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Ice storm: crystal meth on the rise

CRYSTAL meth is replacing *ya bah* as the drug of choice for Phuket's teenagers, according to the island's top police officer.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Pekad Tantipong's comments came after police seized 100,000 baht's worth of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) in a sting operation on January 6. Six were arrested on drug charges.

Maj Gen Pekad and Phuket City Police Superintendent Wanchai Ekpornpit announced the arrests and seizures at a press conference at Phuket City Police Station at 11am on January 8.

"Right now it seems *ya ice* is spreading in Phuket, and *ya bah* (methamphetamine) is looking out of date. We're not sure why," said Gen Pekad.

It was mostly young Thais who were taking the drug, he said.

"They're encouraged into doing it by their friends.



Drug suspects Surin 'Tu' Suwannoe of Nakhon Sri Thammarat (left) and Prasert 'Lek' Kaewsuan of Ratchaburi (right) at last week's press conference.

"Alien workers much prefer drinking to taking drugs," he added.

The six suspects were paraded in front of the press at the conference. All were arrested on the evening of January 6 at the Twin Inn in Phuket Town

after police were tipped-off that a gang of four drug dealers were staying at the hotel.

An undercover officer arranged to buy drugs from Prasert 'Lek' Kaewsuan, 30. After Mr Lek attempted to sell the officer some *ya ice* in front

of the hotel, he was arrested.

Mr Lek's girlfriend, Gingarn 'Yui' Sungkha, 22, was picked up in the hotel room. Two more 22-year-olds, Sitthipong 'Em' Pradab and Surin 'Tu' Suwannoe, were arrested 15 minutes later when they returned to the room.

Searches of the suspects and the hotel room yielded 25 small bags of the drug weighing a total of 20.69 grams.

A Nissan Cefiro registered in Bangkok was also seized as evidence in the case.

Two more suspects were arrested earlier in front of the Twin Inn after buying *ya ice* from the gang.

Athit 'Jack' Pimsamut, 30, and Rangsan 'Joe' Bunklieng, 32, were caught with 0.75g and 0.65g of the drug, respectively.

A small bag of *ya ice*, typically weighing one gram or less, currently sells for around 3,000 baht, police say.

— Atchaa Khamlo

Graft allegations dog convention center

THE LATEST setback to Phuket's decades-old dream of building an international-standard convention and exhibition center came last week, when several media outlets reported allegations of corruption by local politicians with interests in the project.

The center is to be built on 150 rai of Treasury Department land near Tah Chat Chai, at the island's northernmost point.

Funding will come from the government's 1.43-trillion-baht Thai Khem Khaeng

(Strong Thailand) economic stimulus package.

The politicians, whose names were not mentioned, allegedly demanded kickbacks amounting to 41 percent from the project's 100-million-baht design budget.

The Treasury Department, which is developing the project, initially favored a team of Thammasat University engineers bidding on the contract for the center's design, according to the reports.

The university team

reportedly pulled out of the bidding after refusing to pay the large sums demanded.

A team from King Mongkut Institute of Technology in Ladkrabang has now been selected to conduct the design work.

Finance Minister Korn Chatikavanij has ordered his deputy, Pruektichai Damrongrut, to launch a probe into the alleged corruption.

"In every Thai Khem Khaeng project there must be measures which ensure there is no waste," said Mr Korn.

The probe would be thorough and transparent, he added.

Despite some media outlets reporting that work on the project had been halted, by February 10 the design board from the King Mongkut University had not been told to stop working.

They have already worked out the basic layout of the new complex, which will feature a convention hall and exhibition center and have an 'iconic' design.

— The Nation Group

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Tourist cop's death puzzles detectives

AN INVESTIGATION is underway to determine whether an Immigration Police Volunteer found dead in his Rawai home committed suicide or was murdered.

American national Richard Johnson, 67, was found slumped against his bedroom door with electrical cord round his neck on February 5.

There were wounds to his neck and forehead.

The body was discovered by an unidentified friend of Mr Johnson, also a foreigner, who went to the home out of concern after the dead man called him to 'say goodbye'.

Chalong Police and Phuket Ruamjai Kupai Foundation rescue workers arrived at the scene around 7:45pm.

They estimated Mr Johnson died about three hours earlier.

There were no signs of struggle in the house, located on Soi Khok Makham in Rawai.

In the room police found Mr Johnson's passport as well as a card identifying him as a Tourist Police volunteer.

What is puzzling investigators are the mechanics of Mr Johnson's death.

The white cord around his neck was not

attached to anything, leading them to wonder whether the American asphyxiated himself by tying the cable round his neck and pulling both ends.

While police believe suicide is the most likely scenario, they have yet to rule out murder.

Further investigation has revealed that Mr Johnson had been doing business in Phuket for several years.

He lived alone in the home, having separated from a Thai wife who since remarried.

Fellow Phuket Immigration Police Volunteer Tim Gardener said, "Richard was a friendly chap with a story to match all occasions. He will be missed."

"He would amaze listeners with stories of his varied careers - US Navy Seal, karate instructor to Hollywood stars, bodyguard to presidents, working for Hawaii Police and Fire Departments and captaincy of various ships around the world as a senior mariner."

Mr Johnson's body was sent to Vachira Phuket Hospital for examination.

Police are hoping the results of that work will show whether they can close the book on the case - or begin the hunt for a murderer.

- Gazette reporter



Roxanne bar burns

POLICE are hunting a man who burned down the popular Roxanne Bar on Wichit Road in Rawai in the early hours of February 6.

Chalong Police were notified of the blaze at 3:30am.

It took two Rawai Municipality fire engines about 30 minutes to put out the flames, but not before they destroyed the bar and everything inside.

Located near the Sapphaya Spa, the Roxanne Bar was run by a Nakhon Sri Thammarat woman named

Wanida and her Danish husband.

After the bar closed Saturday night, one staff member stayed on for security.

The staff member told police that a man wearing a hood suddenly appeared, dousing furniture at the front of the bar with gasoline and quickly setting it alight before fleeing.

Police are investigating a business rivalry as a possible motive, noting that patrons of the popular bar often parked their cars in front of rivals' premises.

- Gazette reporter

Col Grissak: injustice, drunkenness, robbery spark violence

By Atchaa Khamlo

PATONG's most senior cop says perceived injustice, drunkenness and robbery attempts lead Thais to assault foreigners.

Kathu Police Superintendent Grissak Songmoonark said it was important to examine the underlying causes of Thai-on-farang violence.

The comments came just after the announcement of his transfer from the bright lights of Patong to Phang Nga's sleepy Kuraburi district in the latest police reshuffle.

They also follow a number of attacks on tourists in Phuket and other parts of Thailand.

In early January Canadian tourist Ivan Anwar got into a

punch-up with a tuk-tuk driver following an argument over fares.

More recently, a 32-year-old Thai man confessed to stabbing elderly German expat Wolf-Dieter Kesselheim to death in an apparent case of road rage.

Two weeks earlier, another German man was shot dead after 'giving the finger' to a Thai motorist in Chiang Mai.

"We should look at why Thai people are doing this," said Col Grissak, who doesn't believe Thai people are predisposed to random acts of violence.

"It's impossible that they're stabbing or harming people they

don't know for no reason. Thai people are naturally nice."

Col Grissak said Thais sometimes attack foreigners if they feel they have been cheated or feel under attack.

"Lately there was the case of the tuk-tuk driver beating up the foreign tourist because of the fare," he said.

Mr Anwar agreed to the fare before taking the tuk-tuk, but when he got to the destination he thought it was too near to justify the fare, Col Grissak said. "The tuk-tuk driver was angry that he didn't get the amount of money that had been agreed."

"The case in Chalong of the German being stabbed to death was started when the German didn't notice the Thais' bike and nearly crashed into them," he said.

"Then they chased him and honked at him, so the farang gave them the middle finger. The case was down to neither side showing kindness."

A second common cause of such incidents are drunken tourists, Col Grissak said. A third was Thais trying to rob tourists who fight back, he said.

"Mostly the fighting is due to the first and second causes," Col Grissak said.

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Honorary consuls spell out tourism woes to Governor

THE Phuket Governor met with honorary consuls from 16 countries on February 8 to discuss ways to improve safety for foreign tourists on holiday in Phuket.

Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop chaired the meeting, which was hosted by the Royal Phuket City Hotel. Only the honorary consul from Spain was unable to attend.

Gov Wichai said that from now on all criminal cases and accidents involving foreign tourists would be reported by police to both the Phuket Provincial Office and either the consular official or embassy of the party involved.

Police will now have to not only report arrests, but also keep the diplomatic missions informed of updates in investigations involving their nationals.

As for the controversial issue of closing times at nightlife entertainment venues, Gov Wichai said he would like to introduce zones in popular tourist areas that would allow foreigners to enjoy Las Vegas-style partying throughout the night.

Soi Bangla and Rat U-Thit Road in Patong and Thalang Road in Phuket Town were mentioned as possible areas for such zones, he said.

"But the special zones would only be for foreign tourists, not Thais," he said.

The governor also spoke frankly on the issue of public transport options for tourists, reiterating that he would like to introduce standardized pricing requiring all independent-hire transport vehicles on the island, including tuk-tuks, to be fitted with meters.

Gov Wichai said he intends to call all of the departments involved to discuss the possibility of moving forward with such a plan, which he admitted is still in the conceptual stages.

Many disputes between passengers and drivers are the result of misunderstandings, he said. Poor English language

skills on the part of drivers and tourists' unfamiliarity with the geography of the island combine to create confusion and frustration that can sometimes lead to disputes, he said.

As for complaints about long lines to clear customs, immigration and security requirements at Phuket International Airport, Gov Wichai promised to rectify the situation by tripling the number of X-ray machines there.

A question-and-answer session followed the governor's two-hour talk. German Honorary Consul Dirk Naumann pointed out that frustration with the tuk-tuk services on the island had reached a point where news about disputes had made headlines in media outlets around the globe.

Taxi services on the island present far fewer problems than tuk-tuks, which grossly overcharge passengers, he said.

Taxi and tuk-tuk drivers risk getting shot if they pick up passengers outside their own turf, he added.

Tossaporn Thepabutr, one of Phuket's three members of parliament, also serves as honorary consul for South Korea. He said he would like the governor to address the problem of foreign tourists who are arrested or fined for driving without a Thai license, even though they are in possession of licenses issued by their home countries. Such problems are compounded when tourists get into accidents with rented vehicles, he said.

Supporting this idea, British Honorary Consul Martin Carpenter said that outfits renting vehicles to foreigners usually hold onto their passports as surety. He suggested taking steps to change this, because people caught driving without a Thai license face problems with Traffic Police as well as Immigration if they are caught.

— *Kitima Pornmongkhonwat*



Deputy Commerce Minister Alongkorn Ponlaboot smashes knock-off goods with a hammer.

Hammertime for counterfeit goods

THE Intellectual Property Department and Phuket Provincial Police on February 8 destroyed over 200,000 counterfeit products valued at 43 million baht.

The event, intended to show Thailand is serious about enforcing intellectual property laws, was held at the solid waste incinerator at Saphan Hin.

Taking part were the Phuket Provincial Police, Department of Intellectual Property, Phuket Office of Commercial Affairs and Phuket City Municipality.

Deputy Commerce Minister Alongkorn Ponlaboot said the ceremony should help increase awareness of the need to 'just say no' to counterfeit products among Thai consumers and tourists.

Named the 'Destruction of Confiscated Pirated Products Ceremony' by its organizers, the event was attended by local dignitaries including Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop,

Phuket Police Commander Pekad Tantipong and party list MP Chalermklak Ketsup, whose business interests include real estate holdings in Patong.

All enjoyed a laugh while smashing counterfeit items with an oversize hammer.

Mr Alongkorn also climbed into a front-end loader to destroy a large pile of confiscated counterfeit goods, all of which were then incinerated.

The goods included textiles, bags, watches, sunglasses and many other items popular with tourists which were seized in multi-agency operations from January to October last year.

During that period, the Department of Intellectual Property reported 6,731 cases of intellectual property rights infringement and seized 5.03 million illegal items nationwide, up 75 percent from the same period in 2008.

The increase was due to

better enforcement of anti-piracy laws, Minister Alongkorn said.

"This year we expect a one hundred percent increase in the arrest rate," he said.

"I believe with government support we can improve the situation and protect producers' intellectual property rights," he said.

More border control operations to stop pirated goods from entering the country are also needed because the trade costs Thailand a great deal in lost import taxes from legitimate goods, he said.

"Pirated products are a stain on the beauty of Phuket. The Pearl of the Andaman should be unblemished," he said.

After the ceremony at Saphan Hin, Mr Alongkorn joined a 'Say No to Piracy' walking campaign in Patong, which is infamous for the trade in counterfeit goods.

— *Sitthipong Nongkaew*

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Taxi tiff: no end in sight

A DISPUTE over increasing the number of taxis at Phuket International Airport (PIA) appears to have no end in sight.

In a recent meeting, Airports of Thailand (AoT) were slammed for inadequate services and lack of consideration in their management of PIA taxi services. An ongoing row between two rival taxi operators was also discussed.

Representatives of the Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo Service and Phuket Airport Limousine and Business Cooperative Ltd (PBC) both presented their cases at the meeting, held on February 5 at the airport. Over 50 participants, including Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisai-ngop, senior transport officials and (AoT) representatives were present at the meeting. Top of their agenda was a proposal from Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo Service to register another 30 taxis to operate out of PIA.

Last month about 100 members of the PBC assembled at Phuket Provincial Hall to protest Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo Service's purchase of the new taxis.

On January 19, AoT approved Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo's request to operate 30 more limousines at the airport, but, licensing problems are halting their use.



The PBC staged a strike in 2008 when rival service Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo first went into operation.

AoT's decision infuriated staff of the PBC, which for years enjoyed a monopoly concession and was the only taxi service allowed to operate a kiosk inside the arrivals terminal.

At the meeting, PBC representative Chukiat Panyawai produced company invoices and said his company was being forced by AoT to pay excessive monthly operating costs.

"We have to pay 1.3 million baht a month to AoT while Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo only have to pay about 80,000 baht a month," he said.

"With 30 extra taxis being allowed to pick up passengers from the airport, it is now going to be even more difficult for us to make enough money to pay these fees to AoT," he said.

Final approval of the 30 license applications would bring Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo's vehicle tally to 110 operating out of PIA.

Thanyarat Achariyachai, who chairs the Senate Standing Committee on Tourism, said she wanted AoT to think "more carefully about Phuket and the tourism industry and not only their own financial benefit".

Addressing AoT representatives, she said Phuket does not benefit economically from the transport concessions at the airport. Governor Wichai agreed.

"Phuket doesn't get any benefits from income you [AoT] receive. Your taxis drive on my roads for the whole trip, using your own road only for the last 300 meters to the terminal," he said.

From Bangkok to attend the meeting were Supot Sublom, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, and Kecha Saksomboon, chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Transport. Mr Kecha is due to have a meeting with AoT President Serirat Prasutanond in Bangkok to address issues discussed at the Phuket meeting.

It is hoped a decision on how to end the latest dispute will come within one month.

— Kitima Pornmongkhonwat



Jim Petersson and his girlfriend Maria Larsson will skate from Chiang Mai to Satun, where they will cross into Malaysia.



TWO Swedes skating almost 5,000 kilometers from Chiang Mai to Singapore are on course to roll into Phuket next month for a quick respite – and maybe a foot massage or two.

Education workers Jim Petersson, 25, and his girlfriend Maria Larsson, 29, have endured high speed spills, heat and exhaustion but say they're relishing the long slog south.

Skating from 30 to 90 kilometers a day, Petersson is riding a long board skateboard and Larsson is strapped into rollerblades.

At the time of writing, the pair had skated through 10 Thai provinces and were 160 kilometers from Bangkok. They left Chiang Mai on January 16.

The pair plan to arrive in Singapore in June.

"No one has ever skated this route before. It has taken over a year of planning for us to prepare," Petersson said.

The couple are skating to raise funds for the Swedish Childhood Cancer Foundation.

They have already amassed 18,000 Swedish krona (81,000 baht). Their target is 50,000 krona (223,000 baht).

