

The Phuket Gazette

Volume 11 Issue 33

News Desk - Tel: 076-236555

August 14 - 20, 2004

Daily news at www.phuketgazette.net

20 Baht

The Gazette is published in association with

The **Nation**

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No defections in Phuket - Chuan

By Kamol Pirat

PHUKET: Former Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai has confirmed that Phuket's two members of parliament will stand as Democrat candidates in the upcoming general election, quashing rumors that one or both of them were planning to defect to the Thai Rak Thai party of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

K. Chuan made his remarks on August 9 while chairing the closing ceremony of the Cherng Talay Football League, at Cherng Talay School.

The league received prize money and cups from the island's two MPs, Chalermklak Keksup and Suwit Sa-Ngiamkul, along with former Democrat party-list MP Anchalee Vanich-Thepabutr, who was recently elected President of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization.

K. Chuan told a crowd of some 1,000 people at the tournament that the defection reports "come from someone in Thai Rak Thai spreading rumors to confuse people." These rumors had been spread far and wide by some TV stations, he added.

"I have asked both MPs about this and they have confirmed that they are still party members and will stand in the next election just as they did in the last one."

He admitted, however, that the Democrat Party has suffered from MPs defecting to other parties, particularly Thai Rak Thai.

"The [Democrat] party will bring in new blood as replacements [for the defectors]. The party's growth comes from new members replacing the old. The Democrat method is different from the other party, which pre-



Former Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai receives a rose from a Democrat supporter during his visit to Phuket.

fers to buy MPs," he said. "The purchase of MPs is a bad sign in a democratic society."

He explained that the Democrats' strategy for the next election is to be the party whose members would not hesitate to check everything the government does, by keeping a very close eye on government policy.

However, he said, if the party wins the election, it will be perfectly capable of running the country.

"The Democrat Party can function as either government or

opposition. If the other party thinks only about being in power, I don't think it will be able to check a government [headed by another party]."

MP Chalermklak told the crowd that she had received no approach to join "the new party". Her counterpart in Election District 1, K. Suwit, did not indicate whether he had received an approach from Thai Rak Thai but, like K. Chalermklak, he confirmed that he would stand in the next election as a Democrat candidate.

Immigration goes online to boost security

By Dhirarat Boonkongsaeen

PHUKET CITY: The Immigration Police have launched a project in Phuket that will eventually allow hotels and homeowners all over Thailand to report required data about their guests via the Internet.

The project is intended to help combat terrorism and monitor the movements of suspicious foreigners visiting Thailand.

Following refinement of the pilot project in Phuket, the system will then be launched in Chiang Mai. It is expected to be implemented nationwide some time next year.

The underlying database will also be linked to intelligence networks overseas.

Once the system is up and running, hotel staff will log on to the Immigration Police website and enter 24 items of information about each guest who checks in.

During the initial trial period, however, hotels and guesthouses will have to submit the data in a spreadsheet by email to: phuket_imm3@police.go.th

Immigration went public with the project at a training seminar on August 4 at the Pearl Hotel, attended by about 170 hotel staff. The training was organized in cooperation with the Phuket Tourist Association (PTA).

At the session, Pol Lt Gen Chanwut Watcharapook, Commissioner of the Immigration Bureau, said "The Immigration Bureau's mission is to provide both service and security, and these tasks should be accomplished side-by-side."

"We need the public's cooperation on this because we al-

Continued on page 3

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Queer News

Crack worship

SUKHOTHAI: Villagers who discovered a long crack in a wall surrounding Khong Pong temple in Sri Samrong District believe it was made by an angry *naga*, or serpent-god.

The crack was first noted on July 22, when pupils came to ask temple administrator Sawai Pradit why the 200-year-old temple had cracks resembling a serpent's track around its exterior wall.

Dumbfounded, K. Sawai said the cracks hadn't been there on the previous day, nor had there been any unusual activity in the area that could account for them.

Many villagers therefore concluded that the cracks were the result of supernatural activity. They prostrated themselves before the crack, praying that it would somehow transmit to them the winning numbers in the upcoming lottery draw.

K. Sawai said that many people believed the tracks were made by an angry *naga* that had become enraged by the construction of two new *naga* images in a pond in front of the temple.

"People think the [real] *naga* may have become angry because the sculptures were built in the wrong way, with their heads facing the earth rather than the water. They think the *naga* coiled himself around the temple and squeezed, harming the wall as a result," he said.

Source: Daily News

August scheduled blackouts

PHUKET: The Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority (PPEA) has announced scheduled blackouts for August, in order to continue its work on high-voltage power lines.

All blackouts will occur from 9 am to 4 pm, and will be as follows:

August 17, **Chalong**: Luang Por Chuon Rd, from Chao Fa West Rd to Chao Fa East Rd, including Phuket Country Home and Land & Houses Nantawan 2,



It's the final countdown

Congratulating finalists in the Miss Thailand World 2004 contest at the Tropical Garden Resort in Kata are the 2003 winner, Janjira Keadprasop (wearing tiara) and Narumon Bunya (pale gray suit), the 2003 runner-up.

The 43 Miss Thailand World contestants who arrived on the island on July 30 were whittled down over the following week to a final 18.

The lucky 18 will appear at the BEC-Tero Hall in Bangkok on August 21 for the finals of the contest, culminating with the crowning of Miss Thailand World 2004. The event will be broadcast live on Channel 3, starting at 8 pm.

Surprises at Patong plan hearing

By Gategaeo Phetsawang

PATONG: A public hearing to discuss a town plan for Patong took place at Patong City Hall on August 9.

The meeting drew about 80 people, and an assortment of government officers, academics, local businessmen and residents.

Listening to the feedback were researchers from Consultants of Technology (COT) Co, a Bangkok-based consulting firm,

and representatives of the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning.

Dr Supornchai Siriwoharn, a member of the COT research team, told the meeting that the new town plan would affect future generations and urged participants to think in the long term – up to 30 years into the future – when making their recommendations.

Pian Keesin, who is still waiting for his election as the town's mayor to be ratified, urged the planners to enact zoning regulations that would prevent further encroachment on public waterways.

He said that the plan should also solve Patong's oversupply of tuk-tuks and motorbike taxis.

He even offered to allow two hotels in which he is a shareholder to be knocked down.

"I once suggested to PM Thaksin Shinawatra that the government buy back the land on which the Phuket Cabana and Patong Bayshore hotels are built, to make a parking area.

"I am a partner in both

these hotels, but I don't mind selling the land back at actual cost and demolishing the hotels if it is in the public interest," he said.

Patong resident Boonchuai Ruanpetch agreed that planning was needed, but added that poor public relations had meant that few residents knew about the hearing in advance, and it was therefore a failure.

He also blamed a lack of political leadership in the past for Patong's chronic woes.

"There were former Patong Chief Administrative Officers who were keen to solve Patong's problems, but there was a powerful politician – and I don't want to name him – who derived his power base from the people who were causing all the problems," he said.

Malinee Setanant, Director of Planning Standards Development Division of the Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, assured those in attendance that the plan finally adopted would reflect public needs.

IN BRIEF

A bright idea

TAH CHAT CHAI: Officers from Tah Chat Chai Police Station will join forces with motorcycle dealer Phuket Nam Saeng on August 14 and 15 to modify motorcycle headlights so that they come on automatically when the bike's engine is started.

The modifications will be provided free to anyone bringing a bike to the Tah Chat Chai police checkpoint, just south of the Sarasin Bridge, between 9 am and 5 pm on the two days.

Thai law requires motorcycle riders to have their headlights on at all times when driving. All motorcycles registered from January 2005 onwards will be required to have headlights that come on automatically when the bike's engine is started.

Paws fundraiser

SURIN BEACH: The Phuket Animal Welfare Society will hold a fundraising dinner at Twinpalms Phuket resort on October 2, at 7:30 pm, to raise funds to buy a mobile veterinary clinic.

Entertainment will include live music and a dance show, and there will be a raffle for quality prizes.

Tickets are 1,400 baht a person. For bookings or more information contact the Twinpalms resort at Tel: 076-316500, Athena at Tel: 01-5979416, or Karen at Tel: 01-0889327.

Science site launched

BANGKOK (*The Nation*): The National Science and Technology Development Agency, the Council of Science and the Nation Group have launched a Thai-language website, www.myscientists.com, aimed at Thailand's scientific and medical communities.

The Nation's editor, Pana Janviroj, said, "We hope that anyone interested in science will not only visit the website, but will also contribute articles, news and press releases [to it]."

Currently being run on a trial basis, the website will eventually feature articles, consumer reports, projects and a special section for young scientists.

Queries and comments may be submitted by email to: info@myscientists.com

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Immigration reporting to go online

From page 1

ready have about 790 names on our terrorist black-list.”

Pol Lt Col Vitawat Booranasamarn, Superintendent of the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office (PPIO), said the new database would facilitate entry of the required data.

Section 38 of the Immigration Act 1979 requires homeowners and hotels providing accommodation to foreigners to notify Immigration within 24 hours of each guest's arrival.

Hotels should be able to start submitting the required data immediately after their staff complete the one-time training session, he said.

Those failing to comply are subject to an 8,000-baht fine. In the past the law was seldom enforced, but once the new system is functioning properly, Immigration Police plan to crack down on violators.

Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen, Deputy Inspector of the PPIO, told the *Gazette* that additional training sessions may be held in the future if necessary, but added that the PPIO might have to seek outside funding in order to pay for them.

Pattanapong Aikvanich, Chairman of the Phuket Tourist Association (PTA), said that the training session was useful. In the past, he noted, mistakes often resulted from the need to hand-write the information. Entering the required data via the Internet would allow hotels to provide more complete and accurate information.

K. Pattanapong accepted the need for better enforcement of the reporting requirement. “There are some ill-intentioned visitors coming here, so we must be careful. This is not just in regard to terrorism, but also to help prevent economic crimes, trafficking in human beings, passport forgery and other crimes.”



Gen Watcharapook: ‘We need the public’s cooperation.’

Gov gets 10 minutes for B2bn funding pitch to PM

PHUKET: Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura will have just 10 minutes to propose development projects costing 2 billion baht to Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra during a whistle-stop visit by the PM on August 25.

Vice-Governor Winai Bua-pradit confirmed that the PM will come to Phuket on August 25, but will stay on the island for only an hour. “The prime minister will arrive at Phuket International Airport at about 2 pm before leaving for Krabi,” he said. The PM’s stop in Phuket will be part of a tour of southern Thailand.

Phuket Provincial Highways Office (PPHO) Chief Wanchai Wattanasiri told the *Gazette* that the planned projects to be presented include underpasses at the Darasamut and the Samkong junctions, with the bypass road diving beneath the roads meeting it at those points.

“Each underpass will be about 200 meters long and four lanes wide. They will cost about 400 million baht each,” he said.

V/Gov Winai said, “The plans that will be presented to the Prime Minister will be mostly road construction projects, namely a new road connecting Chal-long with Patong, the expansion of Rattanakosin 200 Pi Rd [in Phuket City] at a cost of about 117 million baht, and the two underpasses on the bypass road.

“In addition, the Phuket office of the Royal Irrigation Department will apply for funding to clear and widen Klong Bang Yai at a cost of about 1.08 billion,” V/Gov Winai said.

However, he added, “I am not sure whether the Governor will be able to present all the proposed projects in the 10 minutes available, or if the Prime Minister will approve funding for any of the projects.” – *Kamol Pirat*

Police target teen bikers

PHUKET: Police have launched a crackdown on traffic offenses, with particular focus on teenagers on motorbikes, Pol Col Koki-kiat Wongvorachart, Deputy Commander of the Provincial Police has announced.

During the first two months of the crackdown, which is part of a national road safety campaign that will continue until year’s end, police expect to check more than 200,000 vehicles in Phuket.

“We expect to check 106,200 vehicles a month – that’s [a total of] 43% of the cars and motorbikes registered in Phuket,” Col Koki-kiat said.

He added that officers will be on the lookout for teenagers on stolen motorbikes, especially the popular Honda Wave model. “Most motorbike thieves in Phuket steal for parts to add to their own bike, or to sell to motorbike shops. They then dump the rest in tin mines,” he said.

Riding a motorcycle?

Thai law requires that motorcycle drivers and passengers wear a safety helmet with the chin strap fastened at all times – 24 hours a day.

PHUKET PROVINCIAL
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

25pc of city’s water ‘lost through leaks’

By Gategao Phetsawang

PHUKET CITY: Leaks in the municipal water distribution system result in an estimated 25% of the city’s water supply being lost, possibly more, the city’s new mayor, Somjai Suwannasuppana, announced at her first press conference on August 6.

In addition, she said, one of the private companies that has long supplemented Phuket City’s supply with free water from its tin mines has pulled the plug on its donations.

Mayor Somjai said, “Ninety per cent of the municipal wa-

ter supply used to come from private companies. But now one such company has decided to stop giving water to the municipality, so we have to buy more water from Bang Wad reservoir.”

She said that the municipality was thinking of hiring water-management specialists to solve the city’s recurring shortages, adding that possible solutions include desalination plants and more efficient use of wastewater.

“We expect that [Phuket City’s] water quality and water management will improve within three years,” she said.

On the plus side, she an-

nounced that the municipality’s registration services have been rated third-best in the country.

Mayor Somjai explained that the Interior Ministry’s Local Administration Department in July assessed the registration departments of all 20 *tessabaan nakhon* (city municipalities) in Thailand in terms of efficiency and public feedback.

The services evaluated included registration of births, deaths and marriages, as well as that of Thai ID cards and house registration papers (*tabien baan*). Ubon Ratchathani came first and Chiang Rai second.

Engineer dies in Novotel blast

PATONG: One man was killed and another was injured in an explosion at the Novotel Coralia Resort on August 7.

Police named the dead man as Chanyud Intrachai, 20, from Phuket. His colleague, 27-year-old Kittipong Kaileard, is recovering at home.

Pol Maj Sanguan Muangtham of Kathu Police Station would not disclose details of the incident to the *Gazette* because, he said, it was under investigation by Kathu District Police and the Phuket Provincial Public Works Office. However, Maj Sanguan did say that the explo-

sion, which involved oxy-acetylene tanks, occurred away from guest areas of the hotel.

The Nation quoted an unnamed official as saying that the blast seemed to have been caused when a leaking cylinder ignited, causing two others to blow up in a chain reaction.



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Two local branches of two government agencies are responsible for ensuring the safety of all 1,200 boats registered in Phuket – ferries, fishing boats, recreational boats, jet-skis and long-tail boats.

While the Marine Police are responsible for law enforcement, safety concerns fall mainly to the Phuket Marine Office, which has among its principal duties vessel licensing, crew training and crew certification.

Everybody who works at sea must complete four basic safety courses offered by the Merchant Marine Training Center, which is part of the Ministry of Transport's Marine Department. These courses are based on requirements specified by the International Maritime Organization (IMO); the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (Solas) and other international treaties to which Thailand is a party.

The four basic courses are: fire prevention and fire-fighting; personal safety and social responsibility at sea; personal survival techniques; and basic first aid.

With the glaring exception of fishing vessels, crews of all commercial craft are required to complete the training and to have keep their certificates displayed on board.

Recreational vessels such as privately-owned speedboats, sailboats and even wooden boats "fashioned in an antique style", such as junks, are also exempted, as are vessels owned or operated by government agencies.

Taken together these recreational vessels constitute the majority of boats operating in Phuket waters. Many "recreational craft" are in fact used for business purposes. Their operators hide this fact from authorities, however, in order to avoid paying taxes and having to comply with other regulations.

Hemmawatt Panpein, Navigator 5th Class with the Bangkok-based Merchant Marine Training Center, told the *Gazette*, "Phuket has many categories of vessels, but this gap in the law means that we are powerless to enforce safety regulations on vessels classified as recreational."

Anuwat Oranomwetchakit, captain of a boat that runs tours of coastal areas, said, "I have

Safety on the water: a

With tax on imported yachts having been reduced to zero and a number of large new marina projects in the works, the future for Phuket's marine tourism industry has never looked brighter.

Yet one aspect of this industry – safety standards – remains a serious obstacle to the industry's development to world-class standards.

Here, the *Gazette's* **Anongnat Sarpisut** and **Siripansa Somboon** report on safety training, standards and enforcement in Phuket's marine tourism industry.



'If we conduct our inspections too rigorously it could harm tourism.'

– Kittipong Wasukri
of the Phuket Marine Office.

seen unlicensed boats giving tours. As soon as the authorities approach them, they just pretend they are a recreational boat [and that the passengers are friends]."

The Marine Department Training Center conducts training in Phuket, but only after a sufficient number of people have signed up for any of its 25 different courses, which range in price from 1,200 baht to 5,800 baht.

The courses, which formerly took place at Rassada Port,

are now conducted at the ST Hotel. The training appears to be gaining in popularity. In the most recent sessions, which ended early this month, about 100 trainees took part, far exceeding the expected demand of about 30. Courses, which include several modules, can usually be completed in two to seven days.

While in Phuket for the most recent training, K. Hemmawatt told the *Gazette* that 80% of marine accidents are preventable, as they result from human error and lack of training.

Many participants have worked on boats for many years, but without any formal training, he said, and lack some fundamental skills.

"I don't know how it's possible that some people who come to take this training course don't even know how to swim [part of the personal survival class]. They don't know how to use life vests either. That's why this course is important."

He added, "Most people [who take the courses] are interested in the training because they know water safety is important. Higher-level certificates, such as the one required to captain a dive vessel, need to be renewed on a five-yearly basis at the Phuket Marine Office.

"However, it's impossible for us to inspect everyone on a regular basis, so basic-level cer-



HOT TOPIC: Trainees on a Marine Department course practice fire drill.

tificates, which must be kept on each boat, have no expiry date.

"It is hard to require re-certification for everyone on an annual basis, because we train 10,000 people nationally every year. If every certificate had an expiry date, we would have no time to issue new ones.

"Actually, according to the law, boat captains are responsible for their crews and are required to give them training at least once a month."

K. Anuwat said that many boat owners are too profit-oriented, and don't want to pay for training.

"I am paying for this training myself. It costs about 15,000 baht total, including food and accommodation, but it's worth it. I feel I can help protect my crew and passengers better with what I have learned here," he said.

Some boat-operating companies have policies that he believes are very unfair.

"Some have 'slave contracts'," he explained. "They will pay for the crew to train, but the crew have to sign a contract promising to work [for the company] for at least three years. It's unfair because some crew make as much as 100,000 baht a month for their companies. But what can we do? We have to comply with the law," he said.

"Crew are aware of the need for safety, but many company owners are not. Personally, I think it would help a great deal if [the owners] took part in the training, too," he added.

Royal Thai Navy Lt Cdr Preecha Sirchusiri, another training instructor with the Merchant Marine Training Center, said that money isn't the only issue.

In the past, many boat owners were unaware of the training rules or where they could get the required training for their crews. He said the heavy turnout for the most recent course was due in large part to better publicity.

He agreed that cooperation from business owners is a problem, and that many refused to allow crew to take time off for training.

"This course is open to everyone, but whether or not crew attend depends a great deal on the importance the company owner places on safety and training.

"In some cases the crew have to pay for the training themselves. There have even been cases when staff were laid off for not coming to work during the training," Cdr Preecha said.

He told the *Gazette* that he believes staff training is not only good policy, but can also mean the difference between life and death.

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Property report

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YSMO EVENTS

disaster waiting to happen



THE REAL THING: On the Andaman Sea a boat blazes after an engine-room fire.

"We get good feedback. One trainee told us that because of a knot-tying technique he learned at the course, which allows a life raft to be released automatically in the case of an emergency, that nine people were saved," he added.

Cdr Preecha noted that one foreign boat owner sent his entire crew to take advantage of the training, once he realized it was available in Phuket. Many of the crew had been working on the vessel for 15 years with no formal training, he said.

K. Hemmawatt thinks company owners should view training as an investment, not a cost.

"Boats cost as much as 50 million baht. If the crew are properly trained and certified, they are more likely to keep a vessel in good, safe condition. So it's more like an insurance policy.

"But many companies don't look at it this way," he said.

