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A woman walks along Nai Harn Beach, where bluebottle stingers washed ashore earlier this week. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Bluebottles on the beach

HUNDREDS of bluebottle stingers, the notorious cousin of jellyfish also known as the Portuguese Man of War, washed up at three Phuket beaches this week.

Only one woman was stung, at Nai Harn, reported lifeguards, but not seriously.

Although nearly all of the bluebottles were dead by the time the waves stranded them on the sand, lifeguards warned people not to touch them – or their long, clear tentacles – just in case.

“If a person touches a bluebottle tentacle, they should wash the area immediately with freshwater [or drinking water] or vinegar,” said Uten Singsom, head lifeguard at Kata-Karon.

“This kind of jellyfish cannot swim and are usually found at the bottom of the sea but during the [southwest] monsoon season, the strong current and waves pull them up to the surface and wash them ashore,” Mr Uten explained.

The Rape of Racha

Developers, resort owners blasted for destroying ‘natural beauty’

By Atchaa Khamlo

ENVIRONMENTALISTS this week lashed out at officials for lax law enforcement and at greedy developers for “destroying” the environment at Koh Racha Yai.

The island, about 25 nautical miles south of Phuket, is popular with day trippers, snorkelers and scuba divers.

“To save the environment we need action now... It’s time to use the rules to enforce [environmental protection] and we need to make private businesses understand [their responsibilities],” Suta Prateep Na Thalang told a meeting in Rawai on Monday headed by Phuket Vice Governor Sommai Prijasilpa.

Mr Suta, president of the Community Network of Chalong Bay and a member of the marine natural resources management team on Koh Racha, accused owners of local resorts and other businesses of cutting down natural forest and not adhering to environmental protection regulations.

Specifically, he accused developers of not abiding by the Building Control Act BE 2522 (1979) and the environmental protection regulations issued under the Ministry



Beautiful, for now, but environmentalists say landfills and wastewater are poisoning the island. Photo: DMCR

and Science Technology BE 2535 (1992) legislation.

He also accused police and other law-enforcement officials of inaction in preserving the natural beauty of the island.

“We have often filed complaints with police, but no action has been taken. For example, we reported to police that trees were being cut down in a forest on the island, but by the time the case was investi-

gated, condos had been built on the land already. Then the local people who tried to do the right thing were accused of destroying the economy,” Mr Suta alleged.

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Local Burmese ‘delighted’ by Suu Kyi visit

By Orawin Narabal and Chutharat Plerin

FAMED Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi arrived in Bangkok on Tuesday night on her first international trip in 24 years.

As reported in *The Nation*, Thailand was a natural destination for Mrs Suu Kyi, a woman who spent 15 years under house arrest. The visit would give her a chance to meet many people from Myanmar, including some of the millions of migrant workers from her homeland.

Mrs Suu Kyi planned to visit the national verification center set up in Samut Sakhon province, where she was scheduled to give a speech.

Many migrant workers told the Thai media in Bangkok that Mrs Suu Kyi’s visit meant a lot to them, as it gave them encouragement and support. Some said they could not believe they would get to meet the Nobel Peace Prize laureate in person.

Phuket, with its booming real estate market, is another popular spot for migrant workers from Myanmar to seek employment. The *Phuket Gazette* asked some of

them what her visit to Thailand meant to them. Than Soe Lux, a 38-year-old Burmese building contractor in Phuket who has been in Thailand for 18 years, told the *Gazette* that he was unaware that Mrs Suu Kyi was in Thailand.

“But I’m happy to be informed of this. If I lived near Samut Sakhon I would go and see her. If I had a chance to talk to her, I would like to congratulate her on her successful election and ask her about how she plans to develop our country,” he said.

“I would like to know how she is going

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Democracy icon Aung Sung Suu Kyi has inspired the Burmese people living and working in Phuket. Photo: The Nation

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Phuket's yellow shirts join the Bangkok mass protest

PHUKET members of the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), also known as the yellow shirts, piled into three buses headed to Bangkok on Tuesday to join their PAD counterparts in protest.

The PAD staged a mass rally in the capital on Wednesday to protest the reconciliation bill and other bills designed to expunge post-coup court verdicts and offer general amnesty to people involved in the recent political conflict.

"We will all gather at the King Rama V Equestrian Monument at about 1pm, and then at 3pm we will proceed to the Parliament," Phuket yellow-shirt coordinator Don Limnunthaphisit told the *Gazette*.

Mr Don said he was unsure how long the rally would be, but his supporters were prepared to stay in the capital for several days.

"I have not been told how many people are expected to join the rally, but I'm sure there will be lots of people from across the country," he said.

Three separate reconciliation bills submitted by MPs from the ruling Pheu Thai Party – and one



The PAD supporters left Phuket on Tuesday to join the Bangkok rally against several reconciliation bills. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

submitted by General Sonthi Boonyaratglin – were planned to be raised for debate in the House of Representatives on Wednesday.

The one bill submitted by Pheu Thai Party List MP Natthawut Saikua is supported by 74 Pheu Thai MPs, many of whom are linked to the red-shirt movement.

Mr Natthawut, currently a deputy agriculture minister, said his bill was similar to that submitted by Gen Sonthi, but his version includes a clause to exclude amnesty for people involved in terrorism

and crimes that resulted in deaths.

The move by Pheu Thai to introduce the bills comes amid mounting criticism of the reconciliation bill proposed earlier by Gen Sonthi, the former coup leader who now chairs a House committee on national reconciliation.

The move is also widely believed to pave the way to allowing fugitive former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, elder brother to current PM Yingluck Shinawatra, to return to Thailand.

Somjai Suwansupana sole candidate for Phuket City Mayor election

SOMJAI Suwansupana will run for re-election as Phuket City Mayor uncontested following the closure of candidacy registrations last Friday.

Former Mayor Somjai will lead her Khon Nook (Young Turks) party to the polls in the upcoming Phuket City Municipal election on June 16, marking her attempt for re-election to her third consecutive term as Phuket City Mayor.

Although running for office uncontested, Ms Somjai will still need to garner at least 10 per cent of the total number of eligible votes in the election to be installed as mayor, Phuket Election Commission Director Kittipong Thiengkunagrit confirmed to the *Gazette*.

Her Young Turks party will also have to overcome candidates from the Khon Roon Mai 2555



The Khon Roon Mai 2555 party is contesting seats in all four wards, but has no mayoral candidate. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

(New Generation 2012) party, who registered on the last day.

They are led by Phairoj Ruamphunpong, a former Phuket City councillor.

Mr Phairoj said that his party was intentionally not entering a mayoral candidate in the election

as he believes his candidates can achieve more meaningful results at the grassroots level and by supporting policies, not party dictates.

"We are ready to support any good policies, especially the educational budget. If elected, we will perform our work to the best of our ability under our slogan, 'Speak truly, act truly'," Mr Phairoj said.

The *Gazette* would like to remind business owners in the restaurant and entertainment industries that in accordance with the Election Act, as the election date has been set for Saturday, June 16, there will be a ban on selling alcohol within the Phuket City Municipal area from 6pm Friday, June 15, through to midnight June 16.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

Burmese 'delighted' with Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to Bangkok

From page 1

to help us solve the unemployment problem in Myanmar, and when Myanmar workers who live abroad will be able to return to find good jobs there," he added.

Khin Khin Soe, a Burmese worker at the Phuket office of the World Vision Foundation in Thailand, was well aware that Mrs Suu Kyi was in the country.

"My Burmese friends and I were just talking about the visit last night. We are all so happy that she finally has the freedom to visit Thailand. We have been talking about it a lot recently as we are delighted. Every Burmese I know in the community is happy for her.

"We wish she would come to Phuket. If I had a chance to meet her, I would like to give her a hug and tell her how happy I am for her," she said.

Ms Suu Kyi was invited to the World Economic Forum on East Asia to meet leading international business figures and express her vision for reform and the future of her country. She will be in Thailand until Sunday, June 3.

After her session at the World Economic Forum on Thursday and Friday, Suu Kyi will travel to the border districts of Mae Sot and Tha Song Yang in Tak province on Saturday to see refugees who fled from conflict and war at home in Myanmar.



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CENTARA GRAND BEACH RESORT PHUKET

Officials fear for reefs of Racha

From page 1

However, Mr Suta also voiced a "more realistic" stance on the issue. "Although several buildings on Koh Racha are illegal, we are willing to compromise. We just want them to take care of the environment," he said.

Support for Mr Suta at the meeting came from the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR).

Chaimongkol Yam-a-run-pattana, an officer at the regional DMCR office in Phuket, said his office was concerned about wastewater poisoning the coral reefs surrounding the island.

"We are concerned that wastewater released into the sea will seriously affect the growth of corals," he said.

Many of the reefs around Koh Racha Yai suffered in the widespread coral bleaching along the Andaman coast in 2010, but they are slowly recovering, he explained.

"We recently conducted a survey around Koh Racha Yai and found that coral was recovering further offshore. The recovery seems to be going well, but some hard corals still need time," he said.

The DMCR collects seawater samples from around the island every six months. So far, the water quality has remained within acceptable parameters.

"We will collect water samples from more points around Koh Racha, especially where wastewater is discharged into the sea," said Mr Chaimongkol.

Piles of trash in makeshift landfills are causing problems, even poisoning the soil around the dump sites scattered across the island.

DMCR officer Nisa Permsirivanich explained that some resorts on the island pay to ship their trash to Phuket, but many others simply dump it in makeshift landfills. The dump sites are now piling up, with discarded trash found strewn across the island.

"People do not cooperate with each other. For example, the per-



Environmentalists have cried out against the wastewater (left), deforestation (center) and trash (right) that is destroying the once pristine island of Koh Racha Yai (top). Photos: DMCR (top, right and left); Google Earth (center)

son who used to dispose of used bottles by grinding them down for recycling died more than a year ago, but nobody has volunteered to take on this responsibility. So the machine is just left sitting idle," Ms Nisa explained.

Negligent tour operators were also blamed for contributing to the trash problem and the degradation of the coral reefs.

DMCR head Paitoon Panchaiphum named one tour operator, which he said provided only one hour of training to tourists before unleashing them to enjoy the local bays at will.

"Operators such as this are out of control," he said.

To this, Mr Suta and Chief Paitoon found support in Terdkiet Eamrod, of the local office at the Bureau of Tourism Business and Guide Registration.

Mr Terdkiet said it was difficult

to catch such perpetrators in the act of harming the environment, simply due to the huge area his officers must patrol, but his office would take action – even revoke tour guide licenses – if such claims could be substantiated.

"We are always ready to take action if we have evidence of people destroying the environment. We will punish them by withdrawing their guide licenses," he said.

Mr Terdkiet invited anyone to send him and the DMCR pictures and videos showing any tour groups destroying the environment.

"Our office is now working with the DMCR in issuing official warning letters to tour companies to make sure that they follow the regulations and do not destroy the environment," Mr Terdkiet said.

To counter the spread of trash and to raise awareness of the need

to keep the island clean, the DMCR will conduct beach and reef cleanups on June 1 and 2.

"Both private operators and island residents will be asked to take part. The idea is to foster relations among local people so that they work together on important operations, such as trash management," said DMCR officer Nisa Permsirivanich.

In closing the meeting, Vice Governor Sommai ordered a report on the situation to be filed with the Provincial Office this week and a two-month deadline be set for environmental protection measures to be put in place on Koh Racha.

V/Gov Sommai also called for another meeting to be held to address these issues. That meeting is to include representatives of the government and the private organizations involved.

The Racha resort – it ain't us

ACCUSATIONS flew wild this week over unscrupulous developers and owners of resorts and other businesses at Koh Racha destroying the natural beauty of the island to make a quick buck.

Management at the renowned The Racha resort, probably the best-known resort on the island, were happy to confirm to the *Gazette* – "It's not us."

"The Racha has its own landfill for garbage and we have a boat to transfer trash and items to be recycled to the mainland twice a week," said Assistant Manager Krisana Siangproh.

The landfill occupies about five rai of land, and is available for other organizations and local people to use, he added.

"We always take part in environmental activities on Koh Racha, just like the coral and beach cleanups to be held on June 1-2. For activities like this, we often provide accommodation and a venue for the official ceremonies, and our divers volunteer to help with projects designed to regenerate coral," Mr Krisana said.

The Racha also has its own wastewater treatment pond, occupying about two rai.

"The pond was created with a seal across the bottom so wastewater does not leach into the soil. The treated water is used to water the plants at the resort," Mr Krisana explained.

"I can guarantee that the problem of wastewater being released into the sea is not from us, especially since our resort is so well known. If anyone saw anything like that, they would point it out to us."

"There are many accommodation establishments on Koh Racha, and some don't have any treatment ponds," he added.

– *Atchaa Khamlo*

New incinerator set for 'full burn' this month

STAFF will fire the new Saphan Hin incinerator up to "full burn capacity" on June 5, the chief of the Phuket City Municipality Environment Office confirmed to the *Gazette* this week.

The new burner was originally scheduled to be fully operational by the end of May, but the failure of one of the burners in the new unit resulted in the entire surrounding area being doused by a foul odor.

"We have been working on the machine since then. One of the three burners has a problem, which we are working on at the moment," explained Environment Office chief Prachoom Suriya.



Fixes are being made inside the new incinerator.

"When the incinerator is fully operational, it will be able to handle at least 700 tons of garbage per day," he confirmed.

– *Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai*



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Evason opens books to defend layoff plan

AT A closed meeting on Tuesday, representatives from the Evason Phuket & Bon Island resort revealed financial statements to prove that the company does not have the capacity to pay for extra demands made by workers summarily dismissed on May 22.

"The Human Resource Manager and the Accounting Manager from the resort are here today to present financial statements from their company," said Thanapong Orachorn, the officer at Phuket Provincial Labour Protection and Welfare Office, assigned to meet the representatives.

"They say that the company even has to borrow from the buyer just to pay for the redundancy packages being offered and that they cannot afford to offer any more to the workers in terms of financial assistance.

"If the firm can prove that it lacks the capacity to pay the claims, then no action will be taken... I will pass this information on to the [resort] union," he added.

Mr Thanapong's statement of no action under the "capacity to pay principle" follows that of his chief, Kittipong Laonipon, Director of the Phuket Provincial Office of Labor Protection and Welfare Office, on May 24.

Mr Kittipong, who is personally overseeing the complaint filed by the resort staff through the Phuket Island Union, was unable to attend Tuesday's meeting as he was in Satun province for a seminar.

Mr Thanapong also confirmed that the redundancy package being offered comprises salary payment according to Thai law, plus one month advance notice, a bonus as per agreement with the union, health insurance cover until November 2012 and a job reference, as announced by Sonu Shivdasani, founder and CEO of the Soneva Group, in a hotel press release on Saturday.

However, union vice president Warin Sungkong on Tuesday told the *Gazette* that the union had yet



Mr Kittipong confirmed that if the firm can prove it lacks the capacity to pay the claims, then no action will be taken. Photo: Orawin Narabal

to hear from resort management since filing a complaint with Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha.

"We were not invited to join the talks today, but I had previously acknowledged that the hotel will pay us in accordance with labor law, a bonus, health insurance and compensation since they didn't notify us one month in advance.

"But they still have not mentioned anything about compensation based on length of service with the hotel, which we requested in the complaint [filed with Governor]," said Mr Warin.

He added that the union was invited to join talks with hotel management at the Labor Protection and Welfare Office on June 12, at 2pm.

"In the next meeting, I will again talk to them about the redundancy package we have requested, and tell them that if the new hotel opens and starts hiring staff, we want them to consider hiring the former employees of the Evason Phuket resort first," he said.

In his statement on May 26, in addition to confirming the full redundancy packages being offered, Mr Shivdasani said, "We are working hard to provide alternative employment to as many hosts as possible."

— Orawin Narabal

Riddle of

The *Phuket Gazette* investigates a reader's inquiry into why much of the sand at Laem Panwa Beach is black – and why it sticks to anything metal. The *Gazette's* Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai, Stephen Fein and Chutharat Plerin report.

PHUKET's west coast beaches attract millions of tourists annually, but there is only one beach on the island that is truly magnetic: the black sands that line Makhm Bay, off Cape Panwa in Wichit.

A concerned reader alerted the *Gazette* to the situation in April, after he took a few buckets of the black sand home thinking it would add a cool new look as gravel in his home aquarium.

Soon after buying a light-blue shrimp and placing it in the aquarium it turned dark brown. Later, when he accidentally dropped a magnetic algae scraper into the tank, he found it created chaos in aquarium – the "gravel" leapt onto the magnets.

The reader, who initially thought the black sand was a wholly natural phenomenon like the basaltic black sand beaches in Hawaii, contacted the *Gazette* wondering what the strange black sand consisted of and, more importantly, whether it was as harmful to humans as it seemed to be the cause for the shrimp's unnatural discoloration.

Noting that even images provided by Google Earth showed that the mystery sand was clearly visible offshore in black bands, he feared that it could be some kind of dangerous heavy metal that reacts in water and accumulates up the food chain to concentrations that can be toxic to humans – such as lead.

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

The *Gazette* contacted representatives of Thaisarco, which operates a large tin smelter at the north end of the bay, to see if they were responsible for the black sand or could shed any light on the subject.

Their representative assured the *Gazette* that the black sediments dated back to the island's tin-mining days, when the landscape in and around Ao Makhm was extensively transformed. There are similar deposits at other beaches in Phuket, including some in

Cherng Talay, they said.

Local residents in the area confirmed the age of the deposits, saying that they had been there for as long as anyone could remember – well before the Thaisarco smelter opened in 1963.

Phuket Provincial Industry Office Inspector Charan Nongsook concurred.

"The black beach at Cape Panwa is a unique feature of the area. It has nothing to do with Thaisarco. Decades ago there was an ore-processing operation in the area, with local residents panning for [tin] there as well. The small black pieces mixed

prised many different kind of ores," she said.

STICKING POINT

Krit Promsorn, another expert at the Primary Industries and Mines Phuket office, examined a sample of the deposits provided by the *Gazette* and gave his explanation as to how they most likely ended up on the beach – and why they were magnetic.

"From a preliminary visual examination of the sample and the background of the Ao Makhm area, I would say the black deposits mixed up with the sand are magnetite. This is a ferromagnetic mineral with chemical formula Fe_3O_4 . It is one of several iron oxides and a member of the spinel group," he explained.

"After extracting the tin, they just dumped the magnetite because it did not have any economic value," he explained.

"Back in those days, those involved in the tin-mining business would take a boat called a tin-mining sledge just offshore and dig up deposits from beneath the sand. They kept only what they were looking for, dumping everything else overboard. Over

time, these deposits could have migrated ashore from wave activity.

"But from the look of this beach, I have a feeling they were not just swept ashore by currents or waves, but rather were dumped directly on the shoreline. Operations that conduct themselves like this would be illegal today. They would never be permitted because they could harm the environment," Mr Krit said.

"The economy of Phuket back then didn't rely on tourism like it does now, and there was no Thai Industrial Standards Institute to regulate the tin-mining industry. So what we are seeing now is a legacy from the past," he added.

"No one can fix all the mistakes of the past. The best we can hope for is to mitigate the environmental impacts and ensure that such negligent business



Deposits from the black beach sand reacts to the magnet of an algae scraper. Photo: Stephen Fein

with the sand are ore cinders," he said.

Geologist Umpai Thongpinyochai, of the Phuket Office of Primary Industries and Mines, explained, "Since Phuket was extensively mined for tin in the past, there were many 'placer deposits' or secondary minerals, left in the area.

"These kind of secondary minerals were all originally mixed together in with the stone when it was mined."

When the stone was broken down by mechanical processes to extract the tin, the "placer deposits" were those unwanted elements separated out as sediments by gravity.

"When they mined for tin back then, they extracted the tin only and threw away whatever was left.

"The remainder, collectively called ore cinder, typically com-

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the black sands



Ao Makham at low tide. The area continues to attract new villa and resort projects despite the color of the local beach. INSET: Stratification in the sand. Photo: Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai

practices are never allowed to happen again," he said.

CLEAN BILL

Ms Umpai said that despite their magnetic properties, the black ores of Ao Makham were most likely harmless to humans who come into normal contact with them.

"It doesn't have any serious negative affects on the biosphere and isn't toxic to humans. One ore that is potentially toxic to humans is Arsenopyrite, which [can oxidize to produce] arsenious acid," she said.

"But what I have seen at the beach appears to be just magnetite. We could run a laboratory test to confirm whether or not there is any arsenopyrite ore mixed in with the sand, but I suspect the results would be negative.

"Arsenopyrite ore is yellow and smells strongly of hydrogen sulfide. We can easily spot it, even without scientific testing. But the ore found on the beach is black and shiny," she said.

Madusop Rakharb, a 65-year-old retired resident of the area, agreed that the black sediments

were harmless ore cinder. While few foreign tourists visited the beach, it is still sometimes used by local residents as a picnic spot, he said.

"We do not have any problems with the ore cinder on the beach. It is natural thing in our area, the same as a normal beach sand except for the color," he said.

The Phuket Gazette would like to thank the reader, who asked not to be named, for bringing the issue of the black sands to our attention. See related editorial column, page 10.

Something in the air

WHILE investigating why the beach at Ao Makham was black, the *Gazette* interviewed Madusop Rakharb, a 65-year-old retired resident whose home is off Soi Heamharnuthit, the main public access route to the Ao Makham Beach.

"What bothers me is not the beach, but the dust from the Thaisarco smelter," he said.

"It causes our skin to itch, especially from December to April, when the prevailing winds are from the east," he explained.

Mr Madusop lives in the same village as the local residents who filed a complaint against Thaisarco with the Damrongtham Center at Phuket Provincial Hall two months ago.

The residents complained that the plant in early March was releasing tin and iron dust into the air, causing air pollution, lung cancer and windpipe and respiratory problems among local residents.

The complaint led to an immediate investigation of the plant led

by Phuket Vice Governor Somkiet Sangkaosutthirak.

"Authorities who inspected the plant later announced that the emissions did not exceed public health standards for that industry," said Mr Madusop.

"I don't know what else we can do. I am just a villager. I live here. My house is here. I have nowhere else to go. I am just going to live through it," he said.

"We want what is best for both sides, for the plant to continue to run their business in harmony with the local community, with neither side bothered," he said.

Kaewkuan Tiengsuthaisasil of the Phuket Provincial Health Office was among those who took part in the Thaisarco factory inspection.

"We monitored four locations around the plant, and particulate emissions were under the standard of 10 microns at each. We reported these findings to Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha through the Damrongtham Center," she said.



Local resident Madusop Rakharb. Photo: Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai



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Monsoon madness washes across Phuket

THE Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) on May 29 reported a monsoon trough, lying across Northern and upper Northeastern Thailand, would bring rain and isolated heavy rain across the Andaman provinces.

The TMD continues to warn the public of strong wind-driven waves of two to three meters in the Andaman Sea, and a significant risk of flash-flooding inland, despite the prediction that between now

and June 4 the trough will steadily move northeast across Burma and Laos.

A weather warning for shipping was also issued for the latter part of last week advising small vessels to stay in port and residents living along the Andaman coast to beware of flash-flood conditions.

For Phuket, the TMD issued an additional warning for scattered thundershowers this week with southwesterly winds ranging from 15 to 35 kilometers per hour.

During the past week, the heavy wind gusts caused power outages across Phuket, with some areas of Krabi suffering black-outs for several hours.

