

Phuket Gazette

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25 Baht

Mexican takeaway

Foreigners arrested in B30mn gem heist

POLICE have sent a missive to Interpol to confirm whether or not three foreigners arrested for the theft of 30 million baht in gems and jewelry on Monday are wanted international felons.

The move to check with the international law coordination agency follows police seizing as evidence a notebook containing a list of dates, events and venues of upcoming gem and jewelry trade shows in a variety of countries, including Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, India, Dubai, Bahrain and Japan.

The book also listed accommodation establishments located near where the international trade shows are to be held, Phuket Provincial Police Commander Chonasit Wattanavrangkul told the *Gazette*.

"We found the book with the



Banditry Breakdown

- 'Mexican Maria' still in the run
- Turkish gang member held on drugs charge
- B5mn of gems still missing
- Suspect caught with diary of upcoming international gem fairs

list of upcoming gem and jewelry trade shows in the possession of the Mexican woman Mejia Asseneth," Maj Gen Chonasit said.

Police arrested 57-year-old Mejia Zuluaga Maria Asseneth

along with fellow Mexican national Ruben Dario Zapata Gonzalez, 40, and Roslina Binti Abu Bakar, 42, from Malaysia, as well as Turkish national Riza Balkan, 49, in Trang province after the car they were travelling in failed to stop at a police checkpoint.

Trang Highway Police gave chase and forced the car to stop. Inside the car, officers found most of the stolen jewelry.

However, about 173 items with a total value of about 5mn baht is still missing.

Ms Asseneth managed to flee the scene after her initial arrest.

Police believe her to be central to the robbery and she remains at large. She may be heading south to Thailand's border with Malaysia, said Maj Gen Chonasit.

A warrant for her arrest has been issued, he confirmed.



Mexican national Ruben Gonzales, arrested on Monday, was back in Phuket to conduct a re-enactment of the 30-million-baht heist. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Police Commander Chonasit said he believed the gang were an "international crew" who were assembled expressly for committing gem heists, first in Thailand and then elsewhere around the world.

"I believe they are part of an international gang. These people met on the internet first and then met

for the first time in person here in Thailand," Maj Gen Chonasit said.

As of Wednesday, police were continuing their search for Ms Asseneth and for the missing 5mn baht in gems and jewelry.

All three suspects have been denied police bail, Maj Gen Chonasit confirmed.

See full story on page 3

New Etihad airlink opens gateway to Europe

THE new weekly direct flights between Phuket and Abu Dhabi, and on to Germany, launched last month by United Arab Emirates (UAE) national carrier Etihad Airways have transformed the UAE into a portal for European tourists traveling to and from Phuket and the rest of Asia.

The new service launched on April 15 after Etihad inked a cooperative agreement with Air Berlin earlier this year.

"This route is more popular among European tourist travelling from Europe than Middle Eastern tourists," said Ekarat

Jenkijjaroenchai, head of Etihad's press relations in Airway Thailand.

"But with the new direct flights, we expect to have more Middle Eastern tourists to travel on this popular route," he added.

"Phuket is one of the highest demanding and most popular destination for people who travel to Thailand by our flights. Many Etihad passengers who land in Bangkok do not even stopover in Bangkok, they transit directly out from Suvarnabhumi Airport to Phuket by our co-share partner, Bangkok Airways," he said.

Passengers landing in Abu Dhabi can connect with Air Berlin flights to Dusseldorf, Berlin and Frankfurt.

To launch the new service Etihad is offering discounted fares until the end of December, including Phuket to London return from 20,300 baht for economy class and 71,300 baht for business class.

Discounted rates are also being offered for flights from Phuket to Moscow, Istanbul, Athens, Manchester, Frankfurt, Berlin, Munich, Dusseldorf, Paris, Milan, Geneva, Brussels, Dublin and Johannesburg.



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This Week



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'Minute Man' dashes from Family Mart with B19k

By Atchaa Khamlo

POLICE are searching for a man who robbed a Family Mart store in Chalong at gunpoint early on May 11, making off with more than 19,000 baht in less than a minute.

Police believe the man is responsible for at least two other gunpoint robberies of 24-hour convenience stores carried out in the previous week, one in Patong and another in Nai Yang.

Rapeeporn Tangeng, supervisor of the Family Mart store near the entrance to Soi Yodsanae, which leads up to the Big Buddha image, told the *Gazette* that the man entered the store at about 4am.

"The man entered the shop wearing a helmet, black jacket and gloves. He pointed the gun at a staff member and told her in Central Thai [dialect] to get out from behind the counter. She screamed in panic and moved out of the way," Ms Rapeeporn said.

Another female staff member who was at the back of the shop heard the scream and sneaked out into the shop.

"She hid behind an aisle of products while watching the robber. He jumped over the counter right



Police believe the gunman is also responsible for robbing at least two other 24-hour convenience stores in Phuket. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

away and opened the unlocked safe underneath, then took off with the basket that was inside the safe, which had about 19,000 baht in it," Ms Rapeeporn said.

"He took less than one minute to away," she added.

"Chalong Police said he looked like the same man who robbed the Family Mart on Phisit Gorani Road in Patong less than a week ago," Ms Rapeeporn said.

Police said they also suspect the same man robbed a 7-Eleven store in Soi Na Ya, in Nai Yang, three days ago, she added.

"Our shop is insured, but we are increasing our security measures," Ms Rapeeporn said.

"To start with, we will not be leaving the safe key in the drawer anymore, and we will have at least one male staffer working on the night shift," she said.

TMD issues heavy weather warning for Andaman area

HEAVY downpours caused traffic tailbacks and minor flooding across Phuket roads on Wednesday morning, hours after the Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) issued a "Heavy Weather Warning" covering Phuket and other provinces along the Andaman coast.

The warning urged people in the affected areas to beware of flooding and noted that the heavy weather is expected to continue for at least two days.

"The ridge of high pressure area covers upper northeastern Thailand and the moderate southwest monsoon prevails over the Andaman Sea, Thailand and the Gulf. These



Traffic makes its way through the rain along Thepkrasattri Road.

cause more rainfall over Thailand and isolated heavy to very heavy rain..." the warning explained.

Waves in the Andaman Sea were expected to reach heights of about two meters.

THE Phuket Lifeguard Club has submitted an offer to restore lifeguard services at Phuket's key tourist beaches, an offer that is likely to be agreed to by Monday, the *Gazette* has been informed.

The news comes after two rounds of offers by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) to receive applications to provide the services.

Both rounds failed to elicit a single application by any organization willing to put lifeguards on Phuket's beaches.

However, Kanyarat Senrungs, an officer at the Phuket *OrBorJor* Tourism Department, told the *Gazette*, "The new contract to provide lifeguard services is now being considered by the *OrBorJor* council. It was submitted [on Monday] by the Phuket Lifeguard



The Phuket Lifeguard Club has reluctantly applied to return to duty.

Club – the same company that provided the service before.

"I believe the decision will be made by the end of the week," she added.

Phuket Lifeguard Club President Prathaiyut Chuayuan said that his organization was reluctant to return

to duty, but felt obliged to make sure Phuket swimmers were offered some protection from the dangerous surf at this time of year.

"I agreed to sign the new contract with the *OrBorJor* because nobody else wants to do it. This is hard work with no profit," he said.

"Even though I talked to the *OrBorJor* about raising the salaries for my staff, the budget for the new contract will be the same as last year – nothing has changed," Mr Prathaiyut said.

"A company is supposed to raise staff salaries each year... With this budget we cannot take as good care of our staff as we want to," he said.

Mr Prathaiyut said the earliest his lifeguards could return to patrol the beaches would be Monday.

– Chutharat Plerin



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CENTARA GRAND BEACH RESORT PHUKET

Mexican gem bandits ran for border

From page 1

THONGSAK Chintakanroek, a 46-year-old jeweler and owner of Expert Gems in Bangkok was in Phuket with his marketing assistant for week-long Jewelry Fair at Central Festival when his B30mn of gems and jewelry was stolen on Monday.

This was Mr Thongsak's seventh visit to Phuket to showcase his jewelry.

"Because I have come down to the fair many times before, I believed Phuket to be a safe place. I did not think I would have any trouble," he said.

"I chose all of my best jewelry from the shop for the fair, but it wasn't insured," he added.

He and his assistant had spent the night at a nearby hotel and had stopped for breakfast near the Big C supercenter on the day of the robbery.

"After we had some noodles, we walked back to our vehical and found that its window had been broken and the jewelry stolen. I called the police immediately," Mr Thongsak said.

Phuket Police and the Phuket Tourist Police all arrived at the scene within 10 minutes of being contacted.

CCTV footage revealed the suspects fleeing the area in a Toyota Vios.

Although the CCTV footage shows the gang in possession of



Ms Abu Bakar hides her face for a moment during the press conference.



'Mexican Maria' is still on the run.



Mr Balkan is being held in Trang.

the black suitcase taken from Mr Thongsak's van, it does not show the gang breaking into the vehicle or give any indication as to why the car alarm failed to alert people in the area.

However, the CCTV footage that captured the license plate number was enough to lead the police on a paper trail to discover the rented vehical and its license plate registration.

"We contacted all agencies – including Immigration, Tourist Police and Highway Police – and asked them to keep an eye out for the rented Fortuner," Maj Gen Chonasi said.

At 7pm Monday, Highway Police Station 2 Division 7, led by Col Jakkrapan Janwana, stopped a vehical and asked to search it.

A search by officers discovered the stolen jewelry, including gold, diamonds and other precious gems, in two separate bags inside the car.

"While the police officers were questioning the suspects, one of the women, the large one, fled the scene.

"We are now searching for her," Col Jakkrapan said.

The driver of the vehicle the gang were fleeing in, an illegal taxi driver in Patong, has not been named by police and has yet to be charged with any offenses.

Police are still questioning him, but at this stage believe he is innocent in terms of being involved in the robbery.

It was explained that he most likely failed to stop at the police checkpoint as he was under duress from the thieves.

Mr Gonzalez and Ms Abu Bakar are currently being held in custody at Phuket City Police Station, while Mr Balkan remains in police custody in Trang province, due to the police discovering drugs in his possession.



Diary of a thief

AMONG the items seized by police in the arrests of the three foreigners for the 30-million-baht gem and jewelry heist on Monday was a notebook containing a handwritten list of upcoming international gem and jewelry trade fairs.

Considering the high profile and international status of the trade shows, police now think the gang were an international crew assembled expressly to target such events.

First on the list was the TFWA Asia Pacific event in Singapore, marked to be held May 13-17.

Next on the list was the Asia Jewels Fair in Bangalore, to be held on June 8-10, followed by an event at the Brisbane Exhibition & Convention Center in Australia, slated for June 9-11.

The notebook also listed an event as "Hitex, Hyderabad, India... June 22-24".

On On Hotel's last guest resting well in hospital

HANS Maeter, the 88-year-old German expat who was moved from Phuket's famed On On Hotel to Patong Hospital on May 8, is reportedly doing well.

Mr Maeter, who had been a permanent resident at the On On Hotel for 20 years, was moved to hospital as the hotel is about to undergo extensive renovation work.

As the *Gazette* reported in our page 1 story last week, Mr Maeter was bed-ridden for the past year, cared for by hotel staff who brought him meals and cleaned for him.

Mr Anurak, Czech Honorary Consul, and the founder of the Phuket International Hospital, was there the day that Mr Maeter was taken by ambulance to hospital.

"He had [repeatedly] refused to go to a hospital or anywhere else. He said he wanted to die here," Mr Anurak said.

Almost two weeks after Mr Maeter's admission to Patong Hospital, staff are optimistic about his health.

Patong Hospital Director Dr Phumin Silaphan told the *Gazette* on Wednesday, "He is fine at the hospital now. He does not need any special treatment as he is not ill.

Hospital administrators have contacted the German Embassy in Bangkok in order to plan Mr



Mr Maeter. Photo: Phuket Tourist Police

Maeter's future.

Despite the large sums of money in both cash and in bank accounts recovered from his hotel room, Dr Phumin noted that Mr Maeter had no medical insurance.

"Right now... all we can do is take care of him as best we can," he added.

– Chutharat Plerin

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Prompong vows action in land title probe

GOVERNMENT Spokesman Prompong Nopparit has confirmed that the investigation into two land titles that were illegally issued for 65 rai at Phuket's pristine Freedom Beach has now been handed over to the Land Department and the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) for further action.

Speaking to the *Gazette*, Mr Prompong also confirmed that the Parliamentary Committee for Anti-Corruption and Misconduct had

deemed that the two titles deeds in question were found to have been issued illegally.

"The case has been sent to the National Anti-Corruption Commission [NACC] and to the Land Department for further action.

"The parliamentary probe headed by Mr Prompong also found that at least 13 officials were involved in illegally issuing land titles.

"How long the officers involved in this incident have been con-

ducting illegal actions will be determined by the Land Department in their investigation.

"Anuwat Meteewiboonwut, the director-general of the Thai Land Department, has given his word that he will take action against anyone found to be involved in this case.

"If he doesn't do anything about this, he will be found derelict in his duty and removed from his position," said Mr Prompong.



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Quake victims get payout



Chief Naruenart (uniform) and Mayor Worawut (center) handover a cheque to a victim of the quake.

RESIDENTS in Srisoonthorn sub-district whose homes were damaged by the April 16 earthquake received payouts from the government on May 10 to assist in repairing their living quarters.

Thalang District Chief Naruenart Supattarapateep led the proceedings in handing out cash cheques provided by the Phuket Provincial Office to 410 residents.

The funds were made available through the Provincial Office's 50-million-baht emergency reserve fund, explained Srisoonthorn Mayor Worawut Songyot, adding that the financial assistance is being provided to 520 residents who filed complaints that their homes were damaged by the April 16 quake, which registered 4.3 on the Richter scale.

"The financial assistance granted so far totals 1,354,000 baht, but not everyone who filed a claim could be here today, so we will follow up with the remaining 110 people to make sure they receive their payments," he said.

Mayor Worawut added that Srisoonthorn Municipality has reopened the center for residents to file complaints that their homes were damaged so that they can also receive financial assistance.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

Red Shirt Village rally a 'test', says local leader

ONE of the men named responsible for organizing a red-shirt rally near Nai Yang Beach yesterday has denied any intent of establishing a "Red Shirt village" in Phuket.

The true aim was to determine how many people would protest against such a rally, said Surin Yotharak, a local village leader in Tambon Sakoo, the subdistrict immediately south of Phuket International Airport.

"The Red Shirt leaders wanted to see how many people would protest this rally. We have every right to hold rallies like this. The people who protested against us today say we are trying to incite conflict by holding it, but this is just an excuse," Mr Surin told reporters yesterday after the rally, which attracted about Red Shirt supporters.

Mr Surin's comments came after about 200 anti-Red Shirt protesters removed a street blockade, at the request of senior police at the scene, at about 4pm to allow the Red Shirt supporters to leave.

"There are no plans to establish a Red Shirt Village in Southern Thailand. The communities we want to establish are for the sake of democracy. We want communities to be strong and immune to the drug problems the government is focusing on," Mr Surin said.

Rumors circulating in the days leading up to the rally speculated that anywhere from 500 to 2,000 red-shirt supporters were to join the rally, many of them travelling from other provinces.



Although the atmosphere was charged during the stand-off both sides remained peaceful.

Prominent Red Shirt leaders were rumored to speak at the rally. However, none showed up.

The Red Shirt rally was organized in two areas. Many supporters were to arrive at Nai Yang Beach, and then move to a stage set up down the road next to Thalang Technical College. The anti-Red Shirt protesters' street blockade was intended to stop Red Shirt protesters from massing at the initial rally point on the beach.

At the beach rally point, was Mr Surin's brother, Sutha Yotharak. Mr Sutha supported his brother's claim that the rumors of establishing a red-shirt village in Phuket were nothing more than misinformation.

"The rally was called to address

drug issues in the area. Red Shirt leaders were invited because they are part of the political system and might be able to help, because the government doesn't seem to be able to stop the spread of drug use," Mr Sutha said.

Mr Sutha asked not to be reported as a Red Shirt. "In this, I am just a local villager," he said.

However, tensions throughout the day initially ran high, with police arriving in force to keep the two crowds separated.

Officers did not allow the protesters to cross into each other's areas for fear of a fight erupting.

Protesters yelled at members of the Red Shirt rally and demanded that they remove a sign from their

stage that said, "Democracy village fight against drugs, assembling for better democracy, amending the constitution".

After negotiating with Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosuttirak, Police Region 8 Deputy Commander Pisan Chuldilok, Phuket Provincial Police Commander Chonasit Wattanavrangkul and Thalang District Chief Naruenart Supattarapateep, did the anti-Red Shirt protesters agree to lift the blockade, but many maintained their presence at the junction.

Some protesters left the area after the Red Shirt supporters departed, but some remained in the Nai Yang Beach area.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

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Nation Group to enter Myanmar

THE *Phuket Gazette's* media partner organization Nation Multimedia Group (NMG) Plc has signed a comprehensive agreement of cooperation with Myanmar's Eleven Media Group Co Ltd.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed in Yangon on May 4 by Nation Multimedia Group chairman Suthichai Yoon and Eleven Media Group chairman and CEO Dr Than Htut Aung, is a precursor to the formation of a joint venture in a wide range of English-language publications in the near future.

Both Suthichai Yoon and Dr Than Htut Aung pledged to combine their editorial and business efforts to benefit the peoples of both countries and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) region with high professional standards and ethics.

"The Eleven Media Group is Myanmar's No 1 private publishing group with a highly impressive record of independent and hard-hitting coverage against



The deal will lead to a wide range of English-language publications in the near future. Photo: The Nation

corruption and undemocratic activities in Myanmar. I have great respect for Dr Than Htut Aung's crusade against dictatorship and corruption," Mr Suthichai said after the signing ceremony.

"This is a landmark agreement with both media organizations sharing similar histories in independent and impartial news reporting, as well as supporting democracy," said Dr Aung.

Both sides also announced an immediate setup of editorial offices in Yangon and Bangkok with immediate effect. The initiative will intensify news coverage of

Myanmar and ASEAN affairs out of Thailand, and Thai and ASEAN affairs out of Myanmar, at a time of significant international interest in Myanmar.

Eleven Media publishes the largest-circulation newspaper, operates websites in local and English languages and is the pioneer and leader in SMS English-language news. Nation Multimedia publishes Thailand's leading newspaper *The Nation*, which is also co-founder of the Asia News Network, an alliance of 21 leading newspapers in 18 Asian countries.

Drinking water flows north

By Orawin Narabal and
Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE Phuket Waterworks Authority has revealed a plan to provide public water fountains throughout Mai Khao as a pilot project in rolling out potable water supply across the northern parts of the island.

Pichai Wetchrungsri, Deputy Director of the Phuket Waterworks Authority, announced the news earlier this month at a meeting at Provincial Hall, where he explained that the plan was inspired by the drinking-fountain at Loma Park in Patong.

"This year we plan to provide clean drinking water to the central and northern parts of the island," Mr Pichai said.

He explained to the *Gazette* that the project will focus first on providing public water fountains in Mai Khao, as the northern end of the island was considered the "gateway to Phuket".

"There are also some important facilities in the area, such as Phuket International Airport, and soon the Phuket International Convention and Exhibition Center," he said.

"However, we have yet to decide on where to establish the supply point for the central parts of the island," he added.

Mr Pichai said the water would be purified and then delivered to the drinking fountains through new polyester pipes that his office has been installing across Mai Khao for the past eight years, replacing the old PVC water mains.

"In the past we used PVC pipes, which were joined together with PVC glue. This glue sometimes did not provide a tight seal, so water occasionally would be contaminated," Mr Pichai explained.

The new polyester pipes are joined by much tighter-fitting seals,



As part of the potable-water supply project the old CVP pipes are being replaced with new polyester pipes, which are less susceptible to leakages and contamination. Photo: Phuket Waterworks Authority

greatly reducing the risk of the water being contaminated, he added.

The new pipes are being used in the 40-million-baht extension of local government water mains from Baan Pon, just south of Thalang Town, to Baan Mak Prok School, located near the eastern end of the runway at Phuket Airport.

The project will allow local communities in the north of Phuket to start hooking up their local water networks to the mains and use government water supply in their homes in Srisoonthorn, Thepkasattri and Mai Khao subdistricts.

Connecting with the local water mains network from Ban Jo water treatment plant – which is currently

under construction to treat water from Bang Neaw Dum reservoir – the new pipes are being laid alongside the southbound lane of Thepkasattri Road from the 16km road marker to the 30km marker.

Pornthep Bunyaluek, an engineer at Phuket office of the Royal Irrigation Project, said the project is aimed at resolving recurring water shortages suffered by residents in the north.

Mr Pichai maintains that the government water supply in is safe to drink – in some areas.

"We have been replacing the water mains pipes since 1998. So those areas being supplied by water treated at the government water

treatment plants and delivered by the new pipes have household water that is safe to drink," he said.

In addition to the Bang Jo water treatment plant that is currently being built, the Phuket waterworks Authority is also looking into setting up a water-treatment plant at the Klong Krata Dam in Chalong, once that dam is completed, in order to provide drinking-quality water to residents in those areas.

"Bang Niew Dum reservoir will supply water for the north area of the island, especially during the construction of the Phuket International Convention and Exhibition Center," Mr Pichai said.

But is it safe to drink?



Tap water. Photo: Tom Rafferty

THE heads of the two major waterworks agencies in Phuket say their water is safe to drink after it leaves the treatment plant and arrives at your tap, but experts warn otherwise.

Brad Kenny, an environmental engineer and managing director of Environmental Solutions & Protection on the bypass road, previously told the *Gazette* in a special report that he believes water from the plants meets international drinking-water standards.

However, he expressed concern about tap water becoming contaminated between the treatment plant and the tap.

"Once water leaves the water treatment plant, here in Phuket or in your home country, no one has total control of all of the places the water could become re-contaminated: the water mains, the plumbing... and most of all your own water storage tank.

"The best way to ensure that the water at your home is drinking quality is to be sure your own supply pipes are in good order and good quality, along with quarterly cleaning and disinfecting any water storage tanks you have," he advised.



