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Quayle calls for better tourist safety

By Matt Crook

PHUKET CITY: Following a wave of *Phuket Gazette* reports of crimes against foreigners in recent weeks, British Ambassador to Thailand Quinton Quayle has voiced his concern over the personal safety of British citizens in Phuket.

Speaking to the *Gazette* at the Royal Phuket City Hotel on May 29, Mr Quayle said, "I think safety is a worrying aspect..."

"[Safety] is one of the things I will be talking with the governor about. Crime happens all over the world - we have a lot in Britain - but if there is a particular spate of attacks targeting tourists or targeting people on motorcycles, one would expect the authorities to take some countermeasures," he said.

Although Mr Quayle said he had been informed of a police manpower shortage on the island, he said, "If crime is going up, then the measures need to somehow react to that. Policemen can't be everywhere, but if there is a pattern like that, then you would imagine there would be some sort of reaction to it."

Possible solutions include more plainclothes officers patrolling on motorbikes and increased surveillance around the island, said Mr Quayle.

"I understand there is a problem with lighting and that the streets are quite dark, so these may be issues for the governor," he added.

As part of his two-day visit to Phuket, Mr Quayle met with Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit on May 30.

Mr Quayle said that crime affects all types of tourists on Phuket: short-stay visitors, long-stay property buyers and those



'If there is a particular spate of attacks targeting tourists or targeting people on motorcycles, one would expect the authorities to take some counter measures,' British Ambassador Quinton Quayle (pictured) told the *Gazette*.

attracted by the marine tourism industry.

"One of the attractions of coming to Thailand is that it is a comparatively safe country, so this is an issue that needs some attention," he added.

While in Phuket, Mr Quayle visited British citizens incarcerated in Phuket Provincial Prison. "In Thailand there are about 50 Brits in prisons; in Phuket there are just two [British] prisoners.

"We have a consular responsibility to look after Brits who get in trouble. I will go and [visit] them, see how they are, see if they have any requirements we can help them with, and see the conditions in the prison," he said.

Mr Quayle added that almost one million Brits visit Thailand every year, "which creates a lot of consular issues," he noted.

In the latest wave of attacks on foreigners in Phuket,

British national Richard Hendren, 50, who runs the September beer bar on Soi One Man in Karon, was shot and robbed while riding home on Patak Rd early morning on May 22.

Mr Hendren was traveling with a 13-year-old girl, the daughter of one the bar staff. The girl was to return the Honda motorbike to the bar after dropping Mr Hendren at his home on Soi Yodsane in Chalong.

The pair were attacked while rounding the bend from Kata Hill to Chalong.

Two men pulled alongside and kicked the bike, causing Mr Hendren to crash.

The man who had been riding pillion approached Mr Hendren and the girl, demanding their valuables. Mr Hendren was then shot in the leg, causing a compound fracture, before the robbers made off with cash, bank cards and a mobile phone.

Mercy mission ship diverts to Phuket

By Sompratch Saowakhon

AO MAKHAM (*Nation, Gazette*): After 10 days in the Indian Ocean waiting for permission to enter Burmese waters, the 24,000-tonne French navy ship *Mistral* docked on May 27 at the Phuket Deep Sea Port to unload tons of supplies intended for cyclone victims in Burma.

French Ambassador to Thailand Laurent Bili said that an agreement had been reached with the Burmese military government making Phuket the logistics center for French supplies heading for the Irrawaddy Delta region.

He estimated the value of the supplies at about 1 million euros.

The Burmese junta has refused to allow foreign naval carriers or airforce cargo planes to enter its territory.

Mistral and her crew of 180 waited in international waters before finally receiving orders to unload in Phuket.

The French military said on May 26 that the supplies would be given to the UN's World Food Program for distribution to victims in the worst-hit areas.

A UN cargo ship arrived to collect the aid on June 1 and left for Burma at 6 am on June 2.

Reportedly equipped with three helicopters, *Mistral* carries enough food to sustain 100,000 people for two weeks.

The ship also had tents and tarpaulin sheets to provide shelter for 60,000 homeless people, as well as cooking pots, mosquito netting and other necessities.

Cyclone Nargis left an estimated 133,000 dead or missing when it struck Myanmar on May 2 and 3.



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Marathon traffic restrictions announced

CHERNG TALAY: As the island gears up for the Laguna Phuket International Marathon on June 15, the event's organizers have announced traffic restrictions that will apply during the event so athletes can safely complete the course.

Traffic along certain roads will be directed by police for the safety of runners as follows:

1. All roads within Laguna Phuket and the main road leading into Laguna Phuket from 4:45am to midday.
2. Route 4030 from Plaza del Mar to Thalang Market in Baan Don from 5 am to 7:30 am.
3. Route 4031 (the old "Airport Road") from Baan Pru Jam Pa to the airport from 5:45 am to 11 am.
4. Route 2025, which spurs off Route 4031 and joins it further south, from 6:15 am to 11 am.
5. Route 4030 from Thalang to Baan Don, for returning runners, from 6:30 am to 11:30 am.
6. Route 3024 (Koktanod Rd) from Baan Don to the Shangri-la construction site, from 6:45 am to 11:30 am.

Central blood donation clinic

PHUKET: To mark World Blood Donation Day on June 14, Central Festival Phuket will hold a public blood donation session, from 11 am to 10 pm, at its events hall on the second floor.

The Phuket Red Cross is encouraging people aged between 17 and 60 to donate blood.

Personnel from Phuket's hospitals and other agencies will be on hand to assist and to promote regular blood donations by the public.

Tsunami victims to regain access to their homes

By Alin Boonkrungthong

CHALONG: Residents of Baan Fah Mai will have a bridge built so they can regain access to their village, which was cut off after excavation of a drainage ditch.

Baan Fah Mai, which is located at the end of Soi Mayuree, opposite the entrance to Land & Houses Park on Chao Fah East Rd, comprises homes for about 20 families whose former dwellings were destroyed in the 2004 tsunami.

Their new homes were built by the military on Treasury Department land, with the work funded by Deutsche Bank Asia. The

homes were handed over to the families in October 2005.

Chalong Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) President Nattapong Wimolphon on May 30 explained to the *Gazette* that the residents presented a letter to Phuket Vice-Governor Smith Palawatwichai, complaining that the access road to the village was no longer passable, on May 26.

V/Gov Smith visited the site on May 27 and discovered that the access road passed through private property.

At the site, a drainage ditch had been excavated into a nearby public canal – leaving the Fah Mai residents with no road

access to their homes.

K. Nattapong said that V/Gov Smith had asked the landowner to allow a bridge to be built across the ditch, thus reconnecting the village to the outside world.

"V/Gov Smith told me that he is still awaiting final confirmation from the landowner, who is willing to allow the bridge to be built on his property as long as it has erosion control barriers and is paid for by the government," he said.

The Chalong *OrBorTor* will pay for construction of the bridge once they receive final confirmation. A temporary structure will be provided in the meantime, he said.

Nine ya bah arrests in series of raids

By Sompratch Saowakhon

PHUKET CITY: The sale of a single *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pill to an undercover policeman late on June 1 sparked a series of arrests that netted nine suspects and nearly 3,000 pills by dawn the next day.

Muang District police announced at a press conference on June 2 that Saroj Sopawaj, 25, was arrested in a sting on Soi Suthat 2 at 11 pm after allegedly selling one *ya bah* pill to a plain-clothed police officer.

Questioning Saroj led police to the Ket Ho branch of 7-Eleven, where they arrested Sanchai Kongsua, 24, who was allegedly carrying 20 *ya bah* pills.

At 1:20 am, officers went to an area behind the Prince of Songkla University (PSU), where they caught Krssana Ramwong, 20, Wissawa Seeeyom, 22, and Sanpetch Pongsakul, 22, with a total of 50 *ya bah* pills, police said.

After questioning these suspects, police went on to arrest Ekkawit Sirinuntawith, 18, and his girlfriend Phakaporn O-mark, 21, at the 7-Eleven behind PSU at 3:30 am. The couple were alleg-



The suspects are set to face the media while Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit (2nd from left), Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Decha Buthnampetch (3rd from left) and his staff stand by.

edly carrying 110 pills of *ya bah*.

An hour later, police arrested Piyasak Boonma, 27, at the Muang District Office intersection, who allegedly had five *ya bah* pills.

During this arrest, police noticed a car parked nearby with a person inside. Suspicious, police searched the car, where they say they found 2,700 *ya bah* tablets. The car's occupant, Pansak Silarat, 20, was arrested.

All of the suspects face charges of dealing illicit drugs and may face additional charges if their urine samples test positive for drugs.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit, who was at the press conference, said that drug use has emerged as a major social problem in Phuket, noting that about 60% of those held in Phuket Provincial Prison were incarcerated on drugs charges.

PPEO moves to allay labor shortage

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: In a bid to ease Phuket's manual labor shortage, the Phuket Provincial Employment Office (PPEO) is accepting applications to extend by one year the work permits of the 19,000 Burmese, Laotian and Cambodian laborers working in Phuket whose work permits are set to expire this month.

Employers can register their migrant laborers at the PPEO building on Rattanakosin 200 Pi Rd, from 8:30 am until 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday.

PPEO officer Nantachai Thepcharoen made the announcement at the governor's monthly press meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on June 2.

There are 34,000 migrant laborers registered with PPEO, 15,000 of whom have already had their work permits renewed, said K. Nantachai.

The number of unregistered laborers in Phuket remains unknown, he said.

"Phuket employers requested from us a quota of 50,000 workers, but so far only 34,000 workers have been registered. I think there must be at least 16,000 laborers working illegally in Phuket," he added.

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Officers watch over the Burmese workers as they await processing at Phuket City Police Station.

Burmese doing Thai homeWorks

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

PHUKET CITY: That unregistered, migrant laborers from Myanmar continue to play a key role in the island's construction industry was confirmed on May 27 when 28 illegal workers were arrested at the 1-billion-baht "homeWorks" project site at the Darasamuth Intersection on the bypass road.

The arrests followed a tip-off from the Phuket division of Royal Thai Police Special Branch to Phuket Provincial Hall.

The informant reported that project contractor RTH Construction Co Ltd was using unregistered labor at the site, which covers 27 rai at one of Phuket's busiest intersections.

Chalong Tadverapong, of the Provincial Provincial Administration Office, told the *Gazette* that the workers were taken to Phuket City Police Station.

Some of the workers were charged with illegally entering the country and working without a permit, but others were charged only with working illegally as they

had work permits, but the permits allowed them to work for another employer only, he said.

RTH Construction Co faces charges of sheltering illegal "aliens" and allowing them to work without government permission, he added.

Those who entered the country illegally will be deported, but the others will only be fined, he said.

The plight of Burmese workers in Phuket made international headlines when 54 suffocated en route to the province in the back of an cold storage truck in Ranong on April 9, he added.

Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit, who says there are tens of thousands of illegal migrants from Myanmar working in the province, recently ordered police to prepare for an new influx in the wake of the Cyclone Nargis disaster in Myanmar's Irrawaddy Delta region.

Burmese aid on its way

By Nick Davies

CAPE PANWA: Stocks of donated food and emergency-shelter supplies on June 3 finally began their journey from the Third Naval Command at Cape Panwa to help victims of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar.

Approximately 10 tonnes of supplies were loaded onto four container trucks heading for the Thai-Myanmar Border Fishery Co-ordination Center in Ranong province. From there, the supplies are expected to be distributed to the cyclone victims in Myanmar by Burmese officials.

The Third Naval Command had been the main collection point for the many donations by local businesses, charities and individuals, although the Royal Thai Navy had been waiting for the stockpile to become large enough to warrant transporting the supplies to Myanmar in a single trip.

As the trucks rolled out, US Navy sailors and Marines began disembarking from three US Navy ships – USS *Pearl Harbor*, USS *Dubuque* and USS *Benfold* – at the nearby Deep Sea Port.



Four container trucks loaded with relief supplies for victims of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar roll out from the the Third Naval Command at Cape Panwa, bound for Ranong.

While in Phuket for five days for "rest and recreation", some of the sailors were to lend a hand with painting at the Phuket Special School in Pa Khlok.

"The school has a vocational training building for tailoring and a bakery. This building is 10 x 30 meters with a roof height of eight meters and we plan to paint the entire building inside and out," said Brad Kenny of the Rotary Club of Patong Beach.

Mr Kenny went on to explain, "These ships are part of a US Navy amphibious assault group and with their landing capabilities also serve and are highly trained for humanitarian assistance during natural disasters.

"They are in the area to use their disaster-relief capabilities in the event the Myanmar government gives them access up the delta area after the recent cyclone," he said.

Public Works chief calls for zoning suggestions

PHUKET CITY: At a meeting of about 250 Public Works officers from throughout the five Andaman provinces, Somchai Chumrat, director-general of the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, on May 29 called for all suggestions as to what zoning regulations local authorities would like in effect in their respective areas.

After making his opening speech, K. Somchai told reporters, "We need local officers to think clearly and apply their knowledge to come up with ideas together.

"The South has outstanding

natural beauty, which works well with the nature travel industry. We need to know what policies local officers would like to see in place in their areas," K. Somchai said.

Although he called for officers to be "creative" and "individual" in their suggestions, he stressed that zoning regulations should be uniform throughout the five Andaman provinces: Phuket, Ranong, Phang Nga, Krabi and Trang.

"Provinces such as Phuket, Krabi and Ranong are known around the world for their natu-

ral beauty – and development always has an effect. Together, we need to make sure that development continues, but we must also preserve our natural resources the best we can," he said.

He said that any new ideas would not receive budget support this fiscal year.

However, he added, "It will be easier to ask for the budget from the government if we request it as a group of provinces instead of each province applying individually.

"It will be more effective," K. Somchai added.

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A taste of freedom: Kiwi on

On November 4, 2005, New Zealander Ian Newton and his Thai wife, Sangwan, were arrested on their 15-meter yacht, *Short Time*, at Yacht Haven Marina for their alleged involvement in an international heroin smuggling ring.

After spending more than two years in the notorious Bombut Phiset Narcotics Remand Prison outside Bangkok, the couple were released earlier this year after a judge at Ratchada Court in Bangkok ruled that the prosecution was unable to provide sufficient evidence linking Mr Newton and his wife to two Hong Kong men nabbed in Phuket with 40 kilograms of heroin.

Mr Newton and his wife were released on 1.6-million-baht bail pending an expected appeal by the prosecution, which has yet to be filed.

In the meantime, Mr Newton cannot leave the country.

After extensive telephone conversations with the newly acquitted, *Gazette* News Editor Stephen Fein summarizes Mr Newton's version of events.

Writing on the popular Phuket community forum of Thai-Visa.com, a contributor posting under the name "NewtronBom" on June 10 started a new thread:

"Hello members. My name is Ian Newton. My wife and I are free! We were in prison for more than two years. I won't even begin to describe the conditions

there... We got busted in Phuket for heroin in October, 2005, on our yacht. I was born in the UK, but grew up in New Zealand. We had nothing to do with the drug bust. We are totally innocent, as we proved in court!"

In a subsequent post, Mr Newton explained that his attorney Decha Kittywitprayanun, convinced the judge that there was no physical evidence linking

Mr Newton and his wife to the 40 kilograms of heroin seized on November 4, 2005, at the Karon hotel room of Hong Kong-Chinese nationals Barry Chung Oi Fung and Leung Pak Long, aged 42 and 20 years at the time, respectively.

The Newtons were on the other side of the island when the two men were arrested.

In gaining his client's acquit-



tal, K. Decha told the judge that the two Hong Kong men, who are both serving life sentences, denied that Mr Newton and his wife had anything to do with the drugs.

"They were called to the stand by my lawyer, but the judge wouldn't let them say anything that was not on the statement put forth by police," Mr Newton told the *Gazette*.

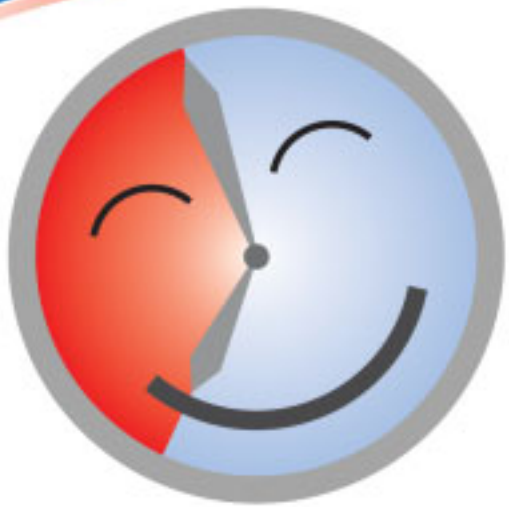
Central to the prosecution's evidence was a small bag of heroin allegedly found on *Short Time* after an extensive search by

15 police officers, accompanied by two US Drug Enforcement Agency officers and drug sniffing dogs, said Mr Newton.

"There was nothing found during the original search. It was five hours after the search, while we were still being interrogated, that a lone policeman went back and found a small bag of heroin in the bathroom of the yacht," said Mr Newton, whose 70-year-old mother was also on the boat at the time of his arrest.

The defense was able to

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bail after two years in jail



ABOVE: Mr Newton's wife, K. Sangwan, of whom Mr Newton said she "has never committed a crime in her life".

LEFT: Ian Newton and his wife aboard their boat *Short Time*. After police alleged to have found a small bag of heroin on the boat, Mr Newton and his wife spent two years in prison before being released earlier this year.

convince the judge of the possibility that the heroin might not have belonged to the suspects, even though the bag had K. Sangwan's name on it.

The bag, which had initially contained subscription medication for her heart condition, had been discarded in the bathroom of the boat after K. Sangwan had taken all the pills, the defense argued.

Despite four months of close surveillance of Mr Newton by Narcotics Suppression Bureau detectives, the defense was able to convince the judge that Mr Newton's stay at the same hotel in Bangkok as the two Hong Kong men four months before his arrest was coincidental.

"The two Hong Kong men did not know us and had never had any contact with us. This was proven in court, despite the police saying otherwise. They did not, as the police said, implicate us. The first time we ever met was in the police cells," he said.

"The police followed us for four months, 24 hours a day, and did not have a scrap of evidence, apart from hundreds of innocent photos of us shopping and going about our lives. Having spent all that time and manpower [must have] cost them a fortune. The day of our arrest, they had two army helicopters and over 150 men on the jetty at Phuket. They were determined to put us in prison, but there was no real evidence, so we are free," Mr Newton wrote.

Upon acquittal, the judge advised the Newtons to sue police for their losses, he said.

Left unattended at Yacht

Haven, the vessel Mr Newton bought for 4.7 million baht was damaged by waves and had all its valuables taken – everything from the GPS system to the bedsheets, he said.

The couple also owe 15 months in dockage fees to Yacht Haven Marina at 15,000 baht a month, he added.

Mr Newton put the amount of valuables seized and unreturned by police from his house in Bangkok at about 2 million baht.

"We have had our house returned to us, but so much was missing.

"At the time of our arrest, I owned an Isuzu four-door, 4WD pickup truck. I was paying it off and we owed 100,000 baht on it, but it was sold off after only a few months of non-payment. I also lost my motorbike, three computers, a Sony home theater, all my tools, a radio-controlled helicopter, gold and jewelry. The

court case cost us just over 1 million baht to fight and I cannot even begin to calculate how much I have lost business-wise," he said.

"I used to do computer graphics and backgrounds for video games," he added.

"Conditions in prison were atrocious. My wife needs a heart-valve transplant now, because she received no medicine for an existing heart condition while she was inside. We both suffer from nightmares.

"Despite all this, I love Thailand. My wife and I had tremendous support from family and friends while we were in prison," he wrote.

A HISTORY

So why were Mr Newton and his wife even suspected of being involved? Mr Newton apparently became a suspect because of previous drug convictions, all involving marijuana possession and use.

He admitted his previous drug convictions were sufficient grounds for police to suspect him, but said that his wife "has never committed a crime in her life".

Mr Newton was convicted in Taiwan of marijuana use, serving some jail time after failing a urine test. In 1993, in Japan, he swallowed 755 grams of plastic-wrapped marijuana in an attempt to smuggle it into the country for personal use by himself and four friends "after drawing the short straw", he said.

When a poster on Thai Visa.com spotted the story about the arrest in Japan, some of the previously supportive posters turned against Mr Newton, particularly questioning why he changed his name from Kerry Mitchell to Ian Newton.

Conditions in prison were atrocious. My wife needs a heart-valve transplant now, because she received no medicine for an existing heart condition while she was inside.

Mr Newton replied, "I am not trying to make myself out to be a saint. The fact is that we had nothing to do with the case in Phuket."

He went on to explain that he was convicted in Japan of possession, not dealing, and was released without spending a

day in prison after paying a US\$2,000 fine.

The name change was done legally to help his future career prospects, he said.

As for his 9-million-baht-house in Bangkok, Mr Newton said he paid 4.5 million baht for it five years ago with money that his lawyer proved to the court came from his mother's bank account.

"My yacht was paid for by my business partner from his bank account. The police checked that out. My side of the business was to sail it back to Thailand, repair and paint it, then charter it out for diving or fishing, for both of which it is suitable. I still hope to do this," he wrote.

As this report went to print, Mr Newton was still recovering from an accident at his home in Bangkok, where he slipped while cleaning out a fish pond and had a sharp piece of wood pierce his leg.

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Queer News

Blushing bride goes on the run

SAPHAN BURI: Being forced into a loveless marriage is an unhappy fate for any girl to endure, but not everyone takes the situation lying down.

After being forced to marry the son of a wealthy local cattle owner, one young woman from Suphan Buri managed to escape with not only her freedom, but also the 400,000-baht *sin sot* (bride price) and maybe with her childhood sweetheart in tow, as well.

The story came to light on May 27, when the bride's mother, 40-year-old Kamlai Thirakaow, contacted the press to enlist its help in locating her daughter, 19-year-old Walee.

The bride had disappeared nine days earlier on her wedding night, along with the all-important *sin sot*.

With tears of anguish streaming down her cheeks, K. Kamlai told reporters that on May 17, Walee had wed 23-year-old Sunet Kamlangdee, whose family had paid her a bride price of

cash and gold worth about 400,000 baht.

After the wedding reception, the couple went back to Sunet's home—presumably to consummate their union.

The next evening, Walee slipped out of the house with the *sin sot*, which her mother had yet to collect, and had not been seen since, K. Kamlai said.