Petersson said he drew inspiration from the distance skating Guinness World Record holder New Zealander Rob Thomson, who skateboarded 12,000km across the USA, Europe and China in 462 days, ending in Shanghai in October, 2008.

With 8,180 fans following their progress on their Facebook page and plenty of Swedish media interest, Petersson welcomes the positive response for their cause.

Thais have also shown support for the pair's adventure on this country's highways.

"People in the North have been stopping and asking what we're doing. Most of them clap and cheer for us," he said.

One family invited the pair into their home for food, but as much as they enjoyed the local fare, Petersson had to be mindful of what he eats due to his allergies to curry, nuts, beans and peas.

With no support vehicle and the daily slog of skating busy highways, avoiding potholes and living out of small backpacks, Petersson said life on the road is tough, "but it's the only way for us."

Maria fell badly after hitting a pothole on their skate between the northern provinces of Kamphaeng Phet and Nakhon Sawan, sustaining cuts to her leg.

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Swedes' long skate south



The pair, a little tired, are currently 160 kilometers from Bangkok.

Petersson has a sprained back and bruised foot and elbow after he lost control of his board on a steep descent in Lampang Province.

But breaking his board, not bones, is Petersson's greatest fear. He said they trained hard in Sweden to prepare for the trip.

Training involved 100 kilometer skates from his home in Eringsboda to his girlfriend's hometown of Kristianstad in southern Sweden.

"At home I never use my car. I skate to work, I

skate everywhere," he said.

Jim's custom long board is specially designed for distance skating: "Super-light carbon fiber, suspension and oversize wheels built to withstand small stones in the road," he explained.

Maria's inline roller blades are also designed for endurance and have 90mm wheels built for speed and durability.

Traveling light for obvious reasons, the pair carry three changes of clothes, a towel, a camera, a laptop and Petersson's numerous allergy medications.

Sleeping wherever they can find guesthouses along the way, the pair said they are indebted to locals who have helped them bed down for the night.

In Thailand on 60-day tourist visas, the pair say they will arrive in Phuket on March 10, extend their visa 30 days and roll on down to Satun and enter Malaysia.

They plan to coast down Malaysia in under two months before eventually arriving



The pair will skate over to the east coast of Malaysia bound for their final destination, Singapore, and the end to their epic skate.

in Singapore. If they make it, the pair will fly to Bangkok and then back to Sweden. Petersson said plans are already in place for his next international skate.

"My brother and I will skate from Germany to Italy this summer, but we'll have to wait and see how our Asian adventure works out first," he said.

For more information see Petersson's blog at mrjimonlongboard.blogspot.com or see W:mrjimonlongboard.com.

— Fraser Morton

Early morning blaze on boat

A WOODEN fishing boat that burst into flames during repair work on February 8 was deliberately sunk in the waters of Klong Tha Cheen.

After receiving a report of a boat fire at about 9:30am, Phuket City Police, Marine Police and four fire engines from Rassada Municipality and Phuket City Municipality rushed to the scene.

Arriving at the Pichai Fish Pier along Klong Tha Cheen in Rassada, they found the 17-meter vessel *Pichaitavorn 6* engulfed in flames. Strong winds and the location of the boat made it difficult for firefighters to put out the blaze, so after a two-hour battle and with the boat almost completely gutted the decision was made to scuttle the vessel.

Initial investigation revealed that the fire began as mechanics were performing maintenance on the vessel's exhaust pipe.

Ungkoon Buraphakhunakorn, Maintenance Manager of P Pichainawa Company that owned the vessel, said the fire started accidentally as mechanics were working near the boat's 700-liter fuel tanks. It was too early to estimate the cost of the damage, he said

— Gazette reporters

Danish Prince en route

PHUKET is preparing for the arrival of Prince Henrik of Denmark in mid-February.

Louis Bronner, manager of Mom Tri's Boathouse, recently met with Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop to discuss security arrangements during the Danish royal's stay on the island.

Governor Wichai said he was notified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Prince Henrik, husband of the Queen of Denmark, Margrethe II, would be arriving in Phuket for a personal visit.

— Atchaa Khamlo



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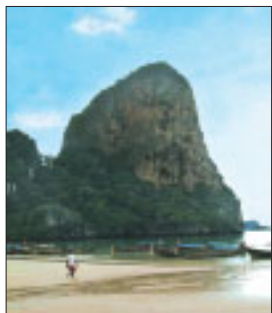
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ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus

On December 26, 2009 the world marked the fifth-anniversary of the Indian Ocean tsunami, which killed 230,000 people in 14 countries, of which 5,395 fatalities were confirmed in Thailand.

Throughout the southern region, coastal communities participated in memorials to honor those who perished on that morning.

In Krabi, the Sriphong Phukaoluan Foundation (SPF), part of the Krabi Relief Fund charity, hosted a memorial service at their Community Center in Krabi Town.

The SPF Community Center opened in 2008. It



Californian musician Gary Gates accompanied by 14-year-old violinist Thornawin Khanantai during a tsunami memorial ceremony.

comprises a medical clinic which offers free weekly medical exams, a public library stocked with books and magazines, and a computer learning center.

Foundation Director Robert Reynolds recently established the Foundation Community Bank, based on the microbanking concepts of India's Grameen Bank and Nobel Prize winning banker Muhammad Yunus.

Currently, the Foundation Community Bank has 31 projects running, including a noodle shop, fish farm, laundry shops and a vegetable farm..

In addition to SPF's other accomplishments, is the newly

established Tsunami Child University Scholarship Program, which provides financial aid for Krabi province orphans.

Attending the SPF memorial ceremony were over 200 tsunami survivors and volunteers, along with many local dignitaries.

SPF President Khun Chuan Phukaoluan and former Mayor of Krabi opened the ceremony, welcoming 84 tsunami children and their families, all of whom the Foundation continues to support via donations and scholarships.

Memorial ceremony attendees viewed the mini-documentary *Helping Hands*. With graphic images of the destruction, the film illustrates how post-tsunami Krabi residents have revitalized their community with thousands of helping hands.

The highlight was an original song titled *Helping Hands* by Californian musician Gary Gates.

To honor the tsunami victims, Gary Gates made the trip from California to Krabi to perform the song live at the memorial. He was accompanied by 14-year old Thornawin "Gun" Khanantai, who soulfully played her violin as he performed his tune.

For those of you interested in more information about the foundation's activities and programs, visit the foundation's website: www.krabiirelief.com.



Film Festival selections (clockwise): *Fierce Light-When Spirit Meets Action* from Canada. *Addicted to Plastic-The Rise and Demise of a Modern Miracle* and the Asian premier of *No Impact Man* from USA;

Eco-spirit celebrated

Phangan's third annual Film Festival takes place from February 12 to 14 this year.

Featuring film selections from Myanmar, Iran, Iceland, Canada, Japan, UK and USA, organizers are committed to providing a diverse presentation of high-quality independent films from around the world.

The opening night of the festival features the Asian premier of Iceland's entry: *Huldufolk*, which explores the mysteries of elf folklore; and USA's *Tapped* looks at the business of bottled water.

First night presentations also include *The Age of Stupid*, from the UK, and *Polycultures: Food Where We Live* from the United States.

Both of these selections address the current issues of global warming and self-sustained organic farming.

Most of the films

presented at this year's festival have environmentally sensitive topics and themes.

On Saturday night, the festival continues with its green theme by presenting American films, *Food Fight* and *No Impact Man*, which address alternative food source, organic farming, and lowering our carbon footprints.

Finally, two of the four films being offered on the Festival's last evening are *Addicted to Plastic: The Rise and Demise of a Modern Miracle*, from Canada, it illustrates the world's current overproduction of plastic and its toxic legacy. *How Green Was Our Valley*, from Iran, highlights the perspectives of a small desert village being flooded out in the name of modern progress by a hydroelectric project.

For this year's Festival organizers wanted to offer films that encompass the themes of nature and spirit. These are two widely cherished and intimately related subjects which bear increasing relevance for both Phangan island and the planet.

Their mission statement urges communities worldwide to ban the use of plastic bags and opt for more environmentally responsible cloth bags.

Organizers hope their green theme initiative will profoundly touch festival goers and bring about appropriate changes in attitude and responsible action.

They wish to open the doors to spiritual activism in the Phangan community and ultimately contribute to the harmonious development of Koh Phangan for all of its inhabitants and visitors.

Tickets can be purchased at the Phangan Film Festival box office and are priced at 300 baht per evening or 700 baht for a three-night pass.

Screenings start at 7pm nightly. Friday and Saturday night screenings feature live musical entertainment before the films.

For more film festival information or for tickets email info@phanganfilmfestival.com.

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Queer News

High on human ashes

NAKHON SRITHAMMARAT: In the latest drug craze to hit the south, youths in Nakhon Sri Thammarat are reportedly drinking a concoction that includes the ashes of recently cremated corpses and extracts from leaves of the *krathom* tree.

'Phon', a 17-year-old from Muang District, said he and his gang of about 10 friends had tried every known concoction of *krathom* leaf available until they stumbled upon the new formula.

The mixture is made by boiling the leaves and then adding ashes taken from funeral pyres after cremation ceremonies.

Drinking it confers physical strength as well as spiritual protection from the ghost of the person whose ashes were drunk, Mr Phon said.

"The drink has an amazing taste and anybody who tries it becomes instantly addicted," he added.

To satisfy their thirst for the elixir, the youths drive around looking for funerals. When the cremation is over, they sneak in to steal the ashes, he said.

The mixture is known as 'Avatar' after the hit film.

Sumol Aksonphalee, chief of tambon Bang Chak Village 5, said he was aware of the new craze

for Avatar – though he added that he couldn't understand how kids dared drink the concoction.

Most of the teenagers who were into the craze, both male and female, tended to look very unhealthy and he suspected they wouldn't have long lives.

Truancy officer Somphong Yutao said he spoke to students who were into Avatar to find out what was behind the trend.

"The youths believe it gives them special powers, especially when it comes to attracting the opposite sex. When they speak [to someone they like] they will have a special aura that makes [their target] fall for them," Mr Somphong said.

"This type of behavior is very worrying, but all we can do is keep track of it and inform the parents and schools," he said.

Nakhon Sri Thammarat Governor Thira Minthrasak held a meeting on January 28 to discuss the problem and ordered a police crackdown.

This is not the first unusual drug trend to come out of the South. For years authorities have been trying to stamp out '4x100', a mixture of *krathom* extract, cola, cough medicine and ground up mosquito repellent coils.

Source: Khao Sod

Smoke without fire



Amphibious vessels release smoke to cover themselves during the recent Cobra Gold exercise at the Navy's Hat Yao training base in Chonburi's Sattahip district. Photo by Tatchadon Panyaphanitikul

Laotian illegals

NAKHON PHANOM: A Bangkok police inspector was caught driving a minibus full of illegal immigrants from the Laos border to Bangkok on February 5.

Lt Col Wichan Chaison has been transferred to an inactive post while he is investigated.

The arrest team were tipped off by a police officer who saw five young Lao women getting into the minibus at a market.

The women told police they were on the way to work in Bangkok. Only one had permission to stay in Thailand.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

'Cops killed mom'

UDON THANI: An air hostess who claims her mother was murdered by police has called in the Department of Special Investigations (DSI) to follow up the case.

Kusuma Insri, a 27-year-old air hostess for a foreign airline, says police are stalling an investigation into her mother's disappearance in order to protect colleagues who carried out her murder.

Miss Kusuma told the DSI that her mother disappeared from a house near Ban Thueam Police Station in Udon Thani on November 17 and has not been

since since. Police found a trail of blood at the scene.

On January 8, police arrested Yaowalak Khosit for ordering the killing of Mrs Kulap. The suspect confessed that she had given two police officers from Ban Thueam Police 60,000 baht to kill Mrs Kulap.

Mrs Yaowaluck said she ordered the killing in revenge after Mrs Kulap moved in with her former boyfriend, another officer from Ban Thueam Police.

Miss Kusuma said that police have failed to question the two officers who allegedly killed

Mrs Kulap. Police claimed that despite Mrs Yaowalak's confession, there was not enough evidence to question the officers as no body had been found, she added.

Miss Kusuma said she is worried local police will not push forward with the case. She said she is also concerned that her mother's body will be disposed of so it can never be found.

Mr Tharit said if the DSI discovers police are interfering with the investigation, it will take on the case itself.

Source: MCOT/Thai Rath

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Supping it up on Cloud 9

On the menu
WITH
Marque Rome

Figure it out: Our world is in crisis with the old order crumbling and retirement funds in jeopardy; modern life is a crap-shoot. It's time to DO something! But what? "Hara-kiri is too exotic for the average pot-walloper," you say. I agree.

Besides, it spoils digestion.

Fine dining, on the other hand, is the best revenge. Better by far, isn't it, to keep your head about you, your intestines intact, and fly to less problematic climes?

"Trouble is, we're already in Phuket," you rejoin. Ah! So we are — and thus that much closer to Cloud 9. Those in Rawai are QUITE close — to the Cloud 9 Lounge, that is, the new restaurant created just across from the shell museum by Swami Nito Legrain and his coolly clever distaff half, Wassana Fongngam. The swami — in common with most divines — knows how to get away from it all. As recounted in his 2004 tome, "Naked and Empty-Handed", he abandoned in early manhood the tailored ex-

istence of a wealthy Parisian bourgeois, left the bosom of his family and set off on camel-back across the Sahara to the Cote d'Ivoire. There, for a year, he lived "in the jungle, by the sea," hunting, fishing and growing greens to eat.

It was thus he came truly to appreciate the finer things in life. Some he has collected and placed in Cloud 9: three towering glass hookahs or 'hubble-bubbles', for example. "Hookahs are actually Indian," he explained, "but the shisha (or tobacco preparation) is not imported into Thailand," owing to legal restrictions.

Thus he set about developing his own local mixture: "I found a source for organically grown tobacco from Payao which I mix with crushed apple, a little molasses, and glycerine — which is how traditional shisha is made anyway."

With Special Relativity, Einstein demonstrated the impossibility of pinpointing anything, even motionless rocks; how much more troublesome, then, to pinpoint what Phuket's fickle diners want!

Perhaps hubble-bubbles, though well-prepared, are not your cup of tea. Hence Nito — in truth a certified religious



DINING ON CLOUD 9: The new restaurant in Rawai is the product of Swami Nito Legrain and Wassana Fongngam (left). The restaurant offers gourmet varieties of both Thai and Western dishes, and sets it all against a unique atmosphere, complete with hookahs and a game room for kids.



teacher who cut his teeth at the great Indian and Nepali religious centers — long ago turned practical man of business: the Cloud 9 Lounge has something for everyone, and should be especially popular among families.

Inside, the color scheme relies on red: a wine-red floor, cherry-red seat cushions and spacious red divans. It is here on which weary revelers, sated after consuming a raft of delicacies — shrimp and seafood cocktails, deep-fried spring rolls, tempura, sweet corn soup or lobster bisque, steaks, burgers, fish, and tamarind dishes — can sip Drambuie (100 baht per shot) and suck on a hubble-bubble while the kids cavort outside on the patio (or inside in the separate games room, playing futsal or billiards).

Inside or out, chic informality prevails; but the patio garden, ruled over by a dancing Ganesha, god of prosperity, is especially appealing.

Drinks, as one might hope on Cloud 9, are a bargain: many liquors — Baccardi, Captain Morgan, Smirnoff, Gordon's Gin, Johnny Walker Red, Jameson, Regency brandy, even such exotics as Malibu and Pernod —

list at 80 baht the shot. Most liqueurs — Benedictine, Sambuca, Kahlua, Amaretto, Bailey's — are 100 baht, as are such mixed concoctions as Tequila Sunrise, Long Island Iced Tea, Mai Tais, Screwdrivers, Black Russians, Bloody Marys and Daiquiries. Unique exotics from Cloud 9's heavenly mixologists — with cherries, chunks of pineapple and tiny paper umbrellas — are 120 baht.

A sampling of dishes revealed that the kitchen staff, who together have three decades experience at top Phuket resorts, were not idly employed. Particularly memorable is the Prawn Salad (150 baht): served in a pineapple decorated to resemble a bird, it is loaded with cashews, bell pepper, pineapple, grapes, apple and prawns.

