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IN THIS ISSUE

NEWS: Locals call for cyclone aid; Drug ring busted; Senators declare a lot of dosh; Tour guide found dead.

Pages 2 & 3

INSIDE STORY: Step right up for your Burmese workers.

Pages 4 & 5

AROUND THE NATION: Children caught playing dangerous games.

Page 7

AROUND THE REGION: Special school scoops top awards.

Page 8

AROUND THE SOUTH: Southern provinces to receive cash injection.

Page 9

PEOPLE: Innocent singer reaches for the stars.

Pages 14 & 15

LIFESTYLE: All made up and smelling great.

Pages 18 & 19

SPORTS: Duncanson sails to glory; Millennium picks up choppy victory; Runners set for Laguna marathon.

Pages 34 & 35

PROPERTY: Gardening: Bert figures out what's in a name; Home of the Week; Property Watch; Construction update.

Pages 37-42

PLUS

QUEER NEWS 6; AROUND THE ISLAND 10; GUEST CHEF 12; HAPPENINGS 16; YOUTH 'N ASIA 17; AMBROSIA 20; WHAT'S ON 21; TAKE A BREAK 23 & 24; MOTORING 26; BOOKS, THAI 101 27; EDITORIAL, LETTERS 28; FIRST PERSON, ISSUES & ANSWERS 29; MAKING TRACKS, HOROSCOPES 30; COMPUTERS 31; BUSINESS AND MONEY 32 & 33; CLASSIFIEDS 43-55.

Young Turks party storms election

By Semacote Sukanya & Stephen Fein

PHUKET CITY: Incumbent Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwannasuppana was re-elected by a comfortable margin on May 11, garnering 10,657 votes (57.4%) to just 7,910 (42.6%) votes for her rival Ayuth Tansiroj, leader of the Chao Baan Sarng San (Creative Village People) party.

In a remarkable outcome in voting for regular council seats, it was a clean sweep for members of Somjai's Khon Noom (Young Turks) party, who won all 24 seats – six in each of the four voting precincts. It will be the second four-year term for K. Somjai, also known as Jae E, who became the city's first directly elected Mayor in April, 2004 following the municipality's upgrade to full city status.

When the voting was completed and the scale of the Young Turks' victory began to emerge, some female candidates of the Creative Village People party were in tears and had to be consoled by their party leader Ayuth Tansiroj.

K. Ayuth, whose family owns Bangkok Phuket Hospital, was one of three deputy mayors dismissed by K. Somjai one year into her first term as Mayor.

Campaigning was fierce in the final days leading up to the polls, with both mayoral candidates distributing thousands of multi-page newsletters attacking the other and defending themselves.

One of the many issues raised in K. Ayuth's *phom yaak phuut bang* ("I want my say") newsletter was that K. Somjai's team was standing by idly as resi-



Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwannasuppana on her thank-you tour after being re-elected by a comfortable margin.

dents near the trash incineration plant in Saphan Hin faced health risks from dioxin emissions from the plant.

K. Somjai had the last word in that debate by issuing 7,000 copies of her own newsletter, *The Truth About Ayuth that Every Phuket Resident Must Know*, in the final days before voters went to the polls.

In addition to allegations of impropriety by Ayuth during his tenure as Deputy mayor, the newsletter also contained a copy of lab results from inspection, testing, certification & verification firm SGS (Thailand) Co Ltd.

The results showed that concentrations of three contaminant classes taken from six sampling sites over a 3-day period in March were all well below safe standard levels set by the government.

A source at the Phuket City

Administration Office said that overall turnout was lower than expected, with just 20,262 of 44,637 eligible voters (45%) casting ballots. Of these, there were 833 "no" votes and 862 were spoiled ballots.

Wet monsoon conditions are thought to have kept turnout low at the 69 polling stations, most located in schools in the city's two tambons: Talad Yai and Talad Neua.

The winners in each precinct were:

Precinct 1: Wutthichai Saekam (2,179 votes); Songwut Hongyok (2,151); Likit Thaneerat (2,063); Prathana Tahnthiwit (2,032); Kanoksiri Prachumpan (2,007); and Worapop Rattachothipong (1,981).

The top vote-getter among the six Creative Village People candidates was Pornyamon Khanlkaikul, with 1,905 votes.

DSI reaches out to scammed rubber investors

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHUKET: The Department of Special Investigation (DSI) has set up a desk at Phuket City Police Station to accept complaints from victims of an "investment company" thought to have defrauded some 5,000 southerners of more than 151 million baht.

Thanin Prempri, head of the DSI Phuket investigation team, told the *Gazette* that Amorn-ake Petluechai and two associates of his Khon Kaen-based Thaninanan Co Ltd were charged in early-March with multiple counts of conspiracy to commit fraud. They were sent to a Bangkok jail without possibility of parole.

The arrests followed a DSI investigation after numerous complaints that the company had promised 6% to 8% monthly interest payments to people investing in its "rubber share" fund.

A search of the company's offices uncovered a list of 712 people who invested a total of 217,540,500 baht in the scheme. Many were from Phuket.

The DSI estimates that some 5,000 investors nationwide fell for the scheme, suffering total losses of more 151 million baht.

Fifty cases have already been filed against the company in Khon Kaen court and many more are expected.

A complaint desk set up in Krabi last month has already accepted complaints from 959 victims, he said.

"The Phuket complaint desk we set up on May 9 has already had more than 70 people come forward to report losses of 13 million baht," he said.

The desk will continue to accept complaints until May 22.

From page one

Phuket City elections

Precinct 2: Visuth Promthong (2,542 votes); Phisut Suthichindawongse (2,495); Virunporn Saetan (2,444); Sommai Nathip (2,366); Prasit Jongjeamjai (2,354); and Wilai Sanguan-ngam (2,146).

The top Creative Village People candidate was Thawat-chai Boonwit, with 1,540 votes.

Anand Saekaew, the only independent candidate in the election, received 515 votes.

Precinct 3: Nivat Arunrat (3,051 votes); Ananthep Navee (2,841); Narongrit Thavornpaiboonbutr (2,837); Thiensak Santhikayawakul (2,804); Pongsingh Na Nakorn (2,760); and Yuthachai Limchaisawadi (2,547).

The top Creative Village People vote-getter was Lt Somkiat Jiomrrarat, with 1,966 votes.

Precinct 4: Niwat Aengchuan (2,771 votes); Amnuay Kumban (2,669); Nithakarn Keratichariyasopon (2,600); Thanin Charoenlap (2,570); Chalerm Chankol (2,522); and Niran Kongtanthikul (2,496).

The top Creative Village People candidate was Wittaya Tantisuthiweij, who scored 1,808 votes.

Cellphone ban starts May 19

PHUKET: Phuket Provincial Police Chief Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch has warned motorists that they have until May 19 to break the habit of talking on a mobile phone without using a hands-free set while driving – or face being fined.

However, Gen Decha said that local police will not fine motorists for breaking the law until May 19.

"After that, they face a fine of 400 to 1,000 baht," he said.

"The new law will apply to car and motorbike drivers," Gen Decha said.

Phuket Senators not short of spare change

By Janyaporn Morel

BANGKOK: Phuket Senator Thanyarat Atchariyachai and her husband K. Pamuke have combined assets totaling just under 1.7 billion baht, according to asset declaration statements posted by the National Counter Corruption Commission (NCCC) on its website on May 8.

K. Thanyarat declared assets totaling more than 684 million baht, while her husband K. Pamuke, managing director of the Kata Group, declared assets of just over 1 billion baht.

The bulk of their combined total comprised landholding assets worth about 1.1 billion baht.

K. Thanyarat also had debts totaling 29 million baht.

Former Phuket City Mayor Phummisak Hongsyok, one of 74 appointed senators, was listed as having 224 million baht in assets and 21 million baht in debts. His wife, K. Sasinee, executive secretary at Anuphas and Son Co Ltd, declared assets of 1.4 million baht.

The biggest component of his assets was landholdings, with 137.6 million baht in land title deeds. Most of it, over 200 contiguous rai in Wichit and Kathu, is still undeveloped. K. Phummisak also listed 72.4 million baht in bank savings and 12.8 million baht in stocks.

According to Sections 259 and 260 of the new Constitution, all 150 members of the upper house are required to submit to the

NCCC an account showing assets and liabilities and those of their spouses and children who have not yet reached the legal age of 18 within 30 days of being sworn in.

Asset statements are also required of the Prime Minister, his Cabinet and all members of parliament.

When the asset declarations of Phuket's three MPs were announced in March, Tossaporn Tephabuttra was listed as the second-richest member of the Thai parliament, with combined family assets of more than 963 million baht.

Fellow Democrat MP Chalermklak Kepsap declared more than 140 million baht in assets while Rawat Areerob had some 60 million baht in declared holdings.

Eight nabbed in local drug bust

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: Cherng Talay Police have arrested eight people on drugs charges, Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch announced on May 6.

Cherng Talay Police arrested Prasit Waharak, 31, from Phang Nga, in possession of *ya bah* (methamphetamine) in a sting operation at the Bang Tao weekend market, he explained.

After questioning Prasit, the officers arrested Thanongsak Phromdech, 32, from Nakhon Sri Thammarat; Somchai Nitaram, 32, from Nakhon Ratchasima; and Yuthana Khantikul, 32, and Isahak Hayeewaeyuso, 23, both from Bangkok.

All have been charged with possessing *ya bah*, Gen Decha said, adding that Isahak has been charged with possession with intent to sell or distribute the drug.

While questioning the five suspects, police learned that Yuthana ordered 400 pills from a dealer in Bangkok and had transferred payment to the dealer's bank account. The dealer sent



Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Decha Budnampetch (back row, 3rd from right) announces the eight arrests on May 6. Police are still looking to arrest one foreigner in Cherng Talay for dealing in crystal methamphetamine. Photo by Yongyot Preurksarat.

Isahak to deliver the pills in Phuket, Gen Decha said.

The interrogations also led to the arrest of Cherng Talay residents Saknarin Proksakul, 19, Attachai Maneesri, 21, and Marina Prabpet, 19.

All three were charged with possessing and selling *ya Ice* (crystal methamphetamine).

In total, 457 *ya bah* pills, four packages of *ya Ice* with a total weight of 210 grams and a

white Honda Jazz car and four mobile phones were seized.

Police have been issued an arrest warrant for the dealer in Bangkok, a Thai, and will seize the money in that person's account, Gen Decha said.

He added that police were now investigating leads of foreigners buying *ya Ice* and of one foreigner in Cherng Talay selling the drug.

"We can't give the name of the foreigner involved in selling the drug, but police are keeping an eye on that person and are collecting evidence before moving to make an arrest," Maj Gen Decha said.

Tour guide, 31, dies of 'heart attack'

By Alin Boonkrungthong

RASSADA: Police have cited heart failure as the probable cause of death of a man found dead in his Rassada apartment on May 2.

Phuket City Police duty officer Lt Salan Reedeng said his station was alerted after security staff at Building 3 of the Rassada National Housing Authority apartment complex reported a foul odor coming from a fifth-floor apartment.

Arriving about 7:30 pm, officers discovered in the apartment the corpse of Boonlert Tengvanich, 31, who worked in Phuket as a tour guide, said Lt Salan.

"We found him lying on his bed in his underwear. We believe that he had been dead for about seven days [before his body was discovered]," he said.

K. Boonlert had visited a doctor at Vachira Phuket Hospital and complained of chest pains on April 29, he added.

K. Boonlert, who was registered as a resident of Phang Nga's Muang District, most likely died of heart failure, he said.

Doctors at Vachira Phuket Hospital examined the body and took samples before releasing it to relatives. Confident that heart trouble was the cause, the relatives cremated the body.

However, police are still awaiting the final autopsy report.

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Plodprasop criticizes NDWC's effectiveness

By Alin Boonkrungthong

CAPE PANWA: Dr Plodprasop Surasawadee, assistant minister of the Prime Minister's Office, on May 7 likened the status of Thailand's National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) to that of an "abandoned toilet".

His scathing remark was made at the Phuket Aquarium at the opening of a three-day convention on coral reef research and management.

As a former director of the NDWC, he said he would use his current position to lobby Cabinet for the NDWC to be an independent agency.

The NDWC, established by the Thaksin administration after the tsunami, was placed under the Thai Meteorological Department by the government of Surayud Chulanont.

That move has harmed the NDWC's effectiveness to the extent that Dr Plodprasop compared the agency's current status with that of an "abandoned toilet".

Formerly, the NDWC could



Dr Plodprasop Surasawadee, assistant minister of the Prime Minister's Office, compared the National Disaster Warning Center's current status with that of an 'abandoned toilet'.

issue warnings independently, but now all alerts must first be approved by both the Meteorological Department and Prime Minister's Office. Resulting delays could cost many lives if another disaster strikes suddenly, he said.

In mid-March, current

NDWC director Dr Smith Dharmasaroja threatened to resign his position over the issue.

Dr Plodprasop said that the enormous death toll in Burma's Irrawaddy Delta region [as a result of Cyclone Nargis] would have been much lower if Burma had a disaster warning center in place.

"I am worried that Thailand could face a situation like the tragedy in Myanmar under the current system," he said.

The current tsunami early-warning system is also incomplete and ineffective, with just a single direct detection buoy too far from the Thai coast to give ample warning time, he said.

On the topics being discussed at the convention, Dr Plodprasop called for strict controls on diving at vulnerable reefs.

Although Thailand's efforts to restore degraded reefs and build artificial ones are still in the early stages, they have so far been successful, Dr Plodprasop said.

Saying that Thailand's coral reefs were deteriorating day by day, he also encouraged government officers to work hard at protecting these vital resources.

The convention at the Phuket Aquarium was held by the Department of Marine and Coral Resources and its Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) as part of International Year of the Reef 2008 activities.

The topics of the first day's seminars were: technical methods used to survey coral reef ecosystems; reef ecology and diversity; oceanographic and climate change impact on reefs; community-based coral reef management; and coral reef restoration.

Topics covered over the next two days included coral reef management strategies, coral reefs in crisis, and trends in coral-reef restoration techniques and academic research.

Phuket steps up to help cyclone victims

By Sompratch Saowakhon

BANGKOK: With the death toll in Myanmar now feared to be more than 100,000, aid organizations have started relief efforts in the hardest-hit areas.

Staff at the British Curriculum International School (BCIS), Phuket, are calling for donations from the school's students, parents and the general public for their "Help a Neighbour in Need" appeal, while Thai AirAsia has set up a series of donation points at several airports in Thailand.

Money raised will be donated to UNICEF. "We are asking the children to bring in a donation or their pocket money next week to go towards helping children in Burma affected by Cyclone Nargis. We have chosen UNICEF as it is a children's charity that is currently active in Myanmar," said BCIS teacher and donation co-ordinator Jo Cullen.

Meanwhile, Thai AirAsia announced on May 9 that it is offering aid to cyclone victims in Myanmar by carrying public do-

nations to Yangon. Thai AirAsia, which flies out of Bangkok, flies daily to and from Yangon.

The airline has set up collection points at all the destinations it flies to, including Phuket.

Donation stations have been set up in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Haad Yai, Krabi, Narathiwat, Phuket, Ranong, Surat Thani, Ubon Ratchathani and Udon Thani.

Donations may be dropped off at any of the airline's domestic and international stations, and Thai AirAsia will carry these donations to Yangon.

Tassapon Bijleveld, chief executive officer of Thai AirAsia, said that the airline wants to make sure that donations such as food, clothing, flashlights and articles for shelter reach Myanmar as quickly as possible.

A press release by the company did not state who would receive or distribute the goods once they arrive in Yangon.

At the time of going to press, AirAsia had yet to reply to queries on this point sent to them by the *Gazette*.

Phuket goes on landslide alert

PHUKET CITY: As heavy rains dowsed the island, the Phuket office of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) issued a landslide warning on May 10.

"We have officers on 24-hour standby, manning phones and radios, ready to deal with any problems," said Chotenarin Kersom, chief of the DDPM - Phuket office.

"Because of the southwest monsoon wind, Southern Thailand can expect to have more hard rain, hard wind and waves of up to two meters high in the Andaman Sea. Small boats should not leave the shore," he added.

K. Chotenarin named 14 landslide risk areas: Baan Mai Reab, Baan Nua and Baan Kalim in Kathu; Baan Kanan, Baan Kuan, Baan Pak Cheed, Baan Lipornbangkok and Baan Tha Rua in Thalung; and Baan Kata, Baan Bangla, Baan Kokchang, Baan Watmai, Baan Laem Promthep and Baan Chidcheaw in Muang district.

"Luckily, we have not yet had any landslides in any of the risk areas, but we are worried about areas with construction sites because in the past many landslides have occurred near work sites," he said.

To report a landslide or ask for help call 076-218444 or 076-218409.

Smart ID cards available again

PHUKET CITY: Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit on May 12 announced that "Smart ID cards" for Thai citizens are now available at Muang District Office - again.

The new-style cards, which have a memory chip for storing personal data such as date of birth, physical description and even the holder's house registration information, became unavailable January last year when local office of the Department of Local Administration ran out.

At the time, the office had to place an order with the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), which makes the cards. Phuket received just 1,000 of the new cards in the initial shipment nationwide.

Since then, some 26 million Smart ID cards have been made and are now being distributed to District Offices around the country.

The Muang District Office is expecting more than 150 people a day to apply for the new cards.



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Burmese migrants form the backbone of Phuket's construction industry. They are also found largely in the fishing industry and on rubber plantations. Over the past 20 years, their labor has been indispensable to Phuket's development.

Yet Burmese are the subject of almost daily abuse and recrimination in the Thai press and suffer manifold depredations at the hands of corrupt officials.

Many live in poor conditions in crowded work camps and are denied basic human rights. Even Burmese legally registered under Thailand's guest-worker program suffer restrictions shocking in a civilized society.

"They are not allowed out of their camps at night," said a Phuket woman who has long driven much of her trade with Burmese labor.

"They cannot leave the worksite without written authorization from their employers. Police sometimes demand that they be accompanied by a Thai. They are forbidden to ride motorcycles or possess cellphones... Anything forbidden is forfeit to the police if they can find it," she explained, "so they're targets of frequent searches."

The draconian rules, now in place in several provinces with high numbers of migrant work-

Being Burmese:

Gazette correspondent Marque A. Rome takes a look inside the Phuket market for Burmese workers – legal and otherwise – and the people who profit from their presence here.

ers, were first suggested by former Phuket Governor Pongpayome Vasaputi.

He was reacting to an incident in which three drunken Burmese raided a Phuket City slum house and tried to rape a woman. In the event, no-one was hurt.

Several years ago, the fishing port area saw a continuing spate of violent stabbing deaths, so many that the area was nicknamed by Thais as the "Burmese cemetery". Yet, then as now, migrant Burmese have little record of violent crime or theft within the greater community. "They are terrified of being arrested and deported," said a Phuket City contractor, "so they behave themselves. You never need worry about theft of tools or materials; they're punctual, work harder and are more responsible than my Thai workers – all because they're afraid."

Once a flourishing and powerful empire, Burma has suffered almost continual warfare, both external and internal, since the 1820s. Economic development has languished, prompting an exodus of job seekers to Thailand over the past two decades that shows no sign of abating. Human Rights Watch, an international advocacy group, estimated last January the total number of Burmese nationals in Thailand at more than two million.

Their plight in relatively-prosperous Thailand was cast sharply into international focus last month when 54 suffocated in a container lorry en route to Phuket. Human rights organizations have argued since the early '90s that many foreign laborers – mostly Burmese – work under conditions best described as "slavery". But the country's 1955 anti-slavery law has been used

Thailand employers want to hire Burmese workers by the hundreds of thousands, but only a relative few, like these in Chalong, are legally registered.



only once, in 2006, against a mother-of-four convicted of cruelty to her maid. The mother was forced to pay 200,000 baht in compensation.

As for human trafficking – the government reported 88 arrests for human trafficking from September 2005 through February 2007.

None of those arrested were government officials. Only small fish are caught. On April 22, for example, 35-year-old Panchalee Chusook, wanted in connection with the suffocation tragedy, handed herself in to police. She told police she was paid 30 baht per head to supply packaged lunches to the victims. "Our only job was to supply lunch... My task was to count them as they entered the container."

Most advocacy groups suggest, diplomatically, that trafficking in laborers has proceeded with official connivance. After the most recent incident, officials vowed they would "track down the perpetrators and bring them to justice". Cynicism about such claims, even among officials, was open.

On April 30, Saisuree Jutikul, chair of the Co-ordinating Sub-Committee on Solving the Problem of Trafficking in Women and Children, said, "It remains to be seen whether police will be able to capture the ringleaders. If they do, it will be the first time we have discovered any."


"I've been thinking we should invite police from Scotland Yard to Thailand to exchange views on investigation methods for tracking down the trafficking gang suspects... if acting national police commander Gen Pacharawat Wongsuwan agrees, I'm sure it will be a plan that gets results. Personally, I find it discouraging, after more than 20 years in this field, never to have been able to capture the head of even one gang."

The day after the April 9 suffocation tragedy, Interior Minister Chalerm Yoobamrung said, "I fear we are going to be attacked for human rights violations because of this... The border is long, however, and detecting all who sneak across – difficult – [so] I don't want to hear accusations of official involvement..."

But the question of official involvement is indeed uppermost. Twenty-one organizations representing immigrant laborers, private development groups and Thai labor unions led by Wilaiwan Sae-Tia, who chairs the Thai United Labor Committee, protested on April 21 outside Parliament.

Among their demands: that police investigate whether officials and agencies "knew about the trafficking ring or were involved in it", and that suspects be prosecuted for human trafficking.


The same day, Division of



Child Clinic

is extending its medical services until 11 p.m. daily.

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living with oppression



After an on-duty police officer shot and killed a fleeing youth in Koh Kaew in April last year, protesters blocked traffic on Thepkasattri Rd. One of them held a sign that read, "Thai police can do 2 things: 1. Kill people; 2. Get money from Burmese."

to his post in a few months after the hubbub died out.

In another incident, a caravan of pickup trucks hauling Burmese was stopped in Phang Nga one night. One driver somehow escaped – forgetting his Patong Police ID and service revolver. It was reported that investigators suspected the ring involved others at Kathu Police Station. The ring, if there was one, was never cracked.

In recent months there have been three reported cases of people apparently posing as police in order to try and extort Burmese workers.

A Chalong contractor employing Burmese told this reporter confidentially that it costs 5,000 baht to obtain a Burmese worker and 500 baht per month per head in payoffs to keep authorities at bay.

Owing to centuries of conflict with the Burmese, there is suspicion of Burmese among

many Thais. So what makes them stay in Thailand and keep coming in droves, according to some accounts, paying 6,000 baht each for the privilege?

Ong, a skilled carpenter who is registered with the Labor Office and has worked in Phuket for 10 years, said, "In Thailand, we have few rights, but in Burma the military forms a separate group with interests differing from those of the public," he said.

"Jobs are scarce. Those who have them hang on to them. Teachers have learned to tell students what the military wants them to hear. Opposition doesn't pay; the military is ruthless.

"Schooling, even for primary education, is expensive. Most people can't afford the fees. The government does nothing to develop the people; they work only for themselves and big investors.

"Any boy who lacks opportunity for education is happy to join the soldiers; when his offic-

ers order him to shoot – even at protesting Buddhist monks – he fires.

"For others, the only hope is finding work outside. Educated people get good jobs overseas. Ordinary people come to Thailand.

"Smuggling operations typically have two principals – one Thai, one Burmese; both are officials or persons connected with the government. To pay the smuggling fees, emigrants sell their crops or, failing that, their land. After that, officials always seem to have their hands in your pockets. It's especially bad for illegals," he explained.