One of the key safety features on any vessel is life vests. But many operators don't carry even these most basic items, and the vast majority of vessels that do have them use substandard

ones.

The Marine Department trainers told the *Gazette* that 99% of life vests used locally fail to meet Solas standards because operators simply don't want to pay for them. There is a considerable cost difference: life vests carrying the official Solas logo cost about 2,800 baht each, compared with the 350-400 baht cost of jackets used by most companies.

But you get what you pay for. Most of the cheaper life jackets lack important features that can save lives, such as neckpieces that ensure that an unconscious victim doesn't float face-down in the water and drown, or a whistle to alert rescuers at night.

"In the past nobody knew which life vests were standard, but now they do. But because nobody has complained about this, [owners] just continue using the cheap ones," Cdr Preecha said.

Currently, government efforts to check vessels for life vests has focused on quantity, not quality. The number of life vests on a passenger vessel must be

10% more than the number of passengers at the time of inspection.

Kittipong Wasukri, an official at the Phuket Marine Office in Ao Makham, told the *Gazette*, "We check only the number [of vests], not their quality, though if we notice life jackets in bad condition we warn the crew to get new ones."

K. Kittipong said, "The Marine Department in Bangkok is responsible for checking the quality of imported life vests, but there is no government agency responsible for ensuring the quality of domestically-produced life jackets.

"Nor does the Phuket Marine Office have the authority to check life jackets on sale locally, but only after they have been put on board a vessel. Most boats, especially tourist boats, have no

problem in this regard. They carry enough life vests for all their passengers and are properly licensed. But the province has to follow government policy to support tourism. If we conduct our inspections too rigorously it could harm tourism," he said.

K. Hemmawatt said that many operators choose to take the risk of having to pay fines rather than comply with safety regulations, including the rules regarding the need to use Solas standard vests and have certified staff.

Though the rules are seldom enforced in Thai waters, the situation changes when Thai vessels enter the waters of countries where enforcement is taken more seriously.

"Yet still they prefer to take the risk and pay a fine rather than ensure safety," K. Hemmawatt said.

He noted, too, that many crew members have fake certifi-

after that to upgrade their certification, they realize that the previous one was a forgery because there is no record of the certificate number," he said, adding that anyone could check the status of his certification at the Merchant Marine Training Center.

Cdr Preecha said that there is rampant use of fake qualifications, though he could not estimate just how many were out there. He did say, however, that only about 50% of people carrying fake certificates knew they had been forged [as opposed to being issued through 'proper channels' with the aid of bribery].

"But they don't care. They just think of the income they can make by using those credentials to get work," he said.

K. Hemmawatt said, "I just came back from provincial meeting about the growth of the marine industry in Phuket. Nowadays, boat tax has been reduced to 0%. Everybody talks about the

growth in the number of tourists, but no one mentions the safety of crews and passengers," he said.

Boat skipper K. Anuwat said, "About 80% of those who invest in the marine tourism business are foreigners. And foreigners make about three times as much as Thais who do similar jobs.

"I know some of this has to do with language ability, but I still think

the government should do more to increase the knowledge of Thais working in the marine industry.

"If the Labor Ministry would help us out with funding [to help pay for the training] this would improve safety for everyone," he concluded.



'[Many boat operators] prefer to take the risk and pay a fine, rather than ensure safety.'
- Hemmawatt Panpein of the Merchant Marine Training Center

cates of competence.

"Instead of completing the training, they pay 70,000 to 80,000 baht for a certificate, believing these to be genuine [though improperly issued through bribery]. Later they learn that the papers are forgeries.

"If they take another course

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By Gategao Phetsawang

WE, ROBOT

While most sports men's and sports-women's attentions are currently focused on the Olympics in Athens, six Phuket primary school students have their attention fixed on competing in an entirely different international tournament – the World Robot Olympiad (WRO).

Two teams of three from Phuket City Municipality School – the Romsaitong Robotics team and the Mingmuang Robotics team – have won berths at the national WRO finals in Bangkok in October.

As in the Olympics, the WRO requires supreme performance in sports, but with a mechanical twist: robots designed and built by students compete in the events.

The robots must be built from Lego bricks and then programmed by the students, with software specially developed for users as young as eight, to compete autonomously in four events: sprint races, slalom races, wrestling matches and maze navigation.

In June the Mingmuang team of 11-year-olds came second in a WRO qualifying round held in Haad Yai. The Romsaitong team, all nine-year-olds, failed to make their mark in Haad Yai, but came home last month with first prize from another qualifying round in Rayong.

If either Phuket team is successful in the Bangkok finals, where some 200 teams are ex-



Above, the winning Romsaitong team, from left – Naratip 'Nan' Phoosakul, Sarut 'Nite' Pattaraanuchitakul and Attawut 'Nut' Cheewamaitriwong.

Right: the members of the Mingmuang team discuss robot tactics. From left: Aditep 'Tianwern' Saeung, Krissada 'New' Toosakul and Pirapong 'Pi' Sritangsirikul.



pected to compete, they will go on to compete in the international finals to be held in Singapore in November.

There they will compete against finalists from Australia, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Sri Lanka.

Romsaitong team leader Attawut "Nut" Cheewamaitriwong, said, "We enjoyed the con-

test at Rayong more than the one in Haad Yai because this time we won first prize."

Teammate Sarut "Nite" Pattaraanuchitakul agreed. "This contest was good for experience and I liked winning this time," he said.

Of all the aspects of building their robot, Nut rates robot design as the most important.

"If we don't create a strong

robot, we could be beaten. Our robot has two horns like a buffalo to lock onto other robots when wrestling."

Although they all enjoy the fun of creating their own robots, the pressure to win adds a competitive edge to the competition. Naratip "Nan" Phoosakul, the only girl in the two teams, said, "We formed the team because we have been friends since kinder-

garten. But sometimes we argue, like when I released the robot in the wrong position at the starting point."

Although the teams design, build and program their robots before the contests, they get only one hour to make any modifications to compensate for local conditions, because once the robot has been started teamsters cannot directly control the robot.

Pirapong "Pi" Sritangsirikul, of the Mingmuang team, explained, "The lights and the floor surface can make the robot move differently from the way we programmed it to behave."

"Our robot has two touch sensors and a light sensor, and making sure that it doesn't go off the black line or go out of the [wrestling] ring depends on how we program the robot to react to those sensors."

He added that the team spent a month preparing for the competition, working after school and at weekends.

"Each box has at least 700 Lego pieces and we can use five boxes to build the robots. We design and build the robot we want," Pi said.

He added, "We were chosen to represent the school because we are good with computers. We were taught how to use Lego Robolab Set, which we use to write programs to make the robot move."

Mingmuang team leader and programmer New, who competed in last year's WRO, said, "It's not just a toy. It's a robot. The good thing with this robot is that we can plan, think, do and then improve on what we have done."

"The more complicated the program we create for our robot, the better it will move."

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*When the taste is perfect,
it can be the start of a friendship.*



Deputy PM opposes amnesty bill

Deputy Prime Minister Vishanu Kruangam is opposed to a draft law that would expunge the records of former convicts and civil servants punished for disciplinary offences.

"In principle, I disagree with the bill," he said. "We have to consider it carefully, as society may view the move as an attempt to whitewash wrongdoers."

The bill was proposed by the Justice Ministry, which says it was drawn up to celebrate HM Queen Sirikit's 72nd birthday on August 12.

If the bill is passed, errant civil servants would be eligible for whitewashing regardless of whether they have already been punished or are currently undergoing punishment.

Seeds of discontent: The Agriculture Department ordered a halt to the distribution of papaya seeds from its research station in Khon Kaen, in an effort to disprove claims by Greenpeace Southeast Asia that genetically modified papaya seeds slipped through to farmers.

Department director Chakan Saengraksawong said the halt would allow his department to investigate whether farmers possessed genetically modified papaya seeds. He insists, however, that while his station was researching genetically modified papaya, it had not distributed any modified seeds.

Greenpeace raided and destroyed plants on an experimental papaya plantation at the station.

Desperate act: Bangkok's Min Buri District Court released a mother of five charged with shoplifting after a state lawyer pro-



Facing ex-stink-tion? Canal boat operators on Bangkok's Klong Saen Saeb fear going out of business as the ongoing extension of the city's subway and Skytrain lines continues to lure away customers.

A survey conducted last year found that an average of 78,000 commuters used the water-taxi service each work day, despite the stench from canal, widely regarded in the capital as little more than an open sewer. The maximum fare is 15 baht.

tested her possible incarceration.

The court released Suri Poltabtim, 33, who was accused of stealing 99 items from the Tesco-Lotus branch in Min Buri.

In ordering her release on probation, the court noted that it was Suri's first offence, as well as the fact that she claimed to have been motivated by a lack of money to feed her children.

The court added that if Suri were incarcerated there would be no one to care for her children, because her husband is serving a five-year jail term for possession of amphetamines.

Her youngest child is still breastfeeding.

Botanic discovery: A new species of custard apple tree has been found in the highlands of Mae Hong Son, claims researcher Piya Chalermglin, who discovered the plant.

Mahaphrom rajinee, the 49th species belonging to the Annonaceae family, was found on the slopes of Mae Hong Son's Surin Waterfall National Park.

The discovery came as part of Dr Piya's classification of Annonaceae in Thailand, funded by the Biodiversity Research and Training Program. Only 18 trees are known to exist.

Escapegoats: Three people ac-

quitted of murder have filed a lawsuit against former police commissioner Chalor Kerdthes, who is now serving a life sentence at Bang Kwang maximum-security prison.

The Criminal Court found Chalor guilty of abetting the abduction and killing of the wife and son of a suspect in the infamous and still-unresolved Saudi Jewelry case.

Ratana Rianmora, 65, Pak Madeesan, 65, and his wife Ratee Promthpe, 42, have demanded compensation of 60 million baht, claiming that Chalor caused damage to their lives and careers by wrongly prosecuting

them for killing Ratana's husband Suranart Rianmora in 1987.

The three allege that Chalor abducted and tortured them to get them to confess to the murder. Primary, appeal and supreme courts acquitted the three.

Emergency decree: The House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a proposed emergency decree to appoint a group of senior monks to act on behalf of the ailing Supreme Patriarch.

The Lower House voted 341 to 1, with one abstention, to endorse the decree proposed by Cabinet.

Democrat MP Preecha Suwannathat said at a House meeting before the vote that although the decree reflected the government's good intentions, changes to the Monastic Act should be handled carefully. He also suggested the rule of seniority had been ignored in the appointment of certain members of the monastic group.

Sins of the son: The son of deputy police commander for Region 6 was among four men arrested for possession of 4,000 amphetamine tablets in Phitsanulok's Muang District. Yingyos Thaikla, 21, the son of Pol Col Pot Thaikla, was charged with possession of the drug with intent to sell.

Under the Narcotics Act 1979, possession with intent to sell of 100 grams or more of a pure Category I substance, such as amphetamine, carries a minimum sentence of life imprisonment and a maximum penalty of the death sentence.

Around the Nation news roundup is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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Construction – and prices – boom

The low season is bringing the usual rush by business and building owners to develop and refurbish their properties. In Ao Nang, numerous shopping mall and office projects are underway, as well as housing developments.

The housing projects are mainly aimed at filling demand for middle-income homes, and hopefully the results will be an improvement over the typical "shophouse" architecture that dominates the landscape.



ACROSS THE BAY

By Gus Reynolds

Runway upgrade:

By far the biggest project underway is the expansion of the Krabi International Airport. The original airport was built by the local government and a private group in 1986. Located 13 kilometers from Krabi Town, it was originally quite small and was underused.

The airport as it is now was completed and opened in July 1999, years behind schedule. Immediately, it needed alterations

because the lengthy delay in completing it had rendered many facilities obsolete or inadequate.

The runway, at 45 meters wide and 2,100m in length, was capable of handling only domestic flights and short-haul regional flights. The passenger terminal, with a capacity of 600 people, had just one arrival/departure gate and the baggage claim area had to be redesigned.

Even so, passenger growth was impressive, with a 22% increase in passengers in 2001, followed by increases of close to 50% in 2002 and 2003.

The current expansion project is budgeted at 327 million baht, with the new runway alone costing 229 million baht. The runway will be lengthened to 3,000m and the parking apron will be enlarged to accommodate, at the same time, two 747-400 planes, one 737-400 and three smaller craft.

The new terminal will have a capacity of 1,400 people.

Other plans include a dou-



The new passenger terminal at Krabi Airport is fast taking shape.

bling in the size of the car park, a new control tower, and improvements in security, international arrival services, visa screening, and ambulance and fire services.

The expansion of the airport and its ability to accommodate 747s direct from Europe and Asia have big implications for the local tourist industry. The talk is that tour groups from Scandinavia will be targeted, and surely additional flights from Asian destinations will follow, augmenting the current services from Singapore and Malaysia.

Runaway prices: As a result of the airport project, optimism runs high for tourism-related businesses, and newcomers to Krabi seem to have high expectations.

Long-time residents are a bit more cautious, but there is evidently an influx of money, especially from foreigners looking to establish themselves in this growing market.

This has driven up real estate prices to astonishing levels. With rents of 1.5 million baht a year becoming common on the beachfront and land prices jump-

ing as well, it isn't so easy to start a profitable venture.

The price escalation and land scarcity in Ao Nang has seen some of the bigger hotel chains searching elsewhere to establish their operations.

Klong Muang has become a popular place to set up, and this formerly sleepy beach area has been a construction zone for the past few years. Several large luxury resorts have established themselves here, most notably the Sheraton. The price of land next to these properties has skyrocketed.

Running away from the sea:

Residential projects in Ao Nang have moved further and further from the beach, and potential homeowners are abandoning their demands for a seaview when they see the exorbitant prices.

Very few of the expatriate community live near the beach. Most prefer the quieter, less touristy areas away from the commercial zones along the beach.

Ao Nang is still quite small, so one can still live just minutes from work or the beach, while the uniqueness of Krabi's topography makes finding a home with a scenic view fairly easy.



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Pruerk-lawan	112.6	11,850,000	100,000	3,455,000	8,295,000
Pruerk-umpai	157.80	14,480,000	100,000	4,244,000	10,136,000



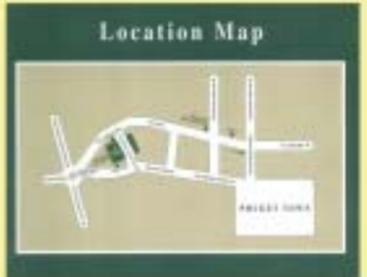
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This week



ABOVE: General Manager of the Royal Phuket City Hotel Ian Taylor Woodward (3rd from left) with Executive Chefs Gottfried "Godi" Voney (left) and Anucha Ketsro (2nd from right), and Assistant Director of Sales Kobkaew Narkrod (wearing scarf), at the opening of the hotel's 19th-floor Red Onion restaurant.

LEFT: Suwalai Pinpradab (3rd from left, standing, in white blouse) Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand Phuket office, joins Rotary Club of Junk Ceylon members and models at the TAT batik exhibition at the Big C supercenter.



A HEARTY CHAIYO! Phuket FantaSea staff and management celebrate a day spent cleaning up the park and grounds of the famed entertainment venue. FantaSea's Assistant Director of Revenue, Somwang Kiewkacha (back row, white shirt) leads his team by example.



A POPULAR CHOICE: Members of the new board of the Phuket Tourist Association celebrate their recent election at the Phuket Merlin Hotel. Pattanapong Aikwanich, here shown receiving a bouquet from Phuket Guide Association President Panompol Thammachatniyom (in blue shirt) was elected PTA president for a third successive term.



PARTY TIME! Juntra Husted (front, with flowers) and friends celebrate the 1st anniversary of the relaunched Baan Mai Pai in Karon on August 2.



WINE TIME: Enjoying a selection of Sileni Estate wines at The Evason Beach Resort & Spa are (from left): Amanpuri's Director of F&B, Thirawit Yingdamnoon; Executive Assistant Manager of Katathani Hotel and Beach Resort, Philip Reiss; Red & White International (Asia) Marketing Manager for Southeast Asia, David Andrews; and Chantana Songsang and Erik Cornetet of ItalThai Industrial Co.

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FATHER'S SECRET LEADS SON TO PHUKET

Australian chiropractor Jim Davidson and his wife Dale were in Phuket last month in search of his grandmother's grave, which he believes is located in a Chinese cemetery somewhere in Phuket City. As **Sangkhae Leelanaporn** and **Stephen Fein** learned, the quest was launched after Mr Davidson's father revealed a 50-year-old secret.



Jim Davidson, 60, began a quest six months ago after his 97-year-old father, Victor, broke a half-century of silence over his past and revealed that his own mother was a Chinese-Thai woman from Phuket named "Yok".

Victor also admitted that his real name was George Russell, but that he had changed it as a way to bury his Chinese-Thai ancestry and avoid racial discrimination.

This much is known about Grandma Yok. She was born in 1888 and died around 1976. Her own mother was Thai, her father Chinese. She is thought to be bur-

ied somewhere in Phuket, most likely in Phuket City. The burial site is believed to be near the site of a former brick factory, and near a *klong*.

She had seven children from two relationships. One of these children was Jim Davidson's father, Victor Edward Davidson, born George Russell.

Grandma Yok had a brother named "Kiat", and was part of a large family in Phuket, though the family name remains unknown to the Davidsons.

This much is known: she was diagnosed with cancer of the uterus while in her 40s. Upon learning this, the young Victor

returned to Phuket and took her to Kuala Lumpur for treatment. She recovered and lived until she was 88.

She knew death was coming, apparently; she is said to have bought the coffin herself and was in the habit of sleeping in it before she died.

Because of World War II and the Japanese occupation of Phuket, Victor lost contact with his mother; with his Eurasian features, it was dangerous for him to stay in Asia.

He eventually made his way

to England with his wife and children, and there reinvented himself to hide his "half-caste" background because of the prevailing racial prejudices of the time. In 1951 the family migrated to Australia.

Since Grandma Yok had children by two men, Victor had two elderly step-sisters living in England. One of these contacted him in Australia years ago and introduced herself as his half-sister. She also said she had visited Grandma Yok's grave in Phuket.

At the time, however, Victor wasn't receptive to anything that could compromise the secret he had kept hidden for so many years.

Later, after Victor came out with the story about his past, his son Jim contacted one of the half-sisters in England.

By then, however, the shoe was on the other foot: she was unable to offer much assistance in helping the family locate the grave that she herself had once

visited. Her age and the distance between England and Australia also made communication difficult.

She did reveal, however, that she had seen a plaque bearing the names of all of Yok's seven children from her two relationships.

So far, the search for Grandma Yok's grave or any long-lost relatives still living in Phuket has been unsuccessful, despite help from Provincial Hall in supplying information about the locations of possible burial sites.

Arita U-Heet, a tour agent with Phuket Adventures who happened to meet the Davidsons at their hotel, also offered to spend her free time helping them in their quest.

Jim Davidson and his wife Dale recounted the following tale of his father's past in the hope that some *Gazette* readers might recognize part of story and help the family find Grandma Yok's grave or put them in contact with

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Left: Jim and Dale Davidson search one of Phuket's Chinese cemeteries for the grave of Jim's grandmother, a Thai-Chinese woman called Yok.

Below: The Chinese symbol for "Yok", which may mark her gravesite.



and in 1951 we migrated to Australia."

Victor never saw his mother again.

"We learned that his father grew up in Malaysia. There are relatives on his father's side whom we have discovered only in the past five months and whom we are also going to visit.

"In fact, we learned that the Russells are quite a prominent family in Malaysia and we plan to meet in KL in a few weeks' time for the 50th wedding anniversary of one of our relatives there.

"So we're trying to find both sides [of the family]. On the father's side we can now go back six generations. But until six months ago, we could only go back one!"

Readers with information that may help the Davidsons can email them at Jamesdale4@hotmail.com or Jamesdale09@optusnet.com.au

any other relatives still living in the area:

"In 1942 [my father and his wife] had four children. They left [occupied] Malaysia and went to Singapore which, at the time, people thought would never fall [to the Japanese].