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	PG280	22.10	23.35
BKK-HKT	PG271	08.05	09.30
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	PG924	12.20	13.45
	PG273	13.55	15.20
	PG277	16.55	18.20
	PG279	20.00	21.25
	PG220	21.55	23.20

BKK = Bangkok / HKT = Phuket

Scout training part of Phuket's 'White Prison'



Young inmates learn about the scout training they are about to undergo. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

PHUKET Prison is to be awarded "White Prison" status after regular inspections of the provincial detention facility declared it free from drugs and illegal mobile phones.

Department of Corrections Deputy Director General (Administration) Somsak Rangsiyopas announced the news at Phuket Prison during the opening ceremony of a scout training program for young inmates Monday.

"We have had many inspections for drugs and mobile phones smuggled into the prison and all results have been negative. Phuket Provincial Prison will soon be awarded 'White Prison' status in order to reward the good work on the total ban of drugs and illegal mobile phones," Mr Somsak said. Mr Somsak also explained that the objective of the scout training for young inmates was to rehabilitate young offenders and change their daily behavior.

"We want these individuals to see themselves as being valuable, have responsibility and be able to integrate with other people," Mr Somsak said.

"Phuket has held scout training twice with 35 youngsters attending each training session. We have found that young offenders who passed the training can integrate well when living with others," Mr Somsak added.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

Failure to launch

New incinerator misfires during trial burn

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE long-awaited second incinerator at the Phuket City Municipality facility in Saphan Hin failed to fire correctly during a trial burn last week, dousing the surrounding neighborhood in a foul stench.

The disconcerting odor sparked a stream of complaints from local residents and from families visiting the popular recreational park nearby.

"We had to move to solve the problem immediately. We received complaints from local residents as well as people visiting Saphan Hin Park about how bad the smell was," said Tawatchai Thongmung, the Chief Administrative Officer (*Palad*) at Phuket City Municipality.

Operations staff immediately shut the burner down, resulting in all trash intended to arrive at the new incinerator being redirected to the growing landfill located behind the facility.

The cause of the misfire was attributed to an electrical fault.

"Not only was there the bad smell, but there was also smoke," said Darawan Naknakorn, 26, who regularly exercises at the Saphan Hin Park.

"Now things are better, but I still hope the people involved in solving the problem are able to do so quickly and prevent any further issues," she told the *Gazette*.

Mr Tawatchai explained that at the time of the misfire Phuket was caught in a low-pressure system which brought heavy rains for over a week.

The dense, low cloud cover at the time trapped the foul odor close to ground, exacerbating the problem for people in the area, he said.

Pressure is building for the municipality to get the new burner online, Mr Tawatchai explained.

"The old incinerator is no longer capable of running at full capacity and it has a problem with its



While the new incinerator is offline, the mounds of trash in the landfill continue to grow. Photo: Gazette file (2010)

ventilation system, so we cannot use it to dispose of all the trash, he told the *Gazette*.

"We currently dispose of 500 tons of trash a day by dumping it in the landfill. We have enough space in the landfill for the trash until the new incinerator is ready for operation, which I believe will be no later than the end of May," he said.

The new incinerator, when up and running, is expected to dispose of up to 700 tons of trash per day, allowing Phuket Municipality to burn off additional trash that is currently piling up in the landfill.



The new incinerator smokestack stands proud. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Co-ops help fight rising prices

THE Phuket Provincial Cooperatives Office held a "discount products fair" in front of its offices in Phuket Town this week to offer residents some relief from the spiralling cost of living.

Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosutthirak officiated the opening of the week-long fair on Damrong Road, in the old government quarter of Phuket Town.

On sale at discounted prices were items such as household consumer products and fresh produce, including fresh vegetables, seafood and meat.

Selling the items were members of small community-based cooperatives, mostly from Phuket, but also from nearby provinces.

"People are now suffering from the rising cost of living. We would



V/Gov Somkiet at the fair.

like to help them by reducing their living expenses with the discount products at this fair," said Phuket Cooperatives Office chief Tewaklit Khemkao.

"This is also the best opportunity for us to highlight the goodwill offered by Thai cooperatives and local farmers," he added.

Joining the fair were the likes of food-producing giants such as

Charoen Pokphand Foods PCL (CP Foods) down to local cooperatives such as the Phuket Shrimp Farm Club, among others.

As of May 11, the Department of Internal Trade (DIT) listed the maximum price for selling size number 3 eggs at fresh markets in Southern Thailand at 2.8 baht each, or 84 baht per tray of 30.

The current maximum price allowed red pork sold at fresh markets in Southern Thailand is 135 baht per kilo.

The notice also reminded fresh-produce vendors that charging more than the mandated maximum prices listed by the DIT incurred a penalty of up to seven years in prison or a fine of up to 140,000 baht, or both.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Sea Gypsy Cultural Center to open 'within six months'

By Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai

THE long-anticipated Sea Gypsy Cultural Center, or Urak Lawoi Culture Center, is on schedule to open toward the end of this year, about six months after it is officially transferred from the Phuket Office of Public Works to Rassada Municipality at the end of this month.

At a cost of 5.4 million baht, the Sea Gypsy Cultural Center being built at Baan Laem Tukkae village on Koh Sireh, Rassada, claims to be the first of its kind in Asia and aims to preserve the distinctive way of life and culture of the Urak Lawoi sea gypsies and to attract tourists to Phuket.

Just over 2mn baht of the funding was from the 2010 provincial budget, with the remainder provided by the 2010 *Thai Khem Khaeng* (Strong Thailand) financial stimulus package instigated by the former government under then-prime minister Abhisit Vejjajiva.

The center, being built on four rai of land, was first announced in September 2009, with the Phuket Provincial Public Works Office placed in charge of construction. On completion, Rassada Municipality will take over the running of the center.

"Since the Cultural Center Sea Gypsy is located in the Rassada Municipality's area of responsibility, operations will be transferred to us and we will be responsible for managing and maintaining the facility, and the displays in the center," said Rassada Municipality Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) Dachakanee Leelanon.

"The Ministry of Culture



Rassada chief of administration Dachakanee Leelanon hopes to have the center and its displays completed ready to open before the end of this year. Photo: Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai

Phuket office has only the budget for the construction work, everything else is down to us," he added.

We are expecting responsibility for the center to be transferred to Rassada Municipality on May 28, Mr Dachakanee explained.

"Once the center has been handed over we can proceed to the next step, which is the preparation of the exhibition area," he added.

Even though the building is up, there is still much to do to get the center ready to open.

"It will take at least another six months after the transfer before the center will be fully operational," he said.

"Once the center opens, people who want to learn about Urak Lawoi culture and their history can visit the exhibition for free. We will not charge any fees to enter the



museum. We may just put a donation box there to help pay for the utilities such as electricity, water and maintenance, but the overall budget for the center will come from Rassada Municipality," Palad Dachakanee said.

The new center being a tourist attraction is in line with plans by Rassada Mayor Phudit Raksaraj to regenerate the area.

"Koh Sireh has been neglected for so long, but Mayor Phudit has a plan to bring this part of town back to life. He wants to develop Koh Sireh into one of the important Rassada tourist attractions," Mr Dachakanee said.

Other plans to promote Rassada as a tourist destination include developing the viewpoint on the hill behind Koh Sireh temple as a place for visitors to watch the sunrise; creating an artificial

beach at Koh Sireh, similar to a project in Singapore; and installing a musical fountain in the sea.

"The musical fountain would be similar to the one the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization [*OrBorJor*] built [at Saphan Hin], except our musical fountain will be in the sea. No one else has done that before," he added.

"We haven't given much attention to this part of our area before, but investors have seen the potential in Koh Sireh, as we can see from the many hotel projects springing up around this part of town.

"I think it would be good for Rassada if we tried to promote Koh Sireh to be a more important attraction in Phuket. This is the time for us to polish this previously neglected island to be the 'Pearl of Phuket,'" he said.

Rawai votes Aroon Solos in for another term as mayor

ACCORDING to preliminary results of the local election in Rawai last weekend, Aroon Solos has been re-elected Mayor of Rawai Municipality.

The preliminary count gave Mr Aroon 3,715 votes, said Kittipong Thiengkunagrit, director of the Phuket Election Commission.

Mr Aroon's only opponent, Yutthana Jundee, garnered 1,972 votes. Just over 60 per cent of the 6,139 eligible voters turned out at the polls last weekend.

"Of those, 178 selected the 'No Vote' option. There were 274 spoiled ballots," Dr Kittipong said.

In accordance with the Election Act, the Election Commission in Bangkok now has 30 days to confirm the results, Dr Kittipong added.

Mr Aroon responded to his victory by thanking those who voted for him and promised to improve the quality of life for his fellow Rawai residents.

"I will sort out the water and electrical systems and other facilities including the environment in Rawai so that all Rawai people will have a better quality of life," he said.

— Orawin Narabal



RE-ELECTED: Mayor Aroon Solos.

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Phuket very tolerant of gay lifestyles: Gazette poll

PHUKET society is very tolerant of people with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) lifestyles, according to the results of the latest *Phuket Gazette* readers' poll.

The poll, run to coincide with the Phuket Pride Festival held in Patong late last month, asked readers: "Overall, how tolerant is Phuket society of LGBT lifestyles compared to other places you have lived in or visited?"

More than three-quarters of readers overall (77.4%) thought Phuket society was either "tolerant" or "very tolerant", compared with 8.8% of readers who thought it was either "intolerant" or "very intolerant".

The most popular reply was "very tolerant" at 46%.

In a breakdown by demographic, tourists were most likely to find Phuket very tolerant (49%), followed by expats (46%) and Thais (33%).

— *Phuket Gazette*

Parents pawn family gold to pay for their children's education

THE Phuket City Municipality Pawnshop reported brisk business last week as parents pawned off gold to pay for back-to-school supplies for their children.

Mr Boonsong Korecharoen, accountant and acting manager of the shop on Kamoraphat Road, told the *Gazette* that recently they had been dealing with a daily volume of about 400 people.

About 99 per cent of these people were pawning gold ornaments to pay for student tuition, fees and related expenses. As a result, the shop has seen about 20 million baht change hands over the past month, nearly 1mn baht daily, he said.

"Our pawnshop is now getting very busy, with many people coming to use the service. Some come to pawn their belongings, others to extend their repayment periods. A small number of people are also paying back loans and reclaiming their valuables," he said.

"In order to meet the high demand, we have an extra 50 million baht during this period," he added.



Tough decisions: How much should a parent be prepared to pay for their child's education? Photos: Phuket Municipality and SW Layne

"The economic situation isn't good right now, so more people need cash. That's why they come to the pawnshop. Most of the items people pawn are gold ornaments. The remainder are electrical appliances and some



other items of value," he said.

Phuket City Municipality Pawnshop is one of three government-run pawn shops operating on the island in accordance with a national government policy to curb loan

sharking and other unauthorized money-lending practices.

The other two shops are run by Patong and Cherno Talay municipalities. Private gold shops also offer regulated pawn services, but their rates are not as attractive as those offered by the government-subsidized counterparts.

"In response to current government policy, we are further helping the people by reducing the interest rate from May through to December. Those who borrow less than 5,000 baht are charged just 0.5 per cent interest. If the loan is over 5,000 baht, the interest rate is 1.0 per cent," he said.

Many government schools in Phuket re-open in mid-May, but most of the schools under Phuket City Municipality administration have re-opened early this year because their classrooms will be used as makeshift dormitories for the young athletes arriving to take part in the upcoming Phuket Games, which run from May 26 to June 5.

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Taiwanese pilot drowns in freak boat accident

CHENG Hway Shyu, 46, a Taiwanese airline captain, drowned and his Thai boatman rendered unconscious in an accident on May 14 in Khao Sok National Park, Surat Thani.

Col Jarun Uchuphap, Superintendent of Baan Takhun Police, told the *Gazette* that the accident occurred on the Chiao Lan Reservoir, a nature reserve also known as the Ratchaprapa Dam.

"Mr Shyu came with about six Taiwanese friends and stayed at a floating resort in the park. They went out on the lake on a big boat, then divided into groups to tour the reservoir on four small longtail boats. The small boats cannot carry more than three people," he explained.

"Mr Shyu went alone in Mr Atipong Wichiankaew's boat to go fishing," Col Jarun added.

A search for the missing pair was launched after they failed to meet up with the group for lunch.

They found Mr Atipong floating in the water near his boat, but found no trace of Mr Shyu.



With due respect the body of Cheng Hway Shyu is recovered by rescue workers. Photo: Khao Sok National Park staff

Rescue workers with dive gear later recovered Mr Shyu's body from the lake.

Mr Atipong was discharged from hospital on Tuesday and reported to police the next day.

Baan Takhun Duty Officer Lt Manop Manotrakul said, "Mr Atipong claimed that the boat was travelling at about 20km/h when he had to steer to the left of a tree stump protruding from the water. It was at that point that Mr Shyu

lent the wrong way and struck the tree with his head."

"Both men were thrown from the boat, which was undamaged and stayed afloat," he said.

Lt Manop said that Mr Atipong had been charged with causing death by negligence, but other charges may follow. After questioning, Mr Atipong was allowed to go home but must report to Baan Takhun Police periodically.

— *Atchaa Khamlo*

Go-go dancer survives suicide plunge

PATONG Hospital is looking after a broken-hearted transgender person who survived a suicide plunge from a Phuket hotel on May 9.

Local media named the survivor as "Nong Yok", 33, a dancer at a night venue named as "Russia A-Go-Go" club.

Ms Nong tried to end her life

by jumping from a fourth-floor room near her own accommodation at the Suksabai Hotel on Soi Baan Kamnan. Ms Nong fell two floors before landing on an awning on the second floor. She suffered head trauma, a broken leg and other injuries.

Medical staff at Patong Hospi-

tal said they were keeping her under close observation, as her psychological condition was described as "very poor".

Ms Nong decided to end her life after learning that her Thai boyfriend had left her for another woman.

— *Siangtai Daily*

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Lese majeste charge filed against National Human Rights Commission chief

THE head of Kaeng Krachan National Park has lodged a *lese majeste* complaint against members of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) after they allegedly intervened in a project that had been set up in honor of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Chaiwat Limlikhit-aksorn filed the complaint against NHRC chief Niran Phithakwatchara on May 11, according to internet news portal *Prachatai*.

Mr Chaiwat attended the police station with more than 100 supporters, including National Park officials.

He claimed that Mr Niran and members

of the NHRC subcommittee on the rights of ethnic minorities and migrants had intervened in a project to cut down forest vines in order to grow plants to feed elephants. The project was launched in honor of HM the King.

The NHRC and the park are in conflict over the fate of ethnic Karen villagers living in the park.

Park officers claim the villagers are destroying the forest in order to support their agricultural lifestyle.

But the NHRC has attempted to protect the rights of the Karen by forcing park officials to cancel the elephant-feeding

project and other plans to expand the park boundaries.

Mr Chaiwat said that ordering the cancellation of the project constituted *lese majeste*.

He added that the NHRC was not respecting the wishes of Their Majesties the King and Queen, who have told government officials to protect watershed areas and prevent illegal logging.

The charge of *lese majeste*, listed as Article 112 of the Criminal Code, carries a sentence of between three and 15 years in jail if the court rules a conviction, and has been the focus of much free-speech controversy.



A Karen spiritual chief, files a petition against the Krachan National Park authorities and asks to maintain rights to continue to live in the park. Photo: The Nation

Yellow-shirt hides in truck for a long haul

AROUND THE nation

YELLOW-shirt leader Karun Saingam last week made a farcical bid to dodge arrest by refusing to get out of his truck, forcing police to haul the vehicle 400 kilometers from Buri Ram to Royal Thai Police headquarters in Bangkok – with Mr Karun still inside.

Mr Karun, a former senator, was wanted for his part in the takeover of Suvarnabhumi Airport in 2008 by the People's Alliance for Democracy.

Around 8pm on May 12, officers from the Crime Suppression Division (CSD) intercepted Mr Karun as he was driving his Dodge pickup truck home in Buri Ram.

He was about 100 meters from his house.

Officers produced an arrest warrant and asked him to exit the vehicle – but he refused, locking the doors and calling his wife.

About 100 yellow-shirt supporters arrived and formed a human barricade around the pickup, preventing police from using a flatbed truck to haul Mr



Karun Sai-ngam locked himself in his Dodge pickup truck and was hauled 400km to Bangkok. Photo: The Nation

Karun's vehicle away.

Following a 10-hour standoff, 200 policemen from nearby district police stations turned out to remove the protesters, leading to a brief scuffle. No one was reported injured.

Police hauled Mr Karun and his pickup to Prakhon Chai Police Station, but he refused to step out of the vehicle, so at 8:30am they began the long haul to the CSD head

office in Bangkok.

Still inside his truck, Mr Karun reached the CSD office at 12:30pm. About 30 yellow shirts were there to provide moral support.

Mr Karun was eventually released without having to post bail after being interrogated and hearing additional charges against him, including terrorism.

The takeover of the airport in-

stigated the ouster of former Prime Minister Somchai Wongsuwan – a relative of Thaksin Shinawatra – and paved the way for the Abhisit Vejjajiva government to take office.

Several yellow-shirt leaders, including media magnate Sondhi Limthongkul and Chamlong Srimuang, face charges for the takeover, though all are free on bail.

17 hurt in southern Red Cross attack

A ROADSIDE bomb in the Deep South injured 17 people last week while they were heading home from the Pattani Red Cross Fair.

The victims – bar one civilian – were all paramilitary volunteers, 10 of them women.

The explosion went off at about midnight on May 13, an unusual time for a bombing in the Deep South, where most attacks are conducted in the morning.

The same day, another attack took place at the Red Cross Fair in neighboring Narathiwat province.

Two men on a motorcycle reportedly threw two grenades at officers manning a checkpoint at the fair.

One of the devices went off, injuring seven people, including a police officer, a paramilitary volunteer and five civilians.

More than 5,000 people have been killed in the three southern border provinces of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat since the insurgency in the Deep South flared up in 2004.

The insurgents have never stated their goals clearly, though they are believed to be fighting for some form of autonomy for the three provinces, which comprised an independent sultanate until they were annexed by Siam in 1909.

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Speak loudly, but leave 'big stick' on mainland

AS THIS week passed, the non-event of the Red Shirt rally apparently planned to be held at Nai Yang Beach last Sunday (see page 4) settled in as a near miss.

The timing could not be a coincidence. Today, May 19, 2012, marks the second anniversary of the violent confrontations in Bangkok between government security forces and the Red Shirt United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD). Hundreds were injured and 91 people were killed in the clashes between the two. Undoubtedly, news media will ramp up coverage of the anniversary as this issue hits the streets.

The rally in Phuket was allegedly organized so that local leaders in Nai Yang, located immediately south of the airport, could proclaim their collective home as a "Red Shirt Village". That move alone would isolate the villagers from the mainstay of their fellow Phuket residents, who have long and staunchly supported the Democrats, and by association their Yellow Shirt cohorts.

Sensational reports circulated that up to 2,000 Red Shirts were to arrive in Phuket for the "Red Shirt Sunday" event, they didn't. Many people in Phuket will sigh, "Thankfully".

The initial reaction by Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosutthirak must be praised, as he plainly told yellow-shirt protestors, "You all have the right to say what you like and dislike. So long as you act within the law, be assured that the authorities will protect you... We will show fairness to all sides."

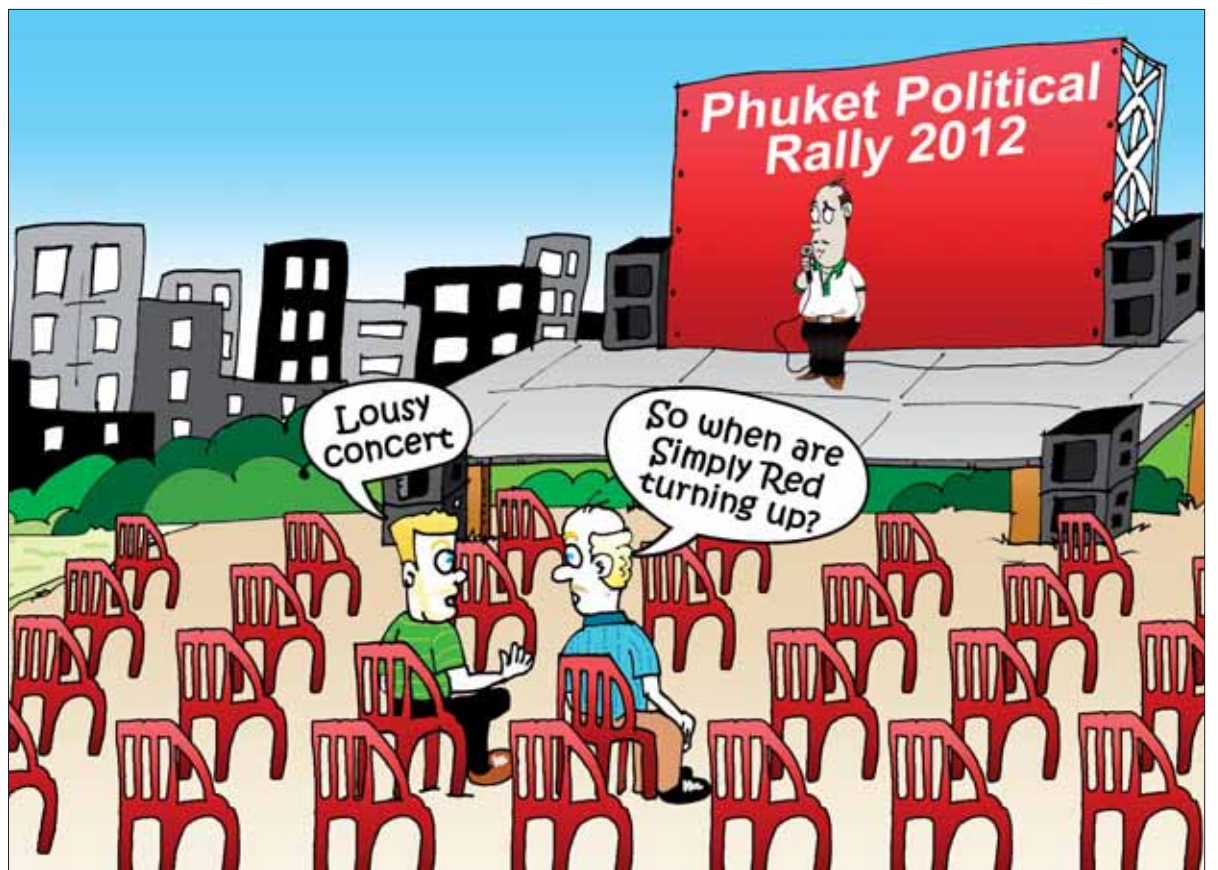
However, that did beg the question whether or not the hundreds of Yellow Shirt supporters at Provincial Hall last Sunday understood if the police armed with batons that had encircled their protest were there to "protect them", as V/Gov Somkiet said, or to contain them if any unrest started to escalate.

