

LOCAL MAYOR CAUGHT IN CORRUPTION PROBE > PAGE 2



Ukrainians and Russians in Phuket stood united in their protest for peace on Monday (Feb 28). Photo: Tourist Police

UKRAINIANS, RUSSIANS IN PHUKET CALL OUT FOR PEACE, END OF WAR IN UKRAINE

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Ukrainians and Russians in Phuket gathered in front of the Russian Consulate for Phuket on Monday (Feb 28) to protest the invasion of Russian forces into Ukraine and to call for the end of war.

The group numbered about 80 Ukrainians and Russians in total, holding placards and shouting chants including “No War”, among others.

Irina Demidova led a group of about 20 protesters to hold their demonstration in front of the Russian Consulate “Temporary Office”, located at Royal Phuket Marina, at 9:30am.

By 10am they moved to join the larger group at the entrance to the marina, on Thepkasattri Rd in Koh

Kaew, calling for peace in Ukraine.

The protesters said they had only two demands: to end the war in Ukraine; and to stop violence and the killing of innocents.

Between chanting anti-war and pro-peace slogans, the group sang the Ukrainian national anthem.

Present to ensure the demonstration proceeded peacefully were Phuket City Chief Lt Col Sarawut Chuprasit and Lt Col Ekachai Siri of the Phuket Tourist Police.

Also present were officers from the Phuket branch of the Internal Security Operations Command (Isoc), which serves as the political arm of the Thai military, Phuket Provincial Police Chief Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong and Phuket Vice Governor Anuphap Rodkwan Yodrabam.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew had assigned the officers to oversee the demonstration and ensure that the protesters were careful to not break the law.

The protesters peacefully disbanded at 10:30am.

Of note, no Thais came out to protest and support the rally.

Apparently by coincidence, also on Monday Russian Ambassador to Thailand Evgeny Tomikhin was in Phuket on a visit previously unannounced before his arrival to “pay a courtesy call to discuss official matters”.

According to the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket), Mr Tomikhin was in Phuket “to discuss government matters about the situation of Russian tourists in

Phuket and increasing cooperation between Phuket Province and the Russian Federation and bilateral cooperation.”

Also present for the talks was Russian Consul-General to Phuket Vladimir V. Sosnov.

Despite the agenda described, the PR Phuket report noted only two issues discussed as significant enough to report: the setting up of a Muay Thai camp in Phuket and Phuket becoming a sister city with the Kamchatka Krai Administrative Region.

Mr Tomikhin was welcomed to the new Phuket Provincial Hall by Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong, who said Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew was unavailable due to attending to official matters, said the report.

NEWS PAGE 3

**Patong Police
under fire for
Bangla arrest**



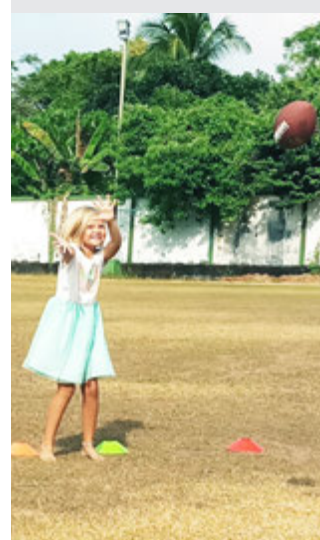
LIFE PAGE 8

**The sky's the
limit with
John Magee**



SPORT PAGE 16

**Flag Football
makes Phuket
touchdown**



CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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News



**Stray Dog
Shelter in need
of feed > p5**

Russian Ambassador in Phuket

Continued from page 1

...Vice Governor Pichet noted that there were currently about 8,000 Russian nationals on the island, mostly tourists.

"This year marks the 125th anniversary of Thai-Russia relations, which will come to an end in July 2022," V/Gov Pichet said, noted the report.

Come July, Phuket is hoped to have formed official relations with the Kamchatka Krai Administrative Region as a sister city, he added.

"Thailand is in the process of reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between Thailand and Kamchatka," V/Gov Pichet said.

"It is a matter for the Treaty Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior, which Phuket is unable to do on its own," he added.

According to the PR Phuket report, "The second issue that the Russian Federation ambassador wants to inform the province is the request to build a Thai boxing camp in Phuket, which the province says can be operated but must go through the process of obtaining permission



Russian Ambassador to Thailand Evgeny Tomikhin was in Phuket on Monday on what was called a "courtesy call". Photo: PR Phuket

from Phuket [officials] properly."

The report did not clarify which boxing camp was to be established or where it is hoped to be set up.

It also did not clarify who was funding it, or why the Russian Ambassador was needed to be involved in the process of setting up the business.

In concluding its report of the meeting, PR Phuket, in Thailand language noted, "Another thing [that Russian Ambassador to Thailand Evgeny Tomikhin was in Phuket for] is to confirm the standpoint of the

conflict between Russia and Ukraine, that Russia has tried to negotiate but because the agreement did not work, causing problems this time."

Mr Tomikhin has already given this explanation in a public statement issued last Saturday, repeating the same mantra from the Russian government. The statement was posted by the *Bangkok Post* under the headline "West's unkept promises the problem, not Russia".

Present at the meeting with Ambassador Tomikhin was Bhumikitti

Ruktaengam, President of the Phuket Tourist Association.

Russians were the top tourism source market demographic to come to Phuket since the Sandbox and Test & Go entry schemes were launched, totalling some 50,000 arrivals, Mr Bhumikitti said.

"We are still seeing quite a large number of Russian tourists booked to travel [to Phuket], including planes arriving from many cities in Russia. There has been a lot of reaction in terms of tourism, but no impact yet, so I urge people not to worry about it," he said.

PHUKET HELPS

At the time of going to press there had been no public announcements from any department of the Royal Thai Government confirming any support for Ukrainians stuck in Thailand because of the Russian invasion launched on Feb 24.

With Phuket Immigration unable to answer any requests for information, a call centre officer on the Immigration Bureau hotline 1178 confirmed on Monday that there had been no statement from the Immigration Bureau as to any

support for Ukrainian nationals in Thailand.

Ukrainians concerned about their status of staying in the country were advised to contact the Ukrainian Embassy in Bangkok or their local Immigration office. "Alternatively, they can call us here at the Immigration hotline for assistance," the officer said.

Meanwhile, privately operated hotels have already stepped up to provide free accommodation for those unable to return home.

The support was announced in a post, written in Ukrainian and Thai, on the Phuket 9 Real Estate Facebook page last Saturday (Feb 26).

"Dear Ukrainians who are in trouble and do not have the opportunity to return home now, we are ready to provide you with accommodation in our hotels. Please contact our booking department for details! Hold on, we're with you!" said the notice.

Ukrainians in need were advised to contact: +66 65 893 9978 by SMS, phone call or via What's App.

The post was shared by the Phuket Info Center, operated by the Phuket office of the Ministry of Interior, on Monday.

Arrest warrant sought in local corruption probe

SUKSAN PRASARA-AE, Director of the Phuket office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC), has confirmed that an investigation had found a former Mayor of Thepkasattri Municipality guilty of corruption.

Mr Suksan revealed the news by including it halfway through a long report on the progress of the works and investigations conducted by the NACC Region 8 office.

Mr Suksan delivered his report at a meeting at Phuket Provincial Hall on Feb 22 presided over by Phuket Governor

Narong Woonciew.

"The NACC in Phuket has conducted various missions this [past] year," Mr Suksan said in beginning his long briefing to the Governor

Mr Suksan explained that the NACC Region 8 office had announced the "disclosure of the results of the inspection of assets and liabilities of state officials under the Organic Act on Anti-Corruption. 2018, in Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Surat Thani, Chumphon, Ranong, Krabi, Phang Nga and Phuket".

"A total of 950 cases, comprising 205 cases of persons

taking official office and 745 cases of persons vacating office, were investigated," he said.

"The NACC has declared to the general public [the results of the investigations] under Section 111 of the Act by disclosing the results of the inspection of assets and liabilities via the NACC website www.nacc.go.th," he added.

Of note, the reports publicly posted by the NACC do not disclose the assets and wealth of those investigated. The reports only confirm that the people were investigated.

Mr Suksan invited people who are interested in viewing the announcement revealing the results of the inspection of assets and liabilities to "follow the aforementioned steps on the website above".

"Disclosure of the results of the audit assets and liabilities does not deprive the NACC of the power to conduct further investigations at a later date in the event that there is a reason to suspect the correctness or existence [of corruption]," Mr Suksan said.

"The next task of anti-corruption concerns is the inquiry that was accepted before the Organic Act on Anti-Corruption 2018 came into force", he said.

"The NACC has considered the preliminary inquiry case, the case against the former Thepkasattri Mayor and government officials in Thalang who were accused of corruption in the procurement of the construction project of the Thepkasattri Municipality Fresh Market and of being unusually wealthy, Mr Suksan said.

"The NACC has ruled that [a/the] former mayor of Thepkasattri is a criminal because the official had the duty to buy, make, manage



NACC Phuket Chief Suksan Prasara-ae at the meeting on Feb 22. Photo: PR Phuket

or maintain any property, and fraudulently exercised power in the position," he said.

