

Phuket Gazette

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More blood is needed to help flood victims in Bangkok.

Call for blood donors to help flood victims

THE Phuket Regional Blood Center (PRBC) is asking for more people to donate blood to help flood victims.

"Due to the floods in Bangkok, the National Blood Center had a shortage of blood at the beginning of the month. The center normally receives about 1,500 units of blood daily, but it went down to less than half that - about 600 units per day," said PRBC Acting Director Pornthip Rattajak.

"With the floods continuing, we still need blood and we hope that the PRBC can collect more. Many local schools and other organizations that never did so before have asked for us to set up our mobile clinics on their property. We're very thankful for that," Ms Pornthip added.

The PRBC is located at Saphan Hin in Phuket Town and is open daily for walk-in donations.

See PhuketGazette.net for the center's program of scheduled mobile clinics.

See page 7 for our flood report

Transport chief puts brakes on negligence

By Warisa Temram and Chutharat Plerin

PHUKET Provincial Land Transportation Office (PLTO) chief Terayout Prasertphol has announced strict new measures that will hold tour bus companies responsible for the mechanical safety of their vehicles.

Under the new measures, tour bus companies stand to have their commercial passenger permits revoked entirely, meaning the companies' right to operate any commercial passenger vehicles will be terminated, chief Terayout told the *Gazette*.

The move comes after two serious bus crashes in Phuket within the same week in late October. Both accidents were attributed to brake failure.

"There was a tour bus crash [on the hill from] Karon [to Chalong] on October 22 in which one Chinese tourist died and many were injured. Then on October 26, a tour bus full of Russians crashed on Patong Hill, which injured a lot of tourists," Chief Terayout told a group of more than 10 Phuket tour bus company representatives this week.



GETTING OFF THE BUS: Terayout Prasertphol (inset) hopes to prevent accidents like the one on Kata Hill in October (pictured). Photo: Dean Noble

"Official departments and organizations in Phuket are seeing this as a very important issue. From now on, in the case a tour bus crashes, the police will now charge both the driver and the registered owner of the bus," he warned.

Mr Terayout said his office had discovered that many bus companies were using vehicles that had not been issued their annual road safety inspection certificates.

"Bus companies often report to our office that some of their buses

are no longer in service or they simply do not present buses for their bi-annual inspection.

"The penalty for using a bus that has not been issued its annual roadworthy certificate is a fine of up to 50,000 baht. This is because doing so could cause a serious accident," he said.

Companies found to repeatedly neglect having their buses undergo the safety inspections will have their commercial passenger permits revoked.

Chief Terayout added that any bus companies found to be using drivers who do not have the appropriate license - or that their drivers had been found to have been drunk driving and involved in an accident - also stood to have their permits revoked.

"The full responsibility for keeping buses safe must be with the bus companies because they are the ones who maintain their vehicles.

"This includes tour companies and independent operators hired by tour companies to provide bus services.

"The PLTO and police have started setting up checkpoints to

Continued on page 2

Brit swindler Paul Ridden free of Phuket charges

By Atchaa Khamlo

FORMER Phuket expat Paul Ridden, who earlier this week was sentenced to four years in jail for fraud and deception charges in the UK, will not face any charges for any alleged fraud committed on Phuket.

Lt Col Boonlert Onklang, Duty Officer at Chalong Police Station, this week told the *Phuket Gazette* that not a single complaint in writing was received by Chalong Police.

"After his arrest, some people come to the police station. They wanted their money back for the house and motorbike deposits they gave him, but Mr Ridden didn't have any money," said Lt Col Boonlert.

"But they didn't file any complaints with the police that ridden defrauded them... Anyway, it's not even a case [for the police]. It's a civil case. It's not for the police," he added.

Lt Col Boonlert confirmed that Mr Ridden was fined 5,000 baht and deported by

Phuket Immigration after it was discovered that he had overstayed his permit-to-stay in Thailand.

According to reports in the UK, Mr Ridden pleaded guilty to six counts of fraud by false representation and three of theft.

He was required to attend court to plead guilty on his 58th birthday.

Mr Ridden was later sentenced at Lewes Crown Court to serve four years in jail for each charge. The sentences are to be served concurrently.



Paul Ridden behind bars at Chalong Police Station in September. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

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This Week

Special Report



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Tech



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NEW! International Sport. Also ITF finals; cricket league opener. **Pages 43-47**

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Public safety boosted through CCTV rollout

By Chutharat Plerin

THE Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) will install 189 CCTV cameras throughout Koh Kaew and Rassada at a cost of 29.8 million baht.

The roll-out is phase two of the *OrBorJor*'s "citizen safety" campaign, which will coordinate with police in providing CCTV footage of traffic accidents and other incidents, explained *OrBorJor* President Paiboon Upatising.

The cameras, some fixed-position and others with 360-degree views, will relay footage back to a control center at the *OrBorJor*'s hospital in Rassada.

Among the areas to be targeted by the phase-two roll-out are the Sapam local market and the area around the Phuket Rajabhat University campus.

"Phase one of our CCTV campaign involved installation of 53 cameras throughout Phuket Town, with the cameras feeding a control center set up at the Phuket Provincial Police Station. This proved very successful and very useful for police investigations," said Mr Paiboon.



The cameras in Phuket Town are often overlooked. Photo: Warisa Temram

In this phase, the cameras were installed by Advanced Information Technology Plc with a budget of 16,893,160 baht.

"In phase three, we will install another 300 CCTV cameras that will also feed video to the control center at the hospital. We have yet to decide where and when to install the cameras for that phase. We will see what the completed phase two looks like and then decide on phase three later," he added.

OrBorJor Supplies Officer Chuthaporn Chantet told the *Ga-*

zette that under the government contract for phase two, CS LoxInfo Plc is to complete the installations by January 19, 2012.

"The budget is 29,838,000 for the entire project, including wire installation and the control room at the hospital.

"LoxInfo will install 142 CCTV cameras at 38 locations in Rassada, plus nine cameras at six locales on Chumphon Road. In Koh Kaew, 38 CCTV cameras will be installed at eight locations," she said.

Student killed in truck crash

A 16-year-old student has died and her classmate is in hospital after a six-wheeled truck collided with the motorcycle they were riding in Phuket Town on Tuesday.

Capt Thada Sodarak of Phuket City Police said officers received a report of the accident at 12:30pm.

The accident happened at the junction from Phuket Road to Saphan Hin, near the Phuket Immigration Office, said Capt Thada.

"From our initial investigation, the ice truck was heading towards Saphan Hin when the accident happened. The truck dragged the rider for about 10 meters before coming to a stop. She was killed in the accident," he said.

"The other girl, who survived the impact, was rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital," he added.

A teacher at Phuket Vocational



Police at the scene of the fatal crash. Photo: Warisa Temram

College, which is about 250 meters from the scene of the accident, identified the deceased as Wiparat Ketkaew, 16, from Chumphon province.

The teacher also identified Wiparat's classmate, who survived the impact, as Panatta Panumas, also 16 years old. A nurse at

Vachira Phuket Hospital confirmed that Panatta escaped with only scratches, but was admitted overnight for observation.

"Wiparat was a first-year domestic science student. The girls had just finished morning class and assisting the school's efforts in making meals to be sent to flood victims in Bangkok," said the teacher.

"Wiparat called her mom just a few days ago and said she missed her, so her mum came to Phuket to stay with her. Last night was her first night staying with her daughter. Now her mum is in shock. She's still at the hospital," the teacher told the *Gazette*.

Capt Thada said the driver of the truck fled the scene, but was later arrested by police. "We are continuing our investigation into what happened," he said.

— Warisa Temram

Transport chief targets tour bus companies over safety

From page 1

inspect buses. These checkpoints will be in operation twice a week," Mr Terayout said.

By the end of this month the PLTO will start holding training sessions to update bus companies of their legal obligations in providing safe transportation.

The training will include warnings of roads in Phuket known to be dangerous, so drivers can exercise extra caution when navigating those roads, said the chief.

"I am also concerned about buses from other provinces. The drivers are not used to Phuket

roads. This might cause accidents, especially on the Patong and Karon hills," he said.

Regarding the previous two bus crashes on the Patong and Karon hills, Chief Terayout confirmed to the *Phuket Gazette*, "These accidents happened because the drivers did not pay enough attention to the road. They probably were driving too fast on the hills and caused the accidents.

"Both of these buses were registered in Phuket. The cases are now under police investigation." However he said that the new strict enforcement of the law will not be applied retroactively to these cases.



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A Transaero 747 lands at Phuket Airport. Photo: Andy Mitchell

Phuket Airport ready to receive redirected flights

PHUKET International Airport (PIA) is ready to take on the role as the Airport Authority of Thailand (AoT) Emergency Operations Center if Suvarnabhumi International Airport in Bangkok succumbs to floods.

"We held a meeting to discuss the possibility of PIA becoming the alternate [main] airport in case Suvarnabhumi Airport is unable to operate," said an AoT Phuket spokesperson.

Although Phuket has already entered its tourism high season and the airport is bustling with air traffic, the spokesperson said Phuket Airport was prepared to take on the role.

Staff at the airport will prepare special areas in case of a further increase in air traffic, though they will only be able to handle additional flights at specific hours.

"The PIA can open up one spot for a Boeing 744-400 and a couple spots for Airbus 300 aircraft from midnight to 8am. A couple more spots will be available for Airbus 300 aircraft from 8am to noon," the spokesperson said.

Somchai Sawasdeepon, AoT Senior Executive Vice President and Acting General Manager of Suvarnabhumi Airport, considers the move as precautionary only as he believes the extensive dyke system installed around Suvarnabhumi will protect the airport from encroaching flood waters.

THAI upholds Yingluck call for 'evacuee' flights

PRIME Minister Yingluck Shinawatra has called on Thai Airways International to reduce airfares for flights to Phuket and other destinations in Southern Thailand.

The call for assistance came late last week in response to the imminent flooding of Rama II Road in Bangkok, the main artery connecting Bangkok with Southern Thailand.

"Thai Airways International will offer airfare discounts in response to PM Yingluck's request," said Yuparit Buaklee, a Thai Airways International Information Center officer.

"The special fares will start from tomorrow and last until December 10. They're good for all Thai Airways flights between Bangkok and Southern Thailand in order to help flood victims who wish to evacuate to the South," she said.

Patong plan to transform human feces into fertilizer

By Pimwara Choksakulpan

PATONG Municipality will apply for a 65-million-baht loan to build a treatment plant that will convert thousands of tonnes of Phuket's fecal matter into fertilizer.

The Patong Council last Friday carried the motion in favor of building the fertilizer factory, with a plan to profit from the horrendous waste.

Residents and tourists in the resort town generate up to 10 tonnes of firm organic waste a day, explained Patong Mayor Pian Keesin.

From July 2010 to September 2011, the solid waste amounted to 2,020 tonnes, he added.

"I would like to turn this sludge into valuable fertilizer," he told the council.

"Right now we are giving it away. It helps plants and trees to grow very quickly... If we turn it into fertilizer, it will make a lot of



Patong Mayor Pian Keesin lays out a plan to deal with the city's ever-mounting human waste.

money for us," he said.

The loan application will be filed with the 'Office of Environmental Fund' and include plans for a two-storey building covering 1,168 square meters of land at the Patong Wastewater Treatment Plant to produce the fertilizer.

The plans will also include a six-room, two-storey accommodation block for workers.

"The loan should be approved within six months and it will take about one year for construction," said Mayor Pian.



Human 'sludge' separated at the Patong Wastewater Treatment Plant.

"The fertilizer plant will be able to produce 10 tonnes of fertilizer a day. The current market price for fertilizer is about 10 baht a kilogram, but we will sell it for only

five to six baht a kilogram.

"If we follow the plan, I am sure we will be able to pay back the loan within seven years," Mayor Pian said.

Expat, wife arrested for M16 assault rifle in car

POLICE arrested a long-term expat and his wife after finding what they identified as an M16 automatic assault rifle with a loaded clip in the back of their car last Saturday.

Thung Thong Police Duty Officer Lt Col Chana Suttimard told the *Gazette*, "At 4am [last Saturday], police arrested Ivan Vaclavik, 43, from Slovakia, and 32-year-old Phuket-native Suppasa Chuyyemukkasik.

"Both are residents of Kathu. They live in a residential estate near the Loch Palm Golf Course and have two children together," he

explained.

The couple had just left the Isarn Return Pub and Restaurant near Kathu market and were driving towards Patong when they were arrested.

"I have yet to be informed of the full details of what happened. At this stage all I know is that the officers involved believed the couple were 'acting suspiciously', so they stopped and searched the vehicle," Lt Col Chana said.

"In the back of the car, a white Honda CR-V, they found an M16 and one magazine loaded with ammunition," he said.

The M16 is the primary service rifle of the United States Military, with semi-automatic and fully-automatic variants. Police did not provide information regarding which variant the rifle was in the car.



An M16A4 assault rifle. Police did not give information regarding which variant of the M16 was found in the couple's car.

During questioning Mr Vaclavik told Lt Col Chana that he had just returned from a trip abroad on his yacht, which was at a marina at Ao Por.

"He said that his yacht needed repairs so he had to take everything off the boat while the repairs were being made. That included the M16," Lt Col Chana said.

Mr Vaclavik said he bought the rifle in the Philippines and that it was only for self-defense, as sometimes during his trips abroad he needed to sail into the dangerous pirate-infested waters off Somalia, he added.

Mr Vaclavik was charged with possession of an illegal firearm and carrying a firearm in a public place, while Mrs Suppasa was also charged with possession of an illegal firearm.

Both are being held at Phuket Provincial Prison.

Mr Vaclavik has lived in Phuket for about 15 years, police said.

Until recently, he was a part owner in the Phuket Tropical Inn resort on Nanai Road in Patong.

"He is no longer involved in the hotel. He sold his partnership six months ago," a staff member at the hotel told the *Gazette*.



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— *Phuket Gazette*

Phuket models looking for votes in competition

TWO young Phuket models are seeking votes in the Photogenic Model competition, part of the Thai Supermodel Contest 2011.

Uraisri "Yim" Watsang, 16, and Vanessa "Van" Herrmann, 20, have both made it to the final round of the contest to be broadcast on Channel 7.

Miss Watsang attended Phuket's Plookpanya School before moving on to Srinagarindra, where she is now a Mor 4 level student in the Intensive Math Program.

"This is the first time I've participated in such a large-scale contest. Please vote for me and Van and cheer both of us in the final round," she said.

Half Thai, half German Miss Herrmann studied at Darasamuth Phuket and Satree Phuket schools and is now a second-year bachelor's degree student in Ramkhamhaeng University's Mass Communication program.

Miss Herrmann, who can speak Thai, English and German, has been a model since she was 15



Uraisri (left) and Vanessa have made it to the final round in Bangkok.

years old. She made it to the final-50 round of the Miss Teen Thailand 2008 competition and the final 40-round of the Thai Supermodel Contest 2008, and won first prize in the Asni Guest Model Contest 2011.

"I would like Phuket people to help vote for me and Yim. We have 'Gam the Star' as a singer, America 'Amy' Jacobs as an actress, so I want to be 'Van' Vanessa as a model. I'll do my best to help promote Phuket," she said.

To cast your vote in the Photogenic Model Competition, send an SMS to 4777222. To vote for Miss Watsang, enter "T11" as text; to vote for Miss Herrmann, enter "T17".

Votes can be cast in the competition until December 1.

The final round, originally scheduled to take place on November 2, was postponed due to the flooding in Bangkok. The new date will be announced by Channel 7.

— Pimwara Choksakulpan

Struggling

BAD news moves quickly – constantly – and there is a cast of usual suspects who society likes to push the blame on, people who are "different" or somehow not representative of the whole.

Who are they? Illegal immigrants, stateless people, migrant workers and essentially any other minority group that has the misfortune of being a convenient scapegoat. One such "group" of people that is closely watched and often stigmatized in Thai society is the transgender community: katoey. The Phuket Gazette's Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai reports.

KATOEY are born, raised and registered in the Kingdom of Thailand. They are, and have been, an integral part of Thai society dating back to at least the Rattanakosin period in the 18th century. However, in the mainstream psyche, *katoey* are placed on the fringes of the Thai social fabric.

Loud, aggressive and violent are all stereotypes associated with the transgender community, especially in Patong – a classic case of "one rotten apple spoils the whole barrel".

However, there are "good apples" that have chosen a different path, but not without adversity.

Toedsak "Gai" Kaipraiwan, 30, earned a bachelor's degree from a university in Sakon Nakhon, her home province in Northeastern Thailand (Isarn).

"I got a degree in education because I have always wanted to be a teacher, since I was young. Educating people has always been my passion," Gai said.

"Dreaming about it is one thing, but making it reality is something completely different.

"When I graduated, I couldn't wait to find a job teaching, but it wasn't as easy as I thought it would be.

"I grew my hair long, like a woman, and I dressed like a woman when I went to apply for jobs. I can't remember how many schools turned me down, even though I have an excellent academic record and great teaching skills," Gai recalled.

"After months of trying, I finally got a job teaching English and Thai languages at a vocational school in Sakon Nakhon.

"The students respected me for who I am, not only because I was their teacher, but because of my ability – I was good at what I was doing. The only problem I had was with other male colleagues. They treated me differently and didn't respect me.

"The worst part was that they

always thought of me as a joke – they never took anything I said or did seriously.

"The same was true with people in my hometown. I realized that they thought of me as the joke of the community, so I decided to move somewhere that I could be respected," Gai said.

Gai moved to Phuket seven years ago and took a job at the reception desk at a hotel.

"I got along well with my colleagues. Even though we didn't hang out together after work, I knew that they respected me," she said.

She worked at the hotel for three years before taking a position as a counselor and coordinator at the Sabai Dee Clinic at Patong Hospital. The clinic provides blood tests, counseling services and an anonymous HIV clinic for transgender and homosexual people in Phuket.

Gai is happy in her new position where she advises transgender people on how to practice safe sex and how to take care of themselves if they are already infected with HIV or an STD.

She said it's fulfilling in that she can make use of her training and skills as a teacher.

"I'm no longer discriminated against, but that's not the best part of my career. The best part is that I am doing public work for people born with the same identity as me, as *katoey*," she said.

Not all transgenders have struggled with finding the right job.

Tintinarn "Um" Homroskla is a 23-year-old Phuketian with a degree in business administration from a local vocational college.

"I started working as a cashier at a store in Phuket International Airport as soon as I graduated. I was 18 years old," Um said.

"I had no problem getting the job and I got along fine with my

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WOMEN AT WORK: Toedsak 'Gai' Kaipraiwan (left) and Tintinarn "Um" Homroskla are happy working in Phuket.

colleagues. Even though there was nothing exciting about my job, it was my plan to start from something small and work my way up.

Um moved from cashier to sales agent at a housing estate to receptionist at a spa and now is the manager of Andaman Power Organization, a local non-governmental organization working directly with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual (LGBT) community in Phuket.

"Since I am a part of this community, I might as well take an active role in it," she said.

The organization, among other things, conducts workshops for the LGBT community around Phuket, including sex workers in Patong.

"Once a year we have a big meeting with the Phuket Provincial Health Office where we report on our work. I was really scared at first. Part of it was because of my personal experience with non-transgender people – they usually look at us in a negative way and I wasn't sure if anyone would pay attention to what I said.

"I was wrong: everyone listened," Um said.

"This job has helped build my self-confidence and I hope some day that what I, and many others like me who are professionals, am doing right now can gradually change the way people see us," she said.

Many Thai employers look more at which educational institute the applicant graduated from than they do at personal experience. However, this principle does not apply to transgender people.

Sompol "Wicky" Sitthiwetch, 30, has a bachelor's degree in hotel management from a top university in Phuket.

"I realized it would be difficult for me to get a job in the hotel

business, so I accepted a job from my friend who owns a company. It was as a web developer for a hotel booking website – not exactly what I wanted to do, but I knew it wouldn't be easy for me

to get a job somewhere else," Wicky said.

"After working there for two years, I decided to challenge myself more so I went job hunting.

"After approaching many hotels and companies, I started to understand more about discrimination.

Some hotels wanted to hire me, but they asked me to cut my hair short and 'appear as a man'.

"I turned them down because I won't do anything that forces me to change who I am," she said.

Wicky finally found a job at a small hotel on Soi Paradise, an area

popular for its gay nightlife scene in Patong.

She is also a volunteer at the Sabai Dee Clinic, where Gai works.

"I share knowledge about safe sex and HIV/AIDS to sex workers on Soi Paradise, which has been easy and rewarding for me as everyone here knows me and respects me.

"The hard-to-reach people seem to be the *katoey* sex workers on Soi Bangla [in Patong] – they seem to not want to cooperate, so I get to them through their *mama-sans*, or pimps," Wicky added.

"I know there are still a lot of nightclubs in Patong that ban transgender people from entering. At first I was upset, but I kind of understand their situation. Transgender people did bring a bad image to those venues.

"I just want to encourage all transgender people to help improve our image and let everyone know that a lot of us are quality people and we belong in society as equals," Wicky said.



Sompol 'Wicky' Sitthiwetch hopes to see the 'katoey image' changed.

