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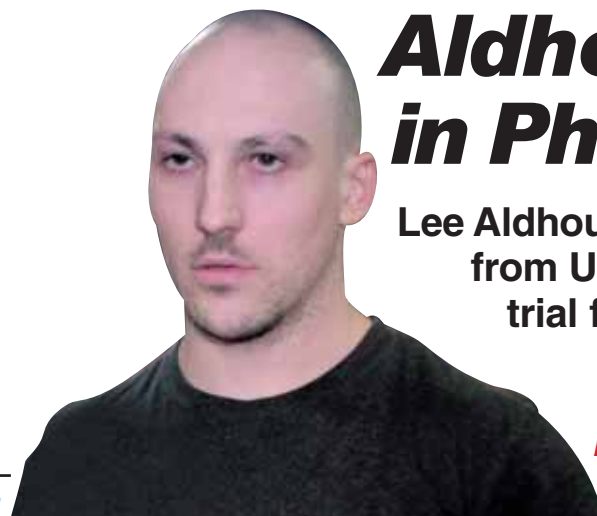
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Aldhouse in Phuket

Lee Aldhouse arrives from UK to stand trial for murder in Phuket

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■ 'IT HAS BEEN DAYS SINCE SHE LEFT US... SHE WAS MY EVERYTHING'

Tour van crash kills girl, age 9

■ Police vow to press charges against tour van driver for reckless driving causing death

By **Gazette reporters**

THE Phuket expat community this week reeled from the tragic death of 9-year-old Kunnaree Lattuada-Lancini, a Year 5 pupil at British International School.

Kunnaree, also known affectionately as "Wan", meaning "sweet", died from head trauma on November 29 after a tour van collided head-on with her uncle's pickup truck on the way to school.

Friends, classmates and family gathered at Chalong Temple last Sunday for the funeral. Overcome with grief, one family member fainted and needed to be carried from the service.

The Lattuada-Lancini family has yet to come to terms with the tragic loss. "It has been days since she left us, but we have yet to be able to accept the fact that she is gone," Kunnaree's grandmother, Pailin Lattuada-Lancini, told the *Gazette*.

"She was my everything," she added.

Police have vowed to press charges against the tour van driver, Tuan Russala Samae, for reckless driving causing death.

"I talked to the hospital and he will be released in a few days. Then I will call him in to press the charge," Chalong Police Sub Lt Kraisorn Boonprasop said on Tuesday.



Children lay 'flowers' at the funeral for 9-year-old Kunnaree Lattuada-Lancini, who died in a tour van crash while being taken to school. Photo: Isaac Stone Simonelli

For our full reports, see Pages 4-5



Motorbike taxi leader calls for fellow drivers to charge fair fares

Full story on Page 7

Police launch manhunt after expat executed

POLICE launched a manhunt for an Israeli-Hungarian dual national this week after the body of a fellow Hungarian businessman was found in a Phuket rubber plantation.

Initial investigations so far point to the alleged swindling of land valued at 15 million baht as the prime motive for the murder.

Full story on Page 3

E-payments for immigration fees, fines yet to arrive

THE online service to pay for immigration fees and fines has yet to launch on the island, says Phuket Immigration Chief Napat Nusen.

Full story on Page 8

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This Week



Business
AMCHAM legal council cautions foreign-owned companies **Page 11**



Finance
Don Freeman explains overseas UK pension transfers. **Page 16**



Charity
The Phuket Life Home Project hosts a 'Pub-style' quiz. **Page 38**



People
Olympian and recent LPT winner Reudi Wild. **Page 39**



Explore
Blazing 'Baz' hits the trails near Nai Harn Beach. **Page 40**



Sport
The Phuket King's Cup Regatta returns to Kata Beach. **Page 49**

Saturday



32 - 23

Sunday



33 - 23

Monday



33 - 23

Tuesday



33 - 24

Wednesday



33 - 23

Thursday



34 - 23

Aldhouse denies murder

By Atchaa Khamlo

BRITISH national Lee Aldhouse, charged with the murder of former US Marine Dashawn Longfellow in Phuket in 2010, has confessed to police to stabbing Mr Longfellow, but has denied any intention to kill him.

Mr Aldhouse was extradited from the United Kingdom on November 30 to stand trial in Phuket. He arrived at Phuket Airport last Saturday and was taken directly to Chalong Police Station and charged with murder.

"Mr Aldhouse is charged with premeditated murder under Section 288 of the Criminal Code, which states, 'Whoever, murders another person, shall be sentenced to death or imprisoned for 15 years to 20 years'," confirmed Chalong Police Deputy Superintendent Jumroon Plaiduang.

However, Lt Col Jumroon added, "Mr Aldhouse accepted that he stabbed Dashawn Longfellow, but claimed that he did not have any intention to kill the man."

Chalong Police presented Mr Aldhouse to Phuket Provincial Court on Monday to relinquish custody of the suspect.

"Mr Aldhouse has not yet entered a plea to the court, as we have yet to hand over the case file to the Public Prosecutor," Col Jumroon explained.

"He was in court only so we



Lee Aldhouse, the first UK national to be extradited to Thailand since a treaty was signed in 1911, arrives back in Phuket to stand trial for murder.

could hand him over to court custody. The judge ordered that Mr Aldhouse be detained at Phuket Provincial Prison until his trial begins," he added.

In obtaining Mr Aldhouse's extradition from the UK, the Office of the Attorney General in Bangkok has reportedly given assurances that he will not face the death penalty if found guilty.

Aldhouse is the first British national to be extradited from the UK to Thailand since an extradition treaty was signed 101 years ago.

"The Thai authorities had fought for his extradition for two years and this is the first time in 101 years that the UK approved a

request," Col Sinard Ajhanwong, commander of Thai Interpol region 3, told the international media.

"Prior to this case, they had declined to send suspects back, even when they were not British citizens. This time, however, they extradited a British national to us, so that emphasizes the significance of this case," he said.

Col Sinard said Aldhouse appeared nervous about his rights being honored under the Thai legal system.

"But our prosecutors assured him that he will be treated according to international standards of justice," Col Sinard said.

Teenager who killed stepfather with axe bailed until next year

THE 15-year-old boy who confessed to killing his sleeping stepfather with an axe in August will appear before the Phuket Family and Juvenile Court on the morning of February 4 next year.

A court official told the *Gazette* on November 28 that after his confession to Chalong Police on August 22, the youth was remanded in the custody of the Family and Juvenile Court.

"He was granted bail, set at 30,000 baht, on October 1," the official said.

Lt Col Boonlert Onklang of Chalong Police Station told the *Gazette* earlier that the youth had admitted to killing 42-year-old Prayoon Pothi with a blow to the



Mrs Panta grieves over the loss of her husband, who was killed in his sleep by her son. Photo: Gazette file

back of his head with a hand axe.

"The accused has been charged under Section 288 of the criminal code. If the court finds someone guilty of murder they have it within their power to impose the death sentence or 15 to 25 years imprisonment," Col Boonlert said.

— *Irfan Jamdukor*

Father appeals to public to help locate missing son: Brett Bean, 43

DISTRESSED parents are appealing to the public to help find their 43-year-old son who failed to make his flight home last week.

They expected their son to arrive back in Los Angeles on November 28.

However, after checking with the airlines it became obvious that Brett Bean, had not made his 8:25am connection from Bangkok to Hong Kong.

Staff at the AirAsia office at Phuket Airport confirmed that Mr Bean had booked a seat on board flight FD3012, which was scheduled to depart Phuket on November 27 and arrive at Don Mueang Airport in Bangkok.

However, airport staff con-



MISSING: Brett hangs out around the beach with lots of other surfers, said concerned father Wayne Bean.

firmed that Mr Bean did not board the plane.

Mr Bean who lived in a bungalow in Karon, was a keen surfer.

"He hangs out around the beach with other surfers," Wayne Bean

Brett's father wrote in an email to the *Gazette*.

"I have reported him missing to the US Embassy in Bangkok and Hong Kong," he added.

Wayne Bean described his son as slender, about 77 kilograms, and about 2 meters tall with "very short hair or bald". Brett also has a large tattoo on the inside of his left forearm.

The last contact Wayne Bean had with his son was on November 25, when he received an email saying that Brett was with friends.

Anyone with information that may help locate Brett Bean is urged to contact the US Embassy Bangkok at + 66-2-205-4049.

— *Phuket Gazette*



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Tsunami film hits the cinemas



The Impossible tells the true story of a Spanish family caught up in the 2004 tsunami. Image: Summit Pictures

ALTHOUGH initially thought by some as insensitive, the tsunami film *The Impossible* has been bringing in crowds at cinemas all over Phuket.

"It has been showing in our cinema theater since November 29 and so far many people have come to see the film," an employee at Jungceylon Phuket SF Cinema City told the *Gazette* on December 3.

"There has been no special instructions from our headquarters in Bangkok and we have not received any negative feedback from the audiences; no complaints, emails or phone calls complaining about the movie," he said.

"Since the disaster occurred years ago, I believe that time has healed many of the feelings of loss and sadness in many people. I think that's why the movie can be shown in cinemas," he added.

— *Orawin Narabal*

Manhunt on for killer of Hungarian businessman

By Kritsada Mueanhawong

A NATIONWIDE manhunt was launched for the executioner of Hungarian businessman Peter Reisz, whose body was found hidden with hands bound in a rubber plantation on Patong Hill on November 29.

"We have contacted every local police station on the island, and immigration offices nationwide, with information about the arrest warrant for dual Israeli-Hungarian national Moshe David," said Phuket Police Commander Choti Chavaviwat on December 2.

An arrest warrant was issued earlier that day for the chief suspect Moshe David, who was allegedly Mr Reisz's business partner on Koh Samui.

"After getting into a fight with Mr David, Mr Reisz told Koh Samui Police that he feared for his life," explained Thung Thong Police Superintendent Kraithong Chanthongbai.

"Concerned about the situation, the Hungarian Embassy in Bangkok requested that Mr Reisz contact embassy officials every three days," explained Col Kraithong.

The current investigation has already revealed that at some point Mr Reisz allegedly forged Mr



Gen Choti examines evidence at the crime scene where the body of Peter Reisz was discovered. Photo: Patong Police Station

David's and Mr David's mother's signatures on documents related to the sale of land valued at about 15 million baht, Maj Gen Choti explained.

Police are currently seeking Mr David for only two charges: the murder of Mr Reisz and conceal-

ing the body. However, police may bring more charges against Mr David, Col Kraithong said.

At the press meeting on December 2 Maj Gen Choti outlined the events leading up to the disappearance of Mr Reisz.

"On November 24 at about

2pm, Mr Reisz went shopping at a Tesco Lotus, and finished in time to accompany Mr David to a construction supplies shop in Thung Thong, Kathu at about 5pm," Gen Choti explained.

"At the construction supplies shop they bought black plastic bags, door fixtures and other house 'do-it-yourself' items," Maj Gen Choti said, adding that police would check properties connected with the pair to confirm if the items purchased were for any of them.

"We believe that Mr David may have rented another house in Thung Thong," Gen Choti said.

The white Toyota Vigo belonging to Mr Reisz was recovered on Samui, though its plate number had been changed and it was found sporting a red plate, Thai media reported on December 3.

Police intend to question Mr David's wife, who they have contact information for, but is not being held.

Though DNA test results comparing samples found in Mr Reisz's rented room in Sri Soonthorn, Thalang, and those of the body found have yet to confirm a match, Col Kraithong said that police were now confident that the body recovered was that of Mr Reisz.

Second suspect arrested in Danish abduction, robbery

POLICE on November 28 arrested a second suspect in connection with the abduction and robbery of a Danish woman in a Patong Safety Zone two days earlier.

Diana Muller, 37, reported that on November 26 at about 9:30pm she had been abducted, threatened at knifepoint and robbed by two men, Patong police said.

She told police that the pair had convinced her to get onto the motorbike by offering her a lift. However, once she was on the bike the men took her to the secluded, nearby Phra Baramee Soi 7, where they threatened her with a knife before taking her purse.

Immediately after interviewing Ms Muller, police went straight to a house on Phra Baramee Soi 9, and arrested Thanuthong "Lek" Thawiahoop.



Diana Muller alleged that the men abducted her and then robbed her at knifepoint. Photo: Patong Police

During police questioning, Mr Thanuthong confessed to the crime and named his accomplice as Tak Panmuang.

Mr Tak drove the motorbike while Thanuthong sat at the rear with Ms Muller sandwiched in the middle, he told police.

— *Atchaa Khamlo*

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Kamala dive center goes up in smoke

A NEWLY constructed scuba diving shop and bar near the Kamala beachfront went up in flames on December 2, causing an estimated one million baht in damage.

It took Kamala Fire Department 20 minutes to douse the flames that had engulfed Sunset Scuba and Snorkeling Center, but by that time the entire building had been gutted, Kamala Police officer Wanlop Pitakporn said.

During the construction a complaint was filed to Kamala Police by locals who were concerned about the safety of the building based on the use of flammable materials such as Nypa leaves, said Maj Wanlop.

"Furthermore, the company had not been co-operating with our investigation into the safety of the building," he said.

— *Niruj Suriya*



Kamala firefighters took 20 minutes to put out the flames.

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A FAMILY IN LOSS

By Chutharat Plerin

WHILE police continue with pressing criminal charges against the tour van driver in the accident that killed 9-year-old Kunnarree Lattuada-Lancini, her family are still coming to terms with their traumatic loss.

"We are in deep grief of the family loss. It has been days since she left us, but we have yet to be able to accept the fact that she has gone," said Kunnarree's grandmother Mrs Pailin, wife of Alfredo "Dino" Lattuada Lancini.

"We will scatter her ashes in the sea, as a part of the funeral, on Wednesday [December 5]," she added with some sense of impending closure.

Mrs Pailin spoke of how young Kunnarree – nicknamed "Kanom wan or just "Wan (meaning "sweet) – had endeared the lives of those around her.

"We raised her since she was born and I took her as my god-daughter. She was a very good girl. She was my everything," a soft-spoken Mrs Pailin said.

"We run a spa as a small family business and she loved the spa so much. She was always very good



The family grieves at the funeral for Kunnarree Lattuada-Lancini, age 9. 'She was my everything,' said her grandmother. Photo: Isaac Stone Simonelli

to me and my husband," Mrs Pailin added.

Kunnarree's younger sister, Kullasatree "Kwan Khao" Kaengin, survived the accident. "Her skull was cracked in the accident, but she has been released from the hospital and she is now recovering at home, Mrs Pailin explained.

"My son and his wife had a business in Uttaradit. They used to come and go between Phuket

and Uttaradit to visit us while Wan stayed with us...

"A few months ago they moved back to Phuket and spent all their time with Wan. That has dragged them down into even deeper grief," she added.

"We do not want this kind of accident to ever happen again. You cannot just say that you are in a rush to do work. Everyone shares the road," Mrs Pailin lamented.

Lethal tour

By Irfarn Jamdukor

POLICE have confirmed they will charge the driver of the Phuket tour van involved in the fatal accident that claimed the life of 9-year-old schoolgirl Kunnarree Lattuada Lancini with reckless driving causing death.

Sub Lt Kraisorn Boonprasop, the investigating officer in the case, confirmed to the *Gazette* that Chalong Police officers were preparing their case against Tuan Russala Samae.

However, Lt Kraisorn said, "We have yet to press him with the charge. We are waiting for him to recover and then we will question everyone involved in the accident."

"I talked to the hospital and he will be released in a few days. Then I will call him in to press the charge," he said on Tuesday.

Tuan Russala was driving a tour van southbound on Chao Fa West Road in Chalong at about 6:40am on November 30 when it collided with a pickup truck that was making a "school run".

Sitting in the front passenger seat of the van, which was painted white and emblazoned with the Pegas Touristik tour company logo, was Tuan Russala's older brother, Makeesan.

"The tour van struck another van from behind, then crossed the center line into the path of the oncoming pickup truck," Lt Kraisorn explained on the morning of the accident.

Kunnarree died at the scene of head trauma.

"Three other students were in the back. They are all fine. They suffered only minor injuries, just some bruises and scratches," said Lt Kraisorn at the scene.

Two of the students were to be

dropped off at Wichit Songkram School, located south of the Central Festival Phuket shopping mall, and the third was to be dropped off at Kajonkietsuksa.

Kunnarree was to be dropped off at the British International School – Phuket in Koh Kaew.

The force of the impact pinned Tuan Russala and the driver of the pickup, Niphon Kaengin, behind the steering wheels in their vehicles.

"It took rescue workers 25 minutes to get them both out," Lt Kraisorn said.

All of the injured, students and drivers, were rushed to hospitals in Phuket Town.

At the time of going to press, Lt Kraisorn said he had yet to question several people still in hospital recovering from injuries sustained in the accident.

Tuan Russala was at Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town, recovering from surgery to correct a ruptured spleen. "He is now out of the ICU [Intensive Care Unit] and recuperating in an internal patient room," a nurse at the hospital told the *Gazette*.

Niphon Kaengin, the driver of the pickup truck and Kunnarree's uncle, was recovering at Phuket International Hospital.

"Mr Niphon is now out of the ICU, but still recovering in the hospital. He underwent an operation at 3pm [on Thursday] to stem internal bleeding in the abdomen. He is getting better. He is breathing unaided and is responding well to stimuli," one of Mr Niphon's relatives reported on Tuesday.

Kunnarree's sister, Kullasatree Kaengin, was placed under observation in the ICU at Bangkok Hospital Phuket. She has since been discharged from the hospital.

BIS classmates, teachers honor Wan

THE whole BIS community was devastated by the tragic accident that took the life of Kunnarree Lattuada-Lancini, a Year 5 pupil at the school, and our deepest condolences go to the parents and family, and also to her classmates and their parents, friends and teachers.

It is important to us all that we honor the memory of this wonderful, fun-loving young girl, and her friends have helped each other through discussions on how best the school is able to do this.

I would like to acknowledge the role of the teachers in charting a positive and affirming path through the grief and shock that has affected so many of the children and parents as well as the teachers themselves.

The school officially acted as one of the hosts for the funeral liturgy at Chalong Temple, while at the school, later in the week, a tree will be planted by Wan's close friends in her memory.

Children will wear orange ribbons in honor of Wan's time at the school, and place them on and around the tree as a final farewell.

On behalf of the school community I would like to express my gratitude for the many messages of sympathy that we have received from members of the wider community, and it gives comfort to us all that this tragic accident has touched so many people and that we have been in their thoughts throughout this difficult time.

Neil Richards
Headmaster

British International School – Phuket

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van driver to face charges



Rescue workers assess the damage to the tour van, which brandished the Pegas Touristik tour company logo. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong



The force of the impact pinned the driver of the pickup, Niphon Kangin, behind the wheel. Mr Niphon was taking his nieces Kunnarree and Kullasatree to school when the accident occurred. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong

The two other students in the pickup truck at the time of the accident – Aoithip Sanguanthip, 13, and Prapathip Pengsakul, 15 – suffered only minor scratches and bruises in the impact.

Regardless, both were rushed to Vachira Phuket Hospital in Phuket Town as a precaution.

“Prapathip was discharged from the hospital on the morning of the accident after receiving first aid,” a staffer at Vachira Phuket confirmed.

“Aoithip is under observation in the Neurosurgical Unit. She is responding well to stimuli and only has bruises to her body and minor wounds on her legs,” a

nurse at the hospital confirmed.

Makeesan Samae, the sole passenger in the van at the time of the accident, was also at Vachira Hospital. He reportedly suffered only minor injuries in the accident.

“He is now recovering in the Osseous [bone] Surgery wing at the hospital,” a nurse confirmed to the *Gazette*.

A company representative at tour company Pegas Touristik denied any responsibility for the accident.

“We do not own the vehicles or employ the people who drive them,” she said.

Although the tour van involved in the accident was painted in

Pegas Touristik white and featured the company logo, it was also marked as belonging to Apitchaya Destination Co Ltd.

Pegas Touristik made headlines in Phuket three weeks ago when a tour bus painted with the company logo struck and killed an aunt and her niece while travelling at high speed on the main road to Phuket International Airport on November 15.

The driver of that bus fled the scene. Police have now been issued a warrant for his arrest.

Additional reporting by Kritsada Mueanhawong and fellow Gazette reporters.



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Red Cross launches Christmas blood drive

AS THE Christmas and New Year festive season draws closer, Phuket residents are being asked to donate blood to ensure an adequate supply for hospitals dealing with emergencies.

"We need all blood types, but we especially want those with Rhesus-negative (Rh-) blood groups to step forward. We just don't have enough Rh- blood," said Pornthip Rattajak, Acting Chief of the Phuket Regional Blood Center.

PRBC mobile clinics are scheduled to be held at the following locations this month:

December 11, 1pm to 4pm:
Royal Phuket Yacht Club Hotel
The Kee Resort Patong

December 17, 1pm to 5pm:
Bangkok Hospital Phuket

December 19, midday to 6pm: Central Festival Phuket

December 28, 10am to 3pm:
Duangjit Resort Phuket in Kathu

Donations can also be made at the PRBC at Saphan Hin. Call 076-251178 for more information.

Marine Office splashes out B5.8mn on new moorings

By Irfan Jamdukor

THE Marine Department has rolled out a project costing 5.8 million baht on installing 300 moorings in coastal havens off Phuket in order to protect coral reefs.

"We dropped 200 moorings in Chalong Bay on Saturday [November 24]," Phuket Marine Office chief Phuripat Theerakulpisut explained to the *Gazette*.

"They are available to use now, for free," he added.

His officers followed up by installing another 100 moorings in Ao Por on December 1.

"It is an important project that helps prevent coral reefs in the area being damaged by boats dropping anchors on them," Chief Phuripat explained.

Each mooring is anchored to the seabed by a block weighing about 2.5 tons.

"This should be enough to allow boats of up to 100 tons to tie up to them. Normally, an



The concrete blocks used to anchor the 300 moorings weighed about 2.5 tons each.

anchor of a boat weighs about 100 kilograms," Mr Phuripat said.

"I cannot tell you exactly how far apart they are from each as that depends on the marine topography," he added.

The project follows the Marine Office being actively involved in the mass underwater reef cleanup organized by Go Eco Phuket. That cleanup set a new world record as the largest underwater cleanup ever.



Marine officials drop concrete blocks with red buoys attached into the water off Chalong Pier. Photos: Phuket Cruising Yacht Club

Krabi police seize 9 cars, M16 as B6mn meth ring crumbles

POLICE believe they have broken a major local drug network with the arrests of 13 suspects and the seizure of more than 6 million baht in drugs in Krabi province, across Phang Nga Bay from Phuket.

During the raids, police also seized more than 5mn baht in assets, including nine cars and five firearms, Krabi Provincial Police Commander Nantadech Yoinuan announced on November 30.

Among the weapons seized was an M16 assault rifle, he added.

The breakthrough came days earlier, on November 28, when police arrested Nantapol "Jen" Chuaibumroong in Saithong, Chaiburi District, in Surat Thani Province.

Mr Nantapol was found with eight *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills, 900 milligrams of *ya ice* (crystal methamphetamine) and an M16 rifle, Maj Gen Nantadech explained.

However, after questioning Mr Nantapol, police were able to arrest 12 more people at several undisclosed locations throughout Khao Phanom District in Krabi Province.

Although Khao Phanom is not in the more popular coastal holiday resort areas on the Krabi coast, the area is well known to tourists for its Khao Phanom Bencha National Park and the protected forests surrounding Phanom Bencha mountain, which stands 1,397 meters above sea level.

Arrested in the raids throughout the district were Wirachai Changsalak, 41; Jantane Chua-



Krabi Provincial Police Commander Nantadech Yoinuan inspects a sample of the drugs seized in the raids. Photo: Kritsada Mueanhawong



Police seized five firearms, among them two shotguns and an M16 assault rifle.

wan, 25; Sumet "Chui" Lekmak, 34; Sinchai "Chai" Somduang, 45; Panatda "Fang" Lilaburanapong, 24; Surasak "Kiaw" Keawlok, 25; Thammasak "Khui" Thongboonchoo, 26; Jarun "Jon" Lukwai, 30; Jariya "Jasor" Lamun, 43; and Aumnart Kingchum, 31.

"Wirachai alone was found in possession of more than 14,000 *ya bah* tablets," said Gen Nantadech.

In total, police seized 18,709 *ya*

bah pills and more than 100 grams of *ya ice*, he added.

The weapons confiscated comprised two shotguns, a 9mm handgun and a .38 pistol as well as 100 rounds of ammunition, he added.

"All 10 suspects are local Krabi residents," Gen Nantadech pointed out.

"Two other suspects arrested in the raids were Yottikrai 'Moo' Kitphadung, 41, from Nakhon Sri Thammarat, and Kanyawee 'Hai' Gumnerdsung, 40, from Chiang Rai," he added.

