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INSIDE



SNEAK PREVIEW

Sleek curves, turbo-charged driving dynamics and two gearboxes in one. It can only be Porsche's new model: the Panamera. See page 18.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

On the most auspicious occasion of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 81st birthday on December 5, the *Gazette* offers His Majesty thanks and praise for his guidance during troubled times and his life of innumerable achievements.

While most readers know of HM The King's work in such fields as water supply, economic theory and animal rights, some might not be aware that His Majesty holds patents for several inventions, and was this week recognized by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) as a champion of intellectual property protection, when he received WIPO's first Global Leaders Award on December 1, 2008.

HM The King was granted his first patent in 1993 for a system to resolve water shortage problems in the dry season, making him the first member of the royal family to obtain a patent. The Department of Intellectual Property, under the Ministry of Commerce, has since granted patents in His Majesty's name for a number of innovations, including Chaipattana aerators, royal rainmaking and the use of palm oil as a fuel.

HM The King now owns over 20 patents and 19 trademarks. Many of his inventions have generated concrete benefits for Thai communities, having been put to practical use in a range of rural development projects in Thailand.

HM The King this week received recognition as a champion of intellectual property protection when HRH Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn represented His Majesty in receiving the Global Leaders Award from WIPO Director General Francis Gurry.

The WIPO Global Leaders Award, which comprises a citation and a medal honoring the



Father of the Nation turns 81

recipient, recognizes leadership and personal engagement in promoting intellectual property at national, regional and international levels.

It also rewards exceptional personal creative and innovative activities, and use of the intellectual property system to protect these works.

Established by the WIPO Convention in 1967, WIPO is a specialized agency of the United Nations and now has 183 member countries.

The organization is dedi-

cated to developing a balanced and accessible international intellectual property system, which stimulates innovation and contributes to economic development.

The importance of intellectual property as a policy tool to promote development has been a key feature of WIPO Director General Dr Kamil Idris's vision as head of the organization since 1997.

Dr Idris has campaigned extensively to enhance awareness and understanding among global leaders of intellectual

property and its strategic importance in promoting economic, social and cultural development. The new WIPO Global Leaders Award recognizes HM The King's contribution to the realization of this vision.

On behalf of all our readers, the *Gazette* congratulates His Majesty on this latest in a long and varied list of impressive achievements, and joins with all Thais and foreigners in extending to him our sincerest wishes for good health and a long life.

Long Live the King!



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Merit making for HM The King's birthday



Last week organizations and citizens all around the island held merit-making ceremonies and celebratory events in honor of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 81st birthday, Friday December 5.

At Chalermphrakiat School in Phuket City December 1, police, monks and local people, as well as 10 local organizations, held a merit-making tree planting ceremony.

In Cape Panwa at the Royal Thai Navy Third Fleet headquarters on December 2, crowds were treated to a sea rescue demonstration by the Third Fleet, a brass band performance and a military demonstration by Phang Nga sea soldiers. Vice Admiral Narong Tetwisan, Commander in Chief of the Royal Thai Navy Third Fleet, then presided over a Royal blessing ceremony

on the beach. Following the ceremony, 382 sea turtles and sea shrimp eggs were released into the sea.

At Mai Khao Beach, 500 people planted 999 mangrove plants to make merit. Representatives from Tambon Mai Khao administration, Phuket Natural Resources and Environment Provincial Office, the Royal Thai Navy, as well as students from Phuket Polytechnic and Satee Phuket School took part in the proceedings.



Photos by Sakhorn
Saengtongsamarnsin

Governor urges Phuket police to squash trade in sex and pirated goods

PHUKET CITY: Fearful that foreigners will view Phuket as a "sex tour" destination and center for trade in counterfeit goods, Phuket Governor Preecha Ruangjan has urged police to take a more serious approach in enforcing anti-prostitution and intellectual property laws.

At the monthly meeting of the Provincial Committee for Social Stability, held in the meeting room at Phuket Provincial Hall on November 27, chairman Gov Preecha told fellow board members that a recent night tour of Patong Beach convinced him that trade in sexual services and counterfeit goods was widespread and openly conducted there.

"Phuket is a world-class destination that attracts a great deal of tourists who come here to relax. I don't want them to get the impression and spread the word around the world that Phuket is a sex-tour destination like Pattaya," he said.

In order to protect Phuket's reputation, he asked police to do a better job at enforcing anti-prostitution laws – especially in Patong.

On the issue of intellectual property law violations, Gov Preecha told police the trade in counterfeit CDs and other pirated goods was widespread in Kata as well as Patong.

He urged police to take a more proactive approach by arresting violators without waiting for the copyright holders or their authorized representatives to turn up and request enforcement.

The crackdown should begin right away, he told police officers at the meeting.

Hospital staff crisis continues



PATONG: Service at Patong Hospital continues to suffer, with no doctors on its permanent staff and no reinforcements expected until the middle of next year.

Hospital Director Dr Taveesak Netwongse explained that the 60-bed hospital continues to get by with a skeleton crew of doctors on loan from other state-run hospitals including Vachira Phuket Hospital, Thalang Hospital and some in other provinces.

The last of Patong Hospital's six doctors resigned in September. The walkout began when two doctors gave up their positions, saying they wanted to resume their studies in Bangkok to become specialists, he said.

"During that period, the remaining doctors had to work 12-16 hours per day. That left them no time to work in their private clinics and they faced income problems as a result. So by September all of the doctors had resigned," he said.

Having doctors work on a loan basis from other facilities is unsustainable and not a long-term solution to the staffing problem, he added.

"I was told Patong Hospital will have to wait until new doctors can be assigned in the future, just like every other state run hospital in Thailand," he said.

Dr Taveesak, who has worked at the hospital for 15 years, had also tendered his resignation. However, his request was turned down by MoPH permanent sec-

retary Dr Prat Boonyawongvirot during a visit to Phuket in early October.

At that time, Dr Prat also accepted for consideration a proposal to upgrade Patong Hospital from 60 beds to 200 beds in order to provide better service to both Thais and foreigners.

"We presented our plan and an 870-million-baht budget request to develop the hospital and construct a new seven-storey building, but the plan is still under consideration and awaiting cabinet approval. I don't know when it will be approved," he said.

When asked whether the hospital would have a sufficient number of doctors on staff to treat patients after such an upgrade took place, Dr Taveesak said it is the government's duty to address staffing issues.

Phuket Provincial Health Office Director Dr Paisan Worrasathit said government hospitals across the country are facing severe doctor shortages and the MoPH is working hard to solve the problem.

"Government hospitals in Ranong, Phang Nga and Krabi all face shortages, but rather than making an outcry through the media they endure and do their best to treat people and improve their health," he said.

The earliest that new doctors can be assigned will be in the middle of next year, at which time the MoPH will conduct its next "doctors' reshuffle," he explained.

When asked about rumors that the staff walkout at the hospital was in fact due to internal management problems, Dr Paisan refused to comment, except to say that management practices always have to be examined when staff walkouts occur.

"All I can say is that we are doing our best to develop and improve services at Patong Hospital," he said.

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Phuket to host AFF Suzuki Cup



Phuket's Sarakul Stadium will be the host venue of the AFF Suzuki Cup 2008.

PHUKET: Phuket has been announced as the new Thai venue for Group B of the AFF Suzuki Cup. It is the biggest football tournament in South East Asia and the only regional football competition to feature the senior teams of the ASEAN nations.

When contacted by the *Phuket Gazette*, a spokesperson for the Football Association of Thailand (FAT), who gave his name as Mr Chaiyos, confirmed that Phuket will stage matches at the 30,000 capacity Sarakul stadium in Phuket Town. Games will be played on Dec 6, 8 and 10, Mr Chaiyos added.

Originally slated to take place in Bangkok, the FAT decided that Phuket is the best alternative venue to host one group of this year's tournament, due to the ongoing unrest and disruptions to air travel in Bangkok.

"There's too much trouble in Bangkok, so we've decided to switch the venue," Thai FA chief Worawi Makudi said.

"All parties have agreed this is the best solution to the problem and Phuket is a very suitable alternative because it is not affected by the political situation and Malaysia, Vietnam and Laos can all fly directly to Phuket International Airport," he added.

A total of eight teams will compete for the AFF Suzuki Cup trophy and the US\$100,000 in prize money. The top six seeded ASEAN nations, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, will be joined by qualifiers Laos and Cambodia to make up the final field of eight nations.

The competition, formerly known as the Tiger Cup and ASEAN Football Championship, consists of the two group stages followed by semi-finals and finals that will be contested over two legs on a home and away basis.

Phuket will be playing host to Group B, which consists of Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and Laos. Group A, which will be based in Jakarta, contains Indonesia, Singapore, Myanmar and Cambodia. The top two teams from each group will go on to the semi-finals.

The venue will be the 15,000-capacity Sarakul Stadium in Phuket Town, which was used for the Fifa Women's Under-19 Championship and has been approved by Fifa. Mr Worawi said he that the stadium, facilities and hotels in Phuket were satisfactory and that Phuket could cope with hosting the biennial tournament.

20-year-old girls killed in double homicide

KOH KAEW: Police have issued an arrest warrant for a man who allegedly shot at three women on a motorbike, killing two of them.

At about 2 am on November 28, Phuket City Police were notified that two women had been found murdered at the mouth of the access road to Laem Hin in Koh Kaew Village 7, Muang District.

Police officers, including Phuket Provincial Police Commander Apirak Hongtong, rushed to the scene with Kusoldharm Foundation workers.

At the scene they found the body of one young lady lying in the middle of the road with a Phuket registered motorcycle on top of her. Nearby, the body of another young woman was found in a roadside drainage ditch. Both had been killed instantly from gunshot wounds to the head, fired from a 9mm weapon.

The first victim was identified as 20-year-old Praphasri Limpanon, a resident of Tambon Srisoonthorn Village 5. The other victim was later identified as Khansina Sanhaad, a 20-year-old resident of Pa Khlok.

A third woman who survived the attack said all three women were riding on a single motorbike on Thepkasattri Rd southbound when a man on another motorbike began chasing them. They turned onto the road to Laem Hin in an attempt to escape, but the man overtook them and cut them off, forcing them to stop.

Once they had stopped, he pulled out a pistol and shot Miss Praphasri, then Miss Khansina. The third woman, whose name was not reported, ran for her life and managed to escape as her assailant got back on his motorbike and sped off.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Apirak Hongtong told the *Gazette* that an arrest warrant has already been issued for the prime suspect, a former lover of Miss Praphasri.

The two homicides raise to ten the number of shooting murders in Phuket over the past three months.

Source: *Manager Online*.

Dead dugong thought victim of fishing gear

LAEM PANWA: More bad news for Phuket's tiny dugong population came early on the morning of December 2, when the carcass of an immature female was found floating less than a kilometer offshore from Laem Ka, up the coast from the Sea Gypsy Village in Rawai.

Dugong researcher Kanjana Adulyanukosol from the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) said the carcass was recovered at about 6 am by local fisherman Boonlert Sukasem, who brought the carcass to Chalong Pier and notified local conservationist Sutha Prateep na Thalung, who in turn notified the PMBC.

The fact that it was still floating indicates it had died no more than about 24 hours before its discovery, Ms Kanjana said.

At 167 kilograms and 191 centimeters long, the animal was an immature female about five years old. Dugong reach maturity at about 10 years of age, she said.

As for the cause of death, the animal had signs of bleeding abrasions on the head and right side of the body. These were recent but minor injuries, not enough to have been the cause of death on their own.

A necropsy performed later that afternoon indicated that the dugong had been feeding well,





with a wide variety of seagrasses in both its large and small intestines, she said.

PMBC veterinarian Songtaya Manawattana said a clot of pus was found in the mammal's windpipe and that it had water in its lungs, indicating that the animal suddenly went into shock and drowned.



Although the exact cause cannot be confirmed, Dr Songtaya said the most likely cause of the sudden death was that the animal became ensnared in fishing gear and was unable to get to the surface to breathe.

It is not easy for dugong to drown and there is a lot of abandoned fishing gear in the area where the dugong was found, he said.


He added that the population of dugong in Phuket waters is estimated at only about 10 individuals, so the death represents a significant loss in the total population.

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Phuket hotels braced for airport fallout

As the siege of Suvarnabhumi entered its second week, Phuket's tourist industry was showing signs of serious strain, with many hotels reporting a significant drop in both current occupancy rates and forward bookings. To gauge the current feeling within the island's hospitality industry, the Phuket Gazette recently talked to senior managers of four leading hotels: the Indigo Pearl, the Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa, the Holiday Inn Phuket and the Mövenpick Resort. We asked them how they were managing in the face of the growing crisis, and what measures they were implementing to mitigate the effects of the PAD's occupation of Suvarnabhumi and Don Muang airports. Tipwarintron Tanaakarachod reports.

Three out of the four executives interviewed reported that occupancy rates, already under pressure due to the global economic crisis, had seen a visible fall-off since the beginning of the crisis.

Hansruedi Frutiger, GM of the Mövenpick, cited a 4% drop in occupancy, while Frank Grassmann, GM of the Evason, and Matthias Jaeckel, Executive Assistant Manager of the Holiday Inn, also confirmed that they had significantly more empty rooms than this time last year.

By contrast, Indigo Pearl GM Arnaud Girodon told the *Gazette* that his resort remained fully booked, as many customers who were unable to get flights to Bangkok had opted to take ad-



Hansruedi Frutiger, General Manager of the Mövenpick: "Laying off staff is the last thing I would ever do in a crisis."

vantage of special rates and stay on at the resort.

Indigo Pearl's close proximity to Phuket's airport was a key factor, he added.

All four hotels have already witnessed a significant reduction in bookings into January and February, with travel trade and MICE business being particularly affected in the short term. Frutiger reported that cancellations were outnumbering reservations by a ratio of 3:2.

Each of the hotels was actively exploring a variety of options to combat the downturn in business and to navigate through the crisis following the closures of the two airports in Bangkok.

"Our customers want to know what is going on, so we are posting regular updates on a flip-



Arnaud Girodon, General Manager of the Indigo Pearl: "When I arrived in Thailand, they had a coup!"

chart in the lobby," said the Holiday Inn's Jaeckel.

To offset falling occupancy rates, the Evason has introduced special "bonus night" packages, where customers who book two nights will receive an additional night free.

Finding a silver lining to the cloud hovering over the industry, Grassmann noted that the recent economic downturn had already forced hotel operators to tighten their belts with cost cutting measures and efficiency programs, leaving them well prepared to weather this latest storm.

Despite the difficulties being encountered by the hotel industry, though, none of the managers interviewed were contem-



The scene at Phuket airport earlier this week as stranded passengers tried to find their way home.

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plating staff lay-offs.

"Laying off staff is the last thing I would ever do in a crisis," said Frutiger, adding that he would pursue other avenues, such as energy saving and staff up-selling.

Similarly, Grassmann dismissed the idea of cut-backs in the workforce, adding that staff were the "bread and butter" of the business.

Jaeckel said that the Holiday Inn was not considering redundancies and would look at other options, such as variable opening hours for the hotel's outlets as well as shorter staff working hours, before turning to what Indigo Pearl's Girodon termed "the last resort".

The hoteliers remained generally supportive of the TAT, agreeing that the organization was doing everything humanly possible under very difficult circumstances.



Frank Grassmann, General Manager of Evason Phuket and Six Senses Spa: "Staff are the bread and butter of our business."

Grassmann said the Evason was currently working closely with the TAT on a number of initiatives, while Frutiger expressed the hope that the TAT would continue to campaign aggressively on the industry's behalf with further overseas promotions.

Although markedly downbeat with their short-term projections, the managers remained guardedly optimistic when quizzed about the longer-term prospects for the island's hotels.

Indigo Pearl's Girodon, while sounding words of caution in acknowledging that the next six months would be difficult, went on to point out that Phuket's tourist industry had a long history of resilience in the wake of adversity and would bounce back quickly once the situation had returned to normal.

Frutiger concurred, adding that if the industry could continue



Matthias Jaekel, Executive Assistant Manager of the Holiday Inn: "September 11 had a far greater impact on travel and tourism than this will."

to demonstrate creativity in its pricing and promotions, it would surely recover.

And as crises went, was this the worst the executives had ever seen?

Far from it. With 20 years experience in the hotel business, both Grassmann and Jaekel said that they had been through a lot worse.

Jaekel noted that the fallout from the events of September 11 had had a far greater impact on travel and tourism.

For his part, Girodon said that during his 15 years in the business he had seen more than his share of turmoil, including wars in Beirut and Iraq.

"And then, when I arrived in Thailand, they had a coup!" he added with Gallic humor.

A case, perhaps, of *Plus ça change... plus c'est la même chose*.



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Lions Club beach cleanup bags 625 kilos of rubbish



PATONG: Last month saw the Lions Club of Phuket team up with students from four local schools and volunteer divers from All 4 Diving, Sea World Dive Team, Scandinavian Divers and Mermaid Liveboards for Patong Beach Clean Up Day 2008. After a morning's work, the volunteers managed to remove a total of 625kg of waste from Patong's formerly pristine waters and beach.

Students from Wat Suwan Kiriwong School, Sai Nam Yen School, Ketho School and Kalim School took part in the event, which was organized by the Phuket Lions Club. Additional help came from the local tourist police, who sponsored the event and provided boats and equipment.

A draw was held and the students and divers were split into five colored teams – blue, red, green, yellow and light blue – to introduce a competitive edge to the proceedings. Work began early, while the beach was still relatively deserted, and continued until lunchtime.

While the students spent their time picking up every piece of garbage they could find on the beach, divers took longtail boats out into Patong Bay near Paradise Beach, where they knew there would be waste on the sea bed. Nets and line discarded by fishermen were the most common items found in the water. Other objects collected included hula hoops, a tyre weighing 65kg, a fishing rod, a 33kg anchor and a large plastic scaffolding-like object that weighed 30-40kg.

Phuket Governor Preecha Ruangjan came to inspect the waste collected, accompanied by Lions Club President Claude de Crissey and Kathu Police Chief Krissak. Mr Preecha gave a thank you speech at the closing ceremony, and the Lions Club presented scholarships

Special krathongs sold with added

BANGKOK: In the run up to Loi Krathong festival every year, there are a host of predictable stories in the Thai press about teens who choose to lose their virginity during the romantic, full moon celebration.

Other common reports involve rampant price gouging on candles and other materials needed to make krathongs as the special day draws near.

This year, another seasonal vice was brought to light when a young couple was found to be selling a "special krathong". What made the baskets so special was not their ornate decoration or quality craftsmanship, but the fact that they were stuffed full of ganja.

Police held a press conference on November 13 to announce the arrest of 22-year-old Anucha "Pong" Chompheung and his girlfriend Sungrachani "Nan" Chaiset, 21.

In front of reporters, Mr Anucha admitted that the previous evening he had set up a stall

selling krathong for people to float down Khlong Saen Saep, a narrow canal running through the heart of the capital that is probably Thailand's dirtiest waterway.

"Yesterday [November 12], which was Loi Krathong, I wanted to get rid of the last of the ganja that I had, so I decided to try a new marketing method.

"I hid bags of ganja in krathongs, then set up a stall by the side of the canal and sold them for 200 baht each. My customers quickly found out what was happening and came to order 'special krathongs'," Mr Anucha said.

Unfortunately for Mr Anucha and his girlfriend, his customers were not the only ones to get word of the scheme. Phayathai police also heard about the new method of drug dealing.

Later that night, police came to the couple's home in Makkasan district with a search warrant. In the house, they found 133 baggies of ganja with a combined weight of 930 grams and

56 methamphetamine pills.

