By Kamol Pirat

PHUKET: Thailand’s largest construction company, Italian-Thai Development (ITD), has unveiled a plan to invest 95 million baht to develop a new marina at Ao Por.

The project will be handled by the Ao Por Pattana Co, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ITD; this will be ITD’s first development in Phuket.

Project manager Akarpa Chawanich said Ao Por Pattana already holds a 60-rai site at Leam Lhong, near the old Ao Por pier, where it proposes to build the marina. He said the development would cover 10 rai of land onshore and a similar area of sea.

Work is expected to start early next year and be completed by mid-2006.

The marina would have space for 100 yachts, but would have no facilities for building or repairing them, nor would it have a hotel or other accommodation.

The Chief Administrative Officer of Pa Khlok Tambon Administration Organisation (OrBorTor), Pranom Keawprong, said the plans had already been submitted to the OrBorTor, which is now awaiting the results of an environmental impact assessment (EIA).

The plans were unveiled four days after 55 members of the public voted at a meeting, organized by the OrBorTor, to back a proposal by the Phuket Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorTor) to build a new pier at Ao Por.

The exact location has yet to be decided – the land around all the possible sites is in private hands.

The meeting was opened by Vice-Governor Niran Kalayananit, and attended by Marine Department deputy head Sumanth Thongphat, OrBorTor President Anchalee Vanich-Thai, and staff from the Marine Department.

Marine Department engineer Pongsan Jarudecha told the meeting the proposed pier would be within 100 meters of the old one. It would be seven meters wide and about 500 meters long – about two thirds length of the Chalong Pier.

The proposal has already passed an EIA, and the 130 million baht cost will be included in the OrBorTor budget for the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

However, the OrBorTor will have to persuade whoever owns the required land to sell it or lease it long-term.

“If the OrBorTor can get the four or five rai we need,” said K. Pongwan, “the Marine Department will put the project out to tender next month.

“Building could start early next year and we estimate it will take 540 days to complete and will be ready in 2006.”

Local people at the meeting recognized that a new pier will make it easier for them to travel to Koh Yao and other islands around Phang Nga Bay. At present larger boats must wait for the right tidal conditions before coming in to the existing pier. The new, longer pier would allow them to tie up at any time.

Fast visas and work permits coming soon, Sipa promises

By Gategao Phetsawang

PHUKET CITY: The man charged with transforming Phuket into a “cyber paradise” says procedures to fast-track visa and work permit approvals for foreign IT workers will start next month.

Dr Manoo Ordeedolch, President of the Software Industry Promotion Agency (Sipa), has announced that applicants will be able to apply to the Sipa office, which will then coordinate with the Board of Investment (BoI).

Once applications are approved, the BoI will expedite procedures at the Immigration and Labor Departments. Applicants will know within about four days whether they are eligible for the red tape-cutting measures, he said.

He also told the Gazette on November 4 that the next six months will see his agency working hard on the “one-stop service” website that will allow residents to pay bills and conduct business with the Government on line.

If implemented, the service could put an end to the “take a number and wait in line” frustration of conducting business with government departments.

The next step, he said, will be to get other state agencies to coordinate their efforts and share databases. This could take some time, he warned, as each government agency has to observe internal regulations – and many of the required changes involve lengthy approval processes.

Three companies, two foreign and one Thai, have now applied for BoI privileges as IT investors though the Sipa Phuket office, he added.

The benefits, which include tax breaks and duty-free import of hardware and software, became available in August.
AirAsia expands Phuket-Singapore service

By Anongnat Sartpisut

PHUKET: Low-cost carrier Thai AirAsia, an associate carrier of Malaysian low-fare airline AirAsia, on November 5 launched a daily, direct flight service between Phuket and Singapore, offering promotional fares as low as 1,200 baht for advanced ticket purchases made over the Internet.

Flight FD 3028 departs Phuket at 9:30 am and arrives in Singapore at 12:10 pm local time. The return leg, Flight FD 3029, departs Singapore at 12:45 pm and reaches Phuket at 1:20 pm.

Thai AirAsia CEO Tossaporn Bijevel led the announcement of the new service at a press conference at the Novotel Coralia Phuket.

He said the daily service was launched in response to increased customer demand, as the former twice-weekly flights were expected to be the three top sources of foreign tourists, respectively.

K. Suwailadi said that the overall number of tourists visiting Phuket, both foreign and domestic, was about 2 million during the first half of 2004 – an increase of about 15% compared with the same period last year. She expects about 500,000 more arrivals by year end, with Germany, Taiwan and the UK expected to be the three top sources of foreign tourists, respectively.

Aboriginal art goes on display

KOH KAEW: Prints by some of Australia’s most celebrated Aboriginal artists are currently on display at Dulwich International College, in an exhibition entitled “Dreamtime”.

The exhibit, on loan from the Australian Embassy in Bangkok, comprises 23 linocut, woodcut and lithograph prints by Aboriginal artists including Jimmy Pike, Rover Thomas and Doris Ginginginara.

It was due to be officially opened on November 9 by the Australian Ambassador, Milt Kupa.

The exhibition, in the secondary school foyer until November 17, is open to the public. Between November 19 and December 5, it will be on display at the Sheraton Grande Laguna Phuket.

CAT planning to upgrade Internet connection

PHUKET: CAT has announced that it will upgrade its Bangkok-Koh Samui-Phuket Internet connection, which is dedicated to providing CAT and TAT’s 1,000-halt-a-month broadband services.

The line, which serves CAT’s Hi Net and TAT’s T-net services, will be upgraded from its current maximum rate of 8 megabits per second (Mbps) to 155Mbps.

The upgrade should, theoretically, greatly improve service for Hi Net and T-net users, who are currently offered a maximum connection rate of 2Mbps shared among a maximum of 50 users.

Since the launch in March of the Hi Net and T-net promotions as part of the government’s ICT City project, users of the services have suffered considerable reductions in connection speeds because they have shared the same 8-Mbps connection to Bangkok.

The upgrade is expected to be complete next year.

Time to Give

The newest gift sets from Ocean Glass for your happiness in the coming year.

The Aspasia Phuket

We admit it...We’re wired. In all our rooms and suites. Each one has high speed Internet access. We’re also a Hot Zone. Our restaurants, lobby, spa and pool areas have WiFi wireless high speed Internet access. Free if you stay, dine, or enjoy a spa treatment. Stay in touch with us....
WTO helps develop sustainable tourism

**PHUKET CITY:** Developing tourism as a sustainable industry for Phuket was the topic discussed by World Tourism Organisation adviser Hans Carl Jacobsen and local officials at a meeting on November 8 at Phuket Provincial Hall.

Joining Mr Jacobsen at the seminar were representatives of the Office of Tourism Development and the Ministry of Sports and Tourism, as well as Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura.

Mr Jacobsen has been commissioned to research and develop a national tourism development plan for Thailand, and the trip to Phuket was part of his remit.

He told his audience, “Thailand is a big tourism destination … The issue is to make sure that tourism is sustainable.”

“I want to formulate a plan to create a new product in Thailand. We need the cooperation of both public and private organisations to develop new products and new markets.”

To start with, Mr Jacobsen recommended that Phuket City should have more street signs, so that visitors can find their way around more easily, and that more be done to meet the needs of pedestrians.

He said, “Vehicles are the kings of the street. We need to think about pedestrians.

“Tourists want to come to a nice town, to a nice place, [so] that is what we need to create.”

Gov Udomsak said Mr Jacobsen’s final report on the tourism development plan should be ready early next year.

He added, “For Phuket, I recommend a strategy to develop five main [aspects of tourism]: health tourism, marine development, shopping, MICE [meetings, incentives, conferences, exhibitions] and FIT.”

He said these would be considered along with Mr Jacobsen’s recommendations.

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**Nong Poi wins world beauty title**

By Gate Gaeo Phetsawang

PATTAYA: Phuket-born Treetchada “Poi” Petcharat has become the first Miss International Queen.

K. Poi — born Saknarin Malayapan — beat 23 other transgender contestants from 12 countries to win the competition, the first such international event organised by Tiffany’s Show Pattaya Co Ltd and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

The other contestants in the November competition came from Indonesia, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malaysia, Laos, Germany and France.

K. Poi won US$7,000 (about 315,000 baht) in cash, a crown, a trophy, gifts from the sponsors and a domestic airplane ticket. She also won the swimsuit competition, for a further US$1,000 (45,000 baht) in prize money.

K. Poi told the Gazette, “It’s like a dream. I think the committee must have decided I really did look like a girl and had a good shape in my swimsuit.

“I was asked, if I could change anything in the past what would I do? I said that I wouldn’t change anything.”

Second was Ariissa Rani of India while Ma Cristina Dunand of the Philippines was third.

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**French yachting industry checks out Phuket**

PHUKET CITY: Representatives of French companies running up-market boating vacations have been in Phuket to investigate the possibility of bringing boats here.

Officials and members of the Fédération des Industries Nautique (FIN) — which represents more than 600 companies in the French marine leisure industry — met with Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura on November 4 and talked with officials and local officials at a meeting on November 8 at Phuket Provincial Hall.

Joining Mr Jacobsen at the seminar were representatives of the Office of Tourism Development and the Ministry of Sports and Tourism, as well as Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura.

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THE FINAL UPSHOT

BANGKOK: Police arrested a 27-year-old man after he was caught taking photos up a girl’s skirt at a motor show at Central Plaza on Phra Ram III Rd last month.

Worakarn Jaruphat was collared by security guards after “Amp,” a young woman taking part in the Miss Motorshow Contest, grabbed his wrist after she felt something touch her legs.

When police officers inspected Worakarn’s gray knapsack, they found it contained a digital camera. A hole had been cut into the side of the bag, allowing the camera lens to zoom in and out.

Worakarn, who told police he was a researcher working for the Finance Ministry, claimed he had wanted to take some photos but got caught before he had the chance. His camera showed otherwise.

He admitted to taking pictures up girls’ skirts twice before – at Thammasart University. These photos, he said, had been for “personal use” only and he had not sold them. He was charged, nevertheless, with taking obscene pictures with intent to distribute.

Police kept the pictures of Amp’s undies that were stored in Worakarn’s camera – as evidence, of course.

Source: Kom Chad Luek

Thinner can be a blast

SAMUT SAKHON: As any drug-taker driven to extremes by the government’s War on Drugs Part III can tell you, taking a few deep breaths of paint thinner can give you a buzz.

This, perhaps, is what happened to a crew of boatbuilders at the Mahachai Docks on the morning of November 2.

Three workers were putting the finishing touches to a 40-meter fishing boat, which was still in drydock, when they decided to take a smoke break in the boat’s hold, where all the paint and thinners were kept. A hole had been cut into the side of the bag, allowing the camera lens to zoom in and out.

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Source: Kom Chad Luek

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer with the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), is not convinced that ordering gas stations to close between midnight and 5 am has had much effect in Phuket.

“It may have saved some fuel, but I doubt it’s saved much, because people are still using their cars just as they used to,” he said.

Changes in Phuket are often measured by the effect they have on tourism, but K. Teerayuth says that the earlier closing of gas stations is likely to pass unnoticed by visitors.

“Many tourists – around 90% of them – travel during the day, when the gas stations are open.

“For residents, it’s just that things aren’t quite as convenient as they were before. It’s still very much up to the car user whether to use the car less.”

However, he added, since Phuket is quite a rich province, residents can afford to buy new cars, and when they do, they appear to be opting for models with lower fuel consumption.

In addition, figures collected from the island’s 44 gas stations by the Phuket Energy Business Office (PEBO) show that sales of fuel have fallen by 5% since opening hours were restricted on September 9 this year.

PEBO officer Tongrat Vannach told the Gazette that before the restrictions there were only around 10 gas stations on the island that were open 24 hours a day; these had been affected by the reduced opening hours, but, overall, the restricted hours had made little difference to the amount of gas they sold.

“That said,” he said, “it’s important to realize that reducing operating hours is just one measure implemented by the government.

“Closing gas stations earlier saves electricity too. Each individual measure might save only a small amount of fuel, but that translates into a much bigger amount when added up across the nation as a whole.”

He suggested that another way to reduce fuel consumption...
most out of Phuket’s gas

Gas station operating hours have been restricted, but there seems to have been little impact on consumption by Phuket’s motorists.

would be for people to use public transport more, but it would be difficult to change the habits of car users.

Wichitpong Chuenthongsurp, Director of Depot Management for PTT gas stations, said the company’s eight stations in Phuket hadn’t noticed a marked difference in sales in the two months since the shorter hours were introduced.

Limiting gas station opening hours might not alter people’s consumption much, said K. Wichitpong, but raising the price of fuel would.

He conceded, “Early closing has saved fuel, but only a small amount. There weren’t many drivers in Phuket who would fill up their vehicles between midnight and 5 am, and those people now come and get their fuel before we close.

“The government has been trying to subsidize oil prices, but I think this situation is more about politics than anything else.”

He questioned whether reducing gas station opening hours really is the most effective way of persuading people to use less fuel.

“The number of cars on Phuket is rising,” he said. “Look at the traffic jams outside Central Festival.

“If the government really wants to save energy, it should increase the price of fuel. Forget about the subsidy, make the local price of fuel reflect the price in the real world.

“That would bring down consumption, as car users would make more of an effort to use their cars less – and so use less fuel.”

But Wittaya Yukulthorn, the manager of Bangkomthee Petroleum’s Bang Chak gas station in Rawai, believes the early closing policy has made a difference, because it is saving energy, as well as reducing costs for operators.

His station used to close at midnight, but now closes at 7 pm, because the number of nighttime customers has fallen.

“Since we have started to close early, we have saved money on electricity, as well as staff wages, but our sales haven’t fallen, because customers make sure to fill up before we close.

Government policy may be saving gasoline, but it’s not saving large amounts because it’s still up to individual drivers how much they use, and people continue to use their cars, said K. Anurak.

He said he is aware that some drivers buy black-market fuel from roadside vendors, but he said drivers probably bought it because it was cheaper, not because it is available when the gas stations are closed.