"But Burmese don't complain. This is our only avenue of hope," he added.

Even the word "Burmese", a catch-all term, is deceptive. Probably fewer than two-thirds of the "Burmese" workers in Phuket are ethnic Burman. In fact, there are many minorities. Thais are generally less wary of Mons who also live in Thailand.

Many ethnic Nepalese from Burma work as maids. "They speak English, are pretty and have fine skin. The men often work as tailors in Patong," she added.

According to Thailand's Migrant Assistance Program, at the end of 2007, there were 367,834 migrant workers from Burma registered to work in Thailand. But that is probably "only a fraction", as Human Rights Watch insists, of the total.

Annual registration of foreign laborers starts in June. The number registered has remained nearly static for six years. The Phuket Provincial Labor Office shows 35,116 registrants. The Office estimates the number of unregistered workers at about 50,000 – but it may be twice that;

possibly much more.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit recently admitted there could be as many as 100,000 migrant workers from neighboring countries in Phuket.

Labor Office chief Nattaya Anudit noted on May 1, Labor Day, "Last high season, there were 20,000 unfilled positions in the hotel and tourism business."

Now she is urging registration of an additional 20,000 foreign workers to take up the slack.

Plenty more will remain illegal. In a camp with 100 workers, "perhaps 70 will have cards", this reporter was told. If a construction site is isolated, "maybe only those working near the street are registered – for show. Inside they're all illegal".

According to this source, some police have opened a sideline facilitating registration: "At Keha [National Housing Authority project in Rassada] is a cop who has done it for a long time. New registrants are charged something over 8,000 baht; old ones, about 6,000 baht."

The real price, including registration and medical certificate, is 4,500 baht.

Employers charge workers for all expenses – official and unofficial. Said Ong, "Employers charge 500 baht per head for transportation to the hospital for medical checkups."

Immigrant laborers are relentlessly preyed upon: "If a Burmese works for someone powerful," said a source, "cops lay off. So they ask first, 'Where do you work?'"

"But look out on the 5th of the month in the morning: they have food supplies set up for the long day to make arrests. Those days everyone in the 'buses' is Burmese."

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Queer News

Pestle pistol swindle

SONGKHLA: It's always worth keeping in mind the phrase *ca-veat emptor*, or "let the buyer beware", when making any purchase.

The warning should be especially well heeded when the item under consideration is somewhat less than 100% legit.

This sage advice must have been far from the mind of one wannabe tough guy in Haad Yai, however, when he paid 15,000 baht for a bag that ended up containing nothing more than an old pestle and a few rocks.

On the afternoon of May 8, Phongsakon Niamhom walked into Haad Yai Police Station and told a tale of woe to duty officer Pol Lt Somchai Hatkhaja.

Phongsakon, 28, told the officer that he had long wanted to own his very own gun; he did not tell the policeman why he wanted a firearm, however.

Not knowing how to go about getting hold of such a weapon, he mentioned it to a motorcycle-taxi driver on Sriphuwat Rd Soi 10, whose service he often used.

Motorcycle drivers tend to play the same role in Thai society as The Yellow Pages do in the West, so it comes as no sur-

prise that the driver, later identified as 30-year-old Wichian Rakkhlai, knew just the person to fix his customer with a gun.

Before long, Wichian came back with a young woman called Saow, who identified herself as an Army Ranger.

A bit short of cash, Saow said she would sell him a pistol complete with license and registration for 20,000 baht.

Phongsakon agreed to the price and Wichian drove Saow off to go and buy the "gun".

A little while later, Wichian and Saow returned with a little black bag that Sow claimed contained the gun. Somehow, she made Phongsakon promise not to look in it until she had left.

When Phongsakon asked to see the paperwork, Saow said that she hadn't brought it with her, but would return with it the next day.

A little put off at this, Phongsakon said that he would give her 15,000 baht for the gun alone and hand over the 5,000-baht balance when she gave him the license.

Happily agreeing to this, Saow took the cash and then rushed off with Wichian again.

After the pair had left, Phongsakon felt it was safe to

take a peek at his purchase. When he opened the bag, however, he found not a shiny pistol, but a pestle and five or six stones, all wrapped in two T-shirts.

Filled with anger, Phongsakon rushed to the police station to report the fraud. Officers accompanied him back to the taxi stand to hunt for Wichian. After a short wait, Wichian came back to his spot and was duly arrested.

Wichian claimed he was merely the driver and said he knew nothing of the scam. Police charged him with fraud. As this went to press, they were still hunting for the elusive Saow.

It had not been reported whether any action would be taken against Phongsakon for attempting to buy a firearm.

Source: **Kom Chad Luek**

When he opened the bag, he found not a shiny pistol, but a pestle and five or six stones, all wrapped in two T-shirts.



Using your head

PHUKET CITY: Using a hardhat perched atop a traditional rice-farmer's hat, an ingenious construction worker at the entrance to the Phuket@Town project on Surin Rd gets double protection from the sun and falling objects.

STAMPS



Thailand Post launches enlightened stamp

PHUKET: Thailand Post will on May 19 release a stamp to honor Visakha Bucha Day. The day commemorates three important incidents in Buddhism: the birth, the enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha. Not only did these events fall in the same month, but on the same day in the Buddhist era.

The day is also recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage Day.

The stamp has two parts. On the left is the Mahabodhi temple in Bodhgaya, an ancient and revered building located in the Gaya district in the Indian state of Bihar, on the banks of the Niranjana River.

The building is a tall, pyramid-shaped tower with a flat top that supports a stupa. The temple has two levels. On the first, there is a Pang Marnvichai-style seated Buddha image, sat cross-

legged with his right hand on his lap. The second level, located right at the top, is where the stupa is.

On the right side of the stamp, Buddha is shown in a seated position beneath a bodhi tree, also known as bo. This represents the tree under which Buddha spent much of his time meditating on the path to Enlightenment. After Buddha decided to follow this path, he would meditate and fast for long periods.

Discovering that he could endure much hardship during his meditation, Buddha decided to start eating and regain his strength. As his struggle along The Path ended, he achieved Supreme Wisdom, experiencing this moment of clarity while seated beneath the tree.

The stamp measures 72 millimeters by 30mm and will be available from May 19 at a cost of three baht each, or 10 baht with a commemorative envelope. All 10 of Phuket's post offices will carry the stamp, of which only 700,000 will be produced.

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Sex-game shop clampdown

The Culture Ministry is threatening to close Internet cafes that allow children to play video games with sexually explicit themes. Ministry permanent secretary Vira Rojpojchanarat said the National Culture Commission is looking into reports that children are playing sex games at Internet cafes.

Offending venues will have their licenses revoked and then be prosecuted, he said.

Culture Watch Center chief Ladda Tangsupachai is discussing with other government agencies ways to prevent children from being exposed to this type of material.

Recently, child rights activists and groups promoting the family institution suggested children be limited to no more than three hours a day in such cafes.

Those aged under 15 should be barred after 8 pm and children under 18 should be barred before 2 pm on weekdays, they said.

In a related development, the Chiang Rai Culture Office has reported the spread of pornographic games and books. Office Director Mongkol Sittilor said the materials are being smuggled in from Burma.

Many children and monks had been found attempting to smuggle in these items, K. Mongkol added.

Proboscis peril. The Public Health Ministry is warning that people allergic to anesthetics are at risk when having cosmetic rhinoplasty procedures performed at private clinics.

The alert follows the 19-year-old Chamaiporn Kaewkue becoming infected with encephalitis after having nose surgery at a clinic.

Medical Services Department Deputy Director-General Dr Boonruang Trirungworawat urged people considering surgery to ensure they do not suffer from allergies or hemophilia.

Nose surgery is generally safe, but not for sufferers of certain conditions, he said.

Lab results later showed that the encephalitis was caused by a pre-existing case of herpes

simplex, not because of the nose surgery.

Medical Registration Division chief Dr Tara Chinakarn said Chamaiporn is recovering well after receiving treatment for encephalitis.

Dog's best friend. Four dog lovers have lodged a complaint with the Administrative Court against Bangkok Governor Apirak Kosayodhin and his administration, challenging their authority in issuing a regulation that requires all dogs in the capital to be embedded with microchips.

Promulgated last July, the regulation is set to come into effect July 5. Dog owners must register their animals and pay for the microchip, while those regularly feeding strays must do the same.

Failure to do so is punishable by a maximum fine of 5,000 baht.

Lawyer Prayat Senvirach said the regulation is illegitimate and unfair to animal lovers.

The Administrative Court agreed to rule on the case.

Blood on the tracks. The Food and Drug Administration has warned that some brands of cheap but fashionable dental braces are contaminated with toxic chemical elements such as lead, selenium, chromium and arsenic.

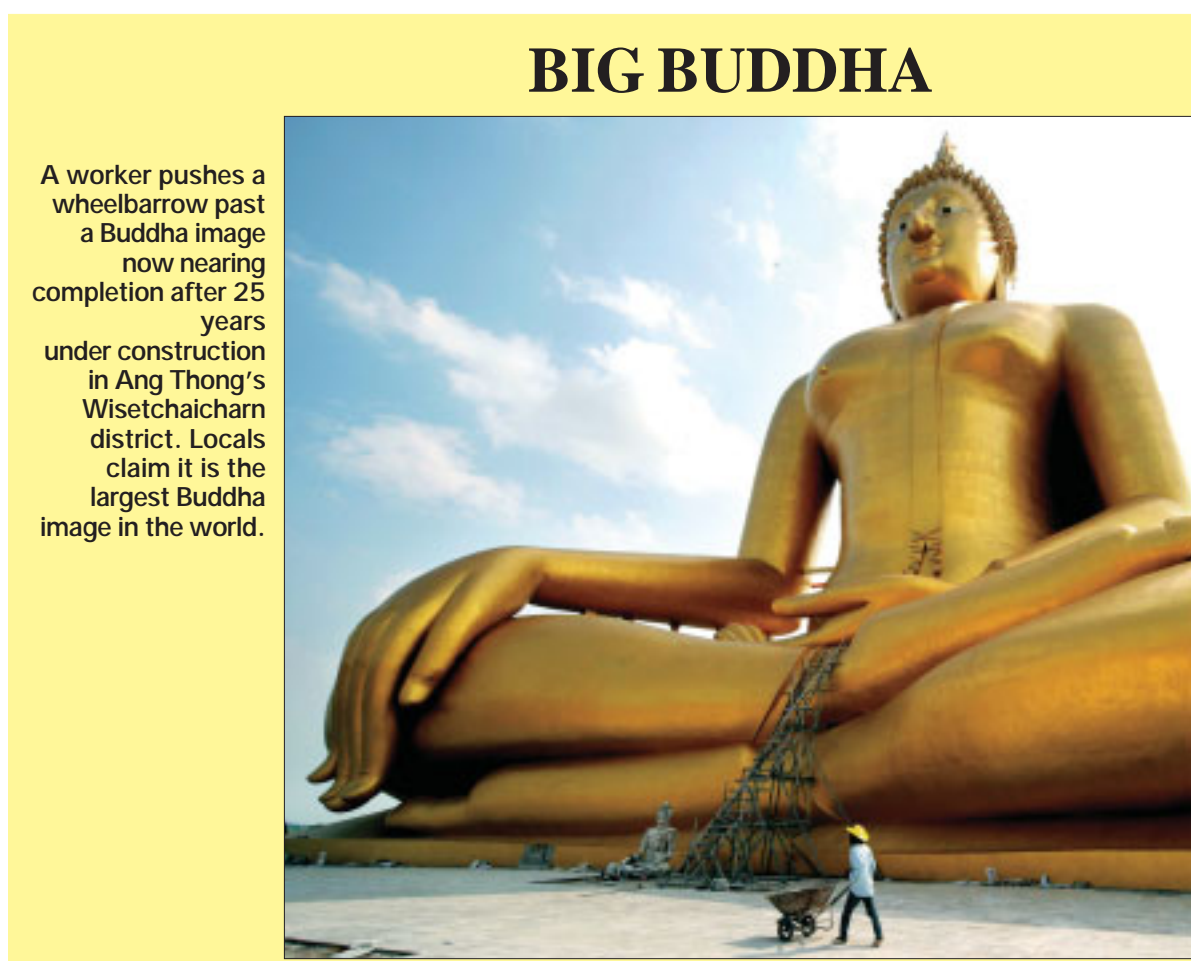
If the dangerous substances accumulate in the body, they can cause kidney failure and even death, said Deputy Public Health Minister Chaovarut Chanweerakul.

Some braces available outside dental clinics and hospitals are made with substandard materials and can cause an accumulation of toxins, K. Chaovarut said.

Such braces are worn mostly by young people as a fashion accessory, not to correct dental problems, he added.

Low-down larceny. Metal signs have been stolen from more than 100 temples and historic sites in Ayudhya, prompting police and Fine Arts Department agents to launch an anti-theft campaign.

It is believed that thieves



BIG BUDDHA

A worker pushes a wheelbarrow past a Buddha image now nearing completion after 25 years under construction in Ang Thong's Wisetchaicharn district. Locals claim it is the largest Buddha image in the world.

are now targeting such signs because they are made of more expensive metal than government-owned infrastructure items, such as manhole covers and rail guards, and fetch more when sold as scrap.

Fine Arts Department Deputy Director Prarob Lao-wanich said temple signs are also in demand because of a belief that they can be remade into amulets or holy items.

K. Prarob called on communities to work with police to prevent thefts and for a crack-down on scrap-metal shops buying stolen property.

Bad practice. A young mother has relodged a complaint with police accusing surgeons at Bangkok's Navaminthra Hospital of leaving a piece of gauze in her womb after a recent Cesarean delivery.

Waraphorn Weerawong has not filed any criminal charges against the unnamed surgeons, but is complaining that they and the hospital ignored her complaint and responded improperly.

Police say they will inter-

view her and hospital staff to determine if there has been any criminal act.

The woman, 23, says she suffered stomachaches, infection, dizziness and severe discomfort after giving birth at the private hospital last October. She passed the gauze a few weeks later.

She filed a similar complaint with Min Buri police last November. Waraphorn says she wants an apology from the hospital and compensation for medical costs incurred.

The police have asked the woman to renegotiate with hospital staff.

Rich reps, poor reps. The National Counter Corruption Commission on May 8 released the asset statements filed by 149 senators upon assuming office.

Senator MR Priyanathana Rangsit had a highest net worth of 1.2 billion baht, while her colleague Singchai Thunthong was 5 million baht in the red.

Senate Speaker Prasopsuk Boondet has a family fortune of 32 million baht. His two deputies

boast bigger fortunes: Nikom Wairatpanit with 194 million baht and Thasana Boonthong with 45 million baht.

Bangkok Bolly. Bangkok has been chosen as the venue for this year's star-studded International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards, to be held at Siam Niramit Theater from June 6-8.

The IIFA Weekend Bangkok 2008 extravaganza will be held over three days and include business forums, film premieres, media briefings, a glitzy awards ceremony complete with Indian stars striding down the red carpet, and charity fund-raising events.

The event is expected to boost tourism in Thailand and attract visitors from all over the world.

The event, to be broadcast three weeks after it takes place, is expected to draw 600 million viewers around the globe.

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

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FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

By Max Rogers

Bluewater International School was presented three awards for excellence in education from the Ministry of Education's Surat Thani office late last month.

The awards were presented at a ceremony on April 29 that was hosted by Surat Thani Governor Vinai Buapradit, after inspections were carried out on all registered nursery schools in the province in February.

Bluewater International School won awards for Best Nursery Location, Best Nursery for Activities and Exceptional Nursery.

Headmaster Jeremy Lees said, "This is a fantastic development for Bluewater as all the hard work and commitment that our fully qualified primary school teachers have put into ensuring that the children receive the very best international education has been given recognition."

The school's new premises opened to students in September 2007 and the school has had a growing number of new students throughout the academic year. There are plans to expand Bluewater's education program in the coming years to provide International Baccalaureate education to students up to age 18.

Former kamnan gunned down. Former Koh Pha-ngan kamnan (subdistrict chief)

New school wins education awards



Surat Thani Governor, Vinai Buapradit, handed Bluewater International School headmaster Jeremy Lees awards for Best Nursery Location, Best Nursery for Activities and Exceptional Nursery.

Nakorn Ruengrot was found dead in his home from injuries sustained from gunshot wounds on April 13.

The victim's son, 15, told investigating police that K. Nakorn, 47, had been sitting outside his residence in Baan Sri Thanu when two men approached and inquired about buying land from him.

Soon after, one of the men pulled out a gun and began to fire at him.

K. Nakorn ran for cover inside the house, where he was then shot three times in front of his son.

K. Nakorn was involved in politics on the island for many

years and it was known that he had received awards for his role as *kamnan* some years ago.

He ran for re-election in October, but lost in a disputed result with only 90 votes' difference.

Accusations of election fraud were made in the months after the elections and police are looking into the possibility of rising political tensions.

Police investigating the crime believe that the men involved may have been hired hitmen who were acting on the behalf of others.

Songkran death toll. Only three deaths were recorded in Surat

Thani province over the Songkran festivities from April 13 to 15.

Two of the deaths were reported on Koh Samui, while 43 people were listed as injured on the island.

Thawaikit Phetsud, hospital communications liaison officer for the police, said that 109 people were involved in accidents over the week of Songkran holidays, but only two people had died from their injuries.

Of the many people injured during this time, 20 were foreigners.

Reports, consistent with previous years, claim that most injuries were related to road acci-

dents involving people driving motorbikes or other vehicles while impaired.

Top golfers coming to Samui. (*Daily Xpress*) A strong field of local challengers will feature in the US\$300,000 Bangkok Airways Open which will be held at the Santiburi Samui Country Club from June 5 to 8.

In-form Prayad Marksaeng, former Asian Tour No 1 Thaworn Wiratchant, 2006 champion Chawalit Plaphol and young guns Chapchai Nirat and Chinarat Phadungsil are among the main contenders who will look to conquer the par-71 6,908-yard course this year.

In the three years of the tournament, Chawalit has been the only Thai to capture the trophy with Taiwanese veteran Lu Wen-the and South Korean Lee Sung winning in 2005 and 2007, respectively.

Two-time Asian Tour No 1 Thongchai Jaidee might also join the locals, if he recovers from a back injury, along with Prom Meesawat, who has yet to confirm his participation.

The undulating course will serve up a big challenge for contestants as skill alone may not prove enough to last the four days.

Stamina and good physical condition are the other elements that pros must possess to tame the beast. As if the hilly terrain were not enough, organisers have extended the rough.

Apart from the prize money, a special award of a return ticket worth 100,000 baht will be presented to any golfer who fires a hole-in-one.

Other familiar names for the event include Scot Simon Yates and Malaysia's Iain Steel.

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DINING LOUNGE

The Commerce Ministry will spend 50 million baht on stimulating growth in five provinces in the Deep South, as the economy in the region continues to plummet.

The project is aimed at increasing the confidence of small and medium-sized enterprises, foreign traders and investors to conduct business in the area, after some have moved out due to the daily violence.

The project will start in September in Songkhla, then in Satun, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat.

The economy in the South, which accounts for 10% of Thailand's gross domestic product, is projected to grow by 4% this year.

However, the economy in certain areas of the Deep South is gradually shrinking due to the ongoing violence.

Commerce Ministry inspector Krisda Piampongsant said the ministry wanted to stimulate the economy in the southernmost provinces by boosting confidence among businessmen and the general public.

The project will focus on food enterprises and SMEs to give security to people who have low confidence to operate a business there, he said.

Ministry officials on May 19 will travel to Songkhla and Satun to meet with local governors and draw up the project.

The government will help SMEs, in particular halal food producers, to improve their selling channels by setting up marketing training courses, promoting geographical indications for value-added goods, and supporting SMEs to attend international trade fairs.

Home sweet home. A day after his return from trip to the Deep South, Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej said the government would buy land from local people there if they offer it for sale.

The purchase by the government would prevent the separatist movements from gaining ground in the Deep South, he said.

Speaking during his Talk Samak Style program on the state-run NBT television network

Ailing economy to get cash boost

TALK TO THE PALM:

A convoy of some 500 palm growers from Surat Thani and Chumphon provinces block a road in Surat Thani on May 8 to demand government assistance in the wake of a drop in palm oil prices.



on May 11, PM Samak said the government is now in control of the situation there.

Blackout. Five districts in southernmost Narathiwat province were left without electricity for three days after militants sabotaged power poles and cut power lines.

People in Tak Bai, Sungai Kolok, Sungai Padi, Waeng and Sukhirin were in the dark from May 5 after insurgents cut power lines in the areas and loosened screws at the base of electricity poles, causing them to collapse.

Saying they had lost millions of baht due to the power failure, the local business community urged officials to speed up the repairs.

Power supply resumed on May 8, according to Narathiwat Vice-Governor Nippon Narapitakul.

The night of May 4 and

morning of May 5 saw a number of other attacks throughout the Deep South. The most serious attack took place in front of the Narathiwat Muang District Chief's residence, where a bomb exploded at about 10 pm.

A dozen people were injured, including three teenage girls who were attending the annual Red Cross fair being held nearby.

At 6 pm that evening, a gunman on a motorbike wounded two people in Yaring district, Pattani. An unknown number of militants in a pickup then launched a gun attack and injured a local resident in Kapho district about 6:45 pm.

Some 20 minutes later another group injured a government official in Thung Yang Daeng district.

Family attacked. A former member of Songkhla Provincial Administration Organization

(OrBorJor) was shot dead and his two sons seriously injured on May 9.

The body of Hama Dorloh, 48, was found in his pickup truck by the side of the road in Village 11, Tambon Lamplai, Theppha district. The vehicle was riddled with bullet holes.

Hama's two sons, Faisol, 18, and Ruissan, 12, were still alive but suffered serious wounds.

They were rushed to Haad Yai Hospital for treatment.

Police said that as K. Hama was driving from Haad Yai to his home in Saba Yoi district, a pickup truck pulled alongside him and a man in the back opened fire with an M16 assault rifle, causing K. Hama to lose control of his vehicle. Police collected 10 spent M16 bullet cartridges from the scene.

Police believe the killing was motivated by a personal dispute, possibly linked to local politics.

They did not link the attack to the ongoing insurgency in Muslim-majority Saba Yoi and Theppha.

K. Hama was a member of Songkhla OrBorJor representing Saba Yoi until last month, when he lost his seat in the election.

All's not well. A worker suffocated in a brick factory in Satun May 7 after a pile of earth trapped him in a well he was digging.

Somphan Rachasong, 30, and two other workers were digging a well at the Satun Cement company when the accident happened. K. Somphan was trapped at the bottom of the eight-meter-deep well when piles of excavated earth soaked by heavy rain suddenly slid back into the well.

By the time rescuers reached him, K. Somphan was dead.

A doctor from Satun Hospital said that K. Somphan died of suffocation and there were no signs of foul play.

Chief killed. A former assistant village chief was shot dead in front of his wife in Songkhla's Sathingphra district on May 7.

The body of Wichai Jansuk, 59, was found in a field in Village 3 Tambon Jathingphra.

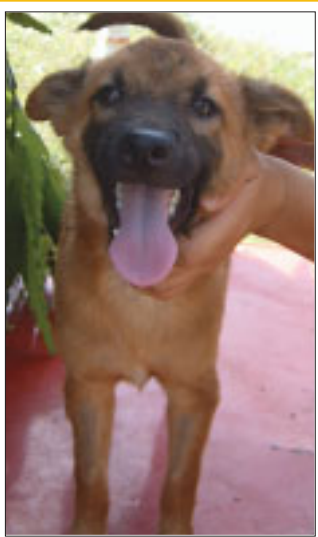
His wife, who police did not name, was waiting by his side.

