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Candidates call to replace PEC

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHUKET CITY: Candidates from several parties jointly filed a complaint with the Phuket Election Commission (PEC) charging Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutra with unfairness in using her office to campaign for the Democrat Party, which is fielding her husband Tossaporn Thepabutra as one of its two constituency candidates for Phuket.

The complaint was filed by Chart Thai Party candidate Sgt Sorranun Sane on the morning of December 3 at the PEC offices on Phun Pol Rd, where it was accepted by PEC Director Supap Akkam.

The complaint, filed on behalf of the Chart Thai, People Power, Puea Phan Din and Ruamjai Thai Chart Pattana parties, was presented with documentary evidence in the form of three editions of a local Thai-language newspaper.

The issues included investigative reports alleging that the OrBorJor organized activities with taxpayer money that were in fact attempts to campaign for the Democrat Party, which has long had a political stranglehold over Phuket and the southern region.

More specifically, one of the reports alleged that the OrBorJor funded a November 29 to December 2 trip to Malaysia for members of a local housewives association that was politically advantageous for the Democrat Party candidates.

K. Supap declined to give further information or comment,



People Power Party (PPP) candidate Dr Sriyada Shinawatra (right) was one of six local MP candidates calling for the Phuket Election Commission to be replaced.

saying only that he had assigned a committee to investigate the allegations, which were the first formal complaints filed with his agency regarding the upcoming national poll.

Earlier, on November 28, six local MP candidates from the same four political parties held a press conference calling for the national Election Commission (EC) to replace members of the Phuket Election Commission (PEC), chaired by Phuket Vice-Governor Tri Augkaradacha and directed by K. Supap.

The six politicians charged that the PEC's joint staging of an "anti-vote-buying" activity with the OrBorJor on November 26 demonstrated the panel's bias towards the Democrat Party.

The six candidates at the press conference, held at the Phuket Town Inn, were: People Power Party (PPP) candidates Dr Sriyada Shinawatra and Wisut Santikul; Puea Pandin

Party candidate Wisut Janjira; Chart Thai Party candidates Sgt Sorranun Sane and Somchart Somnam; and Ruamjai Thai Chart Pattana party list candidate Suksan Kasetkala.

The six said that the recent PEC event, during which 200 yellow helmets were distributed to motorcycle taxi drivers, had sparked distrust of the PEC and cast doubt over its ability to conduct a free and fair general election on December 23.

PPP candidate Wisut Santikul accused the PEC of working together with the Democrat Party, noting that one of the Democrat Party candidates had a "close relationship" with a top OrBorJor officer.

There was little doubt that he was referring to Democrat candidate Tossaporn Thepabutra, husband of OrBorJor President Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutra.

"Today we have come here
Continued on page 2

Governor calls for more police officers

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET: After the spate of attacks on foreigners recently, Phuket Vice-Governor Worapoj Ratthasima, speaking on behalf of Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit, asked the commanding officers of Police Region 8 and Phuket Provincial Police to increase security across the whole island.

Speaking at the Phuket Provincial Security committee meeting this morning, V-Gov Worapoj said, "The Central Government ordered us to beef up security in Phuket because of the potential damage to tourism and relationships with foreign countries if such crimes persist."

On September 23, Norwegian Simen Sparra Knudsen was stabbed on the road from the Kata Viewpoint to Rawai.

Mr Knudsen died later in hospital and his killers remain on the loose.

On October 7, Australian Sooz Lomas was robbed at gunpoint in the same area after leaving Icon Bar.

"There have been a lot of cases of tourists being stabbed and robbed, as well as houses being burgled."

"We are only a small province, but we have one of the highest rates of theft in the whole of the South," said Vice-Gov Worapoj.

Vice-Gov Worapoj added that Traffic Police will need to become more efficient to reduce congestion. Road accidents in Phuket must be dealt with swiftly, he added.

Between November 1 and 22, there were 87 reported road accidents with 11 people killed and 69 injured.

From page 1

Candidates complain

as a group to plead for fairness from the EC. Our PPP legal representatives will lodge a formal request to the EC, asking it to change the PEC membership within seven days. If we get no reply we will raise this as a campaign issue directly with the people of Phuket, asking them to see for themselves how the Democrats campaign," K. Wisut said.

Chart Thai candidate Sgt Sorranan said, "We don't want to shout, but we need fairness from the PEC in this election. Will they give it to us or not?"

Ruamjai Thai Chart Pattana party list candidate Suksan Kasetkala said, "We need the EC to investigate whether the PEC and OrBorJor are working together to support one party or not. We are not getting fair treatment."

A common complaint is that billboards put up by the OrBorJor as part of its publicity campaigns in the past have included images of K. Anchalee and the logo of the Democrat Party, he said.

Of note in the current election campaign is that PPP candidate Dr Sriyada, who used her maiden surname Palimapan in previous runs to win a parliamentary seat, has now chosen to run as Sriyada Shinawatra in the current campaign.

CHARITY SPONSORS NEEDED

KOH SIREH: The Lions Club of Phuket Andaman Sea is seeking additional sponsors for its Sunshine Village orphanage and daycare center on Koh Sireh.

Although all donations are graciously accepted, the Lions Club is trying to find long-term corporate sponsors to help cover the center's on-going operating costs, about 300,000 baht monthly.

To donate or for more information contact the Lions Club of Phuket Andaman Sea. Tel/Fax: 076-349050; Email: info@andamanlions.org.

PIMEX looking 'pretty' good

Gulu Lalvani, developer of Royal Phuket Marina, returns from taking a spin with Thai supermodel Nathalie Schnitzer ahead of 5th Phuket International Boat Show (PIMEX), beginning December 6.

After four years of steady growth, the show will be held in and around the 80-berth basin encompassing the Boardwalk, Luxury Apartment and Town Square.

As well as the vast range of boats and marine equipment on display 42 teams of up to 16 paddlers will be battling it out on the water for the inaugural Phuket International Dragon Boat Challenge Cup, which will take place in the marina basin during the show.

PIMEX is officially supported by the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Board, the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the Ministry of Sport and Tourism.

The exhibition on the water from December 6 to 9 will see over 35 yachts, 70 exhibitors and over 100 brands of products.



CHERNG TALAY TESCO: Protesters continue attack on legality

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

THALANG: With construction of the new Laguna Tesco-Lotus Market in Cherng Talay nearing completion, the development continues to be marred in controversy after representatives from Cherng Talay Municipality measured the area of the site on November 26 and declared the construction legal in a subsequent report.

Samarn Krohlek and Apisit Ngarnpresertkit, leaders of a local protest against the store, joined Thalang District Chief Chaiwat Tapee, members of the public and Thalang District Office representatives at Thalang District Office on November 28 to discuss the matter.

According to a 2004 ministerial regulation drawn up by the Ministry of Interior, individual supermarkets must cover a space between 300 square meters and 1,000sqm.

An initial report on the project filed by officers from Cherng Talay Municipality and the Phuket Office of Public

Works and Town and Country Planning reported that the Laguna Tesco-Lotus Market is spread over 790.93sqm.

However, K. Samarn said that the total area of Laguna Tesco-Lotus Market is 1,278.23 sqm, taking into account motorcycle and car parking areas.

Much of the parking area is covered by a roof, which K. Apisit said means that it should be included in the total area of the supermarket.

When Tesco-Lotus first requested permission to begin construction, an area of 1,152sqm was declared, added K. Apisit.

"K. Chaiwat will take this case to the Governor once more," said K. Apisit.

"I think we are also now ready to file a complaint at the Administrative Court. It will be faster and dealt with fairly. If we are wrong, then somebody should have given an answer on this issue, but nobody can tell us anything," said K. Apisit.

On November 30, Thalang District Chief Chaiwat called on Phuket Governor Niran Kalaya-

namit to rule whether the construction violates the ministerial regulation. Gov Niran has yet to issue a statement.

He has also yet to clarify whether the issue falls under the jurisdiction of Cherng Talay Municipality or Cherng Talay Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor).

Cherng Talay Municipality originally issued the building permit for the Laguna Tesco-Lotus Market, but ordered a halt to construction after residents staged a protest outside its offices. Meanwhile, building work continued.

Initially dubbed "Tesco-Lotus Express Cherng Talay", a sign stating the official name as "Laguna Tesco Lotus Market Cheryng Talay" was erected early November.

The *Gazette* contacted Tesco-Lotus for their explanation of the confusion.

However, for the second time, the supermarket chain Corporate Affairs Department has declined to comment.

Registered population continues to rise

PHUKET: As of October 31, Phuket's official population stood at 313,835 persons, up 880 from September 30. The rise follows a provincial campaign to increase the registered population of Thais living in Phuket, as officially tallied from household registration forms, or *tabien baan*.

Phuket Provincial Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Piya Bharatasilpin reported the increase during the monthly meeting of the Phuket Provincial Security Committee, held November 29 at Katina Hotel in Wichit.

An extra 1,990 residents were added to the provincial scrolls in October, while 1,122 names were removed.

Muang District had the most new registrations (1,066), followed by Thalang (579) and Kathu (332).

Also contributing to the net increase were 92 babies born during the period, compared with 80 deaths.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit's drive to increase the number people registered as living in Phuket received a boost on November 8 with the launch of Thailand's first "mobile registration van".

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Chalong Police Superintendent Pol Col Samarn Chainarong watches over (from left) Supot "Pued" Mortip, Pichet "Oy" Duangpet and Mongkol "Tum" Sanguannam and the nine kilograms of marijuana they had allegedly planned to sell in Phuket.

Three arrested in Chalong dope bust

By Sompratch Saowakhon

CHALONG: Chalong Police seized nine kilograms of marijuana on November 30 after a sting operation that resulted in the arrest of three men.

Chalong Police Superintendent Pol Col Samarn Chainarong told a press conference on December 1 that after gathering intelligence from informants, police received information about a group of men who had been selling marijuana in Phuket.

Pol Maj Veerayut Sitthirattakul of Chalong Police Station arranged to meet Mongkol "Tum" Sa-Nguannam, 28, in Chalong on November 30 to buy one kilo of marijuana for 20,000 baht.

About 5:40 pm, police arrested Tum at the rendezvous in possession of the marijuana. He was taken to Chalong Police Station for questioning.

Tum told police that he got the marijuana from Supot "Pued" Mortip, 32, who lived in a rented house at Soi Sookniran 2 on Chao

Fa East Rd, behind the new Wichit Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) office.

Police arrived at the given address about 7 pm and arrested Puchet and Pichet "Oy" Duangpet, 37, both from Supanburi, after eight packets of marijuana weighing a total of eight kilos were found in the kitchen.

"The marijuana came from Laos and was bought by Puchet in Ubon Ratchathani. He transported the drugs by bus to sell in Phuket, mostly to tourists. Puchet would buy a kilogram of marijuana for about 10,000 baht and sell it for between 18,000 baht and 20,000 baht, Col Samarn said.

"We will send the case to Phuket Provincial Police to investigate who these men bought the marijuana from in Ubon Ratchathani," he added.

Tum was charged with selling marijuana and Puchet and Oy were charged with possession with intent to sell. All three were being held at Chalong Police Station, Col Samarn said.

Dutchman heads home

PHUKET CITY: Thomas De Klerk, 51, the Dutch tourist who ended up in Bangkok Hospital Phuket after being stabbed twice by a knife-wielding thief, has returned home to the Netherlands.

Mr De Klerk had been shopping with his wife at the Downtown Market on Ranong Rd on November 26. The couple were loading goods into a tuk-tuk when a man snatched Mr De Klerk's belt-bag from around his waist.

Mr De Klerk gave chase

and caught up with the man, but was stabbed with a knife, once in his left hand and once in his abdomen, slicing his bladder.

Surgeon Attawut Chua-thong told the *Gazette* that Mr De Klerk checked out of Bangkok Hospital Phuket on November 30. He returned for a checkup on December 2 and was given the all-clear to return home.

Mr De Klerk has since returned home, although K. Attawut was unable to verify the exact date.

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Chalong Police nab power cable cutters

By Sompratch Saowakhon

CHALONG: Chalong Police have arrested two suspects for late-night thefts of electric cable that left homes in Rawai and Chalong in blackout over the past month.

At a press conference at Chalong Police Station on November 29, police identified the culprits as Mana Sae-Tun and Sansern Klaseuk, both 23-year-old Phuket natives.

The thieves were presented to the media by Chalong Police Investigations Inspector Lt Col Suchart Suwanpirom, who led the investigation and subsequent arrests.

Presented on a table before the pair was some of the 44 kilograms of copper wire the two men had stripped from various locations across the island's south end, along with the insulated wire-cutters and flashlight they used.

Both men confessed to stealing copper wire for sale to a junk shop on Sakdideet Rd in Phuket City for 180- 200 baht/kg, Col Suchart said.

The arrests followed the theft at 3 am on November 22 of the main electric power cable leading to the home of Sommai Damrongkitkarnwong, located opposite the Rising Sun Residence on Soi Sainamyen, off Chao Fa West Rd in Chalong Village 6.

Led by Lt Col Suchart, police rushed to the scene to find a



Pol Lt Col Suchart Suwanpirom (standing) presents confessed vandals Mana Sae-tun (blue shirt) and Sansern Klaseuk (grey shirt) to the media at Chalong Police Station.

great deal of stripped copper wire. The thieves barely managed to escape on foot, but left behind a key piece of evidence: a Honda Wave motorbike legally registered to Mana.

A check with the Phuket Transport Office led to the November 28 arrest of Mana at his home in Chalong Village 3.

He confessed to the crime and identified Sansern as his partner, who was arrested shortly thereafter at his girlfriend's home in Rawai Village 6.

After their arrest the pair showed police how they wrapped the handles of the large cable-cutters with cloth to avoid elec-

trocution.

They also confessed to carrying out similar crimes, including the theft at about 3 am on October 30 of about 30 kilograms of copper from a location along the the access road to Baan Krating Resort at Ao Sane, Rawai.

That haul netted the pair about 7,000 baht after they sold it at the Kanlaya Secondhand Shop on Sakdideet Rd in Phuket City. The 44 kilograms sold after their November 22 theft netted them about 8,000 baht, they said.

Both men have been charged with vandalism and robbery.

Foreign workers arrested for murder

KOH SIREH: Two foreign laborers have been arrested after the body of a Thai man was discovered in the Tha Chin river near Koh Sireh November 26.

The body was initially believed to be that of an Indonesian or Burmese laborer but was later identified as Vitus Sornin, 23, from Surin Province by local residents who saw the corpse.

K. Vitus had been living in Phuket and working at a fishery, said Pol Lt Amporn Musikapan from Phuket City Police Station.

Lt Amporn said, "I got a call on the police radio at 10:05 am that a body had been found floating in the river around Jien Wanich pier. I went straight to the scene.

"When I arrived, I was told that the body had

floated from Jien Wanich pier along the river to Koh Sireh bridge," he added.

Lt Amporn said that there were stab wounds to the neck of the body and that the man may have been dead for about two days.

"After our investigation, we have now arrested two foreign workers [one Cambodian man and one Vietnamese man]. We found a knife at their work camp and the two men confessed to the murder of K. Vitus," said Lt Amporn, who was unable to verify the location of the worker camp or a possible motive for the killing.

The two suspects are being held at Phuket City Police Station.

The victim's relatives have collected the body and returned it to Surin, added Lt Amporn.

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QUEER NEWS

Ghostly goings on

NAKHON RATCHASIMA: In the West nowadays, fears over the safety of children have reached the point where many parents are reduced to nervous wrecks at the thought of letting their little ones out of sight.

Predatory priests, pedophiles and high-profile disappearances – notably that of Madeleine McCann just six months ago – have all take their toll on parents' sanity and further restricted the freedom of Western kids.

In Thailand, however, the paranoia does not seem to have yet reached such a peak. Indeed, the freedom enjoyed by Thai tots would be the envy of cooped-up little Westerners. There is one realm, however, where the Thais tend to take more precautions, as illustrated by an eerie tale from Bua Yai district in Nakhon Ratchasima recently – ghosts.

A number of villages in the district began ramping up anti-ghost measures after residents had been having dreams that people born on Tuesdays and Wednesdays would be taken by the dreaded *phi pop*.

Despite the fact that their name sounds rather cute in English, *phi pop* are one of the most terrifying specters in the panoply of Thai folklore. With an insatiable appetite for fresh meat, they enjoy nothing more than disemboweling unfortunate villagers and snacking on still-warm organs. It is believed that *phi pop* are born when practitioners of the black arts let their magic get out of control, thus allowing themselves to be transformed into ravenous ghouls.

When reporters from the *Gazette's* Thai-language affiliate newspaper *Kom Chad Luek* arrived at Baan Khok Sawang Village 9 on November 24, they found villagers sitting pale-faced, discussing how to deter the ever-hungry ghosts.

Villagers Buntham Pawanna and Yaem Upara explained that spine-chilling dreams of the *phi pop* had started about a month before. News of impending doom quickly had spread throughout the area, putting everyone in a state of fear – especially children. In a bid to deter the ghouls, many homeowners placed scarecrows in front of their dwellings bearing written messages that no one born on a Tuesday or Wednesday lived therein.

Outside one home, reporters found a farang busily engaged in making anti-ghost scarecrows. The man, originally from Switzerland, identified himself as Pius Bierler, 41. He said that he was making the models to protect his young son, Tim, who at the tender age of two would make a tasty appetizer for a ravenous *phi pop*.

Pius, whose name indicates a willingness to perform religious duties, told the reporters that he had come to the village just a week earlier to visit his wife's family.

At first he had been confused as to why nearly every house appeared to have a scarecrow outside.

After his wife explained what was going on, however, he realized that Isarn held a grave threat to his child, one potentially more terrifying than the most perverted priest.

Pius said that he had never heard about *phi pop* before and had certainly never seen one. After hearing of their gruesome dining habits, however, he felt compelled to stay on the safe side and make a model to protect his beloved son.

"The villagers say that *phi pop* are so cruel that they eat the livers of their chosen victims while they are still alive. I fear that one may come and eat my son, who was born on a Wednesday. To keep them at bay, I made this scarecrow to put outside our house," said Pius, showing the sign.

Source: *Kom Chad Luek*



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More than half of the official tally of 2,500 suspects killed in the government's "War on Drugs" in 2003 were not involved in drugs at all, a representative of a fact-finding panel has revealed.

At a brainstorming session in Bangkok on November 27, a representative from the Office of Narcotics Control Board disclosed that some 1,400 people were killed and labeled as drug suspects despite not having any links to drugs.

The fact-finding panel worked under the government-appointed committee, which was tasked with analyzing the Thaksin Shinawatra-led government's drug policy and its implementation that destroyed people's lives, property and reputation.

During the War on Drugs, police attributed many murders to silence killings by fellow drug traffickers. However, the families of the victims have demanded justice, saying that the victims were not involved in the drug trade.

Senior public prosecutor Kunlapon Ponlwan said it was straightforward to investigate extra-judicial killings by police officers as the "trigger-pullers" usually confessed.

It is more difficult to investigate silence-killing cases because of lack of witnesses, he said.

The death toll was highest in February, when the policy was first implemented, then came down during the following two months, one representative said.

Stiff competition. With penalties for vote-buying getting stiffer, some candidates have reportedly come up with a new tactic: handing out Viagra tablets instead of cash.

Sayan Nopkham, a canvasser for the People Power Party in Pathum Thani, said the drug used to treat male sexual dysfunction was being to given

Most War on Drugs victims innocent: government panel



Monk MRI

Much-revered monk Luang Por Khun Parisuttho, abbot of Wat Baan Rai in Nakhon Ratchasima, was admitted to the Nakhon Ratchasima Provincial Hospital on November 25. Doctors said he had blood infection and would have to be remain under close watch of doctors.

out to local community leaders for distribution to elderly voters.

He said he had kept two tablets as "evidence" to prove his claim. "What is worrying is the possible side-effects of the drug. We can't be sure if it is properly manufactured," said K. Sayan, chief executive of a local tambon administrative council whose younger brother is a People Power candidate.

Big chill. The Loei Provincial Administration Organization on November 30 announced "cold-spell disaster zones" in 14 districts.

Suthep Maneechote, chief of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation in Loei, said the province announced the zones when the temperature stayed below 15°C for three consecutive days.

The announcement allowed the provincial administration to provide urgent help to people affected by the cold by distributing tens of thousands of blankets.

No deaths caused by the low temperatures have been reported.

HIV/Aids outlook. Thai youths were at risk of contracting HIV

as many had their first sexual encounter at 15 and nearly half did not use condoms, the Public Health Ministry has revealed.

At an event held to mark World Aids Day on December 1, Disease Control Department deputy head Dr Somchai Pinyopornpanich said Thailand had seen a steep decline in HIV infections overall.

Some 14,000 new cases were expected this year, down from 140,000 new cases per year during the 1990s.

However, many of the new infections were young women, some 45% of whom were house-

wives. About 20% of new cases were homosexuals, he added.

A worrying trend was that youths faced a high risk of catching HIV and sexually transmitted diseases because some had sex to impress their peers and believed that HIV was spread only via sex workers, he said.

Citing results of a survey last year, he said that less than 50% of youths who had casual sex used condoms and the age they first had sex was about 15 years old. Previously, the average age of was 18.


Uproarious ruling. The Central Administrative Court has rejected a petition from residents living near Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport for a ban on night flights to ease noise pollution.

The court dismissed the request from 359 people who demanded that the year-old airport be closed from 10 pm to 5am.

The court said the seven-hour ban would affect 100,000 passengers and nearly 170 flights on average a day. The court ruled that such a ban would go against the Kingdom's commitment to becoming a major aviation hub and could trigger retaliation from airlines and travelers.

The residents asked the court to have Airports of Thailand suspend all night flights until it implemented measures approved by the National Environment Board in March 2005, including evacuating areas and soundproofing buildings.

