Lesbians in Thailand Speak Out

Lesbian issues were in the spotlight last month when the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Thailand hosted a discussion night on March 18 at its plush premises high above Bangkok.

Fielding questions from journalists and other members of the public were Anjareae organiser Anjana Suvarananda, Pink Ink co-editor Jennifer Bliss, sexuality researcher Megan Sinnott from the US, women’s health worker Kanokwan Taran and Anjareae member Khun Mau.

Outlining the work of the national lesbian group, Ms Anjana said they aimed to support lesbians and protect lesbian rights. She said that many lesbians did not feel comfortable coming out: “We want to put an end to this situation, not just for lesbians, but for everyone to be able to be themselves. It’s a question of freedom of choice.”

Commenting on the “coming out” episode of the TV sitcom Ellen which was screened before the discussion, Ms Anjana said that Thai women did not enjoy as much independence as American women did and were under more pressure from their families to be seen as “proper women” in public.

“Many of us who are not married live with our parents until they die. When we find a partner it becomes complicated. It’s hard work to come out and it depends on the understanding of your parents,” she said.

Ms Mau added that she didn’t need to come out to her family as everybody guessed she was a lesbian from an early age: “But many parents don’t accept their lesbian daughters and think they are abnormal. We try to explain that we didn’t choose to be gay; we were born like this. We feel it inside.”

Parents’ fear of their children being lesbian or gay was understandable, said Ms Kanokwan. “It comes from being afraid of seeing their kids live in a society with much discrimination. We have all as a society created this fear.”
Lesbians Speak Out... from Page 1

On the question of identity, Ms Kanokwan said that Thai women did not like the word "lesbian" because of its negative connotations. She explained that "lesbian" was tainted because it was associated with pornographic foreign films aimed atutilating men.

“We have come up with a new Thai word, ‘ying rak ying’, meaning ‘women loving women’, but so far it is not used beyond the Anjaree members,” she said.

Thai lesbian women generally refer to themselves as “toms” and “dees”: “A tom is a woman who wants to be a man and a dee is a woman who is with a tom,” Ms Kanokwan said.

Comparing tom/dee to the western concept of butch/femme, Ms Simnot said that feminist theorists in the 1970s dismissed butch/femme as imitating heterosexual roles, but that it was making a comeback in the 1990s.

Ms Bliss added that she found butch/femme in the West as an idea to play with to undermine stereotypes. “But in Thailand it’s a survival technique which enables lesbians to find a level of acceptance in society. We can’t assume a parallel with the West.”

Ms Anjana explained that dress codes made it easier for lesbians to identify potential erotic partners. On the subject of national political action, the Anjaree coordinator said that Thai society was not ready to grant legal rights to lesbians and gays as has happened in some other countries. “The level of politicisation is different in Thailand... I wish we were better at getting together and setting political agendas.”

“We must place the lesbian struggle in a wider context,” explained Ms Simnot. “In the US, for example, it came after civil rights and women’s rights.” Public demonstrations demanding gay and lesbian rights, she said, is not the Thai way.

“We don’t confront. We sidestep any issue we deal with,” said Ms Kanokwan.

The level of violence against gay men and lesbians is lower here than in the West, and there seems to be more tolerance. But without laws that tolerance can be withdrawn at anytime as the Rajabhat Institute demonstrated last year.
In Search of Sulayman X

Sulayman X has a lot to say about Islam and homosexuality, and the provocative stand taken by this Bangkok-based writer at his website “Queer Spirits,” located at http://www.geocities.com/WestIddywood/Heights/8977, has outraged Muslims worldwide.

This is evident from the “Comments” section of the site, which contains hundreds of messages, most from Muslims who condemn the notion that any Muslim could be gay or lesbian. Some are violently profane; some are lengthy rebuttals; some are death threats; and a few—precious few—are messages of support and encouragement.

His site is filled with articles and stories about being both gay and Muslim, and he actively encourages other gay Muslims to post their own.