Driving conditions in Phuket were reported by many as treacherous, as sudden and very heavy downpours reduced visibility and quickly inundated low-lying roads, especially along major routes and intersections.

— Mark Dee



Riding a motorbike was not a pleasant experience last week. Photo: Gazette file

Lifeguards back on duty

FULLY equipped lifeguards are now back on duty at Phuket beaches, ready to rescue swimmers who get into difficulty during the current treacherous weather.

Lifeguards who are members of the Phuket Lifeguard Club returned to island beaches on a volunteer basis last weekend. Their new contract with the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) came into effect on May 28. Now lifeguards man 33 stations at popular tourist beaches from 9am to 7pm every day of the week.

Uten Singsom, head of the Phuket Lifeguard Club unit at Kata-Karon, told the *Gazette*, "This year we are going to have a new uniform and new flags. Both will be ready next week. Last year the warnings were written in Thai and English. I am not sure if they will add Russian to the warning signs this year."

Mr Uten noted that despite the bad weather, tourists were not paying attention to the red warning flags and still entering the sea.



Uten Singsom (left) trained in Australia to be a lifeguard and now trains the guardians of beach safety here. He laments the attitude of some tourists who have little regard for their own safety. Photos: Chutharat Plerin

"If tourists would just read the beach signs and obey the flags it would help. If they followed the rip current emergency procedure it would give the lifeguards time to reach them."

"The worst thing to do in a rip current is to attempt to swim directly back to the beach. Instead, they should swim parallel to the coastline and land further down the beach," he said.

The negative attitude of some

tourists toward the lifeguards is not helpful, he added.

"Sometimes lifeguards blow whistles to warn tourists that they are getting too far from the shore and risk not being able to make it back if they go any further out to sea, but the tourists react like they are angry at the lifeguards," Mr Uten said.

"I understand tourists come here for vacation and fun on the beach, but safety is important as

well," he pointed out.

Although, lifeguard patrols have resumed in full with all stations manned and fully equipped, it was too late to prevent the deaths of two French tourists who drowned in separate incidents at Freedom Beach and Karon Beach recently.

Officials are also warning visiting athletes and others arriving for the Phuket Games 2012 to stay out of the water at island beaches,

where dangerous riptides and heavy surf claim the lives of scores of overconfident swimmers each year.

The initial warning came on May 25 during a meeting of Phuket Games 2012 management council at the Royal Phuket City Hotel in Phuket Town.

The gathering was chaired by Phuket Vice Governor Sommai Prijasilpa and attended by top local officials including *OrBorJor* President Paiboon Upatising.

"At the moment it is monsoon season, so if tourists, athletes or staff want to visit the beach, please be careful and note the warning flags on the beaches before entering the surf. The red flags indicate danger, so please refrain from swimming in any areas where they are flying," he said.

Anyone considering an ocean swim should do so in areas where the yellow "caution" flags are flying, as these indicate that the island's lifeguards are on duty there, he said.

— Orawin Naraba and Chutharat Plerin

Construction worker injured as tree crushes pickup truck

A PHUKET construction worker was injured last Sunday morning when a tree crashed down onto the cab of the pickup truck he was riding in on the coastal road from Patong to Kamala.

Kamala Police were notified of the accident, near the access road to the Thavorn Beach Village Spa at 11:15am.

Arriving at the scene with Ruamjai Katanyu Foundation volunteer rescue workers, police found a large tree fallen across the road, crushing the cab of a Toyota pickup.

A witness rushed the victim to hospital for treatment of injuries to the neck and left leg.

He was identified as Supong Phumjaroen, a construction contractor in his mid-to-late 30s.

Rescue workers and officers from the Kamala Tambon Administration Office, using a chainsaw, took about one hour to cut down the tree and re-open the coastal route to traffic. Long tailbacks in



TREE VERSUS PICKUP: Tree wins, as vehicle passenger goes to hospital leaving behind long lines of waiting traffic. Photo: Thawit Bilabdullar

both directions resulted.

Supachai Suksawatdee, who was driving the Nakhon Sri Thammarat-registered vehicle, said he and Mr Supong were returning home in a torrential downpour from a construction site near Chalong Circle when the accident occurred.

"When I reached the site where the accident took place I heard

what sounded like thunder and the tree suddenly crashed down on us, injuring my boss," he said.

Fortunately, the injuries suffered by Mr Supong were not life threatening.

He remained conscious throughout the incident and was able get out of the truck on his own, witnesses told the *Gazette*.

— Thawit Bilabdullar

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Prompong on the prowl

Government spokesman suspects foreigners in another illegal Freedom Beach land deal

GOVERNMENT Spokesman Prompong Nopparit on May 25 announced that he believes foreigners were involved in the illegal acquisition of protected forest land on the headland south of Patong Beach.

Leading an entourage of about 20 people, Mr Prompong that morning inspected the 20-rai plot of land in question, located near Freedom Beach.

He also led the questioning of Phuket Land Office official Somchai Chaisri during the afternoon, who was answering questions on behalf of Phuket Land Office Chief Sithichai Promchart.

Mr Sithichai was unavailable to answer questions that day, but has already voiced his support for the series of investigations into illegal Phuket land titles.

During questioning, Mr Somchai explained that ownership of the land had changed hands many times over the years.

In great detail, he read out example after example of applications for transfer of ownership of the land.

However, some critical information was not recorded, Mr Prompong discovered.

In response, all Mr Somchai could reply was, "I was not even working in Phuket at the time."

Mr Prompong told the press earlier that day that the land in question had been transferred into the ownership of a private com-

pany that had foreign shareholders.

"We will investigate further into what percentage of the company the foreigners own," he said.

The visit by Mr Prompong follows PACC Secretary-General Dusadee Arayawut's public announcement the previous day that he suspects skulduggery – possibly involving government officers – in issuing land titles for the prime, pristine real estate.

"A Chanote title was issued for the land, but the land was not even covered by a *SorKor 1* [land document], and the land is believed to be in a protected forest area.

"For both reasons, the land cannot be issued a valid land title deed," Mr Dusadee said.

He explained that his suspicions were aroused when his investigation revealed that the same Chanote title

number for the land had been issued on two other occasions for the same land: Chanote Number: 89530.

"PACC officers discovered that the land survey map sheet number was registered on January 18, 1990, and a Chanote title was issued three times thereafter. This is illegal since a Chanote title can be issued only once," he said.

Another factor clouding the issue is the matter of the land status: protected or not?

"Documents produced by the Phuket Provincial Land Office [PULO] surveyor, who previously

inspected the land, state that the land is in a protected forest area.

"However, officers from the Phuket Provincial Forestry Office claim to have reported to the PPLO that the area in question is not in a protected forest," he said.

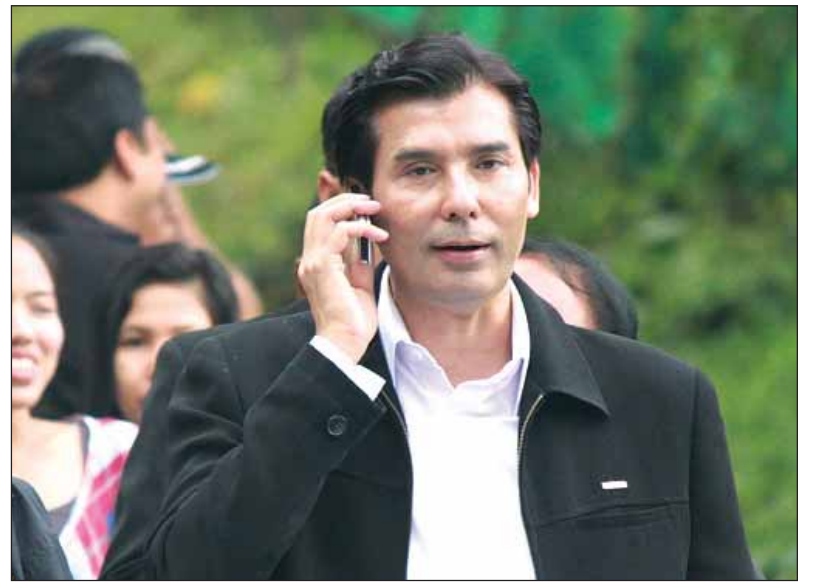
Mr Dusadee noted similarities in how the Chanote title was issued for the 20-rai plot and for other land at Freedom Beach his office is also investigating.

He suspects it will take another two months to inspect the documentary evidence before the PACC can reach a conclusion as to who is involved.

Also, he was uncertain whether the investigation into the 20-rai plot will be conducted by the same team currently investigating the Freedom Beach land.

"From our initial investigation, it's possible that the officers involved might be in higher positions than the PACC officers investigating the case.

"If this is true, the PACC will likely report their findings to the



Mr Prompong suspects foreign involvement in the illegal land deal and states that critical information was not recorded. The investigation rolls on as he also plans to investigate a nearby 90-rai plot. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission for their action," he said.

More probes into Phuket land grab scandals are likely in the near future. Mr Prompong told the

press he would next turn his attention to a 90-rai plot adjacent to the 20 rai already under investigation.

– Atchaa Khamlo and Kritsada Mueanhawong



The land in question in the latest probe into Freedom Beach land is on the far side of the bay.

Thai, Malaysian navies stage joint anti-piracy exercises

TWO Royal Thai Navy warships and one Marine Police patrol boat took part in counter-piracy exercises with their Malaysian counterparts off the coast of Phuket this week.

The six-day exercise, which concluded on Friday, marks the 53rd year that Thailand and Malaysia have conducted their annual "SEAEX Thamal" joint naval drill.

Vice Admiral Taratorn Kajitsuwan, Commander of the Third Naval Area base at Cape Panwa, on Phuket's east coast, welcomed his Royal Malaysian Navy counterpart Rear Admiral Pahlawan Mior Rosdi to Phuket on Tuesday.

"We train with the Malaysian Naval Command in Langkawi every year to build relations and reduce conflict between our two countries. These exercises also help to develop our skills and ex-




The two commanders take the salute at the opening of the naval exercises. Photo Atchaa Khamlo

perience, increasing effectiveness," V/Adm Taratorn explained.


The Thai ships engaged in coordinated exercises with five Malaysian Navy vessels. The operations primarily focused on countermeasures to piracy, diesel smuggling and the human-trafficking of stateless Rohingya people through the Strait of Malacca.

– Atchaa Khamlo




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Counterfeit Thai bank notes in South

POLICE in Phuket are urging the public to carefully check any banknotes they receive, as there have been reports of counterfeit bills being passed across the south of Thailand.

The first reported case took place on Tuesday when a fried chicken vendor used a bogus 1,000 baht note to purchase items at a 7-Eleven convenience store in Haad Yai, Songkla province.

An official warning has already been issued to merchants in that city, located about 50 kilometers from the Malaysian border.

Learn how to spot a bad bill by going to www.bot.or.th/English/Banknotes.

Child's psychological trauma persists after maniac attack

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE 7-year-old victim of a screwdriver attack by a mentally ill man in Phuket Town on May 19 has recovered from his physical injuries, but his mother fears that the psychological trauma caused may take much longer to heal.

Krittamet "Best" Kingsaiyut's mother, Chareerat Naksri, was told by doctors that the stab wound to her son's head was only two centimeters deep. The x-ray examination revealed that the screwdriver had hit an underlying bone, which prevented it from penetrating any deeper.

"Even though the wound is getting better, his mind is not. He is frightened of strangers, especially men. Because he won't walk alone his father or I must always be with him. It was not like this before," said Ms Chareerat.

"Now if he sees too many strangers he wants to go back home," she added.

Best's parents are trying to give



Best is still having trouble coming to terms with the random stabbing by a mentally disturbed man. INSET: Screwdriver Best was stabbed with.

him as much support and comfort as possible, but they are concerned that his mental state

does not appear to be improving. They are considering taking him back to see the doctor if there

are no signs of improvements.

Ms Chareerat said that while she was at hospital the mother and brother of Best's attacker visited.

The attacker was quickly detained by police after the incident based on witness descriptions.

Initial reports from witnesses said the suspect was a man about 40 to 50 years old, wearing denim shorts and a white shirt.

At the time of his arrest he was still carrying the screwdriver and knife, said police.

Ms Chareerat was told that they would be taking the attacker to the Mental Health Department at Srithanya Hospital.

"I do not think what happened to my son should have occurred.

"Anyone who has a family member with a serious mental condition should take proper care of them.

"People like this are not supposed to be walking around in public, not when they might just attack someone," she said.

Burmese maid cleans house

A BURMESE maid who made off with about two million baht in cash, diamonds and jewelry from an ex-employer's house in Phuket on May 21 was captured by the Phuket Provincial Police last week.

The maid, 32-year-old Sandar Win Wan Dee, was tracked down to room number "666" of an unnamed guest house on Soi Patong Whiskey on Monday afternoon.

She was caught with a brown purse that contained many of the stolen items, Deputy Superintendent Serm Kwannimit explained at a press conference at Phuket Provincial Police Headquarters.

Among the items stolen were three pairs of diamond earrings, a diamond bracelet, a diamond necklace, two diamond rings, two gold necklaces and almost 400,000 baht in cash, said Lt Col Serm.

Yupa Waiyasit, 52, filed a complaint with the Phuket Provincial Police May 21 after she realized she had been robbed.

"She worked for me as a maid five or six months ago, but left after less than a month, claiming she wanted to go back home," Ms Yupa explained.

"I suspected she might be the thief because she knew the house well and where I kept my valuables," she said.



Yupa Waiyasit was quick to finger her ex-maid after the robbery. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Ms Wan Dee was charged with burglary and vandalism of Ms Yupa's home on Nanai Road in Patong, said Lt Col Serm.

The suspect confessed that she planned to leave Thailand that week, he added.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

Little prick ends with big stab

A MAN from Samut Prakan province stabbed a work colleague almost to death for teasing him about the size of his penis.

Bunma Saenrak, 23, stabbed Nakarin Noikert, 24, three times in the head in the toilets of their workplace, an autoparts factory in Bang Phli District.

Mr Bunma, who is now in police custody, told officers that Mr Nakarin constantly teased him about the length of his "longfellow".

He said Mr Nakarin liked to lean over him while he was urinating in the bathroom and sing a



situationally unflattering song called *Por Hai Ma*, which translates as "Father Gave It To Me".

Another part of the song he sang featured the line, "Father gave me only a little bit".

On the day of the attack, May 19, Mr Nakarin did his usual act, teasing Mr Bunma as he urinated,

but this time his singing sent Mr Bunma's blood rushing and he flew into a rage.

Mr Bunma pulled out a knife and stabbed his tormentor three times in the head.

Mr Nakarin fell to the ground in a pool of blood and was rushed to hospital by a friend.

At Chularat Hospital doctors saved his life, draining blood that was flooding his brain.

By the time police officers arrived at the factory to arrest him, Mr Bunma had already decided to hand himself in.

— Khao Sod

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Three more killed as Deep South violence continues

A BURIED roadside bomb killed three village defense volunteers and injured four of their colleagues in an attack in the troubled Deep South province of Pattani last week.

The 20kg improvised explosive device (IED), which was constructed from a cooking gas cylinder, was detonated as the victims drove past a rubber plantation in their truck in Kapho District.

It was detonated via command wire by someone in the plantation about 200 meters away.

The three who died, Abdullo Hawae, 40, Nima Masae, 32, and Muhammadromesu Yuso, 25, were returning from a circumcision ceremony at the time.

The blast tore through their truck, killing them instantly. Four more victims were injured in the attack.

Meanwhile, a seven-year-old boy who suffered birth defects after his mother sustained injuries from a bomb blast in January 2005 received assistance from Justice Minister Pracha Promnok during a visit to the boy's home in Yala's Muang district.

The boy, Saharat Kheoya, has not spoken since his birth and is unable to perform many basic tasks, following injuries to his mother, Kaewta, in an insurgent bomb attack at a noodle shop, when she was six months pregnant. The blast killed one person and wounded 59 others.

The King visits Ayutthaya

AROUND THE nation

HM KING Bhumibol Adulyadej travelled outside Bangkok for the first time in two years in a visit to Siam's ancient ruined capital of Ayutthaya last week.

HM the King, who has been hospitalized in Bangkok's Siriraj Hospital since September 2009, rarely leaves the facility. During the visit he was accompanied by HM Queen Sirikit and HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

The visit on May 25 has been taken as a sign that His Majesty's health is improving. Large crowds turned out to wish the monarch well, shouting "Long live The King", while millions more watched the visit on television.

The area chosen for the visit, Thung Makham Yong, has historical significance. In 1996, HM the King and Queen Sirikit used a sickle to harvest rice in a local paddy field there.

The area was filled with people as they flocked in huge numbers to get close to the royals. All 10,000 copies of the printed programs about HM the King's trip were taken up in less than 10 minutes.

Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and Ayutthaya Governor Wittaya Phiewphong waited to welcome the royals in Ayutthaya.

PM Yingluck also presented HM the King a title deed for the paddy field where Their Majesties had harvested the rice crop.

"My family and I would like to present the plot that covers 7 rai and 3 ngan to His Majesty," PM Yingluck said.



HM the King was accompanied to Ayutthaya by HM Queen Sirikit and HRH Princess Sirindhorn. Photo: The Nation

HM the King accepted the title deed before proceeding into a pond-side pavilion, where he watched spectacular shows arranged by locals and agencies.

Democrat spokesman Chavanond Intarakomalyasut said

that seeing HM the King in good health would be a major encouragement to all Thais.

He said the Cabinet, given an audience during the trip, should express their loyalty and help the country to unite.

Mr Chavanond also urged PM Yingluck's government to express a clear stance on *lese majeste*, as well as on politicians who criticize Article 112 of the Criminal Code, which criminalizes *lese majeste*.

Bangkok crazy for 'Gaga'

POP superstar Lady Gaga brought the house down in front of 50,000 fans at her first-ever Thailand concert at Rajamangala Stadium in Bangkok last week.

Despite courting controversy with comments about using her trip to Thailand to "buy a fake Rolex", the songstress let none of her fans down with a concert that earned across-the-board praise from the Kingdom's critics.

The New York-born singer sang an enigmatic ballad and some synth-pop tunes and then revved things with rockier, heavier songs.

"Bad Romance" followed to phenomenal cheering from the crowd as Gaga appeared in a short white dress and Capricorn mask.

Nevertheless, some may remember Lady Gaga's visit for reasons other than her performance.

After landing at Suvarnabhumi Airport, the superstar tweeted: "I just landed in Bangkok baby! Ready for 50,000 screaming Thai monsters. I wanna get lost in a lady market and buy fake Rolex."



Lady Gaga. Photo: The Nation

Some Thais were upset by the comments, claiming the suggestion that fake watches were available to buy in Thailand was insulting.

The Intellectual Property Department plans to submit a letter of complaint over the comments to the US ambassador, local reports said.

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Whitewashing the past dishonors ancestors

PHUKET has a long and somewhat checkered history of past industrial development dating back to its tin-mining era, which petered out over the final decades of the last century and finally ended for good in 1992 with the closure of the last mine on the island. [See Riddle of the Sands, pages 4-5]

In these air-conditioned days of digital data, internet and numerous other advances in technology, it is perhaps understandable that there are many among us who tend to romanticize the tin-mining days.

Tourists are encouraged to visit the island's old commercial center along Thalang Road, which back before the radical transformation of the island's coast by tin-mining dredges was not far from its natural, sandy waterfront.

The images we are fed of this period include women in Peranakan attire being pulled along in rickshaws, dance halls and pipe-smoking businessmen proudly posing with latest tin-mining technology, which was literally "cutting edge" at the time.

In many concrete re-creations of the original Sino-Portuguese homes once found in the area, we are presented with bric-a-brac carefully displayed to evoke a sense of nostalgia for by-gone days. The period is often portrayed as a simpler time, free of all the stresses of modern life.

The reality, however, is that few among us – with the possible exception of migrant workers from Burma – could begin to imagine the hardships faced by most people living in Phuket a few hundred years ago.

Child mortality rates were incredibly high by modern-day standards, while very few people ever made it to 50 years of age. There were no hospitals or dental clinics. Infectious diseases including malaria and syphilis were rampant. It is little wonder opium abuse was rife among those who could afford it.

While a small fraction of wealthy merchants might have taken pleasure where they could find it, life for the vast majority of coolies who did the back-breaking work of extracting tin ore from bedrock was little more than a back-breaking struggle simply to survive.

Efforts to use Phuket's tin-mining past to bolster the island's modern-day tourism industry may eventually prove successful, but a comparison of the crowds found at the highly-informative Tin Mining Museum in Kathu with those found at island beaches indicate we have a long way to go before its contribution amounts to a significant slice of the tourism revenue pie.

Perhaps, rather than try to romanticize our tin-mining past, more effort should go into helping us appreciate the incredible sacrifices our ancestors made so that we could enjoy all the wonders of modern technology we take for granted.



Better to cater to fond memories

Re: Gazette online, Phuket strike action sees 400 workers laid off, May 22

Evason Phuket is presently a leader in eco-friendly practices and sponsors many charities with its "Slow Life" philosophy.

The company opened 10 years ago, earned a lot of profit and paid bonuses when targets were met.

However, on the last day the company gave the staff 30 minutes notice before closing. Surely, the company had other choices, so why choose this way?

If they had given us more notice, the moral thing to do, it wouldn't have been so harsh and would have left us with fond memories of work.

unemployed people
Gazette forum

Letters to the Editor

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

personal relations with customers, especially sexual intercourse in one of their rooms?

Why hasn't this guy been fired yet? If he was, nobody has reported it.

Manneken Pis
Gazette forum

Teachers need a serious lesson

I have been a teacher in Phuket for almost two years. There has been an increase in the number of new teachers to Phuket. However, what would be beneficial is for people to realize that teaching in Phuket is a serious career for some of us.

Wasting time with interviews when you have no intention to work, or come to work hung over or still drunk is completely unacceptable.

What makes people think this is acceptable behavior?

CR
Phuket

Eradicate the trash and the corruption across Racha Yai

For too long, Racha Yai Island has been a mess, as civil servants at the helm of the Thai administration refuse to take legal action against illegal constructions on public land, corrupt land deals by some resorts and land owners, as well as pollution on the island.

The Anti-Corruption Commission should act decisively by investigating corrupt lands deals by some resorts and land owners, which are at the expense of local people and other members of the public.

An official state audit and fraud investigation would be helpful to have a sound report of alleged wrongdoing.

Department of Marine and Coastal Resources (DMCR) has organized official "Clean-Up Days" on June 1 and 2, but what I do not understand is why it is divers and tourists at large who have to clean up the mess, as it would have been better to prevent pollution by cracking down first on those illegal selfish opportunists who are destroying the landscape and coral reefs in Phuket.

G L
Phuket

Communication, more than words

Re: Gazette online, Poll: English in the Phuket tourism industry, May 27

I do not think that being able to speak English very well matters all that much. As long as we both get the gist of what each person is trying to say, and are both a little patient, I believe we can manage.

Marconi
Gazette forum

True English test

Re: Gazette online, Poll: English in the Phuket tourism industry, May 27

It will be a true test of Thai nationals' English-language skills when the AEC [Asian Economic Community] comes into force. The service industry in Thailand will be "manned" by many non-Thais (Filipinos, Malays, Indonesians and even Singaporeans) as they really do speak passable English.

Rob
Gazette forum

A stay stay here...

