

Will Chiang Mai become Hollywood East?

Creative Kingdom, a US-based film production firm, last month kicked off construction of the Bt20-billion Chiang Mai Movie Town Project, or CNXWood, saying they aim to be a regional hub of film-making.

"Thailand has the potential to host a 'movie town' and game business combination. These are not affected by internal political uncertainty or the global financial crisis," said the group's chief executive officer, Eduardo Robles.

The investment Creative Kingdom and its partners is putting into Chiang Mai would have to be five times larger to work in China, Robles said. The growth of the movie business and game and animation work will gradually increase, and Thailand can play a leading role in the sector, he added.

The project was announced in 2009 as using land in Mae Rim district. However, some parcels had ownership problems so the group relocated the project to San Kamphaeng district. Major foreign investors from South Africa, the Philippines, the Middle East and Korea hold 49 per cent of the group. But some local investors have changed as a result of the relocation. Some land owners have joined the project.

The group says the entire development will be worth US\$617 million (Bt20 billion) on 1,500 square rai. It will start the first phase this year on 200 square rai, which will consist mainly of studios and residences. It expects to spend \$70 million for the first phase.

White House Studio Complex, in the first phase of the project, will include state of the art studios with a full range of sound stages and post-production facilities. The group expects the development to

attract representative offices from the major Hollywood studios, and believe it will eventually become a thriving nexus of the international film-making market in Southeast Asia. The Studio complex phase is set to be completed by the end of 2012.

According to Robles, the whole project should finish over the next seven years. Additional development will include studios, world class shops, a theme park, a university, residences and a convention hall and hotel with beach and entertainment facilities. The entire development is expected to provide over 4,000 jobs, both local and foreigners.



Chiang Mai will also become a game production town by providing a high-tech infrastructure that will attract the world's major IT and game production companies to set up facilities in CNXWood.

The Board of Investment has already approved the three-studio plan. This approval is now in process to cover the wider aspects of the overall project.

US Ambassador Eric John said he welcomed the work that Creative Kingdom was doing to create business opportunities and jobs for northern Thailand.

The plan includes the development of a residential estate to accommodate the working community.

The Chiang Mai film production company Living Films, Southeast Asia's leading media provider to the Hollywood studios; Swedish game production company Mindark, producers of the Entropia Universe MMORPG game; American game producers Digital Stryers; and Dabok, a Korean TV and film production company have already expressed interest in becoming some of the first companies to establish offices at CNXWood.



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Chiangmai Expats Club



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Our Mission

Chiang Mai Expats Club aims to help expats expand friendships and improve their quality of life here. We try to serve the community of foreigners by

making it easier to understand the laws, language and lifestyle needs of our members and guests. Through the actions of our members and committees, with meetings twice-a-month, we strive to ease you into Chiang Mai culture by liaising with immigration and law enforcement officials, medical and insurance providers, businesses and property services and more.

It is our hope that through the efforts of the Chiang Mai Expats Club we can help members to successfully integrate into the Thai community in Chiang Mai and make contributions of our own for the benefit of all.

The Chiang Mai Expats Club meets every 2nd and 4th

Saturday of the month at the Shangri-La Hotel, Chang Klan Road (From July 2008). The meetings start at 10.30 a.m., but members and guests are encouraged to start arriving from 10.00 a.m.

The meetings are great fun, with a wide variety of speakers, an open forum, free legal advice, and a free draw offering such prizes as television sets, microwaves, DVD players and gift vouchers.

There is also an opportunity to meet with members of the special interest groups. For more information, contact by e-mail at:

info@chiangmaiecpatsclub.com

Coming Events & Future Speakers

24th July 2010

Scott Jones will be on hand with his unique sense of humor and entertainment style.

8th August 2010

TBA

22nd August 2010

Medical Guru, Dr. Greg Greer

Don't forget the popular DVDs and Books exchange at every meeting.

Outside Group Activities (OGA)

The Outside Group Activities operate independent from CEC without control or administration from CEC. The current groups are:

Board and Card Game: Chris Hedges - oga.boardcardsclub@yahoo.com

Chiang Mai Sunday Cycling Club: Michael LaRocca - larocca.michael@gmail.com

Chiang Mai Friends Group: Boong Chaladlam - boong@btsthailand.com

Chiang Mai Photography Group: Mike See & Wyndham Hollis <http://cmpg.igroups.com> or cmpphotographyclub@gmail.com

Computer: Bill Dahm - ChiangmaiComputerClub@gmail.com <http://chiangmai-geeks.phpbb3now.com>

Dining Out Group: Paul Schoenkopf - diningoutcnx@hotmail.com

Expat Women's Lunch Group: Fran Decoster - franybill@yahoo.com

Gardening Club: Mark Bleadon -

Email: chiangmaigardener@googlegroups.com

Web page: <http://groups.google.com/group/chiangmaigardener>

Gay/Lesbian Friends: Bruce Janis - lyc.cnx@gmail.com

Chiang Mai Hiking Group: Roger Williams -

ChiangMaiHiking@gmail.com

Reading Group: Janet Greenleaf - cmreadinggroup@gmail.com

Textiles: cmtextilesgroup@gmail.com

Travel Experience: Dorothy Engmann -

dorothy.engmann@googlemail.com

Writing Group: Lee Thomas - lee@lifewb.org or

<http://www.lifewb.org/writerswb.html>

Video Club: Mike - msg362@gmail.com

Chiangrai Expats Club

A milestone in the life of the Chiang Rai Expats Club, was reached on Saturday 3rd June, the Club having arrived at its 6 month anniversary. Attended by regular members and 3 new signees, the meeting was hosted by the Inncome Hotel and covered a good range of topics.

Top of the agenda was a presentation by Mrs Jarrusie Kewsuan, Head teacher at the Chiang Rai AMEC School. Khun Jarrusie spoke of the great success her school had achieved in the teaching of English, which in many cases was way ahead of comparable schools even in Bangkok. Her unassuming style and obvious modesty added to the charm of her talk. She quietly mentioned the Minister of Education speaking to her about education in Thailand, which proved that her opinion mattered when it came to this subject. With many Thai-Foreign partnerships having school-age children, the presentation proved both helpful and informative.

