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Back to work at Jungceylon



Construction workers are back at work on the 50-rai site.

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn & Alasdair Forbes

PATONG: After a lull of five months, construction of the huge Jungceylon mall project in Patong is once more underway, with the mall's new owners saying that much of it will be open for business in November or December.

Suchad Chiaranussati, Managing Director of Recap, which in February bought 95% of Phuket Square, which in turn owns Jungceylon, said that the reason for the delay in restarting was simple: after a year of no activity, Jungceylon had no staff.

The main contractor, Powerline Engineering, had no people on site. It took time to reassemble all the people needed and to adjust plans.

Now some 300 to 400 people are on site, mostly working indoors, which is why the site still appears quiet from the street, he added.

Firm commitments to take more than 85% of the total space available for rent have been made and Jungceylon's retail side is on track to open for business in November or December this year, K. Suchad said.

There were originally to have been two hotels at the site, a new Burasari and a Four Points by Starwood, but both pulled out when the project halted.

"We'll take the hotels back and probably turn them into one property, which should open in the middle of next year," K. Suchad said.

One major tenant will be French hypermarket chain Carrefour. Puntharee Na Lumphun, Carrefour's Assistant Public Relations Manager, said that work inside the store is about 70% complete, with decoration set to begin at the end of July.

"We halted construction to wait for Recap. We're not sure yet exactly when the supermar-

ket will open, but it should be around the end of November," she said.

She noted that Carrefour will need some 300 employees and is planning to hold recruitment days at Phuket Rajabhat University on August 4 and 5, in conjunction with the Provincial Labor Office.

Thawatchai Jirawattana-angkana, Project Manager of Powerline Engineering – which suspended work on the site more than a year ago when payments dried up – said that the company put workers back on the site "a few weeks ago" and plans to complete construction work in September, giving tenants time to decorate their units in time for a November or December opening.

"The new partner [Recap] is paying us regularly and we have not needed to renegotiate the contract with Phuket Square," he added.

Phuket not touched by Java quake

PHUKET (Gazette, Nation, Kom Chad Luek): Thailand was not affected by the 7.2-magnitude earthquake that sent deadly two-meter tsunami waves crashing into the Indonesian island of Java, killing at 245 people.

Although the quake was stronger than the 7.0 threshold used by the Nonthaburi-based National Disaster Warning Center (NDWC) for issuing tsunami warnings, the distance from Phuket to the epicenter was deemed too great to merit an alarm, said Arun Kerdsob, Chief of the Phuket Office for Disaster Prevention and Mitigation.

NDWC Director Smith Thammasaroj confirmed that the seismic event had no impact on Thailand.

Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangura said Phuket is prepared to conduct a successful evacuation in the event that the NDWC does issue a warning.

He added that evacuation drills will be conducted twice a year in high-risk areas including Patong, Kata-Karon and Kamala, with the next drills scheduled before November.

Panungsak Pisadu, who operates a parasail operation at Patong Beach, said news of the Java earthquake had not affected his business.

"I heard about it [on the evening of July 17] and we were back to work as usual the next day, although we kept a careful watch on the water level," he said.

"I am confident in the tsunami warning system, because if they raise the alarm we will have [at least] 40 minutes to evacuate. The only thing I worry about is whether or not the siren will be loud enough for us to hear it," he said.

Gov backs Patong-Chalong highway

PHUKET CITY: Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura has thrown his weight behind a proposal to build a 206-million-baht six-lane highway linking Patong with Chalong.

At a meeting held on July 18 at the Royal Phuket City Hotel, Governor Udomsak explained that the 4.5-kilometer-long highway would follow the route of the current two-lane road leading to Wat Luang Phu Supha in Chalong, extending on from there to meet 50 Pi Rd in Patong.

That road is due to be extended anyway, in order to reach the site of the planned Klong Kata reservoir.

The Governor said that he had already approved spending by the Department of Rural Roads (DRR) to extend the road to the Klong Kata site, but that he would like to see the road pushed all the way through to Patong.

"We could start building the road next year, making it ready



Jaroen Thewabutr: Villagers favor a different route.

for use in 2008. It would bring economic benefits to Phuket," Gov Udomsak said.

However, he added, if the road is to be built, Tambon Chalong and Patong Municipal-

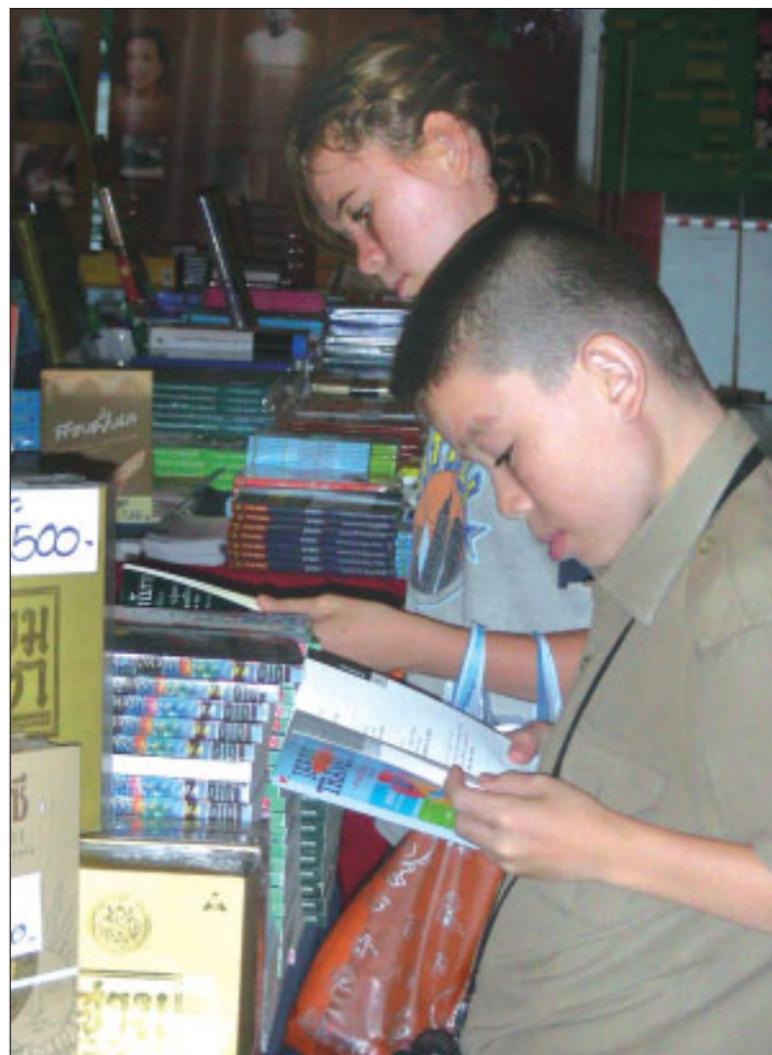
ity would also need to contribute large amounts of money. This is by no means guaranteed.

Patong Municipality was not represented at the meeting, but Jaroen Thewabutr, village chief of Moo 6, Chalong, said that villagers did not agree with the route recommended by the DRR.

Three routes have been proposed, with the DRR favoring the northernmost route.

K. Jaroen said villagers favor a more southerly route because it will take noisy traffic away from Wat Luang Phu Supha; because the road will not be so steep; because it will be less likely to damage the Klong Kata dam; and because it will not require 23 local people to give up farmland, which would be the case with the third proposed route.

The Governor said that he would call another meeting of all parties concerned to see if an agreement could be reached.



PAGE-TURNERS: Two youngsters check out books at the annual Southern Book Fair, held this year at Big C in Phuket, instead of at its usual venue in Haad Yai.

Mobile phone numbers to change

PHUKET: Mobile phone users will be giving their thumbs a serious workout between September 1 and November 30 as the country switches from nine-digit mobile numbers to 10-digit ones.

The change, which will not apply to land lines, will be brought about by adding the number 8 after the initial zero.

For example, a mobile number beginning with 01 will be altered to begin with 081, rendering obsolete all mobile numbers stored in mobile phones or other databases.

Supakarn Boonchan, an en-

gineer with the National Telecommunications Office, explained that the change is necessary in order to add numbers to meet rising demand.

The current system, he said, allows for 90 million numbers, but the change to 10 digits will allow up to 300 million numbers, enough to cater for expected demand for the next 30 years.

Between September 1 and November 30, callers may dial either the old nine-digit number or the new 10-digit one. But after November 30, only the 10-digit numbers will work, he said.

Park fiasco still unresolved

NAI YANG: The construction of 30 shophouses for use by vendors at Nai Yang Beach continues to remain on hold, pending completion of a survey to ensure that the intended site is actually public land.

The President of Sakoo Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*), Surapong Panayawai, met with Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura on July 12 to ask when work could begin. "Not yet," was the answer.

The units are intended to replace 30 shops that Sakoo *OrBorTor* began building in December 2004 on land inside Sirinath National Marine Park.

When those units were about 60% complete and more than 6 million baht had been spent, Sirinath Marine National Park Chief Thanapong Aphaisorn complained to Gov Udomsak that they were not being built according to the original plans and that

the park had, in any case, never formally authorized their construction.

In August last year, Gov Udomsak – also noting that the units were an eyesore, blocking views of the sea from the road – ordered them demolished.

He also threatened to return to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) what remained of the 15 million baht budget it had provided if the park and the *OrBorTor* could not reach agreement on where to erect the replacement structures.

Sakoo *OrBorTor* intends to construct the new units in an area known as Pa Son Lek, some 150 meters from the site of the demolished units.

After his July 12 meeting with Gov Udomsak, K. Surapong said that the land on which the new units are to be built was part of an 805-rai area listed as public land following a 1931 survey, but which had been reduced to just

405 rai in a subsequent survey conducted in 1968.

Now only about 200 rai are still thought to be in public hands, he said.

Gov Udomsak ordered the *OrBorTor* to conduct a new land survey in conjunction with the Land Office, local village heads and the Thalang District Chief to ensure that the land is public before he would allow work to go ahead, K. Surapong added.

Some local residents claim ownership of land in the area, he noted. They would be given a chance to prove their claims to the Land Office before any land is declared public and construction begins, he added.

"We still have 8.4 million baht to do it. We also expect to get additional donations from Australia as part of a beach preservation project, but this funding must first pass through the TAT, so we do not know yet what the final amount will be," he said.

The survey work in the area is now about 80% complete, Gov Udomsak added.

– Janyaporn Morel

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Local anger over Thailand 'hazard hotspot' survey

By Alasdair Forbes & Jenjira Ruengjarus

PHUKET: A press release from British insurance giant Norwich Union has infuriated local tourism and security officials by branding Thailand as "a hotbed for theft, tummy problems, traffic accidents and lost belongings".

In its release, issued on July 10 and entitled "Holiday Hazard Hotspots Uncovered", Norwich Union said that it based its findings on more than 60,000 claims made by customers who had bought travel insurance from the company.

The press release was used as the basis for stories that appeared on the BBC website, in British newspapers *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph*, and the Paris-based *International Herald Tribune*.

Norwich Union did not release the figures on which it

based its survey. Media Relations Manager Rebecca Holmes told the *Gazette*, "We are not giving details of exact numbers for commercial reasons."

"However, the claims data has been calculated by comparing claims in each holiday destination against volumes of visits to each country by British vacationers. These figures are from [the Office of] National Statistics [for] 2005."

Although the release gave no figures, the data were apparently compelling enough to prompt Dawn McMullan, Travel Product Manager, to allow herself to be quoted saying, "The purpose of our research is to not to worry tourists looking forward to their summer holidays, just to make them aware of what can go wrong when they're away from home..."

"Our research shows that you need to take a little extra care

in certain countries, and of course make sure you are adequately covered by travel insurance."

Panu Maswongsa, Vice President of Marketing and spokesman for the Phuket Tourism Association, was infuriated by the statement.

"They say Thailand is the most hazardous country... I think maybe they want to prevent people who are insured with them from coming to Thailand."

"They give no numbers to back up what they say - all they do is give a bad image to Thailand," he said.

Pol Col Teeraphol Thipjaroen, Superintendent of Kathu Police Station, which covers Patong, remarked, "What they say is incredible. They give no numbers; it is too vague."

He pointed out that tourists generally like to feel safe; if they did not feel safe in Thailand they would not come here in the numbers that they do, he argued.

Suwalai Pinpradab, Director of the Phuket office of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, said she thought that all tourism destinations had problems. "For example," she said, "a friend of mine had her handbag snatched while on vacation in Spain."

"I do not know how they compiled this survey. I shall have to check with head office in Bangkok to see what can be done about this."

In response to *Gazette's* questions about the total lack of supporting data in the press release, Norwich Union's Ms Holmes said, "The release is simply a factual review of our claims and we are happy with our data."

Editorial: page 26

Gov calls meeting over dive industry crackdown

PHUKET: Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura will convene a public hearing to discuss impending changes aimed at regulating the island's dive industry, some members of which have come under suspicion of evading taxes and employing foreign nationals without work permits.

Phuket Provincial Chief Administrative Officer (*Palad*) Nivit Aroonrat told the *Gazette* on July 18 that the Governor has accepted the general concept of bringing the dive industry under closer provincial scrutiny, but that he first wants to hear the opinions of the dive industry and relevant government agencies before putting new regulations in place.

evant government agencies before putting new regulations in place.

"If we have a clear understanding from the beginning, it will prevent problems from arising in the future," he said.

Invitation letters for the hearing will be issued to all relevant organizations, including dive operators, dive associations, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, tourism associations, government offices and the media, he said.

The meeting is scheduled to take place at Phuket Provincial Hall, starting at 10 am on July 26.

- *Janyaporn Morel*

Police arrest mum, seize ya bah



The two accused women hide their faces during a press conference held to announce the arrests.

PHUKET CITY: Police stopped a 25-year-old woman on July 17 after she dropped her daughter off at Kajornkietsuksa School on Pattana Rd. In her car, officers found 3,000 *ya bah* (methamphetamine) pills. She also had 63,000 baht in her possession.

Pol Col Phuwadol Vudducanok, Deputy Superintendent of Phuket City Police Station, yesterday named the woman as Aroonporn "Jeab" Choorat and said that a subsequent search of her home in Soi Massayid, Chalong, turned up another 3,000 pills.

Other evidence seized in-

cluded money in her bank account, as well as her house and her car.

He said that Aroonporn told police that the *ya bah* had come from a supplier in northern Thailand, who sent shipments by bus to Phuket Bus Station.

After questioning Aroonporn, police then arrested Pa Khlok resident Panee Ngerndee while she was working at her food stall at Phuket Technical College.

Panee was found to have two *ya bah* pills on her person, and confessed to having "many more" at home.

More direct flights to Phuket

PHUKET: The island's tourism industry received a shot in the arm recently with the announcement by one of Denmark's largest travel agencies that it will add two additional direct charter flights to Phuket weekly, starting in November, because current flights are already fully booked.

Krabi received good news as well, with Singapore-based low-cost carrier Tiger Airways announcing that it will raise the number of flights on its Singapore-Krabi route from four to six a week, starting in August. On July 1, the carrier increased its number of weekly flights from Singapore to Phuket to nine.

Scandasia magazine reported that, on November 14, Danish travel agency Tjærborg Rejser will introduce two direct flights to Phuket from Aalborg, Denmark's fourth largest city.

The two flights will be in addition to the agency's existing connections to Phuket from Billund, which is home to the country's second busiest airport. The company also reported strong advance bookings from Copenhagen, the Danish capital.

"Phuket already looks to be the most popular travel destination for Danes in the upcoming winter season," the report read.

"With the pace at which these trips to Thailand are being sold, we can already now say that our [plan] to fly ... out of Aalborg to Phuket is a success," Tjærborg Rejser Sales Director

Kjeld Gadegård was quoted as saying.

The new charter flights will use the Airbus A330 aircraft operated by MyTravel Airways.

Meanwhile, Tiger Airways will add two additional flights to its Singapore-Krabi route with effect from August 14. In addition, the low-cost carrier has launched a promotion on its flights to Bangkok, Haad Yai and Krabi, with one-way fares starting at about 800 baht.

The new schedule will give Tiger Airways 41 flights a week between Singapore and Thailand.

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A HOME FULL OF HOPE

On July 21 the Holiday Inn Phuket handed over the new Children's Happy Home on Phang Muang Rd, Patong, to the World Vision Foundation in Thailand, marking the center's opening as a home to some 30 children currently living on Patong's streets.



The aim of the shelter is to give Patong's young homeless – runaways, glue sniffers and teenage prostitutes – a hope of living a new life.

Here the *Gazette's* Sangkhae Leelanapaporn reveals what the home will offer these kids, and how it came into being.

For Vilaiporn Sakdilak of the World Vision Foundation in Thailand, the children's Happy Home – originally called the Street Children's Shelter Project – is long overdue.

"We have been running our 'drop-in' center in Patong for the past five years. Our staff there help to entertain and teach the younger children, including doing coloring-in exercises with them, and we teach the older children how to use computers.

"At the same time we try to learn from the children just why they are living on the streets," said K. Vilaiporn, World Vision Thailand's Manager for Government/Corporate Relations and Special Events.

"If we know that they have run away from home, and that their home situation is not dangerous, then we try to contact their parents to pick them up. If they are homeless or it is not safe for them to return home, then we organize for another organization to provide them with a safe place to live.

"We help them in many other ways, such as trying to get children of migrant workers issued with ID cards and registered on a house registration document [*tabien baan*] in Phuket, be-

cause without these, they cannot receive basic children's rights, such as going to school," she added.

However, she explained that the drop-in center is open only during government office hours because it is in a building belonging to Patong Municipality.

"So we presented the idea of the Children's Happy Home to the Holiday Inn, and we got good feedback from them. They were willing to support it and even be a partner in the project, which has been a big help," she said.

Indeed, the Holiday Inn has been working with local World Vision projects for some time. Wolfgang Meusburger, General Manager of the Holiday Inn Phuket and Regional General Manager, Resorts, Southern Asia, for the InterContinental Hotels Group, told the *Gazette* that the Holiday Inn's work with World Vision kicked into high gear following the tsunami.

"We had already worked with World Vision with some sponsorship, and World Vision already had projects in Patong, but they didn't have a shelter.

"After the tsunami, we really felt that we had a responsibility to give something back. We had been in business here for about 15 years, and although we



Wolfgang Meusburger: 'We felt very strongly that we could make a difference.'



Jutharat Puthanukul: 'I believe the children will change if we show them that we love them.'

were now involved in more charity projects, we had never initiated a big project," Mr Meusburger explained.

"We just felt that it was time to help, and we wanted to do something in Patong. We didn't want to give money to a big charity to build something somewhere in Khao Lak or wherever; we just felt that could give 25 to 30

children in Patong the opportunity to have a home to live in and to get an education.

"We felt very strongly about it – we really felt that we could make a difference for these children," he said.

One thing is certain: the Holiday Inn has put its money where its heart is. The hotel initially donated 4.5 million baht to

buy a four-story shophouse from the Patong Natural Home development on Phang Muang Rd to become the Happy Home.

Later it gave another 4.2 million baht to buy the adjoining shophouse unit so that boys and girls staying at the home could sleep in separate dormitories, and a further 1 million baht to decorate, equip and furnish the home.

In addition, in a move that secured at least the home's short-term future, Holiday Inn introduced World Vision to AIG Private Bank Ltd, based in Cologne, Germany, which will provide 35,000 euros (1.68 million baht) a year for five years to go toward the home's running costs.

However, Mr Meusburger explained, fundraising is as far as the hotel's direct involvement goes. "We will continue to inform our guests about the project and try to raise funds, but we believe that when you provide a shelter or something like this, you need professionals to work with the children.

"We can make donations,

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House of hope: The Happy Home in Patong will give shelter to street children, in the hope of turning their lives around.

we can find funds, but we cannot operate the shelter. We are not professional psychologists, we do not know how to deal with these kids – and these children need psychological help,” he said.

There will be seven adults involved with the home: a maid, a security guard a chief guardian for the boys and another for the girls, all living at the home, and a child psychologist and two social workers on hand 24 hours a day.

The children they will care for will be carefully selected, and will be allowed to stay at the home for no more than four months.

Mr Meusberger, true to his word, leaves this decision to the specialists. “They will have a system, a way to select who can stay at the shelter. This is very difficult subject. I think when you have space for only 30 children, you have to select who you can take. It is very safe to say that you can’t help everyone, but at least you can help 30,” he said.

Of the 50 children who regularly visit the drop-in center, just two so far have qualified to

stay at the home. Jutharat Puthanukul, 35, who has been Site Manager at the drop-in center since it opened, explained that one iron-clad rule is that, in order to be accepted at the home, children must not be involved in drugs.

“But nearly all children who regularly visit the drop-in center are known glue sniffers. They can come to the home for activities

or lessons, but they cannot stay there,” she said.

Similarly, to stay at the home the children must go to school and learn skills, such as batik painting

The phone number for the World Vision Foundation in Patong is 076-340822. For more information about World Vision or to make donations, visit www.worldvision.or.th (Thai and English versions)

or playing music, so that they will be able to support themselves.

But, said K. Jutharat, “Most of the street kids who come to the center do not want to go school.

“Most of them are boys, and they range in age from two to 19 years old. The toddlers are brought to the center by their older brothers or sisters because they do not want to leave them home alone while the parents are out working.

“The kids work at night and some of them sleep at the football pitch [on Thaweewong Rd] or at the wastewater treatment plant. They have nothing to do during the day, so we try to arrange activities and talk to them about changing their behavior.

“Most of them are male prostitutes, and some of them are well taken care of by their customers, which gives them the idea that they are doing okay.

“They cannot see the big picture, they just live for today – they have money, food and what they think is a comfortable life,” she said.

“We always tell them to choose another life, even if it means less money. There is no need for them to sell their bodies again and again.

“They are also glue addicts. After they get some money, they buy glue to sniff, which is another reason why they are not so bothered about staying at the home or going to school.

“We can’t force them to stop sniffing glue but we can teach them how to protect themselves from HIV and [get them to understand] that this ‘work’ is does not last.

“We give them the chance to try and change their behavior. We encourage them to study more, but most of them do not want to study – they love their freedom,” she added.

There is no way, however, that she will give up on them. “I

believe the children will change if we show them that we love them.”

Another condition of staying at Happy Home is that the children must be aged between 10 and 18 years old.

K. Jutharat noted that although World Vision is a Christian organization, there is no requirement that the children staying in the new home be Christians.

“There is no need to be a Christian,” she said. “We respect the children’s choices, they have their right to choose their religion. We do not ‘push’ Christianity here; if they want to convert, that is up to them.”

K. Jutharat also explained, “We will allow children to stay at the home a maximum of only four months because we want them to improve themselves. We want to see the Happy Home being a place where we can change a child’s way of thinking.”

K. Vilaiporn agreed. “We will let the children stay only temporarily because if they have run away from home, our main aim is to reunite them with their parents.

“The Happy Home is a place where we can teach children how to improve their lives,”

K. Jutharat said that she believes the majority of street children are runaways who stay on the streets for only a few days at a time. Children whose circumstances mean they will likely live on the streets for quite some time are far fewer.

“But during those few days these children are at risk of being lured into bad work by a gangster,” she explained.

K. Jutharat said, “I urge parents, please take care of your children and make them more of a priority in your lives. They are your blood, so please do not destroy their lives. If everyone took care of their families, we would not have a problem like this.”

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Queer News

UNLEADED, PLEASE

A determined thief learned the hard way that toy guns are not very effective in carrying out armed robberies, especially when the intended victim is packing real heat.

At 12:15 am on July 11, Pol Lt Col Prayong Khotsakha, an Inspector with Udon Thani's Muang District Police, received a report of an attempted robbery at a small gas station in Tambon Nakhon, about 17 kilometers out of town along the road from Udon Thani to Sakhon Nakhon.

Arriving at the scene with fellow officers, he found a critically-injured man lying beneath a dark blue Honda motorbike, with a single .22 caliber bullet wound to the left side of his chest. Beside him on the road was a replica gun.

Later identified as 29-year-old Wiwat Santiwattanakul, whose first name means "Peace" and whose surname means "Clan of the Peaceful and Prosperous", the injured man was rushed to Udon Thani Central Hospital.

The gas station owner, 59-year-old Somchai Thongnarong, told police that one of his pump attendants, 25-year-old Phichit Channarong, had also been shot in the robbery attempt and had been rushed to hospital earlier.

K. Somchai said he closed up the two-pump station as usual that night at 10 pm, turning out the lights and retiring inside the office with his wife.

Sleeping on a cot outside, in front of the pumps, was K. Pichit – presumably to watch over the pumps or service any late-night motorists who desperately need fuel after the official closing time. He had with him a shoulder bag.

K. Somchai recounted, "I was awoken suddenly by the sound of Phichit screaming, 'Help! It's a robbery!'"

Sliding open the window of the office, K. Somchai saw his trusty worker grappling with the robber, the pair spinning in circles, each trying to get control of the shoulder bag. Nearby on a motorcycle sat two more thugs, armed with knives and watching the proceedings.

"As soon as they saw me through the window, they raised their knives and started toward me. But they stopped in their tracks when I let off a warning shot," he said.

But the warning shot did not deter the third thief from trying to steal the shoulder bag, and his struggle with K. Pichit continued.

"That's when I took aim and fired. But my shot hit K. Pichit in the arm and he fell to the ground.

"After that, the assailant pulled out his own gun and trained his sights on me. But I fired first, hitting him in the chest," he said.

They say there is honor among thieves, but on this night it was apparently in short supply. Rather than help their wounded comrade, the two knife-wielding accomplices jumped on their motorcycle and sped off.

Wiwat, the man of peace, tried to do the same. Despite having a bullet lodged in his chest, he got on his motorcycle, money bag finally in his possession, and began to drive off. He didn't get far, however, before losing his balance and falling to the road.