Throughout his long delivery of this report, Mr Suksan did not name which former Mayor had been found corrupt.

With the complaint filed five years ago, and no explanation from Mr Suksan as to why the investigation took so long, Piyawat Jirajamorn was Mayor of Thepkasattri at the time. Mr Piyawat was succeeded by Thanasan Jiramorn.

The current Mayor of Thepkasattri is Siricharat Trairat, sister of the former mayor Prasong Trairat.

Ms Siricharat was elected to office in December, after her brother Mr Prasong resigned just months after he was elected mayor on Mar 28 last year.

Whoever the NACC now deems to be corrupt has been found guilty of "causing damage by performing or refrain-

ing from performing duties in order to cause damage to any person or acting or refraining from performing duties dishonestly according to Section 151 of the Criminal Code," Mr Suksan said.

Officials also investigated reports that the individual was "unusually wealthy," Mr Suksan added.

"For the unusually wealthy case, it was resolved that the allegation had no basis for the allegation, and it was dismissed," he said.

"In this case, the NACC Region 8 office is working to be issued an arrest warrant by the Criminal Court for Corruption and Misconduct Cases Region 8," Mr Suksan said.

"The NACC's criminal ruling is not yet final. The accused remains innocent until the final judgment of the court," he added.

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Police flamed for flower vendor arrest

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Patong Police have been flamed for a plainclothes officer arresting a flower vendor on Bangla Rd and forcibly restraining her on the street for peddling in a public area without a permit.

The incident happened in front of the now-closed Red Infinity Go Go bar, beside the Illuzion nightclub, at 2am Feb 24.

A video of the arrest taken by relatives of the woman was posted online, drawing harsh criticism by viewers.

Wanchat Paetmod, 39, husband of the woman arrested, told reporters on Feb 25 that his wife, Chanpen Lueadsurin, who is seen in the video challenging the officer, had been charged for selling products in a public area without permission.

She was also charged with defamation of officials while performing their duties.

Ms Chanpen was fined B5,000 by the Phuket Kwaeng Court, Mr Wanchat said.

Mr Wanchat explained that three men, not wearing police uniforms, approached his wife and his two daughters.

The lead man, wearing



Mr Wanchat confirmed Ms Chanpen was fined B5,000 for selling flowers without a permit. Image: Eakkapop Thongtub



Ms Chanpen is forcibly restrained while being arrested for selling flowers on Bangla Rd. Screenshot: Supplied

a Honda Repsol motorbike racing shirt and red baseball cap, asked to see their government ID cards.

"The man asked my wife, 'Who is allowed to sell here? Do you know who I am?'" Mr Wanchat said.

His wife complied and presented her ID card.

"Then he asked my girlfriend, 'Do you know who I am? Do you know how big I am? How do you sell here? You don't know me,'" Mr Wanchat continued.

"My wife replied, 'I don't know, and what are you?'"

"He told her, 'Don't raise your voice at me, or I'll take all of you to court,'" Mr Wanchat said.

"Her family [his wife's family] are just ordinary people trying to make a living. I didn't know what to do with the officer. I just saw the clip and was shocked why he did that."

"It felt too intense, because it is the act of government officials. And when the

incident happened, my two daughters stood and cried because they couldn't help their mother," he said.

His daughters urged him not to go to Patong Police Station unless he was accompanied by a uniformed officer.

"Because anyone can impersonate an officer out of uniform," Mr Wanchat said.

Mr Wanchat did go to Patong Police Station, and only then was it confirmed that the officer who made the

arrest was an officer with the Patong Police.

Patong Police Chief Col Sujin Nilabadee later confirmed he was aware of the incident, and the complaints.

"Police had received complaints that there were a group of vendors selling flowers who were annoying tourists. The plainclothes police officers went to the area to perform their duties and found a group of such people and therefore detained to prosecute the aforementioned," he said.

Col Sujin made no mention, and gave no defence of his officers failing to properly identify themselves as police officers before placing a citizen under arrest.

He also gave no explanation for the Patong Police now enforcing a zero tolerance policy on street peddlers, a decades-long fact of life in Patong, or at least only on selected people.

Col Sujin also failed to name the officer who made the arrests.

CCSA eases entry measures

THE CENTRE FOR COVID-19 SITUATION Administration (CCSA) has approved for the second mandatory RT-PCR tests required of tourists under the revised Test & Go Sandbox entry scheme to be ATK (antigen test kit) tests instead.

CCSA spokesperson Taweasilp Visanuyothin announced the news on Feb 23, confirmed the Phuket Info Center, operated by the Phuket office of the Ministry of Interior.

Tourists who enter Thailand under the Test & Go Scheme will be required to stay at their SHA+ pre-booked accommodation for only their first night before being allowed to travel freely throughout the country, he said.

The CCSA also approved to reduce the required COVID insurance coverage for tourists from US\$50,000 to not less than US\$20,000, Mr Taweasilp said.

Both measures came into effect on Mar 1.

The Phuket Info Center later updated its announcement to explain the changes to the entry requirements for tourists as follows:

Updated measures to prevent COVID-19 For travelling to the Kingdom of Thailand Starting from March 1, 2022

Travellers can travel from any country by direct flight or connecting dedicated flights for both Sandbox and Test & Go travellers

(1) Registration system: before entering the Kingdom of Thailand, must be registered through the Thaland Pass system and when entering the Kingdom of Thailand must use the "Mor Chana" mobile phone application

(2) Quarantine: Not quarantined, but must stay to wait for the results of the COVID-19 test within SHA Extra Plus / AQ for 1 day (the day of arrival)

(3) Evidence of vaccination: Must have



A tourist receives help at Phuket airport. Image: TAC Phuket

received complete vaccination according to the criteria prescribed by the Ministry of Health at least 14 days before travelling.

(4) Proof of accommodation booking: proof of payment for 1 night's accommodation SHA++ (to wait for the RT-PCR test result for COVID-19).

(5) Health insurance (for foreigners): insurance with coverage of not less than US\$20,000

(6) COVID-19 test results before travel: COVID-19 test results by RT-PCR method (issued within 72 hours before departure).

(7) COVID-19 test upon arrival in Thailand (RT-PCR and ATK included in the accommodation fee): Must be tested for COVID-19 twice.

- 1st time: RT-PCR upon arrival
- 2nd time: Self-ATK on Day 5 (of stay in Thailand)

Registration (under the new requirements) starts from 1 March 2022 and travel (under the new requirements) starts from 7 March 2022 onwards.

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Wind 22 m/s

MON MAR 7



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Low: +26°

Wind 18 m/s

TUE MAR 8



High: +31°

Low: +26°

Wind 11 m/s

WED MAR 9



High: +32°

Low: +25°

Wind 7 m/s

THU MAR 10



High: +32°

Low: +25°

Wind 7 m/s

Woman rescued after bridge jump

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A 37-year-old woman from Wichit was rescued from the Chong Pak Phra canal separating Phuket from the mainland after she jumped from the Thao Thepkrasattri Bridge leading onto the island in an apparent suicide bid on Feb 23.

Local community leaders Panupan Jindapol, village headman (Phu Yai Baan) of Moo 5, Mai Khao, and Wiwat Jindapol, a Vice-President of the Phuket Provincial Administration Organisation (PPAO, or OrBorJor) Council and police were alerted to the incident at 8:30pm.

Officers from the Tha Chatchai Police and rescue workers from the Mai Khao Tambon Administrative Organization (OrBorTor) were soon at the scene to provide immediate first aid and transport the woman to Thalang Hospital.

Mr Panupan later explained that the alarm was raised by an "eyewitness" who saw the woman get out of her white Mazda sedan stopped



The woman was safely brought ashore by a local fisherman. Photo: Panupan Jindapol

halfway across the bridge, and jump over the edge.

A local fisherman in his boat on the water below was able to react in time to rescue the woman from the usually fast-moving water, notorious for claiming lives of those who jump from any of the three bridges connecting Phuket to the mainland.

Mr Wiwat, at the scene last night, said that the current in the canal was not particularly strong when the woman plunged into the water.

"At that time, the tide was not very strong, so the fisherman was able to rescue her in time," he said.

Police said they were still investigating what had motivated the woman to jump from the bridge.

However, Mr Wiwat said her distress "seems to be related to family problems".

"Now, she is in a better state of mind as she has since been in contact with her parents," he said.

The woman's jump from the

bridge came just two days after the 49th anniversary of Somsak Wana-wornasukrak and Kanjana Sae- Ngho together ending their lives by jumping off the Sarasin Bridge after their families had forbidden them from seeing each other.

Tamnoon Wannawichaikul, a classmate of the couple, on Tuesday posted a remembrance of the fateful night.

The tale of the star-crossed lovers has become modern Thai folklore, with the Sarasin Bridge today a popular site for Thai tourists to visit during trips to Phuket.

Phuket authorities have set up a 24-hour hotline at Tel: 1300 to help people who have been impacted and are struggling – emotionally, mentally, financially or otherwise – due to fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you or anyone you know is in need of emotional support and counseling, please contact the Samaritans of Thailand at their 24-hour hotline 02-113-6789 (English & Thai) or the Thai Mental Health Hotline at 1323 (Thai).