Under questioning, Mr Anucha said that he had previously worked parking cars at an underground casino. After the casino was shut down, he lost his job and didn't have any money to look after his wife and Miss Sungrachani's three-year-old son.

Then a friend in Bangkok's Klong Toey said that he could sell him ganja in bulk for just 14,000 baht a kilogram, so he decided to buy some and then sell small bags of it to local youths for 200 baht each, making a profit of 2,000-3,000 baht on each lot.

As for his girlfriend, she would order ya bah from another contact for 180 baht a pill and sell it on for 250 baht a pill. All the money went on living expenses and looking after their son, Mr Anucha told police. The cops charged him with possession of cannabis with intent to sell and Miss Sungrachani with the more serious charge of possession of ya bah with intent to sell.

— Source: *KomChadLuek*

Going for a

PHUKET: A bird singing competition, featuring over a thousand Red-whiskered Bulbuls, was held at Saphan Hin on November 22-23.

The competition was divided into four categories, in which no less than four committees of top bird-song experts assessed the beauty and frequency of the Bulbuls' singing efforts. Prizes were also up for grabs in the "speedy singing" competition, which judged the Bulbuls' capacity to get through as many songs as possible within a 30-minute period.

By far the toughest category, however, was the grueling "singing marathon", in which the melodious contestants were required to sing for as long as possible before, presumably, dropping dead or running out of material.



Giving the lie to the phrase "going for a song", the winners in each of the competitions earned their proud owners lucrative prizes, worth up to 20,000 baht. In all, 360 birds were entered in the beautiful singing competition, with 500 contesting the speedy singing contest and 800 in the singing marathon.

For those of an ornithological bent, the Red-whiskered Bulbul has a tall pointed black crest, red face patch and thin black moustachial line. The loud and evocative call is a sharp kink-a-joo, and the song is a scolding chatter. It is more often heard than seen, calling from the tops of trees. Its life span is more than




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Flood toll rises in South

With most of the nation's attention focused on events in the capital, 14 people were killed and some 15,000 others treated for various ailments as a result of flooding in the South, Public Health Minister Chalerm Yoobamrung said on November 29.

From November 9 to 28, mobile medical units had treated 15,000 patients, mostly for foot problems and rashes, as well as flu. Some 1,000 others received treatment for stress and insomnia.

The ministry, which has spent 5 million baht to assist the victims, has also sent 50,000 first-aid kits.

The Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC) Region 4 provided food, manpower, vehicles and barges to assist flood victims in the southern border provinces, including Narathiwat, where five districts were submerged.

Severe flooding killed 14 people who drowned in Nakhon Sri Thammarat. The inundation also destroyed some 315,000 rai of crops, killed nearly 76,000 livestock animals and damaged 1,840 roads, bridges and weirs.

Damage is initially estimated at about 350 million baht, said Nakhon Sri Thammarat Governor Panu Uthairat. Further south, the Pattani River overflowed and flooded homes. The districts of Yaring, Panare, Muang, Mai Kaen and Ma-Yor have been declared disaster zones. In neighboring Yala province, local officials in Betong district were advised to be alert for flooding and landslides round the clock after days of heavy rain.



An aerial photo shows plantations hit by flash floods in four districts of Songkhla province late last month. Photo by: Santipab Ramasutr.

Two students perish in bus tire blowout

HAAD YAI: Two female students were killed in a freak accident in Haad Yai on November 26 when two tires of the bus they were traveling in burst, blowing a hole in the wooden floor of the vehicle.

Saowanee Jansawang and Kusuma Paethiow, both 21-year-old accounting students at Rajamangala University of Technology's Srivijaya Campus, fell under the bus when the floor beneath them was blown out by a pair of exploding tires on the left-hand rear of the bus.

Police said that the bodies of the two young women were found about 200 meters behind the bus, which came to a stop by the side of Kanchanawanit Rd in Tambon Nam Noi, on the road from Haad Yai to Songkhla Town. The two tires were completely shredded and there was a large hole above the axle where the seat had fallen through.

Other passengers said that the bus had been traveling fast downhill when the tires suddenly exploded, sending large fragments of the wooden floor flying into the bus. Three other students from the same university were injured. Passengers reported watching in horror as Miss Saowanee and Miss Kusuma fell onto the road under the bus.

Police detained bus driver Khren Samnuan, 43, to establish if there were any grounds to charge him over the incident.

SURAT THANI: A 72-year-old man stabbed his wife to death, then attempted to kill himself in Surat Thani's Kanchanadit District on November 25.

After hearing the elderly couple arguing, a neighbor who came to investigate found Chuan Kangbol lying on the floor and foaming at the mouth next to the body of his wife, Rachinee Kangbol, 73.

The neighbor called the police and took Mr Chuan to Kanchanadit Hospital. He was later transferred to Surat Thani Hospital for further treatment.

Police said that they believe Mr Chuan stabbed Mrs Rachinee after they had had an argument, and that he then drank insecticide to kill himself.

Politician shot dead

SURATTHANI: A member of the Traisopha Tambon Administration Organization in Surat Thani's Phra Saeng District was shot dead on November 28.

The victim's father was also seriously injured in the attack.

Suthep Khithong, aged 43, was found dead in his pick up truck in Trisopha Village 2. His injured father, Yeuang Khithong, age 63, was in the passenger seat next to him.

Police say both had been shot multiple times. Mr Yueang was taken to Surat Thani Hospital, where he was reported to be in serious condition.

Southern conflict continues

YALA: A rubber tapper was found shot dead in his orchard early on the morning of December 1 in Yala's Thantoe district, one of the most highly contested areas in the Deep South.

Police said the body of Adinan Che-sameh, 27, was riddled with bullets. The attack is the latest in ongoing violence in the Muslim majority region, where more than 3,200 people – mostly Malay Muslims – have been killed since January 2004 in connection with the ongoing insurgency.

The government blamed most, if not all, of the violent attacks in the region on a new generation of Malay separatists bent on carving out a separate homeland for Malay Muslims in the region.

Local Malay Muslims, on the other hand, accuse the authorities of carrying out a number of abductions, target killings and other atrocities.

In other incidents of violence in the Deep South, three people were shot dead and a teacher was seriously wounded.

On the same morning as the three killings, gunman riding pillion on a motorbike shot Prasarn Chairaj, 49, a teacher in Pattani's Nong Chick District. Mr Prasarn survived the attempt on his life, but was last reported in critical condition.

Police are continuing their investigations into the violence.

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PROMJAI DENTAL CLINIC

Construction, con artists and other shenanigans

Reaching skyward: Ao Nang residents have been perplexed at how a beachfront building has been able to add to the height of their building, above all the other buildings, in excess of the six-meter limit within 50 meters of the beach. Seeing this, all of the other beachfront property owners immediately became curious to see if the height regulations had been relaxed, or if this was just another example of construction without a proper permit.

While there had been talk of relaxing height restrictions in areas more than 300 meters from the beach, no-one has been aware of a change in the beachfront limits. The construction had carried on for quite some time and looked near to completion when a large sign suddenly appeared on the front of the building. It was a sign from the Ao Nang Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor) ordering a halt in construction. The next question locals asked was: "Why did they take so long?"

This is the most visible, high traffic area in Ao Nang. It would be impossible not to notice the construction, even for the most casual observer. The latest word

is the building must be knocked back down to the legal height. Good to see.

If you have been reading my columns over the past few months, you have been following the stories of various "Nigerian scam" emails that have been hitting resorts and hotels.

In addition, I highlighted the emails to "Update your account information" from various vendors from e-Bay to Yahoo, including one that duped one of my business associates.


Now, there's a new twist: the scam artists are targeting foundations and orphanages, posing as wealthy philanthropists on their death bed who want to leave these organizations millions of dollars. But the foundation must send them \$1,000 or so for "fees" to transfer the millions to help the poor orphans. Our tsunami foundation has been receiving a large number of such emails, as well as handwritten letters promising huge sums of money. Of all the scams, this has to be the lowest: I hope they rot in hell.

It seems like hotel bookings have hit a stone wall in the middle of November and hotels still have rooms available for the peak period of Christmas and New Year.




Construction work to increase the height of this building went on for quite some time before the authorities finally put up this sign (bottom left), which reads: Restricted zone for building. Any construction without permission from the Tambon Administration Organization is strictly forbidden.





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Occupancy rates have been running 40-50% in November. Normally they should be about 70% or more. Those in the hospitality business who had been guardedly optimistic about the prospects for this high season are less so now after the international financial meltdown continues – especially as the political shenanigans in Bangkok seem never ending.

Booking agents report that hotels are offering special discount room deals to fill the empty rooms, and the bookings for later January and February are not promising. Always seems like something!

Tidbits: Thai Air will start direct flights from Chiang Mai to Krabi this December. This won't make as much of an impact as the addition of an international direct

flight, but every bit helps. For me it's a blessing as my son is in private school in Chiang Mai and this cuts the travel time in half. The flights are scheduled for three days a week.

According to reports, the Ao Nang Loy Krathong festival, heavily promoted by the tambon administration with signs all about town, was a bit of a yawn. Seems like most of the budget went into the signs, or elsewhere.

While tourism struggles this season, rising prices for commer-

cial rental properties show no sign of slowing down. The redevelopment of the Phra Nang Inn on the beachfront road into a shopping plaza has set new highs for rental units. Small 2m x 5m shops with no water or indoor facilities rent for 600,000 baht a year. Units of 4m x 10m rent for 1.1 million baht a year, while units of the same size facing the road fetch 2 million baht a year. On the beach road, a 2m x 3m closet sized unit rents for 1 million a year, with a 1.5 million baht

key money payment upfront. That's a lot of T-shirts and post cards to sell.



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By Gus Reynolds

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Krabi welcomes a new season with Boek Fa Andaman Festival

Every year during November, Krabi celebrates the beginning of a new tourist season with the Boek Fa Andaman Festival, which means "Opening the Andaman Sea". After the long rainy season, locals gather in anticipation of the influx of tourists over the coming months.

Tourism is the mainstay of Krabi's economy and as new arrivals touch down, there is great hope among the community for a long and prosperous season. The festival is also a celebration of the rich diversity of cultures in the region – the food and crafts on sale reflect the infusion of styles from India, Malaysia and China.

While past festivals had featured exhibits drawn exclusively from within Krabi Province, this year, traditional arts and crafts from each of the fourteen Southern provinces were on display.

The festivities commenced on November 20 in Tara Park, close to the town center. After dark, the vibrant market scene was beautifully illuminated against the Krabi river. Hundreds of shoppers browsed the range of basketware, textiles, jewelry, coconut products, plants and furniture. Exotic aromas filled the air, as vendors concocted an array of mouthwatering snacks and desserts, demonstrating their unique cooking techniques.

Each night, the main stage hosted a wide variety of entertainment, including shadow puppet shows, known as "Nang Talung", traditional southern Thai dance, or "Manora", as well as upcoming local bands and singers.

"Nang Talung" is the indigenous performing art in the south of Thailand. It uses figures cut from animal leather, elaborately painted and attached to bamboo sticks. These figures are manipulated from behind a screen, ac-

companied by narration, dialogue and music in an hour-long story from the Ramayana, an ancient Sanskrit epic. The chief of Nang Talung sits behind the screen and not only narrates the play but provides dialogue for each of the puppets. It is a hugely popular form of entertainment and a regular feature of festivals in the area.

Manora dancing is revered by Thais throughout the country and originates from the southern province of Pattalung. It is the dance of half-human, half-bird creatures featured in the Ramayana. Dancers at the festival wowed the audience with their elegant gestures and colorful costumes.

A second, smaller stage featured performances from local musicians. Isalee Mala played traditional Thai folk music, known as 'Rong Ngeng', and there were also appearances by Jellyfish Band, featuring Choy, and Thai reggae sensation Job2do.

Rong Ngeng music is played on violins, mandolins, Arabian drums and Chinese gongs, accompanied by old fashioned Western dances. It is still prominent in Koh Lanta, where the first settlers inherited the legacy from the Portuguese, who had been the first Europeans to trade with Thailand.

Local musician and tsunami survivor Choy, whose real name is Piyasak Guntharungsi, performed a selection of songs he composed for his debut album Andaman: Lesson of Loss. The album is an expression of his mixed emotions about the tsunami, but ultimately Choy uses the power of music to send a message to the world, encouraging people to visit the islands and areas worst affected by the tsunami.

Choy explained the purpose of the festival: "It marks and cel-



brates the beginning of a new tourist season for Krabi. It is the end of the monsoon, when the rain disappears and tourists can enjoy the surrounding nature and good weather once again.

"Krabi is blessed with beautiful beaches, mountains, islands, hot springs and forests. It is a central point on the Andaman

coastline and a gateway to so many other idyllic holiday destinations, such as Phuket, Koh Lanta, Koh Phi Phi. We are very proud to reside in Krabi, it is a special place with so much culture. The international airport also makes it very accessible," he added.

Job2Do brought a slightly

more contemporary sound to the festival, performing a selection of his popular reggae songs. The crowds thronged to see the undisputed king of Thai reggae, complete with synchronized fire show.

The festival was a showcase for Krabi's charm, hospitality and rich heritage. Krabi is well and truly open for business.

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Down memory lane at Claude Angevin's fabulous Paris Phuket

Someone out there, please have pity on me. It's not easy writing food reviews when you want to blow the lid off corporate gouging but realize the resulting libel actions and lawyers' fees would put a serious dent in the twice-weekly Moët et Chandon delivery bill. Another hard fact of life for the average Joe restaurant critic is that just before writing a review for a seriously good restaurant you can get stomach-wrenching munchies that would shame Cheech and Chong after a bong-bashing session – because you're now going to have to describe a meal that damn well hit the perfect spot.

In the case of Paris Phuket in Kata, the second scenario applies. "Drat", and, as Daffy Duck would say, "triple drat".

But first let's give credit where credit is due: The guy who put me onto the Paris Phuket bistro is none other than "Mr Moo" himself, Ray Vaillancourt, nowadays a purveyor of fine English pork products.

He it was who ran Bluefin, the successful expat Kata hang-out, all those years ago, when 80% of the island's population drove like idiots and 15% were hospitalized because of them (RIP the other 5% and nothing's really changed since then, has it?)

So here Ray and I are on a Friday evening, reminiscing about the days when expats were somewhat whimsically known by their first names and their professions only; when "Second-hand Steve", "Computer Dave" and the like were the island's movers and shakers.

Ray, of course, was known as "Bluefin Ray" and hasn't lost an ounce of the charisma that made his bar such a nighttime magnet for the eclectic mixture of beach bums that made up the local expat scene.

This, of course, way before the environmentally challenged "property developers" moved in to sell the island down the river. Phuket, believe me, used to be one hell of a beautiful spot before those carpetbaggers moved in.

Claude Angevin, Paris

Phuket's young owner-chef from Toulouse, has set up a shop-house restaurant diagonally opposite the Sawasdee Village on Kata's Khetkwan Road. He's a modest sort of guy with a lovely young wife and a bouncy daughter.

His name – like those expats of a few years ago – is apt for someone who serves such angelic wine with his fare. He suggests a Chateau Causse St Chinian, which, slightly chilled, bears up well through the evening. Claude, it must be added, does not hold a French monopoly on neat monikers: a few years ago Le Meridien was

managed by a certain Monsieur "Hotelier".

To an extent Kata is the domain of Scandinavian visitors to Phuket, but it's often foolish to generalize and, as if to prove the point, the evening Mr Moo and I were there a savvy Dutch crowd came in to mark their last evening on the island before heading back to the land where you can smoke a reefer but not a Marlboro in a café.

They were obviously familiar with Paris Phuket's charms and rattled off their orders post-haste before I had time to sink a glass of Chinian – and that doesn't normally take long.

No wonder they were enthusiastic: the six-table restaurant (20 covers) is personable and friendly, but most of all, Claude delivers some of the best cuisine I have ever sampled in Phuket.

Don't get me wrong: I'm the last to gush, and the service at PP is somewhat slow. It's just that when the food does arrive it's obvious that Claude has cooked it just for you. Now, how far away can you get from corporate blandness than that?

The foie gras de canard (there's that dratted duck again) with framboise and salad has flavor subtleties that dance between orgasmic and, well, multiple-orgasmic.

Ray and I slip into a semitorpor between courses and cast our minds back to the Phuket of yore... Those were the days, some 15 years ago, when men were men and women were women. Nowadays, who cares?

An impossibly juicy red grouper filet and perfectly crunchy croquette with a yielding interior, accompanied by spanking asparagus, is served up by Pookie, Claude's lovely wife, and it knocks the "remember when my ex assaulted me in your bar" conversation stone dead. It's just perfect, and I can't recommend it highly enough.

Indeed, I suggest you give Claude a phone call ahead of trying this place to find out if he's booked up – a probability, since it's a real find in a tourism-choked minefield of mediocre cuisine.

Next comes a lovely rare hunk of beef with an egg cream and Gruyère morel sauce alongside courgette slivers and potato fritters, which is fiendishly difficult to describe except to say that the whole affair is worth a "dear diary" moment.

Crumbs. For once, I'm lost for words. I'll just say this: if you are looking for dedicated one-on-one home-cooked French cuisine then it's got to be Paris Phuket.



Beef with an egg cream and Gruyère morel sauce alongside courgette slivers and potato fritters.

Claude – carry on and you'll be up there with the best of them.

Thanks to Ray Vaillancourt, Mr Moo himself, for pointing us in the right direction – a truly memorable dining experience.

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Raising the bar in Phuket's fitness clubs



Out of 12 Thai trainers who took the American Council on Exercise (ACE) Personal Trainer Certification course, only Vorapong Sripet (left), Natarujat Sukkharat (center) and Anothai Klomsiri passed.

Not content with raising the bar with their own state of the art, space age gym, two men are determined to raise the standard for personal fitness training throughout Phuket. Hayden Rhodes and CJ Prieur, who manage Royal Phuket Marina (RPM) Health Club, have together offered the island of Phuket's first ever course for personal fitness instructors accredited by the American Council on Exercise (ACE).

Personal training is one of the fastest growing professions in the health and fitness industry. ACE's Personal Trainer Certification is designed for fitness trainers providing any form of

one-on-one or small-group fitness instruction.

Twelve Thai trainers took the course, of whom only three passed at the first attempt, which is a testament to the depth and breadth of the knowledge required to achieve the internationally recognized ACE certificate.

Of these three, one, Vorapong Sripet, is employed by RPM Health Club; another, Natarujat Sukkharat, works at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia; and the third, Anothai Klomsiri, is at the Amanouri Hotel in Bang Tao.

Originally from Phuket, Vorapong, 29, has been working in the fitness industry for seven years.

"I like helping people exer-

cise," he says.

"This course has taught me the right way to exercise and I have learned some much more complicated exercises. Now I can just look at a person and judge where they are physically strong and weak and where they might have any problems just from their posture. I couldn't do that before."

The course was no walk in the park though, as Vorapong admits that it was very difficult.

"You don't just learn about exercises, you learn about the whole body and all the muscles. It's not just about running. This course has taught me how to help people to exercise with a specific goal in mind. For instance if you

are a boxer normally you will just get taught how to box but I can show you exercises which will improve specific muscles for boxing," he says.

"I am very happy because not many people can get this qualification. There were more than 10 people on the course and only three got the certificate," he adds.

Natarujat Sukkharat, 30, has been at the Hilton Arcadia for four years. For her, passing the course is an achievement for a different reason. She says she didn't do much exercise in the past and has a lot of friends who work in offices.

