



Phuket Gazette

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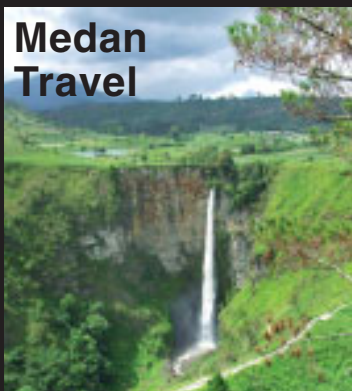
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Life after death

Tragic loss turns family into Phuket lifesavers

THE family of a young Canadian man who died in Patong six years ago in a freak accident have donated six Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) to Phuket hospitals and rescue foundations.

Noah Yelizarov, 19, died as a result of electrical shock on October 9, 2004. He was in Phuket on holiday with three friends.

Standing knee-deep in flood water alongside a road in Patong, he was electrocuted when exposed wires on an electric pole sent a deadly charge through the pool.

Noah died on the way to the hospital.

His death could have been prevented had a defibrillator been administered.

In an effort to prevent similar tragedies on Phuket, the Yelizarov family raised the 25,000 Canadian dollars (794,000 baht) needed to buy the six AEDs for the island's medical services.

The family presented the AEDs and a host of other medical equipment to Vice Governor Tri Augkaradacha on March 19 at Patong Hospital.

Michael Yelizarov, Noah's father, said he was grateful for



A SON REMEMBERED: Noah Yelizarov, 19, died as the result of an electric shock in Phuket six years ago.

the warmth the Thai people had shown his family on their donation trip. The AEDs would ensure there would be fewer parents suffering the loss of a child, he added.

Holding one of the AEDs Mr Yelizarov said the device was capable of 150 electrical charges.

"That means 150 people could be saved with just this

one machine," he said.

Noah's mother, Lori, said electrical wiring in Thailand is substandard.

"I would like people to be aware that if we can help change things, this can be a safer place," she said.

The Yelizarov family donated one AED each to Vachira Phuket Hospital, Thalang Hospital, the Kusol-

dham Foundation, the Phuket Rescue Foundation and two to Patong Hospital.

All of the donated AEDs will be used in mobile emergency medical units.

Also present at the ceremony were five officers from Firefighters Without Borders, there to train 150 local medical personnel to use the equipment.

- Pimwara Choksakulpan

Water fights begin early this year in Kata

TENSIONS between residents and a Kata resort flared amid the current drought parching swaths of the island.

Chalong Police were called to a scene on Soi Rodphai, close to Kata Beach, on March 21 after 30 villagers blocked an access road to the Peach Hill Hotel & Resort.

Due to the blockade, the hotel's water trucks were unable to use the road for two hours.

The villagers were angry at what they saw as the resort monopolizing the local groundwater.

They claimed the resort was taking four truckloads of 12,000 liters of water every day from a newly drilled well.

The amount being siphoned

from the source was diminishing the supply available to local residents, they said.

A representative from Peach Hill Hotel & Resort, Mr Tawich Suwanpakdii, said the resort started buying water to supplement its reserves in January due to shortages.

"We cannot rely on government water supplies," he said.

Chalong Police Duty Officer Pachai Matthayan was successful in getting the village head and Mr Tawich to reach an amicable solution to the dispute.

The agreement reached was that the resort will be allowed one truckload of water a day, with a possibility of purchasing additional water from the village head.

- Gazette reporter

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Decorator murdered over noise

POLICE are hunting two men they believe stabbed a neighbor to death in Phuket on March 21 for making too much noise in an apartment block.

Ponsan Noi-oonsaen, a 41-year-old Chiang Mai native, died around 10:30pm after being stabbed at least five times in the chest with what were described by the crime's only witness as "foot-long knives".

Thirty-year-old Teeradech Jampihom, who worked with Mr Ponsan as a decorator, witnessed the slaying.

Mr Teeradech told police the pair were drinking and cooking in the corridor of the Jaroen Thawee budget apartment block on Srisutat Road in Rassada.

A man yelled from another room for them to be quiet, he said.

When Mr Pongsan went to the man's door to apologize, two men emerged and stabbed him to death, he said.

When the men approached Mr Teeradech, he ran into his room and locked the door. The two men sped away on a motorcycle, he said.

Police have issued an arrest warrant for the two men.

— *Kitima Pornmongkhonwat*

Jellies safe

THE PHUKET Marine Biological Center (PMBC) has found no evidence of deadly jellyfish on Nai Harn Beach.

After the hospitalization of a four-year-old boy earlier this month due to a jellyfish sting, PMBC researchers sampled the area by sweeping the waters with two nets at depths of 1.1 and 1.4 meters.

The operation netted seven jellyfish of the painful but non-life-threatening schyphozoan variety.

"The jellyfish found at Nai Harn are not dangerous like the box jellyfish. They are most commonly found during the rainy season (May-October), but nonetheless are present year-round," said the director of PMBC, Wannakiat Tubtimsang.

— *Atchaa Khamlo*



This six-wheeled truck overturned on Kata Hill on Patak Road around 9.45am on March 20. Somboon Famungkorn, 28, was driving the truck around a steep-sloping curve when the cement bags it was carrying shifted, causing the truck to flip. No one was hurt in the accident.

Truckin' trouble

Bike smash claims three young lives

THREE young women sharing a motorcycle died instantly in Phuket when a car traveling in the opposite direction veered into the wrong lane and hit them head on, police say.

The accident took place around 4am on Chao Fa East Road close to the Kislai Swimming Club near Kwang Road on March 23.

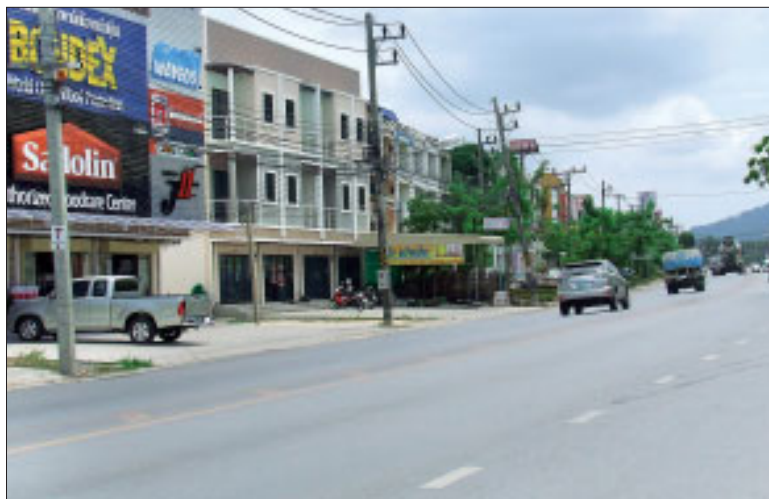
Chuleeporn Primprai, 18, Pattarawan Boonpachuen, 20, and Nicha Chatterawat, 24, were heading towards Phuket Town when they were hit by a car driven by Hason Boontham, 35.

The women were not wearing helmets.

The car dragged their motorcycle around 30 meters along the road.

The women's families have claimed their bodies from Vachira Phuket Hospital for funeral arrangements.

Phuket City Police Duty



The scene of the crash on Chao Fa East Road the following day.

Officer Tada Sodaluck said Mr Hason spent a night in Phuket International Hospital after sustaining minor injuries.

Police took a sample of Mr Hason's blood to check for the presence of alcohol.

— *Atchaa Khamlo*

Australian awaiting dope trial in Phuket

AN AUSTRALIAN man arrested for possession of marijuana faces a possible prison sentence of up to a year and a fine of up to 20,000 baht.

Richard Beaver, 28, was allegedly caught with 0.9 grams of dry marijuana by Chalong Police on March 16.

The Australian was stopped on Soi Samakee 2 off Saiyuan Road around 11:30pm. He reportedly told police he bought the drug for 500 baht from a Patong Beach dealer.

Currently out on bail, Mr Beaver is awaiting formal charges to be filed by the prosecutor, a process that can take up to 84 days.

Mr Beaver entered Thailand on March 10 and planned to stay for one month.

"Right now we are still investigating and collecting evidence and it may take a month until we can send the case to the prosecutor. After that, it is up to the prosecutor to decide on a trial date," said Duty Officer Tianchai Duangsuwan.

"Although out on bail, the suspect must remain in Thailand until the conclusion of the case," he added.

On March 17 Mr Beaver was one of five drug suspects paraded by Chalong Police at a press conference.

Four Thais caught with small quantities of *ya bah* (crystal methamphetamine) were also presented at the conference at Chalong Police Station.

Chalong Police Superintendent Wichit Inthasorn said his men were cracking down heavily on drug crime.

"Those involved with drugs should turn over a new leaf right away, before they get arrested and punished," he said.

— *Gazette reporters*

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BANYAN TREE PHUKET

Pian's war on flooding



LEFT: Mayor Pian Keesin has initiated a project that aims to keep Patong's roads safe from flooding. ABOVE: Motorists making their way through the so-called 'Nanai River' in Patong last year.

PATONG Mayor Pian Keesin has launched an ambitious program of public works in a bid to prevent a repeat of the flooding that deluged Phuket's premier

resort town during last year's monsoon season.

Mayor Pian said he guaranteed that the four projects underway would be complete before the rains start this year.

"I'm not saying there will be no more flooding in Patong, but compared to last year I'm sure the situation will be much better," he said.

One project aims to prevent

the return of the sardonically named 'Nanai River', a 50-meter stretch of Nanai Road which spent much of last year's wet season under up to a meter of water.

The size of the inundation varied with rainfall but generally stretched from the Aroonpat Village housing estate to the Chang Residence Hotel.

Around 200 meters of drainpipe will be laid along the side of the road in order to siphon floodwater into the nearby Pak Lak Canal.

Mayor Pian said a tender process for the four-million-baht project was currently underway.

"It won't take more than two months to finish construction," he said.

A second project saw two pumps installed in the canal beside Patong Hospital, which was also the site of flooding last year.

Mayor Pian explained that the pumps would speed up the passage of water through the canal.

In a third project, drainpipes are being laid underneath Phang Muang Sai Kor Road, the new road running north-south behind Jungceylon.

One section, which was completed on March 17, will direct water from behind Jungceylon, under the road and past JJ Market Phase 2.

A second section, which is now underway, will direct water from the same place to Patong's wastewater treatment plant.

"Laying another line will double the water drainage," said Mayor Pian.

Finally, Pak Bang Canal will be dredged and widened to increase the amount of water it can direct into the sea.

— Pimwara Choksakulpan

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What a bloody mess

Red-shirt protesters poured collected blood on the ground in front of the Democrat Party head office in Bangkok last week.

Queer News

Myna dispute turns major

BANGKOK: A man shot dead his neighbour of almost three decades on March 19 after becoming enraged at the squawks of the victim's pet myna bird.

Police found Nun Am-on, 74, waiting to give himself up gun in hand.

Nearby was the body of 70-year-old Thongcheua Phreuksa.

Mr Thongcheua's wife, Manee Phreuksa, 69, said that around 6:30am she heard Mr Nun shouting for Mr Thongcheua. Just then, Mr Thongcheua returned home on his bicycle after giving alms to local monks.

Mrs Manee said the pair had a fierce argument about the myna bird's early-morning squawking. Mr Nun then drew a revolver and shot Mr Thongcheua dead.

Mr Nun told police that he had lived next door to the victim for more than 28 years.

Relations between them had soured five or six years ear-

lier because Mr Thongcheua's wife was impolite, Mr Nun said.

There were also a number of minor disputes between the two households such as when Mr Thongcheua accidentally drilled all the way through the dividing wall into Mr Nun's daughter's room.

Relations deteriorated further about two years ago, Mr Nun said, when Mr Thongcheua began to keep the myna bird.

Mr Nun said he reported the issue to the police a number of times, but they were powerless to do anything. Mr Nun said he had difficulty sleeping at night and liked to sleep in, but couldn't because of the noisy bird.

Deputy Commander of Bangkok Metropolitan Police Region 2 Charoen Srisalak said Mr Nun confessed to killing his neighbour in anger over the noisy bird. Mr Nun will be charged with murder.

Source: Khao Sod

Protests red, but vendors in black

BANGKOK: The claim that some red-shirt leaders or protesters have made money from taking part in the anti-government rally has yet to be clearly proven. But if you come to the rally on Rajdamnoen Avenue, it's obvious some people are profiting as the protest goes on.

They are street vendors who sell products ranging from daily necessities, such as food, beverages and toiletries, to protest items such as red T-shirts with political messages and mats.