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








Knight Frank

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Promises, promises

PHUKET'S ELECTION CANDIDATES TALK SHOP

On December 23, Thais will go to the polls nationwide to elect the 400 constituency members of parliament and 80 party list MPs who will make up the 480-seat national assembly.

To see what each of the political parties running for Phuket's two constituency MP seats hope to achieve if elected, the *Gazette* asked one of the candidates from each of the six parties competing in Phuket three questions:

- What are your party's policies?
- What do you think are the greatest problems facing Phuket?
- If you win, what is the first thing you will do for the people of Phuket?

When asked what they hoped to achieve for Phuket, none of the six would-be legislators the *Gazette* interviewed made specific mention of any new bills they hope to put before Parliament.

Also notably absent from all of their replies were new constitutionally-mandated restrictions on MPs from lobbying the Government for projects in their constituencies.

Here's what they did have to say.

The new rules

An extensive overhaul of the electoral rules under the new Constitution brings about two major changes from past elections.

First, under the new system all of Phuket will constitute a single voting district, with the top two vote-getters winning the island's two constituency MP seats in the 480-seat rathaspha, or national assembly. This creates for the first time pairs of candidates from the same party campaigning together

as "running mates", although it is possible that one might be elected and not the other.

The other big change is in the party list system, with voters now casting their ballot for their party of choice based on a list of regional, not national, party-list candidates.

Phuket and the entire south fall into party list voting region 8, which will yield ten of the total 80 party list seats.

The parties

DEMOCRATS



"We... need to stress the importance of maintaining Phuket's attractiveness as a tourist destination."

Democrat Party candidate Rewat Areerob (pictured), running on the ballot alongside Tossaporn Thepabutr, said, "We will do everything possible to support our party's policies aimed at developing the nation's human resources [through education], saving the

economy, restoring peace to the three southernmost provinces and making a full return to democracy.

"In my view, increasing traffic congestion is a major problem facing Phuket.

"We also need to stress the importance of maintaining Phuket's attractiveness as a tourist destination and need to increase environmental awareness and a love of nature among the people in order to achieve this. I don't need to say a lot, except that we will follow party policy."

CHART THAI



"Currently Phuket has both a low and high season for tourism. I want to change that, making every month of the year part of the high season."

Candidates for the Chart Thai (Thai Nation) party are Sgt Sorranun Sane (pictured) and partner Somchart Somnam. Although given little chance of winning a seat in Phuket, Chart Thai is tipped to win enough seats nationally to give it a chance to win some key portfolios as part of the next government, expected to emerge from coalition.

"Viewing Phuket as an important international tourism destination, the Chart Thai Party places the safety of visitors and ensuring they have a pleasant stay as a top priority.

"Currently Phuket has both a low and high season for tourism. I want to change that, making every month of the year part of the high season by organizing tourism events such as road shows so that foreigners will know they can have a good time here all year round.

"In my opinion we aren't


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really ready to welcome tourists yet because our roads, water supply system and electric power grid do not cover all areas.

"While campaigning door-to-door one of the most common concerns voters raise with me are the roads.

"Even though we are a tourism destination our road network resembles what one would expect in a remote, border province.

"Another problem is garbage. The amount we produce continues to grow and we need to find a way to deal with it. I want to increase people's awareness of waste disposal issues and encourage recycling.

"It is easy for politicians to come up with grandiose campaign promises, but I am a realist who understands that the bottom line depends on getting government budgets to make them a reality," he concluded.

PEOPLE POWER



"I worry about [the lack of] public transport services such as public buses and taxis too. As we are an international destination, we certainly need improvements in this area."

Former Phuket Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) Vice-President Wisut Santikul (pictured) is running alongside Dr Sriyada Shinawatra, in-law of deposed Prime Minister Thaksin

Shinawatra, in the hope of wresting one or both parliamentary seats from the arch-rival Democrats.

"Our party policy nationwide addresses education, economic and social development issues, all three of which are important throughout Thailand.

"As for Phuket specifically, the tourism industry economy is the main concern and there are many issues involved.

"One of the problems is the failure of recent governments to support Phuket's tourism industry. The result has been uneven development, with the government always lagging behind the private sector.

"Phuket has long requested road repair budgets and more recently the idea to build a tunnel to Patong was revived.

"However, we approved a 4-million-baht study for the same idea back when I was *OrBorJor* Vice-President and to this day we have never received [central] government support for this project.

"I worry about [the lack of] public transport services such as public buses and taxis too. As we are an international destination, we certainly need improvements in this area to support tourism.

"All of the policies being put forward by all of the candidates are laudable, but there are only two seats available. Whoever wins them needs to be clever and creative in planning Phuket's future as an international island. I really hope to have the chance to serve as the representative of the Phuket people."

RUAM JAI THAI CHAT PATTANA

One of the lesser-known parties competing for seats in Phuket is the Thais United National Development Party (Ruam Jai Thai Chat Pattana), formed in September 2007 as a merger of Thais United and the National Development Party 2007.

Their two Phuket candidates are Chawit Toongku and Chaipitak Apichitsitthikul (pictured), Deputy Chairman of the Phuket Chamber of Commerce.

"In my view the most im-

portant problem in Phuket is traffic congestion on our roads."



"As an international destination, we have to provide good opportunities for students in all areas."

We have a limited land area, but the number of new arrivals appears limitless. Our older roadways are in need of repair and I would like to expand the existing road network so that we can welcome more guests to our home," said candidate K. Chaipitak.

"The second problem is about educational opportunities for children. These vary greatly depending on whether students live in town or in more remote areas. As an international destination, we have to provide good opportunities for students in all areas. If I am elected this will be one of my priorities.

"For the past 15 years, Phuket has not received good [central] government support.

"An example is the international convention center project, which should have become a reality long ago but which has languished for years because the responsible parties fail to expedite the project and make it a reality.

"Phuket is a tourist destination that is known the world over, so we need to maintain the confidence of our guests and provide them with security so they can travel happily without fear of crime.

"Our party policies are aimed at improving peoples' lives, especially by development of human resources through providing equal access to quality education for all.

"I was born here and will do my best to help my home province, that's why I want to be the peoples' representative.

"I will give my rapid and full support to any projects that can help the province. My working team is highly-qualified and motivated to work with me to achieve this goal," he concluded.

PUEA PANDIN



"Phuket is an international island, famous the world over. This means we have to be good hosts, both gracious and fair."

Like the Chart Thai Party, the Puea Paendin ("For The Motherland") Party is another mid-sized party that could play an important role in the next government. Founded on September 11 this year by more than 200 veteran politicians who wanted to stay out of the pro-Thaksin or anti-Thaksin rift dividing the country, the party is fielding as its Phuket candidates Wisut Janjira and Aree Suriya (pictured).

K. Aree told the *Gazette*, "I'm a Muslim while my running mate is a Thai-Buddhist.

"I think this demonstrates our willingness to work together to create peace, happiness and social harmony in Phuket, the

home that we love.

"We plan to hit the campaign trail hard and familiarize the people with our ballot numbers, nine and ten, letting them know that even though our team is new it is made up of experienced people with a strong work ethic.

"The people of Phuket are waiting for the right representative to come along with social initiatives and other plans to help Phuket reach its potential as a perfect tourist destination that is clean, safe and secure.

"To do this will require a deep understanding of what the existing obstacles are. Phuket is an international island. This means we have to be good hosts, both gracious and fair. I worry that local income levels could be a problem in this regard.

"Traffic is another issue that needs to be urgently addressed. Many roads need repairs and widening. It is common knowledge that many of these problems stem from the problem of Phuket's "hidden population" of unregistered migrant workers.

THAI RUM RUAY



The final party with candidates in the election is the Thai Rum Ruay Party, the political fortunes of which were thrown into array when party founder Pathom Ansakul had his 90-million-baht in assets frozen for suspicion that he obtained them through an illegal pyramid scheme run under the name of his company, Easy Network Marketing. As a result, Thai Rum Ruay candidates Vatcharin Amornsingh (pictured) and Naruemon Leelahoot declined to answer any of the *Gazette's* questions at this time.

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The cost of the recent flooding that inundated Koh Samui could total more than 200 million baht, according to Samui District Chief Adisorn Kamnerdsiri.

Samui was declared a disaster zone after heavy rain earlier this month brought travel around the island to a halt. Bridges were washed away, a major landslide resulted and fish were seen swimming down the streets.

Chief Adisorn said that evaluations of the damage were still being conducted, though Samui Mayor Varakorn Rattanakrak estimated the total damage at around 100 million baht.

Although Surat Thani Governor Vinai Baupradit promised to provide 20 million baht to solve the island's recurring flood problems, the Surat Thani Highways Office said that 1.2 billion baht would be needed to fix the flood problems completely.

One local resident whose shop was flooded said, "We have had this problem for years and although the money to fix the problem has been promised, nothing has been done. We need to fix it and do it right – or it will only get worse."

Emergency funds will be allocated to repair the roads, drains and flood-prone areas. It is unclear when the work will begin.

Samui flood damage could total B200m



Debris from another landslide covers the hill road that leads to Nathon, Khao Laem Yao, which took three years to clear the last time it happened.

Taxi-fare battle over. After months of disputes, the local Transportation Office has finally devised a fare system for yellow taxis on the island.

A table of fares has been

drawn up to give taxi drivers a wage in line with the high cost of living on samui and giving passengers set rates for transport within defined areas.

The move came after resi-

dents and tourists complained to the local Transportation Office about taxi drivers not using the meters in the cars, instead opting to charge "unfair" rates.

The new table shows fares for travel to and from each area of the island. The new fare chart must be displayed at the back of all taxis so that they can be clearly seen by passengers.

All passengers are advised to check the chart before paying. Drivers have been issued warnings that they risk punishment if they do not follow the new rules.

Stars on Samui. Koh Samui played host to two big-name stars this past month while scenes of a new film were shot on location on the island.

The film crew and actors were part of Swedish director Lukas Moodysson's first English-language film, *Mammoth*.

The film has already caught the attention of the public with the lead roles being played by Michelle Williams and Gael Garcia Bernal.

Williams was nominated for an Oscar for her role in *Brokeback Mountain* while Mexican-born actor Bernal has won acclaim for his roles in several films, including *The Motorcycle Diaries* and *Babel*.

The two are set to play a New York couple in the drama.

Filming took place at various locations around the island for five days before moving on to the Philippines, Sweden and New York. The premiere will take place in Sweden, August 2008.

Irish tourist drowns. An Irish woman drowned off one of Koh Samui's most popular beaches last week.

Linda Crossan, 28, from Carrickmacross, Ireland, drowned while swimming at Choeng Mon Beach on November 18.

Staff at the bungalow resort where she was staying reported Miss Crossan missing after she had inquired about swimming conditions earlier in the day and failed to return.

Staff at the resort reported that they had voiced their concerns of dangerous high waves and strong currents.

After receiving the missing person report, Tourist Police alerted the Marine Police, who launched a search for Miss Crossan in the sea off Choeng Mon, where her body was later dis-

covered.

Friends holidaying on the island with Miss Crossan had been attempting to locate her without success.

Miss Crossan's father and her four brothers confirmed her death but were unavailable for further comment.



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By Max Rogers

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Ex-policeman gunned down

A former police Sergeant Major was gunned down at a car boot sale in Chumphon's Pathiw District in the early hours of November 30.

Sgt Maj Sathon Saengthawee, 39, was shot four times while he was loading clothes that he and his wife had been selling into the back of his pickup truck.

He was rushed to Pathiw Hospital, where he later died from his injuries.

The victim's wife, K. Yuwadee, 37, said that a man she did not recognize walked up to them and opened fire as they were loading their truck.

She dived for cover and remained hidden until the shooting stopped.

After the shooting, she saw her husband lying on a floor and his assailant making his escape on a Honda motorcycle.

This was the second attempt on Sgt Maj Sathon's life this year. On April 22, he was shot seven times with an 11mm pistol but survived the attack.

Sgt Maj Sathon, formerly a squad leader at Map Ammarit Police Station, was discharged from the police force when he was named prime suspect in the murder of a fellow officer at Map Ammarit Police Station.

The victim, Sgt Maj Wichan Phromthep, was shot dead February 23 this year.

Sgt Maj Sathon was granted bail and prosecutors later decided there was insufficient evidence to bring a case against him.

Police believe a personal dispute was the motive for Sgt Maj Sathon's killing.

Trafficker trouble. A man was arrested in Ranong November 30 for attempting to traffic nine Burmese men to work illegally in Phuket's construction industry.

Prawet Pricha, 32, was seized by a police and army task force at 12:30 am as he was ushering the men into the back of a Toyota pickup truck in Suk Samran district. The driver man-



CONTRABAND CONTAINED

Customs Region 4 Director Rakhop Srisupha-at announces the seizure of smuggled goods including 1,090 cartons of cigarettes, 1,000kg of frozen beef and 9,000 liters of petrol at Singhanakhon District Customs House, in Songkhla, on November 29.

aged to evade capture and was last seen running off into the surrounding forest. Police also seized a new Chevrolet sedan, still with red license plates, at the scene.

During questioning Prawet admitted that he was taking the men to work on construction sites in Phuket. He was to be paid 2,500 baht for each worker delivered and had made several other worker-smuggling runs, police said.

Prawet would drive ahead of the pickup in the Chevrolet, which he owned. When he came to a police checkpoint, he would SMS the driver of the Toyota pickup, who would instruct the

workers to get out and walk through the forest to avoid the checkpoint. The workers would be picked up further down the road.

Prawet was handed in to Suk Samran District Police to be charged. Police did not say what action would be taken against the workers.

Encroachment beef. Local politicians in Surat Thani province are claiming that a large number of cows have been poisoned by land encroachers in Wiang Sa district.

At least 35 cows have allegedly been poisoned on com-

munal grazing land in the district. Local people are blaming the deaths on businessmen who want to convert the land into a palm plantation.

Kritsaphon Wankaow, a member of Surat Thani Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), said that the communal land was originally 2,700 rai.

Encroachment had reduced the communal area to only around 700 rai, he said.

Surat Thani *OrBorJor* had prepared the land for grazing and run a scheme to provide cows for villagers in the area, K. Kritsaphon said.

Recently, however, people started using pesticide to kill the grass and then planted year-old palm saplings. They then spread poison over the area, killing livestock, he alleged.

K. Kritsaphon claimed that he knew the identity of the man behind the poisoning and has informed police. He will also raise the issue at an *OrBorJor* council meeting on December 13, he said.

Supharak Tiwtong, President of Wiang Sa Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*), said that the communal land was under the jurisdiction of the *OrBorTor*. Encroachment there is a long-standing problem, he said.

He notified the provincial authorities several times and submitted evidence of the encroachment. However, the boundaries of the communal land are not clear so they have been difficult to enforce, he added.

At least 14 people have planted palms on the land, but the *OrBorTor* does not have the authority to remove them, K. Supharak added.

Jeerawat Phetchdang, 34, a resident of Wiang Sa Village 9, said that he used to graze his 15 cows on the land.

Recently, however, four of his cows – worth 10,000-20,000 baht each – have died from poisoning. Many of the surviving animals are still ill, he said.

The government should clearly define the boundary of the grazing land to stop encroachment.

Those who have lost livestock to the attacks should be compensated, he added.

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

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This season's must-haves: knitted knick knacks

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

Christmas is coming and although there are an abundance of stores touting handmade oriental ornaments, few offer anything exceptional.

A little perseverance led the *Gazette* to individually-handmade items made to order in a cozy shop called Nicha's Design at the Tesco-Lotus supercenter. The shop is packed with a colorful array of knitted knick knacks and accessories to spruce up homes this festive season.

Everything in the shop is handmade and there is something to cover or decorate almost every kind of household furniture or item imaginable. There are cutlery sleeves, cellphone bags and decorations, wall hangings, wall pockets, lace lamp shades, tissue-box covers, plastic flowers and even knitted business-card covers.

Shopowner and knick-knack designer Natnicha "May" Boonyanit, 38, is from Phuket and spent over a decade working as a public-relations executive in the property industry, but she has always loved making and collecting accessories and ornaments for the home, either for herself or her friends.

She has a team of 15 staff stitching and crafting her ideas before the pieces are given a final decorative, individual touch and put on sale at the shop.

Nicha's Design has been open for three years. K. May admits that the lacy and fluffy items are not to everyone's taste,



How cool is kitsch? Nong May (top, right) now has a team of 15 stitching away, making everything from knitted figurines (above) to a store full of frilly things (right).



but with such a variety of products, there is no shortage of customers, both young and old, who appreciate the items on sale.

"I'm always having ideas for new items to cover something or decorate a corner of a room. The kind of people who like these products are those who are not interested in big brand-name accessories but prefer something more homely and individual," May said.

More foreigners than locals are attracted to May's handmade knick knacks and she often receives orders from overseas, as well as from hotels and resorts.

"When customers want to order something for themselves or a special friend, I try to find out as much as I can about them so I can help them select a style and color that suits," May said.

"All of the products are unique because they are hand-

made – no one item is ever the same and, of course, customers can add their own ideas when they order something," she added.

May has come up with some novel designs for the festive season that would be ideal as Christmas gifts, such as cutlery sleeves in the form of snowmen with long hats and scarves.

Customers can learn how to

make their own knitted items with cross-stitch classes for two hours every Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

If you want to get something made in time for Christmas or New Year, you'll have to be quick, as orders for handmade products can take anywhere from one week to 15 days to complete, depending on the complexity and size of the order.

Nicha Design is open everyday from 9:30 am until 10 pm. For more information call K. May at 081-7191293 or visit www.phukethandmade.com

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By Nick Davies

Degustante duo

Dynamic duo from New York, Michelin Star Chef Patricia Yeo and Mixologist Joseph Boroski stopped off in Phuket recently to show off their contemporary culinary skills for a night of fusion entertainment, cocktails and cuisine at Sri Panwa's Baba lounge as part of their continental exploration of what Asia has to offer in the way of new culinary experiences and ingredients.

The first thing Patricia and Joseph did when they arrived in Phuket was to take a trip to the nearest market so they could see what fresh local ingredients would add a new twist to their creative cocktails and cooking.

Innovation through authenticity is the what the pair who worked together in New York's Monkey Bar aspire to when dreaming up their culinary creations. "It's ironic that a lot of the hotels we work with in exotic locations often place importance on importing ingredients, whereas there is usually so much to choose from locally," said Patricia.

"Wherever we go, there is always a traditional way of preparing and cooking local dishes, so I like to take those dishes and adapt them in some way. I love experimenting with the different kinds of legumes you can find in each country," she added.

Joseph has similar views about his cocktail creations. "I often meet people who ask for a cocktail done in a specific way, because that's the way they have been drinking it for years, but I like to suggest improvements or adaptations that can be as simple as adding a pinch of something to spice it up or a squeeze of juice from a different kind of fruit," he said.

Joseph elaborated on the pair's successful working rela-

tionship, which blossomed at Patricia's New York restaurants. "We work well together because I often need fresh ingredients from the kitchen for my cocktails and she is always happy to oblige, unlike some other chefs I have worked with.

"We seem to inspire each other. Patricia will often come up with a new syrup for my cocktails, which helps me create something new," said Joseph.

Thai Bouillabaisse with Blackfish, Mussels, Clams, and Spinach Serves 4

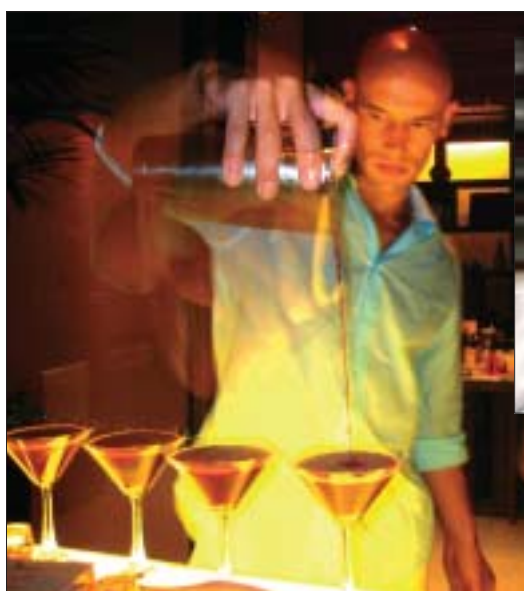
Ingredients

For the broth:

- 4 cups lightly salted shellfish stock, chicken stock, or clam juice
- 2 red onions, sliced
- 1 green apple, peeled, cored, and roughly chopped
- 1 stalk lemongrass, tough ends trimmed off and discarded, smashed in a few places with the handle of a knife
- ¼ cup of sliced ginger (no need to peel it)
- 2 jalapeno chilies, roughly chopped
- 2 Thai bird chilies
- 4 kaffir lime leaves or 4 teaspoons freshly grated lime zest
- 2 cups cilantro leaves
- 2 cups mint leaves
- 2 cups basil leaves
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce, or more to taste
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice, or more to taste
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

To finish the dish:

- 4 (4-5 ounce) pieces of blackfish, halibut or cod
- 12 mussels



Shakin' & Bakin': Iron Chef Patricia Yeo photo by Michael Weber (above) and mixologist Joseph Boroski at Sri Panwa.

- 12 small clams, such as Manila or cockles
- 2 cups spinach leaves
- Cooked rice or noodles, for serving
- Cilantro sprigs and finely shredded scallions, for garnish

Method

To make the broth, combine the ingredients for the broth, up to the cilantro, in a large pot and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer 15 minutes. Remove from

heat and add the cilantro, mint and basil. Infuse for 15 minutes. Strain the broth into a clean saucepan. Season to taste with fish sauce, lime juice, salt and pepper. The recipe made up to this point can be kept refrigerated for up to two days.

When ready to serve, heat the broth to a simmer over high heat. Add the fish, mussels and clams and cover. Cook for 5 minutes, or until the mussels and clams open. Stir in the spinach just

until it wilts and serve with rice or noodles in a bowl. Pour in the broth, place the shellfish on top of each bowl and garnish with cilantro and scallions.

