

Phuket Gazette

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INSIDE



Sailor's delight

Sailors from the USS Nimitz, USS Pinckney and USS Rentz arrive in Phuket for some much-awaited R&R. See page 7

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Maimed pilot: 'I will fly again'

By Dan Waites and Kitima Pornmongkhonwat

AIRLINE pilot Scott McDonald is trying to put his life back together after his lower calf and foot were sliced off by a speeding motorbike in Phuket late last month.

As he lay bleeding by the side of the road, a passerby who witnessed the accident used the American's cellphone to call for help – before pocketing the device and fleeing the scene.

Mr McDonald has undergone surgery at Bangkok Hospital Phuket seven times since the accident.

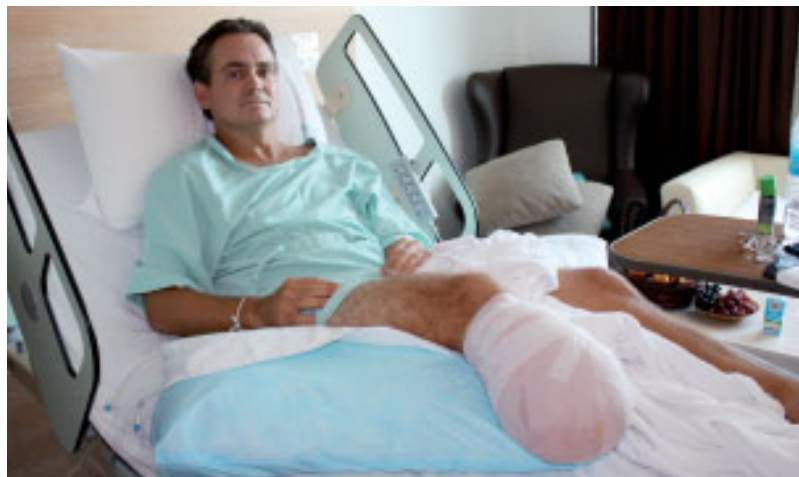
He is hoping a prosthetic foot will allow him to resume his career as a pilot with Cathay Pacific – and continue to indulge in his great love, golf.

The smash happened shortly after midnight on January 24.

Chicago-native McDonald, 43, was heading up Thepkrasattri Road towards his home at Yacht Haven when his phone rang.

He parked his Harley Davidson Fatboy by the side of the road, just north of Blue Canyon Country Club.

Turning the parking light on and still straddling the bike, he answered the cellphone. It was



DOWN BUT NOT OUT: Cathay Pacific pilot Scott McDonald now hopes a prosthetic foot will allow him to continue his career.

his girlfriend Wan calling to ask when he would arrive home.

He told Wan he would be home in 10 minutes. "Just as I was saying that, wham. I got slammed from behind. I thought it was a car that hit me, it was so loud."

What hit the American was the foot pedal of a speeding Honda Dream ridden by two Thai men. "I think they were going at at least 100km/h," Mr McDonald said.

His foot was sliced clean off above the ankle.

"I just remember being thrown and then crawling over as far left as I could on the road because I thought I was gonna get hit by a car. And from there I don't

really remember a lot. I was in shock," he said.

Wan was still listening, horrified, on the cellphone. "I heard screaming, 'Ah! Ah! Ah!'. Then it was quiet," she said.

Mr McDonald's memories of the accident are hazy, though he can remember asking someone who rushed to the scene to call Wan.

After telling Wan where her stricken boyfriend was lying, that person disappeared – with Mr McDonald's cellphone in hand. It has not been returned.

By the time Wan arrived, Kusoldharm Foundation workers had already taken Mr McDonald

to Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

He immediately faced the agonizing decision of whether to have his foot, now infected, sown back on or surgically amputated above the existing wound.

He decided to follow doctors' recommendations, choosing amputation.

"The prosthetics they can make are very up to par these days," he said.

Mr McDonald's employers, Cathay Pacific, have been 'very, very supportive', he said.

"They told me just the first or second day afterwards, 'remember your career is not over with Cathay Pacific'."

The driver and passenger of the motorbike that hit Mr McDonald are receiving treatment at Vachira Phuket Hospital.

Inspector Sarit Budnongsang of Tah Chat Chai Police said an investigation was underway to discover who was at fault.

At the time of writing Mr McDonald, an eight-year resident of Phuket, was due to have his leg sown up on February 4.

He said he would now work on his recovery – and go through with his plan to marry Wan.

Lost fishermen paddle to survival

THREE Phuket fishermen lost at sea for a week had to paddle their broken-down boat 19 miles before finally being rescued by the Royal Thai Navy.

Chusak Sae-aueng, 43, Sanchai Pinmek, 35, and Praween Sungorn, 26, on January 22 set out in a longtail boat from Saphan Hin for what they thought would be a routine fishing trip.

But after the men failed to return home on January 25, their worried families alerted the Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command, which launched a

search and rescue mission over the Andaman Sea.

As days passed, fears grew within the Saphan Hin community for the fishermen's safety. The men's family members visited Chalong Temple to pray for their safe return.

Mr Chusak said the longtail's engine failed at about 4pm on January 23 not far from Koh Racha Noi, about 18 miles south of Phuket.

"We could see the island in the distance, but we kept drifting further away from it. We tried to make a sail from old sheets we had on board,

but it didn't work," he said.

Without a marine band radio and unable to get signals on their mobile phones, the trio's fear grew as night descended.

"We couldn't sleep because of strong winds and we had to stand and balance the boat. We didn't think we would see our families again," he said.

The next morning, the men made three paddles from scrap wood with tools they had on board and began paddling their way back to Koh Racha Noi, albeit slowly.

Continued on page two



RESOURCEFUL: The three men with their makeshift paddles.

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Paddling home to their families

Continued from page one

Over the next four days, the men saw at least 10 commercial ships pass nearby.

"We waved our flag and screamed, but no one came for us," Mr Chusak said.

We paddled as far as we could, but the boat is very heavy, he said. Mr Sanchai said when he was exhausted from paddling he would repeat the name of his three-year-old daughter Baithong (banana leaf) over and over to give him strength.

"She kept me paddling and kept me alive," he said. Meanwhile back on Phuket, Mr Sanchai's wife and little Baithong visited the dock where the fishermen's boat was usually docked.

"Baithong would point at where the boat usually was and say 'papa'," Mr Sanchai's wife said.

By January 28, the men were praying for their lives, vowing to enter the monkhood if they could see their families again.

Mr Sanchai said they left Phuket with five kilos of rice and seven, five-liter containers of water.

"To save water we didn't boil our rice. We ate very little to ration our food supplies," he said.

On the morning of January 29, the men had only two containers of water left. Unbeknown to them, they had drifted so far from Phuket they were just three miles from Indian territorial waters.

Just after 4pm that day, a

Royal Thai Navy reconnaissance aircraft spotted the vessel about 17 miles from Koh Racha Noi Island.

"When we saw the plane overheard, we threw down our paddles, grabbed our flag and waved," Mr Chusak said.

"Tears came to my eyes and I thanked Buddha," he said.

The men were transferred by Navy vessel PCF 218 to Cape Panwa, arriving at 9pm.

Although exhausted and malnourished, they were nevertheless elated to see their families and hundreds of well-wishers who cheered as the men got off the navy vessel and back on to dry land. Mr Chusak's wife, 24-year-old Metta Srisamai, said she was ecstatic to have her husband home with their three small children.

Rear Admiral Supoj Sudprasert, Deputy Commander of Phuket's Third Naval Area Command, was also at the pier to greet the weary survivors – as were many members of the local media.

All three men were taken to Vachira Phuket Hospital for treatment. Speaking to the *Gazette* on February 2, Mr Sanchai said he would like to thank the Royal Thai Navy for rescuing him, but said he would have to get back out to sea soon.

"We will have to go out again. This is our livelihood, how we provide for our families," he said.

The men say they will not get stranded at sea again as they plan to purchase a marine radio.

But before they do, the three men plan to honor their pact and enter the monkhood.

– **Pimwara Choksakulpan**



Photo by Sakorn Sangthongsamansin

Fifty firemen fight blaze

IT took over 50 firefighters more than two hours to bring a blaze at a recycling center in Wichit under control on February 2.

The blaze started at about 7:40pm at the Naka Recycle warehouse, just north of the turnoff to Wat Naka on Chao Fa

West Road. A total of 18 fire engines as well as Phuket City Police, Kusoldharm Foundation workers and Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop rushed to the scene. The last flames were finally extinguished just before 10pm.

The next morning, little but charred remains of paper,

cardboard, clothes, plastics and other recyclable materials remained in the warehouse, which was formerly a lumber yard.

The wooden warehouse structure, however, remained intact. Police are now investigating the cause of the blaze.

– **Atchaa Khamlo**

TAT to keep 'zero fare' packages out

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is working to establish a standardized system of 'branded' tours to Phuket specifically for the Chinese market.

The initiative, intended to keep 'zero tour fare' package operators out of Phuket, was discussed at a meeting of tourism industry leaders held at The Metropole hotel last month.

Chairing the meeting was TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing Sansern Ngaorungsi.

Under the plan, tour companies would be allowed to submit an unlimited number of tour programs for approval by a review panel comprised of TAT officials, members of the Thai-Chinese Tourism Alliance Association (TCTA) and other

government agencies and private sector groups. Once approved, the packages would bear annually renewable verification logos, certifying them as tours approved by the TAT, Ministry of Tourism and Sports as well as the government of China, which last year outlawed sales of tours without fixed itineraries.

Participants will now begin working to establish how many different tour categories should be offered and what the exact qualifications for each should be.

One possibility presented at the meeting was to categorize tours into 'platinum', 'gold' and 'silver' options, each specifying such factors as the star-rating of the hotels to be used, meal prices and restrictions on the amount of time allocated for shopping. 'Platinum' tours, for example,

would see tourists staying at five-star hotels and not having to take part in any of the 'shopping trips' that have become a major source of complaint among Chinese tourists visiting Thailand.

Participants will hash out the details in meetings to be held in Chiang Mai and Koh Samui before drafting a proposal and sending it to the Ministry of Tourism and Sports for approval.

The TAT sees China as a high-potential source of inbound tourists. About 770,000 Chinese visited Thailand in 2009, down slightly from 2008 when 819,000 visited.

Phuket Tourist Association (PTA) Vice President Bhuritt Maswongsa said the move is intended to keep 'zero tour fare' operators out of Phuket.

– **Atchaa Khamlo and Stephen Fein**



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Camp owner defends rampaging elephant



Gustav Carlsson was forced flee the raging bull, hopping into a nearby hut with a bone protruding out of one leg.

THE owner of an elephant that recently went berserk and injured two Swedish tourists has defended the beast, blaming its mahout for the incident.

Trin Khanwilaikul, owner of 'Camp Chang' in Kalim, said the elephant named 'Captain' would not be punished for the rampage, which also damaged a car.

"He is a nice elephant, but he had the wrong mahout. It is like a car being driven by someone other than its owner," she said.

Captain, a 20-year-old bull, is one of seven elephants owned by the camp. Only two are males.

On the afternoon of January 25, Swedish tourists Gustav Carlsson, 31, and John Haraldsson were riding Captain at the camp.

Mr Carlsson's 31-year-old wife, Hanna Agnarsson-Carlsson, and the couple's 10-year-old son Oscar were on

another elephant. Mr Haraldsson's wife and four-year-old son were on a third.

Just the day before, Gustav and Hanna had held their wedding on Phuket, attended by a large party of Swedes.

Mr Carlsson said Captain's mahout had been poking the bull's head and neck with a sharp stick for 20 minutes prior to the incident.

The elephant seemed to be getting angry, he said.

When Captain stopped moving, a mahout on the elephant behind fired a slingshot at his bottom.

With this, Captain went berserk.

The raging bull grabbed a tree, pulling it down onto a car. "We were shocked and very scared. We thought we would get killed," Mr Carlsson said.

The mahout jumped off. "The elephant continued to smash more trees," he said.

The two tourists managed

to get off Captain's back by grabbing an overhead cable and jumping onto a car below.

"We jumped off the car. Suddenly the elephant rolled the car over before stepping through its window.

"Then he turned to us. While we were trying to run away I realized I had hurt my left foot. I'm not sure if the elephant stepped on it and broke the bone."

With a bone protruding out of his left leg, Mr Carlsson managed to make it hopping on one leg into a nearby hut, where the rest of the party were already hiding.

Terrified, the group cowered in the hut while the elephant continued its rampage.

"The bad stuff lasted about 15 minutes," Mr Carlsson said. "I heard the elephant was back to normal about 30 minutes later."

"My son saw the whole thing. He was very scared and was crying a lot. Luckily my daughter wasn't there," he said.

Mr Haraldsson flew home to Sweden on January 27 for treatment on his bruised knee.

Mr Carlsson was treated at Phuket International Hospital for a broken left leg and bruised heel.

"I think we'll come back to Thailand, probably in the next three to four years. But we'll never ride an elephant again for sure," he said.

Camp owner Ms Trin was keen to defend animal welfare standards at the camp.

"We treat our elephants very well. You can see that our elephants are very healthy and big," Ms Trin said.

— *Atchaa Khamlo*



TRANSFERRED: Kathu Police Superintendent Grissak Songmoonark (left) and Phuket Immigration Superintendent Chanatpol Yongbunjerd

Top cop shuffles off

PATONG'S top cop, Kathu Police Superintendent Grissak Songmoonark, has been transferred off the island in the latest police reshuffle.

Col Grissak will take up the significantly less hectic position of Superintendent of Kuraburi District Police in Phang Nga.

His replacement, effective February 19, will be current Tung Tong Police Superintendent Arayapan Pukbuakao.

Col Grissak seemed saddened by the news of the transfer to rural Kuraburi, Phang Nga's northernmost district and a far cry from the bright lights of Patong.

"I have been working here since June, 2007," he said. "I didn't request the transfer, but those are my orders. What can I say? I have to go."

As for his new posting, he said: "I have never been there

before, but I think it will be good and will give me a chance to make new friends. I have held many positions in many different locations, so the adjustment should not be difficult at all."

"It is hard to say at this time how people will react to the transfer, but I put my heart into my work to keep Patong safe and secure, so I think those who want Patong to remain peaceful will be sad," he said.

"I would like all Royal Thai Police to have good morale, never giving up so they can work hard to serve the people," he said.

The latest reshuffle saw 26 officers stationed in Phuket transferred to other provinces.

Phuket Immigration Superintendent Chanatpol Yongbunjerd has been transferred to a position in Bangkok.

— *Gazette reporters*

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Rage on the road leaves expat dead

ROAD rage claimed the life of an elderly German expat late last month. On the evening of January 27, Wolf-Dieter Kesselheim, 66, was stabbed to death in an altercation with three Thais on the busy Wiset Road from Chalong Circle to Rawai. The next day, police arrested 32-year-old Pittaya Srijitraporn for the killing. Mr Pittaya claimed he acted alone – and in self defense. Yet friends of Mr Kesselheim dispute Mr Pittaya's account. Dan Waites reports.

AROUND 200 people attended the funeral of Wolf-Dieter Kesselheim at Chalong Temple on the morning of January 3. A prominent and well-respected member of the island's German community, Mr Kesselheim had lived in Thailand for more than 30 years.

For the past two decades,

he worked for a company selling military equipment to the Thai armed forces.

This was no fresh-off-the-plane retiree, looking to spend his twilight years in the sun.

We have just one first-person account of the fight that ended Mr Kesselheim's life: that of his confessed murderer, Pittaya Srijitraporn.

Mr Pittaya was picked up by police at Kata Viewpoint, where he made a living charging tourists to have their photographs taken with sea eagles.

On the morning of January 28, he was made to re-enact his version of events for the media.

Mr Pittaya's two young cousins were also present at the re-enactment, their faces hidden behind balaclavas because they are both minors.

Though some witnesses said all three Thais were involved in the fatal scuffle, Mr Pittaya claimed he acted alone.

Mr Pittaya said he had just picked up the younger Thais from school and was driving them home on his pink Yamaha Fino when the incident took place.

He confessed to cutting off Mr Kesselheim's pickup truck at around 7pm outside Chalong Police Station.

According to Mr Pittaya's account, this angered the German, who followed the three Thais in his pick-up to Chalong Circle, shouting at them and giving them 'the finger' along the way.

Both vehicles turned off the traffic circle onto Wiset Road, heading towards Rawai, with the German honking his horn angrily, Mr Pittaya said.

Eventually, Mr Pittaya pulled over in front of the German's truck, forcing him to a



A police officer holds Pittaya Srijitraporn in a headlock during a police re-enactment of the murder.

stop in front of a 7-Eleven store. Mr Kesselheim was 'too drunk' to talk the incident through, his killer claimed.

Mr Pittaya said the German got out of the truck and punched him in the face, starting a scuffle he realized he could not win against the larger, but much older, man.

When Mr Kesselheim got him in a headlock, the Thai pulled a knife from his pocket and stabbed him twice in the chest, he said.

After the German fell to the ground, Mr Pittaya and his cousins fled on the motorbike.

But at least one long-time friend of Mr Kesselheim has come forward to question Mr Pittaya's version of events.

The woman, who for safety reasons wishes to remain anonymous, claims the Thai's 'self-serving' account is not credible for several reasons.

"Wolf lived in Thailand for more than 30 years," she said. "He spoke fluent Thai and he knew how to behave. I never saw him stick his finger up at anyone."

The friend said she could not believe Mr Kesselheim was drunk at the time of the incident.

"He liked to drink sometimes, sure, but he was on the way to a business meeting. He

would never have been drunk at that time."

The woman described Mr Kesselheim as very safety conscious. "I am amazed Wolf got out of his truck under those circumstances," she said.

Central to Mr Pittaya's assertion that he acted in self-defense was his claim that the 66-year-old German had him in a headlock when the stabbing took place.

"It's impossible," the friend said. "If I have you in a headlock, there's no way you can stab me in the chest like that."

Mr Pittaya has been charged with the premeditated murder of Wolf-Dieter Eugen Kesselheim.

If convicted he could face a jail sentence of 15 years to life or even the death penalty, depending on the court.

At last report Mr Pittaya was still in detention at Phuket Provincial Court and police were continuing their investigation.

Under Thai law they have up to 84 days to complete the investigation and file court charges.

Police said the two minors were not involved in the murder and will not be charged with any criminal offenses.

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Forests, coastline under serious threat

ANATIONAL park that includes some of Phuket's most stunning stretches of coastline is under siege, the park's chief has warned.

