The Nation

HRH Galayani

BANGKOK (Nation, Gazette): After months of receiving treatment for cancer, HRH Princess Galayani Vadhana's passed away 2:54 am on January 3. She was 84.

The Princess had been receiving treatment for cancer at Siriraj Hospital for months. Well-wishers had flocked to the hospital since the news spread that she had been admitted.

HM Queen Sirikit and several members of the Royal Family visited Princess Galayani at the hospital on the evening of January 2, arriving at 6:06 pm.

HRH Galayani was also visited by HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, HRH Princess Chulabhorn Valayalakana, Princess Ubolratana Rajakanya, HRH Princess Sirisasmi, HRH Princess Bajra Kitiyabha, HRH Princess Siribha Chudhabhorn, and HRH Princess Sirivannavari Nariratana.

The royal funeral will take place at the Dusit Maharasart Throne hall inside the Grand Palace. The mourning period will continue until the 100th day of her departure, the Royal Household Bureau has announced.

Shortly after the news of her death was announced, people in black dress rushed to the hospital to pay their respects to the portrait of Her Royal Highness on display there.

The Princess is the elder sister of two kings of the Chakri Dynasty, HM King Rama Ananda and current monarch HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The Princess contributed to the country's education in many various ways. She sat on a committee to select who should win scholarships from the Office of Civil Service Commission to pursue degrees abroad. She chaired a committee that designed French exams for national entrance tests.

In addition to education, the Princess also did much social work. She was patron of the Thai Cardiac Children's Foundation, Foundation for Slum Children, Cardiac Children's Foundation, especially the underprivileged.

In 1995, in the year of the Princess' sixth-cycle birthday, HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej bestowed her with the title of Krom Luang Naradhiwas Raja.

PHUKET CITY: An unusually wet December has kept Bang Wad reservoir in Kathu filled to capacity, while forecasts for continuing rainfall through March mean there is little reason to worry about water shortages in 2008, the head of the provincial waterworks authority said December 27.

Reporting to Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit at the monthly Phuket Provincial Security Council meeting at the Katina Hotel, Phuket Provincial Water Supply Manager Sayan Wareaoonroj said current reserves are sufficient to last until May, the month that usually marks the end of the dry season.

The island's only reservoir, the 7.3-million-cubic-meter basin at Bang Wad is currently at 99.9% capacity, he said.

The Thai Meteorological Department has predicted appreciable rainfall for the next four months, with 30mm expected in January, traditionally Phuket's driest month, he said.

Despite copious amounts of rain falling on Phuket in the wet season, lack of reservoirs has resulted in water shortages during past years.

A second reservoir with 7.2-million-cubic-meter capacity at Bang Neaw Dum in Thalang is expected to be complete by September, 2008, at the earliest.

By Sompratch Saowakhon

Continued on page 2

HRH Galayani Vadhana. Photo courtesy of Praew magazine.
Annual fiction contest opens

PHUKET: Aspiring writers are invited to compose novellas for the second Mom Tri’s Boathouse Short Fiction Contest.

The writing contest which saw last year’s winning short fiction piece expanded into a full-length novel will be judged in student and adult author categories.

The adult competition is open to all. Stories can be on any subject but must have a Thai theme or Thai flavor. Submissions must be between 1,000 and 1,500 words and contain the following three key words: the Boathouse, Phuket and (the big) Mango.

Student writers between 15 and 18 years old will be given some help to start off their short stories by using the introduction from a Jack Shepherd story by internationally acclaimed author Jake Needham, whose crime fiction Killing Plato starts in the Boathouse’s Galley Bar.

Students are asked to finish the story using between 800 to 1,200 words.

Winning stories will receive Mom Tri’s Boathouse vouchers and some stories will be published in The Greater Phuket Magazine.

The deadline for entries in the adult writers category is February 29, 2008. Winners will be announced on March 12, 2008. The deadline for student entries is April 10, 2008.

From page 1

What water woes?

while the authorities are in the final stages of land acquisition to build a 5.7-million-cubic-meter reservoir at Klong Krata in Chalong.

Phuket has two main water supply systems. Both systems use the Bang Wad Reservoir as their principal supply.

The protesters, some of whom are vendors at the Moom Muang market near the proposed project site, converged at Provincial Hall about 2 pm.

In the absence of Phuket Governor Nirat Kalayanamit or any of his deputies, the complaint was accepted by Governor’s Office chief Rapeepat Na Nakhon.

Wisate Sabaijit, acting Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) of Wichit Municipality, told the Gazette that on September 5 Tesco-Lotus was granted permission to build the new retail center, which will be located on a long, narrow plot along the inbound land of Chao Fa East Rd in Wichit, several hundred meters south of the PTT service station.

The protesters, some of whom are vendors at the Moom Muang market near the proposed project site, converged at Provincial Hall about 2 pm.

The project will cover a total land area of 1,729 square meters, he said.

All the required procedures had been adhered to and a building permit was issued by his office on that day. As such, there is now no legal basis under which construction can now be stopped, he said.

However, local residents say they will continue to protest the project. Retired local resident Sunanta Iam-anancharoen said the project would have a negative impact on the livelihoods of vendors at Moom Muang market and other small businesses in the area.

K. Sunantha told the Gazette that the recent opening of the controversial Laguna Tesco-Lotus Market Cherng Talay, in Thalang, against strong local opposition was a bad sign.

Although a complaint had since been filed with the Administrative Court over its legality, the Cherng Talay Tesco opened just in time to take advantage of brisk holiday season sales.

The first Tesco-Lotus branch in Phuket opened with great success at Samkong Intersection on the bypass road in October 1999. Numerous other large retailers have opened on the island since then, especially along the bypass road, with little or no public opposition.

A source at the Tesco-Lotus Corporate Affairs Department declined to comment on the new store at that time, but said the retailer would issue a statement soon.

Construction on the project is now in the land-clearing phase. Nationally, Tesco-Lotus and rival retailer Big C have both refused to comply with the Commerce Ministry’s proposal to regulate modern retail expansion in the absence of the country’s first retail and wholesale business law.

The Commerce Ministry on December 26 called for a meeting with retailers and suppliers to seek agreement on temporary regulations to end the conflicts between big and small players.

While other retail giants agreed with the proposal, Tesco-Lotus and Big C were the only two to find fault with some of the regulations.

They said that the regulations must be changed, as some details were too restrictive for chains wanting to expand.
Woman remains comatose after severe beating

By Natcha Yuttawarowit

PATONG: A 37-year-old woman was left fighting for her life at Vachira Phuket Hospital after her enraged husband of 20 years allegedly beat her over the head with a dumbbell early on December 27.

Pol Lt Col Serm Kwanmit identified the victim as Dawan Harnsena, native of Nongkhai and long-time Patong resident.

After questioning the victim’s younger sister, police learned that Dawan’s likely assailant was her husband, 43-year-old Songdet Harnsena, who fled by motorcycle from the couple’s home on Phisit Gorani Rd after the attack.

Songdet likely became jealous after he went to collect Dawan from work the night before and saw her chatting with a foreign man outside Pizza Hut on Soi Bangla, where Dawan was employed on the night-shift as a dishwasher, said Col Serm.

Songdet, a security guard at the local agent of an international courier service, thought his wife had taken a farang (casual sex partner), said the victim’s sister, who lived nearby.

The couple’s ensuing argument turned violent at about 3 am at their home. The weapon used was a dumbbell — not a club, as was previously reported in the Thai-language media, Col Serm said.

Dawan’s sister, Aran Innok, 35, said that the victim worked a housekeeper at the Phuket Palace hotel in addition to her work at Pizza Hut, he added.

After the attack, Dawan was rushed to Patong Hospital and then transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket City where she underwent emergency surgery for a blood clot in her brain. She is still in a coma, he added.

“The victim’s sister told police that the couple have a 19-year-old daughter who is studying in Nongkhai,” he added.

The exact motive for the attack won’t be confirmed until Songdet turns himself in for questioning, Col Serm said.

“We are confident he will surrender himself to us soon,” he added.

Chef severely burned in Patong restaurant gas explosion

PATONG: The chef at a newly opened restaurant on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd suffered first- and second-degree burns to 40% of his body after a cooking gas cylinder exploded on December 26.

Pol Capt Jongserrm Preecha of the Kathu Police told the Gazette that he received a report at 8 am that there was an explosion at Patong Corner Restaurant, on the corner of Soi Jintana.

The chef at the restaurant, 32-year-old Chairat Inkaew from Phang Nga, had his arms and upper body scorched in the explosion.

He was rushed to Patong Hospital, and later transferred to the burns ward at Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket City.

Capt Jongserrm said the blast likely resulted either from carelessness on the part of staff or faulty equipment, which had only recently been installed.

The new restaurant opened for business on December 17, he added.

Capt Jongserrm estimated the damages to the restaurant at 300,000 to 400,000 baht.

“The restaurant was fitted out with all high-quality materials. The owner said that he had invested about 1 million baht [in the restaurant],” Capt Jongserrm said.

The owner is a Bangkok-based investor, he added.

Chairat is now listed in a stable condition and is able to walk. However, he is expected to be hospital bound for about two weeks.

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHUKET: The Election Commission (EC) in Bangkok has agreed to investigate one complaint of electoral fraud against Tossaporn Thepburat, one of the two Democrat Party candidates elected to represent Phuket in parliament in a landslide win in the December 23 general election.

Phuket Election Committee (PEC) investigation officer Ratchapon Thongnunnarm confirmed on December 20 that the EC had ordered him to collect evidence in the case, based on charges lodged jointly by candidates from four rival political parties before the December 23 polls.

Six candidates from four parties — People Power, Pea Pandin, Chart Thai and Ruamjai Thit Chart Pattana — held a press conference on November 28 calling for changes in the PEC, which it said unfairly allowed K. Tossaporn’s wife, Phuket Administration Organization (Or-Bor) President Anchalee Vanich-Thepburat, to unfairly use her position to help him win a seat.

The ensuing complaint, lodged against K. Tossaporn only, was based on similar charges.

K. Ratchapon on December 20 told the Gazette he is now busy collecting evidence in the case with his counterpart from the Royal Thai Police and that an EC ruling should be rendered by January 3.

“We are confident he will surrender himself to us soon,” he added.

Were the EC to issue K. Tossaporn a “yellow card” (suspension) he could still stand in the resulting by-election — but not if he were to receive a “red card” (ban).

The PEC is also collecting evidence for the EC related to a complaint lodged by K. Tossaporn and his running mate Rewat Areebor the day before the election.

The complaint involves a pamphlet circulated by persons unknown implicating the public not to “waste their time” voting for the Democratic Party candidates, as they stood to be red-carded after the poll for having received help from K. Anchalee.

The Democrats asked for an investigation into who had circulated the pamphlet, which they claimed was a violation of Section 53 of the Election Act, forbidding efforts to intentionally discredit a candidate by disseminating wrongful information.

Despite the alleged smear campaign, the Democrats won in a landslide.

K. Rewat was the top vote-getter with 93,004, followed by K. Tossaporn with 87,905 votes. Somchart Somnam from the Chart Thai party came in a distant third with 17,252 votes.

Corpses washed up at Tah Chat Chai Beach

TAH CHAT CHAI: Police are trying to identify a body that washed up on Tah Chat Chai Beach about 2:30 pm December 26.

Pol Lt Damrong Songchauy, of Tah Chat Chai Police Station, said the body appeared to be that of an Asian man, probably in his 40s.

“There were no wounds or abrasions to indicate the man had been a victim of violence,” he said.

TIT FOR TAT: Democrat Party MP candidates Tossaporn Thepburat (in blue shirt) and Rewat Areebor (in yellow shirt) file their complaint at the Phuket Election Commission in Phuket City against a pre-election smear campaign.

The Election Commission in Bangkok has now agreed to investigate a complaint against K. Tossaporn for alleged electoral fraud.

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

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The body, found by villagers, was clad in a yellow polo shirt, black trousers and leather shoes.

“There was a watch on the left wrist and a gold ring on one finger,” he said.

“A review of daily police logs failed to turn up any missing person reports, nor had any been called in,” he added.

Lt Damrong said the man is believed to have died about two days before his body was found.
The true cost of living in paradise

If you’re a landowner in Phuket, you’re sitting pretty. Your land’s value will continue to rise at breathtaking speed, while the prices of most everything else – aside from petrol – will remain stable.

Even if you don’t own land, Phuket is still full of ample opportunity to prosper.

Borrowing rates are set to go down, making it cheaper for you to spend and invest, while the economy continues to grow, ensuring that your job will remain intact and your business will thrive.

If you’re at the lower end of the economic scale, have no fear, the government will help keep prices low and impose a minimum wage to ensure you’re able to afford to live in this fast-growing paradise.

Sound like a dream come true? Well, these assertions can be gleaned from the statistics – and as the old saying goes, “statistics don’t lie” – compiled by three government offices in Phuket.

The rosier figures, of course, are the land values, which are reported by the Phuket Provincial Treasury Office (PPTO). Late last month, the PPTO released its assessed land prices for the whole of the island (see charts, right).

Land appraisals are conducted every four years in order to set benchmark figures for property transaction taxes. Since the previous assessment of 2003, prices in many areas have doubled, tripled or even sextupled.

The smallest figures, of course, are the land values, which are reported by the Phuket Provincial Treasury Office (PPTO). Late last month, the PPTO released its assessed land prices for the whole of the island.

If you bought a half-rai (800sqm) plot in this area four to five years ago, it would have cost you about 400,000 baht. The same plot today is worth 2.54 million baht.

Phuket’s priciest land overall is Patong’s Thaweewong Rd, commonly called “the beach road”, which has a new assessed price of 94,000 baht per square wah, up from 40,000 baht in the previous valuation.

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Looking at figures from the Phuket Finance Office (PFO), property has taken the driver’s seat in Phuket’s economy, with 35% of the 3.184 billion invested in the province in 2007 coming from real estate or construction businesses. Hotel and restaurants accounted for 20% of the investment total, while 9% of investment was in tourism.

While the land office hears “boom”, the words of caution “slow” and “steady” are what’s whispered around the Phuket Finance Office. PFO Director Boonsong Sookvisit reports that product prices will be stable, inflation will slow down and the buying power of consumers will strengthen due to salary increases in both the government and private sectors.

He also said that the PFO forecasts that loan-interest rates will be reduced, returning confidence to investors.

This view is echoed by the Phuket Internal Trade Office, an agency that acts as a mediator between consumers and producer in setting prices. Its director, Wasana Utsaharam, said that prices overall remained stable in Phuket, while the most notable increases were in transport costs (fuel) and cooking oil.

Wasana said that the central Internal Trade Office controls the prices of raw products such as rubber, rice and soy beans.

For products with rising prices, such as palm oil and soy beans, Wasana said that the price hikes were for a period of time, with incremental increases every three months (three baht per liter), to help consumers cope with the higher costs.

A similar strategy was used to stem the spiraling petrol prices.

The office also works to convince shops to display price labels on all products, to discourage overcharging.

“Phuket, said K. Wasana, “most shops and malls are very co-operative as Phuket is an upmarket and international market. The entrepreneurs have co-operated very well. We also see that the foreign population likes to see price labels, so they will buy goods from the shops that have price labels showing.”

However, services such as motorbike taxis and tuk-tuks are beyond the authority of the Internal Trade Office, said K. Wasana. The prices are agreed upon between two people, and if buyers see the price as reasonable they will use the service, she said.

Rent

Rent accounts for a large proportion of expenses for many people in Phuket, but probably due to the nature of the business – mostly small, family-owned, with possibly “two-book” accounting practices – figures are not collected for long-term rental units.

An informal survey of a selection of people by the Phuket Gazette, however, showed that rental prices have remained the same or increased only marginally over the past five years.

The owner of a 14-unit apartment building near Phuket Rajabhat University, Pranee Hongwongpaisal, has recently made a third rental-rate increase since the apartment opened five years ago.

The original price of 2,000 baht per month was raised to 2,200 baht three years ago, and this month she increased the rent to 2,500 baht per month.

“As Phuket has higher living costs, and because the petrol price is up as well as the electricity and water prices, we have had no choice but to put the rent up,” she said.

“Compared with other apartments, the rent for our apartments has been steady for long enough and we have a good safety record, so the 300-baht increase won’t be much trouble for the tenants,” she said.

GETTING RICH – OR GETTING BY?

Phuket’s minimum wage was given a boost on November 12, when the Ministry of Labor announced an increase of the daily wage rate from 186 baht to 193 baht – the highest increase in the country. The wage hike came into effect on January 1.

The effect on labor costs will be minimal, according to a source in the construction industry, who noted that workers on construction sites in Phuket are already paid a rate of 200 baht per day.

And for the sizable population of non-salaried workers in the province, the wage hike will have no effect.

Fishermen, especially, are finding it hard to get by in the wake of fuel price increases, said Duangjai Thipatan, a volunteer for the Catholic Phuket Group, a charity for the poor in Phuket.

K. Duangjai said that in Koh Kaew, for example, there are about 30 fisherfolk families, who supplement their incomes by sifting through trash for items to sell. They earn about 120 baht a day.

“They cannot afford the cost of living,” said K. Duangjai, “so they always search for other...
ways to get money, such as borrowing from anywhere that they can.

“So in the long term, they cannot afford to send their kids to school. Many of these children have to stop school long before they graduate because their parents cannot pay the education fees.”

Tuk-tuk driver Paisarn Suthitapan has seen his profits fall in the wake of the fuel price hikes. A tuk-tuk driver for 10 years in Phuket, he is based at Wachira Phuket Hospital, where he charges passengers 20 baht per person for fares within Phuket City.