Cocktail: Blueberry Joe

Ingredients

- ¼ cup of blueberries
- 1 oz chilled fresh coffee
- Juice of ½ lemon
- ½ oz simple syrup
- 1 oz tequila
- ½ oz triple sec

Method

Start by pouring the blueberries into the bottom of a cocktail shaker. Crush them well with a muddler. Add the tequila and triple sec. Squeeze in the lemon juice, add the simple syrup and pour in the coffee. Shake well with ice.

Strain it into a chilled martini glass. Make sure that you don't strain it too well or you'll lose a lot of the blueberry pulp, which adds texture and acts as a garnish for the drink.

To find out more about these two creative culinologists and their recipes, Patricia has written a book that defines fusion cuisine, available at Amazon.com, titled Cooking A to Z.

You can follow Joseph on his travels through his blogs at www.sipslowly.blogspot.com

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On the path to peace

Phra Boonchoo first became involved with the Dhammakaya Foundation when he was a young student, but he wasn't ordained as a monk until he was 36.

"I became interested in studying Buddhism when I was a student. I went to the Dhammakaya Foundation and was immediately impressed by the way they train people to become role models of peace for the whole world. From then on it became my goal to become a monk," he said.

Boonchoo's family didn't feel as strongly as he did about following a spiritual path, however.

They refused to support the idea of Boonchoo joining the Dhammakaya Foundation, so he worked in a factory for the years that followed.

After three years at the factory, Boonchoo's brother-in-law, a successful businessman, sent him to Georgia State University in Atlanta to study for an MBA in the hopes that Boonchoo would return and help run the family business.

After completing his MBA, Boonchoo was torn between making others happy by returning to help with the family business as he was "supposed" to do and following a path that would lead him to his own happiness.

Initially, he stayed on in America to work at the Thai Department of Export Promotion in Atlanta, but as the years went

One of nine children in his family, 45-year-old **Phra Boonchoo Ariyadhammo** grew up in Samut Prakarn province. His life's journey has taken him from the factory floor to the United States, where he currently teaches meditation at the Dhammakaya International Meditation Center in Azusa, California.

A science graduate from Kasetsart University in Bangkok, Phra Boonchoo is now studying for his PhD in Buddhism at the University of the West, also in California.

Phra Boonchoo recently visited his homeland and his much larger family of 1,300 Buddhist monks at Wat Phra Dhammakaya in Pathum Thani.

Here he explains how meditation can help one find peace and happiness in a world of chaos and strife.

Compiled and edited by *Gazette* News Editor **Stephen Fein**.

by his mother passed away, then his father.

With fewer family responsibilities, he started to seriously reconsider his long-standing goal of entering the monkhood.

"I started to think about my goal in life, and realized that my life is mine – not anyone else's. If you think of doing something that is good, that will make you happy, you shouldn't wait. You should go ahead and do it, as long as it doesn't create a problem for society. Eventually I decided to become a monk because it would make me happy and I could make a positive contribution to society, even though my family still didn't agree with it at that point," he

said, with the smile of a man who has won the internal battle for true contentment.

Before one of the weekly meditation sessions at Wang Kung restaurant in Phuket City, Phra Boonchoo asked people what they expected to gain from meditation. The two most common answers were "relaxation" and "happiness".

The following are some of Phra Ariyadhammo's comments on the nature of happiness and how to achieve it:

"Happiness is the language of the experience of independence, of being able to control the situation around you. When things happen that we can't control, the feeling – the 'quality' of the things that we are constantly 'touching' with our minds – does not transfer to ourselves and we become unhappy.

"To find inner peace we have to take control of our thoughts and emotions. There are many methods we can use to gain the power over them in a logical way. When things happen to us, we can observe our thoughts and reactions to situations, examine how we feel about them and try to understand the consequences of our actions that could follow. This will help us make up our minds about what is good and bad.

"If we have a real under-



More than 10 years after setting his goal of becoming a monk, Phra Boonchoo Ariyadhammo was finally ordained only after both of his parents had passed away.

standing about what is going on in our minds, if we can see through the thought process of what is happening and see the way things really are, then that is how happiness will come to us.

"People generally perceive things with their five senses. They gather all the data here [points to head] and try to understand. What actually happens a lot of the time though is that people don't truly understand something because they don't experience phenomena directly, so they guess 'it should be this way' or 'it should be that way'.

Thinking like this means we come up with a common result and posit it as a theory, like a scientist would. We must consider though, that some scientific theories that have been accepted and passed down from generation to generation are later proved invalid when they are examined in a different way when better testing equipment becomes available.

"This is because the 'human machine', with its five sensory organs, is in fact low quality equipment.

"Consider eyesight and how many of us need to wear glasses

because our vision is poor. The same thing is true of all the other senses, yet most people continue to believe only what they have seen or otherwise experienced through the senses. Yet most of what we perceive is, in fact, illusory.

"Have you ever noticed the light shining from a light bulb? We think and perceive of it as continuous, permanent brightness when in fact it is fluctuating. It is constantly going on and off, from dark to light, but at a frequency that is too rapid for our low-quality human eyes to detect.

"Because the equipment of the human machine is so poor, we cannot always observe or experience things as they really are. The result is misconception, fear and a constant search for something that is more secure – the next new super-theory that explains everything.

"Some religious groups ask us to take things for granted, telling us 'This is the way it is, not that way' without offering any kind of proof. But how can intelligent people take things for granted, without any proof? This is the problem.

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Phra Boonchoo Ariyadhammo and students at the November meditation training session at the Kalyanamit Center in Phuket City.

“Those of us who meditate don’t trust what our five low-quality sensory organs tell us. Through meditation we learn that the only thing that never lies is our ‘sixth sense’, our consciousness.

“Unfortunately, human consciousness is commonly fragmented, like hundreds of tiny fireflies scattered across the sky.

“Meditation allows us to focus our consciousness, making it more sensitive and better at observing.

“If we meditate regularly and persistently, the scattered fireflies come together as a single light to illuminate our wisdom, allowing us to observe the phenomena inside us.

“Meditation makes the mind soft and gentle, like water. If we know our true nature, we will not hold on to unrealistically high ex-

pectations and be constantly disappointed. When we learn to stop disappointing ourselves we can experience happiness all the time.”

Phra Boonchoo Ariyadhammo is one of several English-speaking Dhammakaya Foundation monks who have conducted free meditation training at the Kalyanamit Center, formerly the Wang Kung Restaurant, behind Suan Luang Park on Wirat Hongyok Rd Soi 7/2 in Phuket City.

The sessions, generally held on the third Sunday of the month starting at 1:30 pm, are open to people of all religions. The next session is December 16. For more information visit www.meditationthai.org or call: 081-9793669, 081-3704005.

Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket



Brett Williams and Ingrid Maack from Australia were married at Laguna Phuket’s Chapel-on-the-Lagoon on October 23.



Laddaporn Kaewkate and Sathaporn Tanthaves were married at the Pra Pitak Grand Ballroom of The Metropole hotel in Phuket City on November 11.

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This week



THE RIGHT CARDS: Cindy Radcliff (2nd from right), president of the Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC), is joined by (from left) Resident Manager Conor O'Leary, Executive Chef Danny Ryan, General Manager Prapaijit (Ning) Thongma of the Burasari resort in Patong, where a lucky draw was held on November 29.

Michael Kirjon and Captain Bob Sween, who attended the 2007 PIWC Gala Ball last month, won prizes donated by the Burasari that included free accommodation and brunch at Floyd's Brasserie.



PIECE OF CAKE: Rudolf Borgesius (left), general manager Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort, cuts the cake to celebrate the resort's 20th anniversary on November 19. Guest Zeev Dichne from Switzerland lends a hand in leading the applause.



CHOMPERS OF THE CENTURY: Dr Ratchada Limwattanapornchai from DC One Dental Clinic thanks and congratulates the clinic's 100th patient, Anette Durieux, with a flower basket on November 17.



HEALTH EDUCATION: Bangkok Hospital Phuket kicked off its "Teach the Child" project at Baan Kathu School on November 5. Led by Hospital Director Dr Kongkiat Kespechara, doctors and nurses will teach health education and English to children in Prathom 4 to 6 throughout the school term.



PARTY WITH JOCHEN: Jochen Lauer (in gray vest) poses with friends at the grand opening of his new Thai-style studio apartments, Jochen's Residence, on November 18.



BACKSTAGE BELGIAN: PGTV viewer Geert "John" Merlevede from Belgium visited the PGTV studio on November 20. He is welcomed to the studio by PGTV News Editor Michael Chalermvong (right), Production Manager Nattamon Meesin (2nd from left) and Cameraman Narong Jaidee.



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By Semacote Suganya

Ditch the mascara and eyelash curler, pass on the fake stick-ons and get yourself some waterproof, synthetic eyelash extensions.

The popularity of eyelash extensions is growing among Asian women who seek thicker, longer eyelashes that can stand up to swimming, sleeping or exercising.

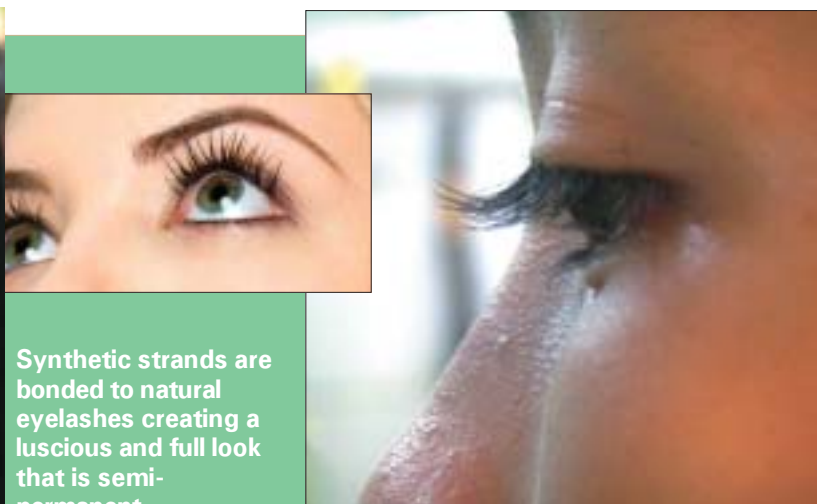
Each artificial eyelash is applied on a lash-by-lash basis for a natural look. The single synthetic strands are designed with a curve to mimic a natural eyelash and boost the length and thickness of the lashes. This form of eyelid enhancement creates an elegant, natural look.

The process takes about 45 minutes and is painless. Any makeup is removed and a layer of Vaseline is applied to the eyelids, which are then covered with plastic film to protect the eyes from stray glue. The synthetic strands are then bonded to the natural lashes.

When professionally applied, eyelash extensions can last from six to eight weeks. A natural eyelash falls out after 60 to 90 days and is replaced by a new one.

When a natural lash drops out, it takes the artificial lash with

Synthetic strands make luscious lashes



Synthetic strands are bonded to natural eyelashes creating a luscious and full look that is semi-permanent.

it, making touch-ups necessary every two to four weeks, although the time varies depending on the individual.

Sirithorn "Tookta" Arksornkul, owner of the Puchayarnon beauty salon on the second floor of Ocean Mall, Phuket, opened her shop about eight months ago.

She said she has received excellent feedback from customers who have tried eyelash extensions.

"At least five customers a day come for eyelash extensions," she said. Customers range from young teenage eye-batters to professional women

fighting their fifties," she added.

K. Tookta's shop offers three colors – purple, blue and black – with black the most popular.

There are three sizes to choose from: natural (slightly extended), thick and extra thick (one centimeter, 1½cm and 2cm long), said K. Tookta.

Praneed Suthikul, 55, a customer of K. Tookta's shop, said, "I like eyelash extensions because they make my face look more sweet and sharp."

K. Praneed's daughter, K. Poom, 23, said, "I think it's fashionable and I like to have my eyes look more attractive as well."

Extensions are an obvious choice over false eyelashes for many women because they require low maintenance and are semi-permanent.

"Fake eyelashes need to be removed every day and they hurt your eyes, but eyelash extensions last longer, don't require removal and are not damaged by water. They look more natural as well," said K. Tookta.

This form of eyelash enhancement isn't an Asian phenomenon, as Western women are using them too.

"Many foreigners use our services. They typically request the thickest lashes, while Asian or Thai women like them natural," added K. Tookta.

Ratri Saolood, 39, another

customer of K. Tookta's shop, said, "I like eyelash extensions because I party a lot."

"I used to put on the fake ones and would have to remove them after I finished partying before I could go to bed. It was too much hassle."

However, not everybody has positive experiences with artificial lashes.

Pornapa Sangarun, 26, said her extensions caused her pain when the natural lashes began to fall out.

The lashes didn't last as long as promised and when some fell out they looked horrible, she added.

When K. Pornapa attempted to remove the remaining strands with Vaseline, the natural ones fell out too.

"I had to wait at least two weeks for my eyelashes to grow back," said K. Pornapa.

Most eyelash experiences won't end like this if salt water is avoided and the lashes are gently cleaned with warm water.

It is also recommended to avoid oil-based mascaras and use water-based makeup remover.

Eyelash extensions are priced around 299 baht for natural, 499 for thick and 699 baht for extra thick.

For further information call K. Tookta at 087-502474 or 085-1565353.



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The best of time

By Janyaporn Morel

If you are looking for a timely Christmas gift, you'll find the latest lines of wristwatches from some of the world's leading watchmakers at the "Best of Time 2007 Phuket" wristwatch exhibition and sale at Central Festival, including limited editions for men and women that are sure to be snapped up in no-time.

Brand names in the collection include Calvin Klein, Flik Flak, Longines, Omega, Rado, Swatch and Tissot, some of which have produced limited edition timepieces, including the racy Tissot Ambassador, endorsed by Moto GP World Champion Nicky Hayden and the Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Casino Royale Limited Edition.

The chunky Tissot Ambassador features Nicky Hayden's new race number 1 and carries the driver's signature on the sporty clasp. Just 11,111 of these timepieces have been produced to commemorate Nicky's position as World Champion after five years in the Moto GP.

The rugged stainless steel sports watch in carbon casing is tough enough to endure rough treatment with Swiss-made quartz movement and a scratch-resistant sapphire crystal front. It is water-resistant up to 100 meters.

The limited edition numbers go from 00001 up to 11111, which are displayed in a mini helmet. The watch retails at 22,800 baht.

For a little more classic luxury and underwater sports, James Bond's Omega Seamaster Planet Ocean Casino Royale carries the distinctive bezel of the original Seamaster models and is water resistant up to 600 meters with a watertight, screw-in crown and casing plus a helium escape valve. Only 5,007 pieces

GET DRESSY: Bold and beautiful Calvin Klein dress watches for the ladies.



RUN DEEP: The Longines Hydro Conquest (right) is water resistant to depths of 300 meters.



RUGGED AND RACY: The Tissot Ambassador limited edition (below, inset) is signed by MotoGP World Champion Nicky Hayden.



have been made for this spy special, which displays the 007 gun insignia on the scratch-resistant face.

Other diving watches on display include the Longines Hydro Conquest, which is water resistant to depths of 300 meters and has an automatic self-winding mechanism that will store up to 48 hours of reserve power.

Couples can make a match with the smoothly-contoured Sintra Jubile pairs of all-white ceramic watches by Rado.

The color and form is a fresh approach for a brand that has built its reputation on style

by rarely deviating from black geometric shapes.

Apart from the lustrous milky sheen that the white ceramic gives off, the men's model is a no-frills timepiece priced at 44,000 baht, but the women's Sintra Jubile has four diamonds in place of the numbers, putting the cost at 81,000 baht.

Purely for the women, Swatch is showcasing a seasonal collection entitled Irony Square Lady with elaborately decorative straps with dangling pearls and Christmas charms.

Also for the ladies are elegant dress watches by Calvin Klein with smooth lines that look luxurious with the highly visible CK logo on the face encased in gold-plated stainless steel.

Time is ticking away, though, as the Best of Time 2007 Phuket exhibition runs until December 20.

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He's been described as the Miles Davis of dance music, and when you look at his credentials you can see why. A resident DJ at Studio 54, he's produced house-music classics alongside Todd Terry, remixed Donna Summer and Janet Jackson, and is one half of the most respected duo in house music – Masters at Work.

It's rare for a musician and DJ of this caliber to pass through Phuket, but with the island's club scene constantly evolving, you'll find "Little" Louie Vega at Seduction discotheque in Patong on December 11.

The son of jazz saxophonist Luis Vager and nephew of singer Hector Lavoe, Louie grew up with music and started his DJ career when he was 13 years old. By the time he was 20, he was rocking nightspots in the Bronx, New York, establishing a devoted fan base as house music first began to take shape.

Louie went on to hold residencies at the likes of Studio 54 and the Palladium in Manhattan. He became renowned for his innovative approach to music, incorporating everything from Latin and jazz to hip hop and new wave.

Meanwhile, in Brooklyn, Kenny Dope was putting on parties under the moniker "Masters at Work". After being introduced to each other by Todd Terry, Louie and Kenny went on to record as Masters at Work – and under various other guises – establishing one of the most successful acts in dance music.

Twenty years later, with countless productions and remixes under his belt, on November 29 Louie embarked on a world tour that will see him play in Switzerland, Belgium, the Philippines, South Africa – the list goes on. "I'm very excited about my Winter world tour. Many interesting countries, lots of great parties," Louie told the *Gazette* in an exclusive interview.

Evolution in the mix



'House music has many forms and that keeps the sound interesting – evolution is natural,' says House music icon Louie Vega, who is coming to Phuket.

digital-music equipment now the norm, Louie has embraced this newfound technology, although he admitted that "illegal file sharing sucks", in response to how illegal music downloads mean that Louie's tracks can be nabbed by anyone.

On the subject of technology, Louie said, "I will always love the analog, warm sound of vinyl, but for a global DJ, with all the traveling, it's convenient to carry CDs or your laptop, a hard drive and, for example, Serato [DJ software that allows users to play digital-music files on vinyl turntables]. The music you carry can be endless. If I had to carry vinyl for all I'm bringing, I'd have over 12 cases to check in. With modern equipment, there is so much you can do."

Speaking about his forthcoming trip to the island, Louie said, "I've heard good things about the party scene in Phuket. I've been to

Bangkok, but never to Phuket. I'm looking forward to an incredible time and hope to see everyone very soon. Special thanks to all who have supported MAW, Louie Vega, Kenny Dope and the Vega Records family."

Louie Vega will DJ at Seduction disco, Soi Bangla, Patong, on December 11. Admission is 500 baht and advanced tickets are available from the club. Visit www.seductiondiscotheque.com for details. For more information about Louie Vega visit www.vegarecords.net or www.mawrecords.com

With flights almost every other day, Louie's tour doesn't give him much time to relax. "With my busy schedule, it's hard to stay in one place for days," said Louie, "but on occasions, I get to stay at places such as Ibiza, Mykonos, Japan, South Africa and a few others."

"The traveling really takes its toll on you physically. I will slow down on DJ world traveling within five years. I have lots of artists to produce, soundtracks to create, my own albums and I have a great night in NYC at Cielo called Roots," said Louie.

Before his tour, Louie was working in the studio and on his record label, Vega Records.

"I've been producing Anané's new album Selections, which is now licensed by Vega Records to Tommy Boy Records. It is my new masterpiece, to be

released in April 2008. Vega Records is now up to its 50th single and has released five albums, including my albums Elements Of Life and Elements Of Life Extensions. I'm about to start on the new Elements Of Life album, One Dream," Louie said.

While house music has gone through many phases, Louie has been consistent throughout his career, innovating while ignoring trendy sub-genres. "I'm very true to our sound and the most important thing is that I stay creative and keep recording with new artists, concepts, albums and not be afraid to experiment. House music has many forms and that keeps the sound interesting – evolution is natural," said Louie.

Remixing other artists' tracks, particularly pop-music stars such as Madonna, is a lucrative niche explored by many dance-music artists. While remixing is considered an art in its own right, some producers use it as a way to make quick cash, putting out substandard tracks for the clubs. House-music icon Armand

Van Helden once said he could remix a track in less than four hours – on some of his efforts, it shows.

"A good remix is when you give an existing song a new life – with a new groove and new melodies – and it rocks the clubs worldwide. You usually get an a cappella to work with these days, so it's hard work to create an entirely new track. Lots of artists who are not in this genre hire remixers to have their jams in the clubs. It's also good to hear a pop artist like, for example, Justin Timberlake in the clubs. He writes wonderful melodies and to hear his voice in the clubs under the right track works."

Traveling the world as a DJ means lugging music around. While DJs traditionally use vinyl, DJ technology has evolved to the point where DJs don't need to take bulky record crates with them. With CD turntables and

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By Matt Crook

Thailand Teller Best Restaurant Award 2004 - 2007

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Pampering returns to Phuket

A few years ago, a firm directive was issued at a weekly editorial meeting. Due to excessive use, the word "pamper" was banned from use by staff writers assigned the grueling task of researching and writing spa reviews.

A quick look at the synonyms listed at thesaurus.com found some that come close, but none that match up perfectly in meaning with the word that has been successfully hijacked by the disposable diaper industry: baby, caress, cater to, coddle, cosset, dandle, fondle, gratify, humor, indulge, mollycoddle, overindulge, pet, please, regale, satisfy, spoil, tickle and yield. Hmm.

Now free to indulge ourselves in use of the "P" word, which, having been banned for so long, now needs to be liberally applied to make up for lost time: pamper, pamper, pamper!

Now that felt good, but not nearly as good as my recent visit to the great pioneer of Phuket Spas: Banyan Tree Spa Phuket.

Launched in 1994, Banyan Tree Spa Phuket is now the flagship of one of the most successful international spa chains in the world, the Banyan Tree Group, with 61 spas in 23 countries.

