

Phuket Gazette



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INSIDE TODAY

November 17 - 23, 2012 | PhuketGazette.Net | In partnership with **The Nation**

25 Baht

■ EVERY SINGLE BAR IN PATONG AFFECTED, SOME PAYING 100,000 BAHT A MONTH

Corruption killing Patong night trade

■ Nightlife venue operators call on Phuket Governor to curb 'out of control' corruption

By **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

PATONG nightlife venue operators this week dispatched a delegation headed by Patong Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukban and Patong Entertainment Business Association President Weerawit Kurasombat to urge the Governor to investigate rampant extortion by government officers.

Deputy Mayor Chairat and Mr Weerawit broached the issue with Governor Maitri Inthasut at Provincial Hall on Wednesday morning. Also present was Prapan Kanprasang, head of the Damrongtham Center (Provincial Ombudsman's Office).

"Many government departments in Phuket ask entertainment operators in Patong for protection money, and the problem is getting worse," said Mr Chairat.

"We would like to ask the Governor to please investigate these government departments," he added.

Mr Weerawit told the *Gazette* that officials from up to nearly 20 government departments and law enforcement agencies regularly ask night venues in Patong for money.

"To the best of my knowledge every single bar in Patong has to pay at least 500 baht to some government official each month," he said.

"Large nightlife venues in Patong pay much, much more," Mr Weerawit said. "Some pay as much as 100,000 baht a month."

Patong's nightlife industry was a prime target for officials to demand corrupt payments, he said...

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A villager holds the remains of a hawksbill turtle that is blamed for a mass poisoning of 43 villagers.

Turtle soup blamed for poisoning sea gypsies

Full story on Page 8



Kang Chelgue is assisted out of a tour van while being rushed to Phuket International Hospital for emergency treatment to a serious head injury. Photo: Thawit Bilabdullar

LUCKY ESCAPE FOR TOURIST

Korean tourist survives being struck in the head by the propeller blade of a passing longtail boat while snorkelling with friends on a day trip on Phang Nga Bay.

Full story on Page 2

Work on B600mn underpass to start on November 21

THE leading engineer heading the project to build for Phuket's first underpass at the Darasamuth Intersection, located in front of the Central Festival Phuket shopping mall, confirmed this week that work will commence on November 21.

Speaking at a meeting at the Phuket Highways Office in Phuket Town, Itiwatra Kritsanavanich said that the inside lanes on the north side of the junction will be blocked off with concrete barriers to allow workers to start cutting down the trees on the median strip.

"From November 21 to the end of the month, we will put the concrete barriers in place so we can prepare the site before we start digging and installing the retaining walls in December," Mr Itiwatra said.

- Chutharat Plerin

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This Week



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Former heroin addict Yassine talks drugs and dinghies. **Pages 36**



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Events galore. SKAL, PIWC and LHP line up for charity. **Page 38**



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Blazing saddles. Baz blazes through on his bicycle. **Page 40**



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Thai Dive Master trainee, Scuba Bunny conquers all. **Page 41**



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Avram Grant takes time on his holiday to talk football. **Page 50**

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Korean tourist survives hit from longtail boat

By Thawit Bilabdullar

KOREAN tourist Kang Chulgue, who was struck in the head by a longtail boat propeller while on a snorkeling trip in Phang Nga Bay, was well enough to be released from Phuket International Hospital on Wednesday.

Medical staff at the hospital told the *Gazette* on Tuesday that Mr Kang was conscious and eating unassisted.

Mr Chulgue, 30, was on a day trip with five other Korean tourists at the popular tourist site Tumlod-Khao Phing Kan, located near Koh Panyee in Phang Nga Bay, when the accident happened.

Mr Kang was rushed to Phuket International Hospital at 4:30pm on Monday by Sri Soonthorn Municipality rescue workers.

Rescue van driver Chaityuth Rassamee explained that Mr Kang fell unconscious while en route to the hospital due to blood loss.

"All I could do was give him first aid to stop the bleeding and get him and his five friends to hospital as soon as I could," he added.

Tourists in the van told Mr Chaityuth that Mr Kang was



Unconscious on his arrival at Phuket International Hospital, Korean tourist Kang Chulgue has now recovered and been discharged from their care.

snorkeling off Koh Panyee. After about 20 minutes in the water a longtail boat passed through where they were snorkeling.

"After realizing that Mr Kang had been struck and injured in the head, they rushed him by boat back to the Baan Krasom Pier in Takua Thung in Phang Nga,

where he was put into a tour van and rushed to Phuket," Mr Chaityuth explained.

"Mr Kang was bleeding a lot and there was a lot of traffic because it was rush hour, so when they saw our rescue van, they stopped and asked for help," he added.

Rohingya land in Phang Nga

HEAVY seas forced a boat loaded with 112 Rohingya attempting the perilous journey to Malaysia to land on Tai Muang beach in Phang Nga, where they were promptly arrested by the authorities on November 10.

According to police the boat was part of a flotilla of seven boats ferrying over 1,000 Rohingya that departed their native Rakhine State on the western coast of Myanmar on November 2.

Lt Chaityuth Boonyai of Tai Muang Police Station said that the Rohingya were spotted leaving their stricken vessel and making for the shore near to the Tai Muang Industrial and Community Education College.

"We arrested a total of 112 men between the ages of 18 and 40 years old," he said.



The Rohingya refugees were rounded up by police and handed over to Phang Nga Immigration.

Police charged the new arrivals with illegal entry into Thailand and took them to Tai Muang Police Station for questioning before handing them over to Phang Nga Immigration officers.

The plight of the Rohingya has been well documented by the United Nations and other international NGOs. In June, the BBC reported that in Rakhine State, 57 Muslims and 31 Buddhists had died, an estimated 90,000 people were displaced and over 2,500 homes were burned during sectarian violence.

A report submitted to the UK Parliament indicated that the Burmese Army and police were playing a leading role in targeting Rohingyas through mass arrests and arbitrary violence.

The figures jumped dramatically in October with reports of a further 80 deaths, 20,000 displaced persons and an unknown number of homes burned, believed to run into thousands.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

Teen axe killer in court next week

THE 15-year-old boy who confessed to murdering his stepfather with an axe on August 21 has been charged with murder and will go to trial next week.

Lt Col Boonlert Onklang of the Chalong Police Station told the *Gazette* that the boy, who cannot be named because he is a minor, remains in the custody of the Phuket Family and Juvenile Court.

"Officers have been investigating his background, behavior and other factors that might have made him murder his stepfather," Col Boonlert said.

At the time of the teenager's arrest, Col Wanchai Palawan, who heads the Phuket Provincial Police investigations division, said that the boy did not like his stepfather as he constantly beat



Mrs Panta grieves for her husband, who was killed by his stepson. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

the boy's mother.

"He said he made the decision to kill his sleeping stepfather," Col Wanchai said.

"We cannot give any further information about the case as it is now with the court. The rest depends on the judge's decision," Col Boonlert said.

— Irfan Jamdukor

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Slow loris Bangla raids to continue



SLOWLY, BUT SURELY: The slow loris raids on Soi Bangla follow tourists making complaints about the touts. Photo: Issac Stone Simonelli

COMPLAINTS from tourists have prompted Patong Municipality to launch a campaign to rid Soi Bangla of touts who charge tourists for having their photos taken with specimens of the slow loris protected species.

Patong Deputy Mayor Chairat Sukban told the *Gazette* that the campaign used the coordinated effort of the Phuket Environmental Conservation Unit of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP), local police and Patong Municipality.

"We have been conducting raids since the beginning of October and so far we have arrested more than 10 people. We will continue making raids as we can see the number of people making money from these activities is decreasing," he said.

Aussie fights for life after 18-storey balcony plunge

By Atchaa Khamlo

THE Australian man who fell 18 floors from a Patong hotel balcony on Tuesday was conscious and underwent surgery to address a ruptured spleen at Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town on Wednesday.

John Hurley, 39, suffered several broken ribs, a punctured lung, serious injuries to his right leg and broken left hand in the fall from the Royal Paradise Hotel, which dominates the Patong skyline.

During surgery on Wednesday, doctors began correcting his shattered right leg, which was nearly torn off in the impact.

"We are still concerned about his condition as he suffered serious internal bruising, but he is conscious and responding to stimuli," a staffer at the hospital told the *Gazette*.

A rescue worker at the scene on Tuesday reported, "He landed on the clear plexiglass roof on the second floor and then hit the extended cement terrace of that floor... It took about 10 minutes to get him to Patong Hospital."

Mr Hurley was transferred to Vachira Hospital in Phuket Town later that afternoon.

Capt Teerasak Boonsang of the



Rescue workers prepare to rush Mr Hurley to Patong Hospital.

Patong Police said they were now questioning witnesses known to have seen or spoken with Mr Hurley before his fall.

"We found a chair on the balcony of his hotel room and on the chair was one of Mr Hurley's shoes," explained Patong Police Deputy Superintendent Kittipong Klaikaew.

"Also, hotel records show that Mr Hurley called Australia 15 times before his fall," he added.

Rescue workers at the scene said they could smell alcohol on Mr Hurley.

Lt Col Kittipong said that Mr Hurley was due to check out of the hotel on Tuesday, the day of the fall.

Additional reporting by Orawin Narabal



Australian John Hurley, 39, suffered serious injuries in the fall from the 18th floor of this hotel, but he survived the incident. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Phang Nga official killed in hail of drive-by gunfire

A LEADING local community figure from Tai Muang in Phang Nga was shot dead by unknown assailants in the neighboring town of Khok Kloy on November 8.

Lt Nakhon Tangruamsub of Khok Kloy Police said he received a report of a man being gunned down near the Na Tai Pub ("Southern Field Pub") at about 2:15pm.

Officers arrived to find Suthon Soithong, 42, dead at the scene.

Lt Nakhon explained that Mr Suthon had only recently been promoted to vice president of the Tai Muang Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor).

"Mr Suthon was walking back to his car when two men in a bronze Toyota Vigo pickup truck pulled up beside him and opened fire," said Lt Nakhon.

"Mr Suthon was hit in the head, chest and body before his attackers sped off. Officers found seven 9mm bullet cases at the scene," he added.

Police have yet to establish a confirmed motive for the killing.

"He was a very close friend of the Tai Muang OrBorTor president, so at this time we believe the killing was politically motivated," Lt Nakhon explained.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

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Rampant corruption in Patong under fire

From page 1

Mr Weerawit estimated that night venues in Patong generate a total of about 10 million baht a day during the "peak tourism season" (during the end-of-year holidays) and about 7mn baht a day during the rest of the year.

However, he added, "The problem is so bad that some operators have even changed their businesses to restaurants to try to avoid the corruption."

During the meeting on Wednesday, Mr Weerawit also requested that Governor Maitri extend the official trading hours for night entertainment venues so they could serve the many tourists who come to

Phuket to party. "Tourists love to stay out late. After night venues close at the regulated hours, the tourists buy drinks at convenience stores and hang out on the beach... This makes our beaches dirty and jeopardizes tourists' safety," he added.

Governor Maitri said he would personally visit Patong to follow up on the issue. "Thank you for the information. I will have the relevant departments investigate and I will keep track of any progress made," Governor Maitri said.



Governor Maitri

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Police crime blitz nets 220 youths

IN A 12-day blitz on youth crime in Phuket Town, police arrested 220 people on drugs and weapons charges, as well as six youths for attempted murder in two separate gang sword fights at Saphan Hin.

Phuket City Police chief Col Sermphan Sirikong told the *Gazette* that the 12-day campaign ran until November 5.

"In that time, we arrested 220 people for possession of illegal weapons, as well as for drug possession, use, sale and distribution, and others were arrested for gambling and prostitution.

The six teenagers arrested for attempted murder were caught amid two separate gang fights at Saphan Hin, he added.

"The gangs were fighting with swords and long knives. We arrested many youths in those two incidents. One gang fight was on October 25 and the other was the very next night," explained Col Sermphan.

— *Orawin Naraba*

Police reject YouTube rapist bail blame

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

KRABI Provincial Police have posted a YouTube video in response to the "Evil man in Krabi" video that accused the officers of allowing a rape suspect to be released on bail.

The move follows Krabi Governor Prasit Osathanon holding a press conference on November 8 for officers to publicly explain what action has been taken in the case.

"The case is about the Dutch tourist [allegedly] raped by a Krabi tour guide on July 28. We arrested the suspect on July 29 and presented him to Krabi Provincial Court," explained Krabi Provincial Police Commander Nunthadej Yoinual.

"Later, the court allowed him to post bail. Our investigation officers opposed the bail, but were unsuccessful," he said.

"The content of the video is totally different from what happened. It is said in the video that police 'easily' released the suspect, which is absolutely wrong. It was the judge who allowed the suspect to be released on bail. Police cannot be involved in this decision," Gen Nunthadej added.



The YouTube clip (inset) that went viral prompting a similar YouTube response from Krabi Provincial Police Commander Nunthadej Yoinual.

Governor Prasit voiced his support for the Krabi Police chief. "The Krabi Provincial Office was aware of the case since the beginning. However, once the case was presented to the Krabi Provincial Court, we could not interfere," he explained.

Maj Gen Nunthadej defended the efforts of his officers to protect tourists and deliver justice.

"We try our best to protect tourists' lives and property. We

have never ignored them and we will never stop our work in making tourists confident and reassured that their stays in Krabi will be safe and secure," he said.

Gen Nunthadej highlighted the recent case of a teenage gang attacking a young British couple near a parking lot at Nopparat Thara Beach on October 22.

"The injured tourists were a young couple from England. Police arrested the three suspects

and presented all of them to the Krabi Court. They are now being held in the detention cells at the court while police collect more evidence and question more witnesses in preparing our case against them," he added.

Wiyada Srirangkul, Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Krabi, said her office will step up its efforts in assisting police in getting clear and accurate information to the public.

"We were not involved in the Dutch rape case and were not aware of it. We have helped in other cases, such as the British tourists who were attacked at Ao Nang. We even received a thank-you email from them saying they will come back," she said.

"From now on, the TAT Krabi office will work more closely with the local police so we can coordinate better and make the media report the truth," Ms Wiyada added.

Also present at the conference was Krabi Hotel Association President Ittirit Kinglek, who just days earlier blamed the handling of the case by local authorities for a backlash of holiday cancellations by tourists who had already booked trips to Krabi.

Phuket Poll: Expats prefer to pay rather than run for the border



Whether it's a flight out of Thailand or a hair-raising van trip to Ranong, most expats will have had to deal with it at some point. Photo: Gazette file

MORE than half of all respondents to a *Phuket Gazette* online poll have voted for options other than making the obligatory, and often dangerous, visa runs that are required every 30 or 90 days in order to continue their stay in Thailand.

Nearly a quarter of all respondents, including Thai nationals, preferred foreigners to present themselves to the Phuket Immigration Office and pay a fee directly to the Thai government.

The *Gazette* posted the poll after a reader suggested that foreigners should make blood donations in lieu of visa runs. After pointing out that there were many other ways foreigners living in Phuket could be of help to society, the poll asked, "Which of the following options do you think is acceptable for a foreigner to earn an extension to their stay in Thailand?"

Overall, 17.9% replied that making a blood donation once every three months would be fair, while 10.8% said that volunteer-

ing for community projects for one morning a week would be appropriate.

Only 4% of respondents thought that making themselves available to undertake translation services for public and private-sector organizations would be the way to go, but 23.4% said they would much prefer to pay an official fee of 2,000 baht directly to the Immigration Office.

A startling revelation – considering the volume of complaints the *Gazette* has received over the years arguing against the need to make visa runs – was that 44% of all respondents, including resident expats living on the island, voted, "None of the above as the current system works well and doesn't need amending."

Another statistic that highlighted the importance of the issue was that 1,489 readers voted in the poll, making it one of the most popular online polls ever conducted.

— *Phuket Gazette*

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Phuket gets new Brazilian consul



Amb Meira de Vasconcellos with the new Honorary Consul Jiratha.

BRAZILIAN Ambassador Paulo Cesar Meira de Vasconcellos was in Phuket last week to install Jiratha Thavornwongwong as the Brazilian Honorary Consul for Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi.

At the Kata Beach Resort and Spa on November 8, the Ambassador was joined by Phuket Governor Maitri Inthut and host of other Phuket dignitaries.

"I am very appreciative of the positive relations between Thailand and Brazil and I hope that the Honorary Consul for Brazil in Phuket will keep promoting strong, friendly relations between the two countries," Governor Maitri said.

After her installation, Ms Jiratha explained to the *Gazette* that the Brazilian embassy in Bangkok approached her husband for the position first.

"However, he declined and explained to them that I actually know more about football than he does," Ms Jiratha joked.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong

Hotels claim Paris Hilton party sparked B8mn in cancellations

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

THE hoteliers of eight resorts who have appealed to the Phuket Governor to not approve the huge Sydictive new year party at Surin Beach have claimed that just the announcement of the event by global celebrity Paris Hilton has already cost the resorts 8 million baht in room cancellations.

Among the hoteliers chief concerns are the level of noise the two-day dance party will create and the impact of the expected 50,000 revellers in the small beachside resort area.

Twinpalms Phuket Resort Executive Manager Somjai Tungkoo told Governor Maitri Inthut at a meeting on November 6, that the "peaceful" surroundings of Surin Beach were a critical marketing point for the resorts in the area, and that hosting the party was already damaging high-season bookings.

"Tourists have cancelled their room bookings after they realized that this event will be held at Surin Beach," she said.

"Each hotel [of the eight protesting the party] has suffered room cancellations valued at about one million baht," Ms Somjai added.



Supacheep Wanchai (left) the director of Sydictive says disruption will be minimal, but it doesn't impress Resort manager Somjai Tungkoo.

"This event will affect us not only for this year, but also for the years to come. We think that it is not necessary to hold such big events here," she added.

However, Supacheep Wanchai, director Sydictive Element, said they will keep the noise down and employ thousands of security staff to make sure the revellers do not disturb the neighbors.

"This event will start at 3pm on December 30 and continue



through to 6am on January 1. We expect more than 50,000 people to join this event, including Paris Hilton and 14 world-famous DJs. We will also hire 4,000 staff," Mr Supacheep said.

The event will feature a floating stage 70 meters long and 20m wide, with a firework show each night, he said, adding that the noise will be kept below 100 decibels.

"We will use local vendors and shops for sourcing all the food for

welcoming guests to the party and we will coordinate with local bus, van and taxi operators to transport the guests around.

"There will be about 2,000 security personnel to make sure there is no trouble and we will conduct searches to make sure that no drugs or weapons are anywhere near the party," he said.

Gov Maitri ordered the event organizer and the hotel representatives to meet again to try to resolve the issue.

"As this event seems to have not been discussed with the relevant local authorities, different opinions have not been taken into consideration before moving ahead with arrangements. There should be further discussion and an attempt to brainstorm solutions to the potential problems before we move ahead," Gov Maitri said.

In the meantime, Phuket Marine Office chief Phuripat Theerakulpisut must approve the event before it can be held.

"For now, the Phuket Marine Office has no intention of approving construction of the event's floating stage or any other structures on the beach until all parties are in agreement and the Thalang District Office has approved the use of the public area," he said.



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Man injured as power pole falls on house



Power lines were strewn across the ground after the utility pole came crashing onto the house.

A POWER pole that fell onto a house and injured a man in Phuket last Sunday was unstable due to the water erosion caused by a burst water pipe, locals told the police.

Police received the report of the incident at about 3pm and arrived to find power lines strewn along the ground near a freshly dug waterline trough on Soi Baan Nua Ton in Cherng Talay.

"The villagers told us that construction workers burst a water pipe in the area, which caused the earth around the power pole to erode and the pole to fall over," said Lt Col Yotpat Suwannasit of the Cherng Talay Police.

The injured Burmese national Mr "Yao" was sent to Thalang Hospital with a head wound after the pole came crashing down onto the house.

However, Mr Yao was released later that day, said Col Yotpat.

"We have contacted those in charge of the construction as part of our investigation," he added.

— **Thawit Bilabduhar**

New incinerator struggling with rising volume of trash

By Chutharat Plerin

PLANS to have Phuket's 960-million-baht second incinerator start reducing the ugly eyesore landfill at Saphan Hin, in Phuket Town, have already come asunder.

The new burner is already working near-capacity just keeping pace with the 600 tons of trash that arrives at the facility each day. Worse, the landfill site is "100 per cent full", Prachum Suriya, chief of the Phuket City Municipality Environment Office, confirmed to the *Gazette* this week.

Earlier in March, Mr Prachum told the *Gazette* that once the new incinerator was fully operational, his staff would start using the "extra burn capacity" to burn off the landfill.

However, with 600 tons of new rubbish turning up at the facility every day, the process of clearing the backlog mounds of trash has slowed dramatically.

"Right now the need is for over 500 million baht to fix the old incinerator. With that working we will be able to burn 250 tons per



With the landfill '100 per cent full' and 600 tons of trash arriving daily, the new incinerator is struggling to cope with the load. Photo: Chutharat Plerin

day to get rid of the landfill," Mr Prachum said.

"However, even after we have received the funds, it will still take two years to complete the repairs," he added.

"To renovate the landfill site for future use, we will need another 89 million baht. I have already pre-

sented the case to the mobile Cabinet meeting in March and now we are keeping track of the process to get the budget," Mr Prachum explained.

The incinerator, which was expected to be fully operational during May, encountered technical problems during its trial run and

repairs needed to be carried out.

The timing was unfortunate. At the same time, the original incinerator also developed problems and had to be shut down ahead of schedule for repairs.

"The old incinerator was shut down on May 23. Since then, we have had to rely on the new incinerator burning only its 300 ton trial capacity until it became fully operational on June 5," Mr Prachum explained.

To help alleviate the problem of the growing volume of trash generated on the island every day, Mr Prachum urged, "Phuket people need to learn about garbage separation. We all need to take this more seriously. Previously, we ran a 10-million-baht campaign to highlight the issue, but people continued putting all their rubbish in one bag."

"The separation process has to be conducted at the source, but I know that many people are not in the habit of sorting their household trash at home," he said.

See also 'First Person' on page 19

Swedish expat found hanged at Chalong mall

STAFF arrived at the HomePro Village in Chalong on November 9 to find a retired Swedish expat hanged from a drainpipe at the back of the complex.

Sub Lt Kraisorn Boonprasob of the Chalong Police told the *Gazette* that he was notified of the discovery at 7:30am.

"When we arrived, the wife of the man was already at the scene. However, we have yet to question her about the incident as she was in deep emotional distress at the time," he added.

Lt Kraisorn named the deceased as Per Ake Ingvar Arvidsson, 67.

"He and his Swedish wife, who is also in her 60s, moved to Thailand two years ago. The couple lived in the area, but lately had been arguing a lot."

"Both of them had come to the Chalong Police Station yesterday [November 8] to try and find a solution to his claim that she had taken his passport and car, which he wanted returned," Lt Kraisorn explained.

Despite the arguments between the two retirees, police believe the death was suicide, he added.

— **Orawin Narabal**



Rescue workers recover the body of Swedish expat Per Arvidsson. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

Governor urges prompt completion of the Klong Koh Pee mangrove flyover

PHUKET Governor Maitri Inthusut last week urged officials to complete the Klong Koh Pee flyover, which will traverse 600 meters of protected mangrove forest on the border of Phuket Town, as quickly as possible.

During an inspection visit to the site at Saphan Hin, officials told Governor Maitri that Cabinet had approved a budget of 170-million-baht for the project and that construction will begin next year.

However, Gov Maitri told officials that the allocated 480 days to complete the elevated road, which is expected to alleviate inbound traffic from the south of the island into Phuket Town, is "too long".

"The people of Phuket have waited more than 10 years for this project because it was 'stuck' on the mangrove issue," Governor Maitri explained.

"I think the construction period is too long as the work will not



Governor Maitri Inthusut (right) explains his reasons why the construction of the Klong Koh Pee mangrove forest flyover should be completed as quickly as possible.

affect people's daily lives while it is underway. The project should be completed quicker. The sooner it is finished, the sooner people's [traffic] troubles will be relieved," Gov Maitri said.

During the presentation to the governor, Teeraporn Jiraratta-

nakorn, the director of the Department of Rural Roads Phuket office, explained that the planning stage had been completed, with the final plans having been signed off and approved.

"It will be a 600-meter, four-lane divided road with an elevated section 3.5 meters high and 510 meters long. The road will include a bicycle lane and a pedestrian walkway 1.8m wide and raised 20 centimeters higher than the road surface, with concrete railings on both sides," Mr Teeraporn said.

The elevated road will be divided to keep traffic heading in different directions separated for safety reasons, he added.

"There will be a five-meter gap between the two [elevated] roads to allow light to get through to the mangrove forest below and the road, being elevated, will not affect the high and low tides," Mr Teeraporn said.

— **Kritsada Mueanhawong**

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QUEER news

Gaming bender ends with knife suicide threat

A MAN who spent all night playing shooting games in a video game shop in Bangkok got out of paying for his night of entertainment by threatening to stab himself in the neck.

Chairat Chairak, 30, told reporters he used to work at a *larb* (a spicy Northeastern meat salad) shop in the Sathupradit Road area of Bangkok.

But due to problems with another employee, on the evening of November 11 he quit.

He then headed to the nearby Mixer video game shop and started playing "first-person shooter" video games.

At 9am, he was still playing.

At that point, an employee at the shop asked him to pay for his night's entertainment.

But Mr Chairat asked if he could continue playing – until 9pm. He had no money to pay.

Then he went into the bathroom. When he came out, he had a knife up against his own neck.

He told the employee that if he insisted on making him pay, he would kill himself.

Then he walked out the shop and sat outside a nearby bank.

Officers from Bang Phong Phang Police Station were called to the scene, finding Mr Chairat sitting outside the bank, the knife still to his throat.

It took them two hours to persuade him to put down the knife.

Then they took him to the station to discuss the incident.

– Sanook News

Eight injured as bus hits bridge, flips in heavy rain

A BUS travelling from Phuket to Chumphon, north of Koh Samui on the Gulf of Thailand, slammed into a bridge guardrail and flipped onto its side in heavy rain in Phang Nga province late Monday afternoon.

Lt Col Anan Kuaboonkaew of Takua Pa Police received a report of the accident at 5:30pm.

Col Anan and a team of officers and rescue workers arrived to find the bus lying on its side with shattered glass from the bus windows littered across the road.

"Eight of the 20 passengers on board were taken to Takua Pa Hospital for treatment of minor injuries.

