment of Hiro's 10-year project, and he hopes to have brought up to 10 artists to Phuket before the end of 2007. Without much interest in art, Hiro finally revealed that Platr is part of his thesis for his masters' degree in hotel and tourism management and his PhD in community management.

Traveling back and forth between Thailand and Osaka, where he studies at Osaka City University, Hiro said that he may eventually move to Bangkok to study at the research center at Chulalongkorn University.

Despite having set aside 10 years to complete Platr, like most visionaries, Hiro has his sights set upon multiple goals.

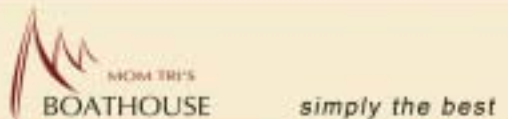
"When I finish my studies I want to go and work for the UN," he said. "If I stop doing Platr then the project will probably stop too. The future is uncertain really."


Before Hiro decides to call it a day on his project, Phuket residents have a visit from the Dowding Club to look forward to in October.

On their website, the Dowding Club say they have "no conception of music", "no idea of music" and "make sweet songs sometimes".


Sound enticing? In characteristic fashion, the venue and format of this musical extravaganza is yet to be decided, but when it happens, expect improvised music played on self-made electronics. Whatever the results, it will be unique.


"I'm not so keen on interesting things," concluded Hiro. "I wish to highlight Phuket through the eyes of various artists and to have the world know another Phuket; it isn't just an Asian resort."






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This week



GREEN EDUCATION : Adrienne Tusoni (2nd from right) from the Lions Club of Phuket Pearl joins Evason Phuket Resort Hotels Area General Manager Henry Gray (3rd from right) and Wittaya Sathid School Director Dr Supaluck Kanjanamethakul, (right) at the launch of their environment awareness drive on August 10.



ON SHOW: Phuket FantaSea CEO Kittikorn Kewkacha (left) hands a souvenir show book to Brunei Ambassador to Thailand Pengiran Dato Paduka Hj Sharifuddin Pg Hj Yusof with his wife, Datin Hajah Arbi Abdulrahman, during their recent visit to Phuket.



AQUA MEN: Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit (center) joins Royal Phuket Marina developer Gulu Lalvani (left) and K-TECH Managing Director Dominic Der Kevorkian at the ground breaking ceremony for The Aquaminium, the second phase of luxury residences at Royal Phuket Marina, on August 8.



VALENCIA UNVEILED: Rawai Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) President Aroon Solos (4th from left) and Best Wanamakok (2nd from left), owners of the pool villa project 'Valencia at Rawai', are joined by Montavee Hongyok (left) and other guests at the project's recent grand opening.



WHIRLPOOLERS: JD Pools President Thanusak Phungdet (3rd from left) and Deputy MD Rungrat Srisuk joins (from left) JD Pools and Intellapool agents Steve Merrit (Australia), Peter Woo (China), Nguyen Duc Thanh (Vietnam) and Bob Bahar Jus (Indonesia) at the launch of the 'Intellapool Innovation' promotion campaign, to be held at Central Festival Phuket September 1 to 5.



TASTEFUL: Phuket epicureans enjoyed degustation and a new selection of Australian wines from Rutherglen Estates at Wine Connection in Chalong on August 10. Pictured (from left) are Wine Connection GM Paul Clark, Chef Eric Lamiroux, Rutherglen Estates Chief Winemaker Nichole Esdaile and Wine Connection Food and Beverage Manager Pascal Laigle.

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BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

The Fiat Cinquecento was created in 1957 as an affordable Italian city car. Designed by Dante Giacosa, it was a tiny, cramped machine with an equally tiny two-cylinder engine of just 479cc. Mounted in the rear it was air-cooled and produced just 13bhp (under 10kW).

The little 500 was certainly never going to set the world alight and despite its humble origins and low price, the little Fiat was not initially a great success. But over the years – it lasted until 1975 – it became a popular runabout in almost every European country.

It played a role in the 1968 Michael Caine movie *The Italian Job*, which was set in Fiat's home city of Turin, but director Peter Collinson's preference for the Mini meant the British-made compact stole the limelight in the numerous exotic stunts.

Now there is a new Fiat 500 – launched July 4 this year, exactly 50 years after the original. The new 500 is already available in Europe, although a decision has

yet to be made about the car being released in Thailand or other Asian markets.

Designed by the Fiat Style Centre in Turin and built at Fiat's Poland plant in Tychy, the new 500 retains similarly compact dimensions to the original. Although it now features three doors, it is just 355 centimeters long, 163cm wide and 149cm tall.

Despite the 500's minuscule size, Fiat claims it offers "class-beating safety". It can be fitted with up to seven airbags: dual front bags, curtain bags and side

bags and one for the driver's knees; a record for a vehicle in this segment.

A host of electronic aids contribute to occupant safety, including ABS, EBD, stability program, anti-slip and a hill-start program to assist the driver with steep takeoffs. There is also hydraulic brake assist that steps in for emergency stops.

There is a choice of three "green" engines: 1.2 or 1.4-liter gasoline units or a 1.3L 16-valve turbo-diesel; one of the best small engines available with more than

two million produced to date.

The gasoline models produce 69bhp and 100bhp respectively, and comply with Euro 4 emissions standards, while the diesel delivers 75bhp and is fitted with a particulate trap.

Fiat claims that with the range of engines, transmissions, wheel options and choice of 12 body colors, there are no less than 500,000 possible combinations in order for a buyer to personalize his or her 500.

The new car also introduces numerous novelties for its seg-

ment by making features available to everyone that were previously exclusively reserved for more upmarket motors.

Other high-tech additions include a hands-free function with Bluetooth interface and voice recognition is available, while the latest sat-nav system is also on offer.

The latest incarnation of the 500 has been developed from the concept car displayed at the 2004 Geneva show.

The enthusiasm and interest from the public convinced Fiat, and in particular its dynamic Group CEO Sergio Marchione, that the original shape created by Dante Giacosa had not exhausted its unique appeal.

This time round, Fiat involved the public in the design of the new 500 by launching a communications project called "500 wants you", but it was on the web at www.fiat500.com that the project really came into its own.

The website, which is available in several languages, is proving to be hugely popular and has received more than 3.7 million hits so far.

It is widely expected that Fiat will launch the new 500 in all thriving auto markets in the near future, including Hong Kong, China and Thailand. Add your weight to the ongoing campaign by registering at the website.

Jeff Heselwood can be contacted at jhc@netvigat.com



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By Ignacio Evans

Perhaps I am getting a little cantankerous in my old age and I've always considered myself a bit self-ish, but whatever the reason, whenever there is any annoying sound emanating from an entity, my earplugs are inserted within 15 seconds. After about 20 seconds they have fully expanded in my ears and I am in total, soundless bliss.

You are probably already laughing, but please, hear me out. I carry a set of earplugs wherever I go, inside the house or out. They're not for safety, but for sanity.

Why would you ever want to use earplugs? Well, can you recall during the last week or two at least a few situations where sounds irritated you? Of course you can.

For me, here are some examples: screaming kids; loud, villainous women in Thai soaps; bars that endlessly blast the sound of a certain sport that everyone else seems to enjoy, but that I'm not fond of; bars that play music too loud, especially Thai-style, battle-of-the-bars decibel levels; and bars that play crappy music – for the rest of my life I don't want to hear *You're Beautiful* or *Mambo No. 5* again:

Earplugs are also useful for travel, especially by air. On early-morning flights, you can get a window seat, pop in the plugs and fall fast asleep in minutes.

The plugs provide long-term protection on international flights, when the chirpy stewardesses spend half the flight saying everything in four different languages through the speaker directly above your head.

Screaming kids aboard aircraft are another nightmare that you don't have to endure if you have your plugs.

Pop 'em in, sit back and enjoy in silence, the cringing of the other passengers. This is par-



Available in Singapore for just SG\$3.50 (77 baht), industrial earplugs are all that stand between you continuing to endure noise pollution and increasing your productivity.

ticularly satisfying if the screaming kids happen to be your own.

On the domestic front, you can enjoy uninterrupted slumber right through to the night, blissfully ignorant of the neighborhood dogs' mindless barking at anything that moves and howling at every passing vehicle.

Now for some tips.

Go for sponge. Not all earplugs are created equal; get the "sponge" ones with the string attached. I have used only orange ones, but I've also seen them in yellow. Simply twist the sponge earplugs into a thin rod slightly smaller than the thickness of a pen and put them into your ears, where they magically unfurl into a crescendo of silence.

Forget about other kinds of earplugs. Most hardware stores sell hard rubber ones with concentric circles that come in a yellow box. These don't do the job

because they can't expand to totally block out noise.

However, crappy earplugs are better than nothing. By using them you'll still gain experience and get into the habit of carrying them around – in preparation for that glorious moment when you get the real thing.

Cut those strings. Cut off the strings about 1/4 of an inch to 1/2 an inch from the earplug. This makes it easy to pull them out. It took me about two years to discover this. Without the string, the earplugs can become embedded so deeply in your ears that you can't get them out with your fingers and have to use tweezers.

Never has an earplug been in so deep that I couldn't get it out. After insertion, the earplugs might be a little uncomfortable at first, but you will get used to them. Just make sure you don't push them in too deep.

The longer the string, the easier it is to get them out – but it also makes it easier for others to recognize that you have earplugs in, which might take the fun factor out of it.

Once you gain the experience, you can go with a shorter string.

Storage. Put the earplugs in a small pocket or an infrequently-used pocket, or else you will lose them. This will take some

practice and you'll probably lose an earplug here and there until you get this down. Since the sponge earplugs are light and a bit sticky, if you mix them with almost anything else in your pockets they might get pulled out by mistake without you noticing.

This eliminates the two back pockets and the two front pockets – or for you guys out there, the two "pocket pool" pockets. Did you ever wonder what that little pocket on your blue jeans is for; the little one that's inside the front right pocket? Well, as far as I'm concerned, the only conceivable use is for earplugs – it's perfect.

Other options include auxiliary pockets or the front pocket on a shirt, or shorts that have either a lower-right or lower-left front pocket or even a cutesy mod condom pocket.

Although the rule of thumb is to always have a dedicated pocket solely for your plugs, there is one exception: pills. As pills are valuable and something that you have to be careful about taking out of your pockets, they can be mixed safely in the same pocket with earplugs.

The "one in, one out" strategy. If you are in an "in-between" sonic situation and find yourself repeatedly pulling the plugs in and out, it's acceptable

etiquette to leave one earplug in at a time, only having to pop one in and out.

Better safe than sorry. Have at least one backup pair of earplugs handy at all times. If I am carrying a computer bag or a backpack, I always bring along an extra pair.

Maintenance. The earplugs can get pretty grotty, so once a month, leave them in the same pants pocket when the pants are being washed.

This will probably occur several times by accident in any case. After they have been washed, pull them out, let them dry and *voila!* – just like new. Your ears will get itchy when you pull them out following prolonged use, so it's best to have some Q-tips handy; there's nothing worse than an itch you can't scratch.

Other benefits. Obviously the main benefits are peace of mind and increased productivity, which are also themes of my "Pushing Buttons" series. But there are a few other benefits:

Social statement. When loudmouthed, idiotic people think you want to hear what they have to say, you can, for dramatic effect, look them in the eye as you slowly put in your earplugs to show them what you think.

Concentration. If you are immersed in something that requires 100% attention – as I find myself with IT projects – or you are a little loony and talk to yourself out loud, you can actually hear yourself louder and clearer – try it.

Lip-reading. When your better/other half is nagging you, see how long you can keep the conversation going with your earplugs in. You'll eventually pick up lip-reading skills that really come in handy. For example, when you are watching a sporting event and you can make out the coach yelling at an official, "That's bullsh*t! Who's paying you?"

The downside. The big downside of regularly using earplugs is that if you can't find any when you need them, you might start to freak out.

I reiterate: it's best to always have a pair handy. At first you'll often forget them and each time within an hour or so you'll wish you had them.

Availability. I've searched five hardware stores in Phuket and have yet to find them. After extolling the virtues of earplugs I would hate to let you down if they can't be found on the island.

I get mine in Singapore at a conveniently-located hardware store on the ground floor of the building behind Orchard Towers on Orchard Rd. It's within spitting distance of Harry's and the ATMs. Please email me if you find earplugs in Phuket and I'll mention it in my next Pushing Buttons column.

A new life awaits you...

Ignacio Evans is an information security consultant based in SE Asia who tries to be in Phuket whenever he can. Email him with news about industrial earplug availability in Phuket at: iggy69.e@gmail.com

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Mode Maternal

A select group of Phuket women from all walks of life strutted their stuff on the catwalk this past Mothers Day at the inaugural My Mom is Beautiful @ Central Festival Phuket fashion show. The event was created by Songphol Pongrapeeporn, general marketing manager of Central Festival Phuket, who wished to honor all mothers in a dynamic and exciting way on their special day of the year.

The models featured included the *Gazette*'s own Janpen Arno-Magee, Wipa "Fon" Putkaew, Niladaa "Jib" Mastanawattanakul and Able Wanamakok.

Kankanok Chanprasartporn, General Manager of Central Festival Phuket, also took part in promenading down the runway while local artist Jay-da Rodnit took the opportunity to showcase her unique style to the audience as well.

All of the ladies were accompanied by either their children, members of their extended family or by friends.

Joining the women were Phuket mothers, professional models and TV stars, from Bangkok, Ornjira "Pang" Lamwilai, Rinlanee "Joy" Sripen, Nawat "Pong" Kulrattanakul and Chanokwanan "Tuk" Rakchip.

To help make the women shine in the spotlight, K. Kankanok offered her makeup services while Cut & Curl ensured that the hairstyling was perfect. The wardrobe for the event was provided by top-end fashion boutique *bebe*.

The show went off without a hitch and, judging from the lens-shattering smiles and deadly poses of those who graced the stage, a good time was had by all who participated, as well as the family and friends in the audience who showed their appreciation through whistles and applause.

Model Chanokwanan "Tuk" Rakchip soaks in the warm reception as she promenades the catwalk.



Bangkok-based model and TV star Rinlanee "Joy" Sripen shows her picture-perfect smile as she gazes out to some camera-ready members of the audience.

Kankanok Chanprasartporn, general manager of Central Festival Phuket, smiles while being mirrored on each side by her identical-twin daughters.



Niladaa "Jib" Mastanawattanakul checks out the mesmerized onlookers as they applaud both her and her son.

Wipa 'Fon' Putkaew is joined by her son as they showcase their designer threads to the crowd.



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Paradise lost, or never found?

Does paradise make you happy? The short answer to this question is, of course, no.

Paradise doesn't make you happy any more than Ferraris and multiple orgasms make you happy.

Although these fine things have been known to give people a great deal of pleasure, that is a different thing entirely. Only you can make you happy, if that's not too much of a hippy-dippy type statement for the start of the 21st century.

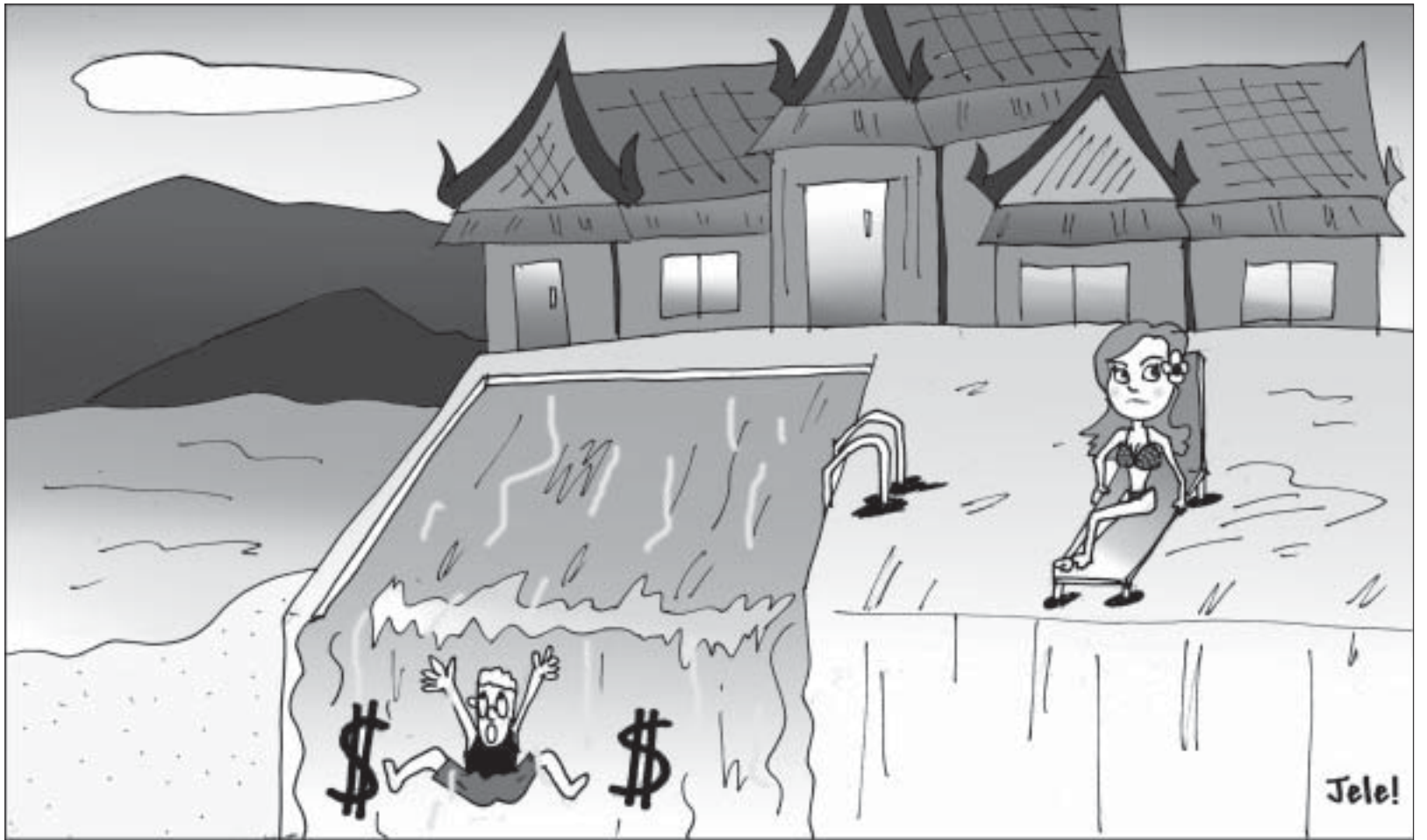
In our affluent times "paradise" has become the most over-used cliché in the English language in describing anything to do with resorts, retirement villas, tropical homes and marinas around Phuket.

If, by some strange inversion of reality, Thailand were to develop a cliché police who banned the use of the word "paradise" advertisement copy would fall by around 20%.

And because we are all media-overloaded consumers with the attention spans of gnats, we have to be shown what is meant by "paradise". The word itself is not adequate; we need to have paradise defined for us visually, so that we all know what we are talking about.

In paradise, as it's visualized in the media, there is always a picture of something called a horizon, or infinity pool, the idea being that the water bleeds off into some distant realm where annoying ring tones and emails can't permeate.