"But my father has always been very intuitive. He believed Singapore was going to fall. He put his wife - my Mom - and the children, plus my mother's sister and brother, on a ship. But he didn't know where it was going.

"Then he turned around and went back to Kuala Lumpur to look for his boss. But when he got there, he came across a car by the side of the road. The driver's throat had been slit. Deciding he must be behind enemy lines, he turned back.

"His car broke down. Some Australian soldiers told him 'Forget about your job. Your boss won't be there. You've got to get out of here!' They were kind to him and helped him fix his car, which was why, later in life, he decided to move to Australia.

"He got on a ship about 10 days before Singapore fell. The ship was supposed to go to Ceylon, but it ended up in Bombay. [Totally by chance] he arrived in Bombay and found his wife and four kids there.

"They were in Bombay for two years, and that's where I was born. Later we went to England. We stayed there for five years

50 years of painful silence

Jim Davidson recounts how his father Victor finally revealed a secret he had kept for 50 years: that his name was not Victor Davidson but George Russell:

"I can tell you, there is no Derrick George Davidson recorded as being born in Scotland [at any time] back to 1732. Not one. Not even 'Derrick Davidson'.

"My mother's sister, who lived in England, died last year at the age of 82, and she actually mentioned before she died that my father's real name was not Davidson, but Russell.

"And my uncle, who had been told this - and whom we will meet in a few weeks' time - told us that Russell was a prominent family in Malaysia, so we were able to track them down through the Internet.

"So why did my father reveal his secret after all those years? In a way, regrets play a major role.

"But once the floodgates were opened and he started to tell his story, he then touched on the pain of the things he hadn't done properly [such as re-establish relationships with relatives who had tried to contact him].

"The families in England, on my mother's side, warned us not to pursue it. 'He's 97,

you'll kill him,' they warned. So for years we didn't say anything about the name Russell. But I felt I had to broach the subject somehow. I couldn't let him go to his grave without revealing it. So we decided to use the birth certificate angle.

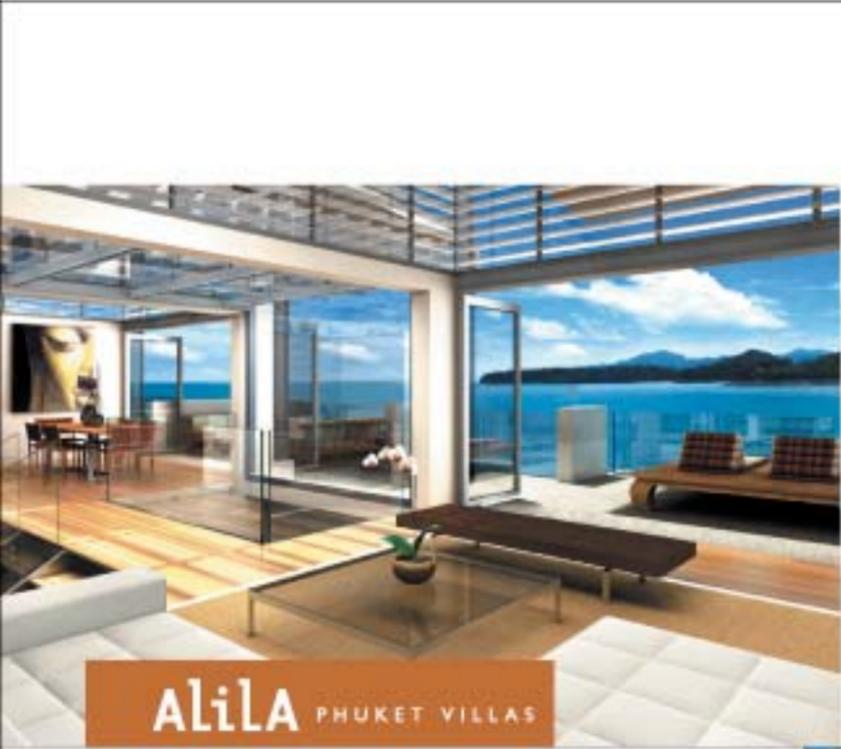
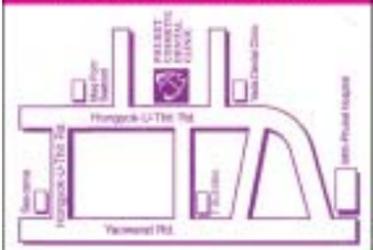
"One day over lunch I told him I wanted to get a British passport and needed his father's birth certificate. After a while there was silence. I was watching him chew his food, and his chin was twitching. It seemed like an eternity, but it was probably only 10 or 15 seconds. And then he said, 'I want to tell you my secret.'

"The hair stood up on the back of my neck, even though I already knew his secret. He started talking. 'I was forced to change my name from Russell.' And then we couldn't shut him up. He just talked and talked and talked.

"It's made a terrific difference. He's 10 years younger. He used to walk with a stick, but he doesn't need it any more."



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Cheap air fares big boost to mobility

Sitting in a bar quietly watching the tide rolling in one evening, I remembered that I had an article to write. The low-season cash flow was not looking too good, so I knew that my destination had to be somewhere cheap.

It suddenly dawned on me that I should take advantage of the range of cheap flights now on offer and go to Bangkok, a place I tend to visit for business, not pleasure. It had, in fact, been ages since I had traveled there simply to take in the sights.

Also, son Chris had been pestering me to take him to his first gig – a band called Offspring playing at the Impact Arena. So, I thought, why not kill two birds with one stone? Stage one was to book the concert tickets online, a fast process at Thaiticketmaster.com.

But which airline should I choose? I first tried with Thai Airways. Their deal of the month was a non-endorsable, non-refundable, no-changes one-way ticket for 1,900 baht.

I tried the AirAsia website, and found it as cumbersome as ever. I even tried to make an inquiry while paying my AIS phone bill but gave up because the staff were too slow.

In addition to Thai and AirAsia, Phuket Air, Orient Thai Airlines and Bangkok Airways all offer daily flights between Phuket and Bangkok. They update their fares constantly, so shop around before you fly.

In the end I settled for Phuket Air and their more expensive evening flight. It was not, at 1,550 baht for a single, the cheapest deal around but was valid for a month and I could change my flight details without a problem.



Thanks to cheap air fares, Bangkok is more accessible than ever before.

Off we flew to Bangkok International Airport, with Chris ready to rock the night away in his Offspring T-shirt.

We landed, and found the airport packed. It was not a public holiday, there were no important dignitaries or celebrities to be seen, so why so busy on a low-season Tuesday afternoon?

I scouted around and found that the crowds seemed to be congregating at the discount airlines' booths. Nok Airlines was busy,

as was the new Orient Thai Airlines check-in desk. Phuket Air and AirAsia were also busy.

At the Nok Air counter, I picked up a brochure showing their opening deals – and what bargains they were. Flights from Bangkok to Udon Thani at 498 baht; Bangkok-Chiang Mai for 598 baht; and Bangkok-Haad Yai for 898 baht, with promises of more to follow.

The fare touted by AirAsia for Bangkok-Chiang Mai was even cheaper than Nok Air, and they offer more routes.

A leaflet from Value Air quoted mid-week flights on the Bangkok-Singapore route for

3,850 baht return. This was the reason for the crowds at the airport, proof positive that air fares are becoming cheaper and air travel more popular.

The concert was my first in many years and Offspring were ... interesting, not a bad band at all and I can recommend the Impact Arena to any concert-goer.

After the gig, we checked into the Amari Boulevard (thanks for the free room), a fine hotel in an excellent location. The hotel was busy, and during the next day's shopping excursion, I realized that Bangkok was jam-packed with tourists.

Traveling by SkyTrain, we took in The Emporium, the Central Department Store, the World Trade Center and eventually Siam Square before finishing up at the Siam Discovery Center.

Back in Rawai the next evening, the thought occurred to me that these low-cost Asian carriers are giving everyone in this region the chance to travel cheaply and quickly to Thailand and, more to the point, Phuket.

This is producing great low-season business for the island, a thought shared by the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the investors building Billion Plaza, Central Festival Phuket, Jungceylon and the other major retail developments on the island.

But I did wonder, too, whether this is actually a good thing for Phuket. I am still wondering about that one, and you should too.

Bill Owen, who has lived in Phuket and worked in the island's travel industry for more than 15 years, is General Manager of Oriental Leisure Co Ltd, a leading event management company in Phuket. He can be contacted by email at: owen_b@hotmail.com. Website www.oriental-events.com

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IN

Splash out on some new fashions in marshmallow pink and white to chase the gray skies of the wet season away. Spaghetti-strap tops, miniskirts and ¾-length trousers such as capri pants, pedal pushers or clamdiggers in pretty pinks and winsome whites can be mixed and matched with each other – or a range of other colors – for a sweet and sexy look.

Women with lighter-colored skin can get away with wearing vibrant colors while their olive-skinned sisters should show their style with slightly more subtle, muted tones.

One word of warning: the gauzy, gossamer-thin fabrics for many of these styles can – when wet – leave very little to the imagination!

Funky earrings in black, white or corresponding shades of pink accessorize perfectly with this look. High-heeled shoes in pink are still in vogue and allow the wearer to wade through any minor flooding. Look for handbags or clutch bags in similar colors. – Siripansa Somboon

Clothes and accessories courtesy of Kob & Ple (pronounced "Peun") Fashion Center on Ongsompai Rd, and Indy on Thepkrasattri Rd, near the Shintaro Japanese Restaurant, both in Phuket City.

Exposure to sun and seawater, as well as hair dyes and perming solutions, can all take their toll on your hair. Leave it too long and your lovely locks may end up looking dull and tired.

But help is at hand for your hair in the form of – wait for it – oil spa treatment. Spa treatment, using a cocktail of mud, amino acids and milk, can work wonders, adding volume, weight – to help prevent flyaway hair – and moisture.

Such treatments also add luster to the color, natural or otherwise, of your hair.

Jeraporn Thonggate, owner of the Suay Update salon explained that this style of treatment is new to the island.

"My salon is currently the only place in Phuket to offer this and I learned about its secrets from my hair guru – a Korean – in Bangkok just a few months ago," said K. Jeraporn.

There are three ingredients to the treatment cocktail: Crystal Hair Lotion by Sofei, to repair damaged hair; an amino-acid mud pack by T&C; and another Sofei product, Soft and Shine hair cream, which contains milk whey, a protein vital for building healthy tissue.

"All of these products are imported from Italy," K. Jeraporn added.

K. Jeraporn advised that the hair should be washed twice before the mixture is applied. The concoction is then activated by use of a "Roller Ball" – a dough-

Thailand TRAVELER

By Bill Owen

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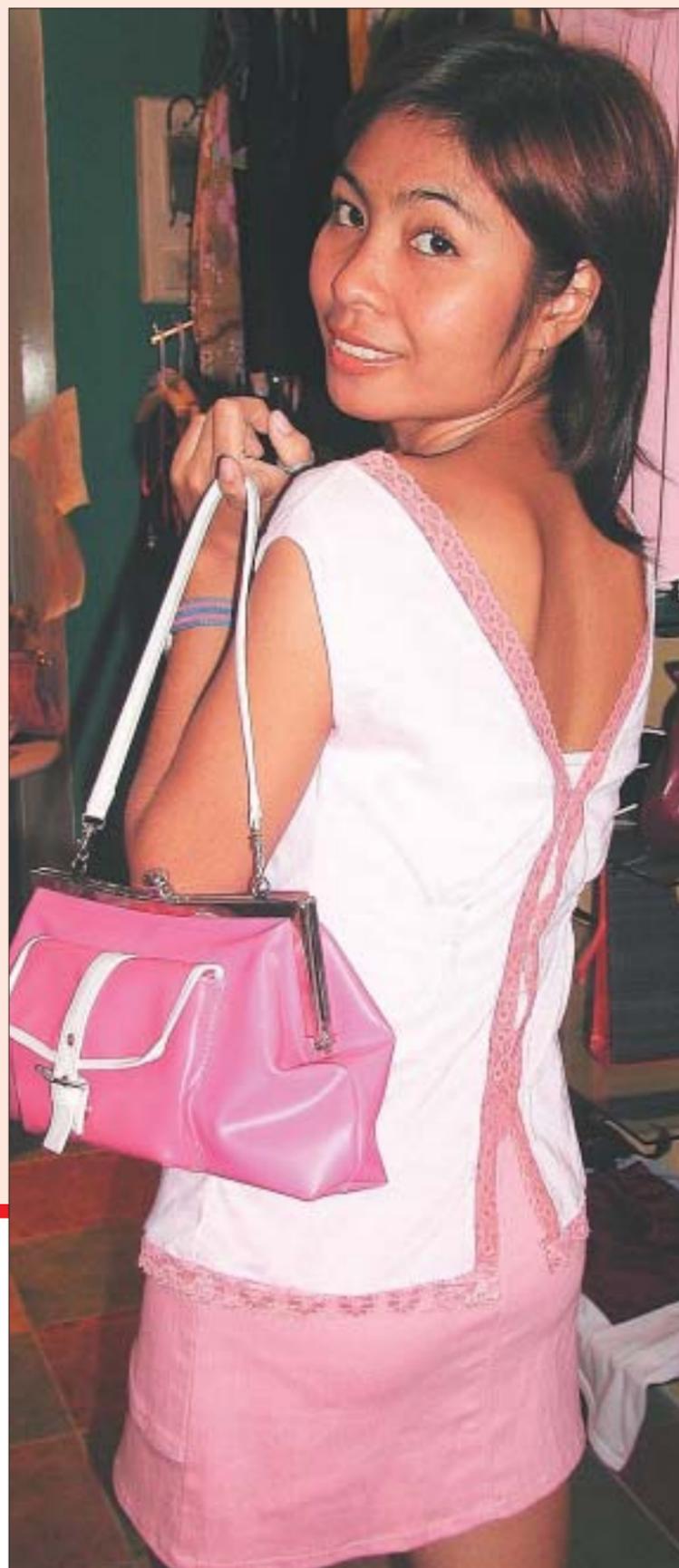
THE PINK

Fashion by Siripansa



Left: Look cute in a pink top with silver applique.

Right: Stay in the forefront of fashion with a plunging backline and pink miniskirt. And don't forget to accessorize.



The lure of the rings

Hair by Sangkhae



The benefit of using a Roller Ball is that it is cooler than the more commonplace "hood" dryer. The entire procedure, from coating individual sections of hair to the final wash-and-dry, takes around 45 minutes.

With prices starting at 300 to 500 baht, depending upon the length of your hair, it is more expensive than having your hair "steamed" but the effects are immediately evident – by sight,

touch and smell – and last until the next wash.

K. Jeraporn added that she has many return customers. "They love it that their hair smells of fresh milk," she said with a wide smile.

–Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

nut-shaped hairdryer (see above) that rotates above the head.

Suay Update is in the V&P Mansion at Wor Kor Junction (the turning to Rajabhat University Phuket) along Thepkrasatri Rd. Opening hours are 8 am to 8:30 pm daily. For an appointment, call Tel: 076-241193.

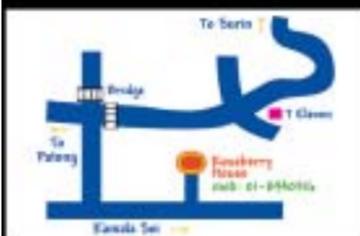
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HEARD & scene

The *Gazette's* Siripansa Somboon met up with the Miss Thailand World contestants and asked five of them, "What is the most disgusting thing you have ever eaten?"



Nikallaya Dulya
Age: 23
From: Yala
Occupation: Student

It was goat curry. I'll never forget it. My friend offered it to me. When I was told it was made from goat I wanted to spit it out. But then I realized it tasted good, so I changed my mind. Goat meat is very tender. If I'd known what it was, I would never have tried it, but now I like eating it.



Areeya Rohitsathian
Age: 20
From: Bangkok
Occupation: Student

The most disgusting thing I have ever swallowed was a glass of orange juice. What happened was that my friends put lots of salt in it. I didn't know when I drank it. My friends were having a joke on me. It was so salty. Anyway, they'd better watch out - I'll get them back!



Pornpatsorn Suwanmongkon
Age: 21
From: Bangkok
Occupation: Student

The most disgusting thing I have ever eaten is baby corn - I think it feels like you've got a mouthful of worms when you're eating it. I'm scared of finding worms in baby corn.
The first time I ate it I threw up. I really hate it and I haven't eaten it since.



Alexandra Stybert
Age: 20
From: Bangkok
Occupation: Student

One time, my friends tricked me by mixing dessert with savory food and giving it to me to eat.
It's hard to believe how horrible the mixture tasted. Imagine eating *tom yam* mixed with orange juice. It was disgusting. I nearly threw up.



Mananya Chainan
Age: 22
From: Bangkok
Occupation: Student

A group of my friends were dieting but I wasn't because I'm lucky and have no trouble with my weight. One day I bought blueberry cheesecake to tease them and stuffed lots of it into my mouth. They looked so angry that I had to spit it out. I really went off blueberry cheesecake after that.

In the Stars

by Isla Star

LEO (July 24-August 22): You will feel inspired to add some new touches to your lair this week. Home sweet home looks like the place where Leos most want to be this week, so a shopping trip will probably be the furthest you venture. The color turquoise will encourage creative thinking.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): You won't believe your ears this weekend when a friend spills the beans. Even if this isn't a matter that concerns you personally, there will be reason for you to take mental notes for the future.

If you have come to a career crossroads, go with your instincts.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): The high point of your week should be on Wednesday, when all your hard work finally comes to fruition. Reaping a bountiful harvest will put you in a position to expand into new areas. If you're on the lookout for a trustworthy business partner, Pisces can make a suitable introduction.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Scorpios usually have no trouble attracting romance.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Aquarians can usually find an answer to any dilemma, but this weekend a particular problem will really put your skills to the test. You may want to consider the possibility that this situation is much simpler than others would have you believe. Wear azure blue to encourage peace of mind.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): If August has so far been a series of fits and starts, Sagittarians will be happy to know that this week will see positive moves. You can now start to relax in the certainty that success is imminent, but don't spend too much money just yet.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Capricorns who were starting to believe that justice was not on their side will receive tangible proof that things are finally starting to work out. By the end of this month you will realize

that it was your tenacity that helped to find a path through the overgrown jungle.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Someone appears to be trying to lead you down the garden path, and there will be no bed of roses at the other end. Pisceans who want to avoid getting a thorn in their sides should close their ears to fairy tales. The course of romance is smooth, but a minor storm next week will require careful navigation.

ARIES (March 21-April 20):

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): The thunder that has been rumbling in the distance for so long now should finally move away so. Mid-week, Taureans should refrain from splitting hairs over a matter that is really as simple as a bowl of boiled rice. Scorpio has romantic inclinations toward you.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): You are not normally one to count your chickens until they have been declared healthy. However, you will be entitled to give yourself a pat on the back this weekend for work well done, even though the results probably won't be apparent until next month. An intimate relationship would definitely benefit from some spicing up.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): Your credit card may not be as flexible as you think. Many Cancerians could get a shock when the bills finally arrive. You are advised to tighten your belt for the remainder of August. If anyone can make an art out of economizing, it is you. Wear the color hibiscus red to improve financial conditions.

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KIDS THE FUN PAGE FOR ALL THE FAMILY

Hidden Words

Hidden in the grid below are the family names of at least 20 US Presidents. The names may read vertically, horizontally or diagonally. They may also read right-to-left or down-to-up. See if you can find more than your family or friends. Score: 10 or more, good; 15 or more, very good; 20 or more, excellent.