K. Somchai, who had been operating the station for many years, said he bought the gun after he was robbed of 5,000 baht in cash and a mobile phone during a similar attack in June 2003.

He had already used the weapon to fend off another robbery attempt in January, 2004, he added. *Source: Thai Rath*



KOH KAEW: Don't know what to do with the garbage in your home? It's simple. Carry it out the front door, across the road and scatter it along the roadside. It may niff a bit on a warm day, but once it's gone from your premises, it's no longer your responsibility. Problem solved.

You can do this anywhere – this fine example was photographed about 150 meters from the gates of the British Curriculum International School.

Want to raise a stink about an "informal" garbage dump? Take a photograph and send it to dump@phuketgazette.net along with details of where and when the photo was taken.

TRASHING
Phuket



WARNING: SELLING ALCOHOL TO PERSONS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD IS ILLEGAL

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



By Andy Johnstone

Really putting Phuket on the map

Although accurate cartography of the waters around Phuket have been available for years in both hard-copy and on-screen versions, the same cannot be said for mapping of the island itself.

True, one can pick up a map of Phuket almost anywhere, but these are not to scale, tend to lack detail, and are usually out of date.

New roads servicing the myriad new property developments on the island are simply not marked, though it seems that every tailor shop is prominently displayed.

While tourist maps may be useful to the average package-holiday tourist or anyone wishing to have a nice worsted three-piece suit run up for less than 3,000 baht, anyone wishing to go off the beaten track – or indeed to find that the beaten track has become a two-lane blacktop – may have a struggle to get from A to B.

Fortunately, ThinkNet – www.thinknet.co.th – has produced what just might be the most accurate and up-to-date civilian map of the island.

For 259 baht (Thai language only) or 299 baht (English and Thai), you can own not only a standard fold-out 1:55,900-scale paper map of Phuket, but also a CD-ROM version with zoom-in/zoom-out scales ranging from a

1:381,706 overview to a finely-detailed 1:1,99.

The CD version can run on any computer with 100 megabytes of hard-drive space and a Pentium III chip with 128MB of memory or higher. Installation – the map was designed for MS Windows 98/ME/2000/XP/2003 – takes less than 60 seconds.

A few spelling mistakes aside, the English version of the CD map is a very useful product.

Yes, the ubiquitous tailors' shops are shown, as are their cartographical archrivals, the opticians. But so too – it would seem – is every minimart. Christin Massage even has a presence.

More mundane, but no doubt more practical, is the inclusion of every gas station, police station and bank branch in Phuket, as well as nigh-on every hotel, post office, bookshop and restaurant.

The map is easy to move around in, with panning, straight-line distance calculation and name or decimal degree latitude/longitude search.

Where are the island's wa-

terfalls? Simply click the Search icon on the toolbar, type in a keyword, or select Type and scroll down to Waterfalls, then click Locate. The map highlights the waterfalls for you.

Roll the cursor over map highlights and, in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen, the exact coordinates appear, to five decimal places.

Readers may be interested to know that the point at which

Phuket's three *amphur* (districts) meet is Long. 98.35260°, Lat. 7.94718°, give or take a few decimal points. Try it, it's fun.

The map reader has four choices of background: Normal, Terrain, Political (it's actually more administrative) and Printer-friendly.

One cannot superimpose, for example, the administrative and terrain backgrounds, which is one of this product's few faults.

The other is that – as with any map – it will be out of date soon .

Prapun Rugchanya, ThinkNet Product Manager for its Map-Magic series, told the *Gazette* that 5,000 copies of the Phuket map set have already been sold and that public feedback has been good.

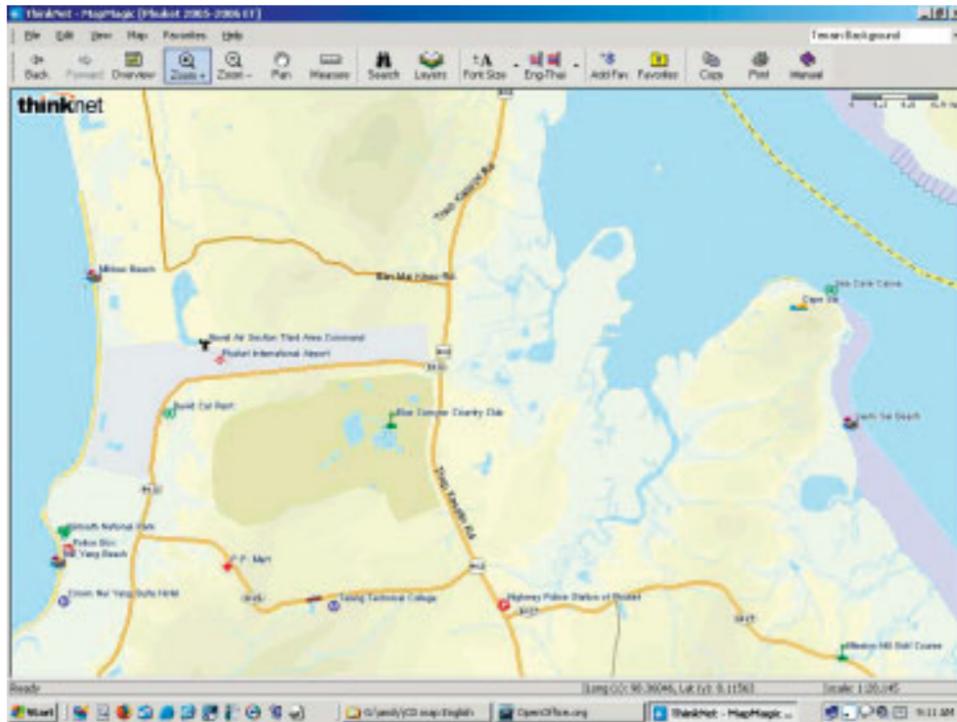
As the company plans to update the maps every two years, the next version, due out in 2007, will not only be faster and more detailed, but will also be compatible with many Global Positioning System (GPS) applications, he said.

Is this map perfect? Of course not. It's rather slow on my computer – which, it has to be said, is not noted for its speed.

Also, Mac users are right out of luck; this is a PC-only product.

However, it is cheap, very easy to use and is by far the most detailed map of the island available commercially.

The ThinkNet map and CD of Phuket is available in all Se-Ed bookstores and other selected outlets in Phuket.



Geographical detail is good: The north end of Phuket, with the top of Phang Nga Bay.



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A lottery winner was drugged and relieved of 2.5 million baht on July 7 by a gang of con artists who have been working Trang province.

The officer in charge of the case Pol Lt Col Wadol Khongkaew said that the victim, Sujin Aksonkoon, reported that the gang, comprised three men and a woman. They came to her house and asked to rent some land from her for 40,000 baht a month to install a telephone transmitting tower.

When she offered the land at the back of the house, the gang said it was inappropriate and proposed that she buy another piece of land, which they would then rent.

The gang explained that they had found a suitable piece of land next to a main road. The owner, they said, would not rent it out but was prepared to sell it for 2.5 million baht cash. As they were driving to look at the piece of land, one of the members gave K. Sujin a drugged carton of milk to drink and then persuaded her to go straight to the bank and withdraw the money, Col Wadol explained.

One of the gang members escorted K. Sujin into the Trang branch of Krung Thai bank and then waited while she withdrew the money. The bank teller, surprised by the request, tried to persuade K. Sujin to use a more secure method of payment, such as transferring the money to the bank account of the land seller.

K. Sujin, however, insisted that she wanted cash. The teller was also disturbed by K. Sujin's sedated appearance – she was having difficulty signing her own name. However, the teller stopped questioning K. Sujin further and proceeded with the transaction, Col Wadol added.

After taking the money, the gang kicked the almost unconscious K. Sujin out of the car outside a park on the Trang-Phattalung road, he said.

K. Sujin, 46, a banana seller



Pattani defense volunteers take part in an annual training exercise. With the increased violence in the deep South, defense volunteers have been asked to work alongside soldiers to provide security in the area. – Photo by The Nation

Lottery winner loses as con artists strike

by trade, won the first prize in a government lottery, a total of 4 million baht, on June 16 and had intended to use it to finish building the family home and to put her three children through college.

Col Wadol said that police had found the car used by the

gang but had yet to catch any of the members. He said that they had probably committed crimes of this nature a number of times, researching their victims first before feigning friendship and lulling them into a false sense of security, he added.

Thieves raid wat: Another four ancient Buddha images have been stolen in Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province. The theft follows an incident earlier in the month in which four Buddhist images were taken from a temple in the Chawang District of the province.

The most recent theft occurred at Samao Temple in Lan Saga District, in the early hours of July 9.

The abbot of the temple, Phra Siphatr Waralapho, said, "While I was sleeping in my room I heard some strange noises so I opened my door to have a look. I saw four men searching around the altar. One of the men threatened that if I shouted for help they could not guarantee my safety. I was shocked and went back to my room.

"Ten minutes later I heard a car leaving, so I went back out of my room to investigate. I found that the scoundrels had taken all four Buddha images."

Police Major General Sutjai Yanrat, Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province Police Commander, said

police suspect the thieves are professionals from central Thailand who have teamed up with locals who supply them with information about potential targets.

Politician slain: The dangers of adultery and local politics were highlighted on July 10 when a member of Thonhong Tambon Administrative Organization in Nakhon Sri Thammarat province was shot dead as he returned home from a friend's ordination as a monk.

Anucha Chawalit, 34, was shot once with a shotgun as he was opening his gate shortly after midnight by an unknown number of attackers who had lain in wait in a dark corner nearby.

A relative of rushed K. Anucha to hospital where he later died of his wounds.

Police investigators found only a pool of blood at the scene. They said that they have discovered that K. Anucha was involved with a married woman whose husband may have had a grudge against him. They also said, however, that they are not ruling out a political dispute as a motive for the killing.

Worker shortage: Krabi and Phang Nga are facing a major shortfall of tourist-industry workers, with thousands of job vacancies in the two provinces.

Prasert Janpholngam, the Chairman of the Phang Nga Tourism Business Society (PTBS), said that hotels in Phang Nga need at least 1,000 workers at every level. He added that hotels in Phang Nga currently have a combined total of about 1,300 rooms and 1,300 workers, a ratio of 1:1. However, by the end of October the number of rooms will have increased to 2,900, so maintaining the 1:1 ratio will require an additional 1,600 workers.

He said that personnel managers from hotels in the province would meet and discuss their needs before coordinating with labor offices in Chiang Mai, Nakhon Ratchasima, and Khon Kaen provinces to arrange recruitment days in those places when representatives of the hotels could accept applications and conduct interviews.

He added that the PTBS, along with Phang Nga provincial authorities and the province's vocational colleges, were discussing ways to produce enough qualified workers to meet the long-term needs of Phang Nga's tourism industry.

Krabi province also has an estimated 1,500 positions to fill for next high season.

Around the South news round-up is sourced from the pages of Kom Chat Luek



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Thais too fond of taking medicine

Thais consume too much medicine and pay too much for it, Dr Piya Netrwichien, a member of a panel set up to review the National Essential Drugs List, said, adding that Thais spent 50 billion baht a year on more than 900 drugs on the essential medicines list.

Spending on drugs amounted to about 35% of the health budget, compared with just 10%-20% in most other developing countries, he said.

Despite the higher spending, which often went towards inappropriate and unnecessary medicines, Thais' standard of health was no better than in other countries, he noted. Most medicines in Thailand are also overpriced, he added.

Promises, promises: More than half of Thai youths say they will stop drinking alcoholic beverages during Buddhist Lent, according to a poll conducted by Bangkok University earlier this month.

Young people aged 15 to 22 also said they planned to abide by the five Buddhist virtues during the three-month period, which began July 11. Besides abstaining from alcohol, youths say they will also refrain from committing sins such as stealing and lying.

Vanished vultures: Wildlife experts have given up hope of finding vultures in Thailand after a year of research turned up no trace of the birds.

It has been almost 15 years since a vulture was found in the kingdom, said Dr Narit Bhumpakphan of Kasetsart University's Faculty of Forestry, which helped conduct a joint study with the Wildlife Conservation Society.

In 1992 about 50 red-headed vultures were illegally poisoned to death by hunters in the Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Preserve in Uthai Thani Province. Since then, no vulture has been seen in the wild anywhere across the country.

Researchers attribute the disappearance of vultures from Thailand to the decline of predatory animals, on whose leftover prey vultures feed, plus contamination of animal remains by herbicides.



OF VEGETABLES AND VISAS: Six Burmese illegal immigrants, five of them women, were found hidden among bags of vegetables in a pickup truck at a checkpoint in Sukhothai Province.

From 20 to 50 years ago, three kinds of vultures could generally be found in the forests and paddy fields of all regions of the country, including Bangkok.

Healthy clergy: To mark the 60th anniversary of HM the King's accession to the throne, the Ministry of Public Health is spending 100 million baht to improve the health of more than 300,000 Buddhist monks and novices.

Launched in February and concluding in December 2007, the three-phase project will cover 34,764 temples and 333,766 monks and novices, said caretaker Public Health Minister Pinij Charusombat.

An initial survey found that more than half of all monks and novices suffer health problems. Of these, 17% have eyesight problems, 6% have partial memory loss, 5% suffer from high blood pressure and diabetes, and 5% are unable to bend their knees as a result of arthritis. Some 27% are smokers.

Medical Services Department Director-General Dr Chatri

Bancheun said the project would provide free checkups and treatment for monks. In the long term, officials will conduct evaluation visits twice yearly and health checkups every three to five years, he added.

Puff piece: The Youth Forum on Tobacco Control reported that Thailand continues to gain 200,000 to 300,000 new smokers a year, mainly due to a lack of effective measures to prevent young people from adopting the habit. Prof Prakrit Vetisathokkit, Secretary-General of the anti-smoking organization, said Thai teens usually picked up the habit at the ages of 13 and 14.

An estimated 375,900 teens are addicted to smoking, while nearly 80,000 smoke occasionally, he said.

"Recent research in the US has found that it's very difficult to quit smoking and it takes as many as 20 attempts to be successful.

"As a result, it is more effective to prevent teens from taking up the habit [in the first place].

Our focus is to encourage teen-to-teen communications in the fight against smoking," he added.

Game over: The Ministry of Interior has issued a regulation aimed at curbing computer game addiction by controlling hard disks used for playing games at Internet cafés, police spokesman Pol Lt-Gen Achirawit Suphanphesat said.

The regulation would control the rental, exchange, distribution or screening of games and other media, he said.

Under-18s will be banned from gaming cafés after 10 pm every day and before 2 pm from Monday to Friday.

"We have laid down the order in response to widespread game addiction that has caused family and social strife," he said.

He said police had assigned chiefs to every province to help enforce the law.

Touch of gray: The government has been warned that it must start now to plan social-welfare programs for the elderly, who will

number 16 million, or 25% of the population, within the next three decades.

Mahidol University's Population and Social Research Institute said the government must take action now, otherwise effective plans might not be in place in time to cope with an aging population, the institute said.

According to the institute, the country's birth rate will eventually decline to the point where it is the same as the death rate. At this point the population will stop increasing, and the age balance will begin shifting so that there will be fewer children and more elderly people. The research predicted the population would peak at 65 million in 2022.

The institute urged the government to devise policies that reflect the expected "graying" of the population and called for it to expand social-welfare programs for the elderly.

Double trouble: Malaysia and Thailand are to form a joint committee to resolve the difficulties caused by 50,000 to 100,000 people holding dual citizenship, which has been a longstanding problem for both countries.

The committee will include representatives of relevant authorities of both countries, it was announced following a recent meeting between caretaker Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak.

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



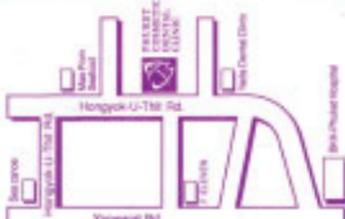
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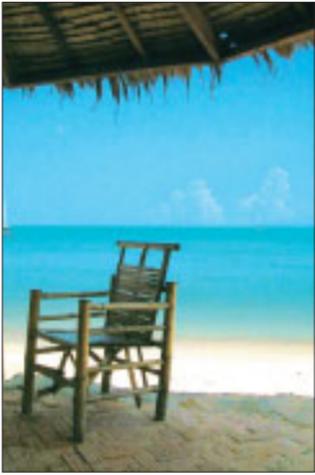


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FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

By Barry Singleton

On July 4, Khumphanat Glinsaowakon, the Deputy Chief of the Samui District Office, joined Forestry Department officers on a visit to check areas of woodland belonging to a temple in Lamai where trees had reportedly been cut down.

The inspection team, discovering that 30 teak trees had been felled in the forest, described it as a clear case of illegal logging.

Further investigation revealed that the businessman allegedly behind the destruction had received the backing of a former Samui police chief, who has since left the island.

The trees, which varied in age from 30 to 100 years and were painted by local monks, had an estimated value of around two million baht.

The businessmen thought to be involved are currently under investigation and may face charges of illegal logging.

Landslides and flash floods warning: After the Meteorological Department issued an early warning of an approaching monsoon from the southwest, Surat Thani Governor Vichit Vich-



A new device in the war on drugs even works on human skin; a small patch is selected and particles are collected from it for a BIOSENS analysis, which takes about 60 seconds.

Probe into 'clear case of illegal logging'

aisarn issued what many people view as a "retroactive warning" by urging residents in 149 high-risk areas to stay alert to the possibility of flash flooding and landslides.

The Meteorological Department recently predicted that the

summer monsoon would bring heavy rains, strong winds and rough seas, with wave heights up to three meters in the Gulf of Thailand.

Governor Vichit asked the local authorities to pay special attention to protecting tourist hotspots such as Samui, Koh Phangan, Koh Tao and Khao Sok National Park from natural disasters.

He also suggested that the authorities create teams of professionals to work around the clock so as to keep an eye on the situation.

Should conditions deteriorate, small craft such as speedboats may occasionally be banned from setting sail for reasons of safety.

Kobchai Boonyaorana, the head of the provincial disaster prevention and mitigation office, revealed that 10 centers staffed with relief workers from different departments have already been established across the province.

The army is also ready to act, having stationed emergency transport vehicles such as barges at every center.

Letters have been sent to all district and municipality offices in the region instructing them to remain vigilant at all times for possible flash floods and landslides.

New drugs checker: Developed by Swedish scientists, BIOSENS is a new tool in the technological arsenal used in the hunt for drug traffickers and terrorists. It is a detection machine capable of finding minute traces of drugs or explosives left behind on any surface.

The device even works on human skin; a small patch is selected and suspect particles are collected for a BIOSENS analysis taking about 60 seconds. Evidence gathered by BIOSENS machines is admissible in Thai courts.

On June 30, Donsak District Police Chief Pol Col Chakkrit Srisuwan set up a checkpoint at the Seatran ferry pier to check land vehicles using the port.

Police, previously having been trained in the use of the machines, were testing their efficiency in the field.

However, nothing suspect was found in any of the vehicles.

Because of the high cost of the technology – 2.7 million baht each – currently there are only five BIOSENS machines in Thailand.

Donsak Police are the first to deploy one in the South, with the port chosen because of its importance as an embarkation and disembarkation point between the mainland, Koh Samui and Koh Phangan.

Both destinations are popular not only with tourists, but also with the criminals and drug traffickers who prey on them. The authorities hope that checks such as this, combined with vigilance, will help to make travel in the region safer.

Pier pressure: On the unspoiled south coast of Samui, inhabitants are complaining to government officials about a proposal to build a pier in the area.

Ban Taling Ngam village headman Praphan Poonsawat received a delegation from Ban Hua Thanon, who presented him with a petition to be sent on to Samui District Chief Decha Kangsananan.

He, in turn, presented the objection to Surat Thani Governor Vichit Vichaisarn.

The villagers claim that the new pier will not only destroy their traditional way of life, but may also damage the environment.

They also say that the local arm of Spanish property development firm Solymar Properties, the company that wants to build the pier, had never sought the opinion of local people on the matter.

PERMITS

Solymar Properties, however, countered this accusation by saying that it had all the necessary building permits, which were legally obtained from the Marine Department office.

Gov Vichit has since ordered the project to be suspended, saying that the issues surrounding the matter must first be clarified before construction can go forward. Public opinion must be also be heard, he said.

Disease prevention: On July 4, Samui District Chief Decha Kangsananan opened a one-day seminar on how to prevent and control infectious diseases.

Health expert Dr Boonaoun Pinkaew, head of the infectious disease unit in Nakhon Sri Thammarat, reported on how cross-border migration from Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar is leading to an increase in the prevalence of certain diseases in the south of Thailand.

Elephantiasis, for example, was eradicated from Thailand 30 years ago, but is now making a worrying comeback.

The question discussed at the seminar was how to control infectious diseases from spreading throughout the population.

One step suggested was to control the influx of foreign labor from neighboring countries and to make sure that all who arrive have the necessary work permits and health certificates, which in turn allows for them to be traced through their Thai employers.

Also recommended were regular health checks and increased vigilance on the part of employers and supervisors in areas such as Samui, where industries including tourism and construction attract large numbers of migrant workers.

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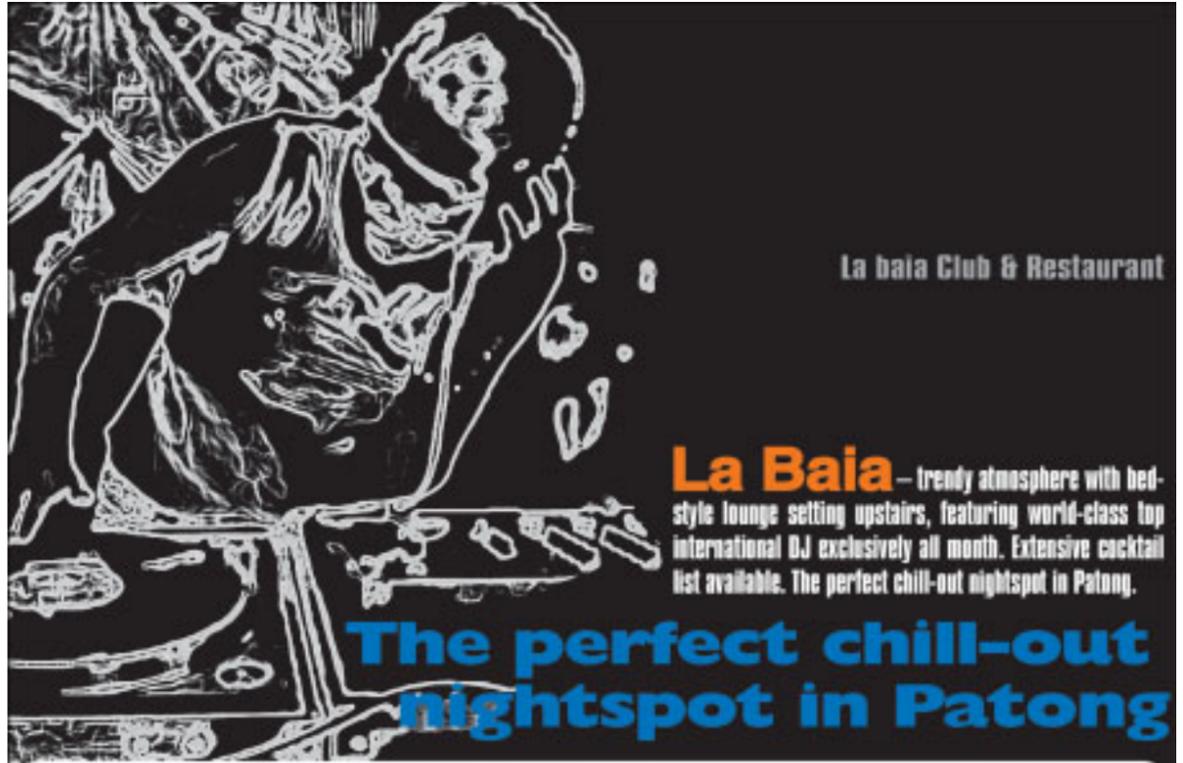
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On the menu



WITH Andy Johnstone

Carmen

Carmen GET IT



The first time I went to Carmen, at Surin Beach, was in March 2004 in the company of a company of opera singers who had performed *Tosca* at the Sheraton Grande Laguna the night before.

I had been embraced into their collective arms for some reason, and spent the after-show party listening to such erudite, quick-fire repartee as to think I was a character in *Vile Bodies*, or another novel of the time.

The puns flew thick and fast – the title of this magnum opus was just one. As we were a little drunk when we left, we were Carmen rollers. I was Faust to get in the car.

A man from Holland tripped up across the road and he became the Flying Dutchman. Puns surrounding Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* were thin on the ground until the rapid-fire chat became *Dialogues of the Arma-lites*.

It was an exhausting evening.

Fast forward a couple of years and I'm back there again for the Dining Out column, although in my heart of hearts – and with my three charming female dining companions – I know that seeing Gift and Robin, as well as Wally, who reminds me of the actor Seth Green (Scott Evil in the *Austin Powers* films), will be more pleasure than work.

And that's just as it should be. Carmen, for all the theatricality of the name, is as unpretentious and homely a restaurant as one can find here, there or anywhere.

The children with us, showing signs of maturity beyond their slender years, advise us that they intend to absent themselves to another table in Carmen. We walk in, and they do just that.

Gift immediately takes charge of the girls, ordering their *manao soda* for them and generally displaying all the qualities of a mother and restaurateur in one.

This is no exaggeration; Gift is mother to Carmen, Sara and Jackson, and has another child on the way. She also has the Pomodoro restaurants in Bangkok.

We turn our attention to a bottle of 2003 Carmen Chardonnay – no, as Robin points out, Gift does not have a vineyard although we suspect that Georges Bizet must have staked a claim for that name – and the serious business of dispensing good news



A brace of meats: lamb on the left, pepper steak on the right.



Above: rocket and rock lobster. Top: a quartet of pastas.

and catching up with all the developments.