"The other 12 passengers suffered only

scratches and bruises, and they were all were treated with first aid. All of them are safe now," Col Anan said just hours after the accident.

"Fortunately, the bus did not flip into the canal below as it is three meters down," he added.

The bus, a commercially registered vehicle owned and operated by Rungkij Tour Co Ltd, stopped at Takua Pa Bus Station to pick up passengers.

The accident occurred soon after.

"The bus driver, Somsak Chansong, said he lost control at the curve [just before the bridge] as it was raining heavily," Col Anan explained.

– Kritsada Mueanhawong



The bus was en route from Phuket to Chumphon when it struck a bridge guardrail and flipped onto its side in heavy rain.

Turtle soup poisons fisherfolk

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

OFFICIALS on Koh Lanta believe a sick hawksbill sea turtle was the cause of a mass poisoning that may have contributed to the death of a 61-year-old man and resulted in 43 other villagers being admitted to hospital.

"Many people in the Urak Lawoi sea gypsy village on Koh Lanta Yai fell ill with an affliction that produced symptoms similar to hand, foot and mouth disease," Koh Lanta District Chief Suriyan Narongkul told the *Gazette*.

The villagers were admitted to Koh Lanta Hospital for suffering from sore throats, nausea and diarrhea, he added.

Local villager Boontin Changnum, 44, explained to the *Gazette* that he found a turtle weighing 30 kilograms caught in a fishing net just offshore.

"I brought it home and cut it up to share with 10 families in the village, but immediately after eating it my whole family had sore throats, like we had swallowed sand," he explained.

"We all went to see the doctor



Boontin Changnum holds the remains of a hawksbill turtle that is blamed for a mass poisoning of 43 villagers. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

at the hospital. We felt better after taking some medicine, but everyone still has a sore throat after almost a month," Mr Boontin said.

Mr Boontin's father-in-law, 61-year-old Wat Thalaylurk, suffered more than any others.

"His symptoms were like mine,

but he was also vomiting blood. We took him to Koh Lanta Hospital, but he died last Thursday [November 8]," Mr Boontin said.

"The doctor at the hospital reported that congenital diseases, including diabetes, hypertension and gastritis, might have contributed to his cause of death," he said.

District Chief Suriyan said he had ordered staff from Koh Lanta Hospital, the District Public Health Office and the Koh Lanta District Fisheries Office to investigate the cause of the mass poisoning.

"The villagers are feeling better now and Mr Wat died from the range of congenital diseases he was suffering, not from eating the turtle," he said.

"The villagers ate a hawksbill sea turtle, which is a protected species, but they didn't know that," Chief Suriyan explained.

"In this case, we believe the turtle ate toxic plankton or toxic jellyfish before it was caught in the net and then taken home and eaten by the villagers," he added.

"We told the villagers that the turtle is a protected species," Chief Suriyan.

Results of baby elephant DNA maternity tests finally revealed

AFTER months of silence, the DNA test results to determine the legality of three baby elephants seized in Phuket in February have been released for two of the three young pachyderms, while one's fate is still undetermined.

The DNA results for the baby elephant seized from the Phu Thai Souvenir Market in Chalong proved that it was the offspring of a legally registered mother at Saiyoke Elephant Park in Kanchanaburi, Col Watcharin Phusit, Superintendent of the Regional Natural Resources and Environment Crime Suppression Division [NREC] confirmed on November 9.

"The young elephant will be returned to the Phu Thai owners," he added.

However, the DNA test results from the baby elephant seized from the ATV@Hill Adventure



Col Watcharin (right) warned that if found guilty, the operator faces up to four years in jail, a 40,000-baht fine or both. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Tour camp, on the road to the Big Buddha image in Chalong, showed otherwise.

"The DNA results prove that the youngster is directly related to a wild female elephant seized at Kaeng Krachan wildlife park in

Kanchanaburi province. The baby will not be sent back to the ATV camp, but reunited with its mother instead," Col Watcharin said.

Meanwhile, the status of the young elephant "Joey", seized from the elephant camp located at the Laguna complex in Chong Talay, is still under investigation.

"The elephant camp owners have provided the NREC with a document signed by the Tah Thum district chief in Surin province, stating that the baby elephant is the offspring of a legally registered mother. We are still waiting on that district chief to confirm that the document presented to us is genuine," he added.

While the investigation into that baby elephant continues, Col Watcharin warned that more baby elephant raids will be conducted in Phuket in the near future.

– Chutharat Plerin

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Pitak Siam leader claims trump card up his sleeve

AROUND THE nation

POLITICAL tension is building in advance of anti-government activist group Pitak Siam's next rally at the Royal Plaza planned for November 24 and 25.

Movement leader General Boonlert Kaewprasit hopes the protest will provoke the Army into launching a coup to oust the Yingluck Shinawatra administration, which he claims has allowed elements to insult the monarchy and carried out massive corruption. However, if the rally does not generate enough support, he claims to have a "trump card" still up his sleeve.

"If the next rally fails, everything will be over and I will not hold another rally," Gen Boonlert said.

"But if a lot of people join the rally, and we still fail to oust the government, I'll unveil my trump card," he added.

Army Commander-in-Chief Gen Prayuth Chan-ocha has said that active Army officers are prohibited from participating.

However, Gen Prayuth did confirm that police will serve as the officers in charge of ensuring security during the rally.

Last week, Chamlong Srimuang, a co-leader of the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), gave the green light for his organization's supporters to join the Pitak Siam protest.

"I don't invite you today to join the rally, but if you're free and it's convenient, you should go. Our country needs someone who is brave and dares to take action like us," Mr Chamlong said.

The PAD decided against joining Gen Boonlert's first rally at the Royal Turf Club on October 28, which drew more than 10,000 supporters.



General Boonlert Kaewprasit at his last Pitak Siam rally. Photo: The Nation

In anticipation of the rally, pro-government leaders have been discussing whether or not to stage a counter-rally.

Pheu Thai Party deputy spokesman Jirayu Huang said a poll conducted by the party showed

that people were willing to rally against the Pitak Siam group.

However, the party does not believe it is a good idea, as the two opposing sides could clash, which the military could then cite as grounds for staging a coup.

British Queen grants audience to PM Yingluck

THIS week, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra is to become the first Thai leader in decades to meet the Queen of England.

PM Yingluck's trip, at the invitation of British premier David Cameron, comes as Thailand and the UK celebrate 400 years of diplomatic relations this year.

A meeting with the British monarch is a rare event for a non-Commonwealth leader, *The Telegraph* reported.

PM Yingluck's brother Thaksin made visits to the UK in 2002 and 2005, but never met the Queen.

PM Yingluck has been very active in taking overseas trips since she took power following a landslide election victory in July last year.

The premier has made trips to 17 countries since she was elected.

"No matter how we may disagree about politics, Thai people should be proud that this government has brought back the dignity and integrity of Thailand onto the world's radar," said Pasan Teeparak, the Thai ambassador to Britain said, according to *The Telegraph*.



Barack Obama is set to visit Thailand this week. Photo: The Nation

Obama to Thailand for Asean-area tour

FRESH from his US presidential election victory over Mitt Romney, Barack Obama is set to visit Thailand this week as part of an Asean-region tour.

Analysts believe Mr Obama's visit, which will also take in neighboring Myanmar and Cambodia, is intended to reaffirm his "Asia pivot" strategy of counterbalancing China's power by focusing US energies on the Asia-Pacific region.

To establish a clear presence in the region, Washington has said it wants to increase its military's role in natural-disaster management, proposing that it be allowed to use U-tapao airbase for that purpose.


The US leader will arrive in Thailand on November 18 and meet with Prime Minister Yingluck on the day of his arrival.

Foreign Minister Surapong Towichukchaikul said Mr Obama's visit would boost the Kingdom's standing in the international community. Thailand has been a long-time strategic partner of the US.

Upgrading Thailand's trade status and eliminating obstacles are expected to be two key topics up for discussion.

A senior official at the Commerce Ministry explained that Thai authorities had been trying hard to upgrade the country's status on the Special 301 Report of the Office of the US Trade Representative.

Talks on Thailand's participation in the Washington-initiated Trans Pacific Partnership could also be on the table, a source told *The Nation*.





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In brief...

Cold Christmas for Ugandan gay community

THE Ugandan parliamentary speaker said she wanted to pass as a "Christmas gift" for Ugandans an anti-gay law, which rights groups have criticized for its draconian penalties against homosexuals.

The bill had initially proposed the death penalty for gays in the conservative east African country but still presents an array of jail terms for convicted homosexuals, including life imprisonment in certain circumstances.

Israel and Hamas agree on uneasy Gaza cease-fire

ISRAEL and the Palestinians stepped back from the brink of a new war in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, sending signals to each other via Egypt that they would hold their fire unless attacked, after five days of mounting violence.

The tacit truce arrested an escalation to all out fighting, but both sides remain armed and primed for another round in the unresolved conflict that has festered since 2007.

Cold feet slows EU climate change strategy funding

EUROPEAN finance ministers have failed to deliver firm promises of cash to help poor nations deal with climate change, threatening progress at international talks to tackle global warming later this month.

Talks on Tuesday in Brussels agreed to vague wording but no detail on funding after the end of this year when a first tranche of cash runs out.

Scandal of CIA Director to snare a top US commander

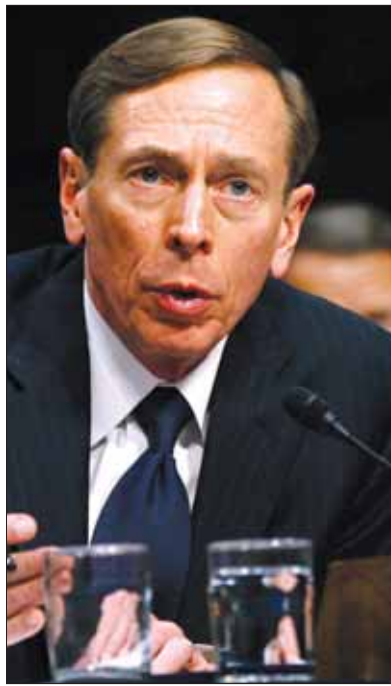
THE scandal that felled CIA Director David Petraeus widened on Tuesday to snare the top US commander in Afghanistan, Marine General John Allen, who was being investigated for "flirtatious" communications with a woman at the center of the case.

Though a law enforcement probe has not uncovered any evidence so far of legal wrongdoing or security risks, it does raise questions about the unusually close relationship between a Florida socialite, her sister and two of the most powerful men in the United States' national security apparatus.

The woman in question, Jill Kelley, has emerged as a central figure in the scandal that has brought down one of the most admired military leaders in the US and threatens to derail the career of another.

Defence officials and people close to Petraeus say neither he nor Allen had a romantic relationship with Kelley, a 37-year-old wife and mother, who is described as a prominent presence in military circles in Tampa.

She may have been seen as a rival by Petraeus' biographer, Paula



CIA Director David Petraeus (left) and Lt Gen John Allen are both caught up in a scandal involving a Florida socialite Jill Kelly. Photo: Reuters

Broadwell, who sent Kelley a series of anonymous, harassing emails which touched off an investigation that uncovered evidence of an affair between Petraeus and Broadwell.

According to law enforcement



sources, investigators pursued the matter when they found the messages contained information about the CIA chief's activities that was not publicly available.

Kelley had got to know both Petraeus and Allen as a volunteer

setting up social events at MacDill Air Force Base.

The relationship was evidently close enough that both men intervened in a child custody battle involving Kelley's twin sister, Natalie Khawam.

"She is a dedicated mother, whose only focus is to provide the necessary support, love, and care for her son," Allen wrote about Khawam in a September 22 letter to a Washington, DC court.

Allen and Kelley communicated often enough over the past two years to produce between 20,000 and 30,000 pages of email and other messages.

A Defence official told Reuters the messages were seen as inappropriate because they were "flirtatious" in nature, not because they dealt with sensitive information.

Allen has denied that the two had a sexual relationship, officials said on condition of anonymity. Adultery can lead to a dishonorable discharge under US military law.

The scandal complicates President Barack Obama's efforts to reorganize his national security team following his re-election.

— Reuters

Challenges ahead for Japan's nuclear power industry

TOKYO Electric Power Co sees no imminent resumption of operations at the world's biggest nuclear plant, shut down after last year's Fukushima disaster, further raising its costs as it spends more on fossil fuels to generate electricity.

A wall to protect the 8,212 megawatt Kashiwazaki-Kariwa station's seven reactors against tsunamis will not be finished until June next year, said Shiro Arai, deputy site manager.

"It is too premature to talk about when reactor restarts will happen," Arai told Reuters in an interview at the plant.

An earthquake and tsunami on March 11 last year wrecked the company's Fukushima Daiichi plant, causing widespread radiation contamination.

All of Japan's nuclear plants were shut down after the accident, the world's worst since 1986, and public fear about nuclear safety has made it hard to persuade authorities to agree to approve the restart of plants.

Prospects also appear dim for any quick restarts as safety standards, to be drawn up by a new nuclear watchdog, will probably not be issued until next year.

Tokyo Electric Power Co, known as Tepco, needs to get Kashiwazaki-Kariwa running to reduce fuel costs, which totalled 1.34 trillion yen (US\$16.87 billion) in the six months through September when none of its reactors were online.

Restarting Kashiwazaki was also a central plank of the bailout of Tepco by the government, which injected 1 trillion yen of capital into the utility in July. Tepco also got a commitment from its banks to lend it another 1 trillion yen based on getting the reactors operating again to reduce losses.

— Reuters



Volunteers cleanup after the disaster at Fukushima Daiichi. Photo: Jetalone

Deepening divide on tackling substandard medicines

A GROUP of experts calling for a global treaty to stop the lethal trade in fake medicines has been barred from attending a World Health Organisation (WHO) meeting, highlighting deep divisions that are blocking progress on the subject.

Leading academics and health professionals hoped to provoke debate on the need for a new international law to prevent falsified and substandard drugs reaching the market with a paper published in the British Medical Journal.

Their article, which sets out a clear case for a fake drugs treaty similar to existing ones on money laundering and human trafficking, comes a week before 100 states hold the first meeting of its kind



Non-government representatives blocked from WHO meeting. Photo: E-MagineArt.com

to discuss the problem.

But lead author Amir Attaran of the University of Ottawa said he was told by the WHO that he and other non-governmental representatives could not attend, following an objection by India.

— Reuters



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EXTENSIVE REACH: Jagrut Kotecha (center), General Manager – Beverages, Pepsi-Cola Thailand, recently announced the firm's readiness for production and distribution of its beverages across Thailand.

Pepsi gets new Andaman arm

SUPER Cheap Co Ltd has taken over distribution of Pepsi beverage products in Phuket and two other key Andaman coastal provinces, a spokesperson from the local retailer giant has confirmed.

The development follows the expiration on November 1 of a long-running contract between the Thai subsidiary of PepsiCo (PepsiCo) and local beverage firm Serm Suk.

Prior to the split, Bangkok-based Serm Suk ran bottling and distribution of Pepsi beverages in the Kingdom for nearly six decades.

However, PepsiCo recently sold its majority stake in Serm Suk to Thailand's largest brewer and distiller, Thai Beverage Pcl, in a deal reportedly worth in excess of 15 billion baht.

Super Cheap Administration Manager Jiranart Intasarn, who is

now looking after distribution and logistics of Pepsi products in Phuket, Krabi and Phang Nga told the *Gazette*: "After PepsiCo's contract with Serm Suk ended on November 1, Super Cheap became the [official] Pepsi distributor..."

"The amount of Pepsi drinks in Phuket will be the same as before. The only thing that has changed is the distributor – from Serm Suk to Super Cheap," she said.

However, consumers will have noticed that Pepsi is no longer available in glass bottles as has been the norm at restaurants and eateries across the Kingdom for decades.

In the absence of Pepsi, Coca-Cola will look to continue its strong hold on the returnable glass bottle market, which now faces competition from the recently launched "Est" brand, Serm Suk's new carbonated cola drink.

Claiming that there is a declining market trend in Thailand's returnable bottle market, PepsiCo has shifted focus to single-use plastic and aluminum packaging.

The US-based corporation recently announced that it will invest upwards of 18bn baht (US\$600mn) in the Thai market over the next three years.

At the core of this investment is the recent completion and opening of a 5.2bn baht (\$170mn) bottling factory in Rayong province.

Spanning 96-rai (153,600 square meters), the new facility, recently utilized by San Miguel, is reportedly PepsiCo's largest beverage plant in the world, outputting multi-range and multi-size non-returnable PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles and cans.

"So far, we've ordered 10,000 packages of different plastic bottle sizes. We have sent our sales teams across Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi in order to keep up with orders from our customers since Super Cheap took over Pepsi's distribution," Miss Jiranart said.

Admitting that the volume of Pepsi orders is not yet on par with that before the takeover, she reiterated that the situation will be "as before" as soon as SuperCheap rebuilds and reinforces its Pepsi distribution network in the three Southern provinces.

In a recent PepsiCo press release, General Manager of Beverages for Pepsi-Cola (Thai) Trading Co Ltd, Jagrut Kotecha remarked: "Thailand is a growth engine of PepsiCo's Asia Pacific business, and we're committed to investing in the market to drive our future success..."

The release said that PepsiCo's traditional trade distribution network in Thailand encompasses 50 distribution points, and that the company will continue to pursue strategic partnerships with modern supermarkets, small family-owned stores, local eateries, restaurants, cinemas and traditional outlets.

The firm will also undertake significant marketing investments in Thailand through campaigns related

Coca-Cola pouring B200bn into Thai cola market battle



CLASSIC: Coke will still be offered in glass bottles. Photo: Dean Noble

COCA-Cola (Coke) is spending 200 million baht on marketing in the final quarter of this year in hopes of surpassing Pepsi to become the undisputed leader of Thailand's 38.5 billion baht carbonated-drink market.

Colas represent about 75% of Thailand's carbonated drink market. This is followed by flavored drinks (20%) and lemon-lime beverages (5%). The cola segment is also the most competitive, with international brands such as Pepsi-Cola, Coca-Cola and Big Cola, in addition to local newcomer, Est (see below) fighting for a share.

As part of Coke's 200mn baht marketing effort, the firm is conducting the largest sampling campaign ever in Thailand, along with a nationwide tour to interact with consumers; one highlight was distributing a million bottles of Coke in a single day.

In a recent interview with *The Nation*, Thiti Tuangsithanon, marketing manager of Coke's Thailand subsidiary, said that the soda drink market was projected to increase by 11% year-on-year in the first nine months of this year, while Coke would be able to grow its domestic sales by 20% over the same period...

"We expect that the overall carbonated drink market will be on par with 2010, with 12 to 15% growth [for the entire year]. The market was flat last year due to the massive flooding... We expect the market to grow again this year driven by positive factors, including the coming of new brands, and more investment allocated in the industry by both existing and new players," he said.

"Having a strong alliance with local partners – Thai Nam Thip and Haad Thip – is considered as one of the factors driving our success in accessing individual consumers. They have provided us with local insight and know-how regarding consumers and the market situation," he said.

– Kwanchai Rungfapaisarn

New cola player 'est' ambitious

SERM Suk has set an ambitious target for its recently launched 'est' brand to become Thailand's cola segment leader within three years.

The company aims for est to achieve 8 billion baht in sales in its first year: "We aim to have 25% market share and to take the number two spot in the local cola drink market in the first year, and be the market leader by the end of three years," said Dhitivute Bulsook, president of Serm Suk.

"We will invest 300mn baht in the last two months of this year to boost awareness of est, and another 900mn baht in proactive marketing activities next year," Dhitivute said.

He added that while 40% of Thai consumers are loyal to either Pepsi or Coke, about 60% of them are brand switchers, willing to try new cola beverages when they appear on the market.

He described Thailand as a unique beverage market where returnable glass bottles still play a major packaging role, representing between 60 and 70% of the market, with PET bottles and cans making up the remainder.

"Our capacity for handling returnable glass bottles, which are owned assets, is our unbeatable advantage. [The volume of] returnable glass bottles is still growing at an average of 5 to 6% per annum," he said.

Parinya Permpnich, Serm Suk's marketing and sales operation director, said the company has five bottling plants and 48 branch offices across the Kingdom.

The company has 1,200 sales trucks, 150,000 coolers and more than 200,000 retail outlets and eateries that are ready to support the est product line, he said.

– Kwanchai Rungfapaisarn

to music and sports.

PepsiCo said it will also place additional emphasis on training to support the company's expanding workforce in the country. With the completion of the new Rayong plant, PepsiCo's beverage business now employs 3,000 direct and indirect employees in Thailand.

The firm's investment in Thailand is part of the company's overall plan to drive growth in emerging and developing markets around the world, having nearly tripled its business such markets from US\$ 8bn in annual revenue in 2006 to \$22bn in 2011.

PepsiCo entered Thailand in 1952 and has built a strong and growing food and beverage business in the market.

The firm's beverage portfolio includes some of Thailand's most popular brands, including Pepsi, the country's top-selling cola; Mirinda; 7-UP; Twister; and Gatorade.

PepsiCo's successful food business in Thailand includes some of the country's leading snack brands, including Lay's, Twisties, Tawan and Sunbites.

– Phuket Gazette

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If Mr Piya's projections come true, then Australian tourist arrivals this year will surpass those from China, which topped Phuket's list last year as shown in the graph. Image: Gazette Graphics; Source: Phuket City Municipality.

Tourism growth projected at 15% by Seacon head

PIYA Sosothikul, executive director of Seacon Group, and owner of the Renaissance Phuket Resort and Spa, recently gave his outlook for Phuket tourism.

Mr Piya said he expects tourist arrivals to increase by 15% this year, despite a decline in arrivals from the island's traditional tourist source markets in Western Europe, due to the economic and financial crises affecting outbound tourism.

He attributed Phuket's rise in tourism to the growing Russian and Chinese tourist market, which he said has seen on average, 30% annual growth over the past three years.

Mr Piya projected that there will be a total of 300,000 arrivals from each of these countries for all of 2012, and thus making them Phuket's second and third largest tourist groups, respectively.

He added that the Australian tourist market is projected to yield about 500,000 tourists to Phuket.

Meanwhile, he projected average hotel occupancy for the year to be as much as 70%, with a 5% increase in room prices.

Particularly benefiting the Chinese market are large 3 and 4-star hotels located in Phuket Town and in beach towns, but not so close to the ocean, he said.

This is because such hotels are competitively priced and cater to a market who tend to prefer to go sight seeing instead of partaking in leisure activities out in the open sun.

He added that Russian tourists' accommodation choices, in contrast, will range from two star apartments up to five star hotels, which are located closer to the beach.

Going on to speak about his own hotel, he said: "We're satisfied with hotel operations... We expect the occupancy average for 2012 to be as high as 75%. We also expect the average room rate to surpass our initial objectives due to the fact that direct bookings, which didn't come via agents, have increased. This, in addition to the fact that the style of our villas are popular among clients."

In any case, Mr Piya said that the news of increased tourism may not be good across the board, pointing out that an increase in rooms

will pose some new challenges.

Competition is rising with some 1,500 rooms being added to the market in the final quarter of the year, namely from projects such as the Holiday Inn Express, Patong, Pullman Phuket Arcadia Naithon Beach and the Regent Phuket at Cape Panwa, among others.

"In order to remain competitive, many hotels have been unable to raise their prices..."

Mr Piya went on to elaborate on his hotel's strategy: "We aim to keep our prices steady, keeping to the standard – not reduce prices in order to lure clients from the competition... We're trying [to target] the package market with high-potential clients, especially during low season. These include [packages for] marriage and reception ceremonies, seminars and Korean honeymooners who like to stay in villas."

He said that, counting up to the end of this year, there will have been 33 couples holding their marriage ceremony at his hotel, which averages out to one marriage every 10 days. This is compared to only six

B116mn October trade surplus

DESPITE international trade in Phuket yielding a surplus of more than 116 million baht in October, the overall volume and value of imports and exports slumped significantly from the previous month and year.

Phuket customs receipts revealed that the trade surplus of exports over imports was 116.5mn baht last month – the first month of the 2013 government fiscal year.

This figure came from 57 export declarations valued at 240.9mn baht, in addition to 92 import declarations valued at 124.4mn baht.

October's surplus represents a drop of 72.4% from the previous month (m-o-m) when the trade surplus was more than 423mn baht.

In September, Phuket Customs declared 68 export entries, worth 592.9mn baht, and 92 import entries, representing a combined value of 169.6mn baht. Hence, the number of export entries dropped 16% m-o-m, while the combined value of those exports dropped by 59.3%.

The year-on-year (y-o-y) change was even more drastic.

In October 2011 – the first month of the 2012 Thai government fiscal year – Phuket's trade surplus was nearly 900mn baht, calculated from 85 export entries (1.04 billion baht) and 80 import entries (145mn baht). This means that the number of export declarations dropped 32.9% y-o-y, while the value of exports fell nearly 77% over the same period.

And though the number of imports, jumped y-o-y by 15%, the value of those exports dropped by 14%. All in, the trade surplus dropped by 87% y-o-y.

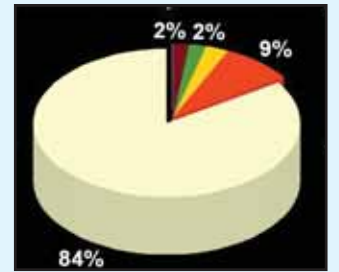
Topping the export list last month was block rubber, with exports of the commodity valued at 202.97mn baht, about 84% of all exports.

This was followed by sports and leisure vessels, valued at 21.43mn baht (8.8%), live fish (6.75mn baht or 2.8%), frozen sea fish (4.99mn baht or 2%) and frozen fish meat (4.5mn baht or 1.8%).

All other exports were relatively insignificant, valued at only 320,000 baht, or 0.13% of all exports during the month.

Meanwhile, the 92 import entries declared during the month had a combined value of 124.45mn baht.

Dominating the import list was chilled sea fish, worth 81.3mn baht or just over 65% of the total. This was followed by frozen sea fish worth 25.3mn baht (20.3%), sports and leisure vessels (16.3mn baht or 13%), lumber (1.1mn baht or 0.88%) and freezing equipment (111,000 baht or 0.08%). All other imports – food, wine, textiles and apparel, among others, were relatively insignificant, worth only 290,000 baht or 0.23% of the total.



Rubber (cream) dominated Phuket's exports last month.

couples in the previous year.

He added that most of the couples have been Australian.

