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■ ‘I AM IN THE FIRE – THERE IS NO WAY OUT OF HERE, I LOVE YOU’: MICHAEL TZOUVANNI

OUT OF THE ASHES

■ Tiger Discotheque tragedy raises specter of Thailand's nightclub fire safety rules

By **Gazette reporters**

A PRE-DAWN fire swept through the iconic Tiger Discotheque in Patong early on August 17, killing four people and injuring at least 11 others. The tragedy thrust Phuket once again into the international media spotlight and raised further concerns abroad about the safety of the island as a tourist destination.

News of the blaze was reported to Patong Police at about 4am, some two hours after the designated closing time for all venues in the Bangla Road night-entertainment district. Eight Patong Municipality Fire Department fire engines responded, managing to extinguish the fire after about one hour.

By all accounts, the conflagration grew at a furious pace, making escape impossible for four victims who were trapped on the mezzanine section at the back of the pub, where they were burned beyond recognition.

A Kusoldharm Foundation rescue worker who helped recover the bodies said all four were found outside the second-floor bathroom, just a few meters from a fire escape door.

The only one of the four victims to have been positively identified as this issue of the *Gazette* goes to print was 24-year-old British national Michael Tzouvanni. The construction developer from London, who reportedly loved the Bangla nightlife scene, was identified after his elder brother Joseph flew to Phuket to try and locate him after hearing about the fire. The identification, based on dental records provided by the family, was announced by the Royal Thai Police Institute of Forensic Medicine in Bangkok on Tuesday.

Mr Tzouvanni reportedly called his best friend at 4am and said: “I am in the fire – there is no way out of here, I love you.” His official cause of death was later given as suffocation and smoke inhalation....

Continued on Page 3



A Kusoldharm Foundation rescue worker bows her head near the side entrance to the ill-fated Tiger Discotheque, where up until the fire patrons could enter the nightspot by stepping through the open jaws of a tiger. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

FLOODS CUT ISLAND ROADS

SOME of the heaviest rain to fall on the island this year – more than 177mm within 24 hours in Phuket Town – brought traffic to a grinding halt on Wednesday as floodwaters cut across major roads, threatened access to Patong Hospital and downed power poles....

Full story on page 2

Election Alcohol Ban

THE *Gazette* would like to remind readers that the sale and purchase of alcohol will be banned this weekend as voters go to the polls to elect a new Phuket Provincial Administration Organization council.

In accordance with the regulations laid out in the Election Act, the sale of alcohol will be prohibited island-wide from 6pm Saturday, August 25, to midnight on Sunday, August 26.

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This Week



Business

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Technology

The future of computing: Live Wire gazes into the IT crystal ball. **Page 14**



History

Remembering the Free Thai Movement of World War II. **Page 16**



Humor

A lighter look at the goings-on round about Phuket. **Page 19**



Arts

Sex and drugs and Rock & Roll. The best from Internet TV. **Page 22**



Sport

PIA students contend for the top national gokart positions. **Page 47**

Saturday



Sunday



Monday



Tuesday



Wednesday



Thursday



Heavy rains usher in island flooding

HEAVY rain on Tuesday night turned to floods by Wednesday morning, affecting large areas of Phuket, with traffic brought to a standstill throughout Phuket Town and tailbacks of more than 10 kilometers on the main arteries leading into the city.

The Thai Meteorological Department weather monitoring station at Phuket Airport recorded 93mm of rainfall in the 24 hours preceding 7am Wednesday, with 34mm of that falling within a three-hour period. Phuket Town suffered a much more severe lashing, with 177mm of rain drenching the town within 24 hours – 95mm of that in just three hours.

Due to the traffic jams, Thai Airways flight number TG204, was delayed for 30 minutes to allow passengers arriving late to clear entry procedures and take their seats on board the aircraft.

Meanwhile, Phuket Highways Office Director Samak Luedwonghad confirmed that his office received reports of a landslide in Paklok.

"However, it was only mud on the road. Nobody was injured and no houses were damaged."

"We also received a report of a damaged road in Paklok Village 4. The road was blocked. It is clear now and traffic can pass as usual."

In Phuket Town, Phuket Wittayalai School and Satree Phuket School were both closed



Several roads across Phuket were damaged due to the heavy rains, including the critical route over Patong Hill. Photo: Sampawat Wannasangkarn

as floodwater swept through several areas in nearby Rassada.

Rassada Mayor Phudit Raksarat told the *Gazette*, "As much as 40 per cent of Rassada municipal area has been affected by the floods, especially in Soi King Kaew."

Patong was also hit by minor flooding, with Phang Muang Sai Kor Road flooding as usual, causing traffic tailbacks in the area.

Patong Hospital Director Dr Phumin Silaphan reported at the height of the flooding that people could still access the hospital,

located on the corner of Sai Nam Yen Road and Phang Muang Sai Kor Road.

"We are monitoring the water level, but have no plan to move patients just yet," he said.

Several roads across Phuket were damaged, including the critical route over Patong Hill between Patong to Phuket Town.

The outside lane eastbound, toward Phuket Town, was closed about 150 meters from Sea Pearl Villas.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Dead whale washes ashore

THE carcass of a sperm whale measuring nine meters long and weighing an estimated six tons was found washed ashore at Bang Sak Beach in Phang Nga, north of Phuket, on Wednesday.

Experts from the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) believe the whale died at sea from an illness about four days earlier and its carcass was washed ashore by the rough water.

Not knowing who to call, local villagers who first spotted the dead whale reported the find to local rescue workers, who arrived to find the whale on the sand in front of the Royal Bangsak Beach Resort. They reported that the whale had no teeth, and an overpowering stench of "rotting fish".



The carcass of the sperm whale measured nine meters long.

Dr Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong, from the PMBC, told the *Gazette* that, "Sperm whales live in deep waters; such as off the Similan Islands. It was probably washed ashore after it died"

PMBC officers hope that they will be able to identify the cause of death, he said.

– *Kritsada Mueanhawong*

Police top brass appeals for public help

ROYAL Thai Police Assistant Commissioner-General Chalermkiat Srivorakan has appealed to the people of Phuket to help police efforts in maintaining public safety.

The Assistant Commissioner's plea came at the launch of a publicity campaign in Patong on August 17 to promote the new Patong Safety Zone project to tourists.

"Crime is on the rise everywhere these days, especially in tourist areas where foreigners are targeted. This directly affects the reputation of those areas among

tourists," Lt Gen Chalermkiat said.

"Ensuring the safety of tourists and tackling the problem of crime is necessary and requires every part of society to cooperate."

Patong Police chief Chiraphat Pochanaphan told the *Gazette*, "We need 90 more officers. There simply are not enough new recruits. Every police station has the same problem."

He added that police were working with volunteers, such as beach guards and security guards, and issuing them with police radios so they could report any incidents.



Assistant Commissioner-General Chalermkiat Srivorakan.



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CENTARA GRAND BEACH RESORT PHUKET

Tiger Disco fire fuels safety concerns

From Page 1

The identity of the other three bodies, two females and a male, remain officially unconfirmed.

Police forensics investigators on Wednesday flatly denied the widespread allegations that the death toll was probably much higher, but that some bodies had been completely incinerated.

Pol Col Nattapol Samsen, superintendent of the Police Forensic Science Office in Bangkok, told the *Gazette*: "There could not have been more than four dead because our officers searched the area very carefully and thoroughly. The fire burned for an hour; with this duration, it is impossible that any corpse could have been completely incinerated. Some evidence would have remained, even if it were just skeletal."

INJURIES

Hundreds of people managed to flee the venue through its seven standard exits and eight fire exits, though eleven people were rushed to Patong Hospital for a variety of injuries that varied from smoke inhalation to broken bones, sustained in the stampede-like conditions, as people tried to escape.

The most seriously injured person was 30-year-old Frenchman Benjamin Tallanotte, who suffered second-degree burns to 40 per cent of his body. He was among two victims who required admittance to Patong Hospital. A female witness who escaped unharmed told the *Gazette* that she noticed that Mr Talanotte was badly burned and assisted him to safety.

CAUSES

Some initial reports released in the immediate aftermath of the fire attributed the cause to an electrical transformer that exploded due to a lightning strike.

Thamrongsak Boonrak, Legal Counsel



Mr Wasawat (inset) pointed out the danger and legal issues of using polystyrene foam.

for the Tiger Group, told the *Gazette* later the same day that the power shut down and came back on three times before staff heard an explosion. Thinking it was a bomb, they fled in panic as the fire broke out.

Atipong Thongyon, who heads the Provincial Electricity Authority (PEA) Patong Office, the following morning denied that a transformer explosion could have started the fire.

"We have checked the transformer and it is operating normally. Another transformer, belonging to Tiger Discotheque, is also working normally," he said.

Mr Atipong said that the electricity went off at 3:52am, before reports of the fire circulated.

"So if the fire was not caused by transformers blowing up, it is possible it was caused by an electrical short," he suggested.

As this edition goes to print, there was no official report or conclusion as to what

started the fire, so the possibility of an arson attack or bombing have yet to be ruled out.

FLAMMABLE FOAM

While the source of ignition remains unclear, there is little doubt that the rapid spread of the fire was fueled by the highly-flammable polystyrene foam used in making the Tiger Discotheque's trademark interior decorations.

The news came two days after the fire, when officers from the Department of Public Works and Town and Country Planning, the Association of Siamese Architects Under Royal Patronage (ASA) and the Building Safety Inspectors and Office Association (BSA) inspected the gutted remains of the building.

"The decorations on the second floor were made from polystyrene foam, which is similar to what was used in the Santika

pub," said Pol Lt Col Bundit Pradubsuk, chairman of the ASA's Security Architecture Committee.

BSA Vice President Wasawat Kritsiritirapak on Sunday explained that new regulations were put in place this year to restrict the use of such highly-flammable materials inside buildings.

Mr Wasawat called for action to be taken to enforce the new regulation. "It is necessary to have entertainment venue owners across the nation make changes in order to fall in line with the new regulation," he said.

Lt Col Bundit said that the Tiger Discotheque had eight fire exits with signs, meeting building code requirement.

OFFICIAL REACTION

While the extensive use of polystyrene foam in the building construction has yet to be formally confirmed as a major cause of the tragedy, this fact has not stopped Phuket Provincial Office from ordering local administrations to check all nightclubs in their areas of jurisdiction to ensure compliance with building codes.

BAD TIMING

That so many people were still inside the venue two hours after the official closing time was also a matter of concern to Gov Tri.

"The Phuket Provincial Office has assigned a committee to investigate whether or not Patong Police are neglecting their duty by allowing night-entertainment venues to open past designated closing times," Gov Tri said.

"The rules and regulations are already in place. Now it's up to people who have the authority to be more strict about law enforcement," he added.

Staff and management of Tiger Group continue to maintain that the club did not breach the closing regulations.

Also see: related stories, pp6-7; editorial, p10

Northbound tour bus flips

A TOUR bus flipped onto its side early on Tuesday, blocking three lanes of traffic and causing long tailbacks on Thepkasattri Road hours later.

Sen Sgt Maj Kitti Klaisamniang of Phuket City Traffic Police confirmed there were no passengers on board the bus at the time of the accident.

"Only the driver was on board. He suffered minor injuries," Sgt Kitti said.

"The road was slippery because of the rain, and the driver lost con-



The bus had no passengers at the time of the crash.

trol of the vehicle when he tried to negotiate the curve," said Sgt Kitti.

— Orawin Narabal

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Mum sues for B24.5mn over slain son

THE mother of slain Swede Maksim Schantz will be adding a civil suit to the criminal charges against the alleged killers Johan Sebastian Ljung and Tommy Viktor Soderlund.

Aeknara Luangsanam of the Public Prosecutor's Office told the *Gazette* on August 14 that part

of the reason the court trial had been delayed was to give Schantz's mother, Yvonne Raissa Schantz, 52, more time to prepare her case against the accused.

"Mrs Schantz is suing the accused for 24.5 million baht for financial compensation due to the emotional duress she has suffered

from the loss of her son," Mr Aeknara told the *Gazette*.

The court has charged them with premeditated murder, collaboration in robbery and carrying a knife and an unlicensed firearm with ammunition.

They have denied all charges.

— Atchaa Khamlo

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Patong Tunnel inches forward to 2018

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE Expressway Authority of Thailand (EXAT), the government agency tasked with conducting a feasibility study of the Patong Road Tunnel project, has said that the tunnel from Kathu to Patong could be completed by 2018 if the budget is procured by the 2013 financial year.

A study undertaken in November 2011 projected the amount required from the central government at 3.5 billion baht. The figure being considered in March of this year, during the mobile Cabinet meeting in Phuket was B5.5bn.

In June this year, however, EXAT Governor Aiyarat Tinapai announced that new design features included by EXAT have raised that figure to B6bn.

Speaking at a meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Transport at Phuket International Airport this week to discuss unrelated taxi issues, EXAT Deputy Governor for Technical Affairs Sintop Sirisingha gave the attending media a progress report on the tunnel project.

"One of the important issues we have had to face is the use of the tunnel by motorbikes and *salang* (motorbikes with sidecars), and parking facilities around the tunnel entrances," he said.

In a meeting with Patong Mayor Pian Keesan in June, EXAT Governor Aiyarat Tinapai explained that motorbikes are nor-



EXAT have planned for elevated road sections to join the tunnel from both directions, but it has increased the price tag, explained Sintop Sirisingha. MAP: Google Earth / EXAT

mally not allowed on expressways operated by EXAT, but that Phuket was a special case, as it is a tourist destination, and this would make things more convenient for tourists.

Mr Sintop reiterated some of the design characteristics that would be included in the tunnel construction.

"The lane assignment is designed to be able to alternate the traffic flow in case of

emergency. The tunnel must be able to handle evacuation from Patong in case of a natural disaster such as an earthquake or tsunami. Furthermore, the tunnel itself must be able to survive an earthquake," he explained.

The EXAT design plan is slightly different than the one the Patong Municipality had selected. The Patong Municipality's plan designed the entrances to the tunnel to be at ground level and have traffic lights to control the traffic flow at the junction allowing access to and from both tunnels. EXAT plans to build flyovers at street level rising to the tunnel.

"We will set up the toll collection booths and construct the control center building to monitor the electricity supply and other utilities in the tunnel such as emergency telephones and a CCTV system," said Mr Sintop.

"The beginning of the road that will go through the tunnel will be in Kathu district. It will start at a new intersection from route 4029 [road approaching Patong Hill]. The tunnel approach road will be raised on a 577m flyover consisting of four or six lanes."

"Once emerging from the tunnel on the Patong side, another four-to-six-lane, 3km flyover will descend to connect at ground level with Phang Muang Sai Kor Road [at the rear of the Jungceylon shopping complex]," he said.

'Superchu' Facebook tip-off sparks gambling den raid



Controversial Thai MP Chuwit Kamolvisit, teased police that they already knew the locations of the Phuket gambling dens. Photo: Facebook

PHUKET Police raided a gambling den operating near a government school in Kathu on August 15 after its location was revealed by controversial MP Chuwit Kamolvisit, on one of his Facebook pages.

The raid on the gambling den, at 7:20pm in a house about 100 meters from Baan Kathu School, was conducted by 15 officers from the Phuket Provincial Police and Thung Thong Police.

"We arrested 11 gamblers, men and women, who were caught gambling on a dice game. We seized gambling items and 3,900 baht in cash," said Col Wanchai Palawan, who led the raid.

"The suspects have all been charged with gambling," he added.

On his "Chuwit I'm No. 5" Facebook page, MP Chuwit revealed the locations of seven

different gambling dens in Phuket, as follows:

1. An unnamed den in Soi Bai Lan, off Chao Fa Road, in Phuket Town
2. Ko Bee den, near Chalong Circle
3. Go Ber den, near a small temple in Baan Kuku (in Rassada)
4. Go Nong den, near Baan Kathu School [the den raided last night]
5. Ko Jai den, near Heroines' Monument
6. Ko Yuth den, near a popular seafood restaurant in Rassada
7. Nayok Or den, also called the "Muang Mai den", opposite a gas station near Phuket International Airport

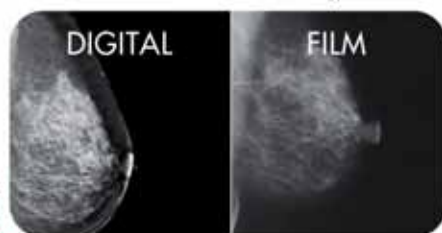
He also posted on his Facebook page a footnote: "This information if my gift to Region 8 Police, but in reality you already knew about all this."

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Airport B5.7bn expansion 'likely to start next year'

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE 5.7-billion-baht expansion of Phuket International Airport is likely to begin next year, and take two and half years to complete, the Senate Standing Committee on Transportation was told last week.

The committee, led by Chairman Kecha Sak-somboon, heard the news at a high-profile meeting held at the airport on August 15.

"The 5.7-billion baht project has now passed its tender offer process," explained Wing Commander Pratheep Wichittho, Deputy Director of Airports of Thailand (AoT) Public Co Ltd, which operates Phuket Airport*.

"On August 23, the relevant authorities will consider and decide which construction company will be selected. I believe the project will start next year," he added.

In light of the impending major construction work, Mr Pratheep

explained that all commercial business contracts and concessions to operate taxi and rental car areas at the airport will be extended for only another six months.

Phuket Airport Director Pratuang Sornkham told the meeting, attended by Phuket Senator Thanyarat Achariyachai and Transport Ministry Inspector-General Sumpun Pongthai, as well as officers from other departments, that more seats had already been installed in the

departure lounges and the restrooms have been renovated.

"We expect nine million people to use the airport this year," he said.

Once completed, the expansion project is expected to boost passenger capacity at Phuket Airport to 12 million travellers a year.

However, Committee Chairman Kecha said the main purpose of the senatorial visit was to hear the complaint against the airport

'The terms of the tender stipulate that construction take no longer than 31 months'

— Wing Commander Pratheep Wichittho



The CGI artist rendition of the airport after the B5.7bn expansion was revealed in September last year.

administration for considering allowing 30 more metered taxis to serve passengers at the airport.

Prakop Punyawai, who presented himself as the "managing director" of the Phuket Car Service Cooperative (PCS), said, "The AoT is considering allowing 30 more metered taxis to serve the airport, but according to the

concession we have with AOT, if you allow 30 more metered taxis to serve the airport, you must allow us to boost our numbers by 60 vehicles.

"Under the current concession we have, we now pay the AoT 1.5 million baht a month. This is a very high price," Mr Prakorp said.

The move to boost the taxi fleet

came as part of the Phuket Taxi Meter (PTM) Service Co Ltd's negotiations to renew its concession. PTM's current concession is set to expire on September 30.

* Airports of Thailand is the public company nominated by the Ministry of Transport to operate several of Thailand's busiest airports, including Phuket Airport.

Police: Phuket B12mn meth bust only 'tip of the iceberg'

THE drug bust that led to 12 million baht in methamphetamine being seized in Phuket on August 12 was only the "tip of the iceberg" in the true volume of drugs being trafficked to the island from Bangkok said the lead investigator of the operation.

Kittisak Sew-Eaw, 29, from Phuket, and Dusit Chaiphan, 30, from Petchabun, were arrested in Rawai on August 12 after a sting operation was set up by officers from Bangkok Metropolitan Police.

The two men were arrested at a delivery company office after receiving 20,000 pills of *ya bah* (methamphetamine) and one kilogram of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) packed into two separate bags, said Lt Col Prawit Engchuan of Phuket City Police.

The pair were also found in possession of an unregistered .22 Smith & Wesson revolver, a 9mm Glock handgun and three rounds of 9mm ammunition, he added.

The drugs were received after being transported to Phuket on a standard delivery service truck.

"The suspects were charged with possession of a Category 1 drug with intent to sell and illegal possession of firearms," Col Prawit said.

The arrests came after an investigation by officers from Bangkok Metropolitan Police (Reg 7) revealed Phuket-native



Lt Col Prawit Engchuan of Phuket City Police led the 12mn baht drug bust in Rawai. Photo: Gazette file

Kittisak was a key suspect in a large drug-trafficking network.

After tracking Mr Kittisak's movements, the Bangkok officers alerted their Phuket counterparts to the impending shipment arriving in Rawai and organized a coordinated raid to arrest the two suspects in one fell swoop.

"The pair were operating as part of a larger drug network that we are still investigating. We have yet to get the 'big guy'," said Lt Col Sawat Phakdee, the lead officer from the Bangkok squad.

"There is a definite Phuket-Bangkok connection. From the information we are getting here in Bangkok, the drug situation in Phuket is getting so bad – it's scary," he added.

— Phuket Gazette




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Tiger fire survivors' tales

AFTER firefighters contained the blaze at Tiger Discotheque, *Gazette* reporter Atchaa Khamlo spoke with witnesses on the streets, many had narrowly escape the flames. Snapshot accounts from those witnesses reveal part of the tragedy that ended with four dead and 11 injured.

Surviving the scramble

Nareerat Wantong, a 28-year-old woman from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, was out with friends on the second floor of Tiger Discotheque when the fire broke out. She suffered smoke inhalation, but still managed to escape the blaze that engulfed the building.

"It was quite crowded inside the club, certainly more people than normal," Ms Nareerat said.

"The electricity went off first, then the smoke appeared and people began to shout. Immediately, everyone started scrambling to get out.

"We ran to the exit staircase behind the bar, which emerges onto a small soi beside Tiger. There were many bottles at the bottom of the stairs blocking our way out. It was dark and we trod on the bottles as we tried to escape.

"One foreign woman nearly fell face down on the bottles. She was only able to catch her balance by grabbing my blouse.

"Others fell and were trampled on by others escaping the fire."

After Ms Nareerat and a friend escaped the bar, the electricity to Soi Bangla and Soi Sansabai cut off depriving the whole area of light.

"It was dark everywhere and we had to use the light from our telephones.

"About five minutes after we escaped we heard an explosion from inside the club and were able to see the fire. While standing outside, I heard another five explosions from inside the burning building."

"Once we were safe we were trying to find others who had been inside with us.

"I have still have not seen some of my friends who were at Tiger that night. I worry about them."

Jumping through the roof

Ms Surakan, 23, was with Ms Narrerat on the second floor when the fire broke out, but was separated from her during their escape. She received only minor bruises and scratches.

"When we opened the emergency door behind the bar we saw that the escape ladder didn't reach the ground," she said.

Ms Jurawan, worried that she would injure herself attempting to descend the ladder, decided to jump.

"With the fire behind us, I ended up jumping from the second floor onto the roof of the bar below. The roof gave way and I fell it."

Escape without injury

Costas Ntalaginnis, 42, from Greece escaped from the second floor of the building without injury.

"I was enjoying lots of drinking and dancing before the fire. When it happened I was quite scared and ran," Mr Ntalaginnis said.

"Probably, it was an electricity problem. At the time I kept thinking there was a lot of rain."

Saved by a stranger

A 25-year-old Thai, who gave her name only as Naruemon, was at the discotheque with two friends. She was helped in her escape by an anonymous foreigner, making it to the safety of Soi Bangla without injury.

"At about 4am the electricity went off. People in the discotheque did not go anywhere; they thought it was just a power cut.

"The power came back on after about three minutes and everyone was still having a good time, clapping and cheering for the DJ to start up again. There was probably about 1,000 people on the first and second floors at the time and it looked as if most were drunk.

"About five minutes later I saw flames coming up from behind a bar.

"The blaze spread and people ran out of the [second-floor] bar. One foreigner pushed the emergency-exit door and I followed him, running.

"It was dark and raining heavily. I could not see anything very well. It was quite a drop from the emergency escape ladder to the ground. One man who jumped down to the street from the ladder lifted me safely to the ground from the end of the ladder.

"Many people were choking on the smoke. It was so dark that I had to follow the sound of people running ahead me out onto Bangla Road. I was in shock at the time.



Hundreds scrambled to safety as the inferno gutted the building. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong



Bystanders and officials examine the damage in the morning light. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

"The place should have an alarm in case anything bad like this happens," said Ms Naruemon.