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Car overturned after hitting buffalo

Vehicular bovicide continues

ONE car overturned, a bus was damaged and two buffalo were killed on November 11 after a motorbike driver clipped one of the beasts as he drove past, spooking both animals and causing them to run into oncoming traffic.

Kusoldharm Rescue Foundation workers received a report at about 12:30am that an accident involving three vehicles and two buffalo had occurred on Thepkasattri Road about one kilometer north of Thalang intersection.

At the scene, rescue workers found two dead buffalo in the road, a parked motorcycle, a hotel employee transport bus with a crushed front end and an upside down Honda sedan.

No humans were injured in the accident, and no one came forward to claim the buffalo, a rescue worker said.

This is the third such incident in four months. In late July, a passenger van hit and killed two buffalo while in August, an Airport limo hit and killed one buffalo. Both incidents occurred at about 1:30am on Thepkasattri Road in Thalang. No humans were injured in either incident.

Patong resort moves to stave off 'boulder rain'

By Atchaa Khamlo

AFTER waiting months for steps to be taken to prevent boulders from tumbling from the Guanyin construction site into their resort, management at L'Orchidee Residences in Patong have hired their own contractor.

Jean-Claude Guillet, the retired developer and the owners' representative of the resort, explained to the *Gazette* that the move follows months of failed attempts to get the contractor to abide by his promise to take full responsibility for the damage caused by the tumbling boulders and to ensure no other boulders roll into the resort.

He referred to an article published by the *Gazette* in July in which then-contractor for the site, Thanachart Pibuncharoenpol, agreed to restore villas damaged by tumbling boulders to their original condition and to remove any potentially dangerous rocks still teetering precariously high above the resort.

"Three and a half months later, nothing has been done," he said.

Wassana Yukunthon, public relations at the resort, explained that lawyers representing the villa owners had sent two registered letters seeking action be taken. The first letter was to contractor Prasert "Opal" Auksonprommarat, because he responded in person to the initial complaint filed at Patong Police Station.

The second letter was sent to Warada Karnkij-o-larn, as she is registered at the Phuket Land Office as the owner of the land in question.

"Neither have replied," Miss



One of the many boulders that reportedly tumbled from the construction site during a landslide this year

Wassana said.

"So we are proceeding through a claim with our insurance company and we will seek compensation from the project owner later," she said.

Mr Guillet explained there were at least 17 boulders still precariously supported by tree trunks above the resort and possibly even more on the project site further uphill.

"Four villas remain empty as the owners are too scared to return," Mr Guillet added.

"We have sent more letters asking to have them removed, but we have received no answer," he said.

The work to restrain the boulders will cost about 600,000 baht, said Mr Guillet.

"We are trying not to have to sue the project owner. If the claim

is accepted, there will be no problem as there would be no reason to sue them. And we want real protection, not just people saying so," he added.

Somkiat Limpanapa, Managing Director of 11 GEO Engineering Company, which is carrying out the work, said, "Removing the big rocks is quite difficult, so we will cover the rocks that are on the steep slope with an iron net to keep them securely in place."

Repairs to one villa damaged by a boulder weighing two tonnes is underway, he added.

The repairs to the villa should be complete by the end of this month, while work on restraining the boulders began last week, he added.

Meanwhile, the cleanup at Kok Makham village, which was unin-

dated by a mudslide from the same project site, is now complete.

Kok Makham resident and former elected community leader Chatchapol Khamintong, 48, told the *Gazette*, "The project owner has already cleaned the roads and storm drains that were covered by the landslide from their project. They have also fixed some minor damages to houses."

All heavy machinery for conducting earthworks had been removed from the construction site, as the project owner Chaianan had promised in a meeting with officials on October 19, he added.

"However, we will follow up closely on whether they will keep their promise of installing concrete retaining walls to prevent any future landslides," he said.

Cops bust dealer with stuffed pants

By: Warisa Temram

THE arrests of two low-level Phuket drug users have led to the bust of their suspected methamphetamine dealer, who was allegedly caught with 1,400 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) tablets stashed in his underwear.

Narongrit Metula, Bualin Panachai and Seksan Sritham were presented at a press conference at Chalong Police Station on November 9.

Tipped off by an undercover agent, a team of police officers investigated an area along Soi Mae Ampan, off Patak Road in Chalong, where teenagers supposedly met to buy and sell drugs, said Chalong Police Deputy Superintendent Narong Laksanawimol.

Narongrit, who was riding a motorbike, seemed suspicious to us. After identifying themselves as police officers, the team searched



Seksan, center, was charged with possession and intent to sell meth.

Narongrit and found 200 milligrams of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) on his person, he said.

The police questioned Narongrit, which led to the arrest of Mr Bualin at a rented house in Karon about an hour later.

Police searched the house and found 1.34 grams of *ya ice* in Bualin's pockets and 185 *ya bah*

pills under the television table, said Lt Col Narong.

After questioning Bualin, police believed that Seksan would be delivering *ya bah* to the house and planned to arrest him on arrival.

At 7:30pm Seksan arrived at the house on a motorbike. The officers then identified themselves and searched him. They found 111.6 grams of *ya ice* and 1,400 pills of *ya bah* in his underwear, he said.

A total of 113.14 grams of *ya ice* and 1,585 pills of *ya bah* were confiscated from the suspects.

Narongrit, 19, and Bualin, 40, both from Nakhon Phanom province, were charged with possession of a category one illegal drug.

Seksan, 25, from Ubon Ratchathani province, was charged with possession of a category one illegal drug with intent to sell.

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Floods affect HM's health

AROUND THE nation

HM KING Bhumibol Adulyadej has recovered following internal bleeding likely induced by stress over Thailand's worst floods in at least half a century, Princess Chulabhorn said.

HM The King, who has worked to prevent flooding in Thailand throughout his life, recently went into shock and fell unconscious after watching footage of the unfolding disaster on television, the princess said.

Princess Chulabhorn, who did not specify the date of the incident, said the 83-year-old monarch suffered abdominal bleeding and a sharp drop in blood pressure.

The princess said doctors told her it could have been caused by concern over the flooding.

"This indicates that His Majesty the King loves his people as his own children," she said, as quoted by AP.

The princess was speaking during a visit to a flood evacuation



HM The King was reportedly 'shocked' by footage of the floods. Photo: AFP

center in Nonthaburi province last week.

HM The King has initiated more than 4,300 royal projects aimed at developing Thailand and improving the lot of his subjects. Around 40 per cent of them are related to water resources.

HM The King has sounded out constant warnings of the danger over-development poses to Thailand in terms of flooding.

His Majesty famously devised the "monkey's cheeks" strategy to

protect the capital from inundation. The technique involves storing run-off for the north in "cheeks", with the water later used for irrigation of the country's rice fields.

This year, some analysts have noted that reservoirs in the north were allowed to become full early in this year's rainy season. When rains continued, the reservoirs were unable to hold the additional rainfall, resulting in widespread flooding.

'Big bag' wall destruction allowed

AUTHORITIES have reached an agreement with residents of Bangkok's flooded Don Muang area who destroyed part of a sand-bag wall credited with keeping inner Bangkok dry last week, causing filthy water to surge into the area protected by the barrier.

The so-called "big bag" barrier had been in place for more than a week. Water on the north side of the wall was up to 70 centimeters higher than on the south side.

It had caused considerable anger among residents whose flooded homes stood behind the wall. They claimed the six-kilometer-long barrier was prolonging their misery.

On Sunday, residents in Don Muang District, also home to Bangkok's second airport, took action. They removed a 10-meter section of the barrier, allowing floodwater to surge into a previously unaffected part of the city.

The Flood Relief Operations Center (FROC), which is coordinating the authorities' response to the disaster, ordered the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority (BMA) to rebuild the barrier, saying that its removal would benefit no one.

However, on Monday, FROC and the BMA reached an agreement with the residents to allow a reduced height of 80cm for the 10-meter section. It previously stood at 120cm, *The Nation* reported.

'Never again' insists Thai government

THE floods that have brought parts of Thailand to its knees in recent weeks will never be repeated, the Thai government has insisted.

"We are not going to let it happen again," Deputy Prime Minister Kittirat Na-Ranong told the *Wall Street Journal* at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Honolulu.

Mr Kittirat was filling in for Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who stayed in Thailand to coordinate the response to the ongoing disaster.

Mr Kittirat used the summit to reach out to Japan, Thailand's largest foreign investor. He met with Japanese trade minister Yukio Edano on the sidelines of the meeting, briefing him on measures to assist businesses hit by the floods.

On November 28, Mr Kittirat will lead a delegation of Thai officials and private-sector representatives to Tokyo to update Japanese investors about the situation and the government's recovery plans.

Board of Trade of Thailand (BoT) secretary-general Vichai Assarasakorn said the Thai visit to Japan was requested by Japanese investors.

"Japanese investors want a clear explanation from the Thai



Deputy PM Kittirat at APEC Summit in Honolulu, Hawaii. Photo: AFP

government about its plans for rehabilitation and for preventing flooding in the future, in order to restore their confidence about continued investment in Thailand," said Vichai.

Japan is the Kingdom's largest source of foreign direct investment, accounting for more than 40 per cent of total foreign investment.

However, many Japanese companies – in particular automobile producers – have been forced to suspend operations due to the floods, while many sectors participating in the supply chain have also been impacted.

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Waste not, want not: Patong-style wisdom

THE plan by Patong Mayor Pian Keesin to install a fertilizer factory at the Patong Wastewater Treatment Plant must be heralded as good news (see page 3).

Just the week before Mayor Pian made his announcement, the *Phuket Gazette* received reports of yet another “chocolate plume” emanating offshore from the treatment plant and snaking its way toward Kalim.

This latest plume was just more evidence that municipal efforts are unable to keep pace with the growing strain on the wastewater infrastructure and the town’s sewerage system. Any preparations to provide effective relief on the strain must be welcomed.

The motion carried by Patong Municipality to apply for the 65 million baht in budget needed to build the facility indicates tacit recognition by the authorities that the current sewerage system is not good enough. One would not expect local administrators at any holiday destination in the world to advertise that raw sewage was making its way to the beach, least of all in Thailand. But the fact that Patong Municipality is facing up to the feces is encouraging and deserves our support.

Of course there is so much more that could be done. In the *Gazette*’s ‘Your Phuket’ society pages last week we ran a photo of young students at HeadStart International School making “EM” (“effective microorganisms”) balls to send to Bangkok to help break down the level of harmful bacteria floating in the flood waters.

EM balls are not new to Phuket’s efforts to deal with waste. Some areas have been doing it for years. Patong could follow their lead, particularly in the wake of the extremely adverse, but well deserved, worldwide publicity given the fecal pollution found on the sand and in the surf at Kata and Karon beaches by a German television crew who filmed it earlier this year.

If the stink over Kata and Karon taught us anything, it was that people understand how development can outpace infrastructure, but they do not understand or forgive when nothing is done about it and those responsible lurk in silence. Only acknowledgment and action can stave off the shame.

As one *Gazette* reader recently suggested in our ‘Island View’ column, a nominal “environment tax” could be collected from tourists arriving at the airport. Even a painless levy of 50 baht could have raised close to 200 million baht in 2011, given the roughly four million tourists who will have arrived on our island by the end of the year. Surely an amount this size would suffice to undermine any cries of “no budget”.

Corruption? Possible, but as our reader so valiantly suggests, tourists don’t much care about our social ills so long as these ills don’t directly affect them. Just a clean beach and a pleasant holiday will suffice to send them home with the type of experience we’d like them to tell their friends about. Patong knows this.



Who will be brave enough?

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket officials push for buses from airport to main beaches, November 13*

I’ll cross my fingers for this to become a reality, but with no applications filed it looks doubtful. Everyone knows it’s dangerous. However, progress sometimes requires great sacrifice. The question is, who will be brave enough? If enough people stand up to the cancer (mafia), which is killing this island’s reputation, things can get done, but it will require sacrifice.

The original Steve
Gazette Forum

Letters to the Editor

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

10 months (before the accident), my girlfriend’s best friend. I took her wedding photos three months ago. She was 10 weeks pregnant. I went to her funeral on Tuesday. The carnage on the roads in Phuket just has to stop. I doubt anyone in authority will read this. Why is it still possible to obtain a driving license within a week? It takes months elsewhere.

Steven Peel
Gazette forum

alcohol features prominently in their plans for enjoying their holidays,” said the *Phuket Gazette*. In my opinion this is sad news. Why do human beings need to ruin their health and sanity in the name of “fun”? Considering all the problems caused by drunks, it seems absolutely unnecessary. These problems appear to be signs that this idea of having “fun” (drinking) seems to be very limited and sad – but I might be wrong.

Menny
Gazette forum

Tough teaching

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket schools relax rules for hiring English teachers, November 14*

I’ve volunteered at a local school, helping out in English classes one day a week, in the past. Teaching is a tough job; It takes a special kind of person.

The rewards are there, but they certainly are not financial. Check with your local school and see if they could use some help – it will be an eye opener.

The kids aren’t that much different than the ones back home. But if you think you can just show up and start teaching, forget about it.

Pinot
Gazette Forum

November

It’s over halfway through the month and there have been a disparaging amount of mustaches on the island. Mates, this is November. Take these last few days and start growing that distinguished upper lip hair to raise awareness about prostate cancer!

Andy Churt
Patong

Ex-police speaks out on public transport

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket Public Transport: The decision to have public buses is ours, November 13*

I was the Supervisor of the Phuket Tourist Police Foreign Volunteers for five years until 2009. Using multilingual signs urging tourists to report acts of violence or intimidation will only scare and freak out the tourists.

Besides, the Tourist Police rarely answer calls on the hotline, and if they do, the officer just hangs up if he doesn’t understand the caller. Armed police on the buses would be the most reassuring thing for tourists and everyone else involved.

Patrick
Gazette forum

Yachts and guns

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket expat, wife arrested for M16 assault rifle in car, November 13*

I have to agree with Ivan. It was a good idea for him to have this firearm (M16 assault rifle) under his direct control, rather than on an unattended yacht – good man.

Let’s not forget the brutal killing of Malcolm Robertson on his yacht in these waters (2009), or the killing of Jean and Scott Adam and their friends, Mr Bean Phyllis Macay and Bob Riggle, on board the *Quest* (2011). Remember, too, the self defense killing in Kata Bay by Pierre-Alain Oberson (2008).

Dun
Gazette Forum

Stop the carnage in Patong’s streets

Re: *Gazette online, Young woman crushed to death on Phuket beach road, November 9*

I had known this woman for

No need to get drunk

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket Poll: How alcohol dependent is Phuket?, November 11*

“For many such tourists,

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Travelling Thais to get new services in Phuket

FIRST PERSON

IN ADDITION to issuing passports, we offer several other services to Thai citizens, such as validating visas for expired passports.

Another one of our responsibilities is to offer assistance to citizens who have relatives working abroad in countries facing national crises, such as Libya. If someone can't locate their (Thai) relative abroad, they can ask us and we can help find them.

One thing that is often requested at our office, but we can't do, is notarize documents. We plan to expand our office soon, so we can offer this service.

Once we begin offering this service, if you are Thai and come in with a Thai document, such as a marriage certificate because you want to go abroad with your husband, you need to certify it. You will need to have it translated into English (by a translation company), before we can notarize it. This will make the document a 100 per cent legal and you can use it abroad.

This same process can be used to convert English documents into legal Thai documents. Currently, the nearest Passport Office providing this service is in Songkhla province.

We issue about 100 passports a day. It takes only about 10 minutes to fill out the form and 20 minutes to take a photo, so it won't take more than half an hour to apply for a passport book from



Benjapa Tubthong, Phuket Passport Office chief, has a doctoral degree in social sciences from National School of Administration and Political Science of Bucharest in Romania. She started at the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1994 and was promoted to her current position in October 2011. Here she gives us insight into the functions of the Passport Office.

the moment you step into my office. Just bring in your valid ID card, but make sure the photo has not started to fade.

We need to see a clear photo of you, otherwise we might ask you to get a new ID.

The fee for a passport is 1,000 baht and an additional 40 baht for postage. It takes three days to get to the Bangkok office and an additional seven days before it will arrive at your home. But due to flooding in Bangkok, their office is currently not able to receive any passports.

If any organization in Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi or Ranong wants us to send them a mobile unit, please give us three weeks advance notice.

For a mobile unit to be sent there should be at least 20 people wanting to get a passport.

For parents who want to get a passport for a child under the age of 15, both the father and mother have to come into the office to certify it.

If you are separated, divorce documents will also be required.

I suggest that you call our office, 076 222080, in advance, to check what documents are needed. If you come in with the proper documents, you will not waste your time or lose your temper.

Lastly, we are not authorized to issue visas or immigration work permits. Many people mistakenly come to us for these services. All we can do is suggest that they go to the proper authority.

For visas you need to go to the embassy or honorary consulate of the countries you will be visiting. For immigration work permits you have to go to the Phuket Immigration Office at Saphan Hin.

I am delighted to serve as the new chief here because I think the southern part of Thailand is interesting.

I know the northern and northeastern areas of Thailand well and it's embarrassing to tell foreigners how few times I've been down to Samui Island or Phuket.

I wish I could stay here for five years, but this is a temporary duty. I will be here for only 11 months.



Fighting for British pensions in paradise

YOUR signatures are needed to end the unfair frozen overseas pension policy of the British government.

Some of you may not be aware that when a United Kingdom state pensioner retires to live abroad in certain countries their pension is frozen and they do not receive annual cost-of-living increases. There are over half a million of these pensioners affected by this totally unjust law, mostly in the Commonwealth countries of Australia, Canada and South Africa, but also in Thailand. These pensioners made the same National Insurance contributions as those living in the UK who get the increases.

The International Consortium of British Pensioners (ICBP) is the organization representing UK pensioners living abroad and they have been very active in trying to get the government to change the legislation so that all pensioners are treated equally.

A new electronic petition on the frozen pension issue, sponsored by the ICBP, has now been posted on the government website with the aim of obtaining 100,000 signatures so that this matter can be considered for debate in the House of Commons. So come on you

Island View

By Peter Wyborn

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

Britons, male and female, young and old, rich and poor, speak out and add your name to the petition.

To sign the petition, visit bit.ly/BritPensions and click on the "sign this petition" button.

Complete all the details and make sure your email address is accurate, as you will be sent a confirmation message as part of the process.

Where asked if you are a "British Citizen or UK Resident", answer "yes", unless you are neither.

Having completed all the above click the next box, "I agree to the Terms and Conditions", then click on the box "Sign this E petition".

You will receive a confirmation email usually within minutes. Click on the link provided in that email and your signature will be registered.

Additional votes will not be accepted from the same email address. If you are a couple that share one email address, both names can be entered in the name box but it will only register one vote.

Issues & Answers... ...asking the questions that affect you...

Bird bandit

Thieves are getting into our private village in Chalong everyday to catch wild birds and disturbing us with their motorbikes.

The caretakers of this private village don't seem to care, so we asked the police, who only smiled and said, "It's not bad, because these people love birds... and as long as they are not ten people, no problem".

In fact one man is here from 8am to 7pm and catches about four birds a day.

At this frequency there soon won't be any birds in our village. What organization can take serious action against these people for entering a private village and stop them from stealing wild birds?

Chalong
Phuket

Woodyphong Promtavee, acting chief of Chalong Municipality, replies:

I have never been notified of this situation. Actually, it isn't

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

within our power to take direct action in this matter. I would suggest that the person concerned with the birds being captured come in and present a photo of the type of bird or be able to identify the type being caught for us.

If the birds are a protected species then we can pursue legal action.

If the the birds are not a species protected by law, then we can only ask for the people's co-operation in protecting nature, explaining that the birds are very important to nature's balance.

As I have said, we can't forbid or stop people from catching wild birds without more information on the matter. If the birds are not pro-

tected by law then I will cooperate with the community's leaders to keep an eye on the situation and draw the community together to forbid what the bird thieves are doing.

You can contact Chalong Municipality at 076 282255

Narong Laksanawimon, deputy superintendent of Chalong Police, replies:

It is illegal for someone to come onto private property to catch wild animals to sell. If you see anyone doing this please contact the police immediately. We have to catch them in the act to prove that they are doing something illegal.

You can call Chalong Police at 076 381247 or 191.

Taking farang blood

Someone told me that the Phuket Regional Blood Center doesn't accept *farang* blood, anyone know if this is true?

Laurie Howells
Phuket

Pornthip Rattajak, the Phuket Regional Blood Center Acting Director, replies:

Yes, we do accept blood donations from foreigners. If you have an address in Phuket that we can contact you at, you are welcome to make a blood donation.

We do not accept foreigner blood donations from people with tourist visas, because we cannot contact them if there are issues with their blood work. Our policy is that we must contact the donor if there is a possible issue with their blood. We will send them a letter to inform them that they should have another blood test. If the donor really has a problem, we will advise them to get proper treatment.

Another condition for donating blood is that the donor must not have lived in or visited the United Kingdom between 1980 and 1996. During that period of time Mad Cow disease was spreading in the UK.

Recently a lot of foreigners have donated their blood at our center. Foreigners are a great source for Rh-negative blood, which is uncommon among Thai people.

