

Thailand's Gay & Lesbian Monthly

Pink Ink

Email: pinkmonthly@hotmail.com Web Site: www.khsnet.com/pinkink Vol 1, Issue 5

Sex Change Clinic a First

by Peter Weekes

One of Thailand's leading plastic surgeons will soon be teaching the art of sex change surgery to doctors from around the world if his plan to establish Asia's first sex reassignment clinic in Bangkok proves a success. Dr Preecha

Tiewtranon, a plastic surgeon

at Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital and president of Thailand's Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, said the centre would also generate much-needed foreign exchange for the country.

He said he was approached with the sex-change-for-foreign-exchange concept by the Department of Export Promotion.

But the centre's focus will be patient care, not a fast buck, when the clinic opens in March. It will be staffed by Dr Preecha, a psychologist and other medical specialists, and will also offer a range of services, including counselling for parents.

"I started doing sexual reassignment surgery because patients were asking me to. I think it is better than having people contemplate suicide - that is no way to live," he said.

When he began operating on the occasional patient 20 years ago, most were locals. However, today business is booming and he estimates that he has done

Cont...Page 3

Bar Work in a Foreign Tongue

Just how do local sex workers communicate with foreign customers across a language barrier? How do they say "no" to unsafe sex?

Questions like these are the focus of research being done by Graeme Storer, working on a Ph.D at Macquarie University in Australia. Storer's approach is to study the discourse of it all, specifically, how the bar-based male sex worker in Thailand communicates with his customers. How does he negotiate customer satisfaction as well as payment? How does he tell a customer that he does not want to have unprotected sex?

Storer says this field of research is important because it

Cont...Page 3

Events This Month

Feb 1: V-Club is sponsoring a trip to Lopburi province.

Feb 14: Most venues will be having fun stuff for Valentines. Babylon will be offering champagne to couples. Sphinx will be having a sit-down. See also Heaven, Colony and V-Club.

Feb 15: Carpediem Galleries will be kicking off "Dream of the Blue Buddha" show till mid-March.

Feb 26: Neng art show to begin at Telephone 7:30pm-ish, wine and cheese.

Feb 28: Super Lex is staging the Happy Man Contest.



'It is better than having people contemplate suicide'

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Clinic, Cont...

about 650 operations and averages between one or two a week with about 70% travelling to Bangkok from as far afield as the United States.

Pink Ink caught up with Dr Preecha a week after he operated on Terrilynn, a 38-year-old computer technician from Silicon Valley in California. And when he returns from a week's holiday,

three more patients from Iran will be waiting for reconstructive surgery to repair the damage from a botched operations in Tehran.

Terrilynn was skeptical when first told of Dr Preecha's work. Although he had a perfect track record in regard to successful surgery, Terrilynn thought, "he was just too cheap". But after she saw the doctor's work on a friend, the computer technician booked

her flight to Bangkok. "This is the happiest night of my life," she said afterward.

Believing that it is a person's right to choose if they want a sex change and the medical profession's duty to ensure it can be done safely, Dr Preecha says he is also planning to establish a training programme in his procedures at the centre for overseas doctors.

Bar Work, Cont...

seeks to locate the discourse strategies that the bar workers have developed, which in turn, can provide tools to help other sex workers negotiate these obstacles. He's found that there exist a variety of negotiation responses. For example, when the customer refuses to use a condom, how does the worker resolve it without the customer becoming unhappy and still ensure payment?

One of the common responses to this problem, Storer says, is to turn the tables on the customer and say something to the effect that "How do you know I'm safe, that I don't have Aids?"

These responses can help greatly in intervention efforts.

There are three major components to the sex worker/customer relationship that must be addressed, Storer says.

First, the initial meeting must be managed, either by a "host" at the bar where the worker is being picked up, or by the worker himself.

In less tourist-oriented situations, the worker usually relies on the host to do the management - to figure out what the customer wants, and what the worker will

do. Secondly, payment must be negotiated. And thirdly, the customer must be satisfied.

Storer says there are, broadly speaking, two types of "off bars" where male sex workers may be found. The first, and more prevalent, serves primarily Thai customers. In these bars, the sex workers sit together in front of the customers, and have little say in the negotiations that take place

concerning them. The second is tourist-oriented establishments, where the workers are able to fend for themselves.