"They don't exercise because they say they don't have time and I want to be a role model

for them. Before, people would not have believed that I could do this, because I am very skinny and have never been particularly good at sports," she says.

"This course has completely changed my habits and changed my attitude. I was very nervous at first but now I am happy to talk to the guests and share my knowledge with them. I work in the hospitality business so I want to provide the best possible service for my customers," she adds.

At 43, Anothai Klomsiri is the veteran of the trio. Anothai works at the Amanpuri Hotel in Bang Tao and has done so for the past 13 years.

For him, passing the course

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Master of Thai flute entertains Phuket

Celebrated Thai musician Mr Thanis Sriklindee treated a lucky audience to a free concert at Bangkok Hospital Phuket on Saturday November 29. Mr Thanis is regarded as one of Thailand's most accomplished players of the *khlui*, a type of Thai vertical flute.

Mr Thanis, who was born in Singburi province in 1951, first picked up the *khlui* at age 11. After teaching himself to play the instrument, he went on to study music at Srinakharinwirot University in Bangkok.

He has since played with musicians from all over Asia and was the first musician to modify a *khlui* to make it compatible with the Western musical scale. He has arranged music for a number of well-known Thai singers and has released an album of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's own compositions.

He has performed with a number of famous Thai acts and was formerly a member of Carabao, Thailand's most successful musical group of all time, playing keyboards and woodwind instruments on the band's "Made in Thailand" album.

The concert was arranged by Bangkok Hospital Phuket as part of its Care & Share program, which the hospital says is a way of showing gratitude to the community that supports it.



Mr Thanis has been a member of Carabao and released an album of arrangements of HM The King's own compositions.

was a huge relief because, as he says, "When you study, you feel you are carrying so much pressure, because it was so important for the hotel and for my career that I passed. When I found out I had passed it felt like a huge weight had been lifted."

"At first I thought the course was going to be easy but once it started I realized I was wrong. You have to learn the basics of anatomy and how the different muscles work, what different muscles do."

"Also you have to learn to motivate people, not just for the short term but for the long term. You want people to understand the benefits of exercise but you also want them to exercise with a happy mind."

Hayden has been in the fitness industry for 15 years and is the club manager at RPM Health Club, which opened earlier this year.

He says, "In the health and fitness industry in Asia there's a lot of unqualified people doing dangerous things. ACE is a doorway to education and knowledge

that's going to not only improve the standard of the industry and what people are doing but ensure people actually understand what they are doing, which they didn't here for many years."

RPM Health Club is managed by Seara (Sports Engineering and Recreation Asia Ltd) and CJ Prieur is the company's general regional manager. All the equipment at RPM Health Club is provided by Seara and, for CJ, having qualified staff on the island is a huge bonus.

He says, "We're interested in developing quality equipment but we want to develop the people so that they know how to use the equipment properly. It's like if you have the best computer but don't have any programmes on it."

"We provide the hardware, the equipment, but we also want to help develop the software, the people," he adds.

Between them Hayden and CJ are determined to take the quality of the provision of health and fitness services in Phuket to a truly international standard.



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KING'S CUP LAUNCH: Kevin Whitcraft (left), president of the King's Cup Regatta Organizing Committee, talks with Phuket Senator Phummsak Hongsyok at the opening of the 2008 King's Cup Regatta.



PILGRIMAGE OF PENANCE: Monks from all over Thailand (199 of them) congregated at the Big Buddha atop the Nak Kerd hills in Karon, where they will be performing acts of penance between December 1-10. The monks, who have committed various misdemeanors, will stay in the forest during the pilgrimage.



FRONT OFFICE FUN: More than 120 staff with The Crissey Group gathered at Phuket Merlin Hotel on September 27 for the group's annual staff party. Pictured are the Front Office Team of Royal Phawadee Village, who won the event's talent competition. The Crissey Group comprises: All 4 Diving, Aquamaster, Mermaid Cruises, Royal Phawadee Village and Sea World Dive Team.



CHARITY ART: Dr Frederick and Mrs Malina Davies, artist Lea Laarakker and Derek Davies at the opening cocktail reception of Ms Laarakker's exhibition 'Silk, the Art of Life' at Mom Tri's Boathouse Gallery. The exhibition, featuring hand-painted silk banners, shawls and various silk gift items, will run until January 7 2009. All profits go directly into the Baan Reng Khai foundation, helping 79 families in five villages to make a living and remain



SOUL SOUP: The Yentofah Exhibition, featuring the work of four young Thai artists, opened at Siam Indigo restaurant on Phang-Nga Road on November 21. The artists have been friends for the past 10 years and collectively own a shop in Bangkok. Their work will remain on display for the next three months. Pictured are: Yiu (left), Ek (2nd from left), Pi (2nd from right) and



CLEAN MARINE: Scuba divers prepare to take the plunge as part of the recent underwater waste clean-up at Koh Hong on Krabi. The charity has scheduled its next marine clean-up for December 7.



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Jazz fit for a king



The island's hipper denizens congregated in Phuket City November 30 for the first of this year's Rommanee Jazz Festival events. The evening saw an eclectic mix of local and visiting musicians entertain the crowds between the charming Sino-Portuguese shophouses of Soi Rommanee, in the heart of Phuket's Old Town.

The event was the first of five that will take place on the last Sunday of each month until April, when the rainy season will begin and dampen Phuket's appetite for outdoor festivals. There will also be a special event on Friday December 5 dubbed "Jazz for the King" in honor of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's 81st birthday.

Organizer Puchong Tirawatana told the *Gazette* he wants the festival to become a local tradition, launching high season in Phuket each year. He said the festival is an attempt to capture some of the atmosphere of the world's famous street festivals, such as Mardi Gras in New Orleans or the Rio Carnival.

Mr Puchong plans to book at least eight groups for each event, and hopes the festival will continue to attract musicians from around the world. "I don't care if the musicians are Thais or foreigners," he said. Sunday's event featured a Filipino singer and a Japanese saxophonist, as well as a number of Thai musicians.



Lonely Lady

Phuket-based artist Varaporn Ponrit's paintings are distinctly feminine. They reflect a woman whose life is filled with passion. In turn, her paintings stir the emotions of those who see her work.

Varaporn studied art at Thaivichitsilp Art School and Poh-chang Art Institution in Bangkok. She then went on to become an interior designer for La Scala. It was during this time, traveling through Spain, France and Italy, that she realized her ambition to become an independent artist.

A native of Southern Thailand, Varaporn now lives and works from her home studio in Phuket with her husband Kenneth Abday and their children Karyth & Karina. Varaporn's latest collection of paintings, titled "My Awakening", can be seen online at www.phuketlifestyle.com. Among the collection are paintings with simple titles, such as *Earth*, *Summer Rain* and *Sunrise*. The formless yet carefully combined streaks of color are moody reflections of Varaporn's inspiration from nature.



"When I paint, I try to touch people with what I do. I want to arouse their hopes, fears and passions. I want to make people feel their emotions," she says. Varaporn can be contacted at Tel: 081-6963901. Email: art@phuketlifestyle.com.



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Location Map

Oh, What a night!



These beautiful women have been the guiding lights of the Phuket International Women's Club, (from left) Linda Cumming, Past President, Khun Vipa Tanmanatragul, Carol Dux, Gala Chair and PIWC President Sue Arnulphy.



The ladies of the Phuket International Women's Club managed to throw another memorable evening of fine cuisine and entertainment at their annual fundraising gala, Diamonds are Forever, which was this year held at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort.

An estimated 1.3 million baht was raised from ticket sales,

raffles and auctions for the Club's scholarship fund for local students in financial need.

This year, many challenges faced organizers. With the Bangkok airports closed, the popular 30-piece Lai Thai Orchestra had to make their way to Phuket in mini-vans with their instruments.

The stunning crystal backdrop curtain, which gave the

evening its theme, was loaned to the PIWC by Diethelm Events and also had to be brought down and installed by a team from Bangkok.

"Considering the challenges this year, we were very happy with the evening especially when we had 29 good souls stand up to pledge 10,000 baht each to sponsor a student for a year," said Sue Arnulphy, President of the

PIWC.

The Scholarship fund has helped hundreds of local students over the years. For 2008, scholarships were given to 240 students at a cost of 2.8 million baht.

Currently, funds go to 50 students in Khao Lak, six students studying medicine, 16 nurses, nine students studying at Bangkok universities, eight at the local Prince of Songkla University and 46 at the Vocational College with the balance in local primary schools.

"In addition to individual scholarships, the PIWC has supported schools with lunch money, computer equipment, and musi-

cal instruments," explained Carol Fryer, Scholarship Co-ordinator. "The demand for educational funds increased after the 2004 tsunami with a number of orphaned children.

"Now those funds have expired and we need to find additional sources of funding to help these young children finish their education.

The cost is only 10,000 Baht per year per child."

If you want to assist with helping a local student in financial need, contact either info@phuketiw.com or call Carol at 087 417 8860.

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Abbyssan YOGA Opens its 2nd studio in Boat Lagoon

On November 15th, 2008 - Abyssan YOGA & Wellness Center, established in September 2007 in Bang Tao, opened a new studio at Boat Lagoon. The new Yoga studio will also embody the concept of "Wellness", the ultimate combination of exercise, meditation and a variety of yoga styles. Many group exercise classes will be offered each week along with New Body, Mat Pilates and Yoga Core! We also teach Kids yoga and Teens yoga.

Yoga enthusiasts will be offered the opportunity to practice yoga under the direction of Dr Abhishek, certified and registered bachelor of Naturopathy and Yogic sciences from Bangalore and Post graduation in Wellness Management from Apollo Hospitals, INDIA.

For more information please call us at **083-1070277**.

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ChildWatch golf raises record amount for charity



Blue Canyon Country Club played host to the 10th anniversary of the ChildWatch Charity Golf tournament, held on Saturday November 22. A midday shotgun start saw a full field of 124 golfers competing in a 4-ball Texas Scramble competition.

The golf was followed by a splendid buffet dinner and the highlight of the evening, the 'Live Auction'.

Event organizer and auctioneer extraordinaire Martin Carpenter MBE managed to coax record bids out of a captive audience, making this year's ChildWatch event the most successful to date, raising more than 1.3 million baht.

Assembled guests were also treated to a brief performance by some of the children under the care of the ChildWatch Phuket charity.

To round off the evening, Mr Carpenter, representing the event's presenting sponsors, the British Business Association of Phuket, thanked Blue Canyon Country Club, the hosts, all sponsors and competitors for their assistance in the staging of this year's event.

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Porsche Panamera previewed

Porsche has released the first official photos of the Panamera, a full six months before the official launch.

Conceived and designed as a four-door grand touring sports car, the Panamera combines driving dynamics with a spacious interior to generate the kind of excitement inherent in the Porsche experience.

Joining the 911, Boxster and Cayman sports cars, as well as the Cayenne SUV, the Panamera is Porsche's fourth model.

It features strongly contoured air intakes instead of a conventional radiator grille.

At the front of the car, striking wheel arches and a long, sleek hood create that typical 911 look, which has been prevalent for almost 45 years.

Like all Porsche models, the Panamera is oriented in every respect to the needs of the driver.

Occupants enjoy perfect ergonomic comfort in both the front seats and the two firmly contoured single seats in the rear.

The luggage compartment accommodates a large amount of luggage, while the variable space concept, with its folding rear seat backrests, enables the driver and passengers to individually adjust luggage space to fit their personal requirements.

Porsche has developed high performance, modern power units for the Panamera, again reflecting all the qualities typical of the Porsche marque.

The V-configuration engines within the engine compartment come with six or eight cylinders and range in power from 300 to 500 bhp.

Some of the engines use turbocharger technology and direct fuel injection, making them both fuel-efficient and powerful. Power can be routed through either a manual six-speed gearbox or the new seven-speed, double-clutch gearbox, the so called Porsche-Doppelkupplung (PDK).

A dual-clutch transmission effectively offers the function of

Six months before the official launch, we take a look at the new Panamera which has an annual sales target of 20,000 units.



The Porsche Panamera will be built at Porsche's Leipzig Plant, where a production hall measuring some 22,000 square meters and a logistics center are currently under construction.

two gearboxes in one.

Think how a conventional gear shift occurs: the driver reduces power, presses the clutch, which disconnects the engine from the gearbox, and then selects a new gear before releasing the clutch pedal.

It is obvious therefore that a conventional transmission means that there is not a continuous flow of power from the engine, with torque activated in an interrupted sequence according to the gear shifts.

The dual-clutch transmis-

sion uses, by definition, two clutches, but has no clutch pedal. Sophisticated electronics and hydraulics control the clutches, with one clutch controlling the odd-numbered gears – first, third, fifth – and the second, the even-numbered ratios – second, fourth and sixth.

This unique system means gears can be changed with no interruption in the power flow from the engine, offering smooth gear shifts and better fuel economy.

Porsche's incredibly successful 956 and 962C Group C

race cars have benefited from the PDK transmission.

In addition to rear-wheel drive, the top-of-the-range version of the model, the Panamera 4S, comes with even more sophisticated all-wheel drive, which is also available for the other versions as an option.

The Porsche Panamera will be built at Porsche's Leipzig Plant, where a production hall measuring some 22,000 square meters and a logistics centre are currently under construction.

While the engines featured

in the Panamera are built at Porsche's main plant in Zuffenhausen, the painted body shells will be supplied by the Volkswagen plant in Hanover.

The Leipzig plant will then assemble the Panamera for final delivery, with an annual sales target of some 20,000 units. The Panamera will make its world debut in spring 2009 and the first models arrive at dealers worldwide in late summer.

Jeff Heselwood can be contacted at jhc@netvigat.com

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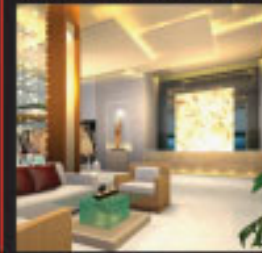
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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

December 7. PC Group Therapy Patong.

Is your Internet connection driving you NUTS? Ready to throw your PC out the window? Need advice on where to buy a computer, or get one repaired? Join "For Dummies" author Woody Leonhard for his weekly PC Group Therapy sessions. They're absolutely FREE. Novices most welcome - no experience necessary. Bring your questions, bring your computer, bring your mother-in-law and your worry beads and let's see if we can sort things out. For directions to Sandwich Shoppe Patong (Aroonsom Plaza, near BYD Lofts), see the web site.

Sponsored by the Phuket Gazette and Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppes. For more information contact Woody Leonard. Tel: 089-196 0940. Email: woody@khunwoody.com. www.KhunWoody.com.

December 8-11. Pre-Christmas Mat Class Series.

Four transformational class-ess in four days. Take part in a fun and challenging workshop series that will teach you moves & postures to lengthen, strengthen & sculpt your body while bringing fluidity & focus to your practice. Each class lasts 75 mins and incorporates the best of yoga, pilates, dance and unique body-shaping movement. Classes are at 10:30am and 6:30pm at the Studio @ Boat Lagoon. For more information contact Roxanne.

Tel: 089-027 6970. Email: roxanne@yogaphuket.com. www.phuketyoga.com

December 9. Christmas for Soi Dog Foundation at Tatonka.

From 7.00pm to 11.00pm, the Soi Dog Foundation and Tatonka's Soi Dog's Annual Christmas Dinner is being held at Tatonka restaurant at Laguna.

Tatonka owner Harold will be serving up a dazzling array of delicious courses. Dinner tickets are 1,000 baht, with half of the proceeds going to The Soi Dog Foundation. Lots of great prizes to be won in the raffle and silent auction.

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



Laguna Phuket Triathlon 2008

December 7

From 7.00am to 1.00pm at Laguna Phuket. Southeast Asia's premier multi-sport event, the Laguna Phuket Triathlon, presented by Thai Airways International, the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Herbalife, is now in its 15th year. The 1.8km swim, 55km bike ride and 12km run offers a US\$20,000 pro prize purse. The event expects to attract some 800 athletes from over 30 countries competing in both the individual triathlon and the Herbalife Corporate Challenge Team Relay. A 6km fun run for 500 participants will also be conducted during the event. For further information call the race office Tel: 076-324060. Email: info@lagunaphukettriathlon.com www.lagunaphukettriathlon.com.

December 10. Constitution Day Public Holiday.**December 12 January 22. Kris Saroenjai Exhibition.**

An exhibition by artist Kris Saroenjai will run from December 12 to January 22 between 12pm to 9pm. Born August 2, 1965, Love is elemental throughout Saroenjai's work: love for his art, love for his daughters, love for elephants as a symbol of his 'Thainess' (elephants are revered in Thailand).

A self-taught painter, his work is realistic and mature. He feels passionately that life is beautiful, a feeling which is visible in his paintings.

The Kris Saroenjai exhibition will open at the Art Rendez-vous Gallery on December 12 at 7pm. For more information contact Patrick Bois. Tel: 076-219095. Email: art.rdv@gmail.com www.art-rendez-vous-gallery.com.

December 13-14. Christmas Market at Royal Phuket Marina.

A Christmas market will be held from 4.30pm to 8pm on the week-ends of December 13/14 and 20/

21 at the Royal Phuket Marina (RPM) Town Square.

Local and expat residents of Phuket are invited to come along and sell their home-made Christmas cakes, cookies, plum puddings, hand-made Christmas baubles, candles, jewellery, etc.

Booking fee is 300 baht per evening, payable in advance at Skippers Bar at RPM. Buskers, Capella singers, Christmas choirs and artists are warmly invited to come and liven up the scene even more.

For more information contact Crystal Riedemann. Tel: 076-360890. Email: crystal@skippersphuket.com. www.skippersphuket.com.

December 14. PC Group Therapy - Laguna.

Tel: 089-1960940. Email: woody@khunwoody.com

December 15-20. Phuket Carnival.

This year's Phuket Carnival will take place between December 15 and 20 at Patong Beach. Activities will be held from 9am to 12am. This year's carnival is organized and funded by Patong Municipality.

There will be One Tambon One Product (OTOP) sales, arts and culture displays, spa and massage services, and food and beverage services.

The entertainment will showcase traditional Thai culture from

various regions around the country. Highlights of the carnival will include fireworks on Dec 15, Beach clean-up and longtail boat competition off Loma Park at 9am on Dec 16, Adventure Competition at Loma Park at 9am on Dec 17 and a Fancy Parade along Beach Road at 5pm on Dec 20.

For more information contact Thawee Pol Promkaew. Tel: 081-677 0121.

Email: iamsill@hotmail.com. www.patongcity-phuket.org

December 20 to January 17. "The Rhythm of the Heart" Art Exhibition.

An art exhibition entitled 'The Rhythm of The Heart' by emerging Thai artist Santi Thongsuk will run from December 20 to January 17 at D Gallery, Royal Phuket Marina.

Santi Thongsuk, a versatile artist and devoted Buddhist, won the first ASEAN Art Awards in Singapore (1994). He has not only participated in a number of domestic and international exhibitions, but was also represented at the Christie's auction in Bangkok titled "Important Thai Paintings".

Exhibition hours are: Tue-Sat, 11am to 7pm; Sunday, 12pm to 6pm. For more info contact Ms Jittiporn Barua. Tel: 076-360867. Email: jittiporn@dgallery.co.th www.dgallery.co.th

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HORIZONS

ON THE MOVE

Frank Grassmann has been appointed General Manager of Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa. A German national fluent in Spanish and English, he joins the Evason from the Dusit Thani Manila, where he held the position of Hotel Manager. Mr Grassman has nearly 20 years of experience with leading hotels around the world, including the Savoy Hotel in London, the Steigenberger properties in Germany, the InterContinental in Riyadh, Dusit Thani in Phuket and Bangkok, and the Sheraton Maria Isabel in Mexico City.