My visit began with a trip to the Yoga Pavilion, where the cute and flexible Doctor of Naturalopathy (yes, it is a word) Dr Preethi from southern India explained the many health-enhancing activities and services offered: meditation, pilates, Pranayam and Hatha yoga, and even yoga for golfers.

Dr Preethi was undaunted by the challenge of trying to limber up an old and overweight fossil like myself, cheerfully leading me through a number of stretching and breathing exercises.

My favorite new breathing exercise, one that my two-year-old daughter has since taken up with great relish, involves sitting in meditation, inserting the tips of the index fingers firmly into the



Of the 25 treatment rooms at Banyan Tree Spa, only four are set-up as Ryokan Villas (above), which are sumptuous overnight-stay pavilions with a Rainmist Room, complete with every conceivable feature needed in the pursuit of pampering.

ears and humming long and loudly from the back of throat. Try it now. Thus far I have resisted the temptation of using this technique to block out the distractions I face at work.

Although I was initially suspicious of doing something strenuous when my real goal was to be pampered, thanks to Dr Preethi I was suitably loose and relaxed when my spa therapist Thanomis, also known as Nui, arrived to escort me to the Star Anise Villa.

One of four ultra-luxurious, overnight-stay pavilions at the spa, the Star Anise Villa is fitted with a Rainmist Room, steam, sunken bath and a large bed. Like

everything at Banyan Tree, it is immaculately clean and fresh.

With high ceilings, light harp music playing in the background and aromatherapy scents in the air, it is just perfect for – you guessed it – pampering.

At state-of-the-art spas like Banyan Tree, attention to detail is everything. I started in the villa's antechamber with Nui gently washing my feet in water scented with rose petals and sanitized with sprigs of clove.

Normally I don't like any attention paid to my feet, which at size 15 are possibly the largest pair in Phuket.

Thankfully, the large bowl Nui used was big enough to ac-

commodate them – I expected it to be too small, as has happened many times before.

commodate them – I expected it to be too small, as has happened many times before.

Expecting similar size-related problems on the clothing front, I had brought my own fisherman's pants as the ones provided at most spas don't fit me. Again, totally unnecessary at Banyan Tree, which uses soft and generously-proportioned sarongs that can fit anyone.

My complimentary three-hour Tranquility Hydro Mist session (normally US\$240), a signature treatment unique to Banyan Tree, was blissful, with a soothing herbal body scrub with granulated sugar, then fresh milk and honey to moisturize every inch of my body, followed by intervals of

intense mist and rinsing with warm water. The pseudo-rain fell from one of the most impressive plumbing fixtures I have ever seen: an array of 10 large and flexible shower heads in two parallel columns, the entire apparatus suspended from the ceiling to allow the warm, relaxing water to cover every inch of the body.

True luxury for someone who usually showers using a bowl to scoop cold water out of a plastic trash barrel.

After my Rainmist experience, I was left feeling as fresh as a fern in the mid-canopy of the Amazon rain forest – and my pampering had only just begun. Nui then led me to the massage table, where I opted for a Balinese oil massage.

As with most wonderful experiences, time seemed to slip by swiftly. I had to fight the temptation to drift off into sleep as Nui gracefully rubbed the soothing massage oil into my skin, at my request rubbing hard into the neck and shoulder muscles that were still tight after a whole week hunched over a keyboard.

With the hot, dry season now upon us, the Rainmist experience is the perfect way to keep relaxed while re-moisturizing the skin in a way that no other spa treatment can match. It is also a top-notch pampering experience everyone should try at least once.

For more information contact Banyan Tree Spa Phuket. Tel: 076324374. Email: spa-phuket@banyantree.com Website: www.banyantreespa.com

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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

Until December 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.

Until December 9. PIMEX 2007.

The annual Phuket International Marine Expo (PIMEX) will be showcasing all aspects of the marine industry, from high-end pleasure craft to boating industry services, at Royal Phuket Marina.

For more information visit www.phuketboatshow.com.

December 9. Phuket International Dragon Boat Challenge.

Organizers Sail in Asia will have six 45-foot Chinese dragon boats at the PIMEX Boat Show on December 9 for Phuket's inaugural International Dragon Boat Challenge to take place from 10 am until 5 pm.

The aim is to engage the community in one of the world's most enjoyable sports.

The event is open to all, schools, companies, charities – everyone. This is also an excellent opportunity for advertisers and sponsors due to the wide media coverage.

For further information contact Mike Downard. Tel: 087-2810458. Email: mike@sailinasia.com Website: www.phuketdragonboat.com

December 10. Constitution Day – Public holiday.**December 13-18. 'These shoes are made for working' exhibition by Mia Gillow**

A record of the restoration of Cariad, the largest, oldest gaff cutter in the world, being rebuilt in Thailand.

The result from this talented young photographer is an artistic

view of the vessel's revival and the workers involved.

Uniquely seen through the eyes of a sailor and a yacht skipper in her own right, Mia's rare insight into the world of yachting is distinctive.

The exhibition, on show at Watermark bar and restaurant at Boat Lagoon, goes below decks to highlight the endless maintenance, craftsmanship and passion required in restoration work and the plethora of personalities magnetically attracted to it.

Open 11 am to 11 pm

For more information contact Stuart. Tel: 081-7376184. Email: stuart@watermarkphuket.com Website: www.watermarkphuket.com

December 15. Super BBQ Buffet at Wine Connection Bangtao.

A super BBQ buffet with grilled meats, seafood, cheese, cold Cuts, salad bar and desserts.

A live band will supply the music. 650 baht per person. All you need for a perfect Saturday night. 6:30 pm until 11 pm.

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

December 16. Lofts Surprise Island Beach Party.

Join the BYD Lofts crowd on the luxury yacht MV Voyager to a surprise island-beach destination for a great party right on the beach.

Watch the sunset, swim, tuck into a great BBQ, dance and have lots of fun with 80s and 90s dance music and late house music by DJ Mikey Mike.

The cost is 2,500 baht including transfers from Chalong pier to the island (first departure is at 2pm, second at 4pm), two drinks, BBQ and great music. RSVP by 11 Dec.

For further information contact Stephan. Tel: 076-3430247. Email: info@bydlofts.com Website: www.bydlofts.com

December 19. Soi Dog Foun-**Phuket King's Cup Regatta**

The annual King's Cup Regatta is Asia's biggest and most popular regatta, attracting crews from around the world for great sailing and lots of parties during the week-long event.

dation Fund-Raising Christmas Party.

The Soi Dog Foundation this year will hold its annual fun-filled, fund-raising Christmas Party spectacular on Wednesday, December 12, at Tatonka Restaurant at Tinlay Place, near the entrance to Laguna.

Starting at 7 pm, enjoy an evening of globe-trotting cuisine and lots of surprises.

The Tatonka Restaurant is donating the meal and all proceeds from ticket sales will go directly to the Soi Dog Foundation. Tickets at 900 baht are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment.

Please email jennifer.gardner@email.com to reserve your ticket or call 076-317937 or 086-0174525.

December 24. Christmas Eve Wine Dinner at Wine Connection Chalong.

Christmas Eve six-course set dinner with aperitif, six glasses of wine, fireworks and live band – all for 3,300 baht net per person. 7 pm until midnight.

For inquiries about the menu, please send an email to fb.phuket@wineconnection.co.th or call Pascal at 087-8896074.

December 31. New Year's**Eve. Public Holiday.**

This is a public holiday in Thailand. Please drive safely!

January 1, 2008. New Year's Day. Public Holiday.

This is a public holiday in Thailand.

January 12, 2008. TriBallistic Re Launch Party 2008.

From 6 pm to 11 pm at Skipers Sports Bar at Royal Phuket Marina. Live music by Indigo Pearl house band The Boom, featuring the extravagant May Palmer and the "Sax Bomb" DJ and saxophonist Gerard Cornielje for your entertainment.

Buffet, dancing and lots of fun for all the family. Raffle prizes to be won.

Also includes pre-race registration for February 3 Triballistic race and a new range of Tri-

Ballistic merchandise for sale.

Adults: 1,000 baht, inclusive of buffet, one beer or glass of wine and raffle ticket.

Children: 750 baht, inclusive of buffet, 3 soft drinks and raffle ticket.

For more information contact Shaun Boulter. Tel: 089-5902014. Email: info@triballisticclub.com Website: www.triballisticclub.com

Tickets are available from Shaun at 089-5902015 or info@triballisticclub.com; from Skipers Bar at 076-360890; and from the Helle Kirstein at the British International School – Phuket library.

January 12-27, 2008. French Cuisine Festival at Mom Tri's Boathouse.

Mom Tri's Boathouse will host the annual "Quinzaine de la Gastronomie Française", an extravaganza of French cuisine each night from 7 pm to 11:30 pm, from January 12 to 27, 2008.

Guest Chef Maître-Cuisinier de France Jean Noël Lumineau, in collaboration with Mom Tri's Boathouse Executive Chef Tummanoon Punchun, will present a four-course dégustation menu every evening, with each course accompanied by a superb French wine, chosen by the Boathouse's Wine Director, Georges Ciret.

The Boathouse Wine & Grill à la carte menu will remain available throughout the Festival.

For more information contact: Pinyo Thippimas Tel: 076-330015. Email: fb@boathousephuket.com Website: www.boathousephuket.com

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Christmas Eve
Monday 24 December

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8 Course Christmas Dinner
with a Thai Twist
Live Entertainment

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New Year Eve
Monday 31 December

Bonnie Anderson
Soul, Blues, Jazz, R&B

DJ Q
Soulful Funky

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6 Course Gourmet Thai Dinner
Champagne Midnight Toast
Late night dancing & snacks
Live Entertainment

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Booking made and deposit paid By 10 December 2007

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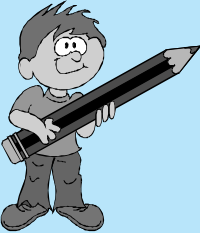
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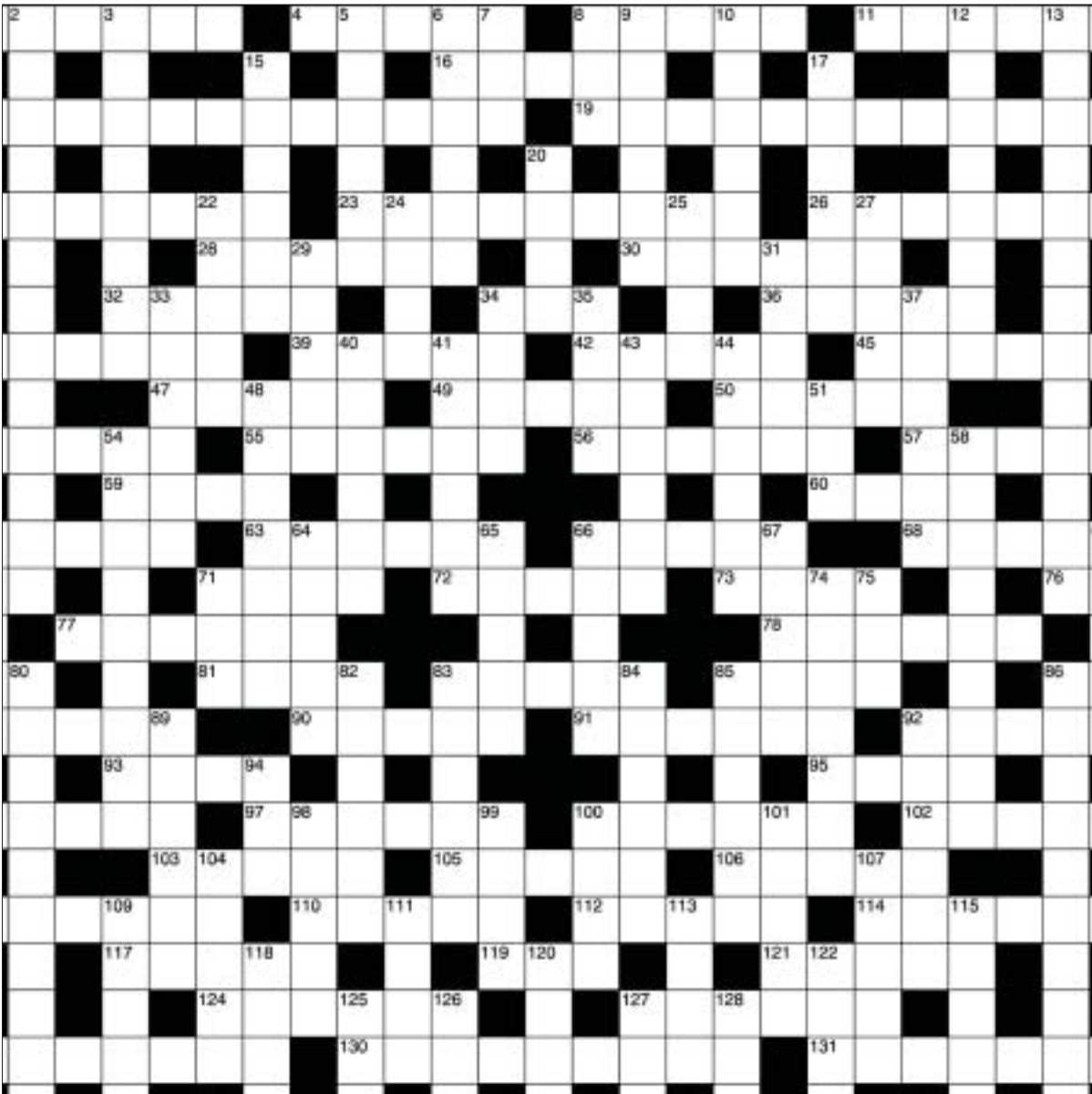
The BIG Crossword

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?
Solution on the next page.





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- Across
1. Toward shelter

4. Gun blasts

8. Rains

11. Browsed (book)

16. Purchaser

18. University enrolment

19. 2-way radios (6-7)

21. Lack of feeling

23. Excessive

26. WWI spy (4,4)

28. Non compos...

30. Recoup

32. Rib playfully

34. Actress, ...Ryan

36. Guardian...

38. PC phone links

39. View

42. Backpacker

45. Slumbers

47. Cry of applause

49. Annoyed

50. Monaco's ...Carlo

53. Grid

55. Delved

56. Weather feature (2,4)

57. Crypts

59. Abominable snowman

60. Highland dance

61. Goes into

63. Acropolis country

66. Steal (power)

68. Former cricket captain,... Hussain

70. ...& don'ts

71. Nudge

72. Frequent regularly

73. To ...his own

76. Possesses

77. Screech

78. Poland's capital

79. They were, he...

81. Prayer ending

83. Measured (out)

85. Little Women sister

86. Dedicatory poem

88. Detour round

90. Exudes

91. River area

92. Glared fixedly

93. Body powder

95. Model, ...Macpherson

96. Most painful

97. Endured

100. Spend

102. Immediately vital

103. Instil

105. Bushy plant

106. Edit (text)

108. Dress

110. Persona non...

112. Begin working (3,2)

114. Salesmen

117. Tin or lead

119. Permit to

121. Type of orange

124. Navy jacket

127. Mark of disgrace

129. Postponed (4,4)

130. Beaten egg dishes

131. Australian mammal

132. Varied

134. Self-consciousness

135. Canadian symbol

136. Prize ribbon

137. Knight's horse

138. Curtsied

139. Abandoned

5. Lamb stew

6. Steaks (1-5)

7. Solar body

8. Church bench

9. Public speaker

10. Gathering (leaves)

12. Trusty

13. Military neatness (4,3,6)

14. Aversion

15. Shuts

17. Pests

20. Woodwind instrument

22. Shatter

24. Persons of importance (1,1,2)

25. 7-day period

27. Acute anxiety

29. At no time

31. Moses' brother

33. Floor show hosts

34. Servant

35. Clarified butter

37. Roman XI

40. Pressed (clothes)

41. Battlefield ditch

43. Laziest

44. Political exile

46. Leered at

48. Short, witty remark

51. Neither fish ...fowl

52. Russian emperors

54. Songwriters

58. Fine gypsum

62. Under no circumstances (2,3)

64. ... & Juliet

65. Edges of roof

66. Beneath

67. Groped

69. Scent, ...toilette (3,2)

71. Ham & ... soup

74. Reflective road marker

75. Her Royal Highness (1,1,1)

79. US president, George... (1,4)

80. Seance holders

82. More intrusive

83. Slightest

84. Strauss waltz, The Blue...

85. Soldier's lodgings

86. Famous train (6,7)

87. Singer, ...Piaf

89. Lampoon

92. Oily mud

94. Truck compartment

98. Army signal horn

99. Lentil dish

100. Eject

101. One of a number of

104. 1000 mm

107. Of warships

109. Unchaste

111. Throat-clearing sound

113. Shopping carrier,... bag

115. Select group members

116. Plotter

118. Taken from plane (of photo)

120. Pitcher

122. Current unit

123. Stayed at

125. Wooded area

126. Start again

127. Pollen-producing part

128. Jewish land

133. Gloomy

134. Moose
- Down
1. Rues

2. Insect specialists

3. Make enemy of

Answers on next page

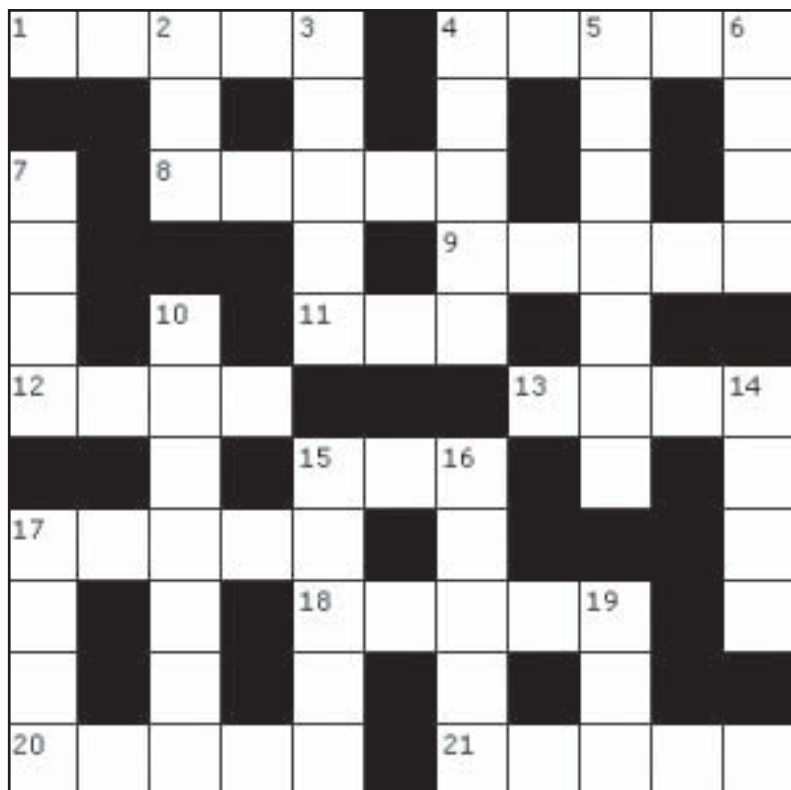
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Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

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



Quick Crossword

Across

1. Scale
4. Inebriated
8. Shouts
9. Camera company
11. Affirmative
12. Job
13. Like a rabbit
15. Small insect
17. Boggy area
18. Cooking method
20. Short-stay hotel
21. Hit

Down

2. Type of plant
3. He picks on others
4. Workstations
5. 2nd-hand vehicle (4,3)
6. Hit with foot
7. Talk
10. Attack
14. Boundary
15. Month
16. Homeless person
17. Con
19. Type of metal

Solution below

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. Which Aussie state is named after a man?
2. What is the most commonly spoken language in South Africa?
3. What is now the smallest planet in our solar system?
4. What so-called crab has been around for about 500 million years?
5. Jameson Whiskey gains its golden hue thanks to which acid?
6. Which King of England from spent only 6 months in the country?
7. Krav Maga is the self-defense system of which country?
8. Henri Dunant, founder of the Red Cross, was a native of which city?
9. Which continent has the most countries?
10. Linguists trace Romance languages back to what family of languages?
11. In which sport do skiers slow their heartbeats when shooting?
12. What seaweed can grow fronds up to 200-feet long?
13. What is the longest division of time on the geologic time scale?
14. What is the only planet in the solar system with two moons?
15. Bangladesh produces about 60,000 metric tons a year of what?
16. In December 1946, who attacked the French at Tonkin?
17. How many hours is the world's longest non-stop flight, Singapore to NYC?
18. What is the largest branch of Christianity?
19. Which Michelangelo statue was completed on September 8, 1504?
20. After killing Duncan, which Shakespearean character says, "I have done the deed"?

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

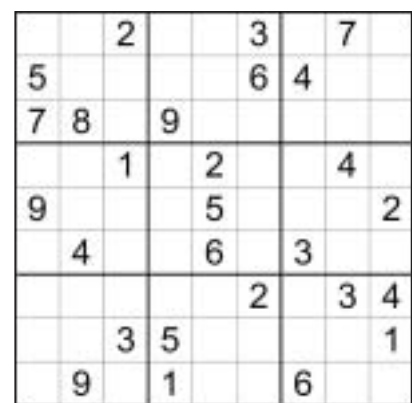
Solution to this week's Quick Crossword



Monster Quiz Answers

1. Tasmania, Abel Tasman; 2. The Zulu; 3. Mercury; 4. Horseshoe crab; 5. Tannic acid; 6. Richard the Lionheart; 7. Israel; 8. Geneva; 9. Africa; 10. Indo-European; 11. Biathlon; 12. Kelp; 13. Eon; 14. Mars 15. Tea; 16. Ho Chi Minh; 17. 18; 18. Catholicism; 19. David; 20. Macbeth.

