

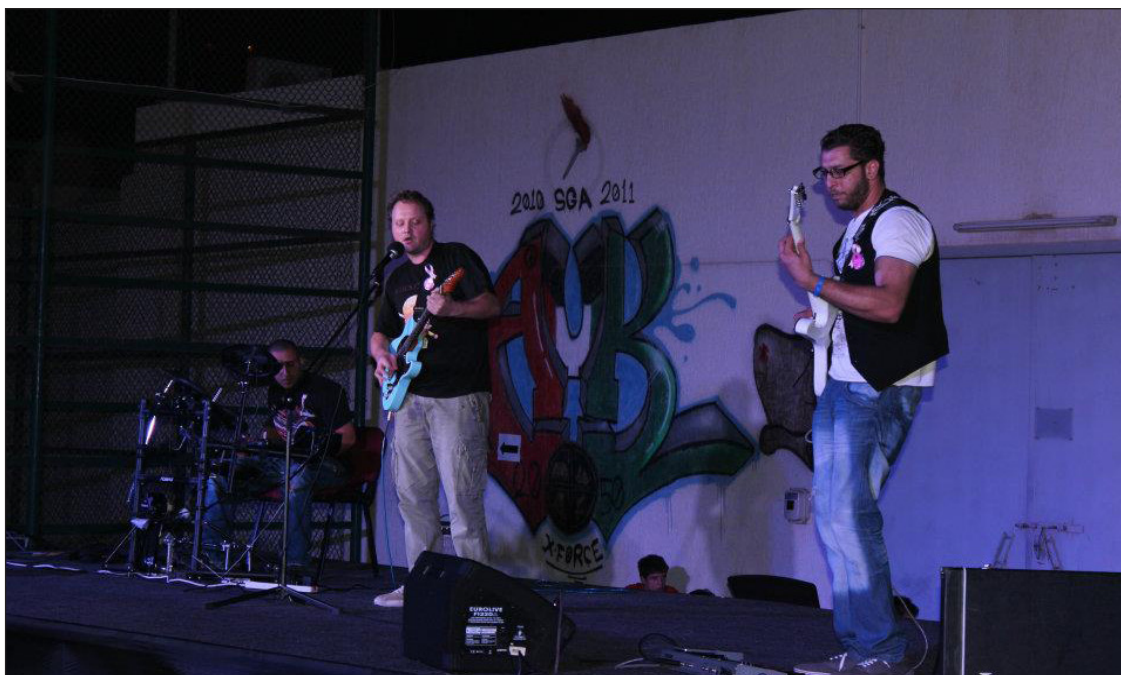
Creativity & Talent, Essentially AUK

BY ISHA SADIQ HAIDER

On Wednesday, 26th October, 2011, as part of the Pink Week sponsored by Zain Telecommunications, AUK hosted a Talent Show consisting of a total of twenty-three performances, in the grassy area beside the Liberal Arts building. This event was made possible by the collaborative efforts of the Community Service Club and the Student Life.

Prior to the day of the event, although a lot of tickets had been sold, several people still wanted to become a part of the audience and were willing to do so at any cost. This was made evident by the purchase of last-minute tickets, on the day of the event, for prices peaking up-to a maximum of KD 40 per permit. The area destined to showcase the occasion had been covered with thick, large cardboard panels to perhaps prevent any onlookers to get a free piece of cake!

The doors opened at 1830 hours, allowing a mob of excited spectators, into the scheduled premise, to get seated until the inception of the event, which began at 1915 hours and lasted until 2230 hours. At entrance, everyone was



Professor Chris Gottschalk and Majid Mahmoud tear it up at the talent show.

given a circular placard targeting Breast Cancer awareness. The event was beautifully hosted by Mr. Trevor Taylor, AUK's very own Sport's

coordinator. Mr. Taylor has gained an M.S. in Sports Administration from Eastern Kentucky University, and a B.S. in International Image

Creation from the American University of Sharjah.

Now, let us get into the brilliant performances; the very essence of the AUK community! The event was initiated with welcoming words from Mr. Taylor, where he thanked the generous sponsor of the event, Zain Telecommunications, and the facets of AUK which made the event possible. After which he welcomed the first participants, Noor Arnoot and Adel Al-Ansari, Noor is a 23-year-old singer from Syria, who had recently recorded songs in Toronto, Slovenia, and Kuwait. Adel gracefully accompanied Noor on guitar in the first performance.

This was followed by a "bunch of true performers," who taught themselves into becoming a full blown break-dancing crew! Mr. Taylor welcomed *One Soul Crew*, for the second performance.

Ghalia Al-Dhafeery was the third performer who wonderfully sang "How do I live without you?" by Lean Rimeys. The next artist, Yousef Al-Muzairai, spoke to the sea of audience

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Left to right: Mr. Don Prades, Helene El-Neaman, Marie El-Neaman, and Luke Rangel.

Speaking for The Environment

BY NADA EL-BADRY

The 11th Inter College Environmental Public Speaking Competition (IEPSC) took place on the 28th and 29th of November in Dubai. This year, the American University of Kuwait sent two teams, through Professor Don Prades, to proudly represent their university at the competition. Every year, about 60 universities take part in the IEPSC, which is divided into four different categories, with 16 to 20 universities competing in each one. The competition is bilingual, and had four sessions: two morning sessions, and two afternoon sessions. Our first team participated in the topic "Recycling-Does it Really Matter?" The team's speaker was Helene El Neaman, assisted by Marie El Neaman. As for the second team, their topic was "Development without Destruction-Is it Possible?"

and their speaker was Luke Rangel, also assisted by Marie El Neaman. The other two topics to be covered in the competition are "Mobile Phones – a curse or boon?" and "GCC countries – 25 years from now." During the competition, each team (each of which compose of a maximum of five members) was given a maximum of twelve minutes to express and argue his or her view with the aid of a previously written research paper and Power Point presentation that they were required to submit to the competition prior to the actual event.

The teams were judged by a panel of four judges, composed of renowned environmentalists/conservationists from the public and private sectors of the region. The teams' scores were based on the speakers' rhetoric skills, the

originality of their ideas, their explanation of the environmental impact and the solutions they provided, and how well they presented their research. Finally, the awards of the competition are the following: winners from each topic will receive a crystal, the institution with the highest aggregate will be awarded an Annual Rolling Trophy and, to show their appreciation for the efforts they put forward, each participating institution, along with their speakers, team members and the coordinating teachers will be rewarded with a Certificate of Participation.

This is not the first time that AUK has competed in this contest. As a matter of fact, just last year, our speaker, Nour Al Ariss, won

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6.5 = 0.002% x 2,288

BY CAROL ROSS SCOTT

Why would this equation mean ANYTHING to you as a student at AUK? What does it actually mean? It should read for you like this... 6.5 is equal to less than 1% of 2288. OR... WAY fewer than 1% of the AUK student population showed up on Tuesday, November 15, 2011 to have a conversation about the future of the Student Government Association. SERIOUSLY?! Of the 2288 students registered for this Fall semester, only 6.5 of you showed up? (No, we didn't have a pregnant student. Omar works for Student Life so he kind of had to show up but he is still committed to the cause!)

It would have been very easy to say that because there is minimal interest, the Student Government Association will no longer exist at AUK. It certainly makes life easier because then we don't have to worry about student complaints, don't have to worry about what's on the minds of students, the staff can plan what they feel is best regardless of what students want, we can choose the students that we feel will represent what we want them to represent to outside agencies... Life would be much simpler. BUT THAT IS NOT COLLEGE LIFE! That is not what AUK is about! The voice of

the student has been and always will be an integral part of the AUK philosophy. If only 6.5 students are willing to step up to the plate, put aside their personal agendas and priorities in order to ensure the collective student voice of AUK is heard, then that is where we will begin.

Even if ONE student stepped up to the plate and had the desire to work to ensure the students of AUK maintained a collective voice, that one person would be enough to serve as the *Transitional Student Government Association*. However, there are

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No Smoking

BY ABOLGHASEM ALAVINEJAD

Smoking is not permitted in University buildings. Many ashtrays are placed within none-roofed areas of campus for cigarette butts. Some smokers on campus disregard the ashtrays even when they are within reach, as evidenced by the butts scattered around. It is not justified that others pick your cigarette butts and clean after you.

If you are a smoker, please extinguish your cigarettes and dispose of the butt in any one of the multiple ashcans provided across the campus. Continuation of littering the campus might force smokers to go off campus to light up.



One of many well-placed ashtrays on campus.

Adopt A Pet

BY LAVEENA LOBO

On December 7th 2011, the Office of Student Life organized a trip to the PAWS shelter in Kuwait to meet animals and tour the facilities there. This visit was part of the initiatives of AUK Volunteer Program 'Refuse to be Ordinary.' The visit provided us with a great opportunity to learn more about animal care and services especially in the Gulf. Moreover, I found out more about volunteer opportunities and got to know the cats and dogs that are up for adoption.

AUK students had their smiles on the minute they entered the shelter till the last second they left. It is very satisfying as you feel the love and happiness when you first release dogs from their cages and walk them around the shelter. For that reason, shelters like these need young volunteers to help them care for animals, feeding, taking dogs for walks, giving cats some much-needed playtime, or even comforting pets that are sick or need surgery until they get a new home.

Throughout my experience I realized that while this is



Laveena with a pet dog at the PAWS shelter

community service it is also important to the animals because at the end of the day you are not just helping the community but also caring for abandoned dogs and cats which many people do not have the desire to do.

Due to the fact that there are so many animals in need of help

and companionship, you should consider volunteering because no matter what your skills or interests are, there's probably a way you can help your local animal-welfare organizations. To those of you already volunteering, our thanks to you for all you do. You make an amazing difference for homeless pets. Make a change in your life and theirs!

If you are caring, nurturing, patient and have deep love for pets, spread the word and help these pets get a new home! They deserve a life too.

If you would like to get more information on the volunteer program, email studentlife@auk.edu.kw. To get to know more about PAWS and how to help them, visit their website www.paws-kuwait.org or relsamad@auk.edu.kw.



THE VOICE OF AUK

Our Mission

The Voice of AUK is a student-run, monthly newspaper that seeks to foster active communication among the entire campus community and keep it abreast of diverse and relevant issues by providing high-quality news and information in an academic context. Through this, The Voice also strives to heighten awareness of rights and responsibilities of membership in the AUK community. The Voice also espouses a commitment to philanthropy.

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The Voice of AUK welcomes contributions from all registered students, faculty and staff members of the American University of Kuwait. Submissions should be emailed to voice@auk.edu.kw.

All submissions must be approved by the Editorial Board, in accordance with the Editorial Policy. **The Voice of AUK** offers no guarantee that any submission will be published.

To be considered for publication in the Voice, submissions for a given issue must be received on or before the published deadline for that issue. The views expressed in opinion columns represent strictly the views of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of the **Voice of AUK**, nor those of the American University of Kuwait.

All submissions become property of the **Voice of AUK**.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit all submissions, including for grammar, spelling, style, and clarity. Writers have the right to withdraw submissions at any time prior to publication.

The Voice of AUK is published in ten monthly issues from September through October, and in a single issue for the months of July and August. Special non-news supplements may be published from time to time.

For advertising information, send email to voice@auk.edu.kw. Advertisements for a given issue must be received on or before the published deadline for that issue. The Editorial Board reserves the right to accept or reject any advertisement. Opinions and/or attitudes expressed in advertisements do not necessarily reflect those of the Voice of AUK nor those of the American University of Kuwait.



MUNAUK members Wadha Al-Obadialy, Abdulaziz Jaber, Khalid Al Mutawa, Mark Rangel, Ahmed Tawfik, & Ahmed Khalil.

AUK at 7th BMUN

BY MUN, AUK

The Model United Nations club attended on November 24 and 25 the 7th annual Bahrain Model United Nations (BUMUN) in the Crowne Plaza hotel. BUMUN was held under the patronage of H.E Mr. Hisham Mohammed Al Jowdar, President of General Organization for Youth & Sports. The guest of honor is His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Dhafer Al Umran, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The

conference lasted for two days where many issues were discussed such as: "Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental freedom while countering terrorism," "Prevention of youth crime and the rehabilitation and reintegration of youth offenders," "The Current situation in the Middle East, specifically the Gulf States," and "The usage of Nuclear programs for peaceful purposes." The MUN team from AUK represented the Russian

Federation, South Africa, Egypt, Gabon, and Kuwait. The General Assembly was being chaired by Khalid Al Mutawa, the MUN President.

Participants included: Khalid Al Mutawa (President), Wadha Al Obadialy (Secretary), Mark Rangel, Ahmed Tawfik, Abdulaziz Jaber, Ahmed Khalil, and Mark Rangel.

Ahmed Tawfik, and Ahmed Khalil all received honorable mentions in their respective commissions.



Experience Dartmouth

BY THEODORE KRUSE

The Dartmouth-AUK Student Exchange program has been sending AUK student to Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire since 2006. The exchange provides the opportunity for Dartmouth students to spend a term at the American University of Kuwait and for AUK students to intern for one month in the summer at Dartmouth College.

The internships offered are aimed to develop the student's academic and professional life, through handling tasks that stimulate creativity and critical thinking. This past summer five AUK students participated in the program: Sara Soliman, Hala Botros, Nada Bedir, Thamer Al-Mayyen, and Dalaa Al-Qhatani.

