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Speedboat pirates raid Thai tanker

By Janyaporn Morel

CAPE PANWA: A fuel tanker on its way to Phuket was boarded by six masked men in the Singapore Strait early morning on April 25. The pirates made off with more than half-a-million baht in goods stolen from the vessel and its crew.

News of the incident was reported to the Phuket City Police soon after the tanker, *Patara Varin 2*, reached the Phuket Deep Sea Port at about 10 am on April 27.

According to Rear-Admiral Supot Prukha of the Third Naval Area Command, *Patara Varin 2* was on April 21 ordered to transport Jet A-1 fuel from the ARC oil refinery at the Mabtaput Industrial Estate in Rayong to the PTT oil storage facility at the Phuket Deep Sea Port at Cape Panwa.

After loading the fuel at 5:30 pm that day, Capt Pinit Rattanaphan reported engine trouble and spent the night moored at Mabtaput while repairs were carried out.

Patara Varin 2 finally left Mabtaput at 4:45 am on April 22, scheduled to arrive in Phuket about 7 am on April 27, after making the long voyage around Singapore and up to Phuket.

Just after midnight, in the early hours of April 25, Capt Pinit had relieved his deputy of command as the vessel began to enter the busy shipping lanes in the Singapore Strait.

While he was writing a security report, he heard a hatch open. He presumed it to be crew member Rattasart Intima returning to the bridge after a trip to the head, and thought little of it.

A few minutes later, he heard someone call out "Captain" in English.



Fully-laden with jet fuel, the pirates found the *Patara Varin 2* (pictured) a tempting target and easy to board.

Photo courtesy of Phuket Marine Police

When he turned to look, he saw ship mechanic Jaras Srimart handcuffed and being led onto the bridge at knife- and gun-point by two masked men.

After throttling down the engines at the pirates' orders, Capt Pinit was also handcuffed – along with three other crew members who in turn came onto the bridge to see why the engines had slowed.

The six pirates soon had the full 13-member crew in cuffs and began searching every cabin for valuables while two more pirates waited alongside the tanker.

The pirates soon disembarked, racing into the darkness in their 20-foot speedboats, powered by twin 300hp outboards.

There were no injuries reported.

Capt Pinit reported that the incident took place at coordinates 01° 31.5' N, 104° 24.4' E while the ship was cruising at 11 knots.

The entire operation lasted 45 minutes, during which the pirates made off with valuables estimated at 597,700 baht.

Among the stolen items were cash, gold, 13 mobile phones, four notebook computers, two wristwatches and a CD player.

The pirates communicated among themselves in Indonesian, Capt Pinit wrote in his report.

Bogus cop busted in extortion case

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

CHALONG: In the second crime of its type reported in less than a month, police arrested a Thai man for impersonating a police officer in a bid to extort money from a construction project employing unregistered Burmese workers.

Pol Capt Arthid Sue-sattabongkot of Phuket Provincial Special Branch (*Santiban*) Police told the *Gazette* that construction foreman Santi Nasang, who is overseeing a project off Soi Palai in Chalong, on April 23 informed the Phuket Special Branch Police that a man identifying himself only as "Chai" had earlier that day appeared at the construction site.

Chai told K. Santi that he had been sent there by Pol Sen Sgt Maj Karoon (no last name provided) of Phuket Special Branch Police to collect 8,000 baht in return for not reporting the illegal workers.

After K. Santi reported the incident, a team of Phuket Special Branch Police, led by Capt Arthid, gave K. Santi 5,000 baht and set up a sting operation to nab the extortionist.

On April 24, Chai drove his car to K. Santi's house, where police recorded the exchange of money as evidence in the case before placing Chai under arrest.

The subsequent investigation identified the extortionist as Tanakorn Kueakoon, 28, of 17 Pattana Rd, Phuket City. He has been involved in successful extortion attempts at workers' camps in the past, Capt Arthid said.

Tanakorn, now in Phuket Provincial Prison, has been charged with extortion, but not with impersonating a police officer.

Samak says Phuket needs urgent 'rehabilitation'

BANGKOK (*Nation*): Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej said on his weekly Sunday morning radio show on April 27 that Phuket needs urgent "rehabilitation" and development projects.

The prime minister said he had received direct complaints from local businessmen that the central government had not done enough to "rehabilitate" the province, which has been "exploited" for tourism.

The prime minister said he would soon hold a meeting with government agencies to consider development projects for the province.

One of the projects proposed by the local businessmen, he said, is to draw water from the Chieo Lan Reservoir in Surat Thani and pipe it to Phuket.

Mobile clinic for Thai passports

PHUKET CITY: The Consular Affairs department of the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs will hold a mobile service center for Thai nationals to apply for "E-passports" in Phuket City from May 12 to 23.

The service center, in the conference room of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) offices on Narisorn Rd, will be open 8 am to 4:30 pm daily, closed May 18.

An E-passport, which is valid for five years, costs 1,000 baht, plus 35 baht to cover postage. Passports will be delivered about one week after application.

Adult applicants must present their identification card, government officer card or state census card.

Applicants will also be required to provide documentation of any changes of name.

For more information call the Thai Consular Affairs department in Bangkok: 029-828786.

New OrBorJor council awaits approval

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

PHUKET CITY: Unconfirmed results from the Phuket Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) elections held on April 20 saw the upstart Khon Baan Rao party, led by former senator Paiboon Upatising, sweep into power by winning seats in 16 of 24 voting precincts in Phuket.

Seven candidates running under the Democrat Party banner also won seats, along with one independent candidate.

All of the official results as tabulated by the Phuket Election Committee still require final approval by the Election Commission in Bangkok before the winners can

take office and convene the new provincial council.

Confirmation of the election results is expected to be announced before May 20.

Of the independent candidates running for seats, the only winner was Sommit Suebsit, who ran in Thalang District 4, which covers most of Cherng Talay.

In Krabi, incumbent *OrBorJor* President and Rak Krabi leader Somsak Kittithorn garnered 96,779 votes to beat Democrat Party challenger and former MP Sasetthasit Sithomom, who received 61,182 votes.

Rak Krabi retained a solid majority in the 24-seat assembly, winning 19 seats to just five for the Democrats. There were no inde-

pendent candidates among the winners. Turnout was 64.3% of Krabi's 269,568 eligible voters.

In Phang Nga, 51 candidates ran for 24 regular council seats, with Ruam Pattana candidates winning 13 seats. Other winners included 10 independent candidates and one member of Thai Muang Pattana.

The election for Phang Nga *OrBorJor* president will be held next year, after the term of current president Bamroong Piyanamvanich ends.

Overall, 41 *OrBorJor* elections took place on April 20. None of the results have been confirmed by the Election Commission in Bangkok.

Phuket girl wins TV talent quest

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

PHUKET: Phuket teenager Wichayanee "Nong Kam" Peagrin on April 27 became the first female contestant to win *The Star* contest, the wildly popular Thai TV equivalent of *American Idol*.

The final round of competition, televised nationally on Channel 9, was held April 27 at the full-to-capacity Hua Mark Indoor Stadium in Bangkok.

The final pitted the dimple-faced Nong Kam, 19, against fellow finalist Supparuj "Ruj" Techatanond.

The pair were the last two standing after months of televised competition that started with a field of more than 16,000 amateur talents, all hoping to make a name for themselves in the show, which last night completed its fourth year.

In the final round of voting that closed during the show, mobile phone users nationwide overwhelmingly endorsed Nong Kam, who at 11 pm was announced the winner, with 61.2% of the vote, vs 38.8% for runner-up K. Ruj.



Phuket teenager Wichayanee 'Nong Kam' Peagrin (center) with her mother, K. Yada, and her younger sister, K. Kate.

The final round, which began at 9 pm, also featured the singing and dancing talents of the other eight quarter-finalists.

Nong Kam is a Satree Phuket School graduate who began singing as an eight-year-old primary student at Samkong School. She honed her vocal talents by taking classes at the Siam Kolakarn Music School.

She has also been featured

on the popular *At Ten* weeknight variety talk show on Thai TV Channel 3.

As this year's winner, she will now go on to record her first album under the GMM Grammy label.

Nong Kam hopes to follow in the footsteps of her own singing idols, American crooner Beyoncé and Thai music sensation Jennifer Kim.

Digital Gazette enters 'fast lane'

PHUKET: Readers of the *Digital Gazette* can now enjoy much faster download and handling speeds as a result of enhancements to the system used in delivering the product.

The publishers announced on April 29 that it is no longer necessary to use the *Digital Gazette* Browser. Existing subscribers can simply uninstall it. Sign-up, download and file response speeds have been "increased by at least 30%" they say. Subscribers can access the *Digital Gazette* from anywhere in the world and from any computer, without restrictions.

The enhanced digital version of the company's full weekly newspaper can now be used with any Web browser – including, among others, Internet Explorer, Firefox, Opera and Netscape – and it can finally be accessed with a Mac.

Readers with current paid subscriptions to the *Digital Gazette* can click online to download the current issue.

For those who have not subscribed but wish to do so, an account can be set up quickly and easily.

An annual subscription (52 issues) is 1,040 baht, a 20% discount on the cover price.

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Illegal logging camp in Patong raided

By Semacote Suganya

PATONG: More than 20 forest protection officers on April 24 raided an illegal logging operation high in the hills south of Patong, but the handful of workers caught by surprise at the site all managed to flee the scene.

Panumet Dam-orn, who heads the Phuket-based Forest Protection Unit 2, ordered the raid after aerial surveillance of the area on April 23.

The site is located upslope from Meun-ngen Rd, which runs from the south end of Patong Bay to Trirang Beach.

K. Panumet conducted the raid with about 20 other officers from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment's Forest Resources Inspection Office 17, located in Krabi.

The group reached the site at about 1 pm after traveling about two kilometers along a winding dirt road, some sections of which

were covered with reinforced concrete because of the steep gradient, K. Panumet said.

When they reached the site, the officers found workers – allegedly Burmese – cutting down hardwood trees and processing them into planks one-inch thick, six-inches wide and 13-feet long.

After the workers quickly fled, officers recovered about 140 planks as evidence. K. Panumet estimated the total value of the lumber seized at about 200,000 baht.

Local residents told officials the operation had been going on for many months, allegedly after a Bangkok-based investor hired a team to fell the trees and process them into lumber.

The investigation will try to identify the investor and bring charges against him, K. Panumet said.

Following his aerial survey on April 23, he estimated the to-

tal area of encroachment on hillside forest land throughout Kathu district at about 100 rai.

Problems in the hills of Patong made headlines in October last year when heavy rains triggered a landslide that undermined the foundations of a holiday home and apartment block off Nanai Rd Soi 9, causing an emergency evacuation.

It was later discovered that work on a real estate project downslope was the likely cause.

In November 2005, a landslide crashed through the wall of a dwelling on Nanai Rd, killing a Thai woman and her child.

A provincial ban on building permanent structures more than 80 meters above sea level was brought into effect in 1994 in order to prevent erosion.

However, the ban has been meaningless, with many projects – completed or currently underway – widely visible in the hills surrounding Patong.

Dog groomer busted for cat burgling

PHUKET CITY: Police have arrested a serial thief charged with breaking into 14 homes in Wichit and Chalong during a crime spree that began mid-2007.

Phuket City Police Superintendent Col Nos Svettalekha and Lt Col Wijak Tarom identified the suspect as 31-year-old Noppakhun Chatchawech, a resident of Chalong Village 4.

Noppakhun, worked by day grooming dogs at a pet shop in Phuket Villa 3. He was presented to media along with more than 1,000 stolen items recovered by police.

The booty included jewelry, mobile phones and bank notes in a variety of denominations. Most of the recovered goods were fake or low-quality items that the suspect probably had trouble sell-

ing off, Lt Col Wijak said.

He told the *Gazette* that the suspect was very active over the Songkran holiday, when six break-ins were reported – all at Jomthong Thani on Kwang Rd and Phuket Villa 3 off Chao Fa East Rd, both in Wichit.

The big break in the investigation came when the suspect was caught on a CCTV camera while withdrawing money from an ATM using a stolen card belonging to Phuket Villa 3 resident Rattawipa Chantawat.

She told police that her home had been burgled during the

Songkran holidays. When K. Rattawipa later checked her account, she realized that 104,900 baht had been withdrawn.

She identified K. Noppakhun when viewing CCTV footage of him making an ATM withdrawal.

After the press conference, homeowners were invited to identify and reclaim their stolen belongings.

Among them was Phuket Provincial Livestock Office Chief Sunart Wongchavalit, who lost many valuable items during a break-in in November.



Volunteer divers work to remove fishing nets snagged on coral at Koh Racha Yai. – Photo by Prasith 'Mood' Boonsop.

Divers help out on Earth Day

PHUKET: More than 100 people took part in beach and underwater cleanups on April 22 as part of Earth Day activities held on and around the island.

In addition to the Royal Thai Navy, private companies took part in the cleanups on the beach and in the sea at Koh Racha Noi and Koh Racha Yai.

"More than 30 people were on our boat Scuba Fun," Sarah Kench of Scuba Cat told the *Gazette*.

"We collected 160 kilos of rubbish [at Koh Racha Yai], including fishing nets, plastic bottles, three tires, household rubbish and even clothing," she said.

The collection required two group dives of one hour each, she added.

The underwater cleanup was just part of the dive company's commitment to maintaining dive sites, Ms Kench explained.

"We cleaned that particular bay because we moor there from June through September. We use it, so we look after it," she said.

Local resorts make Conde Nast list

PHUKET: Two local resorts, and their spas, and two Phuket restaurants have made the much-respected Conde Nast Traveler Hot List for 2008. The list is often regarded as the quintessential guide to high-end travel around the globe.

The Sala Phuket Resort and Spa in Mai Khao and the Six Senses Hideaway Yao Noi, in Phang Nga province, both made the grade in the hotels list. Both are rated at "US\$400 or more" a night.

The spas at the Sala Phuket and the Six Senses Hideaway Yao Noi were also the only local day retreats to make the Conde Nast Hot List Spas 2008.

The Hot List Tables 2008, the magazine's top choice of restaurants around the world, included the Chef's Table, an "eight-table gem on the top floor of the Aleenta Phuket Resort".

Also making the top eateries' list was the Amanpuri's beachfront restaurant Naoki, located on Pansea Beach.

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Getting away with murder

While the shocking murder of Hanna Backlund on April 15 sent shockwaves through the Thai tourism industry, expats living in Phuket found the late-night stabbing murder of long-time Phuket resident Simen Knudsen on September 23, 2007, equally disturbing.

The murder, which never made national headlines and went unreported internationally outside the victim's native Norway, was the first case of a well-established resident expat being slain in an apparently random robbery attempt.

About a week after the killing, Chalong Police reported the capture of two teenagers from Surat Thani, who were also involved in an attack on a Swiss man on a rented motorbike on the road from Patong to Kathu.

The pair confessed to killing Knudsen and fingered two more boys who took part, police said.

Not long after the victim's Thai wife and their 13-year-old son appeared at Chalong Police Station to congratulate the Chalong Police on the speedy investigation, however, it was announced that the four boys were no longer under suspicion for Knudsen's murder and that the case had been transferred by the Phuket Provincial Police to Phuket City Police Inspector Pol Lt Col Somkid Boonrat.

After six months of investigation, there have been no arrests in the case.

Chalong Police Superinten-

The swift and successful investigation into the stabbing murder of sunbathing Swedish tourist Hanna Backlund at Mai Khao Beach in mid-March demonstrated to the world just how quickly murder cases in Phuket can be closed when the intense glare of the international media is shining down on them.

However, hardly a week passes in Phuket without a murder. The victims form a diverse group that reflects the demographics of the island – from scores of low-wage foreign workers, whose cases will never be investigated, to rich, high-standing members of Thai society and wealthy foreign tourists. Here the *Gazette* updates investigations into some of the more high-profile cases.

dent Col Saman Chainarong, who took over the top spot after the transfer to Phang Nga of former Superintendent Col Chalit Kaewyarut in November 2007, told the *Gazette* that the case was returned to Chalong Police after the promotion of Lt Col Boonrat to the Phuket Provincial Police.

"Now we have no new updates to report, but we are still investigating the case closely," he said.

Last January, members of a Scandinavian police-investigation unit based in Bangkok traveled to Chalong to check on the investigation and received a full briefing, he said.

Col Saman said he could not release any further information to the media for fear of jeopardizing the ongoing investigation.

PATONG: Another unsolved, high-profile murder involving a

Scandinavian tourist was that of Danish tourist Henrik Rasmussen, 47, whose body was discovered in a canal behind the Royal Paradise Hotel, where he was staying, on February 7.

Citing information from doctors at Patong Hospital, who examined the body, Kathu Police Investigations Inspector Pol Capt Pratuang Pholmana told the *Gazette* he now believes Mr Rasmussen, who suffered from Down syndrome, died seven to 10 days before his body was discovered.

Capt Pratuang initially speculated that Mr Rasmussen died from two wounds caused by a sharp object: a five-centimeter laceration down to the bone on the back of the neck and a wound about 10cm long to the right arm pit.

Autopsy results from the forensics unit at the Police General Hospital in Bangkok later listed the cause of death as drowning, Capt Pratuang told the *Gazette* on April 3.

Unfortunately, the investigation is moving slowly because police have been unable to un-

cover any new evidence in the case after questioning all the staff at the hotel.

Police were unable to draw any leads from CCTV footage in the hotel because all recorded data was automatically deleted after three days – at least four days before the body was recovered.

"All we know is that he died from lack of oxygen, not the serious wounds inflicted to his body," he said.

All of the autopsy results have been sent to the Danish Embassy in Bangkok, he said.

Like the Hanna Backlund case, investigators from the Justice Ministry's Department of Special Investigations assisted in the investigation – but to no avail.

"We lack evidence and have been unable to recover the sharp object used in the murder. Also, the badly decomposed state of the body makes this case especially difficult," he said.

"Even though there has been little progress, we will continue this investigation," he said.

KOH KAEW: Regarding another murder of a disabled person, the *Gazette* contacted Phuket City Police to see if the second suspect in the September 2, 2007, slaying of 23-year-old Michelin-tire-store-employee Somchai Mingpijaan had been apprehended.

K. Somchai, who was lame in one leg, was attacked by two men in their early 20s outside a mobile phone shop on Thepkasattri Rd.

One of the two suspects, 22-year-old Krabi native Somyot Longlode, was apprehended in Phang Nga's Koh Yao district a few days after the attack.

Phuket City Police Investigating Inspector Lt Col Keerati

Triwai told the *Gazette* on April 8 that police know the identity of the second suspect and a warrant for his arrest has been issued.

The suspect's profile has been distributed to police units nationwide, but he remains at large. The case of Somyot is still in the judicial system, he added.

The assault took place after the victim tried to intervene in a dispute that broke out among customers waiting outside the mobile phone shop.

The two suspects later returned and beat Somchai with a length of wood, while several witnesses looked on. He died en route to hospital.

KOH KAEW: One high-profile murder involved the April 18, 2007, shooting on the bypass road of 17-year-old Worrawuth Samarnmit by then Pol Sgt Prasarn Chuayman, an on-duty member of the Phuket City Police force.

Worrawuth and his friends were riding along the bypass road about 1 am, when two police officers pulled alongside and asked them to stop so they could inspect their driver's licenses.

The youths refused to stop and one of the officers fired a shot, hitting Worrawuth in the left hip. Worrawuth was rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital, where he died soon after.

The following day, the victim's friends and family staged a blockade on Thepkasattri Rd, paralyzing traffic and causing scores of tourists to miss their return flights.

After police agreed in writing to six protester demands regarding the subsequent investigation, the protesters disbanded.

Despite their promise to discharge Sgt Prasarn from the force and transfer other officers out of Koh Kaew, Sgt Prasarn



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was transferred to Krabi, where he was subsequently promoted twice to his current rank of senior sergeant major.

Pol Maj Wicharn Suwanasit of Phuket City Police Sta-

tion said that the police investigation into the case has already been completed and case no. 576/50 for manslaughter filed with the Phuket Provincial Court on April 20, 2007. The suspect was

granted bail.

The victim's mother, Theewee, told the *Gazette* on April 25 that her family received 200,000 baht and an apology from now Sen Sgt Maj Prasarn Khayman

and that her family are no longer actively following the court case against him.

"We want to put it behind us," she said.

KATHU: One of two suspects in the 2006 murder of 40-year-old Nongying "Sao" Sengton remains at large.

K. Sao, a long-term companion of 72-year-old property owner Tavorn "Pae Lian" Kajkla, died in her home near the Tung Tong Market on November 27, 2006. Her gold necklace and bracelet were reported missing.

A 17-year-old suspect named "Aek", from Phang Nga, was arrested by Tung Tong Police on January 16, 2007. His alleged accomplice, 24-year-old "Yod" from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, has yet to be apprehended.

Tung Tong Police Duty Inspector Lt Col Passakorn Sonthikul told the *Gazette* on April 25, that police are still looking for Yod, while Aek remains in detention at the Phuket Juvenile Observation and Protection Center.

The arrest warrant for Yod has been posted at every police station in the country, but the suspect remains at large, he said.

KATHU: Another unsolved stabbing murder in the Tung Tong area is that of 62-year-old businessman Kajorn "Ko Jorn" Somnam.

K. Kajorn's body was discovered in his Bangtong Village home in the early evening of May 22, 2007.

The apparent cause of death was two stab wounds, one to the neck and one to the body. Inside the home, numerous land title deeds and vehicle registration books were found scattered.

Among the physical evidence collected at the site were at least two separate sets of bloody footprints and fingerprints, indicating that the attack was carried out by at least two assailants.

Tung Tong Police Investi-

gating Inspector Lt Col Passakorn Sonthikul told the *Gazette* that possible motives were robbery and jealousy over a romantic affair.

On April 25, he told the *Gazette* the court had issued an arrest warrant in the case and that it had been posted at every police station in the country.

The killers, or killer, remain at large.

KATHU: A third unsolved murder by knife under investigation by the Tung Tong Police is that of 37-year-old tour agent Sommai Chumee.

He was found with his throat slashed in his home at the Irawadee Ketho residential development on November 9, 2007.

The victim had been stabbed repeatedly in the neck, but had sustained no other injuries.

A friend found K. Sommai, originally from Phatthalung province, lying face up and naked on his bed about 1 pm of May 9, 2007.

Tung Tong Police Inspector Lt Col Kittipong Klaikaew said that police have not recovered enough evidence to issue a police warrant.

PHUKET CITY: Police have yet to arrest 27-year-old Khon Kaen native Saharat Kamhongsa, wanted for the June 5, 2007, bludgeoning murder of his live-in girlfriend, 28-year-old karaoke singer Kanchana Aonpleng of Pathum Thani.

K. Kanchana's body was discovered after relatives of Saharat called KPS to say that he had called them about 6 pm that day. Apparently, Saharat said that he had just killed someone and was going into hiding.

Former Phuket City Police Duty Inspector Lt Col Sien Kaewthong, now an Inspector with the Haad Yai District Police in Songkhla, told the *Gazette* recently that police in Khon Kaen have yet to serve the suspect's arrest warrant.

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Queer News

Abbot receives fruity surprise

NAKHON PATHOM: A common sight in Thailand, the mango is part of many dessert dishes. It is less common, however, to hear of a mango being used as an assault weapon, especially when the victim of the said weapon is a respected temple abbot.