Leatherback turtles recently returned to Sirinath National Park's Mai Khao Beach to lay their eggs after an absence of years.

Despite this unexpected good news, park director Nonthawit Chaturabandit is warning that unless something is done about encroachment and coastal erosion, there may not be much left of Mai Khao and Nai Yang beaches in just a few years' time.

The 56,000-rai park includes both beaches, as well as the hilly, forested region south of Nai Yang and 43,000 rai of protected water and offshore seabed.

Mr Nonthawit said 260 people have encroached upon more than a fifth of the 13,000 rai of the park land.

Many are farmers who are trying to prove they occupied the land before its establishment as a national park. If they fail to prove this in court, the park would reclaim their landholdings, Mr Nonthawit said.

Intruders recently encroached on an additional three rai of park land. After the authorities noticed that buildings had been erected on park land, they destroyed the structures.

Ton Son pine trees found along both Mai Khao and Nai Yang beaches were also under threat, he said.

A police investigation is currently underway over the mysterious felling of eight of the trees at Mai Khao late last year near the West Sands hotel and condominium project.

Natural forces are also damaging the park as wind is eroding exposed land on which the pine trees stand. Three or four of the trees have already fallen for this reason and coastal erosion is threatening another.

Park officials are currently in talks with local village leaders over building a breakwater to help protect the coastline, he said.

The park chief said he hoped Prince of Songkla University researchers could help determine the best shape and length for the breakwater and come up with a cost estimate.

"If we do nothing, erosion will destroy the coastline," he said.

Recently it also emerged that human encroachment had laid waste to more than two-thirds of a large forest reserve, also in the north of Phuket.

The Bang Khanon forest reserve in tambon Thepkasattri originally covered more than 5,000 rai, but just 1,500 rai of virgin forest remain.

In January, Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop accompanied an inspection team from the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment (MNRE) to the site of the latest devastation.

Led by MNRE Inspector General Monthip Sriratana Tabucanon, the team were in Phuket to witness first hand the extent of the island's encroachment problem.

After touring other encroached forest areas in Karon and Patong, the team visited a 100-rai plot located inside the reserve and just 300 meters from the Bang Khanon Agroforestry Office.

Many of the trees in the area had already been felled, while others stood dying.

Encroachers had cut deep rings around the tree trunks, allowing the sap to leak out.



Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop (right) and MNRE Inspector General Monthip Sriratana Tabucanon at Bang Khanon reserved forest, the site of a fresh assault on Phuket's natural environment.

This technique kills the trees, making them easier to cut down.

Gov Wichai described the trees as rare and irreplaceable, saying some were more than 80 years old.

"No matter how much we spend on reforestation, [the new trees] will never be worth as much," he said.

Gov Wichai pleaded with the Phuket people to end encroachment.

"If we ruin our natural resources, tourists will stop coming to our province," he said.

Dr Monthip said the MNRE had ordered local officials to use aerial photography to detect deforestation on the island.

Any future damage would be reported directly to Natural Resources and Environment Minister Suwit Khunkitti and subsequent investigations would determine whether local officers were involved, she said.

Figures released by the MNRE's Phuket office last year showed the rate of forest destruction in Phuket had quadrupled over the last six years.

— Gazette reporters

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Hi-Fi Beauty (2)

Last week we talked about radiofrequency procedure. This week I will give you more details about it.

Why is it better?

RF lift has been used for years for face and eye treatment. Previous RF systems were not equipped with smart treatment technology that can detect skin temperature and cool it down with cryogen spray when it's too hot. Your skin surface won't be burnt with new system, unlike old one that might cause some problems. And physicians can deliver higher RF fluence, which gives a better end result. It requires a single treatment and it can last up to 2-3 years. The result lasts longer if you take good care of your skin and protect yourself from UV rays and cigarettes. There are different tips for different treated areas: face, neck, eyelid, body and the newest one is the hand tip. It's recently launched in US and has arrived Thailand. If you read hand in hand article a few weeks back, you have to add this treatment to rejuvenate your hands. It can restore a younger look for your hands without any downtime.

Sounds good?

The treatment result seems fascinating. But it's not offered to replace surgical facelift. You can't compare these two different procedures. RF is an option for anyone who doesn't have too much problem or severe laxity; otherwise surgery might be a better solution. But if you're not ready for a surgery and all downsides of it, you should pick RF. With RF, your skin will be red for 30-60 minutes. If you wish for a natural younger look with less risk and recovery time, consider RF. Anesthetic cream should be applied 45 minutes prior to treatment. As it produces heat, you will feel a deep, but brief, heating sensation and maybe a little discomfort while RF is delivered to your skin.

There are other non-invasive treatments that help restore the skin. But different systems give different results. It's best to discuss with your physician treatment that can give a result which meets your expectations. Non-invasive procedures are a growing trend now but they might not be the best alternative for your problem. Next issue, we will talk about another hi-fi treatment. Curious? For more information, please contact: dr.thanaruch@gmail.com.

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Rice to the rescue



Workers load 100 tonnes of Thai rice from government stocks onto a Thai Airways International cargo plane for a humanitarian flight to help victims of quake hit Haiti.

Queer News

Woman bares all on Bangla

PHUKET: While it's not unusual for Thais to make merit after good fortune comes their way, one woman put a fruity new twist on the custom on January 19.

The woman, who gave her name as 'Toy', stripped off on Soi Bangla and ran around naked to thank spirits for granting her wish of finding a foreign husband.

The report did not say what her new husband thought of the ritual.

The somewhat intoxicated Mrs Toy, who appeared to be in her thirties, took off all her clothes and danced around on the zebra crossing at the end of Soi Bangla opposite Tai Pan club.

Unperturbed by crowds of tourists, she happily shook her bits while waving for the cameras before rolling around on the floor.

At 3:20am, Kathu police turned up to put an end to the fun, bundling the woman into a police truck.

Mrs Toy said she stripped off to fulfill a pact she made with spirits at a sacred shrine in her home province of Yasothorn in Isarn.

She said she had wished that she would find a foreign husband when she moved to Phuket and promised that if her wish came true, she would dance naked in the streets of Patong.

When she finally met the farang of her dreams, she had to pay back the spirits with her nude display.

Police held the woman until she sobered up, then let her go home fully dressed.

Source: Siang Tai

Gaur gores man to death

CHACHENGSAO: A farmer died after being badly gored by a gaur, a species of wild cattle.

Thanomsak Sae-sim, 43, spent a week in hospital following the attack, suffering from a broken back and cerebral edema. He succumbed to his injuries on January 27.

The victim's mother, Angun Sae-sim, said Mr Thanomsak was working in a cassava field when the attack happened on January 19.

The gaur rushed out of the trees and gored Mr Thanomsak before throwing him into the air with its horns numerous times. Finally the victim's friends managed to scare the beast away by banging sticks and shouting. They rushed Mr Thanomsak to hospital, Mrs Angun said.

Gaurs are the largest species of wild cattle in the world. They are classified as a threatened species and are rare in Thailand.

In Thai, they are called *krating* and have lent their name to *Krating Daeng*, the original Thai version of the energy drink Red Bull.

The name '*Krating Daeng*' was also used by the right wing paramilitary group that was responsible for much of the violence in the October 6, 1976 massacre of students at Bangkok's Thammasat University.

Source: Khao Sod

Karaoke fan loses penis

CHACHOENGSAO: A woman almost severed her husband's penis on January 31 after seeing him kiss a karaoke singer on the cheek.

The pair were drinking at home with about 10 friends when Anand Ongsombun, 48, began to get a little too close to a guest who worked at a local karaoke bar.

Mr Anand reportedly asked if he could kiss the singer on the cheek. This so enraged Mr Anand's wife, 53-year-old Uri Emmod, that she ran to the kitchen, grabbed a knife and slashed at her husband's groin.

Rescue workers rushed Mr Anand to hospital, where surgeons managed to reattach his organ with more than 20 stitches.

Mr Anand said his wife was very drunk when she attacked him so he would not press charges.

Source: Khao Sod



Southern hospitality

Locals in Yala give flowers to Army Commander in Chief Gen Anupong Paojinda who was on a recent visit to the province and other parts of the Deep South. Photo by Nakarin Shinworakomon

American hotelier takes life over huge losses

CHIANG MAI: An American hotel and bar owner was found dead in his condo on January 28 after an apparent suicide. His business had reportedly been suffering heavy losses.

Forty-eight-year-old James Gregson was found by his housekeeper in the bathroom of his condo in the Twin Peaks development on Chang Khlan Road.

Police found a half empty bottle of Lannate insecticide and

two cans of soft drinks. The room was locked from the inside and there were no signs of a struggle, police said.

Mr Gregson's housekeeper, Kritiya Suriya, 35, said Mr Gregson had recently invested 10mn baht in leasing the Sri Tokyo hotel in Chiang Mai and converting it to the Lavena Lanna Hotel.

The hotel, opened in October 2009, is aimed at gay holi-

day makers. It claims to have the largest gay bar in the North.

Mrs Kritiya told police that Mr Gregson had said he was losing large amounts of money on the venture.

He also told her that his gay hotel businesses in the US were also losing money.

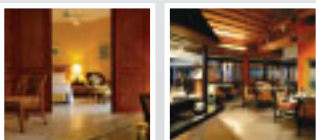
Police said they believe Mr Gregson killed himself because of business worries.

Source: Thai Rath

laguna
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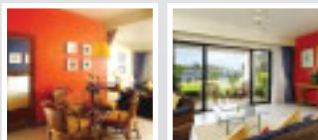
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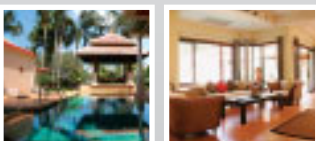
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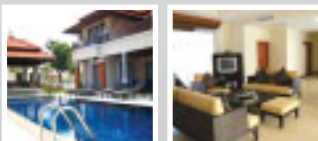
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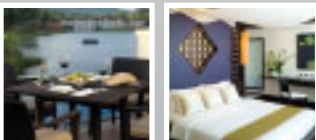
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Anchors Aweigh my boys...



*...Heave a ho there! sailor
Ev'rybody drink up while you may...
For you're gonna sail at break of day
Drink a-way, Drink a-way,
For you sail at break of day, Hey!*
(From the US Naval Academy Fight Song)

Thousands of US servicemen stationed aboard the USS Nimitz and its support vessels arrived in Phuket on January 31 for five days of rest and relaxation.

Anxious to get off the 333-meter vessel after a month on board, sailors and marines quickly formed a long line on the hangar deck.

USS Nimitz Commander Adm John 'Fozzie' Miller said the US servicemen were 'delighted' at getting the chance to visit Phuket and meet the Thai people. He described Thais as 'great friends' of the American people.

All staff going ashore had been thoroughly briefed on a range of safety issues and were committed to being 'good

guests' during their stay in Phuket, Adm Miller said.

Teams of volunteer US servicemen will take part in community relations or 'Comrel' projects at two local schools during the liberty leave, he said.

The Comrels are organized with the Rotary Club of Patong Beach.

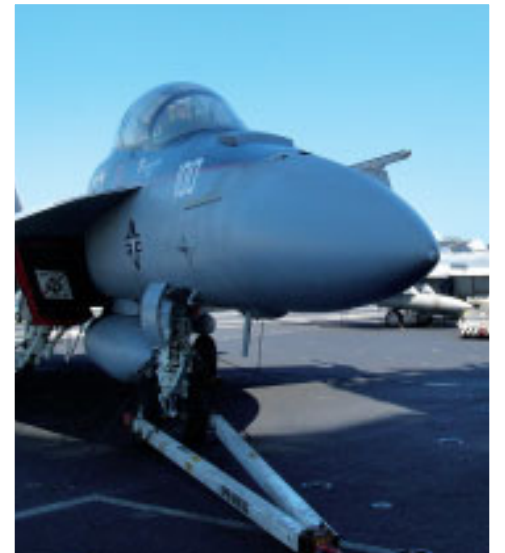
Today and tomorrow sailors from the USS Nimitz will paint the cafeteria at Baan Ao Nam Bor School in Ao Makham, near the Deep Sea Port.

Meanwhile, sailors from the escort vessels USS Pinckney and the USS Rentz are scheduled to paint classrooms, hallways and fences at the Baan Sai Nam Yen School in Patong.

Once ashore, sailors found a number of vendors and taxi drivers eagerly awaiting their arrival.

Large bottles of ice-cold Heineken sold from Styrofoam coolers at 100 baht each were popular among the sailors, who are denied the right to drink on board.

— Gazette reporters



TOP LEFT: (from left) Adm John Miller, Cpt Paul Monger and two commanding officers greet civilian visitors aboard the *USS Nimitz*. Named for Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, the supercarrier is one of the largest warships in the world. TOP RIGHT: Ampika 'Grace' Raktabut is the only Thai among 6,000 US sailors in Phuket for R&R. The *USS Nimitz* is home of the commander of Destroyer Squadron 23.

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It's so good Phyto you

By Bruce Stanley

Ani Phyto, named the world's "sexiest raw vegan woman" by *Vegitarian Star* news, recently gave a workshop at Mom Tri's Villa Royale resort on how to make delicious meals using her raw vegan recipes.

Ani has received additional awards from online vegan pundit 'Best of Raw', including Best Chef, Favorite Cookbook and Favorite Educator.

By eating a clean, healthy diet of raw foods, we can maintain our ideal weight, lower cholesterol, boost the immune system which will allow us to look and feel our best.

"We need to eliminate cooked and processed foods that have little nutritional value. In order to respect and care for our bodies people need to eat a healthy diet of foods rich in the nutrients it requires."

Ani's message is full of common sense. With the soaring numbers of people dealing with cancer and auto-immune disorders, she believes that poor diet is the fundamental cause.

"Stress is the number one

cause for disease. When you reduce stress, your body can regain its natural strength.

"There are four distinct areas of stress. The first is environmental stress. Our body needs clean air to thrive. The second is physical stress by not giving our bodies the exercise and rest they require. The third is emotional stress which can be helped through meditation and living in healthy relationships. The fourth is nutritional stress which requires feeding the body a diet that can allow it to thrive and deal with the other stresses."

Ani advises that each of us think more consciously about what we eat and what we do with our body. This is part of the Buddhist concept of being mindful.

"The skin is the largest organ of the body. Whatever we put on our skin goes into our blood stream. We need to be careful even when we take a shower that chemicals are not put into the water which can be absorbed or inhaled into our lungs. The same goes for deodorants and shampoos."

But Ani's main message at the workshop was how to prepare



Celebrity raw food chef Ani Phyto proves that vegans can enjoy good health and good food.

nutritional foods made from raw ingredients. She does not favor the use of any animal products.

"Milk is good to feed to baby cows. But we are not cows so should not eat dairy products as many people can not digest these products without creating some strain to the digestive system."

She also advises using nuts mixed with fruit, ground in a food processor, instead of processed wheat which can cause bloating, intestinal inflammation, diarrhea and malnutrition.

"The body craves good nutrition. People often overeat as the body is hungry for vitamins and minerals. I tell my clients to eat a healthy raw foods meal every day and then the body will not crave as much less nutritious food. Raw foods are mostly fiber and water and full of nutrients."

Ani has a number of books to her credit including *Ani's Raw Food Kitchen*, which was awarded 'Best Vegetarian Cookbook USA 2007'.

To watch Ani's videos and get free access to recipes, check out her website at www.Aniphyto.com.

Valentine's Day Dining

This Sunday why not treat your partner to a taste of Valentine's Day romance with a special dinner for two at one of these local restaurants.

A French Love Affair

Crepes Village restaurants at Saiyuan in Nai Harn and at the Laguna entrance in Cherngtalay are offering an evening of amorous ambiance with a Valentine's set menu of fusion cuisine from 6:30pm until 11:30pm for 1,200 baht net per person. Bookings for tables of four receive a complimentary bottle cider. For more information contact Khun Por. T: 087-282 1717.

E: por.nathong@crepesvillage.com. W: crepesvillage.com.

An Intimate Evening at Les Anges

Les Anges chef and patron Peter Webber has come up with a special eight-course Valentine's menu for an intimate dining experience. Courses created with love in mind include pan roasted rock lobster; passion nectar sorbet; a choice of beef, fish or chicken mains; and marinated strawberries with ice cream. Prices are 1,750 per person or 2,500 baht per person with selected wines. Price includes a special gift for everyone. Served from midday to 10pm. For more information contact Peter Webber.

T: 076-360803, 081-9680738. E: peterw@lesangesphuket.com.

W: lesangesphuket.com.

Valentine's Dinner at Royal Phawadee Village

Royal Phawadee Village is putting on a Valentine's Day Dinner from 6pm until midnight at La Boucherie Grill & Steakhouse, where guests can let their imaginations run wild with a special a la carte menu and a variety of wine selections. Royal Phawadee Village's Mae Naam Restaurant will also hold a special dinner, from 6:30pm to midnight. Dinner tickets for both restaurants are priced at 2,500 baht per person. For more information contact Khun Bao.

T: 084-849 2122, 076-344581. E: claud@crisseyco.com.

W: royal-phawadee-village.com.

Love at Puccini

Celebrate Valentine's Day Italian style with the one you love at the Sheraton Grande Laguna's Italian restaurant Puccini. Enjoy an extravagant five-course set dinner under the stars at the poolside from 6:30pm until 10pm. 3,600++ baht per couple includes one glass of sparkling wine, a glass of white wine and one glass of red wine each, plus a rose for the ladies and chocolates for the gentlemen. For more information contact Adam Beasley.

T: 076-324101. E: fbreservation@sheratonphuket.com.

W: sheratonphuket.com.

Valentine's Day Surprises at Movenpick

Surprise your loved one with a Valentine's Day dinner on the Lagoon Lawn with a romantic six-course affair. Dinner is served from 6:30pm until 10pm. 3,000++ baht per couple includes a glass of sparkling wine and a red rose for the lady. For more information contact Patrick DeStaercke.

T: 076-396139. E: patrick.destaercke@moevenpick.com.

W: moevenpick-phuket.com.



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Gaelic gala fundraiser



Life Home Project staff and volunteers from Prince of Songkla University participate in a kids activity day at the Koh Sireh shelter.

Current data shows Phuket as the Province with the highest incidence of people infected with HIV and AIDS and that 60% of all new HIV infections occurred in teens and young adults aged 15 to 25 years-old.

The Life Home Project Foundation (LHPF) is addressing the urgent needs of the island's HIV community by providing a secure home for women and children effected with the virus, while also promoting HIV/AIDS education.

