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Tuk-tuks agree to set fares

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

IN A landmark move for Phuket tourism, the Patong Taxi Federation has agreed to a range of set fares to charge passengers.

The federation represents about 85 per cent of all passenger vehicle operators in Patong, including taxi, tuk-tuk, motorcycle taxi and minivan drivers.

One of the key fares agreed to is a maximum fare of 200 baht for any tuk-tuk or taxi ride within Patong.

Federation president Preechavude "Prab" Keesin told the *Phuket Gazette*, "We have agreed to these fares because if drivers keep overcharging, then tourists will stop using our services altogether and we will lose customers. "By agreeing to these fares we are helping to save our drivers' jobs. We need to change to make sure everyone survives," said Mr Prab, who is also the son of Patong Mayor Pian Keesin.

The new fares are the result of a provincial committee set up by Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha to mediate among stakeholders what fares should be



DRIVING FORWARD: Preechavude 'Prab' Keesin discusses the new set fares.

standardized and at what rates.

The fares will come into effect after the official agreement is ratified in writing by Governor Tri.

However, Mr Prab said nearly all his member drivers were aware of the new fares and may begin charging them immediately.

Maximum fares for journeys within Patong will be 200 baht for up to four passengers, with a maximum extra charge of 50 baht per passenger exceeding four.

At the meeting on Tuesday when the fares were announced,

Vice Governor Weerawat Janpen said, "These are the fares that drivers normally charge tourists – we've just made them standard and professional.

"At first, some drivers may have problems following this announcement, but I believe that in the end everyone will adhere to these fares," he said.

The standard fares will be posted on official signboards and leaflets to be handed out in Patong.

See also page 9 for our new "Letter from the Governor".

Some of the new set fares from Patong to:	One way (baht)	Return (baht)
Airport...	...800	...1,600
Chalong Bay...	...500	...900
Cape Panwa...	...700	...1,300
Kathu...	...350	...700
Karon...	...300	...600
Kata...	...400	...800
Kata Noi...	...450	...900
Kamala...	...400	...800
Lotus, Big C and Central Festival...	...400	...800
Laguna...	...600	...1,100
Layan Beach...	...800	...1,500
Nai Thon Beach...	...900	...1,700
Nai Yang Beach...	...800	...1,500
Nai Harn Beach...	...600	...1,100
Phuket Town...	...500	...900
Phromthep Cape...	...600	...1,100
Phuket Zoo...	...450	...900
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Wat Chalong...	...500	...900

Medical center planned for Karon

THAWEE Thongcham, the mayor of Karon Municipality, has confirmed that plans are afoot to build a medical center on two rai of land between the Hilton Arcadia Phuket Resort and Spa and The Old Phuket Resort.

The site is part of a five-rai plot currently under responsibility of the Treasury Department.

Royal Thai Police Region 8 have already requested permission to build Karon's first police station on the remaining three rai.

Mayor Thawee explained that Karon Municipality has applied to the Treasury Department to use the land, but has yet to receive a reply.

If all goes according to plan, he expects construction of the facility to start at the end of this year or at the beginning of next year.

A municipal budget would be combined with corporate sponsorship by local businesses to fund the building and medical equipment, Mayor Thawee explained.

He declined to provide an initial cost estimate, saying draft plans have yet to be drawn up.

Medical staff are to be provided by Patong Hospital or Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town.

"We have yet to decide which hospital to sign a memorandum of understanding with. The center



The medical center is expected to help people rescued from the notorious surf at Karon Beach.

should be run the same as Vachira Phuket Hospital 2 in Phuket Town," Mayor Thawee said (see page 2).

The medical center in Karon, with 10 beds, would provide emergency outpatient services.

Mayor Thawee said he expects the facility, once completed, to help save tourists rescued from drowning at Karon, one of Phuket's most dangerous beaches during the rainy season.

"It will be for emergencies such as small injuries and especially people rescued from drowning.

"Normally, patients are taken to Patong or Vachira Phuket hospitals, which take time to reach.

"This new medical center would help save time and lives," he said.

– Pimwara Choksakulpan

Rohingya Refugees



Where are they?
See Page 5

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This Week

All eyes on Thailand

Fighting along the border with Cambodia intensifies. **Page 7**

History



Looking back to 1987 when a Thai Airways flight crashed. **Page 16**

People



Spiritual figurehead Joan Halifax Roshi stops off in Phuket. **Page 19**

Environment



The *Gazette* asks locals their opinion on Phuket's development. **Page 25**

Classifieds

Everything you need at prices you can afford, from jobs to homes.

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Sport



BIS hosts inaugural Phuket Cup International Youth soccer tournament. **Page 43**

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Vachira expands outpatient services

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

VACHIRA Phuket Hospital, the largest government hospital on the island, has opened an off-site outpatient clinic in Phuket Town to reduce the workload at the main facility.

"Vachira Phuket Hospital 2 was set up to help reduce the number of patients at Vachira Phuket Hospital, which is now up to 2,000 a day," explained Hospital Director Dr Jessada Chungpaibulpatana.

"It will also help reduce waiting times for patients," he added.

The center, located literally on the corner of the Yee Teng Complex at the Slaughterhouse Intersection, where Chao Fa Road meets Patipat Road, opened quietly on January 4.

It can serve 100 patients a day with staff treating patients daily from 8:30am to 4pm.

"We provide only emergency medical services, ordinary health checks and a dental clinic.

"Patients needing surgery or intensive care are transferred to Vachira Phuket Hospital," Dr Jessada said.



The new Vachira outpatient clinic at Slaughterhouse Intersection.

However, the center will soon have its own an x-ray machine, pre-natal clinic, family planning center and Thai massage spa, he added.

"The center is currently on trial. There are about 60 patients a day. If we receive positive feedback from the public, we might open this one 24 hours a day and open

similar outpatient centers in Sapam, Chalong and Karon," Dr Jessada said.

Thai Public Health Minister Jurin Laksanawisit is scheduled to attend the official opening in April.

To call the center, call Vachira Hospital's main line at 076-361234 and ask for extension 3000 or 3032.

Hazardous waste trade booming

AN INNOVATIVE project that allows people to exchange toxic household waste for pharmaceuticals is going strong in Phuket Town.

The Phuket Safe project, a collaborative effort of Phuket City Municipality, the Phuket Drug Store Club and the Phuket Pharmacists Association, allows anyone to exchange toxic waste items for a variety of non-prescription medications at any of 12 participating venues.

Tiensak Santikayawakul, secretary of the Phuket Drug Store Club, said 24 kilograms of hazardous waste were collected in the first three months of the program, which started on September 15 last year.

"Most of waste collected between September and December comprised flashlights and dry bat-



The red sticker that marks the participating drug stores.

teries. We brought them all to Phuket City Municipality for proper disposal," he said.

Mr Tiensak added that he was pleased with the response from the public and thought the project would continue.

Drug stores want to support the local community, not just in terms of dispensing medication but also in maintaining a healthy living environment, he said.

The medications provided under the program include common remedies such as paracetamol, mentholated oil and lozenges for sore throats.

"People who buy medicine from pharmacists can feel safe in the knowledge that they can receive important usage advice," he added.

There is plenty of room to expand the network because Phuket has more than 300 registered pharmacies, Mr Tiensak said.

"Our aim is to have every drug store join, if possible. Any store that is ready can join right away," he said.

— Janpen Upatising



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Drug war crippled by slow test results

PROCEDURAL problems in drug testing are crippling efforts by the Phuket Police to suppress narcotics use on the island, a provincial committee on drug suppression was told last week.

At the first annual meeting of the committee, held at Phuket Provincial Hall, Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha said central government policy on drug issues was straightforward and progress easy to evaluate.

There are currently 27 different anti-drug projects on the island under an 11.4-million-baht budget earmarked for drug suppression at the start of fiscal 2011, he said.

The heads of various sub-committees should submit progress reports every 10 days so that strategies can be reviewed and changed if necessary, he added.

The committee was told that the use of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) was continuing to increase despite its high price and there was a continuing rise in illegal drug use among Phuket youth, especially students.

There are currently 1,500 people in the province undergoing court-ordered drug treatment programs, the committee heard.

Police continue to claim that verification of the results of urine tests administered in Phuket takes too long.

In a meeting on that issue on Friday, Phuket Provincial Police



Drug trafficking and the use of methamphetamines are rising.

Deputy Komol Wattarakorn urged the Forensics Police Bureau in Bangkok to establish a certified drug testing center in Phuket.

Currently, police conduct random urine tests at nightclubs and other night entertainment venues around the island.

They also test in several hotels that have agreed to take part in the police 'white hotel project', under which staff agree to be tested.

However, samples need to be collected and sent to Vachira Phuket Hospital.

From there, they are forwarded to regional Forensics Police testing centers in Surat Thani or Trang for verification.

Often the samples are too old by the time they are tested for verification and the results don't match those of the original test, Col Komol said.

Repeat trafficker snared in accident

By Yodsak Jarana and Atchaa Khamlo

MORE than 1,000 marine animals, including 260 specimens of protected species, were seized after the pickup being used to smuggle them collided with a motorbike in Wichit last Saturday.

One man died from injuries sustained in the accident.

The driver of the pickup was Pichit Bangjark, 34, a Rawai sea gypsy who has been charged with trafficking protected marine animals before.

His pickup collided with the motorbike in front of Baan Nabon School on Chao Fa East Road about 1am last Saturday.

Two men and one woman thrown from the motorbike were rushed Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town.

One of the men, Kiangsak Songnu, 28, died in the hospital.

Chalong Police arrived at the scene to find 350 starfish, 45 sea urchins and 390 hermit crabs in water-filled plastic bags packed into boxes in the bed of the pickup.

Stashed among the haul were 30 pipe fish and 230 six-spotted gobies – both protected species.

Pichit was charged with reckless driving causing death and



Some of the 350 starfish seized after the accident. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

injury, and for being in possession of protected marine animals.

On March 7 last year, Pichit and three minors were arrested for smuggling protected marine species in the same pickup involved in the accident last Saturday.

Legal proceedings for last year's incident were already completed before Pichit's arrest last weekend.

The punishment for smuggling protected marine animals is a jail term up to one year, or a fine up to 100,000 baht, or both.

Conservation center officer Prajuab Mokrat said the pipe fish and six-spotted gobies were "very rare" and commanded high prices in the illicit trade. Both are found around coral reefs.

"Marine animals such as these are always trafficked for private collections. Pipe fish are usually used to produce an aphrodisiac," he said.

Of the marine animals that survived the accident, some will be kept at Phuket Aquarium. The remainder will be released into the sea after the case is closed.

Aldhouse back in court March 1

PHUKET "kickbox murder" suspect Lee Aldhouse appeared in Westminster Magistrates Court in London on February 2 for an extradition hearing following a request from the Thai authorities, the UK Home Office has confirmed.

Aldhouse will remain in custody in the UK until at least March 1, when he is scheduled to return to the same court for extradition proceedings, Sam Eversden of the UK Home Office told the *Gazette*.

Aldhouse, originally from Birmingham, is wanted for the stabbing murder of 23-year-old US Marine Dashawn Longfellow in Rawai in August last year.

Aldhouse was able to escape Thailand via Cambodia. An international manhunt of almost two weeks failed to find him, but he was arrested on arrival at Heathrow Airport in London.

He was wanted on an outstanding warrant issued after he fled the UK while out on bail for a previous offense.

Intranee Sumawong, Executive Director of International Affairs at the Office of the Attorney General in Bangkok, told the *Gazette* that the British authorities have yet to tell her office how long the extradition process will take.

"At present, the court [in Lon-

don] is hearing his testimony and allowing him to present a defense against extradition to Thailand.

"If he objects to extradition, he will have to provide sufficient evidence for them to consider," Mrs Intranee said.

The UK will not extradite its citizens to any country for charges that include execution as punishment, she said.

— A Khamlo and N Altstadt

Body blown across the bay

THE body of a man found floating off Koh Racha, about 25 kilometers south of Phuket, remains unidentified.

Chalong Police Duty Officer Tianchai Duangsuwan said the body, discovered by passengers on a dive tour boat, looked as if it had been in the water several days.

This in mind, he believes it might have been blown across Phang Nga bay from Phi Phi Island or even from Koh Lanta.

"We estimate the man died about four days ago. He was about 40 years old. We cannot be sure whether he was Thai or foreign," he said after the discovery.

"The body might have originated from Koh Phi Phi or even Koh Lanta, as at this time of year the wind will blow it from there in that time," he added.

An officer at the Phuket Tourist Rescue Center in Chalong concurred with that possibility.

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Couple spend retirement in the dog house

NAKHON Pathom resident Champa Tangsombun is crazy about dogs – so much so that it's ruining his wife's retirement.

Mr Champa, 74, has been taking stray and injured dogs into his home in Village 9 in Bang Chang subdistrict for 15 years.

The retired bus station master, who now has 61 canines to take care of, has spent his entire life savings on dog food.

The situation has become so serious that Mr Champa's wife has had to keep on working as a bus conductress to help pay to feed the animals.

But now even the 20,000 baht she earns each month is not enough, and the couple owe the pet shop tens of thousands of baht.

Mr Champa said he used to be a rich and respected man. When he retired from his job with the Bangkok Mass Transit Authority

QUEER news

12 years ago, he already had a few dogs in the house.

The numbers rose and rose. There are now dogs everywhere: in the house, in the garden and in a specially constructed pen where Mr Champa keeps them all. The sound of barking is deafening.

Mr Champa said he could not give any of the dogs away as he was afraid they would not be well cared for. He therefore asked kindhearted readers to donate dog food. His address is 9/1 Village 9, Bang Chang subdistrict, Samphran district, Nakhon Pathom.

– Khao Sod

The piggy bank bust

By Atchaa Khamlo

A WOMAN who saw her piggy bank being carried past her house in Chalong by a neighbor knew something was amiss – especially since the piggy bank was stolen from her home a month earlier.

The woman called the police, who followed up on the tipoff and arrested a young couple who have since confessed to robbing more than 30 homes around the island.

Chalong Police deputy superintendent Narong Luksanawimol identified the pair as Boonyod Atthatham, 21, and his female companion Chadawan Prateep Na Thalang, 24. Both were arrested at Chalong Circle on Monday.

Police have since recovered a wide range of items from local secondhand shops and an apartment rented by Mr Boonyod near Rang Hill in Phuket Town, as well as less valuable items seized in a search of a home rented by the couple on Soi Kloom Yang, where Ms Chadawan was spotted carrying the piggy bank.

The pair confessed to targeting homes and apartments in many parts of the island in spree of more



Some of the recovered items on display at Chalong Police Station.

than 30 break-ins dating back five or six months, Lt Col Narong said.

People who believe their homes have been robbed by the pair are urged to visit Chalong Police Station to see if their belongings are among the recovered loot.

Recovered items included Buddha images, jewelry and electronic devices including laptops, mobile phones, hand-held video recorders and digital cameras.

Lt Col Narong expressed concern about how poor parenting seems to be contributing to a rise in crime and drug use among young people on the island.

Ms Chadawan and Mr Boonyod both finished their studies after three years of high school.

Many youths leave school early and fall into peer groups that lead them into drug use and other criminal activities, he said.

Man slaughtered on palm plantation

THE body of a Burmese man with a half-severed head and intestines spilling out was found on a Phuket palm plantation early last Sunday morning.

Thalang police were informed of the gruesome discovery at about 8am. The body lay in the Anchalee Plantation, just south of Heroines' Monument, off Thepkasattri Road.

The victim, identified by a document on the body as "Yoe", age 37, was found face down with 11 stab wounds, police said.

According to the document, he lived in Rassada subdistrict.

Near the body police found the victim's socks, a tobacco pouch and a hat.

Thalang Police Duty Officer Patiawat Yodkhan speculated that Mr Yoe may have known the killer,



The body was found a short distance from Thepkasattri Road.

who possibly lured him into the secluded plantation behind Wat Tha Ruea to kill him.

Another scenario could have been that Mr Yoe was killed while trying to fend off robbers, Lt Patiawat said.

Kusoldharm Foundation volunteers took the body to Thalang Hospital for examination.

– Wichai Witthawat

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Where have the Rohingya gone?

By Nicholas Altstadt

THE saga of the plighted Rohingya arrested on February 1 in Phuket continues as scores of them seem to have disappeared.

Phuket Immigration Superintendent Panuwat Ruamrak told the *Phuket Gazette* on Tuesday that all 68 Rohingya refugees detained in Phuket were transferred on Monday to Phang Nga Immigration due to overcrowding at facilities in Phuket.

However, an official at Phang Nga Immigration, who declined to give her name, told the *Gazette* on Wednesday they were unaware of any such transfer or arrangement.

Sen Sgt Maj Sanpetr Jantjai of Immigration Region 6 headquarters in Haad Yai on Thursday told the *Gazette* their office received a message from Phuket Immigration dated February 4.

The message stated Phuket Immigration detention facilities were overcrowded and that they would contact headquarters to "communicate any further action", he said.

Phuket Immigration, which operates under the command of Region 6 headquarters, has given no further notice of action, he added.

