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Norwegian man killed in Rawai

By Sompratch Saowakhon

RAWAI: Police say they have suspects in mind but are collecting more evidence to submit to Phuket Provincial Court when they apply for arrest warrants in the case of Norwegian Simen Sparre Knudsen, who was stabbed to death on September 23.

Mr Knudsen, 47, was stabbed and left for dead on the road from the Kata Viewpoint to Rawai at about 1 am on September 23.

He later died at Phuket International Hospital, where an autopsy revealed he suffered two stab wounds: one to the ribs on the left side of his torso and another to the heart.

Chalong Police Superintendent Col Chalit Kaewyarat identified the victim as Simen Sparre Knudsen, a Norwegian who had lived in Phuket for more than 20 years.

The day after the murder, Col Chalit said that two men had attacked Mr Knudsen on a dark section of the road.

A resident of Rawai Village 7, where he lived with his wife Sommaai Knudsen, 39, and their 13-year-old son Chanon, Mr Knudsen was on his way home by motorbike after a night of socializing when the attack occurred, said Col Chalit.

Col Chalit initially said he thought a personal dispute was the likely motivation behind the attack because Knudsen's motorcycle and other belongings were left untouched.

However, the victim's wife insisted that two cell phones, credit cards and an unspecified amount of cash were missing from a hip bag her late husband always wore when he went out.



Norwegian sea captain Simen Sparre Knudsen had been coming to Thailand for 30 years before he was stabbed to death on September 23. The case, headline news in Norway, again puts the spotlight on tourist safety in Phuket.

K. Sommaai said she was unaware of any personal disputes that may have motivated the attack as her husband had never been involved in any businesses in Thailand.

"He was a good guy and never got into fights with anyone before. In 13 years since I've known him I never heard about him fighting. I don't believe this was local teenagers fighting with him, but it is possible that he was robbed," said K. Sommaai.

Mr Knudsen called his wife by mobile phone at about 6:30 pm that evening to say he was going out to meet friends at the Boon Bar in Kata, she said.

He said he would not be late returning home because he had to prepare to leave for Norway on Monday to work a two-

month stint. Mr Knudsen, who normally worked for two months and then had a two-month break, had been traveling between Thailand and Norway in this fashion for 30-years, she said.

That night, K. Sommaai suggested Mr Knudsen wait for her and their son to return home so he could use the car, but he opted to go by motorbike, she said.

Two suspects had followed Mr. Knudsen on a motorbike before the attack, said Col Chalit on the day after the murder.

He later confirmed that an image of one suspect had been sketched, but declined to release it to the media for fear of jeopardizing the investigation.

Phuket Provincial Police **Continued on Page 2**

ICEC site decision deferred

By Janyaporn Morel

PHUKET: Originally scheduled to be held on September 19, the provincial committee meeting set to make a final decision on the site for Phuket's long-anticipated International Convention and Exhibition Center (ICEC) has been postponed until October 4, the Gazette has learned.

The reason for the postponement was that Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit, who chairs the committee, was called to an urgent meeting at Government House in Bangkok.

Called by Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont, the September 19 meeting with the governors of the six Andaman Coast provinces was to discuss the readiness of the tsunami-warning system after the tsunami scare a week earlier.

The September 19 meeting was intended to announce whether or not the ICEC will be built at Anuphas and Son's land off Chao Fa West Rd, where Chao Fa City is to be built, or on government land in Tah Chat Chai.

The committee is to submit its recommendation to Tourism and Sports Minister Suwit Yodmanee and then to Cabinet for further approval before the project can proceed.

The project received a boost to the cause when K. Suwit said the it could move forward with private sector investment and ING Funds (Thailand) expressed interest in developing the project under a build-operate-transfer agreement.

Once approval is granted, ING Funds (Thailand) could begin construction immediately and the project could be completed in a year's time, said Anurak Khunyotying, Managing Director of architectural firm Axis Group.

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From page 1

Norwegian murder

Deputy Commander Pol Col Paween Pongsirin had already visited Chalong Police Station to check on the progress of the investigation. Tourist safety has been in the spotlight in Phuket since the crash of One-Two-Go flight OG269 on September 16.

The *Gazette* called the Norwegian Consul in Bangkok Bridgit Branthenberg, who confirmed only that Mr Knudsen's family in Norway had been notified.

All of the information released by the consulate was included in a report by Norwegian journal *Aftenpost*, she said.

Norwegian readers of the *Gazette* kindly translated reports of those accounts, which stated that Mr Knudsen had been employed as a merchant marine captain. He was a native of the town of Vestfold in Nottoroy County, it was reported.

Mr. Knudsen was rushed to hospital by a German bar owner named Stefan, whose Icon Bar is close to the scene.

He was made aware of the stabbing when a woman ran into the bar screaming. Stefan raced to the scene by motorcycle, called an ambulance and kept Mr Knudsen alive by mouth-to-mouth until it arrived.

Scheduled blackout

KATHU: The Phuket Provincial Electricity Authority (PPEA) has announced scheduled blackout on September 27 in order to continue work on high-voltage power lines.

Power will be switched off from 9 am until 5 pm in the following areas:

Kathu: Phra Phuket Kaew Rd, from the Tesco-Lotus intersection to Wat Kathu, including The Valley, The Heritage, Moo Baan Chalaykiri, Baan Kathu, Soi Dara, Soi Baan Kathu School, Kathu Thani Village, Hope Land 2 housing development, and Soi Kathu 3, 4, 5 and 6.

This information is subject to change without notice. For more information or to check the latest status call 076-211663.

PEC prepares for island-wide OrBorTor elections

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

PHUKET: The Phuket Election Committee (PEC) held a meeting September 19 to present ballots and ballot boxes to representatives from each Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*) on behalf of the Central Election Commission in Bangkok.

"Each *OrBorTor* must keep these things safe in a place where there is a security guard," PEC Director Supap Akkam told the *Gazette*.

Elections for eight *OrBorTor* councils in Phuket are set for October 7. Islanders

are urged to register at their local polling stations or *OrBorTor* offices, K. Supap said.

OrBorTor election boards, consisting of about 10 members per polling station, were named at the meeting. Each election board will comprise a polling station president, a director, seven government officers and at least one police officer to control and inspect the station during the election.

The 19 candidates to run for *OrBorTor* presidential positions are: Natthapong Wimonpan and Thanapong Kor-udom for *OrBorTor* Chalong; Jareon Thinkohkaew and Keukiet Jitkue for Koh Kaew; Itsanu

Doomlak, Jaran Sarnrak and Jutha Doomlak for Kamala; Sarawut Sisakookarm and Kasate Pimarnprom for Mai Khao; and Tamrong Tantiwiratchakul and Taweesak Soderaksa from for Srisoonthorn.

Also running are Manote Panchalaad, Samart Sakae and Sommit Seubsin for Cherg Talay; Surapong Panyawai, Kittikorn Preteep na Thalang and Kamnueng Jampathong for Sakoo; and Sompob Konkaew and Krailert Pantip for Thepkrasattri.

There are also 284 candidates running for the 120 *OrBorTor*-councilor positions, said K. Supap.

By Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

PHUKET AIRPORT: A French delegation arrived in Phuket September 19 to mourn the loss of 10 French nationals killed in the One-Two-Go plane crash.

Led by Rama Yade, Minister of State responsible for foreign affairs and human rights, the group arrived at the airport at 9:30 am and placed flowers before a metal storage container housing the bodies of 10 victims, all known or thought to be French nationals.

Miss Yada was also briefed on the process used to identify and claim the remains of victims killed in the disaster, in which 89 passengers and crew died.

The identities of six French victims have been confirmed by Phuket Immigration Police by their travel documents. They were identified as Henry Macaire and his wife Fermina Macaire, Laetitia Gambu, Thibaud Lamere, Jacques Marnef and Alain Benbaron.

The identities of four other victims traveling in the same group are thought to be French, but their identities have yet to be confirmed.

Buddhist, Islamic and Christian religious rites were conducted at the crash site on September 18. Another Buddhist ceremony was held the following afternoon, inviting the souls of the deceased to leave the crash site for a better final resting place.

A service was held September 19 for Jewish victims. All eight Israeli bodies have been identified and flown home. The

French mourn air crash victims



French Minister of State Rama Yade (left) observes a minute of silence at Phuket International Airport for the 10 French nationals who died in the air crash.

Photo by Jirada Deechaiya.

bodies of Israeli women Rachel Tofen, Lily Alon and Eliya Hofit as well as American Stefan Mark Woronoff and Frenchman Alain Benbaron were flown to Bangkok September 20, before being flown back to their home countries.

The atmosphere was subdued at the Phuket Airport Hall, where officers from the Royal

Thai Police Thailand Disaster Victim Identification (TDVI) program were working to identify remaining bodies.

Of the 53 foreign victims, only 13 were left to be repatriated as of September 25.

On September 23, six Iranians who survived the air-crash were discharged from Bangkok Hospital Phuket. They were: Hashem Parviz, Mahsa Fatoorechi, Hashem Madia, Movahed Abbas Kiyani, Maryam Mirtaheri and Kiyani Movahed Mehrana.

On September 24, the bodies of four passengers on flight OG269 - one each from Iran, the UK, France and Canada - were repatriated, while the bodies of two German citizens were flown back to their home country September 25.

Five Thais and one citizen each from Ireland, Australia and Britain were still being treated at Bangkok Hospital Phuket when the *Gazette* went to press, with four Thais and two Dutch nationals yet to be discharged from Phuket International Hospital.

Five survivors (two Irish, one Thai, one French and one British) suffering from severe

burn wounds were sent to Bangkok September 24 to receive treatment at the burns unit at Bangkok Hospital.

On September 20, Udom Thanprasongchai, managing director of Orient Thai, which operates One-Two-Go, announced that survivors and the families of those who died in the crash landing of One-Two-Go flight OG269 will each receive an insurance payout of US\$150,000 (about 5 million baht).

Speaking to the press at Phuket Airport Office, K. Udom explained that One-Two-Go had already offered up to 50,000 baht for each survivor's clothing and other immediate basic needs.

"We are insured up to US\$300 million... We are currently working on the documents and fine-checking the contracts," said K. Udom.

Families of Thais who died in the crash will also receive 100,000 baht per victim to cover funeral costs.

K. Udom explained that One-Two-Go has decreased its daily schedule by 10 domestic flights a day, down to 30. "We want our staff to feel relaxed and not to worry too much about what happened. I think after two or three weeks, our services will be as normal again," he said.

"We have also enlisted the help of an expert company for transporting the bodies of victims' back to their home countries," he added.

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The twisting road from Kathu to Patong has claimed many lives over the years, but Phuket Provincial Highways Office is making road improvements to the tune of 10 million baht.

Patong Hill road being resurfaced

By Sangkhae Leelanaporn

PATONG: In response to the large number of accidents on the section of Phra Barami Rd from Kathu to Patong – one of the busiest roads on the island – the Phuket Provincial Highways Office (PPHO) is spending nearly 10 million baht on resurfacing the road.

PPHO Deputy Chief Nirong Khumtua explained, “We have received many complaints from people saying that oil has been spilled on Phra Barami Rd, making it slippery and causing many accidents, especially in the rainy season.

“We resurfaced the road two years ago. Some people thought that we did not do a good job, but people should please keep in mind the volume of traffic that uses that road, including the large number of big cement trucks,” he added.

K. Nirong explained that under the construction contract, work started August 17 and is scheduled for completion by October 15.

The contract budget is 9.8 million baht.

Contractor Haad Yai Cape Seal Co Ltd is carrying out the roadworks on the 2.8-kilometer-long section of road from the Chinese shrine at the top of Patong Hill to Wat Suwan Khirongse in Patong.

Traffic signs warning motorists to exercise caution have been posted along the route, added K. Nirong.

K. Nirong said that he expected the resurfacing to reduce the number of accidents along the road.

However, he urged motorists to still be careful when driving along the notorious stretch even after the roadworks are complete.

Korean tour operators hesitant to sign MOU

PHUKET CITY: After months of setbacks, only 33 of the island’s 54 Korean tour operators have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) ensuring that they will hire Thai tour guides.

At the public signing on September 18, representatives from just 25 Korean tour operators turned up to sign the MOU.

Kim Tae Woen, Chairman of the Korean Association, and Phuket Vice-Governor Worapoj Ratthasima welcomed representatives from 25 of the island’s Korean tour operators to Phuket Provincial Hall and thanked them for their participation in the signing, which was also attended by Phuket Governor Niran Kalayanamit.

“We would like to see good co-operation among us. I would appreciate if all parties would follow the MOU because we do not want any problems in the future as next year we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of Korean and Thai Tourism,” said V/Gov Worapoj.

Promchote Traivate, of the Phuket Office of Sports and Recreation Development, read out the MOU, which was then translated by a Korean interpreter. The MOU stated that Korean tour operators will hire Thai tour guides who pass a Korean-language competency test, being held September 28 to 30. Those who pass the test will begin work within 15 days and there will be additional tests held every three months.

Air-crash mystery hero steps forward

By Semacote Suganya

PHUKET CITY: Australian Robert Borland, who was pulled from the burning wreckage of One-Two-Go Flight OG269 by a “man in a yellow shirt”, finally had a chance to thank his savior on September 20 at Bangkok Hospital Phuket, where both men were being treated for injuries sustained in the crash.

The hero was identified as Paiboon Phaphan, a 39-year-old air-conditioner mechanic and resident of Village 3, Tambon Pa Khlok, Thalang.

K. Paiboon, who suffered a back injury and walked to the meeting supported by a brace, told the *Gazette* in a weak voice that he was not a regular flier and was returning from Bangkok with his boss at the time of the accident.

“I am still afraid to fly now. I think it will take some time before I will be able to fly again,” he said.

Mr Borland, 48, a 10-year resident of Phuket and a tsunami survivor, suffered a broken bone in his back and was trampled by passengers desperate to escape the burning fuselage. Thanks to K. Paiboon, he was among the last to make it out of the plane alive.

“Other people were trying to escape, and many of them were stepping over and on top of me. I was also on fire. My trousers were burning...”

“I couldn’t get out of the aircraft, but I think there was a Thai man and he had a yellow shirt on; he dragged me through the emergency exit and onto the wing.



Australian Robert Borland (right) thanks his savior Paiboon Phaphan, who pulled him from the burning fuselage of Flight OG269.

“Because the wing was slippery, I slid off it and fell to the ground. I was seated in the aircraft’s midsection, near the wing and the emergency exit, which was quite lucky for me,” he had told the *Gazette* earlier.

After meeting Mr Borland, K. Paiboon recounted his own memory of the chaos.

“It was raining very hard and the landing was very hard, much harder than usual, so I put my head down and braced myself against the seat in front of me,” he said.

“After we crashed with a loud bang everything went dark and a fire broke out in front of me. Then I heard a farang behind me and I saw him push open the emergency exit door.

“I was able to breath only twice because the air was burning my nose. When I managed to get out I was standing on the wing and I saw many passengers following me.”

K. Paiboon said he waited on the wing until his boss, K. Chaowalart, and his son Jumbo had escaped.

After they had safely made it out he noticed Mr Borland, with his legs on fire. Ignoring his own bleeding head wound, K. Paiboon pulled Mr Borland out onto the wing before looking back inside for more survivors.

When he looked back, Mr Borland was gone so he assumed he had slid off the wing and fallen to the ground.

Also, Jumbo became stuck in the mud below when fell off the wing. K. Paiboon pulled he boy to safety and then went to look for the boy’s mother, who was thought to be still inside the plane.

“I called but nobody answered, then the fire trucks began to arrive and they told me to come down,” he said.

K. Paiboon said he felt better and had been cleared to leave the hospital, but stayed for a week to receive the physical therapy he needed because it was too difficult for him to travel back and forth from home in his condition.

Irish visas on Phuket

PHUKET: The Irish Honorary Consul for Phuket, Helene Fallon-Wood, has announced that her office now accepts applications for visas to enter Ireland.

For more information contact Mrs Fallon-Wood at: Honorary Consul of Ireland, Tamarind Valley, Moo 4, Soi Suksan, Wiset Rd, Rawai, Phuket 83130. Tel: 076-281273. Fax: 076-281084.

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ICONOCLASTIC CAPITALISM: Laguna Phuket 20 years on

Surveying Laguna Phuket from the air these days, it is hard to imagine what United Nations surveyors were thinking years ago when they advised that the area had no potential for tourism. The lush, sprawling integrated resort complex on Phuket's northwest coast at Bang Tao Bay today is a much-studied paradigm for tourism projects elsewhere.

The 600-acre development, this month celebrating its 20th anniversary, and its constituent hotels; Dusit Laguna, Laguna Beach Club, Sheraton Grande Laguna, Alamanda and the Banyan Tree, are consistent award winners.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand annually distinguishes Laguna Phuket's "outstanding performance". *Conde Nast Traveller* magazine last year lauded Banyan Tree Resort for having some of the best hotel rooms in Asia.

The 2005 Asiamoney Business Travel Poll called the same hotel "the best vacation resort in Asia" and the Banyan Tree Spa "Asia's best health spa". Sheraton Grande Laguna in 2005 was chosen "Thailand's leading golf resort" at the World Travel Awards and one of the "top five leading Asia Pacific resorts" by *Business Traveller Asia Pacific* magazine, while the British Guild of Travel Writers selected Dusit Laguna as the "Best overseas tourism venture" in 2003.

At the recent China Hotel Investment Summit (CHIS) in Shanghai, Banyan Tree won the Finest Hotels of The World award.

Celebrating its 20th birthday this year, Laguna Phuket stands as an internationally-recognized resort complex whose success is the envy of hoteliers around the world.

Arriving in Phuket just when the resort was being build is well-known Chalong resident **Marque A Rome**, who takes a look back over how a small group of visionaries from Singapore transformed Bang Tao Bay from a wasteland into one of Asia's top tourist destinations.

The name Banyan Tree, according to Ho Kwon Ping, Laguna's iconoclastic creator, comes from the fishing village on Lamma Island in Hong Kong, where he and his wife Claire Chiang lived "three idyllic years".

Ho, during the '70s was a romantic idealist and journalist and she a "poor development sociologist". Rustic Yung Shue Wan, or Banyan Tree Bay, was their sanctuary and had a magical quality.

Times have changed. Claire has since served as a member of Singapore's Parliament and is executive director of the Banyan Tree Gallery retail outlets. Ho is one of the richest men in Singapore.

But he never lost his romantic streak, so, when it came time to name his new hotel chain and the company that owns it, he chose Banyan Tree: "Our hotels aspire to be Yung Shue Wans, or sanctuaries for our guests."

Few would argue that the aspiration is incompatible with the place. Yet in 1977, a United Nations Development Plan team wrote that Bang Tao Bay was

"too environmentally damaged to have any development potential."

Formerly the site of large scale tin-mining, the property was pock-marked with craters and littered with piles of blackened soil, discarded machinery and ramshackle huts. The earth had been so badly leached by chemicals that even the hardiest weeds wouldn't grow.

Such was the material with which KP Ho (the anglicized version of his name) wrought his first masterpiece. Earth movers leveled the area, then truckloads by the thousand spread fertilized topsoil before numerous gardens and native flora were planted. A sophisticated sewage system was built at a time when hotels elsewhere installed minimal sewage treatment plants – and left them turned off to save money. Ho installed a versatile recycling plant; and constructed two reservoirs with a freshwater treatment plant.

Complex engineering problems were tackled.

"We had to remove contaminated soil and water and restructure the area so the lagoons could wrap around the resorts," he explained.

"When we decided to build villas out over a swamp, we had to fill the area with soil, set down the pilings, build the villas, then



His wife Claire Chiang once described KP Ho (above) as 'a capitalist in his pocket – and a socialist in his heart.'

finally remove the soil from underneath, leaving the villas to appear as floating on the lagoon."

When that first phase was finished, observers stood amazed. Some couldn't comprehend the transformation, still imagining Bang Tao Bay a wasteland. "You can't swim at Bang Tao," one would hear then, "it's ruined from tin mining," they said incredulously.

Whereas countless generations of fortune hunters had come only to take, Ho had actually put something back into Phuket.

In appreciation thereof, the International Hotel Association and American Express presented Laguna their Environmental Award in 1992. Ho is still proud of the achievement. "Where acid-filled craters once stood, inland lakes are now teeming with life," he wrote recently, noting that "fish are abundant in the lagoons, which attract Siberian

ducks, white egrets and other migratory birds."

The astounding rebirth was made the more unlikely because it began almost as a lark.

"When I started to build the resort business," Ho told an audience in July, "I did not have our family business as backing. I had already lost millions of my father's money through a disastrous oil rig project in China. I had access to less than SG\$3 million to buy the land and build the first hotel... My brother and I literally designed it on his kitchen table."

The company initially could not find investors or bankers to support the project.

"Even hotel management companies refused," said East Asia's most successful resort operator, whose net worth *Forbes* magazine estimates at US\$195 million. Ho is also ranked as number 31 on the list of Singapore's richest.

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Above: Before KP Ho and associates bought the land along Bang Tao Bay where Laguna Phuket now sits, a UN survey team had once written off the land as having no potential for tourism development.

Left: This year Laguna Phuket proudly celebrates its 20th anniversary.

Ho is a frequent guest speaker at Asian business seminars, where he is notable for his wit and arcane knowledge: “Bargirls and bankers,” he observed in July, in a typical bon mot, “have something in common... both can persuade you to part with your money, and both can make you wake up one day, regretting everything you’ve done. But only a banker can make you owe him... more after the deed than before...”

The value of Banyan Tree Holdings Co Ltd shot up 300% last year, from SG\$0.97 a share to SG\$2.83. Current market capitalization is roughly SG\$2.2 billion dollars. Including Laguna Phuket, the company owns controlling interest in 21 resorts, 58 spas and 68 retail galleries in 20 countries; employees number 4,380 of 32 nationalities.

“Over the next three years we will add some 28 hotels and

36 spas in places ranging from Mexico and the Caribbean, to Greece, Morocco and other Mediterranean countries, to the Middle East, India and, of course, China.

“We are a tiny player compared to the Starwoods and InterCons of the world, but we believe we can be a dominant player in our own chosen niche, our own small but global space.”

Ho says one more Banyan Tree Holdings hotel is planned for Laguna – the Angsana Phuket, a brand created in 2000 and aimed at Gen Xers.

Residential and commercial development there will continue, as will time-share marketing, which Ho feels serves a critical need for tourists from developing countries who “are interested in being locked into a holiday at fixed cost.”

He is also looking at developing Laguna’s “integrated re-

sort” theme in Vietnam whereby normally competitive hotel brands co-operate by sharing facilities and services.

As for Banyan Tree Holdings, Ho says, “We are particularly focused on China.” Why? Simple: “More than any other single factor... proliferation of a middle-class will be the most powerful engine for global tourism” and China’s middle class is growing rapidly.

“It’s already around 50 million in size and forecast to grow to 170 million by 2020, and to a staggering 520 million by 2030.”

A similar process is taking place in India.

This he calls “the most important demographic trend this century.” 100 million Chinese will travel abroad by 2020, he avers, and wonders pointedly, “Is anyone other than the casino-owners of Macau prepared for this onslaught?”

The answer, of course, is KP Ho. “I don’t see the tremendous growth of China as a zero-sum game,” he told the *Gazette*. “China is going to be the world’s largest inbound and outbound tourism producer [but] it’s a two-way flow, which can only be a win-win game.”

Still, China looks to be the goose to lay the golden eggs. Ho noted during a recent speech in Shanghai at the China Hotel Investment Summit that, “Morgan Stanley says there are 100 million Chinese consumers in the luxury goods market. Goldman Sachs claims that by 2015 China will be the world’s top consumer of luxury goods...”

“Around half of the guests at our China resorts, paying more than US\$400 a night, are Chinese nationals.”

Despite his many triumphs, Ho retains a penchant for humor. Asked by a reporter once

how he dealt with success, Ho answered, “By buying Rolex watches and Ferrari convertibles,” then added, on a more serious note, “Just joking! I don’t know. I am not sure what you mean by dealing with success – except to say that it makes me want to do more.”

His wife Claire Chiang once described him, not without humor, as “a capitalist in his pocket – and a socialist in his heart.” He has said of them both, “We were idealistic students, radicals wanting to change the world. Then we realized that changing the world is far more complex than demonstrating on the streets; that we can change the world only in a limited individual way.”

In creating Laguna, he certainly changed Phuket – and in a way which, from the perspective of 20 years on, clearly has advanced local business, the environment and society.



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Volunteers clean up Mai Khao Beach and surrounding areas, collecting almost a tonne of rubbish for recycling.

Mai Khao kids take out the trash

Almost a tonne of trash from Mai Khao Beach and the surrounding area was picked up and separated for recycling on September 13 by people young and old taking part in the Mai Khao Rubbish Awareness Clean Up.

The cleanup was organized by Mai Khao Marine Turtle Foundation with the support of JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa as part of the resort's international initiative under the banner "Spirit to Serve Our Communities".

About 200 people took part in combing five areas of Mai Khao for rubbish, including teachers and students from Phuket Rajabhat University and Mai Khao School, the village chief and members of the local community, along with resort staffers.

The collected rubbish was taken to Mai Khao School to be separated into six categories for recycling, including 127.4 kilograms of plastic, 11.1 kilograms of paper, 605.9 kilograms of glass, 15.2 kilograms of foam, 115.2 kilograms of general rubbish and 6 kilograms hazardous materials.