Chef Montientong Butgrim will not reveal how he makes the sauce, but it is rich, savory and healthful. Excellent.

The Lobster Bisque (80 baht) is thick, redolent of lob and littered with pieces thereof — a difficult, time-consuming dish well-done.

The European entrees, Australian Tenderloin Steak (300 baht) and Chicken Cordon Bleu

(200 baht) are well-proportioned (the latter three-inches thick) and come with a side of vegetables (the former with baked potato, too). The tenderloin's kiwi sauce is superb.

Outstanding are the Thai entrees: Roast Duck in Red Curry (120 baht) and Prawns in Tamarind Sauce (90 baht). The duck is tender, its curry spicy and rich with coconut cream — a fine example that ranks with the best. Cloud 9's tamarind sauce is thick almost as jam, and gives the prawns special zest.

For dessert we enjoyed a plate of eight ripe, delicately fried banana fritters (30 baht) with honey. These are fat; a plate serves three or four persons.

Cloud 9's wine list is short but sufficient (850 - 1,300 baht per bottle), and the house wine, a Chilean Merlot from Amigo, is fine (bottles are 700 each, glasses are a modest 120 baht).

Take it all together and the upshot is, I suppose, that in these parlous economic times, Cloud 9 is no bad place to hang out.

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A clear alternative to braces



Word of Mouth

With Dr Yupares Nimkarn DDS., MS.

There were times when great smiles and straight teeth could only be achieved by cutting teeth to fit dental prostheses, or for the die-hards, by removing the crooked teeth to fit dentures. Then braces came into the scene, offering a new, non-invasive alternative.

However, the prospect of wearing braces for a lengthy period is still off-putting for many, especially when considering the initial difficulty of eating and brushing teeth while wearing braces.

Times have changed, though, and patients can now have 'invisible' braces fitted, which can be easily removed for eating and teeth cleaning.

Invisalign treatment is a series of custom-made thin, transparent plastic appliances designed to simulate tooth movement. They are made with computer aided design and manufacturing (CAD-CAM) technology, which has become one of the best communication tools for orthodontists.

Patients can see images of the end result even before treatment has begun, enabling the orthodontists to clearly communicate their treatment plans with Invisalign laboratory technicians, who are 14,000 kilometers away, in California.

The Invisalign braces come in sets designed to keep the patient's teeth moving in the planned direction. The patient wears the first appliance for two weeks and then replaces it with the next one, and so forth.

As well as being removable, Invisalign braces have a smooth surface, so they are comfortable and don't scratch the insides of patients' cheeks. It is one of the gentlest orthodontic appliances currently available; most of my patients describe a little tightness on their teeth just for the first day or two.

If you are considering having transparent braces fitted, be sure to seek treatment from a trained professional, preferably an Invisalign-certified orthodontist, to ensure the best results.

Dr Yupares Nimkarn is an American trained orthodontist at Dc one The Dental Clinic, Med Spa at Boat Lagoon. She is an expert in orthodontic treatment for children and adults and has been published in various international academic dental journals. E: infophuket@dc-one.net. T: 076-239525.

Finding the humor in hardships

By Nick Davies

When Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait in 1990, Ibrahim "Brian" Khatib and his family had to leave 'everything' behind as they fled to Jordan.

Brian's hopes of becoming a lawyer after finishing his studies in international law at Iraq University were dashed. Instead, Brian joined the Jordanian army.

"This time of conflict has left the biggest marks in my heart and mind. I certainly look at things differently now."

Despite being a talented man with a passion for painting and writing, Brian had to settle for a low-paying job carrying vegetables at a local market.

"I would set off early in the morning for a five-kilometer walk to work, dodging wild dogs and thieves."

He later found work training the Jordanian wrestling team at a private health club, then as a painter and a life guard.

Then, Brian's painting literally took off when he joined an aircraft maintenance company painting aircraft for international carriers.

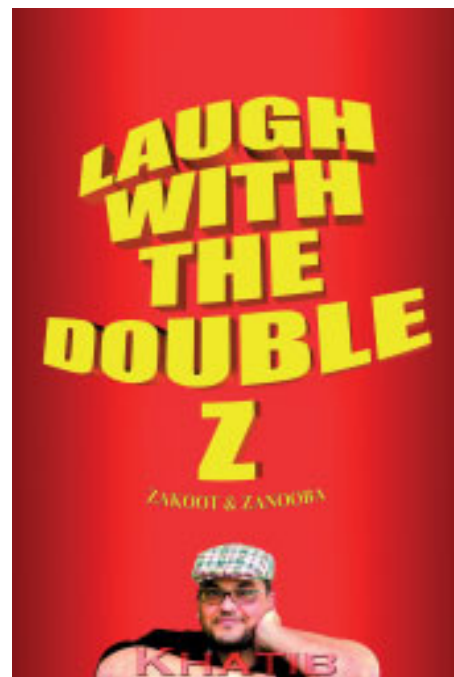
"One of the benefits of being an aircraft painter is being able to travel. So in 2002, I requested to come to Thailand to paint a private jet belonging to a well known Thai VIP. This proved to be a huge turning point in my life; I met my wife and became a father."

With a more normal life in Phuket, Brian turned his attention to writing again.

He wrote three books in Arabic and one in English but tragically lost them in the 2004 tsunami.

Then at 32 years old, Kathib 'tasted death' yet again when he had a heart attack - the result of high stress. The incident left him paralyzed for six days.

Undeterred, and perhaps



An excerpt from *Laugh with the Double Z*:

Larry King: What is the difference between disaster and the end of the world?

Zakoot: When I take Zanooba to the hospital and I see the doctor's bill I call this disaster, because Zanooba do not deserve all this money to be spent on her health.

Larry King: And what is the end of the world?

Zakoot: When the doctor tell me that she will be OK.

— Kathib

"Our lives full of sadnesses... Full of problems... Full of difficult moments... Full of tax payments... And the question is: 'What can we do?'"

even more determined than ever before, the highly motivated Brian went on to publish *Laugh with the Double Z*, a collection of humorous anecdotes involving Zakoot, his wife Zanooba and their 13 boys and one daughter, all of whom find themselves in hilarious situations which readers will often find strangely familiar.

The stories are told in Brian's unique 'Aranglish' writing style: English peppered with Arabisms, which makes for highly entertaining reading and an insight into a cunning and determined Arab mind set.

Find out more about Kathib and his Aranglish musings at www.khatibwriter.com.

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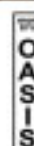


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Tai Chi Timeout XIV – Breathing Challenge

Welcome to the 14th article in the series of *Tai Chi* Timeouts. The *Tai Chi-Chi Gung* exercise illustrated here is the 'Standing Pose'.

It is the most mentally challenging exercise due to lack of physical activity. Simply stand in a relaxed position, hold your hands up and breathe in and out.

The benefit is a lowering of the heart rate and blood pressure while strengthening the legs and gathering *Chi*.

To begin, stand in a comfortable up-right stance, knees slightly bent, with hands at chest level.

Relax the neck and shoulders and let the elbows hang loosely down. Close your eyes and slowly, calmly and evenly inhale and exhale through the nose.

In order to properly gain the benefits of the exercise, you must initially stand for ten minutes. Once comfortable with the sequence, extend the duration to fifteen minutes, and eventually to a full half hour.

Tai Chi aims to develop the intrinsic energy (*Chi*) within the body through slow, rhythmic breathing exercises.

The ancient martial art naturally relieves tension from stress as well as aches and pains from stiff limbs. Perform them whenever you wish to unwind and loosen up.

Tai Chi-Chi Gung exercises are especially beneficial in the early morning when the *Chi* is especially light and clean, relaxing and energizing both the mind and body for a new day.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 3

SEQUENCE

STEP 1: Place your feet shoulder-width apart, with knees slightly bent and your hips tucked gently underneath the spine.

It is important to keep the back straight at all times.

Relax your shoulders and hold your head up, but keep your neck relaxed.

Place your hands over your Tan Tien (*solar plexus*), close the mouth and breathe calmly through your nose.

This exercise is to focus breathing and calm the mind.

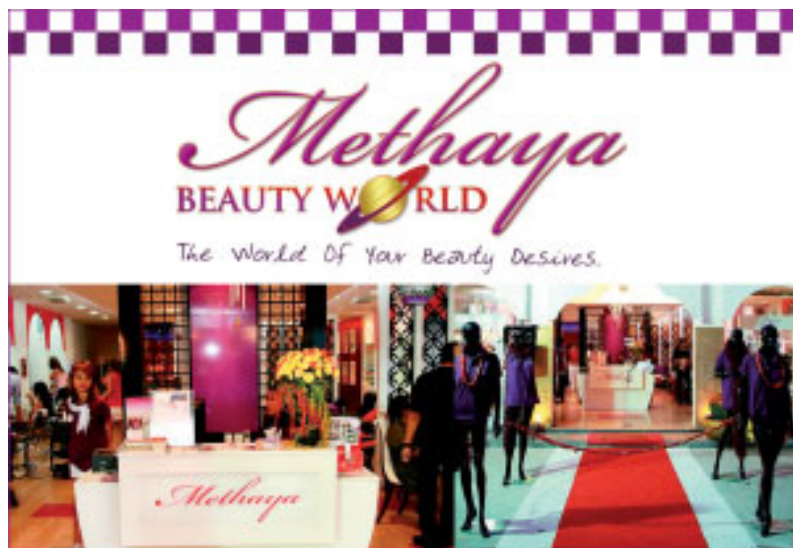
STEP 2: Bring your hands to chest level. Relax the neck and shoulders while letting the elbows hang loosely down.

Close your eyes and slowly, calmly and evenly inhale and exhale through the nose. Maintain the stance and continue to focus on breathing in and out, slowly and calmly. The mind is relaxed by focusing on breathing. Continue breathing slowly for ten minutes or more.

STEP 3: To complete the exercise, slowly bring the hands to the center of the body then back to the *Tan Tien* and gather the *Chi* within.

Rick Attix has been practicing Tai Chi for over 25 years with masters from China, Malaysia and the US. Rick holds regular Tai Chi classes at his Kamala garden residence. Classes are held three times a week: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday from 8am. A six-day retreat is held the first week of every month. All levels and ages are welcome.

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Racers reap squalls of joy at Phang Nga Bay Regatta

On the third morning, the wind had picked up slightly and the vessels were lined up along the start boat's starboard end.

At dawn, most sailors were on deck with the sun breaking on their backs and over the bay's limestone karsts.

Course number three would carry the racers 14 miles through Thailand's most idyllic vistas from Koh Yao Noi to Krabi for the 13th annual Phang Nga Bay Regatta.

The Phang Nga Bay Regatta is known for its relaxed and family friendly vibe, although it still retains a competitive spirit for some sailors, but with no wind the day before, many of the 40 racing yachts retired their vessels from the competition to explore the bay's pristine coves.

"This is our fifth year racing with the *Rusalka* in Phang Nga," said American expat Henry Mellegers, one of the yacht's six-person crew.

"We hope to catch some wind and have a great day on the water."

When the race began, racers jockeyed for position through narrow waterways, and by 11am, the Oyster 435 *Rusalka* was in second place – moving ahead of *Rascal*, *Smystery* and the other nine yachts in cruising B Class.

Back-dropped by fecund colors of jungle, sea and sky, captains barked commands over the bow while their crews rushed to secure sails, lines and winches.



Rusalka's racing crew is the perhaps the oldest and most seasoned one to compete in the race.

"Seamanship is about experience. Our ages range from 58 to 75, so our average age is the highest," said Singapore resident Glenys Taylor, another veteran sailor on the *Rusalka*.

"Besides our ages, perhaps it is more of a challenge for us on this boat, because we do everything manually. The other boats are pushing buttons but we do it right; hauling the ropes and hoisting the sails... Anyone can press a button, but real sailing is feeling the load, exerting your strength with wind."

By noon, the boats had moved farther south, but slowed between the course's tallest cliffs. Kevan Perrins, the *Rusalka's* owner and captain, explained that sailing in a light wind is a much more detailed sport. Perrins and his wife Sheila, nicknamed by their friends as the 'Admiral' and the



Clockwise: Sunrise over Phang Nga Bay and the Regatta racers; The crew of *Switchblade*, the Regatta's Racing class grand prize winner, readies the deck; Yachts cruise through the bay's limestone cliffs; Captain Kevan Perrins and *Rusalka* crew hustle to catch a breeze. Photos by Elizabeth Branca

'Skipper', have been sailing since they were teenagers in the UK.

Their first date was a sail aboard Kevan's family boat, and they have cultivated a love for sailing throughout the course of their marriage.

Splitting their residences between Scotland and Thailand, the Perrins have raced in many regattas, including Phang Nga and the King's Cup, but Kevan claimed they were not competitive racers.

"A good sailor knows what will work for you or against you on the sea... Around here there are high cliffs, katabatic winds and variable currents. You have to understand the down drafts."

The Phang Nga Bay Regatta is divided into six racing classes: Racing; Cruising A and B; Firefly 850 sport; Multi-hull racing and Multi-hull cruising.

This year a maverick two-man crew manned a beach cat named *Weta*. Through the Regatta's course, however, they were not acknowledged by the race committee as an official participant.

Many of the yachts have

been competing in the Regatta for a decade, so the competitors take on a familiar and festive tone. *Rusalka's* crew is a tight group of friends who live aboard the dual-cabin yacht for all five days of the race.

They all met in Singapore in the 1990s, crossing paths in their small sailing community. Between the three couples, there are decades of sailing stories, over a dozen grandchildren and volumes of travel memories from around the world.

"The tradition is to do this Regatta together. Now that the bathroom schedule is fixed," Mellegers said with a smile, "we are set. It works."

In the lull of afternoon wind, some boat crews formed strategies on how to string together a few soft gusts, while others just reclined along the deck, napping or admiring the coastline.

On the calm sea north of Krabi, the sailors were reminiscent of Tennyson's lotus eaters and "came unto a land in which it seemed always afternoon. All around the coast the languid air did swoon, breathing like one hath

a weary dream."

Still in second place, the *Rusalka* crew worked to keep their positions, with Kevan and Sheila alternating as helmsman.

"Everything in life is a challenge," said Jimmy Faure, who, in his seventies, is the oldest and most experienced sailor aboard the *Rusalka*.

Jimmy and Shirley Faure have competed on the international yacht racing circuit for half a century. They contribute to the *Rusalka's* racing adventures with their warm demeanor and vast knowledge of sailing, travel, wildlife and the arts.

As an accomplished author and watercolorist, Shirley recently published a nautical-themed book titled *Afloat on the Dutch Waterways*.

While living in Singapore, Jimmy was the equivalent of the sailing community's commodore. However, they have since retired from competitive international racing and now enjoy exploring Europe's waterways from the deck of their steel motor yacht, a *Linssen Grand Sturdy* 410.

Jimmy said the appeal of the regatta was due to the beauty of the course. "We love sea life and anything in the natural world."

Approaching the final marker in Krabi, *Rusalka's* crew celebrated their success; although they placed third in Course Three's overall ranking, the crew made excellent time – in spite of the light wind – with a 4-hour, 13-minute finish.

Overall, the *Rusalka* had a strong show in the Regatta's Cruising Class B, placing fourth.

For the crew of the *Rusalka*, the sailing adventure continues: "We are all set to sail to the Andaman Islands with *Smystery* and *Rascal*" explained Shirley Faure enthusiastically.

"It's moderately uncharted territory off the coast of India with a history of cannibalism... It will be quite an adventure."

– Elizabeth Branca

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EXPAT GALLERY

Jim Newport

Jim (James) Newport has had a home in Kamala since 1988 when he decided to find a place to write screenplays and novels. He has worked as a production designer on a number of important Hollywood films.

Most recently, he designed the film *Bangkok Dangerous*, starring Nicolas Cage.

"The production designer controls the look of a film. I bring in the set designers, model makers, illustrators, etc, and run the art department. I'm very proud of my work on *Bangkok Dangerous* as it was made entirely in Bangkok, using a totally Thai crew in the art department. I think it will be known as the definitive movie that captures the essence of the Thai capital city," he says.