In paradise, there are occasionally people placed amid the clean, stark, uncluttered architecture. But these people, all with impossibly-beautiful bodies and hair, are always looking away from us into the far distance. We



get no eye contact or engagement from the models, for as we all know, other people can often be heaven – but they can just as often be hell.

In paradise, there is no place for such vexing contradictions of reality.

Paradise is where we want to live, so the media tells us, and they show us what it looks like.

But once you have bought your slice of this paradise and moved to live in your new tropical island home, what does paradise really feel like – especially after the initial novelty has worn off?

When paradise is your everyday reality, what does it actually do for your state of mind?

We asked a selection of punters who had actually bought their slice of "paradise" in Phuket how it was working out for them. Had they become magically happier by moving here?

Unsurprisingly, they hadn't.

The same sort of problems – everything from personal relationships to plumbing and electricity supply, to the state of the roads – still made them just about as grumpy as they used to be elsewhere.

Paradise is clearly an illusion, or at the very least, a personal idea which only occasionally coincides with the mass media's depiction of what it's supposed to be like. Life is much more complex than the typical adman's pitch – and paradise is more difficult to attain than the way it is portrayed to potential property buyers.

Money alone can't buy happiness, so nowadays governments are increasingly looking at exactly this paradox of modern affluence. For a long time, raw economic measures of a society's health and happiness, such as gross domestic product, were the yardsticks by which we measured success. But we now know that increasing economic growth not only comes with an increasing environmental cost, but also with a growing impact on the mental and physical health of human populations.

The first index of "gross national happiness" originated about 30 years ago in the Buddhist Kingdom of Bhutan, of all places. King Jigme Singye Wangchuk (who is probably extremely happy whenever a journalist actually spells his name correctly)

had a group of experts devise a list of factors that affected the happiness of his subjects.

Items such as the state of the environment, personal safety, relationships with family and friends and good governance came out on top.

Unsurprisingly, infinity pools and teeth whitening services finished well down the list.

Although you may feel that you have little in common with the average Bhutanese goat herder, when it comes to what makes us happy the factors prove to be pretty universal to all human beings – regardless of culture, education or location.

Once a fairly low threshold of economic certainty is achieved, it's mental and physical health, personal relationships, a good environment, a sense of purpose and personal passions, and a belief in a higher being or spirituality. These are universals that have been proven to be the staple requirements for human happiness.

Just for the record, at the time of writing Thailand was rated as the 32nd-happiest country out of a total of 178 nations in the world, as compiled by the New Economic Foundation.

The Pacific Ocean archipelago of Vanuatu topped the list, while Zimbabwe takes the gong for hell on earth. One of the world's most affluent and powerful countries, the United States, finished up as one of the unhappiest, in 150th place – incrementally happier than the Ivory Coast, but not quite as happy as Burkina Faso.

There's more to achieving happiness than affluence alone and certainly a lot more to it than the facile depictions of paradise the media and advertising try to tempt us with every day.



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My mother and father are visiting for the day. They're both pretty easy-going people. Mum doesn't put on white cotton gloves to run her fingers along surfaces and check for dust, and she doesn't complain if the towel I've put in the bathroom appears to have been run over by a truck.

Nor does she sniff the inside of the toilet bowl.

And yet, at 6 am on the day of their arrival, the mop kicks into action, the first of three loads is stuffed into the washing machine, the television screen is baby-wiped, and the toaster is shaken upside down to liberate its antique crumbs.

Is this normal, doctor? It's been more than 20 years since I flew the parental nest, and for most of that time I have managed to live a fairly tidy, occasionally messy, but functioning life.

I pay my utility bills on time, do all the school runs without forgetting anyone (except that once), have life insurance (I think) and even know who to phone when the loo starts flushing repeatedly, all by itself, during the night.

In other words, I don't need to prove I'm a grown up – I am one. Yet, my parents are coming to lunch and I'm nagging the kids to clean the garden, put away their bikes and pull out the weeds while they're at it.

A friend of mine in her early 30s says she hates herself for it. Before a parental visit she banishes the children while she

Quick, grab the mop – Mum's coming!

attacks all known grime. "If it's raining, I'll bung on a full-length DVD – something like *Lord of The Rings* or *Harry Potter* – which gives me a couple of hours to knock the house into shape. If I get the timing just right, the kids don't have a chance to wreck it again before my parents show up."

Not that her children are still ogling the screen when the grandparents glide in. "Nope, the TV's off in good time. I'm aiming to portray myself as a perfect mother, remember? So out come the felt-tip pens and coloring books."

Both sexes appear to be blighted by this trait. On the first night my best mate's boyfriend stayed at her place, he was up with the lark, yanking on his jeans and whipping out

his car keys. This was not the wake-up call she had hoped for.

"Sorry," he babbled, "but I've got to get home. My parents are arriving at lunchtime and I've got to take my sheets to be cleaned." Very romantic.

Adults? Forget it. Insert a parent into the scenario and we all suddenly skid backwards to childhood. When I was 10, it mattered that Mum and Dad thought I was clever and great. And at whatever age I am now, it still does. I show off.

"See how tidy my home is? How I've remembered to change the water in my vase of lilies? Look – all the boys have had their hair cut, too. And new business cards printed. Aren't I sorted? Are you proud? Haven't I done well for myself?"

Cruelly, though, the façade soon crumbles. I lose the house keys only when my father is around. The exhaust pipe always parts company with my car when I'm taking Mum shopping. And if she visits for a few days, a major electrical appliance is bound to develop some terminal illness.

Just like when we were kids, parents hone in on your cock-ups – "Just look at the state of your room!" – without praising your achievements – "Top marks! You're wearing matching shoes."

Once, when I left a friend's house early, ranting that I had to blitz the bathroom in preparation for my Mum's brief visit, she gave me a pitying look and asked: "Does it really matter? It's you she's coming to see, not your bathroom."

She was right of course. Mother didn't swoon at the sight of all our tooth-

brushes, neatly lined up in their rack.

I'd love to adopt a "take me as you find me" approach, but it's unlikely to happen. I tell myself it doesn't matter and that she won't notice the eggshells in the sink. Dad saunters in with gardening tools – Mum made him bring them to get rid of the jungle-sized weeds – while she greets the children in the kitchen, which despite my efforts still smells of fish.

She follows me down the corridor where the bathroom cupboard lies open, a jumble of towels cascading out of it.

More horrors are lurking in my sons' bedroom. Sheets are sticky with chocolate and other substances I don't wish to investigate.

She trips on the tangled-up Internet wires in the hallway. As laid-back as she is trying to be, Mum is finding it pretty difficult to restrain herself from saying something.

She glances out into the garden at Dad and sighs, knowing what she's going to have to do: "I don't suppose I'll be seeing much of the garden today..."

Ambrosia Sakkadas, a UK-born Greek Cypriot and graduate of Central St Martins College of Art & Design in London, is an artist, designer and newspaper columnist. Her first novel, 'Greek Girls Don't Cry', is available from amazon.com

AMBROSIA'S

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SECRETS

The sad tale of a teacher losing his English

Virgil Chumpp is a retired English teacher who is forgetting how to speak English. Earlier, he lived in an apartment complex with a few other foreigners. When they all moved out, Virgil didn't have anybody to talk to. Gradually he began to forget his English.

My buddy Fardley Nerdwell introduced us. Virgil was a skinny old guy with trembling hands and a bald head.

"Herro, Tsow," he greeted me. "I am grad to meet yoo. I am Wirgin Shumm."

Wirgin Shumm? Ah, Virgil Chumpp. "Hi, Wirgin," I said. "Fardley says you have a problem."

"Yett," Virgil said. "Big ploblem. Orr my flen move out. Wisa ploblem, money ploblem, dey orr go back America, Ottrayya, Angrit. I no have anybody talk to. Befoh, I teasing Angrit. Now roozing it. Angrit teasher rooze Angrit! Can you berieve?"

I was having a little trouble following his accent. "This has to be a joke," I said. "It's impossible for a person to forget his native language."

"It's true, Ess," Fardley assured me. "Psychiatrists have examined him. They've never seen anything like it before. They're calling it native-language



amnesia syndrome."

"Unbelievable," I muttered.

"Dey orr move out," Virgil wailed. "Thairand no rike farang nowsaday. I no have anybody talk to."

"You can talk to your Thai neighbors," I suggested. "Surely some of them speak English."

"Neighbor no sa-peak," Virgil sighed. "I mutt sa-peak motocy taxi driwer, sidewalk wendor, guayteow rady in soi. Sometime go bar, sa-peak bargirn." He stifled a sob. "I am roozing my fruency."

I turned to Fardley. "Fardley, this guy could put on shows. He could be a comedian. He could become famous, like Borat. This isn't a tragedy. This is an opportunity."

Fardley hurled me an angry look. "Tsow, you're a bastard," he snapped. "The man is in pain, and you mock his infirmity! How can

you be so devoid of compassion?"

"I want to sa-peak Engrit again," Virgil sobbed.

"Look, he's improving already!" I exclaimed. "Before, he said 'Angrit.' Now he just said 'Engrit.' Pretty soon we'll have him saying 'English.' All you've got to do is get him together with English-speaking people again, and his fluency will come back. The man is not beyond saving."

"I no can find peepor to sa-peak wit'," Virgil moaned. "Eewen Thai dogs no bark in Engrit. Bark in Thai. Say 'Hong-hong,' not 'Bow-wow.'"

"Listen, Wirgin—I mean Virgil—you can take English courses at AUA. Your English will come back in no time."

"Wirgin rooze fate," Virgil objected. "What Thai sa-tudent t'ink when see American take Engrit cratt?"

He'd lose face, all right. "Get cable TV," I suggested. "Turn on to CNN, BBC, watch movies on HBO. Your English will come back in no time."

"Best of all, TV will give you a life, which you don't seem to have much of. Like me, you will quickly become an 'ER' addict. You'll become fascinated by the interlocking lives of the doctors and nurses in the emergency room of a large Chicago hospital."

Virgil stared at me. "Whass?" he blinked.

"Get a TV, Virgil," I advised him. "TV will give you a life. Even if it's other people's."

"I rike teewee," Virgil murmured. "TeeVee," he corrected himself.

"See that, Fardley?" I cried. "He's coming around! Like a

doctor on ER, Dr Tsow has just saved another patient."

S. Tsow can be flamed at stow@yahoo.com, but not till he gets over his shock at meeting somebody who has lost their native tongue.

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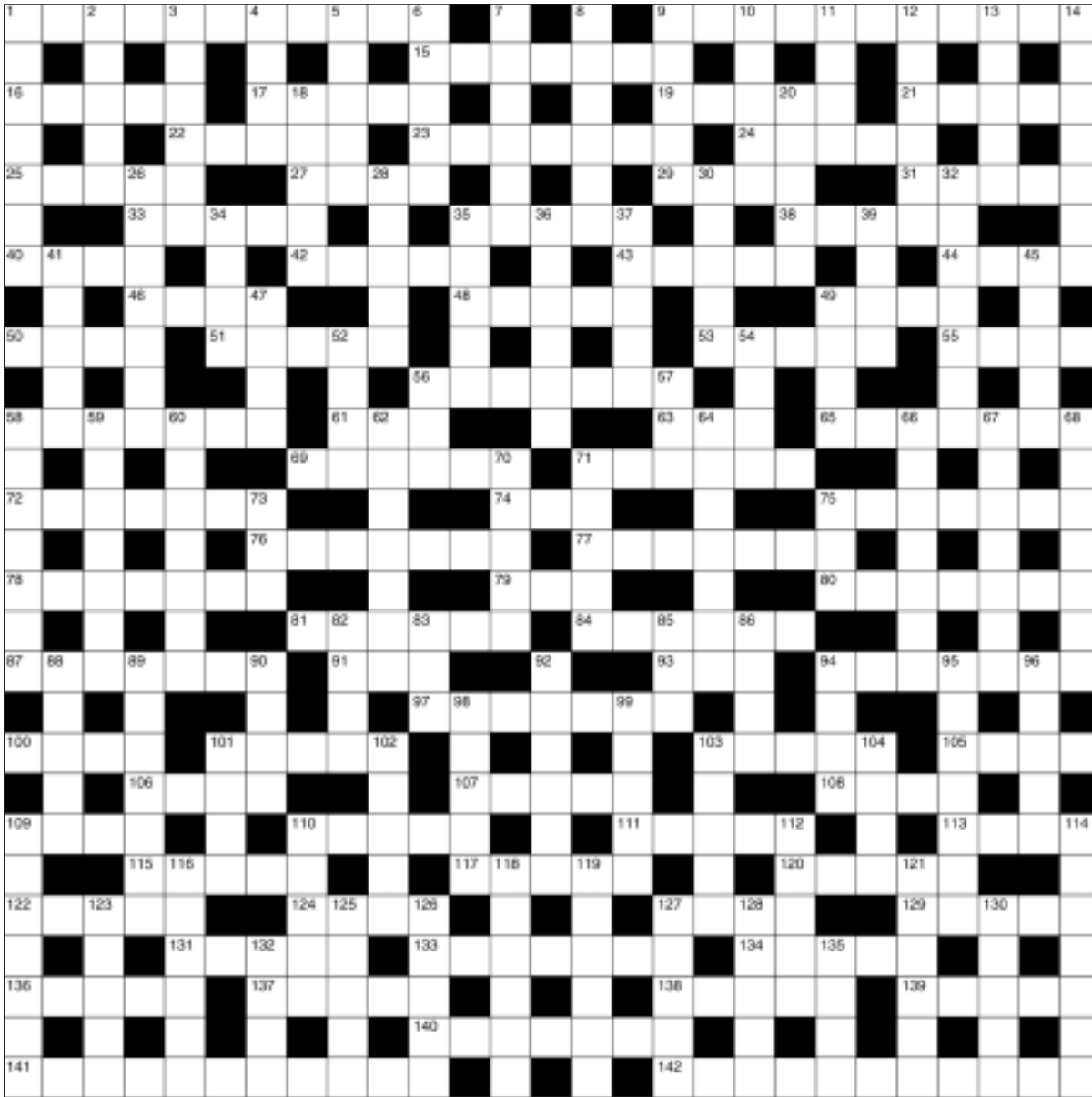
The BIG Crossword

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are more than 20 words relating to mobile phones. The words may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. Score: 10 or more, good; 15 or more, very good; 20, excellent.

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

Solution on next page



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- Across

1. Keeping back

9. Scaring with threats

15. Eight-tentacled ocean mollusk

16. Knocks (head)

17. Track

19. Mideast natives

21. Coronet

22. Attend to medically

23. Chamois or suede

24. Fabric

25. Shelf

27. Trust, ...on

29. London nightclub district

31. Follow next

33. Unwarranted

35. Body fluid lumps

38. Din

40. Be brave enough

42. All set

43. Excavated (minerals)

44. Series of bell notes

46. Smelter waste

48. Gentle prod

49. Shove

50. Noel

51. African snake

53. Goes sallow

55. Red-rind cheese

56. Stage backdrop

58. Epic journey

61. Yasser Arafat's group (1,1,1)

63. Flying saucer (1,1,1)

65. Listening range

69. Serviceable

71. Shout

72. Iron-deficient

74. Grow old

75. Funeral guest

76. Seizes in transit

77. Make fresh
- Down

78. Rifle shots

79. Flow away

80. US honeymoon falls

81. Cricket great, Sir ...Bradman

84. Recovers from drinking bout, ...up

87. Cruel people

91. Cask

93. Actress, ...Lupino

94. Diplomatic mission

97. Beholden

100. Ellipse

101. Chokes with sweetness

103. Repels, ...off

105. Autograph

106. Unruly child

107. Uses book

108. Famous US university

109. Obscure

110. Detested

111. Movie award

113. Average

115. Actor, ...Murphy

117. Scat!

120. Sluggish

122. Reprimand

124. High mountains

127. Sight organs

129. Court attendant

131. Unclear

133. Avoidance

134. Signifies

136. Plain clothes

137. Eagle's nest

138. Spin

139. Barter

140. Cleaver

141. Examines

142. Science investigators
- Down

1. Teetered

2. Measured duration of

3. Hurry

4. Early guitar

5. Annoyed

6. Gosh!

7. Regular

8. Result

9. Russian leaders

10. Arrive at

11. Knuckle of veal stew, ...bucco

12. Linear units

13. Presses (clothes)

14. Excessively polite

18. Not as common

20. Fair-haired

26. Estimates

28. Alpaca relative

30. Confess (3,2)

32. Nieces & ...

34. Nip (of whiskey)

35. Scornful person

36. Taking the part of, ...with

37. Daub

39. Debtor's notes (1,1,2)

41. Meant

45. Davy Crockett's fort

47. Actor, ...Sinise

49. Brazilian soccer hero

52. Hits quickly

54. Spiky plant, ...vera

56. Tearful gasp

57. Hollywood legend, ...Brynnner

58. Citrus fruits

59. Deeply desired

60. Crests

62. Pasta dish

64. Moved with tide
66. Stalk food

67. Aircraft sheds

68. Hoarse-sounding

70. Alleviated

71. Thyme & sage

73. Cuban guerilla, ...Guevara

75. Fellows

82. All right

83. In the past, long...

85. Make offer

86. In proportion, pro...

88. Smithy block

89. Bad-mannered (3-4)

90. River sediment

92. In flight

94. Whirlpool

95. Agrees

96. Confection, barley ...

98. Feathered creatures

99. English racecourse

101. Printed greeting

102. Rigged event (3-2)

103. Zany

104. Auction

109. Develops into

110. Exhilarating

112. Vertical part of stair

114. Distinguishing signs

116. Remove condensation from

118. Man's neck scarf

119. Creature

121. Pastoral

123. Construe

125. Ancient harps

126. Appears

127. Go in

128. Utters

130. Haul

132. Rebel actor, James...

135. Your school, ...mater

Solution on next page

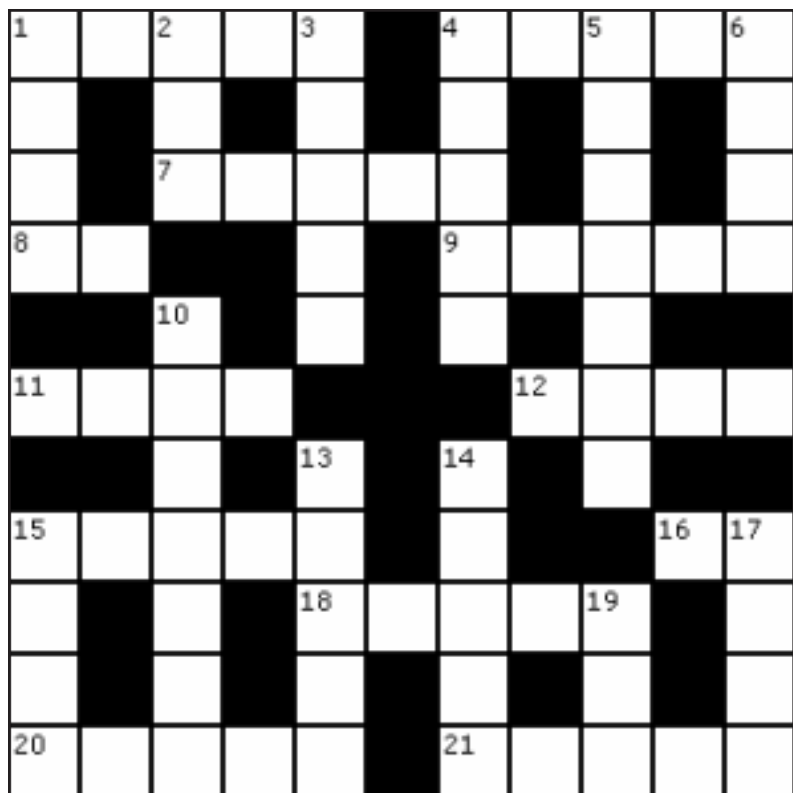
su | do | ku

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

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

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



Quick Crossword

ACROSS

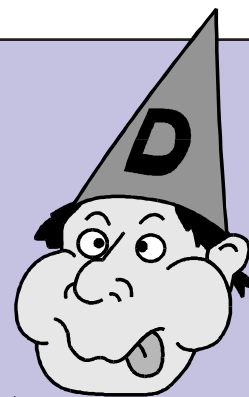
1. Our French
4. Cowboy's catcher
7. Bits and pieces
8. City of Angels
9. Utters
11. Navel dust?
12. Metal meld
15. Of the people
16. Only two
18. Putrid pipe
20. Chinese wall
21. Middle East nation

DOWN

1. First Christmas?
2. Top of the iceberg
3. Third rock from the Sun
4. Perseveres
5. Book supporters
6. Plank propellers
10. Bring alive
13. The very beginning
14. Body chafer
15. ____ Kong
17. The tiniest amount
19. Steal

Solution below right

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. How many years ago is life in the sea believed to have begun?
2. How many adult elephants would equal the weight of a fully grown blue whale?
3. What is a group of jellyfish called?
4. What is the most expensive fish used for food, costing up to 670,000 baht each?
5. What marine life can be used for grafting human bones?
6. What is the longest bony fish in the world?
7. How fast can a penguin "fly" under water?
8. How many hearts does a squid have?
9. What is another name for a school of herring?
10. What is the largest species of turtle?
11. What is unique about the blood of an icefish?
12. Which fish spends most of its time out of the water?
13. Which sea creature is said to have given rise to the mermaid legend?
14. Why is the frigatebird also known as the man-o'-war?
15. What form of marine life can be used to make beer, desserts, adhesives, ceramics and explosives?
16. What form of marine life can be used in making pet litter, cosmetics, pool filters and tooth polish?
17. How much did the largest pearl in the world sell for?
18. How does a baleen whale feed?
19. How long can whales stay underwater?
20. Which marine animal makes the farthest migration?