Asked about challenges and problems facing Phuket tourism, Mr Piya identified congestion at Phuket airport as the most urgent, especially in the high season when charter flights increase by as much as 20 flights per day.

"By the end of this year, Phuket airport will have received more than nine million passengers, while its capacity is only

6.5 million passengers. There are planes taking off and landing on its runway every five minutes, and many airlines thus cannot find slots to touch down through to the middle of the night.

"In any case Phuket province is a resource for more than 10% of the country's revenue for international tourism. Thus, I believe the government will continue to support [tourism development and infrastructure] investments."

– Siam Turakij

Phuket based website sold for B760mn

BLAIR Speers, founder of the Phuket-based hotel booking website HotelTravel.com (HT) has sold the company to Indian online travel agency (OTA) MakeMyTrip.com (MMT) in a deal reportedly worth US\$25 million, or more than 760mn baht.

Mr Speers, a Canadian national and well known resident of Phuket for the past 20 years, founded HT in 1999.

MMT reportedly paid US\$ 15mn in both cash and shares upfront, with the remaining US\$10mn to be paid in MMT



Screen shot of HotelTravel.com

shares over three annual installments, to be paid in full by 2016.

Some experts assess that MMT is trying to spread their net beyond

the Indian market, which has seen profits fall in the third quarter by 25%. The losses are largely due to the current economic situation and the poor performance of domestic airlines, said MMT CEO Deep Kalra.

The buy-out of HT is seen as part of MMT's business strategy of increasing its profile in the hotel and holiday industry in South-East Asia, as well as its home market.

MMT currently has tie-in deals with some 80,000 hotels worldwide.

– Phuket Gazette



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PROPERTY Gazette

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

Kata Rocks gets new 'Sky Villa'

KATA Rocks' first "Sky Villa" comes with sleek *louvres* and tinted glass panels that wrap around a clean, modern "Ocean Loft" design.

The Sky Villas range from one to four bedroom units.

Located on Phuket's west coast, Kata Rocks is a stunning collection of 34 luxurious oceanfront Sky Villas designed by architect Adrian McCarroll.

The villas nestle within the natural topography of the rock features, creating a development that is both in harmony with its surrounding location, and aslo a thoroughly modern example of tropical design.

The property has already won 15 international property awards, including World's Best Apartment from the International Residential Property Awards.

The development provides the space and seclusion of a private residence and the benefits of a luxury, boutique resort.

Each villa enjoys stunning sunset views of the Andaman Sea and smart home technology

allows owners to change the lighting, close the blinds, adjust the air conditioning, order room service, book spa treatments and activities and enter the central entertainment server with its thousands of films and albums.

Developed to the highest international standards, the resort facilities include an oceanfront restaurant, bar and pool, a luxury spa and wellness center. Sky Villas will also have access to a state-of-the-art fitness room.

Kata Rocks is located in one of Phuket's most exclusive areas, Kata Point, which has some of the islands finest restaurants, cafes, bars, shops and beach clubs.

Although all of the Ocean Lofts have already been sold, there are still Sky Duplexes, Pool Condos and the last Club Penthouse available.

For more information please go to katarocks.com or email the Kata Rocks Team at info@katarocks.com.

– Phuket Gazette



THE OCEAN AND YOU: Interior of an 'Ocean Loft' Villa. Inset: The Andaman Sea at sunset, seen from Kata Rocks.

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The secret lives of wallflowers



A FEW days ago I fell off a cliff. Never mind the ominous sounding fiscal cliff that is now the global buzzword as we move into Obama Part 2.

Hopefully the Pres can keep on walking the tightrope as he has deftly done for the past three years. Apparently Teflon doesn't tarnish.

My perilous downfall was much more surprising, like a shot in the dark. Maybe I ventured too close to a cliff, missed that invisible tripwire, and fell down into an emotional bottomless pit.

Someone, who once was a friend, decided to not be a friend anymore. *Ad hoc* decision making at it's finest. But the tribe has spoken, and the jury stepped out for a smoke.

Which brings me back to the topic of wallpaper. Remember that? Strangely, in tropical climates those colorful patterns and whimsical imagery just ended up aged and crumpled. Like my old Uncle Fred.

Peeling back the shredded paper can often be an arduous task. Forget politeness, go to it with a hammer and chisel.

As I sit here and contemplate the lack of wallpaper in my current existence this brings me close to home and life in Phuket. We live on a paradise island, yet, so many among us live the life of lost wallflowers.

Seekers, rudderless boats

drifting along with no direction or perhaps flotsam lost in the seas of uncertainty.

This blank statement could of course raise the ire of many a reader, whose ears are burning at the first stop sign of negativity. Yes, my life is indeed one lived in the 'isms' – cynicism, pessimism, narcissism.

Dark humor is my constant companion. Frankly speaking, I don't understand what all the fuss is about. Making fun of life is rather entertaining. So, for us living in the magical kingdom of 'Ism', all of you bright shiny people don't know what you are missing. This is Indie, an after hour's show with the Stones in a smoky nightclub down a dark alley, or a vodka Martini late at night in a velvet piano lounge.

Certainly there are merits to being laid-back; no worries and free of angst. Let us view one of my favorite characters of all time, Jeff Bridge's, *The Dude* from *The Big Lebowski*. He makes slacking seem so cool, and at the end of the day *The Dude* does abide together, this, his signature cocktail – the White Russian.

Again many readers may not recall this classic drink and believe this to be a tag line shouted out by overworked immigration officers at Phuket airport. But again if you don't know who *The Dude* is or can't tell a Manhattan from a Whiskey Sour, stop reading immediately. You won't understand any of this, and perhaps are better suited for more mundane activities such as Salsa Night, detox or



GET YOUR BACK OFF THE WALL: Many people here in Phuket live the life of a lost wall flower. Photo: Kaustubh Nadkarni

getting into Gangnam style. YouTube, MeTube or whatever, but leave the stupid pet tricks at home.

Yet I digress and it should indeed be pointed out that our hero *The Dude* even has his own religion – Dudeism – which you can sign up for online. But, I, unfortunately, have chosen another path.

Yes there will be angst, and certainly misunderstandings along the way. Self help, inner discovery and that trip to total awareness have about as good a chance of appearing on my itinerary, as a culinary journey to North Korea. Or else a visit to Iowa. But that's another story.

Certainly there is every reason to wish my fellow humans a daily

greeting, exchange pleasantries about sports, the weather or even the latest movies. I can end all my SMSs with smiley faces and post photos of my awesome social moments on Facebook. Note to self – never speak to strangers who use the word awesome in any way manner or form.

At the end of day that's not me, and to be honest, all too often when you dig into below the skin of those woefully pleasant folks, the end results are hidden secrets, dark lives and absolute dark souls.

So why bother? Let's get straight to the point. The ism's are not for everyone and mature individuals at my age don't have a love affair with a mirror. Celebrating diversity,

occasional trash talking and even a little trip off the beaten path make life's adventure more meaningful.

Journeys of self-discovery often end up on a trip to nowhere. Much like a vacation to Iowa. My advice is to get out of that introspection, stop thinking and just go out and do things till you drop. Our friend the big sleep is always lurking just around the corner. Right, or wrong, perfect or failed, at least you woke up during game time.

At the end of the day there is only one *Dude* and that's not me.

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

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<p>3 Laguna Village - Townhome II THB 17.85 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 beds 3.5 baths Townhome • lagoon view • leasehold • private pool 	<p>4 Laguna Links - Residences I THB 28 M</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fully furnished • leasehold • golf course view • private pool
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Condo regulations to change

Somluck Srimalee

CONDOMINIUM developers have welcomed a proposed amendment in environmental regulations, expecting that the clearer process would slash land costs by 5-7 per cent a year.

The new regulations are the result of a proposal by the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) to revise the application process for environmental impact assessment.

Rather than having to apply for EIA approval from an expert panel, developers would be required instead to comply with a full environmental checklist under the supervision of local authorities, which are in charge of issuing construction licenses.

Thai Condominium Association president Thamrong Panyasakul-



Condos being built in Patong. Photo: bFlick

wong said such a move would bring about a new standard practice for condo developers.

"Currently when we decide to buy a plot of undeveloped land for a new condominium project, we have to bear the risk if the project cannot win EIA approval. The approval process relies heavily on the judgment of members of the expert panel," he said.

Without a standardized approval process, one of two projects in adjacent areas could win EIA approval while the other does not. This has been a major risk for developers, he said.

Property firms are ready to do anything to protect the environment, but need a single set of standards, he noted.

"Standards aside, the checklist will also help us save costs. With the checklist, we can go ahead with the projects. Under the current rules, we need to wait for six to eight months for the expert panel to grant EIA approval," he said.

Large developers have to acquire land in advance, bearing the cost of interest while the land is undeveloped. Some companies tap funds from the bond market, offering a coupon rate of 5 per cent, but smaller firms have to depend solely on bank loans.

– *The Nation*



CHARMED I'M SURE: No more chance encounters. Photo: Russ Bowling

Keep snakes off your lawn

SNAKES are known to have poor eye sight and due to their lack of ears, they are also deaf. To make up for these shortcomings, snakes are lined with nerve endings that sense vibrations transmitted through the ground as a sign of danger.

The "Snake Repeller" generates a pulsating wave that travels underground in all directions making the snake sense that danger is imminent, and thus scaring away any serpents from your living area.

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The waterproof, easy to install and quiet snake repeller comes in two models: one with a Ni-MH solar energy cell and one powered by four 1.5 V D alkaline batteries, which last about 10 months. For more info visit: contact@alarms-phuket-services.com

Ananda: life with a lake view



THE LADY ON THE LAKE: The new Ananda Lake View development will target Thais and foreigners looking for a quiet place to live.

ON THE way from Thalang to Laguna, a new housing project called Ananda Lake View is being constructed. The project spans a total area of 112,000 square meters (71 rai) and is divided into three phases consisting of 340 units.

The first phase will include commercial buildings, comprising a total of 32 units, all of which have already sold out.

Phase two will include 195 detached and semi-detached houses, with over 30 per cent sold out and phase 3 construction will start in the next two years. The entire project is expected to be completed in the next three and a half years.

Mr Thursak Choosup, executive director of Ananda Lake View remarked: "The property market now is especially

competitive for condominiums and you can see many condominiums coming up across the island, but we believe the demand for houses is still strong for people who want their own land, building, garden and space.

"The development was built to harmonize with its tropical surroundings so the lake, grassland and mountains form the back drop for residents."

The project is located close to a number of facilities on the island and less than 10 minutes from the beach.

Mr Choosup explains what market Ananda Lake View is aimed at, saying: "We are targeting Thais and foreigners. Thais buy the units to live in but some plan to rent out the units to a long term holiday maker. So far, we have a lot of

foreign buyers from various countries."

All of the modern tropical style houses will be built to the highest quality and use international standard materials. The units will range in area from 106 to 162 sqm and will come with a high ceiling to allow natural breeze to flow through.

The semi-detached houses start from 2.59 million baht and detached houses start from 5.59 mn baht.

Various stores, such as a coffee shop and wine gallery, are set to open at the entrance to the estate. – *Phuket Gazette*

For more information on Ananda Lake View, visit: anandalakeview.com or email: sales@anandalakeview.com, Tel: +66 82 282 2532, +66 76 680 998.

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No fund is risk free... but

I RECENTLY began using a very interesting fund with retirees who need a steady income called *Lavaux Capital*, which is run out of the very well-regulated jurisdiction of Switzerland.

The managers have all been involved in trade finance for many years and basically specialize in bridge financing backed by insurance contracts. The fund pays 8% simple interest in quarterly distributions or you can take additional units so that the holding accumulates at something like an 8.25% compound rate.

This investment is totally uncorrelated to stock markets and does not rely on derivatives or things difficult for the average person to understand.

You may have noticed a trend in several of the funds I have written about in the last year.

That trend is short-term lending, backed by insurance contracts. There is a very big distinction between these kinds of funds and others in what is called the "asset-backed lending" space.

Many lending funds went horribly wrong in the credit crunch due to a combination of reasons.

One, is that the underlying

Retirement Years

By David Mayes



The outside of the New York Stock Exchange. Photo: Nick Allen

assets were illiquid, such as property.

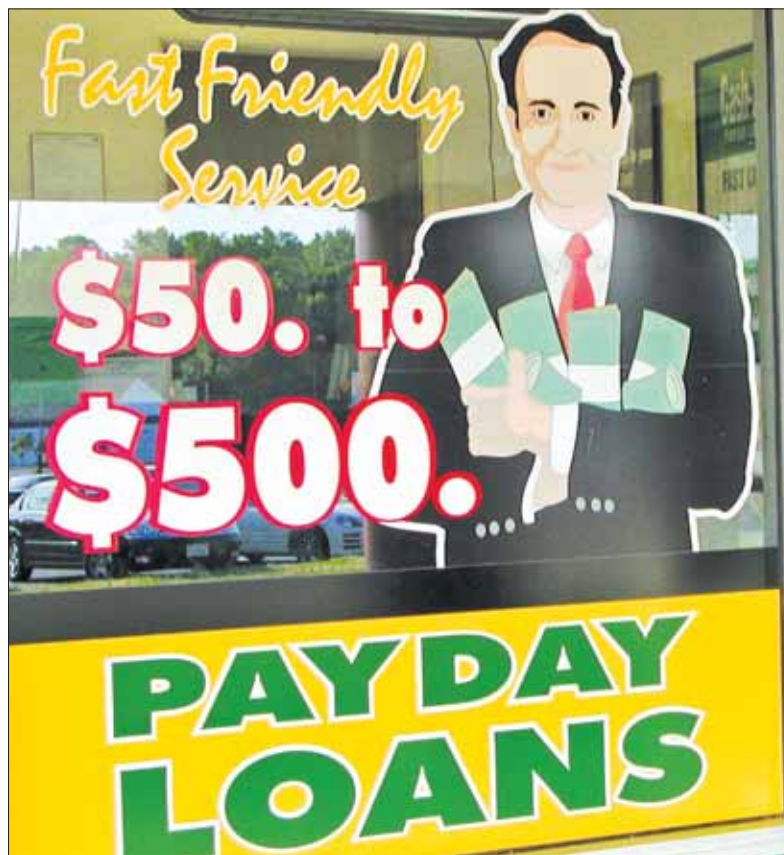
Another, is that when people all try to redeem at the same time, it is usually the worst possible environment to dump the assets needed to raise cash for redemption. As such, investors take a walloping.

The maximum term a loan made by *Lavaux Capital* will ever have is 120 days, whereas, most are 90 days or less. This fund manages its own liquidity by only allowing redemptions on a quarterly notice. Thus liquidity is essentially perfectly matched.

Even if all of the investors redeemed simultaneously, the loans would all come due at about the same time as the redemptions, and then a gate wouldn't even need to be put up.

With other short-term asset backed lending funds, the gate would likely be very short term.

A fund where the asset backing the loans is property on the other hand, would have a serious predicament on its hands, and investors could either take a huge blow to their capital base or be stuck waiting nervously for years for their



PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION: Investment in short-term lending backed by insurance contracts reduces exposure to risk. Photo: Taber Andrew Bain

redemption proceeds.

Of course there is no such thing as "risk free".

This fund has not been in existence for very long and thus there could be unforeseen problems.

The only way I can see it going wrong, short of fraud, is if all of their clients went bust at the same time, and then the major insurance companies such as Zurich also went bust.

This would likely be the kind of Armageddon scenario where I think we'd be more worried about surviving the war than how our investments were doing.

It has been difficult to find safe yields for investors since the

credit crunch, but a number of funds such as this have been stepping up and filling several needs at once.

Businesses need credit to survive and be able to trade; retirees need fixed income without worrying about market fluctuations; and insurance companies are in the business of taking on default risk for a price.

Lavaux Capital brings these things together very nicely.

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

In brief...

Managing Thailand's Debt
THE Public Debt Management Office will mobilize 100 billion baht through an issuance of amortized bonds to address the budget deficit with an expected 30bn baht offer to institutional investors.

The office also plans to issue inflation-linked US-dollar-denominated bonds worth about 40bn baht and zero-coupon bonds, said Churarat Sutheethorn, director-general of the PDMO.

The first tranche of amortized bonds will repay its principal in the last five years of its 25-year maturity.

Foreign holdings up on SET
FOREIGN holdings on the Stock Exchange of Thailand hit 3.6 trillion baht or 36.76% of total market value, at the end of September – the highest level since 2010. Half of that belonged to investors in Europe.

Data from the Bourse's "SET Note" showed that the SET continued to attract foreign investment in the first nine months of this year. Their net buys, net purchases against sale, totaled 65.77bn baht.

No tax cuts just yet

THE Finance Ministry has no plan in sight to restructure the individual income tax, pending clarity on the impact of the corporate tax cut. Finance Minister Kittiratt Na-Ranong said that despite some amendments, individual income tax would not be cut for now.

Rather, the Revenue Department has been assigned to explore opportunities to lower tax rates but also to enlarge the tax base.

Yuan some more?

Wichit Chaitrong

HSBC foresees an increasing role of the yuan for trade settlements among China and the rest of Asia and emerging economies.

China's total international trade last year was worth US\$3.5 trillion (108tn baht), and about 10% was settled in its own currency, the renminbi or yuan.

By 2015, yuan settlement is expected to account for one-third of China's total trade value, estimated at US\$6tn.

As China's trade with emerging economies increases to US\$2 tn by 2015, yuan settlement is expected to account for more than 50%, he said.

He said Chinese exporters and importers used the yuan to hedge against foreign-exchange risk rather than for speculation. That is the right behavior, he said, rather than the common practice of money speculation among



Watching the future. Photo: D Dennis

businesses in other countries. Chinese traders usually offer 3% discounts on their goods to help trade counterparts manage foreign-exchange (for-ex) risk, he said.

Usually counter-parties do not have instruments to hedge against for-ex risk when they engage in yuan settlement because of restrictions imposed by Chinese authorities.

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Elephants in the room

FINALLY the DNA tests for the baby elephants seized in Phuket in February are being released, with one toddler being returned to its natural mother, another being returned to the tour park operator – as the elephant was actually deemed legal – and the fate of the third young pachyderm yet to be determined.

This “dance of the baby elephants” stands in stark contrast to the constant resurfacing of slow loris touts on Soi Bangla, where they can regularly be found despite the occasional arrest.

The baby elephants were seized without a shred of evidence that they were illegal; suspicion alone was enough. So why don't police arrest the repeat-offender touts when they are already familiar with the faces of the offenders and the animals involved?

The answer to this lies in the bureaucratic hoops good-intentioned officers must jump through – and good officers in Thailand love doing things “by the book”.

Police openly admit they need an “expert” officer present to identify the animals used by the touts as true members of a protected species. Also, the head of the conservation unit at the Khao Phra Taew Wildlife Reserve has to apply to Patong Police weeks in advance for permission to even lead a raid on Bangla.

But the average citizen doesn't know this, and most don't care when it comes to flagrant disregard for the law. Without such information being clearly, publicly disclosed, the public is left to its own devices in coming up with a reason for inaction.

Add to this the daily “in-your-face” disrespect for nearly every law or regulation that can be witnessed on the streets of Phuket, and it becomes little wonder that the public generally arrive at the same conclusion time and again – that the police don't care.

This is where the Tourism Authority of Thailand's mantra of preserving Phuket's reputation among tourists, and their confidence in their personal safety, genuinely kicks in. Krabi Tourism Association president Ittirit Kinglek deserves support in bringing to the attention of the Krabi Police the public's perception of the handling of the rape case of a Dutch tourist.

The silence from police prompted a backlash, incited an angry father to post his “Evil man from Krabi” video on YouTube, where it has now gone viral, and resulted in many room booking cancellations. They had damaged their precious tourism-based economy and they had brought it on themselves.

As the Krabi TAT office pointed out, police often need assistance in getting clear, accurate information out to the public. The *Gazette* understands this from interacting with the police on a daily basis. Ambiguity and omissions, intentional otherwise, don't work.

Like any other organization that has a vested interest in the commercial success of Phuket and its neighboring provinces, the TAT may wish to put its own “spin” on the information it releases. But it cannot be allowed to suppress, omit or otherwise alter facts.

So if the intent of the TAT in Krabi is to use its considerable network of resources to deliver clear information when such is absent, as in the recent rape case, then much will have been gained by the public – and everyone wins.



‘Crackdown’ is just spitting in the ocean

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket youth crime blitz nets 220 arrests for weapons, drugs charges, November 8*

Many of the Thai youths I see each day, driving their motorbikes like their hair is on fire, don't get any parental supervision. Society and the police need to accept this fact.

Two weeks of “cracking down” is like spitting in the ocean. Top police officers need to get tough on youth crime 365 days a year and get the police island-wide to stay busy daily to help make these youths responsible adults.

Mark
Gazette forum

Re-focus on details that are important

Re: *Gazette online, British expat dies in Phuket motorbike crash, November 8*

I find it very strange that when a bus rolls over no one interviews the passengers, no one photographs the pothole or the “blown” tire, but here, we have a man die and we are told a knife is found, amongst the debris.

What has a knife got to do with the story?

Laurie Howells
Gazette forum

Ao Nang desperate for police patrols

I have lived in Ao Nang for the most of the year for the past eight years. In that time I have been attacked and robbed as have several of my friends, including men. Either having our houses robbed and being attacked or knocked off a motorbike and robbed.

I love the place and the people, but step up the police patrolling.

The young couple that were attacked will never forget Thailand and will talk to all their friends back home about the terrible

Letters to the Editor

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

experience they had.

The police never patrol at night. The lighting is switched off all through low season along the Noppara Thara Beach area. It is so dangerous as you cannot see anyone approaching. Now many tourists are canceling their trips because they are afraid. Of course they are!

Why save a few baht on electricity and have people harmed in this way. Maybe the police can patrol all of Ao Nang every evening through to 3am.

Liz
Ao Nang

Move the market

Re: *Gazette online, Market vendors protest relocation from new Phuket hospital site, November 3*

I believe that moving the Chalong fresh market north of Land & Houses Park is a great idea. One issue not mentioned in the article is that the traffic going to the current location adds to the congestion at the Chalong Circle. Moving the market north would help alleviate the jams that currently clog the circle.

David Rubin
Phuket

Post crime, TAT must learn its place

Re: *Gazette online, Krabi Tourism chief blames police rape case cover-up for tourism backlash, November 10*

This case, a crime that had already happened, is now none of the TAT's [Tourism Authority of Thailand] business, no matter how political or culpable the local Krabi

office might be.

I say “culpable” because the TAT clearly has a duty to protect tourists, and tourism, by working with the police before crime happens; that is to do everything possible to prevent crimes against visitors.

Art Anderson
Gazette forum

Animal rights claims served with soup

Re: *Gazette online, Koh Lanta officials blame turtle soup for 'strange' outbreak, November 13*

It's shameful that the sea gypsies in the area didn't even realize that hawksbill sea turtles are a protected species. I understand that they probably have been eating them for generations. However, this is no excuse for not adjusting to the laws protecting these animals.

Far too often it seems that ignorance of the law is a valid excuse for committing crimes in Thailand. This excuse is flagrantly used by foreigners and Thais alike. If lawbreakers were flogged with the law, and occasionally caught the whole book in the face, there would be far less ignorance.

Tony Kleinschmidt
Chalong

Coming through

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket motorists in three death-defying accidents in one day, November 11*

I perceive the problem to be that neither drivers nor motorcyclists give way or slow down in order to allow anyone to make a maneuver such as turning across on-coming traffic or pulling out into traffic. They just use their horns and expect you to be able to leap out of the way. More speed signs should be put up so that everyone knows the maximum speed they're allowed to drive at.

Turnery5
Gazette forum

Phuket Gazette

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Landfill burnoff takes high season backseat

TO BOOST Phuket's tourism industry, the government has adopted a strategy to increase the number of travelers arriving through Phuket International Airport to 12 million a year. I understand they have good intentions, but it seems they haven't thought about supporting Phuket's environmental management infrastructure. We have been forgotten about for years.

By the time the AEC is launched in 2015 we could be dealing with 900 tons of trash a day. Our estimates indicate that figure will climb to 1,000 tons by 2020.

The volume of rubbish generated in Phuket has been increasing at a rate of 8 per cent per year. Last year's high season created about 600 tons of garbage a day, I believe this year it will reach 700 tons.

The new incinerator at Saphan Hin has been operating since August, burning up to 650 tons of trash per day, close to its capacity of 700 tons per day. So although we have a new incinerator, it already is coping with only the trash that arrives each day, and nothing more.

It will cost more than 500 million baht to service the old incinerator, which operated for more than 15 years before we had to shut it down. With that back on line we'll be able to burn another 250 tons of rubbish a day. It will take about two years to fix and I'm hoping we can start repairs next year.

With the new incinerator's capability, I believe we can handle Phuket's trash, but it won't solve everything as some kinds of waste can't be incinerated. That has to go into the landfill site, but now the site is already full. We can only make the piles higher as there is



Prachum Suriya, 57, is a native of Surat Thani. He graduated with a master's degree in public administration from the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA). Since 1989 he has been involved with the management of Phuket's trash and is currently the chief of Phuket City's Municipal Environment Office. Here he voices his concerns on the arrival of the Asean Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, the increase in the number of tourists and the affect it will have on a waste management system already feeling the strain.

no room to expand outwards.

In the past we've tried public awareness programs to help reduce the volume of trash arriving each day. We launched a campaign to have people separate their trash into different colored trash cans, depending on the type. What we found was a whole load of different colored trash cans containing all types of trash.

We need to fix the whole system from persons generating the trash right up to incineration. I wish we could have proper system like in other countries, such as people separating their trash before dropping it into a bin and trash tucks having a schedule to collect a particular category of rubbish at a fixed time on a fixed day.

In Phuket a complicated collection routine won't work, but having every household separate their trash into different bags before throwing it into the bin would. It would certainly make

it easier for workers at the trash plant, as they have the task of separating recyclable materials.

Organic waste can be processed to make fertilizer. Already, several local administration organizations have their own facilities to process organic waste and make it useful.

What people must remember is that if we don't reduce the amount of trash generated, or can't be bothered to separate it, then the local authorities must pick up the tab. Local governments spend hundreds of millions on trash management – and that money that could be used elsewhere.

I admit our collection system isn't perfect and we are still waiting for a budget so we can make improvements, and all the while the volume of trash is increasing. So, in light of this, I urge everyone to think how you can personally decrease the amount of trash you generate.

