



Over 16 Years of Expats helping Expats

June 3, 2018

The Pattaya City Expats Club was honored to have two speakers during a recent Sunday Morning Meeting. The first speaker, Jonathan Finch, spoke about his latest novel, "How to Avoid Madness in Pattaya, (or not)" and on a totally different topic, Insurance Broker Chamnong (Neng) Anusat-utai. Spoke about the insurer issuing the Club's Group Health Insurance policy decision to no longer offer the program.

Jonathan Finch, author, teacher and lector, has published almost a dozen books, in the last few years, including prize-winning poems. He was born in London, to an Irish mother and a first-generation father from England (grandparents are from Austria and Poland). He has lived in Italy and worked at the University of Rome as a lector. He states that "He found Thailand, and it found him, and he has stayed in Thailand ever since".

His review of the novel "How to Avoid Madness in Pattaya, (or not)", begins with a disclaimer: "I am no expert on madness.". However, he goes into some length describing his understanding of madness and society's belief in the mad. Jonathan cites the major forms of madness, like paranoia, schizophrenia and other forms, such as personality disorders. He points out that anyone who cannot listen and hold a conversation is crazy. He questions society's understanding of madness and talks about the views of noted psychiatrist R. D. Laing, a Scottish psychiatrist who wrote extensively on mental illness and that symptoms of mental illness may just be a description of lived experience. He also cited Erasmus and Burton, two critics of vanity in people, and mentioned that Pattaya is full of people in love with themselves (vain, boastful people).

Jonathan talked about the fact that Thailand has very strict laws concerning the use of drugs and issues very severe punishments against offenders. However, he talks about three intoxicants or drugs that are much more harmful, yet legal, that cause devastation. Those substances are alcohol, an obviously intoxicating liquid, tobacco, a low-cost product, popular in Thailand and then there is sugar, probably the number-one killer, over the long term. He also talks about driving in Thailand and how crazy it is to travel on the roadways. In reference to his book, "How to Avoid Madness in Pattaya, (or not)", his approach deals with the madness of having unlimited sex with an unlimited number of people.

In an earlier novel, titled, "DEAR PATTAYA!!!: A Novel of Sexy Letters and Sexy Dreams (For Frank)" that Jonathan wrote for his Austrian friend, Frank. The purpose was to entice his friend to come back to "Fun City" and depicts Pattaya as a place full of fun, with bargirls, sensational sex, and more. But, at a certain point the author runs out of steam. He commissions his friend, "The King", to continue writing but he gets sick and yet another writer-narrator is summoned from the UK. A "criminal cook" continues stimulating Frank's libido, but his intentions are thwarted because the social worker, "after touring the bars and staring into the glitzy face of sexual depravity, decides to close down Pattaya" So, the book evolved into a collection of e-mails that outlined the life in Pattaya, which served the purpose and is quite entertaining.

Jonathan provided a couple of examples of his collection, he then invited Member Ren Lexander to better demonstrate the threads within the e-mails. Some of the e-mails deal with the gullible relationships between the farang and the bar-girls. The humorous exchanges between an obviously deluded man and his desire for sympathy is explored. Advice is offered and the life in Pattaya is explained.

One of the primary ways of avoiding madness in Pattaya, in Jonathan's opinion, is to practice moderation and the choice of a life-style with one woman or partner. He advocates that cardinal virtues are correct and that those virtues include humility, kindness, abstinence, chastity, patience, liberality, and diligence. He asked the audience to consider the seven deadly sins or classification of vices within Christian teachings, which he quotes from the Bible (Ecclesiastes): pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth.

The second speaker, insurance broker, Chamnong (Neng) Anusat-utai talked about corporate changes that have taken place which impacts the club's group health insurance policy and discussed some alternatives. We have included his information in the Group Health section of the Newsletter and will be revising our website information to incorporate the Group insurer's offer of other plan(s) that will be available for members that have the Group policy. Neng suggested, however, that barring preexisting condition issues, some may wish to insure with a different company that offers a good package and he would suggest those wanting a policy in the future use it as it is renewable to the age of 90.

Khun Neng has been a professional insurance broker for more than 12 years. He works with leading international & local insurance companies to provide a quality service for many clients and expats from all over Thailand.