Waking up to the smell of smoke

A 32-year-old Australian man, who wished to remain anonymous, was staying with friends at a hotel only 20m from Tiger Discotheque.

"We heard big bang just before 4am. Shortly after that, we heard about three more explosions and a high-pitched bang, but not like thunder," he explained.

"At the time we were very scared because we had just woken up. We didn't



Mr Ntalaginnis returns after safely escaping earlier that day. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

know what was going on and we could smell smoke.

"Later, our hotel receptionist knocked on the door and told us it was a fire. So we left room and building immediately. We could see the smoke coming from somewhere on Bangla. We started walking and realized that Tiger Discotheque was on fire.

"We stood some way off and watched for about half an hour. I talked to some people who said they had to jump from the second floor.

"The place had many fire-escape exits, but probably the bar was made from some highly-flammable materials. They probably should have installed more sprinklers," he said.

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Woman survives leap for life

THE Phuket Governor and his wife presented a gift basket to a survivor of the blaze, 32-year-old Suree Deeying on Monday.

After thanking the Governor and his wife, the Tiger Discotheque employee gave her account of the events of 4am last Friday.

"I was working behind the bar on the second floor. When the fire broke out, the pub had already closed, but there were still some people inside. We had already stopped selling drinks at that time and I was preparing to close up

the bar. All of a sudden I heard someone yell, 'Fire! Fire!' Then I looked up and saw flames all over the place," she said.

"There are many fire exits from the second floor. So I ran out through one of them, but I was so afraid that the flames would get me, that I jumped off the staircase and landed on the ground.

Ms Suree broke her right ankle in the landing, but has already undergone reconstructive surgery at Bangkok Hospital Phuket.

— *Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai*



Ms Suree expects to eventually return to work for the Tiger Group.

Families of victims to get B1mn compensation each

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE management of the Tiger Discotheque has announced that it will pay one million baht in compensation to each of the families of those who died in the blaze early last Friday morning.

General Manager Sema Sinchai also announced that the Tiger Group will cover all medical expenses of the 11 people injured, as well as pay compensation to them.

He added that the Tiger Group will additionally cover any expenses incurred by loved ones to travel to Phuket, whether they are travelling from within Thailand or abroad.

"Eleven people were injured in the incident, two of them still in hospital. We will cover the full amount of the medical expenses plus compensation, which will be determined case by case," he explained.

To claim the compensation, those injured by

the fire, but already released from hospital, will have to present all documents, including medical bills, identification documents and evidence of belongings damaged in the fire, at Patong Police Station so officers can record the claim in the daily police log at the station.

"We will go to the police station and pay those who come to

claim it in front of the police," Mr Sema said.

Speaking of Benjamin Tallanotte, the 30-year-old Frenchman who suffered second-degree burns to 40 per cent of his body, Mr Sema said, "Mr Tallanotte is now receiving treatment at Bangkok Hospital in Bangkok. We will also cover his full medical expenses there.

"We have already paid 500,000 baht to cover his treatment at Bangkok Hospital Phuket and his transfer to Bangkok by air ambulance."

"We will also take care of all medical expenses for Ms Suree Deeying, who broke her right ankle in the incident," he added.

Meanwhile, Patong Municipality Civil Engineer Arjsuek Gaysornsin on Monday served a 30-day notice to the owner of the fire-gutted building, Kata Holding Group, to make sure that what remains of the building is structurally sound.

The notice also ordered that no part of the building be used and

that the building be covered in order to stop debris from falling to the ground.

"The owner of the building must have a recognized company come to inspect and certify the building as safe. Only after we have seen signed verification from a building inspector that the building is safe will we allow people to enter the premises again," said Mr Arjsuek.



About 40 per cent of Benjamin Tallanotte's body was severely burned. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Gov Tri fears fire damage to Phuket's safety reputation

GOVERNOR Tri Augkaradacha admitted this week that the fire would be yet another stain on Phuket's reputation as a tourist destination, but continued to insist that safety standards in Phuket nightclubs were not lax in general.

"After the incident happened, there was wide-scale international media coverage, and there were many reports that Phuket entertainment venues do not have good safety standards. I have to say that it is not true. We inspect all entertainment venues on a regular basis to ensure that all of them follow all rules and regulations," Gov Tri said.

"It may take awhile before we regain [tourists'] confidence, but



Gov Tri visited one of the victims of the blaze earlier this week.

I want to confirm that the safety of both tourists and local residents is our top priority," he said.

— *Chaiyot Yongcharoenchai*

Scores mourn those lost to Tiger Discotheque flames



MORE than 100 people holding red roses and candles gathered, in the rain, in front of the fire-gutted Tiger Discotheque at 2:30am Tuesday to mourn those who died in the inferno last week.

Officials, business owners, locals and tourists gathered in a minute of silence on the usually chaotic Soi Bangla before laying flowers in front of the charred building in memory of those killed and injured.

Despite the somber atmosphere on the usually vibrant street, many in the crowd showed their support for Tiger Discotheque's possible return to operations.

— *Golf Thairath*



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National park chief moved to Bangkok after only a month in office

NATIONAL Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department (DNP) Director-General Damrong Phidet on August 15 announced that the chief of Sirinath National Park will be transferred from Phuket after less than a month in office.

"The Sirinath National Park Chief will be transferred to the DNP [offices] in Bangkok for 30 days," said Mr Damrong.

He explained that Sirinath National Park Chief Opart Nuanmungsor would be "better suited for work elsewhere".

The announcement came on the same day that Mr Damrong led raids on 10

resorts allegedly encroaching on national park land on Phuket's west coast, specifically the Sirinath Marine National Park.

However, Park Chief Opart told the *Gazette* that he had yet to receive notice of the transfer.

"Once I get the official order to be transferred, I won't question it. I can accept that it is due to me being more suitable for work in Bangkok," he told the *Gazette*.

"I took up my position here on August 8. I have been working in Phuket for less than a month, so I have yet to really learn about the area," he said.

Before being transferred to Phuket Mr Opart was chief of Khao Lam Pee-Hat Tai Muang National Park in Phang Nga.

"It doesn't matter where I work, as long as I'm protecting the nation's land," he said.

Mr Opart is the second Sirinath National Park chief to be immediately transferred by Mr Damrong within five weeks. The first was Jirapol Amkham, who was transferred on July 13.

Mr Damrong did not announce who will take up the post as chief of Sirinath Marine National Park.

— Kraitsada Mueanhawong



DNP Director General Damrong said Mr Opart would be "better suited to work in Bangkok". Photo: Orawin Narabal

Land corruption probe finds 100 cases with more to follow

THE investigation by the Office of Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission (PACC) into illegally issued land titles in Phuket has identified 100 plots that will be investigated thoroughly, but the number could easily double if tip-offs from local informants are accurate.

PACC Secretary General Col Dusadee Arayawuth said that "some" of the 100 plots investigated so far had been cleared and deemed legal, while the remainder were still under investigation.

However, he added that since the probe was launched 10 months ago, his office had been informed of at least 100 more plots worthy of being investigated.

"We have a network of informants in Phuket who tell us that there must be at least 200 plots of land that may be illegally owned. When we first received this information from our sources, we were not convinced. But since coming to inspect for ourselves, we've found suspicious land deals every time," Col Dusadee said.

"We will investigate every single plot, especially any land owned by, or involving any former or current government officials. We will also check to see where they worked before to check for any



Col Dusadee said in June "No matter how high ranking, if they are found guilty they will be prosecuted without exception". Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

previous activities that may be suspicious," he added.

Col Dusadee explained that the PACC intends to target land that "may have the potential or opportunity to be encroached on by government officials."

He listed five examples where his team had researched the official records and found the documents "suspicious enough" to investigate:

1. Land ownership documents for 20 rai of land at Laem Mai Ngao in Karon. The PACC is now investigating government officials involved with the issue of the land ownership documents.

2. Land ownership documents for two plots of land at Baan Nakalay in Kamala. The plots now have a hotel and a resort on them. The PACC subcommittee is now investigating this case.

3. Using a SorKor 1 land document for land in Patong to issue a higher-grade land ownership document for 21 rai of land in Kamala. That land now has a hotel under construction on it. As the case involves government officials, it has been handed over to the Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC) to lead the investigation.

4. A request to survey land in Patong in order to issue a NorSor 3 Gor document was altered in size by including 21 rai of SorPorKor land (land that can be used only for agricultural purposes and remains government property). The case is now being handled by NACC due to government officials' involvement.

5. Land ownership documents issued for land within the preserved forest area of the Kamala Hills. The case involves an attempt to issue a Chanote land title deed for seven plots of land covering about 300 rai. Col Dusadee inspected the site himself and declared it was within the protected forest area. The case is under investigation.

"There are still more cases in Phuket that we are investigating," Col Dusadee said.

— Kraitsada Mueanhawong

In brief...

PMBC dolphin dies despite care

THE striped dolphin that was under treatment at the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) died last weekend, two weeks after she washed ashore in Phang Nga.

Despite round-the-clock treatment that included the fitting of a harness to help her swim, the female dolphin took her last breath on August 12.

Dr Kongkiat Kittiwattanawong of the PMBC's Endangered Species Unit, confirmed the death.

"We took good care of this dolphin and monitored her all the time. Unfortunately, she suffered from pneumonia, a lung abscess and a systematic bacterial infection."

Toyota Vios vs concrete post

TWO men were injured after the car they were travelling in slammed into a power pole in Cherg Talay on August 16.

Arriving at the scene, on Pasak-Koktanod Road, police and Kusoldharm rescue workers found a white Toyota Vios with extensive damage to its front end caused by a high-speed impact with a concrete utility post.

Two casualties were pulled from the wreck, one with severe facial and head injuries.

Police believe that the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel.

Roadside masturbators flash at Yank expat

AN AMERICAN expat has told of her shock at witnessing two men furiously masturbating by the side of the road in the Patong-Karon hills on Sunday afternoon.

Long-term expat Amy Bensema, 36, was driving her motorbike home when she spotted two naked "Asian-looking men" masturbating and shouting obscenities at passing cars and motorbikes.

The incident happened just a few meters before the corner where the Secret Cliff Resort is located. Ms Bensema had just finished work in Bang Tao and was en route home to Nai Harn.

She said there were lots of cars and motorbikes passing the men at the time and that at least 10 people must have witnessed the "shocking scene".



"It was crazy. The men walked out of the jungle onto the road. They were naked and both were masturbating. As I got closer, I saw they were going at it furiously and one used his free hand to throw cans at cars," she said.

As Ms Bensema got closer the men both shouted for her to "Come here".

"They were wagging their tongues and making horrible faces at me," she said.

"At that point I turned away, accelerated and didn't look back."

Ms Bensema stopped at a construction site on the other side of the hill and told a security guard what had happened.

"He laughed, but then quickly apologized when he saw how upset I was," she said.

Ms Bensema, who has lived and worked on the island for more than five years, said she hoped the police could catch the men.

"It's not safe to have people like that running around" she said.

This is not the first time Ms Bensema has been the victim of "flashing" on Phuket.

"A similar incident happened to me in Nai Harn a few years ago. It's crazy that people would do that in public. I think people should know that these things happen so they can stay safe."

— Fraser Morton

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Chakorn "Ome" Boonchern pretended to be suicidal to gain the trust of women before robbing them. Photo: The Nation

'Suicidal' man a serial criminal

A MAN who lured victims into his clutches by claiming he was suicidal committed more than 100 crimes against women over the past three years, police said.

Chakorn "Ome" Boonchern, 33, posted messages on webboards claiming he wanted to kill himself, earning sympathy from compassionate women, *The Nation* reported.

Mr Chakorn was arrested at a flat in Bangkok last week. Found in his room were 136 apparently stolen items, namely, handbags, ATM cards and computer notebooks.

"I offered words of encouragement and we began chatting online and on the phone," said one victim, asking for anonymity. "After a week, he invited me to meet him and his parents, saying that he wanted to thank me in person."

He had described himself as a son of a famous politician.

When they met, he told her to get a facial massage before meeting his parents, so that she had a "neat" look.

"He offered to carry my handbag for me. I didn't suspect anything," she said. "But after I came out of the massage room, I found that he was gone."

Police said five women had also lodged rape complaints against Mr Chakorn.

Mr Chakorn, who appeared stressed at the press conference, said: "I plead guilty to all theft charges, but not to sexual assault. You can check recordings from security cameras that all those women walked out of the rooms normally, and some even held my hand."

Policy change ushers Southern peace talks

THE government is holding informal talks with insurgent groups in the Deep South – a policy reversal that follows a surge in violence over the past six months.

At a press conference Deputy Prime Minister Yutthasak Sasiprapha explained that "discussions" with militants had begun – though he said they stopped short of "negotiations".

"Don't call them negotiations... but there are talks aimed at achieving peace, which is a crucial government policy," said Gen Yutthasak, who is in charge of national security.

Gen Yutthasak said the Southern Border Provinces Administration Center (SBPAC) was handling the talks with splinter groups of the Runda Kumpulan Kecil (RKK), one of the networks believed to be behind the violence.

The Yala-based SBPAC had been given the task, "as they are well aware of who to talk to," Gen Yutthasak said.

The talks represent a policy reversal for the government, which previously ruled out peace talks with militants in the Deep South.

After years of peace, more than 5,200 people have been killed since the insurgency reignited in 2004, according to Deep South Watch, which monitors the near-daily carnage.

The groups launching the attacks have never publicly stated their aims, though they are believed to be fighting for more autonomy from the State – or possibly independence.

The government has often alleged that the groups are criminals involved in smuggling and drug dealing.

However, at last week's press conference, Gen Yutthasak explained: "Right now we are holding peace talks with different insurgent groups, but we are still not clear as to what they want."

On August 17, the SBPAC handed over almost half a billion baht in compensation to 422 relatives of victims of violence in



A Thai Ranger stands guard as a Muslim woman takes her children to the first day of school in Thailand's southern province of Narathiwat on May 14, 2012. Photo: AFP/Madaree Tohlala

the Deep South.

In particular, compensation was provided to families of the victims of the infamous 2004 Tak Bai, Saba Yoi and Krue Seh Mosque incidents. In the case of Tak Bai, 85 Muslims suffocated when they were piled into military trucks after a crackdown on their protest in Narathiwat.

The government of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra was pressured earlier this year to pay more compensation to the southern victims after the Cabinet paid B7.5mn to each family of red shirt protesters who died during an uprising against the government under Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva in 2010.

Guards had whistle-blower colleague killed, says cop

PRISON guards at Nakhon Sri Thammarat Prison had one of their own colleagues murdered after he blew the whistle on their tolerance of the drugs trade in the facility, the provincial police chief said on August 20.

Od Sae Phua, 49, was shot dead on August 18 as he rode his motorbike home.

Reports said two assailants used a pickup truck to block his escape, while one of two others riding a motorbike opened fire on him, hitting him in the head and body.

Maj Gen Ronnaphong Saikaew said Mr Od, who was in charge of the prison clinic, had discovered drug dealing activities in the prison on July 30.

Gen Ronnaphong said other prison officials pleaded with him to keep quiet – or come to "an agreement". He also reportedly refused to accept a bribe of



Nakhon Sri Thammarat Prison guards search inbound goods. Photo: The Nation

200,000 baht for intentionally ignoring smuggling into the jail.

"Od might have wavered a bit... but on August 17 he decided to file a report about it. He was shot dead the very next day," Gen Ronnaphong said.

Sophon Thitithampruek, deputy director-general of the Corrections Department, said that his department would seek donations to raise funds for Mr Od's family.

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Along the watchtower

THE Tiger Discotheque tragedy on August 17 demonstrates yet again that when it comes to “disaster preparedness” in Phuket it seems as if we are battling invisible demons, being continually hit in the back of the head by obvious threats we had somehow managed to ignore – or failed to realize even existed.

The latter case is of course best exemplified by the 2004 tsunami disaster. Since then, Phuket has been the stage of many highly-publicized tsunami evacuation drills, with Navy helicopters magically appearing off Patong Beach just minutes after the “hypothetical tsunami” is scheduled to arrive and emergency rescue workers suddenly appearing to whisk mock victims – covered with fake blood and broad smiles – to the relative safety of Soi Sansabai.

To anyone who has witnessed first-hand these media circuses and some of the real tsunami panics that the island has experienced, the difference between the well-orchestrated “stage shows” and the panic-induced pandemoniums could not be more stark.

After the needless deaths of 90 people aboard the ill-fated One-Two-Go Flight 269, well-publicized disaster drills at Phuket International Airport also became regular events.

Indeed, the “business of disaster” has skyrocketed in Thailand over the past decade, with huge government expenditure on safety equipment and infrastructure, including as just one small example the shiny new 16-million-baht Department of Disaster Mitigation and Prevention office on Damrong Road.

The Navy has been getting increasingly in on the act, using its colossal budget to stage numerous safety drills every year, perhaps correctly realizing that our country’s biggest security threats actually lie within our own borders.

Of course it is hard to criticize efforts to keep our various emergency rescue units well-coordinated, highly-trained and “battle-ready”, but as the Tiger Discotheque tragedy reveals, a much more effective approach would be a proactive one: actively seeking out and dealing with obvious threats through enforcement of existing regulations. After all, preventative measures are always orders of magnitude cheaper than the cost of mitigation.

Sadly, a lethal combination of corruption, indifference and complacency – both on the part of officials and the public who should do a better job of holding them accountable – allows this inherently dangerous status quo to persist.

That the Tiger tragedy has now focused official attention on fire safety at nightclub venues comes as little surprise. However, there are far bigger firetraps on the island that have been accidents-in-waiting for more than a decade. One of the most obvious is a huge independent retail outlet on the island that appears to have been designed for maximum carnage should a fire ever break out there. Until obvious threats such as this are addressed, it seems all one can do is take as much responsibility as possible for one’s own personal safety – and hope not to become a victim of the next catastrophe.



Desperate need for smoke-alarm system

Re: Gazette online, Tiger disco fire: Police to call in forensics experts from Bangkok, August 18

There’s nothing to suggest that this was nothing more than a tragic accident that could of happened at anytime of the day or night.

What I would like to know is how the fire took hold of the building so quickly, seemingly without anyone noticing until it was too late.

A basic smoke-alarm system would probably have saved these peoples lives. All bar and discos should have them, but I’ve been here long enough to know this will not happen.

Jon Patong
Gazette forum

Letters to the Editor

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

He turned on the meter. It started at 53 baht. When we got home, it said 266 baht. My wife gave him 300 and he was very happy!

Go figure. Amazing Thailand. Now I wish I’d gotten his name for future use. We were so astonished at the time about the 300 baht, that we forgot to ask.

Udom Somboon
Gazette forum

done” this way?

If it works, then it ain’t broke. And if more people opened their eyes to “other” cultural ways and didn’t just condemn them because it is not the same as “home”, then they could benefit from the difference.

Sceptical John
Gazette forum

Don’t stop, please don’t stop

Re: Gazette online, Damrong leads National Park raids on Phuket resorts, August 16

Isn’t it amazing how the Phieu Thai-led government in Bangkok now closes in on the Democrat stronghold of Phuket. This isn’t just about upholding the law; there is also a wider political agenda. But be that as it may, it certainly gets the message across.

Well done, Khun Damrong, and please don’t stop.

Amazed
Gazette forum

Hold your breath for speedboat traffic

Re: Gazette online, French tourist dies snorkeling in Phi Phi speedboat accident, August 20

I am surprised we haven’t had more accidents like this in Phi Phi waters – or maybe we just haven’t heard [about them]. Every year, I see speedboats being driven between Hin Phae and Long Beach on Phi Phi even though loads of snorkelers are in those waters every day.

I have actually had a speedboat drive right over the top of me in that area, as well as had a few near misses. Luckily, I could hold my breath while clinging to the bottom [of the ocean] when I heard them approach.

Lars Bindholt
Gazette forum

Corruption is not bad

Re: Gazette online, Phuket corruption probe reveals ‘hundreds’ of suspicious land titles, August 18

“No matter how high ranking, if they are found guilty they will be prosecuted without exception,” [said National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department (DNP) Director-General Damrong Phidet].

No, they won’t. It will be another “drama” for a few more weeks, then it will slowly be forgotten and life will get back to normal. That’s how it has always been here. Maybe Thailand needs to stop pretending it has an acceptable stance against corruption. But this is the Asian way, and this is not the West.

Actually, I embrace the Asian way. I follow the culture and don’t try to press my “Western” ways onto it. The main reason I have lived in Thailand for the past 20 years is purely because I dislike the “Western” way. I find the so-called corruption a refreshingly easy way to get things done.

Maybe further explanation is required. Basically, the “West” assumes that all corruption is evil and needs to be stamped out, but what if your culture has a 1,000-year history of “getting things

Those lost in flames of Tiger Discotheque

My heart and prayers go out to the families who lost loved ones in the horrific accident in Patong.

I hope all those injured physically and mentally find the care they need and have a speedy recovery.

Tina Swift
Patong

Simply first rate metered taxi service

Re: Gazette online, Phuket Airport B5.7bn expansion ‘likely to start next year’, August 19

I live in Phuket and travel to Bangkok most weeks. Normally, I use one of the gray Toyota “limousines” to Cherg Talay when I get back to Phuket, but I never buy the ticket from them in the terminal. The price there is 550 baht!

I just go up to one of the drivers outside in the parking lot and negotiate. The price I usually get is 400 baht. But yesterday, no one would give me that price, so I went over to a metered taxi with my Thai wife and asked how much. He said 400 baht. We agreed.

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New police stations pulling into Phuket

FIRST PERSON

IT'S important for us to transfer more officers into Phuket and to establish new police stations in Wichit and Karon.

The increase in the population and the development of those areas requires us to have a more substantial presence there. The rise in crime, due to the increase in population, makes it necessary for us to have quicker reaction times for incidents in those areas.

In the past, when the Chalong Police received a report about a crime in Karon, it took them some time to get over the hills and onto the scene. But once the new police station is established there, our reaction time will be greatly improved, which should help stifle the rising crime, at least in that area.

These new police stations will also help boost tourists' confidence about their safety while on holiday in Phuket. With more officers and more stations, they will know that help from us will be fast and effective whenever they need it.

The addition of the new stations will also help us meet Royal Thai Police policy, which is to serve people in every area in Thailand.

We have already started construction of the Wichit Police Station. However, we are waiting for the Royal Thai Police headquarters to dedicate the funds necessary to begin building the Karon station.

We are expecting to get about 56 million baht in total – 28 mil-



Lt Col **Rattapong Siriburanapong**, 53, is the Staff Inspector at Phuket Provincial Police Station. Before taking up his current position, he was a Sub-Inspector at Provincial Police Region 6 in Phitsanuloke. He recently submitted a request for more officers in Phuket, who will be assigned to two new police stations, once they are built. Here he explains why having new police stations in Phuket is so important.



An artist's rendition of what the Wichit station will look like when finished.

lion baht to get each station up and running. This would cover the cost of the building, officers' residences and vehicles.

The budget was originally approved by the Royal Thai Police, but political strife a few years ago required the funds to be diverted.

If we receive the rest of the budget in the coming 2013 fiscal year, we should have both stations operational within the year.

Each station will be staffed by one superintendent, two deputy

superintendents, three inspectors and nine sub-inspectors.

The Royal Thai Police will select the superintendents and deputy superintendents for us; the rest of the officers we will be transferred from Phuket City Police Station and Chalong Police Station.

We hope to have 93 officers in total at the Wichit station and 83 at Karon.

We are also hoping to get stations up and running in Sakoo and Pa Khlok.

Give way, idiot coming through



Traffic police, the potential to prevent 'all' but the immoral.

I DRIVE my motorbike like an idiot.

I didn't always drive like an idiot. Before I moved to Phuket, I was the type of person that would soberly sit behind the wheel of my car at a red light at 2am waiting for it turn green – I would wait minutes. But here, in rush-hour traffic, it's all bob-and-weave to the red light and then, just keep going.

I don't hesitate at speeding, using sections of sidewalk or "ghost riding" in the wrong direction. Sometimes it's safer. But if I returned to small-town Indiana tomorrow, I know I would revert back to lawful, careful and considerate driving.

