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INSIDE TODAY

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■ **CONVICTED KILLERS OF AUSTRALIAN TOURIST MICHELLE SMITH SENTENCED TO LIFE BEHIND BARS**

LIFE IN PRISON

■ The man who wielded the blade says he 'can accept' spending the rest of his life in prison.

By **Chutharat Plerin**

THE two men charged with the murder of 60-year-old Australian tourist Michelle Smith in a bungled bag snatch in Kata in June were sentenced to life imprisonment on Wednesday.

The life sentences were handed down by the Phuket Provincial Court after a three-day trial, during which prosecution evidence included closed-circuit television (CCTV) images of the attack taking place.

Suspects Surasak Suwannachote and Surin Tadthong were initially sentenced to the death penalty, but the judge commuted the sentences to life in prison after both men confessed to all charges against them.

During the trial this week, both Surasak and Surin confessed to charges of premeditated murder, gang robbery causing death, and carrying a weapon in a public place.

Surasak had previously confessed to stabbing Mrs Smith, but claimed he only wanted to cut the strap on the bag she was carrying.

Surin, who operated the motorbike used in the

attack, also confessed to disposing of the knife used in the attack. As the knife was never recovered, police could not charge Surin with concealing evidence of crime.

At Phuket Prison in the morning before the sentences were handed down, the *Gazette* asked the two suspects what they thought of rumors that they were about to receive life sentences.

Replying with a broad smile, Surasak said, "I can accept that."

Surin, however, was less comfortable with the prospect of life behind bars.

"I cannot accept it. I did not do it," he said.

Nonetheless, Surin added, "I am not angry at Surasak. We have already talked it through together."

During the trial, expedited to relieve international pressure to bring the men to justice, Lt Col Boonlert Onklang of Chalong Police revealed that the attack was carried out "as a dare".

Surin teased Surasak about whether or not he could steal Mrs Smith's bag, he said.

Col Boonlert read out in court the police transcript recorded during the questioning of...

Continued on Page 2



Surin Tadthong, who operated the motorbike in the attack, clutches at the cage in the back of the prisoner transport truck as he heads back to Phuket Prison, to spend the rest of his natural life. Photo: Kritsada Meunhawong

D-Day for illegal taxis

BANGKOK pressure to put an end to the antics of the illegal taxi drivers plaguing Phuket, which has led to numerous violent clashes between drivers and tourists [see page 3], comes to a head as Phuket Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada's report on the situation is expected on Deputy Prime Minister Chalermsak Yooamrun's desk by September 1.

Once the order has been signed, illegal taxi operators will have 15 days to register their vehicles and get on the right side of the law.

Full story on Pages 4-5



Officers question an illegal taxi driver as he enters Phuket Airport.

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This Week



Business

The mid-year deadline for tax returns is fast approaching. **Page 13**



Diving

PADI: It's time to come together to clean up the reefs. **Page 16**



Explore

Ziplining: It's brown trouser time on the death slide. **Page 19**



Arts

Kane Killer. Is Vertigo a better movie? We discuss. **Page 22**



Your Phuket

Mother's Day messages from mums and their babies. **Page 24**



Sport

Phuket FC fans held hostage as Krabi fans run amok. **Page 47**

Saturday



34 - 24

Sunday



34 - 24

Monday



34 - 24

Tuesday



34 - 25

Wednesday



34 - 24

Thursday



34 - 24

Killers given life in prison for stabbing Aussie tourist

From page 1

the confessed killer Surasak

"Surasak told police that Surin asked him, 'Do you think you can steal that woman's bag?'" he read out aloud to the court.

"Yes, I can," Surasak replied."

The dare prompted Surin to turn around the motorbike the pair were traveling on and pull up alongside Michelle Smith and her friend, fellow Australian Tammee Lee Lynn.

Mrs Smith was stabbed three times after she fought to keep her handbag. Her heart was pierced and one of her lungs was punctured in the attack.

Mrs Lynn also suffered deep lacerations requiring stitches to close. Fortunately, none of her wounds were life-threatening.

At the request of the judge, Col Boonlert also presented video evidence, including CCTV footage of the attack.

Also presented was a video recording of Surasak confessing to the press after the re-enactment of the crime on June 26.

The court watched as Surasak told the press, "I didn't even want to stab the woman [Mrs Smith]. I just wanted to cut the strap of the bag. I didn't know she was going to die. I saw her walking away..."

"I saw on the news that the



Convicted after confessing to 'premeditated murder' of Australian tourist Michelle Smith (inset), Surasak Suwannachote (left) and Surin Tadthong have been sentenced to life in jail. Main Photo: Orawin Narabal

woman died. I am sorry for what happened. When the police arrested me I was already considering handing myself in."

Surin and Surasak were offered the opportunity to refute the police evidence presented in court, but both declined.

After court was adjourned on Wednesday, both men were returned to Phuket Prison, where they will begin serving their sentences.

The defense lawyer represent-

ing both Surasak and Surin told the *Gazette* the two men would not be appealing their sentences.



Michelle Smith pictured with husband Geoff

Earlier this week, Mrs Smith's brother, Alan Gordon, told the West Australian newspaper, "It might sound callous, but I hope he gets the death penalty."

"Michelle had a lot to live for. 'If that's their law [the death penalty], I hope [both men] get the death penalty," Mr Gordon added.

Lorry driver flees crash: one dead, six injured

POLICE are searching for the driver of an 18-wheel truck and trailer that slammed into a pickup, plowing the vehicle into a noodle stand in Thalang on Tuesday.

A customer at the restaurant, Daruwan Tantrangsamaphan, 50, was killed instantly from massive head trauma.

Five of the six other victims were of the same family travelling in the pickup truck.

Rescue workers took an hour using "jaws of life" metal cutters to free one of the victims trapped inside the wreckage.

The sixth injured person was named as Chaiyanon Kiantiruangrit, age 12.



Rescue workers needed one hour using metal cutters to free Rerm Maneesri, 74, from the twisted wreckage. Photo: Thawit Bilabdullar

All six were rushed to Thalang Hospital for emergency treatment.

The survivors will be questioned once they have sufficiently recovered, police said.

- Thawit Bilabdullar

Police investigate Swiss expat suicide

POLICE are investigating the apparent suicide of a Swiss expatriate found with a fatal knife wound to the chest at his rented home in Rawai on August 6.

Arriving at residence on Soi Naya with Phuket Ruamjai Kupai Foundation rescue workers, Chalong Police found the body of a man lying on the bed in the bedroom of the two-storey home.

A bloodstained fruit carving knife, still in the hand of the deceased, was among the evidence collected at the scene.

The body was identified by passport, as that of 54-year-old Swiss national Francois Leepert.

His Thai wife, who reported the death, was lying at his side crying when police arrived.



Passport photo of Francois Leepert. Photo: Kritsada Meuanhawong

An initial investigation by Chalong Police Inspector Aekasit Pinkaew found no signs of struggle or forced entry and assessed that Mr Leepert had died about two hours earlier.

After their inspection, police

released the body to rescue workers who delivered it to Vachira Phuket Hospital for further examination and storage pending funeral arrangements.

Initial questioning revealed that the deceased likely fell into a depressed, lovesick state. According to reports, he tried to call his wife up to 80 times and sent a text message to his wife before ending his life.

"Teerak [My love] Can't stop loving you - wish you all the best - you are the woman of my dreams - good by", the text read.

According to one report, Mr Leepert worked as a banker in Switzerland before retiring in Phuket six years ago.

- Krissada Meuanhawong



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Safety Zone in Patong pointless: Poll



Recently installed CCTV cameras have cropped up all over Patong.

PESSIMISM reigns over a plan by the Royal Thai Police to set up a "Safety Zone" in Patong, with more than four-fifths of people taking part in a recent *Gazette* online poll thinking the initiative would have "little or no effect".

A total of 1,640 people took part in the two-week poll, which was launched on July 13.

Readers were asked: *Deputy National Police Chief Gen Pansiri Prapawat recently announced a bold "Safety Zone" plan for Patong under which strict law enforcement would help reduce tourist complaints related to tuk-tuks, jet-skis and personal safety issues. What do you think will be the effect of this in the long-term?*

Overall, 86.3% of readers thought the initiative would have "little or no effect".

Of those who thought the plan would make a difference, 7.1% said it would have a "significant positive effect", while 4.9% said it would have a "large positive" effect.

Less than 2% of people taking part thought the initiative would worsen the tourist security situation in Patong, however.

There was little variation by demographic group, except that those identifying themselves as Thais were more likely to think the plan would have a positive impact.

Those identifying themselves as "local foreign residents" were the most pessimistic.

For support of plan see page 11

Taxi drivers attack Aussie

AN AUSTRALIAN tourist filed a police complaint August 2 alleging that he was severely beaten after confronting a taxi driver about a sexual comment made to his girlfriend.

Accompanied by the girl and an Australian consul, Peter Hulands filed the complaint with Patong Police shortly after being released from hospital.

He suffered a broken nose and a shattered eye socket in the violence.

Maj Somsak Tongkiliang of Patong Police explained that in his complaint, Mr Hulands said he and his girlfriend were walking past the taxi driver at about 2:30am on Tuesday near the eastern end of Bangla Road when the altercation occurred.

He alleged that the driver, 29-year-old Sathit Nuyuphai, made some comment "sexual in nature" about a hat that Mr Hulands' girlfriend was wearing, and a fight ensued.

On her Facebook page, Kitty Cardway said the attack was carried out by "5 Thai tuk tuk drivers".

Her Facebook also shows she is very fond of felines, and features a photo of her sporting a novelty hat imitating a large cat on her head.

Mr Sathit, however, on August 3 denied the accusation and gave a different account of events.

"He seemed to have had an ar-



Australian Peter Hulands suffered a broken nose and a shattered eye socket. He may need reconstructive surgery. Photo: Facebook

gument with his girlfriend, then crossed the road," Mr Sathit said.

"I asked him 'Taxi boss?'" Mr Sathit said. "Instead of answering me, he asked 'Can you speak English?' Then I said 'yes' and he swore at me, so I swore back."

Mr Sathit alleged that Mr Hulands grabbed him by the neck.

Mr Sathit said he punched Mr

Hulands, who then walked away from the fight.

"Later, he came back looking drunk with two friends, one Thai and one farang [westerner]. He kned my friend, then we got into a fight," Mr Sathit claimed.

Mr Sathit said one of his fingers was broken during the fight.

Patong Police said that Mr

Hulands fell down, hitting his face on the ground during the brawl.

The *Gazette* has yet to be informed of what, if any, action the police might take in response to the complaint.

Ms Cardway reported that Mr Hulands will need to consult specialists over the extent of his injuries, and that he may need reconstructive surgery.

The news of yet another tourist suffering a severe beating by Patong taxi drivers comes as Phuket's top policeman is trying to establish a "Safety Zone" in the crime-ridden municipality. The zone is to be heavily monitored by public access CCTV.

It also comes amid pressure from the Prime Minister's Office – and specifically from Deputy PM Chalerm Yoobamrung – for Phuket officials to resolve long-standing "problems" with local taxi drivers in Phuket [see pages 4-5].

In September last year, a gang of taxi drivers camped outside an upscale resort on Phuket's west coast beat a local driver with an iron bar while a pair of horrified elderly Australian tourists were still sitting inside the vehicle.

Earlier that same month, German national Kurt Trotnow was left in intensive care fighting for his life after being beaten by a mob of Patong tuk-tuk drivers for refusing to pay a fare of 200 baht (about US\$6.70).

Patong political powerhouses prepare for battle

IT WAS a busy morning at the Patong Municipality Offices on Monday, when two rival teams of Phuket politicians registered their candidacies for the upcoming municipal election scheduled for September 2.

Incumbent Mayor Pian Keesin led his blue-shirted Rak Patong ("Love Patong") team to the office, while rival mayoral candidate Kittisan Kuru led his yellow-shirted Patong Gao Na (Patong Progress) team members.

Candidates had from August 6

through August 10 to register their candidacies in the election, which will see 18 council members elected in the town's three electoral districts, which comprise six seats each.

Apart from the members of the two teams, independent candidate Manote Thonghom also registered his candidacy in District 1.

In accordance with Election Commission rules, all candidates who arrive before opening time on the first day of registration are entitled to draw lots to see who would be assigned the "lucky

Number 1" slot on the ballot sheet.

In the mayoral draw, Mr Pian drew number "1" while his rival Mr Kittisan, who served on the town council back in 2003, drew number "2".

As previously reported, the poll will be a sobering experience for many in Patong where alcohol sales will be restricted on four nights over a nine-day period due to the municipal elections and the provincial council polling that precedes it by one week.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong



Pian Keesin (blue) and Kittisan Kuru hold up fingers to represent which slot they will be on the ballot sheet in the upcoming Patong election.

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57 candidates lined up to contest Phuket OrBorJor council election

THE registration period for the upcoming Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorJor) council election, to be held on August 26, closed last Saturday with 57 candidates registering to contest the 24 council seats available.

The council comprises 15 seats for Muang District, six seats for Thalang District and three seats for Kathu District.

The Khon Baan Rao party, headed by OrBorJor President Paiboon Upatising, has entered 19 candidates contesting 19 seats, leaving five seats uncontested.

Nine candidates have entered the election as "Independents", with eight candidates contesting seven seats in Muang District, one candidate contesting one seat in Kathu and no independents contesting any seats in Thalang.

The remaining 29 candidates registered as "Others", with 18 candidates contesting 10 seats in Muang District, two candidates contesting two seats in Kathu and nine candidates contesting all five seats in Thalang.

A total of 358 polling stations



Independent candidate Somkid Suphab receives garlands from supporters.

across the island will be open from 8am to 3pm on election day for people to cast their votes.

"I believe about 70 per cent of those eligible to vote will turn out [at the polls] on August 26," said OrBorJor Chief Administrative Officer Manop Leelasuthanon.

"For voting districts that have only one candidate, the candidate

must receive at least 10 per cent of the total number of eligible votes in their voting district in order to be win their seat," he added.

In line with election law, the sale of alcohol will be prohibited island-wide from 6pm Saturday, August 25, to midnight on Sunday, August 26.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

Deadline

PRESSURE from as high up as the Prime Minister's Office is forcing local authorities to take clear steps to resolve Phuket's decades-old problems with illegal taxi drivers and jet-ski operators.

Chamroen Tipayapongtada, Phuket Vice Governor, has until September 1 to report to Deputy PM Chalerm Yoobamrung exactly what Phuket officials are doing to resolve the issues. The Gazette's Atchaa Khamlo reports.

THE Phuket Governor will sign an order giving illegal taxi operators 15 days to register their vehicles, officials were told at a meeting on August 2.

The meeting was headed by Phuket Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada, who said the order will be signed into effect ahead of a report to be submitted to Deputy Prime Minister Chalerm Yoobamrung.

The deadline for filing the report, which is to explain what action Phuket officials are taking to resolve problems involving illegal taxis and jet-ski rental operators, is September 1.

The chiefs of Phuket's three District Offices had until the end of this week to report to V/Gov Chamroen on the number of taxi ranks and taxis – legal or not – operating within their respective areas.

"Once this information has been reported to me, the Governor will sign an order giving illegal taxi drivers 15 days to register their vehicles with the Phuket Land Transportation Office [PLTO]," V/Gov Chamroen explained.

the problems with taxis in Phuket.

EPIDEMIC

An officer from the PLTO told the meeting that, according PLTO statistics, there were 111 taxi ranks and 1,221 registered taxis operating in Phuket.

However, Bang Tao Jet Ski Club President Anusorn Salae, who has operated legally registered taxis for years, said the actual number of drivers of "black taxis" (ordinary vehicles illegally used as taxis) in Phuket was closer to 10,000.

Mr Anusorn suggested that the authorities restrict the number taxis allowed to operate in Phuket and called for the police to set up checkpoints to catch illegal taxi drivers.

MIDDLE GROUND

However, Phuket Provincial Police Deputy Commander Sakchai Limcharoen pointed out that the problem was more complex than just arresting those found breaking the law.

"Last month police caught about 1,000 illegal taxi drivers, but local village heads called and asked us to stop the crackdown. They told us that the campaign was hurting villagers who earn their living by driving taxis, and the story took a serious turn. Also, the police faced 'some problems' with them," Col Sakchai said.

The recurring issue of crackdowns affecting people "just trying to make a living" is not new. This same point was placed squarely at the center of the debate at a dialogue between police and illegal taxi drivers in May.

At that meeting, Pom Sukkasem, "president" of a group of taxi drivers who operate out of Central Festival Phuket, said that ridding the island of an estimated 10,000 "black plate" taxi operators would affect thousands of families – up to about 50,000 people in total – who rely on that income. Recognizing that strict law



Anusorn Salae estimates there are about 10,000 taxi drivers currently operating illegally in Phuket. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

PRESSURE

"I have to report to Deputy Prime Minister Chalerm Yoobamrung at the beginning of September about the progress made in resolving problems with taxis and jet-skis in Phuket, as the government considers these to be serious issues," V/Gov Chamroen told the meeting.

"Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, the Minister of Interior, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the deputy national security minister are now all directly involved in resolving taxi and jet-ski problems in Phuket because the government has received so many complaints," he added.

V/Gov Chamroen cited as an example that British Ambassador to Thailand Asif Ahmad recently met with PM Yingluck to discuss

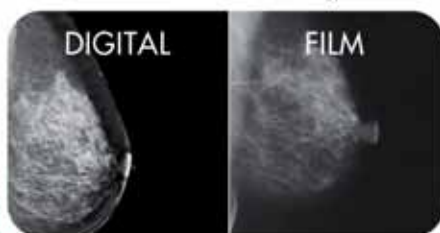
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looms for illegal taxis



Officers question an illegal taxi driver as he enters Phuket Airport during a crackdown. Photo: Gazette file

enforcement alone may not be enough to resolve the problems to the satisfaction of all parties involved, especially given the "need to earn a living" argument, the government is taking some steps to relieve tensions before they arise, V/Gov Chamroen added.

"The government plans to issue LPG and gasoline coupons to taxi drivers. Officials are now in the process of collecting information and the project is coming soon," he said.

STANDARD FARES

At the meeting last week, V/Gov Chamroen also ordered the PLTO to work with Phuket's three District Chiefs and relevant local organizations to come up with a list of agreed standard fares to be charged by all taxis in Phuket.

The list of standard fares will be posted on signs at all taxi ranks in the province.

"The list of fares must be

drawn up before the end of August," V/Gov Chamroen said.

He added that all taxi drivers should also be dressed in "polite" attire.

"The PLTO will set up three committees – one for each district: Thalang, Phuket City and Kathu – to follow up on progress in their areas," he said.

HOTLINE

V/Gov Chamroen also explained that he will launch a publicity campaign to raise awareness of the Thai-language only hotline at Tel: 1584, which was set up years ago by the Department of Land Transport specifically to receive complaints about taxi drivers.

"The hotline will be announced to the public through local media, on the radio and television channels and in newspapers," V/Gov Chamroen said.

Chayes Subtema, deputy chief of the hotline complaints office

in Bangkok, explained to the *Gazette* that the hotline, a nationwide initiative, was launched nine years ago.

"Although our hotline complaints center receives calls nationwide, we have three officers dedicated to receiving complaints specifically from Phuket."

Mr Chayes explained that his officers were in the process of installing an automated service that should be up and running by the end of this month.

"If our operators are busy, the system will automatically switch over to an answering service so callers can leave recorded messages of their complaints and officers can follow up later," he said.

Chutinan Jindacheua, one of the operators who receives complaints from Phuket, explained, "Most of the complaints from Phuket are about the manners of the drivers and passengers being overcharged. If a driver is found guilty of being rude or of over-



An illegal taxi discreetly displays its sign. Photo: Stephen Fein

charging a passenger, the fine is 500 baht per offense."

To file a complaint, the aggrieved passenger must give the taxi license number – if such a license is actually on display.

"We also need the name, contact address and phone number of the person making the complaint. No receipts are required to prove the fare paid," said Ms Chutinan.

However, she added that as the service is offered in Thai only, the center does not receive many complaints from Phuket.

Also, despite Phuket's heavy dependence on tourism and the high-level pressure to resolve ongoing problems with taxis, Mr Chayes added that his office had no plans of adding any foreign languages in the near future.

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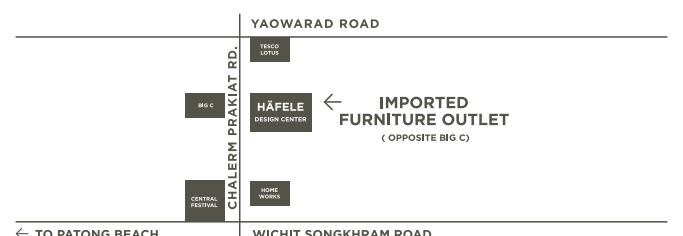
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Cpl Rachaporn (ID photo) was off-duty when the shooting incident occurred. Photo: Gazette file

Court date for killer cop looms

THE case against an off-duty police officer who shot a man dead in Phun Pol Soi 11 in Phuket Town on May 5 is now with the Provincial prosecutor.

The shooting occurred in the early hours of the morning, after Cpl Rachaporn Semaksorn and his brother Dechaporn had an argument with Ekkasit Sangam. The dispute ended with Cpl Rachaporn, who was not in uniform and off-duty at the time, shooting Mr Ekkasit in his left eye and escaping on motorbike. Mr Ekkasit died on arrival at hospital.

Cpl Rachaporn and his brother were arrested minutes later while riding along Wichit Songkram Road.

Phuket City Police Station Deputy Superintendent Jumroon Plaiduang told the *Gazette* on August 8 that the case file was sent to the prosecutor on July 24.

"After the report was dispatched, we were told to investigate other witnesses. Those witness statements were sent to the prosecutor on August 6," said Lt Col Jamroon.

The *Gazette* contacted Patong Police Deputy Superintendent Kittipong Klaikaew to ascertain if Cpl Rachaporn is still on his duty.

"He has to report to Patong Police Station daily and stay in the office, but he isn't responsible for any duties" Lt.Col Kittipong told the *Gazette*.

— *Orawin Narabal*

New humane prison for B1bn

By Atchaa Khamlo

JUSTICE Minister Pracha Promnok on August 2 reviewed plans to close the overcrowded 115-year-old Provincial Prison in Phuket Town and establish a 3,000-person capacity prison in Thalang.

Pol Gen Pracha announced details of the new prison, which is set to be established on 108 rai of government land near the Bang Jo detention center in Srisoonthorn, Thalang.

However, even without land costs, the budget for the new facility is expected to be about 1 billion baht.

"Phuket Provincial Prison is 115 years old, that's too old. A new prison is necessary," said Phuket Provincial Prison Chief Rapin Nihanon.

Chief Rapin explained that Phuket Prison was originally built to hold only a few hundred prisoners, but the facility currently has nearly 2,000 inmates in protective custody.

The Department of Corrections

Director-General Suchart Wongananchai echoed Chief Rapin's thoughts about Phuket Prison's current capacity, pointing out that with as many prisoners as the facility currently has, inmates are allowed only a very short amount of time to spend with visitors.

"The new prison will be up to international standards," said Col Suchart. "We have to accept that the governments of the world cannot allow one small jail dormitory to be occupied by 50 to 80 inmates, as it is a violation of basic human rights."

"A new prison is the only solution, as the old prison cannot be expanded anymore," he said.

Col Suchart explained that the plans for the new facility at Bang Jo had already been drawn up.

"Now, we are waiting for Justice Minister Pracha to review and approve the budget," he said.