Gift first brings a weighty plate of tantalizing starters, an Italian mixed dish of salmon carpaccio, Parma ham and melon balls, insalata Caprese, deep-fried calamari and imported salami.

The salmon is impeccable, the bufala in the insalata Caprese divine. The ham is sweet, perfumed, even, the sign that it has been aged well. This mixed dish is also a sign – as if we need one – that Gift has a talent for sourcing the best ingredients and putting them together just as they should be. Appropriately? Yes. Tastily and tastefully? A double affirmative. Over-adorned? No.

SHARKS

Between and during courses, the chat doesn't stop. I keep eyeing Wally, expecting him to say something about "...fricken' sharks with fricken' laser beams attached to their fricken' heads" but he doesn't.

A rather wonderful soup, well, two soups actually, one pumpkin and one broccoli poured together into a single bowl. I begin to wonder, using my Physics A level for the first time in years, why the two soups do not immediately blend together.

A light vodka sorbet refreshes the palate before a superb rock lobster and rocket salad. The sweet piquancy of the balsamic dressing blends seamlessly with the soft, creamy texture of the rockfish and the slight pepperiness of the rocket. By the

way, rocket, or arugula – they share the same Latin root, *eruca* – is, it is said, an aphrodisiac.

A sampler of four of Gift's most-loved pasta sauces – which, as with many of the other dishes at Carmen are prepared in the Sardinian style – are brought out next. Gift is wise to bring just a degustation of the quartet, for they are moreish to a sublime extreme.

Spaghetti with river prawns is heavenly, a burst of chili adding some zest. Fettucine with salmon and fusili with tuna begs us to eat more, but it is the penne with porcini that really grabs us.

Meaty mushrooms in a devilishly rich and creamy sauce have us complimenting, between and during mouthfuls – yes, I know that speaking with one's mouth full is a *faux pas sans pareil*, but needs must – the chefs receive our gratitude. Oh, homemade pasta, of course.

We were warned earlier in the evening about pacing ourselves, so we ask for the main course to be delayed for just a minute.

The 60 seconds are up, and a magnificent plate of New Zealand steak with a crunchy green pepper sauce and a rack of lamb with a mixed herb sauce arrive.

The tender lamb – perhaps my favorite meat – lasts no time at all while the steak lasts barely a second more. Earthly delights rarely taste so good.

There is just room for dessert – a plate of tiramisu and pecorino cheese with pizza sticks

and sesame snaps – and, as with all the dishes tonight, we share this too. It's more fun, it's certainly more familial and it certainly fits the atmosphere more than stuffily husbanding a dish on one's own.

The Carmen Chardonnay is empty, and a quick ice-cold Sardinian limoncello coupled with double espressos round off the most enjoyable restaurant review in ages. Gift's innate sense of making people feeling totally at

ease, as well as her skill in the kitchen and the airy, friendly ambience of Carmen, make a swift return trip a certainty.

Carmen is open from 5 pm to 1 am daily, except for the first Sunday of each month. Dinner costs around 1,200 baht for two, excluding wine. Carmen is on Surin Beach Rd, Cheryng Talay. Call Tel: 076-325713 for more information or to make a reservation.

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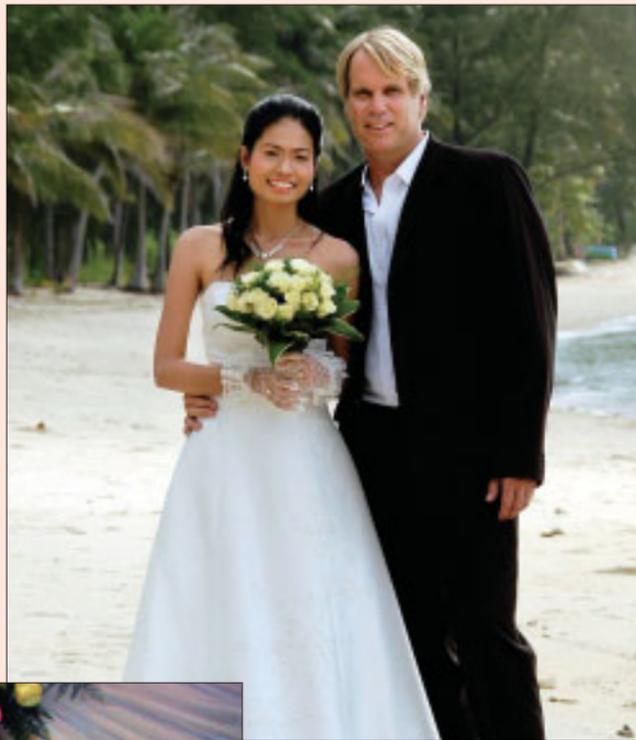
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Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket

Pattanee Waitong and Julian Eymann were married at Tri Trang Beach on July 8.



Jantana Wangapisit and Nivat Boonsiri were married in the Phra Pitak Grand Ballroom at The Metropole hotel on May 11.

Browsers at Nabon market or Wat Naka are often treated to a strange yet melodious rendition of classic Thai songs. The music flows not from any normal kind of instrument, but from a leaf.

Fifty-eight-year-old Sombun Ninned has been busking in the markets of Phuket using his talent for leaf blowing for more than two years now.

As he explained to Sompratch Saowakhon, he was forced to take up this unusual vocation after he lost a leg in a motorcycle accident and had to give up his work on a construction site.

Sombun Ninned's life changed when he was knocked off his friend's motorcycle in Krabi Town two years ago. Originally from Srisaket Province, he had been working as a laborer on construction sites in Krabi province for more than 10 years when he had the accident.

"I was riding pillion on my friend's motorcycle after celebrating Songkran in Krabi Town. I was chatting to my friend, the driver, when suddenly another motorcycle came and hit us from behind and we both came off the bike," he explains.

"The driver of the motorbike that hit us was drunk. The events of that night will always stay with me and are the reason that I'm here playing today," he says softly.

Before coming to work in the South, K. Sombun had a family in Srisaket. One day, however, his wife simply left and never returned. He was forced to provide for and take care of their daughter by himself.

When his daughter grew up she became pregnant and gave birth to twin boys. K. Sombun then had to provide for his grandchildren as well.

After the accident he was taken for treatment at Krabi Hospital. When the doctor broke the news that his left leg would have to be amputated below the knee, friends and family began to weep and the atmosphere became very sad.

K. Sombun asked his daughter to go and find a *khun* leaf from the hospital gardens. When she returned he began to play music on this leaf.

"It was an unfamiliar sound for everyone, but it made us all feel better. After I had been playing for a few minutes people started coming in from nearby rooms in the hospital. There were nurses, patients and visitors standing listening.

"After a little while the sadness was gone and people were smiling. Some of the nurses even wanted to record my playing," K. Sombun said, smiling at the memory.

He explains that he first learned to play music on leaves at the age of 12, when he was learning Thai boxing in Srisaket.

"One day, during a break from training, one of the instructors asked if anyone would like to learn how to blow leaves. He said that leaves could be used to support the traditional music played before fights.

"I was the only one who wanted to learn," says K. Sombun.

But as he grew up, he stopped playing – until the day he was told he would lose his leg.

"When my daughter came back with a leaf I wasn't totally sure I'd remember how to play. But when I put the leaf to my lips, it all came flooding back," he says.

"After being discharged



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How to blow your own leaf

Many different kinds of leaves can be used for leaf blowing; the *sok* leaf, forest lychee leaf and rambutan leaf are all recommended by K. Sombun.

But the best, in his opinion, is the *Lumduan* leaf as it has a perfect thickness for blowing.

To play a leaf you must position it horizontally between your lips and blow lightly. The fingers can then be used to change the note. A good leaf can last up to a week before it needs to be replaced.

LEAF MUSIC THAT SAVED A MAN AND HIS GRANDSONS



Tools of the trade: Donation bowl, leaves and whisky for emotion.



Sombun demonstrates how to make music with a leaf.

from the hospital I was very worried about how I would be able to provide for my family. I was already 56. 'What job could an old man with only one leg possibly do?' I wondered.

"To make matters worse, a few days after I got home from the hospital my daughter ran away, leaving me to look after the twins. She must have been worried that I would not be able to take care of myself and would become a burden to her," he adds.

It was at this point that he decided to move from Krabi to Phuket. A neighbor helped him move and set himself up here. "I knew my days as a laborer were over but I thought that maybe I could make a living through busking.

"I thought I would have a better chance of success at that in Phuket," K. Sombun explains.

He now plays at the Car Boot Sale at Wat Naka on Saturday and Sunday from 5 pm to 10 pm, and at Nabon Market from Monday to Friday from 4 pm until 8 pm.

"When I am playing I set up a table with a donation bowl, a glass for leaves and a glass of whisky. I need the whisky when I'm playing to build up my emotions. To play well you really need to put emotion into the music.

"I also have a raincoat be-

cause I have to keep on playing even when it's raining.

"I can play many different kinds of songs but my specialty is the songs of Suraphon Sombudcharern. I can play all his songs," he said.

"It's not always easy to find suitable leaves. I have to get my neighbors and friends to help me find them.

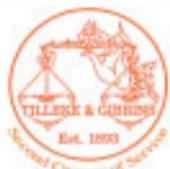
"Sometimes I even have to pay people to do it for me as I have to look after the twins and it's not easy for me to get around" - K. Sombun now has a plastic leg but still has difficulty getting to places by himself.

His goal in life is simple: to

make enough money to build a small house for his grandchildren and to send them to university.

"I don't want my grandsons to have to work as buskers like me," he says, holding back the tears.

"I know I have to work very hard to give them a chance in life. Now I even hire a child-minder to look after them so I can go and play and collect more money for them."



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This week



ART HOUSE: Louis Bronner (center), General Manager of Mom Tri's Boathouse in Kata, opens the "The Melody of Life" art exhibition, consisting of works by Teoh Siew Choo (2nd from right), as exhibition organizer Jay-Da Rodnit (left) and Boathouse PR Manager Lies Sol (2nd from left) look on.



TOP COG: Rotary Club of Junkseilon President Chantra Kulveera-aree (back row, 4th from right) and fellow Rotary members pose for a photo at the July 7 ceremony at Thainaan restaurant to install new Presidents for all the Rotary Clubs on Phuket. Other Presidents installed were David Arell (Rotary Club of Patong Beach), Pakornkiet Watpitak, (Rotary Club of Phuket South), Samkhan Sangfai (Rotary Club of Tungkha), Sakchai Chowvai (Rotary Club of Phuket) and Nakarin Yorsangrat (Rotary Club of Andaman).



TASTE TEST: Pictured at Wine Connection, during a tasting of wines from the Nekeas vineyard of Spain, are, from left, Wine Connection General Manager Paul Clark and Shop Manager Rungsai Intarasuk, with Carlos Biurrun, Export Manager of Nekeas.



OUTSTANDING IN THEIR FIELD: Chaowawat Chomchean (center) leads U-thit Limsakul (2nd from right) and fellow officials from the Tourism Authority of Thailand Phuket office on a tour through his mixed-fruit orchard in Kapong District during the officials' recent inspection tour of agricultural tourism destinations in Phang Nga Province.



MORE THAN A FEELING: Holistic therapist Roger J. Moore (in white trousers) recently held his Happy Living holistic therapy workshop at Blue Canyon Country Club (BCCC). Among those who attended were Nicole Kochornswasdi (2nd from right), BCCC's Business Development Manager (Operations) and the club's Assistant Spa Manager Thanakarn Putthinan (right).



BAYSIDE BIRTHDAY! Jintana Supho (2nd from right), Assistant Manager of the Tamarind Bar & Restaurant in Chalong, celebrates her 44th birthday party with Tamarind Bar owner Luckana Chanakarn (3rd from right) and friends on June 27.

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BEHIND THE WHEEL
By Jeff Heselwood

Fortuner favors the bold

Based on the Toyota Hilux pickup truck, which is assembled in Thailand, the Fortuner SUV has become an extremely popular 4x4 with a host of luxury appointments and equipment.

So successful has the Fortuner become that Toyota has begun exporting it to other Asian countries, and beginning in October this year, the vehicle will be produced in Indonesia for export to the Middle East by PT Toyota. Around 15,000 vehicles a year will be exported.

With a choice of gasoline or diesel engines, the Fortuner is sufficiently powerful to master the hills of Phuket with ease, while its auto transmission can be used as a Tiptronic if required, although it is generally best left to its own devices.

The 2.7-liter gas engine produces a healthy 118bhp (87kW) with maximum torque output of 241Nm at 3,800rpm.

The 3.0 turbo-diesel motor, on the other hand, has amazingly strong torque of 343Nm, produced all the way from 1,400 to 3,200 rpm.

Maximum power is still a reasonable 120bhp (88kW).

INTERIOR

The interior of this 4x4 is its most endearing feature, with full leather upholstery, power everything and a decent audio system complete with multi-disc CD changer located under the driver's seat.

It is not as fiddly as you might imagine as the CD cartridge ejects easily, even with the motor switched off, in order to insert new CDs. Airbags for the driver and the front passenger are standard.

In normal configuration, the Fortuner is a five-seater, but there are two extra foldaway seats located in the rear cargo area for occasional use.

The luggage area is positively cavernous and comes with a drop-down cover in order to protect the paintwork.

The rear seats split 60/40 to further increase capacity and flexibility.

Driving the vehicle is easy as the driver sits high up in a commanding position; reversing though is not quite as simple as it is hard to judge the outer limits of



the Fortuner. It is all too easy to clout a low wall or other obstacle that is out of the driver's line of sight.

In addition, the steering lock is somewhat limited due to the four-wheel drive setup, though according to the listed specifications this SUV has a turning circle of 5.7 meters, which is reasonable for this type of vehicle.

Inevitably, though, a certain amount of shuffling back and forth is sometimes necessary in confined spaces.

Another criticism is that, because the Fortuner is based on a rudimentary pickup chassis, it comes with ancient drum rear brakes.

It seems a mite penny-pinching of Toyota not to modify the rear axle to accommodate a decent set of discs, but that said the brakes work well for such a large vehicle.

Toyota is on-stream to become the world's largest auto maker, having already surpassed Ford to become Number 2. It is anticipated that, by the end of 2007, the Japanese firm will overtake General Motors by a comfortable margin.

Interestingly, Toyota has recently been refused membership of the Association des Constructeurs d'Automobiles, the European automakers' organization.

Although both Ford and GM are members, Toyota has been denied membership because, they say, it "does not have significant manufacturing capability in Europe".

In Thailand, it is clear Toyota has similar ambitions to become the clear Number 1 manufacturer; its one-ton pickups, along with those of Isuzu, already account for more than 70% of the passenger car market, but Toyota clearly wants the

outright lead. The Fortuner will certainly help it along the way.

Prices of the new luxury

4x4 start at 1.029 million baht for the gasoline model and a little more for the diesel version.

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

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Modesty made fashionable

By Natcha Yuttaworawit

Among Phuket's sizable Muslim community, the term *hijab* is used loosely to mean any clothing that protects a woman's modesty by creating a barrier between her and those around her.

Although the word originally comes from the Arabic meaning "barrier", in Thailand it most often refers simply to a headscarf worn by a Muslim woman.

To learn more about *hijab*, the *Gazette* spoke with Imam Baimard Ploykao of the Hansorisooson Mosque in Bang Tao. He explained that all Muslima, or Muslim women, are expected to cover up by wearing a *hijab* – and that only the face and hands should be left exposed.

Islam has it that this custom follows from the word of Allah himself, as given to man by the Prophet Muhammad and recorded in the Holy Qur'an. The rule applies to all Muslim women and goes into effect as soon as they begin menstruating, he explained.

Women are even expected to follow this tradition even when at home.

They are, however, free to choose from a huge variety of colors, materials and styles.

"There is really no limit to the number of colors or styles, apart from the fact that they should not bear images or designs representing animals," Imam Baimard said.

This explains why you won't see Snoopy or Hello Kitty adorning a headscarf – at least not one worn by a respectable Muslima.



Imam Baimard Ploykao: Women are free to choose from a huge variety of designs – but none featuring animals.

Not surprisingly, styles vary from region to region and even from community to community. Twenty-year-old Chalida "Da" Wanthong, who regularly attends prayer services at the mosque, explained that there are two basic kinds of *hijab* headscarf and was happy to model several for the *Gazette*.

"Headscarves come in two basic shapes: triangular and rectangular. To wear the triangular one, you must pin it with a single pin or brooch on top of your head," explained K. Da demonstrating the routine effortlessly after years of daily experience.

"To wear the rectangular

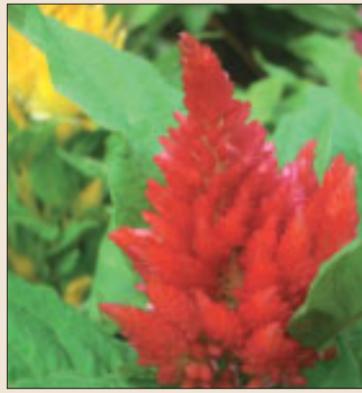
one, you must first pin it under your chin, then pull the two ends across to the opposite shoulders and pin them there...just so," she explained, getting the tension exactly right.

Not surprisingly, Thailand's Deep South, with its majority Muslim population, produces some of the loveliest *hijab* available in Thailand.

"I think the most beautiful *hijab* are from Yala Province, where they are usually available for prices ranging from 500 baht to 1,500 baht, depending on the type of embroidery and other things,"

K. Da added.

Phuket residents will have a chance to see and buy some of these at the upcoming Halal Food, Hilal Town Festival, to be held at the Thalang Chanasuk Memorial Field in Tambon Thepkrasattri from July 29 to August 2.



Blossoming Phuket

As the *Gazette* went to press for this issue, stalls were being erected for the 14th Annual Phuket Flower Show at Saphan Hin. Chief Reporter Sangkhae Leelanaporn took her camera along to get a foretaste of what will be on show there until July 26.



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The variety of colors, combinations and patterns is potentially infinite.

- Model: Chalida Wanthong.



A wide variety of pretty brooches and other fastenings are used to keep headscarves in place.



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Life is suite



Above, the peaceful interior of the suite. Right, therapist Jeab Soonteg.



I wake up excited in the knowledge that this day will be my first-ever spa experience, taking place at the luxurious Cheraim Spa Village, a sprawling spa complex covering 10 rai along Wichit Songkram Rd, next to Thainaan restaurant.

As I arrive at the teakwood Thai-style reception pavilion, I am greeted by Spa Manager Chatayodom "Garry" Martmuang, who offers me a refreshing, chilled drink of lemongrass and safflower. Equally refreshing is the lemongrass-scented hot towel he hands me to wipe my face and brow with.

I can already feel my sinuses beginning to clear as I savor the taste and enjoy the aroma of the cool beverage.

Curious, I ask Garry about the spa's name. He explains that Cheraim is a sort of Thai portmanteau, the first syllable of which, "cher", a Thai word with Khmer roots meaning "tree". The second syllable is from the second syllable of word "Chaim", meaning licorice.

The spa, which cost 200 million baht to create, has been open for about seven months. Services are divided into two zones.

The first is the Group Zone, which caters to large, often boisterous tour groups from around Asia. The second is a special VIP zone for individual customers seeking more quiet and privacy.

Good news: Garry says, "We will take you to the double suite room, which we usually only offer to the guests who buy four-and-a-half-hour spa packages costing between 7,200 and 7,900 baht," he says.

"I can deal with that," I said to myself, thinking what a pleasant break this was going to be from my normal routine of chasing government officials and business people around with a tape recorder.

Cheraim Spa has a huge

menu of therapies and treatments, including eight Spa Body Treatments, nine different massage therapies, body waxing, nail art, manicure and pedicure.

For those who want to luxuriate for a long time, there are no fewer than 15 packages, ranging in duration from two hours to four-and-a-half. These come with alluring names such as "Cheraim Absolute Body Pampering" and "Cheraim Oriental Respite". And if that is still not enough, there are the three Suite Packages, each lasting four and a half hours.

Somewhat overwhelmed by the options and combinations available, I choose a shortened version of the "Cheraim Healing Stone Wellness Experience", which features a full-body hot-stone-therapy treatment.

The cost for the entire 4.5-hour suite package is 7,900 baht, making it the most expensive package on the menu. "Is it my fault that I have expensive taste?" I ask myself.

After showing me around the spa products store, Garry introduces me to Sawitree "Jeab" Soonteg, my therapist. I follow her down the corridor to the VIP zone.

The woman's VIP spa area is really a bathroom extraordinaire, with facilities for just about every type of bath one can imag-

ine: hot baths, cold baths, bubble baths, salt baths, hydrotherapy baths, steam baths and sauna chambers.

The suite is a private, fully-contained spa facility with two massage beds and a Jacuzzi. Built flush into the floor is a pool with fish swimming gracefully back and forth, giving the room a relaxing and distinctly Asian visual appeal.

Adding to the sense of relaxation is soothing, high-quality ambient music coming through hidden speakers.

"Right now there are three different kinds of music to choose from. Before long we will increase it to five," Garry says before departing and leaving me in the highly capable hands of K. Jeab for my hot stone treatment.

K. Jeab explains that the Hot Stone Massage therapy is based on the Japanese Shiatsu style of

massage. A variety of stones are used, each thought to have specific healing properties when used as part of the massage.

For example, a green stone called aventurin helps to improve blood circulation, I am told, while white jade has a positive effect on kidney function.

Larger stones are used on the torso and limbs, while smaller stones with holes in the middle are used for facial massage, giving the therapist greater control and precision.

After heating all the stones in a special unit, K. Jeab tells me to lie on my stomach. She begins to apply a special "Secret Garden" oil of lavender and lemongrass, deftly working it in along my spine with a snowflake stone, which supposedly has special power as a pain reliever.

For me the effect is more soporific, and before long I feel myself starting to drift off. "If I drift off now does that mean I am sleeping on the job?" I wonder.

Drifting in and out of consciousness, I can feel K. Jeab expertly applying the warm stones, each on a specific body part and making sure the whole massage is "balanced".

For 45 minutes, she works on my shoulders, back and legs before turning me over to finish up with my arms.

For the last step of the body massage, she carefully places yellow stones on my four *chakra* points, leaving them there for about 10 minutes while she massages my legs. This, she says, helps to improve digestion.

The stone massage is followed by 45 equally blissful minutes of face massage.

K. Jeab uses a toner to remove my make-up in preparation for my facial, which involves wearing a cream mask.

The 90 minutes are soon over, and as I lie in the Jacuzzi I wonder what it would be like if all this were part of my daily routine. I feel perfectly relaxed and completely care-free.

I admit I was skeptical at first, but there do seem to be some real benefits from massaging with stones, which allow a better distribution of force than I have experienced in previous massages using only the hands. I am not sure about some of the "spiritual" aspects associated with the technique, but the overall effect is very relaxing.

As I finish up, I feel like Cleopatra, stepping into a bath filled with mineral water with smooth, creamy milk, on top of which float small red orchid flowers. Sheer indulgence.

Today's therapy concludes with a final drink of lemongrass and safflower, this time served warm. It is the perfect ending to my first-ever spa treatment. I don't think it will be the last.

Cheraim Spa is west of the Thainaan intersection on Wichit Songkram Rd, opposite Central Festival Phuket. For more information call Tel: 076-249-670-5; Fax: 076-249676, or visit the spa's website at <http://www.cheraimspavillage.com>

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By Andy Johnstone

You've come a long way, baby

Your starter for 10 points: list all possible meanings of the word "seraph" or "seraphim".

A character from *The Matrix*. A race of aliens from *Battlestar Galactica*. A mega-level Digimon. Characters from, or names of, 300 or so different video games. The six-winged celestial beings from Jewish and Christian mythology.

Their role in the latter, apart from singing "*Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh*" – that's "Holy, holy, holy" to most of us – is vaguely undefined, although "Caretakers of the celestial throne" rings a bell. Best not to ask for whom the bell tolls, though.

But Phuket's very own Seraph is none of these. She is quite possibly the most beautiful sailing vessel gracing these waters. She is certainly the most recognizable.

The *SY Seraph* is politely known as the Old Lady of the Sea – "But never ask a lady's age, nor her weight," advises Tom Howard, of Sea Phuket (www.sea-phuket.com) over a drink at The Lighthouse.

The Old Lady of the Sea is, however, an apt title; *Seraph* reached her centenary this year.

"She began her life in a shipyard just outside Copenhagen in 1906 as a ketch-rigged fishing boat destined to work in the harsh environment of the North Sea," he began.

"Her first role would have been as a 'buy boat' – one that sailed out to meet the trawlers, transferring their catch to her large hold, which would have been partially flooded with seawater to keep the fish fresh. The buy boat would then return to port to sell the catch at market."

This inauspicious start to her life, says Tom, does not prevent a number of romantics familiar with the Erskine Childers novel *The Riddle of the Sands* draw-



Old Lady of the Sea: *Seraph* started life as a fishing boat but leads a more elegant existence these days.

ing comparisons between that novel's *Dulcibella* and *Seraph*.

"Well, fiction and reality do blend a bit; both were in similar areas of the North Sea at around the same time, though I'm not aware of *Seraph* being involved in anything to do with espionage or red herrings. I'm sure the crew became a little soused at times, though..."

Tom relates how she was worked hard up until the late 1970s, when she was bought by a Dutch couple who took her to Holland and converted her into a liveaboard schooner with a Marconi rig.

"They looked after her and took some considerable time cruising the Med and the Indian Ocean before arriving in Thailand

in the late '80s," says Tom. It was in Thailand that there occurred an incident that almost put the Old Lady to rest once and for all.

"In 1991, a squall drove *Seraph* onto a reef in the Similans, holing her beneath the waterline. She was recovered, and restored and re-rigged in her present configuration as a gaff-rigged schooner."

He smiles. "Those six sails are her six wings."

At an age when most other ladies are looking to retire, *Seraph* had a new lease on life, and continued to take liveaboard groups around the Andaman Sea – rather than fish in the North Sea.