Sommal Kruwattanawong, manager of Ngan Tawee Service Ltd, supports the government’s policy, even though sales at his pumps have fallen by 15% since early closing was introduced.

“It has saved gas and saved electricity,” he said, adding that only a few people would use the pumps between midnight and 5 am before early closing came in.

For Somchai Patum Ratanachai, the manager of an Andaman Oil Ltd Caltex gas station, early closing makes economic sense, even though it has caused sales to fall by a fifth.

He said, “Our filling station has closed at 11 pm for a long time. We don’t really need to open later than that because, even though we lost 20% of our sales through closing earlier, it cost us more to keep the gas station open during the night than it does to open during the day, and we take more money during the day than we did during the night.”
Elephants are known for their size and strength as working animals and, in Thailand, as a dignified mode of transport for royalty and a crucial part of the army of the past.

More recently, since becoming largely redundant from the logging industry, they have become known more as a patient form of transport for tourists, or worse, as pitiful sights “begging” for food on the streets of Bangkok and other cities.

What they are less well known for are their skills with a paintbrush – an image that Phuket-based writer Jim Newport aims to change.

Mr Newport, the author of The Vampire of Siam, thought it would be a good idea to put together a calendar of elephant art and, with the help of Richard Lair, an adviser to the world-renowned Thai Elephant Conservation Center in Lampang province. And that’s just what he’s done.

It may be possible to persuade an elephant to hold a brush in its trunk, and even to get it to put that brush in contact with a canvas – but do elephants actually know what they are doing with the brush, in the same way a great artist does when creating a masterpiece? Mr Lair thinks so.

“A human chooses the colors, a human changes the brush, so what’s left for the elephant to contribute? Only the use of the brush and the use of space. But that’s a huge ‘only’, in the [same] sense that all you have to decide on when you do calligraphy is brushwork and space.

“Is it great art? I think it is, but not in the classical museum sense of the word. It’s great decorative art, and there is certainly nothing wrong with using art for decorative purposes.”

Mr Newport said, “I asked Richard whether [elephants] really enjoy painting. He said he wasn’t too sure, but he said they do understand work – the task. They think they are working, and they know when it’s time to do a job.”

An insight into the mind of the elephantine artists may be gained from the “orchestra” of elephants in Lampang, who have been trained to play musical instruments.

Mr Newport described watching the elephant orchestra at work. He said, “They played their instruments, they banged on the drums … when they did that, we pretended to go outside and left them playing music. We saw them get very excited.

“Their ears flapped and they raised their trunks. It was like they were talking, as if they were jazz musicians talking about the music they had just played. That was pretty cool.”

As for their painting, he explained, “They obviously know in their minds where they want to put the colors, although we really don’t know for sure if elephants can see in color. That’s an experiment that has not been done yet.

“Richard is hoping to raise money for experiments to find out about this, but it costs a lot of money.”

Although the elephants’ handlers control much of the process, it’s not as forced as it may seem.

“Elephants are known to ‘paint’ naturally, by holding a nail and scratching it on a wall. They don’t paint out of frustration. They paint the same way as humans did when they first started painting in caves.”

The elephants also have freedom of expression, he said. “Maybe every elephant can paint, but it’s not every elephant that actually wants to paint. Not all elephants do well in a limited space and can ignore distractions. Not every elephant understands what they have to do and only a few paint well,” explained Mr Newport.

“If we put the brush in the trunk of an elephant, it may play around, but it should focus on what it is doing.

“I was once painted on by an elephant after he was given a brush with color on it. He looked at the canvas and looked at me, then he painted on my shirt, which we didn’t want him to do; we wanted him to do it on the canvas.”

He also recalled one artistic outburst while shooting pictures for the calendar.

“I had the idea to get all of these elephants to bathe in the water, and then get one of them painting – to make people think he was painting the other elephants.

“The elephant wasn’t painting the picture at the time. He’d painted it already, but we put it there and gave him the brush.

“The elephant started moving the brush across the canvas, and then we pretended to go outside and started making loads of marks on the canvas.”

The painting was later re-touched to repair the damage.

The calendar was painted in Lampang, but Mr Newport thinks a similar project could be tried in Phuket, where there almost 200 elephants.

“As we know, elephants are in trouble because they have been taken to cities like Bangkok to work, but this [painting] could really help them out.”

The calendar, priced at 700 baht, is available at Divers Bar on Sarin Beach; Mom Tri’s Boutique House in Kata; Jackie Lease travel agency in Kamala, and Asia Books at Phuket Airport.
Tourism to save the Deep South?

The Tourism and Sports Ministry and the World Tourism Organization (WTO) are teaming up to promote destinations in Thailand’s three southernmost provinces.

Tourism Minister Sontaya Kunplome said the two bodies would start work this month on “reviving” tourism in Narathiwat, Yala and Pattani. The Tourism Authority of Thailand would provide marketing support, he said.

A January 4 raid on a military camp in Cho Airong district, during which four soldiers were killed and 400 guns stolen, marked the beginning of an escalation in violence in the region.

Late last month, at least 85 demonstrators were killed by government forces in Narathiwat’s Tak Bai district, in an incident that drew global criticism of the government.

K. Sontaya said his ministry and the WTO would focus on two projects: a practical action plan to calm the southern unrest, and a study of the three provinces’ tourism potential.

Contradicting numerous reports by tourism professionals in Haad Yai that the violence has devastated tourism there, K. Sontaya said, “Overall, tourism has seen no impact from the southern unrest. Many Malaysian tourists are avoiding the three provinces to visit other parts of the country.”

Traffic control: The Senate rejected draft legislation containing a controversial provision aimed at banning public demonstrations on highways – by a razor-thin margin of 64-63 votes.

Pro-government senators and those with close ties to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had a fiery debate on the draft vetted by a House and Senate special committee. The NGO senators took the floor to oppose the draft ban, labeling it an attempt to stifle free speech.

After the vote was called, the upper chamber was equally split on the issue.

Senate Deputy Speaker Nipon Wisityuthasart was called on to cast his decisive vote, rejecting the draft.

Applied physics: More than 30 primary school students in Suksamarn Buri’s U-Thong District were rushed to hospital after they ate nuts from a “physic” tree, scientifically called the Jatropha curcas, growing in the school’s herb garden. The nuts of the tree contain a laxative oil that is poisonous in large quantities.

Dr Sunantha Jindarat from U-Thong Hospital said the 32 Grade-4 students from Wat Nongyaisab School were hospitalized for dizziness, vomiting and severe diarrhea. The students went through detoxification, she said, but needed to remain in hospital for a few days.

Nujarin Srikumma, 10, one of the ill students, said the children ate the nuts because senior students said they tasted like peanuts.

Anusorn Foochareon, Director of Educational Office Region 2, said the tree had been cut down and the office is looking into why there was no sign warning that the nuts were dangerous.

Civic duty: A man suspected of strangling a 23-year-old Hong Kong woman in Pattaya four years ago was apprehended in his home province of Srisaket while attempting to renew his identification card so he could vote in the upcoming general election.

Boontan sodakot, 34, stands accused of breaking into the Pattaya hotel room of tourist May Sae-Jang on May 7, 2000, murdering her and stealing 8,000 baht in cash. Her belongings were subsequently sold and the man fled to Srisaket, where he is presumed to have spent the past several years.

A-steroids: The Food and Drug Administration issued a warning about herbal treatments marketed as traditional remedies, after steroids were found in a bogus cure-all tablet.

A Samut Songkhram health office examined a “Yaruam Wanhuayai Samunpraprodang 108” tablet. It contained a steroid called Prednisolone, which, if misused, can cause stomach ulcers, brittle bones, high blood pressure and heart failure. FDA Secretary General Pakdi Phosiri warned people against buying this and other products promising to be miracle remedies.

Around the Nation news round-up is sourced from the pages of The Nation and Kom Chad Leuk newspapers.
Locals call for better dolphin protection

Following the recent CITES international environmental convention in Bangkok, which focused on the protection of endangered species in Thailand, environmental groups in Kanom, on the Thai mainland opposite Koh Samui, have stepped up their campaign to improve the protection of dolphins.

The CITES conference (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) saw dolphins classified as serving “level 2” protection, meaning that they can only be disturbed subject to certain restrictions.

However, local environmentalists have appealed to the government for dolphins to have “level 1” protection, meaning that they, by law, must not be damaged or harmed, especially by commercial concerns.

Local environmentalists say the seas around Koh Samui once had a lot of dolphins, but unrestricted fishing practices and rising levels of water pollution have devastated the local population over the last few years. The number of dolphins in the waters around the islands is now thought to be very small.

The dolphin is already considered an endangered species in the Gulf, and the government is now discussing new ways of protecting these enchanting creatures before they are rendered extinct in this region.

The Fisheries Department has been asked to look after dolphins, and owners of large fishing boats are being approached to support the campaign.

There is also a 10-million-baht project under consideration, which would involve creating artificial coral reefs to re-establish underwater flora and fauna.

Many local people on and around Samui fear that if the request for better protection for dolphins is not implemented swiftly, these delightful creatures may soon be just a memory in the Thai Gulf.

No fowl ‘flu: Chan Naroong Puttikultasaem, a top veterinarian working for the government in Surat Thani, recently announced that there have been no cases of bird ‘flu in Surat Thani province.

Extensive research and observations were carried out, and not one case of the disease was found. However, the government is ready to act should any cases be uncovered, and any reports of dead poultry are immediately investigated, with every chicken checked for bird ‘flu before being released for consumption.

Over the OTOP: One Tambon One Product (OTOP) goods from Koh Samui are being rated in terms of one- to five-star quality in an effort to ensure only the island’s best products are entered in a OTOP contest in Surat Thani.

District Chief Yunjut Limawan said that stringent checks will be made to ensure products entered in the contest are of the highest quality, including the popular kalamae, a coconut paste used as the basis of many Thai sweets, which has been rated as a five-star product.

The famous Samui lang-saad fruit has been rated a four-star product, as was batik made on Samui and a special herbal tea.

These four products will be the island’s main contenders at the contest. If they do well in Surat Thani, they will be entered into the national contest which will be held in Bangkok later this year.

Meanwhile, officials are looking forward to feasting on the Thai treats as part of the testing process.

Cdr Swan is a writer with Koh Samui’s community magazine.
This week

**BRIDGE OF SIZE:** Derek Priest (left), Director of the Phuket Bridge Association, presents a commemorative plaque to John Newman, Director of the International Bridge Club of Australia, at a recent tournament at the Phuket Merlin Hotel.

**HIGH DIVES ALL ROUND:** Managing Directors of Ocean Zone Pro Tech, Andrew Fortune and Mathew Partridge (standing, left and center) gather with friends for the company’s grand opening on October 30.

**A CHILLING SITE:** (above) DeeDee Bunnag (2nd from left), Manager of Phuket City’s Da Jam Pub and Restaurant, celebrates Hallowe’en with suitably attired friends.

**THE THREE GRACES:** (below) Art lovers Daojai (left), Tasha (center) and Tik amuse themselves at the recent opening of Galerie Martini at The Plaza, Surin Beach. Behind them is one of a number of pieces on display at the gallery by acclaimed Thai artist Budis.

**COLOR-CODED MESSAGE:** (below) Phuket City’s latest nightspot, Barcode Pub and Restaurant, opened on October 27. Managing Director Bobby Tsang (in white shirt) and friends soak up the atmosphere.
Treat at Trisara.

The “world’s best hotel spa.”

Gault Millau Overseas by the highly-respected last year voted Best Swiss Chef Sukhothai in Bangkok and was opening Executive Chef at The Restaurant guide.

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In his spare time, Gerard has been renting his hunky frame out as a male model and was used in a photo shoot where he was featured in a soapy bath with 17 young Romanian girls.

Larking about: Gerard is not only the only one experiencing a bit of glamour. Last week Trisara, that much-anticipated new resort managed by Anthony Lark, opened to receive its first guests.

Most of us know Anthony from his years as GM at the Amanpuri. Originally from Sydney, Anthony, who has his base of operations at the Wentworth Hotel and The Regent and spent his time cleaning rooms and bussing dishes before becoming one of Australia’s youngest hotel managers.

In 1988, at just 27 years old, Anthony accepted an offer by Adrian Adonis to open a small, “eccentric” resort which became the Amanpuri.

Four years ago, Anthony began work on the 33-room project that has become Trisara. With his considerable international contacts, he has brought together a team that promises to bring a higher standard of service to Phuket.

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forces involved in making a car go or an aircraft fly, he says, theory is no substitute for practical experience.

“The big difference between a car and an aircraft,” he says with a rare smile, “is that cars go forward or backward, left or right. Aircraft also go up … and down.”

Capt Kiatkul acknowledges that relatively few rescues take place around Phuket, but perhaps because of this, he and his team — he has 60 personnel at his disposal — train continuously. Part of the training for all Naval Air Section personnel, and on occasion, civilians, is rigorous survival training, sea ditchings and how to live off the land should they make a forced landing in a remote area.

“The training is nerve-wracking,” says Capt Kiatkul, “but I look at it this way: my team have to practice — and pretend to be the victims — in more or less every rescue scenario that they may one day face for real.

“This way, they can empathize with the victims as well as learn how to perform almost instinctively. By the time my crew have been through the training, they have dealt with their fear; they can get on and do the job.”

One of the ironies of SAR missions is that the very same extreme weather conditions — thankfully rare in the waters of the Andaman Sea — that may cause a distress call to be made may also prevent the SAR helicopter from taking off.

“Our missions can be hampered by extreme weather and sea conditions … it is frustrating when you have to sit just waiting for the weather to break so that you can go out,” he says.

“We have to work fast,” says Capt Kiatkul. “Our aircraft are fully fueled and ready to fly within 15 minutes – the time it takes for our pre-flight briefing — of a distress call coming through from the operations center at the Third Naval Area Command at Cape Panwa.

“We carry sufficient fuel for outward and return journeys of 15 minutes each – the time it actually takes, if necessary, to hover and rescue people.”