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

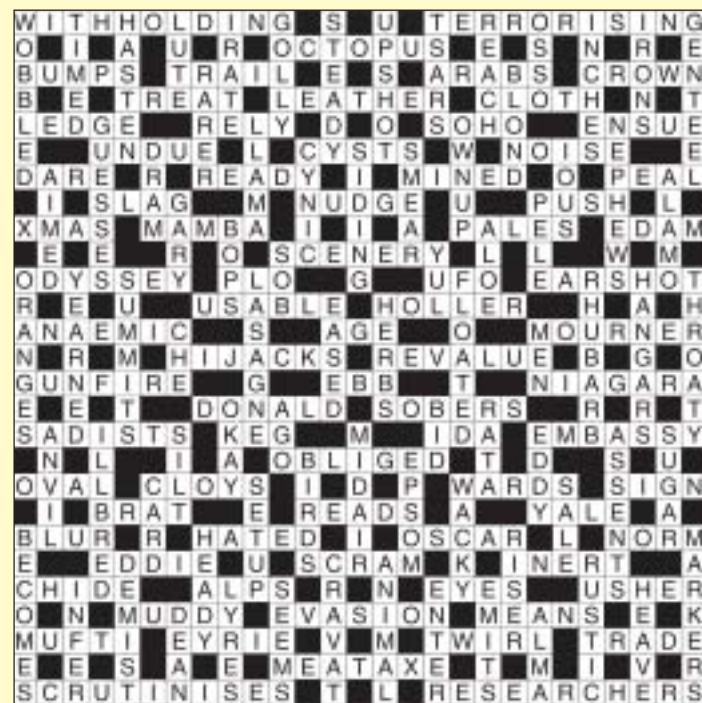
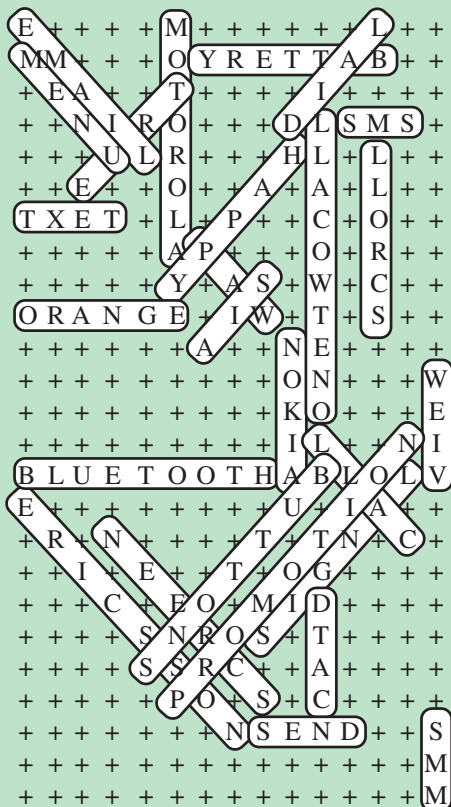
Solution to this week's Quick Crossword



Monster Quiz Answers

1. 3 billion years ago; 2. 50; 3. A smack; 4. Bluefin tuna; 5. Coral; 6. The oarfish; 7. 25 miles per hour; 8. 3; 9. A seige; 10. A leatherback; 11. It is colorless; 12. Mudskipper; 13. Dugong; 14. They rob other birds of their fish in mid air; 15. Alginates (The cell walls of brown algae); 16. The remains of diatoms (algae with hard shells); 17. 335 million baht; 18. By straining plankton and krill through its comb-like plates; 19. Over an hour; 20. The gray whale.

Hidden Words SOLUTION



Solution to this week's Big Crossword

Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

The sprinter tries a marathon

Clive James shot to fame as the author of a slim and very funny book, *Unreliable Memoirs*, about his childhood and young adulthood in Australia. He followed this up with *Falling Toward England*, about his university days at Cambridge where he ran around with the likes of Eric Idle and Germaine Greer. He's also well known as a TV presenter and documentary film maker.

Now he's swinging for the stands with a 876-page masterwork to set the capstone on his career: *Cultural Amnesia* (WW Norton, New York, 2007, 876 pp), subtitled *Necessary Memories from History and the Arts*.

The sprinter is now trying to run a marathon. His theme is nothing less than the triumph of liberal democracy over the two great totalitarian ideologies of the 20th century: Nazism and Communism. Showing how things turned out that way, liberal democracy's supporters and antagonists – 106 of them to be precise – are profiled in this book.

The only order imposed is alphabetical. Thus American TV director Michael Mann, creator of *Miami Vice*, bumps up against German literary giant Thomas Mann, who bumps up in turn with Mao Zedong. Louis Armstrong precedes French political theorist Raymond Aron; Albert Camus, Dick Cavitt; WC Fields, F Scott Fitzgerald; Charles De Gaulle, Edward



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

Gibbon; Heinrich Heine, Adolf Hitler; Tacitus, Margaret Thatcher; and Evelyn Waugh, Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Each profile sticks to a formula: a photo, followed by a biographical sketch, a quote and a meditation upon the quote – much like a preacher would take a biblical text as the basis for his sermon.

It took Clive James three years to write the text but it still reads like a random collection of magazine articles. For this he is unapologetic: his theme is the protean nature of liberal democracy against the lockstep thinking of totalitarian ideology.

Robert Brasillach, Paul Celan, Egon Friedell, Ricarda Huch, Heda Margolius Kovaly, Virginio Rognoni, Wolf Jobst Siedler, Dubravka Ugresic – the weak point of this book are all the obscure essayists the reader has never heard of. The

best thing about it is his gleeful slaughter of sacred cows: Edward Gibbon, Miles Davis, Jean Paul Sartre.

Of the opaque prose of Gibbon's alleged masterpiece he writes, "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire is a Grand National with a fence every ten yards, each to be jumped backwards and well as forwards; and you have to carry your horse."

He paints affectionate portraits of his heroes Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong but rounds on Miles Davis and his ilk, writing, "Always a sucker for the sweet shout of the open horn, I never much liked even the most famous work of Davis, because his trumpet sounded as if it had been shrunk within the diameter of a drinking straw. Scholarly devotees assured me that his long solos were bringing an art form to its ascetic apex. I thought he was using a pipette as a kazoo."

And don't get him started on Jean-Paul Sartre and other lefty French obscurantist philosophers. "Radiating contempt for its bourgeois liberal conformity, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) looms in the cor-

ner of this book like a genius with the evil eye. For the book's author, Sartre is a devil's advocate to be despised more than the devil, because the advocate was smarter."

Clive James is a facile writer, quick with irony and paradox and the well-turned

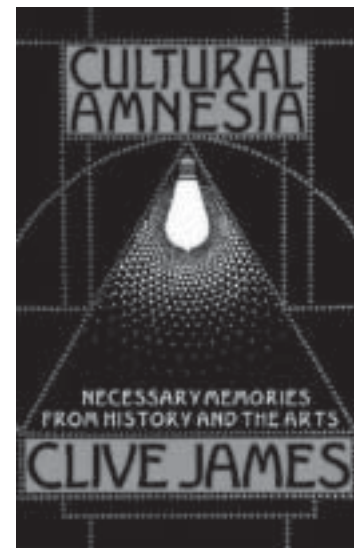
sentence. He's a modern day GK Chesterton and it's a disappointment that his appreciative essay on Chesterton strays off on a tangent – the prevalence of crap in modern culture, for example "the unalleviated stupidity of The Da Vinci Code – and stays there to the end.

Similarly, an essay on documentary film maker Chris Marker turns into a brilliant polemic against the left-wing critics of Australian Prime Minister John Howard's immigration policy.

In fact, this is a pattern of many of the pieces in this book, a strange mixture of gems and dross.

Since the only order is alphabetical, the best way to read this book is to cherry-pick the gems.

If you're a book reviewer, you have to go back and trudge through the dross. But if you're not, don't.



EVENTS CALENDAR

www.phuketgazette.net/calendar

August 24. Italian Wine Dinner at Puccini.

Savor the flavors of Italian wine with Filippo Mangione, a wine educator from Casa Vinicola Zonin, Vicenza, Italy, at a special wine event featuring a variety of creations, a five-course dinner with 5 fine Italian wines at Puccini restaurant from 7 pm to 10:30 pm. 2,900++ baht per person.

For reservations or more information, contact Wanpen Boonsiew. Tel: 076-324101-7. Email: wanpen@sheratonphuket.com Website: luxurycollection.com/phuket

August 24-26. The Avalon Night at Ratri Jazztaurant.

Live jazz from Maria and the Jazz Crusaders and Bonnie Anderson will kick off at 6 pm and continue throughout the evening as those in attendance dance until they drop. DJ Mikey Mike will play house music to finish off the evening.

For further information contact Jay at 081-811-9953 or Bib at 089-874-5286, or email: info@ratrijazztaurant.com

August 25. BBQ and Wine Dinner.

Enjoy a terrific evening with a barbecue dinner for only 390 baht net, or a barbecue dinner and a bottle of wine for 1,000 baht at Wine Connection Bang Tao from 6:30 pm to 11 pm. The night will be accompanied by a live band.

For details contact Pascal at 087-8896074 or by email at: fb.phuket@wineconnection.co.th

August 31. School's Back Party and LCD TV and computer auction.

This auction at the Watermark Bar & Restaurant's Famous Friday Happy Hour, sponsored by Courts, will see JVC 32" LCD TVs & Acer notebooks up for grabs in an extravaganza of eating, drinking and dancing to raise funds for the Rotary Club of Laguna Phuket. The event will take place from 5 pm to 11:30 pm with food, drinks and a disco.

For more information contact Stuart at 076-239730 or 081-7376184, or email: stuart@watermarkphuket.com

September 5-7. KTO Junior Golf Challenge Golf Tournament 2007.

The inaugural KTO Junior Challenge Golf Tournament 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 handicap card from a recognized golf club. 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 for the event has been closed since July 31. Special events, discounted greens fees and special hotel rates at Laguna Beach Resort have also been arranged. For further information visit www.kids-tee-off.com

September 12. Tax Seminar for Value Added Tax (VAT).

Learn and ask questions di-

rectly from the director of the Bureau of Tax Auditing Standards of the Revenue Department head office in Bangkok at a full-day seminar on VAT issues organized by Network Advisory Team Ltd (NAT).

The seminar will be held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel from 9 am to 4:30 pm. Tickets are 2,675 baht each. Book before September 5 and reserve an early-bird ticket for 2,033 baht. Anybody who has attended a previous NAT tax seminar will receive a further 10% discount.

The seminar will be conducted in Thai language only.

For more information contact NAT, Phuket branch, at 076-212 989, or K. Sriruan at 089-6523229.

September 15. Splash for Trash - Underwater Clean Up.

Take the plunge on International Clean Up Day with Dive Asia and Sea Fun Divers, Phuket's only PADI five-Star CDC Centers.

The event is free to join, but participants must be certified divers and must pre-register due to limited space on the boats.

Boats will leave Chalong Pier at 8:30 am, returning at 5 pm.

For more information call 076-330598 or 076-330124, email info@diveasia.com or visit www.diveasia.com

September 22. The 8th Phuket International Beer Fest.

A celebration of probably the best beers and most ardent beer drinkers in the world at the

Watermark bar and restaurant.

This is your chance to show to the world, or at least Phuket, your favorite beer. Yes! YOU supply the beer – in the hope that it wins the prestigious accolade of "Winner of The 8th Phuket International Beer Fest".

Each competitor must supply 12 bottles or cans of their nominated international beer. All entries are required to register in advance.

Entry fee: 12 beers plus 800 baht.

Tip: bring back the best beer from overseas while you're traveling this summer! For more information call Stuart Bird at 081-7376184.

October 11-19. Phuket Vegetarian Festival.

This annual festival is held during the ninth lunar month of the Chinese calendar, normally in late September or early October.

Sacred rituals are performed at all Chinese temples in Phuket. The processions from each temple show spectacles of strict vegetarians, known as devotees, ostensibly possessed by gods, piercing their tongues, cheeks and other parts of the anatomy with sharp implements.

October 23. Chulalongkorn Day – Public Holiday.

Chulalongkorn Day commemorates the reign of Rama V.

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New charter may herald new era for Phuket

After years of fiscal neglect by the Thai Rak Thai (TRT) government, followed by almost another full year of bare-bones funding by the military-appointed government of Prime Minister Gen Surayud Chulanont, Phuket can finally start to look forward with the passing of the draft constitution by nationwide referendum on August 19.

With the passing of the new charter, it appears that a general election will be held by year's end and a new, democratically-elected government could be in power by early 2008.

It couldn't come any sooner for Phuket, where some of the most basic infrastructure requirements have long been ignored – most notably the need for a second incinerator at Saphan Hin to deal with the huge and ever-increasing gap between the amount of trash and garbage produced on the island every month and our ability to dispose of it.

While it is unwise to speculate too far into the future about the course of political events in this country, the current divided political situation coupled with the terms of the new charter make it unlikely that there will be a return to single-party rule any time in the foreseeable future.

Much more likely is a return to the kind of horse-trading, coalition politics that was the norm before the well-intentioned but now-abrogated 1997 "People's Constitution", which allowed Thaksin and associates to move in with vast financial resources and considerable political skills to dominate almost every arm of the government – including those intended to serve as checks on executive power.

While Phuket stands to get more of its fair share of funding if the Democrats return to power to lead a coalition government – and that's still a big "if" – there remains much work to be done at the local level to make Phuket a cleaner, safer and better place to live, both for residents and tourists, whose annual numbers are soon expected to breach the five-million mark.

In this context comes a few promising developments with the launch of the Phuket Community Foundation (PCF), an independent charity sponsored by the *Gazette* that aims to bring about positive change on the island by encouraging all island residents to contribute what they can – whether in the form of financial donations, volunteer time and effort, or just a good idea.

Such a foundation is long overdue in Phuket, where so many people find themselves feeling marginalized with no voice or power to effect change in the communities they inhabit. – **The Editor**

Do you have an opinion you want to share?
Email editor@phuketgazette.net

The Phuket Gazette

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Letters

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

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

Hailing taxis

The Samui taxi incident in which four Belgian tourists were threatened and slashed with a knife by a taxi driver for objecting to a rip-off fare (see *Gazette* issue of August 18, page 8) is yet another example that highlights the lack of care and regulation by Thai authorities regarding tourists and their transport needs.

It's time Samui, Phuket, Phang Nga and Khao Lak governments provide legitimate, honest and registered transport for tourists to avoid the rogue rip-off choices available now.

And another thing: why is there no tour desk at the Phuket airport for the Khao Lak region to provide service and transport for the tourists who want to go north?

The name Phuket International Airport should also be reviewed and perhaps called The Andaman Airport as it services an entire region, not just Phuket. It is misleading to arrive at Phuket Airport and ask about Khao Lak only to be told that there is nothing there to visit. The same dishonest information is told by travel desks in Patong.

The current scams are harming our tourism industry and the rubbish the tourists are being fed must be stopped.

Stuart
Darwin, Australia

Many thanks for the Big Crossword fun

My husband and I had a highly enjoyable weekend solving the new Big Crossword puzzle. Could we have more of them please?

Annabel Garneau,
Zurich, Switzerland

Patong Hill hell

After 35 years of driving, I had an experience recently that I will never forget as I was driving up over Patong Hill from Kathu. I was lucky to survive.

It was a really heavy downpour. As I was approaching the tightest, steepest left-hand incline turn, three pick-ups in front of me trying to negotiate this turn suddenly drew to a halt. Their overloaded vehicles lacked sufficient grip with all the water beneath their worn tires.

By the grace of God, I had anticipated that they might get into trouble and had backed off accordingly.

I stopped immediately, but then couldn't believe my eyes: when they engaged first gear, all that happened was that their wheels spun frantically. Instead of moving forwards, they were now all sliding back – towards me.

Would they stop in time to avoid crashing into the front of my car?

Thank my Buddha they did, as by then I was appealing to all faiths. The nearest pickup was immediately in front of my bumper, so I couldn't get round him to pass. Eventually the traffic behind me reversed so I could escape.

The authorities could certainly reduce the chances of these accidents happening if they have the will, but as long as they don't, human lives will continue to be needlessly sacrificed.

The following solutions could be easily implemented tomorrow: repave the most dangerous sections with extra-grip asphalt; improved drainage; check the condition of tires on vehicles before they go over the hill; check pay-

loads to ensure they don't exceed weight limits; install brake-testing facilities; ensure drivers are capable of carrying out hill-start maneuvers.

Long-term resident,
Phuket

Round of applause for first referendum

Congratulations Thailand! You have successfully completed a violence-free referendum. Having military leaders should inspire doubt among anyone, but so far I have been very impressed with the resolve and progress the "government" has made. It's not perfect, but it's made some very smart steps where lesser governments would have crumbled.

Congratulations also to the people for maintaining the pressure on the government to fulfill its promises, and for fulfilling your obligation to vote. At this rate, we'll have a real democracy in no time.

Now, if we can just get a competent IT minister...