During the meeting, Gen Pracha explained that he would like the new Phuket prison to be much like the prison on Koh Samui.



The plan to build a new prison has the backing of the Justice Minister. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo



At 115 years old the existing prison is too old and too small to contain the current number of inmates in humane conditions. Photo: Gazette file

"As Phuket is a tourism destination, it is important that our new prison is like Koh Samui Prison, which is now a tourist attraction, meets international standards and is a beautiful structure that is in harmony with the environment," he said.

Corrections Director-General Suchart also pointed out that Koh Samui Prison is located in a beautiful area on Samui and that a resort and spa was close by, allowing the products produced by the prisoners to become a tourist attraction.

Acknowledging the potential benefits, Gen Pracha said that officers from Phuket will be

instructed to visit Koh Samui Prison to observe the operations there.

At the meeting, Srisoonthorn Mayor Worawut Songyot introduced the idea of naming the prison something "softer and more interesting" than Phuket Provincial Prison.

Gen Pracha said the request would be considered by the Department of Corrections.

"We have come to an agreement about the project. However, to build a prison we must take into consideration the feelings of the local people," said Director-General Suchart.

Runaway inmate back behind bars

ESCAPED prisoner, 23-year-old Nantachai Poonluck is back in detention after only one day of freedom.

Mr Nantachai had been in Vachria Phuket Hospital for 10 days, where he was recovering from treatment to remove eye cataracts. The decision for him to remain under medical supervision to recover fully came about as the prison authorities deemed it untenable to return him to hospital for the hourly eye-drop treatment he required.

It was during a visit from his 14-year-old girlfriend on August 4 that he absconded from the hospital. When his two prison guardians returned from having dinner, they were informed by a hospital security guard that Mr Nantachai had been driven away on a motorbike by a friend.

Provincial Prison Chief Rapin Nihanon immediately organized a search of the local area, but it failed to recapture Mr Nantachai.

"We contacted his mother in Krabi. She told us he had not turned up at home and suspected that he may still be with his girlfriend."

"I told her that if she brought her son back to prison we would take



Fearing that Mr Nantachai would go blind, Chief Rapin allowed him to remain in hospital until completely recovered.

no action against him. She promised to do what she could," said Chief Rapin.

Chief Rapin also spoke with the mother of Mr Nantachai's girlfriend in Phatthalung province. She told the chief that she was happy to help as she didn't want her daughter associating with him.

Acting on information prison officers, assisted by Phuket Police, on evening of August 5 raided a residence in Koh Sirey. Unfortunately Mr Nantachai got the drop on them, escaped through a back window and ran off into the dark.

Initially his girlfriend was taken in for questioning, but later released. What she didn't know was that the authorities were following her movements; knowing that love cannot be separated for very long. And sure enough, the pair arranged to meet.

Only this time the police were waiting and they got their man.

Mr Nantachai is now waiting to be sentenced by Phuket Provincial Court for his original crime, possession of .5gram of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine), and escaping from custody.

— *Chutharat Plerin*

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Unidentified body found floating in lake

POLICE are attempting to identify the body of a man found floating in an old tin mine lagoon in Chalong on August 1.

Phuket Ruamjai Foundation rescue workers along with officers from Chalong Police arrived to find a large crowd of people gathered at the scene on Luang Por Chuang Road.

Pol Lt Col Boonlert Onklang said the man appeared to be between 35 and 40 years old, about 165 to 170 centimeters tall, bald and had a tattoo of a swan on his left upper arm.



The unidentified body is believed to be that of a migrant worker.

Police believe the man died five to seven days before he was found by local resident Waree Saetiern.

"I was fishing at the lagoon

when I saw something floating in the middle of the water. I looked carefully and then realized it was a dead body. I was terrified and called other villagers to see. Then I reported it to the police," said Ms Waree.

Police officers at the scene found no evidence that enabled them to identify the body.

"I think the body is that of a migrant who worked in the area. He may have come to the lagoon to fish and accidentally fell into the water and drowned

— *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Customs seize B100mn DIY drug kit

Indian man arriving with 10kg of 'meth primer' tries but fails to escape airport



As Mr Katchi's satchels seemed unusually heavy, the Customs officers on duty decided to take a closer look.



Hidden inside the 20 document satchels they found the sealed bags of ephedrine.



Despite trying to run away while still in the airport, Mr Katchi ended up reunited with his possessions.

CUSTOMS officials at Phuket International Airport on August 5 arrested a man trying to smuggle 10 kilograms of packed ephedrine into the country, which they said could have produced up to 100 million baht of methamphetamine.

At a press conference at Phuket Airport the following day, Customs Bureau Region 4 director Prayut Maneechote presented the suspect, named as 31-year-old Indian national Katchi Mohamed Buhari Ahmed.

"Mr Katchi arrived from Delhi on Thai Airways then transited at Suvarnabhumi Airport to Phuket on board the same aircraft. He arrived here at 9pm," Mr Prayut explained.

While Mr Katchi was passing through Customs, an officer found his two items of luggage overly heavily for what they seemed to be containing, which was 20 document satchels, among other items.

The officer opened the bags and then checked the satchels to find the ephedrine concealed inside the satchels' linings, Mr Prayut explained.

"The ephedrine was in 20 sealed packs each weighing 500 grams, hidden in the document satchels. The suspect tried to run away, but officers chased and apprehended him," Mr Prayut said.

The ephedrine seized would have been able to produce

up to 500,000 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills with a street value of more than 100 million baht, he added.

Mr Katchi has been charged with illegally importing and possessing a Category 2 narcotic with intent to sell more than is permitted by law, which is an offense under the Psychotropic Substances Act 2518 (1975), Mr Prayut explained.

"The suspect has been transferred to Tah Chat Chai Police Station for further questioning. He had entered and departed Thailand via Suvarnabhumi Airport several times, but this was his first time to Phuket," he added.

— Kraitsada Mueanhawong

Police Sgt arrested for drug possession

PHUKET Police arrested a fellow policeman on August 4 just hours after he was named by another drug suspect for involvement in the sale and distribution of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine).

Phuket City Police Deputy Superintendent Jamroon Plaiduang told the *Gazette* that officers arrested Sen Sgt Maj Kumthorn La-orsuwan, 40, after drug suspect Mana Jindamanee, 37, named the officer as his supplier.

Mr Mana was arrested at 5am last Saturday at an apartment in the Phun Phol area of Phuket Town. He was charged after being found in possession of four grams of *ya ice* and 20 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills, explained Col Jamroon.

After questioning Mr Mana, police returned to the apartment block at 11am and arrested Sen

Sgt Maj Kumthorn. He was in the room next door to where Mr Mana was arrested earlier, he added.

Sen Sgt Maj Kumthorn was charged with possession of two unregistered handguns and 1.29 grams of *ya ice*, Col Jamroon told the *Gazette*.

"Sen Sgt Maj Kumthorn denied the allegation that he sold drugs to Mr Mana. He also declined to offer any further information, including which police station he is stationed at," he said.

Col Jamroon declined to confirm if Sen Sgt Maj Kumthorn remains on active duty or whether he had been released on bail.

He also did not disclose whether or not any special measures had been taken to ensure Mr Mana's safety.

Although Mr Mana was presented to members of the press



Mr Mana (seated) was presented to the press. Sen Sgt Maj Kumthorn exercised his right not to attend. Photo: Orawin Narabal

at Phuket City Police Station, the current whereabouts of Sen Sgt Maj Kumthorn was not disclosed.

Phuket City Police Superintendent Sermphan Sirikhong explained that Sen Sgt Maj Kumthorn, who was at the police station earlier that morning, was "exercising his right" not to appear in public.

— Orawin Narabal



Two illegal hand guns taken from Sgt Maj Kumthorn's apartment.

For the honor of HM The Queen



IN HONOR of HM Queen Sirikit's 80th birthday, Bangla boxing ring will host three female bouts during the World Muaythai Council Championships on August 12.

The 118 lbs contest; Sunantha Muaythai Rawai (Findland) vs Tanyakorn Sor Tammajak (Thailand). The 153 lbs contest; Nong Nan Jor Nguan Gym (Thailand) vs Clair Tiger Muaythai (Luxembourg). The 112 lbs contest; Kwanjai Pabaijaturat (Thailand) vs Teresa Sinbee Muaythai (Sweden).

— Kraitsada Mueanhawong

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Boy, 14, dies in Chao Fa Road motorbike crash

A 14-year-old boy from Nakhon Ratchasima died on the afternoon of August 3 after crashing his motorbike into a large truck parked by the side of Chao Fa West Road in Chalong.

At the scene in front of the Land & Houses residential estate, police and Phuket Ruamjai Rescue Foundation workers found the body of Setthawut Nimmual beneath the back of an 18-wheel Isuzu tractor-trailer rig. His wrecked Yamaha motorbike lay next to him.

Witnesses said they saw the driver of the rig park by the side of the road and go to a roadside sala (pavilion). Sometime after that, the motorbike driven at high speed by the young Mr Setthawut crashed into the back of the trailer.

Police suppose that the boy was not concentrating on the road ahead and didn't see the parked truck until it was too late.

No crash helmet was found at the scene. Rescue workers said Mr Setthawat died of massive head trauma.

— *Orawin Narabal*

Customs seize B8mn of smuggled fuel in Krabi

PHUKET Customs officials on August 6 announced the seizure of what they claim is 8 million baht of smuggled fuel.

Customs and navy officers seized the "black oil" in a late night-raid on August 3 as it was being pumped from a wooden ship converted into a fuel tanker to a fuel transport truck waiting on shore in Krabi.

Two crew members of the boat, docked at the Baan Bor Muang Pier in Khlong Thom District, as well as the driver of the fuel transport truck were arrested in the raid.

After they were unable to produce a manifest for the shipment or other necessary documents, the three men were taken into custody.

A total of 30,000 liters of fuel were seized along with the tanker and transport truck.

The suspects said they were hired by a "Thai investor" to bring the shipment ashore.

— *Chutharat Plerin*



Royal Thai Navy Third Area Command Assistant Chief of Staff Capt Natapol Malarat (front, in tan-colored uniform) explains how the oil was transported in the hold of the converted fishing boat. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

Sick dolphin receiving care at marine rescue center

Kritsada Meuanhawong

THE veterinarians at the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) say that a striped dolphin that washed ashore in Phang Nga last month is in a stable condition at their facility, but fear for its long-term survival due to its inability to feed on its own.

Dr Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong told the *Gazette* that the dolphin, which washed ashore at Tai Muang District on July 30, was transported to the PMBC Endangered Species Unit the next day.

Antibiotics administered to treat wounds to the animal's rear flippers and tail have worked well, but the dolphin continues to suffer from dangerously high levels of

urea in her muscle tissue, making it impossible for her to swim unaided.

For this reason the dolphin needs round-the-clock treatment and has been fitted to a sling to prevent her from drowning.

While describing the animal's condition as stable, Dr Kongkiat said it had yet to feed on fish and squid offered to it and hence needed to be force-fed through a tube. The dolphin is also suffering from considerable stress due to captivity.

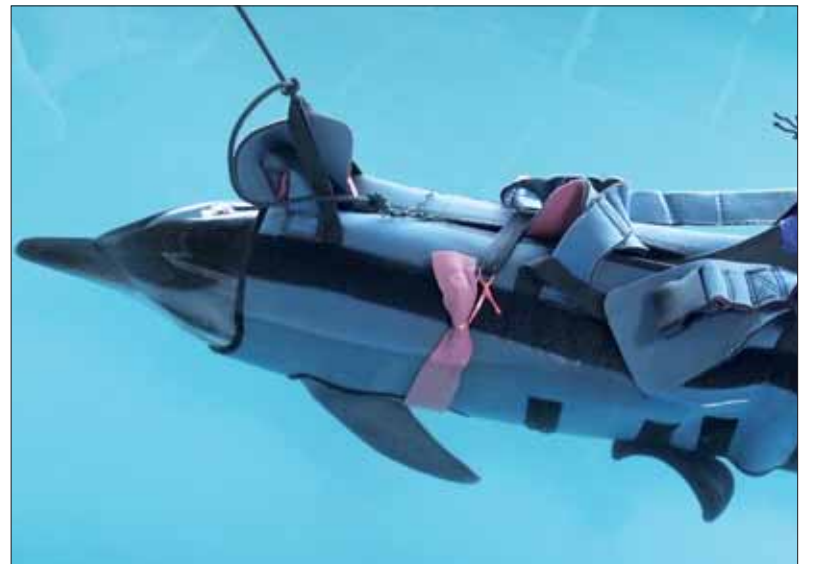
The staff hope the dolphin will soon begin to feed on its own, as this would be a big step towards recovery. Otherwise it risks starvation as force-feeding is insufficient to meet its energy



Staff are providing 24hr care for the striped dolphin. Photo: Kritsada Meuanhawong

requirements, he said.

The dolphin is suffering from a systematic bacterial infection, not a viral infection, he explained.



Researchers at the Phuket Marine Biological Center say the dolphin needs the support of a sling to keep it from drowning. Photo: Kritsada Meuanhawong

Ghostly visit leads man to mom's body

A MAN in Ayutthaya claims he discovered the gruesome body of his own recently murdered mother after her ghost came back to tell him what had happened to her.

Mrs Sukkhapha (full name was not reported) was discovered in a field on July 31. She had been sexually mutilated.

Mrs Sukkhapha's remains were found in a state of advanced decomposition around 300 meters from the road in Ayutthaya's Nakhon Luang District.

Mrs Sukkhapha's son Chaiyo, 27, tearfully told a reporter he worked as a construction contractor and lived with his wife and mother.

His mother went back and forth between their house and that of Mr Dam, her new husband, Mr Chaiyo explained.



He alleged that Mr Dam drank heavily and beat his mother often.

Mr Chaiyo said he had tried to persuade his mother to leave Mr Dam, but she refused.

Before she died, Mrs Sukkhapha told her son that she was going to Bangkok to help with a wedding. That was the last he saw of her.

Mr Chaiyo tried to find out where she was, but none of her friends had seen her.

When he went to Mr Dam's house, the place was locked and

no one was home. He assumed his mother had gone somewhere with her husband.

"In the middle of the night, I saw the black shadow of a woman standing next to one of the house pillars," Mr Chaiyo said.

"It was like she had come to say something, but couldn't speak. I thought something bad must have certainly happened to my mother."

Mr Chaiyo said the next morning he went looking for his mother, finding her body in the field.

"I think Mr Dam did it for sure," he said.

Police confirmed that Mr Dam has since disappeared with his two children. Before he left, he sold his cellphone to a neighbor.

Police are continuing their search for Mr Dam.

— *Sanook News*

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Thailand's Buddhist Monks take up alms over obesity

HEALTH officials are preparing a food education program to help overweight monks lose weight following a study that showed that almost half of Thailand's monks are obese and that 40 per cent suffer from lifestyle diseases, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

Public health officials will also prepare guidelines on what kind of food should be donated to monks in order to

help them stay healthy.

A study by The Thai Health Promotion Foundation (Thai Health), Chulalongkorn University and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University suggested that sweet, oily snacks given to monks by the faithful were partly responsible for their health issues.

Monks also tended to consume fattening, sugary drinks during the evenings when they abstain from eating, which could be

compounding the issue.

The study of 246 monks in 11 provinces found that 45 per cent were either obese or morbidly obese, while 40 per cent had diseases like Type 2 Diabetes and high blood pressure.

The study also revealed that the only exercise most of them took part in was sweeping their monasteries and their daily alms-collecting round.



Monk collecting alms. Photo: Gazette file

Deep South violence escalates

AROUND THE nation

THE Government's handling of the insurgency in the Deep South has come under fire after a surge in increasingly brazen attacks have shaken the public.

A chilling video of an insurgent operation that killed four soldiers was captured on CCTV, shedding new light on the capabilities of the Southern terrorists and putting the Yingluck Shinawatra administration on the defensive.

The CCTV captures an attack in broad daylight on July 27.

The video shows two pickup trucks drawing level with two pairs of soldiers on motorbikes. Men in the back of the trucks then open fire and gun down the four soldiers. At the same time, another pickup truck flanks a third motorbike and keeps the two remaining soldiers at bay with sporadic gunfire.

About 15 insurgents involved in the operation then steal the victims' weapons and flee the scene.

The release of the footage was



Members of bomb squad units inspect damage caused by the explosion of a bomb planted by suspected separatist militants on a roadside in Narathiwat on August 5, 2012. Photo: Madaree Tohlala

followed by the bombing of the CS Pattani Hotel later that week.

The CS Pattani Hotel, a popular establishment with visitors to the region, was rocked by a car bomb

that killed two and injured 15.

Half of the town of Pattani was plunged into darkness for several hours after the explosion destroyed a transformer nearby.

The bombing was billed as a response to massive sweeping operations and shakedowns in remote villages that resulted from hundreds of "vulnerable" young men being

placed on the military's watch list.

Members of the Patani United Liberation Organization (PULO) said the spike in attacks was intended to remind the Thai government of the deaths of the more than 80 unarmed Malay Muslims in Tak Bai, in Narathiwat province, eight years ago.

Kasturi Mahkota, president of one of the PULO factions, slammed the government for downplaying the capacity of the militants and for trying to discredit them.

"[The insurgents] are seeking the recognition from the Thai side that they are insurgents, combatants and liberators rather than bandits or 'sparrow bandits' and not a drug-trafficking group," Kasturi told *The Nation*.

The authorities have issued a warning in Songkhla for three stolen vehicles, which they suspect may be used for car bombings: a black Mitsubishi pickup truck, a black Mitsubishi sedan and a silver bronze Isuzu pickup.

It was believed that the insurgents may plan more violent attacks as Ramadan comes to a close.

The spike in violence has also led the government to consider imposing a curfew across the region, a move that would prove highly controversial if implemented.

Man flees to Myanmar to dodge pedophile charges

A 93-YEAR-OLD Australian citizen was arrested in Myanmar and deported to Thailand after allegedly fleeing to Karen State to escape prosecution on pedophilia charges.

Karl Joseph Kraus was originally arrested in 2010 for allegedly abusing four sisters aged seven to 14 in Chiang Mai.

Parents of the girls accused him of using sweets and money to lure the girls to his home, then raping and molesting them over a two-year period.

More than 100 images of child pornography were allegedly found at his home.

Last week, Kraus was arrested in Pa'an, the capital of Karen State of Myanmar, after police discovered he had entered the country illegally.

The Myanmar authorities sent him back over the border, into the custody of the Thai Police.



Karl Kraus pleaded with police to return to Burma. Photo: The Nation

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that Kraus pleaded to be sent back to Myanmar, where he had been staying for around one month.

"Where am I? Take me back to Burma [Myanmar]. I want to go. You are illegal. My embassy should be here," he is reported to have pleaded with police.

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Football hooligans score own goal

THE recent threat of violence against Phuket FC fans who made the journey to Krabi Provincial Stadium (see page 47) should serve as a wake-up call to the Thai Premier League (TPL) Co Ltd to ensure that better security measures are in place for future matches in Krabi, especially those involving southern rivals.

The TPL leagues have been an undisputed boon to Thai football since its inception in 2009, giving Thai players a great new opportunity to develop their talents against professional players from abroad – rather than having to market their own services on foreign soil.

Also benefiting have been fans, who for the first time have a real chance to express provincial pride by cheering on their home teams – rather than having to glom onto some foreign team based seven time zones away, or worse, artificially fueling their excitement through gambling.

Here in Phuket, the local team has also given many expats a chance to meet and socialize with natives – not so easy on an island where migrants outnumber the born-and-bred. In addition, the matches also help attract domestic tourists throughout the year, including during the low season when occupancy rates are low.

Sadly, Phuket FC's promotion to Division One was accompanied by a rise in loutish behavior at Surakul Stadium – most notably the blockade of referees from leaving the stadium following a disappointing loss last season.

Fortunately, the situation has improved considerably, thanks in large part to the TPL's issuance of fines. Hopefully, the Krabi FC management will take steps to prevent a repeat of last weekend's debacle; they will have every incentive to after a 60,000-baht fine and a complete ban on any fans attending their next home match.

It remains a mystery why "the beautiful game" seems to produce so much ugly fan behavior. Notwithstanding, it has to be the responsibility of each club's management to organize sufficient security at matches – including for supporters of visiting sides.

TPL club owners should study the well-documented steps taken by their circa-1980 counterparts in the UK, who were successful in stamping out a rash of violent behavior at matches there in that era.

Thanks to the political climate in recent years, Thailand has perhaps already eclipsed South Korea as the country most often associated with mob action and street riots. The last thing we need now, as we enter what appears to be a period of relative political stability, is to create a new outlet for this type of behavior.

Whether it be politics or sports, much of Thai society still has a long way to go in learning to respect the rules of the game – and accepting the results gracefully.



Knowing what to ask for

Re: Gazette online, Koh Lanta community 'powerless' for two decades, July 15

Maybe the villagers are asking for the wrong thing.

Clearly no-one could economically justify running a grid supply over a long distance for such a small load. Not only would the capital costs be high, maintenance would be a nightmare.

So an off-grid supply looks the obvious way to go. That would not be a profitable solution for the electricity company, since a diesel generator is a relatively expensive way to provide electricity, but the absolute cost to the company would be very small compared to a grid solution. If there is an implicit or explicit expectation of the company to electrify all households, it would be a cheap solution.

If, say, the villagers have an average 6kw household demand, based on the sort of uses they are discussing, then they need a 120kw generator. That would not cost much. They could also go for a more eco-friendly solution, but that would probably cost more. Then they need to collect payments from each villager for consumption and cover their fuel costs, maintenance and depreciation costs.

Howard Digby-johns
Phuket

Making us look bad

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Violence: Another tourist severely beaten by taxi drivers, August 3

Having just enjoyed two wonderful weeks in and around Patong, the only times I observed unsocial behavior in public was from my fellow Australian tourists, both male and female.

If this very small minority cannot control themselves, or "respect" the privilege of being a "guest" in a foreign country, then

Letters to the Editor

please stay home and behave like loutish bogans [low-lifes] down at the local pub instead of travelling to Thailand and giving Aussies a bad reputation.

Wiggum
Gazette forum

Defending Microsoft

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Live Wire: How Windows 8 will roll out, July 31

I wish tech pundits would stop talking about Apple as if it were that special. My UltraBook has been on the market for about six months. It cost half of what a MacBook Air does and it's twice as powerful. It's no Apple "wannabe".

My wife has an iPad. The email and photo apps are a complete mystery to both of us, and it was not cheap by any standard. Roll on Windows 8. Let's see some real functionality in a tablet.

Captain Jack
Gazette forum

Here's to what is believable

Re: Gazette online, Krabi drug rehab student drowned in escape, says friend, July 31

I worked as a volunteer English teacher at this school briefly in early 2011. The number of students (about 200) at the school was considerably smaller back then. I also taught at an adjacent government school (Banklongkam School) for three months.

I keep in regular contact with some Thai staff still working at the nearby government school and from what they tell me it seems the initial report [student beaten to

death by teaching assistant] described in the Gazette was more accurate than the current version of events.

Whatever the case, I hope they sort it out. During my time there, on the surface, the school seemed like quite a well run and effective operation. Although, if the reported number of current students (1,000) is accurate then I could understand why there may have been problems.

Keep up the good work Gazette!
Dave Armstrong
Krabi Town

Seriously, get your priorities straight

Re: Gazette online, Charity rally to support Phuket Stray Dog Shelter, August 4

Once again, we are asked by well meaning, but misguided people to contribute to a hopeless cause. Probably five per cent of the world's dog population plays a useful role, while the majority make life a misery for everyone with their constant barking and droppings.