Pink Ink asked Sulayman X why he’s doing what he’s doing, and he replied: “It needs to be done. There’s a billion or more Muslims all over the world. Even if just 5 percent of them are gay or lesbian, that’s about 50 million people. That’s greater than the population of some countries.”

He adds, “The religion of Islam is so oppressive against homosexuals that you could be killed for ‘coming out of the closet’ and that’s why few do. But that doesn’t mean we don’t exist. People have sent me messages saying that the Prophet Muhammad supposedly said all homosexual people were to be thrown off the tops of high buildings, or made to burn each other to death. Although I doubt he ever said such things, his followers believe it wholeheartedly. Just the other day there was a story in the paper about Islamic fundamentalists killing homosexuals by collapsing a wall on top of them, hurling them to death. In a country like Saudi Arabia, you could be beheaded. Imagine growing up gay or lesbian in these sorts of environments.”

Does he get discouraged by all the hate mail he receives? “Not really. Newcomers to the Web site who look at all those comments—all those awful, terrible comments about how I’m not even human, how I should be killed, how I’m unworthy of even common human courtesy—all of it has a profound effect that actually works to my benefit. When you can see all that hatred just sitting there, it makes you stop and think. And it might make heterosexual people stop and think about whether or not they really agree with all that, and whether anyone deserves to be treated in such a fashion.”

He explains that the Muslim holy book, the Koran, carries the story of the Prophet Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah, much like its Old Testament counterpart, and that the discrimination against homosexuals is based on that story. Aside from that, the Koran does not speak about the issue, he says.

What does the future hold for Sulayman X? “I’m going to continue with the Web site. I’m constantly working on it, adding to it, trying to get others to share their experiences, to write their life stories so they can posted and read.”

He’s currently at work on an in-depth look at the issues surrounding Islam and homosexuality.

Mardi Party...from Page 1

gest events in Australia. From its humble beginnings in 1978, when a motley crew of demonstrators demanded rights for gays and lesbians, and police responded with violence and arrests, the Mardi Gras has grown into an unstoppable annual expression of pride and glamour that draws visitors from around the world.

Among the 350 or so parade floats were 122 Xena Warrior Princesses, 70 marching drag queens, hundreds of bikini-clad marching boys and a large contingent of lascivious katoys from Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines. The parade was broadcast live on the Internet for the first time and recorded more than 20,000 hits.

It was a night to savour. In the words of Sydney Star Observer’s Greg Logan, “Any party that has a DJ playing in the men’s toilets, where dykes piss on each other in public is a good party.”

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Pink Ink, April 1998

**A difficult coalition**

The following comment is in response to the “Monogamy or not to be?” editorial in the March 98 issue of Pink Ink.

What a shock! To pick up Thailand’s gay and lesbian monthly and find an article by Nick Wilde supporting the tired old cliché that men have some biological imperative to need sexual variety, whereas women are biologically suited to monogamy! Actually, given that biological explanations for sexual practices are a venerated western tradition, with such precedents as justifying women’s exclusion from politics or blacks’ natural suitability for hard labour, Nick’s ideas are not surprising. Is this what the “rainbow” queer (read: male) coalition is all about?

Whatever the biological truth is of men’s and women’s natures is hard to say, but social mechanisms that influence, control, stigmatise and valorise behaviour are easy to see.

Women don’t need sexual variety, huh? What happens when women need sex outside of marriage in Thai or western society? They are vilified as hell-bound whores.

Speaking of Thailand, heterosexual women I have interviewed said that they too would like to see what it is like with other men, but they don’t dare because of the way others will react. How is it possible that men can pretend such uncontrollable ignorance of the double standards that society perpetuates regarding men’s and women’s needs?

Women have traditionally been bound to men for reasons of financial security and social standing - factors that depend on proper feminine behaviour, that is, no screwing around. Women who are no longer dependent on these factors face the same dilemma that Nick speaks of - the trade-off between maintaining a long-term love relationship and the desire for sexual experience.