It's because there is nothing necessarily immoral about speeding or running a red light in the way that there is something fundamentally wrong with murder and rape.

Traffic laws are a set guidelines to make the roads safer, so you don't accidentally kill yourself or someone else. Even if the result is just as horrific, it's not done with the same immoral intent.

I have never had a Bible-thumper tell me I was going to hell for speeding on my way to church. For many other things yes, but not speeding.

Island View

By Alex Stone

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

I didn't speed in the US the way I speed now, because I was afraid of being caught. I was afraid of hefty fines and losing my driver's license. I was afraid of being an idiot who got caught and fined for trying to save two minutes at 2am by running a red light.

It was my fear of the law being enforced that kept my driving habits in check. The vast majority of the times I came to full stops at stop signs or double-checked my speed, there wasn't a cop in sight, but if there were, I wouldn't be taking an unnecessary risk.

People take serious risks driving like an idiot in Thailand, as can be seen by the daunting road death toll and the number of heartbreaking news reports on the topic. However, the risk of an accident exists in the US also. I had a classmate die in speeding car.

But when I'm honest about it, that's not what stopped me from speeding.

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

Removing signs of the fallen

Who is responsible for the removal of signs once they collapse? A very large tin sign measuring 7m x 4m was erected earlier this year to market a new Nai Harn development near the temple.

The sign collapsed two months ago.

This sign, strewn in the grass along the road, is both an eyesore and a safety hazard. Shouldn't the developer be held responsible for removing this piece of waste? What action will be taken?

*Keep Nai Harn Clean
Nai Harn*

Rawai Mayor Arun Soros replies:

I have not heard about this sign, though most likely one of our departments has already taken care of it. However, in general, if you see any collapsed signs, please let us know. If the sign belongs to us, we will get it



MORNING PERK: Once a sign falls, it's time to get it fixed or cleaned up.

fixed as soon as possible.

However, if the sign belongs to a private business, you can either contact them directly or get in touch with us. We will give them seven days to respond to the situ-

ation. If they are unable to take action in that time, we will remove it ourselves.

Call our office at 076-613801, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Noisy Chalong bar

Can someone tell me when the police will do something about the noise on Patak Road in front of Patak Villa?

Every day there is a live band playing until 4am. Many of my neighbors have complained, but no one has gotten a response.

In addition to the music, there are often fights and even gunshots. Everyone thinks that the closing time is supposed to be 1am, but apparently not for everybody.

*Brian
Chalong*

Narong Laksanawimon, Deputy Superintendent of Chalong Police, replies:

Our officers are often on patrol along Patak Road, but we haven't seen or received any reports about there being an issue in the area in front of Patak Villa before.

We have made it clear that entertainment venues should close at 1am, but there are still many of them that are trying to get away with breaking the law. Unfortunately, it is a large area and we have a limited number of officers. We need help from locals by immediately informing us of any violations.

Apart from the incident on June 19, when one of our own officers was shot at a bar on that same section of road after the official closing time, I have not heard about gunfire in the area. In the past we have had to deal with drunkards fighting, though we haven't had any reports recently.

To report any incidents you can get hold of the Patong Police at 076-342719-20.

Tesco protests get response

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

MORE than 500 local traders, business owners and residents marched on Provincial Hall last Thursday to petition the Governor to stop construction of a new Tesco Lotus outlet planned for Phuket Town.

After assembling at Rama X Park (Suan Luang), the protesters marched through the streets carrying signs with slogans reading "Tesco ruins our life in Phuket Town", "We don't want Tesco", among others.

The march ended at Phuket Provincial Hall, where protest leader Prasart Boontunthapiwat presented an official letter of complaint to Governor Tri Augkaradacha.

In accepting the complaint, Gov Tri told the protesters he always did his best for the people of Phuket.

He added, however, that he would have to forward the letter of complaint to Phuket City Mayor Somjai Suwansupana, whose administration has authority over development issues inside city limits.

Tesco Lotus has already acquired 23 rai (36,800 square meters) of land for the project, but has yet to complete its Environmental Impact Assessment that must be filed with a building permit application.

The protesters told the Phuket Gazette they wanted to take their protest to the streets before the EIA is approved.

The final project would be similar in size and scale to Tesco Lotus in Thalang.

The protesters said they had the support of market vendors at two Phuket City Municipal Markets as well as 18 local communities spread across the city.

"We found out that Tesco Lotus will be building a branch on Bangkok Road. It will



Protesters hand their complaint to Gov Tri.

directly affect all of us," said Teeraphong Aiumanan-jaroen, representing the vendors at the Municipal Market on Ranong Road.

"Stall vendors and many of the smaller stores won't be able to compete, as people will buy stuff from the bigger store. It will be a domino effect; one-by-one we will all go out of business," he said.

"I am also concerned that the lifestyle of the Phuket Town community will be changed. The culture and traditions of Phuket people won't be the same," Mr Teeraphong said.

He also believes that the outlet would increase traffic congestion in the area.

"If a Tesco Lotus store is opened, the environment in the area will also be ruined. As the representative of Phuket People Protest Against Tesco Lotus Network, I would like to oppose the plan for Tesco Lotus to open a branch in Phuket Town," he said.

The phenomenal growth of Tesco Lotus in recent years has spawned other protests in the past, especially opposition to smaller retail outlets in Wichit and Cherg Talay.

In response to the protests, Thailand's leading retailer released a corporate state-



INSECURE: Many protesters believe that their livelihood will be threatened by a new Tesco Lotus outlet, which is set to be built in Phuket Town, pending approval of an EIA study.

ment earlier this week.

The statement reads: "Tesco Lotus has been operating in Thailand for 18 years, delivering excellent value for our customers and actively contributing to local communities where we operate.

"We have helped customers lower their cost of living through low price products and promotional campaigns, offered business opportunities to over 5,000 suppliers who sell their products in our stores, created over 40,000 full-time jobs nationwide and helped local communities through active staff volunteering of over 2.3 million hours last year. We serve a large number of customers each week, including small retailers who can buy our products in bulk to sell at a healthy margin.

"We always ensure that any proposal to

open a new store complies with the relevant local and national regulations. For the planned project, we have gathered feedback from the community and conducted an environmental impact assessment which will be shared with the local community.

"We will continue to engage all local stakeholders to ensure that any action we take will best serve the people of Phuket."

Tesco Lotus also used the opportunity to remind Phuket residents about its efforts to reduce the use of plastic bags on the island, as well as a forthcoming beach-cleaning activity its staff were scheduled to partake in on August 23.

Tesco remains one of Thailand's most successful retailers, announcing in its annual report for 2011 a revenue of 140.84 billion baht.

Shortage causes sand prices to double

A GROUP of construction contractors and building material retailers on Monday gathered at Phuket Provincial Hall to protest the cost of building sand, which has spiraled upward following the raid and closure of an illegal quarry in Phang Nga.

The protesters filed a joint complaint, addressed to Governor Tri Augkaradacha and Phuket Chamber of Commerce committee member Samran Sinthong.

Local prices of the essential construction commodity started skyrocketing after the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) shut down a sand quarry in Tai Muang

District, Phang Nga in July, explained Piroj Aorpattanakul of the Triphada Construction Company.

"Since the operator is under investigation, the DSI banned the company from excavating more sand or selling any of their stockpiles. That directly affected us."

"All of the sand that used to be sold in Phuket was from Phang Nga. Now suppliers have to buy sand from other provinces at much higher prices. It is having a serious, wide-reaching effect on the local economy," Mr Piroj explained.

Price of sand has nearly doubled and the shortage is forcing many construction projects in Phuket,

including hotels and housing developments, to grind to a halt.

"Sand is one of the most important materials, used in all kinds of building work. Those of us who have come to file the complaint today want a new source to buy sand at reasonable prices to get our businesses going again," Mr Piroj said.

"We used to pay 500 baht per cubic meter, but now we have to pay 1,000 baht. The price is much higher than we used to pay and the volume of sand available is not enough to meet local demand," he added.

Mr Piroj called on Governor

Tri and the Phuket Chamber of Commerce to help locate a local source of inexpensive building sand.

"Or they could help by negotiating with the DSI to allow us to continue buying sand from the quarry in Phang Nga until the case is finalized," he said.

"I would like government officials to clearly define areas where sand mining is allowed and where it is forbidden. Current regulations are unclear, which could cause the



Protesters asked Gov Tri (2nd from left) for help to locate a cheaper sand source.

problem we are facing now to recur again and again," he said.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



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❖ Contracts siamint@loxinfo.co.th
❖ Work permits
❖ Bookkeeping
❖ Visa service
❖ Translations

Cigarette, booze prices rise

THE Cabinet on Tuesday approved a proposal by the Finance Ministry to slap heavier tax rates on alcohol and cigarette products.

The Finance Ministry reasoned that this action would raise the government revenue as well as reduce consumption of the unhealthy products.

According to a report by Thai media, Ban Muang, the Excise Department expects the changes to rake in 10 billion baht annually from the tobacco trade, and 2bn baht from the alcohol trade.

With immediate effect, the excise for tobacco products will rise to 87% of the unit value, up from 85%. This will result in rises of 6-9 baht per pack for popular cigarette brands, including Krong Thip, Marlboro, LM and Mild 7.

Meanwhile, excises on white liquor products will raise to 150 baht

from 120 baht per liter, while that for "special alcohol", such as brandy will rise to the lawful cap of 50% of the unit value, up from 48%; the excise on blended liquor will rise from 300 baht to 350 baht. The new rates are still within the legal limits, and do not require a legal amendment.

— The Nation, Ban Muang



World cigarette consumption (red) and demand is rising. Source: CIA

Global sugar buzz to benefit Thai farmers

RISING prices of sugar in global markets, particularly in Asia, may increase Thailand's annual earnings from the commodity by up to 7%.

As reported in the Nation last week, the Office of the Cane and Sugar Board (OCSB) expects the sugar industry to earn 193 billion baht this year thanks to the rising price of sugar in the world market.

As a result, Thai sugarcane growers will enjoy a high final price in the new harvest season (starting in November) which is forecast to produce 99 million tonnes.

Prasert Tapaneeyangkul, OCSB secretary-general, said the initial assessment was that income for the

industry for the 2011-2012 harvest season would reach 193bn baht, compared with 180bn baht last year.

Of the total, export revenue will account for 140bn baht and the remainder will come from the domestic market. This revenue comes from milling 97.9 million tonnes of sugar cane to produce 10.2 million tonnes of sugar.

"The increased income will come from increasing sugar production and also raw sugar that sold in advance at 24 [US] cents per pound," Mr Prasert said.

However, he acknowledged that drought could affect production.

Mr Prasert noted that Thai sugar

will not be affected by the Euro financial crisis due to import quota restrictions on non-European Union countries; Sugar from Thailand accounts for only 0.5% of the region's import volume.

Moreover, the US economic downturn has resulted in low imports of sugar from Thailand, accounting for only 0.5% of its import volume.

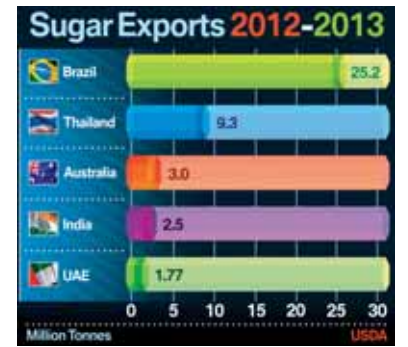
Asia is the most important export market for Thai sugar, accounting for 90%. Of that total, ASEAN accounts for 40% and the Middle East for 7%.

It is forecast that the final price of this year should reach 1,065 baht

per tonne for cane with content of 10% CCS (commercially recoverable sugar). This is compared with an initial price of 1,000 baht. Farmers will gain 1,200 baht for cane with a CCS rating of 12%.

Thailand's sugarcane production in the 2012-2013 harvest season is projected at 99.75 million tonnes. However, the rainfall level should be closely monitored, as drought would directly damage production. Regions at high risk of drought are the lower Northern and the Northeastern, as well as the Central and the Eastern regions.

The OCSB has encouraged



Top 5 sugar exporters anticipated for 2012-2013 season. Source: USDA

farmers to export more sugar to ASEAN countries, especially as the coming ASEAN Economic Community will create a bigger market for Thai sugar. Currently, Indonesia is the biggest importer of Thai sugar but its high import tariff of 38% has been restrictive. The office will closely monitor whether Jakarta will reduce the tariff rate to 5% in 2015, when the AEC kicks in.

Africa and the Middle East also have high export potential as their sugar consumption is rising in line with their growing economies.

Thailand is the world's second largest exporter of raw sugar.

Luxury motorcade to drive Southern sales

LUXURY automobile importer and dealer, TSL Auto Corporation Limited, has lined up a Southbound motorcade as part of its latest campaign to boost sales in the region.

Entitled "TSL Caravan - heading south - cool as it gets", the road show will launch on August 30 and last through the month of September.

To be headlined by some of the most desired and in-demand models on the market, including the iconic Porsche and Mini Cooper, the promotional event will first hit the streets of Surat Thani before continuing on to Nakhon Sri Thammarat.

Chanasin Bamrunghon, TSL Director of Marketing and Business Development, commented: "The company is truly delighted to inform our valued customers in the Southern provinces about our road show. . . We

have realized the high [spending] potential of southern clients, who are in favor of imported luxury cars."

Businesses are expanding in the South, across various sectors including agricultural production such as palm oil and the seafood industry, in addition to the real estate and tourism industries, he noted.

"We recently opened our Phuket branch and have since received excellent feedback from both the southern locals and foreign business investors residing there.

"We have been received well, and this is



The TSL promo poster says: "Luxury car lovers in the South, get ready..."

due to our good reputation in all aspects, including high standards of service, which is consistent at all of our branches across the country."

In terms of expansion strategy, he noted that TSL gives priority to provinces that have high potential to serve as an interconnecting hub with other Asian countries, in

light of the AEC (Asean Economic Community) just around the corner.

"Malaysia and Singapore are also considered to be attractive markets, that should be studied like our pioneering in

Myanmar," stated Mr Chanasin.

"Our sales office and SMRT service center in Phuket provides convenient access to customers and privileges. These include waived membership fee worth over 300,000 Baht, free 29-point checking programs, free car wash, plus other benefits and discounts from shops, restaurants, beauty clinics and hospitals, which are available through our 'Miracle Card'.

"The strategy we employ for our business in the south is to build cordial friendship by offering fast and impressive services together with exceeding-expectation privileges that will capture customers' hearts, so that they will go on to tell others about their impressions, and consequently come back with more new customers," Mr Chanasin concluded.

ASEAN spells out tourism targets

TOURISM Ministers of ASEAN - the Association of South-east Asian Nations - will mutually and actively pursue both mass and niche tourism objectives

ahead of the ASEAN Economic Community, set to come into effect by 2015.

A recently drafted ASEAN tourism road map highlights the intent for enhanced strategic cooperation among the 10 member nations, as to optimally capitalize on important growth markets such as China, Korea, Japan, India and Australia.

The ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2011-2015 is the foundation of the ASEAN Tourism Marketing Strategy (ATMS) 2012-2015, adopted by ASEAN Tourism Ministers in January 2012.

It is the plan with which ASEAN national tourism organizations (NTOs) seek to maintain double digit tourism growth, an ASEAN hallmark for much of the last 14 years.

ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan and the ASEAN Tourism Ministers have endorsed the plan, which includes a swathe of initiatives such as

the creation of a new website and digital promotional campaigns targeting the mass markets of China and India.

"Our strategy is designed to help build global recognition of Southeast Asia as a competitive, world-class tourism destination.

"Our focus is on drawing visitors to the region and encouraging them to visit more than one country. As each has its own unique attractions, we will capitalize on the sophisticated marketing capacity and resources of our individual national tourism organizations to spread the word," Dr Surin explained.

The plan will also look to target niche markets such as experiential, creative, adventure, business, senior, and long stay visitors. Moreover, there will be special promotions for the cruise market.

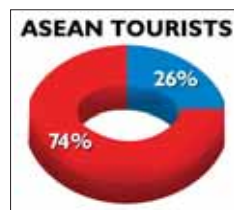
This niche sector is particularly favorable for ASEAN since riverine and sea cruise ships tend to visit multiple destinations.

As a boost to this sector, the "Cruise Shipping Asia Pacific 2012" forum will be held on September 17 in Singapore.

ASEAN destinations attracted 81.2 million visitors in 2011, an average increase of a million visitors each year for the last two decades.

Three out of four visitors to ASEAN come from Asia; 46.5% from within ASEAN and 27.6% from other Asian markets. According to ASEAN NTOs, Europe is the next largest group of visitors to ASEAN at 12.2%, followed by Oceania (including Australia and New Zealand) at 5.3%, and the Americas at 4.4%.

- ASEAN tourism news



Asian tourists in red.

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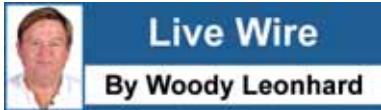
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Dr Surin Pitsuwan

It's the future of computers



AUGUST is usually a rather dull month for the computer industry. This August started out with an enormous amount of activity, but as the days wane, so does the news. All eyes at this point are fixed on the coming Christmas season. And it looks like Christmas this year will be very interesting indeed.

Microsoft has already released its latest operating system, Windows 8, to people who subscribe to their developer's network. Win8 is also available to large companies through certain kinds of volume licensing deals. As you may know, I've been working with test copies of Windows 8 for almost a year, and writing furiously about it since.

In my March 23 Live Wire column, I didn't give it a ringing endorsement, particularly for people in Phuket, because of its Dr Jekyll/Mr Hyde interface. Back then, writing about the Consumer Preview version of Windows 8, I said, "I've come to several conclusions: First, you probably won't like it. Second, you probably won't like it at all. Third, if you take a lot of time to learn how to use it, you might warm up to it a little bit, but probably not much."

Fast forward five months, I've been working with the final ("Release to Manufacturing" or RTM) version, and Windows 8 still has many of the same problems I talked about in that Live Wire column. My InfoWorld review last week, "Windows 8 Review: Yes, it's that bad," drew a lot of raised eyebrows and more than a few comments. If you

want to see the details, check out the post at infoworld.com.

Don't get me wrong. Windows 8 is a great product, in the right situation. But many of the people in Phuket won't be buying new touch tablets any time soon, and Win8 is kind of in a neither-fish-nor-foul position for those of us still wed to the keyboard.

The place Windows 8 will shine is on new tablets or flip-over convertibles, where people want to run with a tiled interface some of the time, and hop over to the "real" Windows the rest of the time.

I've been using Windows 8 on a touch-sensitive tablet for many months now, and I could see the appeal for someone who wants iPad style ease of use some of the time, but also wants to switch to the full Windows we all know and love, as needs dictate. The problem, of course, is that full-fledged Windows 8 tablets, at least in the near term, are going to be big, heavy, noisy (with a near-obligatory fan), probably expensive – and they'll have a battery life that's much shorter than an iPad's.

But that's only part of the story. Windows 8 also has a touch-first version called Windows RT that may well take the world by storm. It's still much too early to tell – reviewers have only had a chance to spend a few minutes with working machines – but the idea is, simply, to take on the iPad. Windows RT looks like a mobile phone or tablet operating system, with flashing tiles and an emphasis on gorgeous photos and many re-imagined pieces. There are even fantastic new Windows RT versions of Minesweeper and Solitaire. I kid you not.

Microsoft has said that we'll see the new Windows 8 and Windows

RT tablets on October 26, with a handful of computer manufacturers – Lenovo, Dell, Asus and others – picking up the gauntlet and shipping their own versions of Windows 8 and Windows RT tablets. While the Windows 8 machines probably won't take the world by storm, the Windows RT machines just might.



INTERFACE WARS: Both Windows and Apple will be stepping up their game this year as they go toe-to-toe for the touch-screen interface market. Photo: Buck

RT tablets on October 26, with a handful of computer manufacturers – Lenovo, Dell, Asus and others – picking up the gauntlet and shipping their own versions of Windows 8 and Windows RT tablets. While the Windows 8 machines probably won't take the world by storm, the Windows RT machines just might.

Stealing a page – no, a couple of chapters – from Apple's playbook, Microsoft is also getting into the hardware business. Windows RT tablets made and sold by Microsoft, called Windows RT Surface tablets, will go on sale October 26. Full Windows 8 Surface tablets are due early next year. We still don't know how much they'll cost, but the specs are impressive, and they're certain to put Microsoft somewhere in the tablet market. Just where is anybody's guess.

More than that, Microsoft is rolling out Microsoft Stores, in many cases literally across the street from Apple Stores, all over the US. I've heard a lot of jokes

about empty Microsoft Stores next to packed Apple Stores, but at least Microsoft's making some sort of effort. Their fortunes may change in November, when the Surface tablets hit.

The sincerest form of flattery, eh?

Sometime between now and the holidays – more likely sooner rather than later – Apple's due to come out with new and different products. Now the largest publicly held company in the world – ever, in human history – Apple's meteoric rise seems destined to continue, at least for the foreseeable future.

Why?

Great products, of course.

So far this year we've seen the Retina Display – a revolutionary monitor that you simply have to see to believe – on the latest iPad 2 tablets and on one particular MacBook Pro. No other display matches the Retina. Full stop.

Apple's selling all they can make – and they've locked in all of the parts manufacturers to exclusive contracts that will keep the com-

petition scrambling for years.

Apple's also released a new operating system, and re-jiggered some of its mainstream products. I expect we'll see much, much more in the near future.

For example, it wouldn't surprise me to see the Retina Display on more Apple products. And I'll predict without any fear of error that new Retina Display computers will sell like hotcakes, even at elevated, nosebleed prices.

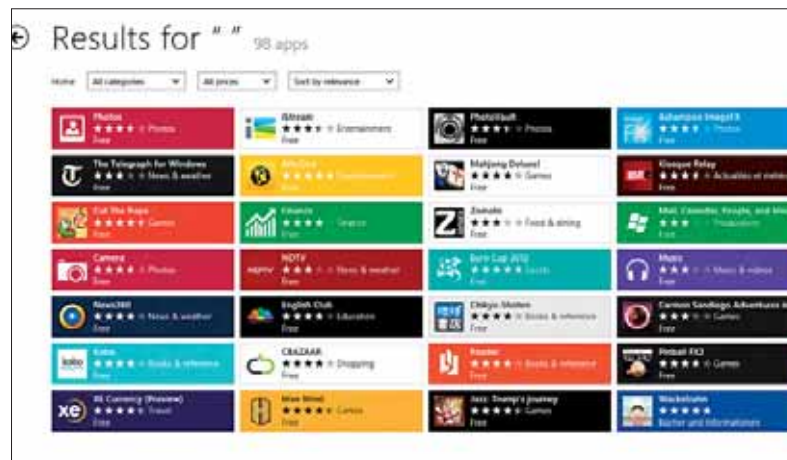
Rumors are all over the place about new MacBook Pros and MacBook Airs.

Time will tell, but it's likely Apple will bolster the product lines before the holiday season.

Of course, the products everyone's waiting for are the new iPad, iPhone, and possibly a new iTV. I'll talk about those in Part two of this four part series next week.

Seth Bareiss holds computer sessions 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.



STORE WARS: Windows is taking the fight to the high streets and the app stores. Photo: Filip Skakun

True focuses on boosting ad revenue

PAY-TV operator TrueVisions expects high growth in combined advertising fees and sponsorship revenue, saying it could make up half of total revenue in the next few years – up from the present 12 per cent.

This follows the company's partnership expansion to cover cable and satellite-TV operators to broaden its viewer base.

True Corp chief executive officer Suphachai Chearavanont said that TrueVisions changed its business model to focus more on boosting advertising revenue by

expanding viewers via the partnership after previously relying mainly on monthly subscription fees.

The latter currently contributes about 88 per cent of total revenue.

Last week TrueVisions forged a partnership with Cable Thai Holding (CTH) to expand its viewer base through CTH's more than 300 cable-TV operators in the provinces.