I'm sure the millions of people in refugee camps around the world would really appreciate a can of dog food and some shampoo and medicine. Lets get our priorities right!

Sitka
Gazette forum

Uncage drug dog

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Customs nab Indian man with B100mn of 'meth primer', August 6

Maybe the police should consider bringing Bebe [Phuket's drug dog] out of retirement, rather than relying on pure luck. I wonder how many times he, and others, have brought in smaller consignments undetected.

Agogohome
Gazette forum

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Patong 'Safety Zone' expectations soaring

FIRST PERSON

I WAS very happy when I first heard about the Patong Safety Zone project. I always thought we needed something like this; the project really should have been launched a long time ago.

Patong is the most popular tourist destination on Phuket, and one of the most important factors in increasing its popularity is safety.

When I travel to another country, for example Hong Kong, I don't know the area that well. I also don't know what the people are like there. But I felt safe walking everywhere at night, because there was a CCTV camera installed on every corner of the city.

When compared with other popular tourist destinations, Patong is still lacking necessary safety measures.

The best part of the Safety Zone project is the increase in the number of CCTV cameras. Already all hotels that are members of the Patong Hotel Association have installed CCTV cameras as part of the project. But I still think police need to do more.

Though CCTV cameras are useful when collecting evidence for a case, they don't really prevent crimes in the same way that police on patrol can.

Simply put, Patong needs more officers on night patrol.

During the day, lifeguards are on duty to ensure tourists' safety, but at night no one is securing the



Sommai Kitcharoenpun, 54, is the Patong Hotel Association Secretary and a Phuket native. A graduate in hotel management studies, he has 37 years of work experience in the hospitality industry. In addition to serving as secretary of the Patong Hotel Association, he is also a human resource manager for a hotel in Patong. Here he explains his optimism about the Patong Safety Zone project.

beachfront area. Lots of tourists love to walk along the beach at night, and some of them get robbed. Patong needs to put officers on a beachfront night patrol.

Once the project proves to be a success in Patong, I think the Safety Zone project should be launched for the whole province.

When tourists say they are coming here for a holiday, they don't say they are going to Patong, they say they are going to Phuket. Therefore, it is necessary to make every single corner of the island as safe as possible.

The government should provide the funding to increase safety in Phuket. However, I believe local people wouldn't mind helping in order to make their homes more secure. I told all the members of the Phuket Hotel Association that if the local administration doesn't have the budget to help us, we should help ourselves. We could do this for the whole community, because

when the community becomes a safer place, we all benefit from it.

Though there have been several tragic cases in the news in recent months, it hasn't affected the number of tourists coming to Patong. However, the safety and security that we seem to lack can psychologically affect people. The effect may not be seen today, but perhaps in the future fewer people would choose to travel here.

I see the Patong Safety Zone as a new hope for us. I really do hope the project will be successful and that everyone in Phuket, will benefit from it.

I truly admire Phuket Provincial Police Commander Chonasi Wattanavrangkul's idea for making Patong a safe place. When I had the opportunity to talk with him I asked if the Patong Safety Zone was going to be a permanent project or just temporary. He told me that once the system is developed, it will be here forever.



A motorbike and truck are left 'in situ' until police arrive. Photo: Gazette file

Chief concern after motorbike mashup

Island View

By Chris Hudon

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

IF you plan on driving in Phuket for any length of time, the likelihood that you will be involved in a road accident is great.

I tell you this, because I just bought a used car. Can you guess why? Yep, I was in a motorbike crash. It happened during the heavy rains last month.

I'd been inside all day and went out to get some noodles for dinner. A woman was stopped in the middle of the road in Phuket Town and none of her bike's lights worked. By the time I saw her I came to the heavy realization that nothing could be done.

I laid the bike down on the pavement and skidded into her, in order to avoid more serious injuries. Fortunately, I wasn't going very fast.

Nonetheless, I don't remember the collision, only right after, as we lay in the middle of the street in the pouring rain – she was making a low, steady groan.

I shook myself, stood up and asked the woman in Thai how badly she was hurt. She replied that she was in pain, but generally okay.

Now, people in Phuket don't care that you were just in an acci-

dent. They are mainly thinking – "go" – and several cars nearly hit us as we lay in the street.

As a Westerner, my first reaction was to move both the people and bikes to safety (once we knew there were no spinal injuries).

But I found myself arguing with a crowd of Thais who were insistent that nothing be moved. I relented at first, until, as time went on, the situation became more and more dangerous and I just moved everything, despite the crowd's wishes.

I later learned that the only reason for this unnecessary scene was insurance. In Thailand, no accident is allowed to be moved until photographed for insurance purposes.

Then everyone points a finger at the other person, as if anyone here obeys any kind of traffic laws.

My point: was insurance really our chief concern in this situation?

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

Rawai drivers not seeing red on Wiset Road

At night the new signal at the junction of Wiset Road [the road from Chalong Circle to Rawai Beach] and Sai Yuan Road in Rawai is switched to flashing red and yellow.

Southbound traffic on Wiset Road gets a flashing yellow. Southbound traffic turning right onto Sai Yuan has a separate signal from that of the traffic carrying on straight towards Rawai, which is also flashing yellow. The traffic going northbound on Wichit is given a flashing red light, as is the traffic coming off of Sai Yuan Road.

The problem is that 99 per cent of the northbound traffic on the main road, Wiset Road, which faces a red flashing light (red flashing light means stop, then proceed when safe) doesn't stop or even yield to southbound traffic turning right onto Sai Yuan even though that traffic faces a yellow flashing light, and hence has the right-of-way.

Much of this northbound traffic is travelling at a high speed and doesn't even slow down for the



A red flashing light means stop. Photo: Johannes Jander

red flashing light.

The few vehicles that do stop at the flashing red light run the risk of getting rear-ended. This creates a very dangerous situation, especially for drivers unfamiliar with the intersection or people driving habits, due to Phuket being a tourist island.

Is it possible to get the lights flashing in a more logical way?

Wiset Road should be flashing yellow in both directions, and southbound vehicles wanting to turn onto Sai Yuan should face a red flashing arrow.

If Phuket wants to be an international tourist destination and cut down on its high road accident and death rates, its road designs need to conform to international standards.

Phuket Provincial Highways Office Chief Samak Luedwonghad replies:

Thank you for the useful information. I will have our officers inspect the junction and integrate the information you have provided with our road safety plan.

I will then discuss the matter with other relevant authorities and have it fixed as soon as possible.

We are currently working on updating road-use information to make the roads under our responsibility safer for drivers.

In coordination with other authorities, we plan to survey Wiset Road in order to identify the "black spots" that need rectifying to improve safety.

The lights will probably not be fixed this fiscal year, but we will get to them as soon as we can.

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

Can I help with my family's business?

I have heard random bits and pieces about a work permit for working in a family business, and would like to find out the truth about it. Does it exist?

My Thai husband's business is getting busier, which is a good thing, but it is now getting difficult for him to run it alone. The obvious thing would be for me to help out, since I'm his wife and would not need a salary, as I'd be living off my husband's income. Is this possible, or are we forced to hire local staff?

**Tinkerbelle
Phuket**

Chief of Alien Working Control Division, Phuket Provincial Employment Office, Jiraphan Suk-whan replies:

There is no such thing as a family business work permit.

There are only three types of work permits: a permit valid to work for a period not exceeding three months; a permit valid for three to six months; and a permit valid for six months to one year.

You can help your husband with his business, however, according to the Foreign Workers Employment Act BE 2551, if you assist in a trade or occupation which is carried out for profit, whether or not you receive pay or reward for that employment, you are required to have a work permit.

When you fill in the work permit application form, you can specify your position as management, and stating that you will not receive compensation.

Contact us at our office at 076-219 6601 to check what documents you need to submit for consideration for a work permit application.

Thailand to reel in its rice reins

Commodity Exports

DESPITE a recent prediction by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) that India and Vietnam would replace Thailand as the world's top rice exporter in 2012, the Commerce Ministry (MoC) insists that the Kingdom will maintain its world rice reins – but not necessarily in terms of quantity.

The USDA prediction, concurred with by the head of the Business and Economics Forecasting Center at the Thai Chamber of Commerce, as reported in the *Gazette* last week, follows a rocky first six months of the year for Thai trade, highlighted by a 360 billion baht deficit.

Permanent Secretary for Commerce Yanyong Phuangrach affirmed that the reason why rice exports dropped during this period is related to the government's strategy to keep rice prices high.

"We are pushing for higher prices as our policy now is to focus on the sale and export of quality rice," he reiterated.

Meanwhile, exporters in Vietnam and India have dropped their prices to be more competitive.

According figures from the Thai Rice Exporters Association figures, as reported by government news agency MCOT, Thai rice exports in the first six months of this year dropped to 3.45 million tonnes, a 45% decline from a year earlier.

These exports were valued at 71.4bn baht, compared to 107.6bn baht in the same period a previous year.

In this year's first half, India was the top rice exporter with the exported volume of 3.61 million tonnes, followed by Vietnam with 3.52 tonnes.

Korbsook Iamsuri, President of the Thai Rice Exporters Association projected that Thailand will export about 3.05 million tonnes of rice, worth 50bn baht, in the second half of the year.

This would bring the country's total to about 6.5mn tonnes, compared to the India and Vietnam, which are projected to export 8mn and 7mn tonnes, respectively.

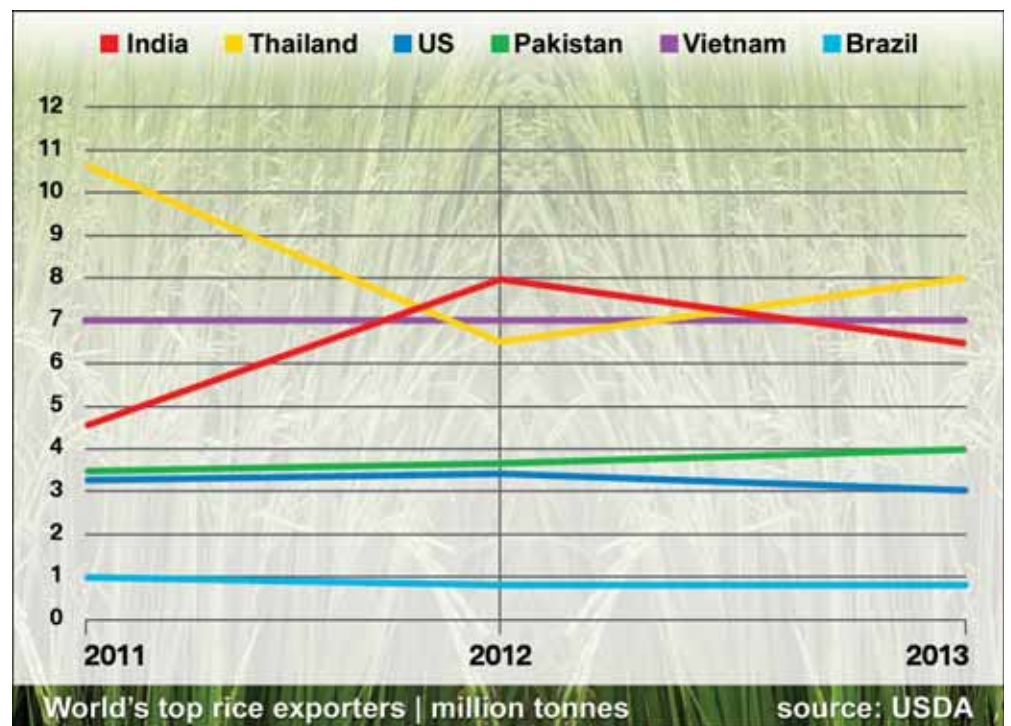
As for factors negatively affecting Thai rice exports, Ms Korbsook referred to hefty stockpiles in India, as well as the weakening of the rupee and falling demand for imported rice in Indonesia and the Philippines.

The lower demand from these two countries resulted in fierce price competition between Vietnam and India, Ms Korbsook said, explaining that Vietnam had sharply cut its prices, affecting prices in the global market.

Despite these projections and figures, Secretary Yanyong insisted that Thailand is still poised to be the world leader.

"Last year we exported 10.6bn tonnes compared to Vietnam, which exported 6bn tonnes. Our aim from here on is to export more quality rice that gets a good price, not just a high quantity. I'm confident that Thailand will remain the rice exporting champs by year's end," the secretary said.

Mr Yanyong noted that Thailand has sat in the world rice exporting throne for 30 consecutive years.



AT YOUR SERVICE: ABS-Relocations General Manager Pinrapee Pinsuk sits at her desk at the newly opened Phuket office. The firm's center of operations is in Eastern Bangkok.

He pointed out that under the current rice pledging scheme, the price of raw rice paddy has risen from 8,000 – 9,000 baht per tonne to 11,000 baht per tonne, while export quality rice rose from US\$400-500 (12,600 to 13,800 baht) up to \$600 (18,900 baht).

Meanwhile, the secretary also told speculators not to be too concerned about Thailand's bulging, 360 billion baht trade deficit during the first six months of the year.

"When there is stability in the private sector, investors need to expand their operations and investments, and thus need to import raw materials, machinery and equipment. These imports were not luxury items or ready made products, but will be turned into exports. It will take about four months to realize these investments," he explained.

– MCOT / Phuket Gazette

Inflation grew steadily in July

THAILAND'S Consumer Price Index (CPI) in July stood at 115.82 points, representing a 2.73% increase year-on-year.

According to the Commerce Ministry, as reported by government news agency, MCOT, the rate of increase was lower than earlier predicted, due to easing inflationary pressure, and lower global oil and consumer prices.

When compared to the previous month, the inflation rate increased by 0.35%, Permanent Secretary for Commerce Yanyong Phuangrach announced last week, adding that the national CPI in the first seven months of this year accelerated by 2.92% from a year earlier.

Inflation in July, which was below 3%, reflected the country's satisfactory stability overall, the economic outlook in line with the ministry's continuing policy to help reduce the cost of living, shrinking

global energy prices and the government's scheme to assist low-income earners.

Food and beverages prices alone increased 5.42%.

Meanwhile, the core CPI in July stood at 108.34, up 1.87% year-on-year and up 0.03% from June.

Despite the low inflation rate in July, the country's inflation in the 2012 fourth quarter was forecast to stay between 3.1-3.2%, Mr Yanyong said.

As a result, annual inflation is likely to rise within the range of 3.3-3.8% as previously projected.

The risk factors impacting the CPI were the global economy, natural disasters and the fluctuation of global crude oil prices, currency exchange rates and interest rates. These factors will affect the production cost and the public's living expenses, Mr Yanyong said. – MCOT



BREAKING IT DOWN: Retail businesses dominated new web sites registered under the TBGO program on both a national and regional (right) scale.



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VAT to remain at 7% for two more years

The Cabinet last week resolved to maintain the 7% Value Added Tax (VAT) rate for another two years, until September 30, 2014, citing fragile economic conditions as a result of last year's floods.

From October 1, 2014, a VAT rate of 10% will be applied.

The Finance Ministry reasoned that the tax rate should be maintained for another two years, given the enormous impacts the flood disaster had on the economy. Gross domestic product in 2011 registered growth of

only 0.1%, against 7.8% in the previous year. Keeping VAT at 7% would spur purchasing power, to allow the normalization of consumption and investment and stabilization of the economy.

"The extension of the 7% tax rate will spur purchasing power, private consumption and private investment, which are key factors in economic recovery," said Finance Minister Kittiratt Na-Ranong.

Thanit Sorat, vice chairman of the Federation of the Thai Industries (FTI), said keeping the 7%

rate for another two years was a good strategy to promote the domestic economy amid global economic uncertainty.

However, he expressed some concerns on the government's ability to earn more revenue, as it plans to spend huge amounts on many projects. An increase in VAT is one method to earn more revenue. Thanit said the government should clearly draw up a plan to earn revenue to increase fiscal stability.

– The Nation

Corporate, Personal midyear tax filing deadline approaches

Companies and individuals who generated income in Thailand during the first six months of 2012 – regardless of where or how payments were made – have until August 31 to file their midyear tax return.

Tax Tips

By Steven Layne

IN THIS first article, we will go over the basics of regulations and procedures for filing and paying income tax in Thailand. Next week, we will cover withholding tax certificates and rate calculations.

When it comes to taxes, many prefer to let a trusted partner or certified accountant on the payroll take care of everything. In this case, it is important that the person who is filing on your behalf be aware of all your traceable income sources.

This will ensure that they calculate and withhold the correct amount of tax, otherwise you may find yourself with an unexpected bill, of which you, and only you, will be liable.

Individuals need to file the mid-year personal income tax prepayment form PND-94. Likewise, companies need to file the corporate income tax prepay-

ment form PND-51.

Following are some simple explanations and basic advice.

PERSONAL INCOME TAX (PIT)

Anybody who has generated income in Thailand between January 1 and June 30, 2012, is required to disclose the gross and net values of such income when filing the PND-94 form, which is due 60 days after the first six months of the year: August 31.

The purpose of the form is to calculate, pay and/or verify payment of half of one's expected full-year tax liability. This is induced from what one made in the first six months.

If your income was subject to withholding tax, the respective tax-paid certificates (there are six in total depending on type of income) can be used as credit against projected liability.

Corporate Income Tax (CIT)

Thai companies – limited liability, partnerships or any other juristic entities – are required to pay

CIT on all their net profits, globally.

Foreign companies that conduct business within Thai borders, such as those with a subsidiary company or branch office in Thailand, or any other entity that sourced income from Thailand, which was in access regardless of where or how the income is disposed, are also subject to pay CIT.

Like individuals, companies are required to disclose their current and projected income, midyear, by filing the PND-51 form, also due by August 31.

Similar to the PND-94 for PIT, the purpose of the PND-51 form is to calculate and declare your company's expected annual net profits, by deducting all allowances and expenses from a company's (expected) gross income.

Calculating both PIT or CIT is not as difficult as many people think, and is simply a matter of determining which portion of your income is taxable, in the eyes of the government.

Ready to file?

Phuket Revenue Office
23 Narissorn road, T. Talad Yai, A. Muang
Tel. 0-7621-1280, 0-7621-4950 - 51
Fax. 0-7621-6674

Branch Offices

Mueang Phuket 1 Area Revenue
Tel. 0-7621-2360, 0-7635-4620

Mueang Phuket 2 Area Revenue
Tel. 0-7628-3199, 0-7628-3200

Kathu Area Revenue
Tel. 0-7632-1403

Thalang Area Revenue
Tel. 0-7631-1493 - 4



You do this by deducting your living and operational costs following specific guidelines as set forth by the Revenue Department.

The net income that remains is what will be taxed. Next week, we will look at Thailand's withholding tax system and go over Thailand's tax bracket system and how to apply progressive tax rates accordingly.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this article is based on personal experience and direct inquiries with the Revenue Department. The author and the Phuket Gazette will not be held liable for any damages from misuse, misinformation or misunderstanding. All specific issues should be addressed with the Revenue Department. For more information, see rd.go.th or call their hotline: 1161.

Pork prices plummet by 11%

OVERSUPPLY of pork in the market, with its relatively higher prices causing consumers to buy other types of meat, has prompted the not-so-invisible hand of the Commerce Ministry (MoC) to reach in.

In coordination with its Department of Internal Trade (DIT), the MoC at the end of July issued new price suggestions for pork nationwide, with reductions ranging from 4 to 13 baht per kilogram.

In Bangkok, the Central and Western regions, for example, the suggested price for red meat, from the pigs' thigh and shoulder region, was not to exceed 106 baht per kilogram, 8 baht less than previously when the cap was at 114 baht; in the East to 110 baht from 114 baht and in the South to 111 baht down from 124 baht; in Isaan 114 baht from 119 baht and in the North 115 baht from 119 baht.

The price suggestions do not cover special grade and premium hygienic porks, such as those certified by the government.

As for suggestions for live pigs at farm price, in Bangkok and the West, the price dropped to 54 baht from 59 baht per kilogram; 56 from 59 baht in the East; 57 from 65 baht/kg in the South; 59 baht from 63 baht/kg in Isaan and 60



Live pigs on the way to the market.

baht from 63 baht/kg in the North.

Kithiwong Somboontham, Secretary of the National Pig Cultivators Association concurred that the reason why pork prices have dropped is because of oversupply in the markets.

"Farmers don't have enough money and are losing profits. The base costs for raising pigs has gone up. This has forced a lot of farmers to rush their pigs to the market, one to two weeks prematurely.

"Also, as it's the wet season now, people are more inclined to eat fish and other types of seafood instead of red meat. Base costs for raising the pigs are as much as 60 baht/kg, while we can only sell for about 52 to 54 baht / kg," he said.

Commodity Report

Item	August Week 1	July Week 1	Month Change	Year Change
Benzine 91	43.89	41.49	5.78	0.93
Diesel	30.07	30.27	-0.66	-1.2
Gasohol 95 (E10)	38.57	37.17	3.77	-0.03
Gasohol 95 (E20)	34.92	33.52	4.18	N/A
Thai gold	1561.2	1574.3	-0.83	1.29
Pig <100kg	57.5	60	-4.17	-48.7
Pork tenderloin	135	135	0	-11.11
Whole chicken	37	43	-13.95	0
Gutted chicken	72.5	77.5	-6.45	-13.79

Source: Department of Trade

* per liter

** per gram

*** at farm

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What exactly is this new 4G?



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

THAILAND has been bombarded with “3G” advertising for years. As befits a term with no real definition, “3G” is all about marketing. A phone company can call two tin cans and a piece of string “3G” and get away with it.

Not so 4G. Internet Service Providers in the US and Europe have been taken to court over their “4G” claims. Something of a consensus has emerged about what, precisely, encompasses 4G.

4G will become the next big wireless internet marketing term here in Phuket, probably in the next year or so. Let me take you through the details, so you’re braced when the time arrives.

There’s an official definition of “4G” – the International Telecommunication Union has decreed that, for a wireless technology to be named 4G, it must support 100 megabits per second (Mbps) transmissions. That’s about ten times as fast as the fastest wired connection in Phuket – and I’m including fiber optic. Imagine that. A wireless connection that’s ten times faster than the fastest land line we have now. High definition TV signals streamed live from anywhere – with no need for a TV satellite dish. Truly disruptive technology.

It won’t happen in the next year or two, but it will happen, if the regulators get out of the way, and graft doesn’t pull the whole house down. And we won’t get the 100 Mbps technology, at least not at first. We’ll probably get something much slower, but still considerably faster and more reliable than what we have now. And it’ll be portable.

As I’ve been predicting for years, when Thailand’s politicians, bureaucrats and courts finally catch up with the rest of the world and get that “3G auction” off the ground, chances are very good 4G technology will be in full swing.

Indeed, the 3G auction is scheduled (once again) for a few months from now. At this moment 4G is popping up all over the US, Europe and many places in Asia.

Here’s a quick review of where we are, and where we’re headed.

Governments all over the world control the allocation of airwaves – the *spectrum* – that mobile phone companies can use. Many years ago, the primary use of spectrum – and a sizable source of government income – was in the TV and radio bands. If you wanted to set up a TV station to broadcast on Channel 4, you had to pay the government for the privilege.

Wireless mobile phone, and now internet access, is no different. Years ago, the Thai government granted a license – a *concession* – to CAT so it could use the 800 MHz “channel” and to TOT for the 850 MHz. Fast forward a couple of decades and TOT and CAT – two huge and politically connected companies – are making an enormous amount of money from their concessions. They employ tens of

allocated to any company. Various Thai governments have drawn up, and abandoned, plans to auction off the channels near 2100 MHz. TOT and CAT, of course, want a piece of the action. But so do a dozen or more additional companies, some Thai owned, some *farang*.