This has raised concerns among international human rights organizations and within Thailand. Both Human Rights Watch (HRW) and the Lawyers Council of Thailand have released statements over the past two weeks demanding government action and transparency in dealing with Rohingya refugees.

The head scratching over the whereabouts of the Phuket 68 quickly turned to concern as reports emerged of 91 "starving" Rohingya refugees landing on India's Car Nicobar Island on February 3.

One report quoted Campbell Bay Police as saying the men were adrift for 15 to 20 days.

The concern stems from 91 Rohingya who landed in Trang province in January. They were arrested but were eventually "unaccounted for" as the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) pressed the



The 68 Rohingya detained at Phuket Immigration last week are nowhere to be found. Photo: Janpen Upatising

government to allow access to the refugees. The Thai government, however, ignored the UN agency.

Amnesty International (AI) Myanmar researcher Benjamin Zawacki told the *Gazette* that although it cannot be proved at this stage that the Nicobar arrivals were the same men who were detained in Thailand, the number was "awfully coincidental".

He also said that AI had confirmed the men were Rohingya.

"Some of the men, who are now in India, claimed that they did land elsewhere [before Car Nicobar] and were essentially cast adrift without provisions and a functioning engine," he said.

"This, of course, brings to mind events of early 2009," Mr Zawacki added, referring to an incident about two years ago when Thailand faced harsh criticism for arresting 190 Rohingya refugees and towing them back out to sea with limited provisions.

Human Rights Watch Deputy Director Asia Phil Robertson said, "Thailand is not being transparent in its handling of Rohingya."

"They are playing the game of 'find the pea under the coconut shell'," he said.

Although Thailand is now in the spotlight over possible human rights violations and its alleged mishandling of Rohingya refugees, the root of the problem is firmly planted in Burma, experts say.

The Rohingya have the unfortunate distinction of being near, if not at the bottom rung of the global social ladder: the world's most unwanted people.

Decades of human rights abuses have forced them to flee their homeland at all costs.

The Rohingya are a Muslim minority originating in northern Arakan State in Burma and parts of Bangladesh.

The Burmese government formally stripped the Rohingya of their citizenship in the 1982 Citizenship Act, HRW's Phil Robertson said.

"The Burmese government has engaged in revisionist history to claim the Rohingya are not citizens. The Rohingya have lived for many generations in Arakan State, including well before Burmese independence from the British in 1948, and so they have clear, legitimate claims to Burmese citizenship," he said.

The Rohingya need government permission for everything

from domestic travel to marriage. They also face systematic religious persecution, Mr Robertson said.

The Burmese military also engages them in forced labor and physically abuses them, in some cases killing or "disappearing" them, he added.

Not surprisingly, many flee to Bangladesh, Mr Robertson said.

"The government [there] refuses to grant new arrivals any legal status and [like Thailand] prevents any sort of refugee status determination by the UNHCR," he said.

HRW estimates that as many as 300,000 Rohingya are believed to be living in Bangladesh, many in makeshift camps where they are not permitted to work and face violence and discrimination by local authorities and communities.

"Their situation [in Bangladesh] is like the old Thai saying, 'Fleeing the tiger and running into the crocodile'. It's not surprising they are taking such huge risks and such a dangerous journeys in these rickety overcrowded boats – trying to get to somewhere they will be safe," Mr Robertson said.

"The rest of the nations in the region recognize these facts and now they need to forcefully demand that the new Burmese government accept this and end their systematic discrimination and abuse against the Rohingya."

"Only then will the Rohingya refugee crisis come to an end," he said.

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'Mangrove Rd' finally gets green light

AFTER more than a decade, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) has finally approved an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for a controversial road through a mangrove forest in Phuket Town.

News that the EIA of the Klong Koh Phee Road project had been approved was announced on Monday at a project committee meeting chaired by Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha.

During the meeting, Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansupapana said an expert committee from the MNRE approved the application on December 1.

The approval followed an aerial survey of the site by visiting Deputy Prime Minister Sanan Kajornprasart in November.

The application was the fifth submitted for the project, which involves construction of a 600-meter elevated road connecting Saphan Hin with Sakdidet Road Soi 7.

The stumbling block for over a decade was the effect the project would have on nearby mangroves.

The big break came on July 30 last year when the MNRE issued an exception on its 2003 blanket ban on public use of mangrove forest land. However, the exception stipulated that any such projects could only go forward with cabinet approval.

The cabinet request should be filed with the Ministry of Interior by the end of the month, the committee was told.

As soon as cabinet permission is granted, the Phuket City Municipality will submit a formal request to the Forestry Department to use the reserve land.

See Editorial on page 8

Farewell to a 'class

By Michael Lewis

IT WAS as Mick Tonkin would have wanted it – no fanfare, his friends bidding farewell by raising a glass and with fond memories in their hearts.

Although respectful of local customs, Mick was always true to his roots where the celebration of life meant everything, never standing on ceremony.

And so it was on Tuesday when more than 150 friends attended Mick's funeral at Wat Phra Thong in Thalang, followed by a wake at the Black Cat restaurant in Cherng Talay, a favorite eating haunt.

Early Wednesday evening last week, Phuket lost one of its "good guys" after Mick collapsed at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok on his way home from a business trip.

Efforts by paramedics and doctors failed to revive him. A post-mortem examination revealed he had died following a massive heart attack.

Michael John Tonkin's pragmatic and unassuming attitude to life was perhaps honed by his own beginnings. He was brought into the world in south London during the Blitz in World War II.

He often joked that his mother put a tin basin on her head during the bombings, hoping it would save them in the event of a direct hit.

Young Mick excelled in his studies, winning a scholarship to grammar school.

But the family's financial situation meant he could not go on to university; instead he took an apprenticeship in instrumentation engineering.

His mathematics and physics skills were quickly recognized when, at the age of just 22, he was sent to India as the only foreign electronic engineer on a massive



Friends gather at the Black Cat restaurant to toast to the life of Mick Tonkin – just as he would have wanted them to.

dam project.

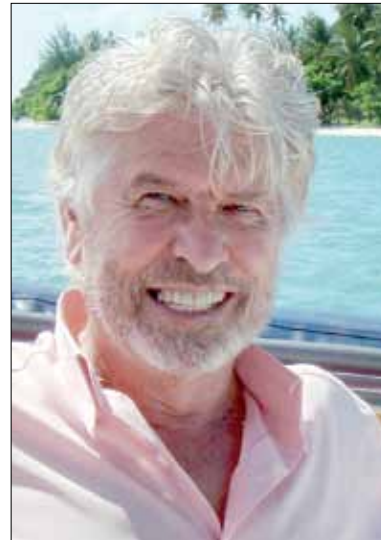
Mick then worked in a number of industries until the late 1970s, when he discovered his addiction to computing.

Later, he opened the world's first Apple Centre in London and won awards for his accounting software. About this time he met his partner Carol Fryer.

They moved on to develop their own businesses in the financial services and software sectors.

In the mid-1990s the couple relocated to Phuket, successfully establishing A++ Software, providing Thai companies with the first dual-language accounting packages that allowed them to bypass expensive foreign alternatives.

Mick had passions beyond computing – among them a love of golf (his playing days curtailed by serious knee injuries) and the legendary open-house breakfasts he and Carol hosted to celebrate



Mick Tonkin

the first day of the annual Formula 1 racing season.

His ever-present and youthful smile belied Mick's 68 years; even so, he was a founding member of the Grumpy Old Men's Society in Phuket. But that was

Mick, indicative of his wry sense of humor and desire to support the community.

The online postings since his death sum up Mick's reputation in the international, expatriate and local communities: "a great guy", "what an extremely decent and wonderful guy", "we would like to say farewell to the best boss anyone could have had. Mick was a pleasure both to work with and for, and we are all deeply saddened by his premature departure", "we miss his humor already", "one of life's true gentlemen", "we honor you and all you have done for so many" and "a class act" among them.

And one that said everything: "So sad and too early."

Farewell Mick Tonkin, you are gone but not forgotten. We have raised a glass, as you would have hoped, in your deserved honor.

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Tensions high

Fighting on Cambodian border intensifies, conflict draws UN attention

FIGHTING between Thai and Cambodian troops in the border area surrounding the disputed Hindu temple of Preah Vihear has killed at least seven people and sparked growing concern among the international community.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on Sunday said he was "deeply concerned" by the conflict, which has prompted the evacuation of thousands of villagers from surrounding areas.

Fighting broke out last Friday, with both sides accusing the other of firing first. Troops exchanged fire sporadically for at least four days, with an uneasy peace holding from around 11am Monday.

Cambodia on Monday said the fighting had killed five people and wounded 45. At least one soldier and one civilian have been killed on the Thai side.

The Cambodians also claim Thai shelling has damaged the disputed temple, resulting in the collapse of one of its wings.

Tensions over the 11th century

AROUND THE nation

temple have been high since Unesco granted it World Heritage status in July 2008 following an application from Cambodia.

In 1962 the World Court ruled that the temple belonged to Cambodia, although Thailand claims 4.6 square kilometers of territory around it.

The temple stands atop a steep cliff face, making it accessible only from Thailand.

The latest fighting followed the recent arrest and trial of seven Thais for illegally entering Cambodian territory.

Five were released with suspended sentences last month. Two of them, Thai nationalist Veera Somkwamkid and his secretary Ratee Pipattanapaibul, were con-

victed of espionage and sentenced to eight and five years in prison respectively.

The convictions have ratcheted up political tension in Bangkok, where the nationalist People's Alliance for Democracy is holding a protest attempting to push the government of Abhisit Vejjajiva to take a harder line in the dispute.

While Prime Minister Abhisit's government is keen to resolve the conflict bilaterally, Cambodian premier Hun Sen has written to ask the United Nations Security Council to intervene.

Hun Sen has asked the UN to send peacekeepers and demanded an emergency Security Council meeting to "stop Thailand's aggression", according to United Press.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for "maximum restraint" on both sides.

"The secretary-general is deeply concerned by reports of repeated armed clashes," his office said in a statement.

— *Phuket Gazette*



Cambodian soldiers stand guard at Preah Vihear temple. Photo: AFP

Pattaya beach 'could vanish' in five years

THAI scientists say Pattaya beach is being eroded at the rate of almost two meters per year and could vanish completely in as little as five years.

"If we do nothing about it, the beach will disappear in the near future — you can see that in some areas the beach has already gone," Thanawat Jarupongsakul, a coastal erosion expert at Chulalongkorn University told *Reuters*.

Scientists say that sea currents and increasing development have meant the beach is being eaten away, threatening the tourism industry which has brought vast amounts of cash to Thailand.

Weerasak Chiewkij, who rents

deck chairs to tourists, said it was harder and harder to find space for his chairs as the beach was getting smaller, *Reuters* reported.

A rescue plan has been drawn up, though it won't come cheap. Thanawat said 220,000 cubic meters of sand were needed to increase the width of the shore to 40 meters — a plan that would cost an estimated 600 million baht.

"Many countries have done this," he said. "In the past, we would just build some kind of structure, but they look so ugly and have many negative effects."

"If we have the budget, I think this project could be finished in one to two years," he added.

Trial tests new cyber laws

THE head of the Prachathai political website went on trial last Friday in a case seen as testing free expression and Thailand's tough new cyber laws.

Chiranuch Premchaiporn faces up to 20 years in prison for failing to remove 10 comments deemed insulting to the monarchy from the website's now-defunct web board.

She has been charged with violating articles of the 2007 Computer Crimes Act by "intentionally supporting or consenting to crimes linked to the use of computers".

The Act concerns offenses such as hacking and online fraud and forbids the circulation of material deemed harmful to national security.

In 2008, 10 comments appeared on the web board that prosecutors say constituted *lese majeste*, a crime in Thailand. The content of the comments cannot be reported, since doing so would itself be *lese majeste*.

Although Chiranuch co-operated with censors by removing the comments, she was arrested in March 2009 for failing to do so quickly enough.

Media activist Supinya Klangnarong told *Associated Press*

that the Computer Crimes Act "has become a political tool of the state to close down websites and arrest people".

The first day of the trial at Bangkok Criminal Court was well attended by local and international media as well as NGOs, diplomats and representatives of international organizations.

Final testimony is scheduled to be taken on February 17, though observers believe the trial is likely to take much longer than planned.



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There's nothing wrong with nipples

Re: Nipplewatch: staying abreast of nude Phuket [Island View, Issue of January 22, page 7]

I note there is no space to comment online for the article, so I'd like to comment here on how it is apparently perfectly acceptable for the male walking along the beach in the accompanying picture to have his nipples and rather prominent breasts uncovered.

I'm quite sure that up until the religion-obsessed colonialists began spreading their uptight, anti-female, sexist doctrines that indigenous women walked around the tropics all over the globe, freely bare chested in order to best enjoy the cool breezes.

The genital-izing and criminalization of women's chests has been fought in the US and women in New York City now enjoy freedom like most of their European counterparts.

I urge resistance to this blatant, unfair sexism.

*Respectfully,
Christy K Sweet
Cherng Talay*

Second chance

Re: Phuket Gazette, Guns and gangs not child's play, February 5

This tragedy is right out of an episode of the Twilight Zone. Two identical brothers – one killed for the other's transgressions.

The other brother is given a second chance at life.

What will he do with this second chance? Following the ways of Buddha is certainly a good start.

*Sherlock Holmes
Gazette online*

Dangerous shortcut to mangrove loss

Phuket Gazette

THE long-awaited approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment for the "Klong Koh Phree Road" project [see News pages] comes as great news for all sides and represents a reasonable solution to an infrastructure hurdle that has needlessly wasted untold thousand of hours of commuter time over the years.

To review, the project first came into being at around the time the Chalermprakiat School was built at Saphan Hin over a decade ago.

So sure were planners at the time that approval would be given to complete a 600-meter stretch of road connecting Saphan Hin to Sakdidet Road that the school's main entrance was built fronting the mangrove forest. Then, like the scene out of Sleeping Beauty, something strange happened and everything came to a mysterious halt.

Long viewed only as a convenient source of material for charcoal production, Thailand's dwindling mangrove forest reserves finally gained the legal protection they deserved through a 2003 Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment regulation that mandated a blanket ban on any and all public projects on mangrove reserves.

The landmark statute was no doubt inspired by Royal Patronage projects that raised public awareness of mangroves. Mangroves are important ecosystems in their own right and also play a key role in incubating marine species that live offshore. Among their other important roles, mangroves are a first line of defense against sea erosion and – as tragically revealed in 2004 – tsunami inundations.

Despite MNRE protection, a combination of rising property prices and corrupt (or indifferent) officials led to continued attacks by encroachers.

Such developments have left vast swathes of former Phuket mangrove reserves little more than muddy plains covered with tin shanties, resorts, fish farms and floating restaurants in recent years.

Yet despite this widespread destruction, several rai of degraded mangrove land needed for this crucial development project remained as if frozen in time.

Enter former Phuket Governor Wichai Phraisa-ngop, who made road building his prime gubernatorial priority during his brief stay in office.

Although the *Gazette* disagreed with his initial plan to cut a low-budget road straight through the low-lying area, it was no doubt tMr Wichai's raising of the issue at the highest levels of government that led the MNRE to clear the way for the exception that should now end with a "mangrove overpass road" across Klong Koh Phree.

That's the good news.

The bad news is that we must now all hope that the ability to grant such exceptions does not end with Cabinet joining their local counterparts in failing to provide our remaining mangroves the protection they deserve.

Mangrove madness

Re: Gazette online, Phuket 'mangrove road' EIA approved, February 8

I am fairly sure my dismay will be echoed by most readers. Why destroy what little natural environment is left in Phuket in the name of commerce?

This issue has been rumbling away for at least eight years and virtually everyone has opposed it at every stage.

Why has it been approved now?

*Logic
Gazette online*

Changing lanes

Re: Gazette online, Phuket committee agrees to set standard tuk-tuk fares, February 8

Finally!...Finally! Finally! Finally! Finally! Finally!

*Mick
Patong*

FIVB a talent quest Phuket should keep

I recently read in the *Gazette* about the possibility of the 2011 FIVB Women's Volleyball World Tour moving from Phuket to another province.

I think it would be a down-right travesty for the island if this becomes a reality. The sport itself I can take it or leave it, but what I enjoy about the event is the chance to watch a bounty of beauties "do their thang" on the golden sands of Karon Beach, while I sip on a cold bruski and take in the view.

The rules and competition are not important... it's the players I will miss most if the tournament moves elsewhere.

*Sandy Hand
Karon*

Right to withhold... my urine

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Police: Drug war crippled by slow test results, February 7

It is amazing that some people

actually agree with this. What kind of country do you want to live in where you have done nothing wrong but are stopped and made to urinate into a cup so the police can check and see if you have done drugs.

Keep in mind that some drugs

can stay in your system for days, so you could have just flown in from Amsterdam, not done anything while here, and still get thrown in jail – nice system.

*Freedom
Gazette online*

Phuket Gazette

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Issues & Answers...

Grass cutters expose a roadside eyesore

This year workers are once again cutting the grass along the edges of the road from Muang Mai to where it widens to four lanes in Pa Khlok, which is wonderful.