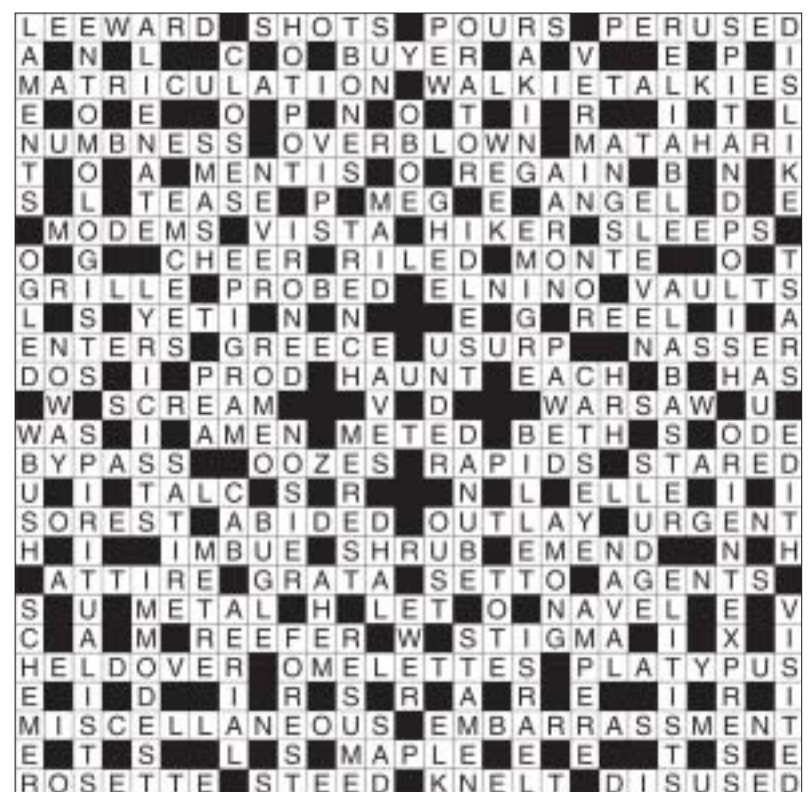
Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle



Solution to this week's Cartoon Puzzle



Solution to this week's BIG Crossword



"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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- 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.*

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

For more information, please contact Khun Jib at 076-236 555
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Military historian Adrian Gilbert takes a comprehensive view of the World War II prison camp experience in *POW* (John Murray, London, 206, 398p). The prisoners of war he focuses on are British and American. They totaled 295,000 people in camps in Italy and Germany: 95,000 American and the remainder from Britain and every part of its vast Commonwealth.

The POWs lived on scant rations, often in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, but their captors abided by the Geneva Convention and the prisoners were supervised by the Swiss Protecting Power and enjoyed Red Cross food parcels and YMCA athletic equipment – all to ensure that German and Italian counterparts received equally good treatment.

Russian POWs enjoyed no such privileges: “During the war on the Eastern Front, the Germans captured approximately 5.7 million men and women of the Soviet armed forces, and through a process of shootings, beating, starvation, disease or overwork killed 3.3 million of them. As the Soviet Union was not a signatory to the Geneva Convention (and had little interest in its own captives), Russian prisoners did not receive assistance from a Protecting Power or from the Red Cross or other humanitarian organization.”

Behind the wire



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

Regardless, life in the camps was no picnic. Here's the typical daily menu: “A cup of Ersatz coffee, made from acorns in the morning, a bowl of soup, usually Sauerkraut, with a few potatoes at mid-day, and one fifth of a loaf of black bread with a pat of margarine and a small piece of sausage or cheese in the evening... These rations amounted to barely 800 calories per day, less than half the optimum required for an adult human being. The pangs of hunger were ever present.”

Beyond the hunger was the psycho-

logical torment of living packed together in an ill-smelling, noisy crowd with no semblance of privacy. In Colditz prison, there was competition to be sent to solitary confinement in the “cooler”. One inmate recalls, “We had a roster of who was to insult the Germans next so we could get a turn in jail.”

Gilbert follows the stories of POWs from capture to release. In the early days there were mass surrenders of infantry in France and North Africa, followed a second wave of British and American airmen captured in the occupied territories of Europe.

In time, the camps organized themselves into small cities with a functioning bureaucracy, language and history classes, libraries, orchestras, theater groups, newspapers, gambling dens, illegal stills and a wide variety of sports: football, baseball, basketball, volleyball, rugby, boxing, table tennis and even golf. But he greatest form

of entertainment was organizing escapes. As one prisoner wrote, “All schemes involved weeks and sometimes months of furtive planning, decisions on route and disguise, invention of a suitable story for traveling purposes and sometimes even the learning of a new language...”

The Great Escape of 76 men from Stalag Luft III in March 1944 was the most famous, but there were three other mass breakouts almost as large. A few achieved a “home run” of a return to England, but their recapture tied up thousands of Germans.

There were other ways of escape, too, as one prisoner relates, “A whole room of 24 men would agree to pretend that they were going on a day's outing, say, to

Bournemouth. One man would be the engine-driver, another the guard and so on. The rest would be trippers. They would make a noise like a train and ‘Choo-choo-choo!’ all round the camp... The guards would stare in astonishment and grunt to each other ‘Alles verruck!’ (“All mad!”). But if we were, it was only that sort of madness that kept us sane.”



Readers will be glad to learn that our resident linguist, Grammar Dork, has returned.

After a lengthy absence, he's back with a completely new set of gripes about the state of the English language. I interviewed him in his seedy digs at the Rat & Cockroach Guesthouse in Banglampoo.

Tsow: Welcome back, Gram. What new complaints about the English language are you about to inflict upon us?

Gram: “Impact.” This noun has been traditionally associated with cataclysms such as comets and asteroids crashing into Earth. Now it's been used as a verb and used in the most trivial contexts, such as, “The change in hemlines this spring will severely impact the fashion world” and “The self-help book *I'm OK, You Really Suck* will greatly impact your dysfunctional personality.”

Tsow: Well, languages are always changing. “Impact” will add pizzazz to any sentence.

Gram: Really? What's wrong with traditional verbs, say, “affect” and “influence”?

Tsow: “Affect” sounds affected and “influence”, well, has never been very influential. “Impact”, on the other hand, is a tes-

English as an impacted language

tosterone-charged word just reeking of force, power and good old-fashioned oomph.

Gram: Yes, and constant overuse will dilute the force, power and good old-fashioned oomph it aspires to. This “black hole” word will suck in and destroys all synonyms and impoverish the language. Soon, related words such as “force” and “power” will be swept into its insatiable maw and vanish from our vocabulary forever.

Interstellar warriors will greet each other with. “May the Impact be with you” and Chuck Norris will star in movies called *Delta Impact*. We'll have songs called *I've Got the Impact* and *The Impact of Love*.

Tsow: Hmmm. You may have a point.

Gram: Not only that, this word is breeding clones. Not long ago, Leonardo DiCaprio was being interviewed on CNN about the

movie *Blood Diamond* and he was asked, “What was the most impactful moment for you in making this movie?” Leo didn't miss a beat. He looked solemn and said, “Well, the most impactful moment was...”

But “impactful” is only the beginning. Soon, “impact” and its myriad clones will hold sway over a desolate linguistic landscape devoid of variety. People will say things like, “Impact-wise, the eight-baht bus fare is impacting my finances very impactfully” and “China is gaining rapidly in world impacthood.”

The worst thing you'll be able to say about a weak person will be “He is impactless,” and when you're unimpressed by an argument you'll say, “I am unimpacted by your reasoning.”

Tsow: Can we say “impactable”?

Gram: I bet you'll soon be able to, although I have no idea what it might mean.



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Phuket politics start in earnest

Fifteen months after the military coup, Thailand takes an important step forward in restoring democracy on December 23, when voters will go to the polls. In Phuket, voters will elect two constituency MPs and a party of choice under the new party list system.

Despite the new Constitution, it seems there will be little real change in the political status quo – locally or nationwide – regardless of which party wins the right to form the next government. Already, political pundits are giving what inevitably will be a coalition government little chance of holding together more than one or two years under the new electoral system, which was carefully devised to make a strong single-party government like that of the former Thai Rak Thai Party more difficult to establish.

As demonstrated in the referendum in August, Thailand remains deeply divided along both class and geographic lines. Thai Rak Thai's self-confessed "nominee party" Palang Prachachon (People Power) is expected to win most of the seats in MP-rich Isarn.

The Democrat Party is expected to maintain its political domination throughout the South – though one of the People Power candidates could pull off an upset win here in Phuket.

It is notable that Phuket's influential Thai-language daily newspaper *Siang Tai* has come out in full support of the two People Power candidates, running their pictures every day on its front page with messages reading "Phuket's Sweethearts" amidst its normal assemblage of gory photos of road accidents and violent murder scenes.

Despite what appears will be their inevitable victory, Democrat Party candidates Tossaporn Thepabutra and Rewat Areerob will be forced to endure attacks from their political rivals right up until election day.

Several candidates have petitioned the national Election Commission to replace the Phuket Election Commission (PEC) on the grounds of impartiality after the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), headed by K. Tossaporn's wife, K. Anchalee, took part in a highly publicized motorcycle helmet giveaway organized by the Governor's Office.

The PEC has also accepted a request from the same candidates to investigate Anchalee for taking a group of housewives on a trip to Malaysia, using taxpayer's money for political gain.

Other past events that candidate Tossaporn will also be constantly reminded of by his rivals is his lost legal battle to retain control over land issued to him under the *Sor Por Kor* land-use program to make state land available for use to the poor.

For these reasons and others, the local Democrats would be well advised to avoid getting into a mud-slinging match with their rivals.

– The Editor

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Email editor@phuketgazette.net

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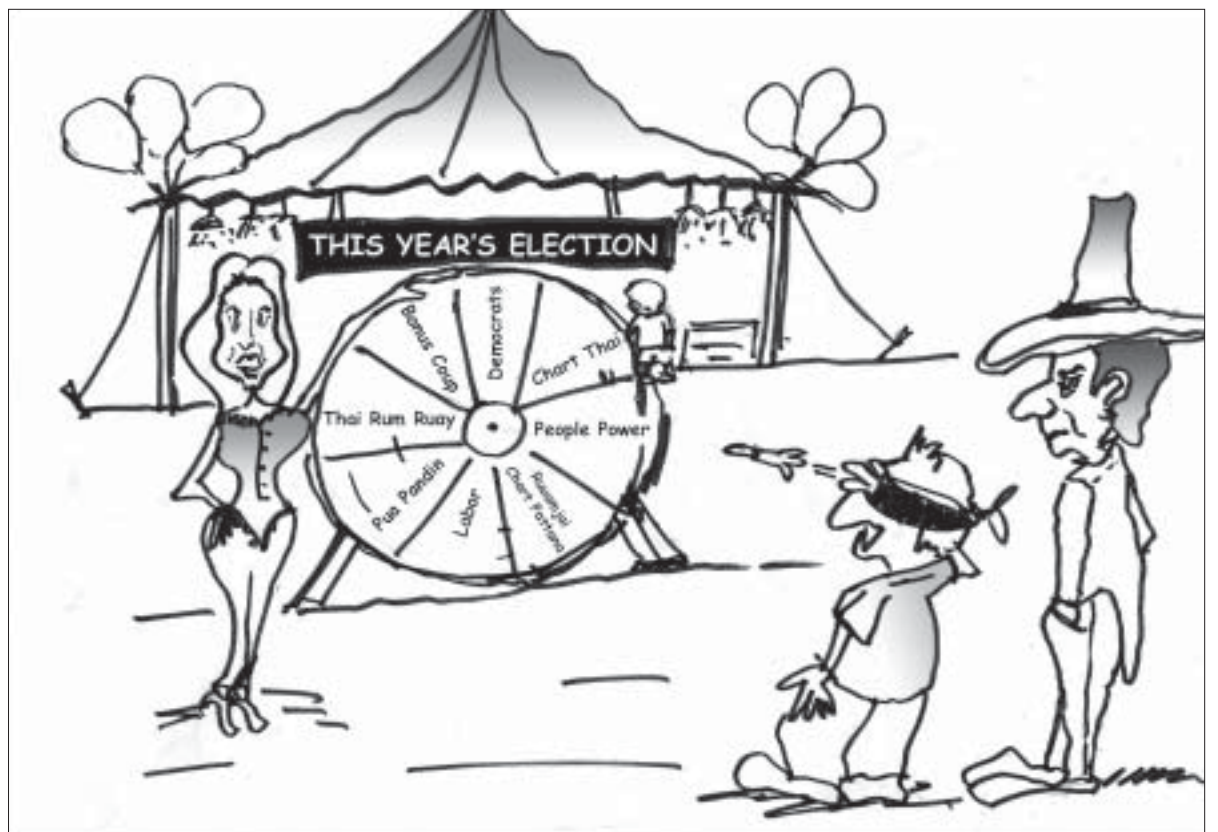
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Letters

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.

Stop nicking cable

I rejoiced to see the story about the police arresting the two cable thieves in the Rawai/Chalong area. Granted, they are probably not the same people who have stolen the cable to my house – twice – but they are the same type of sneaky little sodomites.

It seems to me that a lot of this cable theft could be stopped if the secondhand shops and scrap merchants who currently buy stolen copper cable were strictly required to notify police every time someone approached them with cable to sell.

Unannounced spot checks for unreported cable would help enforce this. Any shop that did not comply would face strenuous prosecution for receiving stolen goods and abetting a crime.

Readers may recall the thieves who disabled half of Phuket's tsunami warning system a couple of years ago. Cable theft is not just an inconvenience for the victims – it could be a matter of life and death.

Alasdair Forbes
Baan Bang Rong

Sad in Singapore

It is sad to learn of violent actions both in Sukhothai, where a Japanese tourist was killed, and in Phuket where there have been numerous stabbings in recent months. As these are both tourist destinations, such crimes must be brought under control. Otherwise the image of Thailand as the Land of Smiles will suffer, as is the case with Deep South destinations such as Haad Yai.

While crime can happen anywhere, measures must be in place to ensure the safety of tourists. Deploy more uniformed and

plain-clothed police in areas largely patronized by tourists and increase the penalty for those committing such crimes, especially when they involve violence.

I have visited Thailand on many occasions and have always had pleasant memories. Hence, such reports are really shocking.

YK Lim
Singapore

What's happening in my home town?

Phuket City, my hometown, has become so bad over the past few years, all because too many people from outside Phuket, including Thais from other parts of the country as well as foreigners from abroad, want to live here.

The police are surely not doing their job as well as they should, and some have become "not so straight".

Oh, Phuket, today people only care about getting richer and don't care about each other anymore.

Kung
Phuket City

The light stuff

I'd like to applaud the Phuket Community Foundation's (PCF's) first initiative to fit motorbikes with brake lights for free. This was a great idea by the charity's members that may well have saved a few lives in the last few weeks.

Of course this kind of road safety initiative wouldn't be necessary if all drivers received just a little bit of training in the first place and took their own and their family's safety into their own hands.

For most car drivers and motorcycle riders from Europe or

the US, simple things like putting on a seatbelt or helmet are automatic behaviors that are a result of simple training when learning to drive, not just the fear of being fined, which is the sole reason most Thais wear a helmet or seatbelt.

As for crash helmets, wouldn't it be great if buying at least two helmets was compulsory when buying a motorcycle.

Of course persuading people to wear them is another matter.

I've lived in Thailand many years so surely I should be used to seeing whole families or groups of friends on a motorcycle but in all my time here, the situation has never improved, people keep dying on the roads.

Knight Rider
Phuket City

Green going

Although the technology has existed to run cars without using fossil fuels for several years already, the big car makers continue to produce cars that keep their oil company comrades in business while telling the public that they care about the environment by trickling out technology labeled as environmentally friendly.

That's the big picture but on a micro level, I was dismayed to see another bare patch along the bypass road where trees had been ripped up and cut down in front of the new Honda Showroom.

Presumably this was done to make the showroom and the cars out front more visible to passers by, but it also shows that these companies have no consideration for the environment.

Green dreamer

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

Sea Sun Sand witness clears the air

This was the only time I have ever seen this ugly side of Phuket. I have been disappointed with the response by the police and resort management to something that seems to have been considered no worse than a guest absconding without paying his or her bill.

I have stayed many times at that place and I am known among the staff.

When Mr Corley told me that his safe had been tampered with, I replied that it was impossible as he alone knew the combination.

The manager has since been adamant that any housemaid wouldn't know how to access a safe and that nobody would have had a duplicate key. I took Mr Corley to the Tourist Police office, but it was closed.

We then went to Kathu Police Station, where our treatment was about average. We were told to wait for an officer, which wasn't a problem.

There was a Swiss couple there who had come to report that they had lost some money, a watch, a gold bangle and a bracelet. They were staying in the same wing as the Corleys.

The detective who met us was very blasé about everything. He told us that there had been other reports previously about this hotel but that the police had been unable to pin anything on anybody.

I know for a fact that the police never asked Mr Corley and

FIRST PERSON

Brian Perkins from Australia has visited Thailand 26 times, spending most of his time in Phuket. As a regular return guest to the Sea Sun Sand Resort, Brian was stunned when a number of holidaymakers staying at the resort alleged that they had money and items stolen from their room safes while they were out (see Inside Story, November 17 issue of the *Gazette*).

Well-known among the staff, Brian was staying at the resort at the time of the incident. Brian is also a long-time friend of Jan and Warren Corley, who were two of the guests at the forefront of complaints against the resort. Here, Brian tells his thoughts about what happened and how guests and the resort can move on from this incident.



his wife to return to the police station.

Also, I was talking to one of the police officers when one of the other guests from the resort quite stupidly threw a 100-baht note at him saying, "You might as well have your share." This would get you locked up in Australia.

It was me who actually recommended that the Corleys stay at the Sea Sun Sand Resort instead of their original choice, which was the Patong Resort.

I have stayed at the Sea Sun Sand Resort a number of times. It wasn't uncommon for me to

leave between 400 and 1,000 baht in notes in the top drawer, but I have never lost a baht.

Thinking about why it happened, how can you give a reason for theft? Opportunity, greed – it was evidently not an isolated case and yet I was there in May and I had never heard of anything like this. It must have been well-rehearsed.

One thing that I didn't think about at the time was that each of the people who complained about having money and items stolen had been on a day trip that same day. They either went to James Bond Island or Phi Phi.

The receptionist must have been aware of this because the pickup area is in plain sight of the front desk.

About the tourists trying to blacken the name of the resort: Imagine you have just lost a couple of hundred dollars and your friend has lost US\$400 and other few guests a few hundred dollars more.

Reception refused to get in touch with the manager or even the day manager, who lives not far away in Phuket City.

These people were told on a Saturday that they would have to wait until Monday to speak

with someone.

I am a well-liked guest at the resort, but I was totally flattened by the savagery of the person at reception, who kept asking me, as a long-time visitor, why I didn't believe that the guests had ganged up on the staff.

I have no reason to fabricate at my age and I could not believe the way the staff all ganged up together. The only face that was lost was that of the honest staff and also the perpetrators when they found out they had been sprung.

There were thefts and bad manners all around, but that resort needs a hell of a shake up to return to its once-beautiful self and get the confidence of travelers back – and they should not blame the guests who were short-shrifted by the perceived Asian loss of face.

I have known the Corleys for about 40 years and I would stake my life on their honesty.

After being told to their faces by reception that they were liars, I think that would be enough to want not just retribution, but justice and knowledge that these criminals wouldn't strike again and that the management might show some remorse.

Mr Corley is the manager of a large pharmaceutical firm in Western Australia. He is not the sort of person who would indulge in wild fantasies.

The Sea Sun Sand Resort can return to what it used to be, but only if action is taken to get rid of this criminal element.

When will the roadworks in Kathu be completed?

Construction work at the Tung Tong intersection is creating unsafe traffic conditions. The diverted traffic onto Wichit Songkram Rd has made that road so overcrowded that motorists and cyclists are making dangerous moves just to get on the road.

When will this roadworks be finished? This is a real inconvenience for westbound traffic heading to Patong that is now being re-routed all the way around because the work.

Nesvold
Kathu

Charoonlert Logootara, Architect at Kathu Municipality Public Works and Town & Country Planning Office, replies:

The construction work is to install a water pump and drains under Phra Phuket Kaew Rd. It is part of a Kathu Municipality project that should be finished by December 15.

The drains have been installed. All that is left to do is to install the pump station.

We had to close [one lane of] the road for safety reasons

Issues & ANSWERS

**Want to know how to get something done?
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so that it does not collapse while work is underway. We expect some subsidence, but will ensure that it is safe before reopening it to traffic.

When construction began in October we asked Tung Tong Police to control the traffic there.

Sen Sgt Maj Surapong Puangprom of the Tung Tong Police replies:

We are doing the best we can. We have put out orange cones and traffic signs and appointed traffic police to supervise traffic during the rush hours, at 8 am and 4 pm.

It is also important that drivers strictly adhere to traffic rules. As this is a residential area, drivers should not be driving faster than 40 kilometers an hour.



Can a spouse of a retiree also be issued a one-year permit to stay?

My husband and I just bought a house for 3 million baht and we are planning to invest more in re-building next year.

My husband is 65 years old. He receives a pension of 85,000 baht a month, but I am 50 years old and, as a housewife dependent on him, do not receive a pension. Can I apply for a one-year retirement visa? We are planning to move here next year.

Debbie Habeler
Karon

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

Your husband can apply for

a non-immigrant "O" retirement visa from a Thai embassy or consulate in your home country. When you file that application, also file an application for you to also be issued a non-immigrant "O" visa on the basis of your husband's status.

Once in Thailand, apply for a one-year permit to stay at any Immigration office using the same documents filed with your husband's visa application. You should be issued the same permit to stay as your husband as you are the spouse of a retiree.

With your application for a one-year permit to stay, you must show your marriage license.