This, however, is what happened one night to Phrakhu Palatsitthiwat, abbot of Wat Phai Lom, as he was returning home in the early hours of April 23 after a trip to Bangkok to buy a stereo to donate to a local school.

The cleric, known to his followers as Phrakhu Namfon, was sitting in the temple minibus when a pickup truck screeched to a halt in front of them and a young man hurled a mango at full force, smashing the windscreen. Luckily, Phrakhu Namfon and his driver were unharmed by the flying fruit or shattered glass.

Determined not to let the fruit thrower get away with the uncalled-for assault on the abbot, driver Prida Suntharasuan sped off in pursuit of the yahoos and called police to ask them to set up roadblocks.

With driver and abbot still in hot pursuit, police apprehend the fruit-flinging suspects at a roadblock in Tambon Bang Kem, Muang district.

They immediately arrested the pickup's driver, 32-year-old Pratiu Phomhom, and passenger Ronaphum Suanchato, 18.

Quickly confessing that he was the one who had hurled the fruit at the van, Ronaphum insisted Phrakhu Namfon was not the intended target of his mango missile.

He and Pratiu, his boss, were on their way back from buying a batch of mangoes to sell

at the market in Nakhon Pathom the following day, he told police.

While they were driving through Nakhon Chaisri District, however, a Toyota Yaris sped up and cut in front of them. In a fit of road rage, the pair chased after the Yaris until it was stopped at a set of traffic lights. Ronaphum then grabbed one of the mangoes and threw it full pelt at the offending vehicle – just as Phrakhu's minibus was driving past. Missing the Yaris completely, the mango smashed the minibus' front windscreen, Ronaphum said.

Pratiu concurred, saying they never meant any harm to the abbot – they just wanted to teach the driver of the Yaris a lesson.

The pair then prostrated themselves in front of Phrakhu Namfon, begging for his forgiveness.

They would be happy to pay for any damages caused by the misguided mango if the abbot would agree to not press charges, they said.

Being a merciful man, Phrakhu Namfon agreed to not take the matter further.

Saying he understood that the pair had meant him no harm and acted in a fit of anger, he told the pair to let the incident be a lesson to them.

Lt Col Jennarong Som-sathien, deputy superintendent of Nakhon Pathom Muang District Police, said the pair agreed to pay off the 30,000-baht damage caused to the windscreen in installments.

They were then allowed to go home with no charges brought against them.

Source: Kom Chad Leuk

Narco-cleric nabbed in drugs sting

SARABURI: Going to the toilet is a basic need for the entire human race, including monks. One abbot in Chalerm Phrakiat District, however, went further than most to ensure guests at his temple could do their business in comfort – he allegedly sold drugs.

Phrakhu Samak Punyaphalo, 33, abbot of Wat Pleakhwa in Tambon Peung Ruang Village 2, was arrested in a raid on April 24.

Also arrested were Phra Nophadom Thitmaetho, 24, and Phra Wuthi Asapho, 29 – along with two temple helpers – Wiraphol Thamphusa, 27, and Khanit Lapsit, also 27.

Police said that the raid followed a tip-off that men were using it as a place to hang out and take drugs. When officers arrived at the temple, they saw a group of men sitting around, but promptly ran on seeing the police.

Khanit and Wiraphol were caught in a field behind the temple

and hauled off for drug testing. Their urine samples turned purple, indicating the presence of *ya bah* (methamphetamine) in their bloodstreams, police said.

During questioning, the pair soon cracked and admitted they had been smoking *ya bah* they had bought off Phrakhu Samak, police said.

Police requested permission to urine-test the abbot. Again, the urine turned tell-tale purple.

Realizing the game was up, Phrakhu Samak confessed to selling *ya bah* and smoking it himself, police said.

He led the officers to his stash, under a rug in the sermon hall. There, police found a hammer. Inside the handle was a tube containing seven *ya bah* pills. Phrakhu Samak also told police that Phra Nophadom and Phra Wuthi had smoked *ya bah* on temple grounds.

After their arrests, both tested positive for methamphetamine.

The three monks were then taken to see Phrakhu Pan-yawarak, the top monk in tambon Peung Ruang, to be defrocked.

Samak Sangat, formerly Phrakhu Samak, told police that he ordained as a monk about 10 years ago and had been the abbot of Wat Pleakhwa for about two years.

Like all drug dealers, his actions were profit driven. He bought the *ya bah* in bulk for about 150 to 180 baht a pill, then sold it on to local drug users for 350 baht a pill.

He was saving up the profits to build new temple toilet facilities for guests visiting the temple, he claimed.

Superintendent of Chalerm Phrakiat District Police Col Somboon Sutthiwong said that Phrakhu Samak would be charged with possession of a Class 1 drug with intent to sell. The other four would be charged with using a Class 1 drug.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

BIS PTA's inaugural 'Dinner & Dance'

CHERNG TALAY: Tickets are now on sale for the first British International School (BIS) Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) Dinner & Dance, to be held at Laguna Beach Resort on May 17.

Master of ceremonies Martin Carpenter MBE of Phuket Concierge will lead an evening of entertainment and socializing.

"All are welcome to join the event, even if they are not part of the PTA or do not have children at BIS," said organizer Annick Lobelle.

A charity auction will be held, with proceeds going to three local charities: Holland House, a safe house for needy children operated by Childcare; Kamala House orphanage; and the Schooner Christian Foundation's Ixodos, which is intended to deliver medical supplies and become an outlet for the gospel in isolated communities.

The evening will begin with welcome drinks at 6:30 pm followed at 8 pm by a buffet dinner. The dinner will be followed by charity auctions and live music until after midnight.

More than 200 tickets priced at 2,500 baht each are available.


They can be bought from Flints-One café, located at the BIS campus, between 8 am and 8.30 am Monday to Friday, or at the school's primary and secondary administration offices.

Ticket sales close on May 10.

Contact Annick Lobelle for more information about the dinner and dance. Tel: 081-0808679. Email: annick.lobelle@gmail.com

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Police on April 23 arrested a Thammasat University lecturer for giving good grades to two female students in return for oral sex.

Engineering-school lecturer Kamthorn Cherdchookiat, who admitted that two unnamed students had oral sex with him, was charged with sexual molestation.

Police arrested him at his Rangsit campus office after he made a similar offer to a third student, who refused.

She later consulted with her parents after the lecturer called her to discuss the deal.

An investigation into the alleged sexual molestation of the two will require more information from the students, police say.

Case investigator Pol Lieutenant Kitt Cherdkiat of Klong Luang in Pathum Thani said no other victims had met the police nor lodged any new complaints regarding the matter.

Meanwhile, a team of Thammasat lecturers have opened their own investigation, which will involve meeting with the alleged molester, all three victims and police.

The scandal at the prestigious school has also taken on nationwide proportions, with 26 universities coming together to brainstorm ways to counter the scandal.

The Council of University Presidents said 26 schools will attend a summit at Ubon Ratchathani University to ponder the recent allegations of improper conduct between staff and students.

In the meantime, the council said lecturers' offices should be open to view and staff should keep an eye on one another to protect against improper behavior.

Natural is better. The Health Ministry is establishing clinics across the country to educate young mothers about the advantages of breast-feeding.

Mothers will learn that breast-feeding infants for six months improves their mental and intellectual development.

The ministry says current breast-feeding data is shocking and that children's development is being arrested as a result.

Sex-for-grades scandal rocks Thammasat



FLYING HIGH

The Singaporean Air Force Black Knights put on an exciting air show for the press at Don Mueang Airport as part of ceremonies to mark the 25th anniversary of relations between the air forces of Thailand and Singapore.

According to a Unicef survey in 2007, just 5.4% of infants were being exclusively breast-fed during the first six months of life.

The ministry adds that Thai children's intelligence quotients are below average at between 88 and 99 compared to the international "center value" of 100.

According to the Health Department, just six months' breast-feeding increases a child's IQ by between two and 11 points and that breast-fed children are generally healthier.

The national symbol of the new initiative is a character dubbed "Miss Breast Milk".

Boys arrested for assault. Three boys aged between eight and 12 have been arrested on suspicion of sexually assaulting a seven-year-old girl after watching pornography at an Internet cafe.

Thammasala Police ar-

rested the boys at a housing estate in Bangkok's Thawee Watthana District.

The victim's parents' allegation that their daughter was raped on April 17 is supported by a medical exam.

Police are considering charges ranging from gang rape to taking a minor for a lewd act.

Inspector Major Phuwadol Niamsri said the boys admitted to the acts and say they copied what they saw older boys watching on a computer.

They had been at the cafe to play video games.

This and other reports of assault at Internet cafes over the school break have once again put the spotlight on the role of such cafes in Thai society.

Bangkok Deputy Governor Putthipong Punnan said there are some 10,000 computer "shops" open in the capital during the holidays, some temporary

establishments taking advantage of the school-break business.

Some good news. Bangkok taxi driver Rung Wantumma on April 25 returned 500,000 baht in cash to Japanese businessman Takechi Saito, who had left it in the back of his cab.

The passenger forgot his bag containing US dollars, Japanese yen and Vietnamese dong, a mobile phone and his passport.

K. Rung, 34, had FM91 Traffic Radio announce the discovery.

Owner Takechi Saito reclaimed the bag, hailing his driver's honesty.

Mobile. The main problems for mobile-phone consumers are poor signals and abrupt disconnection of calls, a new survey by Abac Poll has concluded.

The study was carried out on 1,000 mobile-phone users and 1,000 Internet users in Bangkok over three months.

In the survey, 82.3% of the mobile-phone users complained about poor signals in some areas, 72.3% about unclear signals and signal jams, 67% about frequent

disconnection of calls and 60% about difficulty or failure when connecting to different networks.

Some 18% said they suspected eavesdropping.

There are more than 50 million mobile-phone subscribers in Thailand, compared with about six million fixed-line subscribers and more than 10 million Internet subscribers.

The NTC said they plan to use the study results to help improve service.

Labor law. In the run-up to May 1 Labor Day, Labor Protection and Welfare Department chief Padungsak Thephasdin na Ayudhya said the Labor Protection Act states that employees are to be informed of the 13 paid public holidays a year.

If staff work on any of these days, they are entitled to a day off in lieu or double pay. If the day worked is overtime, then payment must be three times the norm, K. Padungsak said.

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

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Film fest debuts on Koh Pha-ngan

Koh Pha-ngan held its first Pha-ngan Film Festival in late April in the southern port town of Thongsala. Thais and foreigners alike turned out to the event, which featured 10 international independent films over two days.

Both short- and full-length feature films were screened, mainly on the subjects in keeping with the islanders' alternative outlook.

The festival was intended to heighten awareness of sensitive issues such as island ecology and included one film that highlighted the massive destruction that plastic is causing to the world's marine life. Other films spotlighted other issues affecting nature and its fragility and some films focused on spirituality.

The organizers scheduled the event to precede Earth Day, which fell on April 22. They also planned a large-scale beach cleanup on that day, hoping that attendees of the festival would also take part. Free cloth bags were handed out to ticket holders to encourage people to stop using plastic carrier bags.

Festival organizer Julien Balmer was pleased with the overall outcome and especially with the number of local Thais who attended. The festival was the first of its kind on Samui and not only did it introduce the concept of what a "film festival" is to an island totally unfamiliar with the idea but also brought a deeper message within each film's content.



A COLD ONE: Guests of the newly-opened Ice Bar enjoy the novelty of having a tippie in a parka.

The festival was not a complete sellout, however.

Promoters of the event and guests who attended agreed upon the festival's success and are

planning for the event to be held again next year.

Man City FC to visit. Manchester City football club, owned by former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, have revealed their plans to come to Koh Samui for a one-week holiday this month.

Team members said to be included in the trip are manager Sven Goran Eriksson along with players Micah Richards, Elano Blumer, Martin Petrov, Richard Dunne, Joe Hart, Jihai Sun, Darius Vassell and Benjani Mwaru-wari.

The team is planning to combine some relaxing downtime with a few games of football with some local teams from around the island and the country.

The team, some of which are said to have been to the island before, are looking forward to the visit, said Ratsamee Padrem, a public relations manager for the team.

It has not been said when the matches will take place and accommodation arrangements have also not been disclosed.

Eriksson last year bought a holiday home on Samui, at the Peregrina Bay development at Laem Set, in tambon Maret.

Chill-out: The Ice Bar and Restaurant opened its doors on Samui with a party and three days of events that welcomed many of its residents to an experience that is rarely shared.

As the name suggests, this bar has one gimmick that is cooler than cool – it's downright cold.

Free drinks and nibbles were on offer to guests who gathered in one of the main bar areas before being suited out with full arctic garb and led into the sub-zero temperatures of the ice bar.

Once inside, guests were transported into a world where everything is made of ice, from the walls to the bar stools, the artwork and even the glasses are all made from ice imported all the way from Canada.

This massive undertaking was brought to fruition by five English entrepreneurs, some residing on Samui while others are based in Dubai.

The concept got off the ground nine months ago, soon after careful designing, sculpting and shipping of the ice took place thousands of kilometers away by a team of dedicated ice experts in Canada.

Meanwhile, on Samui, the team were busy preparing the high-tech refrigeration system that allows the ice to remain frozen even in Thailand's tropical climate.

The owners have built the Ice Bar Samui independently from that of some of the world's popular sponsored ice-themed bars. They serve a multitude of internationally recognized vodkas and Samui's version is said to boast one of the largest collection of its kind in the world.

Its owners are hoping that visitors will come at least once, while island regulars are expected in the much more tropical section of the bar.

The Ice Bar Samui will also be inviting local school children to experience the winter wonderland and the team are hoping to have snow-making equipment to take the theme one step further.

Entry to the Ice Bar is 700 baht and includes a free drink.



FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

By Max Rogers

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Haad Yai Police raided a clinic providing illegal abortions on April 20, catching the clinic owner, a police doctor, in the act of performing an abortion.

After receiving a tip-off that abortions were being performed at Phatharawet Clinic in Haad Yai City, police sent a young woman in to ask about an abortion. When the receptionist said that they could do the procedure, the woman gave a signal to police waiting outside and 20 officers raided the clinic.

Seven women in the waiting room were detained for questioning. Officers then headed to the second floor, where they found a patient lying on an operating table being operated on by Pol Col Dr Somchai Trima-thurakul.

Col Dr Somchai and his two female assistants were arrested. The woman was detained for questioning along with six more women who were recovering in another second-floor room after being operated on.

Songkhla Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Wirun Eamphaichit said that Col Dr Somchai, a doctor at the police forensics unit, had refused to give a statement and had posted bail while police collect evidence against him.

A detailed report of the incident has been sent to the headquarters of the Police medical officers so that Col Dr Somchai's commanding officers could decide what disciplinary action to take with him, Gen Wirun added.

Deconstruction attack. Five construction workers were shot dead and one wounded on April 24 when gunmen opened fire in Pattani's Yarang district as the crew were heading to work at a construction site, police said.

Authorities blamed the attack on separatists in the restive region, where about 3,000 have died since January 2004.

A man from Yala who was traveling to Pattani said traffic was stopped for several hours as soldiers launched a massive man-hunt for the gunmen and removed the spikes on the road scattered by the gunmen before they fled.

Police doctor posts bail in abortion scandal



MEN OF WAR

Army chief Gen Anuphong Phaochinda lands at the base of the 14th Special Task Force in Yaha district, Yala province, on April 22.

In a separate incident, a roadside bomb detonated, injuring two soldiers on foot patrol with their unit in Narathiwat's Joh I Rong district. Investigating officers arrived at the scene were lured by a suspicious package near a local train stop about 300 meters away. The box was a fake bomb, a popular tactic employed by insurgents to divert authorities' attention from their work.

Family affair. A policeman was shot and injured in a scuffle in Trang April 23. Lt Kittiphol Julasak, deputy inspector at Trang Muang District Police Station, was shot once as he was arresting Sem Phrongsang, 45. Sem was also hit once.

Police arrested the gunman at the scene who was later identified as Bamphen Phrongsang, 24, a Rangers soldier and Sem's nephew. Police confiscated a .357 pistol from Bamphen. They also found a meter-long sword at the scene.

Lt Kittiphol was taken to hospital to be treated for a gunshot wound to the leg. Sem was treated for a bullet wound to the left foot.

Natthaphong Khanchong, 24, who was involved in the incident, said that he and a group of friends were watching a football match nearby when Sem approached them and began insulting them.

An argument broke out and Sem walked off. A few minutes

later he returned with a sword and attacked him, but only managed to scrape his chest, K. Natthaphong said.

When the police arrived, Sem charged at them with his sword, but was subdued by the officers. As the officers were scuffling with Sem, Bamphen walked up and opened fire at Lt Kittiphol who was restraining Sem, hitting the policeman and the suspect, K. Natthaphong said.

Other police officers then charged Bamphen and placed

him under arrest.

Police said that Bamphen would be charged with attempted murder of a government officer, obstructing a police officer in the line of duty and possession of a firearm without a permit. Police said they had yet to charge Sem as they were waiting for him to sober up before interrogating him.

Double shooting. A woman was shot dead and her boyfriend seriously injured as they were riding home from a market in Songkhla's Chana district on April 22. Police said they believe the attack was motivated by a personal dispute, but are not ruling out the shooting being connected to the insurgency in the district.

Phongphanu Damsongsang, 31, and his wife Kaesara Damsongsang, 26, were found bleeding on the roadside in Tambon Thamorsai. Villagers took them to Nathawee Hospital, but K. Kaesara later died of her wounds. She had been shot once in the lower abdomen and twice in the chest. K. Phongphanu was hit once in the lower abdomen.

K. Phongphanu told police that he and his wife were riding their motorcycle back from a market in Nathawee district when two people on a motorbike rode up to them and opened fire.

Col Dusit Julasen, superintendent of Chana Police Station, said that police believe the killing was motivated by a personal dispute.

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



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PROMJAI DENTAL CLINIC

Diamond in the rough

By Alin Boonkrungthong

The Rassada Port area near Koh Sireh is a tough part of town. Best known for its crime, violence and grinding poverty, it is usually a place avoided by island residents and visitors.

After the tsunami, however, the plight of the local people became highlighted in the international press, prompting an inflow of funds and community-building ideas from all over the world.

The Austria-Phuket Community Center, founded by the Austria Hilfswerk Foundation, is the most striking example of such projects.

Open in December 2006 on Soi Si Sena, the center houses a library, training center and kindergarten – bringing literacy, skills training and just plain fun to local residents who would otherwise have no access to such a facility.

The modern building provides a stark contrast to the tin-shack slum on the opposite side of the road, bringing pride and



ABOVE: Women hone their culinary skills in one of the many adult training courses.

RIGHT: Local children take part in an art class at the Lighthouse of Life Library.



purpose to a beleaguered community.

The center's Lighthouse of Life Library has two stories – one for children and one for teens and adults – with access to about 10,000 books, available by request. In the children's zone, there are story books and text books, along with CD and DVD language resources.

The library was established for the benefit of the local Thai community and the majority of the books are in Thai. On the second floor, there are a range of text books, youth literature, novels and guidebooks.

Members can borrow up to four books and two CDs or DVDs at a time for up to seven days.

Annual membership costs 200 baht for adults, 150 baht for children. Lifetime membership is 1,500 baht for children and adults.

The library also has Internet access.

Besides the library, the Austria-Phuket Community Center

has two other facilities open to the public.

A skill development training center offers courses in areas such as Thai massage, Mandarin, cellphone repair, cooking and computers. Training is supported by Phuket Skill Development, Phuket Polytechnic College and Phuket Vocational College.

As well as classes for adults, there are classes for children in areas such as drawing, making greeting cards and batik. Children's classes are typically between three and six hours over one or two days at a cost of 5 baht per hour.

Assistant librarian Sutheekarn Kongchan said, "I love working here because I think this library gives many good things and good chances for the children in the community. We want to support them with knowledge. I love to see them happy and enjoying to read."

New courses can be requested at the front counter of the library.

All training programs were on hold in the run-up to the Phuket City Municipality election. Courses will be available again from May 11.

In the future, there will be a

gallery to exhibit and sell the work of people who have taken the various courses at the center.

The second facility, which is run with support from Phuket Rajabhat University, is a kindergarten for KG levels one and two, with two classes for each level.

Since the end of 2007, the center has been run by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*).

For more information about the Austria-Phuket Community Center, call K. Sutheekarn at Tel: 086-2812906.

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Cut Killer makes deepest cut of all

The French have a tradition of nurturing some of the most innovative DJs and record producers in the world. Laurent Garnier, Daft Punk, Justice, Redeyes, DJ Netik and Dee Nasty – when the French are good, they're really good. So there was a definite buzz around town in anticipation of France's most famous hip hop DJ, Cut Killer, coming to Phuket.

You may remember Cut Killer from the French movie *La Haine*, in which he appeared as the DJ who played KRS-One's *Sound of Da Police* and Edith Piaf's *Je Ne Regrette Rien*.

Cut Killer, who rose to fame competing in Tony Prince's DMC DJ battles, released a string of mixtapes in the '90s and solidified his reputation as a serious player in the French hip hop scene.

Of all the places in Phuket you'd expect to see a French hip hop DJ, White Box would not be among the most obvious.

The venue, as always, looked fantastic. There is no faulting White Box in terms of

conceptuality. It's hip, in every sense of the word – and it has a dance floor.

As what you might call a clubbing snob, I become bored easily when out in Phuket, where the club scene is about 10 years behind the rest of the world and about five years behind Bangkok, with a few exceptions (Club Lime, Soundwave Sundays). When a DJ is booked and hyped up as someone worth seeing, I expect more than run-of-the-mill pop music.

Any negative feeling in this review should in no way reflect upon White Box and, perhaps, not even the DJ, but rather, the island's stale and dated music-and-club scene. Were we treated to a masterclass in hip hop variety on the night of April 5? Not at all. What Cut Killer delivered was tired and dull – from a purist's point of view.

My expectations were radically different from everyone else's and as a result, I was perhaps the only person in White Box who was disappointed.

What I had hoped for was

a real turntablist's set (à la DJ Netik) combined with a quality musical selection (à la Laurent Garnier). Cut Killer played tracks for pop music fans, which was lucky, because those were the people at White Box.

If Cut Killer had played a more "real" set, people would have probably walked out, so instead, he focused on chart hits.

For club kids to whom music means more than the contents of the Billboard 100, Phuket has little to offer. But such people are a minority on the island.

Cut Killer started off with some formulaic hip hop beats, dropping an occasional surprise, but for the most part, the set could have been played at Seduction or Banana.

Cut Killer has skills; the brief periods when he chose to cut and scratch bore testimony to his talent, but when someone who is supposedly France's best hip hop DJ drops Soulja Boy's *Crank That (Soulja Boy)* – a track that the credible hip hop community wholeheartedly rejected – you now something isn't right.

Even more startling was the fact that everybody in the club knew the track and knew the dance that goes with it. These people were having fun, but everything about that track is an abomination of contemporary music, hip hop or otherwise.

As an aspiring DJ, Cut Killer found his inspiration from watching DJs such as Ca\$h Money, but there's no way Ca\$h



Phuket's busy socialites were out in force to see what French hip hop maestro Cut Killer (left) had in store for them at White Box.



Money would play *Crank That (Soulja Boy)*. But on this night Cut Killer was playing to a crowd with limited knowledge of hip hop.

Bob Sinclar. Those two words will make any true fan of French club music cringe. He makes awful records for the sake of commercial success. In 1998, Sinclar released the classic disco album *Paradise*. Since then, he has churned out mindless dance music tracks. So why would a French hip hop DJ choose to play two of Sinclar's recent hits? Sinclar doesn't even make hip hop music.