DJ spin that party

I read the *Gazette* articles about the planned New Year's Eve party at Surin Beach with a lot of interest. I have been working globally in the electronic dance music industry for the past 26 years and currently I manage Asia's most successful female DJ: Nakadia from Thailand.

As happy as I am to see that electronic music has become more popular in Thailand, and better-quality events are being held all over the country, I am highly amused by the number of party-goers that the promoters for this New Year's Eve event expect to turn up.

The local authority at Surin Beach should know that the expected numbers of visitors for this event [50,000] will never be reached. I simply cannot see any people traveling to Phuket just to join the event.

Sure, many tourists staying around Phuket will buy tickets, but I would expect a number of 5,000 people as the most optimistic.

I know what kind of DJ would make people travel and what kind of people are willing to spend money for events like this.

This knowledge is essential for somebody planning an event of this scale. Unfortunately, it seems to me that the company behind this event has not taken advice from people who know the industry from within. Inviting Paris Hilton to the press conference is the best indication that the event management has no clue about the dance music scene.

Sure, Paris Hilton gets media attention and that heightens the focus on the event, but it does not sell any tickets. Upper-class Thais who would like to be seen with Paris Hilton would not buy tickets. These people just expect to be invited. So, who would buy tickets, and who would actually

Island View

By Sebastian Lehmann

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

travel to Phuket to join an event like this?

The answer is that music lovers travel. The more that people know about electronic music, the more money they would spend to join events with their favorite DJs. The problem with the Surin Beach event is that none of the booked DJs are favorites of music lovers.

There are a few commercially big names in the lineup, but these names are not followed by music lovers.

Sure, they might join the event for a good night out if they are nearby, but I doubt they'd be

prepared to travel a great distance or pay a lot of money. Fifty thousand people... never.

Another point is that big events never start big from scratch. Big events start small

and grow due to the quality offered in previous years.

Look at Bangkok with its population of 12 million: Thailand's biggest electronic music festival "Culture One", offering some of the biggest names of the DJ industry at a lower ticket price, has a hard time selling 10,000 tickets.

The way it's planned now it could well end in financial disaster for both the promoter and businesses at Surin Beach. Which would be a shame. It should be planned for a number between 5,000 to 8,000 attendees in order to be successful.

I am all in favor of a high-class festival in Phuket for New Year's Eve. Yes, I would like to see this event happen, but I would like it to be a success and make everyone happy.

'Sure, Paris Hilton gets media attention and that heightens the focus on the event, but it does not sell any tickets'

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

The New Price is Right: Phuket taxi edition

I ordered a meter taxi from Bangkok Hospital to go to the Airport [on July 18], when I got in the taxi the meter was already at 140 baht, I asked the driver to reset the meter, but he refused, and quoted a 400 baht flat rate. I paid this, as I didn't have time to go and find another taxi. After I arrived at the airport and checked in, I called the office to complain.

The first number I called, the operator didn't understand me. The second number I dialed connected me to the girl who I had originally made the booking with. She told me that this [price] was correct.

What can be done about this?

Chalongian
Chalong



Host Bob Barker calls a Phuket Taxi down for a pick up, but is The Price Right? Photo: Mr Littlehand

Thaweesak Pomtagee, an officer of The Taxi meter Association replies:

The complaint's office staff are correct. The cost of a taxi journey from Bangkok Hospital to the

airport is around 400 baht.

The initial flat-rate charge for any taxi is 50 baht. A surcharge of 150 baht is charged by the taxi company to send a car from the airport to pick you up at Bangkok Hospital.

The taxi fare starts at 7 baht per kilometer, reducing to 4 baht per km after 20km. You must understand that it is a long journey to the airport and you were actually charged a fair price.

If you have a grievance, concerning price or the driver's behavior, you can lodge a complaint with either 1584 or the Taxi Meter Association on 076-202171.

We will either give the driver a warning, a fine or file complaint with the police depending on how serious the case is.

Smell my funky tap water

When I shower or open the tap in my apartment in Chalong the smell of old rain and ground water comes up. My landlord says that every room in the surrounding area has the same problem. It makes my eyes itch when I shower, so I'm sure it is not clean at all. What is it? And how can it be improved?

Matt
Chalong

Phuket Provincial Waterworks Authority Manager Pisak Chonlayut replies:

The bad water smell in your Chalong apartment might be caused by water pipe repairs that were going on in that area. Even after making

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

repairs the pipes have to be drained of residual dirty water.

We drain the waste water, but some will work its way through the system to your tap. This is probably causing the smell, and you should not use tap water while dirty water is still in the system.

If you have water issues, call me. My cell phone number is 087-012-0295. I am available 24 hours, and I can contact my workers to any resolve problems.



REGATTA IN KATA: Kata Group Resorts Thailand, celebrates its fifteenth successive year as host sponsor of the Phuket King's Cup Regatta, Asia's most prestigious sailing race. In the photo are Pamuke Achariyachai, President of Kata Group Resorts Thailand and Santi Kanchanbandhu from the Phuket King's Cup Regatta Organizing Committee.



SPICE GIRLS: Spice House recently celebrated their restaurant's first anniversary.



Photo: Christian Mouchet

PIWC PONEY UP: Carole Dux President of the PIWC with sponsored students from Rajabhat University wearing their "Jockey Strip" at the Melbourne Cup charity event at Laguna's Latitude. Many beautiful hats were on display at the event (above, above right and on page 38).



GIVING BACK: Thanyapura's 'Give Back' – Beach Clean Up campaign was recently held at Naithon Beach. The event saw over 100 Thanyapura staff in attendance to clear debris off the beach. Thanyapura plans a series of 'Give Back' campaigns in the months to come.



Photo: Christian Mouchet



REACHING OUT: The Philippines' Ambassador to Thailand (center) held a 'Consular Outreach' for Filipinos living in the south of Thailand at the Pearl Hotel Phuket recently. Pictured are: (front row, from left) Erlito Bayaga, HE Jocelyn Batoon-Garcia, Consul General Mr Edgar B Badajos (standing, from left) Sharon Primavera, Mr Roberto Verzosa, Ms Pilar Melizza Presina Binuya.



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HOME of the week

PATONG SEAVIEW
TOWNHOUSE



See page 23

DEAL of the week

mobile
car rental



See page 30

JOB of the week

w|i|n|e
connection

See page 27

BOAT of the week

SIMPSON
MARINE



See page 31

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Yearly payment: 1 million baht x 15 years = own forever. 9 bedrooms + land + building. 60m to beach. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

URGENT SALE



Very nice house in the heart of Patong 3 floors with 3 bedrooms, living room, kitchen, 2 bathrooms, big roof terrace with sala and jacuzzi, garage. Price on request. Tel: 084-188 4544. Email: michahildner@hotmail.com

2 BEDROOMS PATONG
Fully furnished, 2 bathrooms, parking. 4.9 million baht. Tel: 081-612 4187. Email: nicolaas5@yahoo.com

LAND 1 TO 5 RAI
Land with Chanote title. Phuket - Saku, 4km south of the airport. 4.3 million baht per rai. Tel: 087-076 6016. Email: kanchanajit09@gmail.com

VILLA FOR SALE
Mission Heights. Land area: 500sqm. The area of the villa: 167sqm. 3 bedrooms, 4 toilets. 10 million baht. Tel: 088-838 3242. Email: Alisa.lisica1982@inbox.ru

HOUSE IN PHUKET VILLA 5 FOR SALE



46sq wah, furnished, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 3 aircons, carpark. Only 3.5 million baht. Tel: 081-787 7675.

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Yamu Hills, 2 plots +/- 1 rai each. 180 degree stunning panoramic sea view. Tel: 084-625 5090. Email: phuket.turquoise@gmail.com For further details, please see our website at <http://phuketseaviewsunrise.com>

MUST SELL QUICKLY

Kata beach house, 3 storeys, 4 bedrooms, big balcony. Sale: 3.3 million baht. Tel: 081-303 2202.

SEAVIEW LAND 16 RAI

At Koh Yao Noi, 16 rai 73sq wah. 300m to beautiful beach. Sale: 76 million baht. Tel: 084-837 4429. www.chokechaiproperty.com

CHALONG- RESIDENCE PHUKET



Opposite Wat Chalong on the way up to the hill. Fantastic seaview. 1 rai, Chanote, gross floor space: 684sqm, 5 ensuite bedrooms, completed in 2011, pool with over fall, sala, covered carport, only 32.5 million baht. Direct by owner. Tel: 085-654 4011, 089-404 0737. For further details, please see our website at www.chalong-residence.com

HOUSE FOR SALE IN KATHU

3-bedroom attached home, single storey. Located on Bangthong hillside, 10 minutes from Patong. Furnished. 3.5 million baht (negotiable). Tel: 086-332 2638 (English), 085-819 8524 (Thai). Email: jaques.carl@yahoo.com

RAWAI POOL VILLA, SALE/RENT

Sale: 5 million baht. Long-term rent: 30,000 baht per month. Negotiable, furnished, 300m to beach. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

PHUKET VILLA CONDO PATONG



New condo. 1km to beach, near Bangla Rd and Jungceylon, 1 bed, 1 bath, fully furnished. 3.9 million baht for 42sqm and 3.8 million baht for 44.5sqm. Tel: 081-541 2025. Email: c.junlarat@gmail.com

THIDA HOUSE SALE 27 MILLION



Thai-style modern townhouse with land. Size: 10.50m x 10.85m. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with living room, dining room, kitchen and car park. Single house on land size: 15m by 10.85m. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with living room, dining area/kitchen, terrace and car park. Soi Mountain View Kathu Waterfall. Tel: 081-535 7585, 084-119 4262, 081-356 9754. Email: peecho74@hotmail.com

URGENT SALE/ RENT



House in Patong. Newly built 40sq wah, near Sea Pearl project, Patong. 2 storeys, 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.

1 RAI, SEA VIEW LAND

Opposite Wat Chalong on the way up to the hill. Chanote (36m x 45m approximately). Sophisticated hillside project, proratable. 8.5 million baht. Direct by owner. Tel: 085-654 4011, 089-404 0737.

LAND NEAR KATA CENTER

Great location, road access, 5 mins to Kata Beach and main road, 1,450sqm with title deed. Contact Lychee. Tel: 081-891 3048 (Eng & German).

HOUSE IN KAMALA



For sale. 2 houses on land. 1 ngan 89sq wah. Chanote title, near mountain, peaceful and safe, 10 minutes from the beach. 5.5 million baht direct from owner. Tel: 083-180 2143. Email: nana1225@gmail.com

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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.

HOUSE & FURNITURE

Single house, 60sqm. 2 floors, 3 bedrooms and 3 toilets. In Chaiyapruet Village at Land & Houses Park, Chalong. Good location and entrance from bypass road. Built 2 years ago. Tel: 084-627 7001.

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Foreign freehold. Great sea view. 100sqm, 1 bedroom, fully furnished. Near the beach. Luxury upgraded. Good rental return. Bargain price: 6.9 million baht. Agents welcome. Tel: 086-747 9292. Email: claudstrey@gmail.com

BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE



Fully landscaped, 3 air conditioners, telephone and internet, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen. Located near the Heroines Monument towards Pa Khlok. Land size is 53sq wah. 3 million baht (negotiable). Tel: 080-520 2989. Email: edc9designs@gmail.com

30 RAI IN TOWN

Flat land near Dowroong School in Phuket Town. Tel: 081-691 2526.

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

HOUSE IN VILLA DAORUNG

Phuket Town. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 47sq wah. Tel: 089-909 2771.

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At Koh Yao Noi, 16 rai 73sq wah. 300m to beautiful beach. Sale: 76 million baht. Tel: 084-837 4429. www.chokechaiproperty.com

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1 million baht yearly rent, long-term lease. Negotiable, 9 bedrooms, full guest. 60m to beach. Tel: 084-242 8914. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

TWO BUILDINGS FOR RENT

Commercial building for long-term rent on Montri Road. Near Pearl Hotel. 3 storeys, 2 building. 38,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-606 2827 (English & Thai). Email: nij017@hotmail.com

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Villa on 9,000 sq.ft, right on the sea, no noise, large pool, garden, family room, live-in maid. Available on November, early December and from January 2. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

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Phuket city, bypass road, opposite Tesco Lotus. 45sqm, 3 Fl at the corner with swimming pool view. 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, kitchen, fully furnished (2 aircons, hot water, washing machine, refrigerator, TV, microwave, 24 security and internet provided). Pls contact: 086-4769612. Email: annanol1@hotmail.com

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BAR, SHOP FOR RENT-RAWAI BEACH

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Jagota Brothers Trading Co., Ltd. Long-time, well-established food importer and supplier to hotels and restaurants welcomes applications from experienced salespeople. 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

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

SALES CONSULTANT REQUIRED

Club Asia Fitness requires a Sales Consultant. Applicants should be fluent in English and a Thai national. Excellent remuneration offered. Tel: 080-698 5021.

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

REPORTER

- ▶ Thai national (able to read, write, speak fluent Thai)
- ▶ Ability to communicate clearly in English
- ▶ Clear thinking in order to identify what makes a good news story
- ▶ Initiative and enthusiasm to track down a story
- ▶ Photography skills
- ▶ Able to manage own time effectively
- ▶ Knowledge of Burmese an advantage
- ▶ Driver's license

Good salary for the right candidate.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV by email to Isaac@PhuketGazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew
A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-273555 Fax: 076-615240

QUALIFIED TEACHER NEEDED

Female teacher needed to teach 3-5 year old kindergarten students. Send CV and photo please. Tel: 076-521550, 084-847 0732. Email: info@smiley-kidz.com

TOUR OPERATOR REQUIRED

Thai national. Good English. Based in SaiYuan office. Good salary. start! Immediately Tel: 076-388 067, 081-958 8747. Fax: 076-388 938. Email: kannika.liva@gmail.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: 076-289472. Email: grahamkay@mac.com. For full details see our website www.holyclothing.com/htmlx/work.html

MARKETING STAFF

Condominium in Patong is looking for marketing staff. Contact K. Keith on 080-081 8870. Email: george@davidvacationclub.com

COMPUTER PROGRAMMER

Send your CV to cc@bayshoreprojects.com Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

PHILIPPINE STAFF

Female, good salary. Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963. Send CV to cc@bayshoreprojects.com

TIGER/TIGER GRILL JOBS

positions for Thai nationality.

- Floor Manager

Patrolling the rings, may include taking attendance. Salary 15,000+ depending on English skills or other qualifications.

- Secretary to the Executive Chef
Good pay, benefits, fun job, training, etc. Tel: 076-367 071.

Email: jum@tigermuaythai.com
www.tigermuaythai.com

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Male/Female - Age 18-30 years. Good character
Well presented. Neat/tidy. Well organised
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Does not need previous experience as training will be provided for suitable candidate.
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Must be able to swim. Diving certificate an advantage.

Salary Bt15,000-20,000 depending on experience.
Private medical cover provided. Uniforms provided.
Food/food allowance provided away from base station.
Please send resume to pinyo@zolutionsthailand.com
Tel 0846629961

PROGRAMMER WANTED

Please send CV to cc@bayshoreprojects.com. Tel: 081-968 5963.

FOREIGNER ACCOUNTANT

Needed as soon as possible for hotel developer. Contact Marianne. Tel: 081-270 1370. Email: c@bayshoreprojets.com

OFFICE ASSISTANT NEEDED

Small dynamic and friendly real estate agency company based in Chalong, Phuket working for national and international clients. Seeking assistant with administrative experience and outgoing personality. Experienced in selling real estate is an advantage. Thai national. Excellent English is a must. Salary based on qualifications. Tel: 086-940 2266. Send resume, photo and expected salary to sales@18excelsior-property.com

RECEPTIONIST KARON

Beautiful spa in Karon is looking for Thai lady as Receptionist-Cashier. Good salary, staff room. Tel: 087-894 5585.

THAI PLUMBER

Contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

BARTENDERS AND WAITRESS

Thai national, English speaking, some experience, good looking and manners. Training will start on 1st of November 2012 at Nai Harn. Tel: 084-509 1975 (English). Email: laterrazza@phuket@hotmail.com

LOOKING FOR STAFF (2 POSITIONS)

Phuket Wake Park is looking for Secretary Engineer and HR Manager. Tel: 084-889 4942 (English) Send CV to office@phuketwakepark.com

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Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

2 SUB-EDITORS

- ▶ Fluent in English
- ▶ Able to work to strict deadlines
- ▶ A team player
- ▶ Naturally curious about the world, especially Phuket and what affects its residents
- ▶ Newspaper experience and/or layout skills, especially in PageMaker or InDesign, required.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV and writing sample by email to editor@phuketgazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

79/94 Moo 4, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaew
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SALE / MARKETING

Marketing employee urgently needed. Male or female. Good salary. Tel: 089-618 6894.

SPA RECEPTIONIST

Beautiful spa in Karon is looking for new receptionist and cashier. Good salary. Call for more information. Tel: 087-894 5585.

RUSSIAN GUIDE

Thai-speaking Russian or Russian national. Urgent! Tel: 089-618 6894.

THAI FOREMAN WANTED

Please contact Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

SALES ADMIN INTERIOR DESIGN

We are hiring a motivated person with a passion for sales/admin to join the team at our furniture showroom in Bang Tao. We offer an attractive salary and benefits. Tel: 076-325 419, 081-400 4678. Email: orientalsamui@gmail.com, for further details, please see our website at oriental-living.net

ARCHITECTURE

Thai national wanted. Ability to use AutoCAD, Sketch-Up and 3D-Max is a must. Tel: 081-788 1639. Email: sec@phuketawnings.com

MARKETING REPS NEEDED

EZYSTAYS looking for marketing representative. No experience required, full training provided, work permit and good income. Email: leoiphuket@gmail.com

WEBSITE PROGRAMMER REQUIRED

Must have solid HTML and CSS coding experience with knowledge of JavaScript and PHP. Design and English skills are the advantage. Immediately start. Email your CV to messenger.alexander@gmail.com

GUESTHOUSE RECEPTIONIST

Thai national. Aged up to 30 years old. Good English. Tel: 084-876 7220.

IT OR AV ENGINEERS

Thai nationality, can speak English. Please send CV to Email: info@techworx-project.com

WINE & TAPAS BAR

Staff required in Phuket town, available on October 2012: bartender, helpcook, waitress. Tel: 083-969 7807.

A leading Home Automation and MEP Engineering company in Cherrng Talay is looking to fill:

- | M&E Engineer
- | Autocad draftsman

Good Salary. 5 day week.
Email: info@avcphuket.com
Fax: 076-615811

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Staff wanted for Wellness Center located in Koh Kho Khao, Phang Nga. Administration staff must have excellent spoken and written English skills. Full time kitchen staff and Spa & Yoga therapist positions also available. 6 days per week, salary negotiable dependent on experience. Service charge after 3 months. Thai nationals only. Tel: 080-866 4097 (Thai), 081-647 9365 (English). For further details, please see our website at www.amitywellness.com Please email resumes/CV to info@amitywellness.com

NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHER

We're looking for NES teacher, US/UK/AUS/CA, to start ASAP. Degree, TEFL and CV required. At least 1 yr experience. Tel: 080-907 7466. Email: info@brainy-house.com

ECOMMERCE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Are you hard working, computer literate & fluent in English? Thai or Foreigner. Salary: 17-22,000 per month. Join HolyClothing, a leading online fashion retailer since 2001. Tel: 076-289472. Email: info@holyclothing.com Full Details Here: <http://bit.ly/ROWNBD>

GUESTHOUSE MANAGER

Experienced, spoken English and Thai. Small operation, needs to do all jobs. Tel: 085-159 7400 (English). Email: dshumny@yahoo.com

THAI STAFF WANTED

Good salary with bonus. Call Carla. Tel: 081-968 5963.

Employment Wanted

REQUIRES AN EMPLOYEE

Requires an employee to promote the online store on the Internet. Tel: 088-838 3242. Email: zxigor.n@gmail.com

International Law Office Patong Beach Co., Ltd.

Accountant 1 position

- Bachelor degree in Accounting
- 1-2 years working experience as Accounting staff
- Can speak English would be advantage
- Computer skills in Microsoft Office

Interested candidate, please send your CV with recent photo, expected salary to secretarysam@ilo-phuket.com. Only qualified candidate(s) will be called for interview.



In the frame of rapid growth, we are looking for the following candidates

- Executive Chef
- FB Manager
- Restaurant Manager (Thai Nationality only)

Please send the resume to hrrecruitphuket@wineconnection.co.th
Or Call 076 282 411 ext 13 for further information



Secretary/PA

- Communicate both Thai and English in verbally and writing
- Have a knowledge in MS Office
- Required organizational skill, maintain file, database and working procedure
- Office working based at Boat Lagoon

Interesting candidate, please email to farrimond.sam@gmail.com

CHEF REQUIRED

Small international restaurant in Kalim looks for independent working kitchen chef with experience in preparing Thai and international dishes. Tel: 080-555 2377 (English & Thai). Email: 55inkalim@gmail.com

BARTENDERS AND WAITRESS

Thai national, English speaking, some experience, good looking and manners. Training will start on 1st of November 2012 at Nai Harn. Tel: 084-509 1975 (English). Email: laterrazzaphuket@hotmail.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

OPERATION/ADMIN MANAGER

Luxury yacht charter company is looking for an Operations/Admin Manager. Thai nationality. Key tasks: yacht provisioning, cleaning control, staff coordination for the charter, secretarial work and basic accounting. Own car is necessary. Email: sales@fivestarseacruises.com For further details, please see our website at fivestarseacruises.com

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Requires Western Villa Maintenance Manager. Must be fluent in both English and Thai, and have extensive maintenance/construction experience. Some hotel operations experience would also be beneficial. High level of responsibility. Flexible hours. Applicant must have current driving license and vehicle. Tel: 087-881 0003. Please send CV to hr@phuketvilla-sandhomes.com

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▶ Taurus Travel (Aroonsom Plaza)	Tel: 076-344521-2
▶ Khun Woody's Sandwich Shoppe (Aroonsom Plaza)	Tel: 076-290468
▶ Deli Supermarket (Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd)	Tel: 076-342275
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▶ Sin & Lee (Thalang Rd)	Tel: 076-258369
▶ iTree complete printing service (Tesco Lotus Phuket Town) bank zone	Tel: 076-255425
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▶ Chaba Supermarket (at the Laguna gateway)	Tel: 076-325586
RAWAI	
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Articles For Sale

MASSAGE BEDS AND CHAIRS

For sale. 25 Thai-massage beds, 8 foot-massage chairs. Normal price: 300,000 baht, now: 80,000 baht only. For more details please call: 081-537 6866.

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- 2 mountain bikes. Sale: 10,000 baht and 4,000 baht. Respectively. Tel: +852 02 865 1013. Email: cmcgee@netvigator.com

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Big kitchen, 2 bedrooms, great location. Price: 475,000 baht. For more details please call: 087-417 8379.

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Old Home lounge bar, free fitout + free accommodation. 5 million baht. Available on rental. Negotiable! Email: cocodiorster@gmail.com

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Daddys Cafe/Bar/Apartment at Kamala. Thai lady worker preferred. Invest 150,000 baht. Tel: 084-850 0568.

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Popular bar, open air. Beer bar in busy tourist area, fully furnished. Urgent sale: 1.6 million baht. Tel: 081-550 7379, 087-893 1753.

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Behind Bangla Tiger, quality fitout, long lease, no key money. Ready to open. Tel: 084-627 1301. Email for details to flatstanleysfastfood@gmail.com

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GOOD COMMERCIAL

Space for sale in Bangtao Beach. On main road. 156sqm, currently setup as a restaurant and bar. All equipment and furniture included. Now sale: 1,800,000 baht. Rent: 15,000 baht per month for 10 years contract. Tel: 081-733 9498, 080-700 3775.

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With all furniture, CCTV, computer, air, printer, bedroom only 150,000 baht. Tel: 088-178 7830 (English & Thai). Email: josephjohnn@gmail.com

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We offer the highest number of searchable products in Thailand and are expanding into the Southeast Asian market. Seeking USD 0.4M in investment. Tel: 022-072588, 089-687 5889 (English & Thai). Fax: 022-072626. Email: panupong@diversition.co.th If interested, please visit www.attackprice.com

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9 bedrooms. Sale: 15 million baht, 650sqm building and land, 90m from pier. Bargain. Tel: 081-416 1072. Email: rawai4@yahoo.com

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Middle of Patong, 60m from the shore, 6 rooms, guesthouse + restaurant with large, steady, ever-increasing clientele. Sale at cheapest price due to owner leaving. Tel: 089-651 3250. For further details, please see our website at www.guesthousepatong.net

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On Sawatdirak Road, opposite White Sand Resortel, a minute's walk to the beach. Tel: 076-342108, 081-892 7480 (English & Thai), 081-607 5716 (English & Thai). Email: Nanzz86@gmail.com

BUSINESS FOR SALE

A well-established (over 20 years) Marine Service Company, with many of the world's top marine products distributorship and offices in Phuket Boat Lagoon and Ao Po Marina. The owner is looking at selling the company and stock but could stay on to help with the day-to-day running and the technical side of the company on a salary or contract if required by new owner. We have five staff with very low overheads and with all orders and accounting done internally. Tel: 081-892 0534. Email: barrett.damian@gmail.com

Audio & Video Equipment

HOME THEATER

Samsung HTD555K. 6 weeks old, must sell, new condition. Sale: 6,600 baht. Tel: 087-281 9800.

Bar & Restaurant Equipment

KITCHEN HARDWARE FOR SALE

Second hand kitchen hardware: ovens, sinks, grills and etc. Tel: 082-283 8250 (English & Thai). Email: phuket@rayadivers.com

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Kebab Machine 25,000 baht. Tel: 089-666 6726 (English). Email: lasonth@gmail.com

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Looking for female companion to help me find a new home/land. Swiss Entrepreneur, mid-50s, sincere. Please answer with picture to tom4bell@gmail.com

LADIES!