Conscientious observer,
Kata

She'll be Apples...

I've been enjoying the new computers column by Ignacio Evans that you have been running periodically in the past month or so.

While I am avid reader of Khun Woody's writing, it is a welcome change to see a bit of variety on the page. Although I use Windows every day at work, I must confess that I am loyal to the Mac world.

Perhaps you can add even more variety to the tech columns by featuring a regular Macintosh-related column?

Mac the wife,
Karon

Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials and/or business owners are published in *Issues & Answers* on the facing page.

Time to separate and recycle

Our team has worked in Phuket since 2002. We have been studying the rubbish problems, including the different rates of waste production and the nature of the waste products.

We also study the different ways that the local agencies have been using to deal with the waste problems. From this we have acquired significant knowledge and understanding of the waste problems this island is facing.

In 2004 we started working with the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*Or-BorJor*). We told them that Phuket needs to treat the rubbish issue more seriously. We warned that this could become a major problem for the island if it was not dealt with properly.

We advised the government that the local population must begin to routinely separate their waste. This idea was first proposed to the *Or-BorJor* in 2004. Next, government officials and agencies must improve their administration methods. They have been working in the same manner for decades without change or improvement.

In some cases, when people take time to actually separate their rubbish, trash collectors don't know any better and mix it together again. Everyone needs to be well informed of the problems in order to deal with them effectively.

The *Or-BorJor* also needs to have clear knowledge of their own administration, such as operating costs and important statistics and data, in order to function more effectively.

Over the years the nature of the problem has changed, yet the policies remain the same.

The rate of rubbish production in Phuket has increased greatly, exceeding the capacity of

FIRST PERSON

The piles of trash are growing, the waterways are becoming polluted and there is no end in sight for the continuing waste management problems.

Local officials have repeatedly pressed for a budget to build a second incinerator, but when Natural Resources and Environment Minister Kasem Sanitwong na Ayuthaya toured Saphan Hin on June 30, he suggested that the answer may lie instead in more recycling programs.

Here **Pireeyutma Vanapruk**, president of Development of Environment and Energy Foundation, puts forward his argument why another incinerator will not solve Phuket's trash problem in the long run.

The only way to curb the growing problem may be to separate and recycle our rubbish.



our incinerator. In 2004, we produced about 300 tons of rubbish every day in Phuket and that was too much for our incinerator, which has a capacity of 250 tons a day.

Also in that year we started a campaign aimed at encouraging people to separate their waste so that not all of the rubbish produced would be sent to the incinerator.

The campaign was not big and involved only Cherg Talay and Thepkasattri municipalities, but the idea had a lot of potential. Now we are trying to get the *Or-BorJor* and Thepkasattri, Cherg Talay, Wichit, Srisoonthorn and Kamala Tambon Administration Organizations (*Or-BorTor*) to implement trash-separation campaigns.

Most of the rubbish produced on this island is food stuff

— about 60%. If separated properly, food and other organic wastes can be recycled as swine food or used as compost.

In recent years, the rate of rubbish production in Phuket has increased dramatically and unexpectedly.

Only the west coast areas of Phuket saw a sharp rise in development, where it was predicted that the volume of waste would rise.

Recently, however, parts of the east coast have been developing just as fast with many projects springing up.

This has greatly aggravated the problem since nobody was prepared for it.

Initially the government had plans to increase the incineration capacity of the island to 500 tons of garbage a day, but today our waste production has surpassed

even that, with 520 tons a day on average.

The problem is that when we plan to solve a particular problem, the plan usually becomes outdated even before it is put to practice.

Even if another incinerator were approved today, which would boost our capacity to 500 tons a day, it would take two years to complete and by that time we would have between 600 and 700 tons of garbage to burn each day. The problem is growing very fast, and another incinerator is only a short-term solution.

Instead of trying to increase our incineration capacity, I think we should change our approach and recycle our waste, since a lot of our waste can still be used again.

About 70% of Phuket's ho-

tels have some sort of waste separation system. Most of the large hotels are situated along the west coast.

If we can start a waste collection system, perhaps a rubbish truck collecting along the west coast, from Mai Khao and south to Patong, collecting only organic rubbish from all the large hotels, we would probably be able to collect about 70 tons of organic rubbish a day.

This would not be difficult since there is a long road running past all the western beaches. Using proper technology, we can make compost out of the organic waste or even ferment it to create a type of bio-gas to produce electricity.

Collecting the food separately would also make the rest of the rubbish less moist and easier to burn. This would make the incineration system more efficient. We call this idea the "Green Route Project", since it would benefit the environment in many ways.

If the Green Route is to become a reality in Phuket, we need maximum involvement and cooperation from the local population as they separate their household rubbish.

There is potential for such a system to be set up and widely used in Phuket. Many trial projects have been set up on the island already and we have learned a lot from those.

If such a system is set up permanently it would benefit the island greatly. We wouldn't need another incinerator at all.

— **Compiled by Anand Singh and Pathomporn Kaenkrachang**

For more information about DEE works and projects visit their Thai-language website at www.dee.or.th

Are any phone lines available in Patong?

I am in need of a telephone line for a address on Soi Watanna, in Patong. I have been told that all of the lines are currently in use by several well-known companies. Can you offer me some advice on this situation?

Sarawuth Saegang, TT&T officer, Patong Branch, replies:

TT&T does not have any lines available in the Patong area. You can contact the TOT Public Co Ltd (TOT) office for more assistance regarding this matter.

An officer at the Chalong TOT Operations Department, replies:

We have checked the nearest port for the address you have

Issues & ANSWERS

To submit an Issue, write to The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue through our website at www.phuketgazette.net

given and it is currently not free. We recommend that you place your address on our waiting list.

If a cancellation occurs, then the individual at the top of the waiting list is connected first.

However, if there are enough requests for phone lines in the same area, we will expand our exchange to meet demand.

You can register your request at the Patong TOT office on Sainamyen Rd, opposite Patong Hospital, Tel: 076-340199; or at the TOT office on Chao Fa West Rd, Tel: 076-367238, Monday to Friday from 8 am to 5 pm; or at the TOT office at Central Festival Phuket, everyday from 11 am to 8 pm.

Royal Paradise buses are hurting local businesses

I own a restaurant and guesthouse on the road leading to Royal Paradise Hotel in Patong. My business is being greatly affected by the number of large buses that are pulling up outside my guesthouse to drop people off at the hotel.

These buses, which are loud and pollute the air, stop outside my guesthouse for long periods of time, causing people to leave my restaurant and check out of my guesthouse.

Is this a private or a public road, and who do I contact to deal with this matter?

Kathu Police Deputy Superintendent Pol Lt Col Chartchai Nicrodhanond replies:

The road off of Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd that leads to Royal Paradise Hotel is not a public

road. It's a private road so we can't do anything. You will have to reach a compromise with the project owner.

Dr Jirachai Amornpairoj, Royal Paradise Hotel general manager, replies:

I don't see the problem because those buses just stop for short periods, dropping passengers and then leaving. We can't tell the bus drivers to stop away from this area because it is not convenient for our guests.

However, if a business operator is having problems, then we are open to discuss and resolve the matter.

Lek Khaisaeng at Royal Paradise Hotel is responsible for taking care of these matters. You can contact Royal Paradise Hotel by calling Tel: 076-340666.

Funding critical for dog shelter

The recent news story "Island dog shelter begging for attention" (August 4 issue of the *Gazette*) raised as many questions as answers. The shelter was originally the idea of a previous governor, a dog lover himself, who foresaw the shelter as just that: a shelter where unwanted and abused dogs could be housed and cared for.

With changes in administration, the shelter's role changed to that of a place where all the island's stray dogs could be housed in an attempt to solve that particular problem.

Many dogs were rounded up by local Tambon Administration Organizations (*OrBorTor*) and sent to the shelter, and this continues to this day.

However, it has proved unworkable and the dogs rounded up off the streets by the *OrBorTor* are soon replaced by other dogs.

Although the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office (PULO) was already fully stretched in ensuring that Phuket did not suffer from an outbreak of bird flu, checking the quality of fresh meat and the myriad of other tasks they perform, the office was given the job of managing the shelter.

With a limited budget, the PULO was given a difficult job and it is a credit to PULO chief Dr Sunart Wongvorachart that he was able to do as much as he did.

Limited resources, however, meant that dogs received minimal amounts of food and staff numbers were insufficient to run the shelter effectively or provide adequate veterinary treatment.

With reports that the amount of money available was falling and that the facilities badly needed improving, The Soi Dog Foundation, under pressure from supporters, proposed a move into the shelter to assist with both finance and staffing.

The Soi Dog Foundation, however, was set up to sterilize



One of the 400 dogs at the shelter currently facing an uncertain future.

the island's dog population, not to house all of it.

More than two million baht (enough to have sterilized 4,000 dogs) was spent upgrading the facility, on improving security for example, as many dogs were escaping and finding their way back to their original homes or becoming involved in traffic accidents on the main road outside the facility.

A drainage system was installed to prevent the compound flooding. The existing compound was divided into smaller, more manageable areas and better and larger bad-weather shelters were added.

In addition, a purpose-built clinic paid for by The World Society for the Protection of Ani-

mals (WSPA) was built and better quarantine and treatment areas were introduced.

Additional staff were brought in to assist and volunteers, both Thai and foreign, helped train and socialize the dogs with the aim that the dogs could be found proper homes. Additional facilities, such as an agility area and a socializing room for the dogs, were paid for by the volunteers.

The financial figures quoted in the *Gazette* article, while correct, do not take into account the large amount of money the Soi Dog Foundation spends each year sterilizing and treating dogs *not* in the shelter.

The Soi Dog Foundation received a substantial donation from WSPA spread over two years following the tsunami, but this was purely for sterilizing dogs and the final payment was made in 2006.

The foundation estimates that running the shelter – maintaining acceptable standards, food, staff, a full-time vet, drugs, utilities, building maintenance – costs about 300,000 baht per month.

However, the foundation's current income from donations, most of which comes from overseas, is about 200,000 baht per month, with much of this required to cover the costs of ongoing sterilization and treatment programs, which have had to be cut back.

With most *OrBorTor* no longer contributing funds and the PULO being overstretched, there is clearly a problem.

To provide conditions similar to those found in the West would cost considerably more,

and require substantial further investment.

It is a sad state of affairs when some of the wealthiest businesses on the island regularly call on the Soi Dog Foundation, *OrBorTor* or the PULO to remove dogs from their premises but are unwilling to contribute to keeping them at the shelter.

With annual costs of 3.6 million baht and a population of around 400 dogs at any one time, it costs an average of 9,000 baht per year to keep a dog there.

Stray dogs are still a problem in Phuket and they undoubtedly have an impact on the island's tourism. Some tourists do not like dogs, others are dog lovers and are upset by some of the things they see.

There are no figures available on how many injuries are caused by dogs on the roads. I know several local people who have been in motorcycle accidents after collisions with dogs.

Ideally, a budget should be provided by the central government to cover the costs of the shelter and a committee should be established under the guidance of the PULO to manage the facility properly.

An increasing number of tourists are now visiting the facility and there is no reason why the shelter cannot become a showpiece.

The Soi Dog Foundation website (www.soidog.org) receives nearly 250,000 hits a month and many overseas supporters

are now visiting the island specifically to visit the dogs they sponsor.

With the money saved, the Soi Dog Foundation could spend more on sterilization, which has already had a major impact on number of stray dogs here.

The *OrBorTor* on the island could focus on improving the island's garbage problem, which would have an effect on the number of stray dogs that could survive here.

In addition, I have no idea whether it is possible to introduce a local law banning the import of dogs for sale, but the number of puppies pouring onto the island by air and land to be sold at markets and temple fairs is fueling the problem.

With the new Tah Chat Chai checkpoint in operation, this needs to be as high a priority as the restrictions on bird movements and weapons being brought on to the island.

Phuket could easily become the first province in Thailand to be a virtual stray-dog free zone – a blueprint for other areas – but it would take investment to complete the exercise, just as it would take investment to solve the garbage problem. Without funding, expect to see the number of stray dogs rise again.

To contact the Soi Dog Foundation, visit their website at www.soidog.org, email john@soidog.org, or call 070-508-688.

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MAKING TRACKS

By Top Dog

In The Stars

by Isla Star

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Be prepared to let bygones be bygones in order for business to get underway. During the final days of August, take time out to attend to health matters. You will need full energy levels to deal with September. If you are celebrating a birthday this week, expect to benefit from dramatic changes in your life during the coming year.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Your load will lighten after a colleague realizes that he hasn't been pulling his weight. For a good balance between work and play, take a closer look at your schedule. On Sunday you will have the chance to set a good example for younger family members. The number 4 can be lucky on Wednesday.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Life continues to be up and down, but improvement on the home front is forecast. However, you will need help on someone else's terms and this is a good chance to learn to be less critical. Where romance is concerned, it would be wise not to pursue Capricorn as their heart is already spoken for. Wear a piece of onyx to encourage better grounding.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): You will be reminded that it's important to protect your privacy. Those of you who are at times too free with information will be happy to take this lesson to heart. Stormy skies over your zone of romance mean that a fledgling relationship should be put on hold. Those already committed to someone will realize that they've been taking too much for granted.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Cupid is poised to aim an arrow for you this week. Your romantic opportunities are better starred than they have been during recent weeks. Money matters are set to reach a conclusion; if you've been fighting an injustice, expect to come out ahead. Tuesday is best for extend an olive branch to someone you fell out with last month.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): You aren't the only one who would like to sign the dotted line on a potentially-fruitful business agreement. You will need to be an early bird in order to land this juicy worm, so set your priorities in order this week. Travel may have to be postponed in the midst of this busy period, but September will bring a golden opportunity to visit a faraway place. The number 3 can bring some luck on Thursday.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): You are advised not to spend money like water this week. You will regret not having something to tide you over next month when a payment is delayed due to crossed communication. Where romance is concerned, an intriguing Libran is about to steal your heart. Thursday is the best day for approaching those with the ability to pull strings concerning financial matters. The number 9 could bring some better luck on Wednesday.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Hot gossip isn't worth listening to this weekend. Those of you tempted to follow unreliable leads will end up drawing the short straw. The best way to climb up the career ladder is to continue on the path you've been taking. An unscheduled meeting early next week makes you wonder if it might be possible to mix business with romance. The color peach softens your expectations.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Many of you should now be enjoying a period of more leisure and less work commitments. As long as you're not getting bored, continue with this theme. But if the hours are ticking by too slowly, follow a tip offered by Leo that will lead to involvement in an interesting project. Romance continues to be conspicuously absent for those who are single, but a new friendship brings you much pleasure.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Most of you often think you know enough and don't need to listen to too much advice. However, this is definitely not true this week. Pay attention to what a sensible Sagittarian has to say and you will benefit greatly. Resist the temptation to splash out on luxury items until next month as the chance to travel is about to crop up. The number 5 comes alive on Tuesday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Your luck picks up as August draws to a close. Those of you who don't normally like taking chances will be unable to resist doing so this week. The stars are ready to support your efforts to branch out. Love takes on a new twist when an old flame makes contact. Those in a new relationship will need to make a serious decision. Wear silver to sharpen your perception of truth.

LEO (July 24-August 22): August has been busy, with the emphasis on family concerns. You can look forward to a period of relaxation during September, but this week will probably bring a small drama requiring your attention. You should make it clear now whether you're willing to become involved in matters that don't directly concern you. A Scorpio has a secret to share this weekend.

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For the first time since it began, on August 26 we won't have a PC Group Therapy session in Patong – and the Sandwich Shoppe will be closed all day. After six-plus years, K. Add is finally making an honest man of me – we're getting married on August 26.

The following Sunday, September 2, the PC Group Therapy sessions return in full swing, from 10 am to noon. I expect we'll be running sessions every Sunday from then on.

People stop me in the street and ask about PC Group Therapy. Here's the *Reader's Digest* version. The sessions draw quite a mix of people, from rank beginners to true gurus.

There's no charge at all. You can ask about any computer thing that's bugging you. We even talk about Macs and Linux – all political affiliations are respected. "Newbie" questions don't bother anybody.

We spend a lot of time talking about Internet connections – that seems to be the #1 topic on everyone's mind – but we also cover a lot of other ground, too. If you have a laptop with a problem, please bring it by and we'll see if somebody can fix it.

I actively encourage Internet service providers to come by, people with computer businesses, individuals with equipment to sell, people looking for jobs, business owners who want to build a website, hapless folks who aren't sure about the difference between left-click and right-click. You name it.

Everyone's welcome. We don't solve all of the problems, but we sure tackle a big chunk of 'em.

One recent session covered installing a new monitor. A PC user in Laguna just bought a Samsung 22-inch widescreen flat-panel monitor – but he had a, uh, little problem. Every time he used it, he came down with an Excedrin-

size headache. He was ready to throw it out the window. I urged him to throw it in my direction.

If you buy a fancy new flat screen monitor – prices have fallen to the point that they're everywhere – you should plan on spending some time getting it set up properly. While it's true that you can simply plug the monitor into your computer and run with it, you may end up missing out on much of what you've paid for.

In the worst case, if the monitor gets an extreme case of the fuzzies, you may end up wondering why you ever gave up on that classic 15-inch TV tube with the Windows logo permanently etched onto its screen and smoke occasionally belching from its side.

Here's the full drill for installing a new flat panel monitor.

First, throw away the CD that came with the monitor. Keep the instructions booklet (you'll see why in a second) but don't follow the directions in the booklet. Instead, take the flat panel bull by the horns and do things right the first time.

Start by installing the latest drivers for your video card. No, *not* your monitor, your *video card*. To a first approximation, a "driver" is a program that allows Windows to work with a particular piece of hardware – in this case, your video card – and a misbehaving video driver can cause no end of grief.



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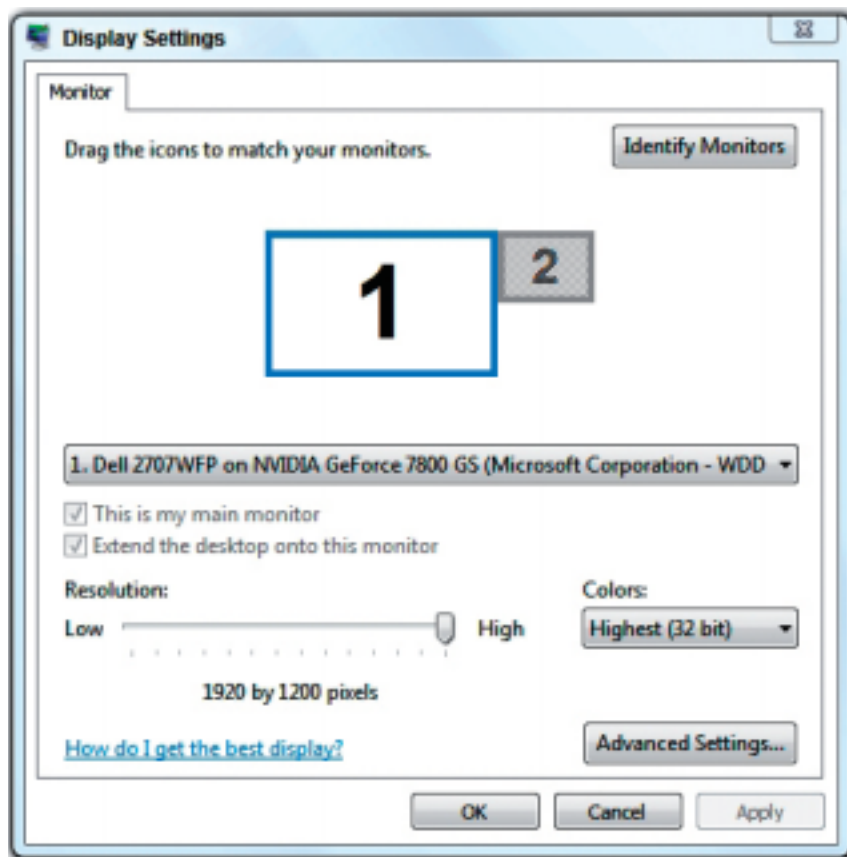


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On a LCD day, you can see forever



If you buy a new flat monitor, take a few minutes to make sure it's set up right. It could be the difference between happiness and a headache.

