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Ao Phuket project given green light

By Gazette Staff

PHUKET: The government of Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej has given the green light to the Ao Phuket development plan, a 100-billion-baht mega-project on 3,000 rai of reclaimed land that would include a convention center, marina and other facilities.

The latest movement in the Ao Phuket plan, first conceived over two decades ago, follows from PM Samak's assigning responsibility for the project to the the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA), a public organization under the direction of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports established in 2005 under the first Thaksin government.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit met with DASTA's Ao Phuket working committee at the Phuket Merlin Hotel on May 2.

The Ao Phuket committee, accompanied by DASTA chairman Gen Soonthorn Khumkomkul, earlier that morning traveled to the waterfront to view the intended project site, which stretches across Phuket Bay all the way from Saphan Hin to Rassada Harbor.

Also attending the meeting were representatives from Phuket City Municipality, the Tourism Authority of Thailand South Region 4 Office in Phuket, the Phuket Tourist Association, Muang District Office, Rassada and Wichit municipalities and other agencies.

PM Samak in March authorized DASTA to take responsibility for areas it deems as appropriate for "sustainable" tourism development.

Rajathin Syamananda, who



A computer generated illustration of what Ao Phuket will look like after a 100-billion baht in investment.

heads DASTA's Ao Phuket project committee, is well acquainted with the project as he is a former director-general of the Interior Ministry's Town and Country Planning Department.

Allowing DASTA to develop the project meant it could be fast-tracked, said K. Rajathin.

"As we have full authority from the government, we can pass the project proposal on to Cabinet much more easily," he said.

Before the Ao Phuket project was put on hold following the coup, responsibility for it fell to the Town and Country Planning Department, who put a 63.5-billion-baht price tag on the designs it drew up.

That plan in many regards resembled a spectacular 130-billion-baht plan put forward for the project in 2005 by Japanese construction firm Umezawa Tadao - except that the Japanese design called for a "floating city", not one on reclaimed land.

"The most important aspect of this development will be environmental and natural resource

conservation and ensuring that it improves the lives of local people," K. Rajathin said.

Extensive land reclamation in the shallow Phuket Bay, into which most of the wastewater from Muang and Kathu districts flows, would not impede drainage there, he said.

Other infrastructure aspects, including traffic, wastewater treatment and power supply needs, have been carefully considered and quantified, he said.

K. Rajathin is confident that the Town and Country Planning Department's plan, if allowed to go forward under DASTA's management, would attract a good deal of foreign investment and benefit both Phuket and Thailand in general.

DASTA's role will be to coordinate the efforts of the many government agencies involved and present the project to potential investors. After the previous Ao Phuket committee first posted information about the plan back in 2003, there was a great deal of interest from investors from

Continued on page 2



At the time of going to press, hospital staff had yet to give the babe a nickname.

Newborn found in car park

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

PHUKET CITY: A newborn boy was discovered in the back of a pickup truck in the car park of Bangkok Hospital Phuket on May 5. Doctors believe he had been abandoned the night before.

Dr Nat Tantipipat of Bangkok Hospital Phuket discovered the baby, wrapped in a towel and a blanket and placed in a red basket in the back of a pickup truck, at about 10:20 am.

He made the discovery during heavy rain and while many of the hospital staff were welcoming to the hospital Wichayanee "Nong Kam" Peagrin, winner of the national TV talent quest "The Star".

Dr Tantipipat said it was evident that the baby had been born in the early hours of May 5 but had not been delivered by doctors as the umbilical cord had not been properly cut and that the wound was still fresh.

Doctors are keeping the newborn in an incubator until he can be transferred to the children's hospice, Banpakdek Phuket, in about a week.

From page 1

Ao Phuket given go-ahead

Canada, Japan, China and Thailand, he said.

"Now that DASTA is fully authorized to lead the project, it will not fail again. We will work as quickly as possible to iron out all the legal and investment issues so that it can move forward," he added.

The DASTA committee will re-evaluate the plan put forward by the previous committee in light of changing conditions, he said.

Not expected to change would be the project's two main attractions: a marina and facilities for Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE).

The MICE facilities would comprise: "Phuket Arena", a 40,000-square-meter convention center with the capacity to host events for up to 15,000 people; two exhibition areas of 60,000sqm and 30,000sqm each; a 40,000-sqm business center with space for 100 businesses to rent; a 1,000-room hotel complex; and a 60,000sqm shopping center featuring shopping malls, souvenir shops, restaurants, cinemas and other facilities.

The circular, 690-rai marina development to the south would include berthing facilities for superyachts, hundreds of slips for smaller vessels and apartment or condominium blocks.

On the economic front, K. Rajathin said the original cost estimate of 63.5 billion baht when the plans were drawn up might no longer be practical.

The total price tag would probably hit 100 billion baht, he said.

To begin, an initial budget of 4.9 billion baht would be needed from the government. The project could generate 19.5 billion baht in revenue annually, he said.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit said he was in agreement with the plan. His idea to establish an international convention center on Treasury Department land in Mai Khao was launched on the presumption that the Ao Phuket project would never move forward, he told the committee.

Patong extortion gang busted

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PATONG: In the latest case of extortion involving Burmese workers, Kathu Police on May 3 arrested five men posing as government officers in a bid to extort money from a construction company.

Kathu Police Superintendent Col Grissak Songmoonmark told the *Gazette* that Kathu Police were informed of the extortion bid by construction foreman Somyot Chairat, who was overseeing a project off 50 Pi Rd in Patong.

Five men approached him claiming to be

part of a special branch of the Narcotic Control Board (ONCB) tasked with "suppressing" Burmese laborers in Thailand, K. Somyot said.

In exchange for a 150,000-baht cash payoff, the fake ONCB officers offered to leave the camp alone for one year – regardless of whether the workers were registered or not, he said.

K. Somyot took the telephone number of Maj Teeradet Janjamsai and said he would call them back and pay at the work site later that afternoon. Knowing his workers were legal, he called Kathu Police, who set up a sting operation.

When the gang returned, police officers moved in after the transaction and arrested the men.

The men were identified as Nakhon Sri Thammarat natives Paisarn Bumrungsak, 39; Pornthep Julladet, 34 and Wittaya Inthanop, 35; along with Surat Thani native Teerapong Sripoot, 34, and alleged ringleader Maj Teeradet Janjamsai, 51, from Bangkok.

Subsequent investigation revealed that the group had successfully extorted other construction companies in Phuket City and Patong, but for lesser amounts – typically about 30,000 baht, he said.

Dead turtle signals plight of species

PHUKET (TNA, Gazette): The discovery of a dead Olive Ridley turtle on Mai Khao Beach on March 17 has again raised the issue of coastal development depleting endangered turtle's natural breeding grounds.

The Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) at Cape Panwa was alerted to the discovery by the Mai Khao Marine Turtle Foundation.

Sontaya Manawatthana of the PMBC's Marine Endangered Species Unit reported that many species of fish and squid were found in the dead turtle's esophagus, with little in its stomach.

"This indicates that the animal ate this prey just before its death. The species of prey we found, which are typically caught by trawler, are normally too fast for turtle to hunt down, so it is most likely that the turtle fed upon these prey while in a trawler's net..."

"This turtle was an immature male, aged around 10 years. Its overall condition was healthy, which makes it so unfortunate he died like this..."

"The Olive Ridley turtle is highly endangered in Thailand, where nesting numbers are even lower than the Leatherback turtle



Researchers believe this immature Olive Ridley turtle might have died from exhaustion after being released from a trawler.

in some years. Its only known nesting sites now are at Koh Phrathong in Phang Nga," he said.

"In the past five decades, the number of sea turtles has dropped five-fold. Now, there are only 20 or so nests per year," said PMBC biologist Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong.

The Olive Ridley, the smallest and probably the most ubiquitous species of sea turtle worldwide, is at risk of extinction locally, he said.

The major cause for the plummeting sea turtle population

locally is over-development of coastal areas for tourism, K. Kongkiat said.

According to the Marine and Coastal Resources Development and Research Center, the number of sea turtles coming to Thailand's Andaman shores to lay their eggs has dropped dramatically to only 10-20 nests per year, decreasing from up to 1,000 nests in the past.

In the future, sea turtles might disappear from Thailand's Andaman coast altogether, K. Kongkiat said.

"Naturally, sea turtles will return to the same place they usually come to lay eggs. But they will not return if the place is not safe for them anymore. They will find a new place," said K. Kongkiat.

Aussie airlifted from Similans

By Alin Boonkrungthong

PHUKET CITY: An Australian man was recovering at Vachira Phuket Hospital after being airlifted to Phuket from the Similan Islands by the Royal Thai Navy on May 2.

Rear-Admiral Supot Pruksa of the Third Naval Area Command, based at Cape Panwa, identified the man as Gregory Edwin Orior, 51.

The Navy base received an emergency call that morning from the Navy outpost at the Similan Islands, requesting that a helicopter with doctor and medical equipment on board be dispatched immediately.

The call to fly out Mr Orior was made after he suffered two convulsive fits.

The helicopter landed at Phuket City Police Station at 1:10 pm.

Mr Orior was immediately transferred by ambulance to nearby Vachira Hospital.

By that time, Mr Orior was able to walk from the helicopter to the ambulance unassisted.

An officer at the Narenthorn EMS Center told the *Gazette* that Mr Orior suffered a convulsive fit after breakfast.

He recovered after being administered first aid, but then had another episode later that morning.

As for the cause of the seizures, a hospital official revealed that Mr Orior suffers from epilepsy.

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Police on the hunt for 'tsunami coffin' thieves

By Janyaporn Morel

PHANG NGA (*Kom Chad Luek*): Takuapa District Police are on the lookout for two former cemetery workers who have allegedly confessed to stealing 11 coffins, which were intended for tsunami victims, from a storage facility at Bang Maruan Cemetery.

Cemetery manager Nitinai Sornsongkram, 54, filed a report with Takuapa Police on April 27 after discovering that 11 of 40 70-kilogram coffins were missing. The missing coffins are thought to be worth an estimated 400,000 baht.

Following police advice, K. Nitinai monitored workers at the cemetery and began to suspect two caretakers of stealing the coffins. "I questioned the caretakers and one of them confessed to taking the coffins and selling them as scrap," K. Nitinai alleged.

The thieves allegedly used an enclosed pickup truck with a high roof to take the coffins out of the cemetery.

"I didn't want to file charges at first as we have been working together for a long time and I felt sorry for them. They asked for time to bring the cof-



Police are searching for two workers at Bang Maruan Cemetery who have allegedly confessed to stealing coffins intended for tsunami victims (pictured above) for scrap.

fins back, but they have not been returned so I will have to file charges against them," he added.

The two suspects, whose names the *Gazette* has yet to learn, are currently at large.

"It wasn't difficult for them to load the coffins onto the truck unnoticed because there has always been a high level of trust among the cemetery staff," said K. Nitinai.

A local scrap dealer, identified only as "Montri", said that scrap aluminum currently fetches about 70 baht per kilogram, but

that no shop would be likely to accept a new, complete coffin as scrap.

At local rates, the 11 coffins would have fetched more than 50,000 baht as scrap.

"I just didn't imagine that they would dare do such a thing," said K. Nitinai.

The missing coffins were bought by Thailand Tsunami Victim Identification (TDVI) center with funds provided under an 88-million-baht joint donation by countries whose nationals perished in the disaster.



A firefighter sifts through the remains of one of the shops that was gutted by fire early on April 30.

Fire destroys Patong shops

PATONG: Firefighters took more than an hour to extinguish a fire that broke out in Jintana Plaza, opposite the Immigration office on the Patong beach road, early morning on April 30.

Lt Naruewat Putthaviro of Kathu Police Station told the *Gazette* that the fire started before 4 am.

"When I arrived there, the fire had already destroyed a large area. We used four fire engines and took more than an hour to bring the fire under control," he said.

"No people were injured in the fire as the buildings were empty at the time. However, it destroyed many of the goods stored in the shops, such as clothes, bags, watches, sunglasses and shoes," he added.

Police have yet to determine the cause of the fire, said Lt Naruewat, adding, "We are waiting for the results of the fire investigation team."

"Only a few shop owners have come forward and reported the estimated cost of the stock they have lost in the fire. It is still too early to give an estimate of the total damage caused," he said.

One report in the Thai press estimated the damage at 10 million baht.

Hotelier dies in paramotor accident

NAKHON SRI THAMMARAT (*The Nation*): Suwit Kitkamchai, owner of the Patong Pearl Resort on Sawasdirak Rd in Patong, died on April 30 when his paramotor rig plunged into the sea during a test flight off the coast of Nakhon Sri Thammarat. He was 53.

The death was reported to Nakhon Sri Thammarat Police Inspector Lt Col Boonchern Choosuehng by staff at Maharaj Hospital, where K. Suwit was pronounced dead on arrival.

K. Suwit had driven from his home in Kathu to Sichon district, Nakhon Sri Thammarat, to compete in the "Paramotor Sport Challenge" that was set to start from Thong Yang Beach in Sichon district yesterday.

Over 100 paramotor enthusiasts were registered to take part in the event, leading up the coastline through neighboring Khanom district and then out

over the sea to finish on Koh Samui in neighboring Surat Thani province.

After arriving in Sichon and checking in to his hotel, K. Suwit decided to give his paramotoring rig a test flight.

He launched from a beachside bluff known as Plaidam Hill and was flying just offshore when his rig lost altitude and plunged into the sea.

His wife, K. Sasiwimol, told police she suspected her husband may have been too tired for the test flight after the long drive from Phuket and might have fainted while airborne.

However, doctors listed the cause of death as respiratory failure.

Body washes ashore in Rawai

RAWAI: Police are working to determine the identity of a man whose naked body was found on Laem Kha Noi Beach early on April 27.

Lt Ratthaket Munmuang of Chalong Police said, "We believe he had been dead for more than 24 hours before his body was found. There is a tattoo on his right shoulder in a language that I cannot read. It's not Thai or English.

"A man was reported missing to Chalong Police on April 25, but we have confirmed that this is not the same person," he added.

"There are a few wounds on his back, near the base of the neck, but we cannot tell whether they were made by a knife or are bite marks from sea animals. We are waiting for results of the autopsy," he said.



Job Fair marks Labor Day

SAPAN HIN: Hundreds of people turned up to apply for jobs early May 1 at a job fair to mark International Labor Day.

The fair was organized by the Governor's Office and the Phuket Provincial Employment Service Office.

More than 30 companies sent representatives to meet job seekers, who perused noticeboards advertising more than 1,000 job vacancies in Phuket and Phang Nga.

Many of the vacancies were for office workers and for staff in the tourism and service sectors.

There were also exhibits to inform workers and employers of their rights under Thai labor law.

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Thailand's Coronation Day on May 5 was intended to mark the auspicious start of an operation to sink 10 decommissioned aircraft, collectively known as the "Coral Reef Squadron", into a circular formation on the seabed at Bang Tao Bay.

The stated goal of the project is to create a new dive site off Phuket that will take some of the pressure of existing natural dive sites: the Similan and Surin Islands Marine National Parks, where strict limits on the number of tourists allowed went into effect in February.

Unfortunately, the effort to sink 10 aircraft, four Cold War-era Douglas C-47 Dakota Skytrain military transport aircraft and six Sikorsky S-58T helicopters before the full onset of the monsoon season had to be postponed at the last minute for safety reasons.

Strong winds from tropical storm Nargis, which has killed and estimated 50,000 people and left scores more homeless in Burma, whipped up four-meter-high waves along Phuket's west coast in the days leading up to the planned sinking of the aircraft.

The event was to be attended by Sports and Tourism Minister Weerasak Kowsurat, Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit and a bevy of other officials and local politicians.

For added star power, Thai actors Dom Hetrakul and Vorarit "Not" Fuangaromya were lined up to be the emcees of the event, while Thai actor Teerapat "Tui" Satjakul and actress Kathaleeya "Mam" McIntosh were to take the plunge at 1 pm and be the first guests to dive among the wrecks.

But the only aircraft movement that day was at Phuket Deep

Coral Reef Squadron

The planned sinking of 10 decommissioned military aircraft starting on May 5 to create Thailand's largest artificial reef in Bang Tao Bay was recently postponed until November.

Here *Gazette* News Editor Stephen Fein and reporter Pathomporn Kaenkrachang report on how the undertaking began, why the sinking was postponed – and other technical aspects of the project readers may be wondering about.

Sea Port, where contractors were working in blustery conditions to move all the aircraft off the wharf and into a nearby gravel parking lot, where they are to be reset on concrete blocks and covered with tarpaulins to wait out the rest of the monsoon season.

When the *Gazette* arrived, members of the Bangkok-based For Sea Foundation, which instigated the project, were busy filming a documentary with several TV-star members and supporters – diving being a popular pursuit among the new generation of Thai glitterati.

Looking on from under an umbrella was For Sea Foundation Secretary Vittayen Mutamara, credited by fellow foundation members as the man who first came up with the idea for the project.

K. Vittayen refused to take any credit, however, insisting that the idea came up naturally to the entire group during their post-tsunami efforts to rehabilitate Thailand's coral reefs from the damaging effects of the tsunami,

global warming and other harmful influences.

Watching the workers use a crane to carefully maneuver one of the full-winged Dakota aircraft up off the three three-ton blocks to which it had been chained, K. Vittayen told the *Gazette* that the decision to postpone the sinking was agreed to by all groups involved – including the company that had been contracted to do the work.

"In the end, the decision was simple," he said, "safety first."

K. Vittayen explained the background behind the project, including how the foundation had to obtain special permission from the US State Department to use the US-built military aircraft, which were partially disassembled and transported over the road on 15 flatbed trucks from Koke Krathiem Air Force Base in Lopburi.

The request, finally approved last year, was placed through the the Joint US Military Advisory Group Thailand (JUSMAG) office in Bangkok, which also sent a representative to attend the planned sinking ceremony, he said.

"We still had to promise that we wouldn't use the aircraft for



anything other than an artificial reef," he said.

Asked if the new dive site will be suitable for beginners once it is in place, K. Vittayen said that the depth of 18 to 20 meters was an appropriate one for new divers.

"Regardless of their skill levels, however, all divers will be asked not to enter the structures," he said.

The decision to sink the planes off the coast of Cherng Talay was not based solely on the fact that Cherng Talay Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorJor) had come up with 4 million baht in funding for the project, he said.

Cherng Talay already has one dive site at Koh Waew, which is actually a small cluster of islands lying about 1.5 kilometers off Laem Son at the north end of Bang Tao Bay, he explained.

Given that the artificial reef will take two dives to explore, divers visiting Cherng Talay once the artificial reef is in place will have a full day's worth of three dives available to them right off the coast of Phuket.

This should take pressure off popular sites to the south of the island, such as at Koh Racha Yai, he said.

Asked whether the predominantly aluminum fuselages of the aircraft would attract sufficient coral growth, he said Internet research had shown that similar structures have been used successfully for this purpose in Canada.

In some ways, the relatively non-corrosive nature of aluminum

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caught in holding pattern



One *Gazette* reader wrote in to express concern that despite being chained to three one-tonne blocks, the lift potential of the Dakota Skytrain could cause problems if left facing into a headwind at Phuket Deep Sea Port. The organizers plan to move this aircraft off the wharf and cover them with tarp to prevent this.

will make the project more long-lasting, he said.

"We think the main structure could remain intact for up to 30 years, whereas a car, for example, would be completely corroded away after about six to 10 years," he said.

"After about five years, we expect the amount of coral growth to make them no longer identifiable as aircraft," he added.

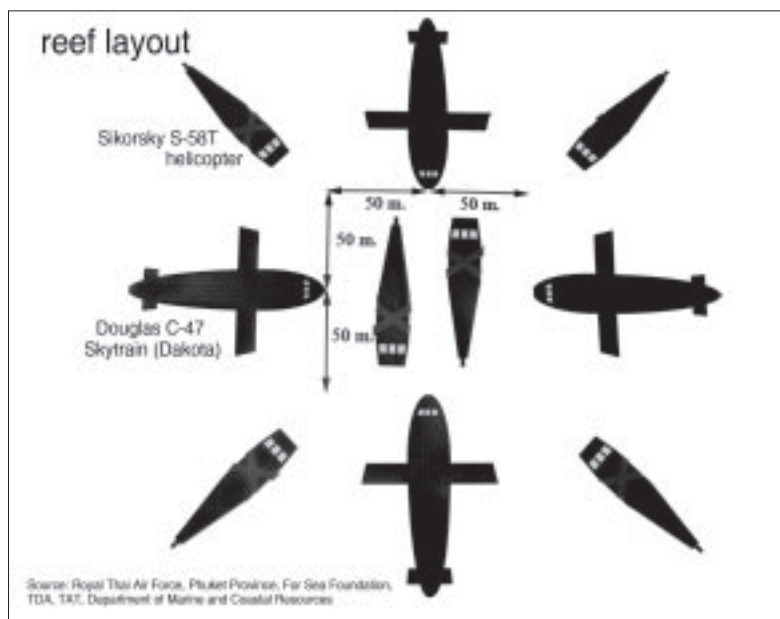
Asked by the *Gazette* about concerns that the strong subsurface currents might drive the aircraft up onto Bang Tao Beach, Thai Diving Association (TDA) Vice-President Pragon Geatgun told the *Gazette* just a few hours before the postponement was

announced that everything possible had been done to ensure that the aircraft would be secured to the seabed by being chained to large concrete blocks.

"We are going to chain the aircraft onto one-tonne cement blocks with stainless steel chains, sinking them together. They will be sunk from a barge about 1 km from the shoreline."

For example, the larger Dakota planes will be chained to three of the one-tonne cement blocks of the type commonly used in artificial reef projects.

The aircraft will have to be sunk carefully, because the aircraft are old and very lightweight compared to the weight of the



The planned layout of the aircraft, which will be sunk at a depth of about 18 meters one kilometer off Bang Tao Beach.

concrete slabs.

There is already an abandoned tin-mining sledge that is used as a dive site in the area where the artificial reef will be, he said.

Asked who would be allowed access to the new dive site, he said a committee comprising government agencies, dive operators, the TDA, Cherng Talay OrBorTor, local people, technical experts and other groups would be formed to manage it.

"We plan to create more artificial reefs in the future.

This is only the first step, so we need to have a good committee to look after this reef and the ones that come after it," he said.

People who use the site will be asked to donate money or buy souvenirs to support the project and fund new artificial reefs in the area, he added.

Asked why the west-facing Bang Tao Bay was chosen as the reef site, K. Pragon admitted that Cherng Talay OrBorTor being

the only local administration willing to fund the project did play a major role.

The idea for the project was initially raised three years ago, after the tsunami, by the Air Force and the For Sea Foundation, he explained.

Initial cost estimates for the project were 17 to 18 million baht, an amount no local administrative body could afford, he said.

"The project was asleep for three years, but finally we received word from Department of Marine and Coastal Resources Director Dr Pinsak Suraswadi, who said he had 10 aircraft that could be used and asked us if we wanted to go ahead.

I said, 'Why not? It's our dream' and we all agreed to work together," he said.

Apart from raising some money for the project on its own, the TDA was also involved in sourcing funding locally, he said.

"We went to every

OrBorTor, tessaban and even the provincial office in search of funding. We went to Chalong, Rawai and at Koh Racha. They all said, 'Why should we pay for this? We don't have that kind of money,'" said, K. Pragon, who is not affiliated with any dive business.

Finally realizing that an artificial reef could bring real economic benefits to their tambon, the Cherng Talay OrBorTor provided 4 million of the 7- to 8 million baht needed for the project, he said.

Thus far the project has cost about 5.5 million baht for the transport and sinking, with the organizers doing everything possible to keep costs down.

As for concerns about the environment, Prince of Songkla University Professor Sakanan Panthong has done an extensive study of the issue and determined how the planes could be stripped of all environmentally damaging components, he said.

K. Pragon admitted that all of the agencies involved were so busy before the postponement decision was agreed upon that none had found the time to really do adequate public relations about the project's technical details.

"The project really seems to have taken on a life of its own and we are all so busy now," he said.

A few hours after talking to the *Gazette*, the unanimous decision to postpone the sinking was announced by Suwalai Pinpradub, director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Southern Region 4 Office, at a press conference at the Cherng Talay OrBorTor office.