The Mai Khao Turtle Foundation will also hold a follow up workshop at schools in the Mai Khao district in November to find solutions for rubbish management.

For more information, call Michelle at 081-8936001 or Email: info@maikhaoturtlefoundation.com

TRASHING
Phuket

PIWC Gala Ball After Dinner tickets available

PHUKET: Organizers of the PIWC Gala Ball have announced that After Dinner tickets for the island's prestigious annual charity event are still available.

Tickets for the much anticipated Gala Dinner on November 24 at Indigo Pearl Resort, Nai Yang, have already sold out. However, a limited number of tickets to join the after-dinner fun from 9.30 pm until late remain.

The Gala Ball, organized by Phuket International Women's Club has become one of Phuket's most glamorous annual social events, attracting the island's well-heeled movers and shakers.

Funds raised at the event will go towards the club's continuing efforts to provide scholarships and funding for Phuket's underprivileged children.

With the generous support of local businesses and members of the community, the PIWC has awarded more than 500 scholarships since 1988 and currently supports more than 250 vocational and university students with their education.

This year's Gala Ball, with the theme "Rhapsody in Blue", promises to be as spectacular as ever with music and dance until late, with live music from the 19-piece Lai Thai Orchestra.

After Dinner tickets cost 1,500 baht each, and include drinks, midnight snacks, casual seating in The Music Room and the chance to bid in the evening's charity auctions.

To buy tickets or contribute items to the auctions, call Joan at 087-2820422 or Sue at 087-2776948.

Queer News

Fortunate fellow crashes own cremation ceremony

CHAI NAT: Attending your own cremation – as in actually turning up alive, rather than making a brief appearance stuffed in a box before being burned – would be an interesting experience.

Think about it, you could hear the good points of your personality extolled in a eulogy and see who looked genuinely upset – and who looked secretly pleased.

A 45-year-old man in Sapphaya district had exactly that opportunity on September 14, when he turned up in the middle of his cremation just before "his body" was to be cremated.

Samreng Numreut had disappeared from his home a few months earlier. This in itself was not unusual. K. Samreng's sister, Sopha Namthongchai, 46, said that her younger brother was "not quite all there".

He was in the habit of leaving home for weeks at a time and he would usually turn up at the home of one of their relatives, she said.

On August 16, Sapphaya District Police contacted the family to say that a body matching K. Samreng's description had

been found by the side of the Asia highway in Tambon Phonamdak.

The unfortunate man had been hit by a car, leaving his face unrecognizable. Officers took a photo of the body to show K. Samreng's relatives. Despite the lack of a face, everything else seemed to match K. Samreng – the height and build were identical. He was wearing a blue shirt and shorts, just the attire K. Samreng favored.

The corpse even had shorts held up with a piece of red string and a tattoo of a leaping tiger on his stomach – again, just like K. Samreng. The only noticeable difference was that the corpse was wearing underwear, whereas K. Samreng was known to eschew briefs.

Despite the discrepancy, police persuaded the family that the similarities were too striking – and K. Samreng could easily have picked up a pair of pants during his travels.

The case apparently closed, the grieving K. Sopha claimed the body and began arranging her brother's cremation. It was a grand event, as no expense had

been spared on the ceremony.

Just as the presiding monk was leading the final prayers before cremation, in walked – you guessed it – K. Samreng, curiously questioning attendees about the reason for the lavish ceremony.

At first, his presence caused shock among the mourners, who were convinced that a ghost of the departed walked among them.

After the initial shock, however, they realized the confused figure was no ghost, but the real flesh-and-blood K. Samreng.

"I spent more than 10,000 baht on the cremation," K. Sopha said. "I don't know who the body belongs to, but I'm glad to get my little brother back."

Lt Phaithoon Yuakthong, Duty Officer at Sapphaya District Police Station, said that K. Samreng's timely appearance means that officers will have to start another hunt for the dead man's relatives.

If anyone has lost a relative in the area, they are encouraged to come and look at photos of the faceless corpse at the station, he added. *Source: Khao Sod*

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College hazing leaves teen in coma

The foster parents of a comatose teenager, who suffered severe burns to his body after rolling over a bonfire in a college hazing, have filed a complaint with police.

Suthin Tosong said her son Niphon, 16, has already undergone one brain surgery.

His torso was badly burned and he suffered a head injury after head-butting the sand beach on the orders of about 40 senior students of the Thai Wijitsilp college in Bangkok.

K. Suthin said the college refused to take responsibility because the senior students organized the hazing on their own, but the college gave her all the senior students' names.

They were included in the complaint she filed with the Crime Suppression Division (CSD) police after Nonthaburi Police, whose jurisdiction covers the college, refused to receive it.

Thab Sakae Police in Prachuap Khiri Khan, where the hazing took place, had primary jurisdiction, they told her.

A group of about 90 boys left Bangkok for a resort in Prachuap Khiri Khan on a rented bus on the night of September 14.

In the same hazing, two other students suffered severe burns to their bodies and faces. They said they went to the resort with the group just to have fun and were not prepared to disobey the orders of their seniors.

All three students were later transferred to hospitals in Nonthaburi when the group returned to Bangkok.

The Education Ministry has ordered an investigation.

Love-sick lunatic. A lone gunman said to have suffered a mental breakdown after his wife left him shot dead three neighbors and his mother-in-law and injured five others, including two policemen, on the night of September 19.

Police said a man identified only as "Jakkrit", 35, shot dead three neighbors while they were noisily drinking at 8:40 pm in Chanthaburi's Soi Dao district.

He then drove his pickup truck to the house of his wife in another village, where he shot dead his mother-in-law and injured his father-in-law.

Police said the man became angry after he did not find his wife there. After that, he fled to a cane plantation and engaged in a gunfight with police at about midnight, injuring two policemen.

Police have yet to locate him.

Free wheeling. The introduction of bicycle lanes has increased the number of student-cyclists in Kalasin's Muang district.

Bike rider Kittti Pathawong, 15, a student at Kalasinpittayasan School, said, "Since we've had the bike lanes I have noticed that around 60% of students in my school ride bikes when going to



HORROR SMASH

Ten people were injured when a double-deck tour bus lost control and overturned onto a pickup in rainy conditions on Route 304 from Nakhon Ratchasima's Pakthongchai District on September 18.

school. In the past hardly anybody rode them... It's easy and safe to ride a bicycle with these lanes because they are on the footpaths and have a smooth surface."

The student wants the authorities to create more bike lanes around the district and provide more lighting at night.

The four-kilometer-long lanes were built in March as part of the municipality's policy of saving energy and the authorities' wish to see students riding safely. The bike paths will be extended to 10 kilometers by next year, said the municipal official in charge of the project.

Anthem anathema. Anti-coup activist Chotisak Onsueng and a female companion were attacked and verbally abused after refusing to stand up for the Royal Anthem at a Bangkok cinema on the night of September 20.

Chotisak told *The Nation* that he and his companion had to call the police in order to end the

feud, after someone in the audience shouted at them and a slight skirmish took place.

Chotisak, 26, filed charges of physical assault against the alleged attacker, 40-year-old Nawamin Wittayakul, who in turn threatened to counter-sue on a lèse majesté charge.

Chotisak insisted that he had rarely stood up for the Royal Anthem in the past, but this was the first time he had got into a scuffle.

The attacker accused them of being "unpatriotic" and disloyal to the monarchy.

The man allegedly called them "pathetic" and questioned if they were real Thai citizens.

Keypad clone crooks. Commercial banks and the police are battling a new ATM theft technique in which fake keypads record pin numbers and personal information, from which thieves then produce clone cards to empty bank accounts.

Noting that the fake keypads feel hard to the touch, Thai Bankers' Association secretary-general Twatchai Yongkittikul urged cardholders to immediately cancel transactions and notify the bank if the keypad feels strange.

K. Twatchai did not say when this new technique was detected, nor how often it had occurred. He believes it is a large-scale operation involving computer experts and people with experience in plastic and rubber products, as the fake keypads looked very much like the real thing.

If proved at fault, banks would be responsible for the stolen money.

K. Twatchai said he did not think bank officials were cooperating with the thieves.

Cancer blitz. By the end of the year, the Public Health Ministry hopes to teach its 200,000 community-health volunteers everything there is to know about di-

agnosing cervical cancer so they can catch cases in the early stages.

Deputy Public Health Minister Vallop Thaineua said that the ministry needed to be more active in screening for cervical cancer because the number of patients in Thailand was increasing at an alarming rate. Every year at least 6,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer, which is now claiming about 3,000 lives annually.

Cervical cancer is most prevalent among women between 45 and 50.

Routine Pap smear tests have been deemed the most effective way of detecting cervical cancer, and every woman over the age of 35 is recommended to undergo the test every five years.

The ministry has introduced a Pap smear program in 75 provinces, hoping to have at least 800,000 women tested.

Only 435,995 women, or 54% of the target, joined the program last year.

Of those tested, 6,276 were diagnosed with abnormal cervix cells, 384 with full-blown cervical cancer and 5,892 in the beginning stage.

Face the music. A German DJ was arrested in Pattaya on the night of September 18 for allegedly raping a 16-year-old Thai girl, police said.

Hans Peter Chryslers, 50, was arrested at his condominium in Bang Lamung district at 10 pm.

The Pattaya Court approved a warrant for his arrest the day before.

Police said a 16-year-old girl filed a complaint with police claiming that the German had lured her to be raped in a temple on the night of September 7. The man offered her 300 baht to accompany him to the temple but he later raped her, she alleged.

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

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Councilor carnage in Chumphon, Deep South

In two apparently unrelated incidents, three people died violently within 12 hours in a small village in Chumphon's Lang Suan district. Two of the dead were members of the local Tambon Administration Organization (*OrBorTor*).

The first incident occurred about 4:30 pm on September 15, when Jirawut Yuanbunlim, 38, was shot dead as he was riding his motorcycle home from an event at a nearby temple in Village 7, Tambon Tha Maphla.

Arriving at the scene, police found K. Jirawut's Honda Wave motorcycle lying by the side of the road. His body was found about 30 meters away in a mangosteen plantation. He had been shot four times in the back and neck with a .357-caliber pistol.

Village 7 Chief Phimon Daengsrithan said that he was following K. Jirawut back from nearby Wat Tham Khao Ngen when a black Isuzu pickup truck, with its license plates obscured with red paper, approached from behind and the front-seat passenger shot K. Jirawut in the back.

K. Jirawut tried to escape into the plantation, but his assailant gave chase and gunned him down, K. Phimon said.

Lt Col Narong Bua-in, a Duty Inspector at Lang Suan district Police Station, said that K. Jirawut had served on the local *OrBorTor* for two years and was loved by his constituents.

He also had a reputation for being direct and was unafraid to challenge people, however. This could have provided a motive for his killing, Col Narong added.

Other possible motives included a dispute with a local fruit dealer, as K. Jirawut was known to buy fruit from villagers at a fair price – thereby preventing other dealers from trying to suppress prices paid to farmers, Col Narong said.

Another possible motive is a dispute with an influential person in the *OrBorTor*, he added.

Just hours after K. Jirawut's



Perilous pothole

Soldiers inspect a large hole caused by an explosion on Yaha-Kabang Rd in Yala's Yaha district on September 21. Insurgents triggered the bomb, concealed under the road, when a patrol unit passed by the night before. Eight soldiers were injured.

Photo by Charoon Thongnual.

murder, police were called back to Village 7 with reports of a shooting in a wooden house in a fruit garden. When police arrived, about 12:15 am, they found that the victim, identified by relatives as Jaree Saengsuwan, 47, had been sent to Lang Suan Hospital. She died on route from a shotgun blast to the chest.

K. Jaree's relatives told police that at 11:30 pm Phichit "*OrBorTor* Duan" Damsuthi, 48, a member of Haad Yai *OrBorTor* in Lang Suan district and former boyfriend of K. Jaree, arrived at the house carrying a shotgun. He headed straight for K. Jaree's

room, broke the door down and shot her once before running off, the victim's relatives told police.

Police then rushed to Phichit's house, 500 meters away. As they were approaching they heard a gunshot ring out. In the house they found the body of Phichit with his thumb still on the trigger of his shotgun. Police believe that he shot himself after realizing the consequences of what he had done.

Police are treating the incident as a murder-suicide. Lt Col Panya Thuamsri, also a Duty Inspector at Lang Suan district Police Station, said that a year ear-

lier Phichit had asked K. Jaree to move in with him and she had accepted.

The relationship soured, however, and K. Jaree moved to live with her daughter and son-in-law. Phichit repeatedly tried to win her back, but without success. He had previously threatened K. Jaree that he would kill her if she would not come back to him, Col Panya added.

Final curtain. Police and doctors are working to establish the cause of death of former actor Jaran Likhithumra, 49, who was found lying face down in a pool of blood in his home in Nakhon Sri Thammarat on September 20.

Police led by Nakhon Sri Thammarat Muang district Police Superintendent Col Yanaphat Narasing responded to a call at K. Jaran's house around 7 pm. A preliminary examination of the body found no wounds. Doctors believe that the blood must have come from his mouth.

In 1995, K. Jaran won the coveted Phrasurasawadee "Golden Doll" award for "best baddie" for his role in the film *Lang Muang Khon Du 2*. In the house, police found a photo of K. Jaran with Thai superstar singer Thongchai "Bird" McIntyre taken at the awards ceremony.

After his showbusiness career wound down, K. Jaran returned to Nakhon Sri Thammarat and started a business renting out rooms. People who knew him reported that he drank heavily and suffered from ill health and seizures.

Police said that K. Jaran

was likely to have died of natural causes but they have not yet ruled out foul play. They are awaiting results of a detailed post mortem.

South still boils. A suspected insurgent was killed and another arrested in Pattani on September 19 following a gunfight with security officials.

The gunfight took place at 6 am, when some 100 police and soldiers laid siege to a house in Kuning village, Tambon Khao Toom, Yarang district.

Acting on tip-off that suspected insurgents were hiding in the house, security officials surrounded the house and demanded the suspects surrender. Instead, they opened fire on the officials.

The two sides exchanged gunfire for about 15 minutes before two suspects ran out of the back of the house. One of them was later captured.

Inside the house, police found one suspect dead from bullet wounds. He was identified as Ma-iso Kalong, 44, former imam of a local mosque. The arrested suspect was identified as Abdulrohmae Ahwae.

A day earlier in the same district, Kordae Saratae, 44, Chief of Village 5 Tambon Krado, was shot dead by suspected insurgents at 4:30 pm as he was driving to Yarang District Office.

On the same day in neighboring Narathiwat, another village chief, Ahrong Toweh, 50, Chief of Village 4, Tambon Sawoh, Reusoh district, was gunned down at 8:50 am as he was riding his motorcycle.

That same day in Yala province, a deputy chair of an *OrBorTor* was shot dead.

Romali Sau, 43, Deputy Chair of Baroh *OrBorTor* in Yaha district, was shot in the head and body by gunmen on a motorcycle as he was driving home from the Baroh *OrBorTor* office at 11:40 am.

The night before, Marian Sanor, 35, Chief of Village 4, Tambon Tanoh, Banang Sata district, was killed by gunmen on a motorcycle as she was leaving a mosque.

On the morning of September 21, about 150 police and soldiers raided two villages in Rusoh district and rounded up 17 suspected insurgents.

The searches lasted about five hours and the 17 suspects arrested were from three houses in the two villages.

They were taken to the Inghayuth army base in Nong Chik district, Pattani.

Around the South news round-up is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Luek newspapers.

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Water plans ruffle residents

The Provincial Waterworks Authority (PWA) is looking to develop a reverse-osmosis system on the island that is capable of converting seawater into healthy drinking water. The announcement comes at a time when locals in the area are protesting over an 800-million-baht reservoir project that would occupy more than 500 rai in the northern part of the island.

Locals are protesting because they believe that the reservoir will be built solely to serve local businesses and will effectively displace as many as 300 residents in the area. More than 50 local residents protested that the reservoir will not benefit them as a community, but will only harm them.

The PWA is proposing to start work on a reverse-osmosis plant, predicted to cost 100 million baht, which will supply local communities in the same area.

The two projects are separate but come at a time when the island is facing its greatest water shortage for irrigation and drinking. This is mainly due to the increasing tourist trade and the large-scale hotels and villa developments that have been built recently.

Many locals who attended the protest said they believed that preference is being given to these establishments and high-end villa communities during times of water rationing, which is unfair to the rest of the community. Both projects are planned for the same northwest side of the island.



The opening of the new Big C superstore on Samui, the 51st branch of the store in Thailand, caused major tailbacks and traffic jams.

participation, islanders on September 6 welcomed the opening of Samui's latest large-scale shopping facility: Big C.

Opening day celebrations were attended by Surat Thani Governor Dr Niwat Sawaskaew and senior executives from the retail chain, including Chief Executive Officer Yves Bernard Braibant.

During the opening ceremony, the group took the opportunity to present encyclopedias, bookcases and other educational resources to

Koh Samui Municipality schools. The foundation also announced an environmental project called "Big C loves Samui",

a joint-initiative with the municipality to produce fabric shopping bags.

The aim of the project is to involve shoppers in reducing the impact on the environment by discarded plastic bags.

The opening also proved to be a logistical challenge when a rush of island residents, eager to catch a first glimpse of the new facilities and take advantage of low-price specials, clogged the island's ring road for several hours.

Police traffic wardens were put in place to assist, but the parking areas quickly filled and tailbacks soon followed.

The new complex holds a large Big C store and the island's second escalator system, as well as many boutique shops and well-known chains, such as Boots and Starbucks.

The Samui Big C is the 51st store from the chain in Thailand.

Tesco-Lotus was the first shopping facility of its kind on

Samui, followed by Makro Cash and Carry opening recently. Samui is affirming its ambitions to be a modern and convenient island paradise.

Executives are hoping that the store will attract locals and holidaymakers. Residents on the island hope that the superstore will incite competitive pricing.

Motorists not interested in visiting Big C hope the hype will die down soon to clear the roads.

Gang arrested for animal cruelty. Six men were arrested on

charges of animal cruelty and illegally possessing protected species of wildlife following allegations made by a wildlife foundation, which reported that the gang had been operating on Samui.

The six men were apprehended near the popular nightlife area of Soi Green Mango after a raid. Police found the men in possession of four gibbons, an iguana and a python.

Police stated that several other members of the gang managed to escape with an eagle and a crocodile.

Many animals, which are often obtained illegally and abused in the process, are smuggled onto the island and used as tourist attractions. Tourists unwittingly support this illegal activity by paying a fee to pose for photographs with the animals.

After a tip-off from the director of the Wildlife Friends of Thailand Foundation, police commander of the wildlife protection unit lead the operation that resulted in the arrests.

The suspects were identified as Islama Klang, 24, Yarla Porji, 22, Chatchawai Salee, 20, Anand Mangmee, 38, Kriansak Kitkarn, 28 and Pundit Sepsabai, 27. All have been charged and are awaiting further legal proceedings.

The rescued animals were handed to the foundation to be kept in their care.

Wildlife organizations advise tourists to avoid people exploiting animals in order to remove the economic benefits that motivates illegal traders.



FROM THE GULF OF THAILAND

By Max Rogers

Superstore me. After much an-

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By Janyaporn Morel

Of all the attractions that bring millions of visitors to Phuket's shores each year – the azure blue sea, the white-sand beaches, the natural landscape – what nearly every tourist overlooks is the island's one natural resource that brought hordes of people to the island in the first place – tin.

Long before the tourists arrived Phuket was nothing but jungle, coconuts and pineapples. Then tin was discovered on the island and the tin-mining industry boomed. Much of the tin was used to make pewter, which was particularly popular during the 18th and 19th centuries, when it was used to make plates, cup and utensils. Remnants of that era are still visible in souvenir stores across Phuket.

Today, however, people can treat themselves to a dose of the island's tin-mine history at the Royal Pewter showroom, in Soi Baan Nai Trok in Chalong. A showroom there displays what can be made from pewter, a metal alloy that usually contains between 85% and 99% tin and the rest copper.

Chainarong Gumpholwala-korn, general manager of Royal Pewter, explained that the showroom has been open since May. "Before we built this showroom, we had a small booth in Phuket at Phuket Downtown Free Shop [on Ranong Rd in Phuket City]. That store mainly deals in leather products, but we sold tin items there. Due to the increasing demand for our products, we expanded the business and moved here," said K. Chainarong.

The concept behind the showroom is to offer people the chance to learn about how tin was used on the island, an idea that Royal Pewter owner Surapong Pipatpanlop thought could be marketed to give tin a new lease of life, not only by selling and displaying items, but also by showing where the raw materials came from and how they were made, added K. Chainarong.

"Phuket was an important source of tin, and so K. Surapong thought that people who buy the products should know about its origins. He saw that tin products were being sold all over the island, but the vendors were not explaining to their customers anything about what they were selling, which is where we come in,"



ABOVE: Some of the finer pieces made by craftsmen at the workshop.

LEFT: Visitors to Royal Pewter prepare to fashion their own creations.

he said.

Although tin is the main element used in making the items at the showroom, tin alone is not strong enough to be effectively shaped, which is where the addition of copper to make the alloy Pewter comes in.

Royal Pewter is 97% tin and 3% copper and antimony – A-grade pewter, as K. Chainarong called it. Copper gives the alloy strength so it can be molded into whatever the crafter desires. The addition of the element antimony gives the alloy an impressive shine, K. Chainarong explained.

Set on four rai, the 1,400-

square-meter Royal Pewter building is divided into three zones. The first zone features an exhibition chronicling Phuket's tin-mine history, including miner's instruments. The second zone contains an activity area, where for 350 baht each, children and adults are given a small piece of pewter and taught how to shape it with traditional tools.

"People who make something by themselves will be very proud of their creations, although we can't promise they will be as beautiful as the ones we sell. People can finish their work in about 15 or 20 minutes and take what they have made home with

them," said K. Chainarong.

Work on a piece of pewter begins with a hammer. By hitting a sheet of pewter on a wooden block it is possible to shape the alloy.

Basic items, such as a dish or soap holder, are easy to make, and people are only limited by their imaginations. The activity is fun for both adults and children, making a visit to the showroom a great day out for families.

Beside the activity room is a melting and molding zone to demonstrate how skilled pewter workers can create items ranging from basic key holders to wine racks to delicate jewelry.

The third zone has on display about 3,000 pewter products made by Royal Pewter's host of craftsmen in Rangsit, Pathum Thani. Items such as beer tan-

kards, vases and tea sets are all available for sale.

"Our designers try to give the products as many characteristics of Thailand as possible, resulting in about 500 different designs, with prices spanning from 70 baht to 6,000 baht.

"We have about 150 visitors a day, with almost half of those coming from Southeast Asian countries. Teens from Korea and Japan are especially interested in the ornaments because they are so cheap," said K. Chainarong.

But how do you take care of your pewter when you get it home? K. Chainarong said all that is required is to use a gentle detergent and clean each item with a soft cloth. Avoiding scrubbing, so that the pewter retains its shine for as long as possible, he advised.

Royal Pewter: 61/16 Moo 6, Soi Baan Nai Trok, Chalong, Muang, Phuket. Tel: 076-281-001, 089-4744850. Website: www.phuketroyalpewter.com



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Phuket Gazette

Snap, crackle and munch

There's treasure to be found in Phuket. Nestled in the verdant foothills of Kamala, close to Kathu Waterfall, the Royale Nam Tok restaurant is a treasure chest overflowing with antique curiosities and gems.

Shining silver platters, sparkling crystal, abstract golden swirls on glass under-plates, busts on columns, a stalking iron panther by the pool, European inlaid furniture, leather-bound books and old oil paintings are just a few of the abundance of riches.

Almost everything the eye catches has been shipped from Belgium by the key-holders of the chest: Chef Marc de Schryver and his long-time partner and front of house maestro Corry Ringoet. They had a restaurant together for 18 years – DeTafeljoncker in Berchem, Antwerp – and when they sold it, they shipped the contents, lock, stock and barrel, to Phuket.

Greeted by a genial and fashionably attired Corry, my companion and I were shown straight to our table on the covered terrace by the swimming pool. Ceiling fans stirred the balmy evening air and even amid the splendor of the setting, we felt relaxed as cocktails appeared on the starched white tablecloth and our culinary odyssey began.