Phuket Town fake monk arrested

POLICE HAVE ARRESTED a man who dressed in monk's robes to solicit donations at a main fresh market in Phuket Town and charged him with impersonating a religious to deceive the public.

Phuket Provincial Police Commander Maj Gen Sermphan Sirikong announced the arrest through a statement issued on Monday (Feb 28), but did not name the man.

The search for the man began last Saturday (Feb 26) after police were alerted to a man dressed as a monk soliciting donations from people at the Phuket Town Fresh Market 2 on Ong Sim Phai Rd in Phuket Town.

The same man was later caught on video stripping naked in a field across the road from the main post office on Montri Rd in Phuket Town in order to change into layman's clothes.

Phuket Provincial Police Chief Col Sarawut Chuprasit was tasked with leading the search for the man.

Officers from Phuket City Police along with representatives of the Phuket branch of the National Office of Buddhism tracked down the man, who was unable to present his official identification to prove that he was a monk (Baht Sutthi Phra), Maj Gen Sermphan said.



The fake monk was recorded stripping naked in a field in Phuket Town to change into layman's clothes. Screenshot: Phuket Share Sanan

The man was taken to Wat Mongkhon Nimit (Wat Klang) in Phuket Town to meet with the abbot there, who also confirmed that the man was not a monk.

He was also taken back to the field on Montri Rd to re-enact for police where he changed from monk's robes into layman's clothes.

The man has been charged under Section 208 of the Criminal Code, which stipulates that it is a crime to "wrongfully dress or use a symbol manifesting that oneself to be a Buddhist monk or novice, holy man or clergyman of any religion so as to make the other person to believe that oneself to be such person".

The penalty is up to one year in jail or a fine of up to B20,000, "The man will be prosecuted in accordance with the law," Maj Gen Sermphan said. Eakkapop Thongtub

Police seize illegal timber used to build resort

POLICE FROM THE NATURAL Resources and Environmental Crimes Suppression Division have raided and seized illegal timber found stacked behind a resort located near Laem Krathing, north of Nai Harn.

The officers seized the illegal lumber at a no-name resort located behind Laem Krating, in Moo 2, Soi Laem Mum Nok, Karon.

The timber was seized in a raid on Feb 19, officials have now reported.

The timber seized was being used to build residence buildings at the site, the officers noted.

The man who claimed to own the timber, whose name was not reported by the police, initially told officers that the timber was legal and that had documented evidence.

However, the officers reported that further investigation did not find any documents that confirmed the timber was legally owned as claimed.

Royal Forest Department officials had already made arrests and seized illegal timber in the area in 2019, police noted in their report.

The case was prosecuted as Criminal Case No. 8022562/2019, Asset Seizure Case No. 118/2019, the report added.

"At that time, two suspects were arrested, one a former army officer with the rank of Police Lieutenant Colonel and the other a business owner who lived in the Karon area," the CSD officers noted.



The man who claimed to legally own the timber is asked to point at the timber seized, which was being used to build residence buildings at the resort. Photo: Supplied

The CSD officers in their latest report said the raids on illegal timber were the result of neglect by forest officials since 2019.

"On Oct 30, 2019, the Forest Resources Office 12, Krabi branch, seized illegal timber and ordered prosecution according to its authority and reported [the case] to [their] Director-General, but the case was ignored until a new director took office," their report noted.

"The new director also issued a letter on August 20, 2019 requesting further investigation of forest encroachment, If an offense is found, the seizure must be carried out and proceeded under Section 25," the report continued.

"But forest officials in the area again ignored the order", the officers stated.

"The task force officers [who conducted the raid last Saturday] therefore went to the area to inspect this time and were able to seize the illegal lumber," the report said.

Eakkapop Thongtub

Stray Dog Shelter running out of food

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Phuket Stray Dog Shelter is running out of food and supplies needed to care for more than 1,000 dogs kept at the facility.

Tawan Chotiworananon, the manager of the Phuket Stray Dog Shelter, located in Thalang, said dry dog food was among the top essentials needed.

"We are facing a shortage of dog food and necessary equipment. This shelter takes care of about 1,000 dogs, which need to be fed about 250kg of pellets per day," he said.

"In addition, we need canned food for feeding sick dogs, as well as face masks, garbage bags and syringes," he added.

"We also need drinking water of any size, examination gloves (size M), and medicine and supplies for treating wounds, such as gauze," he added.

"Before we had a lot of donors and enough food for the dogs, but lately there have been fewer donors. I understand that many donors are facing problems and are affected by the COVID-19 situation," Mr Tawan said.

Other essentials are needed to help keep the facility operating, Mr Tawan noted.

"We need sugar for making



The Phuket Stray Dog Shelter is in need of food for the more than 1,000 dogs kept at the facility. Photo: Phuket Stray Dog Shelter

EM [Effective Microorganisms] probiotic water and a 60-litre tank for keeping dog excrement. We also need coconut-thresh brooms, water hoses and squeegees, toilet cleaner for disinfecting stall floors, large garbage bins and

dishwashing liquid and sponges for washing food trays used by sick dogs," he said.

BUDGET FAILINGS

The facility was originally designated its own budget, but ad-

ministrative changes later saw the Phuket Stray Dog Shelter funded by contributions from all 18 municipalities and tambon administration organisations (OrBorTor) on the island.

Those contributions have not been forthcoming.

Phuket Vice Governor Pichet Panapong at a meeting at the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office on Tuesday (Feb 22) asked all local government organisations in Phuket to transfer their budget allocations to the Phuket Stray Dog Shelter promptly.

Vice Governor Pichet pointed out that the shelter was set up in 2004, and for the past 20 years had served to accommodate stray dogs and "nuisance dogs", alleviating the need for local municipalities to set up their own facilities.

"Phuket has integrated with all local government organisations to support the budget [for the shelter], but due to insufficient budget contributions we have been unable to manage and develop this shelter to be effective as a pet care facility according to international standards," he said.

"Currently, the Phuket Stray Dog Shelter is managed by the Phuket Provincial Livestock Office, but because the office doesn't have the budget to operate the facility, it has requested budget support from the 18 local government or-

ganisations that bring stray dogs to the shelter," V/Gov Pichet said.

"The meeting today is to expedite the budget contributions for the Phuket Stray Dog Shelter Project for the fiscal year 2022 from all 18 local government agencies in order to raise the funds so we can manage the facility in a way for the animals to have good health and well-being," he added.

DONATIONS

Phuket Stray Dog Shelter chief Mr Tawan invited people to make any donations of the items needed, but most urgently dog food.

"People who can donate, please donate to us and donors can call us every day or contact us through our Phuket Stray Dog Shelter Facebook page," he said.

Mr Tawan added that donors can donate money directly to the shelter or the Phuket Livestock Office through the following account:

Account Name: บ้านพักพิงสุนัขจรจัดภูเก็ต มูลนิธิภูเก็ตพัฒนาชุมชน

(Phuket Stray Dog Shelter Phuket Sustainable Development Foundation)

A/c Number: 805-0-84926-0
Bank: Krung Thai Bank, Phuket branch.

The shelter is open to receive donations every day, from 8:30am to 4:30pm.

Mr Tawan can be contacted directly at 086-2772699.

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Diesel tax cut not enough

Salma Madsalae

The 3% diesel tax cut in effect for three months is not enough to stave off rising prices in Phuket, Phuket Chamber of Commerce President Thanusak Phungdet has warned.

All sectors in Phuket have been affected by the rising diesel prices, Mr Thanusak noted.

"The diesel tax cut for three months from the Cabinet is not enough to alleviate [financial pressures in] Phuket, the government should freeze the price of petrol for longer than this," he said.

The price of diesel, along with the prices of other most-common forms of vehicle fuel, have risen by as much as 30% in the past six months.

The tax cut, which came into effect on Feb 18, halved the tax rate from B5.99 per litre to B3 per litre until May 20. The cut capped diesel at B29.94 per litre, keeping it below B30 per litre as promised by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha in November.

But the tax cut will do little to alleviate pressure on rising prices in Phuket, Mr Thanusak said.



Rising fuel prices will affect everyone in Phuket, Mr Thansuk said. Photo: The Phuket News

"The prices of all consumer and even trade goods in Phuket are affected by fuel prices, as everything is brought to Phuket by road," Mr Thanusak explained.

"Higher petrol costs make shipping goods more expensive, and Phuket has to import consumer products from all over the country, from Rayong, Bangkok, Samut Sakhon, Samut Songkhram or Suphan Buri, and other provinces.

"Phuket will be more affected than other provinces that have their own agricultural crops and have their own food," he continued.

"The rising petrol prices affects everyday people, shop owners, transport operators... all industries in Phuket... The groups that suffer the most would be those in trade and business," he added.

The surge in non-diesel fuel prices will add pressure to household expenses, though the impact would vary depending on each person's income, he noted. "Some will be more affected than others," he admitted.

The average monthly income in Phuket was "likely to be many times more" than the B1,950 Phuket Governor

Narong Woonciew cited to a Senate standing committee last month, as that figure was calculated when there were no tourists coming to Phuket at all, Mr Thanusak said.