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“As with most aviators, Capt Kiatkul is down-to-earth and always professional in his approach to life and his dream job.

“If you ask me what constitutes a successful mission, the answer is simple: one where we get to the emergency, rescue the victim and get everyone back to base safely.”
The title track of Donald Harrison’s recently-released CD, Heroes, is contemporary jazz stripped bare to bass, sax and drums and is perhaps not for the uninformed.

But wake up to the shock of the new and it shakes the listener from the torpor of clichéd contemporary jazz, rewarding the car with such attention to detail in its improvisation as to compel one to listen to the other 10 tracks on the album.

Post-bop alto saxophonist Harrison’s approach to the standard My Funny Valentine, with bassist Ron Carter – no stranger to regular readers of Ear Candy – is, by comparison, an homage. One can almost imagine Harrison sitting back during the recording to listen to Carter’s stunning fretwork.

Almost two minutes of introspective bass solo transport the listener into places quite simply off the musical map; it’s easily some of the most soulful bass recorded by Carter in the past 20 years.

Track 7, Candlelight – a Carter composition – is the CD’s most sensational piece. Harrison deftly brushes the keys and coaxes note after note from his soul. The style is playful, almost flirtatious at times, before developing an urgency and climaxing in glorious peace. Jazz as an alley for sex? Oh yes.

Why Harrison – who came to prominence with Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers in the 1980s – has not yet reached a wider audience with his personal and uncompromising, yet still accessible, style is hard to fathom.

Perhaps Heroes will set the record straight.

Heroes, Donald Harrison, Nagel Heyer NH 2041. Total playing time: 65 minutes, 5 seconds.

Cuban son singer Ibrahim Ferrer – a member of the Buena Vista Social Club (BVSC) – no doubt laughed when he received the “7 New Latin Artist” Grammy in 2000. He had, after all, been singing professionally since 1941. His recent album Buenos Hermanos is, like the 1998 BVSC album and movie that featured him and his septuagenarian and octogenarian colleagues, produced by the comparative youngster Ry Cooder.

Cooder’s deft style – and sheer respect for his elders – shines through.

Many of the songs are from the ‘40s and ‘50s, and are delivered with the same easy grace by Ferrer. His voice is so languidly effortless as to bring to mind images of long drinks, white sand, palm trees and exotic women.

Thank God that Phuket has all of those things, too. I can’t imagine the frustration one might feel huddling round a cigarette for warmth listening to Buenos Hermanos in a wintry Novosibirsk…

Anyway, this album is delightful stuff from start to finish. Dig out the rum and cigars – and party.


Not all car journeys are interesting, and while drivers must give their full attention to the road, there’s sometimes precious little to keep passengers entertained.

This is where the new portable DVD players can be such a boon, turning any vehicle into a“private cinema” for showing movies.

One compact car-and-carry player is the Nextbase SDV756-B, which can play DVDs, as well as MP3s, CDs and VCDs.

The 5.6-inch TFT CD monitor has a resolution of 300,000 pixels and Kodak picture support, as well as a built-in Dolby digital sound system.

The player can be connected to a computer, TV, projector, video, PlayStation and video camera. Connecting the main unit to a compatible decoder or amplifier/speakers with a coaxial cable gives a playing time of two to three hours, although there is an AV cable, card-type remote control, and a compatible decoder or amplifier/speakers with a coaxial cable.

Connecting the player to a normal speaker system gives a playing time of two to three hours.

The Nextbase player weighs only 900 grams, including the rechargeable li-polymer battery.

Optional extras include a holder that enables the player to be fitted to the back of a car seat or to a wall. The player comes with an AC/DC adapter, mains unit and manual. It costs 9,900 baht.

Connecting the player to a car’s electrical system, a car bag, car power supply (24V) and video cable, card-type remote control unit and manual. A lithium-ion battery gives a playtime of two to three hours.

Shinco SDP 1770, which has a larger, higher-resolution Panasonic screen. This active-matrix 7-inch LCD screen has a 600,000-pixel display which delivers bright, vivid, images. It is equipped with Dolby surround sound.

The player body is magnesium-alloy, and the whole thing weighs just 825 grams.

Play modes are: play, fast play, slow play, frame play, repeat play, scene play.

This “private cinema” is equipped with an anti-shock system and built-in speaker system. The package also includes an AV cable to connect the unit to a television, and a remote-control unit. The lithium-ion battery gives a playtime of two to three hours, although there is an adapter allowing it to be run off a car’s electrical system.

Shinco SDP 1770 is available from Kion Yong Public Partnership Ltd on Thepkrasattri Rd, Phuket City, near the intersection with Dibuk Rd. Tel: 076-211935 or 076-218054.

The Shinco SDV 1770 can be bought at the booth next to the escalator on the ground floor of Robinson department store in Phuket City.
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**SCORPIO** (October 24-November 21): Dare to push your luck where romance is concerned and you could be pleasantly surprised at the outcome. Shyness is not usually a trait associated with those born under the sign of Scorpio, but a certain someone is causing you to feel less than confident. You have good reason to be hopeful in other areas, though. A recent business disagreement is about to fade away into the sun-set. The number 2 is auspicious.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22-December 21): If you can’t quite get into gear this weekend you should be content to coast along in neutral until a wave of energy comes your way on Tuesday. After that you will have no problems tapping into a source of creativity. A friend who has bitten off more sugar cane than he or she can chew asks for advice. In this case, honesty is definitely the best policy. Wear lime green to make a statement.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 20): Fishing for compliments won’t get you very far this weekend. Your partner has got hold of the wrong end of the bamboo cane. A friend who has bitten off more sugar cane than he or she can chew asks for advice. In this case, honesty is definitely the best policy. Wear lime green to make a statement.

**AQUARIUS** (January 21-February 19): Aim to enjoy a quiet weekend away from the stresses and strains that have been bogging you down recently. Aquarians who are feeling frazzled should seek out a tranquil spot and meditate on problems that have been occupying too much energy. You will be able to see things more clearly at a distance. There are positive signs on the horizon, particularly when it comes to work issues. Wear lotus pink to promote peace.

**PISCES** (February 20-March 20): There’s no avoiding the fact that it’s time to incorporate more exercise into your daily routine. Pisceans who have been feeling sluggish during the recent rainy weeks should get moving before the high season starts. Early next week you will be over-sensitive, and on Monday someone’s tactless words could upset you. Think about water rolling off a duck’s back to deal with this situation. Wear shades of turquoise to encourage more self-confidence.

**ARIES** (March 21-April 20): Those born under the sign of Ar-ies who are inclined to spill the beans too easily should guard their deepest secrets well this week. Someone is determined to find out important information that you hold the key to. Where business is concerned you may have to make a rapid adjustment to a new situation. Just take care that you don’t lose control of the helm. Wear jungle green to promote harmony at home.

**TAURUS** (April 21-May 20): This is a good week to implement changes in your working life. Although Taureans are usually unwilling to alter their habits, there is definitely room for improvement. Personal affairs are about to become smoother and friends will want to show how much they care. Midweek, you are susceptible to daydreaming; try to remain grounded and concentrate on finishing off an overdue task. The number 5 is lucky on Tuesday.

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 21): The planets are moving into an auspicious position for those born under the sign of Gemini to finalize agreements. If someone appears reluctant to sign on that all-import-ant dotted line, you will need to put some pressure on. Business affairs should be tidied up before the end of this month as Decem-ber will see you coasting on a wave of pleasurescogking. Your partner asks an unusual question on Sunday.

**CANCER** (June 22-July 23): Risk-taking is the name of the game this week, but most Librans are loath to take anything but the safe path through the jungle. If you can overcome your fear of the unknown, there are rewards waiting at the end of the trail. Personal relationships are subject to stormy weather; there is a strong possibility that you have got hold of the wrong end of the bamboo cane.
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Exploring in style

**Andiamo** may look a little bit Jacques Cousteau on the outside, but the master cabin and state-of-the-art bridge tell a different story, of high luxury on the high seas.

**Superyacht Watch**

**By Dominic Stroud**

Rain, rain, go away: Sadly, in a final act of spite, the monsoon season dumped the mother-lode of rain on Southern Thailand. Mudslides, flooding, roads washed away and, more tragically, lives lost.

But even in the middle of torrential downpours, one could feel the weather was unfamiliar. Rain clouds swelled incessantly and were static, hovering over the southern provinces until exhausted, remnants of a tropical storm that had tracked across Asia leaving a trail of devastation in its wake.

Gentle seas and soft breezes accompanied by an instantaneous increase in the number of tourists (can somebody explain to me how this is so finely coordinated?) and the island is heading into high season...

As if to underline the change in fortunes, there, luxuriating in the bay, was *Naos*, the first superyacht of the season.

In fact, several large yachts passed through Phuket during the rainy season. As necessity dictated the need to find calm anchorage, the yachts moored in safety at locales such as the Yacht Haven, but I would argue the “Superyacht Season” only starts when one of these sublime yachts is seen at anchor in one of Phuket’s glorious bays.

So there was *Naos*, lying serenely at anchor in Kamala Bay, and, after months of superyacht withdrawal symptoms, everything was finally right in my little island world.

Rain clouds can be misleading. *Naos*, at 32.5 meters, is a beautifully streamlined cutter, built in the early 1990s at the CCYD shipyard in Italy.

The Ron Holland–designed *Naos* was originally commissioned for a couple who wanted to circumnavigate the world with their family, how can you not love a yacht built with such good intentions?

Less than 48 hours after dropping anchor in Kamala, *Naos* was gone. As she had arrived a month before one would normally expect superyachts to make an appearance, let us all hope that she is the forerunner to the best yachting season Phuket has seen in years.

**Kings Cup classic**

A special thanks to Henry Kaye and Lies Sol for getting me up to speed on a spectacular yacht that should arrive in early December to attend the Kings Cup Regatta. *St'lolona*, launched earlier this year, is a traditional Indone-
sian Pinisi of 145ft, three years in the making by a team of 90 specialist shipbuilders from Sulawesi and Flores.

To all outside appearances she looks like a classic Indone-
sian commercial vessel, but as her designer, Michael Kasten, jokes, ‘a very well maintained one’.

In St’lolona’s case, appearances are very deceptive. The exterior disguises the fact that she is a truly sumptuous vessel built to German Lloyds specifications, with luxurious cabins for 12 guests, an extensive array of diving equipment.

This seven-sail vessel is an absolute beauty, and will feature in *Superyacht Watch* in the coming months.

Hold your breath: In a move that has left many megayacht fans scratching their heads, German shipyard Blohm + Voss recently announced that it had received *Pelorus*, the queen of Roman Abramovich’s fleet, into its yard for an “extensive six-month re-fit”.

*Pelorus*, a visitor to Phuket earlier this year, is regarded by many as the most beautiful yacht in the world, so it is to be hoped that no external details will be altered.

One rumor has it that a second helicopter hangar is to be added. The first one, right behind the tower, can barely fit in the bow, and it’s impossible to imagine a second being added without altering some aspect of the deck lines ... a thought that makes many yacht esthetes shudder.

Boys love their toys, and one of *Pelorus’s* most famous could be a berth for a mini-sub placed into the hull, a la *Octopus*.

*On Paul Allen’s thumper* *Octopus*, an under-water chamber floods and a little mini-sub farts out, James Bond-style, to do some underwater exploring.

A question: With *Octopus* being a rockin’ 400ft plus, with helicopters landing left right and center, why play “hide the sub-marine”?

Spotted a superyacht in Phuket waters? Want to share the poop on a super slop? Send an email to Dominic Stroud at: superyachts@phuketgazette.net
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Get your brain in gear with The Monster Quiz

Hidden Words

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

Brain Buster!!

Explain this: A boy and his father are injured in a car accident. Both are taken to a hospital. The father is dead on arrival, but the boy lives and is taken to surgery. A grey-haired, bespectacled surgeon looks at the boy and says, "I can't operate on this boy -- he's my son."

Never a Cross Word!

Across
1. Duplicate.
2. Norwegian marine inlets.
3. Maybe.
4. Metal once mined in Phuket.
5. Internet address.
6. It makes you sick.
7. Specialist.
8. Run at a leisurely pace.
11. Colorado capital.
12. Notion.

Down
1. Nicosia country.
2. Puzzle.
3. Mr James, train robber.
4. Rodent.
5. Despatched.
6. Its capital is Kampala.
7. Run at a leisurely pace.
8. Take that.
9. A convention on international trade.
10. Sea, to Marcel.
11. Hurt.
12. Its capital is Kampa.
15. Remarked.

Answers to last week’s Monster Quiz

1. “Harelike impalas sew” is an anagram of the name of which celebrated playwright and poet?
2. The tolar is the currency of which country?
3. Who were the two stars of the 2001 film Moulin Rouge?
4. Where would you find the Vinson Massif?
5. Who were the two stars of the 2001 film Moulin Rouge?
6. Who conquered Lydia in 546 BC?
7. What is the Tweedee Kamer?
8. Which volcano in Colombia erupted on November 13, 1985?
9. What was the deepest hole ever made by man?
10. Which four forces act on powered aircraft?
11. Who provided the voice for Oscar in the movie Shark Tale?
12. What is a paupiette?
13. When and in which city was Kylie Minogue born?
14. Who is the lead guitarist of Cold Play?
15. Quentin Blake has achieved fame in which field?
16. What is the Tweedee Kamer?
17. When a US president flies in a military aircraft, it is known as Airforce One. But by what name is it referred to if it is a civilian aircraft?
18. Who provides the voice for Oscar in the movie Shark Tale?
19. When and in which city was Kylie Minogue born?
20. Who is the lead guitarist of Cold Play?

Answers next week

Happy Friday everyone, I am sure you have been busy with your school work this week. I hope you have enjoyed it and learned a lot. Remember, keep practicing your reading and writing skills. Good luck with your upcoming tests and projects. See you next week!
The Mercedes-Benz C200 Kompressor is currently supercharged. That will likely change as the company introduces turbochargers, in the name of quietness and efficiency.