Kevan Nightingale, as the manager of the CREC, made a presentation about the SOS service, ably assisted by Chris Hedges, Vice-President of Chiang Mai Expats Club. As was

pointed out by Chris, many living in the region could easily find themselves in difficulties, with either legal or health issues. The service, which Kevan and Chris were keen to point out was a service – is often referred to as the 4th Emergency Service. Chris had some recent cases to refer to, which left everyone pondering the potential problems if any of us were to fall foul of a motor accident or had a serious illness. There's no doubt that at an annual cost of 2,000 baht, the SOS service offers genuinely good value, if only as a safety net.

It was very encouraging to see members of this newly-formed Club meet, have a chat over coffee, discuss the topics of the meeting and hopefully further their knowledge of the city. The club is holding a social evening dinner in one of the top Chiang Rai restaurants, Aye's, which will further the bond between residents of this small but active centre.

This article was written by Neil Ray who has lived in Chiang Rai for the past 14 months, Neil recently joined the club, will be assisting Kevan and helping to develop a CREC events calendar.



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LEGAL BEAGLE

By Kritiya Kanthasate (LL.B.)

ENDING A MARRIAGE (Part 2)



A CONTESTED DIVORCE IN THAILAND (going to Court)

If both parties can't agree on their divorce, one party needs to file a petition to the court. But to do so, you must have a cause, or what is normally called "grounds". The burden of proof will be on the person requesting the divorce and she/he will have to appear in Court and prove his/her motivation for asking a divorce. In Thailand, there are several grounds for divorce. For example, they include (The most common that we see are underlined):

The husband has given maintenance to or honored such other woman as his wife (Section 1516 (1) CCCT)

- The wife has committed adultery (Section 1516 (1) CCCT)
- One spouse is guilty of misconduct (criminal or otherwise) (Section 1516 (2) CCCT)
- One spouse has caused serious harm or torture physically or mentally the other, or has seriously insulted the other or his or her descendants (Section 1516 (3) CCCT)
- One spouse has deserted the other for more than one year (Section 1615 (4) CCCT)
- One spouse has been sentenced by a final judgment of the Court and has been imprisoned for more than one year if the offence committed is done without any participation, consent or in the knowledge of the other, and the cohabitation as husband and wife will cause the other party to sustain excessive injury or trouble (Section 1516 (4/1) CCCT)
- The husband and wife voluntarily live separately for more than 3 years (Section 1516 (4/2))
- One spouse has been adjudged to have disappeared, or has left the domicile for more than 3 years and it's uncertain if she or he is alive or dead (Section 1516 (5) CCCT)
- Lack of marital support (Section 1516 (6) CCCT)
- One spouse has been an insane person for more than 3 years continuously and such insanity is hardly curable (Section 1516 (7) CCCT) · One spouse has broken the bond of good behavior (Section 1516 (8) CCCT)
- One spouse is suffering from a communicable and dangerous disease which is incurable and may cause injury to the other (Section 1516 (9) CCCT)
- One spouse has a physical disability so as to be unable to permanently cohabit as husband and wife. (Section 1516 (10) CCCT)

The procedure

You must file a petition to the Court. If you claim for some money to separate the common assets, a deposit must be made to the Court. It is normally 2% of the value claimed. For example, if you bought a house while being married, or a car, and this is under "common property" (Sin Somros) for a value of 2 million baht, you are entitled to claim 1 million baht. So, you will have to pay 20,000 baht as deposit to the Court. If you win your case, the judge can order the other party to pay you back

this deposit. If you have children together, you will probably go at the juvenile section first. They will make a kind report that will be used by the Court. Then, in Court, for the first appearances, it's normally a negotiation session. If parties can't agree, a trial will be ordered. If the defendant doesn't show, the only evidence examined will be that of the plaintiff. If you don't know where a party lives or is, a divorce ex parte can also be done under certain circumstances, and after an announcement has been made. For the trial, the plaintiff must be present and has the burden of proof. Depending on where the proceedings are held, a divorce can be obtained in Court between 3 months to 1 year. This excludes appeals and special circumstances. Again, this is an approximation. Divorces are done in the Family Court division.

Divorcing abroad when in a Thai marriage

The Conflict of Law Act B.E. year 2481 enacts the following clauses about divorces:

Section 26 "A divorce by mutual consent shall be valid if it is permitted by the law of nationality of husband and wife"

Section 27 "A divorce cannot be granted by the Siamese Court unless it is permitted by the law of nationality of husband and wife." No matter where a mutual consent takes place, it is difficult to the other person will know.

The Supreme Court in decision s.5887/2533, whereas one party is Thai and another party is Indian stated that "A mutual consent divorce between plaintiff and defendant shall be valid between two of them only. It cannot be set up against their persons by acting in good faith except the parties who registered their divorce according to section 1515 of Civil and Commercial Code"

The spouse who registered their marriage under foreign law, can divorce by court order in Thailand, if one party sees that there is one of the grounds for divorce according to section 1516 of the Commercial and Civil Code, The spouse has to be present at the embassy of the spouse's domicile. The Spouse declares his/her intention to divorce by submitting a written document concerning marital property and child custody. Both parties have to sign it in the presence of the registrar and 2 witnesses. Where one party cannot be present at the same time, they can agree which party should submit the divorce first and the party will submit later. The divorce made abroad can be registered at a district office in Thailand.

First you need to certify paper from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of divorce country and translate into Thai and certify by Thai embassy in abroad. In the case that someone is dispute over divorce in abroad, the court will step in either certify or refuse of divorce.

Recognition of a Thai divorce abroad

The laws of every country are different and they changed quickly. You should verify if a Thai divorce is recognised in your country with your embassy or a foreign lawyer from your own country.