CAT, and then TOT, formed alliances with mobile companies to put 3G technology on their existing channels. TOT and AIS now run a 3G network at 850 MHz. CAT, TrueMove-H (partially owned by True) and DTAC now run a 3G network at 800 MHz.

CAT and TOT started their 3G services with a technology known as HSPA. Both are in the process of upgrading their networks to a much faster technology, that uses the same channels, known as HSPA+. Here’s where things get complicated.

The government has scheduled an auction for several channels near 2100 MHz. The press here call it a “3G auction” but the companies that win the bids are certainly going to consider leapfrogging 3G and



HERE, THERE, ANYWHERE: Yes’s 4G Huddle XS. It’s a 4G MiFi device that can provide internet or network access to any WiFi enabled peripheral device at a distance up to 10 meters (30 feet). Photo: Vernon Chan

thousands of people. They’re also fast approaching their concession renewal dates.

In Thailand, the channels close to 2100 MHz (the so-called 2.1 GHz band) have never been

going directly to LTE – LTE being a 4G technology, by most reckoning.

LTE isn’t 100 Mbps fast, but it is 10 Mbps fast – at least in theory – and that would be a huge step up from all but the fastest



NOT TODAY BUT SOMEDAY: A bus advertises the 4G service that has begun to pop up in Europe and America. Photo: Olof Forsberg

wired connections here. And it’s wireless.

Right now in the US, Verizon is rolling out a huge LTE network, and advertising it heavily. Clearwire is in the process of switching to LTE and AT&T swears it’s headed in that direction. There are also sizable LTE rollouts under way in Australia, Canada, Germany, Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea.

And now the twist. In the US, LTE is coming on the 700, 1700 and 2500 MHz channels. In Europe, it’s 900, 1800 and 2600. Asia seems to be going with 1800 and 2600. So if Thailand has LTE at 2100 MHz, there are significant questions about where we’ll get the hardware – phones and tablets – to run it. Custom 2100 MHz phones aren’t hard to build, but they will be expensive in relatively small lots.

Of course, fast LTE is dependent on all sorts of things, including the willingness of the phone company to pay for sufficient bandwidth to get good overseas access. Right now, TrueMove, DTAC and AIS are doing a reasonably good job of keeping up with demand, and they’ve been adding new HSPA+ towers all over southern Thailand. It’s my understanding that the HSPA+ equipment can be converted into LTE towers rather easily. This opens up some interesting possibilities.

At any rate, 4G is coming at some point, and it’ll probably be very good. Let’s see which phone company is willing to roll the dice.

On a personal note, two weeks ago I mentioned in this column that the cloud had finally lifted, and I was almost done with *Windows 8 All-In-One For Dummies*. Wrong. Very wrong. Shortly after I wrote those words, Microsoft announced that it was abandoning Hotmail, replacing it with a new service called Outlook.com. (Details next week.) That killed one chapter and heavily changed another one in the book.

Then Microsoft announced that it wasn’t going to use the term “Metro” for the tiled part of Windows 8 – a move that effectively gutted about a dozen chapters. No rest for the weary, I was flung back into emergency edits, and I’m wading through them now.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions on every-other Wednesday afternoon, from 1 to 3pm. 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 mail at Woody@KhunWoody.com, follow him on Twitter, @PhuketLiveWire, or “like” his page at [facebook.com/SandwichShoppes](https://www.facebook.com/SandwichShoppes).

Bundling your phone and internet

HERE are a few recommendations if say, you wanted to bundle your 3G and WiFi for one low price. Since reading the July 7 “Livewire” by *Gazette* columnist and Windows expert Woody Leonard, I’ve been on a mission to upgrade my technology. I had a Samsung Galaxy S II that was stolen shortly after I arrived here. I nearly cried. Say goodbye to email, Facebook, GPS, etc. Also, my apartment has been without Internet. It’s a lovely place for a good price and it has a view from Kao Rang looking out over Phuket Town, but the owner is an old Thai woman who doesn’t know much about technology.

So, this week I set about solving my tech issues in one fell swoop.

I bought a new smartphone on the bottom floor of Big C (a used Samsung Galaxy mini for 3,900 baht, over 6,000 new), then I purchased an unlimited 3G plan through CAT (work permit required) for 790 baht and set up wireless access to my laptop by broadcasting WiFi from my phone (free).

The phone is the key to the entire equation. Buying used isn’t a bad idea as long as it’s a relatively new model. In Thai you say (*meur song*), which literally means hand two. You need to buy a model that is capable of broadcasting WiFi. All said and done I should have high speed Internet everywhere I go for 790 baht per month and you are free to choose whatever carrier you see fit. **-Chris Hudon**

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Interest rates to remain low

Island Investor

By Anthony Lyman

YOU have to think back, for what seems like an eternity ago, to remember when you could go to your bank and be safe in the knowledge that you would get at least a 4% interest rate on your hard earned savings.

Thoughts of “sticking your money in the bank and living off the interest” are long gone, but how long for? No doubt many retirees enjoying these shores once saw money in the bank as being able to more than sustain a standard of living in Phuket that the folks back home could only dream of.

However, as we are all more than well aware, this now seems a thing of the past as many people will be seeing the value of the cash held in the bank slowly dwindle or more importantly be eroded by inflation. What is equally important for the large number of people approaching retirement with pension funds would be annuity rates.

To take pensions back to basics, a pension fund is no more than a pot of savings that must be used upon retirement to purchase an annuity, which is basically a promise to pay you a regular income of a certain amount dependent on the size of the pension pot which you have.

The problem is, like bank interest rates, annuity rates have tumbled because they

	COUNTRY	CURRENT	PREVIOUS	CHANGE
1	AUSTRALIA	3.5%	3.7%	-0.25%
2	UNITED KINGDOM	0.5%	1.0%	-0.5%
3	UNITED STATES	0.25%	1.0%	-0.75%
4	NEW ZEALAND	2.5%	3.0%	-0.5%
5	EURO MONETARY FUND	0.75%	1.0%	-0.25%
6	NORWAY	1.5%	1.75%	-0.25%
7	SWEDEN	1.5%	1.75%	-0.25%
8	THAILAND	3.0%	3.25%	-0.25%

LIVING OFF INTEREST IS NO MORE: The days when you could survive on the interest from your savings are gone. Low rates are here to stay.

are based on interest rates determined at the time of retirement. With reducing interest rates and reducing annuity rates, what does the future hold for cash in the banks, and when will interest rates increase? Can we see this happening any time soon?

Well, the bad news is that this is highly unlikely. The perception that interest rates could only go one way has gone with global sentiment – now shifting towards further interest rate reductions.

Let's take the UK for instance. The earliest prediction of an interest rate increase was deemed to be possible somewhere between mid- 2014 and late-2015.

This has been put further back due to the continuing financial turmoil in Europe and the Bank of England's (BOE) new lending plans for banks. The BOE's plan to hand over 80 billion pounds sterling to banks to offer as cheaper loan and mortgage lend-

ing, has had a huge impact on interest rate futures, and now the likelihood is that, rather than increase these could decrease.

The only solace, potentially, is that the rate of inflation in the UK has fallen slightly to 2.8% from 3%. Not that this means a great deal to the many people that have flocked to these shores from the UK – a very similar story globally. With inflation in Phuket currently at just over 4%, there is a dire need to take action to put an end to seeing your funds being eaten away. As said, this is not just a problem facing UK expats but many expats that have made Phuket their home as the above table illustrates comparing current interest rates of many of the major economies:

So with the long term interest rate outlook gloomy and the rates of inflation eating away at the spending power of deposit based savings and pension fund income

what is the solution? There is no one single answer to this. However, many corporate and government bonds look a wise choice at this point until there is light at the end of the tunnel for the global economy as a whole to recover. As with all investments, bank based deposits being one of them, there are risks involved albeit whether these are inflation risks or direct stocks risk. You should find a level of risk you are comfortable with and mould an investment portfolio around what it is you are looking for, income or growth. One thing is for sure, inaction could see the interest rate vs. inflation risk increase.

This article was written by Anthony Lyman, Senior Financial Consultant for the Montpelier Group. For any more information relating to this article please contact Alyman@montpeliergroup.com.

Government to promote local software developers

THE Software Industry Promotion Agency (SIPA) has joined forces with the Association of Thai Software Industry (ATSI) and the Marketing Association of Thailand to set up the “Marketing Weapons for Thai Software” initiative.

The move is aimed at supporting and driving local software firms to provide for the local market. The 40 participating software companies are expected to see revenue growth of about 20 to 30 per cent. Suwimol Taewasillachai, vice president of SIPA, said the agency expected the cooperation would boost the efficiency of local software companies.

Khun Suwimol hopes they will

be able to provide products and services confidently, tap opportunities and become more competitive. The Marketing Weapons for Thai Software project will have two levels – basic and advanced marketing – starting next month and finishing in November.

“This is the first time that we are working together to provide a training course and consultation for local software businesses, which number about 40,” Khun Suwimol said.

“The cooperation is also likely to include hosting a marketing clinic and match-making between local software companies and local businesses who want to uti-

lize software and technology to leverage their business so as to create growth,” added Khun Suminol.

Somporn Maneeratanakul, president of the ATSI, said the five million baht project would help local software firms create their own marketing arm and give them the tools needed to expand their customer base. The government hopes this will encourage local businesses to use more locally developed software. Last year, SIPA worked with the Thailand Development Research Institute to survey the value of the local software industry and learned that there were about 800 active software companies nationwide.

– The Nation

GDP growth estimate lowered

THE University of Thai Chamber of Commerce (UTCC) will lower its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth prediction for Thailand to between 5% and 5.5% next week, according to Economic and Business Forecasting Center director Dr Thanawat Polwichai. The official announcement was made on Aug 9, he noted. The adjustment is lower than previously expected (5.6%) due to the world economic slowdown that has resulted from Europe's debt crisis and the down US economy. The director said these areas have affected world trade and exports. Dr Thanawat said the UTCC will also lower its prediction for Thailand's export growth rate from 10 to 15% to only 5.8%.

There is a 30% possibility that the country's economic growth will expand less than 5% he warned, due to the government's unclear investment plans. Particularly, the flood prevention measures resulting in unexpected capital flow, slower-than-expected rehabilitation of the industrial sector after last year's floods and the worsening Eurozone debt crisis.

– McoT



Dr Thanawat Polwichai.

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FREE FOR ALL: Microsoft Messenger for Mac includes Thai open-source software. Photo: Keng Susumpow

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PADI centers

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

AFTER coming face to face with shattered coral reef systems all over the world and confronting messes of plastic bags and tangled fishing nets, which are not-so-slowly strangling one of the world's most important ecosystems, divers understand the importance of reef cleanups. There is of course that feeling of only delaying the inevitable, but isn't that why we try to stop smoking and start exercising at some-point?

On Phuket, PADI, the world's largest scuba diver training agency, and Project AWARE Foundation, a nonprofit environmental organization, is launching a collaborative "Dive for Debris" event, with around 25 PADI Dive Centers putting aside their profits, digging into their own pockets and attempting to make a difference with Phuket's biggest reef cleanup.



Tony Andrews

with divers participating in thousands of cleanups.

According to Project AWARE's website, "Cleanup dives from the past 18 years have been a true inspiration, placing scuba divers in the spotlight, key to addressing debris issues on a global scale."

The *Phuket Gazette* sat down with Thailand's West coast PADI Regional Manager and Project AWARE Ambassador, Tony Andrews to get a better grasp of the event and the impact it will have on Phuket's reef systems.

Phuket Gazette: There are dozens of cleanup projects every year on Phuket, what makes the project you are working on special?

Tony Andrews: Okay, what I think you've got to realize is that every PADI dive center here does underwater cleanups and they do beach cleanups, reef checks independently. What makes this one special is that we've got about 25 official PADI centers on Phuket and we're bringing them all together to do one massive reef cleanup. But more importantly we're going to document and report exactly what we find under the ocean.



Marine conservation efforts around the world are making a difference, one life and one piece of rubbish at a time. Photos (top and left): Project AWARE Foundation Photo (bottom right): NOAA Marine Debris Program

We're hoping to get about 200 divers in the water on two islands [Koh Racha Yai and Noi].

To collect all that information about what debris is down there and lift it up in this quantity has never been done on Phuket.

Getting every dive center, especially the PADI centers to work together is fantastic.

What's going to be the goal? How will you measure your success with this event?

The level of success will be based on how much rubbish lifted off the reefs we can document. At the moment we have 10 dive boats.

Each dive boat is going to be assigned part of the reef to be cleaned. Now, what we're going to do is submit the data that is collected on the day [to Project AWARE's database]... So if we're talking about 10 vessels and 200 divers [then] we're talking a minimum of 10 documented marine debris data cards that we'll present to the rest of the world and of course... the local authorities here in Thailand.

So, the information that is being collected is being added to Project AWARE's larger marine debris database. Now, what's the goal of that database?

To make the world aware that we need clean, healthy reefs... We've got to educate locals, Westerners, businesses, divers, everybody, and say, 'Look we've

got to look after the reefs we've got, because without them everything is just going to shut down.'

Our combined work in collecting, using and sharing data is fed into data that is submitted from divers all around the world.

Conservation cannot be done in isolation. That's why all our divers here in Phuket together with Project AWARE can play a critical, deciding role in marine debris abatement efforts. Our data will support the development of coordinated policies and strategies to tackle marine debris at every point.

What dive boat operators and shops are part of this cleanup?

Okay, it pleases me to say that all of the big PADI five star DCI centers, PADI five centers and PADI dive centers have donated their boats.

We've got two live-aboards going out. One vessel is from Khao Lak Scuba Adventures. They've donated their boat, which is doing an overnight trip on Koh Racha Noi for professionals [divers] only. Their target will be to lift some of the big stuff, such as car tires and so on.

All the other boats going out are day boats... so anyone can feel free to join. As I said before, we're talking roughly 200 divers that can be taken out there, though I'm hoping that if people want to donate more boats they will feel free to contact us.

What's your function in the project? What role are you playing?

My main goal is to unite these dive centers, because the importance of looking after these reefs is in everybody's interest.

From a business perspective, if your reefs go, obviously you're going to lose your business. People are going to be out of their jobs, and that has big consequences, not just for the diving industry but for tourism too.

So, my main goal is to be a mediator in the project.

I don't own a business here. I work for PADI. So, as a neutral person I can bring people together and drive the project forward as a PADI Regional Manager.

Now, PADI is a main corporate sponsors of the event. We're going to support these efforts and assist the dive businesses so their out of pocket expenses are reduced.

I think you've really got to emphasize the fact that these PADI centers are closing their business for one day. They are losing money to donate their boats; they're putting their hands in their pockets for fuel and food costs. That loss of business for one day is quite substantial for Phuket. So, if you're talking about ten of the biggest dive boats on the island going, wow, that's pretty impressive.

But they are doing this because they understand and believe in the

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We're all honored and proud to be part of this event and fly the conservation flag for Phuket.

What are some of the difficulties you've run into when coordinating the efforts of all these dive centers? Everyone is PADI, but at the same time they are direct competitors...

You've got the main centers that have jumped at the chance, because they want to help Phuket; they want to help the dive industry, but what I would like to see is some of the smaller dive centers come on board.

You don't necessarily need to have a boat to do this. A lot of people think that you have to have your own boat to be on board with the project. If you want to get involved just email us or contact the *Gazette* [isaac@phuketgazette.net] and come on board.

There are still some companies out there that could attend the meetings and say, 'Yeah we're going to help.' They've been in business here for many years. It's time to give something back to Phuket, and especially give something back to the diving community.

Everyone is trying to determine what price they can send their dive boat out for and still turn a profit. Now they came together for a meeting and leveled with each other to make this work. How did that meeting go?

The meeting was great.

They all came, and if the owner wasn't there, they sent a representative that could make decisions at the meeting.

Each dive boat operator understands that they need to cover their fuel costs, so they all agreed to charge 1,000 baht per person. Let's just give an example, a day trip to Racha Yai would average between 3,500 and 4,000 baht depending on the company.

So they've all agreed that people who want to join can pay just 1,000 baht. That will cover everything, and it will help the dive center recover some of their fuel costs. And that's open to everybody.

No one is going to deny that every piece of trash that you pick up is going to make a difference, but what are the long-term effects of this project?

If you can help sustain the reefs by at least removing the rubbish, you've given extra years to the diving community. That's their office, their back garden.

What I'd like to see is that the marine debris surveys continue every month [after the project]. Dive centers can do this independently.

Their instructors can do it, their fun divers can do it, their



Discarded fishing nets are a serious threat to turtles and other marine life, which can become ensnared and die. Photo: David Burdick Marine Photobank

snorkelers can do it. Anyone can "Dive Against Debris" and be part of the solution.

It's not necessarily about diving. People can survey the reefs from the surface and can say, 'Yeah, we've seen that, we've seen this. We'd like to document it.' I think the more we document it, the more our voice is going to be heard and the more we can highlight the fact that when you drop your litter it ends up in our ocean.

It costs our marine life, our businesses and our economy. We want to stop the ocean's silent killer and we can all be part of the solution – no matter where you live or dive.

We can then take the data and push it over to the government or all across the world and say, 'Look, the importance of removing this trash is that it is going to give the reefs a longer life span, which will eventually create more

marine life and more business'. Hopefully we're still going to be here [he laughs], which is the big question.

You are still looking for corporate sponsor, but what sponsors have already gotten on board with you?

Okay, We've got the *Phuket Gazette* as media sponsors and had a great offer by Da Vinci's to supply a venue for the after party, which has not been confirmed by the Go-Eco Phuket group.

We've also got the COSCO Group, which is Molly Malone's and Coyotes. They've actually supplied some alcohol for the after party to say thank you to everybody.

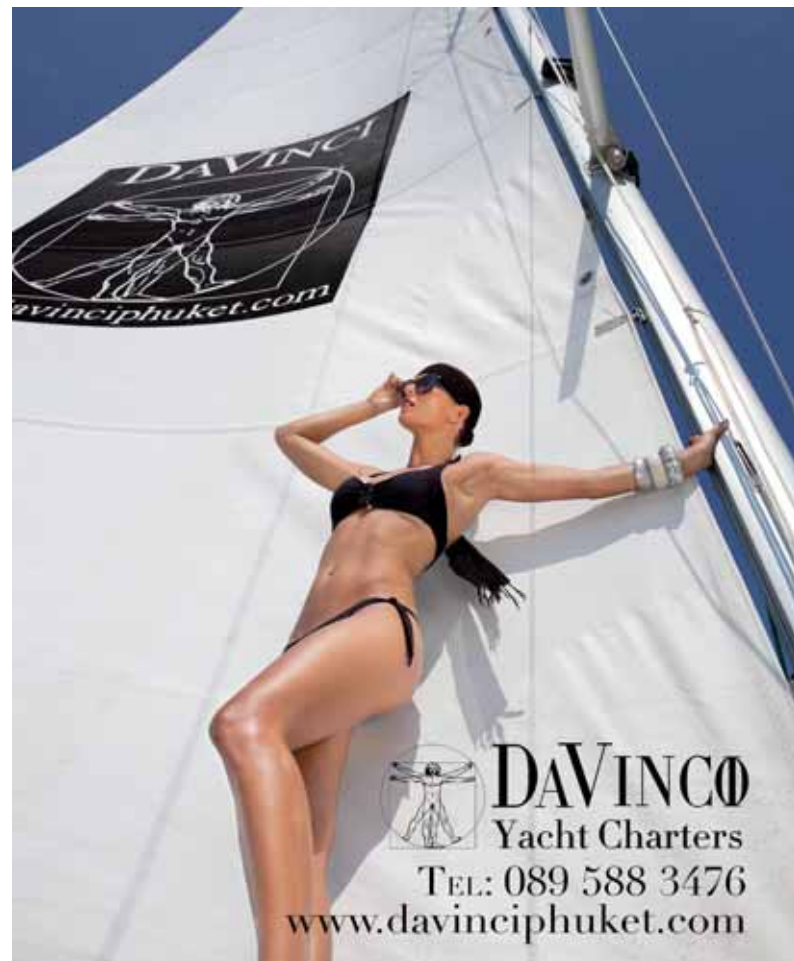
Obviously, that will be monitored!

We've got Phuket Art Advertising, which is one of the local advertising agents; they are going to do all the promotional

banners for us free of charge. And AM t-shirts is going to supply free event shirts for the divers.

PADI is going to be the main sponsor, funding some of the event, but what I'd like to see is

some of the surrounding hotels... get involved. These guys should also be interested in what we are doing here, because a lot of them have booking agencies and are sending people out snorkeling and diving.



Get involved

Anyone interested in joining this *Phuket Gazette* sponsored event, or in the long-term goals of Go-Eco Phuket can find more information at <http://goecophuket.weebly.com> or on the groups facebook page: www.facebook.com/goecophuket



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Discovering Phuket's 'must have' fashions

By Templeton Dean

TRENDS in fashion can be bewildering from one generation to another, but they help us to recognize significant periods and events in time. This is true for Europe and other Western cultures, but it doesn't seem to work like that for people living here in Asia.

Spotting what will become a trend is something designers can do with ease. Following and observing people within their own diverse sub-cultures, helps designers pick out what they think will be the next hottest thing.

However, finding a new trend can be difficult for a designer or retailer in Phuket. With so many diverse subcultures visiting the island it is hard to pinpoint just what will be 'the thing' to have for the season.

Once a new trend is identified, designers then place these hot new items on the catwalk, those ideas are used to cause controversy or outrage, and from this media hype mainstream retailers create a simplified version. Soon enough, a trend hits stores and we begin wearing it.

One example, is the flesh colored body suit with three strategically placed fig leaves shown by Westwood. From this came the watered down version on the high street, a simple leggings. In the world of fashion we call this, the "trickle down effect".

This phenomena has been going on for years, and with so many garments and ideas trickling down through the ages, it sometimes seems that we are drowning in a sea of choices each time we look into our closets. It's just a matter of time before we give up, make do and just throw something on.

So how should we break away and rediscover the comfort of our clothes, clothes that are suited to the tropics? Simple, look to the past. Turn off our brains from brand labels and their recent surge of advertising and go back to what really matters,

YOU, the consumer.

There are two names in fashion who can really help you to dress smart, causal and comfortable.

These forgotten designers helped set trends that seem to be the norm today, but they caused outrage in their time. These women were pioneers, not just in the cut of the clothing, but also in their choice of fabrics. Madeleine Vionnet gave us the bias cut. Her clothes were cut to allow freedom of movement and the bias cut allows air to move around the body. At a time when the Charleston was all the rage, movement and keeping cool were still important.

The other forgotten designers is Claire McCardell. It is from her that we get sportswear, swimwear and any item that could be associated with ease of travel. These two women still influence designers today. The fabrics they were using were new too. Fine silk and silk jersey created by machine, as well as the new innovation of the time, rayon.

Before you snub rayon, take a moment to remember that this fabric is created from plant cellulose, its lighter and cooler than cotton and a large majority of rayon is produced in Thailand. We are soon to see a lot more rayon in stores. With the rising cost of cotton, the trend in manufacturing is to start to blend cotton and rayon.

Phuket seems to be devoid of trends, but maybe its time for that to change. With a quick web search you can find pictorial examples of Vionnet and McCardell as a guide, and I see all over the island simple pastiches of their designs at very reasonable prices. Maybe simple, elegant comfort should be the trend for Phuket.