Under the partnership, subscribers of CTH member companies will get free access

to nine exclusive channels from TrueVisions, including True Explore, Travel Channel Thailand, Siam Sport TV, Star Soccer TV, True Sport International, and Speed Channel.

The service will be launched next month.

TrueVisions' top advertising charge is around 10,000 baht per minute for advertising on TV programmes in its network, while the average advertising rate of local cable-TV operators is 2,500 baht per minute. – *The Nation*

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Capitalizing on world illiquidity

Retirement Years

By David Mayes

THERE have been several investment strategies, with great results, that I have been relying on recently. They are filling the gap left behind as banks are forced to shore up their capital bases and thus forgo many of their traditionally lucrative and profitable businesses.

One of these strategies – legal financing – I have written about several times. Another strategy that provides similar short-term loans backed by insurance, is buying high quality short-term accounts receivables at a discount, a process known as factoring.

The Argyle Fund is one such alternative fund that provides a good return with extremely low volatility. It returns about 9.25% per annum and is perfect for retirees looking for a steady income. The fund has an up front charge and only offers quarterly liquidity. In my opinion, this is not too much to ask in return for an income vehicle with such a steady return in today's environment.

I recommend a minimum of a five year time horizon on money invested with Argyle, to avoid the back-end loaded redemption penalties, which decrease from 5% to nil over five years.

An example of how factoring works is as follows. Let's say a big multinational shoemaker has ordered shoe-

strings from a local manufacturer. The shoestrings have already been delivered but the invoice terms are 90 days.

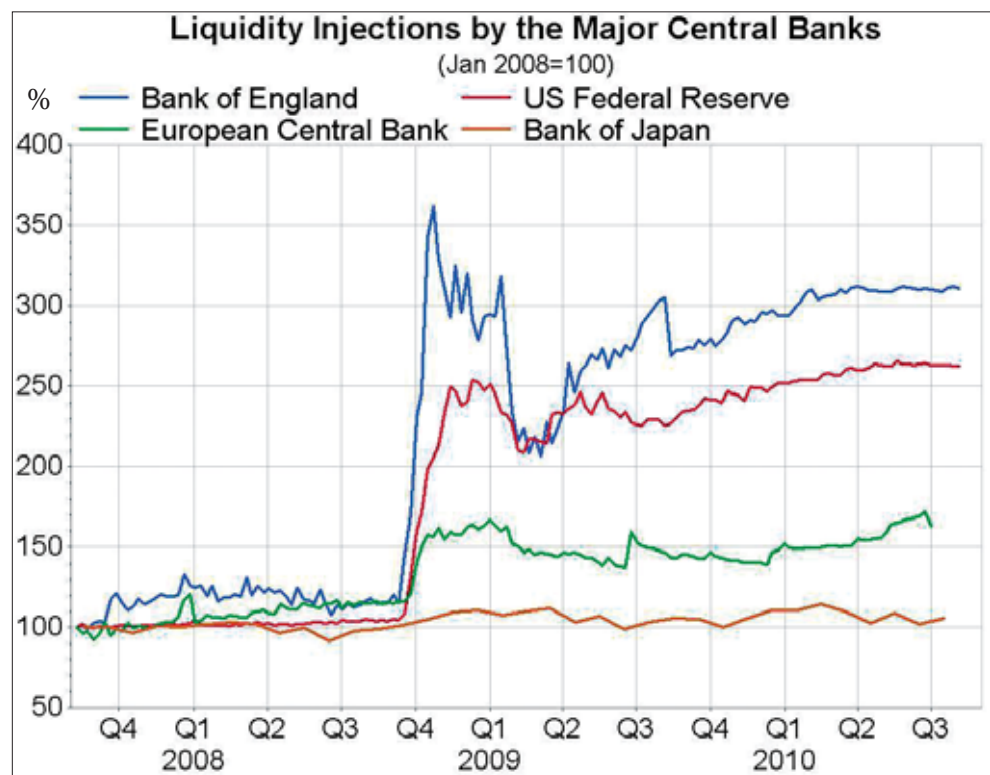
Unfortunately, many small businesses have had their lines of credit taken away as banks have sought to reduce their overall credit exposure. As such, the shoestring manufacturer needs the cash to pay suppliers upfront to be able to continue manufacturing while awaiting payment. This is where a factor will purchase the receivable at a discount.

Since multinational companies are considered pretty much a sure bet, insurance companies are happy to underwrite policies that protect against default. Thus, the factor can protect himself from the credit risk. Not all factors purchase insurance, however, the Argyle Fund only makes loans when they can purchase an insurance contract.

This greatly reduces the risk involved in the fund, although, one cannot go quite so far as to say it is guaranteed. However unlikely it is, a multinational could go bust during the 90 days and then the insurance company who underwrote the policy could go bust as well, and this could lead to a loss.

As the fund is diversified across many loans at once, I find it hard to imagine a scenario where the fund would take a large hit, short of the entire world systemically falling to pieces at once.

I personally think the probability of taking even a small hit is low enough that it almost can't happen unless there is sophisticated fraud involved, which is a



Injections of liquidity by world banks from data compiled by the Bank of England (BoE).

risk inherent to any fund in existence, anywhere in the world.

If you think you might benefit from such a fund, please check with your financial advisor to see if the fund matches your objectives and attitude to risk.

Too many retirees are turning to the stock market to try to make up for low deposit rates, which seem as if they will never return to normal levels. I fear those

people may pay dearly for it.

Funds, which can offer some higher return without volatility, are a much better avenue in my opinion.

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

Positive US economic data boosts SET



Surachai Pramualcharoenkit.

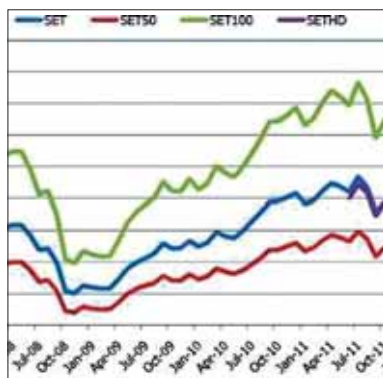
THIS month a string of positive economic data, coming mostly from the US, has boosted the Stock Exchange of Thailand (SET). The new data is comprised of non-farm payrolls, advance retail sales and building permits.

Surachai Pramualcharoenkit, Executive Director of Trinity Securities, says he expects that this trend will continue until the end of August, adding that it could be the driving factor that keeps global equities strong.

"Crude oil prices continue upwards – driven by fundamentals from the supply side," he said.

The market is short, with US crude oil inventory on a downward trend and crude stocks in Europe remaining at their lowest levels in six years. Speculative flows also drove crude prices, as hedge funds built up their net long positions to their highest levels in months.

"We expect the SET Index to move up and test the previous high



Recent trends of the SET.

of 1,240 points around late August or early September," he said.

Mr Surachai said evidence of this growth can be seen in:

- Positive surprise from global economic data.
- Declining tail risks in Europe after Germany has shown support for the European Central Bank's sovereign debt purchase program.
- The upward trend of crude oil.
- Foreign fund flows into both Thai equity and bond markets.
- The German Constitutional Court is expected to reject the temporary injunction on September 12, thereby permitting the German president to sign into law new fiscal policy.

We recommended stocks in cyclical sectors such as energy and petrochemicals, as they are under-owned and should benefit from the strong crude oil price. Furthermore, their worst quarter (the second) has already passed and thus their earnings should have positive

momentum over the rest of this year. Our picks in these sectors are TOP, PTTEP, PTTGC and IVL.

Kiatkong Decho, Head of Retail Research for CIMB Securities (Thailand) said, "Even though listed companies' earnings dropped 13.6% on-year to 344.4 billion baht in the first half, we remain overweight on the stock market."

Much of the fall was attributable to the inventory losses of energy and petrochem companies.

"We believe this will reverse in the third quarter as oil prices bounce back," said Mr Kiatkong. "Thus, we reiterate our overweight call on the petrochem sector, as earnings are poised to recover in Q3. We still expect the SET Index to end this year at 1,350 points."

Market catalysts include strong private investment and consumer spending.

"About 32% of the companies under our coverage reported better-than-expected quarterly results while 33% were in line and 35% lower than expected," said Khun Kiatkong.

"We consequently revised down earnings forecasts by 1.3% for this year and 1.6% for next year.

Following the revisions, we expect the market to show 22% more earnings growth this year and 15% next year.

We believe the market will continue to do well on the back of strong private investment and consumer spending. Improved overseas

sentiment and strong foreign inflows are likely to support the market.

After selling for several months, foreign investors turned into net buyers in July and their appetite is expected to continue. Foreign ownership of the Thai market improved to 26% recently, although

still low compared to 34% in 2008.

Foreign investors account for about a quarter of the market by trading volume with retail investors making up 53%, local institutions 8% and brokerages' proprietary trading the remainder.

– Phuket Gazette/The Nation

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Remembering the Free Thai Movement

LAST week, August 16 marked a special day in modern Thai history. It was the day after the Japanese surrendered, marking the end of WWII. In Thailand, this day is sometimes also referred to as Freedom Day.

Even prior to WWII, Japanese imperialism was spreading throughout East Asia. The Japanese army had taken over parts of China and the Korean peninsula.

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in an attempt to preemptively

destroy the US Pacific fleet. This event is widely known as the trigger that started the war in the Pacific. Lesser known, however, is the invasion that took place far closer to our home.

On that same day, a Japanese army also landed on the shores of Thailand.

In order to effectively invade British colonies in Southeast Asia, the Japanese knew that they needed vital infrastructure such as railways, roads and airports, as well as an abundant source of supplies and raw materials. They

chose Thailand for such a base.

On the day the Japanese began their invasion, different divisions of the Japanese army landed in Chumphon, Prachuap Kirikhan, Nakhon-si-Thammarat, Surat Thani, Songkhla and Pattani.

In every province they landed in, they were met with brave and heavy resistance from the local police, civilian volunteers and even members of the Thai Youth Army.

In Prachuap Kiri Khan, the Japanese lost more than 200 men whilst the loss on the Thai side amounted to nearly 40 men.

At midday, however, the Thai forces in every province received a message from Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram, ordering them to immediately cease any resistance against the Japanese.

This came as a surprise to most of the Thais who were fighting to repel the invaders. Their leader had just effectively given the enemy permission to occupy their country, despite all the blood that had been shed in the heavy fighting.

Later, it turned out that the Japanese had made a deal with Prime Minister Phibun. But initially, Britain and the US thought that Thailand was a victim of the Japanese occupation. On December 21, 1941, the Thai government formally signed an agreement with Japan and in January 1942, Thailand, under Phibun's leadership, declared war on the US and Britain.

At that time Seni Pramoj was the Thai ambassador to the United States. He received a message from the Thai government, ordering him to deliver the war declaration to the US government.

Like many other Thai aristocrats at that time, Seni hated Japanese imperialism and he openly opposed the policy of an alliance with Japan.

When ordered to deliver the declaration of war to the US government, he refused. He went even further and established the Free Thai Movement with the help of the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which was the predecessor to the CIA. They recruited Thai students in the US and trained them to work with the OSS in underground activities.

In Thailand, Pridi Phanomyong took over the leadership of the Free Thai Movement. Pridi was a senior member of Phibun's



SENI PRAMOJ: Thailand's ambassador to the United States refused to deliver the declaration of war. Photos: Wikicommons

government but, when Phibun declared war on the allies, Pridi opposed him and refused to sign the war declaration, considering both the alliance with Japan and the war declaration illegal and unjustified.

Phibun subsequently dismissed Pridi and sent him to an inactive government position. Seni knew Pridi to be staunchly against the Japanese and therefore asked him to lead the Free Thai movement from inside the country.

One of the greatest contributions made by the Free Thai movement towards the allied war effort was the intelligence they gathered about Japanese plans and movements. At critical points of the war, such information was vital for British and American forces to stay ahead of the Japanese.

Throughout the war the Free Thai Movement recruited and trained many Thais who infiltrated the country and carried out underground missions to sabotage the Japanese war effort.

Towards the end of the war, in 1944, there were more than 50,000 Thais working underground with the allies to liberate Thailand from the Japanese occupation.

By 1944, public opinion was beginning to turn against Phibun and the Japanese presence within Thailand. It became apparent that Japan was losing the war and the allied bombing raids were causing the loss of numerous civilian lives.

Phibun was forced out of his position as prime minister and was

replaced by a Free Thai member Khuang Aphaiwongse. Khuang superficially had good relations with the Japanese but behind the scenes, he supported the allies.

In July 1945, British and American operatives began planning an invasion of Thailand with the Free Thai movement. One such operation, codenamed Operation Roger, involved landing troops on Phuket island.

The allied chief of staff expected to regain Rangoon from the Japanese before June 1945. With that assumption they planned to seize Phuket and use it as a stepping stone to recapture Malaya and Singapore.

This plan, devised by Lord Mountbatten, was never carried out. On August 6, 1945, the

Americans dropped their first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. The second bomb was dropped on August 9 on Nagasaki.

The unprecedented atrocities caused by the atomic

bombs pushed the Japanese to surrender on August 15, 1945.

At the end of the war, Thailand was still officially allied with the Japanese. Unlike other countries that were allied to Japan and Germany, however, Thailand was spared the harsh punishments that the losing countries had to endure.

This was because of the efforts of the Free Thai Movement under the leadership of Seni Pramoj, Pridi Phanomyong and many other dedicated members.

Anand Singh is an avid Phuket historian. He can be contacted by email: as.pkt@hotmail.com



TWO SIDES OF THE OCCUPATION: Freedom fighter Pridi Phanomyong (left) and Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram.

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HEAD OF THE TABLE: Executive Chef Ian Thomason at the Luxury Collection Hotel Naka Island.

Island life suits luxury chef Ian

WAITING for the speed boat at the Ao Por Marina to take me across the water to the Luxury Collection Hotel Naka Island for a lunch interview with Executive Chef Ian Thomason was something to look forward to, as it would mean a change of scenery from the sandwich shops, Thai plastic chair joints and western restaurants I normally frequent to keep my hunger at bay.

The secluded Luxury Collection is an exclusive boutique resort surrounded by the Andaman Sea and a five minute journey from Ao Por Marina on the hotel's private speed boat.

Being greeted at the pier by Ian and whisked by golf buggy to the poolside restaurant where Ian had prepared a veritable feast for us to enjoy during the interview was exactly what I was hoping for.

Ian started out as most chefs do, taking an interest in cooking from his mum and watching her work tirelessly in the kitchen, helping out whenever he could.

Realizing he was quite handy in the kitchen he spent three years at Culinary College followed by his "real training" as a commis chef at the world famous Gleneagles Hotel in Scotland.

During his time at Gleneagles, in the early 90s, the draw for chefs was to find a job in London but he does admit that has changed.

"When I was younger London was the place to go to make your name. Now the way the food is in England some of the best res-

taurants are outside London"

Making his way to London he found work at some of the most exclusive and famous hotels in the world including: The Dorchester, Meridian Piccadilly, Landmark Hotel and The Savoy. Fifteen years in London calmed him and helped him to adapt to working in kitchens in Thailand

"The culture in Thailand doesn't allow for a Gordon Ramsey-type screaming chef" he says.

A job in Bangkok for Pullman King Power brought him to Thailand and a job for the then Sheraton Grand Laguna brought him to Phuket.

The amiable chef sitting opposite me is a man without the airs you would expect from somebody with such an exclusive CV. The classically french trained chef, with experience in some of the finest hotels in the world, is now working at an exclusive hotel on Phuket.

He has found that, as with most jobs, the better you get the less you actually do of the thing you started out to do...cook. The restaurant at Luxury Collection now employs 22 staff but when Ian was brought onboard, in November last year, the kitchen only had 14 staff and he found himself spending the most time he has spent in the kitchen over the last ten years. He was as he put it "manning the hobs and stoves cooking burgers and pizza"

This must have been a nice albeit stressful experience for him

to go back into the kitchen and be hands on because the dynamics of the job change as your career progresses "You become a chef to cook and then the further you get up the ladder the less cooking you do" he adds.

His job is now more customer focused and he likes this aspect of the work. If there is a problem it can be dealt with straight away rather than an upset guest who leaves the hotel and leaves a comment on a travel website.

He also deals with the management side of the job which involves scheduling, finances, logistics (getting the produce to the island and storing it) and hygiene among others.

You would think the logistics of certain things would drive him mad working on an island off another island but the only problem he encounters is mechanical: "Things arrive the next day in London, over here it can take up to three months. But Phuket is great food-wise as you can get most things the next day due to demand"

As we walk back towards the pier Ian takes a moment to speak to the guests and the Thai staff greet him with a hearty "Hello chef". Extremely satisfied after gorging myself on Massaman beef I ask Ian, hoping to get a good inside tip, where he likes to eat on the island-

"The best Thai chefs and food is on the side of the road at the plastic chair joints" he says.

- Andrew Scott



Ian's favourite dish, Andaman Shrimp Ravioli. Recipe below.

Andaman Shrimp Ravioli with seared White Snapper and Tom Yum foam

Ingredients:

Ravioli (100g pasta dough), 50g minced white shrimp, 10 egg whites, 50g white snapper fillet, 100ml Tom Yum soup stock, 25ml double cream and a pinch of salt and pepper.

Garnish:

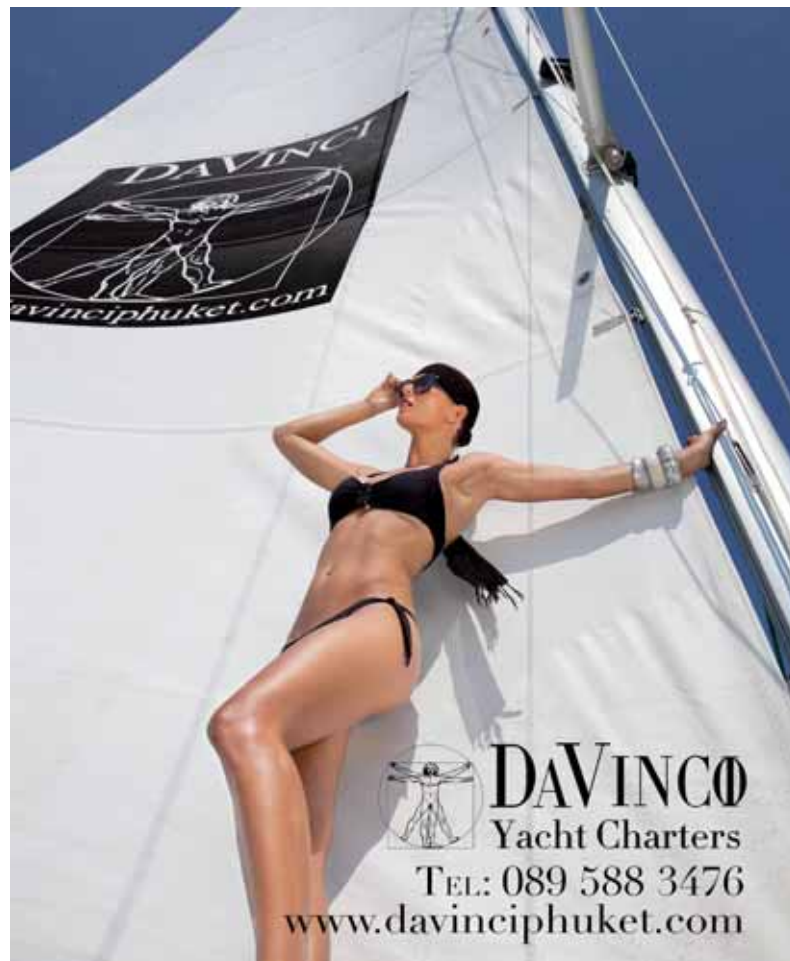
Two or three Rocket leaves
One fine-sliced lime leaf

1. Roll the dough and cut out two 8cm discs.
2. Mix the minced shrimp, and egg together and season to taste.
3. Put the mix on one of the pasta sheets.

4. Brush with egg and place the other sheet on top. Press down to seal the edges.
5. Poach slowly in salt water until soft.

1. Sear the white snapper and cook for four minutes.
2. Heat the Tom Yum stock add the whipping cream and bring to a simmer.
3. Season to taste, blend with a hand blender to make a foam.
4. Place the ravioli in the center of the plate and top with the snapper.

Decorate with the rocket and lime leaves and Tom yum Foam



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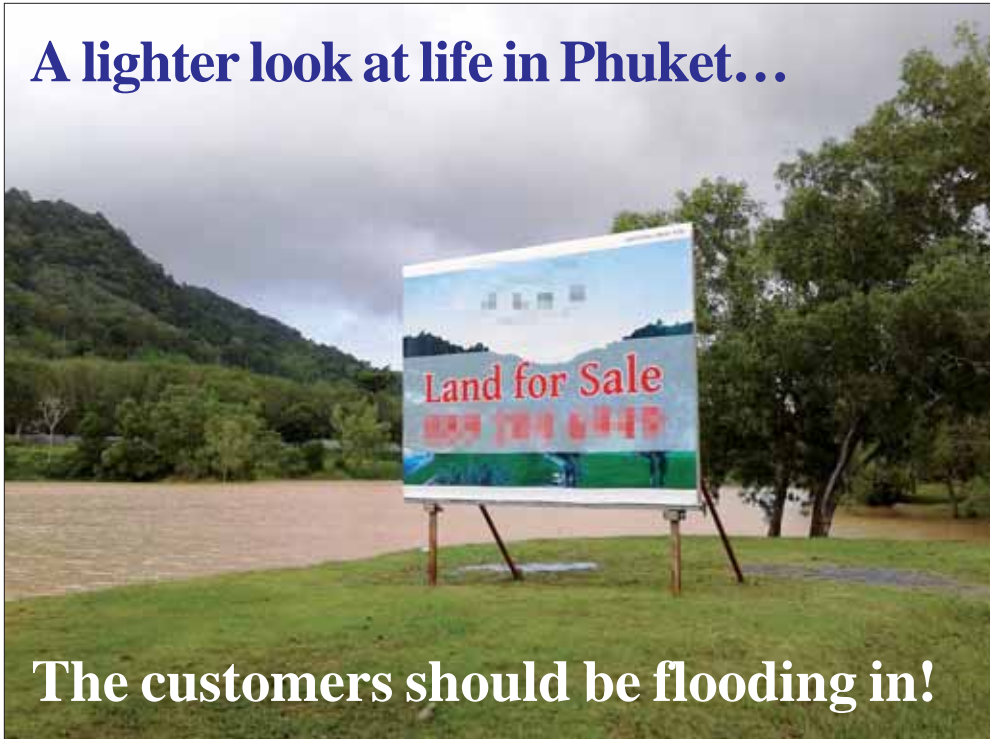
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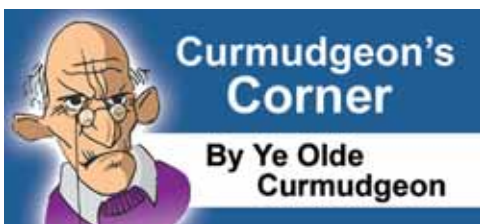
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THE NATION

A lighter look at life in Phuket...



The customers should be flooding in!



The Mallification of Phuket

GET ready, Phuket people. It's coming. It has already saturated Bangkok, and is moving rapidly southward, like an alien slime. I'm talking about mallification: the process by which a nation becomes overrun with enormous shopping malls. Now the mallification of Bangkok has progressed to the point where they are considering appointing a Minister of Malls to oversee the process. The putative Minister of Malls, a dynamic lady named Ngernwadee Seukhong (nickname: "Shop"), kindly granted me an interview:

Q. Khun Shop, there's a rumor that the government plans to turn Bangkok into one giant shopping mall.

A. Yes. It will extend from Nonthaburi to Samut Prakan, and will all be under one roof. Existing shopping malls will be integrated as nodes within the *unimall*, as we call it. The Skytrain, renamed the *Malltrain*, will speed customers from one node to another.

Q. That's marvelous. Now shoppers will never have to step outdoors. They'll all be living in one big shopping mall.

A. That's right. Instead of bringing the people to the mall, we're bringing the mall to the people.

Q. What do you say to those mean-spirited critics who complain that this will make people even more greedy and materialistic than they are now?