Playing Fatman Scoop bootlegs along with remixes of Swedish indie music (Peter, Bjorn and John) would have been forgivable had Cut Killer not abandoned hip hop to delve into commercial dance.

To add insult to injury, the most empathic crowd reaction of the night came when Cut Killer dropped the atrocious *Beautiful Girls* by teen rapper Sean Kingston.

All criticism aside, at face value, there was technically nothing wrong with this party. The DJ was the consummate professional, only slipping up on a couple of mixes.

The staff were on the ball. The crowd was hot and really into the vibe. However, even some of the Thai clientele were wondering why the DJ played the same music you hear in every other club in Phuket. For a guest of such magnitude, Cut Killer pulled

few surprises.

The general consensus after the White Box party was that it was a fun, worthwhile event. The management at White Box filled their club with pretty girls until well after midnight.

People danced, drank and had fun – there's no denying that – but the night that Cut Killer played is illustrative of why I rarely go clubbing in Phuket anymore.

I would rather enjoy Thai bands at clubs such as Oasis, Blue Marina or KorTorMor than listen to substandard party tunes played by a past-it DJ.

AFTER DARK

By Matt Crook

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Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket

Ratchada Champanoi of the *Phuket Gazette* sales team and Andrea Capucci married at the Miracle Grand Hotel in Bangkok on March 30.



James Towli and Carol King from the UK married at Laguna Phuket's Chapel-on-the-Lagoon on April 3.

More than just monkey business

One day in 1997, K. Suwit, better known as Pae Hok, took his daughter for a walk on Toh Sae Hill, behind Phuket Provincial Court in Phuket City. Along the way, they met a small group of pig-tailed macaques. The monkeys looked weak and hungry, so Pae Hok handed them three clusters of bananas.

From that day on, he began regularly taking food to the monkeys.

"The first time I saw them," he said, "I felt pity for these monkeys who had no food to eat. After feeding them for a long time, I feel close to them, as if they are my own sons."

He originally bought fruit from the Downtown Market, but once the fruit sellers heard what he was doing, they gave Pae Hok their unsold produce for free, which they still do today.

Every day is the same for Pae Hok. He goes for a swim at 9 am and then drives to the mar-

As Phuket's natural habitat for wildlife continues to shrink in the wake of rapid development, animals are forced to become dependent on people for survival.

When one island resident took it upon himself to help the monkeys of Toh Sae Hill, he did not foresee that a simple food handout to half-dozen monkeys 11 years ago would mushroom into a full-time operation that consumes all his time and money.

Here **Sompratch Saowakhon** speaks with Sukit Ong-Sathirakul about how he came to be the 'father' of more than 500 monkeys.

ket to collect the fruit donations. From 10:30 am until 1 pm, he drives with his truckload of food, stopping at various points on the hill, where his monkey family clamors around him for their daily meal.

Though the man and his monkeys never speak to one another and never spend time together, there is a close bond between them.

Pae Hok takes his responsibility seriously. There are no holidays, no time off and no recognition for his hard work. Aside from one week when he was sick, he has never missed a day of feeding his primate buddies.

"When I was sick and I couldn't go to feed my monkey-sons, I felt like I was not doing my duty. I had to hire a man for 100 baht a day to feed them for me," he said.

In addition to food, Pae Hok raised about 30,000 baht, mainly from local business donations, for a cement water tank that keeps the monkeys hydrated during the dry season.

While some conservationists may argue that Pae Hok's contact with the monkeys is exposing them to greater risks by making them dependent on, and unafraid of, people, Pae Hok said that the monkeys are safer today than they were before he began feeding them.

"Many times in the past, some groups of villagers came to catch the monkeys and sold them to people who trained them to climb up coconut trees," he said. "I heard that they sold these monkeys for 5,000 baht each and after they were trained, they were sold again for as much as 10,000 baht."

Now, with Pae Hok keeping a daily watch over the area, he says the poaching has stopped.

But behind Pae Hok's gentle smile and kindly eyes is concern for the monkeys' wellbeing.

"I hurt my left knee and my back recently and it hurts when I bend down to pick up the fruit



baskets. I am already 64 years old and I don't know how much longer I will be around, so I have started to look for someone to take on the feeding responsibility," he said.

"The one thing that I worry about is these monkeys."

With this in mind, Pae Hok is taking steps to build an organization that will continue to help



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Though the man and his monkeys never speak to one another and never spend time together, there is a close bond between them.

the monkeys long after he's unable to.

"I have an idea to set up a monkey foundation and I have asked the former chief of the Phuket Provincial Court to be an advisor," he explained. "I will donate my Mazda pickup and my own money for this organization."

"I ask anyone to come help me feed these monkeys; I'd be

happy to train them," he added.

Just like any parent, Pae Hok's worries about his "sons" are balanced with a great deal of joy. "I see them in good health and I know I have done the right thing, which makes me happy," he said.

To find out more about Pae Hok's efforts, call him at 081-7881426. He speaks Thai only.

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This week



TREE-MENDOUS: Piyanuch Ananpakdee (left), coordinator of Bangkok Hospital Phuket, greets officers from Mangrove Resource Station 19 in Thung Maphrao, Phang Nga. K. Piyanuch visited a plantation project, where Bangkok Hospital Phuket has planted about 1,500 trees since July last year. About 70% of the trees planted have survived and there are plans to plant more on June 5 as part of World Environment Day.



THREE AMIGOS: Nepali Ambassador to Thailand Naveen Prakash Jung Shah (right) visited Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit (center) on April 17 to discuss opening a Nepali Consulate in Phuket. Phanuphong Limbuprasertkul, president of the Association of Thai-Nepal in Phuket, joined the meeting.



TEMPERATURE RISING: Tata Young, with boyfriend Prem Busarakhamwong, took time out during Songkran to enjoy Royal Phuket Marina (RPM). Tata ate lunch at Les Angeles bakery before boarding one of RPM's yachts for a day cruising around Phang Nga Bay.



HAPPY SCU-BIRTHDAY: Scuba Schools International (SSI) instructor and trainer Simon Speight (back, 2nd from left) celebrates his 40th birthday at the new Tapas and Wine bar in Kata with owners Lotta Hanson (back, left) and Mona Fristedt (right).



JOLLY BOLLY: Billy Chima (center), owner of Khanasutra restaurant on Takuapa Rd, served up an evening of traditional Indian food and live fusion music for friends and customers to celebrate the restaurant's fifth anniversary on April 20.



STERLING SCRIBES: The Mom Tri's Boathouse Student Writing Competition Awards were presented at the NBT TV Studio in Phuket City April 24. Front, from left, are Lisa Sol of the Boathouse, third prize winner Joy Cortes, first prize winner Courtney Woods, Claire Hillsmith and Diane Therrien. In the second row, from left, are Collin Piprell, Mikael, Sonya, Serena, James Geary, shared third prize winner Philip Upton, Lyndsay Lyon and Mrs Van de Castele.

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LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

When I was a child, my mum gave me a record player. It was a small white box with a turntable, needle – or stylus, as they were called – and a speaker about two inches in diameter. It wasn't much more than a transistor radio. Actually, my mother called it a gramophone.

I was proud of my record player and my transistor radio, as at the time, I had yet to experience hi-fi stereo. A few years later, I heard hi-fi stereo in a car, on an eight-track player. It sounded unbelievable. My little white box was a thing that emitted horrible, tinny squawking noises in comparison.

Sony then came out with the Walkman and you could listen to music played on a portable cassette deck through headphones as you crossed a busy intersection and escaped death by inches, completely oblivious to the cars and buses blaring their horns at you. But the sound was great.

A few years later, I was working in a music shop with a whole section for sound equipment. I became familiar with names such as Bose, Acoustic Research, Wharfedale, Yamaha, Pioneer and JBL. They were the

names of sound systems and components that offered you the opportunity to listen, at home, to a symphony orchestra or a rock-and-roll concert with the sound of actually being at the concert.

Now we no longer need turntables and tape decks; the advent of digital technology has

given us compact discs, MP3 players and surround-sound home theater.

Everything was improving... until the mobile telephone arrived. The mobile telephone was an antisocial nightmare from the start, being used far more for yapping about something that could easily

have been discussed at the next face-to-face meeting, rather than anything useful, such as business.

The telephone has become far more than a talking machine – it takes photos, acts as a portable computer with email facilities and can and play download music and videos.

Mobile melioration leads to tone trauma



All of this is OK for those who feel they need to have music with them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's no skin off my nose and I don't have to do what other people do.

I don't have a problem with any of this, except for one thing: after all this development and improvement, I find myself propelled back to the dark ages when I call my friends or colleagues and am forced to listen to a horrible din instead of the sound of the phone ringing.

Living in Thailand for almost 20 years, I am used to the racket in electrical stores and bars, where nobody seems to mind that about 30 different songs are playing at the same time. But I'm thinking about the prospect of a potential business colleague calling from another country to inquire about the availability of a million-dollar villa, only to find himself listening to a cacophonous Thai pop song.

I wonder if that client would bother to wait for an answer. It certainly stops me calling a lot of people unless absolutely necessary.

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Zara springs into Phuket

By Ingrid Stage-Jakobsen

International fashion brand Zara is set to add a splash of color to Phuket with the opening of the Spanish clothing-giant's first store on the island on April 5.

Zara's spring-summer-2008 collection is currently being showcased.

Influenced by styles from the '70s, the women's collection is a cross between retro-hippie and ethnic-rock. The collection has been designed for shoppers to create a variety of looks by mixing and matching items, such as Roman sandals, form-fitting skirts and safari jackets with satin blouses, masculine blazers and fringe bags.

The range of designs, from secret-garden-inspired full-length floating gowns to ladylike hour-glass-shaped jackets with figure-hugging buckle belts, are aimed at pleasing a large cross-section of fashion aficionados.

In the men's collection, shirts and polo shirts are back with a vengeance, inspired by the 50s' French Riviera look crossed with 80s' youth and grunge.

In store for Zara's male customers are silk cardigans, slim-leg turn-ups, sweatshirts and T-shirts. Key colors include grays



MIX AND MATCH: Spanish fashion brand Zara opened its first upcountry branch in Phuket recently. The store at Central Festival stocks the latest men and women's sophisticated summer styles for an imported European look.

and pastels, while the textiles used are mainly vintage cottons and metallic fabrics.

The store, located on the ground floor of Central Festival, features men's and women's clothing with similar items to those found in Zara stores around the world.

Zara releases two lines – spring-summer and fall-winter –

every year. Adjustments have been made to the items on sale in Phuket to take into account the Thai climate.

Light materials, such as linen and silk, and bright colors, such as red, pink, orange and yellow, figure prominently. Casual items, such as swimming shorts, bikinis and swimwear, are available year-round in the store.

The male and female collections comprise five sub-sections: lower garment, upper garment, shoes, cosmetics and complements. The Zara Children and Zara Home Wear collections have yet to be released in Phuket.

"Phuket is the first out-of-Bangkok shop that we have opened [in Thailand], so we would like to see how the market

reacts towards Zara before we expand," said Zara spokesperson Pornchuen Ngampromphan.

"The reaction has been fantastic and we already have regular customers," she added.

Zara is located at the ground floor, Central Festival. Tel: 076-307000

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LEFT: Winners of the Elite Model Look Thailand 2008. 1st place went to 16-year-old Thai-Canadian Natassia Neufid (center); 2nd place, 19-year-old Natthayanee Rattanapaitoon (right); 3rd place, 21-year-old Natenapa Prasongsansuk (left).

The Elite Look

Phuket was the location for the national finals of the Elite Model Look Thailand 2008 pageant.

The lineup of Elite model hopefuls, whittled down from a field of 1,000 competitors to just 20 finalists, graced several Phuket landmarks as judges made their final decision on which of the contestants embodied all that is the Elite Model Look Thailand 2008.

Elite Model Look contests draw about 450,000 applicants at a time from around the globe, giving aspiring models a hope of becoming the Elite face and body of international fashion.

While in Phuket, the troupe of 16- to 22-year-old temptresses entertained Governor Niran Kalayanamit and VIP guests with a talent show at Kata Beach Resort & Spa.

They posed against the backdrops of Boat Lagoon, Phuket Orchid Resort & Spa and beaches for photo shoots and screen tests before bursting on stage in a dazzling array of designer outfits especially for the tropics. Baring nearly all, the daring

16-year-old Thai-Canadian Natassia Neufid. Second place went to 19-year-old Natthayanee Rattanapaitoon and third place went to 21-year-old Natenapa

Prasongsansuk.

Natassia will go on to compete with other national finalists from 65 countries in the Elite Model Look International Beijing

2008, to be held later this year. Thailand will be host to the Elite Model Look International 2010.

The Elite Model Look contests have launched the careers of many top models, including Cindy Crawford, Stephanie Seymour and Tatjana Patitz.

Of the international finalists, 15 winners are chosen to begin a high-powered professional modeling career, with press interviews, photo opportunities and international media representatives following their every move.

They receive two-year modeling contracts with Elite and the top three win US\$325,000 in prize money.



Jungceylon hosted a catwalk contest of dazzling and daring summer styles.

beauties displayed a range of colorful and dramatic swimsuits on the Jungceylon stage.

The youngest contestant and the winner of the Elite Model Look Thailand 2008 bouquet was

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Cooling off with coconut therapy

The swaying coconut tree is the quintessential symbol of the tropics; its fruit, the hardy coconut, is used in everything from a curry soup base to a refreshing drink to tableware and furniture.

Coconut is a major ingredient in the soothing and restorative spa treatments available at Nhamaya Spa at All Seasons resort at Nai Harn Beach.

Spa manager Nongnuch "Nancy" Kulma explained that coconut products are used in its oils, shampoos and scrubs.

One benefit of coconut, she said, is its sun-blocking properties – an essential line of defense against the sun's harsh rays, especially for tender skin not accustomed to the tropics.

"If we use coconut oil for massage, it means you can walk out without worry that your skin will be burned," she said. If other types of oils are used, she recommends keeping out of the sun for at least two hours, since these do not protect against the sun.

Coconut is also used in hair treatments because it protects the hair from sunlight, in addition to giving it shine.

Mixing coconut with differ-



Coconut products are used in the oils, shampoos and scrubs at Nhamaya Spa. One benefit of coconut is its sun-blocking properties – an essential line of defense against the sun's harsh rays, especially for tender skin not accustomed to the tropics.

ent kinds of herbs, such as ginger, give massage and hair treatments a subtle aroma, K. Nancy added.

"Nhamaya" means beauti-

ful woman and beauty is emphasized throughout the spa, from its setting to its treatments.

There are five treatment rooms, each with built-in bath-

rooms; three Thai-massage pavilions; two Thai-massage rooms; two foot-massage rooms; and a beauty salon. The communal sauna, steam and Jacuzzi facilities are all outside in a garden setting.

Spa treatments range in price from 650 baht (for a 30-minute head massage) to 3,500 baht (for a 3.5-hour package). Services provided include massages, facials, reflexology, sauna, steam, Jacuzzi, manicure, pedicure, waxing, haircuts, coloring and hair spa treatments.

K. Nancy, who has 10 years' experience in the spa industry, including working at the Banyan Tree, said that spa treatments should be a regular part of a balanced life.

To achieve the ultimate in relaxation and health, she explained, one should have a facial treatment once a week, a body treatment such as scrubs or wraps three times a week and a daily massage.

One of the spa's most popular massages is the Sensual Massage, which is good for people suffering from fatigue, especially jet lag. Another favor-

ite treatment is the Ayuthaya Massage, a Thai-style massage that concentrates on the body's pressure points and stretching to stimulate blood circulation and ease muscle tension.

There are also spa packages of 90 minutes to 180 minutes – a great way to spend a rainy afternoon, she said.

The Power Moist facial is a refreshing 60-minute session that therapist Nam-aoi "Meaw" Aewsil said is done in many steps.

A cleansing is followed by a toner, then a compress with warm towel, a scrub, a 15-minute face massage, a 15-minute mask and then an application of facial and sun-block creams.

All the facial treatments use Biodroga, a brand of natural beauty products that are also available for sale to use at home.

Nhamaya Spa at All Seasons is open daily from 9 am to 8 pm. Reservations recommended. Contact for more information. Tel: 076-289333. Website: www.allseasons-asia.com

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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

Until May 17. Soldiers – Art Exhibition.

In his 20 paintings, Thaweasak Srithongdee questions what causes wars and destruction, whether it be past wars or current conflicts.

He looks at who is involved in the wars, the instigators and the victims. He also observes how nonsensical and destructive it is to have wars.

At D Gallery, Royal Phuket Marina, daily from 11 am to 7 pm.

Contact Bowie for further information. Tel: 076-360867. Email: bowie@dgallery.co.th Website: www.dgallery.co.th

May 3. Special BBQ Buffet Dinner at Wine Connection Bang Tao.

A special BBQ Buffet dinner with a huge array of cheeses and dry specialties, such as Parma ham and coppa.

All-in-one for a perfect Saturday evening, including a live band. Only 650+ baht per head.

Contact Pascal for more details. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: fb.phuket@wineconnection.co.th

May 4. PC Group Therapy – Sandwich Shoppe Patong.

Is your Internet connection driving you nuts? Ready to throw your PC out the, uh, window? Need advice on where to buy a computer, or get one repaired? Join *For Dummies...* author Woody Leonhard for his weekly PC Group Therapy sessions from 10 am to midday. They're FREE.

Novices most welcome – no experience necessary. Bring your questions, bring your computer, bring your mother-in-law and your worry beads, and let's see if we can sort things out.

For directions to Sandwich Shoppe Patong, see the website. Sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes.

Contact Woody Leonhard. Tel: 089-1960940. Email: woody@KhunWoody.com Website: www.KhunWoody.com

May 5. Coronation Day (Public Holiday).

Coronation Day commemorates the ascension to the throne of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej on May 5, 1950.

May 10. Chilean Wine Tasting at Wine Connection Chalong.

Wine Connection, in association with Terra Mater Winery, invites you to join Chilean wine tasting. Tapas buffet and live

BOATHOUSE GALLERY presents 'Islands' by Laura Baum**May 8-30**

Mom Tri's Boathouse at Kata Beach presents "Islands" by Laura Baum, accomplished American painter of ethereal landscapes.

Laura was a student of Chinese artist Diane Kan, disciple of the revered master Chang Dai Chien (1899-1983). The materials Laura uses lend depth and light to her paintings.

The gold- or silver-leaf boards with a thin layer of rice paper from Japan and the stone and mineral colors, such as malachite and lapis lazuli, bring a surprising power to the images.

The opening cocktail reception is from 7 pm-8:30 pm on May 8, and the exhibition is open daily from 9 am to 9 pm until May 30.

Contact Lisa Sol for more information. Tel: 076-330015, 081-9152668. Email: pr@boathousephuket.com Website: www.boathousephuket.com



band. Entrance fee: 500 baht, free for club members.

Contact Pascal for more details. Tel: 087-8896074. Email: fb.phuket@wineconnection.co.th

May 11. Barefoot Bowling Soi Dog Foundation Fundraiser.

Soi Dog Foundation together with Kamala Lawn Bowls Club presents Barefoot Bowling from 3 pm to 6 pm. Beginners welcome. 400 baht per person including bowls and tuition. Buffet at 150 baht per person. Booking essential.

First prize for the winning team is dinner for four at The Chedi and a free one-year membership to the bowls club (worth 6,000 baht). There will also be a raffle.

For more info and tickets contact Cristy. Tel: 084-0544367. Email: cristy@soidog-foundation.org Website: www.soidog-foundation.org

May 11. PC and Mac Group Therapy – Laguna.

From 10 am until midday at the Sandwich Shoppe at the entrance to the Laguna complex.

May 13. Boathouse Writers' Night with Collin Piprell.

Collin on "Seducing the Muse": "Half the people I know say that, someday, they want to write something. Most people never do. This talk aims to encourage those who'd like to write," says Collin.

Novelist, feature writer, journalist and editor, Collin will

focus on where ideas come from, psychological hurdles for new (and veteran) writers, and a strange phenomenon he calls the "muse effect".

At Mom Tri's Boathouse, 7 pm to 8:30 pm.

Contact Lisa Sol for details.

Tel: 076-330015. Email: pr@boathousephuket.com Website: www.boathousephuket.com

May 14. Punchline Comedy Club – Live Stand-up Comedy.

Punchline Comedy Club in

association with the London Comedy Store presents another night of live international stand-up comedy.

Top comedians Paul Thorne, Tom Wigglesworth and Ian Moore will perform from 8 pm to 11 pm at the Holiday Inn Resort Phuket.

Tickets are available from Woody's Sandwich Shoppes.

For further details contact Pete. Tel: 081-9565650. Email: info@phuketcomedy.com Web: www.phuketcomedy.com

May 17. BIS Dinner & Dance at Laguna Beach Resort.

The British International School PTA is having its maiden Dinner and Dance in Year 2008. Dance the night away at Laguna Beach Resort on May 17, from 6:30 pm. Dress code: Smart.

Tickets: 2,500 baht per person, including welcome drinks, wine & open bar, live band, and raffle & auction prizes for charity. Also watch the FA Cup Final on our big screen.

Tickets available at Flints-One Bakery at BIS from 8 am-8:30 am, Monday to Friday, or through the Primary and Secondary Offices at BIS. Or call Annie Peters (087-2730786) or Carole Hillsmith (084-4477221).

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The BIG Crossword

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are at least 25 words or phrases related to the media. The words may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. Score: 15 or more, good; 20 or more, very good; 25 or more, excellent. Solution on the next page.