The reason she thought the ex-boyfriend was involved was that Sunet had told her that on the wedding night, a man had rung up and threateningly said, "We'll soon see who will really get Walee."

K. Kamlai said that Sunet had told her that on the evening of May 18, he had been lying in bed with Walee when she got up claiming she needed to use the toilet. The next thing he heard, however, was the sound of a motorbike being driven away at speed. When he got up to investigate, he found that the 150,000 baht in cash and 12 baht-weight of gold *sin sot* had gone.

Immediately suspicious that her daughter's ex-boyfriend had something to do with the disappearing act, K. Kamlai decided to bring the law in and reported the incident to Bang Pla Ma Police Station.

The reason she thought the ex-boyfriend was involved was that Sunet had told her that on the wedding night, a man had rung up and threateningly said, "We'll soon see who will really get Walee."

Through the press, K. Kamlai appealed for Walee to come home and discuss the issue with her family, who are now obliged to repay Sunet's family.

Lt Col Bunyang Bun-eam, an investigating officer at Bang Pla Ma Police Station, said that Walee's relatives had come to the station to ask for help in finding her, but had not yet asked to press charges against anyone.

Police questioned Walee's ex-boyfriend, who had not run away, and two other friends. All denied any involvement in her disappearance. Walee called Col Bunyan a few days after the incident had been reported to police, insisting that her ex-boyfriend had nothing to do with it. She also asked him to persuade her mother not to press charges, he said.

At last report, police were trying to track down the runaway bride through their network of informants.

A source in the police said that Walee had been with her ex-boyfriend for a number of years, since they were in school together.

When Sunet became interested in her, she was forced to marry him after a six-month engagement.

Source: KomChadLuek

STAMPS



New stamps are anything but old hat

PHUKET: Thailand Post on September 5 will launch a collection of four stamps to educate people about royal hats (*prahamala*).

The first stamp depicts the *Prahmala Mala*. King Rama I wore this hat along with full traditional dress. The hat is weaved from gold and silk thread, with diamonds and gold encrusted on the hat for decoration. A feather from a bird of paradise protrudes from the side of the hat.

The *Prahmala Seausung* is the subject of the second stamp. Made from predominantly black wool and decorated with gold and diamonds, the *Prahmala Seausung* also features a feather from a bird of paradise. Kings would wear this hat with clothes of a similar color.

The third design features the *Prahmala Beying*, a hat

worn by King Naresuan during battles with the Burmese. King Rama I declared the hat as auspicious. The hat is weaved from bamboo and covered with lacquer, inside and out. The outer layer is designed to protect the wearer's head. A standing Buddha image and 20 seated Buddha images, all golden, circle the hat.

Made from wool shaped in a semi-circle, the *Prahmala Petchyai*, the hat on the fourth stamp, is a tiara decorated on the front with diamonds. King Rama IV wore this hat when attending royal occasions.

Each stamp measures 28 millimeters by 28mm and will be available for 5 baht, 30 baht with a commemorative envelope.

Only 700,000 of the stamps will be produced and they will be available from all 10 post offices in Phuket.

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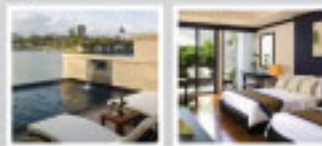
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PROMJAI DENTAL CLINIC

Butterflies to make their break

THALANG: One thousand butterflies will fill the air today (June 7) when they are released by Phuket Butterfly Garden & Insect World at Khao Pra Taew Park.

The colorful ensemble will include 15 vibrant species of butterfly, including monarchs, leopard lacewings and dark blue tigers.

As the butterflies discover freedom, they will also have to find food, so organizers are also planting 100 trees in the area known to be food for the butterflies.

The public are invited to join the free event, scheduled to take place from 8:30 am to 10 am. For more information call 076-210861.

Despite problems, Thais still proud to be Thai

Almost 90% of Thais who believe in reincarnation want to be reborn as Thais, even though they are not convinced Thai society can remain as peaceful, loving and kind as in the past, a recent survey revealed.

Dr Noppadol Kannika, director of Abac's Academic Network for Community Happiness Observation & Research (Anchor), said the center surveyed 3,487 people in Bangkok and 14 provinces from May 25-31.

Some 60% of respondents fear Thai society is no longer as peaceful, kind and loving as it once was. About 52% said they are not convinced Thais detest corrupt governments.

In the study, 90% said despite all that, they want to be born again as Thais.

Asked about the current political situation, some 66% said they feared that violence could escalate.

Asked about solutions to the current political turmoil, 80% said people should apply reason, not emotion, to address differences.

Refugees' last resort. Burmese children orphaned by Cyclone Nargis are fleeing to Thailand for help.

Dr Cynthia Maung, 2002 Ramon Magsaysay Award winner for community leadership, said the number of young Burmese entering Thailand had increased sharply this year, with Cyclone Nargis a main reason.

More than 10,000 children have registered as refugees in Mae Sot since January. Another 10,000 have fled the impoverished country but have not registered as refugees, said the Kareni doctor.

Five rai of land will be used to build a special center for the Nargis refugees. The clinic, which receives about 70 million baht a year from donors, treats up to 600 people a day, she said.

Quick quack fix. The government should impose a 30% tax on foreigners traveling to Thailand for medical care and use the proceeds to fund better national healthcare, said economist Ammar Siamwalla.

Thailand's efforts to model itself as a medical hub for Asia cause it to face a shortage of doctors, many of whom are lured to the private sector by higher pay, he said.

"Most of these profession-



PEDAL POWER

A resident at Baan Nong Thung in Mukdahan's Dong Luang district shows visitors how a bicycle modified to function as a water pump works.

als studied at public medical schools, paid for by the taxpayer. They are meant to work in public hospitals and help the poor. They betrayed us by paying paltry compensation to the government and heading off to private hospitals," he said.

To rectify the situation, the government should impose a tax of up to 30% on all foreign patients – on top of value-added taxes, thus adding as much as 6 billion baht to state coffers each year, he said.

Critical control. The new Film and Video Act that came into effect June 2 has moved censorship responsibilities from an old board run by the police to a new one under the Culture Ministry, which hopes to introduce a rating system that will eventually ban under-13s from viewing violent movies.

Cinemas will now require a license from the ministry, with those failing to comply subject to fines of up to 20,000 baht for every day of the infringement.

Those running unlicensed cinemas or renting movies without permission now face fines of up to one million baht. Films con-

sidered a threat to national security could see producers jailed for a year and/or fined 100,000 baht.

Simple solution. Banana leaves make better bandages for burn victims than gauze pads, accord-

ing to an experiment that won a recent Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) prize.

The smooth surface of the leaves did not rip open burn wounds when removed while the wounds were redressed and the use of banana leaves halved recovery time in first- and second-degree burn victims, the experiment showed.

In addition, taking the leaves off wounds did not discomfort patients and they did not require saline lubrication during redressing.

Banana leaves are also cheaper, about a third of the cost of gauze pads.

The discovery was made by nurse Orathai Phraibung during experiments on burn victims since 2006. K. Orathai works at a health station in rural Srisaket.

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

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The low season has arrived a bit sooner this year and certainly at lower levels than expected. Adding to the low-season pain, Tiger Air stopped its direct service from Singapore.

Normally, the drop-off in European tourists during the low season is partially offset by Asian tourists looking for low off-season bargains. The cancellation of the direct flights, along with heavier than normal rains, has discouraged a number of tourists.

With the global economy entering a downturn, it could mean a quiet summer here in Krabi. It already looks like a ghost town, with little activity except for the frequent downpours.

Resorts eaten by shophouses.

As one large set of townhouse units rises on the ruins of the old Krabi Seaview Resort, another original Ao Nang resort is being pulled down. The Pra Nang Inn, one of the oldest resorts in Ao Nang, has sold a section of the hotel. The hotel straddles the corner of the beach road, with two sections across the street from each other.

The older buildings were heavily damaged by fire last year and now the newer section, built some 12 years ago, is being torn down. While I'm not privy to what the new owners plan to do, from their previous construction of small cube-shaped shops on the corner, it is likely more commercial units will be built.

It is hoped that these are more attractive than the ubiquitous and unimaginative shophouses lining the main road in Ao Nang. But we doubt it.

Volunteer-cop confusion. On May 15, the Ao Nang Tourist Police invited foreign nationals in Krabi to participate in a volunteer project to help the police assist foreign tourists in Krabi. In the days before the meeting, Tourist Police went to local foreign businesses and residences to ask the

Flight cuts add to low-season blues



Shophouse are being built on the site of where the Krabi Seaview Resort once stood.

foreigners to join in this project.

As noted in this column previously, there is already a foreign volunteer police project being developed by the Krabi Town Police Department. Many foreigners, therefore, were confused whether this was part of the same project or something different. We were told it was a different project, being run by the Tourist Police.

The concept of the two programs seemed to be the same, to have foreign volunteers from each nationality assist the police with translation and other duties to help foreign tourists.

A dozen or so foreign vol-

unteers had already submitted their photos and contact information to the Krabi Town police and questioned the need to do it again.

A reading of the information package supplied by the Tourist Police might have provided a clue, except that it was written in Thai. And the Tourist Police officer soliciting the volunteers? Not a word of English in his vocabulary.

The answer was found at the meeting on May 15, or so it seemed. The meeting was scheduled for 9 am to 4 pm on a workday, which put off most of the foreigners who were tending their businesses.

One person who did attend said the entire meeting was held in Thai, with a translator whose English was unintelligible.

The 20 or so foreigners in

attendance were then given a primer in visa and immigration requirements by an officer from the Immigration Department, most of which information is common knowledge among foreign residents. Evidently, the meeting dispersed after the lunch break, with many of the foreigners scratching their heads wondering what had been the purpose of the last few hours.

Community library opens. The Sri-phong Phukaoluan Foundation (SPF), or krabirelief.com, recently opened the SPF Community Center in Krabi Town. The 950-square-meter building on

three rai houses the foundation activities to support more than 100 tsunami children and orphans.

While the Community Center is being furnished in a step-by-step process as sponsors underwrite the expenses, the library is nearly complete and stocked with hundreds of books.

The library houses books in Thai and English, with an emphasis on English language learning and textbooks from kindergarten through high school. There is an excellent reference section with atlases, almanacs and dictionaries.

Textbooks cover subjects in mathematics, computer, sciences, literature and English-language. Magazines and novels are available in Thai and English.

The library will open to the public, who can join as members to take out books. Annual membership will be 200 baht for adults, 100 baht for children, with book rentals at 3 to 5 baht per day.

This will be the first English-language library in Krabi (that I know about) and all are welcome to visit. If you have any old books you would like to donate, it would be greatly appreciated.

The library is located at the Community Center on 42 Watchara Rd, Tambon Krabi Yai. From Ao Nang going to Krabi Town, turn left at the major intersection traffic lights at Klong Chilat heading towards the airport.

The Community Center is about 400 meters on the left hand side. For more information email info@krabirelief.com



ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds

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Shrimp farmers caught by rising costs

Shrimp farmers in the South are calling for the government to step in to help farmers hit by high fuel and raw food prices.

Saranon Chirojmontree, chairman of the Trang Shrimp Farmers Association, said that farmers were being hard hit by the rising cost of fuel, coupled with a 20% jump in the price of shrimp food. Inflation has seen costs rise by 100% in the same year that has seen the market price of shrimp fall. The rising costs have seen 517 shrimp farmers in Trang, more than half the shrimp farmers in the province, to leave the industry, K. Saranon said.

The Trang Shrimp Farmers Association, together with other shrimp-farming groups across the South, have called on the government to guarantee prices for shrimp, ease debt-repayment terms on loans and order retailers to reduce the price of shrimp food by 10%.

The calls for assistance follow similar demands a week earlier by fisherman in the South who have seen their livelihoods impacted by the rising costs of fuel and raw materials.

21 and out. Police in Chumphon arrested a wanted gunman May 28 after the suspect failed to stop at a road checkpoint.

Witoon Saengjan, 34, sped his silver Mazda sedan through a checkpoint in Lamae district. The car was next spotted by police on the road to Ban Chong Sathon in Lang Suan district. Officers gave chase.

Though a loudspeaker mounted on the roof of the truck, they ordered the suspect to pull over. Witoon refused and drove faster in an attempt to lose the police pickup, which followed in close pursuit.

Witoon lost control of the Mazda on the road to Ban Saphan Soong, spinning off the tarmac and coming to a stop.

Witoon was arrested along with his passenger, Narongsak



Soldiers in Pattani spray water for freshmen students of Prince of Songkla University's Pattani campus. The students had just finished a hard day planting mangroves as part of their initiation activities.

Photo by Charoon Thongnual.

SPRAY DOWN

Jansuwan, 40. Police seized from the car a fully-loaded .38-caliber Colt pistol.

The suspects were taken to Lang Suan Police Station for questioning. Col Suphot Bunchuang, superintendent of Lang Suan Police Station, said that a number of arrest warrants had been issued for Witoon, who was number 21 on Police Region 8's list of most-wanted gunmen.

Narongsak told police that he was Witoon's uncle, had nothing to do with any murder cases and just asked his nephew for a lift that day.

Regardless, both men were detained at Lang Suan Police Station, awaiting transfer to Police Region 8 headquarters in Surat Thani.

High roller. Narcotics Suppression Bureau officers and Trang Police on May 27 seized property worth more than 2 million baht from a Trang man suspected of smuggling cannabis.

Officers raided the Pricha Yanyon car accessories shop in Trang Town following the arrest of its owner, 29-year-old Pricha Kanchanaphrom, who was allegedly found in possession of 60 kilograms of cannabis in Nakhon

Ratchasima province two days earlier.

The street value of the cannabis seized was more than one million baht, police said.

Police reported that Pricha and another man from Trang, 29-year-old Udon Siathao, were arrested in See Khiu District on May 25 while driving a pickup truck with 60 one-kilogram bars

of compressed cannabis hidden hidden inside the vehicle. Of these, 40kg were hidden in a secret compartment in the back of the truck and 20kg were stashed inside speakers in the truck's cab, police said.

The men confessed that they had bought the drugs, which had been smuggled across the border from Laos into Nong Khai,

for 5,000 baht a kilogram, police said. The men allegedly admitted that they planned to sell some of the cannabis in Phatthalung before sending the rest to the Deep South.

The suspects said that they had made the trip three times before, each time selling the cannabis for more than one million baht, police said.

See Khiu District Police requested that Trang Police seize property belonging to the suspects that could have been bought with illicitly obtained funds.

Trang Police, working with Region 9 Narcotics Suppression Bureau officers, confiscated two cars – a blue BMW and a red Toyota Corolla – a Honda Wave motorcycle, five bankbooks, three Chanote land title deeds and most of the stock from the Pricha Yanyon shop.

If investigators can prove to the court that the seized possessions had been bought using funds obtained through drug dealing, they would become government property, police said.

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

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FLOYD'S BRASSERIE
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By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

Later this month, on June 25 to be precise, there will be pirates in Rawai. Luckily, Phuket's pirates will be the friendly kind, unlike their southern counterparts who raid Thai fuel tankers in the Singapore Strait.

In fact, the pirates have been rehearsing their raids, complete with comic-routine intervals, at the Phuket Aqua Spectacular Show water park in Soi Bangkotee for months.

The rehearsals are for the Phuket Stunt Show, a one-hour show that will start at 7:30 pm each night, with a cast of medal-winning high divers who have been assembled from around the world.

The mainstay of the performance is a 45-minute "Pirates of the China Sea" stunt action show, including a high-tech light and sound show using a dynamic water-projection screen as well as explosions and other pyrotechnics.

For those who enjoy classic high diving, there will be a 15-minute "Olympic-style" synchronized high-diving show climaxing with a 27-meter dive to the water below. The plunge is one of the tallest high dives performed in the world.

Staging the show will be a team of internationally recognized divers, including world champion Steve Black. Winner of the 1999 World High Diving Championships and the 2004 World Cliff Diving Championships in Switzerland, Steve also placed second in the 2006 World Cup and in last year's World Championships by Night.

Accompanying Steve on the towers is Phil Seaman, now in his 25th year in the business. Phil is a former British international trampolinist who won silver at the 1984 World Championships in Japan and earned a spot in the 1986 edition of the *Guinness Book of Records* for the most number of somersaults on a trampoline in one minute, completing 66.

Joining them is Andrew Byford, from London, who has won 23 national titles and has been European Highboard Champion. He also won third place in both the World and European championships on the springboard.

Among the youngest is



FIRE IT UP: The mainstay of the performance is a 45-minute 'Pirates of the China Sea' stunt action show, including explosions and other pyrotechnics.

Daredevil pirates invade Phuket

Aaron Randles, a former gymnast whose repertoire includes springboard diving, platform diving, high diving, trampoline and fire diving.

Ironically, Aaron was raised among the cornfields of Nebraska in the US, but his diving career has since seen him perform in Saudi Arabia, China, Germany, Japan and Thailand, where he now lives in Phuket.

Bolstering the cast with acting experience are Englishman Mark Nixon and Canadian Craig Anderson.

Craig graduated from the University of Western Ontario in kinesiology (scientific study of human movement) and in visual arts, and went on to perform and later direct international waterski and jet-ski shows.

Mark trained in dance and performing arts in Surrey, England, and has performed in stunt shows, dance shows and cabarets at Thorpe Park, the NEC Arena in Birmingham and at



Legoland in Windsor, all in the UK.

Assembling the team took years of emails and phone calls, say show producers Thomas Larsson and Morten Blixrud of Show Nai Nam Co Ltd.

"The best high diver in the world is our friend, so we started

making contacts, emailing and calling high divers to see if they wanted the opportunity to do something new here.

"It's taken years and we took our time in picking out the best people to perform here," said Morten.

"None of these divers had



ever been in Thailand before and we have four Thai stuntmen who have worked in the movies *Ong-bak* and *Kung Fu Tootsie*, so they have since learned what to call the different stunts in Thai," said Thomas.

Although the cast has decades of experience, they still have ambulance teams on standby while they are performing stunts.

"For safety, we have teams from two hospitals on standby every time we have show. And each time before they perform a stunt, they say, 'Safety first' – for rehearsals and shows. For professionals like them, safety is very important," said Thomas.

Morton explained that he and Thomas came up with the idea of the Phuket Stunt Show six years ago.

"We wanted to create something for tourists and someplace where families and children can go together. We saw that tourists go to the beach during the day, so our show will be at night. But this show is not only for tourists, we want Thais and Asians to be able to see something new as well," said Morton.

Over the past months, lucky local residents have had the chance to watch the rehearsals for free.

So far, the feedback has been good. One comment on a feedback questionnaire read, "It's amazing, I have never seen this before."

Those living on the island even have the chance to join the fun at the fun park, as part-time positions are available for those wanting to dress up and play characters throughout the park.

"And for our opening special festival, we are pleased to invite orphans from any foundation for free," said Thomas.

More details about the show can be found at www.phuketstuntshow.com



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All Swedenness and Light

Everyone makes fun of their international neighbors. The Austrians are the butt of German jokes, who are the butt of English jokes, who are the butt of French jokes, who are the butt of American jokes, who are the gag-wise whipping boys of just about every country in the world that isn't living out of their pockets and a great many who are

Some people say that jokes about America must be extraordinarily rendered to be effective, but I haven't a clue what they're on about...

Fellow Scandinavians love to make jokes about the Swedes. So without further ado:

There was a power failure in Stockholm, and hundreds of Swedes were trapped in escalators.

A Swede was reading through the phone book: "Svenson, Svenson, Svenson after Svenson; it's just incredible how many phones this guy has."

A Swede called the airline and asked how long it would take for a plane to get from



Stockholm to Paris. "Just a minute," the clerk said. "Thank you," the Swede replied and hung up.

I was reminded of these jokes at the Scandinavian La-

goon Resort (SLR), located on Luang Por Chuang Rd, between Chalong Circle and Phuket City, one of the connecting arteries between the two Chao Fa roads.



FAMILY FUN: There's something for everyone at the Scandinavian Lagoon, with a range of traditional platters plus free-flowing sangria and fruit juices.

Here, they throw a weekly Sunday brunch featuring such delights as Swedish potato gratin with anchovies otherwise known as "Janson's Temptation" (no relation, thankfully, to "Montezuma's Revenge"), blue-cheese sauce and Swedish Kopparberg cider as well as a wide variety of cold cuts and whole-wheat bread. All of this is accompanied by free-flow, freshly made Sangria.

The restaurant is large, breezy and open – an ideal place for a Scandi-blowout, so here we are, midday Sunday, loading our plates with meatballs, mashed potatoes, creamy gravy, chicken sticks and a lot more.

To one side, there's a Thai musical duo playing C&W and folk standards. This is Ali and his brother Ming.

Ali knows more English-language songs than most Western singers and slathers them with a Texan drawl that occasionally meanders into quasi-Cockney and back again.

The result is more than entertaining and not a little confusing.

I'm offered some cider and gratefully sip it, washing down smoked salmon and slipping into an impossible reverie of summer camping in the north of Sweden with an imaginary and decidedly pneumatic "Hilda" while in the background Ali growls on about broken hearts and unfaithful women in his Merle Haggard-meets-Tommy Cooper intonations.

The restaurant is still in its fledgling stages and the wine list reflects this, with just three whites and six reds available. The French and Spanish labels, however, are decent enough and attractively priced with house

red going for 150 baht a glass and 700 baht a bottle.

The SLR also does a nice little line in children's activities to ensure that a) kids get plenty to do and b) parents get plenty to eat and drink. There's a pool right by the restaurant and a mini-golf course.

With a kids' club on its way as well as plenty of space for youngsters to let off

steam, mum and dad and their friends can catch up with by far the most popular pastime in Phuket – wringing the juicy local gossip mill dry over a good meal.

Forget about interesting group activities such as naked Twister parties or traditional Thai slam dancing; gossip reigns here.

The incessant beat of Phuket's tittle-tattle tom-toms may seem altruistically fascinating to newly arrived visitors, but is addictive to residents, many of whom dance far too cravenly to the rhythm.

Halfway through dessert it suddenly becomes apparent that the Kopparberg cider is a wonderful companion to the apple crumble with vanilla sauce.

As if in confirmation, the clouds drift aside and the sun makes a welcome appearance in a sort of culinary epiphany – well it is Sunday, after all.