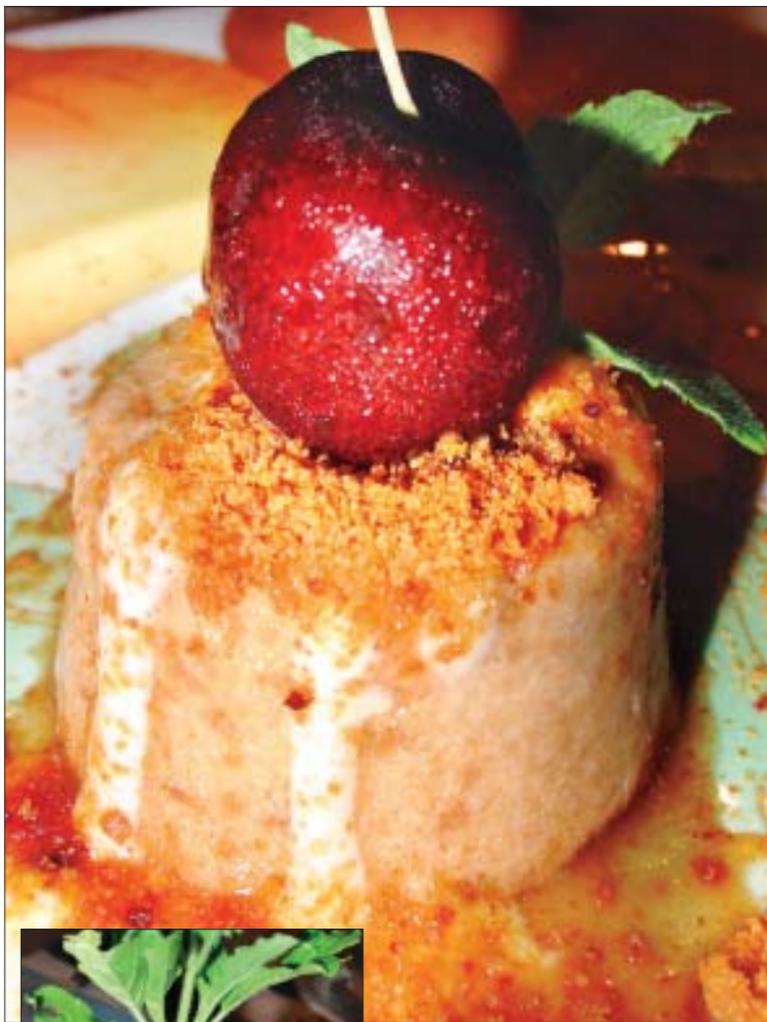
French Beauty was a mix of Cointreau, peach brandy, fresh pink pomelo, lemon and orange juices with a cube of ice in a martini glass. After the first mouthful, we were offered a Parmigiano Reggiano wafer biscuit served from a silver platter.

The fruity and sour flavors of the cocktail cutting through the richness of the cheese was heavenly. Slices of home-baked pistachio bread were accompanied by a two-tier, silver-condiment stand. The top tier contained grapes, plain butter and a bottle of homemade, garden-herb-infused oil. The lower tier held butter mixed with dried tomatoes and anchovy, and a Chinese soup-spoon of sea salt.

I chose the set menu of rock lobster dishes and my companion decided to go a la carte, so we shared the amuse bouches – to our mutual delight. From the first mouthful it was obvious that taste and texture (creamy and crunchy) would be the theme tonight. The miniature creme brulee hid a feather-light, creamy foie gras under a brittle brulee of port and cognac.

The quiche Lorraine, in an eggshell sealed with pastry and a sprig of basil, pitted baked egg against crunchy bacon. The trilogy was completed with a stunning *espuma* (super-light mousse) of tomato topped with crunchy, oven-dried bacon chips – a dish first served in the legendary, futuristic restaurant El Bulli in Spain.

Corry recommended that a bottle of the Italian 2004 Roero Arneis white wine from Bruno



ABOVE: The biscuit glacee of speculaas used speculaas cinnamon cookies to give the crunch in the vanilla and coffee ice cream.



LEFT: While it may look like a potted plant, this is actually a quiche Lorraine served in an egg shell, sealed with pastry and basil, full of baked egg and crunchy bacon.

Giacosa in Piedmont. The Arneis grape takes its name from a word in the Piedmontese dialect meaning “whimsical”, and it certainly was a care-free sort of wine with a hugely attractive perfume bouquet, flowery taste and dry finish – an ideal match to all that followed.

My salade royale was fit for a king. Succulent rock lobster cubes wrapped in endive leaves with wafer-thin slices of smoked duck breast and duck liver on a crunchy bed of walnuts, onions, apples and tomatoes in homemade wine vinegar and herb-oil dressing, all garnished with gar-

lic flowers. The palette was bombarded with sweetness and then acidity, smoothness and then crunch, as each ingredient surrendered its charms.

My companion's scallops, from the US, were removed from their shells, bathed in a reduction of mushrooms, shallots and white wine, then returned to the shell to be completely sealed with pastry for flavor retention.

Opened at the table, they were ladled with a butter, dry Vermouth and dried-bacon sauce, straight from the copper saucepan in which it had been made.

The scallops could have

been inhaled, they were so tender.

A distinctly olfactory experience was next: the a la minute smoked rock lobster. A whole rock lobster freshly smoked in the kitchen and immediately served – the lid removal releasing a puff of smoke. Had one been available, a drum roll would have been fitting.

The butter and tomato sauce perfumed with basil was spread lovingly over the lobster flesh, al dente turnips, baby corn and asparagus. A tower of mashed potato topped with the shell of the lobster signaled that the smooth versus crunch battle was on again.

You have to be a near genius of a chef to get this right. Too hearty a material used to smoke the lobster and its delicate flavor is killed; too light and the sauce will simply overpower the taste of the smoking.

My companion allowed me to delve into her baked white snapper fillet topped with a mix of parmigiano cheese and tomato, resting on a bed of pureed cauliflower with slivers of orange and lemon rind and green basil sauce.

The coarseness of the cauliflower and citric acidity of the orange and lemon rind contrasted well with the smoothness and slight saltiness of the fish. The parmigiano fell in love with its companion, the tomato.

Good things come in threes, so I'm told, and this applies to Royale Nam Tok's desserts. The

sorbet of strawberries was blissful; the sorbet of strawberries and tarragon was placed in a wheat-flour, vanilla biscuit with a slice of dragonfruit. The tarragon pulled every ounce of flavor from the strawberries in a more subtle way than sugar.

The biscuit glacee of speculaas used speculaas cinnamon cookies to deliver a crunch in the vanilla and coffee ice cream. The sabaglione of beaten egg whites, vanilla ice cream, Peter Heering sherry liquor and pink pepper was served in a Champagne flute with slices of passion fruit and plum. No prizes for guessing where the crunch came from.

The Royale Nam Tok uses quality ingredients to present top-class, innovative food – worthy of a Michelin star at least – in a superior European style and setting at reasonable prices. “It's a place you can dress up to visit. A place for an occasion,” explained Corry. I'm already planning my wardrobe for the next visit.

The average cost of a meal for two persons is 3,000 baht, excluding wine. Wines start from 1,380 baht per bottle.

Royale Nam Tok. 116/102 Moo 6, Nam Tok Kathu Rd, Kathu (the last soi on the right before Kathu Waterfall, about 1.8km from Wichit Songkhram Rd). Open daily 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm, closed Sundays. Lunch can be arranged for a parties of six or more persons by appointment. Tel: 087-2637327.



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Happily Ever After

Recent weddings in Phuket



Sergei Okhai and Philippa Hayabll from Australia were married at Laguna Phuket's Chapel-on-the-Lagoon on August 31.



Chotima Nanirankul and Kritsada Intarachot were married at the Phuket Ballroom of the Royal Phuket City Hotel on August 26.

Light of love

Around Baan Sapam, you may notice an elderly couple who get about on their adapted motorbike and side cart. Suffering from a crippling mystery illness, 84 year old Boon lies in the cart while her husband rides the motorcycle. She can barely raise her hands to greet friends and family with the traditional *wai*, while her partner for 40 years, Ian Sae-ang, devotes all his waking minutes to taking care of his soul mate.

Pathomporn Kaenkrachang reports on the elderly couple's long lasting love and devotion to each other.

Wherever he goes, 72-year-old Ian Sae-ang takes his lifelong partner, 84-year-old Boon Keawsook with him. The elderly couple who met over 40 years ago can often be seen on their adapted motorbike and side-cart, in which K. Boon lies under a sun-shade.

K. Boon lies in the cart as her husband rides the motorcycle because she is unable to sit or move much. A devastating mystery illness has rendered her almost completely paralysed for the past seven years, leaving doctors scratching their heads and in the care of her devoted husband.

K. Boon is originally from Nonthaburi and already had a son and daughter when the couple met 40 years ago at a temple fair in Phuket. It was love at first sight and K. Ian invited K. Boon to live with him on the island after their first night together.

"When Boon came to live with me in Phuket along with her two children, she asked me if we could adopt another child, so we adopted and raised a boy together who has now grown up and moved away, as have Boon's own children.

In those days we were both fit and healthy and used to trawl for fish and shrimp, then ride my motorcycle to markets to sell them," said K. Ian.

Although he had never suffered any major ailments before, in 1983 K. Ian had to visit a doctor in Bangkok after suffering from a hernia. "Boon took me to Bangkok to get treatment at Rama Hospital and we stayed at a temple in the city.

To get to the hospital, we had to take a boat across the Chao

Praya River and then catch a bus. I was in hospital for about a month, but I didn't get any better. Eventually, I had an operation and Boon took good care of me. We went back to Phuket together and she stayed by my side for a year while I recovered at home; I have never forgotten her devotion to me then," said K. Ian.

Once K. Ian had recovered, the pair returned to work, but then K. Boon's health took a turn for the worse as she began to suffer from gastritis and high blood pressure.

K. Boon became ill in 2000, and had to undergo surgery to remove gallstones. After recovering from the operation, K. Boon returned to full health, but seven months later, she started experiencing severe stomach pains. She asked K. Ian to take her back to hospital, where she was prescribed painkillers.

After the stomach pains, came a mystery illness that still remains unidentified despite consulting several doctors over the years and has left K. Boon almost totally disabled. She can talk and use her hands and arms from the elbows down, allowing her to awkwardly shift position but she relies on her husband to carry, feed and wash her.

"The first doctor we visited said Boon might have a problem with her brain, but that turned out to be wrong because she could still speak and she knew what was happening around her. The doctor gave her painkillers and told me to take her back home. After that, her condition just got worse. I took Boon to many hospitals but no doctor was able to tell me what was wrong with her," said K. Ian.

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Phuket Gazette

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Advanced in years, 72-year-old Ian Sae-arng vows to stay with his 84-year-old partner, Boon Keawsook until the end.

A crippling illness means K. Boon can no longer take care of herself, leaving her husband to take care of her every need.

During the first two years of K. Boon's mystery illness, K. Ian did everything he could to find out what had caused her ailment and what could make her better so that she might be able to walk again and enjoy the mobility she once had.

"I went back to the hospital many times to try and find out what was wrong with Boon, but nobody could tell me. In the end I stopped asking because I felt like I was wasting my time. I have come to accept that she may never get better and I am lucky she is still alive and we can enjoy each other's company. In 2005 I got sick myself though with renal stones and had to have another

operation."

This time, K. Boon's daughter took care of the couple until K. Ian was well enough to work again. In 2005, they were dealt another blow when they were forced to move out of their home near their daughter's house in Baan Sapam because they did not own the title deed, so they moved into a house in Thalang owned by K. Ian's brother.

For the past seven years K. Ian has taken K. Boon wherever she wishes to go with their modified transport. Before K. Boon became ill they would regularly go to Saphan Hin market to eat. "She used to enjoy getting out and meeting people but now that we

live in Thalang, I can't take her to Saphan Hin any more because it is too far from our place. We still go to Baan Sapam market and her daughter's house for meals though," said K. Ian, who has to physically carry K. Boon from the side-cart into her daughter's house when they visit.

"People always ask me why I don't leave her at home and go to work, but I can't leave her at home alone. The best thing I can

do for her is to be her friend. She was there for me when I was in need, so now I am just doing what any good friend would do, just as she supported me. We have never left each other alone," said K. Ian.

K. Ian told the *Gazette* that he meets many kind people who want to help him and K. Boon in their plight.

Local doctor K. Siriporn donates 500 baht to the couple every month and K. Duangjai, a retired school teacher who used to work at Dowroong Wittaya School, makes regular visits to the couple and takes other people who would like to help with her.

"There is one farang man who he gives us rice every time we see him. Three years ago he bought the sunshade for the side-cart of my motorcycle. I don't know his name but heard that he will come back and see us again next month," said K. Ian.

K. Ian not only drives his wife around but does whatever he can to nurse her, driving to Thalang Hospital every five days to collect a fresh supply of medication for K. Boon.

"Boon is content if we go out every day. We have a daily ritual of changing her clothes and

I wash and clean her before we go out. There was a day when we didn't go out in the daytime and she was still pestering me at 3 am to take her to hospital, even though she wasn't sick. She just wanted to go out. If I hadn't taken her out then, she would have cried all night. She just has to go somewhere.

"Our children have never abandoned us though. We ride to visit Boon's daughter every day at Sapam. Boon's younger son lives in Patong and visits us whenever I call him. Our adopted son helps out when he can but he has to work now. I need to fix my motorbike because, although it still works, it does need repairs. I'm afraid it will cost a lot though, I don't know how much it will cost and I don't have much to spend on it," said K. Ian.

Naturally, despite his kind heart, K. Ian sometimes grows tired of constantly nursing his companion but he can't bear to see her lying helpless and does whatever he can to help her.

"I'm lucky that she can still speak and let me know what she wants. She did the same for me. There is no way I could leave her now."

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This week



WELCOME: Bhutan Ministry of Tourism Head of Services Rinzin Jamtsho receives a souvenir from Phuket Vice-Governor Worapoj Ratthasima at Phuket Provincial Hall September 14 during his informal visit to Phuket to review the island's hotel facilities and tourism services.



DIVINE INSTRUCTION: Monk and meditation teacher, Phra Burin Thitakusalo and his students after The Middle Way meditation retreat held September 16 at the Kalyanamitta Center on Wirat Hongyok Rd Soi 7/2 in Phuket City. The free sessions are generally held on the third Sunday of each month.



SEE YOU, SINGH: Anand Singh poses with the *Gazette* news team on his last day after working with the *Gazette* for three months as a trainee reporter. He will return to the University of Birmingham to complete his economics degree. Joining him are Managing Editor Chris Husted (center, back row), Chief Reporter Sangkhae Leelanaporn and new additions to the editorial team Skyler Swezy (back row, 2nd from left) and Nick Davies (back row, right).



CENTRAL BIRTHDAY: Central Festival Phuket (CFP) senior management Thanapon Tangkananan (front, 2nd from right), Kankanok Chanprasartporn (front, right) and Songpol Phongrapeeporn (front, left) celebrate the third anniversary of Central Festival Phuket with VIP guests, including Narong Hongyok (center), Rojana Ruktae-ngam (in yellow blouse), Pattanapong Aikwanich (3rd from right) and Thanyarat Acharyachai (2nd from left).



PIANO MAN: Ernst Hrabalek (right), President of Lions Club of Phuket Pearl, poses with pianist Frenchman Prof Laurent Touraine after a classical concert at Phukana restaurant in Phuket City on September 19.



GATEWAY OPENING: Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*) President Anchalee Vanich Tephabuttra (right) shows Theerapat Sereerangsan, minister of the Office of the Prime Minister, a pearl necklace on display at the recent grand opening of the Phuket Gateway. *OrBorJor* Vice-President Suthep Thepsukun (right) looks on.

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Gone fishing for a week's food

LARGER THAN LIFE

By Graham Doven

The whingers who live in Phuket say that the beer isn't as good as on Samui, that there are too many crazy drivers, that the roads suck, that you can't get anything done, that television is a disaster, that "they've" ruined Premier League football, and so on. They also say that there isn't any good fishing around Phuket.

They might have a point some of the time, but when it comes to the fishing, they're dead wrong, unless on the particular day that I went fishing, all the fish in the Andaman Sea decided to hang out around Phuket.

My friend asked me to arrange a fishing boat; it'd been about 10 years since our last trip. I called an old mate, John Pearce, who owns a boat called *Reel Hooker*. He has a reputation in other countries as being "the man" in Phuket. We told him that we were after small tuna.

About an hour off Phuket, there we were, with three lines rigged for small tuna.



This sailfish weighs over 60 pounds and took 15 minutes to reel in just an hour off Phuket.

Jimmie and I had sat down to relax and waited to see what would happen. Two of the ladies who came with us had turned green and disappeared below deck, seen occasionally as a blur between the cabin and the loo.

Two other ladies had their heads tucked into plates of fried

chicken and rice.

Zing! Suddenly all three rods keeled over. The skipper shut off the power; three or four seconds too long and the fish would be off the line. We started grabbing for the rods.

I understood that we had rigged for small tuna, but the

small tuna on my rod was pretty tough and I was getting tired. A small tuna apparently weighs about seven or eight pounds, but as it got close to the surface it turned out there was not one, but three on my line. Over twenty pounds of tuna was trying to go in three different di-

rections, but we managed to land all three. The other lines had one each, so we hauled five in the first catch.

Jimmie pointed out that at the price we paid for the day's trip, this came out to around US\$200 per fish. The lines were only back in for five minutes and away they went again. The grand total was 35 fish. The girls who weren't sick helped catch some.

We decided to call it a day for the tuna and spent the last hour rigged for something bigger. About 10 minutes before we had to return to Phuket, the big rod jerked and sang. Fifteen minutes later, Jimmie landed a sailfish weighing over 60 pounds, which we photographed and released. The tuna, we ate, and I've still got some left in the freezer.

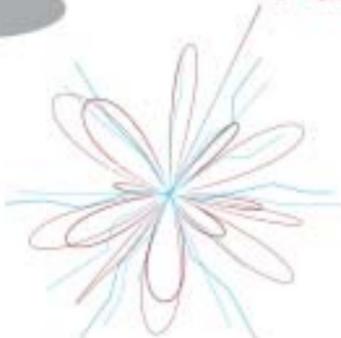
The fact is, fish are out there; it's the skill and experience of a good captain and crew that decides whether you catch them or not. Having the right gear, knowing where to look for them and what to do when you get there makes the difference. Even the green girls looked happy getting off the boat with a few nice fish to take home. If you know what to do it's a fun day and a great feed for weeks.

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Aussies set for world domination

By Marque A. Rome

You probably think conspiracy-theory nuts are limited to a lunatic fringe of New World Order paranoiacs. Well! Have I got a conspiracy for you. Australian vignerons (their term) in 1996 formed a comprehensive marketing plan – innocently labeled Strategy 2025 – and formed the Winemakers Federation of Australia to implement it.

“What’s so sinister about that?” I’ll tell you – not only are they fighting to dominate the wine world, they are actually doing it ahead of schedule.

Already, they’ve knocked France out of the race and are poised to blitz Italy, Spain, Germany, Portugal and Hungary. Moreover, they’re wreaking all this carnage while Australians themselves are drinking over 400 million liters of wine annually.

The federation, a coalition of growers, producers and distributors, bluntly states that their strategy will result in Australia becoming the largest exporter to the US – currently the largest wine market – and world sales leader by 2025. To facilitate the attack, the Australian government is affording tax breaks, grants, subsidies and allowing “aggressive natural resource management”, in the words of one American pundit.

The enormous American market now is virtually at the Australians’ feet. Exports to the US have risen from 578,000 cases in 1990 to 20 million cases in 2004. They are set to replace Italy as top exporter to America – and perhaps overwhelm the formerly dominant domestic industry. California’s Napa Valley winemakers’ association insisting that no member sell wine for less than US\$25 per bottle probably



NEW WORLD ORDER: Australian wines from Rutherglen Estate’s winemaker, Nicole Esdaile (2nd left) are in stock at the Wine Connection, Chalong. Also pictured are Pascal Laigle (left) and connoisseurs.

doesn’t hurt their chances, too.

Australians conquered the smaller but highly influential British market seven years ago, displacing the French, and exported more than 400 million liters to the UK in 2006.

Wine critic and lecturer Matt Kramer of *Wine Spectator* magazine admits “the most powerful influence in wine today” is from Australia, where innovation in canopy management and other viticultural techniques is strong.

Australians are pioneering production of increasingly popular organic and biodynamic wines, having hosted the First International Biodynamic Wine Forum in 2004... and you imagined Aussies as just a bunch of drawling, beer-swilling good ol’ boys.

I discovered most of the foregoing after attending, at Chalong Wine Connection, what I imagined would be a mere product introduction of three red wines and one white by Rutherglen Es-

tates winemaker Nicole Esdaile.

Thailand is one of the countries Aussies aim to conquer with their “bloody good wines”, as Esdaile explained, because East Asia is where the market is headed over the next 10 years.

Wine Connection, the largest independent wine importer in Southeast Asia, carries some 600 labels and 10,000 bottles in each of its three Phuket shops and organizes “three or four big wine tastings yearly with the winemakers,” said food and beverage manager Pascal Laigle.

“Wine Connection is not just a wine shop,” said Laigle. As agent, the firm provides wine training to commercial customers’ serving staff, and with retail prices set at “cost plus 10%” Laigle asserts that Wine Connection sets the benchmarks for pricing in Phuket – making it the logical point of assault for Rutherglen’s winemaker... er, vigneron.

Rutherglen is an old wine-

growing area on the Murray River about 275 kilometers north of Melbourne and is known for high-quality sweet wines.

Rutherglen Estates, formed 11 years ago, had its first vintage in 2001. Until recently, its entire production (50,000 cases last year) was exported to Britain. With 358 hectares of vineyard, it is now Rutherglen’s largest wine-growing estate, though most production is contracted to other makers.

Rutherglen days are warm, nights cool. The mean temperature is about 30°F, humidity is low, but water abundant, and autumn is normally long and dry – all of which grapes like. The red soil is suited to Spanish, Italian, Provençal and Rhone varieties.

Rutherglen winemakers are trying to cut a niche for their Durif, a variety created from Syrah and obscure varietal Peloursin a century ago by Dr Francois Durif in southern France.

Rutherglen Estates’s Durif,

fermented with a Rhone-isolated yeast strain, is typically heavy and tannic, fruit-forward with faint currant notes.

Esdaile favors aging in American oak, providing a strong oak flavor, as well as French oak for nine to 12 months, and uses reverse-osmosis filtering to keep alcohol levels down to 14.5%.

She picks when grapes are “flavor ripe”, meaning not all at the same time. These controversial practices among Old World winemakers and their supporters are countered by New World winemakers so that they are thereby able to tailor wines more precisely to the market. Without doubt, the result is deeply colored, strongly aromatic wine, drinkable without aging.

“I make wine to drink, not for people to talk about for hours,” said Esdaile, a straight-shooting Sydney-sider who “grew up on the beach” and began her career as a pharmacist.

She “designs wines” aiming to “hold on to the fruit” and boasts that comparably-priced French and Italian wines – in Thailand in the 500- to 1,000-baht range – are “funky” by comparison.

For what it’s worth, I felt the Durif not yet ready for its intended “icon status” among Rutherglen winemakers. The Shiraz had a piquant, peppery nose, a deep ruby robe, and long glistening legs that hung on the glass. A hint of apricots graced the finish.

As for the white 70/30 Marsanne-Viognier blend, called the “Alliance”, I had to wonder why the undistinguished Marsanne was used as the informing grape – but it transpires that Australia has some of the oldest Marsanne clones in the world.

Old or not, it was acidic and weedy, eminently drinkable but lacking the honeysuckle and peach syrup flavors of Condrieu, the Rhone’s great white wine, made with Viognier. *Wine Spectator*, however, rated Esdaile’s Alliance “outstanding”.

The other blend was the red 60/20/20 Mourvedre- Shiraz- Grenache threesome “Reunion”.

The very tannic Mourvedre rarely gets top billing but it ripens late in the season and is thus perfect for Rutherglen.

In this case it was softened by Grenache, often used for Rose, and spiced up by Shiraz. I thought its passing was good, but *Wine Spectator*’s more practiced noses thought it “outstanding”.

“There are mass wines,” said Esdaile, “and magic wines”. She might have added, but didn’t, that there can be magic in making wine for the masses. It is a trick she and her cohorts are teaching the world.

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One of the international models at the opening of Phuket Welcome Gate poses in island batik.

Elite models strut at Phuket Welcome Gate

Visitors to the grand opening of Phuket Welcome Gate in Mai Khao on September 9 had a hard time keeping their eyes on the gate itself as five top international models from Elite Model Management were on hand to take part in a photoshoot.

The photoshoot was for Phuket Calendar 2008, which is being produced with the aim of showing Phuket as a fashionable, trendy city that can appeal to the younger generation of tourists who will be tomorrow's movers and shakers in the business world.

The calendar will also present images of Phuket's beaches, culture, water sports, hotels, spas and local fashion, with the help of 12 Elite models.

The five models who took to the catwalk at the launch of Phuket Welcome Gate showed off the latest batik fashions, incorporating bold colors with matching beach-hats and head-scarves. Batik refers to an ancient dying technique used on textiles to create unique, intricate designs.

Elite Model Management has previously had a string of the world's most famous models on its books, including Cindy Crawford, Naomi Campbell and Claudia Schiffer.

The Welcome Gate, located near Thepkrasattri Bridge at Baan Tah Chat Chai in Mai Khao, is what Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*Or Bor Jor*) hopes will become a symbol of tourism on the island.