Thousands of financially secure German gentlemen are looking for attractive sexy ladies 20 - 60 years of age, for serious relationships. Send good photos and bio-data to Exclusive Partner Club, P.O.Box 1303, 26003 Oldenburg, Germany. Email: frau.mfrauen@dap-international.de

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Set of five. Rounded edges with alloy spleen tables. Only 3 yrs old, no glintle. Can be used without bessors or BRTs but not in tandem with cleester bins. Price new: 4,200 baht each. Will sell now at 12,000 baht for full set. Located Rawai, pics available. Email: jackmartin3@gmx.com

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Second hand, full size tournament pool table. Size 4.1/2x9ft, only 70,000 baht (brand-new was 140,000 baht) includes full accessories and installation. Tel: 085-797 0202, 085-797 0303, 081-823 4627. Fax: 076-264461. Email: ying@phuketpooltables.com

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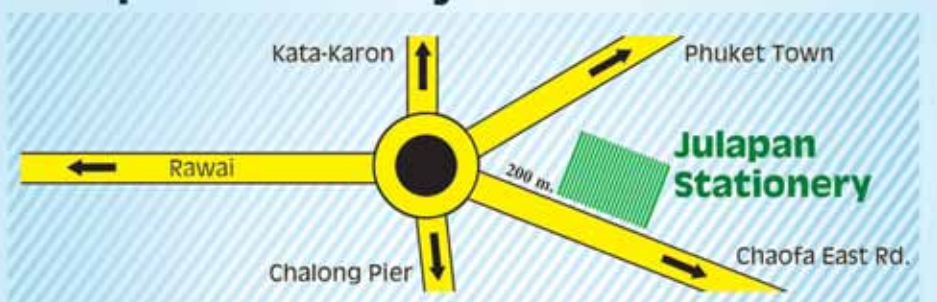
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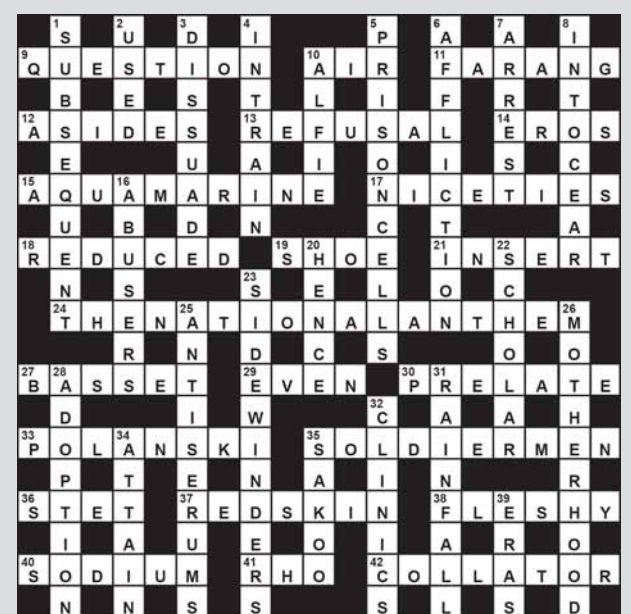
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SOLUTIONS TO THIS WEEK'S

CrypticCrossword

COFFEE break



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Phuket**




INTERNATIONAL GOALS: British International School Headmaster Mr Neil Richards with Marketing Manager Kirsten Smallcombe and students (above) and sponsor JW Marriott Resort and Spa's GM Tony Pedroni (right) at the BIS International Football Tournament. Photos: Marc Mulloy



ACTION MEN: Clockwise: Stuntman Ian Jamieson, 'Birdman' Jari Kuosma and Jagota GM George Des were at Royal Phuket Marina recently to organize the first 'Phuket Family and Gourmet Festival', a charity event which will be held early next year. Photo: Marc Mulloy






Tropical Serenity

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- เติมเต็มสุขภาพกับสวนสาธารณะ ครบพร้อมด้วยสระว่ายน้ำและฟิตเนส
- ทำเลศักยภาพสูง แวดล้อมด้วยสิ่งอำนวยความสะดวก (ก่อนถึงก็โอเค ฉลอง)

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Contact Anna on 089-469 1813 or 076-273555, or AdPower@PhuketGazette.Net



November 17-18, 10am to 4pm: Topper Sail Phuket Sailing Courses at Ao Yon, Panwa

This 2-day course is an excellent and fun introduction to sailing where safety, fun and expert tuition are the key elements. Courses also offered during the school holidays. Topper Sail Phuket is the No 1 Dinghy Sailing School on Phuket. In our fleet we have Optimists, Toppers, Lasers, Topaz with spinnaker, and Cats with twin trapeze. Already know how to sail? Come along and rent one of our boats. Canoeing and SUP courses also available. For more info visit: toppersailphuket.com.

November 17, 11am to 4:30pm: Phuket Adventure Mini Golf – First Anniversary. Bangtao Beach Road, Soi 2 (near Tesco Bangtao)

We want to celebrate with you, your family and friends with free mini golf, free premium gifts, balloons for the kids. 50 per cent off all pizzas and burgers (except Wagyu burger). Beer: 50 baht; wine: 100 baht; mixed drinks: 120 baht. Fun for Everyone!

November 21-24, 5 to 6pm: Phuket International Sport Fishing Tournament 2012

Registration will be on November 21 from 5pm onwards. Fishing days are November 22-24. Prize giving party on the 24th. For more info, visit: phuket-international-sportfishing-tournament.com. This event is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV. We hope you'll join for another great tournament!

November 22, 6 to 11pm:

WHAT'S ON in Phuket

Traditional Thanksgiving Dinner at Friendship Beach Resort, Rawai

Always fully booked every year. Large celebration buffet, live entertainment, (soloist and band). Families welcome. Bookings are essential. Contact Chef Charlie on 089 728 5304 or chef@friendshipbeach.com.

November 22, 6 to 11:30pm: Martini Manicure Ladies Night at RE KA TA

Free express manicure for ladies. Free Martini for ladies on arrival, and 50 per cent off the drink list all night long. Cocktail flaring. From 6pm to midnight – DJ till late. Contact 076-3300421

Nov 24 - Dec 3; 10am to 11:30pm: Laguna Phuket Tri-Fest

Laguna Phuket will again be the focus of worldwide triathlon attention when the legendary Laguna Phuket Triathlon and iconic Ironman 70.3 Laguna Phuket launch the high season in carnival style. The Laguna Phuket Triathlon on Sunday, November 25, and Ironman 70.3 on Sunday, December 2, are linked by a "Tri-Fest" of related training and social events. For the many professional athletes from all over the world. For more info visit: lagunaphuket.com/events/tri-fest This event is sponsored by *The Nation*, the *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and the *Gazette's Phuket Today* show airing daily on UBC/True Visions (Channel 99).

November 24, 6pm to 12am:
ThaiVisa 10 years party at
Phuket Sports & Tennis Club
ThaiVisa members only. Please sign up at: thaivisa.com/forum/topic/583277-phuket-party-10-years-of-thaivisacom-rawai-sports-club/

November 24, 12 to 3pm: Saturday Brunch @ Two Chefs

Every Saturday we set 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: twochefs.com.

December 1 6:30pm to 12am: Phuket Life Home Project Charity Quiz Night: Mövenpick Resort, Karon Beach

A charity quiz night with gourmet buffet, rock & roll bingo, live auction and music throughout the night. Tables of up to ten. Price is 2,000 baht per head, which includes the quiz and other activities, gourmet buffet and limited complimentary drinks. Full bar is available. Doors open at 6:30pm. Quiz starts at 7:00pm. Contact Khun Wandee or Khun Nee on 076-384342 or visit lifehomeproject.org. The *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and the 'Phuket Today' show are proud to sponsor this event.

December 1, 6 to 11am: TSLC IronKids Phuket Official Race

North Phuket Culinary Arts Festival 2012

30 Nov - 2 Dec 2012



Friday

Join us for North Phuket's Epic longest dining table at SALA Phuket Resort and Spa and Renaissance Phuket Resort & Spa

Saturday

Anantara Phuket Villas presents a gourmet wine dinner with fine food and paired wines in the beach front restaurant, Sea, Fire, Salt."

Sunday

JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa presents The Brunch of your life "A bounty of sophisticated tastes from the JWM kitchens and Bars for the entire family to enjoy right on Mai Khao Beach"

Single event pass: 1500 baht net / person
Full weekend pass: 4000 baht net / person

Children under 12 years of age, half price
Children under 7 years of age, free

Contact: events@northphuket.com for further information.



Swim, Bike and Run to become an IronKid. A triathlon for 6 to 17-year-olds with age appropriate distances on a safe and secure course. Both individual and team relay entries available. Register on line or at Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club. Visit: ironkidsphuket.com for more information and race details. This event is sponsored by *The Nation*, the *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and the *Phuket Today* show, found on UBC/True Visions (channel 99).

December 1-8, 6 to 10:30pm: Phuket King's Cup Regatta 2012

Recognized throughout the east-

ern hemisphere as the premier sailing event of its kind, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta will once more put on a spectacular display of the finest sailing talent from around the world, competing in changeable seas to win the 'must-have' racing trophy in all of Asia. The regatta promises five days of highly charged racing complemented by six fantastic beachside parties hosted by some of Phuket's most respected names in hospitality, including the host venue, Kata Beach Resort & Spa. This event is sponsored by *The Nation*, the *Phuket Gazette* and PGTV.

Phuket Afternoon Computer Clinic

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

Free Computer Clinics at:
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Contact at 076-282403, Woody@KhunWoody.com or visit KhunWoody.com

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Yassine's cautionary tale

By Andrew Scott

MOROCCO over the years has been romanticized by Hollywood and through the prose of numerous authors. It's a place that conjures up images of bazaars, palaces and bustling market squares. But the vision of Morocco from those looking in, is a lot different to the one Yassine Darkaoui endured while looking out from the Northern city of Tangiers.

Yassine started smoking cannabis, out of curiosity, when he was 19, and, in a way, to show himself and others that he could play with, and handle the "fire".

He then made what is a natural progression for a lot of drug addicts; moving onto ecstasy and heroin by the time he was 23.

Prior to his drug dependence, Yassine represented the Moroccan National team in Laser Class sailing events before addiction forced him to quit.

Heroin took over his life for the next eight years: "I needed more and more money, work became hard and I started to forget friends and family. When there is no heroin it felt worse than torture."

The drug controlled his life to a point where he couldn't function without it. His life kept spiraling out of control: "I was like a slave and it was impossible for me to live without the drugs. Everyday when I woke up, I would smoke, and at work, every hour I was going to the toilet. One day my boss said to me, 'Hey, I will put a telephone line in the toilet for you as you spend a lot of time in there'."

After recovering from his second overdose, and upon the leaving hospital, Yassine thought the only escape was suicide as the grip heroin had on him was so strong.

But with the help of his aunt, who found Yassine wandering the streets of Tangiers, he spent two weeks getting clean in a psychiatric hospital – only allowed to leave

under 24-hour family supervision.

At that time, he was suffering from chronic depression and had to take 20 pills a day just to feel 'normal'.

Even with the help of prescription medication he still thought about heroin everyday.

The sharp reality of the real world was a lot different from the world his drugged mind had formed over the years: "When you are high, you live more in your mind than in reality and the heroin helps the mind to create a parallel world. The longer you take the drug the bigger the parallel world becomes. You disconnect from reality and live only in your head."

The depression went away after six months but his addiction remained and he started using again.

"I took [drugs] every other day for a year and then one day, when I was with my girlfriend, she helped me to see the way the drug worked and said it would kill me or I would be poor."

Yassine decided to follow his girlfriend Adelaide to Thailand to try and break away from the addiction and start a clean new life.

He stopped taking the drugs three days before his flight.

"To break a habit you have to be positive that the mind can be conditioned to new things and it is possible to change the way your mind works."

The sun-soaked Moroccan now has the personality of a man who has been given a fresh start in life.

On Phuket, Yassine has rekindled his love affair with sailing and says spending time on the water is a form of therapy to help keep his mind balanced.

He participated in last year's King's Cup and Phuket Race week.

He says that he now wants to warn children in Phuket about the dangers of drug addiction and has recently shared his life experiences at HeadStart school, where he gave a brutally honest talk about



JUST SAY NO: Yassine with students from HeadStart after his talk about the negative impacts of drugs.

drugs and their effects to year 9 and 10 students.

"The solution is not to put the addict in prison, the solution is to teach the young people that there are other ways to feel high," said Yassine.

"The drug is like any product and anyone has the opportunity to buy the product."

The other way to 'feel high' for Yassine is sailing, and he is about to embark on a personal challenge that will be the most demanding sailing experience of his life.

He is attempting to sail a 150 mile course in a Laser dinghy, starting from Phuket, to try and beat the record held by Olympic bronze medalist, Michael Blackburn who sailed a Laser dinghy 117 nautical miles across the Bass Straits in 13 hours.

So far he has had physical, mental and technical training to prepare him for this record breaking attempt.

He also received instruction on sailing during the night, which will be the toughest part of the challenge as he only has GPS and a small torch to guide him.

Yassine is being helped by



Yassine recently recovered from a broken arm but is now training to sail.

Andaman Sea Club, the company of Chris Jongerius, CDR Pornprom "Gop" Sagultem of the Thai Royal Navy and his coach

Chris Millington, who has trained the UK army.

To follow Yassine's progress, visit: andamanlaserchallenge.blogspot.com

Key test results due out soon

THE latest results of Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) will be announced in December.

The results of the world's famous international maths and science tests are going to be heard again at year-end and academics are questioning if Thailand will seriously utilize the results to analyse flaws in science and maths education to make changes and improvements, or if the country will just acknowledge the results but not undertake any measures by relevant agencies afterward.

First conducted in 1995, TIMSS reports every four years on the mathematics and science achievement of fourth and eighth grade students worldwide. Find-

ings from the survey are used to inform education policy-makers and to improve teaching.

Following the previous results of TIMSS, other countries have already made some changes to their education policies and science and maths teaching and learning, especially Germany.

The country reacted to what they called 'the TIMSS Shock' and made major changes in education after a weak profile of competence of its Grade 8 students in TIMSS 1995.

Now, Germany's attempt has paid off as German students have performed better in international tests, according to Eckhard Klieme, a professor of education at the German Institute of International Educational Research.

He and two other representatives from Hong Kong and Botswana presented how each country has utilized TIMSS results at the 53rd IEA General Assembly Meeting hosted recently by Office of the Education Council (OEC) in Phuket.

Thai students' achievements have shown continuous declines over the past decade since Thailand joined TIMSS. Thai students' scores were 525 for science and 522 for mathematics in 1995. The scores dropped to 482 (science) and 467 (maths) in 1999. Even in 2007, the scores also dropped to 471 (science) and 441 (math). Meanwhile, the TIMSS average scores were about 500 more or less

– The Nation

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*The results depend on each skin type

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Juncelyon Patong (Ground Fl.)
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Pantipa Upatising

AMIDST the flurry of activities at SU Trading (Suzuki) in Phuket Town, Pantipa Upatising remains calm and composed. As workmen are putting finishing touches on the new showroom, Pantipa recounts the evolution of this 25-year-old family business.

Working with her husband Suwinai, the couple has witnessed the growth of the Suzuki automotive industry in Thailand since its first model Caribbean was introduced. But recently, due to Japan Suzuki's takeover as Thailand's main distributor, SU Trading and other regional dealers are undergoing a significant "overhaul".

For SU Trading this means a more spacious showroom and service area, better customer services and precise marketing plans.

"We now follow the management programs designed by Suzuki in Bangkok, who aim to standardize all their national dealers. This will benefit our customers and I am all for it," says Pantipa.

Initially, the Japanese management team surprised Pantipa and her husband by wanting to involve their sons in the company's future.

"At first I didn't see any relevance. My elder son, who's studying architecture, isn't interested, but the younger one (16) is quite keen on the idea to help run the business in the future. I am impressed by the long-term vision of the Japanese team."

THAI gallery

By Nanthapa Pengkasem

For now, improvement means more work for Pantipa and her staff who are required to work to exact specifications and show definitive results.

"There is so much paperwork and many checklists to follow," laments Pantipa, "It makes for efficiency in (the) workplace but I think there's a line to be drawn between robotic management and consideration for human behavior."

The last remark is hardly surprising coming from Pantipa who studied psychology.

"Please don't get me wrong. I am very impressed with the Japanese style of management, but some things just don't go down well with the mentality of the local people," she elaborates.

"In customer relations, for example, we now have to follow a strict pattern. It's fine, but I always encourage my staff to also use their senses and not just follow the book. It's a balancing act."

Pantipa, a native of Trang, remembers she was fascinated by psychology from an early age.

"I love studying the human mind and behavior. It's a highly complex

area, but equally satisfying if you can grasp the concepts [involved]."

After a degree in psychology from Prince of Songkhla University in Pattani, Pantipa enrolled in a post-grad study in public relations, which included a one-year study at San Jose State University in California.

"I learned so much during that time in the States," muses Pantipa. "Apart from the American culture, I learned about (their) sense of humor and the subtlety and nuances of the English language. It was a great experience for me."

Pantipa met her husband Suwinai while working for Club Med Phuket in the late 1980s. After a short period there, she resigned to establish SU Trading with her husband.

As MD of SU Trading, Pantipa's job is not confined to the office desk behind the scenes. That's not her nature – her preferred role is at the front line talking to customers, 25 per cent of whom are local expats.

Until the new showroom is completed, and staff get accustomed to the current working style, Pantipa has many full days ahead of her.

Nevertheless, she describes herself as a devout Christian, who makes time for Sunday service.

"My husband is Buddhist and we both give complete freedom to our sons to choose their religion and I don't mind which way they go. At the core, all religions have the same aim – to instill virtues and moral principles in their followers."



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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PGTV is the television arm of the Phuket Gazette, and part of The Nation Broadcasting Group.

SKAL members give up their shirts for charity



BEEFCAKE: You can see a lot more of these GMs at the event. Photo: Bruce Stanley

By Bruce Stanley

PHUKET'S SKAL club is planning some playful revelations at their gala charity fundraiser December 8 at Bliss Beach Club on Bang Tao beach.

The *Full Monty* is the name of the event and yes, it means that some of the island's most attractive hotel managers will be taking it all off to benefit both the club's scholarship fund and the Phuket Has Been Good to Us Foundation.

"We have a fundraising dinner every year for our members to raise funds to help support two schools in Khao Lak and another one in Rawai. This year we've decided to invite the Phuket community to an event where they can help support these programs with the purchase of raffle tickets and a very fun evening when some well known hotel managers will be sacrificing their modesty to aid our children's programs. We expect an evening of lots of fun," said Claude Sauter, President of Phuket's Skat Club.

Skat is an international hospitality social club formed in 1932.

Phuket's Skat Club is only one of 450 clubs worldwide in 85 countries and a membership exceeding 20,000.

Urs Aebi, Secretary of Skat Phuket said,

"We have nearly 60 members that range from travel agents to hotel managers. We meet once a month to enjoy a good meal and discuss issues facing the local hospitality industry.

This year we decided to put on our own version of the *Full Monty*, the popular English movie featuring normal men who strip down to their *Full Monty* to raise money to change their lives. What we're hoping to do is to raise money to help change the lives of needy local children."

DJ Doris from 91.5 FM will be providing the music for the event and his team will be handling the evening's entertainment.

Bliss Beach Club and BB & B beverage suppliers will be providing a family style dinner. Raffle ticket sales will enable guests to stay in some of Phuket's top resorts and dine in some of the island's finest restaurants.

It's been fifteen years since the English production of *The Full Monty* became the highest grossing film in UK history with a box office gross of US\$250 million, having been made on a budget of just US\$3.5 mn.

To reserve tickets, send a short email to: contact@skalphuket.org or visit: phuketgazette.net/tickets/ for ticket purchase and home delivery



WINNERS: Maggie Wigman (left) winner of Best Dressed Lady award, and Rinsin Reading (right) who bagged the Most Creative Hat award. Photos: Christian Mouchet

PIWC's Melbourne Cup Party

NOVEMBER 6, saw a gathering of well-dressed and be-hated ladies and gentlemen descend upon the Latitude giant marquee opposite Laguna's Canal Village to celebrate the 152nd running of The Melbourne Cup.

The Phuket International Women's Club (PIWC) were out in force to drink champagne, dine on sumptuous comestibles and party the day away from 9am onwards, all in the name of raising funds for their student scholarship program.

PIWC is a non-profit organization set up in 1989, which provides educational opportunities for needy children. Since 1990 more than 700 scholarships have been offered to girls and boys at primary, secondary and tertiary level. Currently 202 students – from kindergarten to university – are receiving financial assistance from the club.

Former President Khun Wipa Tanmanatragul said, "Students' lives have been profoundly improved by our scholarships and we are very proud of our success stories. Many have been the first member of their family to graduate from high school and go on to fulfill their dreams of becoming doctors, nurses, accountants and more."

The day was a cornucopia of excitement comprised of the race itself live on

the big screen, plus fashion shows, eccentric hat and 'best dressed' competitions, plus mountains of fine food and lashing of champagne!

In summation club president Carole Dux said: "I would like to express my thanks to the fund raising committee who worked so hard leading up to this event and on the day itself making it one of our most successful events. Also our students for always helping at these occasions, but most importantly our generous sponsors and members who supported us on the day and throughout the year to help us reach our objective of furthering the education of Phuket's needy students."

– Baz Daniel



Trevor Stanwell (71 years young), voted Best Dressed Man at the Melbourne Cup, poses with his lovely wife. Photo: Christian Mouchet

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Life Home Project preps for World AIDS Day

AT THE British International School (BIS), CAS students are making Christmas cards for Life Home Project, a Phuket-based charity that cares for mothers and children affected by HIV/AIDS.

CAS stands for 'Creativity, Action, Service' and is an integral part of the school's IB program as CAS student Visnu Khanijou explained: "We are making the cards to help raise money to help them have a better standard of living and so they can get what they want when they want to."

The students have also done cross stitching and Christmas tree ornaments for Life Home Project (LHP) to sell as packages for Christmas at the World Aids Day event on December 1 at BIS. Two women from the LHP were at BIS

helping the students make the Christmas cards as they have been doing already for 14 weeks.

The cards and ornaments will also be sold by some hotels.

Some of the students will also do a presentation on World Aids day. Prior to the event they will send out a questionnaire with 10 questions about AIDS and HIV to every tutor group in the school.

They will correlate the answers and present the findings at the World Aids day event showing how much or how little students at BIS actually know about AIDS. The presentation will be about aids and the LHP.

Meanwhile the LHP charity is gearing up its annual fundraiser, which this year takes place at the Mövenpick Resort, Karon Beach

on December 1 (World AIDS Day).

This year they have organized The LHP Charity Quiz Night, which features a 'pub style' quiz along with other activities including rock 'n' roll bingo, live auctions and live music.

A splendid buffet dinner is being laid out by Mövenpick and a full bar service is being provided by The Irish Times.

Proceeds go towards the LHP scholarship program and the day care center as well as work training for many of the women at the shelter.

– *Phuket Gazette*

The Phuket Gazette, PGTV and the 'Phuket Today' show are proud to sponsor this event. Tables of up to ten are available and the price is 2,000 baht per head, which includes



SHARING: BIS and LHP team up to help AIDS sufferers. Photo: Andrew Scott

the quiz, activities, gourmet buffet and limited complimentary drinks.

To donate, contribute or book tickets please contact Khun Wandee or Khun Nee on 076384342. More information can be found at lifehomeproject.org.

Getting wired into Phuket

HIGH season is approaching. Every year about this time I start getting inquiries about connecting to the internet in Phuket.

As people flock to Phuket for vacations and new jobs, many decide to stay for a week or a month or a decade, and one of the very first questions they have is how in the world to get hooked into the grid, Phuket style.

It ain't easy.

Other people write to me and ask how they can switch their abysmal (the term is usually considerably more colorful) internet service. The short answer is that there's no way to know for sure – in Phuket, more than any other place I've ever been, there are huge variances in line quality and loading; one person's fabulous line may be another's nefarious Skype-dropping mess.

When I first arrived in Phuket twelve years ago, my very first task – after finding a temporary place to live – was to get an internet connection going. There wasn't much reliable information back then, and there isn't too much more now.

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Thailand are fighting a lot of different battles, and consumer relations is only part of the picture.

Over the years, I've stressed measuring international download speeds. We've had a lot of problems with getting accurate reports –

TOT and True, in particular, have jimmied their lines to give unrealistically good performance measures with the tests we use. I still haven't found a good solution to that problem. I'll be meeting with an expert on the topic over the next few months to see if we can find a better way.

For now, the best I can do is give you a relatively educated guess as to the capabilities of the internet packages available on the island, and steer you in the direction that I would go. Your mileage may well vary.

International download speeds aren't as crucial as they once were. Many companies – Google (including YouTube), Microsoft (including Hotmail), Akamai (which drives thousands of key sites) and others – have set up servers either in Thailand, or one short and very fast hop away,



Live Wire

By Woody Leonhard

typically in Singapore.

In addition, the ISP's caches – pools of data sucked into the country once, over a single international data pipe, then doled out to thousands of customers inside Thailand – are bigger and faster than ever.

If you think you're looking at a YouTube video or a Formula race "live" from another corner of the world, you're probably wrong. Chances are good that what you're seeing has been cached in Bangrak, the waystation outside Bangkok, or possibly in Singapore or Tokyo.

Yes, even your Gmail and Hotmail (er, Outlook.com) email messages are being mirrored in Singapore, and it all happens in the blink of an eye.

I wish that signing up for an internet line was as easy as

of these developments and take advantage of the high demand.

And you'd be wrong.

I made the trek to TOT, True and 3BB, hat in hand, and asked about availability of various internet packages in both locations. TOT said they didn't have fiber in one location, and they weren't sure about the other. True said they didn't have the "Ultra" service in one location, and they probably didn't have Ultra in the other, either. (True's "Ultra" is a DOCSIS based cable technology that's similar to cable TV.)

All three said they could get ADSL to both locations, but if I want the faster technology, I'm probably up a creek.

So that's the first lesson: even if an ISP has a good package, it may not be available wherever you are. Yes, even if you're in the middle of a popular housing development, surrounded by people willing to pay a premium for good internet service.