But the end result served Phuket well, and hindsight tempts the question of whether the UDD intended to stage a rally in Phuket at all. They got their media exposure and at the same time tested the waters for a Red Shirt Village in Phuket.

Not since the *SorPorKor* 4-01 land scandal in Phuket, which brought down the government of Democrat Party icon Chuan Leekpai in 1995, has Phuket been a factor in the Thai national political arena. Even those events quickly shifted political focus from Phuket to Bangkok, despite Phuket being the scene of the crime. The Bangkok-centric mindset of the country spared Phuket from civil unrest then, and Phuket has yet to experience it since.

Phuket is not a political arena. It is clearly a venue for political grandstanding, but it is not an isle for activism. No one wants civil unrest here. The murders and corruption over land deals are bad enough. Everyone just wants Phuket to keep on doing what it does best: make money. So be it.

To all the families who lost loved ones in the unrest two years ago, and in the years before, our hearts and minds are with you. May peace prevail in Thailand's future.



Man to take the bullet

Re: Gazette online, 'Minute man' robber makes off with B19k at gunpoint, May 12

"We will have at least one male staffer working on the night shift," she [Chalong Family Mart supervisor Ms Rapeeporn] said. What's the point, a gun doesn't differentiate between male and female.

Or does she mean they will have an armed male security guard as a staff member?

Innocent bystander
Gazette forum

Burying the buzz with cables

Re:Gazette online, Phuket Town power cables going underground, May 13

I live along Krabi Road and I am absolutely delighted with the removal of the power poles, not only for aesthetic reasons, but more so for the reduced Electromagnetic Fields (EMFs) right outside my second-floor window.

Most people might not realize that EMF emissions rise above 100mG (milligauss) in some places around Phuket Town. Europe's [scientists have] suggested safe levels are closer to 1mG!

Pk
Gazette forum

I see red

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Red Shirt Village rally just a 'test', says local leader, May 14

I found Surin Yotharak's mention of there being no plans to have Red Shirt Villages in Southern Thailand a little baffling. Phuket, and the rest of Southern Thailand, is a democratic stronghold, but a recent report actually cited 14 Red Shirt Villages being established in

Letters to the Editor

Narathiwat.

Tida Tawornseth, chairwoman of the red shirt United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), chaired the event as they declared 14 villages with a total population of about 14,000 people as Red Shirt Villages.

The justification given for declaring themselves red shirt villages was that doing so would give residents a stronger voice in the government for matters that concern them, be they land issues on Budo Mountain (as was the case in Narathiwat) or the spreading of a harmful drug culture.

The only way I can make sense of Mr Surin's comments is that he was either misinformed, or purposely misleading the public or – most likely – that he, like many others, considers the Deep South as entirely separate from the rest of Southern Thailand.

Henry Brunson
Thalang

Hard lessons in teaching respect

Re: Gazette online, Brisk business at Phuket City Pawnshop as schools re-open, May 15

The news on this island is so often horrific. From the group of young Swedes slaughtered on the road to Dokset admitting that he stuffed his ex-girlfriend into a rolly-bin to decompose.

It takes almost no time to become numb to the death of a motorist or the obvious destruction of life through the growing use of hard drugs like *ya bah* (methamphetamine) and *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine). Despite the numbness from these

Fanelli sort of horror stories, I found the above story more heart wrenching.

Education is so fundamental to society, and to see parents having to pawn off the few valuables they have – liquidating their modest assets, so to speak – just to ensure their children can attend school struck a cord with me.

I presume these are not kids going to the fancier schools on the island, such as the British International School or even Kajonkiet, but still parents are having to make sacrifices to make ends meet.

I know teachers are highly respected in Thai society.

I can only hope that the foreign teachers who come here are aware of the difficulties that parents are overcoming just to keep their child in class. And being aware of this, chose to put in the due diligence and effort necessary to justify the parents sacrifices and the students time.

Amber Thurston
Phuket Town

Myanmar versus Burma whose side are you on?

Gazette online, Phuket Gazette media partner Nation Group inks deal to enter Myanmar market, May 10

Does the *Phuket Gazette* condone the military junta's illegal coming to power in Burma? If not, please refrain from calling the country Myanmar.

Many political and ethnic opposition groups and countries continue to use Burma because they do not recognize the legitimacy of the ruling military government or its authority to rename the country.

Sharky
Gazette forum

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Prepare to avoid tourist problems

FIRST PERSON

TO PREVENT problems, I would like tourists to study up on the places they will visit during their trip to Thailand and get to know a little bit about the laws, culture and regulations that will apply to them when they are here.

One reason for this is that some tourists arrive in Phuket thinking they can do whatever they want because Thailand is free [of regulations]. The reality may be different from their expectations. For example, some tourists are not satisfied with their stay in Phuket because they heard that it would be easy to buy sex, but when they arrived, the reality on the ground didn't match their expectations.

Tourists should know their limits as well, and not engage in foolish behavior, like driving under the influence of alcohol.

I always study up on countries I intend to visit in order to learn which areas require extra caution. I have been to many places in various countries that have zones that are best avoided.

There are always good sides and bad sides to large cities. For example, if a tourist walks into the wrong zone of a big city, he might find himself in an area with drug activity. In Japan, certain areas are controlled by mafia gangs [yakuza]. So tourists should al-



Yotsavee Pornperaparn, 39, comes to Phuket to serve as superintendent of the Tourist Police regional headquarters in Phuket Town, after serving as deputy superintendent of the Royal Thai Police Crime Suppression Division Emergency Unit, which was responsible for dealing with crowd control during the riots in the capital in recent years.

ways read up on their destinations, much in the same way they check what the weather will be like.

Phuket is a well-known tourist destination, but now it has too many tourists for our tourist police to take care of. We have to manage tourist security through cooperation with other organizations.

Tourist Police must try, as part of their duty, to make tourists feel happy during their stay here. Of course we are always ready to make tourists happy, but I worry about my men being overworked with so few of them. We currently have just nine patrol officers, rotating in shifts of three.

I do not agree with the concept of police needing to be on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's impossible for anyone to work like that without exhaustion setting in, and poor performance

will inevitably result.

I just want them to do their jobs as best they can. They need days off to rest and relax so they will return to work refreshed and full of energy.

There are many problems in Phuket, so I am starting a plan to reduce them by setting up warning signs in different areas cautioning tourists of problems in that area.

For example, we will set up signs warning tourists of the risks they take when renting a jet-ski, such as the need to pay a lot of money in repairs if it is damaged during use.

The warning signs will be put in each place warning of the different problems that could happen there. As our number of officers is limited, hopefully these signs will help tourists understand the risks, so they can take the necessary steps to protect themselves.

Jet-ski enthusiasts, take notice of risks



TAKEN FOR A RIDE: Something is boiling under the surface.

YOU, jet-ski enthusiasts, could be unknowingly supporting illegal jet-ski businesses. The government is currently wrangling with certain operators to alleviate many of the problems jet-ski renters face.

Some operators have been scamming renters, demanding payment for pre-existing damages that weren't noticed by the renters until they were already out at sea. Renters have also been intimidated by thugs who coerced them into paying excessive amounts for damages.

On top of these "run-of-the-mill" scams, a huge conflict is brewing on Bang Tao Beach, where tourists are unwittingly using unregistered jet-skis.

Long story short, it's alleged that the new, illegal jet-skis belong to a foreigner using a Thai as a front man, and the other jet-ski operators won't stand for it. It seems as if they're prepared to use violence to deal with the new competitors. You could get caught in the crossfire.

The government is aware of

Island View

By Pim Yunyongkasamsuk

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

this situation and taking steps to resolve the issue, but ultimately the responsibility falls to jet-ski renters. After all, illegal jet-skis exist only to satisfy demand. If there's no demand for their services, there would be no incentive to start an illegal business to compete with the other registered operators.

Renters should be careful about who they rent from, and avoid doing business with shady operators. This will discourage illegal activity and prevent thuggery. When these operators find out what's hurting their "business", it could encourage them to register with the government and stop harassing tourists. The result? Jet-ski enthusiasts can continue enjoying their hobby of choice, and the government will have one less problem to worry about.

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

Plenty of water, but not a drop to drink

I wrote to you previously regarding the inability of Phuket Provincial Waterworks Authority to provide the Chalong area with water.

For the past month, we have had no water and have instead had to buy truck-loads of water.

Efforts to find out why they are unable to provide this service [supplying water] to its users go unanswered.

If they are unable to provide a service they should inform the area and leave, allowing a better managed supplier to provide the service.

Calls go unanswered seemingly due to embarrassment.

Michael Harrison, Chalong

Chartichai Meechai, Service Supervisor of Phuket Provincial Waterworks Authority replies:

Normally we do not have issues providing water, unless it is during the high season.

Some areas, such as certain parts of Chalong, Patong, Kata and



When the faucet runs dry it's time to stock up. Photo: Ryon Edwards

Karon, might not have enough water during high season because many tourists stay in those areas and use a great deal of water.

However, I am still not sure about the cause of your particular problem, because I don't know exactly where you live.

Please contact our office to in-

form us of your house address so we can verify the exact cause of your water issues. You can contact us by phone at 076-319 173 or email us at pisakc@pwa.co.th or come in and see us during office hours, which are Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm.

Send us your queries and we'll ask the right people to respond to them.

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Burmese builders building regulations

Are there any regulations as to where Burmese construction worker camps can be built? I live in SinSuk Thani in Thalang and to get to our house one has to drive through two security checkpoints.

Now, on one side between the two checkpoints is a big Burmese camp. Today, I noticed that all the trees had been cleared away on the other side of the road in preparation for what will be a new "village".

Do people have to apply for permits to build these villages, or can one just find any piece of

vacant land, clear away the trees and build there?

Graham MacMillan Thalang

Suchai Chaisriplai, Phuket Land Office Registration Department Chief, replies:

If a construction project is to be built at the site, the housing-estate owner might allow the Burmese workers to temporarily stay at the project site until the project is complete.

If that is the case, there is nothing illegal about Burmese workers staying on the land because the owner has agreed to the erection of the camp.

You can check with the housing-estate owner about your particular situation.

If the construction project has already been completed and the workers are still living at the site without the landowner's permission, that could be considered land encroachment.

If this happens to be the case, please inform us at 076-212103 or 076-213646, or come into our office, which is open Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm.

Google bridges the gap

The head of Google Thailand delves into consumer trends, market penetration, benchmarks, strategies and beyond...

By Steven Layne

AMID the fast paced "age of online" a bulk of local businesses have fallen behind a rapidly evolving consumer base, and companies need to catch up, says Ariya Banomyong, head of Google Thailand.

The country's first manager for the iconic IT giant was in Phuket last week and the *Gazette* had the privilege to pick his brain for an hour.

"According to recent marketing research conducted by Nielsen in Thailand, the average consumer spends 11 hours per week in front of the TV, but 17 hours on the computer," said Mr Ariya, who was born and raised in France and speaks four languages.

"Prime time is peak time. After coming home from work, you'd expect people to be watching TV - the news or soap operas - but they're increasingly on the internet.

"The modern consumer multi tasks, consuming traditional media and online media at the same time. The two types of media are complimentary. Traditional media is definitely not dead," he said.

Mr Ariya pointed out that a third of Thailand's population is online, compared to about 30% worldwide.

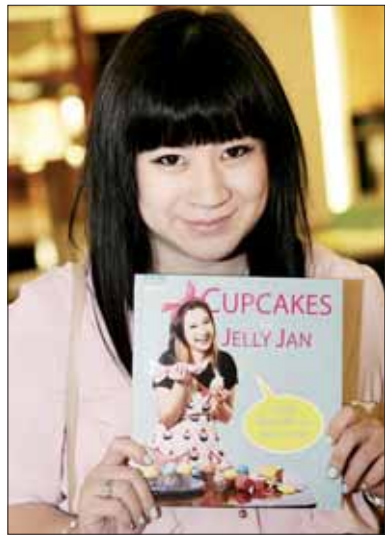
"This shows that internet penetration is not necessarily lagging in Thailand, even though broadband internet is still behind.

Ariya went on to highlight another booming trend of the last three years, which he says businesses would be wise not to ignore.

"The smart phone market has grown tremendously, with 28% of Thais owning one," he says.

Elaborating on what he calls the "Online - Offline link," Ariya said, "We find that when a product is launched using traditional media channels such as newspapers, TV and Radio spots, subsequent interest online is triggered.

"For example a new concept car is displayed at a car show in Japan or Abu Dhabi. Though it is not even available on the market, yet people in Thailand have heard about it offline and are already



Through GTBO, Jelly Jan went from cooking cupcakes in her kitchen to opening a shop at Siam Paragon

searching for it online.

"Using a free Google online tool called Insights for Search we can actually see the instant people began searching for a special keyword, like for example the infamous iPhone5 [which is not available yet] versus searches for the iPhone4, and can even track the search lifecycle in a country over time."

Ariya points out that most businesses realize they need to do something to catch up with con-

sumers but are not sure what to do.

"According to marketing research from the Consumer Commerce Barometer, on average 8 out of 10 consumers in Thailand are searching for local businesses, products and services.

"However only one out of 10 local businesses, products and services have a website," he said.

Indeed, businesses need to catch up with consumers.

Ariya continues: "By surveys we found that there are three main reasons why these companies don't have a website.

"In their perception, establishing a website is either very complicated, time consuming and/or costly.

"So, it has been our task to bridge the gap between these perceptions and actuality.

One such initiative is Google's GTBO [Get Thai Businesses Online], a program targeting local businesses in Thailand, mostly SMEs [Small and Medium Enterprises].

"Through a partnership with the government and other private sector organizations, participants can get a free website, domain hosting, email and web hosting for life.

"Now we have over 88,000 sites since the project launched in June last year, however only 7% of these are in the Southern region.

"Thus, we see a massive amount of opportunity and potential for the GTBO program for SMEs in the South.

Delving into market penetration beyond GTBO, Mr Ariya went on to highlight two products from among its offering of 70, that local businesses can benefit from now: Google+ Hangouts and Street View.

Hangouts are a one-to-many chat or conversation feature on Google+ which allows for remote teleconferencing.

"A recent example came about through a partnership with TRUE, who's 3G+ network enabled a community health center doctor in Nongsamong Village in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, 2 hours north of Bangkok, to use Hangouts to consult with a specialist to diagnose a difficult case.

But Google+ isn't just for connecting rural communities with healthcare, big brands are also gaining traction on what Google calls its' social platform.

"We recently launched Street View for three cities in Thailand: Phuket, Bangkok and Chiang Mai. We've gotten fantastic feedback from this program since we



TAKING CHARGE: Google country head Ariya Banomyong says that Phuket companies need to catch up with their consumers. Photo: Steve Layne

started driving to capture images across Thailand in September. Actually the week of the launch saw Street View become the most searched term in Thailand.

"Now companies in these cities can embed Street View onto their website. This allows companies, be it a hotel or restaurant, to show off the actual 360 view of their establishment's scenery and surrounding location.

"We are planning to launch

Speaking about the success of its past and present campaigns, Ariya said that establishing strategic partnerships has been integral.

For its GTBO campaign Google partnered with the Office of SME Promotion (OSMEP), Kasikorn Bank, the Thai eCommerce Association, Web Biz, Thai Post, and Dot Arai - the official domain registrar for Thailand.

According to research from AMI, prior to the GTBO launch an average of 20,000 new websites were launched in Thailand annually. Today, Dot Arai has effectively tripled that number with 88,000 businesses signed up and over 60,000 websites live and open for business.

"Almost any business can go online, with success stories ranging from a rice and curry shop to homemade cupcakes and even a

tailor made curtain business who went online to keep her business afloat during the floods.

"Our partners have delivered over 400,000 hours of in person training to help entrepreneurs take their first steps online. We're ready to demonstrate our strong support for the national goal of economic growth in 2012 and see Thai businesses continue to grow sustainably online and inspire others countries to do the same," he concludes.

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Companies should not ignore the growing smart phone market.

Street View in the other provinces, but this will take some time.

Meanwhile, in partnership with TAT, the "My Miracle Thailand" campaign will allow locals to contribute by suggesting special tourist attractions to feature on Street View.

"For this we'll use a Google Trike which is more suited for accessing certain sites that the Google Street View cars couldn't," he revealed.

Spectra watermakers to quench growing demand

One of the most common necessities taken for granted – both on and off Phuket's shores – is water. While officials onshore continue to discuss, debate and consider ways to ease the island's pressing shortage of the essential life-giving element, boat owners on the other hand seem to be immune from any such crises. After all, their water supply is unlimited and as long as the tools, expertise and technology are on hand, pure drinking water is only a pump away. Steven Layne reports:



Ilco Nijstad of YSE Marine Engineering says boats and watermakers are growing in size.



YSE Engineering staff member Lyn shows off a Spectra watermaker.

DEMAND for bigger and better watermakers has grown proportionally with the number and size of boats coming through Phuket's waters, explains

"The methods of purifying water on a boat are not much different from land-based desalinization plants. It all comes down to Reverse Osmosis and using high pressure to push water through a membrane or filtration system to separate impure particles from the water. The higher the concentration of salt or other particles in the water source, the more pressure and energy is needed to purify it," he continues.

"Seawater has a TDS [Total Dissolved Solids] rating of about 30,000 ppm [parts per million], while drinkable water needs to be less than 1,000 ppm.

"Our watermakers bring that level below 500 ppm. Bottled drinking water tends to be between 100 to 200 ppm," he said.

In the past eight years that YSE Marine has supplied Spectra water-makers in Phuket, two models continue to be best sellers.

Leon Bowles, another partner of YSE told

the *Gazette*, "We get the most orders for the Ventura 200 and the Cape Horn 330 – the number referring to the amount of gallons it is rated to produce in a single day, if operating 24 hours continuously."

Such models have a power rating of between 108 and 216 watts.

Leon himself has installed the 120 watt, Ventura 200 on his own 42-foot sailboat, which he will be enjoying on a sailing trip through Sumatra and Borneo when this story goes to press.

"There's not one standard model or system that works for everybody. The system needs to be tailored to each boat and its crews' needs" he said.

Indeed, boats and ships coming to and through Phuket are getting larger and so are their needs.

With its signature Clark pump, Spectra's top range model can produce up to 155 liters per hour, or more than 982 gallons

over 24 hours.

But, thanks to its revolutionary new Pearson pump, newer and larger models will be able to produce in excess of 400 liters per hour.

As the only fully authorized supplier, and factory trained servicer of spectra watermakers in Phuket, YSE Marine Engineering services and repairs all types and brands of watermakers.

"About 60% of our business is generated from the sale of spare parts and servicing, while 40% comes from new unit sales and installations," Ilco said.

Located at Boat Lagoon, YSE Marine also deals, installs and services Volvo Penta engines and a wide assortment of marine equipment. For more info see W: ysemarine.com

Do you have an interesting product or service to feature? email: swlayne@phuketgazette.net

1,000 shares of island's football club for sale

AS PART of the latest drive to spare the island's professional football club from dissolution, FC Phuket 1688 Co Ltd will offer 1,000 shares of the team for sale at 10,000 baht each.

Marking the launch of a campaign dubbed "Save FC Phuket", the announcement was made by team executives at a meeting held earlier this week at Mai Mon Seafood restaurant in Phuket Town.

"The target of 10 million baht will enable the team to compensate for necessary expenses in running the team for the remainder of the season," Paitoon "Ko Men" Chutimakornkul, club consultant told fans, media and investors.

Shareholders will receive a VIP season seat, limited edition FC Phuket jersey and other special services including pre and post match drinks and snacks, Ko Men said.

Club Director Soranan Sanae told the *Phuket Gazette* that the team's monthly expenses are about 1.7 mn baht, mostly to cover executives' and players' salaries.

Approximately 1.4mn or 80% of the monthly budget is to cover players' salaries.

"We want fans to participate in the survival and success of the team," Soranan said.

Advising the club in marketing matters, Director of Thai Premier League powerhouse SCG Muang Thong United, Ronnarit Suewaja revealed that the season goal is for Phuket to finish in the upper half of the rankings table.

"We aim for home game attendance to average 4,000 to 5,000

spectators, as it once was," he said.

Early in the season Muang Thong provided its own team to assist its "younger brother" with administration and marketing.

"FC Phuket needs a revival period of about four to five years for it to be able to balance its books.

"[Supporters] must accept that the first two years will entail profit losses of between 10

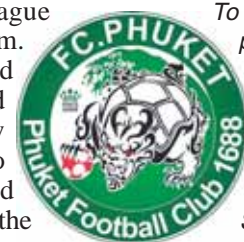
to 15mn baht per year.

"These finances ultimately fall on the table of the new president and administration team that will take over the team. Right now, there is a prominent figure in Phuket who is ready to step forward for the team but we are not ready to officially reveal details yet," he finishes.

Phuket now employs 25 play-

ers, far short of the league cap of 40 ballers per team.

With the anticipated takeover, fans were told that a number of new players will be hired on to the arsenal in the second leg of the season, raising the teams' monthly salary budget to at least 3mn baht.



FC Phuket was incorporated in 2009 and promoted in 2010.

To read about the club's prospective president and latest match report, see page 46. For inquiries about team shares or sponsorship channels, please call club director Soranan Sanae at +66 85 888 0501.