All 13 suspects were charged with possession of a Category One drug with intent to distribute, and those caught with firearms were charged with illegal possession of firearms and ammunition, Gen Nantadech added.

— Kritsada Mueanhawong



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Motorbike taxis hit over fares

Campaign launched to regulate motorbike taxi drivers, aims to stop tourists being cheated

By Atchaa Khamlo

A MOTORBIKE taxi representative from Patong has railed against his fellow drivers, calling for "more ethical" behavior and to not gouge tourists for short journeys in the resort town.

The call came at a meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on November 28. At the meeting, designed to handle a multitude of issues concerning motorbike taxis, Chumpol Aiabsakul, who claimed to represent motorbike taxi drivers in Patong, highlighted the issue of drivers overcharging tourists.

"Some motorbike taxi drivers charge tourists 200 baht for trips that should not cost more than 80 baht," said Mr Chumpol. "Their behavior makes all of us look bad. I would like officials to use the law to get rid of drivers that do this."

An officer from the Phuket Land Transportation Office (PLTO) explained that – by law – motorbike taxi drivers were to charge 25 baht for the first two kilometers of the journey and 5 baht per kilometer thereafter.

"For journeys exceeding five kilometers, the rate depends on the fare agreed by the passenger and the driver," he explained.

Kan Chuchuay, of the informal Saving Patong Motorbike Taxi Drivers club in Patong, defended his motorbike taxi drivers, despite their pricing being above those dictated by law.

"Our drivers charge only 30 baht for the first kilometer and five baht for next kilometer. If the journey is longer than five kilometers, drivers and passengers would have to agree on the fare," he said.



KEEP THE CHANGE: Motorbike taxi driver in Phuket Town winks (left) as hundreds in Patong ride to promote road safety. Chumpol Aiabsakul, who represents one enclave of motorbike taxi drivers in Patong, called on the Phuket authorities to use the law to 'get rid of' drivers who cheated tourists. Photos: Gazette file

Another issue was tabled at the meeting by Cherng Talay Police Superintendent Col Chirasak Siamsak who said that his officers were experiencing problems with motorbikes with sidecars (*saleng*) being used as taxis.

"We are currently trying to control the number of *saleng* and not let drivers operate out of the immediate area. We have already had problems with *saleng* being stuck because they did not have the power to make it over the hills to Patong," he said.

In order to better control the issues that revolve around motorbike taxis Phuket Vice Governor Chamroen Tipayapongtada gave Phuket's three District Chiefs until December 13 to draw up a final list confirming all motorbike taxi drivers operating in their respective areas.

The tentative breakdown of the numbers was delivered at the meeting.

Phuket City Traffic Police chief



Lt Col Narong Kittipongwiwat reported that his officers currently have on record 129 motorbike taxi ranks, comprising 1,037 registered motorbike taxis, in operation in Phuket City.

Chalong Police reported 113 motorbike taxis were in operation

in Chalong, Rawai and Kata-Karon.

"But most of these are not registered as motorbike taxis; they are mostly private motorbikes being used as taxis," the officer explained.

Maj Sarawut Chuprasit, chief

of Kathu Traffic Police, reported that the Patong Motorbike Taxi Co-operative had 93 ranks in operation, served by 416 registered motorbike taxis.

Throughout the rest of the Kathu District there were 72 motorbike taxi stands with 655 registered motorbike taxis, he added.

Thalang Traffic Police reported having only two motorbike taxi ranks: one at Thalang Intersection and the other at the Heroines' Monument.

"There are 13 motorbikes at the Thalang Intersection, of which seven are legal. At the Heroines' Monument there 18 motorbikes, 12 of which are legal," reported the Thalang Traffic Police chief.

Vice Governor Chamroen thanked all present for their input and called on them to reconvene on December 13.

"After then, the PLTO will set standard fares for motorbike taxis and devise a plan of how to regulate all motorbike taxis in Phuket," he said.



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Immigration Bureau Commissioner Lt Gen Panu Keudlappol launches the new e-payment system in Bangkok. Photo: Immigration Bureau

No Immigration e-payments in Phuket – for now

THE system of e-payments for Immigration fees and fines announced in Bangkok late last week will not be launched in Phuket for the time being, Phuket Immigration chief Napat Nusen has told the *Gazette*.

The new system, which allows visitors to pay with a credit or debit card at the Immigration office, will only be launched in the Bangkok area, a Bangkok Immigration Bureau officer explained.

"This new way of making payments will be more convenient for those needing to pay fees and fines," he said.

Lt Col Napat explained that he was aware of the changes being made in Bangkok. However, the Phuket Immigration Office has yet to be approved to receive payments by e-payments.

"We have heard of this payment option, but we do not know when it will be implemented in our Phuket office," he said.

Col Napat also mentioned that the Phuket Patong Immigration Office was still undergoing repairs.

"We are still working on the water works and utilities in the area," he said.

"When it is ready, we will let the public know," he added.

– **Orawin Narabal**

Powerless on Patong Hill

A TRUCK carrying concrete power poles pitched while climbing Patong Hill on November 30, causing a traffic tailback stretching about 1.5 kilometers.

The mishap occurred at about 11:30am, while the truck was en route to deliver the power poles to a construction company in Patong.

Halfway up the slope, the truck pitched. With the cab now pointing skyward, the concrete poles started sliding off the back of the truck and into the path of the traffic following close behind, explained Sen Sgt Maj Kritchana

Songsri of the Tung Thong Traffic Police.

"There were no injuries and no collisions. It just caused a traffic jam while we directed cars and motorbikes to go around the stalled truck," he said.

The ensuing tailback stretched all the way to the Caltex gas station at the See Kor Intersection, about 1.6 kilometers from the eastern base of the hill.

At last report, Sgt Maj Kritchana was organizing the safe removal of the truck and the spilled power poles.

– **Kritsada Mueanhawong**



ALL STOP: With the cab pointing skyward, the power poles started sliding off the back of the truck. Photo: Atchaa Khamlo

Postponed 'Andaman World Experience' raises concerns

By **Orawin Narabal**

UNCERTAINTY clouds the announcement of a firm date for the Andaman World Experience, postponed from November 9, as officials scramble to identify dates when Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra will be available to attend.

Chanchai Doungjit, Director of Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Phuket office, told the *Gazette* on November 29 that the festival would go ahead and that the schedule would be announced within the next few days. As of Tuesday (December 4), the schedule had yet to be publicly announced.

"The previous Minister of the Prime Minister's Office, Woravat Auapinyakul, wanted the festival to go on, as does the new minister, Sansanee Nakpong, but they cannot confirm a date right now," said Mr Chanchai.



An optimistic Mr Chanchai of the TAT Phuket office is waiting for the Prime Minister's Office to come up with the date in December. Photo: Gazette file

However, Mr Chanchai continued by saying that initially a festival press conference was scheduled to be held on December 6 in

Bangkok by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, but he was told that the date had to be changed.

"At the moment the plan to hold the festival in December is still uncertain," he added.

Mr Chanchai pointed out that Phuket Vice Governor Sommai Prijasilpa is concerned about the delay and has tried to coordinate with Minister Sansanee's secretary to get the date confirmed as soon as possible.

Given the shortage of time to arrange everything, Minister Sansanee has floated the idea that the Andaman World Festival be merged with the Patong Carnival, which will be held on December 15-20.

"The minister's proposal is being considered. Either way, we expect an accurate schedule to be announced in a few days," said Mr Chanchai.

Former minister Woravat told the *Gazette* in early November that he expected the festival to attract more than 20 million tourists to the Andaman region.

'Invisible' Paras Shah makes court date

JOURNALISTS trying to catch a glimpse of Nepal's infamous former crown prince Paras Bir Bikram Shah Dev, who was due to report to Phuket Provincial Court on November 29, were in for a long and ultimately fruitless wait.

By midday, reporters who had been waiting since 9:30am, had still not clapped eyes on the former crown prince entering the court to report as instructed by the court order issued over a drugs charge.

The investigating officer in the case told the *Gazette* that Mr Shah had already reported in.

However, the officer declined to say at what time Mr Shah arrived in person at the court.

Mr Shah was arrested on October 23 at the Surin Sabai Condo in Cherg Talay after police officers found him in possession of 3.4 grams of a substance they believed to be marijuana.

After spending that night at



Paras Bir Bikram Shah Dev was ordered to appear at Phuket Provincial Court, but whether he did or not reporters just can't say. Photo: AFP file

Cherg Talay Police Station, he was released on bail the following morning.

Mr Shah was scheduled to appear at Phuket Court on November 29. Following his "mysterious appearance" in court,

the date for his next court appearance was set for December 11.

Mr Shah, 40, became the Crown Prince in June 2001 following an attack on the Nepalese royal palace.

Nine members of the Nepalese royal family and Prince Dipendra, the crown prince at the time, died in the attack. Reports at the time indicated that Mr Shah saved the lives of three royals, but was injured in the incident.

He remained crown prince and heir to the throne of Nepal until 2008, when the monarchy was abolished.

More recently, Mr Shah was implicated in an altercation which occurred on December 11, 2010 at the Chiwan Hotel in Nepal. Mr Shah reportedly fired shots from an illegally owned pistol. Although arrested and charged, the case was dropped after all parties involved changed their statements before the trial began.

– **Atchaa Khamlo**

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Criminal Court jails 'red' leader

AROUND THE nation

RED-SHIRT leader and Pheu Thai party-list MP Korkaew Pikulthong is back in jail after the Criminal Court revoked his bail.

Mr Korkaew was sent to Bangkok Remand Prison on November 30 for threatening the Constitutional Court and "creating fear in society".

The red-shirt leader faces terrorism charges for his part in protests in 2010 that led to the deaths of more than 90 people and the burning of several key buildings in Bangkok.

In July, Mr Korkaew told the media that if the Constitutional Court ruled against the government's charter-amendment bid, there could be civil war. He told red shirts to be prepared to fight to the end.

In its ruling, the Criminal Court said Mr Korkaew's intention was to "threaten and pressure" the



Pheu Thai party-list MP Korkaew Pikulthong is in jail after the Criminal Court ruling. Photo: The Nation

Constitutional Court.

"It was not criticism, but incitement of people for political benefit," the Criminal Court said.

The ruling also noted that Mr

Korkaew's remarks created fear in society and were thus a clear violation of his bail conditions.

Judges instructed four other Pheu Thai MPs that they must not

defame others or "incite" their followers to take any political action. The four were red-shirt leaders Weng Tojirakarn, Deputy Commerce Minister Nattawut Saikua,

Wiputhalaeng Pattanphoomthai and Karun Hosakul.

Meanwhile, red-shirt leader Arisman Pongruanrong was granted bail for 200,000 baht after being sentenced on December 3 for defamation of Democrat Party leader Abhisit Vejjajiva.

Mr Abhisit's case against Mr Arisman stated that on October 11 and 17 of 2009, Mr Arisman had made several defamatory remarks during a red-shirt rally at Democracy Monument and Government House.

People were told that Mr Abhisit had robbed power from the people, ordered the killings of protesters and that the Abhisit administration had borrowed a great deal of money, which had distressed HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

The remarks were also broadcast on the now defunct red-shirt station PTV.

Mr Abhisit was also accused of delaying the process of seeking a royal pardon for ex-PM Thaksin Shinawatra.

Mr Abhisit said all these allegations were false and had damaged his reputation.

Restive Deep South education in crisis

THE education system in Thailand's three troubled Deep South provinces is in crisis following a campaign of violence that appears to target schools and teachers.

Hundreds of schools in Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat closed down for 10 days in protest of the killing of a school director in late November.

Nantana Kaewjan was gunned down on November 22 a mere 100 meters from her school in Pattani's Nong Chik district.

A total of 332 schools closed their doors in response to the violence.

"We demand that security personnel review their safety measures and make plans to restore confidence and morale among educational personnel, particularly teachers and students," said



332 schools closed in response to the violence. Photo: The Nation

Sanguan Indhrarak, president of the Teachers' Federation in Narathiwat.

On December 3, the schools reopened after receiving assurances that security measures had been tightened.

That day, a teacher based in Narathiwat was gunned down – the 155th teacher killed through the separatist violence.

Stewardess fired over coffee threat

A CATHAY Pacific air stewardess has been fired from her job after revealing that Thaksin Shinawatra's daughter Paetongtarn was a passenger on a flight she was a crew member on.

The woman, whose name has not been reported, posted on Facebook of her anguish at having to serve Ms Paetongtarn because of her hatred for Mr Thaksin.


She said she had been tempted to pour some coffee over Ms Paetongtarn's face.

Ms Paetongtarn had taken the flight from Bangkok to Hong Kong to visit her father, who lives

in self-imposed exile to avoid a jail sentence in Thailand.

"I just travelled to see my father and to work. If that's wrong or makes you angry, I apologise. I've never thought somebody would have such an idea. Most of the hostesses on Cathay Pacific are polite," Ms Paetongtarn said.

In a statement, Cathay Pacific said that the company "regrets this unfortunate incident and wishes to assure all our customers that their privacy and a strict adherence to all privacy regulations is extremely important to us."





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In brief...

US opposes new Israeli settlement

THE United States on Monday reiterated its opposition to new Israeli settlement activity on occupied land including in the site known as "E1", which it said could be especially damaging to efforts to achieve a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Aussie bikers challenge 'gang' laws in court

A MOTORCYCLE gang in Australia, where such groups have been targeted over violence and drug trafficking, has challenged the constitutionality of a law that would make it easier to declare them a criminal gang.

Leaders of the Finks, whose motto is "Attitude with Violence", have asked Australia's highest court to overturn laws they say are draconian and threaten civil freedoms.

Malian officials sit down with separatist

SENIOR Malian government officials will meet separatist and Islamist rebels for their first face-to-face talks on Tuesday, but Bamako's rejection of both groups' demands means swift progress is unlikely.

Russia, China urge against North Korea missile launch

RUSSIA and China urged North Korea on Monday not to go ahead with a plan for its second rocket launch of 2012, with Moscow saying any such move would violate restrictions imposed by the UN Security Council.

North Korea's state news agency on December 1 announced the decision to launch another space satellite and reportedly told neighbors it would take a path similar to that planned for a failed rocket launch in April.

"We urgently appeal to the government (of North Korea) to reconsider the decision to launch a rocket," the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

North Korea on Monday notified the UN shipping agency, the International Maritime Organization, about the launch, which was scheduled to take place between December 10 and December 22.

Coordinates provided by Pyongyang showed the rocket's first stage drop-off would take place off the west coast of the Korean Peninsula and the second stage would occur off the Philippines – both stages nowhere near Japan.

Echoing its criticism of the April launch, Russia said North Korea had been warned not to ignore a UN Security Council resolution which "unambiguously prohibits (it) from launching rockets using ballistic technology".

China was not so direct in its criticism of North Korea, but



A soldier stands guard in front of a rocket sitting on a launch pad at the West Sea Satellite Launch Site this April 8, 2012. Photo: Reuters

urged "all sides" not to take any action that "worsens the problem".

"China believes that maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and in North-

east Asia accords with the interests of all sides and is the joint responsibility of all sides," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told reporters.

"In the present circumstances,

we hope all sides can be calm and restrained and not take any moves to worsen the problem. China will remain in touch and coordinate with all sides."

In Washington, the US State Department repeated its opposition to any launch.

"We condemn what we consider to be a highly provocative action that would threaten peace and stability in the region," State Department spokesman Mark Toner said.

North Korea says its rockets are used to put satellites into orbit for peaceful purposes. Russia said in its statement North Korea would be allowed to exercise its right to peaceful activity in space only if the UN-imposed restrictions were lifted.

The State Department's Mr Toner scoffed at suggestions that Pyongyang was genuinely interested in space exploration.

"We are under no illusions that they're somehow pursuing a space program; it's pretty clear what they're trying to do here," he told a news briefing.

The warnings come just weeks before South Korea's December 19 presidential election in which how to handle North Korea is a major campaign issue. The isolated North has for years tried to influence major events in the South by issuing propaganda or launching armed attacks.

— Reuters

President asks Suu Kyi to investigate mine dispute

MYNAMAR'S president asked opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi on December 1 to head an investigation into the planned expansion of a copper mine that has led to evictions and protests that were forcibly put down by riot police this week.

Activists said at least 50 people were injured on November 29, including more than 20 Buddhist monks, after riot police raided camps set up round the Monywa mine in the north west Sagaing region by villagers protesting the evictions.

Riot police used teargas, water cannon and, according to activists, incendiary devices that local media described as "phosphorous bombs". Many of the injured suffered serious burns.

As monks protested on December 1 in Myanmar's biggest cities, President Thein Sein responded quickly to public outrage.

A statement on the website of the president's office said he had set up a commission led by Suu Kyi with a broad remit to look into



A boy carries a bag of sulphur sand to make copper at a copper mine waste dump in Sarlingyi township. Photo: Reuters

whether the expansion of the mine should go ahead and into measures taken to control the protests.

The committee will encompass a broad cross-section of interests, including three local villagers and an official from the military-owned Union of

Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd, a partner in the copper mine project alongside a unit of China North Industries Corp, a Chinese weapons manufacturer.

It should report by the end of December, the statement said.

— Reuters/Soe Zeya Tun

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AMCHAM's warnings

Alien companies are told by legal council to beware of the pitfalls of doing business in Thailand

By Steven Layne

"CAUTION" was a common theme echoed at the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) Greater Phuket Chapter's final meeting of the year, held last Thursday at the Royal Phuket Marina.

The evening featured three informative presentations, courtesy of AMCHAM Thailand's legal council, which provided a wealth of valuable advice to expat business operators – as well as those considering conducting business here.

The first speaker, Douglas D Mancill, shed light on some of the restrictions and risks associated with Thailand's Foreign Business Act (FBA). Enacted in 1999, the FBA divides businesses into three categories, he noted.

"The first category comprises businesses that a foreign company simply cannot operate. It is more difficult to obtain a Category Two business license, which requires approval from cabinet. A transport business is an example of a type of business in this category..."

"The government is a little more lax in granting category three alien licenses, however," he said.

Mr Mancill emphasized that the statutes and sanctions of the FBA, "have a lot of teeth":

"Violations, if imposed in full, can mean up to three years in prison, a million baht fine and a dissolution of the [Thai incorporation of the] business... The Department of Business Development (DBD) has determined that at least 484 businesses have violated the FBA, and are starting to more pro-actively pursue prosecution," he warned,

adding that the Department of Special Investigations (DSI) – the Thai counterpart of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) – has become more active in monitoring and investigating foreign businesses.

A partner at Bangkok-based law firm, Price Sanond Prabhas & Wynne, Mr Mancill highlighted some of the ambiguities of the FBA, specifically with respect to violations that involve illegal "nominee shareholding".

Mancill, an American citizen and Thailand expat of 14 years, said that: "The statute that covers this doesn't use the word 'nominee'...it refers to aiding and abetting foreigners in operating a business, which is subject to the FBA."

Mr Mancill went on to explain that legislature in the Kingdom distinguishes between "control" of a company and the actual share ownership. He says the latter is more relevant in the eyes of Thai law.

"What the MoC (Ministry of Commerce) and DBD look at during a registration of a new business is whether the Thai party actually has the ability to purchase their shares. The second thing they look for, is whether the Thai party actually made the investment and paid for the share. They often require a bank statement going back six months for verification."

Thus, he advised expat business owners, shareholders and/or their respective Thai partners to be especially careful when signing certain documents, which may implicate them in a violation of the FBA.

Moving on to the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, the long-running bilateral agreement between the USA and Thailand,



EXECUTIVE DECISION ADVISORS: From left: Mediator Jerrold Kippen, Olaf Duensing, Michael Ramirez and Douglas Mancill. Photo: Dan Miles Media

which provides juristic entities [people doing business] from either country certain exception clauses in the other party's jurisdiction for trade and business.

"I often get asked when this treaty is going to expire... In order for that [the treaty to expire] to happen, either one of the parties – Thailand or the US – would have to give one year's notice of their intention to cancel the treaty. This has not happened, and thus the treaty is not due to expire."

The next speaker, Michael Ramirez, a senior consultant for the Tilleke & Gibbins Dispute Resolution Group, shed some light on trends in anti-corruption laws:

"With corruption, most people tend to think about the public-to-private type, but actually a lot of the corruption cases involve the private-to-private sector."

He pointed out that Thailand was not one of the signatories of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Anti-bribery convention

in 1999, which had a total 38 signatories, most of which were Western countries.

However, the country was part of the ADB – OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative, 2010, which involved 28 Asia-Pacific nations, who made a commitment to "criminalize bribing of foreign officials" and "sanction businesses involved in bribery."

Nonetheless, Michael said that there is gradual progress taking place in curbing corruption in Thailand in respect to the enactment and enforcement of laws.

"When you begin to accept that corruption is part of doing business, then you are in some ways facilitating that corruption," he concluded.

Finally, Olaf Duensing, co-founder of the legal advisory and services firm Duensing Kippen Ltd, highlighted the importance of including an arbitration clause in business contracts.

Licensed to practice law in Germany and a member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators

(MCI Arb), he has worked as a legal consultant in Thailand for 11 years. Olaf said that it is important to include various details in this clause.

"In addition to the arbitrators, who must be independent and impartial, it is also important to identify the jurisdiction and language that the arbitration will be conducted [in]," he said.

"All parties must agree to the arbitration clause. It cannot be enforced if all parties did not sign to it. However, once signed, you can not back out," he said.

One important point he made is that parties involved should review and consider any and all relevant laws in the respective jurisdiction, which might impact the award or enforcement of an arbitration decision.

For more information see: Duensing Kippen (duensingkippen.com); Tilleke & Gibbins International (tilleke.com) and Price Sanond Prabhas & Wynne (pricesanond.com).

We want to help: IRS

THE Internal Revenue Service insists that it wants to assist US citizens residing overseas, including dual citizens, in catching up with tax filing obligations and provide assistance for people with foreign retirement plan issues.

"We want to help US citizens abroad get current with their tax obligations and resolve pension issues," said IRS Commissioner Doug Shulman.

Shulman said that as of September 1, the IRS has offered some US citizens and others residing abroad who haven't been filing tax returns, a chance to catch up with their tax filing obligations if they owe little or no back taxes.

The IRS is aware that some US taxpayers living abroad have failed to timely file US federal income tax returns or Reports of Foreign Bank and Financial Accounts (FBARs). Some of these taxpayers have recently become aware of their filing requirements and

want to comply with the law.

To help these taxpayers, the IRS offered the new procedures that will allow taxpayers who are low compliance risks to get current with their tax requirements without facing penalties or additional enforcement action.

These people generally will have simple tax returns and owe US\$ 1,500 or less in tax for any of the covered years.

The IRS said that the new procedures will allow resolution of certain issues related to certain foreign retirement plans (such as Canadian Registered Retirement Savings Plans).

In some circumstances, tax treaties allow for income deferral under US tax law.

Taxpayers using the new procedures will be required to file delinquent tax returns along with appropriate related information returns for the past three years, and to file delinquent FBARs for the past six years. – *Phuket Gazette*



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Pornthip: think outside the box

Local food-gift producer's innovative packaging design and product gets world recognition... again

THE island's most recognized local food-gift company Pornthip (Phuket) Co Ltd, was recently honored with the "Good Design Award" in Japan for the packaging of its Sino-Portuguese snack gift items.

This was the second year in a row the company received the accolade for its unique and innovative packaging design.

Also recognized with the "G Mark", the annual award has been running for more than 54 years, with recipients selected from thousands of submissions, from companies in Japan and other countries around the world.

Pornthip Chairman Wirawat Piamwiwattiku explained that the award is considered one of Japan's highest product design recognitions.

"Not only is it [the award] about design competition, but it's also about developing and promoting the design of a diverse array of products [that will] improve the quality of life [for consumers] and promote the development of related industries," he said.

Mr Wirawat said that he is proud for Phuket and

Thailand that his product is the recipient of such an accolade, noting that this year's awards had more than 10,000 submissions from over 70 countries all around the world, largely from Japan and Europe.

"Receiving this award is [a way of] stimulating

[inspiring] operators to utilize local culture and traditions to increase their business [volume and offerings].

"We [Pornthip] have maintained clear goals of utilizing [Phuket] heritage to increase business

continuously... especially [monetizing] that [heritage] of old Phuket Town, since the Phuket city municipality have implemented a project to push for it [old Phuket Town] to get World Heritage [recognition].

Moreover, Phuket province and the Andaman [coastal region] has many beautiful cultures and traditions that [can help you] increase business.

The packages won for standing out as unique, boxed packages that are designed to resemble Phuket Sino-Portuguese architecture style, historical buildings; a medium for relaying Phuket's heritage,



Pornthip Chairman Wirawat Piamwiwattiku shows off the prized box design to HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn.

promoting tourism to the island province and for representing an environmentally friendly snack packaging method.