It's been a light brunch yet one bursting with health. The little guy's happy in a bloated sort of way and we head off back to Wilko Towers, a contented, cheerful lot.

Sunday Brunch at Scandinavian Lagoon Resort, 11 am to 3 pm. Adults 695 baht; children over five years old 350 baht (under-fives free). Luang Por Chuang Rd.14/3 Moo 4, Chalong. Tel: 076-380301. Website: www.scandinavianlaguna.com



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HEART OF FIRE

Apinya "Add" Somsri jumped into the role of rescuer alongside her husband when the tsunami struck Phuket in 2004. She was among one of the first emergency teams to respond when flight OG269 burst into flames at Phuket International Airport on September 16 last year.

In March, she was awarded Best Phuket Firefighter 2008.

Her dedication to a tough, unpaid job that is usually reserved for tough men has seen her decorated for her achievements and she is Phuket's first and only female firefighter. The *Gazette's* Pathomporn Kaenkrachang reports.

Before becoming Phuket's first female firefighter, 35-year-old Apinya Somsri often found herself wondering if she would have the chance to make a difference to other people's lives.

She asked herself how many other lives she could save in her own lifetime.

Phuket has had its share of disasters needs rescue volunteers with the same dedication shown by K. Apinya, but how does a high-school graduate and mother become Phuket's only firefighting female?

While tending to a friend who had been in a motorcycle accident, K. Apinya realized she had the mettle of being a rescue

volunteer, so she resolved to make a difference to others in need and responded whenever the call went out.

On any given normal day, outside the Thepkasattri Municipality Office on Thepkasattri Rd, three bright red fire trucks gleam in the midday sun, waiting patiently on standby for the next emergency.

On the second floor of the offices overlooking the fire trucks, K. Apinya sits at her desk.

In her quiet times, she plays the role of secretary, administering some of the municipality's paperwork,

but when the alarm sounds, she jumps into emergency mode, pulling on her boots and protective gear – just like her male colleagues.

'When you help people in emergencies or even save someone's life, it just encourages you to do more and you can't help but love the job.'

K. Apinya had her first taste of rescue work when she went to help tsunami victims in Khao Lak in 2004, but she didn't officially become a rescue volunteer until two years later.

"I've been working as a fire woman for two years. I started out as a Civil Defense volunteer, but was eventually able to be trained as a firefighter," she explained.

"I wasn't officially a rescue worker or volunteer at the time of the tsunami, but my husband K. Jarar has been a volunteer rescue worker since before we met.

"When the tsunami struck, I went with him to help rescue people in Khao Lak," she said.

Thepkasattri Fire Chief Kittasak Boriboonkaset speaks highly of the station's only female firefighter.

"I have worked alongside her several times as a civil volunteer and seen that she is a very capable woman who plays an



ABOVE: Wife, mother and firefighter Apinya with her family.

RIGHT: Female firefighter Apinya Somsri shows her metal during firefighting training.

ABOVE (INSET): Apinya (seated, 5th from right) and her team of rescue volunteers take a well-earned break on the last day of rescue and cleanup operations after the OG269-02 plane crash.

important role in the team and brings many skills to the job," he said.

"She is just as competent as any man on the job. As well as looking after the office's public relations administration, I knew that with some training she would make a great firefighter, so I eventually decided to bring her onto the firefighting team," he added.

K. Apinya and her squad were among the first emergency volunteers to arrive at the scene at Phuket International Airport when the OG269 flight crash-landed on September 16 last year.

"My team was one of the

first on the scene after the OG269 crash and some of the last to leave after the clean-up operation.

"Just after the crash, I gave first aid to survivors and stayed there until we had washed down the area," she said.

"We had, in fact, just participated in Phuket Airport's Emergency Plan Exercise earlier that month, so we were well prepared to deal with it," she added.

K. Apinya's Thepkasattri Municipality Office has been awarded "Best Volunteer Center" by Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit for two consecutive years and in March this year, K.



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Apinya was awarded "Best Phuket Firefighter 2008".

"I've always thought that being a woman shouldn't hold me back from doing the things that men do, but I'm also lucky that I have had the chance to help other people and I'm not afraid when it comes to emergencies," she said.

K. Apinya graduated from high school but was determined to continue with her education. She has completed a diploma while working and studying at the same time.

Gaining a diploma enabled

her to become a municipality officer.

"I work every day as an officer during the day, but in the evenings I am on standby for any emergencies," she said.

Adventurous volunteer work seems to be in her family's blood. K. Apinya's son is following his parent's lead and has become a security volunteer in the family's village.

"When you help people in emergencies or even save someone's life, it just encourages you to do more and you can't help but love the job," she said.

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This week



BELLES OF THE BALL: At the British International School, Phuket (BIS) inaugural PTA Dinner & Dance at Laguna Beach Resort on May 17 are (from left) Helle Moller, Rosie Smith, Rinsin Reading, Susan Russell, Gillian Warton, Carole Hillsmith, Annie Peters, Annick Lobelle, Catharina Moeller and Jacqueline Phillips. The evening raised some 300,000 baht for local charities.



LEAVE IT TO THE BOYS: Capt Phisit Ruek-ngarm (holding plant), Deputy-Director of the Third Naval Area Command's Civil Affairs Division, joins other sailors in planting trees around the Naval base's offices for National Tree Planting Day on May 19.



SKAL CREW: Allan Zeman (right), Chairman of the Paradise Group, which includes Silk Restaurant and Bar at Surin, is welcomed to the monthly dinner of the Phuket branch of Skai International at Silk on May 15. Welcoming him is Skai Phuket Secretary and Silk Sales & Operations Manager Jorge De la Torre (left) and Skai Phuket President Blandine Cressard, who is also General Manager at the Novotel Beach Resort Panwa Phuket.



BABE IN ARMS: Gulu Lalvani (right) and his wife Semiramis (2nd from left) welcome Bloomberg Hong Kong's lead correspondent Steven Ingles and his wife Jessica – and their baby daughter Yvette – to Royal Phuket Marina. They are pictured at the Mont Gras Wines party at Les Anges restaurant at RPM on May 26.



AIR SUPPLY: Sanont Wattanabulkit (3rd from left), Administrator at Air Asia's Phuket office, receives goods on May 22 that were donated to help provide relief for victims of Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar from Ussanee Issarolarn (4th from left), personnel supervisor of online travel portal Direct Rooms.



MATER ORDER: Regional wine distributor Wine Connection recently held a special tasting, with Chilean vineyard TerraMater as one of the labels offered, at its new cellar in El Gaucho restaurant at Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket.

Pictured with resort guests are TerraMater Export Manager Jose Miguel Montes (left), Wine Connection Phuket General Manager Paul Clark (center) and Patrick de Staercke (3rd from right), the resort's Director of Food and Beverage.

Happy? Moi? Don't make me cry

My other half and I have recently found ourselves arguing more and more often, and what makes matters worse is that sometimes the conversation has become deeper and nastier than the usual quick tiff.

I know that a lot of it can be put down to daily stress, but it can often reach the point when it can be quite scary.

The key to a happy relationship is accepting that miserable patches are unavoidable, or so they say. You may be reminded here of cliché phrases, such as "I beg your pardon, I never promised you a rose garden".

And anyway, you might say, bad times are not only unavoidable in a relationship, they might even be desirable, just as a gin and tonic tastes better after a tough day at work. I'd actually go further here and say that hardship – in manageable

doses – can keep couples frisky. Human beings, in particular women, need a certain amount of angst or they start to look for trouble.

Put me in a romantic boutique hotel with money for shopping and nothing else to do but eat, drink and canoodle, and I begin to find fault with – in no particular order – my bingo wings, my clothes, my partner, my short-term memory, my teeth, how little I have read lately, the shower output and so on.

And don't you always have less sex in a swanky hotel than anywhere else on earth? Because it's just too lovely and easy; there's too much scope for happiness.

What is true of the romantic mini-break can be true of life in general.

A day of lying around in cashmere lounge suits, contemplating your gorgeous lives, is infinitely less bonding than a day



spent clearing up after burst pipes have destroyed a couple of years' worth of hard homemaking.

If he can't find the tap to switch off the mains water, that is not good, admittedly; but if he does find it eventually then sets to it with a brush and gets lots of plaster in his hair (or on his head if he has none), well, it's better than the full couples-therapy package. You don't get that kind of team-building from just being happy.

The bottom line is this: happiness is boring if it is your unwavering state. It makes you complacent and complicated. It

stretches on and on with no defining features, like a Californian summer on drugs.

Children should be happy but adults need to be strapped to the rollercoaster of life wearing nothing but a G-string, or else they start to worry about why they've got it so good.

If you are too consistently happy, you will develop an obsession with the precise shade of white in which to paint the bathroom.

You will buy more clothes that you don't need. You will spend hours planning holidays to places you don't especially want

to visit and take too many photos you will never look at again.

In the end, the entire process of being happy and showing your friends how happy you are will start to affect your relationship. Misery is private and real. It reminds you who you both are when you're not laughing your heads off about something totally ridiculous.

Ambrosia Sakkadas, a Britain-born Greek Cypriot and graduate of Central St Martins College of Art & Design in London, is an artist and interior designer.

AMBROSIA'S

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Celebs play a round in Phuket

Wrapping up three days of golf, soccer and gala dinners, celebrities and guests joining the Asian Celebrity Golf Tour let their hair down at the Graceland Hotel Resort in Patong on May 29 for a finale of some classic British entertainment, magic and a charity auction of world-class memorabilia.

Over the three days, the celebrities joined local golfers in a tournament played at Loch Palm Golf Course and Red Mountain, with local swinger Blair Speers of HotelTravel.com winning the top prize.

The 36-hole competition was in a Stableford format, with scoring based on points on each hole, rather than a traditional lowest-overall-score wins format.

On the first day of competition, instead of heading for the greens at Loch Palm, soccer stars held a clinic for kids from the Children of Phuket charity, run by Patong Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukkabal.

Leading the clinic at the football field on Thaweewong Rd were former Bolton Wanderers captain Mike Walsh, Nigel Jemson, Kevin Reeves and former England international Luther Blisset.

Out on the fairways, the celebs included snooker trickster John Virgo and the "people's champion" Jimmy White, Ray "the voice of snooker" Edmonds, Tony Knowles and entertainer John Leeze.

Joining them, and providing the entertainment at the finale gala dinner, were singers Peter Conway (aka Robbie Williams' Dad), world-renowned magician Dave Redfern and comedians Steve Womack and Dave Wolfe.

The items sold at the charity auction included football jerseys signed by Pele, Diego "The Hand of God" Maradona and Cristiano Ronaldo, as well as a stratocaster guitar signed by Pink Floyd. Proceeds went to the Children of Phuket charity.

"A big thank you to the



people of Phuket, including HotelTravel.com, TaiPan, Tawan Properties, The Bay at Cape Yamu and Paul Moorhouse for

their generous sponsorship," said organizer Ian Reading. He also said that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) deserved special

mention for sponsoring the opening welcome buffet.

Jointly organized by Hi5 Golf, Sport in Spain and the The

Yorkshire Inn Group, the event raised some 550,000 baht for Children of Phuket.



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Big boys and their small toys

By Sompratch Saowakhon

It used to be that the main difference between children and adults was the size of their toys. Bucking that trend is a group of motorcycle enthusiasts, who have downsized their toys and now get their kicks riding Kawasaki KSR motorcycles – fun little runabouts that look more like novelty circus bikes than beasts of the road.

The KSR bikes, which are home manufactured and only available in Malaysia and Thailand, come in three color combinations: green-black, red-black and gray-black.

Apart from riding them, there is fun to be had with soup-ing the bikes up to make them look similar to modern monkey bikes.

The 110cc, four-stroke bikes are just under one meter tall and have proved a big hit with the island's youths, who can be seen congregating at Saphan Hin on weekends, ready to show off their latest mods and newly learned stunts.

Phuket Bike Shop on Yaowarat Road two years ago became the first dealer on the island to sell the KSRs.

Shop owner Payut "Ou" Sutthiparn said the bikes are popular because of their relatively low price tag at just under 60,000 baht.

Throw in the ease with

which they can be modified, along with plenty of accessory options, and you have a winning formula.

The bikes are suitable for first-time riders. Solid and powerful despite their size, KSRs are easy to handle, with just four gears, a semi-automatic clutch and no complicated engine parts to deal with.

There are already about 100 KSR bikes on the island and their riders are part of a growing clique named the KSR Phuket Bike Club.

Club members are mostly men between 25 and 35 years old, all looking for a fun pastime – riding around town on bikes three sizes too small for them.

Apart from the easy-to-adapt engines, mod options for the mini-bikes include a multitude of variations for the lights, wheels, handlebars and fairings, plus anything else the owner can dream up that will garner sufficient kudos points.

K. Ou thinks that allowing the KSR riders to pull donuts and pop wheelies in Saphan Hin is a move in the right direction.

"The area is a venue for Phuket's youngsters to share their ideas and creativity. There are always activities being organized by and for them, so we'd like to thank the authorities for allowing them to meet at Saphan Hin."



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Karma comes back around in Karon

With the low season kicking in, most of the clubs are winding down. Some will be closing their doors, others will be toning down the caliber of acts they are booking. For those left on the island for the "Big Low", there are quiet times ahead. With fewer new faces passing through, now is the perfect time to explore the island's live music scene – yes, Phuket does have a live music scene.

While Bangkok offers indie, electro and all things in between, the scene on Phuket is very different. Musicians don't come to play in Phuket because it's cool or because they expect to be signed to Sony BMG; they come here to play music because it's what they enjoy doing. You'll find fewer trendy haircuts than in the city, but there is an unmistakable vibe that has all the hallmarks of a genuine jam session.

You may have heard of Karma Lounge in Karon; it's had a colorful history. At present, Karma Lounge serves as a hub for the island's dedicated jammers.

Owner and manager Reinhard Haiber is an unmistakable character. Beneath the powerhouse-like exterior of someone who might well have competed in the World's Strongest Man competition is a music lover who has a penchant for everything from jazz and blues to... trance.

So what does Karma Lounge have to offer? In addition to drinks, seats and space to dance, Karma Lounge has soul, brother – and lots of it. The bar opens out onto the street, so you can hear the music long before you set foot inside.

The crowd is always a hodgepodge of locals and expats, long-stayers and tourists, all out for a good time. The music



Harry K belts one out with the mic while Colin 'Illy' Hill (back, left) jams with the band at Karma Lounge.

Photo by Dan Miles.

breezes through jazz, real rock 'n' roll, blues and even the odd ballad.

The stars of the show are the musical performers, who represent a broad cross section of the island's population.

On any given night you can never be sure who might show up to flex their musical muscles. While not quite an open house in terms of who supplies the musical moods, jammers are welcome to show up and do their thing – and if the other musicians and Reinhard approve, a beautiful relationship might blossom.

The musicians at Karma

Lounge are all long-time music aficionados. Aussie Colin "Illy" Hill has more than just flowing blond locks and a collection of wild shirts to his name. He has 35 years' experience as a pro guitarist under his belt, having performed more than 9,000 times around in the world.

As enthusiastic as a small child with a new toy, it was clear from the light in his eyes while talking about his excitement for the local music scene just how much Colin enjoys playing at Karma Lounge.

Joining him on some nights is Harry K, who says he was "brought up by the world of rock". Another Aussie, Harry may have shaved off his once-prolific mass

of hair, but he can still rock a venue. Harry is an accomplished vocalist who also holds a residency in Tai Pan. Like Colin, he had nothing but positive words to say about Phuket's live music scene.

Other vocalists who often join the fray are Karen Adkins-Beresford, a long-time Phuket resident who can wail it out with the best of them, and Phuket's own soul diva Bonnie Andersen.

This combination of musicians is only the beginning of the depth of talent on hand at Karma Lounge every

week. While the whole concept isn't going to set the world on fire, it doesn't matter, because it's not intended to. These guys are there to have fun and nothing more.

On any given night you can never be sure who might show up to flex their musical muscles and have a jam.

If you have a case of the low-season blues, then all you need might be a dose of, well, low-season blues, rock and jazz.

As the nights wear on and the drinks flow, the musicians usually take a back seat and chill out while Reinhard unleashes his passion for trance music on an unsuspecting crowd of revelers.

A big fan of superstar-DJ Tiesto, Reinhard is certainly fond of a diverse range of musical genres.

So there you have it. There are places such as Rock City (and Rock City 2), where you can stock up on nostalgia, there are Thai clubs such as Blue Marina and KorTorMor, where you can hear what the kids are into, and now there's Karma Lounge, where laid-back musicians hang out and jam just 'cos they can.

Karma Lounge is on the corner of Patak Rd and Luang Pho Chuan Rd, Karon. Tel: 076-396733 Email karma lounge2003@yahoo.com

AFTER DARK

By Matt Crook

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Upcoming events on the island

Until June 30. Boathouse Gallery extends "Islands" by Laura Baum.

The much talked-about exhibition "Islands" by Laura Baum, at Mom Tri's Boathouse Art Gallery, will be extended for another month.

Laura Baum, accomplished American painter of ethereal landscapes, was a student of Diane Kan, disciple of revered Master Chang Dai Chien (1899-1983). The powerful watercolors, with stone and mineral colors mixed by the artist, are painted on Japanese gold- or silver-leaf boards covered with rice paper.

The exhibition is open daily, from 9 am to 9 pm, until June 30.

For info contact Lisa Sol. Tel: 076-330015. Email: pr@boathousephuket.com Website: www.boathousephuket.com

June 7. Showbiz.

Dance Performance by the 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.

Is your Internet connection driving you nuts? Ready to throw your PC out the, uh, window? Need advice on where to buy a computer, or get one repaired? Join *For Dummies...* author Woody Leonhard for his weekly 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 near Laguna, see the website. Sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes.

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

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



Hajime Nishi (above, left) is possibly the world's slowest marathon runner. Having competed in more than 500 marathons in more than 70 countries, Hajime is no stranger to finishing last in every race he takes part in. But he doesn't care - instead of running his heart out, he prefers to take some photos of those cheering him on and do a spot of garbage collecting along the way. Catch him if you can at this year's Laguna Marathon.

Laguna Phuket Marathon

June 15

The 2008 Laguna Phuket International Marathon is expected to be another success this year with more than 3,000 participants in the 42km marathon, 21km half-marathon, 10km run, and 5km walk. There will also be a 2km kids' run.

Registration is now closed but that doesn't mean that you can't go and cheer the athletes on. For more information contact Roman Floesser. Tel: 02-2362931. Email: direct@goadventure asia.com Website: www.phuketmarathon.com

June 8. Meet the Dogs Sunday Brunch by Soi Dog Foundation.

Meet some of the special dogs from the Soi Dog Shelter, all of which are looking for new homes.

Hosted by MC Gary, this event at Babylon Beach Club in Bang Tao will be loads of fun, including a raffle and auction.

Tickets are 750 baht and include a buffet lunch.

For more information contact Cristy. Tel: 085-4734636. Email: cristy@soidog-foundation.org Website: www.soidog-foundation.org

June 15. PC Group Therapy - Chalong.

From 10 am until midday at Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe in Chalong.

June 22. TriBallistic Malaiwana Triathlon.

Race three of four in the

TriBallistic Malaiwana Triathlon series will be held at Indigo Pearl Resort on June 22.

Registration will be at 6 am, with the first race beginning at 7 am.

There are three race classes: Adult sprint (swim 750m, ride 20km, run 5km)

Splash 'n' dash (swim 50m, ride 3km, run 750m)

Junior (swim 200m, ride 6km, run 1.5km)

Medals will be awarded to all finishers.

Registration is available online at www.triballisticclub.com or contact Shaun Boulter for more information. Tel: 089-5902014. Email: tri@triballistic club.com Alternatively, email jittima@indigo-pearl.com

June 22. PC Group Therapy - Patong.

As usual, from 10 am until midday at the Sandwich Shoppe in Patong.

June 29. Mac 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.

July 18. Buddhist Lent Day (Public Holiday).

Occurs one day after the full-moon day of the eighth lunar month. Khao Pansa marks the beginning of the annual three-month Rains Retreat, during which Buddhist monks customarily stay at a particular temple to study and meditate.

A candle festival is held annually on this day.

July 23-27. Six Senses Phuket Raceweek.

Described by veteran yacht racers as "the most exciting mixed fleet regatta [in] this region", Six Senses Phuket Raceweek is four days of great monsoon-season racing surrounded by five nights of glittering five-star parties.

This unique regatta attracts international participation and widespread international media coverage in print, on the web and - in 2008 - on TV.

This is one of Thailand's top on-the-water events for participants and sponsors alike.

For more information contact Grenville Fordham. Tel: 076-264491. Email: gren@image-asia.com Website: www.phuket raceweek.com

August 12. HM The Queen's Birthday (Public Holiday).

HM The Queen's Birthday is also marked as Mother's Day in Thailand.

August 13. Boathouse Writers' Night with Jim Newport.

James "Jim" Newport (www.vampireofsiam.com) is a writer and Emmy-nominated production designer of film and television.

The evening at the Boathouse will include readings from Jim Newport's novel *Chasing Jimi* and a Q&A session with the author.

September 13. SDF Tails at Twilight Annual Fundraising Bone A Fit.

The Soi Dog Foundation will hold its annual fundraiser "Tails at Twilight Annual Fundraising Bone A Fit" on September 13 at the Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa.

It will be a private beach party extravaganza with raffles, auctions and a prize draw.

The ticket price of 2,000 baht includes a buffet dinner, free-flow beer and wine, non-stop entertainment and lots of fun at the beautiful venue.

For tickets or further information contact Cristy. Tel: 085-4734636. Email: cristy@soidog-foundation.org Website: www.soidogfoundation.org

September 16. Punchline Comedy Club Live Stand-Up Comedy.

The Punchline Comedy Club, in association with the London Comedy Store, returns to Phuket for a night of international stand-up comedy.

More details will be released soon, but expect a madcap night of laughs.

