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Former Gov jailed on child-sex charges

BANGKOK (*Nation, Kom Chad Luek, TNA*): Chalerm Phromlert, who was Phuket Governor from 1987 to 1991, was sent to Pathum Thani Prison November 13 after the Supreme Court upheld his 36-year jail sentence for multiple counts of statutory rape.

Judge Samart Ardnarong handed down the verdict against Chalerm, who was accused of having sex with four schoolgirls aged between 13 and 16 at a motel in a Bangkok suburb from November 2000 to January 2001.

One of the girls testified that she and the other girls willingly engaged in sex with "Pa Chalerm" for 5,000 baht each.

The girls went to him in succession, each spending two or three minutes with him, the court heard.

Chalerm's case came to light after one of the girls, aged 14, failed to return home for two days because she was afraid of what her parents' reaction would be if they learned she had turned to prostitution.

Chalerm's arrest came while he was serving as deputy speaker of the senate, representing Surat Thani province.

In handing down its ruling, the court said Chalerm was



Chalerm Phromlert (right), who was Phuket Governor from 1987 to 1991, is escorted from the court after losing his appeal against a 36-year jail term.

clearly guilty; as a prominent person who knew his actions were illegal, his appeal did not carry sufficient weight to clear him.

In 2002, the Criminal Court found Chalerm guilty of four counts of statutory rape.

After being sentenced to four years in prison for each count, Chalerm posted 1 million baht in assets as bail.

Rather than overturn the decision or reduce the sentence, the Appeals Court in 2005 added

20 years to Chalerm's 16-year sentence – an extra five years for each of the four counts of molestation that the Criminal Court had not factored into its punishment.

Chalerm entered the court November 13 a free man, having been released on 2.5-million-baht bail pending his appeal to the Supreme Court.

Already in his early 70s, Chalerm now faces spending the rest of his life behind bars.

Teen stabbed to death in Phuket City

PHUKET CITY: The latest casualty of teenage gang violence in Phuket was 14-year-old Theerapong Thongklam, stabbed through the heart early morning November 19 in downtown Phuket City.

Phuket City Police Sub Lt Jakrapong Suchol said that the victim fell off his motorbike near the Montri Rd-Phang Nga Rd intersection at 2:30 am after being stabbed by a member of a gang.

The victim was a resident of Rassada Village 7, Lt Jakrapong said.

Theerapong's friend, who was riding pillion when the bike crashed, told police he and the victim were driving to Thalang when Theerapong "teased"

the girlfriend of one of the gang members.

Neither of the boys knew the members of the gang beforehand, he said.

After Theerapong was stabbed in the left side of his chest, he tried to drive off to flee his assailants but crashed near the traffic lights. His attackers then fled.

Police did not recover the murder weapon, which they assume to be a knife, Lt Jakrapong said.

The boy was rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital where he died a few hours later, he added.

Police have only questioned the victim's friend, whose name was not given because he is a minor.

Key areas stage first Municipal elections

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHUKET: The first-ever municipal elections in Rassada, Rawai and Wichit, all upgraded from tambon administration organization (*OrBorTor*) to municipality (*tessabaan tambon*) status in August, were held November 17.

In Rassada, large crowds amassed at the vote-counting center at Phuket Rajabhat University. Suratin Lian-udom, leader of Raksa Rassada, won 3,264 votes to defeat Preecha Jai-ard of Rassada Prongsai party, with 3,241 votes.

Somchai Duangkae won 2,700 votes and former *OrBorTor* President Sutas Hongboot won 1,716 votes. Voter turnout was 58.7% of the 20,232 eligible voters.

In Rawai, Pattana Rawai leader Aroon Solos won 2,846 votes to hold off Kraiwoot Koombaan, with 2,284 votes. Turnout was 5,526 (66.6 %) out of 8,301 eligible voters.

Officials counting the votes at Muang Phuket School announced the results at 5 am the next day after both candidates agreed to go ahead despite a one-ballot discrepancy between the number of voters who signed in and the number of ballots cast.

There was little drama during the vote counting at the Wichit Municipality Office, as incumbent *OrBorTor* President Kreetar Saetan ran unopposed for the top seat and got the 20% minimum number of votes needed to take office, with 6,729 out of the total 25,824 eligible voters. Voter turnout was just over 35%.

In addition to the polling for the presidency, voters also cast ballots for regular council seats, of which 12 were up for grabs in each of the three municipalities.

First 'mobile registration van' to launch in Phuket

By Sompratch Saowakhon

PHUKET: Thailand's first "mobile registration van" will go into service December 3, when it makes its first stop in Koh Kaew, north of Phuket City.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit officially launched the high-tech van on November 8 in Patong, in the car park of the BanThai Beach Resort & Spa, which donated the new diesel Toyota Hiace to the project.

The goal of the project, the first of its kind in Thailand, is to register as many as possible of the estimated 300,000 migrant Thais who now call Phuket home, but who are officially residents of other provinces.

With about half of the Thais living in Phuket registered, Phuket loses out on budget allotments from the central government that are based on population, including critical areas such as education and law enforcement.

The Internet-enabled van is fitted with equipment valued at 4.6 million baht, much of it funded by local administration organizations and corporate donations.

Officials are still negotiating with TOT about the rate for the satellite link that allows the van's



VAN GO: BanThai staff queue to use the van's services, which include issuing Thai ID cards, changing house registration information, issuing birth and death certificates and changing of one's name.

computers to upload information directly to the Interior Ministry database in Bangkok.

However, the TOT will provide the link free for three months from December 3.

Services available from the van include Thai ID cards, change of house registration information, birth and death certificates and change of one's name.

The service may be expanded to include employment law and other legal advice.

Gov Niran, who conceived and initiated the project, hopes to acquire funding for more mobile registration vans in the future.

The project is administered jointly by the Phuket Provincial Administration Office (*OrBor-Jor*) and Phuket's three district offices: Muang, Thalang and Kathu, all of which offer the same services provided by the van.

The *Gazette* will publish the van's itinerary as soon as it becomes available.



President of the Rotary Club of Patong Beach O.B. Wetzell (right) hands Paiboon Papan the Family and Community Service Award. The Rotary Club of Patong Beach Sgt-at-arms Best Wana-makok (left), Scholarship Committee Chairman Larry Amsden and Thalang Trading staff look on.

Rotary International awards One-Two-Go hero

THALANG: Rotary Club of Patong President O.B. Wetzell on November 20 presented a Rotary International "Family and Community Service Award" to Paiboon Papan, the One-Two-Go flight OG269 passenger who heroically saved the life of expat resident Robert Borland and other survivors of the crash on September 16.

The ceremony was held at the offices of Thalang Trading Co Ltd, where K. Paiboon works as an air-conditioning mechanic.

"The victim, Rob, he wasn't a Muslim. He wasn't a Buddhist. He wasn't even Thai. But he was a human being who needed help and you [K. Paiboon] answered the call. That is what Rotary is all about.

"Helping those in our community who need help and recognizing those who do a service for their community. That's why we are happy to recognize you [K. Paiboon] and your accomplishment today. Thank you from all of us," said Mr Wetzell.

Birthday blood drive

PHUKET CITY: Central Organization of the Sikhs in Phuket will hold a blood drive to celebrate the birthday of Guru Nanak Dev, the founder of the Sikh religion. The event, to be held November 25, will also pay honor to HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 80th birthday.

The event will take place at Siri Guru Singh Sabha Association on Montri Rd, Phuket City, from 10 am to 3 pm.

For more information contact Amarjit Pal Kaur Tel. 081-3965059.

Burglar arrested after slashing victim with knife

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: Police have arrested a burglar who broke into a home near Tesco-Lotus on the night of November 10 and repeatedly slashed its female occupant with a knife before fleeing.

Pol Capt Supachai Petchsakul of Phuket City Police said that the attack happened about 11 pm in a residential area off Songkhla Rd in Tambon Rassada, near the Tesco-Lotus intersection.

The attacker, later identified as Rawai resident Chawinwat Darakai, 23, was arrested by Phuket City Police for the stabbing 35-year-old Phusanisa "Oy" Makmai, who runs a laundry service from her small, one-story flat.

K. Oy told the *Gazette* that the attack occurred when she returned home. "I entered through my front door. As I walked to the rear door of my flat, he came at me suddenly from near the back door with a knife I kept in the house.

"He first tried to slash me in the stomach, but the blade didn't penetrate the skin. Then he began slashing my right arm.

"I screamed and he ran towards the back door, but my neighbors were already there. So he ran behind me out the front door and I ran to a nearby noodle stand for help," said K. Oy.

Chawinwat, who was wearing only shorts at the time of the attack, fled barefoot carrying his jeans and the victim's Nokia 3230 mobile. K. Oy discovered her attacker's san-

dals outside her bathroom when she returned the following day, she said.

Her neighbors caught the man and held him until police arrived while she was rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital for treatment for six knife wounds, she said.

Capt Supachai told the *Gazette* that Chawinwat had confessed that he had entered the woman's home to steal valuables, but he had denied that a woman's bra found in his pocket at the time of his arrest belonged to the victim, as reported by one newspaper.

K. Oy told the *Gazette* that her attacker had been charged at Phuket Provincial Court with assault, theft and drug possession, after marijuana was discovered in his pocket.

Chawinwat is being detained at Phuket Provincial Prison, she added.

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Ladyboy, 19, slain in Patong

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PATONG: Kathu Police are investigating the grisly murder of a teenage ladyboy whose strangled and beaten body was discovered near the road to Tri Trang Beach on the morning of November 12.

Kathu Police Superintendent Pol Col Grissak Songmoon-nark identified the victim as 19-year-old Thanawoot Wiriyananon.

A native of Phatthalung province, K. Thanawoot worked in the Patong nightlife industry, he said.

"About 11:30 am, we received a report that a body had been found and immediately rushed to the scene, a hilly area about 25 meters upslope from the road that leads to Tri Trang Beach.

"We found the victim lying face down near a concrete wall. She was dressed in blue jean shorts and a blue blouse.

"Her purse, cellphone and other belongings were scattered around her body.

"Evidence suggests that she was killed elsewhere, then hurriedly dragged into the woods and dumped," he said.

An initial examination revealed that K. Thanawoot had been strangled, stabbed in the neck and hit in the head with a

blunt object. A doctor at Patong Hospital said that she had died no more than 12 hours before her body was discovered, he said.

An initial examination revealed that K. Thanawoot had undergone complete gender reassignment surgery, Col Grissak added.

After questioning the victim's friends and stepfather in Phatthalung, police learned that K. Thanawoot had been a very attractive and popular ladyboy.

She had been working in a bar in Patong since early December after moving to Phuket from Phatthalung.

K. Thanawoot was last seen leaving the bar with one of her many lovers, Col Grissak said.

Police suspect jealousy as the motive for the murder, though they are aware that the victim also had a criminal background, including two arrests on charges related to *ya bah* (methamphetamine), he said.

K. Thanawoot had been known to scout other ladyboys to work for an Internet pornographer who was arrested earlier this month in a hotel near Soi Bangla, Col Grissak added.

Col Grissak told the *Gazette* on November 20 that the investigation was ongoing and declined to reveal further details for fear of jeopardizing the case.

Swedish consulate to close

PHUKET CITY: The Swedish Consulate in Phuket will cease operations June 30 next year.

The consulate, which opened in late 2004 to assist Swedish victims of the tsunami disaster, will be one of four Swedish diplomatic missions closing worldwide for financial reasons, acting Consul General Christina Palm told the *Gazette*.

Swedish victim-identification work finished in June 2006, but the consulate remained open until the new cost-cutting measures to provide citizen-services to the many Swedish nationals visiting the Andaman region, she said.

Many Swedish citizens arriving in Phuket require assistance after losing passports, becoming hospitalized due to illness or accident or getting into legal trouble, she added.

The Swedish Embassy hopes to appoint more Honorary Consuls in Phuket to help Swedes after the consulate closes.

The Honorary Consuls may recruit local staff for assistance, she added.

The Swedish Consulate moved from its temporary location at the Pearl Village Hotel after the tsunami to set up an office in Phuket City, shared with the temporary Norwegian Consulate until its closure on December 1, 2006.

Miss Christina Palm took over from former Consul General Alf Karlsson, while Pearl Group Managing Director Wichit Na-Ranong is currently listed as the only Swedish Honorary Consul in Phuket.

For more information call the Swedish Consulate in Phuket at 076-380000.

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Seized Buddha images donated to Thalang museum

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

MAI KHAO: In a small ceremony at Phuket International Airport, Airport Customs officials November 15 handed over to the Thalang National Museum 93 Buddha images seized from departing tourists over the past year.

Phuket Airport Customs Director Ruthai Lertkietdamrong told the *Gazette* most of the images were seized from tourists who bought them from shops unaware that they needed permission from the Fine Arts Department to take them out of the country.

While many of the Buddha images were cheap replicas for which such permission could have been easily obtained, one sandstone image of the Buddha's head was an artifact of historical significance, he said.

The image may date back to the Khmer Empire, could be up to 1,000 years old and probably changed hands many times before its seizure at the airport, K. Ruthai said.



Phuket International Airport Director Sq/Ldr Pornchai Eua-aree (left) and Phuket Vice-Governor Worapot Ratthasima inspect 93 Buddha images seized from departing tourists over the past year. The images were handed over to the Fine Arts Department November 15.

Photo by Yongyot Preuksarak.

Permission to export Buddha images can be obtained at the Thalang National Museum, which is run by the Fine Arts Department, he added.

If tourists are unsure whether Buddha images or items

they are considering buying require a permit for export, they should ask the shop owners selling the items, he said.

For more information call the Thalang National Museum at 076-311426.

Two tourists die on the same day

KATA: An elderly German tourist on holiday with his wife drowned at Kata Beach late afternoon November 15. On the same day, an Italian tourist died after taking a fall in the bathroom of his hotel.

Chalong Police duty officer Capt Parichat Jaturonpan identified the deceased German as Rudolf Breidach, 67, a guest at the Thavorn Palm Beach Hotel in Karon.

Mr Breidach, his wife and a female friend, also German, went swimming about 5 pm. There were no Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) lifeguards present in the area at the time, Capt Parichat said.

Capt Parichat did not know whether the red warning flags were posted at the time. The stretch of Kata Beach where they chose to swim has claimed many lives through drowning because of the rip currents that form there, he said.

Mr Breidach's body was taken to Patong Hospital by staff from the Tourist Rescue Center, he said.

The drowning was at least the third at Kata Beach this year alone, following the deaths of two foreign tourists in separate incidents on October 28.

An Italian tourist also died on November 15, succumbing to head injuries sustained after an accidental fall in the bathroom of his hotel.

Pol Maj Vicharn Suwansit of Phuket City Police identified the deceased as Luca Magozzi, 47.

Mr Magozzi was rushed to Patong Hospital after he slipped on the bathroom floor in his hotel room early on November 15. Maj Vicharn declined to name the hotel where the accident took place.

After slipping into a coma, he was rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital, where he died the same day.

The death is considered accidental and there were no signs of foul play, Maj Vicharn said.

Relatives have been notified and the victim's brother claimed the body November 15.

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Investigation into destruction of

The destruction of 21 rai of mangrove forest in Baan Kuku, Rassada, incited 60 local villagers to stage a protest at Phuket Provincial Hall on November 5.

The villagers claimed that, in addition to the clearing of mangrove trees and a road being built at the site, canals had been dug to keep seawater off the property.

The canals were also killing off mangroves on some 80 rai of adjoining land that they believe is part of an 800-rai protected mangrove forest, clearly marked with a government sign set in concrete.

Somai Charoensook, spokesperson for the Kuku villagers, said, "I have lived in the area all my life and nothing had been done with the land for more than 30 years, until recently when an area was cleared and canals and a road built around it, which now prevent the seawater from coming onto the land."

Following the protest, Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit ordered a committee be set up to verify who owns the land and to confirm what buildings rights the land ownership conferred.

Indeed, this is the second time the governor has ordered construction to stop at the site. "Although construction that started in May was stopped by the governor, they started again and worked day and night until the canals and road were completed in September," K. Somai explained.

"The construction began with just a small truck earlier this year but they have gone beyond the 21 rai boundaries and they have stopped seawater reaching the mangrove forest, which is on protected land," K. Somai added.

The villagers have good rea-

The villagers at Baan Kuku live alongside an 800-rai protected mangrove forest, a forest they have been caring for by planting seedlings as part of a government mangrove-reforestation project since 2003.

Now some 21 rai of the mangrove forest has been cleared and canals dug around the project site to prevent seawater from flooding the land. The canals also stop seawater from reaching mangroves on about 80 rai behind the project site. Without the sea water, the mangroves are dying.

The villagers staged a protest and now an investigation has been launched into whether the development is legal. However, the investigation has hit a stumbling block: a sign at the project site says one man owns the land, the local Land Office says it belongs to another.

The *Gazette* reports.

son to be up in arms over the development. They have actively taken part in a provincial project to reforest the area with mangroves since 2003, when they joined the Chalermprakiet Mangrove-Reforestation Project launched by then-Governor Pongpayome Vasaputi.

However, they also have cause for concern. Similar protests against local mangrove forest encroachment in Phuket have cost the lives of environmental activists, including that of Jurin Ratchapol, one of five locals who were killed in separate incidents in 2001 after protesting against the expansion of prawn farms that were encroaching on and polluting protected mangrove forests.

"Only an 'influential person' would have ignored government orders like that," she alleged. "We do not know what they are building, but whatever it is, it is not right. They are destroying the environment that we have lived

in for generations. We would never dream of cutting down the trees or destroying the environment that has sustained us for many many years."

OWNERSHIP

Central to the issue are documents pertaining to proof of ownership of the land and how it can be used – and currently the issue of who owns the land is as cloudy as the disturbed muddy mangrove waters.

A sign posted at the site states that Pol Capt Thuaythep Viboonsil is the landowner under Chanote No. 35691 and that he has the right to build on the land.

However, according to the Phuket Provincial Land Office, Chanote No. 35691 states the name of the landowner as Anan Anatrakul, not Capt Thuaythep.

The Chanote was issued October 10, 1984, and approved by then-Phuket Governor Mani Vilaiyapej.

In addition, none of the government officials, including the Land Office, has been able to contact Capt Thuaythep and the villagers say that no-one has



A sign posted at the disputed site says that Pol Capt Thuaythep Viboonsil owns the land, although the same name does not appear on the land title deed.

stepped forward claiming to be the owner of the land. In light of this, the investigation committee is moving ahead to confirm whether the land belongs to the state.

Initial findings from the investigation reported by the committee's secretary, Suphot Chanakit, are that the landowner claims to have documents to prove occupancy rights to 29 rai of land at the site.

However, K. Suphot told the *Gazette* that the investigation committee was set to survey the area again at 10 am on November 23. "The Forestry Department will then assess whether the land in question actually belongs to the state," he said.

Investigation committee member Thavicha Chaithong, also chief of the Administration and Justice Enhancement Group of the Phuket Provincial Office, said, "The name on the Chanote for the land in question is not the same as the name on the sign posted at the site; the commit-

tee is investigating this discrepancy.

"The findings from this part of the investigation will be announced by the District Chief by the end of November.

"Land Office officials say that there is a valid Chanote for the area, but cannot be sure where the boundaries lie or whether the land is protected mangrove forest. This will have to be determined by the Forestry Department and other relevant offices," K. Thavicha added.

"We have raised the issue with the Phuket Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment, the Forestry Department and the Muang District Office to confirm whether the land belongs to the state," he said.

RESUMPTION

"As the Chanote was issued 23 years ago, we need to determine whether the title holder developed the land in the first 10 years.

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mangroves leads to murky depths



Above: A government sign clearly states that the area is part of a mangrove-reforestation project, but whether the cleared land in question (left) is part of the 800-rai protected national forest is still under review.

"If he did not, then the right to occupy or develop the land would have already expired. If this is the case, the land must be returned to the state," he added.

Before the Chanote was issued, 80 rai at the site was registered under a *SorKor 1* document, which confers occupancy rights but can be upgraded to Chanote (freehold) status. Since then, the land ownership has passed through several hands.

When the *Gazette* asked an official at the Phuket Land Office who was registered on the *Sor Kor 1*, the officer replied, "Our obligation is to simply check

whether all the necessary steps in the issuance of the land titles are followed correctly and that the documentation is in order.

"It is not our duty to check and prove that the correct names are on the documents or whether they match up with the names of signs posted on the property."

The officer declined to be named in this report.

However, K. Somai is adamant the ownership of the land is intentionally murky. "We doubt whether the person carrying out the construction really has legal rights to use the land. As the land has remained untouched for at

least 30 years it should be returned to the state, so it should be impossible for the land office to issue a Chanote for that land.

"We suspect some kind of deal has been worked out in private between the Land Office and influential people. We ask that the provincial authorities investigate and make it clear to everyone who holds the land entitlement and what those entitlements are," she said.

"Now we are waiting for the authorities' decision. Construction has stopped for now and the vehicles are not there, but we still do not know who the land

owner is and no-one has offered any explanation.

"We suspect that the land titles have been altered because the Forestry Department already stated that the land was state-owned when the Chalermparakiet Reforestation Project was launched in 2003," K. Somai said.

"Even if the developers do own the land, they have been unscrupulous in their development of it. They have removed trees and dug canals to stop seawater coming onto the land, which is starving the mangrove trees of the seawater they need to survive.

"We and generations before us have lived off this land and enjoyed its natural abundance for as long as any of us can remember. We are not laying claim to the land. It is for everyone to enjoy. Ultimately it belongs to the government, all Thai people and the nation and should remain that way for many years to come.

"We are kept in the dark about what is happening and who is behind the development. It is important that people know about the destruction of this natural habitat and protected land surrounding it."

"They are not considering the bigger picture their development is having on the rest of the area. How do they expect the mangroves to survive if they do not have water?"







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Queer News

Monk performs final death-defying miracle

RANONG: Funerals of esteemed monks are always auspicious occasions for believers, a chance to bid farewell to a spiritual leader and wonder what rewards he will get for his life-long accumulation of merit.

At the funeral of an abbot in Ranong, the deceased clergyman's spiritual power was reportedly so strong that his mortal remains refused to burn.

Phrakhru Praphasawiriyakhun, abbot of Wat Wareebaphot in Tambon Bang Norn, passed away on October 17.

When the day of his intended cremation arrived on November 8, the temple was packed with the faithful coming to see off their abbot. The ceremony was presided over by the Governor of Ranong Province, Kanchanapha Keeman.

Leading up to the ceremony, the heavens were overcast and rain poured down all day, threatening to wash out the proceedings. When it came to the hour of the ceremony, however, the rain suddenly stopped and the clouds cleared as if by a miracle.

At 9 pm, the body of Phrakhru Praphasawiriyakhun, or Phra Duan as he was known to his followers, was brought out and laid on the pyre. The flames were lit and began to lick at the monk's body.

After a few minutes, the monk's followers began to realize that something out of the ordinary was taking place before their eyes: Phra Duan's body seemed to be impervious to flames.

After about half an hour on the flaming pyre, there were little more than a few minor scorch marks on his saffron robe. The body was unblemished by the heat.

