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ALL CHANGE AT BSB

THE rollercoaster world of the British School of Bahrain (BSB) has taken a new twist and turn with the news that its head of school is stepping down. At the same time, the head of its senior school has suddenly departed.

Students and their families were informed this week that Inspired, which recently took over ownership of the school, had appointed Jeff Smith, currently director and CEO of Deira International School in Dubai, for the top post before the new school year starts in September.

He steps into the newly-created position of overall executive head and will also fulfil the role of head of the senior school from August 20, replacing Julie Anne Gilbert who has 'expressed her wish' to return to a previous role of head of infants. Mystery surrounds the decision to dispense of the services of head of secondary school, Khalil Ahmed.

"Jeff will be leading the school, including the senior school, with an extremely strong team," said Nadim Nsouli, founder and



IN, OUT AND MOVING ABOUT: Jeff chats to BSB pupils during a flying visit to Bahrain, above, Khalil and, right, Julie Anne

EXCLUSIVE
By **STAN SZECOWKA**
editor@gulfweekly.com

chairman of Inspired, which boasts more than 30 schools and 24,000 students on its books. "We are extremely excited that we were able to attract Jeff to BSB and are investing significantly in upgrading the teaching and learning at the school."

In terms often associated with the axing of a football

manager or company executive, he added: "Khalil Ahmed is pursuing other opportunities."

The move has stunned the community and shocked former students. Former star pupil Yannis Panagis, who is currently studying at Imperial College London, was a student at the British School of Bahrain from Year 8 up until the time he finished his A-Levels in

Year 13. He said: "During this time I had support from teachers and staff alike to pursue my extracurricular interests such as running and music, and develop my academic areas of interest in science, technology and English Literature."

"The Senior Leadership Team was often a point of contact to accelerate social projects and ventures, particularly in my roles as



head prefect and as secretary general of BRITMUN and was very helpful in this regard. I wish Mr Ahmed the best of success in his future career."

Stunned Mr Ahmed, who was also a former head of the school's University Foundation programme and Business Studies teacher, said he was unable to comment at this time.

Turn to Page 2

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Inspired move for new head



ON BOARD: Dr Stephen, Julie Anne and Clarissa and, below, the school campus in Hamala

From Page 1

As reported earlier, pupils at BSB started the 2016 school year under the wings of its popular deputy Julie Anne when she stepped up to take over the reins. She joined BSB as a class teacher in reception in 2003 when Bill Frost, the school's first principal, was in charge, and replaced Dr Charles Wall whose sometimes turbulent three-year-tenure ended with a move to Pakistan to join Karachi Grammar School.

The appointment came as an incredible comeback as she was part of an exodus of staff members who either left or didn't have their contracts renewed when Dr Wall took over from Karen Moffat, who was axed in the midst of a multi-million dinar expansion project and following an 'outstanding' independent assessment.

Julie Anne's decision to step down was explained at a presentation to parents and staff last week. She told *GulfWeekly*: "I made a request

to return to my previous role which is actually where I really belong and plays to my strengths. There's not enough children in the admin building. I'm totally straightforward, I said this is what I would like to do and everyone was happy with that."

The position became vacant as Feriha Gauntlett and her husband, Rob, assistant head of seniors, announced they were moving to Dubai.

Coming in the opposite direction will be Mr Smith who will hope it's not a poisoned chalice judging from the longevity of previous incumbents since Mr Frost returned to the UK after leading the school for eight years.

He packs plenty of experience having joined the teaching profession in the UK as a physics graduate, rising swiftly up the ranks to head of science and deputy head. He moved overseas to Indonesia for his first headship in 2003 at the British International School in Jakarta, moved back to Europe to lead Guernsey Grammar School and during his six year spell at Deira International School has helped it grow from 1,100 to 1,700 students and improve its assessment from 'acceptable' to 'outstanding'.

Inspired's group education director Dr Stephen Spurr, a former Eton College head of classics, headmaster of Clifton College and Westminster School, is confident their new man is well up for the challenge.

"After a global search, his name came right to the top of the pile," he told *GulfWeekly*. "He said to us that this is an excellent school and will be the outstanding school on the island of Bahrain and he could see, as we at Inspired could see, its fantastic potential."