Some vendors are red-shirt sympathisers and supporters while others are just people who struggle to make ends meet. Some of the latter said they also sold goods during protests by the People's Alliance for Democracy, or 'yellow shirts'.

But this time they wear red, to blend in better with the mob.

Wilaiwan Thien-ngoen, 58, a red shirt from Phitsanulok, set up shop at the protest site to sell "People Red" freshly brewed



Wilaiwan Thien-ngoen and her coffee shop, "People Red".

coffee. She said she got the idea when she joined a red-shirt protest recently at Khao Yai Thieng in Nakhon Ratchasima.

"I wanted to drink fresh coffee that day but I couldn't find any," she said.

Her pickup truck was modified to become a mobile coffee shop. "Instead of joining the protest and making no income, we sell things. It's like turning a crisis into an opportunity. Join a protest and you make money too," she said, adding that she made 500 to 600 baht profit a day.

Mrs Wilaiwan, formerly a

teacher, said she and her husband admire ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra because of his policies that helped the poor, such as the 30-baht healthcare programme.

Yasothon resident Somkiat Chaithawee, 41, is another red shirt making money from the rally. He sells mats for protesters to sit on while listening to speeches and performances on the street.

"I am a red shirt. I sell mats during the day and listen to Thaksin and other leaders speak at night," Somkiat said.

"I can make a profit of more than 3,000 baht a day, compared to 500 to 600 baht normally," he said.

However, some vendors have no clear preference for any political colors.

"When there was a protest by the yellow shirts, I also came to sell. I have no political color. I just want to make a living," said Kanyalak Ngamchalee, 26, from Phetchaburi.

Source: The Nation



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Lending turtles a helping hand



As part of their 3rd Annual Sea Turtle Charity weekend, Aleenta Resort and Spa of Phuket raised more than 220,000 baht at their Marine Turtle Fund auction on March 20.

All proceeds have been set aside for the Coastal Fisheries Research and Development Center in Thai Muang, Phang Nga.

The center's staff manage a wide range of marine conservation projects, including a turtle hatchery and rehabilitation center, funded solely by donations from the local community.

Housed within the center is a beachfront turtle sanctuary that serves as a nesting ground for Southern Thailand's four species of marine turtle.

The charity weekend started with an afternoon golf outing and continued into the evening with a four-course meal served on the resort's private beach.

While local musicians serenaded the crowd and guests dined on salmon carpaccio, filet mignon, white snapper and Chiang Mai strawberries, Director of Operations and Development Urs Aebi explained the importance of marine conservation and Aleenta's eco-agenda.

"Spending time with marine turtles is a truly memorable vacation experience. Protecting these majestic creatures is not merely a gesture, but a rewarding lifetime commitment to the environment that Aleenta is proud to be a part of," he said.

Blending customer service with an environmental message, Aleenta offers its guests the option of donating 40 baht each night of their stay to the turtle center, which is then matched by the hotel, Mr Aebi said.

Over the weekend, a host of local restaurants and hotels donated auction prizes, and were eager to do their part to support Aleenta's Marine Turtle Fund.

Most of the money raised will be used to buy GPS tracking devices to monitor turtles as they journey through the Andaman Sea.

— Story and photo by Elizabeth Branca

Easy riders and revenue roll into Phuket

An estimated 3,000 bikers from across Thailand are expected to roar onto the island for this year's Phuket Bike Week.

From April 8-13, beach parties, coastal rides, concerts and several bike showcases will take place in Patong.

Organizers expect this year's event to generate 700 million baht for the local economy.

Organized by Patong Municipality, Big Bike Motorcycle Club, the Phuket Riders Club, Hero N, Ride Thailand Magazine and the Tourism Authority of Thailand, this is the 16th event of its kind on the island.

The first big show of the week will be a motorcycle exhibition at Jungceylon shopping center on April 9 at 11am. There will also be a bike show at Loma Park on the same day.

Highlights of the event include a biker cavalcade along Soi Bangla, a country music festival, a tattoo contest and the 'Miss Phuket' competition.

For more information please contact Phuket Bike Week event organizer Wittaya Singkala. E: summon@ridethailand.com or T: 076-352069.

— Elizabeth Branca



Thousands of bikers are expected to travel to the island for this year's Phuket Bike Week. Photo by Christian Mouchet


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Breakfast of champions

Phuket Pochana's new take on the old



A trusty formula: take a spoonful of essence of Old Phuket; then distill it, bottle it and sell it. A few of the island's restaurants are in this business – the venerable Raya, Thalang Road's China Inn, the charming Siam Indigo on Phang Nga Road. The latest, Phuket Pochana, sprang up perfectly formed on the outskirts of Phuket Town last year, and makes a fine addition to the list.

It's clear the owners knew exactly how they wanted Pochana to look and feel before the foundations were even laid. Realizing their vision with discipline, they've created a restaurant that pays homage to Phuket's past without losing vitality along the way.

How Phuket is Pochana? Let us count the ways. In the morning hours its stock in trade is the quintessential Phuket breakfast: dim sum. Fads have seen dim sum joints colonize Western cities in recent years, but Phuketians have woken up to 'Chinese tapas' since the tin mining days.

And then there's the building itself. Some distance from the Old Town, its spiritual home, Pochana shares Wirat Hongsyok Road with the weekend market. Resembling a traditional Phuket house, seating areas are divided into three zones named after the island's trinity of districts, Muang, Thalang and Kathu. It's a microcosm.

Décor is from all over the

place. Sturdy mangosteen-wood pillars supporting the roof were brought in from Surat Thani; florid chandeliers from Burma; an old bicycle capped with a topee hat from Hadyai. Of the restaurant's three owners, not one is a Phuket native. Isn't that what this island's all about?

Back to the food. If there was a global culinary award for 'Nation Doing The Most Weird And Wonderful Things With Pork', the Chinese would snatch the gong. At Pochana minced pork is served up with salted egg, quail's egg, egg tofu, bitter cucumber, shiitake mushroom, or wrapped in cabbage, shrouded in seaweed or sealed in bacon. Religiously observant Semites might struggle.

Ha kao – dainty, near translucent shrimp-shaped dumplings – are the traditional test of a dim sum chef's skill. They must not stick to the serving basket. In the grip of chopsticks, the skin must hold together. Neither too large, nor too small, *ha kao* must be just so. Pochana's, in this amateur judge's opinion, pass the test.

Meanwhile *hor bacon* will be difficult to resist for Brits given their (*hor bacon's*) uncanny resemblance to 'pigs in blankets', the sausages wrapped in bacon essential to a good British Christmas dinner. The minced pork *salapao* are heaven in a bun. And then there's the dim sum sauce: not too sweet, pleasingly complex.

Other Phuketian favorites include *pa kud te* (pork rib soup); *mee sua* (angel hair noodle soup with minced pork); *khai kata* (the Thai answer to the full English breakfast, served straight out the pan) and *khao tom* (rice congee).

Washed down with fresh coffee, it's the breakfast of champions – and one that won't set you back more than 100 to 150 baht per person.



LEFT: A Phuket Pochana staff member mans stacks of steaming dim sum baskets at the restaurant on Wirat Hongsyok Road. FAR LEFT: *Salapao* (Chinese filled buns) are a highlight. TOP: Prawns in a sweet tamarind sauce are on the menu in the evening.



In the evening Pochana transforms into a rather classy Thai restaurant, with seafood and Thai classics replacing the Chinese fare of daytime. Steamed lemon fish is a sensation; prawns in tamarind sauce are a sweet, sticky delight. Drinkers will be excited to hear wines come at "Thai prices". House white by

the glass is 89 baht, most bottles hover at around 800 baht.

At weekends, Pochana positively bustles. For dim sum, get there early as some of items have been known to run out. An excellent restaurant, Phuketian to the core.

– Photos and story by Dan Waites



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Beneath the WAVES

By Dan Ogunshakin

The multi-faceted nature of diving is one of the major reasons it appeals to such a wide variety of people. Simply put, there's something for everyone.

Some divers might prefer slowly passing over a gently sloping coral reef, while others might favor cruising past towering, monolithic boulders placed on the bottom of the sea many moons ago.

Diving along a sheer wall – giving the diver the impression he or she is flying – is enough to set the pulse racing for one diver, while inching painstakingly slowly over seemingly barren sand in the hope of finding a weird and wonderful creature of the deep can do the same in another.

The relaxation brought about by hovering almost motionless can be one's idea of heaven. On the other hand, to an adrenalin junkie, the sensation of being dragged along by wild creatures or being spun in a washing machine by a ripping current can be just as pleasant – the latter definitely not for the faint hearted.

Some people love wrecks, others caves; deep diving can turn some folks on, while others are quite content to stay in the shallows.

And with marine life, it's no different.

All creatures great and small



Photo: Jon Hanson

Giant Manta Rays are just one example of the variety of breathtaking sights for divers of the Andaman Sea.

Some declare, 'the bigger the better'. Others believe that 'good things come in small packages'; it's all horses for courses.

Luckily for me, I find myself in a position where I can't lose: I love sharks and rays, but also love nudibranchs, shrimps and ghostpipefish. But that wasn't always the case.

There was a time when I laughed at the thought of a shrimp being as cool as a shark; I mean, how could it be? There's never been a film made about a killer shrimp, has there?

With that in mind, let's begin with the bigger species that live in the waters in and around Thailand.

Divers who live or visit the land of smiles in search of pelagic life will not go home disappointed. When the seasons are right, it is possible to encounter two of the creatures many would trade their children or grandparents for the opportunity to see: manta rays and the world's biggest fish, the whale shark.

On Thailand's Andaman coast, encounters with manta rays are reasonably common between the months of December and May. Like birds of prey from a prehistoric era in appearance, their wing span is usually in the realm of three to four metres, but they have been known to grow to in excess of seven meters and weigh up to 2,300kg.

Mantas feed on plankton and are totally harmless, often choosing to interact with divers, showing a playful nature as they swoop in and around pinnacles and reefs. This is occasionally done as a group, seemingly mimicking a display of planes at an air show.

Encounters with the biggest fish in the sea are moments to be

savored and recalled for years and years to come. When many people think of sharks, they conjure up images of Jaws tearing through boats, people and everything else in its path, but one glimpse of a whale shark will dispel a lot of your concern.

Although capable of moving at a decent speed despite its size (thanks to its large tail fin), whale sharks are usually seen cruising serenely through the water, almost with a smile etched on its face and a sparkle in the tiny eyes that sit on the side of its head.

The largest whale shark ever recorded was more than 12m in length, although there have been reports of much larger specimens encountered, but never officially measured.

Despite their size, very little is known about these magnificent creatures and they are protected by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Throughout my diving life, I have been fortunate to encounter six different whale sharks. The biggest I ever saw was approximately eight or nine meters and swam within inches of my face; I was extremely lucky and that still remains one of my fa-

vorite diving memories.

Away from the 'big two', Thai waters are home to many other species of sharks and rays. Leopard sharks are fairly common on the Andaman coast, particularly around Koh Phi Phi and the Similan Islands.

White and black tip, and grey reef sharks are also encountered fairly frequently on the west coast, and like leopard sharks, pose little if no threat to divers whatsoever.

In the Gulf of Thailand, however, things become more interesting. Koh Tao is one of the world's most popular dive destinations, certifying thousands of divers each year. Its premier dive site is known as Chumphon Pinnacles and large sharks have congregated around its mountain-like topography for some time.

Widely believed to be bigger-than-average grey reef sharks, two independent experts have stated that they believe the sharks that inhabit Chumphon Pinnacles are bull sharks, commonly thought to be the most aggressive of sharks. On top of that they believe the site might be a bull shark breeding ground.... spare wetsuit time, perhaps.

I could go on at length about tuna, sailfish, marlin, trevally and the like, there is so much to focus on, but any piece that focuses on the bigger stuff wouldn't be complete without a few words about turtles.

The elder statesmen and women of the sea, turtles can live for decades, cruising peacefully around reefs without a care in the world. Comfortable in the presence of divers, most turtles will fix humans with a beady eye as they carry on their daily lives of eating coral, resting or sedately moving around just so they know they've been observed.

A day's diving that offers the chance to see some of these magnificent large specimens can be a day that is impossible to forget, but as you shall see next time, so can an encounter with some of the sea's smallest inhabitants.






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Rubbing out crow's feet



Photo: Meg Wilson

Modern Skin

With Dr Suchart Ngamlertkul

If 'signal peptides' sound like something out of science fiction, they're not too far off. A popular new skin treatment that produces favorable results with a virtually painless procedure (it comes in the form of a cream), signal peptides actually communicate with cells to make them reproduce healthy, younger looking skin.