Jim was born on Long Island, New York. As a small child he enjoyed drawing, especially cartoons. He graduated from the prestigious Pratt Institute in Brooklyn in 1967 with a degree in Advertising Design and Visual Communication.

He then went to Hollywood with the dream of designing record album covers. After doing some work for ad agencies, he decided he wanted to work in movies. So he bought a van and became a one man art department on low budget films.

"I was very fortunate to work in the early 1970s with Roger Corman who has made over 400 films and who started the careers of actors such as Jack Nicholson and directors like Martin Scorsese.

"Later, I worked at Universal Studios on film and television projects so I could get into the union which would expand my career. I soon became an art director, and then a member of the Art Directors Guild."

Jim's career has taken him to many exotic film locations. He considers *Over the Edge*, Matt Dillon's first film, as a significant turning point for his work.

Over the years, he worked on movies like Jonathan Kaplan's *Heart Like A Wheel*, starring Bonnie Bedelia, and *The Stepfather* with Terry O'Quinn, the current star of *Lost*. (They had a reunion in Hawaii recently when Jim designed the 4th season of the popular TV series.)

While working in the movie industry, Jim has always found time to write.

In addition to Thailand, he has written in the south of France, Fiji, and even on Marlon Brando's island, Tetiaroa, in Tahiti. But it wasn't until 1988 that a chance adventure driving a motorbike over the dirt track from Patong to Kamala led him to discover his future home on Kamala Bay.

"I found the solitude and serenity I needed in this beautiful little hamlet by the sea," he says.

In the past twenty years, he has written numerous screenplays and has had five books published and distributed by the Bangkok-based Asia Books.

One screenplay, *Seven Rivers*, an ecological adventure about the plight of the gibbons on Phuket, proved a difficult sale in Hollywood. More than one distributor advised him to write about something that would be easier to sell to the publishers and the film studios.

"I was told to write about vampires, that there was a tremendous market for stories about vampires. So I returned to Phuket and wrote the first in a series of vampire novels, *The Vampire of Siam*, in 2003.

"I've written a book a year since then. I love the solitary act of writing, where I can feel like I control the whole world."

His latest book, *Tinsel Town - Another Rotten Day In Paradise*, which Jim describes as a factoid, is a semi-autobiographical novel about his life in Hollywood.

He raised hundreds of thousands of baht from his Hollywood contacts to aid in tsunami relief, his way of giving back to the island that has given him so much.

When not penning new works, Jim can be seen singing the Blues as Jimmy Fame at the Phuket International Blues Rock Festival, or at some of the island's better lounges. — Bruce Stanley



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, ah, 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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WHO DAT? New Orleans native and owner of Big Duke's Bar in Kata Karen Ellison celebrated with husband and co-owner Mark Ellison and fellow football fans as the New Orleans Saints earned the rights to hoist the Vince Lombardi trophy at Super Bowl XLIV. In the early morning hours on February 8, dedicated fans were up for the 6:25am local-time kickoff to catch the biggest annual event in US sports. Photo by Scott Phillips



SULTRY SONGBIRD: Musician and violinist Chris Melchior, 'Evolutions', and vocalist Luisa Scarpa (center), played three hours of original music at the Watermark restaurant last Friday. Customers enjoyed two hours of free draft beer while evolutions improvised over soothing beats. Photo by Fraser Morton



SHARED SKIES: Bangkok Airways and EVA Air signed a code-share agreement on January 28 to share services from Amsterdam, Vienna, London and Taipei to Koh Samui, Phuket and Chiang Mai. From March onwards, EVA Air will operate international flights and Bangkok Airways will handle the domestic routes in the code-share agreement. Pictured with crew members are Bangkok Airways President Captain Puttipong Prasartong-Osoth (left) and EVA Air President James Jeng.




BON APPETIT: Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa's crew of culinary creationists launched a series of monthly dinners on the beach at the resort's exclusive Bon Island last month. Executive Chef Thomas Jacobi (right) paired Billecart-Salmon Champagne with a special menu of organic delights. Also pictured are General Manager Frank Grassmann (black shirt), Evason Sommelier Monika Bielka-Vescovi (center), Bon Island Manager Harry Haan and Billecart-Salmon Champagne representative Sebastien Papin (2nd from right).



MANGROVE MANIA: Organized by Central Festival Phuket on February 6, over 100 volunteers from Save Phuket, Save Our Planet, Central Board and locals joined together in Thalang for a conservation effort planting 1,000 mangrove saplings. Staff from the Mangrove Resources Development Station 23 were on hand to provide information about the trees. Pictured center is Phuket Vice Governor Theerayut Eimtrakul.



PAGLIACCI PLAYS: French clown 'Zigotto' led kids in fun and games at Holland House, a safe house for children run by Child Watch Phuket, on Tuesday. The clown, Alex Nogier, performs for charities in disaster-hit areas around the world. His week-long Phuket visit was organized by L'Alliance Française director Denis Rochel. Photo by Christian Mouchet




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Safety soars for Asia Pacific aviation

Talking Planes



by
Alastair Carthew

Officially 2009 was one of the safest years in aviation history for Asia-Pacific flight routes. The only major accident happened in April, which involved a six-crew freighter off the coast of Indonesia.

Globally, there were 12 major accidents involving large western-built commercial jets, nine of which resulted in a total of 414 fatalities, according to the International Air Transport Association [IATA]. The number of major accidents was 25 percent less than the average for recent years.

To put this in perspective, illustrating air travel safety, there were 25 million commercial flights in 2009 worldwide, reflecting an average loss rate of one major accident for every two million flights.

Worldwide, the accident rate was divided between passenger and freighter flights, therefore the potential cost to human life was much reduced when citing freighter accident statistics.

However, even with such a low rate of aircraft accidents, more work needs to be done to bring the aviation industry's

cabin technology up to date.

Manufacturers such as Boeing and Airbus – the big two – need to ensure they are keeping up with the increased demands as far as innovations for passengers, such as in-flight email and other telecommunications.

In terms of their environmental bearings, airlines continue to maintain a low carbon footprint. Despite the deep recession that has hit aviation, the industry continues to mitigate its environmental impact and yet still cover the costs of running an airline.

Aircraft comprise only 2% of carbon emissions, however the aviation industry attracts a disproportionate amount of publicity and political attention when compared to emissions from a coal-fired power station or an energy plant.

Due to many factors, Southeast Asia's aviation industry seems to be growing in strength compared to the other major aviation regions of Europe, Latin America and North America.

For example, airlines in Southeast Asia are forecast to spend USD\$330 billion to acquire more than 2100 new aircraft over the next two decades, according to Boeing and Airbus. Boeing is predicting that the world will require 29,000 new aircraft from now through to 2028, costing a cool USD\$3.2 trillion.

More importantly is that about 52% of these new aircraft will be single-aisle units, 40% twin aisle, 7% large and 1% in the small 'regional' category.

Boeing predicts that Asia Pacific is



With a prominent codeshare agreement reached between Bangkok Airways and EVA Air, Phuket International Airport expects an increase in flights. Photo: AFP/STR

to account for 41% of travel in 20 years' time; up from around 32% today.

This is expected to make Asia Pacific become the largest air travel market in the world in less than 10 years.

This data illustrates obvious advantages for a tourist destination like Phuket. In recent weeks Bangkok Airways and Taipei long-haul carrier EVA air have signed a 'code share' agreement which will open up additional flights from Amsterdam, Vienna and London into Phuket.

The 'code share' enables the two airlines to sell seats on the same flight,

therefore upping their market share. Under the new agreement, EVA will operate all international flights, whereas Bangkok Air will deal with domestic.

If 2009 is any indication, Phuket is back on track to attract even more tourist with more direct flights from an increasing number of airlines and their low costs tickets.

Alastair Carthew is a Phuket-based journalist, writer and public relations counselor and aviation expert.

E: alastaircarthew@gmail.com.



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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

Valentine's Day Jazz in the Park
February 14

French big band sound the JCB Jazz Cool Band will bring in the smooth sounds of jazz favorites from the likes of Duke Ellington, Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Glen Miller and Count Basie at Queen Sirikit Park (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 also include a Classic & Super Cars show. For reservations contact Chaisak Koaysomboon. T: 076-304090. E: chaisak@expressdata.co.th. W: tongkah.org.

February 12-14. Valentine's weekend at Les Anges

For Valentine's weekend at Les Anges, special guest musicians Jerry Byrd of Atlanta, Georgia, USA and singer Tony Ingraham will entertain guests in the evening with their unique sounds and songs of love from 7pm to 10:30pm. On the menu is an eight-course Valentine's dinner. 1,750 per person or 2,500 baht per person with selected wines and a special gift served from midday to 10pm. T: 081-968 0738 E: peterw@lesangesphuket.com W: lesangesphuket.com.

February 13-15. Romantic Getaways Phi Phi Valentine Package

Swimming, snorkeling and relaxing on the beach are perfect ways to spend a romantic day in Phi Phi. Laguna Tours has created the Phi Phi Valentine Package for lovers who want to celebrate their day with a little more style. 6,500 baht/person includes the full-day trip to Phi Phi Island on a Laguna Tours Speedboat, Leisure Host, lunch on the beach, beer and wine during lunch and full snorkeling equipment. From 8:30am - 5pm. For further information contact Saowanee Choochum. T: 076-362330. E: tours@lagunaphuket.com W: lagunaphukettours.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 @ Abbysan, Phuket

Share Yoga with your beloved in one or more of these special sessions with Dr Abhishek and Danny at Abbysan 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. Abbysan Yoga Studio is near Central Festival. For more information contact Dr Abhishek. T: 076-304277.

E: rx@abbysan.com. W: abbysan.com.

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. 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 18-21. Redefining Art at Evason with Italian Winemaker Livio Felluga

February 19: Lunch and cooking class at our Organic Herb and Vegetable Garden. 3,000++ baht.

February 20: Gala dinner at 'Into the Med' restaurant. The wine maker will take you for a journey through his winery, an evening that promises to create unforgettable memories. 4,500++ baht.

An exclusive Redefining Art package is offered for both lunch and dinner for 7,000++ baht. Seats are limited. From 12pm to 11:30pm at Evason Phuket & Six Senses Spa. For further information contact Monika Bielka-Vescovi. T: 076-381010. E: bvm-phuket@sixsenses.com W: sixsenses.com.

February 20. RPM Fashion Session

"Phuket Professionals" present their 2010 collections. Fashions and accessories by leading International brands: Calvin Klein, Mona, Rip Curl, StarBlu and Grace of Art. At Skippers Bar on the Boardwalk, Royal Phuket Marina. DJ set by J.C. Free Entry and Free Canapes. From 7pm 9:30pm at Skippers Bar & Restaurant. For further information contact Murat Can Sakarya. T: 081-797 3364.

E: muratc@royalphuketmarina.com

W: royalphuketmarina.com.

Valentine's Day Dining

I Feel Love

Plum Fine Dining offers an aphrodisiac-spiked menu on Valentine's Day. Four courses for 2,200 baht, inclusive of two Love Potions at the Vanilla Skybar. Bonnie Anderson will also perform her funky, groovy beats for your post-dining entertainment at Vanilla Skybar. From 6pm - 12pm at Capesienna Phuket Kamala. For further information contact Riz. T: 076-377300. E: riz@capesienna.com.

A French Love Affair

Crepes Village restaurants at Saiyuan in Nai Harn near Laguna are offering an evening of amorous ambiance with a Valentine's menu of fusion cuisine from 6:30pm until 11:30pm for 1,200 baht net per person. For more information contact Khun Por. T: 087-282 1717. E: por.nathong@crepesvillage.com.

Valentine's Dinner at Royal Phawadee Village

Valentine's Day Dinner from 6pm until midnight at La Boucherie Grill & Steakhouse. Also, 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.

Amore Amore Romantic Dinner at Hilton Phuket

Enjoy a romantic dinner at Buon Appetito Italian Restaurant. 2,400++ baht per couple. Includes a sparkling Cupido cocktail and one glass of selected Valentine's wine per person. From 7pm to 11pm at Buon Appetito Restaurant at Hilton Phuket. For further information contact Khun Jaruayporn. T: 076-396433. E: fb.phuket@hilton.com W: phuketarcadia.hilton.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. For more information contact Adam Beasley. T: 076-324101. E: fbreservation@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.

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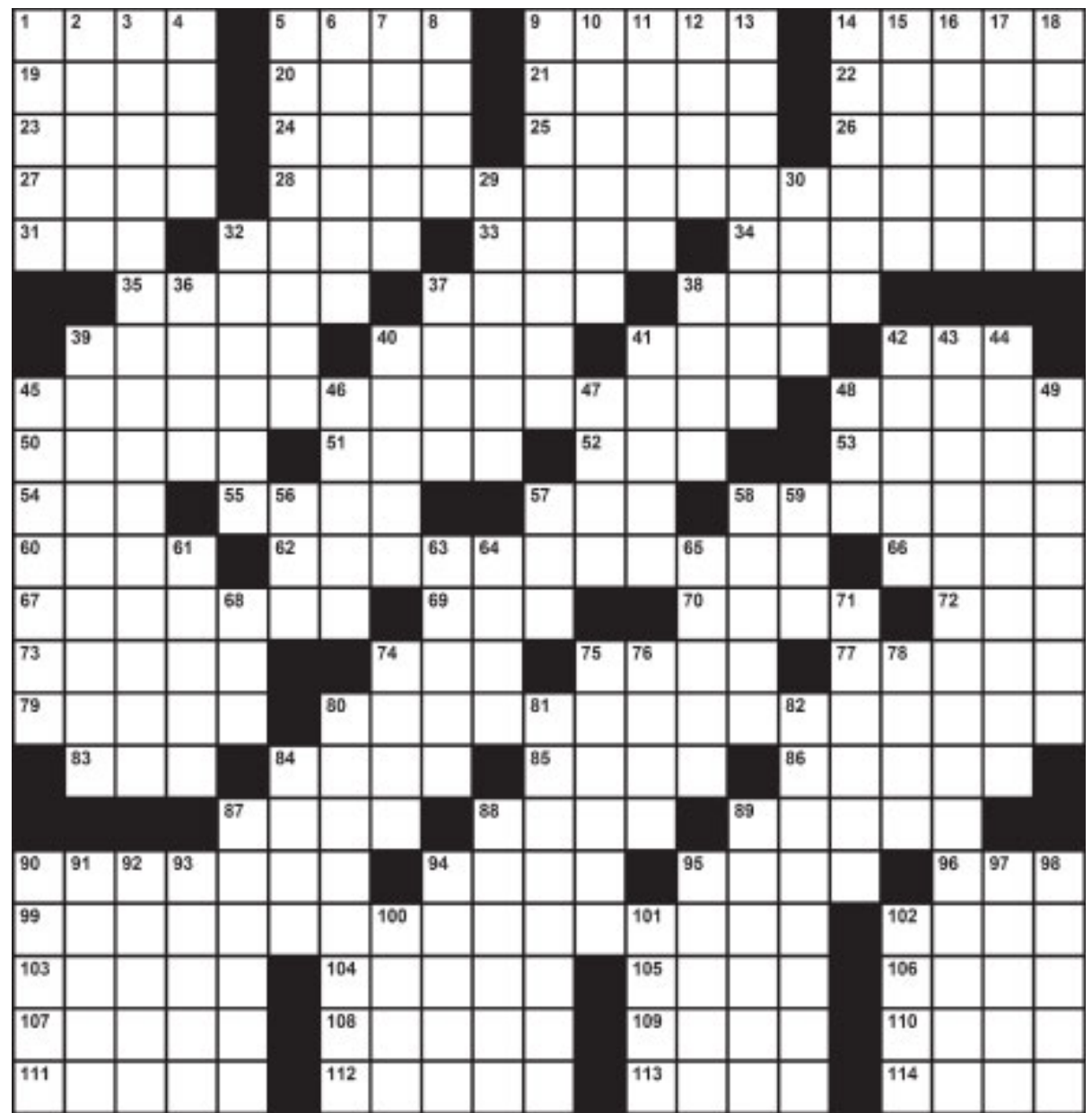
phuketbluesfestival.com