A. That is a narrow attitude that ignores a fundamental truth. Our economy is based on buying and selling. If people don't buy, the economy collapses. If the economy collapses, everybody will be poor.

Q. In that case, shouldn't the government reward shoppers, to motivate them to shop more?

A. Yes, we're thinking of instituting a series of awards for excellence in shopping. "Major Shopper", "Prime Shopper" and "Super Shopper" are a few of the titles we're considering. Every year we'll honor the person who has spent the most money shopping. He – or, more likely, she – will receive a trophy and a cash prize at a ceremony that will be televised worldwide. She will be crowned "Supreme Shopper"

The Japanese mall franchise Godzilla will have a major outlet here, as will the Hong Kong syndicate King Kong and the French consortium Le Big.

and will wear her crown till the following year. She'll appear at charitable functions, on talk shows, and will even put in a guest appearance on "Academy Fantasia".

Q. Sort of like Miss Thailand or Miss Thailand World?

A. Yes. We also plan to augment the carrot with the stick. Recalcitrant shoppers will be required to spend a minimum amount of money on shopping every year.

Q. Are you working with the TAT to attract international shoppers?

A. Oh, yes. We hope the TAT will devise a new tourism promotion campaign with the slogan "Shop Thailand." Entire plane-loads of foreign shoppers will be flown in on shopping sprees. They won't get to see any temples, beaches,

elephants, or classical Thai dancing, but they will get to shop. TV commercials will feature happy foreign shoppers pushing shopping carts piled high with pricey purchases.

Q. And all of this will be coming to Phuket?

A. Yes, we have big plans for Phuket. Our pilot mall is already in operation. This will be followed by malls of increasing size and flash. We favor super-huge structures the size of a small city, with names like Mammoth, Humongo, Gigantica, and Colossus. The Japanese mall franchise Godzilla will have a major outlet here, as will the Hong Kong syndicate King Kong and the French consortium Le Big.

Eventually all these malls will be merged into one vast building that will cover half the island. We plan to call it the Great Mammon Mega-Mall. With a bow to religion, we will have a shrine to Mammon, the pagan god of riches, at every entrance.

Q. I guess all of this will bring us one step closer to the perfect society.

Ye Olde Carmudgeon can be flamed at s.tsow@ymail.com, but not while he's waiting for the perfect society. Any similarity with another writer who shares this same email address is purely coincidental. Kinda.

And for my next trick...

THE END

SO, there we were, looking like we were the losers in a pillow-fight, and some customers were shouting "Throw the rabbit up". Zorro was fired and we had some new stuff on the menu on Sunday.

THE BEGINNING

ONCE upon a time (well last Saturday night to be more precise) in a restaurant called Dee-lish on Rat-u-Thid Road in Patong, Tanat, the original Thai Neil Diamond, mentioned to me that his mate "Zorro" had just returned from a tour of Europe as an illusionist. He told me that he would like to stay closer to home for a while and would therefore like to show us what he can do on Saturday evening.

Sounds like a plan methinks. A great way to give the customers something a bit different. So, Zorro (I hadn't worked out how he got his name yet, but that would become more apparent a little later) donned in a tail coat and looking every bit the part, started with the usual 'Dad tricks', you know, the same tricks that I try out on my six year old son Ryan, and he catches me out every time.

The tricks got a little better as he made this and that disappear... Then Zorro rolled up a newspaper and poured milk into the funnel that he had made, yeah, yeah, I've seen that one too.

He pretended that he was going to pour the milk over the head of one of the customers... yep, its the same one that we've all seen, there was no milk in there.

He then scrunched up the paper and started to tear at it when... blimey! if he didn't make a lovely little white dove appear.

"Oooooohh" the crowd breathed as the pretty little creature fanned its wings. "Wow", they gasped in unison as the bird took flight from Zorro's magical fingers, "***** hell" they shouted, as the dove flew directly into the ceiling fan that happened to be turned on to 'full' and which splattered the dove against the nearest wall. There were feathers everywhere. Trying to get back on track, Zorro did a couple more tricks and produced a big white rabbit out of a flaming box...



Horsing Around



If you have a photo or story that you think will make our editors smile, please send it to features@phuketgazette.net

The ultimate island view

By Marc Mulloy

WHAT do you get when you cross a remote controlled helicopter with a camera? A helicam of course. Helicam is also the name of the Phuket-based company that has been hovering over Phuket for the past eight years. And what do get when you have eight years of aerial shots of Phuket? An opportunity to create a 360 degree view of the entire island as you have never seen it before. Helicam's office manager Jonathan Russell and operations guru Phil Clark were at the *Phuket Gazette* offices to add another virtual tour to their new website abovephuket.com and told us about their latest venture.

Phuket Gazette: So what is abovephuket.com?

Jonathan: abovephuket.com is a new innovative website that allows viewers to explore Phuket from above. [It combines] a vast series of Phuket aerial virtual tours with strategic links and embedded data that allow you to hop from place to place, like a visual directory where you can see each page as a 360 image. By moving around with your mouse you get a bird's eye view of golf courses, marinas beaches and even your own house.

PG: You've been in Phuket since 2003, tell us a little about how Helicam has evolved.

Phil: In the early days we basically had a couple of gasoline helicopters and digital cameras had just come out. We had a five

megapixel Nikon. Things were different, we were shooting plots of land and the odd villa, concentrating on taking the best shots we could from a helicopter. We were the first in Thailand and a lot of people doubted it could be done.

PG: You mentioned you were



taking shots of plots of land in those days, many of those plots are now built upon, so are you still shooting plots of land?

Phil: We still shoot plots occasionally, but a lot has changed dramatically since then. Things are more sophisticated now, for example, we do full production with video for property and yacht charter promotions, as well as movies and commercials.

PG: When did you start with video?

Phil: In the last couple of years, as the new DSLR cameras were able to shoot high definition video. We've also switched from Nikon to Canon. Apart from our new electric helicopters we also have a couple of planecams that can fly very high up; a slidercam, a mini crane, a cablecam, a glidecam and special timers for timelapse photography.

PG: Describe a typical shoot.

What are you going to do today for example?

Jonathan: Today we will do an aerial virtual tour of your offices and also the surrounding area. We will also do a 360 tour of the inside of your offices. From abovephuket.com you can locate the offices from the sky – we'll even add a logo, links and information – and then you can come in through the front door and take a look around, all from the comfort of your home computer. When we started, it was all 'before' panoramas and land shots, but now we can add Computer Generated Images (CGI) and can go back once the property is finished and take the 'after' shots. Another advantage of using a helicopter is that we can allow it to hover at certain heights to see what the view will be like before a building is constructed. A third-storey living room view for example. With real video and CGI combined, we can create virtual tours such as a flyby of a villa that has yet to be constructed.

PG: Although based in Phuket I imagine you have work coming in from all over.

Jonathan: In the last two years we've been to Bangkok, Hua Hin – all over Thailand and also Malaysia, Langkawi, the Maldives and Vietnam. Predominantly the orders come from word of mouth, as we have a good reputation even though we are a small business.



PILOT PROJECT: Phil Clark (left) and Jonathan Russell at the Phuket Gazette.

PG: Tell us about what you refer to as the 'toys' on board.

Phil: The helicopter itself is a normal radio-controlled sports helicopter that can be bought in a toy shop. We manufacture and modify the helicopter ourselves in our workshop in Chalong. We have GPS capability, so a flick of the switch can make the helicopter hover at a certain spot on autopilot. Some of the video mounts themselves are electronically gyro-stabilized, so as the helicopter moves, the video mount banks forwards. I have the monitor integrated with the RC controller so that I can see in real time what is being shot above via a live downlink. There is also a failsafe, so if we lose sight of the helicam a flick of the switch will bring it home.

PG: Have you ever lost or crashed a helicam?

Phil: In the past... yes. In the ocean, in trees. It's an expensive business and it was a steep learning curve. We do have liability insurance but have never had to make a claim. Today's technology means that it is now much safer; radio frequencies no longer get interference from mobile phones for example, and the electric engines

are much more reliable. The worst feeling in the world was when we had a helicam over the sea and the engine stopped. You lose all the equipment and the work you've done which can sometimes cost a half a million baht. Not a nice feeling. Luckily that sort of thing is rare nowadays.

PG: Tell us about your latest adventure, abovephuket.com.

Jonathan: We've been working on it for the last three to four months. We did a soft launch at PIMEX and everyone thought it was Google. When people realized it wasn't Google they asked us where they could see it. So, we realized we had something special. With so many virtual tours under our belt we were able to build up a virtual Phuket map by filling in the gaps. We now have Phuket covered.

Not content to stop with Phuket, Helicam have also covered Koh Panyee, Maya Bay and many more. Who knows, they may even take on Google one day. The sky's the limit.

See if your house is on the map by visiting W: abovephuket.com or to learn more about Helicam visit their website helicam.asia.



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Just take a deep breath

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

NOBODY wants to be the “heavy breather” – especially when you’re a diver. Unfortunately, they are out there, and for sometime I was one.

My breathing was the limiting factor on any dive and not my decompression limit.

Most instructors, dive masters and dive buddies are nice about it, but prematurely coming to the surface can hurt your pride. But more importantly it caps your bottom time, which means less time to search the dark nooks and crannies of the reef for bamboo sharks.

I didn’t want to be last to jump and first back on the surface.

I didn’t want to be the only person the dive master asked, “How much air?”

And I sure didn’t want to know that my dive buddy had well over 150 bar left in his tank when the dive was called.

Shuffling towards the bow of the boat in my fins with my regulator in my mouth, I was immediately nervous about burning through all my air – that’s where it started.

However, there are options out there for us heavy breathers who aren’t prepared to spend an hour in gym everyday, just to put some bar back in our tanks.

Freediving courses are a stunning solution. When you only get one breath per dive, being relaxed, calm and making that one count is naturally of the utmost importance. I’ve heard of first-time divers with freediving backgrounds, who have air consumption on their first dive that rivals their instructor’s.

There is also the gear option, and at first I thought that was going to have to be my solution. Though I’d pass on the forty pound aluminum 100, I found myself asking for high-pressure steel 100, which gave me almost 35 extra bar per dive – over 10 per cent more.

But it was a short-term solution. Bigger tanks cost more, and even then, someone with good air consumption is literally going



BLUE WITHOUT YOU: Bathed in the pale glow of the ocean. Photo: Ian Myles

to blow you out of the water.

I was streamlined, didn’t burn extra oxygen with unnecessary movements and didn’t have to keep my BCD partially inflated to compensate for overweighting, yet I was still struggling. I couldn’t relax, because I knew that I was going to suck wind faster than a tornado.

After having a stunted dive early in the season, my instructor kindly offered some advice, a couple of breathing exercises that would put bar back in my tank – and they have.

The first is the oldest trick in the book when it comes to breathing: “belly breathing”. It’s a practice used

in Tai Chi, yoga and freediving. Many of us breathe only with our chests. We take a big breath, and our shoulders go up and our chest goes out. We really aren’t taking a deep, relaxed, breath.

On deck, we reviewed belly breathing, deep breaths that start with the gentle, relaxed expansion of the abdominal region. With both hands held lightly over your abdomen you can feel the expansion. Then gently, you empty your lungs, starting by tightening your abs. That was it. Practice at work, practice at dinner, practice while on Facebook and put air back into your tank for another dive.

The second trick was just as

simple as the first. You can breathe out for longer than you breathe in. The average person, when relaxed, has an in-breath of about five seconds and out breath of about seven seconds. But, the



TANKED: Compressed oxygen tanks sit awaiting a dive. Photo: Scottie T812

deferential between the two can be expanded on, with a little practice.

So, lying in bed, prepping my dreams with day dreams of shipwrecks, I count five seconds in and seven out. In for five seconds and

out for nine. Slowly increasing, until the long casual exhales become second nature and I’m somewhere on the alleged Captain Morgan wreck off Panama taking advantage of the extra bottom time.



UPWARD BOUND: Diver ascending to the surface. Photo: Ian Myles

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Breaking Bad: so good

By Chris Hudon

BREAKING Bad is an American television drama created by Vince Gilligan, produced and broadcast by the AMC network (who brought us acclaimed series such as *The Walking Dead* and *Madmen*).

The first season premiered in January of 2008 and the fifth season is currently airing. The show follows high school chemistry teacher Walter White (Bryan Cranston), and his unlikely collaborator, former student Jesse Pinkman (Aaron Paul).

After being diagnosed with terminal cancer, Walter uses his death sentence as a justification for the manufacture of drugs to provide for his family. Walter and Jesse begin navigating the seedy underbelly of the crystal meth trade in Albuquerque.

However, after Walter makes a startling discovery, he struggles to legitimize the decisions he's made as he "breaks bad", and becomes increasingly immoral.

Set in the American Southwest, an area which in reality, is struggling to maintain security and order in the face of the Mexican cartel who continue to spill over US borders, *Breaking Bad* has received widespread critical acclaim particularly for its writing, cinematography and acting.

The series has won four Emmy Awards including: three consecutive wins for *Lead Actor in a Drama Series* (Cranston), one win for *Supporting Actor in a Drama Series* (Paul) and three nominations for *Outstanding Drama Series*.

Cranston has been nominated twice for a Golden Globe Award for *Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series Drama* and was nominated three

WALTER: "Who are you talking to right now? Who is it you think you see? Do you know how much I make a year? I mean, even if I told you, you wouldn't believe it. Do you know what would happen if I suddenly decided to stop going into work? A business big enough that it could be listed on the NASDAQ goes belly up. Disappears. It ceases to exist without me. No, you clearly don't know who you're talking to, so let me clue you in. I am not in danger, Skyler. I am the danger. A guy opens his door and gets shot and you think that of me? No. I am the one who knocks."

times for the SAG (Screen Actors Guild) Award for *Outstanding Performance by a Male Actor in a Drama Series*.

As a fan of the show, it can be



difficult to recommend to other people, given its core subject matter. Admittedly, *Breaking Bad* is not a series for children, but for adults it's an action-packed, sickly-

humorous assault on your morality.

Gilligan picks crystal meth as his subject precisely because ordinary people cannot get behind the use, sale and distribution of such a drug.

Even in the pervasive drug culture of the US, most recreational users believe that crystal meth is harmful and dangerous, destroying the lives and appearances of those it ensnares.

Gilligan wants you to abhor what Walter does, and yet he still beautifully preserves a sense that Walter is the hero of the series. Walter White, in all regards, besides the manufacture and sale of crystal meth, is an upstanding father, husband and professional member of his community. He is

of above average intelligence and a shining example of the potential of a good man to become an evil genius.

Moving away from the acting, the show's writing, forces audience members to pick a point at which an action becomes wholly wrong. The show has a habit of taking you along for the ride, getting you to cheer for the drug dealers and then suddenly saying, "Oh my God, that was wrong". Brilliant.

The character dialogue, skillfully crafted and veiled in metaphor, is wrapped in the bravado of Walter's new-found persona. Take the quote above from season four for example. Walt's wife is worried for his safety and the safety

of their family.

Each season grows steadily more shocking than the last (not an easy feat considering) and season five is shaping up to be no different.

AMC has announced that this will be the final run of the show, though there is still a possibility it will be picked up by another network after this season.

Breaking Bad airs on Sundays (in America) at 10pm eastern standard time. For viewing here in Thailand simply wait a day or two and watch it on AMC's website or anywhere else you can find online.

The show is currently at episode six of sixteen scheduled episodes for this season, which will be split into two eight-part series.

Local Legends, of Siam

By Chris Hudon

LOCAL bands can be hit or miss. I decided to give one a try last weekend and went out with friends in Phuket Town.

Well, we were pleasantly surprised when we saw the "Legends of Siam" – LOS (clever), at Rockin' Angel's bar last week.

The band's average age is about 15-years-old and the music has a distinctly pop/rock sound – ideal for a high school audience.

Their original tunes are rock compositions built on three-chord, blues-inspired guitar fundamentals (borrowed from the likes of Angus Young).

Lyrics are a bit more 'pop-y', and run the gamut of broken hearts, bad attitudes and anti-establishment themes. Lead vocals have a kind of Jonas brothers' feel, and sometimes



Frontman Sascha Zen rocks out.

featured backing harmonies.

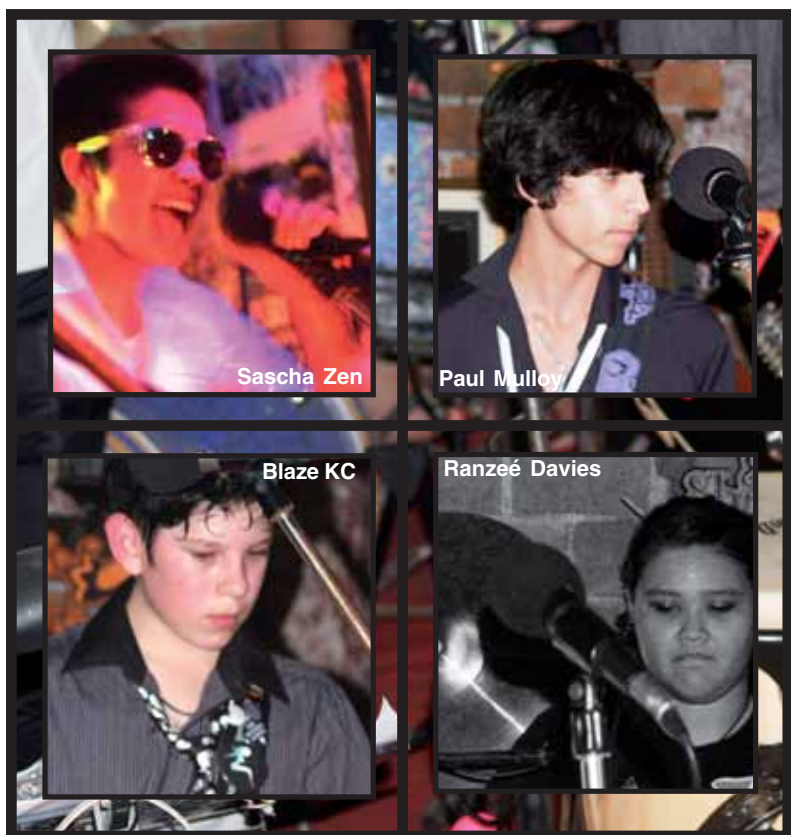
The band recently experienced a line-up change and performed last Friday for the first time with a new frontman – a scary idea for any band, so kudos. I've never seen them with the old singer so

I can't really compare the two. What I can say, is that this frontman makes a good effort to both entertain the crowd and sing the song well at the same time.

With so many local/young bands you either get a singer who focuses on the music and forgets the crowd, or forgets to sing well because he's lost in the crowd. LOS was a good mix of the two extremes. Their set ran just under an hour at Rockin' Angels bar and we were treated to more live music as the night went on, including several spontaneous jam-sessions.

Legends of Siam would be a good band for parties, dances and family events with young people.

If you'd like to check out LOS you can visit : [facebook.com/LegendsofSiam](https://www.facebook.com/LegendsofSiam), listen for them on local radio or visit [W: legendsofsiam.net](http://www.legendsofsiam.net).



Kritidech Srabua

DURING an amiable, hour-long interview, Kritidech Srabua comes across as a stern individual. He drops that guard slightly at the closing photo session when he becomes shy – almost impish.

“I am an introvert by nature and don’t do the social stuff very well,” he admits. “The hard-talking probably has roots in my rebellious teenager years in Cherng Talay.”

His turbulent youth, he says, saddened his parents, so he vowed to turn a new leaf and become “a good person”. He has, however, picked up some virtues from those rough days; he has developed a strength of character that proved invaluable later in life.

Today, Kritidech, 45, is CEO of two successful event management companies: Oriental Events and Oriental Leisure. His reputation as a top wedding planner far precedes him and his clients hail from all over the world.

With staff on the order of 100, and in-house production and artistic teams, the companies organize conferences, meetings, themed parties and lavish weddings for as many as 700 guests.

Kritidech started his career working as a bartender in a Phuket hotel and advanced quickly through the ranks as the result of sheer hard work, ambition and the willingness to learn new skills.

His work has carried him to

THAI gallery

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

Bangkok and Koh Samui, but one of the top positions he held was F&B manager in the most prestigious hotel of them all – the Oriental in Bangkok.

In the early 2000s, Kritidech spotted a developing trend in Phuket that would redefine the island as a new wedding destination. With a partner, he set up Oriental Events, to absorb this novel demand.

For a time, things seemed to be ticking along nicely until a series of national and international disasters struck – the 2004-tsunami, the SARS epidemic and political unrest at home, all combined to slow down business and dry up orders.

Not one to bow easily to such pressure, the gritty Kritidech was unrelenting: “I didn’t lay off a single staffer, nor cut their pay. I continued doggedly and even my wife thought I was out of my mind. I strongly believed there was always a way. If I didn’t have foreign clients, I turned to local ones.”

The patience paid off. Now his two companies are billed as some of the region’s most innovative event organizers. It was Kritidech who pioneered a Bollywood-

inspired wedding theme that has captured the imagination of his rich and famous clients, who are fast filling his books.

“It’s my nature to stay one step ahead of any situation. And I would drill my teams to prepare for the worst and always have a back-up plan in case things go wrong.”

Kritidech admits having one weakness: he’s too fast on his toes. “My staff has to literally run after me and my thoughts. I am fed up with myself sometimes for being like that,” he laughs.

With events booked for every month until next year, Kritidech is busy overseeing all aspects of production – personally carrying out and perfecting every design aspect.

A busy executive who always makes time for his family (three out of four children still live with him), he loves nothing more than taking them out for a special meal, or cooking for them. “I love food and I love cooking for people,” he adds.

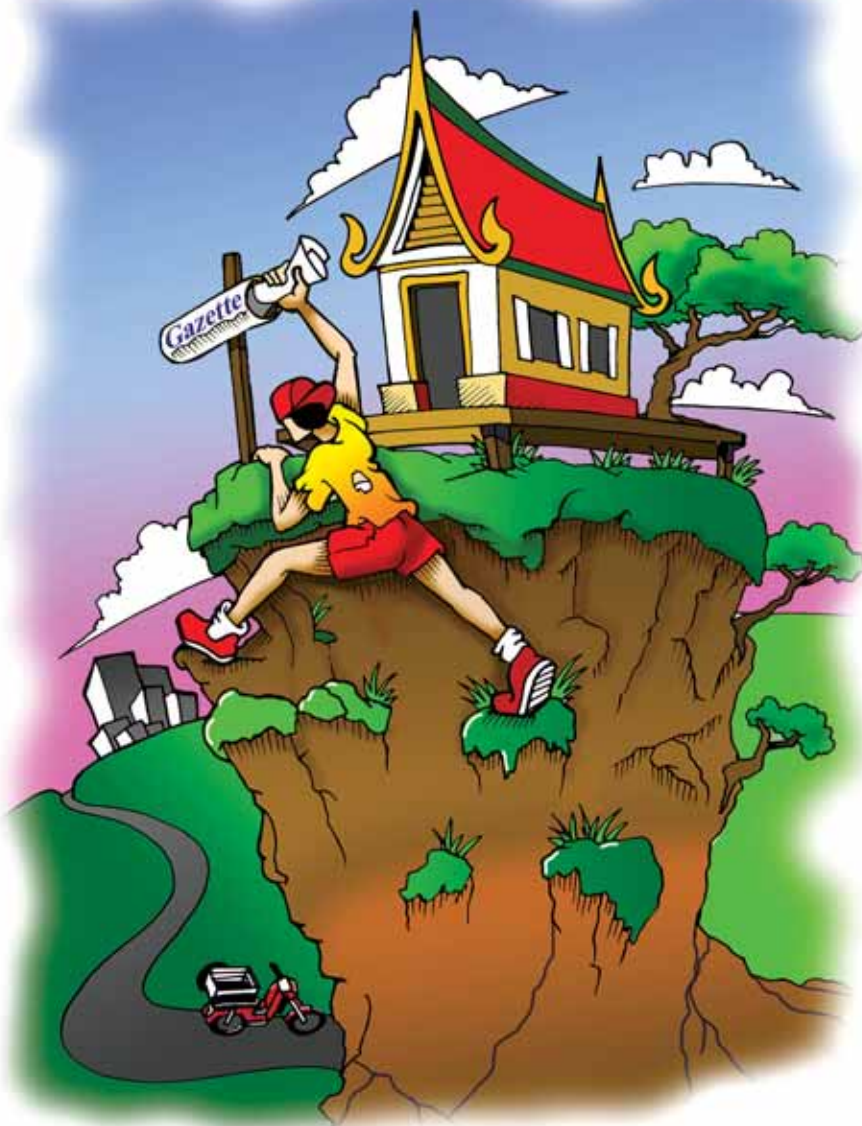
With Myanmar opening up, the savvy Kritidech is eyeing it as a hot new venue for hosting social and corporate events. He’s going there in a few days for a reconnaissance trip.