A	G	C	C	F	F	E	X	T	T	P	M	N	T	H
J	M	R	H	A	R	E	R	P	I	O	C	R	T	C
A	I	H	B	O	R	O	Q	W	D	L	K	E	H	B
B	B	M	M	S	J	T	R	G	N	K	I	W	O	N
T	C	L	L	B	Z	F	E	O	Y	H	N	O	O	H
C	I	I	R	Z	X	X	S	R	F	Y	L	H	V	M
F	O	O	U	S	H	R	A	B	E	N	E	N	E	S
D	R	O	O	S	E	V	E	L	T	Y	Y	E	R	K
T	Y	P	L	F	E	L	K	O	J	I	U	S	C	B
K	F	B	F	I	I	R	P	N	W	P	V	I	A	I
L	N	E	V	N	D	V	U	O	Q	R	Z	E	E	Y
N	J	O	C	P	B	G	U	S	N	C	O	E	X	R
E	O	O	T	L	Z	Z	E	N	O	X	O	V	F	L
O	L	T	A	N	Y	I	A	H	X	Y	W	T	D	M
N	T	X	G	P	I	N	N	O	I	E	G	J	W	X
F	M	V	E	N	Q	L	V	J	N	T	W	C	X	Z
V	A	L	T	W	I	J	C	D	Q	I	A	W	O	H
N	A	M	U	R	T	H	R	W	L	C	H	F	D	N
E	I	L	R	M	D	O	S	S	Y	L	R	J	T	F
C	S	N	X	R	F	H	O	A	M	J	E	B	G	F
B	R	V	F	S	R	N	E	P	W	A	W	T	S	D
Y	D	E	N	N	A	K	Z	G	W	X	D	C	Z	T
Z	Z	I	A	P	Y	G	F	Q	M	Z	A	A	D	L
R	E	A	G	A	N	B	U	S	H	X	D	I	I	H
G	P	W	S	C	C	W	Q	X	D	G	Z	J	I	L

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



1. What is the connection between Eric Estrada and fish?
2. Where is Gillock Island?
3. What product gets its name from the Czech town of Semtín?
4. Who used the pseudonym "Aircraftman Shaw" in the 1920s?
5. Who said, "To refrain from imitation is the best revenge"?
6. Who wrote *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*?
7. For which film did composer John Williams win his first Oscar?
8. What is a philodox?
9. Which author said "I was wrong to grow older. Pity. I was so happy as a child"?
10. Whose face, according to Christopher Marlowe, launched a thousand ships?
11. What is an oculus?
12. By what name was Margaretha Geertruida Zelle, born 1876, better known?
13. How did she die?
14. Dancer Josephine Baker had a pet called Chiquita? What kind of animal was it?
15. Montevideo is the capital of which country?
16. Who lost the Wimbledon men's singles final in both 1986 and 1987?
17. In which sport in the US are the annual Eclipse Awards made?
18. Which US state is also known as the Granite State?
19. Which group of islands lies immediately to the north of Vanuatu?
20. Which media corporation was founded by William Paley?

Answers next week.

Never a Cross Word!

Across

1. Could it be turned into a sword?
7. Assassination.
8. Bird's home.
10. Software should be friendly to him.
11. Seed used in cooking.
12. He was beaten by William at Hastings.
14. Very important people.
15. Desire.
17. In wrestling, can be full or half.
18. Device for measuring temperature.

Down

2. State between Texas and

1	2	3	4	5	6
7				8	9
10			11		
12			13	14	
15	16		17		
18					

3. Mississippi.
4. Buffalo's defenses.
5. Mr Lincoln.
6. Consume.
8. Hometown of C&W.
9. Signalling with flags.
13. Aussie dog.
15. Not dry.
16. Opposite SSW.

Solution next week.

Brain Buster!!

Q. A covered truck laden with birds approaches a bridge. The driver realizes that his vehicle will be too heavy for the bridge. He climbs out and shouts at the birds until they are all flying around inside the truck. Will this make the truck lighter?

A. No. The total mass (air + birds) does not change. Imagine you have a box filled with heavy gas and light gas. If you shake it so the gases mix together, does this change the weight?

Solution to last week's Crossword

S	I	C	K	A	S	L	E	E	P
O	D	S	W	N	A				
C	O	N	F	U	S	E	H	E	R
K	N	B	D	A	A				
V	E	X	P	E	R	N	O	D	
O	C	F	N	C	E				
F	A	T	H	O	M	E	N		
F	I	R	O	M	R				
I	N	C	M	A	D	N	E	S	S
C	U	I	D	N	V				
E	N	T	I	C	E	S	T	O	P

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S MONSTER QUIZ

1. Prince of Wales;
2. Lewis Carroll;
3. Jabberwocky;
4. Tunguska;
5. Lace;
6. Cookery;
7. Steel;
8. Gene Wilder;
9. North Carolina;
10. Vermont;
11. Kalasin;
12. Real estate;
13. Jimmy Durante;
14. Charles Dickens;
15. 64;
16. Laputa;
17. Elba;
18. Diego Maradona;
19. Adam (Clayton);
20. Ultraman.

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By the time you read this column, Microsoft should be about to release a huge patch to Windows XP known as "Service Pack 2."

I've been working with Service Pack 2 ("SP2" to its friends) for about four months now. I just finished updating one of my books so it covers SP2 – a massive undertaking because the changes are so pervasive.

If you haven't heard about SP2 yet, you will. Microsoft will be running a US\$300 million publicity campaign – that's 12 billion baht – to push SP2 with a "Windows XP Reloaded" theme.

Why would Microsoft spend such an enormous sum on a free patch? The 'Softies hope that SP2's improvements, combined with new versions of Windows Media Player (which I reviewed a couple of weeks ago) and Windows Media Center Edition (which isn't available in Thailand) will drive sales this Christmas.

Of course, the 64,000-dollar question is whether you should install Service Pack 2. The short answer is: yes, but not yet. Permit me to explain first why, some day soon, you're going to want to install Service Pack 2.

You know that Windows XP has more holes than a Jupiter-sized colander, and has seen enough patches (and patches of patches to patches) to drive any moderately attentive user batty.

What you may not realize is that much of the plumbing inside Windows XP has a hard time coping with popular new hardware, including wireless networks and DVD-RW drives, among many others.

Microsoft will stick to its story that SP2 is a service pack – a whole bunch of fixes and improvements rolled into a single bundle.

In fact, SP2 constitutes a major Windows upgrade. I think it's fair to say that the WinXP SP2 "service pack" jump is every bit as all-encompassing as the jump from Windows 98 to Windows Me.

However, Microsoft doesn't



The most visible part of WinXP Service Pack 2, the Security Center. It doesn't work very well, and it has an annoying tendency to dupe you into allowing Microsoft to update your PC automatically. But all in all, it's a step in the right direction.

Windows XP SP2: Danger, Will Robinson

want to bill SP2 as an upgrade for fear of creating the same kind of debacle it experienced with Windows Me, which was a marketing flop.

In coming months you'll read reams of Microsoft Party Line "information" about SP2's features. Some of it will actually be true.

SP2 really does include a firewall, although the firewall doesn't monitor outbound traffic. So if you get infected with a worm that starts spewing out thousands of bogus messages, you'll never know.

SP2 really does "lock down" several security settings, making it more difficult for worms to grab your computer by the throat. It patches thousands of security holes. It has a few really good new wireless capabilities, including the ability to switch easily among multiple wireless networks (right now, ping-ponging among available networks can be a real headache).

SP2 also supports "Data Execution Protection" (DEP), which should help reduce the number of buffer overflow security holes, although you'll have to buy a DEP enabled computer in order to take advantage of it. That's kind of like buying a Sherman Tank to protect against potholes that Microsoft should've fixed anyway.

Most of all, SP2 represents a new level playing field. When you upgrade to SP2 (er, apply the Service Pack), you'll replace essentially all of Windows' key programs, and bring your system into line with all the new computers out there.

Of course, Microsoft will start patching SP2 almost immediately (mark my words), so you'll still need to stay on top of the latest updates. But at least the core files will all be current.

You'll have quite a few

worthwhile new features, and you'll be able to skip all the previous patches issued up to the day that SP2 is released.

So with all this good stuff dangling in front of your nose, why on earth would you wait to install SP2?

I bet you already know the answer.

Microsoft always, always, always screws up major upgrades. Heck, they almost always screw up *small* upgrades.

Case in point: Did you read about the MS04-025 security patch inanity? That was just two weeks ago. Seems that Microsoft posted this enormous set of patches for Internet Explorer on July 31.

On August 1, they had to yank the whole shooting match and replace it with "version 2.0" because somebody put the wrong bunch of files in the hopper for folks who are using the latest version of Windows Update! What a mess.

SP2 reaches deep into your system and changes all sorts of things. A small percentage of all people who install SP2 will lock up their machines so they can't even boot. I guarantee it. And a larger percentage of people will have days or weeks of headaches.

You would be well advised to wait for the pioneers to take the arrows in their backs.

See if Microsoft issues an SP2a or "version 2", and allow the tech gurus time to sort out some of the problems, so they can help you if something goes bump in the night. Wait a month. Maybe two.

Danger, Will Robinson.

Woody Leonhard has written a number of books in the "...for Dummies" series on computing. Readers can contact him at: woody@kahunwoody.com

A meditation on youth and death

David Halberstam is the quintessential bigfoot journalist. Along with a small band of brothers in Saigon in the early 1960s, he was among the first to report the battlefield reality behind the official bromides about the Vietnam War, for which he won the Pulitzer Prize.

His last book, *Firehouse*, was a heartbreaking account of the devastation wrought upon a single New York firehouse during the horror of September 11.

As he moves into his old age, he has concentrated on a series of sports books. The sixth in the series is *The Teammates* (Hyperion, New York, 2003, 217pp). Subtitled *A Portrait of a Friendship*, it is the story of four baseball players – Ted Williams, Bobby Doerr, Dom DiMaggio and Johnny Pesky – whose lifelong bonds of friendship were forged in the 15-year-long heyday of the Boston Red Sox (1937-1953).

But this is really not a book about baseball – a sport which interests only a dozen countries in the world – but about how four young men who grew up in the Depression raised themselves to fame and riches through their love of the game, married, went off to World War II, dealt with fading physical gifts and post-retirement careers, and how they handled the last decades of their life and the inevitable disability and death.

Most of all it's about the love and support they gave each other from their youth into their 80s.

A story of this type is Halberstam's meat. As he showed in *Firehouse*, he is adept at the old-fashioned journalist's skills of lengthy interviews, tireless legwork, meticulous research – all wrapped up in profound empathy for the subjects of his book.

In *The Teammates*, his narrative vehicle is a three-day car trip that Dom DiMaggio and Johnny Pesky took in October 2001 from Marion, Massachusetts, to Hernando, Florida, for a last visit to the dying Ted Williams.

Williams, of course, was the leader of the pack, arguably the greatest hitter in the history of baseball, the last to attain a batting average of .406, who played from 1939 to 1960, with breaks to serve as a US Marine pilot in World War II and Korea.

The son of an alcoholic father and religious zealot mother, he was also a tortured soul, moody, foul-mouthed, quick to lose his temper and contemptuous of fans. But he was fiercely loyal to his friends, especially Doerr, Pesky and DiMaggio.

"For many years, the glue that held them together as friends was Williams; someone that great, one of the very best ever at what they did, had rare peer power," Halberstam writes.

"It was," Pesky once said of him, "like there was a star on top of his head, pulling everyone toward him like a beacon, letting everyone around him know that he was different and that he was special in some marvelous way and that we were that much more special because we had played with him."

As the car heads further south, with the former teammates swapping jokes and stories, Halberstam interweaves tales of their childhoods and families, how they met their wives, what they did in the war.

DiMaggio, brother of Joe, the great Yankee rival of Ted Williams, grew up speaking Italian in the San Francisco home of his fisherman father who was amazed that people actually paid his sons to play baseball.

Doerr met his wife when she was teaching in a one-room school for Indians in a remote Oregon wilderness area. He would live there the rest of his life. Photos of the men, with wives, in uniform, as young ballplayers and old men, are also interwoven throughout the book.

But at last they reach the end of their journey: "...when the attendants wheeled Ted in, they gasped in shock. Here was their old friend, a man once supremely powerful, shrunken now, down to perhaps 130 pounds, head down on his chest."

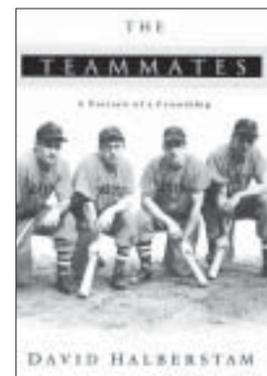
And yet: "It was fascinating to watch him become stronger by the minute with the arrival of his friends. He had to take charge, of course, because that was the natural order of things, and that was what his friends wanted."

Their last reunion turns into a triumph of the will.



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt



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LAYING DOWN THE LAW

With Friedrich 'Sam' Fauma

During a recent expansion of his company he registered a second company, for which his Treaty of Amity company is providing management services.

Trouble came knocking soon after an "amicable" resignation by one of his staff. He was invited to go to the Labor Department where he was told that an anonymous person had filed a report suggesting that Mr X was working without a work permit.

Mr X presented his company papers, his work permit and the management agreement, as well as the receipt for management services he had provided.

The officials agreed that Mr X was working legally for his company, even in providing management services for other companies.

However, they pointed out that there was a gray area in the management services he was providing to his own company and said that they believed that the second company should be listed in his work permit as an additional employer. Any work done for this second employer would then be subject to income tax.

Mr X therefore agreed to have the second company specified in his work permit as a second employer in order to avoid problems in the future.

He is now happily paying the additional income tax in order to be 100% legal in the work he is doing. The Labor Department has approved his application for a change to his work permit so he can now officially work for both companies.

The lesson is that having a work permit does not allow you to work for another company – even at the same workplace – without having this second job included in your work permit.

It is also crucial to understand that the job description in the work permit is very important; doing work that is not defined in the work permit is illegal and can lead to criminal charges.

This column is compiled from the collective experience of the partners in the International Law Office, Phuket City. Tel: 076-222191-5. Fax: 076-222-196. Email: interlaw@loxinfo.co.th.

Having a work permit does not mean you can do whatever work you like – the job description inside the permit is very specific, and doing work not included in the description is illegal.



Death and taxes

It was Benjamin Franklin who said that the only certainties in this world are death and taxes. Death happens to us all, but what happens when a foreign national dies in Thailand?

Generally, the processes and procedures that follow a "natural" or expected death begin with the attending physician completing a death certificate and then following the laws of Thailand.

The cause of death is stated on the death certificate – itself an important document – and this can have serious consequences, particularly with insurance claims. Relatives are notified and the funeral follows, usually a burial, cremation or having the mortal remains returned to the deceased's home country.

Decisions on what happens tend to follow the deceased's wishes, as long as they have made their wishes known, preferably in the form of a legal document, commonly known as a will. This is a fairly straightforward process as long as the deceased had their financial and funeral affairs in order.

Death is not free and funerals cost money. Many health insurance policies cover the hospital, funeral and other costs associated with illness and death for residents in Thailand, but some policies do not cover everything. The repatriation of mortal remains can be one such exclusion and can cost more than 150,000 baht, although other options exist. One's cremated remains can, for example, be sent to the home country with a relative or even through the mail.

However, for tourists, most international travel insurance policies cover death and all the pro-



By Peter Davison

cedures involved in dealing with dying overseas. All fine and dandy if the deceased has the correct insurance.

Funerals in Thailand tend to be a Buddhist-style ceremony and cremation at the local temple. The cost of a funeral can vary considerably, from a few thousand baht for simple rites to many thousands for an elaborate funeral.

There is usually a "wake" or vigil over the body – often held at the deceased's home or in a temple – for relatives and friends to pay their last respects.

In Thailand, as elsewhere, embassies deal with a large number of their citizens' deaths each year. Procedures are generally straightforward, and consular staff play a vital role in supporting grieving relatives.

One common misunderstanding is that the deceased's embassy will make all of the arrangements – and pay – for a funeral. This is not the case, although embassy staff will assist in many other ways.

The embassy will attempt to contact the deceased's next of kin, usually an immediate family member who can assume legal responsibility for making decisions on behalf of the deceased, if no

will or other instructions have been made.

Difficult situations can arise when a foreign national dies in Thailand and the deceased's (unmarried) partner wishes to make decisions regarding funeral arrangements and the execution of the deceased's will.

If no next of kin is found, most embassies can assume responsibility for the personal estate of a foreigner who dies abroad should the deceased have no legal representative in Thailand.

Generally, the consular section of the embassy takes possession of personal effects, such as cash-convertible assets, apparel, jewelry, personal documents and papers.

When a death is unnatural or sudden, for example suicide or where foul play is suspected and a police investigation is involved, an autopsy may be required to determine the cause of death.

The deceased's body may also not be released for funeral rights until after legal and police procedures have been completed.

Consideration should perhaps be given – and expressed to one's next of kin – to organ or body donation for research or transplantation purposes.

In Thailand, body and organ donations are coordinated through the Thai Red Cross Society, and further information can be found at www.redcross.or.th

Peter Davison is the Manager for International Services at Phuket International Hospital. Questions or comments may be sent by email to peter@phuket-inter-hospital.co.th or by fax to 076-210936.

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For those in peril on the sea

In May 1999, the cruise liner *Sun Vista*, on its way from Phuket to Singapore, caught fire and sank. All 250 passengers escaped in the liner's lifeboats and were picked up by other ships shortly afterward. No one was badly hurt and no one died.

In June 2000, 166 passengers were saved from the *Phuket Cruiser 2* when it caught fire between Phuket and Phi Phi. Most of the passengers opted to continue on to Phi Phi in other boats. Again, no one was killed or hurt.

These are the happy stories; no one died. In 1998, 25 people lost their lives in two separate sinkings in Phuket waters and there have many other frightening incidents, particularly in Phang Nga Bay, with its hundreds of boats full of tourists.

Indeed, the fact that there are so many boats out on Phang Nga Bay at any time is the one positive in this situation; there is usually someone close by who can pull passengers off a burning boat or out of the sea.

Certainly, the limited death toll has nothing to do with safety awareness, which is woefully lacking, thanks to a combination of ignorance, sometimes willful, and greed.

There are stark similarities between the attitudes of many boat operators and people operating motorcycles on Phuket's roads. Both carry passengers, both are often overloaded, and in both cases safety equipment – with motorbikes, we're talking about helmets; with boats, it's life jackets, engine and hull maintenance, and trained crew – is all too often non-existent or seriously substandard.

One has to wonder what goes through the minds of parents who carry helmetless toddlers on motorbikes, or boat skippers who have ancient buoyancy aids that are ripped, sun-faded and lacking straps or fastenings. Probably nothing.

Policing safety on boats should, in theory, be easier than policing motorbike users, because there are far fewer boats than there are motorcycles. Also, most boats are used for commercial purposes, while most motorbikes are not.

At the moment, the authorities simply fine boat operators found to have inadequate safety equipment. Surely it would be more appropriate to bar the skipper from taking passengers aboard until his vessel meets safety requirements. This would hit the owners of the boat who, according to one marine training official interviewed by the *Gazette*, are often the ones to blame for skimping on safety.

That, along with truly deterrent penalties for both captains and owners whose vessels are involved in fatal accidents, would go a long way toward improving safety standards.

– The Editor



Letters

The *Gazette* is pleased to receive mail from readers. Please write to us at 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000, fax to 076-213971 or send an email to editor@phuketgazette.net

with your views for publication in our next issue. We reserve the right to edit all letters. Pseudonyms are acceptable only if your full name and address are supplied.

A plea to the PM

You lucky people of Phuket already have modern roads. Spare a thought for the inhabitants of Koh Lanta, who are still waiting for their first pothole- and mud-free road.

Mr Prime Minister, a lot less than 100 billion baht would contribute greatly to giving Lanta the standard of roads it needs. This would make the island more attractive for tourists and greatly benefit the lives of its residents. Please visit our island during your tour of the south and see for yourself.

Serge Barros
Koh Lanta

Phuket Confidential

As a privacy regulator in the UK, I found your article (see *News* this issue) about the Immigration Police going online to boost security worrying.

Providing 24 items of information will help prevent terrorism, but I am concerned about hotel staff having access to my confidential information. This constitutes a gross invasion of privacy.

It also makes "identity theft" a real danger, thus increasing the risk of terrorism, rather than preventing it.

Immigration officers are trained to do this work. Hotel staff, an unregulated body of workers, are not. Mistakes could mean tourists find themselves spending holiday time in a police station. The Immigration Department, bound by rules of confidentiality, is the only place where such information should be requested.