With a background in linguistics, Storer says he became fascinated by how workers manage to communicate with foreign customers. - Nick Wilde

(If you would like to talk about your experiences, contact storer@mozart.inet.co.th)

Pink Ink is issued monthly and edited by Nick Wilde and Jennifer Bliss.

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Quotes

"It's one of my most common fantasies... Absolutely, all the time... I think it's one of the most beautiful things, two women that are lovers. I guess I just haven't found the right woman at the right time yet." - Actress Cybill Shepherd to Los Angeles' *Lesbian News*, January issue.

"Once in a while I'm in a situation where I end up having sex with a woman who wants to and I think, 'Try it, I can try this,' and it feels good and it really is no big deal for me." - Gay record mogul David Geffen as quoted in the Dec. 28 Akron (Ohio) *Beacon Journal*.

"Perhaps our collective inability to talk about moral actions and judgements without feeling like, if not sounding like, the enemy, is the reason why we seem to be having such a hard time speaking out against barebacking (intentionally fucking without condoms). It's not simply that barebacking might cause one or both participants to become infected with HIV, changing a life or two forever. Barebacking purposefully increases the number of vectors of infection, thus increasing the chance that other men, men who likely have no desire to become infected, will become infected with a deadly virus. That's immoral." - John Fall, columnist www.cruisingforsex.com Dec. 29.

"Put that rumour to death. If it's an immaculate conception, maybe." - Actress Anne Heche on the rumour that she and Ellen DeGeneres are planning to have a baby, to the *Fairfax Journal of Springfield*, Va., Jan. 2.

"I remember being in high school and talking with my friends about gay and lesbian issues. If you had told us that six years later there would be a sitcom with a gay character who was confident and happy ('Ellen') we would have said you were crazy. There was no hope for us." - Actor Wilson Cruz (Ricky on 'My So-Called Life') to *The New York Times*, Jan. 1.

"Indiana becomes the 25th state to bar something that doesn't exist - gay marriages." - From an AP story on new laws that took effect Jan. 1.

Is There a Gay Community Here?

Is there a gay community in Bangkok? That's a question we've been asking at *Pink Ink* for some time - and the answer seems to be both yes and no. Yes, in the sense that there are a group of gay and lesbian-identified people who congregate at certain establishments, and no, in the sense that the gay community here does not have the same meaning as it does in the West.

The "gay community" rose in the West because of persecution and discrimination. But in Thailand, while the average gay or lesbian does face some social disapproval, the situation is not the same. The Thais are a pragmatic lot with a live and let live attitude that allows homosexuals to exist in relative peace. There is no need to hunker down in the face of overwhelming condemnation.

To be gay, for the average Thai, means belonging to one more group among many groups. In the West, traditionally rejected by most groups like school friends and co-workers, we tend to find a "home" only in the gay group and we put most of our energy there.

One of the goals of *Pink Ink* was, and is, to build community among gays and lesbians here, and consequently, the gay community question is important to us. But perhaps we're asking the wrong

question. Perhaps our sense of what a gay community should or should not be is not in tune with the times and the locale.

So, what is it that we think the gay community should be like here? A gay community should be that - a community, a group of people bound together by shared interests, shared location, or familial ties. Our community shares an interest in being gay. If you are gay, then finding your way to the "gay community" means being able to participate in the business of being gay. Older gay people, after all, have learned many things through a lifetime of experience - things that should be passed down to the younger generation.

As a community, we should provide access to information. Being gay is bewildering, especially when you're just getting started.

Lastly, as a community, we should provide the framework where gays can meet gays.

Bangkok's "gay community" is addressing these concerns in one way or another. There are, for example, about 20 Thai language gay publications (and 1 English one - that's us!). And there are gays of all ages, forming all sorts of relationships.

So perhaps we worry the gay community issue too much... what do you think? - Nick Wilde

"There's a lot of talk these days about homosexuals coming out of the closet. I didn't know they'd been in the closet. I do know they've always been in the gutter." - US Baptist Minister Reverend Jerry Farwell, founder of Moral Majority
"...Those who behave in a homosexual fashion... shall not enter the Kingdom of God." - Pope John Paul II



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Tower of Babble

by Whirlybird

More venues are opening their doors - and hey, who can complain about that!

First up to the plate: **Albury**, off Sukhumvit 11, a "Men's Club". It features a gym, restaurant, massage, steam room, and lots more. Gotta pay this one a visit! You can give them a call at 255-8920. They're open from noon to midnight daily.