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Town ultimate hotel guest Hans Maeter recovering well, May 25

It's always been a concern of mine, that in later life, staying here could be a problem – not financially, but because of passport and visa issues. This story shows there is at least some concern for elderly expats. Congratulations to all involved, and may Mr Maeter live happily for the rest of his life – where he wants be.

agogohome
Gazette forum

Needed: hotel policy clarification

Re: Gazette online, Update: Phuket resort worker denies rape of German tourist, May 27

There have been several reports on this case, but there is one thing I don't understand. Even if this guy is telling the truth, isn't it hotel policy that staff shouldn't have

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Thai students prepare for ASEAN community

FIRST PERSON

I BECAME involved in education after my aunt Thidaporn Laovisetkul attended a seminar in Bangkok about English-program schools and was inspired to open her own English-program school in Phuket. It is necessary for our students, and all the students in Thailand, to prepare for the Kingdom to join the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015.

The importance of having English language skills cannot be over looked.

For many years now we have focused on teaching our students in both Thai and English language. We educate our students about ASEAN countries, with regard to their geography, culture and lifestyle, so that our students will have some fundamental understandings when we become a member of ASEAN Economic Community.

Moreover, our school has recently begun a cultural exchange program with Shelton College International in Singapore. The program is designed to let high school students visit the school abroad for one or two weeks. Here, Singaporean student will experience Thai culture, such as how to cook Thai food, tap rubber trees, grow rice and so on. This project will enlighten students and help prepare them for the ASEAN Economic Community.

I personally believe that the knowledge, the vision and opinions of Phuket students are equal to those of students from other provinces. However, if you focus



Permkiat Ketkul, 34, is the Kajonkietsuksa School Manager and the Chairman of Private Education Association of Phuket. Here he talks about the issues facing Phuket students as they ready for Thailand to join the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) Economic Community.

on English skills, I would say that they are much more knowledgeable than many other provinces in Thailand. So in my mind Phuket is better prepared to join the ASEAN Economic Community.

However, all educational organizations in Phuket have to help strengthen student readiness for change.

In our school, I always stress to our staff that our students must be able to communicate well in English, have a broad knowledge of international matters and, at the same time, be aware and proud of Thai culture and tradition. It is a challenge to present the material in a way that the students are able to absorb the English, as well as world cultures and traditions, while maintaining their love and respect for Thai traditions and culture.

Currently, Phuket does have a problem with the lack of Thai teachers willing to work in private schools. It is from our Thai teachers that students can readily learn to respect their own culture and traditions.

We are unable to offer our Thai teachers the same salary and benefits as has become the standard

in government schools. Because of this, we have to find other methods to convince them to stay with us, such as by providing a good working environment.

The other reason we struggle to find enough Thai teachers is because of the policies of the Ministry of Education.

Currently, Thailand can't produce enough new teachers, but at the same time the Ministry is limiting those allowed to attend the Graduate Diploma Program, Teaching Profession course.

Instead, potential teachers are required to pass the expensive exam without attending the course, which discourages many potential teachers.

The Ministry's argument is that by limiting the number of places available it ensures only quality teachers will be available to schools. I believe they should focus on building the quality of the graduate teaching curriculum, rather than limiting numbers.

Nonetheless, I have no doubt that a mix of quality Thai teachers and English-language teachers will help create a new generation in Thailand that will succeed in the ASEAN Economic Community.

Imperfect first impression



Phuket Airport needs better greeters at the doors. Photo: Julien gong Min

I HAVE lived on the island for a number of years and, having my own transport, only ever hear about Phuket's public transport woes third hand. Last week, however, I received a surprise visit from my sister who lives in Hong Kong and saw first hand the horror of it all. She arrived at Phuket International Airport just after midnight, where I was waiting to collect her.

Arriving early, I was able sit down and enjoy one of my favorite pastimes – people watching. There is something about an airport arrivals hall that warms the heart as you see families reunited; small children jumping up and down in excitement on seeing one of their parents come through the gates; couples stealing a quick embrace after a long separation and the happy faces of holiday makers arriving at their destination after the discomfort of many hours of travel.

Then it started. The small groups of young Thai men who were, until that point, playing with their mobile phones and chatting among themselves leapt into action, clutching faded laminated A4 sheets and shouting "Taxi, taxi – where you go?"

The tone was aggressive and most were shunned by these weary travellers, who presumably had done their homework. Two

Island View

By Roy McAllum

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

rough looking men in particular were mocking the replies parrot fashion "No, no, no." said one, "one thousand five hundred too 'spensive'," leered another.

I imagined the scene through these travellers' eyes and felt ashamed. This, after all, is the first impression these "guests" receive just minutes after arriving. It was reminiscent of a nature documentary I once saw where a pack of hyenas pick on a sick lion.

Outside, the jostling continued. As I wielded my sister's heavy suitcase through the sea of faces yelling "taxi" at me, I held up my car keys to show that I did not need, nor want their "services".

We drove out of the airport, paid the parking fee and I felt a need to explain to my sister what she had just witnessed. I told her there is little public transport on the island and that there is fierce competition for fares, but my words rang hollow as I again visualized the mob we had faced at the airport.

Surely Phuket can do better than this.

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

Low season change in beach conditions

A month ago, we were enjoying the beauty of Kamala Beach on a daily basis. Now, the beach is a disgrace, full of rubbish and discarded building materials from the departed high-season shop and restaurant owners.

It is now dangerous to take young children down there, as you never know what they are going to find, such as broken glass.

Who is responsible for keeping the beach clean?

Rae
Kamala

Kittikrisri Keawwan, Acting Chief Administrative Officer (Palad) of Kamala Administration Organization, replies:

Presently it is the low season, and during the low season the waves wash lots of garbage ashore.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

The Kamala Administrative Organization (*OrBorTor*) officers, staff from hotels around Kamala and beach vendors have organized beach cleans ups a couple times in the past.

The last beach cleanup was conducted in March. However, the waves that bring all the garbage and debris arrives on the beach all day, every day.

It is just not possible for them to go down and clean up Kamala Beach that often.

The Kamala *OrBorTor* will be organizing another beach cleanup again sometime next month, hopefully this will help some.

Goodness, gracious, great balls of fire

We live and own a nice property overlooking Patong Bay. We recently bought another property in Patong to rent out.

One evening at sunset, I was sitting with my family on Patong Beach. When it darkened, the first floating lanterns were lit and rose into the sky. Very nice to watch, but at the same time frightening to see! The wind blew them in the direction of our properties.

In less than 30 minutes, three "bad" launches or "poor" quality balloons came burning down! I even called the Tourist Police (1155) to mention this.

Who can be held responsible if ever a fire occurs because of this "romantic" floating lantern lighting?

PhuketExpat
Patong

Chief Wisit Mathasontornpoj, Patong Municipality, Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation (DDPM) replies:



Tourist on the beach send off floating lanterns. Photo: Gazette file

We send a team of four municipal police officers out every night to inspect the beach and to arrest any persons lighting lanterns or conducting illegal activities.

Lantern sellers can be fined up to 2,000 baht and have their lantern equipment seized. In the case of a fire being started from the lantern, we have to know the

identity of the person who lit the lantern in order to take action.

We only allow lanterns to be sold during New year and Loy Kratong festival, and supply a special guard from Patong-DDPM to keep an eye out for fires.

If there is any emergency please contact Patong-DDPM's 24-hour hotline: 076-342 600.



Debbie Dionysius



Paul Poole



Bill Barnett



Duncan Worthington



Nicholas Seaver Photos: Marc Mulloy

Sports tourism 'scores big'

An expert panel fosters dialogue about marketing "Brand Phuket" to sports tourists

DEFINING and developing 'Brand Phuket' as a world class sports tourism destination was top of the agenda at a recent meeting in Thalang.

Organized in collaboration with the Phuket PR Network and the Greater Phuket Chapter of the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM), the meeting was held at the Thanyaphura Sports and Leisure Club (TSLC) on May 24.

Discussions for the evening were fueled by presentations from four keynote speakers: Debbie Dionysius, Paul Poole, Duncan Worthington and Nicholas Seaver.

The opening address was given by *Gazette* property columnist and Managing Director of Phuket-based firm C9 Hotelworks, Bill Barnett.

Begging the question about the implications of sports tourism for "Phuket's stakeholders", Bill emphasized the lure of Phuket. "People who've moved to the island in the past few years [did so because they] were driven by the lifestyle, education and sporting opportunities available here."

Following Bill's signature rhetoric, Natasha Eldred of Phuket PR Network introduced the evening's panel.

"When brand guru David Keen at a recent AMCHAM meeting [on November 30, 2011] asked the question 'What is Phuket?', no one was able to answer. The room fell completely silent," she recalled.

"This silence reinforces the fact that no one has yet come up with a distinct brand image for Phuket. . . In this meeting, the first of a planned five-part series, we will further explore and identify 'Brand Phuket,'" she said.

In the opening presentation, Debbie, who is the Assistant Vice President of Destination Marketing at Laguna Phuket, highlighted benchmark sporting events such

as the Laguna Phuket Triathlon, Marathon and Ironman 70.3.

Debbie argued that we should continue to build on and nurture the island's reputation as a sports tourism destination, emphasizing the international reach and exposure that events have fostered.

"We want to push forward the brand of Phuket for being a major sports tourism destination . . . We started the Laguna Phuket Triathlon in 1994 and we've come from a small race, where some triathlon athletes showed up from surrounding countries, to [being] one of the biggest triathlon competitions for athletes from across the world [to] attend.

"I believe we are on the right track to promote the Phuket brand as being the sport tourism destination," she said.

By continuing to support and promote these kind of events, sports tourism and the island's destination brand will become synonymous, she argued.

The 'bottom line' certainly speaks for itself. Last year, for example, independent surveys found that participants and spectators of the island's world-renown Kings Cup Regatta spent over 40 million baht on accommodations, food and beverages during the week of the prestigious sailing competition, according to Duncan Worthington, Media and Communications Director for the event.

Although sailing regattas serve a niche market, last year's numbers support the no-

tion that Phuket's Kings Cup is an increasingly valuable asset in terms of annual tourism income, Mr Worthington noted.

"The Phuket King's Cup Regatta is known around the world as 'the race to win', attracting over 2,000 people from more than 30 countries joining the event. The top participating countries include Australia, the UK,

Russia and Japan," said Mr Worthington.

Going on to highlight the potential of the domestic market, Duncan named golf, Muay Thai and even football as sports that we can expect to see and hear more of in Phuket's future.

While more athletes and spectators equates to increased cash flow in the economy, meals, tickets and reservations are not the primary source of sports revenue.

A marketing veteran backed with nearly two decades of experience, Paul Poole focused his speech on the need to successfully integrate sponsorship into destination events. Mr Poole's company, The Sponsorship Experts, currently coordinates sponsorship for dozens of events and agencies in Phuket.

"Sporting events get the most sponsorship throughout the world," he said, adding that organizations should focus on segmentation for particular kinds of sponsorship using tier levels, and that events must offer clear and tangible incentives to companies.

The closing speaker was Nicholas Seaver, CEO of TSLC.

A Harvard graduate who has worked

with former US Vice President Al Gore on climate-change, Mr Seaver said he moved to Phuket in order to pursue the vision of his club TSLC, which integrates the appeal of a luxurious resort destination with the facilities needed for world-class athletes to train.

"I've learned that the new trend in tourism aims towards health and wellness activities. That is why we provide a retreat center, an integrative health center and mind center. . . [this is] to attract new groups of tourists," said Mr Seaver.

Nick highlighted how efforts to brand the TSLC facility as the most desirable sports center in Southeast Asia will benefit Phuket and help further the island's brand positioning as a quality sports destination.

"We have a complete sports facility that is able to support all kinds of sports activities. The TSLC has a fitness center, aquatics academy, tennis academy, triathlon academy, rugby academy and football academy. "We have hosted many important sports events, such as an ITF tennis tournament, the Phuket International Soccer 7s and the IronKids Triathlon. We've welcomed athletes to use our venue as a place to train – including the Netherlands' National Triathlon Team and the Canadian National Synchronized Swimming Team," said Mr Seaver.

But the TSLC's efforts are not restricted to targeting professional athletes, he added.

"The TSLC also wants to promote the center not only as a home for athletes and members, but also to tourists as a holistic wellness center," he concluded.

The Phuket PR Network plans to continue its Brand Phuket series of seminars. For more info visit: phuketprnetwork.com

– *Phuket Gazette*



SPLASHING SUCCESS: Phuket is an ideal place to stage large and lucrative sporting events.



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Games to bring in B600mn

HUNDREDS of millions of baht will be in circulation on the island thanks to Thailand's 28th National Youth Games which began on May 24 and will last through June 5.

Governor Tri Aukaradacha revealed the official projection during a visit to the Games' press center at the Royal Phuket City Hotel on Sunday evening.

"We expect that this event will inject no less than 600 million baht into [the economy of] Phuket."

"I have ordered the Department of Internal Trade to look after and regulate prices to be fair for all the

organizers, athletes and spectators coming from other provinces across the country.

"Also, [I've asked them] to make brochures that can recommend products, whether food or souvenirs, to leave a good impression with visitors to Phuket. I'd like to ask all in Phuket and neighboring provinces to come out and cheer on the athletes who have come to compete in this event. This will be encouragement for all of them [the athletes]," he concluded.

Dubbed 'The Phuket Games,' this is the second time Phuket has



The Games' mascot is a popular souvenir being sold now in Phuket.

hosted the event, with more than 20,000 athletes, spectators and organizers estimated to take part. The first Phuket Games was in 1990.

Thailand – UK trade steady

His Excellency Asif Ahmad, UK's ambassador to Thailand, was in Phuket last week to hand out IB diplomas at the British International School Phuket and attend meetings. Here he speaks about the strong trade and future ties between the two countries.

AFTER a moving ceremony handing out IB diplomas to graduating students at British International school, HE Ambassador Asif Ahmad took time to speak with the *Phuket Gazette* and other media about the strong links between the two countries.

HE Asif Ahmad was made Ambassador to Thailand in late 2010 but had travelled frequently to the Kingdom, first as Director Asia for UK Trade and Investment and more recently as Head of South East Asia and Pacific Group for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

A holiday destination for more than 850,000 British citizens a year, Thailand is also home to a number of British businesses and trade flows well between the two countries. One of the embassy's

roles is helping British companies to succeed in Thailand and South East Asia and to smooth the path for Thai investors in the UK.

"My main job is to look after national interests, whether it be UK citizens themselves or the UK economy, which currently needs all the help it can get. We try to help UK businesses here. These come in all shapes and sizes, from an individual selling his services as a consultant to the other extreme such as Tesco, which has well over a 1000 stores in Thailand, or Boots with 200. For example Triumph make most of their motorbikes here," he said

Asked about Thai investors in the UK he had this to say:

"The single biggest investment into the UK last year, from any



HE Ambassador Asif Ahmad.

country in the world, was from Thailand. Sahaviriya Steel invested in the closed Teeside steel plant, saving and creating over 1,500 jobs. Right now there is a trade deficit between Britain and Thailand. Thailand outsells Brit-

ain by over a billion pounds a year. This one deal alone will equalize that as we will have steel from Teeside coming to Thailand at a value of a billion pounds a year from now on."

As for the future, HE Ahmad says the big challenge for mature economies like those in the UK and America is to be able to participate in Asia's growth.

"Future growth will not just come from India and China, which we always seem to mention, but also from the Association of South East Nations (ASEAN). The UK already sells more to the ASEAN community than India and China put together. That doesn't mean we should be happy about that, it means we should sell more to China and India. The opening up of

ASEAN however is a great opportunity for us to sell everything from food processing technology to pharmaceuticals."

On the subject of the recent graduates' prospects in the UK he had this to say:

"As I told the students here today, one gift they now have is the English language – this is the language of Asia and the World. Many students here have the advantage of being able to speak more than one language and this is a huge advantage for them. Around 6000 Thai students currently study in the UK and students from International schools like this one [BIS] need no conversion when they arrive in the UK as they already speak the global language."

– Marc Mulloy

London Olympics to give Thai food exports a boost

A THAI trade official has projected that the value of food exports to the United Kingdom (UK) this year will exceed US\$ 1.2 billion (38 billion baht), as the Summer Olympic Games in London boost demand and economic growth despite financial turmoil in Europe.

"Although the financial crunch in the European Union has had an impact on Thailand's exports, demand for Thai products in the UK market, particularly foods, has not

been affected as Britons have good consumer sentiment ahead of the Olympic Games," said Chulit Stavorn, executive director of the Thai Trade Center in London.

Chulit said export of Thai foods to the UK had increased gradually each year, from US\$675mn (21.4bn baht) in 2007 to US\$938mn (29.7bn baht) in 2010.

Last year, exports of Thai food products to the UK were worth US\$ 1.1bn. Major export products were

processed chicken, worth US\$ 555mn (17.6bn baht), followed by canned seafoods, frozen shrimp, rice, noodles, processed foods and fresh and canned fruits.

Chulit said the EU's cancellation of its import ban on fresh chicken from Thailand in July would also boost the Kingdom's poultry exports to the UK and EU markets. He expects that Thai chicken exports to the UK should increase by US\$ 400mn

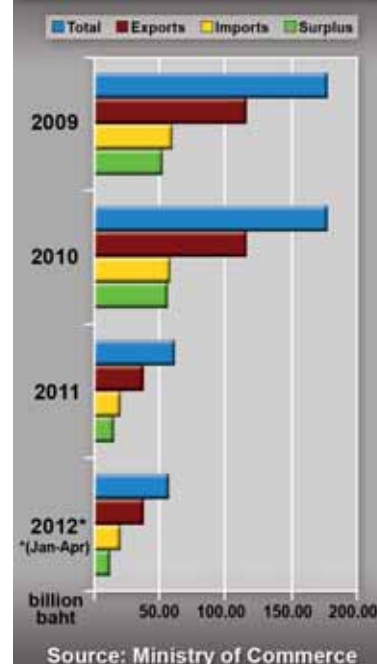
(12.7bn baht) this year.

Chulit also expects that the plan of CP Foods, Thailand's leading food producer, to take over Birds Eye, a giant British fish-finger producer, will boost trading opportunities for Thai products in the UK if the bid is successful.

The deal is not yet finalized, as more than three firms are interested in taking over Birds Eye.

– The Nation

Thailand – UK Trade



2012 Commodity Price Trends

	Jan Week 1	May Week 4	Change (%)
Palm Oil*	42	42	0
Benzine 91*	36.21	41.49	14.58
Gasohol 95*	34.93	38.07	8.99
Diesel*	29.83	30.27	1.48
LPG*	12.36	13.88	12.26
Steel bar***	24.04	25.85	7.5
Rubber block****	87.15	98.7	10.4
Rubber liquid****	78	98	18.41
23ct gold**	1597.3	1534.7	-4.11

*baht/liter
 **baht/gram
 ***baht/kg, one 10m SR24 bar=4.99kg
 ****baht/kg, Haad Yai market

Source:
Department of Internal Trade

Light rail bid on track

ASSURING the public that a light-rail project for the island will go ahead, Phuket Governor Tri Augkardacha said he expects the engineering firm to build the project to be named by the government by August.

"We have an official committee to oversee the light-rail project in Phuket. The committee comprises local officials and businessmen, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Transport in Bangkok.

"We are now considering three companies that we will present to the Ministry. I believe we will be notified which company will be selected by the end of August," he said.

Gov Tri announced the news last Wednesday, when Sung-Min Lee of Korean public transport developer Dohwa paid a visit to Provincial Hall to discuss the project – for the third time.

Also present for the talks were Consultant to the Governor Metta

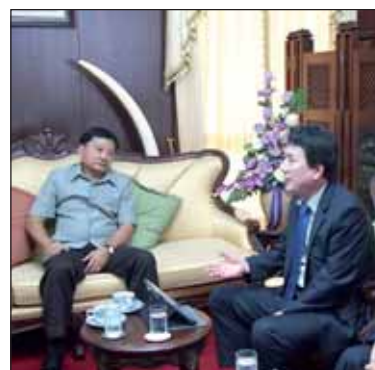
Visetsombat, Phuket Tourist Association Vice President Bhuritt Maswongsa and Phuket Provincial Office Chief of Development Chaipaporn Pattanarak.

"I heard that the Thai Cabinet has already acknowledged and agreed with the project. That is why we have come back again," said Mr Lee, president of Dohwa's Railway Metro Division.

"We want to invest in the light-rail train project and other public transport systems in Phuket because we see very high potential in this province. A large number of tourists visit here every year. Moreover, we have the budget to invest and we have the technology to complete the project," he added.

Engineers and analysts from Dohwa will collect more data to add to their projections, returning in about two months with their final draft plan for the project.

In August last year, Dohwa filed one of the most comprehen-



Sung-Min Lee of Korean firm Dohwa visits with governor.

sive plans presented for the project, including maps of where the light-rail system would transit and the likely location of stations.

"I will further complete the study that has already been conducted to make sure it is up to date in terms of structure, budget and investment conditions," said Mr Lee.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Is the iPad rotting your child's brain?



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

IN 2010 and 2011, there was a rash of articles in the popular press saying that iPads, iPhones, tablets and the like would rot your kid's brain.

It's hard to wade through headlines like these from the *New York Times* and not feel like an iPad is the root of all kiddy evil: "Growing Up Digital, Wired for Distraction, The Risks of Parenting While Plugged In" and "An Ugly Toll of Technology: Impatience and Forgetfulness."

I forgot what the other headlines said, but you get my drift. Typical admonishment: "We're raising a generation of kids in front of screens whose brains are going to be wired differently."

Well, yes. That's exactly the point.

When I was a kid the child development experts said that any more than 45 minutes of television per day would make a kid irresponsible, incapable of concentrating, unable to interact with people, and a developmental basket case.

Look what happened to me. Oh, wait, maybe that isn't a good comparison. Look at what happened to the entire generation.

Perhaps we all suffered from short attention spans and terminal halitosis. But, somehow I think we all pulled through it, give or take the odd few politicians, and maybe a judge on America's Got Talent.

TV changed generations, but not all of its effects were negative. Experts back then were simply commenting on something they didn't understand, as we marched into a "brave new world" that none of us had experienced. They cloaked themselves in advanced degrees, learned speeches and developed case studies designed to reinforce their foregone conclusions.

I don't claim to be a child development expert. But I do know this: putting an iPad (or Android, Kindle, whatever) into your child's hands isn't a brain

cell death sentence. It's opening up an important new world.

Yes, I've read the studies that show toddlers who grow up on tablets do not develop vocabularies until a later age. I know about the teen tech *idiot savants*, who can't write a sentence, but spin out programs to solve high school algebra problems. The high schoolers who send 20,000 SMSs a month, but can't find time to finish a homework assignment. The kids who play so many games they forget to sleep at night.

On the other hand, I've seen the toddlers who spend hours and hours practicing their letters and numbers, shapes and words, colors and coordination, and going right back to the iPad at every opportunity because it's fun.

Someday, maybe someone will run an iPad child development study that's properly constructed – double blind, monitored (not self reported), with objective evaluations.

Perhaps those studies will predict that my son will be a social misfit at age six because of the evil iPad, and an axe killer at sixteen.

If that happens, I'll think about changing my tune. For now, I don't see one iota of evidence that using a tablet is in any way harmful and I see lots of evidence that immersing kids in technology helps prepare them for a wired future.

I know a whole lot of people in Silicon Valley who make a living, not by writing book reports but by churning out miles of incredible code. The best of the bunch started as teenagers – young teenagers. Some of them have changed the way the world works. Really.