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Queer News

Little larvae with powerful performance

KALASIN: Aphrodisiacs and sex aids come in many forms. The Chinese have rhino horns and tiger penis, while Viagra has spread from America to become a worldwide craze allowing a generation of aging lotharios to revisit the prowess they enjoyed in younger days.

In Isarn, however, the latest sex-aid craze is neither the body part of an endangered species nor something cooked up in Dexter's lab. It is small, green and lives on leaves: the humble caterpillar.

Villagers in Kalasin, especially young men, have been collecting bags of the little larvae to eat raw and enjoy as a drinking snack or to use as an ingredient in traditional dishes.

The caterpillars have become so popular that the price has shot up to a hefty 200 baht a kilo.

After hearing of the craze, a reporter from Thai daily *Khao Sod* on April 28 headed to Kalasin Polytechnic to investigate. The school has become a focus of caterpillar collectors due to the abundance of the larva's favourite food source, the somewhat smuttily named golden-shower tree.

At the school, the reporter met a crowd of villagers who had travelled all the way from Khao Wong District armed with baskets and sticks, ready to collect the creepy crawlies.

Phunsuk Sripamai, 31, told the reporter that collecting caterpillars to eat was nothing new in Isarn. The bugs are a seasonal

food, found mainly on golden-shower and Siamese cassia trees. The caterpillars, known as *nang bong*, are larger and tastier than those found in Northern Thailand, he said with pride.

The bugs are highly sought after by local people, who believe they have healing properties and improve sexual performance. They are now particularly popular with young men who eat them raw as a drinking snack, he explained.

Wirasak Janthadee, who had come from Thakhantho District to look for caterpillars, said he liked to eat *nang bong* in the hot season. Village elders say that whoever eats *nang bong* at this time of year will enjoy improved performance in bed and the healing of many body organs.

K. Wirasak, 45, recalled how he had long been stricken with gout until he began eating *nang bong*.

As for the sexual performance, eating caterpillars while drinking whiskey creates a potent aphrodisiacal effect, he added.

"Mostly they are used as an ingredient in traditional Isarn dishes such as *laap* and *kaeng pa*. They can be fried or roasted; whatever you prefer. What is certain is that if you eat about 12 of them they will fill your body with vigor," K. Wirasak said.

As for a medical opinion, Dr Phisit Eua-wongsakul of the Kalasin Provincial Public Health Office said that eating the caterpillars would do no harm. In fact, they are similar in nutritive value to eggs, he said.

However, he could not confirm the rumored healing and aphrodisiac properties, which require further study. To be on the safe side, the caterpillars should be well cooked before eating, he advised.

Source: *Khao Sod*

SPEED DEMONS



PATONG: Although intended as a plea for motorists to exercise caution while driving at high speeds, this sign put up around Patong by Kathu Police could be taken by some motorists as a command to pick up the pace.

The speed at which vehicles now move through the tourist town has become a major source of complaint among visiting tourists since the controversial introduction of a one-way traffic system in Patong in mid-January last year.



Lanky Yorkshireman Tom Wigglesworth will be putting it all together with his own unique brand of comedy.

Triple dose of live stand-up comedy

PATONG: The Punchline Comedy Club in association with the London Comedy Store has lined up another triple dose of boisterous British humor with a night of live stand-up comedy from three of the UK's top comedians at the Holiday Inn Resort Phuket on May 14.

Paul Thorne, Tom Wigglesworth and Ian Moore will take to the stage with their adult humor from 8:30 pm to 11 pm. There will be two glass-filling intervals between acts and the chance for a member of the audience to win a prize for their wit in the silly joke competition.

Leading the trio is one of Britain's most established and sought-after stand-ups Paul Thorne, who is taking a break from his weekly performances at London's Comedy Store as a member of The Cutting Edge team of comedians who perform topical material based on the week's news.

Paul has many TV and radio show performances to his credit and has toured Europe and Asia extensively with the likes of Jack Dee, Lee Hurst and Rory Bremner.

Second up is lanky Yorkshireman Tom Wigglesworth, who was hailed as one of the UK's funniest newcomers to the comedy circuit when he burst onto the scene and split sides with his stylish one-liners and twisted tales derived from an inherently dark humor. He was the winner of Channel 4's "So you think you're funny? 2003" and was a Chortle Best Newcomer Award Nominee in 2004.

He woos audiences with his gangly presence and confident, assured delivery of first-class material. Tom is a natural performer who can skilfully riff with any audience as if they are old friends; instantly establishing a winning rapport and making it all appear simply effortless.

Comedy Store headliner Ian Moore will finish off the night with his laconic observations on life, such as the problems of using the wrong vocabulary in a German Pizza Hut to an almost pathological hatred of most forms of physical exertion.

Ian has headlined at Reading and Leeds music festivals in the UK and was one of only seven British comics selected to appear at Montreal's Just for Laughs festival, performing alongside comedians including Jimmy Carr.

Tickets are 1,200 baht on the door or 960 baht in advance from Woody's Sandwich Shoppes. For further details contact Pete. Tel: 081-9565650. Email: info@phuketcomedy.com Web: www.phuketcomedy.com

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Cellphone crackdown looming

The use of mobile phones in vehicles, which became illegal on May 8, will be enforced from May 20, police say. Police spokesman Watcharapol Prasanratchakij said motorists will be given warnings only until May 19. The "transit period" is intended to give motorists a chance to wean themselves off the habit, he said.

From May 20, any user of a mobile phone in a vehicle not fitted with hands-free kit will be fined from 400 to 1,000 baht.

Traffic police say using your mobile while waiting for the lights to change will still be considered an offense.

If you simply must take or make a call, pull over and do it, K. Watcharapol said.

Fuelling behavior. In an effort to stop fuel smuggling, police are now recording gas tank levels in vehicles departing Thailand to Cambodia via Aranyaprathet in Sa Kaew and at other border crossings.

When the vehicles return, police check to see if "unusual" amounts have been consumed.

Police suspect most are smuggling petrol to a storage facility about five kilometers from the Aranyaprathet checkpoint, where up to 200 trucks cross each day.

Police stepped up border patrols to prevent petrol being smuggled into Cambodia, where prices have skyrocketed in recent months.

Smugglers are using vehicles with enlarged tanks to get the fuel across the border.

Some enlarged tanks on lorries can hold as much as 400 liters.

Great communicator. Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej said he would not revive his weekly interview with Government House reporters following a statement denouncing him by the Thai Journalist Association (TJA) on May 3, Word Press Freedom Day.

The TJA said its media study had concluded that Samak's antagonistic discourse with Thai media poses a threat to freedom of the press and is



GIMMME SOME SKIN

Organizers of the 2nd Annual World Tattoo Arts Festival and Exhibition, to be held in Pattaya May 16-18, held a recent press conference recently to drum up interest in the event.

counter-productive to the development of democratic society.

Samak's crude language, his abrasive manner, his reluctance to cooperate and his rebuttal to criticisms during press interviews are aimed at discrediting the media and prevent them from scrutinizing the government, the TJA statement read.

PM Samak said that as the association had denounced him for intimidating the media through his aggressive style of responding to reporters' questions, he would not resume his weekly interview with reporters.

He would not mind if the media does not report his activities because he still had his *Talk Samak Style* Sunday morning talkshow program to communicate with the public, he said.

E-distractions. Young Thais are the second biggest media junkies in Asia, spending almost 13 hours a day watching television and videos, listening to the radio, on the Internet or reading newspapers and magazines.

According to Hong Kong-based global research company Synovate, young Malaysians are

the biggest media junkies, spending 12.9 hours a day on these activities, followed by youths in Thailand (12.8 hours) and Hong Kong (12.2).

The company's third annual Young Asians study covers 11 countries throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Overall, 37% of the region's youth say they "cannot live without the Internet", while 29% said they were "unable to function without their mobile phone".

Young people in Thailand are the region's biggest chatterboxes, spending a total of two hours 47 minutes a day on the phone. Of this time, more than two hours was on mobile phones.

Young people in Thailand are also the biggest electronic gamers in the Asia-Pacific region, spending more than one hour a day, followed by Singaporeans at 59 minutes and Hong Kong gamers at 56 minutes daily, the survey found.

Dress code debate. If new regulations proposed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) go ahead, students wearing uniforms "improperly" will face punishment.

MoE permanent secretary Charuaypon Torranin said the new rules, which would cover public and private schools, will require schools to take disciplinary action against students who break the dress code.

At a recent seminar on the issue, reaction was mixed over a proposal to include students' hairstyles in the new regulations, which, if approved, would replace rules that have been in effect for decades.

Insufflation stars. A drug suspect has revealed that her cocaine customers are mostly leading actors and upper-class nightlife seekers.

Sunisa Srikantarak, 19, told police that she earned between

2,000 and 3,000 baht per cocaine delivery.

She told a police press conference on April 30 that she delivered cocaine to customers at the popular RCA nightlife area in Bangkok every Friday night.

So far, police have not identified any of the actors Sunina accuses of having bought cocaine from her.

Rubber research. A recent global sex survey by condom manufacturer Durex found that 70% of Thai women are incapable of achieving orgasm.

Of those who could climax, many did so through masturbation or having sex with another woman. Some 79% of Thai men climax during sex, according to research.

The survey questioned 26,000 respondents in 26 countries about their sexual behavior and attitudes.

Scraping by. Of the daily minimum wage rises set to take effect across the country from June 1, the biggest will be in Chiang Rai, where workers will see an increase of 11 baht to 157 baht.

The Tripartite Wage Committee on May 2 approved the 11-baht rise for the northern province.

"We have adjusted the daily minimum wage based on the 5% inflation rate," said Labor Ministry Permanent Secretary Chuthawat Indrasuksri, who also chairs the wage committee.

Workers in Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Nakhon Pathom, Pathum Thani, Samut Prakan, Samut Sakhon, Ubon Ratchathani, Saraburi and Chiang Mai will enjoy a 9-baht rise.

Base-rate workers in other provinces are set to get seven to 8 baht more a day, but workers in Sukhothai, Uttaradit and Chaiyaphum will get just 2 baht more per day.

Sourced from The Nation, DailyXpress and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.



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For locals on Koh Lanta, now that the Songkran festival has passed, the start of the low season, or “green season” as the Tourism Authority of Thailand prefers to call it, has begun.

The passenger ferries from Phi Phi and Krabi continue to run until mid-May, but the island has already slipped back into slow mode. This is the perfect time to discover what makes Lanta so charming.

But charming isn't a word you're likely to hear if you ask the locals at Ao Nang, Phi Phi or Railey Beach about their sister island of Koh Lanta during low season. In fact, they'd likely give you the impression that Lanta resembles the Hawaiian leprosy island of Molokai in the mid 1800s.

It's a situation not unlike Cinderella's ugly sisters trying to keep her locked away so no-one can see that she's more beautiful than they are. Let's face it, when only a limited number of suitors – tourists in this case – are available, a girl has to take care of herself.

Granted, Koh Lanta still has many unresolved issues that are hindering the development of the area as a popular low-season tourist destination, such as quick, easy passage to the island and regular beach cleanings, but it still offers great value for visitors as one of Thailand's most beautiful and diverse islands.

With hundreds of tropical islands to choose from, deciding on which one to visit when you're in Southern Thailand is a daunting task.

Ask the locals or friends which southern isle they prefer and you'll get 1,000 different reasons as to why “their” tropical island is the best.

The fact is that each of the islands – whether on the Andaman Sea coast or in the Gulf of Thailand – has a distinct personality; each one attracting tourists and travelers who appreciate a

Lanta slips into the ‘slow’ season



Between the “refreshing” but usually short periods of rain during low season, there are often glorious sunny days where visitors can enjoy by the sea.

particular island's qualities.

It could be said that Koh Lanta has a dual personality. The west coast caters to carefree tourists on short vacations looking for a great beach and a good time, while the east coast is ideal for the curious traveler looking for adventure, nature and culture.

Low season life on one of Lanta's 10 west coast beaches is compromised by monsoon weather, but between the “refreshing” but usually short periods of rain, there are often glorious sunny days where visitors can enjoy beachfront seclusion in five-star luxury resorts or inexpensive beach bungalows.

Those who are looking for adventure, nature and culture will

enjoy the east coast of the island, especially during low season months, as that shoreline is sheltered from the monsoon winds and waves.

This coast is home to Koh Lanta's unique indigenous and historical fishing communities, which all live on the fringes of an ancient mangrove forest and a protected national park.

The heart of this area is Lanta Old Town, an old Chinese fishing village that, according to the locals, has not significantly changed in more than 50 years.

The same daily activities and traditional structures, such as fresh markets, longtail fishing boats and 100-year-old Chinese shophouses remain as they did when the town served as one of

Thailand's busiest merchant hubs just a century ago.

Si Raya is the official name of the village. The place is a study on cultural diversity, with three distinct groups of people: the sea gypsy people of the Urak Lawoi clan, Thai Muslims and Thai Chinese. These groups have co-existed in harmony for more than 200 years.

Today, as tolerance towards cultural differences is becoming increasingly complex, this area could easily serve as a model society where people of cultural and religious differences live side by side and preserve a traditional way of life.

This village is best avoided by those wanting excitement, though.

Old Town, to say the least, is an incredibly sleepy village, but if you want to experience the simple Thai life as it was 100 years ago, there's probably no better place.

There are several guesthouses open all year in the village, including Mango House's renovated, over-the-sea homes

and Orange House's affordable seafront rooms.

Also, the protected harbor is perfect for low season boat mooring, although most people arrive in Old Town from resorts on the island's west coast.

Here's how to pass the low season on Koh Lanta:

Fishing. The pier in Lanta Old Town is a great place to spend a day with your line in the water – even if you don't catch anything. Also, since the area is the island's main fishing center, it's easy to join in for a traditional trip you'll never forget.

Island exploring. The east coast is the only place in low season where the waters are calm enough for boating excursions to nearby islands and caves. It's also a great launching point for overnight visits to smaller islands, such as Koh Rok, Koh Ngai and Koh Kradan.

Cultural experiences. Old Town has a new museum that documents the history of Koh Lanta, but living history can be found everywhere in town, such as locals building longtail fishing boats, collecting rubber from the farms and sun-drying fish.

Visit the sea gypsy village. The end of the east coast road brings you to Ban Sangkha-U, home of the Urak Lawoi, one of

three ancient “sea gypsy” clans that have roamed and lived on the coastlines and islands of the Andaman Sea for centuries. A museum opened

there last month and visitors are also welcome to wander around their fishing village.

Go green. Explore nature on the east side of the island and in the 134-square-kilometer Lanta National Marine Park, which includes the east coast of Koh Lanta and 15 of the smaller surrounding islands. The island also has six eco-tourism centers showcasing the local heritage and to educate locals about the environment.

Duane Lennie is an international marketing consultant and freelance writer based in Koh Lanta who operates www.kolanta.net. You can contact Duane at duane@kolanta.net

LETTER FROM KOH LANTA

By Duane Lennie

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Mosque bombers condemned

Religious leaders in the Deep South condemned a bomb blast that killed two people at a Pattani mosque late on May 1, saying that “kafirs” (nonbelievers) who wanted to create a sectarian conflict in the region were behind the attack.

“We don’t praise but condemn such a brutal act that causes loss and pain for our brotherhood,” said Waduramae Mamingji, chairman of Pattani Provincial Islamic Committee.

“It is not a just struggle [for Muslims] as Allah would not take the bomber into his embrace. It’s a sin to kill fellow Muslims and damage a holy place,” he said, without mentioning why he believed the bomber was a Muslim.

An M26 hand grenade was thrown into the mosque in Pattani’s Nong Chik while some 20 people were praying. The bomb killed one person instantly. Another died later in hospital, while five others were injured.

Best served cold. The president of Pak Nakhon Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) in Nakhon Sri Thammarat’s Muang district was shot dead on April 28. Police believe the killing was an act of revenge or related to local politics.

Kitiphol Jaturong, 42, known locally as Nayok Khwet, was shot as he was getting out of his car in Pak Nakhon Village 3.

K. Kitiphol’s brother, 49-year-old Prasert Jaturong, told police that as K. Kitiphol was parking his car outside the house of relative Sunthon Sriwimol, a metallic-colored pickup truck pulled alongside.

Five or six people in the back of the truck immediately opened fire with M16 assault rifles and pistols, he said. During the attack, K. Kitiphol was shot several times in the head.

Although there were many eyewitnesses, the investigation has been hampered because most are too frightened to speak to police, officers said.

K. Kitiphol was elected president of Pak Nakhon *OrBorTor* in a by-election following the killing of his predecessor, Bunyong Khayanphol, who was gunned down at the end of 2005.



PEACE PRAY-IN

About 500 people pray in front of Nang Jik District Office in Pattani on May 1 for an end to the violence in the Deep South.

Encroachment woes. In a survey carried out by the governors of the 75 provinces outside Bangkok, Phatthalung was found to have the highest proportion of encroachment on public land.

The results of the survey, ordered by the Interior Ministry, were released on April 29. Phatthalung was named as the province with the biggest encroachment problem, with 10.8% of public land (5,943,184 rai) illegally occupied.

The government said the problem was being analyzed and a solution being drawn up.

Debt drama. A Border Patrol Police officer shot dead his wife before turning the gun on himself in Nakhon Sri Thammarat’s Sichon district early on May 2. The officer survived and is in a coma.

Sgt Maj Raphin Chuthong, 35, was found lying in his house, located next to the base of Border Patrol Police Company 424, with a gunshot wound to the mouth exiting from the neck. The body of his wife, Uthaitip Chuthong, 33, was lying beside him. She had been shot several times with an M16 rifle.

Sgt Maj Raphin was rushed

to Sichon Hospital before being transferred to Maharaj Hospital in Nakhon Sri Thammarat City, where at last report he was still in a coma.

Other residents of the block of police accommodation where the incident occurred reported hearing the couple having a furious argument about debts run up

by Sgt Maj Raphin before the sound of multiple gunshots rang out. Other officers told police that Sgt Maj Raphin and Uthaitip, a nurse at Sichon Hospital, argued frequently.

Most of their fights were the result of Sgt Maj Raphin’s jealousy, they said.

Police targeted. Three policemen were killed and three other policemen and two civilians injured in a bomb attack in Pattani’s Yarang district on April 30.

The explosion occurred at 1 pm on the Sarong-Mayo Rd in Jaroh village, Tambon Khaotoom.

Insurgents first set fire to a telephone booth to lure policemen to the scene, police said.

They remotely detonated the bomb when a pickup truck carrying six policemen arrived. Two civilians passing by on a motorcycle were also injured.

The three policemen killed – Snr Sgt Maj Lop Boonrat, 55; Cpl Thanphat Chairat, 30; and Cpl Sanyan Yimyok, 28 – were riding in the back of the pickup.

Sourced from The Nation, DailyXpress and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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Muse over a book and a brew

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

The Bo(ok)hemian Arthouse on Thalang Rd – Phuket City's art district – is a cozy townhouse with a spartan down-to-earth atmosphere conceived by art lovers for like-minded movie muses and bookworms.

The narrow, indistinct building is the Phuket equivalent of a student hangout in the back streets of a university city in the West, where young and old art aficionados can kick back with book and make a single cup of coffee last all day in the less-than-luxurious, but easygoing, setting.

Although sparsely decorated with an ad-hoc collection of chairs, tables, sofas and even a few straw mats on the floor, there are plenty of shelves stacked with reading material and a long bar that serves fresh coffee and, occasionally, the odd piece of cake.

The place is cluttered with books and video disc cases strewn on the tables and haphazardly lining the shelves in an order similar to that of a ragged line of rag-tag recruits at an army reserves' role call.

The books and movies are in English and Thai – some new, most of them second- or third-hand, others so well used they are barely held together by their tattered bindings.

The Bo(ok)hemian Arthouse was established in 2006 by Marut "Nil" Lekphet – a reserved man who has difficulty expressing his passion for art with words



The Bo(ok)hemian Arthouse in Phuket City's art district offers a laid back reading environment for people of all ages.

Customers can grab a book off the shelves, find a quiet corner and relax with a fresh coffee, or rent a book or DVD to take home for a few days.

The art house is also one of the few Phuket venue's to regularly showcase the latest movies and short films on the fringe.

– as a hobby project to give art lovers a place to meet, read, share views and check out the latest art and media projects on the fringe.

The art house has been one of the only Phuket venues to showcase works from the region's upcoming artists, including that of Thunsaka Pansitvorkul, director of a short film that was awarded the Grand Prize in the Asian Vision 4th Taiwan International Documentary Festival in 2004.

Since then, Thunsaka and other movers in the art scene have contributed to the store, not

just with their collections of artwork, but with encouragement and ideas on how to expand the arthouse's reach into the community with various projects and events.

The clientele is a mixed bag of teenagers, expats and office workers, either relaxing or studying alone in a corner with the intimacy of a good read or joining in gentle conversation over coffee and cake.

Stairs lead up to a landing of wooden floorboards covered with mats and cushions propped against more bookshelves.

"In fact, very few locals hang out here," said Nil. "The customers are mostly students from out of town who are studying here or tourists and expats who have heard about it through friends and word of

mouth," he added.

Nil started the store while still keeping his regular day job, but after running the place for two years – employing students to staff the bar, which now has a permit to sell beer – he and his collaborators are focusing on sprucing the place up, showcasing better-known artists and attracting more local participation.

"Now that we have become more established in the art scene, we aim to play a major role as an indie art house, regularly bringing artists and their fans together," he said.

Customers can rent books to take home or simply hang out at the store and read while soft music plays. The store stocks all kinds of new and second-hand books, from novels to non-fiction, and photo journals. There are also

collections of handmade books to browse through and newly released short stories by aspiring writers.

Various film-making props, such as old cameras, share the shelves with the books. A small theater on the second floor is where some of the region's latest fringe-movie releases are introduced and mused over.

Movies and short films are shown every Saturday from about 7 pm to an attentive audience of art aficionados who occasionally have the chance to meet and chat with the indie-movie makers.

"One of the more memorable events to take place here was a fundraising event to help tsunami victims about two years ago. We had a small concert by Thai singer Ben Chalattit with *Aday* magazine," said Nil. "Handmade products, postcards, were sold and paintings from well-known artists, such as Pod Modernog, were auctioned off during the event. All money raised was donated to help tsunami victims."

To become a Bo(ok)hemian member costs just 100 baht for lifetime membership. Members can rent movies from the store for 40 baht per movie, per week. Books are much cheaper to rent for a week at either 10 or 20 baht. Child members (under 12) are not charged for book rental.

The scenery is constantly changing with rotating art exhibitions. Currently providing the store's transient decor is a photographic exhibition by Ded Chongmankong titled "Sometimes". K. Chongmankong is the grandson of the acclaimed artist, Jit Chongmankong. "Sometimes" will be exhibited until June 26.

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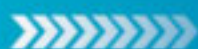
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Think George. Think Brad. Think Angelina. Think swank. Not Hilary, just plain swank, and you've caught a hint of the atmosphere at Jean Pierre, a chic eatery in Patong that serves BYD Lofts as well as a veritable island-wide selection of expats in the know.

A well-stacked black, faux-marble bar, surrounding parquet floors and an adjacent restaurant sporting black floor tiles and weather-resistant rattan-like chairs with glass-topped tables, not to mention plenty of open-sided ventilation and overhead fans – the scene here is set for some serious see-and-be-seen action. One look at this place and I was sorry I hadn't worn my fake agape alligator golf shirt.

Situated off Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd in downtown Patong, in a back soi surrounded by hostelries and commercial enterprises that definitely don't deal in used motorcycle parts, Jean Pierre's location is bordering on the incongruous.

But with the Andaman Beach Suites next door, there's still enough of a family atmosphere to redeem the area. And just why the name "Jean Pierre"? Well, because one of the best chefs on the island is now based there. Stephan Bowman – perfectionist, kitchen Kai-



BAR NONE: The ambiance, decor and food at BYD Lofts is well worth the tab.

Photo by Stephan Audiger.

ser and, according to BYD, "Culinary Architect" – leads his proficient team in his open-sided kitchen, complete with a clever overhead mirror arrangement to let diners watch how he works, and does so fantastically.