Criminal clearance

As part of a visa application for another country I must present a criminal clearance certificate saying that I have not done anything criminal in Thailand. Where can I get such a document?

Peter
Chalong

An officer at the Royal Thai police Office replies:

The following documents must be submitted to the Royal Thai Police in Bangkok, in person: a copy of your passport photo page, visas and work permit. It will take about three weeks to issue the document.

You can then either pick up the document yourself or leave us your address so we can mail it to you. This is a free service.

Remember, you must submit the documents to us in person, because we will need your finger prints and signature.

For more information, contact the Royal Thai Police office at 02 205 2169.

Evoque SUV ideal for 'new age' business folk

THE Range Rover Evoque, the latest high-end Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV) by Land Rover, hit the Phuket market with an official open-house party last weekend.

The Evoque, with a starting price tag of 4.09 million baht, was introduced at the Benz Ramkhamhaeng Group (BRG) showroom in Rassada.

The British-assembled SUV was initially unveiled in the United Kingdom in July, before making its way to the Bangkok market last month.

BRG Managing Director, Chollatorn Sriratanapras, told the *Phuket Gazette*, "We aim to sell 10 vehicles in the first three months, and then to sell another 15 vehicles by next year."

The Evoque's target customer group is a new-generation of businessmen and businesswomen explained Ms Chollatorn.

The vehicle is not designed to look "too tough or strong", typical of SUVs. It is a sleek sports vehicle built to maintain its functionality as an SUV, she said.

The SUV will be maintaining this functionality with a smaller 2.2 liter diesel engine, which will put out 190 horsepower.

Ms Chollatorn explained that the Evoque is an ideal vehicle for the Phuket market because Phuket has many varying terrains and driving conditions.

"This unique SUV can handle various road surface conditions

and has immense torque, making it an enjoyable and safe vehicle to drive. Its below-surface systems are durable and it has better road-grip than most other cars on the road.

"Moreover, it features a strong frame structure and excellent outlook adding to the overall safety factor," she said.

The interior is done in a semi-sport design, wrapped almost

entirely in Oxford leather that is hand-finished with twin-needle stitching and fit around its electronic and memory controls.

It also features metal finishers and flush-fitting air vents with a tactile control system and 20 inch Alloy (Lor Mack) wheels.

For a test drive, contact the BRG showroom, located at 9/29 Moo 6 T. Rasada A. Muang, Phuket, next to IT Square. – *Phuket Gazette*



STRONG & SLEEK: A vehicle built for varying road surfaces and conditions.



UNISEX: The Land Rover Evoque was designed for both men and women.

Canon camera distribution unaffected by floods

SUPPLY of Canon camera equipment in Thailand has not been disrupted by the recent flooding, a senior manager at Cannon Marketing (Thailand) has confirmed.

"Luckily, our camera production facilities are not located in the affected areas," said Warin Tantiphongpanid, Senior Director and General Manager Consumer Imaging and Information of Cannon Marketing (Thailand) Co Ltd.

"We have a printer factory located in Pathum Thani province that was affected by the floods, but aside from this our camera storage and distribution facilities

in Thailand are fine," he said, adding that Canon does not manufacture any of its cameras in Thailand.

Mr Warin explained to the *Phuket Gazette* that Canon's camera equipment production facilities are located in Singapore and Japan, and that the printer factory in Pathum Thani was the only Canon facility in Thailand to be substantially affected from the floods.

Amid a crisis which has paralyzed a large proportion of Thailand's industrial sector, the news is well-received among camera dealers and photography

enthusiasts, alike.

Mr Warin went on to express his confidence about Canon's current positioning and performance in the domestic market, highlighting the latest photographers' market trend: the reemergence of Single Lens Reflex (SLR) technology.

"SLR cameras are continuing to perform well while the compact camera market has declined," he said.

"Since the beginning of this year, the overall SLR camera market has grown by 50 per cent compared to the same period last year," he said, highlighting that Canon's sales

of SLR cameras have increased by 70 per cent.

"We have more than 60 per cent market share in the camera market this year," he added.

Mr Warin attributed much of the SLR trend to the popularity of social networking among youngsters.

"The SLR Camera has become more popular among the teenage group because such a camera opens a whole new world of photography for them – the vast functions give users incentive to share online. . .the popularity of social networking has definitely helped our sales volume," he ex-

pressed.

Mr Warin also mentioned another growing target group for SLR camera: amateur film makers.

"We have learnt that SLR Cameras are also popular among film makers with many more movies being shot with SLR cameras," he said.

"I think one reason is because 'real' video cameras are expensive, and can cost up to 10 million baht per unit, for example. Meanwhile, a high-quality SLR Camera will run only about 300,000 baht and it can do just as good a job as the expensive video camera," said Mr Warin.

"In any case, I'm quite confident that our SLR Camera market will continue to grow," he added.

– *Phuket Gazette*



BOOM: Camera sales are on the up.



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Rajabhat to staff local hotels with flood-affected students

By Steven Layne

PHUKET Rajabhat University (PRU) is accepting applications from students nationwide, who have been affected by the flood crisis, to join its latest tourism "work-and-study" program.

The 4 R project is an extension of last year's 3 R project and is organized in collaboration with the Phuket Office of Tourism and Sports and the Phuket Tourist Association (PTA).

The four Rs stand for Rajabhat, *rong ram* (hotels), *rong rien* (schools) and this year's newest addition, *Ratchakan* (Royal Government).

The main objective of the project is to help alleviate economic hardships burdening students that have been affected by recent flooding. The project provides an opportunity for such students to gain training, education and experience in the hospitality field, while earning income and thus contributing to the economy.

In addition to providing students with practical experiences, the program aims to prepare students for the upcoming Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic

Community agreement set to take effect in 2015.

With an enrollment quota of 150 students, the program targets recent high school graduates, as well as 1st and 2nd year tourism and foreign language students currently enrolled at any Rajabhat University, nationwide.

Priority will be given to those who have been affected by the floods.

Director of the PRU Student Affairs office, Associate Professor Nongyao Jaihor of the Faculty of Management Science, told the *Phuket Gazette* that out of 250 PTA member hotels, about 20 are participating in the 4 R project.

Included among these are the Phuket Merlin Hotel, Patong Resort, Peach Hill Hotel & Resort, Nap Patong, Merlin Beach Resort, Bundarika Villas & Suites, C & N Hotel Patong, Blue Ocean Resort and the Kata Palm Resort & Spa, among others.

"We want to avoid using big chain or five-star hotels who already have sufficient staffing. We prefer to support local businesses by helping to fill staffing shortages at smaller hotels," Prof Nongyao said.

Students accepted into the pro-



TWO BIRDS, ONE STONE: flood victims earn income, hotels get staffed.

gram would undergo interviews with human resource representatives from the participating hotels and those that are accepted would start the program by undergoing a full month of all-expenses paid training starting in March next year, explained Prof Nongyao.

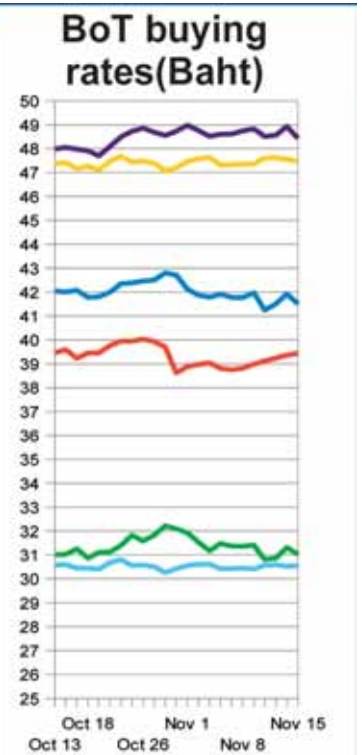
"Most of the positions are in regular hotel operations, such as housekeeping, working the reception desk and being a bellboy," she said, adding that students would earn salaries between 6,000 to 9,000 baht a month plus service charges.

"After the initial training, students will sign a standard

employee contract and will need to pass a three-month probation period. After that, if they still want to continue, they can enroll in weekend classes with PRU while continuing to work at their hotel during the weekdays," she said.

"Not all students end up liking this field and some decide to just work, but not study," she said, noting that out of about 60 participants in last year's 3 R program, 39 continued under the work-and-study model.

The program application deadline is November 26. Interested applicants can contact Prof Nongyao by calling 076 240 223 or 081 538 8929.



Change %		
Currency	month	week
GBP	0.92	-0.82
CNY	0.15	0.23
AUD	0.03	-1.24
JPY	-0.08	1.18
USD	-0.1	0.46
EUR	-1.28	-1.12

Commodities

	Current	Change %
Benzine 91	36.31	0
Gasohol 91 E10	33.28	0
Gasohol 95 E10	35.03	0
Gasohol 95 E20	32.28	0
Diesel	29.03	2.11
Thai Gold (96.5%)*	25,800	0.98
Raw block rubber**	83.2	-7.9
Raw liquid rubber**	80	-14.3
STR block rubber***	103.3	-9

*Price per one Baht unit = 15.244 grams
 **local price
 ***FOB via Bangkok
 Source = Department of Internal Trade and Office of The Rubber Replanting Aid fund

Inaugural Copenhagen - HKT flight welcomed

THAI Airway's inaugural direct flight from Copenhagen landed safely at Phuket International Airport on Saturday afternoon.

At the airport to greet the first 336 passengers aboard flight TG953 were the Governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Suraphon Svetasreni, Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Bangonrat Shinaprayoon, Phuket Tourist Association (PTA) Vice President Bhuritt Maswongsa and the executive board of Thai Airways.

Three direct flights bound for Phuket now depart Copenhagen on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

Arriving the next day, the flights will be served by a Boeing 747-400 and seat a maximum of 416 passengers, he said.

However, the governor pointed out that Danish tourists will not be able to fly directly back to Copenhagen from Phuket.

The return trip will require a transit flight via Bangkok, which are available from Phuket on a daily basis, he noted.

Mr Suraphon went on to highlight the growing market of Danes, citing the following figures.

"Last year 150,300 Danish tourists came to Thailand.

"Of these, 92,518 came to Phuket and spent on average



WELCOME TO THAILAND: Danish tourists can now fly directly to Phuket.

4,097 baht per day," he said, noting that the year-on-year increase equated to 7.5 per cent.

Asked about what negative impacts the flooding crisis has

had on the tourism sector, Mr Suraphon downplayed such notions, and echoed previous statements given by various officials.

"Tourists coming to Thailand in the first nine months of the year increased by 27 per cent compared to last year," he said.

"During the flood months, namely October and November, tourist numbers decreased only by about two per cent, which is not much of an impact," he said.

Mr Suraphon added that the government is planning to launch a post-flood tourism revival campaign, which he said is scheduled to begin next month.

- Warisa Temram

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Fiber 2U seems slow 2me

A COUPLE of years ago, TOT unveiled its Fiber 2U service in a gala presentation at Royal Phuket Marina, replete with pounding music and dancing girls – sure signs of technological superiority.

At the time, the service didn't work very well. It went down for long periods of time, with all sorts of stalls and glitches. And it cost a fortune – two fortunes. But

we were assured it was the fastest thing since greased lightning, with advertised speeds up to 100,000Kbps. That's as fast as a typical line in Hong Kong. Imagine.

The service stabilized and it was blindingly fast. Really. So fast that we had to change the program we used to measure speeds. Fiber 2U blew up the gaudy flash speed test, and we had to revert to bare-bones Java. We were seeing international download speeds of 7,000Kbps – even 10,000Kbps or more. And it wasn't just one line – many people were getting great speeds. It was by far the fastest internet this island's ever seen.

About six months ago, TOT lowered its prices on Fiber 2U and more people signed up. The entry-level Fiber 2U 10/1Mbps line went down to 1,490 baht per month. The corporate line with one fixed IP address went to 5,290 baht per month. Speeds teetered a little bit – you can see it in the graph. Still, most people were seeing international download speeds between 6,000 and 8,000Kbps, which is fast enough to stream high-definition video.

But about two months ago, all of that went to Hades in a festooned handbasket. It's as if somebody turned off the light. Now, Fiber 2U customers are more likely to report international download speeds in the 1,000 to 1,500Kbps area – and some come in at 500Kbps or less. That's about the same speed

as a 599-baht-per month 3BB line.

How the mighty have fallen.

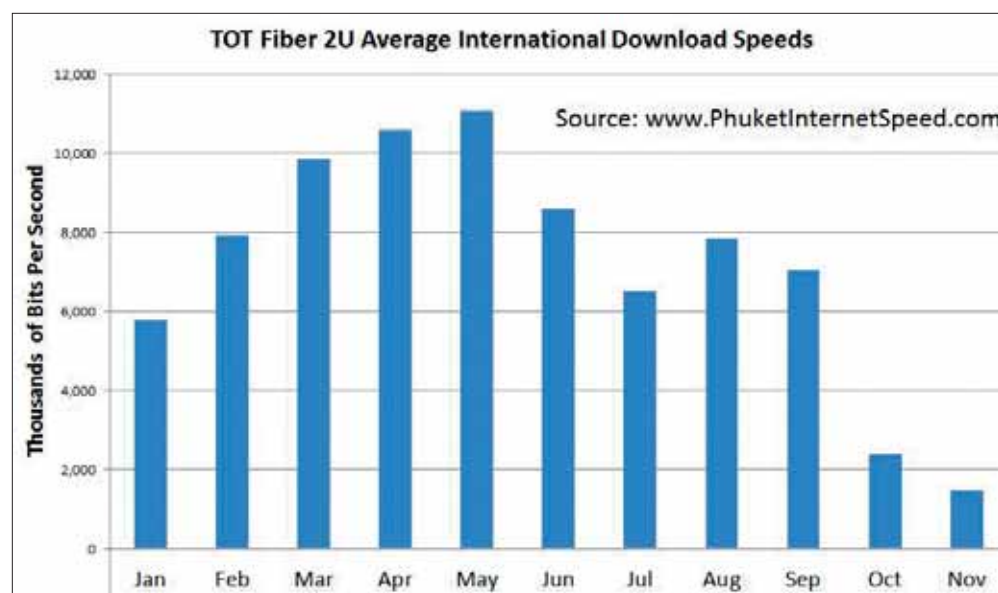
I'm not just talking about the cheapest line, although we have more reports from the Fiber 2U 10/1Mbps line than the others. We're seeing speeds dropping on the 2,420 baht Fiber 2U 20/1Mbps line, as well as the corporate service. A few people are still getting occasional runs back at the

old levels, but for almost all of the TOT customers, almost all of the time, the fiber-optic line runs about as fast as an AIS or TrueMove-H wireless account – at three times the cost. Believe me, that's saying something. What happened?

I don't know. What I do know is that it had nothing to do with the floods – the downward trend started long before rain started falling up North. It has nothing to do with high season – the drop came while there were very few tourists in Phuket. It isn't kids playing games in the afternoon or business demand, or a huge influx of customers. How do I know? Because the speeds are just generally lousy, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Far more likely is that somebody at TOT decided to spend less on international bandwidth for Fiber 2U customers. It's also possible that someone accidentally hooked up Phuket's fiber customers to a slower international line. It's even possible that somebody accidentally mis-routed Phuket's fiber through the wrong switches in Bangrak, the TOT switching center.

According to the people I've talked to, TOT has fielded lots and lots of angry complaints. Surprisingly, the people I know who have complained say that the TOT staff has treated them well and worked hard to make their lines better. Sometimes they see improvements for a while, frequently they don't.



TOT Fiber 2U came roaring onto the scene last year, but lately it's not even as fast as a good wireless connection.

When TOT gets a persistent complaint, the most common reaction is to replace the router. TOT's standard router is a Welltech WG-332S, which isn't even listed on the Welltech web site. Those who complain get a Mikrotik router, which apparently works better – for a while.

What does this all mean for somebody who just wants a fast, reliable internet connection? It means, once again, that the amount you pay for internet probably doesn't correlate at all to the quality or speed of the connection. TOT Fiber 2U is still a reasonable choice, but you can probably find faster speeds for less money. Watch PhuketInternetSpeed.com to see what people are getting.

Have a fiber line and want to keep it? One company in Phuket has a great deal of experience installing, tuning and maintaining fiber systems: Phuket Data Wizards (phuket-data-wizards.com).

If you aren't yet posting your international

download speeds on PhuketInternetSpeed.com, I hope this column gives you an idea of why it's more important than ever to keep everybody in Phuket apprised of how your internet connection is working. Even if you have a simple 3BB 6Mbps line, you're helping yourself – and everybody else – by regularly testing and posting your results. It takes less than a minute. Drop by the speed reporting site and sign up. If you have problems – forgot your logon ID or password, or you can't get it to work – drop me a line. It's free, fast and easy, and the connection you save may be your own.

Live Wire is Phuket Gazette columnist Woody Leonhard's weekly snapshot of all things internet in Phuket. Follow him on Twitter: @PhuketLiveWire, "like" his page at facebook.com/SandwichShopee, or visit his free Sunday morning computer clinics at Woody's Sandwich Shoppes.

Two new Phuket biz-consumer apps launched

SOFTWARE developer Boonsoong Technology Co Ltd and media consultants, Phebe5 Co Ltd have partnered with local coffee shop chain Tiny Coffee to launch two new business-to-consumer mobile applications, designed exclusively for the Phuket consumer base.

The two new mobile applications; "Tiny Coffee" and "Check in 4 Good Deals" were simultaneously launched last week at a press conference held at the Tiny Coffee shop next to the Anuphas

Ford showroom in Phuket Town.

Managing Director of both Boonsoong and Phebe5, Chaluckkamol Fuengchan, explained to the *Phuket Gazette* that both applications were designed to target local consumers' needs and to serve as valuable resources of information, accessibility, navigation, deals and discounts on local products and services. She said that they will mainly differ from each other in clientele lists and functionality.

"In addition to multimedia,

games and competitions, Check in 4 Good Deals will offer discounts from a wide array of Phuket retailers and outlets," she said.

Companies taking part in the discount scheme include those involved in home and decor, hotels, pools, villas, media, transport, wellness and shopping, and include listings by Scandinavian Living and Central Festival, among others.

"The Tiny Coffee application will focus mostly on Anuphas Group companies including Tiny Coffee in addition to its real estate and car dealerships such as Ford, Mazda and Honda," she explained.

The apps feature real time navigation technology to assist in locating the companies as well as direct calling for easy access to services. Both applications are fully integrated for sharing information on social network sites such as facebook.

Users can also win prizes and receive promotions via built-in Quick Response (QR) code scanning.

The Tiny Coffee app also features an augmented reality (AR) game, touted to be the first available in Thailand. Players turn on their phone's cameras and tap



TINY APPS: The two new mobile applications were simultaneously launched last week at the Tiny coffee shop in Phuket Town.

logos that appear on the screen. Each successful tap wins points which can be cashed in at Tiny Coffee outlets at a rate of 10 baht per 1000 points.

To support the mobile applications there is also a free interactive e-magazine, including deals and local life-style indices, which can be downloaded for free at Checkin4gooddeals.com.

Ms Chaluckkamol explained that

both the magazines and mobile applications' index listings and designs will be updated every three months, with the next revision due in January 2012.

Both applications are available in the English language and are free to download at Apple's App Store. For those who don't own iPhones, iPads or iPods the e-magazine can be downloaded from Checkin4gooddeals.com.



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Jury is still out on litigation funding

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

ONE very exciting new asset class available to individual investors that I have been looking into is litigation funding. When I first heard about some notes attached to this I thought it sounded too good to be true and dismissed it, but as sometimes is the case, extraordinary opportunities can arise.

The asset class is currently only accessible via structured notes, but these work very differently than most other forms of investment, which I usually think are a rip-off. I have heard a fund structure is currently being put together for listing on the Irish exchange and this really excites me.

Litigation is expensive and often fairly clear-cut cases are not tried because the costs of going to trial are prohibitive. We all know the story of David and Goliath, and many big corporations often get away with misdeeds simply because it is too difficult to fight a "Goliath" team of high-paid lawyers.

Litigation funding levels the playing and helps David. The notes I have looked into have always been commercial litigation, so it is not helping lowlives chase frivolous cases hoping for a quick buck.

The interesting thing is that insurance companies will actually insure cases they consider to be clear-cut. The costs are included in the structure and insurance costs are even covered in the insurance. So, if the case is lost, the insurance company is on the hook and the investors have their capital protected.

I am not a big fan of guarantees, but this one appears to hold water. Insurance companies are not big risk-takers, and they only insure cases that are "sure" wins. As such, the win ratio of funded litigation is very high – and the premiums collected are pretty large as well, as insurance companies aren't charities, either.

Despite the costs of insurance and financing, the potential take from profitable lawsuits can be large, as well as participation in the award amount.