West Sands Phuket has announced the appointment of **Wasana Korsai** as the resort's new Spa Manager. Mrs Korsai has accumulated more than a decade's worth of experience in Phuket's hospitality and spa industry. She has previously been employed at the Angsana Spa, the Banyan Tree Resort & Spa. She has also worked at the Trisara Resort & Spa. Before taking up her new appointment at West Sands Phuket, Mrs Wasana was employed as the Spa Manager at the Blue Canyon Country Club.



Edwardo Iswandi has been appointed as Director of Sales and Marketing for the Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket. Born in Indonesia, Mr Iswandi previously held the position of Director of Sales & Marketing of the Sofitel Krabi Phokeethra Golf & Spa Resort. A veteran of the hospitality industry, Mr Iswandi has held several prominent positions in sales and marketing at a number of five-star properties, including Hyatt Group properties in Indonesia and Thailand, as well as Melia Bali Villas & Spa Resort, Indonesia.



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

The current global financial crisis is generating interest in investments considered safer than the volatile stock markets. One such option is gold, but, having decided to invest in this most reliable of precious metals, the next question is: how does one hold gold?

Gold can be held in a bank safety deposit box, but many international investors will find it difficult to arrange this less-than-simple transaction. An alternative is an ETF (Exchange Traded Fund) which is simply a unit trust or mutual fund that holds physical gold, ensures security and issues units (shares) to represent the holdings of individual investors.

Again, this sounds straightforward, but anti-money laundering safeguards in the US (where many ETFs originate) mean that the average non-American expat investor is probably going to find



the process onerous, since additional checks will be made on investors who are not US citizens. International ETFs are also available, and such investors will find them considerably easier to access.

The problem is that gold, in its physical form, does not yield an income; the investor is reliant on a rise in the price of gold to make a profit.

That said, if an investor believes that recent stimulus and bailout packages will result in a weaker US dollar, then gold will very likely return to its traditional role as a counterbalance to the US unit.

Another possible outcome of the massive monetary and fiscal stimulus packages being seen around the world is the return of high levels of inflation. Central

banks and governments may well succeed in their mission to create economic growth, but it may become necessary to mop up excess liquidity or risk high inflation or the creation of yet another asset bubble.

For gold "bulls", an alternative way to invest is to purchase gold shares, which offer significantly higher returns than simply holding the physical metal. Most gold shares represent the metal in the mines themselves.

Normally when the gold price rises, gold shares increase at a much faster pace due to the fixed cost to produce gold. For example, if the total cost of extraction is US \$500 per ounce while the gold price is US\$800 per ounce, then the profit is US\$300. If the price rises to US\$1,100 per ounce then the profit margin has

increased by 100%.

In reality, gold share transactions are not as simple as in the example above. Emotions in broader stockmarkets are one of the main reasons for this. Should a rise in the price of gold coincide with a rising stockmarket, gold shares will generally outperform average shares. However, if the rest of the stockmarket is bearish, returns are likely to be lower. Stockmarkets vary between overly optimistic and overly pessimistic. In an overly pessimistic market, "paper assets", i.e. shares, tend to underperform.

Gold peaked at US\$840 an ounce in the early 1980s. It bottomed out at around US\$250 an ounce in the late 1990s and only reached this peak again early this year.

In fact, gold was at US\$1,017, a new record high, some months ago, only to lose around 30% of its value subsequently. Only recently has it shown signs of life again and moved to over US\$800 an ounce.

It is difficult for private investors to select individual gold shares; much more efficient is an investment in a gold fund held offshore.

It is important, as always, to select a fund manager with an above-average track record.

The final way for the private investor to invest in gold is via the futures markets. Again, it is important to use a fund for this approach.

The volatility of futures funds means they are seldom boring, but they have one great advantage over any other investment method: they can make a profit on both a rising or falling gold price.

We live in very uncertain times and reliable crystal balls are in extremely short supply. However, an investor in gold over the past five years would have seen a gain of around 100%, and a gain over the last 10 of around 300%.

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"ONCE UPON A TIME"

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Topic: "ONCE UPON A TIME"

Language: English

Length: 800-1,200 words

Age: Between 14-18, up to December 1, 2008

Opening date for submissions: December 1, 2008

Closing date for submissions: January 15, 2009

Winners announced: February 20, 2009

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- *The Nation*, Hat Yai office...for all southern provinces except Phuket, Krabi and Phang-Nga
- *Phuket Gazette* for Phuket, Krabi and Phang-Nga

2 Northern region contest: *CityLife*, Chiang Mai

3 Northeastern region contest coordinator: *The Nation*, Khon Kaen office

4 Bangkok contest (including Central & Eastern region): *The Nation*, Bangkok

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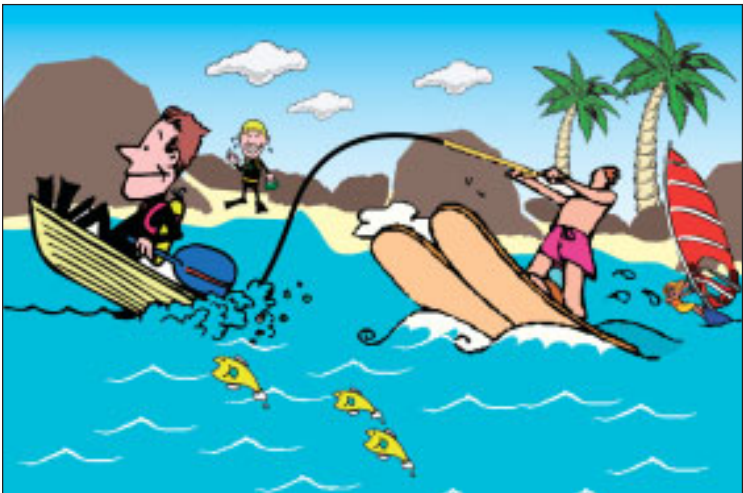
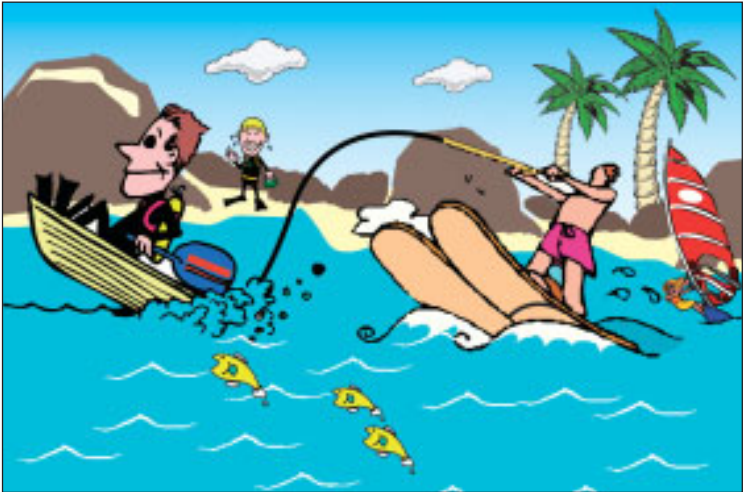
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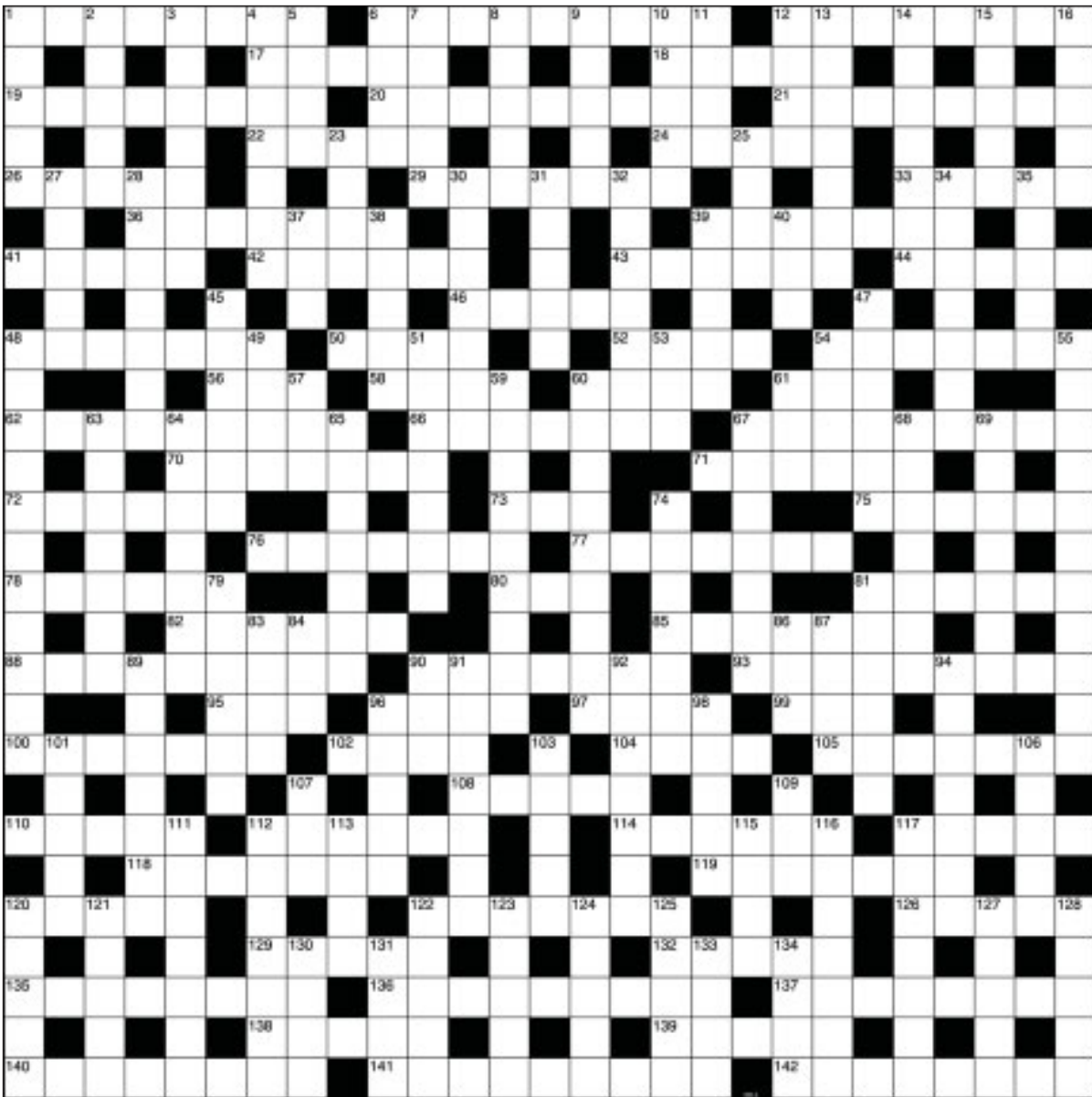
PUZZLES

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?





The BIG Crossword

© Lovatts Publications Pty Ltd

Across

1. Tied
6. Proprietors
12. Changed (hairdo)
17. ... mortis
18. Lady
19. Police vehicle (5,3)
20. Praised
21. Flight attendants
22. French river
24. Wood-turning machine
26. Precious fur
29. Thickest
33. Airwaves media
36. Silly
39. City roads
41. Clips
42. Idle talker
43. Detected
44. Archfiend
46. Early Peruvians
48. Easy to read
50. Author unknown
52. Wild goat
54. Ill-used (3-4)
56. Blunder, faux...
58. Designer,... St Laurent
60. Anchor (boat)
61. Steal from
62. Masks
66. Glimpsing
67. Romantic (dinner)
70. Canvas shoe
71. Dish of melted cheese
72. Baby-minding centre
73. Junior Scout
75. Restaurant
76. The C of CD
77. Income cheats, tax...
78. Commands
80. Volcanic particles
81. More feeble
82. Paris landmark,... Tower
85. Entourage
88. Sat astride
90. La Paz is there
93. Omission
95. Bushranger,... Kelly
96. Lingerie trim
97. Brink
99. Remote
100. Hankered
102. Conceal
104. Yes
105. Leasehold
108. In vain, to no...
110. Cowboy show
112. Defame
114. Hoity-toity (2-2-2)
117. Desexes
118. Impaired
119. Timeless
120. Minimum
122. Shriek
126. Stretchy material
129. Female title
132. Yellow-brown pigment
135. Of Middle Ages
136. Pliable
137. Approaching
138. Table lights
139. Tense incident
140. Senseless
141. Cull (applicants)
142. Most luxurious

Down

1. Exams
2. Hand digit
3. Inexhaustible
4. Scratching out
5. Dreadful
6. Mortgage, home...
7. Curved over
8. Folksinger, Bob...
9. Greek fruit
10. Resided
11. Cleaning agent, caustic...
12. Skin eruption
13. Came in
14. Foils
15. Attracted
16. Dance club
23. Pubs
25. Adds (up)
27. Cowgirl,... Oakley
28. Drifting (into coma)
30. Car motors
31. Cheeky
32. Recording period
34. Normally (2,1,4)
35. Potato variety
37. writer,... Fleming
38. Black timber
39. Derisive smile
40. tyrannosaurus...
45. Mountainous
47. Pacify
48. Laughably
49. Relieve
51. Binge
53. Swamp
54. Garden pool
55. Basic facts of the matter (5-6)
57. Aegean or Caspian
59. Pageant
60. Get into mischief
61. Sprinted
63. Slim
64. Escorted (to seat)
65. Scudded (of clouds)
67. Amounts to (5,2)
68. Confederacies
69. Lustfully looking
74. Artillery fire
79. Actor,... Poitier
81. Ran smoothly
83. Escaped
84. Wined and dined
86. Artificial conception (1,1,1)
87. Orderly
89. Inflatable mattresses (3,4)
90. Rotten
91. Marine
92. Peaceful
94. Angrily
96. Fuming
98. Perfume,... toilette (3,2)
101. Call up
103. Rubbish
106. Fragrant timber
107. Practical joke
109. Lyrical verse
111. Porridge ingredient
112. Animals that suckle young
113. Heavy metal
115. Irritate
116. Weapons cache
117. Rides quickly
120. Citrus fruit
121. Confuse
122. Break into pieces
123. Head of state
124. Electronic message
125. Detains
127. Serious offence
128. Acute anxiety
130. Sadly
131. Current units
133. Sure-fire thing
134. Frisk

Solution on next page

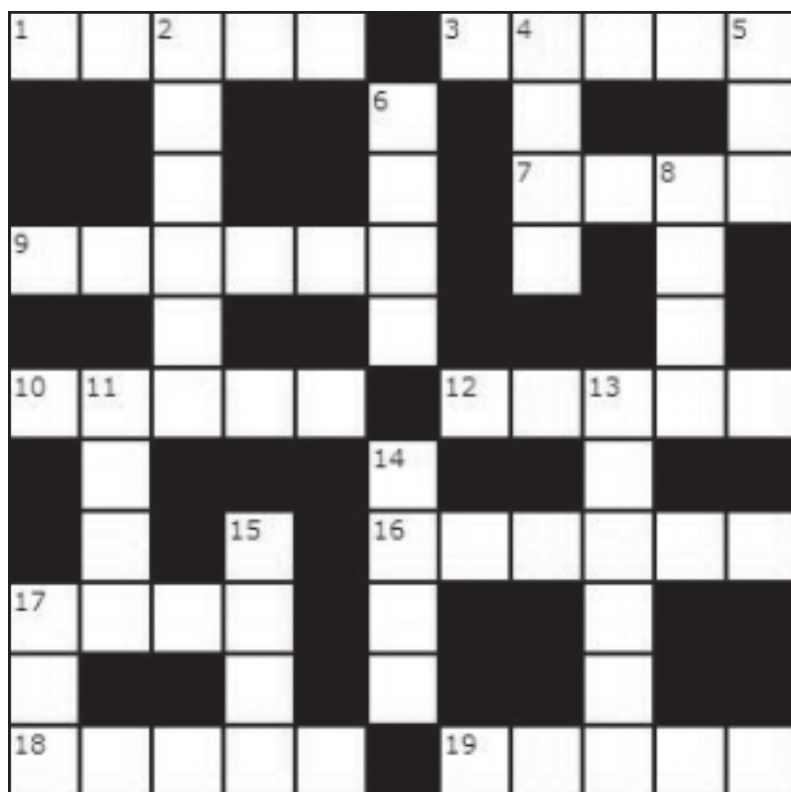
su | do | ku

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

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

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.



Quick Crossword

Across

1. Sandy place
3. Splendor
7. Food list
9. Shape
10. Father Xmas
12. Flowers
16. Meal
17. Ball
18. Disease
19. Suck it

Down

2. Season
4. Baby sheep
5. Not me
6. Team
8. Pleasant
11. Continent
13. Old person
14. Follow
15. Wet
17. Precious stone

Solution below

Get your brain in gear with the MONSTER QUIZ

1. In which sport might you see a crucifix?
2. Who plays the special effects man in the film F/X Murder by Illusion?
3. A frittata is an Italian version of what?
4. Who was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic?
5. On which island is the resort of Limassol?
6. Who wrote the Noddy stories?
7. In roman numerals, what number does the letter M with a bar above it represent?
8. On which tree or bush do silk worms normally feed?
9. How are Blossom, Bubbles and Buttercup collectively known?
10. What was the name of the dog that slept on his master's grave for 14 years in Edinburgh?
11. Which war was ended by the signing of an armistice on 27th July 1953?
12. In literature, how are the duo of Charles and Gerald better known?
13. Who wrote the song 'All Along The Watchtower', which was a big hit for Jimi Hendrix?
14. What mountain range is the natural habitat of the llama?
15. Which of the Great Lakes is the source of the River Niagara?
16. Which infectious disease has a name derived from the Latin for 'bad air'?
17. What was the name of Yuri Gagarin's space ship?
18. Which 1974 sequel won the best picture award at the 1975 Oscars?
19. Which king of England had a mother and a son who were beheaded?
20. What is the surname of Miss Piggy from the Muppets?

Answers below



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Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Quick crossword



Monster Quiz Answers

1. Gymnastics; 2. Bryan Brown; 3. Omelette; 4. Amelia Earhart; 5. Cyprus; 6. Enid Blyton; 7. 1 Million; 8. Mulberry; 9. The Powerpuff Girls; 10. Greyfriars Bobby; 11. The Korean War; 12. Mills and Boon; 13. Bob Dylan; 14. Andes; 15. Lake Eerie; 16. Malaria; 17. Vostok 1; 18. The Godfather, Part II; 19. James I; 20. Lee.