We take a seat on the pe-

riphery and sip a couple of pretty wicked and tangy "Loftinis" while perusing the wine list. Stephan has good relations with all the import wine gents on the island, so the zesty list is forever changing according to what's new and what's not. We choose a

Trivento Roble 2006 (1,600 baht) from Mendoza, Argentina.

Mendoza is where I have tasted the best and the worst wines of my life.

The town and the surrounding countryside are swimming in the stuff. While I was there it was more expensive to buy a large bottle of Coke than a bottle of red.

One time, I asked a bodega owner for a small sample of his wine he gave me a 10-liter Dama Juana carafe to take home.

If it weren't for a certain South-Atlantic military fracas over what the Argies like to call Las Malvinas, I'd still have a tenderizing steak under my saddle and a poncho on my back. Asi es la vida, hombre – such is life.

Meanwhile, back at the Juan Pedro, sorry, Jean Pierre rancho, there's a good selection of homemade breads with pesto, olive oil and garlic butter to keep us happy until Stephan serves up

a foie gras on baguette with fried basil and parsley.

Oh so yielding, fresh, luscious and tasteful... but enough about the waitresses; the foie gras is excellent, as is the troika of soups that follows: spinach with smoked salmon, curry and an unbeatable tom yam gai.

Thankfully, by this time the schmaltzy background jazz has been replaced by Café del Mar mixes, raising the atmosphere. One can take only so much of Lennon's Imagine being given the double bass, tinkling piano, brushes-and-sizzle-cymbal treatment before running to the hong nam for respite.

The wine is excellent; the ambiance just so; the food a work of art and the evening perfect. Stephan explains that his regular Friday night parties were so disrupted by the recent spate of elections resulting in alcohol-free weekends that he suspended them (the parties that is, not the elections) until the near future, but he added that they're definitely on their way back, DJs and all.

One plate of Stephan's scallop and panna cotta with asparagus and strawberries later and we're anyone's, but the main course – Angus steak with potato gratin and mushrooms, fried apple and a chocolate smear – is a dish fit for royalty so we don our crowns once more and away we go.

Coffee ice cream and beautifully caramelized bananas with some devilish cognac finish the evening off.

If you're thinking purely in

Thai baht, dining at Jean Pierre will make a significant but not too painful dent in your wallet, yet the experience of such fine dining in the plush and tasteful surroundings is one to be cherished.

A medium-sized Angus will cost around 700+ baht and a three-part set of entrées up to 800 baht.

Jean Pierre at BYD Lofts. 5/28 Haad Patong Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-343024 Email: fb@bydlofts.com Reservations recommended.

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About

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Gill Dalley should be dead. Her passion in caring for Phuket's sick and neglected animals nearly killed her, it might be said. But anyone who knows Gill would argue that, indeed, it was this passion that saved her life.

In September 2004, she rescued a dog from a flooded buffalo field as part of her work for the Soi Dog Foundation. She had tranquilized the animal with a blow-dart, and it ran off into the field before she could catch it. Gill knew the animal would drown in the water if she'd left it. So, without hesitating, she ran through the muddy water to grab it and carry it to safety.

Two days later, she felt achy, shivery and run-down. She hosted a birthday party for her husband, John, and, after preparing all the food, she told guests who had just arrived that she was sorry but she had to go to bed. For Gill, this was an unusual act. "I don't do sick," she said.

The following evening, the pain in her legs became so unbearable that she asked John to take her to hospital. On the hospital trolley, she says, she watched her legs change from a flesh color to blue-gray and that is the last thing she remembers.

John was told that she likely wouldn't last through the night.

Doctors told him that Gill's

True survivor saves our strays

Gill Dalley is no stranger to pain and suffering, having nearly died of a rare illness that resulted in the loss of her legs, then, only months later, witnessing the aftermath of the catastrophic tsunami. Yet it was the pain and suffering of the island's stray animals that ignited her sense of purpose in life. She spoke with Lana Willocks about her work in saving the island's dogs – and how they, in turn, saved her.

foray into the mud had exposed her to a gram-negative bacteria, the exact strain of which remains a mystery.

As they struggled to treat the infection, parts of her body shut down and she went into septic shock.

She was moved to Bangkok, where she was stabilized. Her legs could not be saved, however, and both were amputated below the knee.

It was a shocking, unimaginable life turn for a woman who had moved to Phuket with the intention of living out her days in comfort and relaxation, with her husband and the many friends

they'd made here over the years.

Gill's first visit to Phuket was 12 years ago, when she and John arrived to have their wedding ceremony and honeymoon at the Dusit Laguna resort. They fell in love with the place and the people, she says, and returned to the island twice a year for the next seven years. During that time, they bought a plot of land on what is now part of the Laguna Residences complex – back when "they couldn't give it away", Gill says – where they planned to build their retirement home.

Retirement came earlier than expected when the company John, a chemical engineer, was

working for downsized, so they built their little oasis and moved here for good five years ago.

From the beginning, both Gill and John had planned to be involved with dog rescue work, perhaps a few hours a week.

Gill says she noticed from day one the plight of Phuket's stray dogs. "One of my biggest hobbies is cooking," she said. "I liked to go check out the ingredients, so I'd go to the market in Cherg Talay and see the dogs. Their condition was absolutely horrendous. I'd come back and my heart was breaking."

Shortly after moving to Phuket, they met the founder of Soi Dog Foundation and began volunteering, helping to sterilize the stray population, working with local and foreign volunteer vets and setting up mobile clinics.

Including the dog Gill had retrieved from the buffalo field, about 1,000 animals were sterilized in the charity's first 15 months of operation.

After losing her legs, Gill spent three months in hospital recovering. Then, as Christmas approached, she decided she'd had enough and booked a flight back to Phuket.

"I was determined," she said. "I didn't know why but I knew I had to be home for Christmas."

She told her doctor that she was leaving on December 23. He told her that was impossible. She said, "I'm going."

She hosted a gathering for friends on Christmas Day. "I was mad," she said. "I cooked dinner for 14 in my wheelchair."

The next day, the tsunami hit.

Gill's life, yet again, was wrenched into a new direction.

One of Gill's closest friends, Leone Cosens, a fellow dog volunteer, was killed by the wave. But there was no time to mourn her loss.

Once the magnitude of the disaster came to light, Gill and John immediately drove up to Khao Lak. John wrapped bodies in muslin. Gill, unable to help physically, offered a sympathetic ear to survivors.

From her recent brush with death, Gill says, "I knew what it was like to be traumatized, so I went to the hospital and talked to people. That's all they wanted to do; talk about what had happened to them or have someone to



cuddle, to share a cigarette with."

After helping people in the immediate days after the tsunami, their attention soon went back to the animals, who were also suffering in the aftermath.

With hotels, restaurants and other businesses either destroyed or shut down following the flight of tourists from the island, the sources of food for the region's stray dogs dried up. Gill and other volunteers set up a feeding program, which they called the Leone Cosens Feeding Program in honor of their lost comrade. Gill secured funding for it from a Singapore-based businessman.

At the same time, the attention Phuket received from the international press put the spotlight on the stray dog problem. In the initial months after the wave struck, some 50 volunteer vets came to help and donations were pouring in. Within a year of the tsunami, John explains, about 7,000 dogs were treated and sterilized.

At the same time that Soi Dog's scope and size increased exponentially, Gill was learning how to walk again.

Fitted with prosthetics, and with months upon months of grueling therapy, she now walks unaided and takes careful yet sure steps as she walks across her peaceful garden with six happy and excited dogs in tow.

Reflecting on her illness and the tsunami experience, Gill says, "Life is a privilege. Nobody knows what's round the corner, so all you can do as a human being is live each day to the full."

"In my case, I choose to work with the dogs, to make a difference, to put something back into the community."

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Double-amputee Gill cuddles Ovaltine, just a few weeks before the former stray dog made the journey to her new home in Sweden.

ing the stray dog problem.

She's launched an education program, where students and teachers from the island's public schools come to the shelter for lessons and hands-on training in caring for dogs.

"You can't change older generations," Gill explains, "so you've got to get to the kids."

She is now working seven days a week, 14 hours a day. Hardly the relaxing retirement in paradise that she and John had dreamed of all those years ago.

Her efforts have been recognized around the world, with Soi Dog receiving awards from both the Elizabeth Lewyt Foundation and the Humane Society. Recently, Gill was named one of 12 "Asians of the Year" by Singapore-based Channel News Asia.

But for Gill, the greatest reward is seeing the effects of her work on the ground. "It's nice to go to the market now and not see dogs in horrendous distress," she said.

Each dog is special to her. She describes how one dog, which she named Pepper, had distemper and a smashed leg. It was in such poor condition that Gill brought her to her home and gave her one-on-one care until her health was restored.

When Pepper was adopted by a Kamala-based couple from New Zealand who renamed her Poppy, Gill says, "I was absolutely over the moon because that dog should be dead. Now she's living an absolutely glorious life."

Gill Dalley's survival was also miraculous – even her doctor said so. Gill says her doctor told her, "I don't know why you're still alive. I can only think that the powers that be, whatever they are, have decided that you've still got work to do with the dogs. That's the only explanation I can come up with."

For her husband John, the explanation is simpler. He told Channel News Asia that she survived not because she's special – "It's because she's stubborn."

down two years ago, Gill and John now run the Soi Dog Foundation with two full-time vets, staff and more than a dozen volunteers. In March this year, they opened a dog shelter, which now cares for some 180 dogs who have been abandoned or rescued from cruel conditions.

The ultimate goal is to find homes for all the dogs, and many have been adopted by families within Thailand and abroad.

Gill says that one thing she's learned is that working within the community, following the "Thai way of doing things", is essential, and, together with her staff, she's worked hard to build strategies with local authorities in solv-

For details about Soi Dog Foundation, visit www.soidog.org or call 087-0508688. On September 13, The Evason Phuket and Six Senses Spa are sponsoring the "Tails at Twilight fund raising bone a fit" event. Full details coming shortly in the Phuket Gazette.

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This week



LOOKING GOOD: Elite Model Look President Alain Attia congratulates Elite Model Look Thailand 2008 winner Natassia Neufid (2nd from left), first runner-up Natthayanee Rattanapaitoon (left), and second runner-up Natenapa Prasongsansuk (right) at the after-finals party at The Playhouse in Patong on April 26. – Photo by Dan Miles.



THE BIG BLUE: Blue Elephant International Plc Founding Partner & Director Nooror Somany Steppe (3rd from right) is joined by MR Jatumongkol Sonakul and his wife (right and 2nd from right) and Phuket Vice-Governor Smith Palawatvichai (3rd from left) at the recent grand opening of Thai Brasserie by Blue Elephant at Jungceylon.



TIME OUT: Former Minister of Science and Technology Korn Thapparangsrri (2nd from right) and President of Bangkok Bank Public Chartsiri Sophonpanich (3rd from left) are welcomed by the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa management team during their recent stay at the resort.



WHEREVER YOU GO: Sarawut 'Aon' Martthong (right), host of the Channel 3 travel show 'Wherever', and actress Rinlanee 'Joy' Sripen arrive at Koh Rang Yai on April 28 after flying in to film an episode of the show on the island.



GARAGE BAND-AID: Niyom Tassaneetipakorn (left) of Laguna Resorts & Hotels and Prinya Onlahoong of Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket (6th from right) present Dr Somsak Nantasri (wearing blue tie) with a donation of 63,421 baht made to Vachira Phuket Hospital on April 28 on behalf of the Laguna Phuket Social Committee. The money was raised through Laguna garage sales and Children's Day events.



KOREAN REWARD: Employees of Phuket-based Korean travel operator The Villa Service Co Ltd and its group companies were rewarded by their employers for their hard work with a trip to Korea from April 3 to 8.

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In The Stars

by Isla Star

Get ready to set sail, Taurus

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Don't waste time crying over spilled coconut milk this week. If you are worried that you might have missed an important boat you will catch sight of a more tempting voyage towards the end of the month. Where work is concerned, inspiration strikes after meeting an enthusiastic Arian. If you are due to celebrate a birthday during the coming days, the year ahead promises to deliver tangible rewards.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Business affairs don't go according to plan, but the outcome should be more rewarding than previously anticipated. Where love is concerned, Pisces continues to be a ray of sunshine in your life. However, effort will be required to separate work from pleasure. Tuesday is the most auspicious day for a second attempt at dealing with a bureaucratic issue that just won't go away. Wear the color silver to encourage smooth talking.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): If you can't see the wood for the trees, take a leaf out of Sagittarius' book. This sensible friend can help you to focus on what must be achieved this month. Money matters are subject to stormy skies this week; avoid making spur-of-the-moment pur-

chases until your bank balance is healthier. A windfall is forecast to arrive before the end of May. The number 7 could be lucky on Wednesday.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Family matters demand more attention than you want to give this weekend. Sensible Leos will not become involved in petty arguments, but allow those concerned to sort out their differences. Love is to be found where you least expect it; an Aquarian acquaintance introduces you to someone who makes your heart race. Monday is best for approaching someone with ideas for new work projects.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Deadlines approach faster than expected. If you have been enjoying too much fun in the sun, you could find yourself burning some serious midnight oil this week. It would not be prudent to ask for extra time at this point in your career. This weekend, a heart-to-heart conversation with someone special reveals some surprising secrets. Aries has some worthwhile tips regarding investment, but Capricorn could lead you up the jungle path.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Those looking for an easy way out of a tricky business situation will be relieved when they hear some pearls of wisdom from Scorpio this weekend. Wearing your heart on your sleeve impresses a new romantic flame, but leaping too quickly into a relationship is not recommended. Meditate on past mistakes to avoid making them again. Thursday is the most auspicious day for discussing property matters; relocation is highlighted this month.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Some Scorpions will discover this week that the grass isn't greener on the other side of the fence. After the middle of the month you will be in a more satisfied frame of mind. This could be affected by a meeting with Capricorn, who is ready to make their romantic aspirations known. A financial breakthrough ensures that you can afford to treat yourself to something special this weekend. The number 4 is lucky on Monday.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-

December 21): Those of you looking for business opportunities could find a potential goldmine this week. It all depends on how much energy you are ready to invest in working hard. Family might not be as supportive as you would like, but this could be the ideal time for a reality check regarding spending. Those who are single are likely to find themselves in a surprise romantic situation on Sunday. Wear navy blue to encourage strong insight.

Don't waste time crying over spilled coconut milk this week.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): It's up to you to decide whether your glass is half empty or half full this week. Most Capricorns should have achieved a lot since the start of the year, but some could be frustrated by lack of progress. One way to get further ahead would be to surround yourself with positive thinking friends, instead of those who are determined to wallow in the mud. The number 6 can be fortunate this weekend.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): The carousel of love is still forecast to provide a confus-

ing ride and this will continue until the end of May. If you are tiring of living in a gray area, you could be ready to make serious decisions. Where finances are concerned, a stroke of good luck comes out of the blue this weekend. Cancer's odd behavior is due to deeper issues than you suspect.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Emotional fulfillment is on the cards this week. A fragmented friendship is about to be mended and romance starts to take a smoother path. Those in a committed relationship will find new areas of common ground. As your personal life improves, so does your attitude towards work and promotion is likely when a colleague suddenly departs. Thursday is best for instigating an interview. Wear the color lavender to encourage good communication.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Many Arians will realize that they've been fighting a losing battle this week. Once you let go of an impossible dream, life begins to look sweeter. Your creative energy flows better after spring cleaning at home and a romantic encounter with Taurus also puts a spring in your step. The number 3 can bring some luck on Thursday.



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Acquiring a taste for that feminine fruit

By Nick Davies

Historically, avocados have been known for their sexuality. They are in some ways, very much like women; to appreciate them requires maturity.

For youngsters, the first encounter with an avocado can be similar to that early aversion to the opposite sex. The first taste has them spitting because "it tastes like washing up liquid", but as maturity advances, so can appreciation for the feminine fruit shaped like a woman's hips. Ancient Aztecs called it "the fertility fruit".

In some places, the fruit had a reputation as a sexual stimulant and was viewed with the kind of scorn usually reserved for the lowliest ranks of society.

Avocado was often avoided by people wanting to preserve an image of virtue and chaste. Avocado growers responded by sponsoring PR campaigns to debunk the negative image and give the fruit new appeal.

Christian missionaries were indifferent to avocados' affiliation with fertility.

They introduced the not-so-forbidden fruit to Nan province about 100 years ago. Since then, avocado cultivation in Thailand has spread

to Nakhon Ratchasima, Chaiyaphum, Tak, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Rayong, Chanthaburi and Songkhla.

True to its ancient branding, the avocado is a hermaphroditic species, with male and female flowers that open and close alternately at different

times of day to be pollinated by insects.

Each flower opens twice in a two-day cycle, with the female flowers (pollen receptive) opening first.

They open in the morning, then close at midday. They then reopen the afternoon of the following day.

The male (pollen-shedding) flowers open in the afternoon, after the female flowers have closed.

The male flower then closes in the evening and reopens the following morning, before the second opening of the female flower.

If you eat avocados before they are ripe, their taste is bitter,

but when ripe, they have a rich flavor and a smooth, buttery consistency.

Timing is important when preparing avocados. The easiest way of knowing when an avo-

cado is ripe is from the color and feel of its skin, which eventually turns from green to a bruised-looking purple-brown.

At this stage, the skin is thick and slightly brittle. There is a gap between the skin and the meat that allows the skin to be pushed inwards

and causes a dent and crack when pinched between the fingers.

Inside, the avocado meat is at its most flavorsome when it has turned from green to yellow, by which time the meat's texture has become soft while maintaining its shape, making it easy to spoon out of its skin and turn into a pulp – the beginnings of guacamole.

The word "guacamole" is derived from two Aztec Nahuatl words: "ahuacatl", meaning avocado, and "molli", meaning sauce.

Basic guacamole recipes vary depending on the avocado's ripeness and the measures of the other ingredients.

If the avocado is not at its ripest, the guacamole will taste bitter.

Guacamole me

Serves 2 to 4:

- 2 ripe avocados
- ½ red onion, minced
- 1-2 sweet chilies or a bell pepper with the seeds removed, minced.
- 2 tablespoons of finely chopped coriander leaves
- 1 tablespoon of fresh lime or lemon juice
- ½ a teaspoon of coarse salt
- A dash of freshly grated black pepper
- ½ a chopped ripe tomato with seeds and pulp removed

Method

Cut the avocados in half, remove the seeds and scoop the meat from the peel.

Use a fork to mash the avocado. Add the chopped onion, coriander, lime or lemon, salt and pepper, and mash it together. Leave the tomatoes out until ready to serve.

If you're not eating it immediately, cover the guacamole and refrigerate.

Inside, the avocado meat is at its most flavorsome when it has turned from green to a creamy yellow – the beginnings of guacamole.



Once you have mastered the basic recipe, you could try adding different herbs, cottage cheese or different kinds of chili. One piece of advice for newbies: don't add too many ingredients. Keeping it simple is best.

Nutritionally, avocados have more potassium than bananas. A single fruit has about 177 calories. Avocados contain no cholesterol and only monosaturated fat.

Although there are many hybrids, there are three distinct races of avocado: Mexican, Guatemalan and West Indian.

Mexican avocados, which are small with thin, smooth skins, are the most tolerant to cold. Guatemalan avocados have thick, hard, brittle skins. West Indian avocados, which are currently in season and inexpensive, are better adapted to warmer climates and have a thin, shiny skin.

Beauty products

Apart from a host of recipes using avocado and avocado oil, such as salads, sandwiches, marinades and even ice cream, the meat and oil can be used in homemade skin- and haircare products, from sunscreen lotions and cleansing creams to moisturizers and hair conditioners.

Avocado's strength as a beauty ingredient lies in the fruit's high nutrient content, including vitamins A, B5 C and E, iron, potassium, niacin and natural emollients (skin softeners).

A person's skin responds best to avocado when the fruit is at its ripest.

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Ripe avocados can be used in homemade creams and moisturizers, which should be used immediately after being prepared. They can be stored in a fridge for up to 48 hours, but will perish quickly.

Avocado facial cleanser

Avocado helps defend the skin against pollutants and grime that can become embedded in the pores. Blend the mush of half an avocado and a beaten egg yolk. Add half a cup of milk and put it all in a blender or use a fork to mix it up in a bowl until the mixture has the consistency of a thin cream. Apply the mixture to the skin with cotton wool. Wash off with tepid water.

Avocado Moisturizer

The oil hidden within avocados has natural skin-moisturizing properties because it contains hu-

mectant – a substance often used in skincare products for its moisture-retaining qualities. Avocado oil can be extracted from the fruit in the same way that oil is extracted from olives.

Organic and cold-pressed is the best way because it leaves the nutrients intact.

If you don't have avocado oil, massage your face with the inside of an avocado peel and let the residue remain on your skin for at least 15 minutes so that the skin has time to absorb the nutrients.

The residue, which is invisible and can be left on overnight, can also help foundation powder stay in place for many hours.

Aztec eyes

Use thin, crescent-shaped avocado slices to reduce under-eye puffiness. Simply lie down and place the slices on each eye and leave them there for 20 minutes.

Great STEAKS!



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New Honda Accord is safe and sound

There is an impressive new Honda showroom on Chao Fa West Rd. One of the models it will have sometime in the future is the new Honda Accord, which made its debut at the Geneva motor show in March.

The new Accord is a step forward in safety and emission efficiency. All engines in the lineup will comply with Euro 5 standards, while all models feature a sector-leading package of safety systems.

Making its debut with the latest car is Honda's second-generation diesel engine, the i-DTEC, which builds on the award-winning qualities of the previous unit.

Not only is the new diesel more powerful, producing a healthy 150bhp, but it also offers cleaner emissions and is significantly smoother to drive. Compact and light, the new motor employs piezoelectric multi-stage fuel-injection technology, efficient exhaust-gas recirculation and the latest particulate filter for reducing emissions. Peak torque is an impressive 350Nm at just 2,000rpm.

The two-liter gasoline engine, which may prove to be the most popular in most markets, delivers 156bhp at a screaming 6,300rpm and improves on its already-class-leading fuel economy.

There is a larger, 2.4-liter version, but this is unlikely to be seen in Thailand. All three engines are mated to a six-speed manual transmission, while the gasoline models have the option of a five-speed automatic. An auto 'box for the diesel will be launched early next year.

The handling of the latest Accord has been substantially improved with a lower center of

Making its debut with the latest car is Honda's second-generation diesel engine, the i-DTEC, which builds on the award-winning qualities of the previous unit.

gravity, wider track and an all-new front-double wishbone and rear multi-link suspension with variable rate dampers. In addition, greater body rigidity means the Accord more readily reacts to driver input.

Speed-sensitive electric power steering is now fitted, featuring a high-output, low-inertia brushless motor that provides excellent feel at higher speeds, giving greater stability.

The Accord is equipped with the latest vehicle-stability system, which, in conjunction with the electric power steering,

detects instability in slippery conditions during cornering and braking, automatically initiating sufficient steering inputs to prompt the driver to steer in the correct direction. The input is barely noticeable and control of the steering remains with the driver at all times.

The interior of the Accord has also been significantly upgraded, with backlit instruments and an LCD multi-information display contained in the center of the speedometer face. Controls on the steering wheel allow the driver to cycle through the display for multiple information. The steering wheel also has audio controls and cruise control.

Passive safety features within the Accord include front-seatbelt pre-tensioners, load limiters and dual-stage front airbags,

driver and front passenger side airbags, full-length curtain airbags and ISOFIX fittings, and tether points for secure child-seat fixture. There are also front-seat active headrests, which are triggered in the event of a rear impact.

Honda claims the new Accord benefits from an "Advanced Compatibility Engineering body structure". This is a complicated way of saying that the body has deformable structures, front and rear, to dissipate energy in the event of impact. It becomes particularly significant when a frontal collision occurs between ve-

hicles of differing heights, weights or frame construction.

The car also incorporates a number of pedestrian-protection measures, including windshield-wiper pivots designed to break away on impact, energy-absorbing front-fender mounts and hinges for the hood alongside an unrestricted area close to the motor, allowing greater deformation on impact.

No prices have been released for the new Honda Accord, but it will undoubtedly be a winner in this segment of the market. Check it out when it arrives in Phuket.

The new Accord is a step forward in safety and emission efficiency. All engines in the lineup will comply with Euro 5 standards, while all models feature a sector-leading package of safety systems.