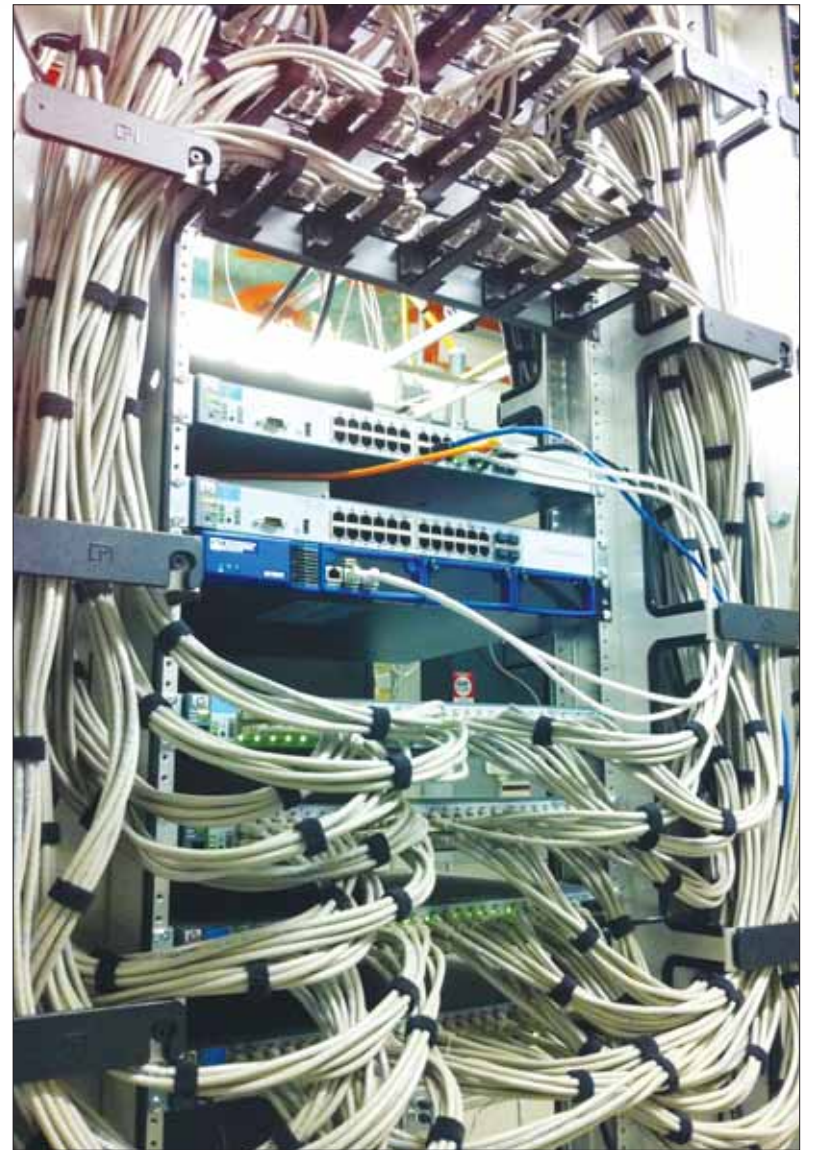
The second lesson: some housing developments won't let you install your own internet line – even if the service they offer is absurdly overpriced and utterly unreliable.

Frankly, I have very little tolerance for places like that.

Fortunately, there's one technology available – TOT's AirMax "WiNet" service – that gives you ADSL speeds without having to string a wire to your house. You may or may not be able to sneak that by your developer's association.

The third lesson: this is all changing. Fast. Right now, the wireless '3G' services from AIS, TrueMove-H, DTAC, and CAT, and coming soon from TOT, offer speeds that typically run about half as fast as what you'd expect from a decent ADSL line. That's quite remarkable, considering that you can take the 3G connection around with you, all over the country, and hook up network cables and WiFi to little pocket-size boxes – all widely available in Phuket.

But the big change is just about a year away. LTE '4G', if we get it in Phuket (don't get me started about the 3G auctions), has the potential to run considerably faster than almost all of the landline connections currently available. Of course, that assumes the ISPs pay to build the infrastructure neces-



INTER-NOT: Phuket has huge differences in quality and loading. Photo: Kelp

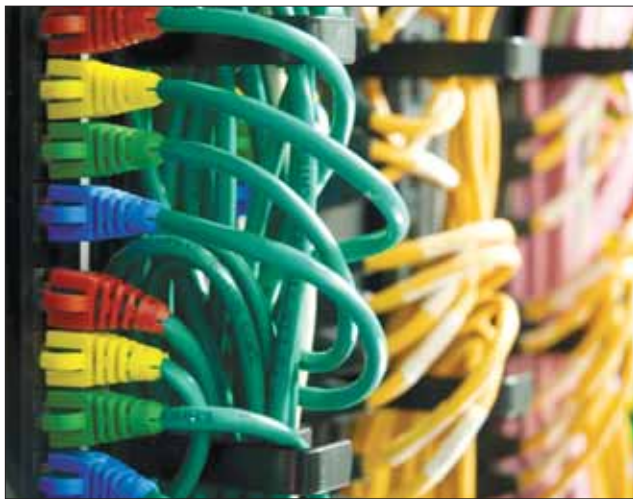
sary to support those fast speeds. But the potential's there for a huge game changing shift, not unlike the shift from telephone wires to mobile phones two decades ago.

Next week I'll talk about the wired connections available in most parts of the island. It probably won't surprise you to learn that the more expensive "faster" lines aren't necessarily faster at all.

We're running informal computer clinic roundtables every Sunday morning at Sandwich Shoppe Chalong, located 1 km north of Chalong Circle on Chao

Fah East road. If you have a Windows problem that needs to be solved, or a question about internet service in Phuket, drop by and ask one of the assembled gurus. 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/SandwichShoppe.



Dealing with a jumble of wires won't necessarily guarantee you fast access to the internet. Photo: Lord BullGod

visiting your friendly local ISP and paying for the fastest package you can afford. It doesn't work that way. Perhaps more accurately, it may work that way, but you definitely won't get what you think you're going to get.

It happens to me, too. I'm in the process of moving from Patong to a more central location on the island. My house search at one point narrowed down to two well-established housing developments in Kathu.

These aren't new places – they've both been around for many years. The people who live in the houses have computers and TV sets and all sorts of electronics – and some presumably have disposable income.

You would think the internet companies would be crawling all over each other to get fast internet connections out to both

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SWINGERS: Baby Sherpa. Inset: Parents Cop (right) and Jorn.

Gibbon back to nature

By Chris Hudon

ONE family of local gibbons – Cop, Jorn and baby Sherpa – are about to undertake the arduous journey of a lifetime, several years in the making, which marks the start of their reintroduction into the wild.

Their journey begins Sunday, November 18, at an undisclosed location inside Khao Praew Thaew National Park, and will continue for several years to come.

Cop, Jorn and Sherpa represent years of time and thousands of bahts' worth of investment by the Gibbon Research Project (GRP), a research division of the Wild Animal Rescue Foundation (WARF) of Thailand.

The GRP, which is funded entirely through donations, employs six full time staff (including a resident primatologist), has a dozen volunteers and is approaching its second decade of operations on Phuket.

GRP officials say their method of re-introducing gibbons into the wild in family groups is the first of its kind.

Gibbons are naturally territorial, and with a young one in tow, the adults adopt a territory in the forest more readily, says Oliver Price, who's been volunteering at the GRP for the past three years.

"They are a good family, and are really tight knit. The parents [Cop and Jorn] play with baby Sherpa a lot."

Cop, Jorn and Sherpa have spent the past three months in a cage designed to acclimatize them to their site in the forest. They've reportedly been coping well despite bouts of recent bad weather. Every morning, staff members trek into the forest with 3 kilograms of food for the family.

Eventually they will be weaned until they can provide for themselves entirely. Cop, Jorn and Sherpa were also recently visited by another Gibbon named Bank, the father of a neighboring family who've already been reintroduced into the wild.

Blazing Saddles

Our fearless correspondent Bicycling 'Baz' Daniel has volunteered to boldly go in search of the great cycling routes around the far-flung corners of our fair isle, in order to bring you this regular column entitled 'Blazing Saddles'.



FOUNTAIN OF FITNESS: 'Bicycling Baz' does a handstand next to his bike in one of Phuket's 'quiet corners'.

THE thought of cycling around Phuket probably enters most people's minds about as frequently as wondering what it would be like to thrust a live cobra down the front of their underwear.

However, cycling around Phuket is undoubtedly growing in popularity, despite the obvious challenges associated with the endeavor.

On most days in the early dawn mist you'll see phalanxes of Lycra-clad figures blithely darting in and out of the traffic, ascending vertiginous inclines, or chilling at roadside cafes.

The resurgence of cycling is a global phenomenon of which Phuket is a part, despite the fact that in all fairness it cannot be said that Phuket is particularly "cyclist-friendly".

There are three key challenges the budding pedal-file must meet, whether you're a road bike enthusiast, or a mountain biker. It's hot, hilly and often hair-raising!

Ambient temperature need not be a deterrent to enjoyable cycling if a few basic rules are observed. Clearly early morning and late afternoons are the best times to be "on yer bike". It's cooler, and at 6am there's a lot less traffic to dodge. In addition, at dawn and dusk the light is more beautiful, and that wonderful aspect of cycling that seems to closely unite you with the environment you're gliding through, is all the more intense.

When out pedaling, drink lots of water, much more than you think you'll need and sip it frequently, as

your body can't actually absorb a huge deluge all at once. After riding there's nothing wrong with a couple of icy beers or a cola to replace the sugars you've used up and the minerals that sweating removes from your system.

Remember, even when it's 30 degrees in Phuket, by cycling you are essentially in a 20 kilometer-an-hour wind if that's your average speed, and the free flow

you'll realize that your moment of pedaling enlightenment has arrived.

Like all sports, start off slowly only doing what your current fitness level will comfortably allow. You'll be amazed how quickly your fitness builds with regular riding. Then it's a case of, "Hills?... I laugh in the face of hills!"

Hair-raising is certainly a fair description of many cyclists' reaction to dealing with marauding

traffic, many dogs, potholes, broken glass and overloaded noodle carts coming at you with no lights on the wrong side of the road. The main arteries of Phuket are a raw Darwinian struggle for survival in which you, dear cyclist, are the lowest man in the brutal hierarchy of "Might is Right."

You MUST cycle with the utmost care and attention at all times, looking every which way at every moment.

Always wear your crash hat and riding after dark cannot be recommended.

However, this column will take you to the many pleasant backwaters of Phuket, where riding is quiet and enjoyable, and you can delight in just being on a bike, in the fresh air, riding slowly along savoring the delights of our tropical island and discovering myriad quiet corners you never knew existed.

In the next column join Bicycling Baz for a classic Phuket ride... down to the lake at Nai Ham and along and around that delightful southern-most beach.

– Baz Daniel



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Dive Bunny takes plunge

Thai “Tanny” learns to swim, and learns English in pursuit of her dream of becoming a member of the dive industry.

A LION fish is out in the open just over the sands of Kata Beach, but before a photo can be taken there is a sudden commotion.

Dive instructor ‘Scuba Nick’, eyes wide-open, rips off his mask and reaches for his student’s regulator. Ex-British military, Nick is a big guy, with big hands going for the second

and Koreans, don’t face the same challenges that Thais do when entering professional levels of the industry, as PADI certification texts are available in their native tongue. But such texts don’t exist in Thai, forcing divers like Tanny to learn the essentials and the minute details of diving in a second or third language.

Diving

By Isaac Stone Simonelli

stage of the small Thai Dive Master trainee, Kritsada “Tanny” Sutjacharee, also known as “Scuba Bunny”. With dexterity and confidence, Tanny quickly takes control of the situation. She establishes physical contact, holds Nick’s eye, checks his pressure gauge for air and gets him breathing – Nick begins to calm down, and one of the several intense drills for the day is over.

Seeing Tanny move in the water, it is hard to imagine that as of June 5 this year, she still didn’t know how to swim. It is often jokingly remarked that knowing how to swim is not essential for a diver to gain their open water certification. Though wonderfully true, it has been known to help, and being a reliable swimmer is an essential element to becoming a Dive Master.

Yet, growing up in Isarn, Tanny never had a real chance to learn, she explains at the surface.

“Mom and Dad told me one day ‘swim like dog’”. Then I went to the pool with my Mom and Dad and twin sister.

They threw me into the pool, and same, same as a doggy,” she said unabashedly.

For Ms Tanny, diving has come before swimming. Nick, her instructor, explains, “I put aside [the swimming] and focused on the diving first to give her confidence in the water,” he added.

However, learning to swim is not the biggest challenge that Tanny, like many other Thais trying to break into the dive industry, face. The real hurdle is the language barrier. Many other nationals, such as the Japanese

Before we made our way through the sunbathing crowds on Kata Beach, Tanny ran through a memorized script for her dive briefing. “Hello, my name is Tanny, but you can call me Dive Bunny,” she said with a big grin. Though struggling with certain terminology, such as “surf zone” she was able to give a comprehensive briefing, cover all the essentials: safety procedures, dive plan, time limits, air limits and so on.

Though many improvements will be needed before Tanny is able to follow through with her dream of becoming a dive instructor and opening her own business “Scuba Bunny”, she exudes the confidence and passion quintessential to being a Dive Master.

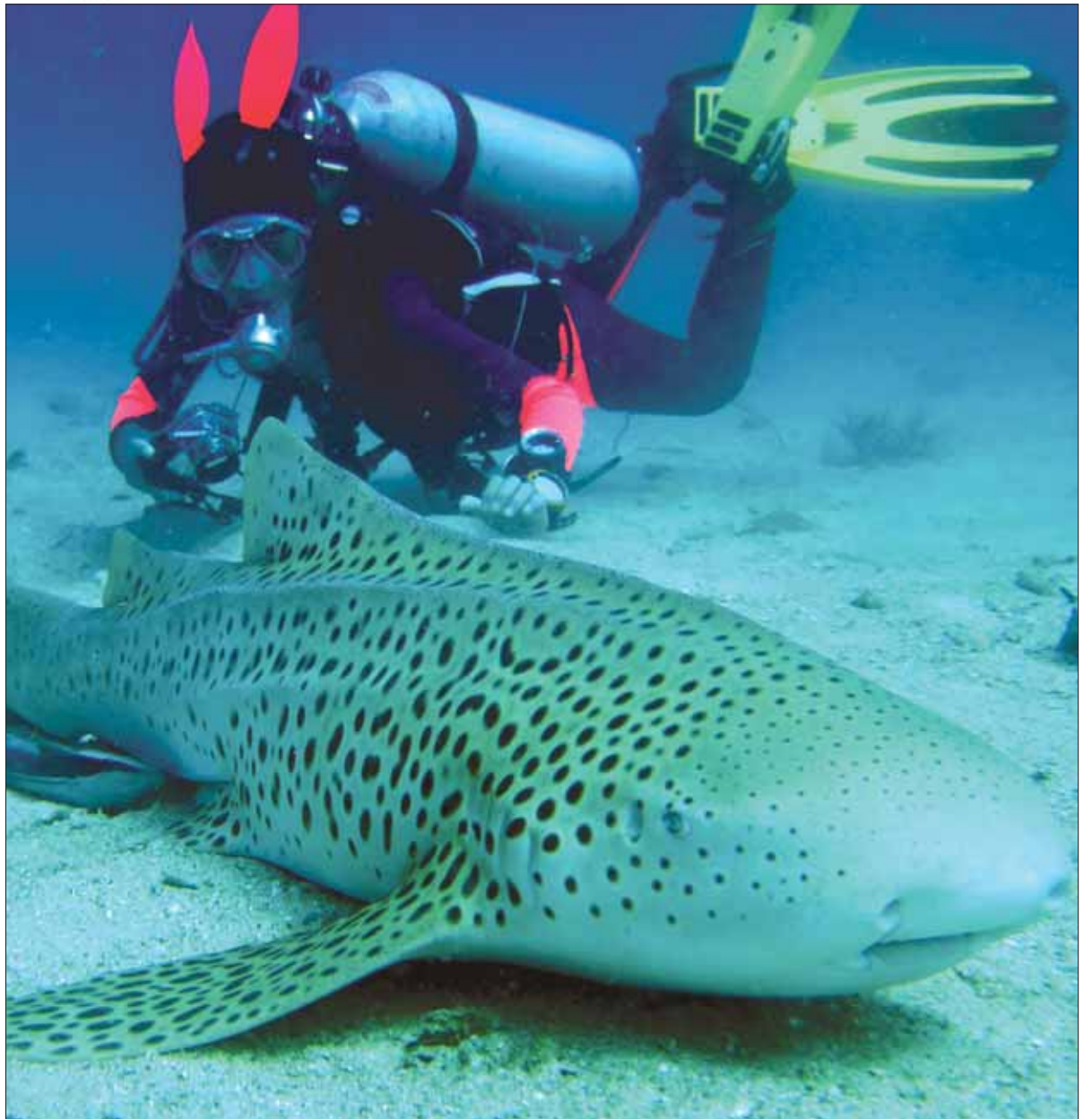
Despite the daunting tasks Tanny has already faced, she has steadily moved through all her certifications up to her Dive Master course and has already made over 130 dives in the last five months, guiding 48 of them. As she guides our tour on Kata, her confidence and experience underwater are visible.

There are just the three of us on the dive, which makes spotting

the tour leader (Tanny) as simple as your first underwater breathe.

However, Tanny’s hood, complete with bright pink novelty bunny ears, makes her easily identifiable in pretty much any dive situation.

As we hover over the sand next to the matrix of Kata reef, I frame up another shot of “Scuba Bunny”, her ears a strong contrast to the blue around her, as she



HOP TO IT: Very few in the world have seen a ‘bunny’ interacting with a Leopard shark. Photos: Scuba Nick

points out a small scorpion fish nestled into the reef.

What might come off as ‘gimmicky’ is so sincerely loved, with the same contagious passion as she has for any “cartoon style” fish, such as Peacock Mantis shrimps and Porcupine fish, that Tanny’s rabbit ears are an instant asset to the dive.

“When I was a child, my Mom and Dad told us a story

about looking at the moon, [where] you could see [the shadow] of a bunny sometimes. And they told me that when you go to sleep the bunny from the moon comes to see you,” Tanny explains.

“That’s when I [first started to] love bunnies, when I was a child,” she said.

Not giving up her love of rabbits, Tanny has clearly moved

on to marine life.

Back at the surface Tanny, Nick and I are all grins. It is just as clear here, floating at the surface, as it was underwater that Tanny has a passion for diving that will carry her forward beyond the many obstacles she has had to overcome, so she can have a chance to explore all the mysteries and oddities of the underwater world.



The first dive tour Tanny led was on the King Cruiser, which has become her favorite dive site. Photos: Scuba Nick



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A SPLASH OF COLOR: Water lilies or *numphaeaceae* blooms and pads float above water. Photo: Texas Eagle

Ecstatic aquatic

WHEN I first came to Phuket, it was well nigh impossible to find ceramic pots that were completely waterproof. Indeed, I recall filling the drainage holes in glazed pots with cement in order to prevent leakage.

I was reminded of this recently by Richard, a fellow Englishman, who is marketing a range of giant ceramic pots, so large that they cannot be thrown or spun, but are crafted into molds by traditional methods, covered with a ceramic glaze and then fired in a wood-burning furnace. Beautiful and unique. Richard writes:

"I would appreciate any thoughts you might have about where I can research the best plants for these sorts of pots. I am particularly interested in aquatic plants that can survive outside [in] this climate."

As far as I am aware, there is no single book that deals

exclusively with water-loving plants, but William Warren's Tropical Garden Plants (Thames and Hudson) has a section on the topic. So here is my own threepenn'orth.

The shape of the container is absolutely crucial. Many of Richard's pots are vase-shaped – either broadly oval, or more slender in style. Consequently, the rims are much narrower than the main body, so one has to consider plants that require relatively little surface space and which will, by growing tall, gracefully complement the design of the container.

One obvious choice is the water canna (*thalia geniculata*), a plant with elegant reed-like stems and bright green, large, ovate leaves that appear at the sides and tops of the stalks.

Grown mainly for its foliage, the water canna also produces dangling clusters of mauve



flowers on elongated stems well above the leaves. A particularly attractive variety has reddish stalks and veining on the foliage.

Thalia geniculata will grow completely immersed in water, and is best established by being rooted in the glutinous mud sold in most good garden centers. Since it will rise four or five feet above its container, it will not look out of place in a large jar or vase-shaped pot with a relatively narrow rim. Moreover, it loves full sun. Witness the water canna's presence on the front patios of many Thai homes. The only downside is that old leaves quickly discolor and will need to be removed with secateurs.

Even more familiar is the lotus,



Some terracotta pots are glazed on the inside, making them suitable for aquatic plants. Photo: Melanie Cook

a plant sacred to both Buddhists and Hindus. Like the water canna, it is a sun-worshiper, will grow with its roots submerged in water and does best when constrained by a narrow-rimmed pot. While *nelumba nucifera* will probably not grow above four feet tall, its magnificent buds and flowers – either pink or white – are borne on long stalks some distance above the water.

Given the right muddy conditions, including fertilizer in tablet form, it will bloom repeatedly and produce masses of leaves. Round and vividly green, the leaves are covered with microscopic hairs that cause raindrops to roll off them. A must-have container plant.

Water lilies are probably the best known of all water plants, for the botanical family of *nymphaeaceae* is huge, and its members are familiar presences

wherever you hail from.

They come in every color of the rainbow, and the spectacular flowers lose nothing in comparison with those of the lotus. But it will only bloom freely, given a sunny location and ample mud around its spreading rootstock.

Since both pads and blooms float on the surface of the water, it requires a very different kind of habitat. In principle, the wider the pot, the better for the lily. And, because the flowers are low to the water, the vessel needs to be at or near ground level to achieve maximum visual impact. No wonder the water lily is the preferred choice of pond owners everywhere.

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

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Tips of the Week

Trace Elements and Healthy Plants

EVERY gardener understands that plants, like humans, require nutrients to stay alive and well. The three main needs are for nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K). These are present in the soil, especially top soil, and in additional material such as compost or chicken manure.

In addition, plants may require monthly applications of fertilizer, which is normally obtained in granular or liquid (more expensive) form, and is most commonly available as an equal balance of the three main minerals (15/15/15).

But that is not the end of the story: trace elements in minute quantities – boron, manganese, iron or zinc assist healthy growth. Happily, they are usually present in rich soil. Plants lacking these elements, especially in pots, may reveal their absence by yellowing foliage or stunted growth. They should benefit from a top dressing of humus-rich soil, manure or compost.

A head-spinning adventure

Books

By James Eckardt

SO FAR, Colin Cotterill has written seven novels in the Dr Seri Series, which tell of the misadventures of the National Coroner of Laos who emerges from thirty years in the jungle with the Pathet Lao after their victory in 1975. Now he's switched to a new Jimm Juree series in modern day Thailand.

Jimm Juree is a 34-year-old divorcee and former crime reporter for the Chiang Mai Mail. In the first novel of the series – *Killed at the Whim of a Hat* – she cuts all ties in Chiang Mai to follow her slightly addled mother after she purchases a complex of five beach bungalows in Pak Nam, Chumphon. Along with her come her bashful body builder brother Army and her granddad Jah, an taciturn, ill-tempered former traffic policeman. Staying behind in Chiang Mai is her 'sister' Sissi, a former transsexual beauty queen and now a reclusive internet outlaw.

These characters form the backbone to the second novel of the series. *Granddad, There's a Head on the Beach* (Quercus, London, 2012, 326) is exactly what Jimm says when she comes back from a walk on the beach with the

two family dogs.

A sinister policeman and two thugs from the local body snatching society determine that the head is of a Burmese and of no further concern. At the same time a middle class mother and college-age daughter turn up at the bungalow. They have no identification and their car has no license plates. Obviously they're on the run from someone.

These two cases are taken up by the former crime fighter Jimm Juree. There are any number of laugh lines. After an angry phone conversation, Jimm reflects: "The trouble with a cell phone was that if you slammed it down you'd break your own jaw."

Of her slightly dotty mother, she observes: "She was convinced that those little packets of preservatives they put in food were condiments. She's eaten so many she'd likely live to 150."

Of the fugitive mother and daughter: "They insisted we call them Noy – the mother, high-tone, and Noy, the daughter, low tone. Thai is a wonderful language that leaves many a foreigner ripping out chunks of hair. It has an ability to change a dog into a horse, a skein of silk into a bush fire, an entire town into an irrigation ditch. And all at the mere drop of a tone."

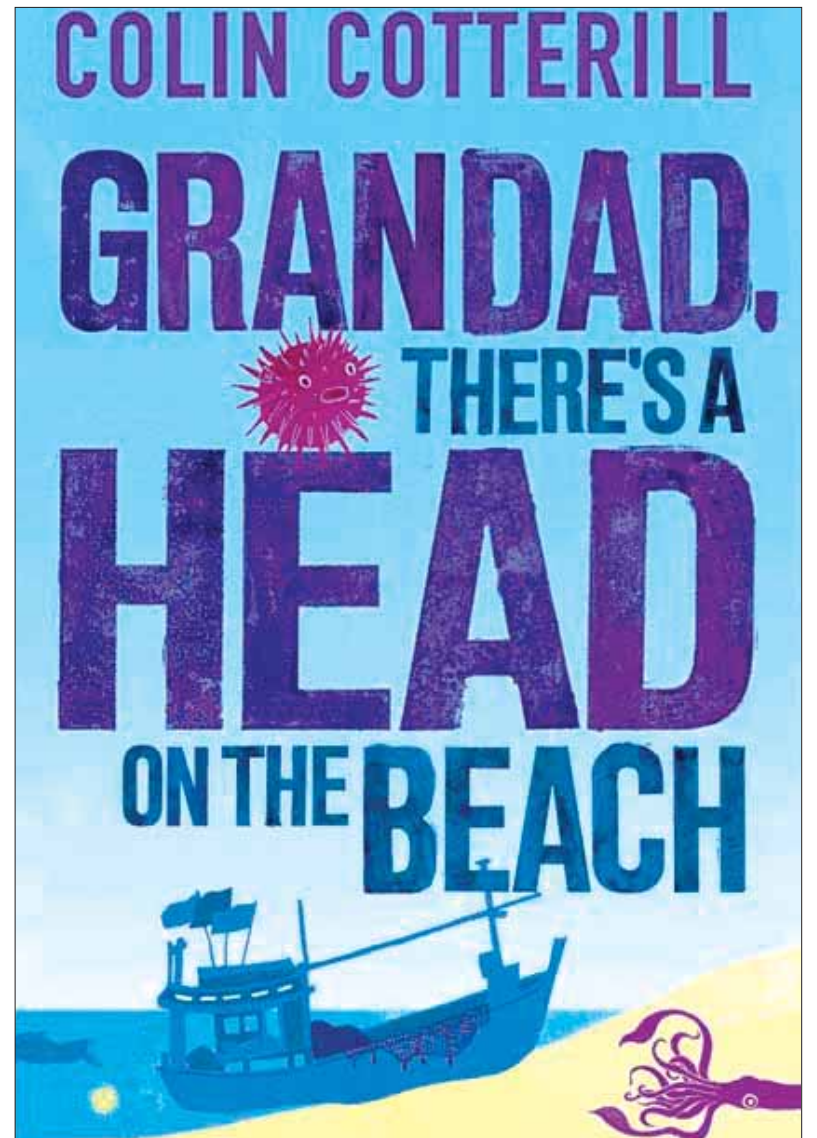
The mystery of the two fugitives is soon solved by Sissi, the

computer whiz. At Georgetown University, the daughter had caused an aristocratic classmate to lose face. For this they're being hounded by hyper-efficient uber-Gestapo dedicated solely to Thai aristocrats. Now I know that this is a farce, but that's just plain silly.