He said that he raised the price to 20 baht three years ago, but hasn’t raised it again, even though his costs are higher. His fuel costs about 400 baht a day, and he earns about 1,000 baht a day, making a 600-baht daily profit.

Rather than raising his hire rates, K. Paisarn chooses to wait until he gets at least five passengers in the tuk-tuk before embarking.

“Local passengers always understand this situation, but passengers from other provinces always complain,” he said.

LIVING COSTS

Small business owners and salary workers alike say they have had to tighten their purse strings, raise prices or make other adjustments in order to cope with what they say are higher expenses in Phuket.

The owner of Mae Porn Seafood restaurant in Phuket City, Theerasak “Ohn” Trisanksuwan, said that the prices of cooking oil, palm oil and drinking water have risen, which has affected his bottom line.

“I used to buy cooking oil at about 500 baht for 18 liters, now the same amount costs about 690 baht [the restaurant uses one bottle every couple of days].

“We can still live but the profit is lower,” he said. Passing the higher costs onto customers would drive diners away, he explained, so instead the restaurant has slightly reduced the quantity of food served with each dish as a cost-saving measure.

A Phuket resident for 17 years, office employee Archara Chaisiri said that her daily costs have gone up while her salary has not. “I used to spend about 100 baht a day on food; now I have to pay at least 120-150 baht a day.”

K. Archara said she now refrains from buying luxury items such as dresses and shoes, and travels less by car because petrol is expensive.

Laundry business owner Benjawan Charoenpiriyanon said she recently had to raise the price of her service from 450 baht for 70 items to 500 baht, after holding the price steady for four years.

“The prices of everything to make this business have all increased, including detergent, fabric softener and bleach,” she said.
Villagers make murky discovery

BURIRAM: The discovery of ancient artifacts is always a cause for excitement.

A common way to unearth such relics is at an archaeological dig, though just as often they are discovered by pure chance at construction sites. While some finds are more dramatic than others, few can beat a recent tale from Isarn of two 1,500-year-old Buddha images rising from the stagnant waters of a temple pond.

On December 10 more than 1,000 people flocked to see the images at Wat Khok Ngiw in Pakham District. Many brought containers to scoop up some of the pond water, believed capable of curing ills and protecting people from danger.

The images were discovered by 52-year-old Saner Nakchalathee, who said he was led to the site after his wife told him she had seen beams of light shooting out from the temple pond in a dream. The following day, he told the abbot of the temple about the dream.

The pair then walked round to the back of the temple, which is the site of ruins from the same era as those at the nearby Phanom Rung temple complex, where they found two Buddha head images protruding above the surface of the murky pond.

The abbot arranged a 24-hour guard for the images, as ancient Buddhist relics had been plundered from the area in the past. The images are thought to date back to the pre-Thai Thavaradee kingdom, it was reported.

Villagers said that they believed the images had emerged from the depths as a sign of impending prosperity and happiness to residents of Pakham District.

Source: Khao Sod
HM The King’s recovery
the year’s best joy

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej’s full recovery from illness provided the greatest moment of joy to most Thais during 2007, according to a Suan Dusit Poll survey.

When asked what their happiest moment of the past year was, 71.1% of 8,367 respondents said they were most happy about the King’s full recovery.

On October 13, His Majesty was admitted to Siriraj Hospital with weakness on his right side and pain in the right side of his chest. The treatment lasted nearly a month, during which more than a million people headed to the hospital to show well-wishing messages for the revered monarch. Many camped out at the hospital to show moral support for the King, until he left the hospital on November 7.

The survey said 20.9% were most happy about the holding of general elections last month and that the country was on track to return to democracy.

Col Piyawat Kingket, head of the DSI’s Office of Special Investigations, said the department expected fraudulent schemes to increase in 2008 due to the sluggish economy and low interest rates for savers.

Most of the websites lure people to invest online with interest rates for savers, they would then close the site and disappear, the DSI found.

Aerial assault. Using mobile phones during rain storms is dangerous as they could be struck by lightning even inside buildings, Dr Thiravat Hemachudha of Chulalongkorn Hospital in Bangkok has warned.

Dr Thiravat said he had recently admitted a male patient with a terrible hearing defect and vision loss in the right eye after being struck by lightning while talking on his mobile phone inside his house.

The accident, which happened in Yala in November, initially left the patient in a coma. The patient is now recovering treatment and is gradually improving.

Beyond bounds. An ex-Border Patrol Police officer received a life sentence for murdering his Bangkok hotel co-worker on March 27 and stealing some 500,000 baht of the hotel’s money that she was transporting.

Bangkok’s Phra Khanong court also ordered Phakhinai Janwiman, 47, who was working as a chauffeur at Novotel Bang Na Hotel, to pay 1.4 million baht compensation to the family of his victim, hotel financial officer Sukanda Mekloy.

The victim’s father said he would appeal the sentence, as it was too light for what Phakhinai did to his daughter.

Elections R Us. The Election Commission (EC) has earmarked 1.8 billion baht to organize the race for 76 elected senators and the selection process for 74 appointed senators, EC Secretary-General Somphon Thaveechaiyagarn has announced.

Preparations will focus on publicity to raise awareness about the new electoral system and the nomination process for senatorial candidates, he said.

For the appointed seats, professional groups will submit the names of their candidates from January 13 to 17 at the EC headquarters in Bangkok.

The EC-appointed panel will vet candidates’ credentials before forwarding the names to the seven-member selection panel, headed by Constitution Tribunal President Virat Lavinichai, to appoint 74 for the job. Under the old system, all senators were elected.

For the elected seats, the senatorial race is scheduled for March 6.

Turf war. Two rescue workers from the Por Tek Teung Foundation in Bangkok filed a police complaint accusing rescue workers from the rival Pirun Foundation in Bangkok of assaulting them on the night of December 24.

They also asked police to arrest people who reportedly shot at a Por Tek Teung vehicle a few hours after the assault.

Two Por Tek Teung workers said in their complaint they heard a communication radio report about a motorcycle accident and rushed to the scene, where a Pirun worker took issue and assaulted one of them.

A Pirun worker, who asked not to be named, denied the assault and said the two foundations had no problem at the accident scene because they had already agreed to zones for collecting injured people.

Sondhi sentenced. The Criminal Court sentenced Manager newspaper owner Sondhi Limthongkul, to three years in jail on a libel suit filed by ousted prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

The newspaper’s publisher, Khuonthong Lorseriwanch, was handed down a suspended two-year sentence and a fine of 40,000 baht.

Sondhi was one of anti-Thaksin activists and led many protests against the government before Thaksin was toppled by the military junta in September 2006.

The court ruled that Sondhi had made comments about Thaksin but not attempted to prove they were true, thus causing widespread confusion.

Sondhi did not follow any constitutional rules in building social sentiment to overthrow Thaksin and his campaign had seriously affected social cohesion, leading to a rift between rival supporters, the Court ruled.

Therefore it sentenced Sondhi to three years in jail, effective immediately.

Shortly after the verdict, Sondhi was released on bail.

Around the Nation round-up is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.
Swedish publisher under scrutiny

A disturbing story written here several months ago about the apparent exploitation of 12-year-old Kay Sayluu from Lanta Old Town has done little to convince the Swedish parties involved to clear the air.

Kay’s family house and two longtail boats were smashed by the tsunami, which was detailed in a Swedish-language book entitled *Kay from Koh Lanta*, published by LL Forlaget Publishing in Sweden, a company partially funded by state grants.

Swedish author Johanna Starkenberg-Frojd and photographer Anna Rheberg arrived on the island shortly after the December 2004 disaster looking for a real-life survivor’s story. They found Kay and his family.

The family never signed an official release form of permission to publish Kay’s story, but trusted that benefits would eventually flow back to them. The Swedish publisher under scrutiny

Funds will allow Kay to have private English lessons while he continues to work in the family fishing business.

**LETTER FROM KOH LANTA**

*By Duane Lennie*

**Bridging the gap.** Peak season arrived but the tourists didn’t.

Koh Lanta resort owners claim their high season occupancy rates have been disappointing compared with the past two years.

Lanta Long Beach Resort, one of the largest beachfront bungalow operators on Phra Ae Beach (Long Beach) with 140 units, reports a 50% occupancy rate from October through December. There is a growing sense among other local business owners that something is askew.

One of the major issues affecting tourism on the island, as it grows from an 80s backpacker haunt into an established tropical destination is access on and off the island.

Currently, arriving by automobile involves two car ferries, one between the Krabi mainland and Lanta Noi and one connecting Lanta Noi to Lanta Yai, where the 10-beach tourist island lies.

Tidal fluctuations and ferry mechanical malfunctions mean the journey between the new Krabi International Airport and resorts on Koh Lanta can take up to four hours – definitely a hard sell to travel-weary Europeans who want instant, tropical gratification.

A bridge has been promised for one leg of the crossings within three years by Krabi Governor Siwa Sirisawalak, but locals fear this will only create a bottleneck at the other ferry crossing.

**Better than a snow hut.** In the past few years, Lanta has seen an incredible influx of Swedes relocating to the island. It only makes sense that the property market on the island is dominated by blond-haired real estate developers and brokers.

Generally, property developments on the island still lack the range and sophistication of Phuket, but several of the best Swedish-targeted projects are selling like vodka in Stockholm.

Poseidon Villas on Long Beach sold most of their 31 homes in their first phase and have already sold 25% of the 35-unit second phase, released a few months ago.

The developer of the beachfront community says 90% of sales have been to Swedish nationals.

Apartment and villa prices range from 3.5 to 7.5 million baht.
Evicted villagers fight for land rights

It may be hard to believe that anything positive could arise from the tsunami tragedy three years ago. However, should a team of veteran lawyers have their way, the events of December 26, 2004 will trigger a major rewriting of Thailand’s Land Act, spelling relief for many villagers throughout the country.

“The land grabs from seaside communities affected by the tsunami were unconscionable,” says Suwit Thonghom, chief lawyer of the Andaman Law and Community Rights Center.

“Hopefully this will be the last straw in decades of injustice of illegally evicting villagers from their homes to line the pockets of land officers and developers.”

K. Suwit and his alliance will soon submit their proposal to Deputy Prime Minister Paiboon Wattanasiritham to amend the 1954 Land Act to ensure community consultation in issuing land titles. This will enable people in communities to scrutinize the dubious process of issuing land rights.

“Right now it’s up to Land Department officials and the individuals who apply for the titles. So what we’ve got is titles being issued for land that had already been occupied and used by villagers... We have found that many new title deeds have showed the land [that was] occupation by fishing communities before the tsunami,” he explained.

A few months after the tsunami, hundreds of families along the Andaman coast found that they could not rebuild their homes where they used to be. The lands their ancestors had lived on now had new owners, mostly investors from companies they had never heard of.

In the eyes of the authorities, these new owners have every right to claim the land because they came with legal land rights papers. Local authorities in many areas ignored villagers’ claims that they and their families had lived on the land for decades, if not centuries, before the tsunami – and became instrument in evicting the people, he said.

The villagers have no way to fight for their land if the law is not changed to recognize community customary rights, said K. Suwit, adding that thousands of communities throughout Thailand face eviction by property developers.

**Stoned on the road.** Surat Thani Governor Winai Buapradit has ordered police and local authorities to patrol the highway and the Governor called on parents to take responsibility for their children and to be on the lookout for harmful behavior.

**Elephant fruit raid.** Villagers in Yala’s Betong district have appealed for help from the authorities after their crops were ravaged by a herd of 16 wild elephants.

On December 28, Ohlan Billsan, an official at Betong District Office, said that the elephants had come down from a nature reserve in the Sankalakiri Hills and raided farms belonging to residents of Baan Kununjunang, feasting on bananas, sugar cane, cassava and other crops.

**Bike thieves busted.** Claiming that they had bused a ring of teenage motorcycle thieves, police in Phathalung on December 26 announced the arrest of eight suspects.

Maj Gen Kittisan Dechsumtharawat, Commander of Phathalung Provincial Police, told reporters that the arrests came following the testimony of a 16-year-old who was arrested in possession of a stolen motorcycle a few days earlier.

From the teenager’s statement, police tracked down seven more members of the gang and retrieved 21 other stolen motorbikes.

Gang members said they targeted bikes whose owners had left the key switched on in their homes, parked in isolated areas, where there were unlikely to be witnesses, police said.

The leader of the gang paid 3,000 to 4,000 baht for each motorcycle, or exchanged the bikes for 10 pills of ya bah (methamphetamine), Gen Kittisan said.

The gang leader would then take the bikes to Ranong, where they would be smuggled into Burma and sold for around 12,000 baht each.

Police are now searching for the gang leader, who they suspect may also be involved in the drug trade, Gen Kittisan said.

People who have had a motorbike stolen in Phathalung can bring their registration documents to Phathalung Muang District Police Station to check whether their bike is among those recovered, he added.
Party for the Little People

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

Thailand’s annual Children’s Day will see a host of free activities, prizes and entertainment around the island for youngsters on Saturday, January 12. The Gazette has compiled a round-up of where to go and what to do to keep the Phuket’s little people entertained on this special day.

**Phuket City:** Students from Phuket City schools will be holding stage performances at Saphan Hin from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm with free food and drinks. The Land Transportation Office will have a road-safety exhibition and a demonstration of safe bicycle riding.

Computers will be available for children to use, along with a range of other activities, games and free gifts. For more information call Phuket City Municipality at 076-250163.

**Bangkok Hospital Phuket** will host activities from 8 am to midday, including a magic show by Philip Mayakol who possesses the ability to make tables levitate. There will also be games with prizes, free food and drinks. For more information call 1719.

**Patong**

**Patong Municipality** at 076-324278.

**Cape Panwa**

Budding sailors will have the chance to climb aboard Royal Thai Navy ships HTMS Chao Phra Ya and HTMS Tayan Chol between 9 am and 4:30 pm at the Royal Thai Navy Third Naval Area Command post. Highlights will include a helicopter and naval-weapons display, a sea-rescue demonstration, a parachute show, plus live entertainment, free gifts, drinks and sweets for kids. For more information call 076-391826.

**Phuket Aquarium** will be opening its doors to children and students for free from 9 am to 4:30 pm.

**Other activities include quizzes for prizes and games. One-hundred-and-twenty children aged between 10 and 13 years old can take part in a digital photography workshop supported by Sony. Applications for the workshop and photo shoot can be made in advance by visiting the aquarium’s website at:**

[www.phuketaquarium.org](http://www.phuketaquarium.org)

Two three-hour workshops will take place on the day – one in the morning and in one the afternoon.

Visitors will also be able to take a look at the photos made on last year’s Children’s Day shoot in Phang Nga. For more information call 076-391126 ext 15.

**Mai Khao**

**Phuket International Airport,** in co-operation with the Third Naval Area Command, Aeronautical Radio of Thailand Ltd and Thai Airways International (THAI), PTT and several airlines, will stage activities at the airport’s multi-purpose building and parking lot from 8 am to 3 pm.

There will be a “Dun-Dar-Ra” (impressions of famous people) competition for individuals and teams. There will also be games, shows, free gifts, plus food and drinks.

A Destination Air aircraft will be on display in the parking lot, along with a navy helicopter, airport emergency-response vehicles and fire engines. There will also be a fire-fighting demonstration. For more information call 076-351570.

**Kamala**

**Phuket Fantasea** will host games and activities from 3 pm to 5 pm and put on a traditional Thai mini-concert at the Viva Bangkok Stage Theater in front of the Similan entertainment center. The day will also mark the opening of a new themed attraction, the Tiger Jungle Adventure. For more information call 076-385000.

**Cherng Talay**

Laguna Phuket will hold activities from 1 pm to 4 pm under the theme “Laguna Party Be good guys for the King”.

Popular RS-promotion singer Yui Noparna will be putting on a performance and free snacks will be available. Other activities will include shows, games and quizzes with prizes. Stalls will be selling second-hand items, the proceeds from which will be donated to the Vachira Phuket Hospital AIDS-elimination campaign.

Stage entertainment will take place opposite Canal Village from 2:45 pm onwards.

**Karon**

Some 80 scholars will be handed out by Karon Mayor at Karon Circle to begin Children’s Day activities to be held between 8:30 am and midday. Students from Baan Kata School and other Karon schools will be performing with dancing and other games.

Thirty lucky children will ride away on bicycles from a lucky draw. There will be games during the day with free snacks available. For more information call Karon Municipality at Tel: 076-330478.

**Kathu**

**Prince of Songkla University (PSU), Phuket campus** students will be handing out gifts to children between 8:30 am and 9 am at Building 3 of the campus, followed by stage shows from 9:20 am to 11 am, plus a lucky-draw and free snacks. For more information call Kathu Municipality at 076-321500.
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The secret is not just in the plethora of fresh ingredients that go into every bowl of Mee Geow (noodles with minced pork wrapped in parcels of flour and egg) Phang Nga but the care and attention that goes into the preparation of each bowl.

"Mee Geow Phang Nga" is a special phrase that K. Penporn or “Pen” has heard since she was a child. It is more than just a name for a bowl of noodles – the phrase has always been associated with a passion for carefully preparing a delicious concoction of wholesome ingredients that has kept customers coming back for generations. At this little-known noodle shop, one bowl is never enough.

K. Pen’s grandparents made these noodles when the family lived in Phang Nga and she has been carrying on the family tradition in Phuket for the past six years.

"In your bowl is my family’s secret formula that was passed on to me by my grandparents. The recipe is actually Chinese and it’s so old that I really don’t know exactly when or where it actually originated," said K. Pen.

Since helping her grandparents as a child, K. Pen has enjoyed the daily preparation and knowing that customers enjoy eating her family’s noodles.