Almost a billion people are on Facebook. The world's knowledge is at your fingertips with

Wikipedia and a little help from Google. The finest maps, critiques and discussions, and university courses, are all there for the taking.

What about the kids who fritter away their time on computers or phones, instead of doing their homework? Hey, when I was a kid we had different distractions, but plenty of us didn't always get our homework done either. Did you? That part hasn't changed a bit.

Or maybe they should be playing 'cowboys and indians', like I did, while begging for a Roy Rogers six shooter for Christmas. How sick is that? I didn't grow up to be an axe murderer – yet.

If kids back then could get over shooting "Injuns" and using x-ray vision glasses, I submit that kids today can overcome slinging angry birds at ticked-off pigs, engaging in grand theft auto and splatting zombies with laser guns.

That said, there are some big differences these days. Just a decade ago, it took a great deal of hand-eye coordination to get started with using computers.

I remember teaching my first son how to type, so he'd be ready to work on a PC when he got to school. We started when he was six years old.

Now, though, little kids of 18 months old and even younger can get the hang of the iPad interface. My two-year-old knows his way around an iPad better than I do. That's an incredibly liberating fact: the big barrier, the huge stumbling block that kept little kids off computers is now disappearing and pre-schoolers are quite capable of working on their ABCs with Elmo or counting to 20 with the Gigglebellees. They can sing "Wheels on the bus" with other kids their age or play "Head, shoulders, knees and toes" with the Wiggles.

The trick, in my opinion, is to use technology to interact with your kids. Sure, my toddler and I still read books – real, dead tree books, every day. But most of the day when we're playing indoors, the topics are generally educational and they're invariably on the iPad or the PC.

Does he throw temper tantrums when he doesn't get the iPad or the Kindle? Yeah, sure. Show me a two year old who doesn't. Does he get so involved in playing with the tablet that he ignores Mom and Dad? Yep. It's called concentration.

"The struggle of maturity is to recover the seriousness of the



WIRED DIFFERENTLY: After years of research do we really know how technology will affect our children's developmental future? Photo: Jamesrdoe

child at play." Do I let him play Modern Combat 3? No, not yet. Not until I'm sure that I can beat him at it, anyway.

Am I setting my toddler up for having his brain wired the wrong way? Well, yes, I hope so; much depends on what you mean by "wrong." Will his interpersonal skills suffer? Not if he gets some time playing with other kids. Will he be able to use all the tools he'll need as he gets older?

Yeah, I think so.

Most of all, he won't be intimidated by these talking pieces of glass. It'll be second nature, and when the time comes he'll be able to start standing on the shoulders of giants.

It's just that, in the mean time, he has to learn that he can't tap or swipe on a TV screen and get it to change channels or slide his finger on a magazine and expect it to move forward a page. We aren't there yet. Try again in five years.

So, I say take your kids to the library. Watch TV with them. Take them swimming and hiking and kick a ball their way. Make sure they have time with other kids. And get a tablet into their hands at an early age, so you can play with them and help them learn.

A friend of mine asked me to come up with a list of iPad apps that my wife and I like to play with our toddler. Here's the list: Cat in the Hat, Dr Seuss Band, anything by the Gigglebellees, any Sandra Boynton books, Pat the Bunny, Twinkle Twinkle (Super Simple Learning), My First Words Baby Picture Dictionary, Starfall ABCs, Elmo Loves ABCs, any Duck

Duck Moose stories, Nighty Night, Pepi Bath and The Little Critter books.

You can also scrape videos off YouTube. (Hint: use Firefox and Video Download Helper – directions coming in my new book). I leave it to your search skills to find videos on YouTube for your kids. Of course, you can watch YouTube directly – no scraping required – if you hook the iPad up to your WiFi connection, or use 3G.

All of this is in the Apple App Store – immediately accessible from the iPad, or if you want to surf, go to W: apple.com/itunes.

Computers are going to give your kids (and grandkids and their grandkids) abilities we can hardly dream about today. Don't be afraid to teach them well, in spite of what the experts say.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions on every-other Wednesday afternoon, from 1:00 to 3:00. If you have a Windows problem that needs to be solved, drop by one of Seth's free afternoon sessions, or come to one of our free Sunday morning roundtables at Sandwich Shoppe Chalong. 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 an email at Woody@KhunWoody.com, follow him on Twitter, @PhuketLiveWire, or "like" his page at facebook.com/SandwichShoppes.

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The case for avoiding annuities

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

I KNOW the insurance companies love to portray annuities as the best thing for retirees since sliced bread.

On the surface, they look like a great thing. They give you a certain, steady income, in nominal terms. If you aren't going to earn any more income from employment, that may seem like a godsend. Of course, the insurance companies aren't known for making losing bets, so even in the best environment, you need to overcome the fact that you're betting against the house.

However, there is a completely different reason to avoid annuities at the moment – interest rates are low.

The real problem is that they give a steady income in nominal terms, not real terms.

Even if you link them to inflation figures, you are in trouble, as just about everyone knows that real inflation figures are much higher than those published by the authorities.

With interest rates so low, an annuity essentially locks in your inability to keep up with inflation. Worse still, if it does have



PROCEED WITH CAUTION: On the surface an annuity may seem like the right solution but it will produce nominal and not 'real' income. Nominal income does not account for inflation. Photo Bruce County

a cash value, the risk to your principle, should interest rates rise rapidly, is extremely high with rates currently being so low.

A repeat of events in the late 70s would see the cash value of an annuity annihilated.

However, there are times when investing in annuities is a smart thing. When you expect interest

rates will fall substantially, an annuity can essentially lock in the current higher rates.

Unfortunately, this is the opposite of the current situation. If one is patient, and also has the guts to go against the crowd, the time to buy an annuity is generally when everyone thinks it is silly, because times are good, the stock market

has been on fire and interest rates have been shooting up – way above the hundred year average.

So, "What should I do in the meantime?" you may ask. Remember, an annuity is designed for someone with almost no risk tolerance whatsoever. Therefore, one must consider an alternative with similar risk characteristics,

which doesn't leave many options.

A common mistake made in today's economical environment is investing into asset classes that are much too risky for a person who ought to be investing in something like an annuity – given a slightly more normal state of the world.

I think the reason is shortsightedness. People see today's low interest rates and project that they cannot live off the return they can earn.

This is even more reason not to risk diminishing that capital base. But instead of envisioning the likely average rate over the coming 20 years, they move into riskier investments.

I would recommend recognizing the low rates as unfavorable. Maintain your capital base to provide an income when rates go back to normal.

The temporary decrease in your standard of living will be a lot less painful than a permanent one if your gamble into risky assets doesn't pay off.

David Mayes MBA lives in Phuket and provides wealth management services to expats around the globe, specializing in UK pension transfers. He can be reached at 085-335-8573 or david.m@faramond.com

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Post-event	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓		
Advertising, full color	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				
Events Flyer – every week !	✓											
'What's On' page x 1	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓				
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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					✓							✓
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* 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.

⁽¹⁾ Continuous, all day

⁽²⁾ in a half hour show running 3 times / day

⁽³⁾ Continuous on CCTV systems in 4,000 four and five star hotel rooms

Phuket Gazette

Contact K. Jane, Events Manager:
Kanjana@PhuketGazette.net



GET EM' WHILE THEIR YOUNG: TAT believes that using celebrities like Markoolio is an effective way to target young and dynamic tourists.

Nordic sensation to lure tourists

THE Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is pumping up the volume of its celebrity marketing strategy to lure more young Scandinavians into visiting Phuket and the rest of Thailand.

In its latest campaign to promote the island to young, working-age tourists in Norway, Sweden and Finland, the TAT has teamed up with the Stenhamar Music Group, a leading Nordic entertainment company, to produce a pop song called *En Vecka i Phuket* (One Week in Phuket).

Performing the song is none other than multi-platinum-selling Nordic recording artist Marko Kristian Lehtosalo, best known by his stage name "Markoolio". The song is supported by a light-hearted music video filmed on location in Phuket, in which Markoolio showcases the many fun activities that visitors can enjoy in Thailand's world-renowned tropical island paradise.

Born in Finland and raised in Sweden, Markoolio is a widely popular singer, actor and comedian in the Nordic countries. The new single *En Vecka i Phuket* recently rolled out in Finland, Norway and Sweden, while the music video is getting broad exposure on both traditional broadcast and social media.

The music video, which shows Markoolio's zany antics during a holiday in Phuket, has been well received with more than 85,000 YouTube views within the first few weeks of its launch.

In the video, Markoolio parties on Phuket's beautiful beaches, explores the island, tries his hand – and feet – at Thai boxing, visits a spa, and enjoys many other local experiences, all to a soundtrack of infectious beats and delightful lyrics.

TAT Governor Suraphon Svetasreni said, "The Markoolio song and music video is a very

effective way to promote Phuket to a young and dynamic segment of Scandinavian travellers, which is an important, quality market for Thai tourism.

"Visitors from Finland, Norway and Sweden especially love Thai beaches and cultural attractions.

"Thailand offers tremendous value for unique experiences, a huge variety of attractions, delightful cuisine and a full range of accommodations that greatly appeal to Europeans, particularly during these economically-challenging times," said the TAT governor.

Last year, the combined total number of arrivals from Norway, Finland, and Sweden was more than 600,000, which equated to about 3.2 per cent of all international visitors to Thailand.

According to recent data, Scandinavian travellers typically visit Thailand for 13 to 17 days, with average daily spending ranging from 3,500 to 4,000 baht per person.

In recent months, Thailand's profile has been increased in living rooms throughout Sweden thanks to a popular television series that is set in the Kingdom.

The renowned "30 Degrees" program, based on the life of a Swede who visits Thailand for a holiday and then decides to settle down in Phuket, has attracted more than 1.3 million viewers.

Also, a recent romantic comedy feature film called *En Gang i Phuket* (Once in Phuket) became a hit, ranking number two in Swedish box office standings during the month it was launched and attracting more than 370,000 movie-goers.

"All of this positive exposure contributes to the recognition of Thailand as the top value-for-money dream destination for Scandinavians and other travellers from all over the world," said Mr Suraphon. – TAT News

Laughter never rains, it pours

WITH Phuket's wet and rainy season now truly here the Punchline Comedy team has decided to give comedy lovers a reason to rejoice with another hilarious night planned for June 27.

Three of Britain's top stand-up comedians will head to the Holiday Inn Resort, Patong Beach to bring the mirth and hilarity back.

The event will be compered by comedian, writer and presenter Jeremy O'Donnell, who mixes sharp one-liners with friendly story-telling and sparkling off-the-cuff wit. His cheeky smile and friendly nature have endeared him to audiences all over Britain and abroad.

Also on the bill is Brian Higgins, one of the most experienced headline acts on the comedy circuit. He moved to London in his teens from a small fishing village in central Scotland. Armed only with a penknife, catapult and a bag full of tadpoles, he set out to make his fortune. Twenty years later he still has the penknife.

Brian has a real passion for comedy, and it shows in an impeccably delivered cheeky upbeat set that never fails to deliver.

Third up will be comedian and actor John Fothergill, who hails from Crawcrook, a small village in the northeast of England.

After spending the majority of his childhood trying to convince the rest of the community that he was a very special child, they finally agreed and after the traditional tar and feathering, banished him to the nearest city – the vast



John Fothergill.



Brian Higgins.

cosmopolitan metropolis that is Newcastle upon Tyne.

John has slotted into the comedy circuit like a three-pinned plug, combining a unique style of embarrassing sexual revelations with a rural innocence.

The usual Early Bird 960 baht tickets will be available soon with the door price still at 1,200 baht.

In a departure from previous shows the Holiday Inn is offering 'Ticket and dinner' specials at 2,400 baht per person, inclusive of the show and a three-



Jeremy O'Donnell.

course set selection dinner at Sam's Steaks, including a glass of house wine.

For the unlimite fun night out there will also be a Ticket + Dinner + Stay combo on offer at 8,550 baht per couple. This option includes the show, the dinner, an overnight stay in a superior room and breakfast the next morning.

The *Phuket Gazette* is a charter sponsor of the Phuket Punchline Comedy Club and will bring you more details as they become available.

RE KÁ TA BEACHFRONT RESTAURANT

At Boathouse

South African food and wine festival

In conjunction with the South African / Thai Chamber of Commerce, RE KÁ TA is flying-in four renowned South African chefs from the legendary Emperor's Palace Resort and Casino in Johannesburg to prepare their unique cuisine at the following events.

Friday 8 June - Four Course Gala Dinner
 Attended by the South African Ambassador to Thailand H.E. Ms. Robina Marks, the event features classic South African fare. Cocktails from 6.30pm.

Saturday 9 June - South African Barbeque Buffet Dinner
 A traditional "Braai Vleis" including a delicious buffet of slow-cooked meats and vegetables, paired with a selection of fine wines from South Africa. Join us for wine tasting before dinner, from 6.30pm. 1,200 Baht ++ per person.

Saturday 14 June - Five Course Wine Dinner
 Join us for a lavish five course wine dinner featuring the best of South African cuisine and wines in a sensational climax to the week. Cocktails 7pm followed by dinner. 2,000 Baht++ per person.

RE KÁ TA Club on the beach 184 Kaktanode Road, Kata beach, Phuket 83100 (Next to Boathouse)
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SMOOTH SAILING: A sailing vessel and the motorized superyacht that marked the course at last year's event.



LIVING LARGE: One of the superyachts at last year's Rendezvous. Photos: asia-superyacht-rendezvous.com

Super-size that please

SOME of the world's most magnificent motor and sailing superyachts are planning their 2012 holiday-season journey to the Asia Superyacht Rendezvous – to be held December 16, 17 and 18 in Phuket.

The 12th annual Asia Superyacht Rendezvous is expected to attract 14 to 18 superyachts. Many guests are likely to extend their stay for the holidays to enjoy Phuket's cruising options. The longest running event of its kind in Asia, the Rendezvous is the largest gathering of superyachts in the region.

An invitation is extended to owners, captains and crew from around the world, whose vessels are 100 feet in length and above.

Organizers Gordon Fernandes, GM of Asia Pacific Superyachts and Captain Charlie Dwyer, of the 130' S/y Yanneke Too, will welcome hundreds of yachting fun-seekers on opening day.

Stalwart Race Director Captain Andy Dowden will set the course for the first day of sailing, to be marked by motor superyachts.

Following the "Captain's Briefing", owners, captains and VIP guests will attend a cocktail party aboard one or more of the moored superyachts.

The next morning racers will gather to face-off against one another at the first race. Winners will be feted that evening during the 'Feadship Challenge' and cocktail party, hosted by principal sponsor Feadship Royal Dutch Shipyards.

Unique to the event, the Feadship Challenge "Model Boat

Race" will take place that evening – to be comprised of teams from the attending vessels. Each team will build a boat in 30 minutes and battle it out in a series of sprints.

With due diligence and a bag full of miscellaneous bits and pieces to construct a model boat, teams must come up with their own model sailboat.

One team member is selected to race the boat, forcefully creating the 'wind' with his/her mouth to fill the small craft's sails.

After the final race, Feadship announce the winners of the 'Best Design Award' and the overall 'Race Winner'.

"The next day is like waking up in heaven, everyone looks forward to a second spectacular day, which generally shapes up to be 'good ole sailing' in a scene that is picture-perfect," notes Captain Charlie.

A highlight of the Rendezvous, the competitive sailing, offers guests great views from various vantage points ashore and close-ups for those lounging or working on the superyachts.

While the race is taking place the "Rendezvous Booty" pirate search will be readied for teams of all ages. Crew members and families search by land and sea, following pirate clues that lead them to a buried 'Treasure Chest' of prizes.

The closing event will be a VIP 'Boat International Media Gala Dinner'. The *Phuket Gazette* is a local media partner of this event.

For more information visit W: asia-superyacht-rendezvous.com

– *Phuket Gazette*

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A cut above the rest

At the Boathouse Francis Ford Coppola wine dinner

IT WAS not exactly “Lights, camera, actioooooon!” at the Francis Ford Coppola wine dinner at Boathouse Wine & Grill on May 25, but it somehow felt Hollywood-esque surreal to be sitting at the newly renovated bar at Boathouse.

Even though some of the faces in the crowd were familiar, the décor and layout of the boutique hotel are light years away from the brass-and-highly-polished teakwood setup of yesteryear.

Gone are the buffed terracotta floors; instead there are off-white faux marble tiles and the old bar, reminiscent of a Parisian zinc-top affair, has been replaced by a lower, light stained wood design. The nautical feel has been toned down and upstairs is a dedicated dining space that has replaced the venue of the once-thriving Chao Phraya Literary Society.

Let me explain a little: back in the pre-internet era, expats on Phuket were western-culturally starved and the chance to get together to share our scribbles was jumped at and, frankly, the cheap prices of the selected booze thrown in were a godsend. As a result, a motley crew would gather at the bar just before seven bells, then file upstairs to share favorite passages, or better yet, read from their own literary creations. It was, to use a delicious oxymoron, the insomniac’s dream.

Once in a blue moon a celebrity author would wing in, read excerpts from their

books between slurps of wine, then, slurping more wine, he/she would chat with us mere mortals for a while before being spirited off to dinner with Louis Bronner, one of Phuket’s most-loved hoteliers.

Anyone expecting the same arrangement at the Francis Ford Coppola wine dinner, with dishes prepared by Executive Chef Jean-Noël Lumineau,

was promptly and politely reminded that time does not stand still, even at one of Phuket’s legendary hotels.

A salmon and tuna sushi, maki, sashimi and yakitori arrangement was served downstairs along with a Sofia sparkling white that ran out seconds before the call to go upstairs was sounded.

The wines featured were from the winery’s Director’s Cut named after the version of a film which most reflects the director’s vision – limited production, appellation-designate wines sourced from

Sonoma’s diverse and distinctive micro-climates. Once seated, a crab, cannelloni wrapped in Parma ham, aged Parmesan and balsamic vinegar was accompanied by a decidedly oaken-flavored and heavy bodied 2005 Chardonnay; quite the opposite of downstairs’ sparkling white, that, in my humble opinion, doesn’t touch the vineyard’s Sofia rosé as an aperitif.

But quibbling aside, a pan-fried red mullet fillet, anchovy butter with eggplant caviar dish is next up, served with a pinot noir 2008

On the Menu

By Sam Wilko



CALIFORNIAN SUNSHINE: Emily Putman presented Francis Ford Coppola’s Director’s Cut wines to an appreciative audience.



The pan-fried red mullet fillet served with anchovy butter and eggplant caviar. Photos: Marc Mulloy

and the flavors, textures and presentation all added up to a winner of a combination. It doesn’t matter that the pinot noir had a slight bouquet of used socks to me, it still tasted delectable. Or maybe it’s my nose.

Anyone frequenting this column will be familiar with the Carnivorous Cameraman.

On this particular evening, we were a distance apart but I could easily imagine his facial contortions at the approach of original Black Angus New York strip steak served with a very nifty pinot noir reduction that must have taken many dedicated hours to prepare (see photo below). I feared for his tablemates, especially the wine’s director of international sales, Emily Putman, who, together with her mother, were vegetarians and not used to witnessing primeval urges in a five-star hotel, and he’s not even a rock star...

Thankfully, he chomped through the dish without incident and we later sat, taking in the evening’s breezes, while guests sampled a cabernet sauvignon with a gâteau Basque, cherries, marmalade and fresh cherry red sauce.

“Could you please mention that every bottle of Director’s Cut pays homage to the history of filmmaking with its wrap-around label designed after a Zoetrope strip, one of the earliest moving picture devices and that each Director’s Cut label is a replica of a strip from Francis’ personal Zoetrope collection?” he addressed the incoming tide.

There I just did.

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In Phuket's darkest hour



CELEBRATING THE LADIES: An annual festival (above) and the statues (right) at the Tha Rua junction on Thepkasattri Road pay homage to the bravery of the two sisters.



ONE of the most popular stories in Phuket's history has to be about the two brave heroines of Thalang.

The tale has been told and retold many times and most locals in Phuket vaguely know what the two sisters did for Phuket during the island's darkest hour.

Visitors and tourists, however, will likely pass by the heroines' monument and notice the statues of the two sisters, armed with Siamese swords and dressed as male soldiers. The monument itself is likely to raise many questions in the minds of foreign visitors.

During their time, the two sisters were known as Lady Chan and Khun Mook. They lived during the

Looking Back

By Anand Singh

Thonburi period, in the late 18th century, which was a well-documented period of history.

However, the life and times of Lady Chan and Khun Mook had not been recorded anywhere.

Historians do not know for sure when they were born, or when and where they died.

Lady Chan's history was first told in the *Chronicles of Thalang*, a work of history compiled by Phraya Surinthalaja's son. Phraya Surinthalaja was the governor of Phuket during the

reign of King Rama III.

The chronicles were written about 50 years after the battle of Thalang in which Lady Chan and Khun Mook led their outnumbered soldiers to fend off invading Burmese troops.

It was definitely the oldest surviving account of the war but is also considered the most accurate because Phraya Surinthalaja was appointed governor of Thalang as soon as the war ended.

For centuries, the *Chronicles of Thalang* were the only source of reliable information that historians could use to study the lives of the two brave sisters. Only a few decades ago, however, it came to the attention of Thai historians that there was a collection of very old letters that had been saved in the archives of the University of London.

Surprisingly enough, these letters were written by Lady Chan herself, in her own handwriting. She wrote these letters to Captain Francis Light, an English officer of the British East India Company who had lived in Phuket for over ten years.

When the war started, Captain Light had already moved to Penang, but he remained good friends with Lady Chan. During the war, Lady Chan wrote many letters to Captain Light, informing him of the events that were unfolding in Thalang and asking him for help. These letters were saved by Captain Light and survive to this today.

The *Chronicles of Thalang* tell us about the origins of the two sisters. It says that Chomrang Ban Takien, a governor of Thalang married a Malay widow, named Masia, who was a high born lady from Kedah,

possibly even a princess. She had two sons and three daughters with Chomrang. Chan and Mook were their elder two daughters. When Lady Chan came of age, she married another governor of Thalang.

The years that followed were turbulent times for Siam. The Burmese invaded the kingdom in 1765 with 40,000 soldiers, engulfing the capital Ayutthaya from the north and west. Ayutthaya was sacked in April 1767 and Siam lost its independence and became a tributary of the Burmese king.

Not more than a year later, however, General Taksin, a brilliant military commander, freed the country from the Burmese and declared himself king.

He managed to reunite the kingdom again and established Thonburi as his new capital. Throughout King Taksin's short reign, the Burmese tried to invade Siam many times and every time they were repelled by the king's generals. Towards his later years, King Taksin started showing signs of mental trouble. His behavior became more peculiar and unpredictable. With the Burmese threat still very near, the courtiers staged a coup d'état and executed King Taksin.

The man who succeeded Taksin, in 1782, was his close friend and one of his most brilliant generals: Chaophraya Chakri was crowned and became known as King Rama I.

The Burmese had watched the events unfolding with particular in-

terest. The internal weakness in the capital gave them another opportunity for invasion.

This time the Burmese planned a massive invasion with over 140,000 men, compared to the 40,000 that managed to sack Ayutthaya a few decades earlier. They divided this massive force into nine armies and in 1785 simultaneously invaded the different regions of Siam.

During this time, the nobles of Thalang had been observing the events with anxiety. In one of her letters to Captain Francis Light, Lady Chan explained that Burmese troops had been assembling at a place called Marid for a while and they might invade Thalang any time soon.