"Even though she has now been retired from doing liveaboards, we still receive telephone calls and emails from individuals and groups who went on board her years ago; some want to return for another, different sort of trip, while others just like to keep an eye on her.

"There is – and it's quite difficult to define – something about *Seraph* that gets under one's skin."

Seraph had a major refit last year – the original oak planks and frames were replaced with local *takean tong*, and a comprehensively-equipped galley and modern heads were fitted. She now spends her days entertaining up to 40 people at a time, tourists, MICE groups, honeymooners, couples celebrating their anniversaries, overnight trips and a host of others on the waters of Phang Nga Bay and off Phuket.

"She fits the role, and the role suits her ideally," says Tom. "*Seraph* has amazing presence on the water; people really do stop and stare as we sail past.

"Granted, there are some highly impressive boats that'll get your attention as they go past at 45 knots, but we take our time – and people notice more," he smiles.

"After all, she is 100 years old, and she deserves to be acknowledged as a true lady."

For more information, contact Tom Howard at email: tom@sea-phuket.com, call: 01-7971120 or visit www.sea-phuket.com or www.seraphcruises.com

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PUZZLES

The Cryptic Crossword

Spot the Difference



Can you find the seven differences between the two cartoons below? And can you find them faster than the rest of the family?
Solution on next page.

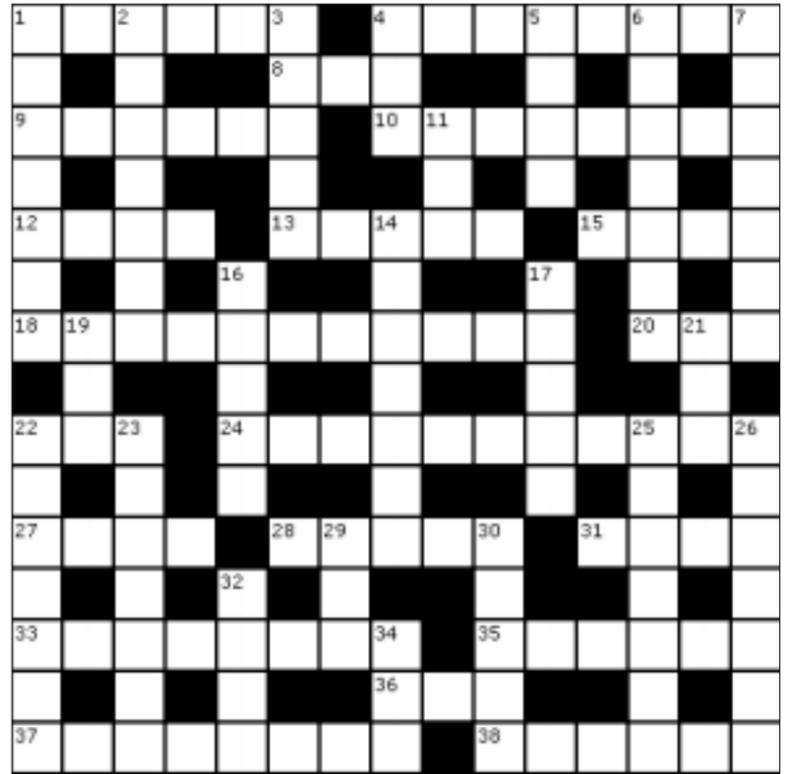


ACROSS

1. Hate de exam! (6)
4. In waistcoat or money, man. (8)
8. Strange drink. (3)
9. Get free bathroom implement. (6)
10. Visit briefly – Jay’s a showoff. (8)
12. Dismembered slow birds. (4)
13. Could be said you are in sin at this beach. (5)
15. Whip eye part. (4)
18. Bosses make very good eye protectors. (11)
20. Carrier as cardinal. (3)
22. Uncle’s missile. (3)
24. Put up a piece of punctuation with tryst? (11)
27. Industry ends in race. (4)
28. Sleeps – no learner oozes. (5)
31. Am I right for a ruler? (4)
33. Little Morris has got the Ecuadorian capital bug. (8)
35. Instrument made from bones and shirt. (6)
36. Sound of disgust from graduate with hotel. (3)
37. Tic often mistaken for wedding stuff. (8)
38. Cap ice oddly for emetic plant. (6)

DOWN

1. Dictators of the French places. (7)
2. Truncated Barsetshire



Compiled by Tortuus. © 2006

3. writer is a whore. (7)
3. Plants to keep shoes in shape. (5)
4. Cheeky chap: “I’m quiet.”
5. Live up – and bad. (4)
6. Herb’s brass band. (7)
7. Musical routines? (7)
11. Love, you and I say yes in Paris. (3)
14. Make repairs to do with the shop. (7)
16. Take care of special time. (5)
17. 20 has officer commanding little associate. (5)
19. Take us and a country. (1,1,1)
21. ’Tis backward to pose for a picture. (3)
22. Size, Michael, of the earthquake. (7)
23. Perplexed maids on NY avenue. (7)
25. Man in a varnish year-book. (7)
26. Unpredictable Eric swallowed rat. (7)
29. Point at way to use food. (3)
30. Chinese dynasty quiet in Japanese food. (5)
32. Sweetener for squares. (4)
34. I follow no note to make sash. (3)

Solution on next page

Scribble Space



EZ TRIVIA QUIZ

1. What is the largest country in Africa?
2. What is the first part of the human alimentary canal?
3. Who was headbutted by Zinedine Zidane in the recent world cup final?
4. What is the SI unit for mass?
5. What colors are in the Greek flag?
6. Who scored the “Hand of God” goal?
7. What country’s flag is not rectangular?
8. The Victory Monument in Bangkok marks victory over which country?
9. What does GDP stand for?
10. Who was the author of *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*?

Answers on next page

Rhyme Time

The words described below all rhyme with ‘red’.
What are they?

1. Ran away.
2. Feeling of intense fear.
3. Got air out of brake system
4. Departed.
5. Wilma’s husband.
6. Stair component.
7. Put down card first.
8. Heavy metal.
9. Went fast.
10. Needle companion.

Answers on next page

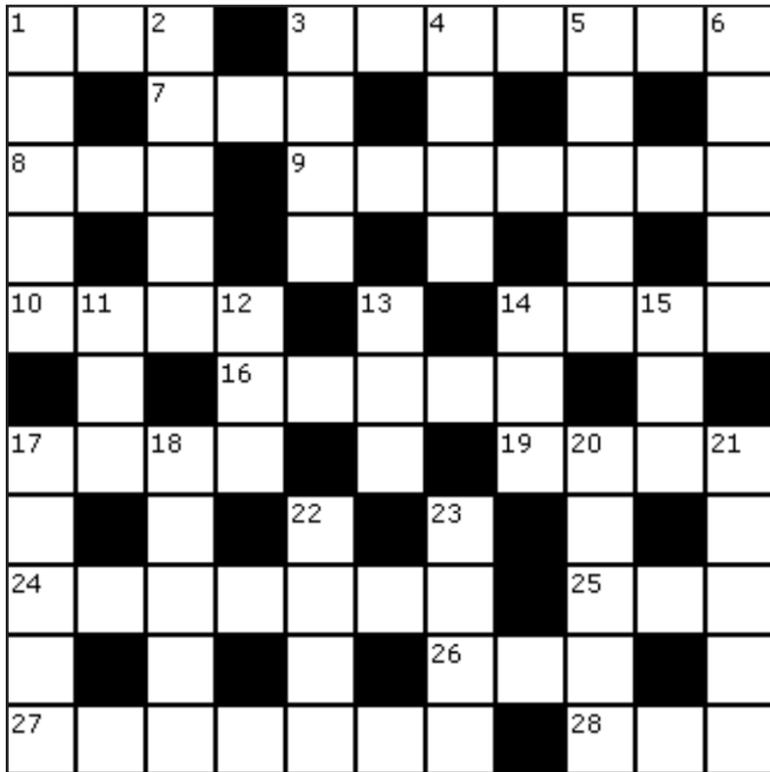
su | do | ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

2	5	3	4
9	7	5	6
4		1	8
	3	7	5
9	6	4	
1	9	2	8
4			
3	2	7	6

Sudoku is very simple: each row, each column and each “box” of nine squares within the puzzle must contain all the numbers from 1 to 9 with, naturally, no repetitions. Beware: there is only one solution to this puzzle, which is on the next page.



Quick Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1. Period of time.
 - 3. No laughing matter.
 - 7. Basketball organization.
 - 8. Garbage container.
 - 9. Jailbird.
 - 10. Directions.
 - 14. Blood vessel.
 - 16. Misuse.
 - 17. Very dry.
 - 19. At that time.
 - 24. Disease.
- DOWN**
- 1. Arm joint.
 - 2. Irritate.
 - 3. Children's race equipment.
 - 4. Monthly accommodation payment.
 - 5. Martini accompaniment.
 - 6. Smooth material.
 - 11. Essential gas mixture.
 - 12. Unhappy.
 - 13. Total.
 - 14. Animal doctor.
 - 15. Anger.
 - 17. Having to do with birds.
 - 18. Slacker.
 - 20. Sprayed.
 - 21. Japanese assassin.
 - 22. Greek cheese.
 - 23. Island.

Solution below, right

Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz



Kids! Ask Mum and Dad to help you find the answers to these questions. They're not easy but, if you do some research, you should be able to find the answers to all of them.

- 1. Name the current Aga Khan.
- 2. Who wrote *Rumble Fish* and *The Outsiders*?
- 3. What is the name of the instrumental theme music to the movie *Local Hero*?
- 4. Who recorded it?
- 5. According to legend, how many rats did the Pied Piper of Hamelin drown?
- 6. Batikent is a city in which country?
- 7. In which year was the cornerstone of St Rupert's Cathedral in Salzburg laid?
- 8. When was the cathedral completed?
- 9. Who is the Governor of Arizona?
- 10. *Duplicate*, *Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham* and *Veer-Zaara* are films by which Bollywood director?
- 11. In which year did Wyatt Earp, famed gunslinger of the Gunfight at the OK Corral, die?
- 12. Which island group is claimed wholly or in part by China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and the Philippines?
- 13. All 45 people aboard PIA Flight 688 died in a crash on takeoff from what Pakistani airport?
- 14. Who owned the sawmill in California where gold was found, sparking the 1849 gold rush?
- 15. Which deceased Buddhist monk from Surat Thani was recently added to the UNESCO list of "Great International Personalities"?
- 16. Who is credited with pioneering the use of dental floss in 1815?
- 17. What building is at 233 South Wacker Drive, Chicago?
- 18. Which former English Premier League soccer team now plays as the Milton Keynes Don's?
- 19. Fleshy the cat and Chimp the talking chimpanzee appear in which comic strip?
- 20. Which Italian poet wrote *La Divina Commedia* (*The Divine Comedy*)?

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Rhyme Time Answers

- 1. Fled; 2. Dread; 3. Bled; 4. Dead; 5. Fred; 6. Tread; 7. Led; 8. Lead; 9. Sped; 10. Thread.

Solution to this week's Cartoon Puzzle



EZ Trivia Answers

- 1. Sudan; 2. The mouth; 3. Marco Materazzi; 4. Kilograms; 5. Blue and white; 6. Diego Maradona; 7. Nepal; 8. France; 9. Gross Domestic Product; 10. Sir Isaac Newton.

Monster Quiz Answers

- 1. Prince Karim El Husseni; 2. S E Hinton; 3. *Going Home*; 4. Mark Knofler; 5. 999,999; 6. Turkey; 7. 1614; 8. 1628; 9. Janey Napolitano; 10. Karan Johar; 11. 1929; 12. The Spratly Islands; 13. Multan International Airport; 14. John Sutter; 15. Phra Buddhadasa Bhikkhu; 16. Levi Spear Parmly; 17. The Sears Tower; 18. Wimbledon FC; 19. *Monty*; 20. Durante degli Alighieri, also known as Dante Alighieri.

Cryptic Crossword



Quick Crossword



Sudoku



Ui! Wot a balloon

Spoiled for choice: "Sitting on the outside deck of a sleazy bar on Patong Beach, I return to my menu as an impatient waiter hovers over me.

"Yes, I'll have a large Singha beer, Panang curry with chicken, and..." searching for the x-rated menu on the table, 'yes, here it is... I'll try the 'Pussy Ping Pong' please.'" (1)

Which way? "At first, it's the little things. Like seeing four people on a motor scooter driving on the wrong side of the road.

"Then stopping to ask a policeman for directions.....and him supplying the information before waving them on their way. Perfectly normal. Doesn't even warrant comment." (2)

Balloon speech: "So I sat. Pee Ong told me to please hold in my stomach because it wasn't ladylike to have a big "balloon", as she called it. So I sucked it in.

"After a few minutes I forgot, and she reminded me again, and this went on for the rest of the day. Soon it got so all she had to do was say, "Dawn..." and then make a sucking-in motion, and I sucked in. (3)

Lizzicide: "We also had a nice little pet lizzard our two days there in our bathroom called 'Lobby the Lizzard' but I think I killed him accidentally on our last day with the bug spray." (4)

Serious blow: "Patong sucks!!! Stay at Bangtao Beach unless you are under 30 and brain damaged." (5)

Missie link: "So they took the guy to the side and said 'Mr fellow Englishman and law abiding citizen...we have decided NOT to afford a fiancée visa to your future ex-wife because her passport in Thai language reads 'Mr' and not 'Miss'.

"Do NOT make a laughing stock of us here at the embassy, asking us to afford a fiancée-visa to a man!

"You must darned well know that British law hears nothing of such a despicable thing! (6)

OUTSIDE IN

By Lis Kinswoman

The rain keeps on coming down, keeping everyone indoors. Thank heavens Lis is back with another selection of unedited goodies from the murky world of the net to keep you all entertained.

Distress call: "Simply put, 'ui!' is the sound of a Thai person in distress. Variations on this include, 'uuui!', 'uuii!' and 'uuuuuui!' (can you see my linguistics major paying off now?)

If, unprovoked, I poke my wife in the side, she might exclaim, 'uui!' (She might just as soon sock me in the stomach and then demand to know what the hell I'm doing, but I did say 'might', right?) [English equivalent in this example: 'Hey!']" (7)

1. www.kenexner.com/thailand.shtml
2. www.stickmanbangkok.com/Reader2006/reader2812.htm
3. www.travelblog.org/Asia/Thailand/Isaan/blog-72706.html
4. www.travelblog.org/Asia/Thailand/Sukhothai/blog-62603.html
5. www.asiaweb-direct.com/forums/showflat.php?Cat=&Number=7264&page=4&view=collapsed&sb=5&o=&fpart=16.http://www.thai-blogs.com/index.php?blog=8&title=thailand_s_ladyboys&more=1&c=1&tb=1&pb=1
7. www.cosmicbuddha.com/blog/archives/2006_03.html

The turbulent 1960s in the US were a time of flowering for literary voices among the black and Puerto Rican inhabitants of the inner cities. Most of these authors have fallen by the wayside and stories about this part of American life have long lost their popularity. But one novelist has doggedly stuck to this patch: Richard Price.

Price's first novel, *The Wanderers*, was a very funny novel about an Italian street gang in the Bronx. It was later made into a movie.

The last four of his seven novels have taken place in a bleak high-rise public housing project in New Jersey, home of welfare mothers, street gangs, drunks and drug addicts.

His latest is *Samaritan* (Bloomsbury, London, 2003, 496pp). The Samaritan of the title is Ray Mitchell, who has just come back to New Jersey from a successful TV screenwriting stint in California.

He has moved into the house, recently vacated by his parents who have retired to Florida. The house, in a gated white community on the Jersey shore, has a view of the Statue of Liberty.

Nearby is the public housing project where he'd grown up in the 1960s. Mostly white then, it is almost completely black and Latino now.

He's invited to give a commencement speech at his old high school and then volunteers to teach a weekly creative writing course for a select group of eight students.

He's also struggling with his own demons. A former teacher, he wasted years as a cab driver and cocaine addict, losing his wife and daughter along the way. His daughter is 13 now and attends a private school in Manhattan. She joins him for the occasional weekend as Ray desperately tries to communicate with her.

He gets through to her as

BACK TO HIS ROOTS



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

they sit on the bench in his old housing project and tells her of his childhood friends with names like "Dub, Butchie, Big Chief, Psycho, Hercules, Little Psycho – no relation of regular Psycho – Cookie, Tweetie..."

The story he tells about the little black girl Tweetie is of the time her head got opened up in a stickball accident and the 12-year-old Ray Mitchell staunched the bleeding and ran with her to the hospital.

Thirty-one years later, Tweetie – Nerise Ammons – is a police inspector 10 weeks from retirement. Ray has started a romance with the daughter of the part-black, part-Dominican beauty who used to live in the apartment above him, bringing her and her son to his home.

Then Mitchell is felled from behind in his living room by someone swinging a long thin vase like

a baseball bat. Hospitalized with a serious concussion, he refuses to identify his assailant. Nerise Ammons takes the case.

Price has always been an ace at gritty city dialog, but *Samaritan* is distinguished from its predecessors by a new stylistic wrinkle which I like to call the Elmore Leonard participle.

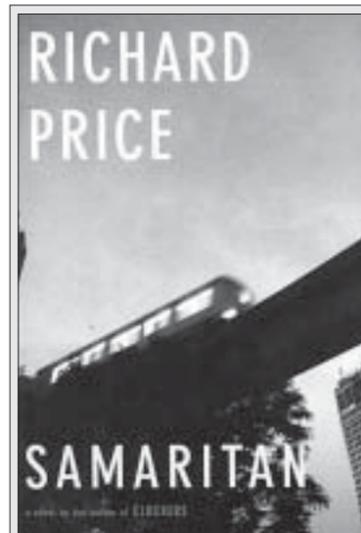
This is a way of speeding dialog along and gaining immediacy. Here are Nerise and Ray talking after the assault:

"Anyways," Nerese, moving in. "That neighbour, Mrs Kuben? How do I say this . . . She says you got so many, let's call 'em people of color, marching through your doors? It's like a stop on the Underground Railroad."

Ray stared at her, processing, then, "F— her. They weren't bothering anybody."

"Who's 'they'?"

"Truly, truly, f— her, that



One author who has not fallen by the wayside

bougie-assed Ziploc-packing stick-in-everybody's . . ."

"Actually, the one I'm interested in, Ray, is the hootchie."

"The what?" Ray needing another minute to integrate again, then, "And f— you too."

Nerese took it in stride, but let her face cloud over like she had just lost a friend; Ray instantly losing his bluster.

"Sorry." He turned away, embarrassed.

"So who is she?"

"No." Shaking his head, shutting this down.

"You know I'm gonna find out anyway."

"Why are you doing this, Nerese . . ."

"It's easy to make me stop."

"Why." Almost shouting it.

Imagine 496 pages of this, plus solid characterization, galloping plot and honest emotions – a writer at the height of his powers. Bliss.

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Dodgy claims

British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli is usually credited with coining the phrase "lies, damned lies and statistics", referring to the way that numbers can be used to lend credibility to dubious theories.

Britain's Norwich Union insurance company appears to have come up with a new wrinkle on this: positing a dubious theory, stating that it is backed with numbers, and then coyly declining to reveal what the numbers are. The BBC, along with the *International Herald Tribune* and such well-respected British newspapers as the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*, all retailed Norwich Union's press release, announcing that – according to statistics it was not going to reveal "for commercial reasons" – Thailand is at the top of its list of "Holiday Hazard Hotspots".

The release opens: "Thailand, Mexico and South Africa are all top exotic holiday destinations for today's travellers, but beware, today they are revealed as the most hazardous locations when it comes to illness, accidents and crime."

Thailand, according to the unrevealed statistics, tops the list for "theft", "gastric problems", "road traffic accidents" and "lost/misplaced belongings".

Road traffic accidents – that one's believable. Many foreigners seem to leave their brains in the hotel before mounting motor-bikes, wearing no helmet. Theft and gastric problems? The numbers, as already noted, are not revealed. How many people get ill after eating chillies for the first time? 0.005%? Or 50%? Norwich are not saying.

But here's the odd one: lost/misplaced items. These are not items that are stolen – those already have their own "theft" category. These, presumably, are along the lines of, "Officer, I've lost my Nokia Vertu. I know I had it yesterday, but I can't find it now. I want to report it lost."

The unseen statistics apparently show that Thailand somehow causes this kind of forgetfulness in greater amounts than any other country, Mexico coming in second.

A PR person for Norwich, alerted to the irritation that the release and subsequent stories have caused locally, told the *Gazette*, "The release is simply a factual review of our claims and we are happy with our data."

Actually, it is not quite as simple as that. Norwich injected opinion into their statement by quoting their Travel Product Manager Dawn McMullan, who said, "Our research shows that you need to take a little extra care in certain countries, and of course make sure you are adequately covered by travel insurance."

Do we need to italicize any of that?

– The Editor

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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.

Beware the blight of helicopters

With proper regulation, helicopter tours [around Phuket] could be a nice thing. However, we all know about Thailand and "proper regulations".

Even in Hawaii, where the US FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) rules, helicopter crashes, often fatal, are a regular event, and choppers have blighted beautiful areas such as the Na Pali Coast, which is similar to Phang Nga Bay.

You can hear helicopters from 8 am to sunset, destroying the natural tranquility of all those folks trying to enjoy Na Pali's stunning nature.

It became so bad in Hawaii that I resorted to shooting documentaries from fixed-wing airplanes with the doors removed and the Betacam strapped inside the plane.

I will never forget shooting my Emmy show – with the plane standing on its wingtip – looking straight down into oblivion and telling my cameraman, "If I fall out the door, save the Betacam."

That's how bad it got; we were willing to risk our lives just so we didn't use a helicopter.

John Gray
Phuket

Immigration Service deserve pat on back

Having just extended my permit to stay for about the 10th year in succession, I feel that I should comment on the new look and service at Phuket City Immigration offices.

The officers are dressed in bright, flower-pattern shirts and always seem to be smiling and

happy. Visitors are made welcome by a member of staff who quickly inquires what service you require.

Signs in English and in Thai inform you of the different time periods it takes to complete each process or service you may require.

Also listed on the walls are the procedure to follow if you are not happy with any service or if you need more help.

Each time that I went there, the officers completed the service well within the stated period. And it's getting faster: in the past it used to take 10-12 weeks to renew a one-year permit to stay based on a Non Immigrant B visa. This time it took just 26 days.

This same high standard of service is also apparent in the Chalong Immigration offices where I go to do my 90-day reports.

On one occasion I turned up during lunchtime. No problem, said the smiling officer. He took my passport, stamped my 90 days slip, wished me a good day and then carried on with his lunch.

Praise where praise is due. Thanks, Phuket Immigration, for making the paperwork easier to do and for helping us through the procedures required, with a cheerful, happy, smiling and helpful attitude. It makes all the difference.

Paul Spring
Chalong

Talking movies

I just read your editorial about the movie company. I was involved in three movies in Phuket, and in all of them the *farang* extras were paid union scale under either Actors' Equity, if the movie company was registered in the

UK, or the Screen Actors' Guild if it was an American production.

The locals, however, got paid local wages because they were covered under local Thai labor laws. That's not something any individual movie company gets to decide.

It's not just the Thai extras who get paid less than their *farang* counterparts. The Thai sound technician, prop man, makeup artist, and carpenter all get paid less than the *farang* technicians.

This also happens with technicians; different nationalities are hired under contracts drawn by different organized labor entities, and covered under different nations' labor laws.

Thai law says you cannot hire a *farang* to drive a movie crew vehicle, and this causes a lot of friction between the producers and the locals; a lot of the stars don't feel safe being transported in a limosine driven by a local, especially when the driver appears to have no experience, chronically shows up late or intoxicated or both, but still cannot be fired because he is the nephew of somebody important.

A bigger crime, on the two UK-based movies I worked on, was the fact that the menu for what's served in the company dining room is set in stone by Equity: roast beef with boiled potatoes on Monday, shepherd's pie on Tuesday, and so on.

If left to their own devices, most movie producers would feed the crew dog food. I once worked on a non-union feature film in New York where, to save money, the producer had the caterer rinse out used styrofoam coffee cups and re-use them.

Steve Rosse
USA

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

Highway robbers 'not from Kamala'

FIRST PERSON

Kamala does have motorcycle gangs. It has five of them, each gang consisting of around 20 members ranging in age from 11 to 18, and all of them hailing from this village.

They tend to gather around midnight to ride their motorcycles around as a group. This annoys people in the village because of the noise of their modified motorcycles and because they ride them dangerously.

Occasionally, they have fistfights – no weapons involved, that again I can guarantee – with other gangs, but highway robbery? No, absolutely not.

The violence is, of course, not condoned, and the village enjoys a good working relationship with the various community leaders, community volunteers and officers from Kamala Police Station, who are all part of the effort to stop the fighting.

The parents of the gang members have enough money to buy their children anything they want so there is no need for them to commit robberies.

The gangs are formed and congregate not to commit robberies, but because the same parents who are so generous with their money do not spend enough time with the children.

Their children are, in that respect, neglected.

We try to solve the problem of teenage gangs by taking a "softly, softly" approach. We try to change the minds of the gang members by showing them how their behavior is antisocial.

In recent months, the *Gazette* has reported a spate of day- and nighttime robberies along the Kalim-Kamala road. In the majority of incidents, the victims have been women riding motorcycles or driving cars alone. In two of the more serious incidents, a woman was dragged off her bike and nearly held at gunpoint and another woman had the rear window of her car smashed by a stone thrown by a motorbike gang.

Kathu Police Station Superintendent Pol Col Teerapol Thipjaroen believes the attacks are the work of a gang based in Kamala, and says he has assigned officers "to hunt them down."

But the *Kamnan* (village chief) of Kamala, Sanoe Poeykhao, 49, is certain that the crimes are not committed by teenagers from Kamala. Here, he explains why.