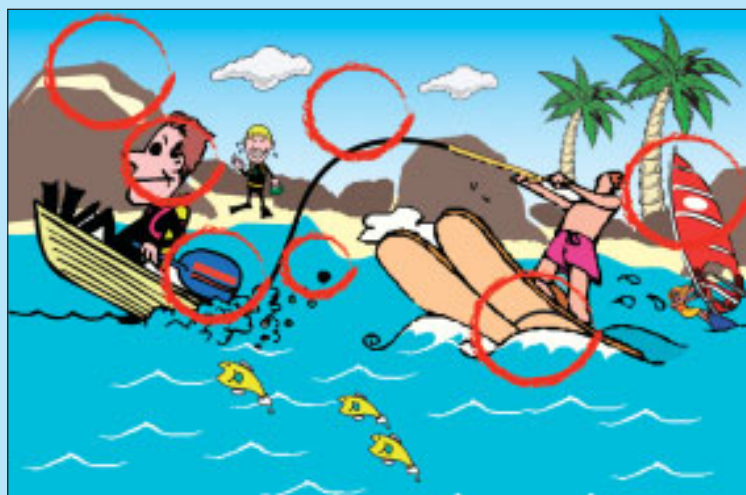
Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

Solution to this week's BIG Crossword

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

Solution to this week's Cartoon Puzzle



John LeCarré takes on terrorism



Off the SHELF

By James Eckhardt

In 1957, with the publication of his third novel, "The Spy Who Came in from the Cold", John LeCarré invented a new form of fiction: the literary spy thriller. What differentiates Le Carré's novels from the formulaic plots of lesser writers is the depth of characterization found in his work, as well as his highly accomplished literary style and deep and often conflicting moral concerns.

LeCarré followed the success of his first novel with his famed Smiley Trilogy, centering on George Smiley, the British spy chief who does battle with his Russian counterpart, Karla.

Following the Cold War, LeCarré deftly turned his hand to other centers of conflict that lent themselves to espionage: the international arms trade ("The Night Manager"), war in the eastern Congo ("Mission Song"), the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ("The Little Drummer Girl") and Big Pharma ("The Constant Gardener").

At age 77, he has produced his 21st novel, "A Most Wanted Man". The subject of the title is a stick-thin young man named Issa who has been imprisoned and tortured in Russia for being a Chechen terrorist. He has escaped a Turkish prison aboard a smuggler's vessel and has turned up in Hamburg, Germany, with no papers and his photo distributed by Interpol.

Here he is taken in hand by an idealist young German lawyer named Annabel who is working for an organization that helps the stateless.

He appears to be a devout Muslim who is innocent of the charges against him. He also possesses a deposit box number containing millions, in care of a failing private British bank run by Tommy Brue, the last of a line of family bankers.

It turns out that the money has been deposited by a notorious Russian special forces chief. It turns out too that Issa is the Russian master criminal's son.

All this sparks the interest of Gunther Bachmann, a German intelligence agent, who is on the trail of the money that supports terrorism in the Islamic world.

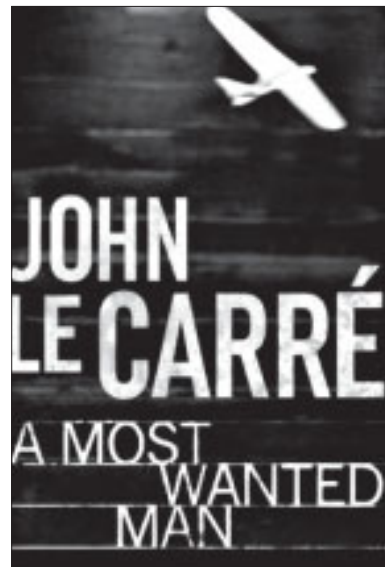
"If there are people in the world for whom espionage was ever the only possible calling, Bachmann was such a person. The polyglot offspring of mixed marriages contracted by a flam-

boyant German-Ukrainian woman, Bachmann had by the age of thirty run away to sea, trekked the Hindu Kush, been imprisoned in Colombia and written a thousand-page unpublishable novel.

Yet somehow, he has discovered his true calling; first as the occasional overseas official without diplomatic rank; in Warsaw for the Polish; in Aden, Beirut, Baghdad and Mogadishu for his Arabic; and in Berlin for his sins, while he cooled his heels after fathering a near-epic scandal of which only the sketchiest outlines had ever reached the gossip mill."

Bachmann's target isn't Issa but far bigger fry: Dr Abdullah, code-named Signpost, an Egyptian Islamic scholar, author and television personality.

Dr Abdullah collects millions for Islamic charities, perhaps five per cent of which goes to fund terrorists. The Americans, the British and the Germans all want him. Bachmann's idea is to abduct him



briefly and turn him into a double agent. The Anglo-American approach is much more brutal.

The plot is quite linear, without the usual LeCarré flourishes, and ends in a single violent collision. Perhaps all the better, given the suddenly ruined lives of people the reader has come to care deeply about.

Which is right? Do two men take 'wives' or a 'wife'?

Which of the following is correct: "Bill and Jim take their wives to dinner" or "Bill and Jim take their wife to dinner"?

To me, the first version implies that Bill and Jim have more than one wife apiece, and the second one says that Bill and Jim share one wife.

Beniah C Harding
Thomaston, Maine

Barbara replies: Whoever invented English didn't think it through to this level of detail.

Your sentence is going to be ambiguous one way or another, so you might as well have it be ambiguous in a grammatically orderly way. "Bill and Jim" and "their" are plural, so "wives" should be too.

Furthermore, no one is truly likely to misunderstand "take their wives to dinner." Only someone who is looking for trouble will find it.

All the same, carefully matching the parts of a sentence can sometimes make it worse. "At the end of the evening, the wives gave each other goodbye kisses" sounds a bit steamy, don't you think?

If you want to be very precise, you could say, "Each wife gave the other a goodbye kiss." But most people would say, "The wives gave each other a goodbye kiss" – and that's perfectly correct.

People who insist it's not correct and they would never be so sloppy haven't done as much painstaking editing as I have. Constructions of that kind are common – so common that we scarcely notice them unless the misreading is funny.

In fact, the one hard-and-fast rule about them – which

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 readers' questions.

native speakers instinctively follow – requires certain nouns to remain singular no matter how many people they relate to.

Those nouns are abstractions, such as "enjoyment" – as in, "The couples' enjoyment (not 'enjoyments') of the evening was complete."

I am 85 years old, so I know English has been dumbed down for many decades and I cannot keep up. What about "if" and "wish"? Is it still correct to say, "If I WERE king," "If I WERE you," "I wish I WERE king," "I wish I WERE you"?

Most books on English avoid even mentioning this quandary."

Moose Williams
Arlington, Virginia

Barbara replies: That's a bit harsh about decades' worth of dumbing down the language, don't you think?

There is very little that was correct decades ago that is now considered incorrect.

The major exceptions are references we've come to think of as sexist, racist or ethnocentric.

For instance, a nonspecific "policeman" is now a "police of-

ficer," and the members of racial, religious and disabled groups etc. get to decide what they should be called. But that change in the language isn't a dumbing down. It's a wising up to people's sensitivities.

On the other hand, it's true that many spellings and phrasings once considered incorrect have become acceptable.

Each of us has to decide where on the spectrum of correctness we feel most comfortable.

Lots of people want to be relaxed and modern, as opposed to formal and traditional, and I don't particularly blame them.

Sometimes I like to be relaxed and modern too – but my duty is to explain what's unques-

tionably correct, and traditional usage almost always is.

Which brings us back to your question about "if" and "wish".

Try looking under "subjunctives" in your books on English. That's where you're most likely to find these words discussed.

The subjunctive is one of three "moods" of English. The other moods are the indicative, which is what we usually use, and the imperative, which is for commands.

We use the subjunctive mainly for talking about hypothetical things, and we create it with out-of-the-ordinary verb forms – such as "I were."

When we "wish" for something, that something is hypothetical, because, of course, we don't have it.

So the subjunctive mood is correct for wishes, as in "I wish I WERE king" – as opposed to an indicative statement like "I AM (or WAS or WILL BE) king in the community-theater play."

"If" is trickier, because some "if" statements are purely

hypothetical, and others are based in reality.

"If I WERE king" is again hypothetical, and therefore subjunctive.

Contrast that, please, with the reality-based "If I AM ever going to end this long explanation, I might as well do it now."



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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The long road to recovery

As this edition of the *Phuket Gazette* goes to press, the first flight from Phuket to Suvarnabhumi was getting ready for take-off after the unprecedented one-week closure of Thailand's primary international airport (and its domestic hub) by anti-government protesters from the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD).

By most estimates it will take at least two weeks for Suvarnabhumi Airport to return to anything resembling normal service due to operational factors, the mess left behind by the protesters, and the need to re-certify Suvarnabhumi in accordance with internationally recognized International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards. That process is expected to take one to two weeks, with officials aiming to have it certified and fully operational by December 15, at the earliest.

The number of stranded tourists had surpassed 350,000 by the time the PAD finally called off its protest in the wake of the Constitutional Court decision to dissolve the three main coalition parties for electoral fraud – a ruling that most certainly would have been made without the PAD's illegal and devastating occupation of Bangkok's airports, it should be noted.

The number of stranded holiday-makers will certainly continue to swell as more people end their vacations and find they have no way of getting home. Each of those inconvenienced will have his or her own tale of woe to recount to friends in their home country, which is certain to cause long-term damage to Thailand's already tainted reputation as a tourist destination.

While it is probably too early to speculate on what the long-term effects on Phuket's tourism industry will be, most industry analysts concede that this year's high season, which was off to a poor start anyway, is now almost a complete write-off.

Despite all the bad news, the fact remains that the worst of this crisis will soon be behind us and the likelihood of mass bloodshed in the streets of the capital has receded.

Fortunately, Phuket has shown remarkable resiliency over the years, most notably after the 2004 tsunami disaster that wiped out a high season but saw arrival figures rebound and reach new highs in 2007.

Unfortunately, over the same period, the number of rooms in accommodation establishments registered with the Tourism Authority of Thailand also increased at an unsustainable rate: from 32,076 units in 2005 to 38,582 in 2008, an increase of over 20%.

If there is a silver lining to be found in the recent events, it might be a long-overdue slowdown in this growth rate, which has led to environmental degradation, infrastructural woes and a host of other problems which have significantly degraded the island's once-indisputable charms.

- The Editor

The Phuket Gazette

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Editor: Parichat Utintu

Managing Editor: Nick Davies

Editorial Team:

Atchaa Khamlo, Passara Kaewbumroong
Tipwarintron Tannakarachod, Daniel Waites
Stephen Fein, Marc Mulloy, Dale Nottingham

Managing Director: Oranee Hildebrand

General Managers: Niladaa Mastanawattanakul,
Natthira Susangrat

Production Manager: Suchart Changate

Publisher: The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

Contact us

Advertising Sales: adsales@phuketgazette.net

Classified Advertising: classads@phuketgazette.net

Website Services: koy@phuketgazette.net

Gazette Guide inquiries: guide@phuketgazette.net

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Telephone: 076-236555 (10 lines) Fax: 076-213971

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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.

Tuk-tuk tyranny

Eric Steen-Olsen's letter [*Ticked off at tuk-tuks*] in your issue of November 29, while not revealing much that isn't already widely known, certainly does summarize the problem nicely. So now the only thing remaining is implementation of the obvious remedy against the behavior – disbanding of the cartels that bring the disgrace to us. But how is this going to happen?

In reading your 'Governor's Letter', which is right next to Mr Steen-Olsen's letter, I note with disappointment that the tuk-tuk monopolies, and the damage they continue to do to our image as a tourist destination, are not even mentioned as a problem. Or perhaps they are deemed troublesome, but somehow rank below the items listed as priorities by our new governor, although he does make reference to the importance of not overcharging tourists and getting rid of thieves.

It could be that Gov Preecha is aware that virtually every governor before him over the past 15 years has promised elimination of the jet-ski problems, but that none has succeeded. But this should not discourage him from trying to bring open and real competition for transport services to our beach areas.

Note that Gov Preecha's immediate predecessor, Khun Niran Kalayanamit, did achieve success in removing the transport monopoly dominating our airport for the past two decades. If that could be done, surely something similar could be put in place to rid the island of the shame brought to our 'paradise' by the tyranny of the tuk-tuks at the beaches.

Chainarong Charuvastr
Layan Beach

Get real, Gazette

I read with a mixed sense of boredom and disbelief your recent online news: "Governor urges police to quash trade in sex, pirate goods". What a complete crock! I wonder why you even bother printing such a story. The governor knows exactly what's going on – everyone does.

The reasons that the laws on prostitution and intellectual property are not enforced are simple: corruption and laziness. Period. Even your own newspaper published an "Issue and Answer" column not too long ago in which the head of the Kathu Police said his *department* has no intention of enforcing prostitution laws except in cases where the women are forced to provide sexual services against their will.

So why bore your readers with such useless stories as the one about quashing prostitution and pirate goods?!

Disgusted
Rawai

Public transport sucks

Having just moved to Phuket from Bangkok, and being unwilling to risk my neck on a motorbike, I've been shocked by the lack of public transport in Phuket Town. There are a number of tuk-tuks on the roads but these are extortionately priced. Why must one pay so much for the pleasure of sitting in the back of a noisy deathtrap, inhaling dust and smoke all the way?

I've never seen a bus stop in Phuket, let alone a bus. And hire taxis are non-existent. Why is this? If there were a half-decent public transport system, or even a few taxis on the roads, perhaps there wouldn't be quite

so many road deaths. Phuket's transport authorities should be ashamed of themselves.

Jemina Chan
Phuket City

Dog diner now open for business

I have noticed that the issue of stray dogs is of great concern to many residents, local and foreign alike. So it's with delight that I am now able to offer what may provide a lasting solution to the problem free-range dogs on our otherwise luscious landscape.

Come on down to my recently opened 'Dog Diner', where only the most freshly harvested and mouth-watering soi dogs are lovingly prepared for the island's most discerning palates. Our signature dish, *Poodle Panache*, was voted "Best of Show" in the Crufts canteen, and has been described by *Horse & Hound* as "a dish for the ages".

I would urge all of your disgruntled readers who are troubled by, and able to steal, dogs to bring them over to the Dog Diner for instant satisfaction – and, if they come on a bank holiday, coupons.

Rong Sieng-maah
Sakhon Nakorn

Charity not dead

Having just returned from five months in Phuket, I'd like to say how nice it was to see Charity in action over there. We counted five major fund-raisers, most recently the PIWC's annual ball. Combined, they raised over four million baht. With charity dying in the west, it's great to see it rising in the East.

Shelly Rogers
Boston, Mass

Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials and/or business owners are published in *Issues & Answers* at www.phuketgazette.net.

Years of Living Dangerously

It's been over 23 years since I left my native homeland to set out on a journey that has circumnavigated the globe more times than I can recall and which has led me to my home here in Southeast Asia.

I started out, full of wanderlust and looking to live overseas in exotic places, knowing not a single soul in the distant lands to which I was headed. Growing up in the faceless suburbs of a large West Coast city in the US, names like Bali, Tahiti, Nepal and Thailand captivated my imagination and prompted those first faltering steps that were later to become a way of life. Like many, it was this quixotic quest for a "life less ordinary" that ultimately landed me here in Phuket.

Not since the political upheavals of the 1950s and 1960s has the world been gripped by such uncertainty.

Terrorism, financial turmoil and political crises now fill the headlines on a daily basis. Coming, as I do, from a country with over 200 years of on-the-job training in the democratic process, I have to say that we are still finding our way, and where every step forward is so often accompanied by two steps back. Thailand has had but a fraction of this time to find its legs in the pursuit of self determination and democracy.

While reading various blogs and comments from around the world about the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), Thaksin Shinawatra and the current Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat, so

Bill Barnett is the Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks (c9hotelworks.com), a Phuket-based hotel and residential property consulting firm. With more than 20 years' experience in the region, he has played an active role in some of the island's biggest developments. Bill has a regular column in the *Phuket Gazette* called Property Watch, but here he speaks about his hopes and fears for the future during these trying times.

much of what is written fails to take into account that the country's road to self determination will be bumpy, unclear and strewn with potholes.

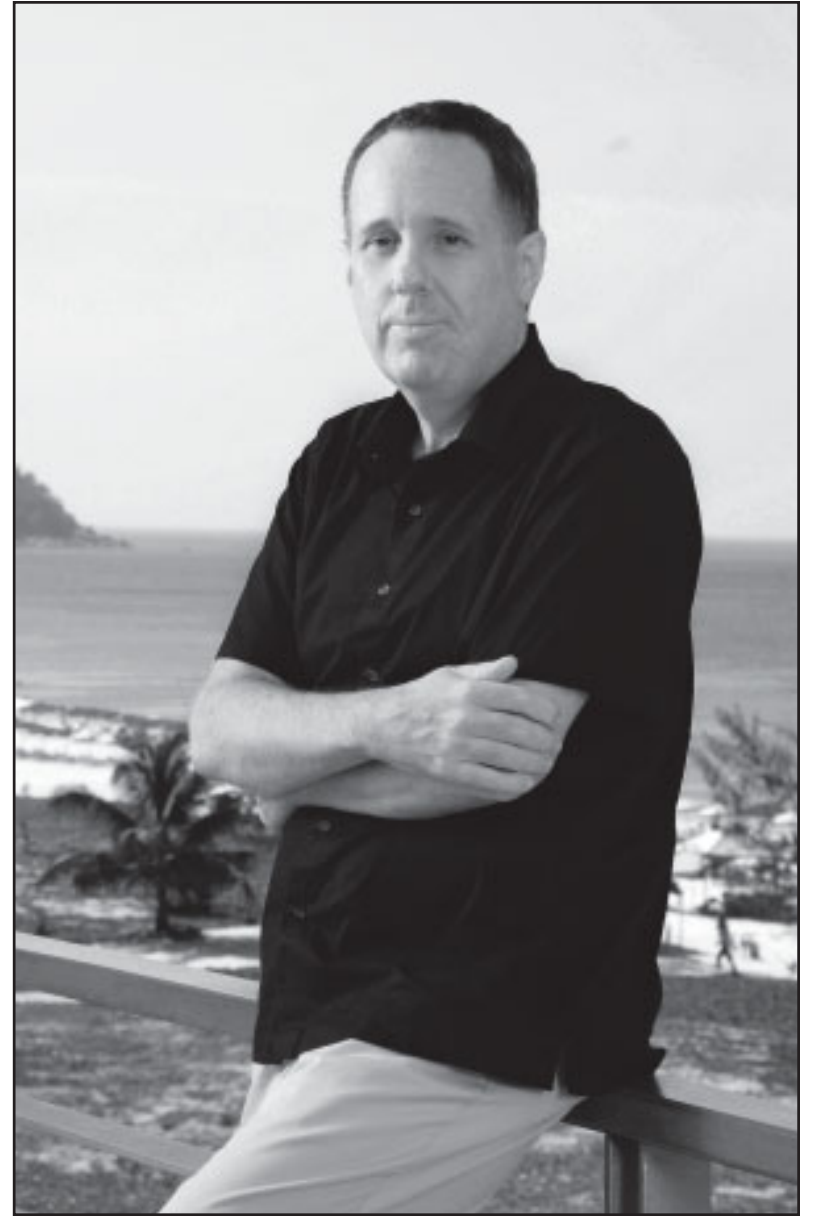
While there is naturally concern about safety and security, again, it's a matter of perspective. For tourists, is it preferable to stay at home or to choose what's perceived to be a more developed destination, such as New York, London or Madrid, all of which have seen their share of terrorism over the past few years.

Looking towards the next few months, I have a trip scheduled in January to Mumbai to attend a hotel investment conference, and the week after next I shall be in Bangkok for meetings. It would be easy to say there is too much risk and simply opt to stay at home. I will not do that. I have reconfirmed my India hotel reservation and remain resolved not to succumb to the wishes of the naysayers and terrorists, who seek to hold travelers, be they on holiday or business, hostage in

their own homes.

The fallout from all this mayhem will be especially severe for the many hotels that travelers call home when they are on the road. Over the years, whether from an overnight stay in a bed-and-breakfast, guest house, upscale hotel or luxury villa, my travel book of memories has been made all the richer for the array of experiences I have enjoyed in these wide-ranging properties. As these institutions are now being targeted by those looking to inflict immeasurable harm, it would be all too easy to avoid them and to look for alternatives. But how much would we forsake if we were simply to opt to stay at home and never venture beyond the sanctuary of our own beds and out into the unknown.