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

1		2		3		4		5		6
7		8								
						9				
		10								
11								12		13
				14		15				
16										
				17				18		
19						20				

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Across

1. Caravan itinerants
4. Australian marsupial
8. The N of NATO
11. Success
16. Colder
18. Fireproof
19. Moody
21. Illnesses
23. Accordingly
26. Administrators
28. Mashies (food)
30. Gentle prods
32. Extent
34. Male person
36. For a specific purpose (2,3)
38. Polar
39. George Cross island
42. Desert springs
45. Chooses (government)
47. Group of singers
49. Indian language
50. Outlay
53. Part of eye
55. River
56. Go by (of time)
57. Brief hitch
59. Prepare (magazine)
60. Put pressure (on)
61. African nation, ...Leone
63. Gunned (motor)
66. Intimate (thoughts)
68. Houston folk
70. Mr &...
71. Dig for minerals
72. Carrying out
73. Fathers
76. Pen name, ...de plume

Down

77. Pick
78. Charted
79. World news service
81. Those ones
83. Himalayan kingdom
85. Nimble
86. Porridge flake
88. Loop
90. Speed trap device
91. Most sagacious
92. Bouffant or beehive
93. Lengthy story
95. Iraq's neighbor
96. Laziest
97. Summon (4,2)
100. Non-malignant
102. Speaks
103. Sir or Lord
105. Slain Israeli PM, Yitzhak...
106. Licit
108. Gaol
110. Crept along
112. Colorado ski resort
114. Spanish currency
117. Grinding tooth
119. Distress call (1,1,1)
121. Equatorial breeze, ...wind
124. Total
127. Cricketer, ...Hussain
129. Death
130. Paltriest
131. Bandaged (up)
132. Anti-slavery campaigners
134. European sea
135. Group value system
136. Involved (in)
137. Happy
138. Aquatic mammal
139. London flower-show venue

Down

1. Harsher
2. Idiosyncrasies
3. Unchaste
5. Soothing drug
6. Pond plants
7. Hotshot
8. Amount after tax
9. NW US state
10. Knocked softly
12. Torvill and Dean's Bolero (3,5)
13. Algebra expert
14. Robs (bank) (5,2)
15. Depletes (4,2)
17. Wrongly accused
20. Old video format
22. Era
24. Back of foot
25. Small blankets
27. Pallid
29. Send (funds)
31. Inhales audibly
33. Drumming insect
34. Incapacitate
35. Knob
37. Old-fashioned (3,3)
40. Come
41. Melted
43. Afflicting
44. Caught sight of
46. Light-splitting glass
48. Largest bird
51. Snake-like fish
52. Muscle cramp
54. Imperturbable
58. Awkward
62. Apt twist of fate
64. Go in
65. Earth moving vehicle
66. Marriage relative

Down

- (2-3)
67. Elevated walkways
69. Wanderer
71. Was introduced to
74. Flitting
75. Enemy agent
79. Director, ...B De Mille
80. Moon-walk astronaut (4,9)
82. Manhandled
83. The environment, Mother...
84. Perks (up)
85. ...dementia
86. Famous train (6,7)
87. Human trunk
89. Skin decoration
92. Dragged forcibly
94. Perform
98. Forewarn
99. Notebooks
100. Inclination
101. Men
104. Cove
107. Not joined
109. Sniffing
111. Injure with horns
113. Like two ...in a pod
115. Unconnected
116. Pump up
118. At any rate
120. Lecherous gaze
122. Paused
123. Appendices
125. Drink
126. The ...Bunny
127. Freshest
128. Try hard
133. Pig home
134. Sound that cattle make
- Solution on next page

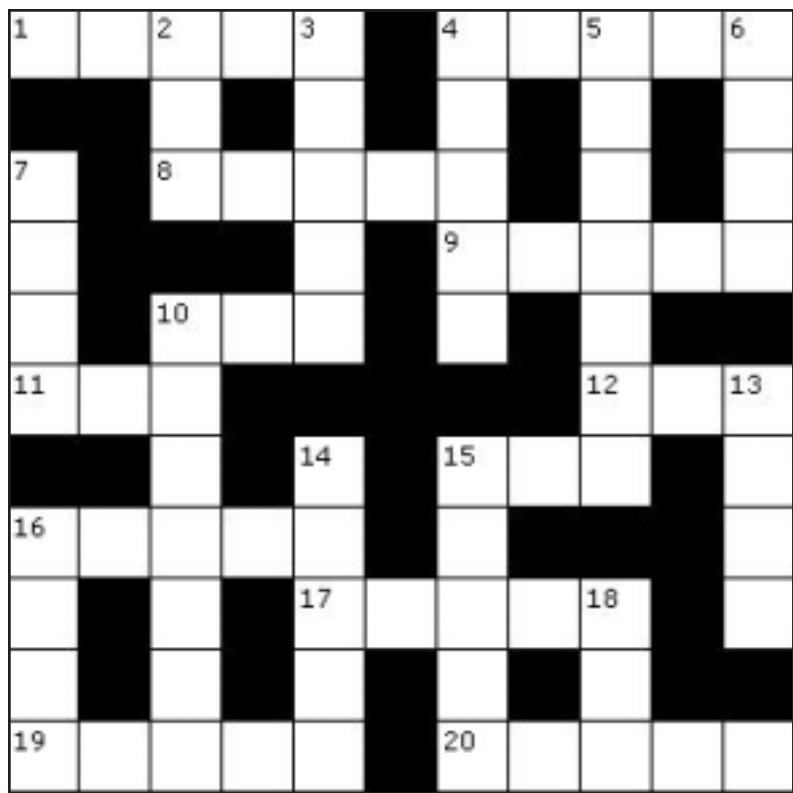
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Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

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



Quick Crossword

Across

1. Head bone
4. Work
8. Extremity
9. Relative
10. Enjoyment
11. Place for pampering
12. Computer firm
15. Not in
16. Egyptian city
17. Not better
19. Puff up
20. Person

Down

2. Web address
3. Sour fruit
4. Flower
5. Cookie
6. Italian capital
7. Weapons
10. Tiredness
13. Holy man
14. A, E, I, O, U
15. Chat show host
16. Swear
18. Tree

Solution below

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



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

1. May Day, which falls on May 1 each year, was celebrated by pre-Christian pagans to mark what occasion?
2. Labor Day, which is also held on May 1, is attributed to which 19th-century labor dispute?
3. How many people are said to have died in that strike?
4. What was that group of workers fighting for?
5. A year earlier, in 1885, Chicago was the proud home to what towering landmark construction achievement?
6. How tall was it?
7. What is the tallest example today?
8. Who built it?
9. What does the company name mean?
10. What is the border between North and South Korea called?
11. Which ancient capital is located 8,500 kilometers to the east on the same latitude?
12. What form of rule is this city famed as the birthplace of?
13. Which statesman introduced it and in which year?
14. In which year did this city host its first modern-day Olympic Games?
15. When did it next host the Olympics?
16. On which date will the Olympics start this year?
17. What is celebrated in the US that week?
18. Which US president signed the decree making the celebration law?
19. What was his nickname?
20. What was the moniker of the informant who lead to his ousting as president?

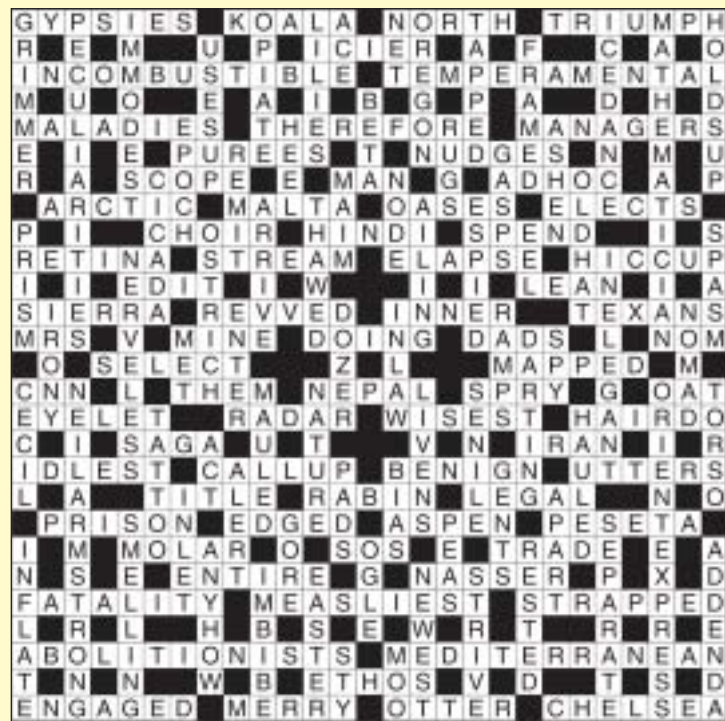
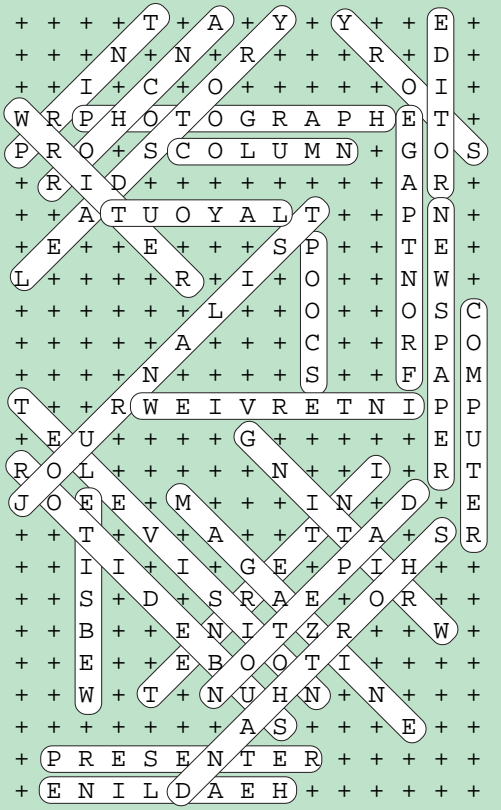
Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Quick Crossword



Hidden Words SOLUTION



Solution to this week's BIG Crossword

Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

Monster Quiz Answers

1. First day of summer; 2. 1886 Haymarket riot in Chicago; 3. Seven policemen, unknown number of civilians; 4. Eight-hour work day; 5. The first skyscraper; 6. 138 feet; 7. Taipei 101 (1,671 feet); 8. Samsung Engineering & Construction; 9. "Three stars"; 10. 38th Parallel; 11. Athens; 12. Democracy; 13. Cleisthenes in 509 BC; 14. 1896; 15. 2004; 16. August 8; 17. National Clown Week; 18. Richard Nixon; 19. Tricky Dicky; 20. Deep Throat.

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ราคาเริ่มต้น 15.5 ล้านบาท
คอนโดมิเนียม 17 ห้อง
ราคาเริ่มต้น 3.9 ล้านบาท



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We've all heard of biodiversity, but what does it actually mean – and how biodiverse is Phuket?

Ecosystems are based on diversity. Squirrels can't exist without fruit trees, pythons cannot exist without prey and flowers need bees for pollination. Biodiversity reflects the variation of life forms in an ecosystem.

Biodiversity necessarily includes plants, which are specific to particular climates. Tropical ecosystems, especially rainforests, comprise a plethora of interrelated plant species, all dependent upon one another and the animal life they support.

When I first arrived in Phuket, in 1989, a Brit said to me, "At least they plant rubber trees instead of building parking lots." But is rubber actually any better?

Rising sea levels have separated different parts of the once-contiguous Sunda Shelf into a variety similar ecosystems.

As a result, the tropical Malay Peninsula, and the Isthmus of Kra that connects it to the Asian mainland, has been blessed by nature as a "hotspot" of biodiversity.

But Thailand's southern peninsular south is now dominated by rubber.

Today, rubber and palm oil plantations overpower Phuket's landscape – better than parking lots, but not by much.

There is just one tree species and minimal ground cover. Animal species are severely depleted, where they exist at all. Some large cobras and pythons remain, keeping the rat population down.

Rubber isn't bad; society is lost without it. Being a commodity, it's a real money maker. Our primary problem is overpopulation of the human species.

In the past, nobody complained about the population because the ever-increasing number of consumers gave corporate boards a false sense of security. As populations and potential markets grew, they didn't factor in resource depletion.

The world's population hit three billion in 1961. We took an estimated one million years to reach the first billion, 1,000 to the hit the second and 200 to make it to the third.

Today, oil is more than



We destroy trees 10 times faster than they reproduce. We like to blame global warming and biodiversity loss on America and the Amazon, but it is far closer to home than that.

Banking on biodiversity

US\$100 a barrel and the price of rice is at an alarming all-time high – and it's going to get worse. There is a simple solution to the rice problem: switch to brown rice.

When nutrients increase, consumption goes down. Unfortunately, oil consumption isn't as simple.

One hundred years ago, Phuket was pristine. World population was about two billion and the hillsides were still jungle, met by lowland forest running down to the mangroves.

The 20th century brought tin mines and rubber.

There are now 6.5 billion people in the world. As reserves of oil, water and food are finite, we've passed the limit on Phuket's microscale and the planet's macroscale.

We destroy trees 10 times faster than they reproduce. We like to blame global warming and biodiversity loss on America and the Amazon, but it is far closer to home than that: most of the Isth-

mus of Kra has already been given over to "monoculture", especially rubber and palm oil production.

Humans devour animal life faster than it can reproduce. We over-fish. We hunt, often poaching. Mother Nature never factored guns, traps and fishing nets into evolution.

Plants and animals newly introduced into an existing ecosystem are known as "exotics". Island biosystems are often protected by isolation. As such, native plants often lack natural defenses against more robust exotics, which simply take over and forever alter a once unique ecosystem.

Phuket's biodiversity was probably very well balanced until the steady flow of human traffic began 2,000 years ago.

Today, even the forested ridgelines are overrun by exotics – yet another threat to Phuket's biodiversity.

Benjamin Franklin once said that agriculture is the only

honest way to make money. Not any more.

Phuket's native forest stands, except for at the highest ridges, were lost eons ago. Whatever survived after World War II was lost to rubber after the 1974 land laws.

Sadly, a rubber plantation has little more biodiversity than a cornfield does. There are no canopies, no thriving, balanced, multiple-species ecosystems.

The smaller an island, the more vulnerable its habitats, which are often too small to maintain their original populations while human development surrounds them.

Ecosystems are full of organisms we rarely consider: worms, insects, plant roots, fungi, bacteria and so on. Pristine rainforest is rich with a complicated, synergistic system of biological mass that feeds from, and yet reinforces, cohabitating species.

An exploding population needs cities and homes. Upscale urban sprawl means concrete, asphalt and infrastructure – no give-and-take biodiversity there. Shanty towns are even worse, thanks to their unmanaged pollution.

Phuket has become a sterile island in a desert of concrete.

If we haven't hammered our ecosystems enough already, let's introduce the final killer: pollution.

Pollution is pervasive, and even though there is very little heavy industry here there is still plenty of pollution. It goes everywhere, permeates everything. Rubber filters into ground water. Silt chokes aquatic systems, killing coral reefs.

Air pollution is everywhere. Phuket's speedboats and driving habits make our children's futures uncertain.

Phuket lost most of its biodiversity to agriculture and tin mining long before tourism arrived. Phuket has, for a long time, been dependent on off-island suppliers. Now there is talk of importing water from our neighbors, who also provide our produce and livestock.

We need planning that looks at more than tourism trends. Thanks to overpopulation, humankind has hit a life-changing wall in terms of commodities.

Our children will be vegetarian by necessity, since meat requires eight-to-12 times more resources than vegetables to provide the same nutrients.

The key word is "necessity". Humanity is running out of options; so is Phuket. Like all commodities,

rubber prices are through the roof, but it might be time to start thinking about veggies.

THE GRAY AREA



By John 'Caveman' Gray



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Me, my Thai girl and I

A few years ago I reviewed a novel by Andrew Hicks called *Thai Girl*. It was about a gormless recent college grad from England who bumbles about the tourist spots of Thailand. The glory of the book was Fon, a former hotel room maid and now beach masseuse on Koh Samet, who brightens up the narrative whenever she appears. Hicks managed to capture the charm and magic of an honest Isarn girl.

His new book is entitled *My Thai Girl and I* (Konstrukt Books, Bangkok, 2008, 250pp). This is about Cat, the real Thai girlfriend who became his wife. The book starts out with a rush, the narrative jumping from Cat nagging Hicks through a shopping trip at Chatuchak Market to an interminable bus ride to her village in Surin to meet her parents, to how the couple first met in Phuket.

Hicks, pushing 60, a British lawyer and academic, was on vacation in Phuket. Across from his hotel, 28-year-old Cat was working at a food stall with her big sister Durian. From early morning till late at night, Cat peeled fruit, chopped vegetables, grilled chickens and catfish, and pounded pestles into mortars to make somtam. They

first met when she sold him some papaya.

"Cat didn't strike me as one of the beautiful ones when I bought my first papaya but I liked her natural poise," Hicks writes. "I liked the way she talked to me, holding my gaze with never a flicker, sitting still as a statue as we later discussed English verbs. She was totally comfortable in her skin, as the French like to say. And her English, though far from perfect, was good enough for her to tell me her story and of her hopes and aspirations for the future."

She was studying Political Science at Ramkhamhaeng University while help-

ing out her sister in Phuket during the high season. She'd come to Bangkok at age 18, taking up her first dead-end job at a chicken factory and then working as a salesgirl at the Mall department store.

In her many photos in the book, Cat gazes straight at the camera. She is tiny, dark, round-cheeked, with a wide, confident smile.

Cat's parents and family accept Hicks but living in a tiny rice-farming village is a struggle for him. It's hot and dusty and he never knows when or what he's going to eat. Cat offers: "Lao curry... plenty chili. Maybe frog, maybe Papa catch snake. You like insects?"

The central drama comes when they decide to build a big concrete house. Comedy arrives when Hicks, to Cat's outrage, buys an old jeep rather than a new pickup and it keeps breaking down at exactly the wrong moment: "The Black Jeep of the Family".

Hicks is outraged in his turn at the repeated failure of his many attempts over two weeks to procure a copy of the Bangkok Post at the nearest town. Cat blows up at him: "Anyway, it's only a newspaper! You not have newspaper two weeks

and you die already? If it so bad, why you not die?"

Cat is a whirlwind of activity, hoeing in the garden, putting up fences, planting vegetables and a rattan plantation, building pig pens and chicken coops. But as the book goes on, she recedes from the picture and the book becomes more about "I" than the "Thai girlfriend": Hicks in his air-conditioned office punching into his computer his many complaints about Thailand. He admits toward the end of the book, "There's nothing more annoying than the expat whinge!"

The tone is informal, addressed to the reader, but he's picked up some sloppy habits. For one thing, he has the annoying amateur habit of beginning sentences with lame adverbs: fortunately, unfortunately, luckily, sadly, thankfully... The text is often disorganized and repetitive, and the overuse of exclamation points does not spice up a dull sentence.

As a lawyer, he may delight in the details of construction contracts and visa formalities. As a reader, we don't.

But things do pick up as Cat comes back into the picture to build another house of wood and expand a fish pond.



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

When in Rome, Thai doesn't sound the same

As I've mentioned before, I'm a big believer in learning the Thai script as a tool for learning the spoken language. Be warned, though, that there's a major side effect of this learning method: it will improve your accent. Shocking, I know.

Why will this improve your accent?

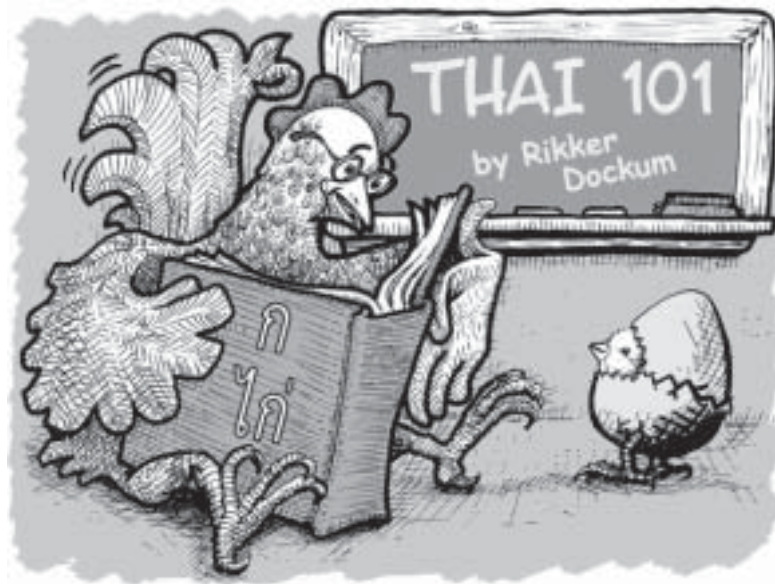
The answer has to do with the multiplicity of ways to write Thai words with English letters. There is no single standard, so it's hard to know which system is being used in a given sign, menu, or name. The odds are stacked against your guessing it right on the first, or even fifth, try.

The best away around this problem is learn the Thai script.

There are so many romanization systems because different things make sense to different people. If you buy three Thai phrase books, you can rest assured they'll each use a different spelling for the same word.

The only thing certain about it is the uncertainty – until you delve into learning the Thai writing system. While it looks intimidating, Thai is much more systematic than English. It is an obnoxious historical accident that in my American dialect, "sew" rhymes with no, while "dew" rhymes with too, while "few" is pronounced fyoo (not foo). And it's different in a hundred other accents. Regional accents exist in Thai, too, of course, but the written language is very well-standardized and will act as a sanity check against the quixotic quest to represent Thai with roman letters.

Take the name of the new airport, Suvarnabhumi. In reality,



Thais pronounce this, roughly, soo-wunna-poom. The bizarre English spelling has to do with the word's origin. Suvarnabhumi is borrowed from Sanskrit, and means "Land of gold". On a historical note, this appellation has long been used to refer to all of mainland Southeast Asia, not just the damp patch of land formerly known as nong ngoo haow, or "cobra swamp".

The spelling in Thai retains features of the original language, helping Thai people recognize it as a borrowed word. So, when they spell it with English letters, they write it as if it were Sanskrit – even though the Thai pronunciation is very different. In fact, most proper names in Thai are from Sanskrit, so we end up with this situation all the time.

If you want to learn Thai, one of the unavoidable facts that you must accept is that you have to learn how to make new sounds. You must retrain your mouth. This is where romanization can be particularly

misleading. It gives you the impression that you can just read it off the page and get it approximately right. Take a simple enough word like wan nii, which means "today", or technically "this day".

You might see this written wan nii, wan nee, wun ni, wun nee, and for all I know, "one

knee". There is, by contrast, just one way to write and read the word in Thai script, which was designed some 700 years ago specifically to write the Thai language, so it makes sense to use it.

In the meantime, though, there are other pitfalls for reading romanized Thai that you can easily avoid. Whenever you see th- or ph-, forget about how they're pronounced in English. Just like in the name Thailand, th- always represents the sound in the English word "tie". In the same vein, ph- is always the sound in the English word "pie". Denizens of Phuket know this issue well, of course.

The recent Oscar-winning film *Juno* has a line where a character uses "Phuket, Thailand" as an exclamation, intended for comic effect. She pronounces it foo-keet, which is, of course, supposed to sound like the English expletive. This isn't the first or last time we've heard this joke, but it's based on a misunderstanding.

ing. These sounds are written with the letter "h" in order to distinguish them from two other similar sounds that English doesn't differentiate, but which are critically important for speaking understandable Thai.

For example, you may know that pai means "go", but phai means "danger". The nitty-gritty of how to make these different sounds is a topic for another column.

For now, get started with the writing system. Go to your local bookstore and get one of those primary school books with the dotted lines you can trace out to practice spelling letters. There's also a nice set of free printable flashcards at <http://slice-of-thai.com/flashcards/>. The sooner you start, the sooner you'll begin to enjoy that side effect.

Rikker Dockum writes regularly at thai101.blogspot.com and can be contacted at: rdockum@gmail.com

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Samak's pipe dreams

Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej's recent announcement that he would like to set up a 15-member panel to oversee the "rehabilitation" of Phuket is good news, at least in that it shows the government is aware of the many infrastructure, development and social problems the island is facing.

Under the two Thaksin administrations and the coup-installed administration that followed, the lack of central-government funding for critical projects, such as a second incinerator at Saphan Hin, borders on scandalous, given the estimated 100 billion baht in tourism revenue the island generates for the country every year.

Unfortunately, PM Samak's government shares with the Thai Rak Thai Party that it is fashioned after, a love of mega-projects, not all of them well conceived.

In solving Phuket's recurring water supply shortages, he resurrected the impractical and unnecessary idea of piping water all the way from the Chieo Lan Reservoir in Surat Thani. The manager of the Ratchaprapa Dam that controls water levels in the reservoir told the *Gazette*, after the idea was first floated in mid-2005, that while the reservoir is indeed huge, the dam was designed for agricultural purposes only and doesn't hold back enough water to meet even these purposes through the dry season – let alone supply Phuket.