– Steven Layne

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Forecast: more clouds



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

“HEY, I’m not going to put my data on the internet”.

I don’t know how many times I’ve heard people in Phuket tell me that. But, while many people are rightfully concerned about privacy issues and the specter of Big Brother, the fact is that the demand for storage “in the cloud” is growing by leaps and bounds.

Two years ago there was only one big player. As of last week, we had the venerable Dropbox, Microsoft’s SkyDrive, Google Drive, Apple’s iCloud (which is a bit different), Amazon Cloud Drive – all of those from huge companies – SugarSync, Box (formerly Box.net), SpiderOak, and many smaller companies.

Facebook is rumored to be just a few weeks away from offering its own online storage.

What happened? People have discovered just how handy cloud storage can be.

I’m not talking about the mega-file uploading companies. Megaupload (which has been taken down, rightly or wrongly), Rapidshare, Hotfile, SoundCloud, and many others specialize in offering parking places for large files, and making it easy to download single files. They’re in a slightly different business.

The cloud storage I’m talking about is specifically designed to allow you to store data on the internet, and retrieve it from just about anywhere, on just about any kind of device – including a phone or tablet.

They also have varying degrees of interoperability and sharing so, for example, you can upload a file and have a dozen people take a look at it simultaneously.

Some cloud storage services (notably Google Drive) have associated programs (Google

Apps) that let two or more people edit the same file simultaneously.

The concerns I hear go something like this:

1. I have to have a working Internet connection.

2. The data can be taken or copied by law enforcement and local governments.

3. Programs at the cloud storage firm can scan my data.

4. Employees at the cloud storage firm can look at my data.

5. Somebody could break into the cloud storage site and steal my data.

Each of those points is quite correct. I’ll talk about them shortly.

On the plus side, a good cloud storage setup gives you:

- Offsite backup, that won’t get destroyed if your house or business burns down

- Access to your data from anywhere, using just about any imaginable kind of computer, including phones and tablets

- Controlled sharing, so you can password protect specific files or folders.

- Broadcast sharing from a “Public” folder, which anyone can see.

- Direct access from applications that run “in the cloud”. Google

Apps being a good example.

- And, almost all of the cloud storage services offer free packages, up to a certain size limit.

Before I give you an idea of which cloud storage services are available, and what differentiates them, let me tackle the concerns.

First, you have to be connected to the internet for it to work. Absolutely true, and there’s no way around it. If you use cloud storage only for backup, it’s sufficient to be connected whenever you want to back up your data or restore it.

Some of the services have ways to cache data on your computer when, say, you’re going to be on an airplane. But in general, yep, you have to be online.

Second, yes, the data can be



CUMULUS COWARDICE: Many people share some fears about cloud file sharing. Photo: Ba-sicGov Systems

taken by the courts. The big cloud storage companies get several court orders a day. The storage company’s legal staff takes a look, and if it’s a valid order, your data gets sent to the cops. Or the feds. Or the tax people.

Moral of the story: if you’re going to store data that you don’t want to appear in a certain British tabloid, it would be smart to encrypt the file before you store it.

Both Word and Excel 2007 and later use very effective encryption techniques. Couple that with a strong password, and your data isn’t going anywhere soon. Unless, of course, you’re required by the court to give up the password.

Third, yes, it’s true. Cloud storage company programs can see your data. There’s been a big push in the past few months to hold the companies responsible for storing copyrighted material. If you upload a pirate copy of Men in Black 3, the people who hold the copyright are going to get upset.

Different cloud storage companies handle the task differently, but with the takedown of Megaupload in January, everybody is concerned about incurring the wrath of the MPAA and RIAA, the defenders of movie and music copyrights.

The net result is that most cloud storage companies will be performing routine scans – either now or in the not-too-distant future – to see if you’re trying to upload something that’s copyright protected.

Fourth, it’s also true that certain cloud storage company employees can see your data. They have to be able to see your data, in order to comply with court orders. Does that mean Billy the intern can look at your financial data, or your family photos? Well, no. It’s more complicated than that.

Every cloud storage company has very strict, logged and monitored rules for who can authorize, and who can view, customer data. Am I, personally, absolutely sure that every company obeys all of its rules? No, not at all. But

I don’t think my information is interesting enough to draw much attention from Billy – unless he’s trying to swipe the manuscript of my next book.

The fifth point – that somebody could break in and steal the data – is true, but probably isn’t much of a concern. Each of the cloud storage services scrambles its data, and it’d be very difficult for anyone to break in, steal, and then decrypt the stolen data. Could it happen? Sure. Will I lose sleep over it? Nah.

So, which cloud storage service is best? Tough question. Personally, I use four of them – different services for different purposes. Dropbox, Microsoft SkyDrive and Google Drive all have programs

‘Every cloud storage company has very strict, logged and monitored rules for who can authorize, and who can view, customer data.’

that you run on your PC or Mac to set up folders that get shared.

Drag a file into the shared folder, and it appears on all of the computers you have connected (with a password) to the shared folder. Go on the web, log on to the site, and your data’s available there, too. Install an app on your iPhone, Android or Blackberry phone or tablet, and the data’s there as well.

Dropbox (dropbox.com) offers 2 GB free storage, with 50 GB for US\$99/year. It’s very easy to use, reliable, and fast. I use it for synchronizing business files across our different bakery and shop locations. It also connects to Facebook, to retrieve or post pictures.

SkyDrive (skydrive.com) has 7 GB free storage, with 50 GB for US\$25/year. It works well with Office Web Apps, the free, stunted versions of Word, Excel, Power Point and OneNote. Nobody in their right mind would use the Office Web Apps to get any “real” work done, but they’re handy if you’re on the road. It works very well with photos. SkyDrive also has a feature called “fetch” that lets you go onto computers that are connected to the shared folder, and copy files into the shared folder – if you left home and your PC is still on. SkyDrive connects to Facebook as well.

Google Drive (drive.google.com)

has 5 GB of free storage, with 100 GB for US\$60 year. Google Drive isn’t as slick as the other two, and there’s no Facebook connection, but it works well enough.

There’s an optical character recognition facility, and the ability to launch web apps directly. Most of all, it’s fall-down simple to use Google Drive with Google Apps, which includes Gmail, and several not-very-compatible writing and spreadsheet apps.

The big drawing point to Google Apps: it lets you use your own domain name (it could be something like khunwoody.com or phuketgazette.net) while you run all of your email through Gmail.

I also use Apple’s iCloud, but it’s really intended to be an Apple-centric service. It works great with iPads and iPhones and even my new Mac, but it’s not really set up for open data sharing.

The other services have specific strong points. Amazon Cloud Drive ties in with Amazon purchases and the Kindle (but not much else). SugarSync lets you synchronize arbitrary folders on your PC. Box is designed for large companies. SpiderOak is the most secure of the bunch: it doesn’t keep the keys to your files, and unlike the other services in this review, it’s impossible for SpiderOak to see your files.

Like so many other things in the PC business, cloud storage is changing very, very rapidly. It’s built in to Windows. But that’s another story, for another time.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions every other Wednesday afternoon, from 1 to 3pm. If you have a Windows problem, drop by, or come to one of our free Sunday morning roundtables at Sandwich Shoppe Chalung. Details in the Events Calendar. Sponsored by the Phuket Gazette and Khun Woody’s Sandwich Shoppes.

Live Wire is *Phuket Gazette* columnist Woody Leonhard’s weekly snapshot of all things internet in Phuket. Shoot him mail at Woody@KhunWoody.com, follow him on Twitter, @PhuketLiveWire, or “like” his page at facebook.com/SandwichShoppes.



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Markets: Buyer beware

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

I RECENTLY read an article by Ian Lance about 13 reasons why today's markets are, in a word, (add your favorite expletive here). The article hit the nail on the head so well that I thought I would steal the best 10 of them for my column this week.

The truth is that many investors do not fully comprehend exactly how precarious things have become, and why the current investment environment is still a minefield.

The recent rise in the stock market has many feeling good, but the underlying fundamentals are still horrible:

"1. The financial situation of many developed-economy governments, has never been worse yet the rates at which they can borrow money have never been lower. The US has 3.3 times more debt outstanding than a decade ago and yet the yield demanded by the market has fallen from 6.1 per cent to 2.0 per cent

2. Investors are lapping up corporate bonds (P&G 10 year at 2.3 per cent and McDonalds 30 year at 3.7 per cent) whilst selling the same companies equity where the well covered

equity dividend yield is higher than the corporate bond yield.

3. Bond yields are below 2 per cent indicating that there is a very low probability of inflation and a high probability we are turning Japanese. Meanwhile, gold races onwards and upwards as central bank money printing points to a probability of inflation.

4. Bond yields are at all time lows, and no one wants to borrow money even at this rate but central banks keep spending billions to try to get rates down just a little bit more.

5. Corporate earnings are at their all time highs, are strongly mean reverting and in the long run grow at about 5 per cent nominal. So, of course for this year, the sell side forecasts 10 per cent growth and fund managers and strategists continue to talk about how cheap equities look on one year forward P/Es.

6. The average holding period for UK equity has fallen from 10 years in the 1950's to 22 SECONDS! Note to David Cameron, if you are expecting shareholders to exert greater influence on management remuneration, owning a stock for 22 seconds makes attending the AGM quite tricky.

7. The ECB, backed by European sovereign states, is lending money to European banks at 1 per cent so that the European banks can lend money to sovereigns by buying government bonds of European states or putting it back on deposit with the ECB. Everyone

seems to think this is great but when Bernie Madoff did it he was arrested.

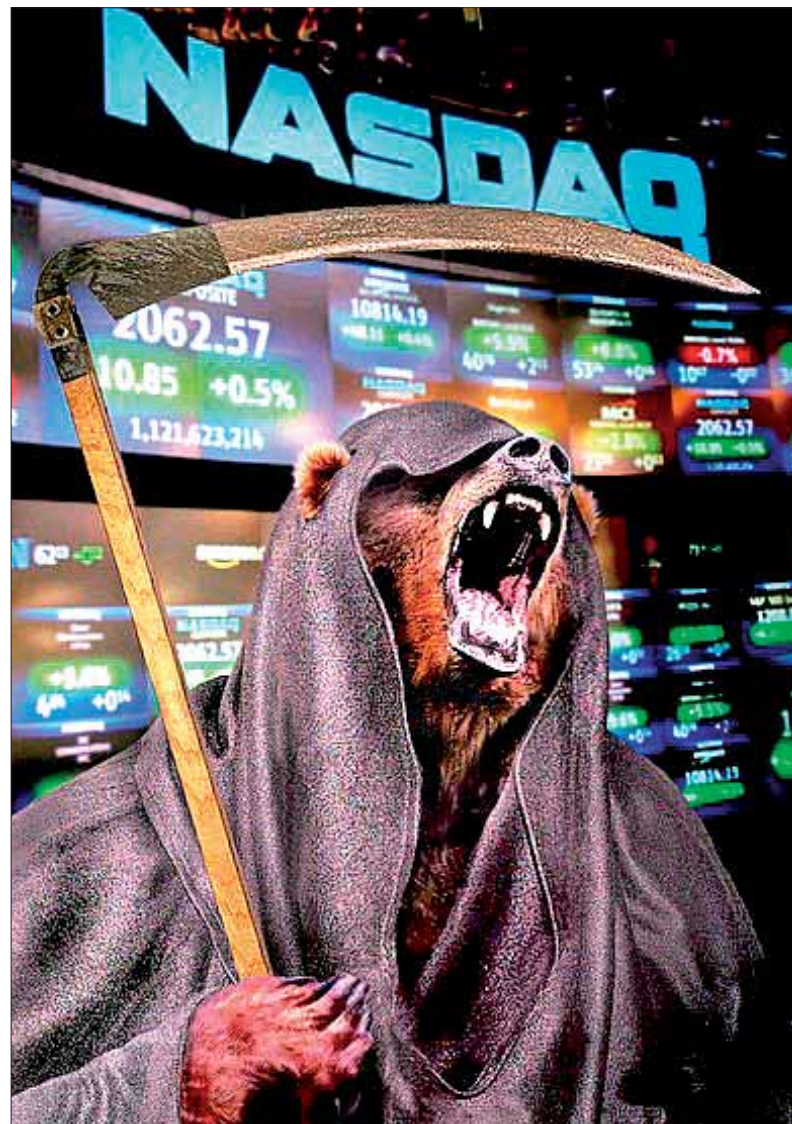
8. During the credit crisis ratings agencies rated over 50,000 subprime CDOs as AAA and markets still hang on their every word.

9. Luxury goods used to be the first thing to go in an economic decline whilst basics would hold up. But now we have Tesco posting their worst sales for 20 years whilst Burberry grow sales at 20 per cent and new orders of Bentleys are up 50 per cent.

10. The vast majority of economists and strategists have proved hopeless at forecasting anything yet continue to be over confident in their ability to predict the future."

I would like to thank Ian Lance for compiling these bits into a concise list, which really paints a vivid picture of a global economy that still has some more pain to go through before we are back to letting the good times roll. Markets crash because people panic.

People generally panic because the markets have gotten too far ahead of themselves and reality comes to roost when many of the illusions that they have collectively held get proven false. I am not saying the markets are going to crash tomorrow, but please be careful about being too aggressive, as the fundamentals still appear unhealthy.



BEWARE THE BEAR: Is another crisis around the corner? Photo: Mark Rain

David Mayes holds an MBA and lives in Phuket. He provides wealth management services to a range of expatriates around the globe,

specializing in UK pension transfers. He can be reached by email at: david.m@faramond.com or by phone at: 0853358573

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Not as smelly as you think



CROWN OF THORNS: To some people the 'King of Fruits' raises a few prickly opinions. Photo: Kazue Asano

By Orawin Narabal

SEREYMONY Or is on a mission. The Director of Food and Beverage at Thanyapura's DiVine Restaurant wants to rehabilitate the reputation of Asia's much-maligned king of fruits – the durian.

"As I arrived here in January I was thinking of doing some special promotions once a month that should be related to local produce. In February we did a coconut festival and last month was the Phuket Fish Market. This month, I came up with durian," he explained.

Unique to Southeast Asia, the durian is easily recognizable for its thick, spiky rind. When fully ripe, its flesh has a creamy texture and unique taste. But it is the durian's unique smell that many people remember best. Pungent hardly describes it.

Durian lovers will often argue that, once you get past the fruit's foul aroma, the buttery sweet flavour of its flesh makes it all worthwhile. But this has not stopped durian from being banned from many hotels, public transport and other areas where its

pong would be bad for business.

"I haven't heard of any restaurants or hotels in Phuket that ever arranged a durian dish promotion," Mr Or said.

"But in our place it is totally different. We don't have much of a problem with its smell since our restaurant is stand-alone, so we have no concern that the smell will bother people in the areas around us."

Having worked in Cambodia, prior to his appointment at Thanyapura, Mr Or has a unique insight into the fruit. "It's an amazing fruit. It has the most distinctive odor but, when you cook it or use it as an ingredient, it is not as smelly as you think."

Even so, convincing his co-workers that they should have a Durian Festival wasn't easy. "When everybody found out they were surprised and said: 'Oh no'. They were afraid of a durian promotion because they worried that the customers might not like it. I posted about our promotion and benefit of durian on the restaurant's Facebook page and I started to see comments, like 'but it stinks!'"

"We did face some difficulties [with the smell] during the cooking process. Our kitchen is an open kitchen, so what we have to do is to cook the durian somewhere else, then bring it inside the restaurant to serve to the customers," Mr Or explained.

In Thailand, durian season runs from mid-April to mid-June, when there are many different varieties on the market. Each, to the connoisseur, has its own distinctive taste characteristics. Some like the more bitter varieties, others prefer the sweeter ones. Some varieties have drier flesh, oth-



LOOK, DON'T SMELL: DiVine restaurant's dishes for the upcoming Durian Festival will create taste sensations without the controversial, pungent smell associated with durian. Photos: Orawin Narabal



MAN WITH A PLAN: Sereymony Or.



Sathaporn Butmeechai.

ers have a more creamy and moist texture. "There are so many types of durian, in order to create every special recipe, we had to try them all first," DiVine Restaurant's Chief of Operations, Sathaporn Butmeechai, told the Gazette.

"Some dishes use only raw durian, some are with fully ripe, some with half ripe. We spent around two weeks trying. We even boiled baby durians, which are just a knot of the thorns, and tried them to see if they can be used in any of our dishes."

People are most familiar with durian as a dessert, but at DiVine's Durian Festival they can enjoy a new range of flavors, such as durian and chicken cream soup; BBQ pork loin with durian light curry sauce; spicy prawn, durian and pomalo Thai salad. There will also be a range of durian-inspired desserts, including durian cake, durian crème brûlée, durian cheese cake and durian mousse.

"Durian is naturally sweet, so when we cook it, the sweet taste can be outstanding. Sometimes we have to find a way to drop [the sweetness] down and

create a way to add other tastes, such as sour, salty or spicy to make a nice dish," Mr Sathaporn added.

"To those who prefer the raw fish, I would recommend trying the Coriander

pesto marinated long fin tuna tartar and roast capsicum with durian salsa. The sashimi-grade tuna will be a burst of freshness in your mouth. If Thai cuisine is your favourite, a must try is the massaman chicken with young durian and shallot. The combination of flavors goes really well with durian," he explained.

Experience the unique taste of Asia's King of Fruits at the Durian Festival at DiVine Restaurant, Thanyapura. May 21-27 from 6.30 pm-10 pm in a buffet style at 780 baht per person.

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WILD THING: Affirm your place among today's fashionistas. Photo: Maegan Tintari



MAKING A SPLASH: A few red accessories will help transform even the simplest outfit. Photo: Abby McMillen

By Abby McMillen

WHEN life comes at you fast, don't get held up by the dreaded "What to Wear?!" question. Be prepared with quick fixes to glamorize any outfit. Having some key accessories on hand will ensure your wardrobe is ready to rise to any occasion. By following these fashionable trends, you'll be a standout at any event.

Gain some height:

Slipping on a pair of heels is the quickest way to dress up anything you're wearing. Add instant sophistication to jeans and a blazer, or transform a daytime dress for evening events.

Many women find extra confidence from the added inches

and walk with a bit more poise.

Heels make your legs look elongated and toned – a perfect way to add polish to any cocktail dress.

Include metallics: Nothing gives you on-the-spot shine like a little metal!

Gold, silver and bronze accents inject immediate allure and highlight your stylish side.

There are numerous ways to incorporate these metal tones. Go

for an over-sized gold necklace or bangle when wearing a little black dress. The color combination is fool proof, and you'll be left looking extra luxurious. Carrying a posh metallic clutch is a chic substitute for any handbag.

Add a splash of red:

If you're looking for a way to spice up your look, why not try a hint of red?

Integrating a few red accessories will help transform even the simplest outfit into a knockout statement.

resistible finish to any look.

Or, if you prefer something a bit more alternative, hot pink or bright orange will certainly turn some heads!

Don an over-sized cocktail ring:

This special occasion piece is not only fun, it's effortless.

A large statement ring draws instant attention and is an easy way to show off your personal style. A little boost of bling is bound to take your look to another level.

This unique accessory will give any ensemble a regal feel and hopefully even provoke a compliment or two.

Take a walk on the wild side:

A touch of animal print can give your outfit a playful boost and a flirty impact. This trend tells the world you're fearless and spontaneous. Sport a jacket with leopard lining or don a zebra striped scarf. Snake skin detailing on a belt or wallet, will affirm your place among today's fashionistas. If cheetahs aren't your speed, opt for something equally as exotic, like large peacock feather earrings or tortoise shell sunnies.

Remember that confidence is the greatest accessory and your smile will be right there when you need it.



A LITTLE BOOST OF BLING: Show off your personal style. This special occasion piece is not only fun, it is also effortless. Photo: Christina Rutz



A pair of heels is the quickest way to dress up anything. Photo: Mark Usram



METAL MANIA: An assortment of gold, silver and bronze will give you that, 'on the spot shine' you've been looking for. Photo: Abby McMillen

in handy for a night on the town. Slip on a little scarlet lipstick or paint your nails crimson for an ir-

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FOR A NIGHT OUT: The Spanish shawl (*Flabellina iodinea*). Photo: jkirhart35EMERALD: *Nembrotha kubaryana*, identified in 1877 by Rudolph Bergh a Danish medical doctor. Photo: Elias Levy

Branching out with colorful nudibranchs

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

PERHAPS it's embarrassing, but I first got involved in diving because of the lure of the unknown treasures, which I "knew" were lying at my feet, just below the surface.

I wanted to discover statues, gold, porcelain, all those precious and valuable objects that were lost to humanity. However, a couple archaeological ethics classes and museum practicum courses managed to loot me of being so unconscionable when diving.

So now I find myself searching among the corals and sea walls for a different sort of elegant

treasure – nudibranchs.

Discovering a blue dragon nudibranch or a blue ocean slug hidden among the corals is like finding a tiny gem (not all are so small), a living sapphire. All 3,000 species of these shell-less mollusks seem to have been created during a massive acid trip. Just look at their wild patterning, bright colors and ornate bodies and explain it another way. But no matter what brought them to their present form, such biological creativity has certainly made them jewels of the sea.

In addition to being tantalizingly beautiful, these creatures seem to have the perfect distribution in a reef; they are neither so common that divers begin to overlook them as "standard sights", nor are they so rare that on the great majority

of dives they can't be uncovered.

It's partly the searching, the discovery that draws divers to this clad (subspecies) of sea slug – it taps into many divers' desire to be treasure hunters.

Though many of these carnivorous jelly-bodied creatures are accidentally overlooked during a dive, they are not an ignored spectacle by any means. Almost every Dive Master and Dive Instructor works nudibranchs into their dive briefing; it sounds something like this:

"Hopefully we'll see at least one leopard shark [substitute manta ray, whale shark, turtle or large napoleon wrasse], but there are no guarantees. So, we'll keep our eyes peeled, but let's stay close to the bottom [or wall] and see if we can't uncover a couple interesting nudibranchs."