The students experienced Dartmouth in their own ways. Sara and Hala, spent their time working at the Public Affairs Office and the Hood Museum of Art. They helped organize events, produced a video about internationalism at Dartmouth,

worked on curatorial reports with curators at the Hood Museum, and designed ads for upcoming exhibitions. Also, they had the chance to see great pieces of art up close.

"The internship provided me with a real work experience and allowed me to explore the aspects of an operating museum of art," Hala recalls

Nada Bedir had a great experience working with the Rassias Center. Nada was trained on the Rassias method of teaching languages (the Snap, Point, Look) by John Rassias himself and previous Assistant Teachers. She was involved in the intensive Spanish Language program where she learned Spanish using the Rassias method. Finally, she performed a comedy skit with the staff at the opening dinner of the Accelerated Language Program (ALPs). Nada also had the opportunity to audit some of the courses offered at Dartmouth during the summer. She attended

a class by Dr. Dale Eickelman on Secrecy and Lying, and also another class on Democracy in Developing Countries for Dr. Misagh Parsa.

"I enjoyed participating in student discussions and observing the teaching methods used at Dartmouth" stated Nada.

Thamer Al-Mayyen and Dalaa Al-Qhatani participated in Dartmouth's Secure Information Systems Mentoring and Training (SISMAT) program. Summer 2011 was the first time AUK had students participate in the internet security problems training and was the result of faculty collaborations between AUK and Dartmouth.

The students recall the experience as unique and enlightening. "I feel I have learned more about myself and understood my capabilities as a student and as a person. I am more confident about what I want to do and how I want to pursue my field of study." Sara recalls.

Vroom Vroom Vroooooooooooooom

BY RAGHDA EL DEEB

AUK hosted a one of a kind experience event by having its students racing their creative cars through the Red Bull Racing Can on November 1. Its uniqueness lied on the interaction with students. Never there was an event on campus where students were asked to create something beforehand. However, with the Red Bull Racing Can it was different. Fun was not the only motivation to race, the winner had the opportunity to go to UK

and compete in the international race. Red Bull gave students who registered for the race: Red Bull cans, the body of the car that had the engine and the remote control. All items were given outside of campus. Intuitively, students awakened their inner creative person to build the upper part with the Red Bull cans. Well it was not that easy. Their creativity had to have some engineering touch so



they could let their racing begin. Twelve groups of two had the ability to enrich their creativity and increase team effort. In the multipurpose room, competitors, their friends and other students were gathered around the track attentively to watch the race. In the first round all cars were judged according to their speed individually, the fastest 8 cars were qualified for racing against each other. Judges Trevor Taylor and Christopher Gottschalk were rating the 16 Red Bull cars based on speed individually and by competing against each other, not regarding creativity of course. Many cars were well coordinated and designed with extreme details.

Proudly announcing the one team with two AUK students qualified to go to UK are Yousef Abu Ali and Mahmoud Jafar. They will compete against 25 countries in the world's final race at the Red Bull Formula One Racing Headquartered in Milton Keynes, UK. The runner up, Kareem Mohammad and Ahmed Hamza won a 200 KD gift voucher from Al Ghanim for his sense of creativity and assembly for the car. The essence of the event was really needed on campus. Friends working together and their friends gathering to cheer for them raised our Wolf Pack spirit amongst each other, or maybe it was just DJ X's magical songs...

Talent, from pg. 1

through his guitar, by playing instrumental music of "Half of My Heart" by John Mayer, followed by some improvisational guitar rifts. Idel Hassan gracefully sang "Someone Like You" by Adele, next! After Idel Hassan, came a singer, a songwriter, and a composer who has been in the world of music for over eight years. Abdulla Murad performed "Home" by Chris Daughtry with an interesting and semi-melodious interaction from the audience, of the chorus line "I'm going Home!" Mohammed Amir and Salem Al-Mathkour, although both being trained violinists, were welcomed on clarinet and piano respectively, to perform "Gozum" composed by Husnu Selendiridi.

Subsequent to the two violinists, was a song called "Angels" by Maria Zarey, sung brilliantly by Azhar Alaradi. It will be fascinating to find that a stand-up AUK student comedian gave a piece of his mind as well. Zaid Al-Kazemi left the audience almost tripping with laughter at his exit! Despite the fact that the next participant only began playing guitar in 2009 and had never taken a single guitar lesson in his life, Yousef Al-Nasser performed a piece by "The Script" called "For the First Time." Then, Nada Sharak melted the audience with her voice singing "Black and Gold" by Sam Sparro, followed by a song by John Mayer. Mr. Taylor then invited the audience to some refreshments by declaring a ten minute intermission.

After the mini-break, the audience were already spurring with anticipation in their seats of what marvels were next to come. Their excitement was fueled by a performance by Hamad Faisal Al-Saad, who had also sung on MBC and Funoon. In the talent show, he sang three Arabic songs, "Laila," "Alal Bal," and "Ya Habibi." This was followed by an intellectual stimulant gifted to all by Yousef Nayef, who charmed the viewers by his own English poem entitled "Childhood Dreams." Amr Gad then performed "Everything" by Stabla Boss and an original piece called "Hibernate," with Yousef Al-Nasser and Adel Al-Ansari assisting him with guitar and beats on drums, respectively. Filling love in the air came Ghaneema Qudmani

singing "Love Song" by Adele. After that, Bashiyyer Al-Saad, with an innate singing ability finely tuned with singing lessons at AUK, graciously sang "All I could do was Cry" by Etta James. Up next was a collaboration by beat-boxer Randall and vocalist Sulaiman Al-Banai. This piece left the audience crazy at the impressive rhythmic combination created. Then, coming back to the stage was Adel Al-Ansari playing guitar and singing, supported with a second guitar by Yousef Al-Nasser once again. Adel is a DJ, guitarist, drummer, and a singer. Talk about a man engulfed in music!

Arabic stand-up was next in line with Hussam Helmy performing highly-comedic ideas from the very essence of his experience. Once again, Amr Gad and Adel Al-Ansari were back on stage to play "Save him" by Justin Nozuka, on the guitar. Another break-dancing crew called the *Elecktrick Crew* impressively trampled the stage with excitement. This group of ten guys, who had been dancing together for the past five years, put their entire body and soul into their humor-centered performance.

Last but not the least, a magnificent musical collaboration between the students and a faculty took place with an actual rock band performing "Back Home in Deery" by Bobby Stands and "Turn the Page" by Bob Seiger. Majid Ashraf Mahmood, with his God-gifted intrinsic ability and mind-numbing capacity to "shred the guitar" with mystifying musical notes, was the lead guitarist, while Ahmed Younis strikingly beat music out of the drums, while Mr. Chris Gottschalk was on guitar and vocals. Mr. Chris is in-charge of the Drama Club at AUK, and has directed several plays in the university as well. He's truly a man of talent!

The successful event ended with Mr. Taylor, once again thanking the ones that made it possible; sending out recognition of the hard work of the Community Service Club and Ms. Rama Sabano, the Coordinator of Student Organizations and Leadership Development, Office of Student Life, for her outstanding efforts and overtime. The remarkable success of this event has led to a promise of an annual Talent Show, or perhaps it will.

Earthwatching Dolphins in Greece

BY GHAIIDAA H MOHAMAD

Prior to volunteering with Earthwatch, I had always been curious about what work volunteers can actually do, and if they could contribute in any significant way to the scientific work aimed at providing sound information for the conservation of the environment in various parts of the world. Joining Earthwatch last summer has proven to me how valuable volunteering can be—both volunteering time and money. I joined the Dolphins of Greece Expedition lead by Dr. Joan Gonzalvo, the scientist in charge of the expedition. We had two research-assistants, Giorgos and Ioannis, both students from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The boating experience on day one was magnificent. According to Gonzalvo, we had one of the best dolphin encounters of the year—that was very exciting! At first, because of our lack of experience, volunteers were not very confident about how to behave onboard and about the best way of delivering our observations effectively to the research crew, but in no time we were all shouting out, "Dolphins, 12 o'clock," "Dolphins, 3 o'clock," helping the researchers keep track of the dolphins' movements. Seeing dolphins at the front of the boat (called the bow) was absolutely magnificent. While bow-riding, dolphins would turn their heads and look up at us, and then go about their own ways. You can really feel the euphoria of establishing a

rapport with such a beautiful animal. The surveys at sea were conducted during the first four days in the Amvrakikos Gulf, right in-front of Vonitsa, where the project's field base is located, and the last two days were spent around the crystal-clear waters of Kalamos Island. Amvrakikos Gulf has mostly calm waters, with low wave agitation (called sea state). Typically, after the surveys at sea, we would come back to the field base for lunch and to process the data in the afternoon. Ioannis and Giorgos were great help. They showed us how to match the dolphin dorsal fin pictures taken during the dolphin sightings with the dorsal fin catalogue developed during several years of research work and over 500 dolphin sightings. It was rather difficult in the beginning, but with some practice we were able to identify the different individuals quite effectively. This whole experience has been nothing short of magnificent in terms of its educational value, and its potential to hone your independent thinking abilities, especially regarding environmental and ecological concerns. The researchers were great teachers and showed enthusiasm and interest in helping the volunteers. I'm most grateful to them for this wonderful experience. For more information on the Dolphins of Greece Expedition, please visit <http://www.earthwatch.org/exped/gonzalvo.html>, or email me at gmohamad@auk.edu.kw.





March 1, 1961 - President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, an organization sending young American volunteers to developing countries to assist with health care, education and other basic human needs.



March 18, 1974 - The five-month-old Arab oil embargo against the U.S. was lifted. The embargo was in retaliation for American support of Israel during the Yom Kippur War of 1973 in which Egypt and Syria suffered a crushing defeat. In the U.S., the resulting embargo had caused long lines at gas stations as prices soared 300 percent amid shortages and a government ban on Sunday gas sales.



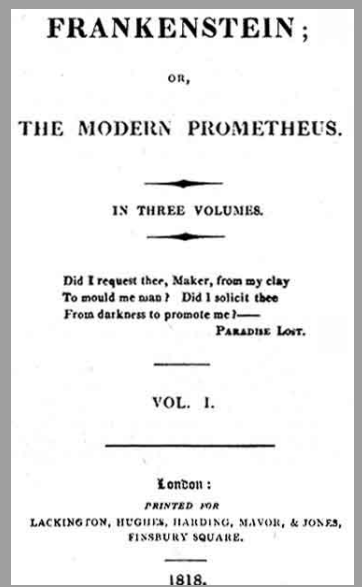
March 19, 2003 - The United States launched an attack against Iraq to topple dictator Saddam Hussein from power. The attack commenced with aerial strikes against military sites, followed the next day by an invasion of southern Iraq by U.S. and British ground troops. The troops made rapid progress northward and conquered the country's capital, Baghdad, just 21 days later, ending the rule of Saddam.



March 26, 1992 - Soviet Cosmonaut Serge Krikalev returned to a new country (Russia) after spending 313 days on board the Mir Space Station. During his stay in space, the Soviet Union (USSR) collapsed and became the Commonwealth of Independent States.



March 15, 44 B.C. - Julius Caesar was assassinated in the Senate chamber in Rome by Brutus and fellow conspirators. After first trying to defend himself against the murderous onslaught, Caesar saw Brutus with a knife and asked "Et tu, Brute?" (Even you, Brutus?) Caesar then gave up the struggle and was stabbed to death.



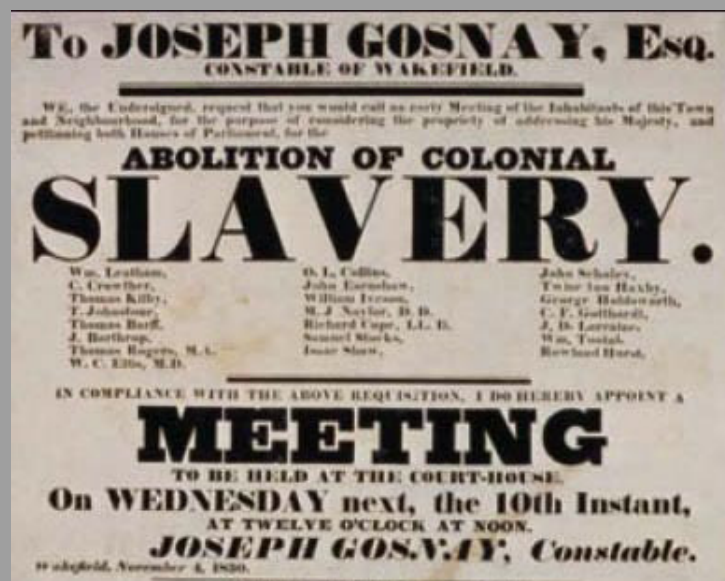
March 11, 1818 - Frankenstein is published. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelly published the world's first science fiction novel.



March 13, 1943 - A plot to kill Hitler by German army officers failed as a bomb planted aboard his plane failed to explode due to a faulty detonator.



March 10, 1876 - Alexander Graham Bell places the world's first telephone call, to his assistant in the next room.



March 25, 1807 - The British Parliament abolished the slave trade following a long campaign against it by Quakers and others.



March 12, 1609 - The island of Bermuda was colonized by the British after a ship on its way to Virginia was wrecked on the reefs.



March 27, 1964 - The biggest earthquake ever recorded strikes Anchorage, Alaska. It measured 8.3 on the Richter scale.