Next stop, Sukhumvit 23 and Soi Sawatdee. The upstairs to **Utopia** is now called **Top Secret** and it's a pub with massage available. Drop up.

Whirlybird caught **Lee and Friends** at **Cyberia** on the corner of Sukhumvit 24. Cyberia is

an Internet cafe, but don't let that stop you. They feature live music, free movies on Sunday and much more. Lee and Friends play every Monday evening starting about 9pm, doing a wide range of stuff from the 60s, 70s and 80s.

Some virtual establishments for you: both **Heaven Sauna** and **Colony Sauna** have set up shop in cyberspace. See www.utopia-asia.com/heaven.shtml and www.utopia-asia.com/colony.shtml. You'll find **DJ Station** at <http://dj-station.com>.

The **LongYang Club** had a fab to-do late last month, and they've changed their phone number to 679-7760.

Coming up this month down

Soi 4 way will be lots of music in a massive effort organised by the **Rome Club**. Towards the end of the month you'll be treated to live shows on the stage of the Rome Club and big discounts on tapes and CDs. Lots of major music companies and artists will be on hand. And in March, look out for "Las Venus" every Wednesday night which promises to be fabulously outrageous with mile-high hair and massive camp. More on that later!

Telephone will be featuring an art hanging by Neng (probably upstairs) to be kicked off last Thursday of the month.

Carpediem Galleries on Sukhumvit 55 will be staging a hanging by Symon called "Dream of the Blue Buddha" along with pottery from Manan Kanaratana beginning on the

15th. Call 714-9903 for more information.

Wondering what to do for Valentine's Day with your lovey-dovey? **Sphinx** will be having a sit-down in the evening. Check out the great new artwork.

Khun Chompoo has taken over *Guide of Bangkok's Pink Page*, and graciously took note of *Pink Ink* though she did say we could be "improved graphically". We'll forgive her for that and wish her well in her tenure as the Pink Page Correspondent.

Chompoo, by the way, apparently missed our first issue which carried an interview with Manuel Pinedo of the Rome Club, who apologised profusely for the goings-on that took place in his absence. Rather than boycotting the Rome Club, she should, perhaps, live and let live.

Was that **J.W.** chatting up a bevy of beauties in **Sphinx** when his old Japanese boyfriend walked in and took a seat at the next table? Or **J.B.** who received a visit at work from her rather young lady friend who just happened to be wearing her school uniform? Or one of our glorious editors taking a nosedive off a bike out in front of **Utopia** for failing to see the pothole? Hmm...

Whirlybird picked up "**Sex, Longing and Not Belonging - A Gay Muslim's Quest for Love and Meaning**" which promised to be a good read but the writer turned out to be vacuous. The author seems to draw no conclusions from his life, and doesn't even address the issue of Islam and homosexuality. Very disappointing. Oh well.

Happy Valentines!

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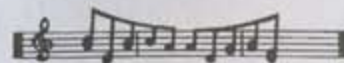
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Lesbofile

Jennifer Bliss

If you want to meet a "high class tom boy", the place to go is Thumb Up pub and restaurant - look for the sign with the big thumb - on Sukhumvit Soi 31, just around the corner from Utopia, on Friday nights. No one's saying there's sugardaddies there for the taking but, apparently, they really know how to treat a lady. BYO mobile phone. Karaoke.

If you do manage to snare a sugardaddy, maybe you'll be able to afford one of the lush array of lesbo holidays abroad. There's the infamous Dinah Shore Weekend from March 26-29 when "15,000 of the hottest

women on the planet" converge on Palm Springs, California for pool parties, shows, dances and comedy. O yeah, and golf. More info at www.girlspot.com. Then there's Olivia Tours which organises women-only vacations to exotic places like the Caribbean, Greece and Hawaii. Check out www.oliviatravel.com.

Down Under, there's the Fitzroy Fantasy dance party on tropical Fitzroy Island on the Barrier Reef on March 7, and Women's Island at Vanuatu in August. Check out Silke's Travel at www.magna.com.au/~silba.

A bit closer to home, those lovely Anjaree gals organised a

Sunday bus trip to the coastal town of Sattahip last month. About 30 members and friends visited Wat Yarnnasangwararan and the Chinese museum before heading off to frolic at Nang Rum beach. More trips are planned. Check out the message in Thai at 477-1776 for more info.