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Puzzles

Spot the Difference



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



su | do | ku

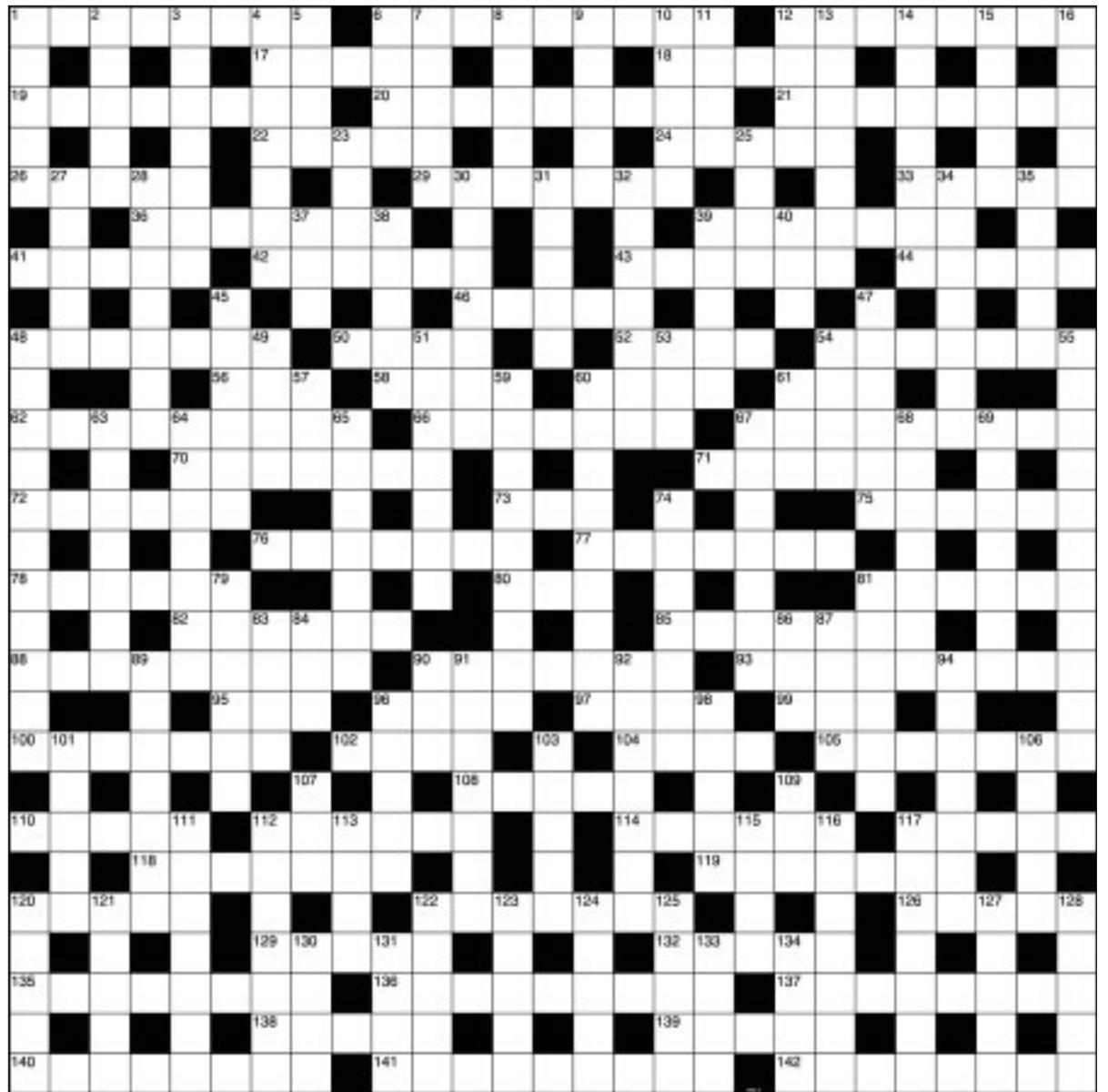
© Puzzles by Pappocom

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

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

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

The BIG Crossword



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Across

1. Most peculiar
6. False doctor
12. Hair-root gland
17. Ultra manly
18. Browns quickly
19. Wizard
20. Waterproof fabrics
21. And so forth (2,6)
22. Omits
24. Early anesthetic
26. Indonesian dish
29. Bull's-eyes
33. Perfect
36. Old soldier
39. Etna is one
41. Perforated
42. Scandi language
43. Sudden hitch
44. Make ends meet (3,2)
46. Disinclined
48. Attired
50. Clarified butter
52. Filled tortilla
54. Artlessness
56. Inflatable vest, ...west
58. London's...Gallery
60. Jacob's son
61. Former Chinese leader, ...Zedong
62. Highway repairs
66. Want
67. Postponed sentence of
70. Insect feeler
71. Rwandan tribespeople
72. Olympic awards
73. Glacial period, ...Age
75. Football code

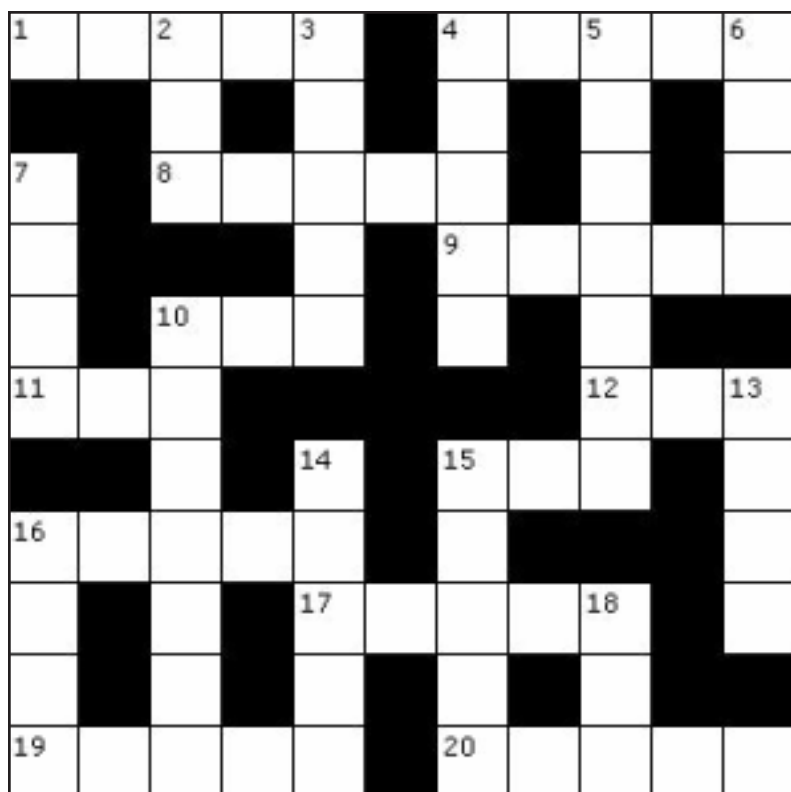
76. Knitting art
77. Game, ...& crosses
78. Caught (thief)
80. Foolish person
81. Overnight bag
82. Commotion
85. Spiral curl
88. Rubber footwear
90. Actress, ...Griffith
93. Camelot queen
95. Dawdle
96. Self-defense aerosol
97. Midge
99. Floor rug
100. Long jump landing area
102. Close up (umbrella)
104. Content
105. Most submissive
108. Stupid
110. Wise guy, ...aleck
112. Heave (4,2)
114. Pilfers
117. Beginning
118. Deals with
119. Drinking slowly
120. Resides
122. Poorest (excuse)
126. Russian rulers
129. George Cross island
132. Urgency
135. Went to bed (6,2)
136. Runs
137. On-course punter
138. Cathedral, ...Dame
139. Acted wordlessly
140. Journalists
141. Intensifies
142. Ushered

Down

1. Cowards
2. Silver bar

3. Deceptively trapped
4. Shattered
5. Armored vehicle
6. Cut with ax
7. Crane
8. Speedster
9. Love deeply
10. Cremation remains
11. Ants' home
12. Unimpeded
13. Largest bird
14. Lustfully looking
15. French pancake
16. Internet letter
23. Tehran is there
25. Owl's cry
27. Circular coral reef
28. Prevented
30. Athletics star
31. Festivities
32. Closer (of fit)
34. Snack, hors...(1'6)
35. Boundary
37. Rodent
38. Dark hours
39. Artist, Leonardo da...
40. Digital read-out
45. Oranges &...
47. NZ natives
48. Stately
49. Flit (about)
51. Pain in eardrum
53. Hymn, ...Maria
54. Brief sleeps
55. Declaration of approval
57. ...out a living
59. Just
60. Granting permit to
61. Was introduced to
63. Able to be heard
64. Pedestrians
65. Dozes
67. Hurrying
68. Quarantine
69. Inoculation fluid
74. Dreamlike
79. Showy flower
81. Expressed (anger)
83. Paint layer
84. Cask
86. Chewing pellet
87. Actor, ...Neeson
89. Soviet force (3,4)
90. Spoil
91. Outshine
92. Swallows
94. Ancient sailors
96. Ruins, ...up
98. Income levies
101. Allow in
103. Actress, Salma...
106. Induct, ...in
107. Swing (tail)
109. Snow-covered peak
111. Food samplers
112. Tea flavor
113. Organism's basic unit
115. Put on...& graces
116. Radiates
117. Always busy (2,3,2)
120. Establish (3,2)
121. Go along (with)
122. Goods
123. Ethiopia's Addis...
124. My Fair Lady heroine, ...Doolittle
125. Amusement (park)
127. On high
128. Scrap
130. Unknown author
131. Ripped
133. In present condition (2,2)
134. Pine or palm

Solution on next page



Quick Crossword

Across

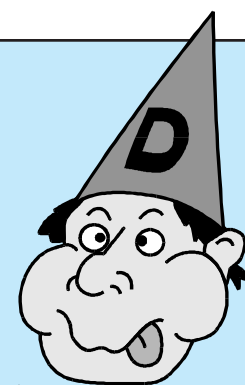
1. Have faith
4. Pass on knowledge
8. Book of the world
9. Homeless person
10. Item of crockery
11. Night bird
12. Precious stone
15. Not true
16. Will grant three wishes
17. Protective covering
19. Last
20. Asian nation

Down

2. Home of McDonald's
3. Flower
4. One of the sense
5. Put in order
6. Aid
7. Luxury vehicle
10. Obama's nemesis
13. Fix
14. Jewel
15. Citrus fruit
16. Outdoor sport
18. Tear

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. Who first translated the Qur'an into English? | 8. In which other Irish hit movie did Hansard play a role? | 14. How many burritos did he eat, and in what time span? |
| 2. And in what year? | 9. Which Irish author wrote the novel of the same name? | 15. How heavy was he when he set the record? |
| 3. From which language did he translate it? | 10. Which novel by the same author won the 1993 Booker Prize? | 16. How old is Google this year? |
| 4. What did Darren Taylor do on July 25 last year? | 11. Who won the Booker Prize last year? | 17. Which two university students founded Google? |
| 5. What feat did he achieve to stake that claim? | 12. What was the name of the novel that won her the prize? | 18. Which university did they go to? |
| 6. Glen Hansard of the 2007 hit movie <i>Once</i> is from which Irish Band? | 13. According to the International Federation of Competitive Eating, who holds the prestigious record for eating the most burritos? | 19. When did that university open? |
| 7. How many Academy Awards and nominations did the movie win? | | 20. Which US President was a student in the university's first class? |

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Quick crossword



Monster Quiz Answers

1. Alexander Ross; 2. 1649;
3. French; 4. He entered the Guinness Book of Records with the highest shallow dive; 5. Dove 10.7m into 30cm of water; 6. The Frames; 7. 14 awards and 17 nominations; 8. *The Commitments*; 9. Roddy Doyle; 10. *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*; 11. Anne Enright; 12. *The Gathering*; 13. Eric "Badlands" Booker; 14. 15 burritos in 8 minutes; 15. 395 pounds (179.5 kilograms); 16. 10 years; 17. Larry Page and Sergey Brin; 18. Stanford; 19. October 1, 1891; 20. Herbert Hoover.

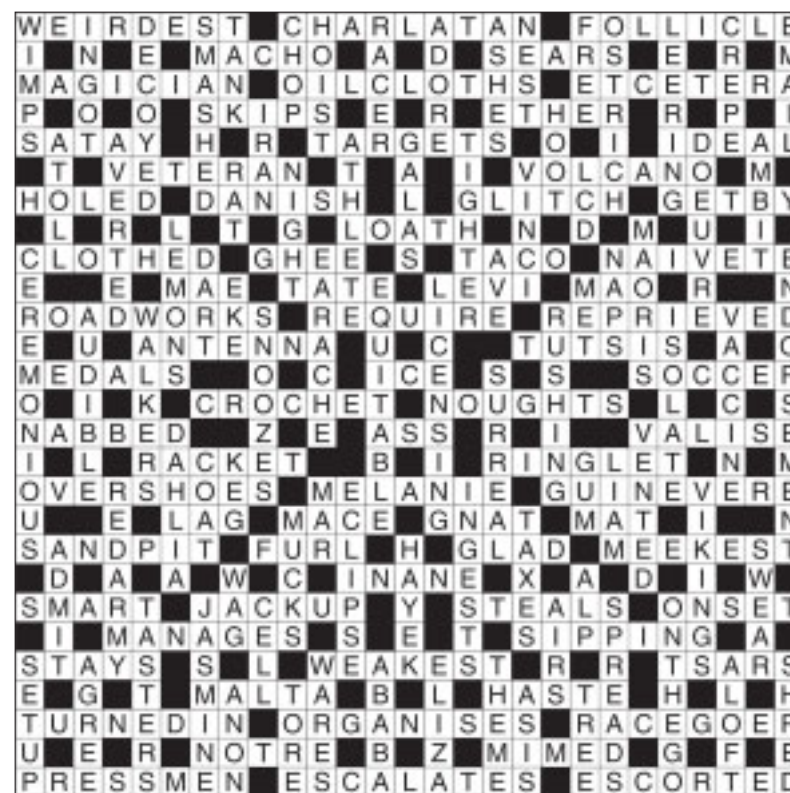
Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

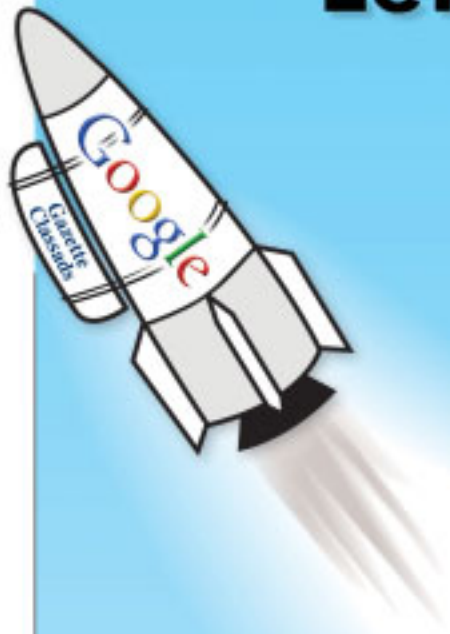
1	9	4	7	3	2	8	6	5
8	7	3	1	6	5	9	4	2
2	5	6	4	9	8	7	1	3
4	3	8	9	5	1	6	2	7
5	6	2	3	4	7	1	8	9
7	1	9	8	2	6	3	5	4
3	8	5	2	1	9	4	7	6
6	4	7	5	8	3	2	9	1
9	2	1	6	7	4	5	3	8

Solution to this week's Cartoon Puzzle



Solution to this week's BIG Crossword





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I didn't plan to attend the Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA) signing ceremony on May 23 until I received a call from Siripon Mektanatip, a polite guy with a difficult task: to bring Silicon Valley, or its Thai equivalent, to Phuket.

SIPA is already eight years behind schedule. In IT, eight years is more like eight centuries.

Phuket is a one-horse town and that nag is tourism. I don't separate property development because without tourism, there wouldn't be much building going on. Tourism hasn't been all good. Sure, the money has rolled in, but there have been cultural and environmental trade-offs, especially given the alarming influx of package tours. We are killing the goose that laid the golden egg.

Many people have doubts about the viability of long-term mass tourism. These people look forward to high-quality, low-volume tourism complemented by a diversified economy.

The concept of bringing Silicon Valley to Phuket sounds great, but the task is a daunting one. I felt sorry for K. Siripon, so I gave up an afternoon to see the SIPA show.

The event was glitzy, but the nuances only accentuated the challenges ahead. I was impressed to receive a personal call from K. Siripon, but I felt like the Lone Ranger.

As a Phuket resident for almost 20 years, I want to see Phuket prosper so we can all enjoy our island's beauty. Once we develop a cross-cultural dialog, I'm sure that better minds than mine will contribute more productive ideas.

We are in an extremely competitive neighborhood. India, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam did not rest for the past eight years. Phuket needs all the teamwork it can muster.

If we expect to attract talent – and business – there needs to be more than sweet tax breaks and a cheap labor force. We want the IT crowd to fall in love with Phuket just as we did. We love, appreciate and respect our island – and since foreigners are SIPA's market, we should work together with even more vigor than we did after the tsunami.

I grew up color blind in 50s California. I thought the maid was my mom's best friend until at 15

An uphill struggle to reach Silicon Valley



Retired surfer Ted Gugelyk has had enough of Phuket and is packing his bags – and selling off his surfboards – after just two years on the island.

I figured out that she actually worked for us. When I lived in Japan in 1953, we took our Japanese friend (maid) to the movies in officers' seating and to the Officers Club for dinner – scandalous in the 50s. My mom did it out of friendship and to enlighten racists.

That's the way it is in Silicon Valley. Black suits? Wear them if you want, but your appointment may show up wearing a

dozen earrings – in one ear. There may be Americans, Japanese,

Chinese, Europeans, Indians, Aussies, Kiwis and Africans, but there are no "foreigners". Call an IT nerd a "foreigner" and he will walk.

IT is international; progressive thinking is international. Today, we are all citizens of the world. I enjoy Christiane Amanpour's current CNN promo where she says to a North Korean, "Let me teach you a new word: friend."

Here's another recruiting hint: forget hierarchy. All that counts is the ulti-

mate product. Feedback comes from all directions – even foreigners.

No matter what the strategy, if we expect the IT industry to grow, we must attract talent. Leave it to the money guys to talk tax breaks and investment incentives. Let's focus on the Gray Area mandate – in this case, a Phuket community environment that's a great place for families.

Go spend a week in Palo Alto and ask yourself, "If I lived here, why would I want to move to Phuket?" Our island has strong selling points, but our environment and our driving habits are big drawbacks.

The last time I looked, there was nothing similar to the Samkong-bypass-junction eyesore in Atherton – and yet every SIPA recruit will pass through that monstrosity.

It's only a matter of time

before our equivalent of Cyclone Nargis hits. The question isn't "if", but "how" we will we rebuild the island. Replacing the overhead wires with underground cables would be a good start.

On your Palo Alto trip, visit Silicon Valley's favorite weekend getaway and my classic sustainability case study and former home, the legendary Carmel, established in 1880 and still an elite international destination.

In California, two-cycle engines are outlawed. Californians are health freaks. They refuse to breathe two-cycle exhaust and find pollution disgusting.

California is also proud of its parks. You won't find rubbish, poaching or pollution in any Californian national or state park.

Then there's family safety. For a population center of close to 1 million (officially about 325,000), we seem to have a fairly low crime rate. We have excellent hospitals – no problems there – and there are many foreign-owned businesses offering everything from swimming pools to interior decoration.

We need more parks and trails. A summit trail from Cherg Talay to Nai Harn would be a real draw – if people don't die crossing the roads.

I'm told that Phuket is currently suffering a foreigner brain drain. My friend Ted Gugelyk is an aging North Shore Hawaii surfer who followed me to Phuket expecting to find paradise. A retired University of Hawaii anthropologist and sociologist, Ted is an intellectual with good taste.

After two years, Ted's out of here, on his way to Ubun Ratchathani, trying to sell his beloved George Downing classic surfboards – just to get out of Phuket. For Ted, it's all about ambiance.

The International Business Association of Phuket (IBAP) includes Thai and foreign members, making it the perfect forum to share local ideas.

The June 13 meeting is devoted to work permit issues. K. Siripon will be there. As he says, "I want to be friends with everyone." I only met him once, but I was impressed. He has a difficult job. Let's help make it a bit easier and come together on June 13. Given the minds already on this island, we can make our future a golden one.

For more information email info@ibap-phuket.org

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Indonesia: The Unlikely Nation

If you live in Thailand, Indonesia is pretty much off the map. There's plenty of press coverage of Indochina, Burma, Malaysia and Singapore, but Indonesia seems to merit stories only of street riots, terrorist bombings and natural disasters. During the five years (1992-1997) that I worked for the defunct *Manager* magazine, we published not a single story about Indonesia.

As a remedy to my ignorance, I bought a book called *A Short History of Indonesia* (Silkworm Books, Chiang Mai, 2003, 270pp) by Colin Brown, an Australian academic and author of eight books about Asia.

The subtitle is "The Unlikely Nation?" The story ranges from the earliest kingdoms of Java and Sumatra and ends with the presidency of Megawati Sukarnoputri and a note of doubt about the country's future.

The islanders had always been hardy seafarers, trading with India, China and mainland Southeast Asia since at least 500BC. Around 700AD the kingdom of Mataram arose in Java.

Prospering in both agriculture and trade, Mataram was powerful enough to construct Borobudur, the largest Buddhist temple in the world. In 600AD, Srivijaya arose in Sumatra and expanded to parts of Malaysia and southern Thailand.

Both were structurally similar to the Thai kingdoms that would appear hundreds of years later. A central district was under

the direct control of the king while regions further afield were ruled by aristocratic agents who "ate" the country: collecting royal taxes while reserving a portion for themselves.

If the burden grew too onerous, farmers just headed into remote jungle to create a "rice frontier".

Meanwhile, even further afield, the kingdom was content to collect tribute from foreign vassals.

Unlike Thailand with its unified land-mass and people, Indonesia was a patchwork of thousands of islands and hundreds of languages. The region was in no position to challenge Western imperialism. Srivijaya had disappeared 400 years before Malacca fell to the Portuguese in 1511.

As the Dutch supplanted the Portuguese and made their initial inroads into the spice trade, Mataram was falling apart into four competing sultanates with the

coastal trading ports to the north in constant revolt.

By siding with one or the other, the Dutch were able to extract huge concessions. By the time the Dutch government took over from the Dutch East Indies Trading Company in 1800, putting together the unitary state of Indonesia was just a matter of time.

Colin Brown is very adept at weaving together economic and political strands. For example, the highlands of Sumatra grew rich at exporting coffee, especially to a growing fleet of American ships that had first called into the northern ports in the early 1800s for the pepper trade.