The beauty about diving at the end of the season (which admittedly has already arrived and passed) is that by this time most dive professionals have their act down pat, which produces great dives and usually includes them swimming by several nice coral heads that have been identified as "nudibranch prone".

However, being shown a nudibranch is not the same as discovering one. The experience is parallel to seeing a piece of blue and white Ming Dynasty porcelain in a museum, when compared to diving in the Gulf of Thailand and uncovering one yourself, perhaps I exaggerate.

The exotic nature of these creatures is intimately connected with their name, which is derived from the Latin word *nudus* (naked) and the Greek word *branchia* (gills). Though their brightly col-



SAPPHIRES, RUBIES and TOPAZ – OH MY: Clockwise from top left: a Blue ocean slug (*Glaucus atlanticus*). Photo: Greg The Busker; a red nudibranch shot in the Philippines last year. Photo: mattk1979; a Blue sea dragon (*Pteraeolidia ianathina*). Photo: Stephen Childs; Varicose Phyllidia. Photo: quinet

ored bodies are a draw, it is their "naked gills" which take on a variety of flamboyantly feathery and horned shapes that make them almost extraterrestrial.

With 3,000 known species already identified, and more



Photo: KraftyMiles

being identified regularly in warm, shallow tropical waters (sound like familiar diving conditions to you?) it is impossible to stem the desire to search for them... because what if you were the next person to uncover a new species – right here in the Andaman Sea?

If you have general questions about scuba diving or freediving in the Greater Phuket region, you can contact me at anytime at Isaac@Phuketgazette.net

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In a league of their own



BON APPETIT: At five o'clock Corry and Marc's house turns into a high-class restaurant. Photos: Stephen Audigier



OPULENCE: The décor is an eclectic mix of European and Asia influences.

On the Menu

By Sam Wilko

THERE'S a restaurant experience in Kathu that is uncannily like dining in someone's front room; largely because it is in someone's front room.

The restaurant in question is Royale Nam Tok (RNT) hosted by Corry Ringoet and Marc De Schriyver, (a Belgian partnership) who, after having enjoyed 20 years of success operating their Antwerp restaurant, *De Tafeljoncker* moved lock, stock and barrel to Phuket, built a house, installed a professional kitchen and set up business.

Yes, you read that right: six years ago Corry and Marc moved the entire contents of their restaurant from Belgium to Phuket in three shipping containers. As a result, it's a stupendously unusual set up featuring fine dining surrounded by Flemish opulence, a veritable glittering shrine to "chic-kitsch" as Corry puts it. If you think the Tamachart Restaurant in Phuket Town is *originale*, as the French so diplomatically put it, this place certainly drop-kicks it into a cocked hat with ease.

This is, in effect, Corry and Marc's house until five o'clock every day, when it turns into a high-class restaurant and then morphs back into their abode once the last customer has left. Just glancing round the place it's hard to fully take in all the décor and ornaments in one go and I certainly don't risk any brusque movements, not wanting to knock a 20,000 baht vase to the floor or stumble over the antique harmonium in the corner.

Speaking of things musical, just how on Earth piped-in REM sung to Gregorian monk chants blend effortlessly with Flemish period

pieces is quite beyond my ken, but it does, sort of, at least after a vodka martini.

Then again, at this stage of exploring this unique restaurant, I'm so taken in by the extraordinary décor that if Hergé himself had wandered through, puffing on a made-in-Dublin Peterson's meerschaum pipe, closely followed by his Belgian creations Tin Tin, Snowy, and a whisky-bottle-toting Captain Haddock, I wouldn't have batted an eyelid. The cuisine here is predominantly "Hi-So French" with tinges of Asian fusion.

So no *pommes frites* with mayonnaise in sight, but there's delicious beef *carpaccio* with homemade pesto sauce, toasted Swiss Gruyère, endives with Madras curry and homemade whole-wheat bread with *rillettes de canard* for starters that have Stephen the cameraman in seventh heaven. Marc decants a young Chilean merlot, one of the many varied choices on the happy juice list, and we tuck into an unfortunate Canadian lobster (alive, happy and well when we arrived) and homemade duck terrine served with homemade passion fruit marmalade.

I don't know how many readers have enjoyed fine dining surrounded by Flemish-Thai décor on a hot tropical night but just in case you haven't, I heartily recommend it to make your life that much richer. Mains come in the form of parrot fish in saffron sauce and a Black Angus beef steak followed by a cheese trolley and raspberry sorbet.

The devil's in the details here, in the tiny silver cocktail sticks, silver serviette holders, cooled and scented towels, eclectic décor and excellent service. This all sets it apart in a class of its own, as no doubt the award-winning *De Tafeljoncker* did in Antwerp. After all, that move

must have cost a lot of cash...

There is, quite simply, nothing else like Royale Nam Tok in Phuket and I very much doubt that there ever will be anything to match it in the future. After all, anyone who can marry classy kitsch with fine dining deserves a round of applause. Take a bow, Corry and Marc.

Even though it's pricey there is no service charge at Royale Nam Tok, neither does the restaurant offer commissions to tuk-tuk drivers. A fittingly rich set menu will cost each diner somewhere in the region of seventeen-hundred baht. There is also an à la carte menu.

Royale Nam Tok. Soi Nam Tok (take the well-signed road towards the Kathu Waterfall) Tel: 0872637327. Closed on Sundays.



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Illuminating a lavish lifestyle

Aedas global CEO Dave Roberts' multi-million dollar Rawai villa gets exposed



THE LIGHT OF LIFE: In order to get the correct balance of light one needs to consider the whole lighting vista, in other words every light source you can see at any moment in time from any location.

LUXURY living

By Steven Layne

FOSTERING the ultimate contemporary tropical lifestyle, Phuket is home to an array of lavish properties, built and owned by some of the wealthiest and most accomplished individuals on the planet.

One such property is a holiday home on the south of the island that belongs to Dave Roberts, global CEO of leading international architectural firm Aedas.

While ordinary guests might feel special if escorted home in a limo, David is the type of VIP who prefers to board his helicopter upon clearing immigration at Phuket airport.

Valued at no less than 200 million baht, his villa was built on a spacious 5.25 rai, or about 8,400 square meter plot of prime real estate in Rawai.

The main house spans 1,731 sqm, comprising five bedrooms, seven bathrooms, three open-living spaces, maids' quarters, a dining room, two kitchens, study-office, library and wine cellar.

Interior and exterior designs utilize only the most premium, raw materials with its floor decking, ceiling, and furniture all constructed of teak wood.

In addition to a separate monitor room and staff zone area, special facilities include a helipad (where else did you think he landed it?), cinema, snooker room, gym, car parking for 13 vehicles, a tennis court, steam room, Sala, swimming pool and a 3,255 sqm, 6-hole golf course.

Upon entering into the open living area from the front entrance you are presented with some magnificent Thai artifacts, plantation ponds with tropical fish, and general entertainment art, including a framed Rolling Stone (Keith Rogers) signed guitar.

"I spend much of my time entertaining in the evenings at home. Good lighting is essential for this," David notes.

With so many rooms and spaces to light up once the sun goes down, David was keen to work with one of the island's most savvy and longest-established lighting designers.

"This is my 4th private villa in Asia that I have worked on with Andaman Lighting Systems (ALS). I found them to be inspirational, producing interesting lighting effects, which have made the best of the various art works and architectural features of my properties. The lighting in some of my spaces is art in itself"

The scope of ALS' work on the villa was design and supply of all lighting equipment; namely, architectural light fittings, decorative light fittings and lighting controls.

Leading the ALS team on the project, Ian Potter explained, "In order to get the correct balance of light one needs to consider the whole lighting vista, in other words every light source you can see at



FINE FLIX: The villa has its own cinema, snooker room and helipad.



SACRED SPACES: The villa's lighting designers, interior designers and architects collaborated closely to ensure an outstanding end result.

any moment in time from any location. As a lighting designer, this 3D image has to be created in the designers head from two dimensional drawings before anything is done."

The villa's ground floor open living space consists of a lounge area and a bar. During the day time, enough natural daylight floods this area, so the use of artificial light is not needed.

Come dusk, this is where the automated lighting system comes to shine, literally. The lighting layout consists of a center chandelier which is carefully chosen with wall lights, down-lights over the bar and coffers running the perimeter of the room.

By activating one button on the control panel, all lounge area lights gracefully fade up to a pleasing scene. Time to dine; push another button and the lighting emphasis fades from the bar, as the dining table and surrounding artwork become brighter.

Ian told the *Gazette* that in creating an inspirational lighting design his firm carefully studied each room of the mansion.

"It was very important that we interacted with the interior designers and architects, as on a few occasions, we had to alter the structural design and move furniture so that the lighting design would work as we envisaged. The custom-designed light fittings were developed from traditional Thai

concepts to compliment the oriental feel of the property," he said.

The list of lighting fittings incorporated throughout the premises include down-lights, up-lights, wall lights, custom designed fittings, coffer lighting, underwater-lighting, game room lighting for the snooker table, mirror lights, picture lights and fiber optic star effect ceiling lights in the cinema.

All of the villa's internal, external and landscape lighting, except the back of house and bedside table lamps, are controlled by a lighting automation system, manufactured by Dynalite, which is owned by Philips.

Where automation is utilized, light switches are replaced by a control panel. To protect such assets, the villa is incorporated with a state of the art security system, which also requires lighting to reach its potential.

"The landscape area is fitted with movement detection cameras. If somebody was to trespass, the cameras will detect this and through interfaces with the lighting controls call a lighting scene in the relevant area so the intruder can be seen.

"The front entrance is fitted with drive-over cameras and drive-over light fittings; again, these fittings interact with each other so that detection of movement by the in-ground camera will activate the lighting so that security can monitor passing vehicles," explained Ian.

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Let Tobi mind your brain

Last week's first Phuket Health and Fitness Festival featured a number of resident experts such as Tobias Warzinek who started the Phuket Meditation Center (PMC) three years ago. Here he shares with us his views on meditation.

By Marc Mulloy

PHUKET Gazette: So what exactly is meditation?

Tobi Warzinak: Meditation has been defined as an effort that puts the mind into a wholesome state. Meditation is ideally an effort that makes yourself and others happy – yes, it's that simple!

What are you covering in your Introduction to meditation seminar?

I will speak about the theory of meditation as I personally think it is an area not often covered. Many people talk about the practical applications of meditation but not the theory. From the viewpoint of Tibetan Buddhism but in a way accessible to every one.

You are specialized in Tibetan Buddhist meditation but how many meditations are there?

Really there are countless techniques around the world. There is an abundance of culture, preferences and education. Therefore there is an abundance of practices. You should choose from techniques that will help you to achieve your goals. Generally speaking there are two divisions we could give. There is analytical meditation and concentrative meditation. All meditation techniques in the world could fit in either category.

Our main background and influence is Tibetan Buddhism with techniques and methods for mental training finding their unique origin in the Himalayan mountains. Tibetan Buddhism derives roots from Indian Tantric Buddhist schools and is therefore characterized by rituals, mantras, mudras, mandalas, complex visualizations, meditations on the subtle energy system of the body and initiations as well as tantric vows. Tibetan meditation is therefore almost always Buddhist Meditation based on Ethics (*Shila*), Concentration (*Samadhi*) and Insight-Wisdom (*Prajna*).

To explain it in short, Tibetan meditations are all about a proper understanding of suffering, renunciation, compassion and liberation for the sake of all living beings.

What do all techniques have in common?

I would say it is the training of the mind. Without going into words like enlightened or awakened I would say making an effort to put the mind into a positive state. Any state that results in more happiness and improves the quality of life.

Do some people find it easier than others to meditate?

Yes, some people have more access and for them it's very natural and fluid and some people have no interest. Interest and determination are important to succeed on the meditation path. The best time to meditate is in the morning when your energy is at its peak.

Who comes to your Meditation Center?

I find that we attract a lot of people who want to learn the basics but without sacrificing comfort. If you were to learn meditation in a monastery in Thailand it is really hard and might put you off. I am one of our best customers as the primary reason for starting the center was so that I could meditate more. Meditating with others is helpful to me too as it helps me

to focus and evolve. It is also beneficial for everyone to meditate in a group to get feedback and to hear the questions and answers people have. The ben-

efits that we all receive is a reduction of stress and being able to control emotions. Some even get to a level where they can control reality by controlling their own mind but this is rare. A great Indian master said that "if you understand the mind you understand everything".

What about the physical benefits?

Meditation is very useful to overcome stress related illnesses such as insomnia and is also a great tool to overcome addictions, because it directly changes the root of the problems and not just the symptoms.

This is the first Health and Fitness Festival in Phuket, do you think it is a good idea?

Yes definitely, As Phuket becomes more of a hub for alternative medicine and spas and such, I feel mental fitness is often overlooked. We need to train the mind just as we do with the body. If we learn to nurture the mind the world becomes a better place. If we know the right techniques to make ourselves happy then this is the best contribution we can make to society. For me it makes life meaningful and is what makes a human being a human being.

The Phuket Meditation Center is situated at 69/509, Moo 1, Tambon Chalong. For more information visit W: phuket-meditation.com or call Tobi or Parn on 087 2797655. E: info@phuket-meditation.com



YIN AND YANG: Tobi and his partner Parn started the Phuket Meditation Center in 2009 and offer retreats, Qi Gong training and daily meditation sessions. Photo: Marc Mulloy

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Don't stop the party



STACY ANN FERGUSON: Mega-superstar 'Fergie' dances on stage. Photo: Jorge Mejia Peralta

By Chris Hudon

AFTER a friend gave me the Black Eyed Peas, *The Beginning: Deluxe Edition*, it took a while before I got around to listening to it. But I'm glad I did. Some bands you either love or hate. You know the kind. Mention them and one person says, "They suck," and another says, "I love them". In my experience the Black Eyed Peas is one such band.

I've seen them live twice now and to be honest I wasn't very impressed. They put on a huge stage show with intricate costumes, fancy lighting, pyrotechnics and scores of back up dancers, but it lacks the

raw element I love in so many bands. I say this only because you should know, I'm not exactly a die hard BEP fan.

My first listen was what I expected. Mostly club tunes of high production-value, thumping back-beats and admittedly catchy hooks. The mega-hit single 'Dirty Bit' is included on this edition of the album. The kind of music BEP makes isn't for everyone but it does have its place. For me, that place is when I'm driving home from work (I put it on to get pumped up for the weekend).

After listening to the whole album a few times, I noticed some really creative elements that remind me why the Black Eyed Peas are often referred to as such an innovative band. Aside from being well produced, the tracks transition into one another seamlessly and spotlight individual elements of the band at different times.

Of course, everyone tends to focus on superstar Fergie, but exposed sections of the music featuring other members of the band were a real treat at times. A few tracks I found particularly interesting were 'Fashion Beats', 'Own It' and 'The Best One Yet'. These songs each have open sections that lead into a thumping baseline and experiment with fusing elements from other genres together into the classic BEP sound.

The song 'Fashion Beats' has a vintage 1980s Madonna feel with a certain *très chic* element, and 'The Coming' has a chorus of singers in the middle that reminds you of the Carnival of Brazil. In 'Own it', the piano and pop lead together give an almost 'Akon-esque' vibe, while retaining a sense of the band. All in all, every song isn't a hit but then again few albums were ever produced where that was the case. *The Beginning: Deluxe Edition* has at least two top singles and some under-appreciated work as well.

Obviously, if country music is your thing, this isn't for you. But, if you like lively club beats from time to time then this is a must-have for your party.



Taboo (left) and Will.i.am (right), two of the group's rappers, perform at the 'E.N.D. World Tour' in November 2010, Sao Paulo Brazil. Photo: Focka



The Black Eyed Peas perform in front of thousands of Parisians in 2009. Photo: Nicolas Genin



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360 turns over new leaf

Film

Lead actors: Anthony Hopkins, Jude Law, Rachel Weisz, Ben Foster
Director: Fernando Meirelles
Genre: Drama/Romance
Phuket release date: April 19

INSPIRED by Arthur Schnitzler's classic *La Ronde*, screenwriter Peter Morgan and director Fernando Meirelles combine a modern and dynamic *roundelay* of stories into one, linking characters from different cities and countries in a vivid, suspenseful and deeply moving tale of love in the 21st century.

Starting in Vienna, the film beautifully weaves scenes of Paris, London, Bratislava, Rio, Denver and Phoenix into a single, mesmerizing narrative.

360 is very multi-threaded, and there are 8-10 "main" characters equally in focus. Many of them are played by relatively unknown actors who are not native English speakers.



STAR STRUCK: Rachel Weisz, Jude Law and Anthony Hopkins star in 360.

Each character is multicultural or itinerant in one way or another, and connected to a few other characters as though they were international flight hubs.

Many modes of transportation are cleverly used as contact points or transition points for those characters. Although it's sometimes very hard to grasp all the relationships at once, different characters, languages and locations make watching this film an interesting

experience nonetheless.

Out of many stars, perhaps Anthony Hopkins, Maria Flor, Jude Law and Gabriela Marcinkova play slightly more important roles than other actors. It's worth noting, however, that Flor and Marcinkova don't even have their head shots on IMDB now.

All in all, it's a refreshing change to see that none of the big names are claiming the entire show.

— *Phuket Gazette*

Phuwanai Wannamakok

PHUWANAI 'Best' Wannamakok is one of the few people who can talk about a subject as dry as civil engineering and convince you that it's exciting, humane and even creative. He should know – civil engineering is his profession.

34-year-old Phuwanai is a northerner, born and raised in Lampoon to parents who were both teachers and he seems to have inherited their enthusiasm for scholastic excellence. As one of the brightest students in school, Phuwanai usually walked away with a string of prizes and awards.

At 17, he studied in a high school in Ohio for a year, thanks to a grant from the Rotary Club of Chiang Mai. At 21, he won yet another scholarship, this time to study for a degree in engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia, USA.

Explaining the reasoning behind his choice of subject matter, Phuwanai says "I like to construct and build things, but I am also down-to-earth. I love nature, hiking and camping. Civil engineering is the science that enables me to consolidate these passions. It is designing, literally from the ground up, if you like. The building process requires a certain involvement – digging, demolishing, constructing, with an end result that is very tangible. The word 'civil' means 'for people'.

THAI gallery

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

Civil engineers build houses and the related utilities that fulfill basic human needs. It's all very humanistic in nature."

During his student days in Virginia, he worked part time in a Chinese restaurant where he met his future wife Able, daughter of the landlord. "I was just a lowly waiter who fell in love with the boss's beautiful daughter," he recalls, smiling.

After his studies Phuwanai worked in the USA for 10 years and is now a certified civil engineer in the states of Ohio and Michigan.

The couple later moved to Thailand and settled down in Phuket. They opened Wannamakok Civil & Environmental Consultants (WCEC), a construction company offering land surveys, engineering design, construction and project management services.

"We started very small. I took on the role of manager, engineer, foreman, inspector and laborer," laughs Phuwanai. Now, the 20-strong, fully-fledged WCEC has just added residential property development and rentals to its portfolio. His wife Able works as part of the

marketing team and WCEC's long list of satisfied customers includes not only local homeowners and companies but also foreign clients in the UAE and India, among others.

Phuwanai sees Phuket as the "land of opportunity". It's all too easy, he says, to set up a business here, to the detriment of society as a whole. "What does it take to set up a bar?" he asks, "Not much, but such businesses have long term effects on our community that are not always good," he said.

Apart from his own business, Phuwanai is actively involved in charity work around the island. As President of the Rotary Club of Patong Beach, Phuwanai wants to make sure that appropriate funding goes to bright young people. He is, he says, in debt to the Rotary Club who, by sponsoring his high school studies in Ohio, opened up a world of possibilities.

Phuwanai and Able have two young sons and, despite his love of golf, always finds time to take them to their favorite place – the beach.

Phuwanai enjoys heading WCEC and has plans to make it a leader in the field. But at times he can't help thinking about the place of his childhood, Lampoon in the North, which is famous for its skilled craftspeople. "Lampoon has potential that is waiting to be capitalized. That will be my job one day," says the confident Phuwanai.



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

May 19, 26, 5-10:30pm: Seafood Chill and Grill at RE KA TA Beach club

Succulent seafood BBQ while listening to a DJ. Price 1,500++ baht per person for food only, and 1,800++ baht per person including one bottle of wine.

May 19, 6:30-9:30pm: Wine Tasting at Wine Lovers in Rawai, Phuket

Enjoy the wine tasting for only 499 baht, including red wine, white wine and a tapas buffet. Join this special grand opening of our Wine Lovers restaurant. For Reservations, please call 076-384663 or email us at info@wineloversphuket.com.

May 19, 8:30-10:30pm: Salsa Night at Royal Phuket Marina

We are delighted to invite you to our Salsa Event at Royal Phuket Marina Yacht Club near Skippers' Restaurant. Dance the Cha-cha, Bachata, Samba and Rumba live with the sounds of DJ Miscaro. Entrance: Free. Dress: Colorful.

May 19-20, 5-9pm: Weekend Market at Phuket Boat Lagoon Marina, Koh Kaew

Buy, sell and barter on an extensive and ever expanding variety of goods, food, or simply relax and enjoy the vast assortment of other fun stuff we're putting together for all ages, whether you're 3 or 30, 6 or 60, 9 or 90. Nobody has more fun than at the soon-to-be number one weekend market and meeting place in Phuket. Located within the conveniently situated Phuket Boat Lagoon. Individual covered booths (2m x 2m) with power facility available

for rent in dedicated zone area for the introductory rate of just 100 baht per day. Contact: 088-768 0471. The Weekend Markets at the Boat Lagoon are sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV.

May 20, 27, 10am-3pm: Beachfront Brunch at RE KA TA Beach Club

Decadent beachfront brunch buffet with tunes from our DJ while relaxing over a glass of sparkling wine. Price: 1200++ baht per person for food only, and 1,500++ baht per person with a bottle of wine for 2. Come 4-7, pay 1 less; come 8-10, pay 2 less, etc.

May 21-26, 4-6pm: Very Happy Hours at Friendship Beach Waterfront Resort, Rawai

Special offers – all beers 60 baht, house wine and single shot drinks 90 baht, tall cocktails 150 baht. Great food, great fun, great drinks all the time special during the month of May.