Vivien Evans
Jersey, UK

Downsider bombed

I enjoyed reading George Bentick describe his 1960s visits to Phuket in the *Gazette* [*Downsider*, issue of May 15], despite his odd remark about American bomber aircraft above Phuket. I put that down to confused childhood memories and found the rest of the piece delightful reading.

However, in his latest column [in the issue of August 7], George seems to be as befuddled as his namesake, whose idiotic statements he pasted into his article.

US bombers overflying Phuket during the Vietnam War? Their crews looking down at this beautiful, bomb-crater-free island and coming here for R&R? Laying the "fundamentals of Patong" thus making Americans the "founding fathers of Phuket as we know it today"?

Why would aircraft stationed as far away as U-tapao and Ubon have approached Phuket, when Vietnam, the target, is east of Thailand? Even if they had, the aircrews would have seen an island pockmarked with hundreds of tin-mine craters and a murky sea full of dredgers.

Phuket's industry was all about mining back then and the handful of European engineers so inclined got their kicks on Soi Sam in Phuket Town, not in Patong. There wasn't even a paved road over the hill then.

Bangkok, not Phuket, was an R&R destination for American troops during the Vietnam War. The dubious honor of being Patong's first sex tourists goes to those intrepid travelers, the Germans.

So should we thank the Germans for creating the modern Phuket? No. As everyone is so

fond of saying, "This Is Thailand", so surely Phuket has developed into what the Thai people wanted it to be, right?

Jeroen Deknatel
Koh Kaew

Brickbat for Bentick

I usually only glance at George Bentick's *Downsider* column – its past content has been factually incorrect and probably of appeal to few people – but the headline and photograph of President Bush in the last edition of the *Gazette* caught my eye.

I do not wish to comment on Mr Bentick's thoughts – they are not worthy of my time – but I will make three observations:

Firstly, Mr Bentick should not underestimate the voting strength of "the silent majority" in a democratic society.

Secondly, if he collects his information from the Soi Bangla area of Patong, then I doubt that it is representative of the American community in Phuket as a whole.

Finally, Mr Bentick should be mindful of the old adage, "Empty vessels make the most sound."

John B Darroch
Chalong

Gunning for George

I would like to make a couple of points in response to Mr Bentick's August 7 article.

First, not all Americans living in Phuket dislike George W Bush.

Second, Americans in general do not care what Europeans think of the President. He works for us, not you.

Edward Petrella
Karon Beach

The Phuket Gazette

In association with The Nation Multimedia Group PCL

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Letters conveying views and suggestions are published here. Those seeking comment from government officials and/or business owners are published in *Issues & Answers* on the facing page.

Police checkpoints prevent youth crime

The checkpoints are part of the government's policy to solve the problems of youth crime and are used in all 76 Thai provinces.

Youth violence is particularly bad when young people form gangs that fight one another. Right now, you have probably noticed that these youths no longer fight hand-to-hand, but instead use weapons that include knives, axes and guns.

Former Phuket Governor Pongpayome Vasaputi, after receiving many complaints on this issue, especially from the Saphan Hin area, ordered police to be strict in dealing with youth crime.

In the past, people used to go to Saphan Hin to exercise in the morning or evening. But then we started getting complaints that youths were threatening and extorting money from people. That's why we had to crack down on this problem.

We set up checkpoints often because we want to prevent activities such as motorbike racing and big gang fights.

If the youths see the police, they may think twice about breaking the law. If they are caught and charged with crimes, they may get fed up and stop breaking the law.

We use traffic laws to force them to wear motorcycle helmets, to make sure they are licensed, and that they haven't illegally modified their bikes, making them unsafe.

We also carry out body



Setting up police checkpoints along roads is a crucial part of the central government's effort to crack down on motorcycle racing, gang fights and violent youth crimes. While some critics think so many police checkpoints are bad for Phuket's image, the local law enforcement community believes they are a necessary and effective way of protecting the innocent from injury or even death at the hands of young tearaways. Pol Lt Col Chartchai Nicrodhanon, Deputy Superintendent of Crime Suppression Division of the Phuket City Police Department, explains why he thinks the checkpoints are a good idea.

searches to see if they are have weapons or drugs.

However, sometimes teenagers don't carry their weapons on their person, but instead stash away a gun or a knife in a tree, only taking it out when they need it to fight.

One thing I really don't understand is why people don't like to wear helmets. Right now many people are wearing helmets but only so that they won't be fined, not to protect themselves in the event of an accident.

I believe that setting up police checkpoints and arresting people who break traffic laws can really help prevent crime.

Sometimes we find motorbikes that don't have tax stickers. When we run a check we

sometimes learn that these motorbikes are stolen. This is just one of the many ways the checkpoints can aid in crime prevention.

If teenagers under 18 years of age are caught riding motorcycles without a license, we will charge the vehicle's owner with abetting a crime.

Sometimes the parents of children who commit crimes think their children are at home in bed - until we call them. They don't even know their own kids are actually sneaking out late at night to go joyriding with friends. That's why we set up checkpoints from midnight to 3 am. Is that a time when decent people should be out on the streets?

In Phuket City the major

spots where teenagers like to hang out and cause trouble are Lan Nawamin Square, Saphan Hin, Rang Hill, the Shell Gas Station on Phang Nga Road and Suan Luang Park.

The modus operandi of the teenage troublemakers is to ride together slowly in a big pack of 20-30 motorbikes, blocking traffic. If anyone takes exception and beeps at the motorcyclists, they will follow that car and hit it.

We don't have enough police officers to set up many checkpoints simultaneously, because the Phuket City Police Station [Muang District Police] has a total of only 200 officers, and not all of these are assigned to man checkpoints.

If you compare that with the

population we are responsible for, it works out that each patrol officer is actually responsible for more than 500 people. If you factor in all the unregistered residents and visiting tourists, the number is much higher than that.

I think the reasons that this problem will never be completely solved are the natural exuberance of youth, coupled with Thai laws that favor giving young people a chance to reform themselves.

We work hard to make arrests [against juvenile offenders], but their parents just go down and bail them out of the Juvenile Observation and Protection Center. After they are released, they go right back to committing more crimes because they were never really punished for their previous offences.

We have already decided to close the [vehicle] entry to Suan Luang Park from 10 pm to 5 am, and to limit access to Saphan Hin to a single entrance during these hours. That way, at least if something happens inside, suspects will have only one way out.

I would like to tell parents with teenage children to be emotionally close to them, rather than just meeting their material needs. It's important to love them, take care of them, reason with them and explain things to them.

I would like to ask anyone who witnesses a violent crime to report it by calling 191 or contacting me direct at 09-7293976.

Compiled by Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

Defining decency in Thailand

How, in Thailand, are standards of decency of images of the human form assessed?

How much "skin" can be allowed to be shown?

Captain Bligh Records
Phuket

Noppadol Mekmakha, Director of the Division of Consumer Protection on Advertising, Office of the Consumer Protection Board in Bangkok, replies:

If the images are to be used for advertising purposes and you are not sure if they are suitable for publication, you should submit 17 copies of all materials in question for review by our committee. There is a 2,000 baht fee per piece. All decisions are rendered within 30 days of application.

Under the Consumer Protection Act, this committee has the power to prohibit any material that it deems immoral or indecent.

Boriboon Yusuksomboon, Deputy Superintendent of Investigation Section, Phuket Provincial Police replies:

Section 287 to the Penal Code of Thailand states, "Whoever (1) for the purpose of trade

or by trade, for public distribution or exhibition, makes, produces, possesses, brings or causes to be brought into the Kingdom, sends or causes to be sent out of the Kingdom, takes away or causes to be taken away, or circulates by any means whatever, any document, drawing, print, painting, printed matter, picture, poster, symbol, photograph, cinematograph film, noise tape, picture tape or any other thing which is obscene;

(2) carries on trade, or takes part or participates in the trade concerning the aforesaid obscene material or thing, or distributes or exhibits to the public, or hires out such material or thing;

(3) in order to assist in the circulation or trading of the aforesaid obscene material or thing, propagates or spreads the news by any means whatever that there is a person committing the act which is an offense according to the Section, or propagates or spreads the news that the aforesaid obscene material or thing may be obtained from any person or by any means, shall be punished with imprisonment not exceeding three years, or fine not exceeding six thousand baht, or both.

However, the definition of

what constitutes obscenity is not as cut-and-dried as, say, what constitutes theft. For this reason, officers must review the material on a case-by-case basis, referring back to previous Supreme Court judgments.

For example, a picture of a naked woman blurred below the waist, is not generally considered as obscene.

However, even some images which have no sexual organs overtly displayed, but which are deemed sexually arousing, can be regarded as "obscenity", not art.

My husband and I were driving along Chao Fa East Rd when, in front of Daorung School, we saw a new road. Thinking it to be a new connection between Chao Fa East and West roads, we decided to drive down it to see where it led.

As we neared the end, the road became narrower until it ended in an alley called Soi Nakha, emerging between two houses on Chao Fa West Rd. There was a long queue on Chao Fa West Rd of vehicles waiting to turn into Soi Nakha, but unable

to because of the cars exiting it.

Very strange. Why hasn't the road been completed? And why is traffic allowed on it before its completion?

Mysia Chettle
Phuket

Fon Butkatunyoo, Director of the Public Works Bureau of Phuket City Municipality, responds:

At the Chao Fa West end of Soi Nakha there are still a few people living in houses on the land we need to acquire before complet-

ing the road. We are currently negotiating with the owners of that land.

When we have reached an agreement, we will expand that section of Soi Nakha to the same width as at the Chao Fa East end.

Although the road is not complete, we allow people to use it because it is better than closing the road.

If we closed it, we would be cutting off a shorter, alternative route for when there are traffic jams on either Chao Fa East or West roads.

Issues & ANSWERS

Want to know how to get something done? Can't understand some of the dafter things that seem to go on in Phuket? Want to pitch an idea to Phuket's authorities or institutions? Then this is the forum for you. Submit your queries or suggestions to us and we'll ask the appropriate people to respond to them.

Write to: The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at www.phuketgazette.net

Traffic bedlam at Soi Nakha

Bouncy castles, fairgrounds and giant slides are essential elements of a complete British seaside holiday, along with jammed highways and rain.

Very soon, we will be able to enjoy the same experience here in Phuket too. Steve Rutter from Manchester and his family have moved to the island after visiting several times. They are about to build a children's pleasure park along the beach road in Rawai.

This is Steve's dream. He actually ran away from home once, at age 13, to join a traveling fair. Subsequently, he established Icon, one of the top private security firms in the UK, and he is considered a valuable training resource among the top players in that industry.

The fairground rides are already on their way from England and include a giant octopus ride, of which there are only two in the world.

The park will operate on a single-entrance-fee basis, which should eliminate the need to stand in long lines – pay one entrance fee, and all the rides are free after that.

There will also be a social club with live entertainment for parents, who can cut the kids free to enjoy themselves in a safe and supervised environment.

In addition to the normal fun fair attractions, there will be a total of 14 rides including a fun house, giant slide and – of course – massive bouncy castles. Construction starts this month, and Steve and partner Sharon hope the new attraction will be ready to open in November.

No limited appeal: One of the live acts that Steve has brought over already is

Check out those big bouncy castles

available to do shows right now. He is Brian Sweeny, aka "No Limits", and is a giant on the pub-and-club scene in the north of England.

A big man with a big show, he has possibly the largest collection of karaoke CDs in the world.

His show is a mix of top comedy and karaoke that is guaranteed to pack your pub and give your guests the best night out of their holidays.

Conveniently, it's a self-contained act. Brian has excellent sound and lighting equipment, so its very much a hassle-free, plug-and-play booking. Just book the bloke, promote the event and collect the money over the bar. For more information contact Steve at sterutter@funkyguide.com

Showing off: I was delighted to visit Sphinx Restaurant and Theatre again this week. I had some friends from out of town in, so I thought I'd put my own advice into practice by taking them there.

The new show is stunning, so if you have not been to Sphinx, now would be a good time to see it for yourself.

I checked out the new Club Rio this

month too, then headed upstairs to Rock Hard for some proper tunes from Big Bill's extensive playlist.

The transition seems to have done no harm at all, as Rock Hard and Club Rio downstairs were both bopping.

Bitter blow: Another step toward making paradise a reality in Phuket happened recently, and it's a big one. Those lovely chaps who brought us Walker's Crisps have now almost brought tears of joy to my cynical eyes.

Ladies and gentlemen, I give you Tetley's Bitter, straight from Leeds and now widely available in the better sort of establishments.

Those bar owners who are put off by the cost should remember this: You Are Not Your Customer. You live here and likely agonize over whether to drink Chang or pay extra for Heineken.

But most of your customers are still thinking in their native currencies, and if they are bitter drinkers they will pay without hesitation. Trust me.

Rumors are that Boddingtons and others may be on their way. Perhaps I

should speak to these guys about choccie biccies and tea bags.

Boomtown: The construction of Jungceylon on Rath-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd continues at a breathtaking pace. It seems that every time I go into Toon Town, heaps more work has been done to it. It's all very exciting and there has been much barstool speculation about which of the major franchises will take out space there.

The Hard Rock Café chain seems to figure prominently in the rumors, as it is the type of place that would appear to be welcomed by both residents and visitors alike.

Another rumor is that two very well-known British restaurateurs are looking at Jungceylon to open Asian branches. These are both major players and respected names in the global restaurant business and their presence would certainly raise the profile not only of this mighty development, but also of Phuket as a whole. I'll keep you posted.

I am also stunned at the progress on Central Festival on the bypass road outside Phuket City. However, I think I am not the only person who is concerned that this will spell the death of the city's traditional commercial center. I am a little saddened by that.

I am also astonished at the Billion Plaza development. Are the developers really sure that there are enough people visiting or living on the island to support yet another huge shopping mall on the same road? Maybe they know something we don't.

Konrad Stalin may be reached at konradstalin@hotmail.com.



By Konrad Stalin

There are times when I have to get away from my slave driver – the computer – leave the Beast alone and hit the open road.

My wife is at the wheel so I can tip back my seat and watch the green, sunlit fields floating by – flashing by, more accurately, as she drives at a steady 140 kmh, which is far too fast for my taste.

We're heading north from the south coast to the London ring road, the M25, from where we'll veer west towards Oxford and a little village beyond, in the Cotswolds, one of the prettiest parts in all of England.

It's cool in the car now, with the windows open. But back in the town we came from, East-

Getting away from the Beast

EDGEWISE

By John Gilpin

bourne, crawling through traffic, it was hotter in our non-air-conditioned car than driving in Phuket.

This is the first time we've been away for a weekend since we arrived from Thailand two months ago. I've been chained to

the Beast because of a new project that has recently been flung at me. As I tell my friends, I feel like an old kipper that's been hauled out of the back of the freezer – and I'm still not defrosted. I need more time in the microwave.

I haven't edited a magazine – for that's what I used to do and that's what I'm now doing again – for 12 years. Things have changed. Everything depends on the Beast. The first thing I had to do was to get broadband installed in order to download picture files of up to 40MB.

I commission the copy and edit it on-screen here in the UK – the days of blue pencil and paper are long gone. I then email it to the designer in Auckland, NZ. He puts together the pages with the pictures and then sends them back to me as PDF files for checking and for captions.

Once everything is okay, the digitized pages are sent to Hong Kong for color separation before being couriered to Shanghai for printing and binding.

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Quack remedy for overwork: ducks on the pond at Wroxton.

roasting like this? Who says England is a cold country?

Sometime later we're sitting in the shade of a tulip tree in an English country garden with pint-sized gin-and-tonics in hand. Our host, who also lives most of the year in Phuket, is a chef by trade. He makes us the most beautiful dinner, which includes enormous shanks of slow-roasted lamb that rise like karst formations from a sea of delicate bean sauce. The wine flows.

The next day,

Trucks or trains deliver printed copies of the magazine to Beijing for distribution. To make matters more complicated, the magazine is bilingual in Chinese and English, and the publisher is based in Bristol, UK.

Twelve years ago, a monthly magazine like this would have been impossible to produce in this manner. But if broadband is now available where I live in Phuket, I should be able to do it from there. Once we're up and running I hope to carry my laptop back to Phuket and work from Chalong.

We've hit a traffic jam caused by roadworks at Junction 12. The sun blazes through the window making an oven of the car interior. How long are we going to be crawling along and

feeling surprisingly healthy, we wander around the picture-book village where the 300-year-old thatched houses have meter-thick walls made of honey-colored Cotswold stone. We watch the ducks on the ancient pond, which is right in front of our host's house.

We take a walk in the landscaped grounds of nearby Wroxton Abbey, an enormous Jacobean mansion dating from the early 17th Century, once the home of the family of Lord North but now owned by an American university. As we saunter over lawns as smooth as putting greens, we admire great redwood trees and a lake full of lilies and large tench and pike.

At last, the Beast seems very far away.

Central to open September 1

By Dhirarat Boonkongsan

PHUKET CITY: After two years of construction costing 2 billion baht, Central Festival Phuket (CFP), covering a plot of more than 30 rai at the Darasamut Intersection, will open on September 1.

Wallaya Chirathivat, Executive Vice-President of Business Development of Central Retail Corp, told the *Gazette* that during construction of CFP the original budget of 1.5 billion baht blew out to 2 billion baht.

"At first we set the budget at 1.5 billion baht, but it was increased to 2 billion baht to include more interior decoration and infrastructure, such as security cameras and water and electricity supply in every part of [the complex]," she said.

"We paid so much attention to decorating CFP, that we needed more time to make it ready to serve our customers, who have waited a long time for us."

K. Wallaya explained that CFP, with Wilaiporn Pitimana-

aree as General Manager, was based on the Central Chidlom shopping mall in Bangkok.

Fashion stores in the mall will include B2S clothing store as a main occupant, along with retailers of Calvin Klein, DKNY, Ferregamo, Burberry, Billabong and Mambo fashion goods, and even a Playboy men's and women's fashion store that cost 10 million baht to fit out.

In the same area, 1,400 square meters has been set aside for jewelry stores, including a new outlet for DD Jewelry, already based in Phuket City, Prima Gold and Vivid Fine Jewelry.

There will also be an Asian Art and Crafts area, taking up 1,200sqm on the first floor, including Jim Thompson, Cocoon, Pasaya, Aka-Walai and EGG stores, as well as One Tambon One Product goods on sale.

A Tops supermarket covering 2,500 sqm, will also be on the 1st floor.

Homeware goods will be available on the 2nd floor, with Power Buy offering 1,500sqm of

electric goods, and Homeworks furniture, fittings and furnishings store taking up 2,300sqm.

Also on the second level will be the 2,500-sqm Tourist Center, featuring a Tourism Authority of Thailand information kiosk, a branch post office and a luggage storage facility. Other services for tourists will be provided by tour agencies, and Thai Airways will have booking facilities there. There will also be Internet cafés to allow travelers to stay in touch with family and friends.

The Tourist Center will also include branches of Bangkok Bank, KasikornBank, Krungsri Ayuthaya Bank and Thai Bank, offering currency exchange, as well as international money-transfer giant Western Union.

Also on the 2nd floor, 3,000 sqm has been earmarked for CFP's IT Center, where mobile phone retailers and service operators, and computer retailers will set up shop.

On the 3rd floor, occupying 2,700sqm, Super Sports has spent

33 million baht on its "adventure store" concept, so customers can try out sports such as rock-wall climbing, abseiling, golf, basketball and table tennis, in the store.

Other indoor entertainment on the 3rd floor will be provided by the seven-auditorium SFX Coliseum cineplex, occupying 4,800sqm.

Those in need of a refreshment break in the middle of a shopping frenzy will have a wide range of sustenance to choose from in the 2,000-sqm International Food Festival area, which will include an upscale food court, as well as outlets of Sizzler, Pizza Hut, Dairy Queen, Au Bon Pain, Black Canyon, Fuji, Phuja Nirvana, Zen, S&P, Oichi and MK Suki.

K. Wallaya promised that CFP's opening ceremony will be a gala affair. "There will be a fashion show with Thai supermodels, mini concerts by popular Thai artists, and games with prizes worth a total of more than 4 million baht, including a 600,000-baht car," she said.