She told police they were driving home on their motorcycle, when two men on another motorcycle pulled up alongside and the man riding pillion opened fire with a pistol.

After K. Wichai lost control of the bike, the pair fell off and fled into a nearby field. The gunman gave chase, shooting K. Wichai three times in the head and body before running back to where his accomplice was waiting on the motorcycle and fleeing the scene.

K. Wichai's wife told the police that she did not know of anyone who would have a grudge against her husband. Police, however, said that a personal dispute was the most likely explanation for the killing.

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



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Crafty trio glam up guesthouse

Forty-Three@Talang Rd guesthouse is a quirky little place to spend an inexpensive night, worth a visit if you're passing through Phuket and want to see how a Sino-Portuguese shophouse is transformed when three friends with artistic tendencies are let loose on the decor.

The result of the designer ménage à trois is a three-story, indie-style boutique guesthouse that looks unremarkable from the outside – inconspicuously blending in with the rest of the grimy whitewashed houses along the roadside terrace.

Upon stepping inside, one is immediately immersed in a world of art, surrounded with paraphernalia and decor that make the place look like permanent art-student accommodation with interesting artifacts propped against and hanging from the walls.

The stylists who decorated and run the guesthouse are interior designers Apisith "Ou" Jangjaiyen, Anan "Boy" Thanomsak and photographer Bandit "Toh" Namprosit.

K. Ou said they wanted to transform the shophouse into a trendy guesthouse using a limited budget.

"When we looked at other budget accommodations in Phuket, we noticed that they were all decorated in more or less the same drab and depressing style. We wanted to create a vibrant environment as an interesting alternative for guests; one that shows we are still young and still want to have some fun," he said.

"We added a lot of color and decorated the place with things from K. Boy's collection of antique items. In fact, K. Boy's collection has some valuable items in it worth trading and we'd eventually like to turn the place into an art gallery," he added.

"Each of the rooms has been decorated in a particular color to give guests a choice depending on their mood and character.



"Red, for example, is a hot color, to which I've added illustrations in gold to give it a warm, northern-Thai feel," said K. Ou.

"Another room is decorated with a seaside theme. It's mainly green with trees painted on the walls and framed pictures of the sea.

Simply painting the rooms in an artistic way transforms them greatly, then we just add a few more decorative concepts to complete the theme," he said.

One of the rooms has a floral theme with oversized flowers

hand painted on the walls. K. Ou said that the trio of visionaries painted the walls themselves, relying on their own feelings, rather than specifically planned designs. As such, the place has a very easygoing, free-spirited ambiance.

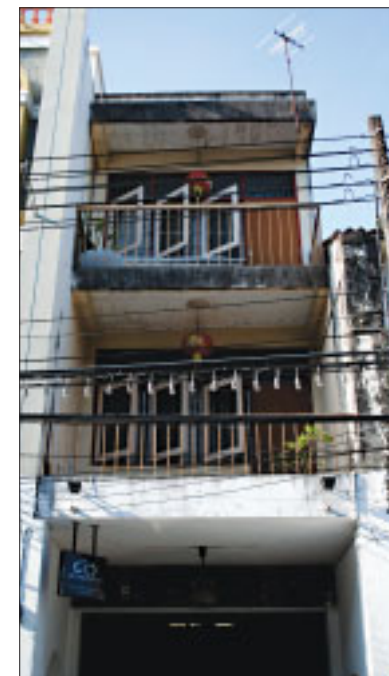
"Each room is decorated with the work of many hands. We have noticed, however, that long-term guests prefer the room on the ground floor, which has a family-home atmosphere. This room is filled with handmade furniture, some of which we bought second hand to mix up with the other fur-



niture," he added.

The collection of old toys, such as model cars and other intriguing items, really sets this guesthouse apart from run-of-the-mill accommodation. If guests are interested in the collectibles, they can inquire about buying them.

There are also stacks of books, which K. Ou aims to even-



The collection of old toys, such as model cars and other intriguing items, really sets this guesthouse apart from run-of-the-mill accommodation.

tually turn into a revolving library for trade and exchange.

"Mainly, we just want our guests to enjoy the same things as us, ensuring they have a memorable stay and leave feeling inspired," said K. Ou.

To fit the nine rooms out with beds priced within their low budget, the innovative trio came up with a design that uses wood placed across four cement blocks. "This was a cheap solution to making sturdy beds that can be easily taken apart and moved if necessary," explained K. Ou.

The ceilings have their share of artistic makeovers with lively reds and blues. Summing it all up, staying at Forty-Three@Talang Rd is like sleeping at an art gallery. A night there costs between 300 and 600 baht.

Forty-Three@Talang Rd guesthouse is located, unsurprisingly, at 43 Talang Road in Phuket City, near Soi Ramanee. For more information call 076-258127 or email: 43talangrd@windowlives.com



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Let's face it, having a barbecue has been popular ever since man first speared a buffalo, dragged it onto a fire and called his friends round to share the spoils. In Phuket, Don Battles has been continuing the tradition with his famous Saturday night barbecues at Don's Café in Rawai.

Don remembers the heyday of American barbecues. "In the mid-1950s to early '60s, backyard barbecues became popular – even [US President] Lyndon B Johnson used barbecues for political meetings," he says.

"I came to Phuket in 1997, during the economic crisis. There was no work for my daughter and I was an aerospace engineer before. We had no work to do and I had a holiday home here, so we opened a minimart with a small barbecue grill and I cooked.

"We had one barbecue and one concrete table. A year later, we started our Saturday night traditional southern American style barbecues. We cooked over charcoal and served it with a buffet, and it's still going nine years later. We serve steak, pork ribs, sausages – and we always have Thai food," says Don.

The best barbecues, he says, use charcoal, not gas. "It gives a natural smoky flavor, just like what cowboys ate when they burned wood," he says.

Don keeps the lid on his secret sauce

Don Battles has plenty of tips for barbecuing meat to succulent perfection – but he's keeping mum on his tasty, 17-ingredient sauce.

The weekly chow down attracts more Thais than foreigners, says Don. "We get families and couples – boyfriends and girlfriends, husbands and wives. They don't have to spend much money for tasty Thai food and traditional barbecue."

But it's his secret family recipe for the sauce that keeps them coming back, he says. "We use a traditional technique from the South [southern US states] that my father taught me. The barbecue sauce takes four hours



to make and has 17 different ingredients," says Don.

Although he does not want

to spill the beans on his secret recipe, Don is willing to say, "We use Mexican Jalapeno peppers grown in Chiang Rai."

Barbecue sauce typically has tomato ketchup or – even better – homemade tomato puree as the base, with anything or everything added to create that lip smackin' taste. A simple example would include: onion, garlic, chilies, Tabasco sauce, fresh squeezed lime juice, soy sauce, mustard, salt and pepper.

Making the sauce is simple. Melt about a tablespoon of butter in a large sauce pan, fry the "solid" sauce ingredients until they start changing color, then add all the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil while occasionally stirring and simmer for about 15 minutes, then continue to simmer until the sauce is the preferred consistency.

Don was willing to let the lid off a few tips in how to perfect your barbecue skills.

For starters, with any steak, add salt and pepper before placing it on the grill. "This helps to bring out the flavor of the steak," he says.

Also, sear the steak on high heat for no more than two minutes on each side before moving it to a cooler part of the grill where the steak can be cooked under more controlled heat. "If you don't do this, the juice is not

sealed inside the steak, then the meat can be very dry," says Don.

With sirloin steak, pepper both sides of the steak before placing on the grill. After searing the steak, cook on a medium heat for five minutes on each side for a medium-to-well done steak.

As for his famed pork ribs, boil the ribs for two hours then soak them in the barbecue sauce for two hours before cooking.

When the ribs are placed on the grill, cook them for only three minutes on each side.

When it comes to buying steaks, Don says don't be shy of buying local produce. "About 75% of our beef is from Ratchaburi province," he says.

"Everything we use for our barbecue are all

Thai products, which are superior to what you can buy imported from overseas – and they're easier to source.

"There is not so much magic about the food, it's just making sure that it is prepared properly and consistently," says Don.

Another pearl of wisdom he unveils to restaurateurs is, "The food to offer to people is what they want to eat, not what you would like to have them to eat."

Don's Cafe, at Don's Mall, 48/5 Saiyuan Rd, Rawai.. Open daily, 8:30 am to 10:30 pm. Tel: 076-289314. Fax: 076-289319. Email: don@donsfoods.com

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Phuket star reaches

On the night of April 27, Phuket teenager **Witchayanee "Nong Kam" Peagrinn** became the first female to win The Star contest, the popular Thai TV equivalent of American Idol. The 18-year-old beat 16,000 other contestants nationwide and will record her own album under the GMM Grammy label.

Sangkhae Leelanapaporn recently spent an afternoon with Nong Kam and her mother Yada as they traveled around the island thanking everyone for their support and gave a mini-concert at Saphan Hin.



Nong Kam fended off competition from 16,000 other hopefuls to win The Star.

Gazette: Tell me a little bit about your background.

Nong Kam: I'm 18 and I have a younger sister, Sujimon or "Nong Kate", who is 16. I went to Samkong School during my primary years, then Satree Phuket for high school. While at Satree Phuket, I took a lot of English language and mathematics classes.

I started singing when I was about three years old at Samkong School, where I later performed as a member of the school's "Super Dance" team, which mostly did Thai country numbers. I entered my first competition, at a Loy Krathong fair in Phuket, when I was about 10.

So far I have entered about 100 singing competitions across the country and have won a lot of awards and prizes.

Not including The Star, the result I am proudest of was finishing third in the 2007 One Tambon One Product OTOP singing contest, which was a nationwide contest with the finals in Bangkok.

Gazette: Why do you love singing so much?

Nong Kam: I don't know,

but whenever I saw singers perform on TV I always knew I wanted to do the same.

K. Yada: When they were young, Nong Kam and Nong Kate used to spend a lot of time watching TV because I was always busy with housework and my job at Bangkok Hospital Phuket, where I worked day and night shifts. They loved music programs and were always singing and dancing in front of the TV.

After Kam formed the Super Dance team at Samkong School, I always watched her perform in shows and contests. I felt like it was my duty as a mother, taking care of my kids. Eventually she asked me if she could learn more about music at the Siam Kolakarn Music School. She studied piano and learned a great deal about music and singing there.

I always encourage other parents to spend time with their kids as they pursue their interests and dreams. If you let your kids stay on their own too much, it's impossible to oversee their development properly. Kam, her sister and I always talk together and share everything.

One thing I don't share with

them is a love of singing, though. I hardly ever sing.

Gazette: Why did you enter The Star contest?

Nong Kam: I went to see the final round of The Star in person last year because I was a big fan of winner Sukrit "Bee" Visetkaew and wanted to cheer him on. At that time, I never thought I'd be the one on stage just a year later.

Actually, I planned to enter last year's contest, but the auditions for the southern region were in Haad Yai.

I had heard that they had problems with floods and it wasn't easy to travel there, so I didn't go.

This year I was lucky because they moved the regional auditions to Phuket.

K. Yada: If they held the auditions in another province, I don't think that Kam could have entered the contest. I don't think I could have found the time to take her there.

Gazette: Who are your singing idols, both Thai and international?

Nong Kam: For Thai singers it is Jennifer Kim, while Beyoncé is my favorite international performer. I started singing in English about three years ago and I find Beyoncé inspirational because she is so smart, whether she is singing or acting. She is so perfect in my eyes –

and we have the same skin color. [laughs].

Gazette: What did you do in Bangkok for three months during the competition?

Nong Kam: All eight finalists had to live together in the same house on Rama V Rd. Every day we did singing, acting and dance rehearsals. I had no free time to talk with friends while I was there. There were no distractions – no television, Internet or newspapers. Everyone was focused solely on music.

Gazette: How has winning The Star changed your life?

Nong Kam: It has been a sudden change. Before, nobody

knew me, now everyone does. People congratulate me, want my autograph and ask to have their photo taken with me. It makes me feel good. It has also given me a chance to do many new things, such as appear in magazines. I have also been contacted about appearing on television and radio shows.

Gazette: [to Yada] What advice have you given Kam on how to react to her new-found fame? How are you coping with it?

K. Yada: I have always taught her to respect her elders, take responsibility for her own actions and always be on time. I have tried to instill a positive outlook, because that brings the best results.

As for how she will fare in the entertainment business, I think if she continues to be a good girl she will be okay.

As for myself, I don't have any plan to quit my job in order to help her. It is unnecessary because Kam is not a superstar yet and she has a good team to take care of her in Bangkok. She is a bit busy at the moment, but her life will return to normal soon. She will have to go to university and find a job after she graduates.

Gazette: When do you expect your first album to be launched?

Nong Kam: I just signed a six-year contract with GMM Grammy. They have already prepared the songs for me and the album should be out by year's end.

However, I have already recorded a few songs for other

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projects and appear on The Star compilation album that has already been released.

It didn't take long for my managers to order me to lose weight! [laughs]. I am 171 centimeters tall and my weight right now is 68 kilograms. I would like to get down to 55 kilograms, as I think that would be good for my image and make it easier to find costumes that fit my figure as well.

Gazette: I heard that you were seen crying at one stage of the competition. Did you ever feel like giving up?

Nong Kam:

Yes, I did cry once. It was a Friday and I had to do a mini-concert the next day. My lines, dance routine and other things were still not complete and I was getting complaints about my accent when practicing the song I was going to perform, which was *Listen* by Beyoncé.

I was under so much pressure. I didn't think I would make it that far into the contest and it was the first time I had to plan out the song performance on my own. But in the end I just told myself just to relax and do my best, because I owed that to all the people who cheered me on and voted for me by SMS. I felt like I had to do my best for them.

Gazette: What are your favorite things and pastimes?

Nong Kam: I feel funny saying it because it may seem to contrast with my image, but I really like the Hello Kitty collection! [laughs] I love the color pink and love to dress up in shocking pink outfits.

I think that deep down I am a very sweet person, even if I don't come across that way all the time. Also, I love cooking – that's why I am so fat.

Gazette: What is the hardest part about performing a song before an audience?

Nong Kam: The emotional element, because we have to convey the meaning of the song in an emotional way that will touch the listener.

If I am singing a song that deals with heartbreak, I have to imagine that my own heart is broken – even though I have never experienced it myself.

I have never even had a boyfriend.

Gazette: [to Yada] What is your dream for your daughter?

K. Yada: Before, I wanted to see Kam work as a pharmacist or lawyer, but whatever she chooses to is fine – as long as she really loves doing it.

Gazette: How would you describe Kam's personality while she was growing up?

K. Yada: She was generally quiet, except when she was with her friends. With adults she would just say *sawasdee*, smile and and keep quiet.

Right now she has to talk and develop her speaking skills a great deal, and I think it is difficult for her – not always knowing if what she says will be taken the right way.

Gazette: What do you see yourself doing next?

Nong Kam:

I actually plan to enter Silpakorn University.

I entered The Star competition in February and spent a lot of time practicing singing, so I didn't have much time to study or prepare for the entry exam.

I want to be successful both at singing and in education.

I want to study in the Faculty of Music and the Faculty of Law.

I would like a bachelor's degree in each, then go on to study at the graduate level because that's my mom's goal for me.

At some point I would like to do musical theater, because it takes a powerful voice and I love performing live.

Gazette: Do you have a particular message for Phuket? Would you like to give us any advice on how to achieve success?

Nong Kam: I would like to thank everyone, because without all of their support I wouldn't be where I am or who I am today.

So I say 'thank you' for every single SMS vote, all the cheering and moral support – it is what gave me the power to sing for everyone.

To people in search of success, follow your dreams by doing what you love best and do it with all your heart. If you do, you will realize your dreams.

The author would like to thank the staff at Bangkok Phuket Hospital for arranging this exclusive interview.



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This week



COVER GIRLS: Three big-time celebrities were seen at The Watermark last week. They were there to celebrate the appearance of Phuket's local newspaper on the cover of Bangkok-based Hamburger magazine. From left to right: Bangkok model Sara Legge (in raincoat, carrying a *Phuket Gazette*); Janejira 'Gift' Saywipas (Hamburger in hand); and Natthira 'Anna' Susangrat. (Oh, also in the picture – seated, red and white shirt – is Stuart Bird, a local restaurant worker.)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY: A team from the Phuket Red Cross congratulate Phuket Governor and Phuket Red Cross President Niran Kalayanamit on his 54th birthday on May 2 at the governor's house.



SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: Thaweesak Srithongdee (3rd from left) poses on the opening day of his art exhibition 'Soldiers' at D Gallery, Royal Phuket Marina, on April 26. Also pictured are D Gallery director Robert Collins (left), managing director Pornthip Raksapiksu (2nd from left) and visitors ML Sukhathai Chumbala (3rd from right) and his family.



EASY TIGER: Taiwanese pop singer, actress and star of TV series *Princess Returning Pearl*, Lin Xin Ru, also known as Ruby Lin (wearing a cap), poses at Phuket FantaSea while holidaying with friends.



TECHNICAL TIMEOUT: G4S Phuket staff pose with regional manager Chris Ben (3rd from left), during Thrust Regional Technical Conference 2008, organized by G4S India on May 5 and 6 at the Dusit Thani Laguna resort. The conference focused on helping businesses increase their capability to deliver systems solutions in their respective markets.



TEACHERS' DELIGHT: Jongdee Phusalux (front row, 2nd from left), deputy director of Phuket Technology School, welcomes foreign teachers led by trainer Korstiaan de Jong (in yellow shirt) at the American TESOL Institute. The trainee teachers are taking part in a Teacher Training Explore Thailand Project at Phuket Technology School. The teacher-training course will run until May 27.



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The sweet smell of adolescence

Many centuries ago, Europeans lived without the modern-day benefits of tap water, showers and bathtubs, so bathing was certainly much more of a chore than it is today. The European climate was not exactly clement either. Just thinking of taking bath was pretty traumatic, so I've read.

With all the home comforts we now have, you'd think that taking a bath or a shower would be second nature, but for some people, young and old, taking a bath appears to be more difficult than it was during the Stone Age.

The problem is less evident in Thailand than in Europe however, as here, the climate and the culture mean that people bathe every day, but in Italy, it's a dif-

ferent story, and one that I had to face every time I took the bus to and from school.

In Thailand, it is expected that people will remove their shoes when entering a house, so people are prone to thoroughly washing the parts of the body that

smell the most. Also, eating a lot of garlic, certain vegetables and spices in food can cause your breath to smell bad.

Of course, not everybody has the same opinion about smells. Different people act accordingly, but either way, it is always a sensitive issue. Some of my friends are happy to douse themselves in perfume because they believe that it makes them smell fresh as a rose even if they don't bathe. How can I tell them it is otherwise without seeming rude?

I remember once seeing a commercial on television that told of a solution to under-arm odor. It was very simple: you just sprayed the deodorant on your armpit and you could stay fresh for up to one week. It sounds great – in theory. You just hide the smell beneath the deodorant and then you don't need to take a bath for a whole week.

Yeah, right. In the commercial, it also said that you need to "recharge" your armpits from time to time.

I will never forget that unbelievable nonsense. I began asking myself a lot of questions. The terrible smell that you'd accumulate during a week would be like a toxic cloud hovering around your body.

Do you think I'm joking? Not at all. I'm a teenager so I don't usually hang out in places like Patong at night, but sometimes I ask my dad to take me there so we can do some people watching.

You don't need to sit near the pubs to observe people. Just walk along the road and you'll see many people, mostly farangs, happy, drunk and engaged in some sort of competition to see who can be the dirtiest.

The heat only adds to the results of this competition and

makes it so that you need a gas mask to stop you vomiting. I understand Thai language and the culture and I think that behind the smiles, Thai people often don't understand foreigners.

I realize that many people, including myself, sweat at some point and that this can cause a smell, but what can we do about it?

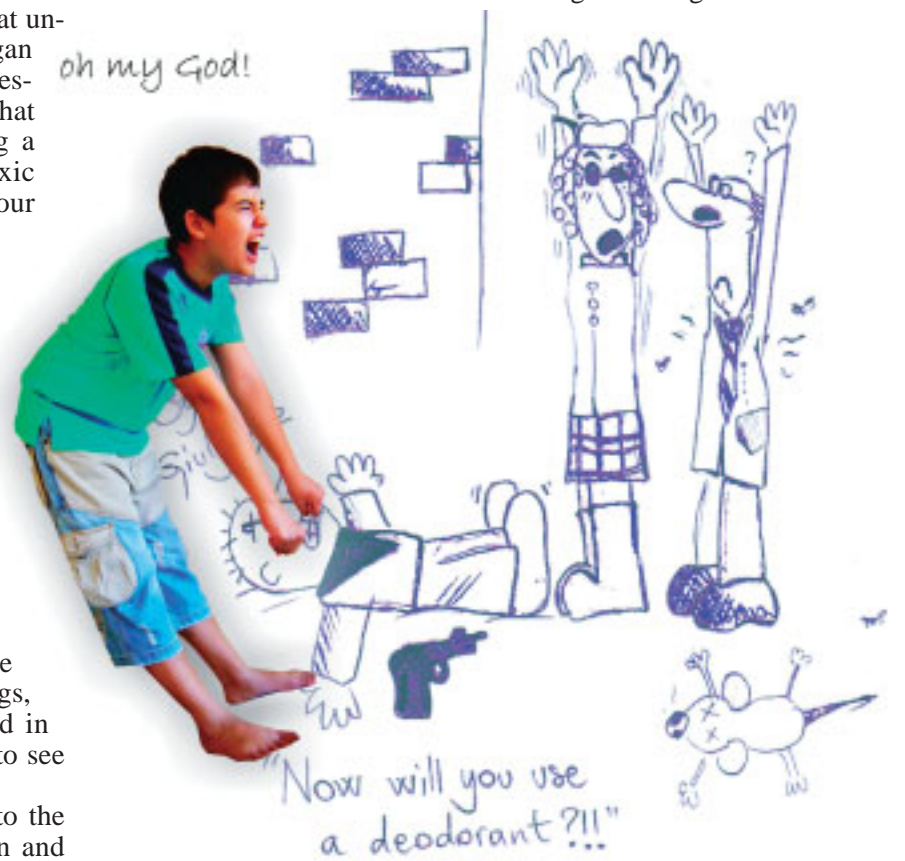
Sometimes it is impractical to bathe, especially when you are at school for an entire day. What is the solution?

We are teenagers, we like to run and we like to keep moving. Of course we will sweat sometimes.

Should we move less or stay out of the sun? Maybe we should have Songkran all year long so that it is possible to wash at the side of the road whenever you want.

I'd love to hear your thoughts on this. To all the teens and people who read this column: what is the solution? Email me at: mariagiulietta@gmail.com

Youth 'n
ASIA
By Maria Giulietta



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There's something in the air



There are perfumes galore at Mist 1000 Parfums, as well as a special method for discovering how to bring out your inner princess – or pirate – in scent.



By Gazette Staff

A potpourri of bottled Parisian fragrances by Mist 1000 Parfums is now providing a sweet-scented refuge in Patong, since the perfume emporium opened its first Phuket branch at Jungceylon last weekend.

The collection of 1,600 different fragrances for men, women and children includes the world's top brands, such as Caron, Christian Lacroix and Jean-Charles Brosseau.

Even Disney characters now have their own branded fragrances to capture kids' interest in smelling sweet. Girls can sample the fragrances of their favorite Disney Princesses and

boys can experiment with eau de toilet à la Pirates of the Caribbean, which apparently doesn't smell of seaweed or rotten fish, and you can even find out if Mr Incredible's special powers also make him smell incredible.

So how does one choose the right perfume from such a massive selection? Whiffing just a few different fragrances in succession often results in a dilution of their distinct scents.