All in, the company has a total of 48 designs of different buildings, and after the New Year, plans to launch designs of Phuket's provincial hall, as well as a savings bank package concept featuring seven different designs, currently in the works. The packages are collectible; Some popular models include the Clock Tower, On On Hotel – the first hotel of Phuket, and typical buildings on Soi Romanee and Ranong road,

the Mor Lao building and Thai Hua museum

The snacks, many of which are becoming harder to find, have particularly been popular among Asian tourists – Chinese, Korean, Malaysian and Japanese.

Launched for Phuket's tourism markets in November 2010, the Sino Portuguese package design was also the recipient of three other awards over the last two years. These include the AsiaStar 2011 – the 'Packaging Oscars of Asia' – and the Prime Ministers' Export Award.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Photo: Marc Mulloy

B300 minimum wage hike to worsen labor shortage

By Somluck Srimalee

WITH the nationwide minimum wage set to rise to 300 baht, a labor shortage tops the list of business risks for property and construction firms in 2013. To consumers, this could mean longer construction periods while they wait to take possession of their new homes.

The nation's construction, infrastructure and manufacturing sectors are now facing a shortfall of about 200,000 workers. The situation is expected to worsen next year when a number of government infra-

structure projects set to launch, which will lead to skyrocketing demand for workers.

To ease the situation, Housing Business Association president Issara Boonyoung said his organization has asked the Labor Ministry to relax rules on employment of foreign labor.

Foreigners' entry to the Thai labor market should be facilitated, and they should be allowed to relocate once they are here.

"As we have many construction sites, workers should be allowed to move around," he said.

According to the National Economic and Social Develop-

ment Board, there are about two million foreign workers in Thailand, mostly from Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia.

After enduring the labor shortage for some time, some property companies have resorted to technology.

Pruksa Real Estate and Sansiri PCL, for example, have moved towards prefabrication. Others have modified the construction process so that fewer skilled workers are needed.

The labor situation is aggravated by the continued expansion of the property sector as it enjoys a 10% annual increase in housing demand. Each year, about 230,000 residential units are launched, 80,000 of which are in Bangkok alone.

"This problem will worsen in 2013 when the government's infrastructure projects worth at least 500 billion baht start.

"This will attract labor away from private projects to public projects, as some are in the workers' provinces or nearby. This will affect both the real-estate and construction industries," Issara said.

The government is scheduled to announce the bidding results for its 350bn baht worth of water-management projects early in the new year and construction should



BUILDINGS WITHOUT BUILDERS: The labor demand for new construction projects continues to rise, but not the available manpower. Photo: S Layne

start shortly after that.

Meanwhile, a portion of the 2.2 trillion baht worth of infrastructure projects planned for the period between 2013 and 20 will be put to tender next year.

With a low unemployment rate of 0.6%, or only 232,400 eligible laborers without work, Thailand is among the few countries with an unemployment rate below 1%, compared with nearly 30%

in Spain and Greece and nearly 8% in the United States.

A low fertility rate coupled with growing labor demand in the agricultural sector has exacerbated the situation, as the workforce has not increased much.

In the third quarter of this year, agricultural-sector employment rose 3% from the same period last year as farmers expanded rice-plantation areas.

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A TRANQUIL SETTING: This computer generated image shows what a two-storey villa would look like once completed. A home like this will sell for 20 million baht.

PROPERTY

Gazette

THE Lake House is a development of seven villas, located close to Laguna.

Four of the villas are to be designed in a Thai-Balinese style and are ideal affordable

homes for families.

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A modern kitchen will be fully equipped with stainless steel appliances and ample

bench and cupboard space.

The bedrooms will all come with remote climate-controlled air-conditioning.

The two-storey villas will be built on 680 square meters of land with 3 bedrooms and the single-storey villas will range from 412 sqm to 640 sqm and have 2-3 bedrooms.

The total price for a fully furnished two-storey villa is 20 million baht.

The single-storey villas start off at 12 million baht and go up to 17 million baht, depending on the size of the property.

The developer, Phuket Greenland Property Co Ltd, has also built the ‘Secret Garden Villa’ which is also located close to Laguna.

The Lake House is only a 5 minute drive from the Laguna area and is close to Cherngtalay subdistrict where all required facilities and conveniences are found.

Bangtao and Surin beaches are also only a short drive away.

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PROPERTY

Welcome to my nightmare

Fear and loathing at Phuket International Airport (HKT)



Property Watch

By Bill Barnett

"I'M MAD as Hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore."

Remember that infamous Hollywood line? *Network* – Peter Finch going out in a blaze of glory for the entire world to see.

In this case what's driven me to the edge of madness? The place inhabited by bums in torn clothes, religious zealots and all manner of stark raving lunatics is the Phuket International Airport.

But isn't travel supposed to unlock a world of possibilities, expand your cultural horizons and make you into a more rounded spec in this ant farm called humanity? Of course it is, unless you happen to roll those dice and find yourself at the dubious facility on the north west corner of the island.

Some may call it a portal to adventure but in my case the past few months have been a dark trip downtown, midnight in Hades and a harrowing visit to hell on Earth.

This is of course the parking lot of the punctually abbreviated PIA.

Today was the absolute last straw and it's not even peak season yet. Arriving mid-afternoon

at the airport, I was greeted with a scene out of 'Carmageddon.'

All the parking slots filled, and also the lanes, with those frightfully optimistic people who just leave their Honda subcompacts and Isuzu pickup's in neutral.

Yet this wasn't enough, trucks

"Today was the absolute last straw and it's not even peak season yet. Arriving mid-afternoon at the airport, I was greeted with a scene out of 'Carmageddon'."

were jammed up on sidewalks, wedged between planters, and the single row of 'neutrals' was three deep.

Throw in one-way traffic, gridlocked in both directions, heading directly into the oncoming mass of auto carnage.

Horns blared, tempers flared, it nearly resembled one of those encampments in Egypt's Tahrir Square. If only I could find some shade in the blazing sun.

Yet, in all their wisdom the AoT had mysteriously cut down all of the trees in the parking lot a few months ago due to safety concerns.

What could that be – falling leaves? What about the towering billboards now lording over the chaos below. You take your life in your hands just trying to get to the terminal past the speeding airport taxis.

In a parallel universe, that place where logic takes place – say in Singapore – you don't have to park at the airport as you can take a meter taxi.

Even at arguably Asia's worst gateway, Manila, you can still get a metered taxi.

But not Phuket. I'm not even going to delve into that subject.

And yet as we head into our best high season ever, and the scales are prepared for 5 million arrivals, what does AoT have to show for their work?

My mind wanders. Yes I have lust in my heart, just like the earnest chipmunk himself Jimmy Carter. But it's not for female companionship. It's to vent, rage and explain what an utter disgrace the island's airport has become.

Viewing a far fence ahead, I have to wonder, why can't they simply build an airport parking lot extension next door, on the vacant land? Why are two football fields of parking cordoned off for buses when none are parked there?



IT'S ONLY JUST BEGUN: Passengers queue up in front of a passport control line at the Phuket International Airport. Photo: Fitri Agung

So many questions. So much angst. And yes, what are the options? Drive to Singapore? Or Berlin? Or Hong Kong?

A departing plane captures my attention for a moment as its jet wings reach to the sky – showing off the slogan, "Now

Everyone Can Fly".

Maybe, but that depends on if they can find a parking place at Phuket International Airport.

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

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Sansiri gets new focus as new year approaches

THE New Year will also mark a new era for Sansiri as it moves to cover all segments of the residential market, company president Srettha Thavisin said in an interview with Thai media recently.

"This year saw our big change, expanding from the middle-income market to the economy segment with prices lower than 2 million baht, while also expanding from Greater Bangkok into the provinces, driving our 2012 presales to 42 billion baht.

"But this is just our starting point for our business expansion in 2013, when we will design our business to be a leader in all markets nationwide," he said.

To support its business strategy for 2013, the company is enhancing its construction system.

Its prefabrication plant in Pathum Thani province began operation early this year to support demand for homes priced lower than 5 million baht. This system speeds up the construction process



Inside a room at Sansiri's 'dcondo' development in Kathu, Phuket.

so Sansiri can deliver homes to its customers on time.

The company also has strategic partners, contractors that support its expansion upcountry. This reduces its business risk from labor shortage while enabling the firm to maintain its construction standards.

Meanwhile, the company keeps its financial condition healthy by controlling its debt-to-equity ratio at no more than 2.5:1. Currently, the D/E ratio is only 1.6:1, counting only debt on which interest is payable.

– Somluck Srimalee

Noble develop a taste for more Thai real estate

NOBLE Development has budgeted nearly 10 billion baht for four residential projects next year, including the Noble Ploenchit luxury development worth 15bn baht.

"Our capital-expenditure budget will come from our cash flow, project loans from the bank and the issuance of debentures worth 1.5bn baht in the third quarter of 2013," Kitti Thanakitamnuay, chairman and chief executive officer, said recently.

Noble Ploenchit's environmental impact assessment has already been approved and the construction will commence next year.

The three other residential projects are valued at 7bn baht, but about 4bn baht from the capex budget will be spent on constructing the infrastructure and

improvements.

About 2bn baht from the budget will be used to buy land to develop projects in 2014.

The company aims to boost its presales to 7bn baht next year, but its revenue will be nearly the same as this year because most of the new residential projects are condominiums that take two to three years to generate revenue. Revenue this year is pegged at 2.7bn baht.

Presales in the first nine months reached nearly 2bn baht, on track to achieve the target of 3bn baht for the full year.

Noble earned 92.52 million on revenue of 1.32bn in the first nine months.

The company says it has enough cash to



Mr Thongchai Busrapan, managing director of Noble Development stands next to a model of the planned Ploenchit up-scale development.



THE SKY'S THE LIMIT: A model of the planned Ploenchit up-scale development.

develop all of its new residential projects by controlling its debt-to-equity ratio at no more than 2.2 times. Currently, its D/E ratio is 1.3, giving it room to take out a project loan from the bank.

The company held a news conference after its managing director Thongchai Busaraphan resigned last month.

Kitti said he would take over Thongchai's work. No new managing director will be appointed. Noble Development will continue to market aggressively and develop condo projects according to its business plan.

"Our strategy will focus on high-rise residences in central business districts rather than low-rises," he said.

The three new condo projects worth 7bn baht will be in the Bangkok business

districts of Ratchadaphisek, Thong Lor and Sukhumvit, with a focus on the middle-to-upper-income market.

The company has a 2bn baht backlog of units that have been sold but are awaiting construction to be completed so that they can be delivered to customers over 2013-16, of which, 2.2bn baht worth will be transferred in the first year.

The company also has finished inventory worth 12bn baht that will generate income over 2013-16.

Noble is now studying expanding upcountry, especially to provinces close to neighboring countries such as Udon Thani, Khon Kaen and Ubon Ratchathani, to serve expected demand for housing when the ASEAN Economic Community goes into effect in 2015, Kitti said.

- *Phuket Gazette*

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Retirement Years

By Don Freeman

FOR the many people who leave the UK each year to live, work and retire in Thailand or many popular countries across the world, a decision needs to be made as to whether they will keep their private or occupational pension funds in the UK or transfer them overseas.

Since April 6, 2006, an individual looking to transfer their UK pension benefits, has been permitted to transfer that UK pension overseas by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) on the condition that the receiving overseas scheme is a QROPS.

Defining QROPS

The initials stand for Qualifying Recognized Overseas Pensions Scheme, and, in short it is the only type of overseas pension scheme that an individual can transfer a UK pension to.

A UK pension fund would have both been contributed to and grown with the assistance of HMRC tax relief over the years. HMRC therefore expects those funds to provide an income in retirement.

However, as other jurisdictions in the world do not have the same internal rules for their pensions, HMRC made the decision that UK pensions could only transfer to an overseas scheme that agreed to pay out benefits with the same limits as UK schemes. This must be for a period of at least five complete UK tax years of the pension member's overseas residency (a period of time now referred to as the Member Payment Provision Period).

The limits would include any pension benefits not being paid out before retirement age 55, with pension income not exceed-



RESTARTING IN PARADISE: Expat retirees must decide if it is best to transfer their pension. Photo: Roberto Jorge

Explaining UK pension transfers

ing the UK limits and the lump sum payable not exceeding 25% of the total fund's value.

Benefits paid before retirement age, 55, or in excess of the UK limits, would be subject to an unauthorized payment charge.

However, providing the pension member (and the QROPS) stays within the UK regulations for five complete tax years of the member's overseas residency, there are many benefits and advantages of transferring from a UK pension to a QROPS.

The advantages of QROPS

A key reason to transfer to a QROPS is tax treatment on the pension. Pension income paid from a UK pension (either through drawing from the fund or purchasing an annuity) would be subject to tax at source, when paid from the UK scheme, or subject to tax upon receipt in the country that the member lives.

Depending upon where an individual has migrated to, the local rules of some QROPS could allow either a nominal or nil tax to be deducted from the income at source and no tax required to be paid upon receipt.

It is important therefore, that an individual seeks the correct advice as to what QROPS in which jurisdiction is the most suitable for him or her.

Many people assume that transferring their UK pensions to a scheme in the country that they are living, is the right solution. This is not necessarily the case.

Firstly, the country that they are living in may not have any pension schemes (or the equivalent) that are QROPS – therefore a UK pension transfer could not be received.

Secondly, the benefits available

from a local scheme may not be any greater or tax efficient than if paid from the original UK scheme.

It is therefore important to seek expert advice when selecting QROPS jurisdiction that you chose to transfer your pensions to.

In recent years, the most popular QROPS are in Gibraltar, Malta, Isle of Man and New Zealand.

The local pension rules for each vary and each jurisdiction has Double Tax Treaties with different countries, therefore it is important to establish what benefits are important to the individual.

Among the benefits available, after five complete UK years of a pension member's overseas residency, are higher income levels than permitted from UK pensions, enhanced lump sums (usually up to 30%) and zero tax paid on death benefits to beneficiaries when a pension is in payment.

This can be up to 100% of the remaining fund, whereas, UK pensions would either tax the beneficiaries 55% on any lump sum or (in the case of some annuities) the pension would stop altogether upon death of the member.

Once the pension transfer is complete the next important question to ask is, "What is the most efficient way to invest the QROPS assets?" This question will be answered in future articles.

With the various benefits and options available, it is important to seek the correct advice before deciding on transferring your UK pension to a QROPS.

Don Freeman is president of Freeman Capital Management, a Registered Investment Advisor with the US Securities Exchange Commission (SEC), based in Phuket, Thailand. He has over 15 years experience and provides personal financial planning and wealth management to expatriates. Specializing in UK and US pension transfers. 089-970-5795 or email: freemancapital@gmail.com

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SMEs seek 'soft loans'

SMALL and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are affected by the government's wage-hike policy are expected to demand soft loans exceeding the government target of 20 billion baht, according to Wiboon Permarayawong, president of Thai Credit Guarantee Corporation (TCG).

The TCG, a state-owned agency, has been joining hands with the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Bank of Thailand in a government loan scheme designed to support small businesses adversely affected by the hike in minimum wage to 300 baht per day.

"The demand for soft loans is expected to be higher than 20 billion baht as a lot of SMEs will be affected by the rising cost of labor," said Wiboon.

So far, loan demand is not high as the new rate of minimum wage applies to only seven prov-



An SME worker.
Photo: Annie Mole

inces but loan demand is expected to jump when it applies across the country next year.

Wiboon also said the TCG is currently asking the Finance Ministry to allow it to provide credit guarantees to small businesses that expand their production and services to foreign countries, members of ASEAN in particular.

Currently, the TCG provides guarantees only to SMEs operating in the Kingdom. It approved credit guarantees for bank loans amounting to 70 billion baht from January to October this year, surpassing the target of 49.2 billion baht.

Wiboon said he could beat the target of 24 billion baht for the year and that the TCG will cover losses of up to 15% for each bad loan.

In 22 years of operations, the TCG has provided a guarantee for bank loans of 220 billion baht, he added.
— *Wichit chaitrong*



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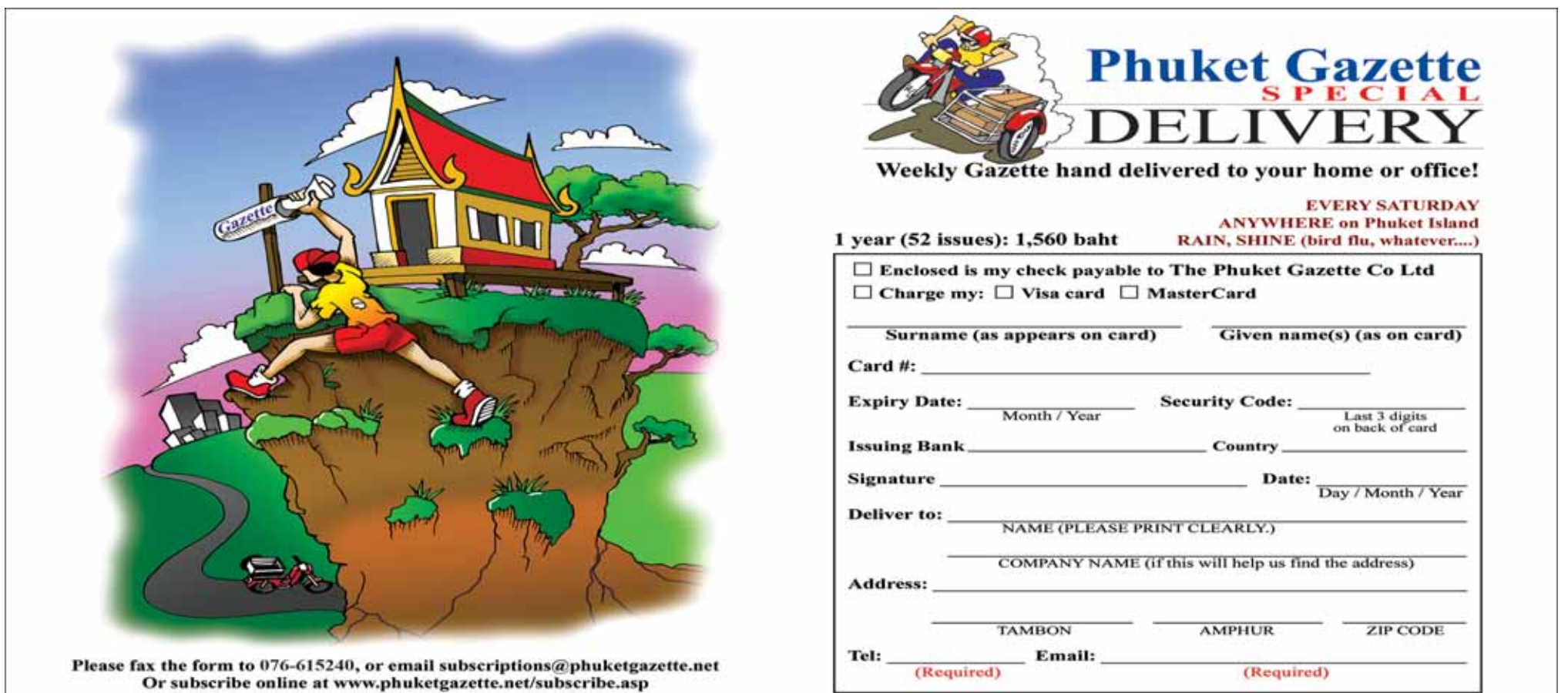
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Wake up and shed the shirts

PHUKET breathed a collective sigh of relief late last month when a dreaded showdown between the Pitak Siam ("Defenders of Siam"), the latest incarnation of the anti-Thaksin People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), and government security forces fizzled out on the streets of Bangkok due to lack of popular support and other factors.

As events unfolded in the capital, local hoteliers and other players in our island's all-important tourism industry cringed at the prospect of yet another crippling episode of "politically"-fueled violence coming at the worst possible time for Phuket: just as accommodation establishments entered the start of the annual "high season" for tourism and most hotels were finally reaching occupancies at or near capacity.

During the *Phuket Gazette's* daily coverage of the drama, some posters in our popular Phuket Forum implied that our coverage was partial; that we had somehow demonstrated support for the protesters by reporting an account of the events by Apharat Chartchutikumjorn, a well-established PAD organizer in Phuket.

As this is quite a serious charge, the *Phuket Gazette* would like to state for the record that we have no affiliations with, or sympathies for, shirt groups of any color. The red and the yellow must share the responsibility for having brought this country to near-ruin, and both are certainly capable of starting down that path again.

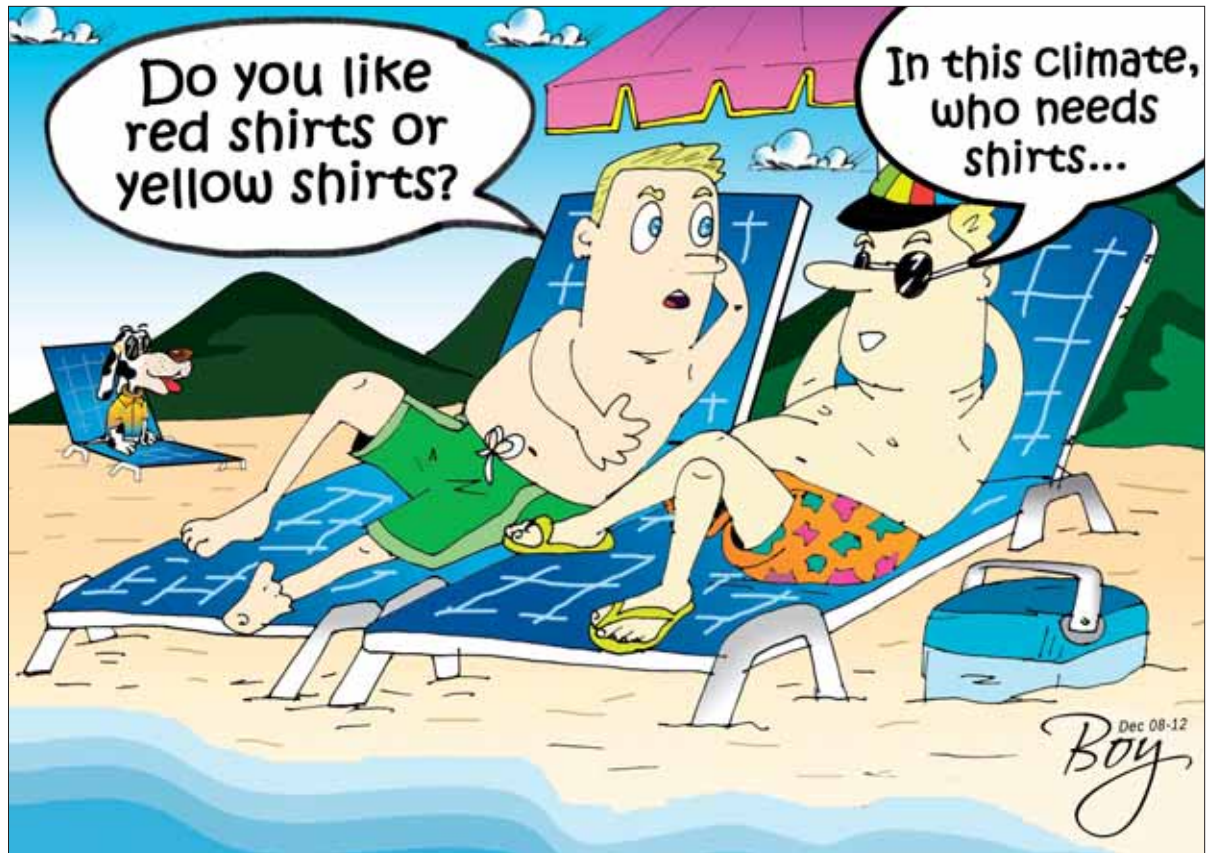
The *Gazette* has long held this stance – not because we think that the media should refrain from commenting on affairs political, but rather because we oppose any behavior, of any color, that places at risk the success of Thailand's arduous struggle to establish itself as a genuine Democracy.

We find incomprehensible the enthusiasm with which folks branding themselves as "champions of democracy" jettison the core principals of it as soon as they suspect that their own vested interests are under threat.

Violent street protests, coupled with an endless series of military coups and shredded constitutions, will never get Thailand where its people want and need to go. Creating a level playing field for one and all, with respect for the rule of law, is the only hope.

We acknowledge and support the right to peaceful protest as part of the democratic process, but the reality on the ground is that national-level protests in Thailand are always heavily imbued with the threat of violence – and those who organize the events invariably know this.

We hope our readers will view the *Gazette* as what we are: staunchly anti-shirt, anti-thug and anti-corruption – and pro rule of law.



Singing the blues, or not

As an American living in Thailand, I occasionally let Thanksgiving slip right by me without a thought. A recent phone conversation with an old friend will make sure this year is different.