The coffee trade led many prosperous farmers to take the pilgrimage to Mecca. They returned imbued with the stern Wahabi strain of Islam, which led them into conflict with their much more relaxed aristocratic rulers. This led in turn to a protracted and bloody civil war.

As in Java, the Dutch were pulled into these conflicts and took over the island piecemeal, culminating in the brutal suppression of Aceh in 1910.

Brown is also very good at interpreting the many conflicting groups and lead-

ers who constituted the Indonesian independence movement. After Japanese occupation during World War II, resistance to the return of the Dutch was fierce. What swung the tide was a providential massacre of communists that so reassured the US about the Indonesian leadership that it leaned on the Dutch to leave.

What followed was a prolonged period of political chaos until the reins of power were snatched up by Sukarno under the concept of "guided democracy". He united the country in a campaign to seize Irian Jaya from the Dutch but failed miserably in his attempt to confront Malaysia in Sarawak and Sabah.

Another massacre of communists in 1965 propelled to power Suharto, who brought a measure of political and economic common sense plus a huge dollop of nepotism and corruption till his own overthrow during the economic crisis of 1997.

Looking to the future of a unified Indonesia, Brown writes, "For all its faults, Indonesia still offers the majority of its citizens a better and more enlightened future than any of its potential successor states could offer."



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



Since my wife is an alumni director, we are aware of the plural of "alumnus". However, I often see the plural of "campus" in the newspaper as "campuses" and the plural of "stadium" as "stadiums"? Can you help here?

Tom Discenna
Sterling Heights, Michigan

Barbara replies: Ah, the quirks of our cobbled-together language! "Campus" and "stadium" came to us from Latin, just as, of course, "alumnus" did. In Latin, the plurals are "campi" and "stadia". But this is English we're speaking. We have censuses and circuses, premiums and maximums – but also curricula and memoranda, nuclei and media (though the alternative forms ending in "s" are generally okay too).

It can be maddening to keep straight the words that have kept their Latin plurals, the ones that definitely end in "s" and the ones that can go either way. My impression is that everyday words have acquired the "s" ending, while more unusual ones are likelier to have stayed true to their origins. But there's no hard and fast rule.

Using Latin plurals isn't necessarily classier than going with the ordinary ones. For instance, "campuses" is completely, exclusively standard. Saying or writing "campi" is a gaffe akin to wearing formal clothes to a backyard barbecue.

Even worse than stuck-up Latin plurals are false ones. Not every Latin word ending in "-us" or "-um" becomes "-i" or "-a" in the plural. For example, one an-

Latin plural confusion

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

cient Roman octopus plus another one were – believe it or not – "octopodes," because Latin borrowed the word from Greek. But for heaven's sake, let's not start with that! "Octopuses" will do just fine.

I am a newspaper copy editor. The other day, a reporter brought over a press release that read, in part: "Our group ... has been given permission to tour the

White House and Capitol. Other sights include the Washington Monument, ... Jefferson Memorial, Lincoln Memorial and Korean War Memorial... Other tours include ... historical sights." The reporter wanted to know whether it should be "sights" or "sites" in the second and third sentences I quoted. Do you have any guidance?

Bill Ward
Decatur, Illinois

Barbara replies: "Sights" and "sites" can be very close in meaning. On the one hand, that press release is encouraging people to go sightseeing.

On the other hand, some of the places they'll visit are historical sites. In those sentences I would vote for one "sights" (the first one) and one "sites," because "historical sites" is a set phrase.

I just looked up "historical sites" and "historical sights" for you in a news database, and it pulled up 162 articles over the past month containing "historical sites" and just three containing "historical sights."

A good rule of thumb might be: See a "sight," but visit a "site."



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

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Finding the middle ground

Two weeks ago, a Thai reader wrote in, complaining of bias in the way the *Gazette* reports acts of violence perpetrated against foreign tourists, while ignoring similar attacks on Thai tourists and local residents ["There are always two sides to a story", Letters, May 24-30].

The writer also wrote that he missed the *Gazette* of 10 years ago, when the reporting was more focused on "good news", such as lifestyle and leisure activities.

"What will tourists think when they see all this violent news?" K. Tarin asked, rhetorically.

The *Gazette* appreciates feedback like this from our readers.

It is true that the *Gazette's* news coverage is slanted towards the expat community, but this is a reflection of the newspaper's readers and the news that will be of interest to them – and not the result of any bigotry or bias.

The *Gazette* is keenly aware of its position in Phuket's expanding media market and strives to present readers with reports that are as accurate and unbiased as possible. This is a day-to-day struggle that is more difficult to achieve than some readers may realize.

Unlike many Thai-language newspapers, the *Gazette* refrains from splashing news pages with gory images of road accidents, murder victims and scantily clad women – even though such images are readily available and publishing them is a proven way to increase circulation.

The *Gazette* chooses to take this route, not for the sake of protecting tourism, but rather to respect the rights of the victims and their relatives, reflect standards of quality journalism and adhere to what is in good taste. The *Gazette* may step over the line sometimes and readers' letters informing us when they think this has happened are appreciated.

At the same time, the *Gazette* thinks that readers would be disappointed if violent crimes and other "bad news" were simply glossed over in favor of the bland, feel-good "reporting" that can be found in so many other English-language publications on the island.

The *Gazette* understands and respects the needs of those who choose to advertise with us, but there must be a clear divide between editorial and advertising – again, not always an easy task.

As for complaints that the *Gazette* has been sensationalizing the news in the number of violent crimes cases it reports and how these cases are reported, the *Gazette* believes Phuket has changed dramatically over the past 10 years and that the news on these pages necessarily reflects those changes.

As for the "lack of good news", if anybody has any please let us know – we would love to pass it on.

– The Editor

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

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Letters

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

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

Muggings are not a conspiracy

Phuket's expats have been quick to incite discussion about how dangerous the island has become with the continual threat of attacks at knifepoint and gunpoint.

While it is sad that such attacks happen, some expats would do well to remember that these muggings aren't some Thai conspiracy to run us off the island.

In the latest case, a Briton was shot and robbed while accompanied by a 13-year-old girl, who was with the Brit so she could ride his motorcycle back to the bar from which they had come – at 5 am.

It's as easy to jump to conclusions about how irresponsible that is as it is to jump to the conclusion that Phuket has become a war zone. Would you send your 13-year-old daughter out on a motorbike in Chalong on her own?

I read news from the UK and it seems that, even in the sacred motherland, there are incidences of violence.

For those vowing never to return to Phuket, where will you go instead? Furthermore, what gives people the idea that Phuket is some sort of utopia where there is no crime?

Fred Keg
Phuket

The Gathering of The Mob

I am disappointed at the way the protests in Bangkok are being handled. The violent mobs and the official reaction to their protests show bad leadership on both sides.

This protesters are using violence to express their political

views but I think the protesters would not have been so irate if the Premier had tried to talk with them mildly. He should not have chastised them without considering their views.

The violent protests also make Thailand look bad in the eyes of foreign media, rather than appearing to be a peaceful country where most people live happily together.

The gatherings are like those in the past, when people came from many provinces to protest and were willing to stand in the heat all day. I am worried about the gatherings. They are not good. The people leading the groups should be less confrontational.

Nanthasan Tohwae
Yala

Stand up for your concert rights

Why are the people of Phuket not treated to same sort of magnificent protests as elsewhere in Thailand?

In Bangkok, people will protest if the price of a Kit Kat goes up by 25 satang. Kit Kat fans will travel for days on end on the backs of elephants, traveling down from the northern provinces to Bangkok where they can wave their banners in protest of the price of Kit Kats rising and have a jolly good time doing so.

Tens of thousands of people have gathered in Bangkok, some protesting the government, others protesting the people protesting the government, while some are just there for the free concerts and a picnic. I'm all for free concerts and picnics.

I rarely hear about any protesters from Phuket making their way to Bangkok or even protesting on the island. It would be great

if people would occasionally take to the streets. It would certainly liven up the atmosphere a bit if there were a few more jovial social gatherings.

I would love it if people would rally together and have a good old-fashioned Thai-style protest. The protests against Tesco were a good start, but they were short-lived and there were no concerts.

Perhaps the first protest could be in protest of the lack of quality protests on the island. We could get some guest speakers, too. I'd also like to see Four Mod provide the music.

Bob Badger
Chalong

Going top heavy on the busts

I have to admit, I do tire of reading about small ya bah busts. Okay, so there is ya bah on the island. Yeah, drug dealers are bad – I know.

But it was only recently that it dawned on me that it may well be some of these same petty criminals committing the same violent muggings Ambassador Quayle addressed recently.

Although after nearly a decade living here I have yet to fall victim to these thugs, I now read these stories with a little more interest – just so I know where these petty criminals were operating, and whether those areas are any of the places I frequent late at night.

So, I have recently had a change of mind. Please keep the bust stories coming – but please try to keep them brief. I really don't need to know that the motorbike was a Blue Honda Wave with a scratch on one side.

Converted in Chalong

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.

A Letter from Myanmar

The past six days in Yangon have been surreal, in juxtaposing what you read in the Western press with what in reality transpires here.

Hopes soared here last Friday, May 23, following UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's meeting with Senior General Than Shwe, when Mr Ban reported to the global press that all foreign-aid materials and crisis experts from all nations would be admitted directly to the cyclone zone without restrictions.

This is still being put out to the press as of today, but accompanied by "creeping equivocations."

But that's not what has happened. On the surface, normalcy is gradually returning to the capital: electricity supply is being restored and more streets and restaurants are being reopened and so on.

The government continues assuring that they're opening wide the doors to qualified foreign assistance. The fact is that 36 or more entry visas were "showily" issued in the past 48 hours.

But in the delta disaster area, here's what I have learned from my multiple Yangon sources, including a couple of key UN career executives and their NGO counterparts.

1. Aid workers from NGOs, the UN and foreign governments continue to be held off, mostly at the main staging point in Bangkok or at their Yangon hotels if they got in, still denied the promised access to the disaster zone.

2. Large transport plans bearing many tons of relief supplies are indeed allowed to land at Yangon Airport, but if their cargo is offloaded, the contents are turned over to government troops and donor representatives are not allowed to proceed further than Yangon itself.

3. We've learned that some

FIRST PERSON

Since Cyclone Nargis devastated the Irrawaddy delta region in Myanmar on May 2, leaving an estimated more than 100,000 dead, the world has stood by waiting to help those still suffering while the ruling military junta in Myanmar lets in only a trickle of relief supplies and workers.

Here, a Rotarian, who wishes to remain anonymous, describes the situation on the ground in Myanmar, and more importantly what can be done to get relief to those who need it most. His name has been withheld at his request.

Reliable sources for immediate relief aid through reliable local entities

- Rotary Myanmar Project c/o Maesai Rotary Club Separate Account, Bangkok Bank, Transfer to Account No. 398-0384253, Maesai Branch, bank swift code is BKKBTHBK. All Rotarians can securely transfer via this account. US and Thai Rotarians will jointly allocate all disbursements.
- Asia Heartbeat in Colorado Springs, PO Box 63720, Colorado Springs, CO 80962-3720. Tel: (719) 332-8172. To Wells Fargo Bank, Account No: 6225216172. Swift code: WFBIUS6S.
- Roman Catholic Missions to Myanmar, through Fr Emile Louis-Tisserand. Email: procupic@netvigator.com Tel: (852) 2849-8187 or 2849-8186 (both Hong Kong numbers).

foreign donors who were given initial access permits by the government in the brief euphoria of early last weekend did get to the delta with their relief materials, while the heavily-armed checkpoint troops were temporarily redeployed to Yangon to "protect" the UN donors' conference, leaving the delta-access checkpoints unmanned.

However, when troops returned last Monday to the delta, all foreigners were then turned back.

Furthermore, Burmese

people in the area were told they would face severe criminal penalty if "caught" in the delta area with any foreigner.

The UN Burma nerve center was moved to my large lakeside hotel last weekend and I've become close to several of their key players.

Rotary is respected among this multi-national, ad-hoc aid community, as is the esteemed local Myanmar charity with which Rotary has co-operated with for the past three years in our continuing water project for

children's orphanages. Even with the current trauma here, we are building two more of them for June 15 completion.

Not surprisingly, morale among those non-national institutions has plummeted in the past six days as their leaders and staff absorb the realization that the promises to Ban Ki-Moon last Friday seem largely illusory and nothing has, or probably will, change.

The government's own statistics acknowledge 80,000 known cyclone deaths plus 60,000 missing.

Each day, at least, hundreds more persons are dying; unconscionably; unnecessarily.

Were I not on the ground here since May 12, and well-connected to key persons in the special aid community, I would not believe any of this, and I don't blame you if you don't.

The cold pride and self-preoccupation of those whose iron grip this nation is captive to is such that they would permit the deaths by thirst and starvation of tens of thousands of their most vulnerable citizens, rather than accept the embarrassment of having the world – and its media – see how ill-equipped they are to cope with the aftermath of any disaster.

But there is a way to help these suffering people. Read closely:

1. Myanmar local citizens are still allowed virtually unrestricted access to the disaster zone, in many cases, with large

trucks laden with relief supplies. Some of them are very capable and well-connected with outside resources.

At great sacrifices, these people are putting on hold their own businesses to save their fellow citizens now. We're bringing back photos they've shot as recently as this week.

2. Please review the absolutely trustworthy and effective avenues I've listed (see panel) to get financial and other aid to these private and effective aid servants now, today.

Each day gained saves lives. All money – 100% – goes directly, undiluted, to benefit those in direct need.

3. Please pass this information in its entirety to everyone you know. However, so that we will be allowed to continue our work here into the future, I ask that I not yet be quoted by name in the press. However, mention of my activities here will be all right.

I wish I had better news on the circumstances here, but we can help, and by helping our friends we are helping drive a wedge of direct help to many Myanmar fellow humans in desperate need.

Since writing the above dispatch on May 30, and having it vetted by absolutely trustworthy "on-ground" Burmese friends, we tried deep into the night Friday and all day Saturday to send it via two unconnected, secure sources, one of them satellite.

Each time, it was blocked just before transmission was complete. Today it was sent from Thailand, where I've just arrived.

My only new intelligence is the following:

1. Children and families standing beside the few roadways in the area in desperate need of food handed from passing cars and trucks have been forcibly herded away by government army troops. "Begging is unseemly and embarrassing to the image of the proud Myanmar nation."

2. Families taking refuge in the few intact schools and monasteries were herded out and told to "go back to your villages and rebuild your own homes."

3. The government on Saturday pronounced that "rescue operations are now complete. And now we return to rebuilding structure and infrastructure."

4. Although the cyclone was 30 days ago, bodies of the dead are still visible in flooded rice paddies, channels and estuaries, attested to me by eyewitnesses from no more than 48 hours ago.

5. The Myanmar school year started today nationwide, except in the delta disaster area, where postponement for a month was announced at the weekend.

I wish I were making all this up, but frankly, I wouldn't be capable of doing so.

My best to you all.

Why the new rules for non-im O visas?

When applying to extend a non-immigrant "O" visa for 12 months on the basis of being married to a Thai, why does the immigration office now require to see 40,000-baht monthly income and a 400,000-baht bank deposit?

Last year, the chief confirmed to me that the bank deposit was no longer required since the changes came into effect requiring a letter from your home country's embassy or consulate confirming your monthly income.

Geoff Morris
Phuket

Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen, Phuket Provincial Immigration Office, replies:

There must be a misunderstanding between you and our

Issues & ANSWERS

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staff. The requirement for someone with a Thai wife applying for a one-year permit to stay on the basis of a non-O visa is either a bank account deposit of 400,000 baht or a 40,000-baht monthly income.

The officer might ask you if you have a 400,000-baht deposit to add in the application form, which will make it easier for approval. Usually, even if you

do not have the 400,000-baht deposit, we still request to see the bank book or statement proving that you are receiving the minimum income of 40,000 baht.

The rule has definitely not changed. If you have the documents showing that you earn at least 40,000 baht per month, your permit to stay should be approved.

I have a terrible confession to make: I am an incurable pedestrian. And yes, I realize that pedestrians are considered to be lower than pond scum in Thailand, the theory being that we cannot afford to purchase even the most rudimentary form of non-perambulatory transport.

As a pedestrian I am the target of all sorts of offers made by people whose job description is to go forth and hassle the walking classes: holiday survey? Body Massage? Sex show? Penis enlargement?

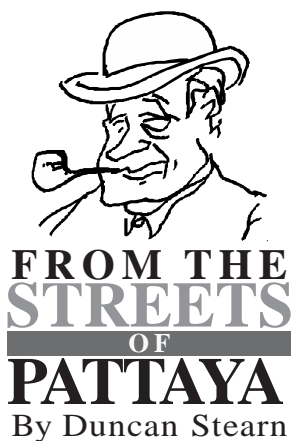
The Malay malady of running amok doesn't have an equivalent in the Land of Smiles. Here, the Thais wouldn't be involved in anything as strenuous; they are far more likely to "motorbike amok" rather than run.

Near one of my former residences is a 7-Eleven. This will be no surprise to anyone, considering the number of these convenience stores spread the length and breadth of the city.

Yet on more occasions than I care to remember, the people living in the apartments next door would ride their motorbike around the corner and return not five minutes later.

I asked she-who-must-be-dismayed what was going on.

You'll always walk alone



"They've probably been to 7-Eleven," was my wife's reply.

I long ago realized there can be two mistakes that are easy to make here in Pattaya and, by extension, the rest of Thailand. The first is to ask directions. The second is to ask how long it will take to reach your destination.

Firstly, even if a Thai hasn't got the faintest idea where you want to go, he or she will rarely admit it. Instead they will go into great and convoluted detail as to the location and direction of your hoped-for destination.

Secondly, if you then ask, "Is it very far?" the reply will almost certainly be, "Ooh, long way." A foreigner soon understands that the Thai concept of a "long way" is almost anything that will require a walk of more than 10 meters.

When you later discover the place you were seeking was in fact in completely the opposite direction from the one you were originally told and was only a three-minute walk away, it is understandable to feel a little upset.

One of the great attractions

for Pattaya is the promenade stretching from the pier in the south to the Dusit Resort in the north. Tourists like to saunter along the beachfront, taking in the sights (on the occasional unhazy day), smells (as long as the wind is blowing in the right direction) and sounds (in some cases "noise" might be the appropriate word) of Pattaya Bay.

It's also free, unless of course one succumbs to the exhortations of the multifarious wall-sitters who offer a look at other interesting, but less edifying, sights at knockdown prices.

For many Thais, if it were practical to catch a baht bus from the bedroom to the bathroom via a detour to the kitchen for a quick bite to eat, they would avail themselves of the opportunity. Therefore, the thought that hundreds of foreigners, both tourists and expats alike, actually want to walk the length of the Pattaya promenade out in the heat of the day seems ludicrous and would bring to mind the famous Noel Coward song "Mad Dogs and Englishmen". That is, if they had ever heard of Noel Coward.

Nevertheless, for many foreigners, not just Englishmen, this is one of the real attractions of being in Fun Town.

Over a period of a few years, the walkway was upgraded and beautified, but at one stage, it looked as though the beautification process had run amok with the myriad flowerbeds lining the promenade, turning the place into an obstacle course.

One particular spot became Pattaya's version of the Khyber Pass. Just opposite Pattayaland Soi 1 is a tree that grows at an angle requiring even a dwarf to duck his or her head when passing by, because bricks containing a flowerbed had been laid so near.

The city's promenade beautification committee saw the error of their ways (despite the fact it was a noble idea) and in less time than you could say "rhododendron" had most of the bricks and flowers removed.

This was a little surprising as it smacked of forward thinking. After all, only the walking classes were being inconvenienced.

The Malay malady of running amok doesn't have an equivalent in the Land of Smiles. Thais are far more likely to 'motorbike amok' rather than run.

In The Stars

by Isla Star

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Refuse to be drawn into others' disagreements this week. Scorpio may expect you to take their side and this will result in the termination of a friendship. Romance is also subject to problems when an old flame tries to play games. Those celebrating a birthday this week will benefit greatly from an experience during the year ahead. The number 6 can be lucky on Thursday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): You could easily be sweating over small issues this week. Your tendency to turn a minor matter into a large problem won't encourage others to trust your business instincts. Take advice from Aquarius - with the right attitude, you will be amazed at the positive results. Romance is set to fizzle out when finances become the source of a disagreement this weekend.

LEO (July 24-August 22): You will be tempted to restyle your ap-

pearance during the rest of June. Pisces has some creative advice, but Virgo's ideas will be a waste of time. Home improvements are also highlighted, but your radical intentions are likely to cause disagreements with a more conservative partner. Tuesday is best for reaching compromises and for financial matters. Wear flame orange and charcoal gray to encourage positive changes.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): After being sidetracked by romance during the first week of June, you should now descend from cloud nine. You are advised to concentrate on work issues until the middle of this month as not everything will go according to plan. The astral atmosphere will encourage misunderstandings where money is concerned. A Capricorn friend can be trusted to keep secrets, but Libra is

firmly on the gossip grapevine. Wear a piece of onyx to encourage grounding.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): New investments are not well starred in June, but Aries will do their best to convince you to take part in a project this week. Stick to your instincts even if this means jeopardizing a friendship. A dream you have this Sunday can provide insight to a partner's inconsistent behavior. Romance will be smoother after the middle of the month. The number 8 can bring some good fortune on Wednesday.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Seeds sown this week have good chance of coming to fruition. Last-minute travel is highlighted mid-week; this could be the result of attempts to contact a long-lost friend. If you're unsure whether to pursue a potential romantic relationship,

Those celebrating a birthday this week will benefit greatly from an experience during the year ahead.

Taurus has some worthy advice. Budgeting is the only answer to solving temporary cash-flow problems, but a bargain could be hard to resist on Saturday.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Make a point of keeping your word this week. Some people could feel let down by your failures and this could adversely affect future business relations. Agreements are best signed after the middle of the month, when the astral atmosphere will be more benevolent. Love flourishes after an arid period; a new relationship with another fire sign becomes more enjoyable than anticipated.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Maintaining your usual steady pace puts you ahead of the competition this week. You will discover a lucrative sideline that will help boost your income. Where money is concerned, the immediate advice is not to push the boat out too far. Finances are forecast to improve, but surprise expenses could pop up later this month.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): If you are tempted to disturb an ants' nest this weekend, refrain from being over-confident as this will certainly prevent progress being made. The remainder of June will be like a game of snakes and ladders.