PUZZLES

Spot the Difference



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



ACROSS

- 1 Curriculum segment
- 5 Big name in foreign news
- 9 To-do list items
- 14 Abated
- 19 Curvy square?
- 20 By word of mouth
- 21 Cause of many yawns
- 22 Ambient sound
- 23 ___ d'Azur
- 24 Wrinkly citrus fruit
- 25 Australia's ___ Rock
- 26 Buffalo Bill or John Wayne, by birth
- 27 In the hay, so to speak
- 28 Methods used by stereotypical pirates?
- 31 A pop
- 32 Byproduct of cheesemaking
- 33 "Babe" sound effect
- 34 Affected lover of beauty (Var.)
- 35 "Everybody Hates ___"
- 37 Construction work indicator, often
- 38 Auto grille protectors
- 39 Aborigine's call
- 40 Absorbed
- 41 Seaweed type
- 42 Ball honoree, for short
- 45 Cynical foreign policy
- 48 Half a dozen
- 50 Small arm of the sea
- 51 Eyeball layer
- 52 Noted life preserver?
- 53 Emcee's delivery
- 54 Point opposite WSW
- 55 One of the wealthy
- 57 Abbott and

- Costello, e.g.
- 58 "Almost Famous" director Crowe
- 60 Author of "Les Misérables"
- 62 Guinness and Sellers in a 1955 film
- 66 Cause of destruction
- 67 Advice-giver Van Buren
- 69 Farthest point
- 70 Account execs
- 72 Awful dancer
- 73 Currency in Tehran
- 74 West in "Night After Night"
- 75 Palm starch
- 77 Florida key
- 79 Times to remember?
- 80 Receiver with a loop antenna
- 83 Put down the first card
- 84 Seedless plant
- 85 Woodland deer
- 86 Thumbs-down signifiers
- 87 Sister of Chekhov's Maria and Irina
- 88 Some square dance partners
- 89 Analogize
- 90 One making a retraction
- 94 Stagnant water growth
- 95 "Holy ___!"
- 96 ___ Khan
- 99 More than merely good-looking
- 102 Animated caveman
- 103 Edible seaweed
- 104 Abu ___ (Arabian sheikdom)
- 105 "Another Pyramid" musical
- 106 Customary observance
- 107 Marine mammal
- 108 "All gone," for a tot
- 109 Non-kosher

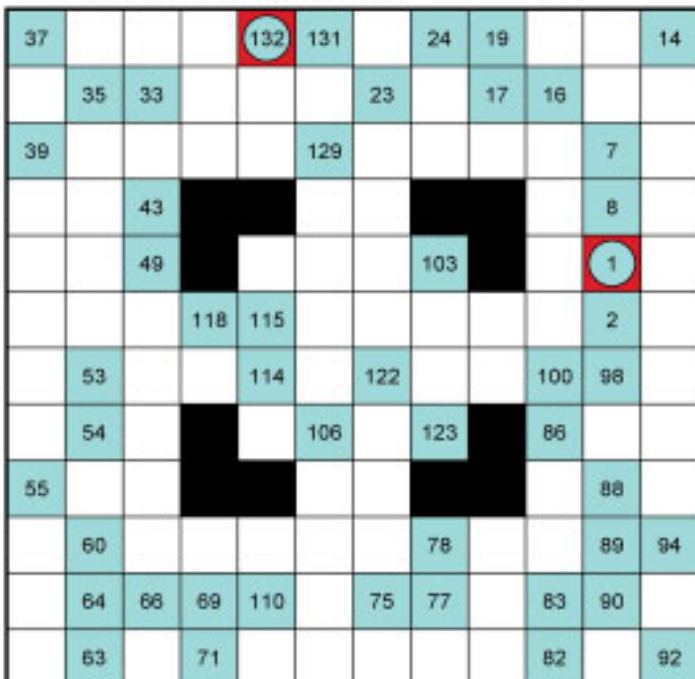
- 110 Ab follower on the Hebrew calendar
 - 111 Hatching posts?
 - 112 Goes tirelessly?
 - 113 All dried out
 - 114 Prepare a manuscript
- ### DOWN
- 1 Flip a lid off
 - 2 Amphion's wife
 - 3 Like Ivy League games
 - 4 ___ off (angry)
 - 5 More delicate
 - 6 Debates
 - 7 A bit blue
 - 8 Cut from a blade
 - 9 Viciously attack
 - 10 "Do I have a volunteer?"
 - 11 Act furtively
 - 12 "Cat's Cradle" novelist Vonnegut Jr.
 - 13 Sororal
 - 14 Authoritative decrees
 - 15 Bouillabaisse base
 - 16 "Blue Jean" singer David
 - 17 Establish a law
 - 18 Rearranged needs?
 - 29 Celebratory commotion
 - 30 "... and make it fast!"
 - 32 Christmas buy
 - 36 Target on the green
 - 37 Dracula's mantle
 - 38 ___ and call
 - 39 Relating to marriage
 - 40 Tore apart
 - 41 John Paul II's first name
 - 42 Star in Cygnus the Swan
 - 43 In a remarkable way
 - 44 Peers of kingdoms, as a group
 - 45 Bruce Willis

- action thriller
- 46 David of the PGA
- 47 Badly claw
- 48 Gender-specific pronoun
- 49 Doomed
- 56 Former heavy-weight champ
- 57 Executed
- 58 Legendary King of Thebes
- 59 Viper variety
- 61 Cast an amorous eye to
- 63 Ache
- 64 One of all fours?
- 65 Cereal eater?
- 68 "... jawbone of an ___" (Judges 15:16)
- 71 "For fun it's a wonderful toy" product
- 74 Actress Sorvino
- 75 "Hogan's Heroes" setting
- 76 Snootiness
- 78 Help make a pot
- 80 Humiliates
- 81 Humiliates another way
- 82 Guaranteed to succeed
- 84 Abscond
- 87 "At ease!" and others
- 88 Formed into a sphere
- 89 "I can't hear you!"
- 90 Accessory
- 91 "Et tu ___?"
- 92 Knocks for a loop
- 93 Don't do this to the apple cart
- 94 Type size for fine print
- 95 Fabric pattern
- 97 "Rise and shine!"
- 98 "The Story of ___ H."
- 100 Indian dish made with stewed legumes (Var.)
- 101 "'Cause I ___ me spinach ..."
- 102 Raised area on a neck?

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Complete the grid so that numbers 1 - 132 connect horizontally, vertically or diagonally:



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Difficulty ★★★★★

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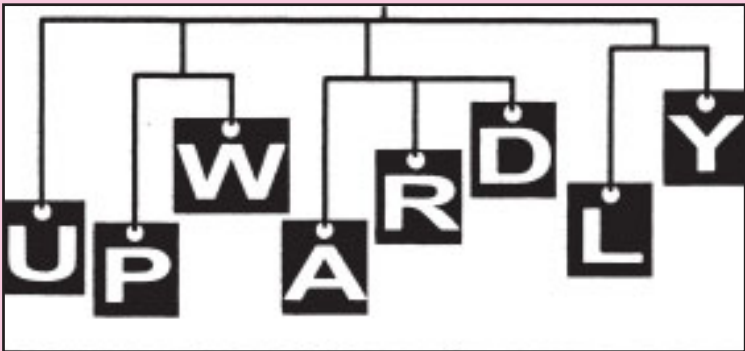
Solutions on next page

www.whatzit.com August 17, 2009

WHATZIT?

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

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poster
poster
poster

manner

"it" whole wheat
self-raising

Get your brain in gear with the MONSTER QUIZ

- Joseph Lister carried out the first operation using antiseptic in 1867 on whom?
- What was the horse Black Beauty's original name?
- Who was the original Peeping Tom looking at?
- What element is present in all organic compounds?
- What is the first name of the fictional villain Professor Moriarty?
- Who was known as the Little Brown Saint?
- Who rode a horse called Morengo?
- A skulk is a group of which animals?
- Who defended his world heavyweight title twice on the same night in 1906?
- What part of an aircraft is the empennage?
- We know who wrote *Little Women* but who wrote *Little Men*?
- Who was the Goddess of the rainbow?
- In which European city can someone be jailed for not killing furry caterpillars?
- Who was Olive Oyl's boyfriend before Popeye?
- Sienna law forbids women of what name from prostitution?
- What do the letters MG stand for (the ones on cars)?
- Who was the first actor to appear on the front cover of *Time* magazine?
- Polyphemus was the leader of which group of mythical giants?
- What does a pluviometer measure?
- Which game was made illegal in England during Elizabeth I's reign?

Answers below



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Puzzle Solutions

WHATZIT? solutions

1. Upwardly mobile 2. Bedside manner 3. Say it with flowers.

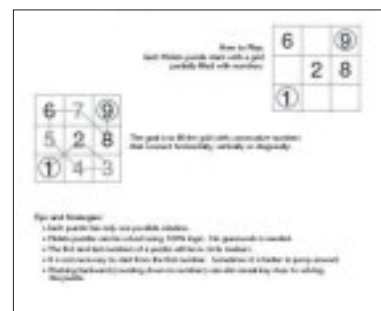
Solution to this week's Spot the Difference



Monster Quiz Answers

- His sister
- Darkie
- Lady Godiva
- Carbon
- James
- Ghandi
- Napoleon at Waterloo
- Foxes
- Tommy Burns – both 1st round knockouts
- Tail Unit
- Lousia May Alcott
- Iris
- Brussels
- Ham Gravy
- Maria
- Morris Garages
- Charlie Chaplin
- Cyclops
- Rainfall
- Bowls

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



Hidato Puzzle Solution

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

Solution to this week's crossword

UNIT	TASS	TASKS	EBBED
NINE	ORAL	ENNUI	DRONE
COTE	UGLI	AYERS	IOWAN
ABED	CUTTH	ROATT	ACTICS
PER	WHEY	OINK	ESTHETE
CHRIS	CONE	BRAS	
COOEE	RAPT	KELP	DEB
DOLLARD	DIPLOMACY	HEXAD	
INLET	UVEA	ARK	INTRO
ENE	HAVE	DUO	CAMERON
HUGO	LADYKILLERS	BANE	
ABIGAIL	END	REPS	OAF
RIALS	MAE	SAGO	LARGO
DATES	DIRECTION	FINDER	
LED	FERN	HART	ANTIS
OLGA	GALS	LIKEN	
ABJURER	ALGA	MOLY	AGA
DROPDEAD	GORGEOUS	FRED	
DULSE	DHABI	AIDA	RITE
OTTER	EATEN	TREF	ELUL
NESTS	SLEDS	SERE	TYPE



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

At 57, William Boyd is part of a triumvirate of British novelists of the same generation. The other two are Martin Amis and Ian McEwan, both of whom seem to be in a creative decline. William Boyd, by contrast, goes from strength to strength. He is not afraid of tackling big themes in big novels, like *The New Confessions* and *Any Human Heart*.

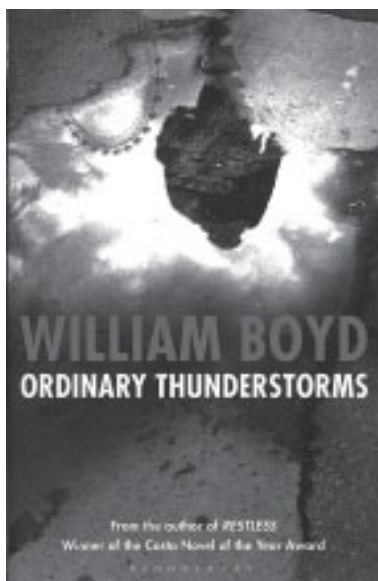
His last novel, *Restless*, took over the spy genre and turned it into a modern search for identity. His latest and 14th novel, *Ordinary Thunderstorms* (Bloomsbury, London, 2009, 403pp) approaches the same question of personal identity through the form of a crime thriller.

Adam Kindred is a British climatologist who has returned to London after a long sojourn in the

United States. In his thirties, recently divorced, he has just come out of an job interview at Imperial College and heads off in search of an Italian restaurant for lunch: "He crosses the road, having no idea how his life is about to change in the next few hours – massively, irrevocably – no idea at all."

At lunch, he happens to meet an immunologist named Philip Wang, who is head of research for a large pharmaceutical firm. He takes Wang's card, bids him goodbye, and then notices a folder that Wang had left behind. He phones Wang and agrees to meet him at his apartment nearby. He finds Wang in bed with his throat slashed. Hearing someone coming in from the balcony, he is suddenly frightened and flees to the street.

Now Boyd advances a proposition that is preposterous. Instead of going to the police, Kindred dawdles at a bar, returns to his hotel, fends off an attacker and finds another hotel. When he finally goes to the Chelsea police station, he sees his photo on a



wanted for murder poster.

He flees again and sets himself up in a ramshackle shelter at an overgrown beach at the foot of Chelsea Beach. He doesn't want to lose his freedom or to become a sitting target again for the assassin who had nearly brought him down. Instead, he decides to find out who killed Philip Wang.

Now if you accept that

proposition, and I did through the sheer power of Boyd's prose, you're on a roller coaster ride with Adam Kindred. And why not? People go missing all the time:

"There was something about London that he needed, he realized, something basic and fundamental: he needed its size, its great sprawling scale, its millions of denizens, the utter and protective anonymity it provided.

"He thought about the 600 people a week that went missing in this country, the boys and girls, the men and women, who walked out of their front doors, closing them behind them, knowing they would never return, or who climbed out of back windows and ran off into the night to join that vast population of living ghosts that were The Missing. Two hundred thousand missing people... living underground, undocumented, unnumbered, unknown."

Bearded and shabby, Kindred survives as a garbage scavenger and beggar. Then he's mugged, rescued by a hooker, taken in by her and her son, and moves up in the world pretend-

ing to be a blind beggar and eating a hearty meal each night at a Christian soup kitchen. The killer meanwhile is on his trail.

Swapping himself for yet another identity, Kindred becomes a hospital porter named Primo Belem and begins to unravel the mystery behind Philip Wang's death. His life becomes more complicated when he strikes up a romance with a policewoman who, by coincidence, had also been involved in the case of Philip Wang and his killer.

"It just proved to him what he has always suspected: that the myriad connections between two discrete lives – close, distant, overlapping, tangential – lie there almost entirely unknown, unobserved, a great unseen network of the nearly, the almost, the might-have-been. From time to time, in everybody's life, the network is glimpsed for a moment or two and the occasion acknowledged a gasp of happy astonishment or a shiver of supernatural discomfort."

The reader is left feeling the same way.

Horoscopes



Isla Star



AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Aquarians who recently got the brush off from an earth sign should receive more encouraging news this week. Your ideas for a business scheme are well-starred during the second half of February. Romance also benefits from an auspicious astral atmosphere – this Sunday is your lucky day for making contact with someone who caught your eye recently. Those with a birthday in the coming days will be focusing on a healthier lifestyle in the year ahead.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Change is just around the corner for many of those born under the sign of Pisces. This week, your motivation is strong and the stars predict that events will develop quickly, particularly in the world of work. Where romance is concerned, a fire sign will be able to tell whether your words are heartfelt or not. Wear the color charcoal gray to encourage more realistic ideas to flow.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): A change could be as good as a rest

for Arians this week. A more stable financial situation should be enough reason to bid farewell to a job that was bringing more stress than satisfaction. Those who cannot afford to leave their current position may learn of a way to make it more stimulating. An overdue answer to a romantic question gives you hope for a happier relationship.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): An overflow of optimism allows Taureans to make plenty of progress during the last half of February. The only downside could be others' reluctance to jump on your bandwagon. Expect useful cooperation from Gemini and Cancer, but don't rely on Capricorn to follow through. Romance takes a back seat this week and your reluctance to become involved with a water sign is justified. The number three can bring good luck on Monday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Geminis find out that there is no smoke without fire this week. Recent rumors prove to be true, but this should give you enough information to invest more in an ongoing business opportunity. In the world of romance, your partner's current leisure time interest could get in the way of domestic harmony. Lucky days for finances are Tuesday and Wednesday. Wearing a piece of dark amethyst can promote a calmer mood.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Cancerians have chance to create their own good luck during the final two weeks of February.