It is true that we live in dangerous times, but the question of personal safety remains full of contradictions. Statistically speaking, traveling around Asia still poses less of a threat to your health than watching too much TV or crossing the road. While gen-



erations have tried and failed to solve the world's problems, the reality is that life is, by its very nature, risky and unsure.

All we can do is live life to the full, take whatever chances come our way, while all the while

marveling at the wonder and excitement of the ever-changing world around us.

Life is a journey, and as with any journey there are bound to be a few bumps in the road along the way.

Issues & ANSWERS

No customers but the music plays on.

Why do the businesses at One Man Karon Plaza play very loud music at night when it is not in an entertainment district?

Residents want to enjoy their home life, maybe watch some TV and get some sleep at night. They cannot, however, because the bars in One Man keep the music turned up even if there are no customers.

We've complained many times but the local police just say sorry.

Sleepless in Karon

Preecha Taweetong, Chief of the Public Health and Environment section of Karon Municipality replies:

Normally, such problems can be solved by the police. But in this case you can also try writing a letter of complaint to Mayor Tawee Tongcham. Be sure to provide specific details about the

location and time of the noise pollution so that municipal officials can investigate.

Call the municipal office at 076-330186 (x1014) if you need more information.

Pol Maj Pachai Madtayan of the Chalong Police replies:

Police have to be fair to all sides, including small business operators. Normally, we will fine bar operators around 500 baht per infraction. The area in question is located opposite a hotel and restaurant and by law they are allowed to stay open until 2 am.

However, if they disturb the public peace while open they are still subject to a fine. For more information call me at: 076-381247; 076-280511 or 076-381930.

Smoke and noise blighting my neighborhood

I live on Plakja Rd in an area full of homes and villas. This is, in short, a residential area, which is stated on my purchase contract. A few months ago, an unknown organization built a factory across

the street. The noise is terrible and there are open fires burning on the site. When the wind blows, the smoke is so bad it can make you cough. I've tried to talk to the workers but this only seems to result in smiles and more wood scraps being tossed into the flames. Who can help with this?

Claudio Vianello, Karon



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Preecha Taweetong, Chief of the Public Health and Environment section of Karon Municipality replies:

You can write a letter of complaint to the Mayor of Karon, Tawee Tongcham, giving full details of the problem.

Alternatively you could visit Karon Municipality Office in per-

son, or call 076-330-186 ext 1014. Your complaint will then be investigated.

If you write, make sure to keep a copy of the letter for your reference.

The address of the local government office is: Karon Municipality Office, 1 Kata Road, T. Karon, Muang Phuket.

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Getting tooled up for DIY: Part two

In this second column we will complete our look at basic hand-tools.

Hex-keys, also known as Allen wrenches or Allen keys, are hexagonal 'L'-shaped pieces of metal designed to screw in bolts with hexagonal holes stamped into the head. There are three types of set available: a plastic set, a pouch-type set mounted on a 'key-ring', and a set assembled into a pocket-knife-type tool. The pocket-knife type is the handiest, containing about six of the most common sizes.

Since each wrench can either be opened straight out or at a 90-degree angle, they are more versatile. A word of caution; when using the smaller wrenches opened at 90-degrees to the handle, be careful not to over-tighten, as it is easy to strip small bolt-heads, causing a whole new problem. You might also round off the end of the wrench, and must then grind off this portion, an extra chore you really didn't need.

The sets in plastic pouches usually include the larger sizes,

good for automotive work. The key-ring sets, with small springs wrapped around the shafts, seem to be made of the cheapest steel, and while handy (since they can be taken off the key-ring and used in tight places), they are best suited to small bolts that don't require lots of torque. Get one of each type of socket set and before use, put a drop of motor oil beneath the Mercedes-logo-shaped knob or small lever on the ratchet-head.

The brands where the shaft swells gradually from the handle to the ratchet-head are much stronger than those that go right from a straight shaft to the rounded head of the ratchet-gear mechanism. The first time one of these weaker ones snaps and cracks one of your knuckles, you will definitely wish you'd had a stronger tool. Most hex keys sold here are made in China, Taiwan or Indonesia, and frankly, the metal is cheap. Don't over-torque with them, or they *will* break.

Nut-drivers are essentially sockets on shafts with screw-

driver-type handles. They come either as plastic-pouch-type sets or in a hard-plastic box like the socket sets. The pouch type is easier to fit in the toolbox.

Adjustable wrenches, also known as crescent wrenches, are handy on nuts for which you lack the proper size regular wrench. Apply oil to each side of the adjustment screw where it mounts in the head and keep a thin film of grease on the "teeth" of the underside of the sliding jaw. This will ensure it is easy to turn. If you use the tool often, grease it regularly, as using it will cause the



DIY Dave

grease to come off on your fingers. When using the wrench, try to hold the jaws against the nut with one hand and tighten with the other, wiggling the handle just slightly back and forth until the jaws are secure. This will fully tighten the jaws, take up slack in the screw and prevent the jaws opening and rounding off the edges of the nut. Remember to keep thumb pressure on the adjustment screw while using one of these.

Saws. Since most saws are too big for a toolbox, find a space where they can be kept close by, or hung on a wall-mounted board (one of our upcoming projects). Hacksaws are the type with a rectangular metal frame and a changeable blade attached to the front of the handle and the front of the frame. The blades here are the key. The higher the "number" of the blade, the more teeth per inch. Get a few "12s" or "14s" for wood, a few "18s" for PVC, and "22s" or "24s" for metal. As with all saws, don't use too much force when cutting and let the

blade's teeth do the work. Pressing too hard will cause the blade to twist, resulting in a crooked cut. It can also crack and cause breakage. Get a wood saw as well, the type with a solid wooden handle, as the plastic-handled ones break easily. After each use, wipe the blade with an oily rag, as rust can cause the blade to drag on the sides of a cut and require more exertion.

Here are some other useful items to round off your basic hand-tool collection:

Files. Files come in flat, half-round and rat-tail (cylindrical) shapes and are good for shaping metal and rounding sharp edges off.

Chisels. "Cold chisels" are used for metal and (when used with a hammer) are handy for separating rusted parts. "Punches" are small, pointed chisels, good for making a starting dimple when drilling metal. "Wood chisels" have screwdriver-type handles, come in various sizes, and are handy for installing door hardware.

C-clamps. C-clamps are useful for holding things together while being repaired with glue, or holding things being drilled.

In The Stars

by Isla Star

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Sagittarians still looking for a new way forward could be fired up by Gemini's idea this weekend. If this person is a relatively recent acquaintance, it would be wise to tread water until their credentials have been confirmed. In the world of romance, a dream comes true before the middle of the month. Those with a birthday during the coming week will be returning to their roots in the year ahead.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Those born under the sign of Capricorn who haven't made holiday arrangements for later this month discover that another earth sign is in the same predicament. Your compatibility should ensure that a trip together will be fun and give you good energy to start the New Year. At work, a reshuffle is highlighted,

but this should ensure that your salary is boosted. The scent of jasmine enhances the romantic side of your nature.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): You should be starting to feel more balanced after a disruptive few days at the beginning of December. Travel is strongly under the spotlight for most Aquarians and this could easily be a last minute necessity. Check that personal affairs are in order to avoid panic before leaving. A romantic relationship becomes more fulfilling when true feelings are aired this weekend. The number eight can bring good luck on Wednesday.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Your tried and trusted methods of doing business could be compromised early next week. Pisceans putting all their eggs in one basket may need to spread assets in order to encourage more gain. Libra has some worthwhile advice, but Scorpio cannot see the big picture. Thursday is the most auspicious day for investigating investment possibilities. A

romantic date this weekend turns out to be more enjoyable than you anticipate.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): The solution to a personal dilemma pops up out of the blue this weekend. Many of those born under the sign of Aries will be relieved to see closure, but some may still want to fish for a better answer. Romance with Taurus is well-starred, although your need for control could be a stumbling block. Tuesday is the best day for negotiating property deals, and Wednesday for seeking new employment.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): An offer to collaborate with Pisces is forecast to appear this week. Taureans with too much time on their hands could be tempted to throw caution to the wind. It would be wiser to wait until the New Year before signing agreements. Your arrangements for the Christmas holidays are subject to change when a family member makes a surprise announcement. The number six can bring some good fortune on Wednesday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Your creative skills are on fire until the middle of this month, but Gemini should be aware that enthusiasm could be burned out by others' lack of cooperation. You can count on a Sagittarian colleague to meet your high standards, but Leo is too easily distracted by other business. A half-hearted romantic relationship is forecast to finally become more stable when you realize how much this person really means to you.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Cancerians coming down from a spontaneous romantic encounter will learn that the other person is keen to continue the liaison. If this is not your intention, Tuesday is the best day to make your feelings known. A money matter can give cause for concern this weekend – you should view this as a reminder not to lend more than you can afford to lose. The number four is lucky next Thursday.

LEO (July 24-August 22): The opportunity to escape personal pressures this weekend will be welcomed by many Leos. Recharging your batteries will also help you to meet extra demands at work next week. Another fire sign is forecast to do a disappearing act and your skills could be

pushed to the limit. Wednesday is the most auspicious day for putting in a late request for holiday leave. Wear the color hibiscus red to encourage more vibrant energy.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Although the flow of money remains under negative astral influences, it's not all doom and gloom. Cash-strapped Virgoans are advised to start planning low budget Christmas celebrations with friends in similar situations. You have good reason to remember that it's the thought that counts this weekend when your romantic gesture is well received. An offer of work from Aries may not appear to be lucrative, but can lead to other possibilities.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Most Librans should like what they see this weekend when business propositions are forthcoming. Although you will be tempted to snap up the first offer, the stars suggest that putting decisions on hold is advisable. Romance will also not progress by acting on a whim – someone born under a water sign would like to lead you up the jungle path. The number one can bring some good luck on Wednesday.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Scorpios who assume that friends will be easily persuaded could be in for a shock this weekend. Your tendency to take others' agreement for granted seems to be getting in the way of personal relationships. Going with the flow could prove to be more liberating than you imagine. Those who are house-hunting learn of an interesting alternative early next week. Thursday is the most auspicious day for negotiating contracts.

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Don't look now, but we're getting better

It's the night before Phuket's first Barcamp, and I'm putting the finishing touches on my presentation about Internet access speeds in Phuket. I've been giving these presentations to various groups around the island for several years now, and they're invariably depressing: speeds occasionally show some signs of improvement, but more often than not the changes are minimal, and sometimes illusory. Last year about this time, I was trying to explain to people why their Internet speeds had been cut in half, overnight.

I started going over the data we've been accumulating, with thousands of Internet speed tests being run all over the island. When I ran a comparison of speeds for the most popular packages from January to November of this year – the graph you can see on this page – my jaw dropped.

Hey, it's hip and cool to complain about Internet speeds, right? Kinda like the weather, or the air pollution in Bangkok. I, for one, have to stop kvetching (complaining). The numbers that are popping up now rate as downright astounding – not as good as Hong Kong or Korea or Singapore, to be sure, but they've improved enormously this year. Believe it or not, somebody, somewhere, is *doing something right*.

First, the details. The graph shows international download speeds from Phuket, as posted on the Phuket Internet Speed Site at liveaccess.com/PhuketInternet.aspx. (Thanks to Henry Habermacher and X-Net for building and maintaining the site.) I talked about the site in my September 27 column, which is available on the *Phuket Gazette* web site at tinyurl.com/5m5hk2. The numbers you see are from uniform speed tests, all performed the same way, with a high speed server located in San Francisco. The tests are conducted all over the island, using more than a dozen different Internet packages from TOT, TT&T, CAT, iPSTAR, AIS, DTAC, and others. They're reported by ordinary people like you and me, based on test results over the Internet connections we

use every day. I've combined several of the package results to make the graph more legible.

Starting at the bottom, the CAT EV-DO service (you may know it as the "Air Card"; see tinyurl.com/6plk2c) is the only fast wireless Internet available in Phuket, and it's only available from CAT. The technology hasn't changed much this year, although CAT now sells "Rev A" hardware, instead of the older "Rev 0." While some people report that their EV-DO speeds have gone down, the numbers show that, on average, international access speeds in November were 50% higher than they were in January. Since the number of EV-DO cards being used now is considerably greater than the number ten months ago, I have to conclude that CAT is successfully improving its network's responsiveness, at least as measured by international access speeds.

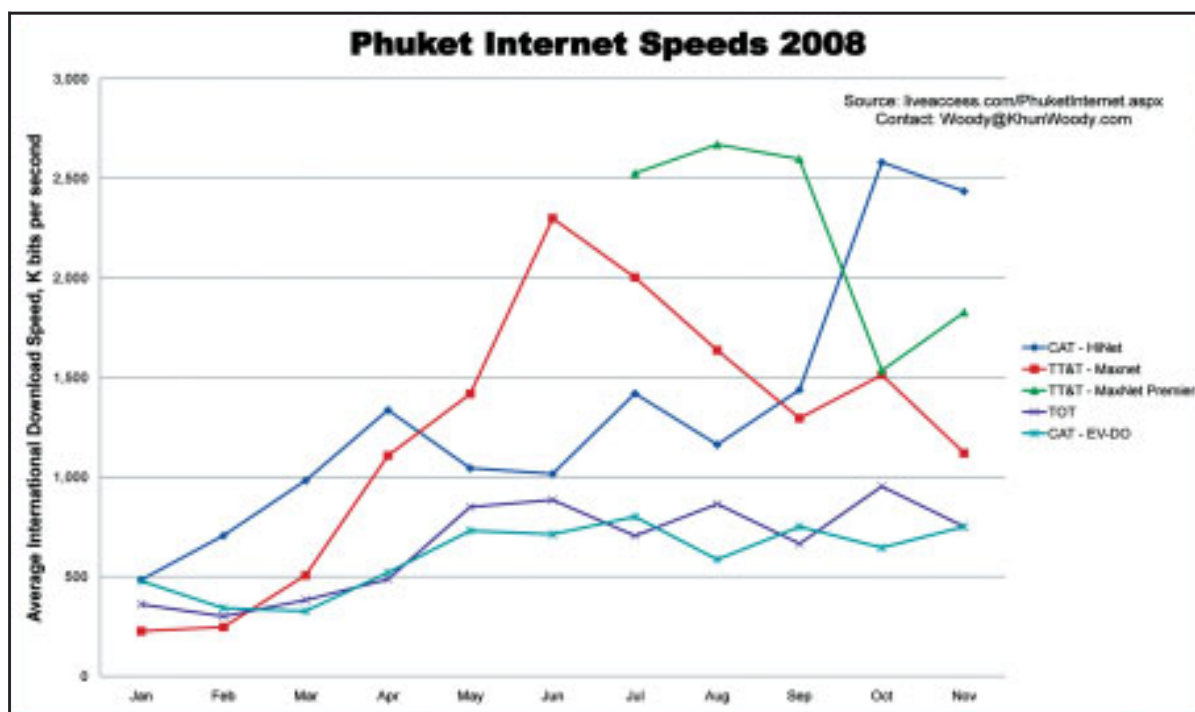
TOT speeds have improved considerably, as well. The TOT speed numbers include all of the TOT services, regardless of price. At the beginning of the year, TOT only offered two ADSL packages. Now there are a half-dozen. People currently running the most expensive TOT package, rated at 4 Mbps (more or less 4,000 Kbps), report wide swings in speeds.

KHUN WOODY'S COMPUTER

I tracked two different TT&T packages. At the beginning of the year, TT&T offered just one package, MaxNet, and it performed even worse than TOT. Starting in April, TT&T finally decided to compete, and the result has been startling.

Our first reports of TT&T MaxNet Premier times appeared in July. (Starting in July, the TT&T MaxNet number on the graph includes TT&T MaxNet Indy, which is slower than TT&T MaxNet Premiere.) TT&T MaxNet Premiere times sunk in October, but have started coming back up.

If you're shopping around for a new Internet connection, the TT&T MaxNet Premiere packages (about 2,000 baht up) are an excellent choice. I have three MaxNet Premiere 3 Mbps lines – one each in my home office and the Sandwich Shoppes in Patong



International Internet speeds in Phuket really are getting better. Depending on which package you use and how much you pay, your speeds now should be 50% to 300% faster than at the beginning of the year.

and Chalong – and they consistently turn out 2,500 to 2,600 Kbps. The same service in Kata runs considerably slower.

The CAT HiNet graph shows steady improvement from January to April, and then shoots way up in October. That was the month when CAT started offering free upgrades from HiNet 2 Mbps to 4 Mbps, for any customer who had their line more than six months. (See tinyurl.com/6e3zuw for details.)

As things stand, if you're looking for a new Internet connection, TT&T MaxNet Premier runs faster than CAT HiNet, simply because CAT isn't automatically upgrading customers to their 4 Mbps service. At least, they aren't yet.

What's happening? Clearly, both CAT and TT&T are making sincere efforts to increase the size of the data pipes from Phuket to the internet backbone.

I've never been able to get Phuket-based numbers or statistics from either company, but Thailand's National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) publishes composite statistics for all of Thailand. You can see the numbers at NECTEC's site, tinyurl.com/5coggu – and they're impressive.

In January of this year, Thailand had a total international bandwidth of 23.3 Gbps (billions of bits

per second).

By November, that number was up to 45.8 Gbps – a 97% increase in ten months.

International bandwidth will more than double this year. It doubled in 2007. But it only went up 25% in 2006.

CAT once had a monopoly on international internet connections, but that changed in 2006. Right now, CAT, TOT, TT&T, True, CS Loxinfo and ADC all have international gateways connecting Thailand to the Internet backbone. (ADC is a joint venture between TOT and AIS. Thaksin Shinawatra sold AIS to the Singapore government's Temasek Holdings in 2006.)

In my next column I'll tell you about Barcamp. Exciting

times for geeks in Phuket!

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12:00 am. Arrive at Khai Nai Island, enjoy swimming and sun bathing. Set lunch will be arranged at Yao Yai Island.
13:30 pm. Swim and relax on the beach.
15:30 pm. Leave from Koh Yao Yai to Rasada pier.
16:00 pm. Transfer to hotel.

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The sixth annual Phuket 7s tournament went ahead as planned over the weekend of December 29-30, despite airport closures in Bangkok, which caused 14 teams to withdraw and forced the organizers to rearrange the fixture list at the last minute.

For Josh Schirmer, who scored the "golden goal" winner in extra time to win the Open Cup for Tokyo Hibernian, it was a fairytale ending to a nightmare journey.

Josh's ordeal began when, having arrived in Singapore from Tokyo, he was told that his connecting flight to Phuket had been canceled.

Determined to participate in the tournament, which he had won with Tokyo Hibernian for the previous two years, Josh set out on a marathon 24-hour bus journey from Singapore to Phuket.

He arrived on the island in time to compete in Sunday's fixtures, helping Tokyo Hibernian to reach the final of the Men's Open where they faced China-based German opposition in the form of the Shanghai Krauts.

With the final deadlocked at 1-1 at the end of regulation time, the match went into a five-minute sudden-death play-off, with the first team to score a "golden goal" declared the winner.

With a penalty shoot out looming, Josh collected the ball inside the opposition half and fired an unstoppable shot through a crowd of players, past the unsighted keeper, and into the roof of the net.