Fake lesbo videos to watch out for: *Chasing Amy*. The premise of this crap film is that all a lesbian needs to set her back on the straight and narrow is a good "deep dicking". It's an angst-ridden straight man's fantasy in which the lesbian succeeds in finding a "normal" relationship. Her experiences with women are written off as "experimentation" while she was waiting for the right prick to come along. Don't waste your money.



Pink Personals

To reply to a Pink Personal: Send your reply in a sealed envelope to recipient's box number at: Pink Ink - Personals, MBE Surawong #227, 173/3 Surawong Road, Bangrak, Bangkok 10500

We will forward your reply to the proper recipient free of charge. To place an ad: Rates are 100 baht for 40 words or less, 200 baht for 80 words or less, and 300 for 120 words or less. Sorry, nothing over 120 words! Send cash payment to above address by the 20th of the month for inclusion in next issue.

Thai Guy, Thai-Chinese, 27, professional, looking for straight-acting GWM 20-40. I'm interested in fitness, travel and foreign culture. I am sincere, down to earth and would enjoy the companionship of interesting people for friendship and possibly more. BOX 17.

EUROPEAN professional, mid-40s, living and working in Bangkok. Interested in meeting student/professional guy 18-23 years, for friendship and perhaps more - who knows? I enjoy reading, music and island holidays! Looking for someone who speaks fairly good English and has plenty of spare time. Let's get together and see how things work out. Ramkhamhaeng area. Call 917-6170 or BOX 15.

ME... Mature, active, straight-acting European, easy going, living and working in Bangkok, enjoy body building, golf, nature and much more... YOU... Athletic, straight acting and good looking Thai, open for new ideas, need strong partner, sincere friendship, bored of going to pubs only. You want to have lots of fun with me? Can you share my hobbies? All letters will be answered. Please send me a short note with telephone number and with a nice picture. BOX 18.

Fun-loving, good-looking, successful GWM, mid-30's, looking for special GAM or GWM of similar qualities for more than just a one-nighter. Like me, you should be educated, spiritual, financially solvent, sexy, at peace with yourself, ready to love and

be loved. Experience is a must! All serious replies answered. Box 19.

GWM, 42, living in Bangkok, would like to meet GWM only, prefer over 50, for dinner, movies local trips, etc, as well as sensual, passionate sex. French A/P, Greek A/P. Married OK. Box 1P.

Australian GWM seeks masculine, non-effeminate Thai guy 20-40 for friendship, maybe relationship. Me: 46 years old, straight-acting. You: sensitive, caring, non-financial opportunist. Bi-sexuals or first timers welcome. Box 1N

Australian Dyke, 35, Scorpio, working in Bangkok, seeks single lesbians interested in the pleasures of leather. Genuine ad. All letters answered. Box 1M.

Accommodation: Sukhumvit, 4 storey, 300-square-metre townhouse near Ekkamai. Share with Canadian. Your share is Baht 10,000 which includes utilities, cable TV, maid service and more. Call Daniel 713-3948. Box 1L

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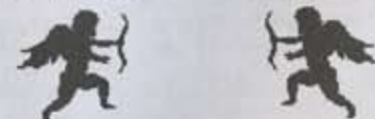


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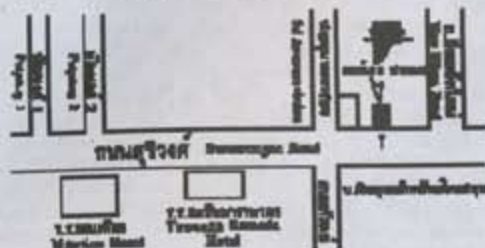
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HIV/AIDS LAW & POLICY: www.critpath.org/aidslaw

HOTLINE: Counselling Centre and HIV/Aids Clinic, 145/6 Hotline Villa, Viphavadda Rangsit 20, BKK 10900, 276-2950, 277-7699, fax 691-4057.

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SEA-AIDS MAILING LIST: South East Asia Aids mailing list aimed at bringing together those building and shaping the response to Aids in the region. Send a message to majordomo@lists.met.co.th with the message "subscribe sea-aids Your Name <Your Email Address>" (without the apostrophes)

THAI RED CROSS: Anonymous Clinic, 1871 Rama 4, near the Snake Farm, Mon-Fri noon-7pm, Saturday 9-12pm. 256-4109.