To find out what card you're using, right-click on an empty spot on your desktop and choose Properties (in Vista, click Personalize). Click the Settings tab (in Vista, click Display Settings).

The Display Settings dialog box (see screenshot) should list your video card chip – in this case, I have an NVIDIA GeForce 7800 GS. The name of the video card manufacturer isn't important. The name of the company that makes the video chip – probably NVIDIA, ATI, Intel or one of a handful of smaller manufacturers – and the model number of the video chip will lead you to the correct driver.

Don't use Google to find your video driver. You'll end up at one of a zillion independent sites that may or may not have the best driver for your video card and may or may not include "extras" with the driver download. Instead, go straight for the manufacturer's website.

If you have an NVIDIA chip, start at www.nvidia.com/page/drivers.html.

If you have an ATI chip, go to ati.amd.com/support/driver.html. Don't be confused: AMD (the computer chip manufacturer) recently bought ATI (the video chip manufacturer), but this particular site only covers ATI video chips.

If you have an Intel video chip, start at [\[sign/intarch/swsup/graphics_drivers.htm\]\(http://sign/intarch/swsup/graphics_drivers.htm\). Matrox is at \[www.matrox.com/graphics/en/corpo/support/drivers/home.php\]\(http://www.matrox.com/graphics/en/corpo/support/drivers/home.php\). SiS's drivers are at \[www.sis.com/download/agreement.php?url=/download/\]\(http://www.sis.com/download/agreement.php?url=/download/\). VIA's at \[www.viaarena.com/?PageID=2\]\(http://www.viaarena.com/?PageID=2\).](http://www.intel.com/de-</p>
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In all cases, follow the manufacturer's instructions to download and install the latest video driver.

With your video card up to date, download and install the latest driver for your monitor. Perhaps surprisingly, many of the lat-

est monitors have their own drivers – the fancier the monitor, the bigger the driver. Installing a monitor

driver is an important step that many people miss, but your monitor needs its driver. For Samsung, start at www.samsung.com/support/index.asp; for Viewsonic, www.viewsonic.com/support/drivers/; Philips, www.consumer.philips.com/lcdmonitors/; Benq www.benq.us/support/downloads/index.cfm?productline=5; Acer, www.acersupport.com.au; Sony, esupport.sony.com. When you have the video card driver installed, re-boot your computer.

Next, you need to find the "native resolution" for your monitor. Every flat computer screen has one preferred resolution setting, which reflects how many individual dots appear on the screen; 17-inch and 19-inch monitors may run at 1024 x 768 or 1280 x 1024.

The Samsung 22-inch widescreen 226BW runs at 1680 x 1050, which means it can show many more dots from left-to-right than a 19-inch 1280 x 1024 monitor, but only a few more from top-to-bottom.

My main monitor, a Dell 2707WFP, runs at 1920 x 1200. If the instruction manual that came with your monitor doesn't mention the native resolution, you're in for a bit of Googling. Sooner or later, you'll find the size.

To tell your video card to run at your monitor's native resolution, follow the instructions above to bring up the Display Settings dialog box. Move the Resolution slider at the bottom of the screen so it matches your monitor's native resolution. In the Colors drop-down box, pick "Highest (32 bit)" then click OK.

Once your video card is hooked up right, it's time to find the button on the monitor that says "Auto". Push it and wait a few seconds while all of the calibration takes effect. You should end up with a monitor that's quite usable. For people like me, it's a awe-inspiring experience.

If you use Windows XP and you work with text – email, word processing, web publishing, whatever – you should also download and run Microsoft's free ClearType Tuner PowerToy.

ClearType is a Microsoft "sub pixel rendering" technology that almost always makes text look better on flat panel monitors. If you decide you don't like ClearType, the PowerToy makes it easy to turn off.

I have detailed descriptions of ClearType in my books *Windows Vista Timesaving Techniques For Dummies* and *Windows XP Timesaving Techniques For Dummies*, along with lots of tips for using and tweaking ClearType, but the basics are pretty easy. Start at www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.msp and follow the instructions to download and run the ClearType Tuner PowerToy.

By the time you're done, I bet you end up wondering why it took so long to spring for that new flat monitor.

When he isn't writing computer books and magazine and newsletter articles, or knocking Microsoft around on his website, Woody Leonhard (woody@khunwoody.com, www.askwoody.com) runs Khun Woody's Bakery and the Sandwich Shoppe in Patong.

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The supreme subprime fallout

Earlier this decade, the US central bank – The Federal Reserve – reduced interest rates (the discount rate) to a 50-year low of 1%. Its chairman at the time, Alan Greenspan, made a comment to the effect that this would have repercussions, he just did not know exactly what they would be.

Well, now the effect has been revealed; low interest rates created a US housing boom, which went to extremes. It was not only in terms of prices but the quality of the credit worthiness of many buyers that became questionable, to say the least.

Many people have complained to me over the years that they have a poor opinion of banks. This usually revolves around a personal experience where a bank refused them a loan when they had no money and now, when they are



MONEY TALKS

By Richard G. Watson

wealthy, banks keep on offering to lend them money they don't need to borrow. Banks and finance companies unfortunately do not have crystal balls; they can only assess risk as it is at present on the details of the borrower.

In too many US cases related to house mortgages, any concept of risk disappeared. This was exacerbated by the fact that some lenders were immediately selling the loans to third parties who, in turn, "securitized" these loans by selling them onwards again to asset-backed funds and hedge funds, who immediately

sold them to investors. However, the eventual buyers of these "investments" were not just individuals, even Harvard University is estimated to be nursing losses of between US\$350 million to US\$550 million (11.2 billion to 16 billion baht) in losses on their own portfolio.

At the height of the subprime-lending boom it was possible for anyone, regardless of atrocious credit history of bankruptcies, to obtain a mortgage. An on-line service, www.verifyemployment.net, for a fee of US\$55 (less than 2,000 baht),

would confirm any income you wished to show to a lender by "employing" the applicant as an "independent contractor" and supplying pay slips. For a further fee of US\$25, they would give anyone a glowing reference by telephone to any suspicious lender (source: *Financial Times*). In reality, most lenders were not even checking on the credit worthiness of borrowers.

The Mortgage Asset Research Institute in reviewing "no doc" loans that merely relied on borrowers statements of income found that almost all borrowers inflated their income, with almost 60% inflating their income by over 50%.

One case in New York found that stolen identities, invented purchasers and inflated appraisals allowed a syndicate to obtain subprime loans on more than US\$200 million of property.

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Even the storied Harvard University has felt the impact from the subprime fallout, with losses reportedly totaling US\$350 million to US\$550 million (11.2 billion to 16 billion baht).

The FBI has charged 26 people in this case. In another case, in Ohio, 49% of the loans routed through a single mortgage broker failed to even make the first repayment.

Ben Bernanke, current chairman of the US Federal Reserve, said: "The recent rapid expansion of the subprime market was clearly accompanied by deterioration in underwriting standards and, in some cases, by abusive lending practices and outright fraud."

What is of concern to financial markets is the extent of the contagion. American lenders sold these securities, i.e. packaged subprime mortgages, to other parties, often to banks in various parts of the world. Already, American, French, German, Australian, Thai and Dutch banks have been found to be holding these "assets". More will follow.

The biggest problem in the "subprime debacle" is the uncertainty of the total amount and who is holding it. Uncertainty is the greatest enemy of financial markets. This has already led to central banks injecting liquidity into

their financial systems via the banking sector. The biggest injections by far have been by the European Central Bank (ECB) but even the Bank of Japan and the Reserve Bank of Australia have been active together with limited involvement in liquidity creation by the US Federal Reserve.

Simply, central banks are injecting funds into the market to provide ample liquidity, every one of these is trying its best to avoid the label of suffering from a "credit crunch".

Not every central banker is sympathetic to the situation; this is well "summed up" by a statement from William Poole of Federal Reserve of St. Louis, USA. "The punishment has been meted out to those who have done misdeeds and made bad judgments. We are getting good evidence that the companies and hedge funds that are being hit are the ones that deserve it."

US investment bank Bear Stearns must be wishing that they had never heard of the term "subprime". The credit-rating agencies are downgrading their

credit rating, their share price has been hammered, their credibility impaired and lawyers are preparing class-action suits.

The key word at the moment is "contagion"; the central banks of Malaysia and Taiwan have already stepped in to stop any falls in the value of their currencies. Considering that both these countries have huge current account surpluses and foreign-exchange reserves, this is a considerable policy decision. Indonesia and the Philippines have taken similar steps, but that is not surprising.

The effects of these problems are being exacerbated by the time of the year. During the summer months in the Northern Hemisphere when many market participants are on holiday, trading volumes are low. In more thinly-traded markets, volatility is often the norm.

Confidence can be a very frail commodity; it is good to see that all over the world measures are being taken to regain confidence. The real question eventually is: What is going to happen to the US economy?

VAT seminar set for September

PHUKET CITY: The Network Advisory Team Ltd (NAT) will hold a full-day seminar to deal with value added tax (VAT) issues on Saturday, September 22. Attendees will have a chance to learn and ask questions directly from Suthep Pongpitak, director of the Bureau of Tax Auditing Standards of the Revenue Department Head Office in Bangkok.

Among the topics to be discussed at the seminar are businesses that are exempt from paying VAT; the correct formats for tax invoices and debit and credit notes; preparing a VAT report; and completing a tax return on the Internet.

VAT, which was implemented in Thailand in 1992 to replace "business tax", is an indirect tax imposed on the value of a product, added at each

stage of production and distribution.

The seminar will be held at the Royal Phuket City Hotel from 9 am until 4:30 pm. Tickets are priced at 2,675 baht per person. Book before September 5 and reserve an early-bird ticket for 2,033 baht. Anybody who has attended a previous NAT tax seminar, which have covered topics like the Foreign Business Act, will receive a further 10% discount.

The seminar will be in Thai language only, and two coffee breaks and a lunch break will be provided on the day.

For more information please contact NAT, Phuket Branch, at Tel: 076-212 989, or K. Sriruan at Tel: 089-6523229.



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ON THE MOVE

Kanyakorn "Tra" Sookprasert, from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, has been promoted from Assistant Airport Hospitality Center Manager to Airport Hospitality Center Manager of Laguna Phuket.

She holds a degree in English from Bangkok University. Her experience includes work as a guest service agent at JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa for four years. She also worked at Bangkok Marriott Resort and Spa in the same position.



Nopparada "Rada" Chatchanaraksa, from Bangkok, has been appointed Assistant Corporate Affairs Manager of Laguna Phuket. She holds a law degree from Thammasat University.

Before joining Laguna Phuket, she was a guest service agent at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort, Executive Secretary for both Central Hotels and Resorts in Bangkok and Thara Patong Beach Resort and Spa.



Kanit Jintabubpha, 30, from Bangkok, has been appointed Branch Manager for BTcino (Thailand) Limited's operations here in Phuket.

Kanit graduated with a degree in engineering from Saint John's University in Bangkok. He has held engineering positions at Soon Hua Seng Rice Co Ltd in Bangkok for three years and at BTcino (Thailand) Limited in Bangkok for four years before accepting his current position.



Phuket drink wins place at Olympics

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: Locally-produced cashew juice drinks Cashewy and Casheway have been chosen to be served to athletes and officials at the Olympics in China next year.

Supphaluck Suhirunyanich, executive director of Sri Supphaluck Orchid Co Ltd and The Cashewy Phuket (Thailand) Co Ltd, which produces the cashew fruit juice concentrate Cashewy and the canned, diluted version called Casheway, announced the export deal at the Governor Meets Press meeting at Provincial Hall on August 15.

The export deal is still in the planning stages and volume to be exported and price per unit have yet to be negotiated, but the terms should be reached before year's end, K. Supphaluck explained.

She is also looking to use the opportunity as a springboard to enter the enormous Chinese market through the contacts she is making in brokering the Olympic Games deal.

The drinks won top prize in the "Thai fruit to Olympics 2008" competition held by the Marketing Organization for Farmers, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MOAC) in Bangkok on August 6.

The MOAC was chosen by the Chinese Forestry Ministry as a fresh fruit and fresh fruit produce provider for the Games.

Cashewy and Casheway were chosen as they are rich in vitamins, including vitamin C, calcium, phosphorus, iron, beta carotene, riboflavin and thiamine. Citing results from her own research, Prof Jintanaporn Wattanathorn of the Faculty of Medicine at Khon Kaen University asserted that cashew fruit juice can alleviate depression.

The company produces two flavors – plain cashew fruit juice and cashew fruit juice blended with mixed fruit juice – from fresh cashew fruit grown in Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi.

The fruit is processed into a concentrate at the company's factory on Thepkasattri Rd in



Supphaluck Suhirunyanich (2nd left), Vice-Governor Tri Augkaradacha (seated) and her staff celebrate Cashewy products being officially selected for consumption at the Olympic Games next year.

Tambon Srisoonthorn in Thalang, which can currently process about 60 tonnes of cashew fruit a year and produces about 40,000 liters of the cashew juice concentrate annually.

Some 20% of current production is exported to Australia, while 40% is sold direct to markets in Phuket and Bangkok.

The remaining 40% of the concentrate produced is outsourced to Merit Thailand Co Ltd, which dilutes and cans the juice

to produce the Casheway drink at its Chon Buri factory.

In Phuket, about 200 cans of Casheway are currently sold each day at various outlets including Big One stores, where it retails at 30 baht per 300-milliliter can.

The drink is also popular with tourists at the Thalang factory and the company's original locale on Kwang Rd in Tambon Wichit, both well-known tourist attractions on the island.

Casheway is also sold at all seven branches of Lemon Farm shops, as well as the Doi Kham and Phak Doi shops.

The company began producing cashew fruit juice in 2000 after a suggestion from an Israeli

university professor on holiday in Phuket.

"The man said that he had found a tasty cashew fruit juice drink in Kenya, and that he had walked into our shop hoping to find it there," K. Supphaluck explained.

K. Supphaluck found the idea enticing as at that time market prices for raw cashew nuts, then the company's sole product, were soaring. However, she realized that, like other cashew nut producers, her company only used the cashew nuts, throwing the surrounding fruit away.

She then devised a palatable recipe for cashew fruit juice and in March 2000 gave it to a local taxi driver to taste.

The driver approved of the flavor and suggested that she make the drink commercially, she said.

The company launched its cashew fruit juice later that year, entering the market with an annual production capacity of 20 tonnes.

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Phuket golf tourism now in full swing

By Skyler Swezy

PHUKET: With more than half a dozen world-class golf courses, numerous high-end hotels and some of Southeast Asia's most popular beaches, it's no wonder that golf tourism in Phuket is such a thriving entity.

Mark Siegel, managing director of Golfasian, said that golf tourism on the island could expand even further if it becomes a year-round industry.

Golfasian.com, which offers golfing vacations in Thailand, recently announced a business growth of 126% on last year. Golfasian owns the golf-travel websites golfasian.com and golforient.com, a company dedicated to golf travel in Phuket.

In June, Golfasian.com experienced a 192% increase in website traffic over June 2006.

"In addition to the record growth achieved from the normal travel season, I am very pleased that we are also seeing a strong increase in orders for the traditionally slower summer months, which indicates that Thailand's golf-travel market is becoming year round," said Mr Siegel.

Tim Haddon, director of golf at Laguna Phuket Golf Club, agreed that the golf industry in Phuket is on the upswing.

"The golf-resort business in Phuket is very healthy at the moment and with the addition of Red Mountain [Loch Palm Golf Club, Kathu] to the list of courses already on the island, Phuket is drawing more golfers than ever before."

Haddon is confident that Laguna Phuket Golf Club will achieve a double-digit percentage increase in business in 2007 com-

pared to last year.

Haddon said that the key to developing golf tourism on the island is to attract markets of people who would normally travel to other destinations during the green season and steer them to Phuket.

"This degree of marketing potential was unheard of in the not-so-distant past," said Mr Haddon, but with the increase in online marketing and Phuket's emphasis on drawing low-season travelers, the golf industry is in a strong position to grow.

For Golfasian, Mr Siegel said, the secret was more golf tourism packages and an expanded web presence with two blogs dealing with golf in Thailand and a course review feature to help tourists plan their time on the greens and find courses that meet their requirements.

Charity badminton

SAPHAN HIN: Phuket Badminton Club will hold a charity tournament September 7 to 9 in honor of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 80th birthday.

The tournament, which will raise money for new medical equipment for Patong Hospital, will take place at Saphan Hin Gymnasium from 8 am to 5 pm.

For more information or to register contact either K. Thunyapisit at Tel: 081-8938909 or K. Banchai at Tel: 081-7974861.

Foreign entrants must show copies of their passports to enter the competition.

Straits Games are coming

PATONG: The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community will be out in force for the sixth annual Straits Games (TSG), which will see a melting pot of competitors battling it out in a series of sporting events between August 30 and September 2.

Participants will compete in sports such as table tennis, volleyball, badminton and bowling, with a non-competitive swimming carnival marking the opening of the games.

As well as the sports competition, a number of social events will take place over the weekend to give participants, volunteers, supporters and the Straits-curious an opportunity to mingle and experience some of Phuket's renowned nightlife.

TSG, which organizers hope can foster friendship and promote healthy lifestyles in Asian LGBT communities, began life as a sports contest between Leadership Program Graduates of Malaysia and Men After Work of Singapore.

Over the years, the event has grown to include participants from countries such as Japan and Hong Kong. This marks the second successive year that TSG has been hosted by Phuket Pride Association, with participants expected to arrive from as far afield as Australia and New Zealand.

For more information email info@phuketpride.org.

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE



SHARPSHOOTERS: The Dogs Bollocks championship side (from left) Lek, Mark, Denzil, Kevin, Peak, Tony, Simon.

Dogs Bollocks revel in glory

PATONG: Members of the Dogs Bollocks dart team celebrated their first win in the Patong Darts League with a league party on the night of August 14 at their bar on Soi Viking in Patong.

As usual, there were many prizes won – including a whole table full of spirits, electronic gadgetry and even some educational DVDs from Japan. For food there was a top-class barbecue with ribs, chicken and baked potatoes.

Peter, captain of last-place Simply Red, was a good sport in accepting – and actually wearing around his head – a toilet seat bearing tidings of good joy from the captains of all the other bars.

Those attending the standing-room-only party were surprised to see a "for sale" sign had been put up by bar owner Denzil, who said he wanted to sell off the the bar to concentrate his efforts on his other fine establishment: the Mutt's Nuts, on Soi Seadragon.