But when they do this, they expose the endless amounts of trash hidden by the tall grass.

Last year, there were teams collecting the trash for pick-up. Why not this year? Please don't tell me it's a money thing. It can't cost that much.

It would be better to not cut the grass and leave the trash, which is constantly added to, than to cut it and reveal this hideous mess.

How can the government of this "paradise" keep talking about this island-wide problem and not clean it up? I don't think anyone really likes the looks of this mess, especially the precious tourists. Now is the time to fix this obvious, in-your-face problem.

*Mr Casey
Pa Khlok*

Send us your queries and we'll ask the right people to respond to them.
Submit your issue at
www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Wasana Srivilai, chief of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) Public Works Section, replies:

The Phuket *OrBorJor* hires a contractor to cut the grass and collect trash on roads under our responsibility.

This service is done every 15 days.

If the contractor is not collecting trash after cutting the grass, or if you find a big pile of trash that needs to be removed, please inform us.

We will ask the contractor to remove it as soon as possible.

You can contact the Phuket *OrBorJor* Public Works Section at 076-213-711.

Late-night flower delivery?

I would like to order flowers from a shop that can deliver them to someone before Valentine's Day. I don't have the address of the place I would like them delivered, but I know the name of the bar.

I have traveled to Phuket many times in the last seven years, so I know the area well and can explain the location.

Also, they would need to deliver the flowers after 10pm and allow me to pay through a PayPal account, by credit card, or when I return in May.

*Ric
USA*

Thitima Hongbut, owner of Flower in Love flower shop in Rassada sub-district, replies:

We deliver flowers 24 hours a day. If a customer wants flowers delivered to Patong, they will have to place an order valued at more than 1,000 baht.

The customer should give us

Tackling tuk-tuk and parking issues

LETTER FROM THE GOVERNOR

SINCE I learned that I would be serving as Phuket governor, the first goal I set in mind was to fix the problems with parking in Patong – especially along Thaweewong Road [beach road] – and overcharging by tuk-tuks and taxis.

I made these issues my top priorities because they have been happening for ages and nobody has fixed them. They have been brought up at every quarterly honorary consuls meeting.

I have heard many complaints from tourists saying it is hard to find parking spaces in Patong because they are all filled with service vehicles such as tuk-tuks, taxis, rental cars and rental motorbikes – and if you are lucky enough to find a space, your car may get scratched or damaged.

Actually, this happens not only in Patong, but everywhere. I started managing parking only along Thaweewong Road first because if I do so everywhere all at once, those who are disadvantaged may rise up and protest – we must go step-by-step.

On the beach road now, rental vehicles are allowed 24 per cent of the parking bays and the remaining 76 per cent is for tourists. This new parking management began on December 30 as a New Year gift for everyone.

The next issue, which I am now working on, is tuk-tuks and taxis



Phuket Governor **Tri Augkaradacha** took office on October 4 last year. Fluent in English, Gov Tri has a master's degree in public administration from Kentucky State University in the United States and served as a Phuket vice governor for nearly four years. In this, the first of our monthly *Letter from the Governor* series, Gov Tri talks about solutions to Phuket's parking woes and overpriced transportation.

overcharging fares. Many people question why the fares are so expensive and tourists are not charged standard fares, despite Phuket being a world-class tourist destination.

I set up a provincial committee to work on these problems, and as with the parking, we will start in Patong and extend to other areas of Phuket later.

The committee members agreed to set standard fares among members of the Patong Taxi Federation which comprises about 85 per cent of service vehicles in Patong.

For example, there could be a maximum fare of 200 baht for every kind of service vehicle – not only tuk-tuks – to travel within Patong, allowing passengers and drivers to negotiate rates for shorter journeys.

The standard fares will be in place mid-February.

Some may ask why we don't install meters in every tuk-tuk and taxi. The reason is that the law requires only vehicles registered

as meter taxis to install meters – it does not affect other taxis and rental cars.

If that were to be done, tuk-tuk owners, for example, would have to agree to change their registration to be a meter taxi and they would have to buy new vehicles, because the regulations require that only sedans less than two years old and no more than 20,000 kilometers on them can have meters installed. After that, the meter can be used for nine years.

That is why no one wants to change their registration to be a metered taxi. What we have done is registered illegal "black plate" sedan taxis so that they are now "green plate" commercial passenger taxis.

The next target is to have all black plate taxis registered as metered taxis, but this process should proceed gradually. We cannot force them quickly, as it may lead to protest. Right now we are considering how to find the ideal solution for this change.



WATCH YOUR STEP: Roadside gutters are a hazard to pedestrians.

Phuket gutters are human traps

THIS is our first visit to Phuket and Karon and I would like to talk about something that happened to my wife during our visit.

On Friday afternoon we came back to Karon on a local bus from a visit to Phuket Town.

When we got off the bus, my wife stepped off onto the gutter next to the sidewalk.

She happened to step down in the exact spot of one of the holes in the gutter.

Normally the holes – the spaces between the concrete covers – are narrow, but some are, for some reason, wider, so her foot went through the hole.

In fact, her leg went through all the way up to her knee.

Fortunately she managed to keep her balance, otherwise she would have surely broken her leg.

After some effort and help from bystanders, she managed to

Island View

By Hans Skarholm

Do you have an opinion to voice? Email Editor@PhuketGazette.net

get her leg out of the hole.

In the end, she had some scrapes and bleeding but we didn't consider it necessary to visit a doctor.

We bought some antiseptic and plasters and we think that will be enough.

It is obviously unacceptable to have this hazard in an area where people are walking.

Later, when I went back to take a photo, I couldn't find exactly where the accident happened because after walking a short distance I found many holes in the gutter that were big enough for a foot to go through.

...asking the questions that affect you...



the name of the bar and address because Patong has many bars. But, if the bar is well-known, we may not need the address. The customer can pay by credit card when they order the flowers.

For more information, call us at 076-221-687 or visit our website at http://www.flowerinlove-pk.com/index_new.html.

Norraset Pinkaew, owner of Iamflower flower shop in Phuket Town, replies:

We can deliver the flowers after 10pm and can do so before

Valentine's Day. There will be a delivery fee depending on the order – probably a few hundred baht. The customer should give us the bar name and address as there are many bars in Patong. Payment can be made by credit card when the order is placed.

For more information, call us at 076-218-303 or visit our website at <http://www.iamflower.biz/main.php>.

Blossoming beer soi leads to traffic woes

The last year has seen a proliferation of beer sheds appear on the two Soi Islandias in Karon, causing these previously snug sois to become a one-way system for vehicles delivering to the various businesses. Are these sheds legal?

Steve Karon

Tawee Tongcham, Mayor of Karon Municipality, replies:

Soi Islandia is private land and

therefore not under the responsibility of Karon Municipality.

Some local residents may not understand that because it is private land, we cannot do anything about the problem.

We don't have the authority to address the increase of shops there.

If the land were our responsibility, we would definitely fix the problems.

For example, we would clean both sides of the soi and would address the issue of people putting tables and chairs on the road, and obstructively parked vehicles.

We have tried discussing this with the owner and asked them to turn the soi into public land.

However, the owner still doesn't want to do that.

We want to turn this soi into public area, but it all depends on the desire of the land owner.

It is their right to keep their land or decide to give it up to us.

If they desire to give it up to us, they can make arrangements and talk to us about it.

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This includes bank deposits, real pension schemes and even rental properties, among other things.

Certain asset classes are appropriate for providing for an "income for life". Others are unsuitable because they either carry the risk of being lost in one swoop, or they are volatile and may take too long to recover to provide for the retiree's lifestyle requirements.

Obviously, no one wants to lose their life savings or the income they need to get by.

Private equity investments, investments into a new venture of any type (which usually have about a 90 per cent failure rate), non-diversified stock or corporate bond investments are all not suitable for retirees for this reason.

Holding all of one's funds in a single bank account – unless backed by a government guarantee – is also a big no-no, even though the odds of this leading to ruin are much smaller than the previous examples.

The second type of investments to be avoided are those that are likely to sustain a large drawdown at some point, such as stock market investments, or in today's low interest rate environment even bond portfolios.

Now that interest rates are returning to historical values, the principal on a portfolio of bonds stands to drop significantly.

This could cause a serious decline in one's standard of living. Most investors do not need to be reminded of the volatility of the stock markets.

We have had two crashes already this decade, with declines as high as 40 per cent in some of the major developed world indexes, though they are now recovering.

The main thing to consider when determining whether an asset class is too risky is historical recovery times.

If a portfolio has historically always recovered from a 10 per cent or 20 per cent drawdown within a year or two, and you aren't drawing out a huge percentage of the funds every year (or do not need the funds for a few years), then you can feel a bit more secure that your future

lifestyle will most likely not be hampered by the inevitable poor

periods that accompany any investment.

For example, even if your pension is in a few apartments that do not have a written track record the way a fund does, you can probably speak to a few long-time owners of some of the units to determine how often they realistically have been unoccupied.

Another option of course is to mark down the rent, as even 50 per cent of your annual rent yield is better than 0 per cent if there happens to be a serious oversupply temporarily.

If you are currently already drawing funds, set aside a decent chunk in a bank deposit.

Even though you are not paying much in returns right now, you will be guaranteed that the money is there for you to spend while the rest of the pot can recover from any spells of bad performance.

David Mayes MBA is a wealth manager for Faramond. E:david.m@faramond.com

Retirement Years

By David Mayes



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South sees 200% investment increase

INVESTMENT in seven southern provinces increased by a whopping 200 per cent based on year-on-year figures for January, the Thailand Board of Investment (BOI) Region 6 reports.

The region's largest investment in January was the 350-room Fisherman Harbour resort project in Phuket, currently under construction. The investment budget for the project was placed at 1.684 billion baht, according to the BOI. The project created 109 new jobs for Thais in Phuket.

In 2009, investments in Phuket that received Bank Of Thailand (BOT) support was more than three billion baht, creating a total of 552 new jobs for Thais.

Apart from Phuket, there were also two agricultural projects in Krabi that received BOI support in January 2011, with a total investment budget of 446 million baht.

Four investment projects in the region received support from BOT, with a total investment budget of over two billion baht.

Mr Suwit Chuavichien, head of the Thailand BOI Region 6, said that one of the main factors driving investment in the region was high yields from the agricultural sectors, thanks to rising prices of agricultural products. This has led to increasing investment in the agricultural sector.

At the same time, substantial investments in tourism and hospitality industries are also driving overall investment in the region, she said.

Investment projects that receive support from the BOI are entitled to tax-based incentives, which include exemption or reduction of import duties on machinery and raw materials. Companies may also be entitled to corporate income tax exemptions.

— Anand Singh

Israel on the secure path

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

THE Israeli ambassador to Thailand was in Phuket last week and met Governor Tri Augkaradacha to offer assistance in airport security and water technology.

Ambassador Itzhak Shoham told the governor that he would, on behalf of Israeli investors, like to offer support and knowledge of security systems to Airports of Thailand in their expansion of Phuket International Airport.

Amb Shoham added that security at Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok is based on the Israeli model and that Ben Gurion International Airport in Tel Aviv is the most secure airport in the world.

"As you know, the situation in Israel is quite dangerous, so we need the most efficient security systems to protect the country," Amb Shoham said.

"We develop technology along with human resources."

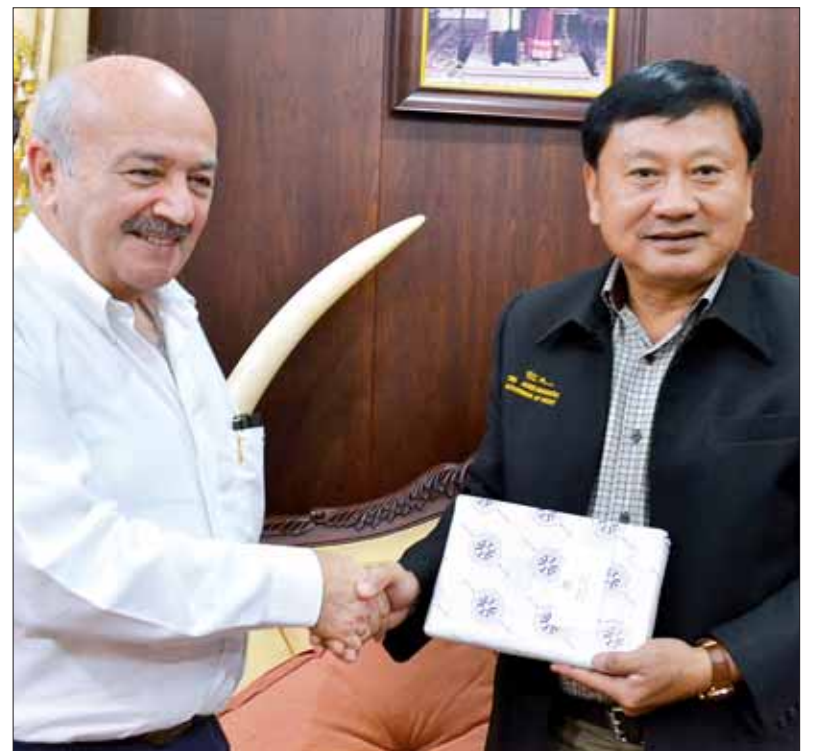
Amb Shoham put the same offer on the table for developing water technologies in Phuket — especially desalination technology.

The growing population of Phuket may lead to water shortages in the future. Israel, as a leader in desalination technology, is ready to provide assistance.

He invited Gov Tri to attend the November 2011 International Conference on Water Technologies, Renewable Energy and Environmental Control (WATEC) in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Gov Tri said that he was very much interested in the invitation and that he, with airport officers, would like to schedule a visit to Ben Gurion Airport to observe the security systems there before the expansion of Phuket Airport is complete.

Amb Shoham has served as the Israeli Ambassador to Thailand since January of last year.



LENDING A HAND: Israeli Ambassador to Thailand Amb Shoham met with Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha last week. Photo: Janpen Upatising

Diving in to replenish marine tourism

By Anand Singh

THE Pure Blue Foundation (PBF) raised 400,000 baht to help rebuild damaged coral reefs and marine ecosystems in the Phuket and Phang-Nga Bay region at a recent gala fundraising auction entitled "Coral Couture".

The PBF is a corporate social responsibility group co-founded by Aleenta Resorts and Akaryn Hospitality Management Services group.

Founder and Managing Director of Aleenta Resorts, Anchalika Kijkanakorn, pointed out that the loss and degradation of coral along Thailand's coastline could result in long term detrimental

effects on local tourism.

"The goal of the PBF is to raise awareness of the urgent need to protect and preserve the environment, replenishing it where necessary," she said.

The PBF aims to raise 700,000 baht during the project's first year and estimates the total cost of rebuilding selected reefs could reach three million baht, which is to be raised over three years.

Working in collaboration with Coral Reef Creator (a Swiss-French company specializing in the development and creation of coral reefs based on artificial structures) the foundation has drawn up an ambitious plan to construct a coral reef "park" located 20 meters

offshore from Aleenta Resort and Spa on Natai Beach.

"With the funds that we have raised, we are now in a strong position to start our first artificial reef project. We will continue to raise funds through the foundation until we meet our goal," Ms Anchalika said.

Narinee Thongtaem, fisheries researcher at the Phuket Marine Biological Center, said that private initiatives to build artificial coral reefs are rare in Phuket, due to the public sector typically receiving consistent funding to create more artificial reefs off the Andaman coast.

"The local government wants to encourage the creation of

artificial reefs because they can help support local seaside communities and generate income through non-intensive fishing," Ms Narinee said.

"However, some artificial reefs, particularly the one near Koh Racha, are also becoming more popular as dive sites.


"Creating more artificial reefs will help benefit the local dive industry, which will be good for tourism," she added.

It is hoped the coral reef park will attract schools of fish, crustaceans and other marine species, enabling the site to develop into a new ecosystem and increasing marine biodiversity in the area.

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Lights, camera, action for future island creativity

By Janpen Upatising

AS FILMING of *The Impossible*, starring Ewan McGregor, continues in Phuket and Phang Nga, Phuket's attraction for on-location shooting has been touted as an industry to be "developed creatively".

The idea was put forward at a brainstorming session among officials and Phuket business folk to identify local industries to be entered in the 50-million-baht Creative City national competition run by the Ministry of Commerce.

The competition was launched after Deputy Commerce Minister Alongkorn Ponlaboot announced in January that the government was to spend 20 billion baht on boosting productivity of the nation's "creative economy".

The aim is to raise creative industries' contribution to the Thai gross domestic product (GDP) from 12 per cent in 2010 to 20 per cent in 2012.

High on the list of ideas presented at the Phuket meeting, chaired by Governor Tri Augkaradacha, was creative tourism.

"We have to develop creative tourism as a selling point since we have a unique combination of tourism attractions," said Krisada Tansakul of the Phuket Tourism Association.

Mr Krisada, a specialist in creative tourism, explained that Phuket has five main areas that can be developed: culture, product, people, enterprise and industry.

"However, we have to think of which activities we should include to create an interaction between the tourists and our culture," he said.