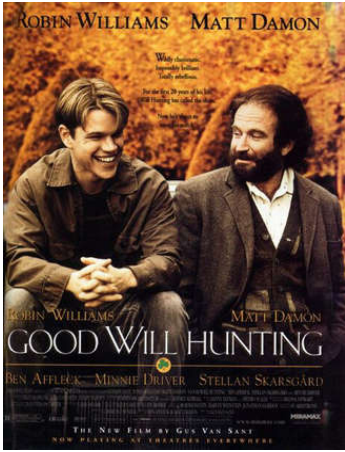
March 5, 1946 - The "Iron Curtain" speech was delivered by Winston Churchill at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. Churchill used the term to describe the boundary in Europe between free countries of the West and nations of Eastern Europe under Soviet Russia's control.



March 31, 1889 - The Eiffel Tower opens in Paris, France.

“Good Will Hunting”: A Movie Review:

BY YOUSEF ABDUL-HUSAIN



Last week on MBC2 they were playing Good Will Hunting, a movie I had always heard about but never actually watched. I thought to myself, how can a movie be good when it completely consists of characters talking? How can a movie be good when there are no car chases or buildings blowing up? How can a movie be good when it was written by the two main actors, both of which were relatively new to the movie scene at the time? And how could Robin Williams be playing a serious role? I decided not to retain these notions and reserve

judgment for after I watched the film.

After seeing the movie I now believe what people say. I am floored by how good Good Will Hunting is. The movie starts out simple; a young guy by the name of Will Hunting is a Boston local working as a janitor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. One day as he's walking by a chalk board with mathematical equations on it, he stops and corrects an error that the equation had. Two teachers walking by notice that he had corrected a very complicated math equation and they get in immediately touch with Will, who is only 20-years-old, and his life is changed forever. Professor Gerald Lambeau finds out that Will Hunting is a genius and can do mathematical equations without an educational background that not even graduates at the university could do, but this is the catch. Professor Lambeau finds out that Will has some psychological issues, so he gets the help of a psychologist, but after six different psychologists all failing with Will, Professor Lambeau takes him to a

friend of his.

Dr. Sean Maguire is the only psychologist that can get through to Will Hunting, partly because him and Will are both from the same area of Boston (Southies, as they call themselves), and partly because Dr. Maguire was also considered a genius when he was younger.

The movie revolves around these three characters. Will Hunting trying to deal with his newly found genius brain, Dr. Maguire dealing with his past and Will Hunting, and Dr. Lambeau trying to get Will to help him research mathematics and show the world his capabilities. The movie on the surface is a character study about Will Hunting, but branches out into studying the characters of Dr. Maguire and Dr. Lambeau and in doing so creates an aura of emotion that makes us care about these characters.

The movie has no violence but rather has some very intense scenes, such as the first time Will meets Dr. Maguire. Will is very cocky and makes a rude comment about Dr. Maguire's deceased wife. Dr. Maguire answers by furiously

grabbing Will by the throat and threatening him that if he ever speaks about his wife again he would "end him." The movie uses a strong dialogue and strong actions from characters to enhance the scenes that they are saying and to immerse the audience. The story is completely dialogue driven and in the movie the characters are animated very well and in doing so keep the flow of the movie strong.

Will Hunting develops an interest in a pre-med student by the name of Skylar. Skylar shows Will love and compassion, but Will rejects it, but an important point to note is that Skylar is a catalyst for Will's brain. The more Will sees her, the more he wants to showcase his genius and help Dr. Lambeau, but Will stops himself. He has fear of abandonment, and so before Skylar has a chance to push him away, he pushes her away first, even though she wants to be with him. When Skylar asks if Will loves her, Will says that he doesn't, but not because he may or may not love her, but because he'd rather be alone and not rejected instead of having a love

interest and there being a chance of him being rejected.

Because of the love interest, one could perceive that the movie was a love story, especially given the ending, but actually it's not the case. This is the journey of a man who is trying to cope with his new found abilities and the people that want to exploit it. Though, the love story subplot adds a great deal of development to Will and we find out during an emotional scene between him and Skylar that he was abused as a young child by his foster father.

Towards the end of the movie comes an extremely emotional scene that even left me in tears. Dr. Maguire stands firmly in front of Will and keeps repeating "It's not your fault." At first Will just shrugs the notion off, but after Dr. Maguire says it over six times, young Will cracks and starts crying while strongly hugging Dr. Maguire. Will realizes that it was not him who has held himself back, but those around him who have held him back.

Will chooses to return to Skylar, but she has recently moved

to California to continue her education. He leaves Boston to go after Skylar, but before he does he leaves a message in the mailbox of Dr. Maguire stating that he had to see a girl, which implies that he is going after Skylar.

Good Will Hunting is a smooth, beautiful movie. The characters are engaging, the dialogue is superb, and we actually care about what will happen with Will Hunting. The only negative thing about this movie is that it tries too hard to deliver messages to the audience, especially the scene where Will is looking for a job at the National Security Agency (NAS) and gives a long and convoluted (but nicely written) speech about people dying because of him decoding something with numbers. But overall this does not hamper the quality of the movie. I implore those who have not seen the movie to do so, but probably grab an uncut DVD version as the MBC2 version was annoying with all the inconsistent cuts for swearing. Overall, I would give it a 4.5/5.

الدبدوب

بقلم يوسف ماجد نايف

(الدبدوب على كرسي طويل في وسط المسرح، وجانبه كرسي أقل ارتفاعاً ومقعد طويل. يشق الولد طريقه بين الجماهير ويسأل بعض الحاضرين إن كانوا يريدون أن يشتركوا معه من ألعاب) يعطيهم أسعاراً غير واقعية وفي كل مرة يقلل الثمن قليلاً. (يكمل طريقه حتى يصل إلى المسرح ويجلس مرفقاً بجانب الدبدوب).

الولد: أه يا دبدوب، ماذا أفعل؟ لم يشتري أحد مني شيئاً اليوم، مع أي متأكد أن لديهم المال الكافي (ينظر إلى الدبدوب ...) ماذا؟ ... لا. أنت لا تعرفهم. إنهم بخلاء، لديهم ما يكفيهم وزيادة ولكنهم يخافون الفقر إلى درجة رهيبه. (يتأوه) لا لهم. أخبرني الآن، كيف كان يومك؟ أعرف أنني تركتك كثيراً ولكن ما باليد حيلة. هذا النوع من الناس لا يؤخذ منهم المال إلا إذا سرقته. انظر! (يخرج بعض المال) قد سرق كل هذا منهم قبل قليل دون أن يشعروا. إنه شعور رائع. إن تبذل جهداً الآن لكي لا تبذل جهداً لاحقاً، تلك هي الحياة. المهم، أرادت أن أكمل في موضوع خطير: سنسيطر على العالم. لا، تستغرب هكذا الأمر بسيط للغاية. سأشرح لك بعد أن أعود من البقالة لأشرب بعض العصير. لا تقلق، ما عليك سوى أن تنتظري وأن لا تخد أحداً عن الموضوع إطلاقاً. سأعود حالاً! سنسيطر على العالم معاً! إنهم! سنسيطر على العالم يا ديدووبوب!

(ويركض خارجاً من المسرح بحرب "الطبيب" الذي يدخل المسرح وهو ينظر إلى الولد مستغرباً حتى يختفي الولد عن نظره، ثم يلتفت إلى الدبدوب ويفكر، ثم يمشي إلى الدبدوب ببطئ وهو ينظر بمتعة وبسيرة ويجلس بجانبه).

الطبيب: دبدوب.. أنا أعرف أنك مشغول هذه الأيام، لديك مشاريع كثيرة، وستحكم العالم قريباً. ولكنك تعرفني، وتعرف أنني رجل طبيب. وقد أكون أطيب من اللازم، دبدوب. أروك ساعدني. أتعرف ماذا حدث لي البارحة؟ سأخبرك بالأمر كنت مع ثلاثة من أصدقائي، ولن أذكر أسمائهم لأنك تعرفهم جيداً. المهم، أكلنا العشاء معاً في مطعم فاخر وبعد أن فرغنا من الأكل ذهب أحدهم إلى الرحاض، وإذ به يرجع مسرعاً ويقول لي: نسرفت سيارتك! نسرفت سيارتك! أفهرعت لي مكان سيارتي لأنك بد نفسي لكنها كانت في مكانها. وعندما رجعت إلى المطعم إذا هم قد غادرو جميعاً. وإذا بالنادل يقول لي بأن هم أن أضع الحساب. ودفعته! أليست هذه خاتمة يا دبدوب؟ أليست كذلك؟ وكانوا من أغز الأصدقاء لدي، كنت أشعر قبل ذلك بالوحدة والآن رادت وحدتي وتعاستي. ماذا أفعل يا دبدوب؟ أنا لا أريد سوى صديقاً وفي! لا أكثر. أجبني: ألا تريد أن تكون صديقي. كلما أنت صديق هذا الولد؟ ... لماذا السكوت؟ أتقصد بأنك لا تريد أن تكون صديقي؟ سحقاً لك يا دبدوب! أنا -- أنا حزين. كنت صديقاً رائعاً طيلة هذه الفترة. ولكنك

خدعتني! أنا لا أريد منك شيئاً بعد اليوم. أتعرف ماذا سأفعل؟ سأتركك! سأتركك للتسلي مع صديقك الزيف! استدفع ثمن صداقتنا يا دبدوب! لا أريد أن أراك ثانية! لا أريد أراك ثانية! (يخرج الطبيب من المسرح غاضباً. وير الجرم ومن بعد الجرم يدخل مجنون يقود أعمى ويجلسان على المقعد الطويل. ينظر الجرم إلى الطبيب وهو يخرج من المسرح وهو يختفي عن نظره، ثم يلتفت إلى الدبدوب. ويمشي إليه وهو ينظر بمتعة وبسيرة ويجلس بجانبه).

الجرم: أنا لا أعرفك يا دبدوب. ولكني سمعت ذلك الرجل يذكر اسمك. أنا، أسف، لم أعرفك بنفسي. أنا مجرم. ومجرم محترف. و... أود أن أسألك سؤالاً: قبل أسبوعين قتلت أختي... من دون قصد. اتفقتنا على دفع إيجار السكن سوبلاً لكنه لم يساعدي. وذلك منذ خمسة أشهر. كل ما كان يفعله هو النوم. وأنا أفعل كل شيء. أسرق وأقتل. أفعل كل شيء لوحدي. كان معتمداً. أثم يكن ذلك من حق؟ أما كنت على حق بفعلتي هذا؟ ... إذا أنت توافقني، سكونك موافقة على فعلي! طبعاً! أتعرف، قتلته تلقائياً. من دون أي إحراج. كان لدي سبب. غيبي يقتلون بلا سبب على الإطلاق! وبدون إحساس. أليس كذلك؟ شكراً لك، دبدوب، شكراً لك! سأعادتني! شكراً دبدوب! سأراك لاحقاً دبدوب!

(يخرج مسروراً من المسرح وهو يشكر الدبدوب. يمر بالممثل، الذي ينظر إلى الجرم مستغرباً. ثم يلتفت إلى الدبدوب. ويفكر قليلاً ثم يشمي إلى الدبدوب وهو ينظر بمتعة وبسيرة ويجلس بجانبه).

الممثل: اسمعني يا دبدوب. أنا مثل بارع. ولكن لا أحد يقتنع بتمثيلي. يتحججون بأنني قصير القامة! ماذا تنصحيني؟ (رثماً يتابع الممثل حديثه مع الدبدوب. يدخل سائحان المسرح وكلاهما معه كاميرا. يصوران ما حولهما بما في ذلك الجمهور والمجنون والأعمى. ويصوران بعضهم). يستمر السائح الثاني بالتصوير كل حين وآخر طيلة الوقت. (يلاحظان الممثل وهو يكلم الدبدوب. يشيان إليهما). السائح الأول: عفواً سيدي. يشهق الممثل متفاجئاً) ماذا تفعل؟ الممثل: (يتأني) أكلم الدبدوب. السائح الأول: لماذا؟ من أنت؟ أهذا عرض مسرحي أم ماذا؟ الممثل: نعم، نعم! أنا مثل وهذا ديدوبي. أقصد، أنني أتمن مع هذا الدبدوب. أتريدان أن نمثل لكما؟

السائح الأول: طبعاً. طبعاً. الممثل: ولكن عليكما أن تدفعا قبل ذلك. لقد تدربت كثيراً معه وهذا حق. السائح الأول: طبعاً. لم لا. (يعطونه مالا. ثم يجلسان على الأرض وظهرهما للجمهور. يقوم المجنون من مكانه ويقود الأعمى ويجلسان بجانب السائحين ليشاهدوا العرض. يعطي المجنون بعض النقود للممثل فيشكره).

الممثل: (يرجل) أيها الدبدوب الخارق! يقولك الـ الـ الخارقة ويقدراتي الرائعة على التمثيل. سوف ننفذ العالم! من سيف في طريقنا؟ هيا فلننطلق! (ويشير بقبضة يده إلى أعلى سكوت طويل ...) أما سمعنتي؟ انطلق يا دبدوب! (سكوت) المجنون: توقف! أهذا جنون! الممثل: (غير مكترث) انطلق دبدوب! المجنون: ماذا تفعل؟! الممثل: أمثل! المجنون: لكنك أقصر من اللازم! (يتضايق الممثل) لا تستطيع التمثيل أساساً إن كنت قصيراً هكذا! أنت مجنون؟ الممثل: أنت المجنون لماذا تشاهدني إذا؟ خذ نقودك وادهب!