In a letter to parents,

he added that Mr Smith, was known for his 'high expectations of students and staff, his drive and ambition and his track record of successful and sustainable school improvement'.

"These are exciting times for the school. With the acquisition of the school by Inspired, the appointment of Jeff Smith as executive head and head of the senior school, the newly defined and strengthened management structure working with him, including Julie Anne Gilbert as head of infants and Robert Howe as head of juniors, we shall have a leadership team in place in September of the highest calibre and can look forward to a flourishing future," Dr Spurr added.

His views were echoed by Clarissa Farr, Inspired's senior advisor, a former headmistress of the top-ranking UK girls' school, St Paul's. "We conducted a worldwide search and Jeff has the passion for education, the interpersonal skills and the experience of leading large communities which made him perfectly suited for the position and we feel extremely fortunate to have been able to recruit him, and also, that he is able to start immediately in September to carry on the excellent work of Julie Anne."

"We feel it is very good news for the school and he has already visited it and made an extremely positive impression. He is approachable, like Julie Anne, and I think he is going to bring a great feeling of confidence into the school."

During his third trip over to visit the school last week he spoke to teachers, administration staff and made time to chat to pupils in the playground.

The school currently has 2,650 pupils on its rolls and Dr Spurr revealed that a search for additional land continues. Inspired wants to build a

separate senior school which would allow more space on its current Hamala campus for younger pupils.

In the meantime, improvements will be carried out during the summer holidays to provide 'greater sporting facilities' by extending the artificial pitch surface and adding tennis and netball courts. BSB is also looking to 'refresh' its drama and music facilities too, he added.

Ellen van Manen-de Boer, chairman of the interim Parent Community Association (PCA) for 2017/2018, whose son, Pim, will be in Y13 and amongst the last students to take the International Baccalaureat (IB) programme at the school, was bullish about the future.

"I feel we are very lucky that Inspired has chosen BSB as its first school in the Middle East. Change is always difficult but with a renowned international educational group managing BSB I think we can embrace the changes and see it as a positive way forward, however difficult it may be for some," she said.

"We have been through some tough times at BSB with the recent management changes and it makes me happy as a parent to see that Inspired is fully engaged into rebuilding our community again."

She added that she was yet to meet the new man in charge but his 'reputation precedes him'. "As a parent I can only welcome the new possibilities he will create for BSB - I think Jeff Smith will be an asset for the school and the wider Bahrain community," she said.

She decline to comment on Mr Ahmed's situation, saying: "We don't know what happened."

● School plans for Bahrain: P4
● Winning ways: Pgs 11 & 12
● Education Matters: P11



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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

A new mosque was opened opposite the entrance to a popular community shopping mall to coincide with the beginning of Ramadan and to offer shoppers, workers and nearby residents a place to worship at this holy time.

The majestic mosque is located close to Saar Mall and includes a massive reception hall, a classic manara (lighting fixture) that is 39m high and apartments for the Imam (who leads the prayer) and for the muezzin (who calls for prayer). Also included, are three apartments as well as offices and classrooms that can be used to teach Islam and Quran.

It has been provided to the community by veteran businessman Hassan Bokhowa, chairman of the Bokhowa Group which started as a construction company to grow into a well-diversified corporate group that's made its mark in civil engineering, property development and business development.

His daughter Esmahan, Saar Mall manager and the group's financial director,

New place for praying



COMMUNITY REPORT

By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

said: "My father wanted to create this mosque because he realised there wasn't one in our area and this is his way of giving back to the community. He wanted to have a place for shoppers and mall staff to pray, as well as local residents."

The Hassan Abdulla Bokhowa mosque, which has been skillfully designed with marble features with traditional Islamic geometric patterns mirroring across the floors, windows and walls.

The Bokhowa Construction Company was joined in the project by Gulf House Engineering and Horizon Interiors. The building covers an area of 2,000sqm and attracts up to 1,000 worshippers in the men section and around 130 women in the female section. It was recently formally opened by Justice, Islamic Affairs and Endowments Minister

Shaikh Dr Rashid bin Mohammed Al-Hajiri, chairman of the Sunni Council.

