Interview with Dalal Al-Mutawa: Participant in Kuwait Charity Run

BY AMAAL BEHBEHANI

Kuwait’s first ever Half-Marathon took place on March 19th in the Kuwait Charity Run, where participants raised money for BAYT Abdullah. The Run took place from Marina Crescent to the Kuwait Towers and back again. Dalal Al Mutawa, an AUK student, was one of the many who participated in the Kuwait Charity Run. She tells us about her experience of the 21km Run.

Upcoming Kuwaiti Author Releases First Book

BY AL-WATAN DAILY

“The message of the book is mainly for Western people because they still don’t know about our culture.”

Ali Al-Momen, the young Kuwaiti author of the book titled, “A Column Named The World We Live In,” released his first paperback in 2010. Witting has been his interest ever since high school, when his teachers encouraged him to pursue his passion. All his life, Ali-Momen has studied in English education al institutions, so although he has studied in English education al institutions, so although

Crossing New Frontiers: The Power of the Human Brain

BY HUDA AL- RASHID

If you’re reading this, you’re as much as lost as I used to be last semester and several semesters earlier to that. If you’re reading this, you’re a soul desperate for help because you know that one or more members of your group act, or don’t act, the way you would have had you been a human being. If you’re reading this, you’re tired to a situation where one or more of your ‘comrades’ appear to usually nod their acceptance at every stage of the group plan, but probably black-out when the time comes for implementation. In short, if you’re reading this, you’re stuck with an idiot!

How to Deal with an ‘Imaginary’ Group Member?

BY ISHA HAIDER

If you’re reading this, you’re as much as lost as I used to be last semester and several semesters earlier to that. If you’re reading this, you’re a soul desperate for help because you know that one or more members of your group act, or don’t act, the way you would have had you been a human being. If you’re reading this, you’re tired to a situation where one or more of your ‘comrades’ appear to usually nod their acceptance at every stage of the group plan, but probably black-out when the time comes for implementation. In short, if you’re reading this, you’re stuck with an idiot!

It would be safe to pass the assertion that each one of you reading this exquisitely entertaining issue of the Voice, have either been a victim of this subnormal epidemic, or have been the very germs disseminating the atmosphere. OK! OK! I apologize. You don’t want to put this paper down without getting the medication to your problem, do you? Getting back on track, all I meant to say was that each and every one of us has gone through this problem, right? Now, what makes our lives easier or more complicated is the way we deal with it. In this article, we’ll be discussing the reasons behind this behavior, and what should our course of action be towards the respective.

According to Merriam Webster, the members who display the aforesaid type of behavior are called passive-aggressive individuals. Passive-aggressive behavior is typically defined as a covert or subtle effort to resist, sabotage, or refuse to comply with a request or expectation, which basically represents the initial group plan outlining what needs to be done and when. It is often characterized by the appearance of initial cooperation and that whatever is acceptable and mutual.

From my personal experience last semester, I was enjoined by my professor to be in a group of four members. Fortunately, most of them were hard working.
Interview with Dalal Al-Mutawa: Participant in Kuwait Charity Run

BY AMAL REHBEBHANI

First of all, what made you interested in entering the marathon? I wanted to accomplish a half marathon and to finish one.

How did you get ready for the marathon? I trained three times a week, running and one long run each week.

Were there any regulations for participating in the marathon? No.

Can you please give us a description as to how the marathon was? The race started at 8 am. It was very well organized and a lot of fun, and the atmosphere was amazing.

How long did it take you? 2 hours and 36 minutes.

Who was there with you during the marathon? My sister and my friends were supporting me.

Were there any obstacles in the Run? Yeah, there were a lot of obstacles because I wasn’t well trained, so I faced some difficulties finishing the race.

How did you feel when you reached the end of the 21km? I felt very good and very ecstatic. I was happy to finish a half marathon.

Do you think it was a success for Bayt Abdullah? Yes because there were over 600 participants registered.

All in all, how was your experience? It was enjoyable and hard at the same time but well worth it.

What is your advice to those who would like to participate? Start training now and have fun.

If you are interested in participating in Kuwait Charity Run events, you can check out their website for further events at www.kuwaitcharityrun.com

Q8-Pad’s Entrepreneurship Shoot-Out

BY ISHA HAIDER

On the 5th of April, as part of the Student Success Center’s 4th Annual Entrepreneurship Fair, Q8-Pad, a freshly crafted business by four young entrepreneurs, participated and received third place in largest profit accumulation, within a very competitive environment, through a paintball shoot-out in the AUK corridor, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

The group of young entrepreneurs received a shield for securing third place for a profit maximization of KD 56.5, which would have been inevitably higher if the costs of implementing the idea would have been relatively low.

Reflecting a mini arena, grounded close to the Multipurpose Room, a large square cardboard stood almost anchored within, hugging several large plastic cups that longed for every paint-ball shot. A team of four workers that were hired initially to set up this stage of the shoot-out and the purchase price of the paintballs had significantly sky-rocketed the respective teams cost.