المجنون: هذا الدبدوب لا يستطيع فعل شيء! وأنت فاشل! الممثل: وماذا ستفعل حيال ذلك؟ ستضربني؟ المجنون: (يقوم من مكانه) لا! يمشي إلى الدبدوب ويضعفه مرتان ثم يلكمه بقوة. فيبقى (الدبدوب بعيداً). الممثل: ديدوب!!

يقوم الجميع بما فيهم الأعمى. يدور الأعمى حول نفسه بحثاً عن المجنون. وينادي مكرراً يا مجنون! ماذا حدث؟ أين أنت يا مجنون؟ السائح الأول: لماذا فعلت ذلك أيها مجنون؟ كنا نشاهد العرض!

المجنون: إنه عرض فاشل أساساً! السائح الأول: كان يسلينا فحسب. لم يكمل!

(يلتقط السائح الثاني صورة لهما وهما يتحاوران).

المجنون: توقف عن التصوير. (يتفاجئ المجنون ولكنه يصور المجنون مرة أخرى. يغضب المجنون ويلحق السائح الثاني. يدوران حول الأعمى وهو لا يزال يدور ويردد العبارة ذاتها. والسائح الثاني يصور المجنون وهو يطارده. فجأة يسمعون صوت إنذار من سيارة شرطة. يتوقف الجميع عدى الأعمى. يهرب السائح الأول. ثم السائح الثاني. ثم المجنون. ويضع للممثل الدبدوب مكانه ثم يهرب كذلك. والأعمى لا يزال في يدور حول نفسه وينادي المجنون. بعد فترة قصيرة يدخل الولد المسرح وهو يشرب ما تبقى من العصير مصدراً صوتاً عالياً بالمصاصة. ثم يرمي العلبة. وودن ما اهتمام بالأعمى يمشي إلى الدبدوب. يختفي صوت الإنذار).

الولد: أنا، أسف. تأخرت عليك. بأخذ الدبدوب ويحتضنه) أود أن أشكرك يا دبدوب. أنت الوحيد الذي يفهمني. دعني أكمل لك خطتي. (والدبدوب معه. يأخذ الولد النقود للمقاة على الأرض. ويضعها في جيبه. وقبل أن يخرج الولد من المسرح بقليل يلاحظ أن الأعمى لا يزال يدور حول نفسه وينادي المجنون. فيرجع إليه ويأخذ بيده ويخرجان).

الأعمى: أشكرك. بني. وأنت ولد طبيب.

of the universe and of their nature and mysteries. This is how Magus describes his teaching, “Magic is a bridge... a bridge that allows you to walk from the visible world over into the invisible, and to learn lessons of both those worlds.”

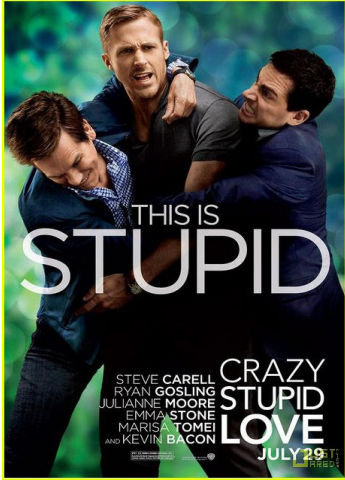
Wicca, a female witch, teaches Brida how to use magic in her voyage to find what she's looking for. She also teaches her to listen and dance to the music the earth composes.

Paulo Coelho, the author, uses remarkable methods of writing that make the reader immerse in the story. The reader can also relate to the characters as their emotions are vividly explained. He manages to turn his words to wisdom and they become worth contemplation.

Some parts of the story made me sit straight up and ponder about the meanings behind Cohelho's words. For example, Wicca says: “When you make a decision, you keep in mind an old German proverb: “The devil is in

Crazy, Stupid, Love

BY NADA EL-BADRY



At first glance, Crazy, Stupid, Love might sound like the typical romantic comedy where a couple meets, falls instantly in love, has ups and downs and, three quarters through the movie, they dramatically break up, only to be

reunited in the most romantic way possible within the last ten minutes; and, naturally, all of this would be sprinkled with the occasional humor that doesn't quite have you in stitches. Not only is Crazy, Stupid, Love comedic enough to give you stitches in your sides; it's also full of unusual plot twists. For one thing, the plot mainly revolves around womanizer Jacob Palmer (Ryan Gosling) teaching Cal Weaver (Steve Carell), who is in the process of getting a divorce after his wife admits that she cheated on him with her coworker David (Kevin Bacon), how to charm women and how to dress to impress. At first, Cal rejects the notion, but when he realizes that he really has hit rock bottom, he decides to take Jacob up on his offer, and you follow his



MUNAUK

Club Mission: The Model United Nations provides educational co-curricular simulation events for students of all ages. MUN seeks to enhance leadership, communication, and debate among its participants through representing a variety of political positions in various inter-governmental organizations. A diverse student body will learn to negotiate and resolve socio-political issues and will assimilate their distinct academic backgrounds in their ventures. MUN strives to provide the younger generation with the tools to comprehend their international world in its past, present, and future.

Email: MUNAUK@auk.edu.kw



Alakhdar Environmental Club

Club Mission: Al Akhdar Environmental Club aims to implement schemes that enrich appreciation for the environment, demonstrating the link between environmental and social relations and enhancing environmental sustainability within Kuwait and the Arab Vicinity.

Email: Alakhdar@auk.edu.kw



The Voice of AUK

Club Mission: The Voice of AUK is a student-run, monthly newspaper that seeks to foster active communication among the entire campus community and keep it abreast of diverse and relevant issues by providing high-quality news and information in an academic context. Through this, The Voice also strives to heighten awareness of rights and responsibilities of membership in the AUK community. The Voice also espouses a commitment to philanthropy.

Email: voice@auk.edu.kw



The Accounting Club

Club Mission: The Accounting club is an academic club that help students with accounting to make them better understand the material.

Email: accountingclub@auk.edu.kw



The Art Factory

Club Mission: The Art Factory Club operates just like an actual factory. Everyone together forms the "factory-like unit" where one can insert strong and creative energy into the factory's machines which will be generated into something that can be enjoyed by many. By this, we are not only talking about artwork, but also one's character for members will learn how to get inspired by their surroundings which leads to promoting a positive and peaceful atmosphere as well as learn how to see beauty in everything. While working and exposing one's self to art experts, talented artists and various people outside the club that they have to work with, will not only help improve the member's artistic skills but also improve in several other fields such as: group work, meeting goals and budgets, time management, marketing projects and expressing ideas.

Email: artfactory@auk.edu.kw



Armenian Culture Club

Club Mission: Introduce the Armenian Culture to the AUK Community.

Email: Armeniancultureclub@auk.edu.kw



alahrar@auk.edu.kw

Club Mission & Club Description: The purpose of this organization shall be to serve the entire community of the American University of Kuwait by promoting interest in the club's activities. The organization shall strive to uphold the name and reputation of the University. Its purpose is, moreover, to provide a social atmosphere and knowledge about some special days in the Hijri calendar. Also, we will focus on some particular scientists in the Islamic history who had a big impact on science and how did they achieve certain goal which led us to this lifestyle today.

Email: alahrar@auk.edu.kw



The International Club

Club Mission: The chief objective of the international club is to apply what we have learned and accomplished from our educational journey at AUK through entertaining ways that tend to create not only an educational, but also an entertaining atmosphere between students, who belong to different nationalities and cultures. Moreover, the club also aims to create a connection between students and faculty, in which they can engage in educational and entertaining experiences.

Email: International@auk.edu.kw



The Human Rights Club

Club Mission & Club Description: The goal of The Human Rights Club is to raise awareness of human rights issues and to promote policies that address civil, political, cultural and economic rights. The club provides a platform for social activists, intellectuals, and artists, to come together to discuss issues that can help encourage change and build a greater understanding for a common humanity.

Email: humanrightsclub@auk.edu.kw



COURSE SCHEDULE for FEBRUARY-MARCH 2012

GENERAL ENGLISH

Pre-Intermediate Level 2A	March 11, 2012
Intermediate Level 3A	February 12, 2012
Upper-Intermediate Level 4A	March 4, 2012

IELTS REVIEW COURSE

Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. Classes start every Sunday.

IELTS EXPRESS

A quick 5-day exam practice and review session before the IELTS Test; practice real listening, reading, writing and speaking questions.	February 12, 2012
	March 4, 2012
	March 25, 2012

Classes run the week before every IELTS Test.

CAMBRIDGE BUSINESS ENGLISH CERTIFICATE (BEC)

Preliminary Level 1A	February 14, 2012
Preliminary Level 1B	March 29, 2012

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMA in BUSINESS

Core Modules	
Business Organization and Environment	March 4, 2012
Optional Modules	
Marketing	March 4, 2012
Business Finance	March 5, 2012
Human Resource Management	April 1, 2012

LEADERSHIP and SUPERVISORY SKILLS

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM (2 core + 3 elective modules)

Core Modules	
Leadership and Influence	March 5, 2012
Elective Modules	
Business Ethics	February 13, 2012
Performance Management	March 19, 2012

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First Aid for Moms	February 11, 2012
IELTS and TOEFL Private Tuition	Upon Request

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What Lies Beneath

BY JASON R. SULLIVAN

It was mid-July when I received a call from an old friend. He was planning a visit and wanted to catch up. “Hey man, I’m coming to Orlando let’s hang out! I want to make it an adventure, just like the old days,” his voice was filled with the enthusiasm that I remembered from our days in college.

“Rob, I have just the adventure in mind”, I told him. I had just finished restoring an old boat and it was ready to be taken out to sea. I had spent several months sanding, rebuilding and repainting this old shell of a boat and now it was something that it hadn’t been in 30 years. It was like new. I explained where our journey would take him, sent him the nautical maps and showed him pictures of several deserted islands that we would visit. He was thrilled at the idea. What makes Rob so much fun is that he thrives on the unexpected, in that sense we both do.

Rob made the ten hour drive to my house and as we sat for dinner he shared his excitement over the three day trip we had in store. He had been doing his research as well. He had plotted a map that included several great fishing spots and a Spanish ship that had been sunk just off the coast in the mid 1700’s.

As the tide shifted and the waves died we decided to go further south to Fort Pierce. This is where our journey would begin. We lowered the boat into the water, added our supplies, and headed out. I started the boat and it roared to life. We pushed forward through “Shorys Slough” on to the mouth of the Fort Pierce Inlet. Open water! Our first stop was the Spanish Shipwreck. We dropped anchor, put on our gear and jumped in the water. We looked over the reef for almost two hours before we finally saw parts of a broken hull still standing upward from the east side of the reef. It was amazing. We were looking at history. This ship had been sitting in the same spot for three hundred years and it was still telling its story. The next two days were much of the same, exploring, fishing, camping and diving. The final day we were finally making our way back to the car and while we were still a few miles off shore the motor died. I was relaxing on the bow and Rob was at the helm. He tried to restart the motor several times but was unsuccessful. We began to look at the motor and realized that one of the water intake vents had been blocked with sea grass. When we cleaned the filter Rob returned to the helm and turned the

ignition. Instead of hearing the sound of the motor what we heard was a small snap. The key had broken off in the ignition. Most people would be a little freaked out, maybe even somewhat concerned, but it was the unexpected that we had been waiting for and now here it was. Rob said sharply, “I wondered when it was going to happen.” He smiled and said, “So captain, what’s the plan?” I laughed and said, “So you break the key and now I’m the captain.” We laughed and began to explore our options. The wind was blowing offshore so there was no chance of us drifting back. I looked at Rob and asked him to get the tool box. He dug around through our supplies and looked back at me, “Dude, what tool box?” So there we were miles offshore drifting further into the open ocean with a broken key and no tools. One of my hobbies is fixing broken things. So I started looking around the boat. I found a pair of fishing pliers, fishing gear, and a couple of filet knives.

Long story short we rewired the ignition switch with the fishing gear. It took some time but within an hour we were back in business. The boat roared again and we made our way back to port.

During the car ride home I kept thinking about 3 days of sunrises and sunsets on the sea. The one thing that stood out more than anything was the shipwreck. I thought about the amazing story that lied just beneath the surface and was curious to know more. I began to realize that this was just a small picture of what we all carry inside. Each of us has a past; things that are buried just beneath the surface waiting to be seen. Some of it is beautiful, some of it is scary, and all of it when it is found makes us vulnerable as it tells our story. Being seen, being experienced by those around us is part of the process of intimacy. Not everyone knows the coordinates of those hidden treasures both good and bad but even fewer actually get to see them with their own eyes.

Who knows what lies beneath the surface in your life? Has anyone experienced the story of what lies beneath? My challenge to you is this. Make your treasure known to someone; let them in to those secret places that are protected by a calm surface. It is the unexpected that makes the journey what it is; offer the unexpected to those around you.

Part of the job of Career Services and Wellness is to offer personal counseling. In other words we are trained treasure hunters equipped to help find the treasures that you may not even know exist in your own life, in your own heart. If you are up for the adventure and want to experience the unexpected treasures of the journey we are always up for the journey.

President’s Lunch, Huh?

BY LAVEENA LOBO

President’s Lunch. You’ve probably heard of that somewhere before – received an email perhaps, just never knew the details. What is it all about? Which President? What lunch? Who’s invited? How can I attend?