Mercedes-Benz has taken the decision to phase out all its Kompressor models and replace the supercharged engines with turbo units.

Superchargers and turbochargers perform the same function, compressing the air flowing into the engine, significantly boosting power.

A supercharger is powered by the engine, usually through a belt-and-pulley system. Turbochargers, however, are powered by gases from the exhaust system.

More than 35% of the energy released by an engine during combustion is lost in the exhaust. Between 1909 and 1915 a Swiss engineer, Alfred Büchi, developed the first turbocharger to recover and use some of this wasted energy.

The appeal of turbocharging is based on the “something-for-nothing” principle whereby energy that would otherwise disappear through the exhaust system can be harnessed to improve an engine’s power output.

While turbos have been widely used only in the past 30 years, superchargers had been used in car engines for at least 80 years and were employed extensively on racing cars between World Wars, one famed example being the 4.5-liter Bentley “Blower”.

So successful were superchargers that, in 1950, the Fédération Internationale de l’Automobile, Formula One’s governing body, stipulated a maximum capacity of 4.5 liters for normally-aspirated engines and just 1.5 liters for supercharged engines. The rules changed again in 1954, limiting the engines without superchargers to 2.5 liters and just 750cc for supercharged models.

Turbocharging came to the fore during World War II, when aircraft engineers began turbocharging piston engines to produce sufficient power for aircraft traveling at high altitudes. The Pratt and Whitney engines of the Consolidated B-24 Liberator bomber were both super- and turbocharged.

It was not until 1977, however, that the first turbocharged F1 car, the Renault RS01, driven by Frenchman Jean-Pierre Jabouille, made its faltering debut in the British Grand Prix. Renault claimed 500bhp on tap but the engine proved unreliable. It was a full year before a turbo car would actually complete a Grand Prix.

By the early 1980s, virtually all Grand Prix cars were turbocharged and capable of producing enormous amounts of power on specially-developed fuels. Specialy boosted for the qualifying heats, these tiny 1.5-liter engines were chucking out in excess of 1,000bhp, though they frequently blew up after a handful of laps.

Nelson Piquet – in a turbocharged Brabham BMW – won the 1983 World Drivers’ Championship, the first to win it using a turbocharged car.

To curb power outputs and speeds, turbos were phased out toward the end of the 1980s, and F1 cars currently run normally-aspirated three-liter V10 engines.

For road use, however, Mercedes-Benz (which supplies engines for the McLaren F1 team) continues to produce a number of supercharged models, including the C-Class, the SLK and the latest CLS 55 AMG.

One of the more popular supercharged models in Thailand is the C200 Kompressor, featuring a 1.928bhp (141 kW) four-cylinder engine complete with counter-rotating balance shafts and an intercooler.

Thanks to the use of a forced-induction system, the C200 accelerates from rest to 100kmh in just 8.1 seconds, and has a flat out speed of 240kmh.

The C-Class was launched four years ago but has this year been significantly upgraded in terms of technology and equipment. Since its launch, Mercedes-Benz has delivered more than 1.26 million C-Class cars and the facelift model is likely to further improve that figure.

At present, only one Mercedes-Benz model is turbocharged – the super-luxury V12 Maybach, which has twin turbos to produce its massive 550bhp.

This is likely to change. Turbos, Mercedes-Benz argues, are quieter and more efficient than superchargers, and it will be replacing supercharged engines with high-performance turbo options in the near future.

Jeff Heselwood may be contacted by email at jhc@netvigator.com.
Pattaya has been undergoing structural changes so colossal they rank right up there with those experienced by cashed-up ladyboys who go under the surgeon’s knife to have a lump of meat and a couple of rissoles removed.

For those of us who’ve been living or coming here for some years it’s been a rapid transformation.

It seems almost everything is in a state of flux. Let me illustrate with some recent examples.

One of the city’s most photographed tourist attractions is a temple: Wat Chai Mongkol on South Pattaya Rd.

One of the hidden delights of the temple used to be a relatively small, dark-green, brackish pond, almost hidden behind a row of gnarled trees and a dusty trail.

Stretching out into the water was a narrow wooden walkway and platform popular with locals who would buy a loaf of bread at the entrance to the wat and then throw pieces of bread into the water, which would suddenly come alive with hungry turtles and catfish.

There were also some ducks, lurking at the edges of the pond.

I don’t know how anything actually managed to live in the water, which looked more like a biological warfare experiment than a home for turtles and catfish.

In the middle of last year, the building and renovation madness that has held Pattaya in its pile-driving grip must have overwhelmed the saffron-robed ones, because the rustick pond and its surrounds have now been transformed into a paved, multi-purpose facility: a car park one day; a fairground and concert arena the next.

I suspect the architect of this cementing frenzy was an Italian immigrant relocated to Fun City from the western suburbs of Sydney.

Anybody familiar with that part of suburban Australia will be aware that it’s easy to spot the homes owned by Italians: every possible square centimeter of ground is covered in concrete.

Remarkably, the pool on the temple grounds remains, but now it is reminiscent of a concrete-walled storage tank for sewage or industrial waste; I imagine you’d find something very similar hidden behind the nuclear facility at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania.

Of course, the saffron-robed ones can’t be blamed. It’s not their fault that Pattaya is starting to resemble a prosperous, bourgeois Club Med-style resort while the major center of worship still has that rustic charm only appreciated by unwashed backpackers and people with Burmese walking sticks.

Travel writer Edith Wharton once described the Swiss countryside as looking like “the landscape of a sanatorium prospectus”.

But she would never apply that description to Pattaya, which is starting to resemble Beirut circa 1978, although the damage here is being wrought by people with hammers and chisels rather than AK-47’s and mortars.

The sleepy fishing village of the 1960s is now well and truly woken each morning by the sound of industrial drills.

While go-go bars may be viewed as dens of iniquity by most - most often those who are unhappily married and therefore prevented from indulging in the joys of ogling - the owners of one such establishment, named Planet Rock, once tried to attract a better class of clientele by offering a magic show for assembled patrons.

Not just any magic show, however. They went to the trouble of engaging the services of a man who called himself Zorro (albeit he came from Singapore, not Mexico).

He was ably assisted by a young sylph-like creature who bore about as much resemblance to Sergeant Garcia as Elle MacPherson does to Lassie.

Zorro was a closet pyromaniac with a penchant for teasing farmyard friends. He was also somewhat of a masochist, galling with razor blades: good for removing impurities, like tonsils.

The sleepy fishing village of the 1960s is now well and truly woken each morning by the sound of industrial drills.

The show has long since departed and Planet Rock is the poorer for it.

At the north end of town there used to be a place called the Elvis Pub. No, it is not run by the original Elvis Presley, who we all know didn’t die of hamburger overdose in 1977 but is in fact running a pizza parlor in Lithgow (New South Wales, Australia, a.k.a. the butt-hole of the world).

This Pattaya Elvis Pub featured a former heavy-metal rocker called Richie Newton, a German who grew sideburns, slicked back his hair and transformed himself by way of a jump suit into an incarnation of Elvis.

The only place that doesn’t seem to have changed in any way at all is the Hopf House, a German micro-brewery and boozatorium.

It features not only yard glasses of amber fluid, but also an Italian singer named Enzo (sounds like the name of a headache medication) who sings operas like Pavarotti, rock like Freddie Mercury (before he died) and love songs like Barry Manilow (OK, not everyone’s perfect).

As Britain’s Prince Philip is said to have remarked when he was asked what he thought of Hong Kong, “It’ll be nice when it’s finished.”
Phuket beach needs your help

With the high season for tourism officially upon us, Phuket is geared up for what everyone hopes will be a banner year, with a record number of tourists and no disruptions – real or imagined – to scare away potential visitors. While it is still early, there are reasons for optimism. Advance hotel bookings are strong and the increased availability and lower costs of both domestic and international flights to the island has greatly ameliorated the long-standing air transport bottleneck.

Despite the obligatory assurances from government and tourism industry officials that Phuket is perfectly safe from terrorism and bird flu, these continue to be concerns that remain, to a large degree, beyond local control. However, Phuket’s beaches, which remain our single greatest tourism asset, are not a matter beyond local control – quite the contrary – and the state of the beaches is a problem that most island residents can play an important role in solving.

The situation is not good. Earlier this year, the national Pollution Control Department surveyed Thailand’s 14 premier tourist beaches and found that none were being managed in a way that met its highest “five-star” standard for environmental sustainability.

Only one Phuket beach included in the survey, Kata, got a four-star rating. Patong came in at three stars – which was probably generous (the presence of freelance prostitutes, tourists, hawkers, jet-skis, parasail boats and mangy stray dogs was not factored in). The Gazette has frequently called for local government officials to enforce regulations that are essential to maintaining the health and attractiveness of the island, including its beaches. Still, unfortunately, very little happens. But the public can still play an important role, by quietly cleaning up the beaches themselves. This might take the form of nothing more than removing one’s own garbage from the beach or taking care not to trample the pak boong talay that still grows along many beaches and that plays an important role in preventing erosion.

Whether the reader is a long-time resident or a visitor reading this column for the first time, we all have a role to play, not only on the days when beach clean-ups are organized, but every day. The best hope for the island’s beaches depends on their being cared for by their own people. What the authorities can do is promote traffic safety for cyclists, and perhaps the authorities should adopt a new approach: promoting traffic safety through fashion and vanity.

Anders Palm Chalong

Time to rid Patong of streetwalkers

Prostitution has at last been acknowledged as a major problem in Patong [Gazette, October 23], and by someone in authority, namely Phuket Governor Udomsak Usawarangkura.

But more “freelancers” are arriving, and they don’t want to work in bars. What they want to do is walk the streets looking for a quick, tax-free score.

The time has come to rid Patong of this blight. Let the people who are looking for cheap sex find it elsewhere, perhaps in their own countries.

“Frank Sinatra”

Patong

Use of helmets on bikes is all in vain

It is becoming more common to see cyclists in Phuket – particularly those on racing bicycles – wearing helmets. However, I am sure that most of these cyclists go from riding their cycles with a helmet to riding motorcycles without similar protection.

As safety does not seem to be very high on the agenda for most people, perhaps the authorities should adopt a new approach: promoting traffic safety through fashion and vanity.

Anders Palm Chalong

Letters

The Gazette is pleased to receive mail from readers. Please write to us at 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Amphur Muang, Phuket 83000, fax 076-236555 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.

Airports are all relative

I have yet to experience the “chaotic scene” at Phuket International Airport (PIA) as described by Disenchanted Resident [Letters, Oct 16]. On the occasions when I have landed at PIA after international travel, I have been met with courtesy and had a relatively easy time getting through Immigration.

This is in contrast to Bali, where I was charged US$25 for the privilege of waiting for over an hour in a noisy, poorly air-conditioned immigration hall.

It would have been nice to think that a proportion of this visa fee was going toward improving the facilities at Bali. However, it would appear that this is not the case, as the immigration hall – though fully staffed – was under-equipped, poorly-managed and too small to cope with the influx of tourists.

To put things in perspective, arrivals in Bali currently stand at less than a quarter of PIA’s, while the airports are roughly the same size.

To some extent, Thailand still does not charge for visas on arrival, as many other countries in the region do.

Airport chaos is, I suppose, relative, depending on time of arrival and departure; I would much rather be flying internationally to and from Phuket and I wish that there were more direct flights.

If “Disenchanted” really wants to see chaos in its ultimate manifestation he should try Don Muang on a Sunday.

Simon J Hand Chalong

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Anders Palm Chalong
Averting disaster all in a day’s work

Phuket city was the area worst hit by flooding in 2003 although the dam age was limited to the economy rather than to buildings. The experience was the Phuket and Kathu municipalities, and the Provincial Administration Organization (OrBorTor) gained this with the measures we introduced to prevent it happening in the future are now being applied to Patong.

Klong Bang Yai, which snakes its way from Kathu through to Phuket City has now been almost completely dredged. Clearing this canal helped Phuket City cope with last month’s heavy rains. But it seems as if the gods knew that we had concentrated our flood-protection efforts on Phuket City and decided to hit Patong instead.

I suppose that we ignored Patong, I admit that we had not organized any form of protection scheme there; we didn’t consider the area to be at risk.

The Department of Mineral Resources surveyed Phuket Island and highlighted 28 areas at risk from flooding. Patong was found to be one of the most likely to be flooded. Consequently I didn’t worry too much about Patong. But parts of Patong and the Kalim-Kamala route have now been reclassified as high-risk areas.

Many of the natural and man-made water courses in Patong have been blocked by the sheer number of buildings and roads being constructed in and around Patong. Trees and other vegetation – the roots of which hold the topsoil in place – are cut down to make way for new buildings.

Teerayuth Prasertphol, Chief Technical Officer of the Phuket Provincial Transportation Office (PPTO), replies:

"Issued and the previous owner’s documentation; I have not stolen the motorbike.

I have not been fined for not having my documents in order, but I have been fined different amounts in different places: 300 baht at Patong police station, 500 baht in Kata and 900 baht in Kathu. I realise that I am committing an offence – which I am trying to rectify – but I don’t understand why I am being fined different amounts.

Pol Lt Sutham Rattonasawangwong, Deputy Traffic Police of Chalong Police Station, replies:

"Traffic police have the authority to fine people at their discretion. According to Thai law, an owner of a vehicle that is not taxed can be fined up to 2,000 baht, and up to 10,000 baht if the vehicle is not insured.

The Department of Insurance at the Ministry of Commerce has been recommending to police stations that they adopt a set 500 baht fine for a first offence, but the final decision lies with each police station.

I bought a secondhand motorbike in January 2004 and I received the green log book, photocopies of the previous owner’s identification papers and a signed consent form.

When my girlfriend checked the log book, though, she noticed that the bike was registered as red, although the bike I had bought was blue.

She told me that I couldn’t have this information changed, but the previous owner could. So I took the log book back to the previous owner, who agreed to change the color for me.

Unfortunately, I haven’t seen him since (I believe he has left Phuket). Now, my tax and insurance discs have run out, but no one seems to know how can I obtain a copy of the log book or how I can get the tax and insurance discs without the log book.