A lack of collagen – the protein that keeps our skin healthy – is the main culprit in causing wrinkles in our skin. When we're young, our skin is full of healthy collagen, which supports skin and gives it its toned appearance. Sunshine and the elements constantly wear down this collagen and, as we get older, it is not completely replaced. The resulting lack of the protein causes wrinkles.

Signal peptides got their name for a reason. When they're applied to the skin, they send out signals to the cells lying within the skin, and cause them to produce more collagen. The result is fewer wrinkles.

The treatment might sound similar to Botox, but there are some key differences.

Botox is an essentially harmless treatment that relaxes or, technically, paralyzes certain muscles. Because it needs to be injected directly into the the body of the muscles, the process of course involves the dreaded 'n' word: needles!

That makes Botox a big 'no no' for many needle-phobes.

Signal peptides, however, are topical, meaning they're applied to the skin in the form of a cream, with no injection needed. The results give very similar results to Botox.

When they're applied on the skin, signal peptides work in one of two ways. Depending on which peptides are added to the cream, they will either start making more collagen or cause the superficial muscles in the skin to relax.

One of the most popular signal peptides being currently used is called 'argireline', which acts in a very similar fashion to Botox. Of course, since it's not injected into the muscles, it does not relax the big muscles of the forehead or re-contour the jaw lines. However, it does relax the more superficial lines around the eyes: those tiny little crow's feet that start to appear on late twenty-something girls who have been smiling too much.

*Dr Suchart Ngamlertkul is a dermatologist specializing in skin lasers, rejuvenation procedures and treatment of skin diseases. For more information contact Face2Face Skin and Aesthetic Centre, Med Spa, Boat Lagoon 20/64, Thepkasattri Road, Phuket 83000.
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B. Alan Wallace is a dynamic lecturer, progressive scholar, and one of the most prolific writers and translators of Tibetan Buddhism in the West. Alan has taught Buddhist meditation and philosophy worldwide since 1976 and has served as interpreter for numerous Tibetan scholars and contemplatives, including H.H. the Dalai Lama. After earning his undergraduate degree in physics and the philosophy of science at Amherst College in 1967, he went on to earn his Ph.D. in religious studies at Stanford University in 1969. He is the Chairman of the Phuket International Academy Mind Centre (PIAMC) in Phuket, where he leads intensive, eight-week meditation retreats and shorter weekend retreats. Also the Founder and President of the Santa Barbara Institute for Consciousness Studies.

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Please note: you have to attend the Sat 10 April session in order to attend the Sun 11 April sessions.

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Falling for Medan

Just a 50 minute flight from Phuket and you can be in Medan, Indonesia. Capital of Northern Sumatra, the city is home to over two million people.

With a wealth of architec-

tural gems, the 400-year-old city, is hugged by some of Asia's most awe-inspiring natural sites: the Sipisopiso (like knives) Waterfall and the largest volcanic lake in the world, Lake Toba.

Following Thai Air Asia's recent move to introduce direct Phuket-Medan flights, Phuket locals and tourists can now be sipping Lintong coffee in a Medanese café before 6pm, three days a week.

In the city center, most tourists hop on motorized *becaks*, a form of rickshaw, which billow black smoke and serve as Medan's most popular form of transport for tourists.

With a cross-city fare costing from 5,000-10,000 ruphias (17 – 34 baht) – it's a cheap way to explore.

While the city is dotted with architectural oddities and museums, out of the city is where the real Medan magic is. However, remember to change your currency before venturing out; there are few places to do so in the countryside.

Reachable by bus in four hours is the majestic Sipisopiso Waterfall, located on the shoulder of Lake Toba.

Formed by a river under the Karo Plateau, the water spews from an opening in the rock face into a chasm 37 meters below, eventually flowing into the lake.

The vast 100 kilometer long volcanic lake is 505 meters at its deepest point. The world's largest



MAGICAL MEDAN: The Sipisopiso Waterfall (left). Also pictured: daily life in Medan.

super volcanic eruption is estimated to have taken place at Lake Toba 70,000 years ago.

A ferry boat ride on the lake is a must for anyone visiting the region. There are a few hotels dotted around the lake where mid-range lodgings can be found at bargain prices.

A search online for 'Lake Toba accommodation' will yield the best results.

A tour of the nearby Tomok Village is also popular for most visitors to Lake Toba.

The macabre tour, takes visitors on a journey into the history of the cannibal tribes who once lived there and their methods of torturing and eating rival tribe members.

An interesting part of the world untouched by tourist hoards. Medan and Northern Sumatra are captivating places to spend a long weekend.

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– *Atchaa Khamlo*

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EXPAT GALLERY

Dr George Hickman

Professor Dr George Hickman has been the Headmaster of the British International School (BIS), Phuket since 2005. He was invited to assume the position because of his vast experience, educational qualifications and proven record for reinvigorating schools in need of organizational change. He is passionate about building an enriched learning environment for staff, students and parents.

He first came to Thailand in the mid 1980s as a consultant at Naresuan University in Central Thailand. He developed and implemented a system of Performance Appraisal for the faculty. He delivered other seminars and conferences at Chiang Mai University and Srinakharinwirot University.

In 2002, he became the adviser to the President of Mah Fa Luang University in Chiang Rai, on Human Resources and International Relations. It was then that his talents were recognized by Dr Arthit Ourairat, Director of Rangsit University, who recruited him as a senior administrator, and shortly thereafter appointed him as Headmaster of BIS.

"I was born in a fishing village in Newfoundland. The Principal in our local school decided I should become a teacher. I was not quite 17 years old when I got my first teaching job at a two-room school, after just five weeks

of training. I had 46 students in Grades 6 through 11. That was a challenge, but enjoyable!"

He attended Memorial University in St John's, and was awarded a Bachelor's Degree in History and English and a Bachelor Degree in Education. For the next 25 years, Dr Hickman worked as a teacher and as an administrator in Newfoundland. During that time, he was the Founding Principal for two schools and completed a Master's Degree in Education Administration.

"When I started teaching, there were few resources so we had to make our own. There were no Projectors, or computers, but we still managed to graduate students who have made their mark around the world!"

Dr Hickman was awarded his Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Toronto, where he still holds the record for completing a doctorate in the shortest time in the school's history. "I well remember analyzing data on Christmas Day, and writing up the results on New Year's Eve!"

In 1984, he moved to the Faculty of Education at Memorial University as a professor, and eventually become Vice President of Human Resources. He continued teaching undergraduate and graduate courses as he wanted to maintain his relation-

ship with students and stay current in the field of education.

"I taught Policy Development and Implementation, as well as Performance Appraisal, as I've always had a particular interest in accountability and the myriad of organizational challenges in a school."

Dr Hickman has also taught on-line courses and has been a graduate adviser to more than 40 students.

By 2002, he decided to "kind of" retire, but after a few weeks out of the classroom he knew he had more to contribute to education.

"When I first paid a visit to what is now the British International School, I was very impressed by what I saw. When Dr Arthit offered me the opportunity to serve as Headmaster, I accepted the challenge with great anticipation."

Under his leadership, the school has grown from 670 students in 2005 to over 900 today.

"It's truly enjoyable to work with both the non-academic and teaching staff. I do believe it's important to show a healthy respect for the different cultures in our school community."

Dr Hickman runs every day and takes regular trips to Switzerland for skiing.

"I haven't finished my work at BIS, Phuket yet. I enjoy the parents and our staff, but the main reason I stay is our students. I firmly believe that we have the best students in the world, and I am very proud to work with them."

- 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, ahh, not entirely clear. Some of our subjects are not business people at all, but have added real value to Phuket as English teachers, journalists, artists, engineers, fund raisers, etc. But all have one thing in common: if there were a *Who's Who* in Phuket, they'd be in it.



We look forward to seeing you in our new offices at **Gazette Square** from **Tuesday, March 30...** onward.

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ALTRUISTIC ALLIANCE: In a signing ceremony held on March 22 a partnership between Marriott Hotels Thailand and Habitat for Humanity Thailand was officially formed to support the Baan Home Hug project. The goal of this partnership is to help families in need and to build 10 houses in Pathumthani and Phuket in 2010. Executive Committees and associates of Marriott recently donated 655,665 baht to the project. Pictured from the left: Director of Resource Development of Habitat for Humanity Asia Pacific Jim Yarbrough; Chairperson of Habitat for Humanity Thailand Dr Chainarong Monthienvichienchai; Chairperson of Marriott Business Council Thailand Peter Caprez; Country Director of Human Resources Thailand Panjit Howe.



HOUSE PARTY: Latin House in Patong held their grand opening party on March 19. The new 5-story hot spot is made up of a Latin dance school, restaurant, lounge and hotel. Pictured at center wearing a black dress is one of Latin House's owners, Ms Supaporn Chengkrathok, with Mr Costa Jean Pierre. Management consultant and Ocean Plaza Patong's Human Resource Manager Terrawat Wattanasoponkul is pictured on far left in blue shirt.



CARING COMMITTEE: The annual general meeting of the Phuket International Women's Club took place on March 18 at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort. Pictured in the front row are: Treasurer Sue Arnulphy; President Wipa Tanmanatragul; Vice President Carole Dux; and Scholarships secretary Carol Fryer.




MI PIACE IL PALAZZO: The new Il Palazzo restaurant, bar and lounge in Patong held a special relaunch bash on March 20. From left: Hard Rock Cafe's General Manager Mr Urs 'Mee' Mosimann and guest; Il Palazzo's PR & Marketing Manager Ceren Guncavdi; Il Palazzo's Executive Chef Rene Kelbassa.



ECO-WARRIOR SPEAKS: Sea canoeist and eco-tourism pioneer John Gray recently visited the British International School's primary year 6 class. Students are currently learning about the effects of tourism on Phuket's environment and are developing ideas for their own environmentally friendly resorts. Mr Gray gave them a heartfelt presentation in an effort to promote conservation and raise awareness of the impact of resort development on the island's flora and fauna.



ONE LOVE ONE NIGHT: Thai reggae star Banjob Phoninn, known by most as 'Khun Job', took to the stage at Yoonique's Bar in Nai Harn on March 20. Accompanied by a special guest band from Chiang Mai, Khun Job entertained the crowd of Thais and expats with some of his greatest hits. Photo by Phanlop Vichitam.




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EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

D Gallery presents Day-Night and Day Art Exhibition at Royal Phuket Marina – April 2-8



Day-Night and Day will feature the works of renowned Vietnamese artist Nguyen Tan Cuong on mixed-media canvas. The theme of time in 'Day-Night and Day' contains several moments that continuously run around and mingle, opposing the contradicting aspects of the flow of time. The artist has participated in art exhibitions throughout the world. The exhibition runs from 11am to 7pm on weekdays and from 12pm to 6pm on Sunday at D Gallery, Royal Phuket Marina. For further information contact Watinee (Ann) Kaewket. T: 076-360867. E: info@dgallery.co.th. W: dgallery.co.th.

April 2. Laguna Turtle Release at Sheraton Grande
To help protect Thailand's endangered sea turtles, Laguna Phuket will host this annual event in association with the Phuket Marine Biological Center and the Royal Thai Navy. This year's event will feature the release of two juvenile turtles equipped with satellite tracking devices, part of the ongoing research that maps local feeding grounds and migration patterns. Donate 3,000 baht to release a turtle, purchase 100 baht raffles to win prizes or a chance to release a turtle. Game booths and lucky dip: 20 baht. Fun and games start at 4pm; the turtle release starts at 5:30pm at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Beachfront. For further information contact Ms Thareeya Deasakorn Khamkar. T: 076-362300 E: thareeyak@lagunaphuket.com.

April 4. Easter Sunday Brunch at Floyd's
Easter Sunday Brunch will be held at Floyd's Brasserie from noon to 4pm. Feast on imported oysters, seafood, special carvery, fresh pasta, European cheeses, cold cuts, fabulous desserts, and much more. Free-flowing wine buffet and soft drinks. Price: 1,500 baht ++ (Kids under 12 eat free; max 2 kids per table). From 12pm - 4pm at Burasari Resort Patong. For further information contact Khun Zew. T: 076-292929. E: kurissara@burasari.com.

April 4. Fun Football Day at Royal Phuket Marina
Join RPM for an afternoon of family football. Test your skills on a penalty shootout, enjoy a demonstration of Futebol de Salão, mixed family-sided games and much more. All proceeds will be used to purchase footballs for a local Thai orphanage. Free admission; parents will receive a 20 percent discount at RPM restaurants from 7pm to 9pm. From 4pm to 7pm at the grass lawn near the tennis courts at RPM. For further information contact Mr Murat Can Sakarya or Mr Martin Hill. T: 085-331 0295. E: muratc@royalphuketmarina.com.