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Pattaya attracts a wide cross-section of visitors from the four corners of the globe. To better understand the quirks and foibles of this diverse range of visitors, the following is a brief description of the most common arrivals to these shores.

Americans (*loudus noisiatum*): These can be divided into those who are Vietnam vets; those who think they are Vietnam vets; grunts on a 24-hour intoxication-and-intercourse leave from the annual Cobra Gold exercises; and retirees refused entry into Florida. Rarely mistaken for a Canadian.

Arabs (*horrendous armpitius*): There are two distinguishable groups. The traditional brigade wander about looking like an unmade bed clutching worry beads; the others discard their traditional attire and after dosing themselves anabolic steroids hire the biggest and nosiest motorbikes they can find and spend their days traveling at speed down Beach and Second Roads.

Australians (*beerium gutius*): Usually announce their arrival in a beer bar with a stupendous belch. In parts of the Australia, this expression (a) frightens the local wildlife and (b) is a mating call for any female stupid enough not to have left to live somewhere civilized. Any Thai girl will find his morning foreplay very direct. After poking her in the ribs, he'll lean over and ask, "Ya awake?" Sometimes mistaken for a New Zealander, which really annoys Kiwis.

New Zealanders (*chippula shoulderous*): Easily recognized by their

A great big melting pot

tortured vowels and fondness for woolly animals. Often mistaken for Australians. This causes them no end of angst, which is why most of them avoid places such as Phuket.

Canadians (*mountium moosalot*): Often mistaken for Americans, tending to send them into a complete decline. Have much in common with New Zealanders.

Chinese (*herdius sheepus baaaa*): Usually mistaken for Japanese and Koreans. Thankfully, local tour guides have managed to reduce the incidence of their national habit of spitting on almost anything, anytime, anywhere to hotel carpets, tour buses, karaoke bars and beggars.

English (*whinus complainiti*): Easily recognized by their white football shirts with lions rampant. Many are heavily tattooed, a throwback to the time of Boadicea and the Iceni and the belief that discoloring the body will keep them warm in winter. Recognizable by the sort of teeth only envisioned by orthodontists on LSD.

French (*frogula leggium*): Although rarely seen sporting berets, their staccato laugh usually gives them away, as does their prominent probosces. Tend to stay within their community and make aloofness an art form. Regarding themselves as having the best restaurants, they try to keep the riff-raff out by having menus in French only.

Germans (*achtung uberalus*):

Have a penchant for chunky gold chains, bright clothing, steroids and munching on pig's bums, usually, but not always, after the porker has expired. Have conquered most of Naklua, but claim to have no further territorial ambitions.

Scandinavians (*vodkaius smashedium*): Most seem to permanently smile, which may be attributed to (a) they are all part of a sociological experiment in which mental patients are given plane tickets and money to travel to warm climates as part of their rehabilitation; (b) those who aren't mental patients are just very happy to come to a country with a daily average temperature 100°C warmer than their homeland; (c) they can drink an incredible amount of alcohol at prices one-quarter of what they pay back home.

Japanese (*karaokesingus strangulous painfulum*): Often mistaken for Chinese or Koreans, which is unfortunate given their mutual historical animosity with both groups. Tend to bend from the waist a lot, squint and smile. Taking photos is a national pastime.

Indians (*currius munchus*): Usually associated with the Karma Sutra,

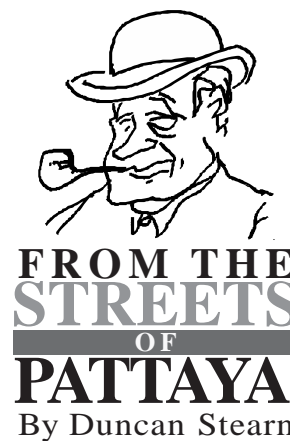
tantric sex and prime ministers who drink their own urine. The Pattaya variety are heavily engaged in travel agencies and the 24-hour suit trade. Brilliant at knocking up

a seersucker or cracker-jack crimpolene number: an art lost to most rag traders in the West sometime around 1979.

Russians (*obnoxious wallius*): Have all the charm of a disabled nuclear reactor. Vendors seeking to offload mountains of garish shirts, pyjama-style shorts and ridiculous hats welcome them with open arms. Capable of even surpassing the Scandinavians in alcohol ingestion.

Finally, the reason 99.98% of people first come to Pattaya and then keep coming back (the other 0.02% are just lost):

Thai bar girl (*coitus regulus remunerum*): The greatest income re-distributor known to man. When they're not sleeping, eating, watching television or talking on their mobile phones, they're thinking about sleeping, eating, watching television or ringing somebody on their mobile phone. Due to their lack of genuine interest in foreign nations, they refer to all customers as ATMs.



When the subject of drinking comes up in conversation, the banter normally revolves around how many wines, margaritas, gin and tonics, or bottles of Singha a person consumes during a typical night out on the town.

There is nothing wrong with drinking alcohol in moderation; a daily glass of wine has even been linked with improved health. Life, however, is about balance; a combination of regular alcohol consumption and living in a hot climate leaves our bodies in need of other drinks to replace lost body fluids and electrolytes.

It is important to know how much you should be drinking; fluid replacement should replenish what you lose through sweating. For most of us in Phuket, this amount will be substantial.

Poeple who play sport will

Looking for liquid refreshment

require more. Of great importance is the replacement of "electrolytes".

Most people drink only when they are thirsty, but the need to rehydrate often occurs before you feel thirsty, especially when playing sports in a hot climate. Initial signs of dehydration are fatigue and a dry mouth.

The real danger occurs when the fluid and electrolyte loss is substantial. Symptoms can include dizziness, vomiting, muscle cramps, headaches and a rise in core body temperature. If not brought under control, heat stroke may occur, which can result in

death. So back to our problem: which drink is best and how much should we drink?

For the inactive, water is normally sufficient. Electrolyte or sodium replacement will normally be achieved through regular diet. If you experience muscle cramps, eat a banana a day. Another method is to add a sprinkling of salt to a meal two or three times a week.

If you exercise or play sport, you need to replace up to one liter of fluids an hour. To determine how much fluid you've lost, weigh yourself before and after exercising. A one-kilogram loss of body weight indicates that you

have lost about one liter of fluid. This must be replaced with a combination of water and sports drinks.

Sports drinks are suitable after exercise because they contain a trace of sugars and electrolytes, such as sodium, potassium and magnesium salts. Sugary drinks, such as Sprite and Fanta, contain way too much sugar (about 14%) and virtually no electrolytes, whereas a drink like Gatorade contains approximately 7% sugar in solution.

The higher the sugar concentration, the slower the digestion of the fluid will be. To stave off dehydration, get fluid into the system as quickly as possible, so don't drink fluids with more than 10% sugar by concentration.

Check with your trainer about which drink is best for you and consume until your body is rehydrated – when your urine is clear or light yellow. Avoid drinking too much, however, as this can

lead to a condition known as hyponatremia, which flushes out all of the body's electrolyte.

Most importantly, never use energy drinks such as Red Bull and M150 as replacement fluids. These all contain caffeine, which elevates the rate of bodily urine excretion (diuresis) and tends to dehydrate the body.

For a cheap and simple rehydration scheme, do what the top professional tennis players do: drink pure water and have a few bites of a banana.

Alternatively, get a big bottle of water beforehand and add a few tablespoons of sugar and a dash of salt. It's just as effective and a lot cheaper than any of the commercially-touted alternatives.

Nick Dobyn is the manager of Phuket Personal Trainers Co Ltd, a Rawai-based personal fitness consultancy. Call 086-2514801 or email Nick at: nick@phuketfitness.net

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By Nick Dobyn

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In The Stars

by Isla Star

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Your aim is on target this week. If you're celebrating a birthday in the coming days, you are assured of success during the year ahead. However, your start should be consistent the way you intend to proceed and this could mean making one or two ruthless decisions concerning business. If you need to have an honest discussion about an employee's poor productivity, do it on Tuesday.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Capricorns seeking a way out of an unattractive obligation should find the answer this Sunday. You will be able to save face and keep your options open. The stars will support your attempts to embark on a new career, but hard work is unavoidable. This could mean streamlining your days off during the holiday season. The number 9 can be lucky on Thursday.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Your good deeds earlier this year are about to be rewarded. Altruistic Aquarians will also be given the opportunity to help those in need this week. However, do not forget that family and friends will also appreciate some attention. If you're single, look out for Cupid's assistance this weekend; a lonely Pisces has the qualities you've been hoping to find in a partner.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Your energy levels pick up this week and you realize that your physical fitness could use some enhancement. Ask Leo if you can join his or her exercise routine and you are certain to make new friends. Work remains somewhat unfulfilling, but a person in authority is about to present you with a new challenge. A modest financial windfall is due later in the week.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): You will probably start wondering whether you will receive any invitations for holiday celebrations. Start the ball rolling by planning a get-together for one of the holidays this month. Others will appreciate the gesture and this would be the ideal opportunity to invite someone special who you've wanted to get to know for some time. Wear apple green to encourage more ambition.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): You should be feeling on top of the world this week. Promising news regarding a creative enterprise can be expected and there's chance you will receive a surprise invitation. Socially, your world is sparkling until the end of the month, but work remains necessary. Plan your time carefully to avoid missing, or even forgetting, important deadlines. Wear the color silver to encourage mental sharpness.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): If you don't know why a friend gives you the cold shoulder this weekend, there's only one way to find out. If you're not afraid of the truth, ask the person in question. Crossed wires could be the simple reason for this situation. Your luck in love will improve if you are honest about your expectations in a relationship. The number 2 is lucky on Wednesday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Those of you hoping to end the year on a positive financial note will be glad to put in some extra hours at work this week. However, you will need to pacify your partner when social appointments need to be canceled. Your tendency to assume everything is alright just because no-one tells you otherwise should be addressed. Wearing the color emerald green encourages better intuition.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Leos who are tempted to build a moat around their castle this weekend should make it extra wide. Family responsibilities are liable to become more complicated at the last minute and an unexpected visit from friends is highlighted. Your mood brightens after Tuesday, when good news from abroad is even better than you had hoped. Singles will be flattered by attention from Aries.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): There's no point in accepting a new job if the pay is peanuts. Promises of wealth to come cannot be relied on and you are advised to remain in situations that can be trusted for the time being. You will receive better offers once the New Year has started. Treading water is also advisable where short-term personal relationships are concerned; if someone is pressuring you to make a serious commitment, you are right to be suspicious.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Leaving the past behind gives you the best chance of success in a new relationship. Your prospective partner is starting to become jealous and this week you will discover that it's time to make serious choices. Thursday is best for a soul-searching conversation. The stars are ready to support your efforts to economize; a bargain hunting trip this weekend proves successful. Wear the color terracotta to encourage more wisdom.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Your tentative plans for the holiday season could be rattled this week when an old party-loving friend suddenly makes contact. Scorpions who were hoping for some low-key fun in the sun should make their needs clear. Energy remains at a low and it's an auspicious time to adopt a healthier routine. Wear lime green to give your spirits a boost.

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Last month I had a chance to drop by the annual ICT Expo at Impact Arena in Bangkok. This year the show featured all of the big names in Thai communications – TOT, TT&T, CAT, True and Hutch – with a handful of government agencies and a small scattering of other related companies.

A few things at the expo surprised me. TOT and TT&T featured expensive exhibits about the future of Internet access in Thailand. Unfortunately, I couldn't find anybody who could or would tell me, definitively, about their companies' plans for Phuket. I guess they don't call us "upcountry" for nothin'.

I have heard rumbles that TOT was about to launch a new initiative to improve Internet access in Phuket homes, but the folks I talked to were short on details and long on hyperbole. Given TOT and TT&T's track records here in Phuket, some skepticism seems in order.

CAT, however, displayed all sorts of maps, facts and figures. As far as I could tell, none had a direct bearing on Internet access in Phuket, but the general trend of more and better seemed evident all over.

The CAT rep I spoke to said that their new wireless broadband EV-DO cards were going to support "Rev A" real soon. Specifically, he said that CAT would start offering the C-motech CCU 680 wireless modem (as opposed to the current CCU 650) and possibly the Sierra Wireless 595U card.

For those of you who haven't been keeping notes, "Rev A" is the next, marginal improvement in wireless Internet service.

If you already have a CCU 650 or Sierra 580 card from CAT, neither will become obsolete overnight. Both use the older but still very capable "Rev 0" (say "rev-zero") technology. Rev A is slightly faster and has less noticeable stutters with Skype, online

ICT Expo offers glimpse of Phuket's IT future



TOT's impressive booth at the recent ICT Expo at Bangkok's Impact Arena demonstrated some tantalizing hints of Internet things to come.

games and other Internet access that alternates quickly between upload and download.

To a typical Internet user in Phuket with a strong CAT signal, the current CCU-650 clocks in download speeds of about 400 to 500Kbps, as measured to the west coast of the US. The new CCU-660 may raise the bar to 520Kbps. Maybe. You'll only notice a significant improvement when running Skype or another VoIP service, or if you play interactive games online.

CAT also had a live demo of "video on demand", a technology that many people call IPTV, which allows you to play movies or other video content directly over the Internet. If you decide at 7:23 one evening that you want to watch *The Shining*, you click your remote a few times and the

movie plays on your TV. Want to pause the show to admire Jack Nicholson's 5 o'clock shadow? Rewind to the beginning of the ax scene? No problem. The movie's transmitted over your Internet connection in real time.

IPTV requires an enormous amount of bandwidth. If you live in Hong Kong, Seoul, Singapore or Stockholm, you already have all the bandwidth you need. If you live in Phuket, well, you live in Phuket.

CAT is seriously talking about stringing fiber-optic cable to homes, at least in some locations in Bangkok. Fiber-optic cables to the home would provide enough bandwidth for IPTV and more, and it's a slam-dunk business proposition for a small, high-demand area like most populated parts of Phuket. I figure it'll happen in Phuket about the same time we see snow in Saphan Hin.

Hutch had an interesting booth. I was surprised to discover that Hutch has no land lines in Thailand. The only service they

offer is via the 3G CDMA phone system. Hutch and CAT use the same technology to deliver fast wireless Internet, but Hutch has an exclusive contract for coverage in Bangkok, and CAT has exclusive rights outside Bangkok. As a result, the EV-DO card you buy here won't work in Bangkok and vice-versa.

CAT and Hutch have been promising to allow customers of one service to use

the other. Although the meld was originally promised for this year, it looks like it'll be 2008 or later before the promise comes true.

Finally, I dropped by the True booth. You probably know True as the company behind UBC television, but you may not know that True is one of the leading Internet Service Providers in Bangkok.

True just opened a coffee shop above the Post Office on the Patong beach road, and it's packed with electronics. I'm very

curious to find out whether or not True has any intentions of offering Internet access here in Phuket. So far, no definitive word – but I'll keep you posted.

Therapy on the road. In response to a loud chorus of requests – and not a few cries of pain and duress – I'm taking the PC Group Therapy sessions on the road. As many of you know, I started the weekly sessions six months ago to help people in Phuket get their computer questions answered. The idea is pretty simple: let's get a bunch of computer people together in the same place at the same time and help each other solve problems.

On December 9, we'll have a PC Group Therapy session at the Sandwich Shoppe near the entrance to Laguna, between 10 am and noon. On December 16, we'll move to the brand-new Sandwich Shoppe in Chalong, located near Wine Connection on Chao Fa East Rd, about one kilometer north of Chalong Circle.

Through 2008, we'll keep the PC Group Therapy sessions moving around the island. On the

first Sunday of every month – for example, on January 5 – we'll meet at the Sandwich Shoppe in

Patong, our original location. On the second Sunday (January 12), we'll move to the Sandwich Shoppe at Laguna, then on the third Sunday (January 19) we'll be at the Sandwich Shoppe in Chalong. Check the latest plans at the forum kindly hosted by Oz Visual Communications (www.ozvisual.com/forum/pclubforum.php).

This is your chance to tap into a vast amount of local knowledge, and it doesn't cost a *satang*. We often discuss issues for people new to Windows, the Internet, Microsoft Office and other applications, and multimedia, even fancy TVs, telephones and the iPod genre.

Woody's latest book, *Windows Home Server For Dummies*, is now available all over the world, in several languages. He can be contacted at woody@khunwoody.com or visit www.askwoody.com.

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Dying doesn't mean having your assets frozen off

Inheritance of money always involves at least two people: the donor and the recipient. But when more people are involved, the situation becomes far more complex because – as in most areas of financial planning – it requires greater attention to the individual situation.

With expatriates in Thailand, often the breadwinner has had two marriages and children from both. Expats have a habit of acquiring assets in various parts of the world and the arrival of the “grim reaper” often leads to a legal nightmare.

When an expat dies, his family does not know where his assets are held. There may be bank accounts, mutual funds, shares and properties held by the deceased during his lifetime, but if there is no documentary proof at hand it may be impossible to track assets. Many governments regularly issue statistics of unclaimed assets and the amounts involved are enormous.

Planning an estate is usually not a lengthy exercise but it is a matter that people often procrastinate about. All of us realize we are mortal, but many of us expect we will live longer than we actually do.

I am currently assisting in one case in which the deceased was in apparent robust good health on going to bed but simply died during the night in his sleep. An exit this easy is hoped for by most people, but because we are human and are subject to all the idiosyncrasies of our species we expect to have at least some warning of our demise.



One of the most common problems that happens after death is that, by announcing the death, the resulting estate becomes “frozen”. This often results in widows and the family immediately facing a liquidity crisis.

The deceased may have left a modest or substantial estate, but the widow or widower suddenly does not have access to ready cash to pay day-to-day expenses. This is not just a problem for expats, but a worldwide dilemma.

However, with expats, it is likely to be more difficult to resolve. One simple route that can save much pain is to have insurance policies made payable to the surviving spouse rather than paid into the estate.

Through this route, only a death certificate is required to claim the benefits. It may have to be translated into English or

another language and duly notarized, but this can be done relatively quickly.

Insurance policies are often not simply an accumulation of regular payments by the policyholder that are a guaranteed payout on his death. They are often “vehicles” or platforms that hold a large amount of assets invested regionally, or even globally.

Expats who have been resident outside their home countries for long periods should consider transferring their holdings, such as bank account balances, from their “home” countries to offshore accounts.

For example, when a UK expat has a bank account in the UK, it is more practical to move this account to the Channel Islands or Isle of Man on becoming a non-resident. One benefit is that on death it takes about six weeks to “wind up” the estate.

Death could be just around the corner for any of us, but once you've popped your clogs, will your family know where to find your assets?

The legal process is just as sophisticated as in the UK, but it is faster because there is no interference from the tax authorities. A similar UK estate

would take on average about one year to wind up.

A question frequently raised by expats with wives and young children is that they are worried that their wives would not be competent in handling the subsequent financial matters and continuing to pay school fees. In short, their death would seriously affect the future of their children.

The best way to avoid this problem is to use a trust; ideally, an offshore trust in a well-respected jurisdiction. It is much better to use a large, respectable corporate trustee than to rely on family members with little or no knowledge of these matters.

However, if it is essential

that a family member be involved in the management of an offshore trust, there are established ways for this to be done.

Many people leave large sums of money for their children to receive on their 18th, 21st or 25th birthdays. Should the sum involved be, say, US\$50,000, then probably not too much damage will be done.

However, often large sums of money suddenly given to a young person can send them completely “off the rails”.

Often, as well-documented in news reports and surveys of the accounts of people who won large amounts of money in lotteries, in most cases the sudden windfall had a very negative effect on the “lucky” winner. Many said they wished that they had never received the money.

The main reason for this is that people can place a value on what they have worked, invested and saved for, but windfalls of large sums, instead of adding value to their lives, often have the opposite effect.



MONEY TALKS

By Richard G Watson

Richard G Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial-planning service. He can be reached at Tel: 076-381997, Fax: 076-383185, Mobile: 081-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th Website: www.global-portfolios.

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ON THE MOVE



Ameer Al-Ali from Jordan has been appointed Executive Chef at the Movenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket.

Mr Al-Ali has worked as a management trainee, chef and sous chef in prestigious locations around the world, including Thullagiri Resort in The Regent of Kuala Lumpur, Dhoveli Beach & Spa Resort and Kempinski Hotel, Amman and in the Maldives, where he worked at the Full Moon Beach Resort and The Four Seasons Resort.

In his last position he was the Executive Chef at Iberotel Palace, a five-star beach resort in Sharm, Egypt

Kulchada "Fann" Boonrawd from Phang Nga has been appointed Marketing Communications Manager for Banyan Tree Phuket.

K. Fann has a bachelor's degree in tourism management from Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University.

K. Fann brings a wealth of experience with her from her time at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket and Allamanda Phuket working in sales and marketing. In her new post, K. Fann will be responsible for managing and handing all media and marketing communications tasks on site together with her sales and events team.



Jakchalat Puangubol from Bangkok has been appointed Finance Analysis Manager of Shinawatra Home Co Ltd.

He graduated with a master's degree from the Faculty of Business Management at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce and with a bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Business Management at Bangkok University.

He has worked as a Financial Consultant for Baan Badin Raksa Pattavikorn in Bangkok and Intern Vallay Project in Rayong.

In his last position, K. Jakchalat was the Credit Manager of The Ocean Securities and Finance Co Ltd.



Food importers enjoy festive season spike

By Semacote Suganya

PHUKET: Phuket's food importers are enjoying the festive season as foreigners fill up their fridges for Christmas and new year feasting while the island's resorts promote their festive menus.

Many of the tourists who have booked stays in Phuket's four- and five-star resorts during the island's peak season have had to pay for their compulsory Christmas meal, ranging from 4,000 to 10,000 baht per head.

Imports of seasonal fruits such as cherries, blueberries and other berries spike at this time of year as do imports of poultry. However, recent restrictions and clampdowns on poultry imports due to the risks involved with avian flu contamination, some suppliers are not importing fresh turkeys.