UK: We found a website at <http://thaiwomensorganisation.com/> talking about this aspect of Thai divorce and British recognition of it. One of the articles, available in .pdf, is related to "family law" between Thai and UK citizen. It says that:

"If the parties are granted the divorce by a Thai court and one of the parties had Thai national or reside in Thailand, UK law will recognize it. But if the parties have a divorce by consenting and registered it at a district office, UK law might not recognize it if one of party resides in UK within 12 months before divorce"



If you have any questions regarding the above or other legal matters, please feel free to contact me at

waidhaya@gmail.com

Quotes about Being Yourself (part 2)

“The great majority of us are required to live a life of constant duplicity. Your health is bound to be affected if day after day, you say the opposite of what you feel, if you grovel before what you dislike, and rejoice at what brings you nothing but misfortune.” ~Boris Pasternak

“It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are.” ~E.E. Cummings

“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life; define yourself” ~Harvey Fierstein

“Learn to... be what you are, and learn to resign with a good grace all that you are not.” ~Henri Frederic Amiel

“I am much better employed from every point of view, when I live solely for my own satisfaction, than when I begin to worry about the world. The world frightens me, and a frightened man is no good for anything.” ~George Gissing

“No man can climb out beyond the limitations of his own character.” ~John Morley

“There is just one life for each of us: our own.” ~Euripides

“Never apologize for showing feeling. When you do so, you apologize for the truth.” ~Benjamin Disraeli

“If God had wanted me otherwise, He would have created me otherwise.” ~Johann von Goethe



“Wherever you go, go with all your heart.” ~Confucius

“Let the world know you as you are, not as you think you should be, because sooner or later, if you are posing, you will forget the pose, and then where are you?” ~Fanny Brice

“Every time you don't follow your inner guidance, you feel a loss of energy, loss of power, a sense of spiritual deadness.” ~Shakti Gawain

“At bottom every man knows well enough that he is a unique being, only once on this earth; and by no extraordinary chance will such a marvelously picturesque piece of diversity in unity as he is, ever be put together a second time.” ~Friedrich Nietzsche

“The most exhausting thing in life is being insincere.” ~Anne Morrow Lindbergh

“Almost all absurdity of conduct arises from the imitation of those whom we cannot resemble.” ~Samuel Johnson

“If you are ashamed to stand by your colors, you had better seek another flag.” ~Author Unknown

“To be natural is such a very difficult pose to keep up.” ~Oscar Wilde

“We all wear masks, and the time comes when we cannot remove them without removing some of our own skin.” ~André Berthiaume, Contretemps

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What's on in Chiang Mai?

The First Northern Thailand Toastmasters Club

*When: Saturday 8th and 22nd August 2010,
6.00 - 8.30 pm*

*Where: Uniserv, Chiang Mai University,
2nd floor,
Hanoi Room*

Admission: 100 Baht

Contact: 053- 214-309, 08-1861-2284

Learn communication skills and public speaking.



The Royal British Legion, Chiang Mai Branch



1st & 3rd Wednesdays

Legion members - only social night. 7pm at The Olde Bell.

2nd & 4th Wednesdays

Ex Servicemen's Club social night, open to any ex or current serving forces personnel including reservists etc. again from 7pm in the Legion Room on the 1st floor of The Olde Bell.

Fairs & Festivals

'No Foam No Food'

When: Every Sun day.

Where: Wat Phun Ohn, Rachadamnoem Road (Sunday Walking Street).

Admission: Free

Contact: www.nofoam.org or info@nofoam.org

A little campaign to completely and permanently switch people from using disposable Styrofoam containers with food to something less harmful and more eco-friendly, such as banana leaves and bio containers. As from this April, Wat Phun Ohn, Sunday Walking Street, Chiang Mai, became the first place in Thailand for the campaign to be fully implemented. Please come and support us! For further details please check www.nofoam.org or contact us or type 'no foam for food' on facebook.com and become a fan of our page.



Regular Activities... Walking Streets

Roads are closed to all traffic and a festive atmosphere of shopping, eating drinking and hanging out with friends is what draws the crowds to these events.

• Wualai Walking Street – Every Saturday from 5pm - late. At Wualai Road.

• Tha Pae Walking Street – Every Sunday from 5pm – late. At Tha Pae Gate and Ratchadamneon Rd.

• Night Market – Every Thursday and Friday from 4-10pm. In front of Central Kad Suan Kaew. (Road is not closed but traffic heavy, so take care.)

AIS Regional League 2010

Date: 1st and 21st August 2010

Location: 700 year stadium

The Sport Association of Chiang Mai will arrange the 'AIS Regional League D2' football match. Tiger Chiang Mai FC will play against Phayao FC on 21st August from 5 p.m. onwards. 30 baht admission.

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Quotes about Being Yourself (part 2)

Continued from page 5

"All the knowledge I possess everyone else can acquire, but my heart is all my own."

~Johann von Goethe, The Sorrows of Young Werther, 1774

"It is not only possible to be the person you pretend to be, but there is less effort involved."

~Robert Brault, www.robertbrault.com

"We are betrayed by what is false within." ~George Meredith

"No man for any considerable period can wear one face to himself and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true."

~Nathaniel Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter

"Man is least himself when he talks in his own person. Give him a mask, and he will tell you the truth."

~Oscar Wilde

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind." ~Dr. Seuss

"All the mistakes I make arise from forsaking my own station and trying to see the object from another person's point of view." ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

"One's real life is often the life that one does not lead."

~Oscar Wilde, L'Envoi to Rose-leaf and Apple-leaf, 1882



When I travel, I make a point of doing what the locals do as much as possible. You know, be a traveller not a tourist. But sometimes you're better off just being a tourist. This proved to be one of those times. I had spent a couple days in Luang Prabang, a picturesque old French colonial town in northern Laos that's the country's main visitor draw.

I strolled around the 19th-century mansions, with their wrought iron balconies and louvered shutters, which now housed enchanting guest houses and artsy boutiques. I visited the temples with resplendent mosaics and chatted with student monks in broken English. I toured the Royal Palace Museum, which stands much as it did in 1975, when the Communists took over and the royals disappeared without a trace. I was dazzled by the throne room, with its walls covered with mosaics of tiny brilliantly-colored mirrors, and I rolled my eyes, at the chintzy plastic model of a space capsule gifted by Richard Nixon. I plunged in the icy-turquoise waterfall pools outside town.

In the evenings, I shopped at the handicraft market in the street and took in a traditional dance performance at the Royal Theatre.