Price controls on essential goods are helping to contain price rises from spiralling upward further. Some industries, such as Phuket's fishing industry, will rely more on other government support programmes to contain rising operational costs, he added.

Transport costs, such as fares charged by local taxi drivers may be soaked up by the drivers, considering the

fares already charged, or they may be increased further in light of the rise in regular petrol prices, Mr Thanusak said.

"Tourists are more likely to be affected," he said, adding that tourists still had the right to negotiate fares with 'green-plate' taxi drivers. Alternatively, tourists had the option of renting cars, he said.

Phuket's tourism situation has improved, but not to the extent that many had hoped. "The current state of the tourism industry in Phuket is still not good," he said.

Hotel occupancy was estimated at 60-70%, Mr Thanusak said, but admitted that the figure was based on the new number of hotels currently open on the island.

Some 30-40% of hotels that were open pre-COVID have so far remained closed, he said.

The number of tourists coming to the island is helping the economy, he added. There is now local shopping turnover from this group," he said.

"The government should encourage local people to travel in their own provinces more, and should encourage more Thai tourists to come to

Phuket or go to other tourist cities, to create more Thai trends to travel in Thailand," Mr Thanusak said.

Mr Thanusak agrees with the open letter by tourism figures to ease entry restrictions for tourists. "Measures should be eased, not necessarily immediately, but gradually adjusted. This is probably most suitable for Phuket," he said.

He also agrees with Vice Governor Phichet Panaphong requesting to have COVID-19 declared endemic in Phuket.

"What Phuket needs most is for development into a true tourism business destination and to become a duty-free destination," Mr Thanusak said.

"I hope that the government will appoint one team of high-level executives to come and plan for Phuket to be a Special Andaman Tourism Economic Zone, with Phuket as a pilot province, which the private sector presented to the Cabinet on Nov 16 last year," he said.

"The 'Special Economic Zone' aims to make Phuket and the Andaman provinces the main areas for importing both Thai and foreign tourists and distributing tourists throughout the country," he said.

TAT pushes Phuket, Udon Thani travel

THE TOURISM AUTHORITY OF THAILAND (TAT) is taking credit for creating a tourism campaign linking Phuket with Udon Thani and nearby provinces in Isan.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew and Udon Thani Governor Siam Sirimongkol on Feb 24 held the press launch of the campaign, called "Phuket, the whole island @ Udon Thani", in Udon Thani.

Joining the event was Bhummitkitti Ruktaengam, President of the Phuket Tourist Association, along with a host of representatives from tourism and travel industry in Udon Thani.

The aim of the campaign is to sell cross-regional travel tours between the two regions in Thailand in response to the policy of leading the country's economic recovery through tourism, said a report of the launch by the Phuket office of the Public Relations Department (PR Phuket).

The campaign involves more than 30 "alliances" between tour and hospitality operators agencies, the report said, "to bring quality tourism products in Phuket to offer to business operators in Udon Thani and nearby provinces."

The campaign is designed to stimulate cross-regional tourism marketing in line with domestic airline routes, the report added.

At the event, Thapanee Kiatpaiboon, TAT Deputy Governor of Domestic Marketing, presented a guideline for integrating cooperation between the public and private sectors to stimulate the domestic tourist market from this April, the report added.

According to the report, the TAT expects an increase in domestic travel of not less than 25% during the upcoming Songkran holidays in April. The report gave no indication of the



The travel mart held in Udon Thani aimed to boost travel between Isan and Phuket. Photo: PR Phuket

base year or figure that the 25% increase claim was based on.

"The TAT continues to carry out 360-degree marketing activities, including adjusting tourism products to create an unforgettable experience, to target potential Thai tourists, in addition to promoting cross-regional travel weekday tours, promotion of tourism to the main destinations and secondary tourism locations, as well as community tourism, "Faith and Belief Travel", Workation tourism, etc.," the report said.

"The TAT will also carry out activities targeting tourists, including couples, family groups, the elderly and teenagers, together with travel agencies, hotels, accommodation operators, airlines, transport operators, shops, restaurants and tourism communities to revive Thailand while developing tourism towards sustainability," the report concluded.

The report made no mention of the Level 4 COVID-19 alert currently in effect throughout the country, which asks all people to refrain from interprovincial travel.

The Phuket News

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Ukraine fallout worries Cabinet

BANGKOK

Bangkok Post

The government is expected to introduce economic measures to mitigate the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine – especially its impact on global energy prices – after a Cabinet meeting that was scheduled for late Tuesday (Mar 1).

Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha called a meeting with his deputies and relevant agencies to discuss the ongoing developments in Ukraine, as tensions continue to escalate, government spokesman Thanakorn Wangboonkongchana said on Monday.

The crisis, he said, will undoubtedly have an impact on the economy, which will range from higher oil prices to volatilities in the equity and cryptocurrency markets. "Thailand's economy will be hurt if the crisis drags on," he said.

Deputy Prime Minister and Energy Minister Supattana Pongpanich said the government is closely monitoring the situation.

Although Thailand's energy imports are not directly



Forty-three Thais arrive at the help centre set up by the Foreign Ministry at a hotel in Lviv, in western Ukraine, on Tuesday (Mar 1). Photo: Foreign Ministry

affected by the crisis, he said the government will boost the nation's fuel stocks to minimise the conflict's impact on the public.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Don Pramudwinai said Gen Prayut has instructed agencies concerned to prepare measures to cushion any potential impact from the Ukraine crisis.

"The price of energy, the

stock market, currency exchange, trade and investments are among issues the prime minister touched on and urged authorities concerned to make comprehensive plans in case [the crisis] escalates further," he said.

Don also said the government welcomed the news that Ukraine and Russia have agreed to hold talks, before adding Thailand will provide

humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict.

"International politics is complicated and we can't take it at face value. We hope that the international community will cooperate seriously to resolve this conflict and have it contained," Don said.

Deputy Prime Minister and Public Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said the prime minister had instructed

all agencies to be prepared to discuss the Ukraine-Russia crisis on Tuesday.

He said while Thailand can largely depend on itself when it comes to consumer goods, the crisis may still affect the export sector, as payments will be difficult to make when the sanctions kick in.

Finance Minister Arkhom Termpittayapaisith said the ministry will hold talks with the Bank of Thailand about potential impacts the Ukraine crisis will have on the country's economy.

He said the talks will also focus on the US and its key allies' decision to remove some Russian banks from the Swift financial messaging system, essentially barring them from international transactions.

"We're closely monitoring the situation and assessing how it will affect the tourism and exports sectors," Arkhom said.

EVACUATION UNDERWAY

Separately, the Foreign Affairs Ministry reported on Tuesday that 142 Thais had been evacuated from Ukraine, with 103 already safe in Warsaw, Poland, and 39 in Bucharest, Romania.

Others were on their way to the assistance centre set up at Lviv in western Ukraine.

The ministry said 38 evacuees would depart from Bucharest on Tuesday and arrive home on Thai Airways International flight TG923, due at 6:25am on Wednesday.

The second group, 58 Thais, would fly from Warsaw on Tuesday and arrive on Emirates flight EK384, due at 12:05pm on Wednesday.

Upon arriving in Thailand, they will be transferred to Sattahip naval base for a one-day quarantine, as all of them have had at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccine, said the Thai ambassador to Poland, Chetthapan Maksampan.

Other Thais stranded in Ukraine cities remained safe, and 35 had already left cities including Kyiv for Lviv. They were expected to reach there on Tuesday.

Most Thais leaving Ukraine were using trains because travelling by car was risky and very slow because of congestion, the Foreign Ministry said.

Any remaining Thais have been told to lay low until the situation on the ground improves.

CCSA's daily case count briefing set to wind down

BANGKOK

CRITICS HAVE VOICED CONCERNS over reports that the Ministry of Public Health will cease providing daily bulletins containing the number of new COVID-19 infections over the preceding 24-hour period, saying members of the public have the right to be kept abreast of the situation without having to seek the information themselves online.

Dr Kiatiphum Wongrajit, permanent secretary for public health, has said the daily update on the number of new confirmed COVID-19 cases would possibly end soon as health authorities change the focus of their briefings to the emergence of new clusters of what is thought will soon be classified an endemic disease.

Currently, about 60% of all people infected with the virus are receiving care under the government's Home and Community Isolation programme, he said.

"The figures are already out of date when we announce them. So what's the point? We previously gave the number of [daily] infections because we were afraid they would overwhelm hospitals' capacity, but now they don't. Every patient is well taken care of," Dr Kiatiphum said last Friday (Feb 25).

The ministry will now report only new infections in provinces with serious outbreaks



Dr Kiatiphum Wongrajit. Photo: Bangkok Post

for the sake of containment and efficiency.

The figures, however, will remain posted on the ddc.moph.go.th website as all countries are required to collect daily tallies and report them to the World Health Organization in a transparent manner.

Dr Thira Woratanarat, associate professor of the Faculty of Medicine at Chulalongkorn University, pointed to the need for the government to continue publicising the infection rate as he said it should be considered of major interest to the public under Section 59 of the charter.