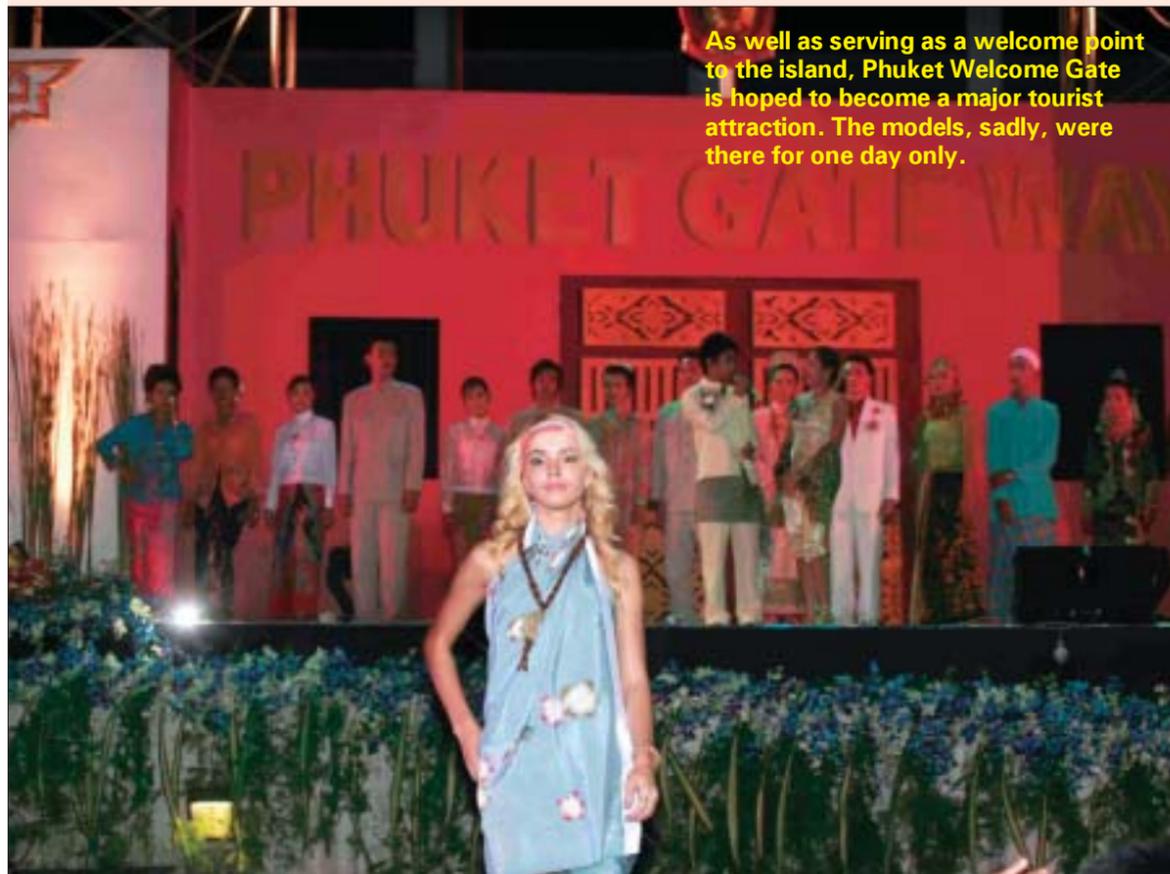
Located just 10 minutes from Phuket International Airport and five minutes from Yacht Heaven Marina, the Gateway contains tourist information, a seminar room, an "e-library", and sculptures of leatherback turtles and their eggs, and a hand-picked array of tourist shops.

Also at the Gateway are 29 stone poles, each of which bears details of the history of Phuket.

- Natcha Yuttaworawit



The beautiful models at the opening of Phuket Welcome Gate were from Elite Model Management, the world's largest and most prestigious modeling agency.

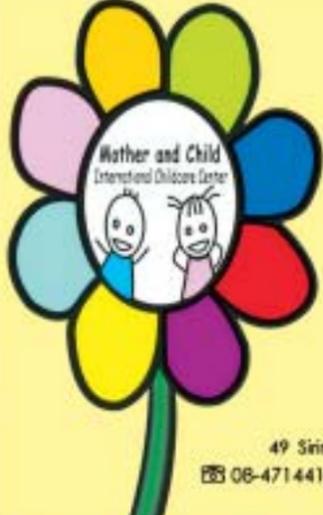


As well as serving as a welcome point to the island, Phuket Welcome Gate is hoped to become a major tourist attraction. The models, sadly, were there for one day only.



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SINGING IN THE RAIN

It was another wet and miserable day in Phuket. I'm not a fan of the rain. Not only does it make my hair frizzy, but it also makes my makeup run faster than a group of my fellow countrymen to a superstore opening. Oh yes, we all love a bargain, but when it's pouring and the wind is blowing, I start to lose my faith in retail therapy and I need a bit of cheering up.

Romance is one option, but why do we need to rely on men to brighten our days? The perfect cure for the precipitation blues is a trip to a spa.

Being in the middle of rainy season as we are, there's ample opportunity to visit a spa and lift the mood of a gloomy day a little.

For my latest adventure, I drove through torrential rains to get to Le Spa at Le Meridien

Phuket Beach Resort. I practically swam from my car to the spa's reception; my feet were sodden. I arrived, stamped my foot in frustration, and gave my head a little shake to get rid of some of the water.

Jintana Therdkitiwarang, supervisor at Le Spa, saw my state and took pity on me. "Just make me feel better," I sobbed. She nodded and handed me a towel before taking me on a tour of the spa.

With about 470 rooms, making it the largest hotel in Patong, Le Meridien is the ideal hotel for a relaxation retreat.

The spa has been open for almost 20 years, and each of the therapists is required to have at

least 10 years experience before he or she can start working here, said K. Jintana.

The spa's lobby was warm and comfortable, feeling very much like a living room. I was still a bit damp, but felt happy to be able to sink into one of the large sofas and drift off into a daydream while I was served a cool Thai-herb drink and fresh towel to clean my hands and skin.

I had a look through the spa menu and eventually settled on the Siam Fruits Retreat package. I'm one of those people who is happiest when the sun is shining, and something with fruits in it sounded quite sunny to me.

The cost of the 110-minute treatment was 3,240 baht, including a full body scrub and facial treatment; I didn't really care what it involved, so long as I was out of the rain.

The main ingredients of the treatment were oranges and avocado, along with honey, milk and yogurt. I wasn't sure if they were going to give me a treatment or turn me into a smoothie, but I was certain that I'd come out good enough to eat after my time at the spa.

K. Jintana told me that Siam Fruits Retreat, launching at the end of September, will be the new signature treatment at Le Spa; I was getting a sneak preview, but if you book the treatment before the end of October for, you can



By Sangkhae
Leelanapaporn

Le Spa,
Le Meridien Phuket
Beach Resort



The Siam Fruits Retreat, launching at the end of this month, will be the new signature treatment at Le Spa.

get it for the discounted price of 2,880 baht.

Sirisopa "Fay" Shuchit, spa and fitness manager, assured me that I wasn't about to be made into a fruitshake. She told me that they use oranges to scrub away the dead cells that cover the epidermis, while at the same time applying milk to soften the skin.

I wanted to eat the avocado for a snack, but K. Fay said that it was needed for my facial to help remove wrinkles. "Are you saying I have wrinkles?" I asked. K. Fay giggled. "It's because of the rain," I added.

Once I'd chosen my treatment, a therapist approached me with a bamboo basket to take my shoes in. I slipped off my soggy socks and trainers and the therapist gave me a pair of slippers. My guide on my romp through the world of fruits was to be therapist Ooy Tansuebcheaysai,

41, who told me that she has been working at Le Spa for 18 years; she is, to all intents and purposes, an expert in the field of making people feel good.

I was taken to a room where there was a bathtub filled with water, with hundreds of delicate-looking rose petals floating on the surface. I wasn't in the mood for getting wet, so I was grateful to learn that I wasn't required to get in the bath. It was a pleasant aesthetic touch though.

The spa building was separated into two parts either side of the reception area. There were 10 treatment rooms in total, as well as a massage room, all serviced by 19 skilled therapists. I think I got the best of the bunch with K. Ooy though.

The therapists need to be on top of their game at Le Spa, because, as K. Jintana told me, up

to 100 people per day come in for treatments, most of whom are guests at the hotel.

I disrobed and changed into a sarong. The first stage of treatment was a foot rub. K. Ooy took each of my feet and placed them in water with dry tea leaves and lemon slices. I began to feel perkier.

After my foot massage, I laid down on an electric blanket. It was so warm and I felt like my body was at the perfect temperature. K. Ooy went to work on me, applying the ingredients of the fruit cocktail to my body. Breezy Thai music filled the room at just the right volume to set my mind at ease.

I could almost feel the dead skin cells leaving my body as K. Ooy continued with the scrub. Each time she added a new ingredient, K. Ooy told me what it was and warned me that it might be a little cold.

As the scrub came to an end, I felt like a jam sandwich as I was still covered with the fruity ingredients. The orangey aroma was so delightful that I wanted to find a piece of bread and make some toast.

Advising against my toast idea, K. Ooy wrapped me up tight in a towel to really fuse the ingredients with my body. After 20 minutes of not being able to move, it was time for my facial, which was to use the same ingredients as the scrub, but with milk instead of avocado.

I was lost in a world of milk, honey and cucumber. By the time K. Ooy got round to massaging my face I was positively bursting with good vibes.

After she was done with my face, I was unwrapped and took a shower, washing away the last remnants of my orange-jam-on-toast fantasy.

Next up, I was back on the bed with cucumbers over my eyelids as a soothing lotion was applied to my body for the last part of my treatment.

It's difficult to explain how I felt after the Siam Fruits Retreat treatment, but if I was miserable before, I was full of the joys of spring afterwards.

K. Fay told me that anybody who wants this treatment must book in advance because it takes about an hour to prepare all the ingredients of the scrub.

I said my goodbyes, thanked K. Fay, K. Ooy and K. Jintana, and walked to the exit. I could see that it was still raining, but I was unfazed.

I left the spa and strolled to my car at a leisurely pace without a care in the world.

For that day at least, it was going to take more than a spot of rain to dampen my mood. Not even a man could have spoiled that moment of heavenliness.

Le Spa at Le Meridien Phuket Beach Resort is open daily from 9 am to 11 pm. For more information call 076-340480.

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BEHIND THE WHEEL

By Jeff Heselwood

Testarossa testimonial



Visitors to Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club have reported sightings of a Ferrari Testarossa.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of Ferrari. Celebrations have been going on all year, including the round-the-world "Ferrari 60 Relay" that ended at Maranello in June. Readers of the *Gazette* might be interested to know that a magnificent Ferrari Testarossa was spotted in Nai Harn heading towards Le Royal Meridien Phuket Yacht Club.

The Testarossa dates from around 1984 and was both stylish and impressive. A successor to the 512 Boxer Ferrari, the name originates from the 250 Testa Rossa of the 50s and 60s, including the Ferrari that won the classic Le Mans 24-Hours in 1958, 1960 and '61 with such legends as Phil Hill and Olivier Gendebien at the wheel.

The 1984 Testarossa was one of the greatest supercars of its time. Powered by a 4.9-liter flat-12 "boxer" engine that chucked out a prodigious 390bhp, the Ferrari was good for 290kmh and reached 100kmh from standstill in under six seconds.

The cam covers were red in

reference to the original Testa Rossa, while the exquisite bodywork was styled by long-time Ferrari collaborator Pininfarina in Turin. In all, around 7,000 Testarossas were produced between 1984 and 1992.

The Ferrari 60 Relay began in Abu Dhabi in January, before heading for Dubai, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Kuwait. Abu Dhabi was chosen as the starting point as a result of plans to build a

major Ferrari theme park, in addition to a Formula One circuit, on the island of Yas in the most rapidly developing area of the Emirates' capital.

From Abu Dhabi the relay crossed the Middle East and went on to China, Japan, Australia, South Africa, the US and all of Europe before arriving in northern Italy five months later in June.

When the relay reached Maranello, numerous displays

were put on, including a concours d'elegance contest, an auction of some of the finest Ferrari classics in existence, a parade involving historic F1 cars and former Ferrari drivers and, finally, a fly-past by Italy's aerobatic squad, the Freccie Tricolori; the same squad that flew over Modena for Luciano Pavarotti's funeral in mid-September.

There were Formula One cars from all eras; from the 1947

125S to the 2006 248 F1, all of them driven by former and current Ferrari drivers.

Italians Ivan Capelli with a 1932 Alfa Romeo P3, Nino Vaccarella in a 1040 Auto Avio Costruzioni 815, and Luca Badoer in a 375 F1; Austria's Gerhard Berger with the 500 F2; Italy's Andrea de Adamich in a Dino 166 F2, and current Ferrari F1 driver Felipe Massa from Brazil in a dramatic 312 T.

Also there were 1979 World Champion South African Jody Scheckter with a 312 T4; wily Frenchman Rene Arnoux in a 126 C4; another French driver who won his one and only Grand Prix with Ferrari. Jean Alesi was in an F1-90; seven-time champion Michael Schumacher with an F2004; current F1 star Kimi Raikkonen in this season's F2007; and again Schumacher with the FXX prototype sports-car.

In addition, Piero Ferrari drove some laps in the 125 S, the first car to be built at the Maranello factory in 1947.

Ferrari is a legend, of that there is no doubt. To find one – and a Testarossa at that – in Phuket is a bonus.

Jeff Heselwood can be contacted at jhc@netnavigator.com

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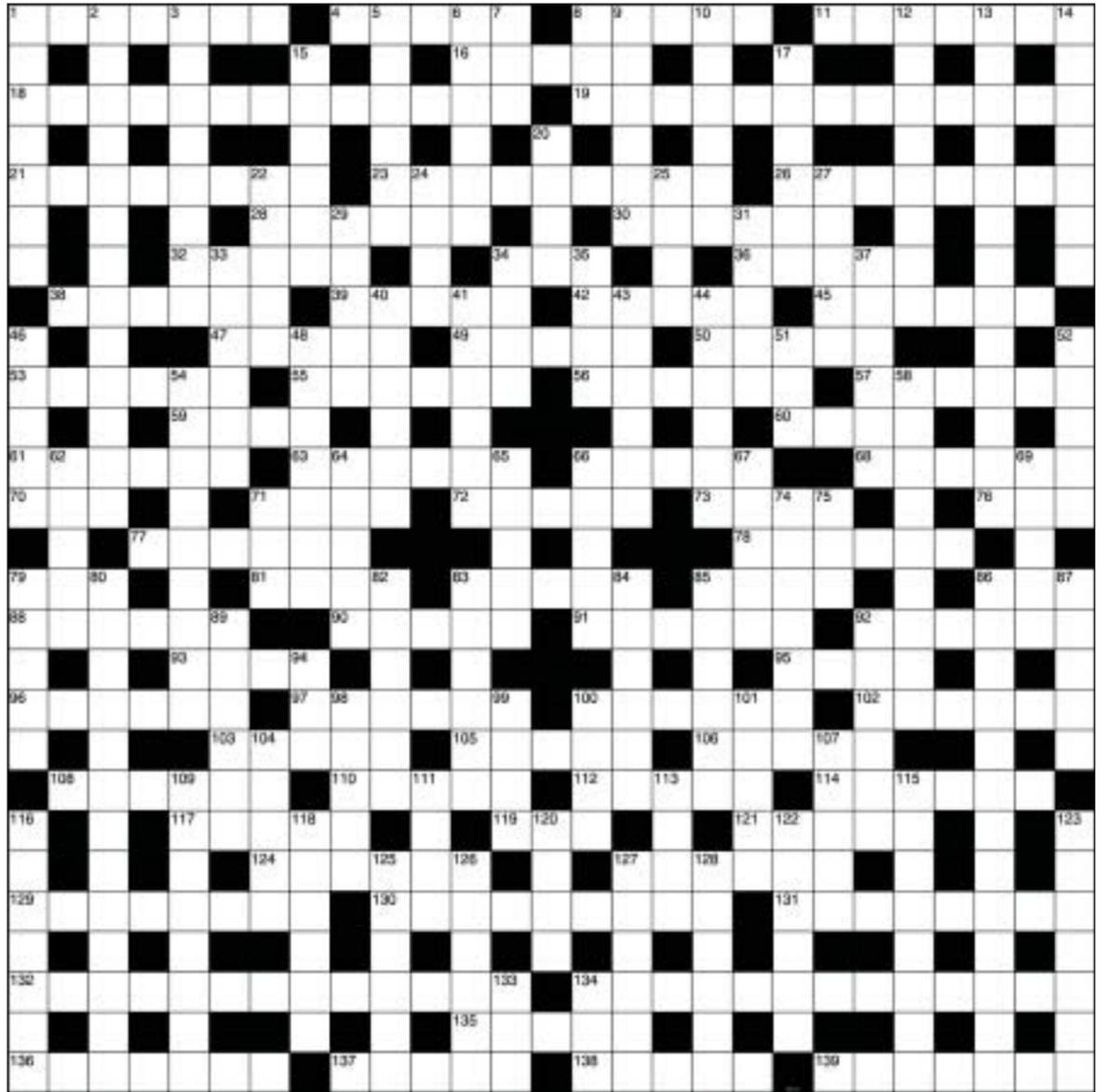
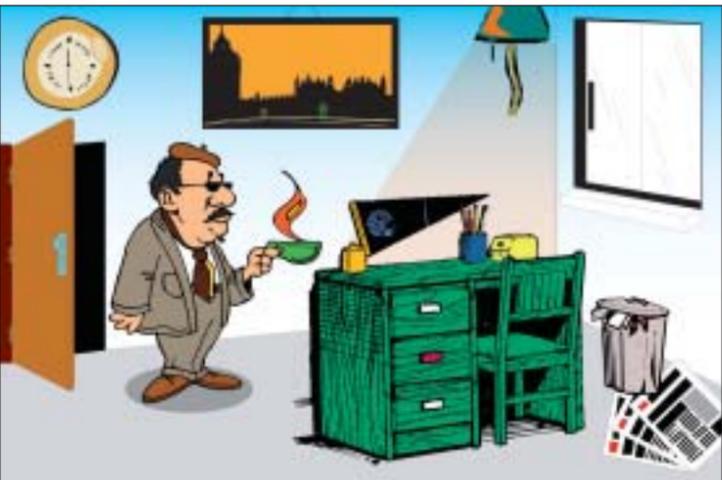
Puzzles

The BIG 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?



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Across

- 1. Incursions
- 4. Altogether (2,3)
- 8. Moderated, ...down
- 11. Progress
- 16. Meant
- 18. US journalism award (8,5)
- 19. Misleading account
- 21. Poorest
- 23. Filled with wonder (3-6)
- 26. Hand-me-down
- 28. More dignified
- 30. Actress, ...Stone
- 32. Black timber
- 34. Business degree
- 36. Gaze
- 38. Fringe
- 39. Public meeting
- 42. Surface (3,2)
- 45. Lebanese trees
- 47. Cantaloupe
- 49. Alternate
- 50. Caledonians
- 53. Restaurant/bar
- 55. Sufficient
- 56. Distributed
- 57. Balance out
- 59. Acorn bearers
- 60. Drastic
- 61. NW US state
- 63. Mariners
- 66. Dutch center of government, The...
- 68. Ability
- 70. Ccoal by-product
- 71. Crest
- 72. Glossy bird
- 73. Fill suitcase
- 76. Fish eggs
- 77. Thin coating
- 78. Minor
- 79. Lid

- 81. Drink, ...spumante
- 83. Italian country house
- 85. Honey liquor
- 86. Writer, ...Fleming
- 88. As a gamble (2,4)
- 90. Vagrants
- 91. Utterly preoccupy
- 92. US border river, Rio...
- 93. Baby sheep
- 95. Auction
- 96. Sailing boats
- 97. Oily fruit
- 100. Cloak
- 102. Nervier
- 103. Metropolitan
- 105. Tracking device
- 106. Encumbered
- 108. Bath sponge
- 110. Creature
- 112. French farewell
- 114. Decrees
- 117. Select band
- 119. Spreading tree
- 121. Screened again
- 124. ANC hero, ...Mandela
- 127. Hunting expedition
- 129. Looked upon
- 130. XXI (6-3)
- 131. Of indifferent quality
- 132. Shameful
- 134. Making individual
- 135. Ancient Peruvians
- 136. Mistrust
- 137. Struck with knee
- 138. Hide away
- 139. Paris boulevard, Champs...

- 3. Gained
- 5. Standard
- 6. Idler
- 7. Recline
- 8. For now, pro...
- 9. Hateful
- 10. Cry of discovery
- 12. Mixed
- 13. Shop display designer (6-7)
- 14. Veil
- 15. Early English Celt
- 17. Outcome
- 20. Pierce with knife
- 22. Sleep loudly
- 24. Raised bruise
- 25. A... off the old block
- 27. Pass (law)
- 29. Romantic poet, Lord...
- 31. Animal welfare group
- 33. Express sorrow over
- 34. False belief
- 35. Copies
- 37. Holiday spot
- 40. Parka
- 41. Lumberjack
- 43. Parentless child
- 44. Exhausts supply of (4,2)
- 46. Monastery head
- 48. Leaseholders
- 51. Mismatched
- 52. Proclaim
- 54. US president, Franklin D...
- 58. Plumed
- 62. Synthetic fiber
- 64. Venus & Mars' neighbor

- 69. Wanderer
- 71. Green vegetable
- 74. Graded
- 75. Young goat
- 79. Japan's capital
- 80. Thoughts and behavior specialists
- 82. Antiseptic solution
- 83. Electors
- 84. On ship
- 85. Resolution
- 86. Unrecognizable
- 87. Approaches
- 89. Offhand
- 92. UK actress, ...Jackson
- 94. Actor, Billy... Thornton
- 98. Clothes tag
- 99. Over-gratify
- 100. Respectful form of address (2'2)
- 101. America's First Lady
- 104. German wine, ...Riesling
- 107. Uncanny
- 109. Scary
- 111. Affirm
- 113. Ayatollah's land
- 115. Endlessness
- 116. Processions
- 118. Monotonous routine
- 120. Tardy
- 122. Stoat fur
- 123. Cleans (harbor bed)
- 125. Stress
- 126. Dame ...Melba
- 127. Most painful
- 128. Dines sumptuously
- 133. Conclude
- 134. Social blunder, faux...

Down

- 1. Encroach (upon)
- 2. Amusement park ride (6,7)
- 65. Hitler supporters
- 66. Greeting word
- 67. Lessens

su | do | ku

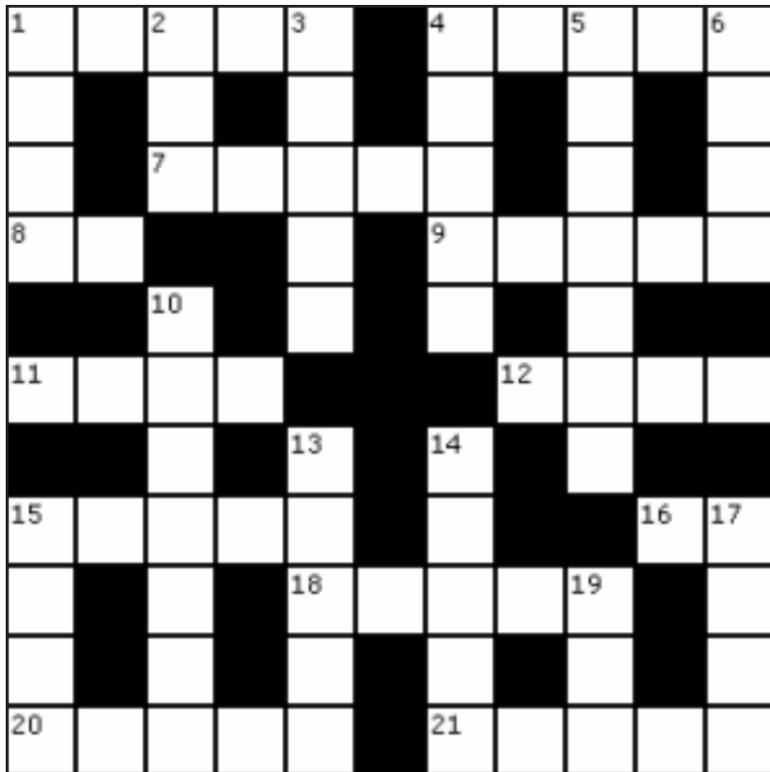
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Solution, tips and computer program at www.sudoku.com

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

The principle of 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. Guess if you will, but each Sudoku puzzle can be solved using logic alone. Beware: this puzzle has only one solution, which is on the next page.

Solution on next page



Quick Crossword

ACROSS

- 1. Pulse.
- 4. Matador's opponents.
- 7. Glistening gem.
- 8. Road.
- 9. Grind.
- 11. The other elf.
- 12. Star Trek nemesis.
- 15. Place of worship.
- 16. Big Apple.
- 18. Make right.
- 20. Relaxed.
- 21. Latin dance.

DOWN

- 1. Roam.
- 2. Indian king.
- 3. Wails.
- 4. Boat bottom.
- 5. Finder.
- 6. Soft wraparound.
- 10. False reasons.
- 13. Reflective fragment.
- 14. Big cats.
- 15. Sugar rod.
- 17. Hindu exercises.
- 19. True hardwood.

Solution below

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. Which group of animals are members of the class Sauropsida? | 8. The gecko is unique because it's the only lizard with what? | 15. Which is the only inanimate symbol in the zodiac? |
| 2. Baskin Robbins produced only one vegetable flavored ice cream. What was it? | 9. Which 1969 movie became the only X-rated movie to win an Academy Award for Best Picture? | 16. Which year was the last year that France used a guillotine to carry out the death penalty? |
| 3. Elvis Presely made one TV ad in his life. What was the ad for? | 10. Which Michaelangelo sculpture was the only one that he signed? | 17. Who was the last person recorded as dying from smallpox? |
| 4. What year did the ad run? | 11. Which is the only human living tissue that does not receive oxygen from blood flow? | 18. How did she contract the virus? |
| 5. Giraffes are the only animal born with what? | 12. Which river flows both north and south of the equator? | 19. Where did the Beatles stage their last concert? |
| 6. What is the only bone in the human body not jointed to another? | 13. How is this possible? | 20. In which year was the concert held? |
| 7. Who was the only Englishman to become pope? | 14. Which is the only bird that can fly backwards? | |

Answers below

Puzzle Solutions

Solution to this week's Quick crossword



Monster Quiz Answers

- 1. Reptiles; 2. Tomato Ketchup; 3. Southern Maid Doughnuts; 4. 1954; 5. Horns; 6. The hyoid, in the throat; 7. Nicholas Breakspear, (Adrian IV); 8. A voice; 9. *Midnight Cowboy*; 10. The Pieta; 11. The cornea in the eye, which takes oxygen directly from the air; 12. The Congo; 13. It crosses the equator twice; 14. The hummingbird; 15. The scales of Libra; 16. 1977; 17. Janet Parker; 18. She was exposed to it in a laboratory accident; 19. Candlestick Park, San Francisco, California; 20. 1966.