A far more practical and cost-effective approach would be to increase water storage capacity locally. This could be accomplished by building more reservoirs, requiring all new developments to have sufficient capacity for rainwater collection and storage to meet the needs of all its buyers, and encouraging owners of existing dwellings to do the same – just as our forefathers did for eons.

Such regulations should have been put in place 20 years ago. Because they weren't, we are left to bear the expense and potential health risks of pumping and trucking low-quality tin-mine water around the island to meet dry-season demand.

Even more impractical, expensive and poorly conceived is the 538-million-baht desalination plant [see Governor's letter, facing page]. Even if its operators ever manage get the plant working to spec, spending millions of baht on electricity every month to force seawater through reverse-osmosis membranes simply doesn't make sense in the middle of the monsoon belt. Added to this is the fact that the water-distribution system in Kata-Karon is not up to potable-water quality standards.

With any luck, PM Samak's board will prioritize and fast-track the cost-efficient, practical solutions that Phuket needs and spare us talk of tunnels under Patong Hill, light-rail systems and the like.

– The Editor

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

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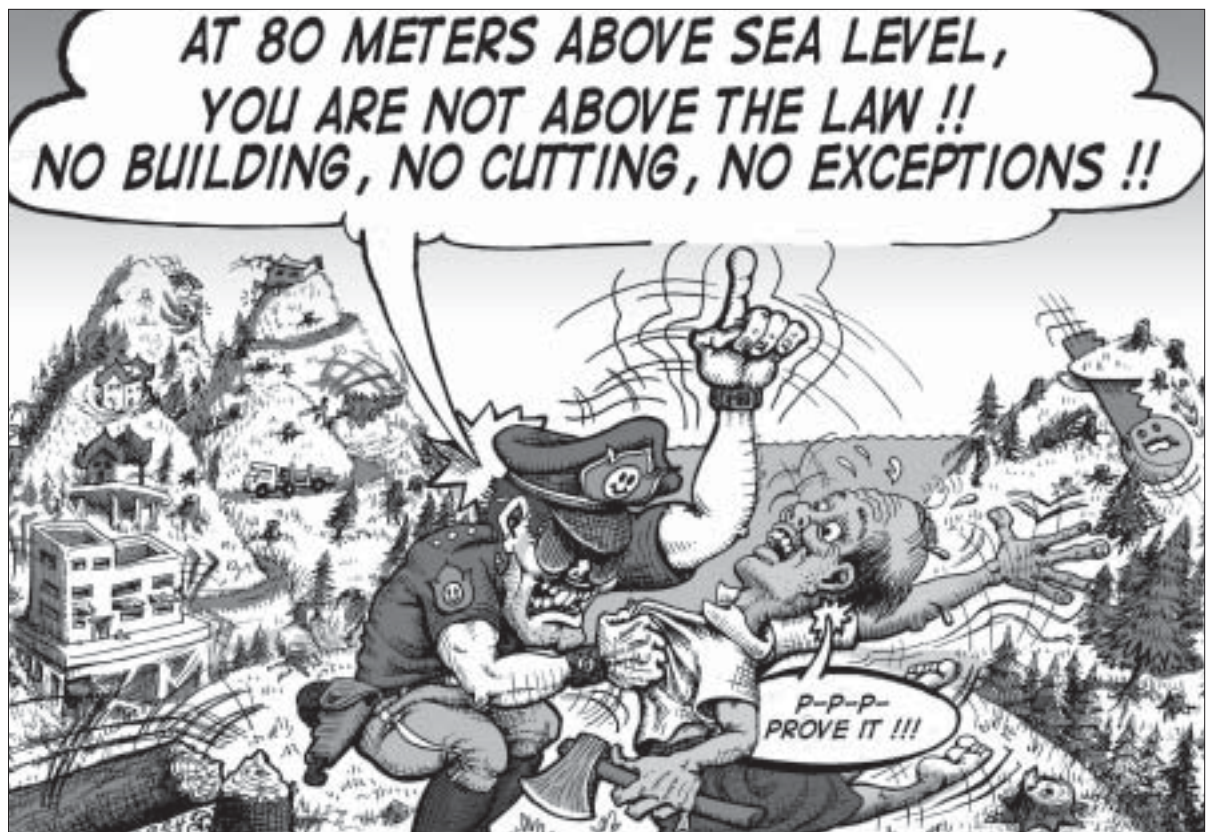
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Letters

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

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

No shine in gold robber's life

It's been a long time since I've heard a story like the one about gold-shop robber Taweesak ['I robbed to pay for my baby,' says gold shop suspect, *Gazette* online, April 18].

I cannot feel anything but sympathy for the young man. At 21, he has a baby on the way, a dowry to pay for in a hurry and the standard burden of having to pay for caring for his mother.

So what does he do? He buys a plastic gun so that it is impossible for him to kill anyone – indeed, the only person in danger if he's caught in the act is himself – and robs a gold shop that would be insured for its loss.

Even then he calls the cops and talks about handing himself in.

At 21, Taweesak has more mettle than most of the youngsters in the UK, where I happily left to live in Thailand. Youngsters there are currently enjoying being "slap happy" – that is, the kids go around beating up the old and infirm just for fun.

Good luck, Taweesak, at least you have your decency.

Chuck
Chalong

Rehab? How about responsibility?

Um, so let me get this straight. Prime Minister Samak says that Phuket is in urgent need of rehabilitation, an assertion based on direct complaints he's received from local businessmen [*Gazette* online, April 28].

Presumably these are the same businessmen who have

shown their love for the province and its nature by bribing local officials to skirt environmental regulations, rubber-stamp their concrete visions of hell and even defy science by making a hill shrink to a level of below 80 meters.

They build and build and build with no long-term vision or plan to accommodate the zillions of people they hope to attract here.

And then these same businessmen go crying to the government that their poor little island is dirty, crowded and increasingly unlivable.

It's like the alcoholic in denial, who puts the blame on his parents, his girlfriend, his boss, the unfriendly cashier at the supermarket, for the problems that have led to his drinking, without questioning his role in his own demise.

Let's send these businessmen to "get real" rehab first, then we might have some hope in tackling the urgent issues that they themselves have created for Phuket.

Yvonne
Thalang

On building tsunami memories

I totally understand Franky Gun's frustration and anger over the lack of action in building a memorial to the victims of the 2004 tsunami [Andaman Coasting, *Gazette*, April 26-May 2].

It must surely be heart-breaking to have lost so much, and then have the tremendous loss of your community fall so easily out of people's consciousness, as it has done in many places.

I've heard, too, but haven't

gone to check for myself, that the Wall of Remembrance in Mai Khao has now fallen into disarray, polluted with garbage and graffiti. Not sure which is worse, no memorial or one that's built only to be abandoned. Either way, these shameful acts of neglect are a slap in the face to those who survived the waves.

What is of utmost importance now, however, is ensuring that a tragedy of this magnitude never happens again and that starts with building and maintaining a solid education and tsunami-warning infrastructure.

Fully functioning warning towers backed by a tried-and-tested system for helping people evacuate would be by far the best memorial we could offer to those who died in 2004.

T Rivers
Chalong

Mysterious facts surround piracy

You should check things before you write them. In your story "Speedboat pirates raid Thai tanker" (*Gazette* online, April 28), you report that the pirates used 20-foot speedboats powered by twin 300hp outboards.

This must be some kind of a joke. Engines with that much power would easily sink a boat that size.

That's like putting a V8 engine on a Honda Dream.

Jeff
Phuket City

Phuket Gazette News Editor Stephen Fein replies:

The information about the pirates was part of a press release published by the Royal Thai Navy.

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

The infrastructure problems that are letting us down

First, the desalination plant in Karon is not working as well as we initially anticipated. We have to understand that this is the first project of its kind in Phuket. The Phuket Provincial Water Supply hired IEQ Co Ltd to carry out the project, but the problem now is that during monsoon season, the weather is very bad and the underground pipes that we laid cannot function as well as normal.

According to the contract with IEQ, 12,500 cubic meters of water is supposed to be treated per day, but this quota cannot be fulfilled and they are trying to fix that now.

However, the Bang Neaw Dam will be finished this month, which will be able to collect rainwater during the coming monsoon season so that the dam will be full of water by next year. After the Bang Neaw Dam, the next project is the Klong Kata Dam, which will be under construction soon.

Registration van failure. Since this project began last year, the number of people who are registered as living in Phuket has increased by only about 20,000 people, which isn't very many. This is partly due to the large number of people who have used the van to register themselves as no longer living on the island, and we still have the problem that many people on Phuket are tourists and immigrants.

Serf shortage. I have heard from many businessmen that Phuket's tourism industry is suffering a shortage of skilled workers. This may be because when people move from other prov-

The Governor's Letter

With several basic infrastructure projects already failed, stalled or simply not yet undertaken, Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit is concerned about infrastructure problems on the island, especially garbage.

He has yet to receive any feedback from the central government about a second burner at the Saphan Hin incinerator, despite Prime Minister's Office inspector Changthong Opassiriwit pledging top-level support last month.

Here he discusses the status of Phuket's key infrastructure projects, what problems they are facing and what is being done about them.



inces to work in Phuket, they sometimes find that it is too expensive to live here and then they move back to where they came from after working here only a short while.

Related to this is the number of migrant laborers on the island. The number of legal Burmese, Cambodian, Lao and Malay immigrant workers in Phuket is about 32,000, but the number of illegal workers is believed to be about 30,000. In total, there could actually be as many as 100,000 immigrant workers in Phuket.

I heard that a group of businessmen in Thailand, including representatives from Phuket, sent a request to the Minister of Labor in Bangkok to increase the quota for immigrant workers be-

cause we do not have enough laborers.

But before we move to increase the number of legal migrant workers in Phuket, we must consider several things. One important aspect is security, because the more poor people we have here, the greater the likelihood that crime will increase.

Also, we need to think about whether we really need this increase, because many Thai people don't want it and such a move would affect the entire economy. We must implement an effective system for keeping track of immigrant workers, such as they have in the US or Europe, where they scan eyes, fingerprints and have evidence that can identify each person.

New OrBorJor president. I would like to congratulate the new president and his team. After the election results have been made official by the Election Commission, we must discuss plans to develop the province and to solve the various problems on the island, such as garbage, traffic and other basic issues, such as ways to improve the education system.

Lack of support. I don't think there has been enough support in Phuket from the private sector at times when the government has needed to develop facilities that would be beneficial to the province. We can't force them to work with us, but it would be good if the private sector worked with the government

more than it does at the moment.

Thailand still does not have a good system in place for foreign investors, who are waiting for positive action and policies from the government to instill some confidence in the economy.

Foreigners are waiting for political stability before they invest; they don't want to risk their money in an unstable climate.

If there is political stability, then the situation with regards to investment will improve, especially the potential in Phuket for investors to become involved in large projects, such as marinas, MICE [Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions], a light-rail system and sports complexes.

I think that the current government is interested in projects such as Ao Phuket. There will also be a new board set up that will focus on promoting these projects.

A number of Korean bankers and the CEO of Lotte Korea visited me recently and expressed interest in investing in mega-projects in Phuket.

Boxed in. There have been a lot of condominium projects developed and built in Phuket recently. Not long ago, I predicted that this would happen.

Phuket does not have much vacant land and the cost of land here is very expensive. The best type of investment, at the moment, is in high-volume projects that cover small areas but with multiple stories.

In the future, Phuket will be a lot like Bangkok, where in the city, there are many condominium projects, while single houses are mostly on the outskirts.

New checkpoint. After we transferred management of Tah Chat Chai checkpoint to the Royal Thai Police recently, we started receiving a lot of positive feedback. We have police 24 hours a day at the checkpoint and we plan to install more CCTV cameras there. We have budgetary support for this from the Pa Khlok Tambon Administration Organization.

If possible, I would like to see an x-ray machine installed that could scan every vehicle that comes into Phuket, but this would be very expensive. If we had such a system, we would be able to see when immigrant laborers are hiding in a car or truck.

How can I help the Khun Poom Foundation?

I have been trying to find the street and email addresses for the Khun Poom Foundation, which was founded by HRH Princess Ubol Ratana Rajakanya.

The foundation is responsible for building some new facilities for autistic children. I would like to help them.

Ron Bass
By email

Dr Jessada Chungpaibulpana, director of Vachira Phuket Hospital, replies:

The Khun Poom building, or Baan Khun Poom project, that we have been building is already funded by the Public Health Ministry and the Government Lottery Office.

They have provided 344.5

million baht for the building and other facilities.

The Phuket Gazette notes:

The Khun Poom Foundation website can be found at www.khunpoom.org

According to their website, you can make donations directly to the foundation by money order or check to:

Khun Somboon Arsirapoj (Khun Poom Foundation Committee Member)

4645 Din Daeng Rd, Din Daeng Bangkok 10400.

Call K. Somboon at 089-4885045 for more information.

Alternatively, you can have funds transferred by bank to:

Issues & ANSWERS

Want to know how to get something done? Can't understand some of the dafter things that seem to go on in Phuket?

Write to: The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at www.phuketgazette.net

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made to the foundation are tax deductible. For more information please call the Autistic Foundation of Thailand at 02-866-7125 or its Special Education Center at 02-2474685.

Niran Kalayanamit, Governor of Phuket

It's no mistake to say that sometimes we all make mistakes when choosing clothes, but in 2008 there are an awful lot of people working round the clock to make sure we get it right most of the time.

Trinny and Susannah, presenters of a British television program called *What Not to Wear*, have made millions steering women away from looming fashion disasters, and many high-street shops now have in-house style consultants.

Sometimes it feels as if we are approaching a bright new dawn when everyone will make the most of their figures, wear complimentary colors and high-waisted stretch jeans will be a thing of the past. Except for one rather important omission – men.

None of this fashion advice ever takes into account the preferences of the opposite sex. What not to wear if you want to keep them happy. And what to wear if you want them to notice you, but in a good way.

You won't get the shop-floor stylist checking whether your man has a problem with brown or asking his views on ankle gripping jeans. Male approval is the last thing on the minds of anyone dictating the how-tos of fashion. We are convinced that looking good is all about female expertise, and that men are not equipped to say what works and what doesn't.

But men are actually more alert to bottom-expanding cuts and bosom-flattering necklines than fashion-blinded women. A man instinctively knows that a bright yellow A-line jacket isn't going to do anything for you, even if it is on model Kate Moss's wish list.

Men have the advantage of not giv-

Male order fashion



ing the slightest care whether something is by designer Stella McCartney or discounted monsoon wear from the local North Face supplier. This is because all they care about is How Good You Look. And that is not good as in cool but good as in attractive.

There are a few misconceptions about men that women indulge in at their peril. The first is that they care about fashion.

Some men appreciate a hip girl with her finger on the pulse, but only – *only* – if her look presses all the right buttons. Women presume that they will somehow score more points for being in the fashion frontline, but ladies, only your girlfriends notice.

Ask yourself: is it important that your best friend raves about your latest purchase or that the man in your life gets that far-away "must book a dirty mini-break" look?

The second misconception is that

men notice only if you whip on a low-enough top, a tight-enough skirt or a high-enough pair of heels to register loud and clear on their radar and that anything less will go unremarked.

Wrong. Men don't switch off their antennae in normal time and, what is more, they share an allergy to certain items of clothing which women fondly imagine to be really quite cute.

For example, you might think they'll love you in a miniskirt and polo neck because it's skinny-fit and hugs your curves, but all men dislike polo necks. They panic if they can't see some throat. Men like the touchstone of a collarbone.

Tights also make them squeamish. It's not the look beneath skirts they object to, it's the trussed-sausage effect when you are stripped down to them. Even fishnets remind them of onion bags.

Other articles of clothing men unanimously reject include pop socks, culottes

(fair enough), dungarees and caftans.

Big, busy prints are never a hit, and vintage 1950s-style dresses give them trippy flashbacks to nursery school teachers with body odor. Well, it is the same look – just because it has Prada on the label doesn't make them feel any less confused.

Also, much to their credit, most grown men cannot stand girly bows and fluffiness, even on a Marc Jacobs cardigan. Most men operate on the theory that if you've got it, they would like you to flaunt it, albeit within reason.

Sawed-off trousers, trapeze tops, bubble skirts – just more lovely fashion to us – are the enemy of the male. The way we see it, we spend our lives nibbling on protein, detoxing and grabbing our bum in the mirror only to go out and spend a fortune on camouflaging those very parts we obsess about.

Men don't get it, but can you blame them? Think about it. When did you last see a man's face light up because of something you were wearing? Did it feel better than successfully dieting yourself into the skinny jeans which he announced reminded him of Rudolph Nureyev?

No-one's saying we have to let them dress us. Just that it might be worth keeping one eye on the only person who really cares...

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

In The Stars

by Isla Star

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):

The way forward becomes crystal clear. A longstanding personal dilemma is solved and you are able to concentrate on making progress. Your generosity is appreciated by Sagittarius this weekend, but don't allow your heart to be taken advantage of. Tuesday is best for resolving a bureaucratic issue. Wear the color coffee to make the right impression.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):

Those of you who are not sure whether you really want to pursue romance should take some distance from the situation before things get out of hand. Put business matters first during May as unforeseen events are predicted. Aries cannot be trusted to do the right thing, but Pisces is rock steady.

Protect your tender heart, Taurus

CANCER (June 22-July 23):

Those looking for romance should leave the security of their shells and venture further afield. Leo is hoping to catch your attention and this relationship has Cupid's support. Wednesday is the most auspicious day for a job interview, but don't burn bridges until you receive confirmation of success. As May progresses, relocation is highlighted.

LEO (July 24-August 22):

A hot temper could spoil your social life this weekend. Leos who know they need to cool down are advised to spend some quality moments alone. After the first week of May your mood becomes more mellow and others will look

to you for inspiration. Someone new on the scene is determined to be noticed and romance is forecast to bloom when you least expect it.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23):

Control your habit of always having the last word. This weekend, allowing Scorpio to believe they're right could save a friendship. Maintaining a low profile will also serve you well at work when a disagreement brews. Those who would like a change of employment receive a hot tip before mid-May, but you will need to move quickly.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23):

May is not the ideal month to be impetuous, particularly with finances. Those who act first and think later will soon have cause for regret. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, a relationship that you believed to be waning begins to glow again. You discover that a Capricorn friend has a heart of gold when you ask for assistance midweek.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22):

Scorpios who returned from a holiday feeling less rested than expected should have the chance of a better break before the middle of the month. A quiet time away from daily pressures will set you up for a busy

summer. Pisces would make a calm companion to travel with, but Taurus is bound to get your goat.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21):

Don't worry about things you cannot change. If you have already done your utmost to repair a friendship, it's high time that the other person concerned made some amends. A promotion at work should suddenly be presented by the middle of this month. Romance is subject to stormy astral conditions this week; allow your partner the space to learn from their mistakes.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20):

If the heat is making you sluggish, try to escape for a few days to a cooler climate. Tuesday is the best day for making travel plans as the stars will support your efforts to get a good deal. Where finances are concerned, Aquarius has an illuminating tip to offer, but Leo is only looking out for their own gain. Wear a piece of amber to encourage a more positive outlook.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19):

Those who aren't sure which direction a new rela-

tionship is heading in will receive clarification this weekend. If the answer is not entirely to your satisfaction, some time out should enable a calmer atmosphere to prevail. If you're single, keep romantic approaches low-key. A surprise visit from friends or family is forecast to cheer you up during May. The number 4 can bring some good fortune on Wednesday.

PISCES (February 20-March 20):

Blowing off steam this weekend will enable you to make a fresh start next week. Problems at work should dissolve as the new month gets underway. A colleague who was out to cause trouble is forecast to leave the scene, and you should discover more compatibility with their replacement.

Leo is looking for some romantic excitement and is ready to show interest, but Taurus has someone else in mind.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):

A fortunate encounter this weekend should give you a second chance where better employment is concerned. May is forecast to proceed at a much faster pace than April and you should endeavor to get plenty of rest. This is also the ideal time to adopt a healthier diet. Romance is sparked off when you discover that Taurus is more interested than you realized.



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This week, the S in The S-Files stands for “super and simple do-it-yourself project”. You do not need special tools, skills or knowledge for this one.

In my previous column, I introduced several do-it-yourself ways to convert a pencil-like Wi-Fi antenna into a more powerful directional antenna. The article gave links to instructions for a paper-and-foil parabolic dish and for a variety of tube-like “cantenna” projects.

The article hinted at how you could convert a Potae potato snack can into a sturdy parabolic dish for your Wi-Fi antenna.

This week, we return to that Wi-Fi project with step-by-step instructions on how to make it.

If distance makes your Wi-Fi signal weak, placing one of these Wi-Fi parabolic wings around your PC's Wi-Fi antenna – and ideally around the base station's wireless router antenna, too – will increase the signal strength and quality of the signal by up to 400%, with some radical speed enhancement as a side effect.

If you don't have a Wi-Fi adapter, I recommend the Edimax USB type with screw-on antenna. Other types, such as PCI card, and those of other brands, such as Linksys, will work too, but the Edimax USB Wi-Fi adapter is ideal.

If you're hunting for an Edimax, the box is red and white; the contents are 1,500 baht. They're available at most IT supply stores.

The antenna should be about the same width and height as your ring finger. You should be able to unscrew the antenna from the adapter. If not, the whole adapter should fit into the bottom quarter of the Potae can.

Don't worry if your Wi-Fi USB adapter's antenna is built into the adapter and can't be detached. We can still do this project as long as the adapter will fit inside the Potae can.

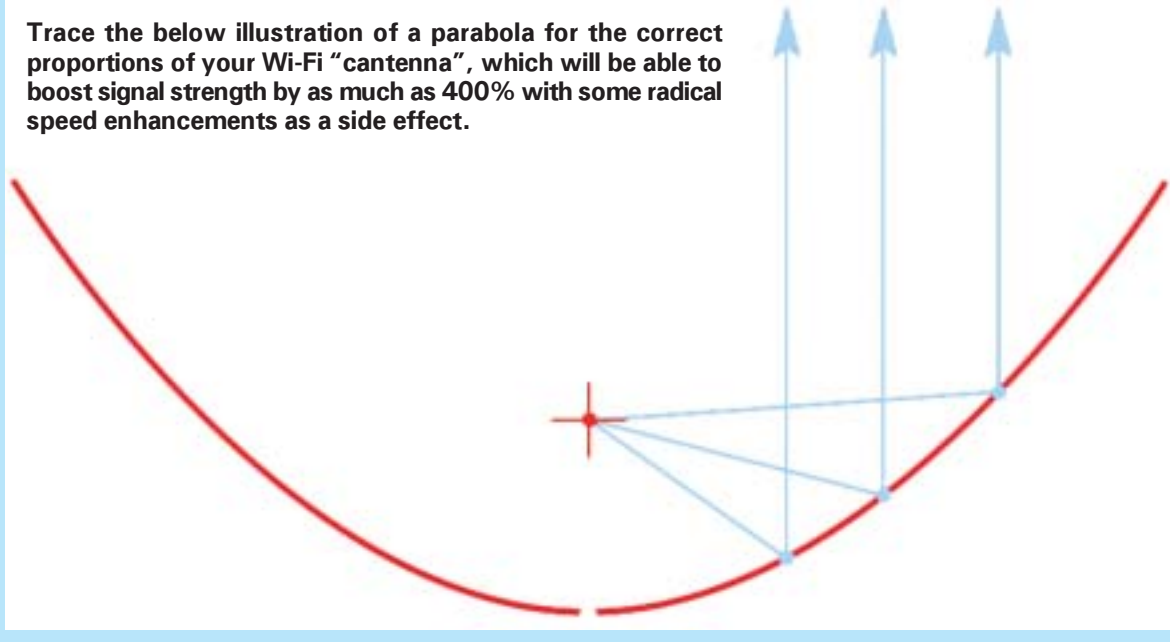
Just like cupping a hand around your ear, a parabolic curve of metal around your antenna focuses the incoming waves toward the antenna – and focuses outgoing waves into a beam – improving reception and transmission enormously.