April 4. A traditional Easter at Moevenpick
All are invited to enjoy a traditional Easter feast with some special surprises. Experience a unique take on the traditional Easter dinner with selections that include favorites such as roasted lamb and fish, Easter eggs and chocolate goodies. Throughout the night, guests will be entertained with a Thai cultural show. 1,300++ baht per person (dinner only). 1,800++ baht per person with free-flowing beer, liquor, favorite cocktails and wine tasting reception. From 7pm - 10pm at the Hotel Lagoon lawn. For further information contact Mr Teerawat Ratsamee. T: 076-396139. E: teerawat.ratsamee@moevenpick.com. W: moevenpick-phuket.com.

April 6. Chakri Day – Public Holiday
Chakri Day commemorates the origins of the Chakri Dynasty, founded by Rama I, who established Bangkok as the nation's capital. HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej is the ninth monarch of the Chakri dynasty.

April 8-11. Phuket Oilfield Classic 2010
The Red Mountain and Loch Palm Golf Courses welcome all competitors to their 2nd Annual Charity Golf Tournament. This event attracts international golf pros as well as local competitors. Come join in the fun on the weekend before Songkran and see if you can win some of the fantastic prizes available to all contestants. Lucky contestants will bid for a once-in-a-lifetime collectible at the Charity Auction, such as a framed Carlos Santana Guitar or an F1 Checked Flag signed by all the F1 Drivers. For further information, contact Mark Cameron. T: 081-882843. E: mark@phuketoilfieldclassic.com. W: phuketoilfieldclassic.com.

April 13. Songkran Dinner & Entertainment at Moevenpick
Moevenpick is making a splash of its own this Songkran with a special Gala Dinner Buffet at the Sand Bar, featuring the best Thai traditional family-style cuisine accompanied by Thai music and a cabaret spectacular. 1,010++ baht per person. The performances start at 8:00pm; the event runs from 7pm - 10pm at the Sand Bar. For further information contact Mr. Teerawat Ratsamee. T: 076-396139. E: teerawat.ratsamee@moevenpick.com. W: moevenpick-phuket.com.

April 13-15. Songkran Festival – Public Holidays
Songkran, Thailand's biggest holiday, celebrates the beginning of the Thai New Year. Also known as the Water Festival, Songkran

is held during the driest months in Thailand, and is celebrated by Thais throughout the country by pouring (traditionally only a little, but these days a lot of) water on other people to wish them good luck for the New Year. Celebrations will take place throughout the island.

April 21. Phuket Punchline Comedy Club
The Phuket Punchline team returns with another night of international stand-up comedy. This show welcomes internationally acclaimed novelist and comedian Mark Billingham, author of the hugely successful 'Inspector Thorne' books. Joining Mark are two more Brits in the shape of Mike Gunn and Carl Donnoly. From 8pm - 11pm at Holiday Inn Resort Phuket, Patong. For further information contact Boom. T: 089-646 9278 E: info@phuketcomedy.com. W: phuketcomedy.com.

April 22. Phuket Int'l Women's Club lunch at Silk
The Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch will be held at Silk Restaurant, Andara, Kamala. All are welcome, but please pre-register. 450 baht for members; 600 baht for guests. From 11:30 am - 2pm. For further information contact Carole Dux. T: 076-316711. E: info@phuketiwc.com.

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March 28 – Chalong.
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MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

Richard G. Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial-planning service, and has over 25 years experience in this field. Office: 076-381 997. Mobile: 081-081 4611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th www.globalportfolios.com.

The current global financial crisis is making investors interested in alternative opportunities. One of the choices is gold, but, having put the yellow metal on a shopping list, the next question is: How does one hold gold?

Gold can be held in a bank safety deposit box but many international investors are going to find it difficult to arrange this not-so-simple transaction.

An alternative is an ETF (Exchange Traded Fund), which is simply a unit trust/mutual fund that holds physical gold, takes care of security and gives units or shares to represent the

Holding onto gold

holding of the individual investor.

Again, this sounds straightforward, but problems with anti-money laundering measures are bound to arise and the average expat investor (non American) is probably going to find the process onerous.

However, international ETFs are available, and there are much easier and legal ways of accessing them.

The problem is still that gold, in its physical form, does not yield an income; the investor is reliant on a rise in the price of gold to make a profit. That said, if an investor believes that the outcome of all these stimulus and bailout packages is going to lead to a weaker US Dollar, then gold will very likely return to its traditional role as a counterbalance to the US unit.

What also could eventually occur due to massive monetary and fiscal stimulation around the world is the return of a higher than expected level of inflation.

Central banks and governments around the world may well succeed in their mission to create economic growth but it will be necessary to 'mop up' excess liquidity or risk inflation – or the

creation of another asset bubble.

For gold 'bulls', other ways of participating include gold shares, which offer significantly higher returns than just holding the physical metal. Most gold shares are in the mines themselves.

Normally when the price of gold increases gold shares rise at a much faster pace. Mines have a fixed cost for producing gold. Here's an example: total cost of extraction = US\$500 per ounce; current price = US\$800; profit = US\$300. Should the price rise to US\$1,100 per ounce, the profit margin has increased by more than 100%.

The real profit to an investor in gold shares is unlikely to be as simple as that example. One of the main reasons for this is emotions in broader stockmarkets and gold shares are subject to overall emotions. If a rise in the price of gold coincides with a rising stockmarket, gold shares are likely to outperform average shares.

However, if the rest of the stockmarket is still in a 'bear' phase, returns are likely to be lower. Stockmarkets vary between being overly optimistic and overly pessimistic. When they are the latter stage, 'paper assets' (shares) tend to under perform.

Gold peaked at US\$840 an ounce in the early 1980s then it bottomed out around US\$250 an ounce in the late 1990s.

It took until early 2008 to reach its previous peak. Gold reached a new all-time record high some weeks ago at over US\$1,200 an ounce.

India now seems to be at the center of the gold universe. There were widespread reports that when gold moved to over US\$1,000 an ounce, many Indian ladies decided to cash in their traditional gold bracelets.

However, India has joined most of the rest of the world in an economic downturn, and its inflation levels are still relatively high while growth rates are falling quite rapidly.

On a global basis, around



ALWAYS ATTRACTIVE: Women shop for gold in Gaza City's gold market. The Israeli blockade on the impoverished Gaza Strip has not affected the gold trade, say sellers, who say they bring stock through tunnels from Egypt to satisfy the demand for gold gifts in hugely popular weddings. Photo: AFP/Mohammed Abed

75% of gold is used for making jewelry, demand which at present is muted. The balance is mainly used for investment or industrial purposes.

It is difficult for private investors to select individual gold shares; it's much more efficient to invest in an offshore gold fund. For this kind of investment, it is important – as always – to select a fund manager with an above average track record.

One other way private investors can access gold as an investment is via the futures markets. Again, it is important to use a fund for this approach. Futures funds are seldom boring but they have one great advantage over any other approach: they can make a profit on both a rising or falling gold price.

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

investors over the past ten years will have seen a gain of about 300%.

There are efficient ways of holding all these assets and switching at any stage without causing a paperwork nightmare.

The global gold market appears robust. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) sold several hundred tons of the yellow metal last year, which was immediately purchased by the Indian Central Bank, the Reserve Bank of India. The reason for the purchase was to diversify India's foreign currency reserves, which have risen substantially in recent years.

A further large amount was put on the market, again by the IMF, and caused little disruption to the price. The IMF is making these sales to give it liquidity to assist countries with financial problems.

It is an indication of a strong global market for gold that it can absorb large unexpected sales.



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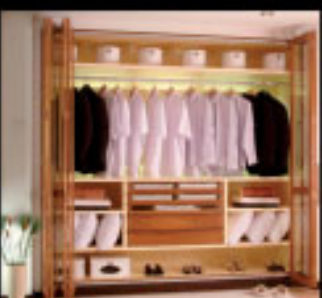
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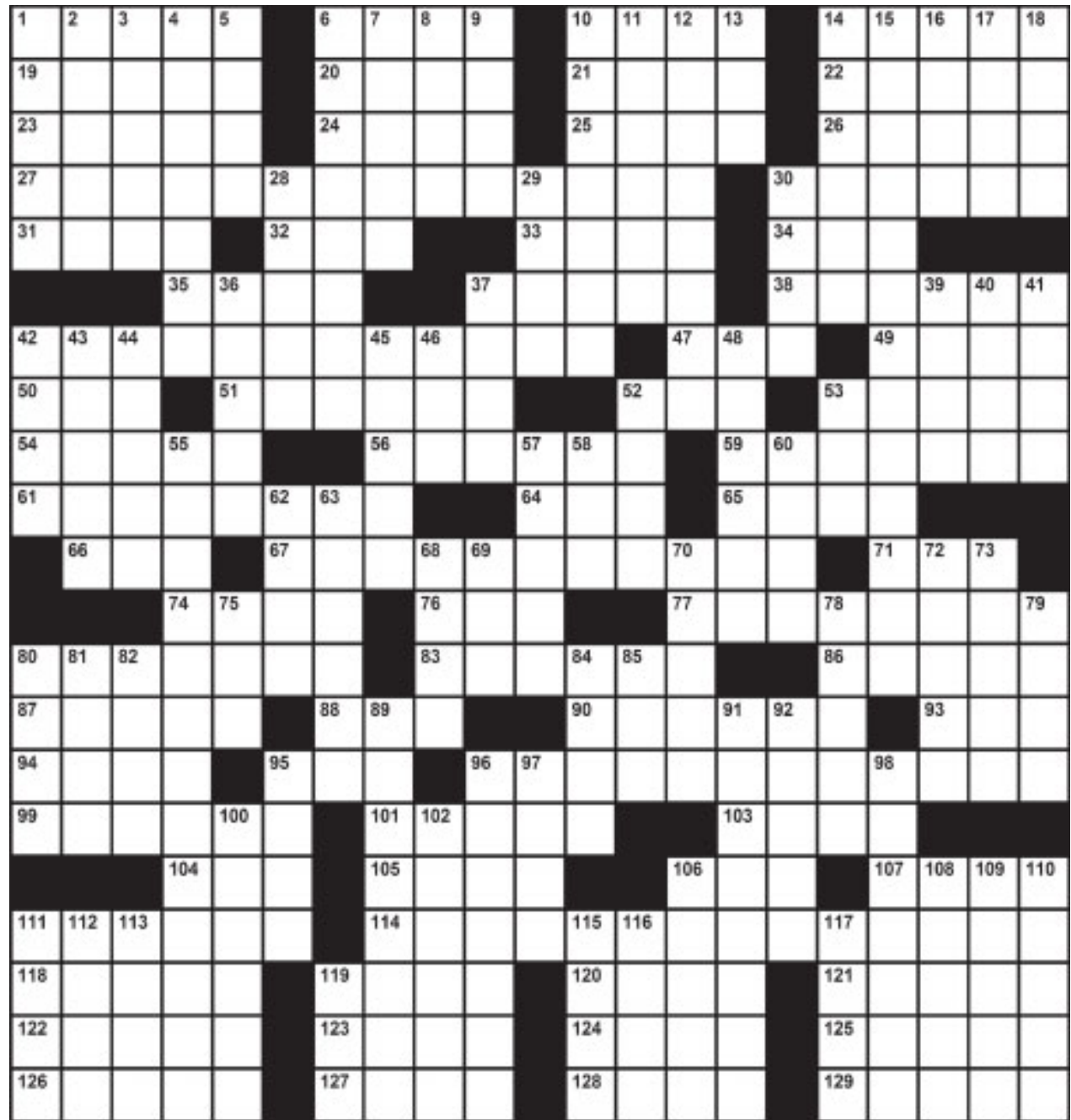
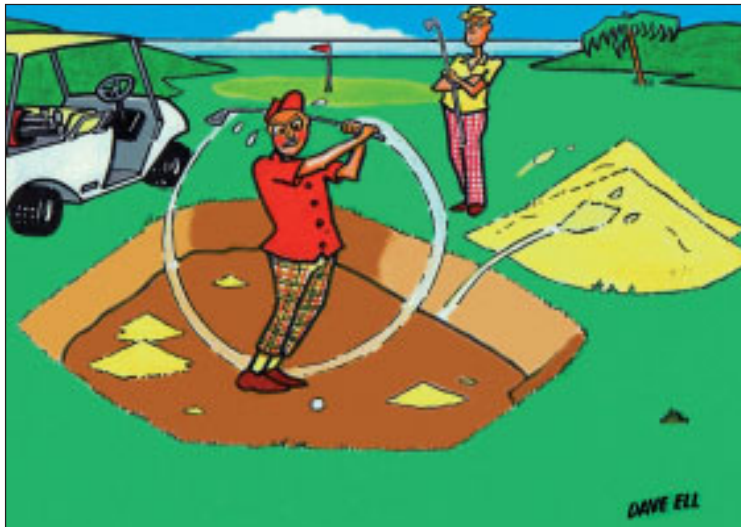
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PUZZLES