Their Koh Sireh shelter presently accommodates 30 women and 25 children living with HIV/AIDS. It provides childcare services, hospice care, health education and family support to the those living at the LHPF house, as well as another 170 children around Phuket.

During their stay, women participate in training workshops held on the premises to promote self-sufficiency and self-esteem through occupational skill building classes in sewing, art, and handicrafts.

The safe and supportive environment helps families cope with the effects of living with HIV/AIDS.

LHPF aims to educate the youth of Phuket to the dangers of unprotected sex, in order to prevent future unwanted pregnancies and the spread of HIV/AIDS infection.

Part of the community outreach program includes a telephone hotline which offers counseling, HIV information, medical treatment options and general health care tips. They also operate a local radio station program for the purpose of raising HIV/AIDS awareness.

FHPF services are available to all island residents, but cater to many disadvantaged and at-risk people, including women's groups, families in crisis, teens, immigrants, and people working within the sex trade.

In recent years LHPF has been surviving on generous donations mainly from Europe, some small donations from UNICEF and Global Fund USA.

On March 27, the Life

Home Project Foundation will host Phuket's first St Patrick's Day Ball and fundraising event at the JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa in Mai Khao.

To celebrate all things Irish, the event will feature traditional Gaelic music, dancing, food, and auctions. Proceeds will go towards supporting the foundation.

The evening of fun begins with welcome cocktails at 6:30pm. The dress code is Irish national costume or black tie.

Event tickets are 3,000 baht each. For more information about LHPF organization or for event tickets contact Daoroon on 076-614 060 or 081-3979 809.

LHPF is currently in the process of taking donations for the ball's live and silent auction prizes. Donations of hotel accommodation, dinner vouchers, art work, charter flights, golf green fees, gym sessions, yoga classes, diving courses and more are welcomed by LHPF.

For auction donation details please email Julie Street at Julie@tawanproperties.com, or Hélène Fallon Wood at irelandconsulatephuket@gmail.com, or Kathy Coulson at kcoulson@bisphuket.ac.th.

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The captivating Capoeirista



Back flipping three feet into the air, walking on his hands, cartwheeling whilst flailing legs kick the air and onlookers hold their breath is a daily occurrence for Joaquin 'Mr J' Foster-Gross.

The 32-year-old American born traveler is a *Profeta* (Teacher) of the Brazilian martial art Capoeira. On a month-long visit to Phuket, Mr J recently hosted a free-of-charge workshop at Phuket International Academy (PIA).

Among his 30 Capoeira disciples – both young and the slightly older teachers and parents who turned up –

was eleven-year-old PIA student Olivia De Perthuis.

"It was my first time and I loved the movement involved in Capoeira. And the music, too," she said.

Mr J has studied and taught with Capoeira *mestres* both in the Americas and Africa over the past 15 years and said the martial art form can build bridges between everyone, everywhere.

Mr J said debate still reigns over the origins of Capoeira, but most agree it was African slaves from today's Angola, that brought the art form to Brazil in the 1600s.

Some interpretations suggest Capoeira was a form of slave rebellion to their masters disguised by a facade of dance. So much so, the rebellious martial art was outlawed in Brazil in the 1800s, Mr J said.

It wasn't until 1930, when Brazilian authorities recognized the cultural value of Capoeira, that they lifted the ban.

Since then, Capoeira has morphed into fragmented forms, transcended its Afro-Brazilian roots and is practiced from Tokyo to Toronto, LA to London – and now, in Phuket, Thailand.

Mr J's two hour workshop at PIA, saw children as young as six form *Roda's* (circle of life), sparring with one another while accompanied by ritualistic music.

The sparring is marked by fluid non-contact acrobatic play, feints, and extensive use of sweeps, kicks, elbow strikes, and punches, Mr J said.

Mr J said whilst in the *Roda*, Capoeiristas enter into a dialogue of expression through kinetic energy, reading and anticipating each others next feint or move.

At the PIA workshop, Mr J gave a five-



Joaquin 'Mr J' Foster Gross (top) demonstrates one of his inspired Capoeira moves at Friendship Beach. Above, PIA students and teachers look on in awe during a workshop. Photos by Fraser Morton.

minute Capoeira demonstration, executing a series of evasive cartwheels and double spinning kicks for his drop-jawed disciples.

With elated students leaving the workshop, invigorated with their new-found martial art, Mr J said the response was inspirational.

A new martial art form has been embedded in the subconscious for a select few on the island.

It is Mr J's hope that seed of inspiration can be continued after he jets off back to America.

To find out more or talk to Mr J about Capoeira contact E: joaquin.fostergross@gmail.com

– Fraser Morton

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EXPAT GALLERY

Debbie Dionysius

Debbie is part of a small cadre of senior managers in the office. Some of the many staff not in that group seemed to be dashing around everywhere, possibly trying to look as if they were doing something massively important. But Debbie sits at her desk unfazed and with the usual smile that says, "Nice to see you; what's happening, and if it's not important make it quick and get out of here so I can get back to business!"

Its Laguna Phuket's Destination Marketing office and Debbie Dionysius is head of it. She knows what she's doing. At the moment, she's organizing a new Laguna Phuket Advantage Card program and laying the groundwork for the resort's first International Asia-Pacific Championship Ironman 70.3 event in 2010.

She has very successfully organized and managed both commercial and charity events, including the ESPN STAR Sports charity weekends; a couple of tennis tournaments featuring none other than Paradorn Srichaphan; a 'Phuket is Back' post-tsunami campaign; several marketing themes; and multiple marathons and internationally recognized Laguna Phuket Triathlons.

She has also played major roles in the Phuket Tsunami Recovery Fund, assisting local people

to rebuild their lives, homes and boats; the Laguna Phuket Community English Language Centre for locals; the Michael Learns to Rock concert for the Life Home Project for HIV infected mothers and children; Star Aid and other annual gala events; and many more.

It doesn't all happen on the same day, fortunately, or the routine, organized mayhem in Debbie's office would collapse into total chaos. Every one of these events is a marathon of organization and excruciating detail, requiring a calm and collected person to put it all together and make sure that everything runs smoothly, or at least appears to unfold according to plan.

Debbie knows how to remain cool and perhaps that's why her associates clearly value her efforts, and have done so since she arrived on Phuket in early 1995 to accept a position as Personal Assistant to the then Assistant Managing Director of Laguna Resorts & Hotels, Khun Eamsri.

Soon after joining the resort mega-complex, Debbie, as Manager of Destination Marketing, began to work directly for Laguna Phuket Managing Director James Batt, a master diplomat who seemed to excel in the day-to-day battles with local bureaucrats and other trouble makers. Among lo-

cal, James acquired the honorary title of "Mayor of Laguna". Since his departure over three years ago, the reins have been taken over by Michael Ayling, formerly Financial Controller at Laguna, to whom Debbie now reports.

"We constantly have a lot going on with both events and non-event related marketing activities. Just organizing the Laguna Phuket Triathlon – an internationally recognized event – is a full time job." Wikipedia says "The Laguna Phuket Triathlon is considered Southeast Asia's premier triathlon. [It is] one of the world's most successful 'destination distance' triathlons, meaning it does not conform to any of the standard triathlon distances."

Raised in rural Queensland, at age 18 Debbie began to explore the world and vowed to spend as much of her life overseas as possible. So far, that amounts to about 20 years of living in Sweden, the USA, UK and Thailand, with bouts of extensive travels thrown in between plus a few valuable years working in Sydney's travel industry.

The mother of two daughters, ages 9 and 6, she has adjusted well to Phuket and clearly continues to get a buzz out of her many challenges with one of the world's greatest resort organizations.

And what does the future hold? "I guess I'm here for awhile longer as life in Phuket is just too good to give up!" she says with her usual wry acceptance of the way things are. – *Graham Doven*



BY PETER CHILD FOR THE PHUKET GAZETTE

ABOUT EXPAT GALLERY

The individuals profiled in the *Gazette's* 'Expat Gallery' series have been chosen on the basis of their contributions to Phuket, and, as foreigners, for having made those contributions in successful partnerships with Thais. For many, the contributions have entailed significant investment, often at a time (mid-80s to mid-90s) when the rules of business were, ahh, not entirely clear. Some of our subjects are not business people at all, but have added real value to Phuket as English teachers, journalists, artists, engineers, fund raisers, etc. But all have one thing in common: if there were a *Who's Who in Phuket*, they'd be in it.

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HELP FOR HAITI: The Kids Love Kids Haiti fundraiser was held at ABC Nursery in Rawai on February 1, raising about 80,000 baht for the UNICEF emergency fund. Local businesses, including Evason Spa & Resort, Mom Tri's Villa Royale and the Holiday Inn contributed to the silent auction with prizes such as free hotel nights. Pushing the raffle bids along were a multitude of dinner vouchers courtesy of Don's Mall, Los Amigos, Two Chefs and even babysitting and house cleaning services from ABC Nursery.



MONASTIC MORNING: At dawn on January 31, ceremonies were held throughout Thailand for the ordination of 100,000 monks. At Wat Kuean in Phuket Town, 150 Nagas, or monk candidates, started their religious indoctrination with Vice Governor Teerayuth Eimtrakul leading the grand opening ceremony. The mass ordination period runs from January 19 to March 8. A ceremony will also be held at Wat Kuean on February 8.



SNAP HAPPY: Photographers Rattapong 'Boy' Pollakornand and Phonsunt 'Deng' Phathrapeephan pose during the grand opening party for their creative joint venture D-IMAGEPLUS at Lad Yai Chill House on January 30. The informal event featured portrait and landscape photo exhibitions and a video presentation from the gallery's proprietors accompanied by wine specially selected by Evason's sommelier Monika Bielka-Vescovi.



HIGH-END HAUNT: Absolute Nakalay Beach Resort opened on January 27 with a fabulous party. Developed by Absolute Resorts & Hotels, it is the latest addition to their growing portfolio of resorts. Pictured are (from left) Absolute Resorts' Managing Director Khun Supachart Ruamsamu; Chairman Bryan Lunt; CEO Vladimir Sucevan; VP of Sales Svetlana Kostromitina; and Director of A-Plan Properties Darren Judges.



FIESTA FANTASTICA: Guests danced under a full moon at the Caliente Salsa party held at Royal Phuket Marina on January 30. Bodies moved to Latin beats, while the tequila and music flowed freely late into the night. Pictured are (from left): Bota girl; RPM PR & Events Manager Murat Can Sakarya; Tequila girl Jade; Managing Director of Internship Thailand Jorge De la Torre; and DJ Ricardo from Latinos Sabotaje, Bangkok.



BEACH BEAUTIFICATION: Sustainable Smiles, an environmental non-profit organization, held a beach clean-up on January 29 on Thai Muang Beach in Phang-nga Province. Over 340 students and community members came out to help clean 4km of beach front while learning about the importance of protecting Thailand's marine ecosystems and other natural resources.



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Dining divinity discovered at DaVinci

On the menu

WITH Elizabeth Branca

Look for the Vitruvian man in Nai Harn and you'll find DaVinci Ristorante Pizzeria, which offers a variety of Italian fare in their alfresco up-market plaza.

Reminiscent of Florence's great piazzas, DaVinci's venue sprawls into three distinct restaurant personalities: the sexy hotspot V-lounge, the family-friendly DaVinci Pizzeria with adjacent kid's play area and the outdoor bistro-style Ristorante with private dining room.

Marc Norris, the general manager and DaVinci partner, has been greeting his customers almost nightly since he took over the spot in January 2009.

The gracious and ubiquitous Norris takes his job seriously. "As an owner and manager I could just sit in the corner enjoying my food and wine all night, but I like to know my customers and make sure they had a great dining experience with us."

After years as a high profile electronics marketing executive, Norris wanted to try something different. "The only restaurant experience I had before DaVinci was eating at great restaurants for 30 years." But from the way he gushes about food textures, smells and tastes, you'd never label him a neophyte gourmand.

"It's comfortable and sexy...people love the place because the food is uncomplicated and 97 percent of our customers return after the first visit," said Norris. The marketing pro has used his keen eye for details to make DaVinci the buzz word for cool with foodies, local families and hipsters.

Consistently sounding about the bevy of DaVinci beauties, Norris prides himself on the staff's ability to make his guests feel comfortable.



One of DaVinici's star players is positioned nightly in front of the brick pizza oven: pizza chef 'Dao' Jeeraporn Harnchana. She's famous for flashing a brilliant smile while effortlessly tossing the pizza dough through the air like a weightless baton, delighting customers.

Executive chef John Keattisak Engchuan has been with DaVinci for three years and understands the flavorful nuances of regional Italian cooking by using earthy extra virgin olive oils, pungent pecorinos and beautifully ripe ingredients. This Thai chef interprets Italian cuisine as if he hailed from the lemon groves of Positano and his last name ended in a vowel-bellissimo.

"We have one of the finest pizzas in Phuket," touts Mr. Norris, "because of our authentic brick pizza oven and our fresh ingredients." From classic *Margherita* pizza with creamy mozzarella, fragrant basil and ripe tomato to their savory *Salamino*

and Gorgonzola pizza, DaVinci does pizza to perfection, all priced under 300 baht.

Packing in crowds every night, the pizzeria is especially popular with families due to the adjacent children's play area. After a quarto-frommaggio pizza, parents have the opportunity to enjoy a leisurely glass of *Bosco Del Cermioli Rosso* house red, while the kids amuse themselves nearby with Legos, building blocks and a drawing table; sounds like a slice of heaven.

The dark wood furnishings, candlelight and white tablecloths are a melange of European and tropical influences. Well-heeled tourists and casually attired locals alike enjoy DaVinci Ristorante's artfully plated signature dishes and languish happily over entrees made with fresh herbs, pastas, seafood and meats.

For the perfect starter, the *Bruschetta DaVinci*, with its garlicky goodness and sweet Roma-style tomatoes served on

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a thick slice of daily baked peasant bread, pairs perfectly with the pear bouquet of the *Graves del Friuli Pinot Grigio*.

Appetizer selections range from traditional *Misto* and *Caprese Ensaladas*, with locally purveyed ripened veggies and aged balsamic; the *Affettato Misto* platter is piled with cured meats like prosciutto and salami.

Somewhere between the first course and the entrée, diners begin to realize DaVinci's culinary success doesn't come from labor intensive recipes bona fide by *Le Cordon Bleu*, but rather from the simple goodness of their fresh ingredients.

The menu celebrates the flavorful and relaxed tastes of the Mediterranean, listing dishes inspired by the soil and sea, like white snapper cooked in olive oil and white wine, and black spaghetti with squid and prawns in chunky tomato sauce.

The signature entrée, the *Filetto Da Vinci*, is a buttery soft cut of beef with fresh creamed spinach and golden potatoes served with a white truffle cream, similar to a *béchamel*, and worthy of its fanatical following.

It would take a sizable amount of willpower not to indulge in the wildly decadent dessert selections, which are paired with a frothy cappuccino. Thick mascarpone cream dusted with chocolate tops the espresso

soaked layers of lady fingers in
the *Tiramisu*-this is *la dolce vita*.

Try the chilled amaretto cream with amaretto liquor, or the *Pannacotta Con Frutto Della Passione*, the Italian sweet cream custard combines perfectly with the tart passion fruit reduction.

For post-gastronomic respite, diners seamlessly make their way into the V-lounge, recently completed in October 2009 as part of the restaurant's expansion under new ownership.

Guests can relax with a coffee martini or just sip an espresso on the brightly pillowed rattan couches while the chilled-out music blends the sounds of Sade, Moby, Simply Red and Café del Mar into a perfect distant rhythm.

The lounge's focal point is a state-of-the-art, glass encased wine room which not only showcases DaVinci's impressive wine collection, but a Ferrari F-1 engine block from the 2004 racing season. Ferrari's engine block and the *D'Abuzzo Montepulciano* on display inspire a lot of conversation from the bar, where diners, music lovers and singles converge under the stars.

DaVinci Ristorante Pizzeria is open seven days a week from 5:30pm till late. Reservations are recommended on weekends. W: davinciphuket.com. T: 076-289 574.



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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

Live International Stand-Up Comedy

February 10



The Punchline Comedy Club is back this February, kicking off its 2010 season with a trio of international comedians. John Moloney, Stewart Francis and Pete Johansson have over sixty years of stand-up experience between them, so guests can be assured of a fun-packed night full of laughter. It all takes place in an air-conditioned venue with a 'comedy' bar selling drinks at sensible prices (Beer 100 baht; Selected Spirits 120 baht; Wine 140 baht). From 8pm to 11pm at the Holiday Inn Resort Phuket, Patong Beach. For more information contact Khun Boom. T: 089-646 9278. E: info@phuketcomedy.com W: phuketcomedy.com.

February 12. Valentine's Crush at RPM

Royal Phuket Marina and QSI present Valentine's Crush night. Give a complimentary rose to your crush and vote for the 'Sweethearts of the Night'. Performances, henna tattoos, music, dancing, free ice cream and games. 300 baht entry includes finger food and a free mood punch. Parents will receive a 20 percent discount at all RPM restaurants during the event. From 6:30pm until 11:30pm at the Town Square, Royal Phuket Marina. For more information contact Murat Can Sakarya. T: 081-797 3364. E: murat@royalphuketmarina.com. W: royalphuketmarina.com.

February 13. Chinese New Year's Eve at Moevenpick

Feast with friends and family to celebrate Chinese New Year's Eve at Moevenpick with a festive buffet dinner of Chinese delicacies and international desserts at the Pacifica from 6:30pm to 10pm. 1,288++ baht per person. Tables of 10 or more receive a complimentary 'Yu Sheng' Chinese New Year Salad. For reservations contact Patrick De Staercke. T: 076-396139. E: patrick.destaercke@moevenpick.com. W: moevenpickphuket.com.

February 14. Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year starts with the new moon on the first day of the lunar calendar and is the biggest social occasion in the Chinese tradition. It is celebrated with gusto amongst Thailand's sizable ethnic Chinese community and legions of Chinese tourists from neighboring nations who choose to enjoy the holiday in Phuket.

February 14-20. We Love Yoga @ Abbyssan, Phuket
Share Yoga with your beloved in one or more of these special sessions for month of love with Dr Abhishek and Danny at Abbyssan Yoga.

Feb 14. Enjoy harmonizing fun with 'Friends & Family Yoga' from 10:30am to 2pm. Price: 1,500 baht for groups of three.

Feb 17. Improve your intimate touch of love and movement with 'Couple Yoga' from 5:30pm to 7pm. 1,200 baht per couple.