On the Move

The Cape Panwa Hotel has appointed **Pojakorn Limpichati**,

44, from Bangkok, Director of Sales. He has a diploma in hotel management from Les Roches hotel school in Switzerland, and has been working in the hospitality business for more than 15 years. Before joining the Cape Panwa Hotel, K. Pojakorn was teh Director of Sales and Marketing at the Best Western Fortune Hotel in Bangkok.



Atipa Kitporkar, 39, from Samut Sakorn, has been appointed as PR & Communications Manager for Mom Tri's Co, the umbrella company for Mom Tri's Boathouse, Mom Tri's Villa Royale in Phuket and the Prem Tinsulanonda International School in Chiang Mai. She has an MBA from Strayer University in the US. Before joining the company, she worked for eight years in the hospitality and travel industry.



Anant Akanisthaphichat, from Khon Kaen, has been promoted to Associate Partner at law firm McEvily & Collins, and will take over the Phuket office. A graduate of Sukhothamthamthirat Open University as a barrister, K. Anant has also been an Adjunct Professor at Kasetsart University. Before being promoted he was head of the firm's litigation department in Bangkok



Been promoted? Made a career change? Know someone who has? Let us know by email to onthemove@phuketgazette.net.

The dangers of flexible friends

We live in an era when possession of a credit or debit card is virtually mandatory. Customers who wish to pay cash to stay at better hotels, or hire a car, are viewed with an element of suspicion. Not having a card almost implies that a person is not creditworthy and therefore not to be totally trusted.

For those who do not understand about "plastic", the difference between a credit card and a debit card is simple. A credit card is issued in conjunction with a credit limit which is, in most cases, settled monthly or over a period of time with a minimum repayment each month.

A debit card is simply linked to a bank account and, apart from limits on daily cash withdrawals, the limit is the balance of the bank account. Both types of card are issued by Visa, MasterCard and other major card issuers.

A client of mine recently received a letter from the fraud division of her bank in the UK, asking whether she had made certain purchases. The first was a US\$20 purchase from an American department store, and this was followed by a number of purchases, all in Korea, for items ranging from a meal in a noodle shop to cosmetics and even a hotel bill.

On checking her account through the bank's internet site she discovered that purchases totaling about 35,000 baht had been made, all in Korea.

She had never visited Korea, so she telephoned the bank. Staff there explained that an illegal copy of her card appeared to



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

have been made and said that the bank would cancel the card immediately and issue a her a new one.

She asked about the US\$20 purchase from the American department store. The bank replied that fraudsters routinely test the validity of a forged card by making a purchase via the Internet.

Further investigation revealed that her card details were stolen from her while she was preparing for a trip to Malaysia a few months earlier. She had used her card only for booking airline tickets via the Internet and a hotel room via an online travel agency, but this was enough for the card details to get into the wrong hands.

The good news was that the bank refunded all the money fraudulently debited from her account.

I contacted a business associate of mine who is a long-time resident of Kuala Lumpur to discuss this issue. He explained that credit/debit card fraud was widespread in Malaysia, with arrests being made and reported in the local press almost daily.

He has his main bank account in the UK, and said that, even though it was only July, he was already on his third card this year. He has an account with another British bank and has just received his second card from that bank.

He is very careful about using the card, never letting it out of his sight and using it sparingly, but apparently to no avail. He recently received a call from the fraud division of one of his banks, asking if he was in Japan using the card. He replied that he was in Malaysia and that the card was in his wallet.

My associate said that he believed the main culprits in the theft of credit and debit card details are Malaysian bank staff. This obviously makes the use of ATMs in Malaysia as risky as any other form of card use.

The problem of credit/debit card fraud is not helped by the fact that law enforcement agencies are notoriously reluctant to pursue small cases.

Fraud cases involving

amounts as large as US\$50,000 are seen as being too small to be of interest to the authorities.

In Asia the worst countries for card fraud appear to be Malaysia and Indonesia but Thailand and Taiwan are also often on the list of offenders.

So would traveler's checks be a safer option when going to Malaysia? They might – if you could cash them. When my client tried to cash a US\$500 (about 20,000 baht) traveler's check at a bank in Malaysia, she was told it was too large. Presumably they prefer plastic.

Richard Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial planning service. He can be reached at Tel and Fax: 076-381997, Mobile: 01-081-4611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th.

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CTDA launch makes waves

Change is constant, and although many people resist it, sometimes it can be for the better. One recent controversial change in the Thai diving industry has been the launch of a new diving organization: the CMAS Thailand Diving Association (CTDA), a non-profit diving organization.

CMAS – the Confédération Mondiale des Activités Subaquatiques, or World Underwater Federation – was founded in 1959 by a group of top divers including the late Jacques Cousteau.

It is not new in Thailand, but has been overshadowed by the Professional Association of Dive Instructors (Padi), which has been the dominant diving certification organization in this country; indeed, some might say that Padi has enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the dive industry here.

In the past, CMAS was not much of a competitor for Padi. But now, with the formation of the CTDA, that could change. According to CTDA Chief Executive Officer Rainer Gottwald, however, this is not the intention. The goals of the CTDA are different from those of Padi, he maintains.

In the nine years that Mr Gottwald had been working in the Thai diving industry, he had been paying annual fees to both CMAS in Germany and Padi in Australia – even though he was using Thailand's resources.

He points out that now, with the formation of CTDA, fees will finally go to Thailand, where the money belongs and where it is needed.

Mr Gottwald says, "Our aim is not to destroy Padi. Hopefully, in the future, we will be able to work together."

He recently met with Padi's Asia Pacific Regional Manager, Rick Ray, he says, and Mr Ray



The founding officers of the CTDA, from left, are Rainer Gottwald, Rewood Chindapol and Chaturathep Khowinthewong.

agreed that CTDA was "a good thing for Thailand".

The CTDA board of directors is made up of foreign CMAS examiners and Thai government officials. Rewood Chindapol, the CTDA Honorary President, is a former member of parliament. Chaturathep Khowinthewong, the President of the CTDA, is a high-ranking official in the National Parks Service.

High-ranking government officials working together with foreigners in the same organization will, it is hoped, provide just the right combination of influence and ideas that is needed to make some improvements in the Phuket diving industry.

One major difference between Padi and the CTDA is that the latter is non-commercial. None of the board members gets a salary. Mr Gottwald says, "CTDA will have open financial records for anyone to see."

Funds, he says, will be allocated by committees formed to work with government agencies.

Mr Gottwald is very enthusiastic about the possible benefits to Thailand of CTDA-sponsored programs. Ideas include programs to make it possible for every Thai to learn to swim or dive; an academy for teachers to learn about oceanography, archeology, biology and the environment; and free lessons for children.

The protection of the marine environment is high on the list of CTDA priorities. The organization has already spoken with the relevant state agencies and is making plans to reduce traffic to dive sites in the Similan Islands National Marine Park.

Beneath the SURFACE

By Sylvie Yaffe

Muay Thai fans in for a feast of top-notch boxing

Mr Gottwald adds that the CTDA will also work with the government to certify military and park rangers in diving, as well as providing specialized training.

Even though CTDA is officially non-commercial, Mr Gottwald admits, "It is a little bit commercial in that we are planning for everyone to become a CTDA member. But from [the fees] we can pay for non-commercial things."

Right now the chief examiners are devising crossover courses for instructors to become CTDA instructors. The courses are not free because examiners do not work for free. So, in addition to the 5,500 baht CTDA registration fee, there is a 5,500 baht course fee. Compared with fees charged by other diving associations, however, this is quite low.

When asked about the CTDA's beginner-level diving certifications, Mr Gottwald said it was not a new idea or a new certification. Thailand is now the 112th country with a CMAS affiliate, so what has been available through CMAS in many countries worldwide for years is now available in Thailand.

When people become CTDA-certified divers, their CTDA-CMAS card will be honored worldwide. And if divers also want Padi certification, there is no reason why they can't do both.

How all of this will affect the Phuket diving industry remains to be seen. The concept of CTDA is certainly different from that of Padi, and there are sure to be some skeptics. But as the CTDA begins implementing its many programs, it will gain increased support and acceptance in the Thai dive industry.

Anyone interested in further information about the CTDA can call the office in Bangkok at Tel: 02-6625656 or visit the CTDA website at www.cmasthailand.com.

Sylvie Yaffe is a semi-retired dive instructor. She can be reached by email to: prodcs_pkt@yahoo.com

PHUKET CITY: Hundreds of the country's best Thai boxers will be in Phuket this weekend to compete in the 8th Wai Kru Muay Thai tournament at Saphan Hin.

A total of 600 boxers will gather in Gymnasiums 1 and 3 of the sports complex for three days of competition organized by the Office of Sports and Recreation Development.

Muay Thai is the ancient Thai martial art, in which combatants can use their feet, knees and elbows, as well as punching with their hands.

"Wai Kru" is the ritual way of showing respect to teachers and relaxing the body before bouts.

There will be two age groups: 15 years and under and 16 years and over, and three sections to the competition. The first will be in Wai Kru Muay Thai, during which boxers warm up the body and show respect to their Muay Thai teachers.

In the second part of the competition, contestants will demonstrate fighting moves, but without making physical contact, while in the third section, teams of five boxers will perform aerobic exercises incorporating Muay Thai gestures.

The Muay Thai Aerobic Dance competition will be held in Gymnasium 3 on August 14 and 15, starting from 9:30 am, while the Wai Kru Muay Thai and Muay Thai skill competitions will take place in Gymnasium 1 from 9:30 am to 7 pm.

The winners from days one and two will go through to the semi-finals and finals, due to take place on August 16 between 8 am and 4 pm. They will also receive medals.

The tournament is open to both Thais and foreigners. Entry is free.

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Rock solid

The Operations Manager of Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club, Simon Bunditvorapoom (left), and Executive Chef Peter Hatt (white jacket, center) congratulate skipper Wirat Klangarun (front row, second from left) and his F&B soccer team, Northern Rock, on winning the soccer tourney at the resort's annual staff sports day.



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OrBorTor Rawai blitz Rassada 4-1 in Thai Cup



Rawai's Nang Chiao Chan put his team into a 1-0 lead in the 34th-minute, slotting this penalty past Rassada goalkeeper Kamheang Pramongkit.

By Anongnat Sartpisut

KATHU: The superior attacking skills of OrBorTor Rawai C led to a 4-1 victory over OrBorTor Rassada in their first-round match in the Third Thai Cup 11-a-side soccer tourney, at Baan Kathu School on August 7.

Just five minutes into the game, Rawai C's Wiroj Yothanan came close to the Rassada goal, but his run was cut short by Rassada defender Somporn Pramongkit. Two minutes later, Kittipong Onksantipab made Rawai C's first attempt at goal, but his 35-yard shot was saved by Rassada goalkeeper Kamheang Pramongkit.

Although Rawai C got off to a seemingly unstoppable start, Rassada started to fight back about 20 minutes into the game.

Fouls against Rassada players earned yellow cards for Rawai C's Krissada Chaihunjaroen in the 26th minute and for Nang Chiao Chan a minute later. Rassada's Wuttichai Pramongkit was given a free kick from 30 yards, but his shot soared over the goal.

Three minutes later, Rawai C's attacking earned them two corner kicks, but they failed to score.

A foul by Rassada in their goal area in the 34th minute earned a penalty for Rawai C, and Nang's sure shooting took his team to a 1-0 lead. The goal revived the confidence of Rawai C's passing game, while Rassada's mistakes in general play left them no opportunities to score.

In a fiercely-fought second half, there were many fouls. Rassada's attack was better than Rawai C's, but the Rassada squad could not prevent Rawai

C's Wiroj dribbling the ball into his opponents' half and scoring a goal from 30 yards out in the 46th minute.

Rawai C made several more attempts at goal, but all were blocked. Rassada in turn had a few shots at goal, but all missed.

Rawai C dominated most of the second half, and in the 59th minute the team was awarded another penalty, and Wirun Nawin didn't fail in sending the ball into the back of the net.

Rassada had a chance to score five minutes later, with a seven-yard free kick, but Rawai

C goalkeeper managed to block the shot. Rawai C's Wirun missed his chance to score again a few minutes later when his shot went wide of the net.

The fourth Rawai C goal came in the 65th minute, when Rassada players failed to stop Narin Tamchu's approach. Ras-

sada's first – and only – goal came four minutes before the final whistle, thanks to a speedy attack by Somporn Pramongkit.

Final score: Rawai C 4, Rassada 1.

On the same day, Phuket City Municipality beat OrBorTor Rawai A 3-1.

Confusion as Darts League starts anew

PATONG: The Patong Darts League resumed play on August 3 with two new teams: Anton's and Two Black Sheep.

Unfortunately, and in true Patong style, Anton's pulled out at the last minute, leaving a rather embarrassing situation for all involved.

As a result, the remaining teams will have two "bye weeks" – unless another team enters soon.

In another development, the team that formerly played out of Football Crazy is now happily ensconced at an establishment bearing the classy name of "Dog's Bollocks".

Results for August 3: Amigos 6, Two Black Sheep* 3; Champs* 4, Happy Days 5; Didi's* 5, In-Between; Dog's Bollocks* 9, Piccadilly 0; Off Shore 4, Shakers* 5. Valhalla had a bye. (*Winners of the beer leg.)

August 17 Match-ups (Home teams first): Amigos v Happy Days; Champs v Piccadilly; Dog's Bollocks v Shakers; Off Shore v In-Between; Valhalla v Two Black Sheep. Didi's has a bye.



Renu Arnesen on her way to second place in the 12-kilometer women's 15-35-years-old category.

Mini-marathons raise cash for kidney unit

PHUKET CITY: A sporting 136 runners turned out to take part in two fun runs held on August 8 to mark the 72nd birthday of HM Queen Sirikit, and to raise funds to buy much-needed renal dialysis equipment for the Wachira Phuket Hospital.

Both the five-kilometer and the 12-kilometer courses started and finished at Suan Luang Park on Chao Fa Rd.

Results were as follows:
Five-kilometer run results. Men Under 16: 1. Watcharin Kerbsuk, 2. Thiti Thamhin, 3. Sorawut Kanyacheab. Women Under 16: 1. Karuna Nakara, 2. Papadsorn Hirunywadee, 3. Yodsawasdee Hiranyowadee.

Men 15-35: 1. Mana Takein, 2. Anucha Anaburong, 3.

Paiwan Eamkqew. Women 15-35: 1. Chanida Paisuwan, 2. Chonthicha Chuchart, 3. Parpid Sanegam.

Twelve-kilometer run results. Men Under 16: 1. Kriwid Kongsin, 2. Oran Leelasinlapasad, 3. Sombat Kreasob. Women Under 16: 1. Apasarat Woranut, 2. Dutsanee Hirad, 3. Kannika Lekkam.

Men 15-35: 1. Pungen Sangkaew, 2. Raewat Rakapan, 3. Sittipong Chenglai. Women 15-35: 1. Wannadee Pajitwijan, 2. Renu Arnesen, 3. Dujsinee Hiran.

Men over 35: 1. Taweesak Sesat, 2. Sukjai Intanai, 3. Srisompong Wongsuwan. Women over 35: 1. Anong Piriyaipret, 2. Ketsaraporn Boonkao, 3. Winut-sara Tanupon.

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Underrated offroader

**BEHIND
THE
WHEEL**
By Jeff Heselwood

For some unknown reason, the Lexus 4x4 is barely recognised in the luxury SUV class, despite being a superb luxury model in the finest Lexus tradition.

The RX300 has failed somehow to capture the same market share as the highly successful LS430 saloon car or its predecessor, the LS400, which are examples of the finest – and, it should be said, quietest, luxury sedans available anywhere in the world.

The latest RX300 may be facing something of an uphill battle in the 4x4 market, but it is certainly equipped with the right ammunition to take on the competition.

This Lexus features some of the most advanced safety systems in a luxury 4x4. Among these are a version of the stability control developed by Germany's Bosch, which prevents the vehicle losing traction, as well as a series of airbags in the cabin, including a knee bag on the driver's side to prevent leg injuries.

Full-length air curtains are fitted, which are equipped with a roll-over sensor. A gyro-sensor detects any extreme angles and inflates the curtain airbags to protect the occupants in the event of a roll.

In the United States, following a number of spectacular accidents involving large SUVs, many manufacturers are equipping their vehicles with sophisticated anti-roll-over devices. Ford and General Motors have both been subject to some pretty hefty



lawsuits as a result of vehicles overturning.

In one high-profile case, superstar footballer Derrick Thomas, who played for the Kansas City Chiefs, died from a heart attack one month after being paralysed in a roll-over accident in his Chevrolet Suburban SUV.

Now a jury is being asked to decide whether the crushed roof of his GM-built SUV contributed to his death. Thomas

was not wearing a seat belt and he and one of his passengers were thrown out of the Suburban. The passenger died at the scene, while another passenger who was wearing a seat belt sustained only minor injuries – a strong reminder of the need to “buckle up”.

Such accidents were probably one of the factors behind the decision to incorporate so many safety features in the Lexus 4x4.

The RX300 is powered by a three-liter, all-aluminum, 24-valve V6 engine, developing a healthy 201bhp (148kW), making it one of the better performers in this class. With outstanding torque of 283Nm available, 80% of which is produced as low as 1,200rpm, this Lexus performs superbly in all conditions.

The reason that the torque figure is so good is in part thanks to the variable valve technology,

but is also due to a variable length inlet manifold, which responds according to speed and demand.

While the RX300 is a true luxury machine and not a rough-road rider, this is not to say that it is incapable of dealing with rough terrain.

The fact is, though, that few owners of modern 4x4s actually venture off-road. As a result the RX300 has a 0-100kmh time of around nine seconds and a top speed close to 180kmh.

The interior of the RX300 is classic Lexus with a choice of bird's-eye maple or walnut wood paneling, leather upholstery and, of course, a premium audio system: in this case a 168-watt six-speaker Nakamichi system, incorporating a six-CD autochanger.

An newer version of the RX300 will be available soon, featuring air suspension and a marginal increase in power, although this model will be available in North America before the rest of the world.

The RX300 should be recognized as a fine automobile and is thoroughly worthy of the Lexus name.

Jeff Heselwood may be contacted by email at jhc@netnavigator.com.

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To age, or not to age: that is the question

Some wines, like delicate, fresh and fruity white wines, are at their best as soon as they go on the market. Many wines, however, do improve with time. To know which wines should be cellared, and for how long, requires some homework.

Wines are like people in the sense that both have a life cycle. For people it is birth, childhood, prime of life, middle age and death.

In a wine, the cycle is fermentation, bottling, maturation and expiration. As with people, the proper development of any wine depends on both "nature" and "nurture" components.

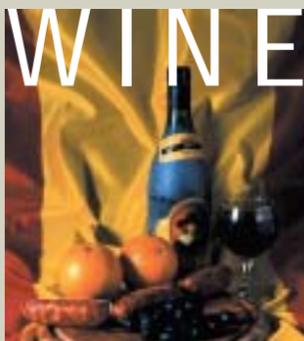
The soil quality where grapes are grown, the location and aspect of the land towards the sun, the amount of rainfall and the climate, as well as the genetic qualities of the grape all determine a wine's intrinsic aging potential. These can all be considered as elements of the na-

ture component. The parallel for people is prenatal care and nutrition, as well as the genes inherited from parents.

The nurture component reflects the fact that wines, like people, can have a beneficial or flawed upbringing. Both can either be molded towards their fullest potential by skillful parenting – or left to wither on the vine through mistreatment.

Like parents, vineyard workers and winemakers may help craft a wine that reaches its full potential, but this can never surpass its limit as defined by nature.

To know a wine's true potential you must do research. Are the winery and grape variety noted for their age-worthiness? Is the vintage a good year or bad one? Does the wine's pedigree require



By Steven Roberto

cellaring or is it by nature "approachable upon release"?

If a decision is made to age a wine, this of course includes an implicit assumption that the wine is to be stored properly. To age a wine under the wrong conditions is worse than not aging it at all. If the wine is stored correctly, the only other variable to consider is your own unique response to flavor and aroma.

Eventually, all wines turn brown with age and expire. Yet I know connoisseurs who look forward to tasting these tired wines, experimentally, out of intellectual curiosity.