She told the captain that her husband, the governor of Thalang, was still very ill and if the Burmese chose to invade the island, they would need the captain's help.

When a Burmese army reached Pak Phra, the narrow strait that divides Phuket from the mainland, Phraya Thammatrailok was put in charge of defending the island.

He recruited many able men from Thalang and built fortifications on the narrow strait in order to stop the Burmese from landing troops.

Amidst the fighting, Phraya Thammatrailok was killed. Losing their commander, the Thalang soldiers routed and had to retreat back to the town.

The Siamese had lost the first battle of Thalang but the war was not over.

Anand Singh is an avid Phuket historian. He is fluent in Thai and English. If you have any questions or information you would like to share about Phuket's history, you can contact him at as.pkt@hotmail.com.

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Dive below 'low season' rumors

UNDER STORM COVER: Beneath the 'low season' storms that we see on shore in Phuket, the diving still presents world-class spectacles. Photo: Bill Bouton (above); Henrik Konradsdal (below)

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

AS I watched my first rainy season blow in over the Andaman Sea in frightful gusts, I assumed it was time to pack up my dive gear and head over to Kata Beach with a longboard.

However, I wasn't ready to throw the flippers overboard completely, because unlike Khao Lak, Phuket dive companies do run low season trips daily, so I said a prayer and decided to give "low season" diving a go.

Given the potential weather, I booked with one of the bigger day boats leaving Chalong Pier, Andaman Safaris' well-equipped *Chok Som Boon*, which translates to "complete luck".

It's a gorgeous Sunday as we make our way out to Koh Phi Phi for our first two dives. The prevailing monsoon winds that tend to rip down and across Phuket's west coast are not to be found. The sun has already warmed the top deck, making it the ideal place for a morning nap.

After a brilliant first dive, we splash in at Bida Nai for another.

Despite my briefing, I'm expecting relatively low visibility and a strong current when I hit the water – why else is it considered low season? Yes, our first dive at Bida Nok, perhaps Koh Phi Phi's best dive site, had pristine diving conditions, but that must have been a fluke.

It wasn't. The visibility at Bida Nai is stunning as we drop down to the reef.

Keeping in mind where our heads and tanks are, we work our way through a spacious swim through, easily avoiding a couple of lionfish floating in the shadows, and then we move out along the skirt of the reef.

Less than five minutes into the dive we encounter a sea turtle gobbling up mouth-fulls of bubble anemones – the highlight of a dive any day of the year.

A deep breath out, along with a release of air from my BCD, and I kneel on the sandy seafloor.

Not oblivious to us, but unperturbed by our presence the turtle moves from one frothy bouquet of bubble anemone to another, taking several big bites from each as it goes.

Knees in the sand, I am awestruck – this is diving in the low



LOW SEASON SCOFFING: Turtles, blue spotted rays, an octopus and leopard sharks were all sighted during a recent Andaman Ocean Safaris 'low season' trip to Koh Phi Phi and Koh Doc Mai. Photo: The Lightworks

season? But it's picturesque.

"Lucky day, huh?" I ask the Andaman Ocean Safaris trip leader.

We are lucky to get all day sun, but what everyone is seeing: leopard sharks, octopi, blue spotted rays and sea turtles, all that is pretty standard, he explains.

So that's "low season" diving. You just pop a couple of

Dramamine in case the ocean gets rough in the less predictable weather and then can get pumped up about diving the eastern leeward side of some islands.

Sure, if a small storm does kick up it's nice to be on one of the bigger boats, and you might have to switch dive sites from the unprotected pinnacles of

Shark Point to the wall of Koh Doc Mai, where we had a run in with a tiger sea horse and an ornate ghost pipefish.

Really, the biggest difference must be that on a bad day that the boat goes out you might have to give up some topside sun time (as it's probably raining), to still score some beautiful bottom time.



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	PG276	12.15	13.40
	PG907	14.35	16.00
	PG274	16.10	17.35
	PG278	19.10	20.35
	PG280	22.10	23.35
BKK-HKT	PG271	08.05	09.30
	PG275	10.00	11.25
	PG924	12.20	13.45
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The riddles of Ridley Scott

Film

Starring: Noomi Rapace, Michael Fassbender, Guy Pearce, Idris Elba, Charlize Theron
Director: Ridley Scott
Genre: Action / Sci-fi
Release Date: June 7, 2012

PROMETHEUS is not the movie we have all been waiting for. It is not the *Alien* prequel. It was supposed to be, but a funny thing happened on the way to the Cineplex.

Director Ridley Scott has been thinking about the prequel to his 1979 noir sci-fi horror hit since the beginning of this century, but put the project on hold because of *Alien vs Predator*. (Everybody take a moment to think about that excuse, then join in a shared "Huh?")

Ever the busy fellow, Mr Scott didn't get a chance to think about the *Alien* prequel again until 2009, when he signed on to direct two prequel movies from scripts supplied by Jon Spaihts.

Mr Spaihts is highly regarded in Hollywood, in a way only Hollywood can, for writing great sci-fi scripts that are never turned into movies. His one celluloid credit is for a Russian-made low budget alien invasion movie.

So, of course, Mr Scott was over the moon with the two

prequel scripts he produced.

That was in June 2010. In July Lost's David Lindelhof was brought on to "revise" Spaihts's scripts. Then there was to be only one movie and it was to be called *Paradise*, and then it became *Prometheus* and it wasn't the prequel anymore. So what the heck has been going on here?

Mr Scott has admitted that *Prometheus* shares "strands of *Alien*'s DNA..." but chances are those are just the leftovers from Mr. Lindelhof's cut'n'paste crusade.

Set in the late 21st century, the movie opens with the discovery of shared iconography at unconnected archeological sites around the world.

The fact that alien heritage conspiracy theorists have been ranting about this since the 1960s seems to have been conveniently overlooked.

The iconography is combined and translated into a star map that seems to point the way towards our outer-space progenitors. So, of course, the Weyland Corporation (the first of the DNA strands) sticks a bunch of misfits onto a great

big spaceship called the USCCS *Prometheus* and then sends them hurtling off towards whoever knows what.

Let us take a moment to consider that name. For those of you without access to Wikipedia, *Prometheus* was a Greek titan, the brother of Atlas,



HOLLOW HERO: Will Fassbender's 'droid David slay the alien Goliath?



NOT THE PREQUEL: Those are definitely not xenomorph eggs and that isn't Ridley Scott (below left) directing Noomi Rapace as Ellen Ripley, even though she plays a mild-mannered lady who becomes a warrior heroine.

who stole the secret of fire from his father, Zeus, and gave it to man.

As such, the name of the movie makes sense; man flies off into space in search of the beings who gave them the spark of sentience.

But, thanks to Karl Marx, *Prometheus* is also considered the patron saint of communism. So why would the hardcore neo-fascist militaristic Weyland Corporation name its best space buggy after a pinko?!

And how about that crew? As Danny Boyle proved with 2007's *Sunshine*, putting a bunch of misfits on a spaceship is a really stupid idea, both as a movie and if you are trying to achieve something really important (like saving the Earth).

The reason that the misfits inside the *Nostromo* worked in the plot of the original *Alien* is because they were just a bunch of working schleps who *accidentally* found themselves in a critical situation.

This is not the case with the *Prometheus* crew, who have been supposedly hand-picked to represent humankind to our creators. Aw, come on. We couldn't find anyone better?

At least Michael Fassbender looks the clean-cut hero we'd want



to represent our species. The problem is; he's the resident android.

Charlize Theron plays the uptight villainess every spaceship must have aboard, according to Mr Smith's Law of Intergalactic Adventure.

Rumor has it, Ms Theron had to spend a significant amount of time re-working her character during production. As good as that may be for the film, it doesn't say a lot about the writers' ability to come up with believable characters in the first place. Or, maybe Ms

Theron was just worried about being unfavorably compared to Ian Holm.

What happens once they reach the X that marks the spot on the millennia-old star-map pretty

much follows standard *Alien* franchise procedure; a whole bunch of the lead characters you have invested half a movie getting to know are killed with perfunctory nonchalance and life on Earth is threatened unless some great big nasty can be overcome before the credits roll.

That this plot so closely follows the *Alien* franchise mold is odd because the reason Mr Scott gave for *Prometheus* not being the prequel was that he didn't want to "repeat cues" from the original.

So, why not just make it a completely new movie not set in the *Alien* universe?

Because then everybody would accuse Mr. Scott of ripping off his own significantly better original movie. Hah! Oh what a tangled web...

— By Alexander Maycock

As Danny Boyle proved with 2007's *Sunshine*, putting a bunch of misfits on a spaceship is a really stupid idea.

Novel new releases for June

Book briefs

The Age of Miracles by Karen Thompson Walker. **Random House**

Slated as the summer book to watch out

for, this science fiction coming-of-age thriller is narrated by an 11-year-old girl who lives through a time when the earth's rotation begins to slow. Karen Thompson

Walker's debut novel has already garnered much critical acclaim, despite its fairly unoriginal title.

Heading Out to Wonderful by Robert Goolrick. **Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill**

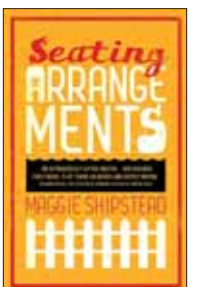
Robert Goolrick scored a New York Times bestseller with his debut novel, *A Reliable Wife*. Can he do it again with this one? Set in post-WWII Virginia, Goolrick tells a tale of love between a man and a

married woman in small town America.

Seating Arrangements by Maggie Shipstead. **Knopf**

Another debut novel for June.

This is Maggie Shipstead's story about a mother coping with a wedding weekend gone horribly awry on a New England island.



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Dr Narongrit Havarungsi

IT MUST be obvious to everyone that running a large private hospital as successful and established as the Bangkok Hospital Phuket is a tough job – to put it mildly.

Everyone that is, except Dr Narongrit Havarungsi, the newly-appointed director, who seems unphased by the task ahead.

Dr Narongrit knows that he has to live up to the hospital's reputation and image and explains how.

"Even though the hospital is already quite successful, I still don't want to be complacent. My job is to turn this success into a long-term and sustainable reality, and push for the hospital to be a veritable medical hub of Southeast Asia.

"My mission is to make this hospital a household name for any patients seeking state-of-art, professional and friendly services. That is our pride and joy."

Dr Narongrit, who turns 50 this year, trained and practiced as an orthopaedic surgeon in Bangkok for many years before moving on to a management position. His father was a judge but did not encourage his son to follow in his footsteps.

Being of a scientific mind, Dr Narongrit naturally turned to medicine and chose to specialize in orthopaedics, an uncomplicated discipline, he says, that suits his no-nonsense personality.

"A broken bone," he says, "is just that. There is no hidden meaning

THAI
gallery
By Nanthapa Pengkasem

and you just get on with treating it."

This trait may explain why he takes to and excels in management so readily. As a former director of the same hospital branch in Had Yai, Dr Narongrit is well-equipped to tackle his new task and be successful here. Still, he admits that Bangkok Hospital Phuket is an "entirely different kettle of fish" compared to his work in Had Yai.

"There's a lot more emphasis on medical tourism here and we play a big role in it. As such, this is the direction we are heading. At the moment we are re-organising and streamlining the aesthetic department, with procedures such as breast implants and anti-aging treatments being very popular among foreign tourists.

"In addition, one entire floor will be dedicated to various health check stations – a one-stop shop for all patients. No more running around from department to department. Our minimal invasive [key-hole] surgery is the latest product and is quite a success."

Despite the hospital's long list of innovations and treatments, Dr

Narongrit is being pragmatic when he hints that: "It is the nature of the healthcare business that you cannot guarantee the end result to be 100 per cent. You cannot do quality control the way that's done with other products. Some allowance and flexibility have to be considered. It's a juggling game."

At work, the doctor's day is packed with meetings with the hospital's various teams and departments. Having been appointed two months ago, Dr Narongrit has plenty of reading and paperwork to catch up on, mostly hospital related.

Still, holding down a top job doesn't stop him from being humble. Dr Narongrit admits to having a few weaknesses, one of which is being a 'Yes Man'. "I have to learn to be more assertive, but there's a fine line between self-confidence and pushiness, so I tread carefully," he says.

A former university athlete and true believer in proper diet and exercise as the key to good health, Dr Narongrit starts his day with a jog in Suang Luang Park in town.

He also swims and plays golf whenever he can fit it into his busy schedule.

Dr Narongrit is married and his wife works in banking; they have two grown-up children. His son studies law at Thammasart University in Bangkok and his daughter is still in high school.



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

June 2, 8-9am: Free Fitness Workshop at Nai Harn Lake
Getting back into fitness. Low to medium intensity workout with David, Qualified Personal Trainer. Muscle toning, cardiovascular and introduction to boxing available. For more details/bookings e-mail: giom44@hotmail.com or call 082-578 7402.

June 2, 10am-5pm: Thanyapura Carnival at Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club

Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club (TSLC) welcomes everyone to visit their sports facilities with fun games and challenges and a chance to win special prizes for all of the following activities: Athletics events, spinning, Zumba, Muay Thai classes, tennis, beach volleyball, basketball, soccer/rugby, swimming time trials, free trial massage at Thanyapura Spa, pool tournament at Booster Bar, kids' games and face painting at Tree Club. Entrance to the BBQ buffet for adults is 750 baht, with children (ages 4-12) 350 baht. E-mail tslc@thanyapura.com or call 076-336000 for more details.

June 3, 12-3pm: Centara Grand Sunday Family Lunch at Mare Restaurant

Looking for a family-friendly place to spend your Sunday afternoons?

Mare Restaurant at the Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket is proud to present Phuket's most extensive "Sunday Family Lunch". Come and enjoy this spectacular lunch every first Sunday of the month. Your whole family is invited to enjoy our swimming pool, kids pool, lazy river, jumping cliff and water slides! 990 baht net per person, including softs drinks, water, coffee and tea. 1,390 baht net per person with one bottle of red, white or rose wine per couple. Free for children under age 5, and half price for children ages 6-12. E-mail marermcpbr@chr.co.th or call 076-201234 for more details.

June 4: Visakha Bucha Day
Public Holiday

June 11, 6pm-1am: Surfnight at Two Chefs Kata Beach

Every Monday we are setting up a great BBQ-Buffet. Filled with loads and loads of food. There will be juicy steaks directly from the BBQs, a big 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 with this is that it only costs 495 baht for all of it. For more information please visit us on the web www.twochefs.com.

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*.

Free Computer Clinics at
Sandwich Shoppe Chalong - June 13, 27, 1-3pm
Sandwich Shoppe Patong - June 6, 1-3pm
Contact at 076-282403, Woody@KhunWoody.com or visit KhunWoody.com

June 11, 7-8:30pm: New Exhibit - My Abstract Life by Chris De Meo at VR Gallery Mom Tri's Villa Royale

Mom Tri's VR Gallery welcomes the first solo exhibit of artist Chris De Meo. He has been invited to exhibit 'My Abstract Life' from 11 June to 11 July. Opening reception June 12 at 7pm. It will be predominately large abstracts. Chris began painting over a year ago in 2010, having waited his whole life to allow himself his true passion. VR Gallery is the successor to the mini gallery that existed at Mom Tri's Boathouse for many years. The Boathouse gallery served as a venue for local and visiting artists. The new VR Gallery will continue in this tradition.

June 15, 7-10pm: Indian Night at Les Angeles, 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 for the drinks. Reservations recommended. Call Mr Murat on 081-797 3364.

June 15, 7-11pm: Curry Fridays Phuket at Navrang Mahal Indian Restaurant, Karon Sea Sands Resort & Spa

We present Curry Fridays at Navrang Mahal India Restaurant. 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 nett! Draught Beer by the glass: just 50 baht nett. Special discount on beverages. Venue: Navrang Mahal India Restaurant at Karon. For reservations please call: 076-286464, ext 4

June 16, 4-7pm: Phuket Academy Dance 2012 at the Hilton Hotel

Song and Dance spectacular - Ballet, Jazz and Tap by students from across the Island. For more details call 076-288525 or e-mail lecumming@gmail.com.

June 21, 11:30am-2pm: Phuket International Women's Club Monthly Lunch at Tawaii Restaurant, Cherng Talay
The Phuket International Women's

Laguna Phuket International Marathon
Phuket, Thailand
10 June 2012

The *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV are sponsors of this event

For more details call 081-902 9219 or e-mail laurence@goadventureasia.com. Visit our website at www.phuketmarathon.com.

Club monthly lunch will be held at Tawai restaurant in Cherng Talay. All are welcome but prior registration is essential. Members 500 baht, guests 650 baht. Contact info@phuketiw.com.

June 22-23, 10am-3:30pm: Social Media Marketing (Facebook) Beginner's Course at the Sandwich Shoppe-Chalong

Looking to expand your marketing plans by utilizing social media for your business but don't know how? Take this 2-day compact social media training course focusing on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest and learn how to easily maneuver your pages to get your brand out to the online community. Cost per person will be 4,000 baht and the course will start with a minimum of four persons. Sign

up today by emailing us at info@awpr-phuket.com! Registration ends on June 17.

June 23, 12-3pm: Saturday Brunch at Two Chefs Kata Center

Saturday brunch at Two Chefs Kata Center. Every Saturday we are setting up our brunch buffet, filled to the limits with home made delights. In our smoke house, we smoke all of our fish and meats by ourselves, and in the bakery we bake all our bread. With very well trained chefs and a Swedish head chef, we can promise you that you won't leave hungry or thirsty. All this for only 395 baht, and if you add an extra 300 baht you can choose to drink what you want from our free flow alternatives. For more info, please visit our web page W: twochefs.com.

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HIGH FLYERS: The Phuket Etihad and Air Berlin Road Show was held at the Millennium Resort Patong on May 26. 42 people from 23 tour agencies joined the day seminar and partied in the evening. Pictured are Chaivavut 'Billy' Chomsakorn (center), Sales & Marketing Manager Thailand and Mekong Region of Etihad Airways and Natdanai 'Paul' Srisukham (right), Marketing Coordinator of Etihad Airways.



THE CLASS OF 2012: Graduates at the British International School Phuket (BIS) received their awards last week at an emotional ceremony before setting off to join universities in Thailand and abroad. Photo: Marc Mulloy



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CLOUDY DAYS: Centara Karon Resort and Artjerm recently opened the "mini-clouds" exhibition by artist Mr Somrak Maneemai (right) seen here with Sales and Events PR Manager, Chutarat Manachaipornpis.



BACK TO SCHOOL: Staff from Indigo Pearl recently visited a school in Koh Sirey to donate much needed school materials to Burmese children and help fix the leaking roof. From left: David Ippersiel, resort manager; Mayuree Wathanachart, HR director; Yamonporn Soodkhao, secretary to the General Manager and GM Kelly Lewis.



MUM'S THE WORD: UK fitness professional Sarah Thomas (center) opened Studio 3 fitness this week, offering various different exercise classes for men, women, mums and expecting mums.

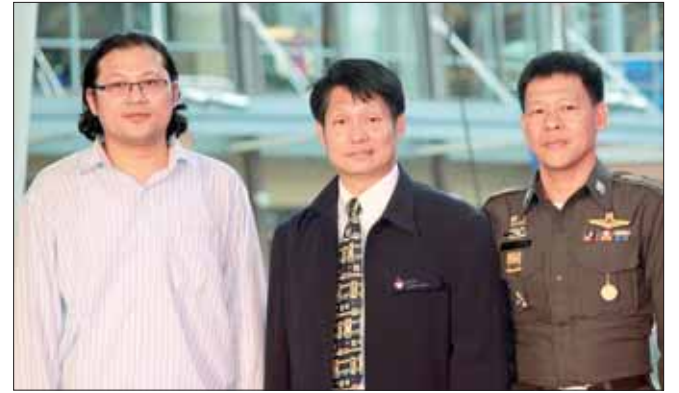


THE DOCTOR WILL SING TO YOU NOW: The Bangkok Hospital Phuket invited a celebrity doctor known as the 'singing doctor' to join them on May 27. Dr Smith 'Oak' Arayaskul, a dermatologist and Anti-Aging Medicine expert talked about "Unlocking the secret of youthfulness" as part of their 17th anniversary. Also attending the discussion was Dr Tanupol Virunhagarun, the director of Bangkok Hospital Royal Life Anti-Aging Center (Bangkok) together with the PR team of Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

YOUR Phuket



MODEL BEHAVIOUR: A 'Kids Model Contest' organized by FM 95 MHz was held at Jungceylon shopping mall in Patong on May 27. Twenty children between 5 – 11 years old participated in the event where scholarships and prizes valued at more than 50,000 baht were awarded. Money was also raised by sponsors for the Cardiac Children Foundation of Thailand.



Presiding over the 'Kids Model Contest' are (from left) Preechawut Keesin, Pisona Group Managing Director; Col Dr Chalermkiat Tantrakul, Deputy Secretary General of The Cardiac Children Foundation of Thailand and Pol Col Somchai Kaosamran, Deputy Commander, Crime Suppression Division, Royal Thai police.