I learned from my friend, Andy Andersen, the founder and energy behind the Phuket Blues Rock Festival, that there will be no show this coming Feb. I've loved the event from the first rainy year and was sad to think of a season without it.

Over the years, I've observed Andy's hard work and listened to the results with the happy joy that good live music brings. Thank you Andy. I wish you all the best in the future with the hope that the blues will return to Phuket in the years to come.

Long live the Blues and Rock and Roll.

Randy Worth
Phuket

Table for none please

Re: *Gazette online, Phuket hoteliers claim Paris Hilton party sparks B8mn in room cancellations, November 9*

I have been reading about this event for sometime now and it honestly sounds outrageous. How do they expect to make money? Most people can sit back outside the enclosed area, for which I assume patrons will be asked to pay an entry fee, and listen to the music for free.

I am also appalled to see they will stage a fireworks display each night of the event. We have pets and this explosion of fireworks will be very disturbing to them, let alone my wife and I as we only live about 300m from the beach.

What about the other lovely restaurants at Surin Beach which have planned to host New Year's Eve parties. No doubt they will also be disturbed by the loud music.

Letters to the Editor

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

We normally book a table for about 20 people at local restaurant on Surin Beach for New Years Eve, but I can tell you now we will not be attending this year; so that's lost revenue for the owners of that fine restaurant.

I hope these people are not granted permission to stage this event.

A resident
Surin Beach

Stop the vans

Re: *Gazette online, Girl, 9, confirmed dead in Phuket tour van crash, November 29*

In light of this tragedy I ask; when is something going to be done about the dangerous way these vans are driven everyday?

How many young innocent girls have to die on their way to school?

How many high-speed road accidents will it take before these companies are held accountable?

I am regularly frightened on the roads by their tailgating, blatant dangerous driving and ridiculous speeds.

Saddened Teacher
Phuket

Not in anger, or out of contempt

There is a hard-core group of contributors to the *Gazette Forum* whose comments I do value. I just wish those same observers of Phuket life would just pause long enough to pen their thoughts in a more serious and comprehensive way. I say these things not to be malicious or spiteful. Far from it.

We all understand that it is a god-given right for us expats to have the occasional whine about most things in general. However, I do feel there comes a point when the one-liners and equally fast return comments become self-defeating. With so much collective experience among the forum, I for one, would be really happy to read more in depth thoughts and points of view. No offense intended.

Clint Jameson
Chalong

Learn from other's mistakes, please

Re: *Gazette online, Flames engulf Phuket dive shop, December 3*

You just have to shake your head. The Tiger club had highly flammable materials, 4 people die, and yet, so soon after that fire, we see a new development using a thatched roof.

Worse still is that Maj Wanlop says, "However, the company had not been cooperating with our investigation into the safety of the building."

Laurie Howells
Gazette forum

Pay with e-money not 'tea money'

It's a total sham that the e-payments for fines and fees incurred from overstays and other such silliness is not being implemented across Thailand as a whole.

I have a multitude of friends that are so disorganized that they do occasionally overstay for a day or two and are forced to pay the overstay fee (which is fair enough). However, being able to do so in a situation that does not offer the opportunity to ask for a little 'tea money' would be ideal!

Andy Churt
Patong

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Find a solution for long term absence

I STUDIED in Cherng Talay when I was a boy, so I am able to really understand the issues at play here. I make it a policy not to just sit in the police station, but to get out, meet the people and join in community activities. Those interactions help us enormously when we need the communities cooperation for crime prevention.

Foreigners who have houses in Cherng Talay and are absent for long periods of time should really hire maids to take care of the property or have someone else stay there while they're away.

Thieves often break in foreigners' houses because they believe that they will be able to steal more expensive items from them. Although we recently arrested a large organized gang committing robberies in the area, there are still other gangs out there watching and waiting for an opportunity.

For holidays, such as New Years and Songkran Festival, we routinely adopt extra measures to protect residents' property. But this is only for a period of about five days to a week, not six months to a year, which is how long some people in the area leave their houses empty. Long-term absentees really do need to get someone to watch their house, as the police cannot keep an eye on their house every hour of the day, every day of the week.

As the burglars improve their skills it makes it harder for us to catch them, especially with the limited number of police officers we have on our force. So we do need local support in reporting suspicious characters in order to prevent crime.

Another issue that concerns me in Cherng Talay is the issue of foreigners driving motorbikes and getting into accidents. The accidents happen frequently because tourists are not familiar with the roads in the area and often are also not familiar the



Chirasak Siamsak, 46, has been serving as a police officer in Phuket and Phang Nga for 22 years.

Originally from Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan province, Col Chirasak served as the Deputy Superintendent for Thalang Police Station for two year before being promoted to Superintendent of the Cherng Talay Police Station.

Here he warns expats to take care of their houses when away for extended periods of time, and tourists to be wary of learning to ride a motorbike on the unfamiliar island roads.



A confessed Cherng Talay burglar keeps his head down behind a pile of stolen goods after being busted in July this year. Photo: Gazette file

motorbikes they're driving.

I arranged a meeting with motorbike rental operators to try and convince them not let a few hundred baht profit sway them into allowing foreigners, who can't ride motorbikes proficiently and don't know the roads at all, drive away on their machines. The horrific accidents that occur on motorbikes cost the tourism industry much more than the small

rental fee the operators receive.

I want tourists who are thinking of riding motorbikes to be realistic about their own abilities. If they are not familiar with the roads, they should take taxis to familiarize themselves with the area before hiring motorbikes. Also, they should always wear helmets when riding; they would in their own country so why not here?



Thailand is ranked above the US for homicide by firearm. Photo: Gazette file

Pondering the stats: gun violence, crime

Island View

By Chris Hudon

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

BURMA, a country that's been experiencing internal armed conflict for five decades, ranks 33rd for homicide by firearm on the UNODC 2011 Global Homicide Study.

Thailand is number 3. The US ranks number 8.

Despite this, according to nationmaster.com, Thailand has fewer instances of serious crimes than many Western countries. Car theft is just one example. You are 379 times more likely to be carjacked in the US than in Thailand, and 105 times more likely in the UK.

Back to gun violence. Although Thailand has a smaller population than the US (about one fifth the size) and fewer per capita ownership of firearms, Thailand has eight times as many violent gun deaths.

Just last month in Phuket, a man committed "suicide" with a home-made gun, a robber held a cashier at gunpoint for 2.5 million baht in a high-profile bank robbery and two Swedes are going to trial for charges, which include carrying an illegal firearm in addition to murder.

Why then, does the Kingdom fare well in terms of overall crime, yet poorly in terms of homicide by firearm? Perhaps the issue isn't the presence of firearms, but a lack of regulation?

According to ThaiVisa, to be issued a firearm license, Thais (foreigners can't legally own a weapon here): "Must show themselves to be a good member of the community, show cause for

issuance of the license, and... pay a specific sum for a firearm license to be provided."

Gun ownership is often a touchy subject, polarized by those who see it as a right and those who believe that guns promote violence.

Charlton Heston, president of the National Rifle Association in the US, would be quick to point out that most gun crimes involve illegal and/or unregistered weapons.

Not that he'd say this, but Mr Heston's argument lends credence to the notion that regulation will not affect the core problem, which is availability of firearms.

Countries such as the UK, France and Germany have all but eliminated private ownership to the extent that the presence of a firearm is a rare and disturbing thing.

Looking at the gun crime data, it becomes obvious that countries with no private ownership of guns have far fewer homicides by firearm – not overall murder, just murder by firearms.

Perhaps what we need is a new perspective. Revolutionary thinker Chris Rock said, "Gun control? We need bullet control. I think every bullet should cost US \$5,000. Because if a bullet cost \$5,000, there would be no more innocent bystanders."

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

Can I homeschool several kids?

I would appreciate it very much if you could let me know what the law in Thailand is concerning homeschooling. We have a mixed Thai-foreign group of six kids, age 6 to 8 years old, who we would like to home school.

One of the parents, a foreigner, would be teaching. Is it possible to get a foreign tutor in to teach the kids?

Roger
Phuket

An official of the Promotion of Educational Provision Group of

Phuket Primary Educational Service Area Office replies:

Concerning homeschooling, we do have a homeschooling policy, but it applies only to children in your family.

You will have to design the curriculum to be taught to your children. That curriculum will then be considered by an officer of the Promotion of Educational Provision Group for its suitability.

However, before that, you should contact the Promotion of Educational Provision Group on 076-211591, 076-216854, 076-212035. We will be able to supply you with a handbook containing the important information about homeschooling.

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

Submit your issue at

www.PhuketGazette.net/IssuesAnswers

Arakarn Thongkeaw, Phuket Provincial Employment Office replies :

Once you have permission from the relevant education authority, you will need to apply for work permits for your staff.

Please note that anyone teaching without a work permit risks a

200,000 baht fine or possibly imprisonment.

Furthermore, the major shareholder, who must be a Thai national, risks a 500,000 baht fine and possibly imprisonment.

Who pays for visas, work permits?

Who is responsible for applying and paying for work permits and non-B visas? Is it the employer or the employee, or does this vary from company to company?

John
Phuket

Jeeraphan Sookhwan, The

Chief of Work Permit Department, Phuket Provincial Employment, replies:

Responsibility for applying and paying for work permits and non-B visas is a matter between an employer and employee. Who pays for what depends on the relevant company's policy on the matter.

Lt Col Napat Nusen , chief of the Phuket Immigration Office replies:

Applying and paying for non-B visa depends on an internal agreement between the employer and employee. However, we will issue the receipt under the name of the foreign employee.

YOUR Phuket

Loy Krathong Phuket 2012

CENTARA VILLAS PHUKET

Centara Villas Phuket organized a romantic and festive night, Loy Krathong 2012, at The Cliff Restaurant & Bar overlooking the Andaman sea. They welcomed esteemed guests, both local and tourists, with a special Thai boxing dance by the Lumpini Stadium's champion, Pen-ek Sithnornnoi Singpatong, who won the trophy of HM King last year. This was followed by folk dances and a Miss Noppamas contest and ended with a Lanna procession and dance leaving a lasting impression on the assembled audience.



LOY KRATHONG FESTIVAL

Or Bor Jor Phuket opened the 'Saphan Dao' for the Loy Krathong Festival at Chalong pier and invited tourists and locals to join in the festivities.



TSLC IRONKIDS PHUKET 2012

Kids became 'IronKids' and triathletes at the Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club on December 1, 2012



NORTH PHUKET RESORTS

North Phuket Resorts kicked off the third annual Culinary Arts Festival event from November 30 to December 1, 2012.



North Phuket Resorts, some of the most upscale and tranquil resorts in the north of Phuket, held the third annual Culinary Arts Festival. Starting with the 'Longest Dining Table' set along the beach lawn of Sala Phuket and Renaissance Phuket Resort and Spa, featuring Phuket regional cuisine and indulging guests with a fantastic view of the sunset on Mai Khao Beach, it was followed by a gourmet wine dinner at 'Sea, Fire, Salt' restaurant on Saturday night at Anantara. It ended with a bounty of sophisticated tastes from 14 kitchens with the 'Brunch of Your Life' at JW Marriott Phuket.

The Phuket Gazette's weekly

ISLAND TRADER

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December 8 - 14, 2012 | PhuketGazette.Net

*The Gazette is the top-ranked Website for Phuket. (Google Analytics)

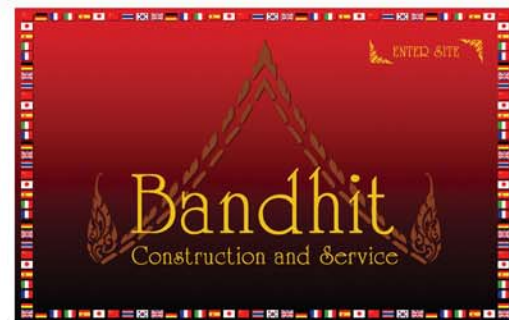
PROPERTY of the week



**LUXURY VILLA
IN CHALONG**

See page 22

BUILDING SERVICES of the week



**Bandhit Construction
& Swimming Pools**

See page 25

BOAT of the week



See page 31

JOB of the week



See page 27

All Property, Boat and Business Ads are **PAID!**

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Properties For Sale

BEACHFRONT LAND FOR SALE



2 rai absolutely amazing beachfront, few minutes boat ride from Phuket, facing west with views of Phuket. 13 million baht per rai. Tel: 086-278 8300. Email: izzy.serenitygroup@gmail.com

HOUSE IN CHALONG



Chanote title, 412sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lovely garden, quiet area. Penthouse with open kitchen and storeroom. 3.9 million baht. Negotiable! Tel: 087-881 3062.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Near British International School. 1,000sqm, 5 bedrooms, financing available. Tel: 084-185 4746. Email: idwian@hotmail.com

KATA DISTRESSED LIQUIDATION

Penthouse, 2 apartments, restaurant, land and 7-storey building. 16 million baht or best offer. Tel: 081-828 0972 (English). Email: sbolls@hotmail.com

HOUSE IN VILLA DOWROONG

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

STUNNING SEA VIEW LAND



A wonderfully located plot measuring almost two rai, located near Cape Yamu and giving magnificent sea views across Phang Nga Bay. Only 4 million baht per rai. Tel: 076-279280, 087-381 1485, +60-12-303 0790. Email: jaekayjosh@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at www.phillips-property.com/property/869/land-for-sale-cape-yamu-phuket-thailand/

KATHU GOLF VIEW FOR SALE

Large house with 7-aircon bedrooms, swimming pools, golf view, quiet area, close to all shopping centers and international school. Price 22 million baht. Call 081-271 3228 or email: info@procarpentering.com for more info.

1 RAI, SEA VIEW LAND

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

D CONDO 1, KATHU

-29.94sqm, mountain view, price 1,278,000 baht.
-29.70sqm, mountain view, price 1,280,000 baht.
-29.79sqm, pool view, price 1,330,000 baht.
-29.70sqm, pool view, price 1,365,000 baht.
Contact Vutdy on 081-892 3709.

FOR SALE / RENT



Short or long-term rent available. Fully furnished sea view condo at Sunset Plaza, Karon. 1, 2-bedroom and penthouse. Gym and swimming pool. Also 3 new beautiful houses with swimming pool at Soi Samakki 2, Rawai. Tel: 086-302 9742 (Kae), 081-843 3990 (Komol).

AMAZING SEAVIEW PENTHOUSE



360° panoramic sea view and mountain view. 310sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with option to convert into 3 bedrooms. Spacious living area and balconies. Tel: 086-278 8300. Email: izzy.serenitygroup@gmail.com

GOLF COURSE LAND FOR SALE



Near British International School, 17 rai with public road access. Suitable for resort or housing project. Can be divided. Price: 4.5 million baht per rai. Contact owner. Tel: 089-724 7211. Email: julien@phuketimmo.com

LAND NEAR KATA CENTER

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

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.

PATONG TOWER NEW 1 BEDROOM

Newly renovated 1-bedroom condo. On the beach in the centre of Patong. Beautiful mountain view. Tel: +45-523 9377 (English). Email: deherder@hotmail.com

CHALONG RESIDENCE PHUKET



Opposite Wat Chalong on the way up to the hill. Fantastic sea view. 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

PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

At Ao Makham. Land is located opposite Port of Phuket and next to Bel Air Cape Panwa Resort. Price 4.2 million. Tel: 081-891 5932, 089-035 6702.

CHEAP LAND FOR SALE

Close to Phuket International Airport. 4 rai, Chanote title. 3.8 million baht per rai. Tel: 081-868 7676. Email: phuketann@gmail.com

GOLF VIEW VILLA FOR SALE



Near British International School, state-of-the-art villa overlooking the Loch Palm Golf Course: 4 bedrooms + maid's room; 485sqm. Built on 1,860sqm land. 28 million baht. Contact owner. Tel: 089-724 7211 (English). Email: julien@phuketimmo.com

Luxury Villa in Chalong, Baan Prangthong Park.
Amazing Villa in perfect condition: 660 sqm. on 3 levels. Land 1.600 sqm. 5 bedrooms, 7 bathrooms, swimming pool 12.5 x 6m with Jacuzzi, large sala, double garage. Top quality construction.
www.tamata-phuket.com or www.phuketvillabyowner.com
Please contact: crishausb@hotmail.com | Eng: 086-2713260 or 086-2734149

Reduced price: 25,600,000 THB

PRIVATE SALE OF HALF A RAI

At Ao Makham. Land is located opposite Port of Phuket and next to Bel Air Cape Panwa Resort. Price 4.2 million. Tel: 081-891 5932, 089-035 6702.

LAND FOR SALE

Near the main road to Baan Don-Cherng Talay. 68sq wah. 1.1 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118. Email: honda.1437@yahoo.co.th

30 RAI IN TOWN

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

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.

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info@lambertbrothers.co.th
Tel: + 66 76 273 385
www.lambertbrothers.co.th

HOUSE FOR SALE IN BAAN PROMPHAN

2.5 floors, 5 mins to town, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Good for stay! 2.85 million baht. Tel: 083-506 9155. Email: sumitra.saetan@gmail.com

LAND AT CHERNG TALAY

390sq wah, nice flat land, quiet area, Chanote. In Pasak Soi 5 near Laguna Home. Price: 6 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118, 086-709 2933.

ALLAMANDA (LAGUNA)

Residences/Phuket Condo unit, half of a deluxe twin house, fully furnished and equipped, set direct on the picturesque lagoon with balcony right over it. 3 bedrooms, each with shower/bathroom roof terrace. Long-term rent or sale. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

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**See more classified ads
at www.phuketgazette.net**

Properties For Rent

NICE HOUSE IN CHALONG



Single house (74sq wah) with lovely garden for long-term rent in Soi Parichart, Land & Houses Park. It has 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms, 24 hr security + clubhouse facilities. Price: 25,000 baht per month or special price of 20,000 baht per month without furniture. Contact the owner. Tel: 081-867 6466 (English & Thai). Email: bow.jariya@gmail.com

WALK TO KATA BEACH

New home with 2 bedrooms and 3 baths. Available January. Call Mam or Dan. Tel: 081-472 1010 (English & Thai). Email: kahunadan@hotmail.com

LATE DEAL 4-BED VILLA RAWAI

Due to cancellation, we have a luxury 4-bedroom pool villa, recently refurbished, available from now to December 26. 8,000 baht per day. Willing to negotiate. Tel: 089-071 0169. Email: nigelburt51@gmail.com

PROPERTY TO RENT

On great beachfront location, very private. Bungalow can enlarge, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, terrace and garden. Private parking, free mooring. House needs repair. Long lease if required 16,000 baht. Ao Yon Bay, near Cape Panwa. Tel: 087-840 8163. Email: luck phichit@gmail.com

HOUSE AT PRIME PLACE VILLAGE



Near Heroines' Monument. Furnished, aircon, 3 bedrooms, cable TV, kitchen. Tel: 086-607 7493.

1, 2, 3-BED PATONG APARTMENTS

Large pool, gym, parking, maid, free WiFi. Rates from 22,000 baht per month. Tel: 080-052 8082 (English & Thai). Email: phvcondo@aol.com

PATONG SEAVIEW

2 and 3 bedrooms, near Simon Cabaret, quiet, clean, furnished. Short or long-term rent. Tel: 081-892 8208.

ALLAMANDA (LAGUNA)

Residences/Phuket Condo unit, half of a deluxe twin house, fully furnished and equipped, set direct on the picturesque lagoon with balcony right over it. 3 bedrooms, each with shower/bathroom roof terrace. Long-term rent or sale. Tel: 081-737 0365. Email: utaipan@yahoo.com

VILLA AT FRONT BEACH



For rent. 5 bedrooms. 110,000 baht per week. Agency welcomed. Tel: 081-719 7015. Email: jyfiyvet@gmail.com

DELUXE BEACHFRONT CONDO

At Kalim Beach, 2 beds. Also in Phuket town, 1 bedroom, kitchen, lounge, many facilities. Tel: 081-892 0038.

KAMALA VILLA FOR RENT

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, pool, 2 storeys with 2 entries. Great for 2 families, top security system, top cable package, two 50" TVs, aircons in all rooms. Bike and Fortuner truck may be included in long-term lease. Available on December 1, 2012 to March 1, 2013. 125,000 baht per month. Contact Harold for details. Tel: 084-446 8965 (English). Email: haroldmccarthy@gmail.com

PATONG APARTMENT LONG-TERM RENT

8,000 - 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-290 9567.

PHUKET VILLA 5 VILLAGE



For Sale. Price: 4.2 million baht. No agents!, not furnished, with 4 aircons, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and car park. Behind Kajonkiet International School on Chao Fa West Road, 5 minutes to Central Festival. For short or long-term rent, 16,000 baht per month. Call to see 087-270 9093.

TOWNHOUSE IN KOH KAEW



Corner unit, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, fully furnished. 3.5 million baht. Tel: 089-472 9118.

CHALONG BEACH TOWNHOUSE

Furnished, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, carport, garden, internet, cable TV. 14,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-415 2900.

2-BED BEACH CONDOS WITH POOL

Spacious, 2 beds with en-suite bathrooms, kitchen, large gardens, pool and free WiFi. 3 minute walk to beach. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

RENTAL APARTMENT, PATONG CONDO

Pool, security, 46sqm, fully furnished. Tel: 089-728 4005. Email: thamad17@yahoo.com

3 BEDROOMS - BANG TAO BEACH

Modern, fully furnished. Only 25,000 baht for long-term. Tel: 089-795 6363. Email: vicky_grc@hotmail.com

SURIN CONDO

2-3 b/r, 300m from beach. Direct pool access. Furnished. Minimum 3 mths rent. Email: jgstryker@gmail.com

LARGE HOUSE KAMALA

furnished, 280sqm, 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, office, sundeck, pool, jacuzzi, carport. 25,000 baht per week. 35,000 baht per month. Minimum 6 months contract or sale 3.5 million baht lease hold. Tel: 084-716 0502.

2-BED BEACH CONDO + POOL

In Nai Harn, 3 minutes walk from the beach. Perfect for families. Only one unit left for X-mas and New Year period. Email: resortgm@gmail.com

APARTMENT KATA BEACH FOR RENT

Furnished, 1 bedroom, kitchen, WiFi. Tel: 086-595 8512. Email: nalumana2000@yahoo.com

NEW HOUSE, RENT/SALE



3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully furnished with small garden, quiet area. Rent: 15,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-626 5616. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

2-BEDROOM HOUSE, BANG TAO



2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, terrace, living room, parking, fully furnished, cable TV, internet, 2 aircons, hot water. Only 5 mins to Surin Beach, Bang Tao Beach and Lotus Cherng Talay. Tel: 089-470 7488. Email: nattamon.m@gmail.com

5 STUDIOS & POOL AT CHALONG



1 bed, kitchen & share pool: for short, long term. Quiet place. Price: 14,000-20,000 baht per month. Tel: 081-809 2625. Email: phuketdee1@yahoo.com

PERMSAP VILLA, HOUSE FOR RENT



Near Cherng Talay. Plot size: 520sqm with living area 156sqm. 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms with garden. Semi-furnished. Automatic gate. 50,000 baht per month. More information please call sales office. Tel: 076-527 869, 081-270 8940. Email: enquiries@richmondth.com

HOUSE FOR RENT

Furnished, two bedrooms, living room, garden, kitchen, car park at 9,000 baht/month. Tel: 084-051 1955 (English & Thai), 080-521 9888 (English & Thai). Email: somin_s@yahoo.com

2 BEDROOMS APARTMENT PATONG

2 bathrooms, WiFi, pool, quiet location. 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 086-279 0837. Email: bricothailand@hotmail.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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- A team player
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- 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

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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

EMPLOYMENT WANTED

Reliable English-speaking Thai woman with cooking experience in hotels and villas requires fixed-term cooking, childcare or housemaid work, live-in if required. Contact Taew. Tel: 081-084 2708.

LOOKING FOR STAFF (4 POSITIONS)

Phuket Wake Park is looking for Chef of Thai Cuisine, Cook Waiter, Operator of Cable Ski Line, Cashier. Tel: 084-889 4942 (English). Send CV to office@phuketwakepark.com

SECURITY GUARDS WANTED

Royal Security Solutions is seeking male/female guards. Tel: 081-970 1479, 080-609 4677.

EXPERIENCED ELDERCARE NURSE

Nurse/helper for older person or invalid. Two years experience with alzheimers patient. Reliable, hard-working, excellent references. Some English. Tel: 089-196 0940. Email: woody@khunwoody.com

SPA RECEPTIONIST

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

NES TEACHERS REQUIRED

November start. KG teacher (38-40K baht), Early Years teacher (43-45K baht). Degree and recognized TEFL/TESOL certificate and 3 email references required. Preference given to experienced teachers. Tel: 084-846 9109(English). Email: stegee68@gmail.com

CASABLANCA RESTAURANT

Needs experienced cook and chef. High salary for qualified person. Tel: 081-892 8208.