So, fundamentally, there is no such thing as perfect maturation period because "perfection" is a subjective assessment the taster projects upon the wine.

At any point during a wine's life cycle, one wine taster may proclaim the wine as perfect, while another may say it's too old – or not old enough.

The most fascinating way I know to examine a wine undergoing its distinctive life cycle is to buy it by the case. Each year, open and enjoy a bottle, reflecting upon how the wine has evolved from the previous meeting.

When the wine is at its best according to your standards, it is time to call your friends to a dinner party to share the remainder of the case, celebrating the synthesis of nature and nurture to the very last drop.

Steven Roberto is a winemaker and restaurant consultant from California. He is the Wine and Beverage Director for the award-winning Baan Rim Pa restaurant in Patong. Email: stevenroberto@lycos.com

BIG AND EASY AT THE EVASON

Mention Creole food or Louisiana, and it's guaranteed that a few cultural references will be voiced. The dreadful song *Jambalaya* by The Carpenters with the lines "Pick guitar, fill fruit jar and be gayo, Son of a gun, we'll have big fun on the Bayou" paints a frightening picture of Louisiana, and the movie *Southern Comfort* probably remains banned by the Louisiana Tourist Board.

But Louisiana, and especially New Orleans, has also brought the world music – it is the home of trad jazz, after all – and for more than 300 years has been one of the world's great cultural and culinary melting pots.

For two generations before the arrival of French refugees from Acadia in Nova Scotia in 1755, the area had been a rich mix of Spanish, German, Italians and Haitians.

Indeed, it is from "Acadia" and then "Acadie" that the name Cajun derives. Nor should one forget the African and Native American influences on the culture and food of Louisiana.

The Executive Chef at The

Evason Phuket, Keith Kornfeld, a modest man and a native of New Orleans, brings a taste of his culture by way of more places than his natural reticence allows him to say.

From Japan to Germany, and from the Greek Islands to The Maldives, Chef Keith – who says that his first calling was music – has let his laid-back but professional attitude speak for him.

The restaurants at The Evason – Into the View, Into Thai, Into Fusion and Into The Beach – are something to behold. Tables are set well apart and as for music, all that can be heard is a soundtrack provided by Mother Nature herself.

With a waning moon casting its dancing light on the sea, the view across to Koh Bon is beautiful.

The menu on the Wednesday New Orleans night offers the gastronome a "mere" 29 dishes – including dessert – to choose from. My dining companion and I are almost spoiled for choice, but not quite: we plump for 14 of the dishes offered.

Our frequent return jour-



SNAP IT UP: Caribbean Creole red snapper really is a dish to try.

trinity of onions, celery and green peppers – *paella* by another name; the Old World reinvented in a symphony of vibrant tastes.

The New Orleans food at The Evason, featuring lots of cream and meat, could be described as a little rich; a throw-back to its French and German heritage. However, the inclusion of zingy spices prevents it tasting heavy and the myriad seafood choices – the Caribbean Creole red snapper really is one to try – glide gently from plate to palate.

We finish with three desserts, one of which – the banana flambé with rum-and-vanilla ice cream – is just about the sweetest thing I have ever eaten and should be sponsored by an enterprising dentist. However, this is no criticism of the flambé. It is delicious and just the right size.

A return to the spices with a splendid little apple crumble with cinnamon before finishing with something unexpected: bread and butter pudding with whisky cream sauce which is – sorry Mum – better than was cooked for me as a child.

All in all, a refreshing change of taste and pace at The Evason, and not a genetically-challenged banjo player or a blue bayou in sight.

New Orleans Night every Wednesday at Into The View at The Evason Phuket, 100 Moo 2, Wiset Rd, Rawai, Phuket. Tel: 076-381010-7.

tasty and perhaps typifies Creole food. Andouille sausage – although French in origin – was brought to Louisiana by Germans and gumbo is traditionally thickened with lady's finger, or okra. This plant, slightly less pleasantly, was brought to the New World by African slaves. Still, I am quite open to a lady's finger now and then.

Back to the melting pot and to duck jambalaya, the spicy Creole dish of rice and ham, sausage, chicken, or shellfish with the holy

neys to collect more food – for research purposes, you understand – draw an occasional glance from other diners, who seem envious of how we can down so much food while retaining sylph-like figures.

The shrimp and chicken gumbo with Andouille sausage is

On the menu

with Andy Johnstone

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Construction Update

by Anongnat Sartpisut

Phuket Forest Hill is a contemporary Thai-style development on 8.5 rai of Patong hillside. This is the first housing development by businessman and hotel owner Opas Netraumpai, who is also Managing Director of the project.

K. Opas said, "This scheme is build-to-order, with prospective buyers able to specify changes to plans before building starts. For example, we can provide a pool or deck if required, at extra cost. "The location is within easy reach of Patong and Phuket City. There are other developments [in this area], but this one offers a naturally forested, tranquil setting.

"The project started in April, and we expect a show house to be finished in September. We can't estimate the completion date for the entire project at this stage, because we start construction only after receipt of a client's order.

"However, the houses take about five months to build, and we expect to sell all the homes within two years."

He said he was unable to forecast total investment needed for the project, but noted that infrastructure alone will cost an estimated 30 million baht.

"We are planting pine trees, and we feel that customers will appreciate the forest atmosphere. The Thai-style houses will have low fences with lush vegetation and the sound of running water from a waterfall and creek which we will create."

The completed development will consist of 22 houses in three different groups:

Phumithas – consisting of



Left: Architect's impression of how Phuket Forest Hill will look when completed.

Above: The B13m Phumithas style of home in the development.

A forest atmosphere

five units with floor areas of 385 square meters, these homes will have a sea view and 100-200sqm of garden. Each will be built on three levels, with three bedrooms, five bathrooms, a living room, a family room, a kitchen, maid's quarters, a swimming pool and a double carport. The starting price is 13 million baht.

Tarn Pana – consisting of 10 units of 255sqm apiece, each with an 80sqm garden. These are two-story homes, with three bedrooms, five bathrooms, a living room, a family room, a kitchen

and maid's quarters. The starting price is 8 million baht.

Wanalai – there will be seven of these along the forest edge of the development. They will have 155sqm of living space with 70sqm of garden. On two floors, they will have two bedrooms, three bathrooms, a living room, a family room and kitchen. The starting price is 5 million baht.

K. Opas said, "Houses can be used for residential purposes and the Tarn Pana houses can also be used as home offices, because they are next to the road. There will be 24-hour security with an intercom system linked to each home.

"Currently, Phuket has a problem about land titles. We are aware of this problem so we will liaise with the Land Department, so that a Chanote will be issued for each home. Buyers can be assured that they will own the land without any problems.

"Our target customers are foreigners and Thai people who want a second home. It is better value and more comfortable than staying in a hotel.

"I am in the hotel business – I own and operate the Club Andaman Beach Resort, and the Andaman Suites condominiums.

"Phuket Forest Hill is my first venture into developing homes, and they will be well constructed. We want to build them to the same standards as the hotels, and will look after all aspects of development carefully to ensure a combination of Thai style and international standards of service and infrastructure."

For more information contact Phupana Co, 120/24 Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong. Tel: 076-341-465, Fax: 076-341466, email: info@phuketforesthill.com, or see the website at: www.phuketforesthill.com



In the Construction column in the issue of August 7, the name of the project was erroneously given as Baan Rae Rawai. The correct name is Baan Lae Rawai. Contact details are as follows: Tel 076-323424 or 01-6285166; Email: bigkris66@yahoo.com. The Gazette regrets the error.

Home of the Week

Vive



This two-story French-colonial-style house is 13 months old and is on 1.5 rai of land in a quiet area of Rawai.

It is fully furnished and, being surrounded by thick vegetation and rubber trees on three sides, offers plenty of privacy. It has a beautiful walled garden with mature tropical trees and plants and two salas. There is also plenty of room to install a swimming pool.

The house is immaculate throughout, with tiled terracotta floors, and black hardwood doors and windows with mosquito screens. Interior walls are white, making the house bright and airy.

The floor area is 330 square meters. There are three bedrooms, one on the lower floor and two on the upper floor, all with en-suite bathrooms.

There is a kitchen on the

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Rawai

la difference...



The house has a solid European appearance (left) alleviated by spacious, bright, airy balconies running along two sides. Below: one of the two salas on the property.

upper floor, which is fully-equipped for Western and Thai cooking, and large living and dining areas which open out onto a spacious terrace surrounding the property on two sides.

In addition to the bedroom, the lower floor also has a laundry, a WC, a bath house, and a storage area under the stairs. There is also a carport with space for two cars.

The house has air conditioning and fans throughout, and utilities include a water heater, well water, 3,000-liter backup supply, septic tank, and security lights with motion sensors.

The land title is Chanote and the price is 9.5 million baht



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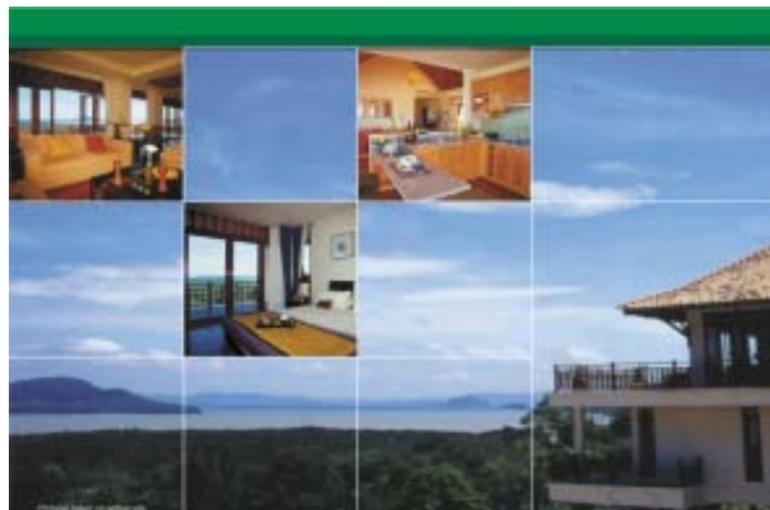


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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

Going completely potty

I know I'm predictable. Each week I use this column to ramble on about some plant or other, and prattle about how easy it is to grow, where you can grow it and how common it is in Phuket.

This week is the exception to that formerly rather predictable rule. I'm going to try not to talk about plants. I thought we'd have a look at an area that is often somewhat ignored in the gardening world – pots.

Everyone with a garden tends to take what they have at the front or rear of their house for granted.

They have it easy. All they have to do to plant their fresh purchase from the garden center is to walk outside their back door, dig a hole, and chuck the plant in the orifice. Splash a bit of water around and that's pretty much it.

Then there are those who aren't so fortunate. Their 'garden' consists of a patch of concrete if they're lucky.

I was one of these people until I came to Phuket; I had a balcony of about 25 square meters with not a square inch of soil in sight.

If I'd dug a hole there, I'd have ventilated the living room.



The landlord might not have seen the funny side.

Pots are therefore the answer. But which pot? There's certainly a multitude of choices in Thailand, from the traditional orange standard, to ornate pieces

of art that can cost thousands of baht.

What size? That depends very much on the plant you're putting in it. There aren't really any rules for this. You can't base it on the thickness of the stem –

we've all seen those tiny pots containing three 2-inch-diameter dracaenas, lashed together with a bit of twine. They seem happy enough.

Rather than apply some kind of mathematical formula, try to imagine whether the plant in its pot will be stable when the weather gets windy. Is there enough weight in the soil in the pot to stop it blowing over? A primitive approach, but effective.

Another thing to consider is how much you want to spend. Thailand has some incredibly cheap plant pots. I remember buying a small pot base in Thailand a few years ago for 20 baht. When I turned it over, I saw a sticker with the logo of a well-known British DIY chain, and the price that the Great British public was being charged for this item was £4.99 – about 350 baht. Scandalous.

In Thailand, for that amount of money, you can get a pot big enough to make a comfortable home for a small palm tree. It will be about two feet across at the rim, and won't be particularly

fancy, but it will inevitably have a dragon embossed on the side of it, for some inexplicable reason.

However, there's a downside to palms in pots. While they make the blandest of concrete areas look tropical, the problem is that they simply don't know their own strength.

They start off fairly well-behaved, and sit there quite contentedly in the ample bagfuls of soil you've buried their roots in. But then the roots take on a sinister underground quest to devour every cubic inch of soil so that eventually all you have is a potful of roots. It's then that they make their move.

They escape by squeezing out of the pot, literally breaking it in two. There are just so many roots that it would take the Arnold Schwarzenegger of the pot world to hold them back. Spend a lot of money on a palm pot and you'll regret it.

But why limit yourself to pots? There are many other options. I've seen miniature flowers in shells, and pipes and car tires used as perfectly adequate plant homes.

My favorite is one that Thai people seem to have difficulty comprehending. I have a rather magnificent plant outside the front of my house, planted in a somewhat atypical pot – a toilet. It does the job perfectly, and even better, it was free. The first time I put it in position I got a few weird looks from the neighbors – by now they seem to have come to terms with my quirks.

Go potty with your plants!

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in Rawai for 6 million baht. Ideal for living on/investment. With Chanote title, road access, electricity and quiet. Please email for details at: together@myway.com

Properties For Rent

PATONG RESIDENCE
1- or 2-bedroom apartment for rent. Includes kitchen and pool, and is only 350m from the beach. 6,000 baht/month. Contact for details. Tel: 09-4740227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

LAND FREE FOR 15 YRS
available on the east coast of Koh Maphrao (Coconut Island). Incredible sea views to Krabi, Phi Phi, Phang Nga and Koh Lanta. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-8918930. Email: bruno@loxinfo.co.th Website: http://maphrao.com

NEW HOUSE
in Pa Khlok. 75 sq wah, fully-furnished house with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms with bathtub, UBC, aircon, hot water, built-in kitchen and garden. 17,000 baht and 19,000 baht per month. Call or email for details. Tel: 06-6829922. Email: mvanichakul@hotmail.com

KATHU HOUSE
for rent. Furnished 1 1/2-story house with 2 bedrooms, 2 aircons, 2 bathrooms, big living room, kitchen, hot water and UBC TV. 15 mins drive from Patong. Price 10,000 baht/month. Call for details. Tel: 09-6459527, 09-731-9960.

NEW DETACHED
house. Fully furnished house in Chalong - close to Palai Beach - for long-term rent. Comprises 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, garden, carpark, aircon and phone. Call for details. Tel: 09-7288311.

LONG-TERM LEASE
New houses at Palai Green. 2 aircon bedrms, hot shower, kitchen, living, patio, garage. Fully furnished, beautiful garden, quiet, peaceful area. Palai Beach, near Chalong bay. Tel: 01-8924311.

PATONG INNER-CITY
living. No tuk-tuks or no bikes, just walk everywhere. Save over 3000+ baht. Large apartment on top floor. 1 bedroom with lounge, kitchen and phone line! Luxury finish. From as low as 13,000 baht/month for long term. Call or email for details. Tel: 01-8922824. Email: junaworn@hotmail.com

ROOM IN PATONG
Fully furnished as-new room with aircon near Siam Commercial Bank in Patong. 7,500 baht per month. Call or email for details. Tel: 01-8922824. Email: junaworn@hotmail.com

KATA HILL HOUSE
for rent. Fully-furnished, 2 bedrooms with aircon, 2 bathrooms living, dining, kitchen, parking space and tel line, available from August 1, 2004 rent 19,000 baht/month. Please contact for details. Tel: 076-216036, 01-6062827. Email: nij017@hotmail.com

KAMALA HOUSE
House in Kamala for rent. Comprises 2 aircon bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, hot water, fully equipped kitchen, dual gas rings, microwave, fridge, 25" TV and DVD, parking and garden. Bright design, and 1 km to the beach. 15,000 baht/month. Tel: 09-4744335. Email: chutima_incharoen@hotmail.com

GOOD HOUSE

for rent or sale. 2 -bedrooms and air conditioning, kitchen, car port, telephone and in safe area. Located in Baan Tha Rua, in Thalang District. Tel: 01-6764777.

NEW HOUSE
Good & cheap! Fully furnished, 2-bed house near Nai Yang Beach with aircon, 1 bath with hot water, equipped kitchen, UBC, TV, surrounded by fence. 12,000 baht/month. Pls call or email for details. Tel: 09-6506221. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

FISHERMAN WAY
Beachfront house for rent. Tel: 076-381181, 076-381189. Please see website at: www.fishermanway.com

Properties Wanted

PATONG CONDO
wanted. I want to buy a 1- to 2-bedroom condo in Patong. Max price: 2 million baht. Please email with details, photos and address. Email: poul_66@hotmail.com

NEED SMALL OFFICE
Looking to share a small office space, with high-speed Internet access, in Patong area. Need from mid-September. Email: parwvk@aol.com

WANTED: VILLA
for rent. Searching for holiday villa for rent in Samui or Phi Phi, for wedding party mid-February 2005. Need accommodation for 12 persons or more, near beach, private pool, maid & cook services included. Multiple villas in same location also considered. Direct communication with owner preferred. Please quote rate for whole villa for 5 days/4 nights. Send description and photos to Edlina at email address above. Email: edlinaa@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT/HOTEL
We are looking for a restaurant/hotel at Patong Beach. Kindly send offers with details and pictures. Email: naturalflora2002@yahoo.com

KOH YAO NOI
We're looking for 3-10 rai of waterfront land on Koh Yao Noi island. We will consider both east- (Krabi) and west- (Phang Nga) side locations at reasonable prices and with proper land titles. If available, pls send some pics along with your offer. Email: dusitha@phuket.ksc.co.th

HOUSE OR LAND
wanted on Phuket. Limit 2.5 million baht. What do you have? Pls send info. Email: funlife_99@hotmail.com

APARTMENT/CONDO
Maximum 3 million baht cash. No agents. I want to deal with the owner. Pls email. Email: admin@phuket deafeagle.com

Agents for Classified Advertising

PHUKET	
K.L. Mart Patak Rd, Chalong	Tel: 076-280400/3
NAVA Language School Phang Nga Rd, Phuket Town	Tel: 076-232398/9
Sin & Lee Thalang Rd, Phuket Town	Tel: 076-211230
Taurus Travel Aroonsom Plaza Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd, Patong	Tel: 076 344521-2
A la Carte Kamala main road, Cherng Talay	Tel: 076-278019
PHANG NGA	
Maew Internet Shop , Khao Lak	Tel: 076-420627
Avalon Creative Group Co Ltd , Khao Lak	Tel: 076-420539

Classified Advertisements

Please use this form to write your classified advertisement.
Then hand it to any of our agents.

_____ (heading)

Classified ads are charged per line. Each line is 60 baht, with a minimum of 4 lines (heading included) per ad.

All advertising must be paid for in advance.

Deadline for Property Mart page: Friday 3 pm.
Deadline for all other pages: Saturday 12 noon.

Island Job Mart

Phuket Pavilions

Phuket Pavilions is a 30-villa luxury resort hotel and residential complex currently under construction at BangTao beach near the Laguna complex. Projected opening is May 2005. The development consists of 21 one-bedroom pool villas, to be operated as a boutique hotel, and 9 three-bedroom residential pool villas. Pavilions also operates a hotel in Bali, Indonesia, and has future projects in the planning stages.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Hotel Accountant

Phuket Pavilions is currently seeking a full-time accountant to manage all aspects of pre-opening accounting.

Duties:

- Implementation and management of all accounting procedures.
- Payroll, accounts receivable, and accounts payable.
- Monthly profit and loss, and balance sheet.
- Reconciliation of bank accounts.
- VAT accounting.
- Preparation of revenue department reports.
- Cost accounting, procurement of estimates and bids from vendors.
- Budget accounting.
- Monthly managerial report to include both projected and actual revenue and expenses, monthly, year-to-date, and annual.

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in accounting from a recognized university.
- 3 - 5 years previous experience in resort hotel accounting, preferably with experience in property development.
- Proficiency in oral and written English.

To apply: Please send resumé to Managing Director, LS Pavilion Development Co. Ltd., 31/1 Moo 6 Chermgalay, Talang, Phuket 83110. Fax: 076-273408. Phone: 06-9430260.