With the body so steadfastly refusing to burn, the cremation had to be called off. Phra Duan's body was brought down from the fire and placed back in his coffin.

He was then taken to the temple's Hall of the Reclining Buddha, where stunned devotees changed his robes to the sound of cheering from the funeral guests, all amazed that the Phra Duan's holiness had been stronger than the flames.

Police and volunteers worked together to prevent guests getting too near the body, fearing that scuffles would break out between people desperate to get pieces of Phr Duan's singed robe to make into charms and amulets.

Witnesses reported that after the 30 minutes on the flaming pyre, the only marks on Phra Duan's body were a couple of small burns on his arms. The lenses in his glasses were uncracked and his robe was only slightly burned.

Phra Duan's followers then lifted his body above their heads and carried him among the guests for all to see.

When everyone had had a chance to catch a glimpse of the body, it was placed back in a coffin while the temple's directors decided what to do it next.

In the end, the directors decided to keep the body in a glass coffin so people could come and pay their respects.

Somphian Banyicheng, a guest at the funeral and a follower of Phra Duan, said that he believed the reason the body's flame retardant qualities came from Phra Duan's holiness as he had been a strict follower of the dharma for many years.

As it became clear that the cleric's corpse was incombustible, K. Somphian shouted for water to extinguish the useless flames.

Phra Duan, a native of Songkhla Province born Duan Prangsuwan, initially wanted to be a policeman. After failing the entrance tests at the age of 21, he became a monk instead.

After spending Buddhist lent in a temple in Phatthalung, he went and practiced meditation in a cave in the province's Khao Chai Son hills for two years.

He then traveled around making merit, eventually ending up staying in Bang Non. As the story goes, one night a hairy, dark-skinned man dressed only in a loincloth appeared to him and asked him to stay in the village.

In 1959, Phra Duan started building Wat Wareebaphot, where he remained doing good deeds until his death.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

STAMPS

Stamp to mark the 5th Arts of The Kingdom Exhibition

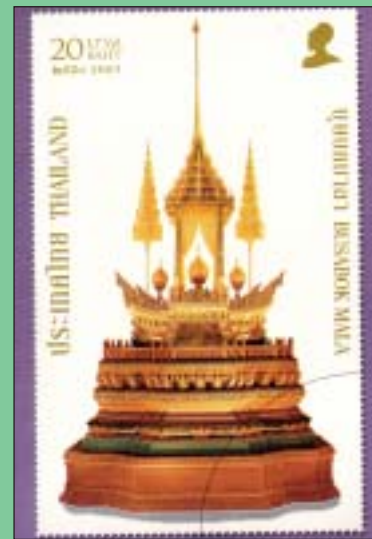
PHUKET: Thailand Post will launch a stamp December 18 to honor the Fifth Arts of The Kingdom Exhibition, which is being organized by The Foundation of the Promotion of Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques (SUPPORT foundation) founded by HM Queen Sirikit.

The stamp is being issued to promote cultural heritage and features an image of the *Busabok Mala*, a transportable throne pavilion with pointed roof. The original *Busabok Mala* is now used as an altar at the Grand Palace.

The image shows the small gable all covered with gold and adorned with nine gems while the spires feature diamond-encrusted flowers. The entire throne sits atop a decorative pedestal.

Measuring 42 by 70 millimeters, the stamp will cost 20 baht, or 90 baht for the stamp affixed to a commemorative-issue envelope. Only 800,000 of the stamps will be produced.

The stamp will be available at all 10 post offices in Phuket.



Turistipastori: Weekly prayer service for Finns

KARON: Evangelical missionaries Juhani and Irma Waarna of Finland conducted the first weekly ecumenical Christian prayer services in Finnish language at the Coconut Grove Room at the Hilton Arcadia Resort and Spa in Karon.

The services, every Saturday at 6 pm, are part of the missionaries' efforts to meet the spiritual needs of some 6,000 Finns who travel to Phuket in the high season.

The missionaries also have several other spiritual events planned in the region, including a service in Khao Lak on December 8, a tsunami memorial service at the Hilton on Boxing Day and a Christmas Day service in Krabi.

For more information call K. Puh at 084-8693406 or Juhani at 084-8693405; email waarna@gmail.com; or visit the website www.kotikirkkophuket.com (Finnish language only).

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Internet cafés face ‘culture crackdown’

Online games that involve sex and violence are popular among Thai youths, a poll has revealed. Ladda Tangsupachai, head of the Culture Ministry's Cultural Surveillance Department that commissioned the poll, said most youths used the Internet to search for information, play online games and download music or movies.

Online-game-playing respondents ranked their favorite themes as fighting, fantasy worlds, crime shootouts, stripping and seducing young women.

More than half of the youths said they had seen obscene or pornographic materials on the Internet, including downloading porn pictures or clips (64%), playing games on pornographic sites (16%), chatting about sex with others (13%), uploading sexual pictures or messages onto websites (11%), and using webcam services such as Camfrog (6%).

Moreover, 27% of male respondents and 8% of the females surveyed admitted they had sex with people they had met online. Of this group, 28% of males and 59.4% of females said the sex was not consensual.

To combat the problem, the National Committee on Safe and Creative Media is gathering information on Internet cafés and computer-game shops to classify them as red (dangerous) or green (safe). Venues issued stickers would face legal action by the police, she said.

Violence rising. The use of violence in the country has been on the rise with more than 200,000 people being physically attacked last year, up 30% from 2002.

In 2006 alone, 216,037 were rushed to hospitals because they were victims of physical attacks. Of these cases, 3,086 died of their injuries.

The findings came from a report by the Bureau of Epidemiology, which has gathered information from 24 hospitals across the country, he said.



Beauty beyond borders

Tanyarat Jirapatpakon, better known as "Nong Film", beat 29 other contestants from around the globe to be named Miss International Queen 2007.

The pageant, held in Pattaya on November 10 and supported by the Tourism Authority of Thailand, aims to advance and support transvestites and transgender persons.

Infantile debate. Deputy Prime Minister Sonthi Boonyaratglin has been criticized for recently saying that pregnant illegal immigrants, mostly Burmese, should be sent back to their home countries to deliver their babies before being allowed back into Thailand.

Assoc Prof Phanthip Kanjanajittra, a Thammasat University law lecturer, said such a practice would backfire and create hatred between Thais and Burmese.

"DPM Sonthi apparently misunderstood the law concerning the nationality of children born in Thailand to illegal immigrants.

"Those children in fact do not automatically earn Thai nationality by birth under an exception under Thai law," she said.

The practice of not issuing birth certificates to children born in Thailand to immigrant workers,

whether registered or illegal, is wrong, she said.

Without birth certificates, these children cannot verify their rightful nationality or link to their parents if they return to Burma because they don't have documents proving their status as members of the same family, she said.

The comments by DPM Sonthi, the now-retired soldier who organized the September 2006 military coup, followed a report that around 2,000 children are born to illegal immigrants nationwide every month.

Express education. Under a new drastic change to be put into effect over the next five years, students attending classes in the six-year compulsory level can complete their studies early if they earn all mandatory credits, Edu-

cation Minister Wijit Srisaen said on November 13.

A credit-earning system used at universities will be introduced in primary schools, both government and private.

"The practice will allow smart students to complete their compulsory education before the six-year period," the minister said.

The general educational standard would also be raised under the reform to increase the minimum passing grade point average to 1.50 or 2.00 from the current minimum of 1.00.

The Office of the Education

Council will coordinate the entire reform process by collecting information from technical seminars to be held during the five-year process.

Christmas gift? The Cabinet has agreed to make the Monday following the December 23 election an extra public holiday, Deputy Interior Minister Theerawut Butrsiphum said.

At its weekly meeting, the Cabinet agreed December 24 should be declared a public holiday in order to encourage voters to go back to their constituencies to cast ballots, he said.

Many people live and work outside of their constituencies.

The finance minister was assigned to inform the Bank of Thailand of the Cabinet resolution, K. Theerawut said.

Pessimistic opinions. As many as 60% of top Thai businessmen believe the next government will not last more than two years, according to a survey by Thai Chamber of Commerce.

The survey was conducted among about 379 top businessmen who gathered at its 25th annual meeting.

Of the total respondents, 27.5% even believed that the next government would last just one year.

Yajai Chuwicha, head of the TCC's business poll, said that less than 2% expected the new government to enjoy high stability, while just over 31% foresee low stability and almost 50% foresee moderate stability.

The remainder, about 18%, expected it to be a period of uncertainties.

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

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Charity run a sunny success

The new Four Seasons Resort and Spa's benefit run for cancer research in Thailand was held on November 11 with participants bathed in sun instead of drenched by heavy rain.

The run was part of a charity event held annually at Four Seasons Resorts around the world.

The event was attended by Surat Thani Governor Winai Buapradit, District Chief Officer Adisorn Kamnerdsiri, Koh Samui Mayor Warakorn Rarranarak and Chief of Police Pol Con Ninwong, as well as Dr Manorom, vice president of the Oncological (Cancer) Society of Thailand.

The race had a total of 152 participants and raised over 450,000 baht.

The funds were donated to the Oncological (Cancer) Society of Thailand under the royal patronage of Her Majesty the Queen.

The racers set off with a 7 am start in three categories – a 7k men's and women's run and a 3k children's walk – with the youngest registered participant being only 23 months old.



BIG WIN FOR HEALTH: Surat Thani Governor Winai Buapradit (light gray jacket) joins race participants and local officials to celebrate raising 450,000 baht for cancer research.

"It was a tough call being there that early on a Sunday, but it was well worth it. The sun was shining and there was a real sense of community spirit," commented Krystyna Mylonas, a resident who took part in the run.

Winners on the day were K. Jaimatoon, K. Burapha and nine-year-old Boonyawan Naksuwan.

Disease outbreak. Schools were closed across Koh Samui after a possible outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease.

Several schools on the island reported students showing symptoms of the viral infection, which is most common in young children.

The disease, characterized

by sores in and around the mouth and rashes on the hands and feet, is often confused with the disease found in farm animals. It is highly contagious and therefore a complete decontamination of infected areas must follow in order to prevent an epidemic.

A Bangkok Hospital representative confirmed that several children around the island have displayed symptoms, but further tests must be conducted to reach a definitive verdict.

The disease, which has no specific treatment, is common in tropical areas and is prone to spread during the rainy season.

Several schools around Thailand and Malaysia have reported outbreaks, but these are the first suspected cases on Koh Samui.

Rain disaster. Koh Samui was declared an official disaster zone after days of heavy rain.

The island was at a standstill as roads were closed due to water inundating areas as drains,

lakes and rivers overflowed.

Authorities declared the island a disaster zone after the waters rose to such a level that emergency government aid was necessary.

Transportation from the airport was halted and passengers were left stranded until flights were resumed on November 9.

Schools were closed November 8 after teachers and students were left stranded the night before when trying to get home.

An administrator of one of the schools said, "We were concerned for the welfare of any-

one needing to use the roads. It was impossible for anyone without a four-by-four truck to get through prime areas, so we made a decision for everyone's safety."

Meteorological reports showed that a tropical depression was responsible for the weather system that caused the rain.

As the rain eased, the water was pumped out by the Thai army.

It is normal

for the island to experience heavy rainfall during this time of year, but over-development and destruction of the natural habitat has exacerbated drainage problems.

Two years ago, the island was declared a disaster zone with the army having to come to its rescue after rain caused roads and bridges to collapse and a landslide killed nine people.



FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

By Max Rogers

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Immigration Police arrested a German man in Ranong for smuggling controlled impotence treatments and sex-enhancing drugs from Burma on November 17.

Riker Enris, 31, was stopped on Chalermprakiat Rd in Tambon Bangrin by officers from Ranong Immigration Police led by Lt Col Phuwapat Suwanrong.

After receiving a report from an informant, the officers searched three black plastic bags Mr Enris was carrying and found an assortment of pharmaceuticals, including Viagra and a number of generic copies of the anti-impotence drug.

Mr Enris was also in possession of other sex-related pharmaceuticals for men and women, police said.

Under questioning, Mr Enris admitted that he had bought the drugs in the Burmese port town of Kawthaung and was preparing to take them to Bangkok to sell, as he had many times before.

The German told police he could sell the pills for five times the purchase price and still undercut the normal street price for the drugs in the capital.

Mr Enris has been living in Thailand for eight years without regular employment, police said.

He has been charged with importing pharmaceuticals into the country without permission.

Bad sport. A former candidate for a seat on Nakhon Sri Thammarat's city council was shot outside the sporting goods shop he owned and died in hospital a few hours later.

A relative who rushed 33-year-old Surachit Phiomrak to Maharaj Hospital said that K. Surachit was walking into his shop about 10 pm on November 13 when a youth walked up and started talking to him.

The two talked for a couple of minutes before the youth pulled out a gun and shot K. Surachit once in the solar plexus before escaping on a motorcycle.

K. Surachit succumbed to his wounds in the early hours of the following day.

He had once stood for election to Nakhon Sri Thammarat Municipality as a member of the

'Visa runner' arrested for importing sex drugs



GOING HOME

Police officers carry the body of pilot Pol Capt Pichet Khum-ai, one three Royal Thai Police Forward Command officers killed when the helicopter he was flying crashed and sank to the bottom of Banglang Reservoir in Yala's Bannang Sata district on November 12.

Capt Kum-ai's body was sent aboard a police aircraft from nearby Songkhla to his home town in the northern province of Uttaradit.

Democrat Party, though police do not believe the killing was politically inspired.

Col Yanaphat Narasing, Superintendent of Nakhon Sri Thammarat Muang District Police Station, said that he believed the victim knew his killer as the two spoke to each other before the shooting.

Police are investigating adultery, debt problems and a dispute in the amulet trade as possible motives for the killing.

Of the three, adultery appears to be the most likely motive, said Col Yanaphat.

Wheel of jealousy. A man found beaten to death in Nakhon Sri Thammarat's Thung Song district on November 19 is believed to

have been the victim of his ex-wife's new husband, police said.

The body of Prasit Atkan, 49, was found lying next to a canal in the district. About four meters from his body police found a bloodied motorcycle wheel, which they believe was used to beat K. Prasit around the head.

A relative of the victim, Rajana Phanrak, 23, said that before his death K. Prasit had gone to visit his child, who lived with his ex-wife Wiyada.

While he was visiting, K. Wiyada's new husband Charoen Chanthaburi returned home. An argument broke out between the two men, with Charoen telling K. Prasit to no longer visit the home.

The argument then became

violent and Charoen began to kick K. Prasit until he fell to the floor, K. Rajana alleged.

Charoen then beat K. Prasit round the head with the motorcycle wheel, the police quoted her as saying.

Breaking camp. In a major embarrassment to the military,

Fourth Army Commander Lt Gen Viroj Buacharoon has rescinded his own executive order that removed 384 young ethnic Malay, Muslim men from their homes in the Deep South.

The 384 included young men who were ordered to sign up for a four-month "job-training" project in Army-run camps in the upper South, as well as those who were ordered to stay out of the region for six months.

Gen Viroj had deemed them likely to be involved in insurgency activities and decided to use his authority under the controversial Emergency Law imposed on the region to send them for "job training" or to banish them from their homes.

As there was not enough evidence to charge these individuals, the Army decided to either ban them or sent them to job-training schemes. Buses were scheduled to return the men from Army camps back to their homes.

The move effectively ends the project, which has been strongly criticized by rights groups on legal and humanitarian grounds.

The military reversal follows a court ruling that detaining the men without evidence was illegal.

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



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Phuket welcomes Elite calendar girls

International models dressed up and down at Phuket landmarks and beaches for photo shoots that will put the beauties in *Phuket Calendar 2008*, produced by Elite Models Management South East Asia and sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*.



The five-day photo shoot from November 14 to 18 was overseen by renowned professional photographer Teerapong "Bee" Liewrakwong, who photographed the models in locations such as Bang Pae Water Fall, the Heroines' Monument, the Phuket Welcome Gate, Patong and Nai Yang beaches and Koh Racha.

Local restaurants and resorts were also used in on-location shoots. The calendar is being produced at a cost of 5 million baht to help promote the island's image as an exotic holiday destination.

The calendar will feature 12 models sporting swimsuits, batik, casual and formal wear at the various locations.

The Elite Models firm has been in the fashion game for more than 40 years, boasting nearly as many branches around the globe. It is responsible for some of the world's top fashion females, including Cindy Crawford, Naomi Campbell, Claudia Schiffer, and Stephanie Seymour.

Russian beauty Daria Evgrafer, 19, got on and in boats at the beach for her part in the shoot at Nai Yang. One shot had her draped in a fishing net in an old long-tail. She also modeled poolside for one of the resort shoots.

"This is a really fun photo shoot. I love traveling and meeting new people. The Thai photographers are really nice," she said.



With time to kill before the sunset shoot, Daria Evgrafer (right) and Sofia Malamgren (left) chill on an upturned boat at Nai Yang Beach, while photographer Bee added more images to their portfolios.



Swedish siren Sofia Malamgren, 20, (left) told the *Gazette* that this was her fourth time in Thailand and that she favors Karon Beach for fun in the sun.



Polish princess Magdalena Trzaska, 27, also enjoys being behind the scenes. As her ambition is to be a photojournalist, between shoots she was busy snapping away with her own camera to capture the scenes of her first trip to Thailand. She is welcome to join the *Gazette* team anytime.

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A tasty bit of surf and turf

Chef Ronnie from the Philippines has become an institution at the Impiana Phuket Cabana in Patong.

His award-winning dishes of tenderloin and rock lobster are a culmination of over a decade as a Commis chef at the Hyatt and Sky City Casino hotels in New Zealand.

Guest chef

By Semacote Suganya

Unlike many chefs, Ronnie didn't learn from his mother and he didn't experiment in the kitchen until he was in his 20s.

He started out as a submarine engineer based in the Philippines, but was determined to get out of the water and into a culinary career – to make more than just sub sandwiches.

At 21 years old, Ronnie secured an apprenticeship at the Hyatt in Auckland where he stayed for 12 years, becoming a Commis chef and a Chef de Cuisine before moving on to Sky City Casino Hotel, also in Auckland.

While working at the Sky City Casino Hotel, Chef Ronnie was approached by Wallee

Puchantabutr, owner of Kaneang restaurant in Chalong and the Impiana Phuket Cabana, after she and her son had tried Chef Ronnie's beef and lamb dishes at the hotel.

"Khun Wallee offered me a position in Phuket and the chance to learn more about Thai food."

"Khun Wallee was insistent, so I eventually accepted her offer and came here in December 1999," says Chef Ronnie.

"The great thing about K. Wallee's offer was that she gave me a lot of freedom to create what I wanted."

"I think this was an important aspect of being able to come up with imaginative dishes," he adds.

Since then, Chef Ronnie's flair for creating fusion food has made him a triple winner of Bangkok Salon Culinaire competition at Bitec, which is judged by the World Association of Chefs Society.

Here, Chef Ronnie shares the secrets of a sampling of his award-winning recipes.



Chef Ronnie Macuja serves up fusion cuisine delights at the Sala Bua restaurant at the five-star Impiana Phuket Cabana in Patong. Here he shares some of his experiences and a few of his award-winning recipes, including his pavlova (right).



Grass-fed beef tenderloin with herbal potato confit and rock lobster salad

Serves 1

Ingredients

800g Beef tenderloin, trimmed and tied with string
4pcs Rock lobsters cooked in a court bouillon.

Method

For the potato confit you obviously need potatoes, plus roughly chopped onions, rosemary, thyme, sage and sweet basil. Add a little olive oil, butter and salt, then bake slowly in the oven.

For the rock lobster sauce I use white wine and brandy with tomato trimmings and tomato paste.

This is all put in a hot pan with *mirepoix* (onions, carrots and celery) and reduced until all the liquid evaporates. Add cold water, bring it to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes until you get a sauce consistency. Now add

some cream and a small amount of grain mustard and season to taste.

To make the vinaigrette that goes with this dish I use 12 whole shiitake mushrooms, 4 spears of asparagus, 4 cobs of baby corn, rubbed thyme leaves, 12 carrot balls with a little salt and fresh-ground black pepper.

These are added to the sauce, which is made from 8 tablespoons of olive oil, 4 tbsp of balsamic vinegar, 1 tbsp of grain mustard and 3 tbsp of beef juice all mixed and heated in a pan.

The beef needs to be seasoned with salt and pepper and seared in a hot pan before it is roasted in the oven. Once done, take it out of the oven and leave it to cool.

Now the dish is ready to be assembled. Place the beef in the

middle of a plate, top it with the potato confit, rock lobster, carrot julienne and crispy fried potato shavings. Finish by pouring on the vegetable vinaigrette and rock lobster sauce. A sweet basil sprig makes a nice garnish for the final touch.

Pavlova

Serves 1

Ingredients

4 eggs
200g sugar
1tsp vinegar
2tsp corn flour
A pinch of salt
Vanilla essence

Method

Chef Ronnie has added a bit more class to this classic dish with a hazelnut-praline mousse crown and passion fruit reflections. Serves six.

Beat the egg whites until they are stiff and gradually add the sugar, vinegar, salt and corn flour. Keep beating until the mixture is very stiff. Pipe the mix-

ture into a tray and bake at 120°C for 30 minutes. Once done, leave the mixture for three hours.

To make the hazelnut-praline mousse, you need 100 grams of praline cream, a leaf of gelatin, 10 ml of whipping cream, an egg yolk, 30 grams of icing sugar, 10 ml of rum and 150 grams of slightly whipped cream.

The praline cream and gelatin mixture is melted in a double pan to stop it burning. Whip the egg yolk with the sugar and add to the praline and gelatin mixture.

Take it off the heat and add the rum. Fold in the slightly whipped cream then put it in the fridge.

For the passion fruit reflections use 100 ml of passion fruit pulp, 25 grams of sugar, 5 ml of passion fruit liqueur and a teaspoon of arrow root flour.

Heat the mixture to reduce the pulp and sugar to half the original amount, then thicken with the arrow root flour and flavor with liqueur.

To serve, place the pavlova on a plate and crown it with a spoonful of praline mousse. Pour a generous amount of passion fruit sauce around and garnish with kiwi fruit and fresh slices of strawberry.

Top it off with a sprig of mint.

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Sailing on the edge to victory: navy man ready for King's Cup



Lt Peera Sagultem is looking forward to defending his IRC 2 class title at this year's King's Cup Regatta on the yacht Royal Thai Navy 1, pictured here during a 'sail-past salute' to honor HM The King's birthday last year.

Photo taken by Rick Tomlinson (www.rick-tomlinson.com).

Held every year at the beginning of December, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta is the biggest and most popular regatta in Asia.

Now in its 21st year, the King's Cup Regatta this year promises to be one of the most memorable in history.

This year, the King's Cup Regatta will mark the 80th birthday of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

One sailor who will once again be out for glory is Lt Peera Sagultem, skipper of the Royal Thai Navy 1 yacht and reigning back-to-back champion of the Phuket King's Cup Regatta IRC 2 class.

Lt Peera explains to Pathomporn Kaenkrachang what it's like to be a sailor at heart.