I do have the signed consent form and the photocopies of the previous owner’s documentation; I have not stolen the motorbike.

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Mr J Karon

There are no regulations concerning treehouses, but it’s best if you check with the local authority where the structure will be located, such as the municipality or local tambon administration organization (OrBorTor), for safety reasons.

You can also ask PWTCPO officers to check your plans to ensure the treehouse will be safe.

Can I build a treehouse?

What is ‘paid-up capital’?

When it comes to setting up a business in Thailand, what exactly does “paid-up capital” mean?

B Knight

“Paid-up capital” means the amount of shareholder capital that has been paid in full by shareholders.

For example, this word is used in the balance sheet, perhaps as “paid-up share capital” which details the amount of stock that has been sold and for which the company has already been paid.

I would like to know why cable TV is not available in Rawai. It would be good to enjoy what people in Patong and Phuket City have for 500 baht a month, rather than UBC’s 1,506 baht for repeat programs.

Is cable TV coming to Rawai? If so, when?

Neville Scorer

Rawai

I would like to build a child’s playhouse in a tree on land that I lease. Are there any restrictions or regulations concerning this?

R Cruose Phuket

Taweew Homhuan, engineer at the Phuket Public Works and Town and Country Planning Office (PWTCPO), replies:

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<td>Want to know how to get something done? Can’t understand some of the dafter things that seem to go on in Phuket? Want to pitch an idea to Phuket’s authorities or institutions? Then this is the forum for you. Submit your queries or suggestions to us and we’ll ask the appropriate people to respond.</td>
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Write to: The Phuket Gazette, 367/2 Yaowarat Rd, Muang, Phuket 83000. Fax 076-213971, or submit your issue at www.phuketgazette.net

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A parade of horrors and heroes

Aidan Hartley’s The Zanzibar Chest (Harper Perennial, London, 2004, 446pp) is both magnificent and horrifying.

Hartley grew up in bucolic East Africa and cut his teeth as a journalist in all the major hellholes: Ethiopia, Somalia, Rwanda.

His big book is many things: child- hood memoir, detective story, collection of dispatches from war zones. Over a couple of hundred years, Hartley’s ancestors served in the far-flung outposts of the British Empire. His father, the last of the imperial ser vants, worked as an agricul tural officer in Tanzania and Yemen for three decades until, in 1951, he married and settled down to farm in East Africa.

It was a bad time to be a white farmer: he was driven out of Kenya by the Mau Mau, then his second farm in Tanzania was confiscated by the bone-headed social ialist Julius Nyerere and destroyed by neglect.

Still, Aidan Hartley had an idyllic childhood in Africa, and raced back to Kenya as soon as he graduated from London’s School of Oriental and African Studies in 1988. He was taken on as a stringer by Reuter, rented a house in Nairobi with two other journalists, and went off to cover the wars.

“The old days all come back to me,” he writes. “Overnighters, all-nighters, hitching rides on tanks busting down palace gates, sipping dictators’ champagne, scoops and whores and house arrests, herograms, smelly socks and Caterpillar boots, the shit, deadlines, dead on arrivals, bouts of amobae and malaria remembered fondly as adventures, beriberi, organ failure, Stalin’s organs, brain damage, gas gangrene, coke cut with pig laxative from condoms smuggled in the bowels of living men, oral rehydration salts, satellite feeds, food aid, baby milk, mass burials through a Nikon lens, Huey chopper rides, the pure adrena line of being in fallen cities decorated with floral mortar bursts and Choppers in the sky. Interspersed with the war stories is a journey through Yemen inspired by the Zanzibar chest of the title in which, after his father’s death, Hartley found the diary of his father’s best friend, a political officer named Peter Davy.

Davy converted to Islam and married an Arab, and Hartley retracts the myriad routes that led to his murder by a tribal chieftain in Yemen. The desert journeys provide some respite from the relentless gore of the other side of the Red Sea that culmi nated in the genocide in Rwanda. Hartley writes of marching in a Tutu column that eventually captures the chieftain. From then on it’s just one massacre after another, meticulously de scribed – an eye-popping Heart of Dark ness horror.

In the process, he immortalizes his journalistic comrades, all wildly eccentric, living on the edge of terror, cutting the adrenaline with massive doses of booze, drugs and profligate sex. Many were killed.

Hartley writes about how certain friendships fade with age and then ob serves: “Dead friends are different. Death is different from permanent joy. Our inti macy is frozen in memory at the instant they lost their lives. I mourn the old ages they will never have, but I will know them as young and beauti ful for as long as I live.”

Years later, Hartley had an on/off love affair with an American photographer named Lizzie, until it was terminated because of too much frenzied time in war zones. He eventually found some peace on a remote farm in Kenya and settled down to write this book in the company of his Anglo-Indian-Chinese wife and two children. The Zanzibar Chest succeeds on all counts: as a personal account, witness to African history, and as a eulogy to Hartley’s war correspondent comrades – the best account on this subject since Michael Her’s Dispatches.

“One of my colonial ancestors, we were just meddling in the tragedies of foreign lands and this was always going to be dangerous,” he reflects. “But in my brightest moments I believe that our colleagues were among the biggest heroes ever in the news business. They genu inely did die trying to draw attention to the plight of the forgotten or the fickle ten countries of the world. Journalism gave us comradeship, a purpose in life and some form of honour.”

Time to get radio-active – for free

Y ou may not realize it, but if you have an un limited-access Internet account and Win dows XP, it’s easy to receive the world’s best radio stations, right there on your PC.

If you follow Microsoft’s instructions, in the latest version of Windows Media Player, you’ll probably end up paying to get decent radio broadcast s, but if you know the right trick, an enormous amount of free radio programming is just a few clicks away.

You don’t need any fancy hardware, a big antenna or one of those outrageously expensive digital radio players, all you need is your PC, Windows XP and a Internet connection that’s fast enough to keep up with the music. If you’ve never heard radio over the Internet, it’s the perfect way to spend the five minutes or so it takes to give it a go.

If you have installed Win dows XP Service Pack 2 (and if you haven’t, I strongly recommend that you do so, pronto), the latest version of Windows Media Player, called WMP 10, came along for the ride.

To crank up WMP, click Start | All Programs | Windows Media Player. WMP 10 is imme diately distinguishable from its predecessors by its buttons at the top – Now Playing, Library, Rip, Burn, Sync, Guide, Music and Radio versions of WMP show the buttons on the left.

You might think that the best way to listen to radio over the Internet is to click on the marked Radio – and you’d be wrong. Microsoft uses that button to try to sell you an upgraded version of Microsoft Network, using one of the most under handed tricks in all of Windows.

First, Microsoft has col lected the play lists from hundreds of well-known radio stations. In stead of playing a live feed from a well-known radio station, Microsoft advertises that it has a station that “sounds like” the well-known station.

It then plays the same songs as the ripped-off station, but without the advertising – and without compens ating the ripped-off station. The big question is how can Micro soft’s got away with this? Several leg ions of attorneys are asking that same question.

Second, Microsoft offers free broadcasts of very nearby stations, near AM-quality versions of many of the ripped-off stations, while danging the possibility of hear ing CD-quality music from all of the ripped-off stations, for a small fee.

If you click the WMP10 Radio button expecting Internet ra dio, you obviously underesti mate Microsoft.

But WMP10 does offer good quality, free Internet radio – you just have to know where to find it. If you click the Guide button, WMP10 brings up the main page from www.windowsmedia.com (the site be ing a subsidiary of Microsoft, of course).

Look hard at the list of options on the right-hand side of the web page. Click on Radio Tuner. That takes you to a series of pages where you can find free radio stations, many of which are worth a listen.

WMP isn’t the only game in town. In fact, most Internet radio stations simply have their websites. You may have to search on Google to find the trick.

Radio stations are usually delivered by streaming – the pro cess of sending an audio or video file over the Internet to your com puter so you can play it, but at the same time make it very difficult for you to capture and keep the file.

Stations are frequently rated by their streaming rate: a station that streams at 24 kilobits per second (Kbps), for example, sends a file that’s small enough to fit on a dial-up Internet con nection – but the sound quality is very similar to scratchy AM ra dio.

Streaming at 100Kbps, on the other hand, takes a well-en dowed ADSL line, but the music coming out your computer ap proaches (or in some cases ex ceeds) CD quality. A friend of mine asked me why Virgin Classic Rock (which has become my favorite Internet radio station – www.smradio.com) is required to stream at 24Kbps, when the songs will play fine for a while, then all of a sudden the line goes dead, only to come back a few seconds later.

There are three reasons why an Internet radio station will go dead. First, the station itself may not be broadcasting – some stations run out of cash (such as www.kbco.com) are required to stream to silence when certain advertisements play in the studio. Second, the computer that’s sending out the broadcast may not be able to keep up with the demand and may crash or become overloaded. Third, and most likely, you’re Internet connection isn’t keeping up.

If you get silence too often, try switching to stealth streaming; rate your stations’ Web sites have a button you can click to switch to “modern” or “56K” streaming, that is, limiting the file that will play against your ADSL line, or buy a faster connection.

With thousands of top name radio stations now broad casting live over the Internet, no matter what your tastes in music, what language you speak, or when you want to listen, chances are very good you can find a station (or two or 200) that play music you like – and they won’t cost you a cent.
Shophouse boom continues for now

By Dhirarat Boonkongsaeen

PHUKET: The proliferation of shophouses, possibly Phuket’s oldest form of commercial property, continues, though developers are now introducing value-added design modifications and improved aesthetic appeal to entice buyers.

Indeed, Thanit Prateepnathalang, the deputy president of Phuket Real Estate Club, said that the 90-million-baht project – 60% of the capital came in the form of a loan from Siam Commercial Bank – hopes to feature bars, pubs, discotheques and guesthouses.

Jirapachara Jankaew, project assistant at the Ananda Gardens scheme in Chalong, said that the single most important factor in selling property remains the age-old maxim, “Location, location, location.”

As testament to her belief, shophouses at Ananda Gardens are being sold around a kilometer north of Chalong Circle on Chao Fa West Rd – sold out within four months of going on the market in June this year.

On the west coast, the Kata Night Bazaar, located about 200 meters south of Kata Center, comprises modern-design shophouses and is being postured as an “entertainment complex.”

Construction of the 21-unit development began in June and is expected to be complete by January 2005.

K. Thanit is also project manager of the Billion Plaza development, which is located opposite the Tesco-Lotus supercenter on the byapss road. Phase I of the project is currently under construction at a cost of 300 million baht.

Some 25 of the 64 units – around 40% – were sold between August and the time of going to press, at prices between five and 10 million baht apiece.

“The key to a successful shophouse development”, according to K. Thanit, “is to build in public amenities as well as shops.”

He went on to explain that some 3.2 rai of the eight-rai site has been set aside for public use, mainly in the form of roads and parks. “This will help support the businesses in the project,” he said.

Some 25% of the 64 units – 60% of the capital came in the form of a loan from Phuket Provincial Land Office (PPLO), he said, had collected 900 million baht in taxes so far this year, compared to 200 million baht for the whole of 2003, with shophouses featuring significantly.

According to K. Thanit, of the 50 or so construction projects that have been approved by the PPLO this year, 10 are shophouse-related.

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Indeed, the conventional wisdom went further than that; those who changed their strategy were frequently viewed as being slightly unstable – probably the sort of person who “job-hops”.

For those who still believe in the buy-and-hold philosophy, the events of the past five years in the financial markets should have provided food for thought.

Attitudes have changed rapidly. Increasingly, investors want to see a profit on their investments each year, regardless of what direction financial markets are taking.

This may seem almost ridiculous, but it has led to a new class of investment funds known as “absolute returns”. The aim of these is to produce a positive return whatever may be happening in underlying financial markets.

Some months ago, this column featured Orbis Investment Management and its “Opportunistic Equity Fund”. When almost all investors in global equity markets were losing money in the early 2000s, this fund was making substantial gains.

The reason was simple: the fund was selling shares “short”. In other words, investors were profiting when share prices fell.

Instead of taking the traditional view that buying shares hoping they will rise, an active “absolute return” manager is seeking profit in all situations.

Absolute return funds are an important part of the hedge-fund industry, as investors cannot assume that their assets will always appreciate in value. Even in reasonable times there are goods shares and there are shares that should be avoided. That said, if a company’s share “drops down, why not profit from the situation?” If it is not immoral, though it does carry risks.

If a company’s share price is falling, it is often the fault of the management. In such situations, the board of directors may elect to bring in a new chief executive officer with a track record of reviving ailing companies.

Alternatively, a low share price may well attract a predator intent on taking the company over. Both of these scenarios are dangerous to “short sellers” as they can lead to rapid rises in share prices.

Despite these and other threats to a hedge fund’s performance, the industry has attracted many of the most able managers in the world.

Most hedge funds (though not Orbis) levy, in addition to management fees, a substantial charge on profits achieved. This will usually be about 20%-25%, not the 4% or 5% that was once common. However, if the manager produces high returns, then maybe a share of the profits is justified. When a manager can earn millions of dollars a year, he certainly has an incentive to excel.

This has been a difficult year for many hedge funds for the simplest of reasons: volatility; or rather, the lack of it. For the best part of 2004, most financial markets were choppy and many investors have experienced much less volatility than usual.

Hedge funds generally can make money on rising or falling markets, but when the markets are stuck in tight “trading ranges”, there is little scope for profit.

I can imagine that in the quiet of their offices, many hedge fund managers are muttering, “Where is Osama bin Laden when you need him?”

Richard Watson runs Global Portfolio Co Ltd, a Phuket-based personal financial planning service. He can be reached at Tel and Fax: 076-381197, Mobile: 01-0814611. Email: imm@loxinfo.co.th.

Dragged through the hedge – forwards

In the past 12 years or so, assets invested in the hedge fund industry have grown from less than US$100 billion (about 40 trillion baht) to almost US$1 trillion (about 120 trillion baht).