"All the ingredients are fresh and we start preparing everything at about 5:30 in the morning. We never use any artificial colors or preservatives or MSG [monosodium glutamate] so our noodles look and taste quite different from those at most other places,” she said.

"Our noodles are made fresh every day from 100% wheat flour mixed with eggs, which gives them a soft yellow texture, making them very easy to eat," she added.

"We prepare the soup stock by boiling pork bone for a couple of hours, along with the dumplings, roasted red pork and boiled chicken, which is shredded then added when the noodles are served," K. Pen said.

The restaurant is small and can be difficult to find, since there is no sign in English – even the sign in Thai is small and not easy to spot at a glance. Even so, the restaurant is always packed with people waiting patiently for their next bowl of noodles.

The waiting is not a sign of slow service but that a single bowl is never enough. There are always people waiting, possibly for their third or even fourth bowl.

The choice of noodles is limited to two kinds, they are: mee-geow-nam (noodles in soup) or mee-geow-heang (noodles with soup broth on the side).

With the mee-geow-heang, a spoon of roasted peanut is added to the bowl of noodles.

Each of the servings has a colorful mixture of fresh noodles, four fresh geow (pork dumpling parcels), roasted red pork, boiled chicken, all topped off with a garnish of crackling pork, fried onion and freshly sliced leek. You can add more color to your bowl with bean sprouts and the variety of fresh green vegetables at each table.

“Even all seasonings and garnishes are made right here, nothing pre-packed, instant or artificial. It’s like our brand and we are proud of it,” she added.

To find Mee Geow Phang Nga Restaurant, go from Phuket City towards Thalang, past Heroes’ Monument. Slow down at the Shell gas station on the left and look for a house with a blue roof, about 10 meters past the station. Open every day except Mondays, from 9 am to 4:30 pm.
Changing the world

4TH JUNIOR IMPAC DUBLIN LITERARY AWARDS

Nearly a hundred students from the southern region, all aged 14 to 18, recently submitted 800- to 1,200-word essays in English entitled “If We Could Change the World” for the regional round of judging in the 2006/2007 4th Junior IMPAC Dublin Literary Awards for Thailand.

Arriving at the Phuket Gazette offices from several secondary schools in the region, the submissions were judged by the Gazette editorial team.

Judges narrowed the submissions down to five finalists each, from which two were selected for merit awards and one awarded the top prize.

The 5,000-baht merit award winners were Jatuporn Neamchuchuen from BuranarumLuk School in Trang and Joy Courtheys of QSI International School in Phuket.

The regional finalist, 16-year-old Kongsarat Kladphot receiveing from Kathu Wittaya School, Phuket, receives 10,000 baht for his winning essay plus the chance to attend the senior international IMPAC award ceremony in Dublin, Ireland.

Judging was based on content, originality and the writer’s ability to clearly express his or her ideas, while taking into account that English is a second language for most of the writers.

Here is Khun Kongsarat’s essay, unedited, as it was presented to the judges.

If We Could Change the World

Before discussing how or if we could change the world, it is important to decide who we are. Are we a group of friends in Phuket, Thailand, or maybe a nation of people? Are we all Thai people? Or are we the whole world? I think people who live in this world are all in need of change.

If we are talking about changing the world, then I think we do have to include everybody. If we talk about the modern world, the first thing that appears in our minds must be this place full of modern technology and facilities.

On the one hand, yes, these make our lives much easier. For instance, in the past there were no cars, trains or planes, so it was hard for people to go to places that were far from their homes. Now we have the technology to do this. However, these are only benefits. On the other hand, we also get lots of problems that impact our environment.

By the year 2100, it is predicted that the sea levels and the global temperatures will rise worryingly. We will lose our coral reefs in the next few years if nothing is done.

So, what is the cause of these problems? The answer is “Global Warming”, which is the phenomenon whereby the world becomes hotter because of Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions.

Many scientists believe that pollution from burning fossil fuels is causing temperatures on Earth to rise. So, what is the reason for all this increase in CO2 emissions? The only answer is “Humankind”.

Would you not agree that humankind is the most destructive species on Earth? Every action that we take has an impact on the environment.

Every time we use air conditioning, every time we travel in a car or on an airplane, every time we turn on lights, each time we use energy created by burning fossil fuels we are leaving our own carbon footprints.

These footprints are damaging our planet. They are the black marks of our guilt. It’s time to clean up!!

We can clean up by using less energy that relies on burning fossil fuels. We can use renewable sources of energy such as the sun, water and the wind for hydro-electric or solar energy, for example.

We need to use cotton bags instead of using plastic bags, walk or use public transport instead of using the car and turn off lights when they are not needed.

We should reuse paper, bottles, cans and anything that needs energy for its production. We can recycle things like plastic bottles, cans and glass.

This is not difficult and it would not take much for us to change our habits and to make the world a better place.

The environmental problems, however, are not the only problems we have nowadays. We also have increasing problems about prejudice. There are many types of prejudice such as classism, racism, nationalism and sexism.

Prejudice means judging people or misunderstanding the facts before we know them. Many people make decisions about others based on what they look like or who they are instead of what they can do.

Prejudice is like a disease; it stops our communities from being healthy.

It also holds people back from doing what they want to do. It is a barrier for people, preventing them from achieving their dreams.

Perhaps there are many lost opportunities where people cannot follow their dreams and
change the world in a positive way.

So we need to find a cure for this disease. The only cure can be found in our hearts. We should be more tolerant of each other and accept everyone for who they are.

We should celebrate our differences and enjoy them.

For example, different cultures and different communities have their own ways to celebrate their festivals. We should accept what they are doing by enjoying them, rather than being afraid or judgmental.

We need to understand each other to avoid fear and ignorance. This can be done through education by telling people in school about prejudice and discussing the differences between people.

To live and work together for a better world, we need to have one global community, sharing resources, sharing power and sharing responsibility. We need to share action and change.

I accept that change is difficult and many people resist it. Change is like mourning, we have to deal with loss and accept something new.

There are four main stages that people go through to deal with change and these are the same stages people go through when they are mourning somebody's death.

The four stages are denial, which means people pretend that they do not know anything about the problems and refuse to solve them.

The next stage is anger, which means getting angry about the problems that nobody is willing to solve.

The following stage is despair, which means hopelessness and the thought that nothing they can do would solve the problem.

And the final stage is acceptance, which means accepting what happens and trying to finally solve the problems. I think we need to be aware of the stages and face up to them. We need to take responsibility.

All of our actions are important and each thing we do has an impact on the world around us. The title of this essay is 'If we could change the world'.

I believe we do change the world every day with everything we do and say. Each time we use a motorcycle instead of walking, each time we judge someone without knowing them, we change the world.

Each time we turn down the air conditioning, each time we help someone who is different to us, we also change the world.

It is clear that we are constantly changing the world, sometimes without our knowledge or intention. The question should not be if we could change the world, but how are we going to change it for the better? How are we going to save the world?

The Gazette would like to wish Khun Kongsarut all the best at the IMPAC finals in Dublin and hope it spells a source of pride for him and his school.

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MERRY MARRIOTT: JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa Marketing Communications Director Ms. Lenka Juraskova (2nd from left) and Public Relations Manager Siripun Petchai (right) visited the Phuket Gazette offices on December 20 to wish reporters a happy and healthy New Year with a basket of health food. Receiving the basket are Gazette reporter Pathomporn Kaenkrachang (left) and Chief Reporter Sangkhe Leelanapaporn.

HIP HATS HOORAY! Bangkok Phuket Hospital held an end of year party December 14 for 900 administrative staff and doctors and nurses at the Royal Phuket City Hotel. The party included a variety of stage performances and a “Hip Hat” contest.

SAFE HAVEN: French Red Cross President Prof Jean-François Mattei chats with children at the official opening of children’s shelter Phuket Sunshine Village at Koh Sireh on December 17. Also present on the day were Phuket Vice-Governor Smith Palawatwichai and PSV Managing Director Dr. Supaluck Kanjanamethakul.

DEVELOPING DEVELOPER: Phil Marmara of UPL Real Estate Phuket and Son Sariya (in yellow), owner of Sariya Property Co, donated computers to the students of Rachaprachanukroh 36 School in Kamala on December 17.

GOING COCONUTS: UK representative Andy Wallace (left) and General Manager of The Village Coconut Island Mark Ashman (right) celebrate the opening of phase one of the five-star luxury villa development on December 16. About 400 friends and guests took a private water taxi from Laem Hin to The Village’s pier to enjoy a day of seaside activities, including water skiing, banana boat rides, Hobie cat sailing, face painting and live music.

ON MANY LEVELS: Famed Thai actress Jarunee Suksawat (left) congratulates Benjamas Boonrod on becoming Executive Director of and first Phuket agent for Bangkok-based, multi-level network marketing company Dham Allianze, which provides healthcare, personal care and household products.

MERRY MARRIOTT: JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa Marketing Communications Director Ms. Lenka Juraskova (2nd from left) and Public Relations Manager Siripun Petchai (right) visited the Phuket Gazette offices on December 20 to wish reporters a happy and healthy New Year with a basket of health food. Receiving the basket are Gazette reporter Pathomporn Kaenkrachang (left) and Chief Reporter Sangkhe Leelanapaporn.
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Unknown to many visitors to the island, big, beautiful superyachts drop anchor off the north end of the island every year for the Phuket Invitational Superyacht Rendezvous, held every December 19 and 20.

The annual event, which has been running for the past seven years, sees the bold and the beautiful enjoying rallies around the islands off Phuket in the highest of style and returning each night for festivities at the exclusive Amanpuri resort.

This year, however, event organizer Adam Frost has special news – the annual Phuket Invitational is to become a regular fixture on the Superyacht Cup calendar.

The Superyacht Cup has been organizing superyacht sailing regattas for 12 years, and its event in Palma in June 2007 set a record for superyacht events by attracting 52 of the world’s biggest sailing yachts.

Forthcoming Superyacht Cup events include the SYC Transatlantic Challenge starting in Antigua in April, the SYC Palma from June 11 to 14 and the SYC Antigua in December. The Superyacht Cup is part of Informa PLC, which also owns The Monaco Yacht Show, as well the new World Yacht Racing Forum in Monaco in December and the Abu Dhabi Yacht Show to be held March 2009.

“We are excited at the opportunity of joining forces with Asia’s Phuket Invitational, pooling our knowledge and expertise to present a very appealing addition to our event calendar,” said Spike Thompson, director of the Superyacht Cup.

“It also gives us an interesting potential enhancement to other Superyacht Cup events, since we have often been asked to consider ways of including motor yachts, and the experience of the team in Phuket in this regard will be invaluable.”

Adam Frost said, “Asia’s servicing infrastructure and facilities have expanded considerably over the past five years, and now offer the high level of service and provisioning that some of the world’s most elite clientele have come to expect, as well as a spectacular and exciting array of destinations to discover.”

The 2008 event will see the start of the joint venture between the two organizations, with a three-day regatta and a new Asia Charter Show and Destination Asia Cruising Forum.

Pictured here are scenes from this year’s event – simply a taste of more opulence to come.
Twelve international models, one for each month of the year, draped in tropical attire, from casual Thai silk and batik designs to swimwear, caressed the catwalk at Phuket Fantasea last week to celebrate the launch of the Paradise in Phuket 2008 calendar.

The calendar girls showed off locally produced fasion wear, including batik fashion by Phuket clothing store Chai Batik as well as poster prints of the photographs shot on location in Phuket.

The professional models were flown to Phuket for photo shoots at 12 prominent locales on the island, including the Phuket Welcome Gate, Promthep Cape, Nai Yang Beach and the Heroines’Monument.

Organized by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Southern Region 4 office, Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) and Elite Model Management South East Asia, the Paradise in Phuket 2008 calendar was conceived to promote Thai fashion, the skills of Thai photographers and tourism in Phuket.

Other locations for the calendar shoot were Phuket Fantasea, Jungceylon, Sunwing Resort & Spa, a pineapple field, Sino-Portuguese-style buildings in Phuket City and at Phuket Aquarium and Ton Sai Waterfall.

A limited run of 10,000 copies of Phuket Calendar 2008 produced by Elite Model Management South East Asia at a cost of 5 million baht will be distributed free to the public.
Hey DJ!

What’s that sound?

Is it the sound of progress? There’s definitely something going on in Phuket. Six months ago, you’d have been hard pushed to find anything remotely resembling a “club scene” on the island.

Now, there are major Thai and international acts coming to Phuket, playing out and asking to come back – the music scene finally has more to offer than just dingy discos and karaoke bars.

Enormous progress in the club scene was made in 2007, partly thanks to the open-minded approach to music employed at Club Lime.

Whether played by resident DJs Eddie and D(r)readmongey or by high-profile guests, the venue has been steadily making a name for itself.

The first major milestone was passed when DJ Nakadia played at Lime on October 12. That gig alone proved there is a market for clubbing beyond generic rock, hip hop and madden- euro-techno.

Another first for Phuket is minimal techno. D(r)readmongey has been championing the genre at Club Lime for a while now, but the style of music received a big boost when “Jay” Montonn Jira brought his laptop full of tricks to Lime on October 31.

The girls danced out of com- pulsion and admiration for their fantasy sweetheart while he played a style of music most of them had never heard before.

It isn’t just minimal techno that is making waves – there is also something of a drum ‘n’ bass movement occurring in Phuket. Promi- nent Bangkok DJs such as Dragon, T- Base and Pichy have played in Phuket recently – and there’s more to come.

Club Lime is once again on the pulse here, playing drum ‘n’ bass on a regular basis.

The twice-monthly Bass- load event was pulled back to once a month but looks set to re- turn to two times a month for 2008.

Rumors that a major drum ‘n’ bass artist (hint: think of “the best of the best”, but I am not allowed to say who just yet…) will be coming to Phuket have been floating around and should be confirmed once all the i’s are dotted.

Another strong rumor is that a former world number one DJ, according to the top 100 poll compiled by DJ Mag, will be playing at Seduction some time this year. If you haven’t noticed, Seduction has been booking some heavyweight names.

Recent DJs at Seduction include party-annual Brandon Block and US house maestro Louie Vega. On January 12, Judge Jules will arrive loaded with CD-Rs and trance tunes galore.

The club scene is experienc- ing change all over Thailand, as well as in Phuket. On January 19, Bangkok will play host to what is being billed as Thailand’s first in- ternational dance-music festival. Think Creamfields in the UK, Future Music Festival in Aus- tralia and Zoukout in Singapore.

Culture One is being orga- nized by the people behind Club Culture, who were previously behind Club Astra, the venue that kick-started the trend of interna- tional DJs playing in Thailand.

The event is taking place at Helicopter Port, BITEC, Bang Na-Trat Highway. The fact that such a festival is even happening is phenomenal for Thailand.

Four arenas will play host to various styles of music, from house, through hip hop and indie, to psy-trance. Headlining the bill in the main arena will be David Morales with support from the likes of the Stanton Warriors.

Marco V and Brian Cross will lead the charge in the Anmee- sia arena, with John “OO” Fleming in the Godskitchen arena. There will also be a Dude/Sweet arena where indie kids can enjoy the sounds of Slur, Filthy Dukes and Twilight Actiongirl.

Tickets for Culture One are 650 baht in advance or 850 baht at the door, inclusive of one drink. For the sake of history-and because it’s on a Saturday night, make this one event to venture away from Phuket to attend.

Doors open at 4 pm and advance tickets can be bought from www.thaiticketmajor.com. What would ideally come next would be a similar event in Phuket.

Promoters, club owners and DJs are starting to look favorably upon Phuket over Koh Samui and Koh Phang- ngan.

The Phuket Jazz Festival is a start and the Phuket Interna- tional Blues Festival has made inroads over the past few years, but a dance-music festival dur- ing this or the next high season would cement Phuket’s reputation as a serious nightlife desti- nation – not some place lost in yester- year.

The logistics of organizing such a festival are, sadly, horrendous.

In Phuket last year, the Hilton Arcadia Phuket Resort & Spa played host to the Nation par- tygoers and DJ Kate Monroe. This year, the logistics of organizing such a festival are, sadly, horrendous.

The event attracted 1,500 parygoers and DJ Kate Monroe span until 8 am on October 23.

Party-organizers Fridae pulled the plug on the Nation par- ty to focus on other projects.

It’s unclear whether an event similar to the Nation par- ties could be organized on an even
larger scale in Phuket.

At the speed of change in Phuket, anything is possible. The island now has its own DJ store – RST located at 23/14 Chao Fa East Rd.

The shop sells all the latest DJ and sound equipment and offers an already-popular DJ training course, which has been a hit with quite a few girls on the island. Could it be the Nakadia effect?

Setting the foundations for the club scene in Phuket are the local DJs. As well as the DJs in Lime, there are a string of quality acts playing out across the island, most of whom were on display at the Phuket DJ competition held at Jungceylon in September.

DJ Q, DJ Touch and others are playing tunes against the grain that people are starting to enjoy.

One of the problems in Bangkok is that clubbers rarely turn up to support local DJs, instead opting to venture out only for headline acts.

In Phuket, the local DJs are starting to make names for themselves, but the all their hard work could come undone if there is a sudden influx of big name DJs arriving in Phuket every weekend.

This past year was a great year for nightlife in Phuket – things can only get better in 2008. Support the scene, attend the parties and there won’t be any more talk of Samui or Phang-anagan – it will all be about Phuket.

For more information about Culture One call Tel: 02-2623456 or visit www.culture-one-bkk.com. See www.thaiticketmajor.com to book tickets. RST DJ shop can be contacted by calling 076-264675.
Enjoying a natural end to stress

After being so busy with work toward the end of the year, I was hoping to find a spa treatment that could relieve all the tension that had built up in my body and mind over the past few weeks. I also wanted something simple, tranquil and chemical free – no need to add more pollutants to all the toxicity I have accumulated over the years.