Sailing runs deep in the blood of Lt Peera Sagultem, skipper of the Royal Thai Navy 1 yacht and reigning back-to-back champion of the Phuket King's Cup Regatta IRC 2 class.

Born in Sattahip, Chon Buri, to a naval officer, Lt Peera, 32, knows a thing or two about boats and has been sailing since the ripe age of 14 years old.

A sailing course for kids at the Sattahip Naval Base led to more intensive training at the Sattahip Naval Club. He first tested the waters in an Optimist dinghy and further developed his skills in larger two-person dinghies.

Lt Peera continued his training throughout the 1990s in pre-cadet school, then at the Naval Academy, where he competed as part of the academy's racing team.

Lt Peera's bid for a win in next month's King's Cup will mark his seventh entry in the annual regatta.

He sailed his first foray into regatta racing at the 1995 King's Cup as a crew member of the naval cadet team, who did not finish with a prize.

After another attempt in 2000, Lt Peera returned in 2002 for his first taste of King's Cup



Lt Peera began sailing when he was 14 years old. This year he will be sailing for his third King's Cup IRC 2 class victory.

victory – his Royal Thai Navy 2 naval cadet team placed first in the Cruising 2 class.

In 2003, the IRC 2 class was formed, which has since been dominated by Thai Navy sailors. Royal Thai Navy 2, with Lt Peera as a crew member, won the title that first year.

The next year he joined *Royal Thai Navy 1*, which emerged the champion, and then, at the helm, sailed the boat to victory in both 2005 and 2006.

The key to winning, Lt Peera says, is to aim for perfection every time.



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The Royal Thai Navy 1 crew on their way to victory in the IRC 2 class of the King's Cup Regatta last year.

Photo taken by Sail-World.com

"The challenge in sailing is in making the fewest mistakes. If we cannot [prevent mistakes] that means we are at a disadvantage."

Acknowledging that smooth sailing is rare indeed, Lt Peera says, "Everything can change within a second when you're sailing."

Having a strong, adaptable team is essential, he adds.

Describing his 2006 King's Cup win, Lt Peera says, "One day, the wind was light and a long-distance course was set."

Lt Peera's crew, on board a 34-foot Farr MRX, took an early lead. "We normally covered one of our opponents, but we couldn't do it that day because they disappeared from view after we rounded the first gate."

Then they sailed off in a different direction, which made us hesitate and wonder if should follow to cover them, or sail a course of our own."

After considering the sailing conditions, Lt Peera decided to forgo any covering, instead choosing to sail close to the islands.

"That day, everyone kept an eye on our boat because we were sailing in a zig-zag pattern."

"We sailed right along the edge of the islands all the way to the finish," he says.

"We kept an eye on the current and the wind, and kept to our

strategy. Finally, we recorded the best time and became the leader of the IRC 2 class. "In the days following, many other sailors followed the same "shortcut", he adds.

Lt Peera's naval career has taken him to coastal areas all over Thailand, from the Andaman to the Eastern Seaboard and now, fittingly for a man very familiar with the waters surrounding Phuket, he is Commander of HMTS Phuket.

Returning to the Royal Thai Navy 1 crew this year is Lt Peera's older brother, Lt Cdr Pornpong Sagultem, along with veteran sailors Chief Petty Officer 1st Class Teera Wonglak, Petty Officer 1st Class Chaiwat Taikhing and four new crew

members.

Although he is happy with his crew, Lt Peera says he expects strong competition from teams from Malaysia and Hong Kong.

For Lt Peera, helming a racing yacht is about more than the accolades. "Sailing lets me be free," he says.

"Every time I sail I face different winds, currents and situations, but I can take control of the situation and sail to where I want to go."

Watch for Lt Peera and some thrilling racing at the 21st Phuket King's Cup Regatta, December 1-8. Full details at www.kingscup.com

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This week



POM POM BOYS (above): Phanuthep 'Pom' Siriwetachapan (center) celebrates his birthday with Chanchai Deena (2nd from left) and friends from the 'Thursday golf club' at Blue Canyon Country Club.



SCHOOL'S OUT (right): BIS – Phuket School Director Dr George Hickman (front row, 2nd from left) poses with 29 headmasters at the annual FOBISSEA conference on the British curriculum in Southeast Asian international schools held at the school this year.



SET. SPIKE AND STAY: Roger Branstma, Director of Operations (3rd from left) and the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa team welcome 2004 Olympic bronze medalist Elaine Youngs (2nd from left) and 2006 AVP most-improved US player Nicole Branagh (3rd from right) during their stay at the resort. The duo were runners-up in the Swatch FIVB Beach Volleyball World Tour '07 at Karon Beach.



ALPINE ALMS: Children at the Austrian-Phuket Community Center in Rassada welcome Jimmy Sng (back row, yellow shirt), Austrian Airlines' Area Manager for SE Asia, Australia and New Zealand, and Buranan Limjitti (back, right), Country Manager Thailand, who on behalf of the airline donated cooking utensils and educational aids to the center. Joining them is Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) Chief Administrator Manob Leelasuthanond (wearing tie).



RUSSIAN ARRIVAL: Philip Raiss (front, center, with name tag), General Manager of Phuket Orchid Resort & Spa, and Glenn Ferrer (front, left, in gray shirt), Kata Group Director of Marketing, welcome some 50 representatives from the IYO group of tour agents in Russia on their familiarization trip of the Kata Group resorts.



DELECTABLE DIVER: Prapaijit Tongma (in white), General Manager of the Burasari Resort, welcomes Thai actress Yada Chotchutrakul, who has ranked in *FHM*'s 100 sexiest women in the world, as she arrives in Phuket to take part in the Patong underwater cleanup during this year's Phuket Carnival.

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Where have all the buyers gone?

I've never had much money, probably due to the rather decadent lifestyle I lead without paying much attention to my finances.

However, being unable to find any royal or aristocratic connections in my extended family who might provide the odd estate or castle, I have had to once again concentrate my efforts in my own realm.

In my chosen occupation of property sales, the past few months have been unproductive, in spite of the fact that I am proposing to buyers some of the finest property in southern Thailand.

That's where the problem comes – there haven't been any buyers, which explains my finances, or lack of.

It's been a bit like after the tsunami – there hasn't been anybody around.

There have been all sorts of reasons put forward: the foreign-business act, the coup, the political situation, economic reasons, and so on.

In spite of this, a number of developers with track records of

LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

delivery and quality decided to go to Hong Kong with us under the banner of "Phuket Select".

They invited potential buyers to the Mandarin Oriental to inspect our projects.

I wasn't sure what would happen with the market being so quiet.

However, the buyers came and they were clearly the right sort of people. It was pleasantly surprising to get so much positive feedback. I received two e-mails yesterday from prominent developers here.

From Laguna Phuket: "Greetings from Laguna Property. Thank you very much for all your help and the success of Phuket Select. We are very happy with our four sales and we had a great weekend in Hong Kong. Impact Asia has done a great job bringing us a lot

With the growth in property development here and in other parts of Thailand, there are bound to be some high-profile failures with people losing money and going to the press.



Allan Zeman (2nd from left) with staff and clients at the Mandarin Oriental for the Phuket Select event.

of good potential buyers."

From Allan Zeman's Andara: "Thank you for the success of Phuket Select. It will provide a lot of useful leads for the future. We have a couple of units that have been reserved by people who visited the show. Wonderful! Thank you for the good arrangement and the quality of the show. We hope you will have the next Phuket Select show very soon. Please let us know."

Nobody was talking about politics or coups. Clearly, real buyers are unconcerned with such matters with regards to Thailand.

The only concerns relate to currencies and property markets in the US and the UK – totally financial considerations.

The Asia-Pacific manager of Ford Motor Company, when announcing new plans for a big investment in Thailand, was asked

about concerns over politics here.

His answer was brief and to the point: "We take a 10-year view, not a one-year view." Subject dismissed.

There has been some strong revival of interest in the property market in the past few weeks, so there seems to be hope for an improvement in my finances.

The event that we held in Hong Kong went some way towards helping this along, thanks to an extensive and visible advertising campaign.

It seems that too few developers are seeing the benefit of this kind of promotion, while others sit back and reap the benefits without contributing anything to the overall picture. That's how it is in everything, I suppose.

With the growth in property development here and in other parts of Thailand, there are bound to be some high-profile failures with people losing money and going to the press.

The focus will definitely come back to brand names like Phuket Select, which will ensure that potential buyers know who they can trust.

For the many who have asked about the twins in my column last time around, they are doing well and look terrific. They'll be back.

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Happy Birthday Watermark

A downpour on the night of Watermark's 5th birthday bash didn't dampen the spirits of Phuket's movers and shakers, who turned out in mass and dressed in their best for an evening of classic-contemporary fusion entertainment at Baan Chin Pracha in Old Phuket Town on November 10.

Champagne and canapes with classical music accompaniment started the evening off, followed by an exquisite dining experience for invited guests.

As the crowd of revelers grew to around 200, local fire artists Elementricks were in their element while DJ Billy V from QBar pumped up the volume until the early hours.



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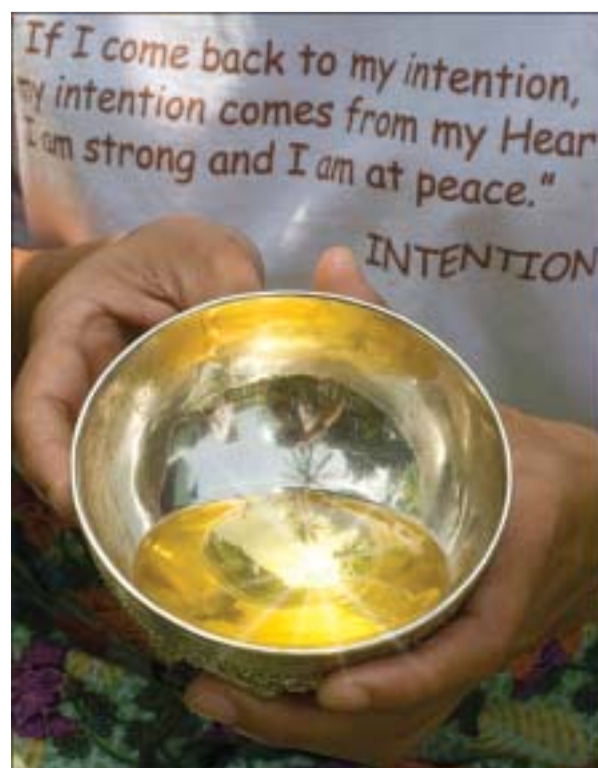
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Jazz on the Boardwalk



Royal Phuket Marina was jazzed up on Saturday, November 17, with the combined talents of the island's finest jazz musicians, including pianist Bobby Durham, guitarist Jerry Byrds and divas Alice Day and Bonnie Anderson.

Les Angeles chef Peter Webber dished up a plethora of fresh seafood delights for the buffet.



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Phuket is about three hours nearer to Europe, whereas Bali is much closer to Australia, its tra-

Even though property in Bali is much cheaper than here, Phuket feels like home. To me, Bali lacks that certain *je ne sais quoi*.

Phuket is a beach destination with virtually all its attractions water-based. Bali has nothing to compare with Phang Nga bay or the beauty of the many offshore islands there. Diving is undoubtedly superior in Phuket. The only recreational activity where Bali wins is surfing, as it has perfect conditions all year round on its western beaches.

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Have you ever wanted to take a bath in a bowl of *tom yum* soup? No? Maybe that's my Thai roots showing. I've always thought it would be fun. I'm sure British people dream of brushing their teeth with Marmite and Americans fantasize about sugar showers.

Most foreigners who visit Thailand are rather taken by our famous *tom yum gung*. My husband often asks me to cook up a bowl when he fancies a change from his Western dishes.

Imagine my delight then, when I found out that the same ingredients I use to make my delicious, spicy soup can be used for skin care and detoxification.

The herbs used in the soup act as gentle exfoliators, providing a nourishing effect that brightens the skin and relieves tired, stiff muscles while boosting blood circulation – sounds terrific.

Tom Yum Therapy is the latest brainwave of the inspired therapists at Spa Canvaree at Centara Villas Phuket.

I couldn't wait to go and try it out. My only reservation was that I'd leave the spa smelling like soup. While I wouldn't have a problem with it, I think it might disturb other people – my husband in particular.

Driving from Patong and climbing the hill up to Karon, I arrived at Centara Villas. The resort is tucked away in a rain forest overlooking the sea.

Amornrat Prawing, manager of Spa Canvaree, welcomed me to my Thai-soup fantasy. I was feeling hungry and considered asking if I'd be fed as well as treated with *tom yum*.

My welcome drink was a fairly normal glass of hot lemon-grass, though.

K. Amornrat went through the formalities, telling me that the spa has been open since 2000. It has two open-air, outdoor salas for massage, aromatherapy and various other treatments.

There are four therapists catering to resort guests and walk-in customers.

Although I had my heart set on the Tom Yum Therapy, the other treatments were also

Spa Canvaree's tom-yum treatment tickles the senses



This is not some sort of dressing before a cannibalistic ritual, but Tom Yum Therapy, which involves being scrubbed and massaged with *tom-yum* ingredients. You have to experience it to believe it.



tempting, but none looked good enough to eat.

Reading through the spa menu, I saw that it included body scrubs, body wraps, facials, manicures and massage.

Prices ranged from 495 baht to 2,295 baht for treatments of between 45 minutes and two hours.

"The Tom Yum Therapy has been well-received by guests," said K. Amornrat. It

lasts for two hours and comprises an Exotic Tom Yum Body Glow – you get scrubbed and wrapped

in *tom-yum* ingredients. It's like a human *tom-yum* fajita.

I started my *tom-yum* journey by following therapist Nongluck "Luck" Phunakphan to the changing room where I was given a robe and some disposable underwear.

K. Luck led me to the treatment area and cleaned my feet with a mixture of warm water, milk, galanga, lemon grass and sliced lime. Next up was my *tom-yum* scrub.

Laying face down on the treatment bed, K. Luck got to work on my whole body with her *tom-yum* ingredients. All the while, I could hear the soothing sound of the waves of the Andaman Sea gently lapping against the shore.

The ingredients of the treatment included tamarind water, lime peel, coconut milk, grilled

coconut meat, honey and almond oil – honestly, it smelled so good I could have eaten my own leg.

K. Luck told me that the ingredients of the treatment are freshly mixed every day.

I closed my eyes and imagined I was an oversized prawn in an enormous *tom-yum* pot. I lost myself in a vivid dream about being cooked in a soup but quickly came around before being eaten.

I felt relaxed, as if all the stress had left my body. The smell of *tom yum* was bliss.

I was then wrapped in plastic film for 20 minutes before K. Luck told me to take a shower.

I washed the ingredients from my body and could feel how soft and tender my skin was. I didn't even have to use body lotion after the treatment.

The coconut milk and grilled

coconut meat had done its job, said K. Luck. After my shower, I laid back down while K. Luck gave me a massage, applying an essential oil called Siamese Bliss.

Even if you aren't a big fan of *tom yum*, this treatment is still worth trying because of the softness of your skin afterwards and relaxed feeling you have when you leave the spa.

The treatment costs 1,495 baht. As my treatment came to an end, I thanked K. Luck and K. Amornrat and said goodbye before rushing to the nearest restaurant and ordering a *tom yum gung* I could actually eat.

Spa Canvaree is open daily from 10 am until 8 pm. For further information contact Spa Canvaree at Centara Villas Phuket, 701 Village 1, Karon. Tel: 076-286300-9. Alternatively, contact Centara Hotels & Resorts, Bangkok Office. Tel: 02-7691234 ext 6129. Email: centarackv@chr.co.th

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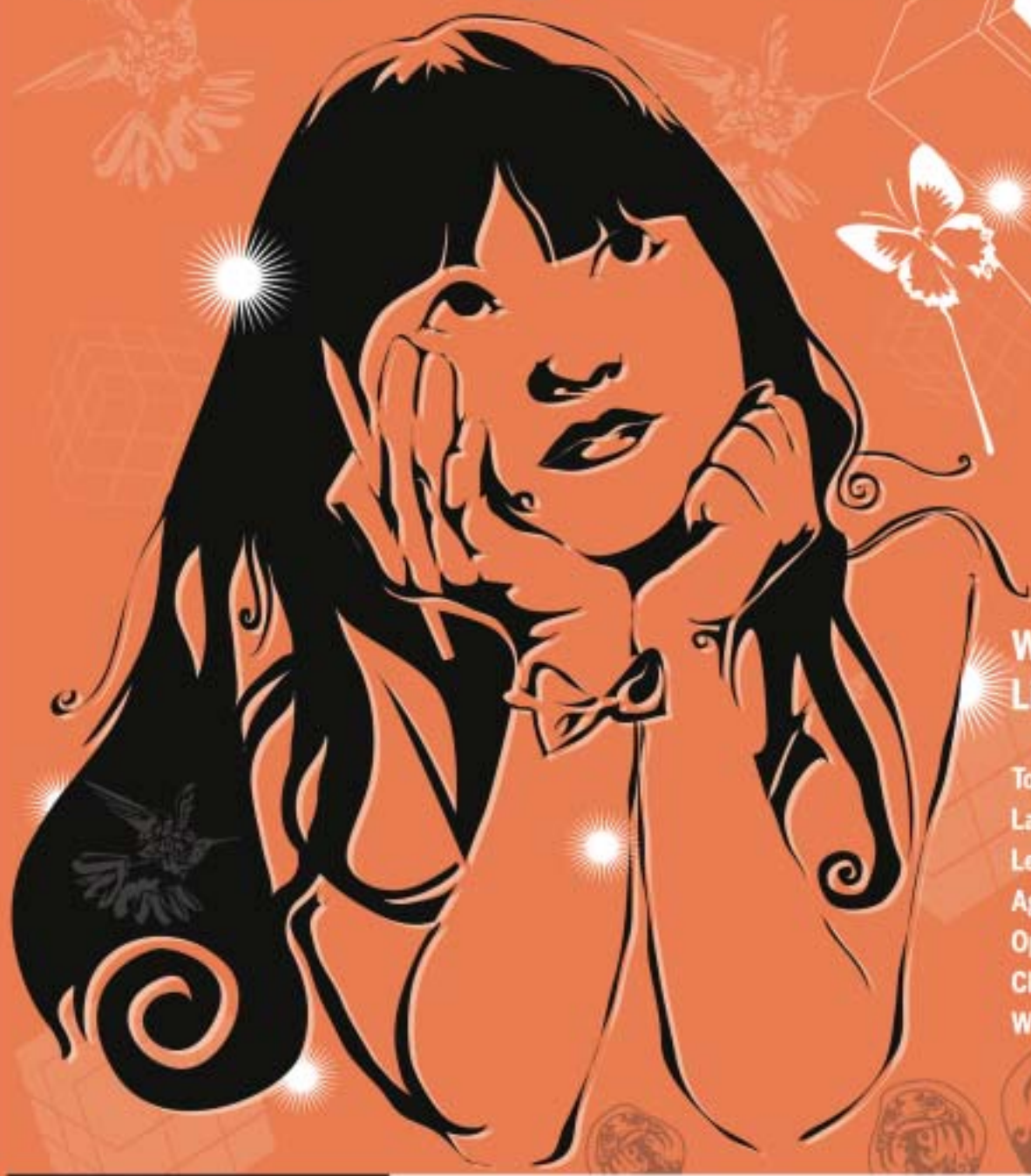
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"If We Could Change the World"



Welcome to the 4th Junior IMPAC Dublin Literary Awards for Thailand 2006/2007

Topic: "If We Could Change the World"

Language: English

Length: 800-1,200 words

Age: 14-18, up to December 1, 2007

Opening date for submissions: November 1, 2007

Closing date for submissions: December 10, 2007

Winners announced:

- for Southern Region: December 19, 2007
- for all of Thailand: January 15, 2008

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The contest takes place in all four regions of the country

1) Southern region contest coordinators:

- The Nation, Hat Yai office... for all southern provinces except Phuket, Krabi and Phang-Nga
- Phuket Gazette (for Phuket, Krabi and Phang-Nga)

2) Northern region contest: CityLife, Chiang Mai

3) Northeastern region contest coordinator: The Nation, Khon Kaen Office

4) Bangkok contest (including Central & Eastern region): The Nation, Bangkok

Prizes:

- 1) The winning author in each region will earn 10,000 baht, and there are two merit awards per region of 5,000 baht each.
- 2) The overall national winner will win a trip with one parent to Dublin* where they will attend the senior international IMPAC Dublin Literary Awards ceremony to meet and take part in a reading with the winning author. The Dublin Literary Award is the richest literary prize in the world.