In the other case, the head on the beach belongs to a Burmese fisherman, one of many who have been murdered aboard a fleet of three slave ships. Now this makes no sense either. Why go to all the expense of hiring a corrupt police officer and a couple of thugs to abduct Burmese and ship them out to slave ships, not to mention paying and equipping Thai armed guards to watch over them, when they'll work for chickenfeed anyway? What's the point?

Still the climax is a rousing one, with the action shifting between Jimm narrating her scoop into her video camera aboard a small fishing boat and her audience of mother and sister Sissi who've taken over an internet shop. They're watching the action, which has gone viral, along with the rest of the world. The unhappy internet shop owner suddenly realizes that what he's watching is not a TV show.

The book is full of off-the-wall funny stuff – a thoroughly enjoyable read if you know nothing about Thailand, not so much if you do.



The Big Bang Theory Season 6: Still funny

OUR universe began as a swirling mass that existed in a hot/dense state, which started expanding rapidly 13.75 billion years ago.

This expansion caused the universe to cool and resulted in what now is its present continuously expanding state.

This knowledge forms the core of mankind's best model for understanding the origins of the universe AND is also the premise for one seriously hilarious show on CBS.

The Big Bang Theory is a sitcom about a group of Cal-Tech physicists who spend their time trying to unlock the mysteries of the universe only to fail at interacting with people here on planet Earth.

Leonard (Johnny Galecki) and Sheldon (Jim Parsons) are roommates who spend their free time with fellow scientists Howard Wolowitz (Simon Helberg) and Raj Koothrappali (Kunal Nayyar), playing board games in Klingon and watching recorded Stephen Hawking lectures. But the planets start shifting when they meet Penny (Kaley Cuoco), a pretty blond waitress/aspiring actress who moves in next door.

Even though she doesn't have a terribly high IQ or an affinity for quantum physics, Penny's looks and willingness to befriend the geeky guys has them trying their best to charm her with their

limited social skills. As the series progresses, more female characters are introduced (Sara Gilbert and Mayim Bialik) who match Leonard and Sheldon's braininess.

This fun, well-written series features an endearing cast who provide viewers with lots of humorous moments. Leonard, Sheldon, and their friends fully embrace their genius and recognize their social shortcomings.

If you never thought science could be combined with potty humor, consider this quote from the series: "Leonard: What would you be if you were attached to another object by an inclined plane, wrapped helically around an axis? Sheldon: Screwed."

Still, while the show is definitely funny, its storyline isn't completely original. It has all the expected clichés about nerds, they have a passion for sci-fi characters and can't sell a pick-up line to save their lives. Penny puts forward the stereotypical "dumb blonde" image, though women with brains and awkwardness to match the guys' are featured in recent seasons. In the end, this show is a fun, intellectual comedy about a group of guys having fun and looking for love.

Now in its sixth season, episode 9, *The Parking Spot Escalation*, airs November 29 and can be seen at cbs.com. – Jonathan Ryan

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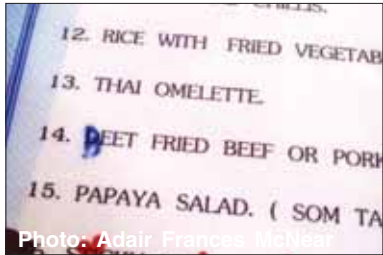
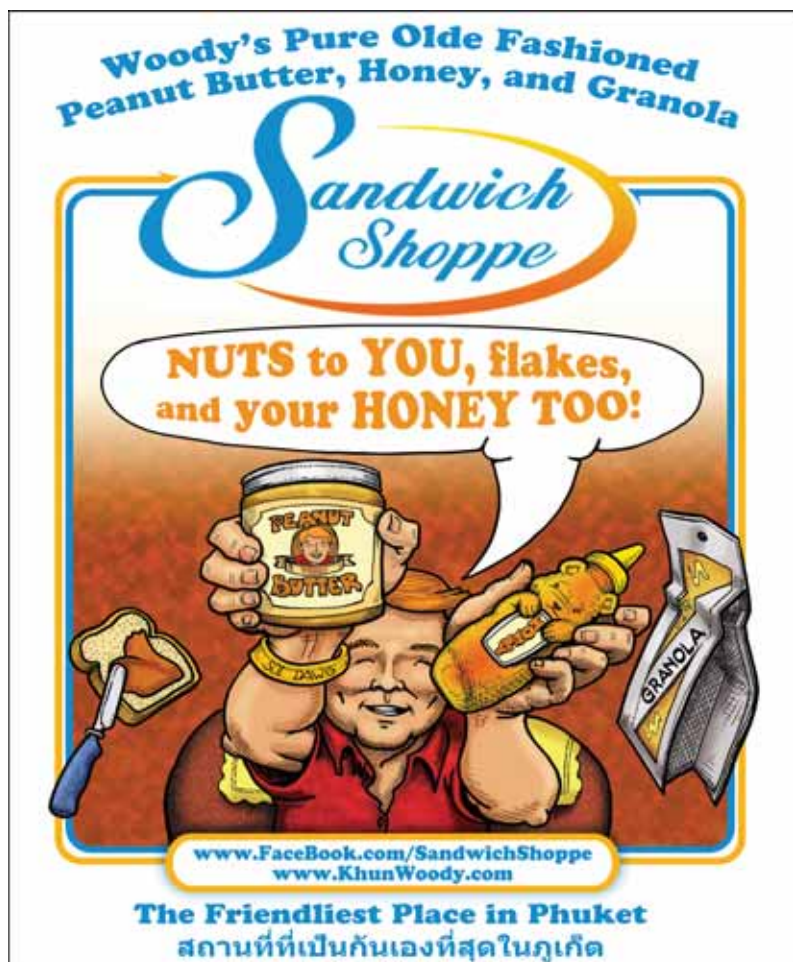


Photo: Adair Frances McNear

Sign language



Some things you never knew you didn't know

PEANUTS are one of the ingredients of dynamite.

A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.

The longest one-syllable word in the English language is "screched."

No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver or purple.

A pig's orgasm lasts 30 minutes. (In my next life, I want to be a pig.)

A cockroach will live nine days without its head before it starves to death! (Creepy, but I'm still not over the pig.)

'Dreamt' is the only English word that ends in the letters 'mt'.

Almonds are members of the peach family.

Maine is the only state whose name is just one syllable.

There are only four words in the English language which end in 'dous': tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, and hazardous.

Los Angeles's full name is 'El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciuncula'. And can be abbreviated to 3.63% of its size: L.A.

A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.

An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

Tigers have striped skin, not just striped fur.

In most advertisements, including newspapers, the time displayed on a watch is 10:10.

Al Capone's business card said he was a used furniture dealer.

A dragonfly has a life-span of 24 hours.

A goldfish has a memory span

of three seconds.

On an American one-dollar bill, there is an owl in the upper left-hand corner of the '1' encased in the 'shield' and a spider hidden in the front upper right-hand corner.

It's impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.

The giant squid has the largest eyes in the world.

The male gypsy moth can 'smell' the virgin female gypsy moth from 1.8 miles away (*pretty good trick, luckily pigs can't do that*).

In England, the Speaker of the House is not allowed to speak.

The microwave was invented after a researcher walked by a radar tube and a chocolate bar melted in his pocket.

The average person falls asleep in seven minutes.

There are 336 dimples on a regulation golf ball.

'Stewardesses' is the longest word typed with only the left hand.

The 'pound' key on your keyboard (#) is called an octotroph.

The only domestic animal not mentioned in the Bible is the cat.

The dot over the letter 'i' is called a tittle.

Table tennis balls have been known to travel off the paddle at speeds up to 160 km/hr.

Pepsi originally contained pepsin, thus the name.

The original story from "Tales of 1001 Arabian Nights" begins, "Aladdin was a little Chinese boy."

Nutmeg is extremely poisonous if injected intravenously.

The most common name in the

world is Mohammed.

The volume of the Earth's moon is the same as the volume of the Pacific Ocean.

'Cephalocaudal recapitulation' is the reason our extremities develop faster than the rest of us.

Each year there is one ton of cement poured for each man woman and child in the world.

The house fly hums in the middle octave key of F.

The longest place name still in use is: Taumatawhakatangihangao auauotameteauripukakapiki maunga horonukupokai-whenua kitanatahu - a New Zealand hill.

The strongest muscle in the body is the tongue.

Only 1 in 2,000,000,000 will live to be 116 or older.

Hummingbirds are the only animals that can fly backwards.

A cat's jaw cannot move sideways.

Some lions mate over 50 times a day. (*Pigs have quality over quantity though*)

The sentence, "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog," uses every letter in the alphabet.

The airplane Buddy Holly died in was the *American Pie* (Thus the name of the Don McLean song).

$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321$

The world's termites outweigh the world's humans 10 to 1.

Humans and dolphins are the only species that have sex for pleasure. (*What about that pig?*)

- Compiled by Marc Mulloy

The Greatest Invention

EUGENE J Polley is dead. Who, you will ask, was Eugene J Polley? Ah, dear reader, Eugene J Polley was the inventor of the wireless TV remote control device, familiarly known to all who love it as "the remote." This hallowed instrument has been immortalized in the universal cry, rising from a thousand throats in times of crisis: "WHERE IS THE F#\$% @*! REMOTE?"

That puts Eugene J Polley right up there in the constellation of great benefactors of humanity like Edison, Marconi, Ford, Steve Jobs, and Isidore T. Hamburger. (I don't have to tell you what HE invented.) Eugene J Polley cast off his mortal frame and joined the angels on May 20, 2012, at the age of 96.

Humankind owes a great debt to Eugene J Polley. Were it not for his genius, we would have to get up and waddle to the TV every time we wanted to change channels. He has saved all of us incalculable amounts of needless exercise and is responsible, by a conservative estimate, for adding approximately 50 kilograms to my previously gaunt and shrunken frame. So let us shed a tear and drink a toast to the memory of this



remarkable man.

His demise made me pause to ponder a weighty question. What is the greatest invention of modern times? What recent invention has conferred the greatest benefit on suffering humankind? We all know that the wheel was the greatest invention in human history. But what invention of the past few centuries has done most to gladden our hearts?

The TV remote comes to mind, of course, and its faithful ally, the La-Z-Boy recliner. Without these two invaluable amenities, my personal corpulence would be greatly diminished. Then there is the computer, the mobile phone, and their host of spinoffs: the iPhone, the iPod, the iPad, and the legions of i-toys that are at our command. Valuable inventions all, and not to be sneered at, even though they turn our brains into oatmeal. But the greatest recent invention of all? We look for a stellar achievement far more lofty,

transcendent, and sublime.

There is air-conditioning, without which modern man would quickly perish in the summer heat. The ancient Chinese emperors had every imaginable luxury, yet despite all their wealth and power, they had no air-con. They sweltered in the sauna of a Beijing summer like the lowliest peasant.

Yes, air-con is a top candidate, and so is the humble coffee pot. What would your day be like without your morning coffee? Industry and commerce would grind to a halt, nothing would ever get done, multitudes of sullen and bleary-eyed citizens would commit mayhem, murder, and suicide, deprived of that energizing brew.

I could go on, but the 500-word limit which my cruel editor has imposed looms up before me like the portals of doom. The greatest invention of modern times, dear reader, is the flush toilet. Just think of how your bathroom would smell without it.

Ye Olde Curmudgeon plans to elaborate on this felicitous theme in future columns, unless readers in sufficient numbers write in to stop him, c/o s.t.sow@gmail.com

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

COFFEE break

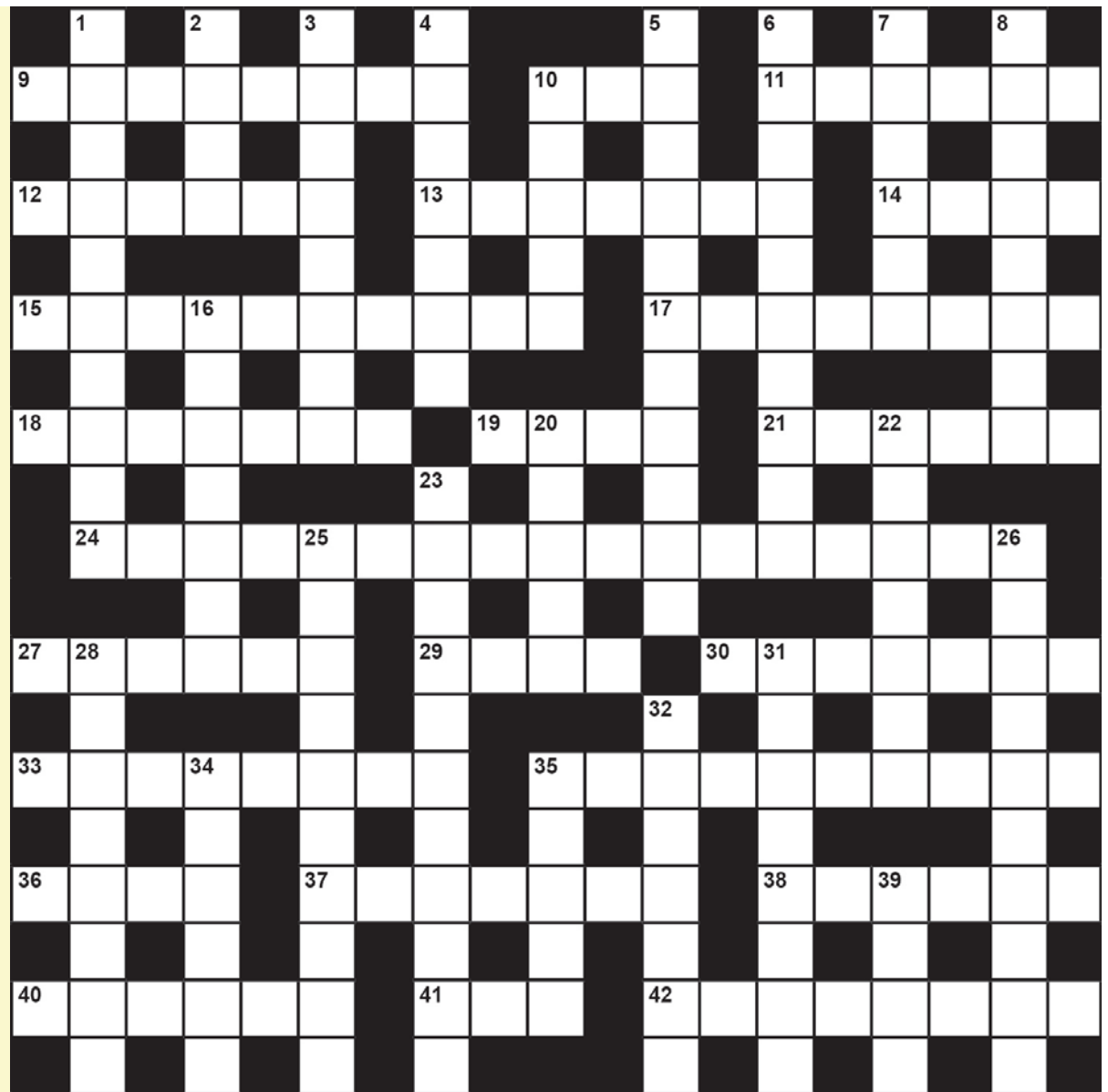
Across:

9. Search for one on request (9)
10. Atmosphere first rate, right? (3)
11. Football Association called a foreigner in Thailand (6)
12. As one of French made unrelated remarks (6)
13. Short reference states a liberal turn down (7)
14. Sore back for a Greek god (4)
15. A marque in a new color (10)
17. Subtle points in pleasant relationships (8)
18. Cut back possibly cured editor (8)
19. She keeps nothing in footwear (4)
21. Introduce rest in movement (6)
24. Will people stand for this? (2,8,6)
27. Hound graduate's group (6)

29. The day before noon is flat (4)
30. Rep changed tale about church dignitary (7)
33. Notorious late last century film director, Pilot Officer, left a Navigator on a runner (8)
35. Sold in mere misrepresentation to those in the army (7,3)
36. Set outside, time to let it stand (4)
37. Original American communist's family (7)
38. Fly she, moving, concealed being plump (6)
40. In element I do sum cleverly (6)
41. Greek character's river house (3)
42. Colonel left new rota to one who puts things in order (8)

Down:

1. Maybe bust queen's following (10)
2. Sued as it could be taken advantage of (4)
3. Said used carelessly, advise against (8)



4. Fashionable retinue under way (2,5)
5. Pair on island once left large son in jail accommodation (6,5)
6. Fact, if lion is disturbed, suffering ensues (10)
7. Starer comes to apprehend (6)
8. To move the car, first get this (4,4)
10. Short for Alfred, that is the abbreviated name! (5)
16. Those who hurl insults are maybe baser about us (7)

20. Chicken about East from now on! (5)
22. Clash, or move student (7)
23. To bring about wins, desired modern missiles (11)
25. Ruminates about singular reagents against bacteria (10)
26. Medical Officer the right cover in the maternal state (10)
28. Nowadays a choice for taking into one's family (8)

31. Amount of precipitation in wet-weather autumn (8)
32. Health centers caught fifty in one century, son! (7)
34. Tain't a possibility to arrive at! (6)
35. Ask about nothing round this Phuket Tambon (5)
39. Times are upsetting, son! (4)

Cryptic crossword compiled by Patong Bill. Answers on page 31.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):



Certain Scorpions could be getting hot under the collar at work this week. There are signs that an air sign colleague has been interfering in something that is your concern. Wednesday is the most auspicious day to tackle this issue. Those celebrating a birthday in the days ahead will be ready to take more chances in the coming year. Wear the color cucumber green to help you keep your cool.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):



Neighborly relations may be put to the test this week. The astral atmosphere can cause misunderstandings around your home environment – the stars advise not allowing minor grievances to get out of hand. What goes around comes around, and this can also apply to your realm of romance. Those Sagittarians who have been keeping someone dangling on a string could have a sharp wake-up call. Lucky days for finances are Tuesday and Wednesday.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):



Jealousy can play a part in your life this week. The stars suggest that a water sign would like to dampen your dreams, whether at work or on a

personal level. Another earth sign is on your side and can give valuable advice this weekend. More physical activity can be the key to better balance, and including your partner in this will enhance the relationship. Your lucky color this week is bronze.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):



Even if you can't always get what you want, the star indicate that Aquarians will be more than satisfied with what they can achieve during the second half of November. This is an auspicious week to use technology to your advantage, and an earth sign friend will appreciate your help in that department. In the realm of romance, another air sign's words are music to your ears this weekend.

PISCES (Feb 20-March 20):



There should be more activity and adventure on your agenda during the second half of November. Pisceans who have been preoccupied with mundane matters since the start of the month are advised to accept invitations they might normally reject. Travel is well-starred during the coming days; the stars advise you to remember that the journey can be more important than the destination. Dazzling days for romance are Sunday and Monday.

YOUR horoscope By Isla Star

ARIES (March 21-April 20):



Your outlook remains rosy until the end of November. Finances are particularly well-starred – expect your bank balance to be boosted by a payment that is more generous than anticipated. Where affairs of the heart are concerned, a meeting of the minds shows you that another fire sign could be your soulmate. Those who have been struggling with a difficult decision concerning a casual relationship should find that the answer is easier than expected.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):



Leaving your comfort zone can be hard for those born under the sign of Taurus, but the stars suggest that rewards will make this worthwhile. The second half of November is predicted to be an important period, with emphasis on creativity becoming a way to make more money. Where romance is concerned, your idea of a fun date may not coincide with that of a water sign this weekend.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):



The stars suggest that some Geminis need to let go of a grudge. Harboring these negative feelings will get you nowhere and can prevent you from seeing the sunny side of life. Money matters could become complicated – there are signs that listening carefully can prevent mistakes being made. In the realm of romance, it would be wise to use your head instead of following your heart where a fire sign is concerned.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):



Small changes in your domestic situation can make a worthwhile difference to your wellbeing. The second half of November is an ideal time for those born under the sign of Cancer to brighten up their surroundings. An earth sign friend has ideas to share that won't stretch your budget too far. Finances remain affected by uncertain cosmic conditions until the end of the month – this is not the right moment to make big commitments.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):



Conclusions can be wrongly drawn by Leos this week. The stars recommend digging more deeply for information before confronting anyone – another fire sign will not

appreciate being wrongly accused. In the world of work, the second half of November is an auspicious time to tidy up loose ends. A task that you have been avoiding turns out to be less daunting than expected. Luckiest days for love are Wednesday and Thursday.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):



Personal relationships fall under the spotlight during the second half of November. Offering an olive branch to a water sign friend or family member is advised. There are signs that this person is ready to forgive and forget and you should do the same. The stars advise being careful with what you say to a new romantic partner – sharing too much information too soon would not be a wise move.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):



Practical matters occupy most of your time and attention this week. Those born under the sign of Libra whose social life was a whirl during the first half of November could have a reality check. Unannounced visitors are forecast to mean last minute changes to your schedule, and could also cause some ripples in domestic harmony. Best days for finances are Tuesday and Wednesday. Sparkling days for romance are Sunday and Monday.

Sport

INTERNATIONAL
Sport

By Reuters

SPONSORSHIP deals and record revenues from the sale of almost 11 million tickets helped London organizers hit their target of raising 2.4 billion pounds sterling to stage the Olympics and Paralympics.

The income covered the core costs of putting on the world's largest sporting event, said Paul Deighton, the former Goldman Sachs banker who served as chief executive of the London Organizing Committee (LOCOG) for the Games in July and August.

The British government separately provided almost 9bn pounds of public money to build and provide security for the venues in East London for the Games. "Throughout this period we have made clear our aim for LOCOG to break even, and we

remain confident that our revenues will meet our costs," Deighton said in a written submission to the London Assembly released on Tuesday.

The success of the London Games has earned Deighton a position with the finance ministry overseeing delivery of infrastructure projects. He will take up the role at the start of next year.

London organizers raised almost 750mn pounds through domestic sponsorship deals with more than 40 businesses including oil company BP, British Airways and telecoms company BT.

That was almost on a par with the sum reported by Beijing after it hosted the Games in 2008 and almost four times what Athens generated in 2004, the last time the summer Games were in Europe.

Revenue from ticket sales also



LONDON CALLING: The full moon rises through the Olympic Rings hanging beneath Tower Bridge. Photo: Reuters

topped forecasts at a record 659mn pounds thanks to near sell-out crowds for both the Olympics and Paralympics.

The fact that any tickets were left over will irk some Britons who were unable to get in to see live action after missing out in

an initial ballot for seats.

The majority of more than 300,000 unsold tickets were for early rounds of Olympic football, LOCOG said.

It also said it had made thousands of free tickets available to students, soldiers and

volunteers after embarrassing gaps appeared in the areas reserved for media, athletes and officials early in the Olympics.

The previous highest figure raised from ticket sales was US\$551mn generated by Sydney in 2000.

Sonny Bill returns to Roosters



Sonny Bill at practice. Photo: Luton Anderson

WORLD Cup winning All Black Sonny Bill Williams confirmed the worst kept secret in rugby union on Tuesday when he signed a one-year contract to return to rugby league with Australia's Sydney Roosters.

The 27-year-old Williams had been widely expected to join the Roosters for the next National Rugby League season after a short-term contract in Japan, having declined a new agreement with the New Zealand Rugby Union earlier this year.

Williams, who ruptured a pectoral muscle while playing in Japan that could signaled the end of the lucrative stint with the Panasonic Wild Knights, said he was fulfilling a long-held promise to play for the Roosters after he sensationally turned his back on rugby league in 2008.

"It was pretty tough [to come back]. It's tough, but me and [Roosters chairman] Nick [Politis] are good friends, good mates," Williams told reporters in Sydney.

"He tried to get me when I was an 18-year-old [and] when I made that [handshake] agreement with him I knew it would always be the case [of joining the Roosters when he returned to league]."

Williams walked away from a long-term contract with the Roosters' cross-town rivals the Canterbury Bulldogs in 2008 to play rugby in France before returning to New Zealand in 2010 in an effort to make the All Blacks 2011 World Cup squad.

He played 19 times for the All Blacks following his debut against England in 2010, though appeared mostly off the bench during the All Blacks' successful World Cup campaign.

The barnstorming inside center, however, came into his own during the 2012 Super Rugby season, helping the Waikato Chiefs to their first title, and impressing in June internationals against Ireland.

Despite stating he felt he had found his "place" with the Chiefs, he declined a new agreement with the NZRU and was photographed in Sydney meeting with Politis.

Williams has also combined professional boxing with his rugby career, but the pectoral injury has forced the postponement of his November 24 bout against South Africa's Francois Botha.

In other rugby news, Wallabies flanker David Pocock has been ruled out of Saturday's test against England at Twickenham due to a calf strain.

Pocock's continued absence is a big setback for the struggling visitors, who were routed 33-6 by France without him last weekend and had been hoping for a boost with his return from a knee injury suffered in August.

In a further blow, lock forward Kane Douglas will also be absent due to a knee problem confirmed by a scan on Monday.

— Reuters

PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE		PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES	
TEAM	PTS	SAT, 17 NOV 2012	
1 Man Utd	27	22:00	
2 Man City	25	Liverpool vs Wigan	
3 Chelsea	24	Man City vs Aston Villa	
4 Everton	20	Newcastle vs Swansea	
5 WBA	20	QPR vs Southampton	
6 West Ham	18	Reading vs Everton	
7 Tottenham	17	SUN, 18 NOV 2012	
8 Arsenal	16	23:00	
9 Fulham	16	Fulham vs Sunderland	
10 Newcastle	14	TUES, 20 NOV 2012	
11 Swansea	13	03:00	
12 Stoke	12	West Ham vs Stoke	
13 Liverpool	12	SAT, 17 NOV 2012	
14 Wigan	11	ARSENAL vs TOTTENHAM	
15 Norwich	11	19:45	
16 Sunderland	9	SAT, 17 NOV 2012	
17 Aston Villa	9	WBA vs CHELSEA	
18 Reading	8	22:00	
19 Southampton	5	SAT, 17 NOV 2012	
20 QPR	4	NORWICH vs MAN UTD	
		00:30	

Premier league roundup

MANCHESTER United fought back from a losing position for the eighth time this season to grab all three points at Villa Park.