WORLD CLASS: At the recent AMCHAM - Phuket PR network meeting panelists discussed how 'sports tourism' helps define "Brand Phuket". From left are Nick Seaver, Duncan Worthington, Debbie Dionysius, Paul Poole, Natasha Eldred and Bill Barnett. Photo: Dan Miles



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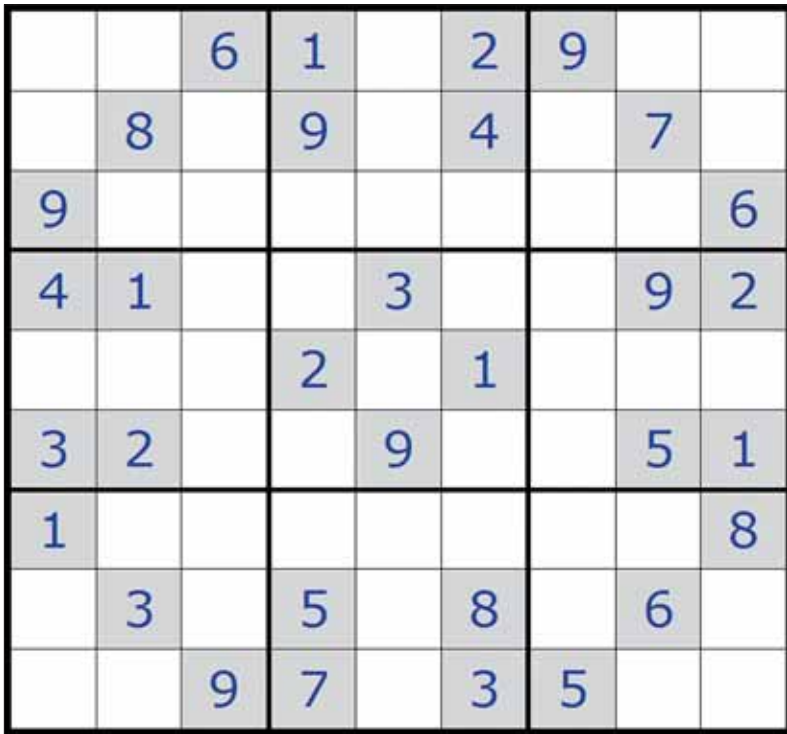
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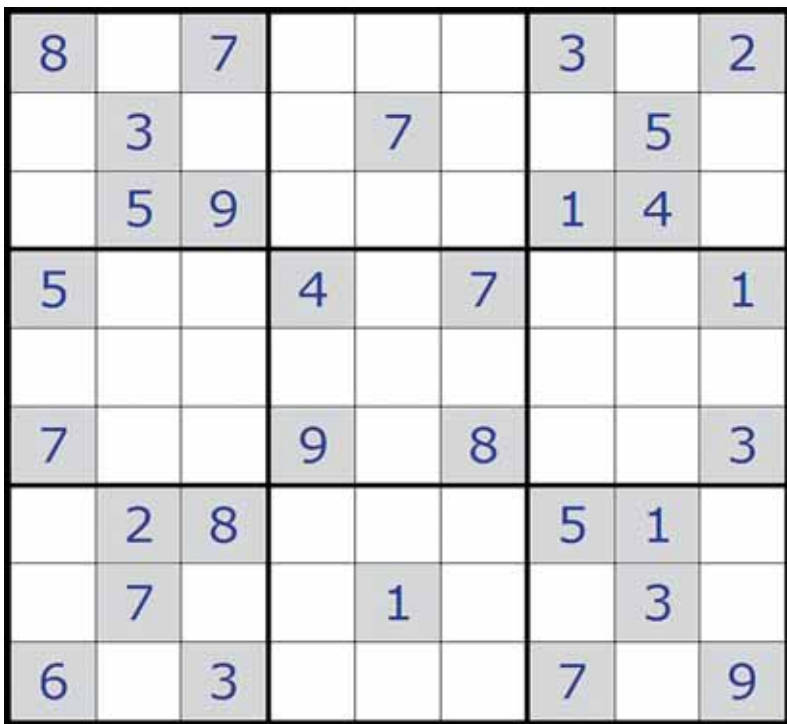
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SUDOKU: Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the number 1-9 once only. © Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)

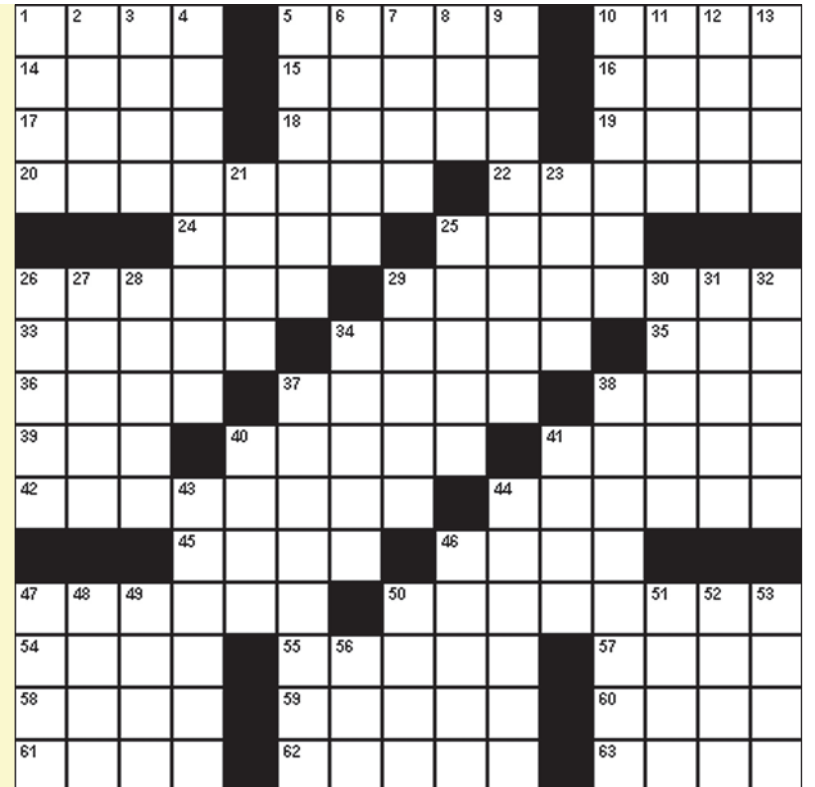


Across

1. Cave dwellers
5. Go with the flow
10. Moist
14. Buck follower
15. Dweebish
16. ... saw Elba
17. A party to
18. Lute of India
19. Neighbor of Cambodia
20. Gloomy expression
22. Indian people of Canada
24. Web locale
25. One of the Baldwins
26. ...tung
29. Salutation
33. Bay
34. Chart anew
35. Society page word
36. Antlered animal
37. Attack
38. Blood vessel
39. Altar in the sky
40. Prophet
41. Freight
42. Golf hazard
44. Stewart of home tips
45. Monetary unit of Cambodia
46. Actress Virna
47. Alleviation of pain
50. Not subject to rent
54. Hgt.
55. Ticked off
57. Crew needs
58. Not acid
59. Helicopter part
60. Some DVD players
61. From the U.S.
62. Perfect places
63. Dole (out)

Down

1. Remove water from a boat
2. The Ponte Vecchio crosses it
3. Animated character
4. Singer
5. Having a handle
6. Free of frost
7. Commedia dell' ____
8. Palm Pilot, e.g.



9. Inhabitant of the Innsbruck region
10. Misdemeanor
11. Kaffiyeh wearer
12. Cat sound
13. Galileo's birthplace
21. Clenched hand
23. Rugged utility vehicle
25. Defense covering
26. King with a golden touch
27. The end of ____
28. New York city
29. Costume
30. Inactive
31. Sound of a horse
32. Columbus's birthplace
34. Fit for a king
37. Guaranteed to succeed

38. Having various forms
40. End in ____ (draw)
41. What you do to a shadow
43. Chauffeur
44. Pit workers
46. Divulge
47. First name in country
48. Jack of "Rio Lobo"
49. ____ majeste
50. Charge per unit
51. Speed contest
52. Part of Q.E.D.
53. "____ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto)
56. Slender bar

Provided by BestCrosswords.com
Used with permission

Puzzle solution on page 43

GEMINI (May 22-Jun 21):



Looking on the bright side will come more naturally to those born under the sign of Gemini in June. A series of positive developments at the start of the month puts you in an optimistic mood and the stars suggest that renewed energy will contribute to success. Those celebrating a birthday in the coming days are forecast to experience a boom in business during the year ahead. Your lucky color this week is burgundy.

CANCER (June 22-Jul 23):



A change is as good as a rest for those born under the sign of Cancer this week. There are signs that work will take you away from your usual surroundings and bring you in contact with people who can become important in your life. Money matters are better starred during June – those who have been negotiating for a higher salary should be satisfied. A romantic break-up may not be as final as you thought.

LEO (Jul 24-Aug 22):



Your plans to unwind this weekend could be compromised by the unexpected arrival of an old friend or family member. For some Leos

this will come as a pleasant surprise, but for others it could mean awkward moments. The stars advise that swallowing your pride is the best way to handle this situation. Lucky days for love are Tuesday and Wednesday. Winning a water sign's heart is well starred.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



A busy social scene helps to keep work worries at bay for Virgoans this weekend. The stars suggest that you should know what is going on by the end of the week. Promotion could be a welcome result after a period of uncertainty. Affairs of the heart are affected by an unsettled cosmic climate – this is not an auspicious week to make commitments. Money matters are lucky on Tuesday and Wednesday.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



Librans have the ability this week to set the pace for the month of June, but it will be important to understand what you really want. Where finances are concerned, the stars indicate that ignoring a small problem could lead to a situation that will be much harder to solve. In the realm of romance, an earth sign's heightened emotions mean that you should think before saying too much this weekend.



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



Friends who are fresh out of ideas would like to pick your brain this week. The stars advise that offering too much information could land you in hot water, particularly where a fire sign is concerned. Property matters fall under auspicious astral conditions until the middle of June, with emphasis on the search for a dream home coming to an end. Single Scorpions enjoy an encounter with an air sign this weekend.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



A minor boost to your finances may seem like a drop in the ocean, but this is an indication of further gain coming during June. The stars suggest that this should be one of the most profitable months of the year for Sagittarians. In the realm of romance, sparks fly with another fire sign. Those already committed appreciate their partner's thoughtfulness this weekend. Your lucky color this week is turquoise.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



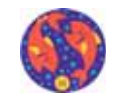
Capricorns' determination to see a tricky project through to a successful conclusion is predicted to pay off this week. Too much drama in your personal life may be taking its toll. Those whose relationship has been on the rocks for a while are likely to make a sensible decision this weekend. If you are single and seeking, efforts to catch a water sign's eye pay off. Promising days for finances are Monday and Tuesday.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



The stars suggest it may be necessary to sugar coat your words at work this week. Another air sign is forecast to fly off the handle when the truth is pointed out to them and a tactful approach will be called for. Where romance is concerned, three could be a crowd this weekend for those pursuing an earth sign. Wear the color indigo to promote your earning power.

PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20):



The month of June is a time to go after what you want. If this relates to more rewarding work, Wednesday and Thursday are the most fortunate days to schedule important interviews for. The stars

hint that another water sign could be strong competition, but doing your homework thoroughly should seal the deal. Spiritual matters are highlighted to become more important for many of those born under the sign of Pisces.

ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20):



Where business and work are concerned, timing will be everything during the first week of June. Arians' usual enthusiasm could be replaced by an inclination to sit back and wait for opportunity to knock on their door. There is little chance of this happening – taking action should be a priority. Wednesday is an auspicious day to make contact with influential people. Sparkling days for romance are Sunday and Monday.

TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21):



Taureans should only deal with what is real this week. The stars suggest that your imagination could take over and unnecessary stress will be the result. Where finances are concerned, your luck increases and a water sign can hold the key to chances of gain. Those stuck in a romantic rut are advised to listen to their partner's point of view this weekend. Your lucky color this week is midnight blue.

PROPERTY Gazette

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Sansiri launches island's third dCondo project

Marketing team expects quick sell-out of 806-unit condo development in Kathu.

DRIVEN by the success of its first two condominium developments in Phuket, Sansiri PCL will be taking reservations for units in its third dCondo development in Phuket.

Scheduled to break ground in October this year, and ready to occupy by the third quarter of next year, sales of dCondo Creek's 806 units will open on June 1 at Sansiri's dCondo gallery in Kathu.

Located along Wichit Songkhram Road, midway between Patong and Phuket Town, the site of the one billion baht development is right next to the first dCondo project, currently under construction.

The dCondo brand has thus far been well-received in Phuket, reflected by the rapid sales of all 1,209 units in its initial two launches in October, 2011, and January this year.

Executive Vice President of the developer's Project Management and Marketing Department Suriya Wannabuit said that demand in Phuket's condominium market is still strong.

"We are confident that the new design will receive strong feedback. One highlight is the swimming pool, which runs through the develop-

ment. Buildings on either side represent a mountain landscape and the pool represents a creek," explained Mr Suriya.

"The area of dCondo Creek is surrounded by mountainous landscaping, which has inspired the project's conceptual development and design," he added.

Located on an area of just under nine rai, or about 14,250 square meters, the project will comprise four low-rise, eight-story buildings.

In addition to 750 one-bedroom studio units (29 sqm), the project will feature 56 two-bedroom units (60sqm) – not on offer in the first two Phuket dCondo developments.

All units will comprise a balcony, kitchen area and accompanying bathroom, while the larger units will also have a dining area, ensuite master bedroom and living room area.

Each unit has a holistic functional design, maximizing space to meet the lifestyle needs of customers.

On premises will be a clubhouse, fitness center and garden. There will also be a 100-meter swimming pool and security system equipped with 24-hour CCTV



LIVING AND SERVICE: dCondo units are characteristic of a simple yet practical design that separates the cooking and washing area from the main living areas.

and key card access.

With units priced between 1.1 and 2.7mn baht, Sansiri is offering a special promotion for customers who reserve and sign

a contract from June 1-3: customers can enjoy installments on the down payment as low as 999 baht per month. Also, customers with Siam Commercial

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Mind the skills gap



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

LIKE bees around the honey pot, the island's coconut wireless, online and print media have swarmed to the saga of the Evason's closure and the dismissal of its staff.

It's a passionate situation that will no doubt have more curves than the Monaco Formula 1 race.

I am presently typing like a madman in order to get out of the office and back home for a glimpse of the high octane spectacle – the F1, that is. Not the hotel closure.

I'm not getting into the issue of who is right or wrong at the Evason. Let's just say – it's complicated.

What is more important is the broader view of the days ahead for Phuket's legacy hotels, which are aging faster than a former porn star who has run out of Botox.

I can safely say there will be more hotel sales coming up soon, from north to south, and west

to east. It's not a one-off and, as we love to say here in the tropical rabbit hole, same same.

My own love affair with hotels began with cross country summer trips in my parent's station wagon, staying at roadside motels.

I've worked in the business for nearly 30 years: carried bags, made beds, checked guests in and out, done the nightshift, tended bar and changed light bulbs. I didn't start out glamorously and I've had more name tags and timecards than I can recall.

Inching up the ladder and eventually going abroad has been a fabulous life.

Hospitality makes for a great career for any student. Strangely enough, I still feel passionate about my job, rushing to

work more times than not. I often find myself reflecting on how charmed a life it's been while sitting in some exotic destination.

But, from the hotels I've stayed in over the years and the colleagues and staff with whom I've come in contact, I can easily see what makes a hotel extraordinary. In so many cases, it's the "X" Factor. It's not the hardware, but

'It's not the hardware, but the software that keeps things interesting – human capital.'



THE HOTEL MONEY GAME: Hotel properties may be the chips that international chains play with now, but do staff matter to them any more than the little ball on the roulette wheel? Photo: Money Images.

the software that keeps things interesting – human capital. Those little things: simple recognition, a smile, a staff member going out of their way or extraordinary service that make the experience most memorable.

Over the past 20 years Phuket has taken a strange and wonderful journey from a niche backpacking destination, to a popular seaside holiday place for Europeans, then into the luxury-pool villas and now into the mass-market.

Those workers who started in the golden age of island tourism are now middle-aged. The same goes for many hotels. What was popular five, 10 or 15 years ago, isn't in vogue any more. Tastes change, clients mature and the market never stays static.

Despite my love of the business it does have its illogical and superficial side. Asian hospital-

ity still remains in a different world, where youth, looks and an endless supply of new workers remains in vogue. Yes, even I succumb to turning my head in the airport when a trio of smiling AirAsia flight attendants walk by.

The industry workforce here requires a fairly large amount of staff. In legacy hotels, in many cases, they lack higher education and have received only minimal job skills training. This is in broad terms, and there remain many exceptions, but for the most part it's a bottom heavy superstructure, a numbers game.

For older hotel staff, it's enormously hard to adapt to international chains after getting used to family-run hotels. Technology is on the move and, overall, there is a huge gap between those trained in universities that specialize in hospitality and those who have

only rudimentary skills.

As we move into the next generation of tourism, the critical issue is not just creating a bureaucracy to illogically protect jobs, but to improve standards of hospitality training, education and language skills.

In the meantime we are headed into a mean few years as more hotels redevelop and are bought and sold. More retrenchments and layoffs are inevitable. With rising costs, efficient and effective staff members are now going to become more and more an object of desire.

Let's hope our hotel industry takes the long term path to developing not just jobs, but careers.

Bill Barnett is Managing Director of C9 Hotelworks and can be contacted through W: C9hotelworks.com

Global awards for local spas

SPAS in Phuket and its environs have done well at this year's World Luxury Spa Awards.

In the hotly contested country awards, Spa Cenvaree at Centara Grand Beach Resort Phuket won Best Luxury Emerging Spa and Khao Lak's The Sarojin won Best Luxury Hotel Spa.

Indigo Pearl's Coqoon Spa, which hangs among the branches of the island's oldest banyan tree took the title of Thailand's 'Best Luxury Resort Spa'.

Acknowledged as the world's leading luxury spa awards, the winners and finalists were selected by means of the annual voting process, where thousands of spa guests worldwide were given the opportunity to vote on-line.

"The level of competition in 2012 was evident from the calibre of spas that were nominated by clients," said Marinique de Wet, Executive Manager of the



AWARD WINNER: Coqoon Spa won best luxury resort spa. Photo: TAT

World Luxury Spa Awards. "These spas stood up to the highest expectations and were tested by discerning spa-goers looking for the ultimate experience, where only the absolute best is accept-

able," he added.

Thailand's Banyan Tree Spa took best luxury spa group in the global awards and Deverana Spas won Thailand's Best Luxury Spa group in the country category.

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GET OFF MY PROPERTY: This week's column emphasizes the importance of carefully checking land access legality before purchasing any. Photo: Aaron Jacobs

Landing yourself in trouble

Property Legal

By International Law Office

BUYERS often overlook the issue of secured access when buying property, which potentially can have serious problems later on.

In the case that a property is built on land adjoining a public road, then normally direct access is provided from the public road and access should not be an issue.

However, not every single property may have direct access from a public road. As a matter of fact, roads that are believed to be public are sometimes privately owned.

Therefore, particularly in a case where applicable laws provide no or little legal framework with respect to access issues, a buyer should always hire professional assistance and verify the access situation that applies to the property of his or her choice with a competent authority such as the local land department offices.

Sometimes, for instance, in a property development, buyers are required to pass privately owned land such as a project or estate road in order to access their individual plots, leased from their developer.

In a case where all land forming part of the development is owned by the developer, the developer, as a minimum protection, should promise under relevant agreements to retain ownership of the access land and provide unobstructed access to the individual plots over the access land in favour of its buyers.

However, it is important to understand that a contractual promise is not an absolute guarantee and that there will always be free and unrestricted access to other properties. In case that

the access land would be transferred to a new owner, the problem may already start.

Therefore, whenever it is revealed that a plot of land is surrounded by other plots without direct public road access, caution is advisable and it should be verified by what legal means unobstructed access to the plot can be secured.

Certainly registration of a servitude right over the access (*servient*) land in favour of the other (*dominant*) land would be appropriate, if possible.

The registered right of servitude provides important benefits such as guaranteed access, the right to lay pipelines or supply utilities through the servient to the dominant land.

Whether such a right of servitude has been registered over a specific plot of land in favour of other land plot(s), should be verified by inspection of the relevant land documentation, lodged with the competent land department office.

In summary, careful investigation of the access situation should be part of any due diligence performed prior to investing in a property. Unfortunately, buyers all too often deem such investigations unnecessary or rely on representations made by others, who have a vested interest in the buyer proceeding with the purchase of a specific property without having an expert-eye check it first.

This article is written by International Law Office Patong Beach Co Ltd, a Phuket based law firm for informational purpose only. In case of enquiries, please contact Michael Greth, Consultant, by email (michael@ilo-phuket.com) or phone (+66-(0) 76-222 191-5).



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Scarlet symbols

RED flowers are often symbolic, or associated with particular events or activities. Take the red rose, England's national symbol. In the dynastic War of the Roses, the baronial armies of the House of Lancaster wore the red rose in battle against the white rose of York.

Bizarrely, that red or "damask" rose may well have been the first cultivated species in history. More universal is the red rose's association with love and passion. "My love is like a red, red rose" the poet Robert Burns famously wrote.

Today this link is given expression on St Valentine's Day, or helps to line the pockets of flower girls hawking roses to besotted *farangs* in the bars of Patong.

Sadly, the red poppy (*papaver*) has negative connotations: it is an



Gardening
By Patrick Campbell

emblem bloodshed and conflict; a symbol of the senseless blood-letting of World War One, when 10 million courageous souls perished in the fetid mud of Northern France.

Every November on Armistice Day, red poppies are still worn as a mark of remembrance. Ironically, these flowers still bloom every spring in Flanders, literally nourished for decades by the blood of the fallen.

While scarlet flowers lack these historic associations in Thailand, they want for nothing in terms of beauty. There are even roses, but even the world's most popular flower is difficult to cultivate in

these tropical climes.

The poppies here are more likely to be pink, produced not for their links with history, but because they are a centuries-old source of opium – and now heroin. Oddly, these poppies are innocently grown the world over as decorative perennials for the herbaceous border.

But the charm of tropical red shrubs is undeniable. One example is the Turk's cap or wax mallow, (*malvaviscus arboreus* or *chaaba rheum* in Thai) which has previously avoided capture in these columns.

As the local name indicates, this South American native is a close relative of the hibiscus; a bushy, evergreen shrub with hairy, toothed foliage, and an explosion of large, bright scarlet flowers that are rolled as if about to open. They never do.

Usually held upright, one variety (*penduliflorus*) has pendant blooms. It is a strong grower and can easily become invasive if not pruned back. For this reason it is a good 'starter' plant for the new garden, provided it has a sunny spot and access to plenty of water.

Like so many hibiscus varieties, it is often attacked by leaf-eating or boring insects. As with all members of the family, it flowers freely and takes easily from woody cuttings.

Less common in these parts is the coral tree (*erythrina speciosa* or *thong laang*). More a small tree than a large shrub, this deciduous member of the leguminosae genus will reach 15



TUBULAR BLOOMS: Related to Hawaii's *wiliwili* tree, *Erythrina speciosa* flowers well after a long dry spell. Photo: mauroguanandi

meters in height. Ideal for a garden with strong sun and limited supplies of water, its flowers appear at the same time as the leaves. In fact, blooming is more spectacular after a long dry spell, thus for much of the year the thorny branches carry no foliage.

The blooms are distinctively tubular, with brilliant red, upward pointing racemes, which are followed by elongated, bean-like pods.

Sometimes called the Tiger's Claw on account of its unusually formed flowers, the plant is shapely and looks good as an ornamental in the garden, either with or without

leaves and flowers.

Erythrina constitute a huge genus; there are varieties native to Africa, Mexico and China. One grows in Hawaii where it is

known as the Wiliwili tree.

The Wiliwili comes in a range of hues varying from white and green to the inevitable vivid red.

World-wide travellers, all *erythrina*s

should do well in Phuket's hospitable climate.

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



PRONE TO PESTS: *Malvaviscus penduliflorus* is popular with insects but can be invasive if left unpruned. Photo: turtlemom4bacon

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Tip of the week

The greenhouse effect



NATURAL OFFENDER: These are the effects of extreme CO2 emissions caused by volcanic activity. Photo: Clinton Steeds

THE greenhouse effect is the increase in global temperatures caused by the build-up of heat-trapping carbon dioxide (CO2) in the upper atmosphere, a process caused mainly by the burning of fossil fuels.

The only practical way in which this effect can be reversed is by regeneration and by planting. We can only effectively remove the CO2 by utilizing it. Plants offer the best way of doing this naturally.

As they grow, plants transpire: that is to say

their porous leaves allow gases and moisture to escape into the atmosphere. Thus, not only do they prevent the build-up of too much water in the soil and thereby minimize the risk of flooding, they also allow the release of life-enhancing oxygen.

In a small way, we as gardeners help this process of regeneration. Every green-leaved plant that we grow does its own little bit for the environment.