**The Dublin trip for the Thailand national winner is compulsory. If the national winner cannot go, the trip will be awarded to the next winner who can go.*

Writers from the Southern Region should send entries to:

Managing Director
The Phuket Gazette
367/2 Yacwarat Road, Taladyai, Muang Phuket 83000
or by email to: DublinAwards@PhuketGazette.Net

For more information, please contact Khun Jib at 076-236 555
or Email: jib@phuketgazette.net

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Puzzles

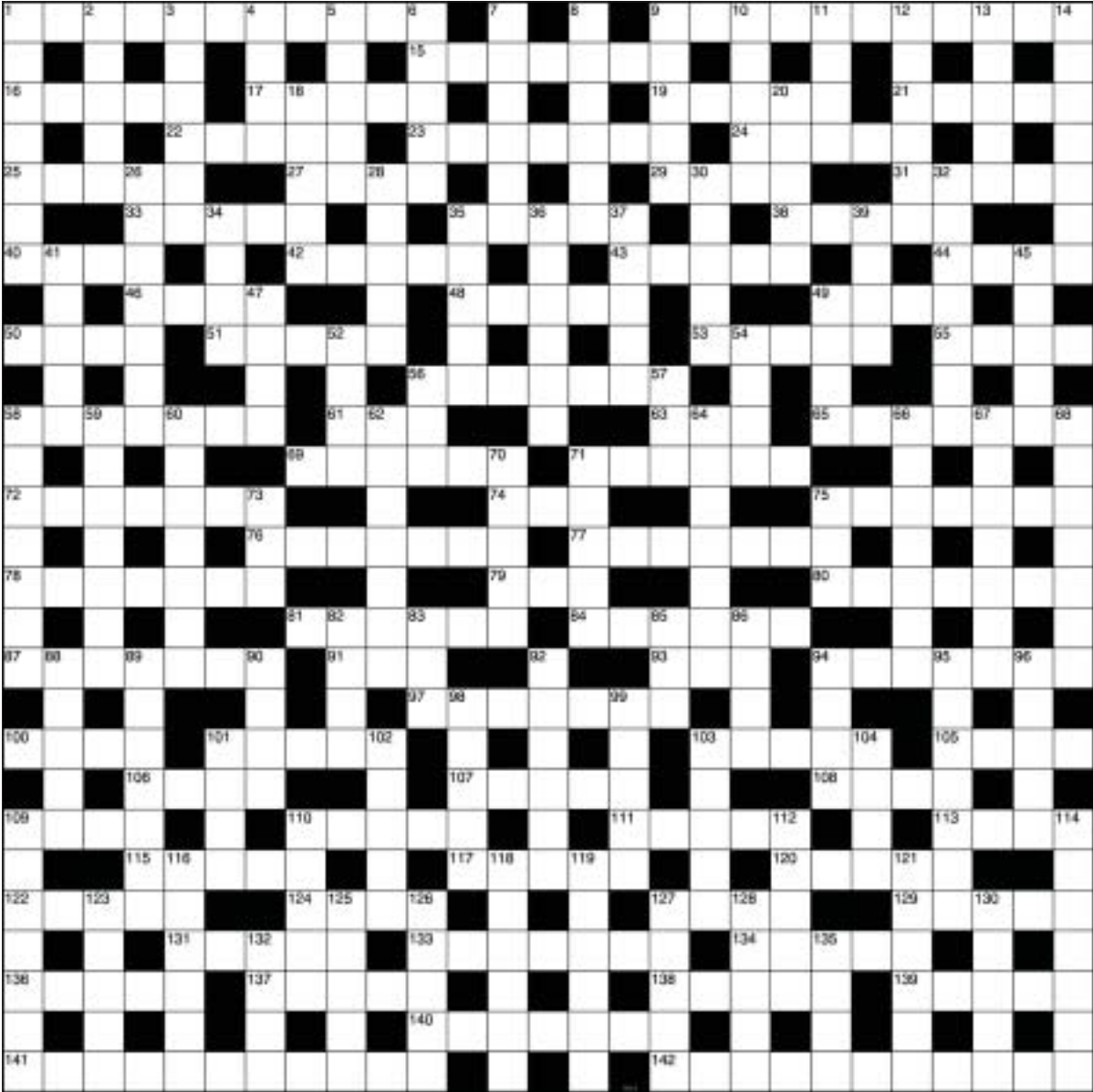
The BIG Crossword

Spot the Difference



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





© 2007 Lovatts Publications Pty Ltd

- Across
1. Blood flow

9. Greatly delighting

15. Incessantly (2,3,2)

16. Flooded (of decks)

17. Skips

19. Vibrations

21. ...Lumpur

22. Muppets, Bert &...

23. Legal trade ban

24. Absurd

25. Canvas support

27. Dancer, ...Astaire

29. Horse harness

31. Tutankhamen's land

33. Dictator, ...Hitler

35. Hide (booty)

38. Child's gland disease

40. Animal den

42. Opera house, La...

43. Line-up

44. Serving platter

46. Furniture wood

48. Harvests

49. Soothsayer

50. Persian ruler

51. Of shipping

53. Startle

55. Tennis ace, ...Lendl

56. Swindled

58. Outrage

61. Actress, ...Lupino

63. Actor, ...Brynner

65. Fixing (race)

69. Beautiful youth

71. Capital city, ...Aires

72. Parentless kids

74. Ventilate

75. Pied

76. Inconsistent

77. Eight-sided figure

78. Acrobat's apparatus

79. Relatives

80. Utterly stupid

81. Is in terror of

84. Adults-only (1-5)

87. Movie star, Leslie...

91. Queer

93. Which person?

94. Wrestled

97. Infant-minding

100. Glow

101. Piebald

103. Islands

105. Smartly-groomed

106. Pagan statue

107. Synagogue scholar

108. Actress, Deborah...

109. Hebrews

110. Neither here nor...

111. Personnel

113. Ogled

115. Sworn promises

117. Mode

120. Mechanical man

122. Building site hoist

124. Illegally aid

127. Measure (out)

129. Actor, ...Reeves

131. Music group, ...& The Pacemakers

133. Refugee

134. Hair dye

136. Marten fur

137. Out of bed

138. Wear away

139. Sing alpine-style

140. Most spiteful

141. Bracket

142. Portable stairs

4. Stratford river, UK

5. Frostier

6. Snooped

7. Ploy

8. Beautifies

9. Embassy official

10. Puzzle cube creator

11. The Leaning Tower of...

12. Running costs

13. Boot-shaped Euro pean country

14. Frightful

18. Aggrieves

20. Adversary

26. Clay-based

28. Internet letter

30. Giant monsters

32. Stripper's garment (1-6)

34. Arabian sultanate

35. Prince Andrew's ex

36. Palestinian hero, Yasser...

37. Hurry, make...

39. Unassuming

41. For purpose (2,3)

45. Anew

47. Designer, ...Lagerfeld

49. Disfigure

52. Amongst

54. Saintly light

56. Tin container

57. Alter colour of

58. Abbreviate

59. Pacify

60. Desk compartments

62. Gave freely

64. Expose

66. Caravan folk

67. Bad feeling (3,4)

68. Blessing

70. Hessian bags

71. New York district, The...

73. Witness

75. Genetic code (1,1,1)

82. Defeat

83. Tot up

85. Wonderment

86. Light years

88. Case-harden

89. Relationship

90. Fingertip covering

92. Crusted over (of sore)

94. Long, hard journey

95. Ooze

96. Banish from own country

98. Land measures

99. Heighten

101. Mail

102. Fat

103. Likeness

104. Belgrade native

109. Lifts (5,2)

110. Russian leaders

112. Liberated

114. Celebrated actor, Kirk...

116. Greek/Turkish sea

118. Hot-drink sachet (3,3)

119. Wreath foliage

121. Accepted

123. Fossilised resin

125. Computer memory units

126. Phrases

127. Encounters

128. Not these but...

130. Wimbledon champ, ...Agassi

132. Skin eruption

135. Singer, ...Diamond
- Down
1. King Rat author, James...

2. Paper batches

3. Defended

su | do | ku

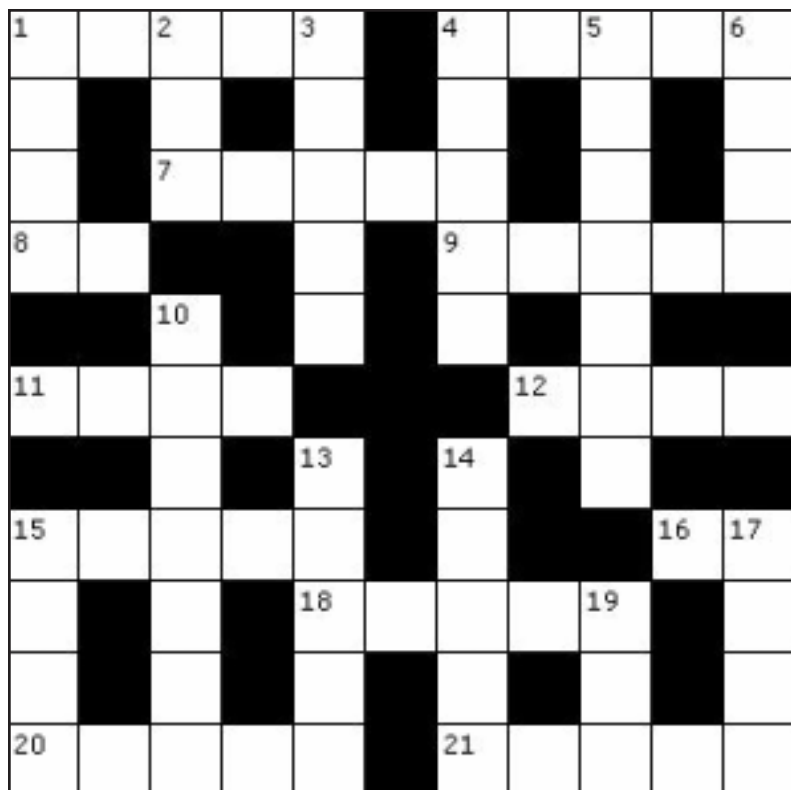
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Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

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

Solution on next page



Quick Crossword

Across

1. Aussie city
4. Fantastic
7. Dance
8. City of Angels
9. Beauty...
11. Twirl
12. Smell
15. Disease
16. Former
18. ...Newton
20. Spear
21. Traveler

Down

1. Skin
2. Rodent
3. Car maker
4. Big bird
5. Leave out
6. Ripped
10. Baddie
13. Sound
14. Expression
15. Medicine
17. Radiation
19. Hat

Solution below

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



Kids! Ask Mum and Dad to help you find the answers to these questions. They're not easy, but if you do some research you should be able to find the answers to all of them.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. What Andean rodent is prized for its fur? | 8. The hairs lining the small intestine are called what? | 15. What was the first private yacht to cross the Atlantic? |
| 2. The international airport in New Delhi bears whose name? | 9. Britain and France invaded Egypt after the nationalization of what? | 16. What is the name for a design pressed into paper products? |
| 3. The name of what fruit comes from the Latin for "early ripe"? | 10. What is the name of the original vampire? | 17. The air-puff test is used to diagnose what condition? |
| 4. What flow of charged particles from the sun creates Auroras? | 11. Halvah is made from what kind of seeds? | 18. Marc Antony's wife stabbed which orator's tongue? |
| 5. Aradus, Sidon and Tyre were three cities of which ancient civilization? | 12. On which island would you find Mount Pelée? | 19. Which country was formerly called Abyssinia? |
| 6. What is the world's oldest army unit? | 13. Lead aprons worn during x-rays have a collar to protect what? | 20. Which glands produce norepinephrine? |
| 7. What was the world's first fighter jet? | 14. The island of Aegina introduced which items to Greek life? | |

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Quick crossword



Monster Quiz Answers

1. A chinchilla; 2. Indira Gandhi; 3. Apricot; 4. Solar wind; 5. Phoenicia; 6. The Swiss Guard; 7. The German Me 262; 8. Villi; 9. The Suez Canal; 10. Nosferatu; 11. Sesame; 12. Martinique; 13. The thyroid gland; 14. Coins; 15. Cleopatra's barge; 16. Watermark; 17. Glaucoma; 18. Cicero; 19. Ethiopia; 20. Adrenal.

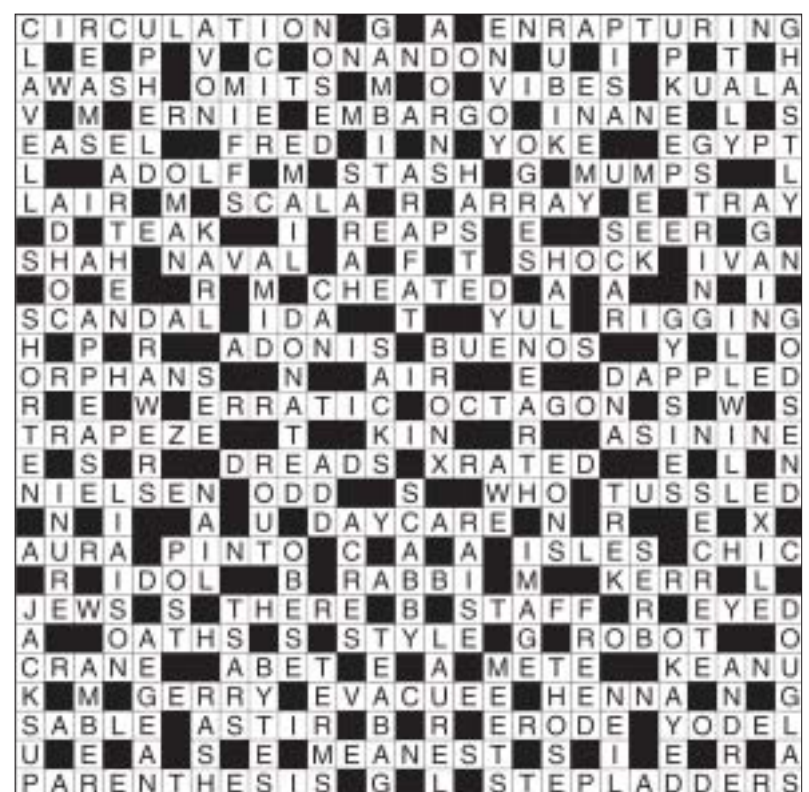
Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

Solution to this week's Cartoon Puzzle



Solution to this week's BIG Crossword



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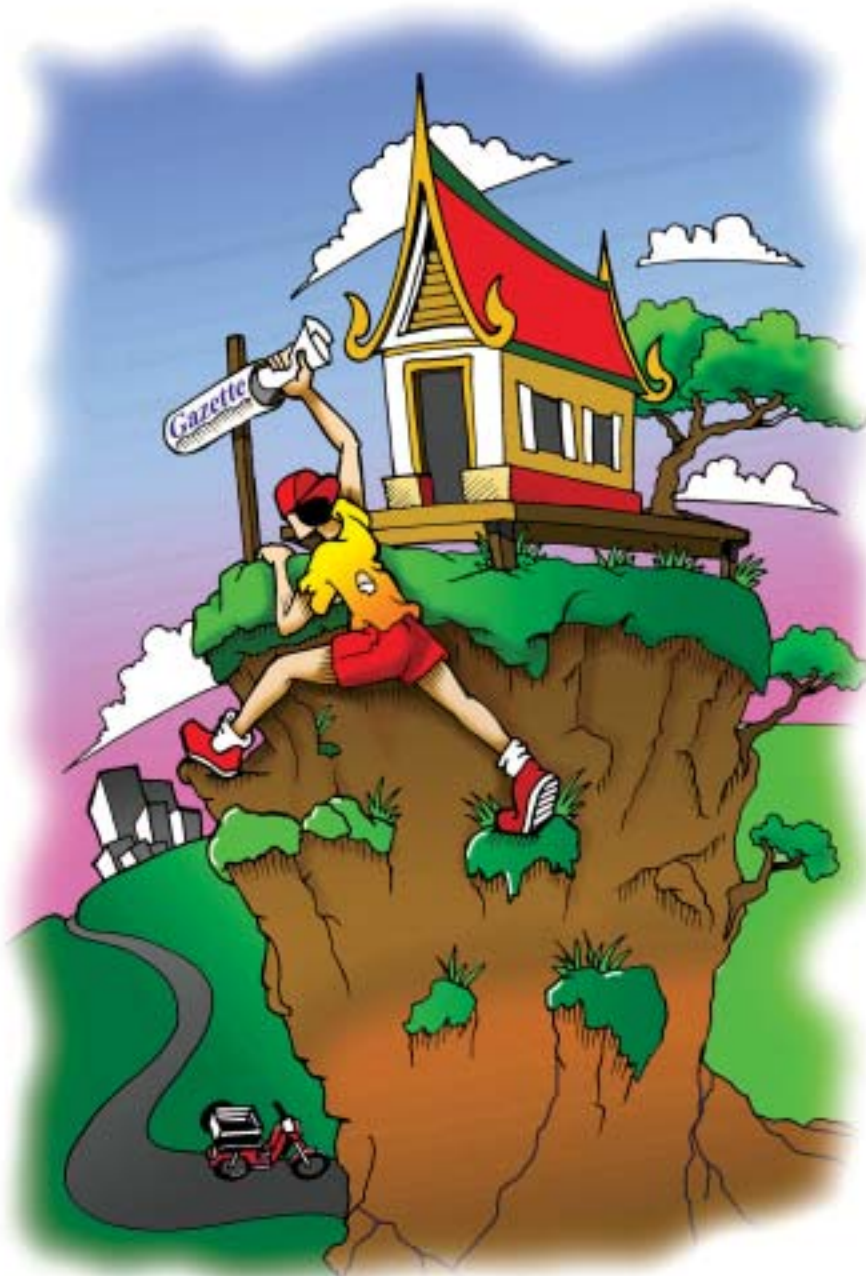
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Charity Auction to be held by The Rotary Club of Patong Beach
with all proceeds going to the Disadvantaged Childrens Education Fund.

Master reflects on the Silk Road

I thought I was *au courant* with the best modern travel writers but there was a huge gap in my knowledge called Colin Thubron.

I happened to read a review of his latest travel book, *Shadow of the Silk Road* (Chatto & Windus, London, 2006, 363pp) and then a colleague turned up at the office with a copy, full of praise for the book.

"This transcendently gifted writer is, of course, one of the two or three best living travel writers, in some ways probably the best," reads a back-page blurb by Jan Morris, no slouch of a travel writer herself.

Born in 1939, graduate of Eton College, Thubron has written nine travel books and seven novels, the most recent shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize.

He wrote his first travel book about Damascus when he was 29, followed by a second about Lebanon.

The rest of his travels have been in the great landmass of central Asia where he has learned to speak Russian and Mandarin Chinese.

His latest book follows the 7,000-mile Silk Road from the ancient Chinese capital of Xian to the Mediterranean port of Antioch.

It was a slow journey of seven months, written in a leisurely descriptive style that reflects the scholarship and civility of an earlier era.

For Thubron this is a return to areas



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

traveled in two previous books: *The Silk Road* and *Lost Heart of Asia*. In Xian, he is shocked by the changes wrought in his 18-year absence.

He remembered a city shattered by the Cultural Revolution, concrete blocks and half-empty stores, a river of bicycles and regulation colors of brown, gray and serge blue. "It seemed a place of inert history, and fatal patience.

"But now it had shattered into life. I recognized almost nothing. It has not frozen in grandeur like Beijing, but transformed into a hectic procession of overcrowded shopping malls, restaurants and high-tech industrial suburbs.

"The nine mile circuit of its walls, which once seemed to enclose nothing, was bursting with reborn vigor, the massive gates funneling in traffic which clogged the boulevards for miles."

He visits the shrine of the legendary

Yellow Emperor and the tomb of the real first one, Qin Shi Huangdi, who proclaimed Xian the first capital of a unified China in 221 BC.

Here, the silk caravans set out for the West and here caravans from the West finally reached their destination. Xian was once the greatest city in the world.

Colin Thubron sets off west on a 450-mile train ride to meet up with an old friend in Lanzhou, a poor schoolteacher now risen to university dean.

He travels on to Jiayuguan, "The Gate of Sorrows" or the mouth of China, the end of the Great Wall and the last bastion of civilization before the howling barbarian wilderness.

Yet modern China stretches a thousand miles to the west, inhabited by the Uighurs, a Turkic Muslim people increasingly resentful of the incursions of modern China.

At the oasis of Dunhuang, he visits 4th-century Buddhist grottoes where travelers had asked monks to pray for their souls or offered gifts in thanksgiving for their return.

"Even then the oasis was a lodestar

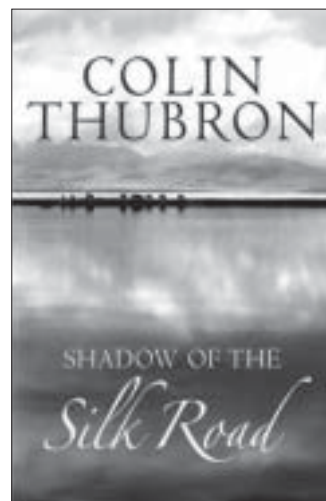
for merchants. Here the Silk Road forked westward, skirting the terrible Taklamakan desert north and south on fifteen-hundred-miles tracks to the Pamir mountains. Whichever route the merchants took, they converged on Dunhuang to amass supplies, hire guides, buy camels."

Thubron wanders amid the temple murals, noting, "The influences of China, India, Central Asia, even Persia, jostled and inter-fused."

Then he is out of China and into the sad, newly independent and impoverished Central Asia Muslim countries of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, visiting the old ruins of Samarkand and Bukhara. Often there's not much to see. The Mongols of Genghis Khan prided themselves on plowing under whole cities.

After a rough passage through northern Afghanistan, he's into the more gentle, urban, modern world of Iran where the many educated women he meets seethe under their chadors.

Moving into Turkey, a country of good roads and tour buses, he luxuriates the hot water of his first decent hotel. You share his weariness and relief as at last he reaches Antioch.



EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

Until November 24. King's Cup Rugby-80.

In celebration of HM The King's 80th birthday, the 2007 International Rugby 80s Tournament will take place until November 24. The games will be played at Sanaam Chai in Phuket City and will feature four international teams: Thailand, Australia, Laos and Sri Lanka.

For more information contact Kwanta. Tel: 081-5858222. Send emails to thairugbyunion@yahoo.com Website: www.thai-rugbyunion.com

November 24. Special BBQ Buffet Dinner at Wine Connection Chalong.

Special BBQ buffet dinner with cheeses, cold cuts and a live band for 650 baht per person from 6:30 pm until 11 pm.

For more information contact Pascal. Tel: 087-8896074. Send emails to fb.phuket@wineconnection.co.th

November 24. 6th Annual QSI Fun Run, 1km & 6.5km races.

QSI International School of

Phuket holds a fun run and auction each year to help raise money for important school projects and to promote good health.

This year's run will be held at the Bang Wad Dam. The run will be divided on the day into two separate runs of 1 and 6.5 kilometers.

Participation medals will be given to the first 200 registrants, along with gold, silver and bronze medals to the top three finishers in each age category, male and female.

For further information contact QSI International School Phuket. Tel: 076-354077, 081-6334279. Email: qsi.funrun@gmail.com Website: www.qsi.org

November 24. PIWC Gala Ball.

The Phuket International Women's Club will hold the most prestigious event of the year – the annual Gala Ball – on Saturday, November 24, at the Indigo Pearl, Nai Yang Beach.

For further information contact Carol (Tel: 087-4178860.

Email: carol@aplusplussoftware.com) or Sue (Tel: 087-2776948. Email: arnulphy@loxinfo.co.th).

November 29. Wine Dinner at Mom Tri's Boathouse.

Mom Tri's Boathouse will host an exclusive wine-tasting dinner, featuring wines of two very prestigious wine châteaux in France: Château Pichon Comtesse de Lalande (Pauillac, France) and Château L'Angelus (Saint Emilion, France).

Seating is limited and reservations are required. For more information call the Boathouse at 076-330015.

November 30. Taste of luxury at Puccini.

Experience a taste of luxury at Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket.

An exclusive culinary experience at Puccini hosted by Leigh Gilligan in association with Brokenhills Estate Vineyards.

This event will be centered around a six-course menu, with each course accompanied by a

different wine from Brokenhills Estate, including the very latest releases, personally selected and introduced by Leigh Gilligan. 7 pm until 10 pm.

Leigh is a veteran of the Australian wine business with over 25 years' experience.

For further information contact F&B Ambassador. Tel: 076-324101. Email: fbreservation@sheratonphuket.com Website: www.luxurycollection.com/phuket

December 1-8. Phuket King's Cup Regatta.

The King's Cup Regatta is held every year to honor the birthday of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The week-long event is Asia's biggest and most popular regatta with great sailing and great parties along the way.

For further information visit www.kingscup.com or call 076-273380.

December 2. Laguna Phuket Triathlon and 6km fun run.

Southeast Asia's premier

multi-sport event, the Laguna Phuket Triathlon, presented by Thai Airways International and the Tourism Authority of Thailand, is now in its 14th year, with a new swim course, altered bike and running routes, and a new start time of 7 am.

The 1.8km swim, 55km bike ride and 12km run offers a US\$20,000 prize purse and promises to be a memorable event.

The event expects to attract some 800 athletes from more than 30 countries competing in both the individual triathlon and the Herbalife Corporate Challenge Team Relay.

A 6km fun run for 500 participants will be conducted from 8 am until 9 am. Registration is 400 baht.