Correction: In the April 26 iBehind the Wheel column, it was mistakenly stated that the Volkswagen Scirocco consumes 7.6 liters of fuel per 1,000 kilometers. The actual rate is, of course, 7.6 liters per 100km.

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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

Until May 17. Soldiers – Art Exhibition.

In his 20 paintings, Thaweesak 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

Until May 30. Boathouse Gallery presents 'Islands' by Laura Baum.

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 exhibition is open daily between 9 am and 9 pm until May 30.

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

May 11. Barefoot Bowling Soi Dog Foundation Fundraiser.

Soi Dog Foundation 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



A vineyard in the foot on the Andes in Chile. Bottles of Chilean wine will be opened for a wine tasting event at Wine Connection Chalong on May 10.

Chilean Wine Tasting

May 10

Wine Connection Chalong, in association with Terra Mater Winery, invites you to join our Chilean wine tasting. Tapas buffet and live band. Entrance fee: 500 baht, free for club members.

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

org Website: www.soidog-foundation.org

May 11. PC and Mac Group Therapy – Laguna.

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 Laguna, 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 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 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 holding its maiden Dinner and Dance for 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).

May 18. PC Group Therapy – Chalong.

From 10 am until midday at the Sandwich Shoppe in Chalong.

May 19. Visakha Bucha Day (Public Holiday).

Visakha Bucha Day is observed on the day of the full moon during the sixth lunar month of the Thai calendar.

It is a day to commemorate three important incidents in Buddhism: the birth, the enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha.

Miraculously, although years apart, these events fell on the same date in the same month on the Buddhist calendar.

May 24 & 25. BIS Flying Fish Tawan Cruises Challenge Phuket 2008.

The BIS Flying Fish Swim Club Phuket, together with Tawan Cruises, will be hosting the inaugural Tawan Cruises Challenge Phuket 2008.

This international meet will bring together about 500 swimmers aged 18 and under from

around Asia. This event is by invitation only and will be held over two days at BIS Phuket.

Contact Denise Goetz. Tel: 089-8687248. Email: denise@flyingfishphuket.com Website: www.flyingfishphuket.com

May 25. Mac (and PC) Group Therapy – Chalong.

From 10 am until midday at the Sandwich Shoppe in Chalong.

May 26-29. Phuket Celebrity Golf Tour and Gala Dinner.

Play golf with top football, snooker and entertainment celebrities from the UK.

On May 29, there will be a celebrity gala dinner, with two hours of live entertainment with the celebs, along with a charity auction of world-class memorabilia and a four-course meal.

For more information contact Jeff Ogden. Email: jsogden@talisman-energy.com

May 31-June 1. 10th Phuket International Rugby 10s.

Marking a decade of international rugby on Phuket, this year's Rugby 10s tournament will be played at Karon Municipal Stadium.

For more information, contact Patrick Cotter by email: at phuketrugby@gmail.com

Alternatively, visit the Phuket Vagabonds website at: www.phuketvagabondsrfc.com

June 7. Showbiz.

Dance Performance by Phuket Dance Academy at Royal Phuket City Hotel.

The performance will start at 5 pm.

Adults: 500 baht; children under 12 years old: 250 baht.

Contact Linda Cumming for additional information. Tel: 081-8937749. Email: linda@linda cumming.com

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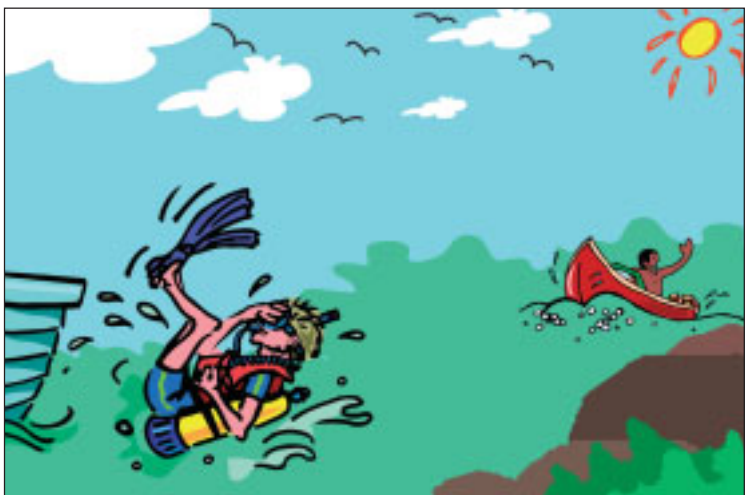
Telephone Anna or Ja-Ja on 076-236555
or contact: AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net

Puzzles

Spot the Difference



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



su | do | ku

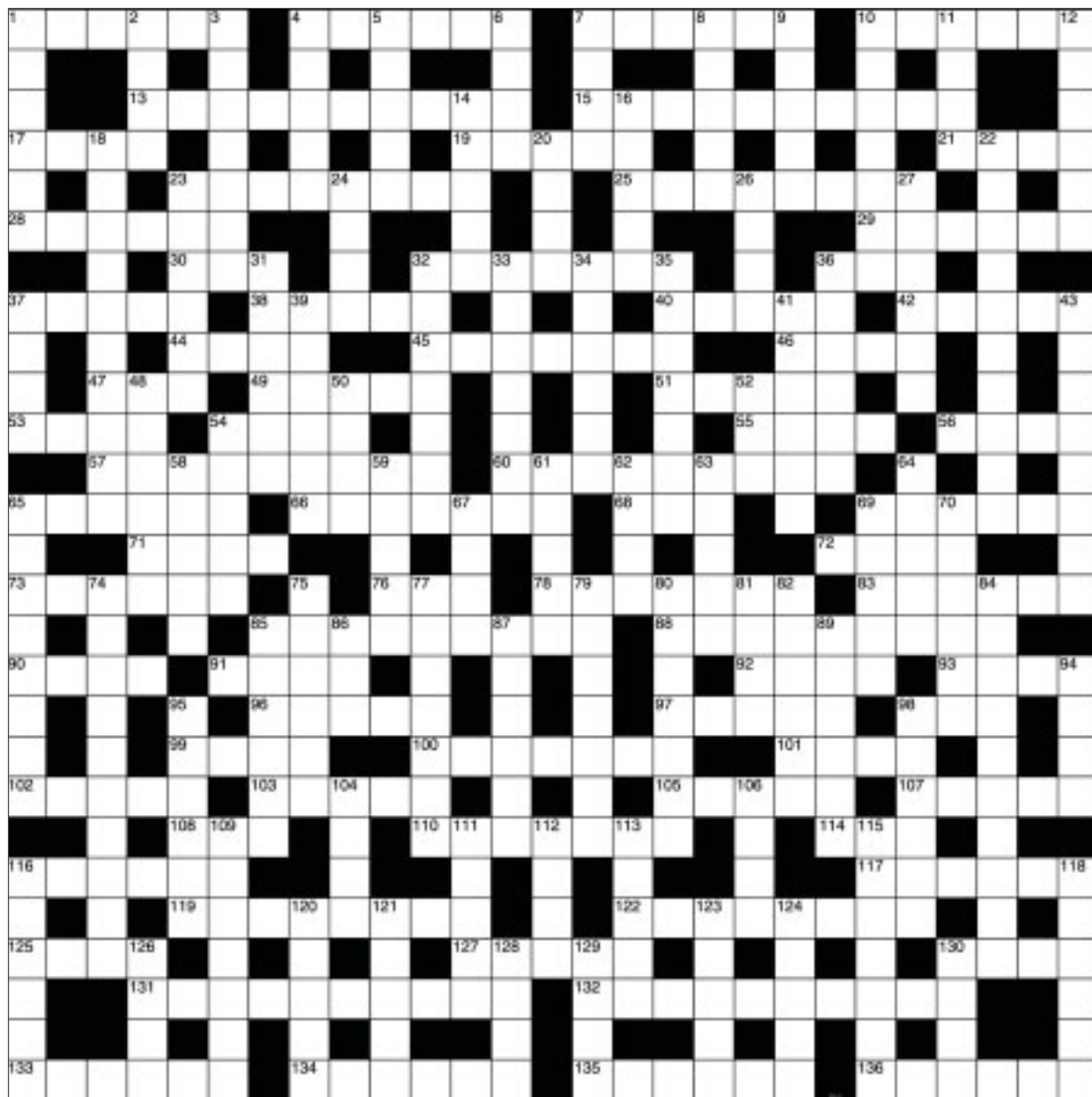
© Puzzles by Pappocom

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

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

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

The BIG Crossword



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Across

1. Church address
4. Mooing
7. Suspicions
10. With directness (4-2)
13. Sweetener (5,5)
15. Spilled over
17. Risqué
19. Robin Hood and his ...men
21. Benefit
23. Misbehaved (6,2)
25. Dormant
28. Teat
29. Carnivores, meat...
30. Fair-haired lady, ...blonde
32. Straighten again
36. Go astray
37. Servants
38. Overly fat
40. Movie award
42. Artist's nude models
44. Breakfast or dinner
45. More substantial
46. Scruff (of neck)
47. From the menu, ...carte (1,2)
49. Relative sizes
51. Castle water barriers
53. The N of NB
54. Veal stew, ...bucco
55. Thank goodness!
56. Actress, ...Paquin
57. Swearword
60. Those not present
65. Occupied (oneself)
66. Ski races
68. Repetitive strain in jury (1,1,1)
69. Becomes more exciting (4,2)

71. Ancestry diagram, family...
72. Actor, ...Gooding Jr
73. Wax coloring stick
76. Youth
78. Moving to music
83. Liquefied
85. Objected
88. Laboriously
90. Did breaststroke
91. Brass instrument
92. Rebukes, ...over the knuckles
93. Long tale
96. Solid earth, terra...
97. Failed to (4'1)
98. I am, we...
99. Fissure
100. Afternoon break
101. Taunt
102. Pummel
103. Edition
105. Surface finish
107. Chasm
108. Possess
110. Magic, ...of hand
114. ...whiz!
116. Exclusive group
117. Immensely
119. Ransacking
122. Small almond-cake
125. Writer, Roald ...
127. Split in two
130. Soft French cheese
131. Debit limits
132. Inexact
133. Explorer, Cecil ...
134. Adds up to
135. Walk like duck
136. Gizmo

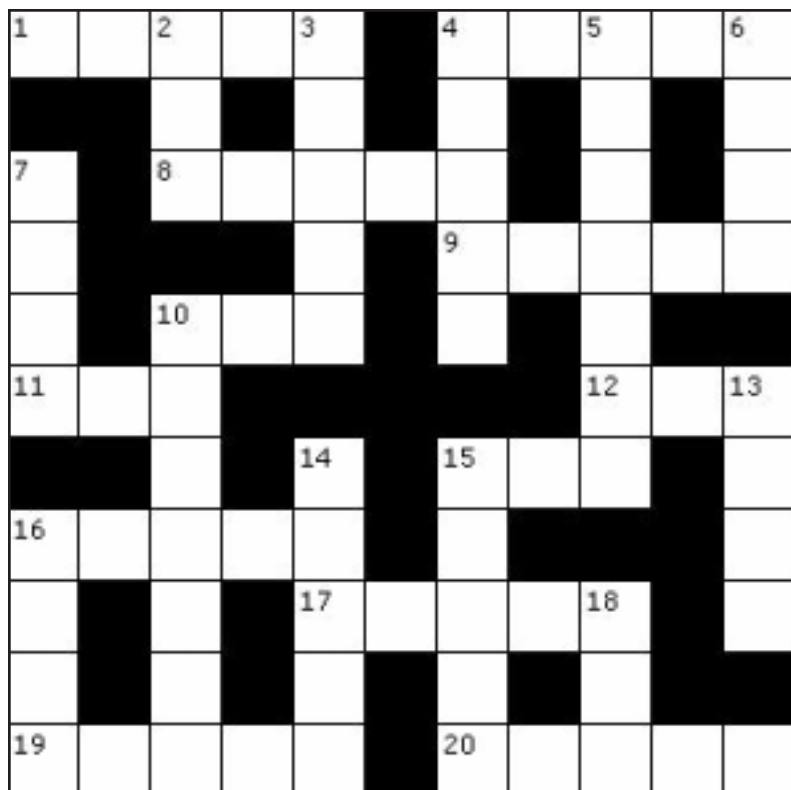
Down

1. Incite (4,2)

2. Fabled whale, ...Dick
3. Asian ribbon food
4. Rangy
5. Should
6. Actor, Richard...
7. Fashion guru, Christian...
8. Also called Myanmar
9. Wet slapping sound
10. Yet
11. Assists
12. Fiction books
14. Plentiful
16. Competing
18. Infatuates
20. Train track
22. Corrections
23. Blood component
24. Fencing blade
26. Stylish
27. Gained
31. Gruff
32. Reshape
33. Letter-jumble puzzle
34. Fools
35. Battle of Hastings victors
36. Rubs out
37. Chinese dish, chow...
39. Explosions
41. National song
43. Discarded
48. Carelessness
50. Slog
52. Mimic
54. Ancient
58. Argentina's Eva...
59. Leapfrog
61. Record's secondary track (1-4)

62. Ireland (poetic)
63. Coordinate (3,2)
64. Ear parts
65. Last resort
67. ...& evens
69. Forest floor organic matter
70. Higher
74. Lacking professional skills
75. Circles (globe)
77. Carbonates
79. Confusing
80. Iciest
81. Dork
82. Country house
84. Secretary's machine
85. Large-headed sea bird
86. Paddle
87. Angry outburst
89. Choosing
94. Six-sided figure
95. Passion
98. Greek/Turkish sea
104. Male deer
106. Famous volcano
109. Enfeeble
111. Lamp
112. False god
113. Strong males (2-3)
115. Calling up
116. Sponger
118. Designer, ...Laurent (4,2)
120. Accounts check
121. Unsuitable
123. Set of beliefs
124. Obtain (funds)
126. Shipment
128. Egyptian snakes
129. Scene
130. Arch

Solution on next page



Quick Crossword

Across

1. Illumination
4. Sharp object
8. Not drunk
9. Before nine
10. Double act
11. Elvis Costello song
12. At this moment
15. How old you are
16. Underneath
17. Not true
19. Experience scent
20. Gaze

Down

2. Petrol
3. Against the norm
4. Divided Asian country
5. John Lennon song
6. Go out
7. Touch lips
10. Turn down
13. Wither
14. Terrible
15. Permit
16. Low pitch
18. Consume

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. During which month does Phuket have the most rainfall? | 8. Which Nic Cage movie will be released later this year? | 15. By airplane, how long does the journey take today? |
| 2. Which is usually the wettest province in Thailand? | 9. Which Hong Kong actress stars in the same film? | 16. How long did the Concorde take to complete the same journey? |
| 3. What is the English name for the southernmost point in Burma, across from Ranong? | 10. Which world-famous actor did she star with in <i>New Police Story</i> ? | 17. And at what average cruising speed? |
| 4. How long did HM Queen Victoria reign? | 11. For which movie was he in Phuket to film? | 18. What incident is attributed to eventually causing the retirement of the Concorde? |
| 5. On which date did her reign end? | 12. Who wrote the original novel of the same name? | 19. How many people died in that incident? |
| 6. Who succeeded her as monarch? | 13. When was it first published? | 20. When was the Concorde's last flight? |
| 7. How long did he reign? | 14. According to that book, how long did it take to travel from New York to London? | |

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Quick crossword



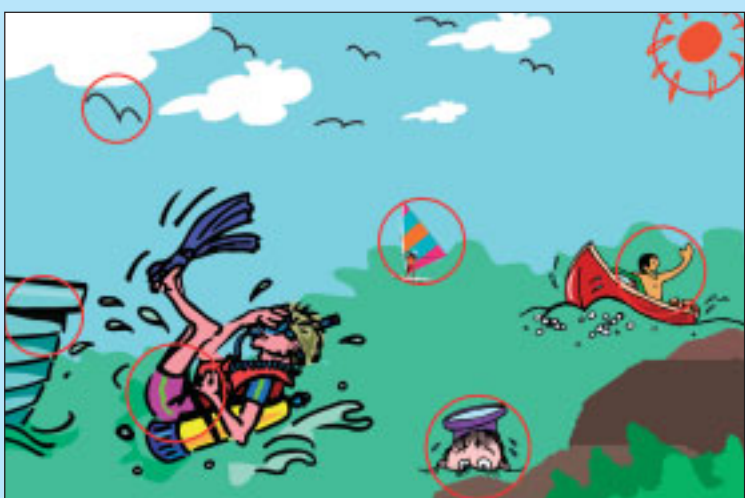
Monster Quiz Answers

1. September; 2. Ranong;
3. Victoria Point; 4. 63 years and seven months;
5. January 22, 1901 (the day she died); 6. King Edward VII; 7. 9 years, 3 months and 15 days; 8. *Bangkok Dangerous*; 9. Charlie Yeung; 10. Jackie Chan; 11. *Around the World in 80 Days*; 12. Jules Verne; 13. 1873; 14. 9 days; 15. About 7 hours; 16. Around 3½ hours; 17. Mach 2.02 (about 2,140 kmh); 18. Concorde's only crash, in Paris, on July 25, 2000; 19. 113; 20. 24 October, 2003.

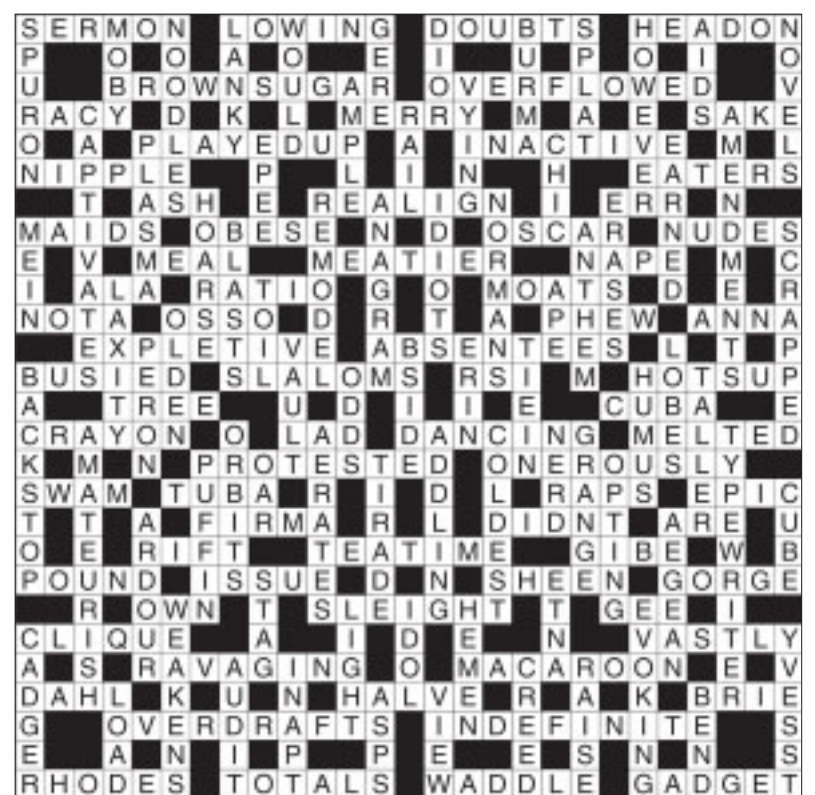
Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

Solution to this week's Cartoon Puzzle



Solution to this week's BIG Crossword



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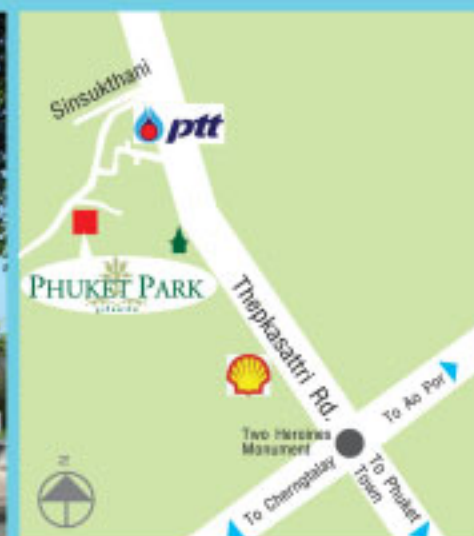
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ราคาเริ่มต้น 15.5 ล้านบาท
คอนโดโฮเทล 17 ห้อง
ราคาเริ่มต้น 3.9 ล้านบาท



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Where better to experience Mother Nature's fiery finale of a dramatic sunset than on the deck of a yacht, with a glass of wine in your hand and an unobstructed view across the sea as it turns to sparkling liquid gold?

The Sunset Dinner Cruise is one of the trips offered by *Nara* luxury cruise yacht. The leisurely trip from Chalong Pier out to Promthep Cape and back takes just over three hours, starting with a glass of wine while the sun is still up, at 5:40 in the afternoon.

The 39.5-meter yacht has three levels and can cater to groups of up to 120.

The lower level holds an air-conditioned restaurant while the upper level is split into an expansive sun deck and an enclosed bar area.

There is also a third sun deck where guests have an elevated view of the passing coastline.

Entertainment begins as soon as you're on board. Waiters and waitresses wander round with trays of drinks and snacks while musicians roll out classic jazz tunes as the sun sinks toward the horizon.

At the back of the boat, the barbecue is fired up and the on-board chef begins grilling steaks,

Sunset cruise offers best seats in the house



Groups of up to 120 can charter the 39.5-meter *Nara* yacht.

burgers and lamb chops.

As the sun descends, there are some great photo opportunities along the way. Landmarks

along the coastline, such as the Mingmongkol Buddha image in Chalong, are turned into silhouettes as the sun goes behind the

hills and fishermen in their longboats return with the day's catch.

As she rounds Promthep Cape, the *Nara* takes her place in the front row for the sun's final performance of the day and guests have the opportunity to take romantic pictures while the sun sinks into the sea.

With the onset of evening, its time to head to the lower deck and indulge in a feast of barbecued "surf and turf" and a buffet spread of Western and Asian cuisine.

Lasagnas, pastas, jacket potatoes with cottage cheese, marinated meats, stir-fried vegetables and traditional Thai curries make up the selection of main-course dishes, while a variety of breads, cheeses, salads and salamis can be mixed and matched.

The cheesecake, chocolate mousse and fruit-flan desserts are outstanding. Their popularity has the waiters running back and forth from the galley.

With a belly full of food

from the all-you-can-eat buffet, there's just time for final glass of wine or a fresh coffee under the stars before the *Nara* pulls into her berth at Chalong Pier at 9 pm.

Nara cruises are ideal for groups celebrating weddings, anniversaries and birthday parties. Management can assist in helping companies organize product launches and themed events with cruises to Phang Nga Bay, Racha Island, Khai Nok Island and the Phi Phi islands.

On these longer trips, guests can try their hand at fishing, or let someone else do all the work and soak up the scenery while enjoying a traditional Thai massage or pedicure.

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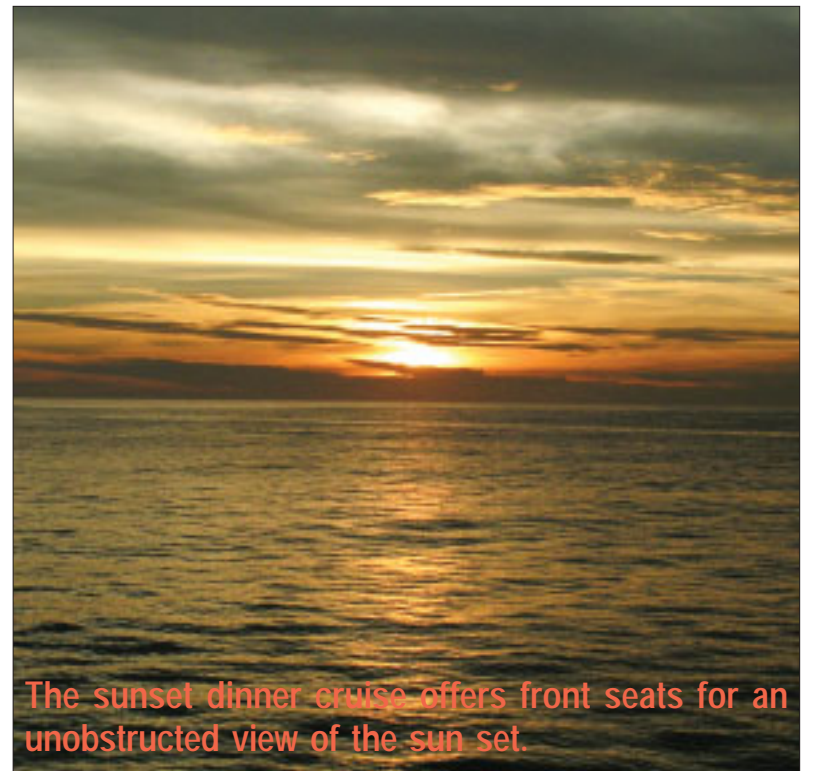
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A PC journey down the Nile

The year before the Tiananmen Square massacre, Harvard graduate Rosemary Mahoney taught English students at a provincial university in China.