Overdosing on quaintness, I was eager to move on. I decided to splurge and laid out fifty bucks to fly to the Lao capital of Vientiane. I figured I'd save myself a ten-hour road trip and gain some time in my three-week backpacking trip around Southeast Asia.

The small airport on the outskirts of town seemed unusually quiet, but everything was laidback in Laos after hustling, bustling Thailand. I was met with a blank stare at the check-in counter, but that's how everyone seemed here. This socialist regime really casts a pall over the people, I thought.

Blankness changed to frowns, then to a whispered consultation with a guy in an office, to a phone call. The manager came out. "Madam, no plane today. Day after tomorrow."

The travel agent in town had booked me on a non-existent flight. The agent arrived somewhat embarrassed. No, I did not want to stay another two days in Luang. I'd had my fill of colonial cuteness. He said he could book me on one of the tourist minibuses that go to Vientiane. Aha! I thought. He's just trying to sell me his expensive tourist service.

"Isn't there a regular bus?" I asked.

He looked uncomfortable. "Well, yes," he said.

"So, I'll take the bus."

He refunded my money, minus his booking fee, and took me to the bus station.

Bus stations are never the most savory of stops, even in the best of places. This one resembled a grimy gas station. And I was the only foreigner there. I should have paid attention to that.

A man who spoke a little English approached. He helped me with my ticket and pointed out the right bus. He was the only person who spoke to me, or even smiled at me, for the next ten hours. The decrepit, diesel-fume-spewing bus pulled up and we boarded. Thinking I was being oh-so clever, I sat in the rear so I could stretch out. I noticed the locals were arguing and crowding into the seats in the front. I should have paid attention to that, too.

I soon found out why. Shock absorbers were apparently luxury accessories here. As the bus gathered speed down the road, I was bounced non-stop up and down, my bum actually rising inches off the seat. I couldn't stay still. There was no way I was going to be able to take ten hours of this. I moved up as far as I could, but it was only a marginal improvement.



I then noticed the man in front of me holding up his camera cell phone. He was using it to spy on me. I was that much of an anomaly. I tried to bob and weave out of camera range, but he just followed me with his lens until I finally positioned myself directly behind him and he gave up.

It was a bone-rattling, mind-numbing ride - about five hours of cliff-hugging hairpin turns up and down mountains. All I could do was hang on. Forget reading or writing. The trip's saving grace was the panorama - enormous shark-tooth-jagged peaks of rocks soaring into the sky, terraces of lush green rice paddies and locals, conical hats pulled low over their heads, clopping along in oxen-drawn carts.

We stopped a couple of times and made use of the toilets - holes in the ground. I was

starving, but I couldn't make out what the food was so I chowed down my supply of granola bars and got hungrier. I did, however, recognize big black spiders at one stop. An old woman was pulling them out of a sack by the fistful and dropping them into a vat. With a slotted spoon, she fished them out, dripping in thick orange oil, and stuck them in my face. I thought about trying one - I really should do what the locals do - but it was mercifully a brief thought. I shook my head.

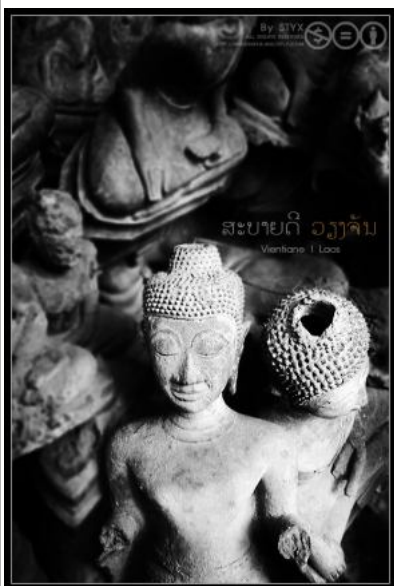
It was night when we finally arrived in the gravel-strewn lot that served as Vientiane's bus terminal. I was besieged by taxi drivers and chose one. I gave him the name of a hotel from Lonely Planet and he nodded. He then took me to a completely different, more expensive place, where he obviously got a cut of my room rate. He also charged me more than the cost of the room for the five-minute ride in his three-wheeled tuk-tuk. I started to protest, but I gave up mid-sentence. It seemed a fitting end to the day.

The next morning, my battered haunches recovered somewhat from the bus trip from hell, I strolled around Vientiane. It was a shabby, rundown city. No danger of traffic jams here - there were hardly any cars. Ditto for shops. Businesses seemed to exist solely in the district that catered to foreigners, the only ones with money to buy stuff, I supposed.

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Best Laid Plans in Laos

Continued from page 8...



The French are long gone from Indochina – they pulled out in the ‘50s – but some architectural vestiges attest to their former influence. Peeling signs like "Ecole Primaire" on government buildings, and the colonial mansions along the riverfront in varying stages of dereliction. The best - tended mansion turned out to be, unsurprisingly, the Presidential Palace.

Behind the palace I checked out two places of interest. Haw Pha Kaew housed a collection of Lao art and antiquities, including many ancient Buddhas. Wat Sisaket, a temple dating from 1818, sat on the same block. The cloister’s interior walls were pocked with 2,000 small niches, each containing a tiny Buddha. Lining the cloisters sat another 300 bigger Buddhas.