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 Unexpressed yet understood
- 6 Break into the system
- 10 "If it's all the ___ to you ..."
- 14 Fettuccine or linguine
- 19 Cain's firstborn
- 20 "___ there, matey!"
- 21 Watered-down
- 22 "It's ___ to you now"
- 23 Psychiatrist Alfred
- 24 Concluding musical passage
- 25 American Beauty, for one
- 26 Economic downturn
- 27 Insincere show of sorrow
- 30 Worst for driving
- 31 "Iliad" quarrelor
- 32 Bad color for business
- 33 Make a sinner thinner?
- 34 Be a shrew
- 35 Loudness measure
- 37 Alternate spelling for 37-Down
- 38 Commotion
- 42 Certain committee
- 47 "I ___ Rock" (Simon and Garfunkel hit)
- 49 Spanish appetizer
- 50 Civil War nickname
- 51 Aid to navigators
- 52 Compete in a slalom
- 53 Clean type of power
- 54 Russian who wrote "The Lower Depths"
- 56 Round Table member
- 59 Scare suddenly
- 61 Prepare for conflict
- 64 "House of Long Shadows" actor
- 65 Christopher
- 66 Earring type
- 67 Permanent moratorium
- 1980 Best Picture nominee (with "The")

DOWN

- 71 First of six?
- 74 Gershon of film
- 76 "Billion Dollar Brain" novelist
- Deighton
- 77 Famous last words?
- 80 Anti-art movement of the late 1910s
- 83 Test of one's mettle
- 86 Animated mermaid
- 87 Organs males lack
- 88 Creature of Cleopatra's demise
- 90 Blackjack pairing, perhaps
- 93 Cruise stop in Brazil
- 94 "___ contendere" (no contest plea)
- 95 Pile at a campground
- 96 Achievement demonstrating great skill
- 99 Jump in a puddle (Var.)
- 101 "... three to get ___"
- 103 "Here ___, there ..." ("Old MacDonald" refrain)
- 104 Pool tool
- 105 "The First Lady of Song" Fitzgerald
- 106 Reading matter on an urn
- 107 Brewer's preparation
- 111 Break the news to
- 114 Bushy, droopy facial feature
- 118 "Antiques Roadshow" estimate
- 119 Thatching palm
- 120 Pertaining to the flock
- 121 "Abandon hope, all ye who ___ here"
- 122 Disconnected
- 123 Former Olympics powerhouse
- 124 It makes a kitty grow
- 125 Tell a thing or two to
- 126 Smartly dressed
- 127 Where a hose may be housed

DOWN

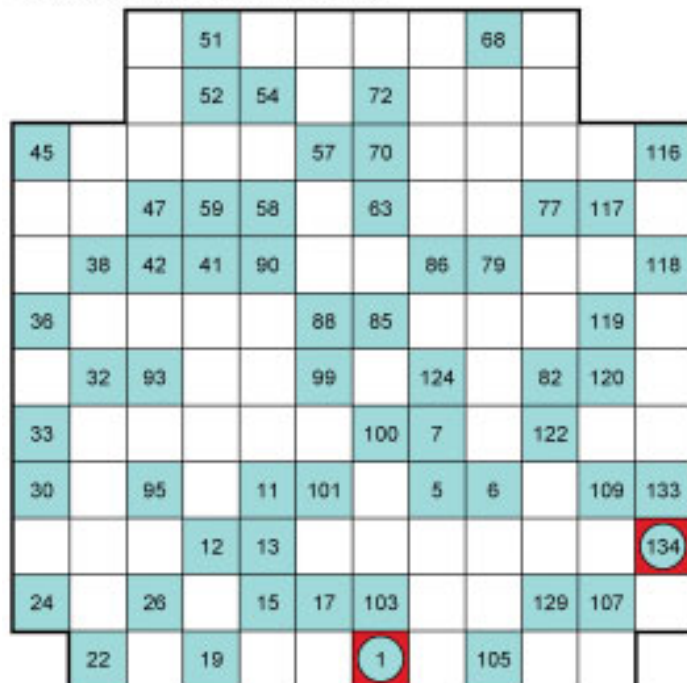
- 1 Emulate a school-marm
- 2 The Giant of wrestling
- 3 What some laser printers offer
- 4 Thick Antarctic coverings
- 5 Via, in old poems
- 6 Mexican ranch
- 7 Get ___ of (reach by phone)
- 8 Building contractor's concern
- 9 Currency in Myanmar
- 10 Puts through a sieve
- 11 "My kingdom for ___"
- 12 Pronounce incorrectly
- 13 Houston-to-Charleston dir.
- 14 French mathematician and philosopher
- Blaise
- 15 Avocado
- 16 Make a sharp turn
- 17 Rolands competitor
- 18 Date with a DDS, e.g.
- 28 Hive-frequency sound?
- 29 Enthusiastic vigor
- 30 Andean ancient
- 36 Tough thing to break
- 37 Asian princess
- 39 Foamy drink
- 40 Mineral formed from silica
- 41 Briefly broiled
- 42 Minimum ___ (lowest legal pay rate)
- 43 Mushroom cloud maker, briefly
- 44 ___ Buena (California island)
- 45 Screenwriter
- Robert
- 46 A dog's age
- 48 Unfortunate accident
- 52 "Keep it" notation

- 53 ___ Luis, Brazil
- 55 Where a fair trial is impossible
- 57 Thyroid, for one
- 58 Mother ptarmigan
- 60 Tennille of pop
- 62 Certain times tables
- 63 Two-l creatures
- 68 Sound of fish being tossed back in the water
- 69 Common pronoun
- 70 Wild fight
- 72 Tricky Dick's veep
- 73 Valentino title role (with "the")
- 75 Speaker of 11-Down, Richard ___
- 78 Too much, in music
- 79 ___ gin fizz (bar order)
- 80 Pestors for payment
- 81 At the high point of
- 82 Big name in computers
- 84 "Five ___ Pieces" (1970)
- 85 Freedom of Information, e.g.
- 89 Like a nag
- 91 Badmouths
- 92 Langley and Mackinnon
- 95 "Did you forget about me?"
- 96 Dabbling duck
- 97 Jewish calendar's sixth month
- 98 Danielle Steel's genre
- 100 It's guaranteed
- 102 Expire
- 106 Leaves off the list
- 108 One may be a ham
- 109 Bookstore necessity
- 110 Bucolic groups
- 111 "The Brothers Karamazov" brother
- 112 California wine region
- 113 Airless tire
- 115 ___ Bator
- 116 Has enough marbles?
- 117 Polanski film based on a Hardy novel
- 119 Certain Greek letters

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| A | D | L | E | R | | C | O | D | A | | R | O | S | E | | S | L | U | M | P |
| C | R | O | C | O | D | I | L | E | T | E | A | R | S | | | I | C | I | E | S |
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Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

Sir John Keegan is a 75-year-old British military historian who is universally acknowledged as one of the best of his generation.

Keegan has written the definitive histories of the first and second World Wars.

His twentieth volume of history is *The American Civil War* (Random House, New York, 2009, 394pp). I was curious to see what the foremost historian of the two world wars had to say about the four-year war that had such huge consequences for the United States. His summation is in his first line:

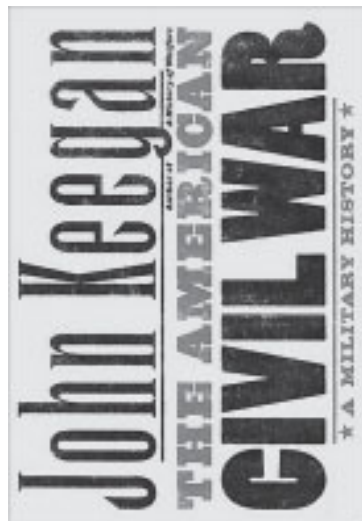
"I began an earlier book with the sentence 'The First World War was a cruel and unnecessary war.' The American Civil War, with

which it stands comparison, was also extremely cruel, both in the suffering it inflicted on the participants and the anguish it caused to the bereaved at home. But it was not unnecessary."

Keegan devotes several chapters to the causes and preparations of the war before concluding that the South, for all the superior generalship of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, could never have won the war, so long as the North was transforming into an industrial colossus that would rival the British Empire.

"The North was propelled into dominance of the world's economy by the war. An apparently open-ended boom, created by the demand for war goods and including agricultural products – wool for uniforms, leather for boots, and grain and meat for rations – as well as manufactured items, would drive the United States' economy to the first place in the world by 1880."

A crucial difference be-



tween North and South was one of leadership. Confederate President Jefferson Davis was a West Point graduate and a veteran of the Mexican-American War, but he was a stubborn and difficult man.

President Abraham Lincoln, on the other hand, started with no military experience but taught himself how to be a superb commander-in-chief. He had the

resolution to fire a series of incompetent or overcautious generals before settling on the ruthless and determined team of Grant and Sherman.

For Ulysses S. Grant, Keegan has the highest praise, calling him "the towering military genius of the Civil War".

"Grant had the gift of fluent and rapid composition on paper, enabling him to write dozens of clear orders in an evening's work in his tent, as well as the ability to visualise terrain in his mind's eye. He also understood evolving technologies, particularly that of the telegraph, which is used with apparently effortless facility."

Later, discussing Grant's unrelenting campaign against Vicksburg, Keegan adds: "He possessed another characteristic which was a function of his powerful self-confidence: a refusal to retrace his steps. 'I will take no backward step' was one of his best-known sayings..."

Grant was blessed with a trio of exceptional subordinates:

William Tecumseh Sherman, Philip Sheridan and George Thomas. Sherman's march through Georgia, inflicting civilian damages he himself estimated at \$100,000,000, presaged the 20th century concept of total war.

"War is war and not popularity seeking," Sherman wrote. "You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will. War is cruelty and you cannot refine it; and those who brought war into our country deserve all the curses and maledictions a people can pour out."

In a determined war of attrition, the South has no hope of winning. The price of defeat was harsh.

"Of all the changes brought by war, and defeat, to the South, the end of slavery was the most profound. . . The supervising class of the South had been decimated by the war; a quarter of the white able-bodied men had been killed or died of disease between 1861 and 1865. The South could never be the same again."

Horoscopes



Isla Star



ARIES (March 21-April 20): As March draws to a close, those Arians who are still counting the cost of a business investment that went pear-shaped should hear some positive news. The stars suggest that tables could be turned, with an unexpected payment coming your way. Be on the lookout for a sneaky Cancerian next Thursday who is likely to pull a prank. If your birthday is due in the week ahead, there should be more harmony in your family relationships.



TAURUS (April 21-May 21): The astral atmosphere continues to shower Taureans with good luck concerning employment matters. This situation will start to go downhill after the middle of April, so job seekers should accept the best offer available before then. A romantic relationship with Gemini is put to the test when you realize that this person's night owl tendencies clash with your own routine. The number eight can bring good fortune on Monday.



GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Geminis could find that it is difficult to get an important message across to a stubborn fire sign this week. Wednesday is the best day to make your point, but you will probably need to follow up with a reminder. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, there are indications that your efforts to meet a partner halfway will be successful. Commitments are high-

lighted in early April. The scent of peppermint invigorates your mood.



CANCER (June 22-July 23):

Cancerians continue to find plenty to keep them occupied and this trend is forecast to last well into April. You may have a few problems juggling work commitments and an ongoing personal responsibility – the stars suggest that a Capricorn friend has down to earth advice this weekend. Those who have been trying to impress Aries could try a mild April Fool's joke next Thursday. The number six can bring good luck next Tuesday.



LEO (July 24-August 22):

Leos who have been waiting to make a detour into a more rewarding direction should see a golden opportunity this week. The stars predict that a water sign colleague can make useful introductions on your behalf. This weekend, your previously negative attitude towards a distant family member changes when they reveal their true colors. Love blossoms when you learn that you have much in common with an earth sign.



VIRGO (August 23-September 23):

Where work is concerned, paddling against the tide could cause fatigue for many Virgoans this week. The sooner you see that your determination is misplaced, the sooner your luck will improve. Romance is af-

fectured by more favorable astral conditions until the middle of April – use this to your advantage by approaching an air sign you've admired from afar. Sunday is a well-starred day for love. The number three can be fortunate next Monday.