There are too many types of hedge fund to allow a comprehensive description; they differ widely in terms of both investment style and asset class. However, most hedge funds will target areas such as stockmarket indices, currencies, bond markets or commodities for a combination of any of these.

Some operate on what are commonly called macroeconomic situations. For example, a hedge fund manager may believe that the Japanese Yen is about to rise against the US dollar. To take advantage of that, the manager may invest in US Treasury bonds and be leveraged accordingly. In that sense, the hedge fund’s investments will be linked to appreciate in value if this occurs.

In addition, “leveraging” (borrowing) will usually be employed to maximize returns.

Most hedge funds run multiple positions simultaneously, to diversify them and total returns.

Some hedge funds are intended to hold their positions for reasonably long periods of time, while others specialize in very rapid changes of holdings.

Before the arrival of hedge funds, fund managers tended to hold assets such as shares, bonds and perhaps property. The public was generally led to believe that there was merit in the philosophy of buy-and-hold.

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In Vino very fast: ACYC final round

AO CHALONG: Josh Lee and his crew on Vino held on to their early lead to win the final race of the Ao Chalong Yacht Club Keelboat and Multihull Race Series 2004 on November 7. Helping out on Vino was Scott Duncanson, whose Sotomay Express had already racked up enough points to seal the championship without even taking to the water.

“It makes a change to be at the sharp end instead of the blunt end,” he remarked.

In a day marked by breezes that were light to non-existent – the start was delayed by 30 minutes due to lack of wind – Vino went ahead of Racing Class rivals Mumia, skippered by Kevin Gillow in his first ACYC race this year.

Vino easily led the flotilla for the remainder of the short-ended course and crossed the finish line at about 2 pm. Struggling in the light winds were Mark Horwood and his crew on Attitude 8, who finally retired without finishing, having succumbed to the stiffening heat out on the near-windless bay.

In the Multihull Class, Henry Kaye on Cebersu managed to fight off repeated challenges from Mark Pescott on Summertime. Both boats crossed the line first. A tight finish, making it his second consecutive win in the ACYC race series.

The tightest contest on the bay, however, was between re-gatta stalwarts Al Boone on Blue Moon and John Fenn on The Four Winds in the Cruising Class.

Both drew on their experience to mount and fight off challenge after challenge, with Al Boone proving the better on the day, finishing with Fenn in his wake as he crossed the line. The shortened course proved to be a good move by race officials, allowing more racing through the bay, with winds gusting to about 25 knots, just as the last of the yachts finished the course.

The overall results of the ACYC Keelboat and Multihull Series 2004 are:

**Racing Class:**
1. Sotomay Express, Scott Duncanson (36 points); 2. Vino, Josh Lee (26); 3. Attitude 8, Mark Horwood (15).

**Multihull Class:**
1. Summertime, Mark Pescott (33); 2. Cebersu, Henry Kaye (20); 3. Charr, Tim Milner (16).

Prizes and trophies will be presented to the top three winners in each class at the ACYC clubhouse, on the beach, 300 meters north of Chalong Pier, on November 27, starting at 7 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Just 14, but Sydney’s a soccer star

PHUKET CITY: Thai hopes of winning the Fifa Under-19 Women’s World Championship 2004 soccer tournament on home soil got an unpleasant reality check on November 5, when the Thai side were demolished by South Korea 6-0 in a warm-up match at Surakul Stadium.

The match was played before a highly partisan crowd, many of them schoolchildren bussed in by school administrators into serving as spectators. But despite their support, the Thai were no match for the Koreans. Faster and better organized than the home team, the Koreans pressed hard in both halfs.

Korea dominated proceedings from the outset, with many of them schoolchildren in search of glory.

Paradorn returning to Phuket

PHUKET: Thai tennis superstar Paradorn Srichapan, currently ranked 26 in the world, will be bringing the 2004 Paradox Super Tour to the island’s Laguna Beach Resort on November 27 and 28.

The tour, which features exhibition matches, tennis clinics and autograph signing sessions, starts in Bangkok on November 22 and moves to Nakhon Ratcahsima before coming to Phuket.

At Laguna, there will be four matches, with play starting at 4 pm on both days, and some of the action is scheduled to be broadcast live on Channel 3 TV.

Paradox will take on Nic- olas Kiefer of Germany, who is currently ranked 18 in the world, in a men’s singles match.

He will also pair up with Thailand’s number one female player, Tamarine Tanasugarn, to take on Kiefer and Croatian Karolina Šprem, currently ranked 17 in the world, in a men’s doubles match.

Tamarine will play Sprem in a women’s singles match, and in a men’s doubles match Paradorn and Kiefer. The two will then take on the very experienced 39-year-old Rick Leach, who has won 45 doubles titles throughout his career.

Please note that the visiting players are subject to change, depending on availability and level of play. For the latest status call the Ticket Office at Laguna’s Canal Village Shopping Centre at Tel: 076-324453 ext 226.

Tickets, which provide entry to both days’ play and are priced at 3,000 baht, 1,000 baht and 500 baht, are on sale at Ca- pricont, the Ticket Office at Laguna’s Canal Village Shopping Centre at Tel: 076-324453 ext 226.

Tickets, which provide entry to both days’ play and are priced at 3,000 baht, 1,000 baht and 500 baht, are on sale at Cal- nival’s Canal Village Shopping Centre at Tel: 076-324453 ext 226.

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crush Thailand 6-0

first goal came, in the 11th minute, when Park Eun Jung struck from 10 yards out. Three minutes later, Thailand’s continued failure to mark attackers deep in their own territory resulted in a desperate foul in the Thai penalty area, with Kim Ju Hee converting for a 2-0 lead. At 37 minutes, Park Eun Jung dashed up the right wing and blasted the third goal, again from 10 yards out.

Then, just minutes before halftime, Cha Yun Hee went into a pack of several Thai players and somehow wrested control of the ball with an impressive tackle. She then dribbled the ball up the right side and crossed it to Park Eun Jung, who deftly headed the ball into the net to complete her hat-trick, putting the Koreans 4-0 up at half-time.

The rout continued unabated in the second half, with Park Eun Sung taking a feed from deep in the backfield to beat the Thai goalkeeper from 20 yards out.

The last goal of the match came when the Thai goalie – quite possibly shell-shocked by this point – miskicked on a routine clearance. Park Eun Sung pounced on the errant ball, sliding it into the net for her second goal and rounding the game off with a convincing 6-0 scoreline. After the lopsided match, Thai team manager Narumon Siriwat, said, “I am not satisfied with today’s game. There was no system, no concentration. The midfielders and defenders looked like they were just standing in a line. We need to get more practice and better teamwork to get our 5-4-1 formation to be effective.”

She played down the chances of Thailand pulling off any major upsets during the tournament. “Even though we have trained for six months, we are less experienced than the other 12 teams in the tournament. We are still in the building stages. For us, just winning one match would be a success.”

Meanwhile, teenage girls from two of the world’s coldest countries, Canada and Russia, got down to action in two fittingly entitled “warm-up” matches played at the seaside stadium in Karon. The Canadians took both matches, winning 2-0 on November 4 and 2-1 on November 6.

The November 6 match was a nail-biter. Canada’s Aysha Jamani opened the scoring in the 32nd minute, only to have the determined Russians equalize three minutes later. The tense deadlock was finally broken after 80 minutes, with a score by Canada’s Jodi-Anne Robinson. After the match, Canadian Coach Ian Bridge said the game had been good preparation for the upcoming tournament matches. “We are happy to win. Both teams played hard, so it was a good test for us. This is an important game to win because it keeps up our momentum going into the tournament.”

He said that the marked increase in “physical play” in the second meeting was normal when two sides meet twice over such a short period of time – and tempers sometimes flare.

“As for the tournament matches, we expect to do well. It was difficult for us two years ago. We came second. We got the silver medal. We have a talented team and intend to work very hard for success.”

Sydney Leroux: “I never expected to be here.”

Cha Yun Hee of South Korea blocks a tackle from Thailand’s Phavinee Nethip

Sydney Leroux: 'I never expected to be here.'
For decades one of South east Asia’s most beautiful countries, Vietnam, was synonymous with one of the most horrific armed conflicts of recent times.

No more. Economic reform – doi moi – and gradual and peaceful national rehabilitation are turning ‘Nam and its broad verdant landscapes into one of the most attractive holiday destinations in the region.

Of course, you can’t move an inch in Vietnam without being reminded of some aspect of French or American colonial influence. Your taxi at Ho Chi Minh Airport could well be a good ol’ 1959 Dodge Royale, a thundering gas guzzler that leaves the city’s myriad mopeds in its wake as it bombs down the boulevard.

The demilitarized zone – surely one of the great misnomers of all time – is still cluttered with military debris. Board a cyclo in the broad, tree-lined avenues of Hanoi – still more of a provincial town than a national capital – and you can take in the graceful colonial architecture, with the characteristic ochre walls contrasting stunningly with the surrounding vegetation.

One of the great pleasures of Vietnam nowadays is that it is so much easier to get around than in the past. The Reunification Express still grinds its way up and down the coast, but now the domestic airways are expanding and – in an incredible development – the road network can almost be described as comfortable.

You can travel easily between Saigon and Hanoi within a week, with enough time to stop off at many picturesque destinations along the way.

Nobody in Vietnam actually calls Ho Chi Minh City anything but Saigon. This is not out of disrespect to the father of the country, but more likely because this is a city that is constantly on the move – and two syllables are quicker than five.

Skyscrapers are now visible behind its iconic Hôtel de Ville – the city hall – and cathedral, but Saigon still operates at street level, with stools and tables cluttering the sidewalks and citizens relaxing over cups of coffee.

Going north, both the main road and railway follow the coastline, passing seaside resorts such as Danang and Nha Trang, and providing a near-continuous view of the emerald sward of rice fields that is a constant backdrop just about anywhere you go in the country.

The jewel in Vietnam’s crown is the old trading port of Hoi An, which predates entrepôts like the more well-known Macau and Melaka, and is graced with some lovely old buildings.

A covered bridge, built by the town’s Japanese community in 1593, still stands and numerous temples and pagodas dot the shoreline and quay areas.

Local residents maneuver their craft along the river, probably in much the same way their ancestors did four centuries ago.

Hanoi – with its French colonial Opera House and plenty of open spaces – must rank as one of the most delightful of Asian capitals. The streets of its old quarter, north of Hoan Kiem Lake, are a cornucopia of cafés and shops selling everything from pirate CDs and silks to tombstones – a one-of-a-kind souvenir if ever there was one.

In bygone days, French colonials ventured off into the hills surrounding Sapa to escape the heat – reveling in the refreshing climate and the colorfully dressed hilltribe people, whose weekly markets remain an important event in the local social calendar even to this day.

While Vietnam is modernizing rapidly, many of its traditions and much of its landscape remain charming and untainted. It is still most definitely worth a visit.
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Before coming to work at the Impiana Phuket Cabana resort in Patong, Filipino Ronnie Macuja lived in New Zealand for 12 years.

“We were very happy there,” says Ronnie. “Although we missed our families in the Philippines, my wife and I had planned to stay in New Zealand for the rest of our lives.”

But the owner of the Impiana Phuket Cabana, on a visit to Auckland, was so impressed by Ronnie’s culinary skills that she managed to persuade him to come to Phuket.

Five years later, Ronnie is still here. These recipes reflect his passion for inventive fusion food, a passion that has won him several national prizes.

### Oysters deep-fried in Singha beer batter with Sabayon sauce
To serve 4 people

**Ingredients:**
- 24 fresh oysters
- Grated zest of 1 lime
- Rock salt and pepper

**To make the beer batter:**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 60 ml olive oil
- 1 small bottle Singha beer

To prepare the Sabayon sauce:
- 6 egg yolks
- 100 ml cream
- 150 ml fish stock
- 100 ml dry white wine
- 5 ml champagne
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 500 ml olive oil
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 cups cornstarch
- 2 cups all-purpose flour

**Method:**

To prepare the Sabayon sauce, sauë the shallots in olive oil until glazed. Add the white wine, vinegar, fish stock and lemon juice. Bring to boil and reduce to half of the original amount.

Remove from heat and allow to cool. Measure 100 ml of this reduction and whisk it with the egg yolks in a stainless-steel bowl over a low heat until it is smooth and creamy.

Remove the oysters from their shells and wash well. Season with salt. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve.

Remove the oysters from their shells, with a small side dish of Sabayon sauce. Garnish with garlic toasted baguette slices and fresh sprigs of dill.

### Open Rock Lobster Lasagna
For 4 people

**Ingredients:**
- 400 gm rock lobster meat
- 160 gm mashed potato, seasoned with nutmeg, salt, butter and chopped chives
- 4 lasagna sheets, blanched and cut into halves
- 8 steamed baby carrots
- 8 steamed ears of baby sweetcorn
- 8 steamed wingbeans
- 12 steamed asparagus stalks
- Butter, for frying

**For the fish cream sauce:**
- 100 ml dry white wine
- 150 ml fish stock
- 100 ml cream
- 6 minced cloves of garlic

**For the Court bouillon:**
- 160 gm mashed potato, seasoned with rock salt, pepper and lime zest
- Heat enough oil in a pan to deep-fry the oysters. Dip them first in flour, then in the batter. Deep-fry until they are golden brown.

Serve the prepared oysters in their shells, with a small side dish of Savoyon sauce. Garnish with garlic toasted baguette slices and fresh sprigs of dill.

To prepare the fish cream sauce, put the wine into a pan and add the fish stock. Bring to the boil and reduce. Add the cream and garlic, stir well and add the pieces of rock lobster. Simmer for a minute or two.

Briefly sauté the steamed vegetables in butter and arrange in the middle of each plate. Put a helping of mashed potato on top and cover with one lasagna sheet.

On top of this, place some rock lobster and cover again with a lasagna sheet. Put some mashed potato on top to stabilize the arrangement.

Decorate with spring onions and fresh basil leaves before serving.

Sala Bua restaurant at the Impiana Phuket Cabana, 41 Thaweewong Rd, Patong, is open 6:30 pm to 11:30 pm every day. Tel: 076-340138.