Templeton is an Honors graduate from the University of Arts London where he studied journalism. With many global awards for his technical abilities in garment construction, he now operates an atelier in Rawai.

Claire McCardell

FREDRICK-born Claire McCardell, the "creator of women's sportswear", "the gal who defied Dior", is widely recognized as the woman who pioneered casual, comfortable American sportswear for women. Ms McCardell always knew that she wanted to be a fashion designer. A genius in her own time, Ms McCardell's creations are now on display in the Smithsonian Institution and the Fashion Institute in New York as examples of the "American look".

Madeleine Vionnet

A French fashion designer called the "Queen of the bias cut" and "an architect among dressmakers". Vionnet is best known today for her elegant Grecian-style dresses and for introducing the bias cut to the fashion world. In 1912 she founded her own fashion house, "Vionnet". The House of Vionnet grew to employ over 1,100 seamstresses and was the first fashion house to create ready to wear designs from *haute couture* for sale in the United States.

MEOW: A model walks on the runway during a Belize fashion show by Veronica Batiz, chief editor of *Intrend Magazine*. Photo: Gabriel Saldana

Center Inset: A local Thai model wears a dress made of rayon, a fabric that is both lighter and cooler than cotton.



The big Zipper



A high-flying experience you can see Koh Phi Phi from

By Chris Hudon

KEEPING with the idea that people and modern primates were once related by a distant cousin, I'd like to make a comparison.

Humans are social like primates, we use tools like they do AND we have the same urge to swing recklessly through the tops of trees for sheer amusement.

Such amusement is available in our back yard (a place where gibbons have tree hopped for generations) at Xtreme Adventures park off Chao Fa West Road, near wat Chalong. The park operates several zip line and climbing courses that range in difficulty.

If you'd like to walk a tightrope just to see, or you want to do something with a bit of a kick, then Xtreme Adventures is the place to be.

At 1,900 baht for admission it isn't the cheapest way to get your thrills in Phuket, but it is definitely one of the coolest.

The low season offers the perfect time to go looking for some adventure. When I arrived at the park last Sunday, I wasn't even sure if it was open for business.

The location is set amidst a quiet, beautifully forested area, and the park itself isn't visible until you climb up the face of what feels like a near vertical hill.

Once safely up the hill I met with my guides, who numbered many since there were only five people at the park that day – just a British couple on holiday with

their young children.

First, we were all given strict instruction in how to operate our harnesses. The harness looks a bit like a swing diaper. Each harness has two carabiners (for safety) attached, as well as a zip line pulley – the thing that travels atop the wire.

I know it may seem like there's a lot to remember, but trust me, once you've done it a few times it becomes second nature.

Everyone say it together: "always attach the safety line first".

After proving to my guide Khun Paragorn Sapakdee, of Supanburi, that I could handle the test course, we set off up the mountain to begin.

There are three courses available: beginner, intermediate and advanced.

Where Xtreme Adventures Phuket differs from another zip line I've been to in Orlando, Florida,

is that you are not always sliding down a wire from top to bottom.

Our course involved technical climbing that demanded serious balance and agility (we chose the advanced course). We performed maneuvers such as walking on wires, scrambling through nets and climbing up the face of a twenty-meter tree as you might a rock climbing wall.

It was great fun, albeit, a bit of a work out as well – especially, if you've chosen the advanced course. At many points we were reliant on upper body strength to hold on.



ZIPLASH: Paragorn Sapakdee speeds along the longest wire of the course with relative ease. Photos: Chris Hudon

As the day progressed (I went from 10am to noon) my guide and I grew competitive in a friendly way, seeing which of us could complete the course faster or more gracefully.

It can get hot out there so go early. The park struck me as a great place to have a fun time with your children – at least those over ten-years-old or so.

At one point the young daughter of the British couple couldn't hold back a terrified scream (she was in no real danger) and I couldn't help but chuckle.

The park is open Monday through Sunday from 10am to 6pm. No reservations are required, just show up and have fun.

For more information visit W:xtremeadventuresphuket.com



Local weekend get-aways

BANG Pae waterfall is the largest waterfall in Phuket. It is especially popular among young Thais who can often be seen diving off the top. The waterfall is located inside Khao Pra Taew Wildlife Reserve, on the northeast part of Phuket Island, close to the Two Heroines Monument. From the monument at Thepkasattri Road, take the exit heading east (Paklok Road or Route 4027). Admission is 200 baht.

MONKEY around at the bridge that connects Phuket Town to Koh Siray. The area is now clearly indicated by green signs and the monkeys enjoy the fruits regularly given by locals. It's hard to resist these little guys who are not yet as tame as the ones on Monkey Hill in Phuket Town, and certainly not as naughty as the ones you might find in the famous Ubud Monkey Forest in Bali.

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Mother of the Thai Nation turns 80



THE LOVE OF A NATION: Phuket celebrates HM The Queen's birthday at Saphan Hin last year.



On the auspicious occasion of HM Queen Sirikit's 80th birthday on August 12, 2012, the Bank of Thailand has introduced a new banknote to honor HM the Queen. The 80 baht banknote became available on August 9.



THE Kingdom of Thailand is preparing to celebrate Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 80th birthday, on Sunday, August 12 which is also celebrated as Mother's Day in Thailand.

HM Queen Sirikit was born on August, 12, 1932, daughter of the then Thai Ambassador to France, Mom Chao Nakhatmongkol and his consort Mom Luang Bua Sanitwongse. She attended school in Paris after the end of World War II and met her soon to be husband, the future King of Thailand, Bhumibol Adulyadej, in Paris, while both were studying in Europe.

The new King and Queen of Thailand were married by HM Queen Sawang Vadhana, the paternal grandmother of His Majesty at the Sra Pathum Palace in Bangkok, on April 28, 1950. HM Queen Sirikit was officially installed as Queen Somdej Phranang Chao by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, when he ascended the throne as the Ninth Monarch of the Rama Dynasty, on the May 5, 1950.

HM the Queen has been active in helping women advance themselves with her Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques (SUPPORT) Foundation.

In 1976 the SUPPORT Foundation was formally established to further the activities started by the Queen, who, using her own funds, helped to establish cottage industries for village and farm women. Her Majesty supplied weaving looms and materials to make fabrics, clothing and soft goods, as well as providing equipment to produce other marketable items.

Her support of the renewal and teachings of traditional techniques has brought about the revival and fame of the Thai silk industry.

HM Queen Sirikit's birthday has always been celebrated as Mother's Day in Thailand, which is appropriate for HM the Queen who is regarded by each and every Thai as the "Loving Mother of the Thai Nation".

Prison opens for mothers

THE gates of Phuket Provincial Prison will be open on August 15 and 16 to enable mothers to hug their children inside the facility in honor of HM Queen Sirikit's 80th birthday on August 12.

During those two days, mothers will be allowed to visit their inmate children, and inmates' children will be allowed to visit their convicted mothers, depending on the circumstances.

In addition to a little family love, mothers over the age of 50 will get some Mother's Day pampering with free massages to be provided by inmates serving a sentence of one year or less.

"This is the first year that we've had the 'Sai Yai Rak' [Loving Relationships]

project, which allows mothers and children to have enough time to talk about their feelings and hug in the prison,"

Phuket Prison chief Rapin Nichanon told the Phuket Gazette.

"The project is an initiative of Corrections Department Director General Suchart Wong-anantachai, and is intended to show the

people that we are not abandoning inmates.

"We want to support them so they will be good when they are released," he said.

Chief Rapin did clarify that only inmates who had not exhibited dangerous behavior would be allowed to spend the two hours with their mother or children.

"Moms and their children will have an

'Moms and their children will have an opportunity to hug, as well as apologize for any mistakes that they have made'

— Chief Rapin

opportunity to hug, as well as apologize for any mistakes that they have made," Chief Rapin explained.

Postcards were sent from the Corrections Department and handed over to inmates so that they could invite their mother or child to visit the prison. About 200 inmates applied to join the event, which is broken into a morning session, from 9am to 11am, and an afternoon session from 1pm to 3pm, explained Chief Rapin.

In addition to offering an opportunity for quality family time, the prison is running a month-long program called "Massage for Mother", where trained inmates are providing body and foot massages to mothers who are 50 years old or older, at the prison's massage shop. All mothers are welcome and need only to bring an ID card to verify their age. The shop is open from 8am to 4pm.



Chief Rapin's has plans for Mother's Day. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

Purely peer empowerment

Thanyamundra's Shaun Dünhofen unveils 'Thailand's best kept secret' over lunch with *the Gazette*

RECENTLY appointed GM of the award winning, eco-luxury resort that sits on the border of Khao Sok National Park in Phang Nga – Shaun Dünhofen had lunch with the *Phuket Gazette*'s Steven Layne.

Meeting last Saturday at Thanyapura's Divine restaurant in Thalang, a wholesome conversation was fueled by mouth-watering servings of organic rocket leaf, beetroot ravioli and oven-crisp pizza – washed down with a revivifying glass of purple passion juice made from apple, pineapple, and beetroot.

Hearty food certainly wasn't the only source of energy. Shaun, a 31-year-old South African, was radiant with passion as he talked about the path leading up to his present, delving into his current and future roles and initiatives with Thanyamundra and its mother umbrella, Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club (TSLC).

It's hard to believe that it's been only five months since Shaun relocated to Thailand to take up his post at what he calls the country's "best kept secret."

Indeed, his extensive knowledge and passion for local customs, mannerisms and culture is no accident, and compliments more than a decade of working, living and exploring Asia from inside out.

Though relatively new to Thailand, Shaun has spent much of the last decade in places such as Indonesia, Bali, the Maldives, India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, China and South Korea, where he has enriched himself with the essence of eastern culture, customs and philosophy.

Among the skills and techniques he has become versed in over the years include massage, meditation and a rich spectrum of martial arts, including Shaolin style Kung Fu, Tai Chi and Muay Thai; Thanyamundra is exactly where he belongs.

"It was my life-long love of wild places that led me to Khao Sok and it has held me

in its spell ever since. When I saw the new direction that Thanyamundra Organic Resort was taking in combining healthy living – meditation, massage, yoga and organic foods – with conservation, I saw a connection being made that was both innovative and inspiring. It is encouraging to see the new direction the property is taking in combining the luxury of nature with conservation through education," he said.

As for this rapidly disclosed secret, for those of you don't know already, the five-star organic retreat, which just opened in June 2011, sits two hours north of Phuket, abreast one of the oldest and most ecologically diverse rainforests on the planet, where wild elephants, tigers, bears and leopards still roam freely.

An integral part of the property's offering is the adjacent organic farm of the same name.

Fruits and vegetables are picked fresh from the farm and used to prepare and cook snacks and meals for guests. The farm is also an exclusive supplier for Pura Organic foods, one of the country's and region's leading distributors of organic and chemical-free produce.

Since coming on board four months ago, Shaun has led and pursued a number of initiatives aimed at conserving the environment and improving the experiences of guests.

These perpetuate the three fundamental Rs: reduce, reuse and recycle.

For starters, Shaun has helped to remove unnecessary plastics from the properties' suites, with the exception of complimentary water bottles. But even these are recycled using a local vendor.

"At first we considered creating our own recycling plant on site, but decided it was more practical and in line with our values to work with the local community, where there was already someone making a living from recycling bottles. It worked out for both of us," he noted.

Shaun continues to support and encour-

age new ways to reuse: "Before any fruit or vegetables ripens or gets to expire we convert it into dried fruit or dehydrated, bananas used to make jam; ice-cream and sorbets, which we then serve to guests."

Likewise, vegetable off-cuts are used towards making naturally fermented fertilizers (effective micro organisms or EM), while grass cuttings go towards compost.

Additionally, the EM is also used in the resort's septic tanks and drain pipes to eliminate foul odor.

"EM really is effective as it replaces bad elements with beneficiary ones – not only for plants and drains, but humans as well. I occasionally enjoy a shot of pure EM myself," Shaun revealed.

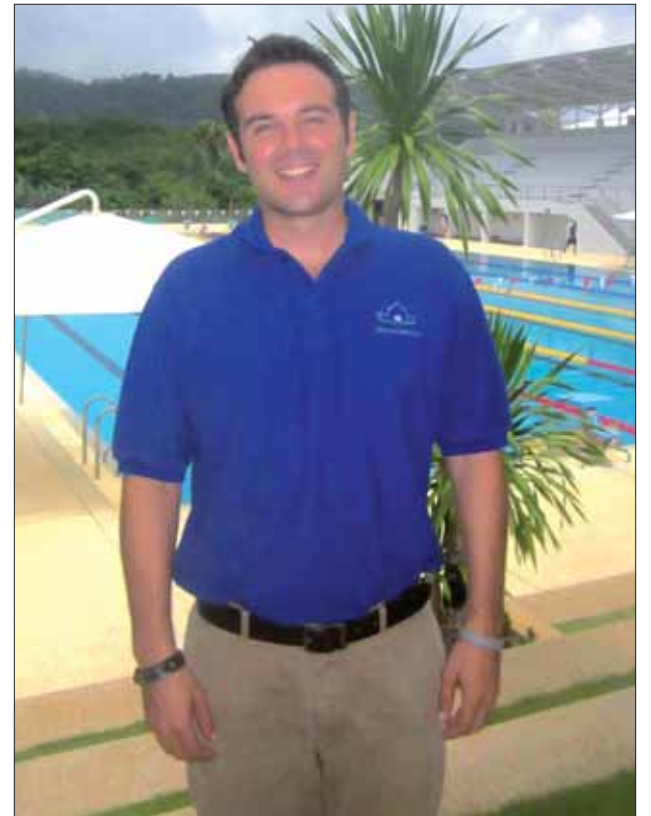
Paper is used only when required, and the resort only uses recycled paper; all big leaves are also dried and used for menu presentation for guests.

Shaun selects only environmentally-friendly guest amenities and cleaning products.

These include home-made mosquito sprays and an array of locally-produced, natural aroma and scent products made by Phuket's own Lemon Grass House.

"Instead of spraying rooms with air freshener, we are now using Tep Taro wood off-cuts, an OTOP product from Trang. The natural aroma it releases lasts up to 6 months," Shaun notes.

Moving on to organizational matters, Shaun shared his unique outlook on management and daily operations: "I'm not really keen on titles and hierarchies, and I choose not to work from an office or desk. Being accessible and approachable is important for both guests and staff alike, which is why I prefer to be at the same level with others. My main



Sean's mood is up, even when the weather's not.

role is to set things up by directing, supporting, encouraging and empowering my team. They are the real talent of the operation.

As for the near future, in addition to his duties at Thanyamundra, Shaun will now oversee the setup of Thanyapura's upcoming sports hotel, set to open in November.

Located near Khao Phra Taew forest and mountain conservation area, off Thepkasattri Road in the north-eastern part of Phuket, the hotel will be the newest addition to the TSLC's complex, with its world class facilities including an Integrated Health Center and an IB authorized school.

"My role with the sports hotel is a supportive one. Again, the team is the real talent. I'm simply here to help them realize and assist in reaching their full potential," he concluded.

Welcoming good health



Clitoria Ternatea, the Butterfly Pea. Photo: Kumaravel Thangaraj

SAID to be a favorite of HM the Queen, and served as a welcome drink at the Thanyamundra organic resort, is an old, local favorite: Butterfly Pea, known in Thai as *Dork Anchan* is an ancient herbal plant that originates in Thailand. Its flower comes in three different colors: white, blue, and purple. Not only beautiful, Butterfly Pea first gained its reputation as a powerful hair strengthener, used in traditional Thai medicine. Its leaves, flowers, and roots can all be used as a medicinal herb, while the plant has a shelf life of two years.

Its benefits are plentiful. It is used to nourish and strengthen the hair and hair roots; prevent skin bruising and keep skin healthy; treat urinary dysfunction; improve eyesight; treat opthalmitis and eye infections; stimulate blood circulation; detoxification; provide antioxidant; slow aging process; enhance body immunity and relieve thirst and debility

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High anxiety over BFI Kane mutiny

LAST week the British Film Institute's seminal magazine, *Sight and Sound*, announced the results of its poll for the greatest movies EVER. The BFI compiles this list every ten years with votes cast by respected critics and writers from around the world.

For the past sixty years, the magnificent *Citizen Kane* topped that list. But this year, even though twice as many voters chose Kane as the greatest movie ever, Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo* took the top spot by a commanding 35 votes.

All over the internet right now, critics and commentators are attempting to explain what's so special about *Vertigo*. As far as I can tell they are all talking bibble. While it may be time for *Kane* to pass the crown, here – in reverse order – are my top ten reasons why *Vertigo* does NOT deserve it.

10: Even Alfred Hitchcock didn't like the film much. The great director is on the record as saying he thought Jimmy Stewart's age (50 at the time) made the love match with Kim Novak seem silly. In fact the age disparity jumps out in the first five minutes, when his greying-haired character, Scottie Ferguson, talks about being at college with the thirtysomething Barbara Bel Geddes.

9: It's not classic, it's generic. Everything Hitchcock does in *Vertigo* he had already done or would do better somewhere else. It's easy to spot bits of *North by Northwest*, *Spellbound*, *Rope*, *The Birds* and *Marnie* among others. If you look hard enough you can even find some *Citizen Kane* in it too (directors like to call this homage, these days the film industry

Film

By Alexander Maycock

would probably call it a property rights violation).

The way Hitchcock frames his female lead and screws with his hero's brain is a master class in his style. The subtlety of the fogged out Golden Gate Bridge far in the distance acting as backdrop to the opening rooftop chase is brilliant. The constant shift to green motifs for Kim Novak's character – more brilliance. There's plenty of Hitchcockian craft here, but there's an equal amount of blatant nonsense. Such as...

8 & 7: The amazing disappearing blondes. Recently retired detective Scottie, having barely survived the rooftop chase, is hired by an old college pal to follow his weird wife, Madeleine (Novak). The no-nonsense down-to-earth ship-building industrialist, thinks his wife has been possessed by the spirit of a long dead ancestor (aw, c'mon!) Madeleine does a bunch of weird stuff – like buying flowers and visiting an art gallery (hmm, mighty suspicious). She eventually goes into an old hotel... then completely disappears.

Throughout the rest of the film absolutely no explanation is given for how she gets out of that hotel, even though Scottie's standing right at the reception the whole time.

Okay, it's a head scratcher, but we'll let it pass. At least Novak does show up later, back at home. The same cannot be said for poor Barbara Bel Geddes, who simply walks out of a scene about two thirds of

the way through the film and is never seen again, leaving the entire second-tier level-headed-love-interest plotline completely unresolved.

An interesting anecdote: apparently, because the Hays Code called for all bad guys to get their comeuppance, the censor wanted a scene added at the end that would have Scottie return to Midge's apartment while she was listening to a radio report about the baddie being arrested in Europe. They look meaningfully at each other then stare out of the window, across the city, holding hands. Fade to black.

This may have been one time when the censor's fiddling would have helped a movie, but Hitchcock made such a fuss the censor let him keep his ending. Oh well.

6: In the history of stupid evil schemes this one is the outright winner. Did Hitchcock even think about his bad guy's motivations? Did he not consider his villain's internal monologue? It would have gone something like this:

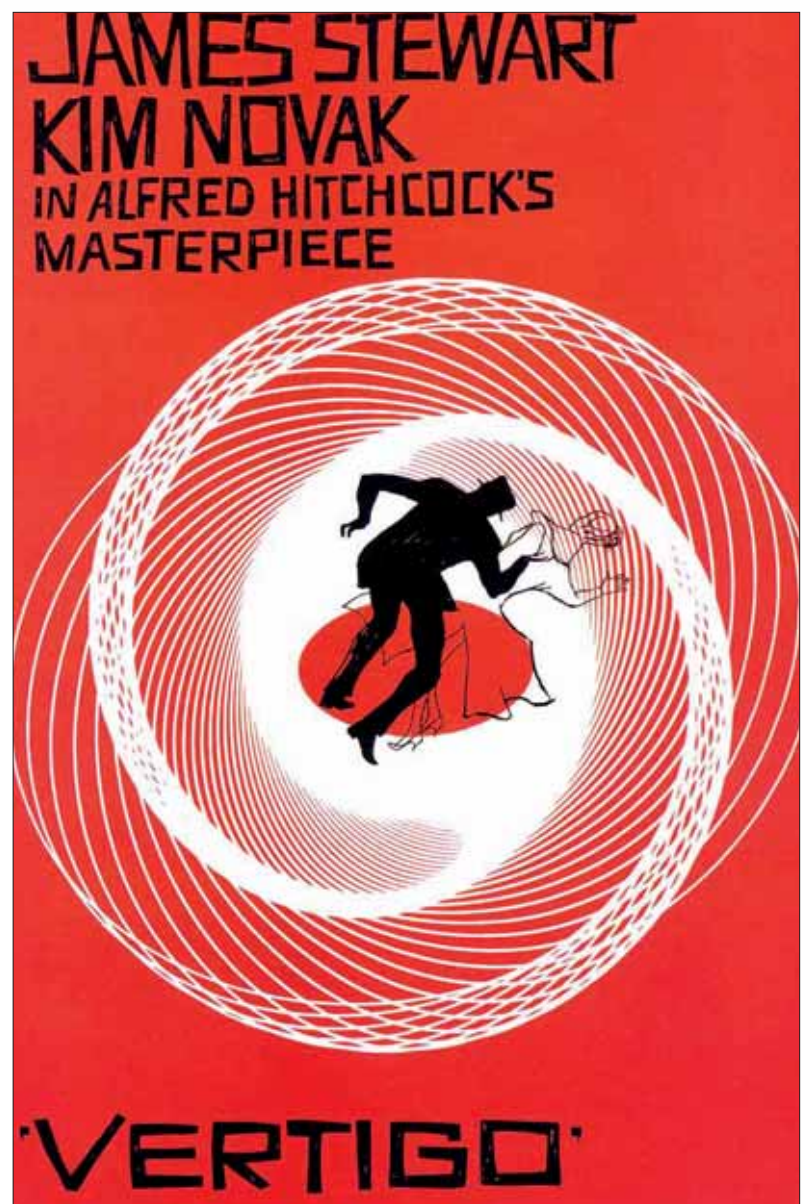
"Damn, I hate my wife, but I love her money. If only there was a way to get rid of her. Wait! Didn't I hear that my old friend Scottie, who I haven't seen in 20 years, has developed a serious case of vertigo? Aha! What if I hire a girl who looks exactly like my wife and get her to pretend to be possessed by a fictitious ancestor. Then I'll hire Scottie to follow her around but he won't be able to stop her climbing up a high tower to try and kill herself... because of his vertigo. I'll hide up the tower and throw my wife's dead body off it and Scottie will think it's the same girl. It's brilliant!" Um. No, it's not.

5: Scottie is a serious perv.

Top marks for the beautifully framed shot when Kim Novak jumps into the freezing waters beneath the Golden Gate Bridge. Scottie drags her out of the bay, and then... administers CPR? Calls an ambulance? Takes her to the nearby Presidio hospital? No. He kidnaps the poor unconscious girl, drives back to his place in San Francisco, throws her on his bed and strips her bare nekkid. Oh, you dog!

4: He's either going mad or turning into a Looney Tunes character. For some reason, critics always gush about the dream sequence in *Vertigo*, but compared to the outrageous Salvador Dali-designed dream sequence in *Spellbound*, *Vertigo*'s is utterly banal, amateurishly composed, and adds absolutely nothing to the story.