With Dogs Bollocks on the

block it looks like it might take a while before other establishments open in Patong with names like the Terrier's Testicles, the Canine's Cojones or the Great Dane's Gonads...too bad.

Perspective buyers of the two-story shophouse should know that the championship dart team will not be sold with the premises; the boys will be playing out of Mutt's Nuts instead.

The new league that kicked off August 21 has nine teams, including one new side, the Market Bar. Run by former Simply Red player Patsy, Market Bar is located near former dart-league venue The Boss Bar. It is opposite Family Mart on Nanai Rd.

Send comments, queries and vouchers for free beer to: darts@phuketgazette.net

August 28 matchups: Piccadilly v Dogs Bollocks; Queen Mary v Beach House; Shakers v Off-shore; Valhalla v Market Bar; Simply Red has a bye.

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Fighting pays off for two Phuket youth

By Sompratch Saowakhon

PHUKET: Two Phuket youth boxed their way to medals in the Thailand Youth Boxing Championship 2007 in Bangkok. More than 400 fighters took part in the competition, held August 5 to 10 at the Mall Ngamwongwan.

Pinyo Kadamduan, 16, won a silver medal in the 75-kilogram division while Manas Yingwittayakhun, 18, brought home the bronze in the 54kg matchup. The fighters received 3,000 and 1,000 baht, respectively, for their efforts.

From here the two youth have been admitted to the National Youth Boxing team, beginning their training next year in Nakhon Ratchasima. There they will train and travel with the national team to competitions in the region.

Phuket sent a total of nine boxers to the competition, ranging in age from 14 to 19, all under the guidance of Master Jay from the Surakit Gym.

Master Jay told the *Gazette*, "We are very happy with two medals from our boxers. All of them are native Phuket and they had trained in Muay Thai before I called them to train with me."

The other fighters in the 14

to 16 age bracket included Asaree Romin, 40kg; Danai Pongthong, 42kg; Vichai Khuadkaew, 45kg; and Tiwakorn Kamdam, 51kg.

In the 17 to 19 age bracket was Mana Seesuksai, 45kg; Manas Yingwittayakhun, 54kg; Jatupong Kaewkongtun, 60kg; Sarawuth Pansawang 69kg; and Pinyo Kadamduan, 75kg.

Master Jay said that Danai nearly clinched a bronze in his weight division but lost by a few points.

In Pinyo's final round, Master Jay had to call for an end to the fight because he felt Pinyo, while a good fighter, was overmatched by an older competitor. "I asked the referee to stop the fight because Pinyo is just 16, but he was up against a 19-year-old because of his weight class," he explained.

"He is a big guy, but we didn't want him fighting the older guy. So we are very happy that he got the silver medal and this will be his first time training with the National Youth Boxing team."

The teams were supported by Tossaporn Thepabutr of the Phuket Sports Association and Joseph Mercer of West Sands Hotel, who made the trip to Bangkok possible.

Local coach serves up tennis lessons

PHUKET: Tennis lovers in Phuket can unite beginning September 1 as local tennis coach Lorenzo Marcuzzi begins tennis lessons and monthly tournaments for youngsters on the island.

These will be followed by lessons, a tennis tournament and partner match-up system for adults that will take place each month.

Lorenzo, the tennis coach at British International School, Phuket (BIS) and at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Resort, will hold lessons for BIS students on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the school.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays he will hold lessons at the Boat Lagoon Resort for all other students.

Although there is no strict age limits, Lorenzo said he expects players to range from six to 12 years old.

In case of rain-outs, both groups will reschedule to Sunday at the Boat Lagoon.

From there Lorenzo will organize teams to play in monthly tournaments. He hopes to eventually create school teams to play other schools from Phuket.

Each tournament will include prizes and awards and students do not need to be enrolled in the lessons to participate in tournaments, which will be free of charge.

For adults, Lorenzo said that he hopes to expand his lessons at the Sheraton to include tournaments.

Lessons will be held 3 pm to 6 pm at BIS, and 3 pm to 5 pm at the Boat Lagoon. Prices are not yet set but will be about 250 baht per hour for students.

Lessons for adults depend on the package purchased at the Sheraton.

For more information or to register, contact Lorenzo at Tel: 081-0802453, email: lorenzotennis@libero.it or visit his website at www.tennis-plus.com

Thais dominate to win Platu nationals

Although defending national Platu champion skipper Scott Duncanson and his crew on *The Ferret* managed to take a quick lead by winning the first race in the Platu 25 Thailand National Championships, the Thai South East Asian Games crew sailing on *Naiad* dominated the three-day, eight-race event to become the new champions.

"It's always a little disappointing to lose a championship, but the Thai National team really deserve and have thoroughly earned their victory,"

Duncanson said.

The 12 crews who took part in the event off the shores of Pattaya enjoyed favorable weather with moderate winds throughout the regatta.

Duncanson and crew, who finished second overall now have their sights set on the world championships, to be held in Neustadt, Germany, from August 25 to 31.

Final results: *Naiad*, with Weerasit Puangnak, 10 points; *The Ferret*, with Scott Duncanson, 18pts; *The Fox*, with Rolf Heenskurk, 22pts.



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Gardening

by Bloomin' Bert

I suppose I'll grow up some day. Maybe. Actually, I don't really want to – the idea of spending the rest of my days behaving like an adult is a bleak thought. I still find the childish things highly amusing. If you gave me a copy of *The Beano*, I'd read it cover to cover.

My parents used to constantly plead with me to "grow up", but as I grew older I realized that was one of the daftest pieces of advice that anyone could dish out. People who have genuinely "grown up" are the type who corners you at parties; the sort that are convinced that you will share their passion for 11th century Castilian archeology.

Perhaps my schoolboy level of humor is best illustrated by the simple fart. I still find them funny. Even their euphemisms are hilarious, as listed in great detail in the renowned Roger's Profanisaurus.

That pull my finger thing – infantile, but superb. Few people appreciate that the volume and intensity of a botty burp can actually be measured in braps, according to the Profanisaurus.

I was a teacher some years ago. I could never understand how many of my colleagues dealt with the sniggers triggered by a trouser cough. I always caved in, and ended up giggling too.

Even the great Peter Sellers was affected by the sound of an air biscuit. Who can forget that *Pink Panther* scene, with four of them in a lift when one of them rips one off. Despite their professional best, not one of them could keep a straight face.

I'm sure that I'm not the only person who thinks that breaking wind under the duvet and



The rubber trees found all over Phuket originated in Brazil. Inset: Tappers must use a delicate touch to draw sap them effectively without killing the tree.

Breezin' through the rubbers

immediately burying the wife's head under the covers while screaming "dutch oven" is the epitome of sophisticated humor.

There are many other infantile things that just seem to scream out for salacious remarks. Just about any mention of leathergoods in any context is usually enough to elicit a childish giggle. Is it possible to mention the word "rubber" without getting the same inevitable reaction from those of a childish ilk?

As it happens, rubber is a pretty regular sight here on the

island. I'm not thinking of what this stuff is eventually turned into, but where it comes from. Rubber trees are everywhere; many of us pass them every day without giving them a second thought.

The humble rubber tree, or *Hevea brasiliensis* as it's more correctly known, is perhaps one of the most common trees in Thailand, yet very few of us have them in our gardens.

These things are all over the place, forming huge plantations around the island – plantations that are dwindling in number daily. They haven't been in Phuket very long in comparative terms, yet they have an amazing history.

Brazil actually provided the world with the rubber tree. History time (I promise not to do this at parties, by the way): In 1876, Henry Wickham, a local planter representing the British government, exported a few from the lower Amazon area of Brazil to London.

The seeds were germinated at the Tropical Herbarium in Kew Gardens in London later that year. From there, some of the resulting seedlings were exported to Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka). The next year, 22 seedlings were sent from Ceylon to Singapore, where they grew enthusiastically and the technique of rubber tapping was developed. Before this, the trees had to be felled before the latex could be extracted, which wasn't profitable long-term.

By 1900, most of the agricultural techniques for establishing large plantations had been developed. One particularly useful technique was bud grafting. This technique ensures that genetically identical trees can be produced in unlimited numbers.

Over the next 40 years or so, the British chaps in Malaya (now called Malaysia) and the Dutch in Indonesia cleared large areas of rainforest to create rub-

ber plantations. At the same time, local farmers planted small groves of rubber trees to supplement their income.

This gave rise to two main types of rubber plantations: large plantations and smallholdings. In Phuket we have smallholdings, which produce those sheets of rubber looking like grubby white towels on a washing line.

All natural rubber originates from the *hevea* tree. It starts its journey when the tree is tapped, which is usually once every couple of days. A tapper starts his hike around the plantation before dawn. At each tree, he uses a sharp knife to shave off the thinnest possible layer from the intact section of bark.

The cut must be neither too deep nor too thick, as either will reduce the productive life of the tree. The cut gets the latex flowing and the tapper leaves a small cup underneath the cut to catch it. The tapper returns a few hours later and collects the latex. This double round trip usually finishes about 2 pm.

Surprisingly, the latex that rubber comes from isn't actually made from sap. The sap runs deeper inside the tree, beneath the cambium, which is the slightly harder part of the tree beneath the bark that does all the growing. Latex runs in the latex ducts, which are in a layer immediately outside the cambium.

This shows how highly-skilled the tappers really are. If the cambium is cut, then the tree is damaged, because the cambium is where all the growth takes place. Too much damage to the cambium, and the tree stops growing and stops making latex.

Well I've somehow managed to get through a whole story about something itching for a lewd comment without making a single inane schoolboy-style remark about what rubber can be turned into. I think I've done rather well, to be honest. Rubbery.

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Decor

by Natcha Yuttaworawit

Lucy in the shower with rainbows

Maybe the trippy rockers from the 1960s were right, bathing in a rainbow sounds like a great way to start the day. Now, thanks to a special shower head available in Phuket, you can start your morning with a walk through the sky – no hallucinogens required.

Varunchai Rungruang, manager of the Hafele showroom on Chao Fa East Rd, said that the light that emanates from their LED shower heads can work as a type of light therapy and alter people's moods.

"Showers can always be relaxing but we wanted to bring different feelings to the shower, too.

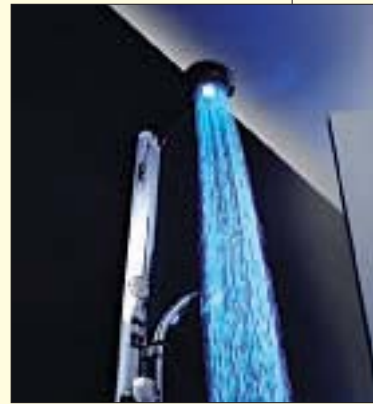
"For example, when you are stressed you should shower with the blue light, or if you have a cold or have some other illness,



shower with the red light. If you want to feel refreshed, use the orange light."

There are eight colors to choose from during the shower and they can be changed with the flip of a switch.

"Each color has its own



meaning, but if you turn them all on at the same time you can have a rainbow show in your bathroom," K. Varunchai said.

"They are based on the primary colors that we mix to make different shades."

The company launched in Thailand in May in Bangkok, with the Phuket store following in July.

"This is a new creation and

we're getting great feedback from our customers," he said, adding that many spas and hotels are adding them as a unique touch.

The shower heads are made from ABS plastic and the whole operation is powered by a specially-wired 12-volt electrical line from the house's power supply.

K. Varunchai said there's

no cause for concern about being electrocuted as the current required to power the unit is too low to cause any harm and the unit has its own circuit breaker.

To ride the rainbow you can buy the shower heads at the Hafele showroom at 90/5 Chao Fa West Rd or call the shop at 076-264481.

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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel

New shooting range takes shape



The new range is being built next to the Phuket Potable Water pumping station on Patong Hill.



An artist's conception of the finished project.

KATHU: A three-story building under construction on the eastern side of Patong Hill will be Phuket's third shooting range, the *Gazette* has learned.

Work on the 45-million-baht Patong Shooting Range, is about 70% complete, said project owner Somchit Sucharitjiravongse.

Honorary Secretary of the Trang Chamber of Commerce, K. Somchit is a shooting enthusiast who has represented in Thailand in international competitions. His aim is for the shooting range to help support recreational shooting in Phuket and become the new headquarters of the Phuket Shooting Association.

Construction at the conspicuous 4.5-rai hillside site next to the "Potable Water" station began in April and should be complete within a few months, K. Somchit said.

Although the venue is located in Tambon Kathu, not Patong, K. Somchit confirmed that the range would definitely be named Patong Shooting Range.

The 45-million-baht price tag does not include the land purchase cost, which K. Somchit declined to divulge.

Patong Shooting Range is K. Somchit's first business venture in Phuket, although he already owns the Sirinthorn Shooting Range in Trang and the Krabi Shooting Range in Ao Nang, Krabi. He also owns two branches of the Grand Suite Inn hotel in Trang.

K. Somchit said that foreign tourists seeking "adventure activities" during their stays in Phuket would be a large part of the tar-

get market, which already has access to the Phuket Shooting Range in Chalong and the Kathu Shooting Range next to Lock Palm Golf Course.

Patong Shooting Range will comprise a three-story building with three shooting ranges on the ground floor. Each range, nine meters wide and 50 meters long, will be used for shooting over distances of 25 to 50 meters, K. Somchit said.

The site can accommodate additional ranges if demand arises for them, he added.

The second floor, which will be air conditioned, will house a single shooting range designed to meet the training needs of competitive marksmen, of which there are currently only six in Phuket competing at national level, he said.

The third floor will have an office, meeting room and living quarters for K. Somchit.

Patong Shooting Range will be open to the general public, including walk-in customers. Trainers will be available for first time shooters.

"We expect to open about mid-November, in time to host the southern regional competition for sportsmen hoping to qualify for the next National Games," said K. Somchit.

"Many foreign tourists coming to Phuket are interested in adventure sports such as diving and rock climbing. Having this shooting range will provide additional activities for them, so they might decided to stay in Phuket longer. This can help promote tourism," he said.




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Number crunching pays off

Deciding what to spend on sales and marketing for a new development can be a daunting task. Taking a big picture approach of key financial numbers for the project and then working through the details makes considerably more sense than putting together a wish list of an advertising and promotion plan that may overshoot budget.

It's important to work from a holistic, number-driven approach and set up spending limits and performance measures for gauging results.

First, look at revenue or sales projections and break these down into realistic assumptions, such as the pace of sales – that is, how many units you expect to sell each month. It's wise to compare your per-square-meter selling prices with a competitive set of properties already in the market.

Also, verify whether your projection is realistic by comparing the sales rate of competing products and factor in other considerations, such as seasons, that can affect sales over the course of a year.

There are more visitors during the tourist season, but property sales are highest when a certain profile of visitors are on the island, including higher net-worth individuals and strong representation from Hong Kong and the UK. Historically, more than 70% of annualized sales are from October to April, though this trend varies for upper-tier luxury properties.

Sales and marketing expenses include commissions paid in-house and to outside agents, as well as sales staff costs and all advertising, promotions and marketing of the project. While there is no industry standard percentage of sales and marketing ex-

penses, expenses are most often expressed as a percentage of total sales.

Local trends in medium to high-end condominium, town-house and villa developments aimed at overseas buyers show that sales and marketing expenses are usually about 10% of total sales.

Having sales and marketing expenses pegged at about 3% of total sales was once the norm for the local market. However, the percentage is moving upwards significantly, so budgets need to cater to this and may see the combination of internal and external commissions reach about 5% of total sales, and incentive schemes with higher rates paid according to a progressive scale are more common among the larger agents.

Significant components of the expenses budget will be print advertising; e-marketing, including Website, on-line banners, "pay per click" and direct email; tradeshow and exhibitions; point-of-sale material; billboards; entertainment and sales office expenses; and public relations.

These costs should be broken into line items and match up with expense items in the monthly and annual profit and loss statements, in order to monitor costs against the initial budgets.

Back up the items with specific-detailed assumptions such as ad placements in particular newspapers and related costs, and so on. The assumption worksheet builds up a zero-based budget instead of just putting in lump-sum amounts, it details out the actual supported costs of each expense. It is best to obtain actual quotes.

Having control and monitoring monthly expenses is important as overspending on sales and marketing reduces the bottom-line profit for a project. Equally im-



PROPERTY WATCH

By Bill Barnett



Old-fashioned getting down to details and counting every baht is the best way to plan a sales and marketing campaign.

portant is tracking the source of sales leads, which leads to a "conversion factor" showing how many potential customers who walk in the door finally buy the product.

Have sales staff set up a daily-traffic record of customer contacts via agents, direct contact, Internet, phone and to also ask direct customers how they came to visit the property. Each month when you review expenses, also analyze sales data.

Cumulate the results for the month and see what is producing the most sales.

Two critical exercises are reviewing how effective your spending is and where are the most sales generated. Marketing plans are not set in stone. You need to rework strategies, create new ideas and constantly improve to meet a changing market. Often you see projects that have 70% of their sales from outside agents but spend 80% of their

marketing on stand-alone advertising. A more logical approach would be to adjust the spending to co-op advertising or using greater incentives to encourage more sales from that venue.


In most cases, marketing is one of the most liked parts of property development. It allows you to use your creative juices, experiment and create both image and product.

Equally important, though, is that any development is a business and the same rules apply to cost management as they do to construction.

Measuring results throughout the sales cycle, adapting and moving to the market and not letting your ego get in the way of solid business judgment is key to getting the payday you want at the project's end.


Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks (c9hotelworks.com), a Phuket-based hotel and residential property-consulting firm. With more than 20 years' experience in the region, he has played an active role in some of the island's biggest developments.

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Property Gazette

Properties For Sale

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: 081-5384989. Email: mnobnorb@hotmail.com

KOH YAO YAI

1 rai, Chanote, water, electricity, close to the beach. Perfect vacation home. Price: 800,000 baht. Please contact for additional details at Tel: 081-8928208.

LUXURY APARTMENT IN PATONG

with lots of elegant furniture. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, well-equipped kitchen. Club-house including swimming pool, snooker, sauna and bar. Comes with new Toyota Fortuner. You can have private swimming, just open the side door. Best views of Patong, especially when standing outside on the balcony. 190sqm in a nice location. Take your baggage to stay immediately. Please contact the owner. Tel: 085-1982577.

THAI BUGALOW

Rural Ban Liphon, Thalang. 2 bedrooms with aircons, lounge, dining room, large back patio with garden. 8 mins to Boat Lagoon, 15 mins to the airport. 920,000 baht ono. Call Clare at Tel: 083-3906700, or evening Tel: 086-4702787 (English). Tel: 086-0918355 (Thai).

PATONG HOUSE FOR SALE

3 bedrooms with aircon, 2 bathrooms, Jacuzzi, equipped kitchen with cooker, garage. 26sq wah. Price: 5.3 million baht. Contact K. Vi at Tel: 081-8443988.