She wrote a book about her oppressed students, another about the oppressed women of Ireland and one about pilgrimage sites in Europe and India. Now she takes on Egypt in *Down the Nile* (Little Brown and Company, New York, 2007, 268p).

Subtitled "Alone in a Fisherman's Skiff", this is her attempt to row down the Nile. The cover photo shows her – with the healthy Irish good looks of a Kennedy woman – in white cotton blouse and trousers manning the oars of a little rowboat.

An avid rower on Narragansett Bay at her Rhode Island home, her quest is to cover the 120 miles between the cities of Aswan and Qena.

As a lone woman, she will be a rarity on the Nile, but she notes, "On an average Saturday in any average New England harbor, it's just as rare to see a woman proceeding alone in a boat."

Why that is, I'm not sure. Perhaps it's because women don't know that it's fun. Perhaps it's because they don't know that they can."

Her book's major theme is her experience in Egypt as a single Western woman in a sexually conservative society.



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

On the third page I was hooked by this bravura sentence:

"And yet, having spent a total of three and a half months in Egypt on three separate visits, I could not deny that, although I always wore long trousers and long-sleeved shirts and conducted myself as decorously and seriously and modestly as my reasons for coming here would allow, I had never visited any country in which sex had so often arisen as a topic of conversation... had never received so many offhand proposals of marriage and professions of love from mustachioed strangers, more swaggering requests for a dance or a kiss, more offers of romantic dinners; had never been the target of more wolf whistles and catcalls and distinctly salacious whispers emanating from behind dusty clumps of shrubbery."

"Nowhere else in the world had a smiling stranger approached me and a

friend on a busy street and said, 'I want f—you,' with the idle geniality one might extend in saying, 'Looks like rain.'"

I quote this passage at length because a large part of the book consists of lengthy conversations she has with Egyptian men about how horribly they oppress their woman.

The travel section is thin gruel. She doesn't actually set off on her rowboat down the Nile until page 118, nearly halfway through the book.

The rowboat belongs to kindly felucca captain Amr, who insists on accompanying her for the three days of her trip to Edfu. Also along for the trip with Amr is Madeline Stein, an Arabic-speaking professor at the American University in Cairo.

The two arrive at Edfu and, cutting the planned river trip by a third, take a bus to Luxor, where Madeline's fluent Arabic at last secures the author a rowboat. She rows for two days to Qena and after a scary encounter at night with a fisherman, abandons the boat at the city dock.

This is hardly a heroic journey and not much to pin a travel book upon. Still, her observations are fresh and funny and carry the reader along despite the pedantic tone.

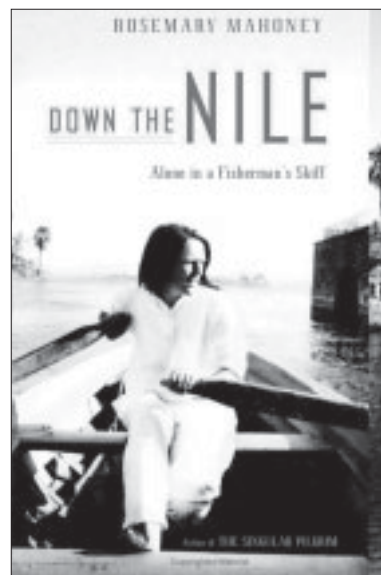
As many travel writers do, she quotes heavily from her traveling predecessors on the Nile, especially Gustave Flaubert and Florence Nightingale.

"Nightingale was already well traveled and was astonishingly well read," she observes. "She was adventuresome and passionate. She had, above all, a wicked sense of humor, which surprised and delighted me. Her characterizations were sharp, subtle, often comical."

The ample quotes she provides give a proper historical perspective, but can often feel like padding.

On her first night alone on the river, she observes that this section of the Nile has long been cleared of crocodiles, but this doesn't prevent her from giving us three pages of historical crocodile lore.

Down the Nile is a wildly uneven book, but worth it for the good stuff.



I asked readers to share their peeves about expressions restaurant employees use. Boy, did I get an earful – not just from restaurant patrons, but from employees, too.

For instance, "I am so glad that you and many of your readers find the time to pick apart the language choices of their servers. However, many of the patrons are far worse in this department."

And "You people are going out to dinner to relax, and all you can do is ridicule and judge the staff grammatically."

"Next time maybe instead of worrying about everyone's food in the dining room, I will sit down at the table with you to get a grammar lesson!!! I would love to tell you about our complaints, but you never post how we feel about customers!"

Let's change that: anyone who works in a restaurant and has peeves about the patrons' language, please share. I'll discuss those messages – along with those I've already received – in a future column. But for now, tell me this: if language is so unimportant, how did I manage, using nothing but language, to enrage you?

Note the words such as "hate," "offensive" and "very upset" in the patrons' complaints below.

It's a two-way street. Also note that I received a number of messages such as, "I liked your article on pet peeves in restaurants. I concur with all of them. I can only hope that restaurant owners read it and pass the peeves on to their employees."

So, all you restaurant staff,

Waiting on a war of words

Welcome to Word Court, where Barbara Wallraff unravels some of the mystery that shrouds the English language, debunking confusing usage and clearing away the clutter that prevents clear understanding – all by answering reader's questions.

listen up. Every one of the complaints below was made by more than one person – some of them by many more than one. That and space considerations are the reasons I haven't quoted my correspondents by name this week.

"My most hated comment is 'Do you want your change?'" one reader wrote. Another echoed him and added: "Of course I want my change! Don't you want your change when you buy something? If I am leaving the change

for a tip, I'll tell you."

What a waiter or waitress says shortly after bringing the food can also rub diners the wrong way.

One reader wrote, "Here's the one I dislike the most: 'How's everything so far?' Why 'so far'? Are things going get worse?"

Another wrote, "It drives me crazy when someone comes to the table and says, 'Is everything delicious?'" And yet another, "I hate it when wait staff ask me, 'How's it tastin'?' or

'Everything tasting OK?' Both of these seem so vulgar.

I would much prefer to be asked if I needed anything or if everything is OK."

Many diners – of both sexes – dislike it when a server calls them "honey" or "hon" or "sweetie."

One male reader explained, "Using 'honey' to refer to someone you don't know, and he knows you don't really care about, is offensive."

And single diners had a special complaint: "I get very upset when they ask, 'Are you alone?' I am a widow, and yes, I am

alone, but don't remind me. Maybe 'A table for one?'"

A despicable thought expressed cleverly can win many people over.

Unfortunately, we all know that. But the other side of the coin is that the most innocent thought expressed badly can be infuriating. This is equally worth keeping in mind.

Barbara Wallraff is a weekly syndicated columnist for *King Features* and a contributing editor and columnist at *The Atlantic Monthly*, where she has worked since 1983.



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Ao Phuket, our problems

The sudden push to resurrect the Ao Phuket project under the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) comes as little surprise given this government's love of mega-projects.

According to a 2005 report on the Public Relations Department website, "The mission of Dasta is to integrate the tourism developments in designated areas under the government's policy and regulation. The designated areas will be overlooked, preserved and renovated. The quality of tourism products and services will also be developed to meet global standards, so that they will be able to compete with other tourism destinations abroad."

One of the first "areas" put under DASTA was the Koh Chang archipelago in Trat, where strong local resistance and other factors have prevented any real measure of success in the quest for sustainable tourism.

While some DASTA projects on Koh Chang worked towards sustainability, such as water supply and waste treatment facilities, other stillborn DASTA projects there went in the opposite direction, such as the plan to pipe fresh water from the main island to smaller, outlying isles and develop them as themed tourist attractions with names such as "Golf Island" and "Spa Island".

DASTA was also put in charge of redeveloping Phi Phi Don after the tsunami. The results were negligible because their plans met fierce resistance from residents.

Given its history, DASTA's board must be relieved that their initial involvement in the Ao Phuket project has not been met with the type of opposition that has railroaded many of their other projects. Indeed, reaction among local officials to DASTA's plan to push the 100-billion-baht project Ao Phuket is overwhelmingly positive.

Perhaps the local reaction is too positive, however, because the project in its current form raises myriad environmental concerns. It would produce an estimated 60,000 kilograms of extra garbage a day, require about 20,000 cubic meters of water daily and must have its own wastewater treatment facilities.

Also of great concern is the effect the project would have on the naturally slow flushing rate in Ao Phuket, into which surface runoff and treated wastewater from Phuket City and much of Kathu flows.

Given the waste-management crisis on the island, perhaps that issue would be a better place for the government to start if sustainable tourism were the real goal. It would be a real twist of irony if the government begins funding the 100-billion-baht mega-project before it comes up with the 2-billion-baht needed for a second furnace at the nearby Saphan Hin incineration plant.

— The Editor

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

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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.

Patong Grand Prix

When you read something in the Gazette, it just isn't the same until it happens to you.

On two occasions in the past few days I have been forcibly removed from parking opposite the Grand Tropicana Hotel on Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd in Patong.

Having parked in one of the free designated white boxes, Thai men came up to me and asked me to vacate the parking spot. Of course, I value my car and complied with their requests.

My question isn't so much about whether the authorities know that this practice is going on, but exactly what kind of money are they making with this concession?

Also, is it true that the tuk-tuk drivers finally capitulated to Patong's one-way system when they were finally offered appeasement in the form of a whole extra lane for them to park down Thaweewong and Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi roads?

Finally, can anyone name just one safety measure that has been put into place for tourists and residents to cross over this race track?

Singapore and Monaco have street Grand Prix races. All that's missing in Patong is the checkered flag.

Safety and value of life continue to have a very low priority in Thailand.

Parked off
Patong

Ignore red at your own risk

I totally agree with John Baptismo [Gazette Letters, April 26-May 2]. When I was about five years old, I learned to stay out of the

water whenever there was thunder or lightning – it's the same rule all over the world.

Also, it is not for fun that there are different colored flags at the beaches – here and all around the world. Red flags mean do not swim!

When I arrived in Phuket on September 5, the whole beach along Karon was full of red flags, so no-one could have missed them. There was even a big road sign with a red flag on it.

Even so, people were swimming in the sea, some with their small children. During my one-week visit, two drowned in Karon and two drowned in Kata.

It does not matter how many lifeguards there are on the beaches when people are indifferent to and ignore the warnings not to swim.

Thank you, Thailand, for this time; I'll be back in November and I always respect the flags.

Ninni Sundberg
Karon

Thailand needs to rise to the occasion

It is shocking to know that a natural disaster of such magnitude has happened in Burma, a country so close to us in distance, yet eons away in wealth and development.

I haven't heard of any relief efforts being organized by people in Phuket and the region, but with the amazing response following the 2004 tsunami, one would think that local personnel in health, army, rescue and related fields should be ideally poised to provide the much-needed assistance in Burma.

With the US playing politics – and, frankly, after its pathetic response to its own citi-

zens after Hurricane Katrina – it leaves Thailand as the best hope for taking a leadership role in this effort.

If it plays its cards right, Thailand could use the opportunity to encourage some real change in the country – if only Thai leaders could come to realize that a free and stable Burma would strengthen Southeast Asia as a whole.

And since the Burmese people are responsible for so much of the building here, it would be morally reprehensible if we failed to help to rebuild their homes and lives in return.

Susan
Chalong

Music matters

Irrespective of the type of "music" being covered – and in my case, the very mention of "hip hop" is enough to switch me off – I would like to take time to address Matt Crook's review of his night out at White Box [Gazette, After Dark, May 3-9].

As it is, the article came across as the glib display of snobbery from a smug pedant.

I must, however, thank you for listing all of the places around Phuket, devoid of musical entertainment of any significant value, that I now thankfully know to avoid.

Harry Barracuda
By email

Matt Crook replies: My review was not critical of White Box, but of the DJ, of whom I expected something worthy of his reputation.

As a cutting-edge venue, White Box deserved better. If the Rolling Stones sang Spice Girls covers at a concert, you'd be disappointed, too.

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

Rambo draws first blood in war on mangrove encroachment

I am an officer with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment responsible for investigating law-enforcement issues in the South. I was formerly the chairman of the Phuket provincial land-encroachment investigation and protection team that was appointed by the governor.

In Phuket, when Dr Yuwat Wuthimethee was governor, I was with the Provincial Protection Unit, which is responsible for protection of natural resources.

Land problems occur because there have always been high- and low-ranking officers involved in land encroachment. The person who approves a title deed must be either a minister, the Permanent Secretary of the Land Department, the director general of a government department or, worse, a public prosecutor, so it is those people who are involved in land encroachment.

There are clear cases of fraud. High-ranking officials approve deeds by upgrading Sor Kor 1 deeds, hiring people to pretend they own the land and then changing the deeds to Chanote titles. Senior-level officials must be involved. When a Chanote title deed is approved, it means no-one can go on that land, or they will be charged – even government officers.

In the past, I reported these people, but the police and public prosecutors took no action. When I was asked to file a complaint against Land Department Director Chairerk Dissaya-amnaji, if the prosecutors did not then charge him, they would have turned it around and charged me instead. He was charged with failing to cancel a land title deed that should never have been issued on 21 rai of mangrove forest in Rassada.

I am now involved in politics and I am not afraid of influential or high-ranking people. I was once treated very badly by my supervisors when I was working for a special unit under the Ministry of Natural Resources

FIRST PERSON

Monton "Palad Rambo" Chardsuwan is an officer of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, responsible for looking into law-enforcement issues in the South.

Palad Rambo, named after the movie hero played by Sylvester Stallone, hit headlines recently when he led a group of villagers in filing a complaint against Land Department Director Chairerk Dissaya-amnaji for failing to revoke a Chanote title deed on protected land.

Here Palad Rambo has some strong words for those involved in illegal mangrove encroachment.



and Environment. My superiors did not protect me. Instead, I was actually charged with corruption. They wanted me to resign, but it didn't work.

Today, I have nothing to lose. If I die, I will leave no problems behind – all my children have grown up. Many campaigners who have done the same thing I do in Phuket have ended up hurt, shot, paralyzed or even dead. Those people fought for what is right. We have to remove the masks of the high-ranking people who have done wrong.

It's difficult to tell where this situation will end, because there are only a few men like me. One day, others might become too scared to go outside for fear of being shot. If those men become discouraged and see no way out, they might end up conspiring with influential people and turning the blame on me, or start asking me why don't I relax more by playing golf or something else. They constantly pursue me to join their side. I cannot do that.

I sometimes have a chance to talk to non-profit organizations and special units. There are many people involved at committee levels, setting up policies. When I ask them in how many cases they

have successfully reclaimed land, I receive no answer. To me, this means they are not truly interested in getting the land back.

The national-park system is a good because there is less encroachment. The parks are controlled quite well. There is some encroachment, but not much. I estimate that only about 15% of National Park land has been encroached on.

In contrast, I think that about half of all mangrove forests in Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi and Satun have been encroached on. Sometimes, the encroachers start with shrimp farms, then they turn the shrimp farms into land by filling it with soil. They then build a resort or marina on the land.

When the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment inspects the land, they show their Chanote title and say that they can do what they want with the land because they already have the deed. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is then unable to do anything right away.

Such cases must be investigated, which takes time.

The investors in these projects are big players in tour-

ism and property. They just do what they want and build what they want. I alone can fight small projects, posing a threat to them and hopefully slowing down their progress, but the provincial office needs to work with many sectors to outline what the wrongdoing is and then file complaints.

The governor has an important role here. Governor Niran is good for this sort of action. He acts right away. When I filed a complaint against the Director of the Land Department, he acted bravely and sought to withdraw the Chanote title that had been approved by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior. The Land Department did not try and have it withdrawn, but the governor did.

We have visions of Phuket becoming a major tourism destination. We must control the land from the beginning, otherwise investors will simply buy everything. We must preserve our country's resources.

Such measures might be attacked by investors. They may say that I am acting against foreign investors. What actually happens is that some people buy land very cheap and take advantage of our people by selling it on at

much higher profits to foreigners, who then build on the land.

Our people spent their life savings on their homes, only to be taken advantage of by investors. Their land is sold, the mangrove forest is sold and the land is encroached on. Only local people will know what is going on as they have to live with this for the rest of their lives. The new generation won't know.

I want people to understand that I will fight for these cases against anyone. All media must make this public knowledge to show the story behind these matters.

On being called Rambo, it's a name that shows people I will fight for them. There was an annual meeting of government departments at which I had to write a statement praising [evaluating] the my superiors in the Ministry of Interior.

Instead, I wrote about how people really felt about the Ministry of Interior. People were scared of them, as if they were mafia. They changed my statement to something more positive and then tried to push me out of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. I wrote that the officers of the Ministry of Interior care only about themselves, without giving any thought to the public. They take the side of businessmen over their own people.

People started to hear about my actions and a newspaper called me "Rambo". It has been my nickname since. I didn't like it at first because I thought that the image of Rambo was not good for me. I am not that kind of person: aggressive, irresponsible, idiotic.

I was a scholarship student who won funding to study abroad. When they named me Rambo, it was as if they were saying that I am aggressive, carry a weapon, have no talent.

That's the part I don't like. I can't avoid the name given to me, but I can make it more about me and change its meaning with my actions.

Where can I dispose of my UPS?

I have an old UPS (uninterruptible power supply) unit which no longer works because the lead-acid battery has died. Is there any place or shop on the island that takes dead UPS units, or do I just throw it away with my usual garbage?

Takashi Hirakawa
Chalong

Sumal Tilokkarn, a store clerk at Wongpanit Recycling Center, the Phuket branch of the Wongpanit Group, replies:

You can bring your old UPS unit to us. We will buy it from you as it has parts that can be recycled. We pay from eight to 10 baht per kilogram,

depending on the condition the unit is in.

We will dispose of the parts that cannot be reused and we will sell the parts that can be recycled.

The main Wongpanit Recycling Center in Phuket is at 75/3 Moo 1, Kathu, Phuket. Tel: 076-203271.

The shop is near Anuphas Dents Done on Pra Phuket Kaew Rd. and is open daily from 8 am to 5:30 pm. It's closed Sundays.

The Wongpanit Recycling Center in Thalung is on Thepkrasattri Rd in Baan Pon, Thalung. Tel: 076-311224, open daily 8 am to 5 pm, closed on Sundays.

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

I recently visited the Philippines, which is the only country in the world where nobody misspells "Philippines". I've seen it misspelled "Phillipines" so many times that every time I see it spelled correctly, I think it's wrong.

As a first-time visitor, I was eager to acquire insight into the Filipino soul. I have always believed that a surefire way to understand the soul of any people is to read their airline's in-flight magazine. And lo, there it was: an advertisement for Gore-Tex nose implants.

The idea of implanting Gore-Tex to attain a nobler nose was new to me. I have a sturdy winter parka made of Gore-Tex, which is a tough fabric that repels rain, wind and snow. I couldn't imagine why anybody in his right mind would want this stuff inside his nose.

Maybe it gives you a waterproof nose.

Troubled by this mystery, I had to concede that understanding the Filipino soul would require a lot more effort than reading an in-flight magazine.

First impressions can be deceiving, but I had the feeling that the Thais and the Filipinos have much in common. Happy and smiling, warm and friendly, with a great affinity for art and music – the two groups have a lot in common.

One difference is that Thais are mostly Buddhists, whereas Filipinos are Catholics. While rolling through the Filipino countryside, I was shocked to see no Thai temples rising from the rice fields. A rice paddy without a temple somewhere

Gore-Tex noses, Viagra and the toilet-paper twist



By S. TSOW

on the horizon is hardly a rice paddy at all, in my opinion. The beauty of the Filipino countryside seemed to be somehow missing something.

It was also a shock to see no monks making their alms rounds in the morning. I call on the Filipino authorities to put some monks out on the sidewalks to give the mornings some color.

There are no noodle stands or sidewalk vendors; instead replaced by wandering touts selling Viagra and Cialis. I found this mildly insulting and pined for the colorful streets of Thailand, lined by friendly vendors and noodle stands.

No temples, no monks, no vendors,

no noodles. I began to succumb to a feeling of sensory deprivation.

There is also a lack of shopping malls. No doubt there are malls in Manila, but I wasn't there long and didn't see any. Outside Manila, I saw only one. There are plenty of 7-Elevens, but no Big C, no Tesco-Lotus, no Philippine Paragon, none of the icons of Oriental culture that flourish in Thailand.

The Philippines looks like a golden opportunity for Thai entrepreneurs to build shopping malls. The Filipinos may be able to survive without temples, monks, vendors and noodle stands, but a dearth of shopping malls is a hardship that no civilized people should be forced to endure.

One Filipino cultural icon that deserves mention is the trike. It's the Filipino version of the tuk-tuk, but with significant shortcomings.

The trike is a motorcycle with an attached sidecar, seemingly designed by sadists, because there's a roof over the sidecar. In fact, the sidecar is an egg-shaped metal bubble with an open doorway—sort of an iron maiden on wheels. To clamber into it, you have to squeeze through the

doorway and fall inside. If you're fat, like me, they practically have to pry you into a trike with a shoehorn. I could hear my bones breaking and my tendons snapping every time I struggled in or out.

Another cultural icon is the toilet-paper twist. Whenever a waitress pops the cap off a bottle of beer, she ties a twist of toilet paper over the opening before presenting it to you.

I could never fathom the reason for this innovation. Is she afraid that bugs will get into the beer? Not likely, since hardly three seconds will pass before the thirsty imbibitor starts quaffing it. You have a choice between removing the twist before drinking or filtering your beer through several layers of toilet paper.

Like the Gore-Tex nose implant, the toilet-paper twist remains an enduring mystery of this exotic land. If I ever feel the need for either, like General MacArthur, I shall return.

S. Tsow can be flamed at stsow@yahoo.com, except when he's trying to figure out the purpose of the toilet-paper twist.

I have found a great way to meet chicks, or – more politically correctly – persons of the alternative gender to the male: my baby son.

One Sunday afternoon, one of my wife's elder sisters and her husband visited us. After taking in the sights of the Viharnra Sien Chinese-style temple and museum complex, I drove couple of kilometers down to the popular tourist attraction known as Buddha mountain.

As a caring husband and loving father I relieved she-who-must-be-dismayed of her carrying duty with our little sprog as we wandered about the environs of the mountain.

Descending a flight of stairs, I was approached by an attractive young Thai lady in her early twenties, who came straight up and said, "What a beautiful baby. Can I kiss him?" As my

The Chick Magnet

chest swelled with pride and other parts of my anatomy swelled with inappropriate thoughts, I graciously granted her request.

I think she-who-must-be-dismayed mentally vowed from that day forth never to allow me outside in the company of our son without appropriate supervision, especially if there was a microbe's chance in Hell of me coming within 500 meters of a remotely attractive female.

With my son in tow, shopping at Carrefour has almost become a pleasurable experience. We take a trolley with a small baby seat mounted atop, complete with safety harness, and our little Adonis is perched on it.

I am entrusted with pushing him up and down the aisles while we criss-cross the length and breadth of the supermarket in search of victuals, clothing, ladies shoes, comestibles, ladies shoes, packs containing 2,000 nappies, ladies shoes, cutlery, plates, and ladies shoes.

What makes this "route march" exercise almost enjoyable is the number of young ladies who stop to stare and very often to reach out and touch our little rug rat.

He has usually fallen into a deep sleep by the time we've traversed the second aisle, the one with ladies shoes, and, since all babies look gorgeous when

they're asleep, he becomes even more of a chick magnet.