To overcome this problem of nasal-sensual overload, Mist 1000 has come up with a color-coded card system that directs customers to the most suitable perfume for them before they've even taken the lid off a tester.

There is a MISTIGRI card for each kind of perfume that has a simple combination of color code and symbols to represent the fragrant elements of the scent.

The clever sales tool leads customers to reach a quick decision based on the six primary olfactory families. Depending on your gender, you might be a Citrus, a Floral or a Woody person. Then a suitable sub-olfactory family is decided and narrows the choice down considerably. Then it's a question of which bottle tickles your fancy the most and how much you are prepared to spend.

One of the dearer brands you won't find at the Mist 1000 Phuket branch is Bugatti's dra-

matic show-piece perfume created especially for the kind of people who can afford their cars. The 200,000-baht gold-plated sculptured bottle is only available at Mist 1000's Central Plaza branch in Bangkok.

Mist 1000 lists four primary olfactory families each for men and women. Unique to the feminine fragrances are Chypre and Floral, while Aromatic and Woody are primary olfactory families for men. Citrus and Oriental are primary olfactory families for both sexes.

The Chypre family is based on a woody, mossy floral accord with a rich, lingering scent. They include leathery or fruity notes.

Perfumes in the Aromatic family are simpler combinations based on one or two herbs, such as sage or rosemary.

Warm musk, spices and vanilla fall under the Oriental family of fragrances. Oriental fragrances are the heaviest and most appropriate for evening wear, while Citrus scents from the oils of oranges, lemons and bergamot are fresh and light.

Those who still don't know which particular perfume to go for may try a few different brands over a few weeks by taking home a Discovery Set for men or women containing nine miniature bottles of different perfume brands. The boxes of sample bottles make great gifts as they come with a gift voucher that entitles the holder to one 50ml bottle of the perfume they like best in the set.

Other fragrance families include Fougere, Marine, Lavender and Leather. The subtle qualities of Fougere – French for “fern” – means it has no noticeable scent, yet the members of the family depict a woodland scent, such as lavender, oak moss and geranium.

Marine scents are relatively new to the world of fragrances. They are designed to evoke a feeling of the freshness of sea air. An ingredient called calone is used to give the marine scent. Lavender is among the oldest scents used in the world as a perfume ingredient.

The Yardly brand built much of its success on the scent of lavender, which is used in Yardley's Old English Lavender for men. Leather fragrances are created from cade oil, which is extracted from juniper and birch trees and has a pungent, sweet and smoky scent.

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Villa Zolitude was the venue for the launch of new concepts by Make Up Store for the Swedish brand's spring-summer-2008 collection. Models graced the steep steps of the luxury retreat in the Chalong hills with a fashion show and three new seasonal looks: Dusty Queens, Caramba and Caribbean Dream.

Sheer pastels gave a matte-velvet look to the two faces of the Dusty Queens romantic look – one for day and one for night.

The daring and fiery Caramba look of a Spanish beauty is strong yet classical with lips and eyes in purple and shifting tones from warm to cold. Inspired by a tropical paradise, the Caribbean Dream look is a splash of the bright colors of exotic birds. Swirling, smoky lines shape the eyes and golden skin is matched with pink lips and cerise and apricot tones.

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Until May 17. Soldiers – Art Exhibition.

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

He looks at who is involved in the wars, the instigators and the victims. He also observes how nonsensical and destructive it is to have wars. At D Gallery 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@boat-housephuket.com Website: www.boathousephuket.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 and raffle & auction prizes for charity.

For information call Annie Peters (087-2730786) or Carole Hillsmith (084-4477221).

May 18. PC Group Therapy – Chalong.

Is your Internet connection driving you nuts? Ready to throw



Runners young and old will be out in force for this year's Laguna Marathon.

Laguna Phuket International Marathon

June 15

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

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

For more info and tickets contact Cristy. Tel: 084-054 4367. Email: cristy@soidog-foundation.org Website: www.soidog-foundation.org

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 Chalong, see the website. Sponsored by the Phuket Gazette and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes. From 10 am until midday at the Sandwich Shoppe in Chalong.

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

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 22. Montpelier Global Property Seminar.

This seminar at the The Holiday Inn Patong will focus on property- and mortgage-related topics for Thailand and around the world. The speakers will be:

Nicholas Vettewinkle, CBRE Richard Ellis, on the Thailand Property Market.

Tony Davis, Dragon Property Group, on short-term returns from high-end properties.

Mark Broomhead, Hong Kong Finance Holdings, on purchase to lease with guaranteed returns.

Neil Jensen, Lloyds TSB, on international and currency mortgages for expats.

Darrien Shiell, Friends Provident, on low-risk property funds.

A buffet and refreshments will be available.

For more information contact Barry Payne. Tel: 086-9764998. Email: bpayne@montpeliergroup.com Website: www.montpeliergroup.com

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. Competing in 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 celebrities, 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 1. PC Group Therapy – Patong.

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

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

June 8. PC Group Therapy – Laguna.

As always, from 10 am until midday at the Sandwich Shoppe in Laguna.

June 15. PC Group Therapy – Chalong.

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

July 17. Asarnha Bucha Day (Public Holiday).

This full-moon day of the eighth lunar month commemorates the Buddha's first sermon to his first five disciples after attaining Enlightenment more than 2,500 years ago.

Evening candlelit processions are staged in all Thai Buddhist temples.



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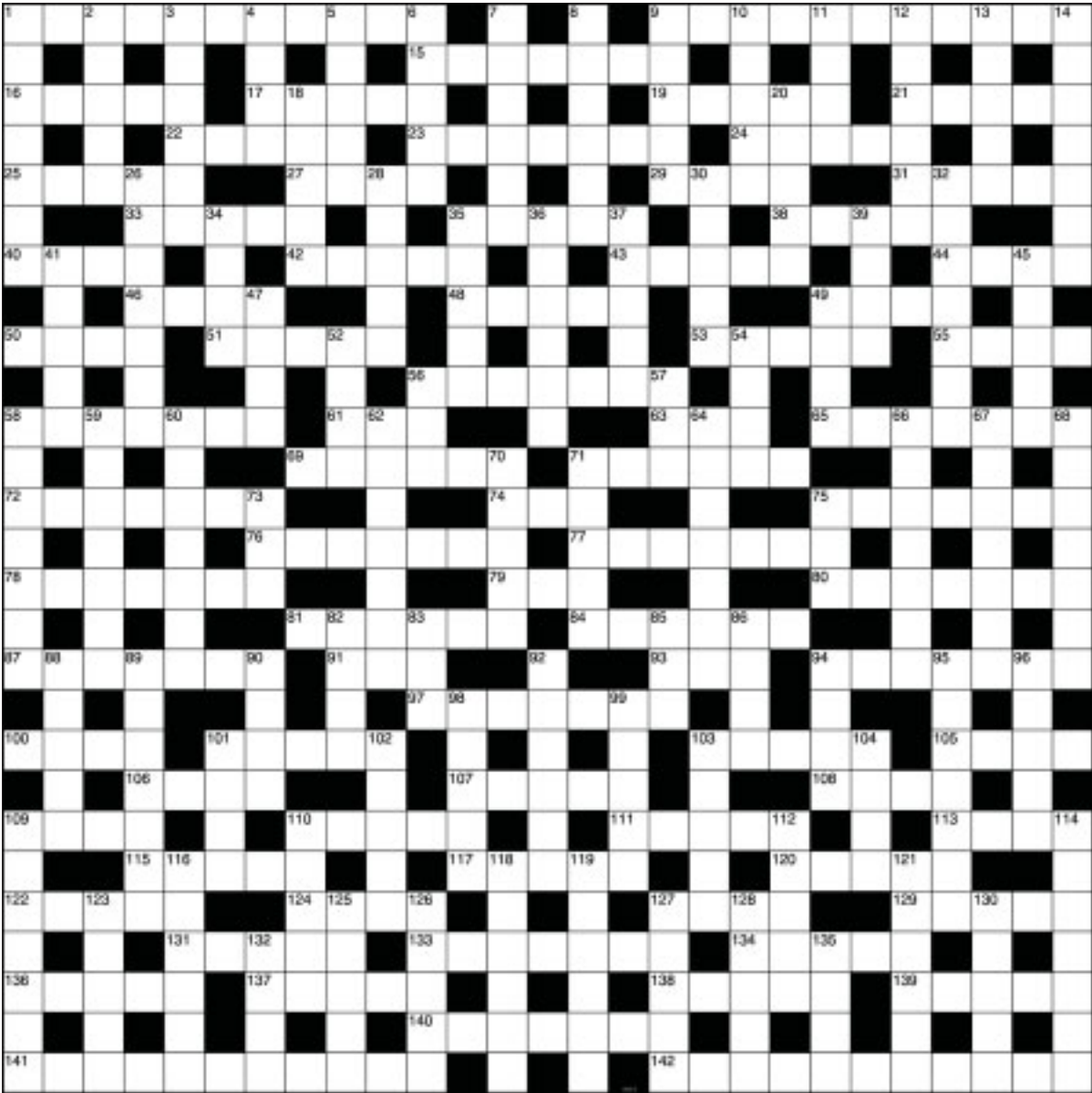


The BIG Crossword

Hidden Words

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

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



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Across

1. Tragedy
9. Secretarial skill
15. Feeblest
16. Warble
17. Magic lamp spirit
19. Pass (legislation)
21. Lounge set
22. The Sound Of...
23. Understand
24. Persists
25. Laughing scavenger
27. Young society entrants
29. Oodles
31. Ran in neutral
33. Amalgamate
35. Stated further
38. Poet, ...Allan Poe
40. Vocalized
42. Domain
43. Peruses
44. Pre-owned
46. Pleased
48. Related to hearing
49. News story
50. Actor, ...Law
51. Bare
53. Adds seasoning to
55. Groan
56. Direct course
58. Stoat-like animals
61. Garden implement
63. Body pouch
65. Earphones
69. Spurred
71. Word processor operator
72. Seems
74. Fish eggs
75. Lessens
76. Outshine

77. Construction toy
78. Actress, ...Dietrich
79. Current unit
80. Candidate
81. Gnawed
84. Painful experience
87. Abandoned
91. ...& nay
93. Nocturnal bird
94. First Bible book
97. US Civil War soldiers
100. Fijian capital
101. Practised (trade)
103. Folksinger, Bob...
105. October stone
106. Tidy
107. Storey
108. Revel
109. Urged on, ...up
110. Indian Brahma worshiper
111. Small notches
113. Early Peruvian
115. Befuddle
117. Lily flower
120. Northern Italian city
122. Not anybody (2-3)
124. Respectful form of address (2'2)
127. Inflated promotion
129. Kind of heron
131. Bravery decoration
133. Army hospital attendant
134. Shaving blade
136. Hair dye
137. Actor, Ryan ... (1'4)
138. Native New Zealander
139. Cartoon strip, Li'l ...
140. Go without alcohol
141. Fashion leader

Down

1. Snags
2. Strong string
3. Author, ...Rushdie
4. Illegally fixes (race)
5. English coins
6. Pitchers
7. Venture (guess)
8. Cherry red
9. Brace (oneself)
10. Praise highly
11. Ins &...
12. Kremlin country
13. Tiny bottle
14. Succumbed
18. Downy duck
20. Lawsuits
26. Gold lumps
28. Plait
30. Verbal exams
32. Beat rhythmically
34. Terrible tsar
35. Astound
36. Cheat
37. Suffocate in water
39. Entrails
41. Blue shade
45. Fill with joy
47. Papas
49. Irritation
52. Repeat
54. Circle curves
56. Bunk
57. Extrasensory perception (1,1,1)
58. Struck forcefully
59. Eagerly desires
60. Pencil rubbers
62. Acorn plant (3,4)
64. Cabin staff

66. Stomach
67. Parts of a minute
68. Decorative tufts
70. Horror
71. Musical time
73. Prosecute
75. Famous director, ...Howard
82. London's ...Park
83. Manner
85. ...& don'ts
86. Confederate
88. Accustom
89. From Kampala
90. Fool
92. Use frugally (3,3)
94. Ambition
95. Inspiring
96. physicist, Sir ...Newton
98. Appalling
99. Deserves
101. Recompensed
102. Diva, prima...
103. Risky
104. Fingertip covering
109. Pistol (wound)
110. Macho person (2-3)
112. Smudge
114. Dressed (in)
116. Consumer pressure
118. Eldest
119. Fanciful
121. Make fizzy
123. 1/16 of pound
125. Vigilant
126. Grinding tooth
127. Sacred songs
128. Haughty
130. Incur (debt) (3,2)
132. Snooze
135. Clothes fasteners

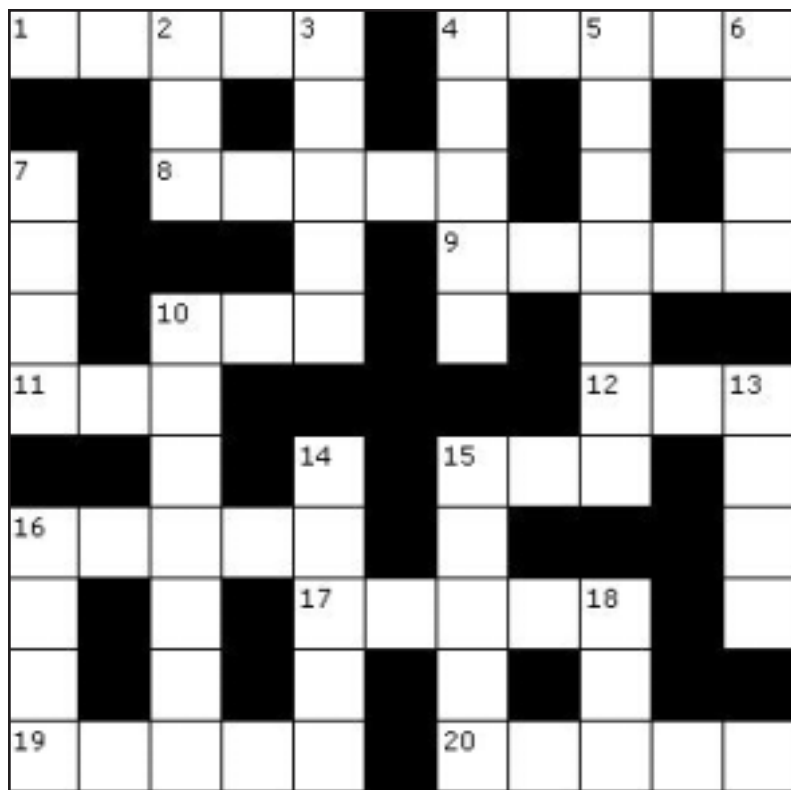
Solution on next page



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

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

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



Quick Crossword

Across

1. Simultaneous notes
4. Piercing
8. Fearless
9. Expel
10. Pre-adult male
11. Oxygen
12. Bruce...
15. Clash singer, ...Strummer
16. Set up
17. House
19. Actor, Charlie...
20. Large boat

Down

2. Sphere
3. Journal
4. Swiftiness
5. Feature
6. Send by mail
7. Large cat
10. Take in air
13. Cheese
14. Lucky number...
15. Gelatin dessert
16. Bother
18. Noah's home for 40 days

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. Which financial institution was formed on May 17, 1792?
2. Where is its original building located?
3. Under which tree was it formed?
4. How tall is Danny Devito?
5. What affliction did Jimmy Scott suffer?
6. How many episodes of Twin Peaks were made?
7. When was the last episode of the The Black and White Minstrel Show broadcast on BBC TV?
8. In the same year, which communist defector died after being stabbed with an umbrella?
9. Which country did he come from?
10. Which poison was used to kill him?
11. How much is considered the minimum lethal dose to humans?
12. Which food is it extracted from?
13. As medicine, what is castor oil often used for?
14. Which produces the most castor oil?
15. Who is the current prime minister of that country?
16. And when was he installed as prime minister?
17. Where did he graduate with a doctorate in philosophy?
18. According to experts, when was that university founded?
19. What rival university set up nearby about 100 years later?
20. What allegedly sparked that university being formed?

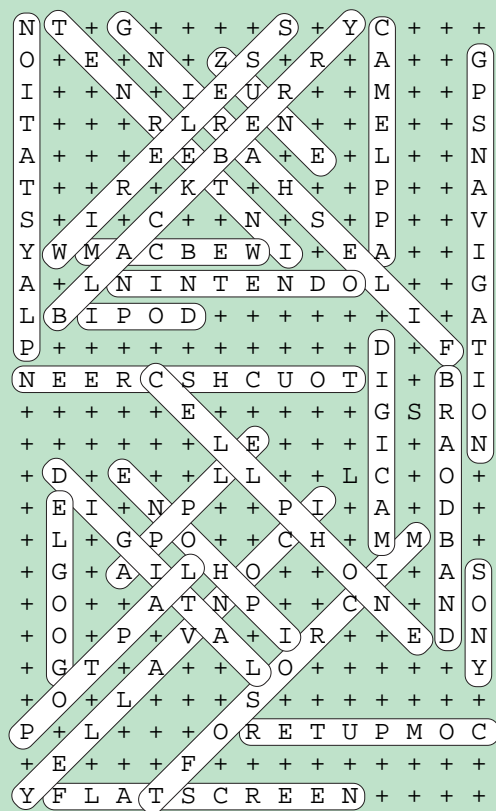
Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Quick Crossword

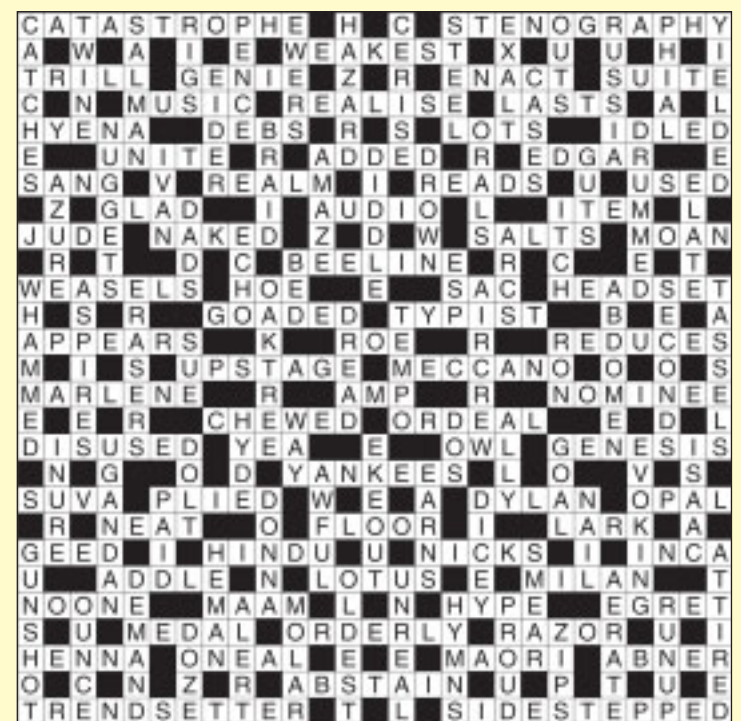


Hidden Words SOLUTION



Monster Quiz Answers

1. New York Stock Exchange (NYSE); 2. 18 Broad Street; 3. A buttonwood tree, or American Sycamore; 4. 4 feet 9½ inches; 5. Kallmann's syndrome; 6. 30; 7. July 1, 1978; 8. Georgi Markov; 9. Bulgaria; 10. Ricin; 11. 500 micrograms; 12. Castor beans; 13. As a laxative; 14. India; 15. Dr Manmohan Singh; 16. May 22, 2004; 17. Oxford University; 18. At the end of the 11th century CE; 19. Cambridge University; 20. An argument among townsfolk.



Solution to this week's BIG Crossword

Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

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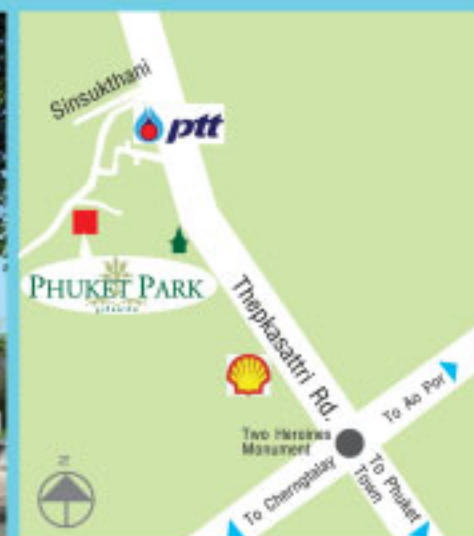
ทำเลทอง
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ตรงข้ามโรงแรม 5 ดาว

อาคารพาณิชย์ 5 ชั้น 6 ห้อง
ราคาเริ่มต้นที่ 15.5 ล้านบาท
คอนโดหรู 17 ห้อง
ราคาเริ่มต้นที่ 3.9 ล้านบาท



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Proton adds its weight to Thai market



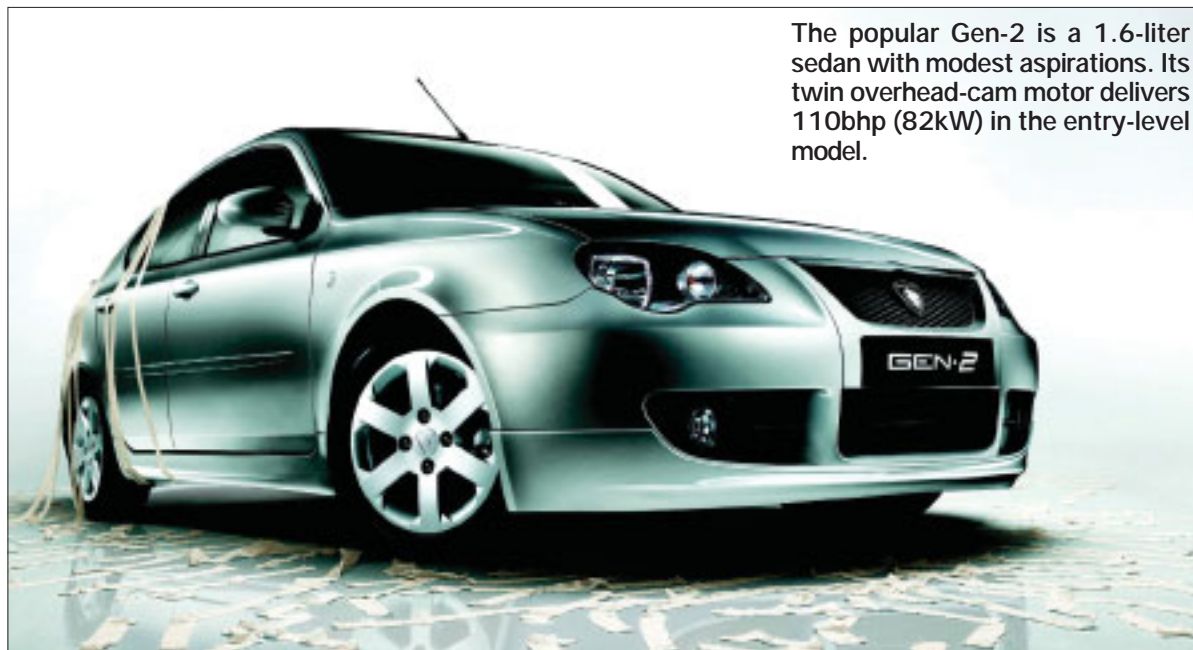
By Jeff Heselwood

Malaysia's Proton, originally a state-funded automaker, but now in private hands, has finally launched in Thailand – with unusually competitive prices.

The first car to be built by Proton, in 1985, was based on a Mitsubishi Lancer and was offered with either a 1.3-liter or 1.5-liter engine. Production, by global automotive standards, was tiny, reaching only 24,000 cars in 1987 and just 80,000 two years on. Compare this with Toyota, which expects to produce almost two million vehicles this year in the US alone.