Regional Sales Manager for Choice Foods Thailand, Daniel Donatelli explained to the *Gazette* that as Choice Foods is a large company specializing in fresh and live products, they now avoid the risk of cross-contamination from poultry with other meat and vegetable products by simply not importing turkeys.

"About 80% of the products we import, such as meats, seafood, vegetables, salmon and lamb, are from Australia, Spain, New Zealand and the US," he said.

CP Foods, however, are continuing to import poultry. The reason given to the *Gazette* is that CP's operations are specifically geared to dealing

with poultry and that they have closed systems to ensure poultry remains separated from other live-stock.

"The main difference between our meat products and those you'll find on supermarket shelves is that our products always display a slaughter date, whereas others will often only have a sell by date, which gives no real indication of how long the food has been stored before the customer buys it," Mr Donatelli explained.

"It is important that we understand the market correctly as we deal directly with farms on a weekly basis.

"As well as supplying hotels and restaurants in the area, we also supply some of the island's supermarkets," he added.

"As a wholesaler, we regularly supply about 130 five-star hotels and restaurants in Phuket, Krabi, Khao Lak and on Phi Phi," he added.

"We usually keep about 20 tonnes of stock in our stores with three delivery trucks operating full time in Phuket, but demand for imported food products increases by about four to five times the normal rate during the Christmas and New Year period," he explained.

Sathit Promwieng, Manager of Don's Mall in Rawai, said that they see an increase in orders from hotels and restaurants in December.

"Last year we sold more than 60 turkeys. Customers usually opt for a pre-cooked turkey meal service, which we provide."

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Diving into an unconventional life

So why has it become so popular to become a dive professional? What is the allure of being a underpaid dive master? Why do impressionable divers leave their cold countries to come to Phuket and continue their diving education? I remember the turning point for me, when and why I made that fateful decision.

I had just finished an open water course in Dahab, Egypt, and was at the end of a four-month solo backpacking trip.

One afternoon I saw my dive instructor sitting under a fig tree, (looks more or less like a palm tree) wearing only a pair of shorts, backdropped by the red sea and I thought to myself, "Why do I live and work in the chaos of an urban metropolis, drive an hour everyday in rush hour traffic, wear uncomfortable business clothes and cram my feet into high heels?"

Why can't I have a life like that?" I couldn't think of a reason why not. At that moment I decided to lead what I refer to as an "unconventional life" - to this day it is still unconventional.

At that time, dive masters and dive instructors were highly respected. In our little philistine diving community in Dahab.

We were well impressed by dive masters and instructors who could avoid getting lost or use a compass.

In that small diving-backpacker colony, dive masters and instructors were the epitome of cool, had there been an A-list in the Sinai desert, they would have topped it.

So besides the hipness fac-



Being a part of someone's holiday makes you a part of memories they will have forever, not to mention the 100s of photos they insist you pose for.

tor and free diving, what are the attractions of being a dive master? It's an idyllic life, outside the box.

A way for people to do what they love, while rebelling against conventional lifestyles; it's global employability. Dive instructing is a way to travel and dive in parts of the world that may otherwise not be possible or unimaginable.

I remember thinking I had attained my goal of an "amazing life" (by my own standards at the time), when working on a five-star liveaboard from

Bali.

We were on Komodo Island in Indonesia searching (and chumming) for Komodo dragons.

I truly felt my life was amazing, although most people probably have different criteria, I had met mine.

This was the "height of my

diving career" (short but full) and I was definitely the envy of professional diving friends.

Personally, I enjoyed liveaboard work more than teaching or day trips. During my first liveaboard trip to the Similan islands, I thought I had died and gone to heaven.

The natural beauty is outstanding; 9 tropical islands with white-sand beaches and turquoise water, a shade you will never find in Patong Bay.

It is more than a job, it is a fantastic lifestyle. Waking up everyday to a view of the ocean meeting the beach on an empty tropical island outside your window (all divers must experience a Similans liveaboard).

Imagine rolling out of bed, striding to the back of a boat and jumping into underwater bliss instead of a driving in rush hour hordes. It beats urban madness any day.

For people who are sociable, working a liveaboard is an ideal job.

All legs on deck



PHUKET: Seventeen schools from Phuket's southern provinces took part in the OBEC-Honda 31 Legs United Race at Sanaam Chai Stadium on November 24.

Each team consisted of 30 students aged 10 to 12. The challenge: For the 30-member team to complete a 50-meter dash while tied together by the legs.

The first five teams over the line on the day won a chance to compete in the national finals in Bangkok on January 12 for the HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn trophy and the 30,000-baht top prize.

The winning ensemble of legs came from Sang Thong Wittaya School, Songkhla, who completed the dash in 9.37 seconds.

The four other teams heading to the nationals are Baan Mae Khri School from Phatthalung, Tessabaan 01 School from Trang, Wat Kuan Wiset School from Trang and Bang Bang Tao School from Phuket.

Every four or five days, whole new groups of people arrive and if they're nice and fun, as most people on holiday are, then it's a perpetual parade of new friends.

You gain a collection of numbers and addresses of friends from around the world. These are people you will never forget.

After the Tsunami it was my previous diving customers who dialed me first; I received calls from around the world.

This may seem ideological, but dive masters or instructors can really make a difference in

someone's life.

Being a part of someone's holiday makes you a part of memories they will have forever, not to mention the hundreds and hundreds of photos they insist you pose for.

You can have an impact on someone's life whether it's spending extra time with a nervous diver, teaching them to relax and enjoy the experience, or making sure people have the great holiday they want.

My dive instructor inspired me in ways that have changed my life forever.

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Cigana and Blatchford win Laguna triathlon

CHERNG TALAY: Massimo Cigana from Venice and Briton Liz Blatchford ran, swam and cycled their way to the front of a throng of about 700 athletes from 44 countries at this year's Laguna Phuket Triathlon on December 2.

The field comprised the likes of 2007 Hawaii Ironman World Championship winner Chrissie Wellington from the UK, Ford Ironman 70.3 World Championship 2007 winner Mirinda Carfrae from Australia and German Faris Al-Sultan, winner of the 2005 Ford Ironman World Championship, Hawaii.

The race began at the Laguna Beach Resort's beach front, with the first wave of competitors setting off at 7 am followed 10 minutes later by the second wave.

The day kicked off with a 1.8-kilometer swim, first completing a leg in the Andaman Sea and then across beachside lagoon. Italian Leonardo Bellerini was first out of the water in the men's race, completing the swim leg in 22 minutes 15 seconds.

Mathieu O'Halloran from Canada and Al-Sultan were close behind.

Massimo Cigana powered his way through the field during the 55km cycle, taking in the Phuket countryside and pulling away from second-place Richie Cunningham from Australia.

Cigana was off his bike and on his feet for the 12km run after 1:21:05. Meanwhile, Bryan Rhodes from New Zealand had edged his way into third place.

Cigana secured the title and the US\$3,000 prize money with a winning time of 2:31:46. Cunningham finished second, while Al-Sultan clawed on to



Massimo Cigana (left) and Liz Blatchford celebrate their wins at the accompanied by Lilly the elephant.

take third place.

In the women's race, after a strong swim and a gruelling bike ride, Liz Blatchford found herself in third place, trailing behind Australians Belinda Granger and Carfrae as the women began the 12km run.

Returning to competition after a nine-month hiatus recovering from a spine operation, Blatchford fought her way back into first place, completing the course in 2:42:24. Carfrae finished in second place, followed by Granger in third place.

A 6km fun run, which took place at 8 am, was won by Aussie Bradley Follett (24:05) in the men's race, with Grace Wong of Canada winning the women's title with a time 27:15.

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

PATONG: Nearing the end of the season in the Patong Darts League, it is wide open after Queen Mary's lead was cut to two points after winning a home match 6-3 to Shakers, but dropping the beer leg.

Elvis of Shakers had a good night too, upsetting Billy in the singles and repeating the performance in the doubles. Queen Mary remain undefeated and with a game in hand and just three weeks to go.

Defending champs Dog's Bollocks completed yet another 3-point sweep, this time at home against Simply Red.

In another blowout, Valhalla got whitewashed 9-0 on the road at third-place Piccadilly.

Bars wishing to join the next league, expected to start the second week of February, should contact league secretary Steen as soon as possible.

Send match notes, comments and queries to: darts@phuketgazette.net

November 27 results: Beach House 4 Market Bar* 5; Piccadilly* 9 Valhalla 0; Queen Mary 6 Shakers* 3; Dogs Bollocks* 6 Simply Red 3; Offshore bye; (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Queen Mary (32pts.); 2. Dogs Bollocks (30); 3. Piccadilly (27); 4. Offshore (24); 5. Shakers (19); 6. Simply Red (15); 7. Market Bar (14); 8. Valhalla (9); 9. Beach House (4).

December 11 match ups: Market Bar v Offshore; Beach House v Dogs Bollocks; Queen Mary v Simply Red; Valhalla v Shakers; Piccadilly v bye. (home teams listed first).

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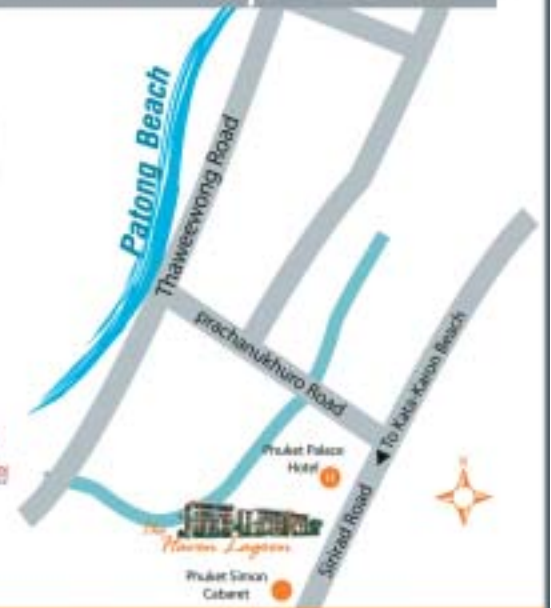
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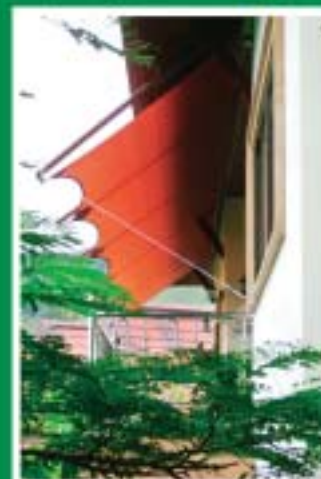
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Construction

by Janyaporn Morel

RAWAI: Work on the 210-million-baht Valencia at Rawai private pool villa project, located on seven rai about 100 meters north of the Rawai Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor) office, is on schedule for completion August next year.

Puwanai "Best" Wanamakok, of partner-developer Wanamakok Civil & Environmental Consultants Co Ltd (WCEC) told the *Gazette* the project has already broken ground.

The project will comprise 12 Southern California-style villas on land plots ranging from 490 square meters to 598sqm.

Prices for the homes start at 16.5 million baht.

"All of the homes share the same basic design, but the interior of each can be customized to meet customer requirements. The homes will be two-story, four-bedroom villas, each with a guest room separate from the main building with an en suite bathroom," K. Best explained.

On the second floor will be two bedrooms with a shared bathroom, while the master bedroom with en-suite bathroom will be on the ground floor and have doors opening directly onto the terrace and four-by-six-meter swimming pool.

Also on the ground floor will be a maid's room with bathroom and a separate guest toilet.

Total living space in each home will be about 300sqm, excluding parking space for two cars, a balcony and a swimming pool. The four houses on the plots on the highest level of the project will have views of Rawai Beach and the bay beyond.

"One of the outstanding features of our homes is that the separate guest-room pavilion is located by the swimming pool. We did this because guests will have more privacy and feel more comfortable by not staying in the

Rawai dreamin'



The villa project Valencia at Rawai offers 12 Southern California-style home, each with two stories and four bedrooms.

same area as the owner.

"The homes also have open foyers, which is a popular design concept in the US," K. Best said.

The living room is also very open with a high ceiling, he added.

"I think the homes are suitable for the climate here [in Phuket] as this design is from Southern California, which has a similar climate to Phuket. Spacious homes with open designs and gardens are ideal here.

"There are not many projects like this in this area, and as this is our first residential project, I just want to do my best, gain experience and build my reputation for my next project," he said.

"We do everything – plan, design, build and control the project – by ourselves, so we can pass on large savings to our customers. It also allows us to control the quality of work, so this

too we can pass on to our customers with our prices," he said.

"Although there are a lot of apartments and condominiums in Phuket now, private houses are also needed for families.

Valencia is a "community" project. It will have a public park with a fish pond and there will be a 24-hour security service.

"Our major selling points are the privacy we offer. We're very

close to Rawai and Nai Harn beaches and we're not far from all the things needed for day-to-day life," he said.

"Our sales office, built in the same style as the project, opened in August. The people who have inquired about our project mainly have been interested in the design and pricing.

"Generally, they have been people looking to become long-term residents, expats with Thai families or Thai families who don't want to live in crowded areas such as Patong, Kata or Karon," K. Best said.

"I want to make our first residential project our best, then with our next project we can focus on maintaining the quality so we will not disappoint our customers," he added.

"We will build to order, and we will need about eight months to one year to complete one house," he said.

For more information about Valencia at Rawai, contact the sales office at 87/12 Moo 2, Rawai, Muang, Phuket 83130. Tel: 087-8901580. Fax: 076-288114. Email: valencia@wcec-phuket.com Website: www.wcec-phuket.com/valencia.

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Design

by Natcha Yuttaworawit

Civilizations around the world were getting creative with ceramic more than 4000 years ago. Mosaics of ceramic tiles have been found in the pyramids, the ruins of Babylon and the ancient ruins of Greek cities. The word “ceramic” comes from the Greek word for pottery, “keramos”, which actually has its roots in Sanskrit.

Europe caught on a little later, with ceramic tiles starting to appear in Spain and Portugal around the latter half of the 12th century. Tiles from each region are distinct and one can easily tell the difference between the rouge and black maiolica floor tiles of Renaissance Italy and the pale blues of the Shang-Yin Dynasty, for example.

Decor and mosaic tile suppliers Casa Nine produce a range of traditional and modern tile styles in various sizes that can transform rooms with Gothic, Greek or any other classic rendition that comes to mind.

Tile decor designs on display at Casa Nine include two tone tessellated Gothic stars, which make for an interesting arrangement that please an eye for symmetry, and curved tiles that look like marshmallows that have been pinched at the sides to create gaps between the tiles.

Jigsaw tiles are a mix and

Babylon in your bathroom



Mosaic landscapes and tiles sealed with translucent, colored tops are among the range of tiles that can add a unique touch to a home.

match variety of lengths and sizes that fit together in a scattered pattern like a jigsaw. Softer on the eyes is the range of “Sofa” style tiles in pastel colors. Their rounded surfaces look like puffy pillows.

Just right for a Phuket bathroom are the “Nature” style tiles, featuring marine life, such as seahorses, crabs and shell fish.

For the classic Mediterranean look, the “Old” style collection will make an attractive Eu-

ropean-style floor or wall arrangement.

Don’t think that using tiles means creating just a wall of squares, though. Casa Nine can create artistic walkways and art-decor walls with flowing inlays of colored stones, leaf reliefs, shells and textured cement with glazed ceramic inlays.

These designs by Casa Nine have been used at some of Phuket’s prestigious villas and resorts, such as decorative arch-

ways at the Sheraton Grande and in the Trisara bathrooms and Thai-Balinese swimming pools.

The most significant advantage of Casa Nine’s tile adaptations is that customers can have their own design or favorite painting turned into a ceramic tile mosaic. The customer needs to provide the Casa Nine designers with an image, which is then scaled to the correct proportions so that it can be applied to the surface tile by tile.

“Most of our customers are foreigners, as they are usually looking for a unique way of decorating their bathroom or pool,” said Krittya Mahasung, managing director of Casa Nine.

“Tile mosaics look good almost anywhere inside or outside the house, but bathrooms look best when they have been decorated with a mosaic of colored tiles,” she added.

K. Krittya said that the natural look of earthenware tiles and mosaics is very popular as it can help keep a room cool. She said that ceramic tiles look good when used against other natural materials, such as wood, stone and metal.

Pricing for the tiles is by the square meter. Swimming pool tiles, for example, are usually four centimeters square and sell for 150 baht per square meter.

There are two showrooms in Phuket: Casa Nine, near Wichit Songkram School on Chao Fa West Rd; and Casa Emporium near Wat Naka in Wichit. Open from 9 am to 6 pm, closed Sundays. Tel: 076-221286. Email: info@casanine. com Website: www.casanine.com

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A property market named desire

Going by the numbers, the sunny isle of Phuket has seen a flourish of economic growth in 2007. It's been a banner year for tourism with arrivals looking to exceed five million. Hotel occupancies together with average room rates are now pushing past the pre-tsunami boom years.

For the property market, the year has been a mixed bag, given the effects of the military coup, the brouhaha over changes to the Foreign Business Act and now uncertainty over the December 23 general election.

While the political landscape has been uncertain, the investment climate has been buoyant, with high-profile, international-investor-driven projects, such as the Shangri-La, Taj, Raffles, Marriott Vacation ownership expansion, The Yamu boutique hotel and Jumeirah Private Island Resort.

Major hotel branding has also continued with French chain Accor opening the Mercure in Patong, Singapore's Millennium soon to open at Jungceyong and the Marriott opening four new managed projects under its core brand Courtyard flag in Surin, Kamala and Patong.

Tourism remains a key indicator for property sales in Phuket, but the industry has had its ups and downs throughout the year.

Tracking performance in the property market in Phuket, however, is not straightforward. The hotel market has hard data on the number of hotel rooms and, to a lesser degree, competitive figures within the branded hotels on occupancy and rates are being traded.

In contrast, transaction data for mid- and upper-level properties is not readily available to the public as in most Western countries. Reasons for this include

many overseas buyers preferring leasehold properties and that some projects' sales are on share-purchase agreements that are signed overseas, together making tracking transactions through the Land Office a daunting task.

During the first half of 2007, there was clear a fall in sales according to most of the larger developers here, which was expected given the political issues and removal of then-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. But now, in the fourth quarter, there is an upswing, which is consistent with the arrival of high season.

Keeping track of trends is important in any business and the property business does track the hotel market in Bangkok. By the numbers, in a market that caters to a good amount of corporate business, the first three quarters of the year saw demand down by 15% to 20%, mainly in the business segment, but the fourth quarter is showing marked recovery and growth despite new accommodations entering the market.

Supply is increasing, as one can easily see by getting in a car and driving around the island and seeing the building sites and billboards. What was once a fledgling market has now become a full-size industry in itself. Other overseas markets are keen to use

Phuket as a blueprint for success.

During the past three months, we've seen groups from the private and public sectors from Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia and China taking a serious look at both the mixed-use and individual property markets, trying to create their own blueprint or adopt the best practices in their local markets. The Malaysian government has thrown open the doors to the foreign retirement market and in Vietnam



The diversity of the attractions of not only Phuket but also Phang Nga, mainland Krabi, Koh Lanta and Phi Phi makes for a domination destination when competing against other Asian resort locales.

laws have been revised, increasing long-term land leases from 50 to 70 years.

One thing for certain is that Phuket, as the "darling" of the resort property market, has become an object of desire for many competing markets in Thailand and elsewhere in Asia. Moving into 2008 and beyond, one key component needed to sustain the momentum is aligning the industry with tourism.

While Phuket property has remained dominated by buyers from Hong Kong, Singapore, the UK and now from Scandinavia; the question is now whether demand can keep pace with supply growth. The burning question is, "Where will the buyers come from in the next few years?"

As with tourism here, property agents aim to extend real estate sales to new international markets, which requires overseas marketing. The power of Phuket as a brand name seems to have enormous potential. Certainly adding to this is the diversity within the "Greater Phuket" area, which includes Phang Nga, mainland Krabi, Koh Lanta and the Phi Phi Islands, together forming a unique offering compared with any other market in the region.

number of international visitors to the island.

There are examples of efficient destination-marketing initiatives, such as the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board and Hawaii Visitors Bureau, which have played important roles in tourism growth in those locales.

Hopefully, there will be a wake-up call for Phuket, which is so dependent on tourism and its offspring industries, including property.

A wake-up call that fills the new hotels under construction, provides visitors to the shopping malls and buyers for the villas and apartments. A wake-up call that results in investment in collective marketing and a focus on developing new markets, which will help retain and develop Phuket's market share in a competitive global economy.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks, 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.



PROPERTY WATCH

By Bill Barnett

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Gardening

by Bloomin' Bert

I like salt. Call me weird, but anything salty is good. So why does salt get such bad press? In the vernacular, salt rocks. I'm not quite sure where the vernacular is exactly, but as some wise scholar once pointed out, "Salt is the only rock we eat."

With today's fancy "boutique" ingredients and fad diets emerging on a far-too-regular basis, many people forget that salt is actually essential to survival – your body needs it to regulate vital fluids. The weird thing is that our bodies can't produce salt, so we have to consume what we need.

I will grudgingly accept that sometimes we take in a bit too much, sometimes to the point where it might be detrimental to our health, but the experts can't seem to agree on where that point actually lies. The Heart, Lung and Blood Institute in the US urges people to limit their salt intake to about a teaspoonful a day. Fooey.

There are many books about reducing or omitting dietary salt and many others about how we should eat more of the stuff. In centuries past, wars were fought over obtaining the substance.

Apparently, at one time, salt was so valuable that Roman soldiers received a salt allowance as part of their pay. The Latin term for this allowance was *salarium argentum*, the origin of the English word "salary" and the French word "argent", meaning silver or money.