Planning well is the only key to success. Where romance is concerned, Libra is beginning to ask whether time with you is well spent. The number 9 can be lucky on Thursday.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): You should be full of the joys of spring this week. Having taken some useful lessons on board recently, you will see serious signs of success during the rest of June. In business, Aries can help you to navigate better than Leo, but in romance, your willingness to understand a partner's problems helps to smooth a rocky path.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): A last-minute problem at work could mean that you need to put in extra hours this weekend. If this situation is the result of someone else's forgetfulness, Tuesday is best for saying how you feel. Regarding finances, shop around before committing to any long-term savings schemes. Cancer may try to convince you; but may have an ulterior motive.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Having the best of both worlds turns out to be perfectly possible. Your aim should be to relax more and appreciate the good things in life. A family reunion is enlivened by the surprise appearance of someone who has been out of the picture for some time. Your creative abilities are appreciated by Pisces, but don't give away too many secrets for nothing.



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Putting the IT in securITy

Today the S in S-Files stands for “security”. It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to notice that IT tools are putting more “oomph” in Phuket’s security and theft-prevention systems. Do you remember a robbery not too long ago, at Don’s Cafe and Mall? The parking lot security camera is the reason the criminals were caught quickly and easily. Oh, wait... Don is a rocket scientist.

Below is a list of recent security problems around Phuket and how IT can make each a little more bearable, preventable and fixable. Helping me are the big brains of Digital Home and Security, a Phuket security company specializing in electronic alarms and other wireless electronic systems.

Occasionally, thieves will cut the anchor chain of a boat, strip it for parts, and then contact the owner, claiming that they found the boat adrift and therefore have salvage rights and expect a finder’s fee. Prevent that absurdity with a high-end lo-jack system (lo-jack being the opposite of hijack; it’s known as a “tracker” in the UK). A good lo-jack tells you by SMS that your boat is in motion beyond its normal drift range. It starts sending you its location, determined by the same global positioning system (GPS) that boat captains use for navigation.

A little IT can give boat owners and home owners peace of mind. Put heat sensors and smoke detectors in a boat’s galley and engine room, motion sensors in the saloon, a depth monitor in the bilge, and use webcams to back them up. If a sensor goes off, the webcams send pictures to your cellphone or PC. If a motion or glassbreak alarm goes off, the cameras show that there’s no problem or give you a picture of the perpetrator.

A security system lets you log on by PC or cellphone, delivering menus, photos, webcam, entry and exit logs, and status info while you’re sitting in Europe or Tesco. What a way to make a nanny-cam or find out if the house sitter is having wild parties.

Choose your motion sensors well. Good ones can distinguish between Godzilla and a gecko blocking the sensor, as well as

differentiate between 50kg cat burglars and 20kg cats.

Many break-ins actually happen while you’re at home. With a StayD card in your pocket, you will be able to roam from room to room with the alarms on. The card turns off each room’s alarms when you enter, and re-arms when you exit.

How about cars, expensive motorcycles, and mopeds? At least one Patong company uses a GPS tracking system in its most expensive rentals. At any time, the owner can use his PDA or cellphone to check where the bikes are.

A GPS tracking system costs 15,000 to 20,000 baht per vehicle and there’s the possibility of monthly charges for routing the GPS data to your PC or phone. That price tag makes them relatively affordable for cars and Harleys, but it’s beyond the means of a shop that rents out Honda Waves. If you’re worried

that your teenage son is spending his nights running around with a biker gang, you can put a

GPS in the family moped.

Some folks think a radio frequency identification (RFID) chip is a heaven-sent security tool. RFID chips are cheap and small. However, RFID sensors are limited to a 10-meter range.

On the other hand, placing one with your contact information in a secret place on any of your possessions could be the difference between your laptop ending up in a lost-and-found and a call from the police saying, “Come and pick up your stuff.”

So, what else can you do to prevent purse snatching, laptop



STICK IT TO ‘EM: A USB memory stick with a fingerprint scanner is a simple and surprisingly cheap way to protect your data.

Photo: Matthias Sebulke

lifting, cellphone theft, and all that? The Big Brains say the answers are mostly low-tech.

Hide personal contact info in the RAM, battery, and hard disk bays. The thief might not care, but he may sell it to someone who does.

Beyond that, personalize the exterior. A heavily personalized laptop or cellphone looks cheaper, easier to identify, and harder to sell.

Etch your name into the case. Use some photo stickers. Put the bumper sticker of your business on them. Go wild and release your inner katoey: paste pink fur all around the edges. I guarantee nobody will steal it.

In Kuala Lumpur and Manila especially, don’t leave your cellphone or camera out in public, even if you and your coffee cup are perched next to it. Buy a cheap Bluetooth headset so you can keep your cellphone permanently out of sight.

Use decoy money: keep small money in a convenient pocket, but your main stash hidden in underwear, an undershirt belt, or a sock. Those Big Brains I mentioned earlier say that sometimes pickpockets and muggers

will intentionally hang up a sign declaring “Beware of pickpockets” because people naturally react by tapping their stash pockets to make sure the cash is still there, telling the thieves exactly which pockets to pick.

If you need to dip into the main stash or tap it to make sure it’s still there, do it someplace private, such as a locked bathroom stall.

If your laptop has important information such as passwords, business plans, tax records and honeymoon pictures, consider encrypting it. Microsoft offers encryption tools, but the tools are weak and Microsoft’s reputation is half resumé, half rap sheet. I’d sooner trust a hungry soi dog to guard my chickens. Dogs can be loyal. TrueCrypt.org offers free, strong open-source encryption tools for partitions, files and folders.

Don’t encrypt your whole C: drive, though – encrypt a small area on another partition or disk. How about encrypting data on an external hard disk or USB stick that you can put inside your shirt or your wall safe? TrueCrypt’s free tools and a USB stick could save your business.

Use the BIOS password on your laptop, not just the operating system’s login password.

Also, you can buy a laptop, external hard disk or USB memory stick that hardware-encrypts and checks fingerprints. A fingerprint scanner adds surprisingly little to the cost of a memory stick: Google for “biometric transcend usb” and the first link is an 8GB stick for less than 2,000 baht.

If you use Internet cafes, use caution as well. In a Kathu Internet cafe recently, I found keylogger software on each PC. Bring a USB stick stocked with AVG antivirus, Spybot Search & Destroy, AiRoboform, and perhaps Mojopack or portable applications from portableapps.com.

In an office, cables can secure laptops and desktops to desks.

To keep data secure, you can put iSCSI cards in your PCs. With the right software, this allows PCs to be entirely without hard disks: they boot from Windows or Linux and store all their data, even the operating system, on a server in a locked room. That server can be in another building or even another country.

Seth Bareiss has been an IT professional for two decades. If you’d like to chat with him about PCs, come on down to one of the PC Group Therapy meetings at Woody’s Sandwich Shoppes, Sundays, 10 am to noon. Seth is also the Gazette’s freelance editorial cartoonist. This week, he’s hidden a tiny UFO and the words “Fox” and “Dana” in the editorial cartoon. Can you find them?

The big brains behind this article is at: info@digitalhomeandsecurity.com

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By Seth Bareiss

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ON THE MOVE

Swiss national **Alain Dutruy** has been promoted to General Manager at the Karon Beach Resort & Spa, Phuket.

Mr Dutruy has more than 25 years of experience in the hotel industry, including an impressive 15 years in Thailand working with Kata Group Hotels.

Before his recent promotion, he was Hotel Manager at Karon Beach Resort & Spa, Phuket.



Natsaran Jitpakdee, from Bangkok, has been appointed Public Relations Manager at the Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket. K. Natsaran started her career in marketing with Loxley Information Service Co Ltd. She later moved into the hospitality industry and has worked for The Tongyai Bay resort on Koh Samui, Banyan Tree Resorts & Spas and Marriott Vacation Club in Bangkok.



Saraburi native **Siripon Mektanatip** has been appointed Director of the Phuket office of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA). His experience in technology includes working as an ABB technical expert for Mae-Moh Power Plant in Lam-pang. He has also worked in marketing and production management with Hewlett-Packard (Thailand).



By Janyaporn Morel

CHALONG: Local property developer Phuket Miracle Group has started work on two luxury property developments targeting high-end customers.

Once complete, the two projects are expected to be worth 4 billion baht.

The three Phuket natives that comprise Phuket Miracle Group – Chanakarn Baosangnin, Phongsri Limpanont and Uru-phong Prateep Na Thaleng – made the announcement at a launch party on May 30.

Chalong Miracle Lakeview, located on 66 rai off Soi Nayai, will comprise approximately 200 condominium units priced from 8 million baht each, 26 lakeside villas priced from 24 million baht apiece and 16 four-story home-offices priced from 26 million baht each.

Chalong Miracle Place, located on four rai near Kan Eng 2 and Danang restaurants at Ao Chalong, will comprise three seaview villas priced from 51 million baht each and 29 luxury condominiums priced from 20 million baht each.

K. Chanakarn told the *Gazette* that the projects are currently in the early stages of site clearance and will take about two and a half years to complete.

“We have received much positive interest from customers, both Thai, especially local Phuket people, and foreigners, such as Russians, Swedes, Germans and French.

“We will have a grand opening in the next three months and I expect that the project will sell out within one year, but if we are lucky enough we will close all sales within six months,” said K. Chanakarn.

“We have been approached by people who want to be exclusive agents, but I think we have the potential to do it by ourselves as our prices are not too high, even for Thais. We have our target customers for this level,” she said.

K. Chanakarn added that she still has much confidence in Phuket’s real-estate industry as it has so far proved resilient to



Chalong Miracle Place, located on four rai near Kan Eng 2 and Danang restaurants in Chalong, will comprise three seaview villas, like this one, priced from 51 million baht each.

economic crisis or any other problems.

“Any project that foreign investors can do, Thai investors can do just as well, which is good for the country and it benefits the local people and the province,” she added.

At the launch, Phuket Real Estate Club (PREC) President Thanan Tanpaiboon told the *Gazette* that Phuket’s property market is growing so quickly that it is in danger of suffering oversupply in the near future.

“We have had very little effect on the real estate market, despite the continuing rise in the price of fuel and our political situation being unstable,” he said.

“I think Phuket should be a special business zone, as our economy is not dependent on the

country’s situation,” he added.

“From what I have seen so far, we still have many projects – big and small – going on all the time. About 20 projects are submitted for approval from the provincial government each month. From the PREC’s perspective, we are concerned that there will be oversupply if the current volume of projects continues at the current rate.

“However, there is still plenty of room in the market if developers aim for niche markets that have specific target customers,” K. Thanan said.

“I’m concerned that some levels of the property market, such as medium-range condominiums, will become very competitive. This will result in low-quality products as developers will have to compete in price,” he said.

As the building boom continues, K. Thanan called for the central government to play a more supportive role in developing the island. “The biggest concern for us is public infrastructure. The central government should help us by supporting all the infrastructure projects that we need, especially the incinerator that we have been waiting so long for, but still can’t get, while tourism continues to grow,” he added.



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Europe at the crossroads

The latest economic data from Europe shows slowing economic activity. This may seem like a problem and it is, but it must be understood in the context of a much broader situation that is considerably more complex.

To make matters clear, the latest data on France, Spain, Ireland and Italy is decidedly gloomy, but Germany is still prosperous although it is not enjoying a boom. Germany is the powerhouse of the Euro Currency Zone: it is the world's largest exporter and third-largest economy.

The Central Bank of the Euro Zone (ECB – European Central Bank) has only one mandate: keep inflation at 0-2% – no ifs, buts or maybes.

Price rises in energy and commodities have already pushed inflation in the euro zone to more than 2%. ECB President Jean Claude Trichet has made it very clear that there will be no reduction in interest rates. Other voting members of the ECB have reacted with various “hawkish” comments, including at least one pronouncement that interest rates may need to rise.

If Germany somehow manages to retain at least most of its economic poise while other euro-currency countries move into slow growth or recession, then this is going to place severe strain on the whole euro structure.

How this situation plays out is going to be interesting. But institutions that survive a long time are always “battle tested”. Seldom mentioned is that Central Bankers have a psychological duty of being seen to keep to targets.

The reason the best Central Banks are politically independent is that politicians can never resist tinkering with the system for short-term political gain.

The problem the ECB faces is if there is a big divergence in the state of the economies in different euro-zone states, this will become a political hot potato. The member countries have abdicated



NOT GOING DOWN: Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank, captured at the Annual Meeting 2008 of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, on January 24, has stated that there will be no reduction in interest rates.

Copyright World Economic Forum (www.weforum.org)
swiss-image.ch

Photo by Monika Flueckiger

all monetary policy control to the ECB, which has to cater to all its members and keep inflation under 2%.

Spain, for example, is feeling the effects of falling property prices and a major recession in its construction sector. Given that the construction industry in Spain represents almost 20% of its economy, this is serious.

Now, there are different types of inflation and although the ECB's mandate only says “inflation” it is currently instructed to restrain only demand-driven inflation. However, the current type of inflation cannot be solved by holding interest rates at current levels.

What the current measures do achieve, however, is keep expectation of future inflation at low levels. If inflation is expected to rise, Europe could enter into a spiral of union organized strikes for higher wages. Once that merry-go-round starts, it is difficult to control as it gains its own momentum.

The euro zone is an interesting experiment; but it relies on synchronized economies to work at their optimum. To date, although the euro is unpopular in many states, according to public opinion surveys, it is still a viable currency.

It has been reported that many people believe that “everything has become more expensive” since its creation and they

do not trust the inflation data issued by the ECB.

Although member states are no longer able to direct their own monetary policy, they still have control of their fiscal policy. This means a member state facing a solitary economic slowdown can reduce tax levels to stimulate its economy.

However, there are other restraints. No member state is allowed to exceed 3% of its own Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in terms of budget deficits. Naturally, some countries have already exceeded this limit, but there is

strong pressure not to, including fines for non-compliance.

Yet, if the worst occurs and many countries enter recession, it is not the end of the world. Recessions happen, they are a normal part of the business cycle.

They are unpleasant, but they correct the excess of the previous peaks of the business cycle.

As the global situation is fluid, massive increases in raw materials makes it difficult to assess where economic growth will be.

Spikes in the price of oil and forecasts from banks such as

Goldman Sachs that oil prices could reach US\$200 a barrel this year are making matters more complicated. Economies can and will adjust to high-priced oil, but it will take time.

Many analysts have said that speculation alone is the cause of much of the rise in oil prices.

However, Rick Santini of CNBC was adamant that it is impossible for speculation to pay much of a real role in oil prices short of massive storage of the physical commodity, of which there is no evidence apart from some small amounts of hoarding in oil tankers by Iran.

He went on to say that oil futures contracts are settled by physical demand every 30 days. Therefore, for 29 days speculation can exist, but on day 30 the physical supply and demand overrides everything.

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



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By Richard G. Watson

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Cynics in the crowd thinking it was not a genuine fight were silenced in the first round as Kwanfa attacked Chantal with some vicious leg kicks. Photo by Kristian Lund.

Italian mare wins battle of the sexes

By James Goyder

KATA: A small piece of Phuket history was made on May 27. Italian Chantal Ughi competed in the island's first male-female Muay Thai bout. Chantal, 28, was up against Phuket-native Kwanfa at the new boxing stadium in Kata.

"I was actually supposed to fight a girl, but she canceled and they couldn't find anyone else to fight me," said Chantal.

For Chantal, standing almost six feet tall, it has been difficult to find opponents because Thai girls are usually much smaller than her.

With her time in Thailand coming to an end, Chantal's trainer, Pricha "Tuk" Chokkuea, was frustrated with his attempts to find her an opponent.

K. Tuk, the owner of the Rawai Muay Thai camp where Chantal trains, said, "She is too big and strong to fight a Thai girl, so we had to do something different."

K. Tuk needn't have worried. After five fiercely competitive rounds failed to separate the two, Chantal was awarded the victory by the judges sitting ringside.

Any cynicism among the crowd that this was not going to be a genuine fight was swiftly dispelled in the first round as the Thai attacked his taller opponent with some vicious leg kicks.

The difference in power between the two was immediately apparent as Chantal's strikes seemed ineffective in comparison. However, she rallied in the second round and dominated in the clinch, a crucial as-

pect of Muay Thai.

This pattern continued throughout the second and third rounds, but Kwanfa rallied strongly in the fourth to land some sharp punches.

In the fifth round, Chantal continued to use the clinch to her advantage and when the bell sounded to conclude the fight, it was her hand that the referee held aloft.

Diana Campillo, who founded Rawai Muay Thai with her husband, K. Tuk, doesn't think that inter-gender fights will become commonplace. "I think it might happen again, but it's not something that we will be pushing for," she said.

Highlights of Chantal's fight can be seen at the Rawai Muay Thai website: www.rawaimuaythai.com

Phuket paddlers push the boat out for Penang

AO YON: The Phuket Dragon Boat Club is preparing a team for the Dragon Boat World Championships, which will be held in Penang from June 30 to August 4.

At the time of going to press, 149 teams have registered to take part in this year's event.

Each team comprises 28 people, including paddlers, helm reserves, coach and manager.

Representing Phuket will be the same team who won the island's first dragon boat regatta, held last December. The team has been training out on the water at Ao Yon once a week for the past five weeks, with all the members working out in the gym every day.

Coach Henry Boissanault will be helping one of the Canadian world championship boats in Penang, but in the meantime he has been giving the Phuket team the benefit of his extensive experience.

The Phuket crew also recently received delivery of a new dragon boat to help the squad take its training to the next level.

From early-June until the end of July, the Phuket team will be practicing at least three times a week, leading up to daily training during the final two weeks before the competition.

The crew is an all-Thai ensemble of hotel workers from Novotel Panwa, with full support from their general manager, Blandine Cressard.

This team is sponsored by Hotel Travel Network, Firefly, *Phuket Gazette*, Tourism Authority of Thailand and Sail in Asia.

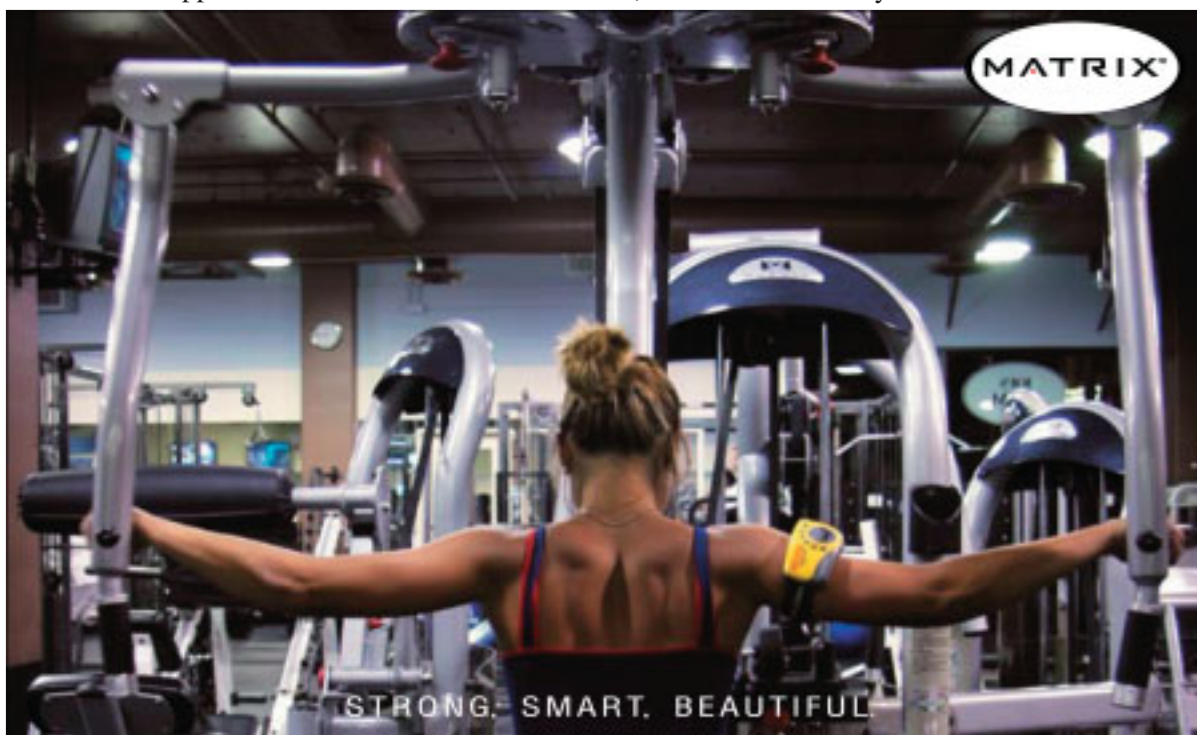
To offer support or sponsorship to Phuket's dragon boat team, visit www.phuketdragonboats.com. The website also has information about attending the world championships in Penang, which is expected to attract some 15,000 supporters.

PATONG POOL LEAGUE

League standings after June 1

	Team	Pld	Won	Lost	Beer	Pts
1	Anchor Bar	3	2	1	4	21
2	Frog Club	3	2	1	4	21
3	Black Dragon	3	2	1	6	21
4	Offshore Bar	3	2	1	6	21
5	Shakers	3	3	0	2	19
6	Montes	3	2	1	4	18
7	Thunder Bar	3	1	2	2	17
8	Kata Spa Club	3	0	2	0	6
9	No Name Bar	3	0	3	0	6
10	Skylight II	3	0	2	0	4

For further information about the Patong Pool League call Murray at 086-1511600.



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Malaysian tops KTO tourney

CHERNG TALAY: With the skies clearing before tee-off, a horde of young golfers took to the greens in their quest to win their respective age divisions in the 2008 KTO Junior Challenge at Laguna Phuket Golf Club on May 29 and 30.

Sixteen-year-old Malaysian Scott Ferguson was the star of the day, finishing with a nett score of 159 to win the boys' 15-17-year-olds' division.

The international 36-hole junior tournament was open to golfers aged six to 17 who hold a current recognized handicap card or certificate of competence for kids aged eight and under.

"As the kids teed off on day one, naturally you'd expect the older kids to play very well, but we were in awe at the level of skill that we saw in the younger



Twelve-year-old Lim Jia Yi, winner of the girls' 10-12 division, fires one off on the way to a nett score of 139.

players. Amazing, simply amazing," said Kids Tee Off Managing Director Pamela Wigglesworth.