“A friend gave me some invaluable advice that I still heed to this day. He said: ‘There are opportunities all around us. You’ve got to know where to look and how to turn them to your benefit.’”



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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Friday Happy Hours are back at the Watermark Boat lagoon Restaurant



THE BAND: Colin Hill, Pjae Stanley and the band got everyone's sea legs dancing.



FANTASTIC: Phuket FC fans pose with the Bangkok FC mascot on Sunday. See P. 46 for details.

It was 20 years ago today... The Ao Chalong Yacht Club celebrate its 20th anniversary



THE OLD: Brendan, Dan and Pete were around when the Yacht Club opened.



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THE HOOPLE: Bob Mott contemplates whether or not to burst the balloons. Photos: Marc Mulloy



FAIR TRADE: Phuket Governor Tri Augkaradacha (green shirt, left) and Phuket Provincial Agricultural Chief Winai Khankaew (green shirt, right) opening the Phuket Pineapple Fair. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong



HEEDING THE CALL: Telephone Organization of Thailand (TOT) participated in a ceremony at Saphan Hin recently in honor of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's 80th birthday.



TREE-WAY JUNCTION: Anuphas Vivuhkarn Co Ltd (Honda dealer) joined together with the Provincial Department of Rural Roads in an initiative to plant more trees along Phuket's roads.



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* The China Daily's mass-circulation newspapers employ more than **500** journalists, including **70** senior expatriate editors from the UK, the United States, Europe, India, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand. In the *Asia Weekly*, they feature news and commentary from authoritative writers across the globe.

TOUCH OF FEEL-GOOD

Spa business is getting better in Asia, P12-15



BOLD STATEMENT

Singaporean entrepreneur offers beauty biz tips, P24



CHINADAILY

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August 30, Sept. 6, 13, 27; 6 to 11:30 pm: Martini Manicure Ladies Night at RE KA TA

Free express manicure for ladies. Free martini for ladies on arrival 50 per cent off drink list for everyone all night long. From 6pm to midnight – DJ will be playing tunes until late.

September 1-2, 9am to 5pm: High Performance Running Workshop with coach Guy Ogden

Take your running to the next level. This two-day workshop with coach Guy Ogden can cut minutes off race times for Triathletes and mid or long distance runners. It's 10,200 baht per person, inclusive of service charge and taxes. For reservations, please contact our Activity Desk. Tel: +66 (0)76 336000, or Email: tslc@thanyapura.com.

September 1, 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 of our fish and meats by ourselves, and in the bakery we bake all our bread. With very well trained chefs and a Swedish head chef, we can promise you that you won't leave hungry or thirsty. All this for only 395 baht, and if you add an extra 300 baht you can choose what you want from our free flow alternatives. Visit Wtwochefs.com

September 1, 6 to 11:30pm: Salsa Night with BBQ Dinner Buffet

Salsa Night with BBQ Dinner Buffet. The Royal Phuket Marina Yacht Club is delighted to invite you to our Salsa evening with BBQ

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

dinner 500 baht++. Dance the Cha-cha, Bachata, Samba and Rumba live with the sound of DJ Miscaro. For more information and reservations, please contact Anna or Didier on 084-306 2016, or Mr Murat on 081-797 3364.

September 7, 21 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.

September 20, 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 send an email request to info@phuketiwc.com. The club is a social network providing educational opportunities for needy children in Phuket. It promotes friendship among women of all nationalities – including welcome support and information to newcomers living in Phuket.



SHELL SHOCK: A turtle made at the Cape Panwa Hotel for the 'Por Tor' festival. Photo: Cape Panwa Hotel

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 in Phuket Town, and all around Phuket. Organizers are hoping that the festival will someday develop into a major international event.

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 seventh 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 modest monk named "Mahayana", who, after his transcendence, searched endlessly for the souls of his two dearly departed parents.

October 5, 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.

October 13 to 3:30pm: 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 of our fish and meats by ourselves, and in the bakery we bake all our bread. With very well trained chefs and a Swedish head chef, we can promise you that you won't leave hungry or thirsty. All this for only 395 baht, and if you add an extra 300 baht you can choose what you want from our free flow alternatives. Visit Wtwochefs.com

October 18, 11:30am to 2pm: Phuket International Women's Club Monthly Lunch

The Phuket International Women's Club monthly lunch will be held at The Boathouse in Kata. Registration is essential. Members 500 baht, guests 650 baht. Contact info@phuketiwc.com.

Phuket Afternoon Computer Clinic

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

Free Computer Clinic at:

Sandwich Shoppe Patong - September 5, 1-3pm

Sandwich Shoppe Chalong - September 12, 26 1-3pm

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COFFEE break

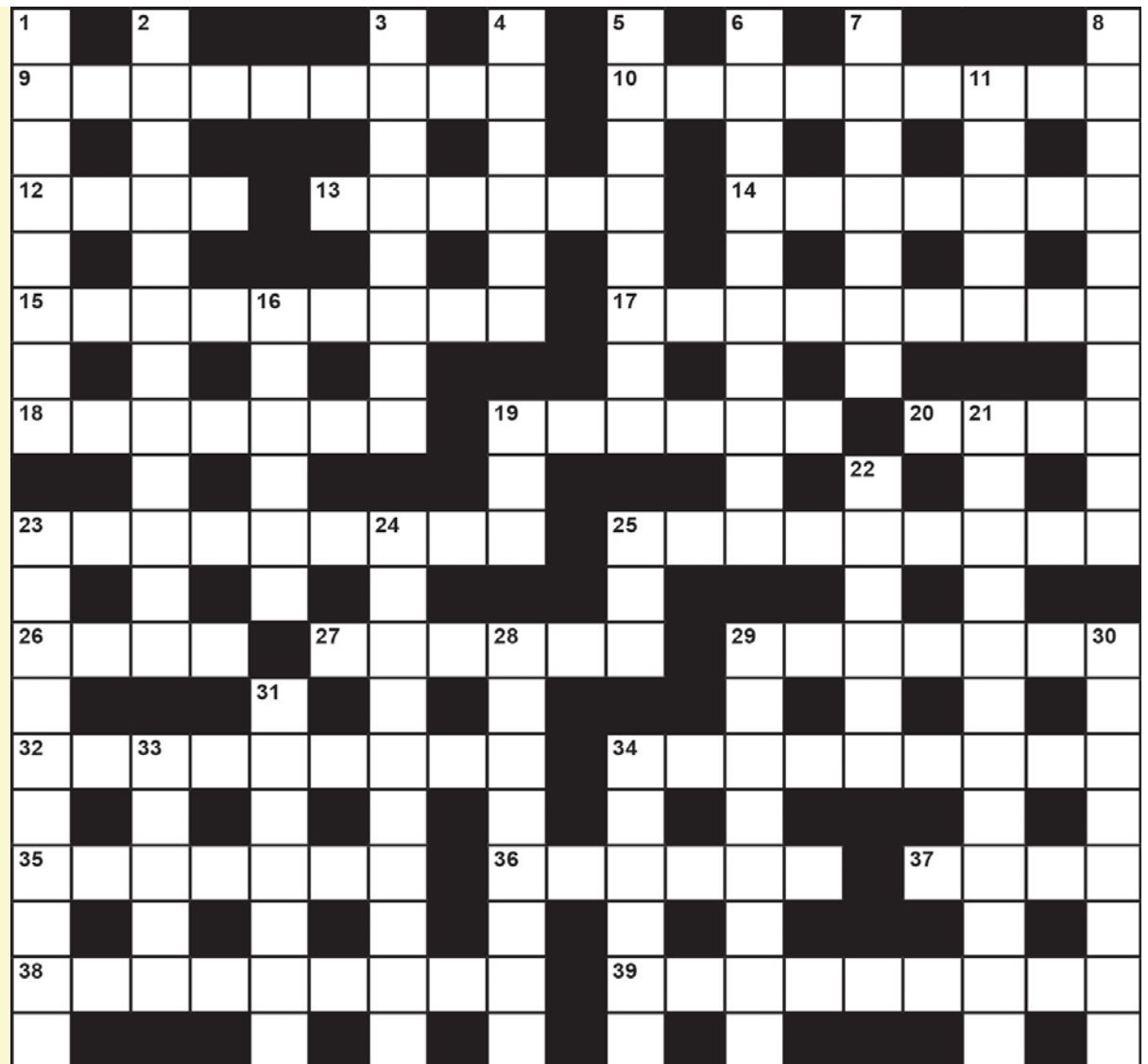
Across:

9. Being equal to not falling over (9)
10. For the middle of the year, arrange dim sum on me, right? (9)
12. Girl in the middle fair maid (4)
13. Rush into a profession (6)
14. Many do rant wildly in a caustic way (7)
15. Sharp declines in confectionery (4,5)
17. Railway coaches and cars I rage about (9)
18. Arranging seeing around the North in motors (7)
19. See ant settling in upper chamber (6)
20. That woman round the brave man (4)
23. Me, I battle to make the travel schedule (4,5)

25. Cast sets out East to make compact recordings (9)
26. Peas cultivated East of the church (4)
27. Part of the head place of worship (6)
29. No charge in favor of being unrestricted (3,4)
32. Cockney teen dares to be different (4,5)
34. Dependence on drugs from acid I don't destroy (9)
35. Maybe lurks around a turn in a Phuket sports facility (7)
36. House left bed outside, take notice (6)
37. Isaan food for the French, right Bishop? (4)
38. Terrible slut, so die debauched (9)
39. A way of doing things, mother working has nothing in the house on wheels (5,4)

Down:

1. Possibly I got able to legally constrain (8)
2. Skillfully ply some magic for



- great sporting occasion (7,5)
3. Independently do trials for medical instruments (8)
4. Way out, for example concerning saints (6)
5. Statesman? (8)
6. Roughly indicates a stupid speed, son (10)
7. Rum come-back, showers cause cattle disease! (7)
8. Demonstrators toss report out (10)
11. Mug an upstart in a central district on Phuket.

16. Give no date in error (6)
19. Be aware of the Bishop's responsibility (3)
21. Wiper out, nor taximeter working! (12)
22. Frantic timer caught by system of measurement (6)
23. This same movement of French on bank of river in London (10)
24. Bad of ruler, mixing up baker's staple (5,5)
25. A reminder of the pigtail (3)
28. Normal, blasé about allegories (8)

29. With total exactness, I'd tie fly dexterously, (8)
30. Raised to the peerage, imposing in the end (8)
31. Two points possibly OK ref.? Go and search (4,3)
33. Indian attire, Sir, as arranged (5)
34. Answer unfortunately has me! Cause to feel disgrace (6)

Cryptic crossword compiled by Patong Bill. Answers on page 43

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



A stroke of good luck encourages Virgoans to look at life on the bright side during the last week of August. Conflict in personal and professional areas of your life is set to ease as September approaches. A fire sign partner becomes more understanding and another earth sign colleague is easier to work with. Those celebrating a birthday in the week ahead will be inspired to travel more in the coming year.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



Testing the waters is recommended for those Librans keen to take a new direction in the world of work this week. The stars show that September will be a fortuitous month where new beginnings are concerned. Expect another air sign to raise the possibility of a career move that could suit your needs. This is also an auspicious time to revitalize a flagging romantic relationship. Your lucky color this week is sunshine yellow.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



Your high energy could intimidate others this week. The stars advise those born under the sign of Scorpio to tone down their mood, particularly where sensitive work

related issues are concerned. Making the right impression on people with influence is important as September will be a promising month to be given free rein to let your ideas loose. The color charcoal gray can help promote a calmer outlook.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



Sagittarians are advised to spend time in the company of those who understand where they are coming from this week. There are hints that mixing with people who are very different could result in unnecessary friction. In the realm of romance, there are signs that you could forget an important occasion. Best days for money matters are Tuesday and Wednesday. Wear a piece of tiger's eye to attract good luck.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



Over concern for others could be cramping your style. If this is related to work colleagues, it would be better to turn a blind eye. This may not be possible to do on a personal level, but the stars recommend encouraging people to be responsible for their own destinies. A possible romance with a fire sign becomes more attractive when this person shows their interest in an obvious way this weekend.

YOUR horoscope By Isla Star

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



The stars show that troubles with technology could interfere with Aquarians' progress this week. Delays in communication may also be due to a lapse of memory – keep careful notes of appointments to avoid this happening. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, an opportunity to catch up with an old flame will not be appreciated by a current partner. However, those who are single could be keen to recapture romance with this person.

PISCES (Feb 20-March 20):



An earth sign plays an influential role in your world of work. Whether this turns out to be a positive or negative situation will depend on how Pisceans react. The stars advise being clear and confident about where you stand and what you expect to happen in the future. Fortunate days for finances are Wednesday and Thursday. Romance sparkles this weekend after a non-eventful period. Your lucky color is pistachio green.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):



This is an auspicious week to convince others to come round to your way of thinking. An earth sign colleague who has had their heels dug in the ground is predicted to change their mind. In the realm of romance, relocation becomes possible when a partner has second thoughts. Money matters become better starred towards the end of August; this is a fortuitous time to chase up people in your debt.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):



As August draws to a close, those born under the sign of Taurus should be feeling on top of the world. A water sign's readiness to meet you halfway should mean that a work project can now be completed and other interest can come from a surprising source. Romance with other earth signs is well-starred, but a water sign's distraction may become too much to take. Your lucky color this week is midnight blue.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



A dilemma at work can catch Geminis off guard early next week. The stars recommend that you concentrate on one thing at a time as it will be easy to get sidetracked. Arrangements are subject to alter-

ations. A fire sign is forecast to back out at the last minute, leaving vacation plans up in the air. This could come at an opportune moment for those who have thought about inviting a new romantic partner along.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Emotions settle down this week and those born under the sign of Cancer who have been easily irritated lately will enjoy more harmonious relationships. Reaching agreements with business partners is well starred, with the spotlight shining on an important collaboration getting the green light at the end of August. Your romantic outlook improves as the stars support efforts for clear communication. Lucky days for finances are Sunday and Monday.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):



Haste can cause waste this week. Leos who are rushing around are likely to lose more than they can gain. The stars suggest setting time aside on Monday to plan your days carefully. This is not an auspicious time to make moves on the spur of the moment, which also applies to romance. An earth sign is forecast to pose a loaded question this weekend and there is more to this story than first apparent.

PROPERTY Gazette

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

Escape to the mangroves

LOCATED on the relatively untouched Ao Yon Khao Kad Road with views to Chalong Bay is the Mangrove Phuket Panwa Resort.

The property offers guests 32 bungalows all surrounded by beautiful landscape and look out across the garden to the sea.

Nestled tastefully in the forest, the bungalows come in Deluxe, Premier and Suite options. All are 48 square meters but their interiors vary.

Deluxe rooms have a private balcony/terrace. Premier rooms come with garden access and a private balcony/terrace. The Suite Villa is a more exclusive choice with an outdoor Jacuzzi and larger private terraces.

All rooms are fully furnished with the latest modern conveniences: flat screen TV, Wi-Fi and microwave. The resort boasts a 25-meter infinity pool a stones

throw from the private 2000sqm beach, which can be used for weddings and private functions.

Behind the pool is the *Mangmoon* restaurant which offers an international menu alongside a southern Thai menu; and all the Thai dishes can be made into a vegetarian version. M bar is an intimate, tastefully designed bar next to the restaurant, providing the same view out to Chalong bay.

The resort is designed in a tropical contemporary style by architect Ammata Sanklang who uses wood throughout, including its furniture, decking and flooring, giving the rooms a soft, natural feel.

The resort is aimed at independent travellers and honeymooners.

Scheduled for completion in September the resort is 95 per cent finished at present.

— Andrew Scott



NIGHT VISTA: The bungalows at night with a natural landscape in a serene setting.



SOFT: The interior of one of the deluxe apartments with wooden furnishings and floor.



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Waiting to exhale in the Garden of Eden

I THOUGHT I was suffering a heart attack last week. My pulse was racing like some coked-up Hollywood type who was riding the early morning rails to oblivion.

My back was covered in sweat and beads of perspiration inched down my pumping chest. The beating sound of my life force started to go jackrabbit mad, just ahead of those racing greyhounds who were closing in.

Inch by inch. Minute by minute. High anxiety and not a brown paper bag in sight to settle down the nerves. Was this the end?

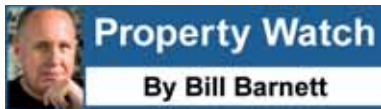
Fortunately (or unfortunately for some detractors), I lived to face another day.

One glossy, juiced-up image of Phuket is

that it's a modern day Garden of Eden, but these days it's taken a turn for the worse for property developers. Lost without a GPS, the industry has found itself somewhere around midnight in the garden of good and evil.

You can hear those baying wolves or even worse, a montage of hits by the reformed Spice Girls. If that doesn't make you shiver in your bones, nothing will.

Fresh ink, be it real or virtual, is continuing to pump up the volume over island land scandals.



Images of the one they call "The Demolisher" continue to feature in headlines.

Angst, uncertainty and paranoia are raging in Phuket business circles. But, as one friend of mine aptly pointed out "it's only an investigation". It's exceedingly hard to not get caught up in the moment.

Certainly my cultural points of reference remain "Tricky Dick" Nixon and a crew of madmen gone over the edge, but these remain dated and even those George W. Bush crazed, delusional,

Weapons of Mass Destruction claims have expired.

A more modern version, say Paranoid 3.0, could be an amped-up, post Two and a Half Men, Charlie Sheen ranting on Twitter.

You get it, right? It's hard not to be cynical in 2012, where Asia remains the only bright economic spot across the globe. This is, to put it mildly, as good as it gets.

Of course dangers lurk around every doorway. Rising religious extremism, sinking export markets, global warming, over population

and the reunion of the Spice Girls.

But, top down or bottom up, the number one deal killer has to be high, low and medium level corruption gone wild. No spring break here, just down and out graft with little hope on the horizon for a better world.

As I plunk down the keyboard, a documentary on TV about DC Comics and its legion of superheroes is on air. It seems the core ethos of Superman (or whoever you fancy in the comic roll call) is the belief in equality and that the common man can prosper no matter what obstacles are placed in his way.

I'm a big fan of Thailand. It's where I've lived for over ten years, where I chose to grow old (make that older) and raise a family. It's my adopted home and, while I remain skeptical and opinionated in, what some may say as, a pro-business mentality, I do often lust after a higher plane of being.

This is where the laws of the land are followed, a democracy thrives and due process functions. It has been interesting reading the online comments recently about the ongoing investigation by "The Demolisher".

There is widespread respect and support for what is happening, which is very untypical of most feedback in the tropical island news. A chord has been struck and it's resonating clear and loud.

Though I must add my own color to the events at hand: the method of investigation being



THE DEMOLISHER: Parks chief Damrong Pidech has threatened to knock down resorts that cannot prove their innocence. Photo: Orawin Narabal

depicted in the news, be it correct or embellished, does have some flaws around the edges.

Flocks of government officials arriving, each with a media entourage and lagging paparazzi. Headlines sensationalize the serious issue but little emphasis is placed on the factual processes which will take place as part of these inquiries.

No matter what you think, Thailand is a developed business environment and has a defined legal system. It's not perfect, but please name me a country, which is? Those who have rightly or wrongly come

under scrutiny will have due process, the chance to stand up and be heard in a court of law, as part of that process.

So, there you have it. We don't live in the Garden of Eden, and sometimes the clock does strike a panicked chord near to midnight. It's easy to fall over the edge in a nervous exhaustion, but all I have to do is take a moment, breath in, and slowly but surely exhale.

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

Thai property companies looking abroad

THAILAND'S property firms are interested in expanding their investment overseas, seeing an opportunity to generate high returns.

They are interested in expanding their investment in Asean, Europe and the USA.

For example, Property Perfect Plc established Property Perfect International Pte Ltd in Singapore, planning to use this firm to expand investment in Asean.

CEO Chainid Ngowsirimanee said the company decided to set up its new branch in Singapore with plans to expand investment overseas by focusing on Asean.

"We are negotiating with our partners to acquire property projects in Asean and will finalize deals within this year," he said, but declined to give more details because the company is in the negotiating process.

Land & Houses Plc established Land & Houses USA Inc with plans to invest in Californian property projects that generate rental revenues for the company in the long term.

Adisorn Thananan-narapool, senior executive vice president of Land & Houses Plc, said the company focused on property that generates rental income in Cali-

fornia, believing that the property market there has bottomed and has potential to rise in the future.

"When we expand our investment overseas, we target return on investment that is higher than in the domestic market," he said.

Sansiri Plc established Sansiri Global Investment Pte Ltd in Singapore in 2009. This company holds 100 per cent in Sansiri Investment (2009) Ltd in Guernsey. Sansiri Investment (2009) Ltd has bought residential projects in the UK since 2009, when local markets dropped following the banking crisis.

Sansiri's Sretha Thavisin explained that his company expands overseas investment when it sees an opportunity to generate high returns. After investing in the UK, the company is interested in the USA, especially New York.

Pruksa Real Estate Plc started to expand their investment overseas in 2010 by focusing on the Asian market, including Vietnam, India and the Maldives.

CEO Thongma Vjitpongpan said overseas investment has its risks, but the company aims to be one of the top 10 property firms in Asean.

"The AEC [Asean Economic Community] also opens business

opportunities for our expansion in Asean in the long term," he said.

TCC Land Co Ltd, owned by beverage tycoon Charoen Siriwattanabhakdi, has expanded its overseas investment by focusing on hospitality businesses. The group now has hospitality businesses in UK, USA, Japan, Singapore and Australia.

Meanwhile, Mark Collins, head of residential at CBRE UK, said Asian buyers have been particularly active in the new building 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 [they] 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.

"Opportunities for central London residences are emerging in new countries. Thai investors have significant buying power, but are still relatively new to the central London market so tend to stick firmly to the more well-known 'Monopoly board' areas of Mayfair, Belgravia and Knightsbridge," he said.

- The Nation

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Freehold and Leasehold

Property Legal

By International Law Office

IN THAILAND foreigners suffer almost a total prohibition on the ownership of land. There are a few exceptions, but these do not apply to the ordinary investor.

The source of this prohibition is section 97 of the Land Code of 1954, which states that neither a foreigner nor a foreign "juristic person", being a company regarded by the law as an alien, can own land.

Curiously, section 93 of the Land Code does provide that a foreigner is entitled to the inheritance of land (by section 87 a maximum one rai or slightly less than half an acre for residential purposes) as a statutory heir, but registration of the same must be approved by the Minister of Interior.

There are some further discrete areas under the Code where foreign ownership is recognized as a possibility, but they are also subject to approval by the Minister and subject to significant investment. In particular, under section 86, a foreigner can acquire land by virtue of an International Treaty, but Thailand currently has no such treaties with any countries entitling foreigners to own land.

However, although foreigners cannot own land in the freehold sense they can lease a plot of land and own freehold any building standing upon it. More on this later.

CONDOMINIUMS

The alternative to this is that a foreigner can purchase the outright freehold interest in a Condominium unit by virtue of the Condominium Act 1979 (as distinct from an apartment which is governed by general laws and can only be leased).