To do this, you will need the following:

1) A foil-lined Potae can with smooth sides, roughly 10 cen-

Make your Wi-Fi fly

Trace the below illustration of a parabola for the correct proportions of your Wi-Fi “cantenna”, which will be able to boost signal strength by as much as 400% with some radical speed enhancements as a side effect.



timeters in diameter and taller than your Wi-Fi antenna. You can find the cans in any supermarket for about 40 baht each. A 40-baht can of Party caramel-coated yam crisps works just as well.

2) A can opener or tin-snips and pliers.

3) A parabola sketched on paper, roughly as long as the radius of the can.

4) Thick sticky tape.

5) A USB or co-ax SMA antenna extension cord (see “S-Files”, page 31, *Phuket Gazette*, April 26 for details).

Crush the ridge around the top edge of the can so it can be bent into a smooth parabola. Cut the can straight down one side, from the top to 3/4 of the way down, or slightly longer than your antenna.

At the bottom of the cut, turn left and right to make a horizontal radial cut. Cut almost all the way around the can, leaving a 4cm-wide section intact, directly opposite the vertical cut.

Spread the can out horizon-

tally, like a bird's wings. Fit the curve of the wings to your parabolic line.

Fold over the edges and cover them with the sticky tape.

Place the plastic lid on over your parabola and mark the lid where it covers the focal point of the parabola.

Cut a cross through that point and push the antenna (or the whole Wi-Fi adapter, if it has no antenna) straight up through the hole. The four corners of the cross will hold the antenna vertical.

Cut a shallow, 4cm arc out the edge of the lid, so that the lid can neatly cover the hole in the bottom of the can and the indent will line up with the spine that attaches the metal wings to the can base.

Poke a hole in the side of the base for the cable to go through. Thread the cable in and fill the can with something heavy, such as sand or coins.

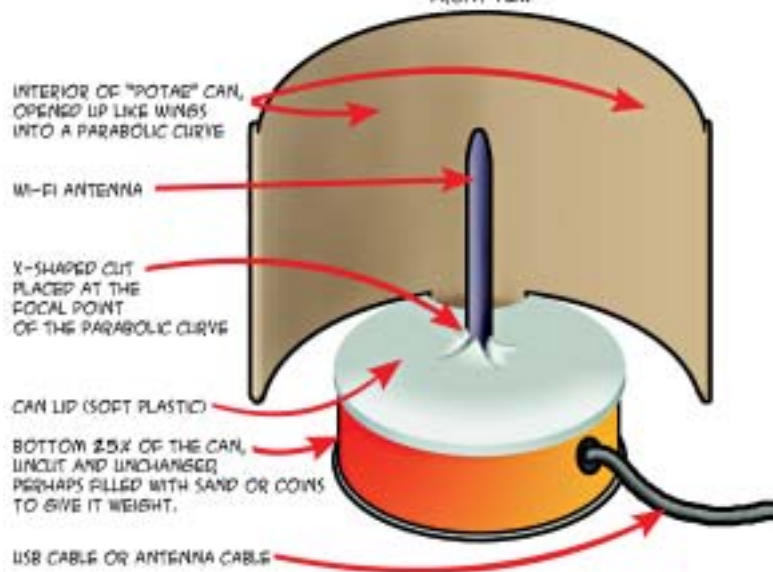
Tape or glue the lid down and you're done.

Seth Bareiss has been an IT professional in Asia and the Pacific for two decades. If you'd like to meet him, come on down to one of the PC Group Therapy meetings at Woody's Sandwich Shoppes each Sunday from 10 am to midday. Seth's the joker with the whiteboard.

THE S FILES

By Seth Bareiss

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ON THE MOVE

Henry Gray has been promoted to Area Director for the Evason Phuket and Six Senses Hideaway Yao Noi. His previous position was Area General Manager.

Mr Gray, who has a hotel-and-catering management diploma from Henley College, Coventry, England, will be responsible for overseeing operations at the Evason Phuket, Six Senses Hideaway Samui, Six Senses Hideaway Hua Hin and Evason Hua Hin.



Bangkok native **Pussadee Funnern** has been appointed Sales and Marketing Director at La Flora Resort Patong. With 22 years in the hospitality industry, she has worked at the Rydges Beach Resort Phuket, the Amora Beach Resort Phuket and the Amora Tapae Chiang Mai. Her previous appointment was Director of Sales and Marketing at Potalai: The Thai Wellness Center, Bangkok.



Bangkok native **Veeradech Chumchua** has been appointed Director of Engineering at the Renaissance Koh Samui Resort & Spa.

K. Veeradech has more than 10 years' experience at leading hotels, including at the Novotel Bangkok and the JW Marriott Hotel Bangkok.

Before joining Renaissance, K. Veeradech was Chief Engineer at the Anantara Koh Samui.



Tax cuts give home buyers a break

By Semacote Suganya

PHUKET: Phuket's real estate market has been given a boost as home buyers rush to take advantage of tax reductions on the transfer of property purchases over the next year.

The latest amendment to the 40-billion-baht economic stimulus package introduced by the Thai government earlier this year will reduce property transfer fees from 2% to 0.01% of the registered value of properties on the market.

The amendment is aimed at further reducing key taxes for property developers and to reduce costs for home buyers, who are usually required to contribute to the cost of transaction fees paid to the Land Office by the seller.

The cut in transfer fees follows a reduction in Specific Business Tax (SBT), paid for property transfer transactions, from



A man checks through property ownership transfer documents at the Phuket Provincial Land Office. The near-scrapping of property transfer fees levied by the Land Office is expected to provide an added boost to Phuket's property market.

3% to 0.1% for transactions made within the year after the package is enacted into the *Royal Gazette*.

The reduction in SBT was approved by the Ministry of Interior on March 28. The amend-

ment to reduce the property-transfer fee was submitted by the cabinet for approval by the Ministry on April 22.

SBT is imposed on property owners who have owned a property for less than five years. The tax rate is calculated as a percentage of the property's sale price or its assessed value, whichever is higher.

When approved, the reduction in transfer fees will also apply to those buying and selling secondhand homes.

However, business tax related to the transfer of new houses will be reduced only to 0.11%.

Phuket Land Office chief Thanet Niyom said that the amendment is part of a measured policy to lessen the burden of taxation and transfer fees for both buyers and sellers of immovable properties. "The decree initially favored only property owners by reducing the taxes they had to pay. Buyers are usually required to contribute to the cost of transfer fees," he said.

"The Phuket property market is unique compared with other provinces. With so many non-registered residents living in the province, there has been a steady increase in residential properties going on the market. This pack-

age will encourage more residents to buy homes rather than rent, which in turn helps Phuket's property market continue to grow.

"Phuket has seen between 20 and 30 new residential projects launched this year alone," he added.

"The introduction of the new economic stimulus package is already benefiting the Phuket property market. Demand for housing has increased and there is a marked increase in sales of condominiums and houses," he said.

"Phuket is attractive to real estate investors. Many Bangkok-based real estate businesses are now investing in Phuket properties, especially condominiums, which foreigners can own freehold," he added.

K. Thanet said that he is positive about the current property market trend in Phuket. "The cost of land in Phuket is high compared with other provinces and I am confident it will continue to rise, making it a great place to invest that will see high returns," he said.

Chief Land Registra Somboon Santiamornphat told the *Gazette* that about 100 people per day have been transferring property, including buildings and land, since the reduction in transfer fee taxes.

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The effectiveness of the US and UK central banks' involvement in banks and the money market remains to be seen. In what has been described as "the biggest U-turn in 300 years in Bank of England history", the Bank of England has been forced to offer a program to banks and mortgage lenders (building societies) that could total UK£50 billion (US\$100 billion or just over 3 trillion baht).

Well, it may be the biggest change in direction by the British central bank, but it was unavoidable. The greater money market is not functioning properly and until it does, as they say in America, Wall Street will impact on Main Street.

Public confidence is just that: "confidence". If it is absent, it is likely that the economy will slow enough to enter a recession. That is what the Bank of England faces.

The London Interbank Offer Rate (Libor), a market component that is often used as the yardstick for various currencies, was yielding almost 1% more than the Bank of England base lending rate.

The Bank of England had cut rates by 25 basis points to 5% but Libor remained effectively "stuck". The central bank needs to inject enough liquidity for the money market to operate properly.

As the UK has been out of recession since the end of 1992, a little economic maintenance might well be in order.

What concerns analysts, economists and fund managers is that the terms of-

The £50bn bank bailout

fered by the Bank of England are less than generous. In exchange for mortgage-backed securities, the Bank of England will issue government bonds, which in reality are short-dated treasury bills. However, they may only advance about 70% to 80% of securities given. Borrowers also have to pay a transaction fee.

Jane Coffey, portfolio manager at Royal London Asset Management, said on Bloomberg Television in late April that there would be some demand for this "liquidity", probably among smaller lenders.

This is a time for the Bank of England to react decisively. Credit-worthy borrowers, both private and corporate, need access to cash.

When the system bogs down on good-quality borrowers and banks are sitting on excess cash simply to meet any write-down in their own asset book or that bought from a fellow bank,

this is when everyone needs to know that there is a "lender of last resort" out there.

This is not a new concept but rather the traditional role of the central bank.

The Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) is in a situation that is typical of many banks. RBS has two causes of its problems. First, it is paying the price through its US subsidiaries for involvement in sub-prime lending. Second, it made, together with two old banking friends, a successful



THE OLD LADY OF THREADNEEDLE: The Bank of England, on Threadneedle St, London, is taking drastic measures to restore confidence in the UK economy.

takeover bid for Holland's largest bank, ABN-AMRO.

However, the price paid was at the top of the market, and RBS did not even want ABN-AMRO. It was after its subsidiary US banking group, Lasalle Bank. During the fight for ABN-AMRO, however, Lasalle was sold to the Bank of America.

RBS has had to offer a rights issue to its shareholders for US\$24 billion to shore up its capital base. When UBS stung Switzerland's pride by taking massive losses, RBS did the same for Scotland. In the list of Top 10 global syndicated loan providers, RBS has fallen to number 8 in first quarter 2008 compared with fifth spot in the same period in 2007. Deutsche Bank of Germany fell from fourth to ninth.

These problems have hardly put investors in the mood to buy. However, Jane Coffey puts it in a different light. There is value in equity markets that may not be reflected at the end of 2008, but it will be by the end of 2010.

There is an opportunity to invest in companies with high-quality earnings and strong balance sheets.

Timing, as always, is critical. Everyone wants to buy at the bottom of the market but, until markets decide to assist us all by publicly declaring the bottom, there is an alternative called dollar-cost averaging (or pick your currency).

This is based on the realization that the investor will never know when a market has reached its lowest point, but by making a series of investments at different times the investor is likely to reduce the average cost of acquiring these investments.

Presuming, for example, an investor invests 25% of available capital every six months. If the market falls steeply after the first or second investment, this works to the investor's advantage as the purchase price has fallen and with it brought down the average cost.

The end of 2010, as mentioned by Jane Coffey, is not that far away.

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



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By Richard G Watson

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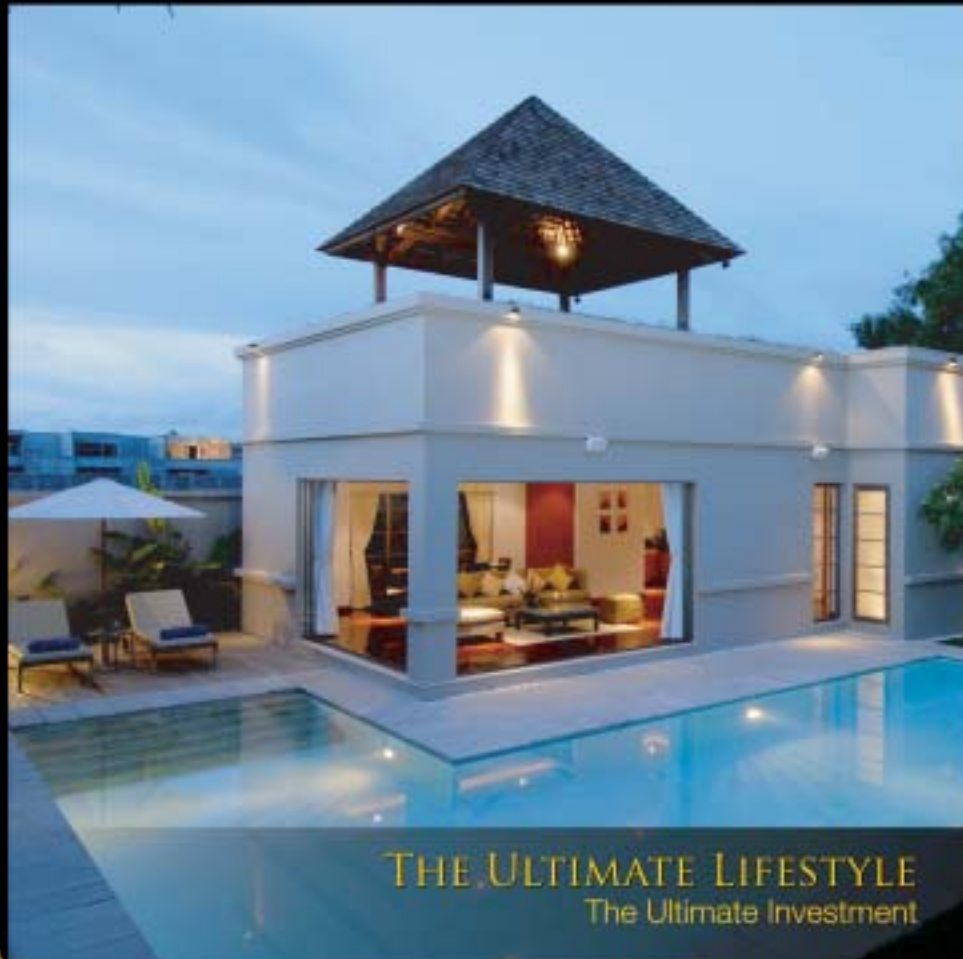
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PEARL BOWL REOPENS

PHUKET CITY: After being closed for about two years, Pearl Bowl has reopened its lanes after renovations costing 1.7 million baht.

Henrik Larsen of Pearl Bowl Entertainment Center explained to the *Gazette* that the bowling alley, located between the Pearl Hotel and Fantasia on Montri Rd, held its soft opening on March 19.

The lanes opened to the public after the April 6 grand opening, which drew esteemed guests, including Phuket Vice-Governor Worapoj Ratthasima.

"We have resurfaced the lanes. We stripped, filled and re-finished the boards. They were not in particularly bad condition, but this brought them up to high standard," he explained.

"Some minor improvements are still needed, but these are just small things we will do over time that will simply add the finishing touches to the venue," he added.

"We have replaced nearly all of the pins for all six lanes and we have 20 pairs of new bowling shoes arriving," he said.

Mr Larsen also has his eye on some major improvements further down the road, "In about two years, we will refit the lanes so that they have a plastic coating; these are called 'genetic lanes'," he said.

He explained that this latest fine-tuning to bowling lanes



The lanes opened to the public after the April 6 grand opening.

around the world results in much less friction along most of the lane but, depending on how the appropriate oil is applied, still allows for curve before the balls strikes the pins.

In addition to the bowling alley, which opens at 11 am and closes at 2 am, there will also be disco as part of the venue. "We closed negotiations just last night [April 27]," said Mr Larsen. "All I can say at this stage is that the disco will be open next month and it will be run by two other men."

The disco will add to Pearl Bowl's existing entertainment facilities, which include a bar with two pool tables and karaoke equipment.

For more information contact Pearl Bowl Entertainment Center at 130/1 Montri Rd, Phuket City. Tel: 076-211809. Alternatively, email Mr Larsen at haveanicedaytoo@hotmail.com

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ACYC YACHTING

A bolt out of the blue

AO CHALONG: Ben Copely's *Katsu* proved too quick for the competition in Race 3 of the ImageAsia Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC) Keelboat and Multihull Race Series 2008 on April 27, taking line honors in the Race class by more than one hour.

After a midday start with a good breeze on the opening downwind leg that saw colorful spinnakers heading southward down the bay, *Katsu* completed the circuit in just over two hours – fast enough to win the race by more than 37 minutes on corrected time.

Citing only the time difference would be unfair to slower boats, as those that did not round Koh Bon quick enough were penalized by the intermittent breezes on the return leg, with many yachts caught without wind.

Minx, a regular winner in the class last year, finished second in the Racing class on the day, followed by *Millennium* in third place.

Nick Band's *Windstar* performed as good as she looked out



Millennium in picked up the encouragement award after dropping her spinnaker before the finishing line and being overtaken by the crew on *Minx*. Photo by Leslie Hand.

on the water, winning the Cruising class in front of *Nerida* in second place and *Cinders* in third.

Harry and Susan Usher were back on the bay, finishing fourth in the class on *Eos*, fol-

lowed by John Fenn's *The Four Winds*.

Chris Jongerious on *The Frog* sailed an impressive race, stealing victory from Roger Kingdon's *Moto Inzi* in the Multihulls class.

Matt McGraw and his motley crew on *Typhoon* finished third.

The ImageAsia encouragement award went to *Millennium*, who dropped their spinnaker just before the finish line only to be overtaken by a feisty crew on *Minx*, who kept their spinnaker flying.

Results from the current ACYC race series are now posted at www.acyc.asia.australiattech.com, with Adam Tepper doing an impressive job and getting results posted even before the prize-giving ceremony.

Day sponsorship came from PIPS (Phuket Island Property Services).

The next ACYC race day will be on May 11. For more information contact Tony Knight. Tel: 081-7470074. Website: www.acycphuket.com

Flying Fish prepare for international meet

KOH KAEW: Flying Fish Swimming Club will host its inaugural international swim meet, the BIS Flying Fish Tawan Cruises Challenge, at British International School on May 24 and 25.

Up to 500 junior swimmers are expected to make the trip to Phuket from Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, the Philippines, Taipei and Australia.

Swimmers, aged under 18 years old, will take part in a range of disciplines over the two days.

As well as BIS students, children from Phuket Country Home and several local swim teams have been invited to compete.

The Flying Fish club boasts about 120 swimmers, with some as young as two years old.

Some of the older, more serious swimmers have competed in up to six international meets and four national meets each year since the club formed two years ago.

Competition will be divided into five age groups each for boys' and girls' divisions.

There will be about 120 races, ranging from

50-meter sprints in all four strokes up to 200m individual medley races, as well as freestyle and medley relays.

Heat winners will be awarded ribbons, while the top three overall in each event will receive medals. Additional medals will be awarded on the day to the top three boys and girls in each age category.

Times swum in heats will be used to determine the final standings in each event.

Medals will be awarded throughout the day between races.

Keep an eye out for three national swimmers, who are part of the Flying Fish Squad: Bianca Goetz from Singapore and Karnnika Porter and Gavin Lewis from Phuket.

Although participation is technically by invitation only, teams wanting to take part, or anyone with general inquiries, are welcome to contact Denise Goetz. Tel: 089-8687248. Email: denise@flyingfishphuket.com Website: www.flyingfishphuket.com

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Chen takes Asian Senior Masters

KATHU: On a day of spluttering showers and overcast skies, Taiwanese Chen Tsang Te rose to the challenge in the final round of the US\$200,000 Phuket Asian Senior Masters 2008.

Golf's top seniors from around the world took part in the three-day event at Phuket Country Club, with Australian David Saunders holding a one-shot lead going into the final day's play on April 24.

At five under par on 139, Saunders was in strong contention for the title, but with playing conditions hampered by bad weather, he could only manage a 76 in the day's play, leaving him in fifth place.

Taiwan's Hsieh Min Nan, second after two days of play, shot a 71 to hold onto second place, while Phuket's top amateur golfer Surin Bumrungrpol and fellow Thai Chucheeb Nirat shot 70 and 74 to take third and fourth places, respectively.

But it was Chen who stole the show, shooting a 67 in the final round, the best score in the day's play, to race up the leaderboard and finish in the top



Chen Tsang Te celebrates after his victory at the Phuket Asian Senior Masters 2008.

spot with a total of 210, six under par.

Chen shot a day-low 33 on the front nine before completing the back nine in 34 to take the title by one shot.

In the team competition, Ramkamhaeng University took the title with an overall score of 221, 19 shots clear of Cocoon, in second place.

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

PATONG: With the league winding down to what promises to be an exciting finish, Queen Mary had a tough test at Shakers in last week's play. Playing without their star Billy, they were 2-4 down after the singles before somehow managing to sweep all the doubles for a 5-4 win. In the beer leg, Anders became the hero with his third dart just hanging tenuously in the X10, thus securing a three-point win for the defending champs.

With two weeks to go, it appears the outcome of the league could be decided on the last day of play, May 6, when Piccadilly host Queen Mary. Piccadilly remains just a point behind the leaders after a 3-point win at Beach House, but will have to keep up the pace in their penultimate match when they face Dogs Bollocks on Soi Seadragon, home of a thousand broken hearts.

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the week was Market Bar taking all three points against Dogs Bollocks. Meanwhile, desperately fighting to avoid another toilet seat award, Simply Red rebounded from a tough 5-4 loss to take the beer leg at Sick Buffalo.

The final week of play will also see Simply Red at Beach House in what could be a match to decide which team will win the toilet seat award and be relegated to the pool league.

The new season will likely start on May 27. Any new bars interested in joining the league should contact any of the participating bars or send an email to: darts@phuketgazette.net

In other darting news, the Ting Tong Bar on Nanai Rd has a new dart board with good lighting.

Run by Larry, the venue sits between Nanai Soi 2 and the Mae Ubun Market. They also serve fish and chips and other British fare.

April 22 results: Shakers 4 Queen Mary* 5; Market Bar* 6 Dogs Bollocks 3; Beach House 1 Piccadilly* 8; Offshore 6 Valhalla* 3; Sick Buffalo 5 - Simply Red* 4 (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Queen Mary (40 pts.); 2. Piccadilly (39); 3. Offshore (25); 4. Dogs Bollocks (21); 5. Shakers (20); 6. Market Bar (19); 7. Valhalla, Sick Buffalo (18); 9. Beach House (14); 10. Simply Red (11).

May 6 match-ups: Piccadilly v Queen Mary; Offshore v Dogs Bollocks; Shakers v Sick Buffalo; Valhalla v Market bar; Beach House v Simply Red (home team first).



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Decor

by Nick Davies

Brighten up your day with a little light

The recently opened PP-Design Studio is lighting up homes and hotels with mood-lighting concepts from Germany. The glass-front store on Yaowarat Rd is an eyecatcher, filled with colorful lamps.

Decorative lamps suspended from the ceiling, standing on tables and fixed to walls glow with warm colors against the stark white walls of the showroom. Some of the lamps are a fusion of classic and modern designs, while others are based on more contemporary styles.

Lamp designs include three sizes of softly glowing spheres and egg-shaped lamps made of colored glass with a cracked mosaic pattern. Long, vertical crystals embedded in stone radiate cool blues and greens, while sleek, angular desktop lamps and futuristic conical lamps spray colored patterns over the walls.