The Office of Student Life is hoping to answer these questions through this short information piece. The President’s Lunches were an initiative that began about 2 years ago, in an effort to present students with the opportunity to have an informal session with the AUK President and members of his cabinet over lunch which is provided for by the Office of Student Life. This lunch gives students a chance to meet AUK President, Dr. Winfred Thompson

and his cabinet personally, discuss any issues they may be dealing with, share concerns, ask questions or give feedback. Students can also use this time to talk to the President about what they feel is good at AUK, programs that should continue as a as share their vision for the university.

The President’s Lunch is organized on the fourth Wednesday of most months – whenever the university is in session. The lunch is held at the Library Conference Room and begins promptly at 1:00 p.m. Each lunch usually lasts for an hour and a half or two hours allowing for enough time to have a meaningful conversation.

At each lunch, in order to

maintain some amount of uniformity a particular cohort or group is invited. Past invitees have been student workers, athletes, seniors, freshmen, sophomores, juniors, IEP students, Awards Night awardees etc. Invites are sent out to the cohort via AUK email approximately 3 weeks before each lunch. Students can register for a spot at the lunch by sending an RSVP to Student Life. Seating is limited to 15 students and hence reservation is on a first come first served basis.

Over the last two years we have received great feedback from attendees – telling us that they received a listening ear and that many of their questions were answered. Others were simply

glad to have had the opportunity to meet with the President one on one and share their ideas with him.

In the upcoming Spring Semester lunches have been scheduled for 28th March and 25th April.

This is a great opportunity for you to be heard and if you would like for a particular cohort/group that you are a part of to be invited please let us know by emailing llobo@auk.edu.kw or studentlife@auk.edu.kw.

If you have any suggestions, comments or queries please stop by our office which is open on all working days from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. or email us at studentlife@auk.edu.kw.

2010 Grads: Get Ready!

BY DANA TAQI



Seniors! You are on your way to become the newest cohort of AUK graduates: Congratulations! This is the first step in becoming AUK Alumni. You’ve heard the word but do you get it? Is it a secret society that only the privileged can join? We are here to guide you on the path of becoming an Alumnus. Being alum is about PRIDE. It’s about staying connected. It’s about the PACK.

Senior year is about hard work, making sure you have all the necessary paperwork done for graduation but it is also about FUN. These are your last months here on

campus, enjoy them! Get involved, stay active and you will ensure a long lasting relationship with the institution. Interested in helping out your fellow seniors? Join the senior committee! Help us help you. Share your concerns and needs with the senior committee; they are your voice to the university.

Stay Connected: Share your updated address and contact information with us so that you do not MISS important information, deadline dates and opportunities to get involved.

Get Involved: Be on the lookout

for senior related activities, volunteer or simply attend.

This is also a time to think about your future. Whether you are looking to secure a job after graduation or would like to apply to graduate school, stop by Career Services & Wellness and find out how to start your future today.

If you are interested in joining the senior committee or need resume guidance please email dhtaqi@auk.edu.kw, your coordinator for Alumni Affairs & Employment Programs.

Graduate! Membership is only for GRADUATES!

Be in Control

BY ABIR TANNIR ITANI

“Being in control of your life and having realistic expectations about your day-to-day challenges are the keys to stress management, which is perhaps the most important ingredient to living a happy, healthy and rewarding life,” says Marilu Henner.

Our brain is full of recyclable as well as non-recyclable containers. Stressful situations come across every minute. It all depends on how we are going to approach it. Categorizing the stressful feeling in

the recyclable container shows that we accept it, can think of it, and change it. Thus this negative feeling can be recycled to a positive one soon. For those who directly fill in their non-recyclable containers, they are telling themselves “I am stressed and I want to be stressed.” Stress is a feeling produced by external influences that can affect our physical health creating increased heart rate, a rise in blood pressure, muscular tension, irritability, and depression. There

are many ways of managing stress. First you need to pull it out of the non-recyclable container and toss it in the recyclable one. Then, communicate with yourself about how stressed you are. Now set goals for yourself; think of positive outcomes like ‘being happy.’ Then organize those goals in your brain and start taking care of yourself by eating healthy and exercising. Do things you enjoy. Do some relaxation techniques like yoga, listening to music, and meditation.

It is really important to know which relaxation technique works best for you. If you are overexcited when responding to stress it is best to go for meditation, deep breathing, or imagery. If you are under-excited, then choose energizing techniques like rhythmic exercise. If your response was both at the same time, frozen response, then seek walking, rhythmic exercise or yoga.

For more techniques, tips, and help visit the Career Services and Wellness center.

What is ASAP?

BY DANIYA ALAM

What is ASAP? No, I do not mean the abbreviation that stands for “as soon as possible!” What is ASAP at AUK? Many students and faculty have already been introduced to this program offered by the Academic Advising Center (AAC). The ASAProgram, which stands for Academic Success Advising Program, is dedicated to all students at AUK who may face academic, personal, social, or institutional difficulties and need guidance to achieve success.

We have all been down that road of transitioning from high school to university, a completely

new challenge. University life means new responsibilities: maintaining a good GPA while working towards your future career and trying to find a balance between family and friends while not getting overly influenced by peer pressure. There are moments when the experience is pleasant and other times when it can be too much to handle.

Research has shown that about one half of all students who drop out of college do so during their freshman year. The AAC’s goal is to reduce that statistic by being available to those students

who are in need of any sort of assistance from the smallest concern such as “What can count as a humanity course?” to “I need to speak to someone concerning difficulties in my class.”

Apart from advising and handing out the RAC number, the AAC is also here to introduce AUK students to the academic and social environment of AUK from academic support— referrals to the Tutoring Center, the Writing Center or Career Services and Wellness, to student activities— clubs, sports, and other recreational programs.

So students, when you get an

ASAP email, DO NOT PANIC— you are not in trouble! It just means that your instructor is concerned about your success and would like you to be aware of all the support services available at AUK. That is where we step in!

The ACC is not only geared to addressing faculty concerns, we are also here to listen to your concerns and find the most suitable solution to any problem you might be having. Feel free to drop in to the Center for a chat any time! The AAC working hours are 8 am to 4 pm. You can also email me any concerns at dalam@auk.edu.kw.

The Spirit of Volunteerism

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI, AUK ALUM ‘11

To live for the service of humanity: that is surely a life well spent. To exist every day with a mind to give to those in need and be sufficed with but a smile or word of appreciation in return: this act of selflessness reflects your own values. By giving time and exercising as much effort as possible to bring happiness to others, you bring it to yourself as well. Sadly, people in Kuwait go along with the misconception that there is nothing one can do here to volunteer because it is a welfare state. That could not be farther from the truth: every opportunity I get, I try to explain that there are social, cultural and environmental ills in Kuwait that people choose to turn a blind eye to. Civil society might not be as plentiful as we would hope but that does not equal communal perfection. Steps will have to be incremental; I was overjoyed when I heard that AUK had put together an event for students to volunteer at several local organizations. Here, is a start. May there never be an end to such endeavors.

I have always wanted to give volunteering a go, all the while knowing that I would have to do my homework because such associations are not at the forefront of Kuwaiti society, plain and simple. But what I found is that there

may just be a distorted view of what volunteering actually entails. For the record, it is getting your hands dirty and doing something, rather than just talking endlessly about why something is a problem. Everyone recognizes this main principle but I have had some minimal experiences showing otherwise. One was when I went over to the Kuwait Red Crescent Society; I had been meaning to pay it a visit for quite a while and when I finally did, I walked out of its retro, 1960s style building extremely disappointed. A kind, outspoken man had greeted and set out to inform me about what I would be able to do as a volunteer and/or member of KRCS. It turned out to be nothing more than enrolling in seminars and workshops. That is definitely not what I had in mind. Even the aura when I first walked in, it was not vibrant, like how I imagined it would be.

I know that, like other countries, Kuwait needs its shopping malls. God forbid I should figuratively banish those from daily routines. But, how are we, the citizens, supposed to give back to our community if the government does not pay attention to civic engagement? My message goes in two directions: a) there are places to go to volunteer but b)

I wish Kuwaiti decision-makers concentrated on making them prosperous, granting them more publicity, etc. When I talk about this with international friends, they tend to suggest that I start my very own non-profit organization, not contemplating that there would be an obstacle(s) to doing that. While I am all for that idea, I know it is anything but clear-cut.

Offshoot non-governmental organizations of the United Nations have garnered a respectable reputation worldwide and I was happy to find, upon researching, that there are some branches of those headquartered in the West here in Kuwait. Just a slight issue: there are no websites, no addresses and even with registered telephone numbers, no one ever picks up. If anything, this is suggestive of the Kuwaiti mood towards volunteerism. Familial support is not always given: indifference is usually expressed and sets those who truly want to help out on the path of discouragement. I do not understand why negativity is even a reaction. In any case, I end this with a word of advice: even if your own society does not provide necessary channels, seek out and ride the wave of change. Your heart will thank you for it. I know I plan on never giving up.

It Must Be The Weekend Somewhere

BY CAROL ROSS SCOTT

I fully understand that once you hit campus, you are considered a full-fledged college student and are afforded certain privileges. And since you are footing the cost, you should be able to decide IF and WHEN you attend class. I feel you... NOT! When I first started college (YEP! one of Dr. Carol's stories about her college life back in the old days) my excuse was that it HAD to be the weekend somewhere in the world... You don't go to class on the weekend! I also took advantage of the sunny days—too nice to be stuck in a classroom... the rainy days—too wet to go outside; I might mess up my hair! The fact that many of my university classes, I had already had in high school PLUS I was paying for college with my parent's money... SERIOUSLY?! I set my own schedule. Even when the accounting faculty member (I started as an accounting major!) said with his outside voice that his “ego required me to be in class.” I still decided when I would attend classes. I couldn't account for those grades that appeared on my transcript!

I could cite the reasons students choose not to attend: you must catch up on your sleep; complete other course work that is more important; you feel the course is useless and/or the instructor is not

interesting; you are part of the latte crowd and must finish the cuppa'... but I won't. I could also do the scholastic thing and cite lots of research that shows evidence of the correlation between attendance and student success or better yet the evidence that shows if you do not attend, you will not do well... but I won't. I could try to guilt trip you with the “what would your parents or the government say if they knew you were not attending?”...I won't do that either. And I won't put the catalog in your face and tell you there is an attendance policy that gives you a 15% window because some will see that as a window of opportunity and chase the rainbow 14% of the term.

What I will share is this... Attendance is not all academic. You can go to class every day and still learn nothing if you are not engaged. But at least if you did show up, there is the chance that you will take away something of value. Attendance is about discipline and stick-to-itiveness. College is about short term sacrifice for long term gain. I know the TERM sometimes feels like it will never end and a couple of rainbow days won't hurt. You must get up and persevere! The habits you develop and hone now are habits that you will carry when you leave our Wolf Pack home. Working private or government, you must be

at work. No snickering; in the government sector too, you must show up to work! In the family business...rise and shine. In your business, got to be there! Rain, blue skies, dust storm, great midnight sale... you must get up and make it happen because there is always someone, somewhere who is willing to get up, outrun, outthink and out-survive you.

It was so easy for me to find somewhere in the world where it was the weekend. And it took a while for me to really understand that going to class was really more than going to class. It was preparation for real life. My favorite motivational poster says “Every morning in Africa, a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed... Every morning a lion wakes up, it knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death.” It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle... when the sun comes up, you'd better be running.

I do not know the author but this poster really resonates with me. Every morning... college is your training ground for surviving the jungle called life. Getting up, getting to class and engaging in learning every morning is about preparing for survival. Your race has already begun... I'm a Leo. Backing out of Dr. Carol's corner until next time... Peace!

The Agony & The Pride

A Backstage View from the Speakers. The Bad Luck, the Good and What Really Happened

BY HELENE EL NEAMAN AND MARIE EL NEAMAN

“A *journey of a thousand miles begins with one small step*”. Lao Tzu ... And...“It's not the destination that matters, it's the journey.”

Luke Rangel and I (Helene EL Neaman) took our first step in ENGL108 when we stood up in front of our class and presented our ice-breaker speech. Legs trembled, voices unsteady, complimented with a throat as dry as the desert... Let me tell you now, it wasn't even close to a quality presentation that would one day win AUK 2nd and 3rd place this year in the 11th Emirates Environmental Group (EEG) Inter-College Public Speaking Competition ...

Who knew that amateur speakers would one day stand up on stage in front of hundreds and “romp away with major prizes” as quoted by confident Don Prades, our coach a day before the competition... Thus, in ENGL108 class, AUK's presenters began their journey...

Last April, the EEG sent out the list of topics to be presented. There were a number of students who showed interest in trying out for this competition, but it wasn't that simple. A great amount of research and a worthy speech had to be produced before classes resumed the following September. But the work wasn't over even after what felt like our 100th draft... The biggest problem was trying to squeeze a summer's worth of research into a 12 minute presentation without taking out the most important points. In the end, even some of those points had to be eliminated, in order to reach our presentation's time limit - 12 minutes on the dot- meaning to be on the safe side, we'd have to hit between 10 to 11 minutes maximum!

“Practice makes perfect.”

We all had our share of memorizing poems in elementary school, but memorizing a speech filled with important facts and scientific information... Well, that was definitely a whole different ball game for us speakers. Standing up in front of an audience during our first few practices wasn't a pretty site. We kept mixing up information and quotations... Our nervous levels shot up like a rocket. And even if we had the speech memorized by heart that mambo jumbo language always seemed to escape from our mouths once we were up in front of an audience! Allowing your nervousness to take over you like that is a big NO NO in the public speaking world. Even the most professional speakers get nervous, but how do all those renowned speakers do it without making a fool of themselves? Well the secret is, is to convert all that strong, nervous energy into something useful... Confidence.