WEDNESDAY FRIENDS CLUB: Hotline (66-2) 253-2666. Support and social organisation for people living with HIV/Aids in Bangkok

Cyberspace

APLB is an electronic mailing list focusing on issues related to Asian and Pacific Islander lesbian and bisexual women open to Asian and Pacific Islander women only. Send email request to: aplb-request@kwaj.engr.sgs.com.

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DJ STATION: http://dj-station.com

DREADED NED: Guide to all things gay in Thailand. Easy to navigate. www.dreadedned.com

FILIPINO QUEER DIRECTORY: www.tribo.org/bakla/bakla.html

GAY ASIAN LINKS: Lots of links to sites for Asian gays and their fans here. http://members.aol.com/APXRDS/gal.html

HEAVEN SAUNA: www.utopia-asia.com/heaven.shtml

PINK INK: That's us! We're on the Web at www.khsnet.com/pinkink

QUEER SPIRITS: Good site for gay Muslims at www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Heights/8977

SYDNEY GAY & LESBIAN MARDI GRAS: www.mardigras.com.au

TELEPHONE: www.utopia-asia.com/telepub.shtml

THAILAND GAY HOME PAGE: www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/Village/2288/

UTOPIA: Bookmark this one! You'll find lots of information about the scene in Thailand, as well as other countries in the region, personals, shopping and lots more at www.utopia-asia.com

Organisations/S.E.Asia

ANJAREE is Thailand's lesbian organization. Their limited resources are aimed at Thai speakers, but they occasionally plan social, educational, or travel events that welcome visiting women. They also put out a Thai language newsletter. Contact them at: PO Box 322 Ratchadamnoen, BKK 10200. 477-1776

CLIC (Can't Live in the Closet): Filipino Lesbian group. P.O.Box 2356, CPO Quezon City, 1163 Philippines. Email clic@phil.gn.apc.org

GAYA NUSANTARA: Indonesian gays and lesbians. Jalan Mulyosari Timsur 46, Surabaya, East Java, 60112 Indonesia. Tel: 593-4924

JOINT COLLEGE QUEER UNION: We welcome Hong Kong gay, lesbian or bi-sexual students. www.asiaonline.net.hk/~skjlu

LONGYANG CLUB: East meets West in Bangkok for weekly outings and more. Membership fee. PO Box 1077, Silom, Bangkok, 10504. Phone/fax 679-7760

PEOPLE LIKE US: Singaporean gay and lesbian group. P.O.Box 299, Raffles City, Singapore 911710

PINK TRIANGLE GROUP: Malaysian gay and lesbian group. 23 Jalan Jati Kuala Lumpur, 55100 or P.O.Box 11859 Kuala Lumpur Malaysia 50760

10 PERCENT CLUB: Hong Kong gay and lesbian group. P.O.Box 72207 Central Post Office, Hong Kong, 2692-7506

Venues

AQUARIUS GENTLEMEN'S HOUSE (gay): 243 Hutyana Soi Suanphu 286-0217. Guest house with hosts.

ALBURY (gay): 71/1 Sukhumvit 11, 255-8920. NEW! Men's Club on Sukhumvit with gym, eats, steam, from noon to midnight daily.

BABYLON (gay): 50 Soi Athakarn

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CAT (gay): 450-452 Sukhumvit 22 (in Washington Theatre parking lot), 663-4031, 663-4098. Cory sauna, massage.

CITY MEN PUB (gay): 45 Thanon Sukhumvit 251-3262. Hosts with some Go Go. Popular with ex-pats.

COLONY (gay): 117 Soi Charoensuk (off Sukhumvit Soi 55), 391-4393, 7114507. Restaurant/Sauna. Young crowd, pool, gym in a charming home and garden setting. Massage. Open late.

CREPES & CO. (crepes and salads): 18/1 Sukhumvit Soi 12. Reservations: 251-2895, 653-3990. Gay-friendly hangout.

DISCO DISCO (gay/mixed): Silom Soi 2, 234-6151. Trendy disco popular with Thais, great music and atmosphere.

DJ STATION (gay): Silom Soi 2, 266-4029, 235-1227. Super-packed dance club. Cabaret at 12:15am daily.

G PLACE (gay): 1/2 Soi Sukhumvit 51, 258-0600. Food, drink and karaoke in a warm setting.