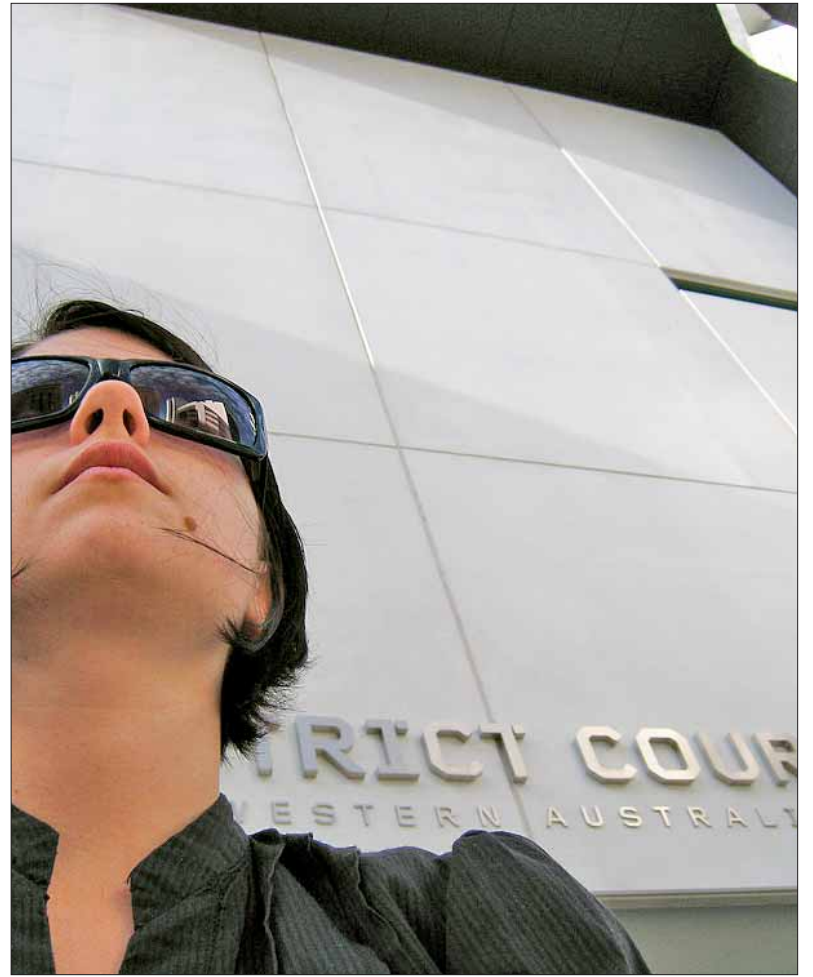
Apparently the market for unfunded litigation is enormous. As it stands now, the cases never move forward because the companies can't afford them and the litigation funding market is still relatively small.

I am not yet convinced of the actual way this opportunity is packaged, but I am still doing my homework and waiting to see how things unfold for some people who I know are willing to be investor guinea pigs.

However, I am convinced of the concept, but in the investing world that isn't enough. You may have known computers were the future 25 years ago, but if you threw all of your money into Tandy you'd probably be kicking yourself now.

The reason I believe this asset class could become exciting very quickly is that it is completely unrelated to traditional and even almost all other alternative asset classes. It doesn't matter what is happening in the stock markets, bond markets, economy or elsewhere.

Litigation funding could be a great addition to a portfolio to lower overall volatility and in-



SEE YOU IN COURT: Despite the costs of insurance and financing, the potential take from profitable lawsuits. Photo: Luis Markovic

crease returns. I will continue to see how this market grows and will most likely be writing about this again in the future.

I would be very careful, however, of sticking a large percentage of your portfolio into a new asset class – at least "new" in terms of being geared

towards individual investors, as there has been corporate litigation funding for quite some time.

David Mayes MBA provides wealth management services to expats around the globe, specializing in UK pension transfers. He can be reached at david.m@faramond.com

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Tri Tim primed for LPT success

I'VE spent the last few issues telling you about what I've achieved so far in my personal odyssey of health and fitness leading me to my goal of completing the Laguna Phuket Triathlon on November 27.

With only weeks to go before race day dawns, maybe now its time to talk about what actually goes into learning – from scratch – to train for a triathlon, and the techniques that my trainer Darren Hancock of Royal Phuket Marina gym has taught me along the way.

Stage one of my journey was way back in May, when it was all about finding out what I was - and was not - capable of doing.

There were fundamental questions to be answered. How did I walk? How did I run? What exercises worked for me? What didn't?

To give you an example,

Darren had me try a rowing machine at the beginning of my training regimen. Five minutes into the exercise my back was in so much pain that it was clear this was an exercise that clearly was not going to help me.

However, the cross training machine was something that I settled into very nicely, with no problems at all.

It was vital to find this out during the first stage of my fitness journey, as clearly a pain-filled routine was only going to give me reasons not to keep going and follow it through to race day. Structured program

I have been following a structured program of excise activities over the weeks since beginning in May. This has been combined with a sensible eating regime to achieve

a weight loss of around 12kg.

I won't pretend that it's all been plain sailing. There were glitches in September when a combination of sickness, business travel and a knee injury knocked my program off kilter.

But the value of following a dedicated program with a trainer such as Darren is that new-found mental discipline quickly gets you back into the groove. Even when I took a holiday in July, traveling with the family back to Australia, I stuck to my diet and kept up my training. Journey of self-discovery

It's all been a fantastic journey of self-discovery, but the highlights have to be conquering the infamous Laguna Phuket Triathlon bike course over Nai Thon hills at the first attempt in September, followed by the 70.3 bike course over Ao Po hills in October.

I'm now in the final stage of my program as the count-



ADRENALINE JUNKIE: Tim is now a self-confessed exercise addict and is ready to put his training to the test.

down to the Laguna Phuket Triathlon gathers pace.

It's comforting to know that I have all this training under my belt and the sense of achievement is going to be made all the

more sweeter when I cross the finishing line.

In my next column, due on the eve of race day, I'll outline the medical benefits my new-found lifestyle has given me.

Youth Acoustic contest

LIFE Home Project Foundation, the Phuket organization that cares for children and women affected by HIV, in association with Phuket Indy Market, Limelight Avenue and Phuket Provincial Public Health Office have announced that they will be holding the AIDS Project – Acoustic Contest, a youth acoustic band contest, through November with the final to be held on World AIDS day, December 1, 2011.

The contest will take place at the Phuket Indy Market, an area of Phuket where the target risk demographic spend

much of their leisure time.

The event started in the first week of November and is held every Thursday and Friday between 4 and 10:30pm.

There are 18 bands with more than 50 participants aged between 18 and 22. A music workshop was also held in the first week of November.

The music sessions feature eight professional acoustic artists based in Phuket and organized with the intention of creating a strong foundation in both AIDS awareness in addition to music education.

The AIDS Project – Acoustic Contest organizers have already selected the contestants and the main competition dates will be November 17, 18 and 24.

On November 25 organizers will announce the bands who qualify for the final round. The final contest will be on Thursday, December 1. The winners and both runners up perform live on December 2 at Phuket Indy Market.

Life home Project Foundation and organizers invite all parents and people to cheer the new generation acoustic bands at the place.



SING FOR THE WORLD: Contestants get ready to warble for the judges.

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Superyacht rendezvous

PHUKET is fast becoming a hub for Superyachts in South East Asia and it's that time of year for the arrival of a flotilla of the world's most luxurious and beautiful ocean going vessels to the island.

Event organizer, Nina Larsson commented on this year's rendezvous.

"We notice a big increase in interest from captains and owners and we are expecting more yachts than ever for the 2011 event. It is a great feeling to see that the event is growing and that owners are enjoying it so much. The organizers are very happy to announce that M/Y Andara will host the opening Cocktail party on December 16."

For the 11th year the Asia Superyacht Rendezvous, which is organized by Asia Pacific Superyachts, will be held at the Surin Hotel from December 16-18. The hotel has been fully renovated and will reopen just in time for the event. GM of the hotel Antonio Saponara commented

"The Asia Superyacht Rendez-

vous has grown since we have been involved and it's fantastic that we can welcome some of the islands elite visitors and residents to our newly refurbished resort," said Mr Saponara.

We are proud to announce that Feadship Royal Dutch Shipyards is returning as principal sponsors for this year's event. Feadship was established in 1949 and is today a world leading shipyard and has built many of the most renowned motor yachts in the world.

This annual event is held to promote super yachting in Asia and has been the leading event of its kind for the last 10 years. Both motor and sail yachts over 100 feet are invited to join in this three day event that is filled with great sailing, socializing and world class parties.

The Asia Superyacht Rendezvous marks the beginning of the festive season in style and it's set in a relaxed environment for owners, captains and crew from all over the world.

– Phuket Gazette



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Helping children help themselves



EAGER TO LEARN: Yaowawit primary students receive training from the Krabi Herbal Learning Center.

YAOWAWIT Boarding School was founded five years ago, post tsunami, to support those affected by the disaster. Today, the school continues to provide home and education to children from families who are unable to provide emotional and educational care.

Located approximately two hours north of Phuket just outside the small village of Kapong, one of the more remote rural areas of Phang Nga Province, Yaowawit School provides a unique environment, where visitors can enjoy lunch and a chance to interact with some of the children who love to receive guests in order to practice their English.

Currently, 129 children live in the school, with ages ranging from 4 to 18 years old and around 30 staff members, ten of whom also live on the premises.

The school's mission statement is to break the cycle of poverty through inspirational and vocational education which includes sustainable practices for future employment and to provide emotional support, focusing on the children's overall well-being.

With the inclusion of English Language Studies (double the hours required by Thai Government standards), their goal is to give students more possibilities in life by providing valuable communication skills.

Attached to the school, is a small lodge with six guest rooms that provide not only sustainable income, but allows travelers to experience the uniqueness of the project. Indeed, the school provides hospitality training for the children in the understanding that this is a sustainable industry for the area. The

children enjoy this unique opportunity to also learn through experience.

Other courses offered include farming techniques, music, art and craft workshops, sewing and hair-dressing training – all in order to provide as many opportunities for the children as possible.

The children are happy to show visitors around the 25 hectare grounds and will proudly exhibit their fish farm, greenhouse, rice plantation and herb garden, all of which are cared for by the children under the guidance of their teachers.

Yaowawit staff members pride themselves on maintaining close personal ties with the children's families too. When the school closes, the children return to their families or extended families to enjoy and reconnect with their cultures. During



SEA GYPSIES: This marginalized group of people struggle to meet their daily needs but their situation has improved dramatically.

this time the Family Department, headed up by Mr Attapol "Bill" Jarusathorn visits all the families to discuss the children's progress at Yaowawit and any other relevant issues. The families themselves are grateful for this support and the respect shown to them. This is a very sensitive issue as many families would ultimately prefer to take care of their own children.

The Family Department recently visited 10 children who come from Koh Payam and Koh Laow, two small "sea gypsy" communities off the coast of Ranong. This marginalized group of people struggle to meet their daily needs, but what became evident from this last visit, was that their situation has improved dramatically. By providing care and education for up to three or four children in one family,

they are now able to provide more for both themselves and their community. Living conditions have improved, as well as the health and hygiene of the children. The school acknowledges that their efforts are having a direct and positive impact on their community.

It is hoped that the children living and learning at Yaowawit will return to their communities with either practical skills or gain meaningful employment to support their communities financially.

You can help the school by enjoying their restaurant or lodge.

Visit childrensworldacademy.com, sabine.yaowawit@gmail.com or contact Bill (Thai & English) 0872712552, Sabine (German & English) 0878928126 or Vincent (Dutch & English) 0822838355.



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URBAN STYLE

On the Menu

By Sam Wilko

OUTSIDE Central Festival last Saturday evening, a camera convention was winding up in an orgy of punters taking photos of other people taking photos of people posing for another group of people taking photos of people taking photos: It was like an Escher illustration; a digital dog chasing its own tail in a blur of camera flashes and goofy poses.

A few steps further on at the southern-facing entrance stands Urban Food, a stylish and modern yet quaint 110-seat al-fresco and air-conditioned self-styled bistro that deals mainly in Mediterranean-style dishes along with a good smattering of Thai/Asian cuisine.

It's spanking new and already a fave-rave venue for people looking for a cut-above-the-rest lunch as well as hungry shoppers with a penchant for something other than the nearby Golden Arches and finger lickin' food and definitely a better health option when it comes to mall dining.

Dé cor wise, the place is easy on the eye with white faux-chalk signage on black paneling, clever lighting and a spacious feel to it.

Now, generally speaking, photo menus are not exactly portents of *haute cuisine* but in Urban's situation and location it's almost mandatory to use them and the restaurant cunningly makes the most out of the opportunity by using an attractive, colorful and easy-to-read layout. Basically, if ordering steak, you can point to the four 'tenderness illustrations' that feature rare, medium rare, medium and well done; the same applies for the chili factor in the Asian dishes featured. It's practical, logical and, er... well done.

The Urban group is managed by French-born Frederic Garnier from Cannes. He tells me that at present there are two branches in



HOT COCOTTE: Even the ovenware is colorful and stylish.

Patong with one more due to open in Bangkok this spring, (does that make them urbanites?) then goes on to explain that the veggies are shipped in from Phang Nga Province and that most of the restaurant's red meats are from Australia and New Zealand. With Thailand's current flood-related food supply problems, this is good news, indeed.

The 44-label wine list is surprisingly easy on the wallet and we choose a red Marius Shiraz Grenache (780 baht) that goes down well with a four-cheese pizza (220 baht), a chicken and mushroom pie (230 baht) and a rather spectacular mixed grill on a wicked-looking skewer that conjures up lurid images of Vlad the Impaler; much to the delight of our carnivorous cameraman.

The pizza crust is excellent, as is the topping, but the chicken and mushroom pie pastry crust was more than I could handle so I removed it and ate straight out of the

casserole. It's was delicious. The mixed grill was a meat lover's dream and was beautifully presented as was the juicy accompanying vegetable dish.

A meal at Urban is quite a feast and everyone enjoyed it, including little three-year-old Beng who tucked into a *khao phad goong* (120 baht) and an orange juice.

Mention must be made of the heroically named Wanchai One-Eye (no kidding, or at least that's how he pronounced his name) whose English and waiting skills are really quite outstanding. And it's comforting to note that, on closer examination, our waiter is not a Cyclops.

Make no mistake; this is feel-good comfort food at its zenith. It's there for a reason called 'mall hunger'. Urbane it ain't but it is definitely Urban. Check it out for its fresh salad bar and wide-ranging menu.

Urban Food: GF at Central Festival.
W:urbanfood.biz T:076-390802



UPWARDLY MOBILE: Meat lovers will adore the kebabs served with two sauces – above is a mixed grill. Photos: Marc Mulloy



The salad bar will keep you coming back for more.



Even *khao phad goong* gets that special 'urban' treatment.



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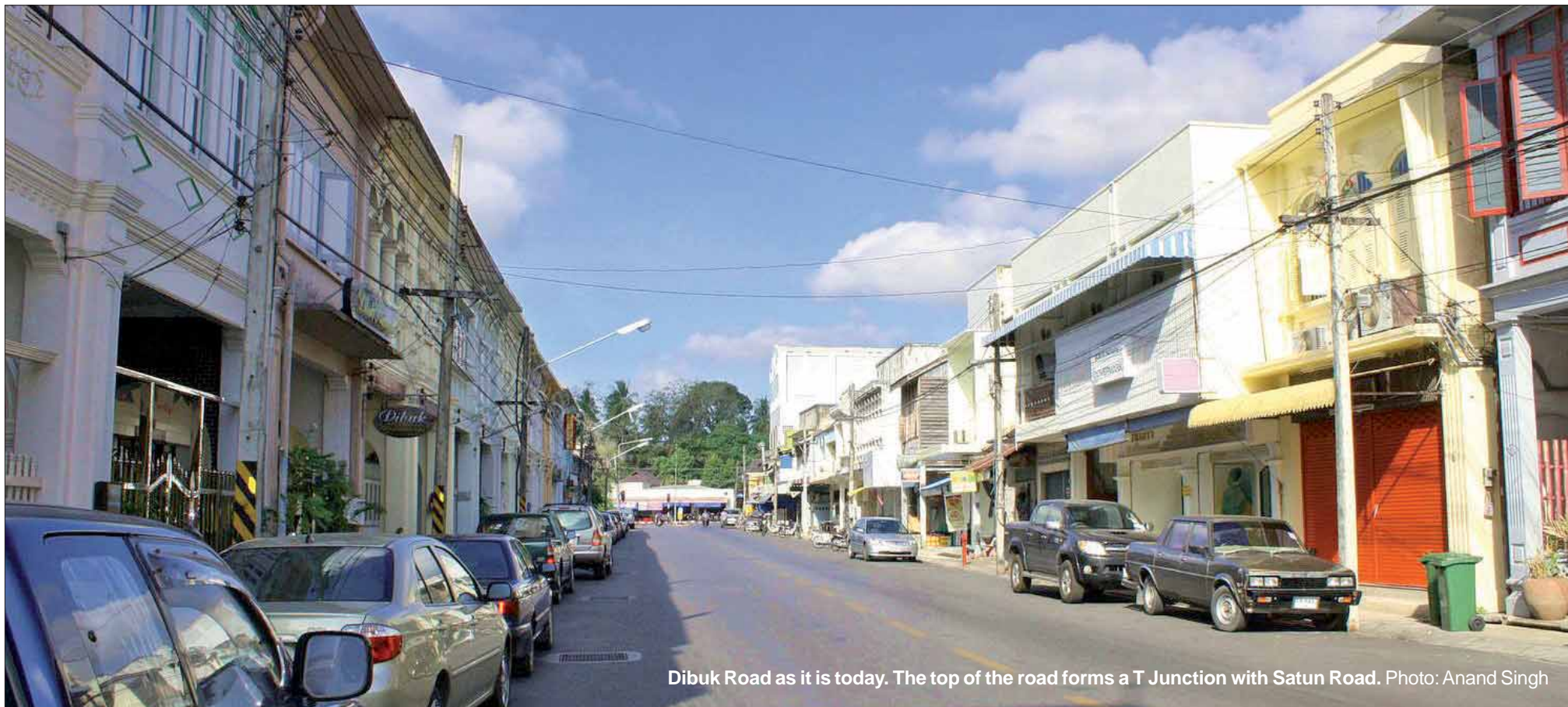
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Dibuk Road as it is today. The top of the road forms a T Junction with Satun Road. Photo: Anand Singh

Kor Sim Bee's new roads

THALANG Road has always been the pride of old Phuket Town because of its interesting history.

Both sides of the narrow road, lined with old Sino-Portuguese shop-houses showcase the town's unique architecture and cultural heritage.

Thalang Road was one of the first roads in Phuket Town to be renovated when Phraya Ratsada-Nupradit (Kor Sim Bee) took charge as Phuket's High Commissioner. The prominent high commissioner of Phuket was a good friend of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) and was personally assigned by his majesty to develop the town.

Kor Sim Bee took office in Phuket in the year 1901. His first development project was to repave Thalang Road with gravel, making the surface more even and smooth for transport. He then encouraged traders and miners to demolish the mud buildings that previously aligned the old road, replacing them with well constructed brick buildings and shop-houses in Sino-Portuguese architecture. The rows of shop-houses were typically connected to each other, with a sheltered walkway built in front of the shops to shield pedestrians from the rain and sun.

After the improvement of Thalang Road, Kor Sim Bee also renovated several other roads in Phuket Town and also built new ones. One of his last projects was the renovation of Dibuk Road, which runs parallel to Thalang Road. This particular project increased the length of Dibuk Road, connecting it with Satun Road on its west end and intersecting Yaowarat Road, continuing east. Although its official name is Dibuk Road (Dibuk means tin), town lo-

cals often referred to it as 'Sinlor Road', meaning new road.

Although most of the roads built during Kor Sim Bee's time were designed to accommodate horse-drawn carts, it was a time when the country's first motorcars were already being imported into Bangkok. Several members of the Thai royal family had grown to become motorcar enthusiasts and many of the country's rich and upper class wanted to follow in this new found trend. Kor Sim Bee knew that it would only be a matter of decades before Phuket's roads would have to accommodate such vehicles.

To prevent future congestion, Kor Sim Bee mandated that new roads in Phuket Town had to be built wider than usual. As such, one of the main criteria used was that the new roads must be wide enough to comfortably accommodate ten horse-drawn carts. Some of the older roads however, like Thalang Road, older sections of Dibuk Road and Soi Romane, were much narrower in comparison. Widening these roads would require the demolition of existing buildings and would cause a lot of trouble for residents. Kor Sim Bee therefore concentrated his road building projects around the lesser populated areas of Phuket Town.

An interesting story emerged from this period. According to the town plan, the new section of Dibuk Road, from the Yaowarat intersection to Satun Road, was meant to cut through an orchard that belonged to a Chinese man named Pae Lao Nua. Kor Sim Bee asked Lao Nua to let him build the new road through his orchard. Lao Nua, believing that the new road would increase the value of his land, agreed to let the construc-

Looking Back

By Anand Singh

tion go ahead. However as the new public road began to take shape on his land, Lao Nua became discontent with the width of the road, which was around 15 meters wide. He protested with Kor Sim Bee, but by then the construction had gone too far ahead and Kor Sim Bee refused to change his plans.

As expected, the value of the land around the new Dibuk Road rose rapidly as soon as the road was opened to the public. People

were offering to buy land on both sides of the lane leading to Lao Nua's house, in order to build shop-houses and other properties. Lao Nua himself built several new shop-houses along this lane and rented them out. The rental income made him quite rich so to thank the town government, he donated the lane to the municipality. The lane was named in his honor as 'Lao Nua Lane'.