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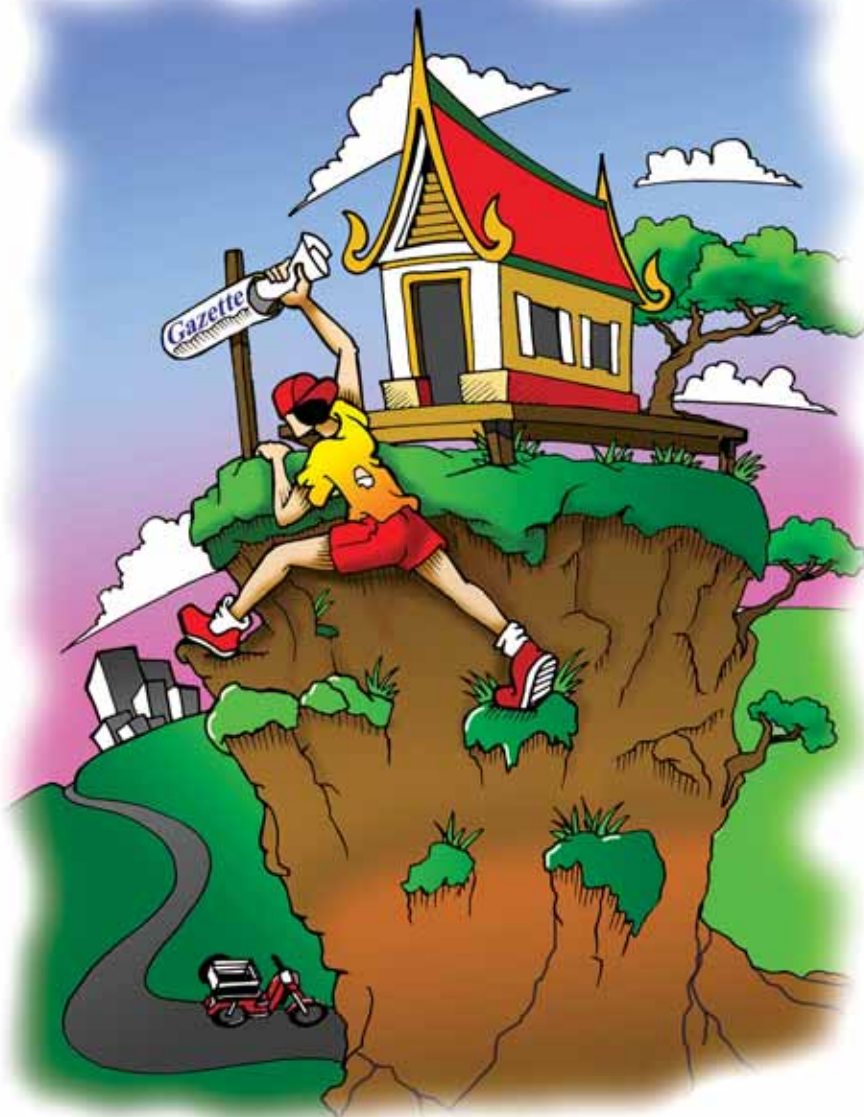
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KATHU GOLF CONDO



2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished brand-new condo with spectacular view of the fairway at Phuket Golf Course. Facilities include pool, gym, roof-top balcony with jacuzzi and maid service. Excellent central location with private parking. 3 months rent at 40,000 baht per month. Short-term rent at 45,000 baht per month. For more information and photos, please contact Annika. Tel: 090-701 2183 (English), 084-932 1988 (English). Email: annika_pm@hotmail.com

OFFICE FOR RENT

Office space for rent next to Jungceylon shopping mall in Patong. Tel: 084-245 8986 (English & Thai) for details. Email: take_a_tab@hotmail.com

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

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

SEAVIEW VILLA (8-13 GUESTS)



For rent or sale. On Phuket, fully staffed with private chauffeur, luxury furnishings, private pool. Air-conditioned 46-foot sports cruiser available at any time! For further details, please see our website at www.chalong-residence.com

BALINESE POOL VILLAS

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>

PRUKSA VILLE THALANG

Near Tesco Lotus, 3 bedrooms, fully furnished, internet, UBC, 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-795 6363. Email: vicky_grc@hotmail.com

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

KATA HILL FOR RENT/SALE



Luxury furnished villa. 3 bedrooms + office room, big kitchen, garden, pool, parking. Rent: 70,000 baht per month. Minimum 6 months. Tel: 081-788 8280. Email: maurice.phuket@gmail.com

SEA VIEW CONDO PATONG

Condotel, 500m from beach, 7th floor, 28sqm, fully furnished, kitchen, new bathroom, aircon. Long-term only 12,000 baht/month. Tel: 084-844 7693 (English & Thai). Email: heijojo@hotmail.com

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

MAKHAM 3-BEDROOM SEAVIEW VILLA

Cottage-style pool villa for long-term rent by Makham Bay. Tel: 076-391 445, 087-386 3388 (English & Thai), 084-305 4333 (English). Email: shanya.arman@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.374250002616957.78946.374247085950582&type=3>

LONG-TERM RENT

1-2 bedroom, furnished houses, beautiful garden, Chalong area 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311.

LUXURY POOL VILLA FOR RENT

Located just outside Laguna, this new three-bedroom pool villa is available for long and short-term rent. Tel: 081-891 1826 (English), 081-891 2926 (English & Thai). Fax: 076-238940. Email: kevinq@loxinfo.co.th

9-ROOM HOTEL, KARON

7 standard rooms + 2 suite rooms. Well furnished, 2 mins to beach. Minimum 3-year contract. Only 760,000 baht per year. No monthly rent. Long lease contract optional. Tel: 081-891 9461.

CONDO PATONG

Studios and one-bedroom apartments for rent at Phuket Place and Patong Tower. Tel: 081-892 1621.

RAWAI BEACH HOUSE

65,000++. 6-month lease. Tel: 081-397 6309.

COZY HOUSE FOR RENT



near Nai Ham. House built to high grade, furnished and conveniently located minutes from Rawai and Nai Ham Beaches. 2 spacious bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms. 1 guest toilet. Aircons. Large living-dining room. Telephone line with ADSL. Free water supply and garbage removal service. 22,000 baht/month. Contact K. Nui. Tel: 087-383 0936. Email: hunt17@hotmail.com

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Villa Attendant

A private villa in Thalang is looking for a female villa attendant who can do housekeeping, cooking, service and flower arranging.

Qualification:

- ▶ Thai female with pleasing personality
- ▶ Communicate very well in English
- ▶ Team player, honest and flexible
- ▶ Previous experience working in the hotel or villa is an advantage

A very attractive salary is awaiting the right candidate.

Contact person: Khun Tararat
Email: tah@shangdumail.com
Tel: +6676 338 490

laGuna HOLIDAY CLUB

Laguna Holiday Club is a project of Laguna Resorts and Hotels Public Company Limited, the owner developer of Laguna Phuket. Laguna Holiday Club is a vacation ownership program that provides members with lifelong access to world class accommodation throughout Thailand and Asia. We are now looking for the positions:

- ▶ Assistant Sales Manager
- ▶ Explorer Pass Event Team Leader
- ▶ Sales Representative
- ▶ Explorer Pass Booker
- ▶ Out side Personal Contact

- Previous timeshare experience, knowledge of sales techniques and sales closing ability for Assistant Manager
- Multi-lingual ability including English, Russian and Cantonese or Mandarin preferred

We are proud to provide an excellent benefits package including: Basic salary, generous commissions, medical coverage, training exc.

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career@lagunaholidayclub.com

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.

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- ▶ 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:

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- ▶ 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 Anna@PhuketGazette.Net

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SUN PARADISE®



Sunparadise (Thailand) Co., Ltd., is a manufacturer of the highest quality aluminum window and door systems from Switzerland which began operating in Thailand in 2001. Due to our business expansion, we are looking for highly motivated candidates to join our team.

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



**BOATHOUSE
RESORT ON THE BEACH**

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 Kuktanode Road, Kata beach, Phuket 83100
Tel: 076 330 015
www.boathousephuket.com

NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS

Brainy House is a private English-language school. We are looking for native English teachers to start ASAP. For children 6-8 years old. We offer an excellent compensation. Please send a cover letter and CV to: info@brainyhouse.com Tel: 080-907 7466 (contact Sasi).

DRIVER BANG TAO

Family need a driver with experience, English skills. Salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-719 3470.

CLUB ASIA FITNESS

Club Asia Fitness - Phuket's leading fitness centre requires an Operations Manager & Sales Consultant. Requirements: Thai National with degree and ability to communicate in English. Please submit your CV to Email: info@clubasiaphuket.com

FOREIGN STAFF WANTED

1 English speaking, 1 Italian & English speaking, 1 French & English speaking. Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

RECEPTION STAFF

Responsible Thai female needed for reception at Patong hotel. Monthly salary: 12,000 baht. Tel: 081-892 1621.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER WANTED

We are looking for a native English kindergarten teacher to join our team to teach 10-12 children aged 3-6 years. Must have a minimum Bachelor's Degree or equivalent. Tel: 076-383150, 084-520 4978. Fax: 076-383150. Email: info@cravensnurseryphuket.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE AGENTS

Customer service agents needed for expanding internet fashion retailer. Are you CS experienced, Thai, hard working, computer savvy & fluent in English? Salary of 17-25,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-789 9249. Email: graham@holyclothing.com
 For full details click here: <http://www.holyclothing.com/htmlx/work.html>

ENGLISH HOME TUTOR

Native English speaking female home tutor for assistance with primary level homework and further learning. Must be employed as a teacher in Phuket, flexible hours after school, maximum two hours per day during week days only. Rate negotiable. Email: morganiain@hotmail.com

VARIOUS SALES & MARKETING

Sales and marketing roles. Native English speakers or other nationals with fluent English-speaking skills. A proven track record in sales is a must. Send CV & recent photo to Email: careers@pp-intl.com

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT KAMALA

For Trading company in Kamala. We are now seeking 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: 076-322 664. Email: skgf@skgf.asia

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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Serenity Resort & Residences Phuket is an up-market residential development with 77 apartments and pool residences located in Chalong bay on the south east coast of the island. We are now looking for an experienced property sales executive with following qualifications:

- Thai national
- Excellent command of spoken and written English
- Preferably female
- Experience in resort style real estate sales in Phuket (no time share!)
- Outgoing and friendly personality
- Understanding of western culture and mentality
- Able to work on weekends if required.

We offer a basic salary and commission on sales plus attractive benefits. Please send your application together with CV and recent photograph to Email: tae@serenityphuket.com
For further details, please see our website at www.serenityphuket.com

Hunter | Sotheby's INTERNATIONAL REALTY

International real estate company seeks qualified and experienced candidates for the following vacancies:

Web/design/SEO professional

Job description: Various web/design projects such as email newsletter templates, website graphics/banners, website optimisation, research keywords, update website metadata, optimise local search listings, conduct monthly reporting, and create social media content.

The ideal candidate:

- Thai national, fluent in written and spoken English
- Knowledge and experience of SEO, SEM, SMO and HTML/Wordpress
- Excellent administrative and communication skills
- Previous experience in similar role

Attractive salary, immediate start for the right applicant.

Please email your CV in the first instance and in confidence to admin.phuket@sothebysrealty.com

Administrator/book-keeper

Job description: General office admin, receptionist, database management, basic accounting

The ideal candidate:

- Thai national, fluent in written and spoken English
- Excellent administrative and communication skills
- Well organised, self motivated and proactive
- Attention to detail
- Basic knowledge of book-keeping
- Previous experience in similar role

Attractive salary, immediate start for the right applicant.

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NANNY/HELPER WANTED

Nanny needed to look after 8 month old full time and 3 year old after school. Live out or in. Tel: 088-167 6140, 081-737 2814 (English). Email: gillian_notley@yahoo.co.uk

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REAL-ESTATE STAFF WANTED



Looking for full-time young Thai staff, fluent in spoken and written English with real estate business experience. Tel: 084-060 7050. Please send an email with a photo to info@moloko-phuket.com For further details, please see our website at <http://moloko-phuket.com>

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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

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Wedding coordinator: Japanese female, good English and computer skills. Sa-mer Wedding (Boat Lagoon). Email: info@sa-mer.com Website: www.sa-mer.com

THAI STAFF WANTED

Work on shifting schedule, can speak English, customer service. Good salary with bonus. Patong. Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

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For sale: new Italian pizza restaurant at Kata Beach. Fully equipped with latest-generation pizza oven, great location, attractive price. Contact Claudio. Tel: 081-270 9698 (English). Email: claudiothai@hotmail.it, www.restaurantgastonephuket.com

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Off Nanai Road, newly renovated, secure income with little work, more than 10% return on investment, long-term rentals, Chanote title, company included. Sale by owner, detailed sales folder available. Bargain price: only 4.9 million baht. Tel: 087-265 0652 (English).

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Big bar for rent close to the beach in a hotel area. The bar is attached to a hotel. 3 years + 3 years contract. Tel: 086-943 4447 (English), 084-306 2440. Email: hollywoodbeach@hotmail.com

BAR FOR SALE

On Patong beach road, looks nice and clean, fully equipped, cheap rent, no key money. Price: 750,000 baht or best offer. Contact Ricco. Tel: 080-537 6125 (English).

MASSAGE SALON SPA

Quality set up, excellent street appeal, spray tan, near OTOP market and Centara Hotel. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 082-601 8942. Email: nina_kangaroo@yaho.com

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Want to make some money? Bar restaurant-beer garden, pool table, pizza oven, near OTOP market and Centara Hotel. 2.5 million baht. Tel: 082-601 8942 (English & Thai). Email: nina_kangaroo@yaho.com

HOTEL SALE/LEASE

Newly renovated 12-room towners suite, has bar and restaurant. Great location in Ao Nang, Krabi, lots of potential, Aussie owner retiring (again). Tel: 080-693 4362 (English). Email: austhaihotel@hotmail.com

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3.5-storey house, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Ha Yaek Chalong traffic circle by the school. Rent: 35,000 baht per month. Sale: 9.8 million baht, negotiable. Contact Tik. Tel: 081-825 9420 (English & Thai).

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Thai traditional massage, aroma therapy massage. Contact Mata. Tel: 087-889 6089 (English & Thai).

HOTEL FOR SALE



Phang-nga Inn, 14 guest rooms, 15 million baht. Tel: 081-892 1507. Email: phangngainn@hotmail.com

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Bulletins

Public Notice

The Directors and Management of Emerald Villa Services and Tamarind Villas Phuket wish to make it known that the person known as: **Sathitapron Dutwan (old name) or Pattrida (Gaye) Dutwan (present name) ID Card number 3 8599 00128 190** is no longer employed by and no longer represents the above companies. Signed the Management.

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Phuket's oldest bi-lingual international child care facility. High-quality, time-proven schedule and curriculum. Now in brand-new house purpose-built school. Experienced native English teachers to teach ages 1 - 8. Mon-Fri 8am-5pm. Bus service available from Patong, Karon, Kata, Phuket, Rawai and Chalong. Tel: 076-384638, 080-624 7060. Website: www.buds-phuket.com

WEBSITE FOR SALE

Highly professional property website for sale. Launch ready. Multi-lingual (UK, RU, DE). Can be used as real-estate-agent site or as (Phuket/Samui) portal site. Only 180,000 baht. Tel: 081-077 3548. Email: mz5005@gmail.com

Club Memberships Available

LOCH PALM MEMBERSHIP

Full membership. 530,000 baht. Will pay 50% of transfer fee. Tel: 086-980 5057.

PCC MEMBERSHIP

PCC membership for 600,000 baht, including transfer fee. Pls send text message or email. Tel: 086-942 0242. Email: rstowell.hkt@gmail.com

LAGUNA PHUKET

Laguna Phuket Regular Family membership, valid until 2026. Transfer fee to be paid by buyer. 400,000 baht. Tel: +61-4-278 7588 (English). Email: hkarbons@yahoo.com

PCC GOLF MEMBERSHIP

550,000 baht, not including transfer fee. Tel: 081-270 2045. Email: nongnut100@hotmail.com

LAGUNA MEMBERSHIP

Family membership available. Expires 2024. 450,000 baht including transfer. Tel: 084-630 2416 (English). Email: jonh assall@aol.com

LOCH PALM GOLF MEMBERSHIP

585,000 baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 081-270 5609.

Computers

ENGLISH COMPUTERMAN

Sales, service, repair & accessories. Free telephone help. Tel: 076-384259, 084-625 7744 (English). Email: computermanphuket@gmail.com

Toy And Kid's Stuff

BABY COT & PLAYPEN FOR SALE

Camera baby cot, perfect condition. On wheels and with IKEA band around inside to stop legs poking through! 3,500 baht. Also have a Maturio Playpen for 2,000 baht. Tel: 087-096 9625, 086-771 3665. Email: anthony dupont@yahoo.com

Golf Stuff

CALLAWAY GOLF SET

Clubs VFT 3-PW, 7 irons + P2 hawkkey drivers & S+L diamond, black cart bag, as new. Price: 75,000 baht. Tel: 088-181 1309 (English). Email: dire@dire.se

GOLF CLUBS

Full set, Ping rapture, very good condition. 30,000 baht ono. Tel: 084-838 8878.

Surfboards

SURFBOARDS / BICYCLES

Saltwater designs 5.3, special design, NSP 5.4 Epoxyboard, GT California bicycle. Tel: 083-525 7871 (English). Email: kim_partanen@hotmail.com

Notice

Public Notice



Call for missing person

In accordance with the Act on Missing Persons 12, the following person is hereby summoned:

Soren Baisgaard, born on 10.2.1959 and whose last known address is: Korterupvej 8, 2750 Herlev, Denmark.

Reported as missing on 5.12.1999 in Phuket, Thailand, where he left the Hotel Holiday Inn, Phuket.

There will be a hearing in Glostrup Court **Monday, June 11, 2012, 10:00am** where a judgment of his presumed death will be delivered.

Anyone who can provide information about Soren Baisgaard is encouraged to send an e-mail to his assigned attorney, Dorte Jensen, Buddingevej 289, DK-2860 Soborg, Denmark, e-mail: **dorte-jensen@ret-raad.dk** as soon as possible with reference to case 21097.

If you know anything, please let me hear from you

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Saloon Cars

HONDA JAZZ 2004

78,000km, automatic, silver, top of range, 2 years serviced at Honda dealer. 350,000 baht. Tel: 089-594 8849 (English). Email: pjmcevoy@yahoo.com

2008 CHEVROLET CAPTIVA

2.0 TD AWD Full option. Upgraded sound system with 2 amplifiers and manual equalizer. 3 color monitors and iPhone interface. 890,000 baht ono. Tel: 084-189 3070. Email: simon@phuketfood.com

FORD RANGER PICKUP & CARRYBOY

140,000 km, turbo diesel, 5-gear manual, 2.5L. Price: 290,000 baht. Tel: 076-486118, 086-942 5244 (English), 089-999 2380 (English & Thai). Email: info@siam-interact.com

FORD RANGER MAX

18 month old, low usage, super accessorized Ranger Max 3.2 only 850 k. Tel: 081-375 0016. Fax: 076-344057. Email: gphuket@gmail.com, www.thaksinproperties.com/rangermax.html

PROTON SAVVY BARGAIN!

Great little car for sale. Only 320,000 baht. Less than 1 year old. Low mileage. Perfect condition. Tel: 084-203 1739 (English). Email: nickfranklin@live.co.uk

TOYOTA COROLLA 170,000 BAHT

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4 x 4s

NISSAN FRONTIER 275,000 BAHT

Dependable, runs good, looks good. 4x4, 5-speed. 3.0 Turbo Diesel. Blue book in hand. Please leave message if no answer. Tel: 082-686 7841 (English). Email: Ted@nesmith.com

FORTUNER 3.0

Fully loaded, bluetooth, hands free, DVD, TV, 20inch alloys 1.25 million baht. Tel: 081-924 9935 (English). Email: inzente@gmail.com

JEEP WRANGLER 4.0 L (REAL ONE)

Jeep Wrangler, 4L automatic. Original import from Japan. Black label, full registration, first class insurance. Soft top and hard top. Price: 980,000 baht. Tel: 086-783 7873, 086-316 6976 (English & Thai). Email: thornchaya444@yahoo.com

TOYOTA VIGO 2008

4 wheel drive, automatic, diesel, 4 door, 4x4, ETCi VSC & cruise control, clear blue metallic, excellent condition, one careful owner. 65,000km. 720,000 baht. Please contact for more information Tel: 089-474 0543, 081-271 9050.

TOYOTA FORTUNER 2007 V 3.0



for sale. 77,000km. Auto, 4x4. In excellent condition. Serviced by Toyota Pearl. Price: 920,000 baht. Tel: 086-942 2007.

Motorbikes

KAWASAKI ER6N FOR SALE

650cc, year 2011, black, mileage 1,400km. Price: 210,000 baht (negotiable). Tel: 081-658 2081. Email: momae_k@hotmail.com

CLASSIC HONDA MAGNUM

Top condition, serviced every 5,000km, green book, excellent condition, insurance paid. 125,000 baht. Tel: 084-054 5820 (Thai), 081-122 9303 (English).

HONDA CLICK AUTO

Only 3,512km. from new, always garaged and serviced, green book, Bargain price 29,000 baht. Contact John. Tel: 080-697 4916.

HONDA WAVE 125 S

2004, 2nd owner, 16,800 baht, w/ lockbox. Honda serviced. Runs strong. Tel: 080-636 8382.

2005 HONDA BLACKBIRD

Recently rebuilt, 25,000km. 219,000 baht with full registration. Tel: 083-184 6868. Email: JanHollister@Me.com, www.CookingChaos.com

YAMAHA FINO FOR SALE



2008. Lady owner, ridden only in Phuket Town, with green book. Asking price 23,000 baht. Tel: 084-889 2676.

TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE



2009, White, Arrow Pipes, STM Slipper Clutch, R&G Tail Tidy, R&G Crash Protectors. Too many extras to mention. Only 6,000km. Serviced and maintained by Britbike Triumph. 525,000 baht. Comes with green book. The world's best streetbike. Tel: 086-281 2033 (English & Thai). Email: senna@cscms.com

HONDA ST 1300 PAN EUROPEAN



2010 Honda ST 1300 in black. 3,000km, as new. Awesome touring bike, V4 engine. Comes with green book. 599,000 baht. Tel: 086-281 2033 (English & Thai). Email: senna@cscms.com

KAWASAKI VULCAN



New Kawasaki Vulcan 900 Custom. Year 2011, only 2,050km. Still 1.5 years on warranty. Tel: 089-588 4550.

KAWASAKI NINJA 636



2006, North American Import and unrestricted. Full horsepower. Top speed 170mph. Only 3,000km since new. This bike is full spec. 325,000 baht. Comes with green book. Tel: 086-281 2033 (English & Thai). Email: senna@cscms.com

VESPA LX125I 2012



As new, only 2,300km, white. Cost new: 98,000, must sell - now only 78,000 baht. Tel: 087-893 1753.

SUZUKI CARIBIAN FOR SALE

Red 4x4 jeep for sale- never a hire car - only 2 owners. 120,000 baht ONO. Tel: 081-271 1507 (English & Thai), 089-645 2576. Email: jayneymac@yahoo.com.au

Pick-up

MITSUBISHI TRITON PICKUP TRUCK

4 doors, auto, leather interior, condition as new. Price: 550,000 baht. Tel: 087-633 1472 (English), 081-539 9612 (English).

Rentals

RENT 2010 FORD WILDTRACK

From 850 baht a day, Full Insurance, unlimited Kms, Lockbox, Auto. Tel: 086-316 9159 (English), 089-803 2694 (Thai). Email: ozmoran@yahoo.com

JAZZ, VIOS, VAN BEST PRICE



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Boats & Marine

SIMPSON

PHINISI SCHOONER 26 M. (2007)



- Well appointed.
- Charter or private.
- A phinisi with detail.

VRIPACK 69 (2004)



- Ready to go anywhere.
- Price reduced for a quick sale.
- Kept in excellent condition by professional crew.