Charging an almost give-away amount of KD 2 per a shooting of twenty-five paintballs, it encouraged several AUK students to test their luck. The main target behind the colorful fires was to aim the paintballs to hit within the outlay of cups and not on the parent cardboard. Anyone reaching this target at least fifteen times would automatically be eligible to enter a future draw involving luxurious prizes viz. HTC Smart phones and several other lavish gifts.

The entire team was present at the event to market their newly-found business and to participate in this thrilling fair. Two of the four entrepreneurs of the Q8-Pad team are young students at AUK, Majid A. Mahnoon, and Ali H. Alsheh. Both of them, 21 and 20 years of age respectively, are not only studious academically, but also are active part-time employees at AUK. The other two participants are Mohammed Al-Sayegh and Ali Bin-Shabah. Mohammed is a 24 years old employee at the Ministry of Oil and also is a Freelance Photographer while Ali is a 23 years old CBA student and is a part-time employee at NBK.

Q8-Pad is a promising online advertising platform that offers great deals of prices for business subscriptions. Anybody who is "somebody" and would like people to know about it, is the target of Q8-Pad. It advertises the different subscribers in an iPod sort of outlay (thence the origin of the name, Q8-Pad, is apparent), offering maximum visibility, along with visitor convenience. The business’s impressive slogan is “Updating You”, and it surely serves that with content it offers. For further information, people are also encouraged to write to them at info@q8pad.com or submit@q8pad.com.

According to Q8-Pad’s website, www.q8pad.com, Q8-Pad finds the great deals in Kuwait and puts them all in one place; it is a place that has been created by four young men for the residents of the country as it is something that they want and a platform that “Kuwait Really Needs.”
Starbucks AUK Art Competition

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI

The 6th Annual Art Exhibition took place on Sunday, April 24th and featured brilliant student artwork in several areas such as painting and photography. New to the event was a large black panel at the back of the Art Exhibition which was left blank to decorate. With this addition, student talents and efforts came together to create something that fully represented their combined labor in preparing for this monumental event. Helene El-Neaman, President of the Art Club, volunteered to initiate and design a personalized graffiti with the words ‘ART EXHIBIT 2011’ volunteers decorating the weekend before the event to paint it. First, she started with pencil on the black panel and drew in the street-styled words. Next she painted the outline with white paint as a base color so the added colors would appear brighter. Noura Al-Ajmi and Alia Mustafa, President and Vice President of the Art Club respectively, were present that weekend to help post doodles that were created by their club members to go around the graffiti as planned out by Lavena Lobo, Senior Coordinator of Campus Life. They assisted Helene with painting the graffiti. It took the team a whole fun-filled Saturday to get it ready in time for the opening of the exhibition which was the following day at 5:00 pm. Although her original design had bright-colored graffiti, it was getting late so the team only managed to have the words in white. She did complete painting it live on Monday as the Art Exhibition took place. Between Saturday and Monday, students, guests, faculty and some staff stood and watched as the graffiti was being painted - it was something like a live painting show for them. The graffiti was completed Monday evening at 7:30 pm. Every day, more and more visitors and students had stopped to take a photo or have it taken with the graffiti as well as the rest of the decoration.

At the far end of the wall, the Office of Student Life left a “leave your mark” section for the visitors and students to draw a picture with the paper and art materials provided and post it on the wall so that everyone can be engaged with the art exhibition - the number of drawings increased by day. The whole black panel at the front surrounding the graffiti was artistically decorated by Ghaneema Al-Qudmani, Vice President of the Graphic Design Club, and other volunteers. The result was not only the largest piece of artwork in the exhibition, but a symbol of magnificent teamwork! The winners of the Starbucks AUK Art Competition are as follows: Sarah Al-FAraj and Uros Lukic - first place, Aisha Al-Jiran - second place, Helene El-Neaman - third place, and Anam Rasheed - fourth place.

The 6th Annual Art Exhibition

The 6th Annual Art Exhibition which took place on April 5th from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

Setting up shop at the very back of Starbucks where tables and chairs would usually be placed, Anam Rasheed, Uros Lukic, Sarah Al-Faraj, Aisha Al-Jiran, and Helene El-Neaman had their blank canvases before them (and a little extra ones on the side in case they made a mistake and had to start over) and brushes in hand. Uros and Sarah constituted one team while Anam was aided by her brother, Ahmed. They each had a finished picture to refer to while painting, each of their illustrations depicted fascinating concepts such as Helene’s rendition of a musical artwork that featured instruments. The finished pieces displayed acute professionalism and a frugal use of color to capture the right amount of artistic expression. Unanimously, they were gushing with life and the artists all made good use of a variety of brush strokes that gave the paintings character.

While some painted stories and had viewers analyze their deeper meanings, others took the approach of piecing together fragments that came together rather nicely. There was some form of unity among some of the paintings presented by way of the abundant, bright colors and some even daringly experimented by putting some alongside one another in an unorthodox fashion. All in all, they left lasting impressions on anyone watching them or those who passed by after their completion. These students definitely have a flair for the delicate art of painting for not anyone can tread upon this territory.