WEBMASTER

Must have at least two years' experience as a webmaster and be able to create websites using flash and others. Good knowledge of computers, IT graphics/photoshop. Ability to edit video would also be helpful. Tel: 081-979 9911. Email: vrit@boatlagoonyacht.com

SALES & MARKETING MANAGER

Luxury yachting company looking for someone with experience of at least 3 years in sales and marketing, especially of high-end luxury products. Industry knowledge of luxury yachts and marine lifestyle, especially of Thailand and Southeast Asia, will be an advantage. Tel: 081-979 9911. Email: vrit@boatlagoon.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

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

M&E Engineer

Programer

Electrician

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

SPA STAFF AND MANGER NEEDED

Newly remodeled spa and massage parlor hiring staff immediately. Competitive salaries and accommodation offered! Tel: 083-391 0291. Email: kamal.mail2000@gmail.com

NATIVE ENGLISH TEACHERS

Brainy House is an English-language school, which is committed to provide all of our students with quality teaching and prices that are affordable.

Qualifications;

- Applicants must be native English speakers.
- Bachelor's degree and TEFL are required.
- Teaching experience would be an advantage.
- Must be able to start in December.
- We offer competitive salary and work permit. Tel: 080-907 7466. If you are interested, please contact Sasi or send your CV and recent photo to info@brainy-house.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

VILLA MANAGER

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Nurse/helper for older person or invalid. Two years experience with alzheimers patient. Reliable, hard-working, excellent references. Some English. Tel: 089-196 0940. Email: woody@khunwoody.com

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

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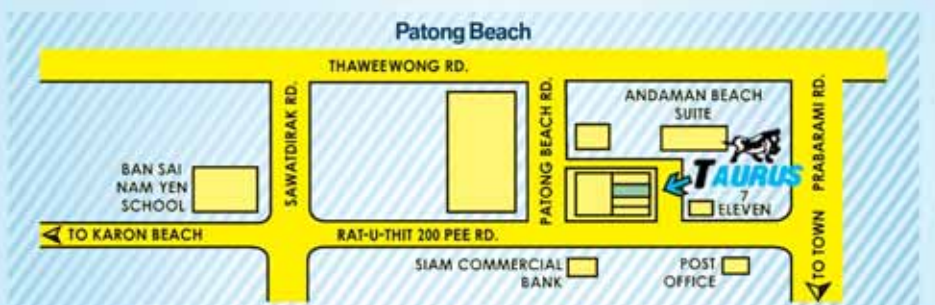
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CrypticCrossword

COFFEE break

1	A	2	C	3	D	4	S	5	A	6	W	7	S	8	U		
9	S	E	L	E	C	T	I	O	N	10	C	R	A	F	T		
11	S	O	N	E	C	S	O	U	S	12	O	U	S	T	13	D	
14	R	I	S	Z	E	E	T	T	E	15	T	E	N	D	E	R	
16	E	G	C	U	I	A	R	S	17	D	E	P	L	E	T	I	
18	D	O	P	P	L	E	R	19	R	E	T	Y	P	E	20	O	
21	R	A	A	E	S	A	G	22	S	A	G	23	C	L	I	N	
24	C	L	I	N	I	C	I	A	N	25	P	E	R	C	H	E	
26	R	C	R	L	A	R	C	27	F	L	O	R	A	L	28	M	
29	I	T	E	M	30	A	F	I	E	31	D	U	E	32	I	M	
33	P	R	E	S	S	E	D	34	H	E	S	I	T	A	N	C	
35	N	A	A	T	O	A	T	36	U	P	R	O	O	T	37	S	T
38	L	I	E	A	N	A	D	39	S	H	O	O	T	I	N	G	S
40	L	A	C	E	R	A	T	E	D	41	S	N	E	S	42	S	E

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DD PROPERTY

An exclusive Phuket Launch of DD property was held on November 29, 2012 at The Watermark, Boat Lagoon.



From left: Ms Prapimporn Matomaeki, regional account manager of DD property (All Property Media Co Ltd); Mr Jedsadakorn Na Lam Phun, Thailand country manager of DD property (All Property Media Co Ltd); Mr Boon Yongsakul, Phuket Boat Lagoon manager and Mr Panupong Kritchanarat, managing director of boat development.



From left: Ms Kiranuch Sukhasvasti (Hongsyok), VP of Anuphas Manorom Co Ltd; Mr Montavee Hongsyok, MD of Anuphas and Son Co Ltd; Mr Tanan Tanphaibul, MD of The Heritage Suites Co Ltd; Mr Jedsadakorn Na Lam Phun, Thailand country manager of DD property (All Property Media Co Ltd) and Ms Prapimporn Matomaeki, regional account manager of DD property (All Property Media Co Ltd).

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF LIMSUP GRAND

The Board of Directors of Limsup Grand Co Ltd and the owner of Andaman Embrace Resort & Spa, marked the opening of their new resort on November 27, 2012 with a traditional merit-making ceremony and luncheon. The merit-making ceremony was held to bring good fortune to the company and officially open the resort to the public.



The Event began at 9am with traditional *Brahman* rituals at the resort's 'Spirit House'. At 10am, a Buddhist ceremony was conducted by 9 monks with alms and food offerings. At 12pm the resort hosted a luncheon for 100 people to join in the celebration of this new 4-star Sino-Portuguese style resort on Patong Beach.



GOVERNOR MAITRI OPENS PHUKET KING'S CUP REGATTA 2012

Phuket Governor Maitri Inthusut (left) and Third Naval Area Commander Vice Admiral Tharathorn Khajitsuwan declare the regatta open.



CROWNE PLAZA PHUKET PANWA BEACH RESORT

Crowne Plaza Phuket Panwa Beach Resort greet Khun Nok, Chalida and Khun Jaja Primrata who were shooting the *Living in Shape* TV program at the resort. Their first show will be on-air on TV Channel 3 on Saturday December 8, from 7:35am to 8:10am.

CENTRA ASHLEE HOTEL

Centra Ashlee Hotel Patong hosted a "Cocktail Night Thank You Party" to offer thanks and to entertain the in-house guests during their stay. Pictured are General Manager, Khun Wilawan Chiammanasombut (right) and Assistant Sales & PR Manager, Khun Sudawan Koliyanon, (left).



BOATHOUSE ART EXHIBITION

Saturday, December 1, saw the opening reception of the Boathouse art exhibition of oil paintings by Phuket-based artist, Robin Gillow. *Contemplation* will run until December 30, 2012 at Boathouse on Kata Beach and is open to the public.



DCONDO MINE ON PHUKET ISLAND

Sansiri launch the 740 million baht 'dcondo Mine' development on Phuket Island

Mr Suriya Wannabuit, executive vice president – project management and marketing department, of Sansiri public company limited (2nd from left) and Ms Somsakul Limsuttaphan, assistant managing director of Plus Property company limited, a subsidiary of Sansiri and sole agent (3rd from left) joined the recent 'dcondo Mine' press conference.

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WHAT'S ON in Phuket

December 8, 7pm to 12am: The Full Monty Beach Charity Party at Bliss Beach Club, Bangtao Beach

Tickets at 2,500 baht per person. Children under 12 years: 1,000 baht. Includes cocktail, dinner and free flow of wine. 1,000 baht per ticket and all proceeds of the auction will support the SKÅL childrens' fund and the Phuket Has Been Good To Us Foundation. This event is presented by the *Phuket Gazette*, PGTV and the *Gazette's* 'Phuket Today' show, six times a week on UBC/True Visions channel 99. Contact: Urs Aebi at 66-76-371900 or email: contact@skalphuket.org

December 10, Constitution Day – Public Holiday

December 13, 11:30am to 2pm: Phuket International Women's Club Christmas lunch at Twin Palms Resort in Surin Beach

For this very popular lunch bookings are essential. All are welcome. Members, 750 baht; guests, 800 baht. Contact Carole as at left. The Phuket International Women's Club is sponsored by the *Phuket Gazette*.

December 13, 20; 6pm to 11:30pm: Martini Manicure Ladies Night at RE KA TA

Free express manicure for ladies. Free Martini for ladies on



Asia Superyacht Rendezvous November 22-24

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visit: asia-superyacht-rendezvous.com

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

December 15-16, 10am to 4pm: Theb Phuket Youth Sailing Watersports Club at Ao Yon

Come and join our watersports club located at one Phuket's finest and most secluded beaches on the island, Ao Yon. Dinghy sailing, Cat sailing, Sea kayaking, Canoeing, SUPs, Swimming and beach

games, or just relax in our new clubhouse and beach cafe' with free WiFi. Memberships available – up to 10 per cent discount on equipment hire and up to 20 per cent discount on sailing and canoeing courses. Open every weekend. Club also available for childrens' parties. The Phuket Youth Sailing Watersports Club supports youth sailing on Phuket for local and underprivileged children, and is home to the Phuket Youth Sailing Club. For more info contact Paul Firmin at: 66-82-814 6007.

December 15, 12 to 3pm: Satur- day Brunch @ Two Chefs Bistro

Every Saturday we are setting up our brunch buffet, filled to the limits with home made delights. In our smoke house, we smoke all of our fish and meats by ourselves, and in the bakery we bake all our bread. With very well trained chefs and a Swedish head chef, we can promise you that you won't leave hungry or thirsty. All this for only 395 baht. For more info, please visit: twochefsbistrodeli.com.

December 22-23, 9:30am to 4:30pm: Phuket Youth Sailing Club Last Chance Regatta

Open to all Dinghy Classes and Beach Cats. Skipper briefing at 9:30am to start racing at 10am. Classes for Optimist Open (born 1996 or after) Racing on Saturday

and Sunday, and Topper Open (Junior, Youth, and Adults) Beach Cats. Entry Fees (includes BBQ): Members, 250 baht per person; Non-members, 350 baht per person. Crew needed and boats available for charter. Come and join the Club's Christmas BBQ for 150 baht. Cold beers and soft drinks available. Prize giving at 3pm. Enjoy sailing? Come join the Phuket Youth Sailing Watersports Club – open every weekend. For more info contact Paul Firmin at: 66-82-814 6007.

December 24-25, 9am to 11pm: Christmas at Two Chefs Bistros Phuket

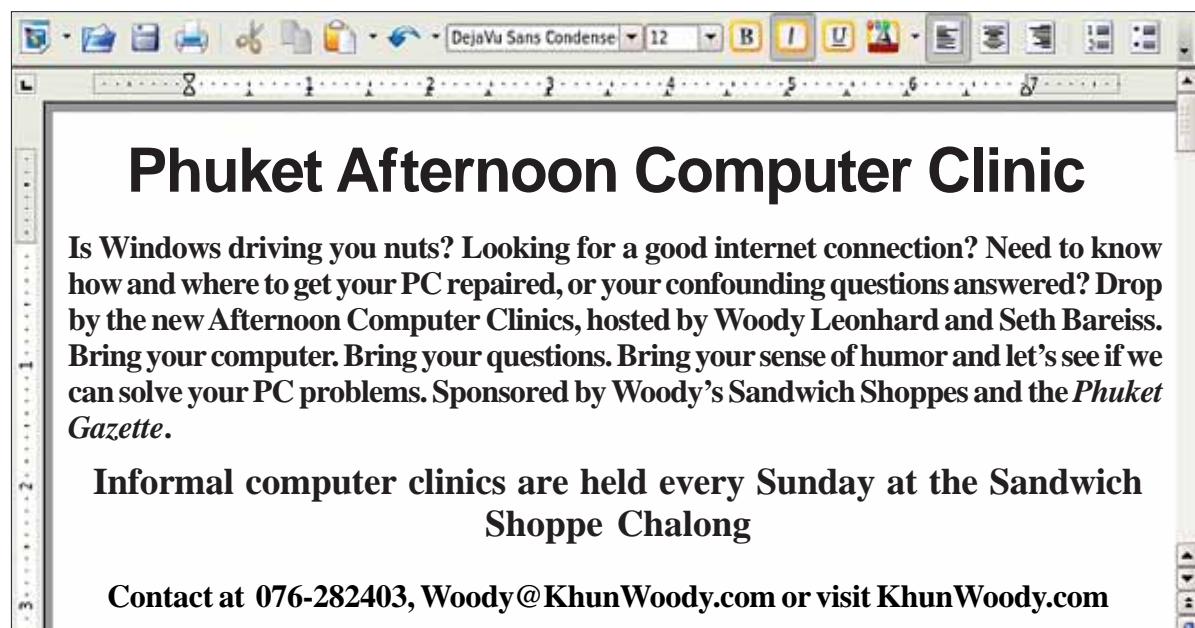
Christmas time at Two Chefs Bistros in Phuket. In our newly opened bistros we are going to serve a classic Christmas plate, one that will include pepper-smoked salmon, different kinds of herring, Christmas ham, veal pâté, meatballs, bread and so much more. You can't miss it! It's only 695 baht and there are no extra charges. So welcome to Two Chefs Bistros!

December 24-25, 9am to 11pm: Christmas Eve Buffet Dinner at Boathouse Wine and Grill, Kata

Watch the sun setting over the Andaman Sea with Christmas cocktails in the sunset lounge, followed by a sumptuous buffet dinner with abundant Christmas specials, regional specialties and festive desserts along with Christmas carols, a visit from Santa and our Jazz Quartet. Cocktails at 7pm, Dinner from 8pm onwards. Cost is 4,500++ per person.

December 24, 7 to 11pm Chilled- out Christmas Eve at RE KA TA Beach Club at Boathouse

Enjoy an amazing four course menu by Chef Bryan Burger, overlooking Kata Beach. DJ line-up until late. Welcome cocktail at 6pm, dinner from 8pm on. 3,800++ baht per person, paired with wines. 2,500++ without.



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

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Robin Gillow: the wandering artist

By Bruce Stanley

ROBIN Gillow's paintings, now on display at Boathouse, remind the viewer of a disappearing style of country life found in Thailand.

This talented South African began showing her drawings and paintings while still in school. She learned her craft while attending what's now known as the National School of the Arts, in a program that included industrial design, sculpture, painting and technical drawing.

She later trained at the Johannesburg College of Art. After graduation, she was hired as the art director at one of South Africa's largest publishing houses. She became well known for drawing race horses, which earned her many commissions.

In 1983, she moved to Australia with her husband Kevin. She continued to work in art and design as an art director for a variety of publishers and advertising agencies, but by the end of the decade, she and Kevin took to a life on the sea – beginning years of travel crossing the Indian Ocean.

While exploring Madagascar, the eastern coast of Kenya and the remote island chain known as Chagos, Robin continued her freelance artwork, taking commissions to paint horses, dogs and children.

"We were living on a boat so I had to work in small form. I also developed many of my ideas for

a painting from memories of places we visited or even from dreams. I'm a very visual person and the sense of color and place stays in my mind, which I can recreate much later in paintings."



Robin's current show at Boat-house is named Contemplation. It's a charming and captivating look at the traditional lifestyles of rural people.

It also demonstrates her talents at drawing and painting of birds, fish and farm animals, including water buffaloes. Rather than a photographic rendition, Robin uses an impressionistic touch with her brush.

"I'm fortunate to be able to sell most of my work and have very little stock. Perhaps that is the result of living on a boat for so many years where there was limited storage. So I focus on the present work."

From her large, light-filled studio in Rawai, Robin explores her art by often taking a completed painting and cutting it into pieces and then making a collage with other canvas to expand and open what she wants to say.

Her reasoning behind this is to "make a statement regarding 'life',

'the planet' and how, we, as mankind view it – through fractured glasses blindly believing that what we do to our world is progressive.

"Cutting the work up in this fashion adds movement, depth and a certain mystery to the work. Also by recycling my finished work to create a 'second' painting, about a particular subject, I am admitting to my own blind guilt; I take an object that is perfectly good as it is and alter it – perhaps into something more agreeable on the eye, perhaps not, it depends on what I want to say."

Robin is currently preparing to join an international charity exhibition in London that supports a strong environmental cause. Her current work at Boathouse can be viewed and purchased until early January, 2013.



ASIA OF OLD: Gillow's paintings reflect the slower pace of life in the East.



Show for HM King a success

THE open-air amphitheater in Benjakiti Park, near the Queen Sirikit Convention Centre, came alive recently, with a colorful light-and-sound show called *The Prestige of Our Beloved King*, in celebration of His Majesty's birthday.

The Finance Ministry and private sector co-hosted the triple event, also intended to commemorate Her Majesty the Queen's 80th birthday and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn's 60th birthday this past summer.

The Thai number 9 is the show's central symbol, a homophone for the Thai word meaning "stepping forward", which is also closely associated with the King.

His Majesty ascended to the throne on June 9, 1946 (2489 in



Scenery from the show in honor of HM the King. Photo: Nation

the Buddhist Era), and is the ninth monarch of the Chakri dynasty.

The highlights included a candlelit ceremony for the public to offer felicitations to His Majesty while singing the royal hymn Sadudi Maha Raja.

Identical ceremonies took place simultaneously in all provinces on Father's Day.

In Benjakiti Park there was also a 'water-light-sound' spectacle

entitled *King of Water*, which depicts His Majesty's talent for managing the country's water resources.

The Royal Thai Navy's official, thirty-member orchestra, accompanied the celebrated singer Rudklao Amaradit, who performed a selection of royal compositions.

The last light show, called *His Majesty's Garden of Light* filled the park with a luminous display of sculptural lighting.

Viewers were able to pick out golden congratulatory rabbits, the royal rain project, a sailboat crafted by the King and a glittering saxophone of the type he plays. Each event culminated in extravagant fireworks shows.

– *Phuket Gazette*

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Dr Panadda Aswanetmanee

A NEW skin and beauty clinic has recently opened up on the Bypass Road, but, amid the proliferation of similar institutions, what makes this latest addition special?

The answer lies with the competent and knowledgeable founder, the young dermatologist Dr Panadda Aswanetmanee.

Dr Panadda, 33, graduated in medicine from Chulalongkorn University. Like all Thai doctors trained under government-subsidized programs, she was required to work for three years in a provincial hospital after graduation. At Chaiyapoom Hospital in the northeast, Dr Panadda noticed that she derived great pleasure from performing small and delicate surgeries.

"I was good with my hands and loved doing what other surgeons called 'fiddly work'," says Dr Panadda. "My caesarian section scars were hardly visible so I became quite popular with pregnant women having to undergo caesarian childbirth there."

This attention to detail may stem from the fact that Dr Panadda is as well-versed in using a paintbrush as she is with surgical instruments. Painting is her passion, developed since childhood, and a hobby she still practices today.

Realizing that medical aesthetics may be her true calling, Dr Panadda decided to specialize in dermatology and enrolled at St John's Institute of Dermatology at King's College,



London, and graduated, with a Merit, in 2008.

Returning to Thailand, Dr Panadda worked part-time for a few years in hospitals in Bangkok before becoming the resident dermatologist at Bangkok Hospital in Phuket, where she worked for almost two years.

During her time at the Bangkok Hospital Phuket, Dr Panadda says she became fascinated by laser technology especially in the field of dermatology and cosmetology.

"I saw first-hand how the laser could be used successfully to treat skin disorders and how it involves relatively small risk compared to other types of surgeries. I decided I wanted to know more."

So she took off to the USA this time, spending two years as a fellow in Dermatological and Laser Surgery at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York.

During the next three years, Dr Panadda continued to add to her formal training with a series of cutting edge beauty procedures, especially in the field of anti-aging.

Returning earlier this year to Thailand, Dr Panadda decided to settle down and work in Phuket.

"I like Phuket. It has a lot to

offer – beautiful beaches and culture. It's also easy to navigate compared to Bangkok. You can get a lot done in a day."

She decided to open a laser clinic here, and last month, The Laser Premium was born. Located on the ground floor of the Royal Place Condominium on the Bypass Road, the clinic offers state-of-the-art laser treatment for all kinds of beauty complaints from pigmentation to wrinkles and scars to aging skin.

Dr Panadda, who is confident that she can help most women to regain their youthful beauty, says that: "I always see changes in my patient after a few sessions. Treating them is almost like making artwork: you can actually paint away blemishes and sculpt noses and faces. All done without the risk associated with major surgery and with no downtime. Modern cosmetology is amazing."

As an advocate of aesthetic treatments, Dr Panadda knows that beauty is skin-deep and the route to stay youthful has many approaches. Practicing what she preaches, Dr Panadda regularly exercises, practices meditation and positive thinking and watches her diet carefully.

She still paints regularly and has accumulated a substantial body of work – enough, she says, to fill a gallery. And that's what this young doctor wants to do in the near future – mount an exhibition that will show off another aspect of her beautiful creations.



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.

ERRATUM: In last week's Thai Gallery, the author mistakenly named the subject Suwit Pattamakanthin instead of his correct name, which is Jom Pattamakanthin. The error is regretted.





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Thailand's AIDS healthcare lesson

ON THE eve of World AIDS Day, regional health experts gathered in Bangkok to examine Thailand's Universal Health System and HIV/AIDS treatment services

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA), and the National Health Security Office recently hosted a regional workshop for health experts to examine Thailand's landmark Universal Health Coverage (UHC) program, with an aim to build capacity in their respective countries on HIV/AIDS treatment and care services.

People living with HIV in the Asia-Pacific region face exclusion, marginalization, poverty and severe shocks to their livelihoods.

A recent report by the Commission on AIDS in Asia estimated that the annual economic cost of AIDS on Asian households is US\$2 billion.

Each AIDS death results in a loss of at least US\$5,000 or 14 years of productive life (calculated at a mere one US Dollar per day).

Ten participants from the ASEAN countries of Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, and the Philippines shared experiences and also learned lessons from Thai experts in the field of UHC and HIV/AIDS services.

The 40 guests received an overview of Thailand's health system, including health financing, information system design, as well as the powerful role of civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

The workshop showcased

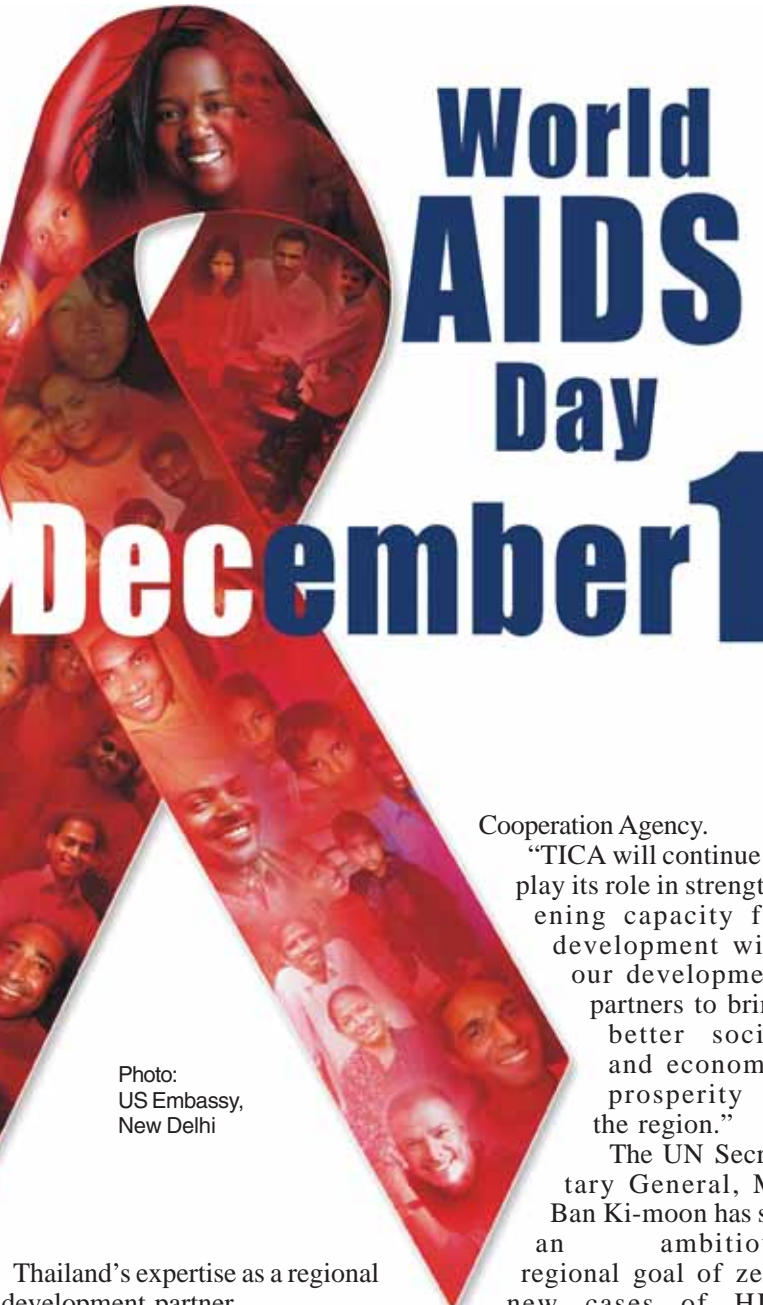


Photo:
US Embassy,
New Delhi

Thailand's expertise as a regional development partner.