Feb 20. Individual 'I Do Yoga' sessions any time between 8:30am and 7:30pm. 500 baht per person. Abbyssan Yoga Studio is near Central Festival. For more information contact Dr Abhishek. T: 076-304277. E: rx@abbysan.com. W: abbysan.com.

February 14. Valentine's Day Jazz in the Park

French big band sound the JCB Jazz Cool Band will be banging jazz favorites from the likes of Duke Ellington, Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Glen Miller and Count Basie at Queen Sirikit Park - Suan Chalermprikiet 72 Years - (opposite the Lemongrass restaurant) from 5pm until 9:30pm on February 14. Organized by The Rotary Club of Tongkah to raise funds for the Bang-neaw School Library, the Big Band Jazz Concert will include a Classic & Super Cars show. For tickets contact Chaisak Koaysomboon. T: 076-304090. E: chaisak@expressdata.co.th. W: tongkah.org.

February 14. Celebrity Chef Sweetens Chinese New Year at Sala Phuket

Sample exquisite pastries from world-renowned Le Cirque pastry chef Lillian Chou for a special Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day culinary adventure in the sensual setting of Sala Phuket Resort and Spa. 4,500++ baht per couple includes a bottle of Peter Lehmann Shiraz or Chardonnay. From 7pm to 11:30pm. For more info contact Food & Beverage Manager Tibor Baan. T: 076-338888. E: fbphuket@salaphuket.com. W: salaphuket.com.

February 15-19. Mid-Term Brazilian Soccer Camp at PIASAWC

Brazilian Soccer Schools (BSS) are putting on a five-day Brazilian Soccer Camp for boys and girls, aged 6 to 12 years from February 15 to 19 at the Phuket International Academy Sports, Arts and Wellness Centre's FIFA futsal field. 4,000 baht per child or 800 baht per day per child. From 8:30am to 12:30pm. Email or call to register or for more info. T: 076-336000. E: activities@phuketinternationalacademy.com or raewyn@phuketinternationalacademy.com. W: phuketinternationalacademy.com.

February 24 & 25. Blues Festival Fund Raising Dinners

Join musical legends for dinner in two exclusive Phuket International Blues Festival fund raisers. Join Australian music superstar

Richard Clapton at Baan Rim Pa, Patong from 7pm to 10pm on February 24. On February 25, join American blues legend Charlie Musselwhite and his wife Henrietta. Limited to six guests per dinner. Four seats are still available for dinner with Richard Clapton. For reservations contact Andy Andersen. T: 086-682 2639. E: phuketmusic@yahoo.com. W: phuketbluesfestival.com.

Feb 26-27. Phuket International Blues Festival

The fifth annual Phuket International Blues Festival is rocking back to the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort, Karon Beach. From 6pm to 1am, returning by popular demand is Rich Harper, and from Malaysia comes AkashA world music band. Top Australian musician Richard Clapton and his band will close the show Friday. Topping the bill on Saturday is the legendary Charlie Musselwhite and his band from the USA. For tickets and more info contact Andy Andersen. T: 086-682 2639. E: phuketmusic@yahoo.com. W: phuketbluesfestival.com.

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February 7 - Patong

February 14 - Laguna

February 21 & 28 - Chalong

For more info contact Woody. T: 076-290468.

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February 14. FREE Mac Clinic Patong

Come by K. Woody's Sandwich Shoppe in Patong for a totally free Mac Computer Clinic. Bring your Mac, questions, problems, and friends along. Your host is Shane Roney from Elite Asia; Apple Authorized Reseller, Apple Certified Technical Consultant, and contributor of "Me and My Mac" to the Phuket Gazette. From 12pm to 2pm at K. Woody's Sandwich Shoppe Patong. For more information contact Shane Roney. T: 076-364570. E: info@eliteasia.org. W: eliteasia.org.

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MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

Richard G. Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial-planning service, and has over 25 years experience in this field. Office: 076-381997 Mobile: 081-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th www.global-portfolios.com



The Liffe Trader statue in central London, once a symbol of the successful rise of the modern businessman, now provides a stark contrast to the difficulties facing the UK economy: a troubled market and rising inflation. Photo: AFP/ Leon Neal

Last week this column covered the current difficulties facing the euro, yen and US dollar. As promised, this week is about the pound sterling.

It would not, however, be doing justice to the global situation without referring to the Chinese currency, the yuan. China has built up the world's largest foreign currency reserves at around US\$2.4 trillion. In 2009 alone this increased by almost half a trillion dollars.

China's currency is not convertible and recently has been effectively 'pegged' to the US dollar at a rate that most analysts believe undervalues the Chinese currency. This certainly makes exports highly competitive and trade numbers from 2009 reflect this: China became the world's

largest exporter, dislodging Germany from the top position.

The lack of convertibility in the Chinese yuan limits its participation in the current world of floating rates.

The pound sterling is, naturally, fully convertible. Before the current global financial crisis, the pound appreciated strongly, especially against the US dollar. It was then trading at around two US dollars to the pound. This exchange rate was last seen in 1992 and in both cases, the pound was greatly overvalued against its US counterpart.

Most currency analysts agree that the pound is worth between US\$1.50 to US\$1.60.

Recently, the pound has traded in a range of US\$1.59 – US\$1.66.

The problems faced by the US economy are also strongly evident in the UK economy. In fact, the UK economy is strongly linked to the US, not only in terms of trade flows and investment, but also in style.

The boom in real estate, consumer indebtedness and banks lending money without much credit information were equally common on both sides of the Atlantic.

Britain has found itself in something of a 'holy mess' and the situation has been greatly aggravated by its own Labour Party government. Before the crisis, the government had gone on a spending spree, which left little in the coffers for when the economy encountered problems.

In addition, during this time, the government had increased the hiring of public service workers known in the UK as the civil service. Former prime minister Tony Blair had encouraged a flow of talent from the private sector to the public sector by offering high salaries to the ridiculous extent that government salaries, on average, were higher than private sector incomes. That was certainly not a mistake made by the Americans.

In last week's article, some of the focus was on the Greek

economy and the difficulty it faced with huge budget deficits and an inability to devalue as a result of being part of the Euro currency bloc.

Britain has very similar problems. Most analysts believe that the budget deficit this year will be in the region of 13 percent, which is similar to Greece. The UK budget deficit will almost certainly be the highest of any major industrialized economy.

In reacting to the impending crisis, the UK had one great advantage over any member state in the Euro zone: its own currency. This allowed the UK to devalue the currency, which in turn, made exports more competitive and imports more expensive. This created a safety value for the pound sterling.

Huge challenges remain; budget deficits at 13 percent are simply not sustainable. A general election is due within the next few months – most likely in May. The shadow finance minister has said that if his party is elected, within three months (the traditional 'honeymoon period') his party will be the most unpopular government since World War II.

The central bank – the Bank of England – embarked, during this crisis, on a quantitative easing experiment. This involved the Central Bank buying GBP 200 billion (around US \$320 billion) of

government bonds. The idea behind this strategy was to keep longer term interest rates at low levels.

However, this is a totally artificial strategy and the money spent poses some hard questions.

Should the Bank of England choose not to extend this quantitative program, it would soon be accused of taking sides so close to a general election. This is something that central banks avoid like the plague.

Another important question lies within the future direction of longer term interest rates: Once the central bank has exited the market, there are fears that they could rise significantly.

The devaluation of the pound had led to another problem: inflation. As rates continue to rise, the Bank of England must also look ahead to after the election at how it's going to contain this looming problem.

Unfortunately, with the UK economy still some way from recovery, this is not exactly an attractive time for the central bank to raise interest rates.

Central Banks normally rely on higher interest rates to cool demand, which has a knock on effect on inflationary pressures. The Bank of England finds itself somewhere between 'a rock and a hard place'.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted in 2008 that the UK would be the last major industrialized economy to emerge from its economic problems.

That prediction looks uncannily accurate.

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HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY**. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

YELLOW ROSES

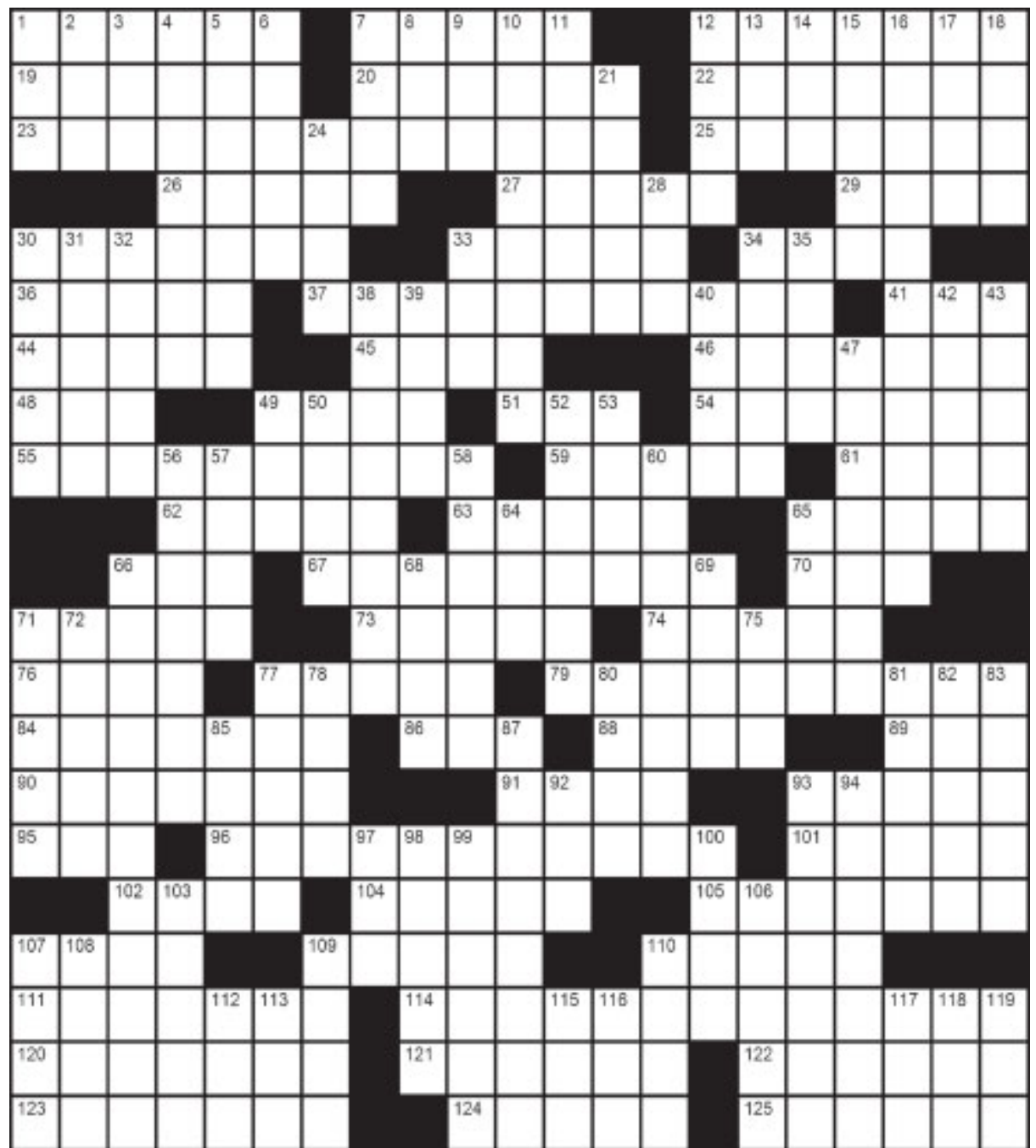
Solution: 5 letters

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

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9/16

Apology, Beginning, Bloom, Bright, Buds, Care, Change, Cheerful, Closeness, Color, Date, Deliver, Encourage, Envy, Event, Excitement, Expression, Family, Flowers, Fortune, Gift, Giving, Message, Mood, Offering, Order, Partner, Positive, Relationships, Relative, Send, Shade, Shine, Show, Smile, Spouse, Stem, Store, Sunny, Sweet, Upbeat, Vase, Warmth



ACROSS

- 1 Wool gatherer's need
7 Hardly concealed
12 Lubricates
19 Commencement
20 Began to irritate
22 With one's back to the wall
23 Part of an old punchline
25 Without exceptions
26 Priests' administrations
27 Partners of hills
29 Clouseau, briefly
30 Many a Sunshine State resident
33 the run (dine hastily)
34 Dole's successor in the Senate
36 Ignore
37 Falklands strutter
41 Depressing sounds for doctors?
44 Bamboo stems
45 Carrot or radish
46 Porky's girlfriend
48 4x4, for short
49 Track gait
51 Number needed in identity theft, briefly
54 Have - pick filler
55 Bridled
59 "Delicious!"
61 Element of change?
62 A mirage may look like one
63 Cry of defiance
65 Mozart's "The Magic"
66 Cranberry patch
67 A knight of the Round Table
70 Ending for "honor"
71 Tempts improperly
73 Big name in farm equipment
74 Role in Bizet's "The Pearl Fishers"
76 Autumn mos.
77 Composer Camille Saint-Saëns
79 Pitfalls for those over 65?
84 Waiting room denizen

- 86 Visitors to Earth, for short
88 "Tales of a Wayside Inn" bell town
89 Tripled, Yogi Bear's catchphrase
90 "Don't try to hide!"
91 Access for a collier
93 "The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit" author Wilson
95 Three times in Rx lingo
96 Collector of illegal tolls, once
101 Greeting in "Winnie-the-Pooh"
102 "Keep after all" marking
104 "___ of One's Own" (Virginia Woolf work)
105 Changed for the better
107 Chinese gooseberry
109 Cold feet, essentially
110 "Missing You" singer Bryson
111 With ___ the ground (alert)
114 Evangelist's shout
120 New Jersey capital
121 Two-position switch
122 Made a sudden attack on
123 Parlor fixtures
124 You may get a rise out of it
125 Actor Borgnine

DOWN

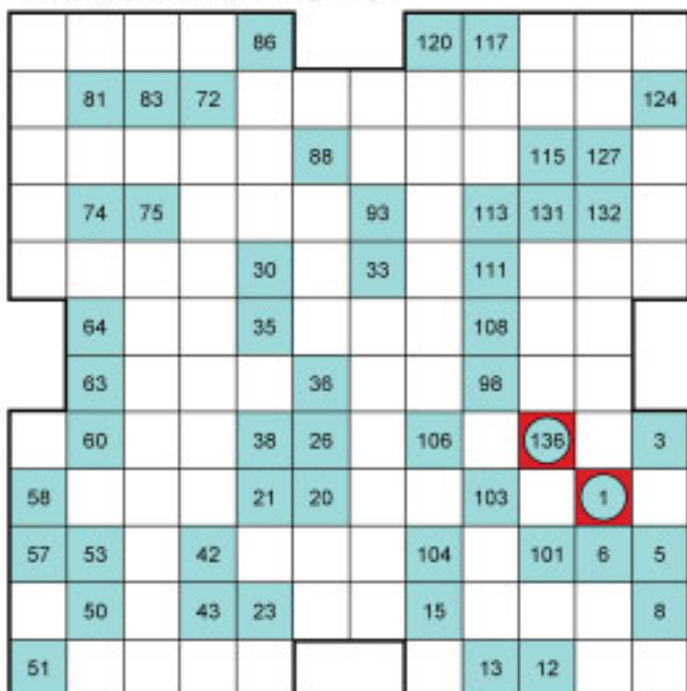
- 1 Regular glass elevator?
2 "Scuse me?"
3 When you're going to show up, briefly
4 Not sidesaddle
5 Does an electrician's job
6 Pleasant and painful
7 Doesn't rent
8 "Hinky Dinky Parlay"
9 "___ King" (Schubert)
10 Acclimates again
11 As of now
12 Some tomcats
13 Letters with "messenger" or "transfer"
14 A barber has to work around it
15 In ___ (agitated)
16 Unplanned
17 Forever, seemingly
18 Choreography bit
21 Paintbrush material, perhaps
24 Quest for
28 He and his brother were inseparable
30 Crop up again
31 Make happy
32 Pea-eating aids
33 Attitude of self-importance
34 Be next to, as on the beach
35 Catch ___ (comprehend)
38 Burr role
39 Fridge attachment?
40 ___ the crack of dawn
42 "Band, start playing!"
43 River at Lyon
47 Not properly explained
49 ___ in Tango
50 "How the Other Half Lives" creator Jacob
52 Madeleine and Harriet Beecher
53 Papa's mama, perhaps
56 Film in which Dustin was Dorothy
57 Car wash supply
58 Word in some magazine titles
60 Heel type
64 All's fair in it
65 Stetson material
66 Pleasant and painful
68 Russo of a Rocky and Bullwinkle film
69 "... and ___ the twain shall meet"
71 Hasbro game of

- 72 ___ of mistaken identity
75 Uganda's infamous Amin
77 Honker
78 "... three men in ___"
80 Ark-boarding unit
81 Get ___ of (obtain)
82 "The Power of Positive Thinking" author Norman Vincent
83 Assembly of churchmen
85 Plain Jane of literature
87 Deliberate subversion
92 A river runs to it
93 "But if ___ a maid-child ..." (Leviticus 12:5)
94 Substance obtained from wool
97 Last Vietnamese emperor ___ Dai
98 Act like a active volcano
99 Scotch-and-vermouth drink
100 Hair-removal brand
103 Baseball's 4-time 20-game winner Luis
106 1984 skiing gold medalist Phil
107 Kit ___ (candy)
108 About
109 Crime syndicate leaders
110 "Syriana" actress Amanda
112 1 or 66 (Abbr.)
113 Digit that may be big
115 "Hometown proud" supermarket chain
116 Some Mercedes-Benz models
117 "To a Skylark," for one
118 "Do" followers on a scale
119 Bug killer banned by the EPA

HIDATO®

FIND THE PATH - SOLVE THE PUZZLE

Complete the grid so that numbers 1 - 136 connect horizontally, vertically or diagonally:



www.hidato.com

Difficulty ★★★★★

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www.whatzit.com

August 17, 2009

WHATZIT?TM

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

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L
L
OCONTROL CONTROL
THING THING
CONTROL
THING

OINTTSETSEMENT

Get your brain in gear with the **MONSTER QUIZ**

1. Author John Milton lost which sense?
2. What are camel-haired brushes made of?
3. According to fable how did Aeschalus die?
4. Which playing card sends Raymond Shaw into a trance in *The Manchurian Candidate*?
5. Eiffel designed the famous tower in 1889. What was his first name?
6. The Salk vaccine is used against what disease?
7. Which zodiac sign falls between June 23 and July 23?
8. Which alloy contains at least 50% iron and 10% chromium?
9. Which American gangster reputedly said "public service is my motto"?
10. Sir Francis Drake's ship, the *Golden Hind*, was originally called what?
11. In what 1968 film did Elvis play an American Indian?
12. In Victorian England, what type of chronometer was known as a "servant regulator"?
13. Which country first used the fountain pen?
14. What is the popular name for the ballad *Londonderry Air*?
15. Freyr was the Norse god of what?
16. TAP is the national airline of which country?
17. In which country would you find the port of Fray Bentos?
18. The Koh-i-Nor is a famous diamond. What does its name mean?
19. A nilometer is used to measure the rise and fall of what?
20. Discovered in 1583, what was Britain's first colony?