Stroke play was the format of the tournament, with tee markers adjusted to make the course appropriate for age and

gender, following USGA guidelines.

The event was organized by Kids-Tee-off, Richmond Group Thailand, the Laguna Phuket Golf Club, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Asian Golf Monthly and the *Phuket Gazette*.

An awards presentation lunch was held at the Laguna Phuket Golf Club clubhouse on May 30 with a crystal trophy presented to the winner of each division.

Division winners:

Boys' 15-17 years old: Scott Ferguson

Girls' 10-12: Lim Jia Yi

Boys' 11-12: S Vikkash Babu

Girls' 8-9: Piyanida "Nicky" Meenil

Boys' 9-10: In-Touch Ruckpanich
Boys' 8 and under: Andre Chong

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

PATONG: The new darts season started up with no big surprises, though some players used to the old point-scoring format found that adjusting to the new system took a bit of practice.

To sum it up, each game (six singles, three doubles, one beer leg) is worth one point.

In the match between Queen Mary and Simply Red, QM's Billy closed the first single from 117 (T19, 20, x20). QM's Joy then closed her singles from 100 (20, T20, x10). Steen of QM took the high score with 140.

In the new Shakers venue, Piccadilly swept all the doubles to come from behind and win the match 5-4. Tony and Jim of Piccadilly took the highest score of the night with 140 (T20, T20, 20). The dart of the night went to Pat, who finished off the second doubles with a double-bull finish.

Please send match notes to darts@phuketgazette.net for inclusion in this forum.

May 27 results: Queen Mary* 8 Simply Red 1; Shakers 4 Piccadilly* 5; Market Bar* 5 Beach House 4; Sick Buffalo* 8 Hilltop 1; Dogs Bollocks 6 Celtic* 3; Offshore bye (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1.= Queen Mary, Sick Buffalo (9 pts.); 3.= Dogs Bollocks, Piccadilly, Market Bar (6); 6.= Beach House, Shakers, Celtic (4); 9. Simply Red (1); 10. Offshore (0).

June 10 match-ups: Queen Mary v Beach House; Simply Red v Piccadilly; Offshore v Hilltop; Dogs Bollocks v Market Bar; Celtic v Shakers; Sick Buffalo = bye (home team first).

Kukri Badgers win International Rugby 10s

By Chris Husted

KARON: In a high-quality match played to a packed Karon Municipality stadium on Sunday, the Kukri Badgers from the UK beat the Loki Odins from Canberra, Australia, by 12-5 to win the Overgaard 10th Anniversary Phuket International Rugby 10s.

The invitational sides played impressive rugby on a relatively hard pitch that could have well done with some of the rain that seemingly fell everywhere on the day but Karon.

The Thai Barbarians, which included about half the Thai national squad, won the Plate competition by defeating the Singapore Wanderers 19-0, while The Singapore Bucks defeated the Balmoral Hellfish from Aus-

tralia 19-12 to win the Bowl Competition.

In the Raimon Land Coffin Dodgers Competition, for players who are perhaps past their prime but not yet willing to admit it, the Extinct Volcanoes beat the Asian Japanese Dragons to win the Cup.

The Wanderers' Wrinklies from Singapore beat the Cottesloe Olde Gulls from Australia by 12-10 to win the Plate competition, while the Bahrain Golden Oldies beat the Phuket Viagrabonds 19-7 to win the Bowl competition.

"Callum Morris from the Kukri Badgers was named player of the tournament and Mahdi from the Bahrain Golden Oldies was named player of the Coffin Dodgers competition," said Patrick Cotter, one of the key organizers of the international tournament.

"Jim Howard of the Pattaya Panthers received the Legend Cup, which is awarded to stalwarts of rugby. Jim has been deeply involved in the development of rugby in Asia for 30 years," said Mr Cotter.

"We have also raised close to 650,000 baht for the Asia Center Foundation, which will go towards children's scholarships," he added.

He added that the Phuket 10s this year had taken another step up in becoming a major international rugby event. "IRB's Total Rugby TV crew were there. They will produce a 30-minute special on the event, which will go out to millions of viewers," he said.

The program will be available for download from the IRB's Total Rugby website at

www.irb.com/home/totalrugbytv/index.html

Mr Cotter explained that the International Rugby Board (IRB) had agreed in principle for Phuket to host an Asian qualifier for the IRB 7s World Cup. However, the teams to take part have yet be finalized. "There are some 28 countries in the division. The IRB needs to determine which 16 countries will take part," he said.

However, the venue in Phuket has yet to be confirmed, Mr Cotter said.

Hopes are high that the local authorities will grant permission for the world-cup qualifier to be played at Surakul Stadium in Phuket City, as Phuket International Hospital staff were kept busy over the weekend treating players for minor injuries sustained on the hard pitch at Karon.

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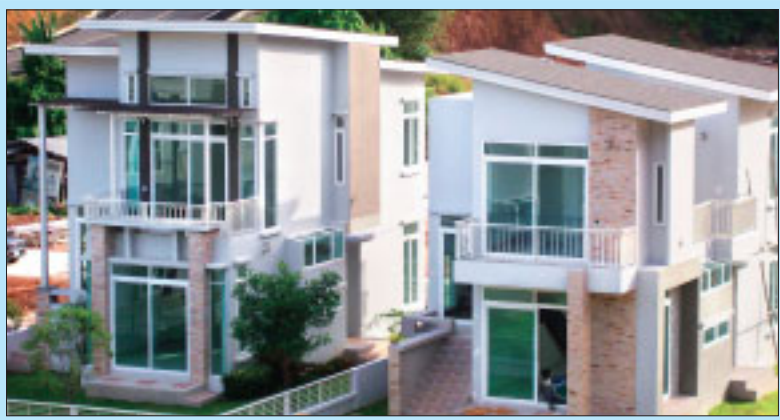
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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel

The Haven Lagoon launches phase two



The first phase of the project on Sakdidee Rd has 46 two-story homes in four designs to choose from.

All Suite makes inroads on bayside development

AO MAKHAM: Work on the four show units of the All Suite Ao Kham Phuket project on Sakdidee Rd is now 35% complete, with phase one of the project due to be finished by the end of next year.

Peerapathana Chairoon, director of project developer All Suite Co Ltd, explained to the *Gazette* that the 70-rai development will be done in five phases. The whole project is expected to be completed by 2011.

The 260-million-baht first phase will comprise 46 two-story units on 26 rai. The units will be built on plots ranging from 240 square meters to 520sqm and for sale from 4.4 million baht.

"We have four different designs of the single three-bedroom, four-bathroom house with two different layouts to choose from. The houses are designed in tropical modern style with a total usable area of 170sqm each.

"We emphasize comfortable living and good design. For example, our high ceilings and airflow system save energy by letting fresh air flow easily throughout the home. This keeps the house cool, which suits the climate in Phuket," he said.

K. Peerapathana said that all the houses were designed with each level having its own separate entrance, allowing homeowners to rent out one level while living on the other.

"We have sold about 30% of our first phase since we launched the project. Now the roads inside the project are finished, so we have more people interested in the houses.

"Work on the project began at the beginning of last year, but we have spent most of the time since then installing the infrastructure and the roads. This first phase is expected to be finished by the end of next year," K. Peerapathana said.

He added that phase two of the project will comprise condominium buildings with a total of around 200 units. The units will be available for sale within two months, he said.

Phase three will also have condo units available for sale.

"The last two phases will be luxury pool villas. It will take about four more years to complete the entire project," he added.



ABOVE: The Haven Lagoon's first phase, pictured here mid-April, is now almost complete.

RIGHT: An artist's conception of phase two, which will be some 50 meters from phase one.



PATONG: Thakarana Development Group is set to begin work on its second luxury condominium project in south Patong, the Seaview Haven Lagoon.

With an investment of more than 300 million baht, the project covers some two rai on Soi Maneesri, off Sirirat Rd.

Seaview Haven Lagoon will comprise three separate condo buildings housing a total of 64 loft-style luxury condominiums, ranging in size from 36.5 to 70 square meters. Prices for the units, which are available freehold and leasehold, range from about 2.3 to 8.1 million baht. Monthly maintenance fees are 50 baht per square meter.

All units will feature hardwood flooring, a balcony and high-quality kitchen and pantry fixtures. All units in block B will have private whirlpool baths.

A model unit has already been completed at the project site, which is on land with a Chanote title deed. Construction,

set to begin in November 2008, should take just over a year to complete. Some 30% of the units have already been sold with some freehold units still available.

The project will include a reception area, two communal swimming pools with wooden decks and a rooftop restaurant with views of Patong Bay and the Nakkerd Hills.

Rachnee "Anne" Kalara of the family-run Thakarana Group said that the project's convenient location is one of its key selling points. The project is within walking distance to Patong Beach and a five-minute drive to Karon.

All residents with cars will have access to covered parking spaces on the ground level.

Work on the Haven Lagoon's 200-million baht first phase, located about 50 meters downhill on Sirirat Rd, is set for

completion by the year's end.

The 36 units range from single-bedroom studio apartments to three-bedroom penthouses. The units are housed in three five-story blocks, each with an elevator and covered parking. Facilities include a swimming pool, fitness center and restaurant.

Prices start at 2.6 million baht for 54sqm single-bedroom units with pantry, living area and balcony on the second and third floors.

About 75% of the units have been sold, including all freehold units. Buyers are expected to take possession in January.

Interior design for both projects is by Idealist Company Limited.

The developers also own and operate The Mermaid Boutique Inn, a 14-room hotel also on Sirirat Rd.



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Home of the Week

Bang Tao

Designed to be appreciated

This modern single-story Thai villa in a Bang Tao gated community is one of the Richmond Group's prestigious properties. The three-bedroom home, designed by architect Fredo Taffin, features a swimming pool and rooftop sala.

His contemporary interpretation of a traditional Siamese abode is a smoothly blended fusion of practical style and comfort that fits in nicely with the coastal landscape.

Much of the 484-square-meter home can be opened to the elements, allowing breezes and natural light to enter the villa without heating it up.

The living area opens directly onto the pool and emphasis has been put on an outdoor lifestyle with the large sala and barbecue area.

Inside, all bedrooms are air conditioned and have built-in wardrobes.

Two bedrooms have ensuite bathrooms and the master bedroom has a door to a secret garden with an open-air rainwater shower.

The villa is being sold fully furnished with locally-made qual-



OPEN TO THE ELEMENTS: The single-story modern Thai-style pool villa comes fully furnished and fitted out for luxurious convenience.

ity furniture, and has already been fitted out with a sound system to pipe music into every room, plus wireless Internet.

Other amenities included are Sony Bravia flat-screen televisions and a high-powered washing machine and dryer.

At night, the villa's ambience is enhanced with mood lighting, which is also part of the high-tech security system.

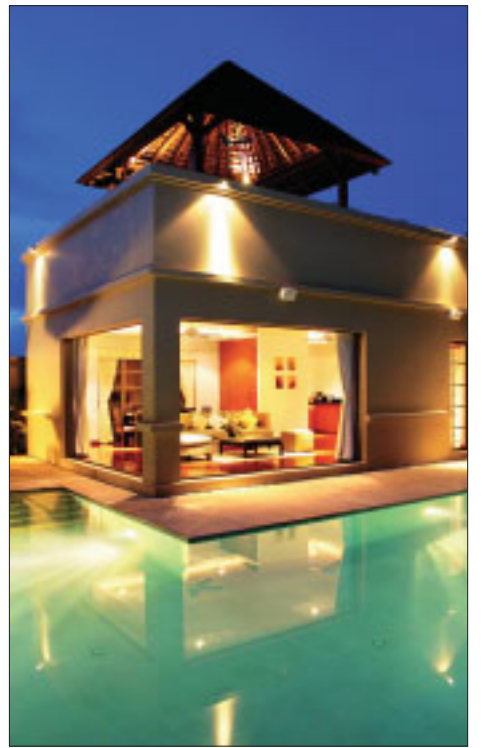
Added comfort and safety features include three-phase electricity with earthed wiring, two water heaters and a water-

filtration system. There is also an outdoor bathroom for the pool area.

The buyer of this 26.5-million-baht leasehold property will also qualify for the Richmond Group VIP card, which allows free use of the community's fa-

cilities, including the spa, fitness center, butler, massage and driver services.

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Design

By Semacote Suganya

Modern Thai-style homes with clean architectural lines surrounded by sculptured landscaping are what makes Surin Hill a harmonious and – literally – cool place to live. The 18 homes in the estate stay cool by using traditional open-air Thai house design concepts and being aligned with the directions of seasonal winds.

The project's manager, Khamron Sutthi, explained that the homes are designed and positioned to ensure they benefit from the direction of the sun and the seasonal winds. "This was a priority when designing them," he said.

"There are three kinds of wind to consider. Apart from during the monsoon, when the wind does not consistently come from any one particular direction, the breeze is predominantly south-westerly for about eight months of the year, so this is what we designed the homes around," he said.

"Knowing this, the windows were positioned to allow fresh air to flow into all of the rooms during those eight months.

It also helps the homeowners save on electricity as they don't have to use air conditioning much," he added.

The natural ventilation of the properties is one of several concepts incorporated into the designs that are meant to bring those living in the homes closer to nature, but in modern and comfortable surroundings.

"It's a fusion of science and nature," K. Khamron said, citing many more aspects of the designs that were conceived to work in harmony with the elements.

In addition to the location of the rooms within the home, each room is designed to channel air through it. North-facing doors or windows, for example, are kept

Looking for stylish harmony on Surin Hill



The 18 homes in the Surin Hill estate stay cool by using traditional open-air Thai house design concepts and being aligned with the directions of seasonal winds.

small and will be accompanied by at least two other opposing ventilation points, allowing the air to flow freely between them.

The houses face north to ensure that the terrace remains in shade as the sun travels east to west, while extended eaves keep the walls shaded and the interior cool.

K. Khamron explained that

the two-meter-high ceilings and the ventilated roofs allow hot air to rise and diffuse.

The tradition of using baked earthenware tiles for the roofing has also been adapted to the Surin Hill homes because of the tiles' ability to reflect much of the sun's heat.

"Having the pool located on the upper floor is also a good

buffer against the sun, which keeps the lower area cool in the hot season.

And although the pool is a modern feature, the design still draws on many traditional elements," he said.

The ground floor is an open-plan area just like traditional Thai homes.

Inside, luxuriously solid

teak, maka and redwoods line the floors, windows and door frames.

"We used maka wood for the flooring as it is as dense as, but not as dark as, redwoods.

If we had used teak, it would have given the home a very rich ambiance, but a teak floor can be easily damaged if something heavy is dropped on it," K. Khamron said.

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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Am I the only one that's irritated by inanities? You know the kind of thing I mean. You finish a conversation with someone (probably an American), and they tell you to "have a nice day". Well, thanks. Actually my intention was to have a terrible day, but now you mention it, maybe I'll just change tack completely and have a "nice" day instead.

"Nice" is one of those words that qualifies as inane all on its own. Once upon a time "nice" meant "precise", but what does it actually mean today? If something is nice, is it good or bad, or is somebody just avoiding the truth? A ludicrous word, really, and should be used only by teenage girls when describing their classmates.

Even hospitals aren't immune from inane sayings. Most likely the first words you'll hear on regaining consciousness after 10 hours in surgery resulting in a 15-inch scar traversing your midriff will be, "And how are you feeling?" Perhaps the good doctor should have his inanities removed.

Then there are the classics. Have you ever wondered what the point is of having a cake without being able to eat it? I'm fairly sure that sometime around the turn of the 12th century the saying had a meaning, or at least its literal translation may have been used in an entirely different way, but now its one of those daft things that people say to somehow fill dead air space; conversation polyfiller.

There are other classics, such as "Whatever". Please, if someone has outwitted you with a quip, do you honestly believe that saying "whatever" will redeem you in some way?

"Expect the unexpected" is a good one. How can you possibly expect something that's not expected? Plain daft. The plant

Battling the inane with fruit bombs



Life is just a bowl of... santol.

world contains a few things you wouldn't expect. Weird-looking plants are fairly commonplace, but there a fair few surprises in the fruit department, too.

In the west, we have apples, oranges, pears, bananas, grapes and the usual suspects from the greengrocer. All fairly run-of-the-mill and predictable.

Thailand's fruit is where you really should expect the unexpected – I'm starting to use this nonsense now.

The santol is not what it appears to be. In Thai, it's known as the *kraton*. To all intents and purposes it looks like a big, round potato. Absolutely *not* what you'd expect from a fruit.

This round, yellow fruit has a particularly thick velvety skin, which can be peeled off easily with a knife.

You can eat the divided fruit segments inside raw or they can be pickled. With the seeds re-

moved it can make a reasonable jam or jelly.

The segments of soft, white pulp cling tenaciously to the seeds, so you need serious sucking power to glean the fruit from them. In fact, in some areas the santol is called the lolly fruit as sucking at it gets the flavor. The fruit has a bizarrely pleasant thirst-quenching flavor of the pulp, with an odd blend of sweetness and acidity from the seed.

I tried some last week, and wasn't ready for it. Although the inner fleshy part is relatively sweet, the outer part, just below

the skin, is somewhat sour. The Thai ladies watching me consume the whole thing just sniggered, and explained that I should have been mixing it with that chili/sugar mix stuff. Well, silly me.

The santol tree enjoys growing in Phuket, but can require a fair bit of work in the garden. Over the dry season, the leaves turn from a deep green to a toast-brown color, then drop like possessed things that... drop, and are likely to carpet the whole lawn.

After the leaves have all fallen (February to March), tiny white flowers appear.

Some time around April, the fruit season begins and for about four months or so the fruits grow from little green balls into yellow fruits the size of plums or apple.

Then comes the fun part – scaling the tree's two-story height and retrieving them. Alternatively, you can wait for the fruits to come to you, as they drop and deluge your lawn, especially at night.

A full-grown santol tree is a prolific fruit producer. You can pick them up off the ground and 24 hours later the garden is once again covered with a knobby yellow carpet. This can even become a problem. In some gardens, trees can be so huge and shady and so replete with this rather acidic fruit that all the grass that once grew under it dies off completely.

Rotting santol fruit isn't particularly good for your pond either, as any fish that might be swimming around happily will soon succumb to the acidic water.

I should probably finish by saying something inspirational such as "life's a garden – dig it". But that would be inane. So I won't. Rudyard Kipling once said, "gardens are not made by sitting in the shade" – he is of course totally wrong. Time to crack open a beer and prove a point, I think.

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Property Gazette

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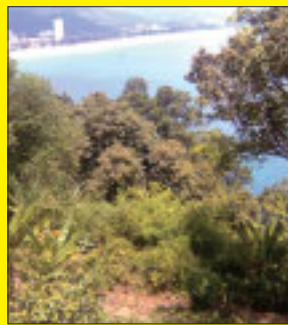
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10-minute drive across Sarasin Bridge. Chanote, 80 rai. Road and utilities access. Suitable for hotel or residential projects. 300m from beach. Only 3.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-5399269. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

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: a.pueng@gmail.com

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.

2-STORY HOUSE

Kathu area, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, swimming pool. 2 minutes to Lotus, 3 minutes to Big C. 3.99 million baht. Tel: 081-7876238, 087-0216542.

BANG TAO LAND

4 rai, 1 ngan, 18 sq wah in Baan Don at 2.2 million baht per rai. Contact Bruno. Tel: 080-7193785.

KOH SAMUI SEAVIEW LAND

Hillside sea view on Koh Samui. Size: 3,200sqm, or 2 rai. Chanote. Tel: 02-277-1992, 083-6113020. Fax: 02-9610072. Email: pharawee@yahoo.com For further details, please visit: www.lovesamui.com

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Unit C-8, 195sqm, 1 story, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Beautiful pool at your doorstep. 21 million baht (or best offer). Tel: 081-6144799.

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

Chok Thip Villa, Chalong. 81sqm. Chanote, water and electricity. Call or mail for details. Tel: 084-8448589. Email: stafsulaiman@yahoo.com

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SAIYUAN HOUSE FOR SALE



2-story house with additional living space in the attic. Sea view, 640sqm. 5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, car park. Nice garden, big swimming pool. A few minutes to Nai Ham Beach. Tel: 084-8475700, 087-898-7642. Email: morn_48@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

FOREIGN FREEHOLD

condominium in Rawai, 250m from the pier. 580,000 baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

POOL VILLA

in Bangtao. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, sat TV, ADSL, big living room, 2 parking spaces. For sale at 5.8 million baht. Tel: 084-8516121, 087-8933183. For further details, please see our website at www.phukethome.ws

SPACIOUS NEW VILLA

New, European-style villa in quiet area in Rawai. Quality building, large living area and huge terrace, 3 bedrooms with aircon, 3 bathrooms (en suite), 1 separate guest toilet, Western kitchen, laundry, garage, wall and gate, tropical garden, True TV, 650sqm plot, Chanote title. Price: 9.5 million baht. Call Paula at 084-8441486. Email: meeuwissenpaula@hotmail.com

URGENT REPOSSESSION SALE

New property in Rawai. Approx 350sqm 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. Tel: 084-0639223, 084-6722725 (Scandinavian).

ON THE BEACH

2-bedroom apartment in North Patong. Foreign freehold, top floor, pool. 9.7 million baht. Tel: 086-2765117. Email for photos. Email: jihshand@gmail.com

KOH SAMUI LAND FOR SALE

2 rai with one house, six bungalows and 10 row houses. Ideal for rentals. Near beach. Chanote title. Asking price: 30 million baht. No agents! Tel: 087-2709093. Email: a.pueng@gmail.com

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For full details contact Tel: 087-6899679.
Email: png.phuket@gmail.com

Property Gazette

21 Rai Sea View Land Krabi

This land plot in Krabi is located at Khong Muang Beach, next to Sofitel Poketara. It has an amazing ocean view and the land title is Nor Sor 3 Gor. The size is 21-2-95 rai, suitable for building a large-size project, villas, hotel or residency. Only 500 m to the beach.

Price: 4 m THB per rai.