LIBRA (September 24-October 23):

Librans see that their cup is half full this week. What seemed to be a no-hope situation can now be turned to your advantage and lessons you learned earlier this year are forecast to come in useful. Your love life brings a pleasing surprise when a partner shows that they know you better than you thought. Technology could let you down mid-week, so take care to back up important work.



SCORPIO (October 24-November 22):

Even Scorpions who are content in their current location could be tempted to up roots when they hear a friend's glowing report this weekend. Someone who recently moved away is forecast to make a strong impression. Those who have itchy feet will need no convincing. Be careful not to take an April Fool's joke too far with an earth sign. The number seven has a lucky look next Tuesday.



SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21):

Taking more responsibilities on board could be one drop in the ocean too many

for some Sagittarians. This week, you will have low resistance to suggestions made in the heat of the moment, with vulnerability highlighted on Wednesday. Another fire sign is forecast to put a particularly attractive spin on a story that is too good to be true. Wearing the color deep purple can help encourage self-confidence.



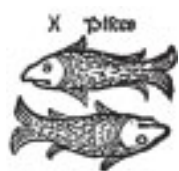
CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20):

Capricorns are advised to voice their feelings more this week. At work, your opinion could be taken for granted, leading to a situation that will be hard to get out of. Where love is concerned, a new partner is having doubts about the depth of your interest. Monetary matters begin to improve at the start of April, but mistakes next Thursday are highlighted. Wear silver to encourage easier communication.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Your ability to move ahead of the times is guaranteed



to take you far during the first half of April. Those born under the sign of Aquarius who could see an opportunity to make profit earlier this month are forecast to gain sooner than expected. Love with another air sign is well-starred, but flirtation with a water sign could cause unwelcome ripples.



PISCES

(February 20-March 20): Finances fall under benevolent astral conditions during the first week of April. Many Pisceans will see a debt repaid to them sooner than promised, and those who have been pulling their weight at work are predicted to be justly rewarded. Romance is not your priority during the first half of April, but attention from an earth sign will come at a welcome moment. Wear a piece of dark jade to encourage wisdom.



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The Phuket Gazette

- Since 1994 -

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In defense of the town

Pop quiz: what's the name of the administrative capital of this island of ours?

If you answered 'Phuket City', in a certain technical sense you're correct. The Thai government raised the status of the town to 'thesaban nakhon' – which can be translated as 'city municipality' – on February 13, 2004.

According to the government's definition, a municipality needs a population of at least 50,000 and 'sufficient income to carry out the tasks of a city' to qualify. With a population counted as 75,573 in 2007, Phuket's capital clearly makes the cut.

Nevertheless, if you answered 'Phuket Town', you're among the vast majority of people who live here. English speakers, native or not, overwhelmingly refer to the capital this way.

And most of those people see no need to change. What they perceive, when they pass through the small conurbation of Phuket Town, is exactly that – a town.

The debate raises an interesting question: who has the right, if anyone, to define what language usage is correct, and what isn't?

In linguistics, 'prescriptivists' are those who believe there exist individuals or organizations who have the right to rule on what constitutes 'proper language'.

Language teachers – and indeed newspaper editors – are usually of the prescriptivist school, and understandably so.

Try teaching a student English with anything less than a certainty of what's right and wrong, and you'll get the picture.

'Descriptivists', on the other hand, seek to describe language as it is actually used in the real world, unmoved by the pronouncements of so-called 'language mavens'.

If people use the phrase 'I'm lovin' it' – the McDonald's slogan derided by many as ungrammatical – according to this school the usage is correct.

If a Texan tells another, 'I ain't happy', and the listener understands and hears nothing unusual or unclear in what they have heard, in what sense can this be said to be 'incorrect'?

A language is just a dialect with an army, as the aphorism has it.

Here in Phuket, some observers have seen fit to deride those who use the term 'Phuket Town' as 'small town thinkers', supposedly unable to grasp the 21st century problems that face the town and, indeed, the entire island.

Does substituting a grand term for a lesser one necessarily bring about an expansion in conceptual ability?

Phuket City might be the official title. But as long as it looks like a town, feels like a town, and remains a town in general parlance, you'll still see the words 'Phuket Town' in the *Phuket Gazette*.

– The Editor

The Phuket Gazette

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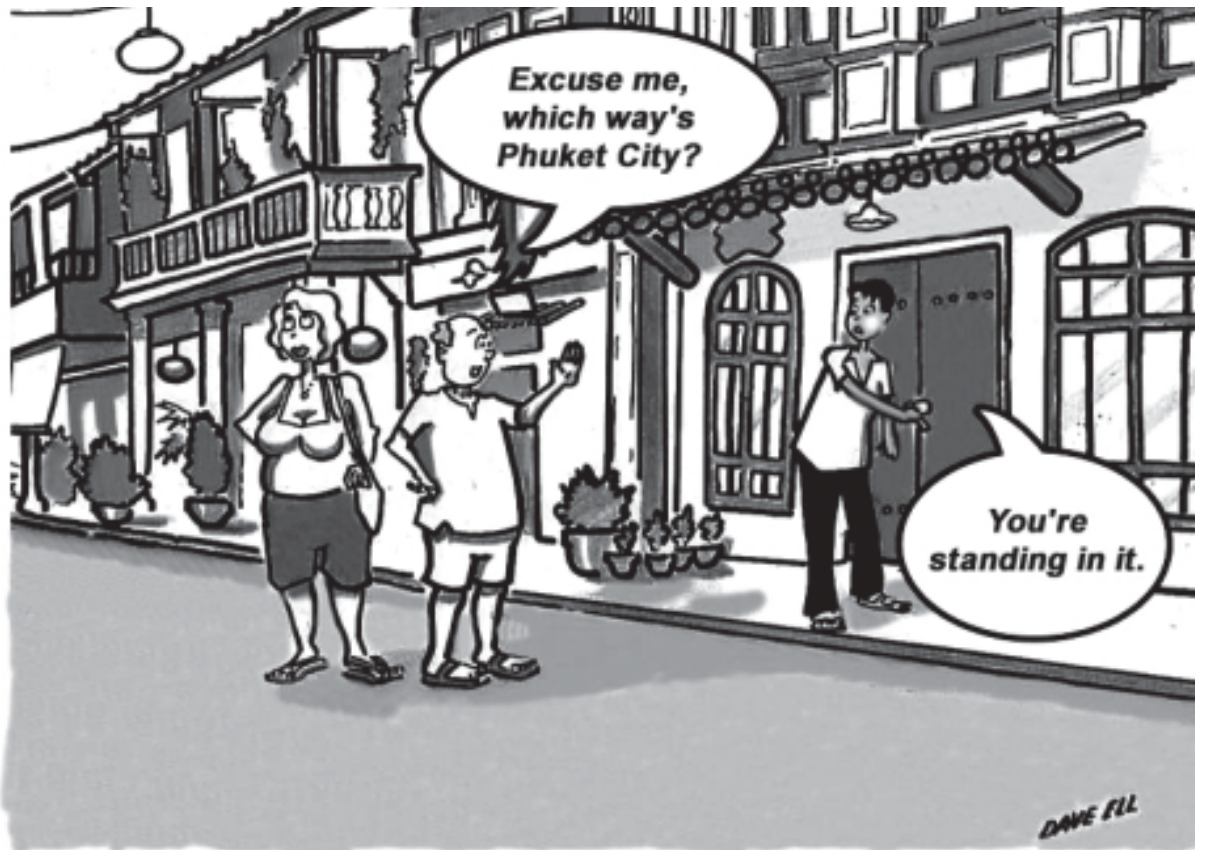
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Letters

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

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

The law is the law

Whether or not the Phuket police are making a spectacle out of the arrest of the Aussie guy for possession of marijuana [*Gazette online*, Aussie awaits drug trial, March 23, 2010], one truth remains: he broke the law.

Sure, he was in Phuket to enjoy himself and was engaging in a relatively harmless activity, especially compared with the number of drunk drivers on the road.

I do feel sorry that his holiday has been ruined and he now faces the prospect of being unable to return to his home country on the date he originally intended.

What was to be a relaxing vacation has surely turned into a bureaucratic nightmare for the young man. He now has to worry about court dates and fees instead of which beach to visit.

As unfortunate as his situation may be and as tempting as it can be to feel above the law, it is of utmost importance that we remember that there is law. Should we choose to engage in illegal activity, we should be fully prepared to face the consequences.

Every time someone hits the road after a few drinks, it is against the law. Extremely inconvenient and costly consequences are possible, not to mention horrible accidents.

Many of the nighttime activities in places like Patong are unlawful.

However infrequently the laws are enforced, and however frequently they are flouted, the case of the Australian tourist serves to remind us of the risks involved.

**Helmut Schneider
Kamala**

Taking on tuk-tuks

Will everyone just stop looking at the proposed pricing [*Gazette online*, Metered tuk-tuks 'just an idea': Phuket Gov, January 21, 2010]. This is more about the actions of the governor, who should be hailed for being so brave to get the ball rolling, even if it's not going to end the situation.

If tuk-tuks are priced at 250 baht no one will use them and they will disappear. If they are 50 baht, it will be business as usual, but fair business. So stop whining about the price and recognize that this is a great thing.

At last Phuket finally has someone brave enough to take on the problem. Well done, Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop!

**Jon
Phuket**

Positive encounter in Phuket

So often you hear negative stories about Phuket. I would like to share a story about something positive that happened to me.

On March 13, I drove down to the night market to pick up some groceries. I parked outside a trendy motorbike shop and made sure I wasn't blocking their small lane. I returned about an hour later and discovered that my vehicle had been chained.

Being relatively new here, I didn't know what the red and white lines on the curb meant.

I spoke to the bike shop staff and explained my predicament and one of their customers offered to run me down to the police station to help solve the matter.

So we drove to the station where I paid the fine. The chains

had already been removed by the time I returned.

I bought the Good Samaritan a beer for his troubles and was mightily relieved. He was a local man and although we had some language issues, we understood each other.

I would just like to brighten up the scene with a tale of a positive encounter in Phuket!

**Nick Lyons
Phuket**

High noon

I'm going to say something I feel needs to be said at the risk of offending the 'sensibilities' of some. Most would agree Thailand is fast becoming the wild wild West.

That being said, the rest of us should be able to protect ourselves at whatever cost and the government should facilitate that.

In places where guns have been allowed, crime has dropped; this cannot be argued. Criminals will always have guns and knives; this cannot be argued. Life is sacred, so our life should be protected.

At the very least, we should be able to own guns (easily, and legally) in our homes. Any takers?

**Tonglen
Phuket Forum**

Just an hour

Earth Hour 2010 is a step in the right direction, but falls short of having any more power than that of an hour.

What the world is in desperate need of is a more consistent awareness campaign and fewer gimmicks that only make us feel better about ourselves.

**Carl Domizio
Kathu**

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.

The new face of Phuket employment



FIRST PERSON

Phuket's new Employment Office Chief Noppadon Ployyoudee took up his position in January. Originally from Bangkok, Mr Ployyoudee is an expert in the employment issues encountered by immigrant workers, having previously worked at the Office of Foreign Workers Administration in Bangkok. In this week's *First Person*, he talks about the challenges faced by foreign workers in Phuket and his plans to streamline employment and work permit application procedures to benefit all concerned. Compiled by Thanasorn Chookate.

Because of the high number of immigrants in Phuket, I have been spending a lot more time out of the office on site inspections than I did in my previous positions in Bangkok and Chonburi.

My previous tasks would revolve around administering policies in the office, but because Phuket has so many foreign workers, I spend a lot more time out and about. There are many more issues to deal with here, but that makes the job more challenging.

While Phuket's rate of employment is very high, I intend to organize events and programs to help those people still seeking work here. The recent job fair at HomeWorks was part of a nationwide effort to help people find jobs or learn trades that will help them find jobs.

As stated, though, few people in Phuket are without work when compared to labor offices in other provinces. As a result, our work at Phuket Provincial Employment Office is more focused on processing work permit applications.

In my previous posts, I usually dealt directly with the employers and employees on employment issues, but in Phuket we deal mostly with representatives from agencies outsourced by companies hiring foreigners.

Most of these employers wait until the last minute to begin the process of renewing work permits.

I want to implement more efficient systems to make things better organized, especially focusing on providing better service to visitors at the office by reducing the amount of paperwork involved and time spent on work permit applications and renewals.

Foreign workers employed legally here should be able to obtain work permit renewals within 10 to 15 minutes. We will also add a work permit delivery service to places of work for employees who are too busy to go to the labor offices.

If we are notified of any foreigners working without a work permit, we will go and inspect the place of work.