I discovered Baan Tamachart Thai Spa in Patong. “Tama-chart” means “natural” in Thai and it was this that persuaded me to walk into the place. It sounded as if they could give me the kind of treatment I was looking for.

I was welcomed to the traditional Southern-Thai-house spa with a drink of fresh bale-fruit and greeted by the General Manager Vinolchan “Ae” Wesaphan. She told me that Baan Tamachart Thai Spa has been giving conceptual spa treatments to clients under the label “natural is life” for over six years.

I also learned that Patong Medical Spa at Patong Hospital is operated under the same company, as well as Patong Sea Spa. “Here we use all natural methods and products for our treatments. Most of our products use fresh and dried natural ingredients that are free from any chemical agents.

“If we do use a product with a chemical base, then we ensure that the products are properly certified,” K. Ae said.

“The idea here is to help customers detoxify rather than adding to the toxins that bombard their bodies in daily life,” she added.

I nodded my approval and felt confident that I was about to receive a therapeutic spa treatment that would bring me closer to nature and back my natural self.

The spa is popular with Scandinavians, Europeans and Japanese visitors looking for an original and traditional Thai spa experience.

The cozy arrangement of the spa’s facilities includes four private treatment rooms, two rooms with four Thai massage beds, two reclining chairs for foot massage, two steam rooms and a changing area and toilets.

The treatment menu provides body and face treatments, beauty treatments and many kinds of massage to banish the various manifestations of stress.

The menu also includes eight treatment packages, each named after a Thai flower. Prices range from 1,400 baht to 5,400 baht. There is also a pedicure service.

On the specials menu is “Shirodara therapy,” which originates from India and uses gently-warmed oil poured on the head, massaged into the scalp. The treatment is said to help relieve tension and stress of all kinds.

Following my request for a simple, stress-relieving treatment, I was offered the Thai Banburi package, which is a combination of herbal steam treatment and Thai massage, plus a hot herbal compress – perfect, I thought.

Before my treatment, I had to fill in a questionnaire that would help the therapist adapt the treatment to my specific needs, noting where in my muscles I was feeling tension.

My assigned therapist, K. Saeng, started by cleaning my feet with warm water, scrubbing them and softening the skin with lotion.

I then changed into a sarong and took a shower before going into the herbal steam room for a 20-minute session of inhaling the herbal scent, which began the process of freeing my mind of troubles and easing the built up tension in my body.

After another shower it was time for the Thai massage, so I donned the light cotton shirt and pants that were ready for me in the changing room.

The massage went from gentle to firm when my muscles needed to be stretched to dissipate the tension in them. As the pampering became more graceful I slipped into a light sleep.

K. Saeng then began applying the hot herbal compress, which contains a mixture of therapeutic Thai herbs, including tamarind leaves, plai (zingiber), khamin (turmeric) and citrus plants, used for their antioxidant agents, such as lime and orange.

The aromatic scent of the herbal compress was relaxing and the heat on my skin took away the muscle pain and tension.

K. Saeng explained that the zingiber in the compress helps make the muscles supple and relieves pain. The antioxidant agents help open the skin’s pores so that the therapeutic qualities of the other herbs can seep into the skin and be absorbed by the muscles. I felt I’d received the perfect treatment for my state of body and mind and I was satisfied with the results.

K. Ae said that many foreigners enjoy this treatment. They are impressed with the traditional Thai wisdom that uses natural ingredients for healing and treating in an uncomplicated way, she said.

My two-hour appointment cost 1,800 baht. When it was over, I felt refreshed and relaxed.

Baan Tamachart Thai Spa, Open daily 10 am to 10 pm, 222 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-341938, 076-294409. Fax: 076-292298. Email: baantamachart@yahoo.com Website: www.baantamachartthaispa.com

By Janyapoarn Morel

Baan Tamachart Thai Spa
January 5 - 11, 2008

PHUKET GAZETTE 23

EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

PHUKET

January 6, 13 and 20, PC Group Therapy – Patong, Laguna and Chalong. Join ...for Dummies author Woody Leonhard and his band of techy irregulars in a wide-ranging discussion of computer topics from 6pm until midnight.

If you can’t get Windows to work right, if Office is driving you crazy, if you need to find a decent last resort Internet connection, if you’re going to buy a computer in Thailand or if you need to get one fixed, this is the place to be.

First Sunday of every month at the Sandwich Shoppe in Patong. Visit www.khuw Woody.com for driving instructions.

On January 13, the session will be at the Sandwich Shoppe near the entrance to Laguna and on January 20 at the new Sandwich Shoppe at Fisherman Way Business Center in Chalong.

For further information contact Woody Leonhard. Tel: 089-1960940. Email: woody@khuw Woody.com

January 12, 2008, Saphan Jai Photo Exhibition at Phuket Aquarium.

On this year’s Children’s Day, Phuket Aquarium presents the outstanding photography and artwork of the InsightOur! Cre-ative Children’s Workshop and Exchange Project.

Besides the opening of a two-month photo exhibition, the children will share their work and experiences. Come have fun with your family and learn how to take great pictures. Or join in with one of the other activities, such as action games.

The event will take place 9:30 am until 5 pm.

For further information contact K. Th. Tel: 076-391126-15, 087-6939365. Email: prom natt@yahoo.com Website: www.phuketaquarium.org


From 6 pm to 11 pm at Skipper’s Sports Bar at Royal Phuket Marina. Live music by Indigo Pearl house band The Boom, featuring May Palmer and the “Sax Bomb” DJ and saxophonist Gerd’ Cornielje.

Also includes pre-race registration for February 3 Triballistic race and a new range of Tri-Ballistic merchandise on sale.

Adults: 1,000 baht, inclusive of buffet, one beer or glass of wine (only first alcoholic drink included) and raffle ticket. Children: 750 baht, inclusive of buffet, three soft drinks and raffle ticket.

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

January 12 and 19, Super BBQ Buffet at Wine Connection Bang Tao and Chalong. A truly special BBQ buffet with cheeses, coldcuts, excellent mains, salad, desserts and live band. 650 baht per person. 6:30 pm until 11 pm. At Bang Tao on January 12 and Chalong on Janu-
ary 19.

For further information email Pascal at fb.phuket@wincollection.co.th or call 087-8890674

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

Mom Tri’s Boathouse will host the annual “Quinzaine de la Gastronomie Francais”, an extravaganza of French cuisine each night from 7p.m to 11:30 pm, from January 12 to 27, 2008.

Guest Chef Maître-Cuisinier de France Jean Noel Lumineau, in collaboration with Mom Tri’s Boathouse Executive Chef Tummanon Puchun, will present a four-course dégustation menu every evening.

Each course will be accompanied by a superb French wine, chosen by the Boathouse’s Wine Director, Georges Ciret. The Boathouse Wine & Grill a la carte menu will remain available throughout the entire festival.

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

February 3, Malaiwana Tri-Ballistic Race at Indigo Pearl Resort.

The new Triballistic series will get underway at Indigo Pearl Resort at Nai Yang Beach, from 6 am to 11 am.

- Senior Sprint: 750m swim, 20km bike, 5km run.
- Junior Race: 200m swim, 6km bike, 1.5km run.
- Splash & Dash: 50m swim, 3km bike, 750m run.


Registration can also be by email to info@triballisticclub.com or by calling 089-5902014. Races start 7:30 am.

For more information contact Shaun Boulter at Tel: 089-5902014, Email: info@triballisticclub.com or visit the website at www.triballisticclub.com

February 7-9, Chinese New Year.

Chinese New Year starts with the New Moon on the first day of the Chinese new year and is the biggest social occasion on the Chinese calendar. It is cele-
brated with gusto among Thailand’s sizable Chinese commu-

nity and legion of Chinese tourists from neighboring nations who choose to enjoy the holiday in Phuket.

February 21, Makha Bucha Day – Public Holiday.

Makha Bucha Day, which falls on the full moon of the third lunar month of the Thai calendar, commemorates the Buddha’s ordination of 1,250 monks who ar-
ived unannounced from afar only seven months after the Bud-

dha began his teachings. It is also the date the Buddha delivered his Fundamental Teachings – just months before his death.

February 22-23, Phuket International Blues Rock Festival. Presented by HotelTravel.com, the third year of Phuket’s biggest international blues rock festival will be huge – expanded to 12 bands – showcasing 10 of Southeast Asia’s finest acts and topping it off with an American headliner each night at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa.

The event will have one of Australia’s top blues bands as well. Returning is guitar phenomenon Rich Harper and his band from California and another top US act will close the show on Saturday night.

February 28-March 1, BIS Under 15 Fobissea Games.

The games will be held on the school site. The Fobissea Games offer a wonderful oppor-
tunity to participate in a major competition and to mix with like-minded students from other inter-
national schools in Southeast Asia.

For further information contact Patrick du Preez. Tel: 076-23871120. Email: ppreez@bcis.ac.th Website: www.bcis.ac.th

Phuket’s sizable Chinese com-

munity and legion of Chinese tourists from neighboring nations who choose to enjoy the holiday in Phuket.
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TAKE A BREAK

Puzzles

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.

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

The BIG Crossword

Across
1. Chewy confection
4. Short-sighted
7. Was inclined (to)
10. Scolded repeatedly
13. Abbreviating
15. Writer/feminist, Simone…(2,8)
17. Small amphibian
19. Nation on the Arabian peninsula
21. Set (table)
23. Strolling musician
25. Soberly
28. Light bulb inventor
29. Cafe or bistro
30. Muslim leader, …Khan
32. Stirred up
36. Request, …for
37. Northern Italian city
38. Politic form of address
40. Respond to stimulus
42. Australian animal
44. Made last, …out
45. Cleaver
46. Desire
47. Gallivant
49. Hospital worker
51. Sink hole
53. Sinful
54. At a standstill
55. Classic pop singer, …Campbell
56. Curved doorway
57. Mobsters
60. Rented property
65. Prehistoric remnant
66. More streamlined
68. Full-time golfer
69. Fix
71. Rope tangle
72. Warm & spice (wine)

Down
1. Subtle shade of meaning
2. Heart (of matter)
3. Sounding horn
4. Arithmetic
5. Proprietor
6. Barred prison
7. Ocean phase
8. Fear greatly
9. Mistrust
10. Asian food items
11. Lass
12. Lethal
13. Man-made fibre
14. Take place after
18. Merry-go-rounds
20. Medium-length skirt
22. Chief port of Egypt
23. Cried in pain
24. Conformed, …the line
26. District
27. Jabbered
28. Indian city, New…
52. A long time…
109. Largest bird
111. Skillful
112. Divorce, decree…
113. Trees, silver…
114. title document
122. Traditional beliefs
123. Not tight
124. Chop cuts
125. In time, AD, …Domini
127. Typeface
130. Drink, …spumante
131. Fashionable celebrities
132. Amazed
133. Diction
134. Bun seed
135. Construes
136. Picturesque

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Answers on next page

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.

Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com
Get your brain in gear with
The Monster Quiz

1. A burger is a German townsman but what is a burgermeister?
2. What is the only Asian great ape?
3. What noun is used for the earliest known dwellers of a region?
4. What is a synonym for an appendix to a book?
5. “The Dead” appears in which James Joyce collection of short stories?
6. What measurement was originally the area that could be plowed by oxen in a morning without tiring them?
7. Coral reefs consist mainly of what sedimentary rock?
8. What strait may be named after Troy’s founder, Dardanus?
9. Who was raised as a shepherd after his mom learned he would cause the fall of Troy?
10. Henry VIII married three women with what first name?
11. What is the official language of Rwanda and Senegal?
12. Who is the only WWII veteran to have walked on the Moon?
13. Which animal’s German name is Nilpferd?
14. Volodymyr Shcherbitsky suppressed press coverage of which disaster?
15. Which is the only Hitchcock movie to win a best picture Oscar?
16. A pair of which company’s jeans sold for more than $46,000 on eBay?
17. Monet and which fellow impressionist often painted the same scene?
18. What is inflammation of the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord better known as?
19. What is the official language of Rwanda and Senegal?
20. White light is made up of which three primary colors?

Answers:

Quick Crossword

Across
1. Grant
2. Item at auction
3. Past participle of wake
4. Barbarian
5. Recess
6. Indie-rock band
7. Turn liquid to gas
8. What strait may be named after Troy’s founder, Dardanus?
9. Who was raised as a shepherd after his mom learned he would cause the fall of Troy?
10. Henry VIII married three women with what first name?
11. What is the official language of Rwanda and Senegal?
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18. What is inflammation of the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord better known as?
19. What is the official language of Rwanda and Senegal?
20. White light is made up of which three primary colors?

Down
1. Grant
2. Item at auction
3. Past participle of wake
4. Barbarian
5. Recess
6. Indie-rock band
7. Turn liquid to gas
8. What strait may be named after Troy’s founder, Dardanus?
9. Who was raised as a shepherd after his mom learned he would cause the fall of Troy?
10. Henry VIII married three women with what first name?
11. What is the official language of Rwanda and Senegal?
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Solution below
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Tales from a living legend

Harold Stephens has long lived in a virtuous cycle of having great adventures (driving a jeep around the world, for example), then writing about them (Who Needs a Road?) so he can have yet more adventures: diving for the sunken battleships Replease, exploring for lost civilizations in the Malayan jungle.

In 1974, after turning his newspaper stories into books that made some money, he built a 71-foot schooner Third Sea in Singapore, fitted it out in Bangkok, and sailed the Pacific for the next two decades.

In Tales from the Pacific Rim, his 18th book, he has turned to fiction. These 20 stories are based on his experiences on land and sea and, as the title indicates, take place in a great arc from Bangkok, Singapore and Malaysia through Fiji, Samoa and Tahiti to San José and San Francisco.

About half employ a Conradian narrator. This is a literary device with an illusory history. Just as Joseph Conrad used Captain Marlowe to tell the stories of his early life, I’ve always been a skeptic as to the validity of the peculiarly romantic Mississipi.

The karmic prognosticator

I was waddling along the street the other night when I was ambushed by a giant Sikh. “Hello, sari!” he roared. “I am karmic prognosticator, also known as fortune teller. I see that you are feeling stressed and don’t know where to go.”

I managed to rise to the occasion. “I know perfectly well where to go,” I informed him briskly, “I’m in heading for that bookstore up ahead.”

Later, I reproached myself for my rudeness. Had I succumbed to his blandishments, I might have enjoyed a pleasant evening having my fortune told.

I’ve always been a skeptic in areas where there’s no compelling evidence. I don’t believe in fortune telling, ghosts, astrology or amulets.

I don’t even believe that Elvis is alive and well. I saw him in the drive-in theater in 1977 and he looked normal.

By S. Tso

The Singapore Yacht Club is the scene of the first story, The Man Who Wanted to Buy a Wife. A sailboat trip in Fiji forms the background for a tale of obsessive love, The Kava Pounder. The Swede Who Liked to Drink is about the global misadventures of one of his crewmen.

How to Throw a Javelin is the tale of the downfall of a local hero in Tahiti. All are narrated in the first person from the perspective of the ubiquitous sea captain. Here’s an example of Stephens’ descriptive style. The young javelin thrower Teranivi is on a schooner arriving in Tahiti for the first time from the remote island of Huahine:

“From a distance the island appeared bluish-gray but as the sun rose higher and the day was more mature to soft greens. Uncertain forms took shape. Valleys appeared in pools of receding purple, justing arms of land reached to join the low breakers and sand beaches of velvet black dissolved into frothy foam where the breaking sand unrolled.”

Stephens lives in Bangkok now and several stories are told from the perspective of Thai characters: a Bangkok tokway who engineers his own disappearance to start another life as a guesthouse owner in Chiang Rai, an illiterate barge boy who rises to own a fleet of service boats, a servant girl who stitches together land and sea and, as the title indicates, take the whole world in a great arc from Bangkok, Singapore and Malaysia through Fiji, Samoa and Tahiti.

I was one of many people who turned up at the club bar to reveal his childhood past in Java. The ending, as in many of these stories, is a shocker.

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REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE

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Growing with responsibility

This past week, four Gazette editors were presented with a special year-end challenge: to judge the best from 58 English-language essays written by teenage students taking part in the 4th Junior IMPAC Dublin Literary Awards for Thailand 2006-2007 competition.

Although the task was initially greeted with a certain amount of apprehension, when it was over the judges had found it had been easier than expected to reach a consensus on which essays merited the two 5,000-baht merit awards and which essay was due the top prize of 10,000 baht – and a chance to visit Dublin in June, when the winner will attend the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award ceremony.

This year’s topic was particularly broad and all-encompassing: “If We Could Change the World”.

Like many of the young writers, top-prize winner Kongsarud Kladphet of Kathu Wittaya School [see pages 14-15 for the text of “If We Could Change the World”]

Teachers, please take note.

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.

Despite promises, South still suffers

Great job Surayuth, great job Sonthi: You criticized Thaksin’s heavy-handed tactics, spewed rhetoric and made hollow promises – and now the situation in the Deep South is worse than ever.

According to an official report, there were more attacks on schools and teachers there in the past year than in the three previous, with about 150 schools burned and 20 teachers murdered.

Extending an olive branch to terrorists works every single time it’s tried (hint: this is called “sarcasm”).

Don’t let the door hit your butt on the way out.

Heaven’s Spent

Phuket becoming Costa del Concrete

Phuket is such an attractive place to live because of the climate and the tropical surroundings but as the hilltops are shaved and jungle encroached upon to build new homes in Western-style neighborhods for the increasing number of people desiring a home in the tropics, the island is turning into a concrete jungle by the sea.