For further information call 076-324060, email info@lagunaphukettriathlon.com or visit www.lagunaphukettriathlon.com

December 5. HM The King's Birthday – Public Holiday.

HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's birthday, also marked as Father's Day in Thailand.

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Let the games begin

For an island where bureaucrats and elected officials at every level harp on incessantly about the need to promote tourism, their collective failure to support the recent King's Cup Rugby-80 tournament comes as an inexplicable irony.

This year's event, which initially drew interest from top rugby sides including current world champions South Africa and former world champions France, ended with just four teams taking part.

Many teams are understood to have lost interest after it became known that the pitch at Karon Stadium was in no condition to host the tournament. Despite a 1.2-million-baht returf of the field in March courtesy of the Rotary Club of Patong, local soccer matches played at the stadium had degraded the pitch to the point where it could not be used for rugby, forcing the event to be moved.

Hardly impressed were the four teams that did end up competing in the event, which was televised nationally by True Visions – another loser in this latest sports tourism fiasco.

It appears that Karon Municipality, the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports have failed to realize the importance of Karon and Surakul Stadiums being able to host international sporting events.

When Surakul Stadium received a 38-million-baht upgrade so that it could host the Fifa U-19 Women's World Championship in 2004, the understanding was that the venue would field many more international events.

That has not been the case, though the facility maintains a busy schedule hosting of worthy local scholastic sports and other not-so-worthy activities, such as "VIP" soccer matches in which local, middle-aged office workers do battle against one another.

Citing the likelihood of damage to the pitch, the *OrBorJor* has repeatedly denied requests to host international rugby events there, even though there is keen interest among event organizers in establishing Phuket as a center of regional rugby play.

The International Rugby 10s, a successful charity event now going into its 10th year that draws hundreds of foreign players and their families to the island, has also been afforded second-class status.

Adding to the irony is that fact that sports tourism development is one of the cornerstones of the Governor's provincial development strategy, which includes construction of a 1.4-billion-baht sports complex in Mai Khao.

Given current developments one can only wonder what that facility, if ever completed, might actually be used for: a new weekend market, perhaps?

– The Editor

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

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Managing Editor: Chris Husted

News Editor: Stephen Fein

Chief Reporter: Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

Editorial Team: Natcha Yuttaworawit, Janyaporn Morel, Somprach Saowakhon, Semacote Suganya, Pathomporn Kaenkrachang, Nick Davies, Matt Crook, Skyler Swezy

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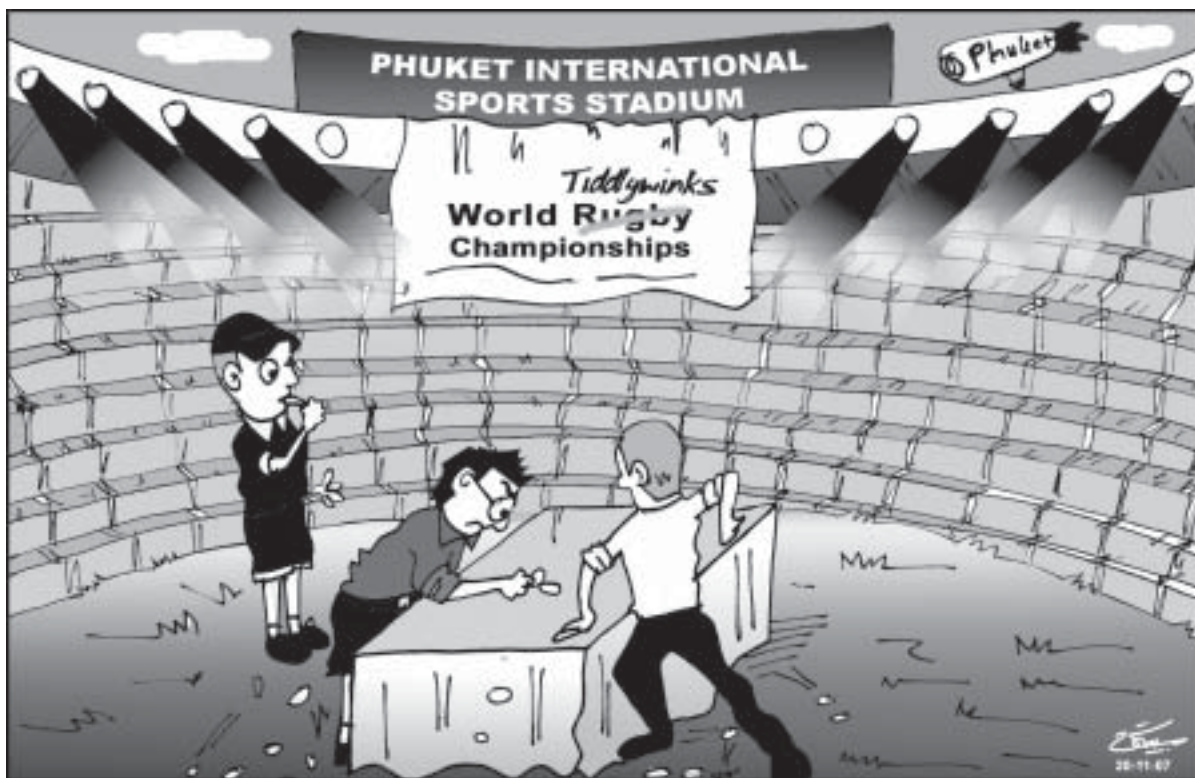
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Letters

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

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

Easy come, easy go

I and five friends recently had the misfortune of visiting Phuket Immigration Office. We wanted to stay six months in Phuket, but we were told that [to do so] we must leave Thailand and then come back – not very helpful.

So we will depart Thailand and go to Malaysia and *not* come back. We will spend our money there, not in Phuket.

The Thai government spends millions on advertising around the world asking foreigners to stay in Phuket, then the Immigration Bureau tells foreigners to leave Phuket, losing millions of baht for Phuket.

Confused? Yes.

James Wilson
Nottingham, England

Sea, sun, sand saga

Thanks for the story on pages 4 and 5 of the November 17 online edition of the *Phuket Gazette*. I have posted the following blog on thaivisa.com as a response to the comments from the Sea Sun Sand manager and the police:

I am one of the people who wrote to the *Phuket Gazette*, which kindly put in the article about our side of the Sea Sun Sand story.

With regards the comments written by the manager of the resort and the Thai police, please note:

- We were not asked to come back to the police station for further questioning, or we would have done so.

- We [the guests] did not all know each other; how can 6 separate rooms of people all be lying?

- The only reason some of

us stayed in reception informing returning guests to check their safes was because the staff were rude and aggressive, not letting us contact the manager and were making a complete mockery of our predicament.

- With regard to us trying to get a "free vacation", there is no way that we could make a travel insurance claim to even cover the amount of money stolen, let alone try to rot a free holiday out of it.

- My travel insurance would only cover AUS\$250 in cash with a AUS\$100 excess on the claim.

We had AUS\$350 stolen, so we could have claimed AUS\$150, except we would have had to pay AUS\$80 to have the police report translated into English. Our travel insurance wouldn't cover the cost.

- Our friends who had AUS\$500 (15,000 baht) couldn't claim at all as their insurance didn't cover money stolen from a safe.

Jan and Warren Corley
Australia

The code is out there

I disagree completely with Pol Lt Col Nichothanond [concerning his comments in "Tourists accuse Patong hotel of 'theft racket'" [November 17 issue of the *Gazette*].

All safes have an emergency key to open the safe in case the code is forgotten. To open and close the safe you need no more than 30 seconds. The code is not needed.

A safe is only as safe as the hotel or resort you are staying in. If the staff are dishonest, not even the best safe will protect your money. A failsafe is always there in case you lose or forget

your code. The person who has those emergency keys should be questioned.

Gunther Genesse

Keep reporting the Rawai road attacks

I picked up the *Gazette* last week, and I am sure many others did as well, looking for some answers as to what is going to be done with the violence in Rawai – and there was nothing in the paper!

Totally disappointed is an understatement. However, there was the interview with the Kathu Police chief about tuk tuk drivers.

Brilliant reporting. Come on guys, there is a real story here – and someone needs to be asking some basic questions and reporting the answers.

Why haven't the kids been rounded up and had the riot act thrown at them? How difficult is to get to the bottom of these problems? It is hardly a huge ghetto and I am guessing most of the kids live locally.

How incompetent does this make the police look? How many billions of baht is tied up in the area and how much of an impact is the violence having in lost revenue, property prices and Phuket's reputation?

I can't quite believe it appears that nothing is being done, or questions being answered, when there is so many billions of baht on the table.

Phuket's rivals as tourist destinations must be having a good old laugh at the basic incompetence of the police in failing to communicate and reassure the community or round up these thugs.

Tricky Dicky
Rawai

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

Kata-Karon police station opens

I have a number of unsolved cases that I will soon be delving into. My main concern is to uphold and protect people's lives and property. Earning the trust of tourists will depend on how efficiently we are able to work from this point onward.

Although Kata-Karon is one of the most popular tourist areas, we previously had only one team of two patrol police operating there. I decided this was insufficient.

Chalong Police Station has about 140 officers, so we have assigned 20 officers to a new sub-station – Karon Police Station – that will operate in the same way as Chalong Police Station. The sub-station opened November 16, just in time for high season.

Karon Police Station, located near Karon Stadium, has its own chief and there are now extra officers patrolling the beach area. We now patrol from 8 pm until midnight because there have been a lot of robberies in that area. We also have a number of police on motorbikes there.

Officers have been positioned on the roads around Kata, the Kata-Karon viewpoint and the road to Patong. If we have checkpoints on all of these roads we will be able to catch criminals

FIRST PERSON

After just a week in his new role as Superintendent of Chalong Police Station, Col Samarn Chainarong announced on November 9 that Chalong Police had arrested two of four people involved in a series of robberies in Phuket.

Col Samarn, 50, was transferred from Kapong District in Phang Nga to Phuket as part of an annual reshuffle ordered by Royal Thai Police Headquarters in Bangkok.

A 1980 graduate of the Royal Police Cadet Academy in Nakhon Pathom, Col Samarn worked for Phuket Provincial Police crime suppression unit before moving to Kapong. He earned his master's degree from Krirk University in Bangkok.

Here he tells how he plans to tackle crime in the south of the island.



As for the murder cases, I will have to review the case files. I have been in my position for just a couple of weeks [since November 7] and as soon as I have updates on cases I will let the public know.

I meet daily with the investigation team and various other police teams, but sometimes I cannot reveal all the details about our meetings because I may jeopardize the investigations.

We are trying to deal with the problems in the Chalong area to win back the support of the tourists. We will do our best because Phuket is a tourist area.

Kata-Karon is not so different from Patong. Every police station in Phuket faces a lack of officers. The problems are the same everywhere. Although the number of police increases annually, so does the number of people in Phuket. As a result, I have to ask for help from the local people too.

Most residents of Kapong were born there, but there are many aliens living here in Phuket so there is a greater likelihood of crime. Tourists may not be on the alert all the time. Sometimes people are desperate and they need to find money for food, so they turn to crime. Criminal behavior is not always an inborn trait; some people turn to crime out of a perceived necessity.

Ten years ago, when I was in Phuket for the first time, most of the cases I had to deal with were robberies.

One of the most serious problems was that the local people were reluctant to help us. Local people can give information to the police without having to tell us their names and phone numbers.

We won't reveal their identities to the public. I believe there are people out there who have seen crimes that they haven't reported.

If these people are afraid to come to the police station, they can contact us by calling 191.

*Compiled by
Natcha Yuttaworawit*

Has the 80m rule changed?

Why are they still building houses along "Millionaire's Mile" in Kamala?

I checked Millionaire's Mile and many houses there are being built above 80m limit. Has the law changed?

People ask me if it is legal to build there, I just want to know the current law for this particular spot in Kamala so I can advise them in accordance with current land law.

John,
Kamala

Karun Seeden, President of Kamala Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor), replies:

The 80m law has not been changed and we have never ap-

Issues & ANSWERS

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proved a permit for any construction above the 80m limit.

You cannot estimate the elevation by the naked eye. We use a GPS to measure the elevation before issuing a permit for any construction on high ground.

Ong-art Chanacharnmongkol, Chief of Phuket Provincial Office of Natural Resources and

Environment, replies:

The 80m law has not been changed.

Our office is collecting feedback from public hearings to determine whether exceptions to this law should be allowed, but the process is not yet complete.

Illegal construction should be reported to the local administration, which has the authority to stop it.

The Gazette notes:

Complaints against a government office can be filed at the Damrongtham Center at Provincial Hall on Narisorn Rd, Phuket City.

The office is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. Call 1567 or 076-213203.

Extending 60-day tourist visas

We will be in Patong Beach for three months next year, from June 1 to August 28. We will each have a 60-day tourist visa issued in Australia and will obviously have to extend our permit to stay for a further 30 days.

Can the 30-day extension be done in Patong? When can we apply for that extension? For example, do we have to wait for the last week of the 60-day visa or can we apply at any time? What documentation are we required to submit for the visa extension?

Cathy Perkins
Australia

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

You can apply for the extension to your permits to stay at the Patong Immigration office, but that office accepts visa-extension applications only on Mondays and Fridays from 9 am to 2 pm.

The Immigration Office in Phuket City accepts visa-extension applications Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

You should apply about one week before your 60-day visas expire.

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In The Stars

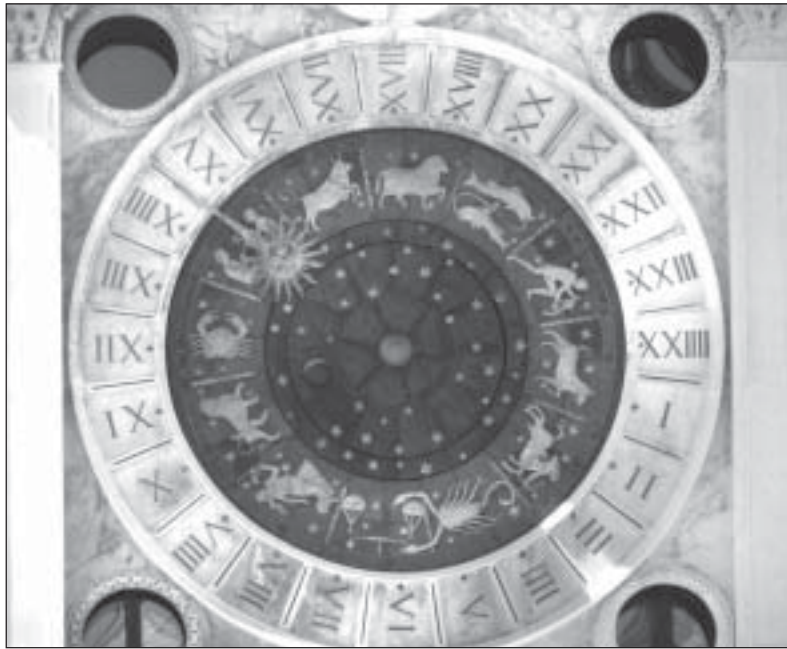
by Isla Star

What do the stars hold in store for you?

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Where financial worries are concerned, bridges should only be crossed when they're about to be stepped on. The signs are positive for slow progress, but rushing discussions will only lead to others getting cold feet and backing out at the last minute. Those of you who have a birthday this week will be surprised by a friend's generous gesture. The number 9 can bring luck on Thursday.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Your intuition can be relied on this week when it comes to business relationships. Pisces is definitely not the person they appear to be and committing to anything with them will be a mistake. Cancer can be trusted, but asking for a second opinion from a reliable friend is advisable. Finances begin to be a happier area of your life – a windfall is forecast to arrive.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Many of you will be residing on cloud nine this week. Due to your way with words,



your luck in love is at a peak until the end of this month, but having a silver tongue also comes in useful when concluding business deals midweek. On Monday, a needy Gemini friend asks you to play Cupid, but there's a danger of wires being crossed.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Most of you will be in a

calmer frame of mind during the final week of November and this is a good time to put your priorities in order. December is forecast to be a busy month, with unexpected visitors due on more than one occasion. A nagging worry connected to something your partner did recently should be brought into the open. Wear a piece of onyx to encourage grounding.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): You will learn that you aren't the only interested party where romance is concerned. However, it's likely that work matters will occupy most of your time this week. A last-minute assignment could have you burning some serious midnight oil after Tuesday. On a brighter note, this is the ideal opportunity to show your high level of commitment. Career matters are well-starred for the rest of the year.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Your mood becomes more upbeat and others are impressed by your confidence during the rest of November. Take advantage of this added glow to keep the ball in your court while having a discussion with Aquarius midweek. Even if you're happy to stay where you are, an invitation to travel gives food for thought. The number 7 can bring good fortune on Wednesday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): More regular exercise helps to clear the cobwebs for those of you feeling jaded from commitment. You are likely to say things in the heat of the moment this weekend – where romance is concerned, this will be a bad thing. Work matters will bring less pressure when November ends and you should make plans for the holiday season before others do this for you.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): A pleasing end to November is forecast for most of you. An unresolved financial matter should be finally straightened out to your benefit and this could mean that you are able to get away from it all in December. Those already in a relationship will be pleased by news from their partner midweek. If you are single and looking for love, wear the color pistachio green to send appropriate signals to Leo and you may get a nice surprise.

LEO (July 24-August 22): A piece of gossip encourages you to see a Capricorn acquaintance in a different light. Romance could be sparked off just in time. Those already involved are advised to consult their partners before making getaway plans. Tuesday is an auspicious day to ask for more credit, but keep your finances on an even keel to avoid sinking in the New Year.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Those of you who have been economical with the truth should prepare to be faced with reality. Dissatisfaction at work will only dissolve by finding a new outlet for your talents. The theme of this year appears to have been selling yourself short and you should resolve to adopt a more confident approach in the New Year. The number 5 can bring some luck on Thursday.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): A strange week lies ahead for many of you. Travel arrangements are subject to last-minute delays midweek, so make backup plans if at all possible. Friends will also spring some surprises on you, not all of which will fit in with your schedule. Try not to upset a sensitive Taurus this weekend as their intentions are genuine. A dream you have early next week holds the answer to a romantic mystery.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Your love life starts to sparkle and those of you who are single are probably ready to make some sort of commitment during this week. Family members who are opposed to this match should be ignored as it appears that you have done enough this year to please others. If you are thinking of visiting friends overseas next month, it would be wise to discuss this with them before booking tickets. The color sapphire blue encourages a sensible outlook.

In a sea of legal uncertainty think of us.



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Momma Duck's last stand

Our agony aunt bids farewell

Dear Momma Duck,
At what age do Thais introduce children to the very spicy foods this Kingdom is known for?

From years of teaching it seems to me that kids at primary school level are given school lunches with little or no chili.

My neighbors' kids are two and four and ask "Is it spicy?" before touching any food.

My daughter, who is half-Caucasian and half-Thai, is only 20 months old. Yet already she seems to be getting a taste for spicy food, stealing it off my plate if necessary and then jumping around the room waving her hand in front of her open mouth.

Warning her by calling out, "Be careful! Spicy!" only seems to encourage her – and her tolerance already seems to be increasing.

I find this troubling and I am afraid that if she starts eating spicy food this early it could harm her mouth or alter her taste buds permanently.

What is the conventional wisdom on this in Thailand?

Papaprika
Kathu

Dear Papaprika,
Children love to mimic adult behavior and I must assume that, perhaps, you, your wife or another relative who lives with you loves spicy food and enjoys expressing delight



Momma DUCK

By Wanida Hongyok
momma@phuketgazette.net

when eating it.

Some children, particularly two- to three-year-olds in my experience, also love to try things even though adults have warned them about possible harm.

In this regard, would I be naughty if I asked whether your daughter's emerging personality is more like yours or your wife's?

Generally, however, when children are young we do not feed them spicy food. Exceptions occur, for example, you could have a babysitter and your daughter eats what she eats.

When children start to attend school,

peer pressure enters the picture and that usually means starting to eat spicy stuff.

In other words, if they're like me when I was young, they may want to show off to friends by eating strong spicy food.

Also, school menus are often quite limited and designed to cater to students of all ages and teachers.

One tends to develop the level of spiciness gradually from a little spicy to tear-filled-eyes hot.

As a parent you're very concerned with the well being of your daughter but, if I were you, I wouldn't worry about it.

There are more than 60 million Thais and we have all survived eating spicy foods. I've never heard that spicy food can harm a child's mouth or alter her taste buds permanently. She will know – or soon learn – her own limit. Bon appetit!

Moving to greener pastures

Dear Readers,

It has been 10 years since I began writing the Momma Duck articles. During this time I have received many questions, ranging from the very interesting to the rather mundane and some that couldn't be published because this is a family newspaper.

The many questions about inter-cultural relationships and marriages were answered based largely on my own experience, but I frequently consulted my husband, as well as Thai and expatriate friends

for their ideas.

I've tried to be sensitive and humorous in my replies, although I must admit, there were times I was tempted to say, "Please, please stop trying to change Thai culture to reflect your own cultural values. If you feel angry and frustrated, perhaps it's time to return home."

Questions about Thai customs, practices and history often pushed me to read books, search web pages and interview knowledgeable people, all of whom became a network of good sources.

Nearly all questions helped me to better understand and know more about my own culture and beliefs. I've really enjoyed writing the column.