One of the ways that Lao Nua made his money was by being a guarantor for someone who got into trouble with the law. He would go to the police station and court house to guarantee those he

thought worthy, so that they could be released on bail. But as he gained more customers, a larger number of them also fled. He lost quite a lot of money in this way. As a result Lao Nua had to sell much of his land along the new Dibuk Road to cover his debts. Much of the land he sold went to prominent Phuket families, like the Tantiwit family, who built one of Phuket's most magnificent Sino-Portuguese mansions on land that used to be Lao Nua's orchard. Today the mansion has been restored to its former glory and is being used by the Blue Elephant Cooking School.






A Phuket legend and culinary landmark on Kata Beach for over two decades, **Boathouse** is reopening after a complete facelift and renovation. The aim is to maintain its original elegance and classic architecture yet introduce some distinctive contemporary design along with a chic style creating the ultimate in luxurious beachfront accommodation and dining.

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J. Edgar, the movie

Film

By Marc Mulloy

POLITICS seems to be a popular theme at the cinema these days with *The Iron Lady* featuring Meryl Streep as Margaret Thatcher, being released at the end of the year and this latest Clint Eastwood offering on FBI founder J Edgar Hoover.

The 81-year-old director goes deep into Oliver Stone territory with this biopic, arguably his most ambitious movie since *Letters From Iwo Jima* if not *Unforgiven*.

J Edgar explores the life of one of the most powerful, controversial and enigmatic figures of the 20th century.

As the face of law enforcement in America for almost fifty years, J Edgar Hoover, played admirably by Leonardo DiCaprio, was feared, revered, admired and reviled.

But what of the private man? Hindsight is a wonderful thing and looking back now we see that behind closed doors, he kept secrets that would have destroyed not only his image but his career and even his life.

DiCaprio is surprisingly good as Hoover despite being about as

physically unlikely to pull it off as you can get, especially in the many sequences of him as an older man. He turns out to have been a quite canny casting move providing his own celebrity presence rather than the squat balding figure familiar to anyone who grew up in the 1960s.

Judy Dench as Edgar's overbearing mother, Annie, is another acting tour de force. Indeed the pedigree of this old-style biopic is impeccable, including screenwriter, Dustin Lance Black, who wrote the Oscar-winning script for *Milk*.

The gist of J Edgar is almost entirely psychological. Hoover is portrayed in stark Freudian terms as a mama's boy who fears his mother's wrath more than he fears the eight presidents he served. Indeed, most of the presidents feared him because of the secret files he kept on them.

The film inexorably turns on Hoover's alleged homosexuality based on the lifelong bachelor's 40-plus-year close friendship with his second in command, Clyde Tolson, played by Armie Hammer. His relationship with Tolson is clearly depicted as a case of repressed longing, although the movie makes it clear that there is no danger that Hoover will act on his impulses.

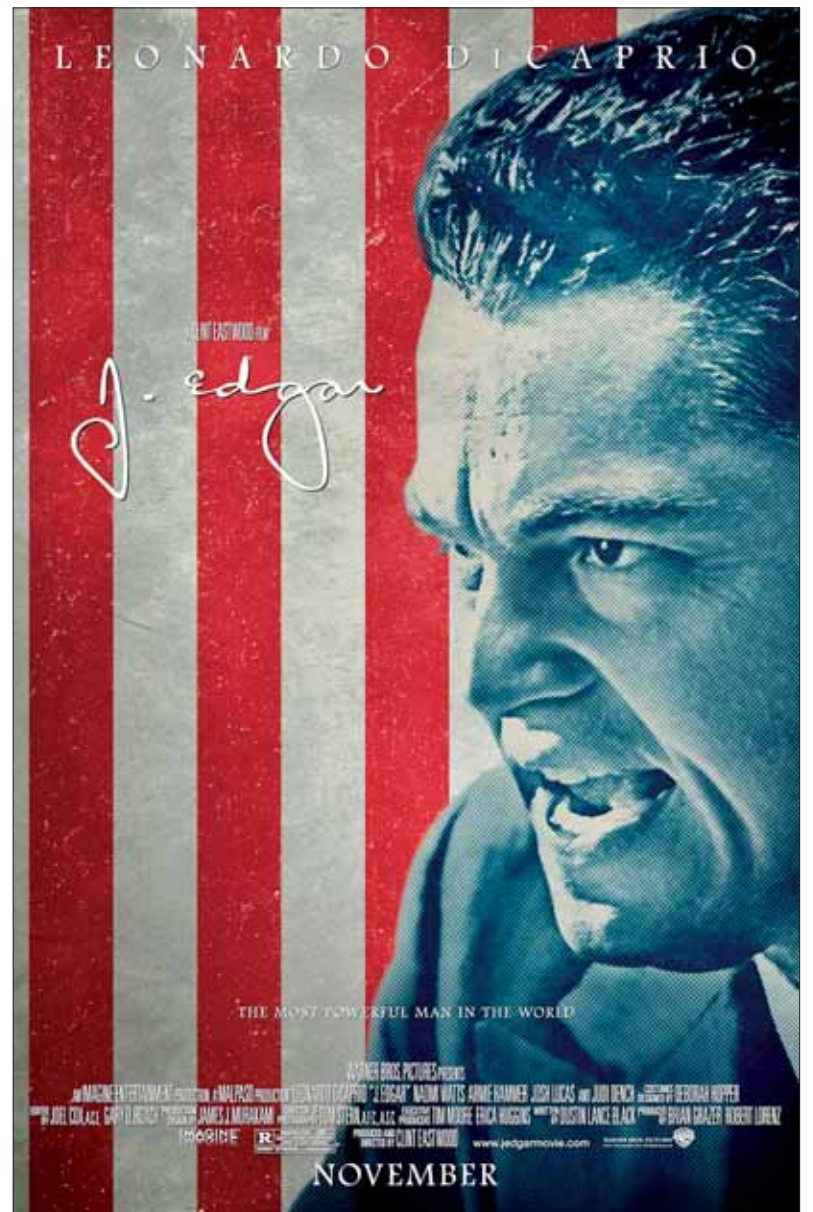
When his mother has an inkling that her son might be gay; she tells him, "I'd rather have a dead son than a daffodil for a son".

Hoover obviously takes this warning to heart and ultimately doesn't trust anyone because, it is implied, he couldn't even trust himself.

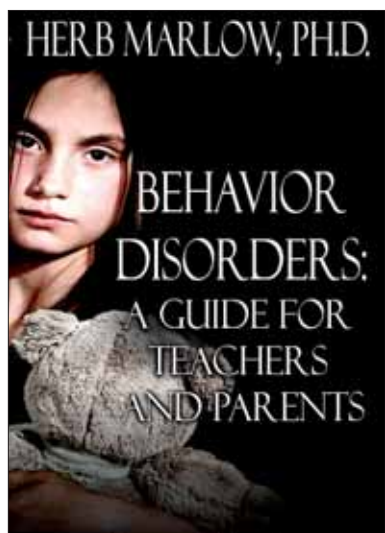
As much as the movie tries to cover the full career of Hoover from 1919 until his death in 1972 it portrays him in fairly sympathetic terms by excluding or playing down his more noxious legacies – especially his use of FBI-paid provocateurs during the civil rights era and his hounding of Martin Luther King Jr.

The film deliberately avoids the sort of scurrilousness that Hoover himself often favored in exposing the dark or trumped-up secrets of his targets and is a lot fairer to Hoover than he was to his many enemies – real or imagined.

DiCaprio, who narrates the film as Hoover an unreliable witness, comes across as a monumentally petty megalomaniac yet for the 81-year-old Eastwood, J Edgar Hoover himself must have been a childhood hero of sorts and perhaps later a role model for Dirty Harry – a guy who would break any law to defend the law.



A POWERFUL PERFORMANCE: DiCaprio is surprisingly good as Hoover despite being about as physically unlikely to pull it off as you can get.



Behavior Disorders: A Guide for Teachers and Parents by Herb Marlow, PhD

DEFIANT disorder and conduct disorder create havoc in families and classrooms in our society today. In this book, Dr Marlow addresses these problems in a case study format, outlining therapy techniques and problem solutions for children, teachers and parents.

The case studies are taken from real-life situations, though names and other identifying characteristics have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the

Book briefs

people involved.

This is a practical manual, and all techniques and procedures detailed have been used successfully many times by the author and his colleagues.

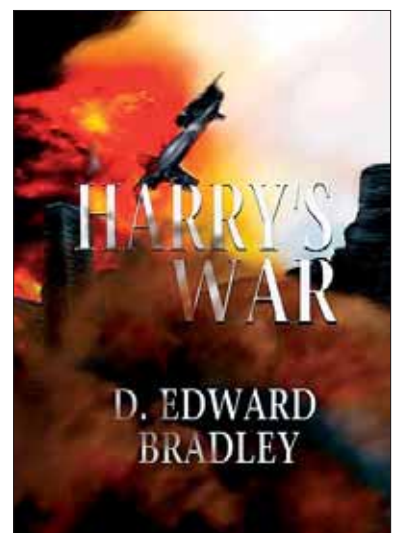
Harry's War by D Edward Bradley

IN WAR-TORN England in September 1941, thirteen-year-old Harry Lockwood steps off the train and embarks on his new life at Markham College, a boys'

boarding school near London. With his father stationed in North Africa and his mother working in a munitions factory a hundred miles away, he is on his own.

Soon Harry finds himself fighting for survival in a new world where the misuse of power by sadistic prefects creates a closed society ruled by fear and violence. As if this is not enough, Hitler's bombardment of Britain with terrifying V1 flying bombs and V2 ballistic missiles threatens to destroy him.

Harry's tale is one of lost innocence, of war, of loyalty and of love.



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Pattanapong Aikwanich

MANAGING director of the Diamond Cliff Hotel, Pattanapong Aikwanich, is the youngest of four children born into one of the oldest families in Phuket who are also synonymous with many important business ventures on the island.

After receiving a degree in Political Science from Ramhamhaeng University, Pattanapong enrolled on a Communications course at the University of Oregon. However, he cut short his postgraduate studies so that he could tend to the family business and he opened Baan Sukhothai, one of the few first hotels in Bang la, Patong in 1980. Phuket was becoming a top tourist destination so he expanded his enterprise to include the Diamond Cliff, a grander and more luxurious hotel, overlooking Patong Bay. When the tsunami struck Phuket in 2004, Pattanapong, then President of the Phuket Tourist Association, was instrumental in helping Phuket get back on its feet – both economically and socially. He set up the Tsunami Recovery Center, initially using his own money. Supported by government and private sectors, he designed and implemented rehabilitation programs for those affected directly and indirectly by the disaster.

Together with Tourism Authority of Thailand and government officials, Pattanapong traveled throughout

THAI
gallery
By Nanthapa Pengkasem

Asia and Europe in an effort to entice tourists back to Phuket.

"I had to give countless talks to convince industries abroad that Phuket had recovered and was now safe to visit. It was hard going, but in the face of such loss and damage, we couldn't sit and wait for miracles to happen," Pattanapong remembers.

With that stressful period behind him, Pattanapong now focuses on what he does best – being a hotelier. His new pet project includes renovating his first hotel and turning it into a smart shopping mall. Baan Sukhothai Mall opens in December this year and will house chic boutiques, restaurants and pubs. "But no bars. We already have enough of those. I want Patong to have something other than cheap entertainment. Baan Sukhothai will be a place for families and discerning shoppers." Apart from running his own business, Pattanapong also sits on the committee for the Thao Thepkrasattri and Thao Srisunthorn Foundation, an historical society set up to honor the two 18th century local hero-

ines who helped thwart a Burmese invasion of Phuket. The anniversary of this monumental victory is celebrated yearly in February in the form of drama and *son et lumie re exhibition*. He is very proud to be part of this organization.

"We musn't forget that Phuket has a long and rich history that must be retold to locals and visitors alike. Those two heroines were extraordinary individuals. We wouldn't be here if it were not for them."

When he is not busy with business and charity work, he collects fine antique china. His face lights up when he talks about his prized collections of Thai Benjarong (five colors) earthenware, European crystal, and Chinese Qing Dynasty tea service.

Another passion of his is topiary. Pattanapong is a man at peace with the world if he can start the day clipping and tending his beloved ornamental shrubs, losing himself to their wonderful shapes and forms. Nothing, he says, beats being out in the open and at one with nature. "Phuket is a charming island, which most visitors can't help but falling in love with. Admittedly, tourism is our livelihood, but we should promote the kind of tourism that is sustainable and ethical," – is the parting note from this hotelier with a conscience.



About Thai Gallery

The individuals profiled in "Thai Gallery" are chosen on the basis of their contributions to Phuket as an *international* community, and, often, for having made those contributions through successful social and/or working relationships with foreigners. This implies some foreign language skills and an interest in interacting with different cultures. They are people who in our experience help make the lives of expats far more enjoyable here than might be the case without them.








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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

November 18 - 20. Foundations of Ashtanga Yoga with Kimberly Roberts

Learn the practices of yoga and meditation with Kimberly Roberts. The practices will be adjusted to be appropriate for each level of student. No prior experience is necessary. All levels are welcome. Three-day, two-night packages start at 11,600 baht, including yoga, meals, access to the fitness club, pool, and a complimentary spa massage. Program: November 18, 7-8pm: Introduction and Discussion. November 19, 9-11:30am: Foundations of Ashtanga Yoga; 4-5:30pm: Moving into Meditation; and 5:30-6pm: Discussion/Q&A. November 20, 9-11:30am: Foundations of Ashtanga Yoga; 2-3:30pm: Moving into Meditation; 3:30-4pm: Discussion/Q&A. Contact: Napapen at 076-336000, napapen.k@thanyapura.co.th or visit thanyapura.com/yoga-retreat.

November 18 - 25. Designer Clothing Sale at Koh Yao

Designer Clothing & Accessories Sale: Versace, Gucci, Armani, Diane Von Furstenburg, Eley Kishimoto, Gerard Deral, Jovani, Calvin Klein, Escada, Alberta Ferretti, Chloe, Stella McCartney, Basler, Kenzo, Olsen, Catharine Molandrino, Chanel, Orono, Wayne Cooper, Salvatore Ferragamo, Jil Sander and many more amazing *haute couture* pieces to add to your collection. Sizes 36-48 from 1,500 to 10,000 baht, from 10am to 3:30pm at Paradise Koh Yao Resort & Spa. Contact Nadine at 081-8924760,

November 27 - December 4. Laguna Phuket 2011 Double Triathlon Festival

The Laguna Phuket Triathlon on November 27 and Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship on December 4 will see hundreds of athletes from around the world arrive for a week-long Tri-Fest of training and social events with top triathlon professionals, in the lush tropical surroundings of the beachfront at Laguna Phuket resort. The LPT has a 1.8km swim; 55km bike ride and 12km run. The Ironman 70.3



Asia-Pacific Championship has a 1.9km swim; 90.1km bike ride and 21.1km run. Laguna Phuket is using the events to raise funds for its community project providing survival swimming lessons for local youngsters. online:lagunaphuket.com and ironmanphuket.com This event is sponsored by PGTV and the Phuket Gazette. Contact Robin at 076-362300, robinw@lagunaphuket.com or visit lagunaphuket.com.

gm@theparadise.biz or visit theparadise.biz.

November 19 - 20. Camp Quest Laguna Phuket Adventure

A two-day, one-night camp at Quest Laguna Phuket Adventure in our "Go Green" series of camps for children aged between 8 and 12. Two full days of fun, adventure and environmental awareness with off-site excursions, evening campfires, BBQ parties and Quest's famous adventure activities. Children sleep in large tents in our very own private jungle. Limited to 25 children. 2,500 baht per child (including VAT). Price includes absolutely everything. First-come, first-served basis. Contact Jazz at 082-4230578, sales@questlagunaphuket.com or visit facebook.com/questadventurephuket or questlagunaphuket.com.

November 19 and 26. Two Chefs Saturday Brunch

Welcome to our brunch that we serve every Saturday from noon to 3pm at Two Chefs Kata Center. We serve a big buffet with loads of Scandinavian specialties. Our popular musicians will entertain you for the afternoon. All this for only 395 baht. Also drink what you want from our free flow options for an additional 300 baht. Reservations at 076-330065, katacenter@twochefs-phuket.com or visit twochefs.com.

November 20. PYSC Endeavour Trophy Regatta

This regatta is open to all Dinghy Classes & Beach Cats not involved in the Phuket King's Cup Dinghy Series from 8am to 5pm at Club house in Phuket Youth Sailing Club, Ao Yon Beach. Come early to rig boats and attend skippers' briefing at 9:30am and racing starts at 10am. Classes: Optimist Topper (Junior, Youth and Adults), Laser Standard and Tasar Beach Cats. Crew needed and boats available for charter. Entry fee for members: 100 baht per person. Non-members: 200 baht per person. This event is sponsored by PGTV and the Phuket Gazette. Contact Katy Gooch-Firmin at 085-2159185, phuketouthsailing@gmail.com or visit phuketouthsailing.org.

November 21. Cowboy nights

Every Monday night we are setting up a big buffet with inspira-

tion from the Old West from 6pm to 1am at Two Chefs Kata Beach. So join us for this night for only 495 baht. With Francis, Ollie and the latest of the Two Chefs artists, Mia, performing live music, it can't be anything other than a success. You can't miss it. Reservations at 076-284156 kata@twochefs-phuket.com or visit twochefs.com.

November 23-26. Phuket International Sport Fishing 2011

Phuket International Sport Fishing 2011 Registration will be on November 23 from 5pm onwards. Fishing days are starting from November 24 to 26 at Chalong Bay. Prize giving party on November 26. This event is sponsored by the Phuket Gazette and PGTV. We hope you will join us for another great tournament! Contact Uwe Schitteck at 076-282036, uweschitteck@yahoo.com or visit phuket-international-sportfishing-tournament.com.

November 24. Thanksgiving Dinner Buffet and Party

Our 8th Annual Thanksgiving Feast with Imported Roast Turkey, Stuffing, Gravy, Appetizers, Desserts with all the Trimmings and Live music. From 6pm to midnight at Friendship Beach Resort, Rawai, Phuket. Price: adults @ baht 850+ +, Children under 12 years @ baht 350+ +. Reservations highly recommended. Contact Charlie at 089-7285304, chef@friendshipbeach.com or visit friendshipbeach.com.

November 25. Job2Do Concert

The Beach Club has partnered with Indigo Pearl to present a Job2DO concert at Nai Yang Beach to mark the Grand Opening of the high season. The date is on November 25. Reggae vibes and lounging by the beach will start from 6pm to midnight. Tickets are priced at 250 baht per person and are available to purchase ticket at the concierge desk of the Indigo Pearl. Joining Indigo Pearl and The Beach Club as sponsors of this event are the Phuket Gazette, its radio partner Blue Wave 90.5 FM, and Chang Beer. Reservations Public Relations at 076-327006 ext 8614, panchan@indigo-pearl.com or visit indigo-pearl.com.

November 25-26. AustCham (Thailand) Phuket Sundowners

AustCham (Thailand) Phuket Sundowner presentation at 5pm by Martin Smesters, Managing Director of Pura Organics at Thanyapura on producing and using organic food products in Thailand. Followed at 6pm by Sundowners business and social networking session with drinks and snacks. A trip is planned on Saturday to visit the organic farm in Khao Sok if enough people are interested. Contact Harry Usher at 081-2831740, harry@ladypie.com or visit austcham.thailand.com.

Free Computer Clinics

Is Windows driving you nuts? Want to know about the best Internet connections in Phuket? Need help finding a repair shop or a dealer that knows what they're doing? Join *For Dummies...* author and local Windows guru Woody Leonhard in his free weekly seminars. Sponsored by Woody's Sandwich Shoppes and the Phuket Gazette.

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UPATISING SINGS: PPAO President Paiboon Upatising sang Take Me Home at the recent Jazz For The King event held at RPM.



A NEW RANGE: Mr Somchai Boonyong, Deputy MD of BRG Ramkhamhaeng Group with his team in front of the new Range Rover Evoque at the 'Evoque Land Rover Launch Party' held at the BRG Showroom.



ALL THAT JAZZ: The Phuket Thailand Music Association, TAT, PPAO and the Thai Hotel Association Southern region held the jazz music event at RPM to celebrate the 84th birthday of HM King Bhumibol.



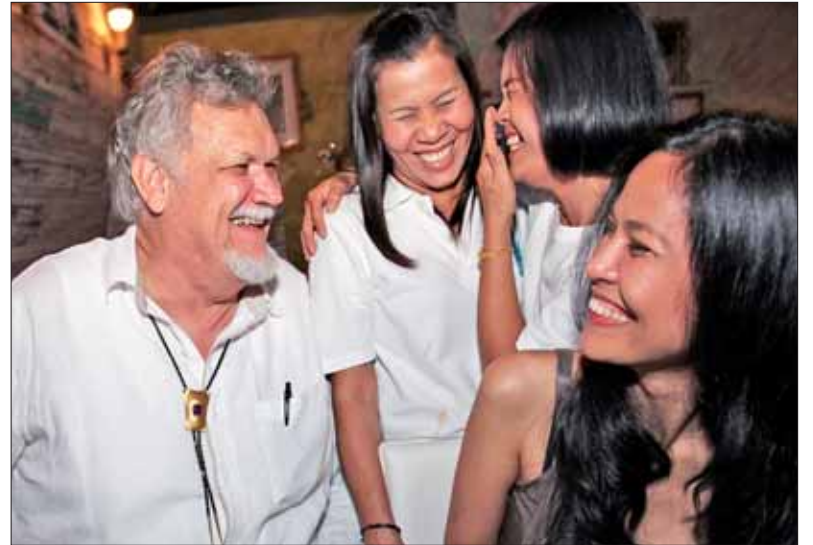
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Krisana 'Kristi' Matzenberger (left), Manager – Advertising Promotions PGTv, with Parichart 'Kathy' Namchoo, President of SenSes Health & Beauty Clinique at Tatonka.