No easy answers here, as many lesbians will tell you. Biological explanations usually justify existing social norms. We all make decisions on our behaviour and are responsible for those decisions.

So make your choice and live with it, and don’t try to push off responsibility for your actions by saying it is your biological imperative. And most of all, don’t tell women about our sexuality.

Don’t bother to ask why lesbians feel fed up with the “rainbow coalition.” Your article could have been written by any heterosexual man. Please tell me what we have in common. - Megan Stannet

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**Pink Ink Letters**

Thanks for Pink Ink, which I love. I look forward avidly to each new issue. It is, however, a curious reader by nature and have been on the verge of writing often. Please permit a devoted admirer two little gripes.

The listings: I, like a lot of my friends, have a Thai partner. There are a lot of us about. I have noticed that respectable Thais will not go into prostitute-oriented places. If we go into one by mistake our friends become embarrassed and want to leave quickly. Would you find this listings more useful if clear distinctions were drawn between sociable, respectable gay places and those providing the services of professional sex workers.

Gripe Number Two: Who are we wondering, wrote that piece on the Rome Club last issue? It reads more like an essay than a piece of journalism. Does the writer own shares in the Rome Club?

Is the writer aware of the history of the Rome Club and its relations with the gay community in Bangkok? It’s wrong to gripe. I know, especially when you produce such a wonderful mag. We loved the piece on monogamy, it was thoughtfully written and elicited some serious discussion amongst my friends. Queer Report is always a good read, and we love the coverage of lesbian issues and happenings. We love everything about you, honestly.

**Khu Kevin**

Thanks for your love there Kevin - we can certainly use it! As for the listings, we do everything possible to make sure they are accurate and up to date. Readers are always encouraged to help us! We do have a time trapasning about the city trying to keep up.

And no, we don’t own shares in the Rome Club, only wanted to let readers know what their reporter found. We earned a lengthy piece last year on Rome and the dreadful goings-on that took place when the owner was in London being treated for cancer. A public apology was offered to the gay community. Perhaps the best thing might be to forgive and forget and move on.

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Web: http://www.utopia-isiz.com
Tower of Babble

Whirlybird

Another sauna is opening its doors in this fair metropolis, and the word here is big: how about eight floors of saunanism? It’s called Hercules and it’s located in Bangkapi, part of the Grand Siam Inn complex. Call 919-9604 for some English-speaking help on directions! It’s not far from Fashion Island and Siam Park, if you’ve been out that way. Slated to open its doors April 16th. Full report next month!

Speaking about new venues, the upstairs to Utopia is now called Mercury and is finally in business. It’s a karaoke/massage pub, elegantly decorated, with friendly service (and some handsome gents to look at, Whirlybird might add). Mercury is being run by a former partner in Spago, Khan Ole (who’s also a handsome gent to look at...ah, life in the Big Mango!).

Hop along to Heaven, especially if you’re just 18-21 years old. You can get in for 120 baht instead of the normal 170 baht. Check out the newly redecorated digs.

Colony will be celebrating Songkran with a special Katoey Contest for contestants up to 30 years of age on April 9. Construction outside continues apace - will it ever end?

Speaking of Songkran, Sphinx may be doing something far more civilised for Songkran than flinging water at everyone. You might get the traditional New Year’s blessing by traditionally outfitted staff in a dry environment. Sure beats the waiters at Telephone, who have been known to dump buckets of ice water down your back! Be warned...and bring your own ammunition.

The Federation for Gay Games is gearing up for the biggest gay and lesbian event on the planet - the 1998 Gay Games in Amsterdam. A note from the Outreach Committee encourages more women to become involved. There’s a special Women’s Outreach task force. For full information, pay a visit to http://www.gaygames.org.