Despite overtures to Volkswagen in recent years, Proton remains relatively isolated as a motor manufacturer, but this new foray into international markets may be the beginning of a period of significant expansion.

The VW saga began in 2004 when it was announced



The popular Gen-2 is a 1.6-liter sedan with modest aspirations. Its twin overhead-cam motor delivers 110bhp (82kW) in the entry-level model.

that a "strategic partnership" had been established, which ended in early 2006 when Volkswagen declared that the partnership had failed because its desires "clashed with the terms and conditions offered" by Proton.

On a more positive note, in 1996, Proton acquired a 63.75% holding in Lotus, the British engineering consultancy and sports-car manufacturer.

In addition, in 2004, Proton bought a majority share in the ailing motorcycle company MV Augusta, only to sell it on a year

later because of heavy losses.

At a press conference late last year, Thailand's Phranakorn Auto Sales Co Ltd announced plans to open 20 outlets to market Proton cars, with an initial target of 3,000 cars in the first year. General Manager Apichart Wangsatorntanakhun said that eight outlets would be located in and around Bangkok with the rest in major provinces.

Although K. Apichart was unwilling to specify which models will be available in Thailand, he indicated that it could be as many as 25 different cars. One

of these will almost certainly be the popular Gen-2, a 1.6-liter sedan with modest aspirations. Its twin overhead-cam motor delivers 110bhp (82kW) in the entry-level model, 125bhp in the luxury version thanks to variable cam timing.

Power windows are standard, as is a reversing sensor and a driver's airbag. The upper model provides an airbag for the front-seat passenger, as well as ABS and EBD (electronic brake-force distribution). Brakes are ventilated discs up front, solid ones at the rear.

Performance figures are equally modest with a maximum speed of 190kmh with manual transmission, slightly less on the automatic, while the 0-100kmh sprint time is between 10 and 13 seconds, depending on the power plant and transmission.

Pranakorn Auto Sales is expecting to capture a significant segment of the market, based mainly on low prices. K. Apichart anticipates being able to sell the Protons at prices starting from 400,000 baht, making them the cheapest sedans available in Thailand.

Proton believes its exports will reach almost 100,000 cars by the end of this year, although last year they exported only 23,000. Dato Haji Syed Zainal Abidin Bin Syed Mohamed Tahir, managing director of Proton Holdings Bhd, said that China will contribute significantly to the company's progress.

Thailand is an experimental export market, but if Pranakorn Autos can provide the backup and after-sales service, there is no reason why Proton cannot prosper. It depends on the models offered and whether the manufacturer intends to support the dealers.

Jeff Heselwood can be contacted at jhc@netvigator.com

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The revisionist explorer revised

The great African explorer Henry Morton Stanley was idolized during the Victorian era, but later pilloried by revisionist historians for being a violent, racist, greedy imperialist.

That's not true, argues Tim Jeal in *Stanley* (Faber and Faber, London, 2007, 570pp), subtitled "The Impossible Life of Africa's Greatest Explorer".

Author of an acclaimed 1972 biography of David Livingstone, another legendary African explorer, Tim Jeal is in a position to know. He deftly refutes all the charges against the misunderstood Stanley and the portrait that emerges is of an inspiring leader, an admirer of Africans and a passionate crusader against the Arab-Swahili slave trade that was ravaging Central Africa in the late 19th century. The toll was 2 million lives.

His introduction is titled "How I came to write the life of Africa's least understood explorer" and it concludes:

"Now, with the poverty of Africa still being blamed on colonialism... it is inevitable that many skeptics will be unconvinced that Stanley's beliefs about the benefits of 'European civilization' deserve a fresh hearing, even in the light of copious new evidence about what he really



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

did and thought. Yet to shirk looking again at Stanley's life simply because many minds are made up already would be to deny another post-colonial generation the chance of gaining new insights into a unique phase of world history and the story of an astonishing man, who has scarcely been acknowledged as British, let alone as Africa's greatest explorer."

Stanley was actually Welsh, but for his entire adult life passed himself off as American. He was born John Pembroke in the lowliest of circumstances: a bastard son disowned by his mother and confined in a country workhouse from the age of six to 16. After a series of menial jobs, he took ship as a cabin boy to America and

landed penniless in New Orleans in 1859. Pretending to be adopted by a wealthy cotton broker, he took the name Henry Morton Stanley.

He was working as a storekeeper in a riverside village in Missouri when the Civil War broke out. He joined the Confederate army, deserted, joined the Union army, deserted, joined the Union navy, deserted, then set out on an aborted trading trip to Turkey.

He found his calling as a journalist working for James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald*, covering colonial wars in Gold Coast and Abyssinia. His greatest scoop, of course, came in 1871: finding Scottish explorer David Livingstone in the heart of Africa.

I had always thought of Stanley spending months in a blind search through jungle and swamp. Actually, he knew where Livingstone was all along. When he reached Zanzibar, the British Consul Dr John Kirk told him that the explorer was somewhere up the Lualaba River, but would eventually return to the trading camp of Ujiji on the eastern banks of Lake Tanganyika. Sure enough, that's where he was when Stanley finally arrived.

The two got on famously, exploring

the northern reaches of the lake. A father figure to Stanley, Livingstone inspired him on his life's mission: the eradication of the slave trade in Central Africa. The area needed to be explored and then steamships sent up its rivers and railroads across its plains to bring peaceful trade to supplant the slavers. His white companions died on Stanley's first and second expeditions and the people who helped him through were a core group of 20 Wangwana, the Swahili-speaking traders of East Africa. These were his closest comrades during 20 years of exploration.

Stanley's second expedition was an epic four-year, 7,000-mile trek that took him from a circumnavigation of Lake Victoria, down to Lake Tanganyika, all the way up the Lualaba River to the main trunk of the Congo and down to the Atlantic Ocean.

In later years, King Leopold of Belgium fooled Stanley into opening up the Congo as his own personal fiefdom.

Jeal concludes with the observation that the great African explorers were "inspired, fearless, obsessed, able to frighten, able to suffer, but also able to command love and obedience..."

"They are an extinct species, and all the more remarkable for that."

In the previous installment of this column, I observed that learning to speak Thai means learning to make some new sounds. Today we'll start to tackle the nitty gritty.

From here on, I'll be using Thai script in addition to the phonetic system used by the AUA language school, which is based closely on the International Phonetic Alphabet. For the moment, don't worry if you are unfamiliar with the AUA system. I will talk about it more later. In fact, I don't want to rely on it any more than necessary. The key is to get you reading the Thai script as soon as possible.

To put it simply, sounds we make can be divided into two groups: Those we're conscious of and those we're not.

The sounds we're most conscious or attuned to are the ones that play key roles in the language we speak. Two sounds that are similar but distinct to the attuned ear are called contrasting sounds. If you mix them up, it can change the meaning of the word – sometimes with a humorous or embarrassing result.

In English, B and P are contrasting. Take the words *bat* and *pat*. These are the same in every way except the initial consonant, but have completely different meanings. To the speaker of a language where B and P are not contrasting, however, they would probably sound the same.

Every language has its own set of contrasting and non-contrasting sounds. The contrasting sounds of English are different

from the contrasting sounds of Thai. This is why Thais and many other Asians mix up R and L. It is also why when we're just beginning to learn Thai we receive such quizzical looks – it's

not just the tones we tend to get wrong.

Take the English letter P. It is only one letter, but it is actually pronounced two different ways. At the beginning of a word,

such as *pat*, *pin*, or *pay*, the P has a puff of air. This is called an aspirated P. In the AUA system, it is invariably written as ph.

Compare this with P in words like *spin*, *spit* or *spy* – listen closely and the puff of air is gone. In this case, it's an unaspirated P. Sure there's still some air coming out, because we're always exhaling when we're speaking, but it's significantly less. If you're not convinced, try holding your hand up to your mouth as you say these words.

In English, an unaspirated P is found only when it follows S as part of a "consonant cluster," as in *spin*, *spot* or *spy*.

To be understood in Thai, however, you must produce the unaspirated P sound on its own at the beginning of many words. Thus, in Thai, *pai* means "go", and *phai* means "danger". Don't forget, that letter H represents the puff of air.

There are other unaspirated and aspirated pairs in Thai, too: t/th and k/kh. So the same is true for *tai* (kidney) versus *thai* (Thai) and *kai* (chicken) versus *khai* (egg).

The table (right) gives you a few examples and shows you which Thai letters correspond to which sounds. Remember that in Thai, more than one letter can often be used to make the same sound.

And finally, here are a couple of classic Thai tongue twisters that you can use to test your new skills:

ใครขายไข่ไก่
khrai khaay khài kài
"Who sells chicken eggs?"

ตาดีตกต้นตาลตาย
taa tii tòk tôn taan taai
"Old man Tii fell from the palm tree and died"

You can even use the first one next time you're at the market. If you get a quizzical look, well, keep practicing.



A breath of fresh air

| Unaspirated | Aspirated |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| p | ph |
| ป | พ พ ภ |
| ไป pai "go" | ภัย phai "danger" |
| ปาก pàak "mouth" | เพื่อน phûan "friend" |
| ปลา plaa "fish" | พัก phák "rest" |
| k | kh |
| ก | ข ค ก |
| ไก่ kài "chicken" | ไข่ khài "egg" |
| กิน kin "eat" | ขวด khùat "bottle" |
| เก้า kào "nine" | ขาย khài "sell" |
| t | th |
| ต ถ | ฐ จ ฅ ถ ท ธ |
| ไต tai "kidney" | ไทย thai "Thai" |
| ตา taa "eye" | ท่า tham "do" |
| ตาย taai "die" | ถาม thām "ask" |

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Time for a humane charter

Few places on the planet have a starker contrast between the rich and the poor than here in Phuket. At the top end of the spectrum are wealthy landowners, whose declared family fortunes reach into the billions of baht – as recently revealed by the constitutionally mandated asset declaration statements required of national-level elected officials (see News pages).

The island is also a preferred destination among many jet-setting foreigners. Some like it so much they decide to buy a second home here, while others visit on their megayachts.

At the other end of the spectrum are scores of poor migrant workers from neighboring countries, especially Burma, who come here not for sea, sun, sand – or even sex – but out of sheer desperation. One can only imagine the deplorable conditions and human-rights abuses that have made them want to work as unskilled laborers in a place such as Phuket, where even those who are legally registered are treated as part of a de-facto criminal underclass, not allowed to travel freely or even use mobile phones.

Migration has been a feature of the human race since the dawn of record keeping. Last year, at least 200 million persons lived outside their homelands, most looking for better work or sustainable livelihoods.

Thailand's labor-smuggling operations differ only in detail from what are officially described as "human trafficking" operations. Though most Burmese are victimized neither by kidnapping nor deception, as is commonly the case with teenage prostitutes, they are nonetheless victims – of economic and political conditions.

Burmese know before coming to Thailand that they will encounter hostility, racist indifference and exploitation; they know they risk employers fleecing them and turning them over to police.

Their plight surely merits application of international laws against human trafficking. But these are narrowly interpreted by the UN and the Thai government. In practice, they apply only to young women sold into prostitution. Burmese are described as "economic migrants". It is a false distinction. Whether kidnapped, sold into prostitution or forced by their legal status into economic peonage, the result is very much the same.

Unfortunately, while numerous well-funded NGOs exist solely to aid prostitutes, exploited workers are treated almost without exception as criminals – though most have committed no violence against person or property.

It is time to amend our labor laws and regulations so they comply with all international human-rights agreements to which Thailand is a member.

– The Editor

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

The Phuket Gazette

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CELLPHONE BAN ENFORCEMENT STARTS MAY 20 SO...



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.

Naught green about Ao Phuket project

In regards to your article about the Ao Phuket project and its "sustainability" [Gazette, May 10-16], I seriously question whether the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) or the Ministry of Tourism and Sports truly understand the meaning of the word "sustainable".

This project most certainly is not an example of sustainable development. It's a project that will likely have a negative impact on the immediate surrounding environment both initially (during construction) and thereafter, with pollutants generated by the superyachts and the marina itself. It will also require a massive amount of energy to operate.

I hope I'm wrong.

How much of the 100 billion baht is going towards renewable energy sources such as solar- or wind-powered generators? Are the MICE facilities going to be air conditioned? If it's going to be supplied with electricity from the regular Phuket power system, it hardly qualifies as sustainable.

What sort of waste-management system is planned? What is the plan for sewage disposal? Is any of the 100 billion baht going towards a carbon offset? How are carbon emissions from the superyachts going to be kept under control?

This project will definitely have some degree of a negative impact on both the environment and the locals in the immediate area. Labor will likely be from migrant workers instead of from the local communities, since migrant workers are cheaper.

I would prefer an honest approach to such a large-scale project when trying to sell the idea to the public. It's a massive project that will use an enormous amount of natural resources.

Paint it with a brush of truth instead of coloring it over with a mural of stories, please.

Long-term concerned resident
Phuket

Out of sight, out of mind... do we mind?

An appalling loss of life stemming from a natural disaster in an undeveloped country. Thousands drowned, thousands more missing, God knows how many thousands homeless, short of food and at risk from starvation.

Fast-forward 44 months from the tsunami of December 26, 2004, and it's a similarly dreadful situation in the Irrawaddy Delta, a few hours flight from here.

But these are only Burmese people, right? All they do is murder each other in the "Burmese Cemetery", catch most of the fish available in the resorts and restaurants here, work as maids and gardeners and build our houses using, often, illegally logged Burmese teak.

They also selfishly suffocate en route to Phuket, causing a few days' hand wringing in the local, national and world media, and at the overloaded dinner tables of what passes for Phuket's chattering classes before slipping into obscurity again, just as when the political problems there came to an ugly head recently.

Until, that is, they die en masse.

But we, the businesspeople, expats and lotus eaters of Phuket, have no hotels in the Irrawaddy Delta, no business interests, no extended families, no reason to claim millions of dollars from well-meaning, but gullible – where did all that money go? – tourists and others to aid them, no collections of food, clothing and shelter on their collective behalf.

It's only Burma, after all. So what if it's death on our doorstep?

Col Robbins
Kamala

Fireworks not working for me

Why does neither the government nor the police do anything to control the sale of fireworks and fire crackers?

It is very annoying and very dangerous to others. In other countries, there are laws and only people with a license can buy fireworks.

Here, anybody can buy them and people just end up playing with them on the beach and on the street without thinking about safety.

Look at New Year's Eve in Patong. It was such a disaster because of all the silly tourists playing on the beach, like they never would in their own countries.

People came down to the beach to see the fireworks, but in the end, people just ended up running around all over the place.

Even now, from time to time, people still play with fireworks that are so loud that they give me a shock. I can clearly hear them from my room.

The police should look into this as it is dangerous and frustrating for all of us.

Alice Nurarif
By email

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.

Phuket guide flies flag of responsible tourism

I obtained my tour-guide license in 1983 and began working for John Gray's Sea Canoe, which taught me a lot about the marine life we were taking people to see.

In 2000 I helped set up a tour company with some friends at Kao Lak, but it was washed away by the tsunami.

Since then, I've continued to work as an independent tour guide, taking tourist groups of about 30 people to various snorkel and dive sites in the region.

In that time, I've watched coral disappear at an alarming rate, mostly due to the effects of tourism.

I'd say that nearly 20% of the coral around the Phi Phi islands and off Krabi has disappeared in the last decade or more. The tsunami destroyed some coral, but I'd say that irresponsible tourism accounts for about 80% of the destruction.

Ten years ago, the coral and marine life around Krabi and the Phi Phi Islands was the most diverse and beautiful in the region, but some species of fish can no longer be seen around there; their habitat is gone.

The reason for the coral's destruction is a combination of a lack of care or knowledge on the part of the tour operators and

FIRST PERSON

Local tour guide 36-year-old Decha Promthep has been taking tour groups to beauty spots and snorkel-dive sites in the Andaman region for the past 25 years.

Here, he talks to Nick Davies about the coral destruction he has witnessed over the years and how the industry can do a better job of protecting what is left.



guides, who are just looking at the short-term financial benefits, and uneducated tourists.

With no official guidelines to go by, tour companies are left to set their own policies about educating tour guides and tourists on how to conduct themselves at reef sites.

There are at least 500 registered tour guides based in Phuket who take tourists on boat trips to various snorkeling spots.

The majority of these allow tourists to take coral from dive sites or encourage them to feed the fish there. Only about 30%

of these guides act responsibly, educating tourists supervising them while they are in the water.

It annoys me when I see groups of tourists feeding fish with bread.

It disrupts the natural food chain. When you see this, you know that the guides are not being responsible.

The tourists probably don't understand the implications of what they are doing. If people in my group do ask to feed fish, I will give them some fruit to throw in.

It's normal for fish to occasionally eat fruit – but bread? No.

It is important not to disturb the natural cycle of any marine habitat. Coral is the most important element.

Different types of coral support particular species of marine creatures. If a kind of coral disappears, so does the other marine life that depends on it.

Whenever I take a group of tourists to see coral, I talk to the group while we are on the way. First I make sure they can swim and are familiar with the equipment.

Then I introduce them to the kinds of marine life they can expect to see and explain why it is important not to break or remove anything.

When you explain to people that some kinds of coral can take over 200 years to grow just a few centimeters, they are less inclined to damage it.

Many guides do not take the time to educate tourists or supervise them in the water.

They say, "Okay, swimming here 20 minutes," and wait on board.

Many tourists, never having seen such natural beauty, want to take something back as a souvenir.

It might be a piece of coral, some shellfish or even a bottle of sand. To them it's just a little bit, but this is the attitude that has destroyed so much already.

Some tourists are conscientious enough to ask if it's alright before taking something, but others will try to sneak something aboard.

I always tell them that they can't take anything back. If I see that someone has taken coral I tell them to put it back where they found it.

I recently took a group of tourists on a snorkeling trip and gave them the usual pep talk, but as we were boarding the boat

after the dive, I noticed that one of the tourists had brought up some coral.

I asked him to put it back, but he refused so I took it from him and swam to where I knew that type of coral was and put it back.

In the end I had to go through this three times, as he had more coral hidden away.

The other tourists in the group clapped their approval at my actions and the coral thief felt pretty uncomfortable for the rest of the trip. He did actually apologize in the end.

I have no qualms about speaking up and taking action when tourists in my groups take something because I know that stopping them and educating them is the right thing to do.

If they take it with them, there will be nothing left for their children and grandchildren to see.

Coral is also destroyed when tour boats are anchored to pieces of coral. Artificial anchor points should be created at dive sites instead.

At one of the sites where I regularly take tourists, I have made an anchor point in the seabed that we attach a line from the boat to. It's a simple way of avoiding coral damage.

Coral is disappearing at the quickest rate in the popular snorkeling spots near Krabi and Phi Phi islands.

As well as having clear sustainable tourism guidelines for all tour companies, boat captains and guides to follow, there should be facilities in place to educate tourists.

The new artificial reef to be made from decommissioned aircraft is a good thing. It will take the pressure off other dive sites.

Another 10 sites like this off Krabi would be great, because that is the kind of effort needed to return the marine habitat to its former glory – as well as stopping the current destruction.

It's a shame that the artificial reef wasn't sunk before the season turned as it is now the breeding season for many fish, so they would have had somewhere to lay their eggs and the site would already be inhabited with marine life by the time the high season comes again.

I would like to see a collective effort by all those who work in the marine-tourism industry to educate each other and every one of the tourists under their care.

This would be the best way for all to benefit from the natural diversity of the region without destroying it.

What are the penalties for foreigners working illegally?

I worked at a German-owned call center in Rawai for eight months. I have now quit that job because the company would not provide a work permit for me. I do not like breaking the law as I am married to a Thai and would like to continue living in Thailand.

When I started working at the call center, they told me that they would make a work permit for me only after I had worked there for one month and with good performance. I worked hard and sealed many contracts for the company. Compared with the 10 other employees, I was one of the top three.

I discovered that most of the other employees had work permits, but they were not provided by the call center. Some employees used work permits issued on behalf of their own businesses, bars, guesthouses, or real estate agencies.

I understand that Thai law states that work permits for employees must be applied for by the company they are working for

Issues & ANSWERS

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and that work permits must be applied for before starting to work anywhere.

Knowing this, and the fact that my employer did not make a work permit for me, I quit.

My question is, what can happen to a company and staff if Immigration or other government officers find out that foreigners are working there without work permits, or, with work permits issued for a company other than the one where they are actually employed?

Straight and clear
Phuket

Janya Yingyong, Chief of Work Permit Department, Phuket Provincial Employment Office, replies:

If Immigration officers discover foreigners working without a work permit, both the employer and the employee will be prosecuted, regardless of the contract between employer and employee.

The employer will be fined between 10,000 and 100,000 baht. The employee will also be fined and deported within 30 days.

The Employment Office does not have the power to close companies illegally employing foreigners. However, the employee will be blacklisted, a record of which is kept at the Immigration Office.

The Employment Office has only three auditors, which are not enough to comprehensively check all illegal workers. However, cases can be reported to the Employment Office by calling 076-219660-1 between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday.

Reading the *Gazette's* letters page over the past few years, it appears that one of the most popular topics is that of stray dogs, with a host of varied opinions. Letters have ranged from requests for instructions on the best way to poison dogs to letters bemoaning the fact that there are now fewer dogs in Patong than there used to be – and everything in between.

Around the world, people's views on animals vary, from those who see animals as a means of deriving pleasure through their suffering and pain, such as the dog-fighting brigade, bear baiters and the like, to animal activists who resort to sending letter bombs to experimental labs.

In between are those who think nothing of skinning animals alive on the basis that they are easier to skin when warm. More than two million animals meet their end this way in China every year – purely to satisfy the demand for furry toys. Then there are those seeking an international agreement on animal welfare. Other people are indifferent.

Why two people from similar backgrounds can have such different views on animals is a mystery.

As a columnist, it is my duty to remain impartial and I accept that everybody is entitled to their opinions. The use of dogs and cats for meat is another hotly disputed subject and I believe it is hypocritical for somebody who eats beef or chicken to decry people who eat dogs on the basis that in their home country such animals are used only as pets.

What I abhor is the way these ani-

mals are killed before being eaten. In many countries, animals used for meat are killed quickly and humanely, whereas dogs are often strung up, have their legs broken and are beaten before being cooked alive because the adrenalin they produce through the pain suffered tenderizes the meat.

This brings me back to Phuket and its dogs. Of all the differing letters that have been written on the subject, there is only one type that irritates me: those that offer no solution, but criticize the people

who are trying to make a difference. A typical example appeared in the *Gazette* a couple of weeks ago when an anonymous writer, who signed off as "Heavens Spent", criticized the re-

cent attempts by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) to count Phuket's actual human population.

The writer could not resist a comparison to the Soi Dog Foundation (SDF), describing the SDF and the *OrBorJor* as boondoggles, which means "doing work or activity that is wasteful or pointless".

Obviously, Heavens Spent knows neither what SDF does nor the problems Phuket faced five years ago and continues to face to this day. There are fewer stray dogs in Phuket than there were five years ago and the population that remains is in far better condition than before.

In addition, Phuket was named

Thailand's first rabies-free province. Wasteful? Pointless?

The human-population increase over the past five years in Phuket has been phenomenal. The population of stray dogs should have grown in proportion – at least. If the 9,000-plus female dogs sterilized in that time had each produced two litters per year at an average of six puppies per litter then, even allowing for death from road kill, disease and poisoning, the result would have been a huge explosion in the stray-dog population.

Heavens Spent should realize that none of this, unlike the population count, has been financed with government money.