TATONKA TO YOU : Harold Schwarz (chef and owner of Tatonka) dances with Jill Dalley (Soi Dog Foundation Founder) at Tatonka restaurant's 15th Anniversary which raised funds to rescue animals in flooded Bangkok.



ENDLESS FUN: Brush owner John Underwood enjoys a joke at the Brush premiere of 'The Endless Bottle' a film made by Jim Newport with a supporting cast of enthusiasts. Photo: Dan Miles



MORNING GLORY: Arunothai 'Oum' Suksompong (left) won a T-shirt and bag from Klinchan a host of the Good Morning Andaman radio show.

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HOOP SHOOTERS: (from left) Ike Nwankwo, Darongpan Apiromvilaichai and Eric Rohwer visited Kajonkiet International School Phuket recently for a Basketball clinic.



LOVE ALL: Laurent Rochette (blue shirt) with his supporters after winning the Chang ITF singles final at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club.



A CLEAN SWEEP: North Phuket Resorts (NPR) together with the Mai Khao Marine Turtle Foundation held a beach clean up recently to maintain Mai Khao Beach ready for the upcoming 2nd annual Culinary Art Festival event which will take place 2 - 4 December at the four resorts.



A MAN OUTSTANDING IN HIS OWN FIELD: Alan Cooke MBE seen here at his eponymous cricket ground which opened this month.

88
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The Impossibly Possible Quiz

General Knowledge

1. The Whitsunday Islands are located off the coast of which country?
2. Which artist's studio was known as the factory?
3. In the world of weaponry, what do the initials ICBM stand for?
4. Which Italian city is home of the car manufacturer Fiat?
5. What is North America's highest mountain?
6. Who wrote the novel Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas'?
7. The song The Rhythm Of Life comes from which musical?
8. The Stratocaster is a model of which guitar maker?
9. What colour are the berries from the rowan tree?
10. Who was the BBC reporter kidnapped in the Gaza Strip and later released in July 2007?
11. Cristina Kirchner became the first elected woman president of which country?
12. Which note does an orchestra tune to?
13. Which England rugby player was controversially denied a try in the 2007 World Cup final against South Africa because his foot was deemed to have been in touch before grounding the ball?
14. Which country has the international car registration letter A?

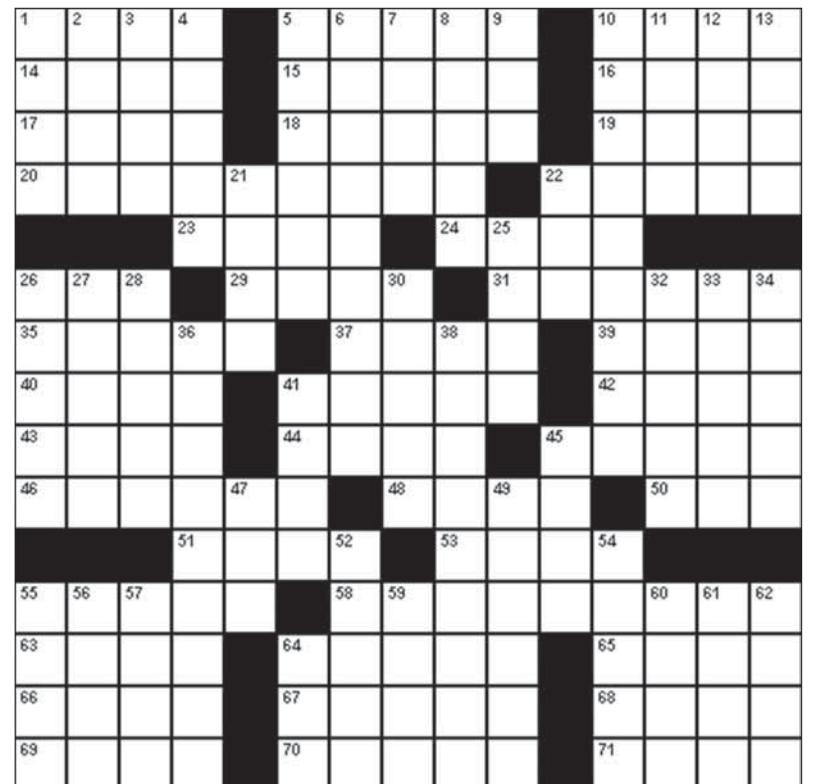
Quiz answers on page 41

Across

1. Queens stadium
5. Toast
10. Langston Hughes poem
14. Hades
15. First prime minister of India
16. Comic Foxx
7. Calculus calculation
18. Addition
19. Draft classification
20. Deformity of a toe
22. Diary bit
23. Hurler Hershisier
24. Former Fords
26. Animation unit
29. Mideast gulf
31. Reverence
35. -- a time
37. Russian parliament before 1917
39. Wall St. debuts
40. Delineate
41. Beaming
42. General -- chicken
43. Lacking slack
44. South African grassland
45. The ones here
46. Writer
48. Antitoxins
50. DC bigwig
51. Snaps
53. San -- Italy
55. Cornerstone abbr.
58. Assemblage
63. Internet writing system that popularized "pwn3d" and "n00b"
64. Motherless calf
65. Drop of water expelled by the eye
66. "From -- according to his abilities..."
67. Head lock
68. Group
69. Pale
70. Appears
71. Black-and-white treat

Down

1. Ayatollah's predecessor
2. Mother of Ares
3. K-6



4. 1836 siege site
5. Caught
6. Scrap metal used as ballast
7. Horrors!
8. Staggering
9. Unit of illumination
10. Blacksmith
11. Canvas shelter used on camping trips
12. Baltic feeder
13. Jazz singer Anita
21. Part of Q.E.D.
22. Conductor de Waart
25. Melt
26. Young male horses
27. Early computer

28. Madagascar monkey
30. Negates
32. Church areas
33. Farm bird
34. Ruhr city
36. Aversion
38. Modern character
41. Opposite of sans
45. -- shanter (Scottish cap)
47. Front part of an apron
49. Break
52. Tally
54. Money paid
55. Zeno's home
56. Mariners can sail on seven of these
57. PC expert
59. Arch type
60. Back
61. All there
62. As a result
64. Skid row woe

Provided by BestCrosswords.com.
Used with permission. Puzzle solutions on page 41

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): November continues to be a satisfying month for Scorpions. Plans for a New Year break start to take shape and there are also signs that an overdue family visit is imminent. If your birthday is due in the week ahead, the stars promise that the coming year will be calmer than the one just passed. Single Scorpions could meet their match when an alluring air sign comes on the scene.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Where work is concerned, Sagittarians seeking answers can benefit from a meeting with an earth sign early next week. The stars indicate that not all your concerns will be addressed, but there will be enough positive news to keep you motivated. Within your social circle, an earth sign friend is not ready to hear the truth – keep opinions muted until they have removed their rose-tinted shades and seen the light.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): The world of work is uneventful until the end of this month and boredom could become an issue. This is an auspicious time to put feelers out for possible new

openings – catching up with ex-colleagues could lead to useful tips. Capricorns who need more social stimulation find that an air sign acquaintance can broaden their horizons this week. Lucky days for finances are Monday and Tuesday. Romance is meaningful.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): This is not an auspicious week for Aquarians to take financial risks. Those who are on tenterhooks concerning an ongoing money related issue will have to remain patient for a little longer. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, the stars advise that you should tread a trusted path rather than look for adventure. Another water sign is ready to lead you to a place that will be hard to get away from.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Wanderlust gets a grip on those born under the sign of Pisces this week. The stars indicate that if you haven't ventured far from home this year it will be tempting to set off for distant shores. Love with an air sign is well starred, but Pisceans involved with other water signs could be caught between a rock and a hard place. Your lucky color this week is emerald green.

YOUR horoscope

By Isla Star

ARIES (March 21-April 20): The key to a business related puzzle is likely to be in the hands of an air sign. Arians who are ready to unlock this mystery should seek answers on Tuesday or Wednesday as the stars will back their efforts on those days. Arians who are ready to move on after recently becoming single are flattered by attention from an earth sign this weekend. Lucky days for finances are Sunday and Monday.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Your grounded attitude gives you the edge at work this week. When the going gets tough, others are likely to panic, but Taureans should keep their cool. Another earth sign is forecast to back out of a business agreement at the last minute, but a water sign is becoming interested in coming aboard. A lot of hot air is circulating within your social circle – getting involved in gossip is inadvisable.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Another air sign is forecast to respond more positively than you expected to a business or work proposition this week. Geminis who have been waiting impatiently for a green light should be able to move forward by the end of this month. Those who have recently made a romantic commitment could learn that jealousy is at the root of a friend's negative reaction. Wear the color gold to encourage better financial luck.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): There are indications that some Cancerians will be suffering from a bruised ego this week. It appears that a fire sign colleague is determined to put you down somehow – taking the high road is the only answer in this situation. A business related decision taken this week can make or break your way to success. Wednesday and Thursday are the most auspicious days for weighing up all the pros and cons.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Where work is concerned, the heat is on for those born under the sign of Leo who are ready to make a break for freedom. If you are considering a change of employment,

an offer comes at exactly the right moment early next week. Those thinking about freelancing for a change should learn something to their advantage from another fire sign. Romance is well starred this weekend, particularly in relationships with water signs.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Virgoans should think twice before confessing a secret to an air sign this week. The stars suggest that you will be surprised to learn later on where this person's loyalties lie. Where work is concerned, taking on more responsibilities may be the last thing you want to do at the moment, but there are hints that this will lead to more financial compensation than expected. Your lucky color this week is dove gray.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Your outlook for the remaining days of November is mostly positive. Those born under the sign of Libra who are looking for inspiration where making money is concerned can pick up on another air sign's energy. Put new schemes on hold until December commences as this will be a productive month. In the realm of romance, a meeting with a water sign is not the coincidence it first appears to be this week.

PROPERTY Gazette

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

Phanason aims high

By Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai

PROJECT developers Phanason Group are confident that the company's first foray into the high-end market will deliver another success for the group, by targeting people with busy lifestyles looking to "get away from it all".

Phanason Resort is one of 11 developments created by Phanason Group, who has been among the leading housing developers in Phuket for more than eight years.

The resort is located on the prime location of Laem Hin, on Phuket's east coast. The entire project is surrounded by lush green space on one side and a

clear view of Koh Maphrao (Coconut Island) and the sea beyond on the other.

"Phanason Resort is the first project of the Phanason Group to target the high-end market. The concept of our resort is 'Modern living in a Resort Style Community'," explained Project Manager Phichet Ko.

"We have designed all of the houses in our project to ensure they have an ocean view. Some houses will face the ocean, while residents in houses facing the other direction will still be able to see the ocean from their balcony at the back of the house," he added.

Phanason Resort has a wide range of house models on offer.



CLOCKWISE: the Atlantic, Andaman, Caribbean and Arctic styles offered at the Phanason Resort at Laem Hin.

Each model has been created with its own design and range of facilities.

"We have six different styles of houses for a total of 142 units. We have Type A: Andaman; Type B: Arctic; Type C: Caribbean; Type C/S: Caribbean; Type D: Pacific; Type E: Mediterranean; and Type F: Atlantic.

"Our units start at 9.9 million baht and go up to 15.9 million baht. Each model has its own unique character," said Mr Phichet.

"The project is 40 per cent complete. We started our pre-sales in June 2011. Already we have sold six units, most of them Type A and C.

"All of our buyers are those seeking to escape a busy life style and live easy, like they are at a resort. I believe we have the answer for that desire," said he added.

The project is aimed at the high end market, but it is still within reach of many people, said Mr Phichet.

He expressed some concern about the current rate of sales for the project, but expects to be able to organize several events during the high season to entice potential buyers.

"There might be many more projects being built in Phuket, but I am confident that our project has set the benchmark.

"We have strong selling points and we can offer the best luxury living experience in a resort-style community at prices that are not out of reach," Mr Phichet said.

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PROPERTY

Snowbirds droppin' in



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

LIVING on a tropical resort island remains one of those elusive objects of desire that fires the imagination of many an urban dweller. Holed up in an arctic winter in some vanilla skyscraping monster, and knocking back a few too many whiskeys just to keep your toes from falling off, you end up chatting with the cat. Or perhaps your dead grandmother.

That scene from the Jack Nicholson terror epic *The Shining* springs up in a vivid daytime nightmare, where he sticks the axe through the bathroom door, and snarls out, "Here's Johnny." A nasty case of cabin fever can drive even the most gentle soul to the edge...and beyond.

This is why so many "snowbirds", as such people are called in the tourism trade, opt out from a potentially thrilling but ultraviolet mid-winter episode and instead catch some sun in Phuket. Soothing the savage beasts of mass tourism certainly brings a state of economic euphoria to those in the rough trade.

In my case opposites attract and high season is increasingly driving me into a state of depression, high anxiety and borderline rage. Despite the ramp up into the festive season (this term I also hate with a vengeance), my all-too-frequent trips to the airport start to mimic scenes playing out during the fall of Saigon during the Vietnam war, or perhaps the crush of crowds standing in line at Bangkok's first Krispy Kreme outlet. American donuts and war machines strike up an odd combo in my mind's eye.

But let's face it, our international gateway has changed its Facebook status from "Hello Phuket" to "Welcome To Hell On Earth". Let's rap out all those "ooh's, ahh's and duh's" – massive tour buses unloading legions



BUT BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE: Snowbirds refers to tourists escaping winter. Photo: Matthew Kenrick

of the lost, ripped up sidewalks/roads/temporary fences, stray dogs and taxis taking up every spare bit of space. Touting drivers, lines longer than cocaine cowboys could imagine, parking fees that are driving me to the edge of bankruptcy.

And of course the confused solo traveler with 10 suitcases tying up the only line open at AirAsia for a full 90 minutes while trying to pack, unpack and repack. Meanwhile mounting flight delays, women giving birth in the same line as the teenage airline staff chats on an iPhone. This is just the trip out, never mind trying to return to paradise.

Of course we can touch upon the subject of those diligent "civil servants" who man the immigration booths. By nature I'm a pretty organized person, and being forward-looking I also stick one of those handy Post-it notes where my non-immigrant B visa is to be found. Travel is one of the tools of my trade, and so my passport is getting fatter by the day with

extra pages. Without fail each and every time, despite putting my arrival card on the correct page and having this huge red sticker marking the spot, the immigration officer always furrows his brow into a confused look and starts aimlessly thumbing through the entire passport.

Trying to help is a fruitless exercise, just stare into that little webcam, don't step over the line and for God's sake – don't offer any help. Mick and the Stones sang about time being on our side. Clearly they hadn't toured Phuket yet.

And still I wait... until the last page is slowly reached and the puzzled person on the other side of the counter starts to go through it all again, one page at a time.

There are of course so many other disastrous episodes, infomercials, virals, mini-series and sequels to the whole distorted passion play of high season that I could never cover it in just one column. Gridlocked traffic, entire families of Croc-wearing tourists

walking down the middle of the street, bad tattoos, Singha beer tank tops, sexpats, knock-off designer logos on every possible wardrobe item and those screwy corn row hairstyles.

I've hit my breaking point. Hollywood often brings inspiration and the other night *Escape from New York* came on. My thoughts turned to retrofitting one of those Titanic-sized tour buses into a Mad Max type of flaming torpedo of massive destruction. I'd need some caffeine first. Momentary stumped how I could park the bus in front of my coffee factory Bake, thoughts turned to escaping Phuket and the nightmare of high season.

A late-night run over the bridge and keep heading north... keep going up through Yunan province in China and come to an intersection and perhaps push the limit into Russia. Suddenly the BBC weather report brought me back to reality: it's snowing in Moscow. Isn't this where I first got on this train of thought?

In brief...

AirAsia expanding into Japan

WHILE everyone is now plying the low cost skies across South-east Asia, soon the Japanese will be ready to jump on the bus.

Or perhaps to put it more clearly – the Airbus.

An announcement has been made that AA which is co-owned by AirAsia and ANA, will reportedly go into service by the 3rd quarter of 2012

Key markets being talked about include Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

The LCC movement continues to gain momentum and looks to have a profound knock-on effect on the regions hospitality markets for the next decade.

Five star hotels not enough? Get the Asia Villa Guide

TIRED of hotel buffets, welcome drinks, tan lines and the inevitable shakedown "have you taken anything from the mini bar?"

Co-founder and former executive of the online booking giant asiahotels.com Jon Stonham has a new venture - The Asia Villa Guide.

The first edition features over 230 properties including in places like Phuket, Koh Samui, Bali, Lombok and Sri Lanka.

Unique to the offering are first hand reviews and ratings.

Non-traditional accommodation is increasingly becoming a sought after alternative to the ordinary world of hotels.

Here in Phuket the selection for high season bookings is reaching an all time high with many property agents moving into the sector given the malaise of the real estate sector.

Reinvention seems to be the order of the day.

The guide can be ordered online or is available at many bookstores.

– Bill Barnett



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Investors invited to manage water

THAILAND'S Finance Minister Phuvanatnaranubala, is inviting foreign investors to take part in the development of new water management systems and food security solutions in Thailand.

In an exclusive interview with global investment magazine *Inside Investor*, the minister said that after the devastating floods "Thailand needs a huge investment to manoeuvre the water in the future" I think we will certainly seek expertise in terms of water management all over the world, and also, at the same time, this will be a good opportunity that we will open up to various investors. We are planning to spend a lot

of money on water management, this can partly be taken over by private investors."

He added that – in this context – the floods have been "a blessing in disguise", as they are forcing the whole country "to rethink how to manage the water, it seems like the whole of South East Asia will need to cope with global warming that results in more rain water that we experienced in the past."

Projects for better water management include improving dams and drainage systems, strengthening industrial estates and lifting up roads to keep Thailand's logistics operational in case of a flood.

Guaranteed rental returns may be more smoke than mirrors

Property Legal

By Michael Greth

WHEN purchasing property in a managed property development, buyers are sometimes offered participation in a guaranteed rental return program.

What guaranteed rental return programs have in common is a representation by the developer that a minimum percentage of the overall investment, typically the purchase price of the property, will be "returned" to the buyer within an agreed time period. However, in practice such guaranteed rental return arrangements may vary greatly with respect to their underlying structure and ultimate performance.

When scrutinizing a guaranteed rental return program, a buyer should verify whether it's actually a sound investment or merely appears to be so, providing only a partial return of a bloated purchase price.

Therefore, a buyer should compare the asking price of a property (including the rental return guarantee) with the amounts payable for other properties (without the

rental return guarantee) having same or similar characteristics in terms of location, construction standard and legal title.

If a buyer decides that a proposed guaranteed rental return program may be beneficial and decides to opt into it, then the performance of the program will depend on its successful management which requires, on the part of the developer, a high degree of professionalism and expertise. Therefore, a wary buyer should verify what track record a developer has.

Simply put, the value of a rental return guarantee mainly depends on the experience and the ability of the developer to attract a sufficient number of rental guests, particularly in low season. The appointment of a reputable and internationally-recognized management company by a developer may be an indication that the rental scheme is well thought out and based on realistic projections securing the stated rental return which have been guaranteed to a buyer.

A buyer would be well advised to undertake a careful examination of all legal agreements required to be signed with a de-

veloper in connection with any guaranteed rental program. A professional contract review with the assistance of a law firm should help to detect deficient contractual terms unfavorable to the buyer, along with hidden costs or unrealistic projections which may ultimately reduce your actual return.

Moreover a buyer should take into account that (guaranteed) rental income may trigger tax liabilities. Therefore, an accountant or tax advisor should be consulted who can assess what tax responsibilities in connection with the investment and subsequent returns may incur.

Last but not least, a buyer should not be afraid to decline the offer of a guaranteed rental return and require a reduction of the purchase price in case that the offered terms or their underlying structure are deemed to have little prospect of success.

This article has been written by International Law Office Patong Beach Co Ltd, a Phuket-based law firm, for informational purposes only. In case of inquiries, please contact Michael Greth at michael@ilo-phuket.com or call 076 222191 5.



CHECK IN THE MIRROR : rental return guarantee mainly depends on the experience and the ability of the developer to attract a sufficient number of rental guests, particularly in low season. Photo: Sibarth Villa Rentals

Indigo Pearl wins spa design of the year

LEADING luxury Phuket resort Indigo Pearl was honored recently with the Spa Design of the Year award for its Coqoon Spa at the prestigious AsiaSpa Awards 2011 held at The Mira Hotel in Hong Kong.