May 23, 25, 3-6pm: High Tea at Les Anges, Royal Phuket Marina

Les Anges is delighted to invite you to our "High Tea" with a large selection of delicious pastries and a variety of teas. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Call for reservations: 076-360803. Or contact Mr Murat (Events & Group Manager) on 081-797 3364.

May 23, 7-9pm: Ladies Beauty Night at Les Anges, Royal Phuket Marina

Ladies Beauty Night at Les Anges. Every Wednesday. For ladies only. Free hair dress-ups, manicures and make-up from beauty specialists. 50 per cent discount on drinks and 25 per cent off for food in the menu list.

May 24, 6-11pm: Martini

Manicure Ladies Night at RE KATA Beach Club

Free express manicure for ladies. Free martini for ladies on arrival. 50 per cent off the drinks list all night long. Cocktail flaring. From 6pm to midnight – DJ till late.

May 24, 4:30pm-7:30pm: Identifying and Marketing Brand Phuket, The View at Thanyapura

The Phuket PR Network and AMCHAM's Phuket chapter will hold a collaborative event as part of a series exploring Brand Phuket, a community-driven marketing initiative by the Phuket PR Network. Registration opens at 3:30pm and the event will begin at 4.30pm, followed by networking drinks from 6 to 7:30pm. Admission is 150 baht and covers refreshments.

May 25, 7-10pm: Indian Night at Les Anges, Royal Phuket Marina

Phuket's best Indian buffet is back with a new chef and a new menu. Special promotion at just 449 baht. From 5-9pm buy one get one free on drinks. Reservations recommended. Call Mr Murat at 081-797 3364.

May 25, 7-11pm: Francis Coppola Wine at the Boathouse Wine & Grill

Another great wine dinner at the Boathouse Wine & Grill. Guest speaker Ms Emily Putnam from the Francis Ford Coppola Winery in the US will be with us for one evening only. Jean-Noel Lumineau's delicious French cuisine will be paired with some of Francis Coppola's best wines. Zinfandel Director's Cut 2008, Pinot Noir Director's Cut 2008 and Cabernet Sauvignon Director's Cut 2008 will accompany the 4 course dinner. Price: 2,000++ baht per person.



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May 28, 6pm-1am: Surfnight at Two Chefs Kata Beach

Every Monday we are setting up a great barbecue buffet, filled with loads and loads of great food. There will be juicy steaks directly from the barbecues, a large variety of sauces and much, much more. There will be nice and pleasant live music performed by one of the members of the Two Chefs house band. The best thing with all of this is that it only costs 495 baht for all of it. For more information about our Surfnight please visit us on the web at www.twochefs.com.

Jun 1, 7-11pm: Curry Fridays Phuket at the Navrang Mahal Indian Restaurant, Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa

Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish Indian curry buffet every Friday. All-time favourite 'chicken tikka masala', very hot 'mutton vindaloo', succulent kebabs, Goan fish curry and much more, served with nan bread and basmati rice. All you can eat for only 449 baht. Draught beer by the glass: just 50 baht. Special discounts on beverages. For reservations, please call: 076-286464, ext 4.

Phuket Afternoon Computer Clinic

Is Windows driving you nuts? Looking for a good internet connection? Need to know how and where to get your PC repaired, or your confounding questions answered? Drop by the new Afternoon Computer Clinics, hosted by Woody Leonhard and Seth Bareiss. Bring your computer. Bring your questions. Bring your sense of humor and let's see if we can solve your PC problems. Second and fourth Wednesday of every month, 1-3pm, at the Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. Sponsored by Woody's Sandwich Shoppes and the *Phuket Gazette*.

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Fit Fest fun

The Rawai-Naiarn South Coast Experience organised a weekend of seminars, activities, classes and a party last weekend at the inaugural Phuket Health and Fitness Festival. The events took place at Atmanjai, Mangosteen, Serenity Terraces and the Vijitt Resort. The *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV were sponsors of this event. Photos: Courtesy of Atmanjai



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BASKET OF GOODIES: A government delegation was in Phuket recently to learn more about organic food and how Thailand could benefit from growing more of it. From left Jarat Petchphakdee, Ministry of Commerce in Phuket; Martin Smetsters, MD of Pura organic foods; Piramol Charoenpao, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Commerce and Yukuntora Pongsupaphongkit, director of Office of Commercial affairs, Suratthani. Photo: Marc Mulloy

YOUR Phuket



MOOD MUSIC: Anand Jagota playing the veena at the Mangosteen resort.



ZUMBA ZUMBA: A Zumba dance session took place at Serenity Terraces on the weekend.



ROCK IT: The Hard Rock Cafe Phuket team "hard rockers" recently went to Child Watch Phuket's Care Center in Kathu to donate toys and supplies. Photo: HRC



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SUDOKU: Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the numbers 1 to 9 once only. © Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)

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- Across
1. Bony prefix

6. Electric fish

10. Board on water

14. Truth ____

15. Eastern nanny

16. Switch ending

17. Roofing stone

18. Pro or con

19. Cancun coin

20. Language letters

22. Full

24. Sea east of the Caspian

25. Puzzled

26. Pertaining to a reign

29. Some are pale

30. Farming prefix

31. Significance

37. Monetary unit of Oman

39. ____ longa, vita brevis

40. Snob

41. Business activity

44. Attendee

45. Highlander

46. Charm

48. Abductors

52. Blackbird

53. Tips off

54. Authentic

58. South American country, famous for Macchu Picchu

59. Denials

61. Gunpowder ingredient

62. Hurler Hershiser

63. Must've been something ____

64. Japanese immigrant

65. Prying

66. Ask for divine guidance

67. Task
- Down
1. Greek peak

2. Exchange for money

3. Snare

4. Subject to euthanasia

5. 1998 Masters winner Mark

6. Artist's support

7. Expel gas or odor

8. Young fellow


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9. Refuge
10. Calyx component
11. Hives
12. Thorny flowers
13. Nourishment
21. Indonesian holiday resort
23. Brewery kilns
25. At ____ for words
26. Broccoli ____ (leafy vegetable)
27. Richard of A Summer Place
28. Fortitude
29. The cruelest month?
32. Female horses
33. Aquarium fish

34. Midday
35. Like some dorms
36. French 101 verb
38. Lingo
42. Edible root
43. Garden spot
47. Pertaining to a rare element
48. Fatted fowl
49. Olds model
50. Israel's Shimon
51. Genuinely
52. Amble
54. Second letter of the Greek alphabet
55. Wishing won't make ____
56. Woodland animal
57. Buffalo's county
60. Implement used when rowing a boat


Provided by BestCrosswords.com and used with permission.
Puzzle solutions on page 43

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21):
 Lying low for a few days will do tired Taureans the world of good. There are signs that you have been burning the midnight oil and your energy needs boosting. Travel may be subject to last minute delays mid-week – the stars advise checking before setting off. Those celebrating a birthday during the coming week should see more wishes coming true in the year ahead. Wear the color cream to encourage better balance.

GEMINI (May 22 - Jun 21):
 The spotlight falls on personal relationships for Geminis this week. Your heart is in the right place, but the stars indicate that your motives could be misunderstood. It would be wise to consider more carefully how others will be affected before taking action. In the realm of romance, a fire sign's support helps you make the right decisions, but an earth sign is finding it hard to understand you.


CANCER (Jun 22 - Jul 23):
 Cancerians could be caught in the cross-fire of a disagreement between friends this weekend. Divided loyalty is forecast to leave you wondering how to react, but


the best answer will be to step away from this situation. Where work is concerned, too many distractions may mean that you give another water sign the opportunity they've been waiting for to get ahead. Fortunate days for finances are Monday and Tuesday.

LEO (July 24 - August 22):
 Clearing the decks at work will be a good focus as there are signs that Leos are about to be in demand. Finances fall under fairly auspicious astral conditions until the end of the month – a modest windfall this week should help tide you over until June when improved fortune is forecast. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, someone who you haven't been able to forget is forecast to reappear soon.


VIRGO (Aug 23 - Sept 23):
 Some Virgoans may suffer from jealousy when another earth sign colleague is favored at work this week. The stars advise that your tendency to remain in the shadows needs to be addressed. Your financial outlook improves as the end of May approaches – treading water in the meantime is recommended. A romantic relationship with an air sign could get a new twist when this person's plans to travel are revealed.




LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23):
 Staying on the ball will be important for Librans this week. The stars suggest that recent success may have resulted in a complacent attitude, but there is still work to be done. The month of June will be a time to wind down and consider your next moves. In the realm of romance, an earth sign partner drops hints that should be too heavy to miss this weekend.


SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22):
 Long term plans are highlighted during the second half of May. If yours are hazy, the cosmic climate will encourage fine tuning; those who thought they knew where they were heading could see new directions opening up. Finding common ground with an earth sign colleague will give Scorpios advantage in the world of work this week. Your romantic outlook is promising – expect to meet an alluring air sign this weekend.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 21):
 The going gets easier for those born under the sign of Sagittarius during the coming week. There are strong hints that the solution to a work or business related problem is within your grasp. Another fire sign should come up with a compromise on Tuesday or Wednesday. In the realm of romance, single Sagittarians could enjoy a game of cat and mouse with a water sign this weekend.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 20):
 Certain Capricorns who have been feeling under the weather recently should be on the road to recovery during the second half of May. The stars suggest that a burst of fresh energy will prompt you to get out and about. New friendships are well-starred this week – expect to meet another earth sign who will be a source of inspiration. Casual romance with an air sign can become a rock solid relationship.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19):
 It may be necessary to provide a reality check for a water sign friend this week. Offering some well chosen pearls of wisdom will be preferable to watching this person

continue making the same mistakes. Romance is mixed; the stars suggest that some Aquarians could lose sight of themselves as a relationship with another air sign becomes all important. Love with a fire sign is forecast to be harmonious.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20):
 A thorny mood could mean that many Pisceans are reluctant to socialize this weekend. The stars suggest that quiet time alone will help you get to the root of your discomfort. Expect a fire sign friend to provide useful advice on Tuesday or Wednesday. Your luck with money increases during the second half of May, with focus on investments paying off. Lucky days for romance are Wednesday and Thursday.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20):
 An air sign's change of tune should benefit Arians in the world of work this week. The stars indicate that you may not have as much room to maneuver as you would like, but settling for less could result in having more. Keeping some free space in your agenda is advisable as last minute commitments are highlighted during the second half of May. Days for romance are Wednesday and Thursday.

PROPERTY Gazette

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New SEC law to take effect in June

THE Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has allowed the creation of Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) in Thailand starting in June.

According to Thai media reports, SEC Deputy Secretary-General Chalee Chantanayingyong said a number of existing property funds are expected to convert to REITs, due to more flexible investment rules than existing property fund structures.

Existing property funds are more narrowly focused, and are generally established to invest in a specific property. REITs are a corporate entity established for investment in property assets such as buildings, land or real estate-related securities.

Prakid Punyashthiti, an SEC assistant secretary-general, said REITs are also able to invest in overseas assets and may borrow up to 60 per cent of the cost of investment for an investment-grade asset, compared with the 10 per cent limit for property funds.

"Global investors are generally more familiar with REITs than property funds," said Prakid. "In the US, some 90 per cent of these

types of vehicles are established as REITs, as they can be larger and more flexible in management than property funds."

While a property fund is run by a fund manager, REITs have a structure similar to listed companies, including rules requiring the appointment of independent directors, annual general shareholders' meetings and disclosure regulations.

Currently there are 39 property funds registered in the market, with assets (as of December) of 102 billion baht. The SEC is negotiating with the Finance Ministry to ease taxes and charges on property funds wishing to convert to an REIT structure.

Managers of an REIT must have paid-up capital (the amount of a company's capital that has been funded by shareholders) of at least 10 million baht and a solid financial position. Asset managers must also have at least three years experience and meet qualifications on work practices and operating systems.

Mr Prakid said establishing an REIT would require a minimum capital of 500 mn baht and the



Currently there are 39 property funds registered in the market. Photo: nist6dh

entity must be listed on the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET). At least 75 per cent of capital must be invested at any time, and only up to 10 per cent of assets may be invested in incomplete projects.

The SEC also has rules on revenue structures for REITs, which Mr Chalee said should generally derive most of their core revenues from rents, not from returns on general business operations. — *Phuket Gazette*



SEC Deputy Secretary-general Chalee Chantanayingyong. Photo: Thai Providence Fund; Securities and Exchange Commission



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Nikki Beach branding of new Phuket hotel



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

GLOBAL lifestyle brand Nikki Beach has teamed up with Singapore's Castlewood Group on a new Phuket development. Described as the "sexiest place on earth" by the London Observer, Nikki Beach now have twelve prime locations at such hot spots as St Barthes, Miami Beach, Marbella and Mallorca in Spain and St Tropez.

Other specialties include big events like the Cannes Film Festival and a mobile set up at the 2012

London Olympics. A wide range of branded products include clothing, a music label and a growing hotel footprint.

In Phuket the Nikki Beach Hotel and Spa will be located on the fringe of Bangtao, in Layan near to Laguna Village. The up-scale hotel, forecast to open in 2013, will feature 151 suites and 23 "sky villas" with private pools.

A separate beach club at another location is set to be announced soon and expectations are great for the high-profile destination club. In Koh Samui, Nikki already has an existing beach-front operation.

Driving Nikki's Asia develop-

ment strategy has been a deal with Castlewood to grow the brand by targeting openings in Bali, Singapore, Hainan, Langkawi and a hotel in Samui next to the existing club.

Castlewood, which was established in Dubai in 2006 and relocated to Singapore, has a core business model for development, marketing and investment sales to individuals. It has taken a business model similar to private equity investment and applied this on a broader scale.

For Phuket, they will tap into a pool of individual investors who can opt for a guaranteed return of five per cent for eight years or else variable returns, which potentially offer higher returns but also carry return risks. Entry pricing points start at just over US\$60,000.

Castlewood will dispose of the asset in 2020 but offers early investors an exit in 2016. The

investment horizon for the hotel would be similar to private equity funds with a cyclical build of operating results, stabilization of the hotel and an exit on recurring cash flow and ideally a strong forward operating potential.

American Title Insurance is insuring investment units and the asset has been placed into a third party trust under Intercontinental Trust Group. The trust deed will in place until 2020 when the hotel will be sold.

Trying to describe an investment, which is neither a vacation ownership nor a straightforward property play looks to be the key challenge for Castlewood. What is clear though, is that in a broad real estate market, which continues to be fairly flat, the highest and best use standpoint hotels, which tap into the tourism sector, are more attractive vehicles.

That said, beach clubs are con-

tinuing to sprout up on the island with mounting frequency and a roll-call that includes Catch, Re Ka Ta, Bliss, Up and Xana.

Yes, there will be more and saturation will inevitably see only the strong survive.

As for Nikki Beach as a hotel brand, it remains to be seen if the conversion from lifestyle to entertainment can be made. Certainly Hard Rock Cafe is a leading example of that working. While down in Bali one of the founders of Ku De Ta is about to launch a hotel project at the site of the legendary Double Six in Legian.

On a closing note, branding parachutes such as Virgin, Apple and AirAsia continue to tap consumers' fascination and the Castlewood Group's investment offering is one worth following to see how the market absorbs the hybrid product. As for Bangtao, things look set to get sexier very soon.

In brief...

A NEW 24-hour butler service has been introduced at the Mövenpick Resort Bangtao Beach Phuket adding a new dimension of comfort and indulgence for guests at the five-star resort's three-bedroomed penthouse villas.

From arrival to departure guests can relax, confident in the knowledge that their own personal butler will take care of everything from unpacking luggage and preparing baths or Jacuzzis to organising laundry, sight-seeing tours, restaurant reservations, flight confirmations, baby-sitting and everything in between.

"Our butlers are highly attentive and respond efficiently to any request but they are also intuitive, able to instinctively anticipate the needs of individual guests to provide a level of service that makes every stay truly unforgettable," said the hotel's General Manager Hansruedi Frutiger.

"We joke that our butlers can read guests' minds, but they are people

You rang, sir?

who are highly experienced, exceptionally well trained, have wonderful personalities and genuinely care. We call it 'service from the heart'."

The butler service at the Jacuzzi penthouses adds yet another level of exclusivity to the prestigious resort that already enjoys an international reputation for being the perfect place for families and groups to relax in style and comfort.

There are 40 luxurious residences featuring one, two and three bedrooms. Each suite enjoys a soothing interpretation of contemporary Thai design and stunning views of the sea, gardens, lagoon or pool. The penthouses feature private Jacuzzis, giant balconies and stunning sea views.

With the latest in contemporary entertainment systems, ensuite bathrooms, Wi-Fi, spacious living and dining areas as well as fully-equipped kitchens, every suite and



All this and a butler too.

penthouse offers the ultimate in contemporary comfort. The resort is based on Bangtao Beach that enjoys six kilometres of bright white sand and endlessly enchanting views of the iconic Andaman Sea.

"At Mövenpick Resort Bangtao Beach Phuket we pride ourselves on providing a relaxed, upscale atmosphere that is ideal for families and groups that want to unwind in style," said Hansruedi. "Now with our new 24-hour butler service, we have added yet another level of comfort to our exclusive penthouses."

— Phuket Gazette

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Avista Hideaway Resort & Spa to open near Patong beach this year

LUXURY LIVING: Interior perspective of a 'Jacuzzi Suite' that comes with a private terrace.

BUILT with a contemporary Thai ambiance, Avista Hideaway Resort & Spa Phuket is set to open midway through this year.

Avant-garde in style, Avista Hideaway Resort & Spa is a new luxury hotel built on the hills above world famous Patong beach.

The futuristic, contemporary Thai architecture and décor, together with a vast, open-view of the Andaman Sea work to create a serene and inspiring environment.

The resort is a 5-star deluxe hotel and is private, secluded and yet peaceful; located only two minutes by car from Patong beach and its famous nightlife spots.

The hotel has 149 guest rooms including 'Deluxe Family Rooms', 'Avista Club

Rooms', exclusive 'Jacuzzi Suites', 10 'Pool Suites' and one 'Duplex Villa' with two swimming pools. All rooms feature high ceilings and customized furniture.

They're also equipped with modern amenities such as 42" LCD TVs, ultra-high-speed wireless access and I-pod docks.

The spacious and exclusive 'Jacuzzi Suites' range from 100 - 140 square meters of living space and are fitted with private terraces that have lounge areas, mini-bars, private gardens and a modern Jacuzzi.

The pool villas offer about 120 sqm of living space that includes a private pool, lounge, outdoor dining area, outdoor bathtubs and showers.

The private deck, which adjoins the 'Jacuzzi Suite' rooms at Avista Hideaway Resort & Spa.

Some villas also come with a *zen* garden. All rooms offer cutting-edge technology for those who like to have all the trappings on their holiday.

'Avista Club Rooms' and all 'Villa Suites' include an on-call butler service to cater to the needs of guests.

This is the ideal location for guests seeking something special, while still being close to the famous entertainment landmarks of Patong Beach.

The resort also offers three large communal swimming pools, each with its own unique theme.

All pools have salt water filtration systems and "swim-up" bars. Guests can

also enjoy the all-day-long light snack menu offered poolside.

Inside the hotel guests can play a game of squash, virtual golf (complete with putting green), use the indoor gym, the game room or relax at the high speed internet bar.

The resort features luxurious in-room facilities and the latest technology. Avista has resorts in both Kata and Patong.

For more information or to follow the latest updates on the Avista Hideaway Resort & Spa Phuket visit: avistaphuket.com/phuket-resort-spa-patong.html

— *Phuket Gazette*

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Raise the red lantern



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

RED usually connotes something negative, and is often associated with danger: red traffic lights, Verey SOS flares, blazing buildings, bloody wounds, hospitals and Red Cross ambulances, warnings on packs of highly toxic chemicals, scarlet hued and poisonous insects.

But, in the realm of flowers, it carries none of these associations. Rather, the color adds richness and opulence to any garden setting. The red hibiscus is one such shrub, both the popular *rosa sinensis* variety of last week's column and today's opening subject, *schizopetalus*.

Sinensis is an iconic tropical presence; its beautiful blooms are worn in the hair of maidens from Cuba to Hawaii. In Phuket it grows everywhere. On the other hand, *schizopetalus*, (Thai name *phuttan*) is a less common, and arguably less flamboyant hibiscus. Indeed, in American plant catalogues it is usually listed as 'rare'.

Nonetheless, the coral or fringed hibiscus, which hails from East Africa, scores over *sinensis* in other ways. While not flowering so profusely, the blooms are intriguingly distinctive.

The popular name Japanese lantern offers a clue: the frilly, finely divided petals, which curl back against the stem and give the

flower its botanical name (*schizoid*, which means split, as in 'split personality') hang vertically down after the manner of a pendant lamp. The prominently protruding stamens, usually of the same red color, dangle an inch or two below the blooms.

These flowers are normally produced at the end of long, arching stems, up to two meters wide. Leaves are evergreen, and closely resemble those of other hibiscus varieties.

The Japanese Lantern prefers full sun and moist soil, but in my garden, it does well in filtered shade. At the moment, it's in full bloom. Pruning is advisable because of its arching, scandent habit. Such action will inhibit flowering for a while, but will give the shrub a more compact appearance. It grows easily from hard-wood cuttings and it is remarkably disease-free.

The same cannot be said about *hibiscus mutabilis*. This shrub, known in America as the Confederate or Cotton Rose, scrapes into the red category by virtue of its rosy-red evening color.

But, unlike the much smaller *brunfelsia hopeana* or *phu saamsi*, which changes the color of its flowers from rich purple to blue to white over a period of three days (hence the popular name of yesterday-today-tomorrow), *mutabilis* achieves its own remarkable transformation during a single day.

The weighty blooms can be



JAPANESE LANTERN: The coral or fringed hibiscus hails from East Africa. Photo: Zaqqy J.

single, but are normally double and rose-like; they open white in the morning, turn pink as the sun rises in the heavens, and become a deep pinky-red in the evening. In the constant heat of Phuket, *mutabilis* grows with spectacular vigor, and will soon form a small tree, up to five meters tall. Though its blooms last only one

day, it flowers all year round.