Although some thought is involved, the answers might be sitting right in front of us, Mr Krisada said, pointing out that even the cashew nuts sitting in

front of each delegate at the meeting were a good example.

Phuket-based business Cashew, famed for its cashew nut farm on Klang Road in Wichit, produces a cashew drink that was one of the official drinks available in the athlete's village at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

"This local product can be developed into a variety of products on the commercial market," Mr Krisada said.



Ewan McGregor

He cited Old Phuket Town and its Sino-Portuguese architecture as a good example in terms of culture, adding that the century-old buildings made Phuket Town a good place for on-location filming – an industry he said could be creatively developed in its own right.

In closing the meeting, Gov Tri ordered a committee to be established to select the entries from Phuket to be entered in the Creative City contest.

The committee will comprise representatives from the Phuket Tourism Association, Phuket Office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Phuket Rajabhat University.

The committee will next convene on February 24.

The first round of the Creative City contest requires representatives from 30 selected cities to present their ideas in Bangkok to a panel of judges comprising key figures from government agencies and the private sector.

The final round will be held in June, with the 10 finalists privy to marketing, design and investment workshops led by experts in their respective fields.

The 10 finalists will also promote their ideas at an exhibition in Bangkok and have their concepts publicized through government-sponsored media promotions.



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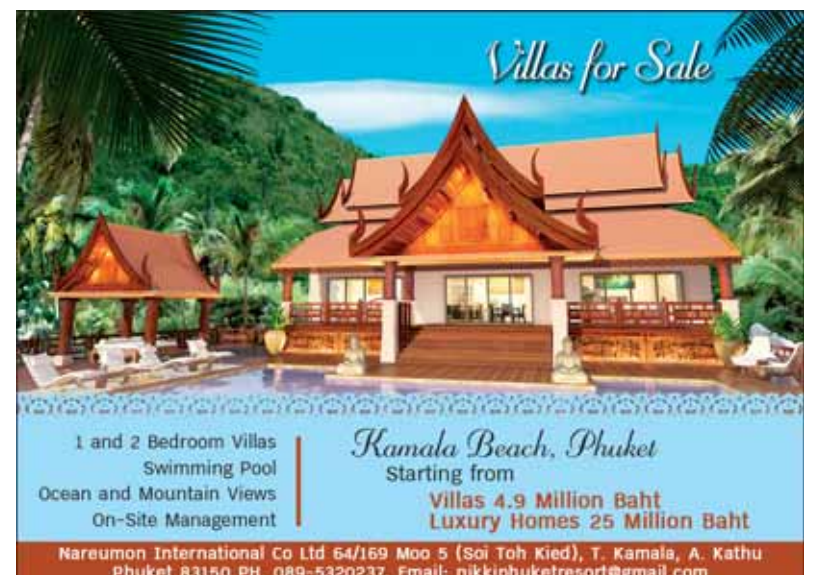
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Napoleon of the Desert

DAVID Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* is one of the greatest films of all time. The director took considerable liberties with the truth but T.E. Lawrence's real exploits of courage and endurance were even greater as a new massive biography reveals.

Hero (Harper Collins, New York, 2010, 762pp) is subtitled "The Life and Legend of Lawrence of Arabia". The author is Michael Korda. At 77, he once was the bad boy of American publishing, editor-in-chief of Simon & Schuster and author of the 1975 screed *Power! How to Get it, How to Keep it*.

But he proves to be a surprisingly graceful and insightful biographer. And he knows his military science, having written biographies of Ulysses S Grant (subtitled "The Unlikely Hero") and Dwight D Eisenhower (*Ike: An American Hero*).

Lawrence was a very odd duck. He didn't drink or smoke or eat meat except in an emergency. He hated being touched and died a virgin.

Korda constantly compares him to Napoleon Bonaparte, though this is a stretch as Lawrence's military career lasted only two years and he commanded an army that was a tiny

Books

By James Eckardt

Hero

By Michael Korda

fraction of Napoleon's.

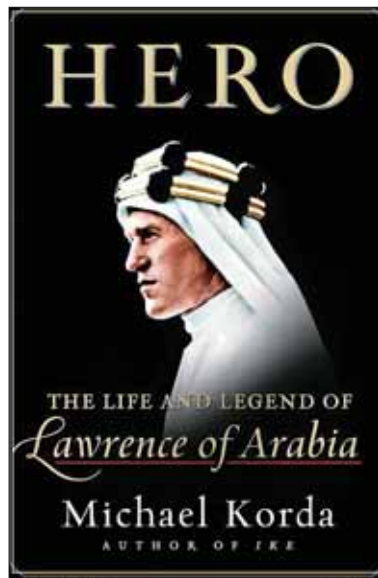
Nonetheless, he led his Arab tribesmen in their only pitched battle with Turkish regular troops and defeated them resoundingly with his far-sighted tactics.

Like Napoleon, he was also small: 165cm tall, weighing on average 49 kilograms though by the end of his war he was down to 40kg from punishing camel treks and sleepless nights.

He had been training himself for his desert ordeals since childhood, testing how long he could endure without food, water or sleep.

He came from an odd family. His Anglo-Irish father came from landed gentry who gave up his vast estate in Ireland to run away to England with his daughters' Scottish nanny. They lived under an assumed name and raised four sons.

Lawrence's mental skills were forged at Oxford University, where he earned a brilliant "first".



Archeological digs in Syria gave him his Arabic skills and easy leadership of men.

He was many things to many people. An earlier biographer noted: "Lawrence seems to me to be like an oyster which has, through pain and suffering, all through life developed into a pearl which the world is trying to evaluate, taking it to pieces layer by layer, without realizing the true value of the whole."

He became the first media star of World War I thanks to Lowell Thomas, the American journalist whose traveling show – movies,

slides, lectures, dancing girls – was the Buffalo Bill's *Wild West Show* of its day.

He fled fame but only after writing a literary masterpiece of a memoir *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and developing deep friendships with Bernard Shaw and Winston Churchill. He then slipped into anonymity, enlisting in the Royal Air Force under an assumed name.

His life was ultimately a tragedy for though he led the Arabs into Damascus to claim an independent Arab nation after the expulsion of the Ottoman Turks, the British and the French split the Levant between them at the Treaty of Versailles.

As Lawrence ruefully observed in *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*: "We lived many lives in those whirling campaigns, never sparing ourselves yet when we achieved and the new world dawned, the old men came out again and took our victory to remake in the likeness of the former world they know".

By the cruelest of ironies, Lawrence had long been aware of the imperialist plans of the British and French and yet he still encouraged the Arabs to rise up against the Turks for their freedom.

Thai film in the running for Asian Film Award

ELATION gripped the Thai film industry last week as news filtered through that one of this country's most promising directors has been nominated for a gong at the 5th Asian Film Awards (AFA).

Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* is in the running with six others for the Best Film Award at the AFA, penciled in for March this year in Hong Kong.

The film, which scooped the top Palme d'Or prize at the Cannes Film Festival last year, will have to fend off stiff competition from other box office heavy hitters from the past year.

Batting out of the Chinese corner, will be two of that country's largest grossing movies in cinematic history: *Let the Bullets Fly* and *After Shock*. Both films reportedly raked in more than 600 million yuan (nearly three billion baht) at the Chinese box office. Rounding off the Best Film shortlist are: *Confessions* (Japan), *Peepli Live* (India) and *Poetry* (South Korea). The first AFA was held five years ago and it has grown in stature since.

– Blair Christopher

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10 great things about Friendship

Friends come easy and the food comes fast and flavorsome at Friendship Beach Resort in Rawai, but there are a few more reasons to head south in a hurry...

By Fraser Morton

Breakfast bliss (from 7am):

If you're an early bird, this place is simply stunning in the morning as the sun rises over Chalong Bay. Sit yourself down at the restaurant yards away from the sand, order a bowl of Muesli with fruit (155 baht), an Irish Coffee (200 baht) or Eggs Benedict (210 baht) – or all three – to start a lazy day.

Fancy a dip? If you order food at the restaurant you can work it off in the swimming pool (0 baht) and make use of the sun loungers (0 baht). Refreshingly different from most other island eateries.

Friend factor: You'll never feel lonesome here, staff – kitchen, bar and resort – smile so much it must hurt, mind you, when you work at a resort on the beach as stunning as this, there isn't much to be down about.

Starr status: American Starr (with double "rr") Farish acquired the resort nine years ago after he came here to retire, but found himself twiddling his fingers with boredom and in need of a hobby. Since then there's been a dramatic turnaround

at Friendship with better facilities and a detox center added to the resort. "The hobby gets more interesting each year... looking to the future, we're going toward a more healthy vegetarian menu, expanding the detox center and improving the entrance," says Starr.

Chef Charlie: Executive Chef Charlie Maurer is a man who knows his trade and how to make and maintain high standards in service and flavorsome food. He



Meet the Friendship team

crafted his trade at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York and won the Seattle Barbecue Cook-Off back in 1995 for his Baby Back Ribs (310 baht at Friendship). Topping off his skills, he's also the American Northwest Chili (no beans) making-champ of 1989. His Chili (245 baht) is still of prize-winning caliber at Friendship. Did we mention he works six days – sometimes seven – and serves as a freelance food consultant around the island? Busy man, but the demand is for a reason, he's great at what he does.

Water theater: On blustery days kitesurfers crisscrossing the bay yards away from where you eat will keep you entertained. If the tide is out, then expect to see locals collecting clams and crabs below the waterline, couples kayaking or yachts and speedboats zigzagging from Rawai round to Chalong Pier. There's always something to lay your eyes on here, and the view out to Koh Lone, Coral Island and Cape Panwa isn't half bad. In fact, the views are so good, you'll be



Executive Chef Charlie Maurer

annoyed if you forget your camera – so maybe bring it.

Fresh juice: The juice bar here is chock full of sweet-tasting, low-fat fruit and vegetable shakes and juices: Wheat Grass, Beetroot, Applemint Zinger, Beach Baby (all 120 baht) are worthy mentions.

Tex-Mex to Thai to fries: Buried in the menu (more like a book) are Thai, American, French, English, German and Mexican dishes. With so much to choose from, it's a wonder anyone can order at all.



Night barman Kartoon + coffee

Bring on the music: Belting out classic rock and blues as well as some pop favorites, the house band (Fridays and Sundays) and the resort's Live Music Extravaganza nights lure in locals from far and wide. Keep your ear to the ground for the next music night.

Easy access: At the end of Soi Mittrapap. If you have no idea where that is, then this might help: three kilometers from Chalong Circle heading south to Rawai. On the left – big sign. T:076-288996, W:friendshipbeach.com

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Looking to the sky for answers

Remembering August 31, 1987 when a Thai Airways flight crashed into the sea off Phuket. Lest we forget...

PHUKET International Airport (PIA) is in the heady days of a sustained tourism boom. Already the second-busiest airport in the country, PIA today is the midst of a huge expansion to allow it to annually accommodate 12 million passengers passing through its doors, with construction scheduled for completion by the end of next year.

Minor air incidents involving the airport are often punctuated by excited reports in the media with quotes from nervous passengers and the mandatory term "emergency landing".

Major air disasters are rare in the airport's history, but they have happened.

Nearly everyone remembers the crash of One-Two-Go flight OG269 on a wet and blustery Sunday afternoon, September 16, 2007. The crash claimed the lives of 90 people, including 45 foreign tourists.

But fewer can recall the day back in 1987 when a THAI Airways flight crashed into the sea just eight miles off Phuket, killing all on board.

The disaster sparked a nationwide campaign by the government to improve air safety throughout the country.

On that Monday morning, August 31, 1987, Thai Airways flight 365 was flying to Phuket from Haad Yai. The passenger aircraft,

Looking Back

By Anand Singh

a Boeing 737-2P5, was carrying 83 passengers and crew – 37 of them were foreigners.

About 3:30pm, the aircraft approached Phuket airport from the east and prepared for landing. According to reports from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), flight 365 descended to 3,000 feet and was 13 miles from Phuket.

Ahead of it was Dragonair flight 203, an international flight arriving from Hong Kong also preparing for landing. The Dragonair Boeing 737 was a mile ahead of the Thai aircraft and closer to PIA, but not by much. The proximity to the runway and the fact that it had already descended to 2,500 feet meant the Hong Kong carrier was given priority for landing.

The ICAO report on the incident stated that the Thai crew hurriedly reported a false position to PIA air traffic control, claiming they were in fact eight miles away from landing, ahead of Dragonair 203.

Back then the airport was not equipped with radar, so Air Traffic Control (ATC) had to use the pilot's reported positions to regulate traffic, and thus gave the Thai aircraft landing priority at 3:35pm.

From the falsely reported position, the Dragonair crew soon came to realize that both planes were in a precarious position. Flight 365 was ahead and would be allowed to land first, but it was flying at 3,000 feet. Dragonair was reportedly further away, but flying at 2,500 feet.

To be able to land, the Thai aircraft would have to slow down



DARK DAY IN HISTORY: After the crash of a Thai Airways flight in 1987, the government mandated that all major airports across Thailand be equipped with radar to prevent similar accidents. Photo: Marcin Wichary

and, upon descending, cross into the Dragonair flight path, risking mid-air collision.

The Dragonair pilots protested with the ATC over radio, saying that THAI 365 could not be given landing priority.

The ICAO report stated that the conflicting information may have confused the Thai crew, who had already reduced speed to 163 knots and lowered the Boeing's landing gear.

By the time the Thai pilots realized they had to abort their approach to avoid collision, the air-

craft was already sending them warning signs that the airspeed was dwindling dangerously.

The Thai crew retracted the landing gear and applied jet power to gain airspeed, but at this point the aircraft began to stall badly.

There was little that the crew could do. Seconds later, Thai Airways 365 fell from the sky and plunged into the sea, eight miles off Phuket. The time of crash was recorded as 3:36pm.

Dragonair 203 made its landing safely and reported the crash to Phuket ATC. The airline's offi-

cials later released a statement in Hong Kong, which assured that the Dragonair aircraft had nothing to do with the crash, *The New York Times* reported at the time.

The New York Times also reported that foreign passengers on the doomed Thai aircraft included Malaysians, Americans, Japanese and several Europeans.

Prayoon Thavisang, manager of PIA at the time, said after the crash that the Thai aircraft had followed a landing procedure that had never caused any problems in the past.

Shortly after, the Thai government mandated that all major airports across Thailand must be equipped with radar to prevent similar accidents from happening again.

Anand Singh can be contacted at E:as.pkt@hotmail.com

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Graham Bibby

GRAHAM Bibby is the CEO of the Richmond Group which holds various real estate properties around Phuket. The most notable to date is 'The Residence' near Bang Tao Bay, which encloses 92 villas designed by award-winning architect Fredo Taffin.

Graham is also CEO and CIO of Richmond Asset Management in Hong Kong, where he advises corporate clients on how to manage their investment portfolios.

What adds special interest to Graham's profile is his interest in motivational behavior to manifest success. He often quotes Deepak Chokpra and inspiring ideas such as the *Law of Attraction* that he feels are essential for people to reach their investment or personal goals.

Graham first came to the island in 1991 and stayed at Laguna Phuket for a holiday. When he returned some years later with a group of award winning fund managers from the United Kingdom, he rented a Jeep and explored the island more thoroughly, looking for investment opportunities, which then became the Richmond Group.

Graham was born in Devon, England and went to school at Exeter. As a student, he was interested in both architecture and finance.

He later moved to Edinburgh where he excelled in his finance

EXPAT gallery

By Bruce Stanley

and accounting courses. He took a job in his early 20s with Lloyd's & Scottish Finance, saved his money and began buying land from a bankrupt builder. He built studio apartments and tripled his investment, he says.

He was involved in many ventures, including such things as selling women's clothing out of vans and buying cars at auction for repair and on-selling at a profit.

He went to work for Prudential as a Financial Planner and became a founding member of the Institute of Financial Planning. He then formed Bibby & Co in Exeter, his initial clients being mostly small farmers willing to entrust him with their life savings.

"While other investment companies were making small returns for their clients, I was making large ones because I invested in other parts of the world. I needed to analyze 46 stock markets to stay current."

When he was invited to Dubai to advise some new clients in the early 1990s, he realized that working in Asia could be very profitable, so he

moved his family to Hong Kong in 1991 and set up Richmond Asset Management under the authorization of the Hong Kong Securities and Futures Commission.

"My focus over the past 18 years has been currency, commodities and the equity markets. I'm not much interested in live markets, but rather how they move over a longer period. My forte is following the trends and knowing when to exit."

During his active years in Hong Kong, Graham served as Chairman of the Technical Analysts Society of Hong Kong and made regular appearances on BBC, CNN, Bloomberg, CNBC and the Asia Market Wrap series.

He travels extensively giving seminars on investment strategies for a number of high net worth individual investors and institutions around Southeast Asia.

"I decided to move to Phuket and enter the construction and development industry as I believe this is where the future lies. I could see this was going to be the most desirable place to live in Asia."

Graham is quite upbeat regarding the Thai economy and the future of Phuket.

"The Thai stock market has huge underlying strength. I never follow the herds when it comes to investment. Now is the time to buy."