Negotiable

Azimut 43S (2007)



- One owner, well maintained.
- Upgraded sound system.
- Joystick control.

BENETEAU OCEANIS 473 CLIPPER (2006)



- The best Oceanis 473 Clipper on the market.
- Every option for long distance sailing included.
- Single owner boat.

Bring Offer

Azimut 55 (2004)



- Pristine condition.
- Separate crew cabin aft.
- Full beam master cabin amidships.

Price Reduced

PRINCESS P42 (2008)



- Winner of Boat Asia 2006.
- Excellent sea keeping ability.
- Viewing highly recommended.

Contact: Mario Zanasì | Mobile: +66 (0) 86 273 4149 | Email: mario.zanasì@simpsonmarine.com
Sergio Loiaccono | Mobile: +66 (0) 86 277 3360 | Email: sergio.l@simpsonmarine.com
ติดต่อ | Tel: 089 727 8149 | Email: phuket@simpsonmarine.com

VALIANT 40 (1977)

In great condition, you could own this Bob Perry-designed cruising legend for only US\$89,500. Contact Alan. Tel: 084-842 6146. For further details, please see our website at www.boatshedphuket.com

CUMULANT 40F (1996)

Lifting-keel steel sloop, excellent condition and equipped to circumnavigate. Huge price reduction. Asking 99,000 euros. Contact Alan. Tel: 084-842 6146 (English). For further details, please see our website at www.boatshedphuket.com

JET-SKI FOR SALE

Yamaha ZX cruiser. 1,852cc. Year 2010. Only 30m use, new condition. Tel: 090-156 7927.

2ND HAND SOLAR PANELS

New and secondhand solar PV panels for sale. Siemens 50W made in USA and Solarex 53W made in Australia. Tel: 084-711 2744 (English & Thai). Email: phuketgreen@yahoo.com

THAI WOODEN GAME FISHING BOAT

150Hp Hino, outriggers, 3x Shimano rods with Penn reels. Price: 595,000 baht. Contact Alan. Tel: 084-842 6146 (English). For further details, please see our website at www.boatshedphuket.com

GRP FAST TOUR/ DIVE BOAT 2011

Well built and surveyed, licensed for 40 pax + 3 crew, only ever done sea trials, 3 x 225Hp Honda outboards (10hrs used). Price: 4.1 million baht. Contact Alan. Tel: 084-842 6146 (English). For further details, please see our website at www.boatshedphuket.com

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\$380,000 USD

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► **Simons 56 (2005)**

\$699,000 USD

► **Lancer 20 Heritage (2008)**

1,500,000 THB

► **Riviera 43 Offshore Express (2010)**

\$699,000 AUD

leemarine.com

Dealership Office
The Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket
Contact: Martin Holmes
Tel: 076 238 803
Fax: 076 273 319
Email: info@leemarine.com

Brokerage Office
The Boat Lagoon Marina Phuket
Contact: Andrew de Bruin / Marcus Overman
Mobile: 081 894 1530 / 081 988 1437
Tel/Fax: 076 239 729
Email: andrew@leemarine.com

Yacht Haven Marina Office
The Yacht Haven Marina Phuket
Contact: Jim Poulsen
Mobile: 081 891 3237
Tel/Fax: 076 206 260
Email: jim@leemarine.com

Pattaya Office
Ocean Marina Jomtien Beach
Contact: Mark Heath
Mobile: 081 787 9408
Tel: 038 235 061 Fax: 038 235 062
Email: mark@leemarine.com

HOBIE MIRAGE TANDEM ISLAND

2012 Hobie Mirage Tandem Island Trimaran sail boat. Looking for a super-fun multi-sport boat for 2-4 people? Easy to set up/launch/sail and put away. I carry it in a motorbike sidecar. Google hobie adventure island tandem. 185,000 baht. Tel: 081-297 3214. Email: mrkevin landrus@hotmail.com

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High quality, economic and prompt inflatable/grp repairs. See our locally built. HD deep V RIBS. Superb performance, price and quality. Tel: 080-349 5462 (English), 084-995 6669 (English & Thai). Email: kajoda 1954@yahoo.co.uk

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paew@lambertbrothers.co.th
Tel: + 66 76 273 385

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Fishing or dive offshore, like new condition, new parts, trailer. Tel: 087-897 9192.

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Custom-built dive speedboat for sale. Only 1 year old. 47ft fiberglass. 3 Honda 4-stroke engines, 675hp, Thai registered. All safety equipment and VHF radio. Licensed for 35 people plus 5 staff. Side entry and exit doors. International survey, excellent condition. Tel: 084-188 4544 (English & Thai) Email: micha hildner@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at <http://prestige-divers.com>

FOUNTAIN PAJOT LAVEZZI 40

(2006) Great condition, fully equipped and ready to go. Dinghy & outboard. US\$279,950. Call Alan at 084-842 6146.

POWER BOAT FOR SALE

36 feet, fiberglass with fly bridge. Perfect for diving or tours. Email: Jgkg24@hotmail.com

LIFTING KEEL YACHT

1983 French steel sailing yacht, completely equipped and in the water at Langkawi, Malaysia. At the giveaway price of €28,000 or 1.2 million baht as our sabbatical sailing year comes to its end. Email: christoph@platzoo.com

9.4M LONGTAIL BOAT

Recently painted, overhauled at boatyard in Chalong. Sale due to owner moving north. Offers over 45,000 baht. Tel: 083-726 6951.

URGENT SALE

5.6m Hypalon Rib (never used) with new galvanized trailer. Must sell. 400,000 baht. Tel: 080-595 4247 (English). Email: brad_urq@hotmail.com

SPEEDBOAT FOR HOT SALE



11m custom-built diving and snorkeling speedboat, 2x200cc Yamaha engines. Radio, GPS, all inclusive. Was 900,000 baht, now 500,000 baht. Contact Joe. Tel: 087-891 8912. Email: joe@similan-diving-safaris.com

GoBoatingThailand

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Used Majesty 88 2011 model

New Majesty 77 2012

4 cabins 4 bathrooms
3 crew cabins
Cat C32 1825 hp Engines
Twin CAT gensets
Chilled water air conditioning
Jacuzzi on flybridge
28 Knot max speed
23 Knot Cruise speed

This boat is offered having been used very little since her purchase in May last year. Engine hours approx 220hrs.
A truly beautiful Majesty and one which we can say is a dream boat to own and operate.
Please contact us for pricing.

Length overall 77ft.
Accommodation 8 pax in 4 staterooms
Crew quarters x 2
Engines Cat C32 1550HP
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Air conditioning system. (Chilled water type.)
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This fine vessel will not be available for long. Act now to acquire this high quality Majesty Yacht.
Asking USD 2,650,000.00
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43-FOOT CATAMARAN

4 double cabins, not finished, in composite. Must sell! Price: 550,000 baht. Tel: 087-461 8089.

URGENT SALE

5.6m Hypalon Rib (never used) with new galvanized trailer. Must sell. 400,000 baht. Tel: 080-595 4247 (English). Email: brad_urq@hotmail.com

TOP LIVEABOARD FOR SALE

Superb condition, sleeps 20 customers, ready for immediate transfer. Call Peter at Sea Dragon. Tel: 081 979 8499. Email: info@seadragondivecenter.com

ENDURANCE 35 (1978)

Long keel, G.R.P. Sloop. Engine just overhauled. US\$42,000. Contact Alan 084-842 6146. Website: www.boatshedphuket.com

SPEEDBOAT FOR SALE

950,000 baht. Fiberglass, two 200Hp Yamaha outboard engines. Ideal for diving and tours. Tel: 081-894 2124 (English). Email: klaus@h2osportzphuket.com

WELLCRAFT 3000 MARTINIQUE (1998)

Twin 5.7L Mercruisers. Air conditioning, Inverter. Reduced to 2,195 million baht. Call Alan 084-842 6146. Website: www.boatshedphuket.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

BOAT FOR SALE

Gross Tonnage 1.94. Engine type: benzine. Net tonnage: 1.31. power 63.40 cylinder 53. Length overall: 4.80m. Engine: Yamaha. Breadth: 1.90m. Depth 1.00m. Tel: 086-739 3220.

SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S PUZZLES

Crossword puzzle:



Looking for boat & marine?

See more classified ads
at www.phuketgazette.net

Aircraft For Sale

AIRPLAY ALTIS MICROLIGHT

Superb trike with Konig radial engine. Great economical fun. Little used. Tel: 089-111 6457, 081-397 7598 (English & Thai).

HAVE A PASSION FOR AVIATION?

If you have an aircraft for sale or an interest in aviation and wish to learn how to fly or buy an aircraft or arrange a private flight, etc. Website: www.aeropromgr.com/newsletter

AIRPLAY ALTIS MICROLIGHT

Superb trike with Konig radial engine. Great economical fun. Little used. Please contact for more information. Tel: 089-111 6457 (English & Thai), 081-397 7598 (English & Thai). Email: kaioda1954@yahoo.co.uk

1999 ROBIN 2160i

I would like to sell my Robin aircraft or trade it for a 4-seat Cessna or Piper (based in Hua Hin). The Robin: TTA1, 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.

TFCNAM 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.

Rockwell Commander 114 HS-AWS



Built: 1976

Registration: HS-AWS
(in Thailand for the last 6 years)
Previous Registrations:
N4798W – USA
N479GE – USA
I-ECCE – Italy
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 IIB 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



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6 races, 6 winners



Formula 1 By The Digby

JACKIE Stewart famously said "qualify on pole and make no mistakes, and Monaco is not a difficult race to win".

Mark Webber qualified on pole, thanks to Schumacher's five place demotion, made no mistakes, and he won.

This is Webber's strength – he is infuriatingly calm and does not make mistakes. He got a clean launch while behind him, thanks to a gyrating Romain Grosjean, turn 1 was turned into bedlam. That called for the "safety car", and Webber contentedly headed a queue.

Red Bull shadowed Nico Rosberg's second place strategy and Webber held everyone back for a classic one stopper. At the end, 10 cars had ceased racing and there was only 1.3 seconds between the top three cars, and only 6.1 seconds between the top six. That shows how much Webber could



TANGLE: Webber leads the Monaco GP as Grosjean spins out. Photo: AFP

hold up the faster cars. Webber is now equal second to Sebastian Vettel in the Driver Championship (DC). It is the first time in F1 history that the first six races have produced six different winners.

The next GP is at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal on a man-made island in the St. Lawrence River. It is named after the only Canadian to win the DC, and possibly the greatest F1 driver ever. It was named after him when he was killed qualifying in the 1982 Belgian GP. It was James Hunt who

discovered Villeneuve, when he was soundly beaten by him in a Formula Atlantic race in 1976. Hunt arranged for Gilles to make his F1 debut with McLaren, although he is best known as a Ferrari driver.

A particularly famous part of the Montreal circuit is the wall at the exit of the final chicane nicknamed "The Wall of Champions". Schumacher, Vettel and Jenson Button have all fallen victim to its magnetic charms.

For a more indepth report visit PhuketGazette.net/sports

MALAYSIAN GRAND PRIX				
DRIVER	POINT	TEAM	PTS	
1 FERNANDO ALONSO	76		146	
2 SEBASTIAN VETTEL	73		108	
3 MARK WEBBER	73	LOTUS FI TEAM	86	
4 LEWIS HAMILTON	63	Mercedes	61	
5 NICO ROSBERG	59	WILLIAMS F1 TEAM	44	
6 KIMI RAIKKONEN	51		41	
7 JENSON BUTTON	45		28	
8 ROMAIN GROSJEAN	35	CATERHAM	0	
9 PASTOR MALDONADO	29	MARRUSSIA	0	
10 SERGIO PEREZ	22	HRT	0	

All systems go for Euro 2012 kickoff

Football

THE 2012 UEFA European Championship is set to kickoff in Warsaw on the 8th of June and this year's Championship looks set to be one of the most closely contested in recent history.

Four years ago Spain, who until then were labeled as perennial underachievers, started the tournament as clear favorites and duly delivered on years of promise. Their slick brand of passing football simply starved opposition of the ball and their pressing when they lost it was exceptional.

However, this golden generation is a little bit older and a little bit slower. Xavi and Iniesta still have their passing radars working, but it can't be denied that they have aged a little. Spain will also be without their talismanic striker David Villa which means Fernando Torres will need a "big tournament" if Spain are to be as potent as they were before.



Fernando Torres. Photo: Wiki

Germany must fancy their chances of claiming their first title since 1996. They, along with Spain, are the only nation to play with the cohesion of a club side and can boast an exciting and youthful side whose swift counter attack, when in full flight, is something to behold. Mario Gomez will have to put the horror show that was his Champions League final behind him if Germany are to have a shot at winning.

Sitting comfortably as the third best team is the Netherlands. The Dutch are still some way behind the top two but are themselves some way ahead of the chasing pack.

They possess pacey wingers and fullbacks, as well as the most in-form striker in Europe, Robin van Persie. However, a defense that is prone to errors has been their Achilles' heel for a while now and might be exposed by teams willing to open themselves up and have a go.

The draw has been kind to some of the smaller nations with Netherlands, Germany and Portugal placed in the same group. Both

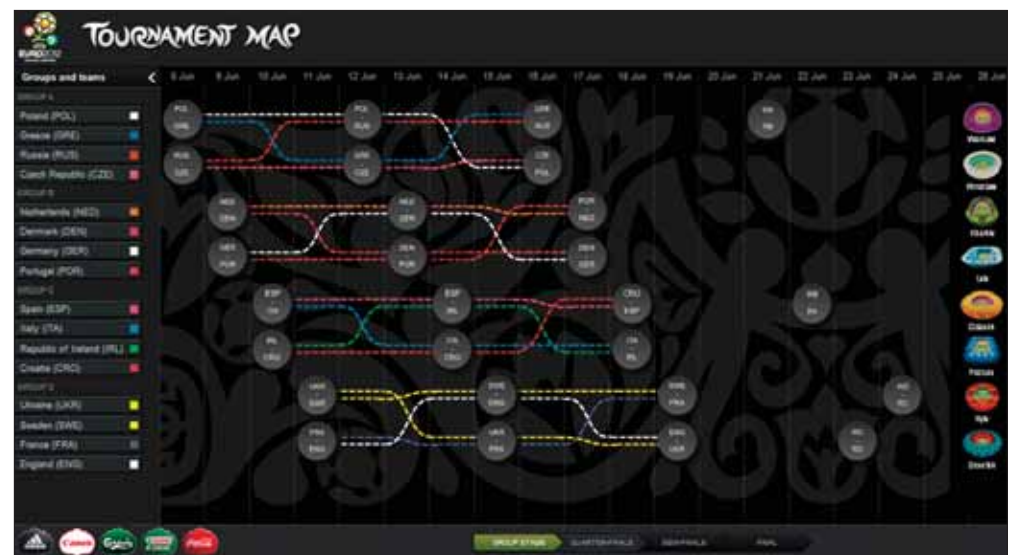
co-hosts have a realistic chance of getting into the knockout stages with favorable groups, particularly Poland. However their group is perhaps the most evenly matched in the tournament.

France and England will be eagerly awaiting their clash as the winner could avoid a giant in the next round. Although both sides possess quality, one expects luck will have

to favor these powerhouses if they have any chance of lifting the trophy.

The congestion of quality teams makes for the most exciting international football tournament in the world, and as Denmark in 1992 and Greece in 2004 showed, reputation means nothing when 22 footballers have the world's eyes on them.

– *Phuket Gazette*



SPORTS briefs...

RUGBY: John Mitchell has lost a record 65 "Super Rugby" matches as coach, after his current side the Lions from Johannesburg went down 17-11 to the Western Force of Perth on Saturday.

The Lions have won just 17 Super Rugby matches out of 93 since 2006, giving them an 18 percent win record in that time.

The Lions' future is in doubt and faces relegation with the arrival of the Southern Kings from the Eastern Cape in South Africa set to join the competition. Tough times for fans from the City of Gold.

STRANGE SPORTS: Husbands will have to bear the brunt of their wives as they carry them on their backs through a 200 meter obstacle course in the New South Wales town of Singleton.

The winner of the "wife carrying" competition is rewarded handsomely. Not only will the victor qualify for the finals in Finland, but will also win his wife's weight in beer!

For a bit of extra spice, husbands can go opt for a wife swap and carry their mate's lady.

Whoever gets the victory beer is left for the couples to decide.

ICE HOCKEY: The New Jersey Devils will face off against the Los Angeles Kings for the Stanley Cup.

The teams finished 6th and 8th respectively in their conference, but strong showings in the play-offs have earned them the right to compete for the cup.

The Kings are a perfect 8-0 on the road this post-season, and going back to last year's playoffs, have won 10 straight road playoff games.

The Devils will take confidence from the fact that they won both games this season against their title rivals.

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Sea Kirin burnt by dragon fire

FC Phuket's impressive first-half performance against league leaders Ratchaburi Mitrphol FC on Sunday was made redundant when their 'secret weapon' was unjustly eliminated early in the second half.

Football: Thai Yamaha One

FC PHUKET fans, outraged over a red card given to keeper Alonso Jose Carvalho Da Silva in Sunday's 3-0 loss on the road at Ratchaburi, got a small measure of vindication this week.

The good news came when the Thai Premier League (TPL) review board on Monday agreed that the Brazilian's tackle on a Ratchaburi player wasn't intended to cause harm and that remedial action should be taken.

FC Phuket fans who travelled to watch the game, and many more who watched on television in Phuket, were inspired by the 16th-place Southern Sea Kirin's first-half performance on the road to league leaders Ratchaburi Mitrphol FC "Dragons".

Thanks in large part to some outstanding saves by Da Silva, the two sides went into the locker room at the end of the first half tied 0-0. But 11 minutes into the second half the lanky Brazilian raced out of the net and managed to kick away a ball before it reached the feet of a Ratchaburi attacker just outside the penalty area.

Cheers for the "supersave" quickly turned to fury when referee Surachai Gulap red-carded Da Silva, who protested in disbelief before finally leaving the field.

As all on-field calls are irreversible in football, Phuket was left with no choice but to continue the match a man down with reserve keeper Worapot Sabaijit in goal.

Ratchaburi Mitrphol FC, who enjoy funding from the largest sugar producing conglomerate in Asia, went on to net three goals and record another home win.

The first two goals came from Chutipon Tongtae on 65 and 89 minutes. The final nail in Phuket's coffin was hammered in by Chakrit Rawanprakhon in the 5th minute of added time.

After their strong performance in the first half, and with Da Silva returning after missing the last match against Air Force, Phuket fans were confident that a win at Ratchaburi would turn the corner on the season.

The team recently got additional funding by the Kata Group of hotels and their new president Pamuke Atchirayachai boldly predicted that the team would rise up to finish out the season in the top seven of the 18-team bracket.

Thus, the controversial ejection of Phuket's "secret weapon" and highest-paid player was not well digested by the fans, especially the 50 or so diehards who made the long bus ride north for the fixture.

Back in Phuket Town, dozens of fans who packed the Nok Sanarm sports bar across the street from Surakul Stadium to watch the match live complained loudly of "blatantly biased" officiating.

"Ratchaburi's first five wins this season are credited to penalties. Coincidence?" asked a fan on



TURNING THE TABLES: FC Phuket and Ratchaburi Mitrphol FC were evenly matched in Sunday's game, up until Da Silva (yellow head band) was ejected in the 56th minute. Photo: Courtesy of Aod Surat, Ratchaburi FC.

the bar's popular blogsite.

The sentiment about the result was not limited to fans. Phuket manager Ahsin Arammethapongsa also condemned the call.

"We strongly disagree with the call by Surachai Gulap. As soon as we review the tape and confirm that the call was uncalled for, we are going to make a formal complaint with the Thai Premier League.

"We know it won't change the result, but a lot of money has gone into bringing [Thai] football up to standard and to have it all go to waste because of one man is unacceptable," he was quoted as telling a SiamSport reporter after the match.

On Monday, the TPL committee reviewed a tape of the play,

agreeing that there was no intent by Da Silva to harm the Ratchaburi player, who predictably rolled in mock agony after their collision. The committee agreed to consider the case further and render a decision as to whether to reduce the red card to a yellow or revoke it altogether.

The committee also accepted a letter of complaint against referee Surachai presented by FC Phuket representative Paitoon "Ko Men" Chutimakkarakul, saying they would pass it on to the Football Association of Thailand ruling committee for review and possible punitive action.

The disappointing result did not have an impact on Phuket's lowly

ranking in relegation zone. Still undefeated, Ratchaburi, who were promoted to Thai Yamaha One (Division One) this season, maintain their stronghold on the league table.

Phuket will break for a few weeks and resume play in a Toyota League Cup match in an away fixture with Division 2 upstarts Sa Kao FC on June 9. After that they will take on Royal Navy in a league match at the naval base in Sattahip, in Chonburi, on June 13.

Phuket are scheduled to return to the island for three consecutive home matches against Bangkok FC (June 17), Chanthaburi (June 24) and Krabi FC (July 4).

— Steven Layne and Stephen Fein



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Thai Division One results: Weekend 11

Bangkok FC 1 - 2 Nakhon Ratchasima

Bangkok United 3 - 1 Rajpracha FC

Khon Kaen FC 1 - 0 JW Rangsit FC

Sriracha Suzuki FC 0 - 2 PTT Rayong FC

Gulf Saraburi 3 - 1 Krabi FC

Phatthalung FC 1 - 1 Royal Navy

Airforce United 3 - 1 Chanthaburi

Ratchaburi Mitrphol 3 - 0 FC Phuket

Suphanburi FC 3 - 1 Songkhla

Sport

Go Phuket!

PHUKET youth have bagged a number of medals competing in the 28th National Youth Games, which began on the island on May 24 and will continue through June 5.

Noteably, Anas Siseng took Penak Silat top honors in the 36-39kg class on Wednesday, while Bussarin Raktaengam, Worakluck Kritsachaikan, Sudaphat Khongkaew and Pichakon Kankanok took gold on Tuesday, after defeating their Nakhon Ratchasima opponents in the girls' soft tennis final.

The victories follow that of Phuket boys doubles team of Krit Jamkhajonkiet and Panode Kingtkaew, who took gold in the strategy game "Go" for Phuket's second top-honors in the island-wide, 12-day event.

Another Phuket gold was seized by Somkiet Krairisombat at the lanes of CS Bowl in Big C Supercenter, where Somkiet narrowly defeated Nonthaburi's Pirawit Rungcharoen, 1217 to 1216.

Phuket athletes have earned medals in tennis, table tennis, bridge, wushu,

ballroom dancing, track and field and swimming, with the tally going up everyday.

To little surprise, athletes representing Bangkok, Suphanburi and Chonburi have dominated the Games thus far, as they consistently do year on year; it's no coincidence that the capital and two provinces have a number of dedicated, residential sports schools, enrolling and nourishing some of the country's top athletes.

At the time of going to press, Bangkok was leading the count with nearly 40 gold medals, followed by Chonburi (21) and Suphanburi (16). Rankings are determined Olympic-style on the number of golds, not the total medal haul. Though this tally will be outdated once *the Gazette* hits stands, it is unlikely that the top three places will change, though Chiang Mai or Nakhon Sri Thammarat may have a fighting chance.

Those who cannot make it to the sporting venues across the island to enjoy the competitions first-hand can watch the action broadcasted on free-to-air NBT Channel 11.



GO FOR GOLD: Phuket's 'Go' team



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