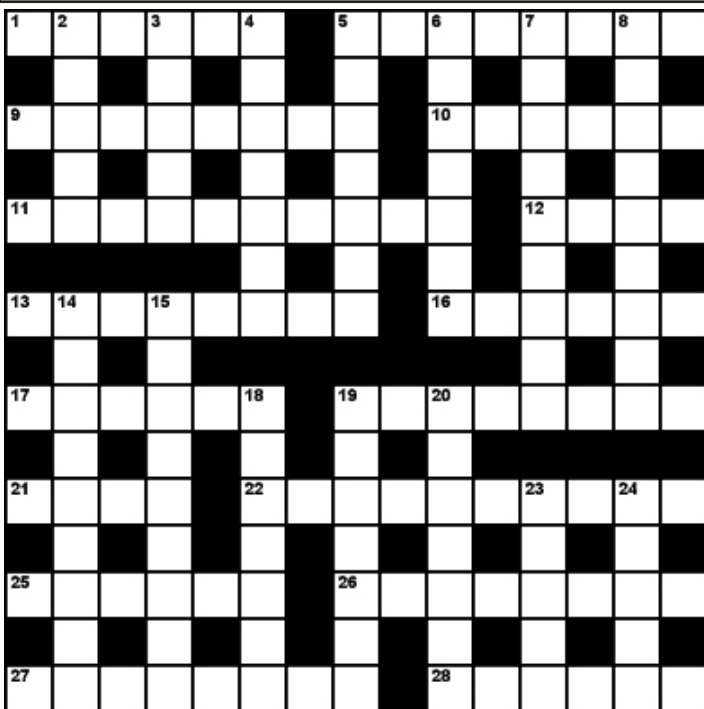
Behind the palace I checked out two places of interest. Haw Pha Kaew housed a collection of Lao art and antiquities, including many ancient Buddhas. Wat Sisaket, a temple dating from 1818, sat on the same block. The cloister’s interior walls were pocked with 2,000 small niches, each containing a tiny Buddha. Lining

the cloisters sat another 300 bigger buddhas.

I ventured into the morning market, Talat Sao, the city’s commercial heart, and trudged up to the Patuxai, a sort of Asian-style Arc de Triomphe at the end of a wide boulevard dotted with Victorian-style lamps. Further up the boulevard lay Laos’ national landmark, That Luang, a golden temple with a huge spire.

Dusk descended. I sat with the English-language daily newspaper and French-language weekly - both published by the Ministry of Information - at a café with some other foreign patrons.

Watching the muddy Mekong wash downstream, I sipped rich coffee – some of the best I’ve ever tasted - and tore into a baguette stuffed with a Spam-like "pate," which seemed to be the equivalent of the country’s fast-food. It’s not so bad being a tourist, I reflected. Next time, take the minibus.



Cryptic Crossword

Across

- 1 One taken in by a bit of student gold more readily (6)
- 5 Outgrowths of British farms (8)
- 9 Should this be sent round? (8)
- 10 Bodies of soldiers, perhaps - that is, with members on the outside (6)
- 11 Hostile 22 entered by father - death extremely likely (10)
- 12 Singer - totally get her out (4)
- 13 Against the current increase? Get a term's break (8)
- 16 Inventor of no team's comeback (6)

- 17 Aimen about to be left behind (6)
- 19 Sister's without broken neck health problem (8)
- 21 Infection in the first year (4)
- 22 Beginning of united Northern Ireland's small in truth, for Brunel, say (10)
- 25 Egghead twice left in vehicle to make room (6)
- 26 Birds assembled at finals (8)
- 27 Surprised that beginning went first? (8)
- 28 Language is in hand, perhaps (6)

Down

- 2 Hunter of stars (5)
- 3 More agreeable clubs in North? That's right! (5)
- 4 About to be taking in drug, free from distress (7)
- 5 Tedium brought forth party at the end of term (7)
- 6 Break down aluminium, in any direction (7)
- 7 Associate new moon with panic (9)

- 8 When getting up, snort plant with edible leafstalks, with lines missing - they're very small! (9)
- 14 Before the end of August, Bond Street is the most charming to look at (9)
- 15 One who journeys with bank employee's nearly extremely enthusiastic on the inside (9)
- 18 Renault production in which no power is transmitted (7)
- 19 Smelt tin with fine iron in one dimension (7)
- 20 Made pure metal to hold empty necklace under copyright (7)
- 23 Spring's fashionable country (5)
- 24 What may be on the roof until establishment carries it (5)

Covering the Unexpected

The expatriate living or working abroad is often faced with many challenges. Not least the language, the climate and the cultural differences in general. One of the main concerns is gaining access to quality medical facilities should illness or injury strike the individual or members of their family.

Fortunately here in Thailand such facilities do exist...but who pays? Many ex-pats come from a country where government hospitals take care of the health needs of the individual which is funded from general taxation. Living abroad is often a different proposition entirely and medical bills either have to be paid by the individual out of their own pocket or from a pre-arranged Healthcare Plan.



It is important to remember that insurance is there for the unexpected. Medical Insurance primarily covers the costs of medical treatment for what is commonly known as an acute condition, (a disease, illness or injury that is likely to respond quickly to treatment)

Choosing the right Healthcare Policy is very important. A wide selection of plans are available and many variations exist. Cover for individuals, couples, families and companies can be

obtained and added value benefits and optional extras can be arranged. The language and policy conditions and general exclusions can often be confusing and as Healthcare consultants we have experience comparing plans and advising on the best plans for your needs. We believe in quality over quantity and therefore only select the best expatriate health insurance

providers. To make sure you are getting the right cover there are a number of guidelines to follow and we have key criteria to assess an insurance plan.

The importance of each will vary from person to person. In assessing a healthcare policy we not only consider the plan coverage but also the insurers financial standing, commitment to the market and customer service.

*These comments come from Nick Kennewell,
a senior executive at IAG Insurance.*

*For further information on health insurance matters
please contact Andrew Williams at
andrew.pfm@gmail.com*

Senior diplomat visits Chiang Mai to strengthen links with Bangkok



A leading Chiang Mai restaurant, The House, hosted a Diplomatic Dinner on Friday, 25th June, 2010 to welcome Mr. Daniel Pruce – Deputy Head of Mission at the British Embassy in Bangkok. Attending were leading British members of the local business community, together with the Honorary British Consul. An opportunity to lightly grill Mr. Pruce was afforded to select local journalists before the meal – and most interesting it proved.

We learned that there are around fifty thousand British citizens resident in Thailand and to that number should be added some 840,000 visitors each year (estimated figures), Thailand being the leading long-haul destination for British tourists. Accordingly, the British Embassy is one of the top dozen or so in the world and maintains a staff of 160, 130 of which being local staff. There is a large visa section (an administrative portion of which is outsourced to a specialist firm, especially since many applications are received for UK study visas and partner visits). In addition to the political team – who liaise with the Thai Government - there is also a substantial Commercial section. Amongst other services, assistance can be offered to entrepreneurs who intend to start up businesses in Thailand.