If you have a recipe you would like to share with our readers, please email: chef@phuketgazette.net
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Our very special price of 2500 Thb nett per person, includes the pre-dinner cocktail, the menu
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The evening starts with exquisite Canapés at the Andaman Lounge at 1930hrs.
For more information or reservation, Please contact K. Nampetch Tipaxorn at
Tel: (076) 386 433-41 ext. 2052
Email: Nampetch. Tipaxorn@hilton.com

It happens at the Hilton...
The first in a development of five luxury homes in Kata has just been completed and placed on the market.

Although all five houses will lie in a secure gated compound, each will have its own separate entrance via an electrically-operated gate and will be completely self-contained.

Each property is being built to a different design. This first house, which has 300-square-meter internal area, has five bedrooms, five bathrooms, a swimming pool, a garden and parking for three cars.

The walls are double-thickness, the floors are Italian granite – except the living room which has a hardwood floor – and the windows are of laminated security glass.

On the ground floor, there are three double bedrooms and one single, each with its own marble bathroom. The two master bedrooms open onto the swimming pool and the 100-sqm patio.

The house has been designed so that these four bedrooms can be an integral part of a family home, or can be rented out as separate rooms, for which there is great demand in Kata during the high season.

On the upper floor, there is an open-plan living area with a luxury kitchen, dining and sitting room areas and a 9-by-5-meter covered balcony that looks out onto Kata Beach. It has a high, vaulted, wood-paneled ceiling to make maximum use of sea breezes.

On this floor, there is an additional bedroom, which could also be used as an office/computer room; it is currently served by a 2Mbps ADSL line.

There is also a system fitted to protect against termites, and carbon water filtration delivering potable water to all taps. There is a PABX telephone exchange, five telephone sockets and three TV sockets.

In the garden there is a teak sala and a number of mature shade trees. The title is Chanote and the asking price is 18.5 million baht.

For more information contact Siam Real Estate, at Tel: 076-298905, website: www.siamrealestate.com, email: info@siamrealestate.com

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I wonder why foreigners choose to live in Asia, and then complain roundly about the experience. “Things don’t happen this way back home,” they whine.

They must have left wonderfully organized societies, paradises even, to come and live in places as difficult as the Philippines or Thailand. It’s incomprehensible.

I recently went back to Australia – my own wonderfully organized country of origin – touching down in cold, wet and miserable Sydney at 6:30 am. I went to hire a car. The chap behind the car rental desk told me that the charge for the one remaining car was $105.

This was almost double the price I had paid for an identical car just six months earlier in Brisbane, so I asked him why it was now so expensive.

“Supply and demand, mate. We’ve only got one car left,” was his response. Given no choice, I agreed to rent the one remaining car just six months earlier in Brisbane, so I asked him why it worked in Brisbane, but not Sydney.

“Me cows get a better deal than this,” remarked a gentlemen of ruddy complexion and generous proportion.

The reason for the slow processing of the taxi queue soon became apparent. Airport officials, generally women wearing men’s trousers – in fact, most officials and airline staff in Australia are women wearing men’s trousers – stood around asking which taxi would be most suited for the task.

They also tried to divine where they were going and who then said, “You can’t take the hapless passenger for a ride.”

We got to the hotel. There was no trolly for my copious luggage. The Queensland weather was so unpleasantly hot that outside without paying for it was impossible. It’s freezing up there.

I headed off to my “local” for a libation with a few mates. The receptionist called the hotel engineer.

“Sorry,” she said, putting down the phone. “There’s nothing we can do. The season’s changed. It’s now officially summer, so the engineer’s switched the whole hotel from heating to airconditioning.”

Brisbane was an improvement. The Queensland weather was warm, the scent of spring in the land of Oz. The receptionist switched the airconditioning. I did. Nothing changed.

I headed off to my “local” for a libation with a few mates and was pleased to see that the girl behind the bar was blonde, attractive and possessed a slim figure sheathed, not in men’s trousers but in a short skirt.

I decided – with her permission – to take it to the car to see if it worked anyway. She followed me outside in the company of a chap, possibly the manager, who in said: “You can’t take that outside without paying for it first.”

I will never know if that gadget would have worked, but I was happy to get on the airplane back to Thailand, where being misunderstood is a lot more fun. The whingers are still here, but then, whingers are to be found everywhere.

Let’s enjoy life while we can; you never know what real problems may lie ahead.
MOROCCAN MAGIC

KARON: One aspect of the Yamawadee project that will set it apart from other developments in Phuket may well be the panoramic sea view it will enjoy from an elevated position in the hills of Karon.

But what makes the project unique is the use of Moroccan design elements throughout the villa interiors.

Karn Prachumpan, Managing Director of project developer Phuket Golden Place Property Co Ltd, explained, “Our concept of luxury villas set in tranquil surroundings truly exemplifies the name Yamawadee – ‘Yama’ means the third level of heaven.

“From this tranquil location, one has easy access to both Karon Beach and central Karon,” K. Karn said.

He explained that the development will have 24-hour security, a spa, a restaurant and a laundry, as well as central management to maintain common areas, including gardens.

“The infrastructure being installed includes underground power lines and an eight-meter-wide concrete road.

“We also have natural well water, which can be used year-round,” he added.

Living space offered by the villas will range from 380 to 430 square meters, with each home featuring three bedrooms, three bathrooms, two living rooms, a fitness room, a kitchen and parking space for two cars. In addition, each will come with a private swimming pool overlooking Karon Bay.

The exteriors of the villas will feature elements of traditional Thai design, while the interiors, making use of wood and stone, will have touches of Moroccan flair throughout.

“Each villa will also have three phone lines, ready for owners who want to use the Internet,” K. Karn said. “And if owners want personalized decoration and fittings, we can include those during construction.

Prices have been set to match the quality of the project, with villas costing from 45 to 65 million baht apiece.

Construction of Yamawadee began in December last year and is expected to be complete by the end of next year.

For more information contact Phuket Golden Place Property Co Ltd at 121 Moo 4, Patak Rd, Phuket 83100. Tel: 076-333488. Fax: 076-333499. Mobile: 01-8927406. Email: info@ktggroup.com. Website: www.ktggroup.com
H ave you ever tried to buy a jar of English marmalade in Thailand? Or a jar of Vegemite (only Australians really understand that stuff)? How about a Range Rover, or a Lay-Z-boy reclining chair?

All of these products are imported and can cost you two or three times their prices in their countries of origin. Whacking huge duties on imported products certainly works, and when it comes to the stage of parting with your cash, it becomes abundantly clear which products didn‘t originate in the Land of Smiles.

So some foreign manufacturers have done the only sensible thing – they just make them here. No confusion – it’s simply a product originally from overseas that’s now made in Thailand. The clever thing is that it doesn’t take free-trade agreements, government incentives or international corporation joint ventures with multi-million-dollar factories to get them going. Once here, they just quietly get on with it.

Plants – in some ways – are no different. A huge number of the plants we have here aren’t native to Thailand. The clever thing is that it doesn’t take free-trade agreements, government incentives or international corporations with multi-million-dollar factories to get them going. Once here, they just quietly get on with it. The plants we have here aren’t no different. A huge number of the plants we have here aren’t.

It would seem that it was the Europeans who started it all. The first international botanist, by all accounts, was Christopher Columbus. Ironically, he went off into the Atlantic partly in search of plants to take back to Europe. The idea was to cultivate them in an effort to lower the prices of spices that had, until then, been imported from India at enormous cost.

What he first “discovered” on his celebrated jaunt to the New World were pineapples and chilies – neither of which was in any way unknown to the locals of South and Central America, who had been enjoying them for thousands of years.

But they were new to Europe, whose later explorers introduced the plants to Southeast Asia where they flourished.

The ti plant, or cordyline (maak-phuu-maak-mia in Thai), in its original green-leafed form, came from the Pacific islands of Polynesia, where the locals made their traditional skirts from the leaves. At some stage, somebody obviously thought it would be a good idea to start introducing the ti plant to other tropical parts of the world.

Many years on, the original long green leaves have become a multitude of shapes and colors, to the extent that it’s now barely recognizable as a single species.

In 1768, Frenchman Admiral Louis de Bougainville began his long journey to the Pacific Ocean and discovered the vine that now bears his name – bougainvillea, known here as jueng-fa. He took it home and it quickly spread to just about every warm corner of the globe. Through the following years, this distinctive Brazilian beauty has assumed its rightful place as one of the most popular tropical plants in the region.

Nobody seems to know how it spread so far so quickly.

The same mystery surrounds the king of the “smelly” trees, the frangipani, or Plumeria (lanthom khao). Perhaps a Portuguese or Spanish ship brought them to Mexico. The Thai name gives the game away – it’s now the unofficial Christmas plant in many parts of the world where holly and ivy aren’t options. Gardens in Thailand, of course, really don’t care where their inhabitants originated. No visas required. We’re just as likely to find heliconia from South America, plumbago from South Africa, or peacock flowers from Madagascar as we are to find something which is native to this region, such as the ixora.

To be honest, nobody really cares any more. Does it really matter where a plant originated? We should probably keep fairly quiet about this; who knows, if we ask too many questions, we may find that we’re liable to import duty on our gardens.

Let’s keep all this between you and me, shall we?

Want to know more about a plant in your garden?

Email Bloomin’ Bert at: bloominbert@hotmail.com
**Property Gazette**

**Properties For Sale**

**HOUSE IN NAI HARN**
Features very high-quality construction, with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, lounge, dining room, kitchen, terrace and separate laundry/laundryroom. Western kitchen with European appliances and granite benchtops. Built-in wardrobes and aircon in all bedrooms and lounge room. Solid traver- stone flooring throughout, 12-volt halogen lighting throughout and many more features too numerous to mention. All this just 2 minutes from beautiful Nai Harn Beach. Must be sold due to relocation overseas. Excellent value at 5.8 million baht negotiable. Tel: 076-289013, 01-8953592. Fax: 076-289013. Email: seasail@samart.co.th

**HIGH-END, OPEN SEA VIEW HOME**
Every room with a view. Teak, Thai-Balinese style home with a deep swimming pool, large decks and master bedrooms. Exclusive neighborhood just 3 minutes from Patong Beach. Price: 48 million baht. Must see! Pts contact for details. Tel: 07-2682424. Email: pocsimon@hotmail.com

**TOP OF KAMALA**
Direct access to the main road. Underground power & water supply, and excellent location with views overlooking the bay. Contact Phuket LandSearch for details. Tel: 076-290509. Email: sales@phuketland.com

**GOLF VIEW VILLA**
For sale. 4-bedroom, detached, 370-sqm villa near Loch Palm Golf Club and Dulwich College is available for sale. Land area is 912 sqm. Full European standards. Pts contact for details. Tel: 06-6848758. Email: proline.publishing@1nf.je

**LAYAN 6 PUBLICATIONS**
Spectacular seaview plot at Layan, near Laguna. NorScor 3 Gor title. For sale by owner. 3 million baht/rai. Pts contact for details. Tel: 01-7371688. Email: riding@kixinfo.co.th

**MANY LAND PLOTS**
2 rai opposite Mission Hills Golf Club, very close to the mountain and with golf views. 2 million baht per rai. Half-rai 150 meters from the sea. 5 minutes from Mission Hills: 1.5 million baht. 2 rai Rawai, very quiet area: 3 million baht per rai. Tel: 01-8920213, 01-8920213. Email: relaphuket@thailands.com

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**SPACIOUS CHALONG HOUSE**
Spacious 530-sqm home on 2,016sqm of land tucked away in a quiet soi near Chalong circle. 3 bedrooms, living room, dining room, family room, study/office, kitchen, storeroom, 3.5 baths, and 2-car carport. At the rear of the house is a large roofed-in terrace with an outside kitchen overlooking a 6x2-metre swimming pool and a separate guest room with bath. Complete with appliances, teak and rosewood furniture and many extras. Nothing compares to the quality of this 1.5-year-old home. Price: 23 million baht. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-281381, 01-2737184. Email: bodell@kixinfo.co.th

**NEW HOUSES FOR SALE**

- **4+2-BEDROOM HOUSE IN KAMALA**
Top-quality 4+2 bedroom house in Kamala, near Phuket Fanita Sea and only 10 min walk to the beach. 4 master bedrooms on 1st floor with ensuite bathrooms. 2 bedrooms on g/f – one can also be used as an office (2 phone lines) – the other as a maid’s room with attached bathroom. Large living/dining room with open European kitchen, as well as a Thai kitchen. Fully furnished – all rooms with aircon and ceiling fan. Priced at 195 million baht. Pts call for info. Tel: 01-5691143.

- **LAND IN KAMALA**
1,200 meters along the road, ready to build with a 2.80 meter high wall around the property already. Priced at 2.95 million baht. Pts call for more info. Tel: 07-8997062. Email: ebensburg@yahoo.com

- **RAWAI HOME**
3-bedroom, 2-bathroom (150sqm) modern Thai-style home on 1 rai (1,600sqm) of land. Stays cool without air-con. Only 6.9 million baht. Tel: 07-8997062. Email: ebensburg@yahoo.com

- **RAWAI CONDO**
For sale, 250,000 baht total price, payable in instalments. 150,000 baht initial payment, the remaining 100,000 baht transferred at the Land Office after 1 year. Freehold title. Pts contact for more details. Tel: 09-4760227. Email: chotip_5@hotmail.com

- **SPACIOUS CHALONG HOUSE**
Excellent condition with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (master en-suite), lounge, European kitchen, 4 aircons, parking for 2 cars and a tropical, land-scape garden. Also includes an additional studio with en-suite bathroom and aircon which can be used as a guest room or office. Total land measures 360sqm. Priced at 2.8 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 07-895-8629. Email: csloxinfo.com

**NEW VILLA FOR SALE**

- **KATA BEACH**
Beautiful 4-bedroom villa with sea views at 5.8 million baht. Please contact for details. Tel: 076-289013.