Sadly, there are two issues with this shrub. Unlike its cousins, it is deciduous, and the large, matt, maple-shaped leaves fall all year round, quickly turning an unattractive shade of brown. It is, moreover, prone to disease and especially to mold and fungal infection. I have yet

to discover an effective antidote.

It's a pity because it is such an unusual plant. And despite these drawbacks, I would not be without it.

If you have a question or a garden that you would like featured, you can email me anytime at: drpaccampbell@gmail.com.



Sinensis is an iconic tropical presence; its blooms are worn in the hair of maidens from Cuba to Hawaii. Photo: Wyemji

Tip of the Week

The dutiful gardener

A WHOLE string of questions from a new reader includes one about gardening priorities for May and June.

"Is it," he asks, "a good time to apply fertilizer?"

The answer is yes. Since most plants will put on a spurt during the coming months when the soil has absorbed rain-water, and when worms (if you are lucky enough to have them) are enriching the top-soil with humus.

But, don't be heavy-handed

with granular fertilizer; it should be applied sparingly. Too much will scorch foliage or, worse, kill the root system. To encourage flowering, use either a basic NPK 16-16-16 – an equal balance of nitrogen, phosphate and potassium – or better still, a phosphate rich fertilizer, say 10-20-10.

All three elements are essential for healthy plant growth. If you intend to sow seeds in open ground, or transplant container shrubs to flower beds, now is the hour.



Photo: chuckoutrearseats

LaGuna
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Properties for sale within Laguna Phuket

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<p>3 Laguna Homes Land plot THB 22 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land plot size 2,474.80 sqm • overlooking Laguna Phuket golf course • freehold 	<p>4 Laguna Village Residences I THB 28.5 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-storey detached house • 4 beds 3 baths • lagoon view • private pool
<p>5 Banyan Tree Residences THB 41 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-bedroom Pool Villa • Residence Club Membership • rental program • fully furnished 	<p>For more information on these and other properties, please call: +66 (0) 76 362 333 or email: resale@lagunaresale.com www.lagunaresale.com</p>

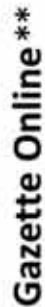

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Post-event	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		
Advertising, full color	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				
Events Flyer – every week !	✓											
'What's On' page x 1	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				
Website Events Calendar, every week until event closed out !					✓	✓	✓					
PGTV – Daily spot – 30 sec					✓ ⁽¹⁾	✓ ⁽¹⁾					✓ ^{(2) (3)}	
PGTV – Post event – 1 min of News footage					✓ ⁽¹⁾	✓ ⁽¹⁾					✓ ^{(2) (3)}	
Radio promotion – Spots / Mentions / Interview					✓							✓
Tickets Sales Promotions	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓

* THAI; Emirates; United; China Airlines; Air France; Delta; Lufthansa; Singapore Airlines; Cathay Pacific; Dragonair and Vietnam Airlines.

** The Gazette Online enjoys the highest Google traffic and 'page importance' rankings of any website in or about Phuket.

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Phuket Gazette

Contact K. Jane, Events Manager:
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Foreigner freehold in Boat Lagoon Marina. 5.5 MB negotiable. Tel: 076-238948, 089-873 8050, 081-968 9046 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-273466. Email: sale@phuketpropertytrip.com

PATONG BANGLA ROAD
XL shophouse for sale. Phar Lap bar building. Have a look, make an offer. Email: coco.diorster@gmail.com

PATONG CONDOS

2 condos, fully furnished. 4 million baht each for 55.5sqm. Nanai Road properties, high and dry. Tel: 080-040 1057 (English). Email: dwrmodarelli@hotmail.com

30 RAI IN TOWN

Flat land near Dowroong School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

HOUSE FOR SALE: URGENT



4.9 million baht, 89sq wah (include furniture). Stone wall around the house & fruit garden. 4 air conditioners, telephone and Internet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 4 CCTV. Located near the Heroines Monument towards to Tesco Lotus Thalang. Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: edc9_designs@gmail.com

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7.25 million baht, but seeking quick sale due to relocation, willing to consider offers. Tel: +44-7-96738 3720. Email: markcunningham@tfl.gov.uk

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Large house in Sukhumvit Soi 54. 24 million baht. 104 sq wah, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, 2 living areas, office, conference room, fitness room, large storeroom, laundry room. Quality fixtures & fittings. Space: 600sqm. Parking for 5 cars. Flood free. Email: scott.tanya@hotmail.com

LAND NEAR KATA CENTER

Great location, road access, 5 mins to Kata Beach and main road, 1,450sqm with title deed. Contact Lychee. Tel: 081-891 3048 (Eng & German).

PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

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

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

HOUSE FOR SALE

Near British International School. 5-bedroom pool villa, 600/1,000sqm. 22 million baht ono. Tel: 084-185 4746.

CONDO AT ROYAL PLACE



Condo at Royal Place Project, bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 37sqm, 2fl, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, cable TV, 24 security with key card etc). Pls contact for more details. Tel: 089-469 1813, 086-476 9612.

BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE



Fully landscaped, 3 air conditioners, telephone and internet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen. Located near the Heroines Monument towards to Paklok. Land size is 53sq wah. 3 million baht (negotiable). Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: edc9_designs@gmail.com

CONDO IN SUPALAI PARK



for sale. Near Seng Ho Bookstore in Phuket Town. Studio, 30sqm, floor 15, sea view, aircon, furnished. Price: 1.9 million baht. Ready to move in July 2012. Tel: 089-472 9118.

HOUSE & FURNITURE

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

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2.5 floors, 5 mins to town, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, Good for stay! 2.85 million baht. Tel: 083-506 9155. Email: sumitra.saetan@gmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE AT CHERNG TALAY

Permsap Villa, 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Fully furnished with big lawn and sports club. Price 8.9 million baht. Tel: 02-585 5086, 085-515 6714 (English & Thai), 082-457 4051 (English & Thai). Email: roxern@yahoo.com

HOUSE IN PATONG



Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 stories, 3 beds, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircons, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 089-469 1813.

D CONDO 1, KATHU

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-29.70sqm, mountain view, price 1,280,000 baht.
-29.79sqm, pool view, price 1,330,000 baht.
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Contact Vutdy on 081-892 3709.

OCEAN FRONT LAND FOR SALE

Chanote title, good road, 36,600 sqm. Located a few km from the Westin Siray Resort. Price: 12 million baht per rai. Tel: 089-729 8365. Email: sudaves2002@yahoo.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

Near British International School. 5-bedroom pool villa, 600/1,000sqm. 22 million baht ono. Tel: 084-185 4746.

HOUSE IN PHUKET VILLA 5 FOR SALE



46sq wah, furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 aircons, carpark. Only 3.5 million baht. Tel: 081-787 7675.

PRIVATE POOL VILLAS 6.5MB

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A house near Homepro. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished. Need 1-year contract. Tel: 087-026 1362. Email: chumapkt@gmail.com

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Private hillside, 15m pool, lush garden, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathroom, office, full kitchen. New condition with quality furniture. Freehold, secure and nice. Tel: 076-388 236, 089-727 5407 (English). Email: cosmocampbell@yahoo.com For further details, please see our website at www.villa-sale-phuket.com

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PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE



For Sale, price 4.2 million baht. No agent!, no furnished, with 4 aircons, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and car park. Behind Kajonkiet International School on Chao Fa West Road, 5 minutes to Central Festival. For short or long term rent, 16,000 baht per month. Call to see 087-270 9093.

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2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, terrace, living room, parking, fully furnished, cable TV, internet, 2 aircons, hot water. Only 5 mins to Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach and Lotus Cherng Talay. Tel: 089-470 7488. Email: nattamon.m@gmail.com

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Luxury boutique villas available for short or long-term rent. Swimming pool, two or three bedrooms. Rates from US\$89 per night. Tel: 076-384691, 087-264 9695. Email: enrico@easyhomephuket.com For further details, please see our website at: <http://villasuksan.com/gallery.htm>

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Close to beach. Aircon, cable, kitchen, fridge. 9,000 baht. Long stay: 8,000 baht. Tel: 085-757 3240.

BIG HOUSE FOR RENT IN KATHU

Big house for rent in Kathu. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms with large yard. 5 minutes' drive to shopping center and golf course. Tel: 090-168 7325.

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SPACIOUS STUDIO

5 mins walk to beach and 10 mins to Jungceylon. Call or mail for details. Tel: +65-9-007 8633 (English), 084-883 5751 (English & Thai). Email: casajope@yahoo.com Please see our website at www.phuket-patong-condo.com/Studio/

PATONG LUXURY APARTMENTS

WiFi, maid, big pool, security, cable TV. Close to town. From 24,000 baht per month. Tel: 080-052 8082 (English). Email: phvcondo@aol.com

RAWAI BEACH HOUSE

65,000++. 6-month lease. Tel: 081-397 6309.

PATONG CONDO

58sqm, fully furnished, aircon, internet, cable TV. 16,000 baht/month. Tel: 081-891 3740.

PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE



For Sale. Price: 4.2 million baht. No agents!, not furnished, with 4 aircons, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and car park. Behind Kajonkiet International School on Chao Fa West Road, 5 minutes to Central Festival. For short or long term rent, 16,000 baht per month. Call to see 087-270 9093.

BEACH VILLA NEAR LAGUNA

3 BEDROOMS, SLEEP 6
AVAIL FOR SHORT-TERM RENTAL
AT 2,000 BAHT PER NIGHT
PLEASE CALL 081-0861428

CHALONG PIER ROAD SHOPHOUSES FOR RENT



Contact 081 89 16143 English or 0818944343



NICE HOUSE CHALONG

2 levels, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, part furnished, fence, garden. Price: 14,000 baht. Tel: 081-370 3181. For further details, please see our website at www.property-thailand.co

POOL VILLA FOR RENT

In Bangjo, near Laguna, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, fully furnished, security. Price: 68,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-9791 994. Email: tuaandta@gmail.com

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Patong Condotel, 1-year contract, 14,000 baht per month. 1 bedroom, 1 living room, dining room with kitchen, fully furnished. Tel: 081-536 7985.

FURNISHED 3 BR, 2 BATH + OFFICE

Near Central Festival, Makro and Head Start. Aircons, washer, nice kitchen. Office with view over shared swimming pool. 17,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-883 3169. Email: sumaynin@hotmail.com

KATA BEACH APARTMENT RENT

Stunning sea views. Kitchen, lounge, bedroom, cable TV, WiFi, pool, gym. Call James. Tel: 090-864 4519 (English).

KATA BEACH CENTER

Apts for rent, short/long term. Furnished. Internet. Discount prices. Tel: 081-828 0972 (English). Email: sbolls@hotmail.com

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The Baan Yuree Resort & Spa in Patong is a foreign operated property with customers mainly from Australia and New Zealand. We are looking for key members of staff to join our fully occupied hotel who are interested in speaking and learning more English, providing quality service and enjoying the benefits of a good service charge and good working environment. We look forward to meeting you!

Front Desk Manager

- Must be fluent in English & some Thai (Foreigner)
- Strong Computer Skills - Knowledge of Comanche a plus
- Have strong leadership skills to lead, train and motivate a team
- Quality Service Oriented
- Previous Hotel Management Experience in Phuket a plus

Additional Vacant Positions

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| ● Asst. Financial Manager | ● Restaurant Captain | ● Must be fluent in English & some Thai (Foreigner) |
| ● Purchasing Manager | ● Demi Chef de Parties | ● Pool Attendant |
| ● Cost Controller | ● Steward | ● Restaurant Supervisor |
| ● Human Resources Manager | ● H/K Floor Supervisor | ● Tour Desk Service Agent |
| ● Senior Human Resources Officer | ● Cleaner | ● Commis I, II |
| ● Driver | ● H/K Clerk | ● Gardener |
| ● Waiter / Waitress | ● Room Maid | |
| | ● Night Auditor | |

We offer High Salary, High Service Charge, 14 Days off Public Holiday, Social Security, Uniforms, Duty meal, Training and Development etc. Interested candidates please send resume & enclosed a recent photo.

Email: hr@baanyureeresort.com

Baan Yuree Resort & Spa

12/1 Petchakut Road, Patong Beach, Kathu, Phuket Thailand 83150
Tel: + 66 76 364 703-8 Website: www.baanyureeresort.com

WATERWORLD ASIA PADI 5 Star Dive Center #S-36048

We are currently recruiting for South Thailand:

Sales Representative

(Travelling sales person – male or female)

Requirements:

- Foreigner (Western Nationality)
- Proven sales track record is a must
- Self motivated, open minded, socializing & friendly personality
- Excellent English, spoken and written; other languages would be advantageous
- Excellent working knowledge of MS Outlook, Word, Excel
- PADI – Divemaster or higher
- Car Driving License + (Own car would be an advantage)
- Foreigner with "Own Work permit"

Main Responsibilities & Duties:

- Act as close contact for customers in designated area of responsibility
- Sales generation & regular visits to allocated existing customer base (Dive Shops, Dive Operations, Hotels, Resorts)
- Generating new business by visiting / gaining new customers
- Introduction / demonstration of new products to customers
- Conducting frequent sales training & product seminars to Instructors / DM / Sales staff
- Producing regular reports on customer visits & market activities
- Conduct market surveys & assist with sales planning & forecasting
- Follow up on customer performance & market situation
- Working area - South Thailand (Phuket, Khao Lak, Chumphon, Krabi, Phi Phi Island, Koh Lanta, Trang Mainland / Islands)
- Reports to GM at Water World Asia
- Please Note: This position requires 80% travelling with around 4 days per month spent in our Water World Asia office.

We Offer:

- Immediate start
- Good base salary with excellent commission earning opportunities
- Company laptop & mobile phone
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- Stable & reputable company with pleasant work environment & friendly staff

Submit applications to: gunter@waterworldasia.com

Interviews by appointment only!

PERSONAL ASSISTANT

We looking for a personal assistant to work for our yacht management department. Good written/spoken English, office skills, basic accounting and an ability to adapt to multiple tasks. In return, we offer a very good salary, bonuses and a chance to work with industry professionals.

Please send CV to david@boatlagoon-yachting.co.th
Tel: +66 (0) 76 238025 | Fax: +66 (0) 76 238025
Boat Lagoon Yachting Co.,Ltd. (Phuket)

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

Administration Assistant

The successful candidate will be a Thai national with an outgoing personality. Experience in business administration combined with good management and organizational skills is essential. A good command of written and spoken English is also important. Knowledge of PageMaker/InDesign and Office software would be an advantage.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to marc@phuketgazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, T. Koh Kaew
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Tel: 076-273555 Fax: 076-615240

Profile Project Sales Assistant Manager

Based in Layan

- Thai National
- Female
- Outgoing confident with foreign nationals
- Degree/Tertiary educated
- Fluent English
- Good written English
- Experience of property sales preferred
- IT literate with experience Microsoft word/Excel/Powerpoint
- Reporting to Sales and Marketing Director/Project Director

Please send current resume to angus@landstate.co.th
all applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

SALES OFFICER

Required: bachelor's degree, female, good written and spoken English. Computer literate. Tel. 076-244491. Email: don1719@hotmail.com Website: www.layan-tara.com

RECEPTION STAFF

Responsible Thai female needed for reception at Patong hotel. Monthly salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-892 1621.

ACCOUNTANT

Elite Yachting at Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket is looking for a Thai accountant with a bachelor's degree and min 3-5 years experience. Good knowledge of Quickbooks, well organized and fluent in spoken & written English. Responsible for invoicing, payments, VAT, w/t, salaries, income/expense statements for yacht accounts, etc. Interested. Tel: 081-978 6086 (English). Please send your CV to jurg@phuket-yachts.com

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MY STORAGE – Thailand's No.1 Self Storage facility located at Jungceylon Shopping Center, Patong, Phuket – is seeking a well organised and enthusiastic Facility Administrator / PA.

Facility Administrator / PA

- Bachelor's degree or related field
- Thai national 25 years old or older, fluent in English (written and spoken)
- Minimum of 3-5 years experience in the related field
- Computer literate with good knowledge of Microsoft Office
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- Bookkeeping and office management skills required
- Self-motivated, proactive, flexible and well organized
- Service-minded and must have attention to detail
- Experience in property management an advantage.

Submit your CV with recent photo and a covering letter in English to hr@mystorageasia.com or call 076 29 29 09 for further information.

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CAN CONNECTION

Can connection to very big company for soft drink. Good commission. Tel: 089-593 8303.

DRIVER BANG TAO

Family need a driver with experience, English skills. Salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-719 3470.

Looking for a job?
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Find more Recruitment Classifieds at www.PhuketGazette.Net/

SECURE WEALTH MANAGEMENT

Administrative assistant / junior analyst (full time)

We are looking for a general administrative assistant to support the two senior partners in our office in Laguna. In addition, the applicant will act as a junior portfolio analyst to support our existing analyst. The analyst role will grow over time and a successful candidate will take on increasing responsibility within the business.

Remuneration: thb 20k - 25k / month + annual bonus

Working Place: Office in Laguna

The role consists of:

- general admin support, including travel booking, company banking (invoices and salaries), meeting scheduling
- new client account opening and ongoing account administration
- assisting our existing portfolio analyst with product and portfolio analysis
- assisting with project-based deal analysis and cash flow projections

Applicants must

- be female and of Thai nationality;
- speak and write excellent English;
- have a university degree in finance, business or accounting;
- have a minimum of two years' working experience;
- have strong PC skills, in particular MS Excel and MS Powerpoint;

Please send your curriculum vitae to:
Passaporn Voragul, mas@securewm.com

www.secure-wealthmanagement.com
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Phuket Gazette

As the result of a major expansion in its **Classified Advertising** business due to the launch of the newspaper's Nationwide Edition, the *Phuket Gazette* seeks to add a **Receptionist** to its existing team of five.

Qualified candidates will be:

- Thai nationals, aged at least 24
- Service-minded with an outgoing personality
- Able to work well with large numbers of advertisers, both foreign and Thai

and should have:

- A Bachelor's Degree from a recognizable university
- A good sense of organization and respect for details
- Knowledge of basic office software

Knowledge of InDesign, PageMaker or Quark Express would be a plus.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Khun Porntiwa, Assistant Manager-Classifieds, at Jeab@PhuketGazette.Net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew
A. Muang, Phuket 83000
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KINDERGARTEN TEACHER WANTED

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English tutor available to teach children of all ages. BA English LIT. TEFL. 300 - 500 baht per hour.

Please contact for more info to Gene.
Tel: 081-827 5574.

SUN PARADISE®



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Marketing/Sales Executive (4 positions)

Position Requirements:

- Male/Female bachelor degree in any fields
- Computer literacy (MS Word, Excel, etc.)
- Good command of conversational and written English
- Customer-service oriented mindset with high self-discipline and eager to learn
- Responsibilities, energetic and self-motivated, punctual and able to handle jobs independently
- Able to work under a dynamic work environment and manage crucial deadlines
- Able to provide quality service and support to customers at all times
- Enjoy dealing with people in a warm and outgoing manner
- Valid car driver's license will be an advantage.

Interested candidates are invited to send a full resume, stating current and expected salaries, with a recent photo to: supapatr@sunparadise.co.th

The legendary Boathouse on Kata Beach in Phuket is now seeking candidates for the following positions:

Management Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Sales • Event Sales Manager (Only Thai nationals or foreigners on local contracts will be considered for these positions) 	Food & Beverage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bar Supervisor • Bartender • Hostess • Waiter / Waitress • Beach Attendant 	Kitchen <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chef de partie – Western cuisine • Chef de partie – Pastry • II commis – Pastry • III commis – Thai kitchen • III commis – Hot kitchen • Steward
Spa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spa Therapist 	Front Office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver & Bellboy 	Housekeeping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaner • Gardener

Interested applicants, please e-mail full resume and a recent photograph to hroffice@boathousephuket.com

Boathouse
182 Koktanode Road, Kata beach, Phuket 83100
Tel: 076 330 015
www.boathousephuket.com

SEO SPECIALIST

• 2-3 years experience in demonstrating website & SEO improvement for client sites

- Wordpress CMS system
- Both on-site and off-site, SEO work

• Working knowledge of HTML, CSS, and PHP coding will be beneficial

• Good English (written)

We offer 30-50,000 baht per month, depending on experience. Tel: 076-324184, 082-255 7507 (English & Thai). Please send your CV to orn@imarketingonly.com

THAI MANAGER

Thai staff manager with good English needed for the restaurant near Kathu Waterfall. Full day. Salary of 15-20,000 baht. Contact 084-734 0122. Email: phuketcableski@gmail.com

BOAT CREW WANTED

Looking for experienced crew for 6 months to cruise Phuket / Borneo / Phuket on comfortable 20m trawler yacht. Tel: 082-806 9104 (English). Please send CV to boatjob1234@gmail.com

KARON HILLSIDE HOTEL

Looking for the following positions no English is required: Gardener, Handyman. For the following positions English is required: Bar and restaurant service staff, Reception staff, Night reception. Good starting salary and service charge. Only Thai nationals. Please contact Sandy on 082-281 4394.

Email: info@karonhillsidehotel.com

RECEPTIONIST KATA

Hotel needs reliable Thai female. Salary: 12,000 baht per month. 2 days off a week. Tel: 081-892 1621.

SALES & MARKETING POSITIONS

Highly successful Sales & Marketing company requires motivated individuals to join our team here in beautiful Phuket. Immediate start available. English speaking, full training, excellent earning potential and startup packages available. Come and join a winning team.

Please contact via by email: jengore@inspire.net.nz

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Thai national. Must have a good command of spoken and written English. Proven sales experience and own car. We provide full training, generous basic salary and unlimited commission potential and bonuses. Car expenses and fuel paid. Working 5½ days with generous holidays. Please send CV to don@rain-water-solutions.com

PHILIPPINE STAFF WANTED

Good salary, good English. Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963. Email: cc@bayshoreprojects.com

FOREIGN STAFF WANTED

1 English speaking, 1 Italian & English speaking, 1 French & English speaking. Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

LIVE-IN HOUSE MAID

English couple, no children, need Thai housemaid to live in. Tel: 085-790 2241.