MARKETING STAR

Thai national required for a startup media company based in Phuket. Good English, own transport essential. Bangkok travel involved. Salary depends on experience. Computer and design skills useful. Apply by email: bigislandmedia@yahoo.com

INTERNET

receptionist. We're looking for a female Thai national to work as a cyber café receptionist in the Patong area. Possibility of lodging. The applicant must be able to speak English. Please email or phone to apply. Tel: 076-341255. Email: leco@liontchai.com

NANNY REQUIRED

Full-time live-in nanny required to look after one-year-old baby girl. Own bedroom, aircon, swimming pool, all meals included. Some light cleaning also. Excellent salary for right person. References required. Please contact for more details. Tel: 07-2681170. Email: mriley42602002@yahoo.co.uk

REQUIRED URGENTLY

Preschool teacher, school manager, secretary with experience. Good pay and fringe benefits for the right persons. Tel: 01-9794140. Fax: 076-381447. (After 2 pm).

ADMIN & CLIENT

relations. Two permanent and interesting positions - 1 senior and 1 junior - available to Thai nationals in a Phuket City office. Skills required: good spoken & written English; computer skills; organizational & communication ability; and a bright, out-going personality. Driving license an advantage. Salary in line with expertise and experience. Tel: 076-232962, 01-8919653. Fax: 076-232961. Email: rob@sailing-thailand.com



Do Not Drink Tap Water!



Laguna Holiday Club, based in Phuket and an integrated part of Laguna Resorts & Hotels, is currently looking for enthusiastic individuals to fill several available positions of:

Sales Manager (2 Positions)
Sales Representative (8 Positions)
Marketing Staff (9 Positions)

Applicants should meet the following criteria:

- Self-motivated and enthusiastic.
- Able to communicate effectively in English (Mandarin, Cantonese, Japanese or other languages would be an advantage).
- Interested in earning a lot of money.
- Experience preferred but not essential (full training given).
- Truly passionate about representing the best product in our industry.
- Marketing Staff positions reserved for Thais only.
- Able to relocate to Phuket.

Applicants are invited to apply in person at Laguna Holiday Club Office, located in Canal Village (shopping area) at Laguna Phuket, or send your full resumé, detailed qualifications and experience with recent photo to:

Group Director of Human Resources
Laguna Resorts & Hotels Public Co Ltd.
390/1 Moo1, Srisoontorn Road, Cherm Talay, Talang, Phuket 83110
Tel: 076 324 416-7 Fax: 076 325 002 Email: surisae@lagunaphuket.com

EXCELLENT SALARY

& benefits. Islandpools Co Ltd, has extensive experience the swimming pool industry in Thailand and Australia.

We are now looking to recruit people for the following positions:

1. Accounts person: must be a Thai national, a qualified accountant with 5-10 years of business experience, and a good command of written and spoken English. Must have computer skills.

2. Junior office staff (Thai nationals): Good interpersonal skills; excellent command of written and spoken English; at least 2 years' experience; computer skills, email and letter writing skills.

The above positions offer excellent benefits and salaries appropriate to the applicant's experience and abilities. Applications should be forwarded to: Ms Wanida Thiprat, Business Development Manager, Islandpools Co Ltd, 53/83/84 Thepkrasattri Rd, Srisoontorn, Talang, Phuket, 83130. Tel: 076-273087, 09-8742205. Fax: 076-273087. Email: islandpools@hotmail.com

SECRETARY/OFFICE

manager. Must be fluent in English, competent with computers, experienced in office organization. Pro-active management style with pleasant, service-minded personality. Accounting skills would be a plus. Contact for details. Tel: 076-239112, 01-8920534. Fax: 076-239058. Email: damian@electrical-marine.com

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Issues & Answers

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issuesanswers/index.asp

EXCELLENT BENEFITS

& salary. Islandpools Co Ltd has extensive experience in the swimming-pool industry in Thailand and Australia. We are now looking for sales staff (unlimited). This position offers excellent benefits and salary appropriate to the applicant's experience and abilities. Applicants should be female Thai nationals between the ages of 25 and 35, with a good command of spoken English. Applications, complete with resumé and certificates should be forwarded to: Ms Wanida Thiprat, Business Development Manager, Islandpools Co Ltd, 53/83/84 Thepkrasattri Rd, Srisoontorn, Talang, Phuket, 83110. Tel: 076-273087, 09-8742205. Email: islandpools@hotmail.com

ONLINE RESERVATION

officers. Resort Hotel Network requires 2 Online Reservation Officers. Vacancies exist for Thai nationals with a good command of written and spoken English. We provide great career opportunities, on top of competitive salaries and an attractive bonus scheme. Please submit your resumé/CV, or call K. Parichart. Tel: 09-9704231, 09-9704231. Fax: 076-261383. Email: pomme@resorthotel.net

PROPERTY SCOUT

A real estate company requires a Thai person with good English to visit properties and land to compile listings. Must know Phuket well, and have transport. Good salary and commission. Please call or email for details. Tel: 076-280805. Email: jobs@siamrealestate.com

Looking for a job?
See www.phuketgazette.com

ISLAND TECHNOLOGY

is the leader in innovative digital solutions. We have many exciting opportunities for Sales Representatives & Web Programmers in Phuket. Come and join our dynamic team of professionals. Sales training provided. Please send your resumé via email. Email: jobs@islandtechnology.com

PHUKET LAW FIRM

seeks secretary and accountant. Please send resumé to apply. Email: scphuket@yahoo.com

URGENT: DRIVER

Driver urgently needed for Rawai area. Good salary. Please call 076-273427.

WEB DESIGNER

Professional web designer with exceptional design skills in the following programs is needed: Adobe Photoshop, Macromedia Flash and Dreamweaver. Applicant must be Thai and be able to speak English. Original and independent design skills wanted. Email CV along with samples and references. Email: info@asiadebit.com

ACCOUNTANT

& auditor. Requirements: BA in accounting; 1 year's experience in an auditing firm; and a good command of English. Tel: 076-238776. Email: supotpac@phuket.ksc.co.th

SALES EXECUTIVE

Experienced Sales Executive wanted - age 25-35 years and with good English abilities. Please call for details and to apply. Tel: 076-215710.

FRENCH TEACHER

wanted urgently. Must be Thai. Contact for details and to apply. Tel: 09-8736467. Email: june@fsi.psu.ac.th

DIVE MASTER / BOAT MECHANIC

Padi Dive Master with experience in boat maintenance. Overseas positions in great location. Pay tax-free in US dollars and airfare, visa, accommodation supplied. Email: markmp@candw.ky

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The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Phuket City Tel: 076-236555 Fax: 076-213971

Recruitment

Silk Entertainment Limited

Silk Restaurant & Bar, a contemporary Thai-style restaurant located in Surin Area, Phuket, is seeking dynamic & independent candidates for the following positions.

Personal Assistant to General Manager

- Female, Bachelor's Degree in Business Management, Marketing or related field.
- Have a pleasant personality, be organized, enthusiastic and self-motivated with excellent interpersonal communication skills.
- Excellent command of English, both written & spoken.
- Good computer skills in MS Office & others.
- Experience in F&B industry & able to write & set up menus will be an advantage.

Accountant

- Male/Female, Bachelor's degree in Accounting or higher.
- Experience in F&B industry of at least 5 years.
- Knowledge of accounting software POS system.
- Good command of English/spoken Cantonese is an advantage.

Restaurant Manager

- Aged between 25 years and 40 years.
- Excellent command & understanding of the English language.
- Able to control & run a restaurant.
- Able to work within fiscal controls & meet budget forecast requirements.
- Ability to lead staff by example.
- Self motivated, great organizer & trainer.
- 3 years in a similar position in a 5-star establishment.
- Good communicator, pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Knowledge of food & wine.
- Knowledge of POS system, computer-literate.

Executive Chef

- Aged between 25 years and 40 years.
- Good command & understanding of the English language.
- Ability to lead staff by example.
- Self motivated, great organizer & trainer.
- 3 years in a similar position in a 5-star establishment.
- Good communicator, pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Previous experience in both Thai & modern-Western cuisine.
- Excellent understanding of kitchen organization & hygiene standards.
- Able to control all kitchen & related costs in line with set budgets.
- Able to write & cost menus, provide daily specials & train staff.
- Computer literate.

Restaurant Hostess

- Aged between 22 years and 30 years.
- Excellent command & understanding of the English language.
- Able to speak other languages besides English & Thai.
- 2 years in a similar position.
- Some knowledge of food & wine preferred.
- Good communicator, pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Knowledge of POS system, computer literate.

Sous Chef

- Aged between 24 years and 28 years.
- Good command & understanding of the English language.
- Ability to lead staff by example, great organizer & trainer.
- 2 years in a similar position in a 5-star establishment.
- Good communicator, pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Previous experience in both Thai & modern-Western cuisine.
- Excellent understanding of kitchen organization & hygiene standards.

Bar Manager

- Aged between 25 years and 30 years.
- Good command & understanding of the English language.
- Ability to lead staff by example, great organizer & trainer.
- 2 years in a similar position in a 5-star establishment.
- Good communicator, pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Knowledge of POS system, computer-literate.
- Excellent understanding of kitchen organization & hygiene standards.
- High degree of knowledge of making & serving first-class cocktails & beverages & able to control bar stocks & costs.

Cashier

- Good command & understanding of the English language.
- Honest & keen to succeed in whatever you do, able to lead by example.
- Good communicator, pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Knowledge of Micros or other POS system.
- Minimum 2 years in a similar position.

Service Staff / Bar Staff

- Experience essential, team players & willing to learn.
- Good command & understanding of the English language.
- Pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Min. 2 years in a similar position or experience in the hospitality industry is preferred.

Cooks / Stewards / Cleaners

- Experience essential, team players & willing to learn.
- Reasonable understanding of the English language (not essential)
- Pleasant personality, energetic & passionate about work.
- Min. 2 years in similar position or experience in the hospitality industry is preferred.

If interested, please send your resumé & recent photo to:

-General Manager- 63/2 Moo 3, Chermgthalay, Thalang, Phuket 83110
Tel 076-271241 Fax 076-271242 E-Mail: quoka@phuket.ksc.co.th



A well-known premier Real Estate Developer for 15 years, we have developed and managed many unique, quality residential and building projects, such as Baan Suan Rim Klong Bangmod, Baan Suan Rim Klong Chaophaya Bangpa-in, Baan Suan Sukhothai and Glas Haus Building. However, we are expanding our business to provide a wide range of asset management and development services.

PLAN ESTATE Company Limited is currently looking for highly qualified, energetic, visionary and proactive persons, Thai or Foreign, who are self-motivated and desire to succeed, to join our long-term business growth at our Phuket site in the following positions.

Project Assistant Manager/ Manager

- Code : 211 2 Positions**
- Male or female, age not over 35 years
 - Bachelor's degree or higher in architecture, engineering or real estate
 - 5-8 years work experience in real estate development
 - Experience in price appraisal or feasibility study is preferable

Sales Executive

- Code : 222 2 Positions**
- Male or female, age not over 30 years
 - Bachelor's degree or higher in marketing or any related field
 - 3 years' work experience in marketing and sales of real estate business

Project Officer

- Code : 212 1 Position**
- Male or female, age not over 30 years
 - Bachelor's degree or higher in accounting, business administration or any related field
 - 3 years' work experience in real estate business

Construction Assistant Manager/ Manager

- Code : 231 2 Positions**
- Male, age not over 40 years
 - Bachelor's degree or higher in construction engineering
 - 5-10 years' work experience in construction management of housing projects

Legal Officer

- Code : 241 1 Position**
- Male or female, age not over 30 years
 - Bachelor's degree in law, political science
 - 2-3 years' work experience, preferably with a property firm

Marketing and Sales Assistant Manager/ Manager

- Code : 221 3 Positions**
- Male or female, age not over 35 years
 - Bachelor's degree or higher in marketing, business administration or any related field
 - 5-8 years' work experience in marketing and sales of real estate business
 - Ability to conduct real estate marketing plans and forecast budgeting

Account Officer

- Code : 242 1 Position**
- Male or female, age not over 30 years
 - Bachelor's degree in accounting
 - 3 years' work experience in accounting

All positions require fluent spoken and written English, computer literacy with good communication and interpersonal skills, as well as good leadership and teamwork skill.

Interested persons, please submit application letter, resumé including job experience, transcript and a recent photo

(clearly indicate the position code on envelope) to :

PLAN ESTATE COMPANY LIMITED

32/1 Moo 2 Thepkrasattri Road, Koh Kaew, Muang, Phuket 83200

Tel. 0-7623-9639-40 Email: admin@planestate.co.th

Employment Wanted

IT, SECURITY

and tourism. Swedish man, 38, holding B visa, resident in Phuket for over a year, seeks job in tourism/hotels, IT, security or marketing. Previous experience: Global network manager - Europe (Internet, computer/server, support of WIFI, etc); computer software teacher, and military airforce officer for several years. Have also worked with online hotel bookings as reservations manager in Phuket (customer service, travel agency relations, staff responsibility, etc). Tel: 05-1601670. Email: patongswede@hotmail.com

CONSIDERING JOB

offers in Phuket. I speak English, Italian, Spanish and Russian. Willing to learn Thai language. I'm currently working in Italy as a sales manager. I take care of customers, sales and expeditions. I can use computers at all levels. I'm Italian, 30 years old, serious and affordable. Tel: 340-5431050. Email: franco.casarini@fastwebnet.it

QUALIFIED ENGLISH

teacher. I am a South African in Phuket, currently looking for employment in the field. I especially enjoy working with children and have the necessary qualifications. I am a hard-working, out-going, honest and reliable person and could truly benefit your company. Please get back to me! Tel: 07-2760882. Email: roxannesax@webmail.co.za

AUSTRALIAN MALE

37, with extensive experience in tourism/customer relations. Just completed 3 years' employment as Operations Manager in the Maldives. Previous sales/marketing experience in trade shows/expos. Excellent people skills. A competent, dedicated person of integrity. Fit and youthful appearance. Email: esjam5@hotmail.com

EUROPEAN TEACHER

European teacher searching for a position. I can teach: English, German, computer, business-related fields. If you are looking for a TEFL-certified teacher, please contact me. Tel: 09-942714. Email: baumuwe@hotmail.com

SALES, MARKETING

manager. 41-year-old Austrian citizen, diploma in business admin, 18 years' experience in int'l sales, marketing and product management (consumer goods, property), looking for new challenge. Excellent PC skills, excellent English and German (native), fair Thai and French language. Prepared to travel. Email: mail2547@hotmail.com

FARANG

looking for work 25-year-old, hard-working young man looking for work, full- or part-time. Am very good with people and could work well in the tourist industry. Can adapt to any sort of work. If you need a good hard-worker you have found the right guy. Please feel free to Email: nwheeler444@hotmail.com

ITALIAN MANAGER

available. I am a 40-year-old, marketing manager involved with commercial planes. Available to travel and live in Thailand. Interested only in important and serious companies. Email: fireeye@libero.it

Tout, Trader & Trumpet

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ARTICLES FOR SALE
2 double beds, 2 wardrobes, 1 bookcase with glass doors, 30 rattan chairs. Tel: 07-2665965.

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29-foot fiberglass motor yacht with Thai registration. 2 x 280hp Mercruiser engines. Price: 3.5 million baht ono. Tel: 076-239864. Email: hktmkt@ksc.th.com

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076-239111

TML THAI MARINE LEISURE



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TML THAI MARINE LEISURE

ANTIQUUE COMPASS
Large, original ship's compass (approx 170cm). Made of brass, with light and magnets, mounted on wooden column. Very decorative for home or in bar/restaurant. Located in Patong. Other items also available. Contact by email at: paloyolsen@hotmail.com

Looking for a business? Check out the opportunities at www.phuketgazette.com

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Please contact:
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Fax: 076-238974
Email: insurance@thaimarine.com

Business Opportunities

MLM LEADERS
US\$4 billion healthcare company seeks quality distributors. Unlimited income potential. Tel: 02-7269918, 06-3418781. Fax: 02-7269917. Email: makelifegood@aol.com

BUNGALOW RESORT
for sale. Resort in Chalong with 7 bungalows and 8 years on lease for sale. Includes restaurant, bar, pool and house. Leaving Thailand; must sell for 1.5 million baht. Tel: 09-0385184.

DUTCH BAR 4 SALE
Well-known Dutch bar/restaurant - with apartment and rooms for rent - in the center of Patong for sale. Has many regular customers. Good contract. Tel: 01-0801370. Email: amsterdampatong@yahoo.com

VERY NICE BAR
& restaurant in Nai Harn for sale. Includes pool table. Call for details. Tel: 01-0887971.

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investment opportunity in land in the Patong area. Own your own shares 100%. Call for details. Tel: 07-8893838.

SMALL INVESTORS
wanted! Excellent money/holiday return. Shares in hotel project. Max. investment €5,000. Email for details. Email: paradiseproperty2004@hotmail.com

PRIVATE SHAREHOLDER
wanted to invest in a successful nightclub in Phuket City. Please call Tel: 076-321278 during office hours for more details.

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8 private pool villas. 5.5 million baht. Great value for money! Tel: 01-5976195, Email: rachneeuomo@hotmail.com Website: www.phuket-info.com/house

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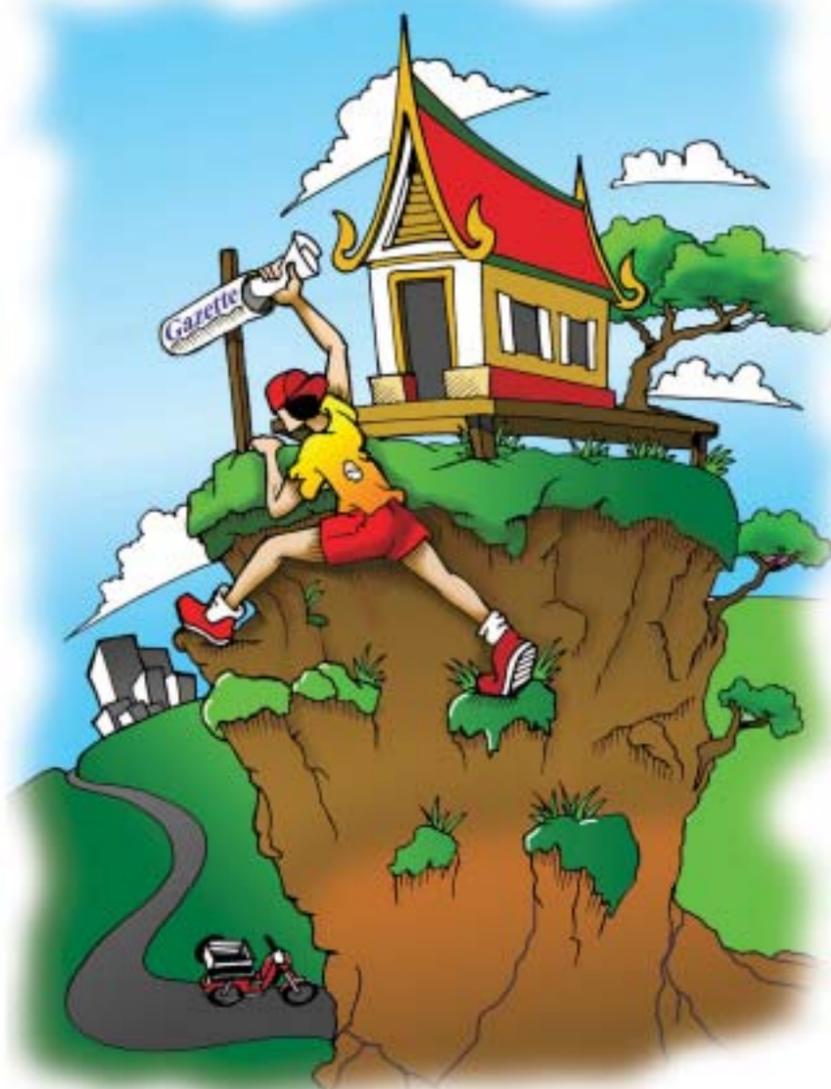
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