Peer Piechnik, creative director of PP-Design, is an internationally recognized interior designer and specialist in light architecture. He brought PP-Design to Thailand about two years ago, setting up his first shop in Bangkok.

"I like to focus on creating artistic, mood-enhancing environments for the home and workplace with light architecture," said Peer.

"As well as designing and manufacturing ranges of lamps, usually inspired by themes in nature, such as water and plants, I often work with other interior designers and architects to create light-art installations and special lighting effects. It depends what kind of mood the customer wants to create," he added.

K. Peer's first trade was as a construction engineer, running his own interior design and construction company for 12 years. During that time he built a reputation for creating artistic interi-



ors for homes and offices. His innovative approach to lighting architecture won him an award at the Interzum 2005 Trade Fair with his "crystal light tree" design.

PP-Design Studio Phuket is the first of several franchise stores

planned for Thailand outside of Bangkok. "When I was first introduced to these design concepts, I knew that they would fit right in with Phuket's clientele of property owners and hoteliers looking for a unique way of decorating their

Some of the lamps at PP-Design Studio are a fusion of classic and modern designs, while others are based on more contemporary styles.

premises," said franchisee Chartchai Phattaranaphakul.

"We've had a good response from high-end resorts and villa owners on the island. We can work with customers to help them create unique light-art interiors and exteriors. K. Peer is an expert designer and very creative, so he helps clients create imaginative environments with light and shadow," said K. Chartchai.

"Fireworks" is the name given to a unique range of contemporary chrome lamps designed by K. Peer. The cone-shaped chrome fixture can be turned to direct a halogen light, which is split into colorful patterns by an adjustable lead-crystal disk.

The transparent disk acts as a prism, breaking the light into warm colors of the spectrum. The disks are interchangeable, so one produces shades of reds to mauve, while another ranges from yellow to green.

The range of Fireworks lamps can be turned on and off by briefly touching the lamp casing. They can be dimmed and brightened in the same way, just by touching the lamp for longer. The Fireworks range includes single and double cones with wall fixings that hide the wires, as well as standing lamps set in marble.

Recent designs include the Flip Flop, so named because it can either be placed upright or hung from a ceiling.

Many of the lamps are weather resistant and can be set up outside.

Waterproof LED lights can be placed in pools of water with a fountain, creating shimmering light effects as colored ripples are projected onto nearby walls and overhangs.

"LED technology has improved over the years. I use aviation-standard lamps because they are bright and durable. One bulb will last thousands of hours longer than a standard filament bulb, plus they are much cheaper," said K. Peer.

"LED lamps can be used almost anywhere because they are small but powerful and don't become hot. This makes them especially good for lighting up plants and flowers as they won't cause any damage," he added.

Lamp prices range from about 1,000 baht to 6,000 baht for individual lamps, with discounts for bulk orders.

PP-Design Studio Phuket is located on Yaowarat Rd, between Vachira Hospital and Bangkok Hospital Phuket, open from 9am to 8pm Monday to Saturday. Contact for more information. Tel: 076-532100. Fax: 076-217599. Email: info@pp-design.de Website: www.pp-design.de

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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel

Investors attracted by Blue Hill condos

PATONG: Construction of the seven-story Blue Hill Patong Condominium on Pra Barami Rd by developer Tanakana Co Ltd began in February and is expected to be completed by the end of February 2009.

When complete, the 64 units, comprising studios and one-bedroom apartments, will be in three wings forming a U-shape on the one-rai plot, which is about 50 meters east of the new mosque nearing completion on Pra Barami Rd. The project has been designed by Siam Pacific Engineering Co Ltd.

"The units will vary in size from 54.6 to 97.26 square meters, including private balconies," said Blue Hills Sales & Marketing Manager Pasqualino "Paddy" Salvatore Fiore.

"At this stage of the construction, buyers can request units to be tailor made to their specifications, with the option of two- and three-bedroom units, or simply to buy larger units," he added.

"The project is in a very good location. It gives units in the west wing a view of the sea, while the east wing faces hills and the south wing faces central Patong," he said.

The apartments are on the



upper floors, while the car park, restaurants, a spa, a gymnasium and the lobby will be on the ground floor.

"Other facilities will include 24-hour security, cable TV and an on-site taxi rank operating 24-hours," said Mr Fiore.

In the center of the U-shape and joining all three wings together on the third floor will be a 160sqm

sun deck with 67sqm communal swimming pool and a poolside bar. Residents on the fourth to seventh floors will also have a clear view of the pool area," he added.

Prices of the units range from three to 10 million baht. The units are sold fully furnished and ready to move in to.

Blue Hill Group Financial controller Ian Kenneth Stuart,



These artist's impressions show the 64-unit Blue Hill Patong Condominium development, comprising studios and one-bedroom apartments.

told the *Gazette* that the project has sold well since its launch in April, with about 20% of the units already sold.

"Most of our customers are Thai. They are interested in buying the units as an investment. They see that property prices in Patong have been rising steadily over the past few years," he said.

"I think almost half of the customers who are buying units now are looking to sell them as the project nears completion and are hoping that the value of the units will have risen by about 20% by that time," he added.

"The rooms are designed to be larger-than-average holiday accommodation, as we expect

buyers to be the kind of people who stay here for three to six months at a time and want to rent out their units when they are not here," he said.

"We offer on-site rental management service. Owners can select guaranteed rental, whereby we promise a return of 7% a year for the first three years. The second choice is a rental pool, whereby we manage the apartment and share the profit with the owner," he said.

"We believe the rental pool option is likely to be a better deal, as despite there being no guarantee on returns, there is the possibility of higher returns than with the guaranteed rate," he added.

Foreigners interested in the property are encouraged to act quickly, he added, as the law requires foreign ownership to not exceed 49% of the total square meters for sale, excluding common areas of the project. Once the limit has been reached, units will not be available to foreigners.

For more information contact Mr Fiore at 73 Pra Barami Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-340105. Fax: 076-340013. Mobile: 087-4715459 Website: www.bluehillphuket.com

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Don't sweat the global stuff

The times are indeed a-changin', as Bobby Dylan said, and these days my local watering hole has shifted from a pub to the petrol station. I'm now on a first-name basis with those who pump the liquid gold into my thirsty V6.

Nationally, some form of economic stability has returned since the election with fast-paced economic reforms to stimulate the economy underway. How will this affect the property market here on the fair shores of Phuket?

The barometer of measurement must be how the past few years of growth here have affected the daily life of the average Thai worker.

The number of new cars and motorbikes is growing at breakneck speed, while new mass housing developments are targeting domestic buyers. Take a walk through Central Festival or Jungceylon and see the rush for brand name goods as well as new phones, flat-screen televisions and other luxury goods – things are flying off the shelves.

But sit down and talk to Mr or Ms Average Phuket and it's an entirely different story.

The woes of the regular working person seem to be mounting with no end in sight. Transportation and petrol prices are spiraling upward, and pushing up commodity prices.

Seafood, a Thai staple, is more expensive because of fuel increases. Fishermen are forced to raise prices as their daily income no longer covers the cost of living. Those farther up the food chain have fallen into the credit gap that is prevalent in many developed parts of the world, such as the US and Europe.

Those new cars, phones and homes along with easy access to credit have caused personal savings to fall to zero while debt loads are spiralling.

Living the dream is coming at a higher cost than ever before.

That nasty word globaliza-



THE PULL OF THE PUMP: Wondering where all your money has gone? Ask PTT.

tion is becoming a stark reality. Issues such as the oil crisis and the falling US dollar do not only play a part on the far-off world of CNN or BBC news but are now hitting the noodle shop around the corner.

The property market boom over the past five or six years has been driven by expatriate buyers from nearby Hong Kong – or further afield in London, Sydney or New York – who intended to either live here or own a vacation home in Phuket. Those looking at early re-

irement have also been drawn here, buying homes that they plan to eventually live in.

Infrastructure grew to meet the requirements of these new residents with international hospitals, schools, marinas and golf courses.

One of the key selling points for the island has been to have all the amenities of a first-world destination with

third-world prices. Ultimately many chose Phuket as the cost of living was extremely favorable.



PROPERTY WATCH

By Bill Barnett

Now the tables are shifting, causing potential buyers to compare costs against other Asian destinations, and, in some cases, with those back home. It's not always a favorable conclusion.

Ramp onto this the rising cost of property development with steel being sucked up by China, labor shortages and material increases often outpacing appreciation of property. While we may want to act and live locally, our ties to the global economy are now evident at every turn.

While all of this seems depressing and it's still too early in the morning to hit a bottle of Jack, Phuket stacks up pretty well on both the domestic and international playing fields. Most of the mid- and higher-end property market is dominated by buyers who have paid cash for homes, unlike Hua Hin, Pattaya and Bangkok where the domestic market rules and buyers are highly leveraged.

There will be no sub-prime crisis in Phuket. Also, the cost of living, while rising, is still manageable. Ultimately the add-on benefits of considerable infrastructure, a beautiful climate and easy access to Bangkok and hubs such as Singapore and Hong Kong continue to make Phuket the buzz of the region.

The good old days when Phuket was cheap as chips to live in are gone and it's doubtful they will be back anytime soon. It means that we are now competing with both the developing and developed parts of the world for the real estate dollar.

This might be a good thing, as it makes us push up our game, stretch and improve instead of just laying back and becoming fat cats.

For investors, it gives freedom of choice, a wider selection and increased value.

So that's the state of it: the good, the bad and the ugly. I'm off to the ATM and the petrol station.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks (c9hotelworks.com), a Phuket-based hotel and residential property consulting firm. With more than 20 years' experience in the region, he has played an active role in some of the island's biggest developments.

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Gardening

by Bloomin' Bert

We all like to think that we know what we're talking about. Quite often though, we haven't a clue. We just make it up as we go along. I do anyway, most weeks in the tail-end of a certain Thailand-based English-language newspaper. Most of us would probably admit that we're guilty on occasion.

The worst offenders are those who profess to be experts in their field. Many of them are, of course. Stephen Hawking will receive little argument from me when he starts making noises about quantum physics. If David Attenborough tells me what we're seeing is a female lesser-spotted Madagascan dwarf guillemot, I'll believe him.

I'm thinking more of the buffoon-type "experts" who will stand up and have us believe that they have all the answers as they attempt to educate us with the depth of their knowledge and experience. The scary thing is that sometimes we actually believe them.

Car mechanics are perhaps the biggest culprits. How come so many of these people are complete dolts who haven't a clue what the problem is with your car?

What the heck do you call this thing?



It's quailgrass... or red fox... or cockscomb... or... or... oh, never mind.

They probably have one or two vague ideas, but in reality, will try one of these at a time, while extracting the maximum possible from your wallet until they fluke the solution and eventually happen to get it right. Computer technicians certainly picked up a few

tricks of the trade from car mechanics.

Then there are those anthropologists you see on Discovery channel. They're pretty easy to spot, as they will always be wearing some form of daft hat and/or ill-fitting khaki shorts.

These are people who immerse themselves in the deepest darkest jungles of the world, attempting to formulate explanations for the unusual and exotic behaviors they witness.

On seeing a tribal dance, they theorize in hushed tones, with nonsense such as, "What we're witnessing is an ancient ritual, in which the tribe are expressing their appreciation of their environment, and asking the gods for good fortune in the coming season". They may well be absolutely right of course, but then again they might be just having a jolly good dance; there's not that much to do in the jungle.

And that's my whole point – these so-called experts are probably just inventing this stuff on the hoof, hoping the masses will believe it. Personally, I have never described myself as an expert in anything (unless of course drinking beer counts), and am quite happy to admit that when I first saw this weird, purple-flowered plant appearing, I honestly hadn't the faintest idea what it was – I had to look it up.

It turned out to be the celosia spicata, or quailgrass. Thais call this odd little plant *ngorn gai soi*. It seems to have dozens of alternative names: Flamingo feather, cockscomb, feathered amaranth, woolflower, and red fox are a few. It's also known as firegrass, as it often grows on the site of previous fires. It really does seem as if nobody really knows what to call it.

You don't have to try too hard to make this plant to grow – it kind of just appears. This particular plant, for example, is just outside my house, next to the road. I certainly didn't put it there, and I can hardly imagine the neighbors waking up and deciding to decorate the front of Chez Bert. Some spectacular clusters of these plants are there now – I'm not complaining.

Nobody is actually sure where quailgrass originated. It could well be from China, but again the experts would just be guessing; they don't know. It's a distinctive plant, with 15-centimeter-long cylindrical groups of flowers that appear on the end of slender stalks up to about a meter in height. They're fairly unique in that they have a metallic sheen lower down, because the lower flowers are silvery-white at their bases.

If you can be bothered to grow these things for yourself, it's not particularly difficult, rather than just pinch a few from some wild spot where they're already growing.

Put a few seeds in a decent bit of compost, just covering the seed with the soil. After sowing, put the tray inside a polythene bag and park it in a well-lit spot out of direct sunlight until germination, which usually takes two or three weeks. Keep the soil damp, but not too wet.

When the seedlings are big enough to handle without them falling apart, transplant them when two or three leaves have appeared, and put them about 30cm apart in a sunny, sheltered spot in rich, well-drained soil. Celosias are a bit fussy about having their roots disturbed, so you'll need to be fairly gentle with them.

The soft, dense feathery spikes that are produced in profusion are probably the reason why these plants are also popular with the flower-arranging crowd.

Unlike most flowers, they don't dry out when they're cut – they retain their shape and color, and last a good couple of years.

Again, if you're into that kind of thing, pick them when the leaves are dry and just before the flowers are fully open. Tie them in small bunches and hang those bunches upside-down in a dry, well-ventilated place until they're totally dry. This isn't rocket science.

In gardening terms, we don't realize how lucky we are here in Phuket. As I found out more about this plant, I realized that in other parts of the world, they struggle to keep these things alive.

I found a picture online, of a smallish group of spicatas in Kentucky, of which the owner was particularly proud. The clusters you see around the island put these to shame, and most of them are probably growing completely wild.

I'm sure that there are experts out there who will accuse me of spouting complete nonsense about the celosia spicata here. So sue me. I just hope that none of them are computer technicians, car mechanics or anthropologists, as I could throw exactly the same accusation back at them. In fact, I will. None of us are experts.

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Property Gazette

KHAO KARD-AO MAKHAM



Chanote. 16 rai with panoramic view near Ao Makham, towards Cape Panwa. Wide road-access directly to the site. 6 million baht per rai. Please contact at Tel: 081-5399269 or Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

SAI YUAN HOUSE FOR SALE



Two-story house with additional living space in the attic. Sea view, 640sqm. 5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, car park. Nice garden, big swimming pool. A few minutes to Nai Harn Beach. Please call for more information. Tel: 084-8475700, 087-8987642. Email: mom_48@yahoo.com

LAND FOR SALE

11 rai in Pasak area located near Laguna Phuket. Only 2.8 million baht per rai (Nor Sor 3 Gor). Good-sized plot and no need for fill-soil. Tel: 081-5399269. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

NEW HOME FOR SALE

2 floors, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Close to Boat Lagoon and British International School. Tel: 081-9580373.

HARMONY HOMES

4 unique executive town homes located directly on the 3rd fairway of Phuket Country Club Golf Course. From 17 million baht. Tel: 081-9583571. Email: sweetybee2000@yahoo.com

BEAUTIFUL SITE

4 rai in the peaceful northeastern part of Phuket island looking out at Phang Nga Bay. Located off Route 4027, eight minutes from Ao Po Bay and Phuket Private Island. 15 mins from glorious Nai Yang Beach and only five mins from Mission Hills golf club. Perfect site for a single grand residence, for a seaview condominium development or whatever you fancy. Nor Sor 3 Gor. Tel: 087-2675376. Email: w.gabriel@gmail.com

UNIQUE & ELEGANT HOME/OFFICE



This property, ideally located on Samkong Rd, Phuket City, represents the ultimate in a comfortable home with adjoining office suite. Recently refurbished and tastefully decorated at a cost of more than 4 million baht, this property is now available for discerning home buyers. The home consists of: master bedroom with balcony, elegant en-suite "spa" bathroom, large second bedroom with balcony and en-suite bathroom and a third double bedroom with balcony. The property has a maid's bedroom and separate toilet/shower. The fitted kitchen features an adjoining breakfast/dining area. The home also offers a vast, comfortable sitting room with contoured ceiling and atmospheric lighting. The adjoining 3-level office suite is ideally suited for numerous business opportunities. The property features an attractive garden and 2-vehicle carport. Asking price is a realistic 8.5 million baht. Call 081-7191705.

NEW HOUSE IN RAWAI

4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, swimming pool. 425sqm of land with Chanote title. Price: 7.5 million baht. Tel: 087-8887676.

TWIN HOUSE RESORT 1.9 MILLION BAHT

Twin house, 80sqm, includes terrace, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, furnishing, aircon, clubhouse, security guard, resort facilities, common pool, 200sqm, quiet area, 5 mins to Nai Yang Beach. Call Tel: 076-245966, 085-7842004. Fax: 076-245962. Email us at: info@thailandpropertygroup.com. Please visit: www.thailandpropertygroup.com/development_detail.php?idc=184

PARICHART VILLAGE



35/20 Soi 1. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircon, some furniture, 50sq wah, garden. In Chalong area. For sale 4 million baht or long-term rent, must see. Contact Nina. Tel: 087-6899679 or tasuwan@hotmail.com. No agents!!

BEAUTIFUL 3-BEDROOM, 3-BATHROOM HOME



The Oasis: 3-bedroom, 3-bathroom modern home. Fully equipped kitchen, 14mx5m pool and Jacuzzi. Fully landscaped, 2-car garage. 2km from British International School. Brand-new construction. Tel: 076-239370, 085-796-9324. Email: oasisphuket@yahoo.com

SHOPHOUSE/HOUSE, KATA

2 stories, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, TV, Internet, telephone, furniture. Tel: 087-8907561. Please visit: www.katahouseforsale.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

in Chalong. Bargain. 2 stories, 4 bedrooms. 3.2 million baht. Tel: 081-7475293.

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

Duplex renovation project directly on 15th fairway for sale. Firesale price. Tel: 081-8941994. Email: tomkat@phuket.ksc.co.th Visit: www.fairway15.com for full details.

LAGUNA TOWNHOUSE

59/9. 3 Bedrooms, golf course and lake view. Ready to move in, only 24 million baht. Tel: 085-7839062.

KHAO LAK: INVESTING PROPERTY

Land beside Sofitel Magic Lagoon Khao Lak. 50 rai (66mx136m), Chanote. 40 million baht total. Call Krit. Tel: 081-9804641.

HEAVEN ON EARTH



5-bedroom, Thai-style villa in Phuket. Magnificent Phang Nga Bay view. 3 big bedrooms (en suite) with sea views. Private swimming pool. 730.8sqm land plot. Construction area approx 573sqm. Full security service. Located at Rommai Chailay Estate. 27 million baht. Tel: 081-7191705. Email: layan@loxinfo.co.th

TROPICAL POOL VILLA

in Chalong. Brand-new, spacious, 2-bedroom villa with deluxe kitchen and large living area. Priced to sell. Tel: 085-7932477.

PROPERTIES FOR SALE AND RENT

For a more personalized approach to your property, please visit: www.phuketproperties.com. If you are a real estate developer or owner you may list your properties with us. Contact K. Noi or Julie. Tel: 081-8931360, 081-7192903.

HOTEL ROOM FOR SALE

Kamala beach. 2 pools. Leasehold. 2 million baht. Sat-TV, Jacuzzi. Tel: 085-7945411. Email: bkeenan@shaw.ca

AO POR LAND FOR SALE



150 rai, Nor Sor 3 Gor, seaview. From 2.5 million baht per rai. No agents!! Please contact at email: allservices29@gmail.com

PEACEFUL LAND

20 rai on the east side of Phuket. Perfect for a residential project. Only 30 mins to airport, very good connection, located in Bangrong. Only 2.45 million/rai. Call Lenny. Tel: 085-7852035. Website: www.thaisunreal-estate.com

2-BED TOWNHOUSE IN KATHU

Brand new development opposite Loch Palm golf course. 80 sqm, 2 bed, 2 bath, private parking. 10 minutes to Tesco, Central and Patong. 2 million baht. Tel: 086-2738978, 081-8959568. Email: philipmason69@hotmail.com

NEW APARTMENT FOR SALE

Includes 28 rooms with 6 shophouses in Phuket City. 36.5 million baht. Installment payment is acceptable. Interested? Please contact. Tel: 081-6072489.

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Immaculate villa. Private area, big lush garden, pool. 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, big living room, Scandi-kitchen, huge patio, fully furnished, contemporary Balinese-Thai style. Living area: 450sqm. Land area: 1,400sqm. Near Heroines' Monument with scenic hill view. Chanote. 12.9 million baht. Tel: 084-6907057.

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HOUSE FOR SALE, KATHU

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POOL VILLA FOR SALE

Ao Bang Tao. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, big living room, parking, fully furnished. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 084-8516121.

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Property Gazette

Properties For Rent

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BEACHFRONT CONDO
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NEW HOUSE NEAR LAGUNA

Permsap Villa, Baan Manik. 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, Western kitchen, 5 aircons. Fully furnished, 42-inch LCD TV, large garden, private village with security. 45,000 baht/month. Contact by Tel: 081-7817250 or email: ggregory.heenan@gmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

in Srisuchart Grand Ville 3. 3 bedrooms. 2 bathrooms. Some furniture. 1 car park. Garden area. Good location. Tel: 081-7372595.

HOUSE FOR RENT

in quiet and safe area, for long- or short-term rent. 5km from Laguna. Furnished, True TV, telephone line, Internet, big garden, 3 bedrooms, 2 aircons, 2 big bathrooms, bathtub, hot water. Only 16,000 baht per month or 13,000 baht if you pay lump sum for 1 year. Tel: 087-4172757 (English), 086-682-9804 (Thai).

PATONG BEACH CONDO

Panoramic sea view, 1 bedroom, 90m from the beach. ADSL, 42" plasma TV, DVD REC, pool and garage. Call for more information. Tel: 084-8473304.

COMPLETE SEA VIEW



3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, pool, 2 full kitchens. ADSL, cable TV and a view that won't stop! A must see! Available for long term. Call to view. Can have separate apartment. Tel: 087-882-1963. Email: benlee53@hotmail.com

RAWAI BUNGALOW

for rent. 1 bedroom, ADSL, aircon, cable TV, quiet location. 8,000 baht/month. Tel: 081-5389466.

LAND FOR RENT

7 rai of land for long-term rent. Power, water. 180m of waterfront in Phang Nga, opposite Yacht Haven Marina. Email: jgkg24@hotmail.com

GOLF VIEW VILLA FOR RENT

4 bedrooms and 3 bedrooms houses with pool, 4km to BIS. Lake-hill view, quiet, on top of private hill. Furnished, Wi-Fi, True TV. Long term: 75,000 baht per month. Contact K. Noi. Tel: 087-2698492.

PATONG APARTMENT

300m from beach. Clean, modern, comfortable. Aircon, TV, fridge, big bed, pool, car park. Tel: 081-0825707. Website: www.phuketaccommodation.info

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT OR SALE

300m from Heroines' Monument. Rent: 25,000 baht/month. Sale: 3.7 million baht. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Tel: 087-2646808, 083-1743880.