Answers below

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Puzzle Solutions

Wonderword Solution: Battleship

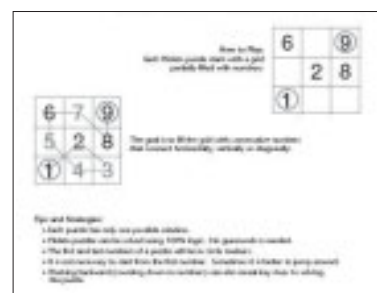
Solution to this week's crossword:

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

Monster Quiz Answers

1. Sight
2. Either squirrel, pony, boar or bear fur
3. An eagle dropped a tortoise on his head
4. Queen of diamonds
5. Gustave
6. Polio
7. Cancer
8. Stainless steel
9. Al Capone
10. The Pelican
11. Stay Away Joe
12. Alarm clocks
13. Egypt
14. Danny Boy
15. Fertility
16. Portugal
17. Uruguay
18. Mountain of light
19. The height of the waters of the Nile
20. Newfoundland

Hidato: How to play and this week's puzzle solution.



WHATZIT? solutions

1. Buck up!
2. Everything is under control.
3. Fly in the ointment.

Hidato Puzzle Solution

3/8

80	82	84	85	86			120	117	122	123	125
79	81	83	72	87	90	119	118	121	116	126	124
78	76	73	71	89	88	91	92	114	115	127	128
77	74	75	70	31	32	93	94	113	131	132	129
65	66	67	69	30	34	33	95	111	112	130	133
	64	62	68	35	29	96	97	108	110	134	
	63	61	39	37	36	28	107	98	109	135	
59	60	55	40	38	26	27	106	99	136	2	3
58	56	54	41	21	20	25	105	103	100	1	4
57	53	49	42	22	24	19	104	102	101	6	5
52	50	48	43	23	18	17	15	14	11	7	8
51	47	46	45	44			16	13	12	10	9

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NASA seeking moonriver

a nobody. A nonentity! The dregs of the interviewing community!

Tsow: Thank you for your flattery. Moon, the world wants to know: how do you feel about NASA hitting you with that rocket?

Moon: How do I feel? How do I FEEL? How do you THINK I feel, moron? How would YOU feel if a rocket came slamming into your abdomen?

What are you damned humans up to, anyway? It's not enough that you have to make war on your own species. Now you're assaulting innocent satellites. What have I ever done to make you shoot rockets at me?

Tsow: Didn't they text-message you in advance to ask your permission?

Moon: No. Not even so much as a lousy fax.

Tsow: Gosh. Well, on behalf of my ill-mannered species, I must apologize.

Moon: Yes, I want an apology. Look at how much I've contributed to your so-called culture! Mooncakes. Moonshine whisky.

The moonwalk. The man in the moon. Songs like *Moon River*, *Blue Moon*, and *Monday, Monday*. Monday was named after me, you know. No moon, no Mondays. No moon, no honeymoons. No moon, no romance.

How many babies have been conceived on full-moon nights because of the romantic ambiance I've kindled to stoke the lust of hormone-crazed couples canoodling beneath the stars? No moon, no full-moon parties on Koh Pha Ngan. No moon, no werewolves. It takes a full moon to turn people into werewolves.

Tsow: That's true. Take away the werewolves and our culture would suffer a crippling blow indeed. But we sent that rocket up because we want to find out if you've got water up there.

Moon: Water? Of course I've got water. All you had to do is ask. What's the matter, you don't have enough water? Three-fourths of your planet is covered with the stuff. It'll be almost four-fourths once the glaciers finish melting and the typhoons stop

dumping rain on you. You've got all that water, and you want to steal the crummy little amount I've got? You ever hear the word "greed," hume?

Tsow: Well, we may want to set up colonies on you. If you've got water, that will make things a lot easier.

Moon: Oh, boy, just what I need. Hordes of greedy humans roaming over my surface, trying to rape me for my metals. I know what you're like. Your planet has told me. Poor Earth. Sweet Gaia.

Now that you've raped her to exhaustion, ripped out all her precious metals and devastated her rainforests, you're turning your insatiable eyes to your next victim – to me, her luckless satellite.

Soon you'll be gouging great holes in my body, ripping me up in your desperation to find uranium and iron and titanium and nickelodeon and God knows what-all, disfiguring and mutilating me and tearing my guts out as I scream in agony and my veins gush moonblood

and my green cheese curdles into buttermilk.

Tsow: Histrionics aside, do you really have water?

Moon: Sure. I've also got loads of beer.

Tsow: (salivating): You've got BEER?

Moon: Yep. But it'll cost you. You send the Heineken, Chang or Singha people up here, and we'll talk. I can already see new lunar-based brands coming out: Moon Beer. Luna Ale. Satel Lite. One Giant Leap For Mankind Lager. Moonbeam Malt. Sea of Tranquillity Stout. Served with slices of green cheese as munchies.

Make a deal with the moon, hume, and you'll see your economy come surging out of the doldrums in no time flat.

Tsow: Gosh. Who would have guessed that the economic recovery would come from talking to the moon?

S. Tsow can be flamed at s.tsow@gmail.com, except when he's talking to the moon.

Horoscopes



Isla Star



AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): The coast is clear for Aquarians to move forward with a delayed project. During the remainder of February, the stars will support your efforts to succeed in new areas and there are also signs that old ideas will be revitalized. Romance is subject to an uncertain period – an earth sign's cool attitude could become motivation to end this relationship. Those with a birthday in the week ahead start to see finances improve in the coming year.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Those born under the sign of Pisces who have been feeling like a big fish in a small pond should see opportunities that suit their talents better this week. Your endeavors to move forward are about to pay off, but balancing new demands with family responsibilities may prove tricky. Tuesday is your luckiest day for financial gain, and Sunday and Monday should turn out to be sparkling days for romance.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): The stars indicate that boredom with work is becoming an issue that you can no longer deny. However, your imagination is stretched by an encounter with an artistic Taurean friend this week. More creative

employment could help Arians realize their full potential, but you should not rush to make changes. Romance with Leo is well-starred, but finding common interest with Scorpio will prove to be a challenge.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Those Taureans adrift in a sea of uncertainty receive useful advice from another earth sign this week. If your doubts are connected to a romantic involvement, the stars suggest that Wednesday is an auspicious day to lay your feelings on the line. Money should trickle towards you slowly but steadily, and one financial commitment will become less of a burden. Wear a piece of crystal to enhance mental clarity.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Geminis who have been spending too much time in a fantasy world are sharply reminded of reality this week. The stars hint that a forgotten business commitment could demand your full attention and you may need to work hard to mend broken bridges. Wednesday is the most auspicious day to make amends. Those with a partner are advised that a small romantic gesture can go a long way.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Your luck with money gradually improves, but a larger-than-expected bill could dampen Cancerians' moods this week. Those who have been considering asking for a pay rise at work should schedule an appointment for Tuesday when the stars will back your efforts. Success in romance depends on honesty – a secret you have been reluctant to

confess may not turn out to be the bombshell you expected.

LEO (July 24-August 22): The atmosphere at work lightens for Leos this week and a project that you anticipated would be tricky should prove to be relatively straightforward. The tide is about to turn for those who have been suffering from cash flow problems. The stars predict that your bank account will benefit from an overdue payment this week. Love with Taurus becomes a concrete possibility.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Those Virgoans seeking ways to reinvent themselves are inspired by talking to an imaginative air sign this week. A fresh perspective on life could encourage changes and the astrological atmosphere is ready to support your efforts to break old habits. Money matters are well-starred until the end of the month when extra demands on your finances will need to be met.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): This week, some Librans could be tempted to borrow more than they can afford to pay back. Avoid this potentially slippery slope by working out a new budget which involves cutting back on some unnecessary luxuries. Someone who you haven't seen for a long time is forecast to make contact by the middle of February. This should cheer up those whose social circle has recently dwindled due to friends' departures.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Scorpions will not be able to enjoy much free time this week. Those who have recently begun a new job will be busy as bees, but enjoyment is highlighted to be strong motivation. A personal relationship is tested when your partner expresses a desire to relocate – treading water is the recommended reaction. Your lucky day for finances is Monday.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Where business is

concerned, your plans will be subject to last minute changes this week. Sagittarians should be ready to go with the flow, particularly when dealing with an impatient water sign. In the realm of romance, there are signs that someone who gave you the cold shoulder recently has had a change of heart.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): After a shaky start to the month, Capricorns can look forward to a less stressful time this week. Nothing ventured will be nothing gained and the astrological atmosphere will support your efforts to take some risks until the middle of the month. Romance brings some pleasant surprises – an air sign who you have delayed approaching is keen to get to know you this weekend.



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Stop 'zero tour fares' before they start here

Plans by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and three tourism business associations to take measures to stop 'zero tour fare' operators from setting up in Phuket are laudable, especially given the damage such outfits have already done to the inbound Chinese market in places like Chiang Mai and Pattaya. (See news pages)

Often run out of Bangkok, zero tour fare operators pay foreign travel agencies on a 'per head' basis – typically US\$50 or US\$100 – for each tourist they bring in.

The operators provide the tourists with accommodation upon arrival, but to recoup their investments they take their guests on 'special' sightseeing tours and shopping sprees, using coercion and reportedly even threats to get the tourists to spend money.

The tour operators make back their money on commissions, thus ensuring there is almost no let-up in the high-pressure tactics the tourists are forced to endure.

The net result is a holiday hell for the tourists, who are held virtual hostages in a foreign land, not knowing where to turn for help and in some cases being abandoned.

Zero tour fare operators have been a major source of complaint to the Chinese government, which last year moved to stop the practice by making it illegal for travel agencies in that country to fly out tourists who have not seen their itineraries in advance.

Unfortunately, some operators continue the practice – at the expense of Thailand's reputation in what should be its fastest growing market. Rather, overall tourist arrival figures from China have been falling in recent years, despite China's strong economy and a number of positive factors that should make China the next great tourism frontier for Thailand.

Fortunately, Phuket has largely been spared of zero tour fare operators, in large part because hotels here are generally too expensive for the operators to afford. In fact, Phuket has been enjoying steady growth in the number of arrivals from China, thanks to an increase in the number of direct flights to the island from Chinese cities.

In another positive development, relatively more Chinese tourists are coming here as independent tourists, freeing themselves of package tours altogether. More Chinese than ever came for the last Vegetarian Festival, eager to catch a glimpse of authentic Chinese cultural traditions that were passed on from generation to generation, unaffected by the Cultural Revolution that destroyed so much of China's cultural heritage.

Another factor the TAT should consider is the future effect China's lop-sided male-to-female ratio will have on tourism here...

– **Stephen Fein**

The Phuket Gazette

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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.

Minimal Enforcement

According to a *Gazette Online* article [Phuket minimum wage increased 7 baht, December 30, 2009], there is a minimum wage for Thai people.

I know of a very successful restaurant in my area of Kathu with an owner who is making good money. Despite this success, all 30 staff members (about 20 Burmese and 10 Thais) are extremely underpaid. Even the Thai people there work 12 hours per day and earn a mere 135 baht. They do get free food twice a day, but they still have to pay for their accommodation.

That wage means they end up with less than 3,000 baht per month. Who do I address this problem to? I want the owner, who is earning good money on the back of his underpaid workers, to be required to pay the minimum wage as specified by law.

What's worse is that most of the clients are foreigners, and their business is helping to exploit the hard-working Thai people in their own country. It is a scandal that needs to stop now!

The times of slavery are over, and we have to make sure we take the necessary action to uphold laws. Without proper enforcement, these laws are in place for nothing.

**Arnold Carlton
Kathu**

Surin's got top cops

Surin Province police officers seem to have their act together. On a recent visit there I saw hundreds of police boxes, many on street corners. All were manned by officers.

In Surin, the police boxes are clean, in good repair and

freshly painted. I saw one man try to cross the street against the light. He was called out by an officer, who explained to him he should cross only when the light is green.

Jaywalking is very popular in Thailand, but I have never seen a police officer put a stop to it in all the time I have spent in this country.

**Michael Weldon
Udon Thani**

Where are my underpants?

Since arriving in Thailand about a year ago, I've lost count of the number of clothing articles I've had to replace because they were lost by laundromats.

Too many times have I felt the sudden ping of anger when I notice the absence of one of my favorite shirts or pants.

It wasn't until recently that I realized this is an extremely common occurrence. As I started expressing my anger to my fellow expats in Phuket, it seemed like just about everyone has lost some clothing that was once dear to them.

If I dare to bring it up with the laundromat, I simply receive a beaming smile and a polite shake of the head, letting me know my problem is completely lost in translation. Unfortunately, the beaming smile doesn't put the pants back around my waist.

**Jason Coles
Thalang**

Goldie-priced locks

Because of Phuket's interesting cultural hybrid of 'East meets West', I understand that some prices are going to be more

Westernized. But a recent trip to a salon in Phuket Town left me with my jaw dropped to the floor: 3,000 to 5,000 baht to dye my hair?

I'm very flattered that many Thais seem to adore my artificial golden locks, but are they aware that they're not actually made of gold?

Those aren't Western prices, those are sucker prices. I guess they're up to speed on the western stereotypes associated with 'blonde-IQs'.

**Laura Hahn
Kathu**

Clever fellows...

Should I worry when the taxi driver we've hired for a night out decides to join us on our bar crawl?

Don't get me wrong, I've made some great Thai friends over the whiskey table, but when I think about it, most of them started the night as our hired taxi drivers.

It's never happened at the first stop of the night, but usually after the second or third stop, when we get a bit liberal with our spending.

Of course, when our driver comes in the pub to 'check on us', we are happy to see our new Thai friend and welcome him to our table and signal for another glass.

Waking up the next morning, thinking about how we did the responsible thing and hired a driver for the night, the memories of the night before come to light: the driver, happy in his free dose of whiskey, laughing as we swerve through Phuket on our way home.

And I think: wait a minute...

**Chris McConnell
Chalong**

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.

Judging Thailand's education system



FIRST PERSON

Former Phuket associate judge, English professor and meditation teacher Tanyada 'Nee' Kumrongkichkarnvong has been an advocate for education reform since she traveled to the US as a high school exchange student. After teaching English at the Teacher's Training College (now Rajabhat Phuket University), the professor has a lot say about the state of Thailand's schools and the future of education. In 1997, Tanyada was chosen to represent Phuket in

the redrafting of Thailand's constitution, focusing her agenda on education reform. Since then, she has worked with numerous agencies who help the island's youth. At 60 years old, the Phuket native continues to campaign for free education in Thailand.

In this week's First Person, Tanyada talks with the *Gazette* about her experiences with Thailand's education system and her hopes for the future of its schools.

When I was young I didn't want to become a teacher. However, when I took part in my high school's learning exchange program and went to the US, everything changed. I compared the school systems of the US and Thailand, which were as different as heaven and hell. This comparison has angered some people in the local education system, but I feel strongly about my nation's failing schools.

I was one of 99 people who traveled to Bangkok to draft the 1997 constitution, which was the country's first drafted by a popularly elected constitutional Drafting Assembly. Previously we had many constitutions, but they were written by men in Bangkok who didn't represent the people living throughout Thailand.

Being one of the few women to make up the drafting assembly, I fought for the right of every child in Thailand to have free education. When I attended high school, 50 years ago, my family paid 120 baht for tuition, but I had friends whose families could not afford to pay that fee. Without the money, these friends

simply did not get to attend school. It was then that I started to realize the need for change in our education system. Simply put, education is essential for success and should be free for all children.

The 1997 constitution made this the law, stating that education would be free for every child in Thailand – but we are still waiting.

At present, schools in Thailand offer free tuition for a few children based on either a lottery system or on income. On average, a school has 50 children in each class, but scholarships are only being offered for approximately 20 students.

Offering free tuition to low income families presents problems when parents are not honest about their earnings, and little has been done to fix this.

While it does make me happy that the government is trying to improve the state of education, the free tuition program needs more work.

In 1998, I sold my business and traveled to the US, where I spoke at the Library of Congress about education reform and Thailand's human rights agenda. The experience reaffirmed my admiration for the American education system and I took away

many good examples of successful teaching models.

In a Thai classroom, students must sit quietly and listen, but in the US the students have the freedom to ask many questions. I remember back when I was a student – if I asked my teacher questions, she got mad.

This is the wrong attitude. A classroom gives children the foundation and courage to be confident. I found the US classrooms full of students voicing ideas and teachers encouraging students to be independent thinkers.

The Phuket Educational Services Area Office has a school evaluation every three years, and I have participated twice in the last six years. If they invite me again this year, I would like to attend and tell them I am very disappointed in the slow progress of our schools.

After decades of observing classrooms in different schools throughout Phuket, I want to institute some big changes in their curriculum. I see the need for more effective lessons, but it is not easy to make changes here.

Students in Thailand study English for 12 years, but afterwards can't speak a word of



Bangkok's Democracy Monument: A representation of the 1932 constitution sits on top of two golden offering bowls.

English. That is the failure of Thai teachers. They are often afraid to speak English. The instructors often teach straight from textbooks and don't engage their students. Their approaches are antiquated and based on memorization techniques.

Teachers simply read aloud to their students from old textbooks and don't engage them with current and authentic materials that inspire students to think progressively.

Despite the government's

slow pace of educational reform, many of the changes needed to improve our system start in the classroom.

When teachers instruct from the heart – and not the textbook – children learn more.

It is important to provide our schools with the books and resources they need, but we also need to call on teachers to show students the value in learning.

Above all, students need to learn that their curiosity is a good thing.

Issues & ANSWERS

Submit your queries or suggestions to us and we'll ask the appropriate people to respond to them.
Write to:

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

My wedding memories were lost in the post

My Thai wife and I moved permanently to Phuket in August last year. We are having trouble getting our mail, and don't know where to turn.