On the other hand, Dr Thirawat Hemachudha, the chief of Chulalongkorn University's Centre for Emerging Infectious Diseases, reiterated that the daily infection rate doesn't reflect the true number, largely because of a lack of RT-PCR test kits.

"I think the ministry wants people to panic less and trust in its ability to manage the situation," he said.

The country registered 20,420 new cases of COVID-19 and 43 coronavirus-related fatalities on Monday. Bangkok Post

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John with Orapin (left) and Rungtip, two key influences during his time in Phuket.



John high above Phuket in his Sport Cruiser.

John Magee, the high-flyer who landed in Phuket

Bruce Stanley

John Magee is well known as the American entrepreneur who in 1993 founded the *Phuket Gazette* and published it for 25 years. It was the island's first English-language newspaper and it had an enormous impact on the development of Phuket – not just as a tourist destination but also as a cosmopolitan and much sought-after place to live.

'The *Gazette*' quickly became a staple in expat life and a must-read among the then rather sparse but also promising corps of tourists to Phuket. It informed these readers of significant

goings-on that were not readily apparent to foreigners.

The newspaper was a voice that promoted responsible development and provided factual reports, "not only on the pristine beaches, but also about some inconvenient truths that needed to be dealt with to enhance the island's credibility overseas," John says.

The issues included crime, corruption, environmental degradation and abuses of tourists.

"There was a belief among some local tourism operators and in officialdom that this darker side of the island could be kept from public view, and that the half-truth of 'Paradise' could be spun successfully forever. But international tourism markets were more sophisti-

cated than that, even at that time.

"So we waded in, and it was not always universally popular here. We had threats – even personal ones – and our offices were raided three or four times. But we also had good encouragement and support in places where we needed it, and over time we were vindicated," John says.

So what brought the former Senior Director for the banking and corporate finance divisions of American Express and Shearson Lehman to the boondocks of Phuket? A story featuring him in the July 18, 2005 issue of *Fortune* magazine gives the answer.

Phuket had, in the short space of a decade, evolved from a quaint fishing village to soaring fame as an international tourist destination. And with that came the realisation that it was also an eminently desirable place for retirement in both economic and life-style terms.

John had foreseen it.

"I first came to Phuket in 1976 on the only flight serving this place, a daily prop-jet from Bangkok. I was on holiday from Hong Kong. We landed on a grass strip and took a bus over the mostly dirt road from the airport to the Phuket Island Resort in Rawai."

He told me it was "not necessarily love at first sight, but it certainly was after a week of exploring the island on a motorbike."

By 1989, after several years of at least monthly visits to the island from Hong Kong, he had acquired land in Kamala that would eventually become Kamala Beach Estate where he lived from 1992 until 2002.

"When I first set up here, there was no internet on the island and Kamala had no electricity. My first home was powered solely by a jury-rigged diesel generator that was always in a bad mood.

"Conditions for a business start-up were not ideal. There were only Mom-and-Pop shops for most things. No computer stuff. I had to bring my Olivetti 386 floppy job from Hong Kong, along with most else for my new home.

"There were almost no roads. The only workable thing connecting Kamala to town was a perilous boulder-infested dirt track over the hump to Patong.

"But with the help of good friends and a cadre of talented and willing freelance writers, we got the first issue of the paper into circulation in May 1993."

After graduating from Chicago's Northwestern University, John joined



John with a restored 1956 Grumman Ag Cat that he used to fly.

JP Morgan Chase while a graduate student in Finance at New York University.

"After 2½ years of formal training in financial analysis, I was assigned to the bank's international division. I had no idea that this would lead to 52 years of unbroken residence outside of my home country."

In 1968, John was approached by a headhunter to join American Express whose enormous travellers cheque and credit card businesses were driving it into expansion of its little-known wholesale banking operations outside the US.

"The company was not, and for strategic reasons did not wish to be, a commercial bank inside the United States," John tells me.

"In 1970, I was packed off to Copenhagen to set up Scandinavia's first foreign bank, from concept to profitable operations in 1973."

In 1975, he was sent to Hong Kong where he remained until 1992 when he took the leap to Phuket.

So what has he been doing since retiring five years ago at age 78?

"The idea of retirement was always a bit terrifying for me, but I'm surviving by just doing the things I enjoy most. One of these is the fulfillment of a self-inflicted commitment to literacy in Thai. I do this through formal study. Including 'homework', it takes about eight hours a week. Great fun and keeps the brain basket churning.

"I also spend a lot of time reading things that are inspiring and well written; enjoying music – mainly jazz; monitoring financial markets overseas; and of course hanging out at the Airpark to indulge my love of flying.

"Finally, and most gratifying, is observing the career development of my two sons, one a commercial pilot and property broker, the other a content developer with a Bangkok-based media group."

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The courage to lead

ON CAMPUS

Milla Budiarto

Lead by example. Yes, it's cliché, but that's exactly how Matcha Phorn-in became a leader in her rainbow family and the indigenous communities in Chiang Mai and nearby provinces. Matcha is a Lao-Isaan ethnic minority lesbian feminist human rights defender. Because of her race, gender identity and sexual orientation, she experienced various systemic discrimination from a young age.

Matcha is the Director of Sangsan Anakot Yawachon Development Project (Building the Future of Youth), which she founded 15 years ago, working with marginalised ethnic minority and indigenous women, girls and young LGBTIQ – many of whom are stateless. Sangsan provides a safe space for the people who are often overlooked and suffer institutional oppression from limited access to education, employment, healthcare, safety, nationality and land rights. The organisation is committed to advancing women's rights, working towards a SOGIESC (sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics) inclusive community, and advocating for social equality and equity through education, capacity building and life skills training.

"Intersectionality" has always been at the very heart of Sangsan; it takes into account the complexity and

compounded effects of disadvantages experienced by marginalised people. For instance, an indigenous woman may experience sexism and racism, but she will experience sexism differently from a Thai woman and racism differently from an indigenous man.

During its first 10 years, Sangsan provided scholarships to more than 1,000 stateless children, 60 of whom have successfully completed a degree higher than high school. These students returned home and in turn became change-makers in their communities. Unfortunately, the scholarship programme was discontinued five years ago due to lack of financial support.

Intersectionality has been a double-edged sword for Sangsan. Funding opportunities have been difficult to come by because the organisation doesn't quite fit into one specific category to receive funding from the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or the United Nations (UN). Though COVID-19 exacerbated financial difficulties, Sangsan was able to hand out emergency relief packages 13 times over two years thanks to donations collected from civil society organisations (CSOs) and individual donors.

"The most important people who inspired me are those who are fighting for human rights," reflects Matcha. One of these people is Nong Air, a scholarship recipient who was previously stateless. Sangsan has worked with her for more than 11 years and she was eventually granted Thai citizenship three years



Matcha Phorn-in (left) and her rainbow family wearing the handmade rainbow-colored Karen tribal woven shirts. Photo: supplied by Matcha

ago. "She never gave up the fight for her rights, so I could not give up either," adds Matcha. Nong Air is currently working as one of the three staff at Sangsan, alongside Matcha and her partner.

Her daughter Siriwan also suffered discrimination and bullying because she is raised in a rainbow family. During Family Equality Day, at age 14, she wrote a story about her experience as a child growing up. In 2020, 18-year-old Siriwan was selected as the Asian Girls Ambassador Human Rights award winner by The Garden of Hope Foundation for her advocacy on the rights of children of LGBTIQ families. In 2021, she collaborated with the Thai Health Promotion Foundation in publishing "This House has Gender Diversity", a manual for parents with LGBTIQ children.

Now Nong Air, Siriwan, and another Sangsan youth volunteer are spearheading the Indigenous Youth for Sustainable Development (IY4SD), an economic empowerment project to enhance the quality of life of women and

reduce poverty in the community. In 2020, the Youth Co:Lab/UNDP Thailand awarded them B100,000 for their Karen Rainbow Textile Social Enterprise Project to revitalise local wisdom and preserve traditional weaving culture in Mae Hong Son Province. The traditional rainbow-coloured woven clothes were handmade by the indigenous Karen women of Ban Mae Sam Laep.

Matcha is extremely dedicated to what she does with Sangsan. Her unwavering voice is filled with conviction, compassion and positivity. Despite all the challenges she faces, she remains persistent and optimistic – the epitome of leading by example. She is true to form.

NOTE: This article was featured in 'The Phuket Collegiate Magazine', the university magazine published by Milla Budiarto at PSU Phuket. The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of PSU Phuket or its employees.

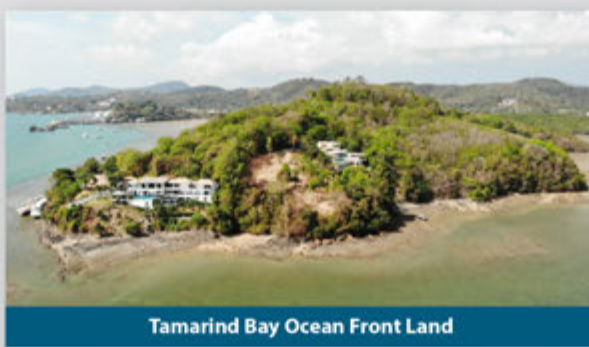
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POP QUIZ

- 1. Max Rockatansky is better known by which name?
- 2. What is Jupiter's largest moon called?
- 3. Yasodharapura is the ancient name for which Asian Kingdom capital?
- 4. In which year did the Jungceylon shopping mall in Patong open?
- 5. How old is Kim Jong-un, Supreme Leader of North Korea?