The result was not only the largest piece of artwork in the exhibition, but a symbol of magnificent teamwork!
in the Auditorium on April 7th, held by the AUK Center for Poetic Scholarship. In the panel, the presenters gave us an idea of how it was during the invasion. Mrs. Thuraya Al Basqami presented several of her paintings while Mr. Walid Al Rujaib discussed some of his short stories and paintings that were done during the invasion. Dr. Khitam Khoudi, Assistant Professor of Arabic at AUK, was the moderator of the event and gave the opening remarks. Dr. George Irani was also present at the panel and was kind enough to translate Mr. Walid Al Rujaib’s speech to the audience. Mrs. Thuraya Al Basqami is an internationally renowned Kuwaiti artist. She displayed several of her artworks painted during the invasion, mostly human figures. She used to show her paintings to the soldiers of the invasion for those who were against it but she destroyed it because the soldiers used to kill them. She starts her presentation by saying that art saved her; it shows from the paintings that she put her emotions into them and draws what she sees around her. There were paintings of the stories of rape during the occupation and about daily life during the occupation like waiting for bread. It showed how basic needs were hard to get and the sorrows the Kuwaitis went through. The paintings she displayed in the presentation were painted with dark colors that gave a sense of sadness in each picture. Through her paintings, she wanted to show that Kuwait was strong and powerful, while the Iraqi army was weak and ugly. In total, she had made 75 paintings during the invasion and showed them around the world at the same time. As for writing, she did not have anything written during the invasion because she could not write anything at that time. It was after the invasion that she did get to write and wrote a diary, and Dr. Walid Al Rujaib is a scholar and prominent Kuwaiti writer who contributed to the impact of his writing. He explained how major events impact the writer and from that event, the writer forms an opinion. A major event that gave Mr. Al Rujaib the biggest shock of his life was in August 1st, 1990 with the Iraqi invasion. He states that you cannot both carry a pen and a rifle at the same time; he tried to do so. He first issued a publication called “the Free Patriots” but decided to stop writing because the woman who was giving him shelter arrested him. He joined the armed resistance and carried their guns while he learned how to make gas cylinders. It affected his lifestyle and he had to move his residence five times. Mr. Al Rujaib said he was still being searched for by the Iraqi inspectors. Later on, he also mentions an incident in which a soldier asked him to paint a gun on his two year old son’s head asking for his son’s paper. The soldier said that after the liberation that he wrote a series of short stories that were published in 1994 and awarded a prize for in 1994. The protagonist of the story is a sword with the words “for your eyes” engraved into it. In the last part of the series, when the hero raised the gun to shoot in joy that the war was over, he looked north, south, then east and said, “I better keep it just in case.” He implies that danger in Kuwait is not over yet, which was a very powerful note to end the lecture with. Mr. Al Julaib gave a very captivating speech with the audience enraptured by his experience during the invasion and the powerful message he had in his short story. When asked about how he was able to take on his position during the invasion, he replied, how can’t he? It is his country, his nation, and if need be, he is ready to hold a gun if a war happens again.

This is the new generation after the invasion but we can still understand and relate to those who lived through it by looking at what others left behind.
The British passenger ship Lusitania was torpedoed by a German submarine off the U.S. coast, losing 1,198 of its 1,954 passengers, including 114 Americans. The attack hastened neutral America’s entry into World War I.

Former political prisoner Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as president of South Africa. Mandela had won the first free election in South Africa despite attempts by various political foes to deter the outcome.

George VI was crowned at Westminster Abbey in London, following the abdication of his brother, Edward VIII. King George reigned until his death in 1952. He was succeeded by his daughter Elizabeth, the current reigning monarch.

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark departed St. Louis their expedition to explore the Northwest. They arrived at the Pacific coast of Oregon in November of 1805 and returned to St. Louis in September of 1806, completing a journey of about 6,000 miles.

Smallpox vaccine was developed by Dr. Edward Jenner, physician in rural England. He coined the term vaccination for a new procedure of injecting a mild form of the disease into healthy persons resulting in immunity. Within 18 months, 12,000 persons in England had been vaccinated and the number of smallpox deaths dropped by two-thirds.

Napoleon Bonaparte became Emperor of France, snatching the crown from the hands of Pope Pius VII during the actual coronation ceremony, and then crowning himself.

Mount St. Helens volcano erupted in south-western Washington State spewing steam and ash over 11 miles into the sky. This was the first major eruption since 1857.

In one of the biggest antitrust lawsuits of the 20th century, American software giant Microsoft Corporation was sued by the U.S. Federal government and 20 state governments charging the company with using unfair tactics to crush competition and restrict choices for consumers.

Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. She departed Newfoundland, Canada, at 7 p.m. and landed near Landscovey, Ireland, completing a 2,026-mile flight in about 13 hours. Five years later, along with her navigator Fred Noonan, she disappeared while trying to fly her twin-engined plane around the equator.

The American Red Cross was founded by Clara Barton. The organization today provides volunteer disaster relief in the U.S. and abroad. Community services include collecting and distributing donated blood, and teaching health and safety classes.