My sister has sent us nine packages, but we have only received two. The most important of these is a DVD of our 30th wedding anniversary, plus four CDs of photos taken in different areas of Thailand over four vacations.

My nephew mailed the package from Austin, Texas, US on December 8, 2009, but as yet they haven't arrived. Is there anybody anywhere on this island who we could talk to about our mail? The CDs cannot be replaced.

Stanley Kent Ebner
Phuket

Ms Pachathida, an administrator at Phuket Post Office, replies:

You must have a receipt from the sender of your package, that includes the delivery address. Maybe the sender can scan and send it to you. Then bring the receipt to your local post office.

Ask to speak to the Lost Mail Department and fill out a form, giving details of your lost package.

Our staff will then conduct checks with the Bangkok Post Office and international postal services. It will take a little while. If the sender has an internet tracking number, then they should check online.

For more information: 12/16 Montri Road, T. Taladyai, A. Muang, Phuket 83000. T: 076-214337. F: 076-218637.

Am I too old to donate blood in Thailand?

My husband has the rare blood type A Rh negative and would like to donate at the Regional Blood Center in Phuket after we arrive from Helsinki, Finland. However, someone told us that if you are over 60 years of age, then you can't give blood. My husband is 66 years old and healthy. Can he donate blood?

Paula Champagne
Helsinki, Finland

Pornthip Rattajak, an officer at the Phuket Regional Blood Center at Saphan Hin, replies:

Normally the age is 60, but if your husband is healthy and has donated his rare blood type regularly in the past, then he can come to the center for screening and our staff will decide whether we can accept the donation.

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The Saints go marching into Miami



The Louisiana Superdome, used just five years ago as an shelter for those displaced by Hurricane Katrina, became the home of one of the NFL's best teams this season. The Saints make their first Super Bowl appearance at 6:25am Thai time on February 8, bringing out Phuket's diehard football fans for an earlybird show.

Super Bowl XLIV (that's 44), the culmination of the NFL season and the biggest annual sporting event of in the US, will kick off in the early hours of February 8 (Thai time). The New Orleans Saints and the Indianapolis Colts will meet in Miami to decide the destination of the next Vince Lombardi trophy.

It will be an historic occasion for the New Orleans Saints, who will be determined to ensure that their first Super Bowl appearance is a successful one. The Colts, by contrast, will be making their second Super Bowl show-

ing since the 2006-2007 season.

The Saints first ever Super Bowl is particularly significant coming just five seasons after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and forced thousands of people to take shelter in the Louisiana Superdome, rendering the stadium unsuitable as a sporting venue for the entire 2005-2006 season.

The New Orleans Saints were forced to play their home games in neighboring cities that year, failing to make the divisional playoffs and finishing with an overall record of 3-13.

Expats in Phuket have been known to make an early rise – or all-night plunge – to be awake for the 6am kickoff of the Super Bowl. This year's game is especially important for local resident Karen Ellison, who is both owner of Duke's Big Board Bar @ Kata and a native of New Orleans. Ellison will make sure her pub is up and running for football fans the morning of the game.

"Living in Southeast Asia redefines the concept of a traditional evening 'tailgater'. Here, it's a breakfast time event for the foolhardy folks willing to catch an

early hour kick-off. No matter, we still get to catch the game live and replace burgers and hot dogs with bacon and eggs. At Duke's Big Board Bar in Kata, we're just trying to make everyone feel at little bit of home...while away from home," she said.

For Ellison and other natives of New Orleans, the Saints' first Super Bowl appearance is about more than just football. "Like the tsunami which devastated Phuket in 2004, New Orleans was decimated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The spirit of New Orleans, affectionately called NOLA, has been experiencing a rebirth under the Fleur-de-lis so proudly worn by the Saints," she said.

Things turned around in the seasons following Hurricane Katrina as the Saints worked their way towards winning records and discovered superstar talent in runningback Reggie Bush and quarterback Drew Brees.

Their success continued this year, finishing the regular season and booking a spot in the playoffs with a record of 13-3.

After stomping past the Arizona Cardinals 45-14 in the NFC semi-finals, The Saints overcame veteran quarterback Brett

Favre and the Minnesota Vikings for the rights to show in Super Bowl XLIV.

The Colts route to Super Bowl was more routine practice for the consistently successful team. Quarterback Peyton Manning – who is arguably the best player in the NFL today – continues to claim his future spot in the NFL Hall of Fame with his precision passing and widely respected team leadership.

The Saints, who go into the game as slight underdogs, will be looking to dynamic running back Reggie Bush to find a way through the Colts defense.

The Colts will, as always, be reliant upon Manning, who led them to their Super Bowl success in 2006. The Saints will be hoping his opposite number Drew Brees, who has enjoyed the best season of his career to date, can conjure up a match winning performance in Miami.

A TV audience of in excess of 90 million is expected in the US, with millions more likely to tune in around the world. Kickoff is set for 6:25am Thai time and the match will be screened live on True TV and Astro Supersport.

Futsal talent shows at tourney



Phuket International Academy held a five-a-side futsal tournament on January 31, the first of its kind in Phuket. The tournament, which brought some impressive newcomers and veterans alike, was organized by local footballer Cyril Lugnier and attracted seven teams.

The games were played on the pristine new artificial futsal pitch at PIA under rules broadly similar to those of normal football but with a slightly smaller, harder ball.

The first semi-final match was between Jambos – containing a number of Phuket 7s veterans – and Thomas Cook Northern, one of two Scandinavian sides in the tournament.

The physically stronger Thomas Cook side took an early lead, which they didn't relinquish, booking their spot in the final.

The second semi final brought Phuket Morning Star against Rugantino. Phuket Morning Star were strong favorites going into the clash and ran out as comfortable 6-2 winners.

This set up an intriguing encounter between Phuket Morning Star, who have been playing together for years and have enjoyed some success in recent 7s tournaments, and Thomas Cook

Northern, who had never competed as a team before but are a strong, skillful side.

Phuket Morning Star enjoyed most of the early possession but were unable to break down a stubborn Thomas Cook defense. The Scandinavian side grabbed a goal on the breakaway with an angled drive from Mikael Haberg that eluded Morning Star keeper Soony Leoni.

In a tight game, it appeared a solitary goal would be enough to settle the tie until Morning Star captain Karl Ward scored a deflected goal in the dying minutes.

This set up five minutes of

golden goal extra time in which the first team to score would win the tournament.

Once again, Karl Ward pounced, capitalizing on confusion in the Thomas Cook defense to poke home the ball from close range and secure some more silverware for the Phuket Morning Star team.

Euro Sky defeated Star Tour 3-0 to claim the plate in the battle of the third-placed teams. Everyone was quick to hail the success of the first tournament of this kind at PIA. "It's been great. Cyril has done a fantastic job of organizing this competition and we are all looking forward to the next one. I was pleased that we won, it was a scrappy goal but they all count the same," said Mr Ward.

Anyone interested in participating in future tournaments can contact Cyril Lugnier. E: cyrillugnier@yahoo.fr.

– James Goyder

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LAGUNA PHUKET GOLF CLUB

Toxic avengers take on electronic waste

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

One old light bulb contains enough harmful chemicals to poison 6,000 gallons of water.

Arsenic, cadmium, lead, mercury and magnesium are also among the hazardous chemicals seeping into Phuket's natural environment and killing off wildlife.

The chemicals often come from used electronic goods, which are either dumped on the side of a road, or mixed up with all the other waste on its way to Phuket's incinerator.

However, local government officials, businesses and NGOs recently joined forces to stem the flow of these harmful chemicals by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that sets new standards for the disposal of electronic junk – from washing machines and refrigerators to old computers, printers and batteries.

The Waste of Electronic and Electrical Equipment (WEEE) agreement was signed by Vice Governor Teerayut Eimtrakul, Mayor Somjai Suwan-supana, the Phuket Business and Professional Women's Club

(BPWC) and 28 other local organizations during a ceremony at Central Festival on January 23.

The MoU outlines a separation and disposal plan for a broad range of electronic junk, including special provisions for the disposal of office and communication devices such as computers, printers, and telephones; entertainment devices, lighting equipment, household tools, sports and recreation equipment, medical equipment and devices from industrial facilities.

Commenting on the waste disposal plan, BPWC Vice President and Project Manager Nipa Nganthavee said that until the MoU signing, Phuket had no facilities for properly disposing of such waste.

"All kinds of trash, including electronic waste, gets piled up at the landfill behind the incinerator. Toxic chemicals from the old equipment can overflow into waterways and have dangerous consequences for humans and the environment," she said.

Sets of WEEE bins where the public can dump large and small items of electronic waste in designated repositories have



ABOVE: Phuket Vice Governor Teerayut Eimtrakul places a battery in one of the new bins installed at 28 schools in Phuket for dumping electronic waste. INSET: One of the new WEEE bins for public use.

been placed in four locations around Phuket. One set of WEEE bins is located at Phuket City Municipality offices on Narisorn Road and another in front of King Rama IX Park (Suan Luang).

Another two sets are located at Bangneaw and Samkong schools.

Bins for smaller items such as batteries, telephone chargers and light bulbs have been placed in 26 schools in Phuket Town.

More bins will be made available in the near future, a BPWC spokesperson said.

The WEEE bins will be emptied once a month and the electronic waste taken to the Saphan Hin incinerator site.

The waste will be stored there until World Environment Day, when officials from Bangkok will inspect and remove it for safe disposal, said Ms Nipa.

As Chinese New Year is traditionally a time for clearing out clutter, Phuket Municipality is running a free pick-up service for electronic waste in Phuket Town from February 1 to 12.

As part of their public



Project Manager Nipa Nganthavee awareness campaign, the BPWC will be at the Phuket Old Town Festival from February 19-21.

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Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks (c9hotelworks.com), a Phuket-based hotel and property consulting firm. His BLOG (thephuketinsider.com) is The Source for all Hotel and Real Estate News in Greater Phuket.

It all started when the Berlin Wall came tumbling down in 1989. After that, Russia Incorporated dissolved into Western capitalistic fervor, the likes of which have not been seen since the untimely (though well deserved) death of disco.

Social change soon opened the door for Russia to contribute to a worldwide pop culture movement. From this we were given numerous fresh faces in the National Hockey League, tennis cover girl Anna Kournikova and even that kinda scary all-girl talentless pop duo, t.A.T.U. We should note, however, that the West did bring us Paris Hilton, so we probably break even.

Dusting off the old history books, it seemed like a fresh meaning was given the the famous words of former US Secretary of Defense James Forrestal, who in 1949 coined the phrase, "The Russians are coming. The Russians are coming."

Discountville threatens luxury market



The nightly scene at Bangla Road is a clear indication of what's in store for Phuket: a dwindling luxury market at the expense of budget tourism.

Today, 61 years after Forrestal's infamous warning, as we cruise the mean streets of paradise in high season 2010, we seem to be in the midst of another invasion, the likes of which have not been seen since the tanks rolled into Yugoslavia in 1941. Only it's not just Russians, but masses of tourists from around the world, all looking for the cheapest deals in accommodation.

Phuket tourism is on the rebound like a basketball overinflated with helium, though this time out it's a numbers game. While spending per tourist is less, a whole new face of visitors are on the rise. Charter flights are bringing in the tourists in droves, highlighting a contrast between the

'new tourist' and the 'old tourist' of Phuket.

It's not unlike the school busing of the US integration programs of the 1960's between inner cities and squeaky clean suburbia. As we know, Phuket is no angel, and bar girl-touting pubs are pushing out from the confines of Patong and into Rawai and Kamala at breakneck speed.

We can't blame the Russians or anyone else for that; but frankly speaking, a tourism industry that resembles the hard times at discountville could derail the island's once promising luxury profile.

It's hard not to get caught up in a xenophobic funk, wondering if similarities between Phuket and that other whispered

P-word (the infamous Pattaya) are starting to emerge. Looking at the rising tide of mid-scale hotels coming up, it's like quenching the thirst of an alcoholic: more and more drinks, but no amount of booze will satisfy the mounting appetite.

As development here continues, the simple fact is that we could soon be taken over by a tourism market similar to the Walmart business plan – rapid expansion and discount prices. That's not an altogether bad thing, as they do have some really good deals, but it's also not likely to be a place I'd like to spend much time. My Walmart visits are typically cut-and-dry: A quick entrance, find what I'm looking for and dash for the exit, all while trying to not make eye contact with any of the borderline nut cases known to inhabit these environs.

Feeding the beast we know as tourism is increasingly difficult. With so many long-haul higher end tourists staying home, filling empty hotel rooms has to be done at cheaper prices in order to keep the cash drawers full. I'm reminded of the quote by Samuel Johnson, "He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man."

Since I'm fresh out of epiphanies at the moment, and cooler nights and later dawns are becoming quite common, I have recently been sleeping quite sound. I can't say I'm lying awake much, pondering this new twist in Phuketland. But of course, all this may change. Come summer, the early rising sun, paired with hot and humid tropical nights, will bring the anxious sweat. I know it will. It's only a matter of time.



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Mai Khao water park turns on the taps

The 22,400-sqm Splash Jungle Water Park at West Sands Phuket opened its gates last week, offering Phuket tourists an all-day attraction on par with US theme parks.

Splash Jungle, Phuket's first modern water park, opened last week on the grounds of the West Sands resort just off Mai Khao Beach.

Among the park's many attractions are a 335-meter 'Lazy River' water ride that meanders through seven themed sections: Inca-Maya, Africa, Asia, Turkey, Northern Europe, North America and even the North Pole.

Two high-octane slide rides are sure to please thrill-seekers: 'The Boomerango' and 'The Super Bowl'.

The Splash Jungle also features a wave pool, a family play area, a bar, a cafe and a number of shops.

The park, built at a cost of half a billion baht, covers 22,400 square meters and holds six million liters of water.

The project was designed and manufactured by White Water Industries of Canada, which claims to have over 4,000 projects around the world, including work on Disneyland and Sea World in the US.

Among the many dignitaries at last week's grand opening ceremony were Phuket MP Raywat Areerob and Phuket Vice Governor Teerayut Eimtrakul.

Despite being located just back from Mai Khao Beach, the park does not make use of the abundant supply of sea water on its doorstep. Instead, tens of thousands of liters of fresh water were trucked to the site to initially fill the pools.

For day-to-day operations, the water comes from a natural underground supply near the site.

Splash Jungle Water Park's CEO Tony Cousens, who took up his position about three months before the park's opening, would not reveal how much of the water used at the park is then released or recycled, but claimed the underground filtration system was state-of-the-art.

On the first day of operations, the opening ceremony was conducted under the beating sun and executives soon realized that the park distinctly lacks any shaded areas, something which guests pointed out could discourage locals from spending any length of time at the park.

Introductory entry rates for tourists (until April 30) are 1,795 baht per adult and 1,050 baht per child. Children under 100cm tall are not charged. Locals and foreign residents pay a slightly discounted rate of 1,500 baht per adult and 1,050 baht per child.

An expat resident and father who drove his family to the park without knowing the entry fees beforehand told the *Gazette* he was surprised at the high price of the tickets.

Mr Cousens said the entry prices were good value when compared with other Phuket tourist attractions, because visitors can spend the whole day at the park and don't have to pay for any of the rides once inside.

"We also plan to offer discounts to locals during Songkran (Thai New Year)," said Mr Cousens.

The park is open daily from 10am to 6pm.



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- 3-4 bedroom single storey villas
- Good size private pool
- Plot size 950 sq.m. +
- Villa size 2,666 sq.ft. +
- From THB 26.8 million

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Getting high downtown

Residential developer Supalai Public Company Ltd plans to begin construction of a 15-story condominium development on Montri Road in Phuket Town in June.

Supalai Park @ Downtown Phuket will be the fourth residential project built in Phuket by Supalai Co.

The developer's previous Phuket projects include Supalai City Resort, Supalai City Hill and Supalai Hill.

Marketing Manager Prawit Akrawarawong, said the new condominium development's central location near Sengho Book Store was chosen because it offers good views of the sea and the convenience of being in town.

"The units (starting at 1.21 million baht) are designed to be affordable homes for local residents who want to live in the center of town for convenience.

"Many of the buyers are locals who already know and trust the Supalai brand, but we are attracting foreign buyers who are looking for well designed, high-quality holiday homes," said Mr Prawit.

The development covers 4.5 rai and comprises a total of 518 one- and two-bedroom units ranging in size from just under 30 square meters to more than 66sqm.

There are three types of one-bedroom Andaman Suites, ranging from 29.5sqm to 37sqm with an open-plan bedroom and living room arrangement, a pantry, balcony and bathroom with shower.

In the 43-sqm one-bedroom Executive Suites the bedroom and living rooms are separated and there's a corner balcony off the bedroom.

The 45.5-sqm Deluxe Suites and 51.5-sqm Presidential Suites have similar dovetail layouts. The 66-sqm Family Suites are the only two-bedroom, single-bathroom units.

The developers have included a number of green features in the design of the building, which has a north-south alignment to reduce direct sunlight into the fronts of the units and allow the wind to circulate and naturally cool all the units.

Units will either have a pool view or hill-side view and the en-



The 15-story Supalai Park @ Downtown Phuket will offer 'affordable' one- and two-bedroom condominium units starting at just over a million baht.

tire building is designed in an aerodynamic S-shape to ensure optimum air flow.

The roof has 1,000 square meters of green space as a recreation area for residents. The greenery also acts as insulation to

help keep the building cool during day time.

Communal facilities include 217 parking spaces, a 20-meter-long swimming pool and terrace, a fitness center and a central lobby. Two elevators will give

residents access to their units.

Construction of the project is expected to be complete by May 2012.

The contract for construction of the project is still under tender.



Now Available for Rent

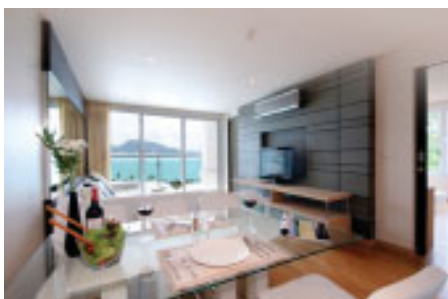
The BayCliff, Patong Phuket

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Tel: (+66) 76 34 26 96 Fax: (+66) 76 34 26 86 E-mail: sales@thebaycliff.com Website: www.thebaycliff.com, www.theprivilegeatbaycliff.com

Property Gazette

Properties For Sale

YANUI PARADISE BEACH



Apartments for sale. Prices from 2.75 million baht. Close to Yanui beach and Rawai beach. Tel: 087-884 4663 (English), 089-292 9416 (German).