Friday nights at Utopia will play host to Cafe Society, a night of art, music and poetry. Local singers will “occasionally do their stuff” - short performances of original songs, most likely - and would-be poetry-readers are being encouraged to brush off those dusty tomes of Whitman and Ginsberg (or their own stuff) for impromptu poetry readings. Got a verse or song to share? Give a call to Jenny at 679-4683 to sign up. Those of you who remember the Unplugged Nights from last year will be happy to learn that some of the Unplugged performers will be on hand to entertain on the first Friday of the month.

Cafe Society organisers say they have a couple of goals in mind: providing an alternative to the crusty bar-scene, and providing an evening where gays and lesbians can mix in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. Sounds sanuk!

V-Club is now offering outside service calls. Dial up 279-3322 or 271-2464. Classical music continues on Sunday evenings from 7pm to 10pm; waiters are outfitted with new uniforms.

Whirlybird found himself drinking beer at G-Place, off Sukhumvit 51, recently. It’s a comfy, cozy joint offering karaoke and friendly service and massage (upstairs). Grab a few friends and check it out.

Spotted in a dry cleaner’s window: Anyone leaving their garments here for more than 30 days will be disposed of.

Advertising Works!

If you’re reading this, you can be sure that others will be reading it too. And it could be your business they’re reading about!

Pink Ink is the one sure way to reach the gay and lesbian ex-pat community in Thailand. Call today for reasonable rates and friendly service at 661-3150 ext 1515.

Get Your Pink Ink Here:

Alhurra, Angelo, Babylon, CAT, Colony, Crepes & Co, G-Place, Heaven, Hercules, Jupiter, Malaysia Hotel, Mercury, New Man, Rome, Sphinx, SuperLex, Telephone, Utopia, V-Club
Lesbofile

Jennifer Bliss

Lesbians have been in the news of late in the City of Angels. Anjaree’s highly successful coming out in December certainly set tongues wagging in the media, and last month Metro magazine published a feature on lesbians in Thailand.

Anjana Suvararna, the public face of the national lesbian group, commented on the response to the ground-breaking conference: “We couldn’t have done this a few years ago, get funding, or get people like Dr Yongyuth Wongpiromsarn or Khunying Amphorn Mee sook to speak to experts, NGOs and the media. The reaction has been quite positive.”

Taking the ball and running with it was the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of Thailand who hosted a discussion in March on lesbian issues. (See story page 1.) The hilarious Ellen coming out episode was screened with Thai sub-titles, a first for the Kingdom, along with excerpts from the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade - loved those marching Xena Warrior Princesses!

The prize for the most bizarre question goes to the middle-aged farang who approached me after the discussion and asked whether lesbians have a commercial sex scene like the guys have in Bangkok. We don’t. It’s not just a matter of economics: the demand just isn’t there. Does this show that men and women are fundamentally different in their sexuality?

Attention girls! Bangkok has a new lesbian venue. At The Time pub and restaurant located at 81 Phahon Yothin Soi 7 (Areo), is open daily from 6pm-2am. Tel: 617-1153. Live music. Young crowd. Check it out.

Utopia Cafe is still open daily until late for eats and drinks and on Friday nights has live music and readings. Call 679-4683 to volunteer your performance skills. All welcome.

With so many lesbians deciding to have babies these days, it’s becoming almost, well, normal, to be a lesbian mother. Star of many a lesbian’s fantasies, Jodie Foster, announced last month that she is pregnant with her first child.

“Yes, I’m pregnant. I couldn’t be happier,” said the 35-year-old actress, film director and producer. “But no, I’m not going to discuss the father, the method or anything of that nature.”

The two-time Oscar winner, long rumoured to be a lesbian, would only say that she expected to become a single mother “just like I was raised myself” and that the baby was due in September. Foster has always refused to discuss her private life despite being named as a lesbian in a tacky book written by her brother Buddy.

Another famous lesbian who has embraced motherhood is Melissa Etheridge. We haven’t heard much from her since her partner Julie Cypher gave birth last year. But she’s due back soon with a new album and tour.

In a recent interview Melissa said, “I’ve had a great time, I’ve been close to my family and friends, and it’s been really nice.”