The moment anyone steps foot on stage, the audience can almost feel themselves in your shoes, if you are shy and terrified; they get the same reaction towards your presentation. However, if you

march on stage with confidence, the audience will find your presentation more enjoyable, and they can sit down in their seat, relax and enjoy the show. In other words, confidence was the key ingredient to any successful speech.

“Dubai - the Paris of the Middle East”

Before we knew it, AUK's teams were on a plane flying out of Kuwait! Speakers: Helene and Luke, and our mutual teammate, my sister, Marie! Dubai, UAE has changed drastically over the years, that even over a time period of a single year, Dubai would have some wonderful additions. And what better time for students to go to Dubai than to be excused from classes for almost a whole week! (Sun. Nov 27 to Wed. Nov. 30) The Burj Khalifa, the word's current, tallest building was a breathtaking site, and could be seen in almost all directions, no matter where you were in Dubai. Malls, ski slope, aquariums, 7 star hotels... Just took our breath away... But before we could let our minds get too carried away, we snapped back to reality as soon as we reached the venue the following morning. It was like High School all over again, don't you just hate having to wake up at 5am?

Don Prades had us at the venue an hour early. It was a two day competition, and we spent the beginning of the first day familiarizing ourselves with the stage; that way when we're up, we wouldn't have the rush of butterflies in our tummies because it's not going to be the first time on that stage. But Marie, Luke and I familiarized ourselves a little too much that day; we were laughing and goofing around on stage, but hey? Nobody saw us... I think? We fell in love with that stage and didn't want to get off... It's where we belonged!

“Break a leg!” Not break your leg.

The quote is “break a leg” but this year, there was no doubt that other teams were secretly hoping that we would actually break a leg...

The competition was extremely competitive this year, nothing like the previous years! We could hear the other team's coaches talking about the AUK team saying things like “Watch out for the AUK team!” and out of the mouth of one of the coaches of AUK's strongest competitor, Prince Sultan University in Saudi Arabia “Every time we see the name AUK in the contest, we worry and expect a tough fight!”

It was just that time of the competition that too much was on the line, and we were too scared that we would jeopardize all our hard work, that bad luck hit us. The venue took place in the Conference Hall at Knowledge Village, a beautiful park like setting which consists of multiple universities bundled together in one location. In other words, it's the perfect location to

get lost. Luke, Marie and I, had a casual walk around the campus during lunch break, and had to circle numerous times to get back to the venue! Don Prades was already at the auditorium waiting for us so we had to call him and reassure that we would be back in 5 minutes, which turned into a good half hour. That was bad luck number one.

We arrived at the venue and watched the remaining speeches, and noticed that most of them had videos and performed miniature skits while on stage- something new to this year's competition. After day one of the competition, all participants were invited to a welcoming dinner that night at a fancy hotel.

Unfortunately, bad luck number two occurred later that night, when our only copy of our presentation notes mysteriously was found soaking wet in my handbag. Ladies, never keep water inside your purse! Luckily the ink didn't smear, and all we had to do to save the work was to dry it with a hair blow dryer at our hotel room-yup you got that right, the woman's newest best friend! (Not really hehe, but you get the idea.)

“It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed.” Theodore Roosevelt

After blow drying sheets of paper, Don Prades, coached us one final time that night... and then we were off to bed. We could feel our butterflies in our tummies fluttering about. Tomorrow is it; it's make it or break. It's hard to get a good night's sleep when your brain is still thinking, but I can honestly say, I've recited my speech enough to actually dream about reciting it. And whenever there would be silence... There my brain goes again- reciting that speech giving “memorized by heart” a whole different meaning. I finally dozed off and fell asleep.

Suddenly, I was awakened by a terrible stomach ache at 4am. Could this be nervousness at its worst? No, it was what I least expected, *food poisoning*.

I had no choice but to stay behind while Don Prades, Luke, and Marie went to the venue without me. I had to accept the fact that I may not participate in this event. However, the good news is, due to this unfortunate event, I had permission from the person in charge to delay my speech to the last, giving me a good few hours to recover. I tried to go back to sleep as soon as possible, but was awakened multiple times by my hotel phone ringing off the hook. They were the calls of a worried mother and supportive friends. After a few hours of resting, there was a knock on the door, Marie and Luke had arrived to pick me up to go to the venue. They had very good news, Luke's speech was a success. He left the audience in

Continued on pg.12

Be Prepared to Be An Employee

BY ABIR K. ITANI

Are you ready to start working? Do you want to be up to the employer's expectation? Then, you need to know what are the skills expected from you.

Skills- Personal, Professional, Intellectual and Basic

There are many skills you need to consider beyond your academic achievement. To prepare yourself for a job you should develop your intellectual, personal, professional, and basic skills. A study shows that many job applicants have deficiency in motivation, self-development, communication skills, and team work expertise (Polyacsko, 2009). Employers are raising those issues because job applicants are not up to their expectations. "On all hiring criteria included in the survey, such as

adaptability and critical thinking, applicants were performing below employers' expectations", as mentioned in The Chronicle (2011).

Because a career starter lacks experience, personal progress is expected from him. He must have motivational skills such as ambition, dedication and a drive to learn. Self-development is very important with respect to learning in a professional area and work culture. In addition to these skills, team work and communication are mostly linked together. Teamwork leads to productive effort and positive relationships. They tell the employer that the applicant can work effectively with other employees, share information, attend to others, participate in team

projects, and be open, responsible and accepting. Problem solving skills have to be developed as in a job setting the employee needs to take quick and effective decisions to produce dynamic outcomes.

An employee is expected to be loyal, committed, honest, enthusiastic, reliable, and adaptable, have self-esteem, positive attitude and motivation.

Generally, skills can be classified as follows:

Source: Commonwealth of Australia March 2002, Employability Skills for the Future, DEST, Canberra (p. 8 -9)

To learn more about Employer's expectations follow our series of Voice Articles and join our workshop on January 30 at 1pm in the Library Conference Room. Check your emails for any updates!

Abolishing Smoking From Within

BY GHALYA AL-DHAFIRI

Smoking has been known to be a hazardous and addicting habit that has taken the American University of Kuwait by storm. It pollutes not only our human bodies, but also the environment in which we live. Smoking should be permanently banned within the American University of Kuwait's campus even in an outdoor open area for the safety of all.

The first rule AUK has come up with regarding smoking is to completely ban in from any indoor enclosed area. However, this has packed the smokers in a smaller area, and they've become less dispersed. Because of this, second hand smoking has become more commonly practiced amongst the student body,

Anonymous Student A, a student at AUK, speaks of this point in particular: "Smoking should be banned at AUK because it is a good way to create a clean and healthy environment, and yes this must include the outdoors, because the bigger the smoking-free radius, the better the academic environment gets!" Second-hand smoke occurs as a result of the inhalation of pollutants in the air from tobacco products. According to the American Lung Association, "Smoke emitted from tobacco contains about 4,000 toxic chemicals 40 of which are known to be linked to cancer."

The Surgeon General and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommend that no one should smoke when young people are present, ironically AUK is an environment made up of more than 70% of students and even staff under the age of 28 – a considerably young age. Secondhand smoke also causes approximately 46,000 heart diseases and deaths each year, and has been linked to stroke and hardening of the arteries. The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids created a red keychain with the number 1,200 on it. The number 1,200 represents the average number of people who die each day due to smoking.

A lot of students object to the banning of smoking in AUK, and say it is a personal freedom to smoke, such as Anonymous Student D says: "We do whatever we want to do, because this is our liberty, and so we can smoke where ever we want to smoke." I, however disagree that it's a freedom of choice but it is merely an act of complete selfishness. Smokers might control their own health but not the health of others like in second hand smoke. Clearly some smokers do not understand that they are taking over other student's right to breathe. Even outdoor smoking limits the oxygen intake of non-smokers that freely chose to sit outside and enjoy the breeze.

There's a reason smoking is banned in hospitals and you don't see a lot of people arguing over their freedom when it comes to smoking there. Anonymous Student E says: "Just because someone chooses to smoke, it doesn't mean he or she should inflict the chances of cancer and other health risks on people who have chosen NOT to smoke. It's extremely unfair!"

Smoking in an academic place - especially a university, is not good for the reputation of the place, especially in the Kuwaiti society. Women that smoke publically have often been looked upon with disgrace or disgust. Anonymous Male Student F says: "I hate it when women smoke, it's absolutely shameful, disrespectful and un-lady like! It's a place to learn, not a public cafe or a club." I expect the University to have a more academic environment rather than a hot spot for peers to grab a cigarette, it's a place to learn, and we can start by learning how to take care of our own health.

The Kuwaiti law clearly states that it is a criminal act to smoke or sell any cigarette products to those under the age of 21, but because this law is not applied in non-smoke-free academic areas where a lot of under-aged students exist and peer pressure is the fastest-spreading way of social

influences, average student smokers at AUK have been smoking for at least 5 years, which means they must have started when they were minors. Samira a student at AUK and a supporter of the abolishment of smoking within AUK says: "Banning smoking completely at AUK eliminates peer pressure - non smokers who may be influenced by smokers no longer do so and the smoking students are prohibited from smoking."

Anonymous Student O at AUK says: "It should be banned so those who are trying to quit don't have an excuse of being around nicotine all the time, it's a motivation and a very good chance for smokers to quit. This comes from personal experience, and I am doing well." Samira says: "Students are still young, and if they are trying to quit smoking AUK can help them do so - at least on its premises. It can also get the students to stay longer hours without smoking and - if given the chance - they can then pass on their new attitudes and lifestyles of smoking-free into their families and relatives."

Some students actually suggested having smoking rooms in campus, but don't they realize that that would be twice the health risk? Smokers would practically be first and second hand smokers at the same time!

I think that this new AUK policy can help reduce health risks for students, staff and guests at AUK. It will help benefit the reputation of the university and make it more of an academic place for learning rather than a hang out or a public cafe shop. The new policy can help reduce the risks of having bad influences such as increasing the number of smoking teenagers. It will also create a healthier and cleaner environment at campus. It will give addicts the chance to save their lives as well as others and most importantly show the Kuwaiti society the side effects of a smoke-free environment to save Kuwait's youth. Smokers have nothing to lose if they give quitting a try, but they have everything to lose if they don't.

Service Hero: Vote to Be Heard



BY RASHA AL-JABI

As service consumers, we constantly feel the need to voice our feedback regarding service quality. With the development of the business market, we are bombarded with a variety of brand options, which makes us, as consumers, picky about what we receive and expect. According to Service Hero's website, it defines itself as Kuwait's first customer satisfaction index launched in 2010 with a mission to provide consumers with an opportunity to be part of a nation-wide online survey that measures service quality across different sectors in Kuwait.

In 2011, Service Hero announced that its annual online survey is available to enable consumers once

again to vote and rate their satisfaction about the services that they receive. Service Hero also revealed that regardless of good or bad service, people's vote will allow companies in different industry categories to learn more about their strengths and weaknesses and compare them to competitors. It further emphasized that the final results of the survey will provide industry average and an overall country average, which will be compared to a global scale.

The representatives of Service Hero believe that the number of votes that one company will receive compared to competitors in the same sector can better help future consumers decide which company to select based

on what they expect and need in a service.

Service consumers can vote through completing the online survey developed by Service Hero to ensure high quality data and make the voting process easier. Based on the results of the survey, three country winners that scored the highest are chosen. In addition, each company has a chance to win in each of several categories, such as restaurants, stores, communication, airlines, among others. According to the Service Hero website, The Peacock Chinese Restaurant, Mais Alghanim Restaurant and Wataniya Airways were recognized as companies providing the best services in 2010.

To guarantee fair and accurate results, the comity has established an independent advisory council that comprises of leaders in the market and in academic institutions including the American University of Kuwait, Gulf University for Science and Technology and the Australian College of Kuwait.

The Most Anticipated Video Game of All Time: Call of Duty: Modern

BY MHD AMER M ABUL BURGHUL



What is there to be said about "Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3," that hasn't already been said? The first-person shooter game was called "the most anticipated game of the year" by many video gamers, but is it that good enough? Well, yes. It surely is.

"Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3," which is the third sequel to the Modern Warfare series, was released on 23 November 2010. According to the game's publishing company, Activision, the game sold 6.5 million copies only within 24 hours of its release in the U.S., making around \$400 million in just one day! Without any doubt,

the game has had the biggest entertainment launch of all time in any medium ever.

It is the game's depth that makes it engaging. The landscapes that you shoot your way through are vast and detailed, and the missions keep you continually occupied. The campaign, or story mode, in the game picks up exactly where "Modern Warfare 2" left off. The multiplayer mode works similar to the previous games: one can anticipate usual changes of maps and weapons. Nevertheless, it is what keeps you picking the controller up time after time. A survival mode has been added to

the game, where two online players take on waves of enemies which grow in difficulty.

The market for video games has been incredibly rising during the past few years, especially with the evolvement of game consoles such as the PlayStation or the Xbox according to PricewaterhouseCoopers' Global Entertainment and Media Outlook. In October only, the sales of video games themselves (without consoles and accessories) reached \$621.3 million in the U.S. according to the report.

"Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2" was ranked as one of the top

selling games of all times in 2009 according to ELSPA gfk Chart-Track. The game sold approximately 4.7 million copies worldwide in the first 24 hours of its release in November 2009. On Aug of this year, Activision confirmed on their website that the game had sold over 22 million copies worldwide.