Last year the number of migrant workers from Burma, Laos and Cambodia stood at about 64,000, but only about 50,000 of those came to renew their work permits.

We have investigated about 10,000 cases of migrant workers not renewing their work permits. Those without work permits can be arrested.

Most companies still don't realize that our officers have special powers to inspect companies suspected of employing migrant workers illegally.



As part of a nationwide initiative to help people find work or learn trades they can use for employment, a job fair took place at Homeworks in Wichit on March 19-20. The fair was an example of an improved level of organization that Phuket's new Employment Office Chief hopes to bring to the island.

Sometimes we find that someone works at two different places but only has one work permit. All that person needs to do is go to the labor offices and pay 1,000 baht to have the second place of work added to their work permit. Then, if they are asked by the police about their employment they can show their receipt from the labor office.

We are currently promot-

ing a drive to have all migrant workers properly registered within the next two years. On January 19 this year, a new directive was issued by the central government to ensure that migrant workers' nationalities are recorded and that they are furnished with all the correct documents pertaining to employment and residency by February 28, 2012.

During this period, foreign workers renewing their work permits will also have to have their nationality confirmed and registered. Once they are properly registered, they can live in Thailand with more freedom by carrying the correct permits, which will also give them access to more Thai services, such as opening bank accounts and buying mobile phones.

Issues & ANSWERS

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

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

What can I do about the noisy factory ruining my local neighborhood?

I have had an ongoing issue with a noisy factory that is allegedly operating illegally in a housing only zone.

Can you please advise the correct procedure for asking the government to investigate this issue?

Paul Spring
Phuket

An officer of Phuket City Municipality, Public Health and Environment Section, replies:

You can complain to your local Municipality or Tambon Administration Organization's Public Health and Environment section by sending them a letter of complaint. Include both your own name and address and that of the factory.

After we get the letter of complaint, we will immediately go check and notify you of any further proceedings.

For more information contact Phuket City Municipality: 52/1 Narisorn Road, Muang, Phuket 83000. T: 076-211570. F: 076-213374. E: health@phuketcity.go.th.

Where can I find help if a manufacturer refuses to uphold a guarantee?

Four months ago I bought a freezer with a guarantee. After three weeks it developed a fault. After three months making numerous calls to the manufacturer's Bangkok call center, I have been given no assistance and the freezer is still faulty. Is there anyone I can contact for help with this matter or was this guarantee not worth the paper it was written on?

Richard Starkey
Phuket

An officer at the Office of the Consumer Protection Board at Phuket Provincial Hall replies:

You can come to the Office of the Consumer Protection Board at Phuket Provincial Hall to complain, but you must have the receipt and insurance paperwork. Without these documents, there is little we can do. It will also help to bring a translator.

For more information contact Office of the Consumer Protection Board: Phuket Provincial Hall, Narisorn Road, Muang, Phuket 83000. T: 076-222886# 68015, 076-213203.



Nonthawat Onting, a rising star from the Youth Football home, shows off his skills at Central Festival Phuket on March 20.

Brazilian method aids rising stars

Twelve-year-old Nonthawat Onting wowed shoppers with his impressive football juggling skills at Central Festival Phuket last Saturday. Nonthawat, who is one of the best players of his age in the country, is perhaps the most exciting prospect at the Youth Football Home in Thalang.

He was at Central Festival as part of an exhibition by Brazilian Soccer Schools, which has recently opened at the Phuket International Academy. Nonthawat was one of three boys from YFH who were showing off their tricks with a small futbol de salao ball, which is used by Brazilian Soccer Schools.

While Nonthawat may be prodigiously gifted as a footballer, players of all abilities can benefit from futbol de salao. Using a smaller, harder ball to learn the basics of technique makes controlling and dribbling with a normal-sized ball far easier.

It is no coincidence that Brazil, the home of futbol de

salao, consistently produces the most skillful footballers on the planet. Martyn Ware, the head of sport at PIA and a former professional footballer, has seen first hand the difference that practicing with a smaller ball can make.

"When I was growing up in London there was one school which banned footballs because they didn't want windows to get broken, so the kids had to play with a tennis ball. That school used to consistently have the best football team and produced one or two professional footballers every year."

Martin Hill is the director of BSS in Phuket and a football coach with more than 10 years experience. "Most of my coaching has been in the US where I was coaching traditional football, but I have found the Brazilian method is better because it teaches kids the basics so well. It can enable an average player to play a high standard of football for their whole life. If you can play football with a futbol de salao ball you can play with anything, that's why Brazilian footballers are so skillful."

Nonthawat Onting has already spent time training with German Bundesliga side VFB Stuttgart and will be heading back to Germany in August.

For more information about regular coaching sessions and the upcoming holiday camp visit: phuketinternationalacademy.com.

— James Goyder

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A new twist to fitness

Bringing some deserved attention to a lesser-known sport in Phuket, a gymnastics seminar took place at Phuket International Academy last Saturday with the hopes of introducing more children and adults to the sport.

Hosted by experienced gymnast and certified coach Sonja Holappa, the event marks the launch of a comprehensive new gymnastics program at PIA.

In its initial stage, the new program would offer training to suit a wide range of age groups and skill levels.

Holappa hopes to later introduce a program called 'Bodyfit Gentle Gymnastics' for all ages – adults and senior citizens included – who are willing to use gymnastics to get in shape and feel good about their bodies.

Gymnastics combines physical strength, flexibility, agility, co-ordination, balance and grace. It can also help build self-esteem and improve skills such as self-discipline and concentration.

Holappa feels that it is not just children who can benefit from taking up the sport.

"Many sports are good for people of all ages; gymnastics is one of them. Perhaps this is why there even seems to be growing interest toward gymnastics for



Host and Coach Sonja Holappa at the gymnastics seminar at PIA on March 20. PIA is launching a new program to bring gymnastics to both adults and children in Phuket.

families. The Aquatic Centre at PIA is already providing services for people with special needs and this is something I would like to include in the gymnastics program as well."

Holappa, who has lived in Phuket with her family since 2007, was an artistic gymnast who also excelled at springboard diving. She taught gymnastics to girls between the ages of 5-16 at a club in Finland for nearly a decade. For more information about gymnastics at PIA visit: phuketinternationalacademy.com.



Sai Nam Yen ruggers sport new skills at BIS rematch

The Sai Nam Yen boys' rugby team solidified their status as one of the most improved sporting teams in Phuket after two impressive victories over their BIS counterparts.

BIS ran out winners when the two sides met last year but this time the tables had turned emphatically, with Sai Nam Yen winning the first game 88-10 and the second game 61-15.

With the help of veterans from the Phuket Vagabonds, the Sai Nam Yen players continue to master the basics of rugby. Even against the physically dominant players at BIS, Sai Nam Yen were able to turn the ball over time and time again, rarely emerging from a ruck or a maul without possession.

The players, some of whom are as young as eight, are quick, nimble and comfortable handling the ball.

Now that they are trained by experienced rugby players on a regular basis, Sai Nam Yen are an efficient defensive and well-drilled unit; extremely difficult to break down. What the players lack in size they more than make up for in determination and are becoming increasingly comfortable with the more physical aspects of the game.

The second of the two



Action from the rugby matches between Sai Nam Yen School and BIS.

matches was a much tighter affair as the inexperienced BIS team welcomed back some key players. The level of coaching their Sai Nam Yen opponents have been receiving makes it difficult for BIS to remain on a similar level, but the BIS players are obviously benefiting from playing competitive rugby and are improving with every match.

Expat Michael Whippy has been donating five afternoons a week for the past three months to coach rugby at Sai Nam Yen School in Patong.

"They have really improved, particularly with their ball carry-

ing, their tackling and their passing. One of the boys is only eight and in a few years' time we think he will be the best scrum half of his age in Thailand. They all love rugby and we would like to get more children involved. They don't have to actually attend Sai Nam Yen school," he said.

The Sai Nam Yen team is currently considering ideas for a new name. Any sponsor interested in the naming rights for the promising young team should contact Pat Cotter at: phuketrugby@gmail.com.

— James Goyder

FC Phuket shuts out Pattani



**FC Phuket 3
Pattani 0**

Action from FC Phuket's victory over Pattani. The win places FC Phuket comfortably at the top of the Division Two (southern section) league. Photo: Fraser Morton

FC Phuket cruised to a comfortable 3-0 victory over Pattani last Sunday to solidify their status as the Division Two (southern section) league leaders.

Goals from Diarra, Poramut and Sarach sealed the win as Pattani were able to offer little more than token resistance.

The Southern Sea Kirin (FC Phuket) dominated early possession with the visitors struggling to string passes together.

Pattani resorted to persistent fouling in attempt to interrupt Phuket's rhythm, resulting in the stretcher bearers spending almost as much time on the pitch as the players.

Eventually the Kirin were rewarded for their superior possession when a cor-

ner was stabbed home at close range by Ali Diarra in his first ever goal for the club. The crowd at Surakul Stadium, which is growing larger every game, was jubilant.

It was a lead that FC Phuket never looked in danger of relinquishing.

Pattani could count themselves unlucky not to be awarded a penalty when FC Phuket goalkeeper Jagked – awarded the captaincy in the absence of the injured Sampet – came flying off his line and took out the Pattani forward without making any contact with the ball.

The referee was not impressed and waved away Pattani protests, much to the relief of Jagked, who was hoping to celebrate

his 27th birthday with a clean sheet.

FC Phuket scored again soon after when Pattani lost possession to Poramut in a misguided attempt to pass the ball out of defense. The midfielder made no mistake, drilling the ball low into the corner.

Despite FC Phuket being without the first choice center-half pairing of Nene Bi, who has already acquired sufficient yellow cards to warrant a suspension, and Sampet, who was injured, the backline was rarely tested by a lackluster Pattani attack.

The win was well secured as Samach added a third goal, bursting through the Pattani defense and cannoning a shot off the underside of the crossbar, which appeared to ricochet off the Pattani goalkeeper and into the back of the net.

In the absence of television replays, the referee saw it fit to award the goal to the Phuket player.

The season is only six games old but FC Phuket, who have only conceded one goal, already look firm favorites to fill one of the two Division Two (southern section) playoff places.

Midfielder Ali Diarra was

delighted to score his first ever goal for the team.

"I am very happy, not just for myself but for the team, who are playing very well, and for the supporters. I hope I can score many more goals from midfield this season."

Coach Arjhan Songgamsub was quick to hail another victorious outing for his new look Southern Sea Kirin.

"It was a good performance and I am pleased with the players and squad I have now. I don't think I need any more players, although it is possible one or two more might come in," he said.

FC Phuket are away to Yala this weekend and then are at home against Nakhon Ratchasima in the FA Cup the following Wednesday.

– James Goyder

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Attracting butterflies to your garden

macro level, I have watched as every tree-lined, roadside plot in my part of south Phuket has been inexorably annexed by concrete condos and shop houses.

On a recent visit to the relatively remote and still beautiful Freedom and Paradise beaches of Tri Trang, I drove along a huge dirt track, all of sixty feet wide in places, carved through the jungle. The adjacent areas, already largely denuded of trees and undergrowth, were melancholy testimony to the ongoing erasure of this peninsula of rainforest.

And on a micro level? When the well for my house was being sunk, the area was combed on a daily basis by Isarn workers looking for adamid lizards. They all ended up on a barbecue, tiny cadavers with scarcely an ounce of flesh on them.

The lizards have not returned. Nor has my tokay gecko. The second largest and most vividly colored of all geckos, a male used to call loudly every night from my garden wall. Not any more. This one, whose plangent love-call gave his hiding place away, doubtless suffered

the same fate as the three million or so tokay geckos that are exported from Thailand every year for the pet trade and the Chinese dinner plate.

Even the humble cicadas have stopped singing, their earth-bound larvae victims of back hoes and bull-dozers. And grey cockchafer beetles, a delicacy to local Thais, have disappeared for the same reason. They no longer crash drunkenly into my windows and expire, belly-up on the ground.

There are two reasons for this state of affairs. The principal one, already alluded to, is the remorseless destruction of habitat. A problem for the whole planet, it is happening in Phuket with frightening speed.

The second reason for the decline in wild-life here is the predilection of the locals for eating just about anything that moves – from the collared doves that risk death by air gun or catapult every time they perch on the electric cables, to the larvae of cicadas and weaver ants, the imagos of cockchafers, water scorpions and grasshoppers, all of which find their way onto local market stalls.

On the other hand, butterflies escape this fate. Why? For one, locals don't eat them or their larvae; two, the destruction of their wild habitats has, to some extent, been offset by the positive passion of Phuketians growing flowers.