Aston Villa were up 2-0 by the 50th minute thanks to two goals from Anders Weimann either side of half time. Ashley Young was replaced with Javier Hernandez at half time and the Mexican, who has scored seven times in his last five matches, turned the game on its head. He scored in the 58th minute, powering a shot against Vlaar for an own goal, and scored

the winner in the 87th minute. The win keeps Manchester United top of the league by two points.

Manchester City, in second place, are also proving to be comeback kings this season. They hosted Tottenham on Sunday and fell behind to a Steven Caulkner goal in the 21st minute. Sergio Aguero equalized in the 65th minute before Dzeko, who came off the bench to score his sixth league goal as a substitute, and seventh goal of the season, grabbed all three points for City with an 88th minute winner.

Manchester City have now gone 35 games undefeated at home and have won seven games from losing positions this season.

Mikael Arteta missed a last minute penalty as Arsenal drew 3-3 with Fulham. Olivier Giroud scored twice and he showed great sportsmanship allowing Arteta to take the penalty even though he was on for a hat trick. Berbatov continued his great start to the season scoring twice for Fulham.

This week's fixtures and league table are listed above. — AS

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INTERNATIONAL
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Formula 1

By The Digby

THE USA GP has been run sporadically since the "American Grand Prize" of 1908. Since then, 41 GPs have been held at nine locations – most recently at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway from 2000-2007.

The USA is an important market for F1 and for team sponsors, so a USA GP is highly desirable. But American fans historically have been less than enthralled, and of course there is no American team in F1.

Indianapolis was never a great F1 venue. To make matters worse, the 2005 GP was a fiasco. Following tyre failures before the race, Michelin advised that the tyres they had brought were not safe for the whole race; 2005 rules did not allow tyre changes.

The FIA refused all proposed compromises. Fourteen entrants, on Michelin tyres, completed the mandatory parade lap, and immediately retired. We were treated to Ferrari, Jordan and Minardi effectively parading their six Bridgestone shod cars when spectators had paid to see a race.

Bernie Ecclestone, failing to negotiate new financial terms, vowed "never to return" to Indianapolis.

In 2010, Bernie announced plans for a New Jersey GP for the 2012 season. Two months later, Austin, Texas, was awarded the race on a ten-year contract. Austin has the USA's first purpose built F1 track, so American fans should finally get to see a real F1 GP. And it looks like the bleachers will be full, which is great news.

The 5.51 kilometer anti-clockwise track was designed by Hermann Tilke, who also designed the Sepang, Shanghai, Yas Marina, Istanbul, Bahrain, Yeongam, and Buddh circuits. We do not know what it will be like, but we can try to guess.

It looks to be most similar to Abu Dhabi, but it seems to have pieces of many great tracks, with the sweeping Suzuka Esses and Turn 8 from Istanbul.



FADING HOPE: Fernando Alonso will be hoping that the sun has not set on his title dreams. Photo: AFP

There are several gradient changes, particularly in sector one. The lap starts with an uphill straight leading to a blind apex at the hairpin which is Turn 1, and then to a number of high-speed corners like the Maggotts-Becketts-Chapel sequence from Silverstone. This leads to Turn 11, another hairpin, and a long back straight followed by a couple of slow-speed corners where the DRS zone should be. A multi-apex long right hander brings up Turn 20 and the Start/Finish straight. There looks to be good conventional overtaking opportunities.

Weather will be cool. Cars will

have similar downforce settings to Abu Dhabi, and Pirelli will bring the same hard and medium tyres. This is conservative, as is usual on a new track, and probably means two stop strategies, with a possibility of some one-stoppers.

Whom will it suit? McLaren will be very bullish, as long as they can evict their gremlins. Lotus is going to be confident as well, and Alonso will almost certainly get a podium position.

So, Vettel has his work cut out to seal the Championship in his 100th GP.

HRT looks unlikely to trouble the scorers, and the team is now up

for sale. Mercedes is talking up its "Double DRS", but while Schumacher may not win at Austin, he will compete in the Race of Champions at Rajamangala Stadium in Bangkok, December 14-16.

The US GP is at 2am on Monday. Qualifying is at 1am on Sunday. If they had started the race at their breakfast time it would have been much more convenient for us; perhaps they did not consider that.

But nevertheless I shall be watching, together with Evan Williams and my Security Director, and any other hardy souls who care to join us.

Look back at Singapore Open and golf tips

LAST week, the Asian tour joined up with the European tour for the co-sanctioned Barclays Singapore Open played at Sentosa Golf Club. This is a true Open tournament, with the same qualification criteria as the US and Open Championships.

The first two days were interrupted by thunderstorms, making it a long day for the players.

Due to the weather, the leaders had to finish their third round on Sunday and the final round started off on the 1st and the 10th tees.

This top class field included world number one Rory McIlroy, but it was Adam Scott who was fancied to win the tournament. If he had putted the way he played from tee to green, he would have been the runaway winner. As it

turned out his putting was as cold as ice and he finished tied for 5th place, five shots behind the leader.

McIlroy was a few shots better, courtesy of bombing in a putt for eagle on the last hole to finish third.

Louis Oosthuizen has been playing very well over the last few months, and on the last day he shot 67 to finish at 13 under par. Matteo Manassero was also fancied this week, in the last round he looked like he was coasting to victory, but the pressure got to him and his driving off the tee became untidy on the back nine. Manassero made some wonderful recoveries for par to finish with a 69, for a four round total of 13 under par, which put him in the play off.

The 18th hole par 5 was the play-

off hole, and it should have played into the hands of Louis Oosthuizen being the longer hitter off the tee out of the two. In the end, Manassero holed a wonderful putt for eagle on the 18th to win and claim the million dollar prize money.

At the golf guru junior golf academy, in Phuket, I teach Thailand's number two ranked player in his age group, Newport Laparokit, 14.

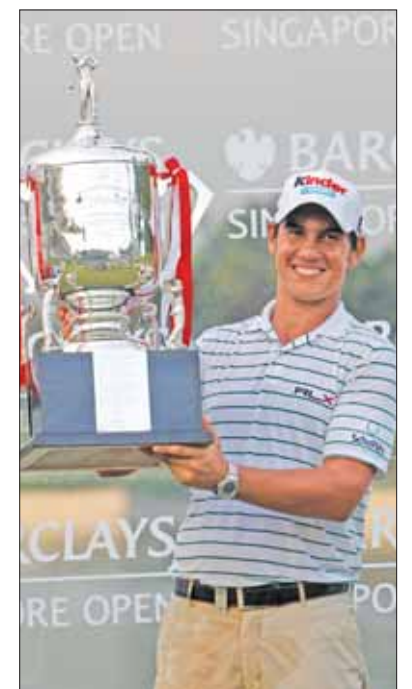
Newport goes to an IMG golf school in America to help further his dreams of becoming a professional golfer. Like Tiger Woods, he is used to picking up trophies at an early age. We'll watch his progress.

Golf tip: Dealing with adrenaline in your system can sometimes help humans to do extraordinary things,

in golf you are normally trying to control this adrenaline rush or take it into account. I think this rush happened to Ian Poulter a couple of weeks ago when he won the HSBC Champions golf tournament in China. He was looking to get his first win of the year, and he was getting caught up in the excitement of it all.

When the adrenaline is pumping you can add an extra 20 yards to your normal distance. The secret is just to keep the same golf swing like Ian did and let adrenaline do the rest. So, if this happens to you when you're playing golf, take one more golf club and let the adrenaline do the rest.

For golf tips, message Martin Platts at golfguru.com.



Manassero's trophy. Photo: Reuters

Phuket FC, Yamaha hold youth soccer clinic

LAST Saturday, Phuket FC players and coaching staff, in collaboration with Thai Yamaha Motor Company Ltd and local dealership Ruampong Motor Ltd, facilitated a soccer clinic for more than a hundred youth at Surakul Stadium in Phuket Town.

Among the Phuket FC players coaching the kids were Roland "Pato" Vargas from Bolivia, Song Won Byeon from South Korea and Thai footballers Arwut Noochet and Kittithat Kraitong.

– *Phuket Gazette*



Phuket youth form two lines to practice ball control techniques.



A BRIGHT FUTURE: More than 150 participants took part in last Saturday's soccer clinic at Surakul Stadium.

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The IronKid with big dreams

By Andrew Scott

THIS week's featured IronKid is 10-year-old Australian Ben McMillan. Ben entered his first triathlon when he was six years old and he is so passionate about the event that he asked for a running coach for his 10th birthday.

Phuket Gazette: Why do you compete in IronKids?

Ben McMillan: I really love the sport and I like nothing better than to be out training with my friends. Whenever friends come to my house, we always play mini triathlons in the yard or go on bike rides.

I am also extremely lucky because I train at Thanyapura and there are some amazing, supportive athletes who train there. These athletes make me try to be a better athlete.

What's your training schedule like?

I train five to six days per week. Although this sounds like a lot, sometimes training is short and sharp and normally lasts between 45 minutes to one and a half hours; except Wednesdays when I swim for one hour and then head to the track to do sprint training with the adult triathletes.

My normal week comprises of three afternoon swim sessions; two days per week running (one day sprint work and one day long run); one bike ride per week, although I have increased this recently to two rides, and Saturday mornings I normally join my dad in a 'dynamic fit' session at the gym, which focuses on all around body work and



Ben at the Boulder IronKids event, Colorado.

uses techniques such as plyometric progression (common plyometric actions include throwing or swinging a golf club/bat), skipping and squat jumps.

Which is your favorite part of the IronKids race – swim, bike or run?

Definitely the run.

Why the run?

I have a real passion for running and it certainly comes easy for me.

One day I hope to become a champion runner and my goal is to make the Olympics.

I also love to watch running movies. I find them quite inspiring. My favorites are *Without Limits*, which is about the legendary American runner Steve Prefontaine, and *Chariots of Fire*.

Which is your hardest part of the IronKids race – swim, bike, run?

No real soft area, but maybe the bike.

Why do you find the bike harder?

Lack of training; although I am working on this much more and feel that it is certainly improving every week.

What do you hope to achieve at this year's IronKids?

I would like to get a faster time than I did in the last IronKids event.

I love to run and I want to make sure that when I cross the finish line I have used up all my energy.

What other sports do you play?

I am in the Silverfinz swim team, which is really good fun and we get to travel to competitions.

I would like to play more rugby but I don't have much time – my teachers expect me to fit in some homework.

I also love doing athletics, especially hurdles, so I hope to have an opportunity to work more on this.

On the weekends, I love throwing a baseball in the backyard.

When did you start competing in sporting events?

I have always loved sports and I started playing football when I was five, I did my first triathlon when I was six.

My parents say that ever since I was a baby I could not keep still, so I have always been very active.

Why do you like them (sporting events)?

I love to compete, even if I don't win I still love competing and pushing myself to achieve better times. I also love going to events and meeting new people.

Who are your favorite athletes?

I have two favorite athletes: Steve Prefontaine (legendary runner) and Jurgen Zack (legendary Ironman and great coach).

My favorite sporting teams are the Wallabies (Australian rugby team) and the San Francisco Giants (baseball team). I watched two Giants games this year, which were amazing.

What does being an IronKid mean to you?

Being an IronKid allows me to have new challenges in life and helps me to reach my long term goals.

I love how people in this sport are very focused. I know that if I train well and keep setting goals I can achieve anything I want.

The 2012 IronKids Phuket Championship race is held on December 1st at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club

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Avram grants an audience

By Andrew Scott

FAMOUS football manager Avram Grant is a softly spoken man who spent his formative managerial years in Israel coaching Maccabi Haifi, Hapoel Haifi and the Israel national team.

The Israeli took over as manager of Chelsea in 2007 and brought them to the brink of a Champions League final victory, only for a John Terry penalty miss to snatch it away.

He led Portsmouth to the FA Cup final in 2010, the same season they went into administration. He then managed West Ham the season they were relegated and recently helped guide Partizan Belgrade to their fifth successive Serbian Championship before resigning earlier this year.

The *Phuket Gazette's* Andrew Scott spoke with Avram Grant at Serenity Resort and Residences in Rawai, Phuket.

Phuket Gazette: How did you find the transition from coaching the Israel national team and coaching club teams in Israel prior to coaching Chelsea?

Avram Grant: For me it was not a big surprise. Since the age of 22 I had visited England five times each year and was in Europe to study.

I was Bob Paisley's guest at Liverpool and I watched training for one week to 10 days – watching games to see how the club was run. Arsene Wenger and Alex Ferguson are friends, so it was not something I didn't know before.

I thought that I could give something to English football and it could give something to me.

Why did it take you so long to leave Israel?

Even if you look at England now, there is no coach or manager from a small country. It's very difficult for them to accept someone from a small country.

People only really noticed me when they watched the Israeli national team's qualification for the 2006 World Cup in Germany, where we didn't lose a game and missed out on qualification by only two goals.

Who is the best Israeli player you have worked with?

I have worked with many good Israelis, but if I was to choose one it would be Yossi Benayoun who has played for Arsenal, Chelsea and

now plays for West Ham. I think he is the most famous one. I started to coach him in 2000 when he was 19-years-old. Then we won the championship with Maccabi Haifi in Israel.

After Israel he moved onto Spain and to England. He is the type of player I believe in because he is also a very nice person.

What makes him so special?

He is very clever and can think a lot quicker than other players with or without the ball. I have to admit I was not so sure he would succeed in England as he is not so physical. He is an intelligent player that can help the dynamic players around him.

Why do you think fewer English players play abroad?

I don't know if you know the color of the money (laughs)? I think [for] two reasons. First: it is the most exciting league in the world. Stadiums are always full, even if you go to the Championship – the stadiums are always full. A football player is like an actor, he wants to play where everybody will see him. Second: Money.

Players always get paid on time. When I was at Portsmouth the owners didn't pay on time and this was a big thing in England.

When you took over from Jose Mourinho at Chelsea, was it hard to leave his shadow?

I can tell you that one of my friends sent me a message saying, 'I don't know if you know what you are doing to [take over] after Jose Mourinho'. I knew it would be very difficult and that all the world expected I would fail after Mourinho.

As I have done all my life, I took on the challenge and only thought about what was best for the team. It was not easy but it was a big challenge.

Do you think your time at Chelsea was a success?

Some of the players said at the time that they didn't think any other manager could've taken over after Mourinho and carried the team the way that I did. When I first saw them, the team was not good, nor was the atmosphere.

With me they were almost the champions of England. We came down to the last game on the same points as Manchester United, which nobody was expecting

when I started, and then the Champions league final. It was a very good season and a good base for Chelsea for the future.

Did you feel hard done by losing your job after the Champions league final?

Yes. When you become a manager you expect everything but football changes... you are [only] as good as your last result. My last result was good and other results were good [but] it was a decision from the owner. I didn't even ask him why. I moved forward and had good days after that.

What are your views on the John Terry racism case after working with him for so many years?

It is good to fight against racism but I think it went a little bit too far.

John Terry is not a racist. Even though he said a few words he didn't need to say. But, we are playing football. If we played here five on five, maybe also we would say something that is not so nice. It is good to fight against racism.

Why do you think he is so disliked in England?

The press lives in the moment and this is not the job of the press in the future. They saw the case, they spoke about the case. I don't think they dislike John Terry but they didn't like what he did this time and they took it too far sometimes. I don't think they hate John Terry.

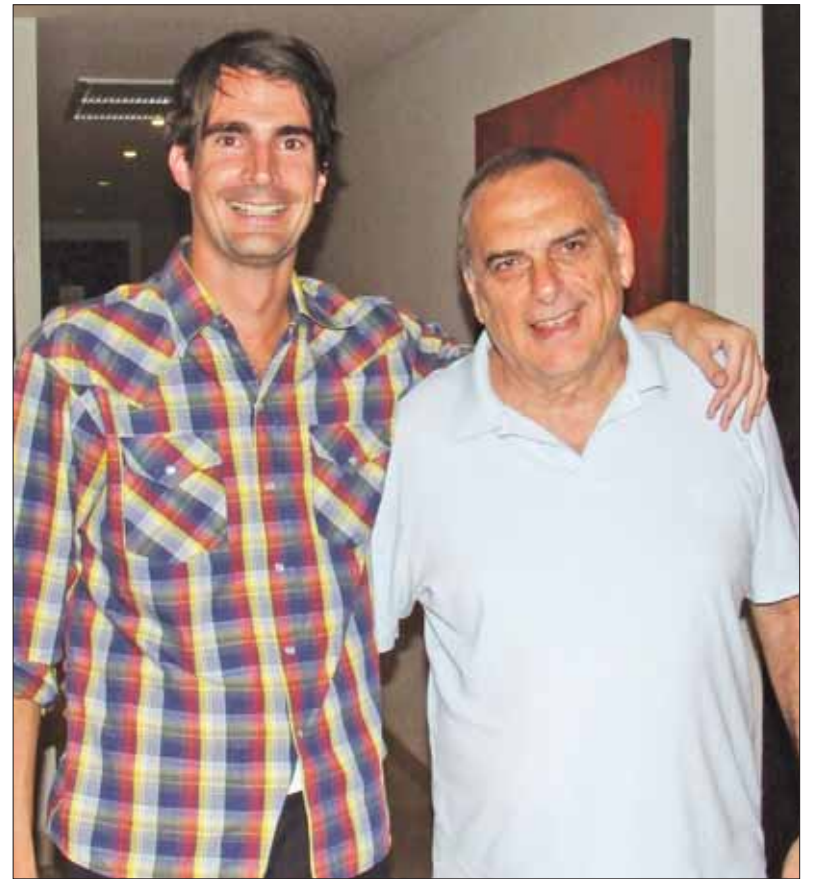
Do you think there is a racism problem in British football?

No, I don't think so. No more than any other country in the world. In every society you will find a racist. There are problems in Austria, in Italy – in many, many countries – but it is only a minority.

In football, like in other areas of life, you hear the minority more than the others. The English supporters are very good. They give a lot of respect to their team and the opposition. Among 40,000 fans you are bound to find a few who are not okay.

How do you feel about the downfall of Portsmouth?

I feel so sorry about what has happened. I am not sure who is right and who is wrong.



Avram Grant (right) after his interview at Serenity Resort and Residences.

The victims of this situation are the supporters. Portsmouth supporters are the best in the world. They get right behind the team. We played a semifinal and 45,000 people came from Portsmouth. We were in a very bad situation and the supporters were still behind us.

If English football wants to maintain its high standards, it needs to find a solution so that, if some people do the wrong things, the victims of the situation will not be the supporters.

I always tell people that the team doesn't just belong to the owners but to the supporters who are paying the money, following the team in winter, summer, under any circumstance.

It's wrong what has happened to Portsmouth.

What has been the highlight of your managerial career?

I remember the first time I won a title. It was with the under-14 Hapoel Tetah Tikva team and they were the happiest players in the world.

The good thing about football is that you always have more and more good moments. Of course, when I look back, the first Champions league final with Chelsea was played in a very good way.

I will always remember the FA Cup semifinal with Portsmouth when we beat Tottenham. They were a very good team, playing the best football in

England at the time.

In the FA Cup final we missed a pen in the 61st minute (sad laugh). Many good moments in Israel. Lots of good memories from football.

What about the low points?

The season with West Ham. Even though we played good football, the results were not good and it was the worst season of my life.

Why did you leave Partizan Belgrade?

I didn't plan to go there. In January the president of the team asked me to come and help the team. It was planned that I would only go for a short time.

We secured the championship. They asked me to change the mentality of the team and I think I did a good job in doing that. I had a good connection with everybody.

Do you have any plans to go back into football?

What is good about football is that you can plan and plan but then there are other things that you didn't plan. I didn't plan to be the manager of Portsmouth. I didn't plan to be the manager of Chelsea. You never know.

I'm not planning anything, but of course there are some possibilities I check into all the time.

I'm waiting for something that will be exciting.

Chris Hart Memorial Football Tournament

THE Chris Hart Memorial Football Tournament was held last Saturday at HeadStart school.

Over 50 people turned out, including Chris's brother Stephen and father Tom, to pay their respects to Chris, who was tragically killed in a motor bike accident on November 6.

The 5 team, 6-a-side tournament started with a moment of applause.

Chris's brother helped his team, Hearty's Heroes, win the tournament by scoring the golden goal in the semifinal to send his team into the final.

The tournament was played in high spirits with players and spectators alike celebrating Chris's life.

"Getting so many people together on such short notice is

testament to the kind of guy Chris was," said Eric Haeg, event organizer.

Phuket's footballer players plan to make the Chris Hart Memorial Football Tournament an annual event.

The tournament raised 15,000 baht to go towards an education fund for Chris's 3-year-old son, Oliver.

– *Phuket Gazette*



BIS football tournament

By Andrew Scott

BRITISH International School (BIS) held its 11th Phuket International 7-a-side Football Tournament last weekend, the biggest to date, with 23 schools from South Korea, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Brunei and Singapore comprising 910 footballers and 88 teams.

"Last year's event, whilst very successful, was subject to late withdrawals due to flooding in Bangkok, so it was great to have all our friends from Bangkok back with us in Phuket [this year]," said Mr Rex Grey, athletic director of BIS Phuket.

The tournament started with a welcome from BIS Phuket headmaster Neil Richards before the first games, which started at 8:15am under a blue sky and blistering heat.

Teams competed in various age groups from under 9 to over 15 boys and girls.

The matches were played across 10 grass 7-a-side pitches over Friday and Saturday.

The first day's action was a league format to determine which teams would play each other in the playoffs on Saturday. BIS Phuket U9 boys won gold; U13 boys won silver and the U13 girls won bronze.

Rex Grey spoke to the *Phuket Gazette* about what attracts BIS Phuket kids and international



EYES DOWN: Players chase the ball during an under 15 game.

schools to the tournament:

"There is nothing equivalent to this in Southeast Asia. It is good for BIS Phuket kids, as in some age groups we have two teams, so it allows for our kids to get some good football experience. The BIS kids are not charged to compete, so it's a big tournament they enter for free.

"Schools love coming here. A lot of the schools that come here don't have the same grass facilities that we have. For a number of kids this will be the first time they have played a number of games on a nice grass surface," said Mr Grey.

The tournament weather was dry and play was competitive, exciting and entertaining. BIS

student rock bands and other performing groups (with musicians as young as 9) entertained the audience.

Close to 3,000 people attended the event over two days.

Children from foreign schools stayed in boarding houses at BIS Phuket, Boat Lagoon and Royal Phuket City among other hotels on Phuket.

The event was sponsored by the JW Marriott Phuket Resort and Spa, Bangkok Burger, Twinpalms Phuket and the *Phuket Gazette*.

For more information about the BIS Football Tournament please email rgrey@bisphuket.ac.th

Bangkok marathon to run this Sunday

THE Bangkok Marathon is held Sunday November 18 on Sanam Chai Road, with HM the King's trophy and total prize money of 3 million baht awaiting the winners.

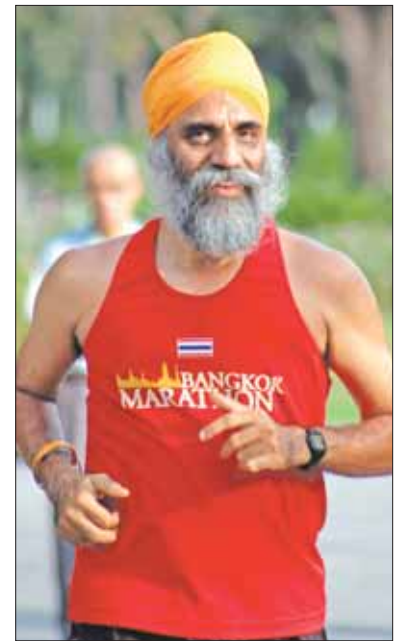
The 25th edition of the event, sponsored by Standard Chartered, will start at 3am and finish at 9am near the Royal Grand Palace.

Five races will be run: the full 42.195-kilometer marathon and the 21.1km half-marathon (both with five age groups), the 10km mini marathon for three age groups, the 4.5 micro marathon and 1.5km walk for health.

"The race serves His Majesty the King's objective of encouraging the public to exercise. The event is also expected to attract many foreigners and will boost local tourism as well," said General Manus Klaimanee, president of the National Jogging Association of Thailand.

"Standard Chartered has supported the Bangkok Marathon for eight consecutive years. We will continue our support and hope to make it as successful as it has always been," said Standard Chartered president and CEO Lyn Kok.

Up for grabs, alongside the glittering King's trophy, are special awards for record times in



Bangkok runner. Photo:hellykelly

the marathon and half-marathon.

Blazers will go to leading runners in the marathon, while medals and souvenir T-shirts will be given to those who cover the full marathon distance within six hours.

To apply visit the NJAT office at 226, Sri Ayudhdhaya Road, Dusit, Bangkok or call (02) 628 8361, (02) 277 76670/1, or visit: BkkMarathon.net or GoAdventureAsia.com.

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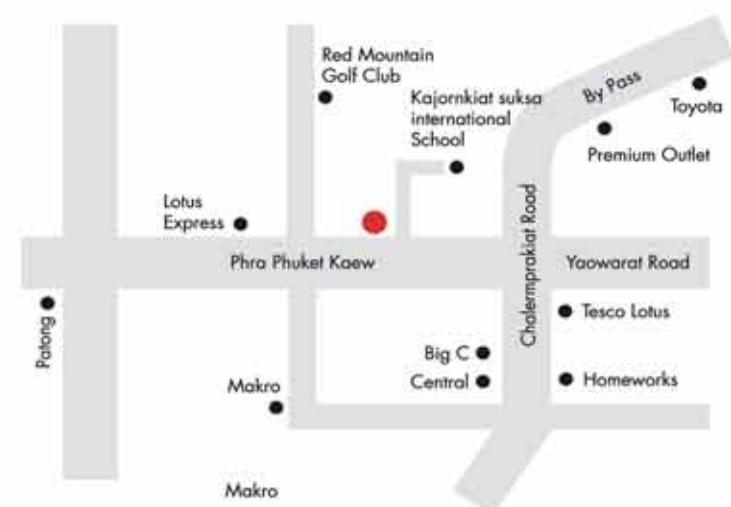
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Sansiri encourages iodized salt consumption to help boost IQ of children