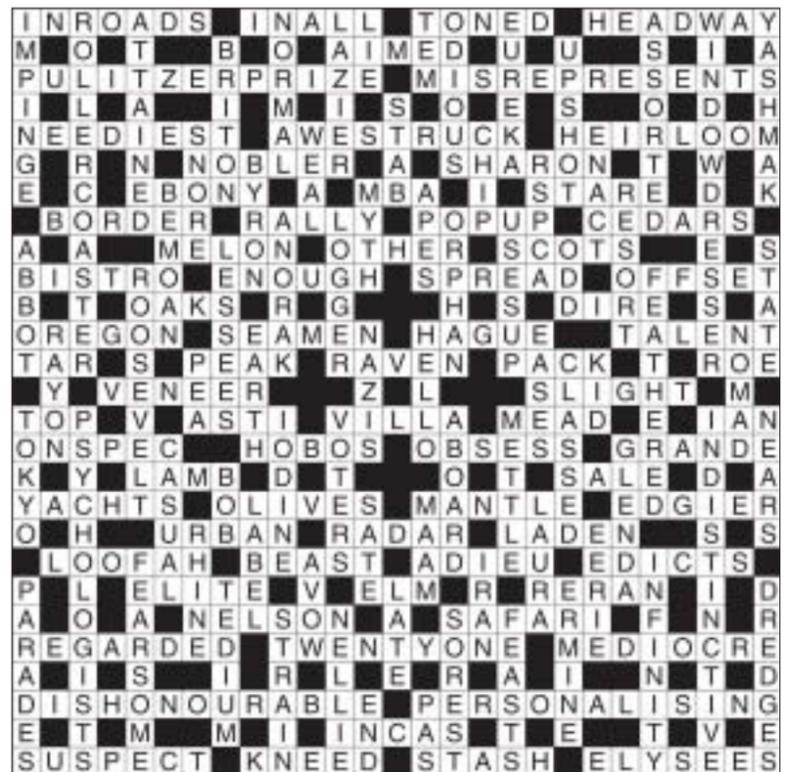
Solution to this week's Sudoku puzzle

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

Solution to this week's Cartoon Puzzle



Solution to this week's BIG Crossword



The rantings of an old crank

The book under review is entitled *Why I Left America?* (P. Press Co Ltd, 175 pp, 2007). To which the immediate riposte might be, "Why should I care?" But the author is John Arnone of Yasothon, a prolific letter writer to the two English-language, Bangkok newspapers – 300 by his own count – in which he offers his opinions on various and sundry topics; these provoke replies, which in turn provoke his replies to their replies.

It seems a pastime ideal for someone with too much time on his hands, much like those British colonial Colonel Blimps who passed their retirement years writing indignant letters to *The Times*.

The 175-page book in question was recently published by the author, after he failed to find a publisher in Thailand or the US. The text was written in 1999, six months after he settled in Thailand, with appropriate updates in bold type.

Arnone was born in 1941 and grew up during a tranquil time in America, to which he looks back with unabashed pride. His parents were the children of immigrants, father Italian, mother Polish. His father brought home the money and ruled the roost.

One of five children, Arnone gradu-



Off the SHELF

By James Eckardt

ated from high school, served in the US Navy and, like many others, migrated from New York to California. First he worked in magazine distribution and then as the owner of a video-porn store. He went through three bitter and costly divorces.

He moved to Thailand nine years ago and is happily married with two kids in Yasothon. Why he moved is the subject of his book: America is a thoroughly rotten place. Government, morals, economy, sexual mores, entertainment, family values, legal system and education – all are one big festering swamp.

Arnone is no scholar and does not quote from books or cite statistics. What he does have are opinions and an awful lot of them. His book is a rant, a raging

polemic, a towering jeremiad. His core beliefs are stated toward the end of this slender book:

"White, European males built America. Not women and not minorities. White men did. And now you revile us and treat us with condescension, if not outright scorn. Women and minority comedians make fun of us openly and television shows portray us as boobs and buffoons.

"Sour grapes? Absolutely. It's like building a house and then having a horde of squatters descend on it, only to criticize the woodwork. Then after partying in it for months and not paying attention to maintenance, they want you to fix the leaks in the roof.

"So little by little, those of us who are still alive and free to do so are leaving the country to you. You have had it for some time now anyway. So far, all you've produced are drug addicts, dysfunctional children and a proliferation of psychiatrists, lawyers and lawsuits..."

Political correctness is a concept very foreign to John Arnone. At first this is refreshing, but the aggrieved whiny tone

of the angry white middle-aged male goes on for too long. He also doesn't like American healthcare, diets, consumer culture, anti-smoking laws, sports, TV shows, movies, music, dancing, drugs, handicap parking, driving, corporations, special-interest groups, male-female relations, dead beatdads and Christmas.

You wonder why he didn't just stay home and vote Republican, but Arnone is also against neo-con bozos and George W Bush's war in Iraq. Give him credit: he found salvation in Thailand.

"...I never said Thailand was perfect. I said I like it. It's the best place I have ever seen for freedom, a sense of values, great weather and the general attitude of the people, not to mention the cost of living. But, most importantly, it is an everyday pleasure watching people treat each other in a civil manner. That alone is reason to defect."

He likes the care Thai people expend on children, the respect for elders, the Buddhist ethos, and the close social relations in his village. And you can smoke in the bars.



EVENTS CALENDAR

Upcoming events on the island

Until October 11. Rugby World Cup live.

IRB France has kicked off, powered by Guinness. Watch all the action at Angus O'Tool's Irish Pub, Karon Beach. Let the games commence! Big men play hard on two big screens because size does matter! Live broadcast from France with English commentary. Late games will also be shown.

Open from 10am until drunk. Eat, drink and sleep rugby at O'Tool's!

For further information contact John. Tel: 076-398262. Email: info@otools-phuket.com

September 30. Phuket Yacht Club Sailing Open Day and BBQ.

Family fun day, BBQ and beach activities. Try sailing on a catamaran, small yacht or dinghy. Come and see the junior fleet or try dragon boat racing sponsored by Sail in Asia.

The Phuket Yacht Club offers sailing-training sessions for juniors throughout the year. Next sailing course starts October 7.

Booking recommended. For details contact Katy Gooch. Tel: 085-2159185. Email: ktfirmin@yahoo.co.uk

October 8. Juvey Camps Wine Dinner at Mom Tri's Boathouse.

Mom Tri's Boathouse will host, in collaboration with Maison du Vin Bangkok, a wine dinner featuring Champagnoise wines of renowned Spanish vineyard Juvey Camps.

The vineyard's winemaker, Mr Mariano, will be introducing various wines of this exceptional estate.

Superb menu by Boathouse Executive Chef Tummanoon.

As seating is limited, reservations are required. Event time: 7 pm to 11:30 pm.

Contact for more information. Tel: 076-330015. Email: pr@boathousephuket.com Website: www.boathousephuket.com

October 11-19. Phuket Vegetarian Festival.

This festival is an annual event held during the ninth lunar month of the Chinese calendar, which normally falls in late September or early October.

Sacred rituals are performed at all Chinese temples in Phuket.

The processions from each temple show spectacles of strict vegetarians, known as devotees, ostensibly possessed by gods, piercing their tongues, cheeks and other parts of the anatomy with sharp implements.

October 21-27. Phuket Film Festival.

Phuket will see this festival realized with the Gala Opening on October 21. On that day, the festival will present the newly restored Thai film *The King of the White Elephant* (1941), the only remaining full-length, English-language feature film made entirely in Thailand.

Want to be one of the volunteers? Call 076-209000 or email filmfestival.phuket@gmail.com

For further information visit www.phuketfilmfestival.com

October 23. Chulalongkorn Day – Public Holiday.

HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej's birthday, also marked as Father's Day in Thailand.

November 14-17. Chalong Bay Fishing Tournament.

Registration night is November 14 and the registration fee is 7,000 baht per team, including free beer. Fishing days will be November 15-17 with prizes given on November 17 from 8 pm. For details contact Uwe Schitteck. Tel: 081-7195766. Email: uweschitteck@yahoo.com

November 24. PIWC Gala Ball.

Phuket International Women's Club will hold the most prestigious event this year – the annual Gala Ball – on Saturday November 24 at the Indigo Pearl, Nai Yang Beach.

For further information contact Carol (Tel: 087-4178860. Email: carol@aplusplussoftware.com) or Sue (Tel: 087-277694.

Email: arnulphy@loxinfo.co.th).

November 29. Wine Dinner at Mom Tri's Boathouse.

Mom Tri's Boathouse will host an exclusive wine-tasting dinner, featuring wines of two very prestigious wine chateaux in France: Château Pichon Comtesse de Lalande (Pauillac, France) and Chateau L'Angelus (Saint Emilion, France).

Seating is limited; reservations are required. Call the Boathouse at 076-330015 for details.

December 1-8. Phuket King's Cup Regatta.

The King's Cup Regatta is held every year to honor the birthday of HM King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The week-long event is Asia's biggest and most popular regatta with great sailing and

great parties along the way.

For further information visit www.kingscup.com or call 076-273380.

December 2. Laguna Phuket Triathlon.

Southeast Asia's premier multi-sport event, now in its 14th year with new 1.8km swim, 55km bike and 12km running routes expects to attract some 800 athletes from over 30 countries, competing for a prize purse of US\$20,000.

A 6km fun run for 500 participants will be conducted during the event.

For further information call 076-324060 or visit www.lagunaphukettriathlon.com

December 10. Constitution Day – Public holiday.

The Phuket Gazette
- Since 1994 -

367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur
Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-236555
Fax: 076-213971
Email: info@phuketgazette.net

Cycling for tourism

One global event that passed by virtually unnoticed in Phuket earlier this month was World Carfree Day on September 22. Local authorities and police in some 30 of Thailand's provinces cleared roads in normally traffic-choked downtown areas to make way for safe passage by cyclists taking part in the global event.

That Phuket was not among the provinces taking part is hardly surprising. Prevailing attitudes toward cycling on the island are poor at best, with many island motorists treating their self-propelled counterparts as little more than slow-moving obstacles to be contemptuously bullied off the road at will.

Apart from the few recreational cyclists brave and fit enough to keep pace with motorized vehicles, most cyclists risk their lives every time they pedal along a main thoroughfare.

Until current attitudes toward cycling change – or the authorities introduce bike lanes that physically restrict motorized vehicles from entering – there seems little hope that cycling will ever take hold and become a safe activity here.

This is saddening, because cycling offers huge potential advantages over driving that include reductions in both traffic and air pollution, energy saving, increased fitness among those who pedal, and even a drop in greenhouse-gas emissions. In Phuket, allowing for safe cycling would give the public a healthy and non-polluting alternative transport option.

Island residents currently face dismal transport options. These include bearing the high costs associated with owning and operating a car in an era of ever-increasing fuel costs, or risking one's life on a motorbike.

The only other option, which has been the subject of much futile editorializing in this space, is to pay the extortionate fares demanded by taxi and tuk-tuk syndicates, which through collusion and not-so-subtle intimidation have conspired to maintain the highest fare rates in the nation for decades.

As a tourism province, Phuket is ideally suited to establish a network of bicycle lanes – just as numerous other tourism destinations around the globe have done with great success. Despite all the lip service paid to “sustainable tourism” and “resource conservation”, our leaders missed a golden opportunity in failing to incorporate bike lanes into the many road-building projects that have gone on in recent years.

In fact, the truth is that it is now more dangerous than ever to ride bicycles along many island roads, especially recently-widened roads such as Wiset Rd in Rawai and sections of Chao Fa West Rd in Tambon Wichit, to name just two.

– The Editor

Do you have an opinion you want to share?
Email editor@phuketgazette.net

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Editor: Parichat Utintu

Managing Editor: Chris Husted

News Editor: Stephen Fein

Chief Reporter: Sangkhae Leelanapaporn

Editorial Team: Natcha Yuttaworawit, Janyaporn Morel, Sompratch Saowakhon, Semacote Suganya, Nick Davies, Matt Crook, Skyler Swezy

Managing Director: Oranee Pienprasertkul

General Manager: Niladaa Mastanawattanakul

Marketing Manager: Natthira Susangrat

Publisher: The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd

Contact us

Advertising Sales: adsales@phuketgazette.net

Classified Advertising: classads@phuketgazette.net

Website Services: koy@phuketgazette.net

Gazette Guide inquiries: guide@phuketgazette.net

Telephone: 076-236555 (10 lines) **Fax:** 076-213971

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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.

Khun Paiboon, Phuket's hero

While others ran, Khun Paiboon [*Phaphan*] stayed and saved the life of Australian Robert Borland [see News pages].

The man is a hero and deserves a medal.

Roger Neill
Rawai

The truth will come

Many are quick to assign blame to the pilot in the crash of the One-Two-Go plane at Phuket. Yes, he makes the final decision to land, but are you aware it's quite possible that he didn't have enough fuel to make it to another airport? Corporate policies to save money are rampant in the industry, not just in start-up budget airlines.

One way to guard against greedy airline executives is for airports to shut down in inclement weather, therefore eliminating added pressure on a pilot that can lead to crashes. This is how it's done in places that care about human life.

It has also come to my attention that Phuket Airport, though located in the tropics where it rains constantly and heavily, has no grooves in the runway to allow for rain run off. In fact, it is not rated as

safe for a heavy-rain landing. The more I find out the more I have to feel that it is not surprising that the plane crashed; it was not a freak accident. Quite the opposite – it was inevitable.

I shall wait with extreme interest for the NSTB report, but it may be somewhat inaccurate as it has been pointed out that large chunks of the plane, presumably to be examined in the USA, were lifted in a very

clumsy fashion by construction cranes, causing even more damage, which could mask other problems that may have contributed to the crash.

Christy K. Sweet
Seven kilometers southeast of
Phuket International Airport

Phuket needs another hospital

I second the comments regarding the need for a hospital near the airport. The nearest hospital to the airport is at Thalang, but it is a very small hospital with limited facilities and only two ambulances, neither of which have on-board ICUs.

When the OG269 air crash occurred, it took about 30 minutes before any ambulances arrived at the airport and many of the injured were put into private cars for the long journey to the hospitals near to Phuket City.

As the northern end of Phuket starts to have more hotels, condos and so on, there is surely a need for a decent hospital in this area to serve the local communities, the airport and hotels.

As far as I am aware, there are only about 14 ambulances in all of Phuket, including those of the volunteer organizations. There is no central administration or management system for them or the provision of a single emergency telephone number. That's pretty shameful.

Concerned hotel owner

Tsk-tsk tuk-tuks

In almost every edition of the *Phuket Gazette* I read letters about weak transportation service on the island.

For my part, I always make prior arrangements via my hotel or my

agent and get a decent transfer service for 500 baht (airport to Patong or vice versa). For getting around town or the island, I rent a motorbike. I can only recommend doing so if you know how to ride one.

Even if you do not need a tuk-tuk or taxi, they are a real pain. You cannot walk one minute in Patong on the beach road or Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd without being bothered.

Can somebody get it into the heads of these drivers that tourists will let them know when their “services” are needed? Yelling and clapping hands does not make anybody use an unwanted “service”. Nobody likes this pushy behavior.

It gets worse. In Patong, parking space is rare. But these people block lots of public parking space with their vehicles. Their cars and tuk-tuks sit on the roadside for hours without customers.

In front of my place, at Rat-U-Thit 200 Pi Rd across from Soi Kepsu, there is a designated parking area for motorcycles only, but this is always occupied by those vehicles.

When I try to park there, the drivers command me not to park here. When I do, they move my bike.

Like many writers before, I must say that there is a lot of work to be done to get things on an acceptable level.

Stephan Hockmann
Patong

Ambrosia admirer

I'd like to inquire about the marital status of Ambrosia. Is she single? If she is, could you ask her if she'd like to go on a date with me?

Fred,
Kata

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

Air disaster reveals flaws in emergency-response tactics

I was at work at the Phuket Provincial Hall at the time of the crash. It took me 25 minutes to drive to the airport and take control of my teams. There are five rescue teams that are separate from the Phuket Airport team: the Pa Khlok team, Cherng Talay team, Mai Khao team, Thepkrasattri team and Phuket City team. Phuket's five emergency-response teams quickly reached the airport and were ready to help.

My teams supported the Phuket Airport team, which was the first rescue team to arrive at the crash site.

When I arrived, I heard that they had a problem with the fire-retardant foam spray; it couldn't put out the fire in one go because the rain was rinsing it off the airplane.

We followed everything according to our plans, but what happened in reality was different from anything we had prepared for. At one point, everyone thought the fire was under control, but it flared up again because of the problem with the foam spray.

Then we ran out of foam, so we had to use water to extinguish the fire. During previous test runs of similar scenarios it was sunny and the foam worked, but when the accident happened it was raining and did not work.

FIRST PERSON

Aroon Kerdson, chief of the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Phuket, faced the challenge of leading his five emergency-response teams as part of the rescue operation after One-Two-Go flight OG269 crash landed at Phuket International Airport on September 16.

Recounting the rescue operations' successes and challenges for the *Gazette*, K. Aroon had some suggestions that could help rescue teams save lives in the future.



The Phuket Airport team had about eight fire fighters equipped to enter the plane while it was still burning. Only the Phuket Airport team could do this because they had fire-proof suits, which are very expensive. My team could only help by spraying water because we do not have those suits.

I was asking for those firefighters but I couldn't find them. I knew that they were the only ones who could enter the plane. I needed them to go in and find out how many crash victims were dead and alive, but they

were not around.

During the rescue, every team had to work together and there were a large number of rescue workers. Phuket Vice Governor Worapoj Ratthasima was in charge of the rescue effort, so I asked him to command every team to follow our plans. After he did so, everything went smoothly.

There were at least 50 rescue workers on each team, so with five teams there were about 250 workers in total. We also had over six hospital teams, each with a 10-person staff, who delivered

first aid and quickly moved patients to hospitals. After my teams aided in extinguishing the fire, they helped move victims from the wreckage until 4 am.

I was not worried about my team members, but I was worried about unregistered volunteers who joined in the rescue operation without being a part of any team or having had any training.

They didn't know about our rescue plans and procedures, so they were confused and it was difficult to give them tasks that they could actually perform.

My teams have not requested any more rescue equipment for future rescue operations. What we have is enough so that we don't make mistakes while working.

What I will request is a larger budget for rescue drills and practice operations. This will help our teams gain expertise and become more confident.

In my eyes, the Phuket Airport canal was not a big problem. It affected us by slightly delaying our initial approach to the scene and by making it difficult to move patients.

However, it was not a serious problem because we were able to find a strong steel bridge to use temporarily.

It would be good if Phuket Airport could get a mobile-bridge unit for people to cross the canal during emergencies.

Also, a spotlight to search for victims at night because we had to have one delivered during the rescue operation.

A large crane would be good as well, because we had to wait until morning for one to arrive from a private company. The airport only has a small crane, which couldn't move large pieces of the wreckage.

Everyone showed great spirit and did their best. For my teams, the rescue operation was a great success.

Under what conditions does the 90-day visa clock start?

I am a Swiss citizen with a one-year multiple-entry visa and a work permit valid for one year. I often travel abroad for business reasons and have never gone to the immigration to receive a stamp for 90 days.

I was informed that every time I come back to Thailand, the 90-day count will start anew. In my opinion, the 90 days had never expired in the first place.

Now, the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office (PPIO) has told me that I must get the 90 days confirmation independent of my travels abroad.

Additionally, I have to fill out an application form and bring it with me along with my house registration.

Last, I must do so myself and cannot be represented by my secretary.

Bangkok Immigration does not know about the new regulation. Is this due to a new law or just an additional obstacle from the PPIO?

Jean-Pierre Rerat
Chuan Cheun Lagoon

Issues & ANSWERS

Want to know how to get something done? Can't understand some of the dafter things that seem to go on in Phuket? Write to: The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at www.phuketgazette.net

Pol Capt Krissarat Nuesen of the Phuket Provincial Immigration Office replies:

If you stay in Thailand less than 90 days under a one-year multiple-entry visa and you travel often, leaving the country each time, you don't need to report your 90-day stay at the PPIO.

This is because the airport immigration officer will see this when you pass through immigration and they will give you the new arrival stamp.

You might have had a misunderstanding when you were told to bring the house registration paper to register at the PPIO.

Under Thai law, every foreigner who enters Thailand must inform the immigration office where they are staying. Hotel officers are responsible for doing this for tourists, but house owners must inform us if they have foreigners living in their home.

Foreigners can also inform us themselves if they have a current rental contract. This is not a new law.

You can choose one of four ways to inform us. Either in person at the respective office, through an authorized person at the respective office, by registered mail or on-line.

How can I be issued a credit card from a Thai bank?

I recently changed jobs and, therefore, had to cancel my credit card from overseas. I applied for a credit card at Siam Commercial Bank where I have an account. I submitted my work permit, which I have held for more than 10 years, my passport and my salary slip.

Two weeks later, I received a text message stating that my request had been declined.

I called the service center to ask why this was the case and I was told that a farang must have a salary of at least 150,000 baht a month in order to get a credit card. Is this true for all Thai banks?

RM
Kata

Phoonsin Sinthanaphat, Chairman of Phuket Bankers Club, replies:

There is no minimum salary requirement for foreigners to obtain a credit card, although Thais

must earn a minimum of 15,000 baht a month.

The main reservation banks have about issuing credit cards to foreigners is that they risk not being able to chase up any debts run up by a foreign card holder if he or she leaves the country. I would advise any foreigner with a credit card from their own country not to cancel it.

It is worth applying for a credit card at other banks where you have an account. The bank will require the following documents:

1. A valid passport
2. Work permit
3. Salary slips or a letter from your employer as proof of employment.
4. Bank account showing income.

Even if all these documents are provided, banks may require additional related documents and still reserve the right not to issue a credit card.

This column seems to be whipping up a fair amount of attention recently, and when I mention to select people that I am the man behind the mask, it's usually greeted with, "You're the Trawler!"

I am not so sure whether this is a good or bad thing. I would call it notoriety and as the great Kenneth Williams said, "Infamy! Infamy! They've all got it in for me!"

After last time's tirade against my tuk-tuk brethren, I am expecting to wake up with a horse's head on my pillow instead of my girlfriend's – some people might ask, "What is the difference?"

Verti go-go. This week the Trawler became the baller – which is hip-hop slang for blinged out – which is hip-hop slang for high roller.

Catch my drift? I wined and dined at the upscale 9th Floor bar and restaurant, not surprisingly situated on the ninth floor of the Sky Inn Condotel in Patong.

I had to replace my trusty ripped shorts with trousers and my beat-up Nike pumps with winkle pickers, borrow a pair of socks and comb out the dreadlocks that

Trawlin' is ballin'

were beginning to form in my fiberglass wig.

The sea views over Patong were immense and the food moreso. I was treated to how the other 3% live, and got to devour lamb shank cooked in red wine sauce served on top of creamy polenta (mashed potato to the laymen).



TRAWLIN'

By Alas Swan

You can't beat a bit of cooked dead animal. I recommend the 9th Floor to everyone, and the price range is not as expensive as you might imagine – although I did take along my parachute just in case.

Back to my roots. Keeping up with my current theme of Irish Bars, I visited the newly opened Finnegan's, opposite Montes on Phisit Gorani Rd in Baan Mon and refurbished by the same people who brought you Lek Murphy's.

For once in my life the timing was perfect, as my entrance coincided with a

birthday party being held there and the tsunami scare of September 19.

Incidentally, if a tsunami were to reach Finnegan's it probably would be drunk dry by the Irish contingent present.

I love the Irish sentiment of having a great time with a good craic. Don't even think about stealing the brand-new tables and chairs inside as they are sculpted out of solid hardwood and moving them guarantees a slipped disc or two.

I thank K. Keiran and K. Darren for a great night and urge people to support this new venture and remember this is a real Irish Pub – not a gimmicky tool used to promote Celtic charm.

Fully Montes. Across the way is Montes, also a venue for a good night out in a pleasant ambiance. I enjoy the Wednesday night all you can eat barbecue, which is excellent value at 200 baht.

The owners and staff are very friendly and there is a big projector screen showing major sporting events. The menu offers a wide range of food items. I have never had a bad meal there.

Off the beaten track. During my pursuits, I am often consulted by Patong residents who look to broaden their horizons a little and get away from the bright lights of Patong for a night.

The main problem is some Patongites – or should that be Patongese? Patongians? Whatever... – need a gentle nudge in the right direction.

My favorite at the moment is the Skylight Bar 2 in Karon

The bar hosts the wholesome Boss Hogg's Sunday Spit-Roast Special, giving you the chance to devour what you can of a succulent 55-kilo pig.