The women look at him, then look at me, look at him again, and then back at me again. I can see their minds ticking over. "Oh what a cute baby," they mutter, sometimes in English, usually in Thai. Looking askance at me they'll ask, "Boy or girl?"

I know they're thinking, "How is it hu-

manly possible to produce such a physically gorgeous young baby when the father looks as if he has spent his life chasing parked cars for a living?"

The next thought is, "Does the foreign gene pool regress a generation or so, thereby producing children who look more like their paternal grandparents?"

There may be something to this, as my father was certainly known in his time as a chick magnet, and not just when he was being pushed about in a stroller.

I am yet to try my luck with him in one of Fun Town's many dens of the chrome pole, also referred to as go-go bars.

The mother-of-my-child hates smoke-filled bars and being naturally protective of our little boy's health and wellbeing, she isn't about to let him go anywhere near a smoke-filled place in which alcohol, loud music and practically naked dancing girls are all within a nappy throw of each other.

I guess I'll just have to wait until he grows up – but not too much.



By Duncan Stearn

The Phuket Gazette is now available at all **FamilyMart** outlets in Phuket

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Has the Internet worm turned?

Last year around December 15, Internet access speeds all over Phuket went to hades in a hand-basket. I'm very, very happy to report that, starting around April 1, the speeds are inexorably, if slowly, headed back up.

Those of us who pay 2,600 baht a month for a CAT HiNet ADSL line that's rated at 2,000 Kilobits per second (Kbps) can expect to see 600Kbps or more on most afternoons. Some people, in some locations, are enjoying speeds around 1,400 to 1,600Kbps, consistently, in the afternoon.

That's important. Permit me to elaborate.

There's a fuzzy magical line drawn in the downloading sand around 1,100 or 1,200 Kbps. If you can consistently download data at 1,200 Kbps, you can watch most videos on the Web in real time, without any stuttering or major gaps.

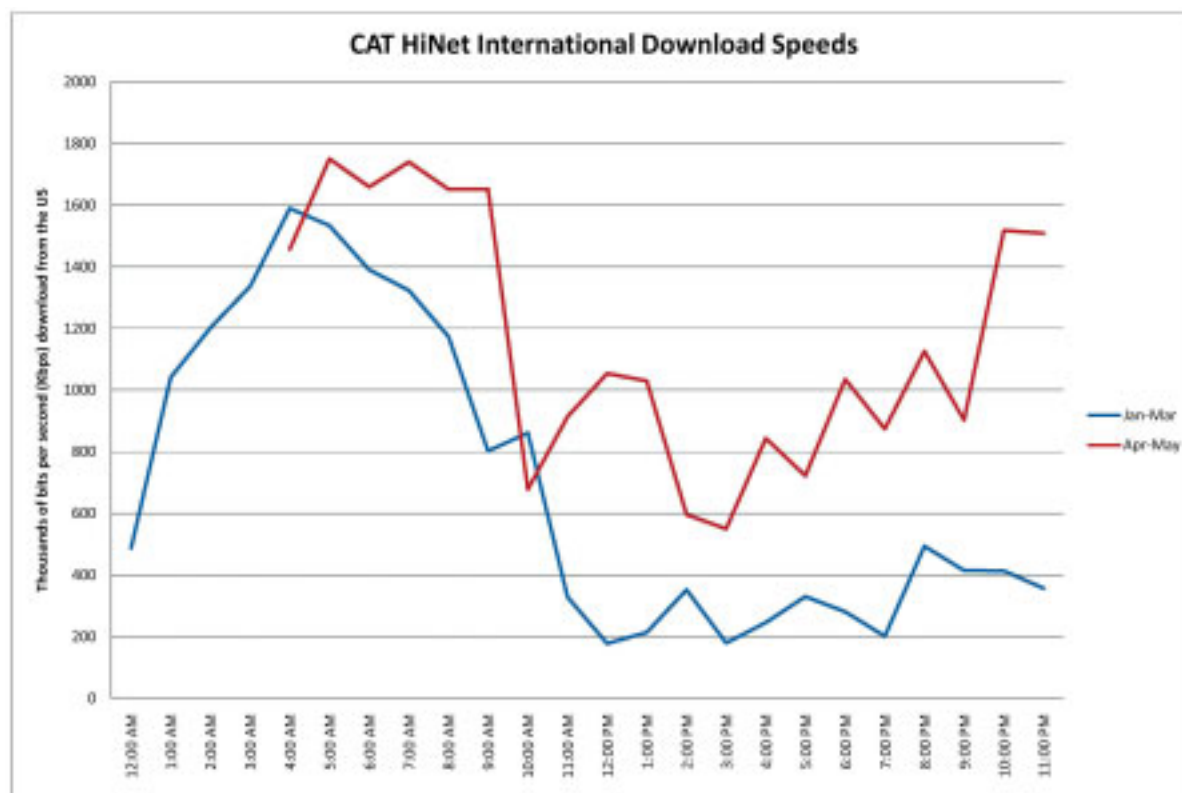
Granted, you can't run high-quality videos, but for the typical YouTube presidential debate or CNN news clip – or PGTV broadcast, for that matter – 1,200Kbps can keep up.

People blessed with Internet lines that run at 1,200Kbps or more now have access to an entirely new medium. Well, it's new for us; folks in Korea and Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong have had real-time video for so long it's become humdrum. But that's another story for another time. Like the leap from radio to TV some 50 years ago, online real-time video has the potential to change our lives.

I've been watching the reported Internet download speeds on the Phuket Internet Speed Reporting site (live-access.com/PhuketInternet.aspx) and seen some surprising results. The most remarkable trend is an across-the-board improvement in Internet speeds from the three major Internet Service Providers in Phuket: CAT, TOT and TT&T.

I have no idea why speeds are improving at the current rate – for that matter, I have no idea whether they will continue to improve or not – but there's no question they're getting better.

A friend of mine has a theory. He thinks that the major ISPs ran out of money on December 15 and had to cut back on their international bandwidth contracts. He also thinks that the new government has replenished the coffers, or at least re-diverted



the funds, and we're now seeing the results of a bigger bandwidth budget.

Another friend thinks that the speeds track the rise of the high season – more people in mid-December spells greater demand, which slows things down for everybody. He thinks that the passing of peak season and now the slow drift into the, ahem, green season, has reduced demand sufficiently to unclog the digital arteries.

Both of those scenarios are plausible. The only speculation I've seen that doesn't hold any water comes from the "school kids did it" theorists. Phuket's Internet slowdown hasn't tracked the school holidays at all. The kids are in the clear, as far as I'm concerned.

If you take a close look at the data, you'll find several additional surprises.

Internet speeds seem to be

highly dependent on location. I have four CAT HiNet ADSL lines. Both of the lines in Patong run like greased lightning most of the day, although they go to different parts of town.

The line that ends just short of Laguna (which, for the nitpickers, is a G.SDSL line, not an ADSL line, per se) consistently runs 30% to 40% slower than the Patong line, at least in the afternoons. And the line to Fisherman's Way Business Park in Chalong lopes along slower still.

If you look at the website, you'll see the differences.

Right now, the fastest line being reported doesn't come from CAT. It's a TT&T MaxNet line based in Kata. On occasion the line runs faster than its nominal 2,000Kbps rated speed – surely an unexpected result for

any ADSL connection, anywhere. At 1,000 baht a month, it's a screaming bargain. But other TT&T Maxnet customers haven't fared as well.

I was a bit surprised to see that TOT's SilverCyber plan has higher posted average speeds than the twice-as-expensive TOT GoldCyber package.

CAT's EV-DO service (known locally as the "AirCard")

is showing signs of strain. Speeds for folks running both the original AirCard 580 and the Comtech CCU-650 (both available only from CAT) have picked up a bit since April 1, but they're still running in the 400 Kbps range in the afternoons.

CAT hasn't sold any new EV-DO cards in more than a month. Perhaps they're restraining demand by limiting the supply

of new cards.

Internet speeds are always a hot topic at our Sunday morning PC Group Therapy sessions and if you're curious about getting the most baht for the baht, drop by one of our free sessions.

If you're confused, don't worry: the press releases, promises and newspaper reports flying around don't make any sense.

Group Therapy sessions tend to cut through the nonsense very quickly, and present the facts in a way that anybody can understand. We're all in this leaky boat together.

Woody (www.AskWoody.com) has written several dozen computer books, including a bunch *For Dummies*... He's also a Contributing Editor at *Windows Secrets Newsletter*, a *Microsoft MVP* and a *bagel fanatic*.

PC GROUP THERAPY

Join Woody and other Windows victims at his Sunday morning PC Group Therapy sessions, co-sponsored by the Phuket Gazette.

On May 11, from 10 am to noon, he'll be at the Sandwich Shoppe near the main entrance to Laguna. On May 18, the crew will convene at the Sandwich Shoppe in Chalong, one kilometer north of Chalong Circle, next to Wine Connection.

On May 25, we'll have a MAC-centric session, also at Sandwich Shoppe Chalong, for those of the Apple persuasion.

Sessions are designed to help everybody – especially complete computer novices – and the sessions are absolutely free.

Find driving instructions at www.KhunWoody.com

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ON THE MOVE

Movenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket recently appointed Belgian native **Patrick de Staercke** as Director of Food and Beverages.

He holds an MBA from Solvay Business School, Belgium, and began his hospitality career at Hotel La Reserve, Geneva. He also held directorship positions at the Brown Palace Hotel and Spa, Denver.

Before joining Movenpick, Mr de Staercke was Director of Food and Beverages at Meeru Island Hotel Resort & Spa Maldives.



Bangkok native **Anussara Kitisook** was recently appointed Marketing Manager of Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

She holds a bachelor's degree from the faculty of commerce and accountancy at Chulalongkorn University and a master's degree from the National University, Los Angeles, California.

Before joining Bangkok Hospital Phuket, K. Anussara held positions as Marketing Manager for Central Pattana and Assistant Managing Director of Kitisook Motor.



Jorge De la Torre Koch was recently appointed as Sales & Operations Manager of Silk Restaurant & Bar.

Jorge studied hotel management and human resources in Switzerland.

Before joining Silk Restaurant and Bar, Jorge was at the helm of Latin Thai Co Ltd. He is also Secretary of Skal International Phuket.

He is a Helms-Briscoe Corporate Management Associate for Phuket and a Royal Thai Police Immigration volunteer.



New home buyer program launched

PHUKET: David Lloyd and Absolute Group on April 24 launched its Fractional Ownership program in Thailand, offering holiday home buyers an option to own property in Phuket and Samui.

Absolute Group Chairman Bryan Lunt said, "Fractional Ownership program is designed to be an alternative ideal for buyers who are holidaymakers, or even Thai people, to own property during the desired period of time for their holiday rather than buying the unit and using it only a few times a year. It's not a new program but it is new to the Thai market."

The program will be available for Bangla Suites Jacuzzi Condominiums, a luxury apartment complex located off Soi Bangla, and the two new joint-venture projects between Absolute Group and David Lloyd: the Absolute David Lloyd Beach Club at Nakalay, north of Patong, and a new project in Thongkrut, Samui.

The boutique condominium project at Nakalay is a joint venture between Absolute Group, David Lloyd and landowner and developer A Plan. The project comprises 33 units and nearly 80% have been sold within three months of the project's soft launch.

The seven units still available will be sold under fractional ownership at prices from 775,000 baht for a four-week or 28-night ownership period each year for life.

The Bangla Suites project comprises 53 units, of which 85% have been sold since the project's soft launch six months ago. Fractional ownership is being offered for all seven penthouses. Prices start at 1.75 million baht.

The fractional ownership certificates can be re-sold.

Jones Lang LaSalle expands to Phuket

PHUKET (*Nation*): Inspired by the rapid expansion of the island's property market, Jones Lang LaSalle has launched estate management services in Phuket.

The estate management services are provided from its Bangkok base, which manages more than 2 million square meters of property.

Jones Lang LaSalle already acts as estate manager for three luxury resorts in Phuket: Kata Gardens, a 33-unit villa development by Raimon Land; a resort component of Blue Canyon Country Club with 98 condominium units; and Seaview Residence, a 14-villa luxury development.

Dexter Norville, head of estate management services for Jones Lang LaSalle in Phuket, said, "Potential demand for our estate management services is very high as new luxury resorts and development projects continue to mushroom."

"More importantly," he added, "developers are now focusing on creating a brand image through the actual quality of the project and their customer-relationship management to deliver investor relations and ultimately better sales. They are leaving



Kata Gardens is one of three projects in Phuket already under Jones Lang LaSalle management.

estate management to professional, independent service providers," he said.

"In addition, unit owners are demanding branded professional management services, not only to maximize their comfort but also to ensure that their property assets' full value is realized over the length of the investment," he added.

The services provided by


Jones Lang LaSalle range from pre-completion and handover management to full on-site estate management and engineering services.

"With many villas and condominium units costing more than 20 million baht, unit owners need to be sure that the estate and all services are being provided by experts who concentrate on management," Mr Norville said.

"Many unit owners are successful business people who will expect a developer to entrust the estate management to a dedicated service provider.

"Knowing that all services, including legal and accounting issues, are being handled by management professionals makes them feel comfortable," he added.

Mr Norville said that management services should start with the consultancy stage for new projects on issues including estate layout, facilities provided, finishing, accessibility, quality of work and system commissioning, all with a view to the present management.



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New fund looks to green future

The only guarantee in life is change. The world around us changes, as do our circumstances and attitudes. What is acceptable can become unacceptable. Smoking is the perfect example.

The "green" movement is another area that has moved from the fringe to center stage. However, when change occurs, it is important that reality is not pushed aside for the latest fad.

Our planet cannot indefinitely absorb the ecological damage being inflicted upon it. When it comes to investment, many green themes are simply not maintainable or economically viable. This does not mean that we can avoid looking at new realities, but it does mean that, in most cases, they will need to be sustainable.

The Arch Sustainable Strategies Fund is an investment fund that is being launched in Guernsey, the Channel Islands.

The parent group is Arch Financial Products LLP, a London-based investment house regulated by the Financial Services Authority of the UK. Arch

has an enviable track record in investment.

The investment allocation, which will be addressed at the end of this article, is different to the average fund, even in this sector. This fund is categorized as an "absolute return fund".

Our planet has never had the demands placed on it that we face today. In many ways we have become victims of our own success. Our life expectancy has never

been so high, nor has our ability to treat disease. Even transport, compared to a century ago, has changed so much as to be almost unrecognizable.

The Arch Fund recognizes these changes and seeks to profit from well-targeted investments. For example, increased wealth in the developed and developing worlds has resulted in a burgeoning class of affluent consumers. These individuals will continue to support the premium ends of markets, especially for assets in limited supply, such as prime property and fine wine.

Of particular merit are assets where there is a well-organized marketplace, where supply

is decreasing or static while demand is increasing. Limited supply assets demonstrate attractive risk-return characteristics and the future returns for such investments should continue to be strong.

Infrastructure is an area that will continue to grow exponentially. Energy infrastructure is a prime example, where current supplies are under pressure. Not only do we need to expand our production, using existing technologies where possible, but there is an urgent need for new, sustainable technologies that don't harm the environment.

Waste recovery needs to improve. Clean drinking water is also essential. It is estimated that by 2030, the world population will be 9 billion. Most of this increase is taking place in countries that are poorly positioned to deal with the resulting problems.

Successful countries will be the ones that tackle the issues. The Arch Fund expects environmental stewardship to become a dominant global investment theme. Whilst most emissions markets have a long way to go, many green firms are already seeing benefits in terms of allocated capital, favorable tax and regulatory treatment.

The Arch Fund allocates to sectors and opportunities that are

at the optimal stage of their life cycle. They avoid early-stage investments, where the return profile is uncertain, risk is high and the strategy unproven. Similarly, public-market investments, where the value potential has peaked and competition is more intense, are also avoided.

The Arch Fund is focused on investment opportunities in infrastructure, clean technologies for industry, alternative energy development, and extraction and transport of scarce resources.

The fund targets a net return of 15% to 20% per annum over the medium term. The existing fund unusually shows no negative returns due to prevailing investment-market conditions.

The major areas for allocation of the fund's assets are projected to be energy and infrastructure (24.3%), water power (16.6%), natural resources (15%), and private finance and sustainable private equity (20.7%).

This new fund is an inter-

esting addition to any portfolio. Base currency is the US dollar, with an alternative in the pound sterling. The fund managers may add a euro class, depending on demand.

Arch, with its 18 experienced partners, has a well-defined investment process, which is essential in investment management.

Our planet has never had the demands placed on it that we face today. In many ways we have become victims of our own success. Our life expectancy has never been so high, nor has our ability to treat disease.

The approach is "top-down portfolio construction and identification of core areas of focus" and "minimal correlation to equity, bond and typical alternative markets".

By coincidence, I was watching an interview with economist Bronwyn Curtis on CNBC. Her new job title: partner and chief economist at Arch.

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



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Ratthapark Wilairot finished eighth in the 250cc Pramac Grand Prix of China on May 4.

Thai rider scores in China

CHINA: Thai motorcycle rider Ratthapark Wilairot scored his best finish in the 250cc Pramac Grand Prix of China in Shanghai on May 4.

Wilairot, after a strong ride in difficult conditions following morning rain, finished in eighth place, scoring his first championship points.

Wilairot, from Chonburi, joined the 250cc World Championship in 2007 as a member of the Thai Honda PTT-SAG team.

The arrival of the Thai rider on the world scene was the result of an agreement between AP Honda of Thailand and Spanish-based Stop and Go Team, providing Wilairot with the opportunity to ride a Honda RS250R A-Kit.

Wilairot competed in the 2006 Japanese GP as a wild-card and finished a respectable 10th after qualifying in 14th place.

Finland's Mika Kallio continued his run of podium finishes with a victory, extending his lead in the world championship.

Kallio headed a Red Bull KTM one-two from teammate Hiroshi Aoyama as he took the Austrian factory's first win at the Shanghai International Circuit, the duo starting on the grid from the front and third rows, respectively.

Siriporn defends title for third time

By Scott Mallon

CAMBODIA: From farmer's daughter to convicted drug dealer to world champion boxer to dining at the Thai ambassador's residence in Cambodia – the road has been long and winding for 25 year-old Siriporn Thaveesuek, better known as Samson Sor Siriporn (11-2, 2 KOs).

Sentenced to 10 years in prison for the possession and sale of *ya bah* (methamphetamine), Sor Siriporn served seven years before receiving her conditional parole in June last year.

Three years ago, while still in prison, Sor Siriporn took up boxing to protect herself against hostile inmates. Just six months into her professional career, she made a bid for the world title, losing a close decision to champion Nanako Kikuchi of Japan, but earning respect from her peers and fans around the world.

In April last year, the Lopburi native became the first person to win a world boxing title while incarcerated in prison, winning by unanimous decision over Ayaka Miyano to claim the WBC women's world light-flyweight title.

On April 26 this year, Sor Siriporn successfully defended her championship for the third time, pounding out a narrow decision over Kayoko Ebata of Japan in the Old Olympic Stadium in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

The bout was the first professional boxing match for a world title in Cambodia.

The indoor stadium was like an oven, the stifling Cambodian heat locked indoors with nowhere to go. A mushy ring apron made



Sor Siriporn (right) and Ebata go toe-to-toe in the center of the ring. Sor Siriporn has come a long way after being convicted of drug dealing seven years ago.

movement akin to walking in sand and factoring in both fighters high work rates made for an entertaining but extremely torrid affair.

The first few rounds were tit-for-tat with neither fighter gaining an advantage. Sor Siriporn concentrated on attacking the body; Ebata attempted to pressure the Thai into making a mistake. Both fighters leaned heavily on one another, punching whenever possible in an effort to seize control of the bout.

In the middle rounds, Ebata landed uppercuts while on the inside; Sor Siriporn continued to chip away at Ebata's body. The persistent assault on the body of Ebata would pay dividends in the final two rounds when Sor Siriporn needed it most.

The champion looked the stronger of the two fighters going into round nine and she man-

aged to do just enough to win by decision.

Two judges scored in favor of Sor Siriporn, one scored the bout a draw. The final tally: 96-94, 96-94, 95-95 for a majority decision.

In March this year, In Focus Productions, a Bangkok-based film-production company, signed an agreement to buy the rights to Sor Siriporn's biography. The company is seeking to turn the biography into a Hollywood movie.

"I read about Samson in many newspapers and thought her story would be a good way to broaden the image of Thai women," said Niramol Sriyanond, the film producer for Women in Focus Productions.

After winning the bout against Ebata, Sor Siriporn celebrated her birthday at the residence of the Thai Ambassador to Cambodia, Viraphand Vacharith.

When asked to make a toast, Sor Siriporn broke down and wept openly, saying, "I never thought my life could be like this. It's like a dream. I never thought I would make anything of myself and now I'm celebrating my birthday here. I can't believe it."

The champion is now looking to avenge her loss to Nanako Kikuchi (7-2, 1 KO) of Japan. Kikuchi has not fought since losing her title to Carino Moreno in May 2007. The bout is tentatively scheduled for August this year.

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

PATONG: Bollocks! Dogs Bollocks, that it. That's what Lindsay and the boys at Piccadilly were saying after losing all three points at Dogs Bollocks.

After that, Dogs Bollocks' Peak took down Pat in the second singles after a marathon hunt for the double one – and it was all Bollocks after that.

Additional sobering news for Piccadilly came when Lins told his teammates he was taking his doctor's advice to hang up his drinking cup – for his liver's sake. The end of an era.

Queen Mary, who won their match at home against Offshore but failed to take the beer leg, are now sitting pretty with a three-point lead at the top of the table.

In the Queen Mary-Offshore encounter, the most impressive closes were by Queen Mary's Billy, who checked out on 88 (20, x18, x16), and Mike, who closed on 83 (T17, X16) to give Offshore the beer leg.

At the bottom of the table, second-to-last Beach House distanced themselves from the toilet seat award with a 3-0 win over Valhalla. Joergen of Valhalla took the high score with 144.

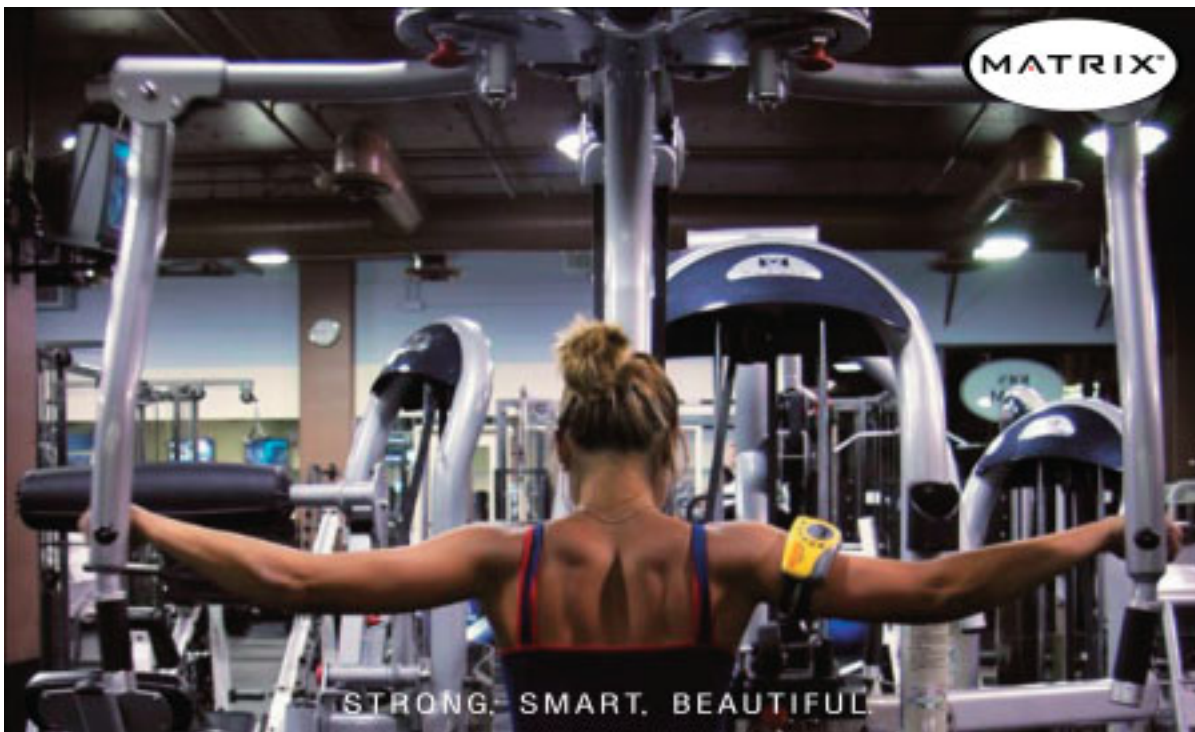
The league would like to extend birthday wishes to league secretary Steen, who celebrated his 60th birthday on May 5.