3: No blonde jokes please.



HEADY STUFF: But is it a Kane killer?

Having just taken part in a serious fraud and as an accomplice to murder, does Novak hightail it out of town? Nope, she goes shopping with her pals. Surprise, surprise, who just happens to be standing outside her fave flower shop? Of course, not being the sharpest fella and recovering from the nervous breakdown her death caused, Scottie isn't quite sure it's Madeleine because she is now a redhead called

Judy. Yep, he's that good a detective.

2: I just can't take the suspense anymore! So, let's have a flash back to what really happened at the top of the tower and then have Madeleine write Scottie a long drawn out expositional letter in case the flashback wasn't clear enough. Phew. Good job we got that out of the way,

now we can spend the final half hour of the movie enjoying the... err...

Yes, Hitchcock throws away the tension early, but his reason is that he wants to clear the air for some serious character development in that last 30 minutes and, by heck, do Novak and Stewart go to town.

While Scottie's obsession winds him tighter and tighter, Madeleine/Judy is being pulled to pieces by her guilt. She desperately wants to come clean, explain, but she can't without losing him again.

The intensity just builds and builds thanks to these great actors work-

ing their socks off. You forgive all the earlier forced melodramatics, you forget the huhs, accept the overuse of vaselined lenses and the face-palming plot twists. You're right there with them as Stewart finally forces himself past his fear of heights to get to the truth and Novak blubbers away hysterically.

Hitchcock completely rebuilds the tension in that final thirty minutes, taking it higher and higher as the actors reach new levels of madness. Just when you think it cannot get any better...

1: And the moral of the story is... Nuns show up at the most inconvenient times. Ho hum.

The restored version of *Vertigo* is utterly beautiful, the soundtrack entrancing. Novak and Stewart play mad better than anyone else of their time and Hitchcock almost gets away with a very stylish telling of a very silly story. Almost.

The problem is that you are left wanting it to be a better movie. The jarring point-of-view changes; the sloppy and occasionally unnecessary editing; that incredibly stupid evil scheme; the coincidental contrivances; the pointless wonda-bra scene; all the little things that could have easily been fixed, but weren't.

And that is why *Vertigo* is NOT the greatest movie of all time.

Ten years from now, don't expect *Vertigo* to hold its poll position, but also don't expect *Citizen Kane* to take it back. Maybe 2022 will finally see *2001: A Space Odyssey* take its rightful place at the top.

Alexander Maycock regularly shouts out the next line of new movies just to prove Hollywood hasn't had an original idea since Casablanca.

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Jakkapan Jitsomboon

JAKKAPAN Jitsomboon is excited to be featured in the Thai Gallery column in the *Phuket Gazette*. His first encounter with the newspaper, during its inception in the early 1990s, was one of delight.

"I remember saying to myself 'Wow! Phuket has an English language newspaper – how wonderful.'"

A third generation descendant of Chinese immigrants from Fujian Province, who made Phuket their home 200 years ago, Jakkapan is proud of his heritage but points out that he is first and foremost Thai.

"I am what you normally call *Thai Hua*, or 'Thai with Chinese roots', but my allegiance is firmly with Thailand," he says.

Having obtained two Bachelor degrees, one in business administration and another in computer science, Jakkapan opened a small Internet Cafe in the historic On-On Hotel in 1999 called 'Kopi de Phuket'. Its central location proved popular among backpackers.

A savvy IT man with a nose for business, Jakkapan also set up what was to become the first Thai private online payment company – *myeasypay.com*, which boasted about 500 merchants on its books during the first two years of operation, as well as a daily six-digit transaction turnover.

The dream of becoming the Paypal of Thailand was somewhat squashed when the company faced

THAI gallery By Nanthapa Pengkasem

unresolved credit card fraud cases and, with a heavy heart, Jakkapan closed it down.

"I felt wretched. This was the system I built with my own hands and even the Ministry of ICT had lauded it as beneficial to small and medium trades. Having to let it go was heart breaking."

Still, all was not lost. The domain name – *myeasypay.com* – was sold to an Irish private firm a few years back and is still in use today.

The downturn in his main business meant that Jakkapan had more time to focus on his cafe. Opening a second and bigger branch on Phuket Road, he poured all of his energy into making it a success.

Decorated in a Chinese contemporary style by Jakkapan himself, the new 'Kopi de Phuket' attracts Thai tourists who come here in droves. Travel magazines in particular find the cafe either 'charming' or 'quaint' and no less than 20 articles with pictures line the wall of the cafe.

Jakkapan admits that social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter play a big role in the promotion of his cafe

(5,000 likes so far on FB). The whole experience also reminds him of the days when his grandfather, a Chinese immigrant, used to run a humble coffee shop in Chalong Town thereby creating a social hub for fellow immigrants and locals, who used the spot to meet and reconnect.

The idea of community is attractive to Jakkapan, whose aim is to make Kopi de Phuket, "a homey atmosphere where people can enjoy good food and amiable company or just chill out."

To uphold the heritage inspired by his grandfather, Kopi de Phuket offers Chinese language classes to those interested in acquiring this skill. "You can't deny the importance of the Chinese language in commerce and in life these days," says Jakkapan, who speaks fluent Mandarin.

When asked to comment on the future of Phuket, Jakkapan says: "We are blessed with a strong sense of community and a certain degree of independence where self-governance is concerned. Some people think the place is over-developed but there's a fine line between being overly optimistic and complacency. We must not let fears of the unknown get in the way of growing and achieving. If you strongly believe in something, then go for it."

Jakkapan, 38, is married to Khun Natt Jitsomboon, a local property developer.



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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SWISS TIME OUT: Phuket's Swiss Society celebrated Swiss National Day on August 1 at Mövenpick. From left are Peter Hatt, former Executive Chef at Le Meridien Phuket Yacht Club, Urs Aebi, General Manager of Serenity Terraces at Rawai who also serves as President of Phuket's Swiss Society and Hansruedi Frutiger, GM of the Karon Beach Mövenpick Resort. Photo: Bruce Stanley



FANNING OUT: Despite recent disruptive elements (see page 47) Most Phuket FC (green) and Krabi FC (yellow) fans enjoy each other's company.



I-ROBOT: The World Robot Olympiad 2012 (WRO 2012) was held recently in Bangkok, and Phuket came away with a first-runner up trophy won by Ban Maireab Elementary School, in Kathu (above). From left are Ms Thitaya Sinsirikunakorn and Team PEP robot (under 12s): Wan Chanmuang, Makarop Thongplave, Tanadol Aumsalika with their teacher Warut Khayankit. Preparing their robot for the competition (right).






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Mother's Day messages

YOUR Phuket



JUNE AND NICK GAKSCH

June: "My son means the world to me and is the absolute pinnacle of my life, the purest love, the love only a mother can give. Being a mom and taking care of my son, watching him grow up is a true joy, motherhood has shown me the true gifts and the utmost magical experience of bringing life into this world. He is my world and I dedicate my life to him."

Nick (10): "The love my mother gives to me is the greatest love of all, I am so grateful and my gift back is showing my mother how grateful I am. My love for my mother is greater than the deepest oceans and the tallest mountains."



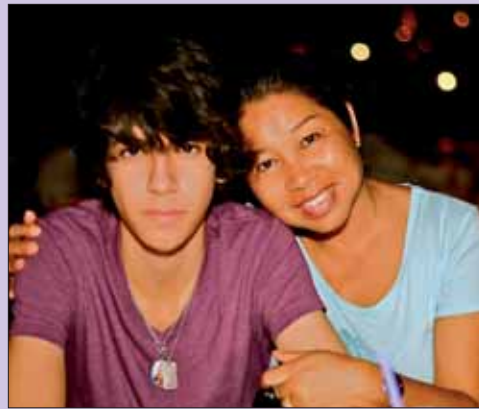
NI AND DJANGO LAYNE

Django (6): "I want to tell my mommy that I love her more than anything. I want to thank her for working so hard to take care of me. I'm going to be a good boy for her and not be naughty."



JILL WALKER AND HONEY

Jill: "Motherhood is one of life's biggest adventures (if not the biggest). You get to see the person you truly are rather than the person you think you want to be. In this raw state you experience such an intensity of highs and lows that only unconditional love can bring about. This intensity is what makes life worth living. I wouldn't trade it for anything."



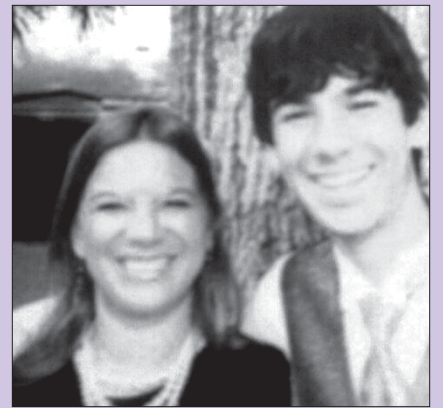
WAN AND PAUL MULLOY

Paul (16): "Having a mother like you is the greatest thing anyone could have given me. It is the confidence and knowledge that you instilled in me that made me who I am today. Thank you for creating me into a person who I like to be, knowing that my proud mother stands along side of me. Thank you for letting me believe that I could be whoever I wanted to be."



LAURA AND LUC CHERMSIDE

Laura: "Of the many experiences life gives you, being a mother is by far the most rewarding. The unconditional love between a mother and a child is the greatest gift of all."



ADRIANE AND CHRIS HUDON

Chris (24): "I've been reminded of you lately. The radio played Cher's *Just like Jesse James* this morning and I thought, 'You know who I'd love to be here right now? Mom.'

When I think of you I picture laughter (I mean truly hysterical), Elvis, Christmas, Bob Seger, animals, love and kindness. You aren't these things, you are the sum of more. I love you."



PIYA AND SANDA FEIN

Sanda (6): "I love my mommy more than everything in the world!"

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- Essays must be written by the student and should not be edited by others
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- The names of the winners will be announced at the Awards Presentation Ceremony on September 21 in Phuket and the authors will be asked to read their submission

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THE NATION

August 11, 18; 12 to 3pm Saturday Brunch @ Two Chefs
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 our fish and meats and in the bakery we bake all our own bread. With well trained chefs and a Swedish head chef, we can promise 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 flowing beverage alternatives.

August 11 – 15, 10am to 6pm: Chanintr Imported Furniture Outlet up to 75% off

A Chanintr Living Special Event is coming to Phuket from Bangkok. Be the first to shop for hundreds of modern and traditional pieces of imported brand name furniture at up to 75 per cent off on selected brands. Until August 15, from 10am to 6pm at Häfele Design Center on Chalerm Prakit (Bypass) Road, opposite Big C.

August 12: HM The Queen's Birthday

HM The Queen's Birthday is also marked as 'Mother's Day' in Thailand.

August 12: Centara Grand Sunday Family Lunch

Celebrate National Mother's Day on HM the Queen's birthday. Especially for Mother's Day at Mare Restaurant. We are offering a family get together lunch with special promotions and lots of surprises for moms. Savor a

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

scrumptious meal accompanied by live music. After lunch, enjoy our swimming pool, kid's pool, lazy river, jumping cliff and water slides and have great fun. Only 1,490 baht net per person including soft drinks, water, coffee and tea. Including one bottle of red, white or rosé wine (per couple) the price is only 1,890 baht net per person. Children under the age of five are free. Children ages 6-12 are half price as well as all Mothers will pay half price in honor of their special day!

August 13: HM The Queen's Birthday Substitution Day

This day is a public holiday in lieu of HM The Queen's birthday.

August 16, 11:30am to 2pm: Phuket International Women's Club Monthly Lunch

The Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch will be held at Angsana in Laguna. Anyone who wishes to attend is welcome but prior registration is essential for participants. Entry for members is 500 baht, guests 650 baht. For more information or to register please contact info@phuketiw.com. The club is a social network providing educational opportunities for needy children in Phuket.

August 17, 7 to 11pm: Curry Fridays Phuket

We present Phuket Curry Fridays on every first and third

Friday. Here is your chance to enjoy an authentic and lavish Indian curry buffet every Friday. "Chicken Tikka Masala", very hot "Mutton Vindaloo", succulent Kebabs, Goan fish curry and much more... all served with Nan bread and Basmati rice. All you can eat for only 449 baht nett.

August 17-19, 9am to 12pm: Social Media Workshop for beginners

Want to learn how to use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Pinterest to market your company, product or service? Join social media maven Able Wanamakok in this workshop that is designed to help you with every question, problem or opportunity you may see with marketing on the social networks. We will cover the basics in a 3-day course at 3-4 hours per session. A fee is applied. To book your seat, email us at info@awpr-phuket.com today. Booking ends on August 16.

August 24, 7 to 9pm: Indian Night at Les Anges

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

August 24, 4:30 to 6pm: AMCHAM Seminar

The American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) Greater Phuket Chapter is co-ordinating with local welfare groups to hold a seminar on Best Green Tourism Practices in Phuket. Registration



Mother's Day Celebration

August 11-12
6am to 9pm

Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club

Celebrate Mother's Day the healthy way with Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club on the weekend of August 11-12, 2012.

Bring your mom and enjoy free access to TSLC's facilities: 900 sqm fitness gym; 50m & 25m swimming pool; track and tennis courts. Also free access to the lifestyle locker rooms where you can enjoy a Jacuzzi, sauna and steam room. Treat yourself and mom with a buy one get one free spa or nail treatment at Thanyapura's Spa. While pampering yourself, Thanyapura Tree Club offers two hours free child minding for moms with children between four and 10 years of age.

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For reservations or further information, please contact +66 (0)76-336 000

starts at 4pm with the session running from 4:30 to 6pm. Attendance is open to the public for 100 baht, and includes drinks. To register visit W:amchamthailand.com or contact Sheree Tanpensuk at 02-254-1041, ext 212.

August – September: Por Tor, "Hungry Ghost" Festival

Por Tor Festival starts the first week of August and runs through the last week of September. The festival originated in ancient Chinese folklore. Every 7th lunar month of the Chinese calendar, the gates of hell open and hungry ghosts roam around the Earth in search of gratification. It all started with a monk named "Mahayana", who, after his

transcendence, searched for the souls of his deceased parents.

August (date to be announced): Phuket Fireworks Festival

The Phuket Fireworks Festival sees 4,000 spectacular explosions light up the night sky in one of Phuket's most popular events. The scale of the display means that, not only are the fireworks visible from their origin at Saphan Hin, but they can easily be enjoyed from vantage points on Rang Hill, restaurants and bars in Phuket Town, and all around Phuket. The organizers are hoping that the festival will someday develop into a major international event.

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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

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

COFFEE break

Across:

9. With maximum effort, complete dullard! (4,4)
10. The French after a drink (3)
11. Daniel could be caught (6)
12. Most prepared morning Thai dish (3,3)
13. Saw to be in favour of a word of action (7)
14. I rushed to a foreign country (4)
15. Farther, not right age to be the elderly bearded man in a robe (6,4)
17. Disturb one herd moving round river to obtain hunting-knife handle material (4,4)
18. Flax threshed in Leeds (7)
19. Public transport back in market shortly (4)
21. Quality of timber worked (6)

24. Small, mischievous creature put off many island people from having freedom to govern themselves (4,13)
27. Thinner replacement part right (7)

29. Unusual rear, unusual (4)

30. A small start, he told uneasily, hiding nothing (7)

33. Cite grub turning into small fierce creature (5,3)

35. Start of drinking session, beginning of fight! (5,5)

36. Good man a right celebrity (4)

37. Aims to be under canvas (7)

38. Iron, e.g., distributed in the area (6)

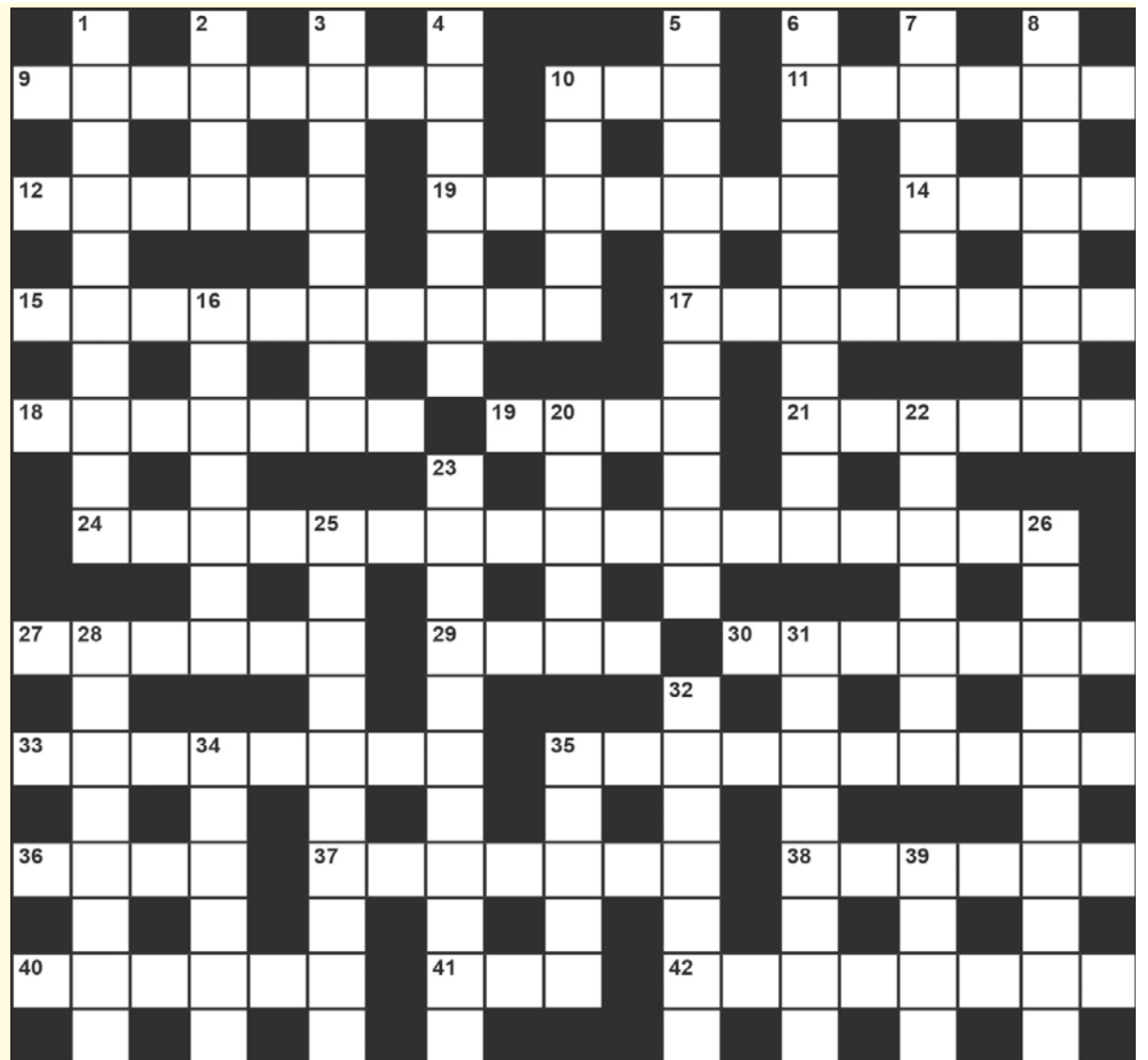
40. Old low level officer makes Egyptian Nationalist advert (6)

41. Nothing left, died advanced in age (3)

42. Beside ale, a weak drink (4,4)

Down:

1. I tout a scam to produce repeater



firearms (10)

2. Boring place to stay (4)

3. Old social interaction in trade (7)

4. Lose hope of the French couple (6)

5. Trickery from male gender I uncovered (11)

6. Fashionable sailor sent first class while away (2,8)

7. End part of fish is hard (6)

8. Agent, maybe rare around island, one who fixes things (8)

10. A flower came out of the bed (5)

16. Her lust worried one who moves energetically (7)

20. More uncommon as not as well done (5)

22. Ah! OK! I am relocating to a Phuket beach (3,4)

23. Giving acknowledgement, but ration it carefully (11)

25. No credit is result of instructions (10)

26. Or only pens fabricated in

plastic cordage (5,5)

28. Unspoilt spirit moved Northeast (8)

31. Canadian has no art in a collection (8)

32. Gift on the spot (7)

34. I grew a strange insect (6)

35. Surprisingly define no point; penalty exacted (6)

39. Pass the fish (4)

This cryptic crossword was compiled by Patong Bill. Answers on page 43

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):



Your busy social calendar may mean Leos have to take some rain checks during the coming week. The stars recommend accepting an invitation from a new water sign acquaintance as contact with this person can be important in the future. Those with a birthday in the days ahead should see more opportunities in the world of work during the coming year. The number one can bring good luck this week.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



This is not an auspicious time to get locked into a power struggle at work. The stars suggest that other earth signs could be particularly difficult to communicate with during the week ahead. Delaying important discussions until after the middle of August is recommended. Romance is also affected by unsettled astral conditions; an air sign's announcement may not be music to your ears. Number seven can be fortunate for Virgoans this week.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



Moving out of your comfort zone can open the door to success in the world of work. A fire sign is forecast to make a suggestion that is something you have never consid-

ered, but could prove more than worthwhile. Romance takes a back seat while career matters fall under the spotlight, but a relationship with an air sign is forecast to make slow and steady progress. Librans' lucky number this week is three.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



The stars advise that you spend time with those who accept you for who you are. There are signs that some Scorpions will find themselves in situations where they feel they have to defend themselves and this could color your week gray. A bureaucratic issue could demand attention around the middle of the month; it would be wise to sort out personal administration before then. Number four shines this week.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



Your vision for the future becomes more sharply focused around the middle of this month. Sagittarians who have been undecided about whether to make major changes in their lives are predicted to see clearly which way to go. In the realm of romance, the stars advise that honest communication is important, particularly with other fire signs. Fortunate days for finances are Tuesday and Wednesday. Your lucky number this week is nine.

YOUR horoscope By Isla Star

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



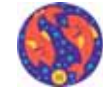
Capricorns are advised to remain open this week or they could miss out on useful information. There is some truth in a sweeping statement made by an air sign and a water sign drops handy hints around the middle of the month. A romantic relationship that was turning sour can be brightened by an out of ordinary experience this weekend. The stars suggest that number eight can be fortunate this week.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



The cosmic climate continues to encourage your creativity to flow. This trend gradually eases during the second half of August and you are advised to make the most of the astral support available now. Wednesday is the most auspicious day to put ideas forward. Romantic vibrations pick up where a water sign is concerned, but a fire sign remains unaffected by your interest. Aquarians' lucky number this week is five.

PISCES (Feb 20-March 20):



Optimism will be an asset for those born under the sign of Pisces this week. Certain situations can arise that appear negative at first, but you will discover that where there's a will, there's a way. Expect an earth sign to come up with worthwhile suggestions on Monday or Tuesday. Negotiations concerning money are best left until later in the week. Number two stands out for Pisceans this week.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):



Healing forces are working on behalf of Arians this week. There are hints that an ongoing disagreement over finances is about to be laid to rest and work related problems are forecast to be solved to your satisfaction. Romance goes your way this weekend – a reunion with an earth sign is well-starred and another fire sign falls for your inspired approach. Your lucky number this week is six.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):



A cloud that has been hanging above your head should disperse this week. The stars suggest that life will be at a slower pace during the second half of this month, with relaxation being the main

focus. Those who need to work see proof that a water sign is more capable than they thought. Sparkling days for romance are Monday and Tuesday. Number eight looks important for Taureans this week.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



This is not an auspicious time to take risks in business – your instincts will be sharper towards the end of the month. The atmosphere at work can be strained this week. Taking the high road is advisable where a fire sign colleague is concerned. The stars advise that making a romantic commitment to another earth sign could be going too far too soon. Number six looks lucky this week.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Following through on commitments can be a challenge for Cancerians until the middle of August. The stars suggest that your attention is likely to be diverted when you least expect it with communication from overseas being a likely cause. Affairs of the heart are subject to cloudy astral conditions – tactics to impress an earth sign could backfire, but an earth sign seems keen. Number nine shines this week.