Answers below, centre

SUDOKU

Easy

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

Crossword by Myles Mellor & Sally York

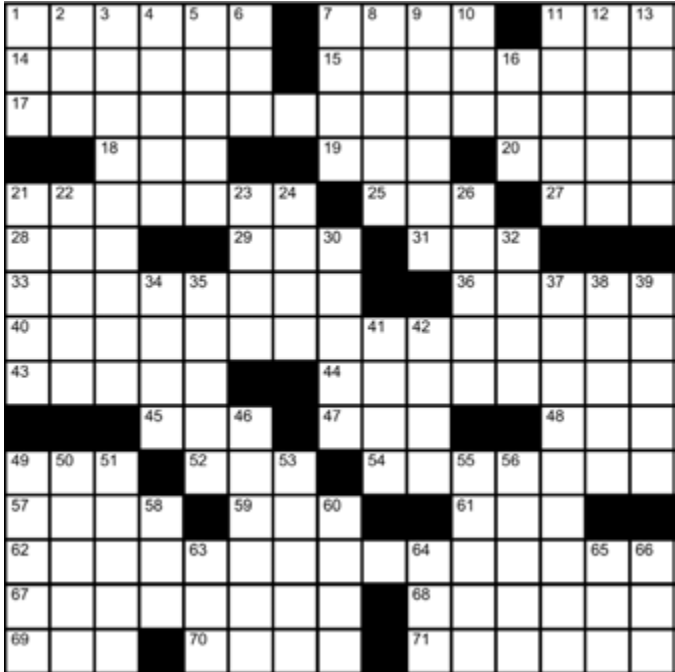
- Across

 - 1. Helpful ones
 - 7. Born's partner
 - 11. Audience
 - 14. Dorm mate
 - 15. Abandon
 - 17. Bellow protagonist
 - 18. Dowel
 - 19. Early
 - 20. Come-on
 - 21. Less populated
 - 25. Is in the past?
 - 27. Nav. rank
 - 28. Holed up
 - 29. 16 1/2 feet
 - 31. Coke's partner
 - 33. Volcanic rock
 - 36. Catch, in a way
 - 40. Salinger protagonist
 - 43. Prepare, as tea
 - 44. Worked a potter's wheel
 - 45. Wassail alternative
 - 47. Retrovirus, for short
 - 48. Jellied delicacy
 - 49. Matterhorn, e.g.
 - 52. Go on and on
 - 54. Gassy
 - 57. Tropical constrictors
 - 59. O.T. book
 - 61. Orkin target
- Down

 - 1. It often appears to the right of you
 - 2. Slip in a pot
 - 3. Simple swim stroke
 - 4. Mideast V.I.P.
 - 5. Saturn has these
 - 6. Visit
 - 7. Cold one
 - 8. Extend, in a way
 - 9. Make beloved
 - 10. Female hare
 - 11. Result
 - 12. ___ squash
 - 13. Magritte and Descartes
 - 16. Dot-com's address
 - 21. Persian potentates
 - 22. Burgundy grape
- 23. One of the Waltons
 - 24. Drilling grp.
 - 26. Drug type
 - 30. End
 - 32. Domestic
 - 34. Biblical plot
 - 35. ___ Rebellion of 1857-59
 - 37. ___ pressure
 - 38. Aerodynamic
 - 39. In a strange way
 - 41. ___ acid
 - 42. Prefix for scoliosis
 - 46. Antique mecca in Illinois
 - 49. Can't stomach
 - 50. Jeweler's glass
 - 51. Agreements
 - 53. Middle Eastern dish
 - 55. Kind of cake
 - 56. Prefix with red
 - 58. Schuss, e.g.
 - 60. A constellation
 - 63. Court ploy
 - 64. Deserter
 - 65. "Today" network
 - 66. Watchman ____, Chinese Christian author

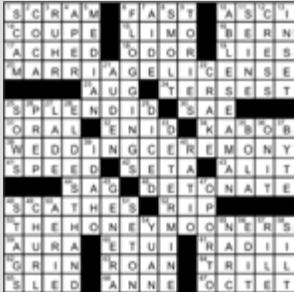
Answers to this week's Pop Quiz:

1) Mad Max; 2) Ganymede (twice the size of the Earth's moon); 3) Angkor; 4) 2007 (April 9); 5) 38



Visit: www.ilovecrosswords.com

Solutions to last week's puzzles:



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

GOT YOUR NUMBER

9

minutes and 33 seconds is how long it takes for the credits to play in the Lord of the Rings film Return of the King (2003) - 'the longest credits ever'.

11

percent of the world's gold in circulation is owned by housewives in India - more than the reserves of Switzerland, Germany and the United States combined.

150

to 200 species of plant, insect, bird and mammal become extinct every day, according to scientists, in the highest number of species die-offs since the dinosaurs went extinct 65 million years ago.

30,000

to 40,000 dead skin cells fall off of you every minute.

94

million

US\$ is how much Daniel Radcliffe made from playing the role of Harry Potter.

ISLAND VIEW



Nai Harn Bay. Photo by Max Taylor

Got an unusual or particularly beautiful picture of Phuket? Email it to exeditor@classactmedia.co.th

This week in history

Mar 4, 1351
U-thong, or Ramathibodi I becomes King of Siam. Uthong (1314-1369) was the first king of the kingdom Ayutthaya, reigning from 1350 to 1369. He was known as Prince U Thong (meaning "Golden Cradle") before he ascended to the throne in 1350.

Mar 5, 1933
Great Depression: President Franklin D. Roosevelt declares a "bank holiday", closing all

US\$ is banks and freezing all financial transactions.

Mar 6, 1836
After a 13-day siege by 3,000 Mexican troops, 187 Texas volunteers defending the Alamo, including Davy Crockett and Col Jim Bowie, are killed and the fort is captured.

Mar 7, 321
Emperor Constantine I decrees *dies Solis Invicti* (sun-day) the day of rest in the Empire.



9M-MRO, the aircraft that disappeared as Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. Photo: Laurent Errera

Mar 8, 2014
Malaysia Airlines Flight 370, carrying a total of 239 people, disappears en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing.

Mar 9, 1959
The Barbie doll makes its debut at the American International Toy Fair in New York.

Mar 10, 1909
By signing the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909, Thailand relinquishes its sovereignty over the now Malay states of Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis and Terengganu, which become British protectorates.

Source: Wikipedia

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FRI 4 MAR


Friday Mussels night

6 PM onwards: Belgian style mussels served with French Fries. All you can eat. Your choice, Your style: Marinier, White wine, Provencale, Garlic & cream, Creamy curry, Blue cheese or Thai style. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 325 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381



The Grow Boating Networking Evening for March 2022

We would like to invite you to join us for the next Grow Boating Evening which will be held at the Sea Breeze at the Royal Phuket Marina on Friday the 4th of March from 5pm. Our drinks sponsor for the evening will be Royal Phuket Marina. There will be a delicious light buffet for all attendees and as always all of your favourite beverages will be available from the bar. Come and join in the fun everyone is welcome and there is no entry fee. We hope to see you there and if you know anyone you think would be interested in coming please invite them along. To join our mailing list please send an email to growboatingphuket@gmail.com Grow Boating is kindly supported by our media partner The Phuket News, Live 89.5 radio and Phuket News TV. See www.thephuketnews.com

SUN 6 MAR


Sunday roast

12PM – 9PM: All you can eat Sunday Roast Buffet Beef, Pork, Chicken & Lamb – Cauliflower, Broccoli,

Peas, Carrots, Fried mushrooms, Grilled Tomatoes – Yorkshire pudding – Roasted Potatoes, Mashed Potatoes – Apple sauce, Gravy, Mushroom sauce, Horse raddish, Mint Sauce. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 350 baht P.P. Kids under 12 years old: 175 baht P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

MON 7 MAR


Pizza Monday

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TUE 8 MAR


International Women's Day 2022

Walk the Walk and/or Talk the Talk! Bring your hat not your heels, your togs not your tiara! It's time for a change in 2022 so we are getting out of the ballroom and into the great outdoors. There are two options on the day: you can walk the walk meeting at 9am, or you

can talk the talk meeting at 11am. Even better join for both and make a day of it! A donation of 1,000 baht net to book your seat. Contact Donna - lunch@classactmedia.co.th or tina@phukethasbeengoodtous.org

WED 9 MAR


Wednesday BBQ night

6 PM onwards: All you can eat BBQ buffet cooked to order. Beef, Pork, Chicken, Burgers, Ribs Sausages, Fish, Prawns & Squids, salad buffet and veggies, Choice of potatoes, cold and hot sauces, Bread, Buns & garlic bread. We have a kid's playground zone. Adults: 395 baht P.P. Kids under 12 years old: 195 baht P.P. www.shakersphuket.com www.facebook.com/shakersphuket Oliver, Shakers restaurant 98/18 Vises Road, Rawai 83130, 081 891 4381