In San Francisco, 201,000 people celebrated the grand opening of the Golden Gate Bridge by strolling across it.

Amnesty International was founded by London lawyer Peter Benenson. He read about the arrest of a group of students in Portugal then launched a one-year campaign to free them called Appeal for Amnesty. Today Amnesty International has over a million members in 156 countries working to free prisoners of conscience, stop torture and the death penalty, and guarantee human rights for women.

The city of Constantinople was captured by the Turks, who renamed it Istanbul. This marked the end of the Byzantine Empire, as Istanbul became the capital of the Ottoman Empire.

The Pennsylvania Evening Post became the first daily newspaper published in America.
Stephen King is known as one of the best horror novelists in the world; he’s also a personal favorite of mine. With his vivid and unique style of writing and his tendency to graphically depict horror, it’s easy to see why his books are so popular. One of the latest novels of his that I have read, The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon, was published in the year 2000 all the way up to 2014. From Argentina to New York and to the Middle East as well. More so, the book tackles many of the modern day issues that exist in our lives, in addition to the issues that have passed and those that are yet to come: tales of love, passion, sacrifice, betrayal, and politics. His characters include a large range of personalities from different back grounds, race and religion. On one hand, there’s Mohammed, a Muslim soldier, who is one of the main characters fighting in the battle of World War III; on the other, there’s Al, your average, young guy who turns into a successful entrepreneur and is in love with Faith. Faith, coming from the Arabic word “faith” is a wonderful character who unfor tunately realizes her love for Al when it’s too late. In addition, his characters include Ambrose, a philanthropist and travel journalist who ends up meeting Mohammed and is greatly influenced by her en counter with him. Another character is Danny Delginio, an American writer who has been trying to make sense of life and the world we live in. Al-Momen’s inspiration for the book not only comes from his experiences but also from historical figures and influences you keep in your life such as Albert Einstein and Paul Coelho. When talking about the character of Mohammed, Al-Momen states that this was his way of foreshadowing cur rent events in our world. He says, “The message of the book is mainly for West ern people because they still don’t know about our culture. I wanted to show the difference between a man defending his country and a terrorist.”

Another interesting character is Dan in Delgino who, like the author himself, is frustrated with the power of technology and enjoys the conventional way of writing: pen and paper. Ironically, in the book, trees are mined for weaponry, and music and movies no longer exist, and writing with pen and paper has almost vanished. In addition Al-Momen says, “I wanted to be creative; when the reader reads my novel, I wanted them to see a movie in the world of literature.”

Al-Momen is the first Kuwaiti author to have his novel featured at the Frank furt Book Fair (the largest book fair in the world). In addition, Al-Momen’s talents besides his numerous side interests which include business, soccer, and music, he is currently pursuing his MBA at the American University of the East. He is also currently working on his second novel which will hopefully be released within the next two years. The book can be obtained at Amazon, Authorhouse USA/UK, Barnes&Nobles, and Ebook.
another one might take place but that remains to
in donations. Following the closing of this auction,
auction ended with an entail number of $45,743.10
an amazing extended effort. At this point, the first
and following up on these auctions was, in itself,
categories included
would donate on behalf of the auction they won,
community called help_japan where people from
organizations. Others started a liveJournal
message of hope for Japan, provided that proceeds
Tumbler account calling for designers to design
the aftermaths of the earthquake. Others began a
Google spreadsheet with lists of Japanese artists
individuals put in to help the Japan operation.
and so it began.
what made Japan different was that there was no
it was pure desire to help a country in a crisis, but
sure what it triggered in me when I heard about
revolutions was the Japanese earthquake. I wasn't

links: http://designforjapan.tumblr.com/ and

It is not my agenda to solely promote these
groups and place Japan on a higher pedestal than
any other country that needs collective help;
other dividing barrier; sometimes, even the word
human becomes a label.

“The concept of donations and providing help should always transcend labels, ethnicities, religious affiliation and any other dividing barrier; sometimes, even the word human becomes a label.”

Following the various events of the 2011
revolutions was the Japanese earthquake. I wasn't
sure what it triggered in me when I heard about
it on the news or when I saw the aftermaths but it
was at that point that I finally took action. Correct,
it was pure desire to help a country in a crisis, but
what made Japan different was that there was no
political agenda behind the help, no sides, and no
one calling my help a sort of alliance to an ethnic
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what was discussed in the meeting,
end of every group discussion, reiterate
what needs to done, when it needs to be
done, and individual responsibilities.
Sometimes these people will
understand and cooperate, while
some might not stop their passive-
aggressiveness completely, but if they
know that you're watching them, they
will be far less likely to test your nerves
a second time.

a) Give Feedback: Begin with
communication. The person probably
did not completely understand what
was required from them. Describe
what is manifested by their behaviour, and
ask for the reasons behind their failure
to comply. That being said, I am not
suggesting that you all gang up on them
but instead, initially establish effective
rapport and a friendly atmosphere while
confronting them very lightly. Describe
to them the impact of their behavior
on the work at hand, on the group, and
on what might deem worthy for them
themselves, i.e. the final grade. Provide
suggestions for how they might change.
Make sure you don't present yourself
in a way that other takes personally.
Don't be direct, but make your point.
Focus on Work, not the Person: Eventually, you need to get the work
done, regardless of your peer's style,
so don't waste time hoping for them to
change. Hope for the best, but prepare
for the worst! Wishful thinking holds
importance when ample time is on hand.
Prioritize the completion of work.