ABSOLUTE BEACHFRONT VILLA

Rawai. 260sqm. 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Pool, sala, Jacuzzi, ADSL, cable TV. Short-term rental from 6,700-8,400 baht/day. Tel: 081-259-6052. Email: phuket-beachfrontvilla-rawai@gmx.de

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KAMALA BEACH

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BIG HOUSE IN KATHU

5 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, 2 kitchens, 2 bathrooms, carport, terrace, aircon/fan, hot water, fully furnished, 2 telephone lines, Wi-Fi, pool. Long term: 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8916632. Email: golfandview@gmx.de

APARTMENT IN KATHU

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SINGLE HOUSE FOR RENT



in Soi Ban Krang, Chalong. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, fully furnished and aircon. 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-8746270.

HOUSE IN CHUAN CHUEN LAGOON



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GUESTHOUSE, CHALONG

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NEW HOUSE IN PA KHLOK

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LUXURY HOUSE

Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, aircon, ADSL. Chalong area. 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6064279.

NEW TOWNHOUSE NEAR BIS

New townhouse near BIS. 3 bedrooms, fully furnished. Only 22,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-9241447.

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RAWAI RENTAL: BAAN SUAN POOL



1, 2 or 3 bedrooms. From 9,000 baht/month. 300m from Rawai Pier. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

RAWAI THAI STYLE



for sale or rent. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool, storage, kitchen, sea view, aircon. Buy for 9.5 million baht or rent long-term for 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-7955383.

NEW KAMALA HOUSE

Beautiful new Kamala house for rent or sale. Fully furnished, private parking, secure, cable TV, aircon, Euro kitchen, 2 shower rooms, very large garden in quiet surroundings. Perfect location: 2 mins from Phuket FantaSea, only 5 mins to the beach. Short term: 30,000 baht a month. Long term: 25,000 baht a month. No smokers. Tel: 087-8836625, 089-867-5122. Email: sales@eldsat.com

CHALONG TOWNHOUSE

Furnished. 2 bedrooms, big kitchen, aircon, cable TV, Tel. 8,500 baht per week not including utilities. Tel: 076-344487, 087-2814535.

B.L. APARTMENT

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CHALONG BEACH

Furnished, 3-bedroom townhouse, views, pool, garage. 10,500 baht per month. Tel: 089-4706104.

HOUSE AT CHALONG

For rent near Palai Beach. 2 or 3 bedrooms, aircon, fully furnished, phone line. Tel: 089-7288311.

NEW CHALONG HOME

2-bedroom, furnished home for rent. Phone line, True TV, aircon. Tel: 089-6521473.

POOL VILLA

Bang Tao, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished. 35,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-8516121.

CHALONG SHOPHOUSE

This new 3-story shophouse is available for long-term lease. Ideal for home office/shop accommodation. Inquiries at 089-6521473.

3-STORY SHOPHOUSE FOR RENT

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Amazing Bike Tours is looking for a tour leader. Must be passionate about biking, speak excellent English and provide great customer service. Contact for information. Tel: 087-2632031. Email: jameshembrow@hotmail.com

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We require more of the following positions: drivers, driver assistants, sales, marketing & orders. Applicants should be Thai nationals and speak English. Please contact for further information Tel: 076-376303. Email: order@boozetoooyoo.com



Dive Supply Co., Ltd

Position available at our Phuket (Chalong) head office:

IT Support Officer/Assistant

Job Description:

- Handle ad-hoc IT support/tasks & maintain IT equipment/systems
- Support PC, servers and peripherals
- Install and maintain software applications
- Create newsletters & promotional artwork & materials
- Maintain & update company website

Qualifications:

- Thai national – male or female, non smoker
- Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science or equivalent
- Experience in IT Support (PC, LAN, WAN)
- Proven ability to install and configure OS and Applications Software
- Experience with end-user support and network administration, Windows 2003 Server, MS Word, MS Excel & e-mail
- Experience with Windows Server 2003 with GPO will be an advantage
- Able to work after hours/weekends (when required)

To apply, please send CV in English with photo, present and expected salaries and date of possible employment start to:

DIVE SUPPLY CO., LTD

gm@divesupply.com (attention General Manager)

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

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

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

367/2 Yaowarat Rd, T. Taladyai, A. Muang
Phuket 83000 Tel: 076-236555

SITE BUILDING SUPERVISOR

Development and construction company seeks foreigner to fill position of site building supervisor. Minimum experience required. Call for more details. Tel: 086-0626210. Email: patrick@oceanic-glob.com

TEACHERS REQUIRED

Work for ECC at schools in Phuket City. Teach children of all ages. Contact Neil. Tel: 089-1398453. Email: neilg@ecc.ac.th

TELEMARKETER

required. English speaking. Contact expats to make appointment. Good commission rates of 20%. Tel: 089-8685143.

RESTAURANT STAFF
for Black and White 24/7, Kathu. Contact K. Nat (Thai Staff). Please contact for further information. Tel: 086-9432976.

GOOD COMMISSION

Thai or foreigner with good English, computer skills and 2-3 years' experience in the property industry. Please contact for further information. Tel: 087-3877182.

MASSAGE AND SPA

we are looking for a manager, cashier and massage lady. Must be service-minded. Contact K Pui. Tel: 085-7859239.



www.lagunaphuket.com

Laguna Property, based in Phuket is currently looking for self-motivated and enthusiastic individuals to fill the following managerial positions:

ASSISTANT MARKETING MANAGER

1 POSITION

- Thai male or female, age between 26 - 37 years
- Bachelor's degree in Marketing or other related field
- At least 2 years' experience in same position or related fields

SALES MANAGERS

2 POSITIONS

SALES MANAGER (CHINESE)

- Chinese-speaking male or female, age at least 25 years
- Excellent written and spoken Chinese
- Bachelor's degree in sales or other related field
- Previous property-sales experience required

SALES MANAGER (REALESTATE PROPERTY SALES)

- Thai/foreigner male or female, age at least 25 years
- Bachelor's degree in sales or other related field
- Must be technically literate
- Previous real-estate sales experience required

SENIOR PROJECT COORDINATOR (CRM PROGRAMME MANAGER)

1 POSITION

- Thai male or female, age at least 28 years
- At least 3 years' experience in project management-technical field
- Bachelor's degree in information technology or related field
- Previous Microsoft Project experience is an advantage

FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE POSITIONS:

- Proficiency in MS Office
- Excellent command of written and spoken English
- Service minded, hardworking and able to work under pressure
- Friendly personality, positive attitude and must be a team player
- Good leadership
- Active listener

Successful candidates will be offered attractive working conditions and excellent remuneration and benefits packages.

Applicants are invited to apply in person at the Laguna Resorts & Hotels Office, or send your detailed English resumé stating current and expected salary together with a recent photo to:

Human Resources Department
Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co., Ltd

350/1 Moo 1, Srisoonthorn Road, Cherngtalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110, Thailand
Tel: (66-76) 271298-300 Ext. 32 Fax: (66-76) 271718
Email: monrudees@lagunaphuket.com

Island Job Mart



www.lagunaphuket.com

The largest hotel and resort group in Phuket, and a company listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand, is currently seeking qualified candidates to fill the below position.

ASSISTANT ACCOUNTING MANAGER 1 POSITION

- Male/female, Thai national.
- Bachelor's degree in accounting and holder of CPA is an advantage.
- 5-7 years' experience as supervisor level and capable of account closing.
- Computer literacy and good command of spoken and written English is required.
- Energetic, outgoing, mature character, hard-working, results oriented, a team player and resourceful.
- Good coordination, interpersonal skills and enjoy challenges.

We offer an attractive remuneration package and the opportunity for career growth.

Applicants are invited to apply in person at the Laguna Resorts & Hotels Office, or send your detailed English resume stating current and expected salary together with a recent photo to:

Human Resources Department
Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co., Ltd

390/1 Moo 1, Srisoonthorn Road, Chermgtalay, Thalung, Phuket 83110, Thailand

Tel: (66) 076-271298-300 ext 32 Fax: (66) 076-271718

Email: monrudees@lagunaphuket.com



Home Product Center Company Limited

HomePro is expanding its operations and is seeking qualified applicants for the following positions:

- General Manager**
Qualifications: Bachelor's or master's degree, 2 years of retail or logistics experience, able to speak English
- Assistant to the General Manager (Division Manager)**
Qualifications: Bachelor's degree, 2 years of retail or logistics experience, able to speak English
- Section Manager**
Qualifications: Bachelor's degree, 1 year of experience in retail or construction

We provide: providence funds, health checks and housing loans.
Please contact the Human Resources Department

Tel: 076-255189 ext 1850-1851; Email: hr11@homepro.co.th

PEARL ISLAND PROPERTY

Sales and marketing. 2 positions. Qualified candidates, age 25-35, must have a bachelor's degree and a minimum of one year's experience in property sales and marketing. Must also be fluent in English (written and spoken), have a driving license and be proactive with good presentation and computer skills. Tel: 076-362600, 081-970 4173. Fax: 076-362602. Please contact by email and enclose your CV. Email: joop@anchanvillas.com For further details please visit our website at www.anchanvillas.com

F & B STAFF REQUIRED

Thai Boxing & Fitness Gym @ Phuket, Thailand requires English-speaking Thai staff to work in our gym restaurant & bar. Duties will include making fruit drinks, helping in the kitchen, and waiting on tables. Above average salary paid for quality workers! Accommodation available. Tel: 087-389-9228. Email: martnee3@rawaimuaythai.com. For further details, please visit website at www.rawai muay thai.com

PROPERTY CARE SERVICES

Electronic Security Sales Executive required. Thai nationals, degree in a related field, 2 or more years' sales experience. Please contact for more information Tel: 076-376557, 081-9586879. Fax: 076-376560. Email: scott@pcs.co.th

OPPORTUNITIES IN REAL ESTATE SERVICES - PHUKET

Jones Lang LaSalle is the only real estate money management and services firm named to FORTUNE magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For". We have approximately 160 offices worldwide. In preparation for the opening of a new office in **Phuket** in early 2008, we are looking for high-calibre individuals to join us in the following positions:

GENERAL MANAGER

To manage and supervise all of our service lines in Phuket including resort management services, transaction services, holiday rentals and tenancy management services

- Thai or expat
- Very good English language skills
- Resort or hotel management background
- Accounting knowledge
- At least 3 years of experience in Thailand
- Knowledge of Thai juristic condominium law

RESORT & BUILDING MANAGERS

- Thai nationals
- Good command of both written and spoken English
- Bachelor's degree
- Experience in building management at senior levels
- Friendly, presentable and service minded

All positions must have basic computer software skills and communication skills

Please submit resume & photo to
Human Resources

Jones Lang LaSalle (Thailand) Ltd
19/F Sathorn City Tower,
175 South Sathorn Rd, Bangkok 10120

Tel 0 2679 6500
recruit.thailand@ap.jll.com
www.joneslanglasalle.co.th



JONES LANG
LASALLE

SALES STAFF WANTED

New company is looking for experienced Thai sales staff. English language required. For further information call Tel: 084-6470468.

MARINE TECHNICIAN

Sailing yacht-charter company is looking for a technical manager. Good salary for qualified candidate. Email: thailand@dreamyachtcharter.com

Employment Wanted

SALES MANAGER

Male, 42, Dutch national Sales Manager with +20 years sales experience. Fluent in Dutch and English, basic knowledge of German. Please contact for more details at Tel: 087-0072366. Email: adriaanbaaij@hotmail.com

IRISHMAN, 42

Seeking position in any field. Experienced driver, bus and heavy goods vehicles. Tel: 076-381920, 085-7920452. Email: pj_duignan@yahoo.ie

HOTEL, DIVING, SALES

Male, 43, Swiss national, sales manager (13 years of advertising experience), hotel business (head waiter) and diving (PADI instructor). Fluent in German, English and French (basic knowledge of Thai and Italian). I am looking forward to hearing from you soon. Kind Regards Stefan. Tel: 087-2684981. Email: stefanhaldenstein@hotmail.com



Luckanawadee Boutique Beach Resort Khao Lak is seeking the following staff for the resort and its high-end restaurant, Soul Fusion.

Assistant General Manager

Thai nationality, must have at least a bachelor's degree in hotel management or business administration, excellent command of spoken and written English. Have at least 3 or 4 years experience in the hotel industry, must be service minded, must have good leadership skills, must have good organizational skills, willing to take initiative, must have a good command of computers and programs.

Waiters / Waitresses

Thai nationality, must have a good command of English, must have service experience in 4-or 5-star resorts, must be self motivated, with a positive attitude.

Head Chef / Cooks

Thai nationality, must speak English, must have experience in 4-or 5-star resorts. Must be a good leader, and a team player, self motivated, must have experience cooking Western cuisine, good with computers.

Bartender

Thai Nationality, male/female, must have good command of spoken English, should have at least 2 year's experience bartending in a 4-or 5-star resort, must be self motivated, service minded, have a positive attitude and be a team player.

Hostess

Thai nationality, female, must have good command of spoken English, should have a professional appearance, have excellent communication skills (people person), have a positive attitude, self motivated.

Personal Assistant

Will work directly for the Managing Director, must have an excellent command of spoken and written English. Must have excellent knowledge of computers and programs. Positive attitude, good organizational skills.

Good compensation package for all employees, including competitive salary, accommodation, bonuses, insurance, meals, uniforms. Opportunities for advancement.

Interested applicants please email resume / CV to: adam@luckanawadee.com or call to set up an appointment: Tel: 089-5886402 (Khun Adam)

REPUTABLE LAW FIRM SEEKS

- Executive Assistant
 - Good English
 - Excellent organizational skills
 - Translation skills
 - Junior Assistant
 - Good English
 - Ability to work in a team
 - Junior Accountant
 - Ability to comprehend simple accounting data
- Salary and benefits subject to experience. Please contact for additional details. Tel: 085-1618251. Email: siripansa_pond@hotmail.com

CHEF & WAITRESS, JUNGCEYLON

Chefs and waitresses wanted for a restaurant/cafe opening soon at Jungceylon shopping center. Good location! Contact K. Oh for more information at Tel: 087-8810300 or Email: thommm@online.no

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Looking for a better quality candidate?
Find more Recruitment Classifieds at www.phuketgazette.net/

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

Articles For Sale

MATTRESSES FOR SALE

25 hotel mattresses, good condition. 1,500 baht each. Tel: 081-9684978.

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Size: 4'x8'. Slate top, new felt, new set of balls, all accessories. Delivery & installation included. Price: 60,000 baht. Tel: 081-823-4627, 084-2901645. Fax: 076-264461. Email: ying@phuketpooltables.com

BEDS & OUTDOOR FURNITURE

2 new single beds & mattresses: 4,500 baht per set. New computer desk: 600 baht. 2 bar stools: 500 baht each. Outdoor furniture: 4 new chairs + table: 8,000 baht. 4 wooden chairs + table: 4,000 baht. 2 rattan chairs + table: 3,500 baht. Photos available. Tel: 076-383280, 086-2817605. Email: paradise@phuket-house-land.com

LADIES' JEWELRY

- Accurist 21-jewel wrist-watch. Offers.
- 9ct gold lady's emerald-type dress ring. Offers. Tel: 087-9223242. Email: patongman123@hotmail.com

3 COMPUTERS & 4 NOTEBOOKS

8,000 to 12,000 baht. Also have externals: DVD-RWs for 2,000 to 3,000 baht, and Mac accessories, including a Matrox card for special video at only 25,000 baht. Tel: 076-346004, 087-2642598. Fax: 076-346004. Email: georgeslancry@hotmail.com

OFFICE FURNITURE

Armchairs, chairs, desks, computer tables - all for sale at just half of their new price. Also have an aircon unit for sale. Only 10,000 baht. Tel: 076-346004, 087-2642598. Fax: 076-346004. Email: georgeslancry@hotmail.com

PRIVATE SALE

Gurios paintings, stereo, antique oriental carpets. Call Heyno. Please contact for more information. Tel: 080-1453483. Email: heinogeick@yahoo.com.sg

PANASONIC 29" TV

Panasonic TV with cabinet. Selling due to relocation back to UK. Bought in December for 8,000 baht, will accept 5,000 baht - no offers. Buyer collects. Must collect on May 3 only. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-0313472. Email: tara@dive4fish.com

MULTIGYM

Large, four stations, excellent condition. Moving, so must sell quickly. All offers considered. Please contact for more information. Tel: 087-2752808. Email: lwa_liz@hotmail.com

MONGOOSE

Rockodile, 21-speed, 1 month old: 7,000 baht. Cold-drink fridge, 2x5ft: 4,000 baht. Compaq desktop computer: 8,000 baht. Tel: 084-6288450.

Bulletins

FORMING ARTISTS' COMMUNITY

International artist living on Phuket wishing to organize local artists and people interested in art to share work and ideas to better the community and each of us individually. Tel: 076-381937, 087-0716063. Fax: 076-381937. Email: tbokich@tbokich.com

FOR HOTEL ROOMS OR FOR HOME DECORATION

The Phendek foundation is offering about 78 teakwood woodcarvings in frames 100cm x 45 cm as well as a number of teakwood carved statues. The money for these teakwood items will be used for 2008 scholarships. For more info please call Arunee (Thai) 086-9438136 or Chris (Eng) 081-5393668.

SPONSOR

a needy child. The Phuket International Women's Club is a volunteer organization raising funds for educational scholarships. We rely on the goodwill of donors and sponsors - small and large. If you would like to put something back into the community in which you live, contact us to find out more about giving a prize or being a sponsor. Contact Carol (Tel: 087-4178860 or carol.fryer@piwc.info) or K. Sue (Tel: 087-2776948 or email: sue.arnulphy@piwc.info).

Business Opportunities

RESTAURANT FOR SALE

Good location on main road to Nai Harn Beach. Trading 7 years. Please contact for more information. Tel: 085-785031, 081-9586723.

BARS AND GUESTHOUSES

Bangla and Nanai. Many business opportunities. For further details and more information please visit: www.janepropertyphuket.com

GUESTHOUSE, BAR

Bar and 2-room apartment. 7 guest rooms, Nanai Rd, Patong. Contact Jorge. Tel: 080-0413071.

PUGWASH BAR, SOI DONGTAN

Fully stocked bar with pool table and dartboard. Lease paid until Oct 1, 2008. Quick sale: 900,000 baht. Tel: 083-5965465. Email: stellan_larsson@hotmail.com

ONLINE TRAVEL BIZ

Worldwide online hotel reservation business for sale (relocatable). Established in 2001. Includes 15 related websites targeting customers globally. Large existing client database. Fully operational system. Asking price: only 1.5 million baht as fast sale needed. Tel: 083-2014621. Email: whispertheway@yahoo.co.uk

GUESTHOUSE AND RESTAURANT

in Patong for sale or rent. Located opposite the main entrance to Royal Paradise Hotel. 6 guest rooms with shower, toilet, air conditioning, TV. Very comfortable. Staff rooms and restaurant with very nice equipment. Kitchen in good condition with high-standard equipment. 14 million baht. Tel: 081-8956587, 086-2697093, 001-4917-26730124. Email: torudofpanz@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT FOR LEASE

Cape Panwa. Enjoys excellent profits with low overheads. Fantastic panoramic sea views. Provides 2 work permits. Contact Simon. Tel: 084-3047700.

BOOKS FOR SALE

Many language books and about 5,000 used books with bookshelf. Quick sale: 350,000 baht. Contact K. Pui. Tel: 084-1705552.

ELEGANT SHOPHOUSE

Bargain: 4-story shop-house with Chanote. Fully equipped restaurant on 1st and 2nd floors. Fully furnished apartment on 3rd and 4th floors. Value: 6.7 million baht. Now priced at only 5.5 million baht. Have to move out. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-8915602.

GREAT DEAL! BUSINESS SALES & RENTAL UNIT

- Hotel for sale: 3 rai, newly renovated boutique resort, great deal, best location in Patong.
- Hotel for sale: 55 rooms in 5-rai area, small luxury resort located in the quiet end of Patong. New construction, clean and great atmosphere.
- Hotel for rent: best location in Phuket City. Please contact via email for an appointment. Email: allservices29@gmail.com

PALM FARM

90,000 palms, 300 species, set in beautiful countryside at Ban Beung, Chonburi. The land and three-bedroom bungalow is rented. Established 13 years. Farang owner working away and has no time. It's an enjoyable, healthy hobby as well as a business. 40 million baht in stock. Giving it away at 2.5 million baht due to ill health. Tel: 02-3939642, 085-2441122 (K. Yupin on 081-9490636). Email: chrisred87@yahoo.com

HOTEL FOR SALE

in central Patong. Long lease. Good value for money. Long- and short-term stays. Excellent location. Many backpacker and bar staff clients. Call Mark at 085-0300612.

BAKERY AND RESTAURANT

for sale. Please visit www.bakeryforsale.info

RESTAURANT FOR SALE

Ao Nang, Krabi. Well established since May 2000. Recommended by all major travel companies. 2 floors, 100 seats, 2 bars, European kitchen and restrooms. Basement is rented out on annual contract. Contract registered on Chanote, expires on 30-04-2016. Rent paid til 27-02-2010. Asking price: 4.5 million baht. Tel: 075-637258, 089-5873533. Email: j.aonang@gmx.de

LOOKING FOR INVESTOR(S)

2 million to 12 million baht for hotel in Patong. Located on the beach. Also businesses associated with the leisure industry and building trade. Excellent monthly returns guaranteed. Can use hotel as security for your investment. Call for further info. Tel: 085-7913048.

COFFEE SHOP FOR SALE

Located near Kata Beach. Call for more information. Tel: 083-1058885. Email: hkmellin@hotmail.com

BANGLA RD BAR FOR SALE

in Soi Gonzo. Long lease. 40 months cheap rent. Good profits. Only 1.9 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-8949960.

ROOFTOP RESTAURANT

for rent on the top floor of Sinthavee Hotel, Phuket City. Convenient for a restaurant or bar. Also, a discotheque on the 2nd floor (with license). Email: allservices29@gmail.com

Agents for Classified Advertising

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K.L. Mart Patak Rd, Chalong	Tel: 076-280400/3 Fax: 076-280403
Earth Language School Phang Nga Rd, Phuket City	Tel: 076-232398/9 Fax: 076-232398
Sin & Lee Thalang Rd, Phuket City	Tel: 076-258369 Fax: 076-211230
Taurus Travel Aroonsom Plaza Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong	Tel: 076-344521/2 Fax: 076-344523
41 Minimart Srisoontorn Rd, Cherng Talay	Tel/Fax: 076-324312
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Fully fitted, concealed air-conditioning, kitchen area, security system, floors, telephone line with broadband capability, etc.
 Please email Khun Nong at plazadelmar@gmail.com for more information

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- Disco is located in a 'government zoning area'.
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- Have government licence.
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- 2 rooms with balcony and gardens/city view (Kata).
- 2 rooms without balcony and sea view.

Tel: 087-6899679.
 Email: allservices29@gmail.com

SALON & SPA
 for lease or rent with all equipment included. In the basement of Fantasia in Phuket City. Please contact for more information. Tel: 086-5930086.

PHI PHI
 13-bedroom guesthouse for sale. Tel: 081-7475293.

GUESTHOUSE IN KATA
 for sale. 3 rooms, kitchen. Offer a good price. Tel: 083-3381625.

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 Prices from 3 million to 30 million baht. Little or no work involved. 20% return each year. Tel: 087-2795021. Email: bbee_1@hotmail.com

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 Email: iaa@intllicense.com
www.intllicense.com

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