There are also a fair few medicinal uses of salt. People learned early on that applying salt to an open or infected wound would draw out the infection and help it heal. Who doesn't remember grandma insisting on a salt-water gargle to cure a sore throat? It made us gag, but it seemed to do the job.

The importance of salt as a culinary ingredient is fairly obvious – it's in just about every recipe nowadays. That wasn't always the case though. In the Stone Age, they didn't need extra salt, be-

Sending a salute to salt



The purple Madagascar periwinkle can be seen everywhere and is known to take over areas if left to its own devices. It thrives on the sea air, however, and is ideally suited to the Phuket climate.

cause they hunted most of their food and mainly ate red meat, which has plenty of salt in it already – vegetarians, take note.

Can you still get sea salt? I remember a school science experiment in which we had to extract salt crystals from saltwater. Not a particularly difficult task, but we got to use Bunsen burners and play with flames. The thing I recall most clearly was the edict from the chemistry teacher, who said, "This salt isn't edible – don't eat it."

Thirteen-year-old Bert saw this as a personal challenge, of course. I took home the crystalline contents of that little white enamel dish from the school lab and sprinkled the lot on my plate of chips that night – perfectly edible. combined with a little vinegar, it went down very well.

Sea salt is all around us in the Phuket air – just check the film of salt on your sunglasses after half an hour at the beach on a breezy day. This kind of atmosphere is enough to kill off many plants, as salty air isn't something that most forms of

plant life are particularly willing to put up with.

A gentleman by the name of Frank contacted me at bert@bloominbert.com this week, saying that he recently rented a beach house with a garden approximately 25 meters from the sea at Ao Yon. He asked me if I could recommend some small potted plants which would be suitable for the sea air.

Well Frank, you're actually spoiled for choice. Probably the best known plant would be the Madagascar periwinkle. This is one of those plants that you just can't seem to escape from – it's everywhere on the island, from growing as an unprompted weed at the side of the road to huge flower beds of the things.

Your biggest problem will be getting these plants to stop growing. Equally content in sandy soil or potted, they will put up with just about anything. All I can assume is that conditions in Madagascar must be similar to Phuket. These plants love the sun and if potted the only demand they make is for plenty of water. In

the ground, they're happy to dig deep and find it themselves.

Although I hate to admit it, the ugly duckling of the Phuket plant world, the *euphorbia milii*, or crown of thorns, is another pot lover that does well here. Few Thai gardeners in Phuket don't have one or two of these dotted around the outside their houses.

These plants may look like monsters on dope, but at least they don't have the audacity to demand anything from you. If you want a pot plant that is pretty much self-sufficient, then these things will do the job.

Another slight oddity, although nowhere near as unsightly, is a potted plant that has a use other than just sitting there looking green – aloe vera. Aloes are easy-going, succulent plants that need very little maintenance. There are only a few basic rules

that need to be followed.

When the rainy season hits, don't water them. An aloe can go for months without water, but they rot easily when they get wet. If you do give them a bit of water in the hot season, make sure that the water goes onto the soil rather than the leaves.

Aloe vera can also be a useful treatment for a range of ailments from inflammation and arthritis, to sunburn and bites. Just cut off a mature leaf and you'll find the inside full of a gel that works wonders. It doesn't help reduce beer guts, unfortunately.

Just enough space for one more: a plant that many people see as a weed, but one that I'm rather partial to – lantana. It's made of clusters of tiny, brightly-colored flowers. They even appear in three colors – yellow, orange and red – in a single cluster. They're resilient plants that thrive in Phuket and bloom profusely.

So Frank, thank you for the idea. Not the quickest of replies to an email, but at least I got there in the end.

There's no escaping salt in Phuket. Being an island surrounded by the sea has a lot to do with that, but at least there are plenty of options for pots in gardens that require very little from their owners. Time for a margarita, perhaps – plenty of salt on the glass, of course.

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?

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BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE



51.47sqm, in Chanakran Property Village, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Behind TOT Public Co Ltd in Chalong. Price: 3.6 million baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 081-9562406.

RAWAI HOUSE WITH POOL

220sqm. living area 12x4m saltwater pool 700sqm land plot, newly built, built-in aircon, all facilities high standard, unbelievably nice. Contact Tim at Tel: 087-8938747.

DISCOUNT PRICE

In January a beautiful, 1-story, 90sqm pool-villa in Rawai will be ready. Price in 2007: 4.5 million baht. In 2008: 5.5 million baht. Finishing is still flexible. Tel: 085-7955383.

RAWAI LAND SALE

1.1 rai on-soi Suksan, Chanote, private access, quiet location and views. 4.5 million baht. (no agents). Tel: 076-521005, 085-7827551.

HEAVEN ON EARTH



5-bedroom, Thai-style villa in Phuket. Magnificent Phang Nga Bay view. 3 big bedrooms are en suite with sea view. Private swimming pool. Land plot 730.8sqm. construction area approx 573sqm. Full security service. Located at Rommai Chailay Estate. 27 million baht. Tel: 081-7191705. Email: layan@loxinfo.co.th

NEAR GOLF COURSES



For sale in Kathu, furnished 2-story house, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms and garden on 488sqm land. 7.5 million baht. Tel: 083-3953976. Email: kawthai@hotmail.com

NEW SEAVIEW CONDOMINIUM

New seaview condominium units: 60, 120 and 180sqm. Overlooking Chalong Bay and Rawai Bay. From 1.8 million baht. Contact Kuno. Tel: 081-9685963. Email: kuno@bayproject.com For details, please see our website at: www.bayproject.com/invest/index.htm

SEAVIEW, FLAT LAND - RAWAI

Access from main road. 20x80m (1 rai). Company available, no transfer fee. Only 15 million baht. Tel: 081-7888280. Email: mauram7@hotmail.com

URGENT SALE

Khao Lak. Bang Niang bungalow-apartment resort. 8 bungalows with 2 rooms and 2 bungalows with 3 rooms. 6m x 12m swimming pool. Sauna, Jacuzzi and restaurant. All rooms with aircon, TV, DVD player and ADSL. Parking available. 9 million baht. Tel: 076-346065, 081-8914844. Email: joerg@phuket.ksc.co.th

14-ROOM HOTEL

Lovely 14-guestroom hotel with swimming pool on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd. Only one year old, this successful business provides a good income and is easily managed. Great location, great reputation and an attractive price, 22.5 million baht. Tel: 081-3700084. Email: ian@teflplus.com Details and photos can be viewed at www.patonghotel.t35.com

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

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.

RAWAI SEAVIEW CONDO

Furnished studio for rent. Aircon, TV, UBC and ADSL. 5,500 baht per month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 084-0579266. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

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

PATONG APARTMENT

300m from beach. Clean, modern and comfortable. Aircon, fridge, TV, big bed, pool and parking. Tel: 081-0825707. Website: www.phuket-accommodation.info

LUXURY VILLA - RAWAI

4 Bedrooms, large bath, pool and garden. UBC, aircon, European kitchen. 70,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-2790837. Email: bricothailand2@hotmail.com

WHEN YOU WANT

a house or pool villa to rent or sale. We have quality choices, from a variety of locations for you. We try to do the best for you. Please contact for more information at Tel: 089-2929095. Email: ppsr.property@gmail.com

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, UBC, ADSL, private pool. Rent: 45,000 per month. Tel: 084-0579266. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

LAND NEAR KAMALA for long-term lease. Contact at Tel: 081-5367435.

MINI RESORT - POOL

Luxury 3-bedroom home and spa near Laguna. Reasonable weekly or monthly rates. Tel: 089-5944067.

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.

KAMALA

4-bedroom, detached, executive house in small compound for long-term rent. Pool, UBC and security. 50,000 baht. Call tel: 081-9560527.

BOAT LAGOON LUXURY

Waterfront townhouses for rent. 2 & 3 bedrooms, UBC, TV. Long- or short-term rent. Pool, sauna included. Call K. So at Tel: 081-3444473.

SINGLE HOUSE FOR RENT

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- kitchen
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MODERN HOUSE, QUIET LOCATION

Fully-furnished Western house with large terrace and fenced-in tropical garden. UBC, ADSL, alarm, garage, 2 bedrooms with bathrooms en suite, full aircon and ceiling fans. Only long-term rentals. 28,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-8744050. Email: happyjo@procom.in.th

RENT PERFECT HOUSE

Near Heroines monument, 3 bedrooms, 3 aircons, 2 bathrooms, hot shower, fully furnished, large kitchen with oven, fridge, washer and dryer, nice garden in corner. 25,000 baht per month or 23,000 baht (minimum 1 year). Contact at Tel: 081-8512280. Email: dennis.mo@hotmail.com

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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.

HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, cable, telephone, Internet, fully furnished, 24hr security and swimming pool. 17,000 baht per month. Near Heroines' monument. Tel: 087-8173019 (Eng), 083-1036578 (Thai).

NEW HOUSE NEAR LAGUNA

Fully-furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircon units, hot water, car park. Cherng Talay. Contact K. Porn. Tel: 087-2740680. Email: noegabriele@hotmail.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.

HOUSES FROM WELLTA

Do you want to rent or buy a house on my island? Maybe I can help you. My name is Wellta. For info contact me at Tel: 081-9680309. Email: info@houseinphuket.com www.houseinphuket.com

BOAT LAGOON HOUSE FOR RENT

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, includes washer and dryer. Large terrace and canal. Only minutes from shopping centers and international school. Long-term rent, 1 year minimum, 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-2820567. Email: crystaleva1@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT AT CHALONG

New single house in Land and House Park for long-term rent. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 240sqm, 2 aircon. 17,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-5697068. Email: sirio@tisco.co.th

BANG TAO HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, pool and 2 living rooms. Tel: 084-8516121. Email: phuketmat@yahoo.com

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.

HOUSE FOR RENT IN CHALONG



2 bedrooms, kitchen, living room, dining room, laundry room, fully furnished, aircon in every room, carpark, swimming pool (shared), tropical garden. High-speed Internet and UBC satellite TV included. 25,000 baht per month, minimum 6 months. Tel: 087-1057320. Email: stefan@phuketit.co.th For details, see our website at www.chalongparadise.com

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. Please contact Tel: 087-2650652. Email: gisbert1@gmx.net

RAWAI HOUSE

for rent. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, swimming pool, cable TV, ADSL Internet. Tel: 081-6067410.

CHALONG TOWNHOUSE

Furnished, 2 bedrooms, big kitchen, aircon, telephone line, TV. Minimum 6-month lease, 9,000 baht. Utilities extra. Tel: 076-344487, 087-2814535.

HOUSE - NAI YANG 2 BEDROOMS

Luxury furnished house, 2 aircon rooms, 2 bathrooms. 23,000 baht per month. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

PATONG APARTMENT SEAVIEW

Cable TV, aircon. Located near Central. 16,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-9046993. Email: capnnard@gmail.com

QUALITY HOUSE FOR RENT

Nai Harn-Rawai, 2-3 bedrooms. Private pool, aircon, cable, telephone, Internet. 5 minutes to the beach. Only 38,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-7286242. Email: purimas_re@yahoo.com

LONG-TERM RENT

Quiet, but in central Patong. 2 bedrooms, fully-furnished house. 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6932759. Email: wunhung@gmail.com

CONDOS FOR RENT

Rawai. Renovated, aircon, TV. Tel: 086-9456650. Email: phuketcomfortcondos@hotmail.com

TROPICAL VILLA



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.

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.

BEST DEAL IN KATA BEACH

3 minutes walk from Kata Beach! Tel: 081-8436349. Email: prisanan@gmail.com For details, please see our website at www.huahinpropertiesjmnt.com

TO RENT FOR 5 MONTHS

2 houses with 1,600sqm of land, 300m to the beach. Each house has 1 bedroom, living room, kitchen, bathroom and no furnishings. 12,000 baht per month, vacant from Dec 1, 2007 to April 31, 2008 (perfect for a family). Tel: 081-6913090, 084-8406775.

VILLA 3 BEDROOMS

in Nai Harn. Also aircon/fan room, low rates, long-term rent. Aircon restaurant, kitchen fully fitted, nice area. Tel: 081-8081804. Email: enqtpitstop1@hotmail.com

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.

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. Please contact at Tel: 084-8375985. Email: kamalarob@yahoo.co.uk

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 K. Nui at Tel: 087-3830936.

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.

BEACHFRONT CHALONG

3 new, furnished, 3-bedroom houses. Pools and great views. From 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-4706104.

KAMALA NEW HOUSE

For rent between Dec 20, '07-Jan 1, '08. 2 bedrooms, aircon, 100m to beach. Tel: 086-2746511.

NICE ROOMS

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

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

BUNGALOW FOR 400 BAHT/NIGHT



4 new bungalows for rent. Fully furnished, cable TV, etc. Weekly or long-term. Please contact for more information at Tel: 081-6913029, 089-7286242. Email: purimas_re@yahoo.com

PATONG CONDO

2 rooms, 56sqm, quiet area, near beach and night life. Daily, monthly or yearly rates. Tel: 076-381260, 087-9362514. Email: jimbeckett41@hotmail.com

TOP VILLA, TOP VIEW FOR RENT

Thai style with pool, on top of a private hill. 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms. 4km to BIS. View of golfcourse, lake and valley. Quiet, security guard, maid, furnished, Wi-Fi and UBC. Yearly lease at 75,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2698492.

THALANG HOUSE

for long-term rent, 2 bedrooms, aircon, near waterfall. 37/136 Pernjun villa. 6,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-6831147.

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.

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: earfievat@voila.fr

HOUSE FOR RENT



Brand new! Tel: 076-273466, 081-7190014. Fax: 076-238948. Website: http://www.phuketpropertytrip.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.

HOUSE - NAI YANG 3 BEDROOMS

400sqm, luxury furnished house. Two aircon rooms, 2 bathrooms, cable TV, ADSL. 27,000 baht per month. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

HOMES FOR HOLIDAY

Near Laguna, 3 bedrooms, pool, spa. Cheap rates and weekly rates. Need car to access house. Tel: 089-5944067.

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.

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 - Approx. 20 meters in length
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- Please contact for more information.
Tel: 081-7473425.

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Brand-new, 36ft, twin Yamaha 200hp engines, commercially registered with company if required. 1.75 million baht each ono. Contact Ian. Tel: 087-2776056. Email: ianthebaker@hotmail.com

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For sale: 2 pcs 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: 081-891 3051.

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Length:30m. Gross:322 tons. 244 passenger. 8 million baht. Docked in Phuket. Managed by Bangkok Capital Alliance Co., Ltd. Tel: 081-6192734.

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6 double cabins, 2 saloons, 2007 built with wood-glass-epoxy. No engines. 1.9 million baht. Tel: 087-4618089.

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4.7m x 2.2m Nautica Dinky with 120Hp Jet inboard engine and trailer. Only 400,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-242091, 081-7370557 Fax 076-242091. Email: Dive_Block@web.de

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BAVARIA 49 "2005"

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 needed on board, at well below replacement cost. Highly recommended for your viewing. Call for details. Tel: 076-239768.

ALUMINIUM BOAT

For sale: "Sessa", 3.9L Italian motor with 25hp Johnson. Includes trailer. Sale by foreigner. Call for more information. Tel: 089-7309608.

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

NATIVE ENG TELE-APPOINTMENTS

Native English speakers required for tele-appointments opportunities in Phuket Town. We require articulate, sales-driven individuals for our dynamic and professional company. We operate UK and Australian markets. Excellent salaries and benefits on offer. Email: lan@evocation.net

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Phuket's fastest growing magazine publisher is looking to expand its sales force. We are looking for a motivated, independent sales manager with a pleasant personality. Experience from sales and a strong command of English required. Good salary and commissions for right person. Thai nationals only. Tel: 076-282211, 081-535 3297. Email: info@origo.pub.com

ENGLISH SPEAKING THAI LADY

wanted for general help in afternoons. Must have motorbike or car. Tel: 086-7458832. Email: gregmackay67@hotmail.com

HOTEL STAFF - KATA

Receptionists with good English skills and housekeeping, maids. Please contact for more information at Tel: 087-2674091.

GENERAL MANAGER

required for setting up new car rental and tour operator in Phuket. For more info, please contact. Email: fredrik.phuket@gmail.com

REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON

Property developer in Kata is seeking an experienced salesperson. Excellent English is essential. Good salary and commissions. Tel: 081-788-8280.

STAFF WANTED

Hotel in Patong is looking for an English speaking receptionist. Call Nicolle. Tel: 084-6470468.

Tiger Muay Thai Training Camp Chalong, Phuket, Thailand 076-367-071

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Looking for Thai National (female) age 24-26 to assist in customer relations and front desk reception

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driver and counter tour staff in Patong. Good English skills. Please contact for more details at Tel: 084-0568231.

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Destination Air seeks professional accountant. Must have minimum 7 years accounting experience with degree. Good English important, Peachtree Accounting Software knowledge a plus. Tel: 076-327415, 087-8853518. Fax: 076-328598. Email: may@destinationair.com Interested persons please send CV to pat@destinationair.com For further details, please see our website at www.destinationair.com

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New hotel in Patong in need of full/part-time staff in all hotel related fields. Good working conditions and salary. Please send resume. Email: amaninfo@amantahouse.com

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Female. Age 25 to 35 years. Excellent spoken and written English skills. Excellent computer skills. Basic knowledge of accounting. Tel: 076-383083, 081-5848502. Fax: 076-280397. Email: admin@philkade.com

HOTEL STAFF

Hotel in Patong require 1 receptionist with good English skills, plus 1 housekeeping maid. Tel: 087-2674091.

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Gymnastic sports trainer wanted for child. Contact K. Celine at Tel: 085-7925636, or K. Nicolas 081-7286188.

MEXICAN RESTAURANT

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Tel: 089-1638166.

Email: vjngong@gmail.com

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Email: info@siam-legal.com

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Tel: 084-7442470. Email: konradsdal@hotmail.com

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One body, one 50mm AF lens, one 75-300 mm AF zoom lens, one polarized lens filter, 4 rolls of Kodak film, one small Samsonite case. Occasionally takes blurry photos. I don't know what the problem is. 1,000 baht. Please contact via by email: jeffepro@hotmail.com

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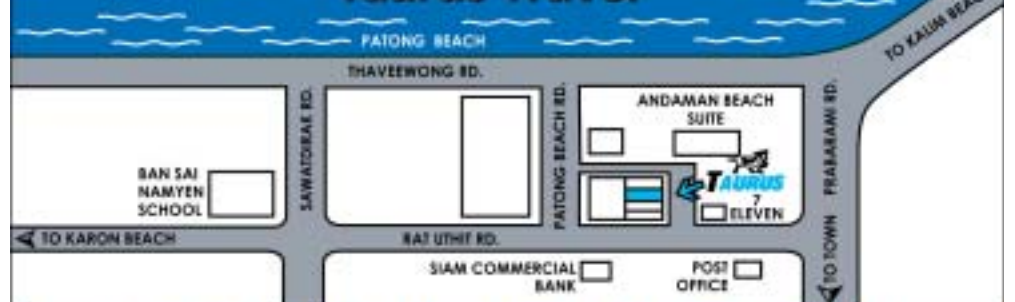
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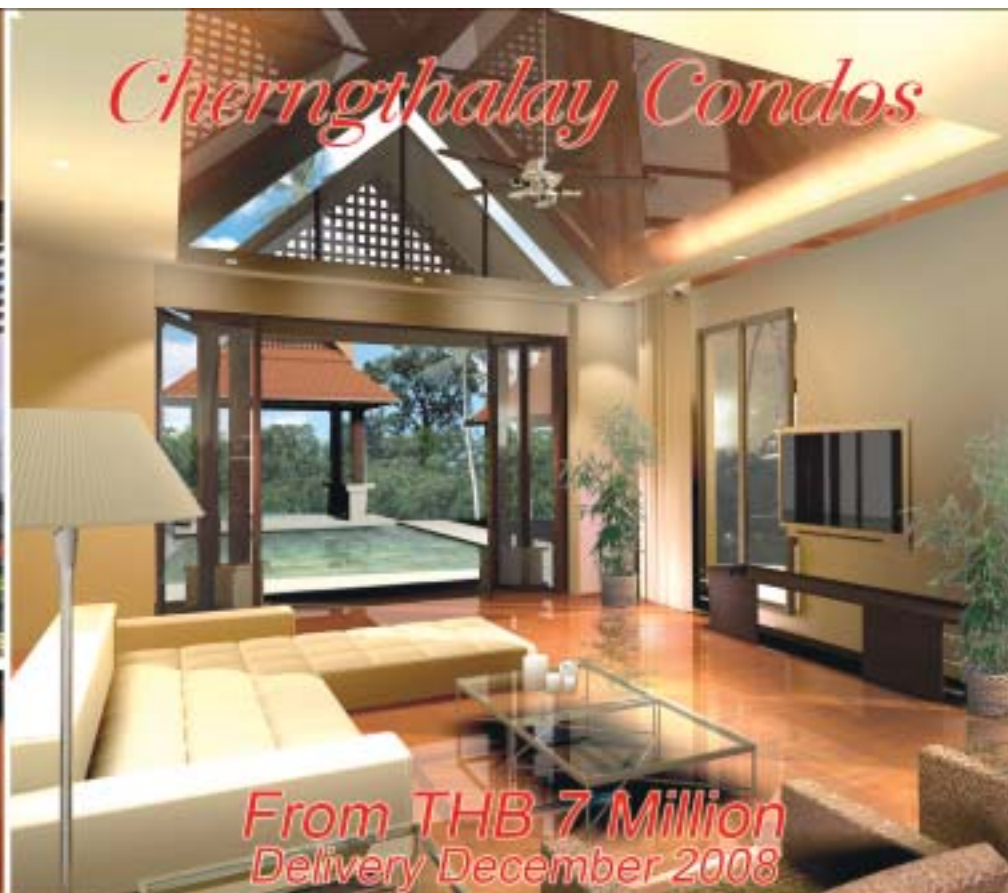
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