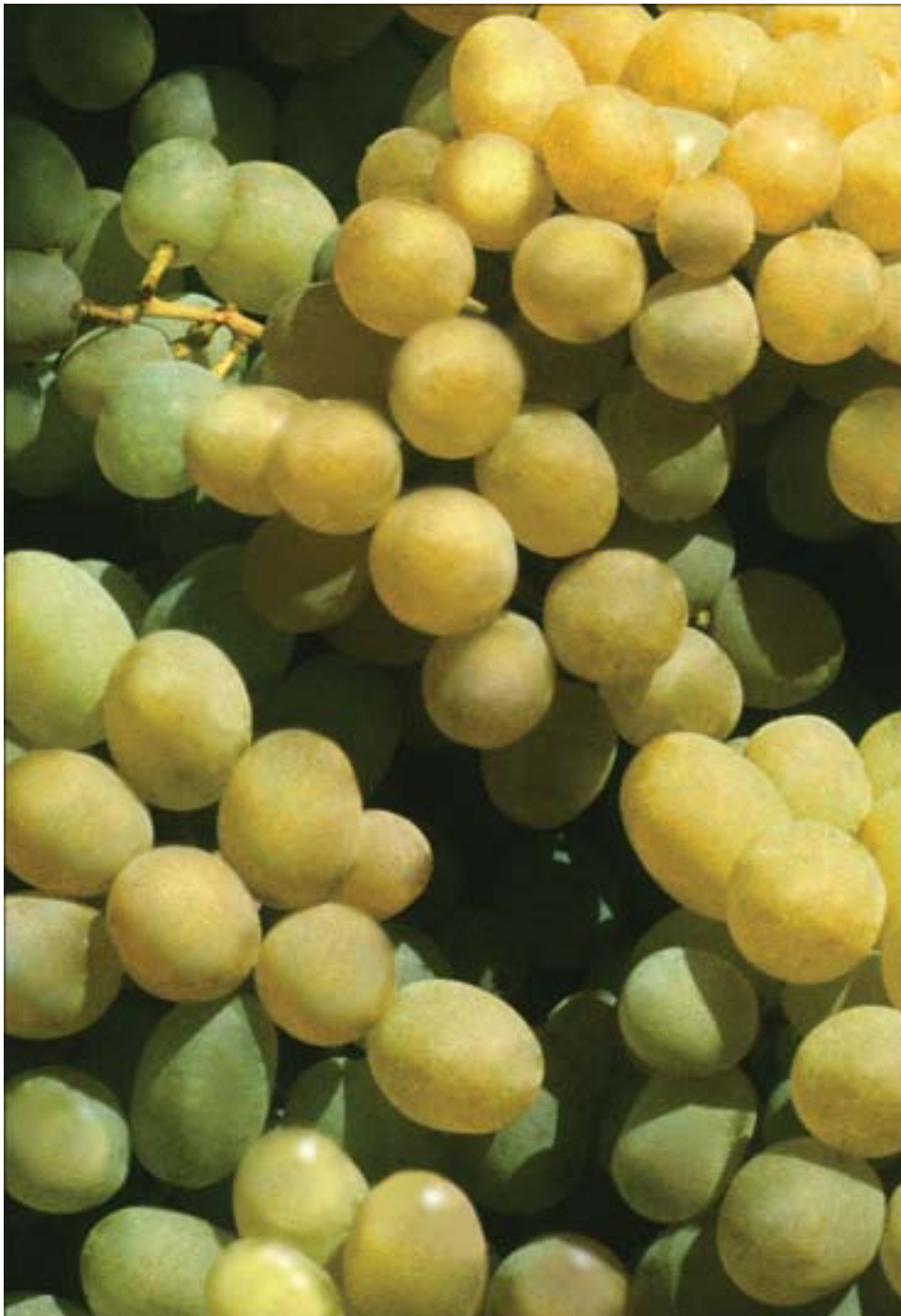
However, the time has come to say goodbye. I want to thank my readers for their support, especially those who sent in questions and gave comments about my responses.

I also want to thank John Magee, and the current and past staff of the *Phuket Gazette* for their years of encouragement and support.

I'm ready to spend more time in the peace of my garden, tending plants and flowers, watching the world go by.

I have found a beautiful corner to place a table and some chairs, where I can sit alone or with my friends. May God bless you and I hope you have a happy and fulfilling life.

Wanida "Momma Duck" Hongyok



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Whenever I compare Phuket's Internet capabilities with those of nearby regions and countries, I invariably hear the ultimate defensive reaction, frequently delivered with a slight snarl: "Woody, if it's so good in Hong Kong (or Singapore or Seoul or Samarkand), why don't you just move there?"

The people who ask me that question miss the point.

I live in Phuket because I love it here. I would figure out a way to live here even if I had to transmit gigabyte files over two tin cans with a string tied between them. Many people don't have my unbridled enthusiasm (or, I suppose, high tolerance for pain).

When most individuals or companies look for a place to do business, fast and reliable Internet rates is a prerequisite, not a luxury. The people of Phuket deserve better.

Welcome to my second "open letter" to Thailand's National Legislative Assembly, addressing Phuket's current pursuit of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) City status.

In this article, I want to take a more detailed look at how Phuket stacks up against its nearby rivals for the hearts and minds (and pocketbooks) of computer people all over the world.

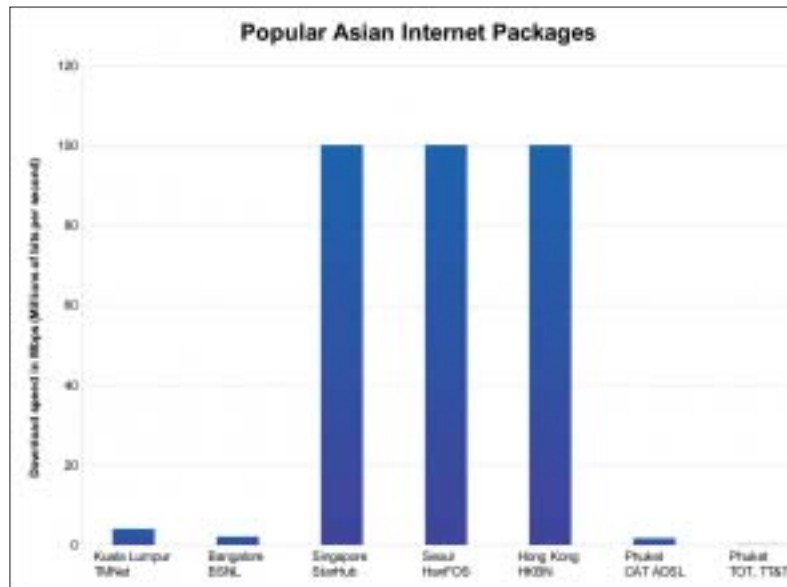
CNET News.com's editor, Michael Kanellios, in a recent article on CNET News (www.cnet.com/4520-13653_1-6794290-1.html), neatly summarized the competition facing Phuket's ICT City aspirations with one simple observation: "If you had to pick a continent where most of the innovation in the 21st century will take place, Asia wins hands down."

It's a dog-eat-dog world out there. Let's see how Phuket stacks up.

Kuala Lumpur

Kuala Lumpur's "Multimedia Super Corridor", while still far

Internet speeds: how Phuket stacks up



A comparison of Phuket's Internet packages with other Asian ICT hubs. Hong Kong's 1,024 Mbps/6,800 baht per month package isn't shown because it would make the others look like Lilliputians.

from pervasive, shows the government of Malaysia is interested in attracting ICT business.

Take a look at www.msc.com.my and you'll see what I mean. The MSC Bill of Guarantees starts out with a commitment to "(1) Provide a world-class physical and information infrastructure. (2) Allow unrestricted employment of local and foreign knowledge workers. (3) Ensure freedom of ownership by exempting companies with MSC Malaysia Status from local ownership requirements..."

Telekom Malaysia has a near-monopoly on broadband in Malaysia because it controls the "last mile" between the switch and homes/offices. While most of the people and businesses in Kuala Lumpur get by with an inexpensive 2 Mbps line, TMNet offers 4 Mbps service to most

parts of KL at about 2,500 baht per month. The 1,900-or-so businesses plugged into the MSC backbone get much faster speeds.

India

Bangalore is a successful ICT center but a lousy place to live. Big companies are leaving in droves. Microsoft's biggest campus outside the US is in Hyderabad, an hour-and-a-half's flight away from Bangalore. IBM and other major ICT players are flocking to Pune, near Mumbai.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) offers 2 Mbps service to 197 cities in India and 8 Mbps to the major metro areas. The quality varies, and the 2 Mbps line at 2,200 baht per month is capped at 20 GB per month.

India's main attraction to the international ICT community remains its large pool of highly educated, inexpensive English-speaking engineers. But its Internet capabilities and prices barely bring India out of third-

world status. Big companies find other ways to get fast Internet.

Singapore

Singapore takes broadband seriously; just about everybody in Singapore who wants a fast Internet connection can get one.

SingTel and StarHub dominate broadband service in Singapore. SingTel currently offers 10 Mbps service for 1,500 baht per month. StarHub offers 100 Mbps for 2,700 baht per month.

The government of Singapore, through its Wireless@SG initiative, provides free Wi-Fi access in most commercial areas. Once you're registered, basic wireless (Internet access at 512 Kbps) is free..

Seoul

Wired magazine called Seoul "The Bandwidth Capital of the World." That was in 2002. In April of this year, Seoul hit 100% broadband penetration: 100% of all homes and businesses in Seoul (give or take a fudge) are connected to broadband.

The South Korean Internet backbone rivals the US and Europe in speed and capacity. Corporations such as Samsung and LG surely benefit greatly from pervasive fast Internet access.

Hanaro Telecom, Seoul's second-largest broadband provider, has just announced the latest HanaFOS Dream package, which offers 100 Mbps service for 1,400 baht per month.

Earlier this year, Seoul rolled out WiBro, a pioneering 3 Mbps wireless technology that works even in the subway, in buses and on trains. The country is developing incredible technologies, including iTV – television

over the Internet with video on demand.

Hong Kong

Surfing to a Hong Kong-based website is a painful experience for this Phuket-bound boy. The pages tend to be packed with streaming video that renders at a snail's pace here in Phuket.

On September 20, Hong Kong Broadband Network Limited announced, "We dropped our 10 Mbps service as of today – it's just not fast enough." The slowest line you can get from HKBN runs 25 Mbps.

Most people (and businesses) opt for the 100 Mbps line at 1,500 baht per month. Some for the 1 Gbps service h (that's 1,024 Mbps, more than 500 times faster than Phuket's fastest commonly-available line) for 6,800 baht per month.

Pick a typical Hong Kong high rise. Imagine one floor in that high rise. Then look at one quarter of that floor – say, 10 apartments. Those 10 apartments have a total bandwidth of about 10 Gbps. I'd bet that's more than we have for all of Phuket.

How does Phuket stack up in the ICT City Internet competition? You be the judge. I think a better question is, will we ever come close?

Woody (www.AskWoody.com) writes computer books and articles. Have an idea for making Phuket a real ICT center? Drop by the Sandwich Shoppe in Patong on Sunday morning, between 10am and noon, and let's talk about it. Driving instructions at www.KhunWoody.com, or check out www.ozvisual.com/forum/pcclubforum.php.

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ON THE MOVE

Pol Col Chantapol Yongbunjerd, 57, from Bangkok, has been appointed Superintendent of Phuket Immigration Office. Col Chantapol has previously worked in Crime Suppression, Special Branch and with the Tourist Police.

He worked in Immigration for 10 years as Superintendent of Immigration at Don Muang (Visa Arrival) and for five years as Superintendent at Chiang Mai Immigration International Airport.



David Coyle, 37, from New Zealand, has been appointed Managing Director of HMS Asia Pacific Co Ltd. Mr Coyle began his career in the hospitality industry in 1989 as a porter and has worked at Hyatt Hotels, Intercontinental Hotels and Resorts, Pacific International Hotels and Ramada Hotels.

Before becoming MD of HMS Asia Pacific, Mr Coyle was General Manager of Peppers Palm Bay Resort, Australia.



Pol Col Paveenah Boonsuthi, 47, from Bangkok has been appointed Superintendent of Phuket Immigration at Phuket International Airport.

His experience includes working in Special Branch, as an Aid to the Bangkok Commissioner as well as working as an Immigration officer for 10 years. Before moving to Phuket he was Superintendent of the Transit Section Immigration at Suvarnabhumi Airport.



Phuket, Phang Nga take home responsible holiday honors

PHUKET: Two local companies have been recognized in the Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards 2007, *The Times* of London announced on November 17.

Andaman Discoveries, based in the Kuraburi district of Phang Nga, took home top honors in the "Best for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage" category, while the Evason Phuket Resort & Six Senses Spa was "highly commended" in the Best Large Hotel division.

Its effort to promote community-based tourism and aid the North Andaman coastal region in tsunami recovery is what earned Andaman Discoveries the award. "They have empowered local communities and worked with them to create a sense of place, using this information to develop tourist activities," said judge Harold Goodwin.

According to Andaman Discoveries' website, its North Andaman Tsunami Relief organization "has implemented over 120 projects in 12 villages, by lis-

tening to and working with the villagers themselves."

The Evason Phuket, meanwhile, was noted for its work with ECPAT International to help protect children from sexual exploitation.

The Evason Phuket and its parent company, Six Senses Resorts & Spas, have received much acclaim for their responsible and environmental tourism activities, including the TTG Travel Awards 2006 Most Environmentally Friendly Travel Company of the Year being awarded to Six Senses.

The Virgin Holidays Responsible Tourism Awards, in its fourth year, is organized by responsibletravel.com, *The Times*, the industry trade show World Travel Market, and *Geographical*, the magazine of the Royal Geographical Society. Nominated from UK-based *Times* readers, entrants are then shortlisted and voted for by a panel of 13 judges, which include a cross-section of tourism industry experts.

Local resorts win top international awards

INDIA: Two Phuket resorts and two others in the Andaman region won top honors in their categories at the World Travel Awards in Bangalore, India, November 3.

The Sarojin Khao Lak was again named Asia's Leading Boutique Hotel, an accolade it won last year with much kudos as the resort had just recovered from sustaining heavy damage in the 2004 tsunami.

Earlier this year, The Sarojin scooped the Luxury Romantic Hotel award at the World Luxury Hotel Awards.

Also taking a top prize in the Asia-wide awards category was Diethelm Travel Asia, Thailand as Asia's Leading Tour Operator.

In the Thailand awards, Trisara Resort was named Thailand's Leading Boutique Resort and the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket was named Thailand's Leading Golf Resort.

Across the bay on Koh Lanta, the Pimalai Resort & Spa was named Thailand's Leading Resort.

More than 200 travel professionals, VIPs and media from 16 countries throughout Asia,



Pimalai Resort & Spa Resident Manager Philippe Sizaret (left) receives the WTA award for Thailand's Leading Resort from Graham Cooke, president and founder of the World Travel Awards.


Australasia and the Indian Ocean rim were at the event, held at the Leela Palace Kempinski, where some 50 trophies were given out to the elite of the regional travel trade.

The winners of the Asia, Australasia and Indian Ocean Awards will automatically be put forward as nominees in their respective global categories.

The world winners will be announced at the grand final, the

Annual World Travel Awards Gala Ceremony in the Turks & Caicos in the Caribbean on December 12.

Now in their 14th year, the World Travel Awards, with trophies awarded in over 1,000 categories, are decided by thousands of votes cast by travel professionals from 167,000 travel agencies, tour and transport companies as well as tourism organizations in more than 160 countries.



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The credit crunch is being felt in the UK. Lending standards of financial institutions have risen substantially. Bob Michaelson, deputy chairman of UK fund-management group Fleming Family & Partners, reported that 50% of new credit card applications are being declined compared with 5% earlier in the year.

British banks and building societies have dramatically reined in mortgage lending. Previously, self-employed people in the UK were able to borrow funds for mortgages without having to produce proof of income. Lenders accepted their word on income statements, merely assuming that they were hiding much of their earnings from the grasping clutches of the Inland Revenue.

This has now changed – no proof of income, no loan. Even salary earners are finding it more difficult to obtain mortgage finance.

The effect of this is already making its mark in British residential property prices. Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBOS), a major UK banking group, reported from national surveys that prices for UK residential properties fell in September and October.

UK homeowners, in an identical manner to their US counterparts, used equity in their houses to increase mortgages. Rising house prices had given them a feeling of affluence. Unfortunately, in most cases, the money was spent on overseas holidays, cars or consumer items.

Many people were using long-term mortgage borrowings to finance relatively short-term goods or services. In other words, mortgages had become ATMs.

The UK residential market is seeing a dramatic rise in repossession as interest rates have risen and the cost of borrowing has steadily increased. Over 90% of UK mortgages are of the adjustable-rate variety as opposed to Continental Europe where most mortgages are fixed rate.

UK lenders snap their purses shut

A substantial number of new UK mortgages employ a mixed-lending approach, where, for example, a loan is granted at a fixed rate for the first three years before switching to an adjustable rate. Borrowers are facing significantly higher borrowing costs and many mortgages are due to “reset” over the next 12-18 months.

It is not only homeowners who are feeling the pinch – everyone who has relied on credit is finding that the costs of borrowing are rising and credit is often unobtainable.

Credit crunches are events that spread through many parts of an economy with unexpected consequences.

One of the best tax havens in the world for the foreign rich has been the UK. Tax laws in the UK previously allowed foreigners to be taxed only on UK-sourced income for the first 17 years of residence. Income and capital gains were exempt if they accrued overseas.

The British government now appears to be changing its strategy and wants to tax wealthy foreigners domiciled in the UK for overseas income and capital gains.

This might appear a good idea, but most rich foreigners will simply use offshore structures, such as trusts and companies, to escape these taxes, or else they will leave the UK. The word “escape” can be replaced with a relatively new word in the English language: “avoidance”. This is a mixture of tax avoidance (legal) and tax evasion (illegal), although

some governments employ “anti-avoidance” measures.

British consumers have racked up record levels of debt – well over UK£1 trillion (70 trillion baht). There are signs that the UK economy is slowing, which will force the Bank of England to reduce interest rates.

On the television business channel CNBC, one analyst commented that by not lowering interest rates at the Bank of England interest rate meeting in November, the Bank of England will have to play catch-up in the coming months. Many believe that the Bank of England is “behind the curve”, which means that its interest rate policy is not in line with current economic conditions.

Before the interest rate decision, Bloomberg television noted that the Bank of England would not lower interest rates as the Governor of the Bank of England was still smarting from the unforeseen Northern Rock crisis.

Also announced was that the UK had experienced the largest trade deficit in history.

David Bloom, chief global strategist for banking group HSBC, acting as a guest host on CNBC’s *Europe Today*, said that nobody in America is worried about the weak US dollar and that US exports are “sizzling”. For anyone interested in financial markets, David Bloom is always interesting.

The US Administration seems to have forgotten that it favors a strong dollar policy. When pushed, officials will say they favor a strong dollar but will quickly add that the dollar will follow “market forces”.

David Bloom is correct in that the weak US dollar is passing unnoticed in the US. Bill Gross of PIMCO and Warren Buffet are both noted dollar bears (people who are negative on the outlook of any financial investment; in this case, the dollar).

Interestingly, Alan Greenspan, former chairman of the US Federal Reserve, was quoted on Bloomberg as saying that he believed the dollar’s fall against the euro was at an end. The dollar was, at that point, quoted at \$1.45/€1.

Two days later, it fell in value to \$1.47/€1. Also interesting is that Greenspan is now, among his other activities, a consultant for PIMCO.

The greatest problem for currency markets is not the dollar trend but the speed in which it is falling. It is important for observers to remember that markets almost always overreact. The participants in currency markets can at any stage be caught out by sudden sharp reversals in trends.

The dollar will likely overshoot on the downside when it finally reaches its lowest point, but nobody knows how long this will take and where the bottom will be. In 2002, the euro fell to US\$0.82. In reality, nothing has changed that much.

Richard G Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial-planning service. He can be reached at Tel: 076-381997. Mobile: 081-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th Website: www.global-portfolios.com



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Muay Thai results

Bangla Boxing Stadium, Patong Sunday, November 18

Main event: 140lbs: Napong (Trang) d. Sornthong (Phuket), KO round 2;
75lbs: Kunprabpayathai (Trang) d. Big-Sun (Phuket);
130lbs: Nongkan (Krabi) d. Salika (Trang), women's bout;
150lbs: K-Dam (Sweden) d. Oddnoi (Phang Nga) KO round 4;
135lbs: Petchmai (Krabi) d. Kompichit (Koh Yao);
160lbs: Matien (Germany) d. Petchpangnga (Phang Nga).
Promoter: Sia Moo

Bangla Boxing Stadium, Patong Friday, November 16

Main event, 120lbs: Wuthichai Kiatchansingha (Bangkok) d. Sakmontree (Chumphon);
65lbs: Robert (Phuket) d. Tanoopleung (Koh Yao);
115lbs: Sankeng (Koh Lanta) d. Chaiwat (Nakhon Sri);
115lbs: Petchthayang (Krabi) d. Thongchailek (Nakhon Sri);
125lbs: Noppakaw (Koh Lanta) d. Ithichai (Prajub);
180lbs: Ngaopeesart (Bangla) d. Kuga (Australia);
Promoter: Sia Moo

Khao Lak Stadium, Phang Nga Friday, November 16

Main Event: 124lbs: Sonnaray (Patthalung) d. Narongchai (Trang);
Sub-main: 135lbs: Siamrath (Rawai) d. Dansakow (Krabi);
130lbs: Chaichana (Patong) d. Rungsiri (Krabi), KO round 5;
"Lady fight": Hiruko (Japan/Patong Gym) d. Namtip (Taimuang).
Promoter: Bow Patong

Results generously provided by Num Phuket, a Phuket-based Muay Thai writer covering the Southern Thailand region for Muay Siam magazine. Send comments about the local Muay Thai scene to: MuayThai@phuketgazette.net

Plookpanya boys win Aerothai mini-volleyball regional finals

SAPHAN HIN: A team of primary school volleyball players representing Plookpanya School in Phuket City came out on top to win the exciting regional finals of the Aerothai Mini-Volleyball tournament on November 17.

The tournament, organized by Aeronautical Radio of Thailand (Aerothai), was held November 12 to 17 at Saphan Hin Gymnasium, with 10 boys' and girls' teams from Southern Thailand.

The boys' teams were representing Plookpanya School, Baan Haad Jik School (Ranong), Baan Klong Hang School (Phang Nga), Baan Khao Klom School (Krabi) and Baan Wang Pring School (Satun).

Plookpanya School made it

to the semi-finals and squared off against Baan Khao Klom School, winning 2-0 (25-12, 25-18). In the final, the Phuket team defeated Baan Wang Pring School.

Schools in the girls' competition were Samkong School from Phuket, Baan Klong Hang School (Phang Nga), Wat Phumi Banphot School (Krabi) and Thai Rath Wittaya 40 School (Satun).

Thai Rath Wittaya 40 School were the eventual winners, but the Samkong School did well, toppling Wat Phumi Banphot School in the semi-finals 2-1 (25-15, 17-25, 15-9) to take second place.

The winners in each division will travel to Bangkok to compete in the national finals from November 16 to 24.



Plookpanya School (wearing blue) do battle at the net with players from Baan Wang Pring School, Satun, in the final of Aerothai Mini-Volleyball tourney November 17. Photo by Wanlop Piromrit

BIS students top soccer tourney



Jerudong International School (wearing blue) take on Tanglin Trust School in the BIS Soccer 7s tournament over-15s division, held November 16 and 17 at British International School, Phuket.

KOH KAEW: British International School Phuket (BIS) hosted its annual 7-a-side football tournament November 16 and 17, with 20 schools from places including Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Taipei.

Players were treated to two days of sunshine, with 700 students, coaches and parents attending. BIS Phuket fielded two teams for the tourney, which was divided into nine divisions. The nine divisions were girls primary, boys under 9 years old, boys under 11, boys and girls under 13, boys and girls under 15, and boys and girls over 15.

Preliminary matches were played on November 16, with the playoffs for all divisions (except boys under 9 years old and girls

primary) being held on November 17.

The BIS Phuket girls' team won the under-15s division, beating Bangkok Patana School in the final.

The girls' under-13s trophy went to International School of Kuala Lumpur, who also won honors in the boys' under-15s tourney. The boys' under-13s title was won by Youth Football Home Phuket.

Matches were played to FIFA 7-a-side rules.

Each match was played in two 12-minute halves with three minutes for half-time. Four points were awarded for a win, two for a draw and one for a loss, with an extra point up for grabs for teams scoring three or more goals in a match.

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BBAP golfers raise record charity funds

MAI KHAO: This year's ChildWatch Charity Golf Competition, held in sunny weather at the Blue Canyon Country Club (BCCC) November 17, attracted a full field of 136 golfers, some traveling in from Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and the UK.