This is a time when dreams can come true, but you should be careful what you wish for. A romantic dilemma becomes less important when you learn more about the person concerned. Advice from a Sagittarian friend is worth its weight in gold this weekend. The number eight can bring some good fortune on Tuesday.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Your luck with money matters follows a positive trend until the end of February. Many Leos will be considering a large purchase and the stars will back your efforts to receive useful advice, particularly from those born under a water sign. Family affairs are affected by stormy astral conditions this weekend – this is not an auspicious time to release your anger. Wear a piece of green stone to help release negative energy.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Taking the initiative is sometimes difficult for Virgoans, but this week you will be fired up with enthusiasm. Tuesday and Wednesday are the most auspicious days to approach influential people with your ideas. An on-off romantic relationship with a water sign could take a surprise turn. Love with Capricorn is well-starred, although this person's habit of forgetting appointments could start to get you down. The number seven can be lucky this weekend.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): An earth sign friend is forecast to try and persuade you to take a trip with them. A break

from the daily grind would benefit Librans who have been rushed off their feet since the start of this year. Those experiencing problems in a romantic relationship may learn that their constant need for reassurance is becoming an issue. Wear a piece of light amethyst to encourage a less serious outlook on life.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Your working life continues to bring satisfaction, with the possibility of a pay rise by the end of this month strongly highlighted. The offer of promotion is also likely, but this may not be in an area that excites you. A dream early next week can shed light on a personal dilemma involving a close friend. Romance brings surprises, particularly for those involved with an air sign.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Sagittarians should guard against reacting too quickly this week. Someone born under an earth sign is forecast to push you for answers – if this involves a property matter, there are signs that not all is above board. Your luck in love improves during the second half

of February. Pisces is ready to spend more time with you and Aquarius would like to be introduced. The number five can bring good fortune this weekend.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Playing your cards right can lead to success in business during the second half of February. Capricorns' cautious approach should guarantee that no mistakes are made when negotiating – Tuesday is an auspicious day for final agreements. Where love is concerned, you discover that Aries is on the same wavelength and this relationship will be well-starred. Getting to know Libra proves trickier than anticipated. The scent of sandalwood can encourage a more creative mood.

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Fixing Phuket's transport

There is widespread support in Phuket for Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop's idea to fit all taxis and tuk-tuks on the island with meters.

It is impossible to quantify the economic damage Phuket's tourism industry has suffered from the island's notorious patchwork of transport syndicates that continue to operate in defiance of the law, colluding to keep passenger fares the highest in the country. This situation has unnecessarily held back a tourism industry that in most other aspects operates under free-market conditions.

While problems with the 'services' provided by tuk-tuks in places like Patong and Kata-Karon are well documented, another important factor driving up transport costs and creating friction among rival groups is the way taxi concessions are allotted at Phuket International Airport (PIA).

At a recent meeting at the airport, Gov Wichai and Senator Thanyarat Achariyachai criticized the management of Airports of Thailand (AoT), which runs PIA, for the way it has dealt with taxi, limousine and minivan concessions there. The pair said the company's profit margins seemed to be their only concern, not the Phuket tourism industry or the hundreds of thousands of people who rely on it to make a living.

Under the urging of the provincial government, AoT gradually broke the monopoly held by the Phuket Airport Limousine and Business Cooperative for years by allowing 'taxi meters', an airport bus and finally rival taxi operator Phuket Mai Khao Sakoo onto airport grounds.

But the increased competition hasn't translated into lower costs for most passengers because AoT continues to charge excessive fees to all who operate there, or at least those that do so legally. That an estimated 200 'black plate' taxis are also shuttling passengers to and from the airport gives some indication of just how excessive the fees are.

As mentioned in this space a few weeks ago, the Tourism Authority of Thailand is currently promoting the country as a value-for-money tourist destination under the catchphrase 'Amazing Thailand, Amazing Value'.

Unfortunately, problems in Phuket's public transport sector drive up prices across the board, making the province less competitive than it should be and driving tourists, both foreign and domestic, to rival destinations.

Governor Wichai has reportedly asked the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to allow him to work past the mandatory retirement age of 60, which he will reach next month. We hope the MoI will seriously consider the request, as Mr Wichai may be the island's only hope for giving tourists the kind of safe reasonably priced transport options they deserve.

- Stephen Michael Fein

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INSPIRED BY 'GEOFF' IN THE GAZETTE READERS' FORUM

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.

Clean up the beach clean-ups

I never understood the thinking behind Phuket's so-called 'beach clean-ups'. Why are school children required to clean up after careless adults?

Make the polluters pay instead. I understand the tremendous burden the Royal Thai Police already shoulder. But there is an easy way to solve this problem: a reward system whereby anyone with a camera who films someone littering the beach can take their evidence to the police. The police would then levy a very heavy fine on the polluter. The fine would be split 50:50 between the police and the person who brought in the evidence.

I am originally from Miami, USA. We have a number of large luxury cruise ships that sail out of Miami every weekend. We also have this reward system. Years ago, a passenger on board a luxury cruise ship filmed the crew throwing large garbage bags into the ocean. The cruise ship company was eventually fined \$2 million. The lucky passenger received \$1 million. Needless to say, the cruise waiting list became several months long, as so many people were hoping for the reward money.

Such a law here, if widely publicized, could help reduce the need for beach clean-ups. It would also employ thousands of Thais and tourists in ensuring Phuket's greatest tourist attractions, its sunny beaches, don't disappear. It would also add very little to the police's workload, while making a big contribution to their budget.

**Mark Kirk
Rawai**

Full disclosure

Thailand is unique in that it has a large number of transsexuals, or 'ladyboys' as they are known. My concern is that many are so feminine that many tourists who come to this beautiful country are seduced by them. They pretend to be women and only reveal their true nature once the hapless victim is in the hotel room, often having had a few too many drinks and feeling too excited to back down.

Should there not be a policy of transparency requiring ladyboys to inform clients that they are not women at the first available opportunity? I am not suggesting a chest sign like those the Nazis required of Jews during the 1930s. But surely in these days of consumer protection, full and honest disclosure should be a priority.

I know of a least one case of a father who took a young son to Thailand to lose his virginity. The young lad did so, but not in the manner expected.

**Luis Porto
Phuket**

Koh Yao Noi annoyed

We are tourists who visit Koh Yao Noi twice a year. This unspoiled island enchants all its visitors with its exceptional beauty, peacefulness and the incomparable friendliness of its local residents. For years our favorite place was Thakhao District, a beautiful and silent bay right behind the hills of the 5-star Evason Resort & Spa.

On a recent visit we were truly shocked to find that a seawall around 300 meters long has been built where there was once a beach. Incomparable in its ug-

liness, the wall also cuts off a walkway to the offshore island of Koh Nok, which could once be conveniently reached by foot at low tide.

Asking the annoyed local residents about this ugly construction, we were told that the local government destroyed the public beach without authorization and carried out this shameful destruction of natural resources in order to construct a football field. We heard they also wasted more than one million baht of taxpayers' money on the scheme. Even worse, the construction site has been left unfinished and now serves as a racing track for local youths and their motorbikes at night.

As visiting foreigners, we were always taught that beach land is untouchable. It belongs to the crown and is a place set aside for public recreation. If Koh Yao Noi wants to maintain its reputation as one of the last pearls in the Andaman Sea, then it should start with the demolition of this disturbing, unfinished construction.

Name and address supplied

Fake concern

I see the authorities are destroying counterfeit goods (*Gazette online*, 'Hammer time in Phuket: counterfeit goods destroyed', February 10). Fakes worth millions of baht were crushed, then burned, 'to show Thailand is serious about enforcing intellectual property laws'.

Well if that's the case, why are the streets of Patong still full of stalls selling fakes? Or are they too many *phu yai* who don't want anything done about this 'problem'?

**Bart Smythe
Kata**

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.

Talk about double standards...

THE TERM 'double standards' sounds innocent enough, but in a society where inequalities are so steep and stark a simple call for equitable enforcement of the law can become political dynamite.

The phrase was introduced into Thailand's modern political history in 2001, when it attracted immediate attention, in part because the use of a non-Thai phrase was unusual and eye-catching.

The Thai version, '*song matrathan*', started to become popular in 2008. Supporters of

Thaksin used the phrase to highlight what they saw as glaring bias in the judicial system. According to them, Thaksin was being persecuted by the legal process, while the yellow shirts seemed to be able to break any number of laws with total impunity.

After the judicial overthrow of the Samak and Somchai governments in late 2008, the phrase became a central part of red-shirt movement publicity. It no longer refers to the rather narrow area of judicial bias, but focuses criticism against the wider and deeper inequality in society. Recently at Khao Yao Thiang and at the Soi Dao Golf Club, speakers asked the crowd why certain kinds of people seem to get away with almost anything. The phrase has spun out of control.

In Thailand, there is a close connection between power and illegality, between social status and defiance of the law. Often, laws seem to exist precisely to allow certain people the very special privilege of being able to flout them. If you have a big enough car, you need not worry too much about traffic regulations. If you have the right background and position, you can carry as much excess luggage as you like. With

good political connections, even if you are accused of corruption in an overseas country, nobody investigates, lays charges or takes steps to prevent you doing a bunk.

In any society, real power is having the ability to write these sorts of privileges into the law and constitution. In old Siam, the aristocracy once enjoyed many such immunities and privileges, but over the past century almost all of them have been swept away. Then, through a half-century of political dominance, the military high command established a new structure of legalized inequalities. Soldiers

are protected from the normal operation of the judicial system. When generals openly flout the law,

we are told they are immune to anything more serious than a reprimand. In case after case when massive land encroachment comes to light, the issue begins to fade once it emerges that senior officials were involved.

When the foundations of a society shift in a big way, these arrangements need to be adjusted to match the new social realities. Over the last half-century in Thailand, a new corporate elite and much expanded upper middle class have become wealthier and more powerful. Although every now and then these new forces have challenged the privileges and immunities of the old powers, generally they have taken the smoother route of buying their way into the system.

The key institution for this process has been Parliament or the political system as a whole. This has been the arena where new money meets old power; where the two parties sit down and make a deal. The Thai political system has been a failure in many ways, but in this respect it has functioned brilliantly. The systems of political recruitment have



SEEING RED: Red-shirted Thaksin Shinawatra supporters shout slogans at victory monument in Bangkok on April 9, 2009. The phrase 'double standards' has become a central part of red-shirt publicity.

been fine-tuned to ensure that money is practically the sole qualifying factor. Although analysts sometimes try to detect political conflicts between 'new money' and 'old money', in reality money has no age. In current Thai politics, money is money. Many political leaders are ready to admit that money is now the 'blood' that keeps Thai politics alive and kicking. The source of the money is of no interest, only the amount.

Under Thaksin, several Cabinet posts were reserved for 'party financiers', people who often appeared from out of nowhere, often with no track record. The system only came slightly unstuck when a particularly flagrant share ramper was given a Cabinet post. Recent vacancies in the Cabinet have incited fierce competition. Corporate interests that are prepared to pay their political dues have very rapidly acquired influence in the background.

But the political system as it currently operates only helps to adjust the realities of wealth and power within a very narrow range. The big story of the past generation has been the overall tripling of incomes, the accompanying rise in ambition and aspiration among the masses of the population, and growing calls for a more inclusive equity. It began with NGOs, the path-breaking campaigns of the Assembly of the Poor, and a demand for rights that applied equally to everyone. It changed Thaksin from being a businessman to a populist.

The growing political significance of the judiciary over the last few years has given this trend a new twist. While the judicial system may not in fact perform in the service of equity, the justification for the importance of the judiciary is that there really is a rule of law that applies to all. Leading judges repeat this idea in defending themselves against bias. The claim was written into

the landmark judgment against Thaksin's former wife Pojaman.

The idea of equity under the law is now very prominent in public debate, yet the political structure still in place is designed precisely to preserve privileges by the evasion or manipulation of the law. This creates a situation so fragile that new challenges can come from anywhere. The red shirts decide to pinpoint Khao Yai Thiang. The Thai Airways union raises the excess baggage scandal. Community NGOs trip up Map Ta Phut. Nothing seems sacred any more. Illustrious institutions. The power of a big surname and an exalted position. The importance of economic growth over the health and well-being of ordinary people.

'Double standards' is a rather clumsy expression. It doesn't have the poetic ring of 'liberty, equality, fraternity' or 'workers of the world unite.' But it is the catchphrase of the moment.

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
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213971, or submit your issue
at www.phuketgazette.net

Where can I take old oil?

Lacking a way to dispose of oil at home, I recently I took my lawnmower to a local repair shop to have the oil changed. They took the mower out onto Chao Fa Road and in broad daylight poured the oil straight into the drain, like it was standard operating procedure.

I was in shock and disbelief – so much for protecting the quality of the island's water. Lesson learned: change the oil yourself. But where should I take the old oil?

Mike Williams
Chalong

An officer at Phuket City Municipal Office replies:

We do not buy engine oil, but a private company, Chok Tawee, does. They pay four baht per liter. Contact Mr Tawee Jarupongsopon, 42/4 Moo 5, Soi Phanieng, T. Rassada, Muang, Phuket 83000. T: 076-261728 or 089-8732106.

However, we do buy used cooking oil and turn it into biodiesel. You can bring the oil to our office in Phuket City. The price paid depends on the quality of the oil.

For more information contact Phuket City Hall, 52/1 Narisorn Road, Phuket Town 83000. T: 076-212196, 076-213551. F: 076-21-3374. E: office@phuketcity.go.th. W: phuketcity.go.th.

Is my water bill too big?

I was recently asked to look after my neighbors' house across the street while they were out of town. I couldn't help but notice that their minimum water bill, with tax, is 98 baht per month. Mine is 246 baht. When I asked a Thai national why there was such a large difference I was told that my neighbors are billed by Phuket City, while my bill comes from Kathu. Why is Kathu water so much more expensive than water from Phuket City? Doesn't everyone on the same soi get their water from the same place?

Mike Williams
Chalong

Ms Areerat, an officer at Phuket Provincial Waterworks Authority (PPWA), replies:

The PPWA supplies water all over Phuket, except in the two Phuket City tambons (Talaad Yai, Talaad Nuea), where Phuket City Municipality supplies it. Our rates are not the same as theirs. You can check our website to find our water rates in Phuket: www.pwa.co.th/service/tariff_rate.html. If you want us to check your water rate, please contact us. We can tell you why it is so expensive.

For more information contact Phuket Provincial Waterworks Authority, 106/137 Wichit Songkhram Road, Moo 7, T. Kathu, A. Kathu, Phuket 83120. T: 076-319173, 086-4784055.

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Investors are looking at 2010 as a difficult year in which to choose asset classes. Most are finding that cash in the bank either yields nothing or close to it. Government bonds have low yields and any future signs of inflation will lead to capital losses.

In the bond category, the most attractive areas are in carefully selected emerging markets' debt and corporate bonds.

Sovereign bonds in the Euro zone have to be approached with a level of caution. For example, German bonds are extremely low risk, whilst Greek and Spanish bonds are probably best to be avoided.

Concerns about the Greek economy continue, and for good reason. The current Greek government is probably making all the right noises about finding the right way out of their problems. It must be kept in mind though that they were elected just after the previous government tried to introduce an austerity program and became distinctly unpopular.

The new Greek government has already vowed to freeze the salaries of the public sector who, in turn, have vowed to strike.

The economic contagion has also reached Spain, and the Spanish government has been outspoken about the differences between Spain and Greece.

Certainly, the Spanish government's debt at 54% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) compares very favorably to Greece's debt of 113% of GDP.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommends 60% of GDP as the maximum.

However, due to the finan-

Rain in Spain dampens confidence



MUERTO EN MADRID: A man carries a coffin on which is written "IMF politics" next to an EU flag that indicates "20 million unemployed" during a protest in Madrid to demand action to combat the economic crisis and rising unemployment. Spain has been one of the European Union members hardest hit by the global economic crisis. Photo: AFP/Philippe Desmazes

cial crisis, unemployment in Spain soared towards the end of last year and officially reached 18.8% – a truly worrying statistic.

Among under 25s, the unemployment figure is much higher.