To give an example, a few days ago I saw some members of a motorcycle gang – all children of villagers here – hanging around. I invited them all for a coffee, and then called officers from Kamala Police Station – not so that the police could give them a hard time, but just for a general chat to improve relations between all parties.

I and others have taken this approach before. As well as fostering better relations, it's an opportunity for us to gauge their attitudes to a whole range of topics, especially their behavior and its impact on the community.

I can't order the gangs to

stop; many of them are legally adults, and those who are not – the ones still supposedly under parental control – are not being controlled.

I keep an eye on all of the teenagers here. They may be aggressive, but they are not involved in drugs or crime.

The gangs of bag-snatchers operating on the Kalim-Kamala road are not from our village.

I have learned from the police that, at the beginning of June, one gang was arrested.

The members of that gang came from Isarn, Trang and Nakhon Sri Thammarat. The



they return from shift work in hotels. We have told them that, if they are frightened to travel the road alone at night, they should call us and we will send someone to escort them until they are safely home.

I don't believe that the Kamala teenagers are involved in these robberies; their interest is in riding their motorcycles, sometimes very fast – although they never race along [the Patong-Kamala] road because they know that, with its hills and sharp bends, it is very dangerous.

When the gangs gather, they form a big group, but just cruise along. Most of the time they simply ride and stop some place to talk. They are friends, after all.

I can vouch for every single member of the gangs; I know their parents and their backgrounds. I have even taken videos of their behavior to show to their parents in an effort to make the parents take more interest in their kids and be more responsible for them.

I also do my best to arrange activities, such as teaching them soccer or cycling, to steer them away from being in a gang – although, if their real interest is in motorcycles, I don't want to deprive them of that completely.

This is a predominantly Muslim village, and we do follow the restrictions of no alcohol and no drugs – as well as prayer – to make the village a better, safer, place for everyone, be they Muslims or non-Muslims, Thais or foreigners.

members were not teenagers, but adults, and possibly professional criminals. Their crimes began after the tsunami.

I frequently point out to the Kamala motorcycle gangs that, when crimes are committed, people will assume that they are involved; they will be the first to fall under suspicion. I tell them this for their own good.

Other methods to prevent robberies are being used, such as setting up vehicle checkpoints on the Kalim-Kamala road, manned by community volunteers and police officers.

Quite a few Kamala residents use this road at night when

Charged for a paper bag at the hospital?

I recently went to Bangkok Hospital Phuket for treatment. The medical care was just fine, but when I was given the bill I noticed a 100-baht fee for "Packaged Medical Charge, Medical Service Charges".

I have a vague feeling that I was charged 100 baht for a paper bag to carry my medicine home in.

I would like to know what this charge is actually for.

Are they really selling paper bags for 100 baht each or is the charge for some extra service that I am unaware of?

Heinrich Mueller
Patong

Piyanooch Ananpakdee, Senior Marketing and Communications Manager of Bang-

kok Hospital Phuket, replies:

The Packaged Medical Charge, Medical Service Charges covers the cost of the comfortable, convenient services we offer, such as free coffee and the close personal care of our nurses.

All hospitals, both private and government, collect some kind of service fee.

The charge goes by a variety of names; some hospitals call it a "Service Fee" others a "Hospital fee", but it is basically the same thing.

In government hospitals it is called a "Medical Service Fee" and is charged at 80 baht.

All patients at Bangkok Hospital Phuket, whether Thai or foreign, are required to pay this fee."

Is it legal for farang to set up businesses on Thailand's beaches?

Can foreigners work on the beach renting water sport equipment or giving surfing lessons?

On one beach I met a foreigner who brings out his equipment around 9 am every day.

He told me he does not need any kind of permit to do this because he has lived in Phuket a long time and does it every year.

If I can rent a space, can I do this kind of work too, or do I need some sort of permit?

If so, where do I get one and what would I pay in taxes if

I made, say, 50,000 baht a month?

Steve Jones
Karon

Penchan Boonhok, Chief of the Phuket Provincial Employment Service Office's Employment Support Department, replies:

Any foreigner wishing to set up and work at a business on the beach renting out water sports

equipment or giving surfing lessons must first register a Thai company for this purpose, and then get a work permit.

The Gazette notes:

Taxes would depend on the salary Mr Jones received from his company and on the profit that the company made over the course of a financial year.

Issues & ANSWERS

Want to know how to get something done? Want to pitch an idea to Phuket's authorities? Submit your queries or suggestions to us and we'll ask the appropriate people to respond.

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

War on the home front

Throughout the tumultuous centuries of humanity's existence on this planet, our species has taken part in some long-running, passionate, cruel and very bloody wars.

There was the World War, parts I and II, hundreds of civil wars, the Gulf War (parts I and II), the Wars of the Roses, the Thirty Years War, the Hundred Years War... I think you catch my drift. Conflict has long been an integral element of human nature.

But there is one conflict in particular that has continued, unresolved, sometimes subtle, sometimes not, but no less serious than all the others, for hundreds or thousands of years. So long, in fact, that it has become an expected and accepted part of life.

No, I'm not referring to the constant conflict between men and women – or boys and girls, depending on your age – that is an entirely different issue.

The battle I am talking about is a gruesome, devious, exhausting and grim affair, employing more originality and ingenuity than it took to devise the Trojan horse or the stealth bomber.

It is, of course, the War of the Generations, or more specifically, the War of the Teenagers and Parents.

You may not see the conflict between hormonal adolescents and loving parents, AKA prison wardens (the title varies

depending upon our mood), as a sensitive or important issue, but you'd be wrong.

Granted, it's not your typical war; we don't use grenades or bombs or machine guns – well, not usually. Our weapons are a bit less fatal, but still powerful nonetheless.

The teenage armory includes the following:

- High-tech weaponry: eardrum exploding, head-banging music to deafen, annoy, provoke and demoralize the enemy.

- Revolt, also known as blatant disobedience.

- Guerrilla tactics, specifically sneaking out of the house (a veritable Fort Knox).

- Propaganda: an imaginative variety of lies, fabrications, misinformation and disinformation that surprisingly few parents seem able to unravel. For example, "I'm just going round to Sarah's house to do some homework" actually means "I'm going with Sarah to a really awesome unsupervised party at Tiffany's".

- Classic violence: the simple, very effective maneuver labeled, "Storm off and slam door with all your might."

These are all useful weapons, and despite their frequent deployment, they are still very effective against our mature adversaries. But – let's give credit where it's due – the other side have some equally nasty, equally effective tricks up their sleeves.

- Guilt: that whole Oscar-



Youth 'n ASIA

By Amy Van de Castele

nomination-worthy act of pained disappointment at our latest act of flagrant disobedience.

- The prisoner of war ploy, whereby we are banished to our rooms to "ponder the consequences" of our actions. Note to parents: not much pondering actually takes place; it's usually more along the lines of sulking, stewing, muttering curses and turning on that angry rock music. This is also normally when we employ the vicious door slam.

- Then there is the cruelest adult weapon of them all, equal in its perfidy to the raids conducted by navies in war on the enemy's food convoys. I'm referring to – horrors! – the withholding of allowances. Or, if you're lucky enough to have one, the confiscation of your ATM card.

This is the most terrible blow to teenagers because we have reached that painful stage in life when we desperately need money but are often unable – or just too lazy – to actually go out and earn it ourselves.

By taking away our supply of baht, adults not only deprive us of our daily bread, but also cruelly ram home a reminder of our dependence on them to provide us with everything we need to make it through the tribulations of adolescent life.

It's a powerful weapon and usually results in immediate surrender by the teenager.

But don't think that this is permanent defeat nor that we have given up the good fight. In fact, surrender has two big advantages for us: it puts us temporarily back in our parents' good books, thereby reinstating the supply of crucial cash, and it lulls the enemy into a sense of false security. They believe they have won, even if it's only for the time being. You'll win the battle, we'll win the war.

In fact, behind the teenager's simpering apologetic grin, the arsenal of adolescent weapons is being sharpened and polished, ready to be wheeled into action once again as we continue to strive for later nights, less homework and more adventure.

The loud, incomprehensible music – with the common themes of angst, death and warfare – will be more earth-shattering than ever, the door-slams will be earth-

quake-inducing and the fabrications even more imaginative ("I'm doing an economics case study on Patong, so I need to go there every night this week to, ahem, visit the bars and clubs and collect, er, economic, um, data, ahem...")

We may even unleash the ultimate adolescent weapon, one that works unfailingly, and which has been a rigidly guarded secret – up to now.

Yes, at the risk of possible execution by my own side on a charge of treason, I'm revealing the ultimate teenage defense.

It's Affection. Adults may snicker at this, but affection is a highly effective way to win battles, because it incorporates that crucial element of surprise.

Parents are so accustomed to our moods, our surly glances, our screams of "I hate you!" and, of course, the door-slaming, that when we paste pretty smiles on our pimpled faces and start behaving like extras in a Hallmark made-for-TV movie, they are usually so taken aback that they instantly melt and give us pretty much anything we ask for.

Our opponents may win a few battles with cash strangulation, the guilt trip or by making prisoners of war of us, but they will never win the war because teenagers can always resort to affection to turn the tables and win one more battle.

It's true what they say: a smile and a little flattery really do go a long way.

PHUKET DIARY

of coming events

To July 26: 14th Annual Phuket Flower Show.

The 14th Annual Phuket Flower Show is currently on at Saphan Hin.

The show includes exhibitions of flowers, house plants and vegetables; a flower contest; and

stalls selling house plants, flowers, OTOP goods and agricultural products.

The show is open every day from 8:30 am until 10:30 pm. For more information contact the PPAO at Tel: 076-216565 or 076-221602.

July 29 to August 2: Halal Food, Hilal Town Festival.

The Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) will hold its second "Halal Food, Hilal Town" festival at the Thalang Chanasuk Memorial Field in Tambon Thepkasattri.

The event, organized jointly with the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Region 4 office, is intended as a celebration of the peaceful coexistence between Phuket's Buddhist and Muslim communities.

The highlight of the show will be nightly performances.

From July 29 to 31 there will be a dramatic presentation of the story of Princess Mahsuri,

a semi-legendary princess from Kamala.

On August 2 and 3 there will be fashion shows featuring Muslim apparel worn by some 300 volunteer models.

All performances are open to the public free of charge.

Other events will include a Quran reading competition, a turtle dove singing competition, display and sale of Muslim food and garments and many other cultural activities.

For more information contact the *OrBorJor* Public Relations Office at Tel: 01-5379899.

July 30: Sound Waves Sunday Session.

The island's two best party venues have teamed up for the summer.

Laem Singh's Sound Waves Crew have moved to Watermark for the season, kicking phat tunes, progressive, funky & happy house with a feel-good vibe.

Undoubtedly the best DJs around, a must for those in search of good dance music. Decks off at 10pm.

A la carte brunch runs every Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. Amazing promos on Moët et

Chandon Champagne: 2,995B. So come early for brunch.

August 13: Rassada Race Day.

Tambon Rassada's race day will consist of a half-marathon, a 10.5-kilometer race and a 4-km fun run, with entrants competing in male and female categories.

Entry fees are 250 baht for the half-marathon, 200 baht for the mini-marathon and 150 baht for the fun run.

All races will start and finish at Rassada Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) offices on Rassadanusorn Rd. The opening ceremony will be at 5:30 am and the races will start at 6 am.

Competitors should arrive early in order to allow time for signing-in.

Registration can be made at the Rassada *OrBorTor* Educational Affairs office until August 10.

Thai applicants must bring their ID card and a copy of their house registration; foreigners may register by presenting a passport.

For more information, call Tel: 076-213151, extension 137.

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In The Stars by Isla Star

LEO (July 24-August 22): Even if it's raining cats and dogs, you won't be put off your stride. Your tenacity is particularly strong this week and you should make the most of this. You may already be exhausted by next Friday, but if you're coming of age, a birthday party will add some sparkle to your life. If you wish to woo a certain someone, you should think of an unusual place to set a seductive scene.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): A project that seemed unfeasible suddenly takes on realistic appeal when someone born under the sign of Scorpio opens your eyes to new possibilities. If you can get this one off the ground by the end of next month, there's a strong likelihood of it being more lucrative than you could possibly dream. Aquarius would like to put a damper on your positive mood this weekend. The number 7 can bring good luck on Thursday.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): The flip-flop is on the other foot this weekend, but you should avoid pointing this fact out. Saving face should be your main aim until the end of July. You may have the tendency to say the wrong thing at the wrong time, so think before you speak. A long-distance intimate relationship is in need of attention; the other party feels unsure about where they stand. The color beige can help to calm you down.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): A breath of fresh air blows in new work opportunities. If you have been looking for ways to diversify you will know exactly in which direction to move. If you've been depressed about the lack of romance in your life, Aries is about to cheer you up. Finances are looking a little rocky until the end of this month, but August should see an improvement. Wear an amethyst stone to attract good luck.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): If you think you can't afford a holiday you are advised to see if friends in other places would like a visit from you. You should try to take even a modest break sometime soon as the month of August promises to bring even more demands on your energy than July has made. A surprise development on Tuesday could lead to a change of address. The color royal blue will encourage constructive thinking.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): You can be forgiven for thinking that the future is uncertain. No amount of gazing into a crystal ball will help to clarify matters; all you can do is go with the flow. A work challenge provides distraction and, if you do a good job, could lead to better things. Take a leaf out of Virgo's book where romance is concerned. Chasing butterflies will bring no lasting satisfaction.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Lack of confidence isn't usually a problem for you. This week, however, finds you in an insecure mood. You are right to doubt the wisdom of a recent career move, but you've set sail and must find a way to make this voyage successful. Scorpio is starting to find you attractive. The sting in this particular person's tail will certainly keep you on your toes.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): You will be edgy this week. As July comes to an end, unresolved personal matters take up much of your energy. If you do what you know to be right, there can be positive closure. At work, progress will be fast if you allow reliable colleagues more control. Leo pays you compliments this weekend.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): Pieces of a puzzle fall into place and you may find you were right all along. With this matter taken care of, you now have time on your hands and should find productive ways to use it. Home improvements are well-starred; go shopping with a creative Taurean to get advice. If you are discontent with your present living situation you will have good luck house-hunting this weekend.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): The planets will make a serious attempt to show you just how much you are capable of this week. A wave of activity is about to sweep over you and you will be more than ready for a vacation next month. Gemini has good news to brighten an otherwise mundane Sunday. Appointments with bureaucracy are best scheduled for mid-week; after Thursday, communication breakdowns could cause you to see red.

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): Hard work brings big benefits for you during the last days of July. Money owed to you should also be paid, although you may need to remind someone of their liability. You should soon be in a position to diversify your work interests; choose a creative outlet to bring more satisfaction. Both Aries and Libra are about to show their romantic interest; don't play with fire by stringing both along. The number 9 is lucky on Thursday.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): If you are pondering whether to change career you will receive a clear sign that will help you decide. You may be hurt to find that your loyalty has been misplaced. In romance, Capricorn has got your number and intends to use it soon. If you are already settled down, you will be considering ways to feather your nest more cozily. Sunday is the best bargain-hunting day.

Walking under undies is not the done thing

Hi Momma Duck,

This morning as I went out to collect my dried laundry from the balcony, I found that my Thai wife had blocked my access to the balcony by hanging her underwear from a plastic ring just outside the doorway. Rather than complain and start an argument, I simply moved the underwear ring and suspended it from the ceiling above the doorway so that I (and anyone else wanting to go outside) could simply pass beneath it. I guess the effect was somewhat like mistletoe, except that it was made up of bras and undies, not leaves.

Whatever the case, my wife was quick to point out my lack of sensitivity to Thai culture by having done this.

She said it is bad luck for Thais to "pass under" another person's laundry. Doing so could also drain the protective energy from any amulets one might be wearing, she said.

I have been here a long time without ever having heard of this one. I suspect that she might just be making it up just to "score a point", much in the same way I make up words when playing Scrabble if I think my opponents won't challenge them.

Is this a real Thai superstition or just a sneaky bluff?

Stephen, Samkong

Dear Stephen,

Sorry, but you lose this one. It is indeed a strong Thai superstition. Like many countries in Asia, Thais believe that the soul or spirit rests in the head or upper body regions.

Therefore, from the waist down to the feet is considered a lower part of the body, in both spiritual and physical terms.

Thus, we not only avoid elevating the lower regions above the head, but also things associated with the lower body, includ-



Momma DUCK

By Wanida Hongyok
momma@phuketgazette.net

Underwear, especially if it belongs to a woman, is believed to have a very negative influence on any man unfortunate enough to walk under it...

ing undies and socks. Other practical manifestations of belief in this superstition include never using our feet to point at things, never putting our feet up on a coffee

table and never stepping over people who are lying on the ground. Such actions are all considered very impolite.

In a similar manner, if you are wearing a Buddhist amulet around your neck and it is subjected to a "bad" object being above it, we believe it is not only disrespectful but could also drain the protective energy from any amulets that you might be wearing.

Another way of viewing it is that the amulet will be "less sacred" or the spirit associated with will run away. Amulets generally represent some aspect of the Lord Buddha, which is why they often bear images of revered monks.

Amulets are thought not only to convey some level of personal protection, but also to afford the wearer with influence over others.

We also believe other people will show compassion to people who wear amulets. Thai people are very serious about this. As an amulet is sacred and highly respected, it should not be subjected to a lower part of the body.

There is also a gender aspect to this superstition. Underwear, especially that belonging to a woman, is believed to have a very negative influence on any man unfortunate enough to walk under it. The small plastic laundry drying ring you describe is very common. It should be hung from a door or the lower bar of a drying rack, so that nobody can walk under it. I love the European tradition of walking under mistletoe and receiving kisses, but placing underwear in such a position will not win you any smooches in Thailand.

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Pipe-dreams coming true

IT ISSUES

By John Seebach

Following techno trends is one of my favorite IT pastimes. I may sound a bit of a geek when I say that, but I really do like taking a few hours a week just to read about the latest technology trends. This week I would like to share some of my discoveries, made while hunting around the Internet.

As a media junkie, I'm already excited about what the new "Media Center" laptops offer. These handy little devices are of the larger laptop breed and a bit too big to be lugging around with you. However, my ideal setup is a portable system that can store and play back videos, TV programs, movies, music and photos – all at the press of a button on a remote control that also controls my TV, stereo and DVD player.

If I were living in the States, my laptop could also double as a TiVo-style recording device. In case you don't know what TiVo is, it's basically digital TV that allows you to pause, rewind and record a live TV broadcast and even interact with other TiVo users. But what's coming down the line is what's really exciting.

TV tuners and other audio-visual (AV) features in laptops tend to come in models that are larger than usual, usually featuring a 15.4-inch to 17-inch wide screen. If you're a frequent traveler, a laptop like this may not be for you, but designs are becoming thinner and lighter as Media Center PCs evolve, and it cannot be long before these powerful AV features appear in a two-kilo ultra-portable laptop.

Imagine watching a high-definition (HD) video on your laptop. Although HD is the latest in video recording media, it's not a pipe dream, and it won't be long before you see portables touting higher resolutions rivaling even the most expensive Plasma and LCD big-screen TVs.

I've seen Media Center PCs that can record HD content using wireless HD tuners, despite

the limited number of HD broadcast channels.

Toshiba is already integrating HD DVD drives into its Qosmio laptops, currently being sold in Japan. So far, Toshiba are offering HD DVD readers only, but it will not be long before they have burners.

Similarly, Sony recently announced plans to put Blu-ray drives into its PCs. Blu-ray discs are currently competing with HD as the next-generation of high-capacity discs, and early reports claimed they could hold up to about 25 Gigabytes of data apiece.

Look for these manufacturers to include HDMI (HD Multimedia Interface) ports as well, so that home-theater enthusiasts can connect their laptops to larger LCD or Plasma displays.

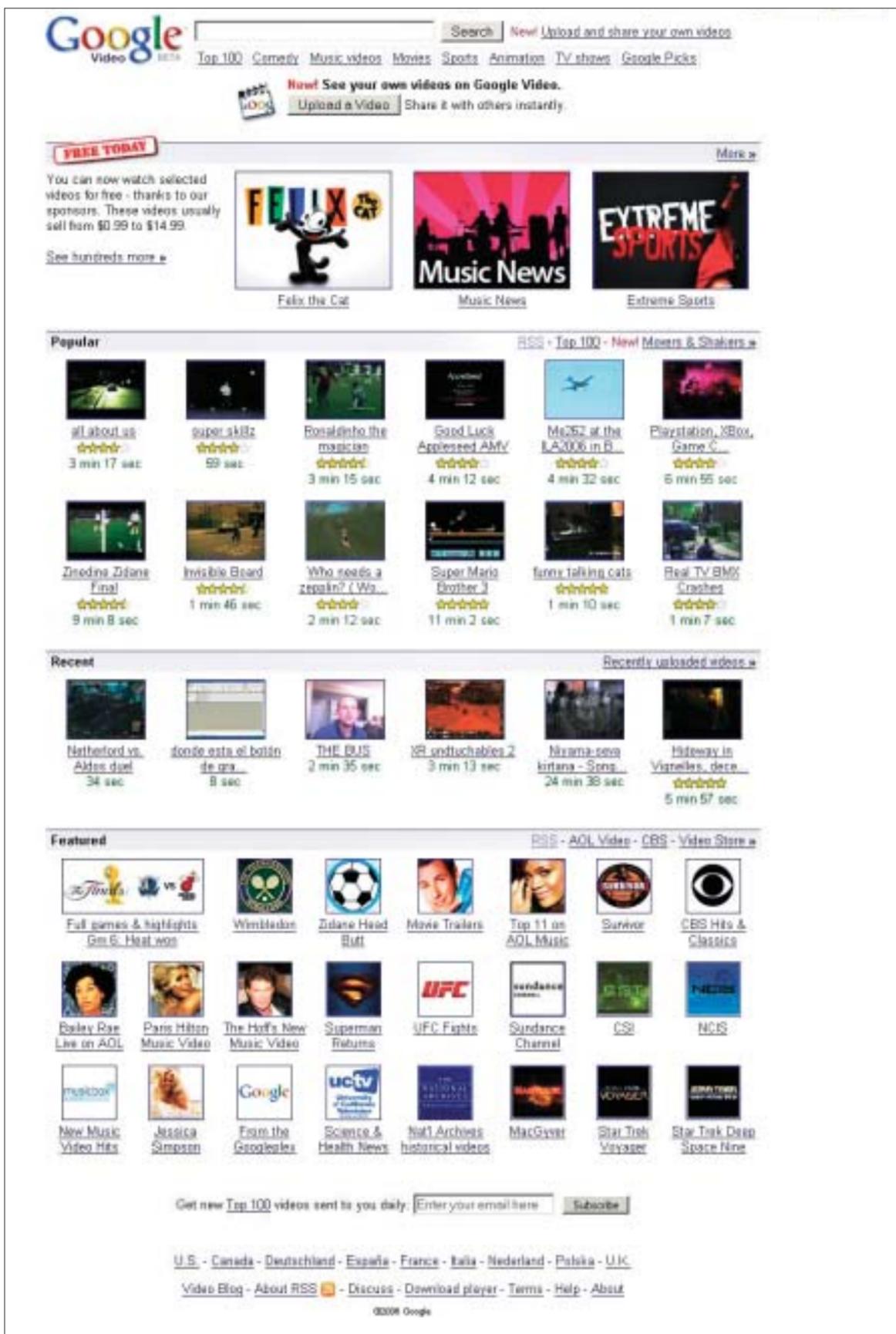
I'm a bit disappointed, though, about Intel's High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection (HDCP), which is slowing down the whole process and limiting availability of both HD content, and HD DVD and Blu-ray drives in notebooks.

Vendors are still trying to figure out how to protect HD content from piracy.

Once they feel comfortable they have managed this – which is only a matter of time – you'll be able to buy notebooks with satellite/cable boxes or even CableCard slots built into the laptop, which you then use to watch HBO and ESPN in HD delivered wirelessly to your laptop.

Once this kicks in, the way we watch TV and surf the Web will have changed forever – and for the better.

GOOGLE-EYED: Google just



Free access to high-quality online video, brought to you by the guys and gals at Google.

keeps getting better and better. Now, Google has upgraded its online video service (video.google.com) to offer free access to high-quality content, among other things.

They can do this via the simple ad-supported business model whereby sponsors pay for advertising space on the screen.

They have just launched a beta version of their new "sponsored video" service, which makes available a variety of videos that are paid for by companies such as HP. The free content ranges from music videos to cartoon shows, interviews and movies.

In order to offer the content for free, Google has stayed with its model of non-invasive, ad-sponsored site design instead of pop-up ads.

The sponsors post links to their websites as well as to com-

mercials they've uploaded onto the Google Video service.

One good feature is that users can rate and post comments about each video, turning each viewer into a potential movie critic.

Videos can be scored on a five-star scale, enabling users to offer personal input, engage in discussions with other users, and see which videos are rated most highly.

Viewers can also label the clips. Google say that the label feature was added so that viewers could associate a video with a specific word or phrase to make it easier for it to be found through searches later.

Even more cool, Google has added a "Share this Video" feature, which lets users send their own videos to friends and family, or post them to different websites. With just a few clicks, your

current favorite home video can be loaded onto the most popular blog sites, such as Blogger and MySpace.

If you read my article a few months ago, in which I talked about Pod Casting, this is all part of this new amazing trend whereby, for the price of an Internet connection, a web cam and some free software, you can produce your own videos.