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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

DESIRABLE HOME

for sale. 3 bedrooms, 2 en suites, 3 bathrooms, living room, kitchen/diner, study, laundry room, garage, ADSL and True TV fitted. Verandas, backs onto klong, fenced garden in secure Choafa Thani estate. Price: 6.9 million baht. Tel: 084-8439579. Email: somlerdee@yahoo.com

TOWNHOUSE NEAR BIS

2-story townhouse opposite Phuket Boat Lagoon. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Unfurnished: 13,000 baht/month. Furnished: 18,000 baht/month. Tel: 081-9793369. Email: phudtheera@phuketrealty.net

TROPICAL POOLVILLA in Chalong. Brand-new, spacious, 2-bedroom villa with deluxe kitchen and large living area. Priced to sell. Tel: 085-7932477.

KRABI LAND

10 rai, 20 minutes from Ao Nang, Krabi. Chanote title. 600,000 baht per rai. Tel: 084-8502499.

KAMALA TOWNHOUSE



near Phuket FantaSea, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, car park, 3.2 million baht, negotiable. Email: png.phuket@gmail.com

PARICHART VILLAGE



35/20 Soi 1. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircon, some furniture, 50sq wah, garden. In Chalong. For sale at 4 million baht or long-term rent, must see. Contact Nina. Tel: 087-6899679 or tasuwan@hotmail.com. No agents!

FOREIGN FREEHOLD CONDO

Luxury, fully furnished, one bedroom, ground floor, pool-side condo. Located at the end of a quiet street in the heart of Patong. Within easy walking distance of restaurants, pubs, clubs, beach and Jungceylon shopping center. 65sqm. Price: 5.9 million baht. Tel: 087-8879070.

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: 081-539-9269. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

PERFECT LAND FOR SALE

on the main road to Chermg Talay and Surin. 43 rai, 1 ngan, 85sq wah. For sale by owner. 5.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-9562406. Email: phatsarar@gmail.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.

LAND: 13 RAI

20 minutes from Ao Nang, Krabi. Between hills with river. 1 million baht per rai. Tel: 084-8502499.

CHALONG TOWNHOUSE

This immaculate 2-bedroom home on an excellent estate is priced to sell. Tel: 085-7932477.

NEW POOL-VILLA, RAWAI

400sqm. 3-4 bedrooms. 300m from Rawai Pier. 7.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: chotip07@yahoo.com

NEW HOTEL FOR SALE



In Nanai Rd, Patong. 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: a.pueng@gmail.com

2 TOWNHOUSES

Thai-style in Bangjo. 1 corner unit: 1.7 million baht. 1 center unit: 1.5 million baht. Buy both at 3 million baht. Contact Ya. Tel: 087-3863388. Email: shanya.arman@gmail.com

NEW TOWNHOUSE

in Than Thong 7 project. 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished. 19sq wah. Central location on Chao Fa East Rd, opposite Villa California. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 087-2770978.

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4 unique executive townhomes by 3rd fairway of Phuket Country Club. From 17 million baht. Tel: 081-9583571. Email: sweetiebee2000@yahoo.com

BEAUTIFUL NAI YANG LAND



9.5 rai, beachfront. 5 minutes to Phuket Airport. Asking price: 120 million baht. Chanote. Must see. No agents! Contact by email: allservices29@gmail.com

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

ABSOLUTE WATERFRONT

Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for fractional ownership of 2 of Phuket's finest Villas. 80 meters of waterfront, land plots over 2 rai. Each 4-bedroom villa has a 20m swimming pool, a fully-loaded pool sala, games room, wine room and walk-in freezers. All bedrooms are en suite and kitchens are Italian design with Viking appliances. These villas will be finished to the highest international standards of quality. Both have more than 1,200sqm of indoor/outdoor living space. No brokers. Only savvy investors who appreciate the finer things in life need reply. Leave your contact details and I will be in touch. Email: mlwphuket@mac.com

LAND IN AO NANG

4 rai in Ao Nang, Krabi. Chanote. 3.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 084-8502499.

VILLA IN BANGJO

10 mins to Laguna, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, swimming pool, fully furnished. 13 million baht. Tel: 081-8976998 (English), 089-6995136 (Thai).

TOWNHOUSE

in Than Thong 3 project. 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom. 19sq wah. Located near Khao Khad viewpoint. On Phattana Thongtin Rd. Fully furnished. 1.2 million baht. Tel: 087-2770978.

SURIN BEACH LAND FOR SALE

1,016sqm: 6 million baht. 996sqm: 5 million baht. 5-min walk to Surin Beach. Tel: 081-8687676.

CHEAP LAND

4,884sqm of filled, flat land. 2.5km from airport road. Laguna turnoff in Ton Sai area. Chanote, electricity, water, paved road around land. 1.8 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-2734212.

PANORAMIC SEAVIEW LAND

Chanote plots from 1 to 8.3 rai. Best Chalong location. 300m from new 9-hole golf course. Wichit area. Tel: 081-8913740.

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Property Gazette

HILLSIDE LAND, PATONG



Beautiful view over Patong town, bay and sea. Nearly 5 rai of tropical forest, 5 minutes to the north end of Patong Beach, very quiet area. Asking 9 million baht per rai. Tel: 085-6523533 (Eng), 085-7952533.

THE WHITE HOUSE VILLA



for sale (27.5 million baht) or rent. The White House Villa is one of the finest tropical pool villas in Patong. Best location for nightlife 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

MANIK CHERNG TALAY LAND

2 square plots: 10m x 25m, flat land, in Baan Manik. Selling for 890,000 baht. Tel: 087-8934636. Email: info@phuketbedandbreakfast.com

PANORAMIC SEAVIEW
3.5 rai in Chalong with access road and utilities. 9.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-949 6480. Email: thipsee84@hotmail.com

4 SEAVIEW LAND PLOTS

80sq wah each. Buy 2 plots for 5 million baht. Chanote, Sai Yuan. Tel: 081-9251730.

PATONG SEA VIEW



Luxury apartments with best view over Patong. Tel: 083-1736521. Visit our booth at Jungceylon. Website: www.patong-view-talay.com

PATONG BEACH LAND FOR SALE

7 rai, good location. Chanote available, roadside plot. Contact Alex for details. Tel: 089-7231682. Email: patonland@gmail.com

KHAO LAK HOUSE/VILLA

1 rai of Khao Lak land (Chanote) with house/villa for sale. Top residential area close to Bang Niang Beach. For further inquiries call 081-7874043 (Eng) or 081-8825069 (Thai). Tel: 081-7874043. Email: wolly.woerner@subaqua-khaolak.com

CHEAP LAND FOR SALE

in Rawai. 3 small plots: 70, 85 and 95 square wah. Urgent sale: 1.2 million baht each obo. Tel: 084-6268105.

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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

LAND IN KATHU

More than 5 rai with Chanote title in residential and secure area, 5 minutes to Big C, Lotus, Central, Index, school, etc. Ideal for private complex. Reduced to 6.5 million baht per rai. Please call 081-8540061 (English) or 081-0803414 (Thai and English).

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. Tropical garden set on 1,600sqm 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

SEAVIEW SPA VILLA
Patong, large, fully furnished, private, pool, garden, spa, waterfall. Tel: 089-5908233.



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: 6.5 million baht

Tel: 087-2709093 Email: png.phuket@gmail.com

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

HOUSE FOR SALE OR RENT



4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. Price: 2.95 million baht. Call for more info. Tel: 080-0300439.

STUDIO APARTMENT
for sale. Poolside studio apartment, Ya Nui 2. Good rental return, near beach. 1.9 million baht. Tel: 084-8528096.

10 RAI IN RAWAI
in the heart of Rawai for villa project or can be split into 1-rai plots. Very quiet and attractive area. Tel: 085-7852035.

LAST PLOT BYPASS RD

11 rai next to Leelavadee Resort Project. 16 million baht per rai. Email for details. Agencies are welcome. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

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Property Gazette

Properties For Rent

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HOUSE IN KATHU



3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Fully furnished, garden with fence, large store room. Only 25,000 baht a month. Contact Bancha. Tel: 084-1896700. Website: http://andamanhome.hi5.com

LUXURY HOUSE

for rent. 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, beautifully furnished, pool, garden. Pool cleaning and gardening included. 5 minutes from Mission Hills golf course. Contact K. So. Tel: 081-3444473.

LUXURY CONDO

2 levels, 2 bedrooms. Swimming pool, sea view, internet, phone, well furnished. Minimum 6-months rental, no young children. 27,000 baht per month. Contact for further information. Tel: 081-270-5374. Email: orcella@phuket.ksc.co.th Website: www.orcella.com

APARTMENT FOR RENT

1 bedroom, living room, kitchenette, fully furnished, cable TV, wireless Internet. 500m to the beach. Tel: 081-891-4381. Email: patongshakers@hotmail.com

NICE HOUSE FOR RENT



A large family home with 3 bedrooms. All en-suite bathrooms. Aircon in 2 master bedrooms, furnished with great swimming pool in surrounding walls, carport. Ideal for family or couple, very safe area, 5 minutes from Bang Tao Beach. Ready to move in immediately. Please call K. Gai on 081-7344324. Great value. Email: ian.taylor.woodward@hotmail.com

KATHU GOLF-VIEW VILLA

for rent. 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, big pool, 4km to BIS, lake, hill and valley view. Quiet, on top of hill, furnished, Wi-Fi, True TV, Long term: 65,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-2698492.

HOUSE NEAR SARASIN BRIDGE

for rent. 40 meters from beach. 5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, 4 aircons, some furniture. 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-8167875.

LUXURY 2-BEDROOM, EN-SUITE BUNGALOW

in private 4-house estate in Kamala. Teak furnishings, ADSL/satellite, plasma TV, DVD, private swimming pool, maintenance and cleaning included. Long term: 35,000 baht/month. Tel: 086-9437598.

NEW TOWNHOUSE

for rent. Near British International School. 3 bedrooms, fully furnished. Tel: 081-9241447.

BEACH HOUSE

for rent at Fisherman Way. 1-4 bedrooms. Tel: 076-381181, 076-381189. Website: www.fishermanway.com

GUESTHOUSE, KATA

Build a guesthouse on 350sqm in Kata. 30 years rent-free. Email: terence@hotmail.de



More information, email: a.pueng@gmail.com

NICE AND COZY HOUSE FOR RENT



Furnished and excellent location, 5 mins from Rawai & Nai Harn beaches. 162sqm. 2 bedrooms with private bathrooms. 1 guest toilet. 3 aircons. Large living-dining room. Telephone line with ADSL. Free water supply and garbage service. Please contact K. Nui. Tel: 087-3830936.

BL APARTMENT

New, in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, car park. 8,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-6923163.

STUDIO APARTMENT IN KAMALA

Private kitchen aircon, True TV, ADSL, pool. 4,000 baht per week; 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-8500568.

BUILDING NEAR MAKRO

with large parking lot. Tel: 081-8929208. Email: samphuket@hotmail.com

CHERNG TALAY RENTALS

3 bedrooms, furnished: 22,000 baht/month. Unfurnished: 17,000 baht/month. New shophouse: 35,000 baht/month. Tel: 085-7839062.

HOUSE



1.5km from Central Festival, 65 sq wah, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 1 bathtub, hot water, fully furnished. Includes refrigerator, furniture, European kitchen, garden. Contact Mr Mongkon. Tel: 084-0628040.

PALAI GREEN

2 aircons, 2 bedrooms, hot shower, fully furnished, free cable TV, ADSL Internet. Near Chalong. 12,000 baht/month. For more information call K. Nee. Tel: 081-8924311.

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

FOR RENT, RAWAI

2-bedroom house, safe area, aircon, cable TV, Internet, furnished, walled garden, 18,000 baht in low season. Tel: 085-7873046.

PATONG BEACH TOWNHOUSE

for rent. Fair price, long-or short-term. Tel: 089-4912496. Email: bluewaterphuket@gmail.com

CHALONG TOWNHOUSE

for rent, furnished, 2 bedrooms, aircon, big kitchen, cable TV, telephone line. 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-344487, 086-2677245.



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BIG HOUSE FOR RENT OR SALE



1.5 km from Central Festival. Attached to Suan Luang Park. 300sq wah. 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 9 aircon. Pond in garden. Fully furnished. Fitness facilities. European kitchen. 2 living rooms. Contact Mongkon. Tel: 084-0628040.

NEW CHALONG HOME

2-bedroom, furnished home for rent. Phone line, True TV, aircon. Tel: 089-6521473.

2-BEDROOM APARTMENT

at Surin. A few minutes from Surin & Bang Tao Beaches. Common pool, aircon, bedroom fans, timber floors, fully furnished, phone. 30,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-2731740.

RAWAI, NAI HARN

Nice new luxury house for rent. 3-4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, large swimming pool. No furniture. 45,000 baht/month. Minimum 1 year. Tel: 081-3971835.

12,000 BAHT PER MONTH

Furnished house for rent. True TV, phone line. Email for more info (in German or English). Tel: 089-9710774. Email: kwanarune@hotmail.com

THE WHITE HOUSE VILLA



for rent or sale (B27.5 million). The White House Villa is one of the finest tropical pool villas in Patong. Best location for nightlife 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

PATONG BEACH CONDOTE

Patong Beach Condotel. Nice apartment, 56sqm. 7th floor, 1 bedroom, kitchen, living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL. Tel: 081-8913740.

4 BUNGALOWS FOR RENT IN NAI HARN

2-bedroom bungalows for rent on private land. Phone, ADSL, 1 or 2 aircons, carport. Tel: 087-9223242. Email: patongman123@hotmail.com

THE GREENHOUSE BUNGALOWS

Chalong. New 2-bedroom bungalows. Fully furnished, cool, quiet, close to all facilities. 12,000 baht/month. Contact K. John. Tel: 081-9791976.

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for Sale: 51 foot, 8 berth sailboat. Thai registered and in good running order. Price: 1,000,000 baht. Tel: 081-8935200. Email: gsf@seal-asia.com

SPEETBOAT HULL

37-Foot wooden hull, 2 years old, perfect condition. 275,000 baht. Contact Nicolas at Tel: 081-7286188 or Kat. Tel: 084-7463032. Email: nicolaswinckler@hotmail.fr

SUZUKI BOAT ENGINE 250

4 stroke. Excellent condition. Tel: 086-2781291.

SPEEDBOAT FOR SALE

33-foot wooden hull, perfect condition, 1.5 years old. 2 engines: Yamaha v6 200hp. Fully equipped for diving. 900,000 baht. Contact Nicolas. Tel: 081-7286188 or Jano 083-5905464. Email: nicolaswinckler@hotmail.fr

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Good for overnight fishing, diving, safari, dinner cruise and snorkling. 22m/6m, 7 cabins, 3 toilets + 3 showers, 330hp engine, 20kw generator. 1.5 million baht. Tel: 081-7874690. Email: dive@chalongseasport.com

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22ft classic runabouts. Beautifully crafted by Naga Marine. Hull made of cedar strip planks, West System Epoxy. Deck and interior decorated with polished Mahogany. Powered by Mercury 210hp Sport Jet. (V Drive/in-board Turbo Diesel package available). Contact for info and price. Can be shipped in container for international buyer. Tel: 081-9598047. Fax: 086-4806533. Email: pokism@mac.com For details visit: www.nagamarine.com

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4.52m/15ft. Easy sail for husband-wife, parent-child combos. It has outstanding stability and fiberglass hull. Designed to be sailed by a man and a woman. Can deliver exciting performance without using spinnaker or trapeze. Small class on island, so can race. Four hours free tuition with sale. 125,000 baht. Wind comes free. Contact for further information. Tel: 081-5399560. Email: oystcove@loxinfo.co.th

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Small fiberglass speedboat with 15hp Yamaha outboard in good condition. 14ft long, newly restored and painted. 120,000 baht, including launch trailer. Can be viewed at Boat Lagoon. Please contact for additional information. Tel: 076-321203, 081-9681975. Email: leonbowles@gmail.com

CHOLAMARK HYPERLON RIB

3.9 meters. In good condition. 15hp Yamaha engine. Price: 110,000 baht. Contact for info. Tel: 081-5399560. Email: oystcove@loxinfo.co.th

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24ft fiberglass and wood construction. 2.5-liter diesel in-board outboard. Many extras. Teak interior. Price: 500,000 baht. Tel: 076-388478, 083-5207308. Email: gerybfoster@hotmail.com

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Handmade stainless steel dolphin (1.8m long) for sale. 20,000 baht. Email: info@klausharbauer.com

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Mobile: 081 891 3237
Tel/Fax: 076 206 200
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Please send a letter of application and updated resume, references, expected salary and recent photo to: Works.Com (International) Co., Ltd.

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Responsibilities:

- Oversee all marketing, advertising and promotional activities.
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- Have strong analytical & organizational skills.
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- Develop annual "sales plans" for each market segment in conjunction with the hotel GMs and with input and support from the group sales team.
- Experience in pre-opening a hotel is preferred.
- Coordinating all PR and marketing coverage for the hotel via a variety of channels.

Qualification:

- Minimum 5 years' experience as a resort sales & marketing professional with contacts in the local and international agencies.
- High level of personal presentation combined with excellent communication skills.
- Self motivated and highly organized.
- Strong interpersonal & relationship-management skills.
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Interested candidates please send full resume, expected salary and a recent photo by e-mail or fax.

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- Responsible for taking care of long-term visas for foreign teachers and administration work.
- Thai nationality.
- Bachelor's degree in Human Resource management, Social management or related fields.
- Good command both written and spoken English.
- Good personality, human relations and service minded person.
- Computer literature; MS Office, Excel and Word.
- Experience in related work is more preferable.

Business Development Officer

- Thai Nationality-Bachelor's degree in either business, administration, Hotels or related fields.
- Good command of written and spoken English, along with computer literacy.
- Advanced Public Relation Skills

Please send a short letter of application, CV, recent photograph and email/fax and telephone contacts of referees to: patcharakorn@bcis.ac.th



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ENGLISH-LANGUAGE TEACHER

required. Full- and parttime, Thai nationals and native English speakers. Must have a high level of spoken and written English and appropriate qualifications. Contact Michael. Tel: 076-222679.

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Do you have one year of experience in Data Entry and Dreamweaver? Are you a Thai National with good English? Tel: 080-0402918. Email: gstephenkay@yahoo.com For details, visit our website at www.holyclothing.com/workdata.html

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- Excellent English, especially writing skills
- Basic computer knowledge: email, etc
- Preferably experienced in real estate

Contact Ms Nathalie. Tel: 085-1111155. Email: alexanderkbh@gmail.com

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Marketing/tour leader required by resort. Degree in tourism or marketing required. Accommodation, basic salary plus performance bonus offered. Please email resume, photo and date you can start work. Email: bob@elephant-hills.com

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Phuket Gazette

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The successful candidate will be a Thai national with initiative, an outgoing personality and plenty of experience about the world and how it works. Also essential are the ability to communicate in English, both spoken and written, and a car.

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Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to editor@phuketgazette.net

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TEACHING ASSISTANT

Thai female for pre-school class. Must speak English well. Please contact for additional details at Tel: 076-282232, 084-3088110. Email: parryallen@aol.com

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Patong hotel needs 1 receptionist with good English skills. Please call for more details. Tel: 081-8921621.

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Near Chong Talay, July 21 - August 12. Good pay for responsible person. Care for home and cats, supervise property worker. Please contact for details. Tel: 084-8424581. Email: info@phukethorserescue.com

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Timelinx.com and Designer Way Vacation Club, the market leaders in travel agent based holiday clubs in Asia. Due to our rapid expansion we are currently seeking the following candidates for our Patong head office:

Sales Representatives (in-house)

- Experience preferred but not essential
- English speaking essential
- Full onsite training required
- Top commissions & bonus incentives

Accountant

- Thai national
- Bachelor's degree or higher in accounting or similar
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- Strong computer skills, MS Office (Word, Excel).
- Good command of English, able to communicate with foreigners

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- Knowledge of SEO & website marketing
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- Programming experience an advantage
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Work permits will be provided to successful sales candidates. Interested applicants are invited to fax or email your resume, details, qualifications and experience with recent photo.

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Looking for keen hotel marketing manager. Freelance or full time. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-239839, 081-2963413. Fax: 076-239838. Email: prakaisriroj@hotmail.com

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Female Thai national required Mon-Fri 8:30 am-4 pm. Enthusiasm and a love of children needed! 7,000 baht/month. 4 weeks paid holiday per year + Thai national holidays. Phone for interview. Tel: 089-9711813. Email: info@abcnurseryphuket.com

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Electronic Security Sales Executive required. Thai national, degree in a related field, 2 or more years' sales experience. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-376557, 081-9586879. Fax: 076-376560. Email: scott@pcs.co.th

ENGLISH TEACHER REQUIRED

Seeking an English teacher with experience. Native speaker preferred. For more info contact K. Joojee at Tel: 081-3979809, 081-970-0121. Send CV by email: joojee88@yahoo.com

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email info@aathailand.org
phuketaa@yahoo.com

FORMING ARTISTS' COMMUNITY

International artist living in Phuket wishing to organize local artists and people interested in art to share work and ideas to better the community and each of us individually. Tel: 076-381937, 087-0716063. Fax: 076-381937. Email: tbokich@tbokich.com

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a needy child. The Phuket International Women's Club is a volunteer organization raising funds for educational scholarships. We rely on the goodwill of donors and sponsors n small and large. If you would like to put something back into the community in which you live, contact us to find out more about giving a prize or being a sponsor. Contact Carol (Tel: 087-4178860. Email: carol.fryer@piwvc.info) or K. Sue (Tel: 087-2776948. Email: sue.amulphy@piwvc.info).

Business Opportunities

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- ATHLETIC body
- LIGHT budget
- CONSTANT performance
- STRONG structure
- RELIABLE guarantee
- ENERGETIC filtration

**"OLYMPIA"
CHAMPION
IN ALL CATEGORIES!**

ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY

In addition to the fact that our filtration benefits of a low consumption as well as a silent pump, investing in a Desjoyaux swimming pool makes you participate in "cleaning" our planet... "Earth". Indeed, the structure (PAC/FORMWORK) of our pools is 100% manufactured from recycled plastic materials. 1 OLYMPIA pool structure represents about 30.000 plastic bags which will never pollute again.

Desjoyaux in Thailand

Bangkok: Tel: +66 2 9889333 Phuket: Tel: +66 76 289145 Krabi: Tel: +66 75 624553 Chiang Mai: Tel: +66 53 283901-2
 Hatyai: Tel: +66 74 262934-5 Phang Nga: Tel: +66 89 511 1401 Samut: Tel: +66 77 247588-9 Hua Hin: Tel: +66 32 522 980-1
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