Spain is also facing an acute real estate crisis. The boom has long turned into a nasty bust with almost one million new properties remaining empty.

During the current crisis, countries with their own currency – the UK being a perfect example – were able to let their currencies devalue, and found this to be a useful escape route. Naturally, it does not make for a total economic solution, but it does remove some of the pressure.

As a member of the Euro zone, Spain does not have the luxury of devaluation. Instead, it has to rely on a strict austerity program. This would be difficult enough to impose in normal times, but with unemployment heading towards 20 percent, it is going to be very difficult.

In fact, it is possible that Spain could make the transition from deep recession to outright depression.

In a recent TV interview on the CNBC business channel, Simon Derrick, the head of cur-

rency strategy for the Bank of New York Mellon, described the problems facing the Euro zone.

Should countries like Greece, Portugal and Spain require a 'bailout', then that will mean that the German taxpayer is effectively underwriting these countries. Alternatively, if any or all of these countries default, then either way it cannot be positive for the Euro.

The global attitude to the Euro has certainly shifted to a negative bias in a matter of weeks. Readers may wonder why Ireland has not been included in the list of Euro zone countries in trouble. The answer is simple: Ireland's government adopted an austerity program some months ago, which not only froze public sector wages, but reduced them by 10 percent.

The total program showed that Ireland was deadly serious about sorting out its economy and has enhanced the country's reputation.

Even Germany, the lynchpin of the Euro zone, publicly

complimented Ireland on its clever strategy.

Commercial rentals in Ireland have fallen some 30 to 40 percent in the aftermath of the financial crisis. A very welcome development in Ireland is the increase in foreign investments.

Investors have often noted that this crisis has resulted in a major shift in the global economic center of gravity; from North America and Europe to the Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

It is not likely that North America and Europe will be able to change this much. That is not to say that North America and Europe will not enjoy an economic recovery in the future, but with Asia & Co growing at faster rates, the focus appears to favor this part of the world.

Investors are likely to find emerging markets the most financially rewarding places to be, but it is how to invest that is of prime importance.

There are a number of alternatives; one of which is invest-

ing in an emerging markets fund. This certainly gives the fund manager a wide variety of choice, which is important, as economic, political and market factors can change rapidly in the emerging world.

This is an area of greater than normal volatility, although late 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 showed that nowhere is immune to large losses.

However, assuming that all emerging markets do not suddenly join the ranks of submerging markets en masse, then diversity is a great advantage.

When investing, it is wise to consider the options open to your selected fund manager, and you certainly want to give fund managers the ability to avoid or escape serious problems.

This is why single-country funds in emerging markets – whilst potentially very profitable in good times – can be a nightmare in bad times. Most emerging markets do not have the liquidity of older, more established financial markets.



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England holds lead in Fair Play's World Cup



Nattawat 'Fluke' Onting of team Argentina blasts a free kick goalwards at a February 7 game against team Spain. Spain won the match 7-2.

Close to 100 boys took to the football field at the Youth Football Home (YFH) and Phuket International Academy in the final weekend before the Fair Play League takes a three-week break.

The action got underway at YFH with the under 15s. Three games were played, with the pick of the action coming in the final match between Brazil and France, which saw France stage a dramatic late comeback to win 7-6.

France's Piers Grasmann is currently the tournament's top scorer with an impressive 13 goals. "I play for my school team at BIS but we only have a game every few weeks so it is good to get to play football every week-

end. I have made a lot of friends from the Youth Football Home and I think you can really connect with people through playing football with them," he said.

Attention then moved to PIA, which was the venue for the under 13s section of the league. The opening match threw up an intriguing encounter between Spain and Argentina, notable because it was the first time that twin brothers Nonthawit 'Film' and Nattawat 'Fluke' Onting, competing against each other on teams Spain and Argentina, respectively, had been allowed to play outfield. A gentleman's agreement had been in place that the twins would both play in goal during the competition on account of being far too

good for this level of football, but it was decided that when their respective teams met they would be allowed to play outfield.

There was clearly no love lost between the two brothers as Spain surged to a 7-2 lead, with striker Chris Thomson claiming four of the goals.

Chris, one of the youngest players in the competition at only nine years old, was delighted to keep his team in the title hunt. "I was pleased to score a hat trick. I really like being a striker because you don't have to do too much running and you get to score most of the goals," he said.

Spain was in action again in a top-of-the-table clash against England. Spain's earlier win had given them a two-point lead at the top of the table, but England, with tournament top scorer Sooksan Arsasook leading the line, claimed a 4-1 win to overtake Spain for the top spot.

In the other two matches Holland defeated Germany 2-0 and Argentina defeated Brazil 6-2.

The league will resume on February 28 at PIA. Anyone interested in sponsorship can contact Hannu Tuukkanen. E: hannu.yfhpuket@hotmail.com.

— James Goyder

Fair Play League standings

Under 13s:

England	13 points
Spain	12 points
Argentina	10 points
Holland	10 points
Brazil	6 points
Germany	1 point
Top scorer: Sooksan Arsasook, England, 11 goals	

Under 15s:

Germany	8 points
France	7 points
Brazil	4 points
Top Scorer: Piers Grasmann, France, 13 goals	

Ban Sapam heads jr cricketers



Young athletes from BIA and Thai Hua School pose on week two of the Sawasdee Cricket League.

The second Junior Sawasdee Cricket League is underway with the participation of five schools throughout Phuket.

The rules for matches in the Sawasdee league are adapted from those of conventional cricket in order to give youngsters more of a chance to hone their cricket skills in a competitive environment. The teams consist of eight players, rather than the traditional 11, and the balls are made of lightweight compressed rubber.

The Phuket Cricket Group are hoping that the Sawasdee League will introduce cricket to youngsters in Phuket, who will eventually go on to compete in the senior competition, the Island Furniture Cricket League.

There are currently six teams in the Senior league which has been expanded this year to include the Phuket Development

Sawasdee Cricket League standings

School	# of games played	# of wins (3 points)	# Losses (1 point)	Total Points
Ban Sapam	5	5	—	15
Cherng Talay	5	4	1	13
Thai Hua A	5	2	3	9
BIS	4	2	2	8
Kajonkiet	4	1	3	6
Thai Hua B	5	—	5	5

Cricket Club, which consists exclusively of Thai teenagers. All the existing teams will be keeping a keen eye on the Sawasdee League — for players aged 14 and under — with a view towards recruiting new players.

The top two teams from last year's Sawasdee League, Baan Sapam and Cherng Talay, have dominated the league again this year. They met in the opening game of the season, with last year's beaten finalists Ban Sapam getting their revenge on Cherng

Talay, outscoring them by 49 runs to 17. Since that meeting, neither team has lost a match, meaning that this year's final, scheduled to take place on February 20 at BIS, will be a repeat of last year's between the two teams.

The third- and fourth-placed teams will also meet with the winner being awarded the plate, and the fifth and sixth placed teams will do battle for the bowl.

Michael Way is one of the organizers of the league and has been instrumental in the development of youth cricket in Phuket.

"The children really enjoy Sawasdee cricket. Events like the Sawasdee League give them an opportunity to meet their peers from different schools.

"Kids also enjoy activities which are organized by adults who take a sincere interest in them and we are fortunate to have good teachers and coaches involved, like Tookta, Scarfy and Nifty, who is the main man when it comes to coaching kids. The Players are all gaining experience, as are the coaches, and the standard is definitely improving," he said.

— James Goyder

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High sails in the bay of karsts

From February 3 to 7, the Phang Nga Regatta – widely accepted as ‘the fun regatta’ and one of Southeast Asia’s most popular boating events – streamed the turquoise waters of Phang Nga with 39 boats in six racing classes. The four-day race took sailors and party-goers alike to a different venue each night throughout the scenic bay area.

Though the reputation as the ‘fun regatta’ is certainly an appropriate one, the competitive edge of many sailors in the race is never far away. Somewhere in between the pleas for steady wind, the precise mapping of the course routes, and the foredecks rushing to raise a spinnaker at just the right moment, one can realize that the drive to win is alive and well.

Switchblade, a 26-year-old Farr 43 craft helmed by skipper and Olympic competitor Selim Kakis, was the overall winner in the Racing class, followed by Ben Copley’s *Katsu* and John Vause’s *Ruby Tuesday* in second and third, respectively.

Switchblade owner Mike Downard was quick to point out the root of boat’s success. “Selim is an Olympic sailor from Turkey, and we also had another Olympic sailor on board, so we were blessed. Twice,” he said. “We also couldn’t have done the race as well without the two foredeckers, Thomas Taatjes and Teiki Ballian. They were fantastic.”

Cruising boats were divided into two different classes based on handicap as-



signments. In Cruising A, Niels Degenkolw and *Phoenix* placed first, while Bill Crump and *Fistral* came out on top in Cruising B.

Rounding out the top winners, Hans Rahmann’s *Voodoo* placed first in Firefly 850 Sport, the only class without assigned handicaps. *Voodoo* was the only craft in the regatta to place first in all four days of racing. Henry Kaye’s *Thor* took home a win in Multihull Racing and Bill Phelps’ *Maharani* placed first in Multihull Cruising, the smallest class with only two boats.

The first day of racing began just off the shores of Phuket’s east coast near Ao Yang pier and took sailors up to Chong Lat. It was there that *Switchblade* established itself as the racing force to be reckoned with, coming in a full 12 minutes and



The 13th Phang Nga Regatta brought 39 competing boats to the bay for four days of racing. LEFT: Foredecker Chris Thormann hoists the spinnaker aboard *Da Vinci Nina*. INSET: The crew of *Switchblade* celebrates their overall win in the racing category.

6 seconds ahead of second place *Katsu*.

Competition on day one was especially tight in the multihull racing class, with the top three boats – *Thor*, *Sumersalt*, and *Da Vinci Nina* – all finishing within 30 seconds of each other.

Things heated up in the racing class on day three as sailors set course from Ko Yao Noi to Krabi. With light and variable winds, *Katsu* took on *Switchblade*, beating the craft by 53 seconds and taking away the potential for a clean sweep.

Day four was the best day for racing, with steady winds giving sailors the push they had all been hoping for as they set course from Krabi back down to Chalong. Competition remained tight in the racing class, with *Switchblade* taking sec-

ond place in another close call – this one delivered by *Ruby Tuesday*, who etched out the top spot by just 36 seconds.

The win, however, was *Ruby Tuesday*’s first. After points were calculated, *Switchblade*’s steady hold of one of the top two spots in each race was enough to make it the overall winner.

When asked about what made his boat the leader, *Switchblade* captain Selim Kakis said, “We were 11 persons on the boat all together, making it a multi-cultural sailboat. We had people from eight or nine different countries, so we had the energy to bring the team together. We combined all of our senses, strength and knowledge together, and the result came by itself.”

– Scott Phillips



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Cultivating conservation

Among the mangrove swamps near the village of Koh Maphrao, in Thalang district, many local villagers, 46 students and four teachers from the Kathu Wittaya School gathered to plant 280 mangrove saplings.

The school's mangrove forest conservation and regrowth project started several years ago, when awareness was raised as to the major decline in Thailand's mangrove trees. Both the community and school realized the need to collaborate on a volunteer planting project.

The grassroots initiative focuses on protecting the remaining mangrove tree population while promoting the importance of these coastal forests as a natural resource through replanting projects.

On the morning of January 20, the planting project was voluntary, however students were encouraged by the school to give-up their weekend, in order to participate in the planting project.

New saplings were planted, as well as maintenance performed on the previously planted growth forest.

During a break underneath a stream-side sala, students



commented on why they volunteered with the mangrove project. They believed by planting mangroves they are preserving an area that can continue to produce food for the community as well as support a natural ecosystem.

For example, the mangrove swamps provide a habitat for birds, plants, fish and other animals such as prawns and crabs. The young conservationists understand that the roots of the mangroves hold the earth

together and protect against erosion and storms. They also protect the soils important nutrients from erosion and have a cleaning effect on the water.

Protecting Phuket's mangrove forests has been a growing concern since it was discovered in 1985 that 56% of Thailand's mangrove forests have been destroyed.

Mangrove forests grow only in saline coastal habitats and have suffered due to the booming shrimp farming business and coastal hotel development. Although shrimp exports, particularly to Japan, have had a beneficial effect on the Thailand's economy, it has been costly to the environment.

The mangrove planting activity is just one of the many extra-curricular projects, organized by Kathu Wittaya School, which give students the opportunity to get involved in helping their community.

Other projects undertaken by the Kathu Wittaya School students include the 'Clean up Phuket' campaign, 'Power of



LEFT TO RIGHT: Students from Kathu Wittaya School pose together after spending the day planting mangrove saplings at Koh Maphrao's reforestation project; A local student plants a mangrove sapling; Students tend to saplings planted several years ago for the mangrove project.

LEFT: The local community members and school staff who volunteer their time to help the environment.

Justice' project (where students participated and won a national high school competition on how to improve the country's justice system), and finally, 'Democracy in Schools' political project.

When asked why the school commits time to such activities, Ajarn Kanrat and Ajarn Nillarat elaborated that the school is trying to connect student's learning to Buddhist principals.

The teachers believe that the focus of learning should not only be conducted in the classroom, but in authentic settings; utilizing the timely and relevant materials available in the real world.

"With increasing island population and environmental changes, there is a greater stress on Thailand's natural resources. We need education to focus on securing what resources we have left," says Ajarn Kanrat.

"With these extra-curricular projects, our school strives to give students the maturity, knowledge and understanding in this rapidly changing world."

— Paul Redfern

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Construction Update

Phuket Town

Modern Light

By Thanasorn Chookate

The Light Suan Luang condominium project is unique in many aspects and embodies the modern Phuket lifestyle.

With its sleek facade and progressive design, the development offers easy access to Phuket Town's best attractions.

East West Architect Company designed the project, construction of which is set to start in July and is expected to be completed in December 2011.

The 12-story building comprises 186 spacious condos ranging in size from 24.4sqm to 103.9sqm, including studio apartments and one- and two-bedroom units.

Each unit offers a commanding city view facing either King Rama IX Park, Phuket City or Saphan Hin from the bedrooms and living rooms.

Standard facilities in the project include a large swimming pool, a state-of-the-art fitness center,

garden, 16th-floor heliport, 24-hour security surveillance with personal key card entry, and CCTV.

The facility also contains a convenience store, a laundry service, plus indoor/outdoor parking.

Prices for the units start at 1.3 million baht, and all of them come fully furnished with quality modern appointments, including central air conditioning.

The project has two entrances, one off Chaofa Road, opposite King Rama IX Park, and the other on Sakdidej Road near Thaklang junction.

The Light Suan Luang presently has show units available for viewing.

For more information or for a personal showing, visit The Light sales office at 15/12 Chaofa Road, Thaklang Junction near the market.

Tel: 076-223344, 076-224455. Email: info@the-lightcondo.com.



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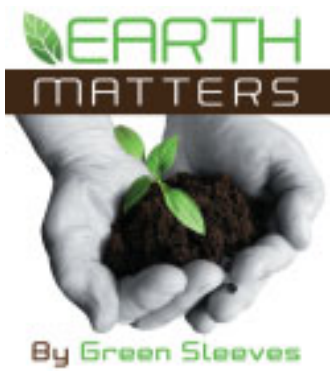
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For more information, please contact: Laguna Property Centre, Canal Village,
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The rise and fall of Granny Smith's Asian cousins



Apples are eaten the world over. Wrapped in latticed foam, you can even get a version of *malus domestica* in your local supermarket, which is probably of the 'Golden Delicious' or 'Gala' cultivars. Both can be farmed outside the cool-temperate climates required by more traditional apple varieties.

But the apples that grow in southern Thailand? No relation. A very different story.

Last week I visited a small temple perched on a cliff-top in Nai Harn. In the grounds was a custard apple tree [*Annona reticulata*], the first I had seen growing in Phuket. With attractive and aromatic leaves, a neat habit, and tasty fruit which contain custard-like, creamy pulp which can be made into a milky drink, it's not a bad choice for a long-term garden.