Daniel emphasized the importance of British Citizens registering their presence here via LOCATE (an on-line website created specifically for this purpose and available world-wide).

Daniel has been in the Foreign Office for more than twenty years and is second only to H.E. Ambassador Mr. Quinton Quayle. In addition to his duties as Deputy Head of Mission, Daniel holds full responsibility for both the Security of and Administration at the Embassy. Daniel can count close work with the EU and the Lisbon Treaty, a tour of duty with NATO in Kosovo and a spell in the Prime Minister's Press Office, with Tony Blair, amongst his (extensive) previous experiences.

Turning to the motive for Daniel's (first) visit to Chiang Mai, he explained that this was part of an Embassy initiative to learn more about and liaise with the various business and residential centres around Thailand. Additionally, to strengthen ties with prominent local authorities; to this end, during his visit here over the weekend of 25-28th June, 2010, Daniel met with the Mayor and the Chief of Police, as well as members of the local community, both business and social. This is all designed to gain a flavour and feel for Chiang Mai and its residents and culture.

Relaxed, polite, informative and articulate, it was a pleasure meeting Daniel and we hope that he will return again in the not too distant future, to steep himself further in the unique environment that we believe Chiang Mai offers.

A Tropical balcony



By Dokmai Garden

Many expats move to Chiang Mai after their retirement, leaving a lovely garden back home. For those who begin a new life in an apartment, it can be traumatic not to be able to sit in a private green environment any more. If such an apartment has a balcony, you can still transform it into an oasis, but as knowledge about monsoon gardening is hard to find, the huge range of new but anonymous tropical plants might be too overwhelming. Maybe you try to buy a few 'pink' and 'blue' ones, not knowing their names or where they come from, and maybe they die after a week. Here is some advice for establishing a monsoon balcony garden.

The biggest problem on a monsoon balcony is solar intensity and heat. Check out where you have north and south. This may have a great impact on what you can grow. Arrange for a parasol, shade cloth or baldaquin. Both you and the plants will appreciate it, although the plant species mentioned below normally thrive in full sun. You need to bring in plants in pots that like it dry, but normally they appreciate some water in the rainy season. If they look like they suffer, show mercy! Good and affordable examples are the desert rose (*Adenium obesum*), oleander (*Nerium oleander*), dragonfruit (*Hylocerus undatus*) or most other cacti or succulent euphorbias, 'Mickey Mouse plant' (*Ochna* spp.), dorites orchids (*Dorites pulcherrima*), pomegranate (*Punica granatum*) and water lilies (*Nymphaea* spp).

The desert rose comes in so many colours and forms you could probably stick to this plant alone. It is native to East Africa where it has been used as an arrow poison. This is a very common Thai garden plant, almost always grown in pots, as the plant does not need much water but demands good drainage. To avoid your neighbour downstairs getting your drainage water on his head, put plates under the pots, but remember to empty those after watering, as standing in water kills many of these plants.

Oleander is native to western Asia and all the way to southern China. You need to put it in a very large pot and make sure the drainage functions well. You can find red, pink or white flowers. Remember that this is a poisonous plant so handle it carefully, or use gloves. Let it grow big for making shade and massive blossom.



"The grenadine juice of the Pomegranate is healthy and refreshing, and you could grow it on your balcony!"

Dragonfruit comes from Central America, although the

Vietnamese told the Thais it comes from Vietnam. Being a cactus it can thrive on stone walls. Commercial growers let it grow on a concrete pipe which they fill with water. The spectacular white flower opens only once, and only in the night, providing a happening to your dinner guests. Select the delicious red fruit variety, as the one with white flesh is tasteless. Other cacti and cacti-like euphorbias would thrive too.

The 'Mickey-Mouse plant' is so called due to the exposed black seeds that look like the ears of Mickey Mouse. There is one species native to Lanna, and some species in Africa. All of them like a very dry environment, but do not forget to water in the rainy season. The flowers are yellow.

The Dorites orchid is native to Thailand, and may grow straight on rocks. It has red or pink flowers and can stand full sun, but in a balcony situation the temperature may reach intolerable peaks, which is why some kind of shade against midday sun would be appreciated.

Pomegranate is a very attractive plant. There are dwarfs for small spaces (var. nana), but while you are at it, go for the Rolls-Royce variety Dhaeng Suriya. This pomegranate cultivar has deep red fruits, and small seeds, which is why this variety provides excellent fruit. Many pale varieties at the local markets are of inferior eating quality, although the flowers are pretty and attract sunbirds.

Water lilies should be planted in a terracotta pot with a terracotta pedestal. Add clay in the bottom (cost 5 Baht for each package), plant the water lily and then cover the clay with a thick layer of some nice gravel to maintain a clear water, rather than a muddy water. Finally add water, slowly. The deeper the water the better, but some varieties indeed survive in very shallow waters. Ask the dealer for advice. Put a fish in the bowl, to make sure no mosquito larvae grow there. When the lily starts looking tired, a bowl of water adds freshness and coolness, and also attracts bees, birds and butterflies which come to drink.



These are just some examples to get you started. You can also explore the many citruses, such as makrut-lime (*Citrus hystrix*), which is excellent for cooking, and lime (*Citrus x aurantiifolia*) for turning a boring drinking water into a refreshing and healthy drink. Good luck!

Dokmai Garden is a private Botanical Garden in Hang Dong, Chiang Mai. The aim of Dokmai Garden is to impart knowledge about plants. Dokmai garden is not a colourful flowershow or a picnic area, but a place for sharing knowledge. We collect all plants; forest trees, fruits, orchids, grasses, weeds, vegetables and even ugly and dangerous plants, too. So far we have 931 plant species on display, and a sales nursery with price tags, scientific names and a list on internet, just like in the west. In addition, we have 72 wild and free bird species, 26 wild and free butterfly species, 25 species of Mekong fish, western toilets and shower, a bar, a shop, tours, real estate offers, cooking school, garden school and mountain camping (www.dokmaigarden.co.th).