HEAVEN SAUNA (gay): 4/F Warner Tower, 119 Soi Mahesak, Silom (Soi opposite Holiday Inn, take right hand elevator as you enter the building), 266-9092

HENRY CLUB (gay): Silom Soi 2. Hosts. Used to be called Harries. Pleasant, redecorated, some go go

JJ PARK (gay): 8-3 Silom Road Soi 2, 233-3247, 235-1227. Popular with older Thai crowd, this pub features singers from 11pm onwards doing pop and Thai folk songs. Sanuk!

JUPITER (gay): 31/1-33 Surawong Road (next to Bangkok Bank), 237-4050 ext "Jupiter". Popular go-go, naughty, elegant, one of the best.

KITCHENETTE (mixed/lesbian): 1st Floor, Dutchess Plaza, 289 Sukhumvit Soi 55, 381-0861. Cafe, live music Fri, Sat nights.

NO BODY CENTRE FOR MEN (gay): Sukhumvit Plaza, 4th Fl. (near Soi 12), 251-4367. Massage.

OBELISKS (gay): 39/3 Sukhumvit Soi 53, 662-4377-9. Elegant 11-storey sauna complex with roof-top garden, jacuzzi/steam room and video.

RELAX (mixed): Sukhumvit 23 (Next to Jet Set). Karaoke and restaurant.

ROME CLUB (mixed) Silom Soi 4. Great music, dancing, drinks. Cabaret at 1am daily.

SPHINX (mixed): 98-104 Silom Soi 4, 234-7249. Cozy, romantic atmosphere, attentive service have turned many visitors into regulars.

TAWAN (gay): 2/2 Soi Tantanwan, off

ALBURY


MEN'S CLUB

Gym & Restaurant

- GYM
- MASSAGE
- STEAM
- RESTUARANT
- MEETING PLACE

Open daily : 12.00-24.00 hr.

71/1 SUKHUMVIT 11, BANGKOK, THAILAND. TEL : 2558920



Surawong, 234-5506. Hosts with Go Go. Popular with muscle maries.

TELEPHONE (gay): 114/11 Silom Soi 4, 234-3279. World-famous gay pub, 2 floors plus popular outside patio. Meet and be met!

THUMB UP (mixed/lesbian): Sukhumvit Soi 31. Cooking on Friday evenings. Karaoke.

TOP SECRET (gay): 116/1 Sukhumvit 23, 2nd floor. NEW! Gay pub with massage. Above Utopia.

UTOPIA GAY & LESBIAN CENTRE: 116/1 Sukhumvit 23 (enter Sukhumvit Soi 23 and take first right turn), 259-9619, email utopia@best.com. Gay shop, gallery and cafe. Open daily from noon until midnight. General information on the gay scene.

V CLUB (gay): 52/1 Soi Aree Phabonyolthin 7, (on right side), 279-3322. Massage, friendly staff, cafe and gym. Enjoyable atmosphere.

(Complete listings can be found at the Pink Ink Web site www.khsnet.com/pinkink or at Utopia www.utopia-asia.com and DreadedNed at www.dreadedned.com. Visit these for complete listings, maps, and comments on the venues, plus lots more. Also see "Men of Thailand" guide book.)

Queer of the Month

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) once claimed to prefer lower-class boys because "their passion was all body and no soul."

He also bragged to a friend of having made love to five different boys in a single night. "I kissed each one of them in every part of their bodies," he said. "They were all dirty and appealed to me just for that reason."

Wilde was arrested on a morals charge and sentenced to 2 years hard labour.

He died in Paris in 1900 and 50 years later the remains of his



Oscar Wilde

longtime friend Robert Ross - "The first boy Oscar ever had" - were placed in his tomb. - *The New Gay Book of Lists*

Brickwall: Southern US gay term for "Shut the hell up and get out of my face!" used in conjunction with the "stop" hand gesture. ("I've heard enough! Brickwall!"). The counter move to the Brickwall is called "Free Willy". If you are Brickwalled, immediately make your hand jump over the person's "stop" hand gesture and say "Free Willy!" (as in "I'll say what I want, when I want!"). - *When Drag is Not a Car Race*



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52/1 Soi Aree Phaholyathin 7, Phaholyathin road, Phayathai, Bangkok 10400 Tel: 279-3322, 271-2464

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