SDF and similar organizations are funded principally by volunteers and overseas donors. Phuket has been fortunate in that there are people here trying to tackle what could have been a major problem for the environment and tourism.

This has been done without much support from the local businesses SDF is helping.

Most hotels request that stray dogs are removed without giving any thought to the costs involved, yet they readily pay pest-control companies to keep cockroaches, termites and rats under control.

What has been happening in Phuket has not gone unnoticed. SDF has received offers of support and requests for help from hotels and local authorities in Krabi and Phang Nga provinces.

The Sarojin Hotel in Khao Lak is paying for an additional full-time vet.

With the support it is receiving from elsewhere, SDF will now focus more on these areas, rather than Phuket.

SDF has the capacity to sterilize more than 7,000 dogs per year in Phuket, but without financial backing from local businesses, this is an unlikely target and there is a possibility that the number of stray dogs will increase.

Stray dogs have an impact on tourism and business.

I know of at least two hotels that are currently under investigation by major travel companies because of complaints made by guests about how the animals are treated on site.

People worldwide are questioning the way we treat animals. Though some may consider such actions a boondoggle, there are many who do not.

To contact Top Dog, email topdog@phuketgazette.net

In defense of dogs



MAKING TRACKS

By Top Dog

In The Stars

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Stirring up a can of worms could cause some regret this week. Rest assured that the stars are on your side where property matters are concerned. However, events are set to move slower than you had hoped until the end of the month. In the meantime, creativity burns when Cancer makes a suggestion.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Sweating over the small stuff could cause unnecessary stress this week. Until the end of May, focus on what immediately requires your attention. Trying to stay two steps ahead of others is not the way to make progress.

Where romance is concerned, follow your instincts.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): You could easily swim out of your depth in business. Aries is likely to put pressure on you when you least need it. Reflecting on successful projects and the reasons for their success will help you to see which path to take. Romance hums along quietly and you learn that you have more in common with a prospective partner than you previously suspected.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Modest progress in business should be the tip of the iceberg for those of you determined to do better.

Working with Pisces should be stress-free, but Aquarius has too many unrealistic dreams for this liaison to succeed. Having less free time could cause problems in a relationship. Sunday is the best day for helping your partner to understand what you are trying to achieve.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Landing a plum job may come as a pleasant surprise. It appears the stars have been working on your behalf where work is concerned. Those of you who are worried that you may not be experienced enough to meet expectations will soon discover that you are capable of more than

you thought. Romance turns turbulent when a third party becomes involved.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): If playing gooseberry isn't your idea of a good time, it would be wise to socialize with friends this weekend. Sagittarius has ulterior motives for inviting you out. Those of you who are in the process of moving house will face unexpected setbacks this week. Patience is the only answer to this dilemma.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Some of you may need to be reminded that health is wealth this week. Taking on extra responsibilities is not recommended during the rest of May. Eating plenty of orange-colored fruit will boost your energy levels, but resting in between busy periods is important. A worrying money situation is about to be resolved and you could find yourself on the receiving end of an unexpected bonus.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Restrain your enthusiasm for a new work project until others have committed to their involvement. The astral forecast is for a lot of hot air circulating around you until the end of this month; so take others' promises with a pinch of salt for the time being.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): You are likely to find out that there are more than two sides to an important story this

week. Keep an open mind until you have absolute proof of the truth. Early next week, you discover that the employment market has more to offer than suspected. Wednesday is the most auspicious day for scheduling interviews. Wear olive green to encourage a serious attitude.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Opportunities to break away from your usual routine come thick and fast this weekend. If you aren't afraid to venture off the beaten track, you will be more than satisfied with what you find. Where work is concerned, Pisces is developing new respect for your achievements and promotion is hovering on the horizon.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Unsettled astral conditions this weekend could mean that you might have a problem seeing eye to eye with family and friends. Your usual approach of letting others have the last word falls by the wayside, but it's high time that you stood up for yourself. As long as you choose your words carefully, the results could be pleasantly surprising.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): A last minute work obligation will probably mean that you have to put in overtime next week. If you feel that you are being taken advantage of by a lazy colleague, bring this matter out into the open. Tuesday is best for an honest conversation. Someone you were attracted to earlier in the year makes a sudden reappearance.

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- Thara Patong Hotel, Thaweewong Rd, Patong
- Mae Luan Rd (diagonally opp. 7-Eleven), Phuket City

- Yaowarat Soi 2 Rd, Phuket City
- Chao Fa East Rd (opp. Big One Supermarket), Phuket City
- Klong Pak Lak, Patong
- Club Andaman, Patong
- Phisit Gorani Rd, Patong
- Monthana Rd, Patong
- Colisem Multiplex, Phuket City
- Soi Paneang, Samkong
- Moo Baan Irawadee, Samkong

Riding the waves of technology

Shan and Leons, the owners of the luxury yacht *S/Y Siren* came to one of our computer group-therapy meetings with a challenge: to help them install a top-notch computer network to match their liveaboard yacht's luxury and reliability standards.

The *Siren* is a 34-meter, commercial, wooden Pinisi schooner with eight en-suite cabins; not your ordinary dive boat. She is designed for sail-and-dive expeditions to the Andaman regions, Burma Banks and Indonesia.

On board are the cabins, an expansive saloon and broad deck space. The computer network was to be a key part of the total experience, delivering to a computer unit in each cabin:

- On-demand videos, to be viewed in the cabins.
- On-demand music.
- The ability to upload photos for display on the 42-inch TV in the saloon.
- On-demand display of real-time mapping showing the GPS location of the boat.

All this had to be done taking into account the added demands of unpredictable blue-water sailing. Most times, the heavy boat is stable as a rock, but the ship can be subject to violent roll, pitch and yaw when the weather turns.

The boat electronics had to face the harsh demands of motion, salt water and rough handling. No problem, said our enterprising boffins, Leons and Shanman. In 10 days, they had the solution in hand and it was ready to install. Leons and Shanman have done similar work before and also have extensive blue-water cruising experience, as well as hundreds of hours under water as PADI instructors.

The final system was simple, with proven reliable components. The client computers are linked in a gigabyte Ethernet centered on a Linksys 16-port switch. The heart of the system is the twin servers, custom-built by our boffins.

Each server – one primary, one backup – is a mini-tower comprising an Asus motherboard, Intel CPU, 2x1GB memory, dual Seagate 500GB HDDs (hard disk drives) and an Antec 450W power supply.

The HDs are set in RAID-1 (mirror images for system reliability) and the main server's data is copied every night to the backup server, which remains offline the rest of the day. This duplicate server can be replugged into the online position in the event of failure of the online unit.

The servers are mounted in a well-ventilated cabinet that is braced and padded for protection from shock and movement. Each



SEA TRIALS: Liveaboard yacht *S/Y Siren* has been kitted out with a top-notch computer network with wireless Internet and multi-media capabilities, allowing guests to stream fish photos and video.

server has a separate APC 600VA UPS. A future upgrade will include a wireless-access point for times when the boat is within range of an onshore Internet connection.

The computer in the community area is on the network and

forms the heart of the AV center, where it supplies a video connection to the 42-inch LCD TV. This center

serves music, videos and allows the display of divers' photos.

These photos are easily uploaded from each cabin using a USB connection on the cabin computers. This is an important feature because many divers are photography enthusiasts and take great delight in showing their photos, seeing their shipmates' pics and talking about the day's diving and photography.

In the cabins, the eight Dell workstations have Vista Business Premium pre-installed.

There were some problems using Vista on the server so it was decided that Windows XP Pro SP2, a proven operating system, would be used for the servers. Some problems did surface, notably with Windows XP accessing Vista clients, so perhaps installing Windows XP on all the PCs would have been best.

Security is a strong point for Vista and it was ensured that the users would have limited privileges by disallowing program installation and only allowing guests to put files in specific folders.

The servers make two shared folders available to the cabin units. The shared folder "Music + Video" has two subfolders: "Music" and "Videos", each with several subfolders and many files.

The other shared folder is

"Photos", which contains eight folders – one for each cabin. Each cabin is allowed read and write access only to the folder assigned to that cabin. Guests can store images and display them on the screen in the saloon.

Windows Media Player proved inadequate for the desired applications, notably streaming videos. Shan and Leons replaced it with VLC (www.videolan.org/vlc) a free, powerful, flexible and easy-to-use multimedia player.

Stress tests were performed to check that the network bandwidth and the server were adequate. The tests included downloading large files to two separate computers while simultaneously streaming videos to two other computers.

The tests went smoothly with no jitters noted.

The most interesting part of the project was the on-demand nautical map image showing the real-time GPS position of the boat. The location map and position were achieved using a

standard chartplotter program on a computer (the saloon computer).

The specific program is Nobeltec Visual Navigator, but almost any such program would suffice. GPS location comes from a standard NMEA data feed from one of the boat's four GPS units. This screen image is projected using TightVNC, a branch of the VNC project (www.sourceforge.net/projects/vnc-tight/).

The TightProjector program is used on the server side and TightReceiver is used for clients. These modules use minimal computer resources and do not interfere with streaming video or file transfers.

Each client can activate the location map by clicking an icon on their computer screen.

The location appears as a window and remains real-time active on the screen.

The only significant problem during the project was with the boat's power supply. The main generator (a 50KW diesel-powered unit) did not supply anything near 220V. Voltages were consistently below 190V.

Such voltage was inadequate to activate the APC UPS units – thus, no power for the computers. The boat engineer had to call the shore electricians to repair the unit until Leons and Shan could get the volts and subsequent faultless operations.

Perhaps worse, occasional power surges hit 330V. If not for the highly recommended APC-brand UPSes, the PCs would have fried.

The galley's electronics weren't protected by UPSes, so while Shan explained the problem and the crew hurriedly unplugged the kitchen appliances, one cappuccino machine entered Valhalla the hard way.

The crew hurriedly installed a more reliable generator and these problems were solved.

The full sea-trials of the system will include Shanman enjoying the waves and checking the units in operation. This should ensure the system integrity and give direct feedback on the service.

The moral of this story is that anything is possible. Trust the geeks and always use a UPS.

Leons Kovisars and Shan and Shanman are members of the PC discussion group, aka Woody's gang. Join our meetings every Sunday at 10 am. The venue rotates between the three locations of Woody's Sandwich Shoppes. See the website www.ozvisual.com/phuketcomputerclub for the schedule.

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Land & Houses launches star bank in Phuket

By Janyaporn Morel

RASSADA: After 28 months in operation, Land and Houses Retail Bank PCL (LH Bank) on May 9 opened its first branch in Phuket, opposite the Proton Showroom on Thepkasattri Rd.

The Phuket branch is one of 17 nationwide, 11 of which are in Bangkok.

Formed as a joint-venture between property giants Land and Houses PCL and Quality Houses PCL on December 19, 2005, LH Bank offers a wide range of bank services, including deposit accounts, loans and payment transaction services.

The bank has experienced phenomenal growth. LH Bank President Sasitorn Phongsathorn said that in 2007, the bank posted a net profit of 101 million baht and expects to post 262 million baht for 2008.

"Although our bank is only 29 months old, our business is growing quickly. Our loans have grown more than 68% since the start. In assets, we have had 40% growth each year. In our first 24 months, our net profit was about 100 million baht. It seemed small compared with other big banks, but for a bank that was only 24 months old, we had quite a good start," K. Sasitorn said.

Total asset growth for 2006-2007 was 45.3 %, bringing total assets to 32.9 billion baht. Growth

at the bank is expected to continue at about 48.5% throughout 2008 to bring its total asset worth to 48.8 billion baht.

Total bank incomes for 2006 and 2007 were 887 million and 1.592 billion baht, respectively. The total income for 2008 is expected to be 2.3 billion baht nationwide.

"Our main income is from interest. In 2007, we accrued 1.5 billion baht in total interest, which was 92% of our total income. We expect this to rise to 2.2 billion baht, or 96% of total income, for 2008," K. Sasitorn said.

"Other revenues were 55 million baht in 2007 for operating fees and 72 million baht for other transactions. We expect these incomes to rise by no less than 50% in 2008," she added.

In 2007, LH Bank provided 26.6 billion baht in loans, up from 10.4 billion baht in 2006. K. Sasitorn said that loans for the first quarter of 2008 totaled 26.7 billion baht and were likely to reach the bank's target of 40.5 billion baht for 2008.

About 80% of the loans by LH Bank are mortgages, which are not restricted to people buying Land and House PCL or Quality Houses PCL properties. The bank provided 20 billion baht in mortgages in 2007 and estimates that figure to grow to 33.2 billion baht for 2008.

"We believe that we are professional enough to be the

first-choice loan provider for customers. For property loans, we offer a maximum loan period of 40 years at very attractive interest rates," K. Sasitorn said.

"As Phuket has good all-round potential and there are many investors, we also provide loans to small- and medium-sized enterprises [SMEs]," she added. LH Bank provided SME loans totaling 2.2 billion baht in 2007. This is expected to grow by 16.6% to 2.515 billion baht for 2008.

"To attract retail customers, we offer competitive rates. For example, our current accounts pay 1.5% interest, a rate other banks don't give. Interest paid on savings account deposits are 2.5%," K. Sasitorn said.

Chutamas Sombunyaveroj, first executive vice-president of Commercial Bank Group of LH Bank, said that LH Bank has been well received in Phuket, with about 50 customers making deposits totaling 10 million baht on the branch's first day of trading.

"Actually, we still don't have an ATM of our own on the island, but our ATM cards can be used at any Krung Thai bank ATM with no fee," K. Chutamas said.

K. Sasitorn said that performance targets for the Phuket branch for its first year stand at 500 million baht in deposits, 120 million baht in property loans, with no limit set for SME loans.



The Phuket branch of Land and Houses Bank located on Thepkasattri Rd, in Rassada, opened on May 9, accruing 10 million baht in deposits on its first day.

"We think that we will be able to open a second branch in Phuket within six months and we will provide other facilities, such

as ATM machines," K. Chutamas added.

LH Bank Phuket's grand opening will be on June 2.

LH Bank Phuket. 9/9 Village 6, Thepkasattri Rd, Rassada, Muang, Phuket. Open 8:30 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday. For more information contact Branch Manager Sorrasak Detcharoen. Tel. 076-523306-10. Fax: 076-523312 Website: www.lhbank.co.th

Sipa calls for businesses to join E-Marketing Day

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

PHUKET CITY: The Phuket offices of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa) and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) are holding their E-Marketing Day 2008 for software entrepreneurs to present their products to the tourism industry at the Royal Phuket City Hotel on May 23.

The event includes lectures by industry experts, starting with the Tourism Technology Association speaking on "World Directions on Tourism Technology".

Online search engine optimization specialist Globet Co Ltd will provide advice on how to enhance corporate visibility on the Internet by gaining higher rankings in search engines such as Google, Yahoo and MSN.

Representatives from Kasikorn Bank will discuss online payment systems, after which Chaiyo Hosting Co Ltd will discuss email marketing campaigns.

Representatives from mo-

bile phone giant Advanced Info Service (AIS) will discuss the pros and cons of marketing through mobile phones.

From 3:20 pm to 4 pm, Bangkok-based e-marketing consultants Born Distinction Co Ltd discuss "Social Media and Tourism 2.0" and the impact of effective websites such as Wikipedia and Wikitravel.

All companies taking part in the event will have booths on site promoting their products and services. SIPA is calling for five more companies to set up booths at the event free of charge. Call 076-379111 or email phuket@sipa.or.th from now till the event day May 23 to join.

The event will start with registration at 9 am and will close with a question-and-answer session and survey at 5:30 pm.

For more information contact SIPA Phuket at the 1st floor of the Prince of Songkla University building at Saphan Hin, Phuket City. Tel: 076-379111. Email phuket@sipa.or.th

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Keeping your money out of the taxman's pockets

One of Britain's big four banks, Lloyds TSB, conducted a survey of their client base to assess attitudes towards where today's Brits wanted to spend their retirement. More than 91% of respondents stated that they wished to move abroad.

A UK Life Assurer, Scottish Widows, found through its research that two-thirds of higher-rate taxpayers in the UK intended to leave the UK and live somewhere with a sunnier climate. Sound familiar?

The statistics show that while most stay at home, that is perhaps not where they leave their hearts.

About 400,000 actually leave each year with the intention of staying abroad permanently. In recent decades, more individuals have switched from being dependent on company pension schemes to Self-Invested Pension Plans (SIPPs).

However, SIPPs are taxable in the UK and the investment choices are limited. To add insult to injury, by age 75 holders of SIPPs must convert them to an annuity.

The rules and regulations of SIPPs are so complicated that we commonly use lawyers who specialize in this area. And with the UK government changing the rules frequently, they end up as a minefield, especially when combined with questions of domicile and liability to inheritance tax.

A new alternative is now available: QROPS, which stands for Qualifying Registered Overseas Pension Scheme.

While an individual was tied to their SIPPs for life, a new escape route has been discovered; that of simply transferring a SIPP to an overseas pension scheme that qualifies as such in the eyes of the "taxman".

The number of QROPS is increasing all the time, the most attractive are probably those based in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

However, it all depends on circumstances. In cases where Brits want to live in countries such as Thailand or Malaysia, it is simple in the extreme. Neither of these countries seeks to tax for-



More than 98% of British respondents in a survey by Lloyds TSB (pictured) said that they wanted to move abroad for their retirement.

eigners on foreign pension earnings. This makes QROPS very attractive.

However, it is common for people to want to live, say, six months a year in Thailand and the balance in France or Italy. This complicates matters greatly and why the service is called "Personal Financial Planning" – one size certainly does not fit all.

Once the tax authorities in the UK have accepted another country's pension scheme as meeting their standards, the transfer can take place. The "new" pension fund is required to report to the UK authorities for the next five years only.

There are numerous advantages, depending on which country is selected for retirement. These advantages include pension income becoming tax-free. The choice of investments is also increased and can include residential property.

After five years, the whole pension may be taken in cash and there is no requirement to ever buy an annuity. QROPS are exempt from inheritance tax.

Obviously, a standard British SIPP does have one advantage; for those who are not capable of budgeting, it ensures that there will be an income for life.

QROPS require that holders are capable of planning into the future, and not buying a house for that oh-so-friendly-and-honest bargirl.

"taxman" and, as we all know, governments do not like to have income streams stopped.

Considering that 400,000 people leave the UK every year and many of them have SIPPs, the cost to the British HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) department must, over the years, add up to a substantial sum.

It would seem logical to transfer any SIPP to QROPS as quickly as possible. Once the transfer has taken place the money is, legitimately, out of the taxman's hands.

Also, it is a long-established practice that when a taxpayer enters into a legitimate tax-avoidance scheme, HMRC will not interfere on a back-dated basis. However, they may well seek to stop new cases at any time.

Taking the tax consequences into account, it is amazing that they ever allowed this major "loophole" to have their blessing in the first place.

MONEY TALKS



By Richard G. Watson

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

One aspect about QROPS that troubles me is tax. Previously, the UK government received tax on SIPPs on both the income be-

ing paid (this is known as "draw-down") and the inheritance tax.

The new system stops revenue from both sources to the



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PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

PATONG: The second-to-last game of the season featured two exciting matchups: first-place Queen Mary at second-place Piccadilly and 9th-place Beach House against bottom Simply Red.

In the Piccadilly-Queen Mary encounter, Queen Mary won handily, 7-2.

The fight to avoid the toilet-seat award came to an end with Beach House seeing off Simply Red with a 5-4 win.

The captain's meeting will take place at Queen Mary at 3 pm on Monday, May 12. The league party will be at Queen Mary on Tuesday May 20.

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

Standings: 1. Queen Mary (45 pts.); 2. Piccadilly (39); 3. Offshore (29); 4. Dogs Bollocks (24); 5.= Shakers, Market Bar (23); 7. Sick Buffalo (22); 8. Beach House (20); 9. Valhalla (19); 10. Simply Red (11).

Millennium snatches win in 30-knot winds

AO CHALONG: Hard weather and the decision whether or not to fly a spinnaker separated the men from the boys in race 4 of the ImageAsia Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC) 2008 race series on May 11.

With 25 knots of wind and gusts up to 30, some tough choices on sail configuration were carefully considered for the nine boats that ventured out in the rugged conditions for a "quiet" Sunday.

Double-reefed mains throughout most of the course were the norm. With only a few boats rising to the challenge of flying their spinnaker, it nevertheless proved to be too much for one racing-class boat, which broached in the strong winds.

With the number of boats evenly spread among the classes, every skipper had the chance to stand on the podium. In the racing class, Ben Copely's *Katsu* had to settle for second after spending time with her ear to the water sorting her spinnaker out, breaking her streak of three firsts in the series and allowing John



SUNDAY, BLUSTERY SUNDAY: *Moto Inzi* in full flight on her way to winning the Multihull class in the ACYC regatta on May 11. Winds gusted up to 30 knots on Chalong Bay.

Photo by Leslie Hand for ImageAsia Events.

Clayton's *Millennium* the victory.

Roger Harris on *Simone* finished third in the class.

Roger Kingdon's *Moto Inzi* cruised through – at high speed – the finish to take line honors and win the Multihull class. Bob Brindley's *X Cat Riot* finished second, followed by Mark Horwood and crew on *Chimera* in third place.

Nick Band's *Windstar*, albeit in the shorter cruising course, crossed second to win the class. John Fenn's *The Four Winds* finished second.

Roger Harris on *Simone* won the ImageAsia Encouragement Award. Roger arrived in Phuket on his boat from Singapore on May 9 and joined the ACYC crowd on the water just two days later. Now, that's the spirit.

The next ACYC regatta will be on May 25. All are welcome to join. For more information call Tony Knight at 081-7470074.

Laguna gears up for annual marathon

CHERNG TALAY: More than 6,000 runners are expected to take part in the 2008 Laguna Phuket International Marathon set to take place on June 15.

Participants will take part in a 42-kilometer marathon, 21km half-marathon, 10km run or 5km walk. There will also be a 2km kids' fun run.

Confirmed to return to defend his marathon title is last year's male winner Brent Roeger, an American based in Thailand.

The course will start and finish at Laguna Beach Resort, taking runners around Phuket, through Thalang, up to Mai Khao and back.

Marathon and half-marathon runners must be at least 18 years old, while participants in the 10km run must be at least 12 years old.

Early-bird registration for the event is closed, but athletes can still register online at www.phuketmarathon.com. Online registration will close on June 5.

Walk-in registrations will be accepted on June 13 and 14 between 10 am and 7 pm at Laguna Beach Resort.

For further information contact Roman Floesser. Tel: 02-2362931.

Marathon man, 94, keeps on running

PHUKET: At 94 years old, Ratchaburi native Peng Pensa is possibly Thailand's oldest marathon runner.

"Grandpa" Peng was in Phuket on May 10 to join activities at Bangkok Hospital Phuket on the occasion of the seventh anniversary of the opening of the hospital's Rehabilitation Club.

Grandpa Peng urged everyone to start running and eating natural, organic food; that way, other people might be as strong as he is.

A farmer all his life, Grandpa Peng has completed four marathons, one half-



marathon and 14 10-kilometer runs. He took part in his first full marathon four years ago in his home province of Ratchaburi.

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Duncanson retains platu title

CHONBURI: *The Lofts* Southshore, helmed by Phuket's Scott Duncanson and his crew of Trent Pederson, Scott Venes, Kevin Scott and SEA Games gold-medalist Weerasit Puangnak, has won the 2008 edition of the prestigious Coronation Cup.

Held in conjunction with the annual Top Of The Gulf Regatta, 14 teams from Australia, China, Singapore and Thailand contested the seven-race event in Platu One Design Yachts in a wide range of conditions from five to a blustery 22 knots from May 2 to May 5.