Competition was fierce but fun with the introduction this year of the 4-Ball Texas Scramble format. The day's golf was rounded off with an awards dinner and a charity auction, which together with private donations and the generosity of the event sponsors raised a total surpassing last year's 1.45 million baht.

In conjunction with BCCC, presenting sponsors the British Business Association of Phuket (BBAP), got their ninth annual charity golf competition off to a shotgun start at noon.

After an enjoyable afternoon's golf, the winning sponsors' team trophy went to the Phuket Land team consisting of Bob Andrews, Henry Kaye, Trevor Hannover and Tim Tkachuk. In the non-sponsors category, the winners' trophy went to Chris Hill, Neil Williams, Jimmy Nixon and Scott Ashton.

The Platinum Plus Sponsors of the event, HSBC and Hoteltravel.com, along with other sponsors and guests were enter-

tained at dinner by the children of ChildWatch, who performed a dance recital on stage.

The live auction, conducted by Martin Carpenter, was well received by the charitable audience, with the highest bid of the evening being for a five-night stay the Presidential Banyan Tree Double Pool Villa, donated by an anonymous golfer, which was sold to a visiting golfer from Malaysia for 250,000 baht.

Dr Supaluck Kanchanmethakul of ChildWatch Phuket played golf and spoke at the dinner, thanking and explaining to those in attendance that the money raised at this event will enable some of the children under the care of ChildWatch to not only finish their high school education but also go on to study at university.

Mr Carpenter, chairman of the organizing committee and MC at the dinner, said, "It was a fantastic day. We are very proud to have assisted in raising a record amount in support of ChildWatch Phuket, thanks to the generosity of the sponsors, those who gave prizes, private donors and the golfers."

"We are very pleased that every year to date, we have managed to improve on the previous year, for ChildWatch Phuket."

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

PATONG: Only three games were played this week, after the Market Bar on Nanai Rd unfortunately burned down. The team was forced to postpone all home matches, including the scheduled match with league leaders Queen Mary.

In the games played, Simply Red nipped Shakers 5-4. Mick hit the winning dart in the beer league (x5) to put the icing on the cake for Simply Red, who need to contact league secretary Steen about their failure to report scores.

Offshore beat Valhalla 8-1, but Valhalla took the beer leg with Morten closing out on a 138 (two T20s, x9), the highest close in a league match anyone can remember. Piccadilly also got back on the winning track, with a three-point win over Beach House.

Tip of the week: Aussie Jeff of Piccadilly, who used to be stationed in Penang, said the place to get a game on that island is Cartwheels, on the beach road about half-way to Batu Ferringi from Georgetown – visa runners take note.

Send match information to darts@phuketgazette.net

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Floating the fundamentals

Underneath the distinct roofs of upturned boats of the villas at The Village, Coconut Island, known locally as Koh Maphrao, lie modern open-plan designs with a concept of back-to-basics comfort and built-in features for self-sustaining, trouble-free maintenance.

The rounded roofs and Thai-style structures are designed to capture the essence of the waterfront lifestyle of generations past.

All 132 of the villas are on the waterfront or have direct access to the beach, locally known as Laem Hin. The Village is the first development on Koh Maphrao, the realized dream of project owner and Managing Director of East West Development, Chris Gordon, and architect-consultant Suchja Pinyochon. Together they aspired to create beautifully practical homes that blend with their surroundings.

"The 'upturned-boat' roofs are designed to reflect fishing boats in the area and give a smooth contour that fits in with the gentle tropical surroundings," said K. Suchja.

"The roofs are actually made from synthetic lightweight materials with a natural color. We decided on this because it provides better waterproofing than tiles and they were easier to transport to the island."

"The open-plan designs of the living area, dining area and pantry are stylish and practical. They look and feel luxurious, fit in with the surroundings and keep the villa cool without the need for constant air conditioning," he added.

The downstairs ceilings are standard heights, but the upper



The villas at The Village feature *maka* and *takien tong* wood, and roofs designed as upturned longtail fishing boats, to create an ambience of being part of the local surroundings.

floors with dark *maka* beams and floors against plain white walls are an airy six meters high.

"We used *maka* wood for the upper floors, which is actually more expensive than teak these days because of its rarity, as it is harder than teak and long lasting. I think the color of *maka* also offers a very warm, cozy feeling to the home," said Mr Gordon.

Designing the villas took about four months and the master plans another six as K. Suchja and Mr Gordon refined the designs to ensure the homes would not only look good but would be long lasting, safe and practical.

"The roofs conceal a gutter system that collects most of the runoff water for the villa's own cleaning system, which recycles the water for air conditioning and provides hot water for the bathroom," explained Mr Gordon.

"The gutters are made from stainless steel and plastic to en-

sure no rust mixes with the runoff water," he added.

"The wood floors and terraces give the villas a tropical feel. The red *takien tong* wood is traditionally used for building boats and works well with the theme, so we used that for the supporting beams of the balconies," K. Suchja explained.

"We used teak for other outdoor features, such as door frames and window panels. We did consider using pine for the outdoor features but used teak to maintain a tropical mood rather than looking too European," he added.

"The concept was constantly evolving and we would sometimes scrap ideas entirely for new ones resulting from the collaboration of our ideas and experience of what would or wouldn't work," said Mr Gordon.

"I think we have quite a unique relationship that ultimately works very well," he added.



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Construction Update

by Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

Dalaaburi phase one nears completion

KOH KAEW: Phase one of the 522-million-baht Dalaaburi project, being developed by Shinawatra Home Co Ltd, is nearing completion and work on phase two is set to get underway next month.

Of the 29 units in the 13-rai project, 18 will be villas and 11 shophouses. Each shophouse is on the market for 11.5 million baht, while the villas are available for between 21 million baht and 26 million baht.

The first phase of construction, which began September last year, comprises five villas and the 11 shophouses. Phase two will see the addition of seven villas, with six more villas to be completed later in phase three.

"We should be able to finish the whole project by the end of next year," said Chayika "Sand" Wongnapachant, marketing and sales director of Shinawatra Home.

K. Sand told the *Gazette* that the project is aimed at families and businessmen looking for exclusive, luxury homes in town. Each of the villas are two stories and on 360 square meters of land.

"We chose to fuse contemporary Balinese style with Thai design because the Balinese style

is very popular in Phuket at the moment, but we wanted to do something that was a little against the trend.

"We used a variety of modern designs to make our villas unique. The outside and inside of each villa contrast in styles, although everything is fused together. I think Phuket does not have many properties like this," she said.

K. Sand explained that the predominant color used in the villas is white because it creates the impression of a new home, no matter how old the residence is. "The interior design is very Thai. For foreigners who have lived in Thailand, they will love this style," she added.

Each of the 11 shophouses is on 294 square meters of land and feature three stories, with two bedrooms and four bathrooms. "The first floor is dedicated to a business area, with a living area-cum-work area on the second floor. The bedrooms are on the third floor," said K. Sand.

"The shophouses can be adapted to accommodate any business. The size of the shophouses – six meters wide – means that they can be used for restaurants, showrooms and so



An artist's impression showing the open-plan kitchen-dining area.

on. One customer bought a shophouse to use as a kitchen showroom and another bought a shophouse for an interior-decoration business," she said.

One of the strong points of the development, said K. Sand, is its location in Koh Kaew. The project is close to international schools, shopping centers and hospitals, and the shophouses will benefit from being close to a main road, K. Sand added.

Also provided will be a

children's playground and park, a garden, 24-hour security with CCTV cameras, a clubhouse comprising a library, business lounge, concierge and daycare center.

The villas, each with a swimming pool, will each comprise four bathrooms and three upstairs bedrooms, one of which could be converted into a study. There is space to the side of the kitchen for a maid's room.

The walkway from the gate

to the front door of each villa has been designed with cement over running water, following the advice of a *feng-shui* expert. The largest area of each villa will be the kitchen, which is connected to the dining room.

A large, wooden door can be closed to divide the kitchen from the living area and there is parking space for two cars.

"The villas are exclusive homes. There is a security gateway dividing the villas from the shophouses. These homes present urban living in a resort-like environment," said K. Sand.

"When we came up with this project, we designed everything as if we were making the homes for ourselves. We thought about what would make us comfortable if we were to live here," she added.

PAE (Thailand) Public Co Ltd is behind the construction of the project, while Santi Srimoung from 9D Architect is project architect and Logi Studio is in charge of interior design.

For further information contact the Shinawatra Home Phuket office. Tel: 076-239060-3. Fax: 076-239643. Website: www.shinhome.co.th

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Living on a small island such as Phuket, it's easy to get caught up in the cycle of life. Seeing friends marry, children born, families grow up and people we know die – all of these play a central role in our lives.

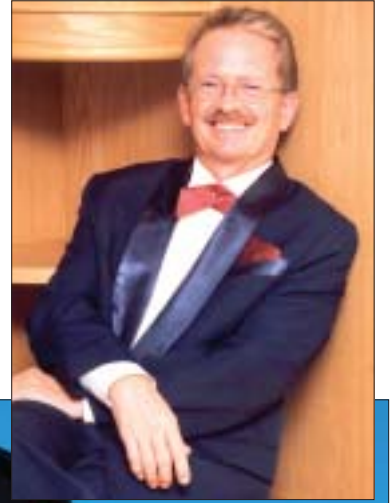
The architect Tucker Bishop passed away November 8 at Bangkok Hospital Phuket. He was 57 years old. He leaves behind his wife K. Oy and many friends made over the past 13 years. He had been ill with a kidney-related illness for some time, although he continued to work right up until his death.

I had known Tucker for almost six years, from the time he worked on my business partner's project – Suan Tua in Layan. We then cooperated on a number of developments, including Bang Tao's Phuket Pavilions, East Coast Ocean Villas in Ao Por, Kata's Movenpick Residence and Jumeirah Private Island Resort in Phang Nga Bay.

Tucker completed projects in Europe and Japan, though he never strayed too far from his life here with K. Oy and their golden retriever.

Tucker's resort-development profile piled up with villas on the Loch Palm and Laguna Phuket golf courses, individual

In memory of Tucker Bishop



homes at Samsara and two stunning beachfront houses in Natai. One of Tucker's final projects, completed this year, was my own home in Kathu. His architectural style, which combined the traditional symmetry of icon Geoffrey Bawa with the use of modern lines and elements, became his trademark.

During my visits to Wat Chalong after Tucker's death, where his family, friends and colleagues had gathered along with his brother and sister from the US, I was able to walk among these people who were important in his life, seeing the names of so many familiar people on the wreaths and flowers.

It was a touching remembrance. His intelligence, humility as a skilled artist, creativity and sense of humor were lasting qualities. While never one to suffer fools, he always had to move on with his pressing work, though

at many times we shared a joke. It's his smile I will remember most.

I am going to cut this piece short and let some pictures of Tucker and his work do the talking. Mere words cannot give ample creed to a skilled architect's work. It's the homes, villas, resorts and developments that represent his life's work and should be shown.

I'm not going to miss Tucker – not at all, because every time I want to visit him, all I have to do is get in my car and drive around Phuket. From north to south, east to west, I can see his work in the buildings he lovingly created. While Tucker is gone in body, he has left a footprint on the island that will live far into the future.

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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By Bill Barnett



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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Let's face it, I'm a bloater. I'm not "heavy", I'm just a bit on the lardy side. Anyone who attempts weak, pathetic euphemisms for their porky tendencies is living in cloud cuckoo land.

As far as euphemisms go, there aren't many that are particularly useful or pleasant. Let's start with the word "obese", for example. Regardless of which words large people may or may not choose to call themselves, I'm not aware of any that would take too kindly to this one. It's a bit clinical; it sounds like something a patronizing 10-stone (about 63 kilograms) doctor would say.

Some people somehow manage to make it sound like being fat is the same as having some form of embarrassing ailment or disease; one that affects regions of the body that gentlemen don't discuss in front of the ladies.

It's certainly true that some people are fat because of some form of health problem or hormone imbalance, but it is perfectly possible to be chunky and to be healthy at the same time.

Most of us porkers are having too much fun eating and drinking to waste time worrying about what it might be doing to us. We would all rather be out enjoying

The lighter side of gardening

some decent food and a few beers than spending time planning next month's low-calorie diet.

While we're on the subject of low calories, have you ever noticed how many large people choose to drink Diet Coke? Why? What's the point? We all know it tastes a bit nasty, so why do they drink it when they could be drinking something they actually enjoy. I've never tried testing this for myself, but I'm pretty sure diet drinks don't make you thin.

Then there's the label "overweight" Over what weight? Presumably some insurance chart invented at the end of the 19th century to find the balance between killing workers and wasting money on feeding them? Sorry – that's not a word I want applied to me, either.

Big boned? This is probably the best of the lot. There are other euphemisms, but I think this one makes the point. The bottom line is that we bloaters shouldn't worry too much about what we're called – I've been called "the fat bloke" for many years.

This isn't without just cause.



The gardenia smells so good you could eat it – well, Bloomin' Bert would...

As my ever-expanding midriff will confirm, I have rather a healthy appetite. Although I can perhaps blame the Thai Asia Pacific Brewery Company – and more recently, a brewer of a rather fine drop from our neighbors to the north – for at least a few of the pounds, it probably simply boils down to the fact that I'm rather partial to fine victuals; good food, in somewhat generous quantities. I've been looking for an excuse that works for some time.

Ice cream is a big part of the problem – I rather like the stuff, but it's not exactly known for its ability to shrink midriffs. The smell of ice cream is what brings us to the gardening section of this week's inanities – the gardenia.

The gardenia, or *pud sorn* in Thai, is one of those plants that smells so good that you almost want to eat it. The blooms produce an incredible scent very much like vanilla ice cream. The smell that's produced when the ice cream is so cold that it becomes crusty. This doesn't seem to happen very often in Thailand – I can't imagine why.

Anyway, the aroma of the gardenia is fabulous. Stick a few of these in your garden, and you'll be raiding the freezer every five minutes, shoveling down ice cream by the bucketload.

The amazing smell oozing from the blooms does come at a price though – it's a bit on the moody side. I had almost given up on a gardenia bush that's in my front garden. For months it just sat there moping, refusing steadfastly to flower, but with the appearance of some serious rainfall, it went mental.

Flowers suddenly appeared all over it and the leaves became variegated (two different colors on one leaf) again. It also became bushier and seemed a lot more content with its lot. If it were human, it would have had a Cheshire-cat grin on its face.

The gardenia grows up to four feet tall and has shiny, deep-green or green-and-white variegated leaves.

Gardenias are a member of the family Rubiaceae and there are more than a couple of hundred species of gardenias.

Gardenias are such a fussy bunch. They like to be given plenty of water and they prefer being planted where they get full sun in the morning and some shade in the afternoon. Plant them in the ground with the crown (where the stem rises out of the ground) slightly above the soil. This will help to prevent root-rot.

Gardenias don't like their roots to be disturbed too much, so once they're in the ground leave the ground around the plant well alone, as the roots are fairly shallow. You wouldn't want them to go off on a hormonal teenager-style reaction. If they're upset, the flowers turn brown, but once they are established in a place they like and given proper care, gardenias will bloom away, providing an abundance of fragrant flowers.

Gardenias can be pruned as much as you like, but there are a few rules to bear in mind in order to keep on its good side. First, cut plants back when they are dormant, which would be the hot, dry season here in Phuket. This allows the stems to "heal" when the plants aren't actively growing. This way you can still enjoy flowers the next year.

When pruning, don't cut all the leaves off. Some leaves need to be left so the plant can produce food for the root system. If you only want your plant to become bushier, just pinch out the tips while the plant is dormant. Pinching will usually promote a heavier bloom the following year.

One other tip: make sure you have a beer in hand when performing the above tasks. It's about the best way I can think of to stave off the urge to dash off to the fridge for more ice cream. Well, it usually works for me. Whoops, there's another half-kilo...

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Chanote title, 2,532sqm. Located on main road near Mission Hills golf. In developing area, great investment. Private sale at 6 million baht. Tel: 081-3670991. Fax: 076-321328. Email: enio99@hotmail.com

BALI-STYLE VILLA SAI YUAN/NAI HARN

3 double bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, full Western kitchen with everything, marble bathrooms with Jacuzzi, private pool and gardens, shingled roof. Furnished with solid teak furniture. 9.5 million baht. Tel: 086-6845368. Email: bisop5@yahoo.co.uk

RAI NEAR MAI KHAO BEACH

600m to Mai Khao Beach. Freehold. 950,000 baht. Call Kenny. Tel: 086-5713667. Email: mmcgrath2@hotmail.com

PHUKET'S NO.1 PROPERTY SITE

Visit us for all things property related! Email: sales@phuketpropertyonline.com www.phuketpropertyonline.com

3-STORY HOUSE FOR SALE



near Chalong circle. 405sqm, fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, aircon, garage for 2 cars. Good location for business. Tel: 089-8742960. Email: pwarunee@hotmail.com

IN THE HEART OF PATONG



Seaview land. Nearly one rai of incredible seaview land in heart of Patong. Price includes costly and difficult to get building license, plans and project website. Can build 5 or 6, 1,700sq ft homes on this lot. Tel: 085-7987556. See plans at www.phuket-serenity.com

SURIN/BANG TAO APARTMENT

Club Lersuang, 2-bedroom apartment, ground floor, big pool, gym, restaurant, bar, etc. 6 million baht. Tel: 076-271870, 087-079-0650. Email: mlcberg@netvigator.com

KOH YAO YAI LAND FOR SALE

4.5 rai, Chanote, hillside panoramic sea view, close to beach. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-5955574. Email: kraisorn@ppfashionworld.com

HOUSE WITH POOL IN RAWAI

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, living room, 4 aircons, fully furnished. Sala, 8x4m pool, terrace on 2 levels, garden and parking. Walled and gated. Quiet area. Includes company papers and Chanote. 5 million baht. Tel: 45-244-19447. Email: bo@motto.dk

KATA BEACHFRONT LUXURY

5-star, exotic, 1 bedroom, spa, pool, ADSL, furnished. Reduced price: 8 million baht. Email: asiasail@yahoo.com For details and to see actual photos visit our website at www.koumbele.com/kata1

Properties For Rent

NEW FURNISHED VILLA



Close to Laguna. 300sqm. Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, living room, dining, kitchen, and pool. 2 mins to Laguna. Long- or short-term rent. Contact K. Gai. Tel: 081-7344324 or see our website at: www.phuketgreenlandvillas.com

BOAT LAGOON LUXURY

Waterfront townhouses for rent. 2 & 3 bedrooms, UBC, TV. Long- or short-term rent. Pool, sauna included. Call K. So at 081-3444473.

COMFORTABLE HOUSE

in secure environment, 3 bedrooms (2 en-suite), 3 bathrooms, living room, study, garage, kitchen/dining room, fenced garden, furnished, UBC, ADSL. 35,000 baht per month. Near Wat Chalong. Tel: 084-8439579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

HOMES FOR HOLIDAY

Near Laguna, 3 bedrooms, pool, spa. Cheap rates and weekly rates. Need car to access house. Tel: 089-5944067.

NICE ROOM

2 rooms for rent with own separate kitchen, UBC TV, ADSL Internet optional. 500 baht per day or 13,000 baht per month. Call Tel: 076-279682, 086-2549466. Email: zaunotto@hotmail.de

BANG TAO RENTALS

Furnished bungalows, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, hot water, telephone-ADSL, car park, gated, quiet. With aircon and private terrace: 15,000 baht per month plus utilities, long-term. Please call K. Tee at 086-2786465 or Betty 076-270377.

MODERN HOUSE, QUIET LOCATION

Fully-furnished Western house with large terrace and fenced-in tropical garden. UBC, ADSL, alarm, garage, 2 bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms, full aircon and ceiling fans. Only long-term rentals. 28,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-8744050. Email: happyjo@procom.in.th

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, garden and parking. Rent: 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

RAWAI SEAVIEW CONDO

Furnished studio for rent. Aircon, TV, UBC and ADSL. 5,500 baht per month. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

BOAT LAGOON

2-bedroom, lagoon-fronted townhouse. Modern, fully-fitted kitchen, use of communal swimming pool. Near international school, shopping, etc. 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8337836.

PALAI GREEN HOUSE

with big garden. Fully furnished, 2 aircons, 2 bedrooms, hot shower, ADSL, and cable TV. 12,000 baht per month. Chalong area. Tel: 081-8924311.

HIGH-END RENTAL

2 minutes to BIS school, 5 bedrooms, private pool, 24hr security. Tel: 081-4077403.

HOUSE FOR RENT

New house for rent: 25,000 baht per month; or for sale at 4 million baht. Tel: 087-264-6808, 083-1743880.

RAWAI BEACH DUPLEX

House for lease or rent. Pool, UBC and ADSL. 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

BANG TAO HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, pool, and 2 living rooms. Tel: 084-8516121. Email: phuketmat@yahoo.com

SINGLE HOUSE FOR RENT

In Baan Suan Naramit, ready to move in.

- 10 minutes to Phuket City, 15 minutes to airport
- 3 bedrooms
- 2 bathrooms
- kitchen
- fully furnished and aircon
- 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-7432011.

HOUSE AT CHALONG

For long-term rent near Palai beach. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, fully furnished, phone line and car park. Please call 089-7288311.

KATHU, 3-BEDROOM

2-story, 3-bedroom, 3-bathroom home. Aircon in 2 bedrooms. Large fitted kitchen, storage room, TV with UBC, ADSL, washing machine, computer. Furnished. 18,000 baht per month. Email: cswift1@swift-mail.com

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Deli Supermarket

Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong

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Fax: 076-344314

Property Gazette

THAI STYLE VILLA



Tropical villa in Rawai, long-term rental. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 5 aircons, 42" cable TV, fully-furnished, lovely garden and large pool. 60,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-8916438.

VILLA FOR RENT

Balinese Villa featuring 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, private pool and car parking. Available for short- or long-term rental. Tel: 086-0043008, 084-053-5780. Fax: 076-282395. Email: info@ayudhya.net

HOUSE - NAI YANG 2 BEDROOMS

Luxury furnished house, 2 aircon rooms, 2 toilets. 23,000 baht per month. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

VILLA 2 BEDROOMS

3 mins to Mai Khao Beach. European standards, big sala, Internet, very charming antique furniture. 20,000 baht per week. Contact at Tel: 089-4708926, 081-7197015. Email: eanfievat@voila.fr

PARADISE HOUSE FOR RENT

in Patong. Private hill, pool, UBC, ADSL, garden. 1 minute to beach. Must see! Tel: 081-5972116.

NICE, MODERN HOUSE FOR RENT



Furnished and excellent location, 5 mins to Rawai & Nai Harn beaches. 162sqm. 2 bedrooms with private bathrooms. 1 guest toilet. 3 aircons. Large living-dining room. Telephone line with ADSL. Free water supply and garbage service. 22,000 baht per month. Please contact Khun Nui at Tel: 087-3830936.

KAMALA

4-bedroom, detached, executive house in small compound for long-term rent. Pool, UBC and security. 50,000 baht. For info contact Tel: 081-9560527.