BY PETER CHILD FOR THE PHUKET GAZETTE

About Expat Gallery

The individuals profiled in "Expat Gallery" are chosen on the basis of their contributions to Phuket, and for having made those contributions in successful partnerships with Thais. For many, the contributions have entailed significant investment, often in the mid-80s and 90s when the rules of business were, ahh, not always clear. Some are not in business at all, but all have one thing in common: if there were a *Who's Who in Phuket*, they'd be in it.



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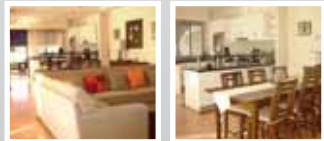
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Saving heritage

Old Phuket Foundation President Kawee Tansukatanon speaks candidly about preserving the island's traditions, community values and unique heritage

By Janpen Upatising

SMARTLY dressed and upbeat, Kawee Tansukatanon, exhales and furls his lips in a smile as he recalls his childhood growing up in Phuket in the 1960s.

He remembers roaming the mottled streets of Old Phuket Town with his friends, being surrounded by family members, and a strong sense of community ties and traditions. These were instilled in him from an early age, although now at the age of 49 he admits they weren't such a high priority for him in those early years.

But with age has come wisdom and a change in values, and today, as President of the Old Phuket Foundation, Mr Kawee's priorities have shifted. Preserving local traditions and restoring faith in the customs of bygone eras are not only his personal goals, but a job requirement.

Having taken up the role seven months ago after a 16-year stint working as a Phuket City Municipality officer, Mr Kawee finds effectively promoting his traditionalist message demands a high level of commitment, research and outreach work within the local community.

Mr Kawee was also one of the co-organizers for the 12th annual Phuket Old Town Festival that drew to a close earlier in the week.

"The event was a success, but I

still think many people just come to buy things at the stalls and shops, instead of to see the exhibitions and listen to the academic readings. It's a very important element of the festival," he said.

A major boon for heritage preservation may soon be on the cards for Phuket following the announcement last month that the Senate Committee had asked the Culture Ministry to secure a coveted United Nations heritage listing for buildings in Old Phuket Town.

The help of property owners in the area play a big part in keeping the architectural heritage of the area in town, Mr Kawee said.

"Current property owners in Old Phuket Town have agreed to preserve their Sino-Portuguese houses, as best as they possible can, to the way they were when their grandparents lived in them," he said.

"The community has really started to realize how important the architecture is," he added.

That some of the dwellings have been turned into guesthouses is a positive development because both foreign and domestic tourists love to stay in the area, he added.

Although

his grandparents migrated from Fujian, China in the early 20th century, he thinks of himself as a local through and through and points to future generations as the next stewards of history.

"If Phuket's tradition disappears, the younger generation may not know who their ancestors were or where they came from. It is about history and educating the young," he said.

"If we keep pushing our message through cultural events, we have a chance of preserving our heritage for future generations – but we need help, from everyone."

Kawee Tansukatanon
Photo: Janpen Upatising



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Words of wisdom shared in Phuket

Anthropologist, author and Buddhist Joan Halifax Roshi shares her insight on cultivating compassion

By Alexandra Andersson

FRESH off the plane from attending the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Switzerland, where she mingled with the likes of Bill Clinton and Bill Gates, Joan Halifax Roshi arrived in Phuket last week for some downtime – and to share the wisdom that has made her the spiritual leader she is today.

“Reality is boundless, vow to perceive it” was the principal message she delivered to her attentive audience during her talk at Phuket International Academy’s (PIA) Mind Center last week.

By this she means not being afraid to experience all aspects of life – including death, inadequacy and suffering.

She related this articulately to her audience, drawing parallels with everything from world politics to individual’s personal lives.

At just four years old Joan lost

her sight and was partially paralyzed for two years from a viral infection. This was when she discovered she had an “interior life” and decided to spread the word.

“Bad circumstances can produce good results, it can make you stronger, whilst comfortable circumstances can make you into a complete sloth,” said Joan, who originally comes from the southern United States.

This attitude has fueled her remarkable life, and seen her work closely with the Dalai Lama, the terminally ill and prisoners on death row.

She has authored numerous popular books, and her wisdom is recognized by the likes of the Tony Blair Foundation, where she serves as an advisor and The Library of Congress, where she’s a scholar.

Her most recent book, *Being with Dying: Cultivating Fearlessness and Compassion in the Presence of*

Death, documents 40 years of “learning” from being by the bedside of those who are dying.

“Serving dying people is an extraordinary privilege, one fraught with difficulties but also intense inspiration,” Joan says.

She also spoke about several issues addressed at the WEF, including religious fundamentalism, poverty and disease in countries such as Haiti, highlighting the importance for people not to avoid these issues.

This is why, she said, “We must internally stop in our busy lives and train our mind not to ignore sentiments of suffering, death and conflict that characterize our world.”

At the talk at PIA Joan asked the audience to sit perfectly still, close their eyes and concentrate on trying to feel the rage of the protesters in Egypt, the silent agony of an abused child, the defeated regret of a prisoner on death row, and the sadness of someone who is dying.

All of this, she explained, had to be done with an open, recep-



WISE WOMAN: Joan Halifax Roshi. Photo: Alexandra Andersson

tive and non-judgmental mind in order to feel pure empathy and avoid slipping into the cynicism, hatred and delusion that is the “default position of people today”.

Joan’s next stop is Burma, but her unpretentious and poignant message will undoubtedly stay with those who were in the Phuket audience that night.

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Tickets Available from the following local outlets – call the hotline for updates:



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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

February 12-13. Balanced mind course training

Transforming Adversity – part of seven points in the mind course training program. A synthesis of practices will be developed to train your engagement in daily life. The goal of the training is to transform the mind so even during adversity the mind is balanced, enabling joy and happiness to arise. Ringu Tulku Rinpoche, Master of Tibetan Buddhism of the Kagyu Order will be teaching this session. From 9am at Phuket International Academy's Mind Centre. Contact Weena at T:076-336030 E:mtc@phuketinternationalacademy.com W:phuketinternationalacademy.com for more information.

February 13. Phuket Yacht Club kid's sailing in Ao Yon Bay

Courses will be held on selected Sundays in February and March for children aged between seven and 12 years old. These will be introduction-to-sailing courses. From 9am at Phuket Yacht Club. Contact Donna Stephens at T:086-1200752 E:phuketyachtclub@gmail.com W:phuketyachtclub.info for more information.

February 14. Candlelit dinner and Valentine's festival

Treat your sweetie this Valentine's Day with a romantic atmosphere

February 9-13. The Bay Regatta



The Bay Regatta (formerly Phang Nga Bay Regatta) will sail through Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi, showcasing some of the most stunning maritime scenery in the world. Now in its 14th year, and organized by Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC), this popular regatta will see more than 50 boats and their crew taking part in four days racing plus five nights of prize-giving presentations and parties, all of which take place at a new location each night. With its casual and fun-filled atmosphere, the regatta attracts serious and not-too-serious racers. Contact Leslie at T:089-8750064 E:bayregatta@acyc-phuket.com or visit W:acyc-phuket.com.

and candlelit dinner at the Hilton Phuket Arcadia Resort & Spa. Choose from four sensational dining locations. From 7pm onwards. Contact Nikki Tipaxorn at T:076-396433 E:sales.phuket@hilton.com.

February 14. Valentine's Day special meal at SALA Phuket.

Recline and dine with your loved one this Valentine's Day. Graze through our special tasting menu while mood jockey DJ Noom lays down silky-smooth tracks. After dinner, lie under the stars and enjoy a romantic comedy in our starlight theater. Price is 3,500 baht++ for two. Lavish your table in a

blanket of rose petals for an additional 1,500 baht++. An intimate, private rooftop table will be available for an additional 2,900 baht ++, including a bottle of pink bubbles. Contact Tibor Baan at T:076-338888 E:fbphuket@salaphuket.com or visit W:salaresorts.com/phuket.

February 14-18. Topper dinghy sailing

Try our new Topper Sail Boats – exhilarating, safe, easy & fun. Enjoy the thrills and spills of single-handed sailing using the well-known Topper & Topaz. This is an excellent and fun way to learn and practice sailing. Katy, who manages the center, has a background in teaching outdoor education activities in the United Kingdom for more than 20 years. Katy is a qualified teacher (PGCE) and is an RYA trained senior sailing instructor. Course fees include all specialist equipment, safety cover, course handouts, certificates, drinking water and insurance. Course fee: 5,000 baht (15 hours). Contact Katy Gooch at T:085-215 9185 E:toppersailphuket@gmail.com for more information.

February 18. Curry Fridays

Curry Fridays is held on alternate Fridays. Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish

Indian Curry Buffet. Selections include all-time favorites chicken tikka massala, very hot mutton vindaloo, juicy kebabs, goan fish curry, chickpea curry and much more, served with nan bread and basmati rice. From 7pm to 11:30pm. All you can eat for only 449 baht nett! Draught beer just 50 baht nett. Contact Seemant Raju at T:076-286464 ext 4 for reservations E:sm@karonseasand.com or visit W:karonseasand.com for more information.

February 18. Phuket-Times Dot Com Amateur Golf Open

To kick off 2011, The Phuket-Times Dot Com Amateur Golf Open will have its 6th qualifying heat. Places are still available for all heats and you need to be in it to win it, with the top 25 in order of merit rankings getting a place

in the grand final automatically, as well as the winners of each category in each qualifying heat. Entry fee: 3,000 baht (inclusive of green fee, caddy fee, and food). All payments and entry forms must be received before February 16. The event will be held at 10.30am at Blue Canyon Lakes Course. Contact Neil Taylor (English) at T:082-2803486 or Laong (Thai) at T:087-8564426 or W:phuket-times.com E:phuketamateurgolfopen@gmail.com for more information.

February 19-25. 'Finding peace & happiness' at PIA

"All happiness comes from a desire for others to be happy; all misery comes from the desire for oneself to be happy," Shantideva, 8th century Indian pandita. Tenzin Priyadarshi, is the founding director of the Dalai Lama Centre for Ethics and Transformative Values at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. February 19: Open to all and February 20-25: Retreat for those interested in continuing. Contact Weena at T:076-336030 E:mtc@phuketinternationalacademy.com or visit W:phuketinternationalacademy.com

February 23. Phuket Punchline Comedy Club in Patong

The first Phuket Punchline Comedy Show of the year sees three of the UK comedy circuit's finest comedians come to the Holiday Inn Resort. Nick Doody, Josh Howie and Michael Legge will perform, all of whom have plaudits to impress even the most discerning of critics. This will no doubt be another rip-roaring comedy affair. The *Phuket Gazette* sponsors this event. Contact Boom at T:089-646 9278 E:info@phuketcomedy.com

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BIS marks big birthday



CONGRATS: BIS Board Member Apiwat Ourairat presents Emma Russell with the 'Top in Thailand' certificate for French IGCSE.

Last week British International School celebrated its 15th year in business with festivities coinciding with the school's International Day event. There were performances from many of the 36 different cultures represented at the school. Numerous awards were also presented to students for achievements in excellence across a range of subjects.

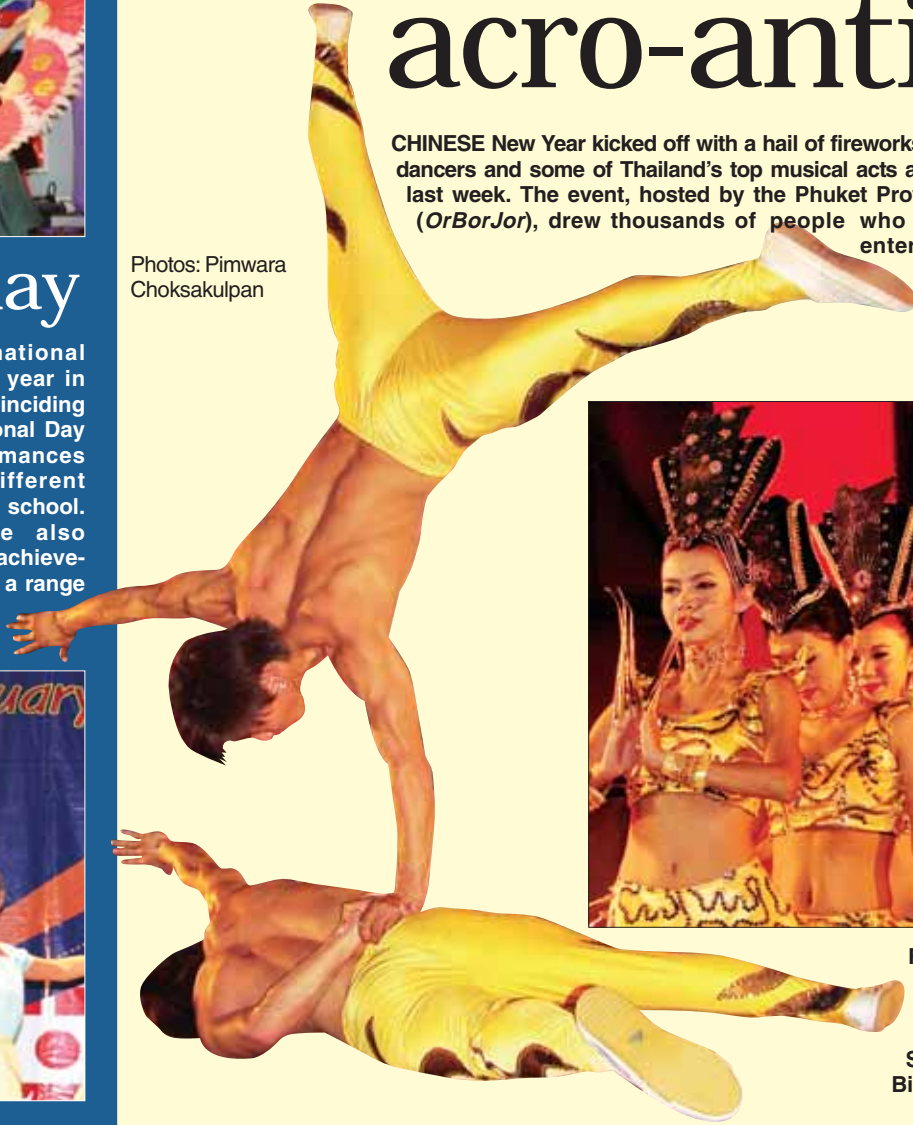
Photos: Alexandra Andersson



Chinese New Year acro-antics

CHINESE New Year kicked off with a hail of fireworks and live performances by acrobats, dancers and some of Thailand's top musical acts at Sanaam Chai field in Phuket Town last week. The event, hosted by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor), drew thousands of people who turned out for great food and entertainment. After the opening ceremony, led by Wichai Srikwan, the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Board Chairman, Chinese acrobats from Puyang City, China, wowed the audience with dazzling acrobatics.

Photos: Pimwara Choksakulpan



FLEXIBLE FRIENDS: Highlights of the night included the gravity-defying stunts of Chinese acrobats (left), a martial arts demonstration by Shaolin warriors and a "Lion Gives Birth" dance.

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C-society sing thanks



COTTO bathroom innovators held a “C-society party” at the company’s studio in Phuket Town to thank customers for their support. Rounding off the festivities on the day was a performance by well-known Thai singer Popetorn Soonthorn-yanakij (right), Photos: Atchaa Khamlo

COTTO MEN (left): Marketing Director of Thai Ceramic Company Limited, Tananit Rattananen (black t-shirt) with staff members at the party.



MUSIC MEN (left): Popetorn and his band at the party.







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Has Phromthep Cape been ruined?

Following criticism in the British media over the state of Phromthep Cape, The *Gazette* finds out how islanders feel about the identity of this southern tourist hot spot.

By Atchaa Khamlo

BRITISH TV personality Phillip Schofield revealed in a recent *Daily Telegraph* interview that he thinks Phuket – in particular Phromthep Cape – has been ruined by tourism.

Recounting a recent trip to Phromthep Cape with his wife, Schofield told the newspaper he was shocked by how much the place has changed for the worse since he visited in his youth.

Schofield said he remembered the Cape was once a magical place where local families would bring food and everyone was invited to share, but now “nasty shacks selling awful food” and the “worst kind of commercialism” had destroyed the popular sunset viewing point.

In recent years Phuket has experienced substantial development as its reputation as a tourist destination has skyrocketed.

Phromthep Cape, or *Laem Phrom Thap* in Thai (which can be roughly translated as “cape of the pure gods”) is located on Phuket’s south-



UNIMPRESSED: Phillip Schofield

ernmost tip and remains one of the island’s top tourist attractions.

On weekends the Cape draws big crowds that visit to appreciate the area’s stunning natural beauty.

There is also a shrine, a lighthouse and a museum to enjoy, as well as the food stalls and souvenir shops Schofield refers to in the interview.

Responding to Schofield’s comments, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket office, Bangornrat Shinaprayoon, said, “People don’t have the same tastes. Mr Schofield probably prefers local lifestyles. Times have changed and everything has changed with it.

“He can choose other spots in Phuket to go to, such as Nai Yang Beach which is still full with local



TOURIST HOT SPOT: Both foreign and Thai tourists visit Phromthep Cape in droves and is a popular place with families.

smells and abundant nature. That might suit him better.”