In the press release announcing the sales record of the game, Activision Publishing chief executive Eric Hirshberg said: "Call of Duty is more than a game. It's become a major part of the pop cultural landscape. It is a game that core enthusiasts love, but that also consistently draws new people into the medium."

Tips for a Safe Kuwaiti Winter

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI, AUK ALUM'11

It is finally wintertime and in Kuwait, we wait a long time for it to come around. On its own, winter brings several heath challenges because of its bitter weather, short days and the need to eat fattening food. People here would usually want to go all out and enjoy it to the fullest and while that is advised to an extent because of the briefness of our winter months, there are some necessary tips to keep in mind. Granted, we are lucky to not have snowstorms and extreme cold come our way but precautions should still be taken. They are as follows:

1. Check the weather report: Before heading out to run an errand, attend a class, make a social call or whatever it is you have planned, be sure to tune in for the weather report. People in Kuwait need not worry about anything major climate-wise but chances of rain can cripple drivers for a good amount of time so it would be best to be in the know and prepare ahead.
2. Drive carefully:

Whenever streets are damp during or after rainfall, you want to make sure you drive with extreme caution. Slipperystreetsareexcellent catalysts for car accidents. No matter what you are going out for, do not, under any circumstance, resort to speeding. After all, the priority is to get there in one piece.

3. Wash your hands on a regular basis: Did you know that hand washing reduces the risk of common infections? Of course you do but laziness prevails at the end of the day. It goes hand in hand with winter because people become a lot more prone to catching them. So, take a few seconds out of your day to wash your hands properly.
4. Dress appropriately: It appears that it gets colder by the year in Kuwait, with credit due to global warming so it would not be such a bad idea to invest in heavy winter clothing. The extremities of the body are what get affected initially by the cold so they must be covered up nicely; this includes the hands, feet and

the entirety of the face and head.

5. Conserve heat: You may most likely need fresh air coming in for your heater or for emergency cooking arrangements. But, if you are in no need of extra ventilation, keep as much heat as possible inside your home. Avoid unnecessary opening of doors or windows, close off unneeded rooms, stuff towels or rags in cracks under doors and close draperies or cover windows with blankets at night.
6. Eat and drink wisely: Eating well-balanced meals will help you stay warmer and that is always what you want to go for, without a doubt. It is a test of will here in Kuwait what with the string of restaurants at every corner but your health is at stake. Do not drink caffeinated beverages: they cause your body to lose heat more rapidly. Instead, drink warm, sweet beverages or broth to help maintain your body temperature. If you have any dietary restrictions, ask your doctor.

Marine Biodiversity and its Connection to the Ancient Environment



A spectacular sample of the Earth's marine biodiversity.

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI, AUK ALUM '11

People usually attribute the ancient environment to something that is inconsequential and that makes sense because it is, after all, obsolete and it would have only been useful when alive. But its use outlasts various time epochs and in fact, sustains life under the sea. Much of the knowledge we have acquired about it come from a fossil record and it has shed light on how biodiversity has been driven over 500 million years.

“It’s a question that goes back a long way to the time of Darwin, who looked at the fossil records and tried to understand what it tells us about the history of life,” says Shanan Peters, an Assistant Professor of Geoscience at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In a study he and a colleague, Bjarte Hannisdal, conducted, it was found that marine life has been propelled by both ocean chemistry and sea level changes over a very

long period of time. It is quite exhilarating since the fossil record being carefully studied dates back to the Phanerozoic eon, the one that documents an abundance of animal life, first beginning with the appearance of hard-shelled animals about 542 million years ago.

Peters and Hannisdal used a method called information transfer which allowed them to identify causal relationships between diversity and environmental proxy records, historical gatherings that track variations throughout time. This way, they were able to obtain near accurate verifications of a various web of systems that are the driving force behind marine existence. “We find an interesting web of connections between these different systems that combine to drive what we see in the fossil record,” Peters says.

At the average level, common sense would dictate that changes in biodiversity such as the overprovision or mass extinction of marine animals resulted from them having to adapt to alterations in the biological environment surrounding them, such as global carbon cycles. I will not get into this deeply but people do have a general understanding of how these geological modifications did have a profound effect on these creatures and dictated which ones would be more likely to survive. Lisa Boush, Program Director in the National Science Foundation’s Division of Earth Sciences, explains that looking at the fossil record will help marine biologists and other professionals related to this field of study to better understand how changes in today’s environment might impact biodiversity today and in the near future.

Breaking it down to simpler terms, it goes back to the idea of cause and effect and can be witnessed throughout human history: nothing we have today would have been possible without the calculated or spontaneous string of events that happened beforehand. In much the same way, animal and plant life on planet Earth depends upon physical and chemical processes that shape its geological landscape, except they are more fixated and routine that human history.

Brain Damage and Football: A Frightful Combination

BY HUDA AL- RASHID



Football superstar Wayne Rooney damaging his brain.

Football is one of the most entertaining sports out there, especially because it has a magical ability to move a crowd of people in unison more than any other sport does. When players demonstrate advanced abilities such as scoring in a unique way just adds to the crowd’s excitement. One of the most moving, exciting moves is when a certain player scores by literally using the head, which is known to be a “header” in the football world. Certainly, a header is not only a useful scoring tactic, but also acts as an effective passing technique, between players. However, have you ever stopped to think whether these “headers” can potentially cause brain damage?

Now, if we think of a

“header,” we can imagine how much force would be exerted on the ball, both to and from the player demonstrating this action. Without going much into the physics of it, we can assume that exerting a large amount of force from a player’s “head” onto the ball exerts a certain amount of pressure on a player’s head. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that there may be a link between potential brain damage and headers. Based on empirical research, it seems that a sample of amateur players had brain scan results that reveal patterns similar to patients suffering from concussions! Some say that this research has maybe shined some light on a potential cause of death to English footballer, Jeff

Astle, who was said to suffer from brain complications years after his football career ended.

Furthermore, Dr. Michael Lipton of Montefiore Medical Center, presented certain research results on this matter, and concluded that by normal standards, the act of “heading” a football will not damage certain nerve fibers in the brain, but repetitive heading would lead to effects that would cause the degeneration of brain cells. However, many scientists are still skeptical about this cause-and-effect relationship, and question the severity of the “heading” action. Nevertheless, this issue is still under heavy investigation by scientists, and neurological specialists.

Scientific Research and a Cure for Autism

BY HUDA AL- RASHID

Autism is a disorder that is increasing in numbers over the past few years. This disorder has especially drawn attention because of its ambiguous nature, and undefined set of causes or even cures. Nonetheless, autism is a disease that is affecting a majority of the world’s population even in Kuwait. The question of finding a potential cure for this disorder is a topic that scientists are actively researching, in order to investigate certain cures.

Of course, although the research in this field is still in progress, there have been several new discovered facts about the potential cure for autism. According to an article in the BBC News main webpage, there has been research done in Stanford University, specifically investigating, what they call the “Timothy syndrome.” The availability of this syndrome often results in autistic symptoms including communication difficulties, and unresponsive behavior amongst other signs.

In their investigation, Stanford scientists created

an experiment that dealt with two samples. One sample contained people that had the Timothy syndrome, and the other sample did not. They then replicated a certain number of brain cells, or “neurons,” from each sample and observed the growth patterns of each. The results showed that the brain cells from the normal sample of patients (without the Timothy syndrome) developed naturally, in which each cell developed into various subtypes that correspond to different areas of the brain. On the other hand, the brain cells from the patients suffering from the Timothy syndrome developed mostly into brain cells that wok in the upper portion of the cerebral cortex, and a lesser proportion in the lower part of the brain. The upper part of the brain contains what scientists call the “corpus callosum” which functions as a “communicating agent” between the left and right hemispheres; in other words, the “corpus callosum” helps the right

and left side of the brain communicate, resulting in more normal, efficient command responses.

Other results found from the sample of neurons from patients with the Timothy syndrome include an observed overproduction of a body chemical that helps create dopamine and norepinephrine, which also tend to affect social behavior, which is a common symptom found in autistic patients. After these observations were made, the scientists then managed to create a drug that significantly reduced the number of faulty neurons, which is a sign that a drug can be used to treat autism in the future. However, it’s important to consider the fact that the existence of the Timothy syndrome only applies to some patients with autism, and thus this discovery will probably help a portion of the patients, but not all of them. Nevertheless, at least this experiment surely shed some light in the ambiguous field of researching potential cures for autism.

Advice for Writers

BY JAMES MCDUGALL



As Writing Center Director I am often asked if I have any advice for writers. When asked, I often think of a little story I was told when I was a boy.

A long time ago there was talk of a labor strike spreading around a mill town. A few of the Italian migrants speaking creaky joul French were thought to be Wobblies—international anarchists. Evidence for this was circumstantial. Some say they argued with the fat priest who warned rocks would replace potatoes in the fields if they didn't pay their tithe. Others say they were the ghosts of Sacco and Vanzetti—communists, agitators.

Two weeks after the Italians were chased out of town, there was still talk. The gnarled former tailor that clerked at the company store heard the grumbings as he darkened the red ink of the company ledgers.

"I am sick of this," said his first customer of the day. It was Jean-Philippe who owed the company more than two years worth of wages. He often joked that the mill would not let him quit even if he died, "old St. Peter would have to wait." His wife would always retort, "the devil would have to wait," to which everyone around would laugh except for Jean-Philippe.

"Eh," said the clerk. It might have been a question, a statement of fact, the beginning of the alphabet song. The sound exclaimed; it intoned; it asked.

"Sacre blu, you horse thief. When those Italians come back, they are going to bring their anarchist buddies and they are going to burn down this store."

"I'd like to see them try. They will get shot if they ever step foot in this town again."

"That's what you think," said Jean-Philippe, "look at me, we've been organizing--HERE. We will join them; we have an army. You better take your family and flee at once—you will be the first to go!"

It wasn't long before the clerk a gnarled gutless, ball of twine and vinegar rolled into the office of the mill boss and where he secretly stole a long glance at the strangely boyish and prune-faced man sitting rigidly alone. The face was a boney scowl of a near-death octogenarian sucking on a lemon; however, the rest of the head was smooth, crowned with the well-oiled, neatly parted hair of a child.

"Uuuu," grunted the mill boss.

"Eh," answered the clerk.

"What are you looking at?"

"Sorry, sir. I think the men are planning something."

"What?" asked the mill boss, again.

"It's them Italians."

"Them again. They are

sponsored by them Russians. It's them Russians and them Chinese. They're going to come and take everything we have. They are going to make us work 50-hour work days. That is why we gotta work 60-hour work days just to show them whose boss. Whose the boss?" yelled the mill boss.

The clerk nodded, arms folded, noodle-like, "you are, sir, eh." The clerk began to stare and the mill boss who in turn became enamored with the idea that the clerk looked at him so deeply. Drank him almost. What was it that intrigued the clerk about the mill boss?

"Well, then if I'm the boss, I better do something about this!"

The mill boss was blind to the abject collection of frame houses that frowned haphazardly on the banks of the mill creek, but saw a steeple rising over a flourishing hamlet of the five hundred hooks that wrenched jack pine and black spruce from swollen tributaries of the St. Lawrence every spring to the three hundred mule drivers hauling logs knee deep in slop up to the two hundred mill hands who beat the godly sea of the northern forest into a pulp that was processed into a never-ending scroll of newspaper stock—the sales of which were handled by three accountants from International Paper who every week would drive to a bank in Gananoque to make sure that funds were wired directly to shareholders in Ottawa, Boston, London, Sydney, Cairo, San Francisco, and Hong Kong. With the whole world in his gaze, the mill boss decided on his course of action. Even in the depression, there was no depression for International Paper, and he intended to keep it that way.

Around the mill boss the workers tiptoed and said nothing. There would be no way for the mill boss to get any real information from them. After interviewing his yes-men, and paying off snitches, he couldn't find anything about a union meeting. So he decided to bait the trouble-making communists by having Pierre-Louis set up an organizational meeting for a fake union in the company cafeteria.

On the day of the meeting, the cafeteria was full of workers. The mill boss was seething mad to find that all his workers were willing to become troublesome agitators. He couldn't wait any longer. He ran out into the dining hall, huffing and shouting, "Why are you all here?"

There was silence.

"Well."

Again, silence.

The mill boss puckered and sulked.

Pierre-Louis, looking especially

nervous, asked, "Didn't you tell us to come?"

The mill boss thought of all the cunning innuendo that was lost on Pierre-Louis and realized he would have to make the most of the situation.

"So, I hear people want to organize; people want to complain, and bring everyone down. YOUR PAYCHECK depends on not complaining! Do what is right and work hard. Does anyone want to complain? You—do you want to complain?" the mill boss asked a large flannel-clad lumberjack from Souris.

"The food," the lumberjack grumbled. "The food is disgusting."

The mill boss went to the counter of the cafeteria, grabbed the first plate of food he could find, took a huge forkful and shoved it in his mouth without knowing exactly what it was. He swallowed it cold and then said, "that was the most delicious thing I have ever eaten. See, you have nothing to complain about here. Any other complaints?... Just like I thought.... Everybody back to work!"

Two days later the mill boss died a violent death of food poisoning.

I was first told of this story by my uncle after I had asked him for some advice about writing. I was only about seven years old, so as you can imagine mill-town politics was lost on me, as was the Great Depression, the paper industry, and why the mill owner was English and the lumberjacks were French Canadian. Overall, it wasn't the greatest story to tell a little kid who needed some help with his second grade assignment. Even though I was later to learn from my father that the mill boss never died of food poisoning, the way my uncle created a kind of moral universe out of a forgettable corner of Canada demonstrated to me how language is tied to power. Why were all those lumberjacks quiet? While the control of language is a sign of power, poor use of language can result in a loss of power.