BEAUTIFUL NAI YANG LAND



5 mins to Phuket airport, close to the beach, 10 rai. 120 million baht. Must see. Tel: 089-7727012. Email: gyb_giff@hotmail.com

NEW 120SQM FREEHOLD CONDO

in Rawai. 180-degree unrestricted sea view overlooking Chalong Bay and Rawai Bay. Only a few meters away from the shoreline of Chalong Bay. Best location of the 41 units in the project. 3.9 million baht. Call Mr Kuno. Tel: 081-9685963. Email: kuno@bayproject.com

110 RAI BEACHFRONT

Absolute beachfront land. 2.6 million baht per rai. Contact Tel: 087-2849541. Email: mk@phuket-no1.com

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

400sqm house, pool, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Garden and covered terrace. Price: 6.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

RAWAI BEACH DUPLEX

15-year lease, 107sqm duplex house, pool, carport, garden. Price: 1.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

SURIN LAND FOR SALE

1,016sqm: 6 million baht. 996sqm: 5 million baht. 5-minute walk to Surin Beach. Call Tel: 081-8687676.

RAWAI 2-STORY HOUSE

140sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, close to the beach. 1.5 million baht. Call Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

KARON LAND FOR SALE



15 million baht per rai, Chanote, hillside, panoramic sea view, quiet area. Please contact for additional information. Tel: 089-7727012. Email: se_rim@hotmail.com

SEAVIEW APARTMENT

2 bedrooms, top floor, north Patong, 20 steps to the beach, freehold. Price: 9.7 million baht. Tel: 086-2765117. For photos, please send email: jihshand@gmail.com

BIG GOLF VILLA

Big luxurious villas for sale from 9 million baht. Only 25 meters to Loch Palm Golf Club. Please contact for details at Tel: 081-9685963. Email: m@bayproject.com

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

NEW 3-STORY COMMERCIAL

building. 2 bathrooms. Price: 4 million baht. Please contact Tel: 086-7432011.

RAWAI BEACH CONDO

Sea view, foreign freehold. 550,000 baht. Tel: 086-940-8914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

FIRST CHOICE PATONG

New real estate agency looking to sell your property, condo, villas or commercial or residential land. Contact Mimi at Tel: 087-9766385 (English/French), or Linjee at Tel: 081-4940450 (Thai). Tel: 076-600151, 087-976-6385. Fax: 076-600153. Email: mimi@firstchoice-real-estate.com

LUXURY HOUSE WITH GREAT VIEW



House with the most amazing view of Patong Bay for sale or lease. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room. This property, if improved slightly by adding an infinity pool, extending the living area and doing some general upgrading would resell for minimum US\$2 million. Very sound investment. Tel: 081-8921108. Fax: 081-345821. Email: giulio@phuketrealestate.com Please visit our website: www.phuketrealestatesolutions.com

LAND FOR SALE

8 rai in Patong. 1.2 million baht per rai. Sea view. Located on 50 Pi Rd. Please contact Khun Terawut at Tel: 081-5361365.

LAND FOR SALE

10 rai in Bang Wad. 1 million baht per rai. Please contact K. Terawut at Tel: 081-5361365.

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value in Patong. 12 studio apartments to be sold. Up-market resort. 5 minutes to beach, Jungceylon, Bangla Rd and use of fantastic facilities. Great investment opportunity at 2.5 million to 2.7 million baht. Contact Jeff at Tel: 083-2807152.

HOUSE FOR URGENT SALE

Large 4 1/2-bedroom house in Chalong. Up for urgent sale due to relocation. Selling at 10.5 million baht only. A bargain deal. Tel: 076-282211, 081-8926251. Email: mrsouza@hotmail.com For further details, visit our website at www.phuketdreamhome.com

NEW HOUSE FOR SALE

4 bedrooms, big kitchen, open plan, near Wat Chalong. For details, Tel: 086-6831964.

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Unfinished duplex directly on 15th fairway. Contact Tel: 081-8941994. Email: tomkat@phuket.ksc.co.th Visit www.fairway15.com

HILLSIDE HOMES

for sale/barter. 4 brand-new, quiet, natural, luxurious 2-bedroom and 2-bathroom villas. Fully furnished with outdoor whirlpool. Approx 180sqm on a 100sq wah plot of land. In the most guarded, prestige estate of Saraburi. For sale at 4.75 million baht each or barter with seaview-land plots or condo development in Phuket. Contact Tel: 081-8142040. Email: sailesh@thaimartin.com Visit our website: www.ziam.com

NAI HARN HOME W/ POOL

Private, secluded, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, custom pool, located on over a 1 rai. 9.5 million baht. Tel: 087-2095174.

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

Luxurious 5-bedroom villa with pool. Only 29.5 million baht. Tel: 085-7839062. Email: sale@phuketmarbella.com

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BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE



51.47sqm, in Chanakran Property Village, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Behind TOT Public Co Ltd (Chalong). The house is under construction and will be ready within one month. Price: 3.9 million baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 081-9562406.

SOI NAYA HOUSE FOR SALE



60sq wah, Nai Harn area. 2.5 million baht. Contact K. Pee. Tel: 084-0513731, 085-7864509.

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quiet home. Lovely outlook, 2 bathrooms, pool, kitchen, carport with storage. Land: 450sqm. 5.5 million baht. Tel: 086-2817605. Email: nigelnixie@yahoo.com.au

HOUSE FOR SALE

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Property Gazette

AO POR LAND URGENT SALE



150rai, Chanote, panoramic sea view. From 2.3 million baht per rai. Contact for more information. Tel: 089-7727012. Email: se_rim@hotmail.com

180SQM NEW PENTHOUSE



Panoramic sea view, 2-3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, large living room. From 8 million baht. Please contact me for a viewing. Tel: 081-9685963. Email: kuno@bayproject.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.bayproject.com/invest/index.htm>

BEACHFRONT POOL VILLA

Located on a private beach. Only 9 million baht. Tel: 084-4422510. Email: admin@thaisunshinedevelopments.com For more details, please visit our website at http://www.thaisunshine.developments.com/sichon_beach.htm

RAWAI LAND

3.25 rai development site for condo, etc. Good sea view from 2nd floor, power on the block. 6 meters from road. 5.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-0825707.

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Immaculate villa. Private area, big lush garden, pool, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, living room, Scandi kitchen, huge patio, fully furnished, contemporary Bali-Thai style. Living area: 450sqm. Land area: 1,400sqm. Near Heroines Monument with scenic hill view. Chanote. 14 million baht. Tel: 084-6907057.

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, 6 rai with good sea view: 6 million baht per rai. 20 rai with best sea view in Kamala: 6 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-2742308. Email: kim@kamalafalls.com

PATONG CENTER HOTEL

for sale. 1 year old, proven success. 18 rooms. Price: 60 million baht. Tel: 085-7839062, 086-2767510.

NAI YANG LAND

for sale. 1km to the beach. Three plots: 20m x 22m (440sqm each), road access. Price: 900,000 baht. Call Tel: 089-7241140.

HOUSE FOR SALE

2-stories in a desirable and secure estate. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, study, living room, kitchen, laundry room, set in fenced garden. Furnished, ADSL, UBC. Price: 7 million baht obo. Tel: 084-8439579. Fax: 076-323421. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

3-STORY HOUSE FOR SALE



near Chalong circle. 405sqm, fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, aircon, garage for 2 cars. Good location for your business. Contact Tel: 089-8742960. Email: pwarunee@hotmail.com

LAND IN RAWAI

1rai 43 talang wah. Secluded high-end hillside plot. Private access. Superb location. Chanote. 4.6 million baht. Tel: 076-521005, 085-7827551.

RAWAI LAND

Chanote, 1,446sqm. Flat, square plot. Mountain, woodland aspects in residential area. 3.5 million baht ono. Tel: 081-6910391. Email: info@liveandletdive.com

1 RAI KAMALA LAND

Chanote, electric, water, main road access, 600m from Kamala center. 5 million baht. Please contact Tel: 076-292-596, 086-2678477. Email: tourniechristian@hotmail.com

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3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, aircon, security bars, quiet area. 1km from Heroines Monument. 2.9 million. Tel: 086-9510123. Email: wing_michael_77@hotmail.com

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KATHU GOLF VIEW LAND

1.9 million baht per rai. Near Loch Palm Golf Club and BIS. The land totals 70.5 rai (Nor Sor 3 Kor). Quiet and scenic with access to water, electricity and road (800 meters is roadside). Please contact Sumon for details. Tel: 076-352069, 081-6919346. Fax: 076-261028. Email: sumon@ridethailand.com

2 BEACHHOUSES FOR SALE

Kamala: 15 million baht. Rawai Beach: 29.5 million baht. Both are ready to move in. Contact Marc at Tel: 085-7839062.

KATHU HOUSE

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 and more. Show house is now open. Only one villa left with completion due in September. 15 million baht. Tel: 084-0639223, 081-7888280.

BANG TAO SEAVIEW LAND PLOTS

Approx 1,000sqm, fantastic sea view, ready to build, 3 million baht and up. Contact to view. Email: bannuaton@yahoo.com

REPOSSESSION SALE-APARTMENT

Beautiful new 1-bedroom apartment on 5th floor overlooking Kata Beach. 5-star hotel service, including pool, gym and international bistro. Was 5.9 million baht, now reduced to 4.9 million baht. Tel: 084-0639223, 081-7888280.

NICE HOUSE FOR SALE

Perfect house, 4-5 bedrooms, ready to move in. Close to Central and Rawai Beach. Please contact Tel: 081-8915296. Email: hkthomesale18@yahoo.com For details, visit our website at <http://www.jkkycar.com>

LAND FOR SALE

756sqm in Jomthong village, 15 mins from Phuket City, 150 meters from main road, suitable for villa or shophouse 4.5 million baht. Please contact Tel: 084-0908811. Email: inthira81@hotmail.com

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Property Gazette

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URGENT SALE

Khao Lak. Bang Niang bungalow-apartment resort. 8 bungalows with 2 rooms and 2 bungalows with 3 rooms. 6m x 12m swimming pool. Sauna, Jacuzzi, restaurant. All rooms with aircon, TV, DVD player and ADSL. Parking available. 9 million baht. Tel: 076-346-065, 081-8914844. Email: joerg@phuket.ksc.co.th

LUXURY 3-BEDROOM HOUSE



Thalang/Ton Sai waterfall area. Luxurious 3 bedrooms, all with aircon and en-suite bathrooms, spacious living/dining rooms, swimming pool, beautifully landscaped, fully furnished, ADSL, UBC, phone. Off the beaten track (not a housing development). 1,600sqm of land, 10 mins to BIS, airport, 15 mins to Central. Tel: 076-321062, 086-8194373. Email: cswift1@swift-mail.com For further details, please visit our website at <http://www.swift-images.com/phukethome/>

RAWAI POOL VILLA

2 bedrooms, 150sqm, furnished, ready to move in. Price: 4.3 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 085-7839062.

LAND FOR SALE

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

PATONG TOWER SEA VIEW



Offered at 6.5 million baht. Furnished, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom condo on the 15th floor with full-length balcony, ready to move in, great condition. Quiet location in the heart of town. Elevated, unobstructed panoramic sea view, 100 meters from Patong Beach, shops, dining and banking just steps away. Pool, indoor parking, 24-hr security and reception. A rare chance to secure a one-of-a-kind location. Tel: 087-2761225. Email: patong15@gmail.com

BEACHFRONT HOUSE
at Kamala. 2 bedrooms, 2 stories. Only one left. Price: 15 million baht. Contact Tel: 085-7839062.

LAND WITH VIEWS

Quiet, green area. 970sqm plot: 2.5 million baht. 732sqm plot: 2 million baht ono. Contact Tel: 086-2817605. Email: nigelnixie@yahoo.com.au

LUXURY SEAVIEW VILLA

Direct from owner. 32 million baht or rent. No agents. Tel: 089-4742958. Email: tm_thanida@yahoo.com

6 RAI IN KAMALA



Nice land with sea view and good road access. Chanote title. Thai owner. 6 million baht per rai. For more info, please contact Sakorn at Tel: 087-6050365. Email: tim.kamalaparadise@hotmail.com

1 RAI ON KAMALA BEACH ROAD



Good for hotel, apartment or resort. Chanote title on 76% of the land. Thai owner. Price: 36 million baht. Contact Sakorn at Tel: 087-6050365. Email: tim.kamalaparadise@hotmail.com

KATHU HOUSE NOW ONLY 3.2 MILLION

Nice 2-story house with open ground floor, European kitchen with ceramic cooking plate, dining, living, bathroom, storeroom, terrace and balcony. The upper floor has 2 bedrooms with balcony, 1 aircon, bathroom. Garden around the house, carport. Fully furnished. 4 mins to Big C and Lotus. Big house, small price. Only 3.2 million baht obo. Email: shd1@planet.nl For additional details, visit our website at <http://home.planet.nl/~duang000/house.htm>

58 RAI BEACHFRONT LAND

on Koh Yao island. Chanote. Half the land is flat with 300 meters of beach front and behind a calm river crossing. Ideal for 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. Tel: 087-6050365. Email: tim.kamalaparadise@hotmail.com

4.5 RAI LAND FOR SALE

Prime location in Trang off main road & near university. Price: 14 million baht. Also, 2 rai at same location. Price: 7.5 million baht. Please contact for specific details at Tel: 089-6513479.

LAND INVESTMENT

30 rai full of palm trees in Kapong, Phang Nga. Priced at only 120,000 baht per rai. Financing available. Email: bourlis@hotmail.com

Properties For Rent

HOUSE AT THE SANDS

Attached to the Sands resort with the benefit of all resort facilities. Overlooking a lagoon to the front and national park to the rear. Living room, kitchen, toilet and yard on the ground floor. Two bedrooms each with king-size beds, en-suite bathrooms, dressing rooms and balconies on the first floor. Private roof-top sala. Email: jact@ardencraig.fsnet.co.uk For details, please visit our website: www.phukethouse-rental.co.uk

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

Furnished house, pool, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, garden, terrace and covered carport, UBC, safe. Rent: 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

BOAT LAGOON

Two bedrooms, lagoon-fronted townhouse, modern fully-fitted kitchen, use of communal swimming pool near international school, shops, etc. 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8337836.

PATONG SEAVIEW APARTMENT

2-bedroom apartment with kitchen, aircon, UBC, swimming pool, quiet location. 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-2790837.

RAWAI BEACH STUDIO

Furnished, kitchen, ADSL, UBC, aircon. 4,500 baht per month. Contact Khun Noki. Tel: 086-6865567.

B.L. APARTMENT

New in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, car park. Price: 8,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6923163.

KARON STUDIO APARTMENTS

New, luxury rooms. Good price & 5 mins to Karon Beach. 5-rooms, ADSL. From 550 baht per day, 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-398436-7, 086-5945121, 089-7247148. Fax: 076-398436-7. www.karonstudio.com

PATONG HOUSE

available for long-term rent. Two bedrooms, fully furnished house in central Patong. No smokers, pets or children. 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6932759, 081-6932759. Email: wunhung@gmail.com

PALM GARDEN

New, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, located in Thalang gated community. 24-hr security, swimming pool, furnished, cable, phone line. 13,000 per month. Tel: 081-8928208.

CHALONG HOUSE

for rent in Land & Houses. 3 bedrooms, fully furnished, aircon, TV, UBC. Tel: 081-9560241, 089-4740645.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

New apartment with swimming pool and security guard. From 18,000 baht per month. Call for more info. Tel: 081-9685963. Email: m@bayproject.com

MODERN HOUSES, QUIET LOCATION

2 houses in Nai Harn for long-term rent only. 2 bedrooms, en-suite bathroom, UBC, ADSL, alarm, full aircon, ceiling fans, big terrace, tropical garden, fenced in, small pets allowed, garage w/ 100sqm storage. 5 minutes to the beach, beautiful view. Only 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-8744050. Email: happyjo@procom.in.th

BEACHFRONT HOUSE
for rent. 1-4 bedrooms. Contact for specific details. Tel: 076-381181, 076-381189.

3-BEDROOM HOUSE

3 aircons, fully furnished, Western kitchen. Long-term rent: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-3705956.

SPACIOUS HOME

Beautiful view, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, pool, aircon. Long term. Price: 60,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-2817605. Email: nigelnixie@yahoo.com.au

NEW CHALONG HOME

Furnished, 2-bedroom home for rent with telephone, UBC, and aircon. Please contact for prices. Tel: 089-6521473.

Would you like to keep up on what's happening in Phuket - the good, the bad and the bizarre?
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Property Gazette

SERVICED APTS – GOOD PRICE

Large, bright furnished studios for rent in Chalong. Rooftop spa and pool. Aircon, Wi-Fi, sat TV, kitchenette, housekeeping. From 9,500 baht per month. Email for pictures. Tel: 086-2826221. Email: sanerod@yahoo.com

CHALONG SHOPHOUSE

This new 3-story shophouse is available for long-term lease. Ideal for home office/shop accommodation. Inquiries at Tel: 089-6521473.

KAMALA VILLA

Large 4- to 5-bedroom villa, 3 bathrooms, quality teak kitchen, side-by-side fridge, full-size snooker table, 42" plasma TV. Broadband Internet. 3- to 4-car garage, set on 1 rai with beautiful tropical gardens. Part of private boutique estate of 4 villas. Garden maintenance, house cleaning, cable TV. All included. Long-term: 55,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8111067.

NICE PATONG ROOMS

Aircon, ceiling fan, free Wi-Fi, cable TV, fridge, nicely furnished, restaurant and bar. Ideal for long-stay tourist. Daily rate: 500 baht. Monthly rate: 7,000 baht. Contact Andrew. Tel: 087-2825086.

LAGUNA 2-BEDROOM RENTALS

Furnished, aircon, common pool. Five available from 30,000 baht per month. Contact Marc at Tel: 085-7839062.

STUDIO APARTMENT W/ INTERNET

Modern apartment off Nanai Rd. Fully furnished including TV, DVD, large fridge, hot water, fan, aircon and kitchenette. From 7,500 baht per month. Internet an option. Tel: 087-2650652. Email: gisbert1@gmx.net

HOUSE FOR RENT



From Heroines Monument, 1 km to Paklok. New single house, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, furnished, 60sq wah. 16,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-6900626. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

PATONG RENTALS AVAILABLE

A number of listings that may appeal to you. Prices starting from 15,000 baht per month. Contact Tel: 081-7196088 (English) or 089-6498703 (Thai). Website: www.gardenislandphuket.com

PATONG HOUSE RENT/LEASE

Beautiful house on 50 Pi Rd. 2 bedrooms, large living room with open kitchen, sea view, garden, parking, etc. Can take over the lease. 7 years and 7 months left. Buy the lease as investment for 2 million baht. Minimum 1-year lease: 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 083-2802424. Email: mdamkvist@yahoo.com

LUXURY VILLA FOR RENT

in Patong. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool and spa. Available August 26. 60,000 baht per month. Contact K. Yeun. Tel: 087-8950362.

RAWAI FLAT

for rent. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, Internet, cable TV, fully furnished. Tel: 081-6067410.

2-BEDROOM NAI HARN VILLA

24,000 baht per month. 1-year rental. For details, call Tel: 081-3709661.

KATHU HOUSE



3 bedrooms (2 w/ aircon), den/study, 2.5 bathrooms, storage room, washing machine, UBC, DSL, 15 minutes to BIS and Patong, 2 minutes to Central. Fully furnished. 18,000 baht per month. Contact for more information. Tel: 076-321-062, 086-8194373. Email: cswift1@swift-mail.com

PHUKET CITY CENTER

250sqm, all renovated perfect for a gift shop, art gallery or design furniture shop. Located in the heritage area of Phuket. Tel: 081-8924885. Contact: claude@phuket.ksc.co.th

SEAVIEW HILLSIDE APARTMENT

5-star seaview studio apartment with swimming pool near Lotus. Daily, monthly, or yearly rates available. Only 12 units in apartment. Yearly rate: 12,500 to 44,500 baht. Tel: 081-8779292. Email: prakaisriroj@hotmail.com For further details, visit our website: www.gracegardensphuket.com

VILLA FOR RENT

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

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.