The country's experiences on HIV/AIDS treatment and care services in UHC are considered one of Asia's best practices in health care innovation.

"This regional workshop is one of the activities for partnership for development where Thailand and UNDP have agreed to host this significant forum, where Thailand can share its best practices/experiences with other partner countries," said Mr Piroon Lai-smit, Director-General of Thailand International Development

Cooperation Agency.

"TICA will continue to play its role in strengthening capacity for development with our development partners to bring better social and economic prosperity to the region."

The UN Secretary General, Mr Ban Ki-moon has set an ambitious regional goal of zero new cases of HIV infections, as well as zero AIDS-related deaths, and zero discrimination by 2015.

"Access to HIV/AIDS treatment and universal health coverage go hand in hand with social justice and a nation's responsibility to uphold the human rights of health and social security," said Luc Stevens, the United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Thailand.

-UNDP Press Release



A Life Home Project raffle prize is presented by a Tropical Voices singer.

Quiz for healing

THE Phuket Life Home Project (PLHP) held a Charity Quiz Night on Saturday, December 1, at the Mövenpick resort in Karon.

The 'pub style' quiz consisted of fifteen teams of approximately ten people and was held in two rounds. All tables were given a form to fill out at the start of each round. Teams then had to write answers to various trivia questions including 'name that artist', 'what movie is this from?' and what naturally occurring compound exists in all three states of matter? (It's water by the way.)

The event was catered with a gourmet buffet, featured rock and roll bingo, a silent auction and music performances by local British International School girl group the Tropical Voices.

The quiz was 2,000 baht per ticket, and raised approximately

600,00 baht, less expenses.

All proceeds from the event will benefit the charitable work of the Life Home Project, a Phuket-based charity, which cares for mothers and children affected by HIV/AIDS.

Specifically, the funds raised by this event benefit the LHP's scholarship program and day care center, as well as providing vocational training for the women of the shelter.

Bar service was provided by the Irish Times, and the night was sponsored by The Phuket Gazette, PGTV, 'Phuket Today' and the Mövenpick resort, Karon.

For more information or to donate visit: lifehomeproject.org.

-Phuket Gazette



TRIVIA TEEN: A young participant smiles on Quiz Night. Photos: Chris Hudon

Phuket's hottest artists have cool plan

STUDENTS of Siobhan's Music Studio, who performed at the recent World Aids Day event inside the Mövenpick resort, Karon, are holding a fundraising concert on Sunday, December 9, from 2 to 6pm at the Boat Lagoon.

This will be the first-ever concert given by students from the fledgling studio, which draws inspiration from Canadian-born Siobhan McGovern. Classically-trained in both violin and voice, she attended the prestigious jazz program at Humber



Tropical Voices perform at Life Home Quiz Night. Photo: Chris Hudon

College, where she trained with Canada's leading jazz artists and developed her own style.

Performances will include

soloists on piano, guitar, drums, violin and voice. Community groups will also perform, including: rock bands, the Tropical Strings, Tropical Voices Junior (TVJ) and Tropical Voices (TV).

Help local music students beat the tropical heat in this unique 'concert for air cons'. All money raised will be used to install air conditioning in the music studio.

For more information visit: musiclessonsphuket.com, or call: 86-951-7409.

-Phuket Gazette

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A Wild interview

By Andrew Scott

OLYMPIAN Reudi Wild enjoyed a successful week at the Phuket Tri-Fest, winning the Laguna Phuket Triathlon (LPT) and finishing second in the Ironman 70.3. The Swiss triathlete took a few minutes out of his Ironman preparation to speak with the *Gazette*.

How did you get into triathlons?

I started as a young kid. I would play several sports at the same time. In the summer, I would go for a bike ride with my parents or we would go for a run, or for a swim in the lake.

A triathlon was held in the town where I lived and I thought it would be good fun to enter. I enjoyed it and then started searching for a swim coach.

Then from year to year I started to improve and it was fun, which was really important. As a kid you tend to do what your parents tell you but it was me who chose the sport.

As I got older, I decided to do it at a professional level, and I started training.



You were also a good skier as a child. What made you choose triathlon over skiing?

In Switzerland, I lived in an area, which was close to the mountains where downhill skiing was very popular.

Usually on Wednesdays after school and on the weekends, I would go skiing.

In the summer you would build up your endurance for skiing through other sports. All my friends skied.

But then I realized that I found it more interesting to do things in summer time. The older you got the more you had to travel to ski events, and spending every day on the glaciers searching for the snow was a lot more difficult than just going outside for a run.

How were the Olympics?

As an athlete the best experience is being part of the Olympics. London was brilliant

and I don't think there has ever been a triathlon like that before with so many spectators.

You finished 39th in the triathlon, were you happy with that?

I think you either have a really good position in the top 8 or top ten or it doesn't really matter what place you finish.

I was a bit disappointed with my race as it wasn't how I expected it to be. I was ranked in the top 20 triathletes in the world, so on a normal day I would expect to finish top 20, on a good day top, 10 or 5.

But I knew it was going to be a hard race. I ended up having a bad day and I tried to make the most out of it, but my legs wouldn't do what I wanted on the bike or the run.

It was such a nice experience in front of the crowd.

From the sports side, it was disappointing but overall it was a very good experience.

Which is your favorite discipline in the triathlon?

It depends. I used to race shorter distances, where it is mainly about the swim and the run, but [with] the bike [it] doesn't really matter if you're a strong biker or a medium biker.

If you do longer races like the LPT it's more important that you're a good biker than a good swimmer. I am more talented in biking and running than swimming.

In the LPT how did you catch Chris Lieto who had a big lead after the bike section?

I knew that he had a minute or a half to two minute lead on us and I wasn't scared about that as I knew that anything under two minutes would be fine for the run, as compared to him I run a bit faster.

It's important to keep your emotions controlled and think about different scenarios in the race.

Although he is a strong cyclist, I knew that I would be fine

I didn't desperately try to chase him. I



WILDMAN: Reudi hopes to use the success gained in Phuket for future triathlons, and return next year to defend his LPT title. Photos: Andrew Scott

relied on my run and knew that I would be able to catch him.

What's your training schedule like?

This week, because I have just had a race and another one coming up (IronMan70.3), it is all about recovery and getting your energy back.

Usually in the build up to a big race, your work should be finished two weeks before the race and then you start to reduce your training hours, but still keep the quality of training high.

Short intensity, your body will feel better day by day, this helps your body look forward to the race.

How did you find the LPT?

I enjoyed it very much. It is a hilly course, with beautiful views over the ocean and I had heard a lot about the course in the past.

It is quite demanding with the heat and humidity, also the steep climbs on the bike, the run along the golf course and the ocean swim, lagoon swim.

The run isn't usually a big deal but if you run on the grass and it's wet it adds some extra weight to your legs, which makes it quite challenging.

What are your hopes for the IronMan 70.3?

As I proved at LPT I am in good shape and all I need to do is transfer this into a longer distance.

I need to make sure I can choose a good pace and not overdo the beginning, or get too excited about other people and do my own thing.

If I can do my run I am hopeful for a good showing.

How have you found the Sports Hotel at Thanyapura?

My stay there has been one of the best preparations I have ever had as everything is within walking distance or delivered within minutes.

It makes things a lot easier as I don't have to search for a pool or a place to eat that won't give you stomach problems. The hotel has everything, even guided tours on the bike.

The guys know where to take you and how to race in this climate and conditions.

It's been absolutely perfect for me.

Do you plan to come back next year?

If there is a chance I will definitely come back. It is one of my favorite places to race.

I wish to come back next year and compete in both races.



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	PG909	16.45	18.10
	PG278	19.45	21.10
	PG280	21.55	23.20
BKK-HKT	PG271	08.05	09.30
	PG222	10.00	11.25
	PG924	12.30	13.55
	PG273	14.35	16.00
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Blazing Saddles

A morning ride to glorious Nai Harn Beach

By Baz Daniel

WELCOME to Blazing Saddles as we take you on one of Phuket's most famous and favorite bike rides, down to the charming southernmost beach on the island's west coast, to Nai Harn.

It's a bleary 6am start as you clamber into your Lycra biking attire, adjust the funny codpiece bulging at the front of your shorts and wheel your bike into the car park in front of Fisherman Way Business Park next to Tesco Lotus on road to Rawai. This is a great place to start the ride, with lots of off-road car parking, and at this hour you will often be greeted by a hearty band of fellow Lycra Louts sipping from their water bottles and pontificating airily about the morning's conditions.

The sun is rising over Koh Lon and Chalong Bay to your east and little wispy beards of cloud are clinging to the crests of the Nakkerd Hills between Chalong and Kata and of course atop all of this, Big Buddha is watching!

This ride has become popular as it takes you through quiet, traffic-free back lanes to the lovely lake just inland from Nai Harn Beach, where you can do as many loops as you wish to increase your total distance. You can make the ride as challenging and vertiginous as you wish by adding in climbs up the Viewpoint and Prom Thep Cape hills. You can factor in a cooling swim and you can finish it off with a healthy juice, or a naughty cold beer, at a true Phuket beachside icon...Nikita's bar and restaurant on the Rawai Beachfront.

Many Westerners live in this southern quadrant of Phuket, and, as the island's population of MAMILS (Middle Aged Men In

Lycra) has increased, so has the popularity of this ride. In addition there are now a huge number of very fit Thai cyclists who work out around the Nai Harn Lake doing their laps in a blazing peloton of perspiration and testosterone and tending to put the more quiescent foreign Pedal-Files to shame.

If the last two sentences seem a little gender-biased, it is intentional, as only a few western lady riders are to be out cycling in

Phuket as yet and even fewer Thai ladies. However, the day when we see far more Lycra-clad lovelies working out on their bikes can't be far off and will constitute yet one more excellent reason for you to "get on yer bike!"

Clamping crash hat firmly in place we set off south along Rawai Road at 6:15am. The traffic is still relatively light and it's 25 degrees as we head to Nai Harn. The straightforward way of doing this is up and over the long, modestly inclined hill on the wide main road, then down into Rawai and along the waterfront. Here you can either fork left taking you over three big challenging hills, the middle one being Prom Thep Cape and then down to the Nai Harn Lake. Alternatively, go straight ahead to little Ya Nui Beach then turn right over the last of the three challenging hills – Windmill Hill with its viewpoint out over the southern Andaman very much worth a stop. Or for a gentler ride, fork right at the end of Rawai Beachfront over the lesser incline of what some call DILLIGAF Hill (it has a bar near its apex delightfully named the Do I Look Like I Give A F*** or DILLIGAF bar) and then left at the crossroads, down to the lake.

While the Rawai Road is a busy



LOOPY: The small inland lake in Nai Harn is a good place to lap up the scenery, while lapping. Photos: Baz Daniel



LOCAL FAUNA: Put a tiger in your tank.



The Blazing Saddler himself, Baz Daniel with his bike.

one, it is wide, with good sight lines so it should cause no problems. If you fancy a more bucolic ride with less hills, turn right off Rawai Road about half a kilometer after the start, at the turning between the Family Mart and 7-Eleven, just before the fuel station. Then immediately fork left and cycle up the back lanes to Sai Yuan Road. Turn right here and only stay on this until the next right turn, as this is a busy, not very wide soi and is the haunt of many tourists coming to Nai Harn.

Again meander along the back sois until you hit a T junction then go left down to the Y junction and take the right option signed to Prom Thep. This road takes you

past Da Vinci restaurant, then the Phuket Art Village, which is well worth a look around. Then take the next right at the Villa Suksan sign, taking you along some lovely back sois all the way over to Nai Harn lake.

The exactly two km circuit around the lake is the morning haunt of joggers, dog walkers, courting couples and lots of other Lycra Louts. You can do as many laps as you wish, stopping on the island in the lake to sit under the trees for an orange and a chat.

Finally you can ride along the little path at the edge of the beach itself enjoying the shady Casuarinas and stopping for a dip ONLY if the flags tell you it's

safe. Strangely enough, there's also a little road right through the car park of the Royal Phuket Yacht Club, which then takes you along the northern promontory of Nai Harn to a charming little beach where you can get a juice and enjoy sensational views of the whole bay.

We usually gather at Nikita's on Rawai Beachfront road for a juice, coffee, or a beer before cycling back to Fisherman Way. With a few loops of the lake, the total ride will be around thirty clicks, but if you do factor in the three hills you will have given your body a thorough work out and you should feel justifiably proud of yourself! Happy and safe riding!



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The new 'Seafood' at Trisara is three steps from heaven



DECKED OUT: The stunning outside setting (above). Heavenly flavors: Tuna tartare (above right), Red mullet (right) and Wild Mille-feuille (below). Food photos: Marc Mulloy



On the Menu

By Sam Wilko

TRISARA is a very imposing but undeniably beautiful resort: Set on 40 acres of hillside lushness on the northwestern coast of Phuket, every one of its pool villas afford gorgeous sea-and-sunset-views out to a mysterious looking rocky promontory in the Andaman Sea.

The resort is the sort of place that celebrities come to and, well, disappear for a few days. The last time I was lucky enough to stay in one of their sumptuous villas, my neighbor was none other than 'Squiggle'... the Artist Formerly Known as Prince. And no, he didn't answer the door when I asked him if he had a cup of sugar to spare.

But on this visit, heading down to 'Seafood', the recently opened beachside restaurant, we run into the resort manager, Antoine Melon. Far from being melancholy, or melon-shaped, as his name would suggest, he's an in-shape, genial French polyglot who has enjoyed a career rubbing shoulders and studying with the big names of worldwide cuisine. He is quick to interject an anecdote about them. In other words, and to say the least, Antoine knows where the land lies, culinary speaking.

Trisara is the only five-star resort in Phuket with a Thai executive chef and no prizes for guessing as to what's served up

here at Seafood. The selective, rather than extensive seafood menu, is prepared by Chef Ka, who has worked/studied in Sydney, New York, Spain (at El Celler de Roca, the second-best restaurant in the world) and Singapore, with one and two-star Michelin chefs. Subsequently he has absorbed a lot of the revolutionary slow-cooking techniques that have surfaced lately. Without going into too many confusing details, this form of cooking entails searing food then inserting it into bags and slow-cooking it, resulting in the maximum amount of enzymes, vitamins and, of course, flavors.

This nautically-themed restaurant has options to dine on the beach, on the fan-cooled terrace or in the air-conditioned interior with programmed in-house music in an Adele and Eagles-free environment.

But outside, the audio factor at Seafood is just the sound of the waves breaking on beach mere meters away, the gentle whisper of the sea breezes plus specialized wait staff who speak very good English and who anticipate your

every need.

So far, so good, but it gets even better – after a dish of mixed international oysters (the Phuket versions acquitted themselves admirably) is a spanking fresh tuna tartar with pomelo, citrus, ginger and dried seaweed and an almost perfect sole *meunière* with green asparagus and potatoes. Yummy stuff, and a dish once described by a turn-of-the-twentieth-century writer as 'life changing' and you couldn't get a better rendition of sole *meunière* than here at Seafood; it reminded me of Proust's madeleine.

We also enjoy a sea bass dish featuring squid, sugar snap peas, watercress and red quinoa. All this, along with a heavenly dessert selection and a 2010 Whispering Angel *rosé* from Provence makes for a powerful culinary treat.

'Trisara' is Sanskrit for 'three steps from heaven' and this location, three steps from the Andaman Sea, is a pretty cool terrestrial attempt at recreating a nutritious Nirvana.

Seafood is at Trisara Resort, between Layan and Banana beaches in northwestern Phuket. Open 12:30-3pm and 7-10:30 pm. Closed on Sundays. Visit: trisara.com/seafood or call 076-310100.



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A decade of hard internet knocks


Live Wire
By Woody Leonhard

THIS is the final installment in a four-part series of articles about getting connected to the internet in Phuket. High season is upon us and many people are looking for good internet connections – for a month, a year, or the rest of their lives. In these four articles I've tried to distill more than a decade's worth of hard internet knocks into a fairly comprehensive view of what's good, bad and reprehensible in local internet technology.

In the first installment in this series, I talked about the general state of internet connections in Phuket. We on the island suffer from a small subset of the general malaise over internet in Thailand in general – political infighting, turf battles, malleable regulations, persuadable officials, and an apparent lack of concern about consumers. With hundreds of billions of baht at stake, and millions of consumers getting the shaft daily, the Keystone Cops approach just isn't cutting the mustard.

In the second issue of the series, I covered the current offerings in land lines, with TOT Fiber 2U 10 Mega bits per second (Mbps) representing the best bang for your baht (1,500 baht/month), True DOCSIS "Ultra" coming in second (if you can get it; 599 bt/mo or 1,299 bt/mo for a moderately faster line), then TOT's WiNet hybrid wireless-to-your-home (599 bt/mo), and finally all of the ADSL lines, from 3BB, CAT, TOT or True, which are

generally indistinguishable from one another, and run to 599 bt/mo. No, I don't recommend signing up for internet service with your cable TV provider; I've heard too many horror stories.

Last week I talked about '3G' wireless connections. My recommendation is to go with CAT's "My Click", because it's considerably cheaper than the alternatives. You may find a good bargain on a specific phone or tablet at TrueMove-H or DTAC (both of which use the same network as CAT), or at AIS (which uses the same network as TOT). Speed and reliability seem to be much more dependent on your location than on the company nominally providing the service.

In general, land lines provide service that's usually good enough to run a Skype video call, or play streamed standard-TV-quality video, as you might from YouTube. International download speeds typically run between 1 and 2 Mbps, with some lines going up to 3 or 4 reliably. (See phuketinternetspeed.com.)

Some land lines are good enough to stream high definition TV, but they're definitely the exception, not the rule.

If you're trying to download torrents, special conditions apply: some internet service providers actively throttle (cut back the speed on) torrents or access to the newsgroups. There are tricks.

On the wireless side, you can expect speeds that are about half of that offered by typical ADSL land lines. Again, that's usually good enough for a Skype video call, or

playing YouTube videos on your phone or tablet. But you can't expect much better. All 3G plans cap your data usage at some point – 2, 3 or 4 GB, usually – but you should check each individual plan.

When you exceed your data cap for the month, the service provider cuts your speed way, way down. That makes 3G in Phuket useful for phones and tablets if they aren't used too much, but it puts a big crimp on using 3G for general web surfing or downloading a lot of email. Downloading big files, including torrents, over 3G, is an exercise in futility.

So how do you sign up for an internet package? There are a few tricks.

First, stay flexible. On a recent house hunting trip I was shocked to discover that the main land line providers don't even have cable run to some of the most internet-savvy places on the island: it's as if nobody has figured out that people in nice houses with significant disposable incomes are actually willing to pay for good, faster internet service.

In other words, don't expect logic (I'm sure you knew that).

Second, don't believe anything you read. There isn't one, single internet service provider on the island that reliably supplies one-fifth of their advertised bandwidth for international access: sign up for a 10 Mbps line, and you'll probably get 1 Mbps. And if you really believe the wireless service in Phuket runs at 42 Mbps, I have a bridge in New York I'd like to sell to you.

Third, if you already have an internet provider, and you don't like your service, go to the provider and see if they'll upgrade you for a small fee. Upgrading typically doesn't involve any labor: somebody in Bangkok types a number into a computer, and you're suddenly on a different circuit. Sometimes that works, sometimes it doesn't.

Fourth, don't try to do anything over the phone, and don't expect to get anything done in English. Some of the internet service providers have



WIRED: Getting a good connection can be tough. Photo: CollegeDegrees360

staff with excellent English skills: the CAT and True offices in Central, True in Lotus, TOT on Chao Fah West and TOT Patong come to mind immediately. Many of the other providers aren't so lucky. When you're ready to get a new package, physically go to the office, and take a Thai-speaking friend with you.

Fifth, when you go to the service provider's office, take your passport (or ID card if you're Thai). If you're looking for a postpaid account, where you don't pay for the service in advance, keep in mind that you're actually applying for credit. Some service providers will give you a postpaid account if you have a work permit. Others will give you an account if you have a retirement visa, and the rules change all the time. Many require that a Thai national sign you up, to guarantee that the bill will be paid.

Sixth, when you go to the service provider's office, take an exact street address, written in Thai, plus a map. You'll need it.

Seventh, if you're going for a wireless 3G connection, take your hardware with you, even if you have to schlep your desktop PC along. You should always insist on getting the wireless connection working, even if you have to wait an hour or two for the satellite's accounts to get updated.

Eighth, if you're getting a wired connection, have a schedule for

when the installer can find you at home. The installers here aren't any more reliable than the ones anywhere else in the world, so give yourself lots of leeway. You also need to understand that the installer is only responsible for getting the internet working up to the boundary of your property – they're not responsible for wiring inside your house. That said, most installers I know are willing to go the extra mile and make sure your line's working all the way to your computer, for a few hundred baht.

There you have it. Stick with those eight guidelines and you're likely to have a decent internet connection going in short order.

We're running informal computer clinic round tables 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. You can shoot him mail at Woody@KhunWoody.com, follow him on Twitter, @PhuketLiveWire, or "like" his page at [facebook.com/SandwichShoppes](https://www.facebook.com/SandwichShoppes).

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Intel Corp to help Thai education

TECHNOLOGY firm Intel Corp says it is committed to assisting the education sector in Thailand, with the aim to encourage the country's students to get the latest innovative technologies as learning tools, according to Mr Accharas Ousynprasert, country manager of Intel Microelectronics (Thailand).

The 'future classroom model' is an education solution tailored for one-to-one 'eLearning' in classrooms around the world.

Currently, Intel Microelectronics (Thailand) is working on "Future Classroom" as a pilot project for Mattayom one students at Taweethapisek and Wat Rachathiwas Schools in Bangkok.

"This move is to support the government's one tablet per

child (OTPC) policy."

Under the pilot project, the company supports information and communication technology infrastructure, including the content distribution network, firewall, content caching and classroom management to address the challenges of internet connectivity and content accessibility.

It also offers the Intel Learning Series 1-to-1 e-Learning Professional Development Program to train teachers using Intel Teach.

Intel has provided 10-inch screen tablets for Wat Rachathiwas School's standard one class and a class of autistic students and Taweethapisek School's standard one class during the pilot period that started this month.

The tablets deployed at the schools are equipped with a classroom management software program, which allows teachers to monitor activities on tablets in the classroom.

John E Davies, vice president of sales and marketing group and general manager at Intel World Ahead Program, said that Intel's server appliances and content distribution solutions allow the school to address two main challenges – how students benefit from rich internet content in schools with limited internet connectivity, and how teachers find and receive the right content without overly burdening them.

– *Phuket Gazette*

Thai signs of life



Whatever it is, don't do it!



RAVISHING: ... And it has four wheels.



A new James Bond movie?



UPLIFTING: Is that like a push up bra? LOS compiled by Marc Mulloy.



YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED: Surprisingly this is not in Phuket.

When analogies go bad

25 terrible analogies collected by High School English Teachers

- 1) Her face was a perfect oval, like a circle that had its two sides gently compressed by a ThighMaster.
- 2) His thoughts tumbled in his head, making and breaking alliances like underpants in a dryer without Cling Free.
- 3) He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it.
- 4) She grew on him like she was a colony of E-Coli, and he was room-temperature Canadian beef.
- 5) She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh, like that sound a dog makes just before it throws up.
- 6) Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.
- 7) He was as tall as a six-foot, three-inch tree.
- 8) The revelation that his marriage of 30 years had disintegrated because of his wife's infidelity came as a rude shock, like a surcharge at a formerly surcharge-free ATM machine.
- 9) The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.
- 10) McBride fell 12 stories, hitting the pavement like a Hefty bag filled with vegetable soup.
- 11) From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and Jeopardy comes on at 7pm instead of 7:30pm.
- 12) Her hair glistened in the rain like a nose hair after a sneeze.
- 13) The hailstones leaped from the pavement, just like maggots when you fry them in hot grease.
- 14) Long separated by cruel fate, the star-crossed lovers raced across the grassy field toward each other like two freight trains, one having left Cleveland at 6:36 pm. traveling at 55 mph, the other from Topeka at 4:19 pm at a speed of 35 mph.
- 15) They lived in a typical suburban neighborhood with picket fences that resembled Nancy Kerrigan's teeth.
- 16) John and Mary had never met. They were like two hummingbirds who had also never met.
- 17) He fell for her like his heart was a mob informant, and she was the East River.
- 18) Even in his last years, Granddad had a mind like a steel trap, only one that had been left out so long it had rusted shut.
- 19) Shots rang out, as shots are wont to do.
- 20) The plan was simple, like my brother-in-law Phil. But unlike Phil, this plan just might work.
- 21) The young fighter had a hungry look, the kind you get from not eating for a while.
- 22) He was as lame as a duck. Not the metaphorical lame duck, either, but a real duck that was actually lame, maybe from stepping on a land mine or something.
- 23) The ballerina rose gracefully *en Pointe* and extended one slender leg behind her, like a dog at a fire hydrant.
- 24) It was an American tradition, like fathers chasing kids around with power tools.
- 25) He was deeply in love. When she spoke, he thought he heard bells, as if she were a garbage truck backing up.