b) Ask for Commitment: Sometimes
it is just better if you start effectively
and efficiently from the beginning itself
by requiring group individuals (including
the troublemaker) to separately, at the
end of every group discussion, reiterate
what was discussed in the meeting,
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Three ways have been outlined by Amy
Jun Su and Muriel Magnan Wilkins,
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of people. If you have a person who says
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Every person in the world is different from any other. Each person has his/her own beliefs, faith, rites, doctrines, and religion. In many cases, religion has played a great role in each and every corner of the world. Religion is a system of life and a routine which people practice every day whether he/she is a Muslim, Christian or Jew. In addition, religion can be expressed through prayers, rituals and it is also considered a moral claim that can control a whole country and its politics which will ultimately affect society as a whole. For instance, Kuwait in the past had a great tolerance for all kinds of religions and doctrines wherein Sunnis, Sh'ia, Christians and Jews lived together without any discrimination and judgments.

The Kuwaiti Christians remain a minority; they exist by discriminating against them, not because people around them are ignoring the fact that they exist. Democrats and human rights activists are Kuwaitis; therefore, they have the right to be represented by their government. The government should support all Kuwaiti Christians and neglect Kuwaiti Christians, we will be erasing pieces of the jigsaw puzzle. By being persistent and neglecting our own history, I guess that the average people did not connect themselves with any factions or organizations, which makes their movement pure and resistance should not be amended, or create one if it doesn't already exist. A constitution is very much needed, to not only highlight the flipchart of "Mubarak's" passing and also after the government and Mubarak's despotism, has held the throne for three decades. The effect of this is that the youth were being turned into a dictatorship. This was what the Egyptian average man, not the average people, are able to whisper cliché words loud; rather, they were only a dictatorship; dignity that is being eaten away by external forces and resistance should not be. As an observer of the world, I can only say one thing to analyze the position of these governments?

The Christian community began in the 1900s with a number of humanitarian projects conducted by the missionaries from the Reform Church of America. Despite the fact that the Kuwaiti Christians have their political rights as citizens, they are discriminated against and judged because of their religious affiliation. Though they have always shown loyalty towards the country, many people have managed to overlook that reality. For instance, they do have the right to vote but do not have the right to be elected for Parliament. According to Rev. Ghareeb, he is one of the people who were very happy that women got their political rights to vote and get elected. However, he wishes that one of the Christian citizens could be a minister in the Kuwaiti Parliament to speak on their behalf. He mentioned that Christians are eligible to becoming ministers. In spite of the fact that they have respectable ambassadors such as Saded Shamas and Sagheer Shuhaiber who are happy and honored to represent Kuwait abroad, they feel prejudice directed towards them as Christian citizens. Additionally, Rev. Ghareeb said that the Christians have their religious freedom to practice their faith and also have a place of worship, the National Evangelical Church of Kuwait which is recognized by the government. They also have the freedom to import Bibles and teach Christian literature in all languages. Moreover, they maintain extreme freedom in inviting Christian preachers and reverends to visit their church in Kuwait. Yet, they cannot announce and evangelize in public because Kuwait is an Islamic country. Rev. Ghareeb states that the government has been tolerant towards churches in Kuwait. They are sponsoring all Christians, the leaders who migrated from Egypt and Lebanon. The Christian people, Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti, fund the church with the money needed for necessary operations, events, and maintenance.

The way I see it, the government must support all churches as they do mosques since it is considered as one of the historical monuments in Kuwait. Even though they represent Kuwaiti identity, people around them are ignoring the fact that they exist by discriminating against them, not giving them the right to get elected for Parliament and apply for citizenship. It is hard to omit their role in history as they are an essential branch of Kuwaiti traditions and customs. If we try to erase and neglect Kuwaiti Christians, we will be erasing and neglecting our own history. I guess that the government should support all Kuwaiti Christians and blur the lines between religions. On the other hand, Kuwait has been supporting every country, and forever so, because we are one another, yet having a nasty and cowardly voice of these governments? A constitution is very much needed, to not only highlight the flipchart of "Mubarak's" passing and also after the government and Mubarak's despotism, has held the throne for three decades. The effect of this is that the youth were being turned into a dictatorship. This was what the Egyptian average man, not the average people, are able to whisper cliché words loud; rather, they were only a dictatorship; dignity that is being eaten away by external forces and resistance should not be. As an observer of the world, I can only say one thing to analyze the position of these governments?

The different characteristics of the Egyptian revolution were appealing, and they add up like a jigsaw puzzle to make up a whole picture that reads: "How to Lead a Successful Revolution?" So, these few pieces of the jigsaw puzzle serve as a manual for us. First, the peaceful strategies that initiated such an uprising were the core of the revolution's success. If it wasn't for the peaceful strategies that the Egyptian people utilized as an initiative, then it would remain an uprising and would not transform into a revolution. Their mature behavior made the government and Mubarak's allies look pathname because the government's response to their protests was pure violence, which speaks for itself as being a dictatorship. This was what the world needed to see, a genuine dictatorship against people asking for their basic rights.