TROPICAL VILLA



near Rawai Beach. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, European kitchen, aircons, UBC TV, telephone, furnished, private pool and garden and fully maintained. Minimum 6-month lease: 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2810452, 087-8931180.

BRAND NEW PATONG CONDO

Beautiful 1-bedroom condo in best location, quiet. Sea and hill views, all amenities. Long-term rent. Call for details. Tel: 081-9701479. Email: caltirol@hotmail.com

KAMALA APARTMENT

Wi-Fi and other amenities. 150m to the beach. Long-term, 1-year rent: 10,000 baht per month. Contact Tel: 081-7193962. Email: bbq@loxinfo.co.th

HOUSE FOR RENT

Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, cable TV, ADSL. 18,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-9732917. Email: brunuiviv@hotmail.com

PANWA BEACH HOUSE

2 rooms, nice terrace. For rent in September or for long term: 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-2717071.

SECLUDED VILLA

One of three sharing a beautiful swimming pool and tropical garden near Rawai Beach. 2 bedrooms, full aircon, furnished, UBC, TV, telephone. Minimum 6-month lease. Price: 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2810452, 087-8931180.

RAWAI/NAI HARN



New, large, luxury house for rent. Large swimming pool, garden, 5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, big sala. Minimum 1-year lease: 75,000 baht per month. 30-year lease: 18 million baht. Contact Tel: 081-3971835.

BEACHFRONT HOUSE

with a wonderfully unique, breathtaking panoramic seaview. 2 stories, 220sqm, fully furnished, telephone, ADSL, sat TV, cold and hot water, only 20 meters to the beach, located in a very nice and quiet area (dead end lane). Yacht owner has possibility to moor the yacht directly in front of the building. Master bedroom: 58sqm with seaview, Jacuzzi, wardrobe, bathroom, shower, toilet and a 40sqm terrace next to pool. 2 kingsize bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen, storage, 1 bathroom with shower and toilet, guest toilet, 33sqm terrace (15sqm under roof). Private 7m x 4m pool, 4 aircons, parking space. Asking price: 89,000 baht per month. Minimum 1-year lease. Call K. Bhatayanond. Tel: 081-2596052. Email: surapong@gmx.de

SHOPHOUSE BLOCK

5 terraced houses for rent on the bypass road. 35,000 baht per month. Please contact K. Vachira. Tel: 081-3269495.

HOUSE FOR RENT OR FOR SALE

We currently have 2 houses available. Contact for details. Tel: 089-4740222. Email: mammos56@yahoo.com Website: www.thehoteldeals.com/photos/

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 Baan Maneekram Estate. The home comes with its own private garden, TV, DVD, fridge, microwave, washing machine, telephone line & internet access, etc. Rent is 15,000 baht per month, with a minimum 6-month contract. For more details, please email Marc Husted or call Chris after 7 pm. Tel: 087-8874659. Email: marc_husted@yahoo.com

STUNNING SEAVIEWS

Colonial mansion set in gardens with amazing views in every direction. Recently restored to high standard. 3 large bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, furnished, swimming pool. In Cape Yamu area, central east coast. 10 mins to BIS. No dogs. 80,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-2796283.

BEACHFRONT CONDO

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

HOUSE FOR RENT

Private, relaxed, 2 bedrooms w/ aircon, large living and dining area, large balcony overlooking bay. Furnished, 24" TV, cooker, refrigerator, microwave, grill, rice cooker, utensils and more. Long-term rent: 14,700 baht per month. Please contact Tel: 076-200-440, 083-5046565. Email: rogersolidgold@yahoo.com

Agents for Classified Advertising

PHUKET

K.L. Mart

Patak Rd, Chalong

Tel: 076-280400/3

Fax: 076-280403

Earth Language School

Phang Nga Rd, Phuket City

Tel: 076-232398/9

Fax: 076-232398

Sin & Lee

Thalang Rd, Phuket City

Tel: 076-258369

Fax: 076-211230

Taurus Travel

Aroonsom Plaza Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong

Tel: 076-344521/2

Fax: 076-344523

41 Minimart

Srisoontorn Rd, Cherng Talay

Tel/Fax: 076-324312

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Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong

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Boats & Marine

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high-performance cruising catamaran for sale. 17.4 meters. Built in 1992 with foamcore and epoxy. Ready to cruise the world. US\$550,000. Tel: 086-4707812, 081-837 5774. Fax: 086-4707812. Email: slarti@onthenet.com.au For further details, visit our website: www.katani2.com

KITESURFING KITE

Cabrinha Crossbow 1. 2006, 12-meter kite, good condition with new bar and lines. Includes pump. 20,000 baht. Tel: 081-8375774. Email: slarti@onthenet.com.au

RIB & ENGINES

Yamaha 140hp and 20hp auxiliary. 30 knots. 300L fuel tank. Excellent condition. 585,000 baht ono. Also, a 5.8-meter RIB with 5hp Yamaha engine with trailer included. 3.5 million baht. Please contact for details. Tel: 084-8394868. Email: arnulphy@bigfoot.com

SAILBOAT

1968 islander for sale. 44ft world cruiser, lying in Yacht Haven Marina. US\$50,000. For details, please email: temptation44@hotmail.com

9M CATAMARAN

for sale. No engine, no mast and no sails. Price: 270,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-8919620.

FERRY FOR SALE


Length: 30m. Gross: 322 tons. 244 passengers. 12.2 million baht. Please contact dock in Phuket. Tel: 081-4084991.



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Contact: Andrew de Bruin / Marcus Overman
Mobile: 081 894 1530 / 01 968 1437
tel/fax: 076 230 720
email: brokerage@leemarine.com

Yacht Haven Marina Office:
The Yacht Haven Marina Phuket
Contact: Jim Poulsen
Mobile: 081 881 3237
tel/fax: 076 206 260
email: yacht@leemarine.com

Pataya Office:
Ocean Marina Jomtien Beach
Contact: Mark Heath
Mobile: 0817879408
tel: 030 235 061 fax: 030 235 062
Email: mark@leemarine.com



Find more classified ads
"Boats & Marine"
 at www.phuketgazette.net/

Island Job Mart

British International School, Phuket are now seeking:

School Manager Secretary Assistant

- Female, Thai national
- Bachelor Degree in related field
- Excellent English, Computer literacy and good people skills
- Able to coordinate with other department

Teacher Assistant

- Thai national
- Bachelor degree, with major in English
- Teaching qualifications and experience of child care/teaching preferable
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Strong interpersonal and organizational skills

Registered Nurse

- Bachelor degree of Nursing or higher with active license
- > 2 years experience in Nursing
- Computer literacy is essential
- Good spoken and written English skills
- Service minded
- Interpersonal and problem solving skills
- Challenge job-oriented
- Team player
- Loves to work with children and people



British International School, Phuket (BIS, Phuket)

59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200 Thailand
Tel: 076 238 711-20 Fax: 076 238 750 Bangkok Tel: 02 636 8991-2 Fax: 02 636 8992
www.bcis.ac.th



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RESIDENCES**

www.banyantreeresidences.com

Banyan Tree Residences is currently looking to recruit a Sales & Marketing Manager to work for one of the leading developers of luxury residential properties in Thailand

SALES & MARKETING MANAGER 1 POSITION (Russian and English Speaking)

- College Diploma or higher required
- Excellent command of both spoken and written English and Russian
- Must have previous Sales & Marketing experience
- Self-motivated and enthusiastic
- Must be a team player with a friendly personality and positive attitude
- Flexible working hours
- Phuket based

We offer attractive remuneration packages and the opportunity for career growth.

Applicants are invited to apply in person at the Laguna Resorts & Hotels office, or send your detailed English resume stating current and expected salary together with a recent photo to:

Group of Human Resources Department
Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co., Ltd.
390/1 Moo 1, Srisoontorn Road, Cherngtalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110, Thailand
Tel: (66-76) 271298, 271 778 Ext. 2, Fax: (66-76) 271718
Email: rungnapac@lagunaphuket.com

WEB DEVELOPER(S)

2 DreamWeaver developers with skills in either 1: PHP/MySQL, or 2: dotNet, JavaScript & AJAX. Any CMS (Mambo, Joomla). OCommerce experience also desirable but not essential. Tel: 085-2233921. Email: ibc.web@gmail.com

PROJECT ACCOUNTANT

Candidate should have 2-3 years experience working on real estate or construction projects, good command of English and computer skills. Tel: 084-053 5780, 076-292265. Email: info@ayudhya.net

FINANCIAL CONTROLLING

- Thai nationality
- 2 years experience
- Good English skills
Contact Tel: 076-296321. Please send resume to email: info@stoneymonday.com

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

Vibrant Thai company with Australian expertise wants you and your energy, ideas and enthusiasm. Come and talk to us for more information. Tel: 084-1845162. Please visit our website: www.shades.co.th

WAITRESS WANTED

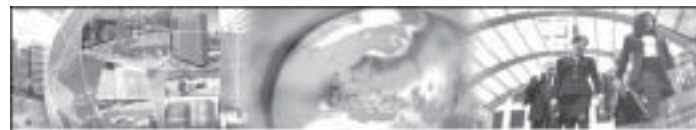
We are looking for staff for our popular sandwich restaurant in Karon. You have to speak English, be able to work as a team, have a happy attitude toward life and be willing to learn. Good salary with raise opportunities. Please contact Ms Nathalie for more information at Tel: 085-111-1155, or Ms Omm at Tel: 081-4499777.

SECRETARY/ ASSISTANT TO GM

Foreign GM requires single Thai person to assist in the running of a residential condominium property. Accounting work (petty cash, accounts payable, payroll taxation). Thai-English translation. General secretarial work, knowledge of Microsoft Office (Word, Excel). Liaising with owners, tenants and staff. Previous experience essential. Tel: 076-344350, 087-2646354. Fax: 076-344350. Email: brendon@kalimresidence.com

SALES PEOPLE

Established real estate company needs foreigners with work permit or Thai national sales people. Experience in sales, fluent English and computer skills required. High earnings. Email: info@ayudhya.net



**Knight
Frank**

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 rapid expansion, we are looking for qualified personnel to join our company as follows:

1. Zone Manager (2 positions)

- Male or female, age over 28 yrs
- BA in Real Estate/Property Management or related fields
- At least 3 yrs experience in building/estate management
- Knowledge of Land Development Act, Condominium Juristic Person Acts an advantage

3. HR Officer (2 positions)

- Male or female, age over 28 yrs
- BA in HR or related fields
- At least 2 yrs experience in HR function
- Knowledge of Thai Labor Law

5. Department Secretary (2 positions)

- Female, age over 28 yrs
- BA in Secretarial or related fields
- At least 3 yrs experience in secretarial work

2. Estate Manager / Assistant Estate Manager (4 positions)

- Male or female, age over 28 yrs
- BA in Real Estate/Property Management or related fields
- At least 1 yr experience in building/estate management or 3 years in management level
- Knowledge of Land Development Act, Condominium Juristic Person Acts an advantage

4. Receptionist (2 positions)

- Female, age over 22 yrs
- Vocational or higher in related fields
- At least 1 yr experience in receptionist front office
- Familiarity with office automation

6. Accountant (2 positions)

- Male or female, age over 25 yrs
- BA in Accounting or Finance
- At least 2 yrs experience in accounting
- Familiar with accounting software with knowledge of MS-office especially Ms-Excel and Thailand taxation systems

Interested candidates are invited to write in with full resume, stating present and expected salaries, and enclosing a recent photo to Human Resource Department at the address below:

Knight Frank Phuket Co., Ltd.

1 Plaza Del Mar Building Room no.109-111 & 201-202, Pasak-Koktanod Road, T. Cherngtalay, A. Thalang, Phuket 83110
Tel: 0-7631 8151-8 Fax: 0-7631 8159
Email: chutima.ninlawan@th.knightfrank.com

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Thai Nationality only
Good command of spoken and written English and computer literacy is essential
Male applicants must complete or exempt from military service
Knowledge of Real Estate an advantage

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Male, 25-45 years old
2 years experience
Basic English skills and service-minded

Please contact Tel: 086-9442504, 076-304072-4
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SUNSET PLAZA
Condominium | Karon | Phuket

Sunset Plaza currently seeking for the following position:
Secretary/accountant required to work in real estate office in Karon:

- Thai nationality, age 25 and up.
- Computer skills
- A degree in accounting or related fields.
- Able to read, write and speak English
- Accounting experience gained in a known organization
- Good personality and unquestioned honesty

BUNGALOW RESORT ALL POSITIONS

- * Restaurant manager
- * Receptionist
- * Cook
- * Waiter/waitress
- * Cashier
- * Maid
- * Beach boy/girl
- * Trainees and more...

You should be motivated, service-minded, with pleasant personality, an energetic individual, have minimum of 2 years experience and good command of English. Please email your resume, expected salary and recent photo to: pia@phuket-bangtaolagoon.com

SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Energetic person with outgoing personality and good command of English is required for sales job with good salary. Must be Thai national. Tel: 076-282211, 081-8926251. Email: mrsouza@hotmail.com

ONLINE HOTEL JOBS

Online hotel reservation company looking for expats to work in Bangkok. Seeking customer service agent and foreign-language managers in these languages: French, German, Italian, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Dutch, Swedish and Malaysian. For IT, senior developer with dot-Net skills in VB.net or C# or Visual Basic are required. Interested people should contact Tel: 02-6461200 ext. 1303. Fax: 02-6461224. Please send CV to email: hr@agoda.com For further details, please visit our website: http://jobs.agoda.com

DISCOVERY MOTO TOURS

Discovery Moto Tours is looking for experienced English-speaking guides to join it's fast-growing team based in Phuket. We offer full-time, year-round work, a great basic salary, a bonus scheme and paid holidays. If you hold a bronze-guide license, enabling you to travel throughout Thailand, have excellent communication skills and would enjoy looking after customers on luxury BMW motorcycle tours then call James at Tel: 081-8922781. Email: james@discoverymototours.com

IN-HOUSE SALES REPS WANTED

In-house sales reps wanted now for holiday club. Selling only to qualified fly-buys. No OPCs! Tel: 076-293061. Email: flgthailand@yahoo.com

2 THAI CHEFS WANTED

Seeking two highly qualified Thai chefs, one expert in Thai cuisine and one in sushi. Must be creative, artistic, and a culinary advocate with good experience. Must have the ability to create specials, suggest weekly menus, and manage kitchen, inventory, and food and labor costs. Must also be able to speak English and meet requirements in sanitation and food handling. Job is located in new, upscale Asian restaurant in Casablanca, Morocco. Travel ticket, contract, housing and excellent salary and benefits are offered to the right candidate. Please send your CV and contact details to email: rlabriny@moroccanrestaurant.com

Island Job Mart

amanpuri

Amanresorts flagship property recently voted Asia's Best Leisure Hotel by Condé Nast is currently recruiting highly motivated and service-minded individuals for permanent and casual positions. A host of excellent benefits are guaranteed for permanent employees, including a generous service charge.

POSITIONS QUALIFICATION

RESTAURANT MANAGER

We are seeking a strong young individual with a passion for people and service. Must be fluent in English, have an exceptional eye for details and communication skills, friendly personality, outgoing character, likes to communicate and deal with people.

The candidate must have the ability to provide the finest guest dining experience in F&B outlets while leading a highly motivated and guest-service focused team. 6 years work experience in F&B Department in 5-star international hotel with at least 2 years fine dining restaurant leadership experience is required. Previous experience in Japanese restaurant is preferable.

BAR SUPERVISOR

We are looking for an enthusiastic individual who enjoys being front of house and talking to guests whilst being professional and passionate about bar service with a sound cocktail knowledge. Therefore, the right candidate will have an outgoing and proactive attitude with an open and friendly character. Must be fluent in English and have an exceptional eye for details. The Bar Supervisor is effectively in charge of any of the bar outlets assigned to him/her and will take ownership of all operational aspects under his/her responsibility.

The candidate must be personable and impeccably presented while leading a highly motivated and guest-service focused team. 5 years work experience in Food & Beverage Department in 5-star international hotel with at least 2 years leadership experience is required. Strong wine knowledge preferred.

TRAINING MANAGER

We are looking for an energetic and passionate individual with strong management, teaching and leading skills, creative, innovative, organized, quality driven and flexible. Additionally our preferred candidate has at least 2 years experience in the same position in an international 5* hotel/resort.

As Training Manager you are responsible to set and improve our high quality standards of our employees by analyzing training needs in individual departments; prepare and conduct training programs from new employee orientation, customer service training, technical on the job skills based training, supervisory skills training, management development training and health and safety training; develop the team of departmental trainers; maintain hotel training records, statistics and training and development budgets.

The Training Manager position impacts on the skills, knowledge and attitudes of every hotel employee and ensures the availability and use of effective resources. The position also plays a leading role in promoting the desired work culture and values of Amanresorts. A professional appearance and attitude together with strong intercommunication and leadership skills are required. Excellent English language skills are essential.

OTHER POSITIONS AVAILABLE ARE:

- PURCHASING MANAGER
- CAPTAIN
- HOSTESS
- WAITER / WAITRESS
- WAITER (VILLA)
- TRAINING SUPERVISOR
- GUEST SERVICE ASSISTANT
- ROOM MAID
- WATERSPORT ATTENDANT
- SPA RECEPTIONIST

PLEASE SEND YOUR RESUME WITH A RECENT PHOTO OR APPLY IN PERSON TO PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT 118/1 Moo 3, Soi Pantree Srisaentorn Road, Tambon Chentlay, Talang, Phuket 83110 Thailand
Phone: 66(0)76-324333 (731) Fax: 66(0) 76-324100
E-mail address: pr@amanpuri.th.com Web: www.amanresorts.com



COMPUTER TEACHER NEEDED

Computer teachers need urgently for local primary schools in Phang Nga. Thai nationals only. Tel: 076-263926, 081-5925260. Fax: 076-486636. Email: david@4kai.org

NANNY WANTED

We are looking for an English-speaking nanny in Patong. Please contact Nicole for information at Tel: 084-6470468.

ADMINISTRATOR

wanted with good English skills, aged 18-25, single and must have driver's license. Also, teacher for children. Please contact for additional details. Tel: 076-239209, 084-1885828.

TIMESHARE REPS

& OPCs. Sales reps and OPCs needed. Minimum of 2 years experience. Foreigners okay. For more details. Tel: 081-1371001. Email: solitude001@aol.com

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

for property and restaurant business.

- Female, Thai national
 - Bachelor's degree in accounting
 - Minimum 5 years direct experience
 - Good command of spoken and written English and computer literate.
- Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to patak-villa@hotmail.com or contact Khun Piyanuch for additional information at Tel: 081-3377262.



SilkAir, the regional wing of Singapore Airlines, invite applications for the position of

CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANT

Requirement:

- Thai Nationality
- Bachelors degree graduate
- Excellent command of written and spoken English
- Customer service oriented
- Willing to perform shift and weekend duties
- Prior working or internship with airline is an advantage
- TOEIC pass grade is an added advantage
- Fresh graduates are welcome to apply

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