However, some tourists and locals in Phuket have agreed with Mr Schofield’s comments.

Nuanjan Gedgliang, 44, has been running a clothes stall at Phromthep Cape for 18 years.

“Not many people bring food up to eat at Phromthep any more, ever since Rawai Municipality campaigned against it after some tourists thought the Cape was dirty,” Mrs Nuanjan said.

Mrs Nuanjan also said that the area has definitely changed and become too commercialized – a transformation driven by the importance of the tourism industry.

She said it has turned into a “foreigner’s city”, where everything has become expensive.

“I really would love for it to go back to being what it used to be, but that seems impossible.

“If my house were not in Phuket, I would not live here,” she added.

Nicklas Nilsson, a 42-year-old Swedish expat, agreed.

“Phromthep Cape is not like it was eight years ago. At that time there were not so many businesses and only small food stalls,” he said.

He went on to say the pace of the development will eventually hurt tourism, as Phuket will no longer have a local influence, which will put tourists off visiting.

Mrs Bangornrat said there are some positives to take from these comments. Better organization in terms of appearance at many of the island’s tourist attractions was one issue Mrs Bangornrat highlighted as needing addressed immediately.

“We want tourists to be impressed, not put off, when they visit Phromthep Cape,” she added.



SCENIC: Phromthep Cape’s natural beauty attracts visitors. Photo: Jeeheon Cho

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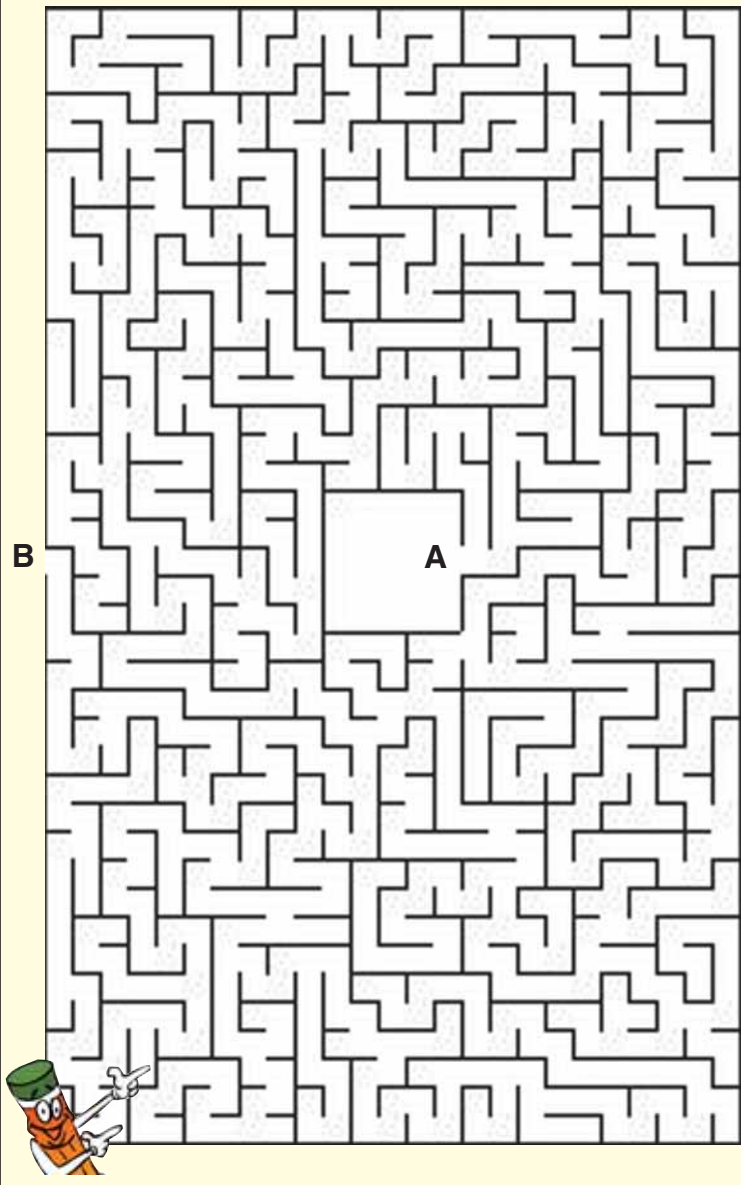
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A *Gazette* staff member completed this maze in one minute. Can you beat their time? Make your way out of the maze.

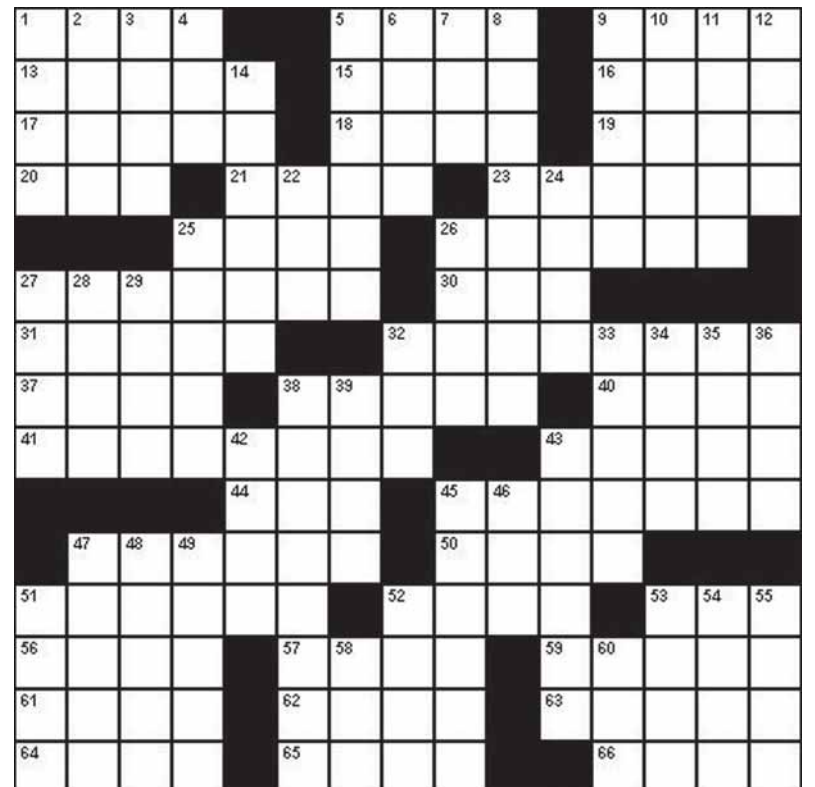


Across

1. Woman who killed Sisera
5. Match up
9. Move suddenly
13. God of Islam
15. Blue hue
16. Comics canine
17. Resembling a web
18. I could — horse!
19. Make-up artist?
20. Large body of water
21. Cat sound
23. Aden native
25. Treater's words
26. Diacritic mark
27. River in South Africa
30. Also
31. Siouan speakers
32. Deducing
37. Crowd sound
38. Farm bird
40. Great Lake
41. Short note
43. Harvests
44. Blame
45. Most proximate
47. Ship apartments
50. Galoots
51. Round of voting
52. Feminist Lucretia
53. Alias letters
56. Black-and-white treat
57. Children's author Blyton
59. 1961 Heston role
61. — account (never)
62. Exchange for money
63. Lasso
64. Abound
65. Ad word
66. One hunted

Down

1. Mouth bones
2. "Hard —!" (sailor's yell)
3. Exile isle
4. Test area
5. Sound investment?
6. 365 days
7. Writer Hentoff
8. Scottish broadsword
9. Stuffed savory vine leaf



10. Farewell
11. Cheerful
12. Actress Hatcher
14. Greek god of sleep
22. Diamond authority
24. "The Time Machine" race
25. Musical drama; 26. Salt Lake City hoopsters
27. Bereft
28. Langston Hughes poem
29. Castle ring
32. Put on
33. Swerves
34. Dies —
35. Bites

36. Adventurous exploit
38. Very large woman
39. "My fault!"
42. Small combo
43. Roof timber
45. Dried strip of egg dough
46. Absorb, as a cost
47. Chili con —
48. Coeur d' —
49. Plant flower
51. Rubber overshoe
52. Factory
53. Rent—
54. Bird of prey
55. Forever's partner
58. Atomic body
60. Back talk

Provided by BestCrosswords.com.
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Puzzle solutions on page 37

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Breaking away from your usual routine is set to open up new possibilities this week. Aquarians are should drop commitments that are dragging them down, particularly if they are not satisfying enough. Your energy will benefit from a motivating astral atmosphere during the second half of February. Those celebrating a birthday in the coming days will see romantic dreams come true in the year ahead.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): The temptation to let a secret slip will be strong this week. An air sign is likely to put pressure on you to tell all, but the stars indicate that repercussions could land you in hot water. Putting in extra hours at work could put you on a slippery slope. Splashing out on some retail therapy this weekend could be just what you need to cheer up.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Tensions will be running high around mid-February for many Arians. Promises made by an air sign could be blown away with the wind early next week. The stars suggest that you consider this part of a learn-

ing curve. Romance could be affected by a partner's jealousy, but flirting is fun this weekend for those who are single. Wear ice blue to cool your hot temper.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): There is no sense in waiting for the future to begin when you can take matters into your own hands. The stars are ready to support your giving a creative project your best shot this week. Negative feedback from another earth sign should be taken with a pinch of salt. Your romantic outlook improves – an air sign wants to get closer this weekend. The number eight can bring good fortune on Wednesday.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Your stress levels are forecast to drop this week and juggling work and family commitments becomes easier. Many Geminis should find that sacrificing something they thought they would miss is not difficult at all. Tuesday and Wednesday are the luckiest days to finalize business arrangements. A Valentine Day's gesture from an earth sign shows you how much they care. Wear the color pearl white to encourage spiritual insight.



CANCER (June 22-July 23): Money is likely to slip through your fingers like sand this week. If you happen to find yourself bored, then find economical ways to pass the time. In matters regarding work, a fire sign's smile could be concealing ulterior motives. Those in a romantic relationship are advised to keep a possessive streak under control. Another water sign is forecast to require more space. The number four can open a lucky door this weekend.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Keeping your eye on the ball will be a challenge this week. Current astral conditions will be providing many diversions for you in the coming days. Wednesday and Thursday are when you will need to really focus on important matters. In personal relationships, the stars suggest that your patience with an earth sign is about to pay off. The number five can bring good luck this weekend.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): The stars predict that your horizons are about to expand. Adventure is on the agenda for the second half of February. An earth sign may predict a way to let off some steam this weekend. In romance, there are signs that more give and take is needed in a committed relationship. If you are single, a water sign appreciates your interest on Valentine's Day.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): The second half of February is an auspicious time for Librans to express their ideas and feelings. Other air signs will be very interested in what you have to say. Lucky days for finances are Monday and Tuesday. An investment opportunity might not appear attractive at first, but research could prove you wrong. Valentine's Day could be ideal for sending a romantic hint to a water sign.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Mixed messages at work can leave you wondering what is going on this week. The atmosphere becomes clearer towards the end of the month. In the meantime, tread water as agreements could be hard to back out of later.

Keep your bills and receipts in order as a financial discrepancy could occur on Wednesday or Thursday. A halfhearted attempt to impress an air sign will not lead to romantic success.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Take care of overdue monetary issues this week. Tuesday is best for approaching financial institutions. You might consider relocating when you hear of an overseas job possibility. Romantic interest from a fire sign is likely to be a flash in the pan, but an air sign is ready for a serious relationship. The number eight can bring good luck this weekend.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Sharing the benefit of your experiences will be appreciated by friends this week. Another earth sign is forecast to show their gratitude with a generous gesture. Capricorns who cannot decide whether to seek different employment may learn something to their advantage on Monday or Tuesday. Where romance is concerned, a partner's shifting moods are hard to follow this weekend. Those seeking romance could meet a fire sign with the same aim.

PROPERTY Gazette

News | Construction | Gardening | For sale | For rent | Classifieds

Focusing on Andaman infrastructure

By Janpen Upatising

INCREASING sea transport and construction of a rail line connecting Phuket and Surat Thani province were two ideas put forward to improve trade and tourist links in the Andaman region, a meeting at Community Hall heard earlier this month.

Delegates from The National Economic and Social Advisory Council (NESAC) heard suggestions from Phuket officials on possible projects to improve transport links between Phuket and neighboring provinces.

Director of Planning and Budgeting of Phuket Provincial Administration Organization, Mr

Satean Kaewpraprab, put forward the idea of a rail link between Kiriratnikom in Surat Thani province and Ban Thanoon district, located just over Sarasin Bridge in the Phang Nga side.

"There should be a railway from Kiriratnikom to Ban Thanoon. The State Railway of Thailand constructed a rail line to Kiriratnikom, but did not connect Phuket.

"If the government makes an investment on this I think it will be worth it, because the railway can be used to transport goods between east and west in the South," said Mr Satean.

"Once the train stops at Ban Thanoon the goods can be eas-



BRIDGING INFRASTRUCTURE: The Sarasin Bridge is a crucial road link for the island, but a railway line nearby could also be coming soon. Photo:Gazette

ily moved to Phuket.

"We still use trucks and trailers to transport goods, which keeps costs high and uses a lot of energy. We should use technology to fix this rather than construct more roads," he added.

Another idea put forward to save energy and decrease vehicle numbers on Phuket's roads is to increase sea travel options connecting tourist destinations across the Andaman coast.

The introduction of more sea travel received a favorable reaction from members of the NESAC, in particular the use of a hydrofoil boat network linking

tourist hot spots around the Andaman.

"The committee studies both land and water transportation, and after listening to the ideas put forward, I think sea transportation is very important and closely related to tourism and the economy," said Mr Suphot Pruksananont, a NESAC committee member.

"We will discuss how we can proceed with all the suggestions put forward.

"It's important to connect provinces in the South, and I think it has been beneficial to come to Phuket to listen to ideas," he added.

In brief...

Banyan Tree's new China fund

HOSPITALITY group Banyan Tree Holdings have raised US\$214 million for a new private equity – Banyan Tree China Hospitality Fund. The Singapore group have publicly stated their intention to reduce what is considered to be over exposure to the Thai market via last year's sale of the Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket.

Previously a Vietnam vehicle for the integrated destination resort Laguna Hue project was funded via a Banyan Tree Indochina Hospitality Fund, which raised a reported US\$283 million.

Holding hands for southern business

A GROUP of southern tourism businesses have joined together for the "Rawai-Nai Harn South Coast Experience".

Founded by the Golden Tulip Mangosteen Resort & Spa, Serenity Terraces Resort and Residences, The Vijitt Resort, Atmanjai Detox and Wellness Center and DaVinci restaurant, the consortium is offering a free resident benefits card with discounts of 15 per cent and more.

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Northern exposure

A bit about Phuket's northern alliance setting joint-standards in excellence

DISSECTING the term "destination marketing" has proved an enlightening experience.

Wikipedia describes the term as: "A proactive, strategic, visitor-centered approach to the economic and cultural development of a location, which balances and integrates the interests of visitors, service providers, and the community."

Despite its wordiness, this pretty much sums up what destination marketing is all about.

For those not in the business (or perhaps slightly hungover) I implore you to take a moment to read over it again...very slowly.

Modern language dictates the use of acronyms, so with this in mind, destination marketing organizations can be readily be referred



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

to as "DMOs". Now, isn't it nicer and tidier? (and almost worthy of a rap group name!)

Looking north, not to Alaska or the North Pole, but up to Mai Khao we can see DMOs beginning to take shape.

It's here that four of the island's leading hotels – JW Marriott, Anantara, Renaissance and Sala Phuket – have teamed up for joint-venture marketing initiative.

Screaming the hackneyed mantra "location, location, location" from the rooftops, these hotels are intent on drawing tourists to one of Phuket's



NORTHERN LIGHT: The Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa in Mai Khao is one of four of Phuket's leading northerly resorts working together.

emerging tourist destinations.

It's a bit like the island's economic engine, tourism, humming away while a rugby scrum evolves for those looking to increase tourist numbers to their resorts.

Perhaps those clever people up at Laguna Phuket, KP Ho and former Managing Director James Batt, were ahead of their time when setting up a destination marketing outfit several years ago.

Here, Debbie Dionysius and her team have done the island proud with marquee events including the annual triathlon and recent Ironman 70.3.

Of course big business is not a charity and Laguna has many rooms to fill, so the synergy surrounding these events increases the commercial opportunities involved.

Taking a step back from our angst-filled lives highlighted by petty jealousy, personal conflict and business wars for a moment, it can not be denied that these big events benefit Phuket on a much broader scale than just the organizers own self interests.

"Brand Phuket" remains a large fish still to be reeled in, and sometimes the voyage home takes the co-operation of different parties to land a trophy catch.

Recently the four leading hotels in Phuket's north undertook the mammoth task of co-operating with organizers of the Culinary Arts Festival. Their general managers – Robert Lohrmann, Mark Hehir, Jason Nuell and John Ashenden – threw a big party for an entire weekend, with amazing results.

It was also a signal of intent sent south to Laguna, Kata/Karon, and even over to Cape Panwa, that event-based tourism remains a team game.