For the paltry price of 200 baht, you get a bottle of beer and a fully loaded pork chop with apple sauce and stuffing.

They roast a pig every Sunday evening and I recommend a visit.

The Skylight Bar 2 is just a stone's throw from Angus O'Tools, opposite the market stalls.

That's all for now – keep Trawlin'.

Alas Swan can be spit-roasted by email at wasnotwass@gmail.com

I used to think the long-term expats and many regular visitors who set aside a couple of hours on a Wednesday and Sunday evening to play for one of the 10 or so quiz teams in and around Pattaya were a little sad.

After all, with a multitude of eye-candy bars and an infestation of beer bars across the length and breadth of Fun Town, why would anyone want to waste a couple of precious ogling hours on something as mundane as a quiz, especially when, as I was soon to find out, many of the questions are Anglocentric?

I mean, who would possibly know the answer to something as esoteric as, "In which English county did the first left-handed tiddlywinks championship take place?" or "Who played Mrs Hermione Felcherer in the 1960s British comedy series *Mad as a Hatter*?" or, better still, "How many Kings of England lost their lives while trying to mate with a horse?"

There are no end-of-season

Waiting on an eternity

prizes for the winning teams, so no-one is playing for sheep stations. Most players treat the quiz as a social occasion and a chance to meet new people, catch up with old friends – or simply to get plastered.

Then I was asked by one bar owner, whose team had just joined the league, to come along and add to the bums on seats if and when I felt like it. Since the bar owner is a decent bloke I wandered along on an infrequent basis.

The series is played on a home-and-away basis and this preamble brings me to the purpose of my story. I won't mention the name of the place where the following took place, let's just call it the Five Daughters Bar and Restaurant.

On a sultry Wednesday evening, our team was playing away at the Five Daughters.

About nine of us were in attendance and the serving staff dutifully plied us with drinks.

The affable owner of the Five Daughters announced that the usual question-reader had failed to turn up, but he had a replacement, "The only problem is, he's a bit quiet. His voice doesn't carry," said the owner. This proved to be an understatement.

The less-than-hoarse whisperer wasn't just quiet. If his lips hadn't been moving you'd swear he hadn't uttered a word. This guy was not at all fazed by our continually asking him to repeat himself.

At the end of the quiz, I paid my bill and waited for 15 baht change. None came. While others received their change, it became clear that the serving females decided I was going to make a 15-baht contribution to their tip box.

I had a choice: accept the situation or ask for my change. Being a contrary type, I asked for my change. After initially ignoring me and then realizing I wasn't going away, a tray with 15 baht



FROM THE STREETS OF PATTAYA

By Duncan Stearn

appeared. I took it and left.

Four nights later, the Sunday version of the quiz found our team once more at the Five Daughters. I arrived just after 8:30 pm. Three of our team at the table had drinks in front of them. None of the serving girls came near me.

A couple more of our team arrived and were duly served. Still, not a single "Would you like some drink?" questioner came within eye contact.

Eventually, all eight of the people around me had been served a drink; I continued to be ignored as if I had farted loudly during a funeral oration.

You might think I'd be angered by all this, but I wasn't. I found it amusing and decided to see just how long it would be be-

fore I was asked if I'd care for a thirst-quencher. The result was predictable: I wasn't asked all night. From 8:35 pm until 10:15 pm when the quiz finished, not a single serving person came near me.

One glazed-eyed serving girl did come past after about an hour, but there was not a flicker of registration in her dull peepers. At one point I counted the number and location of the exalted serving ladies: one was sat at an angle behind me; two were perched at the bar inspecting a plate of food; three were slumped, exhausted from their exertions in seats diagonally in front of me; and another two were on occasional sluggish patrol.

Although the girls are paid a monthly salary to serve drinks and food, the real money is in tips. Since their experience with me the previous Wednesday resulted in not a single *satang* making it near their pockets, there was no incentive to serve me.

After all, I was what they would call a "difficult" customer; I mean, fancy having the temerity to actually want my change... and such a paltry amount, too.

With apologies to Alfred Lord Tennyson, I've rearranged a few lines of his famous poem *The Charge of the Light Brigade*.

No Charge
from this Brigade

Half a bottle, half a bottle,
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Daughters,
Not one of them in a dress.

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Drinks not quite in front of
me,
And not one is mine,
Mine not to reason why,
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In The Stars

by Isla Star

A week with the stars

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Those of you celebrating a birthday this week can look forward to an interesting year ahead. October gaces you with certain challenges. How you respond to these will dictate your path for the coming months. Your financial status is due to brighten and a windfall is likely soon. The scent of almonds encourages a more positive outlook.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): You have the power to change conditions you are not happy with during the first half of October. This weekend is a good time to make a list of improvements and to meditate on how to achieve them. A slight drama with a neighbor could occur early next week, though this is not the right time to release the sting in your tail. The number seven is lucky on Tuesday.

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Your energy levels are set to improve in October. This is the ideal time to adopt a healthier lifestyle, but make modest changes that you can maintain. Those of you who are single could meet a prospective partner through sports. Those already in a relationship should encourage your partner to join in a new pastime. Money flows away from you too freely in the coming days, so avoid financial commitments.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): A strong month is forecast for you. The planets are ready to back your endeavors to succeed in business after false starts encountered recently. The only trick required will be to balance work and leisure so that you don't become burned out. Per-

sonal friendships will be vulnerable and romance could require tactful handling as your partner is likely to divulge that they are planning a solo trip.

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19) Spirituality occupies much of your attention during October. Those of you who realize that life isn't all work and having fun with friends could start some soul searching. Aries has some useful insights but asking Virgo will be a waste of time. Tuesday is best for an overdue business meeting as the stars will back your attempts to uncover the truth. The number five can bring fortune on Wednesday.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): Those of you putting yourself on the line in business matters could regret doing so. You probably do not know all the facts and money could be easily lost. Money matters will be subject to adverse astral conditions during the first half of October, so be content to paddle in the shallows. Love with an alluring Aquarian could be just what you need to perk up during the remainder of low season.

ARIES (March 21-April 20): October is a month for you to shine. You will be in your element as a hectic social schedule begins to brew. Surprise visitors from overseas enhance the atmosphere and you could be considering a trip as the month progresses. Check travel documents ahead of time as the stars suggest that an important detail is likely to be overlooked. The number four can bring luck on Monday.

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Trying to get everything done at once could lead to trouble. Pace yourself and enjoy everything that October is set to bring. On Wednesday you learn of a chance to succeed by using your creative energy. An affair of the heart that didn't appear too promising in September can benefit from Cupid's intervention this weekend. Wear a piece of amber to encourage grounding.

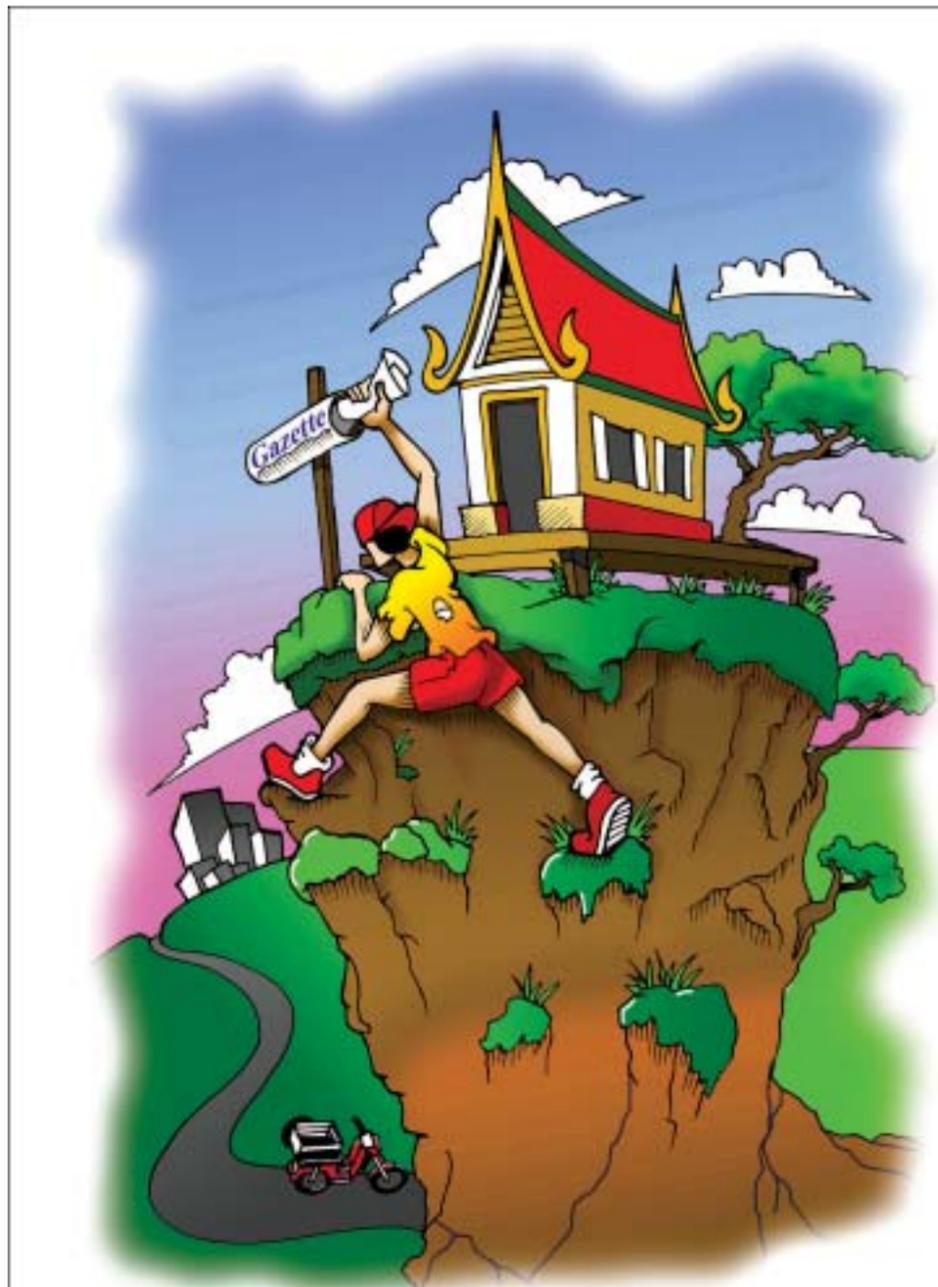
GEMINI (May 22-June 21): You don't usually allow others to have the upper hand in business, but you could be distracted while someone does exactly this. Keep your mind on business in October as opportunities will be fleeting and easily missed. Do-

mestic matters require diplomacy this week when a family member is easily irritated. A dream you have this weekend can hold the key to a mystery surrounding the break-up of a friendship.

CANCER (June 22-July 23): You are advised to be in possession of the full facts before making a judgment regarding a friend's strange behavior. If the person concerned is another Cancerian, don't presume that your usual approach to problems will work. Finances are due to improve by the middle of October as you hit the nail on the head in a business deal. The number 8 is lucky on Sunday.

LEO (July 24-August 22): Home issues are very much on your mind this week when a family member has some surprising news. Many of you will consider a change of residence during October. If this is because of problems with current neighbors, investigate all possibilities of lightening the atmosphere before making a dramatic move. Where love is concerned, it appears that you didn't burn your boats with Libra and a second chance is indicated.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Work is subject to problems this week, particularly if you ignored warning signs during September. Those of you who know they are inclined to take the lazy way out are advised to sharpen up their act. This also applies to a close relationship. Make this weekend a special time so that romance can flow; your partner will appreciate being reminded of how special they are. The scent of jasmine sweetens your approach.



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PC Group Therapy stops dirty cleaner

The most recent PC Group Therapy session drew several new participants – and a whole bunch of people concerned about recent arrests under Thailand's new Computer-Related Crimes Act.

As reported in my previous column, according to sources on the Internet that appear to me to be credible, it looks as if two people were arrested on August 24 and charged under the new Computer-Related Crimes Act.

A man known by his screen name "Praya Pichai" and a woman with the screen name of "Ton Chan" were apparently arrested and ultimately taken to Bangkok Remand Prison. Praya Pichai made bail on September 6; Ton Chan's family had a hard time coming up with her 100,000-baht bail, but the court finally ordered her release on September 17.

Both are awaiting trial for posting comments offensive to the monarchy on several Web forums. Neither is talking to the press.

If you're interested in following the latest developments, the best coverage I've found is at www.prachatai.com/English.

Also on the local news front, Thailand's Information and Communication Technology Minister Sitthichai Pookai-yaudom has announced that he will resign from office at 3 pm October 1, "to set a precedence for politicians".

Under the Graft Law of 2000, which is technically inoperative because of the coup, Thailand's Cabinet ministers aren't allowed to own more than 5% of any public company. ICT Minister Sitthichai owns 16% of Mahanakorn University of Technology, which he founded; 31% of Thai Space Industry Co, which apparently isn't an active company any more; and 31% of Technological Research and Development.

Few people I know will lament Minister Sitthichai's departure.

Dirty cleaner. Back at the PC Group Therapy session, and one new participant brought his laptop



Registry Defender doesn't do much for your computer, but it sure puts a dent in your wallet.

with him and showed us all a program that declared his brand-new Vista Home Premium computer contained almost 200 registry errors.

Registry Defender as well as other similar programs ran every time he started the computer, notifying him that some errors had been fixed free of charge, but if he wanted to fix the other 200, he had to buy this whiz-bang product.

What a crock. I've been railing against registry cleaners for many years. Most registry cleaners perform a perfunctory scan of your registry, fix a few broken links and remove dead entries. But why bother? Having an extra 200 – or even 2,000 – entries in your registry won't slow it down in any perceptible way.

Yes, links get broken, but they don't hurt anything. Some registry scanners make gross assumptions and clobber important settings. I've had to fix many PCs that have been "fixed" by a reg-

istry cleaner.

Some computer checkup programs may make your computer run faster. Maybe. PC Pitstop is arguably the best-known and most highly-regarded program in the genre.

If you feel a burning need to unclog your computer, head over to www.pcpitstop.com and give it a try, but no reputable program pesters you with "Buy this program or we'll shoot this dog" admonitions like Registry Defender – except some major antivirus programs and Windows itself, but I digress.

Spywareremove.com says, "Registry Defender is a rogue security program that scans and detects malware and other problems on your PC, but at the same time badgers the user into purchasing the full version of the program by showing misleading warning messages and scan results.

"It installs itself onto your PC without your permission, usually through Trojan, viruses and web security holes."

Fortunately, it took only a few minutes to remove Registry Defender. In Vista, click Start, Control Panel, then under the Programs icon click Uninstall a

Program. In WinXP, click Start, Control Panel, Add or Remove Programs and remove it – and it didn't re-appear when we rebooted the computer.

We get a lot of newbie questions at the PC Group Therapy sessions, and I welcome them.

If you have a question about your computer, drop by the Sandwich Shoppe in Patong on Sunday, 10 am until noon. Chances are that several people in therapy will be able to help. It's free, too.

Email me at woody@khunwoody.com for questions or directions.

Sneak preview. Finally, if you have been following the latest Microsoft news, you may have heard of a new version of Windows coming out this holiday season called Windows Home Server (WHS). If you have a network at home or in your office and a fast Internet connection, you should look into Windows Home Server.

If you're involved in PC-based multimedia or home automation systems – hardware, software, development, sales, consumer, whatever – you need to understand how WHS fits into the grand scheme of things.

Most people will buy WHS pre-installed on a new computer, such as the HP MediaSmart Server, that's designed to work as the center of a home or small business network. You can also buy the software on its own and install it on your computer.

WHS doesn't try to cover all the bases. It's focused on the most common home and small business network jobs: WHS backs up all the data on all of your

computers – automatically. No setup wizards, no weird jargon. WHS creates locations – you can call them shared folders – where people using the network can put stuff. WHS takes care of disk management behind the scenes so you don't have to.

You'll never even know – or probably care – which drive on the WHS computer holds what folders or which files. Optionally, WHS opens up your entire network so you can log onto any computer on your network from any browser, anywhere in the world.

WHS constantly monitors all of the computers on your network and gives you a concise, centralized "health report" that stays on top of the current status of patches, virus signature file updates, and running out of hard drive space.

WHS also acts as a central repository for Windows XP Media Center or Vista Home Premium PC media – music, movies, recorded TV – and it works with the Xbox 360.

I've spent the past four months beta-testing and digging into WHS. On October 1, I'll be giving a hands-on seminar on WHS in conjunction with the Phuket Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa) office. You'll have a chance to see WHS in action and try it out for yourself right here in Phuket before Microsoft's official launch.

Woody's latest book, *Windows Home Server For Dummies*, will be available worldwide, in several languages, this November. Contact him at woody@khunwoody.com or through www.askwoody.com.

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Are you hot and free? Let readers know. Email Woody an invitation at woody@khunwoody.com

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ON THE MOVE

Gregory Place from France has joined law firm McEvily & Collins as an Associate. Mr Place has a law degree from the University of Toulouse, and a master's degree in IT law from the University of Orleans and a master's in international commercial law from Northumbria University. Before joining McEvily & Collins, he represented clients in Bangkok and Samui, assisting major land developers with projects in Thailand.sss



Natthida "Eed" Satitman, 34, from Bangkok has been appointed Sales Manager of Civil Engineering Co Ltd (Prefabricate House). K. Eed has a degree from the Faculty of Business Administration at Bangkok University. Before moving to Phuket, she worked as Senior Customer Service at Evergreen Marine Star for five years and at TNT Express (Worldwide) as Senior Customer Service Support for three years.



Australian **Paul Millist** has been appointed Executive Chef at JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa, with responsibility for the pool kitchen area. Mr Millist has a wealth of culinary experience and has worked in well-known restaurants and hotels in Australia and Asia since 1997, including working as Chef at famed Est Est restaurant in Melbourne, Australia, and as Executive Chef at the JW Marriott in Hong Kong.



US Fed slashes Funds Rate by 50 points

The decision by the US Central Bank, the Federal Reserve, to cut its key Fed Funds Rate by 50 basis points, from 5.25% to 4.75%, was a bold move.

With many indicators pointing to a rapid slowdown in the US economy, it was important for the Fed to demonstrate that it was prepared to take decisive action. A mere 25-basis-point reduction would have left many believing that the Fed was being too tepid in its approach.

There are plenty of critics who believe a loose monetary policy led to the problems in the US housing sector and other "bubbles". They do have a case. However, hindsight is 20/20. The Fed has to make judgment calls on the current situation while always looking to the future.

Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Fed from 1987 to 2006, admits that he did not foresee the problems that would be caused in the US subprime housing market. Many, if not all, of the problems in this area were actually outside of the Fed's control. The problem was predatory lending,



MONEY TALKS

By Richard G Watson

whereby people took loans on houses with little or no deposit combined with low initial interest rates.

These interest rates were hiked after a few years. Much of the finance was directed to individuals with poor credit histories. For example, contracts often referred to "LIBOR Plus X" percent interest when the mortgage "reset" after an initial period.

LIBOR stands for London Interbank Offer Rate. It would be realistic to say that at least 95% of borrowers had never heard of LIBOR, let alone its im-

plications, before entering their contracts.

When consumers enter a long-term finance agreement, they assume they will be dealing with the same lender for the duration of the loan. However, in recent years, lenders began immediately selling these loans en masse to other entities.

Relieved of the responsibility of carrying these loans on their "books", lenders operating in a highly competitive market abandoned the traditional credit assessment procedures and were simply looking for loan volumes.

It was common for blocks of these loans to be sold to other banks around the world. American borrowers often found their loans were now held by anything from the Bank of China to National Australia Bank.

This resulted in banks becoming far less willing to enter into everyday transactions with one another. Concerned that other banks could be holding vast amounts of poor quality loans, the traditional trust between banks disappeared.

This, in turn, caused a global "credit crunch". A perfect example was Northern Rock. A long-established financial institution in the UK, Northern Rock was a traditional British building society that in recent years con-

verted to the status of a bank. This group was not involved in predatory lending – American style – but was involved in what had become an intensely competitive mortgage market in the UK.

As people now shop online for their mortgages, the past decade has seen banks spurn the cost of maintaining branches. With Northern Rock, it was more effective to borrow money in wholesale money markets to fund lending and increase market share than to rely on their own branch network and depositors.

When the credit crunch rapidly spread to the UK, Northern Rock suddenly found itself without new money available. This lack of funds forced Northern Rock to stop lending to the public. Aware of problems, their depositors panicked and formed queues wanting to withdraw their money.

No bank anywhere in the world holds sufficient cash to meet such situations.

Mervyn King, governor of Britain's central bank, the Bank of England, had made several hard-line statements about the need for a conservative approach to lending. Northern Rock forced him to agree to emergency funding from the Bank of England to supply the necessary cash to meet withdrawals.

However, panic is difficult to control. Despite the Bank of England declaring Northern Rock solvent, people still wanted their money. This forced the Chancellor of the Exchequer

Alistair Darling to announce that the British Government guaranteed Northern Rock unconditionally.

After this debacle, it's doubtful if Northern Rock can survive.

Considering that at one stage Northern Rock's shares had fallen 75% in a year, it was obviously at bargain basement levels. Other large banks, naturally, are also interested.

Overall, the British housing market is in more trouble than America's. While most housing loans in the US have fixed rates, over 90% of housing loans in the UK have adjustable rates that move in tandem with Central Bank lending rates.

Lately, fingers have been pointed at American consumer debt. What has been overlooked, however, is the record level of consumer debt in the UK, which now stands at over 1.3 trillion pounds (around 90 trillion baht).

The effects of the Northern Rock crisis were immediately felt in currency markets, where the pound sterling came under pressure. The question being asked is: "Where does Britain's housing market go from here?"

Richard G Watson runs Global Portfolios Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial-planning service. He can be reached at Tel: 076-381997, Fax: 076-383185, Mobile: 081-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th Website: www.global-portfolios.com

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New venture explores medical opportunities

By Nick Davies

KOH KAEW: The Med Park medical facility at Boat Lagoon opened late July after investment to the tune of some 50 million baht, with the aim of effectively tapping a niche in Phuket's booming medical tourism industry by offering cutting-edge medical treatment with spa aesthetics.

Med Park CEO Poompong Patpongpanit explained that the concept of Med Park is to provide "treatment in the garden". As patients enter Med Park compound, there are no hospital feelings or sick-signals being sent out. Instead, visitors are greeted by Zen-like architecture, water features and earth tones.

The modern facilities at Med Park offer patients a comprehensive range of medical, health and aesthetic treatments and services in a relaxed environment, including dental treatments by DC-one and high-tech skin treatments by Face-2-Face. Planned additions to Med Park include a spa and a health food restaurant.

K. Poompong said that he believes that this approach is a much-needed addition to Thailand's health-services industry. "In Thailand, there is a strong demand for private healthcare and services that cater to the trend for medical tourism. For many foreigners requiring private medical treatment, Thailand is becoming an increasingly popular destination because the total cost of flying here, staying in a nice hotel and receiving professional medical care is often less than the cost of private treatment in their own countries," he said.

"I see Med Park as an essential addition to Phuket's medical services that supplies the demand for professional healthcare to both local residents and visitors, with a focus on the patient as a person, not just a body to be treated.

"At Med Park, we are striving to break from what has become a very commercial approach to private healthcare. It is important that the medical practitioners and health professionals at Med Park are like-minded people who have their patients' best interests at heart and will be honest about the treatment they may or may not need," he added.

"In Thailand, it is common for medical professionals to divide their time between several prac-

tices and hospitals, but at Med Park we want to build long lasting-relationships with our patients.

"When patients come to us, our goal is to act responsibly and assess their genuine needs by first giving them a consultation, which enables us to understand not just their medical issues, but also personal issues that may lead to the desire for a particular treatment," he added.

Medical and skin treatments at Med Park are provided by Face-2-Face, headed by expert dermatologist Pravit Asawanonda. Face-2-Face provides consultation and high-tech skin rejuvenation treatments through the application of modern Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved equipment without performing invasive surgery.

Face-2-Face treatments can remove freckles, scars, moles, warts and bumps with lasers. They also have equipment for tightening and lifting the skin with Thermage, a high-tech radio-frequency treatment that rejuvenates the skin and has gained popularity in recent years, especially in the West. Patients in their 40s and 50s who want to reduce age lines can also undergo radio-frequency treatments.

"Half of our patients come to us knowing exactly which treatments they would like, whereas the other half first need to be informed of the kind of treatments available to them. Whichever kind of patient comes through our doors, it is essential that we accurately assess their needs and if our doctors think a particular treatment is unnecessary we will not hesitate to tell them," said Dr Pravit.

The dental facility at Med Park, DC-one, is headed by orthodontist Yupares Nimkarn DDS MS. The new Phuket branch is a sister branch of a dental practice in Bangkok that opened seven years ago.

"As with the dermatological treatments, the health and safety of our dental patients comes first. We use digital X-ray technology, which employs the lowest radiation in the world. So far, this is the only machine of its kind in Phuket and exposure to its radiation is even lower than people's daily exposure to sunlight," Dr Yupares said.

"We also use European and North American infection-control protocols and sterilization systems.



Med Park aims to offer an alternative to hospitals and clinics by providing dental, skin and spa treatments in a single location with an attractive, relaxing ambiance. Right: Orthodontist Yupares Nimkarn.

Even though dentistry is a health-care industry, certain treatments commonly performed may actually be bad for your health," she added.