The mosque serves as a place where Muslims can come together for *Ṣalāh*, meaning prayer, as well as a centre for information, education, social welfare and

dispute settlement.

There are stringent restrictions on the uses of the area formally demarcated as the mosque, and in the Islamic *Sharī'ah* Law, after an area is formally designated as a mosque, it remains so until the 'Last Day'.



TRADITIONAL DESIGNS: Inside the mosque by Saar Mall

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FOUR SEASONS
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NEW schools are starting to take shape in the kingdom as a recent study suggests Bahrain's private education market will boom in the next five years with further consolidation and competition.

According to a new report by The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), entitled 'Where to Invest Now in the GCC Private Education', Bahrain's private 'kindergarten to sixth form' education market valued at \$0.4 billion in 2017 is poised to grow to \$0.7 billion in the next five years.

The news comes in the wake of developments in the sector with a new school set to open in September, another pushing ahead with plans to open the following year and three well-established operations planning major expansions.

The new BD8m Beacon Private School is being developed and supported by the Dadabhai Group, a leading business group in the kingdom.

Located in Hidd, the school will cover an area of 30,660sqm and be able to accommodate around

Building for the future

EDUCATION REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



1,800 students ranging from nursery through to Grade 12.

However, for the initial year starting in September this year, places will be available at the nursery and kindergarten levels and Grades 1 to 5.

Bahrain-based education management and consultancy organisation Education Development and Innovation Centre managing director Samir Chammaa was appointed to set up the school and told *GulfWeekly* there have been some 'important developments' in recent weeks.

"All required works are proceeding on time and this assures us that we will be opening the school in September for the 2018-2019 school year!" Samir said.

That includes the pre-school building being completed and furnished. Following visits from



FIRST IMAGES: A look inside the new Beacon School as construction work, below right, continues

representatives of the Municipality, Road Directorate and the Directorate of Civil Defence all recommendations made have been implemented.

The structural works on the elementary school building

have also been completed, and the remaining works and furnishing are expected to be completed before the end of June.

As its curricula and instructional resources have all been given the green light, the next move will be to request the authorisation of the Ministry of Education after the completion and approval of the second building.

As reported earlier in *GulfWeekly*, a new school campus is being built in Bahrain for the arrival of King's Group, one of the world's most prestigious international educational institutions.

The school, which will be constructed on land measuring 25,000sqm, is expected to be completed by the second half of 2018 and will cater to 1,700 pupils once at full capacity.

King's Group currently has nine schools in the UK, Spain, Panama and Latvia, as well as a network of UK academies.

The Bahrain campus is being built in partnership with Bin Faqeeh Education

on the outskirts of Manama. Once construction work has been completed an opening school date has been projected for no later than September 2019.

Like its sister schools in the King's Group, the college in Bahrain will offer the UK national curriculum and the students will learn from native British and British-trained teachers.

There's been silence since last August about how plans are progressing, Shani Gersenzon, PR & Press Officer, King's Group, last week said: "Yes, we are opening the new school in Bahrain. It will open in September 2019."

But that's nothing compared to the long wait faced by parents at St Christopher's School who were told back in 2011 there were plans to build a new senior school. The 'iconic campus' would replace the existing Isa Town facility, initially accommodate 1,250 students and be designed to allow for further expansion to 1,600.

It appears St Christopher's dream of obtaining a site near

its infant and junior premises in Saar is progressing well and senior students recently spotted an assistant head teacher taking photographs of a model of the proposed new building.

From its modest beginnings in a villa in 1961, St Christopher's has grown to a joint-site operation with 2,000 students, aged from three to 18. A newly-build state-of-the-art facility would make a notable welcoming gift from the school governors to Dr Simon Watson when he arrives from Malaysia in the summer to take over as principal, and the realisation of departing veteran educationist Ed Goodwin's dream.

Meanwhile, as reported in *GulfWeekly* this week, both the British School of Bahrain and Nadeen School are hunting for land to expand their facilities.

Whilst St Christopher's may be unique in its non-profit philosophy, across the GCC the private education market is becoming a magnet for investors and is expected to double over the next five years.