The fact remains that it's the private sector that must be brand champions for Phuket's tourism market.

The task of drawing visitors to the island, entertaining them while they are here, and inspiring them to return, is no easy task. However, those up in the north of the island have set the bar just a bit higher and hopefully more events will find a home in Phuket.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through www.c9hotelworks.com.

In brief...

Laguna rebrands Sheraton

OPERATIONS of the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket, one of the island's longest-established luxury hotels, will transfer on June 30, from Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc to Angsana Hotels & Resorts, a division of Singapore-based Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts.

The 419-room hotel, part of the Laguna Phuket destination resort in Bang Tao, will be closed from July 1 for extensive renovation work. The refurbishment is expected to reach 500 million baht and the resort will reopen as the Angsana Laguna Phuket on December 1 this year.

The resort has been operating under the Sheraton and Luxury Collection brands of Starwood Hotels & Resorts since 1992, in an operations agreement between Starwood and hotel owner Laguna Resorts & Hotels.

Upon approaching the management contract renewal date, the owner and operator mutually agreed to end their operations agreement, after discussion and re-evaluation of their strategies for the future.

Raimon Land ease on price

A SIGN of the times for property developers in Thailand's resort destinations is Raimon Land's re-engineering of their pricing and product mix for the domestic market. The company recently launched the 480-unit Zire Wongamat in Pattaya and has a second project pending. Launch prices of Zire have fallen under the 50,000 baht square-meter price.

A few for the diary

TWO of Asia's leading hotel investment conferences have announced dates for this year's event.

HICAP, or Hotel Investment Conference Asia Pacific Update, will be held from May 4-5 at Singapore's Pan Pacific hotel.

This event is fairly new on the calendar after the merger of the tribes with Jones Lang LaSalle's annual event a few years ago.

Second up is the must-attend event for hospitality professionals: HICAP Hong Kong at Mark your calendar for October 12-14.

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The low-down on living the high life

IF YOU'RE a foreigner and want to purchase a condominium unit in Thailand you may appreciate that it is actually a straightforward process, and has thus enjoyed continuing popularity both as a promising investment or a private residence.

There are, however, a few things to consider when buying a condo unit to ensure smooth registration of title transfer.

Foreign buyers typically want to verify whether or not purchase of the condo unit would be in excess of the foreign freehold quota.

The foreign ownership ratio in condo projects is usually limited to a maximum of 49 per cent of the sellable area within the project, thereby restricting foreign buyers to jointly acquire majority interest in the common properties, particularly the project land, together with their rights to the individual condo units.

Therefore, a foreign buyer would be well advised to find out if purchase of the condo unit would be in compliance with the foreign freehold quota requirement before entering into any form of binding agreement, or putting down a non-refundable deposit.

Such investigation can be done by contacting the condo's juristic

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person and clarifying the status of the foreign freehold quota.

Foreign buyers may also appreciate that despite the fact that purchasing a condo unit is usually relatively simple, acquisition of registered ownership to a unit demands compliance with "personal" requirements.

"Qualifying" as a foreign buyer of a condo unit is usually achieved by remitting a minimum amount foreign currency from abroad into a Thai baht bank account in Thailand which is equivalent to the price of the unit.

When these funds arrive in the account, the account holder is required to collect proper documentation to prove the remittance and subsequent conversion of the currency into Thai baht.

The documents should detail whether the amount is equal to the price of the condo unit, the conversion of foreign currency into Thai baht (automatic upon transfer), the condo purchase as purpose of the fund remittance, and the name of the buyer as the person who remitted the funds.



BROADENING YOUR OUTLOOK: Buying a condo is not as difficult as you might think. Photo: Nicky Vermeulen

The documentation which is usually required by the land department to apply for or register the transfer of condo unit ownership to a foreigner is a Foreign Exchange Transaction Form (FET) and includes all the above details regarding remittance.

The FET is issued by the Thai

bank that receives the funds.

It's important to understand that Thai banks can only issue a FET with all the relevant details if the foreign buyer provided his or her bank abroad with the proper information when initiating the transfer.

Otherwise, the receiving bank

in Thailand will be unable to issue a FET that satisfies the requirement of local land departments in the country.

This article was written by the International Law Office Patong Beach Co Ltd. Email Michael Greth, Consultant, at: michael@ilo-phuket.com.



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Don't be awkward, get with the orchids

Last but by no means least on our Top 20 Phuket Plants list is a bloomer with ravishing good looks

SO, SOME 20 weeks on, we reach the conclusion of our Top 20 Phuket Plants list. And boy do we finish with a bang, sprouting the virtues of one of the most exotic and most-loved plants on the planet: the orchid.

It came close to not making the list at all. Obviously not on account of its ravishing looks, but because most tropical varieties subsist on tree trunks or rock crevices, which means they are epiphytic rather than terrestrial, possess aerial roots, and do not actually grow in conventional garden soil.

But in the end, it seemed churlish to exclude a wonderful flower on such grounds, and so the family of *Orchidaceae* gets its chance after all. And a huge family it is too.

And what a family it is, in the region of 25,000 strong, and constantly being added to as more and more hybrids are produced to satisfy the global demand. Phuket has its share of orchid specialists developing these new cultivars.

Interestingly, many island gardens include rows of orchids suspended from roof trellis or trees, often in a spectrum of colors granted to few other flowering plant.

If you acquire an orchid without blooms, it may take a long time to produce flowers. However, once it does, it will brighten your garden for an eternity.

Orchids can be notoriously difficult to categorize. Some are monopodial (single-stemmed), others are sympodial (with a number of shoots).

One of the simplest divisions is between shade-lovers and sun-lovers. Sun worshipers tend to have broad, leathery leaves, which resist evaporation better, while shade-hogger has thin foliage.

Of the latter, the Moth Orchid, or *Phalaenopsis*, is perhaps the most popular. It is a large orchid, with a thick central stem and wiry flowering stems which can carry

up to 20 large blooms.

From a distance, the flowers seem

to float independently. *P. Amabilis* has white flowers flushed with yellow, while other cultivars have white, rose or pink flowers. The plant must be kept moist at all times.

Slipper Orchids, or *Paphiopedilum*, need protection from the sun and from heavy rain. Indeed, they do better in cooler conditions. This is why they are generally grown in cool-climate greenhouses and are known to many Europeans as exotic house plants.

They possess mottled, leathery leaves, and dramatically spotted petals. The modified petal often resembles a delicate slipper. Hence its popular name, "Lady's Slipper".

On the other hand, *Vanda*, *Oncidium* and *Cattleya* orchids

require plenty of sun. *Vanda* is the orchid you are most likely to see on sale in plastic cartons at Phuket international Airport.

In common with most orchid varieties, it lasts well as a cut flower, while in the wild, it has blue-mauve flowers.

Often crossed with other orchids, the shades of blue survive in many cultivars. Miss Joaquim – a natural hybrid discovered in Singapore – has deep pink outer petals and a center with orange to yellow shade. It is spectacular, and it's little wonder its Singapore's national flower.

Oncidium orchids come from the New World. The flowers are small and have a distinctive fiddle-shaped lip, and are usually found in shades of yellow or orange-brown. They are profuse bloomers with as many as one hundred flowers on a single plant.

The *Cattleya* genus, with its characteristic large petals and tubular lip, is perhaps the best known and most hybridized of all orchids.

It comes in a wide spectrum of colors – from pure white (Queen Sirikit) to deep purple (Lucky Strike). And like most orchids, it prefers to be suspended in a porous container packed with loose coconut fiber, pot shards or charcoal, so that moisture passes rapidly through.

Word of warning, don't let its roots dry out completely and remember to feed the growing plant on a regular basis. With plenty of tender loving care you will be rewarded with a visual display few plants can rival.

Next week's column will list my Top 20 in order of preference.



ORCHID SENSE: It makes sense to include the 'Orchidaceae' family in our Top 20 Phuket Plants list. Photo: Peter Long



Gardening
By Patrick Campbell

Tip of the week

Dealing with pests

MOST plants are trouble free and successfully operate their own immune systems. While some damage is inevitable, plants normally recover, often with the help of natural enemies of pests, such as birds and other insects.

Chemical remedies have been considered in these columns, but prevention is always better than cure. Stressed plants will succumb more easily.

Thus young plants with small root systems should be well watered in dry periods, fed a

balanced fertilizer, and treated with a mulch to conserve moisture and suppress weeds.

Practice garden hygiene by removing diseased leaf litter, dig up and burn badly affected plants, and, where possible, choose varieties bred with stronger resistance to disease.

It is better to plant a diversity of plants in a flower bed; a collection consisting of one species is more likely to be overrun by those pathogens to which they are most susceptible.

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

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At 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.

HOUSE & FURNITURE

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

3-BEDROOM HOUSE

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

SEA VIEW LAND IN RAWAI

This land is located not far from the beautiful Nai Harn Beach, with a sea view overlooking Chalong bay, and with concrete road and electricity to the border. The land comes with Nor Sor 3 titles, and is in total just over 1 rai. (about 1,650sqm) Got to sell now, asking price 9.5 million baht – or best offer! Tel: 076-290235, 080-519 9777 (English). Fax: 076-290236. Email: kenth@zarpazorealestate.com

TWIN VILLAS AT NAI YANG



Only 600 meters from beautiful Nai Yang beach, this modern pool villa is perfectly located. Featuring a chic, clean-cut design coupled with a choice selection of quality materials and furniture, this villa is a promising investment for holiday seekers and permanent residents. Price: Bt10.2mil. Contact Khun Penprapa. Tel: 087-898 9646. Email: penprapa2526@gmail.com

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PATONG APT

2-bedroom apartment for rent or sale. 87sqm unit on the 5th floor with seaview. Fully furnished. Tel: 081-891 6502. Email: andrea.capucci@gmail.com

LAND AT PA KHLOK

1 rai 13.6sq wah with Chanote. Located on Tha Ruea-Pa Khlok-Muang Mai Rd. 11 km from Heroines Monument, near Mission Hill. Price: 4 million baht. Tel: 089-4729118.

LAND 0.5 RAI

800sqm of flat land, Chanote title in Thalang just a few minutes from Wat Kaneang, Tonsai National Park, International School, Russian church, airport, shopping, beach, etc. Price: 1.5 million baht o.n.o. Tel: 086-1082745 (English & Thai). Email: hansphuket@gmail.com

BEST PRICE POOL VILLA

Thai-Balinese style with L-shaped design. 2 garden view bedrooms with open plan living and modern kitchen, 2 en-suite bathrooms. Located near BIS. Premium quality. Land size 144sqm. Price from 3.7 million baht. Tel: 084-293 7923, 080-648 9622 (English). Must visit us: www.phuket- Eurasia.com

2 RAI IN AO MAKHAM

Chanote, in Soi Rat-U-Thit 1, public utility area. easy access in and out. Just 12 million baht for both rai. Tel: 087-689 9679, 081-270 0875. Email: tasuwan@hotmail.com

LAND FOR SALE

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

KOH MAPHRAO 37+ RAI

280 meters of seafront at the most beautiful spot on the island. Must see. Price: negotiable. Tel: 081-891 8930 (English/German), Buijai baan 081-9563374 (Thai).

HOUSE FOR SALE

In Chalong. A house with 4 bedrooms on a 1 rai land plot. Includes aircon and swimming pool. Tel: 081-403 3870.

3-BED POOL VILLA IN BANG TAO

Located a 5 minute walk from Bang Tao Beach in the popular Baan Mandala development, this immaculate 3-bed pool villa is reduced in order to sell by the owner. Only 23 million baht. Tel: 076-271315, 083-968 8938 (English). Email: mark@phuket-landandhomes.com

3 BEDROOMS, 2 BATHROOMS

In Pa khlok. 1240sqm unit. For sale. Tel: 081-536 5030.

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.

VILLA FOR SALE 225SQM

Patong, on Nanai Rd. 4 bedrooms, 2 living rooms with aircon. 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, swimming pool and jacuzzi. Contact Ple. Tel: 083-390 9001.

KAMALA APARTMENT

3 bedrooms in a quiet forest. Price: 5.1 million baht. Website: www.phuketcondoforsale.com

30 RAI IN TOWN

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

CHALONG HOUSE

3 bedrooms, dining kitchen, Lounge, Private pool. Includes all furniture. On a secure estate. Price: 5.3 million baht. Tel: 081-273 7326. Email: kmar74@hotmail.com

VILLA FOR SALE

3 bedrooms, 3 bathroom, with a private swimming pool on 1 rai of land in Nai Harn, Contact Shanna. Tel: 088-451 2551.

OCEANFRONT PLOTS FOR SALE

12 oceanfront plots with 15 meter water frontage. Each 600sqm and ready to build. They're in a peaceful, natural area opposite Yacht Haven Marina. Direct sale from owner. 3.9 million baht per plot. Tel: 081-343 0777. Email: montha_phuket@yahoo.com

LAYAN 19 RAI

Chanote, with lake. 5.5 million baht per rai, Electricity, public road, ready to start a project. Tel: 081-787 4383.

LAYAN SEA VIEW LAND

5 rai sea view land, Layan area. Priced to sell at 4.5m. per rai. Tel: 081-649 3557. Email: info@phuketlifestyle.com

SEAVIEW LAND PLOTS BANG TAO

Amazing views, private community, underground utilities, 3 phase electricity. Build by yourself or with our expertise. Show houses open now. Tel: 086-267 0157, 089-590 3665. Fax: 076-325294. Email: bannuaton@yahoo.com

KAMALA BEACH HOUSE

2 bedrooms, furnished. At a nice location. Price: 2.5 million baht. Contact Nam. Tel: 089-4725 162.

KATHU HOUSE SALE

Near Phuket Country Club. 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, dining, living, kitchen, fully renovated and fitted. Tel: 089-588 5692. Email: ingoyao@yahoo.de

GREAT VILLA DEAL

2-storey villa in secure estate, 3 or 4 bedrooms, 327sqm, fully air conditioned, fully equipped kitchen, high-quality materials and finish. 11.9 million baht. More great deals available, starting from 9.9 million baht Contact builder. Tel: 087-893 8747.

2 X 1/2 RAI BLOCKS

In Soi Pasak 8. 5 minutes to Laguna. Chanote title. Email: jgkg24@hotmail.com

BEACHFRONT FOR SALE

7.5 rai Chanote near Phuket town. Stunning view of Phang Nga Bay. 17m/rai. Tel: 087-472 7870 (English & Thai). Email: sudaves2002@yahoo.com

LUXURY ONE BEDROOM

Fully furnished, ground-floor apartment, 63sqm, in central Patong. 4.9 million baht ono. Tel: 087-887 9070. Email: ianscondo@yahoo.com

CHARMING POOL VILLA

Shady hillside. Big pool and garden. 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms with the office, secure. New condition. High-quality, very nice. Freehold. Tel: 076-388236, 089-727 5407 (English). Email: cosmocampbell@yahoo.com For further details, please see our website at www.villa-sale-phuket.com

NAI HARN HOUSE 7 MILLION BAHT

Near Nai Harn Beach, in a quiet area. 250sqm, 2-storey house with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, a western-style kitchen. Full air conditioning. It has two big terraces and a 12x6m common pool in a beautiful garden. Includes Chanote title directly from owner. Tel: 083-388 8036 (English or German), 089-972 5378. For further details. www.phuketqualityhouse.com

CHEAP LAND FOR SALE

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

CONDO PATONG

85sqm, with 2 bedrooms and 3 balconies on the 6th floor. Comes with a European kitchen. Fully furnished and equipped. Nice place. Reduced price: 4.9 million baht. Tel: 085-691 1039.

CONDO AT PHUKET COUNTRY CLUB

82sqm. Large lounge with sleeping alcove, 1 bedroom, store-room, Full western kitchen. Refurbished. Immaculate 3.6 million baht. Tel: 081-273 7326. www.phuketgolfview.com

LARGE SEAVIEW PROPERTY

for sale in Layan. 3.5 rai of land. Chanote. 650sqm living area. No agents. Tel: 081-787 4383.

THE SUNRISE OCEAN VILLAS

Overlooking the ocean in the exclusive Ao Por area on the East Coast of Phuket, the luxurious Sunrise Ocean Villas, located only 60m from the beach, offer breathtaking panoramic views of Phang Nga Bay. You will find the most beautiful untouched island, with white sand beaches only a few minutes away.



Just 15 minutes from Phuket International Airport, 25 minutes from the major shopping centers and 3 minutes from the Grand Marina, Ao Por attract a growing number of investors seeking an exclusive and affordable alternative to the West Coast with a more authentic environment.