One example of DC-one's commitment to patient care is avoiding the use of silver amalgam, which is commonly used for making tooth fillings and contains mercury.

Dr Yupares explained that

when making tooth fillings, DC-one uses Cerec 3D, which is the world's only instant ceramic dental restoration.

"This advanced CadCam technology means we can perform ceramic crowns, inlays, onlays, veneers and other single-tooth restorations within a single visit," she said.

Gearing up to offer leading-edge treatment is not cheap. Of

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Kathu Wittaya crowned U-League champs

PHUKET CITY: The PPAO U-League reached its climax on Saturday with the final football match of the season and a closing ceremony that boasted a performance by Thai rockers Clash at Surakul Stadium.

On the final day of play, Phuket Technology College beat Cherng Thalay Wittayakom School 2-1, moving Phuket Technology College up from seventh to fifth place.

Since it began on June 12, the PPAO U-League, organized by Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (*OrBorJor*), has pitted eight schools against each other in a closely-fought football battle.

The eight school teams were: Satee Phuket School, Phuket Technology College, Kathu Wittaya School, Phuket Vocational College, Phuket Wittayalai School, Muang Thalang School, Cherng Thalay Wittayakom School and Srinagarindra The Princess Mother School Phuket.

The winners of the league, taking home 20,000 baht in prize money along with gold medals for each player, were: Kathu Wittaya School, with Cherng Thalay Wittayakom School taking second spot and Muang Thalang School coming in third place.

As well as the league title, the team from Kathuwittaya School were honored with four awards: Kittipong Jailek was named best attacker, Nawathron Thamsing; best defender, K. Samrit; best coach and Tham Sukhapan best manager.

The top scorer accolade went to Maitree Duangdee from Phuket Wittayalai School, while Srinagarindra of The Princess Mother School Phuket won the prize for sportsmanship, Jirayut Chaint of Phuket Technology College was named best goalkeeper, and Watcharit Kaiyarat of Satee Phuket School was honored as best midfielder.

By Scott Mallon

SUPHANBURI: After two postponements, the long awaited match-up between WBC number-two ranked Napapol Kittisakchokchai (44-2, 39 KOs) and WBC number-three ranked Saenghiran Lookbanyai (20-1, 15 KOs) finally took place on September 20.

The rare battle between two top-ranked Thais was well worth the wait.

Lookbanyai, 27, controlled the first seven rounds of the bout, but in the end, Kittisakchokchai scored a dramatic, come-from-behind TKO win. With the victory, Kittisakchokchai, 28, earned a shot at the world title currently held by WBC champion Israel Vasquez of Mexico.

Lookbanyai came out of the gate quickly, scoring with snapping jabs and straight right hands, sliding out of range of Kittisakchokchai's replies.

For the first four rounds, Lookbanyai peppered his opponent with crisp jabs and short rights, content to fight from the outside. All three of the WBC judges had Lookbanyai ahead at the end of the fourth stanza: 39-37, 39-37, and 40-38.

The fifth and sixth rounds were much of the same, although Kittisakchokchai began putting more pressure on Lookbanyai in an effort to smother his punches. The change was slight, but turned the tide for Kittisakchokchai.

By the eighth round, Lookbanyai was running out of steam. Forced to dig deep, his punches lacked the crackle of the previous rounds and he could no longer keep Kittisakchokchai at bay. Back and forth they went, Lookbanyai landing rights to the

Kittisakchokchai wins Suphanburi thriller



Lookbanyai lands a body shot against Kittisakchokchai in the early stages of the fight, but as the 10-round bout ground on, Kittisakchokchai's pressure tactics began to pay off and a TKO in round 10 handed Lookbanyai the second loss of his career.

head and Kittisakchokchai concentrating on the body.

Lookbanyai managed to hold his own, but it was clear he was not the same fighter he was in the first six rounds and was on the verge of being stopped. After eight rounds, the WBC judges had the bout a draw: 77-75, 77-78, and 76-76.

A spent fighter by the ninth round, Lookbanyai looked to be losing his edge. Keen to capitalize, Kittisakchokchai ran across the ring after his adversary, occasionally catching and driving him against the ropes, where he

attacked the body.

Gasping for air, Lookbanyai recognized the need to slow the action. No longer firing off jab after jab, he desperately grabbed Kittisakchokchai, only punching when he absolutely had to.

Brimming with confidence, Kittisakchokchai strode back to his corner at the end of the round, eager to finish off the fast-fading Lookbanyai.

When he bolted out of his corner for the tenth and final round, no longer was Lookbanyai able to stave off his attacks or find the strength needed to grab

on to the rampaging Kittisakchokchai. Fighting on heart alone, Lookbanyai fought with abandon and a never-say-die demeanor.

Before the bout, some boxing insiders questioned the heart of Kittisakchokchai and gave the edge to Lookbanyai. For all Lookbanyai's courage though, Kittisakchokchai proved he was the one with the will to win. In the middle of round ten, he landed a short right hook to the body, doubling over the exhausted Lookbanyai.

With that, Kittisakchokchai launched his final attack, again forcing Lookbanyai to the ropes, where he took a straight left to the body. More from fatigue and the accumulation of punches than any single shot, Lookbanyai crumpled to the canvas. He tried valiantly to rise before the count of ten, but was unable.

A jubilant Kittisakchokchai dropped to his knees. Seconds later his entire team surrounded him inside the ring.

"Our plan was to stay close and to pressure Lookbanyai," said manager-promoter Suchat Pisitwuttinan. "We knew the key to victory was pressure and body shots."

"We would like to bring the world title fight with Vasquez to Thailand," he continued. "We'll have to see if we can make this happen. We've got 90 days."

Wherever the bout ends up, Vasquez, *Ring* magazine's fifth-rated pound-for-pound fighter, will enter as a huge favorite.

On the undercard, former bantamweight champion Veeraphol Sahaprom (59-3-2, 42 KOs) struggled against Filipino journeyman Reman Salim (15-8, 4 KOs) but managed to win a unanimous decision and tally his seventh consecutive victory. Sahaprom hopes to get a title shot early next year.

Also on the card, Asian Boxing Council super featherweight champion Thong Por Chokchai (16-5, 10 KOs), fighting for the third time in as many months, made short work of Danny Boy Bontilao (10-6, 2 KOs) and scored a fifth round TKO.

PATONG DARTS LEAGUE

PATONG: After five weeks of play in the 18-week league, Queen Mary still sits at the top of the table with a two-point lead coming off a bye week as Offshore missed a chance to go top when they lost all three points on the road at Dog's Bollocks.

Dog's Bollocks captain Kevin told the *Gazette* he was enjoying a weekend in Bangkok recently and had such a good time that he decided not to fly back on his scheduled flight: One-Two-Go fight OG269 to Phuket on September 16.

Fortunately, there were no other reports of anyone else in the dart league having been directly affected by the tragedy.

Over on Soi Kepsup, Piccadilly took all three points against Shakers, with barkeep Jack throwing the game winning dart and also closing out the team game. Ulf of Piccadilly once again took the high score, this time with a 140. Shaun of Shakers

had the best throw of the night, however, when he closed out a 106 (20, T18, x16) in the doubles.

Liam scored a 180 to lead Simply Red to a three-point win over Market Bar, but the captains failed to report the final score to league secretary Steen, who had no choice but to put it down as 5-4.

September 18 results: Simply Red* 5 Market Bar 4; Piccadilly* 6 Shakers 3; Dogs Bollocks* 6 Offshore 3; Beach House* 2 Valhalla 7; Queen Mary = bye (* = winner of beer leg).

Standings: 1. Queen Mary (11); 2. Offshore, Piccadilly (9); 4. Dogs Bollocks (8); 5. Simply Red (7); 6. Shakers (6); 7. Valhalla (5); 8. Market Bar (4); 9. Beach House (1).

October 2 match-ups: Market Bar v Shakers; Dogs Bollocks v Valhalla; Piccadilly v Simply Red; Queen Mary v Offshore; Beach House = bye (home team first).

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Phuket athletes win gold

By Pathomporn Kaenkrachang

NAKHON SRI THAMMARAT: Phuket's top sportsmen and women won four gold medals at the 36th Thailand National Games in Nakhon Sri Thammarat, where athletes from around the country competed in 31 sports from September 15 to 25.

Ninety-four athletes and 21 trainers from Phuket made the trip to the Games, with a total of four gold, one silver and four bronze medals won for the island.

Pichate Puengrang took fifth place in the men's downhill mountain biking, clocking up a time of 3 minutes 21.62 seconds.

In tennis, the women's doubles team of Kanokporn Promrak and Worralak Rerkchaikarn took the bronze medal after beating the team from Khon Khen 3-0.

Tuntipong Petchaiya took first place in the women's hammer throwing, setting a national record of 52.29 meters, while Buatip Boonprasert took gold in the women's 800 meters and silver in the 1,500 meters. High jumper Nhuengruetai Chaipet won gold and set a national record by clearing 1.85 meters.

The team of Tamrong Koopmet, Tanyawat Inplub, Salif Noochet and Sompong Pongklang beat rivals Ayudhaya in the final of the men's petanque to take the gold medal, while Phuket got three medals for women's badminton, including a bronze for Pattarapoen Jindapol in the singles event and another when paired with Nitchaorn Jindapol in the doubles.

Songsak Kitakarnkul, chief of Phuket sports authority of Thailand, said, "This year we had 65 men and 29 women taking part in the games."

The Thailand National Games are held every year at a different location, with each province invited to send athletes to compete.

"We were hoping to win many awards for Phuket, particularly in the women's high jump, and 800 and 1500-meter races. We had a lot of good, young athletes representing Phuket this year," said K. Songsak.

"We are delighted to send a team to the National Games every year to support and motivate Phuket's youths," he added.

Last year's National Games were held in Suphanburi, while next year's competition will take place in Phitsanuloke. The Games have not been held in Phuket since 1982.

Cinders dances to ACYC victory

AO CHALONG: Wind conditions were ideal for the "around the islands" course and made for fast sailing on September 23 in Race 11 of the Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC) Keelboat and Multihull Race Series.

The fleet raced upwind on the first leg, hoisted spinnakers for the downwind second leg, and then beat upwind to the channel marker to finish.

"Ket" and "Boo" on *Cinders* won the Racing class with Mick Kealy on *Minx* placing second.

In the Cruising class, Tony Knight on *Fidji*, racing with six Thai crew, took first place, and John Fenn on *Four Winds* came in second. Jay on *Blue Jay* finished third.

Multihulls saw Tim Milner taking first on *Seekrunghuk*, Mark Horwood on *Charro* tak-



Cinders on full tilt to take the first spot in racing at the latest ACYC race meet. Photo by Leslie Hand for ImageAsia Events.

ing second, and Roger Kingdon's *Firefly 850 Moto Inzi* third.

The Image Asia Encouragement Award went to fellow fire-

fly 850 racer Chris Jongerius on *The Frog* for his keen interest in sailing and getting out in the races on a regular basis.



The most common items divers recovered were fishing hooks, nets, lines and ropes.

DIVING FOR DEBRIS

CHALONG: An international troop of divers got together on September 15 for the Dive to Clean Up the World event, collecting garbage from beneath the surface of the Andaman Sea.

Some 71 volunteers and six officers from the Phuket Marine Biological Center (PMBC) took part, diving from vessels provided by Dive Asia, Sea Fun Divers and Scandinavian Scuba Doo, all based in Kata.

Setting off from Chalong Pier, the original plan to dive off Racha Noi island was scrapped due to bad weather. The divers instead went to a popular dive-spot off Racha Yai island.

Due to the conscientious nature of the divers who visit the area throughout the year, the amount of underwater trash was limited. After a sweep by the divers it was spotless, with 460 kilograms of underwater rubbish collected – about 1,500kg short of last year's mark.

Of all the items recovered, the most common were fishing tackle such as ropes, lines, hooks and nets. Among the stranger finds was a banner advertising a brand of shampoo that had somehow made its way into the water.

Originally established in Australia in 1993, Dive to Clean Up the World is the largest single-day, global underwater event. Held on the third weekend of September every year, more than 35 million people from 120 countries take part annually.

Futsal fever sweeps Phuket

PATONG: The ninth Patong Futsal Cup, organized by Phuket Municipality as part of an anti-drugs campaign, took place September 12 to 18 with trophies in five divisions up for grabs along with prize money of about 180,000 baht set aside for the winning teams, and a total of 390,000 baht in prize money awarded to the top teams across all five categories.

Although futsal is usually played indoors, the matches at the Patong Cup took place at Patong Beach Football Field. Teams consisted of seven players and the event was co-organized by Jungceylon, Phuket Sports Au-

thority of Thailand, Kathu Hospital, We love the King Club and Nestle.

Roma Restaurant won the Phuket open division, taking with them a cool 79,999 baht. Baan Khok Makham took first place and 40,000 baht in the Patong division, while Baan Mon team won the under-16s division and 25,000 baht. Baan Kalim won the under-13s, netting 20,000 baht, and the oldies from Baan Khok Makham were victorious in the Phuket over-35s, nabbing 25,000 baht.

Nine top scorers from the competition each received a 1,000-baht bonus prize.

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Decor

By Anand Singh

In a furniture market often focused on mass production and retail, the recently opened Oriental Icon in Cherng Talay aims to offer original pieces in a myriad of styles.

Director of Sales Yothaka "Jip" Chanroonglert explains that when Oriental Icon opened the goal was to offer more than a diverse selection of merchandise. "Every piece of furniture and decoration at Oriental Icon is unique," explains K. Jip.

"With different origins, designs and influences from various oriental cultures, each piece of furniture tells a unique story and is an icon in itself," she adds.

Most of the furniture is made from wood, such as oak and teak. The styles vary from 19th-century Chinese to traditional Northern Thai. Some of the furniture on offer features a mix of Asian and Western designs, resulting in original pieces popular with Westerners resident in Thailand during the tin mining days.

The creators of these antique-style furnishings often prefer to use natural materials, although sometimes this doesn't include true wood. A number of the couches on display employ traditional Siamese design but are fashioned from hyacinth, one of the fastest-growing plants in the world.

In Thailand the water-borne weed spreads through ponds and rivers, often clogging waterways and even boat propellers. In this case the plant has been harvested and dried, then artisans craft it into elegant furniture. The result being couches that have a classic Siamese design yet a rare aesthetic due the unusual materials.

"This is one example of how we can make use of apparently useless natural materials that have degrading effects on the environment," K. Jip says. "Harvesting them helps to reduce the pollution they create, thus helping the environment. We can make really strong and classy furniture from them."

Oriental Icon offers an array of Chinese antique replicas imported from Canton, China. Each piece is handmade and a heavy emphasis is placed on quality regarding the workmanship and materials used.

Defying the common stereotypes often associated with



'Each piece at Oriental Icon tells a unique story and is an icon in itself,' says Yothaka "Jip" Chanroonglert.

ICONIC

Some of the furniture on offer features a mix of Asian and Western designs



Chinese products, which are usually mass produced on an enormous scale, this furniture is created by a band of craftsmen who specialize in traditional Chinese furniture, crafting pieces one at a time, thus making them inherently different, K. Jip adds.

One piece of furniture that K. Jip finds particularly appealing is a free-standing hammock from Chiang Mai. It has been made entirely from bamboo, with a long bamboo pole supporting it along each side.

The bedding is made from bamboo woven into sheets. The hammock, at 12,000 baht, is perfect outdoors, perhaps near a swimming pool in a tropical villa or for napping in the garden.

The bamboo structure that the hammock is suspended from is strong and will support a lot of weight. The bamboo has also

been treated for outdoor use and will last at least two years while withstanding all the elements.

Oriental Icon has aspirations of capturing the European market, which has developed a strong liking for tropical interior and oriental designs.

The idea is that homeowners in a cold European country can use such designs to create the perfect getaway from the dreary climate outside, transforming their home into a virtual tropical environment.

"Sitting in their living room in England, the homeowner can capture the feeling of a tropical villa in Thailand, explains K. Jip.

Oriental Icon is located at the entrance of Laguna Phuket. For more information call 081-1873840 or visit www.orientalicon.com.

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Above: The interior is finished to impeccable standards.



Right: The sea views are breathtaking.



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Gardening

with Bloomin' Bert

People like all sorts of things. Each to his own, I suppose. There are people who have a penchant for songs that go "mai ya ee, mai ya oo, mai ya ah, mai ya ah ah". Weird. There are even those among us that like plastic. I'm not one of them. I hate the stuff. It's nasty.

So what is it with plastic? Anything made of plastic is usually unattractive, non-recyclable and generally not something you'd publicly want to admit to owning.

That said, I will concede there are two inventions created from plastic that are simply superb. I'd even go so far as to say that they're the works of truly brilliant minds. Unsurprisingly, they both involve the consumption of beer.

The first are those amazing plastic mugs you place upside down in the freezer, with the frozen gel that keeps your beer cold just long enough for you to drink it, without having to resort to the barbaric practice of dropping lumps of ice in beer.

The second is one of the most marvelous inventions of the modern world. Forget the telephone, the steam engine, the light bulb, the computer, and the print-

Fantastic Plastic

ing press. I'm referring, of course, to the truly remarkable beer tower.

Only a genius could make it possible for a simple fellow, such as myself, to have his own one-meter high, individual beer dispenser sitting on his table. What's more, this incredible invention keeps his beer cold, due to the inner compartment full of ice. True genius - I'll thank you forever, sir.

Okay, so plastic does have its uses, but let's be honest here - most products produced from the stuff are rubbish.

It was never intended for plants. So why does there seem to be an obsession with making plastic versions of them in this part of the world? It's not as if we're living in the harshest environment on the planet - that title would obviously go to somewhere in deepest, darkest Manchester, northern England.

Plastic plants are becoming increasingly convincing. Surely you've looked at a plant in a hotel or shopping center and won-



Though it might look plastic, the caladium is in fact a real plant.

Picture courtesy of www.toptropicals.com

dered if it was real?

The caladium could be mistaken for one of these. It's a spectacular plant that doesn't have flowers as such, or even a stem - it's just a load of brightly-colored leaves growing straight out of an underground tuber. The dramatic arrow-shaped, paper-thin

leaves are a mixture of bright reds, white and green, in striking combination. The leaf markings are more than a little showy, and almost look like the product of a bored artist with a little too much time on his hands.

It's often replicated in the form of artificial plants, which I will admit look a lot more convincing than your Auntie Gert's plastic daffodils that have been gathering dust on her sideboard for the past 50 years.

Originally from South America, the caladium has a number of aliases: angel wings, heart of Jesus and alocasia, among others. Thais know it as a *bon see*.

Thai caladiums are somewhat different from their relatives elsewhere on the globe. While all caladium species are originally from Latin America, the hybridizing of them in Thailand has taken a bizarre but creative turn from the "standard" versions.

Plant breeders in Thailand

haven't focused so much on larger leaf sizes, rather unusual leaf shapes and bizarre color combinations. Produce a few leaf deformations and throw in a few weird variations and you have the Thai offering to the caladium world. There are now hundreds of hybrids here, some virtually unknown outside Thailand.

Like so many plants in this region, the caladium is poisonous. Apart from minor skin irritations, it will cause major problems if it's eaten, so *khao pat caladium* is probably not the best idea. However, there are those who would argue against the health warnings and suggest the use of caladium as a vaccine. Believe it or not, the caladium is listed as a preventive measure against bubonic plague. Supposedly.

This is another plant that you don't have to encourage much to grow, as it's quite accepting of most conditions. The only thing that it will complain about is direct sun. The delicate leaves become scorched, so always planted it in the shade. This is where the caladium is often found in the wild - they've escaped the gardens and are now contentedly thriving in the shade of tall trees.

As it grows from tubers, it possesses the ability to "die" for a few months. If there's an extended dry period, it will retreat gracefully underground, re-appearing when it's a bit happier with the water content of the soil. If it gets plenty of water year-round, it should continue to grow and spread.

The next time you see a caladium at a restaurant or hotel, try to resist the temptation to investigate its authenticity. At best, you'll be disappointed that the otherwise fine establishment can't be bothered to look after real plants. At worst, your skin will itch for hours. But at least you will have a vague immunity against bubonic plague.






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Construction Update

by Janyaporn Morel

Water park slides into action

KATHU: The 450-million-baht Aquapark Phuket is 20% complete and expected to be finished by early June 2008. The project broke ground in August and will be located on 40 rai of land some 200 meters off Wichit Songkram Rd.

Hungarian Developers Csenki Co Ltd and Strong Team Service Co Ltd estimate the park will be capable of servicing up to 3,000 visitors a day.

Project share owner Prawich Chalorthammanit told the *Gazette*, "The idea for the aqua park came after we had traveled in many places and saw that the highlight of many countries is amusement parks, such as Disneyland in Hong Kong, but we had nothing similar in Thailand," he said.

"We don't have many activities in Phuket to offer tourists except diving or trekking, which do not suit everyone," he added.

The Aquapark will claim the title of the first large-scale water park in Thailand, said K. Prawich, noting that Suan Siam, or Siam Park, in Bangkok is "more of a fun park than a water park".

The water park will have a 2,000-square-meter wave pool, a flume ride throughout the park, eight water slides and pools for all ages, including a kids' pool, adventure pool and relaxation pool. There will also be three restau-

rants, which will be leased out mainly to fast-food vendors to operate, K. Prawich explained.

"We will provide activities for every age. The elderly can enjoy sun bathing, whirlpools, relax in the pools, play on the low-slope sliders, enjoy the restaurants or tour around the park slowly on the flume ride. Teenagers can enjoy the extreme slides and outdoor activities, and families can enjoy the whole range of activities.

"Our park will be able to serve about 3,000 people a day, but we don't want that many. It should be only 2,000 people maximum a day," he said.

As the foundation work is almost complete, next to come is the structures and installation work. Safety systems of the same standards as amusement parks in Europe and the US will be installed, said K. Prawich.

The on-site medical center will be staffed by personnel from a Phuket hospital, emphasizing the park's concern for a good safety and lifeguard system, he said, adding that the hospital to be involved has yet to be announced.

The water rides and slides will be imported from a Turkish



A computer-generated image of Aquapark Phuket's 2,000-square-meter wave pool.

supplier with a safety certificate from Canada, K. Prawich said.

About 65% percent of the 40-rai site will be used for water activities and about 30% has been set aside for a 400-car parking lot. The remaining area will be used for beach volleyball and beach football grounds.

"Phuket holds the international beach volleyball tournament every year, so if we build these courts to a good standard, we might attract some matches or even have the fields used for

training," K. Prawich said.

Completed, the park will also have a building housing souvenir shops as well as an information desk and rest area. An events area with a sound system will host large events, such as fashion shows and motor shows, explained K. Prawich.

"The management concept of the park is from our Hungarian partners, while the construction technology is from us. Our engineers are researching many technologies, such as the wave

pool. Our engineers are researching this themselves because importing licensed equipment or know-how from outside the country is very expensive," he said.

The developers estimate about 300 cubic meters of water will be used a day and about 7,000 cubic meters of water will need to remain in the pools. K. Prawich explained that the water will be supplied from public mains and supplemented from underground supplies on site.

Untreated water will be used for general non-contact functions such as toilets, watering the gardens and cleaning, but treated water will be used in all human-contact areas and treated to standards set by the Phuket Provincial Health Office.

K. Prawich believes the development will benefit the local economy by providing around 100 staff positions.

The park is expected to be completed by the beginning of June next year, but the test run will require about 30 days to confirm it meets safety standards, said K. Prawich.

For more information, email prawich2512@yahoo.com

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Property Gazette

Properties For Sale

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5 mins to Phuket airport, close to the beach, 10 rai. 120 million baht. Must see. Tel: 089-7727012. Email: gyb_giff@hotmail.com

LUXURY VILLA - LAGUNA

This is a Luxury Villa. Email: alex.eric@ntlworld.com For further information, please contact me and/or see our website at: <http://www.saitaan18.com>

SEAVIEW LAND

Located in Patong, nearly 1rai. Comes with building license and plan. Tel: 081-8918082. Email: seagullphuket@hotmail.com

BEACHFRONT LAND

Phuket, Natei, and Khao Lak. 100, 120, 405, 300, and 10 rai. Tel: 081-5395454. Fax: 076-260311.

LAND IN KHAO LAK

Five rai of Chanote land with 50 meters of road frontage on Pakarang beach road. 1.5 million baht per rai. Tel: 053-904873, 081-8817075. Fax: 053-904873. Email: terrairincnx@gmail.com

SEA VIEW APARTMENT PATONG

One-bedroom apartment with stunning sea view of Patong Bay. Located on the 10th floor of Patong Tower. Only 100 meters to the beach. Asking 6.2 million baht. Tel: 081-8924655. Please email patongtower99@gmail.com

KARON LAND FOR SALE



15 million baht per rai, Chanote, hillside, panoramic sea view, quiet area. Please contact for additional information. Tel: 089-7727012. Email: se_rim@hotmail.com

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value in Patong. 12 studio apartments to be sold. Up-market resort. 5 minutes to beach, Jungceylon, Bangla Rd and use of fantastic facilities. Great investment opportunity at 2.5 million to 2.7 million baht. Contact Jeff. Tel: 083-2807152.

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HOUSE AT KARON

2 bedroom, 2 bathroom, living room, garden, terrace, and car park. Tel: 083-1807794.