PROPERTY Gazette

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

Baan Bua brings Nai Harn Luxury

By Andrew Scott

Nai Harn has long been a popular area of Phuket among expats and holiday makers. The sense of being on Phuket but in an area that feels a bit isolated from the rest of the island is one of the draws, along with the beautiful beach and lush landscape.

Nai Harn Baan Bua was launched in 1999 and now encompasses around 150 rai (24,000 square meters) of land with five different projects within the development. Baan Bua phase one and Baan



Exterior Baan Bua phase 2

Pratum have already sold out and Baan Bua phase two only has three units remaining. The other projects – Baan Pattama and Baan Boondharik – are expected to be just as popular.

Baan Pattama's villas are designed around a canal village theme in a contemporary Thai design.

The project consists of 15 single-storey villas with four villa designs to choose from that come in one, two or three-bedrooms.

The one-bedroom villas are 120 square meters and the 3-bedroom villas are 305 sqm with the land area ranging from 195 sqm to 520 sqm. Prices range from 7.8 million baht to 18.9 mn baht.

The villas are designed to allow air and light to easily flow through, and feature a high ceiling, large glass doors and windows. The outdoor area is spacious and allows for outdoor living with the more expensive villas coming with a pool.

All bedrooms are en suite and the master bedroom has a view of the pool on one side and the canal on the other.

Baan Boondharik will be based around the idea of 'Modern Zen' focusing on the key points of a simple, tranquil, relaxed yet stylish way of life.

The villas will be designed with a court yard as the focal piece of the home complete with garden and glass dome roof that can be viewed from the main rooms in the house.



LUXE LIFE: Exterior shows the level of luxury and comfort found in the living area at a Baan Pattama villa.

Baan Boondharik comprises 23 plots covering 17,600 square meters and the plot sizes range in size from 308 to 902 sqm, with four choices of villas consisting of 2 and 3-bedroom designs covering a living area of 270 to 310 sqm. Prices start at 11.9 million baht for a 2-bedroom villa with private pool and the price includes built in furniture in certain rooms and kitchen appliances. Other kitchen appliances and loose furniture will not be included in the

price but furniture packages are available for a separate fee.

The project launched in January 2012 and is expected to take between 18-24 months to complete. A show house is expected to be ready by November 2012.

Baan Bua phase 2 is a bit different to the other projects as the owner is given the chance to design his or her villa, alongside an architect, in a Thai-Balinese style.

Once the layout is complete and

the owner has completed their design each villa will have its own unique feel tailored to its owner.

Villas take 10-12 months to complete depending on size. This idea is obviously quite a popular one as there are only three plots left. Villa sizes range from 450sqm to 650sqm and land area ranges from 1,104 to 1,807 sqm.

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The other tropical paradise



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

PHUKET'S tropical Asian beach destination counterpart, Bali, is hitting some high notes as of late. After some hard times the sun has broken through and the allure of the brand is creating a global sensation.

Last week I took the southbound direct AirAsia flight yet again, (which remains one of the region's best value trips) and checked out what's new on the island.

First up was a stay at the new Anantara Uluwatu, which overlooks one of Bali's most famous surfing areas. Perched up high, the views are simply sensational and change color and shape throughout the day. This is the Thai chain's second isle property, following up a successful start with the first in the trendy Seminyak area.

Rooms are ultra large and meant for hours of chilled downtime. Nearby, Padang Padang remains a world famous location to ride the waves or else just check out the surf riders. Of course Julia Robert's Eat Pray Love was filmed in this area, which has pumped up the interest volume lately.

For golfers there is bad news and good news. Nusa Dua's famed Bali Country Club is closed for an upgrade, which will include a new luxury Shangri-La resort adjacent to it. But from Uluwatu, the Dreamland complex in Pecatu is minutes away and the New Kuta course gets a

thumbs up by the golfing set.

The ritual of sunset drinks remains a nearly religious experience for visitors and nearby El Kabron has caught the imagination of travellers and locals alike. For those tired of the lines at the iconic Rock Bar at the Ayana Resort, the charming simplicity of a waterside setting, comfy bean bag ocean view seating and tapas makes for an unbeatable location.

If you want to head down the hill into Jimbaran, one of two dining destinations of note is lunch at the Jenggala ceramic showroom. Check out the daily special board. For dinner head down past the InterContinental and try the eclectic Balique. Al fresco dining with tasteful antiques and a stylish casual setting.

Moving on for a few nights in Seminyak, which is the holy island grail of coolness, took me to the just opened boutique L Hotel. With just 30 rooms, boho chic interiors and a personal butler service, this is all about personality and location.

A key selling point is the hotel's free transport to and from your nearby dining, shopping and whatever-else-you-have-in-mind excursions. And yes the neighborhood includes such notable spots as Metis, The W, Potato Head, and Ku De Ta.

The concept is fresh and original with my favorite perk being the Kiehl's branded bathroom amenities. After so many years of those vanilla comps, sewing kits and shower caps, here is something you can really use. On top of this



A SHORT TRIP OFF THE ROCK: The luxurious Seminyak Resort looking out onto the Bali Sea.

the drinks in the mini bar are free.

My 'hole in the wall' dining choice is the nearby Rustica for home-style Italian food. The owner's mother, from Italy, is on board and is seen in the kitchen as well as out front. Prices are in the value category.

Another new debut is the Mozaic Beach Club in Batu Belig. It's directly next to Seminyak and is run by the famed dining establishment in Ubud under the same name. This is an increasingly popular alternative to the beach club scene. In addition, upstairs is

a formal eating area, which has a menu of selections to die for.

Want something more funky? Head off to Naughty Nuri's Warung, just up the street, with a roadside grill and soothing martini menu. Otherwise, directly across from the L Hotel is Cubana, with power packed mojitos and a relaxed ambiance on tap.

So many places to go to and so little time. Other eating favorites include breakfast at the Gourmet Café, and lunch at Mama San, which is one of my absolute must-dos in Bali. This is one of the very

best dining and meeting spots in all of Asia in my humble opinion.

So there you have it. Want to know more, check out cool local magazines such as Bali Smile or the artful dodger The Yak to clue into what's new.

While I dearly love my own Phuket, I have to say Bali offers the yin to our yang and is certainly worth a short trip off the rock to see life on the other side.

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

LaGuna

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<p>3 Angsana Island Villa THB 18.5 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 beds 2 baths Condominium • fully furnished • freehold • pool & garden view 	<p>4 Laguna Village Townhome THB 21.3 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-storey 3 beds 3 baths • lagoon view • leasehold • private pool
<p>5 Laguna Village Residences THB 29.75 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 beds 3 baths • leasehold • lagoon view • private pool 	

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Developers look towards smaller Thai provinces

FIERCE competition, limited land supply and portfolio-balancing are behind a recent trend moving away from the Bangkok property market.

With strong competition in the residential market in Bangkok, property firms are lining up to launch new residential projects in provinces outside of Bangkok in the second half of this year.

Sansiri has introduced its latest condominium project, the 1.2 billion baht 23 Estate, in Khao Yai, while NC Housing has announced a single detached housing project worth 750 million baht in north Pattaya.

SC Asset Corporation plans to launch a second residential project worth nearly 2 billion baht in Hua Hin in the second half of the year. Their first condominium project there, the Crest Santora Hua Hin, sold out in the first half of this year.

Supalai plans to launch new

residential projects in Chiang Mai, Chon Buri, Phuket and Surat Thani.

LPN Development plans to launch a new condominium project in Pattaya after successfully selling out two projects there last year and in the first half of this year.

Sansiri CEO Apichart Chutrakul said the company has expanded its provincial business for more than 10 years, but with a focus on Hua Hin. Now, the company is interested in expanding its investment in other provinces where demand is stronger among Thais.

These include the residential projects in Phuket and Khao Yai. The company is also interested in developing a condominium project in Khon Kaen in the second half of this year. Most of these projects focus on domestic demand. "We believe revenue from the provinces will account

for nearly 10 per cent of our total presales this year," he said.

NC Housing's managing director Somchai Tanterdtham said the company has decided to launch new residential projects in Pattaya due to the strong demand there. It also seeks to balance its portfolio between residential projects in the provinces and Bangkok, where the market is facing strong competition and limited land for developing residential projects.

Noble Development managing director Thongchai Busaraphan said the company did not plan to develop residential projects in the provinces this year or next, but may do so two or three years from now, given the tough environment in Bangkok's central business districts (CBDs).

"If we want to drive our business growth in the long term, we will have to expand in the provinces," he said. — **The Nation**

Thai investors eye London

THAI investors are starting to look further afield for new properties and one of their destinations of choice is London.

Overseas demand for new build schemes is expected to remain strong in London, but foreign investors are becoming more discerning, so appropriate pricing is critical.

Only the very best residential schemes that are well-located with a strong developer or architectural pedigree will do well in what is an increasingly competitive market.

Traditionally, buyers from Hong Kong, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and mainland China have dominated international demand, but interest is growing in other countries such as Thailand, although schemes are not yet routinely exhibited in Bangkok.

Elsewhere, there has been a notable increase from Indian high-net-worth individuals, who are typically seeking large Prime Central London properties at the top end of the market.

Mark Collins, Head of Residential at CBRE UK said: "Asian buyers have been particularly active in the new build market and are inevitably the common factor in all of the fastest selling schemes. Many buyers are entering their fourth year in the market, so are highly educated and astute. As a result, there may be a growing distinction between the best and the rest over the course of the next two years.



MOVING OUT: Thailand's elite eye property in London. Photo: Sean MacEntee

"Thai investors have significant buying power, but are still relatively new to the central London market, so tend to stick firmly to the well known 'Monopoly board' areas of Mayfair, Belgravia and Knightsbridge. Indian high-net-worth individuals are also showing an increasing interest at the top end of the market around the 4 to 15 million pounds sterling [196 to 736mn baht] price bracket," he said.

Average house prices in Central London increased over the last quarter by 4% to 881,437 pounds sterling (43.2 mn baht), new research from CBRE has revealed.

Kensington and Chelsea recorded the greatest uplift of 7.5% taking the average price to £1.05m (51.4 mn baht), but Knightsbridge still has the highest value homes at 1.4mn pounds sterling (68.6 mn baht).

New-build developments in central London achieved values well in excess of the second quarter baseline averages; for example, a second-hand apartment in Westminster sold for an average of 721,414 pounds sterling (35.3 mn baht), whilst a similar new build home achieved 1,141,910 pounds sterling (55.9 mn baht) reflecting a 58% premium.

— *Phuket Gazette/CBRE*

On the move: Swissôtel Phuket appoints new GM



NEW GM: Swissôtel announces the appointment of Kevin Furrer (inset).

KEVIN Furrer has been appointed General Manager at Swissôtel Resort in Phuket.

Swissôtel Hotels & Resorts is pleased to announce the appointment of Kevin Furrer, as General Manager of Swissôtel Resort Phuket with immediate effect. He has been with the company since 2004 and was most recently acting General Manager at Swissôtel Nai Lert Park, Bangkok.

Not new to Asia, Kevin Furrer was Director of Food and Beverage at Swissôtel Nankai Osaka, Japan since 2010, prior to his appointment in Bangkok. In Osaka, Kevin was responsible for seven Food and Beverage outlets as well as over 250 team members within the department.

He first joined Swissôtel Le Plaza, Switzerland as an Assistant Banquet and Catering Manager and quickly rose up the ranks to Rooms Division Manager.

He then became Director of Operations at Swissôtel Berlin, where he worked for three years before he moved to Asia. He holds a Bachelor of Science in International Hospitality Management from the prestigious Lausanne Hotel School, Switzerland.

A trained chef, he started his career at Hotel Weisses Kreuz in Lyss, Switzerland as an Apprentice Chef. He brings on board an extensive knowledge of Food and Beverage and Rooms divisions as well as a hands-on approach to Swissôtel's first resort in Asia.

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Raising the Roof

HAVE you ever felt surplus to requirements? I certainly did on a recent visit to a penthouse roof garden in Royal Phuket Marina. So imaginative in conception and so meticulously tended, there seemed little I could suggest to enhance its lavish charms.

Of course, there are roof gardens and then there are roof gardens. Some are actually constituted of a layer of permeable soil – usually lightweight compost – atop a filter mat of gravel, with a waterproof membrane at the bottom to protect the actual roof. Once established, they can look superb, but they are tricky to maintain, and require a whole system of gutters, downspouts and drains to ensure the “bathtub effect” does not occur.

The other type of roof garden is made up of container plants, arranged as the owner wishes: a semi-moveable feast where shrubs getting too much sun, shade or wind, can be shunted around, both to establish their optimal position and to change the overall visual impact.

Paul Maitland-Smith’s roof



Gardening
By Patrick Campbell

terrace was a container-based version, four storeys up, with a swimming pool in the middle, and panoramic views of ultramarine, bays, boats and islands. Not a bad start. But what was equally impressive was the fecundity and variety of the plant life.

One ascended the stairs to burst upon an oasis of vibrant verdancy, flourishing as though impervious to salt-laden winds. Each and every plant was rooted in rectangular custom 316 gauge stainless steel pots – fifty or more of them – and the whole project had been designed with an artist’s eye for different levels and textures.

For example, poles rose from the tiled floor, joined together by wires stretched across the top. But there was no sign of a bare framework: already the trellis-like structures were densely clad in vines, replete with glossy green foliage and small yellow trumpet-shaped flowers.

Probably a variety of *odontadenia*,

these climbers were entwined with passion flowers, and slender coral vines (*antigonon*) with their racemes of pinkish-red flowers. All vigorous, evergreen climbers, they spanned large areas of the terrace, both aesthetically pleasing and offering some shade and shelter to their smaller brethren beneath.

The whole garden had a sculptural feel to it, in part generated by the owner’s imaginative deployment of plants with unusual shapes and surfaces, for example, *yuccas* silhouetted against the sky with their spiky crowns, and symmetrical evergreen trees. To give a typically Thai atmosphere, there were “bonsai” trees with variegated leaves, but the accent was on natural shrubs that needed little or no clipping.

Other distinctive, cane-like profiles were provided by stiff reed mace [bull rushes] which were growing right up against the surrounding wall, and several containers of *heliconias* in full bloom, sensibly positioned out of the full glare of the sun.

One signature shrub, which



THE HIGH LIFE: Four storeys up, with a swimming pool in the middle.

looked superb with its glossy dark leaves and white pin-wheel flowers, was *tabernaemontana*, a dwarf variety with a dense, bushy shape, which dramatically complemented the larger shrubs around it.

There were also clumps of costus with their sexy red cone-shaped bracts, and a number of fountain bushes (*russelia*), so named because of their delicate, broom-like branches, replete with tiny tubular red flowers, arching gracefully over, and softening the outlines of their containers.

A paradise for wildlife? Naturally. At least twenty pairs of birds, mostly spiderhunters and

olive-backed and purple-throated sun-birds, happy to feast on the abundant nectar, had built nests in the trees.

Butterflies flitted from shrub to shrub. Oleander hawk moths – in the shape of emerald green caterpillars – had also taken up residence.

As I said at the outset, such a spectacular and well-maintained garden was hardly in need of my advice. Everything, apart from a single sickly purple *bignonia*, looked in rude health. So, I merely suggested a few additions or alternatives, including some personal favorites. They will put in an appearance in a future article.



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Tip of the Week



Wood chippings. Photo: Mendhak

WE HAVE all heard the expression, “a chip off the old block”, and we all know what it means – someone who has inherited identifiable traits from a parent.

After all our personal genome pool contains about 15,000 genes inherited from mom, and the same number from dad. So it’s pretty inevitable that we will resemble one or the other of our progenitors in recognizable ways.

With a plant raised from a cutting, the newly created offspring will not just look like its parent plant, it will inherit exactly the same characteristics.

One good reason why it is often better to propagate plants thus, rather than trust the unpredictability of seed stock. Of course, it depends on the plant. Annuals, biennials and climbers such as *ipomoea* are normally renewed from seed, but most shrubs will “take” from cuttings.

There are basic techniques for taking cuttings. Soft stem cuttings are taken from the current season’s fleshy soft growth and are best used for temperate plants such as pelargoniums, or hydrangeas.

Use a sharp knife to cut just below a node (bump in the stem) where the new leaves come from and from whence the new roots will develop in soil.

Semi-ripe cuttings are taken from the new growth just where the soft green stems are ripening and getting a little stronger. These or woody cuttings are best for most tropical shrubs (jasmine, strophanthus, bougainvillea), and climbers such as passion flowers, garlic or coral vines.

For heel cuttings, often the most effective method of propagation, pull the stem from the main plant, but leave a “heel” of tissue. The new plants will form from this.

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4 million baht, bypass road, 9m x 27m. Tel: 089-729 6244. Email: ninaphuket@hotmail.com

LAND AT CHERNG TALAY

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

HOUSE FOR SALE, KATHU



Near Kathu waterfall, 48sqm, 2-storey single house, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 1 office room, 1 kitchen, 1 living room, garden, parking. Price: 5.9 million baht. Tel: 085-861 4087, 084-443 5503. Email: nongchoorat@gmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE BY OWNER



2 bedrooms, living room, salon, kitchen, garden. Land: 210sqm (11m by 20m). Corner of 2 streets. 2,500-litre water tank, pump and lava filter. Aircon, telephone, Internet, satellite TV with dish. Asking price: 3 million baht. Tel: 076-278121, 083-182 5037 (English), 089-970 8227 (Thai). Fax: 076-278 121. Email: mellaerts9@hotmail.com

30 RAI IN TOWN

Flat land near Dowroong School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

At Ao Makham. Land is located opposite Port of Phuket and next to Bel Air Cape Panwa Resort. Price 4.2 million. Tel: 081-891 5932, 089-035 6702.

HOUSE IN KAMALA



For sale. 2 houses on land. 1 ngan 89sq wah. Chanote title, near mountain, peaceful and safe, 10 minutes from the beach. 5.5 million baht direct from owner. Tel: 083-180 2143. Email: nana1225@gmail.com

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Kata Hill, 2-storey home. 240sqm house in a 1090sqm garden. Ocean view, only 2km to Kata Beach. Fully furnished, 4 sleeping rooms, 2 large living rooms, 2 American style kitchens, 4 baths. Garage, lumber room, spacious terrace, and all comforts such as cable TV, fast internet, Wifi, 4 aircon units. Built 1998. Chanote land title deed. Fenced in with concrete perimeter wall. Available immediately. Tel: 076-284159, 081-788 2424 (English & Thai). Email: taenkerdpan@yahoo.com

ROYAL PLACE CONDO

for sale. 6th floor, 39.5sqm. Hot price! 2 million baht. Tel: 081-788 1705.

CHEAP DCONDO

8th floor, only 1.23 million baht, lowest price on market. Email: dcondosale@gmail.com

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Foreign freehold. Great sea view. 100sqm, 1 bedroom, fully furnished. Near the beach. Luxury upgraded. Good rental return. Bargain price: 6.9 million baht. Agents welcome. Tel: 086-747 9292.

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Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

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HOUSE FOR SALE: URGENT



4.9 million baht, 89sq wah (include furniture). Stone wall around the house & fruit garden. 4 air conditioners, telephone and internet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 4 CCTV. Located near the Heroines Monument towards to Tesco Lotus Thalang. Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: edc9designs@gmail.com

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Great location, road access, 5 mins to Kata Beach and main road, 1,450sqm with title deed. Contact Lychee. Tel: 081-891 3048 (Eng & German).

KARON TOWNHOUSE

2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, aircon, ADSL, car parking. Price: 5.3 million baht. Tel: 089-594 0423.

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Khok Kloy area. House of 400+ sqm on 4 rai of land. Large 3 bedrooms and 2 baths. Laundry, storeroom, garage. Price: 10 million baht. Tel: 076-494166, 087-284 9679 (English & Thai). Email: g_lovece@hotmail.com

NICE HOUSE 88SQ WAH



4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 3 aircons, sofa, cable TV. Near Jomthong Village on Khwang Rd. 6.5 million baht. Tel: 086-774 2034. Email: hataimata@hotmail.com

PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE



For sale. Price 4.5 million baht. No agents, no furnished, with 4 aircons, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and car park. Behind Kajonkiet International School on Chao Fa West Road, 5 minutes to Central Festival. For short or long term rent, 16,000 baht per month. Call to see 087-270 9093.

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1 aircon bedroom, near Ao Makham Bay, free WiFi, 3km from town, 1km to Panwa Beach. Rent: 9,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311 (English & Thai).

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2-storey house 3 bed, 3 bath near Ao Makham. Tel: 081-892 4311. 20,000 baht/month. For further details, please see our website at <http://panwa.green.weebly.com>

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3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 aircons, fully furnished, kitchen. Tel: 087-966 7191.

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New in Kathu. Big rooms, 1 bedroom, 1 living room, aircon, cable TV, ADSL, hot shower, garden, and car park. Rent: 7,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-692 3163.

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Single house (74sq.wah) with lovely garden for long term rent in Soi Parichart, Land & houses Park. It has 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, 24 hrs security + clubhouse facilities. Price: 25,000 baht per month or special price of 20,000 baht per month without furniture. Contact the owner. Tel: 081-867 6466 (English & Thai). Email: baw.jariya@gmail.com

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25sqm at New Circle Market Chalong, key money, long term rent for 3 years: 150,000 baht. 8,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-187 9627 (English & Thai). Email: Yoying73@yahoo.com

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For rent in quiet area. Long term and short term. 3 or 4-bed villas. Villas for sale at 7.2 million baht with 60% finance option. Super deals on rentals in June, July, August. Tel: 087-893 8747.

KATA HOUSE ONE BEDROOM

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4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, maid's room with bathroom, 2 kitchens, fully furnished, swimming pool, WiFi, garden. 55,000 baht/month. Tel: 089-729 6244. Email: ninaphuket@hotmail.com

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Beautiful Patong Tower Beach Condo with stunning 280-degree panoramic views of the ocean, mountains and town. Large outdoor patio and wrap around balcony. Completely renovated, Internet and washing machine. Available from Aug 12, 2012. Tel: (86) 138 1634 4147. Email: PatongTowerRental@yahoo.com. For further details, please see our website at www.PatongTowerRental.com

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Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 stories, 3 beds, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircons, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 089-469 1813.

PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE



For Sale. Price: 4.2 million baht. No agents!, not furnished, with 4 aircons, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and car park. Behind Kajonkiet International School on Chao Fa West Road, 5 minutes to Central Festival. For short or long term rent, 16,000 baht per month. Call to see 087-270 9093.