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Our blog provides knowledge and information about monsoon gardening for free:
www.dokmaidogma.wordpress.com



Wailing on Wales

By Scott Jones

If England harassed my Welsh ancestors as much as my British friends make fun of me, I understand why my relatives left the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, they ended up in a town and state that all of America ridicules—Fargo, North Dakota—the letters of which can be rearranged to spell “a good, hot, rank fart.”

I had no choice in being born half-Welsh—in the United States of America, which rearranged spells: 1) “An armistice? To us, defeat!” 2) “Fat, roasted, meat cuisine.” 3) “Oi! France made its statue.” 4) “Fantastic idea? Sure, to me!” My mother’s maiden name was Jones, supposedly the Welsh name for John. Darlene Jones married Ken Jones and my friends will never believe they weren’t closely related, probably brother and sister. I wish my mother had popped me during a trip to Canada, or maybe neighboring Minnesota, which at least produced a Vice-president who lost miserably in his bid for the Presidency because of bad hair, oversize ears and too many gums when he smiled, a recent governor who was a former professional wrestler and, recently, in the wake of 9/11 and former President Bush’s War On Terrorists And Random People Who Aren’t Bright White, elected the first Muslim governor in America, rather remarkable for a bunch of large, blonde, Scandinavian Lutherans. North Dakota has only produced one semi-famous baseball player—Mickey Mantle, one semi-famous singer—Peggy Lee, and several prize-winning cows—Bessie, Bossy and Beulah, though these may be the names of their large, blonde Scandinavian owners. It’s often hard to tell them apart, because, like the cows, the owners appear to have five stomachs. What’s the difference between a champion cow and its owner? Two choices: 1) about two kilos; or 2) lipstick.

Even though I’ve left America for good, my relentless British mates continue their not-so-subtle jokes about my sordid heritage. While standing with four Brits, in a vain attempt to salvage my reputation, I plead, “But I’m half-Welsh!” Like a well-crafted movie scene, as if they’d carefully practiced this synchronized maneuver, each of my friends silently take a giant step away from me. Is Wales that bad?

The Internet told me this negative British opinion started in 1847 with the English-speaking commissioners’ official report on their educational system, then largely conducted in Welsh. They concluded the natives were “dirty, ignorant, lazy, drunk, superstitious, lying and cheating because they were nonconformists and spoke Welsh.” (Sounds like most American’s image of Iraq.) My knowledge of Wales was originally slim: it’s the birthplace of gold-chained, famous-to-aging-housewives, big-voiced Tom Jones and has the town with the longest name in the world that, unlike my home town, must be difficult to chant at sporting events: “Go get ‘em, Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantantyl-

siliogogoch! (Fargo was much simpler: “Go, Fargo, far, go far, go far, go!”) With this many consonants and four “l’s” in a row, their language may have developed in pubs after several hundred pints of ale and sessions of slurred singing. I also learned these grim facts: “Jones” means “an addiction to a drug, especially heroin.” “Welsh” means “to cheat or swindle by failing to pay a debt,” perhaps causing “wales” that are “large welts raised on the skin by the lash of a whip.”

When I finally visited Wales, I really only remember castles, more castles and food that tasted like ground-up castles, perhaps the worst I have ever experienced. In London, dining is an anticipated event with delicious cuisine from around the world, though not from England. In Wales, I’d say, “Let’s try to find something with some flavor.” I did love the ale and consumed great quantities while trying to forget I’d have to eat again. I don’t remember anything about the capitol city of Cardiff except it was called Cardiff. Most people were reasonably friendly, not overly, okay, they seemed a bit distant, but maybe they could tell I was from Fargo.

Conclusion? Who cares? Make fun of me. I do. Final facts? Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantantylmahanburiromudomrajaniewsmahatharnamorphimarnavatanathitsakkattiyavisanukamprasit, which means “Bangkok...whatever.” Fargo means nothing, but it’s right across the river from Moorhead and everyone knows what that means.



Sign seen in Chiangmai: Are there Thai litterbugs in Wales?
Word count: 715

You can buy Scott Jones’ books and CDs online at
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Cryptic Crossword Solution

(Continued from page 8)



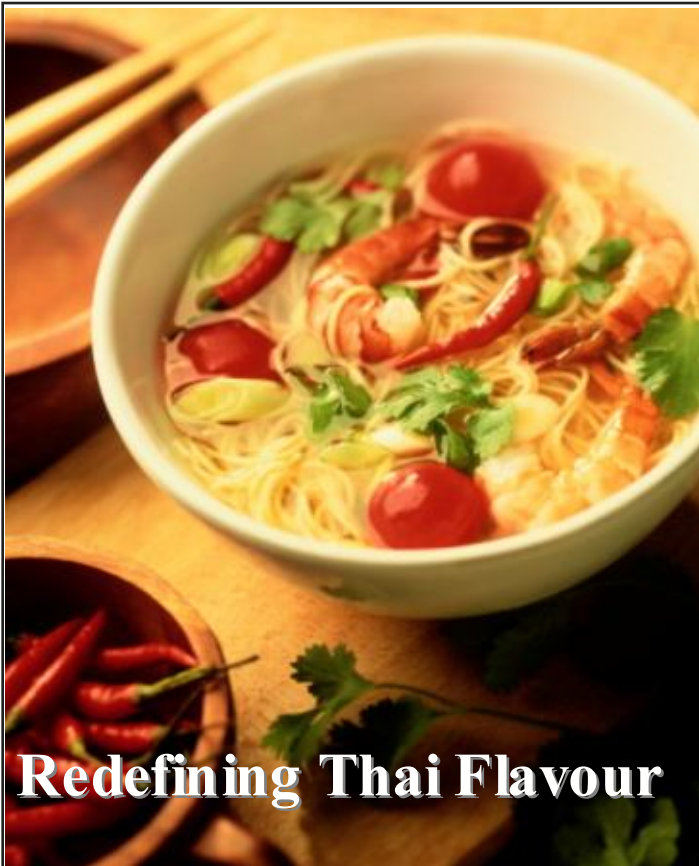
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Redefining Thai Flavour

The popularity of Thai food worldwide has undoubtedly contributed to the country's appeal as a destination. Thai food is now on the menus of cafes and restaurants in most countries around the world and rated alongside Italian and Indian as one of the world's finest feasts.

