

Continued From Page 7

**A group of fellow workers** recently met in a bar after work. As they seated themselves, a waitress asked if they could "kindly refrain from moving the chairs, because it affected the feng shui of the restaurant". Well, kiss my aura.

As they seated themselves, a waitress asked if they could "kindly refrain from moving the chairs, because it affected the feng shui of the restaurant". Well, kiss my aura.

I don't know if I am more saddened by the request or by my friends' meek compliance.

\*\*\*\*\*

**A visitor was confused:** "When we go to a wat, we go to give, not to get, right?" Right. But the value of the latter depends on the depth and sincerity of the former. Right?

\*\*\*\*\*

**Fifty-four years ago**, the Reubeni Foundation in Jerusalem published the first volume of the Jerusalem Chronicles, relating Old Testament events in broadsheet format.

Dated in Hebrew, Latin and cuneiform, sample headlines read: "Sodom and Gomorrah wiped out in worst disaster since Flood"; "Moses returns from Mt Sinai, smashes tablets of the Law - sight of golden calf stuns leader"; "Abraham comes out of furnace - alive!"

The military correspondent's report - filed by chariot - on when David's tribe faced up to the other tribes for the crown of Israel, is headed: "David an old hand at braving heavy odds - remember Goliath?"

\*\*\*\*\*

**My favourite** example of a leader apologising is Adolf Schicklgruber - Hitler to his mates - in late April 1945. Hunkered 12 metres down in his Berlin bunker, dribbling, reduced to a diet of cake and champagne, feeling the ground rumble as the Russian artillery shells came closer and closer, the Fuehrer was heard to mutter, ruminatively: "Afterward, one regrets having been so - benevolent."

Well. The old softie.

Here in Thailand, the views of the public by the powers that be are often regarded not as common sense but as unpleasant and vengeful. Fair enough: the feeling may be mutual.

But the public don't just want someone to feel their pain, just someone to understand their anger.

The point is, a political apology only works when the public finds it believable and the alleged miscreant does not appear to have been forced by expediency to make it.

It takes real courage to create a truly just society, for courage is that moment when the better values of our nature come together at one point.

Injustice is the oxygen of terrorism. If we can't expect justice within our own borders, what hope for the world?

\*\*\*\*\*

**At least one American friend** was delighted by the election result. "Imagine having a Democrat as commander-in-chief during the War against Terrorism," he said, "with Oprah Winfrey as secretary of defence. Big hug for Mr Taleban. Republicans are squares, but it's the squares who know how to fly the bombers, launch the missiles and fire the M-16s. Democrats would still be fumbling with the federally mandated trigger locks."

\*\*\*\*\*

**If every e-mail** sent to my junk mail turned out to be true, I'd be walking around with billions of Nigerian naira stuffed in my pockets, a beautiful Russian girl on my arm and a "Guinness Book of Records" candidate in my trousers.

Speaking of which, all of us must have received at some point a plangent request from the widow of a Nigerian general who needs your bank details to help her get back her \$30-million fortune, which she will share with you at some future date. Most of us delete them, the odd terminally thick individual actually sends money and then finds their savings wiped out. But Brit actor Dean Cameron, with time on his hands between jobs, one day hit the "reply" button and wrote: "Great - do you have any mashed bananas?"

So began an 11-month correspondence with a Nigerian crime syndicate, in which Cameron adopted the persona of a lonely, gay Florida millionaire, and the Nigerians desperately attempted to humour him in the hope of getting some cash. They provide details of where to send money orders; instead, Cameron sends them avocados and

chats about his prostate cancer, his Filipino houseboy and his cats, Mr Snickers and Jo-Jo the Dancing Clown.

There are even recordings of genuine "conference calls" between the mysterious Ibrahim, Cameron and his "lawyer", Perry Mason, in which the Nigerian is persuaded to say "hello" to Mr Snickers.



Available through [www.thainews.com.au](http://www.thainews.com.au)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Whatever happened** to the Three Tenors? Seems at least one of them has gone off opera. The other day I heard Jose Carreras strangulating the vowels and mangling the consonants of "As Time Goes By" - "de worl' weel ohlwez welcomm loafers", rendered with all the passion of a sales exec addressing a footwear convention.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Apparently, approval has been given** for the construction of the world's longest golf course, stretching nearly 900 miles across the Nullarbor Plain, a huge expanse of scrub in southern Australia. It will cross two time zones, two Australian states and some of the most inhospitable terrain on the planet. Potential hazards will include wandering kangaroos, venomous snakes, some inconveniently placed gum trees and the occasional dust storm.

Golfers driving between Perth and Adelaide will be able to play a hole at each of the 18 roadhouses strung out across the Nullarbor, have a quick hit, some "refreshment" and drive on to the next hole, which could be up to 180 miles away. Playing all 18 holes will take several days, by which time most golfers won't even be able to burp without assistance.

Actually, golfers will have to cross three time zones, not two. The town of Eucla, being fiercely independent and miles from bleedin' anywhere, is on Western South Australia Time, being 45 minutes out from the zones on either side of it. A sign in the town's roadhouse announces: "Yes this bloody clock is right."

\*\*\*\*\*

Continued Page 25