If only some simple laws were introduced to ensure sustainable development or at least environmentally friendly development, perhaps Phuket would remain a tropical paradise rather than rapidly becoming Asia’s Costa del Sol.

One simple solution is for developers to be forced to leave a percentage of the area they are developing in its natural state.

Rather than the construction of a new neighborhood beginning with razing the entire plot, let’s say that a new neighborhood must have at least 20% of its area in its natural state. This could be a communal park area or gardens for each property.

This shouldn’t be too hard, as surely, when the leveling of the ground begins, the plans have already been drawn up.

Many neighborhood developments have rows of houses squeezed in to ensure the maximum return on investment for the developer. If they gave the space of one or two houses to gardens, they could charge a little more for the houses and residents would enjoy a bit more space and nature for their money.

Also, the more cement poured over the land, the more chance there is of flooding and landslides in the immediate area.

Lawmakers and developers, it’s up to you to ensure that foreign investors you love so much continue to invest in Phuket for years to come.

Green Dreamer

Phuket

Making sense of what’s in the works

I read with interest your online report that a large homeWorks building supply and home-improvement center is being built.

While the project is too far underway to be stopped, I wonder if there is the demand for yet another home center on the by-pass road, especially given how empty HomePro at Tesco-Lotus is most of the time – not to mention the plethora of small hardware stores on the island.

As for the plan to build a pedestrian bridge connecting the center with the rest of Central Festival, would they also consider putting in other oversights in the area – particularly in front of Wichit Songkram School.

Every morning I see primary school kids trying to cross the busy road to get to school – it’s so dangerous.

Also, covering a huge expanse of what was previously a permeable surface with concrete is bound to make flooding in the area worse. Remember this prediction next September.

Somchai Huasai

Samkong

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.
Deputy mayor pledges solutions to traffic problems in Patong

Everyone must follow the rules that have been set up. We have been asking local people and businesses to share their opinions with police officers in Patong.

We need these people to respect the rules and help Patong remain attractive for tourists.

We have spoken to many businesses owners to get their opinions on the best way we can all work together to achieve this.

Patong Police and Patong Municipality have been working together to address the issue of the roads in Patong. We also asked jet-ski operators for their thoughts on the issue of traffic.

First and foremost, we need to complete the new road [Phang Muang Rd] behind Jungceylon.

There have been a few land acquisition problems that have delayed the whole project slightly, but now the project is nearing completion and should be finished some time in 2008.

We must finish it quickly. Everything hinges on laying sewage pipes under the road.

After that is complete, we will open the bidding up to private companies to complete the road work.

We know that there are a lot of problems with traffic jams in Patong. We will do everything that we can to find ways to relieve road congestion.

We have asked the Patong Traffic Police to look into the one-way system.

There have been many cases of accidents involving people who were not used to or aware of the one-way system.

It’s not so much the local Thai people we worry about; most of them live here and know the roads, but we worry about tourists, especially those here for the first time.

Can you please identify exactly where the road is being fixed.

I recently drove along that road and did not see any place where the road was being repaired.

What you might have seen was work being carried out privately to improve the road right in front of a particular resort or residence.

The construction will take two years to complete.

What is being built on Karon Beach?

What is the construction on the beach in front of Central at Karon (in front of the desalination plant). Is that construction allowed?

The construction will take two years to complete.

A lot of people have been asking me about the [proposed] Patong Hill tunnel, which a lot of people have shown an interest in.

In my opinion the tunnel is needed, but at the moment there is insufficient budget for the research and information gathering needed to present the project to the new government.

Although we need to get a budget in order to complete the research, I think the reality of a Patong Hill tunnel is not as far away as people think.

We have also been speaking to jet-ski operators, members of parasailing businesses and other groups about areas that are being used on the beachfront.

We are in discussions with them on the best way to zone off certain areas and make better use of the available space.

Also, we are working to resolve the issue of how tuk-tuks and taxis use the beach road. Hopefully a solution can be arrived at soon.

There are also some problems on the sidewalks of Patong that have come about from people setting up stalls and selling things.

I keep telling my officers to keep an eye out for and arrest such activity.

Currently, we fine them 500 baht for a first offense. In 2008, the fine will increase to 1,000 baht.

I need everybody to respect the rules in order to prevent Patong from becoming too crowded and unappealing.

I hope that people will love their home and that everybody will take care of it together.

Two-month stays on tourist visas

I have a “2 entry” tourist visa. Each entry is for two months and the visa was issued in Vancouver, Canada.

When I entered Thailand on October 24, I was allowed to stay for two months.

Do I need to leave the country and re-enter Thailand for another two months’ stay? Or, can this be done at the Immigration Office in Phuket?

John Graham

Canada

If I want to have fireworks at my party, do I have to ask any permission? If so, who do I ask?

Miss Lee

Phuket City

Your application must include: the reason for the celebration; which types of fireworks and how many fireworks will be used; a copy of your house registration and identity card (for non-banana); a copy of the ID card of person in charge; and the permit to buy fireworks.

The permit to set off fireworks is issued free, but you should allow at least a week for the permit to be approved.

If the permit is issued, we notify the police to ensure that the fireworks will be set off safely.

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

For this type of visa, what we call a “double entry visa”, you must leave the country after your first two months’ stay, and then re-enter Thailand so that you can stay two months more.

If you come to extend your permit-to-stay at our Immigration office in Phuket City, we can extend your stay only 30 days – not two months.

Taweewong Noksaeng, deputy director, Phuket Provincial Highways Office, replies:

We don’t have any road-works being carried out on the road from Patong to Karon.

The construction has been approved by us.

Termumphon Noksaeng, deputy director, Phuket Provincial Highways Office, replies:

Two-month stays on tourist visas

Phuket Gazette
The fragrant winds of change

I feel it is my duty to divulge the news that I have become a father. I don’t mean in the Catholic Church, clerical dog-collar sense, I mean in the sense of duties and responsibilities. I have the kids under the eyes and sleepless nights. I have aided in the process of producing another two-legged pollutant for the planet.

Yes, the winds of change have blown through the household and I can assure you the noise you hear from a rear end is not mine. So, after all was he awake of etiquette and manners, he would endeavor to hold his eructations until a suitable moment and then let rip. Being a baby, and a male at that, he just lets ‘em go whenever the wind builds up. Given Pattaya’s less-than-frAGRANT air quality, I doubt he has added much more than a few kilos of methane to the diesel-encrusted haze that surrounds our little sleaze-pit-by-the-sea.

My concern, at least in an environmental sense as it relates to Pattaya’s increasing problems with finding landfill, is the amount of waste material now leaving our household on a daily basis. My son produces his own body weight in toxic waste each day. I’m hoping there isn’t some kind of United Nations sanction against the toxic waste he excretes.

A plastic bag filled with his used nappies weighs as much as a couple of kilos of grade-A plutonium and is probably just as dangerous when mixed with the wrong kinds of chemicals.

As this is my first foray into the world of fatherhood, I would like to make a few observations that I have been well-documented among the parents of the world, but, of course, are very new to me.

Sleep: I don’t get enough. My child is a night owl, much like his old man. This is quite a good thing. When I come sauntering home after a night of sipping alcoholically-charged soda water in a number of dens of the chrome pole, I can guarantee my little boy will be wide awake and heavily engaged in removing excess natural milk products from either of the two rather aromatic bars designed for such a purpose.

My wife, if I may be so bold as to announce publicly, does not possess a substantial mammary-gland package, but what she does have are perfect examples of the art.

Though my son is a night owl, he has the disturbing habit of waking up somewhere between sparrows fart and my own rather-more-booming nappy cough, demanding to be once again in easy proximity to the sources of natural milk.

Like most people in Pattaya, I am not a morning person; well, not that early in the bloody morning anyway. Once he has been weaned away from the very objects of my own carnal desires, I am tempted to add a little extra something to his bottled milk to make him sleep.

Sex: I don’t get enough. Not quite true, but it’s the quality that’s missing. Our best chance of engaging in coital pursuits is in the eight-minute-and-13-second periods when he sleeps or when he’s actively engaged in contented gurgling at his favorite toy: a purple elephant with a red tail and black-and-white, polka-dotted underbelly that my wife has swung from a long piece of string tied to the ceiling. Is this how kids get into LSD?

Discovering the secrets of losing weight

Doing something as mundane as shopping requires arising three hours earlier than normal. This, of course, is achieved without effort by our all-farting alarm clock.

The statistics are frightening. Nearly 30% of children in England will be obese by the year 2010 if nothing is done to tackle the problem. In America, nearly two-thirds of adults are overweight or obese and 275 Australians are diagnosed with diabetes every day – obesity and poor eating habits being a major cause.

Things are not much better in Thailand where sugar and fat consumption has risen among school-aged children.

It is predicted that 20% of Thai children will be obese in the next 10 years. Many foreigners come to Thailand to relax and spend time sampling the fine restaurants and bars.

In a lot of cases, this lifestyle includes a lack of physical activity. An excess of unhealthy habits and a sedentary lifestyle will eventually lead to obesity and all of its associated health risks, such as diabetes, cholesterol problems, cancer, cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal aches and pains, and depression.

The solution is to get your body moving. The more active you are, the more calories your body will burn. If your calorie intake exceeds your calorie output, you will put on weight.

In theory, this is a simple equation, but losing weight can be a frustrating process.

The key is to be patient – don’t try and shed weight too quickly. Be disciplined with your eating and exercising habits.

Don’t weigh yourself every day. It’s body-fat you want to lose, not muscle or fluid weight.

Scales cannot tell you what is coming off, so seek professional help from a qualified trainer who can determine your body-fat percentage and create an exercise plan accordingly.

The plan must be specific to your own lifestyle and goals and should include two different types of training session: one for fat burning and one for metabolic rate enhancing.

Your training plan must also be relevant to your current level of fitness, amount of time available and the facilities you have access to.

Unstructured activities, such as walking down the street instead of jumping on a motorbike or walking up a flight of stairs instead of an escalator, are highly recommended. These simple changes in lifestyle will burn more calories.

The other part of the equation is your food-and-drink intake. A drastic reduction in food intake is not the long-term answer.

If you shed several kilos of body weight in a week, the loss will be due to fluid and muscle loss, not body-fat.

Your body will go into starvation mode and slow its metabolic rate, which will lead to more fat deposits in the long term. Carbohydrates are also not evil. Consuming too many carbohydrates is a problem, but we need a constant supply of carboHYDRate to keep our hemoglobin index in order to access our fat supplies when exercising.

Fat is the evil, in particular, saturated fats, which are found in fast foods and sweets.

There are only four calories in one gram of carbohydrates, compared with nine calories in one gram of fat.

If you have had a particularly festive season with extra pudding that is now showing itself around your waistline, get moving, seek advice and don’t just become another obese statistic.

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.
Suffering a Phuket ‘cultivate’ shock

A t 15 years old, I have spent most of my life in my father’s homeland, Italy. I have always been in touch with my Thai friends by MSN and annual visits to Thailand. I really appreciate the opportunity given to me by the Phuket Gazette to have my own column. My work has been told to write freely and without constraints. Before moving from Italy to Thailand, everyone knew that I would struggle with all the changes in my life, but I wasn’t bothered. I was, however, curious to live another kind of life. I was excited to be moving to Thailand, even if it made me sad to leave my friends behind.

After two months in Thailand, school started. I had to attend a new school right away to avoid falling behind and a personal disaster. My first welcome to school was a haircut. I saw my hair falling like Autumn leaves in front of my eyes. I didn’t mind having my hair a bit short but not this much – my hair is above my ears! Not only that, but I have to keep my fingernails short, wear a school uniform and not wear makeup. Also, every morning, I raise the Thai flag and sing the Thai anthem. But you know what? I like it! In fact, this was the type of school I was looking for, with no distinction between students, good discipline and beauty and elegance that comes from the culture. This was a radical change for me. No more colorful dresses; no more Italian shoes; no more dyed hair.

Less than 20 days after arriving in Phuket, while walking with a friend in a supermarket, two girls told me I needed a makeover and insisted that I fill out a form to take part in a contest. Back then, my only concern was to get to the beach and escape from school when I could. I took the form and found out it was for a beauty contest – it was for Miss Teen Thailand 2007. I’m not usually interested in this sort of thing. In Italy, I never used to watch that kind of competition on TV and I never considered participating in a contest like this. My mother and my Italian friends through MSN had other ideas and I became curious about the competition, although I wasn’t exactly enthusiastic.

I filled out the form and, one week later, I was at the contest at Kata Beach Resort in Phuket. I was so happy because, I thought, once I had lost in the contest, I would be able to go to the beach. You never know what destiny has in store for you. In the end, I qualified for the final in Bangkok for Miss Teen Thailand when I was elected Miss Teen Phuket 2007.

When I first heard the speaker say “Miss Teen Phuket” followed by my name, I was as shocked as when my father told me we were leaving Italy. I didn’t know what to do or how to behave. I had to be thin, tall and have white skin, always with a smile on my face even though I felt like screaming. All this was practically the opposite of what I am. They told me to do so many things. They said don’t stay out in the sun – there goes my beach time. They told me to be taller. They must have been crazy, I thought. But no, they were serious.

They even suggested I drink a special kind of milk. My father said that I would probably only grow a few millimeters in time for the final. The only way I could be taller was to wear high heels. At first, it was a disaster. I fell down hundreds of times and kept breaking the heels until I finally learned how to walk in them. It was a relief when I didn’t win the contest.

Since arriving in Thailand, I have often wondered why people want to be white and hate having dark skin. Phuket is a lot of sun. How can people expect to keep their skin white? Are they supposed to stay home all the time? I remember in Italy with my friends, we used a special oil on our skin to make ourselves a perfect brown color. Here, people dress as if they were in Alaska. If you want to be beautiful and famous, you must suffer a little bit, but this is ridiculous. We must be proud of who we are. We are all as beautiful as we feel – dark, white, black, yellow, short, tall, sexy or not. Have a great New Year everybody.
Bringing lost photos back from the dead

If you accidentally deleted pictures on your camera, PC Inspector can help you get them back – free.

1. Don’t use the camera. More precisely, don’t use the memory card that holds the pictures. Every time you use the memory card – on some cameras, every time you stick the memory card back in the camera – you stand the chance of overwriting some of your old pictures.

2. Download PC Inspector Smart Recovery 4.5 (www.snapfiles.com/get/smartrecovery.html). In Windows XP, double-click on the downloaded file to install the program. In Vista, right-click the file and choose “Run as Administrator”. The installer takes a while, so be patient.

3. If you have a card reader attached to your PC, take the card out of the camera, flip the write-protect tab back to its normal position and put the card back in your camera. You’re ready to snap away.

4. Click “Start”, “Programs” (in Vista, it’s “All Programs”), “PC Inspector Smart Recovery“.

5. In the right pane, navigate to a place where you would like to store the reconstructed files.

6. Click “Start”. This will take a while, but you can watch the program’s progress by looking at the folder that’s being filled with recovered photos.

7. When it’s done, “X” out of the AutoPlay dialog box. You may get a message that says “The program is being uninstalled.” Ignore this.

8. Click “Run”.

9. When it’s done, “X” out of the AutoPlay dialog box again. You may get another message saying that the program is not installed. Ignore this.

If you don’t have a card reader, attach the camera to your PC. In either case, if Windows pops up and offers to do something (such as copying the files into your PC), “X” out of the AutoPlay dialog box.

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Events Calendar

17-21 Jan. 2008
JUNGCEYLON
Home & Condo Show at Silang Hall, Jungceylon Patong

30 - 3 Feb.
Kiatnakin Bank Home & Condo Show at Grand Hall, 1st Fl. and 2nd Fl. [PIC] Central Festival
Eyes turn to new leaders to maintain strong baht

Since December 2006, there have been two versions of the baht: an onshore version and an offshore version. The introduction of a “two-tier” currency is not a new concept. In Thailand’s case, it came about as a result of capital controls restricting the types of foreign investment allowed to enter the country.

Basically, Thailand wanted to have its cake and eat it – simultaneously. Unlike Thailand in the mid-1990s, when the country was living above its means on foreign cash, new-millennium Thailand was faced with a problem that was virtually the complete opposite.

It had, to an extent, become a victim of its own success. Exports comfortably exceeded imports, allowing for a build up in foreign-exchange reserves. While every country wants to have a comfortable level of such reserves, if they grow too large, pressure builds for the currency to appreciate.

The Thai government tried having the best of both worlds. To keep exporters happy, it wanted exports to continue to rise. However, exporting at such a high level meant that the money from these exports would continue to accumulate. To restrict the amount of money entering Thailand, the Thai government implemented its controversial “capital controls”.

The alternative to capital controls would have been to allow the baht to appreciate in value. However, this would have had the natural effect of reducing exports and encouraging imports, as imported goods would become cheaper.

One result of the creation of the two-tier currency system is that it is often difficult for individuals to know which rate to use. When sending funds from overseas, the best way is to have the overseas bank send the funds to Thailand and have them exchanged for baht in Thailand.

The expensive route is to exchange the funds overseas into baht and then send it via the banking system to Thailand. This will cost about 10% more than the first option. This is not just a theory. Many foreign tourists make this mistake when leasing villas and condos. It is certainly never pleasant to pay 10% more than necessary.

Given the current political situation, it is unclear what the future holds for this two-tier currency system.

Keeping an ideal level of foreign exchange reserves is not always an easy balance to achieve. Thailand’s neighbors, who are often trade competitors, have to some extent reduced the upward trade momentum on exchange rates, from which they also suffer. Two powerful forces affecting all these countries are the powerhouse economies of Japan and China.