The seventh annual AsiaSpa Awards are presented by AsiaSpa, the only magazine in Asia entirely dedicated to the pursuit of complete well-being.

The AsiaSpa Awards were created in 2005 to give recognition to the most sensational spas in Asia.

Highlighting quality and innovation, essential ingredients found in the world's best spas, the AsiaSpa Awards are regarded as a benchmark of excellence, recognizing exemplary talent, products and services in the spa industry.

The Coqoon Spa, which opened in February 2011 received recognition for its uniquely styled Garden of Eden design concept.

The Spa Design of the Year represents the fourth award Indigo Pearl has won this year for its innovative design and is a further demonstration of the consistent success of the resort.

The designer suites and cutting edge Coqoon Spa are the work of leading Bangkok-based designer Bill Bensley who is best known for his holistic approach of integrating structures with nature while embracing local art forms.

The spas architectural *piè ce de rē sistance* is The Nest, a luxurious treatment suite hovering 10-meters up in the branches of an ancient banyan tree bringing guests up close and personal with nature.

Mr. Kelly Lewis, General Manager of Indigo Pearl, said "We are thrilled to be awarded with Spa Design of the Year for the Coqoon Spa. It is a great acknowledgment for the incredible team we have in place and our designer, Mr Bill Bensley, who has created such an inspired and innovative design".

Coqoon Spa also features six deluxe treatment rooms and an exclusive Coqoon Suite complete with its own accommodation, butler and private pool, as well as a rain shower, steam room, sauna and Vichy shower.

Here guests can stay for up to 3-days to follow a tailored

program of health, wellness and nutritional advice and therapies.

The treatment menus at Coqoon Spa are steeped in Thai tradition whilst embracing holistic ideals in the pursuit of better health and wellness. Guests may choose from a range of aromatic body treatments, scrubs and wraps, Anne Semonin facial treatments, hand and foot care, and beauty treatments. Rare plant essences, Andaman elixirs and Thai herbal spices excite the senses and rejuvenate the mind, body and spirit.

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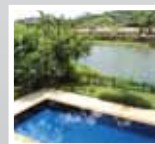


- Land • freehold
- overlooking Laguna Phuket golf course

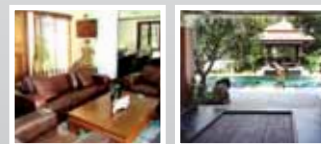
3 Laguna Village Residences II THB 26 M



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- lagoon view • private pool
- private pool • fully furnished
- golf membership



4 Laguna Residences I THB 43 M



- 4 beds 3 baths Residence
- golf course view
- private pool • fully furnished
- Laguna Resident's Privilege card

5 Banyan Tree Residences THB 45 M



- Two-bedroom Pool Villa
- fixed rental return • fully furnished
- Residence Club membership



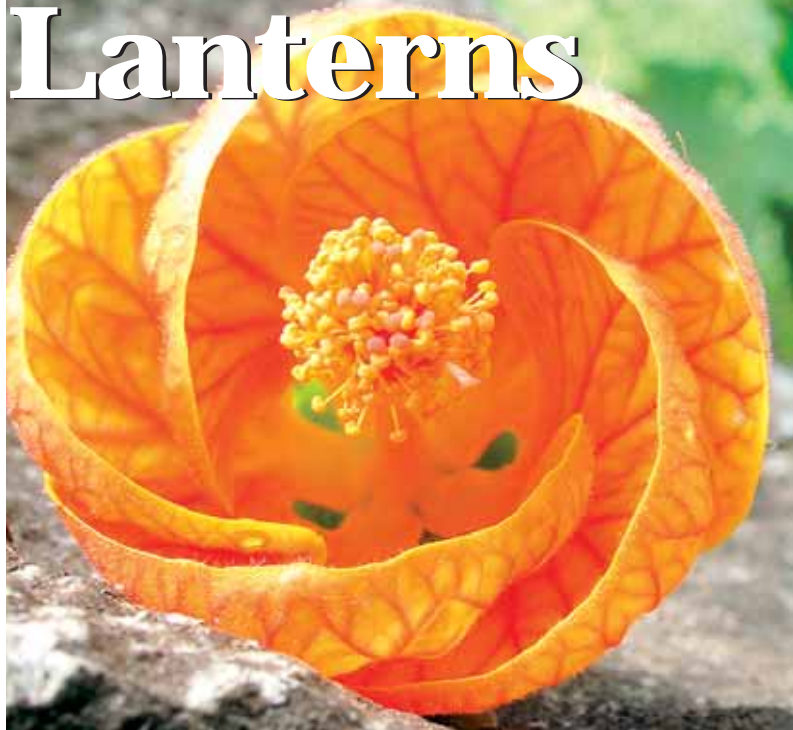
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Chinese Lanterns



Orange abutilon (left) and red abutilon are commonly known as 'Chinese Lantern'. However, they are of South American origin. Photos: Flickr



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

CHINESE Lantern is the common name for some varieties of *abutilon*. A member of the mallow family, this large shrub or small tree (here the distinction really is blurred), can reach ten feet in good conditions. Mostly South American in origin, the *abutilon* species are true tropics, and do well in Phuket's climate.

A *butilon* species will tolerate light shade or full sun, and are suitable candidates for a large container. Most have slender, tough twigs and jagged-edged, lobed leaves, somewhat like the hibiscus, to which it is related. Some five-petalled, trumpet-shaped flowers are hibiscus-like, but most of the cultivars seen in gardens have pendent, bell-shaped flowers, which remind one of the orange Chinese lanterns seen at festival time.

Originally from Brazil, these lantern hybrids come in a range of colors, from white to a deep,

bronzy red. Here is a run down of some of the more widely known varieties of *abutilon*: Canary Bird has yellow flowers; Cannington Carol is a dwarf variety with dense foliage and variegated orange bloom; *Boule de Neige*, an old variety of cultivar, has white flowers flushed with pink; Ashford Red, perhaps the most widely seen, has large



Yellow abutilon

leaves and brilliant deep scarlet blooms; the Indian mallow has velvety, heart-shaped leaves, which may be eight inches across. Suntense, a hybrid from another branch of the family, has intense violet-colored flowers that open up in hibiscus fashion. Since this one comes from Chile, the climate in Thailand may be a bit on the hot side for it. But there are still plenty of others to choose from.

The beauty of the *abutilon* re-

sides not just in its distinctive pendent flowers and foliage, but in the fact that it will bloom all year round in the right conditions – a sunny position, and a well drained soil. It requires little water, though it should not be allowed to get bone dry. Pruning will reduce flowering, but will result in a more compact plant, especially when potted. The *abutilon* can be grown easily enough from hardwood cuttings, unlike the tongue-twisting *xanthorrhoea* or tree grass.

David Strachan, from Surin, wrote in recently saying that his tree grass had a spot of bother. On his balcony specimen he noticed "small white spots... under the leaves and clustered around the center of the stem". He added that he had already asked a nursery for advice and that they had provided a milky spray, which failed to improve things.

I suggested the problem might be powdery mildew, a real issue at present because of the excessive rainfall, especially for sun-loving plants that do not enjoy too much humidity. In its native habitat in Australia, *xanthorrhoea* inhabits rocky, stony habitats where the surface water drains away quickly. Here, and especially in a pot, *xanthorrhoea* can easily be over-watered. This will weaken its immune system, and render it more likely to succumb to a fungal or bacterial disease. Worse, to root rot.

After my tentative diagnosis, David, currently away, wrote back to confirm he suspected that his "maid had been watering it too enthusiastically".

But the mystery thickens. David also sent a recent photograph, white spots and all. Of course, photographic evidence can't always be relied upon, but the plant pictured has spinous, fleshy leaves, and looks for all the world like a succulent, such as an aloe vera. Moreover, the crown of the plant is already looking brown and dead. Right diagnosis, wrong plant? Maybe.



Pink abutilon

Certainly, what is bad for tree grass is worse for cacti.

Almost all succulents are desert plants, and need only an occasional drenching, which they would get in the wild. But every (rain) cloud has a silver lining. If David's specimen is a succulent, it can be readily

replaced. Moreover, the remaining fleshy leaf-stems can be cut off and potted in sandy soil where they may take root.

If you have a question, or a garden that you would like featured, e:drpaccampbell@gmail.com

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Tip of the week

Monsoon Gardening

THE last few months have seen more rain than at any comparable period in the last fifty years. Phuket, by virtue of its topography has largely escaped flooding, but the impact on vegetation is marked. Everywhere the soil is saturated. Trees are growing more and more leaves, and garden plants are lush and green, especially those kept primarily for their foliage; however, many shrubs are not blooming as freely as usual – for example *oleanders* and *bougainvilleas*, as well as such potted plants as *euphorbias* (crown of thorns), *adeniums* (desert rose) and *pereskias* (wax rose).

Remember to reduce watering to a minimum for these plants, especially with potted specimens. If the mix in your containers is already moist, leave them well alone and empty excess water from the saucer under the pot. Remember that container plants are more likely to die from sodden soil, which encourages root rot, than from under-watering.

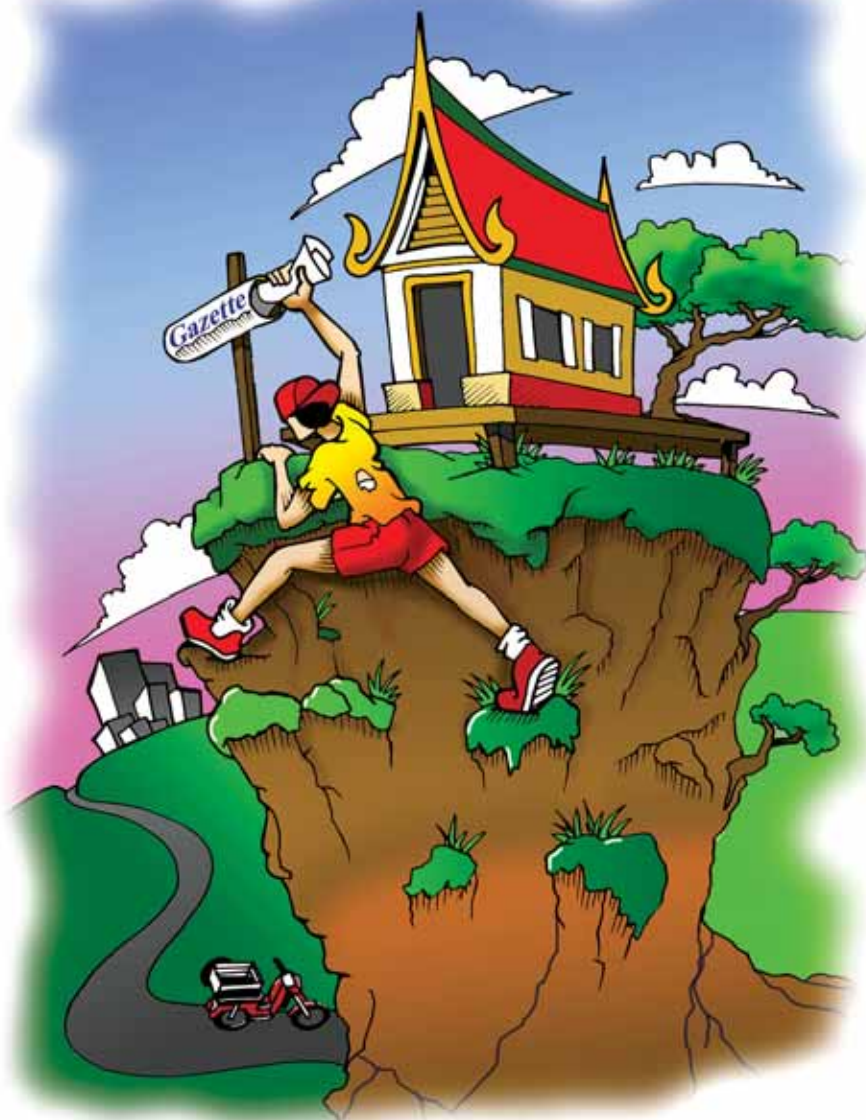
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LAND NEAR MISSION HILLS

Pa Khlok. 1 rai 13.6sq wah with Chanote. Located on Tha Ruea-Pa Khlok-Muang Mai Rd. 11 km from Heroines' Monument. Price: 3.8 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

LAND AT CHERNG TALAY

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

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

5-BED THAI-STYLE POOL VILLA

5 mins to Laguna, high quality finishing, all ensuite bathrooms, big pool on 1 rai of land. 600sqm of living space, fully landscaped. Tel: 087-893 4636 (English & Thai). Email: annericphuket@hotmail.com

SALE 2 TOWNHOUSES

Renovated, 1 storey, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, kitchen. 1.8 million baht each. Opposite Super Cheap. Tel: 081-894 2823.

2-STOREY HOUSE IN PATONG

Sea view. 50 Pi Road, 49sq wah. 4 bedrooms with balconies, 2 bathroom, aircon, fully furnished. Chanote. Price: 17 million baht ono. Tel: 087-270 9093. Email: a.pueng@gmail.com

HOUSE IN KAMALA

For sale. 2 houses on land. 1 rai 89sq wah. Chanote title, near mountain, peaceful and safe, 10 minutes from the beach. 7.5 million baht direct from owner. Tel: 083-180 2143. Email: yaris.vios@gmail.com

NICE AND SPACIOUS HOUSE

In Heritage project, Kathu. 2 floors, fully furnished, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 1 maid room. 234sq wah. 18 million baht. Tel: 081-892 0190 (Warit), 089-646 4823 (Rattana). Email: prayoon_jp@hotmail.com

CHEAP AND BEAUTIFUL LAND

Direct from the Thai owner. 1,054sqm, Chanote title, Cherng Talay. 3.9 million baht. Tel: 081-367 7683 (Thai). Email: norbert.nuetzel@gmx.de

BEAUTIFUL LAND NEAR BEACH

3 rai 40sq wah in Nai Yang. 6 million baht per rai. Contact Khun Nan. Tel: 087-091 8331. Email: chiangmaibeltrade@hotmail.com

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KRABI, AO NANG

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HOUSE FOR SALE

2 bedrooms, bathroom, fully furnished, 350sqm land. Urgent sale: 3 million baht. Tel: 084-851 6121.

NOVEMBER SPECIAL

1 ngan of land in Rawai, 50m from beach road. Land ready to build on with small 1-year-old house already built. Chanote title. This month only reduced from 4 to 3.6 million baht. No agents. Tel: 081-597 9049.

NEW APARTMENT FOR SALE

Patong condo 46sqm, furnished, pool, security 24/7. 2.9 million baht. Freehold. Tel: 089-728 4005. Email: thamad17@yahoo.com

POOL VILLA FOR SALE

Bang Tao area, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, large pool, fully furnished, auto gate, sat TV, ADSL. 650sqm land, house 380sqm. Urgent sale: only 8.8 million baht. Tel: 084-851 6121.

KHAO LAK SAUNA AND PRV HOME

Thai herbal sauna business and private home in Khao Lak, ½ rai Chanote. 5.5 million baht. Tel: 076-443149, 086-281 1945 (English & Thai). Contact for more information at email: thedivezone@hotmail.com

SEAVIEW LAND IN AO MAKHAM

For sale. Chanote title, easy access in and out with concrete road. Price: 12 million baht per rai. No agents! Tel: 087-270 9093.

PA KHLOK HOUSE FOR SALE

59sq wah, 3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, European kitchen. Fully furnished, with common pool. Price: 2.9 million baht. Tel: 081-719 1041. Email: teddykong0222@hotmail.com

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2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, furnished, 60% finance, 0% interest, 40% deposit. Tel: 083-641 9327. Email: rawaipoolvillas@hotmail.com

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1,472sqm with Chanote. On main road. Price: 24 million baht. Tel: 081-958 0373.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Opposite Boat Lagoon, near BIS. 59.4sq wah, 2 floors, 3 bed, 4 bath, telephone, internet, pool, main road. Price: 3.6 million baht. Tel: 081-958 0373.

LAND PLOTS FOR SALE

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2 PATONG STUDIOS
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For long-term rental, 25,000 per month. Free WIFI, maid, pool, gym. Close to town. Tel: 080-052 8082. Email: phvcondo@aol.com

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3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, European kitchen. Kathu area. Near Loch Palm Golf Course. Rent: 37,000 baht/month. Sale: 8.5 million baht. Tel: 081-440 0101.

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The ideal candidate for this role must have previous business-to-business sales experience, ideally in events or the hotel industry. You must have the ability to sell and build strong relationships as well as having proven ability to plan and organise to meet client's needs. Fluent in both spoken and written English is required for this position.

Interested applicants, please send your CV or contact Varissara (Jah)

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The Clubs are well known for their international club acts and active involvement and sponsoring of exciting major events including beach parties.

In order to manage and professionalize the daily operations and to support the expansion of the Company, we are looking for dynamic candidates to fill two key leadership positions:

Managing Director (Thai/foreign national)

Responsible for all management aspects with the purpose of promoting sales and revenue while keeping focus on positive margins and the development of the various brands. The position reports to the Board of Directors.

Job qualifications

- University graduate, preferably business degree holder.
- At least 5 years experience at senior management level, preferably in the hospitality business.
- Self-starter, able to implement initiatives quickly and effectively.
- Planning and execution skills.
- Strong organizational and leadership skills, written, verbal and interpersonal skills.
- Able to make sound business decisions, effective problem solver.
- Proven track record of business operations management, ability to develop financial plans.

Finance and Administration Director (Thai / foreign national)

Manages, evaluates and oversees the development and implementation of finance and accounting policies in order to maximize financial results through cash management, tax planning and financial controls. The position reports to the Managing Director.

Job qualifications

- University graduate in Finance and/or accounting, preferably holds a CPA.
- At least 5 years of experience in a senior finance position.
- Knowledge of QuickBooks is an advantage.
- Excellent planning skills and knowledge of all aspects of finance.
- Responsible and self-motivated. Can work under pressure, firm, attentive to details, has a positive hands-on work attitude.
- Fluent in spoken and written English.

The company is offering an excellent package for successful candidates for these challenging positions.



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We regret that only short-listed candidates will be notified.

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The Board of Directors wishes to appoint a Condominium Manager to replace the existing manager who is leaving at the end of November

Applications are invited from suitable candidates who meet the following requirements:

- Age over 25
- Familiar with the duties of Juristic Person Manager under the Condominium Act
- Experienced in property management and maintenance
- Capable of managing and motivating a team of employees (there are currently seven employees engaged on gardening, security and maintenance)
- Experienced in accounting and working within budgets
- Experienced in negotiating with and supervising contractors for maintenance and other services
- Fluent written and spoken English and Thai

Written applications should include applicant's experience and previous employment, the salary expected and should name two persons from whom references can be sought if required

Application should be delivered no later than 17th November by e-mail or post to sent to:

The Sands Juristic Person

The Sands 23/46 Moo 1, T.Rawai, A.Muang Phuket 83100

E-Mail: thesandsjp@gmail.com

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 - Sense of responsibility
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 - Any on-boat experience would be an advantage
 - Must be able to swim

Office located in Pa Khlok. Tel: 081-537 0033. Please send CV to lek_2000@hotmail.com
Moreton Bay Co., Ltd 222/7 Moo 8, Pa Khlok, Thalang, Phuket 83310

FRONT DESK MANAGER

Needed for small condo project. Thai National, English, book keeping skills. Tel: 088-443 0057 (English & Thai). Email: thailand.properties@mail.com

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Property management company based in Rawai is seeking Operations Manager to join our team. The Operations Manager will be responsible for ensuring organizational effectiveness by providing leadership for the organization's operational functions. Candidates must have experience in management and construction industry, excellent spoken and written Thai and English, computer skills. Tel: 076-384 691 Email: jicky@easyhomephuket.com

NANNY WANTED

to help look after 2-year-old boy, also help with household chores, 5 days a week, 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. MUST have references from previous farang and Thai employers with telephone numbers. Tel: 086-270 3517 (Thai). Email: john_kennedy67@yahoo.com.sg

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HeadStart International School invites applications from fully qualified KS3/4/5 Mathematics Teachers. Start Date: January 2012. Tel: 076-612876. Fax: 076-612877. Please send a full CV and letter of application to ralph@headstartphuket.com

ASSISTANT MANAGER

Good spoken and written English. Advanced computer user. Thai national. Send CV to sales@rt-pro.ru

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Phuket Gazette

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- ▶ Initiative and enthusiasm to track down the story
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- Taurus Travel (Aroonsom Plaza) Tel: 076-344521-2
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**Impossibly Possible Quiz answers:**

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2. Andy Warhol
3. Inter-continental Ballistic Missile
4. Turin
5. Mount McKinley
6. Hunter S. Thompson
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8. Fender
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12. A
13. Mark Cueto
14. Austria

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Owner Wichai Pettongkam loves this airplane and wants to get it back in the air. If you like flying and might want to be a partner in the plane, please come to the TFC to have a look, or contact **Khun Tom** (email tom@thaiflyingclub.com, Tel: 089-092 2711). Or talk to **Khun Wichai** directly on 081-633 7082.