It is still not too late for new teams to register for the upcoming new season. Contact any of the bars or email darts@phuketgazette.net for more information.

April 29 results: Queen Mary 7 Offshore* 2; Dogs Bollocks* 6 Piccadilly 3; Simply Red 3 Shakers* 6; Sick Buffalo* 4 Market Bar 5; Valhalla 3 Beach House* 6 (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Queen Mary (42 points); 2. Piccadilly (39); 3. Offshore (26); 4. Dogs Bollocks (24); 5. Shakers (23); 6. Market Bar (21); 7. Sick Buffalo (19); 8. Valhalla (18) 9. Beach House (17); 10. Simply Red (11).

May 13 matchups (last week of season): Queen Mary v Dogs Bollocks; Offshore v Piccadilly; Beach House v Shakers; Market Bar v Simply Red; Sick Buffalo v Valhalla (home team first).



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Coffin Dodgers ready for Intn'l Rugby 10s

KARON: The sound of bodies thudding against the ground while boots trample over them will soon be commonplace in Phuket as Karon gears up for the Overgaard Phuket International Rugby 10s 2008.

With less than a month to go before kickoff, excitement is building in anticipation of the Coffin Dodgers Vets Tournament. Due to some late withdrawals, the list of competing teams has been cut down to 12 sides who will battle it out for the highly regarded Weasel Cup.

Matches will be played at Karon Stadium, with the first kickoff slated for May 30. Teams will lock horns in what is fast becoming the top vets tournament in the region.

With teams coming from Australia, the UK, Bahrain, Japan, Hong and Singapore, last year's champions the Philippine Volcanoes will have their work cut out to retain their crown.

One of world sport's most avidly followed rivalries will be hotly anticipated as the Phuket



The Doha Dogs (in white) jump against the Bangkok Bangers in a lineout in last year's Coffin Dodgers Plate Final. More top action is expected from the 'Golden Oldies' this year.

Viagrabonds prepare to man-up against the Bangkok Bangers. These two behemoths of rugby have been going at it since rugby was first introduced to Phuket.

Group games will be completed on May 30, with the finals scheduled for June 1 before the main-event finals.

In the main tournament, also to be played at Karon Municipal Stadium, 24 teams will be facing off for the Overgaard Clive Williamson Memorial Trophy.

Teams from from the UK, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, China and Thailand will be taking part in the tournament. Although last year's winners, the Emirate Airlines Flying Muppets, won't be around to defend their title, a strong contingent from Dubai will be hoping to take the trophy back home with them.

Group games will begin on May 31, with the knockout stages

and finals set for June 1. This year's "player of the tournament" award will be presented by ex-England legend Gareth Chilcott.

Phuket Rugby 10s will be raising funds for the Ronda Butler Orphans scholarship program, run in conjunction with the Asia Center Foundation, which aims to give orphans and underprivileged children the chance of an education and a brighter future.

Over the years, the global rugby community has helped provide schooling and shelter for more than 150 children in Phuket.

Once again this year, a group of students will be at the ground enjoying the matches.

For more information about the scholarship program or about Asia Center Foundation visit www.asiacenter.ac For more information about the Rugby 10s, visit: www.phuketvagabondsrfc.com



Carol Kayed (left) lands a left kick to Sainam's midriff, but lost the fight on a TKO.

Kayed loses debut bout in TKO

KATA: Two vixens of violence were in the ring on April 29, as American Carol Kayed and Krabi native Sainam squared off at Kata Boxing Stadium in a girl-on-girl Muay Thai showdown.

The fight was Carol's debut bout, while Sainam was in her 10th fight, giving the home girl the upper hand.

The fight went three rounds of slugging back and forth before the judges, citing that Carol was looking fatigued, called a stop to the bout in favor of Sainam.

"I guess dark circles under your eyes from lack of sleep due to nerves is not allowed," said Carol after the fight.

Carol weighed in at 120lbs and, at 5'2", she was four inches shorter than her opponent.

"I have been training on and off for one year," said Carol, who has vowed to continue fighting.

Villagers stump PCA in Cricket League

CHERNG TALAY: Village Cricket Team (VCT) surprised local cricket fans on March 30 by beating Phuket Cricket Association (PCA) in match 13 of the Island Furniture Cricket League at Cherng Talay Wittayakom School.

In what was dubbed The Battle of the Minnows, VCT skipper K. Quilty won the toss and elected to bat. He and fellow opener C. Gordon notched up 50 runs without loss after the first 10 overs.

However, Quilty was bowled for 25 by F. Khan to put the Villagers at 55-1. Gordon (29) carried on where Quilty left off and, along with H. Gillespie (11), took the score to 80-2 before Gordon was caught by A. Ghadge.

Wickets then fell easily, especially to PCA bowler R. Sadarangani, who recorded bowling figures of 3.3-0-6-5 to earn him Man of the Match.

The Villagers, after a confident-looking start, ended up on a disappointing 120 all out in the 27th over.

After the interval, PCA began their turn with the bat, looking for 121 for a win. However, they were soon in trouble with both openers back in the pavilion with just 16 runs on the board. Khan was caught while on four and Sharma (8) was also caught by an excellent one-handed reflex catch by Gillespie in gully.

Despite some resistance from R. Borkar, who made the team's high score of 32, PCA soon found themselves at 68-7.

Sniffing their first win, VCT kept the pressure on, forcing errors by PCA. Some tight bowling by Gillespie resulted in two more wickets and the PCA were nine down for 104.

With plenty of overs left, 16 runs needed and one wicket

remaining, the tension was electric in the VCT supporters' camp.

Soon enough, Borkar was bowled by Gillespie, with a total of 106 on the board. Gillespie and A. Windybank both shone the ball with figures of 3.4-0-23-4 and 5-0-41-4 respectively, with Quilty also picking up a couple.

A win by 14 runs for the Villagers showed promise for the team, coached by Paul Stamp, who knows where this team may end up.

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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel

Kata condo cashes in on sea views

KATA: Work on Phase 2 of Kata Ocean View apartments is about 35% complete. The project, developed by Oceanic Global Management Co Ltd, is divided into three phases. The development covers about three rai on Patak Rd, above Kata and Chalong, overlooking Kata Bay and Koh Po. The entire project is expected to be complete by February 2010.

Simon Murray, sales executive for Ayudhya Real Estate Brokers, said that the project will comprise seven buildings.

The two buildings in phase 1, with four apartments in each, have already been built.

Phase 2, which will comprise two buildings – one with nine apartments, the other with 15 – will be completed by February next year. Another three buildings and 53 apartments will be added as part of phase 3.

Land for the final phase has been cleared and about 200 million baht has been invested in the project.

"The project has been designed to provide high-quality, spacious and affordable homes. Our clients understand value for money and appreciate a quality living space.

"We have a number of owners who have joined our rental program. They will receive regular income from their properties throughout the year," he said.

Only one unit in phase 1 is still for sale by the developer. This apartment is 104 square meters and is being offered leasehold, fully furnished, at a price of 7.7 million baht.

There are also two units being re-sold: a 208sqm duplex for 16.9 million baht and an 88sqm unit for 6.8 million baht.

For phase 2, the retaining walls are in place. Of the 24 units in this phase, eight are still for sale and can be purchased freehold or leasehold. The apartments range in size from 72sqm to 81sqm. Prices for these start at 4.5 million baht.

"Units are in demand and selling fast, so we are currently selling off the plan," said Mr Murray.

"We have already sold almost one-



The two buildings in Phase 1 of Kata Ocean View apartments are already complete.

third of the units in phase 3 and there are only 10 apartments still to be sold. They range from 93sqm to 106sqm and can be bought from 6 million baht, either freehold or leasehold. They have private pools and parking," he added.

"The project was jointly designed by German architect Frank Witzel and Thai architect Paiboon Thongched, who created a curved, wave-like design and ensured that all the apartment units have views of the sea with walls of glass," Mr Murray said.

The condominiums have a high-quality finish and customers can select from a range of fixings for the kitchens and bathrooms. The units have parquet floors and are air-conditioned throughout.

Each property has a terrace accessed through sliding doors.

Construction of the project is being carried out by GBS Construction.

BAYCLIFF BLESSING

PATONG: The Bureau of the Royal Household Special Advisor Ratanvudh Vajaro-daya was the honorable chairman in the foundation stone-laying ceremony for The BayCliff, Patong on April 26.

The low-rise condominium project is on 1.5 rai along the Kamala-Patong beach road, near Kalim Beach.

When finished, the development will comprise 54 apartment units in three buildings.

Pictured are (from left) The BayCliff Managing Director Piyachat Phochatkaew, Deputy Managing Director Wanrak Likitwong, the Honorable Ratanvudh Vajarodaya, Pra Khru Brahm Yana Sayomphu (Khajorn Nakavetin), The BayCliff Deputy Managing Directors Theeraphan Choprasertchok and Trelup Toopkrajank.



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Home of the Week

Kata Noi

Double the joy in Kata Noi

Set on a hill in Kata Noi, this two-level, four-bedroom condominium has an indoor area of 600 square meters and can be lived in as a single unit or split into two. The corner unit has views of the sea and west coast sunsets.

The modern design uses wood to add a Thai touch to the ambiance, which fits into the tropical surroundings. There is hardwood flooring throughout and stone features on the walls and floors.

The lower level is accessible by stairs or a private elevator that opens into the living room. On the same level is the large, modern kitchen fitted with stainless-steel appliances. The kitchen has a sea view and opens to the outdoor barbecue and pool terrace with rainwater shower.

The master bedroom has sea views and private access to the pool, while the second bedroom is on the other side, adjacent to the living room.

Adding an Asian touch to this level, which also features a dining area and two en-suite bathrooms, is a fish pond in the center of the house. There is also a laundry room complete with built-



in washer and dryer on this level.

An internal staircase leads to the upper level. Should the upper level be rented out individually, doors at the top of the staircase can be locked to ensure privacy between the two living quarters and separate, direct access is possible from an external lift through the use of separate access keys in the lift.

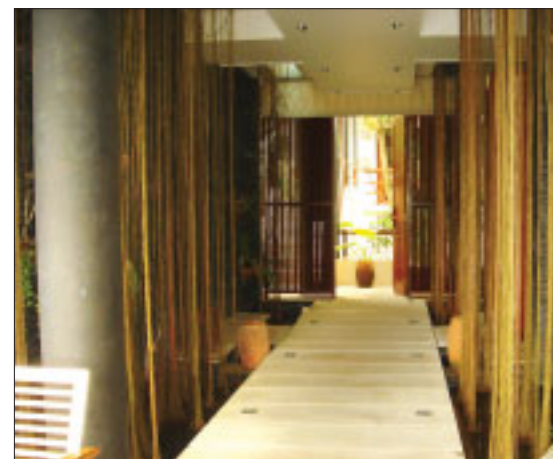
The upper level has two bedrooms, a living room, dining room, home office, kitchen and a view of the sea.

The master bedroom has a bathroom en suite and glass doors leading to an office with floor-to-ceiling windows. A large balcony can be used for alfresco dining.

The complex is on a small street that has no through traffic in a quiet area of Kata Noi.

Kata Beach is two minutes' drive away, while Patong can be reached in 20 minutes and Nai Harn Beach in 10 minutes.

There is a communal pool for use by all tenants in the complex.



This two-story, four-bedroom condominium can be lived in as a single unit or split into two.

The condo is fully furnished with Chanote title and available on a leasehold, or freehold for 45 million baht.

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Decor

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

Busting onto the Phuket scene

Distinctly different statues and busts are the theme of this week's delve into local decor delights. Dubai Bazar on Chao Fa East Rd stocks a wide range of wood, resin and stone sculptures in a variety of classic and contemporary collections that are ideal as ornamental busts to decorate restaurants, homes, hotels and entertainment venues with a specific theme.

Elvis Presley busts share the shelves of the store with resin recreations of famous musicians, including Jimmy Hendrix, Dizzy Gillespie, Nina Simone and other well-known jazz and rock 'n' roll legends. Elvis sells for 9,600 baht.

Busts of wrestlers locked in combat and pugilists landing punches on each other make for eye-catching props for sports bars.

A collection of jolly-looking chefs holding menus ready to be chalked up and carrying crates to display wine bottles are attractive additions to any restaurant's decor.

The chefs come in a variety of sizes and prices, from 680 baht for a petite menu-holding chef for table tops to people-sized waiters and chefs holding blackboards to display the chef's specials and welcome diners with a comical expression.

Not surprisingly, the restaurant decor has been selling like hotcakes since the shop opened earlier this year, said shop owner Suthin Tantiplabthong. "This is the only shop in Phuket selling these kinds of ornaments," she said.

"The American Indian statues are also very popular," said K. Suthin, pointing to a collection



ABOVE: Life-size chefs with comical expressions are waiting to be placed outside restaurants to welcome guests.

LEFT: Dubai Bazar is full of figurines, statues and busts made from wood, stone and resin. The collection contains bust and statues of several musical legends, including Elvis Presley and a variety of jazz greats.

of busts and statues of Native Americans in various poses, a stoic expression on each of their faces.

Elegant gold and black statues of ancient Egyptians on bases decorated with hieroglyphics stand attentively on the shelves. Some statues are made up of several characters depicting scenes from the times of the Pharaohs, similar to the illustrations found in Egypt. There's even a bust of Tutankhamen.

Throughout the shop is a wide variety of statuettes, as if every era on every continent has been recreated in some way. There are shield- and spear-holding Roman soldiers and proud-looking Vikings. There's even a man-sized WWII soldier in mid-charge; the kind you sometimes see outside Army and Navy surplus supply stores.

For decorating kids' bedrooms and playrooms, there are fantasy characters in mid-prance

and dance, such as sprightly elves and angelic-looking fairies.

There are also some classic European reproductions perfect for adding a renaissance touch, such as wild horses petrified in a bronze sheen and pearl-white busts.

The largest, and at 100,000 baht the most expensive, item in the collection of classics is an ornately carved wooden dining table set with a brown marble top.

Most of the items are imported from Dubai, hence the shop's name but the idea for the shop came from K. Suthin's habit of collecting decorative items to give to friends and family as house-warming gifts.

Dubai Bazar is located on Chao Fa East Rd, about 500 meters north of the Dowroong School intersection. Open daily from 9 am to 9 pm. For more information, call 076-213722.

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Flaming good at growing

I hate people telling me that I am not allowed to do certain things. I'm sure that there are people in positions of power who randomly invent inane rules and regulations just for fun, amusing themselves and going home to the wife, saying, "You'll never guess what I told them they couldn't do today..."

For example, we're not allowed to ingest certain substances. I don't smoke marijuana, but if I did, I wouldn't be happy about some politician telling me that I wasn't allowed to.

Parents can't even give their kids a clip around the ear without a do-gooder accusing them of beating their offspring. In the UK, parents aren't allowed to give penknives to their sons anymore – they might cut themselves while carving a piece of wood.

I was given a penknife for about my 10th birthday. It was sharp. I drew blood on the first day, slicing my finger open with a clean cut. But I learned from that; you must be careful with sharp knives. And that's the point – how can you learn these things if you've never been permitted to experiment?

Thailand has its own daft rules and idiosyncrasies. For example, it has been decided that you can't drink on election day, when you should be off putting numbers in boxes rather than enjoying a drink.

On other days, try buying a bottle of beer between 2 pm and 5 pm. It's forbidden. Fortunately, if you want to have a damn good party and get completely hammered, it's perfectly legal to buy 10 liters or more. One case of 24 small bottles, plus an additional six singles does the job perfectly.



NO SMOKING:
The cigarette plant literally looks as if it's bursting into flame.

Photo by Father Alejandro Sanchez.

Flown anywhere recently? You will be in serious trouble if you try to take more than a few teaspoons of any liquid onto a plane – it seems toothpaste and aftershave pose serious security risks. Having said that, Brut 33 should be banned.

My doctor tells me that I shouldn't eat fatty foods, drink a

lot on a Saturday night or smoke the odd cigar or cigarette. Phooey.

If I spend all my days on this planet worrying about these kind of things rather than enjoying them, I'll be on it for far fewer of them, if that type of thinking makes sense to you.

Unsurprisingly, it's cigarettes that brings me to this week's diatribe, the cigar flower, or cigarette plant. This odd little plant, originally from the West Indies and Mexico and otherwise known as *Cuphea ignea*, derives its names from the small, orange,



Photo by Annette Hoeggemeier, Botanical Gardens, University of Bochum, Germany.

tubular flowers, each of which has white tip with a minuscule touch of black that looks a bit like cigarette ash.

The cigarette plant certainly stands out. While some plants might show a bit of color, this one almost looks as if it's combusting – the colors are that vivid. It's even known as the firecracker plant in some areas.

This explosive little annual is almost dripping with tiny tubular, scarlet blooms. The rounded, compact plants, which rarely grow more than half a meter tall, also make good pot plants for indoors and outdoors. Like some of my friends, they need only the occasional trim.

They can be easily grown from seed. Sow the seeds outdoors and barely cover them with soil. Germination takes eight to 10 days and the plants bloom after three months.

You're better off with cuttings, though, and skipping the tedious waiting.

Take a few cuttings of about 10cm long and thrust them

into some moist potting compound. Use more cuttings than you want because some of them won't survive.

Keep the potted cuttings in shade while keeping the compost moist without letting it become soggy for about a week, then move them to where they'll get about "half sun, half shade". After another week, move

them to full sun, and wait for the inevitable fag flowers to appear – by the way, "fag" is British for "cigarettes" before any confused Americans get the wrong idea.

Long term, these plants prefer any ordinary, well-drained soil in full sun or part shade.

Long term, these plants prefer any ordinary, well-drained soil in full sun or part shade. They enjoy moist soil, but will tolerate drier soil once established.

They enjoy moist soil, but will tolerate drier soil once established. In the wild, the cigar flower is often found growing along the edge of streams, so it's probably a sensible to plant them in the wetter parts of your garden.

Humming birds aren't a common sight here in Phuket, but the cigarette plant is one that they like.

Personally, I prefer the sound of just the cigarette part. In fact, it's probably time for me to go off and indulge in some form of alcohol and tobacco derivatives. After all, I've been told I can't. So I will.

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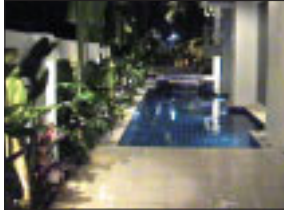
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11 NEW BIG LUXURY VILLAS



in Kamala with private pool. Modern Thai-Balinese style. 24-hour security in a gated community. Exclusive location a few minutes from beach and center. Built in natural surroundings on flat land with a very good mountain view. Chanote. 4 bedrooms. Large, fully-fitted modern kitchen. All bedrooms with separate toilets and built-in cupboards. Jacuzzi. All rooms have air conditioning. Freehold or leasehold. 2 show homes fully furnished. Ready now. Prices from 21 million baht. Tel: 076-279289, 086-2742308. Email: kamala.paradise@yahoo.com For further details visit www.kamalaparadise.com

TWIN HOUSE FOR SALE

New 2-story twin house (both sides) for sale in Rassada Top Land project. Each side has 2 bedrooms (aircon) with en-suite bathrooms, living room (aircon), fully equipped kitchen, washing machine, True TV, Internet, garden, terrace, fully furnished. Tel: 076-620546, 085-6901955. Email: mpomel@yahoo.fr

NEW POOL-VILLA, RAWAI

400sqm. 3-4 bedrooms. 300m from Rawai Pier. Price: 7.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

ON THE BEACH

2-bedroom apartment in north Patong. Foreign freehold, top floor, pool. 9.7 million baht. Tel: 086-2765117. For photos, send email to: jhshand@gmail.com

SURIN BEACH LAND FOR SALE

1,016sqm: 6 million baht. 996sqm: 5 million baht. 5 mins walk to Surin Beach. Tel: 081-8687676.

SAFE AND SECURE

house for sale, 3 bedrooms, 2 en suite, 3 bathrooms, living room, kitchen/dining, study, laundry room, garage, ADSL and True TV fitted. Verandas, klong along back, fenced garden in secure Choafa Thani compound. Price 6.9 million baht. Tel: 084-8439579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

GOLF VILLA, 8.7 MILLION BAHT



Loch Palm, Kathu. Modern style. Fully furnished. 3 bedrooms with en suite, Jacuzzi, TV, Wi-Fi and landscaped garden. Tel: 089-8961265. Email: seeyaagain@gmail.com

SEAVIEW LAND FOR SALE



3 rai, 3 ngan near Blue Canyon and Mission Hills golf clubs. 5 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-6123110.

KOH SAMUI LAND FOR SALE

2 rai with one house, six bungalows and 10 rows of houses. Ideal for rentals. Near beach. Chanote title. Asking price: 30 million baht. No agents! Tel: 087-2709093. Email: anut.samantamit@gmail.com

BRAND-NEW CONDO

Great location near Tesco and Big C. Pool, gym, fully furnished with washer, dryer, fridge, aircon, TV, etc. 45sqm corner unit with 2 balconies. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 087-2770978. Email: koyangle99@hotmail.com

KAMALA SEAVIEW LAND

6 rai with Chanote. Can be divided. All with good sea view. Road, water & electricity supply. Priced from 6 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-2742308. Email: kim@kamalafalls.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

in Chalong. Bargain. 2 stories, 4 bedrooms. 3.2 million baht. Tel: 081-7475293.

SUPER POOL VILLAS



4 unique, 3-bedroom homes available in a tranquil part of Chalong. 9.5 million baht. Tel: 085-7862869. Email: info@tharapropertyphuket.com

SEA VIEW IN KAMALA



Small plots from 1 rai up to 100 rai with very good sea view. A few minutes from city center and beaches. Chanote, road, electricity & water supply. Priced from 6.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-2742308 or Email: kim@kamalafalls.com

LAND FOR SALE

10 mins drive across Sarasin Bridge. Chanote, 80 rai. Road and utilities access. Suitable for hotel or residential projects. 300m from beach. Only 3.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-5399269. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

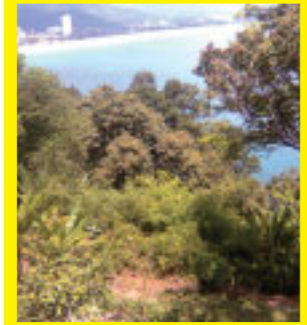
BANG TAO HOUSE

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, big terrace, Jacuzzi, 9mx5m pool, 2 parking spaces, autogate, ADSL, 2 sat TVs, 5 aircons, fully furnished. 10.8 million baht. Tel: 084-8516121.

SEA VIEW KAMALA

Stunning view, 1km from beach, concrete road. Small plots, 1 rai to 30 rai. Chanote, road access and electricity. Behind Phuket FantaSea. From 6 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-3586555, 085-6667882. Fax: 076-911997. Email: palida@gatiematernity.com

KARON SEAVIEW LAND FOR SALE



Located between Centara Karon Resort and Secret Cliff Resort. 10.5 rai with Chanote. Very good location for business (hotel & resort). Asking price 250 million baht. No agents! Tel: 087-2709093 or email: anutsamantamit@gmail.com

HARMONY HOMES

4 unique executive town homes at the 3rd fairway of Phuket Country Club. From 17 million baht. Tel: 081-958-3571. Email: sweetybee2000@yahoo.com

NEW TOWNHOUSE

in Than Thong 7 project. 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. 19sq wah. Central location on Chao Fa East Rd, opposite Villa California. 1.9 million baht. Tel: 087-2770978.