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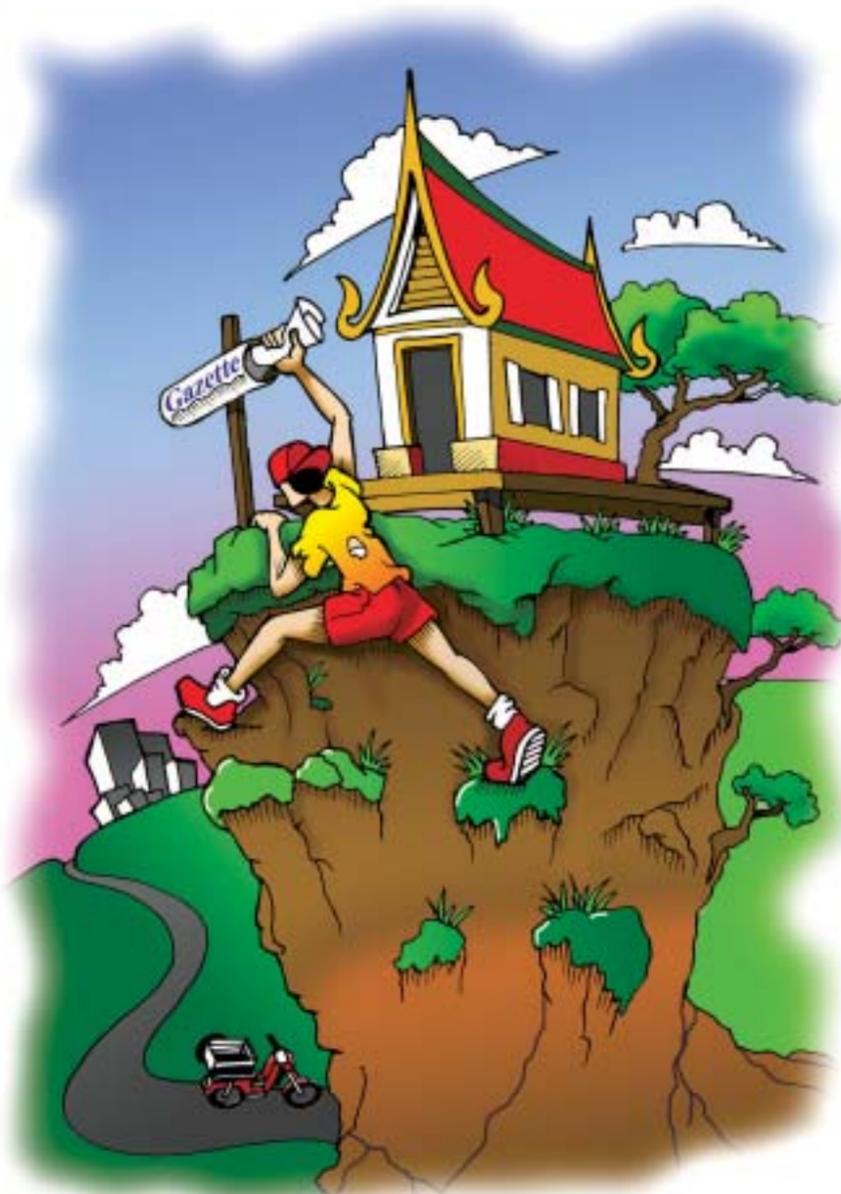
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JAPAN is back on track

The world's second largest economy, Japan, appears to have settled on to a growth track. Deflation has been replaced by modest inflation, although increases in energy and commodity prices are probably the main factors causing this change.

Corporate investment spending is running at high levels. The recent Tankan survey – the Short-Period Economy Observation, which is conducted by the central bank, the Bank of Japan (BoJ) – reveals that overall confidence is running high among the thousands of companies polled.

The BoJ has increased its estimate for economic growth to 2.1% for the financial year that ends March 31, 2007.

This is not an economic boom, but it still reflects growth at reasonable levels for a developed economy.

The BoJ appears keen to start raising interest rates from its current zero base, although the increases will be very modest as there is no wish to cause economic growth to stall, and inflationary pressures are very muted. In

addition, the Japanese Ministry of Finance is still very reluctant to see any increase in interest rates.

The authority of BoJ Governor Toshihiko Fukui has dropped recently due to his personal involvement in a company that faced an accounting scandal and the arrest of its CEO.

This was a situation where the governor was merely a share-

holder in a company, with no evidence whatsoever of his personal wrongdoing. However, the fact he was a shareholder has led to calls in parliament for his resignation. Japanese central bankers are expected to set exemplary standards.

In the US, the situation is far more difficult to assess. Ben Bernanke, new Chairman of the Board of Governors of the US Federal Reserve – its central bank – is still coming to terms with dealing with the media. Central bankers find that their every word is analyzed in great detail and they have to be extremely careful in their statements.

The Federal Reserve raised interest rates by 0.25% to 5.25% in late June, with another meeting on the issue scheduled for early August.

At the last meeting, the Fed, though raising interest rates, did note that the pace of economic growth appeared to be slowing. Subsequent job creation figures



Surrounded by members of parliament, German Chancellor Angela Merkel votes for changes to tax laws on June 29. Photo by EPA/Steffen Kugler

If you thought George W Bush was not popular in the US, take a look at Angela Merkel in Germany



MONEY TALKS

By Richard Watson

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for June were lower than anticipated, continuing a trend that has been in evidence for some months.

This trend has foreign-exchange markets turning against the US dollar, as lower US economic growth decreases the appetite for foreigners to hold US assets.

There is also concern that Mr Bernanke may make the mistake of raising interest rates too far in an already-slipping economy. Economic historians are already comparing the the situation with the experience of former Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan, who aggressively raised interest rates in 1987, leading to the crash

or “adjustment” on October 19, 1987, now known in financial circles as Black Monday.

Another camp of economists feels that the current situation is more similar to 1985 and 1995, when a rise in interest rates by the Fed led to a temporary slowdown followed by a substantial leap in stock market prices.

At this stage it is very difficult to assess which view is correct. Two added factors in the current scenario are also important. First, oil prices are very high and many believe they will rise further.

In addition, many states in the US have seen a residential housing price boom, which appears to have peaked already. US consumers, who account for two-thirds of the total US economy, may start to falter. Consumer savings are actually into negative figures.

Any comparison with 1987 stock markets is somewhat erroneous, because the market nine years ago was very expensive and had just enjoyed a substantial rise in prices before it crashed.

Today, prices are generally reasonable and the market has been hesitant for some time.

In Germany, the world's third-largest economy, the situation is again completely different. Germany has suffered years of either low growth or outright re-

cession. It was hoped that, under the new leadership of Chancellor Angela Merkel, Germany would see market-friendly reforms that would finally place the country on a track to secure, sustainable economic growth.

Instead, Chancellor Merkel and her grand coalition have increased the amount that employers must contribute to social security costs for every employee and have increased maximum marginal income tax rates to 45%.

They also intend to raise VAT rates by 3% in January 2007. Germany is running consistent budget deficits in excess of the 3% maximum agreed to in the EU stability pact. Taken all together, these are not positive factors for German economic growth.

Perhaps cuts to government spending would have been the better alternative. One survey showed that, even among Chancellor Merkel's supporters, 74% are against her policies. And you thought George W Bush was unpopular!

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: 01-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th

ON THE MOVE

Australian **Voytek Klasicki** has been appointed General Manager of the Central Krabi Bay Resort, near Ao Nang in Krabi.

He has more than 22 years' experience in hotel management and has worked as a general manager in various countries including Britain, Australia, India and Thailand.

Before joining the Central Krabi Bay Resort, he was general manager in India of Royal Management Services, part of resort and timeshare company Royal Resorts, and then hotel manager of the Regent Cha'am Beach Resort for two years.



Somlerk Noinartsik, 51, from Bangkok, has been appointed to the post of Project Manager of Sculpture and Architecture with Sivapatt Construction Co.

He holds a diploma in sculpture and artistic work from the Accademia Belle' arte Fome Italia Decorazione, in Italy, and an art diploma from Poh-Chang College of Art & Crafts.

Before coming to Phuket he worked in Bangkok with TV program and movie maker Kantana Co for five years and also ran his own business.



Sukwat Rungklan, 42, from Bangkok, has been appointed Sales and Marketing Manager of the Rungravee property project, next to Phuket International Airport.

K. Sukwat holds an MBA from La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, and a business management degree from Ramkhamhaeng University.

He worked as Resident Manager of the Similana Resort in Khao Lak for three years before moving to Phuket.



Stars' chopper pilot plans Phuket service

By Jenjira Ruengjarus & Chris Husted

PHUKET: The arrival of the island's second helicopter tour company took another step toward realization on July 13 when Australian Harry Kerylidis met with Phuket Governor Udomsak Uswarangkura to solicit his support to launch Phuket Heli-Tours.

"The Governor is positive and has said many good things [about the idea]," Mr Kerylidis said after the meeting. "With his approval and his direction, we are hoping to start this business within the next three or four months," Mr Kerylidis said.

"If the Governor gives his support, then we know we are moving in the right direction and that this will be good for the island," he added.

Behind the new helicopter service is Capt Bob Pagett, a pilot of 15 years' experience who spent eight of those years operating Heli Adventures in Cairns, North Queensland, Australia.

"We were a premier air service, flying people out to the Great Barrier Reef and over the Daintree and other rainforest areas. We also ran two helicopters from the five-star Sheraton Mirage at Port Douglas," Capt Pagett told the *Gazette*.

His charters included being involved in the filming of movies such as *The Thin Red Line* and *Paradise Island*, shot on location in north Queensland, and ferrying celebrities including Nick Nolte, Sean Penn, Madonna and Claudia Schiffer. "We gave clients a service that they could not get anywhere else," he said.

Capt Pagett believes Phuket is ripe for a five-star helitour service. "Phuket tourism is being heavily marketed in Australia, and around the world. With a forecast growth of 17.5% over the next five years, Phuket is taking off in a really big way, and we need to be there," he said.

Indeed, Capt Pagett believes the demand is already here. "I have spoken with the Hilton [Arcadia Phuket] GM and he said he receives an inquiry a week from wealthy guests about tak-

ing a tour by air, and we've had inquiries from developers building an estate with a helipad, asking us if we're interested in transferring the future owners, say from the airport to the estate.

"Sure", I said. "We're basically an air transport service,"

Another example of the type of premier tour Capt Pagett says he is looking to bring to Phuket is the Flights of Fantasy tour he offered in Australia, whereby guests – often honeymooners – were flown to a deserted island off the Great Barrier Reef and left to their own devices for the day, with a Champagne picnic for company.

In addition to the service offered, the helicopters themselves need to be first-rate, Capt Pagett said. Phuket Heli-Tours is looking at bringing two new Bell helicopters, each costing about 30 million baht.

"The Bell 407 is a top-of-the-line helicopter that can seat six passengers – the seventh is the pilot. It is air-conditioned, has pop-out floats, it is very quiet [for a helicopter] and cruises at 145 knots [about 270 kmh]," he said.

Capt Pagett said he was well aware of the environmental impact of operating helicopter tours to secluded areas of natural beauty. "We operated five helicopters in World Heritage areas such as Daintree and other rainforest areas where there are endangered species, such as the cassowary.

"So we will deviate our flight paths, which might mean simply flying at a higher altitude, so that we do not disturb them, or at least minimize how much they disturb them," he said.

As for flying over the Phuket, he said, "We have long maintained a policy of 'flying neighborly'; we take into consideration people on the ground and do our best to leave a very low noise footprint. The last thing people want is a helicopter flying overhead making an absolute racket."

In addition, the helicopters will be available for emergency rescue if needed.

The one thing holding up the plan at present is money; Phuket

Heli-Tours needs more investment if it is to take off.

"I have been working on putting a helicopter on Phuket for five years," said Capt Pagett.

"Our business plan requires AUD5 million [145 million baht]." One investor in Australia has agreed to put in AUD500,000, leaving a further AUD4.5 million to be found.

He added that he expected

the company, once up and running, to recover the initial investment within five years at the most.

The pilots, Capt Pagett said, will come at first mostly from Australia, "mainly because of language ability to make passengers feel more comfortable.

"I will be Chief Pilot doing 95% of the flying for the initial period, but as the business devel-

ops we will be looking for a Thai pilot, and further down the line looking to provide pilot scholarships to teach."

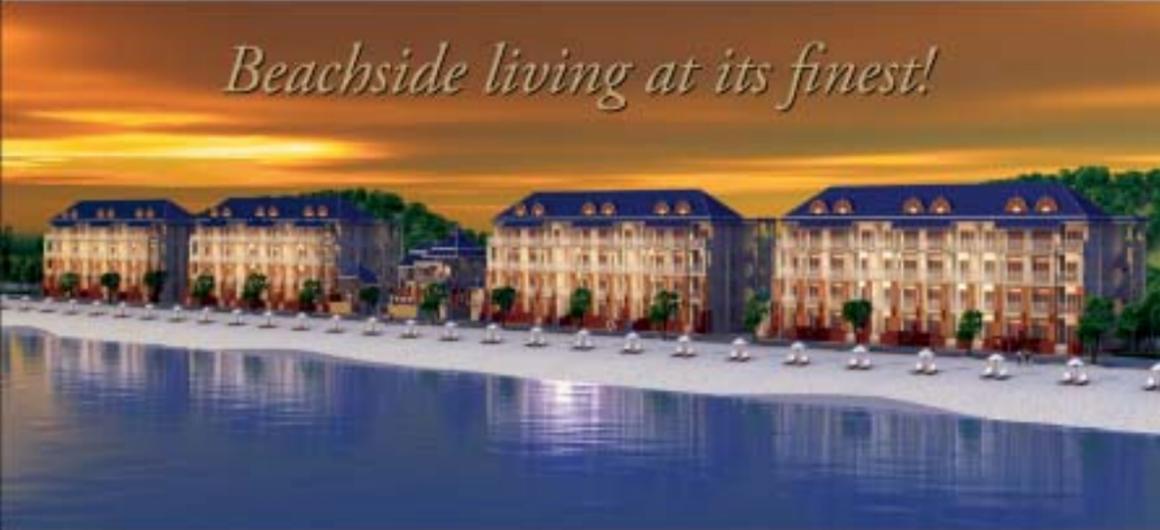
Gov Udomsak said, "This service will raise Phuket's profile and add another aspect to Phuket's tourism, especially for rich tourists."

But, he added, "I have to read the business plan in greater detail first."



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Madcap adventures deep down in the ocean

In 2003, Briton Mark Ellyatt put Phuket on the map as a technical diving destination by breaking the world record for the deepest solo scuba dive, reaching a staggering depth of 313 meters below the surface in waters four hours off Patong.

He has now written a highly entertaining book, *Ocean Gladiator – Battles Beneath the Ocean*, recounting his humorous and dangerous adventures leading up to that point – and what his life has been like since.

The book will appeal to divers and non-divers alike. It is a quick, easy read that includes humorous travel tales from locations ranging from Australia to Beirut, with many in-depth, strange and hectic adventures in Phuket and Pattaya.

Phuket residents will no doubt get a laugh at Mark's description of his first night in Phuket, after the airport taxi dropped him off in the middle of the Royal Paradise area popular with gay tourists.

I was laughing before I even got to the first chapter. The tone of the book is set in the foreword, which contains the comment, "Some names of people and places have been altered to protect certain sensitive dispositions".

Mark has a good sense of humor and doesn't hesitate to make light of his own mistakes.

He writes candidly about the global dive industry, one section reading like the "true confessions" of a dive instructor who is not afraid to have his PADI license revoked.

It should also be mentioned that he gives due credit to the boat crew and safety divers who helped him with his deep dives off Phuket.

The book starts with Mark's description of his first open-water course. With an inexperienced

instructor, it turned out to be partially his first solo dive – and was followed by one of the many bouts of decompression sickness he has suffered over the years.

He tells of his dive career, climbing the PADI ladder, doing a divemaster course while living in a dilapidated mobile home on the not-so-pristine shores of a brick quarry in the UK.

Eventually it was wreck diving that piqued his interest in deep diving and led to his discovery of the final resting place *HMS Victoria* off Beirut, Lebanon, in 2004.

Although not always popular in Phuket because of his extreme diving and his unrestrained opinions, Mark has diving experiences under his belt that certainly command respect.

He recounts many shipwreck dives to depths of more than 100 meters, in terrible conditions, at the bottom of the English Channel. Such freezing conditions would make any Phuket diver more grateful

for the lukewarm water and gentle currents in the Similans after a full moon.

In addition to the wreck dives, he also writes of harrowing adventures in caves and mine shafts, adding further twists and turns to this compelling read.

Mark's insatiable appetite for the deep caused him to volunteer as a guinea pig for many deep diving planners whose strategies had never been tested by

OCEAN GLADIATOR



BATTLES BENEATH THE OCEAN
MARK ELLYATT

any diver. One infamous episode came in February 2003, when a 260-meter dive some 60 kilometers from Phuket resulted in his needing a dozen lengthy sessions in the recompression chamber.

Mark had to wait months before he could dive again and then started teaching technical diving courses until he felt prepared and ready to go once more for the world record.

It is fair to say that in many instances in the book he sheds his cocky persona, disclosing the errors of judgment and mistakes that almost cost him his life.

He is also able to laugh at himself – take the time, for example, when he jumped heroically into water full of cherry fizzy drink, thinking it was blood.

"I hadn't heard of any shark attacks in the area, so [I] jumped into the water ... I noticed a sweet

smell as I swam into the red water. The water tasted like melon-flavored bubblegum and my skin was turning red ... I headed back to shore and saw some of the other dive guides laughing their heads off..."

Other humorous stories include a romantic interlude underwater, unaware of a glass-bottom boat cruising above, and his first days in Pattaya, Samui, Koh Tao and Phuket.

Of arriving on Koh Tao, Mark writes, "... lots of young people colorfully dressed, complete with dreadlocks and knitted knapsacks. I wore jeans and a cotton long-sleeved shirt... I rummaged in my suitcase for my Unicef T-shirt to add some much needed camouflage."

Although the book should come with a disclaimer reading "Kids, don't try this at home", there are otherwise few flaws with this funny yet highly informative narrative.

I am not an "extreme" diver, but I did enjoy reading about the many aspects of technical diving and the stresses its practitioners must endure.

The combination of humor and adventure makes this book recommended reading. Not only was it better than I expected, but the dry wit and cynical tone bring the subject of technical diving to life, keeping it from being just that – too technical.

Ocean Gladiator will be available from local dive shops including Scuba Cat, next to Starbucks in Patong. For more information or to order the book over the Internet, visit Mark Ellyatt's website at www.inspired-training.com.



Vice-Governor Niran Kalayanamit opened the golf fair – and then tried out the equipment on offer.

Locchi wins Golf Fair Challenge

KATHU: Alex Locchi of Italy won the Phuket Golf Fair Golf Challenge 2006 on July 16 at the Phuket Country Club, scoring a gross tally of 73 in two rounds.

Thailand's Thongchai Suka-wuttikul won the Low Net prize for Flight A with his score of 68 off a handicap of 7.

The one-day event followed two days of exhibitions and demonstrations of state-of-the-art golf technology by leading manufacturers including Acushnet, Kasco, Nike, TaylorMade and Cobra as part of the 2nd Annual Phuket Golf Fair.

The event, opened by Phuket Vice-Governor Niran Kalayanamit, attracted 144 professional golfers, with a strong turnout from pros based in Japan, South Korea and Hong Kong. Turnout by Thai pros was somewhat smaller than expected, however.

PCC Clubhouse Manager Songsak Hongyok told the *Gazette* that next year's event would aim to expose more golfers, especially junior golfers, to the world of professional golfing.



By Sylvie Yaffe

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PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

Three teams tied at the top

PATONG: Despite the two-day bar closure for the Buddhist holy days on July 10 and 11, all games but one were played by week's end; the Didi's vs Dog's Bollocks match will be played later, by mutual agreement, and the score will be included in the next issue.

At Jungle Juice, Amigos' bartender Lek had the hot hand, leading his team to a 6-3 win over Jungle Juice with a 102 close (T20, 20, x11), then flipping in a 140 for good measure to take the high score.

At their swanky digs on Soi Saensabai, TaiLife managed to pull a team together, but were no match for Piccadilly, losing 7-2 and then conceding the beer leg as well.

Send reports of high scores, winning darts and "new talent" to: darts@phuketgazette.net

July 25 matchups: Queen Mary v Amigos; Dog's Bollocks v Piccadilly; Valhalla v OffShore; Footrot Flats v Jungle Juice; Shakers v Coyote Bar; Didi's v TaiLife (home team first).

Gumballers of the sea heading for Phuket

PHUKET: The island may still be waiting for the F1 boat races to come but, in the meantime, waterborne entertainment of a different kind will be heading for Phuket in December, in the form of the Rubson Raid Turquoise 2006.

The Rubson Raid, now in its sixth year, was devised by Belgian Philippe Martin as an event for large, fast, inflatable boats.

Mr Martin explained to Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawangkura on July 19 that the 2006 Raid will include flat-out races, navigation trials, timed stages, game fishing, wave running and water-skiing.

The 20 teams will consist of five crew each, plus support crews, and will use identical 7.5-meter Capelli rigid inflatable boats, made in Cremona, Italy, and fitted with V6 Yamaha F250 outboard engines.

The Raid is also expected to bring some 50 print journalists and 20 TV crews to Thailand to cover the event.

Competition will cover four stages between December 9 and 16: Langkawi-Koh Lanta; Koh Lanta-Krabi; Similan Islands; and Similans-Phuket.

For more information see the Rubson Raid website, at www.raidturquoise.com

— Somprat Saowakhon

Cherng Talay to host mini-marathon

CHERNG TALAY: Cherng Talay Municipality will hold a 3.5-kilometer fun run and a 13-km mini-marathon on August 12.

Runners in the 13-km race, which will get underway at 6 am, will compete in 11 age groups: Boys and girls up to 16 years old; Men's and women's open; Men 30-34 years; 35-39 years; 40-44 years; 45-49 years; 50-54 years; 55-59 years; Women 30-39 years, and women over 40 years; Women and men over 60 years.

The 3.5-km fun run is aimed mainly at children, with runners competing in one of four categories: children 10 to 13; children 13 to 15; an open category; or a team category for parents with children.

No child under 10 years old may compete in either of the events.

Both races will start and finish at the Cherng Talay Municipality offices.

Entry to the 13-km run costs 100 baht, while entry to the 3.5-km fun run is free. All runners will receive a souvenir T-shirt.

For more information call Cherng Talay Municipality at Tel: 076-324440 ext 207 during government office hours.

Rotary sets date for annual bowling tourney

PHUKET CITY: The Rotary Club of Andaman will hold its fifth annual Andaman Bowl tournament at CS Bowl, at the Big C supercenter, on August 20.

Proceeds from the events will go toward the club's community projects.

Entry is 3,000 baht per team of three, which includes the cost of lunch, hire of bowling shoes and T-shirts.

Players are advised to arrive on time as no late entries will be allowed and the entry fee is non-refundable. Play will start at 10 am sharp.

For more information, contact Andaman Rotary Club Vice-President Prasit Wiponchai at Tel: 01-6063263 or the club direct at Tel: 076-281058.

FOWL PLAY

By Janyaporn Morel & Sompratch Saowakhon

CHERNG TALAY: Zinedine Zidane and Wayne Rooney should perhaps have been there. Imagine it: no referees. No red or yellow cards. Elbows allowed. All the diving you could wish for. The goal of the game? To be the dirtiest player in the competition.

Yes, it was the Chicken Chase, one of the highlights of the 5th Annual Cherng Talay Agricultural Fair, held at Cherng Talay Wittayakom School from July 14 to 16.

After donning rubber gloves as a precaution against contracting bird 'flu, the young competitors were set free among the banyard fowl. When the feathers finally settled, 15-year-old Donlaphut Saetun was declared the winner, having bagged no fewer than eight birds.

Taking the prize for Dirtiest Chicken Catcher was 13-year-old schoolgirl Phaka-wun Jailak, who probably spent more time in the mud than all the other competitors put together.

The two won prizes of 1,000 and 500 baht, respectively.

Another popular event was the fighting fish competition, with a fish owned by Kittipong Klangnak winning the *hua grad* division.

In the "local fish" division, a finned fury owned by Pakorn Sitti-nunthakul came out on top, while Methavee Merng-khoom's fish won in the "mixed" category. The three owners won 500 baht apiece.



Dirtiest Chicken Catcher, 13-year-old Phakawun Jailak (black shirt), shows her style.

Phuket boxers return with heads held high

NONTHABURI: Of the six amateur boxers representing Phuket at the Thailand Mini-Junior Open Championships in Nonthaburi Province, Pinyo Kadamduan, fighting in the 63.5 kilogram division, made it the furthest, reaching the quarterfinals before losing on a decision by just one point, 24-23.

The only other Phuket boxer to make it past the opening round was Suppanut Kengrai, fighting at 57kg, who lost a decision in the second round of the tourney.

The four other boxers lost in the first round: Prawit Cheuychom (40kg); Sirimate Nakdee (40kg); Sarawuth Kanyaniam (45kg) and Thanawat Pinkaew (51kg).

The first-round loss by Thanawat, son of

Phuket Amateur Boxing Club (PABC) Vice-Secretary and team trainer Sarawin "Master Jay" Pinkaew, was particularly unlucky. Thanawat, expected to make a run for the final rounds, was up 15-3 when he had his nose bloodied in Round 2, leading the referee to stop the bout.

The event, organized by the Amateur Boxing Association of Thailand, attracted 223 boxers from around the country.

The PABC is still looking for corporate and individual sponsors to continue the boys' training for the the next big national event, which will be held in December. Those interested in supporting or joining the PABC can contact Master Jay at Tel: 01-2722629 or Email: info@phuketgym.com

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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel



The OrBorTor office is due to be finished by May next year.



One of the two new OTOP buildings is 95% complete.

Wichit OrBorTor goes on a building spree

The new three-story Wichit Tambon Administration Organization (OrBorTor) office block, costing 35 million baht, is 15% complete and is due to be finished by May next year.

OrBorTor Vice-President

Chaiwat Phungrang explained, "Our current offices are in a Wat Thepnimit school building, and the new building is part of our preparations for being upgraded from OrBorTor to *tessabaan* [municipality] status.