SURIN/BANGTAO APARTMENT

Club Lersuang, 2-bedroom apartment, ground floor, big pool, gym, restaurant, bar, etc. 6 million baht. Tel: 076-271870, 087-079 0650. Email: mlcberg@netvigator.com mlcberg@netvigator.com

EMERGENCY SALE

2-story house near Laguna Layan Beach. 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, and mini-pool. Chanote. 400 sqm. Best offer. Tel: 087-2660592.

NICE LAND PLOT

356 Sq wah. Chanote title, optional 2-bedroom pool villa ready to build. 10 minutes to Laguna Phuket. Tel: 081-5399269.

UNIQUE SEAVIEW



Top investment: New Seaview-Pool-Villa overlooking Karon Beach. Build area :450 m2, Plot: 950 m2, Chanote. Sale directly from Swiss owner. Documentation and pics available. Tel: 089-5938690. ruen_narayan@hotmail.com

POOL VILLA IN NAI HARN

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, Western kitchen. 5.5 million baht. Tel: 076-288047, 081-8941660. Email: cottrell@loxinfo.co.th

TWIN GARDEN BUNGALOWS

Up to 6 bedrooms/4 bathrooms in secure estate near top bilingual school. 4 aircons, 2 ADSL lines, satellite TV, garage. 3.9 million baht includes CRV or Soluna car. Tel: 089-9546433, 089-2885028. Email: kjralph@hotmail.com

LARGE VILLA IN CHALONG

4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, big garden. 4.5 million baht. Tel: 081-8951826. Email: info@far-away.net

RAWAI 2-STORY HOUSE

140sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, close to the beach. 1.5 million baht. Call Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

RAWAI BEACH VILLA

400sqm house, pool, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Garden and covered terrace. Price: 7.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

HOUSE IN PATONG B4.7 MILLION

23sqm, furnished, 3 bedrooms, aircon, 1 bathroom, living room, kitchennette, washing machine. Tel: 081-5690664. Fax: 076-344485. Email: sunsetap@ji-net.com

AO POR LAND URGENT SALE



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RAWAI BEACH DUPLEX

15-year lease, 107sqm duplex house, pool, carport, garden. Price: 1.5 million baht. Tel: 086-9408914. Email: freeholdprop@yahoo.com

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A nice 4-bedroom house w/ private garden, large swimming pool, sala and Jacuzzi. E-mail or call for more info. Tel: 076-378361, 081-676-4849, 081-7722300. Email: info@etwood.com

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TOWNHOUSE

2 stories, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, living room, garage. Next to Kathu Municipality Office, 3 minutes from Big C, Central and Lotus. Special price: 1,350,000 baht. Tel: 076-236590, 081-895 5628. Fax: 076-236590. Email: phuketspeedboats@yahoo.com

LAND IN RAWAI/KALIM

-20 rai seaview in Kalim Bay -7 rai land project in Rawai Good for house project. No Brokers. Pls contact 081-6913029 or 089-7286242. Email: purimas_re@yahoo.com

LUXURY VILLAS



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LAND IN KATHU

Land for sale near market. Backs onto rubber plantation. 91 wah, or 364sqm. Mountain views. Chanote title. Tel: 087-2786439. Email: shall@loxinfo.co.th

TOWNHOUSE FOR SALE

Chalong, fully furnished, all teak furnishings, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, 2-car garage, utility room and 2 balconies. 7 million baht. Tel: 076-280709, 085-7950779.

KATHU GOLF VIEW LAND

1.9 million baht per rai. Near Loch Palm Golf Club and BIS. The land totals 70.5 rai (Nor Sor 3 Kor). Quiet and scenic with access to water, electricity and road (800 meters is frontage road). Please contact Sumon for details. Tel: 076-352069, 081-6919346. Fax: 076-261028. Email: sumon@ridethailand.com

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Property Gazette

SOUTH END OF PATONG BAY



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Living area: 600sqm. Garden area: 6,400sqm (4 rai). Large 250sqm terrace. 3 bedrooms & 1 master bedroom with en-suite bathroom. Open-plan kitchen, living room, Jacuzzi, swimming pool. 100sqm of artificial rivers and charming island. 3-car garage & exterior parking. Completely furnished, foosball table and snooker table. Located at Pa Khlok, 5 mins from Ao Por, marina, golfing, etc. No sea view. Company formed since 2002. Chanote title. Price: 49 million baht. Project by international architects. For info, contact Tel: 081-8935270. Email: mrdupo@yahoo.fr Please visit our website: www.tropical-house.net

BEAUTIFUL HOUSE FOR SALE



51.47sqm, in Chanakran Property Village, 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Behind TOT Public Co Ltd in Chalong. The house is under construction and will be ready within one month. Price: 3.9 million baht. Please call for more details. Tel: 081-9562406.

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for sale/barter. 4 brand-new, quiet, natural, luxurious 2-bedroom and 2-bathroom villas. Fully furnished with outdoor whirlpool. Approx 180sqm on a 100sq wah plot of land. In the most guarded, prestigious estate of Saraburi. For sale at 4.75 million baht each or barter with seaview-land plots or condo development in Phuket. Telephone 081-8142040. Or send email: sailesh@thaimartin.com Visit our website: www.ziam.com

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Property Gazette

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1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments, 2 bathrooms, en-suite in master, fully fitted, teak kitchen, huge terrace, parking, furnished or unfurnished. Long or short term. Starting at 20,000 baht per month. Tel: 089-5926890. Email: northwest98@yahoo.com

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APARTMENT KATA BEACH
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Beautiful Patong Tower beach condo with stunning 280° panoramic views of the sea, hills and town. Large outdoor patio and wrap-around balcony. Completely renovated, Internet and washing machine. Available from March 1, 2007. Contact Tel: +11-861-381-6344147. For details, visit: www.patongtowerrental.com

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Apartment 85sqm. 2 bedrooms, living room, bathroom, kitchen, terrace, pool, fan, aircon, telephone, Wi-Fi, cable TV. Available for short-term rent: 800 baht per day. Long-term rent: 15,000 baht per month. Contact Jamriang. Tel: 076-202725, 081-8916632. Email: golfandview@gmx.de

CONDO FOR RENT
Rawai area, renovated, aircon, cable TV. 400 baht per day. 6,000 baht per month. Tel: 084-1899868.

OCEANFRONT KATA APARTMENT
5-star, 2-bedroom apartment with spa, pool, ADSL, gym. 60,000 baht per month. Email: asiasail@yahoo.com. For details see http://www.koumbele.com/kata2

KATA LUXURY OCEANFRONT
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This sleek lined hardtop is ready to please the most discerning of buyers. High speed and comfort. Highly recommended for viewing. Contact Simpson Marine. Tel: 076-239768.

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If you are after comfort at an affordable value, look no further. The current owner has just carried out a full refurbishment including a complete mechanical overhaul, refitting most of the internal fittings and furnishings, new teak decking and external paintwork. A spacious yacht with live aboard and sports fishing potential. We have been instructed to present all offer. Contact: Simpson Marine. Tel: 076-239768.

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The opportunity to own a near-new 47-foot Portifino is here. This alluring beauty has a full-options package including a convertible hardtop and a hydraulic swim platform. Well below replacement cost. Free delivery within Thailand. Contact Simpson Marine. Tel: 076-239768.

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Contact: Jim Poulsen
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Island Job Mart

ASSISTANT TO THE MANAGER

We are the market leader in luxury yacht cruises and specialists in customized speedboat excursions. For our office in the Boat Lagoon we are looking for a motivated Thai national to assist the General Manager with the daily operations.

Your main activity would be coordinating boat charters together with the crews, briefing guests and occasionally join a trip as a host/hostess.

Additionally you would be involved in the daily office duties. Good English language skills are essential, knowledge of Phang Nga Bay and its surroundings would be an advantage.

The contract will be initially for the high season only, though there is a chance of continuing after this period. If you are an energetic and well organized person and love to work with people, please email your application including your CV and photo to

michael@limestoneadventures.com



HMS Asia Pacific, Phuket's leading Hotel Management company is opening what will be Patong's most unique and exciting 4 star Boutique Hotel. We are looking for fun, energetic and serviced focused people to join us. If you want to be part of a great team that "Delivers Beyond Expectation" we want to hear from you.

The following opportunities are available to Thai national:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Front office GSM (Urgent) | GSA's |
| Reservation Manager | Housekeeping Supervisor (Urgent) |
| Room attendants | Restaurant Manager (Urgent) |
| Restaurant Supervisor | Waiters |
| Exec Chef | Sous Chef |
| Chief de Partie's | Commis' |
| Chief Steward | Stewards |
| Accounts Payable | Accounts Receivable |
| Engineer Supervisor | Sales Manager |
| Secretary to GM | |

All applicants should be able to communicate in English, have an outgoing personality, be customer focused, have passion, creativity and energy and be prepared to work as a part of a great team. Applicants should email their current resume with recent photograph and expected salary to donna@hmsap.com or post them to:

Human Resources, HMS Asia Pacific
133/15 Paradise Complex Raf-U-Thit 200 Pii Road,
Patong, Phuket, 83150



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Phuket Positions

Accountant

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting.
- Good command of English
- Knowledge of Quickbooks software is an advantage.
- 3 years experience in Accounting.

Property Manager / Estate Manager

- Bachelor's / Master's degree in Business Administration, Hotel Management or related field
- Fast-moving and service-minded
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills and proven team leadership skills
- Excellent in both written and spoken English

Assistant Property Manager / Site Administrator

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Secretarial or any other related field
- Good command of English; Computer literate
- Good interpersonal relationship, hardworking, a team player and service-minded

Sales & Marketing Administrator

- Good command of English
- Computer literate Excel, Word and PowerPoint
- Pleasant personality service-minded
- Able to work extra time if needed

Please apply in person or send your CV to:

CBRE CB Richard Ellis (Thailand) Co.,Ltd
12/9 Moo 4, Thepkrasatti Rd.,
T. Kohkaew Muang, Phuket 83000
Tel: 076-239957 Fax: 076-239971
Email: wannpen.duangjit@cbre.co.th

Phuket Gazette

The Phuket Gazette seeks to fill the following position:

Advertising Sales

- Thai, age 26 up with an outgoing personality
- Experience in sales and marketing
- Good command of written and spoken English
- Must have drivers license

Distribution Marketing Person

- Thai age 26 up
- Reasonable command of written and spoken English
- PC experience in Word, Excel & Internet
- Good administrator

Administration Assistant (2 positions)

The successful candidate will be a Thai national age 26 up 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 by email to ann@phuketgazette.net

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd
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One of Thailand's most prestigious golfing venues, Blue Canyon Country Club, is seeking dynamic and experienced Sales Professionals to join our Team.

Sales Executive 2 Positions based in Bangkok 2 Positions based in Phuket

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelors Degree in Business Studies, Hospitality, Leisure, or related field
- Minimum 2 years direct experience in golf or international hospitality industry
- Ability to work flexible hours / weekends
- Excellent command of English and Thai, with sound computer skills

Please send an application letter, together with resume and a recent photograph, to the address below. Alternatively, you can submit your application by email to: sunitsa@bluecanyonphuket.com

Your application will be treated with strict confidentiality and only short-listed candidates will be invited for interview.

Human Resources
Blue Canyon Country Club
P.O. Box 18, Thalung Post Office Phuket 83110
Tel. 076 328088 Fax. 076 328087

campbell kane

Campbell Kane (Thailand) Ltd. is the developer of Cape Yamu, The Yamu Hotel and The Bay project. Cape Yamu and The Bay are two exclusive luxury residential property developments on Phuket's East Coast. With our unique peninsula setting, stunning architecture and the recent announcement of our 5 star boutique hotel project. We are looking for competent, enthusiastic and highly qualified individuals for the following vacancies to join our growing business:

Position	Site Secretary
	- Female - Bachelor's degree - 1 year experience in project construction administration - Fluent in both written and spoken English
Qualification	* Thai Nationality only for all position

Please send resume with covering letter stating salary expectations to annie@campbellkane.com
Campbell Kane (Thailand) Ltd.
28/7 Moo 2, Thepkrasatti Rd, Koh Kaew Phuket 83000
T: +66(0)-76-204-008-9, F: +66(0)-76-239-836

MANAGER REQUIRED

for new nightclub in Patong. Must have previous experience. Must also be self-motivated and enthusiastic with an outgoing personality. Must also have good English skills. Staff management and motivation are essential. Open to Thai nationals only. Excellent opportunity for the right person. Please contact for additional information: Tel: 085-4737781. Or email to: comfortablyumb_18@hotmail.com

SIMPSON MARINE

Asia's leading yacht brokers and new yacht-sales company require the services of a professional receptionist. Candidate must be young, dynamic and outgoing with a service-oriented mind. High proficiency in English and computer skills are a must. Interested candidates, please send CV & photo to email: phuket@simpsonmarine.com

NEW OPENING!!!

We are looking for motivated individuals with a passion for people and service. Must be fluent in English.

- Receptionist (day & night)
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Attractive salary and career opportunities are offered. Tel: 076-279336-7. Email: marcellamocci@yahoo.com Please send your resume via email. Email: to:info@royal-embassy-resort.com

PHUKET TOWN NEEDS

English speaking staff full- and part-time available, good salary given. 086-5097510. Email: simonstthomas@hotmail.com

COOK NEEDED

Cook urgently needed. Female only. For details, call 076-286061 or 081-891-4019 or send email to: tkoschig2000@hotmail.com

KINNAREE MEDIA MARKETING

Model required for Phuket based photoshoot

- Caucasian Female
- Age 25+
- Slim
- Attractive
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Please e-mail head and full length shot with availability to admin@kinnareemedia.com

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SALES MANAGER/INT'L MARKETING TEAM:

- Male/Female, foreign applicants
- Excellent communication skills
- Highly organised

- At least 5 years' experience within a sales dept preferred, especially in the property sector

- The ability to work to achieve monthly sales targets

- High commissions and benefits. Please contact for more information at Tel: 076-261772, 081-9895466. Or fax to: 076-261773. Email: sales@phuket-andaman-tropical.com For further details, please see our website at <http://www.phuketdeluxebase.com>

Island Job Mart



Do you Want 10,000 Baht GUARANTEED Service Charge?

Six Senses Erawan Destination Spa in Phuket is now offering these benefits to bright stars joining our dynamic team in the following positions:

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Finance Purchasing Manager Cost Controller	Kitchen Sous Chef Chef de Partie Pastry Chef Fish Monger/Butcher Snr Chef de Partie (Host Canteen)	Engineering Duty Supervisor MC/Plumber Supervisor D&B Supervisor	Housekeeping Seamstress 1 Housekeeping Clerk 3 Linen Attendant 1	Spa Spa Therapist 1	
Front Office Front Office Manager	F&B Beverage Manager	Fitness Fitness Manager	Kitchen Commis 1 4 Commis 2 3 Bakers/Cooks 2 Steward 4	Gardening Gardener/Beach Cleaner 15 Vegetable & Herb Gardener 2	
Laundry Laundry Supervisor	HR Training Manager	IT Asst. IT Manager	Engineering Kitchen/Laundry Tech. 1 A/C Technician 1 Buggy Technician 1 Painter/can fix it 1	Fitness Fitness Attendant 5 Personal Trainer 1 Boat Driver 3	
Housekeeping Asst. Exective Housekeeper			F&B Hostess 2 Bar Tender 3	HR Compound Cleaner 4	

All positions will offer highly competitive salaries a five-day working week, provident fund, housing, incentives, bonuses and meals. Please apply in writing with CV and photograph to: hrco-phuket@sixsensesdestinationspas.com

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www.KARON-PHUKET-HOTELS.com/JOB.htm

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 Work on our sailing catamarans. Tel: 081-9687564.

THE PHUKET WINFY SCHOOL
 in Kamala, dedicated to quality, affordable education, is looking for an enthusiastic kindergarten teacher. Please contact Lee Feekins on 084-8453265.

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 Need now an experienced receptionist to work in 12-room hotel, 2 pm-10 pm six days per week. Must speak and read English. 6,000-8,000 baht per month. 085-7932477. Or mail garyteets@yahoo.com.

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 Must be able to speak and write English well. Messenger must have own motorbike. Email: ops@theestategroup.com

COOK / CHEF NEEDED
 for English-style restaurant. Telephone 076-344922 or 089-4912496. Or email: info@bluewaterphuket.com

CHALLENGING MODEL CASTING
 Casting for 3 to 35 years old males and females. Western-Thai mixed, Caucasian, Hispanic and black. Please contact Khun Varintara at Myclip Studios. Monday to Friday, 9 am to 6 pm. 076-380610, 081-8942731. Fax: 076-380612. For further details, please see our website at <http://www.myclipstudios.com>.

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 * Restaurant manager
 * Receptionist
 * Cook
 * Waiter/waitress
 * Cashier
 * Maid
 * Beach boy/girl
 * Trainees and more...
 You should be motivated, service-minded, and energetic with a pleasant personality. A minimum of 2 years experience and good command of English required. Please send your resum, expected salary and recent photo to email: pia@phuket-bangtao.lagoon.com

SALES PERSON WANTED
 An experienced sales person is required for retail and wholesale icecream company based in Jungceylon. Salary and commission, immediate start. Contact Bay Blue Co Ltd, Tel: 086-9519406.

LEGAL / LAWYER TO KRABI
 We are looking for a legal consultant or lawyer for a real estate company. He or she must know real estate laws applicable to land purchases and sales, leasing, condos, problems and solutions for foreigners, wills and estate matters, etc. Please contact for more information. Tel: 075-691673 or 081-9683140. Email: krister@krabisunset.com

CHIEF ENGINEER
 Min 3 yrs hotel/ property maintenance. Must have experience in air conditioning, electrical, water/ waste systems or communications systems. Tel: 076-270750. Fax: 076-270751. Email: hr@pipsphuket.com

TICKET AGENT
 Albatross Lufthansa City Center is hiring 2 staff with previous ticketing experience. Salary commensurate w/ experience. Contact Khun Busaba by email to: busaba_albatross@yahoo.com

MARKETING/SALES
 We are a new antique and design furniture shop opening in November 2007 in Thalang. We are looking for:
 - Makerting lady with good experience (in furniture) and perfect English. The candidate must have her own car.
 - Sales and Secretary lady with perfect English and good computer skills.
 If you are the right candidate send your resume including your contact phone number by email or call Marc. 089-8662346. Email: marc@mdcctl.com

ENTHUSIASTIC PERSON
 for small guesthouse in Karon. Take care of reception, staff, tourists; give info, etc. Tel: 086-2718254.

Employment Wanted

REAL ESTATE SALES
 I have 26 years' experience in all aspects of real estate, 15 years as a principal working with some of Australia's largest developers, mainly from off the plan to completion. Why bark yourself when you can employ a dog. Please contact me for more information at 087-0245036.

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 Highly-qualified, British English teacher with 20 years' experience available for any type of work. Good rates. Tel: 086-7458832. Email: g r e g m a c k a y 6 7 @ hotmail.com

MEXICAN RESTAURANT
 Staff wanted: 1 cook and 2 English-speaking waitresses. You are needed for a new Mexican restaurant located in Chalong. Please contact us for more information. 089-1638166. Email: vnjong@gmail.com

Island Job Mart



The Village Coconut Island is recruiting for a **Resort Development Manager & Personal Assistant**

The Village Coconut Island is developing a 5-star high-end resort. The resort is being developed in phases, therefore this role will grow as the resort expands. We are looking for a professional, experienced, hard working individual. The successful candidate will be responsible for creating The Village Resort right from conception through to a fully running comprehensive 5-star Resort. This is no small challenge and will only be appropriate only for the most inspirational hard-working individual to join our management team.

Resort Development Manager

At least 5 years' proven experience in Resort Management at a senior level

- At least 30 years old
- Bachelor's degree in Hotel, Catering or Hospitality Management
- Fluent written and spoken English
- Other languages an advantage
- Driving license
- Flexible outgoing approach to all work

- Reporting to Managing Director.
- Responsible for all aspects of resort management. To include:
 - Recruitment
 - Training
 - Financial accountability
 - General Management
 - Customer Service

Personal Assistant

- Thai National
- Competent MS Office skills
- At least 2 years' proven experience as a secretary or personal assistant
- A related university education
- Driving license
- Flexible, hard working and an outgoing personality
- Very good written and verbal English
- Reporting to the General Manager
- To assist the General Manager and Assistant General Manager in the day-to-day running of the project.

20/12 Moo 2, Boat Lagoon Phuket, Thepkrasatri Rd, Tambon Koh Kaew, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83200
 phorn@thevillage-coconutisland.com, www.thevillage-coconutisland.com, Tel: 086-9429190

Tiger Muay Thai & MMA Training Camp

Marketing Manager:
 University degree in marketing/PR

Office staff:
 Fluency in English for Thai nationals.

Open to with computer and internet literate skills (Quickbooks, Excel, words).

Tel: 076-367071, 086-9516809.

www.tigermuaythai.com



The BayCliff, Patong is a subsidiary company of one of the leaders in Luxury resorts and real estate development located in Pattaya, Hua Hin, Rayong, Phang-nga, Phuket, and beyond.

We would like to invite a suitable qualified and experienced individual to join our dedicated team of sales and marketing at our Patong office.

Expectations and Qualifications:

- Ability to work and think both independently and as part of high performance team.
- Excellence in English communication computer literacy, and selling skills.
- Dedicated to performance excellence.
- Customer oriented.

1. Administrative Assistant
 Age 25-35 years old, Thai Nationality
 Outgoing personality and inquisitive mind
 Fast and accurate typing and transcription skills
 Prior administrative/ secretarial experience an advantage

2. Sales Manager
 Age 30-45 years old, Expatriate or Thai
 At least 3 years of sales experience in real estate or hotels
 Strong in sales, negotiation, communication and training skills
 Creation and co-ordination of marketing programs

3. Sales Executive
 Effectively sell residential units according to the company objective and standard

Please apply in person or send or send your Curriculum Vitae or Resume with recent photograph to The Baycliff Patong 39/12 Prabaramee Road, Patong, Kathu, Phuket 83150 or email to bhumiwat@yahoo.com
 Tel: 086-8617582, Website: www.thebaycliff.com

YACHT BASE MANAGER

for our new base in Langkawi. You must have experience in the yacht charter business and have good technical skills. Please send your resumè via email. Tel: 081-9704020. Email: thailand@dreamyachtcharter.com

EMPLOYEES NEEDED

We understand that work and life cannot be separated in our modern day workplace. Rain Hail is a prestigious and socially responsible family of employees which care for our Phuket community and are dedicated to quality and financial success. We are looking for customer savvy individuals with outgoing personalities and strong social skills in the following positions:

- Host and hostess
- Waiter and waitress
- Bartender
- DJ
- Cook

Please contact for more information at Tel: 081-9791967.

OFFICE ASSISTANT REQUIRED

We urgently require a full-time office assistant. Good command of English and Thai a must (read, speak, write). Shop sales experience preferred. Must be presentable. Please contact for additional information at Tel: 076-281510, 081-554454. Email: james@wahoo.ws Please visit our website at: www.wahoo.ws

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 CTK 800 bought for 10, 000, will sell for 4, 000 or swap for Thai "kim" instrument. Contact Tony. Tel: 089-4731351.

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 Pumps, filters, lights and maintenance equipment. Contact for more details. Tel: 089-1951392.

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Artisan Builders Since 1994. Made with refractory bricks in 7 days, any size and decoration. Ideal for Pizzeria or in your Garden for making pizza, BBQ and excellent roasts. 5-year guarantee. Oven accessories also available. Please email for details or call Mr Lio. We speak Italian, English and Thai. Tel: 084-060-3477. Email: attivita.phuket@yahoo.co.uk

Bulletins

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Mission Hospital
 Phuket City
 Wed and Sun 7 pm
 Bangkok Phuket Hospital
 Phuket City
 Fri 7 pm
 Patong Hospital Patong
 Mon, Tue, Wed, Sat, Sun
 at 7 pm and Fri at 8 pm
 Chalong Health
 Clinic-near Chalong Circle
 Tues 1 pm
 For Phuket info (English)
 call 081-9564031,
 081-8912895
 Scandinavian speaking Group
 Wat Karon School-Karon
 Tue 7 pm
 Tel 081-2732053 (Nor)
 087-2795636 (Nor)
 086-7458910 (Swe)

For info on other Thailand AA meetings inquire at Tel: 02-2318300 (for Thai language press 3) www.aathailand.org or email info@aathailand.org

PIWC GALA BALL

The Phuket International Women's Club announces the most prestigious event this year – the annual Gala Ball on Saturday, November 24th at the Indigo Pearl in Nai Yang Beach. Watch for more details. Tickets will be in great demand.

Please contact for additional information.
 K. Carol at
 Tel: 087-4178860,
 Email: carol@aplusplussoftware.com
 or K. Sue at
 Tel: 087-2776948.
 Email:
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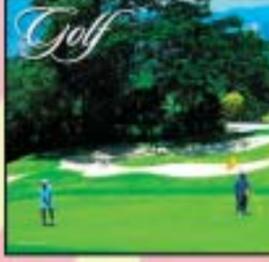


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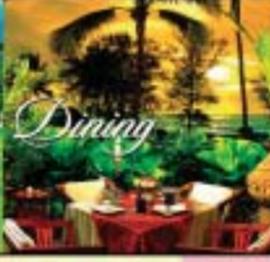
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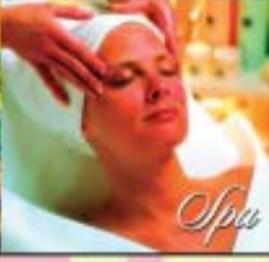
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