This was the third consecutive year Tokyo Hibernian had

Phuket 7s



won the Men's Open, and for Josh, it made the whole trip worthwhile, "We've won it the last two years and having traveled for so long to get here, I really wanted to win."

The Open Cup was not the only competition to go to the wire. The Masters Cup, for veteran players, was contested between Team Bondi, from Australia, and Tokyo-based side, Footy Japan.

Team Bondi looked on course for a third consecutive victory in the cup when they took a deserved 1-0 lead.

However Footy Japan battled back to level the game at one apiece and snatched a last-

minute winner with the final kick of the game, a coolly taken penalty, giving Footy Japan a dramatic 2-1 victory.

For tournament organizer Tim Hodgson the airport closure was a major headache.

"We lost 14 teams as a result of the closures and it was a nightmare for me having to completely rearrange all the fixtures. In the end we had 22 teams who were able to compete and I think everyone had a good time," he said.

"We will be organizing another three tournaments next year in Phuket and another one in Bangkok," he added.



Longtails face off at Cape Panwa

CAPE PANWA: Longtail boats raced across the water off Cape Panwa Sunday November 30 in a competition organised by Wichit District authorities with co-operation from the 3rd Naval Command base at Cape Panwa.

Phuket Governor Preecha Ruangjan was in attendance for the races, which began at 10 am and were touted as a tourist attraction that brings locals and visitors together for a fun event that promotes awareness of the local way of life.

The racing was divided into three divisions: General; 1,500cc Four-pump (4 soop) engines; and Three-pump (3 soop) engines. Cash prizes were awarded for each division. Team Aslida won 10,000 baht for first place in the General division, Team Rawai won 7,000 baht in the Four-pump division and Team Nopprik received 5,000 baht for first place in the Three-pump division.

Seventh annual QSI Fun Run a success



PHUKET: QSI International School of Phuket's seventh annual QSI Fun Run took place November 29 at Bang Wad Dam. The event was open to the public, and participants included students from several schools around Phuket.

There were three runs in total: two 1km runs, for students aged 0-7 years and 8-18 years, plus a 6.5km race open to all comers. A total of 181 people took part in the three events. Swiss national Richard Schildknecht, 40, was first to finish the 6.5km race.

Director of QSI Alan Siporin said, "I'd like to thank the people who donated prizes and helped us raise money and also the teachers and office staff, without whom this would be more chaotic than it is now."

Mr Siporin estimated that the event raised over 100,000 baht for the school's sports and recreation programs.



Patong Darts League

Despite Shaun's nice single finish to close from 62 (t18, d4), Shakers lost 1-9 to Queen Mary with Queen Mary's Leif taking high score with a 140 and Ronnie closing the beer leg.

The big win allowed them to creep to within two points of defending champs Piccadilly, who dropped two points playing in rarefied air up at Hilltop.

Beach House won its first game of the season with a 6-4 triumph over Skinny Dog, while Offshore lost their first to Celtic, 4-6.

The league offers its condolences to Market Bar owner Patsy, whose mother recently passed away.

November 25 results: Shakers 1 Queen Mary* 8; Hilltop 2 Piccadilly* 7; Celtic* 5 Offshore 4; Beach House* 5 Skinny Dog 4; Market Bar 1 - Simply Red* 8; Boozers bye; (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Piccadilly (34 pts.); 2. Queen Mary (32); 3. Offshore (23); 4.= Simply Red, Skinny Dog (18); 6.= Hilltop, Beach House (15); 8. Boozers* (14); 9.=Market Bar* (14); 10. Celtic* (13); 11. Shakers* (4).

December 9 match-ups: Piccadilly vs Beach House; Simply Red vs Offshore; Market Bar vs Hilltop; Skinny Dog vs Celtic; Boozers vs Shakers; Queen Mary = bye; (home team first).



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Design

The Chedi

Green getaway in gorgeous Pansea Bay

The thatched cottages that comprise the luxurious Chedi Phuket resort dot the shore of Pansea Bay, sheltering under coconut palms on landscaped slopes that gently descend to one of the island's most beautiful sections of coastline.

The five-star resort is as tastefully designed as you might expect for one of the island's most plush getaways, with a rustic aesthetic that is reflected throughout the complex.

But what distinguishes The Chedi Phuket from its peers is the amount of thought that has been put into environmental management, both in the resort's design and in the way it operates.

Great care has been taken to ensure that the resort's impact on the environment is minimized, a conscious effort to appeal to the well-heeled traveler with a green conscience.

Buildings have been designed to promote natural air flow, reducing the need for air conditioning. Where possible, natural or recycled products have been used throughout the complex. For example, roofing is thatched, all paper is recycled and cloth bags and weaved products are used instead of plastic.

Orchids and other live flowers adorn the rooms, ensuring the natural ethos is reflected aesthetically as well as in practice. Local plants and trees such as Frangipani, Wedelia, coconut and banana line the footpaths, and no alien flora have been planted anywhere within the grounds.

Care is also taken to minimize the resort's carbon footprint: energy-saving lightbulbs are fitted throughout and local herbal drinks are served to guests, pro-



The Chedi Phuket's natural ethos is reflected in the rustic feel of the cottages and the surrounding flora, all of which are native to the island.

moting Phuket's unique natural produce while reducing transportation emissions associated with importing products from outside the locale. The resort also supports tree planting in urban areas, helping to offset the resort's own environmental impact.

The resort is fitted with grease traps and recycles its

waste water, with much of it used to nourish the plants on site. Sodium Chloride (salt) is used in the swimming pool, meaning there is no need to add chlorine to the water. The hotel always examines the quality of water before it disposes of it into the sea or canals, according to the law.

Garbage is sorted and much

of it is then sold to be re-used by local businesses, bringing money in which is used to finance an annual staff party. The Chedi Phuket also supports educational institutions by allowing hospital-ity students to observe the hotel in operation.

With such an impressive list of measures in place, it's clear

the developers have put a lot of effort into differentiating the resort from its peers. It might be churlish to point out that such features do not come cheap, but The Chedi Phuket will surely be high on the list of desirable stays for any traveler of means looking for a tranquil getaway and environmental piece of mind.

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Construction

Chalong

Mixed residential development under construction in Chalong

Construction has begun on The Clover Phuket, a new residential development on more than two rai located off Kwang Road in Chalong.

The developer, Living Land Capital, said that work on the 79-unit project commenced on November 15, and should be completed by November 2009.

Construction of the project is expected to cost around 200-million-baht.

The first unit owners will be moving in the following December.

As well as 79 condominium units, the seven-storey "modern tropical" development will feature four "Town Home" units and two "Home Office" units. Facilities will include a swimming pool, fitness centre, multi-purpose room, garden and parking area. Security features to be installed include CCTV, a key-card access system and security guards on duty 24 hours.

Condominium units will range between 33 and 97 square meters in size. Prices for those units start at about 1.8 million baht, while Town Home units will start at 5 million baht. Home Office units are priced at 5.7 million baht.

Chanatsha Kheawchaoom, assistant marketing communications manager for Living Land told the *Gazette* that 40% of the condominium units have already been sold, as well as the two Home Office units.

Mr Patharalap Davivongsa, managing director of Living Land, said that The Clover Phuket will be aimed at middle-income Thai buyers (80%) and foreign expats (20%) wishing to buy a residence in Phuket. The project follows Living Land's The Clover Thonglor project in Bangkok.

Construction is being undertaken by Samcon Co Ltd and the project was designed by Process Architect and Planner Co Ltd.



An artist's impression of how The Clover Phuket should look once it is completed in November 2009.

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Spathiphyllum

Peace? It's over-rated. I'm not saying that we should invade more countries for a bit of a laugh, or go around playing Lynyrd Skynyrd at full tilt in the vicar's garden, or even scream and shout drunken schoolboy jokes in the middle of a group of meditating monks.

It's just that the people who go on about peace all the time are just, well, boring. Alright, I will concede that if the west were to invade one or two fewer countries on a regular basis, it might curb the whining hippie types' droning, but probably not. In all likelihood they'll find something else to whinge about.

I'm a bit of a nature fan myself, not averse to the outdoors, and I like to think that I respect my environment. These, in theory, should be universal ideas, not just those of the alleged 'hippie' movement.

I have to admit, I'm not sure about hippies. Both your sixties revolution-type hippies, most of whom are now in their sixties, and today's late teens – early 20-something buffoons that attempt to pass themselves off as 'hippies'.

In reality, real hippies don't snort coke or eat E pills like Smarties; they take acid and mushrooms and aimlessly wander off in the woods. Real hippies aren't idle moochers who grab whatever they can when no one is looking, and expect to make it through life by not doing anything in the least bit productive. Genuine hippies also protest about things other than having to get a job.

Proper hippies live in communes and share responsibilities, rather than doing nothing and living in their parents' spare room.

Real hippies don't have nasty, mite infested dreadlocks. Nasty and mite-infested perhaps, but not dreadlocks. Listen – if you're not a Rasta, or an Indian or Egyptian, you shouldn't have dreads. Please take some of Mummy or Daddy's money and go and get a haircut.

Real hippies fight for causes that most alleged hippies know nothing about. They also actually take the time to read the newspaper, unlike those that choose to flap their gums about something they know nothing about. Maybe I do actually like proper hippies after all. I'm not sure all that "yeah, maan" stuff is really necessary though.

Anyway, back to the peace thing. What would books, films and soap operas be like without a bit of aggression every now and then? Do we really want to see everyone living in peace and harmony with each other, having endless love-ins? Definitely not. We want a bit of action.

Peace is decidedly tedious. As are the people who espouse it. What's their fascination with white doves, by the way? Where do all those doves appear from? And where do they all go once they've actually been let out of those giant cages during huge public 'peace' events? I certainly don't recall ever having seen one.

Perhaps I've stumbled onto something here, come to think of it. I'll bet there are always half a dozen massive bird cage trucks parked a couple of miles away containing smelly bird seed that white doves find irresistible. They just wait for them to fly in, shut the doors and drive off, ready to release them at the next Nelson Mandela show or Greenpeace concert.

Should the hippies, tree huggers and 'turn the other cheek' types ever get bored with ranting on about how meat is murder or releasing white doves whenever they get the chance, they could always pick themselves a plant to wave around. Though they'd look a bit silly.

They could choose the peace lily. Also known as the *spathiphyllum*. It's a genus (part of a family) in itself; evergreen



The Peace Lily, also known as the *spathiphyllum mauna loa*, isn't actually a lily.

herbaceous plants in the Araceae family. While strictly speaking the peace lily isn't actually a lily at all, this group of plants does produce stunning inflorescences, consisting of a white leaf-like 'spathe' bit, and a knobbly 'spadix' on which the actual flowers appear. The medium to dark green foliage contrasts magnificently with the blooms, highlighting the purity of the white color.

Most of the species and varieties available in Thailand have white blooms, although there are a few with light green blooms. Plants with green blooms are usually grown for their foliage value rather than for their flowers. Other bloom colors are conspicuously absent in this genus of plants.

The majority of peace lilies on offer in the west are hybrids of large species crossed with smaller species, producing just about the right size plant for indoors; it's one of the more popular houseplants in more temperate regions.

While green thumbs in the west struggle over the years just to keep their minuscule examples alive, and emit whoops of joy

when the plants produce an attempt at a bloom, lilies here will grow to several times the occidental size without us trying too hard at all.

Just about the only thing to bear in mind when you first bring one home from the garden center is that it will be happiest in a shaded spot in the garden; one that doesn't get too much light. It likes a fair bit of water and even has a way of telling you when it's thirsty. When it dries out, the leaves visibly droop, to the point where, if desperate for a drink, they will all lay flat on the ground.

Give it some water, and within a few hours the leaves bounce right back up to their original positions. For the most idle of gardeners, this would be a good indicator of when to water, except that by the time things reach the point of laying flat, the damage has been done. The roots die back slightly each time this happens, and if it happens often enough, the plant will eventually fail to come back at all.

In theory, lilies flower better when rootbound, so the best spot would be in a pot or planter.

Thinking about it, you see the most dramatic examples of these in confined areas, such as between walls, so the theory might actually be right.

A huge number of hybrids have been produced over the years. Some growers will produce their own hybrids so they can give them names that distinguish their plants from the rest on the market.

An old standby is the *spathiphyllum mauna loa* (as pictured), a larger growing hybrid that has been around for decades.

Newer peace lilies, using *spathiphyllum wallisii* as one of the parents, are much smaller growers with darker green shiny leaves, and they are happy in even lower light conditions. Some of the newer varieties have variegated leaves, splotted or mottled white and creamy green.

The peace lily isn't really a plant that growers have to work too hard at – probably a good one for the hippies then. There's very little effort involved, and their common nickname does contain a word with which the hippies actually agree. Yeah, maan.

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The quiet environs ensure the holiday-maker a fully relaxing stay while still being able to savor the bohemian delights that Thailand has to offer. This is a beautifully appointed house, consisting of three large master bedrooms on the top floor, plus a study that could be adapted to accommodate a child's playroom. All the bedrooms are fully air conditioned, have parquet floors and come with en-suite bathrooms. They also come equipped with TV, DVD players and broadband Internet access points. The master bedroom is connected to a small balcony.

The main living, dining and lounge area spans two levels and is finished with cool marble flooring.

A large modern kitchen

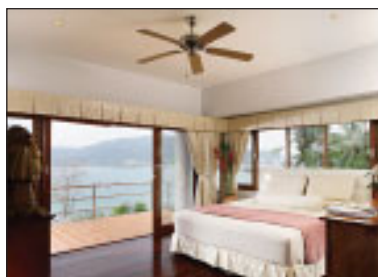
opens onto a spacious private pool deck, which is ideal for just lazing the day away while working on your tan. The lounge room on the lower deck also features an impressive 50-inch plasma TV.

The property is fully alarmed and the garage, large enough for two cars, is secured by a remote-controlled electric gate. A separate maid's quarters is situated off the garage.

Baan Suan offers one of the best views on the island, overlooking Patong Bay, and lies just two miles from downtown Patong, with Jungceylon shopping center and the hustle and bustle of famous Bangla Road.

The property is priced at 54 million baht and is available freehold, meaning foreign ownership is possible. In addition, the owner is prepared to discuss a deferred payment plan of 50% deposit and 50% to be paid over one year, allowing the buyer to transfer the funds during the best time for foreign exchange.

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Property Gazette

Properties For Sale

KOH SIRAY LAND



4 plots of land on Koh Sireh, park view, 480sqm each, beach, Chanote title, concrete road access, 300 meters from new yacht marina. Asking for 1.5 million baht per plot. Tel: 081-5369252. Email: sppcnx@gmail.com

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

Duplex renovation project directly on 15th fairway for sale. Reduced 'fire sale' price. See website, then call or mail for further details. Tel: 081-894 1994. Email: tom.fekete@gmail.com Visit <http://www.fairway15.com>

CHALONG SEA VIEW

2-story twin house, 36 sq wah, 3 bedrooms with airconditioning, garden, sea view and mountain view. Only 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-697 0928.

SHOPHOUSE

2.5-stories, 2 bedrooms, 22 sq wah, near TOT Chaofa West Rd, Soi Luang Phor Chuang. Price: 2.5 million baht. Tel: 089-697 0928.

LAND FOR SALE

5km to Heroines, 5km to Laguna and beach, chanote, 800 sqm to 3,200 sqm. 2 million baht per 800 sqm. Telephone: 081-087 8093.

NAI YANG BEACH

5 minutes from beach, best location, chanote, 1 rai or 3 plots at 440sqm. Private street, electricity, water. Price: 1 rai for 4.5 million baht, or plots at 1.6 million each. Tel: Thai 081-088 4825, German/Eng 081-894 4103.

LUXURY POOL VILLA



Large 600 sqm pool villa, 5 mins to Laguna, 4 bedrooms, fully furnished. 16 million baht. For sale or rent. Tel: 081-734-4324. For further details, please see our website at www.phuketgreenlandvillas.com

HOUSE WITH LARGE GARDEN

3-bedroom, 2-bathroom, house on small development with 24hr security and swimming pool. Only 5 mins from Heroines Monument. Fully furnished with solid teak furniture throughout and with all appliances, curtains and blinds. Full security and fly screens, 3 aircons, 5 ceiling fans. True TV/ Cable TV, phone, ADSL. Walk-in condition with great potential for extension and/or private pool. Now 4 million baht. Tel: 085-782 3273.

TWOVILLAS RESALE

Private pool villa, fully furnished, 1-4 bedrooms. Location: Nai Harn/Bangtao. Price starts at 6.5 million baht. Tel: 076-289900, 081-970-0742. Fax: 076-613114. Email: sales@twovillas.com

YOUR DREAM BY THE SEA

Fully managed by boutique hotel (SLH), idyllic beachfront location, 2 BR colonial style villas, flexible live-in and rent-out and financing options. Only 38 villas, of which over 50% sold. From 10.8 million baht, fully furnished. Tel: 087-386 3388. Email: shanya.arman@gmail.com

BANGKOK CONDO

21st floor, Sukhumvit, Nana. 3 balconies. Sell for 4.4 million baht or trade. Tel: 081-303 2202.

FOREIGN FREEHOLD CONDO



in Rawai, 250 meters from The Pier. 54sqm. Asking 1.3 million baht. Tel: 086-940 8914. Email: rawai1@yahoo.com

SEA VIEW 3.2 RAI

at north end of Bang Sak Beach. Take Thap Tawan beach road to Bang Sak Beach Resort, 6km south of Takuapa. Tel: 081-894 7644.

MAI KHAO HOUSE

for sale. One-story single house, 3 bedrooms with built-in furniture, big dining room and kitchen, large garden with big trees, area 305 sq wah. Only 5.5 million baht. Tel: 089-697 0928.

SALE/RENT, KAMALA

Single house near beach, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen. 4.2 million baht. Tel: 086-277 3381.

KARON LAND

sale. Hotel-condos-townhouse, 1 minute to the beach. Price: 7 million baht or trade. Tel: 081-446 0215.

HOUSE NEAR TESCO LOTUS

2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 3-aircons, water. European style kitchen. Fully furnished. Land 36sqw. Price 2.95 million baht. (Eng) Tel: 086-683 6913, (Thai) Tel: 080-529 4944.

NICE PLOT

near Layan Hills Estate and pool villas project. Chanote title and road access on 4 sides of the plot. 4.5 million baht. Tel: 081-539 9269.

ON THE BEACH

2-bedroom apartment in north Patong. Foreign freehold, top floor, swimming pools. 9.7 million baht. Tel: 086-276-5117. Email for photos. Email: jhshand@gmail.com

QUICK SALE

Only 5.1 million baht, near Laguna. Thai-style home. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, living room. Tel: 087-893 8590.

HOUSE FOR SALE 2.5 MILLION BAHT

Ban Maneeekram Chalong. 2 bedrooms, 3 a/c, fully furnished, cable TV, ADSL phone line for Internet. Existing tenant on long term rental. Tel: 076-264692, 086-281 2115.

QUICK SALE

5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms at 4.5 million baht. Tel: 081-894 2009.

RAWAIYA SUITES CONDOMINIUMS



Rawai Beach, 1 and 2 bedrooms, ensuite bathroom, fully furnished, 65 to 130 sqm, total 27 units. Ready to move into in December, rent out in high season. Full facilities, freehold available. Prices: 3.7 to 3.9 million baht. Sales: +66 (0)76 245 964 or email to: sales@tharadonestate.com. Tel: 076-245964, 085-784-2004. Fax: 076-245962. For further details, please see our website at www.tharadonestate.com

SEAVIEW LAND



4 rai prime sea view land for sale in Kata. Reduced to 12 million per rai. Tel: 081-273 5047.