By Patima Ibrahim

Slap is Mightier than the Sword

Here, members of the Voice of AUK's Editorial Board speak their minds on a range of issues.

The Voice of AUK

Volume 8, Issue 7

Christians of Kuwait

By Dalal Marafie

By Fatima Ibrahim
Mecca: The Forgotten City

BYFARAH AL-SHAMALL

“We made arrangements to be driven from Medina to Mecca and as we made our way through the scorching desert, I could not help but think of how Muslims made the journey on foot centuries ago.”

For a Muslim, making the monumental journey to the holy cities of Medina and Mecca is an occasion of a lifetime and when it is the very first time for pilgrims to tread upon holy ground, feelings become somewhat of a cross between apprehension and unimaginable excitement. As for me, they ran a little deeper and were a lot more personal because my family’s origin happened to be from that area of the world and even though my ancestors lived here, I felt a strong connection form when I went there in February and as I sat on the disfigured pavement with my family outside the airport in Medina waiting for a taxi cab.

We had gone to perform the Umrah – a pilgrimage that can be undertaken at any time of the year save for during the Hajj season. I was immediately struck by the simplicity of this ancient city and, like any Kuwaiti who is deprived of scenic views, gawked at the sight of mountains in the distance. No, I did not retrace Julie Andrews’ 360 degree turn in the Sound of Music because they were nothing like that but were still a joy to look at. The feeling of being enclosed by this mountain range was exhilarating, so much so that I could hardly wait to go to Mecca once my father told me that the actual Ka’aba and the praying quarters than surround it, by extension, are at a lower geographical position than the rest of the city.

So this was it. We made arrangements to be driven from Medina to Mecca and as we made our way through the scorching desert, I could not help but think of how Muslims made the journey on foot centuries ago. As I mulled over these thoughts and thanked Henry Ford a million times over in my head, we had finally reached the holy city. The outskirts would have never prepared me for what I was to witness firsthand at and around the Ka’aba. I am, by nature, very inquisitive and analytical whenever I visit a country and this was certainly no exception since it is one that I relate to so on many levels.

This was my first time in Saudi Arabia, let alone Medina and Mecca, so I was, apart from religiously, quite perceptive of many of the social conventions that took place around me. The case of Saudi women was, to a certain extent, not really applicable here because any woman is expected to dress in certain attire regardless of where she comes from. So that was off the hook. What I really found disturbing was what my sisters and I encountered upon entering the Ka’aba. Islam, as a religion that has men and women on an equal footing in terms of mutual respect, was not the one I saw practiced behind the alabaster walls. Bearded sheikhs were stationed at almost every entrance/exit into the praying quarters and, of course, at the Ka’aba. Are these learned men of Islam not educated enough to know that the religion has, in fact, branched into several factions? Do they not realize that they have absolutely no right to impose an exclusive practice onto anyone?

Muslims come from far and wide and are of several backgrounds. Why then is it that a sheikh comes up to my sisters and I an average of five times during every visit to remind us to don the burqa? What annoyed me most was the measures they executed to make sure women spent as little time as possible praying directly in front of the Ka’aba. If it was socially acceptable, I would have given them each a piece of my mind but I obviously held back and blew off some steam elsewhere. As soon as my sisters and I sat anywhere close to the Ka’aba, they would pop up and beckon us to leave. I hated their insecurity and the fact that men like this represented Islam in Mecca, its holiest city. My father would be forced to leave us at the door because segregation was fiercely imposed so we had no choice but to take in their criticism without rebutting it.

All this I withstood because I kept reminding myself of the greater purpose of my visit and did my very best to exhibit the qualities that Islam encourages in Muslims but I was certainly not prepared for the acuity I observed next. On the surface, Saudi Arabia is such an old-rich country and people often go by the illusion that all of its citizens equally benefit from its wealth. Well, anyone who thinks this way has thought wrong. Some districts in Saudi Arabia are completely neglected by the government. It was truly a depressing sight: as soon as one steps outside of the Ka’aba, everything becomes desolate and listless. Children are dressed in rags and go around selling tissues in plastic wrappers to pedestrians and malls look like something out of a history book.

I looked into several faces and discerned that some of them wanted out of this miserable lifestyle and I could not help but wonder who brought them here in the first place. The Saudi government dumps truckloads of money to finance expanding hotels because, apart from it being a religious obligation, Muslims around the world would object if they did not take proper care of it. But what about the people of Mecca? Why must they live like 18th century Londoners? Why is no one being vocal about their plight? This is a city that people from all walks of life come to. It is quite an embarrassment that it is so mishandled. I truly felt so much remorse for this glorious city that has been forgotten by a regime that does not seem to want to appreciate and preserve its past. If I was a Saudi, I would make my voice heard somehow, somehow.