Second place by just three points was taken by Thailand's SEA Games crew on *Naiad*, helmed by Wiwat Toontat. Third position went to the all-Australian team on *Gulf Charters*, sailed by Platu-newcomer Ray Waldron.

The first leg of the first race set the scene for the regatta with *The Lofts* and *Naiad* tussling for the lead and the remainder of the fleet close behind.

About two-thirds up the first leg, *Naiad*, sailing on port tack, attempted to cross *The Lofts*, which was on the "right of way" starboard tack and declined to give way.

Duncanson quickly raised the protest flag and both skippers spent the evening in "the room" with America's Cup jury chairman Bryan Willis and the protest



The Lofts Southshore, helmed by Phuket's Scott Duncanson, won the 2008 edition of the prestigious Coronation Cup.

committee. Unfortunately for *Naiad*, they were found at fault and disqualified in that race.

The decision lifted *The Weasel* (Nick Henley) into first place, *Pine Pacific*, sailed by Jaray Tipsuk, into second and *The Lofts* into third.

The second race of the day was a long race around Monkey Island and back to the finish in front of the Ocean Marina complex. *The Lofts* won the start and easily led the fleet upwind and around the island with Ray Waldron on *Gulf Charters* in pursuit.

With an amazing show of

close-reaching speed and well-coordinated crew work, *Gulf Charters* out-paced *The Lofts* to take first place, with *The Lofts* in second and *Emma Mathilde XX*, sailed by Morten Jakobsen, third.

Freshening winds of up to 22 knots on day two favored the crew of *The Lofts* and they led race three from start to finish with *Naiad* in second and *Gulf Charters* in third. Race four became one of controversy after nine of the 14 boats sailed the wrong course and were disqualified.

Naiad sailed the correct course to record her first win for the regatta and close the gap on

the leaders. *Platu 114*, sailed by Vladimir Borstnar, finished in second with the Singaporean youth team skippered by Koh Seng Leong in third.

Day three was the long race and after a light-air start, conditions quickly freshened. *Naiad* took an early lead and was barely challenged on the two-sail reaching course. What appeared to be a very boring race with minimal overtaking opportunities soon became one of controversy when a safety rail broke on the Singaporean *Platu 122* and two crew members fell overboard.

Morten Jakobsen and the *Emma Mathilde XX* was the nearest yacht and quickly returned to assist in the recovery of the two young crew members. *Naiad* sailed on to win, with *The Lofts* in second and *Lee Marine Express* in a well-deserved third spot. Morten Jakobsen was awarded equal first place after seeking and winning redress from the international jury.

On the morning of the final day, *The Lofts* were two points ahead of *Naiad* and five points ahead *Gulf Charters*. *The Lofts* won the start of race six and de-

spite colliding with a cruising-class yacht at the windward mark, sailed a near-perfect race to lead from start to finish.

The Singaporean youth team on *Platu 122* sailed very well to finish second and *The Weasel* in third. *Naiad* finished fifth, all but handing the regatta to *The Lofts*, or so it seemed.

With only one race left, *The Lofts* needed only a sixth-place finish to win the regatta. After a conservative start, the crew climbed through the fleet to round the final windward mark in second place trailing, only arch-rival *Naiad*.

However, on the final downwind run for the finish, *The Lofts* elected to protect the favored right-hand lane only to see their lead evaporate as the breeze filled in from the left side of the course.

They were quickly overtaken by *Gulf Charters* and *Emma Mathilde XX*, but retained their composure to finish fourth and take the championship title.

During the royal presentation ceremony, Duncanson said, "This was one of the toughest and hardest-fought regattas we have ever sailed in Asia."

"This was one of the toughest and hardest-fought regattas we have sailed in Asia," said Scott Duncanson.



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Gardening

by Bloomin' Bert

You can't win with names. Helen, Peter, Jane and John are all fine, I suppose. Safe, but boring. Some names are just a little different; celebrities excel in this regard. John Travolta and Kelly Preston's daughter's name is Ella Bleu, while their son's name is Jett. Jett as a name is a tad odd, but John Travolta has a passion for flying, so he has an excuse.

Gwyneth Paltrow was criticized for naming her first child Apple. Although it is fairly unusual (though not so much in Thailand), it is rather cute, I suppose. Her husband, Chris Martin from Coldplay, tired of the controversy over the name at the time and was adamant that their second child, whether male or female, would be named Banana. Their son was eventually christened Moses. Wuss.

Mr and Mrs Frank Zappa probably take top prize for wacky kids' names: Dweezil, Moon Unit, Ahmed Emuukha Rodan and Diva Muffin. While folk legend has it that that Dweezil is the lad's given name, his birth name was originally Ian Donald Calvin Euclid Zappa, as the hospital refused to register the name Dweezil. The weird part is that he was always known as Dweezil as a child, so he wanted to make the name official and his parents took him to have it changed legally. Very odd.

So what's in a name, anyway? How much does it really tell you about somebody? I can certainly commiserate with the Gertrudes, Everards, Ethels and Gervaises of this world. Waiting until later on in life to pick a name for yourself somehow makes complete sense. "Gilbey" or "Gordon" certainly works for me personally, for example. It's a shame I couldn't become "Heineken". That would just be silly.

Really, it's crape



The colorful, crinkly flowers of the crape myrtle resemble crepe fabric.

The human version of an often-seen plant in Thailand would probably be fond of a drop of the amber nectar every now and then – the *lagerstroemia indica*, to give it its full botanical name. Considering it to be named after a style of beer may be a little fanciful, but I like the idea.

The common name of this plant is crape myrtle. Specifically, "crape" myrtle, rather than "crepe" myrtle. It's apparently called this because the flowers have crinkly petals which look a bit like the material called crepe. According to my dictionary, crepe is "a light fine fabric with a crinkled surface", but for some unknown reason you're supposed to spell it "crape" when it's in front of myrtle. It's all crape as far as I'm concerned.

At any rate, it's a common enough name and since there's no central authority that manages common names for plants you can spell – or call it – whatever you want. Call it "Derek" or "Clive" if you want – it doesn't

matter. At least I know what the Thais call it – *yi-kheng*.

The deciduous crape myrtle is one of the longest blooming trees in existence, with flowering periods lasting from 60 to 120 days. Crape can be as short as around 50 centimeters or as tall as 12 meters. Leaves are alternate and smooth, and about six to eight centimeters long. Flowers are borne in big, showy clusters and come in white and different shades of pink, purple, lavender and red.

The fruits that follow are brown or black, and look a little like peas. When they mature, they dry up and split, releasing disk-shaped seeds. Depending on the variety, crape can grow as large shrubs or as trees either upright or spreading. Larger varieties can grow quickly.

Since there's no central authority that manages common names for plants you can call it whatever you want. Call it 'Derek' or 'Clive' if you want – it doesn't matter.

Many types have bark that peels off in thin flakes, exposing a cinnamon-colored or gray inner bark. Crape tends to produce a number of suckers (growths originating from the rootstock of

a grafted plant, rather than the desired part of the plant) that should be removed as they appear, if you want trees with distinct trunks.

The crape myrtle likes moist soil, where it will grow quickly, but it can survive in dry conditions once it's established. Prune it only to remove dense branches and crossing limbs. Otherwise, just let it grow.

One hint is that you should "deadhead" after the first flush of growth to encourage the plant to re-bloom more quickly. Deadheading is pinching off used or spent blooms to keep the plants

well groomed and to prevent them from setting seed.

Crape myrtles are a magnet for aphids, upon whose, erm, "deposits" sooty mold grows. This can give the leaves a gray, sooty coating that isn't harmful to the plant, but doesn't look pretty. Crape is often used at commercial nurseries to attract aphids away from other plants – that's how much the bugs love them. You can control aphids with a soapy-water solution.

Originally from this neck of the woods, the crape myrtle was first introduced to England and the US in the 18th century and is now widely cultivated throughout the world. In fact, Texans took to the plant so much that they named it their state shrub. A classic Asian export.

To plant it, choose a sunny site with well-drained soil, making sure there is enough room for the shrub to reach its mature spread. Dig a hole twice as wide as the container or root ball. Set the plant at the same depth or slightly higher than it was in the pot.

Fill in the hole around the plant with soil and mound the soil to form a 5-cm-high ridge around the perimeter of the hole to act as a catch-basin for the water. Water it generously, filling the basin and allowing water to settle several times. Easy.

I'm probably a bit jealous of the *lagerstroemia indica* deep down. It's the only thing I know of that isn't beer that has a type of beer in its name, apart from a particularly dodgy clothes designer. Time for a change then. "Bloomin' Leo" perhaps? I'll have a chat with the editor. Over a beer, of course.

Want to know more about a plant in your garden? Email Bloomin' Bert at: bert@bloominbert.com

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Home of the Week

Nai Harn

Spanish-style Nai Harn villa is all pool

This single-story Nai Harn property featuring five bedrooms and a large swimming pool, is surrounded by high walls. The 97-square-meter swimming pool has its own water bar and is enclosed within the U-shaped property.

A covered walkway with columns and arches offers shade in front of the rooms that skirt the pool and reflects the modern Spanish design concept of this abode.

Each of the five bedrooms has a bathroom en suite. The property features a European style open-plan kitchen with a breakfast bar is already fully fitted out with modern appliances, including an oven, hobs and a large refrigerator.

Next to the kitchen are the dining and living areas, with a view of the pool and terrace outside.

Large aluminum sliding doors open out onto the patio. The bedrooms are located around the pool.

The master bedroom has a sunken bathtub and an outdoor shower, while all the bedrooms feature polished *maka*-wood flooring and are air conditioned.



One of the bedrooms is located in a separate guesthouse, which also has its own living area and kitchenette, independent of the main villa.

The separate guest house has a bedroom, bathroom, living area and kitchenette and is completely independent of the main Villa.

An automatic gate leads to a two-car parking area, while a covered terrace next to a pond leads up to the main villa.

This property also has a laundry room and storage space. The house's water is supplied by a private well on the property. A large water

tank and water-filtration system has also been installed.

The villa, located in a quiet expat neighborhood, has two phone lines, as well as a sprinkler system and separate office. Phuket City is a 15-minute drive away, while Nai Harn Beach can be reached in five minutes.



Bedrooms and living areas form a U shape around the villa's pool, which can be directly accessed through large sliding doors shaded with a terrace of classic Spanish-style archways.

The property includes a separate guest villa, complete with its own living and kitchen areas.

The property is available fully furnished, and freehold with Chanote for 22 million baht.

For more information on this property contact Patrick Lusted. Reference number HSIL1048. Tel: 076-288908. Website: www.siamrealestate.com Email: patrick@siamrealestate.com

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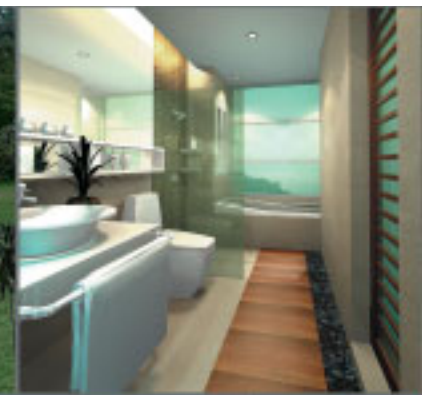
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Despite living in Phuket for six years, I rarely venture past Phuket City towards Cape Panwa. Over the past few years, I can count on one hand the times I've journeyed there.

A few days ago, despite taking a few wrong turns, I went out to look at what's happening with the area's property and hotel projects. I was astonished at the changes marking the landscape. The area is quickly playing catchup to boomtown Phuket City.

As often noted in my column, tourism and property go hand in hand and Panwa was one of the first areas developed during the infancy of the island's tourism economy.

One of the highest-profile hotel-development stories is that of the renovation and upgrading of the former Panwaburi resort into a luxury enclave managed by the Conrad chain. While this project was delayed over a number of years, things are back on track and the property is now set to open under the Regent brand. A new Radisson Plaza property is sprouting up in close proximity.

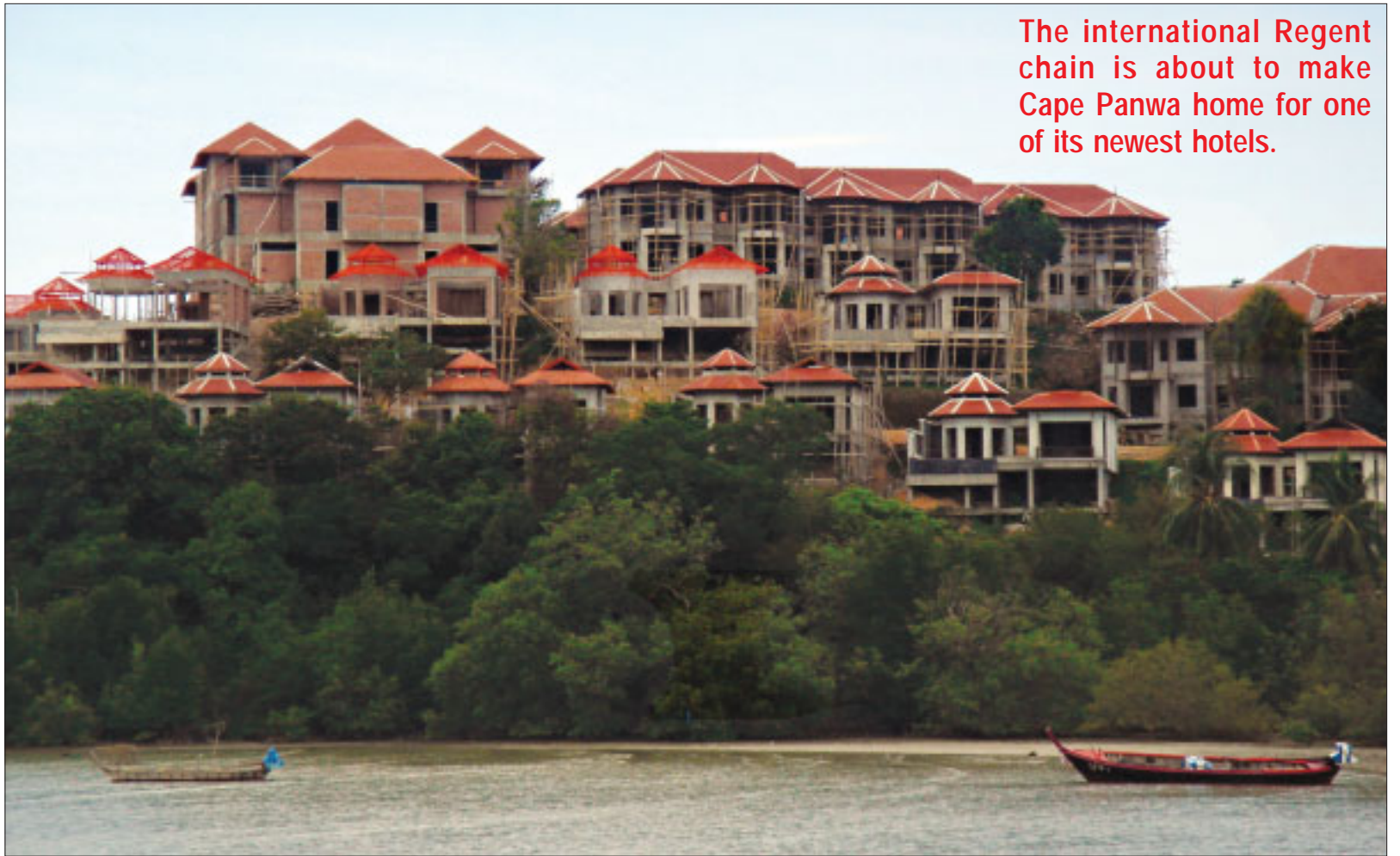
A while back, a hotel on Khao Khad was acquired through global financial giant Lehmanns and was re-branded into one of the French chain Accor's core brand, Novotel. Now the hotel is being expanded and construction of additional rooms is underway.

Nearby, Sri Panwa, developed by the Thai Charn Issara group, has been a notable success both as a high-end resort and managed pool-villa residential estate.

One of the island's grand old dames, the Cape Panwa resort, continues to position itself upwards and maintains a loyal clientèle of return guests.

With the introduction of three large international hotel-management chains to the area's hotel inventory, along with well-regarded boutique properties such as Sri Panwa, the cape's profile

The forgotten cape



The international Regent chain is about to make Cape Panwa home for one of its newest hotels.

is gearing itself up to attract the higher-end tourist dollar.

Condo projects such as Bel Air Panwa were successfully sold and Sri Panwa has long been part of a much-envied competitive set that includes other luxury, mixed-use developments such as Trisara, Cape Yamu and Laguna Phuket.

Some of Phuket's first residential es-

tates and high-end properties were located in the area.

But despite a good start, the pace of development in Cape Panwa has not matched that of much of the rest of the island

during the past five years.

It's a mystery how such an established residential market could become overlooked during the feeding frenzy that has been Phuket's real estate industry of recent memory.

Taking a drive through the area, I was impressed by the improvements. Access through feeder roads off Chao Fa Rd and the island's major north-south artery have provided larger roads through to Saphan Hin and beyond.

Newer projects, such as Two Villas, provide a breath of fresh air to the area's residential property market.

Driving the coastal road and taking time out at viewpoints, I couldn't help but notice the unique attributes of the cape's geography and stunning east-coast views. It almost has a Mediterranean feel to it.

A long, winding road and views into the outlying areas – these are the cape's unique selling points that will stand the test of time.

For land with sea views, prices remain attractive for property developers, but the hilly terrain continues to present site-development and infrastructure challenges. Likewise, the availability of larger tracts of land for mixed-use hotels and estates, remains limited, hence there are some barriers to entry for significant new supply.

I suspect that a number of readers would share a similar experience to my own if they revis-

ited the area. It certainly was an eyepener for me.

All too often, we underestimate the quality and individuality that different parts of the island have to offer. Phuket remains blessed with its diversity and Cape Panwa is one of its most scenic neighborhoods.

Bill Barnett is managing director of C9 Hotelworks (c9hotelworks.com), a Phuket-based hotel and residential property consulting firm. With more than 20 years' experience in the region, he has played an active role in some of the island's biggest developments.

PROPERTY WATCH

By Bill Barnett



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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel



With berths of up to 70 meters long, the marina is aimed squarely at the superyacht set.

Jumeirah marina clears phase one

KOH RAET: Phase 1 of the private marina being built as part of the Jumeirah Private Island Resort is now complete, with the basin dredged and now reflooded.

Anthony Franklin of developer TGR Asia told the *Gazette* that it took seven months to dredge the basin of the marina, which covers approximately 40 rai.

The construction crew is now ready to plow into Phase 2, with pilings to start within the month and installation of floating pontoons during the fourth quarter of 2008, Mr Franklin said on May 12.

"In construction terms, we will be looking for the marina to start accepting yachts at the end of this year," he added.

Designed to international specifications, the fully inclusive marina is being built in a sheltered lagoon on the east coast of the island and will offer a range of facilities, including 101 berths

ranging in length from 10 to 70 meters, capable of accommodating superyachts up to 70m long.

Once complete, the marina will include a fuel dock with pump-out facility, a five-meter depth at the marina entrance to accommodate larger berths (3.5m depth for the rest of the basin), power pedestals, wireless Internet access, electric vehicle pickup and yacht maintenance and repair services.

The invitation-only Jumeirah Private Island Phuket Yacht Club will feature a clubhouse with accommodation, spa, gym and restaurants. Jumeirah Private Island Resort owners will have full access to the marina and yacht club.

"Our first homes are due for completion in the first quarter of 2009, with a total of eight homes at various stages of construction," Mr Franklin explained.

"Construction of the Jumeirah Resort is due to start later

this year with the soft opening scheduled for October 10, 2010."

Regarding submarine infrastructure, including the laying of electricity, fiber-optic and water pipes to supply the island, Mr Franklin said, "The Phuket Provincial committee has given verbal approval to proceed and written confirmation is expected this week. Construction is scheduled to begin early June."

The project will cover about 25% of the 200-rai island.

Mr Franklin said, "As you can imagine, during the development of the island, respect for the environment has been at the forefront of our design planning. To this, we continue to support the Phuket Marine Biological Center in the preservation and restoration of Phuket's coral and mangrove areas," said Mr Franklin.

Ecological design elements include an integrated rainwater collection system, thermal insulation installed in all roof structures to reduce air-conditioning energy consumption, double-block cavity walls and double-glazed windows and patio doors for thermal efficiency.

Shophouse project set for early finish



Phuket@Town will be finished in one year, instead of two as originally planned.

PHUKET CITY: Construction of the Phuket@Town project on 10 rai of land on Surin Rd is about 20% complete. Work on the 500-million-baht project, developed by Bangkok-based Sittarom Property Co Ltd, is expected to be finished by May 2009.

Although the original plan was for work to be done in two years, construction, which began in March, is now slated for completion within about one year so that buyers can take advantage of the government's decision to reduce property transfer fees from 2% to 0.01% of the registered value of a property.

Phuket@Town will comprise 14 three-story commercial buildings, 33 three-bedroom home-office units, 13 three-bedroom, three-story townhouses and 51 two-bedroom, two-story townhouses, all between 162 square meters and 264sqm. Each unit is five meters wide.

The project has only 12 three-story home-office units and four three-story townhouses still available for sale. Prices start at 3.49 million baht for the three-story townhouses and 4.39 million baht for the home-office units. Until the end of June, the prices are reduced to 3.39 million baht for the townhouses and

from 4.19 million baht for the home-office units.

Surasak Borisuti, Phuket@Town manager, told the *Gazette* that although this is Sittarom Property's debut project in Phuket, the company has previously developed five housing projects in Bangkok and one in Udon Thani.

The project has been split into four zones: commercial buildings, home-office units and two accommodation zones.

Once the project is complete, a range of different businesses will operate out of Phuket@Town, including clinics, accountants, law firms and convenience stores. Full facilities are available at the project, including car parking and 24-hour security, he said.

"We created separate zones so that customers can choose a location to suit their purposes," he added.

"Our pre-sales launched at the end of February. The commercial buildings, which face the main road, were sold within three days of going on the market," said K. Surasak.

The construction contractors for the project are Porntisan Co Ltd and DTP Construction Co Ltd.

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Property Gazette

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New property in Rawai. Approx 35sqm of living space, plus swimming pool. Could be used as 3-bedroom house, two 2-bedroom houses or even four 1-bedroom suites. Includes Thai limited company if required. Some finance may be available. 7 million baht ono. contact Dave (Scandinavian) Tel: 084-0639223, 084-6722725.

NEW POOL-VILLA, RAWAI

400sqm. 3-4 bedrooms. 300m from Rawai Pier. Price: 7.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.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.

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

SEA VIEW KAMALA

Stunning view, 1 km 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

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

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

CHALONG VILLA



Convenient location in quiet soi off Chao Fa West Rd. Two bedrooms, 1 bathroom, living room, laundry/kitchen and car port plus large covered outside area. Aircon, telephone, ADSL & cable TV installed. Only 3 years old and in superb condition - viewing essential. 2.6 million baht. Call for more details. Tel: 081-894-9668. Email: cantaneze@gmail.com

FOREIGN FREEHOLD

condominium in Rawai, 250m from the pier. 580,000 baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

KRABI, NEAR AO NANG

New, luxury pool-villa. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, European kitchen, 7.25 million baht. Tel: 084-3224044. Email: info@siamsol.com For details visit: www.siamsol.com

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

TROPICAL POOL VILLA

in Chalong. Brand-new, spacious, 2-bedroom villa with deluxe kitchen and large living area. Priced to sell. Tel: 085-7932477.

BAAN BENJAMAS

2-bedroom townhouse refurbished in 2006. Walking distance to Jungceylon and the beach. 5.3 million baht. Tel: 083-3941397.