The easiest to understand is China, which is enjoying an unprecedented boom that is transforming the nation in many ways. Historically, periods of economic difficulty are often associated with political change. China, as a one-party state, is acutely aware that to keep its political power with a minimum of disruption there is nothing equal to a sustained economic boom.

It is important to note that until 1979 the Communist Party had a track record of fiscal mismanagement, having based its economy on a set of outdated principles that resulted in money-losing, state-owned “enterprises”.

The free enterprise we see in China today is still “managed”, albeit with a 180º turn. Shortly after assuming power in 1979, Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping traveled the region, including Thailand. He saw enough to convince him on his return to China to enact changes.

However, to achieve what he had put in motion was not an easy task. It was necessary for private investment to make the necessary strides and create employment for vast numbers of people and, at the same time, offer continued employment to workers in the state “smoke stack” sector, many of whom would eventually need to be re-employed.

One of the factors used to encourage exports was keeping weak exchange rate. A decade ago, this was absolutely essential. Japan is much too large for the rest of the world, but China has now grown to have the largest foreign exchange reserves (US$1.5 trillion), yet it has allowed only a partial re-stabilizing of its exchange rate.

This has prevented many countries, especially in Asia, from being able to allow substantial currency appreciation against the yuan – it is a matter of staying competitive.

The Chinese government does not allow its currency to be freely traded. It sets the exchange rate daily, allowing the market value to move either upwards or downwards – but only to a modest extent.

The second factor is Japan. On basic economic principles, the yen should be rock solid and trading at very high levels. Japan has the world’s second-largest foreign exchange reserves, at almost US$1 trillion. It enjoys an enormous current account surplus with the rest of the world and is a first world country.

But a quick look at Japan’s economic statistics immediately shows a problem – and as the Japanese economy is the world’s second largest, this will inevitably have an effect on the global economy as well.

Base lending rates in Japan have been between 0% and 0.5% for years. Its central bank base lending rate is currently 0.5%. This indicates an economy with major problems. Japan has accumulated the largest domestic debt in the world, about 160% to 170% of its gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Considering that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommends that countries should not exceed 60% of GDP, the debt of the Japanese can be seen for what it is – an enormous ball and chain. This was mainly caused by government thinking in the 1990s that they could somehow spend themselves out of a recession.

Japan’s citizens are investing their cash in higher-yielding currencies, such as the Australian dollar, New Zealand dollar and the pound sterling. Often, so are their pension funds.

For 2008, Thailand should have a strong currency, appreciating against most of the world’s major currencies. However, the domestic political situation could still “put a spanner in the works”.

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Patong businesses hit by alcohol bans

By Natcha Yuttaworawit & Matt Crook

The December 23 general election sent shockwaves through Thailand, not just on the political front, but through all of the businesses whose income is reliant on the consumption of alcohol.

The two-weekend ban on sales imposed across the nation left a severe dent in the pockets of Patong business owners in the middle of the peak season. Alcohol sales and consumption were prohibited from 6 pm December 14 until midnight December 16 for advanced polling, and again from 6 pm December 22 until midnight December 23 for the main polling day.

Businesses in Patong and around the island were forced to either cease selling alcohol during the ban or face a police fine, arrest, or both.

Before the ban came into effect, Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Col Paween Pongsirin warned that it was to be strictly enforced. The ban was imposed to prevent drunken behavior that might have disrupted the election or lead to violations of electoral law.

Stephan Bouwman, executive chef at BYD Lofts, told the Gazette, “At a modest guess, we lost about 300,000 baht in revenue over the two weekends. Guests went to have dinner elsewhere, but through all of the businesses, so I was directly affected by the ban. Tourists didn’t know about the election rules. When they went to have dinner, they tried to order wine, we couldn’t serve it and they became unhappy.”

“We lost a lot of income and the customers were annoyed. I received many complaints from customers. People come to Patong for the nightlife. When they saw that the bars and clubs were closed, it looked bad,” he said.

“I want the law changed. I understand the reasons for the alcohol ban, but I think it’s unfair for foreign tourists – they can’t even vote.

“Bars, clubs and restaurants should be able to open on election days and sell alcohol to foreigners. That way, we don’t lose income and Patong doesn’t lose tourists,” added K. Chakanok, Pol Lt Col Borrisomboon of Phuket City Police.

Chanok Kaewsinuan, CEO of Tangmo Group, said, “I have more than 20 entertainment businesses, so I was directly affected by the ban. Tourists didn’t know about the election rules. When they went to have dinner, they tried to order wine, but we couldn’t serve it and they became unhappy.”

“I think now we have many problems in our country that affect tourism. As bar owners, we have to follow the law, but the tourists were unhappy,” he added.

Deputy Commander Col Paween Pongsirin, head of Patong Entertainment Business Association, said, “The effects during the election were very bad because the advance voting period was so long. We had to stop selling alcohol for two whole days.

“Patong was almost empty. Many of the tourists and bar owners are angry. Patong must be declared as an entertainment zone, but it can’t happen right now.

“When our government is stable, I will talk to the people about making Patong an entertainment zone,” said K. Somphetch Chanok.

“Bars, clubs and restaurants were left deserted when a two-weekend ban on alcohol sales was imposed throughout the nation. The situation at Club Lime was very much similar to BYD Lofts, said Mr Bouwman.

“This happened in the peak season as well – a period we look forward to all year long,” he added.

Matthew Patterson, who promotes events at Club Lime, said, “The situation at Club Lime was very much similar to BYD Lofts. If anything, I think it would be the tourists who came to Thailand around the two-week holidays, only to find two of their weekends screwed up, who really lost out during the ban.

“For a lot of people coming to Thailand for the first time, it left a bad impression. Most of the bar owners didn’t even find out about the ban over the first weekend until the day before it was implemented.”

Somphetch Mooshophon, head of Patong Entertainment Business Association, said, “The effects during the election were very bad because the advance voting period was so long. We had to stop to selling alcohol for two whole days.

“Patong was almost empty. Many of the tourists and bar owners are angry. Patong must be designated as an entertainment zone, but it can’t happen right now.

“When our government is stable, I will talk to the [the right people] about making Patong an entertainment zone,” said K. Somphetch.
Gloves off in 2007 wrap-up

By Scott Mallon

There is no shortage of boxers in Thailand. With a huge pool of Muay Thai fighters to draw from and several talented amateur-boxing prospects turning pro after the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Thailand seems destined to remain a force in Asian boxing.

Whether because of a lack of marketability, lack of money or their reluctance to travel abroad, the vast majority of boxers from Thailand fight in Asia and are unseen by western boxing fans.

Thailand has tough, determined and disciplined fighters who always give 100% when they step inside the ring.

Yet, there are considerable problems with Thailand’s boxing scene; mismatches, record padding and the absence of an assertive boxing commission are obstacles that hinder the growth and prosperity of boxing in Thailand.

Fighter of the year: Oleydong Sithsamerchai

Sithsamerchai was one of the lone bright spots of 2007. Defeating Puerto Rico’s O coils O Omar Soto in April and closing the year with a stel- sit and, after a long wait, defeating Pongsaklek Wonjongkam, Sithsamerchai managed to put a stop to the WBC’s super flyweight title.

For all Lookbanyai’s courage, Sithsamerchai was the one who proved he had the will to win.

In the middle of round 10, he landed a short right hook to the body, doubling over the exhausted Lookbanyai. More from fatigue and the accumulation of punches than any singular shot, Lookbanyai crumpled to the canvas.

He tried valiantly to rise before the count of 10, but exhaustion got the better of him and he was unable to beat the count.

Reportedly, Lookbanyai will move from the WBC to the WBO, where he should challenge for a major title sometime in 2008.

Two months after his bout with Lookbanyai, Kittisakchokchai only managed a draw with unheralded Jack Asis. He’s scheduled to fight for the world title against Israel Vasquez – most in the boxing world think his chances of winning are slim to none.

Upset of the year: Pongsaklek Wonjongkam Vs Daisuke Naito III

Seventeen straight title defenses, eleven long years without a defeat – it seemed unfathomable that Pongsaklek Wonjongkam could lose.

Lose he did though, to Daisuke Naito, a fighter whom he had defeated twice before. In the bout, Wonjongkam, then 29, looked lethargic, out of sync and unable to pull the trigger – a sure sign of aging.

Wonjongkam closed out the year with two wins against jour- neymen and will supposedly fight Naito for the fourth time early next year.

Knockout of the year: Devid Lookmahanak Vs Richard Olisa

Lookmahanak looked poised to challenge for a world title. Instead, Richard Olisa, a sub-500 fighter, destroyed him in two rounds.

He’ll probably win the ABCO belt but I wouldn’t count on him ever becoming world champion.

Olisa won two subsequent bouts before scoring a draw with fellow Filipino Danilo Pena.

Upcoming Bouts in 2008

Pongsaklek Wonjongkam Vs Daisuke Naito IV: Will Pongsaklek regain his title or has he lost his edge? My pick: Kratingdaenggym via wide decision or late KO.

Poonsawat Kratingdenggym Vs Somsak Sithchatchawal: It’s been nearly two years since Somsak Sithchatchawal upset Mahyar Monshipour in Paris to win the WBA super bantam- weight title.

In his first defense, Sithchatchawal was annihilated in three rounds by Panamanian fighter Celestino Caballero and has’t been the same fighter since then. He’s racked up 10 straight wins against non-descript opposition but has been stunned numerous times and has the look of a one-hit wonder.

Kratingdaenggym fought five times in 2007 against comparable opposition, winning all of the bouts via KO. Although only three years younger than Sithchatchawal, Kratingdaenggym is clearly the more talented and fresher of the two fighters and looks to be have a decided edge. My pick: Kratingdaenggym via wide decision or late KO.

Ratanachai Sor Vorapin Vs Gerry Penalosa: Penalosa holds all the cards in this bout. Back in 2000, he knocked out Sor Vorapin in six rounds and although Sor Vorapin is four years younger than Penalosa, he’s the more ring-worn of the two and has a tendency to lose the big fights.

Couple this with the location of the bout, in the Philippines, and a Sor Vorapin victory looks highly doubtful. My pick: Penalosa via TKO.
Phuket prepares for annual Prime Minister’s Cup

PHUKET: Phuket is set for the annual football competition “The 4th Thailand Prime Minister Cup 2008”, kicking off in January.

Thirty-six football teams from around southern Thailand will compete for trophies and cash prizes.

There will also be the chance to advance and take on winning teams from other provinces in the nationals. The competition, organized by Phuket Provincial Center of Tourism Sports and Creation, comprises teams in the following categories:

- Under 12s (five teams)
- Under 14s (five teams)

Winners in these groups will receive 10,000 baht for first place, 5,000 baht for second place, 3,000 baht for third place and 2,000 baht for fourth place.

- Under 16s (six teams)
- Under 18 (five teams)

Winners’ (three teams, ages not fixed)

Winners in these groups will receive 12,000 baht, 8,000 baht for second place, 5,000 baht for third place and 3,000 baht for fourth place.

- Men’s (12 teams, ages not fixed)

Winners of this group will receive 15,000 baht for first place, 10,000 baht for second place, 7,000 baht for third place and 4,000 baht for fourth place.

The first match to kick off the cup will see the OrBotTor Kamala team and the Thalang Trading team thrashing it out in the Under 16s category at Sanaam Chai Field and Saphan Hin Stadium at 2.30 pm on January 3.

All are welcome to go along and cheer the local teams on at Sanaam Chai Field and Saphan Hin Stadium from January 3 to January 11.

About 35 teams will compete in almost every class. The winning team in each of the 12 groups will advance to the Multihull class at Hin Stadium from January 3 to January 11.

Winners of the Under 12s category at Sanaam Chai Field and Saphan Hin Stadium at 2.30 pm on January 3.

There will also be the Men’s winners who will go on to compete in Krabi. The winners in the Under 16s Women’s categories will go on to compete in Chumphon.

Phuket boats set sail for Langkawi Regatta

By James Goyder

With the sails barely furled after the King’s Cup Regatta, local yachtsmen are focusing on bringing home hardware from the Royal Langkawi International Regatta 2008, to be held from January 5 to January 11.

Many of the boats that competed in Phuket in the King’s Cup will be making the short trip to Malaysia.

Frank Pong’s Jelik and Ray Roberts’ Quantum Racing will be vying for top honors once again, having finished first and second respectively in the Racing class of the King’s Cup.

Both yachts have previously won in Langkawi. The addition of Full Metal Jacket, skippered by Chris Meads, which also competed in last months King’s Cup, promises a highly competitive Racing class.

Bob Brindley will be joining the Phuket contingent competing at Langkawi.

Another King’s Cup veteran, Mike Roberts, is looking forward to competing against Grenville Fordham’s Image Asia Ceburus are all scheduled to compete alongside Xcatriot.

Many eyes will be on Seekronghuk after its dramatic capsize on the finish line in the King’s Cup.

Whether or not Seekronghuk makes it to the start line, Phuket will be well represented in almost every class. Ceburus skipper Fordham said, “A lot of the boats are either Phuket based or were Phuket based, so I’m hoping to see a lot of old friends.”

He, too, has tasted success at Langkawi, winning the Club Cruising class on Jemini Jo in 2006.

However, Fordham is not expecting a repeat of this success. “I doubt we will come away with much silverware this year. It depends on how many boats actually make it. I’m just looking forward to it because it’s one of the few chances I get to go racing – even the trip down there is fun.”

Bob Brindley, however, clearly feels that overcoming Fordham to retain his title will be anything but plain sailing. “I’m particularly looking forward to racing against Grenville.

“I have raced against him before and it has always been 50-50,” he said.

Organized by the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club, the 2008 Langkawi Regatta is the sixth to be held since the inaugural event in 2003.

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Organized by the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club, the 2008 Langkawi Regatta is the sixth to be held since the inaugural event in 2003.

This year, organizers are hoping for more than 35 entries. Usually held early February, this year’s regatta has been moved forward to take place between the Phuket King’s Cup and the Singapore Straits Regatta.

Regatta Race Committee Chairman Ahmad Zailani Bashah said, “The changes in the regatta dates will ensure that strong easterly winds will create an environment where sailors have to work hard to trim their sails to perfection in order to achieve maximum speed.

“It is going to be a highly exciting and challenging race and good wind conditions have been forecast,” he added.

The first race of the Langkawi Regatta is scheduled for January 7.

For the many sailors representing Phuket, it promises to be an exhausting, yet rewarding, five days.

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Land & Houses Park enters final stages

CHALONG: More than 10 years in the making, Land & Houses Park Phuket, a family-oriented residential development of about 1,000 homes, is nearing completion.

Of the three final projects within the 415-rai development, the 300-unit Chaiyapruerk project is 95% complete and should be finished by March, and the Seewalee and Nuntawan projects, together totaling another 400 units, are each about 80% complete and expected to be finished by August.

Construction of the development, which stretches from behind Wat Chalong all the way across its main entrance on Chao Fa East Rd, began in 1996, marking the beginning of one of the first large-scale residential projects on the island.

The project has been developed by LH Muang Mai Co Ltd, a subsidiary of Land and Houses Public Company, which claims the title of Thailand’s largest developer and is listed on the Thai stock exchange.

Ruksapong Khumkhuan-jum, General Manager LH Muang Mai Co Ltd, told the Gazette, “The people who buy our houses like our communal services and facilities available within L&H Park include a children’s playground, clubhouse, spa, swimming pool and paddling pool, gym, sports hall with yoga room and aerobics studio. Round-the-clock security is provided.

Aimed squarely at families, the 950 homes in the huge project are all on plots of 200 square meters to 1,200sqm, with usable areas ranging from 85sqm to 450sqm. The homes currently available are priced between 3.9 million and 20 million baht.

Of the 300 two-story Chaiyapruerk homes, touted as ideal for first-time buyers, only five are now available. The detached homes each feature three bedrooms, a large living area with a combination of Western and Asian designs and utilities.

“Chaiyapruerk units start at 3.9 million baht. We think these units will be sold out by the end of 2008,” said K. Ruksapong.

“L&H Park does not sell off-plan. Homes in different projects within the development are built simultaneously, some to interior-decoration stage and others to ready-to-move-in stage, and then offered to prospective buyers,” she added.

Of the Seewalee and the Nuntawan homes, a total of 59 units are still available. The two-story, three-bedroom Seewalee homes are described as being in “typical English style” designed with families in mind. Each of the homes has a garden large enough to accommodate a small swimming pool.

The three-to-four-bedroom Nuntawan properties come in three styles: colonial, contemporary or rustic. Each has a garden large enough for a swimming pool, a large family area and is set on a plot anywhere from 300sqm to 800sqm. Prices range from 5.7 million to 10 million baht.

Once these homes are sold, there will be only two units remaining available in the Laddawan project.

The Laddawan homes mark a departure from the mid-range market, and offer luxury pool villas modeled on tropical bungalows.

One of the villas is on 1,084sqm of land with 161sqm of living space. The other is on a 1,152sqm plot with 252sqm of living space.

They are priced at 18.9 million and 20.9 million baht, respectively.

They are located next to a lagoon and feature four-by-eight meter swimming pools, salas and gardens with external lighting. The Western-style interiors include three bedrooms with bathrooms en-suite. Each villa also has a maid’s quarters, living area and dining room.

However, K. Ruksapong explained that Land & Houses has two other developments in the pipeline for 2008 and 2009. One will be another residential community, while the other will be something that Land & Houses “has never done before”, she said.

“The 2008 development will continue with the same theme as L&H Park in Chalong, but the 2009 project will be aimed at high-end property buyers, and possibly include condominiums and high-end villas,” K. Ruksapong said.

However, she added that the company was not yet ready to disclose more details.