LOCH PALM KATHU

3 double beds all ensuite. Pool sala, lounge, dining, kitchen, covered parking, private gated estate with 24hr security. Rent: 70,000 baht per month. Tel: 087-265 8002. Email: garysmith436@btinternet.com

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THALANG LUXURY POOL HOUSE

Long term rent: 45,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com. For further details, please see our website at www.rentpoolhouseinphuket.com

KATA HILL SINGLE HOUSE

2-storey, fully-furnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, 2 aircons, 3BB internet, TV and car park. Price: 19,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com

KAMALA CONDO FOR RENT/SALE

Peaceful but convenient area, 5 minutes walk to Kamala beach. Well kept and clean, fully furnished. For long term rent: 28,000 baht per month. Sale: 6.5 million baht. Tel: 089-780 4568 (English & Thai). Email: taareel@gmail.com

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1-bedroom furnished apartment, available now till 5 December 2012, good rate, swim pool, gym, wifi, cable TV, parking. 800m to beach. Tel: 085-069 0938. Email: nnorthwo@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT/SALE

3 bedrooms, fully furnished with aircons in quiet area at Patak Villa near Chalong pier. Long term rent or sale. Contact Kijtipong. Tel: 081-677 8638 (English & Thai). Email: emedward@hotmail.com

THE ROYAL PLACE CONDO



Bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 45sqm, 3fl with swimming pool view, 2 terraces, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, cable TV, 24 security with key card etc). Pls contact for more details. Tel: 086-476 9612.

2-BEDROOM HOUSE, BANG TAO



2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, terrace, living room, parking, fully furnished, cable TV, internet, 2 aircons, hot water. Only 5 mins to Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach and Lotus Cherg Talay. Tel: 089-470 7488. Email: nattamon.m@gmail.com

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

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3 bedrooms, big pool and garden, 4 aircons, 9 fans. All new, luxury furniture, hi-speed internet, HD TV. Tel: 089-052 8970, 089-052 3534 (English). Email: ordersofte@gmail.com

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For rent, near Palai beach, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon, ADSL, fully furnished, cable TV, car park. Tel: 089-728 8311.

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Designed for comfort and security, has all. Laguna. Rent: 35,000 baht per month. Bargain. Tel: 089-594 4067.

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Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

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Fully furnished modern house with 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Spacious dining area, stylish open western kitchen. Living room with balcony, full aircon. All extras: LCD, internet, satellite. Quiet setting. Tel: 084-185 8536 (English).

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

• Chef

Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in food related degree and/or culinary training and/or related experiences to ensure quality dishes are served
- Two or more years in food industry or business with management skills and food safety
- Modify and create new menus as needed, Thai food & European food
- English competency
- Computer literate
- Leadership in food related training
- Team player with service mind

• IT Coordinator

Qualifications

- Thai Nationality, Bachelor's Degree
- Computer skills including using Microsoft Word and Excel
- Ability to communicate in and write in English
- Good organization skills and the ability to multitask

Key Tasks

- Coordinate daily work schedules for technicians
- Coordinate IT related tasks with other departments
- Contact person for students, staff and parents on IT related issues, particularly computer maintenance
- Secretarial work for the IT department

• Science Technician

Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in Science
- A background in chemistry and experience in preparing solutions
- Fluent in English
- Be hardworking, willing, enthusiastic, flexible and motivated to develop own skills
- Experience working in a Science Technician role is desirable

• Teacher's Assistant

Qualifications

- Thai Nationality, Bachelor's Degree in related field
- Teaching qualifications and experience of child care / teaching preferable
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Strong interpersonal and organizational skills
- Loves to take care of children

Benefits: group insurance, provident fund, meal etc.



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Jagota Brothers Trading Co., Ltd. Long time well established food importer and supplier to hotels and restaurants welcomes applications from experienced sales people. Must be fluent in written & spoken English. Background in food industry preferred. Must have own car to visit customers. Tel: 082-790 5143. Please forward resumes and references to George. Email: george_d@jagota.com

PROPERTY NEGOTIATION/SALES/ RENT

Qualifications:

- Bachelor / University.
- Woman Thai nationality.
- Preferably 20-35 years old.
- Excellent command of written and spoken English.
- Minimum 1-2 years experience in selling property is an advantage.
- Good negotiation.
- Pleasant personality, positive attitude, energetic.
- Motivated and hard working to achieve results.
- Service minded with attention to detail.
- Active and well organized pro.
- Computer literacy.
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Interested candidates please send full resume, expected salary and enclose a recent photo by email to Khun Patrice: phuket.employment@gmail.com

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Customer service agents needed for expanding internet fashion retailer. Are you CS experienced, Thai, hard working, computer savvy and fluent in English? Salary of 17-27,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-289 472. Email: graham@holyclothing.com. For full details click here: www.holyclothing.com/htmlx/work.html

HUMAN RESOURCES

Group of companies operating in the property and F&B market, is looking for a Human Resources Manager with experiences in recruitment and evaluation to support the organization's business goals. The ideal candidate is Thai nationality, organized, and confident. Tel: 076-383 435. Email: info@obiettivothailandia.com

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With good spoken and written English. Salary from 20,000 baht. Tel: 080-879 6058.

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- Fluent German language in reading + writing
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- High responsibility and punctuality
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Email: info@vsdma.com

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- Strong problem solving and decision making skills

Accounting Manager

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree or higher in Accountancy
- Solid background in hotel accounting
- Excellent computer skills and results-driven
- Good attention to detail, strong leadership and highly organized
- Good command of spoken and written English

Human Resources Officer

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree, good computer skills
- Good command of spoken and written English
- Previous experience preferred

Guest Service Officer

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree, fresh graduates are welcome
- Customer oriented, motivated
- Good command of spoken and written English

Purchasing Officer

Qualifications:

- Diploma or higher
- Previous experience preferred

Spa Receptionist

Qualifications:

- Female with pleasant personality
- Diploma or higher with previous experience
- Good command of spoken and written English

Sports and Beach Attendant

Qualifications:

- Male with previous experience
- Able to communicate in English
- Customer oriented

General / Operation Technician

Qualifications:

- Male with previous experience
- Committed to work

Waiter & Barman

Qualifications:

- Basic knowledge in F&B
- Customer oriented with pleasant personality
- Able to communicate in English



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Phuket Gazette

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- ▶ Responsible, hard-working, attention to detail
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- ▶ Good communication skills, team player
- ▶ Thai-English speaker

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Khun Anna (General Manager), by email, fax or post to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd
79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, T. Koh Keaw, A. Muang Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-273555, ext 102 Fax: 076-615240 Email: anna@phuketgazette.net

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Ezystays (Travel Club), located in Patong, is looking to recruit a Thai Admin Assistant for its busy sales office. Candidates must have a good command of the English language and be able to work efficiently with Word and XL, and basic knowledge of accounts. Salary is negotiable depending on experience. All applicants must apply with a cover letter and CV in English with photo. We offer an excellent working environment and a 5-day work week. Tel: 076-341 421. Email: clientliaison@ezystays.com

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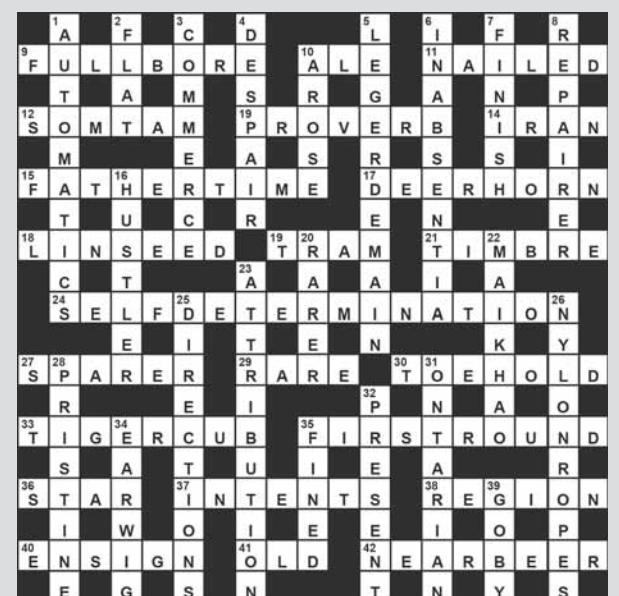
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London Olympics round up

By Andrew Scott

USAIN Bolt won the men's 100 meters breaking the Olympic record in a time of 9.63 seconds. As many predicted before the race he was closely followed by compatriot Yohan Blake who came in at 9.75s to claim silver and American Justin Gatlin claimed bronze with 9.79s.

Andy Murray defeated Roger Federer in straight sets to win tennis gold and in the process made Federer wait another four years for the chance to win the one tournament that has eluded him. Murray was looking for revenge on the same court Federer ended the Scot's Wimbledon dream last month. Murray's 6-2 6-1 6-4 victory was Britain's first medal in Olympic tennis since 1920.

Cyclist Sir Chris Hoy became Britain's greatest ever Olympian when he won his sixth gold medal. Hoy ended his Olympic career on a high and overtook the record of five gold medals originally held by rower Sir Steve Redgrave.

Oscar "Blade Runner" Pistorius made it as far as the semifinals of the 400 meters before his Olympic dream ended. The South African had both his legs amputated below the

knee when he was a baby and runs with the aid of carbon fiber lower legs. He struggled to keep up with the other runners in the semifinal and finished in last place. Pistorius still has the 4x400 relay to look forward to.

Veteran light flyweight Kaew Pongprayoon is ready to fight for his place in the spotlight when the diminutive boxer takes on unfavored Alexandar

Alexsandrov of Bulgaria in the quarterfinal bout of the 49kg class. Kaew is the only Thai boxer left in the Olympics.

The last day of the Olympics is this Sunday and the closing ceremony is expected to feature icons of British music such as George Michael, Pink Floyd, The Who and The Spice Girls.

The closing ceremony will also feature a showcase of samba music and Brazilian culture as the Olympic flag is passed onto the next Olympic city, Rio De Janeiro.

Saturday: men's 50 kilometer walk, men's boxing light fly final, men's football final, women's volleyball bronze medal match.

Sunday: men's marathon, men's boxing fly (52kg) final bout, men's handball bronze medal match.



LIGHTNING: Usain Bolt celebrates after 100 meter victory at the London Olympics. Photo:AFP

Community Shield on Sunday

THE curtain raiser for the Premier league season, the Community Shield, sees FA Cup winners Chelsea take on league champions Manchester City at Villa Park this Sunday.

Chelsea's build up to this game, and more importantly the season, has seen the London club invest heavily in new attacking players.

Roman Abramovich has allowed Roberto Di Matteo to sign Marko Marin (6 million pounds sterling, Werder Bremen), Eden Hazard (32 million pound sterling, Lille), Thorgan Hazard (undisclosed, Lens), Oscar (25 million pounds sterling, Internacional) and let Didier Drogba and Saloman Kalou leave Stamford Bridge for nothing.

With the influential Drogba heading to Shanghai and Abramovich willing to throw his money at young attacking players; this new era could signal the end of Chelsea's famous old guard.

Lampard, Terry and Cole will not quietly fade into the background and Cole is still one of the best left backs in the world (he is currently in talks about signing a new contract), but Lampard and Terry should be a little concerned.

Chelsea have beefed up their midfield and they continue to be

linked with Victor Moses a young midfielder from Wigan and defender Cesar Azpilicueta from Marseille.

Chelsea are doing what Roberto Mancini at Manchester City has been fortunate enough to do the last couple of seasons and what Andre Villa Boas wishes they did when he was in charge.

Roberto Mancini at Manchester City has been surprisingly quiet in the transfer market over the summer. Etihad Stadium has not witnessed a single new player visit the ground to see the shiny Premier League trophy.

City, with all their wealth, have kept their cheque book firmly shut. They have been linked with a number of players and submitted numerous bids but so far nothing has materialized.

Liverpool are playing hardball over Daniel Agger and Mancini has publicly admired Robin Van Persie but the Dutchman doesn't seem to be returning the compliment.

Mancini knows that he doesn't need to make any wholesale changes to the squad just a bit of tweaking here and there.

Chelsea will be hoping for a confidence boosting win this Sunday as they have lost three successive preseason matches.

Manchester City on the other hand have enjoyed a successful tour of Germany with Sergio Aguero and Yaya Toure picking up from where they left off at the end of last season.



ITALIAN: Manchester City manager Roberto Mancini



Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich

SPORTS briefs...

FOOTBALL: England have moved to an unprecedented third in FIFA world rankings.

The national team moved above Uruguay who didn't claim any points in FIFA's rankings for their Copa America victory.

Wales move up a place to 37, Scotland dropped to 46, Republic of Ireland's position at 26 was not affected by their awful performance at the EURO 2012 and Northern Ireland moved up to 101.

The Fifa world rankings are

compiled every month, with ranking points accumulated according to results, the importance of the matches played and the strength of opposing teams.

Top 20 teams: 1.Spain 2.Germany 3.England 4.Uruguay 5.Portugal 6.Italy 7.Argentina 8.Netherlands 9.Croatia 10.Denmark 11.Russia 12.Greece 13.Brazil, 14.France 15.Chile 16. Ivory Coast 17.Sweden 18.Mexico 19. Czech Republic 20.Ecuador.

Brazil have reached a new low of 13.

NFL:The NFL has been such a success in London that the football league is looking at a second overseas destination to host a regular season game. Wembley Stadium in London has hosted a regular season game every year since 2005. The NFL is looking at the possibility of playing a game at Croke Park in Dublin. The NFL has already visited Croke Park to assess its suitability. The ground has a capacity of 82,500 and the city of Dublin will host a college game between Notre Dame and Navy, which is a sell out.

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Laguna reigns over the Village

The Outrigger T20 league saw defending champs Laguna walk away winners

DEFENDING T20 champions Laguna took on the Village in the Outrigger T20 league on Sunday, August 5.

The Village were hoping to avenge their defeat by Laguna in the final of the Island Furniture League. However, Laguna came out winners once again after setting a target of 152 runs while the Village could only manage a total of 123 runs from their 20 overs.

Laguna won the toss and elected to bat first, hoping to set a solid total. The Village got off to a promising start with the prized scalp of Neill Culpan (11) in the second over.

Dave Kelleway (12) looked threatening after dispatching two balls in a row to the boundary. However, he was bowled on the very next ball in the 4th over with the score on 30. Raj Raymaji (3) then joined opener Darren Shaw (48 not out) at the crease and the Village managed to contain the run rate with Raymaji dismissed in the 7th over with the total on 41 runs.

Laguna captain, Stuart Reading (45) then joined Shaw at the crease and they put on a 67 run partnership. Reading was particularly ruthless dispatching loose balls to the boundary. He was eventually dismissed after top edging a leg-side ball in the 15th over with 108 runs on the scoreboard.

The Village once again managed to contain the Laguna lads during the later part of their innings with limited boundaries being conceded during the last 5 overs. At the end of 20 overs,

Laguna had reached 151 runs for the loss of 4 wickets. Pick of the bowlers for the Village were Craig Patterson (2 for 17) and Craig Murphy (1 for 29).

The Village's innings got off to a slow start as openers Martin Foster (5) and Village captain, Kevin Quilty (6), faced a pace attack from Neill Culpan and Sami Ullah. The bowlers had to wait until the 4th over to get a breakthrough, when Ullah scattered Quilty's stumps.

Foster suffered the same fate at the hands of Culpan in the next over. Mark Ashman (16) was next to the crease and hoping to replicate his recent form displayed against ICC when he top scored. He proved attack was the best form of defense once again which included a towering six scattering the patrons in the clubhouse.

However, he also had his stumps rattled in the 10th over with the score on 53 and 4 wickets down.

At the 10 over mark, the match was still in the balance as Laguna were only 57 runs at the same point. James Firth (30) and Craig Patterson (10) then put on a 51 run partnership to take the score to 104.

Firth fell in the 16th over followed by Patterson in the 17th over, and the Village were limited to just 123 runs from their 20 overs. Pick of the bowlers for Laguna were Lijo Jose (2 for 15), Sami Ullah (2 for 22) and Neill Culpan (1 for 17).

After match 4, Laguna are undefeated from their two matches, Patong and ICC have one win from their two matches and the Village are yet to register a win.

— *Phuket Gazette*



BOWLING: (Top) A batsman aims for the boundary during last weekend's cricket action at the ACG.



Teen superstar earns multi-million baht deal

RATCHANOK Inthanon has been offered a multi-million-baht deal by a Chinese badminton club after the club saw her brilliant performance in London.

The 17-year-old from Yasothorn thrilled fans around the country when she gave world No 2 Wang Xin of China a scare, before eventually losing their Olympics quarter-final match 21-17 18-21 14-21 on Thursday night.

In her Olympic debut, Ratchanok topped her group, then clinched an upset win over fifth seed Juliane Schenk of Germany in the round of 16, before putting up a gutsy fight against Wang, the 2010 World Championships silver medalist.

Kamala Thongkorn, manager of Ratchanok's home club, Ban Thong Yod, said her splendid form had caught the attention of Tsingtao Club, who proposed a seven-figure contract for her services in the Chinese Super League.

Ratchanok, who became the first Thai shuttler to reach the Olympics women's

singles quarterfinals, expressed interest in the deal but said she would study the details when she returned home.

"The deal is quite interesting, but what is more important is the chance it offers to develop my skills against the many top players in the Chinese league.

"But, I will have to consult my guardians, because I'm concerned about my studies, too," she said.

If she accepts the deal, Ratchanok will fly to China on August 23 to represent the club until December. She is also due to play for Thailand in the Japan Open and China Masters in September.

The three-time World Junior champion admitted to losing sleep after coming so close to upsetting the world No 2 and winning the first game.

Leading by 16-9 in the second, her more experienced rival turned the tide to win.

"It's a shame, because I should have won that match, but I let it slip away," said Ratchanok.

— *The Nation*



ALMOST: Three-time World Junior champion Ratchanok Inthanon was the first Thai woman to make it to the Olympic women's singles quarterfinals. Photo: The Nation

Krabi hooligans hold Phuket fans hostage, fined B60,000



GUERRILLA TACTICS: One of the Krabi hooligans was captured on tape by Phuket fans.

By Steven Layne

AIMING to establish order amid chaotic times, the Thai Premiere League (TPL) last week dished out more than 100,000 baht in fines to various teams playing in its first division, including three of the league's four Southern teams.

The biggest fine by far, 60,000 baht, was given to Krabi FC, while Phuket FC was fined 10,000 baht and Phatthalung FC 4,000 baht.

Krabi's fine derived from three 20,000 baht violations that occurred during and after the teams derby match with Phuket FC at Krabi provincial stadium last Sunday.

These included allowing fans to launch a large amount of debris onto the pitch during play, allowing an unruly fan armed with a wooden staff to come onto the field, and for barricading the stadium, preventing fans from leaving safely.

Some 400 Phuket FC fans, players and staff were held hostage for nearly three hours inside the stadium following the heated match that ended in a goalless draw.

Traveling to Krabi by bus, members of Phuket's three main fan clubs – the Hard

Core, Hulk and Mask – were united into one energized cheering force to reinforce their boys in the 20th match of the season.

The supporters were hoping the new look Islanders could avenge the teams 0-1 loss to Krabi in Phuket on July 7 and grab much-needed points to prevent them from relegation next season.

Though clear underdogs in Sunday's meeting, Phuket put up a commendable and strategically well-played fight, keeping the score level at the end of the first half.

The intensity of the struggle went up a notch 10 minutes into the second half, when Phuket defender Nenebi was sent off after collecting his second yellow card.

All in, Phuket had accumulated six yellow cards in the match – immediate grounds for a 10,000 baht fine.

But despite relentless pressure on Phuket keeper Alonso, the Islanders held on for a hard-fought draw.

A certain segment of supporters from the home stands, however, were less than content with the result, the officiating and Phuket's players and fans alike.

Particularly infuriated by Phuket's time-



Krabi FC President, Somkiat (in blue) negotiates with Phuket's Pamuk (white hat).

killing tactics late in the game, enraged home fans reverted to launching their 'plastic rockets' at both officials and Phuket players alike, while security did little to stop them.

At game's end, a squabble ensued when a number of unruly Krabi fans came over to the Phuket cheering section, where the visitor fans had just finished singing their traditional tribute song to their team.

Rocks, bottles and wooden boards were launched, prompting the micro-hostage situation in which hundreds of fans retreated to the relative safety of the wide-open, well-lit pitch. Joining them in solidarity were a number of more friendly Krabi fans.

Negotiations ensued between the two clubs, led by their respective presidents, Krabi's Somkiat Kitithorakul and Phuket's Pamuk Atchiriyachai.

One Phuket fan was asked to apologize for pushing one of the stadium guards. Considering the circumstances, the fan reluctantly obliged and the rest of the fans, staff and players were safely escorted out of the stadium by about 10:30pm, fans arriving back home in Phuket by 1am.

Though earning a point, Phuket remained in 15th place of the 18-team league. The one point garnered by Krabi was enough to move the Andaman Eagles to third place, back into promotion zone.

Regarding other violations, Phatthalung's fine was given for the team fielding an unregistered player in their 1-1 draw with JW Rangsit last Sunday.

Suzuki Sri Racha FC also picked up 18,000 baht in fines over the weekend in their 0-2 loss to Nakhon Ratchasima; 8,000 baht was from two of their coaching staff crossing the technical area boundaries during play (4,000 baht x 2), and an additional 10,000 baht came from the side accumulating five yellow cards.

Also fined for five yellows last weekend was PTT Rayong, following their 1-0 win over league leaders Ratchaburi Mitraphol.

At the time of going to press, Phuket were playing their 21st match of the season against Royal Navy at Surakul Stadium.

For the results and report to that match, see the Gazette Sports section online. Also, see editorial on page 10

Thai Futsal warming up



The Thailand National Futsal team is ranked 11th in the world.

IN PREPARATION for the the 2012 Futsal World Cup, which will be held in Thailand in November, the Thailand national squad is on a European tour to play a number of warm up matches as follows. On August 9, they took on Dutch club, VDL Heinohefein; Belgian club Malle on August 10; Dutch club Sad VKK Hommel on Aug 13; Spanish clubs Pampolana on August 16 and Saragosa on August 18.

Having qualified automatically as hosts, Thailand are currently ranked 11th in the world. The Thai team is also set to play two friendly matches against World number 1, Spain, on August 24 and 26.

– Steven Layne

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Orphans team up with Olympic finalists

A GROUP of school children on Phuket played their part in helping the American pair of Jennifer Kessy and April Ross reach the Beach Volleyball Olympic final.

Last year the duo competed in the *Fédération Internationale de Volleyball* (FIVB) Women's World Tour in Karon and took some time out from competing in their tour nament to watch a school tournament that was taking place at the same time.

Teams from four schools in Phuket competed in the event where SOS Children's Village emerged victorious.

SOS Children's Village is located next to the Royal Phuket Marina and was set up to help disadvantaged children and those affected by the 2004 Tsunami. The Village has twelve family homes that house 120 children, a community house with medical room and a kindergarten.

Bob Selznick organized the school volleyball tournament and it is through him that the American duo decided to try and help the girls from SOS Children's Village. Bob met the American pair in California



GOING FOR GOLD: April Ross lunges for the ball during her and Jennifer Kessy's semifinal victory at the Olympics in London. Photo: AFP

a number of years ago when they were just getting started on the volleyball scene and bumped into them again at Karon.

Jennifer and April watched the school tournament and took an interest in the girls team from SOS

Children's Village, asking Bob what the girls needed in terms of beach volleyball equipment.

After leaving Phuket and heading back to America, Jennifer and April sent balls, FIVB tops, autographed pictures and money

to use to buy and design uniforms.

As a show of support and to thank Jennifer and April, children from the village sent the girls good luck messages and pictures to help support them in the Olympics.

The sports stars plan to visit the

Village to practice with the girls when they return to Phuket later this year to compete in the FIVB Women's World Tour.

Jennifer and April reached the final in their first ever Olympic appearance.

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