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**GREAT INVESTMENT**
8 new bungalows and a large house all in a beautiful garden setting. Located on 1 acre in a quiet area. 25 million baht. Pts call for more details. Tel: 01-8924311.

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**BEAUTIFUL 4-BEDROOM VILLA WITH POOL, 360sqm of living space. Exceptional building quality and ready to move in. Only 13.5 million baht. Pts call for details. Tel: 01-8916143.**

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**Protect your environment by reducing your carbon footprint: Use a reusable water bottle or refillable cups. Reduce water usage by turning off the faucet while brushing your teeth.**
PATONG BEACH
condo for sale with freehold title. Property has a fantastic view, measures 52 sqm and is priced at 2.2 million baht, payable in installments. 1.2 million baht initial payment, the remaining 1 million baht transferred at the Land Office. Financing available. Please contact for more info. Tel: 09-4729793. Email: chotip@hotmail.com

KAMALA HOUSE
for sale. Located in a sought-after area in Kamala, the house measures 90 sq wah and has 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, a large kitchen and living room, big garden, air conditioning, and satellite TV. Full title. Priced at 3.7 million baht. Please contact for more information. Tel: 01-4789888, 07-8991717.

ON THE MAIN ROAD
1 rai 1 gan with an old house directly on the main road in Cherng Talay. Chanote title, good for restaurant, bungalow resort, shop houses, office, etc. 4.9 million baht. Tel: 06-2746611.

ABSOLUTELY BEACH FRONT
2.2 rai of absolutely beachfront land at Khok Kloy, Phang Nga - with Chanote title - for sale. 18 million baht. Pls call for details. No agents please. Tel: 01-4789888, 07-8991717.

HOTEL IN PATONG
Situated in a central yet quiet location near the entertainment zone and the beach. 8 newly-refurbished rooms with aircon, TV, mini-bar etc; includes bar and 24-seat fully-licensed restaurant, bar etc; includes bar and 24-seat fully-licensed restaurant, pool and garden. Hoping to recover my large investment so need to move quickly. Tel: 06-9434824. Email: chatkak@hotmail.com

NEW HOUSE FOR SALE – LAGUNA
New house in a quiet area near Laguna Resort golf course. Just minutes to Bang Tao, Layan Beach. Good design, high-quality construction and materials, 2 bedrooms (1 optional), 3 bathrooms, kitchen, living, dining, counter bar, car park and landscaping. Land area: 312 sqm. For more info or site visit, Tel: 06-9434824. Email: chatkak@hotmail.com

LAND 4 SALE
Near Tonsai Waterfall, 15 min from the airport and 10 min to the beach. Quiet area with a business on the land, 1400 sqm with Chanote title – can build a house. Priced at 20 million for all 6. Call for details. Tel: 07-8893838. Email: gisbert1@gmx.net

BEACHFRONT CONDO
condo on the beach. 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, kitchen and living room, 120 sq wah. Long-term rent. 25,000 baht/month. Please contact for more info. Tel: 06-3445212. Email: smith@taurus-travel.com

HOUSE FOR RENT
400 meters from Patong Beach Hotel. Service, aircon, hot water and cable TV. Pls contact for more info. Cheap price. Tel:09-6455134. Email: js_0704@hotmail.com

BUSINESS SPACE
Large business/entertainment space for rent near Le Meridien Resort near Patong. Great location. Pls call for more details. Tel: 01-5376663.

BEACHFRONT CONDO
Fully-furnished condo for rent at Kalim Bay in Patong. High standard, 2 bedrooms, fitted kitchen, pool and many other facilities. Pls call for details. Tel: 01-8920038.

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Property Gazette

Superb Prime View House
Thai-Balinese teak-roofed house for rent. 1 master bedroom and 1 guest room with attached bathroom, plus 6 bedrooms in a great location. Inexpensive with 6 bedrooms, all en-suite, living room, kitchen, living room, garage, and open sea view + 2 additional bedrooms. Also has a small guest house with master bedroom and a dynamic view. High-season and long-term rental now available. 200,000 baht per month. Longer terms negotiable. Please contact for more info. Tel: 076-344044. Email: pococonnor@hotmail.com

Nice Thai House
For rent. Thai house in Thalang with 3 bedrooms and big lawn plot attached. Only 4,000 baht per month. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 06-8521355. Email: mrmsouza@hotmail.com

Nai Harn, Rawai
2-bedroom beach-residence villa townhouses with living room, kitchen, and parking. 500m from beach. Price 9,000 baht per month. Phone or email for more details. Tel: 07-2650652. Email: gisbert1@gmx.net

House for Rent
2 fully-furnished houses in Kamala – 1 bed & 2-bed – with aircon, hot water and phone. Very private area. Pls call for more info. Tel: 01-4761640.

Rainai Luxury
House with pool, for rent from December 2004 to June 2005, or for short term. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-6067410.

Long-term Lease
New, fully furnished house in Palai Green with 2 aircon bedrooms, hot shower, kitchen, living room, garden and beautiful garden. Located in a quiet area near Chalong Bay. Please call for more info. Tel: 01-8924311.

Patong Shophouse
For sale or rent. Brand new, with 6 bedrooms, all-suites, in a great location. Inexpensive opportunity to start new business. Pls call for info. Tel: 07-0170135.

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Located in Patong, 1 bedroom, living room, kitchen, 2 aircons, tennis, patio, shared pool. Weekly at 5,600 baht or monthly at 19,500 baht. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 072-760529.

Kata Gueshouse
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Qualifications:

- Female, over 25 years old
- Bachelor’s degree in accounting
- At least 3 years’ experience in overall accounting and finance.

u Administrator (Bangkok & Phuket)

Qualifications:

- Thai nationality, over 22 years old
- Vocational degree or higher in related fields
- Basic knowledge of computers and office automation
- Good interpersonal skills, detail-oriented, service-minded and well-organized.

u Technician (Bangkok & Phuket)

Qualifications:

- Thai nationality, male, over 22 years old
- Vocational degree or higher in mechanical/electrical engineering
- At least 3 years’ experience with high-rise buildings or villas.

u Messenger (Phuket)

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- Thai nationality, male, over 22 years old
- Vocational degree or higher in related fields
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- Positions 1-6 require a good command of spoken and written English and computer literacy.
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Interested candidates are invited to write in with a full resume, stating present and expected salaries, and include a recent photo. Please send mail to:

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TOUR GUIDE

If you are looking for new staff, English speaking, hard working, honest, please feel free to contact me anytime. Email: chanakoon@yahoo.com

PROCUREMENT manager. French national, 29 years old, currently living in Bangkok and looking forward to settling permanently in Phuket. I am a French English bilingual, and I also speak Italian, Spanish and some Thai. I have 6 years’ experience in procurement at management level. I am looking for any position as long as it is in Phuket, preferably Kata-Karon area, with a competitive salary and will supply a work permit. Tel: 07-2705706.

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EXPERIENCED instructor, Dive Asia is looking for a Sales Manager for our Patong office. The successful applicant should be a diving instructor, fluent in German and English, and have experience in dives. Dive Asia offers a competitive salary and will supply a work permit. Tel: 06-3306989. Fax: 078-284-033. Email: juergens@divesasia.com. For further details, please see our websites: www.divesasia.com

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- Good command of spoken English would be an advantage

Qualified candidates are invited to send a CV to Rongtip Hongkalert, Managing Director, by email, fax or post to:

The Phuket Gazette Co Ltd
367/2 Yaowarat Rd, T. Taladai, A. Muang, Phuket 83000
Fax 076-279977-80. Email rongtip@phuketgazette.net

November 13 - 19, 2004 PHUKET GAZETTE 41

Island Job Mart

CROWNE PLAZA KARON BEACH PHUKET

CROWNE PLAZA KARON BEACH PHUKET, situated on Karon Beach, is seeking active and experienced hospitality professionals to join our team.

ROOMS

Based in Bangkok Sales Office:
- Director of Sales
- Sales Managers
- Wholesale Japanese Market
- Wholesale Local Market
- Corporate & MICE Local Market
- Sales Secretary / Sales Coordinator

Based in Phuket:
- Sales Managers
- Wholesale International Markets
- Corporate & MICE International Markets
- Sales Exeuctive

COMMUNICATIONS & PR

- Director of Communications
- Graphic Designer

GROUPSERVICES

- Crowne Meetings Director (Convention & Meetings Director)
- Crowne Meetings Assistant (Convention & Meetings Assistant)

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

- Director of Revenue
- Assistant Director of Finance
- Executive Secretaries (2 Positions)
- Staff Accountant (Supervisor Level) + 2 Positions
- Please Contact Hotel For Qualifications

Personal Qualities:
- Professional and friendly in attitude
- Excellent administrative, data assimilation and organizational ability
- Exceptional communication, relationship building with competent presentation skills
- Positive, high-energy extrovert with strong desire to satisfy both our external and internal customers
- Ability to influence and negotiate at all levels
- Self-starter, with the ability to work independently with minimal supervision

Qualifications and Experience:
- A university degree or higher in a related discipline
- Working experience in the role applied for within the hospitality industry.
- Fluent English is essential for all positions
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Applications

Please forward your detailed resume together with a recent photograph to:

Crown Plaza Karon Beach Phuket (Attn: General Manager)
509 Patong Rd, Karon Beach, Phuket, Thailand 83100
Tel: 076-390442 Fax: 076-390122
E-mail: info@crowneplazaphuket.com

The Norwegian Hotelier

Norwegian hotelier, 36 years old, currently residing in Cyprus. I am a professional hotelier and have experience managing a 5-star ultra-deluxe Caribbean boutique hotel, as well as sales and marketing management at the only 5-star apartment-hotel (1,100 suites) in Spain. I have also personally hosted British royalty, and US and European superstars. As I would like to relocate to Thailand, I am looking at possibilities of obtaining a position as Resident Manager or General Manager for a small 4- or 5-star boutique hotel/resort. As I am well off financially, my services are offered at a rate well below what one normally would have to pay for a European with my experience and education. No expat package required apart from a work permit. I could also be interested in partnering in the future. I am professional, honest and hardworking, and I place full guest satisfaction as the most important aspect of running a resort. I am well-versed in managing a multi-cultural staff, and have certificates both for Training and “Train The Trainer” courses. I speak and write the Scandinavian languages and English fluently, have moderate knowledge of verbal and written German and Spanish. I can provide some Spanish. I can provide top international professional references on demand. I am available on two weeks notice, and if there is a genuine interest on your behalf, I am willing to travel for an interview. I have a clean medical record and no criminal record. Please contact me for further information. Yours faithfully, Frode Sund. Email: fsund@runbox.com

The Phuket Gazette
Looking to Sell Your Boat? List with Lee Marine for Fast Results

Business Opportunities

Factory 4 Sale

Drinking-water factory - 450 sqm - on Lanta Island, Krabi, 8 km from the airport. For sale at 1.2 million baht. Pls contact for details. Tel: 01-8931739.

Sport Shirt

Profit from official grand prix motorcycle and sporting events. Wholesale discount to sell in UK. Please call for information. Tel: 076-388051, 01-8081804.

Maze Biz

With “coffee corner” in Patong for sale. Free advertising, good location and regular customers. Offered at 500,000 baht. Pls contact for more information. Tel: 076-894338.

Bar in Kata Center

Good location, 600,000 baht, 6,000 baht/month. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 076-814415. Email: christophukt@hotmail.com

Partnership Offer!

I am a German businessman offering a 50% partnership in a newly established Ltd Co. in Phuket (Holiday Ownership). I have 15 years’ experience in Europe and Thailand and good connections here in Thailand. Work permit is no problem! Business begins immediately, all prepared, no problem! Business begins immediately, all prepared, no problem! Business begins immediately. Tel: 076-897377, 01-8954480. Fax: 076-381225. Email: guardiana@cox.net.co

Small Investment

Very solid income all year round from easily managed building. Mix of tenants. 5-yr lease to start. All P & E and capital of 1.5 million baht. Tel: 02-7269918. Email: bountyasia@yahoo.com

Investment OPPOTY

Long-established hotel and bungalow complex for sale with Chanote title. Available for immediate owner’s occupation. New owners are relocating. 90% occupancy during high season. Priced at 69 million baht, negotiable. Fantastic opportunity for either owner/occupier or investor. Please email for more information. Email: investortnvestment@hotmail.com

ROYAL PARADISE BAR

Must sell. Please contact for details. Tel: 06-9486850. Email: patongbar@yahoo.com

RESTAURANT 4 SALE

Baitong Restaurant in Karon, Phuket, Thailand. Tel: 076-323334, 09-7244307.

Seeking MLM leaders. US$4 - billion health - care company seeks quality leaders for network launch in Thailand. Email for info. Tel: by Phuket Air, 08-3417891. Fax 02-7289918. Email: makellegood@aol.com

Kata Massage

Shop. Great business. Easy to run. Low overheads. Only 160,000 baht. Pls contact for more info. Tel: 06-6862388. Email: andrewcambellthailand@hotmail.com

Bungalow Resort

In Chalong with 9-year lease for sale at 1.5 million baht. Please call for more information. Tel: 09-0385184.
C L A S S I F I E D S

Wheels & Motors

LEAVING PHUKET

TOYOTA COROLLA


VOLVO V70

NEW MODEL


ISUZU D-MAX

CAB 4

Highlander-3000, turbo, 4-door, automatic with 14,000 km, 11 months old. Sells for 790,500 baht new, will sell for 590,000 baht. Pls call for more info. Tel: 07-2845344.

MERCEDES-BENZ 300CE

Benz 300ce Brabus version. Mint condition. Fully maintained, perfect engine, brand-new tires and suspension. All work has been done - needs nothing. Comes with manual and many other items too numerous to list. Price: 1.25 million baht new. Contact: Tel: 03-9821560. Email: info@phuketk.ksc.co.th

NICE MIRA

White, manual gearbox, just serviced. Reliable car, economical on fuel and easy to drive and park - a must for Phuket. Only selling because I have bought bigger car due to addition to family.

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

All advertising must be paid for in advance.

Deadline for Wheels & Motors page: Saturday 12 noon.