Since it hails from tropical America, the heat and humidity of the island are no problem. Indeed, this specimen was standing up to the salt-laden sea winds, and had produced a number of those deeply ridged fruits that – bizarrely – remind me of a hand grenade. There are apparently at least seven cultivars, some yel-

lowish or red when ripe. One of these, the cherimoya, is usually sold in Europe. Sadly, it does not appear to be widely grown here; you may have to go to a specialist greengrocer to find it.

More familiar is the star apple [*Chrysophyllum cainito* or *apoen*]. It comes from another small tree that has glossy evergreen leaves which are felty brown underneath, and bears clusters of small white, fragrant flowers. Seedlings will take about seven years to fruit: if you can't wait that long, grafted stock will produce the goods after four.

Once mature, the star apple will crop all year round. And being self-fertile, it will produce its substantial dark green or purple fruits – star-shaped in section – without any outside assistance. Sweet to the taste, and delectable as a fresh dessert, star fruits are much appreciated by Thais, who often plant a specimen tree outside their front door. Instant food...

The elephant apple [*Dillenia indica* or *mataa*], as you would expect from the name, makes a much more substantial tree. Unless you are a fan of powerfully acidic fruit, it is unlikely to tickle your taste buds when eaten raw.

As with so many Asian fruits and vegetables, that is absolutely no hindrance: instead the globose, green, apple-like fruit is put in curries, used to make pickles and chutneys, or used as a tangy additive to cooling drinks. But the tree requires moisture and shade. Moreover, with leaves up to 25 inches in length and massive white, magnolia-like flowers, it is more a specimen for the



TROPICAL TEMPTATIONS: The apple comes in many shapes and colors. Phuket's climate is perfect for many in the long list of these tropical delights, including the apple guava (above) – also known as *farang* to local residents, and the star apple (insert).

rainforest than the garden.

Not so with the water or rose apple [*Syzygium* or *chompusaraek*]. It makes a highly decorative small tree, and was one of the first to grace my new garden. Although fresh from a container, it actually produced a couple of pinkish fruits in its first year.

Pear-shaped and waxy, they are a common sight on market stalls; the crunchy, watery flesh seems to appeal to Thai tastes. Elsewhere in the tropics, varieties are grown for their ornamental and sweet smelling flowers.

The jujuba [*Ziziphus jujuba* or *phut saa chin*] is yet another of these so-called apples on today's dessert platter. It has been cultivated in China for four thousand years, and one variety is now grown commercially in India.

The smallish, oval drupe – about four centimeters across and green to pale yellow in color – has a crunchy, appley taste that recalls a 'Granny Smith', hence its local name of 'Thai apple'.

It is delectable in salads. Left to dry in the sun, the fruit

will go purplish and then black, ending up like a prune or date, hence its alternative name of Chinese date. Readily propagated from seed or root cuttings, it produces chains of small, star-shaped flowers. Fragrant, of course... Moreover, the jujuba makes a fine shade tree and is not fastidious about temperature changes.

The last of today's fruits also bears a passing resemblance to an apple. It is better known to farangs than any of the aforementioned varieties, possibly because its juice is sold worldwide in cartons. Indeed, its Thai name is literally *farang* – an epithet that may be explained by the fact that it is not indigenous, but comes originally from tropical America. It can be pear-shaped, but more often

reminds one of a warty, green apple. Sometimes pinkish, one variety, 'Thai Maroon', is deep purple. Have you guessed? I speak of the guava [*Psidium guajava*], also known as the apple guava.

The fruits are borne on a relatively small tree, so it is worth

considering for your garden. Though it produces a dense canopy almost to ground level, it will withstand plenty of pruning, and in Asia is often deliberately shaped into a compact tree. The large leaves, deeply veined and light green in color, are an added attraction. While the highly aromatic fruits – the smell is reminiscent of lemons – can be eaten straight from the tree, they are more often used for making jellies and jams. And the guava is a so-called 'superfruit', rich in antioxidants and with four times the vitamin C content of an orange.

Here endeth the tale of the apple – Thai style. All rainforest trees, they crave some initial cover and plenty of water, conditions they would encounter in their native habitats.

But given some TLC, they will surely reciprocate; not only will they provide you with delectable fresh fruit, but will suffuse your garden with fragrance, and dispense oases of cooling shade.

Sadly, they are not readily found as container plants in Phuket's nurseries, but all of them will take from cuttings. And if you can't beg, borrow or steal a twig or two, you can surely be tempted to buy the fruit and plant the seeds.

Only today, I put some jujube stones in a pot.

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Ensuring long-term lease protection

Foreigners often buy property in Thailand under a 30-year Land or Apartment lease, which can be extended for two additional 30-year periods.

This is an option widely used by foreign property buyers because residential properties can only be registered with the authorities for a maximum of 30 years at a time.

However, for each 30-year lease extension, both the lessor and lessee have to prepare a new lease agreement and re-register the property in compliance with the laws and regulations applicable with the land department.

A property buyer may recognize that the lease renewal options are based on a contractual agreement between the lessor and lessee, so are therefore not binding for any third party, such as the parties' beneficiaries, or a new property owner if the lessor transfers or loses his or her title to the property.

In such cases, the lessee could face serious difficulties enforcing his right to renew the lease when the initial lease terms eventually expire.

In order to provide additional protection, sophisticated developers have implemented legal structures which allow les-



CHINA, HONG KONG : An estate agent gestures as he briefs a prospective foreign buyer (not pictured) into Thailand's lucrative housing market during the 2004 Phuket and Samui property exhibition in Hong Kong. According to the World Bank, the Thai economy is still performing robustly with estimated growth of 6.4 percent this year, despite a marked slowdown since 2003. Photo: AFP / Laurent Fivet

sees to acquire a contractual lease right to a specific property, and to have an (indirect) interest in the Thai company – from which the leasehold investors lease – that owns the project's land and structures.

This protected leasehold structure is particularly advantageous to lease holders.

Lease holders of specific properties, together with the other lessees in a project, are given a say in the management of the

development, including control of common properities and the renewal of the terms for additional 30-year lease periods.

It is important that all the participants in a protected leasehold structure have the same in-

terest regarding things like lease renewal or the provision of professional project management.

Therefore, anyone acquiring (indirect) interest in the Thai company controlling the development is also leasing a specific property in same project, and vice versa.

This way, everybody is in the same boat; they have the same interests from which each individual leasehold investor will ultimately benefit.

Setting up a protected leasehold structure requires the incorporation of well-thought-through corporate structure and a carefully drafted set of agreements that comply with applicable laws.

Once in place, a protected leasehold structure gives peace of mind to prospective leasehold buyers.

Property buyers and their advisors should diligently review the entire legal set up of such projects, as well as checking all the legal documentation, to ensure the proposed structure fully complies with the applicable laws.

This article is written by International Law Office Patong Beach Co., Ltd., a Phuket-based law firm. For en enquiries, please contact Michael Greth, Consultant. E: michael@ilo-phuket.com. T: 076-222 191-5).



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Property Gazette

Properties For Sale

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.

400SQM POOL HOUSE

Rawai seaview, 12m x 4m pool indoor area all as new for sale. 9.9 million baht. Tel: 084-843 3613.

4 RAI NAI HARN

Chanote. 6 million baht by rai. No agents please. Tel: 089-594 4017.

TWIN HOUSE WITH BUSINESS

2 houses with business. Area totals 285 sqm. 5 years. 4,950,000 baht. Tel: 076-281196, 086-045 3139. Email: finale.2001@hotmail.com

APARTMENT, KARON

3-floor apartment in Karon Plaza for sale. Fully furnished w/aircon. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms w/hot water, kitchen, and large living room. 2 balconies + terrace. The apt also has a room for renting out. Pls contact at Tel: 076-396693, 087-267 6830 (English), 087-267 5957 (English & Thai). Email: gymworld@loxinfo.co.th

30 RAI IN TOWN

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

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.

NEW HOUSE FOR SALE/RENT



In Srisuchart Grandville 3, not far from Tesco Lotus. 3 bedrooms 2 bathrooms, 1 car park and little garden. Very nice house contact to come see at 087-277 0978 or koyangle99@hotmail.com

VASSANA RESIDENCE



for sale. Rawai/Nai Harn, Soi Kerny. 3 exclusive luxury apartments. Each apartment comprises 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, large Euro-style kitchen and living room, large balcony back and front with sweeping views over Rawai and Andaman sea. Swimming pool and roof top whirlpool. Price start at 8.5 million baht. Tel: 087-882 9604. Email: artlpmj@yahoo.com

PATONG LUXURY SEAVIEW VILLA

Super sea view over Patong. Ready to move in. 25 million baht, freehold title. Tel: 086-982 2888 (English & Thai). Fax: 02-960 7051. Email: prim_purdue@yahoo.com For further details, please see our website at <http://awphuket.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.

3 BEDROOMS HOUSE

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

NEW BRAND CONDO

Mid Town, Royal Place Project. Studio condo, fully furnished, reasonable price. Tel: 086-476-9612.

CHEAP LAND

4.8 rai of land between the airport and the Sarasin Bridge near Mai Khao includes access. Can be subdivided into 4 plots. 6 million baht. Tel: 080-521 5425 (English). Email: r.felton@hotmail.co.uk

LAND ON COUNTRY CLUB

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

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: piccharly@gmail.com

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

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.amphiseabreeze.com

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.

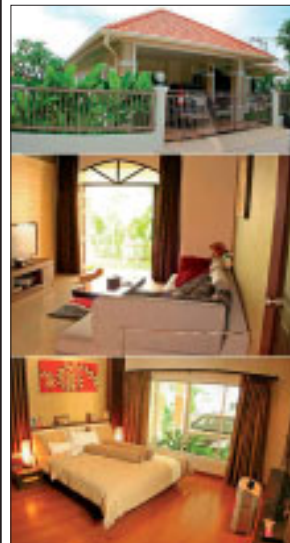
PATONG HOUSES

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.

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).

HOUSE FOR SALE / RENT



312sqm. 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Fully furnished, 24-hour protection. 5 minutes to Chalong Bay, 10 minutes to Nai Harn 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>

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.

SALE CHEAP CONDO PATONG

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

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: yariv.vios@gmail.com

Luxury Pool Villas Laguna/Layan

Boon 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.boonlawadee.com Tel: 081-438 7062

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

VERY NICE SEAVIEW LAND



same as Soi Villas Solitude, Na-Kok, Chalong. 8 rai land for sale, Chanote title. Can buy separate. Price 7 million baht per rai. Contact to see. Tel: 087-689 9679.

FREEHOLD PATONG

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PALM BREEZE RESORT

Nai Harn penthouse for sale or rent 35,000 baht per month. Freehold. New, large, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished with 32 inch plasma screen TV. Fitness center, spa, gym, tennis court and putting green on site. Large swimming pool and slide. Only minutes from some of the finest beaches and scenery to be found in Phuket. 7.5 million baht. Includes one year's maintenance fee, sink fund, transfer fee, land office duty registration tax and transfer costs. Ready to move in today. Tel: 087-882 9604. Email: artlpmj@yahoo.com

PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

in Ao Makham. 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.

TOP SEAVIEW LOT

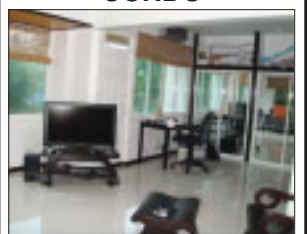
2 rai, Chanote, 6 million baht per rai. Tel: 089-473 8338. Email: phuketone@gmail.com

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.

1.7 MILLION BAHT CONDO



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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.

ROYAL PLACE CONDO

New 37sqm one bedroom condo for sale at Royal Place, near the Tesco Lotus intersection on the Bypass Road. Comes fully furnished including all electrical appliances. Ready to move in August. Complex has pool, gym, restaurant etc. 1.85 million baht. Tel: 083-982 3768. Email: drbeamsaw@gmail.com

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

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Property Gazette

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

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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.

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

PERFECT LAND

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

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>

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

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martin.phillips@phillips-property.com
www.phillips-property.com

RAWAI VILLA



Spacious in prime location. 3 ensuite bedrooms + guesthouse, all AC, maid's room, private pool, in 1,000sqm walled garden. Part-furnished. Chanote. 14.9 million baht. Tel: 087-273 0141. Email: alangath@gmail.com

HOUSE RAWAI/NAI HARN



for sale or rent 35,000 baht per month. 3-bedroom house with 2 bathrooms, 9x4m swimming pool, 2 car parking spaces and aircon. In Rawai/Nai Harn, just minutes from the finest beaches and scenery to be found in Phuket. 10.5 million baht. Tel: 087-882 9604. Email: artlpmj@yahoo.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.

MANEKRAM 161SQ WAH

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

KATA BEACH

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

LAND AND HOUSE



Quick sale, 232sq wah, 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.

HOUSE & FURNITURE FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

HOUSE IN KAMALA

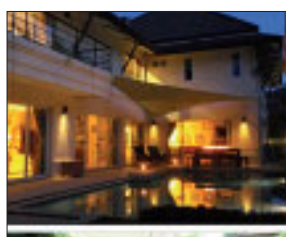
for sale. 2 houses on land. 2 ngan, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, Nor Sor Sam Kor title, good location, 5km from the beach. Price: 10 million baht. Direct from owner. Tel: 083-180 2143. Email: yaris.vios@gmail.com

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 ensuite 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

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 (Jacuzzi) 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

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.

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

CONDO FOR SALE

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

THE ROYAL PLACE

4th floor unit with 2 balconies. Approx area: 42sqm. Fully furnished, ready to move in. Please email: info@allaboutwebanddesign.com

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

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.

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>

QUICK SALE HOUSE IN CHALONG

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

QUICK SALE LAND IN KAMALA

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

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

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).

PATONG DELUXE CONDO

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

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

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Property Gazette

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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>

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>

NEW TOWN HOUSE



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

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).

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.

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.

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

SALE HOUSE KATHU

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

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 email: allservices29@gmail.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

PAKLOK HOUSE SALE

Further reduced to sell semi-detached, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, carport, quiet, secure soi. 1.9 million baht only!!! Tel: 086-905 1406. Email: lowprofile@mail.com

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

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.

2-STOREY HOUSE IN PATONG



sea view. Hasip Pee Road, 49sqm. 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

PARICHART VILLAGE, CHALONG



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

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.

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

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

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3 lots, approx 1 rai each. Bang Pae waterfall area, east side. Beautiful views, privated road. Must see to appreciate. 2.75 million baht per lot. Finance possible. Call Chris. Tel: 086-942 1930.

4-BEDROOM 3-BATHROOM HOUSE

Rawai. 2 floors, aircons, hill views, cul-de-sac. Tel: 081-270 6310. Email: jackiebeyers@hotmail.com

SURIN BEACH

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

BEAUTIFUL HOUSE, FULLY FURNISHED



Ready to move in, 254 sqm. 2 floors. Near Downrun 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.

HEAVEN ON EARTH



5 bedroom Thai style villa in Phuket. Magnificent Phang-Nga Bay sea view. 3 big bedrooms are ensuite 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.



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for sale. Live in 1 and rent the other or sold separately. 5.1 million baht each, fully furnished, well kept, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, Western kitchen, phone line and ADSL. Center of Patong, 2 minutes to Jungceylon. Contact owner at Tel: 087-279 3312.

5-BEDROOM POOL VILLA



Rawai beach. Land and house for sale. 6.5 million baht. Credit lease 360,000 per year. Tel: 086-940 8914. Email: rawai1@yahoo.com

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48 RAI KHAO LAK / BANG SAK

250m from the beach. Chanote, Nor Sor 3. Only 1.7 million baht. Call or mail for further info. Tel: 080-522 4089 (English), 081-397 4957 (Thai). Email: kamala@phuket.ksc.co.th

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A photograph of a fishing speed boat on the water. The boat is dark-colored with a white cabin and a large outboard motor. It is moving across the water, leaving a wake. The background is a clear blue sky.

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• Sales & Public Relations Coordinator

Human Resources

• Training Manager

Job qualifications

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3. Experience in training development with 5 star resort for 3-5 years
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Food & Beverage

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Engineering

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Kitchen

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Anantara Phuket Resort & Spa

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| • Housekeeping Supervisor | • Public Area Attendant | • Technician |

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