The expatriate population is growing, Bahrainis are increasingly interested in private schools, and the government is offering incentives to attract private and foreign investment, the BCG report says.

Maya El Hachem, BCG principal, said: "Bahrain is a highly fragmented market, with no large-scale operators."

"There is a need for high-quality private international schools with low- to mid-range fees. By encouraging healthy competition, the country can benefit from its investor-friendly environment with fewer barriers to entry than the rest of the GCC region."

● **Winning ways: Pgs 12 & 13**

● **Education Matters: P15**



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COMMUNITY REPORT

By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

CARING schoolgirl Layla Jivanjee is urging families to cut back on food wastage this holy month and support GulfWeekly's Ramadan Appeal 2018.

Your campaigning community newspaper has linked up with charity champions Feed the Need to urge people, hotels and corporations to contribute hot meals and everyday groceries for distribution to those struggling to make ends meet.

The St Christopher's School Year 5 student counsellor has been assisting her parents Michelle Bailey and Riyaz Jivanjee, co-founders of Feed the Need, for the past four years.

Layla supported her mum's initiative by purchasing a fridge in May 2014 using her saved pocket money and birthday gift cash, as reported in last week's *GulfWeekly*. Now there are fridges across the island being stocked up with supplies by supporters to help lowly-paid expat workers and local families going through hard times.

Layla, 10, who lives in Saar, said: "I thought it was a great idea when mum told me about it that I decided to pay for the first fridge with my own savings. I'm proud of mum for helping others and we do it as a family so even my three-year-old little brother Adam, is learning how important it is to be part of a caring community."

The food crusaders have placed 20 fridges around the kingdom which are regularly filled with hot meals and grocery items such as rice, milk, cheese, bread and fresh fruit.

Layla has also participated in several food drives staged throughout the years held at Alosra stores and visited labour camps to help hand out meals. Now she is appealing to other children to join the war on wastage and ask their families to be more food conscious at home as well as cut back on excess water use.

Layla said: "I learned we waste too much food. It's easy to blame supermarkets or hotels but most food waste comes from families at home and that was a shock to me. The other thing is all the water we use to grow the food that we then throw away, so it's like a double waste."

"I have given talks to different schools about how we can help, like joining me in the Ramadan Food Drive that we have every year."

"I'm so happy when kids



come to ask me what we do and how they can help. It makes me feel proud of myself and our family and excited that we are making a difference to those that need help."

This year's food drive will be staged on Saturday. Michelle, co-owner of EMEA Business Development, said: "Alosra stores have allowed us to set up tables and chairs inside their stores and children are able to talk to customers about the campaign as well as collect food donations. A responsible adult sits with them, or nearby to supervise."

"Riyaz and I are both extremely proud of Layla for taking hold of this idea and making it her own. She has spoken at school groups in four countries and chatted to the general public about it, explaining how we help others. Most of all, she encourages other children to join in and builds a giving, loving community of all nationalities."

"Adam follows Layla's lead and helps sort through donated clothing and helps me stock the fridges. He often says 'sharing is caring' and he's only three!"

● People can contact Michelle on 39627883 to donate hot meals and other food can be donated at any time at the fridge locations. For details, visit www.feedtheneedbahrain.com



CUT ABOVE: Layla in the kitchen



FLASHBACK: Layla hands out meals at a labour camp two years ago and, below, helping to host a Food Drive in 2015






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Note: This offer is available in Lulu Hypermarket Stores from tomorrow until May 30.

Jawad Supermarket

Heinz mixed vegetables 450gm – BD0.575
Volvic touch of fruit lemon & lime 500ml 5+1 free – BD2.300
Al Fares dumpling mix 2x500gm – BD0.600
Natco rose water 6x450ml – BD1.050
UFC coconut water 2x1ltr – BD1.525
Al Fares rice flour 3x400gm – BD0.525

Carrefour Hypermarket

Royal jasmine rice 5kg – BD1
Al Fares sugar 5kg – BD1
Olive sunflower oil 1.5ltr – BD1
Nadec long life milk 1ltr 4pcs – BD1
Sadia whole chicken 600gm 2pcs – BD1

NOTE: This offer is available in Carrefour Hyper Market until May 30

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Beddicks mint collection 12x200gm – BD2.475
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Summer down peppermint 12x200gm – BD3.800
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The band plays on with different looks

CREATIVE jewellery concept Les Georgettes by Altesse, which features interchangeable and reversible coloured bands made in France, can now be snapped up at Al Hawaj stores across the kingdom.