SUMMER CAMP TEACHERS

British International School, Phuket are seeking ESL teachers for their annual July English Summer Camp programme. Full programme details are available on our school website: www.bisphuket.ac.th. Applicants are ideally required to have a recognized education degree and a TEFL qualification. Please submit your applications to ppreez@bisphuket.ac.th

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For trading company in Kamala. We seek an experienced Senior Accountant. Must know Express software, English, and understand the import business. Salary starts at 25,000 baht + transportation+ accommodation+ BUPA health insurance. Work 6 days a week. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-322663, 086-773 4538 (English). Fax: 076-322664. Email: skgf@skgf.asia

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Barely used (10 hours). Have 2 units for sale. Price: 15,000 baht each. Contact Margy on 089-908 7486.

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Bamboo coffee table for sale. Excellent condition. 110cm square with inset in center (for flower decoration, etc). 10,000 baht ono. Email: beijingmar cher@yahoo.com

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Quality Chinese tea for sale. Contact Peter to arrange a free tea tasting. Tel: 082-278 1575.

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HIX HEAT PRESS DUAL PADS

I am selling my Heat Press Made in USA, very highly used (about 60 t-shirts), like new. I bought it in Bangkok. Paid 125,000 baht, selling 60,000 baht. Tel: 076-283004, 086-742 3437. Email: joelvdo@hotmail.com

FURNITURE AND MORE

Furniture, sofa, TV and bookcase, chairs, lamps and more. All in good condition. Please call or email for photos. Khun Arno. Tel: 087-827 4991 (English). Email: arnyfirst@hotmail.com

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Used 20 to 24 foot (6 to 7 meter) ladder wanted to either rent or purchase. Tel: 081-797 2110. Email: iolare@yahoo.com

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BOAT FOR SALE

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45	G	A	E	L	46	D	U	E	N	D	E				
48	C	A	P	T	O	R	S	52	M	E	R	L			
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**ROCKWELL
COMMANDER 114**

HS-AWS. Year: 1976. Operated in Thailand for 6 years. Engine: Lycoming IO-540T4B5D. 1,300hrs and 700hrs until TBO. Garmin and King radios. Autopilot and Stormscope. Price: 3.75 million baht. Located at Thai Flying Club, Bang Phra. Contact Tony Scragg at mobile 081-906 3250.

1999 ROBIN 2160i

I would like to sell my Robin qircraft or trade it for a 4-seat Cessna or Piper (based in Hua Hin). The Robin: TTAf 300hrs. SMOH 60hrs. This is a well-equipped, two-seat aerobatic aircraft. Has the Christen inverted oil system. Excellent inside and outside. King KMA24 audio panel, KX155 nav/com, KI203 vor, KY197A comm, KN64A dme, KR87 adf, KT76A transponder, CSPA400 i-com, FP5 fuel computer, CHT, OAT, Pitot heat. Price: 4 million baht. Please contact Thom. Email: thos_w@hotmail.com



Notice from Thai Flying Club: There is a very nice Piper Cherokee airplane at the Thai Flying Club (TFC) in Bang Phra. It has fallen into disrepair. Someone took out the seats and some other parts... and then went away.

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.

Khun Wichai does not want to sell the plane, but would welcome a partner who can help to get it flying again. This could be a very good opportunity for someone to get a share in a nice airplane for a very good price. All negotiable.

Rockwell Commander 114 HS-AWS



Built: 1976

Registration: HS-AWS
(in Thailand for the last 6 years)
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G-BVNL – UK



Lycoming IO-540-T4B5D (1,300 hours, 700 hours to TBO). Prop: B3D32C419/82NHA-5. Overhauled Feb 2011 (7 years to TBO). C of A Due 11th November 2011. New 5-year Permit. 100 hour check completed 19 Feb 2011.

Specs:

Horsepower: 260	Gross Weight: 3140 lbs
Top Speed: 166 kts	Empty Weight: 2094 lbs
Cruise Speed: 157 kts	Fuel Capacity: 68.00 gal Usable
Stall Speed (dirty): 55 kts	Range: 700 nm
Rate Of Climb: 1088 fpm	Fuel Av Gas 100LL
Ceiling: 17,400 ft	1 crew plus 3 passengers

Radio and Navigation Configuration: Fully IFR equipped, 2 Garmin GNS430 VHF/COMM/NAV/GPS/TERRAIN, Garmin GI-106A VOR/LOC/GS/GPS CDI, King KN64 DME, Garmin GTX 320/327 Transponder with Mode C via Ameri-King AK350-30 Height Encoder, Garmin GMA 340 Audio Panel, Bendix King KR-87 Adf, Sandel SN 3308 EHSI, Century IIIB Autopilot Dual Axis and S-Tec Altitude Hold, WX-500 Stormscope.

Price: 3.75 million baht. Located at Thai Flying Club, Bang Phra.

Contact Tony Scragg at 081-906 3250, or email tony_scragg@hotmail.com

TECNAM P-92

- Price: 1.5 million baht
- Registration: U-B08
- Year of Manufacture: 2002
- Equipment: Full standard equipment
- Engine: Rotax 912-80HP 350hrs.

Please contact for more information. Aircraft is based at Klong 15. Tel: 081-840 8418.



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International Sport

5 races 5 winners



Formula 1

By The Digby

AT CATALUNYA no driver has ever won starting lower than third on the grid, which makes it a boring race, right?

Right and wrong.

It was McLaren's race to lose again. And they did – again!

Lewis Hamilton keeps winning on the track, and his pit crew keeps losing it for him. This is from a team renowned for its meticulous pit action.

The new crew must be under terrible pressure, but being demoted from pole to last place because someone failed to fuel him adequately to meet minimum weight conditions during qualifying is simply unforgivable. Hamilton gamely fought back



HERO: Pastor Maldonado.

from 24th place to 8th, ahead of Button who started in 10th, but one wonders how long he will stay at McLaren under such conditions.

But it was Williams' day.

Venezuelan Pastor Maldonado was promoted from second to first on the grid because of McLaren's blunder, and won his first ever F1 GP and Williams' first since 2004.

There are rumors that Valtteri Bottas will take Bruno Senna's seat alongside Maldonado next year, and that could make Williams formidable. It is great to see a privateer at the top again against all the works teams. The Williams' victory was

singed slightly by a post race fire in their garage, and Maldonado became a hero again by carrying out his young cousin, who was in a leg-cast. His car was safe in the winners' encl-

sure, but Senna's car was damaged.

There are two castes of F1 driver: those who get there entirely on talent, and those who are able to jump the queue somewhat by bringing with them sponsorship deals. The former drive for the biggest, richest teams, and the latter, derogatorily called "pay drivers" help the smaller teams. Pastor Maldonado is a pay driver, who brought US\$47 million to Williams under a deal reputedly involving Hugo Chavez, so his victory must be very sweet. And Frank Williams must be very happy.

Adrian Sutil was a pay driver for Force India until he lost his family sponsors, and he is now looking for a non-pay seat. The rumors are that he is talking to Ferrari, who are openly expressing frustration at Massa's continuing inability to score points.

Fernando Alonso got his Ferrari into second place and hounded Maldonado, to no effect, but is now joint top of the driver's table. Lotus did do well, taking third and fourth places, but not as well as



SMOKIN': The Williams pit crew try to extinguish a fire in their garage which badly damaged Bruno Senna's car. PHOTO: AFP / JOSEP LAGO

they hoped.

Red Bull was nowhere, and saw their lead eroded.

So it's onto Monaco on May 27, where Michael Schumacher will have a five place grid penalty for hitting Senna. Monaco has the least overtaking opportunities of the F1 year. Qualifying is everything here, so the penalty is bad for Mercedes.

The race is on a narrow street course with elevation changes, tight corners and a tunnel, making it one of the most demanding

tracks in F1. In spite of the relatively low average speeds, it is a dangerous circuit.

Monaco is the only GP that does not adhere to the FIA's mandated 305 kilometers minimum race distance, with an actual race length 260.52km over 78 laps.

It stays a fixture because of its exceptional glamour and prestige.

The race will be shown live on the big screen at The Green Man at 5:30pm Sunday May 27, with qualifying at the same time on Saturday May 26.

Games left to play

CARETAKER manager Roberto di Matteo's future with Chelsea will be decided this weekend. If he delivers the Champions League trophy to Roman Abramovich, the job is his permanently, if he doesn't Jose Morinho is waiting in the wings (kick-off Sunday 1:45am).

Matteo's main area of concern will be his defensive line-up with John Terry and Branislav Ivanovic unavailable due to suspensions. This issue is compounded with David Luiz and Gary Cahill struggling to be match fit.

Adding to Matteo's woes is the fact that Raul Meireles and Ramires are also suspended under UEFA's rules for the number of yellow cards they have collected in the tournament.

This is an issue UEFA needs to address, especially if the final as a footballing spectacle suffers due to a lack of quality. Perhaps granting clemency after the semi-finals, with the exception for a "red card" offence, as advocated by the international players' union FIFPro is the solution.

Bayern Munich will have home advantage, only by coincidence, though this could be viewed as a negative, increasing their

fans' expectations of victory.

Bayern also have problems with their backline with bans for defenders Luiz Gustavo, Holger Badstuber and David Alaba.

So who should you look out for?

Bastian Schweinsteiger is the major threat for Chelsea in his central midfield role where he tends to dictate play, and certainly has the ability to score from range.

As for "Die Roten", both Didier Drogba or Fernando Torres, depending on who gets the nod to start, will provide more than sufficient trouble for Bayern's makeshift defensive line-up, especially if service to these forwards is not nullified.

Drogba and Frank Lampard will also look to the future after the match. Both are aged 34 years and will most likely be playing for the last time in Chelsea blue.

Tottenham Hotspur will want Bayern to be champions, or Chelsea will claim the final English spot in the competition next season. Spurs will be dropped into the Europa Cup, potentially losing some 30 million Euros of revenue.

Whatever happens Newcastle United will be in the Europa Cup.



GOOD KOMPANY: Manchester City won the Premier league on goal difference after their dramatic victory over QPR to secure their first title since 1968. PHOTO: AFP / Paul Ellis

To whet your appetite for the main event West Ham will face Blackpool in the Championship League play-off final (9pm start).

The Hammers are certainly the favorites to rejoin the Premiership after the briefest of absences, destroying Cardiff 5-0 on aggregate to book their place at Wembley.

The Tangerines, who were relegated along with West Ham last season, narrowly

edged passed Birmingham 3-2 over their two games, with manager Ian Holloway admitting it will take a miracle for them to beat the London outfit. It is unlikely considering the form of West Ham who finished 11 points ahead and did the double over the Blackpool outfit, scoring 8 goals and only conceding one.

– Dean Noble

SPORTS briefs...

RUGBY: Coach Robbie Deans says the Wallabies must be wary of Wales in the forthcoming test series which starts in Brisbane on June 9.

The Welsh are certainly keen to succeed and build upon their recent Grand Slam title, with all players making themselves available.

"After winning the Six Nations so impressively, there's no doubt that Wales see this tour as the chance to take the next step," Deans said.

"They were quite vocal about that, saying it was time they beat one of the major Southern Hemisphere nations," he added.

STRANGE SPORTS: Felix Baumgartner completed his first test skydive of 71,581ft in his bid to break Joseph Kittinger's record of 102,800ft, set in 1960.

During the 3 minute 33 second freefall Felix reached a speed of 364.4 miles per hour, until he opened his parachute at 7,890ft.

The plan is to achieve a height of 120,000ft (36.576km) during the summer over Roswell. Another test jump at 90,000 is planned when Felix expects to break the sound barrier during the descent with a record attempt sometime in October.

OLYMPICS: Women's boxing will make its debut at this summer's Olympics with three divisions: featherweight, lightweight and middleweight.

Twenty-four of the 36 Olympic qualifiers will be determined at the women's world boxing championships in China this week.

Ireland's Katie Taylor who stopped Kazakh Khasenovna in the fourth round of their bout to progress to the quarter-finals, is looking to defend her lightweight title for the fourth year in succession, and qualify for London 2012.

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Southern showdown ends in stalemate

Fans told to expect appointment of a new president and team makeover

Thai Yamaha 1

By Steven Layne

FC Phuket played Southern region rivals Phatthalung FC to a 1-1 draw in a heated match last Sunday in Phatthalung Town.

The result follows an announcement made on the "Hulk" fanclub bus earlier in the day, that a prominent Phuket business figure is soon expected to be appointed new club president.

Received enthusiastically, such a development would enable the club to be more competitive – financially, administratively and athletically – and ultimately more profitable (See business story on page 13).

"Regarding rumors that Pamuk Achariyachai, chairman of Kata Group, will be appointed the new president," remarked fanclub leader Sartra Kanganok, "the news is not official yet, but we expect an announcement to verify this soon – perhaps at the next home game against Airforce United on May 19."

The prospect left fans with a boost of confidence going into

Sunday's match against their regional rivals Phatthalung FC, ranked 8th after three wins, two draws and three losses.

Going into the match as clear underdogs, Phuket was in 17th place with only one win, four draws and three losses.

Following a tense yet scoreless first half, the ice-breaker came three minutes into the second half by Phatthalung's captain and current leading scorer Siwamong Jarernsin, scoring his sixth of the season.

A cross from the far left wing by Phatthalung defender Decha Sangdi was deflected by Phuket's backs.

Siwamong was quick to cash in on the deflected ball, driving past two Phuket backs to the top right of the box, sending his shot to the far post and to the back of the net.

Thanks to evasive passing, Phuket equalized eight minutes later, with a goal credited to Thawadech Aunthong – his second score this season – set up like clockwork at the top of the box by Watcharapong Jun-ngam.

The rest of the game was thrilling with commendable attempts at

WEEKEND 9 RESULTS

Korat	0 - 0	JW Rangsit
Bangkok Utd	3 - 1	Songkhla
Khon Kaen	1 - 0	PTT Rayong
Suphanburi	1 - 0	Krabi
Saraburi	5 - 2	Chanthaburi
Phatthalung	1 - 1	Phuket
Airforce Utd	1 - 2	Ratchaburi
Bangkok FC	4 - 1	Rajpracha
Sriracha	1 - 1	Royal Navy

goal demonstrated by both sides.

The match was reported in national Thai media reports earlier this week as well – but not for what happened on the pitch so much as what almost happened in the stands.

Moments after the whistle ended the first half, a brawl among Phuket and Phatthalung fans nearly erupted after some objects were launched from the home stands into the adjacent stands occupied by the visiting Phuket "Hulk".

Phuket fans claimed that one young female fan was hit by a bottle.

Luckily for the outnumbered



SOUTH SIDE IVORY: Coulibaly Amiral (left) halts a drive by Phuket's Ibrahim Kanoute in Sundays match in Phatthalung. Photo: Pimwara Choksakulpan

Phuket fans, security guards were able intervene before anything got out of hand.

Leading up to the spat, Phuket fans were in a foul mood over what seemed to be biased officiating in favor of the home side, while Phatthalung fans were bitter likewise, after losing a man early in the game.

Defender Thanatthep Jiaradab was dismissed in the 16th minute after elbowing Phuket's Korean midfielder Seongwon Byeon, who had gotten in Thanatthep's face after being tripped up.

Seongwon received a yellow card for his instigation.

Content with the result, some 60+ Phuket fans boarded the bus which they had been on all day since 7am, arriving back home in Phuket by 3am this morning.

The result saw the Swiftlets fall one place into 9th of the 18-team Thai Yamaha One league.

Still languishing in 17th place, Phuket will next host 13th place Airforce United on Saturday.

Pending verification of the completion of lighting repairs at Surakul Stadium, kick off is set for 6:30pm.

Check the Gazette online for the latest results and updates.

'Everybody wins' in Irish Times race five

Sailing

SUNDAY saw an exciting race 5 for the Irish Times Race Series off the Ao Chalong Yacht Club.

With a fresh south-westerly wind evident, race officer Scott Duncanson set a scenic course around the islands – Coral Island or Koh Hae – Koh Aeo, Koh Lon and the Ao Makham Safe Water

Mark with the finish in Chalong Bay re-crossing the start line.

Start for all classes were at the normal start marker for boats or long-tails (with race starter Kathy Kruze aboard taking care of proceedings) and the starboard inner channel marker in Chalong Bay.

Five monohulls and two catamarans participated. The catamarans were Niña and Sidewinder, cruising division

monohulls, Astraeus and Uravai and racing division, Linda, Windstar and Moya Hin.

Jack Christenson's Bavaria 49 Linda broke the start by about three boat lengths and by the time they realized they had to restart they were at least a mile down the course. Moya Hin, owned and helmed by Peter Jones, managed to run aground on a sand bank before the start, freeing herself just in time.

Other starters were all on time

with new owner John Punch's Sidewinder leading the pack, followed by Grenville Fordham and Bob Mott on Nina. Sidewinder cleared out well ahead, while Niña, sailing conservatively under headsail and mainsail, slowly lost touch with the leader.

As the fleet pressed their way down the bay, the racers increased the gaps on the cruising class. Niña continued to keep Moya Hin at bay while her crew were entertained by some very interesting spinnaker gymnastics on Moya Hin, who perhaps had too many skippers aboard.

Uruvai and Bill Sax's Astraeus held to the cruisers' course, which didn't include Koh Hae or the Ao Makham Safe Water Mark, giving them a chance of finishing close to the racing divisions.

Winds remained brisk over the complete course and actually increased on the last windward leg to the finish line. Some boats

clocked 22 knots over the deck with others achieving up to 28.

No need to name the winners as all were winners on the day in some way. With three divisions, it was the case for most competitors that "he who comes wins". All won a bottle of wine for their efforts. Included as usual in the entry fee was a sumptuous buffet with Massaman curry, deep fried fish in breadcrumbs, chicken and vegetables in oyster sauce, savory rice, spring roll parcels and plenty of salad selections, topped off with a variety of fresh fruit for dessert.

Those interested in participating on the next race day please email Mick Kealy the commodore at E: mick@octopusasia.com or check out W: acycphuket.com for updates on the next scheduled races. You do not have to be a skilled sailor to participate. The larger yachts normally have space, so all you need to do is turn up on the day and ask for a ride.

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FISH EYE: The view of Ao Chalong Yacht Club from a boat.

Laguna crowned Island champions

LAGUNA Cricket Club were crowned champions of the Island Furniture League at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) last Sunday after a comprehensive 110 run victory over The Village team.

Laguna dominated the game from start to finish, much like they did the entire competition, after winning the toss and electing to bat first.

They posted a target of 238 for six and kept their record of remaining the only team in the competition to bat out their allotted 40 overs in every single game.

Val Guiraud top scored with an impressive 56, displaying run scoring shots all around the ground. His partnership with Li Jose (26) came off the back of a gutsy 43 from the season's top run scorer Andrew Cole.

Laguna were also aided by a sloppy bowling performance by Village which resulted in 48 extras which included 36 wides.

Village were always chasing the game and never really looked like getting anywhere near their target. Some resistance was offered by Justin White (28) and then Tom Gordon (30) but it was simply not enough.

Laguna's bowlers backed their batsmen up superbly with Sameer Kahn running out with figures of 4 for 37 from his 8 overs and Guiraud rounding off a man-of-the-match performance with 2 for 14 from 4 overs.

Laguna were overwhelming favourites to claim the title leading up to the final and for Village to have had any chance many variables had to go their way. They didn't.



VIVA LAGUNA: Sameer Kahn leads the celebrations as Laguna are presented the trophy.

"We were really up against it from the start to be honest" said a humble losing captain James Firth. "We lost the toss so we were already behind before a ball was bowled. We also have to remember that last year we finished dead last so to get to the final is an achievement in itself."

"We lost to the best team throughout the season and for us to have had a chance we needed certain things to have gone our way. They didn't, we couldn't and congratulations to Laguna."

Consistency breeds success in sport and it has been consistent performances

that have brought success to Laguna. Victorious captain Stuart Reading was full of praise for his team-mates.

"We have the top wicket taker (Kahn) and the top run scorer (Cole) and have consistently put in good performances so I think we deserve our trophy today."

"We have depth in batting, bowl good areas and back it all up with our fielding but our success really lies in our sense of camaraderie. We are all mates and that reflects in our team ethic which in turn reflects in the cricket we play."

Cricket is a game about percentages

and averages. Explosive hitting and aggressive bowling can shine through every now and then but more often than not it is good old fashioned consistency that leads to wickets and big innings.

Consistency has reaped dividends for Laguna and it is that consistency that the rest of the competition will need to emulate in order to get anywhere near the champions next season.

— *Phuket Gazette*



If you have a local sporting event that you wish to have featured in the Phuket Gazette email features@phuketgazette.net

Phuket ready for Games

EVERYTHING is in place for a successful opening ceremony for the 28th National Youth Games which begins next week, Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosuttirak was told in a recent games' committee meeting.

Dubbed the Phuket Games, this will be the first time the major national sporting competition has been held on the island.

Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT) Phuket Office Director Wirat Patee and provincial culture chief Prayoon Noosuk assured V/Gov Somkiet and other government officials attending the May 11 meeting that all preparations are in order, and that Phuket will surely make a lasting impression on athletes and spectators.



Organizers prepare groundwork at a for the upcoming Phuket Games.

Even though the opening ceremony celebrations will be staged on May 26, the official start of the games, a handful of competitions will commence as early as May 22, through May 25, including Rugby, Futsal, Football, Judo, Basketball, Table Tennis, Sepak Takraw, Handball, Hockey and Muay Thai among others.

More than 10,000 athletes from around Thailand will embark on the island to compete in 40 sports at various venues. The primary venues of competition will be in Phuket Town, namely at Surakul Stadium as well as at the various upgraded sports facilities at Saphan Hin, Rajabhat Phuket University, and various other schools, venues and sporting facilities across the island.

Phuket athletes are expected to bag medals in a number of sports, including Wushu, Karate, Pencak Silat, Judo, Taekwondo, golf and bowling. For the schedule, see phuketgames.com (in Thai) and read updates in the *Gazette* from next week.

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Phuket, Thailand
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www.phuketmarathon.com
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