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A group of Mecca citizens having dinner on a pavement outside of the Ka’aba.
Naturally Inspired.
We are often told that the human brain's power is limitless, whether it's in terms of the ability to endlessly imagine or in relation to the ability to feel a range of different emotions. But, modern science and technology together are helping to truly unveil the true power of the brain and what it can really do without any help from its action-fulfilling counterpart, the human body. Based on certain, recent discoveries, it seems as though we have underestimated the power of the human brain.

After having my daily dose of articles from BBC news, I came across an article with an intriguing headline reading, the "World Premiere of the Brain Orchestra." Of course, having the words 'brain' and 'orchestra' simultaneously contained in a single phrase is quite peculiar. As a result, curiosity led me to further investigate just what that interesting phrase was referring to. It turns out that the University of Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona was conducting a research project dealing with the creation of a "Synthetic, Perceptive, Emotive and Cognitive System (SPESC)," which is a system that aims to test how strong the human brain really is and how far it can go without the help of the human body.

Now, just how does this exactly work? Well, as a test drive, researchers placed caps on about two "performers" that contain electrodes that respond to the brain's activity. By doing so, researchers were able to see how the brain responds to music, how it transforms brain activity into music, and how performers can control their ability to do so. The findings of the study are quite peculiar. As a result, this new finding is quite interesting and it opens up a whole new level of understanding for not just music, but the human brain as a whole.

Regular Fasting Gives Heart Health

By Parah Al-Shammai

Ramadan may be a few months away but fasting should not be exclusive to it. Really. We Muslims tend to confuse the idea of fasting with just those thirty days and regard it as a purely religious obligation. Fasting has a lot more benefits involved. They are stipulated in the Islamic religion as well as by medical research centers but the act of fasting is largely attributed to spirituality. So the question is, why are we going around the religion for a minute, just how beneficial is it to fast regularly? For one thing, it is good for the heart as it lessens the development of cardiovascular diseases.

This is all according to a new study from doctors in Salt Lake City, Utah who looked at the relationship between periodic fasting and cardiovascular disease. After interviewing 200 people, the researchers found that those who fasted and cardiovascular disease. After interviewing 200 people, the researchers found that those who fasted and cardiovascular disease. After interviewing 200 people, the researchers found that those who fasted

OMG! We’re Weird!

Tickle yourself. Yes, tickle yourself! I feel good and can do it at any amount of cash possible, if you succeed in that attempt. It’s impossible for someone to tickle themselves by the way so don’t waste your time trying, although I bet most of you could have been very Sheldon already.

This sort of article is back on the front burner because of the shocking thumps I received a couple of days ago while browsing through a number of science books that I was tangled in when teaching my little brother for his upcoming Science exam. The chapters that were enjoued upon his preparation included matters related to the amazing facts about the human body. After reading the different facets of the chapters, I found myself awing to an extent I hadn’t previously anticipated. I then decided to share my jaw-dropping reading experience with my beloved and intellectual readers of the Voice!

The following selected facts shocked me right down to the bone. I know that they will do the same to you if you have a careful read over the respective.

To begin with, we will talk about the wonders of our most beloved appendage, 'The Nose.'

1) Smell First. We all have a unique body odor (unless you have an identical twin!)? So now, we all take special about ourselves since our odor makes us unique. No wonder babies recognize the individual scents of their mothers.

Second, another fact is that women are better smellers than men, i.e. they can smell or recognize various scents better than men. Just to clarify, I assure you, I am not being biased towards any orientation here, but the pure order of nature prefers women to be on top of the list (hehe).

Third, did you know that our nose can remember up to 50,000 different scents and, on top of that, identify its origin? Wow isn’t it? Now let’s dive into the other mind-blowing facts about our appendage.

2) Saliva: Okay, forget about the diving part for now, but you know that we have the potential to destruct our brain to deliver the magical notes of some of the famous pieces of Mozart and Beethoven.

Moving on from brain orchestras, modern-day science also presents a brain-controlled computer cursor. This new approach is based on the creation of a system called, "electroctortography." This is an alternative to another similar system (EEG) used in the brain orchestra mentioned just now. Scientists claim that the positioning of the brain electrodes that do the "controlling" in a location closer to the brain's surface by surgically implanting it would intensify the ability to control things using your mind. You may be wondering why would someone go to such extremes just to control a computer mouse? Well, this scientific discovery is meant for the disabled, especially with motor handicaps like those who are quadriplegic. This way, disabled humans could even go as far as controlling an electrical wheelchair by mere thoughts.

It seems that not only is our brain a gift in terms of providing us with the precious ability to think but it is also a means to open up new paths to those who never had hope for a cure in the past. The brain can now help those suffering from physical handicaps reach places that were unreachable before and can allow us to expand our imagination into how we could potentially become the next Yo-Yo Ma without having to dedicate our lives to it.

Secondly, to process all that information or to do all the activities the brain is responsible for, it just needs the power of one light bulb, i.e. a 10 watt light bulb. Now you that the cartoon image of a light bulb over our head when a great thought occurs isn’t too far off from the truth, our brain generates as much as energy as a small light bulb even when we’re sleeping!