"We applied at the end of

last year to be upgraded to *tessabaan* status, which will make it easier to administer the tambon. We expect that the central government will give its approval this year," he added.

"We currently have a staff of about 30, but when we become

a municipality, there will be more service sections and the number of staff will have to increase to about twice that," he added.

The new building, which will be 27.5 meters wide and 60 meters long, is being built on five rai beside Wat Thepnimit, next to the pedestrian bridge over Chao Fa East Rd.

On the ground level will be the offices of the Treasury Division, Revenue Division, Registration Division, Public Health Division and Service Division. On the second floor will be the Education Division and rooms for general administration staff, while the third floor will have a conference room, the Public Works Division and a Muslim prayer room.

K. Chaiwat added that, in addition to 35 million baht being spent on the new main building, about 10 million baht more will be spent on landscaping, creating a small park and a car park, and building a canteen.

The contractor for the project is 3 D Dimension Co Ltd.

As testament to Wichit OrBorTor's need for expansion, it currently has a flurry of projects underway throughout the *tambon*, including two OTOP shops, a public arena with stage, and a new health center.

The first of the OTOP shops, a single-level concrete building, is being constructed at a cost of 700,000 baht on Pattana Thongthin Rd.

"Our OTOP products are artificial flowers made from fish scales, and small dried fish. We would like to have a place where people who visit the Wichit area can easily find and buy these products," K. Chaiwat said.

Work on the building, which is eight meters wide and 12 meters long, is 95% complete. It is expected to open next month.

"We are building another OTOP display center at Baan Bo Rae Moo 6. It will be the same design as the main shop, but smaller – four by eight meters," K. Chaiwat said.

The contractor for both OTOP display centers is Phuket Extreme Construction Co Ltd.

Meanwhile, in the public park across the road from the OTOP center, the OrBorTor is having an arena with stage built at a cost of 5.1 million baht.

In March, contractor Kam-lathong Limited Partnership began building the stage, a simple steel structure with iron-sheet roofing, a concrete floor and a small fence around the seating area.

It is currently 70% complete and due to be finished by October.

"The stage will be useful for public activities, wedding parties, community meetings and festivals," said K. Chaiwat.

Nearby, the OrBorTor bought a block of three shophouses last year for 2 million baht. These are now being renovated, for a further 2 million baht, to house the tambon's new Public Health Center.

K. Chaiwat explained that the old two-story Public Health Center, next door, is not big enough to serve the number of people visiting it.

"People suffering from minor illnesses prefer to come here because if they go to Vachira Phuket Hospital they have to wait in a long queue.

"We have about 80 patients a day, and they are not all people from Wichit. We also have patients from Chalong and other nearby areas coming here as well," said K. Chaiwat.

Once the work is complete, the building will have a reception area and waiting room on the ground level, along with two consultation rooms, an X-ray room, toilets and a room equipped with four patient beds.

Upstairs will be a meeting room and three offices.

Work, originally due to be finished in April, is only 70% complete. K. Chaiwat noted that the contractor is now subject to penalties of 1,900 baht a day.

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Home of the Week

Rawai



Within these walls

This Western-style three-bedroom villa, with separate self-contained guest bungalow, is built in a peaceful setting at the end of a cul-de-sac off the increasingly popular Soi Suksan 2 in Rawai.

The location gives the property the advantages of quiet country living, yet is just minutes' drive from Nai Harn and Rawai Beaches – and about 10 minutes' drive from Chalong Circle.

With privacy provided by natural surroundings and a walled garden, the home was built in such a way as to preserve all the mature trees on the 1,000-square-meter plot.

The home is designed for minimum maintenance and built using top-quality materials, including insect- and termite-resistant wood in the door and window frames.

The 240-square-meter living area of the main house includes three bedrooms, two bathrooms, separate dining and living rooms, a Western-style fitted kitchen with a large two-door fridge-freezer and ample cupboard and storage space, airy front and rear terraces and a laundry-cum-storeroom.

All the bedrooms are air conditioned, and the master bedroom features an ensuite bathroom.

The rooms and terraces are cooled by remote-controlled fans. Roof insulation plus mosquito screens on all the doors and windows allow for cool, open-plan living.

Outside, the sandwashed rear terrace has a carport, and beside the chlorinated saltwater swimming pool is a cold-water shower and an outside toilet.

The detached guest bungalow comprises an air-conditioned bedroom, a separate bathroom, living/dining room and a kitchenette with granite worktop. This bungalow also has remote-controlled fans.

Utilities include underground power cables, two phone lines, well water supply and storage tank, and UBC satellite TV. The property has Chanote title and is for sale by the owner at 10 million baht.

For more information contact Joy Spackman at Tel: 076-289174 or 01-4774792, or by email at: sybil@loxinfo.co.th



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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

What the fruit?

Why can't I use the same words today that were used 50 years ago without getting sniggers from everyone?

There was a time when we could describe a night out as "gay". Such a night would be one that was happy and colorful. Not any more. A gay night in Patong nowadays would hardly be associated with the exploits of a die-hard heterosexual.

Gay has even gone one step further more recently. The BBC has ruled that the word gay now has new meanings among young people, and may be officially used without insulting homosexuals.

They rejected a complaint against one of their radio presenters after he dismissed a ring tone by saying "I don't want that one, it's gay". They ruled that in addition to being used to mean either "homosexual" or "carefree", gay is now used to mean "lame" or "rubbish", and that this is the vernacular use of the word among young people – including the characters in *South Park*.

The Americans may be the biggest culprits in the word-meaning-change game. Not so long ago, if you described something as "bad", then there was little doubt as to what you were getting at. Basic students of the En-

glish language would be able to explain to you that that anything bad is not good. Simple and uncomplicated.

The wordsmiths from across the Atlantic have, for reasons best known to themselves, turned this seemingly straightforward concept on its head. "Bad" is now a wonderful thing, seemingly.

A "bad-assed punk" has absolutely nothing to do with a follower of loud, screaming '70s music who has a disobedient mule. I could of course be wrong.

This process, where a word develops negative connotations or loses positive ones, even has a name: pejoration. As an example, "notorious" initially meant "widely known". Yet it has gone through the process of extension to now mean "widely and unfavorably known". Now I'm just confused. As are they, no doubt.

I can't get too upset about slang terms though, as they genuinely come and go every few years. In a 1990 *Beetle Bailey* cartoon, for instance, Sarge chews Beetle out with a string of symbols ending in #!!, and Beetle laughs.

"#???" he says. "Nobody says # anymore!" Sarge, deflated, sighs despondently, saying, "Gee,

A gay night out used to be one that was happy and colorful. But not any more...



The jackfruit, reportedly the largest fruit in the world, is abundant here in Phuket.

I always thought # was all-time classic cussing." Sarge is embarrassed because, with very few exceptions, notably the genuinely classic four-letter English words, using last year's slang spells social disaster.

If you've described someone or something as "fruity", has it always meant the same thing? I'm honestly not sure.

One of the modern trends employed to avoid upsetting anyone of delicate sensibility is to replace a certain four-letter word with the word "fruit". I mean, how upset can these fruiting people get about a single fruiting word? Fruit me.

Fruit is the topic of this week's nonsense. Well, fruit in Thailand, to be precise.

We have a lot going for us in this neck of the woods in the fruit department. You could even say that we're in a fairly fruity country. Actually, perhaps we can't say that after all.

One of the delights of spending time in this country is the kingdom's incredible variety of fruit available.

The varied colors, shapes

and sizes and sweetness, as well as the distinctive smells make Thailand one of the best places in the world for enjoying unspoiled fruit.

I used to enjoy imported pineapples back in the dim, dark days when I lived in the UK. There, you would pay at least a couple of pounds for a tiny fruit that had been picked several weeks earlier, injected with preservatives, and allowed to ripen in the container ship on the way over.

They were fine, or so I thought until I came to Thailand. Pineapples here actually taste of pineapple. You cut them on a dish that is deep enough to catch the half-gallon of juice that will inevitably be produced in the dissection process.

Once bought, they'll need to be eaten within a day or two, as they'll start to deteriorate if you leave them any longer. No preservatives here, thankfully.

Before you buy a whole fruit, check that it's ripe by sniffing for fragrance, and try to tear away one of the leaves spouting from the top of the fruit. If it

comes away easily, it's ready to eat.

Then there is the less pleasant side to Thai fruits – the inevitable durian, which is the only fruit that you can smell from 100 paces away.

It's a curious odor; imagine a Limburger cheese that's been allowed to sit in the sun for several hours, mixed with that rather special smell that emanates from the locker room of the local rugby team, and you have the durian wave that mercilessly hits you in both nostrils.

I tried it once. I was assured that the smell shouldn't put me off. The Thai person egging me on was insistent that it "... smells like hell, but tastes like heaven". How wrong she was. As far as I was concerned, the taste was identical to the smell.

The texture, something akin to a Brie cheese/Vaseline mix, was even worse. It must be an acquired taste, but one that has been acquired by a lot of people; the durian stalls you see all over the country in the durian season are jammed with customers.

RAMBUTANS

Rambutans are another particularly local fruit. From the Malay *rambut* for hair, the "hair fruit" is aptly named.

They're a bit like lychees (those small white fruits you tend to get as a dessert in Chinese restaurants) inside, and easy to eat. While some fruits can get a bit messy, all you need to do with these things is twist them in the middle, and the fruit itself will appear.

At the height of the rambutan season, you'll see pickup truck after pickup truck parked at the side of the road offering tons of the things for sale. And they're cheap, less than 10 baht per kilo in some cases. Insane prices.

The last time I saw them for sale in the UK they were 20 baht *each*. Yes, 20 baht per fruit. Now that's total madness.

The jackfruit, reportedly the largest fruit in the world, is abundant here in Phuket. So much so that there seem to be more jackfruit lying on the ground under trees than there are for sale. The young fruit is often cooked in coconut milk, while the ripe fruit provides enough sustenance for a village.

You can even eat the seeds as a snack, after boiling them in salty water.

What the fruit? I've managed to get through a whole gardening column without actually mentioning gardening – sorry about that. Hopefully that hasn't upset too many fruiting people. That would be gay.

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?

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That sinking feeling



American Standard's Eye model.



No drain: Cotto's Plate.



It looks like stone, but it's glass.

There was a time, not so long ago, when bathroom basins were like Model T Fords: you could have any color you wanted, so long as it was white. There was not a great deal of variety in shapes, either.

In the past few years, however, that has all changed, with art, design and technology coming together to create a stunning array of equipment for sophisticated face-washing and teeth-brushing.

One of the biggest and oldest names in sanitaryware is American Standard, which still makes a lot of white sinks, but in an interesting variety of shapes, including round, oval, square and even eye-shaped models, for setting into counters or for free-standing installation.

Cotto, Thailand's top-selling brand, has gained "attitude" over

the past few years, as its eye-catching billboards attest.

Its "Plate" basin, for example, is cleverly designed so that the drain is invisible, while the company's round model, designed to stand atop a counter, is almost big enough to take a bath in.

For something more striking, take a look at the ranges from RCI and Rassland Glass of Canada, who make glass basins in stunning arrays of color, including models that look as though they are made of marble or other stones.

And if you just can't make up your mind what color you like, then go for no color at all, with a transparent glass sink and counter, complete with all the fittings. Detecting leaks is easy, too, with this model.

There are prices to fit all pockets, from 2,325 up to 33,575 baht.

Examples shown on this page are all available from Saengchaipanit Khawatsadukorsang Co on Thepkrassatri Rd in Phuket City, near the intersection with Komarapat Rd. The shop is open every day, except Sunday, from 8 am to 5.30 pm. Delivery is included in the prices. Plumbers are also available. For more information, call Tel: 076-237325-30 or call Amwika "Ann" Sae-Teng, the company's Managing Director, at Tel: 01-8911807.



Above: blue glass, a stunning example of the colors available these days. Below: No color at all, from Rassland.



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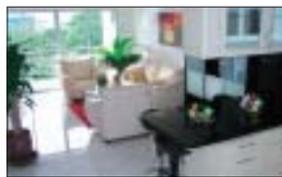
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Property Gazette

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land for sale. 1,330sqm plot for 3 million baht, and a 1,750 sqm plot for 3.8 million baht. Peaceful and quiet, each is suitable for a family home. 3km from Laguna and Layan Beach. Chanote titles. Tel: 01-8912926. Email: vikundaq@loxinfo.co.th

KAMALA

townhouse for sale. 2.9 million baht. Tel: 04-6252989. Email: thaiclassicmac@hotmail.com

4.1 RAI, NAI THON

Chanote. 100m to the beach, gentle slope, partial sea view. 6.5 million baht per rai. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR SALE

in Patong. 2 stories, 5 bedrooms, fully furnished. For more details, please call Tel: 01-9563061. Email: sohai_carpet@yahoo.com

BIG HOUSE FOR SALE

5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 5 aircons, big garden, car park area about 1 rai. Asking 15 million baht. Please contact Julie to view the house. Tel: 01-5698345. Email: julie_phuket@hotmail.com

5 RAI, CHALONG

Value! All utilities. 2.8 million baht per rai. Agents welcome. Call the owner at Tel: 06-6831964.

SMALL PLOT, 300M

from beach. Very quiet, very nice location in Rawai and only 2 minutes walk to Chalong Bay. 350sqm, Chanote, with plans already completed for a beautiful pool villa. Build your own villa and keep the developer's profit! (I can even supervise the building if required.) Includes Thai company which can be transferred to your name so you don't need to transfer the land or pay tax. 1.4 million baht. Tel: 06-684-5368. Email: bisop5@yahoo.co.uk

KATA APARTMENTS

3.5 million baht. Sea view, pool, gym, fully serviced. 90% sold, building now. Be fast. Tel: 09-6525664.

NEW HOUSE @

Nai Harn. Hill view, just a few minutes to the beach, Chanote title. Over 1,600 sqm including the house. Full landscaping/garden. Tel: 01-7371688. Fax: 076-273083. Email: info@phutawanresidence.com

NICE & CHEAP: 1 RAI

Mai Khao. Access to Bankduk Hill, Chanote, flat land, quiet area, electricity supply. 1.1 rai for 1.8 million baht. Email: ek_phuket@hotmail.com

PRIVATE BUNGALOW

Koh Lanta, Klong Dao Beach. Wooden bungalow 50m from the beach. Quiet and shady, 32sqm, car park, cable TV. Tel: 01-9680571.

ECO-COOL THAI HOME IN RAWAI



The open-air design of this award-winning home affords a true tropical lifestyle. Traditional Thai design and modern materials are combined to beat Phuket's tropical heat without aircon. A large, naturally-cool patio surrounded by a pool and a cooling lotus/fish pond. Priced at only 11.9 million baht, this large 3-bedroom, 3-bathroom plus office area (240sqm) home sits on a 400sqm lot and features designer kitchen & bathrooms, hardwood floors & underground water tank for rainwater collection and storage. Call Gary at Tel: 07-8987062.

FOR SALE: 1-STORY HOUSE



In Kathu hills, near waterfalls, 200 sqm, land 390 sqm. Fully furnished. Comes with registered company. Price: 6.9 million baht. For more details call Tel: 01-4945423.

3-BEDROOM HOUSE IN KATHU

Detached 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom house in quiet village close to Patong and major shopping areas. Master bedroom has en-suite and hot water. ADSL phone line, own water well. UBC TV, fitted curtains, 3 aircons. 72 sq wah, Chanote title. Offers in region of 3.6 million baht. Please contact for full details. Tel: 076-203064, 01-0876702. Email: davestacey16@hotmail.com

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Spacious off-plan, Phase II beachside apartments for sale from 9 million baht. Full facilities, excellent capital appreciation and rental income expected. Located beside Laguna at central Bang Tao Beach. Award-winning international architects. Experienced and credible developers. New release already 50% sold. Tel: 01-6064809. For further details please see our website: www.casuarina-shores.com

LAND FOR SALE

27 rai on Koh Lanta, Krabi, 2 million baht per rai. 40 minutes from airport. 13 rai on hill with panoramic sea view and 14 rai of beachfront of 245 meters length. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-5350060. Email: famar5@hotmail.com

LAND FOR SALE

Point East project. Chanote title. 1 rai, 179 talang wah. 4km from Heroines' monument. Tel: 09-8718327, 01-8953649.

NICE HOUSE

Nice house at Sai Yuan, on the way to Nai Harn Beach. Price: 15 million baht. Tel: 076-239444, 09-7276672. Email: utohom@hotmail.com

NICE PLOT OF LAND

in Rawai. 472 sqm. Flat, ready to build with concrete road and electricity in luxury Western-style housing development area. 2.1 million baht. Tel: 076-396548, 06-2663710. Fax: 076-396548. Email for details at: info@butterfly-it-service.com

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- Views over Phang Nga Bay
- Nearby the future deep sea port

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Property Gazette

CHALONG NEW HOME
Perfect Western-style home for rent. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, aircon and telephone. Tel: 09-652-1473.

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One-bedroom apartments for up to 4 persons in Patong. Nicely furnished, TV/DVD, aircon, pool only for vacationers and short-term lets. Email: phuket-apartments@hotmail.com

KAMALA VILLAS
beachfront. Fully furnished to a high standard. Western kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lounge and dining areas. Large balcony overlooking swimming pool and landscaped garden. Stunning sea views, only meters from the beach. Private gated parking with storage. UBC & ADSL. Including daily cleaning and washing, daily pool service and daily gardener. Monthly rental 55,000 baht. Tel: 04-843-6837. Email: info@phuket-island-homes.com. For further information please see our website: www.phuket-island-homes.com

LONG-TERM LETS
1-bedroom furnished apartment in Patong with access to swimming pool. 15,000 baht per month. 3-bedroom, 3-bathroom furnished house on hillside with swimming pool and Patong view, above Amari Hotel: 85,000 baht/month. Please contact Baan Benjamas. Tel: 076-344343.

SEAVIEW HOUSE FOR RENT



Large garden, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. 600sqm, in Phuket City, near shopping area. Tel: 06-2741345. Email: suksavat@hotmail.com

L&H PARK VILLA
for rent. 2 bedroom, 2 aircon, Euro kitchen, big living room, 1 bathroom, cable TV, telephone line (Internet), very nice garden, car park, 24-hour security, part-furnished, good neighborhood, swimming pool use in clubhouse. Long- or short-term rental possible. Please call Tel: 076-383286, 07-8866986.

PATONG RENT/SALE
2-bedroom condo, corner unit, kitchenette, fully furnished. Large balcony, sea view, 150m from beach, pool, recently renovated, foreign freehold. Rent 30,000 baht a month or for sale at 6 million baht. Tel: 076-340792.

LARGE NEW LUXURY
house for rent. Rawai-Nai Ham area, 5 bedrooms, large garden, swimming pool. 50,000 baht a month, min 1 year. 3-bedroom house with pool, 2 minutes from Nai Harn Beach. 30,000 baht a month. Tel: 01-3971835.

KARON SEA VIEW



Large studio apartment for rent. 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, Western-style kitchen, pool, near Karon Beach. Free WiFi (ADSL), good price. Please contact for more details. Tel: 076-398436-7, 06-906-2220. Email: karonstudio@hotmail.com For further details please see at: www.karonstudio.com

LOVELY NEW HOME
Nai Harn: 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2 balconies, fully furnished, TV. Only 18,000 baht a month. Tel: 04-8519072. Email: goodtasteforgoodlife@yahoo.de

RAWAI RENTAL HOUSE
160sqm, 2-story house central Rawai Beach for rent at 5,000 baht a month or lease for 10 years at 200,000 baht. Tel: 06-6865567. Email: chotip36@hotmail.com

FOR RENT IN KATHU
3-bedroom home near Loch Palm Golf Course and British international school. Swimming pool, telephone line with ADSL Internet access, fully furnished, UBC TV, garden and pool maintenance included. 45,000 baht a month. Tel: 09-6498703.

CHALONG HOUSE FOR RENT

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BIG SHOPHOUSE
in Patong. Located in Soi Patong Resort, off Soi Bangla, the commercial hub of Patong Beach. Approx 180sqm on 2 open-space floors. Suitable for commercial purposes, unfurnished. Tel: 076-340290. Email: paciugo89@yahoo.com

2-BEDROOM HOUSE
Nice 2-bedroom house, furnished, 5 minutes to Phuket City. Quiet area, huge yard, perfect for kids and dogs. 8,000 baht a month. Tel: 01-0340651. Email: ajarnlogan@gmail.com

LOFT-STYLE LARGE
flats. 4 large, quiet central flats. 6,000-12,000 baht/month long term. Please contact for more details. Tel: 04-8502926. Email: hkmsn@yahoo.com

VILLA WITH POOL
4-bedroom villa in Rawai available for long-term rent. Fully furnished with swimming pool. Tel: 06-0043008. Email: info@ayudhya.net For further details, please see our website at: www.ayudhya.net

NICE HOUSE
Beachfront house for long-term rent. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, hot shower, 3 aircons, fully furnished, kitchen, fridge, washing machine, 2 phone lines, UBC, big fenced-in garden. 2 minutes from Chalong Circle, in a very nice area with security. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-8931121.

4-BEDROOM VILLA
in Chalong. Unique! Quiet and safe area on a hillside near Chalong Circle. Resort-style villa with aircon, UBC TV, ADSL, tropical garden, Jacuzzi, 4 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms. Long term only. 30,000 baht a month. Tel: 01-6079020, 01-8235410. Email: frank@bathline.info

QUIET HOUSE
in Nai Harn. 2 beds, 2 baths, furnished, phone. 12,000 baht per month. Tel: 076-288047, 01-8941660. Email: cottrell@loxinfo.co.th

KATHU
Close to Phuket Country Club golf course. 2-story townhouse, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, terraces, big kitchen. Quiet house, 10 minutes to Patong and Phuket City. Fully furnished. 120sqm. 20,000 baht a month. Tel: 09-872-6895. Email: jostein.pedersen@eunet.no

NEW 2-STORY
house near Tesco, Index, Dulwich, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, Furnished. 25,000 baht per month. Tel: 09-444-1124. Email: nacky2u@hotmail.com

BIG HOUSE FOR RENT
3 bedrooms, living area, kitchen, etc, on Phisit Gorani Rd, Patong. Monthly rent: 15,000 baht. Available from August 10. Tel: 09-4717629. Or email: maxgmuender@hotmail.com

FURNISHED & NEW
Includes kitchen, hot-water shower. 5 mins walk to bus/beach. Farang comfort in local area. Tel: 01-9683546. Email: robin46@gmail.com

KAMALA, LONG LET
2-bedroom house, 3 aircons, furnished, UBC, phone line, parking. 11,000 baht per month. Tel: 07-1789273.

APARTMENTS
Chalong. Titima Mansions; 2 bedrooms, furnished, aircon, hot shower, security and gardens. Tel: 01-8914964. Email: beachcomberwa@yahoo.com.au

PHUKET B.L.
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BEAUTIFUL VILLA
2 bedrooms. European standard. Fully furnished, aircon, telephone, UBC TV, swimming pool, tropical garden. 2 minutes to Rawai and Nai Harn Beaches. Long-term let at 25,000 baht a month. Tel: 07-2810452.

SHOPHOUSE
for rent. Old building, 20,000 baht per month, and new shop in Phuket City. Shophouse for rent. Old building, 20,000 baht per month, and new shop in Phuket City. Tel: 01-607-2489.

4-BEDROOM HOUSE
This 2-story, fully-furnished house includes 4 bedrooms, a big living room, aircon, telephone, UBC, carport and a beautiful garden with sala. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-891-5296. Email: jikkycars@yahoo.com

FOR RENT
3-bedroom house. Pool, walled garden, near Nai Harn beach. 25,000 baht a month. Minimum one year, no agents. Tel: 01-3971835.

3-BEDROOM HOME
Chao Fa Rd. 207 sq wah, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, nice living room, good kitchen, cool garden, parking for 3 cars. Fully furnished. For sale at 6.7 million baht or rent at 40,000 baht a month. Tel: 01-597-8315. Email: phuket8@hotmail.com

HOUSE FOR RENT
Samkong area, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, living and dining areas, fully fitted, kitchen, one maid's room, UBC, ADSL. Rent: 42,000 baht a month. Tel: 09-7294084. Email: psirikaning@yahoo.com

HOUSE FOR RENT
Home & office, 1,500sqm, Phuket City area, Wichit Songkram Rd. Fully furnished, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms. Please call for more details. Tel: 04-0629587.

BEAUTIFUL VILLA
European standard. Fully furnished, telephone, aircon, UBC, swimming pool, tropical gardens. Long-term let. 25,000 baht a month. Tel: 07-1810452.

SPECTACULAR
views. Yamu house, Cape Heights, Cape Yamu. An outstanding period property, set in delightful gardens with amazing sea views towards Phang Nga Bay. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 receptions, study, kitchen, maid's room, swimming pool, furnished. Close to BCIS. 70,000 baht a month. Please call for more information. Tel: 06-279-6283.

RAWAI SALE/RENT: 2-STORY HOUSE
130sqm living space. 5,000 baht/month or will sell for 850,000 baht. 400 meters from beach. Please contact for more details. Tel: 06-6865567. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

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New house, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, fully equipped, 2 air conditioners. 23,000 baht a month. Contact K. Tik at Tel: 09-7280999.

LAKE HOUSE
New, in Kamala, fully furnished. Has 2 bedrooms, UBC and air conditioning. Asking 17,000 baht a month. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-8928208.

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Property Gazette

Property Wanted



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GUESTHOUSE

and restaurant in Phuket City, Patong, Karon or Kata. Please email or phone me if you have or know of something appropriate. Email: chrillearning@hotmail.com

NEED SEAVIEW LAND

I am looking for prime seaview land at Patong Beach. It must be overlooking the bay and city. Tel: 07-0540120. Email: richard.market@gmail.com

LONG-TERM RENTAL

Expat family looking for a long-term rental in Phuket, as follows: Near BCIS (maximum 20 mins), minimum of 4 bedrooms + maid's room, unfurnished, large pool, garden. Lease to begin Aug 6 for at least a year. Email: pravin@iim.com.sg

WANTED: BEACHFRONT

Looking for a beachfront restaurant or business property to buy or to lease. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-0543505.