Boathouse Wine & Grill

The legendary Boathouse Wine and Grill is a celebration of great French and Thai cuisine right on Kata beach, simply the best oceanfront dining on Phuket.

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The story of a teenage refugee

Books

By James Eckardt

WHEN Chris Cleave's second novel *The Other Hand* (Sceptre, London, 2009, 378pp) was first published in the UK, it sold a mere 3,000 copies in hardback. Word of mouth spread, however, and by the time the novel was published in the US it became the top New York Times best seller.

I had never heard of it, but a friend of mine in Jerusalem sent me a copy and I'm glad she did. Sharp dialogue, vivid characters and a plot chock full of surprises as cleverly withheld information is slowly revealed – this is a wonderfully constructed novel that only falls apart at the very end as the author sinks into the mawkish sentimentality that he has been carefully skirting for the rest of the story.

Two characters take turns narrating the novel: Little Bee, a sixteen year old refugee from "the oil wars" of southeastern Nigeria, and Sarah O'Rourke, a 31-year-old English-woman, founder and editor-in-chief of Nixie, a woman's magazine with a serious edge. The two meet for a few horrendous moments on a beach outside a resort that is on the edge of the war.

Little Bee and her older sister Nkiruka are in flight from a tribal militia that has massacred their entire village in an act of ethnic cleansing. Sarah O'Rourke and her husband just happen to be strolling on the beach outside the resort when the girls emerge from the jungle with the militia in hot pursuit. The meeting will change the lives of all four of them.

Little Bee opens the novel, in the good Queen's English she has learned in an immigration detention center where she spent two years after she stepped off the cargo ship that had brought her to London. She is in the company of other massacre survivors whose stories always

start: "And then the men came." If the men ever come back, she is always looking for suicide options.

"One day the detention officer gave us all a copy of a book called *Life in the United Kingdom*," she writes. "It explains the history of your country and how to fit in. I planned how I would kill myself in the time of Churchill (stand under bombs), Victoria (throw myself under a horse), and Henry the Eighth (marry Henry the Eighth). . . I began to understand how your country worked."

Yvette, a sassy Jamaican girl, has arranged the illegal release of four detainees after she exchanges her favors with an immigration official. Little Bee makes her way on foot to the home of Andrew O'Rourke. She's knows his address because she's kept his driving license ever since he discarded his wallet on the beach in Nigeria.

Andrew O'Rourke is a rather grim columnist for *The Times* of London and he has been sinking deeper and deeper into clinical depression after an act of supreme cowardice on that beach in Nigeria. He commits suicide by hanging. Little Bee turns up on his doorstep on the day of his funeral. Sarah walks to the church with Little Bee and her four-year-old son Charlie in his Batman suit. He wears it all the time so Sarah decides it's good enough for the funeral too.

Little Bee gets along great with Batman, and Sarah learns to appreciate her deadpan African humor. As she attempts to teach her the names of English flowers, Little Bee says: "There are no goats. That's why you have all these beautiful flowers."

"There were goats, in your village?"

"Yes, and they ate all the flowers."

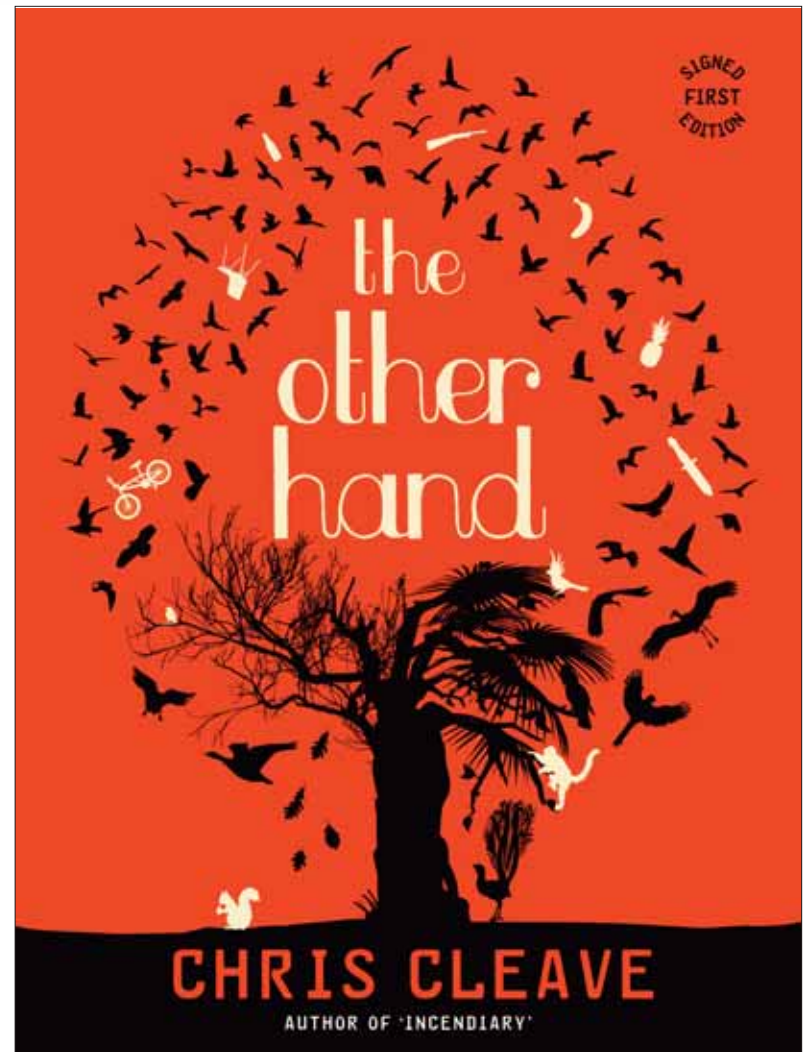
"I'm sorry."

"Don't be sorry. We ate all the goats."

The plot is complicated by Lawrence, Sarah's married lover, an officious civil servant. He threatens Little Bee with deportation, she threatens him right back to expose him to his wife.

An uneasy truce prevails until Batman goes into hiding in a public garden and Little Bee is forced to reveal the simple fact of her name to a policeman. The plot moves swiftly to its conclusion.

There is a surprise ending. And a surprise ending after that, but the last few pages are unbearably bad, trying to wrench some noble self-transcendence out of a recurring horror.



A vampire who's long in the tooth

IF THERE is one thing I can't stand, it's a vampire who turns nice. Give me the old fashioned black-and-white Bela Lugosi vampire who keeps noshing on necks until the last reel and a wooden stake is driven into his black heart. These pasty-faced modern day TV vampires keep falling for teenage girls when they should regard them as lunch meat.

Ramonne Delacroix started off bad in Jim Newport's first novel *The Vampire of Siam*. But now in the fourth of the series, *The Siamese Connection* (Willat Publishing, Venice, California, 2011, 300pp), the vampire is turning human.

This is because of an epic battle with Zhoupeng, a 1,000-year-old Chinese demon who had originally made him a vampire at Angkor Wat in 1860 while he was a member of the Henri Mouhot expedition up the Mekong.

After his modern-day victory, Ramonne gradually becomes human. His yellow eyes turn blue. He stops snacking on humans and eats real food. He can even walk around in sunlight. He also develops a heart and summons Kanchana, his old Thai flame, to his vineyard in Cambodia.

"I have no fear," she tells him. "I want you. I must have you. I need you. I have no life without you."

She braces herself for the bite on her neck but Ramonne explains that he has changed. They embark on an epic bout of lovemaking: "The sheets, new less than an hour before, were now torn, tattered and scattered, moist with their combined essences."

Days later, he declares: "You've brought true joy to my life."

"And you to mine, my love."

But then she tells him that she has to go back to Bangkok to take care of her silk business.

This goes against his nineteenth century sensibilities. So he kills her. Then he reverts to being a vampire – just in time because the novel is halfway over.

Newport spins two other plots simultaneously. One opens at the Bamboo Bar in the Oriental Hotel in 1948. Ramonne is the manager of the bar. Jim Thompson, the American Silk King, is his best friend. That's one of the

'As usual, Jim Newport exhibits a very good sense of place, describing well the Bamboo Bar, the old Silver Palm Cabaret, the modern day Foreign Correspondents' Club, Soi Thaniya and a famous Sukhumvit sex club.'

advantages of such a long life. You get the meet the most interesting people.

A sinister Japanese, Yoshiro Nakimira, is after 'The Oracle', a gold box with magical powers like the Ark of the Covenant. Ramonne "knew that had the sacred object, if it existed, fallen into the hands of the Nazis, it could have changed the tide of the war."

Somehow the Japanese had contrived to leave *The Oracle* behind in a sealed off storage room of the Oriental Hotel. Nakimira and his associates – The Black Dragons – want it back. But Ramonne kills him and

keeps *The Oracle* for himself. The problem with Ramonne is that he can never lose a fight. He also reads minds and reduces woman to a swoon at will.

The second plot takes place in modern day Bangkok and involves the couple Martin and Areeya Larue. Martin is a former rich snob and Areeya the spoiled daughter of a corrupt police general. But they've reformed and now run an orphanage in Cambodia.

Now they are in Bangkok looking forward to their long-awaited child. Ramonne is their patron.

While in 1949, the Black Dragons kidnap Jane Farmer, a female CIA agent and friend of Jim Thompson, in the present day they kidnap Areeya Larue not once, but twice. Ramonne will have to spring to the rescue. In the end, he's reduced to a pile of ashes.

Does this mean the end of Ramonne Delacroix? Fat chance.

As usual, Jim Newport exhibits a very good sense of place, describing well the Bamboo Bar, the old Silver Palm Cabaret, the modern day Foreign Correspondents' Club, Soi Thaniya and a famous Sukhumvit sex club.

He writes a prose ode to the glories of the Skytrain. But he has joined the ranks of other expatriate writers in Thailand – I could name four or five off hand – who've written an original first novel and followed it with a series of mediocre ones. But that might just be me.

After Bela Lugosi, I lost interest in vampires. If you like vampires, by all means buy this book.

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Native and imported plants



NATIVE OR NOT? Given the amount of travel that has existed for centuries, many plants, which would seem like Thai natives upon first glance, are actually just *farangs* in disguise. Photos:Cliff; shirishag75



Gardening

By Patrick Campbell

FOR the aspiring or experienced gardener, it's always a good idea to go on a reconnaissance patrol to see what plants are thriving in your territory. And I refer not only to other gardens in Phuket, but also to everything else that fosters greenery – from roadsides, shore-lines, tree-clad slopes and scrub-land to plant nurseries. If a species is doing well in any of these environments, it will probably do well in your patch.

You are unlikely to need to raise cash crops, but I wonder if you are aware that sugar cane grows here in small plantations, as well as maize (sweet corn). There are pineapples in the north of the island, often

cultivated beneath young rubber trees so they still get some sunshine. Papayas feature everywhere.

For better or for worse, oil palms are arriving by way of Krabi, no longer decorative but strictly utilitarian. And while local farmers are steadily selling off their land to developers, those that remain still grow Chinese kale, garlic, chilies, green beans and wing beans, chives, morning glory, and herbs such as basil and mint. Most of the leaf vegetables in fresh markets here come from Phuket.

And there are still a few venerable trees that produce edible fare: small groves of cashews, some stately tamarind and sator trees, somehow mercifully spared the chain-saw or the back-hoe.

Mango trees, oddly a relative of the cashew, are rightly prized by Thais as yard specimens. After all,

apart from being fine-looking trees, they produce fruit, which are used both when green and hard in savory dishes, or when yellow and ripe as part of many succulent desserts.

However, it is worth remembering that some of this wealth of flora that seems so much a living part of the landscape is not in fact native to Phuket – or indeed to the Kingdom. The tamarind, long naturalized in Thailand, comes from central Africa, mangoes (*mangifera*), although present here for 300 years, may well have originated in India.

The sator (*parkia*) certainly is a native tree, a giant of the rainforest where it may reach 30 meters or more, but the cashew (*anacardium*), in common with the papaya (*carica*), hails from tropical America.

'It is worth remembering that some of this wealth of flora that seems so much a living part of the landscape is not in fact native to Phuket – or indeed to the Kingdom.'

On the other hand, bananas (*musa*), of which there are more than 200 varieties, can certainly be claimed by Thailand. Indeed, one has only to drive along the mountain road from Rawai to Kata to pass groves of wild bananas on the hillsides.

They have been there for centuries. And Patong, just a few kilometers on, owes its name to a variety of the fruit.

The jujube (*zizyphus*), originally from China, has become naturalized here. I recall one self-sown tree with its spindly branches on the front line at Nai Harn beach. People used to come and break off limbs to get at the small, acidic, plum-like fruit.

It eventually succumbed – unsurprisingly – to the predations

of people and salt-laden winds.

So, the picture is not a straightforward one. And it becomes more complex when one realizes that many so-called wild plants in Phuket may have mixed origins, while some are undoubtedly indigenous to Southeast Asia.

Others may have been introduced and subsequently become escapees from gardens and parks. Some have been planted as roadside trees and have spread their wings.

It is not difficult for these arrivistes; after all, the climate here is so hospitable, with its constant temperature and warm rain for most of the year.

This is particularly true for plants at the other end of the scale.

It is these smaller and less conspicuous brethren who will take center-stage next time around.

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

Tip of the Week

Dry weeks ahead

WE probably won't have more than the odd thunderstorm in the next couple of months. That means rock-hard soil and the need to irrigate lawn and garden.

Potted plants are especially vulnerable. I have about fifty and they need individual treatment. The desert plants in full sun – *abelia* (desert rose), *euphorbia* (crown of thorns), any *yuccas* and cacti should be allowed to dry out completely and then given a moderate soaking.

Over-watering will assuredly rot the fleshy stems or leaves. Shrubs that enjoy gently moist-



Desert Rose. Photo: Troy Mckaskle

ened, but not saturated soil, include: *wrightias*, *plumerias*, *bougainvilleas*, *dracaenas*, wax roses, *codiaeum*, and *cordylines*.

They should be watered every other day when in drought conditions, or when they show signs of drooping or wilting.

Jatropha podagrica (an interesting container plant), ginger, *gardenias*, *heliconias*, and most fleshy, shade-loving plants such as *dieffenbachia*, *caladium*, *aglaomena* and ferns such as *asplenium* ideally need moist roots at all times.



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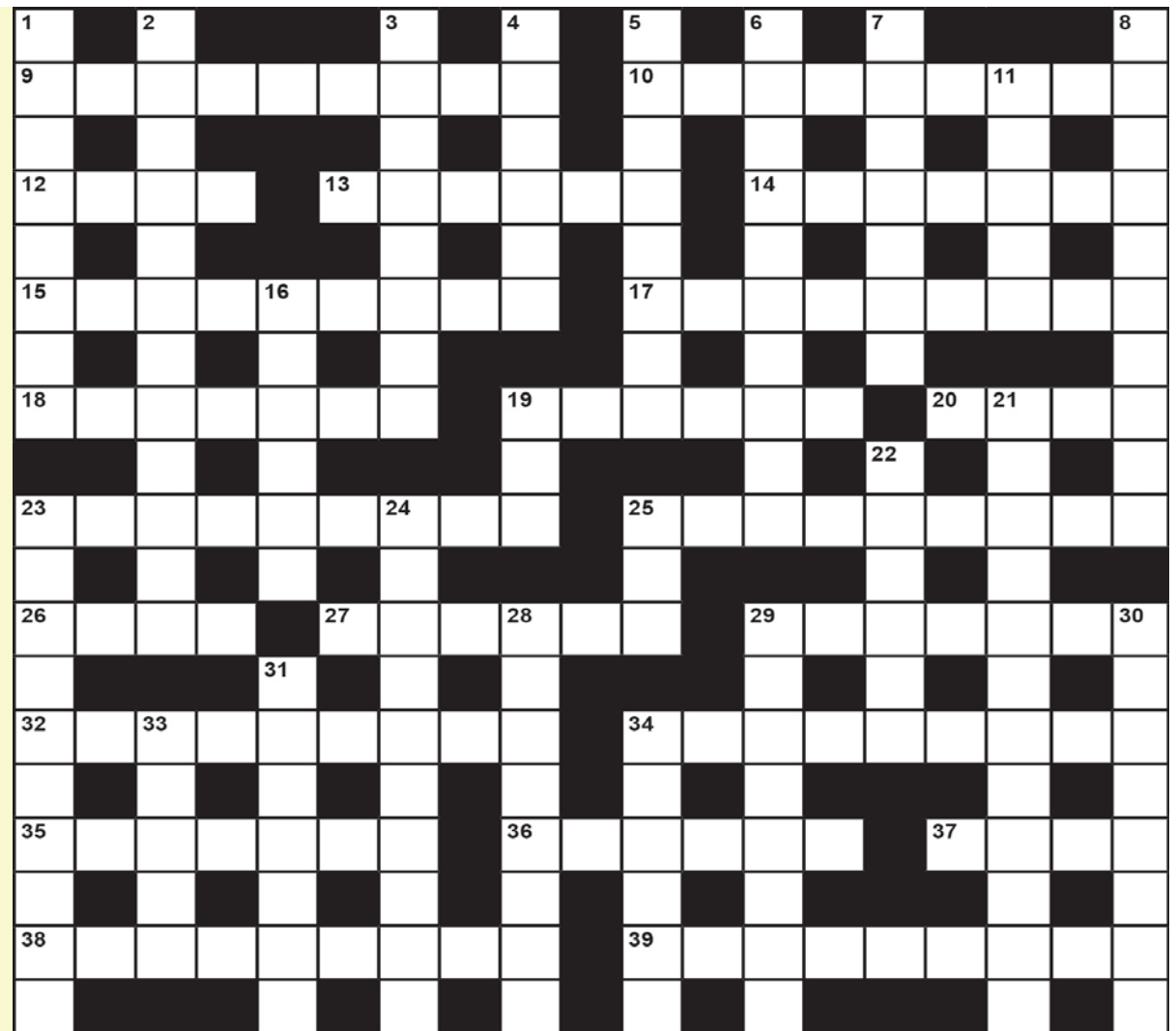
SUDOKU: Each row, column and 3x3 sub-grid must contain the number 1-9 once only. © Kevin Stone (brainbashers.com)

COFFEE break

Across:

9. Choice in second ballot (9)
10. Artisan makes boats, second cove! (9)
12. Turn-out becoming to us (4)
13. Partly turn over a leaf (3,3)
14. In time, disturb the smoothness of rare delicacy (7)
15. Offer to get old in period of youth! (6,3)
17. Using up of resources, noted pile destroyed (9)
18. A passing effect produced by a vehicle siren, for example (7)
19. Use keyboard again and re-categorize (6)
20. Prefix, of all things, in compound words (4)
23. A skilled specialist for tutoring

- session by expert Ian (9)
25. Sit uncomfortably on, note, or turn North for French thoroughbred (9)
26. A piece of news in the paper disturbs mite (4)
27. Female learner uttered about flowers (6)
29. Married newly on Thai island off Phuket (3,4)
32. Felt respect for rep I'd mess about (9)
34. Having lack of confidence in cast, he moved East (9)
35. Being lunar, an unusual way of forming a ring (7)
36. Turn troop around, move to a new location (6)
37. An aircraft requiring no runway initially (4)
38. Declare at being moved badly cut (9)
39. Hot, so sign off the gunnings down (9)



Down:

1. Mixed as arranged (8)
2. Cost of security at the end of the day, sum required following shutdown (7,5)
3. Circle in, disturbing sad ruin of an ancient reptile (8)
4. Result of a cold, violent expiration (6)
5. Attribute account, give credence to (8)
6. Get thin journal, unwanted documents and such (5,5)
7. Rest out, having become more corpulent (7)

8. An ad. you do not see from one of TAT's previous campaigns? (6,4)
11. Greek character, fit out in civvies (5)
16. Cooked rice covering the French cream cake (7)
19. Right article was published in the paper (3)
21. Nun came right around to martial music (8,4)
22. Quiet opening for old confession (6)
23. Unlawfully credit one short minute, friend (10)
24. Show meaning of bad turn, state outright (10)

25. Father left friend (3)
28. Rounds out, editor greatly contributes to (8)
29. Man stood out, finding large extinct mammal (8)
30. Seen led out second, unnecessary (8)
31. Red seal indicates traders (7)
33. Sudden fear from pain, turning cold (5)
34. Give a hard time, has Rear Admiral in second (6)

Cryptic crossword compiled by Patong Bill. Answers on page 31

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21):

The stars advise Sagittarians that grass can become greener wherever you water it, not necessarily on the other side. Dissatisfaction with certain aspects of your life can be a negative factor this week, but looking at ways to find more excitement will yield surprising results. Those with a birthday in the coming week should see more romantic stability during the year ahead. Wear the color lime green to encourage a brighter mood.

CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20):

Capricorns keen to make headway with career matters will benefit from the cosmic climate until the middle of December. Those who have been insecure should be able to channel these feelings into positive energy – a fire sign friend has motivating words this weekend. In the realm of romance, the stars advise sticking to your principles can be a challenge where a possible relationship with an air sign is concerned.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19):

Problem solving is well starred for Aquarians this week. Knowing which way to turn in the world of work becomes clearer; Tuesday is the most auspicious day to

discuss moves with those who have influence. Where romance is concerned, the stars suggest that choices must be made. Another air sign's gesture this weekend can show you where this person's true feelings lie, but a fire sign is keeping secrets.

PISCES (Feb 20-March 20):

Spur of the moment travel is well starred for those born under the sign of Pisces. Friction in personal relationships is best left behind and some time away from people you have not been seeing eye to eye with is advisable. Work should be mostly routine during the remainder of December and the stars suggest using this time to plan strategies for the New Year. Your lucky color this week is water melon red.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):

Enlightenment comes from an unexpected source and Arians are forecast to make beneficial changes by the end of this year. This can have a positive effect on romantic relationships – another fire sign will appreciate your desire for more spontaneity. This is an auspicious time to present new ideas in the world of work, but presentation will be the key to success. The stars suggest that an earth sign can help with this.

YOUR horoscope By Isla Star

TAURUS (April 21-May 21):

Taureans are advised to maintain a low-key lifestyle until the middle of December. This is not an auspicious week to dig too deeply for answers or become involved in unnecessary stress. The stars suggest that your energy levels will increase during the second half of the month, in time to maximize enjoyment of the holiday season. Flirtation with an air sign can become as serious as you like this weekend.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21):

The scent of success strengthens for those born under the sign of Gemini this week. Cosmic conditions are ideal for making contact with people you've lost touch with – a water sign can be influential in the world of work. On the social scene, being the center of attraction this weekend opens up romantic possibilities. Where finances are concerned, a wave of good luck is forecast to affect your bank balance.

CANCER (June 22-July 23):

Physical activity is recommended for Cancerians whose mental energy has been sluggish since the start of this month. The world of work can be frustrating; your powers of persuasion will be needed to convince a stubborn earth sign colleague. In the realm of romance, those in a love triangle involving an air sign could see that this situation has no happy ending. Your lucky color this week is dark chocolate.

LEO (July 24-Aug 22):

A stumbling block can prevent Leos from putting their best foot forward in the world of work. The stars advise that a water sign's failure to meet a commitment will need to be addressed before more problems arise. Truth may be hard to accept this weekend where romance with another fire sign is concerned. Plans to spend the holiday season away from home may be compromised by a friend's sudden decision to visit.

VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 23):

The stars advise that you should prepare to try harder this week. Where work is concerned, it won't be easy to get the attention of an air sign – Tuesday and Wednesday are

the most auspicious days to make contact. In the realm of romance, dreams can bring fears into the open, prompting Virgoans to face up to facts they should no longer ignore. Your lucky color this week is indigo.

LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23):

Choosing new friends carefully is recommended for Librans. There are hints that a fire sign has a hidden agenda in getting to know you, and this could have a negative effect on your situation at work. Where money matters are concerned, the stars also advise treading with caution; this is not a fortuitous time to take risks. Romance with an earth sign starts to look more promising this weekend.

SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22):

There is focus on work this week – the stars recommend taking care of unfinished business before the holiday season or risk upsetting the balance in romance. Finances fall under auspicious astral conditions and investments made before the end of the year should yield well. Friendship with another water sign can be affected by this person's tendency to take your agreement for granted. Your lucky color this week is silver.

England face tough draw in World Cup

INTERNATIONAL Sport

By Mitch Phillips

HOSTS England and Six Nations champions Wales paid a heavy price for the November defeats that sent them tumbling down the rankings when they were put in a tough pool with Australia in the draw for the 2015 rugby World Cup on Monday.

Holders New Zealand, who have never lost a pool game in the tournament, got a favorable draw as they will face Argentina, Tonga and two qualifiers.

Twice winners South Africa were paired alongside Samoa for the fourth consecutive World Cup and Scotland, while fourth seeds France, who leapfrogged England in the rankings to snatch the last top-tier seed, were rewarded with games against Ireland and Italy.

Tournament officials said the draw was made three years ahead of the event to ease planning and logistics and they now know to organize sizable venues for the eye-catching Pool A clashes.

England's November defeats by Australia and South Africa sent them into the second tier of seeds while Wales' precipitous decline since their Six Nations grand slam dropped them to the third tier a little over a year after they reached the World Cup semi-finals.

So they now face the toughest group, alongside twice champions Australia, along with "Oceania 1", possibly Fiji, and the winners of a final playoff.

While the importance of topping a pool can be debated, the fact remains that no team has lost a World Cup match and gone on to win the trophy.

"It is definitely a pretty tough pool," England coach Stuart Lancaster said. "We might have to change our warm-up games," he added, after England had played Wales in warm-ups before previous World Cups.

"Australia have just beaten us and if you look at the age and profile of their squad, they have got some young lads as well. We will look forward to it."

Australia captain David Pocock said of the rivalry with the host nation: "It runs deep. To play them in the pool there will be a lot of hype around that game and it's one you look forward to as a player."

One crumb of comfort for the teams in Pool A is that should they top it they would not play world champions New Zealand, who England hammered 38-21 at Twickenham on Saturday having lost the previous nine meetings, until the semi-finals at the earliest.

Wales have also lost their last nine games against Australia but coach Warren Gatland put a positive spin on the draw.

"We put ourselves in this position and our experience of 2011 is that if you come out of a tough group it sets you up for the quarter and semi-finals," said Gatland, whose side lost to South Africa but beat Fiji and Samoa before overcoming Ireland in the quarter-finals.

"The tougher the group the better. If you look at New Zealand often they don't get tested enough in the pool stage, Teams sometimes field a second side against them. And then they often come undone."



REVOLUTION: England's center Manu Tuilagi (C) breaks a tackle from fly half Dan Carter (bottom) and Richie McCaw during the recent international rugby union match between England and New Zealand. Photo:AFP

If New Zealand win their pool, as they have in every previous tournament, they face the runners-up of Pool D, likely to be France, Ireland or Italy.

Pool C runners-up, probably Argentina or Tonga, will play the Pool D winners.

But All Blacks coach Steve

Hansen, whose 20-game unbeaten run ended on Saturday, was taking nothing for granted.

"If you don't respect somebody you are going to get your rear end spanked. No-one has a God-given right to get through the quarter-finals."

France have been pooled with

one of the southern "big three" only once in eight World Cups and coach Philippe Saint-Andre was happy with his European group.

"We're not in the pool of death," he said. The World Cup will get underway on September 18, 2015, with the final to be held at Twickenham on October 31.

— Reuters

Arsene under pressure

ARSENAL are currently enduring their worst start to a Premiership season under Arsene Wenger.

The London team are in tenth place of the league after 15 games and manager Arsene Wenger is starting to feel the pressure. He watched as his team were booed off by their own supporters after the defeat to Swansea last weekend. Michu scored two late goals for Swansea and the defeat leaves Arsenal five points behind fourth placed Tottenham Hotspur.

Across London, Rafa Benitez is struggling to win over the supporters who have made their displeasure at him taking control of Chelsea very clear. His tenure has started with the team failing to win in the three games he has managed. Chelsea are without a win in their last seven Premier League games. The 3-1 defeat to West Ham leaves Chelsea in third place, ten points behind top of the table Manchester United.

Manchester United extended their lead at the top of the table by beating Reading 4-3. All seven goals



STRAIN: Wenger is under pressure from his own fans. Photo: Reuters

were scored in the first 35 minutes.

Manchester City came back from a goal down to draw with Everton 1-1 and continue their unbeaten start to the season.

Tottenham moved up to fourth after a 3-0 victory at Fulham.

Other results.

Liverpool 1-0 Southampton

QPR 1-1 Aston Villa

West Brom 0-1 Stoke

Norwich 2-1 Sunderland

Newcastle 3-0 Wigan

— Andrew Scott

PREMIER LEAGUE TABLE		PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES	
TEAM	PTS		
1 Man Utd	38	SAT, 08 DEC 2012 22:00	
2 Man City	33	Arsenal vs West Brom	
3 Chelsea	26	Aston Villa vs Stoke	
4 Tottenham	26	Southampton vs Reading	
5 WBA	26	Sunderland vs Chelsea	
6 Everton	23	Swansea vs Norwich	
7 Swansea	23	Wigan vs QPR	
8 West Ham	22	SUN, 09 DEC 2012	
9 Stoke	22	MAN CITY vs MAN UTD	
10 Arsenal	21	20:30	
11 Liverpool	19	SUN, 09 DEC 2012	
12 Norwich	19	EVERTON vs TOTTENHAM	
13 Fulham	17	22:00	
14 Newcastle	17	SUN, 09 DEC 2012	
15 Aston Villa	14	WEST HAM vs LIVERPOOL	
16 Wigan	14	23:00	
17 Sunderland	13	TUES, 11 DEC 2012	
18 Southampton	12	03:00	
19 Reading	9	Fulham vs Newcastle	
20 QPR	6	WED, 12 DEC 2012	
		02:45	
		Sunderland vs Reading	

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Sport

Swim, cycle and run to fun



READY, SET: Young triathletes wait to start.



GO: Swimmers start the event.



The bike section was the longest part.



An IronKid crosses the finish line.

THE third official IronKids took place at Thanyapura Sports and Leisure Club (TPSLC) on December 1.

The popularity of the event continues to grow with almost 300 competitors, including 30 from overseas, competing in the event.

The race included three age groups from: 6 to 8-years-old, 9 to 11-years-old and 12 to 17-years-old, competing in age appropriate distances.

The youngest 1st place finisher was 6-year old Sophie Schwalb from Bangkok, with a time of 18 minutes and 43 seconds.

The Junior age group, with over 60 competitors, followed a course comprised of a

50 meter swim, 3 km bike and 500 meter run. Phuket International School Student Siam Yapp had the fastest junior time overall, winning the 8-year age category with a time of 11 minutes and 40 seconds. The fastest female in the Junior division was Natalie Hunter, with a time of 12 minutes 23 seconds.

The Intermediate age group was the largest individual field with over 80 competitors following a course of a 150m swim, 6km bike and 1.5km run.

Overall Intermediate winner was returning athlete, 11-year-old Muhammad Shafriz from Malaysia, with a time of 23 minutes and 02 seconds, followed closely by Ben

Mcmillan, 1st place 10-year-old finisher with a time of 23 minutes and 17 seconds.

The fastest intermediate female was 11-year-old Mayumi Shinozuka, also from Kuala Lumpur. Phuket-based Natalya Dougall from Phuket International Academy was the 1st place finisher for the 9-year-old age group, with a time of 27 minutes and 12 seconds.

Rikigoro Shinozuka, 17, from Kuala Lumpur, was the fastest overall athlete in the Senior Boys division, with an overall time of 36 minutes 28 seconds. Defending IronKids Phuket Champion, 13-year-old Zoe Bowden, also from Kuala Lumpur, was the fastest overall female athlete in the Senior Girls division with a finish time of


42 minutes 31 seconds on the 300m swim, 12km bike and 3km run seniors course.

IronKids Race Director, Claire Ratcliffe spoke to the *Gazette* about the international appeal of the event:


"It has grown quite big and it is nice to see a lot of international participation. If it was just the local kids they would get to know each other and competition would get a bit boring. When the kids don't know who's coming over it gets a bit more exciting at the finish line," she said.

Details of 2013 Junior Triathlon series are yet to be finalized.

— *Phuket Gazette*



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Meyer mesmerizes

THE standout triathlete of the IronMan 70.3 was not one of the elite pros, but amateur Tim Meyer, who had to race as an amateur due to the German Triathlon Union not providing him with an Ironman Pro License.

Meyer wasn't fazed by starting one minute behind the professional men's field and by the 30 kilometer point of the 90km cycle leg of the race he was in contention for a fast finish.

The Thanyapura Sports & Leisure Club (TSLC) team athlete kept five times World Champion Chris McCormack and Olympian Ruedi Wild in sight on the bike, riding with three other pro athletes.

As the rain came down over the last 10 km of the bike leg, the roads became treacherous, but Meyer stayed focused even with a crash in the last 1 km.

Starting the half marathon, this incredible running talent unleashed his A-game as he set about catching the four world class athletes in front of him.

As the rain continued, Meyer moved past Chris Lieto, one of the triathlon world's fastest cyclists, and into fourth place by the end of the first lap.

His fastest run split of the day, 1hr 16min 57sec, brought him within sight of the second and third-placed athletes at the line, but with one minute up his sleeve he claimed third place overall, only 15 seconds



Top men finishers at IronMan.

behind second-placed Ruedi Wild – his training partner at Thanyapura for the past three weeks.

As the top three professional men were showcased to the crowd, third-placed professional Alberto Casadei of Italy showed outstanding sportsmanship by bringing Meyer forward to stand on the podium to celebrate his fine performance and third place overall.

It is another top flight result that further confirms TSLC is the region's pre-eminent world class training ground for Asia's top triathletes.

At the Phuket Laguna Triathlon, Meyer pushed Wild all the way to the finish line for a very creditable second place.

The exceptional triathlon elite camp training programs offered at TSLC provides athletes with a proven edge.

— *Phuket Gazette*



Photo: Guy Nowell.

King's Cup sets sail

THE Phuket King's Cup Regatta is once more putting on a spectacular display of the finest sailing talent, with a total of 168 boats entering from over 35 countries, each striving to win the 'must-have' racing trophy of Asia.

The event started on December 1 and continues through to this Saturday, December 8, with the full complement of classes for the 2012 race year which includes: IRC Zero (international 'Grand Prix' boats), the highly competitive IRC1, IRC2, IRC3, Premier, Sport Boats, Modern Classic, Bareboat Charter, Multihull, Firefly 850 Sports, Classic and Cruising Class.

This year's regatta also features windsurfing, reintroduced as a competitive class, and will highlight some of Thailand's most famous windsurfing stars, including Ek Boonsawad and Siriporn "Dao" Kaewduanggam. Ek recently represented Thailand at the 2012 London Olympics, while Dao won the 2010 Youth Olympics in Singapore. Up to 40 windsurfers will compete, including the women's 2012 Olympic Gold Medalist, Marina Alabau Neira from Spain.

The King's Cup Regatta 2012 will also incorporate dinghy racing as part of its roster of classes. The inclusion has played a part in the development of youth sailing in Thailand, encouraging more young sailors to take up the sport,

and empowering the development of talented and aspiring skippers. All told, 40 windsurfers and 50 dinghies will have competed over four days from Sunday, December 2 through Wednesday December 5.

In addition to the windsurfers and dinghies, 78 keelboats and multihulls will compete.

Kevin Whitcraft, President of the Phuket King's Cup Regatta Organizing Committee, spoke of the role this classic race plays in the development of Thailand as a sailing nation and sailing destination:

"We are very proud that the Phuket King's Cup Regatta is able to take a regional role in contributing to the growth of the Thai sailing community and the yachting industry in Thailand, reinforcing its position as one of the world's premier sailing destinations. It serves as an inspiration for new and improving Thai sailors, giving them a superb opportunity to experience international competition. From a wider perspective, it is hugely beneficial for Phuket, a part of Thailand famed for its beautiful surroundings, legendary hospitality and suitability for hosting Asia's ultimate Regatta," he said.

In addition, the Phuket King's Cup Regatta is also an important event for the island in terms of development and commerce.

One of the longest running international sporting events in

Phuket, the Regatta generates significant revenue for the local economy, bringing with it sports tourists and their disposable incomes, along with approximately 40 million baht in tourism receipts, according to a survey by the organizers. It serves to the great benefit of Phuket's hotels and restaurants which enjoy a surge of custom before, during and after Regatta Week.

If travel, excursions and repeat visits during the year are factored in, the economic contribution of the event is likely to be in the region of 300 million baht.

The Regatta is strongly supported by local authorities and Phuket Province, who work together with event organizers to make the Regatta an annual success for everyone on the Island.

The Phuket King's Cup is also famed for its series of legendary beachside parties, attracting over 1,500 party-goers who enjoy the live music, great atmosphere and food and drink provided by the Regatta's sponsors.

The Phuket King's Cup Regatta is proudly sponsored by the Phuket Gazette, PGTV and the nationally televised Phuket Today show on UBC/True Visions. Phuket Today, co-produced by PGTV and MCOT World, will be providing coverage of this event. The half-hour show runs six times a day, seven days a week, on channel 59 & 99. - Phuket Gazette

Phuket Soccer Schools score more victories



LITTLE DRIBBLER: Action from the U8 game. Photo: Martin Hill

ON SATURDAY December 1, Phuket Soccer Schools Academy Program accepted an invitation from Kanjonkiet FC to take part in training matches at the new covered soccer facility at their International School in Kathu.

The Under 8's played their first match against Kanjonkiet FC A team 5v5 and played some good flowing football with Daniel C scoring twice in a 2-1 victory. In the Under 8's second game against Kanjonkiet FC's B team, they played more possession football and took their chances with Daniel C scoring another brace and Jonah D also finding the net in a 3-0 win for the visitors.

Man of the Match went to Lou Mouille for his all-round endeavor, commitment and excellent build up play. Under 8 Man of the Match went to Lou Mouille for his two well taken goals, all-round endeavor, commitment and excellent build up play.

The PSS Academy Under 10 team played Kanjonkiet FC's A team 5v5 in their first game with Khun Fard and Luke C scoring in a hard fought 2-1 win for PSS. In the second game against Kanjonkiet FC's B team, the PSS did not hold back and played some great attacking football and defended stoutly to record a 4-0 win with Luke C, Fard and Poom all scoring. The Under 10 Man of the Match went to PSS goalkeeper Khun Nik for some outstanding stops and great distribution.

The final 7v7 training match in preparation for the upcoming JSSL tournament at BIS saw a mixed PSS team of U8 and U10 players play against their gracious hosts. After conceding an early goal, PSS regrouped and went on to score seven unanswered goals to win the final game 7-1. PSS

coaches were pleased to see 6 different goal scorers in the game with Lou M, Siam Y, Daniel C, Fard and Luke, each finding the back of the net.

The PSS Under 12 Academy team played in two twenty minute matches against Kanjonkiet FC teams. The opening match against Kanjonkiet FC's A team was a tight and closely fought game but PSS were able to come out on top with a final minute Koji M winner to go along with Liam D and Rohan S both scoring in a 3-2 victory. In the second game against Kanjonkiet FC B team the PSS players kept the ball better and passed it around well. This created opportunities for the attackers with Tim S scoring twice to win the match with score line of 0-2 to the visitors. Tim had two great chances to complete his hat trick only to see his chances go over and then wide. Ollie V was selected as U12 Man of the Match for his 100 per cent effort, awareness and work rate for himself and his team mates.

Head coach of Phuket Soccer Schools, Martin Hill says "We would like to thank Kanjonkiet FC and in particular Ryan Meinhart for their hospitality and the opportunity to play at their great new facility in Kathu and we look forward to another opportunity early next year. The games were very competitive and I would like to say a big thank you to referee Domo, who explained his decisions to the players which helped them accept the decisions."

For any other questions on Phuket Soccer Schools please e-mail info@phuketsoccerschools.com.

Taekwondo tourney

THE national Taekwondo coach, of Thailand, Choi Yong Seok, met with various sporting dignitaries in Phuket recently to discuss preparations for the first Phuket International Choi Yong Seok Taekwondo Championship.

The event will be held at Saphan Hin Indoor Sports Complex on January 26-27, 2013, and is expected to attract competitors from 12 countries, including about 120 from South Korea, between 1,000 - 2,000 Thai participants and 200 competitors from other

countries.

Marketing consultant for the event, Yosrak Taebunyanupap told the meeting that he hopes the tournament will encourage young people to take an interest in the sport.

"With this event we will help the youth learn Taekwondo and then they could be in the Thai national team and the Olympics in the future," he said.

Application is open from now until January 15, 2013 for anyone interested in the competition.



For those wanting to register, visit: thannam.net. Non-Thai competitors are advised to register by emailing: Phuketintertkd@gmail.com.



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Macca cooks up a debut win

By Andrew Scott

CHRIS 'Macca' McCormack made up for his poor showing at Laguna Phuket Triathlon (LPT) by winning Laguna IronMan 70.3 in a time of four hours and four minutes. He fended off the challenge of LPT winner Ruedi Wild to mark his debut with a win.

In the women's event, Melissa Hauschildt won her second title, beating LPT winner Radka Vodickova with a time of four hours twenty three minutes. The race started under gray skies, and heavy rain made the bike leg of the event a bit treacherous for some triathletes.

A delighted Chris McCormack told the Phuket Gazette that he was happy to win, given the quality of the field.

"It's a strong field, as you've got guys like Ruedi who was at the London Olympics. He is a very strong athlete. Chris Lieto sets a good tempo and athletes like Massimo are also strong. With races like this, you have to play it smart as it can be so unpredictable.

"I kept looking up thinking, 'if this rain clears and the sun comes up it will be like a sauna'. Anything can happen, which is the great thing about this race."

The 39-year-old two-time Ironman World Champion stormed out of the water and onto the bike course to join the breakaway pack with Ruedi Wild, American Chris Lieto, Alberto Cassadei of Italy and

the impressive young German Tim Meyer.

McCormack and Wild pulled away during the run and only 18 seconds separated them at the halfway mark of the two-lap course, but the Australian stepped up a gear to stretch his lead and cross the finish line almost three minutes ahead of Wild.

Cassadei, third in last weekend's LPT, again took the third men's pro podium spot, with Meyer finishing third overall and winning his 18-24 age group.

In a women's field opened up by the last-minute withdrawal due to illness of double Ironman and Ironman 70.3 World Champion Leanda Cave of Great Britain, Melissa Hauschildt made a solid defence of her 2011 title.

Hauschildt – whose bike and baggage were delayed by her airline and only arrived in Phuket on Saturday morning – managed to overtake Radka on the bike circuit at the 40km mark and was almost seven minutes ahead of the Czech Olympian coming out of T2 into the run.

"Radka managed to get a good lead on me but I passed her at the top of the first steep hill and I was pretty stoked by that," said Hauschildt. "From then on I just focused on staying in the lead and I'm so pleased



Chris McCormack celebrates winning the IronMan 70.3 with 'Lucky' the Laguna elephant.

to have won here again – it's the best race," she said.

Top Thai finisher was Phuket's Jaray Jearanai in four hours and thirty seven minutes at 19th place overall.

This year's third and final Ironman 70.3 Laguna Phuket registered 947 individual entries and 19 relay teams, a total of 1,004 athletes representing 55 nationalities. The race offered a pro prize purse of US\$ 25,000 and 35 slots for the 2013 Ironman 70.3 World Championships in Las Vegas.

RESULTS

Men

- 1 Chris McCormack (AUS) 04:04:40
- 2 Ruedi Wild (SUI) 04:07:17
- 3 Tim Meyer (GER) 04:07:32
- 4 Alberto Cassadei (ITA) 04:08:06
- 5 Frederik Croneborg (SWE) 04:14:16
- 6 Simon Agoston (AUT) 04:19:50

Women

- 1 Melissa Hauschildt (AUS) 04:23:30
- 2 Radka Vodickova (CZE) 04:31:46
- 3 Belinda Granger (AUS) 04:41:53
- 4 Tamsin Lewis (GBR) 04:42:53



Chris Lieto leads Macca after the swim.

Pearl set to shock 'Lightning Shrimp'

PHUKET United face a tough away fixture against the Surat Thani Futsal Club, nicknamed the 'Lightning Shrimp', tonight, Saturday 8.

Patt Srivijit, assistant coach of the Andaman Pearl, told the Gazette that the game against their southern rivals will be a big match, but he hopes the



team use this game to push up the league.

"Our aim is to finish in the top five of Thailand's Futsal League even though we are a new team this season.

"The team is improving their tactics, and we are doing fitness training for Thai and foreign players everyday. Phuket

United will be ready to kick off with Surat Thani on Saturday" he said

Coach Patt also told the Gazette that Phuket United is hoping to sign a defensive player from the Liga Futsal League of Brazil.

Colombian Andres Reyes was recently linked to Phuket United.

The team currently have two Brazilians: Rogerio Moreira and Jackson Santos.

Coach Patt had a message for the fans of Phuket United:

"I hope the fans support our team forever. We work hard for the fans, for the club, for everyone" – Wisuwat Romin



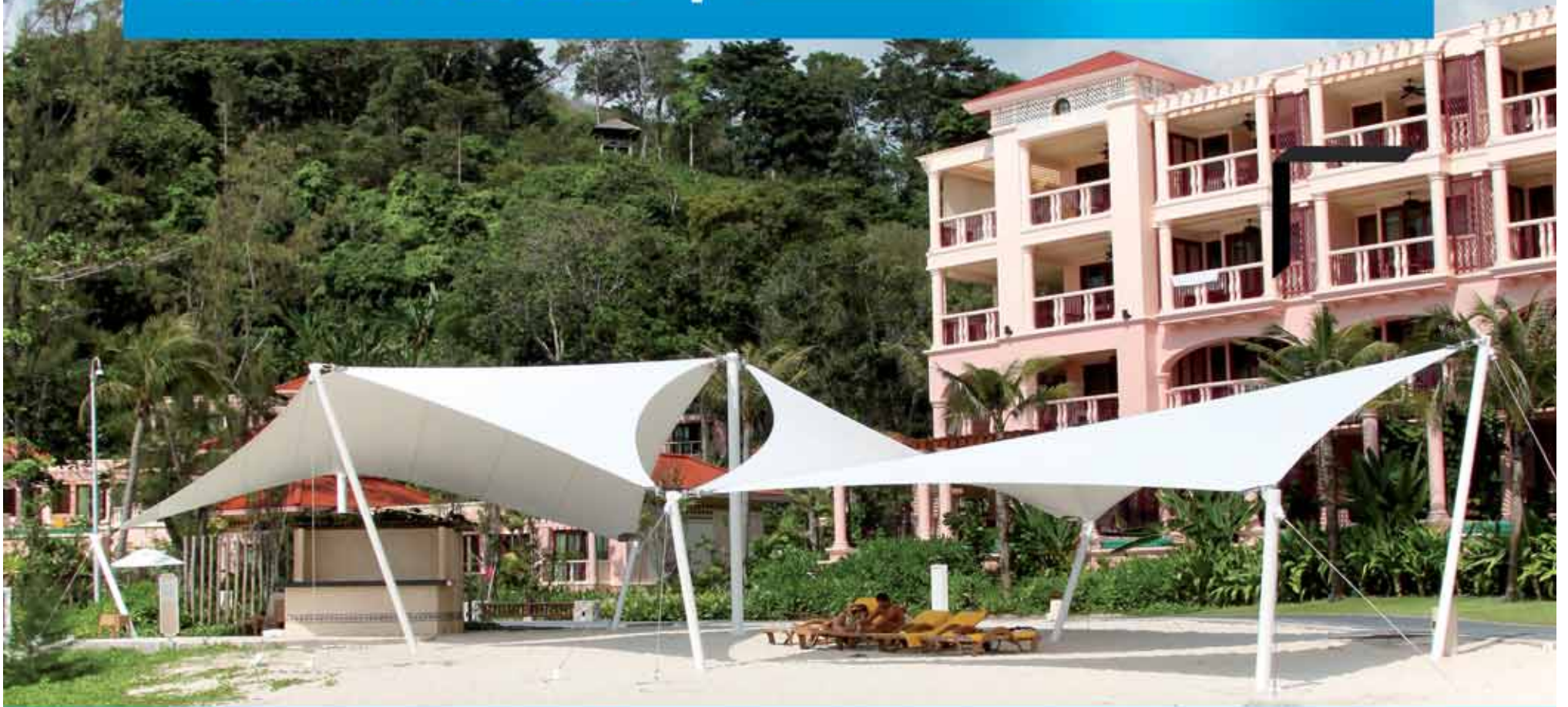
Coach Patt stretches before a training session.



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