HOUSE - NAI YANG 3 BEDROOMS

400sqm, luxury furnished house. Two aircon rooms, 2 toilets, cable TV, ADSL. 27,000 baht per month. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

NICE ROOM

2 rooms for rent with own separate kitchen, UBC, TV. ADSL Internet optional. 500 baht per day or 13,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-279682, 086-2549466. Email: zaunotto@hotmail.de

HOUSE NEAR CENTRAL FESTIVAL



65sq wah, 1.5km from Central Festival, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, bathtub, fully furnished, garden, sprinkler, well and pump. Contact K. Mongkon. Tel: 084-0628040.

KAMALA

BEACHFRONT VILLAS

Fully-furnished to a high standard. Western kitchen. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lounge and dining areas. Large balcony overlooking swimming pool and landscaped garden. Stunning sea views, only meters from the beach. Private, gated, parking with storage. UBC & ADSL. Includes daily cleaning and washing. Pool & gardener service. Daily rental offered; weekly: 40,000 baht; monthly: 140,000 baht. Contact K. Suchada Tel: 084-8436837. For further details, please see our website at: www.phuket-island-homes.com

RAWAI FLAT/RENT

Fully furnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, swimming pool, balcony, cable TV, ADSL. Monthly 29,000 baht, long-term 18,500 baht. Tel: 081-6067410.

BUNGALOW FOR 400 BAHT/NIGHT



4 new bungalows for rent. Fully furnished, cable TV, etc. Weekly or long term. Please contact for more information Tel: 081-6913029, 089-7286242. Email: purimas_re@yahoo.com

CHALONG SHOPHOUSE

This new 3-story shophouse is available for long-term lease. Ideal for home office/shop accommodation. Inquiries to Tel: 089-6521473.

CHALONG TOWNHOUSE

Furnished, 2 bedrooms, big kitchen, aircon, telephone line, TV, min. 6-month lease 9,000 baht. Utilities extra. Tel: 076-344487, 087-2814535.

LONG-TERM RENT

Quiet, but central Patong 2-bed, fully-furnished house. 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6932759. Email: wunhung@gmail.com

RAWAI STUDIO

For rent, fully furnished, terrace, swimming pool, cable TV, ADSL Internet. Long-term only, 10,000 baht/month Tel: 081-6067410.

RAWAI HOUSE/RENT

3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, swimming pool, cable TV, ADSL Internet. Tel: 081-6067410.

CONDOS FOR RENT

Rawai. Renovated, air, TV. Tel: 086-9456650. Email: phuketcomfortcondos@hotmail.com

PATONG SEA VIEW

Condo 500m from beach. Fully furnished, 1 bedroom, kitchen, living room, pool, terrace. Tel: 086-6833836.

RAWAI/NAI HARN

Large luxury house on the lake, 5-6 bedrooms, 7 bathrooms, swimming pool. Long-term rent: 60,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-3971835.

B.L. APARTMENT

New in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, car park. 8,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6923163.

THALANG HOUSE

for long-term rent, 2 bedrooms, aircon, near waterfall. 37/136 Pernjun villa. 6,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-6831147.



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near Rawai Beach. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, European kitchen, aircons, UBC TV, telephone, furnished, private pool and garden, fully-maintained. Minimum 6-month lease: 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2810452, 087-8931180.

BEACHFRONT VILLA

in white, 260sqm. Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool, ADSL, UBC. For long- or short-term. Tel: 081-2596052. Email: surapong@gmx.de

SURIN

1 bedroom apartment, shared pool, Western kitchen, TV, DVD, etc. Gated compound, 24-hour security. Available now through Dec 19. Cheap. Make me an offer. Tel: 813-34517073, 090-66585627. Email: hktkferg@hotmail.com

VILLA FOR LONG-TERM RENT

in Kamala. Consists of 1 large, 2-bedroom apartment, 3 studio apartments, swimming pool, 440sqm of landscaped gardens, private well and water supply, and private road. 1 year or more on request. 50,000 baht per month or sale available at 6.5 million baht. Contact at Tel: 084-8375985. Email: kamalarob@yahoo.co.uk

CHALONG ROOM

TV, VCD, fridge, hot water, Wi-Fi, aircon. 5,500 baht per month. Tel: 089-4727304.

BUNGALOW FOR RENT

5 mins from international school, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, quiet corner location with 24hr security. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-6770663.

HOUSE FOR RENT IN RAWAI



Fully furnished, 1 bedroom, fan, 29" cable TV, hot water, oven, storeroom, washing machine, kitchen utensils and fenced yard. In nice and safe area. Call Tok. Tel: 087-2668728.

STUDIO APARTMENT WITH INTERNET

Off Nanai Rd, 30sqm, fully-furnished. Includes: TV, DVD, large fridge, hot water, fan, aircon and kitchenette. From 7,500 baht per month, long-term. ADSL Internet optional. Tel: 087-2650652. Email: gisbert1@gmx.net

KAMALA LARGE 4-BEDROOM

villa, 3 bathrooms, 42" plasma TV, all teak furniture, kitchen, full-size snooker table, rai tropical garden, private security and maid included. Price: 60,000 baht a month for minimum 6-month contract. Tel: 081-8111067.

RENT HOUSE IN KAMALA

New, 2 bedrooms, 1 aircon, TV, phone, fully furnished, garage, very good. 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-7002901.

HOUSE IN CHALONG

Near Palai Beach. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, fully furnished, phone line and car park. Tel: 089-7288311.

RAWAI HOUSE

for rent. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, swimming pool, cable TV, ADSL Internet. Tel: 081-6067410.

Would you like to keep up on what's happening in Phuket - the good, the bad and the bizarre?
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BAVARIA 49 "2005"
NEW LISTING. Well maintained in as-new-condition and ready to sail away. The current owners are selling this yacht, which is fully-blue-water-equipped with all safety and general equipment on board, at well below replacement cost. Highly recommended for viewing. For more information please contact at Tel: 076-239768.

4-STROKE OUTBOARD ENGINES

For sale: 2 Yamaha 40Hp, Eco-friendly, 4-stroke outboard engines. Long-shaft, tiller control, perfect for RIB inflatable or fiberglass skiff. Brand-new. Price: 170,000 baht each. Tel: 081-8913051. Email: jeroen.deknatel@yahoo.com

SAILBOAT

1968 Islander for sale. 44-ft world cruiser, lying in Yacht Haven Marina. US\$50,000. For more info contact at Email: temptation44@hotmail.com

ALUMINIUM BOAT

For sale: "Sessa", 3.9L Italian motor with 25hp Johnson. Accessories includes trailer. Sale by foreigner. Tel: 089-7309608.

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FISHING BOAT FOR SALE

Length: 11m. Beam: 2.20m. Engine: Isuzu 165hp. Price 220,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-8947565. Email: hade@seacano.net

FERRY FOR SALE

Length: 30m. Gross: 322tons. 244 passenger capability. 8 million baht. Docked at Phuket. Managed by Bangkok Capital Alliance Co Ltd. Tel: 081-4084991.

66" CATAMARAN

6 double cabins, 2 saloons, 2007 built with wood-glass-epoxy. No engines. 1.9 million baht. Tel: 087-4618089.

"TEMPO" SYMBOL 57

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SUNSEEKER 47

This is an opportunity to own one of the best-looking sports boats in the sea, a near-new 47-foot Portofino with Thai registration. This alluring beauty has a full-options package including a convertible hardtop and a hydraulic swim platform. Well below replacement cost. Free delivery within Thailand. Contact Simpson Marine. Tel: 076-239768.

CARVER 500 COCKPIT

Two master cabins. This is truly an amazing and comfortable yacht with plenty of room in separate areas, so kids or guests can still have their own spaces. This one has had no money spared on maintenance and can be seen straightaway as you step on board. One of the best-kept boats we have seen. Please contact for more info at Simpson Marine. Tel: 076-239768.

BENETEAU FIRST 40.7M



This is a true paragon of elegance from the Farr design team. A rare opportunity to obtain a near-new 40.7-racer/cruiser from Beneteau. Contact Simpson Marine. Tel: 076-239768.

FISHING BOAT FOR SALE

Length: 11m. Beam: 2.20m. Engine: Isuzu 165hp. Price 220,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-8947565. Email: hade@seacano.net

SALES PERSON

Real estate business requires dynamic sales persons aged 30-40. Thai national, fluent in English, computer skills and result oriented. Duties will be property scouting, telemarketing and sales. Average salary 40-50,000 baht. Tel: 076-282394, 084-0535780. Fax: 076-282395. Forward CV via Email: info@ayudhya.net.

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER WANTED

Publishing company looking for a distribution manager with good knowledge of Phuket. Applicant must have good command of English, be able to think and work independently and have strong organizing skills. Good salary plus commission for the right person. Thai nationals only. Contact at Tel: 076-28221, 081-5353297. Email: hr@origopub.com

HOUSEKEEPER & COOK - URGENT

Female, live-in, English language essential. Six days a week, flexible hours. 6,000-8,000 baht per month. All ages welcome to apply, but serious applications only, please. Tel: 076-260468/70. Fax: 076-260440. Email: admin@tacticalcapital.net

QSI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

an American school, has an immediate vacancy for an elementary classroom teacher. The ideal candidate will be a native English speaker, have at least a bachelor's degree and hold appropriate certification. Email letters of interest to: alansiporin@qsi.org. Please include your resume and references and be prepared to produce a degree and certification document.

BLUE GARDEN RESORT

New restaurant and bar at Bang Tao Beach Phuket opening in December is looking for staff for the following positions:

- Reception
- Hotel staff
- Cook
- Barman
- Bar/Restaurant staff
- Officer

Please contact Gerard at Tel: 086-2767650 Email: info@blueadventure.com

HORSE CARE NEEDED

Temporary experienced horse care needed ASAP for 3 rescued horses. Full-time for 2 weeks, possible part-time afterward. Tel: 084-8424581. Email: PhuketHorseRescue@gmail.com

PROMOTION GIRLS WANTED

Good pay, part-time, Thai nationals. Call for details. Tel: 086-3418781

IMAGE MASKING

Graphic company requires experienced specialist in image and clipping paths. Photoshop, web- or graphic design skills a plus. Candidates must be able to work on Mac and speak basic English. Flexible hours. Full-or part-time. Thai nationals only. Tel: 081-7473942. Send short resume and expected salary to Email: job@pekaye.com

TROPICAL PROPERTIES-PATONG

One of the island's leading real estate companies is expanding and urgently looking for 2 EXPERIENCED SALES PERSONS. Good command of English, both written and spoken, is essential. Own car is preferred but not a necessity. Good salary, high commissions, career growth possibilities and other bonuses for the right person. Thai nationals only. Please send your resume by replying to this ad or call 076-34079, 087-8822856. Email: luc@phuket-tropical-realestate.com

PROJECT MANAGER KRABI

We looking for a Project Manager for a real estate project in Krabi. We want a person who can run the construction team himself. Must speak Thai. Contact at Tel: 075-691638, 081-9683140. Email: krister@krabisunset.com For further details, please see our website www.krabisunset.com

TOUR OFFICE URGENTLY NEEDS

Thai female staff. English, computer and tour desk knowledge recommended. Salary and commissions. Contact Phil at Tel: 089-6186894.

REAL ESTATE SALES PERSON

wanted. Property Developer in Kata is seeking an experienced sales person. Excellent English is essential. Good salary and commissions. Tel: 081-7888280.

GYMNASTICS

Gymnastic sports trainer wanted for child. Contact K. Celine at Tel: 085-7925636, or K. Nicolas 081-7286188.

MANAGERIAL POSITION

Italian lady, 56, is looking for a job in Thailand. English and German speaker, long experience as human resources manager and in the commercial sector, talent for organization and coaching. Please contact via Email: d_ambroset@virgilio.it

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

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Thai company in Kamala looking for delivery man or woman. Any age, easy job. Must have motorbike. No need to speak English. 7,000 baht per month plus gasoline. Tel: 076-385221. giovannifrova@libero.it

THAI MANAGER FOR HOTEL/RESTAURANT

Our property is located in Patong and has 15 guestrooms and a 60-seat restaurant. The manager we seek must have documented experience and speak good English. For further details, please contact us at Tel: 089-9325175. Email: wjoidkwbengt@hotmail.com

MASSAGE/ COFFEE SHOP

New shop in Karon needs cashier/waitress and massage girls. Tel: 086-2718254.

DIVE SALES STAFF

required for dive travel agent. Diving knowledge essential. Salary negotiable. Tel: 083-5057794, 086-6897975. Email: zambezikid@hotmail.com

SPA THERAPIST

Hotel in Patong area requires 1 therapist starting immediately. Tel: 081-8920038.

TEACHERS WANTED

Experienced female teachers needed for kindergarten classes in Patong from Dec 1 - Mar 30. Excellent salary. Please call Brent at ECC. Please contact for additional details at Tel: 076-219062. Email: eccpkt@ecc.ac.th

EDUCATED THAI LADY

Patong-based office requires educated Thai lady. English skills essential. Tel: 084-7300190.

WEB DEVELOPER/ DESIGNER

International marketing agency requires experienced web developer. English essential, flexible salary and hours. Tel: 089-8740040. For more info or to apply, send CV to Email: claire@orchidmarketing.com, phuketweb@hotmail.com.

ENGLISH SPEAKER WANTED

Urgent. Waitress needed in Phuket town. Full-time, salary 9,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-5097510. Email: simonstomas@hotmail.com

EXPERIENCED SALES PERSON

Well-established real estate company is expanding and urgently looking for an experienced sales person. Good command of English, both written and spoken, is essential. Own car is preferred but not a necessity. Good salary, commissions and other bonuses for the right person. Please send your resume by replying to this ad. Email: annickenluc@phuket-tropical-realestate.com

Island Job Mart



Finnish Red Cross

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR PROJECT ASSISTANT

Purpose

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society (IFRC) is looking for the Project assistant seconded to Finnish Red Cross office in Phuket.

The Project assistant will assist the Finnish Red Cross Health and Construction Delegates in supporting Thai Red Cross National Society and its National Blood Centre to develop and strengthen its health & blood related programmes in Thailand and to construct the Regional Blood Centre in Phuket. The assistant will also help in assessment of health & blood related needs in the Andaman Sea region and in strengthening and supporting the capacity of the Thai Red Cross Society at local (chapter) as well as at Headquarters level.

Reporting

To Finnish Red Cross Health Delegate and Construction Delegate in Phuket.

Specific duties and responsibilities:

1. Assist both Finnish Red Cross Delegates in contacting, co-operation, communication and translation with Thai partners.
2. Assist the Health Delegate in planning, implementation and evaluation of the health & blood related programmes and materials.
3. Assist the Construction Delegate in surveying and monitoring the construction of Regional Blood Centre in Phuket.
4. Assist the Delegates in the procurement of equipment for the Regional Blood Centre.
5. Facilitate and organise meetings, trainings and workshops in co-operation with local partners and stakeholders.
6. Assist in supporting and maintaining a regular contact with provincial Red Cross Blood Coordinators, provincial Red Cross chapters and provincial blood banks.
7. Produce regular, accurate and timely reports as part of the programme reports for the Finnish Red Cross.
8. Assist the Delegates in other tasks determined by the employer.

Qualifications and experience required:

- Appropriate college level education
- Excellent spoken and written English with translation abilities
- Good interpersonal and social skills
- Computer skills (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Experience in writing reports
- Flexibility and willingness to learn and do new things
- Preparedness to travel for work (Office location in Phuket Town)
- Good mental and physical health

The following skills would be an asset:

- Experience or knowledge of construction business
- Experience or training in health related issues
- Experience in working for Red Cross or other NGOs
- Experience in project work
- Valid driving licence
- Knowledge in volunteer management

Interested candidates matching above requirements are invited to apply to:

Finnish Red Cross Delegation in Thailand

To: Ritva Lahti, Country Coordinator

100/158-159 Moo 6, Srisuchart Village, Chalermprikat R.9 (By pass)

T.Ratsada, Muang Phuket 83000, THAILAND

Tel: +66 8 1 958 5802 Fax: (076) 376 253 #21

E-mail: th01@finrc.fi

Closing date: 25th November 2007

Island Job Mart

Position Vacant

Wired Planet, a Phuket-based technology development company focusing on web sales with cutting-edge marketing concepts, is seeking a qualified, result-oriented individual for the position of Finance Manager with immediate effect.

FINANCE MANAGER

Position details:

- To oversee the company's financial management, including monthly and annual account closing and financial statement preparation as well as cash flow management.
- Preparation of periodic management reports.
- Maintain and review all tax-related issues, such as VAT, with holding tax and payroll-related taxes.
- Co-ordinate all accounting functions including accounts receivable and payable.

Qualifications:

- Age 30 to 35 years with Bachelor's Degree or higher in Accounting.
- Minimum 5 years's experience in a senior position within accounts department.
- Good command in written and spoken English.
- Proficient in Microsoft applications.
- Experience in using Quickbooks program is an advantage.
- Must be a motivated self-starter.

Benefits

- Generous salary, with 5-day working week.

Apply

- In English via email to job_wiredplanet@yahoo.com with resumé and recent picture.

Wired Planet Pty Ltd. Phuket Boat Lagoon
23/107 Moo 2 Thepkasatri Road, Koh Kaew, Muang Phuket
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- Need some years of experiences at the same or similar level in 4- or 5- stars resort/hotel.
- Experience with Fidelio/Opera system.
- Good command of English.
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- Must be able to relocate Koh Samui.

Interested applicants are welcome to apply in person or send your application with complete resumé and a recent photo to:

Bo Phut Resort & Spa

Human Resources Department

12/12 Moo1, Bophut, Koh Samui, Suratthani, 84320

Tel.0-7724-5777, Fax 0-7724-5776, Email : hr@bophutresort.com

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Administrator

Thai Nationality. Enthusiastic and well organized candidate required. Basic office skill including computer database, good command of spoken and written English, good interpersonal skills, team player and service-minded.

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4. Chief Steward
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TEL: 076 289333, FAX: 076 289322
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Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

CAMERA OPERATOR

- Thai nationals only
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- Video filming experience
- Experienced user of video editing software
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- Hold current driving license
- Flexibility and punctuality essential

Applicants are invited to send a full, detailed resumé with recent photo to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd
367/2 Yaowarat Rd, T. Taladyai, A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-236555 Email: jib@phuketgazette.net

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Phuket Positions

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- Excellent in both written and spoken English

Assistant Property Manager / Site Administrator

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Secretarial or any other related field
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Samui Position

Sales & Marketing Executive

- Good command of English
- Computer literate in Excel, Word and PowerPoint
- Pleasant personality and service-minded
- Must have own transportation

Please apply in person or send your CV to:



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Property Care Services urgently require sales executives. Applicants should be degree educated, have good English skills and own vehicle. Full product and technical training provided. Tel: 076-376557, 081-694 9088. Fax: 076-376560. Email: sirinat@pcs.co.th

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needed to look after a 3-bedroom house and dog in Kamala, also do shopping. Must be able to drive. Hours: 10 am to 6 pm, Mon to Sat. Please contact for additional information at Tel: 086-5932722. Email: jamesreanet@hotmail.com

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Position Description:
We are actively seeking a full-time Pay-Per-Click Search Engine Marketing Specialist who is a self-motivated, entrepreneurial, outgoing individual with working experience in pay-per-click campaign management.

Required Experience:

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- Experience with keyword research, keyword research tools, and keyword selection will be advantage.
- Experience in managing pay-per-click campaigns will be advantage.

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Interested applicants should submit an application, including CV, to careers@hoteltravel.com or call +66 76 282 808 Mr. Anupab Satakorn for further information.

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SALES/SECURITY STAFF

Security guards and foreign sales staff required for Phuket-based security company. Sales staff must speak and write perfect English and have computer skills. Experience in security systems would be a benefit. Tel: 066-8987-36889, 066-898736889. Please email your CV to wit@phuketsecurity.com.

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needed to work in Kamala and Patong from 10 am to 6 pm, Mon to Sat. Must have good English and be able to drive. Salary: 14,000 baht per month. Contact at Tel: 086-5932722. Email: jamesreanet@hotmail.com

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[PIC] PHUKET
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Property Investment Center is seeking individuals for front office reception positions for its new booth opening in Central Festival Phuket on Dec 1 2007.

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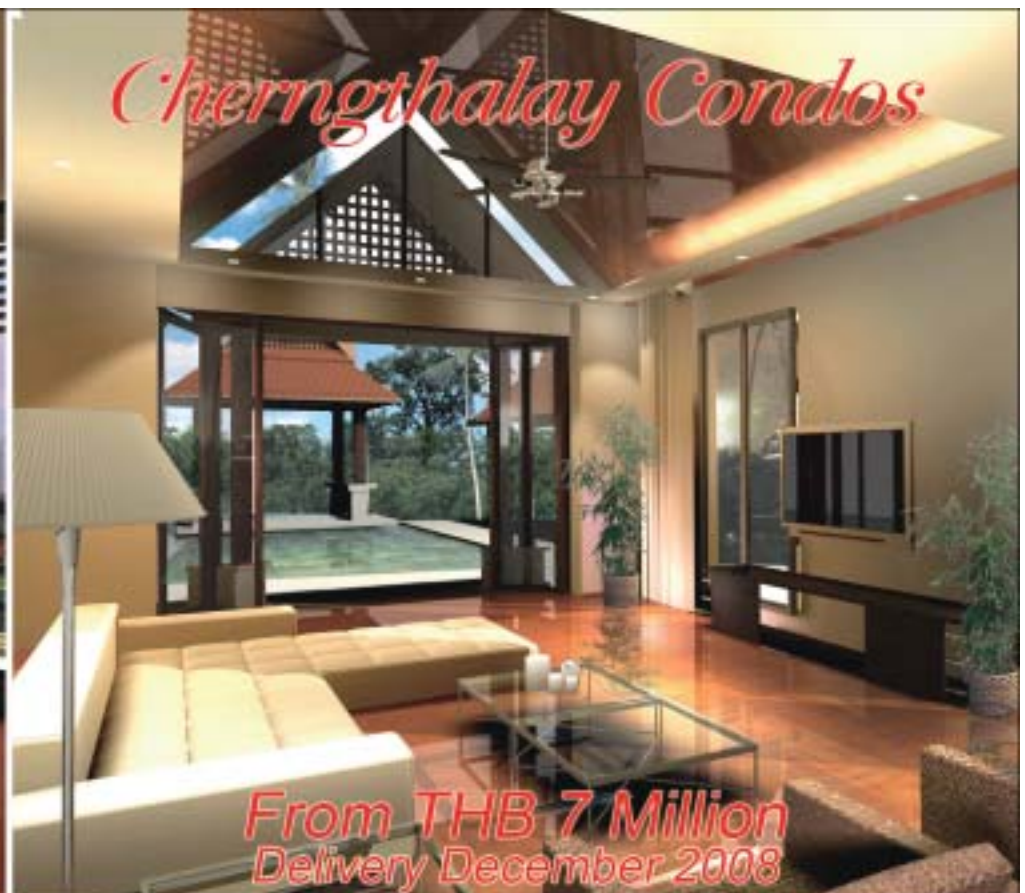
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