AUDITION ROOM

I am looking for an audition room to rent. The room must be at least 7m long and 4m wide, with white walls (for background). One of the short walls should be without windows (background). Would be great with aircon. Tel: 06-6285292.

SEEKING HOUSE TO RENT

German family is looking for house to rent near international school. Min 1 year. Tel: 06-188922.

LAND WANTED

Seaview, beachfront land in Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi. 10-100 rai. Tel: 01-6936437, 06-6841260.

HOUSE WANTED

Looking to buy a 2- to 3-bedroom house in Phuket or Krabi. Maximum price: 4 million baht. Email: wanphenstephen@hotmail.com

PROPERTY EXCHANGE

I am looking for a villa-style property with a minimum of 4 beds on at least 1 rai of land. Just the land alone is an option. If possible, I would like to exchange for a UK property in Scarborough on the UK's east coast. The property is 4 stories and is licensed as a guesthouse. Its value is around UK£250,000, so cash adjustments can be made either way. Email: mrpaulharland@hotmail.com

BUNGALOW RESORT

or guesthouse. I am looking to rent a bungalow resort or guesthouse in the Rawai or Chalong areas. Email: tomdexter2001@yahoo.de

2-BEDROOM APT

Patong hillside luxury 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom apartment available for rent now. Fully furnished, pool, aircon, satellite TV, etc. Clean apartment in desirable area. 25,000 baht per month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 05-0717134. Fax: 076-346158. Email: robinsonkevin@mac.com

3-BEDROOM HOUSE

Rawai. Nice house in Soi Tristar, off Sai Yuan Rd. Fully furnished. Bedrooms with aircon, sala with garden. 37,000 baht a month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 763-289241, 01-6937277. Email: bent@siamdivers.com

KAMALA BEACH

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PATONG LUXURY

apartment Central Patong 1- and 2-bedroom apartments. Please contact for more information. Email for information and photos: suites247@yahoo.com

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KATA BEACH

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3-BEDROOM CONDO

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NEW APARTMENT

Fully furnished, big apartment for rent at Nai Harn Beach. Max 4 persons. 500 baht per day, 9,000 baht per month. Please contact for more information. Tel: 04-8519072. Email: goodtasteforgoodlife@yahoo.de

Accommodation Wanted

HOUSE WANTED

to rent. Looking for a house in Patong area to rent from September 2006, for 6-12 months. Email: john_m_king@hotmail.com

APARTMENT/CONDO

Nice location in Patong wanted from Nov 2, 2006 until Jan 31, 2007. Must have 1-2 bedrooms, kitchen, balcony (prefer with sea view), TV/UBC and a possibility of maid service. Good references from retired Swedish flight captain. Email: anders@orvemo.com

HOUSE OR APT

I'm looking to rent a house for at least 1 year. I require aircon and ADSL or a phone line that can have ADSL quickly. I have 2 small parrots. ADSL is needed without exception. Email: howardbloom@pc-man.com

LOOKING FOR VILLA

to rent. We are looking for a big, furnished house (good standard) with pool and 4-5 bedrooms to rent for the period 15 November, 2006 till 15 January, 2007. Prefer areas of Nai Harn, Chalong and Rawai - but other areas possible. Tel: 06-167-4607. Email: krzysioc@phuket.ksc.co.th

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Property Services

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Mobile: 01 894 1530 / 01 908 1437
Tel/Fax: 076 239 729
Email: brokerage@leemarine.com

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Contact: Jim Poulsen
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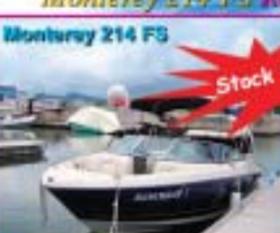
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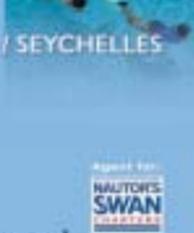
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Length: 17.5m. Width: 4m, 320hp diesel engine, 20kw generator, 2 Bauer compressors, 30 person capacity. 1.2 million baht. Please call Tel: 01-9680571 for details.

16' HOBIE CAT

1987, 16' catamaran. Still good for a lot of fun! Situated at Ao Makham. Tel: 06-5413629. Email: terapi@post.tele.dk

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Jet cruise 1. 244 passenger capacity. Length: 30.73m. Gross: 322 tons. 2 x 1,540KW MTU engines. Docked at Rattanachai slipway. Phuket price at 12.2 million baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-4084991.

LIVE-ABOARD DIVINE

30m steel boat, built 1998. Double cabins plus 12 crew berths, tastefully decorated, full dive equipment, including gas mix and twin Bauer compressors. 2 ribs with 35hp, O/BSIMO registered. Call Simpson Marine at Tel: 076-239768.

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Fishing boat in good condition Jim Young's "Vindex" design. Built-in cedar strip/epoxy, 35ft long, 12ft beam 300hp Cummins 6BTA diesel ZFHG, hydraulic steering from main cabin or fly bridge, sleeps 2 couples in forward cabin or conv. area, WC/shower/hand basin. Including berth until Oct 06. Contact Peter for details. Tel: 01-816-6940. Email: peterhae@e-mail.in.th

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Well-maintained sailboats with s.s. trolley. Single & 2-person boats. Please call. Tel: 01-5399560, 01-397-0905. For further details, please see our website at: www.skiffasia.com/boats4sale.html

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ENGLISH-THAI TRANSLATION

Required by travel company for one day only on October 17, 2006. Kata Beach area only. Would suit hotel reception person. Start time 9:30am, finish 5pm. Must be presentable, speak good English and excellent Thai. Payment will be 10,000 baht. Yes, 10,000 baht for one day. Drinks & lunch included. Please send email to: p.howarth0@talk21.com

CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER

Advertising media company in Phuket City seeking an experienced person to manage our busy print shop. Must speak English well and have strong communication skills. Please call Jame. Tel: 09-4730575.

COOK + HOUSEKEEPER

Urgently required:
- Cook 1 position;
- Housekeeper (ability to look after 3-year old boy) 1 position.

Please contact. Tel: 076-260468, 01-8295388; Fax: 076-260440. Email: admin@tacticalcapital.net

NANNY/MAID

Seeking honest, reliable nanny to look after two farang children, ages 6 and 4. Some English required. Please call K. Boo at 04-6903884 or Email: bengale@ Cairns.net.au

BAR MANAGER

Needed for upscale hotel. Layan Beach area. Reply by email and attach CV. Email: metta@phuketpavilions.com

OFFICE ASSISTANT

needed. P/T or F/T. Basic computer skills needed. Should be an English speaker, but fluency not required. Accounting skills needed, but no experience necessary. Must have own transport. Please call Tel: 04-1840613.

TWO OFFICE

positions. Office Manager with strong administration/financial background and General Office Staff. Applicants must have good English and computer skills. Starting salaries will depend on experience and proven ability. Car and/or license an advantage. Please email/fax application with a CV or contact. Tel: 076-232-960, 01-9703028. Fax: 076-232961. Email: bookings@sailing-thailand.com

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▪ Chef, Cook ▪ Restaurant Service Manager

- Degree from cook, restaurant school or similar
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- Hotel knowledge and/or experience
- Leadership and (kitchen) organizational skills
- Fluent in English

APPLICANTS FOR ALL OTHER POSITIONS ALSO WELCOME

Candidates should send a detailed resumé starting current and expected salary and telephone number together with a recent photograph to:

Personnel Department

Ocean Resort Group: 562 Patak Rd, Karon Beach, Muang, Phuket 83100, Thailand
Tel: +66 (0) 76 396599-601 Fax: +66 (0) 76 396470, +66 (0) 76 396177
Email: wisaroot@oceanresortgroup.com

INTERNET/ RECEPTION

Thai female wanted for Internet/reception duties. Must speak English. Tel: 076-330484, 04-063-5773. Email: johnnymc21@hotmail.com

REAL ESTATE SECRETARY

Admin/secretary for real estate company. Strong English skills, computer literate, knowledge of the island, car license. Please send CV and expected salary. Email: rotapi@hotmail.com

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Looking for full-time cook for foreign/Thai food, must speak English. Tel: 06-2832279.

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designer. Excellent skills in design tools such as Photoshop & Illustrator for graphic design; 3d Max for 3D design; and Flash & Html for Web design. Tel: 09-7290494. Email: iamsosweet@gmail.com

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teachers! Horizons Learning Center requires qualified, experienced teachers for these positions from Aug 2006: nursery; music/drama; Mandarin. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-238756, 01-8942560. Fax: 076-325403. Email: pamelaa@horizons-phuket.com

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Samui Villas & Homes is looking for:

- Estate Manageress*
- Villa Manageress*
- Handyman/Gardener
- Maids
- Guest Relations Officer*
- Thai Chefs
- Chief Engineers*

* Experience of 3-5 years in five-star hotel environment preferred. Good command of spoken English. Salary incentive includes service charge, bonus month and accommodation. Application with resume and picture at the office (Tel (077) 427-648) or at golf@samuivillasandhomes.com

The Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following positions:

I. REPORTER

The successful candidate will be a Thai national, with initiative, an outgoing personality, and plenty of experience about the world and how it works. Also essential are the ability to communicate in English, both spoken and written, and a car.

Good salary for the right candidate.

II. ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

The successful candidate will be a Thai national with an outgoing personality. Also essential are experience in sales and/or administration, a good command of written and spoken English, good management and organizational skills, and knowledge of PageMaker and Office software.

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Wipa Putkeaw, Human Resources, by email, fax or post to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd
367/2 Yaowarat Rd, T. Taladyai, A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Fax: 076-213971 Email: fon@phuketgazette.net

Find more Recruitment Classifieds at
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BY ESPA**

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- * **Spa Therapists**
- * **Receptionists**

Successful therapists will receive the intensive post graduate ESPA training programme leading to recognition as an advanced ESPA therapist so you will be required to have completed a formal massage training programme and had experience within an International 5 star Hotel Group. Good level of spoken English is also required.

Reception Staff will receive ESPA pre-opening training programme including ESPA philosophy, treatments, scheduling software system and 5* client care so will need excellent English, computer skills and prior experience in a guest contact role.

If you would like to apply for any of these exciting and challenging roles please forward your full CV and photograph to Human Resources Department, The Peninsula Bangkok 333 Charoennakorn Road, Klongsan, Bangkok 10600 or E-mail hr.pbk@peninsula.com

Closing date for applications is 31th July 2006.

Personal data collected will be used for recruitment purposes only. Applicants who do not hear from us within 2 months may consider their application unsuccessful.

Island Job Mart

British International School, Phuket are now seeking:

Mandarin Teachers in our Primary School (2 Positions)

- University Degree, Mandarin Major or related fields
- Thai National
- A high level of English fluency
- Teaching qualifications and experience of child care / teaching preferable
- Required to teach Mandarin Language to pupils from the ages of 7 to 11

Assistant to Head of Maintenance (System Division) (1 Position)

- Male, age between 27-35 years
- Thai national
- Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering or related field
- Minimum 3 years experience in the related field

Please send a short letter of application, Curriculum Vitae, recent photograph and e-mail/fax and telephone contacts of referees to: British International School, Phuket

British International School, Phuket (BCIS)
59 Moo 2, Thepkasattri Rd, Koh Kaeo, Muang, Phuket 83200 Thailand
Tel: 076 238 711-20 Fax: 076 238 750 Bangkok Tel: 02 636 8991-2 Fax: 02 636 8992

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Korean or Spanish customer service agents:

- Fluent in Korean or Spanish; both written and spoken
- Have a good command of English
- Have basic computer skills and experience with MS Office software (Word, Excel, Outlook)
- Thai nationality would be an advantage

Translators (work at home) for the following languages:

German / Italian / Korean / French / Spanish / Japanese

- Must be a Native Speaker
- Must have good command of English and excellent translation skills

Interested applicants please submit your application including resume / CV or employment certificates to: Employment@HotelTravel.com or call 076-282808 Khun Parichaya for the further information

The Phuket Gazette

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The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following positions:

TV REPORTERS

- Male or female, 22-35 years old
- Thai nationals only
- Good communication skills
- Must be reasonably fluent in English
- Self-motivated, imaginative, well-organized

An attractive salary and benefits package is offered for the right candidates. Applicants are invited to send a full, detailed resumé with recent photo to:

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367/2 Yaowarat Rd, T. Taladyai, A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Fax: 076 213971 Email: fon@phuketgazette.net

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Good English, computer + internet skills. If you enjoy travelling, meeting people, sales & marketing, admin & secretarial work plus entertaining and being active in a highly-paid, secure job with huge commission benefits in a big corporation, then get in touch! Please contact. Tel: 01-9799911. Email: moo_yongs@hotmail.com

PA/SECRETARY TO MANAGER

(Thai) to assist foreign manager. English, accounting and computer skills, good presentation and pleasant personality required. Email: robor@loxinfo.co.th

SALES MANAGER

A Phuket furniture store is looking for an experienced sales manager. The position requires generating outside sales and servicing clients. Applicants must have a good command of English, be computer literate, a team player and have strong interpersonal skills. Basic knowledge of the furniture business would be a plus. A generous salary, commission and benefits package will be offered to the successful candidate. Interviews will be conducted July 22, 24 & 25. Please call for an appointment. Tel: 076-223025.

ASSISTANT WANTED

Work with manager in international company. Must have good written and spoken English. Please send CV + expected salary. Start immediately. Please contact. Tel: 01-9586805. Email: kris.derweduwe@th.g4s.com Please see our website at www.guardianalarms.info, www.g4s.com

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We are looking for open-minded people who are seeking a challenging role within their career. Join our extensive international team and work for one of the world's market leaders in real estate. Our Overseas Chain Of Estate Agents Network gives you the chance to enjoy both a successful career and a dynamic lifestyle. You will be working with our worldwide offices and global property exhibitions programme.

Opportunities Available:

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An exciting position with the opportunity to travel worldwide and with high earnings potential. You will be expected to liaise with new and existing clients via telephone (no cold calling) and at international exhibitions. You need to have a positive attitude and be a team player. Basic salary + commission.

Email your CV, with photo if possible, to: taa@oceanestates.com

► Listing Executive 1 Position

Negotiable and excellent communication skills, good team player, have your own car will be an advantage. Must know the Phuket island very well.

Email your CV, with photo if possible, to: taa@oceanestates.com

► Sales Executive 2 Positions

Responsible for one-to-one selling to multi-national clients. You need to possess excellent communication skills and be willing to go the extra mile for our clients. Excellent earning potential for both dedicated and enthusiastic sales people. Basic salary + commission + company vehicle.

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is looking for the following positions:

- Restaurant Manager**
- Male, good command of English
 - Waiter & Waitress**
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- For the house of the owner of Herman's Restaurant. English required
 - Bartender**
- Work 3-4 hours a day
- Please contact Khun Ya. Tel: 01-8943740.

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Experienced English-speaking Thai, male or female, wanted to manage Andaman Lighting System's general office admin. Good salary for the right skills. Please contact for more information. Tel: 076-254826, 01-8937027. Fax: 076-254827. Email: ianpotter@hotmail.com For further details, please see our website at: www.andamanlighting.com

ASST MANAGER

English-speaking Thai lady 25-35. Outgoing with experience to run and market 2 juice shops in Phuket. 12,000 baht up a month + commission. Tel: 01-8239448. Email: cjp@punpun.biz

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- Excellent written and spoken English
- Good computer skills
Tel: 076-355067.

BAR MGR

& hostesses needed. Nai Harn. Who can help? Please contact for more information. Tel: 05-1274273. Email: mjbruggink@yahoo.com

IT STAFF

Full-time position, IT staff to install, setup, and manage company server and network. Network is both LAN and wireless. Required proficiency in network management, Microsoft server configuration, back up office database, IP webcam security and secure network system. Email: pat@destinationair.com

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Required for existing shop in Karon must speak fluent English and Swedish send CV to: info@liveaboard-thailand.com

SALES EXECUTIVE

Required by wine importer & distributor for the hospitality industry. A hard worker with a strong track record in sales & marketing. Good salary & commission. Please contact. Email: info@mbsthai.com

GRAPHIC ARTISTS

A leading design and publishing company is looking for highly motivated graphic artists to assist on a new weekly magazine. Experience with Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator is essential. Good level of English is also required. Thai nationals only. Please make applications to K. See for an interview. Tel: 01-928-1530. Email: kammanees@hotmail.com

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MARKETING & MANAGEMENT

Dutch, 26, BA degree in tourism management. Regular salary, office hours. Please contact. Tel: 03-5045530. Email: suzanne@suzannessource.com

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Available for foreign clients only. Fair spoken English. Tel: 06-9469997.

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hotel manager. Asian male, 36, a hotel graduate from a British institution, has been in Thailand for 9 years, and has experience as Sales Marketing Manager, FOM, RDM and GM. Looking for new challenge. Please contact for full details. Tel: 01-0801004. Email: executives@ehotelier.com

BAR + RESTAURANT

manager. German bar-restaurant manager wants to work again in Asia. Have worked 10 years in Hong Kong and Malaysia. At the moment, I'm back in Germany. Can start from November 2006. Seeking long-term position only! Looking forward to coming back to Asia. Please contact for full details. Tel: +49-6146846529. Email: hakdagdo@yahoo.de

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Indoor, outdoor furniture. Call Alex. Tel: 01-4954761.

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2 new dark teakwood cabinets. 6 doors. Size: 2.7m x 1m x 70cm. Price: 25,000 baht each. Email: manuelbkk@gmail.com

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Bulletins

Alcoholics Anonymous

is holding meetings in English at the following places:

Phuket City

Mission Hospital

on Wed and Sun at 7 pm

Bangkok Phuket Hospital

on Fri at 7 pm

Patong

Patong Hospital

on Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun at 7 pm and on Fri at 8 pm

For more info, please call

012732053 (Scandinavian), 019564031 or 018912895

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science. On-line option trader offers private tuition. Learn to trade the financial markets safely and profitably from home, with a small account. You will be amazed that it's not rocket science. Zero experience required. Have an income in the tropics regardless of other people. 100% serious. Limited places. Tel: 01-7373958. Email: otrader123@hotmail.com

BAR FOR SALE

2.6-year contract, no key money. Price: 1.7 million baht. Call 1 pm to midnight. Tel: 09-7240706. Fax: 076-342193.

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shop for sale. Rent and repair all kinds of bikes. Located in Patong garage. Private room in same building. Call and we can talk price. Tel: 07-896-2617.

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Patong's unique Katoys 'R' Us cabaret bar is for sale. A rare chance to buy all, or a share sale is possible as Nick is retiring. Call personally to Nick (01-8922824) or Ning-Nong (01-8955242).

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for rent. Office space for rent in new building ideally located at junction to the new Ao Por Pier in Pa Khlok. Size from 40 - 160sqm. Please call to view. Tel: 076-260468-70. Fax: 076-260440. Email: admin@tacticalcapital.net

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Small business, big opportunity! Recently refurbished pub & restaurant, located in Phuket City. Package includes all paperwork, visas, 2 work permits and all licenses for a smooth takeover. 400sqm, live-music stage, sound and light system, UBC TV, 3 new pool tables (incl pool room), 15 tables, 40 bar stools, 5 fridges and freezers, kitchen equipment and over 300 taxi-bikes with O'Malleys vests driving around the city! Offers considered. Available as leasehold or freehold. Tel: 09-7292846. Email: scottshaw77@lycos.co.uk

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Ownership for sale: 2.3 million baht. 4-story unit next to Joe Mansion, before Lan Nawamin Park, near Pearl Hotel. Important places within walking distance. All recently renovated. Fax: +81-92-6064133. Email: hiro-phuket@nifty.com

FOR SALE

German carwash technology from importer. Wash 100 cars or more a day. Selling, installation, service, training, investment. Email: carwash_phuket@hotmail.com

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in central Patong, 550 sqm, with implicit advantages and attractive hotel, seeks serious financial partners. Initial start-up 9.3 million baht according to business plan. Please contact for full details. Tel: 01-9684541. Email: j_vpartners@hotmail.com

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Patong. Soi Dongtan, Beach Rd. Good, busy bar with pool table, darts, televisions, refrigerated displays. For more information, call Tel: 66-04-8397495. Email: b mudablue@aol.com

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in Phuket City. Excellent opportunity for a housewife looking for a small business. An established beauty parlor right in Phuket City is for sale at 1.5 million baht, including:

- 104sqm space with long-term rent
- an exclusive franchisee contract
- very nice decoration and garden
- full set of equipment
- competent and well-trained staff.

Owner is moving. Please contact me for more detail. Tel: 01-0888848. Email: eng_ls@yahoo.com

INVESTMENT!

Minimum 10,000 euros for 1 year = 10% interest net, payable after 4 weeks in advance. Lawyer contract. Please contact for more information. Email: adventuraintern@hotmail.com

RESTAURANT

Urgent sale, Mango Tree, Nanai Rd. Inspect and make offer. Please call Brian for more information. Tel: 07-0673360.

BAR FOR SALE

No rent for 3 years. Please call for more information. Tel: 07-8817600. For further details, please see our website at: www.homebarphuket.com

RAWAI RESTAURANT

for sale. Restaurant opportunity in Rawai. Please contact for more information. Tel: 09-8605007. Email: meccar@msn.com

2-STORY SHOP

for rent. On Phuket Rd. Good location next to a dentist. 5m x 30m. 240,000 baht a year. Please call for more information. Tel: 01-8924311.

BUSINESS CENTER FOR SALE

Patong Beach, prime location. Includes 15-room guesthouse, 64-seat restaurant, 5 motor-bikes, 1 jeep, Internet cafe and established travel agency. No brokers. Tel: 01-0820039 Ilan or 01-0911662 Niki. Email: patong05@gmail.com For more information, please see our website at: phuketdir.com/coaststar/index.htm

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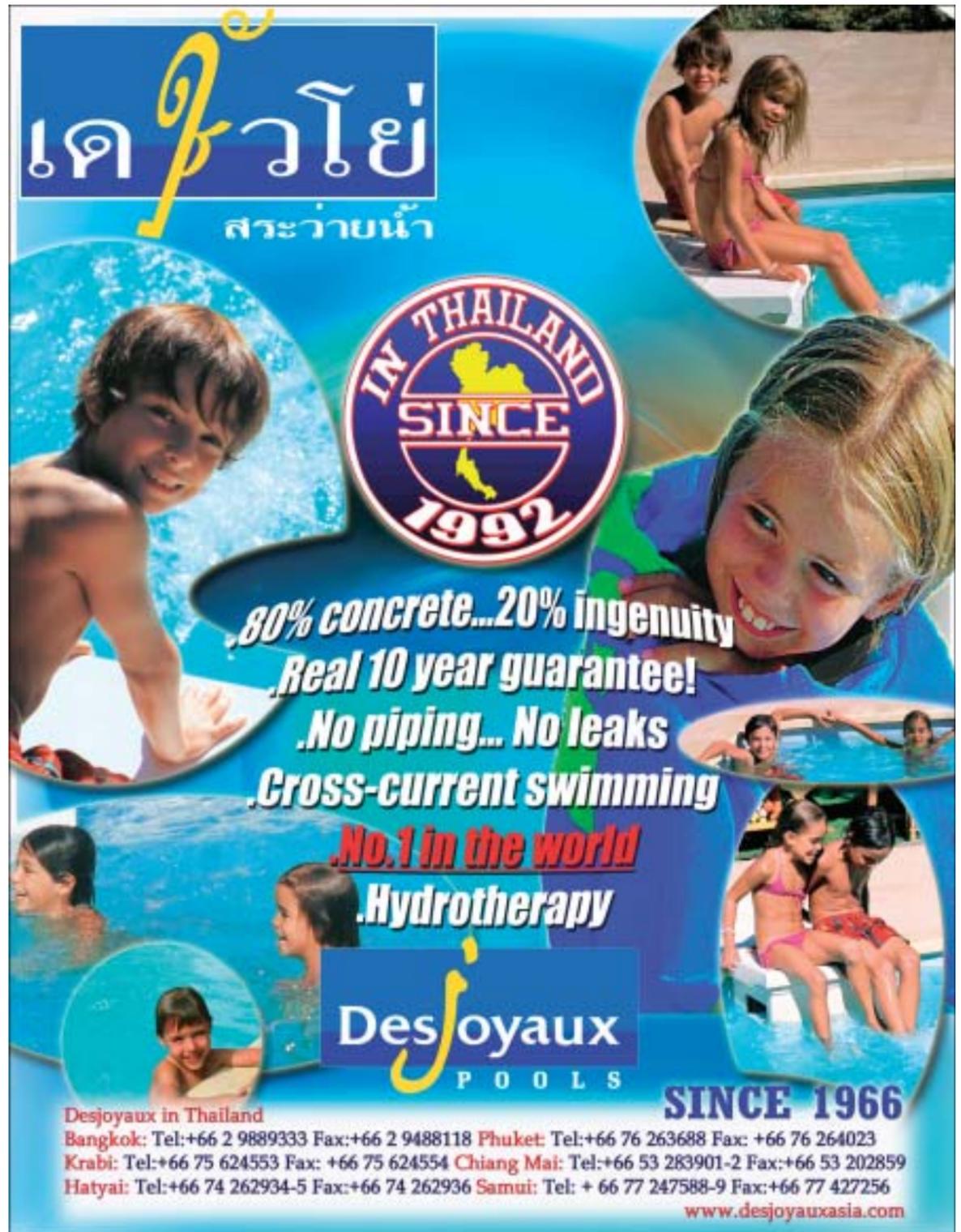


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