PHANG NGA BAY VILLAS

Two boutique seaview villas for sale near Cape Yamu. Each with 4 bedrooms, gym, study, games room, 10-meter pool, lounge, Western kitchens, dining room, two rooms for maids. Tel: 076-283288, 081-2737326. Fax: 076-283288. Email: info@kykinternational.com For further information visit www.kykinternational.com

NEW KATHU TOWNHOUSE

New 2-story, 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom townhouse in Phuket. Golden view, close to markets, Big C, Central etc. Lock-up gates with car space and security at project entrance. Great location. Some furniture included. A bargain at 1.8 million baht. No haggles please. Tel: 080-7197147. Email: pmoney@hotmail.com

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- ◆ Chanote title, electricity
- ◆ 2 minutes to the beach

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50 million baht.

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Property Gazette

SAIYUAN 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. Tel: 084-8475700, 087-898-7642. Email: morn_48@yahoo.com

LAND IN KAMALA



Flat land from 9 rai up to 5.5 rai. Good road & electricity supply. Only 2 minutes from beach and center. Prices from 9.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-2742308. Email: kim@kamalafalls.com

BEACH HOUSE



9 million baht. Rent: 39,000 baht/month. Chalong Beach. Tel: 081-4760380. Web: www.phuketbeachhouse.com

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

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BEAUTIFUL NAI YANG LAND



9.5 rai, beachfront. 5 mins to Phuket Airport. Asking price 120 million baht. Chanote title. Must see. No agents! Please contact at email: allservices29@gmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE



in Irawadee 2 Project, located near Khao Khad viewpoint. 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, fully furnished. Only 1.5 million baht. Please contact to view. Tel: 087-2770978. Email: koyangle99@hotmail.com

PERFECT LAND FOR SALE

On the main road to Cherng Talay and Surin. 43 rai, 1 ngan, 85 sq wah. For sale by owner. 5.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-9562406. Email: phatsarar@gmail.com

TOWNHOUSE

in Than Thong 3 project. 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom. 19sq wah. Located near Khao Khad viewpoint. On Phattana Thongtin Rd. Fully furnished. Price: 1.2 million baht. Tel: 087-2770978.

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

BANG TAO LAND

Nearly 2 rai with Chanote title at Ao Bang Tao. Very good location for business. Price: 16 million baht. Tel: 086-9442064, 087-689-9679. Email: tasuwan@hotmail.com

DETACHED HOUSE FOR SALE

in Patong area. Fully furnished home with swimming pool, Jacuzzi, aircon and automatic gate. Tel: 081-5366732. Email: shoppingspeedy@hotmail.com

BAAN BENJAMAS

2-bedroom townhouse refurbished in 2006. Walking distance to Jungceylon and the beach. 5.3 million baht. Tel: 083-3941397.

LUXURY PROPERTY

for sale and rent in Phuket, Phang Nga. For details see: www.janepropertyphuket.com

COCONUT ISLAND LAND



for sale. 4.5 rai, Chanote, hill-side panoramic sea view, close to beach. 14 million baht. Please call K. Bouddha for more information. Tel: 089-2900484.

LAYAN LAND: 2 RAI

Lake-view, road, electricity. 6.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-7874383 or 084-0977383.

HOUSE FOR SALE

3 bedrooms in Kathu. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 081-8940468, 081-8954112.

THE HEIGHTS, PHUKET

Unit C-8, 195sqm, 1 story, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Beautiful pool on your doorstep. 21 million baht ono. Tel: 081-6144799.

POOL VILLA FOR SALE OR RENT

4 bedrooms with terraces, 6 bathrooms, pool with Jacuzzi, living room, dining room, Western kitchen, maid's room, solar power, hot water, sala, BBQ, parking for 3 cars, electric gate. Nice tropical garden set on 1,606 sqm of land with more than 400sqm of living area. Price: 25 million baht. Special rate for short-term rental. Tel: 081-9707019. Email: nisaya19@yahoo.com

LAND FOR SALE

We have land plots ranging from 1 rai to 365 rai. Best Patong location. Sizes: 11 rai and 20 rai, beachfront. Bang Tao. 350m from the beach. 14 rai in Chalong. For details and pictures please visit: www.thai sunrealestate.com

KHAO KHAD, 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. Tel: 081-5399269 or Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

TWIN HOUSE RESORT 1.9 MILLION BAHT

Twin house, 80sqm, includes terrace, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, furnishings, 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

NEW HOUSE IN RAWAI

4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, swimming pool. 425sqm of land with Chanote title. Price: 7.5 million baht. Tel: 087-8887676.

BANG TAO LAND

4 rai, 1 ngan. 2.2 million baht/rai. 200m from main road. Call Bruno. Tel: 083-6334994.

NEW HOME FOR SALE

2 floors, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Close to Boat Lagoon and British International School. Tel: 081-9580373.

KHAO LAK: INVESTING PROPERTY

Land beside Sofitel Magic Lagoon Khao Lak. 50 rai (66mx136m), Chanote. 40 million baht total. Call Krit. Tel: 081-9804641.

LAND FOR SALE

Manik-Bang Jo land. Chanote. 4 rai at 2.7 million baht per rai. Located in residential area and close to road. Tel: 081-539-9269. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

BANG TAO HOUSE

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 7m x 4m pool, fully furnished, ADSL, sat TV, 2 parking spaces, 3 aircons. Tel: 084-8516121. Website: www.phukethome.ws

HOUSE FOR SALE

in Chalong. Bargain. 2 stories, 4 bedrooms. 3.2 million baht. Tel: 081-7475293.

HOTEL ROOM FOR SALE

Kamala beach. 2 pools. Leasehold. 2 million baht. Sat-TV, Jacuzzi. Tel: 085-7945411. Email: bkeenan@shaw.ca

PEARL OF THE ORIENT

1) Buy freehold property. 2) Apply for 10-year visa (renewable). Tel: +60-4-8993130, +60-19-5163838. Fax: +60-4-8904855. Email: yeb33@streamyx.com

LAGUNA TOWNHOUSE

59/9. 3 bedrooms, golf course and lake view. Ready to move in, only 24 million baht. Tel: 085-7839062.

PATONG BEACH CONDO

Rare 14th floor location. Great sea views. 50sqm. Freehold or leasehold. 3.5 million baht. Call Daly. Tel: 087-0312154.

NEW APARTMENT FOR SALE

Includes 28 rooms with 6 shophouses in Phuket City. 36.5 million baht. Installment payment is acceptable. Interested? Call 081-6072489 for more details.

NEW HOUSE IN RAWAI

4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, swimming pool. 425sqm of land with Chanote title. Price: 7.5 million baht. Tel: 087-8887676.

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Property Gazette



Detached House for Sale

- In Chalongsang
- New detached house on 370sqm of land with Chanote title
- 1-story, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (1 with Jacuzzi), 3 toilets, 1 living room and Western kitchen (with microwave, dish washer, big cooler, electric hot plates), 1 storeroom.
- Car(s) park
- Ornamental pond and jets of water which maybe fitted out in swimming pool
- Big underground septic water tank
- Frontal view of a small lake
- Quiet, well-situated and exposed
- Near all commodities
- Telephone line
- Internet ADSL, Cable TV

Price: 6.9 million baht. Must see!
Tel: 087-2709093
Email: allservices29@gmail.com

TROPICAL POOL VILLA

in Chalongsang. Brand-new, spacious, 2-bedroom villa with deluxe kitchen and large living area. Priced to sell. Tel: 085-7932477.

SEAVIEW GUESTHOUSE

in Patong. Must see. Great location. Contact Kevin. Tel: 084-7300190.

LAND IN PHUKET CITY

165sq wah. Land with Chanote title in Phuket City, located behind the Thepkra-sattri Rd branch of Bangkok Bank. Price: 8.5 million baht. Tel: 081-9682314.

PARICHART VILLAGE



35/20 Soi 1. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircon, some furniture, 50sq wah, garden. In Chalongsang area. For sale 4 million baht or long-term rent, must see. Contact Nina. Tel: 087-6899679 or tasuwan@hotmail.com. No agents!

BANG WAD DAM, NICE PLOT



Nice plot overlooking natural lagoon behind Bang Wad Dam. Approx 26 rai, sloped land, access road, water and electricity. Good for residential project. 2.5 million baht per rai (negotiable). Tel: 081-5399269. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

FREEHOLD LAND & HOUSE

Thai-style house on more than 1 rai of land. Includes Thai company owned by foreigner. Landscaped, pool, fully furnished. Perfect for retirement in Phuket. Tel: 076-386064, 084-8406751. Email: gary_solah@yahoo.com.au

HOUSE FOR SALE, KATHU

Delightful 2-story, 3-bedroom house at end of quiet cul-de-sac. 10 mins from BIS, Central, Patong. B6.8m ono. Tel: 081-9565650. Email: mailpete@hotmail.com For details, please visit our website: www.kathu-property.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.

INDUSTRIAL BUILDING
for sale. Former clinic on 4 rai in Nai Yang. 44 rooms, 38 million baht. Tel: 085-7839062.

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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NEW HOTEL FOR SALE



Nanai Rd, Patong Beach, sea view, 384sqm. 50 rooms, swimming pool. Under construction. Nearly finished. Asking price: 230 million baht. Sale by owner. No agents! Tel: 087-2709093. Email: anutsamantamit@gmail.com

SEAVIEW POOLHOUSE
in Rawai: 11 million baht. See www.phuketdir.com/poolsea house or call 085-7839062.

INEXPENSIVE LAND
Q+ rai. Chanote lots near Mission Hills golf course and airport. 10 minutes to Yacht Haven. 1.25 million baht, full price. Tel: 086-9421930.

PHUKET PALACE BARGAIN

11th floor, sea view, upgraded, extras, freehold. 3.2 million baht. Tel: 085-5905460. Email: coltat1962@yahoo.com

PANORAMIC SEAVIEW LAND
Panoramic sea view. Chanote, land plots from 1 to 8.3 rai. Best Chalongsang location. 300m from new 9-hole golf course. Wchit area. Tel: 081-8913740.

PATONG LAND
6 rai of prime property near Kris condo project. Please contact Ae. Tel: 086-2861952 between 11 am and 7 pm. Email: patongland@gmail.com Website: www.patongland.coolpage.biz

CHEAP LAND FOR SALE
in Rawai at Sai Yuan. Perfect location, quiet area. 70sq wah/85sq wah/100sq wah. Starting prices between 1.45 and 1.6 million baht. Tel: 084-6268105.

PANORAMIC SEA VIEW



Karon land for sale. 15 rai, Chanote title. Hillside, panoramic sea view, quiet area. Very good location for business. 15 million baht per rai. No agents! Please contact at email: allservices29@gmail.com

LAND FOR SALE

260sqm, perfect for house and pool. Ready to build. Kata Beach. Full Chanote. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 081-2714261 (Thai), 089-2905594 (Eng). Email: henryasia50@hotmail.com

BEAUTIFUL LAND, 1 RAI

Chanote title, quiet area, near Ton Sai Waterfall, road access, 3-phase electricity, good water: 2.2 million baht. Tel: 076-321062, 086-8194373. Email: pojana@swift-mail.com

URGENT REPOSSESSION SALE
New property in Rawai. Approx 35 sqm of living space, plus swimming pool. Could be used as 3-bedroom house, two 2-bedroom houses or even 4 one-bedroom suites. Includes Thai limited company if required. Some finance may be available. 7 million baht or ono. contact Dave (Scandinavian) Tel: 084-0639223, 084-6722725.

LAND FOR SALE

2.9 rai in a quiet part of Rawai, partly divided and can be sold in small plots. Price: 5 million baht per rai. Tel: 089-6666726. Email: lasonth@gmail.com

PATONG BEACH CONDO

Rare 14th floor location. Great sea views. 50sqm. Freehold or leasehold. 3.5 million baht. Call Daly. Tel: 087-0312154.

BEACHFRONT 5.9 MILLION BAHT



Beautiful piece of land opposite Yacht Haven Marina. Ready to build on, road access, water, electricity. 7 rai with more than 180m of beach frontage. For quick sale. Only 5.9 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-3430777.

ABSOLUTE BEACHFRONT LAND



in Khao Lak, Phang Nga. 400 rai. 4 million baht per rai. Chanote. Separate plots at 6 million baht per rai. Urgent sale! Tel: 081-5399269. Email: talayjan@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.gabrieelle@gmail.com

SHOPHOUSE/ HOUSE, KATA

2 stories, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, TV, Internet, telephone, furniture. Tel: 087-8907561. Please visit: www.katahouseforsale.com

PATONG GUESTHOUSE
Located in Paradise Complex, Patong Beach. Furnished, 8 rooms, 4 floors. Available for sale freehold. 5.5 million baht. Tel: 076-290393, 086-588-8383. Email: sumalee1955@yahoo.com

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Property Gazette

Properties For Rent

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

BEACHFRONT CONDO
Kalim-Patong, high standard, fully furnished, 2 bedrooms, kitchen, pool, many facilities. Tel: 081-8920038.

NAI HARN BUNGALOW

Available May 1 to Oct 31. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, cable TV, wireless Internet, aircon in 1 bedroom. Quiet area. 12,500 baht per month plus bills. Tel: 076-388657, 087-8917408. Email: gillies18367@hotmail.com

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 per month. Contact at Tel: 081-7817250. Email: gregory.heenan@gmail.com

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/month if you pay lump sum for 1 year. Tel: 087-4172757 (English), 086-6829804 (Thai).

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.

PHUKET CITY

In front of Tesco Lotus in Royal Street arcade. 3-story shophouse is available long-term. Ideal for office or shop. Tel: 081-8913740.

PATONG TOWNHOUSE

Patong townhouse with 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Open living area. 35,000 per month. Tel: 084-8442134. Email: denelson3395@yahoo.com

LUXURY CONDO RAWAI

2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, furnished, 5th floor. Panoramic sea views, pool, spa. Long-term rent: 50,000 baht/month. Tel: 089-0505664.

PATONG BEACH CONDO

Panoramic sea view, 1 bedroom, 90m from the beach. ADSL, 42" plasma TV, DVD REC, pool and garage. Tel: 084-8473304.

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.

NEW TOWNHOUSE NEAR BIS

New townhouse near BIS. 3 bedrooms, fully furnished. Only 22,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-9241447.

HOUSE FOR RENT OR SALE



1.5 km from Central Festival, near Suan Luang public park. 82sq.wah. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. European kitchen. Garden. Call Mongkon at Tel: 084-0628040.

KAMALA BEACHFRONT VILLAS

Fully furnished to a high standard. Western kitchen. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lounge and dining areas. Large balcony overlooking swimming pool and landscaped garden. Stunning sea views, only meters from the beach. Privately gated, parking and storage. True TV and ADSL. Includes daily cleaning and washing. Pool & gardening service. Monthly rental: 75,000 baht. Contact K. Suchada. Tel: 084-8436837. Email: suchada_villas@hotmail.com For details, visit: www.phuket-island-homes.com

PATONG APARTMENT

300m from beach. Clean, modern, comfortable. Aircon, TV, fridge, big bed, pool, car park. Tel: 081-0825707. Website: www.phuket-accommodation.info

HOUSE IN ERAWADEE

halfway between Patong and Phuket City. 2 bedrooms, one with aircon. Living room, kitchen. Long-term rental. Tel: 081-6919120.

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.

JUNGLE COTTAGE HIDEAWAY



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Covering all aspects of F&B operations, including kitchen and restaurant. Based at the resort on Koh Yao with regular visits to Phuket.

- At least 3-5 years' experience in 5- or 4-star hotels in executive kitchen assignments
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- Foreign or Thai national, 35-55 years of age

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- 1. Legal manager:** Thai national with legal qualification, excellent English-language skills essential, experience in real estate and land law preferred.
- 2. Payments/customer relations officer:** Thai national, excellent English skills, numerate, sound financial services/accounts background, experience in real estate/resort industry preferred.
- 3. Accountant:** Experience in accounting department. Bachelor's degree. Computer literate and fluent oral and written English.
- 4. Director of Sales (Thai National or expatriate):** At least 3 years' experience in a similar position, ability to develop sales strategies to maximize both occupancy and revenue, well connected with tour wholesalers and travel companies, good knowledge of CRS/GDS and Internet hotel sales, ability to direct a sales team is essential.
- 5. Resort Director (expatriate or Thai):** At least 5 years' management experience in hotel/resort management. Pre-opening experience is essential. Experience in multi-owner style property would be a great advantage.
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- 8. Financial Controller (Thai National):** Computer literate and fluent oral and written English. At least 5 years' experience in hotel accounting. Condominium experience would be an advantage. Ability to oversee accurate and timely preparation of financial reports, for hotel operations and condominium owner's statements.
- 9. Chief engineer (Thai National or expatriate):** Bachelor's degree or higher in mechanical and/or electrical engineering. Experience in maintaining all aspects of a large complex. Ability to analyze and quickly rectify problems.

Salary and conditions are negotiable.

Please contact by email and enclose your CV to: hr@west-sands.com



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www.west-sands.com

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to organise and build database. Thai national. Must be good with computers and have lively personality. Able to speak, read & write in English. Good pay offered. Please contact for further details at Tel: 081-8337836.

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- Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering / Electrical Engineering or related field.
- Min. 5 years' experience in Quantity Surveying of structural or M & E / Construction Management
- Responsibility for quantity surveying, construction schedules and reports, able to undertake administration of construction contracts, secretarial tasks and support between Construction & Architect team
- Positive attitude, self-motivated, proactive interpersonal & communication skills, well organized & able to deal with contractors
- Computer literacy: Auto CAD, Microsoft Project, Microsoft Office or any software relevant to the position
- Excellent in both written & spoken English

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER

- Bachelor's degree or higher in Human Resource Management
- Good knowledge of Labor Law, aggressive, good attitude and positive thinking
- At least 5 years' experience in Human Resource Function
- Good Command of English, spoken and written
- Responsible for all Human Resource functions
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- Co-ordinate with factory for Human Resource Functions

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- Bachelor's degree in accounting or qualified accountant
- Min. 3 years' experience in real estate and property management company
- Be responsible for establishing & maintaining effective accounting system, monitor voucher payment, taxation, account payable (AP) and account receivable (AR) cost control and knowledge in Accounting Program
- Fair in both written & spoken English

Interested candidates, please send full resume, expected salary & enclose a recent photo by fax or e-mail:

PARADISE GROUP

The Plaza Surin 5/50 Moo 3, Cherngthalay, Thalang, Phuket
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Phuket Gazette

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4. **Executive Housekeeper**
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6. **Restaurant Manager**
7. **Office Manager** (based in the Phuket Office)

Requirements:

- Any nationals with experience in Thailand are preferred
- Minimum 2 years' experience in the position applied for
- English communication skills must be perfect
- Understand basic Thai language. Willing to work on Phi Phi Island, Krabi, Thailand

Please send a letter of application and updated resume, references, expected salary and a recent photo to:

HR Manager

Email: hr@ppisland.com
Website: www.ppisland.com



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Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in accounting or lower level if possessing 5-years experience
- Min 3 years experience in accounting for property management or hotel management
- Responsible for establishing the main accounting system, monitor payments, taxation, accounts payable and accounts receivable, knowledge of QuickBooks or Comanche (accounting module).
- Fair both written and spoken English
- Salary depending on experience
- Location: Kamala, near Phuket FantaSea

Position: Receptionist

Requirements:

- Computer skills
- Good command of written and spoken English

Interested candidates please send full resume, expected salary and a recent photo by e-mail or fax.

The Bell, Tel: + 66 (0) 76-279914-5
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Position Vacant

Wired Planet, a Phuket-based technology development company focusing on web sales with cutting-edge marketing concepts is seeking qualified results-oriented individuals for the following permanent positions:

Finance & Administrative Coordinator

- 22-30 years with bachelor's degree in accounting
- Minimum 2 years' experience in accounts department
- Good command of written and spoken English
- Proficient in Microsoft applications
- Experience in using QuickBooks program is an advantage
- Must be a motivated self-starter

Customer Relations Representative

- Female / Thai national
- 22 to 35 years with bachelor's degree
- Proficient in Microsoft applications
- Fluent in English: Reading, Writing & Speaking
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Apply: In English via email to job_wiredplanet@yahoo.com with resume and recent picture.

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require a

FINANCIAL CONTROLLER / HEAD OF ACCOUNTING

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If you think you have the drive and commitment to work for a leading 5-star hotel please forward your CV and introduction letter by email to Boonmee Khlongruea - Organizational Learning & Culture Manager at boonmee.khlongruea@lemeridien.com

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BUFFALO STEAK HOUSE

RESTAURANT MANAGER. Buffalo Steak House is looking for a competent person to join our team as a Restaurant Manager. The position is based at Patong, Karon or Kata Beach and requires a self-motivated, confident person with excellent interpersonal skills. Experience in restaurant business not needed, we will train you. Position is available immediately. Prefer Swedish nationality or Swedish speaker, fluent in Finnish a great advantage, or Finnish nationality and fluent in Swedish. Candidates with the above qualifications should submit a resume with a recent photo to the Managing Director Mr Christer -berg at: buffalo.steak.house1@gmail.com; or fax: 076-340089; or apply in person at Buffalo Steak House, Soi Patong Resort (Bangla entrance), Patong. For more information or inquiries, please contact Mr Christer -berg: 081-7375085 or Mr Lasse Kokkonen: 081-8926307. Fax: 076-340089. Email: keith.holmqvist@gmail.com
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HOTEL STAFF

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To manage and supervise all of our service lines in Phuket including resort management services, transaction services, holiday rentals and tenancy management services

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- Accounting knowledge
- At least 3 years of experience in Thailand
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8,000 to 12,000 baht. Also have externals: DVD-RWs for 2,000 to 3,000 baht, and Mac accessories, including a Matrox special video card: only 25,000 baht. Tel: 076-346004, 087-2642598. Fax: 076-346004. Email: georgeslancry@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

LORNE SAXBERG 2 YEARS ON

Lorne Saxberg will be remembered in Koh Kai waters where he accidentally drowned on May 6, 2006. Very thankful to all the kind people of Phuket for their love & support. Tel: 087-2761545. Email: brianmattu@gmail.com

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 n 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.amulphy@piwc.info).

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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

Business Opportunities

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Beauty salon inside a busy hotel in the center of town. 120,000 baht ono. Tel: 085-4651589. Email: thebritscott@hotmail.com

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Restaurant/bar on Karon main road for sale. Seats 38. 3 floors with big, newly furnished apartments. Monthly rent: 15,000 baht. Price: 18,000 baht ono, all inclusive. Tel: 0898-729149. Email: info@klausharbauer.com

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GUESTHOUSE

Great opportunity, only 1.11 million baht. 6 rooms and downstairs Internet café + laundry. Tel: 080-6918543. Email: danny.deleenheer@hotmail.com

GUESTHOUSE WITH RETAIL TENANT

5-room, 20-bed guesthouse 2.1 million baht. Inventory/permits, 5.5 years left on lease. Rent: B15,000/month. Tel: 087-1731773, 089-474 6670. Email: seanthepilot@hotmail.com

PHI PHI ISLAND

Ground level: open. 2nd floor: 6-room guesthouse. 3rd floor: 2 apartments with large sun-deck. Tel: 081-1108282. Email: clyvers@aol.com

BAR FOR SALE

Soi Bangla area. Priced for quick sale at 1.2 million baht. Contact Kevin. Tel: 084-7300190.

NAI HARN BAR AND RESTAURANT

Established venue, 30 covers, long-term lease. includes all fixtures and fittings. Tel: 084-8486139.

NIGHTCLUB IN KATA CENTER

One of the only nightclubs in Kata-Karon and Chalong is for sale at 3.5 million baht or 50% partnership. Contact Paul. Tel: 084-6455971. Email: paul.phuket@gmail.com

GUESTHOUSE IN KATA

for sale. 3 rooms, kitchen. Offer a good price. Please contact for more information. Tel: 083-3381625.

PHI PHI

13-bedroom guesthouse for sale. Tel: 081-7475293.

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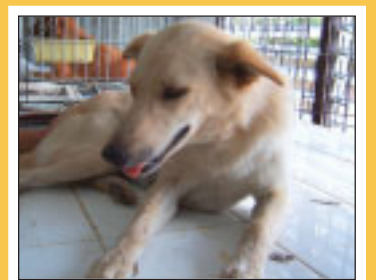
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