The brand, which was established in Paris in 2015, first expanded to North America, the UK and Germany by tying up with 3,000 retail partners and has now focused on the kingdom.

Its uniqueness stems from combining the savoir-faire of major French jewellery manufacturer Maison Altesse and French leather creator Texier to combine their talents with specialist pieces.

Shoppers can create their own cool cuffs and necklaces by choosing a design, a finish and colour of the leather. There are more than 20,000 jewellery combinations that can be transformed to suit any mood or occasion.



Eric Lefranc, the brand's CEO, said: "We have a really innovative concept; mixing personalisable jewellery with

interchangeable elements which allows every individual to express their own unique style.

"The pieces are competitively priced and a true demonstration of high-quality French craftsmanship."

The Al Hawaj Group unveiled the pieces at a conference held in its Salmaniya office alongside details of its partnership with the Renaissance Luxury Group. The event was attended by Al Hawaj chairman and managing director Jawad Al Hawaj, general manager Abdul Wahab Al Hawaj, assistant branch manager Yousif Abdul Wahab Al Hawaj and Renaissance Luxury Group sales director Wissam Al Jord along with invited guests and members of the media.

The bangle are available from BD33 and the leather strap price starts at BD10. The cost of the ring starts at BD15 and the leather strap for the ring is a snip at BD2.

SHOPPING destinations across the kingdom are getting into the spirit of the holy month and are urging people to join their charitable campaigns and activities, writes **Mai Al Khatib-Camille**.

Majid Al Futaim's City Centre Bahrain has once again launched its annual Make a Difference initiative, in partnership with the Bahrain Islamic Association.

Shoppers can contribute used clothes, books, toys and non-perishable food items in special donation boxes placed at the mall's Central Galleria on the ground floor, behind the main customer service desk. All the items will then be passed on through the charity's distribution channels.

Duaj Khalifa Al Rumaihi, City Centre Bahrain's senior mall manager, said: "Ramadan is a time to reflect, give back and spend time with family, friends and loved ones in the spirit of togetherness. City Centre Bahrain will be there throughout the month with themed décor, activities, entertainment and opportunities to give to those in need."

The mall also helped people break their fast on Monday in its Ifar Sae'm (faster) initiative with meals being delivered to labour camps.

Families coming to the mall to donate from May 31 to June

Malls making a stand



HELPING HANDS: City Centre Bahrain, right, from top, The Avenues-Bahrain, Oasis Mall and Dragon City

6, can visit a 'Build a Bear' activation booth too. Children will be able to drop their donations on a conveyor belt, while learning more about Ramadan values through animated screens, and will receive a 'thank you' teddy bear.

On May 30, the mall will host its annual Gergaoun

celebrations with traditional games, songs, mascots and Gergaoun 'goodie bags'.

The Avenues-Bahrain, in collaboration with the Bahrain Red Crescent Society (BRCS), has also launched a campaign aimed towards raising funds for providing provisions and rations for families in need of food all over the world.

An 'End Their Hunger' campaign encourages people to donate by participating in an artistic activation stand placed at The Grand Avenue, near Gate 3 – The Bay Gate. Visitors will receive a white plate as a gift for donating BD5 or more, which they can decorate and paint on. If BD50 or more is donated, then

people can choose a specially painted plate from one of six local artists - Mohamed Taha, Mohamed Bahrain, Hussain Isa, Ali Al Fardan, Yasser Al Dehi and Daweya Ebrahim - participating in the initiative.

Dr Fawzi Abdulla Ameen, BRCS general secretary, said: "We appreciate all the support we can get as we are focusing

on helping to end hunger for those living in the kingdom and abroad such as in the Philippines and Bangladesh. We support 4,000 families in Bahrain every Ramadan and also throughout the year.