Apartment units do not have individual unit title deeds and it is not possible to register individual ownership at the Land Department. Only registered condominiums have unit title deeds and offer foreign freehold ownership together with co-ownership of the common areas, including the land upon which the units are situated by a special Condominium Juristic Person set up for the co-owners' benefit.

Foreign freehold ownership in a condominium is however currently subject to the 49 per cent quota rule, which means that foreigners may only own freehold a maximum of 49 per cent of the total space of units in a condominium building.

For those who were fortunate to legally acquire freehold in excess of that quota in Bangkok or Pattaya City for five years post 1999 the law will still recognize their freehold ownership and those can be sold on, but otherwise we are back to 49 per cent everywhere.

So, if the 49 per cent quota is

already full then the foreigner's only method is to purchase the lease of a condominium. Developers may or may not be willing to offer this and this may depend on locality. One has to remember the quota only relates to foreign ownership and in the cities and on the mainland the developer may have no trouble selling all his units both to foreigners and Thai nationals.

This may not be the case in resort locations, particularly on the islands where Thai nationals are traditionally far less likely to buy. Consequently there is more likely to be a surfeit of unsold units on the island, which will be available to foreigners to purchase leasehold.

A freehold condominium will however always be a more valuable investment because of the cache of freehold ownership together with the strength of co-ownership management rights now prescribed by the latest Condominium Act No. 4 2008.

LEASEHOLD

The phrase "Leasehold" means the same whether it applies to land, a condominium or apartment purchase. The concept of Leasehold is described in the Thailand Civil and Commercial Code as the hire of immovable property.

Such lease must be in writing and registered at the Land Office if the lease term is for more than three years. The duration of the lease term cannot exceed 30 years but the Code does provide that the term may be renewed and in practice it is commonly accepted by the Land Office that the original term may be renewed twice making a total of 90 years.

On this basis, it is common for foreigners to lease land and then to construct a building (house/villa) on that land, which they may then own freehold.

The problem is that although the lease may last 90 years, only the original term of 30 years may be immediately registered at the land office. Renewal of the two further terms depends upon co-operation between the parties to the lease. The Thai Courts have held that renewal clauses are strictly "non-lease rights" and therefore only enforceable between the parties as a matter of contract.

A way to protect against the possible non-performance by the Lessor of the renewal clauses is for the purchaser to acquire an indirect if minority stake in the land owning company coupled with effective minority management control to ensure that renewal of the term does take place.

It should also be noted that a lease is a personal form of contract and only actionable between the original contracting parties, so if the original Lessor dies the lessee may find himself with no security of tenure.

Likewise as to the lessee's

mortality there is no clear law as to their ability to pass rights under the lease to the Lessee's heirs.

Fortunately, the Supreme Court has generally upheld the wishes of the Lessee testator in this regard, but security of tenure can be enhanced by the foreigner taking the lease in the name of an off-shore company. Such company will not pass away as with an individual.

With the number of options available it can be shown that while leasehold appears inferior to freehold, security of tenure may with a little thought and planning be strengthened sufficiently to provide an equal investment, however the likelihood of selling that investment on is diminished particularly in respect to a leasehold Condominium with no management rights.

This article has been written by International Law Office Patong Beach Co Ltd, a Phuket based law firm for international purpose only. In case of inquiry, please contact Timothy A. Taylor, Consultant, by phone: 076-222-191-5 or email: tim@ilo-phuket.com



SECURITY: How to Legally own land in the Kingdom. Photo: Mr T in DC



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Garlanding your garden

THERE is nothing new about buying a floral garland from the lady at the Central Festival intersection. But it did set me thinking about white flowers and, of course sweet-smelling ones.

After all, most of Thailand's perfumed shrubs have white blooms – maybe as compensation for being visually overpowered by their red and yellow brethren. Less dramatic, more alluring.

These garlands or *phuang malai* have been around awhile – and long before the advent of the motorcar. Most were elaborately crafted in the reign of King Rama V, and traditionally hung in front of windows so that the perfume could waft into the house, or, as highly sophisticated arrangements, offered to royalty and dignitaries, or placed in front of images of Buddha.

Every *lei* crafted for your vehicle consists mainly of white flowers – apart from a single red rosebud or orange African marigold for contrast.

The slim, pendulous flowers at the end of the chain are cream-colored and delicately scented champaca (*champii* in Thailand), a key ingredient in some of the world's most exclusive fragrances.

The *champaca*, a member of the magnolia family, is a small ornamental tree, much admired for these delicate, hanging blooms, and consequently a feature of many gardens and spas.

But while the *champii* petals fade quickly, the tiny and densely packed florets dangling above them in our *lei* do not. Taken from the Indian Milkweed (*calotropis gigantea* or *rak dok*), these tiny, almost plastic-looking flowers are not there primarily for their scent, but because they are robust and resilient enough to retain their brilliant white



Gardening
By Patrick Campbell

color for up to five days.

The name might suggest that the milkweed is a lowly-regarded plant in Asia. And indeed in some ways it is: it has a sprawling habit, and it does flourish like a weed. Hence its unrivalled capacity, for example, to colonize various spaces around Phuket, often one of the first shrubs to reappear on land razed by the builder's backhoe.

But besides being quick off the blocks, it has other horticultural uses – as an excellent shrub for coping with windy conditions and salty sea-breezes. That explains the presence of sturdy specimens near the Rawai Beach Road, and its deliberate use as a windbreak, a frontline of protection behind which more delicate shrubs can thrive.

As a member of the notorious *apocynaceae* genus, the milkweed produces a characteristic white liquid from its stems, a toxic and lactiferous latex that contains alkaloids.

But in common with so many of its tribe, the plant has been a folk remedy for centuries, used in the treatment of ringworm, warts, to clot wounds and as a purgative. Maybe its established healing properties provide another reason for its presence in traditional garlands.

The milkweed has a distinctive appearance. The complete bloom (which can sometimes be lavender in color) consists of a large cluster of five-petaled, waxy florets, and an elegant white crown rising from the center. It is these "crowns", threaded in three or four rows like beads on a string, that form the central



HANGING AROUND: *Phuang malai* were around long before the advent of the motorcar. Photo: Irene

element in the traditional garland.

The leaves too are unusual, grayish green in color, and are the preferred food of many insects, including the larvae of the magnificent monarch butterfly. Its caterpillars have, on occasion, stripped all the leaves from my milkweeds, but I know the plant, like the phoenix, will rise again.

At the top of our *lei* is another white and fragrant flower, the jasmine. There are several varieties in Thailand, but *jasminum sambac* (Arabian jasmine or *mali son*) is the most celebrated, not only because it is heavily scented, but also because it is the flower most associated with religious offerings and floral arrangements.

This elegant flower is worth a whole column on its own.

Watch this space.



Jasminum. Photo: Sambac Scottzona

Tip of the week

Visual appearance is obviously the number one consideration when starting or renewing your garden.

But there are other factors to bear in mind besides the decorative floral aspect. Evergreens are both attractive and less prone to leaf drop; different shapes add variety.

Every Thai gardener, moreover, would probably insist on a selection both of "lucky" or sacred plants, and of sweet-smelling shrubs.

Jasmine, plumeria and

wrightia religiosa would probably constitute the top three shrubs grown in Phuket for their perfume.

But your choice of plants might be constrained by other circumstances.

For example, if your pride and joy is also enjoyed by children, you would have to think twice about growing plants such as euphorbias which are armed with spines, or, even more crucially, those with poisonous properties.



White Champaca. Photo: Mulberry 24



Apocynaceae. Photo: Ryan Somma



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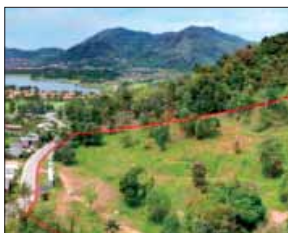
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LAND NEAR MISSION HILLS



Pa Khlok. 2 rai 32sq wah, 60m wide. Chanote. Located on Tha Ruea-Pa Khlok-Muang Mai Rd. 11 km from Heroines' Monument. Price: 7.8 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118. Email: honda.1437@hotmail.com

D CONDO 1, KATHU

-29.94sqm, mountain view, price 1,278,000 baht.
-29.70sqm, mountain view, price 1,280,000 baht.
-29.79sqm, pool view, price 1,330,000 baht.
-29.70sqm, pool view, price 1,365,000 baht.
Contact Vutdy on 081-892 3709.

KARON TOWNHOUSE

2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, aircon, ADSL, car parking. Price: 5.3 million baht. Tel: 089-594 0423.

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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URGENT SALE/ RENT

House in Patong. Newly build 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 stories, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircon, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 089-469 1813.

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 IN BAAN PROMPHAN

2.5 floors, 5 mins to town, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Good for stay! 2.85 million baht. Tel: 083-506 9155. Email: sumitra.saetan@gmail.com

LAND INSIDE GOLF COUNTRY CLUB

Land for sale inside Phuket Golf Country Club, 336sq wah + membership. Good house, 100m from clubhouse. Price: 10 million baht. Contact Prasert. Tel: 081-676 6214.

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.

CONDO IN SUPALAI PARK

for sale. Near Seng Ho Bookstore in Phuket Town. Studio, 30sqm, floor 15, sea view, aircon, furnished. Price: 1.9 million baht. Ready to move in. For more info call 089-472 9118.

PLOT FOR SALE - BOAT LAGOON

Plots for self-build 13,750 baht/sqm. Tel: 076-238948, 081-968 9046. Fax: 076-273466. Email: marketing@phuketpropertytrip.com

VILLA FOR SALE, PHANG NGA

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

KAMALA HOUSE FOR SALE

Near Phuket FantaSea. Price: 3.2 million baht. Negotiable. Tel: 081-719 1041. Email: teddykong0222@hotmail.com

RAWAI POOL VILLA 5 BEDROOMS

Sale 5 million baht, 400sqm land, available for rent. 300m to Rawai Pier. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

EXCLUSIVE PATONG HILLTOP

Four large and ready to develop sites with Chanote title. Overlooking Patong with ocean views. Tel: 085-258 0006. Email: pat@aeropromgr.com. For further details, http://dl.dropbox.com/u/81008861/patong%20land0005.PDF

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

FULLY FURNISHED HOUSE FOR SALE

Chao Fah Garden Home 3 in Koh Kaew near BIS, 10 mins to Lotus. 2 beds, 2 baths, 2 aircons. Nice living & kitchen room, car park, fully furnished. Ready to move in. 2.85 million baht near Boat Lagoon. Tel: 081-541 2025. Email: c.junlarat@gmail.com

ALLAMANDA (LAGUNA)

Residences/Phuket Condo unit, half of a deluxe twin house, fully furnished and equipped, set direct on the picturesque lagoon with balcony right over it. 3 bedrooms, each with shower/bathroom roof terrace. Long-term rent or sale. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

2 LAND 180 D SEAVIEW

At Yamu hills 2 lands +/- 1 rai each, seaview 180D, freehold, chanote, villa, security gated com, electricity, road. Price: 5.5 million baht/land. Tel: 084-625 5090. Email: phuket.turquoise@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at http://phuketseaviewsunrise.com

LAND FOR QUICK SALE

4 million baht, bypass road, 9m x 27m. Tel: 089-729 6244. Email: ninaphuket@hotmail.com

COMMERCIAL BLOCK (5 UNITS)

5-storey (5x100sqm) units overlooking Kings park and beach for sale. Ground floor commercial, 2 apartments + 2-storey penthouse. All modern & open plan. Email for brochure at stewartlees@gmail.com

RAWAI CONDO, PAY IN 10 YEARS

Brand-new, sale: 1 million baht, ownership forever. 200m to Rawai Pier. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

29 million baht **Villas for sale Paklok Thalung**

Land for 2 rai, 2 gateways connect to the public road.

Zone A: 4 villas, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, garden.
Zone B: 4 villas, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, private pool.
Clubhouse: 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 1 large kitchen, 2 living rooms, gym, 72sqm underground meeting room.
Spa: can be used for 10 treatment and massage beds.
 Main swimming pool is located between spa and clubhouse. High view point.

Tel: 081-667 1637, 082-539 6433

RAWAI VILLA SELL 1MB

92sqm house, 26 years lease + 15sqm parking. 300m to Rawai pier. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

HOUSE ON THE CORNER FOR SALE

Quiet location and only 500m from the main road, Thepkasattri, Heroines Monument. 70sq wah x 280sqm, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, big living room with open-plan kitchen (9x9m), 1 separated kitchen, carpark for 3 cars and a small storehouse, 2 aircons, cable TV, 1 phone line TT&T. Price: 3.5 million baht including furnitures. Must See! Tel: 081-607 8000. Email: jochenschm16@gmail.com

BANG TAO BEACH APARTMENT

Stylish, 2-bedroom-plus-study apartment in well-managed development on absolute secluded beachfront. Fully furnished and equipped. Great grounds, views and pool. Price reduced to 5.65 million baht for quick sale. Tel: +61-439-886520. Email: markfootner1@hotmail.com

LUXURY FREEHOLD APARTMENT

Kamala. 68sqm, full resort facilities, fully furnished. Price: 2.9 million baht. Tel: 083-982 9105.

3-STOREY SHOPHOUSE

Good location in Karon. For sale by owner. Tel: 081-958 3310 (English), 085-371 3053 (English & Thai). Email: info@phuketdive.net

3 BED POOL VILLA 6.5 MILLION BAHT

Gated community, Pa Khlok, land 432sqm, house 183sqm. Fully furnished, aircon, 3 bed, 2 bath with shower, True TV, 5Mb internet. 10 mins from Heroines Monument. Priced to sell, offers considered. Tel: 076-270750, 081-737 0722 (English), 089-288 6860 (Thai). Email: allan@pipsphuket.com For further details, please see our website at http://phuketvillarentals.com/villas_detail.php?property=214

LAND FOR SALE

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

30 RAI IN TOWN

Flat land near Dowroong School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

CHALONG HOUSE

Beautiful house, very cheap. Tel: +44-1305-783739, +44-860-571615 (English). Access www.plus.co.th/th/house/SH120124_2.html to view photos and details. Contact Paul. Email: pwhittall@aol.com

SEAVIEW HOME OFFICE FOR SALE

Land plot 44sq wah (176 sqm) consists of 22sq wah 3-storey building and 22sq wah building side space. Close to Wiset road, Rawai, 400m to beach. Price: 6.5 million baht by owner. Or any leasing deal option (to be discussed).



Contact Kittichart. Tel: 081-958 2313. Email: kittip2507@gmail.com

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PATONG SEAVIEW TOWNHOUSE FOR SALE 6.3m BAHT

Four storey townhouse on a small hillside 5 minute walk to the beach at the northern edge of Patong. City on one side, Jungle on the other, Patong Beach down the street, & walking distance to all Patong's delights

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TEL: English/German/Spanish: 089-196 0940 English/Thai: 089-729 8655 Email: Woody@KhunWoody.com

**Best Sea View Deal in Patong**

Properties For Rent

HOUSE WITH POOL IN CHALONG



3-bed house with 4 x 10m pool, in Land & Houses estate, 3 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, furnished, maid's room, laundry area, garden & pool. Maintenance included, 45,000 baht per month. Tel: 085-473 7718 (English & Thai). Email: andrew.gar@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, fully furnished. Near Tesco shopping center, international school. Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach, Phuket International Airport, Ao Por Marina. Tel: 089-724 2787 (English & Thai), +61-43-035 8567. Email: sar_seal@yahoo.com

LUXURY APARTMENT

At Kata Beach. Stunning sea view, pool, gym, restaurant. Contact James. Tel: 090-864 4519.

FULLY FURNISHED HOUSE



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>

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



Near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

KATA APARTMENTS FOR RENT

1 bedroom, WiFi, aircon, cable TV, kitchen, Jacuzzi. 500 baht a day. Tel: 086-595 8512. Email: nalumana20000@yahoo.com

ALLAMANDA (LAGUNA)
Residences/Phuket Condo unit, half of a deluxe twin house, fully furnished and equipped, set direct on the picturesque lagoon with balcony right over it. 3 bedrooms, each with shower/bathroom roof terrace. Long-term rent or sale. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

URGENT SALE/RENT



House in Patong. Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 stories, 3 beds, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished, 2 aircons, kitchen with hood, refrigerator, dining room, living room, hot water, cable TV and internet. Tel: 089-469 1813.

PATONG 1+2 BEDROOM APARTMENTS

WiFi, maid, pool, security, cable TV. Close to town. From 22,000 baht per month. Email: phvcondo@aol.com

CONDO IN PATONG

Located at Phuket Palace. 1 bedroom, 54sqm with pool, parking, wifi. Rent in long term now and get good rate. Tel: 081-892 1621.

APARTMENT THALANG

1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, living room, kitchen, near Tesco Lotus. Rent: 4,500 baht per month. Tel: 081-826 7287.

WOW! CHEAP, KAMALA

2 or 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchen, fully furnished, aircon, free internet and cable. Rent: 13,000 baht per month for 1 year at least. Tel: 081-826 7287.

B.L. APARTMENT

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.

LONG-TERM RENT

1-2 bedroom, furnished houses, beautiful garden, Chalong area 10,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-892 4311.

NICE HOUSE IN CHALONG



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: bow.jariya@gmail.com

MAI KHAO VILLA 4 BEDS RENT/SALE

15 minutes to airport, 5 minutes to beach. Modern style. 60,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-470 8926, 085-471 6662. Email: jyfienvet@gmail.com

KATHU GOLF VIEW

Large house, 7 aircon bedrooms, swimming pools, golf view. Quiet area. 5 minutes to Tesco Lotus, QSI. 10 minutes to Central, Head Start International School. Please email or call for more info. Tel: 081-271 3228. Email: info@procarpen tering.com

LUXURY HOUSE SHARE



Luxury 2-bedroom penthouse for share. 1 master bedroom for rent in a penthouse with private Jacuzzi on roof and 2 swimming pools, gym, sauna, 24hr security, Surin Beach area. Amazing place! Must see! Rent: 15,000 baht per month, plus bills. Tel: 086-086 3845.

LARGE KAMALA HOUSE

Furnished, 300sqm, 2 bedrooms, office, 3 bathrooms, aircon, carport, sundeck. Rent: 32,000 baht per month, minimum 6 months – or buy for 3.65 million baht. Includes use of pool near beach. Tel: 084-716 0502.

BRAND-NEW STORE FOR RENT

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

CONDO AT ROYAL PLACE



Condo at Royal Place Project, bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 37sqm, 2 floor, 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, cable TV, 24 security with key card etc). Pls contact for more details. Tel: 089-469 1813, 086-476 9612.

QUIET AREA HOUSE



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).

NAI HARN POOL VILLA

3 bedrooms, big pool and garden, 4 aircons, 9 fans. All new, luxury furniture, high-speed internet, HD TV. Tel: 089-052 8970, 089-052 3534 (English). Email: ordersofte@gmail.com

LONG TERM, KAMALA

1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, full furnished, kitchen, free cable and internet. Rent: 7,000 baht per month for 6 months at least. Tel: 081-826 7287.

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 Cherng Talay. Tel: 089-470 7488. Email: nattamon.m@gmail.com

NEW HOUSE FOR RENT, PATONG

1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, living room with full western kitchenette. All extras. Aircon, internet, LCD, IBC. Modern furnished, quiet setting near Nanai. Rent: 13,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-185 8536.

LERSUANG HOUSE, SURIN BEACH

3 beds, 5 baths, pool, Jacuzzi, sauna, fully furnished, land of 700sqm. Tel: 081-737 1678 (English & Thai). Email: supotpac@phuket.ksc.co.th

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

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.

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

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

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Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree or higher in Human Resources Management or other related field
- Previous experience in similar position in a 5 star hotel
- Excellent interpersonal and leadership skills
- Good command of spoken and written English
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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



If you have what it takes and wish to join a people-oriented company that prides itself in excellence and the belief that people are our most important assets, then please submit your resume and a recent photo to our Human Resources Department as follows:

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ACCOUNTANTS AND BOOKKEEPERS

Office located in Phuket requires the services of several experienced accountants/bookkeepers.

Duties include but are not limited to:

- Cashflow
- Payroll & Superannuation
- Monthly IAS & Quarterly BAS
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Bank Reconciliation
- Monthly Reporting

The successful candidates will have:

- Tertiary qualification in accounting & finance preferred
- Strong background in a similar role with proven experience managing several accounts simultaneously.
- Advance working knowledge of Excel
- Intermediate to advance knowledge of MYOB preferred
- Excellent English, written & verbal, skills are essential
- High level attention to detail
- Ability to meet strict deadlines
- Strong work ethic
- Willingness to be part of a team environment

Remuneration will be based on experience and qualifications with salary ranging between 260 THB – 456 THB per annum. Only short listed applicants will be notified and must be available for a Skype interview on or around 31st July. Start date will be on Wednesday 15th August 2012. Please email CV and references to Email: hr@nomadsworld.com

WEB DEVELOPER WANTED

Siam Real Estate require a web design and developer competent with PHP, MySQL, HTML, CSS, JavaScript, jQuery, XML. Must be capable of quality work and be able to meet deadlines. Can be company or individual. Tel: 076-288 908. Apply to jobs@siamrealestate.com. For further details, Please see our website at www.siamvillarentals.com

SENIOR ARCHITECT

Phuket-based architectural practice urgently requires a senior architect to oversee design of luxury villa and hospitality projects. Proficiency in written and spoken English required. Please send CV and expected salary to: info@imedgeconcepts.com

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Require 2 persons: 1 experienced and 1 keen to learn. Tel: 081-958 3830.



KATATHANI
PHUKET BEACH RESORT

Katathani Collection of Resorts is looking for a talented Sales Manager for our Group and Corporate business.

This position will be based in Bangkok but will oversee all of the 4 resorts in the south.

Bangkok Sales Manager (Group and Corporate)

Qualification

- Male or female
- Age 27 years or above
- Bachelor degree
- Very good speaking, reading and writing English Skills
- At least 3 years experience in sales and marketing field

Please contact Personnel Department

14 Katanoi Road, Karon, Muang, Phuket 83100

Tel: 076-330124-6 E-Mail: personnel@katathani.com



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PHUKET
KAMALA BAY

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Novotel Phuket Kamala Bay, a new 168 rooms/villas resort-style hotel situated in Kamala Bay, one of the four most popular bays in Phuket. With a 100 metre long beachfront, the hotel facilities include 1 restaurant and 3 bars, multi-function rooms, a swimming pool, fitness centre and spa. This hotel is within close proximity to Patong and Phuket town, the airport and golf courses.

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We are looking for proactive, self-motivated and confident people with excellent interpersonal skill, who have a can do attitude and are committed to delivering great customer service. We are proud to provide a competitive benefit package for the right individuals.

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- High responsibility and punctuality
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Salary & Welfare:

- Salary, Social Security Insurance, Tax, Food, etc.
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Interested applicants apply at:

VS Asia Co., Ltd. (Human Resource Department)
42 Moo3, Palai2, Chalong, Muang, Phuket 83130
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Email: info@vsdma.com

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- Hair and makeup.
- Flower arrangement.
- Dress maintenance and customer service.

Thai male with multiple skills more than two of above required. Driver's license, good command of English and computer are also needed. Email: info@sa-mer.com. For further details, please see our website at www.samerwedding-thailand.com

WORK CS @ HOLYCLOTHING!

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

Looking for a job?

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Find more Recruitment Classifieds at WWW.PhuketGazette.Net/

SHOP STAFF NEEDED

Need more staff for our shops in Kamala and Patong. Rent out motorbikes. English talking Thai. Tel: 085-158 7638 (English). Email: pierre_hammar@yahoo.se

TEACHERS WANTED

Chalermprakit School is looking for native English speakers to teach English. A degree & TEFL is required. Tel: 084-446 3049. Please email your cover letter and CV to swpk_mlp@yahoo.com For more information please contact Clarke.

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Reliable female staff is required. 2 days off per week. Tel: 081-892 1621.