2 GOOD INVESTMENTS

2 houses, furnished. Panoramic Kata. Land at Banpara Pakhlok on main road, 2,532sqm. Call for more information at Tel: 081-367 0991.

LOVELY POOL VILLA

Big pool & garden. 3 bedrooms, 4 baths, office. Quiet hillside near beach. Freehold. Secure. Very nice. Tel: 076-388236, 089-727 5407 (English). Email: cosmocampbell@yahoo.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.villa-sale-phuket.com>

4/5-BDR HOUSE PATONG

1-year-old, nice view over sea & town, 4/5 bedrooms, office, 3/4 bathrooms/ensuite + 1 toilet, 5 Air con units & fans. Laundry, European-timber kitchen, large balcony. Quiet area, 2 levels + flat top (135sqm) for outdoor entertaining. Ready for Jacuzzi & garden. 1 car + motorbikes space underneath. Possible to separate into two living spaces with own entrance. 12,500,000 baht neg. Tel: 081-273 1326. Email: jeanwass@yahoo.com.au

CONDO FOR SALE

Furnished, pool and spa. 750,000 baht. Tel: 089-966 0568. Email: gidmansimon@yahoo.co.uk

LAYAN LAND



for sale. 11 rai, flat land. 3 min from Layan beach, hill and lake view. Price 4.2 million baht per rai. Tel: 089-813 1447.

HOUSE FOR SALE - KATHU

4 bedroom, 3 bathroom, 2 storeys. 10 mins fm Patong. 4,900,000 baht. Tel: 087-278 6439 (English & Thai). Email: shall@loxinfo.co.th

NAI YANG MODERN VILLA

Top spec villa, 600m from beach. 210sqm, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool, sala, big shade sail lookout, modern furniture. 10.2 million baht. Tel: 084-653 5863.

LAND ON COUNTRY CLUB

Near club house, 550sq wah. 13 million baht. Includes membership. Email: o.spiess@gmx.at

MANEKRAM 161SQ WAH

Corner block to the rear of the estate. 19,000 baht per wah. Email: lowprofile@mail.com

PATONG HOUSES

5.9 million baht, seaview, 3 story, 7 rooms, 3 bathrooms. New pool villa, 7.2 million baht. 6 rooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 story. Tel: 087-053 6016.

GOLF VIEW LAND FOR SALE



1,200 sqm with infrastructure, overlooking golf course in Kathu. 5,500,000 baht. Tel: 089-724 7211 (English), 080-522 4433 (Thai). Email: julienmayard@me.com

QUICK SALE LAND IN KAMALA

Bang Wan Rd. 1.03 rai, 1,630 sqm. Contact. Tel: 082-420 6900, 084-304 5841.

WAS BT10.5M NOW BT8.5M

Boat Lagoon Marina. Central island, house for sale, freehold title, approx 200sqm. Built in German kitchen, jacuzzi, beautiful furniture (with or without). 50" flat, carport, rare. Corner unit. From 31 Jan 2010. Tel: 085-258 3900. Email: picharly@gmail.com

NAI HARN LUXURY CONDO



2-3 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 111sqm. Start 4.5 million baht. Must see. Tel: 084-993 7308. For further details, please see our website at www.amphaiseabreeze.com

MUST SELL NOW

beautiful villa Kata Beverly Hills. 3 bedroom/bath, big pool with jacuzzi, garden, includes furnishing. From 20 million baht, now 17 million baht. Tel: 081-788 8280.

SALE CHEAP CONDO PATONG

Modern studio apartment, fully furnished, beach 400m. 1.1 million baht. Tel: 081-082 5707.

HOUSE IN BANGJO

for sale. 2 bed, 2 bath, chanote, western kitchen, saloon, fully furnished. Price 6 million baht. Contact Khun Lek. Tel: 089-5903665.

FREEHOLD PATONG

Just finished, new apartments. Selling at good prices. Tel: 084-845 2170.

CHANOTE, 29 RAI

at 1.6 million baht per rai. Nice and cheap land 12 minutes from Phuket airport. Located 200m from main road, electricity/ water well/ road access to the land. Good for housing project. Tel: 081-538 7050. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

LAND AT PA KHLOK



49 rai, nice flat land. Chanote, 2.5km from Heroines' Monument. 1.7 million baht per rai. Tel: 083-180 2143.

LAND ON COCONUT ISLAND



for sale. 120 rai, 420m beach front 670m along island's main road. Ideal for Marina resort. Tel: 081-825 9728, 081-370 6200. Email: manopjd@gmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE / RENT



312sqm. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Fully furnished, 24-hour protection. 5 minutes to Chalong Bay, 10 minutes to Nai Ham Beach, 20 minutes to Patong Beach and 15 minutes to Phuket Town. Sale: 6.5 million baht. Rent: 45,000 baht per month. Please contact Khun Sam. Tel: 085-110 6449 (English & Thai). For further details, please see our website at <http://ipdproperty.com/30-chalong-villa/30-chalong-villa.html>

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

for sale. Each building has 3 floors. On big road at Kamala Beach, near Krungsri Bank. Price 20 million baht. Tel: 083-180 2143. Email: yaris.vios@gmail.com

30 RAI IN TOWN

Long lease. Near Dowrungs School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

80 RAI FOR SALE, CHANOTE

Located at Natai Beach. 15 minutes drive from Sarasin Bridge. Price 1.6 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-538 7050. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

HOUSE IN ANUPHAS GOLF VILLA

for sale. Kathu, 3 bedrooms, maid room, aircon, small swimming pool, Chanote title. 8 million baht.

Tel: 081-854 0061 (English), 087-395 7301 (English & Thai).



Phuket's All Pool Condominiums

"Our expectations are high that this project will be a top seller in the 2009/2010 high season."

Bill Samet, Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks

- Completed oversized apartments. Each with private pools. Located next to Laguna area and 350m to Bang Tao Beach
- Introductory prices are set 20% below comparable projects
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087 034 2090
tom@indigoRE.com
www.baanmandala.com



KAMALA VILLAS



for sale. A great investment opportunity, in quiet walled secure complex, all European standard. Excellent condition, in 1.3 rai, 20m pool. Live in paradise with a good income. 3 houses, 4 beds, 1 bungalow, 2 beds and 1 guardhouse, only 5 minutes to beach. 25,000,000 baht, from owner. Tel: 081-956 0527.

SUPERB LOCATION IN NAI HARN

Are you looking for the perfect location in Nai Harn? Excellent plot of Land - 1 rai - with house in a safe soi. Only ten minutes walking distance from Nai Harn Beach! Call now. Tel: 081-892 1057 (English & Thai), 081-691 9679 (English & Thai). Email: service@phuket-consult.com

CHEAP HOUSE FOR SALE

1 story house on land. 1.5 rai, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished at T. Taimuang, Phang Nga 2.5 million baht. Tel: 083-180 2143. Email: yaris.vios@gmail.com

PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

in Ao Makhram. Land is located opposite Port of Phuket and next to Bel Air Cape Panwa Resort. Price 4.2 million. Tel: 081-891 5932, 089-035 6702.

3 RAI LAND IN TRANG



for sale. 3 rai in Baan Po, Muang, Trang. Very good location for business, suitable for house projects. Electricity, access road. Sale by owner. With Chanote. Price: 9 million baht ono. No agents please! Tel: 075-210646, 087-270 9093.

SURIN BEACH

Land on Soi Haad Surin 2 for sale. 2.2 Rai, 5 min walk to Surin Beach. Email: costello@exemail.com.au

SHOPHOUSE - CHALONG

12 months old, 3 storey, 3 bedroom, 2.5 bath, 1 km south of Circle. Full kitchen, 1 air con, hot water, all-glass front door, office furniture, beds, very clean. Rent 28,000 per month. Valued at 3.7 million, you pay 3.6 million baht including additions. Bargain! Tel: 086-476 2093.

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in these pages are

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Property Gazette

VILLA FOR SALE NEAR LAGUNA



3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Open-plan kitchen, living room. The villa is fully airconditioned and furnished. Built on 360sqm, 176sqm living area, with a beautiful garden. The location is only 10 minutes to Bang Tao beach and 5 minutes to Laguna. Price 5.5 million baht. Tel: 089-813 1447. Email: kwanphuket@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

LAND AT CHERNG TALAY

390sqw, nice flat land, quiet area, chanote. In Pasak Soi 5 near Laguna Home. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118, 086-709-2933.

HOUSE & FURNITURE FOR SALE

Single house, 60sqm. 2 floors, 3 bedrooms and 3 toilets. In Chaipruek Village at Land & House, Chalong. Good location and entrance from By-Pass road. Built 2 years ago. Tel: 084-627 7001.

PATONG SEA VIEW

nice land. 2.3 rai at 18 million baht per rai. Nice location in a quiet area of Patong. Road and utilities access to the land. Ready to start a villa project. Tel: 081-538 7050. Email: talayjan@yahoo.com

LAND FOR SALE

near the main road to Baan Don - Cherno Talay. 68sq wah. 1.1 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118. Email: honda.1437@yahoo.co.th

FREEHOLD APARTMENT CHALONG

Mountain view apartment, 2 bedrooms, living room, 3 air con. Big common pool. Secured area. Tel: 076-226492, 084-541 5225 (English & Thai), 081-481 1290 (Thai). Email: suphacha_noi@hotmail.com

CHEAP LAND FOR SALE

Close to Phuket International Airport. 4 rai, Chanote title. 3.8 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-868 7676. Email: phuketann@gmail.com.

Luxury Pool Villas Laguna/Layan

Baan Lawadee is a Luxury Pool Villa development located right next door to Laguna Phuket Homes. Great location, beautiful finishes, currently priced from 13.5 to 15.5 million baht. There are only two villas remaining. For more information check our website at www.baanlawadee.com Tel: 081-438 7042

KATA BEACH

nice, one bedroom apartment incl furnishing, air, pool. Special price now 2.9 million baht, financing available. Tel: 081-788 8280.

PATONG DELUXE CONDO

Beautiful, modern, quiet, 61sqm, city/sea view, furnished, parking. 4,275,000 baht. Tel: 081-309 9154. Email: caltirol@hotmail.com

BEACH LAND KHAO LAK 5 RAI

Beautiful 5 rai, Chanote title. Hard to find better than this, next to 5-star resort. 118m of beach front, stunning property. Tel: 081-649 3557 (English). Email: ken@phuketlifestyle.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.phuketlifestyle.com>

3 BEDROOMS HOUSE

for sale. 62sq wah, 2 bathrooms, Villa Dawroong. 4.5 million baht. Contact Khun Tar. Tel: 076-377052, 089-971 1268.

LAND AT PA KHLOK

1 rai, 18sq wah, Nor Sor 3 Kor, Tha-Rue - Pa Khlok - Muang Mai Road. Near Mission Hill. Price 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

SALE HOUSE KATHU

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, swimming pool, 73sq wah. Please contact for more details. Tel: 089-908 4873.

PRIME LAND FOR SALE IN KATHU

with in 2km of 3 golf courses,

5 rai, 50sq wah with Chanote title,

near Central/Tesco Lotus/Big C.

Perfect for private complex.

Only 5.5 million baht per rai.

Tel: 081-854 0061

(English),

087-395 7301

(English & Thai).

2-STOREY HOUSE IN PATONG



sea view. Hasip Pee Road, 49sqw. 4 bedrooms with balconies, 2 bathroom, air-con, fully furnished. Chanote. Price 17 million baht ono. Tel: 087-270 9093. Email: a.pueng@gmail.com

NICE PLOT BEHIND LAYAN HILL ESTATE



Manik area, 4.7million baht. Chanote title, good for pool villas. Tel: 081-538 7050 or email: talayjan@yahoo.com

HEAVEN ON EARTH



5 bedroom Thai style villa in Phuket. Magnificent Phang-Nga Bay sea view. 3 big bedrooms are en-suite with seaview. Private swimming pool. Land plot 730.8 sqm. construction area approx. 573 sqm. Full security service. Located at Rommai Chailay Estate. 24.9 million baht. Tel: 089-474 2234.

BEACHFRONT CONDO

North Patong. 2 bedrooms, freehold, great seaview. 9.7 million baht. For pics, please contact Tel: 086-276 5117. Email: jihshand@gmail.com

VILLA FOR SALE

Contemporary Villa for sale. 1.5 story, 4 en-suite bedrooms, pool w/ Jacuzzi, western kitchen, sala and built-in BBQ, electric gate, security system, car park for 3 cars, and nice tropical garden on one rai (1,606 sqm) of land. Good price. Email: nisaya@hotmail.com

17 RAI WITH PALM TREES

At Kok Kien, Takuapa, Phang-Nga. 85,000 baht per rai. Contact Khun Piek. Tel: 081-892 4094, 084-304 9339.

BEAUTIFUL HOUSE, FULLY FURNISHED



Ready to move in, 254 sqm. 2 floors. Near Downrung school, Laemchan area, close to Phuket Town, nice living room and garden, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 car parks, very nice and quiet area. Price: 6.8 million baht. Tel: 081-541 2025.

NEW HOUSE IN THE BANYAN VILLA



for sale. 3.4 million baht, near Land and Houses Park. 29.5sq wah, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, hill view, common pool, club house. Tel: 089-873 1009 (English), 081-893 8524.

NAI YANG MODERN VILLA

Top spec villa, 600m from beach. 210sqm, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, pool, sala, big shade sail lookout, modern furniture. 10.2 million baht. Tel: 084-653 5863.

POOL VILLAS RAWAI

Various sizes. 3 or 4 bedrooms, big gardens. Peaceful location. Tel: 085-783 1890.

NEW PATONG CONDOS

freehold, 2 bedroom, 3.5 million baht completed. 10 min walk to the beach. Tel: 081-537 9684.

TOWNHOUSE, 2 STOREY



opposite Boat Lagoon. 24sq wah, 3 beds, 2 baths. Email: info@allaboutwebanddesign.com

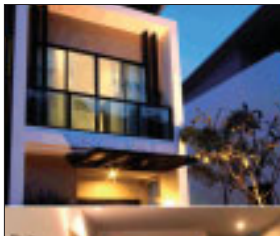
BEACHFRONT CONDO

North Patong. 2 bedrooms, freehold, great seaview. 9.7 million baht. For pics, please contact Tel: 086-276 5117. Email: jihshand@gmail.com

LAND AT PATONG BEACH

Top quality land plots for sale in the hills at the North end of Patong Beach. Elevation: 47m. Very quiet and natural location with wide access road, underground service, and good water supply. Contact Andy at Tel: 081-891 3466. Fax: 076-296160. Email: antc@phuket.ksc.co.th

BAAN BAI MAI



for sale in Samkong near Bangkok hospital. 2 storey, 2 bed, 2 bath, 1 car parking space. Email: info@allaboutwebanddesign.com

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Property Gazette

LARGE FAMILY HOME



Lovely, bright, fully furnished/air conditioned house. 2m-walled garden, electric gate, alarm system. Set on 1 rai in sought-after area near Laguna. Just a few minutes walk to beach and shops. 320 sqm living area, 3 en-suite double bedrooms, guest suite, very spacious lounges, large dining area, office/gym, all with solid wood floors. Laundry/maid room. New solid wood kitchen with built-in appliances. Private and safe for children/animals. 5.5x12m pool, large sala, built in stone barbecue, shower and store. 8 million baht cheaper than local equivalent houses to ensure quick sale. 19,500,000 baht. Tel: 081-956 0527. Email: tuenjai1@hotmail.com

HOUSE IN RAWAI

for sale. Single-story house, 155sqm living area, fully furnished, 2 bedrooms with bathroom, 1 living room, kitchen, aricon, safe, bathroom with washing mashine, covered car park and terrace, swimming pool 4x8m, land area 640sqm. Price for the house 5.2 million baht. Land lease for 96,000 baht per year. Long term lease contract. Tel: 076-248100.

TOP SEAVIEW LOT

2 rai, Chanote, 6 million baht per rai. Tel: 089-473 8338. Email: phuketone@gmail.com

GOOD FOR BED & BREAKFAST

or big family. One project with 4 apartments, pool, fully decorated, furnish incl. Thai company needs money now. 7.9 million baht for 4 apartments. Tel: 081-788 8280.

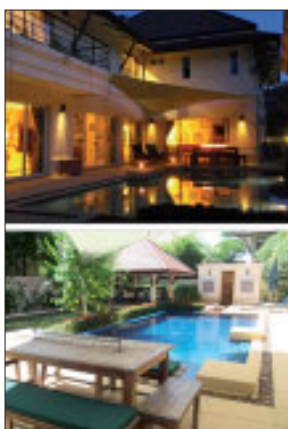
MARINA VILLA, 14 MB!

New Pool Villa in Boat Lagoon. 14 million baht. Tel: 076-238948, 081-968 9046 (English & Thai), 081-353 9730 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-273466. Email: pen@phuketpropertytrip.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.phuketboatlagoon.com>

LAND AND HOUSE, RAWAI

for sale. 1,300sqm, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, internet, tel, cable TV, UBC, wastewater treatment, no external gate remote, garden springer, garden light. Price 12 million baht includes furniture, using house more than 770sqm. Big garden and house. Soi Kok Yang, Rawai, Phuket, next to Two Villas. Tel: 082-275 1445.

IDEAL FAMILY HOME



Luxury 5+1 bedroom villa conveniently located 800m from BIS and central to marinas, shopping, golf, airport and beaches. 535sqm of practical, contemporary living with indoor or outdoor entertaining, excellent bathrooms (Jaccuzi) and spacious bedrooms. Functional kitchen with open-plan dining. Safe and secure estate. Perfect for a young family. Excellent rental return for investors. Sale price 19.5 million baht. Tel: 084-442 1580. Email: ab@megazip.com.sg

POOL VILLAS RAWAI

Various sizes. 3 or 4 bedrooms, big gardens. Peaceful location. Tel: 085-783 1890.

LAND AND HOUSE



Quick sale, 232sqm, 25m. attached to Chaofa West Rd, near Wat Chalong, 3 bedrooms, 3 toilets, 4 aircons, 2 phones, ADSL, 1 temporary warehouse. Price 14 million baht (negotiable). Tel: 089-697 0928, 089-723 8209.

TOWNHOUSE FOR SALE OR RENT



In Moobaan Tinawut, Samkong, close to Yada Dental Clinic. 2 connected buildings, 2 floors, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. For rent: 12,000 baht per month, sale: 2.8 million baht. Tel: 081-597 6302, 081-597 9441.