Land & Houses offers finance on all of the homes in the project. Foreign buyers can take out loans of 50% of the total value of their houses, while Thai buyers are able to borrow 100% of the cost of their new homes.

For further information contact Land & Houses, 80/15 Village 7, Chao Fa West Rd, Chalong. Tel: 076-381151-2. Fax: 076-381111. Email: info@lhphuket.com Website: www.lhphuket.com

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Ann Furniture Antique is a shop that recently opened its doors to customers who have a desire for classical Asian decor. Depending on taste and budget, customers can choose between ancient Indonesian, Burmese, Chinese and Thai antique ornaments and furniture or classic reproductions.

The range of décor in the shop includes artistic Indonesian mahogany and ceramic dolls, expertly handcrafted Thai decor items and century old ornaments from China.

Shop owner K. Ann said that this shop is the first of several planned branches of Ann Furniture Antique, with antiques and classic reproductions from around the region for sale at reasonable prices.

"These pieces are not mass produced. Many of them are unique originals imported from Indonesia, Burma and China. We stock only grade-A products, but we still try to keep the end cost reasonable for our customers and give them options depending on their budget," said K. Ann.

The Thai furniture items are predominantly made of teak wood, while Indonesian furniture is mostly crafted from mahogany. The latest addition to the collection of décor items launching this month is imitation rattan made from polyester, which is imported from Germany to be used for furniture here in Thailand.

"Although polyester rattan is not a traditional material, I think it works well because it lasts longer, it’s easy to clean and there isn’t a problem with mold that effects natural rattan as it gets older," K. Ann said.

"The polyester rattan is perfect for those who like a modern design and want an alternative to more pricey teak," she added.

Even with so many other furniture and decor suppliers to compete with in Phuket, K. Ann is confident that customers will be attracted to the high quality of the items for sale in her shop.

"Yes, there are many other furniture and décor outlets in Phuket, but it’s always possible to offer something different or better than the rest. Some of these products are limited editions that cannot be copied, so you will not find them anywhere else. Look closely at one of the dressers or chests of drawers and you will notice the attention to detail in the decorative patterns and the fine finishes. "Hand-painted, ceramic dolls made in Indonesia and costing about 1,500 baht are popular ornaments with customers. They make nice souvenirs but I often give them away to customers when they buy a larger item of furniture," said K. Ann.

"Other Indonesian décor includes paintings and hand crafted furniture products, such as a unique dining set. "The ‘royal dining set’ is a one-off design by an Indonesian craftsman. It will always remain unique as he will not make this particular design again, but other designs can be requested by customers," she added.

"Reproductions are made to order at our factory in Bangkok before being delivered to the shop in Phuket. "Orders are made from designs submitted by us or the customer, or they are copied from other classic designs. Our customers buy from us with peace of mind as we take responsibility for any damage or mistakes from the factory and we deliver directly to customers in Phuket," K. Ann said.

K. Ann claims that the items in her shop are designed to fit in both traditional and contemporary-styled homes. Comparing natural furniture-making materials, K. Ann said, "Teak is by far the most durable material used for interior and exterior decor. "Furniture made from water hyacinth has become popular recently, but it will not last as long as teak," she added.

"Teak is the best material for outdoor furniture as it’s so hardy and durable. Furniture for the living room should be soft and comfortable," K. Ann said.

Ann Furniture Antique is located on Srisoonthorn Road, about two kilometers from Cherng Talay Police Station. The shop is open on Monday to Saturday from 10.30 am to 5.30 pm. For more information, call Tel: 076-527745-6 or 089-6502153.
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She canna be more beautiful

I’m all for tolerance. We should welcome, embrace and understand all people of all religions, ethnic groups, colors and creeds. If you were to ask me after a few towers of beer, I’d even say we should tolerate the French.

I have decided that this week I wouldn’t actually have a go at intolerance, or even the French, but instead go straight for the heart of a far more menacing group: Trekkies. You know them, those people who dress up in Klingon costumes swearing death and destruction on anyone associated with the Starship Enterprise, spending every weekend at conventions. Nutters. I’m probably being intolerant again.

Unfortunately, from what I’ve seen of Trekkies, most of them appear to be fundamentally confused. For a start, they call themselves “Trekkers” despite everyone else calling them “Trekkies”.

They also seem to forget that there is in fact only one real “Star Trek”. “Live long and prosper”? What kind of nonsense is that? The only Star Trek that really mattered was the timeless series featuring Captain Kirk, Lieutenant O’Hura (who can forget those miniskirts?) and Mr Spock. And yes, he was a “mister” – not a “doctor”.

That title was reserved for a grumpy chap who spent his career crouching over bodies in upside-down gold V badges, waving a silver thing that made a woo-woo noise. He inevitably always uttered the immortal line “He’s dead, Jim”. Why was it that Scotty from Star Trek came to my aid, bringing Scotty’s immortal line to life – “She canna take it, captain.”? He’s dead, Jim.

The canna, or *Buddha Raks in Thai, is so common that I’m still convinced that her potential father-in-law considered it insane for wanting to take some of these plants home, as they were so common and inexpensive. Nevertheless he dutifully helped me to dig a few up out of his garden to throw in the back of the car, so that I could give them a new home elsewhere.

I now see them in most Thai gardens. Even mine, and well-do-to-I most certainly am not.

The downside is that this plant is high maintenance. While it’s reasonably happy just to sit there, grow, flower, look colorful and multiply, it definitely appreciates a bit of regular attention.

Once their job is done, the flowers start to mope a bit, then wither and drop off, after which the whole stalk inevitably meets the same fate – it will only flower once. These shoots always appear in clusters from the ground, as they all share the same root system. The variation in colors is huge, from canary yellow to scarlet and orange, and even dark purple. As they all share the same root system, the variation in colors is huge, from canary yellow to scarlet and orange, and even dark purple.

I remember after first arriving in Thailand, taking a farang friend of mine to meet her potential parents-in-law in the countryside of Trang province. Thai flora was a novelty to me at that stage, and I recall being fascinated by the richness of the colors in this tropical region, originally coming from the Americas and the Caribbean. It was brought here to add yet another splash of color along the driveways and avenues of the well-to-do a couple of centuries ago.

We now see them in most Thai gardens. Even mine, and well-do-to-I most certainly am not.

The downside is that this plant is high maintenance. While it’s reasonably happy just to sit there, grow, flower, look colorful and multiply, it definitely appreciates a bit of regular attention.

One of the best things you can do to encourage future growth of the whole plant is to snip off the whole stalk at its base once its group of flowers has turned brown.

Canna enjoys copious quantities of sunlight, nutrients in rich soil and water. If any of these elements don’t form part of its everyday life, then it won’t do anything drastic, but the flowers will go on striking and simply refuse to appear until they feel the plant is once again receiving the treatment it deserves.

I canna believe that I got through the whole thing with only mentioning Scotty from Star Trek once. Well twice now, of course.

Still another splash of color along the driveways and avenues of the car, so that I could give them a new home elsewhere.

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Still another splash of color along the driveways and avenues of the...
Salika style with all the trimmings

Villa Salika is a ready-to-move-into, fully-furnished villa tucked away in Rawai. This villa features a modern interior-design and is located in a prime residential area. The property is suitable for investment either as a family estate or a resort-like villa for renting out.

The villa overlooks Chalong Bay while Phuket City can be seen in the distance. Nai Harn Beach and Phromthep Cape are a short drive away and Phuket International Airport is about 45 minutes away.

The privately-owned residential area is away from the major tourist spots and hotel crowds. There is no construction work in the surrounding area, ensuring a peaceful existence for residents.

The villa includes a reception and living area, five bedrooms with bathrooms en suite and private spas, an infinity-edge swimming pool with adjacent pool villa, spa pools, a day-room with spa and shower facilities, sun terraces, and a sala suitable for al-fresco dining.

Also included are a wine cellar, a kitchen and a yoga studio. The property has been decorated with furnishings from Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Myanmar. Southeast-Asian craftsmanship is evident throughout – from the stain-finished redwood floors to the bamboo table and pieces of art placed throughout the property.

A geometrically-designed, Chinese-teak staircase leads up to the bedrooms.

In the main living area, the space is dominated by glass doors that open out onto the swimming pool, the water of which is black in appearance.

One floor up is the yoga studio. This space can also be used as a meeting room and is furnished with daeng wood. Bronze woven ceiling fans circulate air throughout the room. The rest of the studio is encircled by glass doors draped in white linen.

The master bedroom is separated from the other guest rooms to ensure privacy. The room comes with its own reception area before the entrance with doors that open out onto a private sun terrace. Warm-brown color are used in the master bedroom, found in the Thai silk drapes and furnishings that are covered with materials such as brown suede and leather.

To one side of the room is a door leading outside to the sala and the pool. A cream-marble design is incorporated in the en-suite bathroom to the master bedroom. The second bedroom is located on the ground floor with two entrances, one opening directly to the parking area.

The third and fourth bedrooms are adjoining. The third bedroom features a Thai-rattan weaved chaise longue and linen curtains. The en-suite bathroom is at the back of the room. This room also features an outdoor whirlpool.

Chao Fa wooden handles are used on the adjoining door, sculpted in the shape of scrolls usually found in Thai Buddhist temples. Both bedrooms face the sea with doors opening out onto a shared sun terrace.

The layout in the third and fourth bedrooms are similar. Both feature black-marble style en-suite bathrooms. The bathrooms feature free-standing, hammered-steel wash basins.

The garden was landscaped by Pieter van Loon from Eurolandscape, Holland.

This property come with wireless Internet, palau-style roofs and parking for three cars. There is also a roof garden with views of Cape Panwa.

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Patong, 80/9 Soi Wattana, Beach road. 14 million baht. Tel: 087-3809181. Email: info@far-away.net

Kata beach
3-Bedroom House, hillside, panoramic sea view, quiet cul de sac 800m from beach. A very well-finished house ready to move in. 4.95 million baht. Tel: 081-2714261 (Thai), 089-2905584 (Eng). Email: herryasia50@hotmail.com

MUST SELL, LAST HOUSE
Near country club. 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, furnished, car park. 1.7 million baht, Chanote title. Tel: 087-4733409.
SEAVIEW VILLA
Rawai-Nai Harn, Phuket. 
Price: US$1 million. 
Land: 700sqm. 
5 bedrooms, 7 bathrooms, fully furnished, fitness room, swimming pool (communal). 1-minute drive to Rawai beach, 5 minutes’ drive to Nai Harn Beach. Contact K. Sam. Tel: 085-1106449.

BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE

51.4 sqm, in Chanakran Property Village, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Behind TOT Public Co Ltd in Chalong. Price: 3.6 million baht. Email: berndpfluger@hotmail.com

HILL LAND FOR SALE

12 rai overlooking Loch Palm golf course, lake and entire valley with 180º view. 1.9 million baht per rai. Contact K. Noi. Tel: 087-2698492.

INVESTMENT PROPERTY
Patong Beach, run as 5-star hotel, 100m to the beach. Income guarantee from the developer. Sales contract at 300,000 baht. For more info please contact K. Qi. Tel: 085-3027242. Email: qi1983@hotmail.com

KATA HOUSE, TERMS AVAILABLE
Two-bedroom house. Terms of 6 years available at 450,000 baht per year, or cash of 2.6 million baht. Tel: 66-801701144. Email: sver@bygggeguien.no

COCONUT ISLAND LAND

Bali Beachfront
or mountain house, 4,990 euros, 10 year/freehold 29,990 euros. Krystal Court Penang, 158sqm townhouse, 99,990 euros. Email: berndpfluger@yahoo.de

PHUKET CITY HOME PROJECT

In Erawadee 2 Project, located near Khao Khad View Point. 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, fully furnished. Only 1.5 million baht. Contact to view. Tel: 087-2770978. Email: koyyangle99@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

Phuket

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB
3-story duplex renovation project directly on the 15th fairway. Tel: 081-8941994. Email: tomkut@phuket.ksc.co.th Visit: www.fairway15.com

ELEGANT VILLA

Hillside, 15m pool, shady garden. Unique! Private! Nice! Contact at Tel: 088-388236, 089-2775407. Email: cosmocampbell@yahoo.com For details, please see our website: www.villa-sale-phuket.com

BEACHFRONT RESTAURANT

Opportunity for exclusive beachfront restaurant/cocktail bar serving Millionaires Mile. 
*Kamala beachfront - south end near Rockfish 
*2 access points: walk-in off beach promenade and main shopping street. 
*Suitable for conversion into exclusive restaurant. 
*Approximately 200sqm inside/outside. 
*Storey concrete structure, currently used as a residence. 

BAN SAKHO LAND PLOTS
100sqi wah, ready to build. 2km from Nai Thon Beach. Tel: 084-0526400, 081-4669597. Email: narin@phuketvillage.se

SEAVIEW POOL HOUSE
in Rawai, 3 bedrooms. 12.5 million baht. For pictures and info please contact at Tel: 085-7839062. Email: docu columns@hotmail.com

PHUKET CITY HOME

4 stories, first floor have large area convenient for restaurant or bar. 
8 rooms apartment on 2, 3, 4 floor. 
Chateau title, electricity

BEACHFRONT

NEW, super modern, furnished. Best location. 2 to 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, garage. Sale from owner. Freehold. 12.5 million baht. Tel: 084-7839062 or visit www.phuketdir.com/poolsea house

PATING TOWER SEA VIEW

Furnished, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom condo on the 15th floor with full-length balcony. Ready to move in, great condition. Quiet location in the heart of town. Elevated, unobstructed, panoramic sea view, 100 meters from Patong Beach, shops, dining and banking just steps away. Pool, indoor parking and 24hr security and reception. A rare chance to secure a one of a kind location.Offered at 6.5 million baht. Tel: 087-2761225, 081-6927397 Email: pating15@gmail.com

THAMPARRA LAND PLOTS
7,500 baht per sq wah. 100sqi wah, ready to build on. 1km from mission hills. Tel: 084-0526400, 081-4669597. Email: narin@phuketvillage.se

BANG TAO HOUSE
for sale. 2-story, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, big pool, automatic gate, 5 aircons, Sat TV, Internet. Tel: 084-8516121. Email: phuketmat@yahoo.com or visit www.phukethome.ws

Contact 081-8687676, 087-2709093
NEW FURNISHED BUNGALOW FOR RENT

Furnished, 1 bedroom, aircon, hot water, Internet, cable TV, 700 baht per night, 12,000 baht per month (long-term). Tel: 086-2670157. Email: bannunot@yahoo.com

PATONG / KALIM LUXURY APARTMENT

Luxury apartment for long term lease (up to 2 years) for caring tenant. Single or couple (Sorry, no one under 18). Privately owned. Double-bedroom, bathroom en suite, lounge/dining kitchenette. On 3rd floor of Sun-Set Beach Resort (junior suite) Hotel on beach front. Balconies (bedroom and lounge) overlook waterfall/swimming pool. Apartment service not included but available at own cost. Business center has high-speed internet. Kalim Beach is a very easy walk (500 meters south) to Patong Beach. 30,000 baht per month; 60,000 baht deposit required. Email: madzorba@bigpond.net.au

Nai Harn House for Rent

1km to beach, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, swimming pool. 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-3971835.

KAMAL BEACHFRONT VILLAS

Fully furnished to a high standard. Western kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, 2 bedrooms, TV, DVD, CD, microwave, washing machine, refrigerator, hot water, aircon, internet, maid, security guard, furnished, close to beach. Tel: 086-7866350. For further details, see our website at: www.phuketislandhomes.com

SEEAV Villas for Rent

A stunning, 5-bedroom villa with infinity pool, vast deck, BBQ area and full housekeeping services. Perfect for a big family or a group of friends. Tel: 076-2904068. Email: ops@theestategroup.com

HOME OFFICE BYPASS ROAD

Great location near Lotus. 31 stories, 10m x 15m, 8 parking spaces in front. Showroom, 4 offices, 4 bedrooms, 3 toilets, 5 aircons. 70,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-1951394, 081-9593135. Email: astec99@yahoo.com

KAMALA BEACH

New apartments and houses for rent, 2 to 4 bedrooms, fully furnished, close to beach, quiet, 15,000 to 30,000 baht, short or long-term. Call Larry at Tel: 089-7589270.

BAAN SUAN KAMWAN

If you want the best, take a look at this beachfront first. Just outside Patong. Overlooking the sea and Patong bay. One large piece of land and one stunning house with private pool and a lot of privacy. Tel: 076-7866350. For further details, visit our website at www.palongblueprint.com

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, UBC, ADSL, private pool. Rent: 45,000 per month. Tel: 08-0579266. Email: chopito7@yahoo.com

BUNGALOW FOR RENT, BANGTAO

Furnished, 1 bedroom, aircon, hot water, Internet, cable TV, 700 baht per night, 10,000 baht per month (long-term). Tel: 089-2670157. Email: bannunot@yahoo.com

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT

25,000 baht per month. Tel: 026488083, 081-7443880.

TOP VILLA, TOP VIEW FOR RENT

Thai-style villa with pool, on top of a private hill. 4 bedroom, 5 bathrooms. 4km to BIS. View of golf course, lake and valley. Quiet, security guard, maid, furnished, Wi-Fi and UBC. Yearly lease at 65,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2984192.

MINI RESORT – POOL LUXURY

3-bedroom, 3 bathrooms and spa near Laguna. Reasonable weekly or monthly rates. Tel: 089-5944067.

BOAT LAGOON TOWNHOUSE

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: 086-2643667. Email: crystalve1@hotmail.com

KAMALA BEACH

New apartments and houses for rent, 2 to 4 bedrooms, fully furnished, close to beach, quiet, 15,000 to 30,000 baht, short or long-term. Call Larry at Tel: 089-7589270.