SALES EXECUTIVE

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

MAID FOR APARTMENT NEEDED

Maid needed for apartment in Karon. Full day. Salary 14,000 baht. Age 20-37 years. Tel: 083-640 0616 (English), 084-734 0122 (English). Email: likhovroman@mail.ru

HEAD OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

We are looking for a Thai female with teaching skills to four English teachers English to our Security Guards. Tel: 076-336 084, 081-607 6637, Fax: 076-336 085. Email: pornthip@sgsphuket.com

EXPATRIATE MARINE MECHANICS

Looking for the experienced expatriate marine mechanics. Duties include general and preventive maintenance of corporate and yachts positioned within the SEA region. Attractive remuneration package for those with the necessary qualifications and experience. Tel: 080-078 3731. Please contact Mark Jones and send resume to mark.jones288@gmail.com

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With good spoken and written English. Salary from 20,000 baht. Tel: 080-879 6058.

BARTENDER REQUIRED

Full-time position. Good salary and great fun. Accommodation if needed. Thai national only. Please call Russell: 089-587 9112. Email: sunsetbarphuket@yahoo.com

CAD DRAFTER

Required for new Company Setting up an office in Phuket.

Multi-discipline drafting using Autocad and Microstation. MUST SPEAK ENGLISH WELL

Contact Trevor via email: enquiries@australiancad.com.au



Horizon Resorts & Hotels operate two 4-star resorts at Patong Beach and at Karon Beach with 160 guest rooms each. The hotels offer a friendly & relaxed atmosphere and a wide range of facilities and are very popular among Australian & European travelers.

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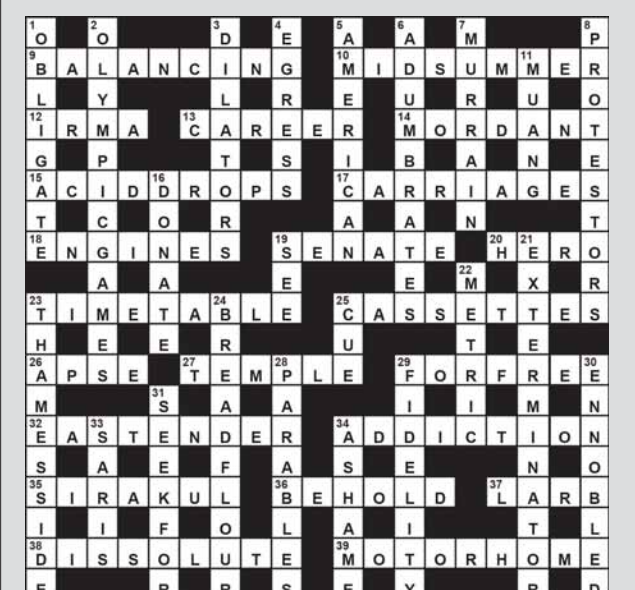
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SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S

CrypticCrossword

COFFEE break



International Sport

Rory roars to another Major

Golf Guru

By Martin Platts

THE last Major on this year's PGA Tour golfing calendar, the PGA Championship, was played at the Ocean Course Kiawah Island South Carolina, one of the most difficult courses in the world.

Before the tournament started, Kiawah Island had heavy thunder storms, similar to the weather in Phuket at the moment.

As all the world's top professionals gathered, including newly crowned Open Champion Ernie Els, the weather seemed to calm, leaving a much more manageable course.

On day one with wet conditions and little wind, players were able to take aim at pins on greens that usually are not as easy to hold and first round scoring was low. Carl Pettersen lead the way on 66.

On the second day, the weather began to make play a bit more interesting. With the wind getting its tail up and blowing some shots off the golf course,

the average score on the day moved all the way to a staggering six over par.

Those who managed a bit better and were now leading at 4 under par included Tiger Woods, Carl Pettersen and VJ Singh, with Rory McIlroy at 2 under par.

The third day was disrupted by the weather, which caused the third round to be suspended until the following day.

Once play was resumed twenty hours later, Tiger Woods was one of the big movers. Would this be his breakthrough effort of the year and 15th Major victory? His third round score of 74 had him moving in the wrong direction on the leader board and created a big opening for some other big names.

Carl Pettersen's 72 kept him at 4 under; Rory McIlroy fared much better putting distance between himself and the field with a solid 67 to lead at 7 under par.

The final round was unusually played from both tees, 1st and 10th, due to the extension of the third round into Sunday. Ian Poulter made a great start with 5 birdies in a row and out in 31

to move to 6 under par.

Carl Pettersen got to 6 under as well, but faded on the back nine for a 72. Rory McIlroy was out in 33 and 10 under with nine holes to play.

Poulter started to falter over the next few holes and eventually finished tied for third place. The stage was set for Rory after birdying the 12th hole.

It looked like McIlroy was playing with the boys at his home club on a Sunday afternoon, calm collected, and having a lot of fun. With two more birdies on the back nine and an error free 66 on the day, the young Irishman seemed to be playing in his own tournament – seemingly not effected by weather or pressure.

A fourth round total of 13 under par to win, and 8 shots better than anyone else was enough to set a new record winning margin at this historic event.

McIlroy, 23, is now the youngest winner of two Majors and the first UK winner of the PGA Championship since Tommy Armour in 1930.

It seems noteworthy, for those of us who enjoy this game



YOUNG HOPE: Rory McIlroy with his trophy. Photo:AFP

so much, to point out that after turning pro at the age of 16 with a handicap of plus 6, McIlroy has never really changed his swing mechanics. In fact, if you look at video when he was very young, he doesn't look like he has changed his golf swing since the age of 3.

What I like most about McIlroy's swing, is that he seems to create tremendous power without looking like he is working all that hard. To me Tiger Woods

seems like he is now working harder than ever, each swing looks difficult not only to repeat but also difficult on his body.

Remember power and consistency in golf start with perfect balance and timing and not brute force. Keep your golf swing simple and fluid, as the expression goes, "the golf swing should be two turns with a swish in the middle". Weighing only 74 kilos, McIlroy is the perfect example of power deriving from timing and balance.

Season opener

By Andrew Scott

THE Premiership returned last weekend to bring joy and pain to football fans across the globe.

The drama and excitement of the world's most popular football league was played out across the UK, with all 20 teams playing over Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Saturday saw seven games played with the stand-out result being West Brom's 3-0 victory over Liverpool.

Brendan Rodgers was hired by Liverpool's American owners over the summer to try and bring back the glory days, but he suffered an opening day to forget.

Liverpool gave debuts to 26 million pounds worth of summer signings, but Rodgers' new and old players let him down.

The opening game is not really the time to make knee jerk judgments but a number of Liverpool fans have already started questioning Rodgers.

A fluid attacking display by Fulham helped them ease past Norwich 5-0; new

Swansea manager Michael Laudrup, who has already lost Joe Allen to Liverpool and is about to lose Scott Sinclair to Manchester City, watched on as Swansea dispatched of a poor QPR side 5-0; Arsenal drew 0-0 with Sunderland and already people are saying they miss the firepower of Van Persie; Newcastle beat Tottenham 2-1 with Ibrahim Ba scoring for the first time in 14 games; Aston Villa lost to West Ham 1-0 and Reading drew 1-1 with Stoke.

Champions Manchester City made hard work beating Southampton 3-2 on Sunday and had to wait until a Samir Nasri goal in the 80th minute to claim all three points.

Two goals in the opening ten minutes were enough to help an Eden Hazard-inspired Chelsea beat Wigan.

Manchester United suffered a disappointing opening day against Everton in the Monday night kick off.

Manuale Fellaini used his height to terrorize Manchester United's makeshift defense, finally getting his reward and only goal of the game in the 57th minute.



HAIRY: Fellaini in action. Photo:AFP

The standout games this weekend will be: Aston Villa hoping to show they know how to use possession and turn it into goals against an Everton team who may try the route one, Fellaini tactic that worked so well against Manchester United.

Fulham will be brimming with confidence after their 5-0 victory at the weekend and they hope Manchester United are suffering from an early season slumber, but with Van Persie expected to start for Manchester United, it could be a very attacking game.

Chelsea take on a Newcastle side who hope they can get Ba and Cisse working

PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES		
SATURDAY, 25 AUGUST 2012		18:45
Swansea	VS	West Ham
SATURDAY, 25 AUGUST 2012		21:00
Aston Villa	VS	Everton
Man Utd	VS	Fulham
Norwich	VS	QPR
Southampton	VS	Wigan
Sunderland	VS	Reading
Tottenham	VS	West Brom
Chelsea vs Newcastle		
SATURDAY, 25 AUGUST 2012		20:30
SUNDAY, 26 AUGUST 2012		19:30
Stoke	VS	Arsenal
Liverpool vs Man City		
SUNDAY, 26 AUGUST 2012		22:00

together, whereas Chelsea still need to bed in a couple new players and this will be a good early test for them.

Liverpool need an instant reply when they host Manchester City on Sunday.

SPORTS briefs...

FOOTBALL: Tottenham Hotspur have finally sealed the transfer of Emmanuel Adebayor from Manchester City for 5 million pounds.

Injury plagued Tom Huddlestone has joined Stoke City on a season long loan from Tottenham.

QPR have signed Michael Dawson from Tottenham Hotspur for 9 million pounds.

Liverpool, Sunderland and Tottenham Hotspur are interested in signing Adam Johnson from Manchester City

CRICKET: Kevin Pietersen's England career looks to be in tatters as he was left out of squads for the World Twenty20 and the one-day series against South Africa.

He was earlier dropped from the England squad for England's third test against South Africa.

England team director Andy Flower said: "There are unresolved issues of trust and respect, which have to be resolved."

These issues relate back to text messages Pietersen sent to some South African players insulting Andrew Strauss.

TENNIS: Andy Murray is being tipped to win the US Open after his heroics at the London Olympics.

Murray reached the final of the US Open in 2008 but he has yet to win a Grand Slam.

The US Open will be held from August 27 to September 9.

Murray's mum believes a giant burden was lifted from her son when he defeated Federer in the Olympic Final to claim gold and he can now go on to claim an elusive Grand Slam.

Murray was knocked out of the Cincinnati Open in the third round.

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On a roll: Islanders win hat trick

Gaining momentum with 10 points from four matches – three on the road – Phuket FC return home for a tough line up

By Steven Layne

PHUKET FC secured a mid-table standing with their third consecutive win, defeating Bangkok FC in a rough, two-segment game contested near the Thai capital's western river bank last weekend.

Having initially kicked off on Saturday evening, the match, held at Thonburi's Chalerm Phrakiet Stadium, was stopped by officials around the 25th minute due to heavy rains making play impossible.

With the score level at 0-0 up to that point, dozens of die-hard Phuket fans that had made the 12-hour van ride opted to spend one more night in Bangkok, with the remaining 65 minutes of the match postponed to Sunday morning.

The postponement was a sort of déjà vu for the two sides, who last year were forced to cut their Bangkok meeting short – seven minutes before full time due to a similar freak storm that hit the capital with Bangkok FC up 5-2.

But unlike last year, when Phuket ultimately conceded the three points, this time the delay worked to the Islanders advantage.

Coming into the match ranked 11th and 12th, Phuket and Bangkok were evenly matched, as they were back in June in Phuket, when the Islanders narrowly prevailed 2-1.

Indeed, the "Iron Bulls" were hungry for revenge, and seemed to have the favor of questionable officiating. However, luck would fall in favor of the Islanders.

The first and final hoorahs were enjoyed by the dozens of green-appealed fans in attendance, along with dozens more that gathered at the Nok Sanarm sports cafe near

Surakul Stadium in Phuket Town to catch the live broadcast.

The winning score, an own-goal blunder by Bangkok, was set up by a piercing free kick by Phuket's Nonthaphan Jiensathawong from the deep left wing on 76 minutes.

Despite sustained efforts and four minutes of injury time awarded, the Iron Bulls were unable to rope in an equalizer.

The result marks the Islanders third consecutive victory, all from a 1-0 scoreline, giving them great momentum.

The three points moved Phuket into 10th place in the 18-team Yamaha Division One, a relatively comfortable position after drifting in and out of the dreaded five-team relegation zone for much of the season's first half.

In other Yamaha 1 matches over the weekend, Songkhla FC fell into 12th place following a 2-0 away loss to Sri Racha Suzuki FC.

The struggling Songkhla side are without the services of star keeper Jonathan Matijas, who recently returned to France to treat a minor injury. His absence is expected to last up to five weeks.

Meanwhile, the Southern Fighting Bulls' head coach, Sompong Wattana, who was head coach of Phuket for part of last season, announced his resignation to Songkhla fans.

Patthalung FC were victorious 1-0 at home in their Southern derby with Krabi FC on Sunday, who dangle in 6th place, falling behind in the

heated contest for promotion. At the end of 34-fixture season, only three sides will be promoted to the Thai Premier League.

Following a rocky first half of



SUICIDAL TENDENCIES: An own goal by Bangkok FC ensured a victory for Phuket last Sunday in Thonburi. Photos by: The Hulk, Phuket FC



the season, Phuket FC are looking to meet their goal of finishing mid table, steering clear of the dreaded relegation zone, which comprises five teams this year.

Reaching this goal will not be an easy feat, with five away and six home matches left on the cards – all tough ones at that.

Their toughest challenge will be this Sunday when Phuket host top-ranked Ratchaburi Mittrphol FC. The runaway-league leaders defeated Phuket 3-0 in Ratchaburi back in May.

Though a convincing scoreline, many Phuket fans are still bitter about that loss and feel that Phuket had a fighting chance in that match, considering the 0-0 half time scoreline; Brazilian keeper Alonso

Goleiro was controversially ejected early in the 2nd half, resulting in a defensive collapse and subsequent loss for Phuket.

Goleiro is expected to play in this Sunday's rematch, and will definitely be put to the test by top Dragon strikers, which include fellow Brazilian, Douglas Gardoza (12 goals) and Attapong Nooprom (10 goals), among others.

The match, to be played at the 15,000-capacity Surakul Stadium in Phuket Town, will kick off 6:30pm on Sunday.

Tickets for adults are 80 baht, while children are 20 baht. Fans hoping to reserve good, dry seats are advised to show up 30 minutes to an hour early, as a larger-than-usual crowd is expected.



Brit, Lee Tuck (9) challenges Nirun Panthong (21) for possession.

YAMAHA ONE LEAGUE TABLE				
	TEAM	P	GD	PTS
1	Ratchaburi	23	39	55
2	PTT Rayong	23	29	46
3	Suphanburi	23	26	46
4	Sriracha	23	23	46
5	Bangkok Utd	23	12	46
6	Krabi	23	17	43
7	Korat	23	-5	34
8	Royal Navy	23	7	33
9	Air Force	23	-1	30
10	Phuket	23	-6	29
11	Pattalung	23	-9	27
12	Songkhla	23	-8	26
13	Khon Kaen	23	-10	26
14	Bangkok FC	23	4	24
15	Saraburi	23	-6	24
16	JW Rangsit	23	-20	21
17	Rajpracha	23	-20	15
18	Chanthaburi	23	-72	2



The Islanders huddle up on Sunday

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2012 FIFA World Cup draw

THE draw for the 2012 Futsal World Cup, to be hosted in Thailand from November 1 to 18, was held on Friday at the St Regis Hotel in Bangkok.

Hosts Thailand, who lost to Japan in the final of the Asian Futsal Championship earlier this year, were among the 24 teams drawn into six groups of four.

These include seven representatives from Europe: Spain, Portugal, Italy, Russia, the Czech Republic, Serbia and Ukraine; three African qualifiers: Morocco, Libya and Egypt; eight teams from the Americas: Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, Brazil (2008

WC champions), Argentina, Paraguay and Colombia; a sole rep from Oceania, the Solomon Islands and five Asian teams: Iran, Japan, Kuwait, Australia and hosts, Thailand.

Following the draw, Thailand, ranked 11th in the world, went on to play the world's top-ranked Futsal squad, Spain at Nimibutr Stadium in Bangkok – one of two friendlies. The two sides will meet again at Korat Chatchai Hall in Nakhon Ratchasima province on Sunday.

For updates, check the sports section on the Phuket Gazette



Sport

Go go Phuket go...karting

By Peter Grimes

STEPPING up from fun karting to competing in a national championship is quite a daunting task, but that is just what two Phuket International Academy (PIA) students and brothers – Ben and Sam Grimes – did this year.

Ben, 14, and Sam, 12, are competing in the Junior KF3 and Cadet Mini Kart series, respectively, in this year's Thai National Championships.

Last December, Krabi Kart officially opened its track and Ben and Sam both competed in the inaugural race.

They competed in the same class, which was a little challenging for Sam, as he races a smaller cadet kart with a less powerful engine.

To everyone's surprise, Ben was fastest in qualifying; he then won the first and second heats and was leading in the final when he developed an engine problem and had to retire.

Sam's objectives were more modest: to gain experience and overtake at least someone in the race – no mean feat in a less powerful kart.

He achieved his objective and was running a strong fifth in the final, when his kart also developed mechanical problems and he was forced to retire.

As a result of the success of the Krabi race, the boys decided they wanted to try competing on the national stage.

The first half of the season was all about trying to learn race craft, and gradually improving their pace and competitiveness.

The first round of racing for the boys was at the Bira circuit in Pattaya. Sam struggled with the Bira circuit, as well as with the hustle and bustle of race day and finished last.

In round two, he improved to qualify eighth of 14 drivers, clocking his personal best time at the circuit. Unfortunately, in the first heat he collided with another kart resulting in an injury to his right arm. He was later declared fit to race but after a series of minor racing incidents, ended up tenth in the final.

Ben is racing in the highly competitive KF3 class, where he is competing against some very experienced and talented racers. In round one, he had mixed fortunes, finishing third in the second heat before being penalized by the stewards in the final for a start infringement.

In round two, Ben finished fifth and last in a small but high quality field, although like Sam, in the final he clocked a personal best time.

Round three saw similar performances from both boys but it became clear that to progress to the next stage, some intensive testing and specialist driver coaching would be required.

Summer holidays were an ideal time to get plenty of practice on the track, and they spent a week in Malaysia testing at Sepang with a

Malaysia-based team. A very experienced driving coach flew up from Singapore to work with them.

Hundreds of laps were completed with the aid of on-board cameras and GPS track-mapping software, which helped them with their breaking points, racing lines and improved their overtaking techniques.

The weekend of August 4-5 saw the resumption of the championship with round four at the long and testing Saraburi International Circuit north of Bangkok. It gave the boys a chance to put into practice everything they had worked on in testing.

Ben led his first KF3 race for 11 out of 12 laps before a racing incident at the tight hairpin ended his hopes of a maiden race win in a heat of the SuperKart series. But come the final on Sunday, he was able to capitalize on a few driving errors from other racers to finish second and claim his first podium finish of the season.

Sam really benefited from the coaching and enjoyed his best weekend results by far. A little disappointed with his qualifying performance, where he finished ninth of 14 drivers, he really stepped up in heat one.

With a determined drive, he finished a highly creditable third, against the cream of Thailand's cadet drivers. Sam then came fifth in heat two, putting him on the second row for the final where he finished fourth, missing out on a top three podium finish by six one hundredths of a second.



ROUND AND ROUND AGAIN: The number 77 car, driven by Ben Grimes rounds a corner at the Junior KF3 race series. Photos: Peter Grimes



MAKING A NAME FOR HIMSELF: Sam Grimes takes second place at the Cadet Mini Kart series, marking his first ever podium finish.

Picking up valuable points in round four has elevated Sam to sixth place in the overall Championship standings on 80 points, and Ben is now in fourth place in his class on 90 points.

With two rounds and extra points still to race for, both

Grimes boys are focused on continuing their improved performances and trying to reach a top three place in the 2012 championship, which would be outstanding for two rookie drivers. Round five takes place in early October.

Just a friendly game of cricket

LAST week saw the Singapore Misfits tour side grace Phuket for a weekend of cricket at the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG).

Phuket Cricket Group (PCG) skipper for the day Neil Culpan opened the bowling and was rewarded early on with the wicket of A. Abhi (3), who topped edge a ball to local player "Jay" Letingoo at mid-off.

A second wicket stand of 35 runs saw the score to 41 before I. Inzy (19) nicked one behind to the gloves of Martin Foster off Paresh Borkar's first ball. R. Rakesh, who was looking very comfortable on 25, ended up losing his wicket when he was clean bowled by Val Guiraud. Misfits 69-3.

The Misfits kept the scoreboard ticking over at a decent rate of 6 runs an over and by the 15th over, they were on 89 for 4.

However, they soon lost O' Pringle to a calf injury on 19.

This brought Nick "Moose" Olin to the crease who helped steady the ship along with P. Mclean.

Mclean lost his middle stump to the bowling of Manesh Sadarangani, while on 13. Moose, who continued with his assault, went on to top score for the day with 49 not out and help the Misfits reach 192 for 7, after their allocated 30 overs.

Pick of the PCG bowlers were Sadarangani, with figures of 4-17-2 and Guiraud with 6-27-2.

PCG took to the field to chase down 193 for a win. Ian Henry and Berger Marx got the home side off to a solid start with 11 runs off the first over, including two 4's from Henry. Marx eventually fell in the 8th over, however, he was bowled by R. Ranga while on 9 – PCG 42 for 1.

Henry was joined by Mike Khan at the crease and they put on an additional 33 runs before Henry was

dismissed for 38, while the score was on 75. Khan (10) followed shortly after when he was caught off the bowling of another local Thai lad "Pao" Suttiprapha, who was playing for the Misfits – PCG 76 for 3 at the 15 over mark.

PCG skipper Culpan (37) was joined in the middle by Roshan Jayasuriya (27). They gave the run-rate a boost, putting together a partnership of 46 runs from 27 balls.

Culpan eventually capitulated with the score on 122 in the 19th over. Jayasuriya was joined by Guiraud who put on a quick 11 runs from 10 balls to again keep the run-rate healthy. Jayasuriya succumbed a few overs later with PCG's tally at 149 after 22 overs.

This left the PCG with 44 runs for victory off 8 overs.

A comfortable win for the home side. Pick of the Misfit bowlers and Man of the Match R. Rakesh had 25 runs and 3 wickets.



Misfit founder and mentor Gini.



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Quiksilver nears: making waves and taking names

FUNCTIONING as the last stage of the Asian Surfing Championship (ASC), which has taken place across seven regional locations, the Quiksilver Open Phuket Thailand 2012 is the largest surfing competition in the Kingdom. This year's event, to be from September 12-15, is expected to host over 300 professionals from around the world.

The tournament will be highlighted by the presence of Stephanie Gilmore – five-time female world champion and brand ambassador for Quiksilver's women's clothing line. In a press conference held on August 16 at Phuket Graceland Resort & Spa in Patong, Mr Surachet Mungthong, General Manager of QS Retail (Thailand), said that the competition will determine this year's 2012 ASC champions.

"The objective of this tournament is to promote surfing to the general public and encourage Thai surfers to improve their skills by participating in a world-class event," Mr Surachet said.

"Thailand is an excellent surfing destination during June and October of every year. We would like to invite foreign tourists and those who are interested in surfing to participate in the event, which will be a great way to promote Phuket's tourism industry during the monsoon season."

TAT director Chanchai Doungjit said, "If events like Quiksilver are continually arranged, over time it will increase sustainable tourism here."

Spectators can also enjoy activities such as surf clinics, where they will learn surfing basics from a Quiksilver pro; an extreme sport show by BMX and skateboard champions



Organizers answer questions at the recent press conference.

of the DC Tour; a fashion show featuring models from Quiksilver, Roxy and DC, as well as concerts.

Event organizers say they hope the contest will be a combination of beach and street lifestyle for those who enjoy music, sport and fashion.

During the tournament Stephanie Gilmore will open the first ever Quiksilver women's shop in Thailand, at Jungceylon. The contest consists of five divisions: short board, women's, open long board, groom (under 16-years-old) and master (35-years-old and over).

The total amount of prize money up for grabs is more than 300,000 baht and the end of the tournament will feature the crowning of Asian champions for short board, long board, women and master division. – *Phuket Gazette*



PALS: Decha Sithidej (left), competing in the over 35-year-old division, stands beside Annissa Flynn who will compete in the women's shortboard division. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

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