But all of a sudden, I start thinking, ‘Gosh, I remember touring.’ There’s no theme yet (to the album). I thought I’d be writing nursery rhymes. But I’ve found I still have the places in me that I write from. I still have the passionate parts of me, the dark parts are still there.”

Rumour has it that Sandra Bernhard is pregnant, too. Refusing to confirm or deny the gossip, La Bernhard would only say, “Have you ever seen my tits this big?”

On a more serious note, the US Population Reference Bureau reports that almost 6,000 women each day were infected with HIV around the world last year, some lesbians. Please be safe.
Queer Resources

Aids
BODANG DROP IN CENTRE: 830 Galaxy Lane, Rama 4, 264-600.222. Provides free services for people with HIV/AIDS.


HIV/AIDS LAW & POLICY: www.critan.org/thailand

BOTLINE: Counselling Centre and HIV/AIDS Clinic, 145/6, Hotline Villa, Vipavadee Rangsit 20, Bkk 10900, 276-2590, 277-7699, fax 091-8587

MEDICINE: HIV, AIDS. DOCTORS WHO DARE! Provides health care for people with AIDS in Bang- kok. If you or your friend has HIV and is ill, please contact us. Our service is confidential and friendly. 375-6401

SEA-AIDS MOURNING LIST: South East Asia AIDS mailing list aimed at bringing together those building and shaping the re- sponse to AIDS in the region. Send a message to majordomo@lists.imt.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 Sathorn Farm, Mon-Fri noon-7pm, Saturday 9-12pm, 24/7.


Books

DK BOOK HOUSE: On Sukhumvit near Sil 12, this book shop has a few gay titles.

FLIGHTING LOTUS COMMUNICATIONS CO., PO Box 44, Ratechwen Post Office, Bangkok, Thailand: 10408. Also BUA, 1155 BOOKS. Publisher of such books as Queer, Novel and Not Belonging, Dear Uncle Go, and The Men of Thailand. OME, P.O. Box 247, Swath, Noriel PEIT/8PA, England. Publisher of this The Feature and others.

KONODIKHORIYA, in the new Grand Emporium just opened on Sukhumvit near the Queen's Park Hotel, this shop has a treme- nously selective range of gay and lesbian literature and we do mean extensive. Worth a visit.

Cyberspace

APLIS 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 : aplis-request@us.uiuc.edu

COLONY SAUNA: www.utosa-asia.com/colony.shtml

CREATIEF & CO: www.sala.net/creatief

DI STATION: http://di-station.com

DREAMED OF: Visit all things gay in Thailand. Easy to navigate. www.dreamedof.com

FILIPINO QUEER DIRECTORY: www.org/philippines/ directory.html

GAY ASIAN LINKS: Lots of links to sites for Asian gays and their fans here: www.members.aol.com/exgals.org

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

LONG YONG CO: www.longyong.co.th/longyong.html

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

QUEER SPIRITS: Good site for gay Muslims at www.geocities.com/WhidaleHighlands/8777

SYDNEY GAY & LESBIAN MARDI GRAS:

www.maridgras.com.au

TELEPHONE: www.telephonepub.com

THAILAND GAY HOME PAGE: www.geocities.com/ WestHollywoodVillage/2398

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

Organisations/S.E. Asia

ANAREE is Thailand's lesbian organisation. Their limited resources are aimed at Thai speakers, but they occasionally plan social, educational, or travel events that welcome visiting women. They also put on a Thai-language newsletter. Contact them at: PO Box 122, Sathummaralom, Bangkok 10200; 477-1766.