For us in the university power comes in the form of mastery of academic language. Each essay that you write brings you closer to developing that mastery. Therefore, even if writing is something that you dread and loath, take every opportunity you have to write; take every opportunity that you have to get feedback on your writing, and before you hand in a paper or send an email make sure it is free of mistakes and our ideas are clear to your audience. I don't think the moral is of the story. Which always makes me think, when I asked my uncle for advice about writing, why did he tell me this story.

Drop In

THE WRITING CENTER INVITES YOU OVER FOR SOME SNACKS

JUST COME CHILL

DISCOVER HOW AUK'S WRITING CONSULTANTS CAN HELP YOU HELP YOURSELF IMPROVE YOUR WRITING!

TUESDAY 20TH MARCH
FROM: 2PM - 5PM

Media Ed for Students

KHEIRIYEH AHMADI, AUK ALUM'08

A look into online resources in general will reveal how the youth have conquered the cyber space, each using the online sphere as a palette for their artistic projection. Every minute hundreds of websites are created and each second new sets of media content are leaked into the online platform. Could we still live in oblivion and disregard these evolutionary changes that are occurring in our literacy cultures all over the world? The world has witnessed a shift from traditional literacy to media literacy where the means of education are no longer print texts and conventional

classroom settings. Out there, there is a culture of knowledge that gets created, updated and remixed every minute through the Web. These are participatory cultures.

Henry Jenkins's *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century* (2006) provides a new framework for the concepts of new literacy and participatory culture. The author urges the educators to view new media literacy as a "paradigm shift" not "as an add-on subject." He also argues that new media literacy should be understood as "operating within a social

and cultural context," which is not about individualized skills used for personal expression but social skills and cultural competencies. He further lists the core media literacy skills that include: play, judgment, appropriation, networking, transmedia navigation, negotiation and what he calls "collective intelligence." We need a more serious consideration of the place these skills should assume in pedagogical spaces. Educators need to assume responsibility for helping students develop the skills necessary to participate in this culture.

AUK's New OWL

The Writing Center will unveil its Online Writing Lab (OWL) on Moodle later this month. Using this service, students will be able to go online and ask questions that they are having about their writing to Writing Center consultants, and getting answers in real time. In addition to asking questions, students can use the OWL to access wikis and other web sites that can help them find information on everything from grammar to citing sources.

To use this service, students will have to log onto

their Moodle Account (or let the Writing Center help them to create one), and on the Moodle home page, select "OWL" from the "Moodle Services" drop-down menu on the left. On the OWL page students will see if writing consultants are available to chat. There is also a drop-box for students to submit their papers if during your chat session they would like a consultant to look at their writing.

The Writing Center looks forward to meeting students on the OWL. It'll be a hoot!

Public Speaking, from pg. 1

third place out of eighteen other contestants! And, as per usual, AUK’s team has made us proud again!

This year, Luke, assisted by Marie El Neaman, won second place in the speech competition on the topic, “Development without Destruction: Is it Possible?” beating twelve other universities who competed in this topic. Our other speaker, Helene, won third place on the topic, “Recycling: Does it really Matter?” among the twelve universities that competed. Evidently, this came as a surprise to no one, for AUK is known for its superior competitor. As a matter of fact, the coach of Prince Sultan University – who is known as AUK’s fiercest competitor

– stated that, “Every time we see the name AUK in the contest, we worry and expect a tough fight!” This writer also had the pleasure of asking the two students a couple of questions about the secret to their success!

Was this your first time to take part in a public speaking competition? Luke: Not really. I took part in competitions in school. However this would be the first competition I have attended which was at university level and challenging at best. Helene: Yes, it was the first time for all who represented AUK this year. Marie, Luke and myself (Helene). Professor Don Prades, of course, has been into the whole Public Speaking thing for a very long time. A very experienced a professional coach!

If yes, was this also your first time competing for AUK? Luke: Yes, this would be the first time I have competed for AUK in any competition, and, I have to say, I feel proud! Helene: No, I have participated in a number of competitions that took place here in AUK, but none involved any traveling. I have competed in

a Starbucks Painting Competition recently and my artwork is now displayed in Starbucks Flagshop, opposite to Fanar mall.

How long did it take for you to prepare for this competition? Luke: We have been preparing for this competition for a long time, since the beginning of summer break. Our coach informed us that we would have to have our PowerPoint presentations ready by the end of the break, and that’s what we did! However, after the break, it was intense preparations. We had speeches that spanned 4 pages but had to cut down to 3 to manage the time limit. And then there was the part of memorizing it. After memorizing, we had to perfect our actions and facial expressions. So yeah, I would say 4-5 months.

Helene: The teams were expected to begin selecting our topics as early as April, have all our research done during the summer, and have a finished speech by September. There was only one team per topic, and only one speaker per department. This is where AUK’s teams had a few complications, because two speakers of two teams consisted of two computer engineering students, so unfortunately, one had to forfeit.

How did you prepare for the competition? Luke: I started working on the PowerPoint presentation during the summer break and finished it at the end of it. The speech was written while I created each slide. As soon as the break was over, I had to meet Professor Prades to discuss the speech. We discussed various weak points with the speech and PowerPoint and how they could be improved. I would go home after every meeting and rewrite it. After that, we would try to meet every Saturday to practice the coordination between the delivery of the speech and the transition of the

PowerPoint slides. And from then on, we were meeting just to ensure the smoother delivery of my speech. Another point I would like to make known was that we had a rehearsal in front of a Professor of one of the IEP classes, after which they were told to offer suggestions. By utilizing that, we managed to perfect our delivery and movement!

Helene: We began by polishing our speeches; we must have rewritten them a hundred times! We were under a strict time limit of no more than 12 minutes, but to be in the safe zone, we cut our speeches to 10. It was very important to have all the important information without making the speech too informative and boring. Next, it was memorizing and rehearsal time. The teams were expected to show up between classes, after classes and even on weekends. It didn’t seem like a lot of work, though, because we loved doing it; we had a blast! When the competition was nearing, we began practicing with microphones and in front of audiences. There was no time to prepare once we reached Dubai.

Would you want to compete in the future? Luke: Yeah! Definitely. The experience gained was well worth the effort put in.

Helene: Definitely, I wish to try out as a team member next year; previous speakers cannot compete as speakers again. However, I hope that AUK can have a bigger budget for this competition so that AUK can send in a full team by next year. It is a shame that AUK’s team actually was the smallest in the competition. Both our teams had two members each, with one of the members (Marie) being a mutual member, which made us a total of 3 students. While the winning teams of first place had a full team of ten students, not even including multiple coaches!

They definitely had the advantage.

How did you feel when you were giving your speech? Were you nervous? Confident? Luke: I was a little bit nervous, like everyone who stands on a stage is. But as Professor Prades puts it in his English 108 class, “You must learn to convert your nervousness into positive energy and use it to charm the crowd.” And that’s what I did! After speaking the first few lines and getting a few laughs, my confidence shot through the roof while delivering my speech. Helene: I actually have been sick all morning of the day of the competition, with a miracle curing 10 minutes before I was due on stage. Professor Don Prades has trained us to convert all our nervous energy into something positive – Confidence! So you can say that, yes, we were both nervous AND confident, but we channeled it in all the right ways, all the practices really helped!

Do you have anything else you’d like to add? Luke: Yeah! The first places in all four categories were won by students from universities in Saudi. Kudos to them! However, what separated them from us was not their oratory skills, but the fact that they had full teams of five people helping them out while they delivered their speeches. They had small skits, tidbits of drama and videos along with their speeches to help them along, while our team was comprised of two speakers and one technical assistant. Not that I’m trying to hint at anything! Helene: Statistics show that generally, people fear Public Speaking more than death! But once you have obtained this skill, you will be more successful in life! I encourage you to participate next year!

In closing - congratulations to Luke Rangel and Helene El Neaman – you have truly made AUK proud!

SGA, from pg. 1

8 students who will comprise the transition team for Student Government for the remainder of the academic year. (One showed up late for the discussion but has been added to the team because he wants to work.)

These 8 individuals will work together, with the support of the Student Life department, to redefine the role of the AUK Student Government Association. They will develop an agenda of issues and strategically go about addressing them. When there is a need to understand the AUK student perspective, this Transition Team will be the first to be called upon for input. They are empowered to debate, program, allocate, resolve, and speak up and out. For this team, it is not about power or a resume perk. It is about a love for AUK and a desire to serve.

The following individuals are members of the AUK Transitional Student Government Association Team:

Habiba Al Hobail... She attended the forum because she wants “change in AUK for the better and our voice to be heard.” Habiba also serves as the Vice President of the E and B Club.

Hani Al Azzam...Hani is looking for a “new perspective to the learning experience.” His work on the Transition Team will provide lots of leadership learning opportunities.

Abdul Aziz Al Mutairi... has been a volunteer in last year’s SGA, as well as a volunteer with the E and B Club and a member of the Patriots Club. His past experiences will be invaluable for this leadership role.

Lateefa Boutaiban... Serves as the president of the E and B club

and has been an active member of the organization. She wants to serve simply because she “loves AUK.”

Fatema Al Thunayan... Fatema is no stranger to assuming leadership responsibility. In her service on the Transition Team, she plans to “make the changes we want to see.”

Sumaiah Al Sourì... serves as the Vice President of the Cooperation Club. Her goal is to ensure “AUK reaches its full potential.”

Omar Medhi... a well-known member of the Wolf Pack, Omar serves as a student worker in Student Life, President of Community Service Club, student athlete-soccer and volleyball, AUK Ambassador, and was the Dean of Student Affairs Awardee for 2009-2010. Omar’s insight into the Administrative side of AUK will prove very beneficial as the Transition Team sets its agenda.

Kevork Awakimian... has had many university experiences including serving as a peer tutor, L.E.A.D. facilitator, and office assistant in Student Life, Armenian Culture Club President, and Al-Akhdar Club. He simply “wants to see AUK have a strong SGA because that is what it’s missing.”

The Transitional Student Government Association will be working to ensure WAY more than 1% of the student population has a positively truly unforgettable college experience. They will work for the betterment of the AUK community. They are working for YOU! SUPPORT THEM! Stay tuned for more information about their plans for the Wolf Pack. *Backing out of Dr. C’s corner until next time...peace! dcars*

Agony and Pride, from pg. 8

awe, and was congratulated several times even by other competitors. Good job look Luke! Wish I was there to see it! While giving me time to get ready, Luke and Marie decided to go out and buy me some medicine. They talked to someone at the front desk asking them to give them directions to the nearest pharmacy. The woman in charge exclaimed that it was only a short 5 minute walk away. They decided to walk there, and 20 minutes and they still didn’t reach the pharmacy. Yup, you guessed it! Front desk miscalculated. Poor Marie and Luke didn’t get back to the hotel until 45 minutes later. Now, that’s what you call a team! They were so supportive in making sure I get better and compete. And I did! Or should I say, we did it! Luke, Marie and I, we were quite a team, weren’t we? Once again, AUK left a very big mark in the competition. Luke won 2nd place in his category, and I won 3rd. We were a little disappointed that we didn’t get 1st, but hey... EEG, we’ll be back. *Wink!*

Behind closed curtains (Marie’s Point of view)

Everyone knows the responsibility of the speakers- the stars of the show... but does one ever wonder... what goes on ‘behind the curtains’?

Speaking for the most part is a little easier than having to worry about hitting the mark for two speeches... at least in my opinion anyway. The pressure of failing and letting your teammates down after suffering the agony of memorizing and researching those many months- not to mention our hard working coach who found and made time to coach us in the ‘art’ of public speaking- is indeed...nerve racking! Dramatic I know, but not far from the truth either.

Imagine yourself up there, speaking... everything cool and relaxed... the knowledge of your memorized words playing like a rehearsed song, then suddenly the mood all changed and you see frowns and confused faces looking up at you. You turn back and find the presentation was all muddled up! Or worse... filled with technical errors caused by a very unruly machine that just won’t make things come out right. Though the show would have to go on, your professionalism will have been stripped- for a timely presentation as well as speech demonstrates that you’ve actually worked your butt off, and know what is going on- AND NOT sticking random pieces of information together just for the sake of being up there. Yes in the end if people like me the “Technical assistants” of each

presenting team didn’t know what was going on, or had lost timing, or didn’t know how to react in emergency cases, everything would have become muddled up, sloppy; and just downright messed up- not to mention the heavy weight of guilt for letting everyone down dragging like a chain on your ankles and having your team want to bite your head off. Ehm.

Anyways, as my sister had already reiterated, our journey began with the first step taken at AUK. Though the voyage was bumpy, we had our impish moments where we got lost’ took over the stage- *familiarizing* ourselves of course- not that anyone seemed to care...or notice...or did they... Ehm. Anyway, on top of that we did get acquainted with new people, styles of speaking as well as presenting- which kept building up onto what we had already known. Aside from confidence... we learned to become independent, responsible and build up heart so to speak- “for lyrics without sincerity is as empty as a blank book- you wouldn’t get the true feel or understanding of it all.”

(Quote by me. (Marie))

In the end when push came to shove, we pulled through it all, the ring of ‘bad luck’ hadn’t held us hostage and we came back home victorious!