And this is where you, dear reader, come in. If you care for wildlife, you can do your bit for tropical lepidoptera by cultivating plants that attract the hundreds of colorful species that share this island with us. And they will repay the compliment by helping to pollinate your flowers.

In Europe and America, there is a shrub known, affectionately, as the 'butterfly bush' on account of its propensity for attracting butterflies.

Buddleia davidii is a beautiful plant with long, densely



A monarch butterfly on a buddleia flower, which exists in shades of purple, deep navy, violet, burgundy and white, and has a rich, honeyed perfume. Photo: Lynn M Kimmerle, Stonington

packed panicles; cultivars exist in shades of purple, deep navy, violet, burgundy and even white. It exudes a rich, honeyed perfume, which accounts for its allure. But although the species has invaded waste lots in urban areas of the UK, it won't grow here. At least it won't for me.

Fortunately, some of its relatives will. In particular, *buddleia paniculata*, known to Thais as *rachawadee*. The grayish leaves are rough to the touch and the tiny florets, borne on white or creamy spikes, are pretty insignificant.

Nonetheless, the *rachawadee* releases an intense perfume, especially in the morning – a plant that pleasures your nostrils before your eyes. I have one next to my gate, much frequented by monarch and orange sulphur butterflies. A must for every Thai garden.

My second recommendation is *wrightia religiosa* [*mok baan*] which is much easier to find in Phuket's plant nurseries and gardens. In part, this is because it is primarily used as a hedge, where it will attain a height of two meters, or as a pot plant on patios. Locals love it because it's easy to grow, can be

clipped into shapes and sports clusters of hanging, bell-shaped, white flowers all year long. Needless to say, the corollas dispense a sweet perfume and attract both bees and butterflies.

My third recommendation may surprise you. The Indian Milkweed or *calotropis gigantea*, is, as its name suggests, a sizable shrub. Many regard it as a weed – which does it less than justice. There are spectacular specimens growing more-or-less wild around Phuket, which are maybe four meters tall.

While its large, gray-green leaves provide fare for a whole range of caterpillars, including those of the cabbage white, swallow-tail, monarch and fritillary, its white or pink flowers are a source of nectar for many varieties of adult butterfly. And it is extremely hardy. Phuket Meridian Yacht Club has a row planted as a wind-break right next to the sea.

Here, I have touched on something which will need another column, another time. You may draw the line on accommodating insects at providing plant food for butterfly larvae. But those beautiful, fragile creatures need to exist as ugly ducklings before they can become swans.

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Construction Update

Patong



New Child Development Center nears completion



LEFT: Construction of the four-story Child Development Center in Patong is about 90% complete. RIGHT: A computer generated image of how the center will eventually look.

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

Patong Mayor Pian Keesin announced earlier this month that construction of a new Child Development Center in Patong is now about 90% complete.

The four-story building on Soi Satharanasuk is a local government project that will provide preliminary education for children aged three to four years old.

The center is the second such project in Patong, which was commissioned by

Patong Municipality at a cost of 29.4 million baht for the increasing number of youngsters living in the area. The first center is located behind Patong Municipality offices. Construction of the new center began last November and is expected to

be complete and operational by July 13.

The new center can accommodate up to 250 children and includes a 200-seat meeting room, eight classrooms, a computer room, a canteen and a play area on the fourth floor.



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The main entrance to Gazette Square (left). The lofty open-plan interior (above).

Phuket Gazette movin' on up

THE *Phuket Gazette* is all set to move into its new purpose-built offices in suburban Koh Kaew on March 30.

Located just off the north-bound lanes of Thepkasattri Rd, the office is roughly midway

between the Heroines' Monument and Royal Phuket Marina.

For readers who are traveling north, take a left turn immediately after the large Isuzu showroom. We're about 120 meters down that rural road, on

the right-hand side. Look for buffalo just before the bridges into the property.

For those who don't know the Isuzu showroom, please see the map inserted as a flyer in this issue of the *Gazette*.

Our new office was designed by the late Tucker Bishop, an internationally acclaimed American architect and former Phuket resident. His earlier work on the island included major projects: Phuket Pavilions, the Movenpick Residences and Jumeirah Private Island.

For the *Gazette*, Mr Bishop had a brief to create the rustic feel of an old newspaper or telegraph office in the western, 'Big Sky' state of Montana, says the newspaper's founder, John Magee.

"We wanted wooden floors, an open plan, old hanging lamps with green shades, lots of wood and the 'Big Sky' feel of a very



Pasting in the front page of the first-ever issue of the *Phuket Gazette*, Bill O' Leary finishes his giant 'Collage of History' in the lobby at Gazette Square. Looking on are the company's Seubsak ('Big') Sahaworaphan (left); Site Manager Janpen Arno-Magee (yellow shirt); and Publisher John Magee.

high roof. That's pretty much what we've now got."

With 1,100 square meters under soaring trusses, beams, ducts, cables and roof tiles peaking at nine meters above the facility's 60 work spaces, kitchens

and a 12-seat management/guest dining room, there is indeed a feeling of Montana spaciousness.

But purpose built for the *Phuket Gazette*, there is also modernity and functionality, with the flow of work spaces and equipment reflecting the production sequence of the newspaper.

The office was built on land acquired by the company purely for investment purposes in 2004. Surrounded by a buffalo pasture, the three-rai plot provides parking for 32 cars, gardens and a covered outdoor canteen with kitchenette for the company's staff.

Branded as Gazette Square, the new complex was created to accommodate not only major expansion of the company's newspaper, web and television businesses, but also the Phuket representative offices of *The Nation*, the Nation Channel, ThaiVisa, and the Asia News Network (ANN).

"Come visit us at *Gazette Square* and let us take you on a tour of Phuket history – at least as far back as we know it as a newspaper. Our walls are lined with the images of people and places you know, dating back to 1993," says Magee.

"However, other than the architecture and the ambiance, we've nothing to show you from Montana," he added.

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Property sales slow

By Kitima Pormmongkhonwat

The Real Estate Information Center (REIC) of the Government Housing Bank in Bangkok has reported that four coastline provinces are facing a slowdown in property sales, which is estimated to require an additional two years to sell properties currently on the market.

The REIC announcement was made by General Director Samma Kitsin from information based on the organization's 2010 survey of the property market.

Among the properties remaining unsold in Phuket's three districts are: 2,470 units in housing projects; 2,250 condominium units; and 1,000 villas.

There are currently 60 housing projects in the planning and construction phase in Phuket, comprising 8,950 units, of which 6,500 units have already been sold, leaving 2,470 units unsold.

There are about 90 condominium developments on the Phuket property market, comprising about 5,000 individual units in total. Of those units, 2,780 have been sold, leaving 2,250 units unsold.

According to the REIC survey, studio apartment units are the most popular among buyers, most of which are located in Phuket Town.

Properties with the highest price tags in Phuket are villas with sea views, for which the average price is about Bt30 million. Phuket currently has a total of 80 villa projects with about 1,900 units on the market, of which 1,000 units have been sold, leaving 900 units unsold.

The REIC survey results also indicated that a number of real estate projects in Phuket have encountered a major slowdown in sales with 25 projects halting sales and construction. Those projects comprise seven housing projects, 11 condominium developments and seven villa projects.

In an attempt to boost property sales during the slowdown, 13 villa projects are reported to be offering discounts of between 10 and 20 percent.

"This year does not seem to be a good one for those who have already invested in property, but people looking to buy property this year are faced with many choices at attractive prices.

"Political turmoil in Thailand is the most significant factor in the slowdown. However, if the global economy improves and the country's political problems quiet down, then Phuket's property market should improve by mid-2011," said Mr Kitsin.

"Phuket's transportation infrastructure is another factor affecting the island's property market," he added.



An abandoned property on the bypass road which was never completed. According to the Real Estate Information Center in Bangkok, thousands of residential units in Phuket's real estate market remain unsold, many of which could remain without buyers until at least 2011. Photo: Thanasorn Chookate



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Property Gazette

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NATAI LAND FOR SALE

4 rain 1 ngan, 50 square wah (7,000sqm) of land on main road, 2 km to Natai Beach. 2 million baht per rai. Email: nisaya@hotmail.com

4 BEDROOM WITH POOL

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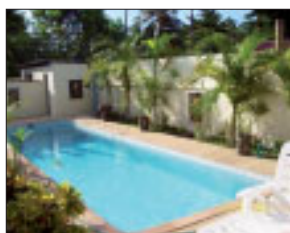
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NAI HARN LUXURY CONDO



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PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

in Ao Makhm. 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.

LAND AT PATONG BEACH

Cheap land for sale at North end of Patong Beach. Has access road, good water supply, and underground utilities. Very quiet, natural location, 2 mins to beach. Land plots range from 500sqm to 1,400sqm. Part of an existing small development. Tel: 081-891 3466 (English). Fax: 076-296160. Email: antc@phuket.ksc.co.th

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

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SURIN BEACH

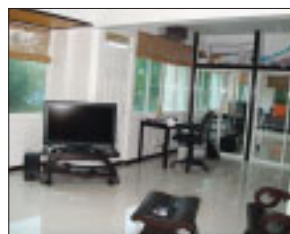
Land on Soi Haad Surin 2 for sale. 2.2 Rai, 5 min walk to Surin Beach. Email: costello@hotmail.net.au

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Property Gazette

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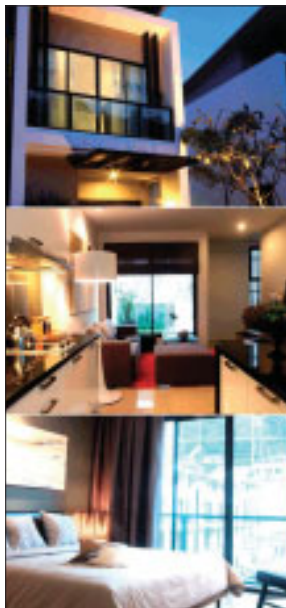
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for sale. 9,312sqm, flat land near Bang Pae waterfall on border with the main road to Mission Hill. Asking price 3.5 million baht per rai = 1,600sqm. Tel: 081-693 4075 (English & Thai). Email: kannanagarden@hotmail.com

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

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

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Property Gazette

LAND AT PA KHLOK



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LUXURY POOL VILLAS



50% finance available, ready to move in for just 9 million baht, 4km from Layan Beach, excellent location, great value. Tel: 081-891 1826 (English), 081-891 2926 (English & Thai). Email: kevinq@loxinfo.co.th For further details, please see our web site at www.baanboosa.com

NEW TEAK HOUSE

2 bedrooms, 2 baths, 84/460sqm, terrace + pool! From 5.9 million baht. Land plot near Boat Lagoon. Construction time: 3 months! Tel: 076-325085, 086-281 1264 (English). Email: ts-teak@contexphuket.com

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Freehold, lease hold. Start 4.7 million baht. Tel: 081-878 2199. Email: orso.realestate@gmail.com

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LAND FOR SALE

Several plots of land for sale, excellent locations, great value. Situated in Layan, Mission Hills and Paklok. 1/4 rai to 3 rai plots. Tel: 081-891 1826 (English), 081-891 2926 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-238940. Email: kevinq@loxinfo.co.th

3 RAI LAND IN TRANG



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

2 RAI IN AO MAKHAM



Chanote, in Soi Rat-U-Thit 1, public utility area. easy access in and out. Just 12 million baht for both rai. Tel: 076-522938, 087-6899679, 089-5885458. Email: tasuwan@hotmail.com

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in Phuket Intervilla 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), 081-8938524.

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- At least 2 - 3 year sales and marketing experience in property field
- Good command of English
- Computer literate-MS Office and good interpersonal skills
- Requires an energetic, strategically focused and creative sales achiever who enjoys the latitude of working independently and effectively uses their time management skills
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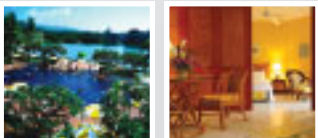
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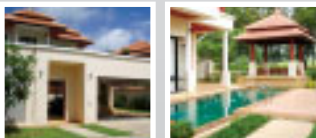
- 2 beds 2 baths Apartment
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- golf course view

3 Laguna Village Townhome I THB 19.5 M



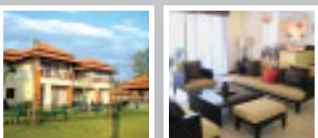
- 2-storey 4 beds Townhome
- extra 4th bedroom with ensuite
- 24 sqm private pool
- lagoon view

4 Laguna Townhome THB 23 M



- 2-storey 3 beds Townhome
- maid's quarters
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5 Laguna Village Residence II THB 38 M



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