SURIN BEACH

Land on Soi Haad Surin 2 for sale. 2.2 Rai, 5 min walk to Surin Beach. Tel: 082-411 2138.

CONDO 63SQM PATONG

Renovated, freehold, 2 rooms, terrace, nice view, pool, beach 200m, furnished, TV, Wi-Fi, 2 aircons. 4.9 million baht. Tel: 086-976 0809.

PERFECT LAND

Nearly 2 rai at Bang Tao. Very good location for business. 18 million baht. No agents. Tel: 086-944 2065, 087-689-9679. Email: tasuwan@hotmail.com

NEW 3 BED POOL VILLA

at Mission Hills golf course. Luxury finishing. Buy it at 9.5 million baht, or rent it long term for 40,000 baht a month. Tel: 087-893 4636. Email: info@phuketbedandbreakfast.com

LUXURY HOUSE

for sale or rent. Mission Heights community, 5 mins from Mission Hills Golf Club. 4 bedrooms, en-suite bathrooms with bath and shower, large Western kitchen, 90-sqm pool, garden, service included. Fully furnished. Please contact to K.So. Tel: 081-862 2962, 081-344 4473.

Absolute Beach - Front Land

at Maikhao Beach
For sale or long lease. Plot: 1-22 rai



Contact Khun Suchon: 081-8936355

NEW STUDIO APARTMENTS IN RAWAI

4 new apartments with shared swimming pool. Kitchenette, Bathroom and Terrace.

Only 1.9 million baht.

Tel: 084-0639223 or 081-7888280

LAND PLOT FOR HOLIDAY HOME



Project Baan Nam Khem, 24 units, mountain & lake view, amid a green cashew nut plantation, 10 min. walk to pristine beach. Price: 1.2-2 million baht/plot. Contact Maneerat. Tel: 081-812 0388. Email: mgrueneberger@yahoo.de

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 by email: allservices29@gmail.com

CONDOMINIUM PROJECT

Beautiful 19 rai of seaview property. 13,412 sqm of living space. Tel: 075-667071, 081-597 9310. Fax: 075-667071. Email: lantalandandhouse@GMX.net. Website at www.lanta-apartment.com

2-STOREY HOUSE

5.5 million baht. 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 72sq wah with some furniture at Villa Samkong. Call Khun Nan. Email: sync_koji@hotmail.com

BOAT LAGOON

Twin house for sale or rent, 2 and 3 bedrooms, fully furnished. Tel: 081-344 4473, 081-862 2962.

PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB



Duplex renovation project directly on 15th fairway for sale. Reduced price. See www.fairway15.com Tel: 081-894 1994.

LUXURY DEVELOPMENT LAND



Ao Po, Phuket, Thailand. 23.5 rai seafront/view. Ideal for development or subdivision. Neighbors include The Estate luxury development, the new Ao Po Marina and Jumeirah Private Island. Quick sale. Call 081-970 4765. Visit www.phuketluxuryland.com

COMMERCIAL RAWAI

88 sq wah, 32 meters frontage on busy Sai Yuan Rd. 4.9 million baht. Good investment. Tel: 085-794 2675.

BARGAIN KATA BEACH

3-level house, only 1 min to beach. Owner moving. 3.3 million baht. Tel: 084-840 5834.

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Property Gazette

RAWAI BEACH POOL VILLA



Sale, lease. 1, 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms, furnished, ADSL, 1.9 million baht ono. Contact. Tel: 086-940 8914. Email: rawai1@yahoo.com

PARICHART VILLAGE, CHALONG



35/20 Soi 1. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircons, some furniture, 50sq wah, garden. For sale at 4 million baht or for long-term rent. Must see. Contact Nina. Tel: 087-689 9679. Email: tasuwan@hotmail.com

BEAUTIFUL NAI YANG LAND



9.5 rai, beachfront. 5 minutes to Phuket airport. Asking price: 120 million baht. Chanote. Must see. No agents. Please contact via by email: allservices29@gmail.com

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BRAND-NEW HOUSE

For sale in Baan Suan Loch Palm. 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms. Price: 10.5 million baht. Urgent sale! Tel: 087-279 9500.

PERFECT LAND FOR SALE

on the main road to Chong Talay and Surin. 43 rai, 1ngan, 85sq wah. For sale by owner. 5.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-956-2406. Email: phatsarar@gmail.com

CHEAPEST SHOPHOUSE

in Phuket Town. Great location and ample parking. Selling below market price. Yaowarat Rd, same road as Timber Hut Pub. 5m x 60m long = 62 sq wah. Not to be found elsewhere. Will let it go at 5.5 million baht. Tel: 076-612730, 089-726 0446. Email: oldphuketshophouse@gmail.com

8 BEACHFRONT LOTS

for sale. Now only 4 left! Coconut Island (Maphrao), half rai for 2.75 to 4.4 million baht. 8% fee to brokers Royal Coast Company. Contact K. Apple. Tel: 076-353926 or 081-693 2791. Or simply email to: ang paos@mac.com

22 RAI @ 500,000 BT/RAI

Beautiful plot of land suitable for either development or agricultural use. Nice mountain views. Has paved road access and electricity. Located 5 km south of Tablamu golf course and 10 km north of Khao Lak. Call or email for more info. Price: 11 million baht. Tel: 081-892 1097. Email: info@swethairealestate.com

HOUSE IN RAWAI

for sale. Corner unit, 26 sq wah. Price 990,000 baht. Tel: 086-952 9517. Email: condo tel@web.de

HILL HOUSE AT KATA

for sale. Sea view, 600sqm for total area. Two-story house with 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, parking, pool. Nice location, 5 minutes to Kata Beach. Can adapt for 2 apartments for rent. Please take a look and ask for price ono. Tel: 087-689 9679.

PATONG DELUXE CONDO

1st class modern building, furnished, all amenities, 2800 views, quiet and close to everything. 4,275,000 baht. Tel: 080-797 5263. Email: caltirol@hotmail.com

50 RAI OF LAND W/CHANOTE TITLE

Phang Nga, 8kms from town center. 30 rai of powered licensed factory for meat + fish. Walk-in fridge + freezer. 8,000 hardwood trees planted on 20 rai. Genuine sale. Tel: 087-269 4083.

PATONG BEVERLY HILLS

Luxurious villa for sale, Nanai Rd, close to Patong Beach hillside. Big pool, fantastic sea view, 2km from the beach, 5 bedrooms, 650 sqm living space, huge private garden, very large spa house, walled property, fully furnished. No agents. Only 65 million baht. Please contact via by email: allservices29@gmail.com

AMAZING CONDO VILLA LAND



Up to 16 meters building with 3 stories. Full sea view of 180 degrees, from Chalong Bay to South Islands. 5 rai at 10 million baht per rai. Tel: 084-445 2831.

MISSION HILLS LAND FOR SALE

Two adjoining 1.5 rai plots of land for sale in the heart of Mission Hills Golf Club. Only 3 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-891 1826. Fax: 076-238940. Email: kevinq@loxinfo.co.th

BARGAIN KATA BEACH

3-level house, only 1 minute to beach. Owner moving. 3.6 million baht. Tel: 084-840 5834.

NEW 2 BEDROOM APARTMENT IN KATA CENTRAL

140sqm., luxury furniture on 6th floor. Use of swimming pool, parking & restaurant. Only 9.7 million baht. Tel: 084-0639223 or 081-7888280

COCONUT ISLAND LAND



for sale. 4.5 rai. Chanote, hillside panoramic sea view, close to beach. 14 million baht. Please call K. Bouddha Tel: 089-290 0484.

CORNER BUILDING OFF BYPASS

2 units, 24 + 33 sq wah, 4 stories. Located opposite Kejmukda restaurant, 300m from the Bypass road. 7-Eleven is on the ground floor. Price for the building is 15 million baht. Tel: 081-893 6630. Fax: 076-241408. Email: baansorada@hotmail.com

LAND PLOTS FOR SALE, LAYAN

2 land plots for sale in an exclusive villa development, 900sqm and 856 sqm. Ready to build at only 5,000 baht per sqm. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-891 1826. Fax: 076-238940. Email: kevinq@loxinfo.co.th Please see our website: www.baanboosa.com

HILL LAND SOUTH OF AIRPORT

18 Rai of Nor Sor Sam Gor land for sale by owner. Six km south of airport. Prepared for development with roads and drainage. Partial sea view towards NaiYang. 36 million baht. Tel: 081-8936630. Fax: 076-241408. Email: baan sorada@hotmail.com

SPECIAL SALE

4 NEW STUDIO APARTMENTS
In Rawai, close to main road,
with SWIMMING POOL

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Million Baht

Freehold / Leasehold

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Property Gazette

CONDO SUPER SALES

- 1 bedroom, pool view, Kamala, 2.3 million baht
 - 2 bedrooms, sea view, penthouse, Rawai, 4.95 million baht
 - 1 bedroom, Patong Tower, mountain view: 5 million baht
 - 1 bedroom Allamanda Laguna condo: 6.5 million baht
 - 2 bedrooms at Bang Tao Beach: 7.5 million baht
 - 2 bedrooms w/ sea view at Kalim Beach: 10 million baht
 All serviced units with rental return direct from owner. For more information see www.phuket-villa-property.com or call Marc at 087-272 0303. We've got it...

BIG COLONIAL HOUSE



Anuphas Golf View, built 2005, 600 sqm, living space, 2 floors with 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, dream kitchen, large foyer, large dining and sitting area, separate entertainment room and snooker room, maid's room, on a 1,700sqm tropical garden. 40 million baht. Tel: 089-587 8173.

AO POR LAND FOR SALE



150 rai. Nor Sor 3 Gor, sea view. Priced from 2.5 million baht per rai. No agents. Please contact by email: allservices29@gmail.com

DOUBLE VILLA IN KATA



Panoramic sea views - 5 bedrooms, 466sqm living space, 36sqm pool with Jacuzzi, 4 minutes from Kata Beach. Ready to move into. Only 24 million baht. Email: allservices29@gmail.com

VILLA + 2 HOUSES IN PATONG



Villa, 4 bedroom, private pool and good views. 2 houses with 8 small apartments, 700sqm. Freehold land. 40 million baht. Tel: 089-290 9567. Email: lars.micksater@comhem.se For further details, please see our website at www.brommathaihouse.com

Properties For Rent

BIG HOUSE FOR RENT OR SALE



1.5 km from Central Festival attached to Suanluang Public Park. 300sq Wah. 5 bed, 5 bath, 9 aircons, 4 bathtubs. Pond in garden. Fully furnished. Fitness facilities. European kitchen. 2 living rooms. Contact Mongkon. Tel: 084-062 8040.

NEW 1 BEDROOM APARTMENT IN KATA CENTRAL

60sqm. furnished. Use of swimming pool, parking & restaurant.
Only 2.9 million baht.
 Tel: 084-0639223 or 081-7888280

Beautiful House

1. 540sqm land plot and nearly 330sqm indoor area, located 3 mins from Heroines' Monument.
2. 5 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms, all with hot water.
3. Separate living, European kitchen and dining areas.
4. 4.5x12m swimming pool with turbo jet (partially indoors).
5. Timber sala with waterfall wall feature.
6. Fully built-in furniture in all rooms.
7. 8 aircon units, 3 ceiling fans, landscape lighting and sprinkler system for garden.
8. 1 Jacuzzi and 1 bathtub.
9. Indoor carport with automatic gate.
10. Water tank and pressure tank for water supply.
11. 3-phase electricity, tel, True TV, ADSL.
12. Good quality of finishing materials after refurbishment to new condition.

40% financial support

Price = 12.8 million baht. Call (081) 895-7310.

LAND IN PHANG NGA

for sale. 9.8 rai working fruit farm, 300+ trees, 5 fish ponds, 2 farm houses suitable for fishing park, 5 kms Phang Nga, 45 mins Phuket airport. Chanote title deed 5,800,000 baht Tel: 086-274 0056 English or 085-151 0823 Thai.

URGENT SALE

Mai Khao, 700 metres to beach. Near West Sands. 2.3 million baht per rai. Tel: 083-633 4994.

1 RAI LOTS

in gated community. Ocean view. East coast, Pa Khlok. Starting at 3.5 million per rai. Royal Coast Company Ltd. Tel: 076-353926, 081-6932 791. Email: eam1008@mac.com

NEW HOUSE IN NAI HARN-RAWAI



for rent. 3-story villa, sea view, hill view, garden, pool, 4 bedrooms with 2 en-suite bathrooms, 6 bathrooms, ADSL. Jacuzzi. Big living room, kitchen/dining, laundry room. 5 aircons. 8m x 3.5m private pool. 2 parking spaces. Tel: 081-677 9837, 089-646 4786. Email: sync_koji@hotmail.com

KARON SEAVIEW PROPERTY



Seaview-pool villa overlooking Karon Beach, plot 960 sqm. Fully furnished, ready to move in, 14.8 million baht. Documentation and pics available. Tel: 089-593 8690. Email: ruen_narayan@hotmail.com

KOH YAO YAI

3.8 rai, 1 million baht. Chanote, electricity, near pier. Thai owner needs money. Call for more details. Tel: 081-892 8208.

AGRICULTURAL LAND

for sale. 120 rai of agricultural land for sale, 20km from resort area of Khao Lak. Total price 3.84 million baht. Please telephone 087-020 0191 for further information.

SUPERB SEA VIEW

1 rai, Yamu Hills. Fully serviced, underground power/water, gated security, ready to build on. Tel: 081-088 8271. Email: capt@loxinfo.co.th

68 RAI OF KRABI LAND

Super-prime hilltop, 280 degree bay view above Sheraton. Chanote and Norsor 3. B6.5m per rai. Please contact via by email: thunderoredigger@gmail.com

LUXURY VILLA IN KATA HILL

3 bedrooms, landscaped garden, swimming pool, jacuzzi. Includes all furniture.
Only 18 million baht.
 Tel: 084-0639223 or 081-7888280

VERY LARGE VILLA IN KATA HILL

7 bedrooms, large landscaped garden, 2 swimming pools, 2 kitchens. Standing on 1 rai.
Only 49 million baht.
 Tel: 084-0639223 or 081-7888280

NEW HOUSE KATHU



2 bed, 3 aircons, fully furnished, car park, security. 8 mins Patong, 3 mins Lotus. Long-term. Tel: 086-597 5474, 087-280 3116.

FANTASTIC SEAVIEW



Karon Beach, pool-bungalow, private and quiet area, nicely furnished, UBC, Internet, 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-593 8690. Email: ruen_narayan@hotmail.com

KATA 5 STAR OCEANFRONT APT

1 bedroom, exotic luxury. Pools, spa, quiet area. Available now until March 9. Email: asiasail@yahoo.com Website: <http://koumbele.com/kata1/>

CHALONG HOUSE
 for rent. 2 aircon bedrooms, fully furnished, near quiet new street close to shops. Phone 084-848 5517.

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Looking for land to buy?

See more classified ads
 at www.phuketgazette.net

Property Gazette

POOL VILLA – NAIHARN



Beautiful contemporary pool villa close to Naiharn Beach available for long term rental. 3 bedrooms, living room, 4 bathrooms, maid/storage room, modern high quality furniture, well-equipped kitchen, LCD TV, Satellite TV, Internet WiFi, private pool, maid/garden/pool service. 60,000 baht / month excluding electricity. Available from January 2009. Christmas time negotiable. Tel: 081-811 5304. Email: janne@rayadivers.com

PATONG TOWER 1 BED

Condominium for rent or sale, furnished. Call Roy for appointment. Tel: 086-270 7819.

CONDOS IN RAWAI

for rent. Aircon, TV, DVD, fridge, kitchenette, furnished. Tel: 086-945 6650. Email: phuketcomfortcondos@hotmail.com

OFFICE/RETAIL SPACE – AO POR

Prime location, 400sqm on 2 floors. At junction to Ao Por Pier with big parking area. Tel: 076-260468. Email: amykoh18@gmail.com

PATONG APARTMENT

300 meters to the beach, clean, modern, comfortable. Aircon, TV, fridge, big bed, pool, parking. Tel: 081-082 5707. For further details, please see our website at <http://www.phuket-accommodation.info>

TROPICAL VILLA ON PHUKET

Country Club golf course. Beautiful home with pool, sala, BBQ area and gardens for rent for 6 to 12 months at 60,000 baht per month. Call Rudi at 081-892 1447.

RAWAI BEACH POOL VILLA



1, 2, 3 or 4 bedrooms, bathroom, aircon, ADSL, cable TV. 24,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-940 8914. Email: rawai1@yahoo.com

BRAND NEW VILLA

for rent. 2-bedroom villa located in Kamala. Spectacular ocean views from every room. Japanese erotica style with 2 enclosed gardens, sala, infinity-edge swimming pool, European open kitchen, flat screen in every room. Minimum rental 3 months, rental rate 125,000 baht per month. Contact Katherine. Tel: 080-699 2436. Email: info@kingdomvillarentals.com

PATONG DELUXE CONDO

Beautiful, modern, fully furnished, stunning views, Quiet. Can walk to everything. For rent long term at 23,000 baht per month. Tel: 080-797 5263. Email: caltirol@hotmail.com

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. UBC and ADSL. Includes daily cleaning and washing, pool & gardening service. Daily rental 8,000 baht. Contact Khun Suchada. Tel: 084-8436 837. Email: suchada_villas@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.phuket-island-homes.com>

RESORT VILLA POOL

2,000 baht daily, Laguna, furnished, Jacuzzi, BBQ, security. Has everything. Tel: 089-594 4067.

NEW VILLA FOR RENT OR SALE

610sqm, 4 bedrooms, swimming pool and garden, 1,000sqm. The villa is located next to Loch Palm Golf Course. Rent weekly: 130,000 baht; monthly, 300,000 baht. Or for sale at US\$ 1.35 million. House agents welcome. Please contact Mr Tuan. Tel: 089-652- 3148. Email: pratuan@solicitorhai.com

SINGLE HOUSE

for rent. Thalung monument, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Tel: 081-537 0033.

CHALONG NEW HOME

2 bedroom furnished home for rent with telephone, UBC and aircon. Tel: 089-652-1473. Email: anandaestates@yahoo.com

3 BEDROOM HOUSE

fully furnished, aircon, ADSL, near Heroines Monument. 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-277 8461. Email: brunuiviv@hotmail.com

HOUSE IN A NICE COMMUNITY

2 kms from Monument 76sqm, fully furnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 aircon, high-speed ADSL, garden + washing area. 10,500 baht per month. Tel: 086-685 2999. Email: rattanawadee@gmail.com

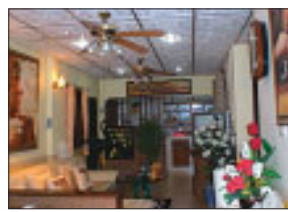
SPACIOUS 2 BED SEAVIEW CONDO

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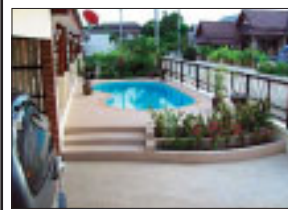
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2005, GPR exhaust, 4,800km, top condition. 360,000 baht with book. Tel: 089-971 5664.

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- Wheels: Bontrager Race Lite

- Shifters: Shimano Ultegra STI, 10 speed

- Front & Rear Derailleur: Shimano Ultegra

- Pedals: Shimano Dura Ace 7800 Pedals.

Tel: 086-945 0370. Or mail: harald20@hotmail.com

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