BOAT LAGOON LUXURY

Waterfront townhouses for rent. 2 & 3 bedrooms, UBC, TV. Long or short-term rent. Tel: 08-0579266. Email: chopito7@yahoo.com

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT WITH TELEPHONE, UBC AND ADSL

Rent: 45,000 per month. Tel: 089-6521473.

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT OR SALE

Fully-furnished villa at 3 soi 5/1, 70/76. Good price (private area). Tel: 08-5376045.

CHALONG NEW HOME

2 Bedroom, furnished house for rent with telephone, UBC and aircon. Tel: 089-6521473.

Nai Harn Beach

Great 2-bedroom, 2-apartment, Lovely view. Rent: 65,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-9252155. Email: nengrich@gmail.com

BAAN SUAN KAMWAN

If you want the best, take a look at this beachfront first. Just outside Patong. Overlooking the sea and Patong bay. One large piece of land and one stunning house with private pool and a lot of privacy. Tel: 076-7866350. For further details, visit our website at www.palongblueprint.com

RAWAI SEAVIEW CONDO

Furnished studio for rent. Aircon, TV, UBC and ADSL. 5,500 baht per month. Call for more information. Tel: 08-0579266. Email: chopito7@yahoo.com

SEMI-DETACHED HOUSE

Living room, 2 bedrooms, 2 kitchens, 2 bathrooms, roof, terrace, 2 aircons, little garden, ADSL, telephone. Loch Palm Club: long-term 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-202275, 081-8916632.

COMFORTABLE HOUSE

in secure environment, 3-bedroom, 3 bathrooms (2 en suite), living room, study, garage, kitchen/dining room, fenced garden, furnished, ADSL, UBC. 35,000 baht per month. Near Wat Chalong. Tel: 076-294579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

FOR RENT AND SALE

in Kamala. Hotel room 1.3 million baht. Condo (2 bedrooms), rent 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-7549411.

BEST VILLS IN NAI YANG

Ultra luxurious, furnished, pool and sala. Superb mountain views. One, large 2-bedroom villa for 25,000 baht/month. And one 3-bedroom villa at 45,000 baht/month. Tel: 089-7549411.

WICHIT VILLA FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 3 aircons, brand-new furniture, TV, DVD, CD, ADSL, Internet, washer, washing machine, etc... 13,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-526557, 084-4849482. Email: brickyor@yahoo.com

PHUKET RENTALS

Houses, villas, condos and apartments. Get booking, pay, no commissions. www.phuket-rentals.com

BAAN SUAN KAMWAN

If you want the best, take a look at this beachfront first. Just outside Patong. Overlooking the sea and Patong bay. One large piece of land and one stunning house with private pool and a lot of privacy. Tel: 076-7866350. For further details, visit our website at www.palongblueprint.com
Property Gazette

Property Wanted

HOME WITH LAND, 1-10 RAI
Any size or style of home with 3- to 10-year lease on monthly payments. Dry land suitable for horses, preferably near a beach, but not on a busy road. Phuket, Krabi, etc. Tel: 084-8424581. Email: christyksweet@gmail.com

HAZARD TOWER
condo with a sea view. Please contact details if you have one available for sale. Tel: 084-447-1076. Email: dgg@realtor.com

WHEN YOU WANT LAND...
for commercial building or residential homes in Phuket, we have quality choices from a variety of locations for you. Please contact for details. Tel: 085-2575711. Email: ppsr.property@gmail.com

LONG-TERM RENTAL
wanted for family. Location: Patong, Kata or Karon. Tel: 084-8889274.

LAND FOR PROJECT
Our VIP client wants buy land — seafront or good view — on which to build a resort. Looking to rent a 3- to 4-bedroom house for one month from Jan 15, Patong, Kata or Karon. Email: mdamkvist@yahoo.com

1-MONTH HOLIDAY RENTAL
Looking to rent a 3- to 4-bedroom house for one month from Jan 15. Patong, Kata or Karon. Tel: 02-3813891, 086-7553734. Email: oak_v30@yahoo.com

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RENT LONG-TERM?
Nice condominium or house with access to communal swimming pool. Minimum: 2 bedrooms. Rent up to 30,000 baht per month. Needed from February 1 for Danish person. Email: jridberg@hotmail.com

HOUSE OR SHOWROOM WANTED
Showroom wanted for rent for old furniture and decorative items. A house, townhouse or commercial building with easy access for big truck would be of interest. Tel: 02-3813891. 086-7553734. Email: oak_v30@yahoo.com

WE HAVE WHAT YOU WANT
in real estate. Please contact for more details Tel: 085-7839062. Take a look at www.phuketmarbella.com

JUST TELL US...
What kind of property you’re looking for and we will find it for you contact Tel: 085-7839062. Email: sales@phuketmarbella.com

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Please use this form to write your classified advertisement. Then hand it to any of our agents.

Classified ads are charged per line. Each line is 95 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (heading included) per ad.

All advertising must be paid for in advance.

Deadline for Property Gazette page: Friday 3 pm.
Deadline for all other ads: Saturday 12 noon.

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See more classified ads at www.phuketgazette.net
SAILING TRIPS
Fishing, snorkeling and kayaking. Australian captain, reasonable rates. Tel: 081-6771641.

WELL BELOW VALUE, MUST SELL
63ft power cruiser, 4 double cabins, full aircon, water maker, GPS, radar, radio and much more. Must be seen and will give special price. Leaving country. Tel: 081-9390176. Email: beaver@tstf.net

PERFECT FIBERGLASS
fishing boat. Tri-hull, nearly new 55 Yamaha and trailer. Free storage for 3 months if you buy for 195,000 baht. Tel: 085-4746119. Email: piratespizza@gmail.com

ALUMINIUM BOAT

JET DINGY
4.7 x 2.2m with 120hp Force Inboard. New electric and trailer. 400,000 baht. Tel: 076-242091, 081-7307557. Email: dive_block@web.de

PERFECT FIBERGLASS
fishing boat. Tri-hull, nearly new 55 Yamaha and trailer. Free storage for 3 months if you buy for 195,000 baht. Tel: 085-4746119. Email: piratespizza@gmail.com

JET DINGY
4.7 x 2.2m with 120hp Force Inboard. New electric and trailer. 400,000 baht. Tel: 076-242091, 081-7307557. Email: dive_block@web.de
**PC JOB: DATA ENTRY**

Work in office, Na Harn. Basic knowledge of English and PC-Internet required. 12,000 baht per month. Urgent! Please contact for more info at Tel: 085-4737812. Email: vankairts@gmail.com

**RESERVATION STAFF**

Diethelm Travel is looking for highly qualified and service-minded operations staff. Good command of English and computer skills required. Experience in tourism is a plus. For more details contact at Tel: 076-209163, 081-8927714. Email: patrick@siamrealestate.com or 076-211186. Email: sinthavee@hotmail.com

**JOB VACANCIES**

Siam Real Estate urgently requires a Thai national with excellent English and sales experience to sell holiday and long-term rentals. Must drive car, know the island and have good administrative skills. Good salary and commission. Please contact for more information at Tel: 076-288908. Email: patrick@siamrealestate.com

**DRAFTSMAN WANTED**

Electrical design and engineering firm needs a draftsman with experience in AutoCAD. Basic knowledge of English and computer skills required. Experience a plus. Good command of English and English not necessary. Good salary plus gasoline. Tel: 076-279340. Fax: 076-279341. Email: giovannifrova@libero.it

**FLUENT ENGLISH SPEAKER**

Required for email tasks, researching, writing and general administrative duties. Email: admin@languagesuction.com

**RENTAL SALES**

Siam Real Estate urgently requires a Thai national with excellent English and sales experience to sell holiday and long-term rentals. Must drive car, know the island and have good administrative skills. Good salary and commission. Please contact for more information at Tel: 076-288908. Email: patrick@siamrealestate.com or 076-211186. Email: sinthavee@hotmail.com

**DELIVERY MAN OR LADY**

Thai company in Kamala wants a man or woman for delivery of products in Phuket. Age not a problem, young or old accepted. Must have motorbike. Job is for Thai national only, 7,000 baht per month, plus gasoline. Tel: 076-385221. Fax: 076-279340. Email: giovannifrova@libero.it

**PURCHASING AGENT WANTED**

To buy construction stock. 3 years experience and English required. Thai national. Tel: 087-0778545. Email: soludote01@aol.com

**HAUSEITTING**

Needed to look after a 3-bedroom house and dog in Kamala, also do shopping. Must be able to drive. Hours: 10 am to 6 pm, Mon to Sat. Tel: 086-5932722. Email: jamesreanet@hotmail.com

**PHUKET GAZETTE **

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following positions:

- **REPORTER**
  - The successful candidate will be a Thai national with initiative, an outgoing personality and plenty of experience about the world and how it works. Also essential are the ability to communicate in English, both spoken and written, and a car.
  - Good salary for the right candidate.
  - Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to editor@phuketgazette.net

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**APMS**

Albar Property Management Service

- *Assistant to General Manager*  
- *Sales Manager*  
- *General Manager*

Contact at Sinthavee Hotel Phuket.

**Events Executive Wanted**

English/Thai speaking Events Executive with own car wanted in Phuket. Tel: 063-7880250, 019-2379447. Email: jeffreysoh@yahoo.com or Fax: 603-78801154. Email: jeffreysoh@yahoo.com or visit our website at http://conceptualevent.com/job_opportunity

**SPA THERAPIST**

Hotel in Patong area requires a spa therapist. Immediate start. Tel: 081-8920038.
OFFICE MANAGER
Phuket
Tropical Landscaping International is currently seeking an experienced, honest, enthusiastic and hard-working Thai national for the position of Office Manager within our growing Phuket team. Applicants should be fluent in written and spoken English and have experience with accounts. Please submit full applications, including resume, references, current photo and expected salary. Tel: 076-325003. Fax: 076-324544. Email: ben@tropical-landscaping.com

FULL-TIME NANNY
Foreign family urgently needs full-time Nanny. Thai nationality, must speak English. Contact Montree at Tel: 087-2664583. Email: vjngong@gmail.com

TEACHERS AND DRIVER NEEDED
The following positions are open at a nursery school in Chalong:
1) Full-time English teacher
2) Part-time English teacher
3) Thai teacher
4) Part-time driver
Tel: 081-9872821.

ACCOUNTANT
Our real estate company is seeking an experienced accountant for immediate employment, full-time, at our Phuket International Airport Office. Tel: 076-328505. Fax: 076-328598. Send CV by email to luc@phuket-tropical-realestate.com

EDEN DIVERS
Reservation staff needed. Must speak good English. Salary depends on experience. Thai female preferred. Contact K. Andrew Tel: 085-7654677.

DIVING & SURF SHOP
In Kata needs Thai staff, male or female. Please contact in Kata Tel: 085-8749147.

WANTED
PROMOTION MARKETING
Sales person with marketing, ticket sales and promotion for Club Lime on Patong Beach. Become a member of our new sales crew, opportunity for farang who want to live and work in paradise. Please contact Nicklass for more info. Tel: 085-7988511. www.clublime.com

MEXICAN RESTAURANT
One cook and two waitresses wanted for new Mexican restaurant in Chalong. Must speak English. Please contact for more information at Tel: 089-1831866. Email: vjngong@gmail.com

PERSONAL ASSISTANT
Thali lady required, part-time, flexible hours, must have good English and computer skills. Please call Tel: 086-2790837.

SWISS SALES MANAGER
32-year-old Swiss Sales & Purchases Manager seeking new challenging job in Phuket. Over 11 years experience dealing with international customers. Very motivated, dedicated and reliable. Fluent in French and English. Tel: 087-2664583. Please contact for CV and further details. Email: chiscredwes@hotmail.com

BRITISH ENGLISH TEACHER
20 years experience. Available for private lessons, business, kids or conversational classes. Tel: 086-7458832. Email: gregmackay67@hotmail.com

THAI FEMALE FLUENT IN ENGLISH
Experience in restaurant management, English teaching, sales and cooking Thai food. Will consider all jobs. Contact Jay. Tel: 086-6459736.

INTERPRETER/ SALES
Singaporean Chinese is looking for a permanent job. Languages: fluent in English, Chinese, Hakka, Southern & central Thai. PC & Internet savvy. Please contact for more info. Tel: 084-3125018. Email: vans_soros@yahoo.com.sg

SALES AGENT
Sales agents/representatives for the most dynamic product on Phuket. Destination Air has three positions open. Must have own car and strong knowledge of tourism market. Please contact for more information at Tel: 076-328505. Send CV to Email: pat@destinationair.com or see our website at: www.destinationair.com

TLC - OFFICE STAFF
Phuket
Tropical Landscaping International is currently seeking English speaking Thai nationals for positions within our growing Phuket office. The positions available are:
- Office Manager
- Office Assistant/Secretary
- Sales Staff
Tel: 076-325003. Fax: 076-324544. Email: ben@tropical-landscaping.com

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL:
- SALES STAFF
- OFFICE MANAGER
- OFFICE SECRETARY
- ACCOUNTANT
- INTERPRETER
- MANAGEMENT
- FRONT OFFICE
- HOUSEKEEPING
- ENGINEERING

OFFICE MANAGER
Looking to hire an experienced hotel manager for 30 room resort. Email resume giving experience, availability and salary desired Tel: 076-383280. Please send to: luc@phuket-tropical-landscaping.com

TEACHERS AND DRIVER NEEDED
The following positions are open at a nursery school in Chalong:
1) Full-time English teacher
2) Part-time English teacher
3) Thai teacher
4) Part-time driver
Tel: 081-7887991.

ACCOUNTANT
Must be able to understand all accents of the English language. Salary starts at 30,000 baht plus 8,000 addendum (under the conditions). Interested persons please call Tel: 081-8949600, 084-328598. Send CV by email to a_pupatanun@hotmail.com

EDEN DIVERS
Reservation staff needed. Must speak good English. Salary depends on experience. Thai female preferred. Contact K. Andrew Tel: 085-7654677.

DIVING & SURF SHOP
In Kata needs Thai staff, male or female. Please contact in Kata Tel: 085-8749147.

WANTED
PROMOTION MARKETING
Sales person with marketing, ticket sales and promotion for Club Lime on Patong Beach. Become a member of our new sales crew, opportunity for farang who want to live and work in paradise. Please contact Nicklass for more info. Tel: 085-7988511. www.clublime.com
Business Opportunities

**DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY**

Nice curtain shop for sale with equipment and staff ready to start, located near Chalong. Tel: 081-8937068.

**WORK FROM HOME**

Proven business, full training given, machines, ingredients, everything you need to start earning money from home day one. 150,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 054-507182.


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**The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd**

367/2 Yaowarat Road, Phuket City

Tel: 076-236555 Fax: 076-213971
Patong Bar
Large bar & restaurant in prominent position 100 meters from beach. Good turnover and profits. For full details please contact K. Wayne at Tel: 089-6523929 or 07-378-5397, 084-8494562; or Email: curtain_unlimited@hotmail.com

SeaView Apartment & Restaurant
4-room apartment with sea-view balconies in Patong. For sale or lease, 6.2 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 082-8881544.

Bangla Club
New, fit-out, seats 90, 4th floor, 7 rooms. 4.9 million baht. Tel: 089-8677940.

Retire on Rocket Science
Online options trader offers private consultancy. Trade in the world’s biggest financial markets safely and profitably. Professional advice with a small account. You will be amazed, it’s not rocket science. Zero experience required. Have an income in the tropics regardless of other people. 100% serious. Limited places. Tel: 087-1-7373858. Email: info@optionwok.com

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1 bedroom. Owner moving over. For lease on Nanai Rd, Ban Karon or Chalong areas. Now available for long-term lease. Ideal for tour operators. Tel: 084-8516179. Email: franck.79@gmail.com

Patong Ivy Antique Shop
OPEN 7 Days 07:30am - 9:00pm.

Patong Bar
Large bar & restaurant in prominent position 100 meters from beach. Good turnover and profits. For full details please contact K. Wayne at Tel: 089-6523929 or 07-378-5397, 084-8494562; or Email: curtain_unlimited@hotmail.com

Construction Company
Looking for a partner / investor. We have contracts to build from Jan’08 over 30,000sqm of buildings. We need to invest in a mobile crane, truck, excavator, scaffoldings and formwork etc. Please contact us in German, English or Thai. Email: kwan_1905@hotmail.com

Bar / Restaurant
Large bar-restaurant with pool table, couches, plunge pool, Wi-Fi and cable TV. Fully-equipped kitchen. 1.5 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-062 8861. Email: mrbeavonwill@hotmail.com

Italian Restaurant
For sale near Laguna entrance. Proven success, ready to move in. 4 million baht. Rent for 30,000 baht per month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-7839062.

Internet and LAN Games
Internet and LAN-games in Rawai. Please contact me for details. Tel: 076-288636, 084-8516179. Email: franci2548@yahoo.com

Bar for Sale
Bangla Rd. Please contact K. Kevin. Tel: 084-7300190.

Soi Tiger Bar
For sale, in excellent location. For more info visit www.janeproperty.phuket.com

Massage, Salon & Bar
Main street near Central, modern design, many repeat customers. Must see! Tel: 089-2553700. Email: markhighson497@msn.com

Prime Retail Space
Center of Patong. 1,350sq ft. Can divide into office, store or restaurant. Tel: 086-1588752.

Clothing Shop
For lease on Nanai Rd, Ban Kajana with furniture and bedroom. Owner moving overseas. Please contact for more details. Tel: 087-3809951.

Jeab’s Jumping Castles
8 models. For children’s parties. Tel: 081-8939742. www.phuketjumpingcastles.com

Osteopath (UK)
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