Built to the highest western standards, Sunrise Ocean Villas offers a stylish and contemporary design to suit our clientele. Large window panels and an infinity swimming pool are built to offer the enjoyment of a great open space with a truly amazing view. Buy your dream villa now with a 25% discount for **only 14.9 million baht!** Tel: 081-343 0777 (Eng) 086-274 6062 (French) Email: montha_phuket@yahoo.com or thesunrisevillas@yahoo.com

180 DEGREE OCEAN VIEWS

Big 155 sqm, 2-bedroom, 2-bath apartment with private roof terrace, 5 minutes from Nai Harn Beach. It is fully furnished with a pool. 3.7 million baht. Tel: 087-897 4421. Email: bisop5@yahoo.co.uk

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► **Custom 35 (1999)**

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► **Carver 38 (1988)**

3,500,000 THB

► **Agreamare 45 (2002)**

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■ **Dealership Office**
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Thai registered cat from 2008. 15Hp Yamaha. New paint, varnish and antifouling. Good condition, fully equipped and ready to sail. Price: 390,000 baht. Tel: +49-332-22930210, 087-461 8089. Email: StefanStier@gmx.de

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One-day tour: 190,000 baht. Price includes captain, crew, cook, and snorkelling and fishing equipment. Tel: 089-476 7443, 085-352 1942. Email: sales@sunnnav.com www.sunnnav.com

NEW BAYLINER 175 FOR SALE@COST

New Bayliner 175 with full options + trailer. For sale by dealer at cost. Price dropped from 950,000 to 850,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-754 7599. Email: csutivas@gmail.com Website at www.mfjetski.com

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Tel: 076-238947, 081-968 3118 (English), 081-271 3228 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-238947. Email: info@procarpentering.com

23M, 75" YACHT - SUPERSALE

Very nice boat in great condition, good for snorkeling and fishing trips. Can carry 35 people + 4 crew. Urgent sale. Please email for more info. Tel: 086-010 6988 (English). Email: michaelcrons@gmail.com

38FT CATAMARAN

It has 4 double cabins, 2 toilets / showers. In composite, under construction. Price: 390,000 baht. Tel: 087-461 8089.

LOOKING FOR PEGASUS 8.2

Looking for a Pegasus 8.2 fiberglass in good condition. Tel: 081-891 3095 (English). Email: norbusteahouse@gmail.com

2007 FIBERGLASS SPEEDBOAT

Thai registered. Open 21' fiberglass speedboat. Year 2007. For quick sale. Only 890,000 baht. Excellent condition, as new. Includes German-made trailer, GPS, fishfinder, Cushions, Bimini cover and 140Hp Yamaha engine (150Hp) with new battery (Nov 2010). Ready for navigation. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-647 0738. Email: mariahanpers@hotmail.com

BIG CATAMARAN FOR SALE



65' Catamaran for sale, for details visit the website. Tel: 081-306 1150 (English & Thai). Email: rm2@food.comthailand.com Website at <http://u5.com/cat>

BIG GAME FISHING BOAT FOR SALE

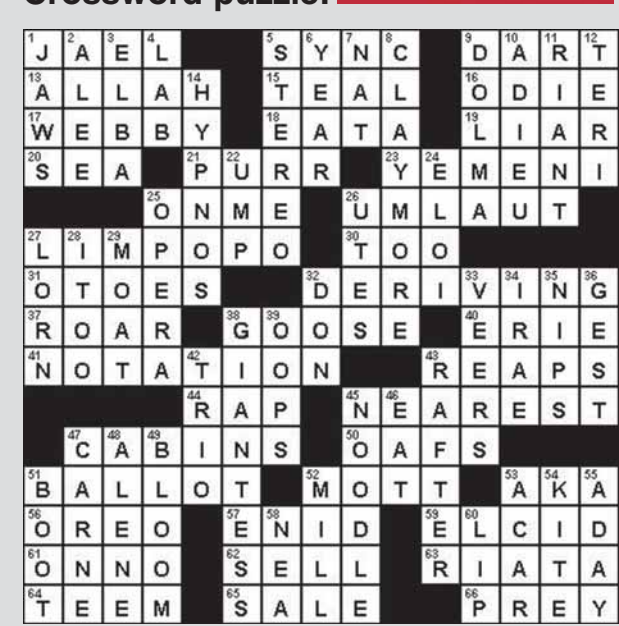
13 meters, purpose-built big game fishing boat. Price: 4.5 million baht. Serious offers considered. Tel: 082-218 3177. Email: deudale@yahoo.co.uk

SWISS CATAMARAN 24 FEET

A perfect fishing boat made of fiberglass. Comes with 2 Honda 4-stroke engines, each 50 Hp. It has a hydraulic system, a Simrad navigation system and electric Ankerwinch equipment. Phuket registration. With 4-wheel aluminium trailer. Price: 600,000 baht. Contact Khun Aree. Tel: 089-474 5168.

SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLES

Crossword puzzle:



COFFEE break

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All positions require good general computer skills
Positions available for Thai Nationality only

Please send your application with a recent photo to Human Resource Dept.
Tel: 076 270 750, Fax: 076 270 751, Email: personnel@pipsphuket.com

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Be a part of something fantastic! West Sands Vacation Club is seeking additional outgoing, motivated individuals to join our growing fun-filled family. Competitive salaries and benefits.

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Marketing Team Leader	1 Position
Marketing Executive Airport	3 Positions
Russian Marketing Executive	1 Position
Chinese Marketing Executive	1 Position

Send resume or CV with recent photo to mark@west-sands.com

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Sales admin and secretary – Experience in event sales in luxury hotels/vacation club/fractional ownership and property. Tel: 076-318400. Email: cilcon@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.bangtaotropicalresidence.com

SEWING STAFF

Excellent conditions. Good boss. 8,000 baht per month. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-383681, 087-380 0525. Email: boxergirl@boxergirl.net

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Phuket's leading wedding, event and speed-boat charter company requires a Thai national with excellent English skills, and experience in tour company admin duties. Knowledge of work permit and immigration and good organisation/people skills is also necessary, as well as good computer knowledge. Tel: 076-354074, 081-956 9961. Email: info@coralseekers.com

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Assistant in real-estate company. English, 24-30 years old. Email derkach@tr-pro.ru to apply.

URGENT

Autocad draftsman and sketch-up designer. Contact P.A.S. Co Ltd. Please send your CV to: a.pueng@gmail.com

SAFeway ASIA THALANG

We have a vacancy for the position of sales and marketing manager. We are seeking a Thai national who is fluent in English with a minimum of 3 years' experience in the relevant field. Please send your CV with a photo and expected salary to: account@safewayasia.com

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We need a strong personality with office skills. Thai / English speaker. Tel: 084-443 9863. Fax: 076-325144. Please send us a recent photo and your CV. Email: daragh@techworx-projects.com For further details, please see our website at www.techworx-projects.com

British International School, Phuket

British International School, Phuket is looking for candidates to fill positions in the following areas:

- **PE Assistant**
 - Thai National
 - University Degree, Physical Education Major or related fields
 - Good English, Positive, willing & hard working
 - Knowledge of local schools or clubs to arrange fixtures
 - Knowledge of local facilities & sports opportunities
 - Coaching qualification to coach a team such as Basketball or etc.
 - Be able to work flexible day 1 pm. to 6 pm. all day Saturday
- **Teacher's Assistant**
 - Thai National / Bachelor's Degree in a related field
 - Teaching qualifications and experience in child care
 - Good command of spoken and written English
 - Loves to take care of children
- **Business Development Coordinator**
 - Thai national, Male/Female, 20-25 yrs old
 - Bachelor's Degree in a related field / computer literate
 - Good/strong command of written and spoken English
 - Detail oriented and able to perform administrative tasks
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MASSAGE LADY WANTED

Thai national. No experience needed, inhouse training, location Phuket Town. Please contact for more details. Tel: 081-537 6866.

PADI INSTRUCTOR

Required for dive center on Phi Phi. Email: jgkg24@hotmail.com

CLUB ASIA FITNESS

Phuket's leading fitness centre requires: Operations Manager, Sales consultant and receptionists. Thai National / English speaking. Tel: 076-354027, 089-126 5671 (Thai), 087-275 3614 (English). Email: info@clubasia-phuket.com. For further details, please see our website at www.clubasiaphuket.com

OFFICE CUSTOMER SERVICES

Atsumi Healing Retreat is seeking a Thai national, BA degree preferred, excellent verbal/written English skills, full time 9-6pm, starting salary 13,000 baht per month please send resume via email. Tel: 081-272 0571, 081-970 1753. Email: info@atsumihealing.com For further details, please see our website at www.atsumihealing.com

BOAT BOY WANTED

Looking for English-speaking Thai boy for boat crew. No experience required. Fixed salary + commission. Tel: 087-277 7395. Email: delphine@sweetdreamers.info

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Want to be part of an exciting start-up digital-only ad agency that will specialise in social media marketing? Have online SEO experience? Social media experience? PPC, planning/buying? PR writing experience? Bloggers needed! New agency in the planning seeks people to drive the digital age forward. Email CV/brief outline of your experience please! Email: paulmccarthy007@yahoo.co.uk

RUSSIAN SPEAKING SALES REPS

The Absolute Group is currently recruiting Russian sales reps for its business in Phuket. Successful applicants will have previous sales experience preferably in the vacation ownership sector. Please call Ivan. Tel: 084-843 2625.

LIVE-IN HOUSEKEEPER

Thai. Speaks some English. Details of experience and references please call or email. Tel: 084-443 9863. Fax: 076-325144. Email: daragh@techworx-projects.com



Real Estate, Phuket

Ocean Worldwide is a leading real estate agency that offers a proven international marketing system balanced with dedicated personnel who are committed to maintaining the highest standards of conduct and professionalism. An opportunity is available for an individual to work with our international clients to proficiently communicate information on our recommended Phuket properties. We are looking for a conscientious and ambitious person to join our team.

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You must be enthusiastic, have a positive attitude and possess above average communication skills. You will be expected to liaise with existing and new clients in person, on the telephone and through email correspondence. You will enjoy a dynamic lifestyle with high earning and advancement capabilities. Basic Salary + Commission + International travel expenses for property exhibitions. Thai female nationality.

Personal Assistant

We require a Personal Assistant to work closely with the directors of a successful real estate company. It is imperative to have had a minimum of 2 years experience in a similar role and also be fluent in both Thai and English, written and spoken. This position requires: Monitoring and updating the Director's daily diary, Receiving and managing Director's emails, telephone calls, faxes and post deliveries, Maintaining and improving office organization systems, Preparing Director's international travel itineraries. Priority will be given to individuals who are resourceful, have strong time management ability, able to prioritize multiple tasks, are exceptionally organized, able to work effectively both in and out of the office, are detail oriented, and comfortable communicating with a variety of people in a relaxed and confident manner. Thai female nationality.

Email your CV, with references to sandra.oneill@oceanwpp.com

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- Thai citizen only, for work in Phuket.
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 - Proficiency in Ms Office Word, Excel, Internet and email.
 - You must have a positive work attitude. Flexible working hours.
 - Must be able to interact with international guests.
 - Candidate will be required to do grocery shopping for guests.
 - Must have own car and a driver's license.
- Tel: 076-527633, 087-881 0003. Send resume to: Phuket Villas & Homes Co Ltd. Please send your CV at email: hr@phuketvillaandhomes.com

THAI FEMALE RECEPTIONIST

Small guesthouse with 17 rooms near the beach road in Patong is seeking a Thai female receptionist to take care of guests checking in and out, receive payments from guests, and when we are most busy she can give a helping hand to cleaning staff. Must be able to speak and read English. Must have experience in hospitality. You can find us in a small soi that opens onto Soi Wattana Patong. Rose Guest House. Salary is 10,000 baht/month. Tel: 080-385 9062. Email: info@patongroseguesthouse.com

SPANISH & PORTUGUESE SPEAKERS

We are seeking a Spanish or Portuguese speaking person, for our call center in Chalong. We offer a fixed salary for telephone data research. Tel: 089-873 9123 (English). Email: eichinger@intercallservice.com

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Sales Manager, Sales Executive

Qualifications:

- o Preferably 25-35 year old Thai female
- o Minimum 2-3 years experience in sales and/or marketing of fine food products in Phuket
- o Good negotiation and English communication skills
- o Self-motivated and dynamic, service-minded and result oriented
- o Pro-active and well organized
- o Pleasant personality
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- o Car driving license with own car will be an advantage

Key responsibilities:

- o To target the key markets: hotels, restaurants, cafés and other leisure and entertainment facilities
- o Finding new business opportunities with existing clients and new prospects
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- o This function requires 70% prospecting, 25% customer follow up and 5% PR work
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The suitable candidate will receive a good salary and benefits

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Aleenta Resort & Spa and Akrya Corporate Office
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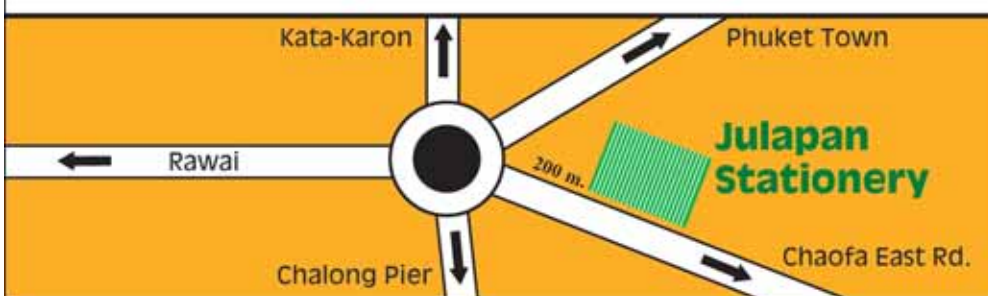
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Sport

Soccer scorcher

By Andrew Jennings

THE pristine soccer pitches at British International School (BIS) provided the ideal venue for the successful first staging of the Phuket Cup International Youth Soccer Tournament last weekend.

The event, organized by Brazilian Soccer School (BSS), saw 22 teams from various parts of Phuket compete against teams from BSS Hong Kong in three different age divisions.

The weather proved kind on the day with glorious sunshine aided by a light breeze, which helped the players cool off between games.

The soccer on display was of a high standard with every player putting in massive effort to ensure their team walked off the pitch as winners.

It was great to see all players shaking hands with opponents at the end of games, ensuring fair play was visible throughout the event. The tournament showcased



GOLDEN BOYS: Youngsters kitted out at the Phuket Cup event at BIS.

young soccer players enthusiastic about the sport and trying out new skills practiced during training. It was encouraging to see many local Thai players competing alongside local international players.

BSS's first ever international tournament can be hailed a resounding success, with many parents and players giving positive feedback. Each player received a tournament medal, while special gold, silver and bronze medals were awarded to the top three teams in each age group.

In the Under-10s, BSS Phuket Green were victorious, while in the Under-12s it was BSS Hong Kong Tigers who finished as top cats. The Under-14 cup remains in Phuket after Youth Football Home proved worthy winners.

"The tournament went really well and BSS Hong Kong loved it, they can't wait to come back next year. We hope it will now be an annual event and we should have 40 teams next year," said tournament organizer Martin Hill.

Sailing icon passes away



WILL BE MISSED: Tony Knight

TONY Knight, a leading figure in Phuket yachting for more than a decade, died in Brisbane, Australia on Monday after succumbing to injuries sustained in a motorcycle accident.

"Tony had a motorcycle accident in Australia on Friday and seemed not too bad, but his condition deteriorated over the next few days as we believe his lung or spleen was punctured," explained Mick Kealy, commodore of the Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC).

"He ended up being airlifted to a Brisbane hospital where he passed away in the intensive care unit," he added.

Through years of dedicated support, especially through his work with the ACYC, Mr Knight became synonymous with sailing in Phuket. He skippered well-known boats *Seraph* and *La Samudra* in King's Cup regattas.

"Tony has many close friends in Phuket and was a vital asset to the Ao Chalong Yacht Club for over a decade as committee member, race officer and MC.

"He will be sadly missed for his kindness, his wit and easy going nature," Mr Kealy said.

Mr Knight is survived by his wife Ming, son Raymond, twin daughters Nit and Noi, and eight-month-old daughter Elizabeth.

A wake will be held at the ACYC clubhouse next Tuesday from 6pm. All are welcome to attend.

— *Phuket Gazette*

Phuket Lomas on Bangkok mission

THE Phuket Lomas return to the capital this weekend to take part in the prestigious Bangkok International Rugby 10s.

The Lomas will compete in three divisions – Under-10s, Under-12s and Under-16s – at the world renowned three-day event.

Following on from their successful tour to the Satit Kaset Youth Rugby Festival in Bangkok late last year, hope is high the Lomas can continue their success and return to Phuket with more silverware.

The club's Under-14s warmed up for the Bangkok 10s in impressive fashion with a dramatic victory at the Prince of Songkla University sevens tournament in Hat Yai last weekend. Lomas sent their A and B teams to the event.

In the first game of the tourna-

ment the two teams were drawn against each other. It looked like the Lomas B were in slight awe of their older teammates, going down 24-0.

From there, Lomas A went on a run all the way to the final, where they faced Ao Luk.

The first-half saw the bigger Ao Luk side race into an early lead before the Lomas pulled a try back just before half-time, but they still trailed 19-7 at the interval.

Ao Luk scored again just after the restart to take a 24-7 lead and it looked all over for the team from Phuket. However, the Lomas suddenly clicked and ran in three tries to win a dramatic decider 28-24 and were crowned champions.

For more on this story see next week's *Phuket Gazette*.

— *Andrew Jennings*



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