In fact, many people in Europe also count Thai dishes amongst their repertoire of home cooking skills and the main ingredients for a number of Thai classic meals are readily available in many supermarkets. Despite its universal appeal, the ingredients, flavours and quality of Thai dishes can vary enormously beyond the Kingdom's shores, which is why visitors are often surprised to find major differences between the dishes they think they know at home and the menu selections served up once they arrive in Thailand.

The food in Thailand is generally much more diverse than its international equivalents and also features considerably more herbs and spices. Essential ingredients like curry paste are usually made fresh rather than pre-bought, while a surprising number of vegetables and herbs commonly used in Thai cooking can still only be sourced at a local Thai market. In

addition to what many people see as the Thai classics, such as Pad Thai and Tom Yam, the variety of dishes on offer around the country is vast. Most regions have their own specialities and everything from street food to Royal Thai Cuisine is not only enjoyed, but also discussed in daily conversation. In cities like Bangkok, people usually have favourite outlets that specialise in just one dish. If the cooks maintain consistency, they are guaranteed busy trade.

In many ways, Thai street food offers a snapshot of the incredible diversity of cuisine on offer in the Kingdom. Commuters, shoppers and passers by can choose from delicate bites like deep fried vegetables in batter or opt for more substantial meals like 'kuay tiow' noodles served with a choice of meats and fresh greens. Many Thai people also have a sweet tooth and there's a bewildering array of hand-made 'kanom' or sweets to indulge in. Kanom Tokyo is a favourite in the capital, small pancakes made from batter spread out on a tepanyaki hot plate. Various fillings are added, such as quail eggs, sweet custard or even bite sized sausages, then the batter is rolled into individual pieces and usually served in pairs.

Of course, the globalisation of cuisine means that these once secret Thai recipes are gradually reaching far beyond the country's shores. The first Michelin-starred Thai restaurant in Europe, nahm, opened in 2001 in London. Aimed at 'serious gourmards who value originality and strong, fresh flavours'. The creations were inspired by Thai Chefs Bo and Lan, who honed their skills with Australian Super Chef David Thompson. The duo recently returned to Bangkok where they introduced new concepts like the bo.lan balance menu, combining 5 essential Thai elements to guarantee the ultimate equilibrium of flavours and at the same time establishing a truly global circle of new international Thai cuisine. Meanwhile, other Thai Celebrity Chefs like the famed Ian Kittichai are travelling the globe challenging contemporary notions of Thai taste. Kittichai has created signature restaurants in New York, Barcelona and Bangkok, developing his own interpretation of classic Thai fare and also producing a cookbook in English.

Having become an established global staple. Modern Thai cuisine is now moving into a new evolutionary phase, re-defining its traditional origins as a contemporary cuisine. Essential, traditional elements are being creatively employed by skilled Chefs to establish a whole new manifestation of the Kingdom's sense of exquisite taste.



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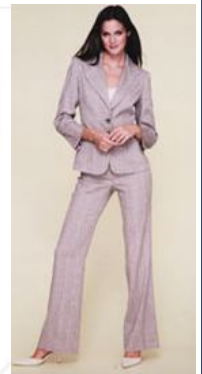
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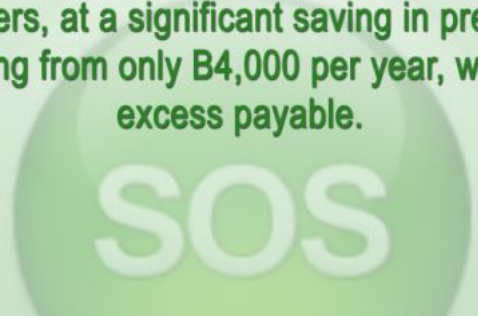


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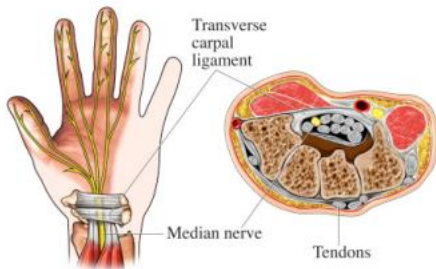
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By Dr. Ken Leeper
D.C. (Doctor of Chiropractic)

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Compression of a nerve in the wrist that produces numbness tingling , and pain. Weakness in the first three fingers and thumb may also occur. You may also have tingling on the palm of the hand often worse at night. It is more common in women over 35 years old.



Causes:

Occupations with repetitive use of the wrist such as using the computer all day. There could be a vitamin B-6 deficiency or other nerve disorder. The nerve could have an

adhesion anywhere along the nerve. Often there is a misalignment of a cervical vertebrae . There may also be a misalignment of a bone in the wrist. There may be osteoarthritis or a disc problem in the cervical area. Often it is a combination of two factors. We call this a double crush syndrome meaning the nerve is irritated in two areas at once. The nerve can often deal with one irritation but two can cause an overload. Thoracic outlet syndrome can also be a factor in irritating the nerve.

Diet:

Foods high in Vitamin B-complex are recommended. Some good foods are whole grains, seeds, nuts, soy beans, salmon, brewers yeast, liver, wheat bran and germ, and cod. You need to avoid vitamin B depleting foods such as sugar, caffeine, processed grains corn, and alcohol. (Nerves do not like alcohol)



Nutritional Therapy:

Vitamin B-6 250 mg a day, B-complex, Magnesium, essential fatty acids, and folic acid.

Treatment:

Often a cervical chiropractic adjustment and vitamin B-6 are all that is required to cure this syndrome. Sometimes deep tissue massage is needed to break up adhesions along the path of the nerve. Sometimes adjusting the wrist and wearing a wrist splint is needed. Acupuncture points can help and can be stimulated by the patient. (P-6 and TW-5) Sometimes certain drugs (some antidepressants and monoamine oxidase inhibitors) can deplete vitamin B-6. Sometimes surgery is needed but I feel you should try more conservative treatments first.

Sincerely Dr. Ken Leeper

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