FRI 11 MAR


Australia Day Phuket Sundowners - March 2022

AustCham Thailand, in collaboration with Australian Alumni, American Chamber of Commerce in Thailand (AMCHAM), British Chamber of Commerce Thailand (BCCT), Belgian-Luxembourg/Thai Chamber of Commerce, CanCham Thailand, Franco-Thai Chamber of Commerce (FTCC), German-Thai Chamber of Commerce (GTCC) and the Netherlands-Thai Chamber of Commerce (NTCC), is delighted to invite you to join us for "Australia Day Phuket Sundowners" at JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa, on Friday 11 March 2022, from 18.00 - 21.00 hrs. A celebration of all things Australian, join us for your favourite Australian food & beverages, and welcome in the New Year as the first business networking event in Phuket of 2022! Please register in advance, as walk-ins are not allowed for this event Limited spaces, please book early to avoid disappointment COVID-19 Requirements: Attendees must be able to show proof of at least double vaccinated and a Negative test result

(ATK/RT-PCR) conducted within 24 hours of arriving at the event. Cost: 500 THB for AustCham members, partner Chambers' members, and Australian Alumni Members. 900 THB for non-members. Accommodation: JW Marriott Resort & Spa offers an additional 10% discount on the room rate inclusive of Breakfast for stays booked & consumed between the 27th to 30th January 2022. For reservation, see https://bit.ly/AustChamThailandPromotion, or contact JWPhuket-Sales@marriotthotels.com

THU 17 MAR


Skal Phuket Dinner at Pizza on Fire Laguna

Welcome to Pizza on Fire, Canal Village, Laguna, Phuket - Vera Pizza Napoletana. Join Skal International Phuket at Pizza on Fire for a real Italian Napoli pizza experience. Skål International Thailand is a professional organization of leaders from all branches of the travel and tourism industry.

THU 21 APR


Skål Phuket Dinner at Baan Rim Pa

Join Skål International Phuket at Baan Rim Pa Ka-lim for dinner in February This multi-award-winning restaurant has proven to be a favorite to international travelers, ex-pats and locals. Baan Rim Pa boasts an incredible cliff-side location directly over the Andaman Sea. Become a member and connect with the biggest Travel & Tourism professional network. Being part of Skål Thailand offers you a wide range of benefits.

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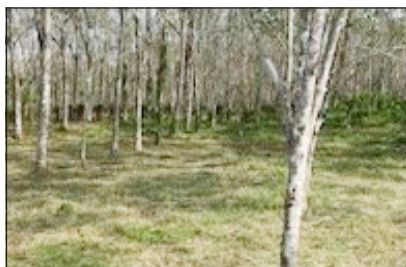
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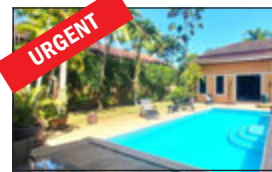
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SKAL PHUKET MONTHLY DINNER

The 1st Skål Phuket Dinner of 2022 was held on Feb 24 at Blue Tree Phuket. Guest speakers included Daniel Steinke, Managing Director of Blue Tree Phuket, and Bart Duykers, Area Director of BB&B Thailand. Become a member and connect with the biggest network of travel and tourism professionals. Being part of Skål Thailand offers a wide range of benefits.



WINDOW ON PHUKET

The April/May 2022
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Phuket tennis trio shine at youth tournament

TENNIS

THREE YOUNG ASPIRING tennis stars from Phuket have received praise for their respective performances in the 60th Royal Cup at the National Youth Tennis Tournament in Nonthaburi.

The annual tournament, which ran this year between Feb 15-27, was held at the National Tennis Development Centre in Nonthaburi in association with the Lawn Tennis Association of Thailand (LTAT) under His Majesty's patronage.

Not only did 12-year-old Tarita Hongyok, known as "Nong Ig", win the female Under-14 singles final but she also paired up with fellow Phuketian Methinee Thongsaming to claim the runners-up spot in the female doubles Under-14 competition.

Ig and Methinee battled valiantly on court but were unable to overcome Perlene Jiewpatanakul from Nakhon Sri Thammarat and Bangkok's Natrada Sakulwongthana who won 5-7, 6-0.

However, Ig, a student at the British International School, Phuket, did manage to overcome Natrada, ranked



Ig shows off her trophies.
Photo: Sport Association of Phuket

as one of the favourites from the program, 6-0, 6-2 to win the Under-14's singles final.

Ig had previously made the news when she moved up the national rankings to become the second-ranked player in her age category in the country after she won her first National Masters title with a straight-sets victory in the Under-10's LTAT season-closing Masters in 2019 in Bangkok.

Elsewhere, Phuket's Chawin Limmanakul and his playing partner Ariyapol Leekul from Songkhla finished runners-up in the Under-14 male doubles final where they lost out to Bangkok duo Ryu Kotikul and Thanathorn Thawatphongsri 6-2, 6-3.

The Phuket Sports Association paid tribute to the success of all three players on their website last Monday (Feb 21).

Ben Tirebuck

Sporting sanctions can land major blow to Putin

ALL SPORTS

AFP

Russia hosting the 2018 World Cup, the scandal-plagued 2014 Winter Olympics and Gazprom's sponsorship of the Champions League were powerful tools for the country's global image and gained Vladimir Putin prestige amongst the Russian population.

However, the Russian president's decision to invade Ukraine has resulted in destroying the warm global afterglow and experts believe it could cost him dearly internally.

Saint Petersburg has already been stripped of hosting this year's Champions League final with UEFA also terminating Gazprom's €40-million (B1.4 billion) a year sponsorship deal.

The Russian F1 Grand Prix has been cancelled, UEFA and FIFA have banned Russia from all club and international football competitions and the International Olympic Committee is calling for a ban on Russian athletes.



Vladimir Putin (right) caresses the trophy next to FIFA president Gianni Infantino during the trophy ceremony at the end of the 2018 World Cup final in Russia. Photo: AFP

"Sport has always had a tremendous impact on society," said Michael Payne, former head of marketing at the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

"The South African sports boycott over apartheid probably had as much or greater impact than economic sanctions, over forcing regime policy change."

Payne, who in nearly two decades at the IOC was widely credited with transforming its brand and finances through sponsorship, said Putin risked his standing with his own people.

"Putin may not care what

the rest of the world thinks of him, but he has to care what the Russian people think of him.

"Lose their support and it is game over – and the actions of the sports community has the potential to be a very important influencer towards the Russian people."

Prominent Russian sports stars have not been shy in voicing their disquiet over Putin's invasion.

Tennis star Andrey Rublev, veteran Russian football international Fedor Smolov, United States-based ice hockey great Alex Ovechkin and Ineos cyclist Pavel Sivakov have all

expressed a desire for peace.

"Russian athletes speaking out to their national fan base, will only serve to further prompt the local population to question the actions of their leadership, and undermine the local national support for the war," said Payne.

However, another former IOC marketing executive Terrence Burns, who since leaving the organisation has played a key role in five successful Olympic bid city campaigns, has doubts about their impact.

"You are making the assumption that Russian people actually see, read, and hear 'real news,'" he said.

"I do not believe that is the case. The Government will portray Russia as a victim of a great global conspiracy led by the USA and the West. It is an old Russian trope they have used quite effectively since the Soviet days."

"Many people, like me, believed that by helping them host the Olympics and World Cup could somehow open and liberalise the society, creating new paths of progress for Russia's young people. Again we were wrong."

Phuket defeats Pattaya in Amateur Ryder Cup

GOLF

PHUKET BEAT PATTAYA BY 12.5 points to 11.5 to win the 15th Phuket-Pattaya Amateur Ryder Cup last Sunday (Feb 27).

It is the first time in 10 years that Phuket has managed to secure victory and boasting rights over its popular golfing tourism destination rival.

The three-day event ran from Friday until Sunday (Feb 25-27) and was played at the 18-hole PCC Country Course. The tournament has been played every two years since it began in May 1996 with the Phuket Golf Association winning seven times and Pattaya Golf Association six times. Only once has the tournament concluded with a draw.

Phuket Governor Narong Woonciew presided over the opening ceremony last Friday, joined by Phuket Golf Association President Pakin Reeksuea and Chief Justice of the Phuket Provincial Court, Srirat Kongpetch.

Mr Pakin explained that each team has 16 members: 12 players, and four reserves.

The first day of play is between four-somes, with six points up for grabs. The second day is the "Four Ball tournament" with six pairs of players vying for six more points. The final day's play is the singles competition, scored using the Match Play system, with 12 matches played.

A win scores one point, a draw scores 0.5 points.

"Any team that scores more than 12.5



The triumphant Phuket team in the clubhouse with their winner's trophies. Photo: Phuket Golf Association

points can be regarded as the winning team in this competition. In this competition, the Competition Management Committee uses rules of the USGA [United States Golf Association], the PGA and rules agreed to by the two associations," Mr Pakin explained.