I think I should bid adieu now, leaving you with the remarkable and touching impression that your wonderful you are and the glory and magnificence of who created you. No matter how much we study, how much we examine, and how much we learn, we will never be able to unravel the reasons, let alone the basic fact of our existence and the beautiful segments of ourselves, let alone the entire creation.
A few people who know me know that I have been aiming to join the United Nations (UN) ever since I arrived in Kuwait in 2007. So when I got a call last March that I was being offered a job at the UN and I needed to reply immediately if I would accept the position, I had a hard time making the decision. The news came with mixed emotions; I thought that I would be jumping for joy when I got the news but when I did, I was quite torn. On one hand, it would be fulfilling one of my life goals of joining the UN and making a career there; but on the other hand, I would be leaving a job that I really came to love and which I enjoyed going to every day (which is a rare feat for anyone who is working). However, as I have a family I need to provide for and as I have always been wishing to work at the UN, my logic needed to overtake my emotions; and so I accepted the job at the UN.

I myself was surprised at how mixed I felt at that time and how hard it was to make that decision. It just goes to show the old saying, “You don’t know what you got till it’s gone” rings true. I hadn’t even left the Writing Center, but I already started missing it and felt sad about leaving a place that I always felt at ease and appreciated. Telling the news to my boss, Professor James McDougall, wasn’t a walk in the park either. However, being the great boss that he is, he congratulated me and said that I would be sorely missed. So now, as this is my final article for the Voice of AUK, I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the Writing Center for the wonderful experiences I have had working there.

I remember I first joined the Writing Center in September 2007 as a part-time staff consultant under Dr. Mary Queen and then became a full-time employee on November 2008. So for my three and a half years at AUK, I can truly say that I have always had AUK, its students, faculty, and especially the Writing Center, is purely praise. This article may sound like I’m brown nosing and just creating hype for the Writing Center but it is truly genuine as by the time you read this piece, I won’t be in AUK anymore. For people who have worked in any part of the world (but Kuwait in particular), it is really hard to say that you worked for a place that you didn’t feel underappreciated or underutilized. But I can say that I am one of the exceptional few who have always felt valued while I was working at the Writing Center. I always felt that I was put to good use and that all of my potential was used.

One of the greatest things that I really liked about working at the Writing Center is that the environment was always welcoming and you felt that you were part of a supportive team. I’ve come from a few companies and organizations that had terrible and poisonous environments that made you dread coming to work where your co-workers were very selfish and where your boss was a total jerk (sorry, I can’t write the word I really want to say). At the Writing Center however, I can truly say that even though I worked mostly with university students, the student consultants at the Writing Center are much more professional and much more talented than people I have worked with who had Masters degrees or who had years of work experience under their belt. I can assure you that I am 100 percent sure the students who have worked and are currently working at the Writing Center have bright futures ahead of them. One thing that I did not like about AUK was the way other department staff employees only said negative things about their student workers during a few inter-department meetings I attended. After attending those meetings, I really had no interest in joining them again. They would expect things and traits from their student workers that they themselves did not exemplify. I would even hear one supervisor stating that he or she only had student workers that were bad apps, or who had failed to do their jobs properly and did not really want to do their jobs. Now, no one really applies for a job and wants to fail or wants to do bad on purpose. Most of the time, employees in departments are not guided correctly or are not appreciated. Let’s put it this way, if a football team is constantly losing, the management does not fire all the players; they fire the coach. So instead of trying to understand what their student workers need, they need to look at themselves for a while and see how they can improve and then later on, how they can improve their team of student workers.

Moreover, is that actually possible? To have only bad student workers and all your student workers are bad apps? Could it be possible that there is a time for a strong selection process to choose their student workers? More importantly, could it be possible that they never trained them enough?

I think a lot of the supervisors fail to give these student workers the credit and respect they deserve. I really don’t think that it is sheer luck that the Writing Center did not have a lot of problems with our work environment given that our work ethic and the feeling that your colleagues care for you and respect you is a sentiment that has been a key to the Writing Center’s ongoing success. The moral fiber and quality of the consultants we have at the Writing Center is of the utmost best and present, and is simply amazing. As a group, the Writing Center is probably the closest thing I can compare to a perfect organization that anyone would love to work for which makes it so hard to go. However, the bare fact remains that I do have to go and that life goes on. So again, I would like to thank you to all the student consultants who have here at the Writing Center are the best student workers at AUK. In regards to commitment, work ethic and all around character, the Writing Center student consultants cannot be rivaled - that is a fact! I believe that the feeling of knowing someone has your back and the feeling that your colleagues care for you and respect you is a sentiment that has been a key to the Writing Center’s ongoing success.

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The experiences, the new found knowledge, the acquaintances, and the friendships that were formed are all things that I will always remember and appreciate. Thanks again Writing Center and I pray for your continuous success!

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The Voice of AUK

Thank you, Writing Center!

By Jose E. Mangibin

We would like to wish Jose Mangibin a successful start at the United Nations and the very best in all his endeavors.

We will miss you!