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Close calls in ITF finals

By Neil Quail

PHUKET'S first professional tennis tournament came to a close last weekend at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club with both singles and doubles titles decided after two weeks of exhilarating play.

The Mens Singles final was played on Saturday with the vociferous number three seed Laurent Rochette of France taking on number two seed, Jimmy Wang of Taipei, in the best of three sets match.

Rochette raced into a 5-1 lead with devastating service games and comfortably took the first set 6-4.

A more focused Wang came out for the second set, and both players held their serve for three games each until Rochette broke Wang to leave the score at 4-3.

Wang broke back immediately in the 8th game to tie the match once again, and then held his serve to lead 5-4.

A superb love service game from Rochette including three aces brought the scores level again at 5-5, but Wang once more showed great competitive spirit to take the next game and force Rochette to serve to save the set.

This the Frenchman did to rapturous applause from his support in the stands, and at 6-6 the champion would be decided by a tie-break.

Rochette again took an early lead at 3-1 and never looked back, eventually winning by four clear points.

Speaking to the *Gazette*, Rochette spoke graciously of his opponent.

"Jimmy played very well today. I thought the game was over when I broke him in the second set, but he came back and that made it a

very tough game. This was a great tournament and I thank everybody involved," Rochette said.

Wang expressed his dismay at losing, and explained that an injury kept him from competing at 100 per cent.

"I hurt my ankle in my quarter-final match against Dennis Lajola and shouldn't really have played in the final. I had to change my game and I wasn't able to move about the court as much as wanted. It was great game and I look forward to coming back again next year," Wang told the *Gazette*.

Rochette received his trophy to a rousing rendition of *La Marseillaise* from his traveling supporters, a fitting and boisterous end to a great tournament.

Unfortunately, the tournament's number one seed, Danai Udomchoke from Thailand had to retire from the tournament with a similar injury in the first round against Emilien Firmin. Danai's retirement was more precautionary than serious – ensuring a good recovery before his participation at the SEA Games in Indonesia.

"I've won the SEA Games twice and I'd like to win again, but it's very competitive this year. After the tournament in Jakarta, I'm going to Japan and then return to Bangkok for a training camp to prepare for the Australian Open," Danai told the *Gazette*.

The Mens Doubles final saw the number one seeded pair from Thailand, Weerapat Doakmaiklee and Kirati Siributwong, take on the number two seeded partnership of Zhe Li from China and Kelsey Stevenson from Canada.

Li and Stevenson had never before combined for a doubles event and to make the



MAIDEN EVENT: Jimmy Wang (second from left) and mens singles champion Laurent Rochette (second from right) with Giles Leonard (far right). Photo: Neil Quail

final was a fantastic achievement in itself, but the duo wanted the title.

Opposing strategies were obvious from the beginning with the Thai team willing to sit deep and soak up the early offensive play from Li and Stevenson.

But it was the aggressive net play that paid dividends when Li and Stevenson eventually broke the Thailand twosome in the 7th game and carried that momentum through to win the first set 6-4.

The second set went with Doakmaiklee and Siributwong who forged a 4-1 lead mainly through forced errors. A brief comeback could only delay the inevitable and the Thais won the second set 6-4.

As with the singles final, a tie-break was needed to determine the doubles title. A reso-

lute Li and Stevenson charged into a 7-2 lead losing only one more point to seal victory at 10-3.

"We were very nervous going into the final as this was the first competition we've played doubles together," Stevenson told the *Gazette*.

Stevenson, 21, has lived in Bangkok since the age of nine, but has been honing his professional tennis career in Spain and Italy.

"It was a great competition and I'm very happy we won the doubles title in Phuket. I hope the tournament continues here," Li said to the *Gazette* before jetting off for a tournament in Australia.

The *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV sponsored of the Chang ITF Thailand Pro Circuit Tour held at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club.

Laguna strike first for early league lead

HIGH standards have been set with the opening match of the Island Furniture Cricket League between Laguna CC and Patong CC producing an enthralling spectacle at the new Alan Cooke Ground (ACG).

But it was a more balanced performance with bat and ball by Laguna that eventually decided the outcome.

After losing the coin toss, Laguna were put into bat on a damp wicket with a slow outfield, but made steady progress with two openers Mike Ayling and Bill Stahmer.

Stahmer was eventually caught by Seemant Raju for 25 off the bowling of Kishor Jaghta followed soon after by Ayling, bowled by Joshi Naresh for 21.

Val Guiaud added five runs to the board before being caught and bowled by Jaghta. At 76 for 3 Sameer Kahn and Andrew Cole entered the fray.

The pair pushed the total to 102 before Khan (18) was brilliantly caught by Dean Noble at deep mid wicket.

Roly Cooper added four runs John Anderson joined Cole for the remaining overs, both hitting 35 not out with good stroke-play and tal-

lied a 61 run partnership. After 40 overs, Laguna had managed to reach 178 for 5, despite the committed efforts of Patong's fielders. Kishor Jaghta was Patong's best bowler with figures of 2 for 29.

Richard Desmond and Noble opened for Patong and showed confidence in their opening salvo of shots.

Lijo Jose, somewhat unsure of how to deal with the rangy Desmond, eventually trapped him lbw coming around the wicket for 17 runs.

Patong were cruising and well ahead of the required run rate at this point, but a middle order collapse of 5 wickets for just 45 runs proved disastrous. Anthony Van Blerk (8), captain Richard Folds (0), Anil Rawat (7) and Quail (36), all went during this spell.

Patong's tail-end offered more resistance than the middle order, and they valiantly pushed the score to 131 with Mike Khan scoring 12 runs and Pat Cotter notching up 15 runs. Jaghta and Naresh each contributed four more to the total.

Laguna bowled out Patong for 149 after 32.4 overs and secured their first league win of the season.

Khan picked up the day's best bowling figures of 4 for 39.

Next week's Sunday league encounter at the ACG will see newcomers, Thanyapura Tigers, tackle exuberance and youth in the form of the Phuket Leopards.

The *Phuket Gazette* is proud to serve as official media sponsor for the ACG and will provide regular updates on the facility's development.

– *Phuket Gazette*



Kishor Jaghta plays fine as Andrew Cole moves to catch. Photo: Neil Quail

SOS Childrens Village win PTT volleyball cup



WINNERS SIGNAL: The girls from SOS Childrens Village cool off after defeating BIS 21-18, 21-17 in the PTT schools final at Karon Stadium.

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Sport



BERCY AT HIS MERCY: Roger Federer holds the Paris Masters trophy for the first time in his illustrious career. Photo: Miguel Medina AFP

Swiss maestro wins first Paris Masters

FRANCE: Roger Federer finally broke his Paris Masters jinx and won the elusive tennis tournament title for the first time in his career with a victory over home-favorite, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

Having never even reached the final at the Bercy arena previously, the Swiss world number four ended his Masters misery in one hour and 25 minutes after a second set tie-break and a 6-1, 7-6 (7-3) scoreline.

"I've been waiting for this for

a long time. I'm really happy to have finally made it," said 30-year-old Federer.

Tsonga, who won the 2008 Paris Masters beating David Nalbandian from Argentina in the final, pushed Federer from the outset, but was unable to capitalize on two break points in the opening game.

Federer clawed the game back and went on to win five games in succession. Within 30 minutes the Swiss ace had wrapped up the first set.

Racing into a 4-0 lead in the

second set tie-break, Federer overwhelmed any hope of a recovery from Tsonga and with the win brought his tournament successes to 69 and secured his 18th Masters title.

Federer now joins Andre Agassi as the only players to win both the Masters and the French Open.

After a decade of winning titles and championships, Federer will be relieved to have won in Paris as this is also his first of 2011.

— *Phuket Gazette*

Irish in for Euro 2012

IRELAND: Football fans breathed a sigh of relief on Tuesday night after the national team drew 1-1 with Estonia and secured qualification for Euro 2012 — their first finals since qualifying for the World Cup of 2002 and their first European finals since 1988.

Following Ireland's 4-0 defeat of a nine-man Estonia team in Tallinn on November 11, a place in the Euro competition seemed assured, but still the boys in green looked nervous on home turf in Dublin.

LA Galaxy star and Ireland captain Robbie Keane squandered two opportunities on goal as did Richard Dunne.

But Irish nerves were calmed on 31 minutes when Wolves defender Stephen Ward pounced on a rebound from Estonia keeper Pavel Londak to score and set the Aviva Stadium alight with celebrations.

Konstantin Vassiljev equalized for Estonia on 57 minutes, but the game soon dissipated as a contest with the Irish easing through on a 5-1 aggregate score.

Ireland now join the Czech Republic who beat Montenegro 3-0 on aggregate and Croatia who also qualify on the same aggregate score at the expense of Turkey.

Record hopes ended for Vettel



GET IN: Fernando Alonso, Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button on the podium at the Yas Marina circuit. Photo: Dimitar Dilkoff AFP

ABU DHABI: McLaren's Lewis Hamilton took full advantage of F1 World Champion Sebastian Vettel's retirement at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix last weekend to claim first place and his third win of the season.

Red Bull's Vettel withdrew in the opening lap because of a puncture to his right rear tyre picked up going through the second corner and was clearly infuriated with the knowledge that his race was ended.

This was Vettel's first retirement since last year's Korean Grand Prix and ended his streak as the only driver to finish every race in 2011. It also put paid to him equaling Michael Schumacher's record of 13 wins in a season.

Ferrari's Fernando Alonso pushed constantly for the lead, but Hamilton held off the two-time champion to win by 8.4 seconds.

"It was one of my best races. To hold off one of the best drivers in the world is very tough to do. I feel fantastic," Hamilton said.

Hamilton's teammate and compatriot, Jenson Button took third, but had to battle Webber and Ferrari's Felipe Massa for position. Webber's fourth place ended Red Bull's run of 19 races with a podium finish.

Massa gained one place to finish fifth ahead of Nico Rosberg, who bravely overtook Mercedes team-mate Michael Schumacher after the seven-time world champion outgunned him at the start.

Sauber's Kamui Kobayashi took the final points with 10th and veteran Rubens Barrichello who started from the back of the grid, fought hard in his Williams to take 12th.

With Vettel on 374 points and waiting to be crowned as champion, second and third places are very much all to drive for and only 28 points separates the next four drivers. Button currently lies second with 255, Alonso is next with 245, Webber has 233 and Hamilton 227, unlikely as it may be, could achieve third.

The final Formula One race of 2011 will be held on November 27 at the Autodromo Jose Carlos Pace in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

— *Phuket Gazette*

Tiger on the hunt for comeback

AUSTRALIA: A late charge by the embattled Tiger Woods was narrowly survived by Greg Chalmers from Sydney to win his second Australian Open.

Woods recorded an eagle and five birdies in a final round score of 67 as he fought back from a disastrous third-round 75.

A day short of the second anniversary of his 95th and last title win at the 2009 Australian Masters, the crowd was thrilled as 14-time major winner Woods surged back from six shots behind to keep in touch.

Victory at The Lakes Golf Club in Sydney would have been a first for Woods in almost two years, his last major coming at the US Open in 2008.

"A couple of drives on the

back nine cost me. I fought real hard all day, but I've come up just short. I'm just going to keep plugging along. It's just nice to be playing and not on the sidelines," said the 35-year-old Woods.

Chalmers, who won the title in 1998, carded a final round of 69 to finish 13 under, one shot clear of John Senden and two shots clear of Woods.

Overnight leader Senden sent a 35ft birdie putt tantalizingly close at the 18th that would have forced a play-off, as Chalmers nervously watched from the clubhouse.

World number 215 Chalmers was thrilled with his win and said he was extremely pleased to have won the tournament twice.



Greg Chalmers wins the Australian Open. Photo: Greg Wood AFP

NBA offer slammed

US: THE entire US 2011/2012 National Basketball Association (NBA) season may be scrapped after the NBA Players' Association rejected the league's latest offer of a collective bargaining agreement.

A 72-game season beginning on 15 December and a 50-50 division of basketball-related income had been the latest NBA offer.

The stand-off has already caused a five week postponement to the start of the league.

Players want a 52.5% share of teams' basketball-related income, but would accept 51% with an additional 1% going to a retirement fund.

The league's current offer gives players between 49 per cent and 51 per cent.

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Thailand World Cup hopes still alive

THAILAND Mens senior national football squad are still in the race for the 2014 World Cup, despite back-to-back losses to Saudi Arabia and Australia on November 11 and 15.

In what was a closely contested match at Supachalasai National Stadium on Tuesday night in Bangkok, the War Elephants were only narrowly defeated by the Socceroos who went ahead with a header by Bret Holman in the 85th minute.

The single-goal loss added a pinch of salt to Thailand's fresh wound following their 0 - 3 loss in Saudi Arabia the previous Friday.

Nonetheless, the Thais proved that their inferior ranking was irrelevant, putting up a fight against their opponents from down under.

Thailand restricted the visitors to few scoring chances, yet despite limited opportunities, the Australians made the Thais pay a costly price by making the most from the chances they got.

After watching the Australians stretched to their limits by his charges, just like in the first meeting in Brisbane in September when the Socceroos had to come from behind to claim a 2 - 1 victory, Thailand's 61-year-old coach, Winfried Schaefer was satisfied with his side's performance.

"I want to thank everyone on my team for putting on such a strong showing over

90 minutes. The only thing we lacked is the goal. I'm happy that we played well against the 20th ranked team.

"The only difference is that they made their chances count, while we failed to do that. It's a pity that we did not score any point from this game," said Schaefer, who has had to transform the team from a disjointed unit under his predecessor Bryan Robson.

Despite the loss, the former Cameroon manager believes there is still a bright future lying ahead for the Thai team.

"Judging from our performance today, we can see that if the team have much more time training together could become a really good side. I think we can succeed in the future. The players have the ability to achieve their targets," he said.

Expressing regret about their 0 - 0 stalemate last month against Saudi Arabia in Bangkok, the coach said, "Had only we claimed maximum points against the Saudis at home, the chances would have become more open for us."

"Now, I want the players to continue working hard when returning to their clubs in order to further improve themselves. If we keep doing our work, we will achieve our goal. Anyway, the final game away against Oman is still important and we need to get the best possible result," said the German,



TWISTED: Thailand midfielder, Datsakorn Thonglao fights for possession. Photo: Football Siam

who only took over the post in July.

Following Tuesday's disappointing loss, Thailand was offered a glimmer of hope after Saudi Arabia missed their chance to seal a berth following a goalless draw with Oman on the same night.

Had Saudi Arabia won, both Oman and Thailand's chances of advancing would have been crushed.

Instead, the stage has now been set for a grand finale with all three sides vying for the remaining qualifying spot of Group D.

After five matches, Thailand are at the bottom of the group with four points. The Thais will need to win at Oman in February and hope that Australia is able to beat Saudi Arabia at home at the same time.

Even if Australia and Saudi Arabia's match results in tie, Thailand could advance if they improve their goal difference.

However, that scenario would require Thailand to beat Oman by at least three goals - on the condition that a Saudi-Oz draw does not exceed two goals a piece.

Other Asian fixtures on Tuesday saw the likes of China, Singapore, Indonesia, North Korea, Tajikistan and United Arab Emirates

(UAE) all denied the prospect to advance - even with a match remaining in hand.

Meanwhile, Jordan, Iraq, Japan, Uzbekistan, and Iran joined the ranks with Australia to secure a berth in the final 10.

Qatar is most likely to advance as well on the conditions that they don't get trounced in their final group E game against Iran, and that Bahrain doesn't have a goal fest against Indonesia.

Considering Indonesia have conceded 16 goals in their five matches - outdone only by Tajikistan with 17 conceded - anything is possible.

And despite a strong start, Asian giants South Korea will have to earn their spot if they are going to advance following a historical 1 - 2 loss to Lebanon.

A Korean - Kuwaiti showdown will determine one of group B's spots while Lebanon need a draw or win in their match against UAE to advance. Even if Lebanon loses but South Korea ousts Kuwait, then Lebanon will still advance along with the Koreans.

All Asian qualifying matches are scheduled for leap year day, February 29, next year.

- *The Nation and Phuket Gazette*

SEA you next time

FOR the second consecutive Southeast Asian (SEA) Games, the Thailand U23 football team were unable to advance to the semifinals round.

Despite the Thai U23s undergoing conditioning which included warm up matches against Songkhla FC and two FC Phuket squads, their early elimination came as a result of two regretful losses.

In their opening match on November 9 defending champs Malaysia stung the Thais 2 - 1, the same result two years ago when the Malaysians went on to win the cham-

pionship, and not the Thais. And despite a 4 nil win over Cambodia on November 11, the coffin's nail was hammered by hosts Indonesia, who defeated a nine-man Thai side 3 - 1 following a series of bookings. At the time of going to press, Thailand played their final match against Singapore, who in order to advance with Indonesia, needed to beat the Thais with hope that Malaysia succumb to the Indonesians by a large goal margin. Meanwhile in group B, Myanmar and Vietnam comfortably sealed the other two semifinal spots.

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KMS win junior soccer championship

JUNGCEYLON last weekend held the Jungceylon Junior Soccer 2011 football tournament, the event's fourth edition.

This year's tourney hosted a total of 32 teams from 25 schools from all over Phuket.

Championship honors went to Tessaban Wat Kittu Sangkaram School, which is also known as Karon Municipality School.

The champions were awarded a trophy and prize money of 10,000 baht, which was presented by Education Minister Worawat Ua-apinyakul.

In addition to football, the event also featured two cheer leader competitions, on Friday and Saturday.

Winning the Friday bout was Patong Municipality School while Karon municipality school was victorious in Saturday's cheer leading showdown.

In total, 70,000 baht in scholarship prizes were awarded to successful participants.

- *Chutharat Plerin*



Above: A goal is contested between promising Phuket ballers; **Bottom left:** Cheering champs pose; **Bottom right:** A young striker takes mark.



Power is balance



PHOTO 1: Andre Agassi shows his balance to power through ground strokes.



Tennis Tips

By Travis Bertram

BALANCE is one of the fundamentals to developing great ground strokes.

In today's game of power tennis, many of the players are leaping in the air to hit their forehands and backhands. This results in not only many errors but also many injuries. One of the great ground-strokers and inventor of the power game, Andre Agassi, had phenomenal balance which allowed him to strike the ball so hard. If we look at the photo you can see that Agassi has his feet a

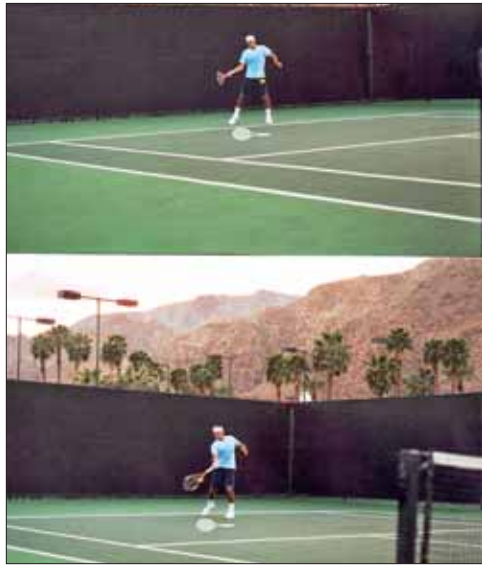


PHOTO 2: Roger Federer places his feet a racket's length apart before striking the ball.

racket's length apart before and during contact with the ball.

When you are balanced it is much easier to hit the ball with power and accuracy. Roger Federer is another player with incredible balance. A great way to work on your balance is to place your racket between your feet, pick up your racket and hit strokes without moving.

Once you feel yourself become balanced, practice by running to the ball then placing your feet at the same length as the racket before you strike the ball. Try to hit your strokes without allowing your feet to be close together.

Travis Bertram is the Tennis Director at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club.

Tri a rest before race day



Triathlon Tips

By Jürgen Zack

MANY athletes feel insecure about their training during the week before race day.

This is a highly important time used to recover from the load of training in the previous weeks. Experts call this the "Taper Phase".

A triathlete's last long workout should be done exactly a week before the event.

For the Laguna Phuket Triathlon I recommend a 50-70km bike ride followed by a short run of 3-4km at race pace.

The following days are designed to recover. You can either have two rest days or easy days with slow and short swim-bike-run sessions just to relax.

Three days before your race it makes sense to get out one more time. Ride 30-50km with some short tempo sections and run 5-8km with several one minute intervals.

Swim workouts should be short and relaxing with, again with several 25-50 meter sprints.

Going into the ocean to get familiar



TAKE IT EASY: Relaxing sessions before race day are vital.

with the swim course and the conditions is also a good idea.

But remember doing too little is preferable than doing too much.

Cruise around for a few kilometers and jog for 10 minutes the day before to loosen up.

You will need the energy on race day. Having an easy week before the Laguna Phuket Triathlon will make you mentally alert.

With all that build-up of energy you will look forward to releasing that excess on race day.

Jürgen Zack is Director of the Triathlon Academy at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club.

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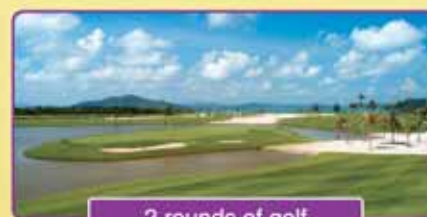
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