"For more than 25 years, this competition has helped develop the relationship – and friendships – between the two associations to become closer. And you can feel when the tournament is over, regardless of who wins everyone who is involved including the players, officials and the members of the golf associations congratulate each other and create impressive memories for the participants."

Phuket led 3.5 points to 2.5 after Day 1 and continued their fine form to secure the overall win.

"This is a great victory for Phuket which has lost each of the last five contests," Mr Pakin said.

The tournament host alternates, with Pattaya to host the event next.

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English Premier League Predictions

thepuketnews.com/predictions.php

Klopp eyes quadruple after League Cup win

FOOTBALL

AFP

Jürgen Klopp challenged Liverpool to chase a historic quadruple after the Reds won the League Cup final in a dramatic penalty shoot-out against Chelsea last Sunday (Feb 27).

Klopp's side clinched the first of the four major trophies they are competing for this term when Chelsea goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga smashed his penalty high over the crossbar.

Kepa was the only player to miss in the shoot-out as Liverpool converted all 11 of their kicks and Chelsea netted 10 after a thrilling encounter that finished 0-0 after extra-time despite both sides creating numerous chances.

Liverpool's record ninth League Cup triumph was their first domestic knockout tournament triumph since 2012.

Having failed to win a trophy last season, Klopp believes his players can use the momentum from their Wembley success to fuel their bid to become the first English club



Liverpool manager Jürgen Klopp hoists the League Cup trophy aloft after his team beat Chelsea on penalties in the final last Sunday (Feb 27). Photo: AFP

to enjoy a trophy clean-sweep.

The Reds are six points behind Premier League leaders Manchester City with a game in hand, hold a 2-0 lead heading into their Champions League last-16 second leg against Inter Milan and, at time of press, were set to host Norwich in the FA Cup fifth round on Wednesday (Mar 2).

"This is the start. We are not silly. You need luck. We have to survive, work hard," Klopp said.

"We don't get nervous when things don't go well. We are more experienced now.

"It's a big one for us. The first time for this group. The atmosphere was outstanding. It was nice to celebrate with the people after the match."

Meanwhile, Manchester City managed to extend their six-point lead at the top of the Premier League by defeating Everton last Saturday (Feb 26).

Phil Foden struck late for City who somehow managed

to survive a late scare when Rodri clearly handled in his own penalty box, only for VAR to clear him of any foul.

Tottenham managed to overcome Leeds United 4-0 with England captain Harry Kane pulling the strings and registering his eighth goal of the season.

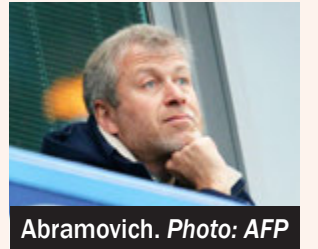
The result saw Leeds part ways with their popular Argentine manager Marcelo Bielsa after a fourth straight defeat left them perilously close to the relegation zone, with former RB Leipzig and RB Salzburg boss Jesse Marsch the heavy favourite to take over.

Manchester United's goal-scoring woes continued despite having 67% possession and 22 shots against Watford as the 0-0 draw saw them drop two vital points in the race to secure Champions League football for next season.

United are just two points clear of West Ham and Arsenal – the Gunners now have three games in hand and are firm favourites to secure the final Champions League qualification slot.

Abramovich hands over control of Chelsea

FOOTBALL



Abramovich. Photo: AFP

RUSSIAN BILLIONAIRE Roman Abramovich has handed over control of Chelsea to trustees of its charitable foundation as Premier League players showed their support for war-torn Ukraine.

Abramovich's move last Saturday (Feb 26) came just days after Russia's invasion of neighbouring Ukraine, which has drawn international condemnation.

The 55-year-old, who has ploughed £1.5 billion (B65 billion) into Chelsea since arriving at Stamford Bridge in 2003, said in a statement on the club's website that he had always viewed his role as a "custodian of the club".

"I have always taken decisions with the club's best interest at heart," he said. "I remain committed to these values. That is why I am today giving trustees of Chelsea's charitable foundation the stewardship and care of Chelsea FC."

"I believe that currently they are in the best position

to look after the interests of the club, players, staff, and fans."

It is understood Abramovich took the decision in order to protect Chelsea from reputational damage as war rages in Ukraine.

Press reports said Abramovich would remain the owner of the club and was not looking to sell the European champions, who have thrived under his ownership.

Last Friday (Feb 25) the UK government ordered all assets of Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov frozen over the invasion of Ukraine.

The Treasury issued a financial sanctions notice against the two men, adding them to a list of Russian oligarchs already targeted.

AFP



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Youths a big hit at national event > p14



'PANCAKE' FLATTENS COWS IN ACG WIN

Man of the match and new father Craig 'Pancake' Morgan. Photo: Jason Robertson

CRICKET

Jason Robertson

Craig 'Pancake' Morgan was the toast of the Alan Cooke Ground (ACG) last Sunday (Feb 27) as his inspired batting performance helped the Patong Penguins defeat the Thalang Cows in Game 2 of the 6-match series.

Morgan hit 108 not out in a week that will live long in the memory of the young South

African after he became a father for the first time.

The Cows, boasting a host of new additions to bolster their ranks, entered the contest with a one-game advantage, won the toss and chose to set the pace early by batting first.

However, newcomer Abu Bakar (7) and Guddu Yadav (9) would not last long, both victims of Jason Robertson (2/30), who had taken some time off from his radio modelling career to Captain the Penguins in this series.

Bakar was given a warm welcome to Phuket by being excellently run out and Yadav had his off-stump uprooted by Robertson.

Those would be the last Penguin celebrations for the better part of 15 overs as Sameer Kahn (84) and in form Mayur Deuskar (66*) snatched the momentum back for the Cows, playing a wide range of attacking shots to put on an excellent 154-run partnership that helped post a very competitive 221 target for the

Penguins to chase down, in their allotted 25 overs.

The Penguins got off to a stuttering start however as Fat Tony Van Blerk (18) and James Chataway (7) were involved in a terrible mix-up that saw the latter run out and on his way back to the clubhouse after some swift work from Guddu Yadav. Rishi Sadarangani (35) joined Van Blerk and immediately showed his intent by smashing the second ball he faced for 6.

He would add a further

boundary before holing out to Pir Sami who, to everyone's surprise including his own, held on to a catch for the first time in recent memory.

Pir would quickly regret that it may have been better to have dropped it, as it meant Pancake Morgan came to the crease, widely regarded as the best batsman currently on the island.

Pancake would not disappoint, going on to score another devastating unbeaten hundred (108*), along with

good support from Manish Sadarangani (27) and Curt Livermore (9*), who helped guide his side to a comfortable 6 wicket victory with 8 balls to spare.

Pancake was duly awarded man of the match for his scintillating knock. Congratulations go out to him and his wife Ivarin as we wish them and the baby well.

Anyone interested in getting involved please contact Phuket Cricket via their Facebook page.

Hut Hut! Phuket huddles up for American flag football

NFL

AMERICAN FOOTBALL ENTHUSIASTS may well be pleased to learn that the fastest-growing format of their beloved sport is now hitting Phuket's shores in the guise of Flag Football – a high-octane, non-contact activity where players attempt to pull flags from their opposition's waists rather than tackling said opponents to the ground.

Leading the way is Rush Sports Academy, an innovative sports institution which is focused on building a pipeline for athletes as young as three years old to adulthood, using American Flag Football to educate participants.

While a fun activity for all of the family, a large emphasis is also focused on character building,



Flag Football in action. Photo: Neil Quail

exposure to the English language, and what it truly means to be an all-around athlete. And as with any sport, these life skills learned through such activities can have a very positive effect on any youngster's future prospects.

Mzuri King is the CEO of Rush Sports Academy and comes to Phuket with over 10 years' experience in the industry. Originally from New York, USA and recently moved from Shanghai, China after living there for the past six years,

Mzuri held the position of Foreign Affairs Director for the biggest Youth American Football Academy, boasting 12 academies and 10,000 athletes enrolled throughout China.

Head of business development is Guy Choobal, a Phuket native and a member of Phuket Vagabonds rugby club since 2012. Recently, Guy was awarded the Vagabonds MVP for his work on and off the pitch, and is also an integral member of the Vagabonds Youth Rugby Academy coaching team.

Having spent most of his teenage years growing up in Canada, Guy is well-versed in both rugby and football, founding his high school's first rugby team and later representing Mahidol University and the Vagabonds at senior club level.

"This is an exciting time for Phuket Island to nurture another

sporting community in American Football," said Guy.

"Phuket welcomes everyone and is well known for its engaging international society. I would love to see Phuket as the world's best destination for sports events, sports tourism, and sports entertainment.

"With Rush Sports Academy, we are aiming to energize the locals, both Thai and Expat families, to get involved with more activities together, while enjoying the serenity of this beautiful tropical paradise."

Currently, Rush Sports offers community classes, VIP (1-on-1) training, and league play. Times vary based on location and age.

For more information follow @RushSportsofficial on Instagram or contact Rush Sports Academy Thailand on Facebook or email: Gorushsports@gmail.com

Neil Quail