CLIC (Can't Live in the Closet): Filipino Lesbian group. PO Box 2366, P.O. Box Queen City, 1163 Philippines. Email ciclive@philas.org.ph

GAYA NUSANTARA: Indonesian gay and lesbian. Julian Muqoori Timur 46, Sariayu, East Java, 50112 Indonesia. Tel: 294-9292

JOINT COLLEGE QUEER UNION: We welcome Hong Kong gay, lesbian or bisexual students. www.asianroc.org.hk

LONGYONG CLUB: East meets West in Hong Kong for weekly outings and more. Membership fee: PO Box 1077, Simon, Bangkok, 1054. Phone: 2679-7760

PEOPLE LIKE US: Singaporean gay and lesbian group. PO Box 299, Radhus, Singapore, 91710

PINK THAIHEGURU: Malaysian gay and lesbian group. 23 Jalan Ini Kuchai Lama, 55100 or PO Box 1859 Kuchai Lama Malaysia 50760.

POLLUX CLUB: Hong Kong gay and lesbian group. PO Box 7202 Central Post Office, Hong Kong, 109-2006

Pattaya

ADAM & EVE COCKTAIL LOUNGE & MASSAGE: Soi 2, North Pattaya. (038) 426473. Cabaret at 20.00. Show (Wedendays).


BODYCARE: 325/77 Pattaya Soi 2, South Pattaya. Cabaret at 02.00, 23.30, 01.00.

CHARLIE'S BOYS: 325/44 Pattaya Soi 1, South Pattaya. (038) 429560, 428847.


CRAYZ BAR & DISCO: 276-34 Soi Siam Plaza Pattaya, South Pattaya. (038) 410440. Erotic show.

L'A FEY ROYAL HOTEL: 325/101 Pattaya Soi 3, South Pattaya. (038) 425525, 428303. Restaurante Piano Bar and terrace bar. Well situated, especially during the high season from November to February.


Manumok Complex: 8/6, Pattaya North Rd. (038) 425813. Coffee shop, pool, lots more.

Memory Bar: 15/4101/10 Soi 18 (Soi Wong Amat) Thonson Nakaia. Cabaret at 02.30. Live Show at midnight.

NoBoBy BoDeY COnFirMeD: 1518/1/11 Soi Anan Thakoon, North Pattaya. (038) 370/70. Message. Traditional Thai skinssessing massage.

RaiBway: 325/106 Pattaya Soi 3, South Pattaya. (038) 428315, 428303.

Rebel Boy Bar: 325/85 Pattaya Soi 1, South Pattaya.

Le Café Royale

HOTEL, RESTAURANT AND PIANO BAR

Le Café Royale is situated in the very heart of Boystown, the centre of Pattaya's gay night life. It is in walking distance of a score of Go-go Bars and refreshment spots catering exclusively to a gay male clientele.

Le Café Royale offers guests most comfortable Standard, Superior and Deluxe rooms and Suites, all of which are quiet, air-conditioned, with full facilities and provided with on-suite shower room with toilet.

The hotel's Coffee Shop, Restaurant and Terrace Bar are open 24 hours. It's renowned Piano Bar and Restaurant opens from 7.30 pm on (19.30 hr.) to around 4 (004) in the morning. Our resident pianist entertains until midnight (24.00 hr.) and thereafter a vocalist and accompanying musicians entertain until closing time.

Contact us for a reservation.

038/242128. An open-air beer bar with hosts.

SKY BAR: 146/82 Thaon Taprajas, roof of Mr. Mark Hotel. South Pattaya. (038) 421112, 252997. Live shows.

STAR BOYS BOYS: 184/322 Thaon Pattaya 2, South Pattaya. (038) 249852.

TOK BOYS NIGHT CLUB: 325/100 Pattaya Soi 3, South Pattaya. (038) 423004, 422992, 428371.

WHY NOT: 325/25 Pattaya Soi 1, South Pattaya. (038) 246499.

Venues/Bangkok


ALUBRY: 71/1 Sukhumvit 11, 255-8920. NEW! Polish Men's Clubhouse sukhumvit with massage, g/m, good food, steam room, gym to midnight daily. Elegant, private, parking.

ANGELO SALMA (gay): 1023/101 Thaon Phloem, 2529076, 2526921. Gym, private room, video room and more.