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

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

NEW TOWNHOUSE

in Than Thong 7 project. 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. 19 sq wah. Central location on Chao Fa East Rd, opposite Villa California. 1.9 million baht. Tel: 087-2770978.

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, 086-819-4373. Email: pojana@swift-mail.com

LAND IN PHUKET CITY

165sq wah. Land with Chanote title deed in Phuket City, located behind the Thepkasattri Rd branch of Bangkok Bank. Price: 8.5 million baht. Tel: 081-9682314.

PATONG BEACH CONDO

Rare 14th floor location. Great sea views. 50sqm. Freehold or leasehold. 3.5 million baht. Call Daly. Tel: 087-0312154.



7 lovely luxury Townhouses 228 m² building in tropical garden, also sundeck/garden on top floor. Shade sail and private Jacuzzi, 20m. pool, many extras (European kitchen) 5 mins to beach. From 10.9 M baht to 11.9 M baht.

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info@kamala-coconut-grove.com

Call: +49 (0)6190 918290, +49 (0)171 455888

BUILDING FOR SALE

in busy area, Soi Sai Nam Yen, Patong Beach

- ◆ 4 stories, first floor has large area convenient for restaurant or bar.
- ◆ 8 apartments on floor 2, 3, 4.
- ◆ Chanote title, electricity
- ◆ 2 minutes to the beach

Asking price: 50 million baht.

Call 087-2709093, 081-8687676

Property Gazette

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

BEACH HOUSE



9 million baht. Rent: 39,000 baht/month. Chalong Beach. Tel: 081-4760380. Web: www.phuketbeachhouse.com

SURIN BEACH LAND FOR SALE

1,016sqm: 6 million baht. 996sqm: 5 million baht. 5 mins walk to Surin Beach. Tel: 081-8687676.

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

PHUKET PALACE BARGAIN

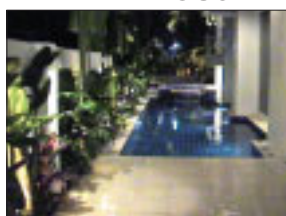
11th floor, sea view, upgraded, extras, freehold. 3.2 million baht. Tel: 085-5905460. Email: coltat1962@yahoo.com

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

THE VILLA WHITE HOUSE



for sale (B27.5 million) or rent. The white house villa is one of the finest tropical pool villas in Patong. Best location for night life and touring Phuket. Located high on the hill above the Amari Coral Beach Resort at the south end of Patong. No agents! Email: png.phuket@gmail.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

SEAVIEW POOLHOUSE in Rawai: 11 million baht. See www.phuketdir.com/poolseahouse or call 085-7839062.

NEW APARTMENT

Includes 28 rooms with 6 shophouses in Phuket City. 36.5 million baht. Installment payment is acceptable. Interested? Call 081-6072489.

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

AO POR LAND FOR SALE



150 rai, Nor Sor 3 Gor, sea view. From 2.5 million baht per rai. No agents! Please contact by email: allservices29@gmail.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

PATONG CONDO RENT/SALE

Rent: B11,000/month. Swimming pool, near beach and Jungceylon. Aircon, TV, DVD. Sunny, 32sqm. For sale at: B1.9 million. Foreign-owned freehold. Tel: 087-1731773, 089-4746670. Email: seanthepilot@hotmail.com

NEW COMMERCIAL BUILDING

for sale. 3 stories near Loch Palm Golf Club. 3.9 million baht. Tel: 084-3081853, 087-279-9500.

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 ispai 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.

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 estate. Price 6.9 million baht. Tel: 084-8439579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

HARMONY HOMES

4 unique executive townhomes at the 3rd fairway of Phuket Country Club. From 17 million baht. Tel: 081-958-3571. Email: sweetiebee2000@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: jihshand@gmail.com

www.phuketmarbella.com

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792 sqm land:
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076-271 544



COCONUT ISLAND LAND



for sale. 4.5 rai, Chanote, hillside panoramic sea view, close to beach. 14 million baht. Please call K. Bouddha for more information. Tel: 089-2900484.

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

HOUSE FOR SALE

in Chalong. Bargain. 2 stories, 4 bedrooms. 3.2 million baht. Tel: 081-7475293.

NICE TOWNHOUSE

3-bedroom townhouse near Chalong with full aircon, phone, Internet and Chanote title. Price slashed to only 1.1 million baht for quick sale. Tel: 667-7-862468, 667-84-8494882. Email: phuketjon@csloxinfo.com Visit our website for more info: www.mistymountainsresort.com/house4sale.html

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

PARICHART VILLAGE



35/20 Soi 1. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircon, some furniture, 50sq wah, garden. In Chalong area. For sale 4 million baht or long-term rent, must see. Contact Nina. Tel: 087-6899679 or tasuwan@hotmail.com. No agents!

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

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

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.

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 hagglers. Tel: 080-7197147. Email: pmoney@hotmail.com

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Property Gazette

SARIYA HOUSE



in Saiyuan. Spacious, open-plan, swimming pool, 2 en-suite bathrooms, modern kitchen, convection oven and fan. Nice garden with native plants. Parking space, perimeter wall, gate and water tank. 320sqm area. 6.2 million baht. Contact Miss Kob. Tel: 081-2733303. Email: info@sariyahouse.com

10.5 RAI-KOH YAO

On main road, 2 mins from pier, electricity, water. Ideal for business. 10 million baht. No brokers. Tel: 087-8821959.

PATONG HOUSE

Urgent sale! 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 sitting rooms and kitchen. 24 sq wah. Chanote. 4 million baht negotiable. Tel: 084-3083262.

PATONG BEACH

Top sea view, 140-sqm apartment, fully furnished, swimming, pool, only 9.5 million baht negotiable. Owner wants to move to Europe. Tel: 087-8984338. Email: supaphon99@yahoo.com

KHAO LAK: INVEST IN

property. Land beside Sofitel Magic Lagoon Khao Lak. 5.5 rai (66mx136m), Chanote. 40 million baht total. Call Krit. Tel: 081-9804641.

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.

KOH YAO YAI LAND

3.2 rai, sea view overlooking Phuket. Chanote. 2.2 million baht. Tel: 081-8928208.

½ RAI – NAI HARN

Best location, ready to build on. Residential area. Chanote. 4.1 million baht. No brokers. Tel: 087-8821959.

RAWAI POOL VILLA

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, living room, furnished, 4 aircon units, alarm. Sala, terrace on 2 levels, 8m x 4m pool, walled garden and parking. Chanote title and company papers included. Tel: + 45-24419447. Email: bo@motto.dk

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

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

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

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

POOL VILLA FOR SALE

Ao Bang Tao. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, big living room, parking, fully furnished. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 084-8516121.

BRAND NEW 3 BEDROOM HOME MISSION HILLS

• 1/2 rai chanote land
• lock up garage
• near international golf course
• underground power.
URGENT SALE 3,500,000 baht.
Tel: 081-2704291

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

HOUSE FOR SALE



in the 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

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 1,600 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

LAYAN LAND: 2 RAI

Lake-view, road, electricity. 6.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-7874383 or 084-0977383.

POOL VILLA FOR SALE

Ao Bang Tao. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, big living room, parking, fully furnished. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 084-8516121.

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.



Chalong House Lake View

New detached house on 370sqm of land with Chanote title. 1-story, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, Jacuzzi and Western kitchen. Telephone line, internet ADSL, Cable TV.

Price: 6.9 million baht

Tel: 087-2709093 Email: png.phuket@gmail.com

MODERN BUILDING IN NAIYANG

Amazing property is 4 rai, 44 rooms, 50 bathrooms, 4 kitchens, Jacuzzi, air-conditioned, fully furnished, 7 minutes (4.5 km) from Phuket International Airport.

Price: 38 million baht.



For full details contact Tel: 087-6899679.
Email: png.phuket@gmail.com

HOUSE & GARDEN (KOH KAEW)



For sale near Boat Lagoon. 371 sq.wah of land, 200sqm of house, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Good for home and office. Tel: 081-5699483. Email: jaidao@hotmail.com, jaidao@yahoo.com

LAST SEAVIEW LAND FOR SALE



This is the last seaview land available in Layan with big potential for a 5-star development. Land has Chanote title. The size is 13 rai, 3 ngan. The owner has reduced the price to 5 million baht per rai. Great opportunity. Contact for more details. Tel: 086-2726508.

PROPERTIES FOR SALE

and rent. For a more personalized approach to your property, please contact www.phuketproperties.com. If you are a real estate developer or owner you may list your properties with us. Contact Khun Noi or Julie. Tel: 081-8931360, 081-7192903.

URGENT REPOSSESSION SALE

New property in Rawai. Approx 350 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. Tel: 084-0639223, 084-6722725 (Scandinavian).

THARADON VILLE, NAI HARN

6 exclusive pool villas, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, swimming pool. House 236-268 sqm, land 363-582 sqm. Prices from 7.2 million baht. Tel: 076-245966, 085-7842004. Email: hakan@tharadonestate.com For further details, please see our website at http://www.tharadonestate.com

HOUSE IN 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

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Property Gazette

Properties For Rent

RAWAI HOUSE



Furnished, cable TV, Internet, Telephone line, 2 bedrooms, aircon, big garden, quiet area. Short-term rent: 18,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-7873046.

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

HOUSE AT CHALONG for rent near Palai Beach. 2 or 3 bedrooms, aircon, fully furnished, phone line. Tel: 089-7288311.

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 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/month or 13,000 baht/month if you pay lump sum for 1 year. Tel: 087-4172757 (English), 086-6829804 (Thai).

NICE HOUSE



800 meters from Heroinesí Monument, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, nice garden at corner. Fully fitted kitchen, 2 TVs with cable TV installed, 3 aircons, telephone line with ADSL. 21,000 baht/month for 2-year contract or 23,000 baht/month for 1-year contract. Tel: 081-8512280. Email: dennis.mo@hotmail.com

NICE AND COZY HOUSE FOR RENT



Furnished and excellent location, 5 mins from Rawai & Nai Harn beaches. 162-sqm. 2 bedrooms with private bathrooms. 1 guest toilet. 3 aircons. Large living-dining room. Telephone line with ADSL. Free water supply and garbage service. Please contact K. Nui. Tel: 087-3830936.

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

KAMALA LAKE HOUSE 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, on the lake, cable TV, phone, furnished. 17,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8928208.

LUXURY HOUSE

Fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, aircon, ADSL. Chalong area. 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6064279.

VILLA FOR RENT: RAWAI

Soi Tristar, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, big living room, balcony with super view, quiet. 18,000 baht/month, min 1-year contract. Barry (Eng) Tel: 085-7959105.

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT OR SALE

300m from Heroinesí Monument. Rent: 25,000 baht/month. Sale: 3.7 million baht. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Tel: 087-2646808, 083-1743880.

2-BEDROOM HOUSE IN KAMALA

200m from the beach. Kitchen, living room. 2 bedrooms, w/aircon. 20,000 baht per month in low season. Tel: 085-1587638. Email: pierre_hammar@yahoo.se

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.

HOUSE IN CHUAN CHUEN LAGOON

Fully furnished, long-term lease or quick sale. Tel: 084-0651133.

FOR RENT, MAI KHAO

2 bedrooms, European standard, quiet and safe. 10 mins to airport, 5 mins to golf and beach. True TV, telephone line, antique furniture, aircon, charming garden. 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-4708926, 081-719-7015. Email: eanfievat@voila.fr

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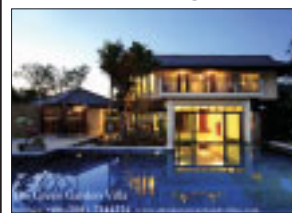
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Nai Harn Beach • Bang Tao Beach



NEW FURNISHED VILLAS



Close to Laguna. 300sqm, 3 bedrooms, living room, kitchen and pool. Long- or short-term rent. Tel: 081-7344324. www.phuketgreenlandvillas.com

PATONG BEACH CONDOTE

Patong Beach Condotel. Nice apartment, 56sqm. 7th floor, 1 bedroom, kitchen, living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL. Tel: 081-8913740.

KATA HILL HOUSE FOR RENT

Close to Kata Beach. 2-story house, fully furnished, one bedroom, big living room, kitchen, aircon and sea-view location on Patak Soi 2. Tel: 081-6062827. Email: nij017@hotmail.com

NEW CHALONG HOME 2-bedroom, furnished home for rent. Phone line, True TV, aircon. Tel: 089-6521473.

HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, aircon, ADSL, cable TV, furnished. Heroinesí Monument area. 18,000 baht/month. Tel: 086-2778461. Email: brunuiviv@hotmail.com

GOLF VIEW VILLA FOR RENT

4 bedrooms and 3 bedrooms houses with pool, 4km to BIS. Lake-hill view, quiet, on top of private hill. Furnished, Wi-Fi, True TV. Long term: 75,000 baht per month. Contact K. Noi. Tel: 087-2698492.

PATONG BEACH CONDO

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Beautiful home, peaceful area of Chalong. Convenient location, beach and major shopping nearby. Fully furnished, one-bedroom house with aircon, hot water. 17,000 baht per month. Call Tel: 089-6468563. www.unclechaihome.com/model2.htm

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in Soi Baan Krang, Chalong. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, fully furnished and aircon. 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-8746270.

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Build a guesthouse on 350sqm in Kata. 30 years rent free. Email: terence@hotmail.de

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5 bedrooms, 2 living rooms, 2 kitchens, 2 bathrooms, carport, terrace, aircon/fan, hot water, fully furnished, 2 telephone lines, Wi-Fi, pool. Long term: 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8916632. Email: golfandview@gmx.de

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25,000 baht per month. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, new, good-quality furniture. Tel: 089-4749317. Email: pauljlaydon@hotmail.com

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Yacht Haven Marina Office
The Yacht Haven Marina Phuket
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email: yacht Haven@leemarine.com

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Island Job Mart



Banyan Tree Resorts and Spas (Thailand) Co Ltd. is a leading spa operator. To meet our rapid growth and expansion, we invite suitable and qualified candidates to join our team.

1. People Development/Administration Manager (Based in Phuket)

Qualification:

- Female, age not over 40 years, of Thai, Filipino or Chinese nationality
- Team player and has initiative to be a self-starter
- University graduate with at least 3 years' experience
- Relevant experience with HR will be advantage
- Good computer skills. Experience with Microsoft Access will be an advantage
- Enjoy relating with people of different nationalities and backgrounds
- Good English proficiency – speaking and writing

2. Marcom Executive (Based in Phuket)

Qualification:

- Female, age between 26-40 years of Thai, Filipino or Chinese nationality
- Bachelor's or master's degree
- Excellent English (esp. writing skills)
- Good communication and good computer skills
- At least 1 year's experience

Applicants should provide a full detailed English resumé, expected salary and a recent photo to:

Human Resources Department

Tel: (076) 324390, 324374 # 6944, 6918 Fax: (076) 324391
E-mail: usanee.takashiba@banyantree.com

RESERVATION STAFF

Diethelm Travel is looking for highly qualified and service-minded operations staff. Good command of English and computer skills are required. Experience in tourism is a plus. Thai citizens only. Please contact for more information at Tel: 081-8927714. Email: max.t@th.diethelmtravel.com

COOK AND HOUSEMAID

Thai or Filipino cook and housemaid required. Full time, for apartment. Two adults, no children, in Cherng Talay/Laguna area. Cook must have good experience in Western and Thai food; both should be able to speak and understand English. Good salary and conditions. No accommodation. Tel: 084-3061232.

GOOD COMMISSION

for Thai or foreigner with good English, computer skills and 2-3 years' experience in the property industry. Tel: 087-3877182.

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Thai female for preschool class. Must speak English. Contact at: Tel: 076-282232, 084-3088110. E-mail: parryallen@aol.com

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for Black and White 24/7, Kathu. Contact K. Nat (Thai). Please call for further information. Tel: 086-9432976.

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YAMOO CAPE CONSTRUCTION CO., LTD



YAMOO CAPE CONSTRUCTION CO LTD (YCC) offers a full range of architectural, structural, M&E and infrastructure services to a diverse portfolio of Thai and international clients on a comprehensive range of private projects. Currently, The Bay @ Cape Yamu construction by YCC, an elegant seaside community of 16 tropical villas set around a beautiful hillside peninsula on the quiet eastern shores of Phuket Island.

We are looking for competent, enthusiastic, honest and highly qualified individuals for the following vacancies to join our growing business:

Project Engineer

1 position

Qualifications

- Male or Female, aged not over 35 years
- Bachelor's degree in Engineering (Civil Structural, or related field), Licensed Civil Engineer is a plus
- Minimum of 10 years' experience in construction
- Experience as Project Engineer of a least 1 site
- Excellent communication in written and spoken English
- Able to use MS Office. Excellence in MS Excel is a plus
- Proficient in AutoCAD 2005 (or higher)
- Proficient in MS Project for setting out master schedule, detailed schedules
- Ability to be lead

Job Description

- Report to project manager and seek ways of saving construction costs
- Responsible for managing a team; approximately 25-35 staff
- Ensuring projects are executed within timeframe and allocated budget
- Arrange and manage cash flow in accordance with master schedule

Foreman

2 positions

Qualifications

- Male, aged not over 35 years, Thai nationality
- Diploma or equivalent in construction
- Minimum of 3 years' experience
- Experience in construction background is a plus

Job Description

- Able to manage a team and co-ordinate with site engineer and subcontractors
- Supervise and monitor workers and site work

Draftsman

4 positions

Qualifications

- Male or Female, aged not over 35 years
- Thai nationality
- Diploma in Construction or related field (or higher)
- Proficiency in AutoCAD 2005 (or higher)
- Minimum of 2 years' experience
- Experience in high-end villa with swimming pool construction a plus

Job Description

- Drafting of structural, M&E, and architectural drawings

Quantity Survey

2 positions

Qualifications

- Male or Female, aged not over 32 years
- Thai nationality
- Relevant qualifications in Civil Engineering or related field
- Minimum of 2 years' experience
- Experience in high-end villa with swimming pool construction a plus
- Proficient in MS Excel and AutoCAD 2005 (or higher)

Job Description

- Draw up cost estimates
- Set out variation orders, payment claims
- Review all payments and certificates to be issued to main contractor, subcontractors and suppliers
- Arrange subcontract agreements or contract main contractors, subcontractors and suppliers

Office Engineer/CAD Manager

2 positions

Qualifications

- Male or female, aged not over 32 years
- Bachelor's degree in Engineering (Civil Structural, or related field), Licensed Civil Engineer a plus
- Minimum of 5 years' experience
- Experience in high-end villa with swimming pool construction a plus
- Proficient in AutoCAD 2005 (or higher)
- Good communication in English writing and speaking

Job Description

- To be the leader of 5 draftsmen for production of shop drawings
- Experience in combining architectural, structural and M&E drawings for production of shop drawings
- Provide documentation for approval of shop drawings/materials
- Email correspondence with concerned parties

Site Engineer

2 positions

Qualifications

- Male, aged not over 30 years
- Bachelor's degree in Engineering (Civil or Structural), Licensed Civil Engineer a plus
- Minimum of 3 years' experience
- Experience in high-end villa with swimming pool construction a plus
- Ability to use AutoCAD 2005 (or higher), MS Office, Internet, proficient in MS Project 2003

Job Description

- Read and interpret engineering drawings, specifications and blueprints
- Communicate effectively and maintain working relationships with supervisor, foreman and subcontractors, monitoring overall work on site

Please send resumé with covering letter stating salary expectations to sombat@campbellkane.com, annie@campbellkane.com

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Island Job Mart

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- Reservation Manager
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- Purchasing Officer
- Guest Service Agent (Villa Host)
- Cleaner

Please apply in person or send your resumé and recent photograph to: Human Resources Department
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Tel: (66) 76-324 101-7, Fax: (66) 76-324 108
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Outrigger Hotels and Resorts, one of the fastest growing hospitality companies in Asia Pacific, are expanding into Thailand.

OUR MISSION

We will grow together as the leisure hospitality company of choice by providing:

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- Our Guests distinctive hospitality and value,
- Our Owners promised results.

Working as a family in harmony with the culture and environment of the places where we do business.

Please visit our website www.outrigger.com and see the family values and commitment demonstrated by Outrigger as an employer of choice. If you would like be part of this growing company here in Thailand then we look forward to hearing from you.

We are currently looking for Thai Nationals to fill the positions below and join our pre-opening office in Phuket.

- 1) **Human Resources Manager** - Conceptualize and implement recruitment plans, provide HR service and assistance to employees in matters related to employee benefits, payroll, compensation, employment, human resources administration, training and be integral in establishing these systems suitable to Thailand.
- 2) **Sales Manager** - An experienced sales professional with contacts in the local and international wholesale market.
- 3) **Public Relations Manager** - Position Outrigger properties in Phuket Thailand as a premier resort company and ensure Outrigger's family values and integration into the local culture are well publicized.

If you feel you have the necessary skills and experience to fulfill these positions, are interested in any of the above positions, and, would like more information please email to the below address, with your resume, recent photo and salary expectations: oum.suksompong@outrigger.com. A full job description can be given on request.

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Teaching Vacancy for August 2008

The British International School, Phuket is a leading international day and boarding school (18 months - 18 years) offering a quality education to the international community of the Asia/Pacific region. Applications are now invited for the following position.

Teacher of Thai - must be a fluent English speaker
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The following are desirable but not essential:

- ⇒ Ability to teach literature
- ⇒ Experience of the IB Diploma Programme
- ⇒ Experience of the IGCSE programme
- ⇒ Leadership experience

Applicants must have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree and teaching certificate or Education Degree and a minimum of two years teaching experience.

Please e-mail a letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, recent photograph and contact details of 3 referees to: Headmaster@bcis.ac.th The closing date for applications is Friday 23rd May 2008.

Further information about the school may be obtained from our website: www.bcis.ac.th



British International School, Phuket (BCIS)
59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200 Thailand
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- At least 3-5 years' experience in 5- or 4-star hotels in executive kitchen assignments
- Leader personality, motivator
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- Previous assignment in Thailand/Asia an advantage
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- Foreign or Thai national, 35-55 years of age

Comprehensive remuneration package will be offered to the right candidate.

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Responsibilities

- To manage and motivate sales teams in charge of residential project sales in Phuket
- To ensure sales teams market and maximize sales of clients' properties within agreed timelines and targets

General Qualifications

- Minimum 2 years of experience
- Bachelor's degree in related field
- Excellent organizational relationship skills and Powerpoint presentations
- Fluency in written/spoken English
- Fluency in written and spoken Russian is an advantage
- Valid driving license

Please submit resumé & photo to
Human Resources
Jones Lang LaSalle (Thailand) Ltd
19/F Sathorn City Tower,
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Wanted: Female aged 25-35 years. English speaker, self motivated, car owner who likes fitness! Good salary, benefits, commission. Tel: 076-355040, 081-8239448. Fax: 076-355039. Send CV to cj@searaspports.com

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Tout, Trader & Trumpet



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Position: Accountant

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 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.

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41/31 Moo 5, Baan Hua Khuan, Fax: + 66 (0) 76-279412
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A six-star resort-style development along the shores of Bang Tao Beach is currently seeking candidates.

Operations Manager

The successful candidate should be in possession of these qualifications:

- Thai national.
- Bachelor's degree in any field.
- Experienced in resort set up and operation.
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- Fluent in spoken & written English.
- Ability to work under pressure.

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Successful candidates should be in possession of these qualifications:

- Thai national.
- Bachelor's degree in any field.
- Independent efficiency
- Fluent in spoken & written English.
- Ability to work under pressure.

The positions offer attractive packages. For an interview, please send resume and photograph to: info@thepalmbeachclub.com

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