MASSAGE SHOP IN PATONG

Good location, cheap rent. 4 beds and 2 chairs for foot massage. Contact Khun Aoy. Tel: 082-288 2362 (English & Thai), 086-745 8876 (English & Thai). Email: toreborgerud@hotmail.com

PATONG TOWER

1 bedroom, 62 sqm. mountain view, freehold foreign name, 12th floor. By owner, no brokers. 5,200,000 baht. Tel: 081-787 8231. Email: peterlomm@hotmail.com

2.4 MILLION BAHT HOME

Khok Kloy town, Phang Nga. 4 years old. 118sqm home on 904sqm plot. 3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, lounge, big kitchen, aircon, phone line, 2 car covered parking. Chanote. Tel: 081-728 4821.

BEACH LAND KOH YAO YAI

8 rai beach land, public road & water 80m long white sand beach, no rocks, include shop house, Beautiful view Beautiful land. Tel: 081-649 3557. Email: ken@phuketlifestyle.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.phuketlifestyle.com>

QUICK SALE HOUSE IN CHALONG

94sqm, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 car park, big garden, full furnished. Price 4.5 million baht. Tel: 087-886 4208.

POOLSIDE APARTMENT FOR SALE

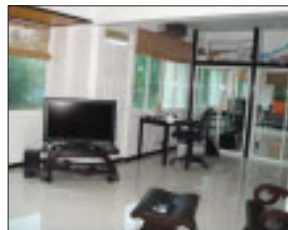
Brand new two-bedroom poolside apartment. 175sqm open plan living with 2 bathrooms, two bedrooms, large terrace, and secure undercover parking. Very quiet and natural location at Patong Beach. Open to offers. Tel: 081-891 3466. Fax: 076-296160. Email: antc@phuket.ksc.co.th

LAND ON KOH YAO NOI



Area: 2,076sqm, seafront (mangrove), Chanote Title. Concrete road front. Next to Koh Yao Municipality Office. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 089-890 3161.

1.7 MILLION BAHT CONDO



Rawai beach. For sale, 54sqm, 150 meter from sea, financing 1 years. Tel: 080-078 0931. Email: rawai1@yahoo.com

PRIME PLOT READY TO BUILD

Bangtao plot of 900sqm within gated area. Ready to build on. Water, electricity, concrete road. 4.5 million baht. Serious inquiries please email: pg1kl@hotmail.com

SALE 2 TOWNHOUSES

1 floor, 2 sleeping room. 200 meter to monument, quellwhater. 1.2 million each. Tel: 081-797 8480.

HOT DEAL LAYAN



Land 3 plots, Chanote of 3/4 of rai each, sale by lot or full plot, road, electric, water, lake view. Start at 4,500 baht per sqm.

Land 19 rai, Chanote, lake view, road, electric. Under priced at 5.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-787 4383. Email: ruggdan@gmail.com

NEW CONDO PATONG

New one bedroom, fully furnished, close to Jungceylon. Will be completed in a few months. Email: jkgk24@hotmail.com

SUPERIOR SHOPHOUSE

4-story house for dwelling and business is for quick sale. Extraordinary fixtures and fittings. Sensational price. Tel: 087-518 8837 (English & Thai). Email: peterwiniker@hotmail.com

LAND PATONG HASSPI ROAD

for sale. Prime location overlooking Patong bay with stunning sea view, located right above Jungceylon. Nor Sor Sam Kor, land title, 2880 sqm. or 1.8 rai. Asking price 22 million baht. Contact Stig. Tel: 084-847 4377.

HOUSE IN KARON BEACH

Corner town house, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, sea and mountain view. Thai freehold, Chanote title, fully furnished. 6.3 million baht. Tel: 089-594 0423. Email: crustaceus@yahoo.com

NINE HOUSES 2 RAI

Rawai, from 3.5 million baht or can buy all for 29.5 million baht. Tel: 087-209 5174.

NEW DETACHED HOUSE



for sale in Phanason 3, Thalung. 253.25sqm, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, double garage, furnished and landscaped garden. 2.95 million baht. Contact Phing. Tel: 087-278-0067. Email: sweetpinkylive@live.co.uk

KATA BEACH 5 STAR CONDO

Private resale because of relocation. Located in five-star resort. One bedroom corner apartment with living room, built-in kitchen, and balcony with outstanding and impregnable view overlooking the famous Kata Beach. Fully furnished, including TV, etc. Ready to move in. Priced at only 165,000 Euro. If interested, please see the website at www.theaccentphuket.com or contact me at Tel: 076-333630, 089-825 3420. Email: b.rusconi@bluewin.ch

KRABI, AO-NANG POOL VILLAS

Land area 320sqm., 2 bedrooms. 6-7 million baht. Second home with strong rental income. Tel: 087-897 7380. Email: mrxelmay@gmail.com

2 RAI IN AO MAKHAM



Chanote, in Soi Rat-U-Thit 1, public utility area. easy access in and out. Just 12 million baht for both rai. Tel: 076-522938, 087-689 9679, 089-588 5458. Email: tasuwan@hotmail.com

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in Phuket Inter villa project for sale. 2.3 million baht. 36.5sqm. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, includes furniture, curtains, kitchen, 1 airconditioning unit, common pool access. Tel: 089-873 1009 (English), 081-893 8524.

POOLSIDE APARTMENT

Large 85 sqm. open plan, one-bedroom furnished apartment with pool and secure undercover parking. Very quiet and natural location in the hills at the north end of Patong Beach. 5 mins to beach. Contact Andy at Tel: 081-891 3466 (English). Fax: 076-296160. Email: antc@phuket.ksc.co.th

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1.9 million baht, new decor, pool, 3 min walk to Jungceylon, 5 min to beach. Tel: 086-272 6755.

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New feelfree atlantis 14 cockpit cover. 25,000 baht. 9am.-5pm. Tel: 089-591 9804.

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7 seats speed boat with brand new seats. 85hp Yamaha engine. 550,000 THB (including trailer). Tel: 076-282782, 081-892 4778. Fax 076-282826. Email: nadegeannaert2003@yahoo.fr

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WANTED: DF 6 HP SUZUKI

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Maxum 1800 year 2000. Price 600,000 baht and Bayliner 175 year 2005. Price 650,000 baht. Bowriders, Mercruiser 130 HP with trailers. Good condition. Can arrange storage. Tel: 089-932 5175 (English). Email: wojdkowbengt@hotmail.com

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Great condition. 2x225hp. Mercury outboards 55kts. www.boatshedphuket.com

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new sail triler beach wheels, very good condition. 149,000 baht o.n.o. Tel: 086-269 7138.

65 FOOT CATAMARAN

6 double cabins, huge space, no engine, wood-composite. 10,000 Euro. Contact for more details at tel: 087-461 8089.

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GULFCRAFT 33, 2006

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BAYLINER 197

19ft. 5.7meters. Outboard Mercury 115hp, 4-stroke. Used for 1 season. With trailer. Price: 850,000 baht. Tel: 082-959 5324.

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SEALINE 260, 1995

300hp, Mercruiser diesel. 1,750,000 baht. For further details. Tel: 084-842 6146. www.boatshedphuket.com

IMPORTED SEA KAYAK

1 double with rudder 25,000 baht, 1 single with rudder 20,000 baht. Good condition. For more details. Tel: 089-594 4017.

Would you like to keep up on what's happening in Phuket - the good, the bad and the bizarre? Let us share it with you - every week!

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Contact Kit Email: kit@phuket.net
Tel: 076 620 055 Fax: 076 620 118
177/34 Moo 4 Srisoonthorn Road T. Srisoonthorn,
A. Thalang Phuket 83110



MAID / NANNY

Live-in for family of 3 in Rawai. Thai female, 7,500 baht plus social security. Room, food, motorbike provided. Must speak English. For further details please send email to: jeremytew@yahoo.com

NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKER

To live and work abroad as a financial advisor. Attractive conditions, airfares paid, rent, plus bonuses, etc. Tel: 085-114 4762 (English). Email: gina.lee173@gmail.com

FULL TIME ENGLISH TEACHER

For Marriott Vacation Club. Requires administrative and computer skills. Native speaker only. Tel: 076-338200. Fax: 076-303625. Email: orapim.k@vacationclub.com

HOUSE MAID NEEDED

to look after 5 pool villas inside and out can teach. Must speak English, live in accommodation is available. Tel: 083-641 9327.

OFFICE STAFF WANTED

English speaking and computer. For further details please contact atel: 076-345081, 087-888 4770.

SSISTANT MANAGER

and Receptionist in Phuket.

- Thai female
 - 25-30 years old
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Good English skills
- Please submit resume, photo and expected salary.
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The Regional Wing of
Singapore Airlines

SilkAir, the Regional Wing of Singapore Airlines, invites applications for the following positions based in Phuket:

1) CUSTOMER SERVICES ASSISTANT

2) SECRETARY/ADMIN ASSISTANT

Requirements:

- Thai Nationality (preferably between 22 and 30 years old)
- Possess a Bachelors Degree in any Discipline
- Good command of spoken & written English and good level of computer literacy
- Customer service oriented, pleasant personality & comfortable with meeting passengers
- Working experience or Internship with airline or travel industry is an advantage
- TOEIC pass grade is an added advantage.
- Must be willing to work in shifts, public holidays and weekends (for CSA position)
- Fresh graduates are welcome to apply

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As an employee of SilkAir, you will be entitled to a comprehensive range of attractive benefits, including free travel on SilkAir, subsidized travel on Singapore Airlines and other airline partners, annual bonus, provident fund, 12 days annual leave, provision of uniform & training opportunities.

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Please send a full resume including work experience, educational qualifications, salary expectation and a passport-sized photograph by email to silkair@foxinfo.co.th or by post to the following address: Manager Thailand, SilkAir, 101/17 Bypass Square, Moo 1 Chalemprakiet Ror 9 Road, Kathu District, Phuket 83120. Applications close on 15 February 2010.

Please indicate clearly the position you are applying for on the top left-hand corner of the envelope/application letter. We regret that only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

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Admin Supervisor – 1 Position (Phuket)

- M/F, Thai nationality, aged over 27
- Bachelor's degree in related field
- Min 3 years relevant working experience
- Excellent communication skills in English written & spoken
- Strong interpersonal skills and computer literacy
- Ability to work under pressure
- Well-organized, proactive, analytical skills
- Willing to work extended hours when required

IH Coordinator – 1 Position (Samui)

- Western or Thai Nationality, aged over 25
- Good command of English, written and spoken
- Strong interpersonal skill and computer literacy
- Ability to work on own initiative
- Willing to work extended hours when required
- Service minded and enthusiastic
- Experience in the Travel industry

Experience is preferred but not essential, training will be provided

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- Male, Thai nationality, aged over 25 years old
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- Thai National
- University Degree, Physical Education Major or related fields
- Good English, Positive, willing & hard working
- Knowledge of local schools or clubs to arrange fixtures
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- Coaching qualification to coach a team such as Basketball or etc.
- Be able to do a supervisor for Military Training & Teaching Assistant
- Be able to work flexible day 1 pm. to 6 pm. all day Saturday

Please send a short letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, recent photograph and e-mail/fax and telephone contacts of referees to: **British International School, Phuket**



59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Road, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200
Tel: 076 238711-20 # 2103 Fax: 076 238711 # 1130
E-mail: patcharakoent@bisphuket.ac.th or sirirats@bisphuket.ac.th

HIRING NOW



The majestic Centara Grand Phuket Beach Resort is now seeking to recruit senior members of its pre-opening team. The first phase of this new resort, with its distinctive Sino-Portuguese architecture, will be opening in mid-2010. This 262 room 5 star resort occupies a stunning direct beachfront location on Karon Beach and will be a spectacular addition to the shores of Phuket.

The Centara Grand Phuket Beach Resort will offer the every finest accommodation, including Pool villas, Pool Suites and Premium Club rooms, all with seaviews. Dining options are varied and creative, while meeting and event rooms are large and flexible and feature several indoor and outdoor options. Leisure facilities are spectacular and are highlighted by a water-park and pools, as well as a children's play centre, Fitness Centre and SPA Cenvaree.

We are seeking applications from outstanding, talented individuals, who share our passion for providing warm and caring levels of customer service. You should be highly motivated, confident and look forward to joining us for this interesting opportunity and to creating a career for yourself within the growing brand of Centara Hotels & Resorts.

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- Human Resources Director / Manager
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- Resident Manager
- Training Manager
- Chief Engineer
- Chief Accountant
- IT Manager
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- Drivers

Previous experience in a similar work environment is desirable for all management positions. All positions are open to Thai nationals only.

We offer a competitive remuneration package to successful candidates. Interested persons should send a detailed resume stating salary expectation, contact telephone number and recent photograph to:



Corporate Human Resources Office, Centara Hotels & Resorts
24th Floor, Centara Grand at CentralWorld
999/99 Rama 1 Road, Pathumwan, Bangkok 10300
Tel: 02 769 1234 Fax: 02 100 6234
E-mail: cpbr.recruit@chr.co.th

www.centarahotelsresorts.com

COOK / WAITRESS

needed for a nice small restaurant/pub. Evening shift. Please call or mail for details. Tel: 081-891 4019 (English). Email: tkoschig2000@hotmail.com

ENGLISH WRITER – SEO

Write comments for websites in blogs. Native English and PC skills are mandatory! Send resume. Tel: 076-613 0533, 085-473 7812 (English). Email: michiel@zonneke.com

ENGLISH TEACHER WANTED

for private lessons with a primary school child. 10-15 hours per week, near Phuket Airport. For further details please send email to: kirkasia@hotmail.com

PROMOTIONAL STAFF WANTED

Thai national, good English, basic computer skills. Full-time. Tel: 081-537 6866.

NEED AN HONEST COUPLE

To work at the house as a maintenance guy and a maid. Live in. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-926 3286.

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

Non profit organization. Right To Play seeks Thai with fluent English, computer literate, training and experience to work on education program. Email: bdronkers@righttoplay.com

NANNY / HOUSEKEEPER

Maid and Nanny wanted. 50-year-old man with 12-year-old son seeks Maid / Nanny. Flexible working schedule to follow international school calendar. 4 hours a day, 4 day a week work and weekends during school session. On vacation time, every day full time 8:00 – 5:00pm. Must be able to drive and I will supply the vehicle. Pay is 15,000–20,000 baht a month. Must be able to speak, read and write English. Submit resume for review and consideration to bob_tames@yahoo.com

DIRECT MARKETING PERSON

wanted. Qualified person for direct marketing of real estate products from our off-site locations. Experience in OPC or offsite direct marketing helpful. Excellent communication skills required. Must enjoy direct public contact. Salary and commission available. Email qualifications or CV to: Patrick@raimonland.com

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A++ Software produces dual language accounting software: Thai Revenue approved. Enthusiastic and experienced accountant required for internal accounts and involvement in user training and support.

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ELECTRONIC ENGINEER WANTED

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 - Experience preferred

All applicants must submit full resume by email to: info@octopusasia.com only. We will contact applicants by return.

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Rapidly growing company seeks sales center agents for multiple products. Fluent English speakers only – any nationality. Earnings of 50,000 baht per month possible. Must be sales-oriented and web proficient. Foreign nationals must hold a Bachelor's degree. Tel: 087-8858 622.

CASHIER

Mini-mart requires part time and full time Cashier. Thai national, good English, computer skills. Forward CV by email. Email: info@buonappetitogroup.com

2 SWEDISH RESTAURANTS

in Bang Tao Beach, open all year. Two chefs wanted to cook farang food and 4 waitresses. Good spoken English required and good salary for experienced candidates. Contact Michael. Tel: 081-787 3167.

Employment Wanted

EXPAT MECH ENGINEER

Expat engineer looking for work in management, commissioning or similar. Part or full time, or partner. Email: andamanproject@myway.com

ENGLISH TEACHER

Native English speaker. 25 years experience. MA (Hons), DELTA. Private lessons, conversation, business, etc. Tel: 083-175 1920. Email: gregmackay67@hotmail.com

ACCOUNTANT

Thai accountant required for SCUBA diving Liveboard Company in Phuket. Responsible for bookkeeping, accounting procedures, salary admin, stock control, monthly and annual tax forms, and Social Insurance. Will also be responsible for submitting, applying for and renewing all kinds of documents, e.g., licenses, permits, etc. To arrange an interview, please telephone. Tel: 076-383819, 084-923 4109 (English). Email: mshandur@hotmail.com

NURSE NEEDED

Full time nurse required. Thai National only. Care for 89-year-old English woman in Kamala. Room available. Please call for more information. Tel: 080-699 2436. Fax: 076-279605. Email: kokakat@gmail.com

RESTAURANT MANAGER

We, a restaurant on a hillside with a good view, are looking for an experienced restaurant manager who also has a background in marketing in the Phuket market. Tel: 076-261940, 081-877 9292. Email: prakaisiroj@hotmail.com

RAWAI BEACH CLUB

The exclusive outdoor seaside lounge/club is recruiting young dynamic individuals for the following positions: waitress/waiter, bartender/bartender. Qualifications required: pleasant personality, English communication skills, guest service oriented. Interested candidates please submit your CV to: rawaibeachclub@gmail.com. We offer good benefits and unique opportunity to grow within the company.

URGENT NEED: KITCHEN STAFF

If you have any further question please contact us. Tel: 076-281084, 083-969 6084. Email: phanida@tamarindvillaphuket.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.tamarindvillaphuket.com>

HOME MANAGER

Looking for woman with Thai and English to run our household. Duties include shopping, cleaning, cooking, paying bills, and taking care of dogs. Both a car and motorcycle are provided, as well as accommodation and all living expenses. Salary up to 15,000 baht per month. Please contact for more info. Tel: 080-532 6144, 086-940 1504 (English). Email: gshrk1972@hotmail.com

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150 MILLION BAHT PROJECT

in Nai Harn, seek 50% partner with 25 million baht. Tel: 085-792 0908.

GRILL RESTAURANT PATONG

Famous grill steak restaurant, Patong beach, prime location, due to personal health reasons, I have to offer my beloved, fully equipped and refurbished restaurant. Long-lease, 60 seats, bar 25 seats, vip room 45 seats as well rooms for staff and owner, good price. Tel: 081-894 0570. For further details, please see our website at <http://www.hermanns-phuket.com>

BAR FOR SALE

Big kitchen, 4 year lease, low monthly rent. Sai Nam Yen Road. 2 million baht. Tel: 089-591 0898.

SHOP HOUSE IN KATHU

for rent. 4 floors, 4 aircon. Fully furnished apartment on third floor. Very good location only 26,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-432 6587.

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