AIAIYON (gay): 50 Soi Athakhram Pratit, near Malaysia Hotel, 213-2108. World class men's complex, one of the finest in Asia.

BARBERRY (gay): 35543 Thaon Suwongs, 2531078. Favourite of days gone by, still drawing patrons.

BELAMMEN CLUB (gay): 971/22 Phooyothin Rd. Sammamai, Phayaai, Bkk, 10400. 01-934-0074, 02-279-1343. Hosts, pub and karaoke from 5pm to 00.00 daily.

BOY COCKTAIL LOUNGE: 3/1 Sukhumvit Soi 11 (Soi Chai Yui), 253727, 2519582. Popular with expats.

CAY (gay): 450-452 Sukhumvit 22 (in Washington Theatre parking lot); 663-4031, 663-4280. Cozy sauna, massage. 3pm midnight.

CHARLES HIDEAWAY (gay): 85 Slom Road Soi 2 Quiet bar next to DJ Station. Classical music.


DAVE DE BANGKOK (gay) (1) Chao Phra Rd, Pramkarm, BKK, near Kao San Road, 625-0429-11. Sauna for me, men, and gay say themselves.

DISCO DISCO (gay/mixed): 71 Sukhumvit Soi 21, 234-6151. Trendy disco popular with Thai, great music and atmosphere.


GOLDEN COKK (gay): 79/2 Anuman Radjon, Siam Wong, BKK, 256-3559. Go-go, hosts, Noon - 1am.


HEAVEN SAUNA (gay): 84/7 Warer Tower, 119 Soi Mahabhi, Silom (opposite Holiday Inn, take right hand elevator as you enter the building). 266-0992.

HENRY CLUB (gay) (Soi 21): 78/2 Sukhumvit Soi 21. Used to be called Harries. Pleasant, redecorated, scene go.


PHUKET SAUNA (gay): 32/1 Soi 16, 2500-1712, 256-3617. 6pm to 9am daily. Go go and hosts.

PARK (gay): 8-3 Silom Road Soi 2, 233-3247, 235-1277.


PHUKET (gay): 1-31/13 Samrit Road, next to Bangkok Bank, 253-7400 ext “Jupiter.” Popular go-go, nanaboy, elegant, one of the best.

PHUKET (gay): 1-31/13 Samrit Road, next to Bangkok Bank, 253-7400 ext “Jupiter.” Popular go-go, nanaboy, elegant, one of the best.

QUIT (gay): 39/2 Soi Asman Ratthanrut, Soi Thantawan, Siam, Small bar, hosts approach. English spoken.

QUIET (gay): 71 Sukhumvit Soi 23, 253-1404. Quiet, romantic atmosphere, attentive service, turn many visitors into regulars. List of cocktails, great food.

QUICK (gay): 52/1 Soi Aree Phratuk, Yetthom 7 (Aree), 256-3379. 256-3219, 256-3219. Go-go and hosts.

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Queer of the Month

Parinya Kiatbusaba

Amazing Thailand indeed! Residents of the fair metropolis - and the world, it seems - were caught up in "Parinya Fever" and those who never saw a round of Muay Thai boxing in their lives were crowded around television sets everywhere.

The source of this mania was Parinya Kiatbusaba, a 16 year old boxer from the North, who also happens to be a cross-dresser. He's knocked out 18 of his 22 opponents so far, and his debut in Bangkok was nothing less than sensational.

We've chosen Parinya as Queer of the Month for his truly heroic courage: not in the ring, but in his personal life. It's not always easy to be who you are, much less when you're young, and still much less when you're in the public eye.

As well, while we talk about a lot of gays and lesbians, we often forget the other leg of the "Queer Triangle" - the transgendered community, those who feel trapped in the body of the wrong sex, and those who prefer to wear the clothes of the opposite sex. Their struggle is just as valiant and difficult.

So, hats off to Parinya. May we all be blessed with such courage and dignity.

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