"The funds will be used to cover the cost of a 22kg package which includes all the main grocery items for Ramadan such as rice, sugar and oil."

Oasis Malls in Muharraq and East Riffa has launched The Clothes for Compassion campaign supporting the Al Sanabel Orphans Care Society. The society will donate clothes in support of the people of Somalia, Syria and Iraq.

Dragon City in Diyar Al Muharraq is hosting a Recycle & Build activity in its Centre Court. Shoppers can participate in making empty boxes into the structure of a traditional Bahraini house. In this way, materials that would have otherwise gone to waste will instead be used to build an artistic communal project.

Tickets to participate can be obtained from Dragon City tenants with the activity open every day from 7pm to 11pm.

FinTechFocus

Editor Stan Szczewka takes a look at the world of financial technology and beyond...

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Bahrain sets the scene for new gathering after convention successes in India

THERE are plans to stage one of the MENA region's biggest blockchain events in Bahrain with more than 500 crypto-currency innovators, decision-makers, start-up company heads and enterprising investors expected to attend.

While dedicating to discovering the latest innovations, market trends

and sensations around the sphere, the organisers suggest it is going to be 'even hotter and bigger' than the response received for its recent Crypto Con Mumbai event.

The Block Hedge event will be held on September 27. "Bahrain was chosen as one of the important Middle East countries for crypto-

currency and blockchain developments of recent times," said Amitabh Das, project manager.

The Bahrain one-day session sets to build on the success of similar events not only in Mumbai but New Delhi too. It will focus on the future of blockchain technology, finance and investment, regulation and



governance, successful past and future ICOs, security threats and consider how decentralisation continues to disrupt sectors like banking and supply chain.

"Block Hedge events are designed to entitle pioneers to find ideas, partners,

investments and friends," added Amitabh, adding that past speakers include Joshua Paul Hawley- Co-founder, Mauritius Ethereum Appliance, Alexander Vervarenko- CEO, ShipNext, Lior Zaks- VP, Olam Foundation, Per Lind-Member, IOTA, Nikita Shevchenko- Co-founder, Fund Platform, Evan

Luthra- CEO, Almora and Sunny Kapoor- Co-founder, Gladage.

The last event in Asia attracted experts from Russia, the US and UK giving them an opportunity to discuss the recent developments in the mining of cryptos and also a chance to network with different traders and investors.

Banking on a digital future

ONE thing you can bank on, banks across the island have been pushing ahead with their digital strategies and services in a bid to attract tech-savvy customers and keep existing ones on board the high-tech train on innovation.

NBB this week announced details of its strategy for its digital transformation, which centres on better meeting the fast-evolving needs of customers and modernising every aspect of its banking experience through the strengthening of its digital capabilities.

Commenting on the bank's digital ambitions, Jean-Christophe Durand, CEO of NBB, said, "Already the kingdom's largest

commercial bank, this exciting transformation will further extend NBB's market leadership to the digital sector where we aim to establish the Bank as Bahrain's digital leader and one of the best in the region.

"We have now established a clear roadmap for our digital journey focusing on making banking easier and more responsive to customer needs while also supporting efforts to diversify revenues, enhance efficiency, better manage operational risk and, ultimately, deliver on targeted growth in line with our new strategy."

Comprised of several important components, including comprehensive developments in services, operations and human resources, the transformation

agenda prioritises the swift actioning of customer-focused enhancements.

To be completed before the end of this year, these include the reorganisation of the branch network and development of a template for the 'branch of the future', substantial upgrading of ATMs, and launch of a native mobile banking app, plus the upgrading of its business online banking.

NBB aims for 80 per cent of all transactions to be processed digitally and 20 per cent of new products and services to be sold online to customers. While branches will be the most beneficiaries by the digital strategy implementation, they will remain an 'important channel' particularly for relationship management and the close connections NBB aims to maintain and further

build with its customers.

Success in the bank's digital journey also requires close collaboration with other parties that are working to develop Bahrain's digital ecosystem and, particularly, those seeking to introduce relevant, new financial technologies (FinTech).

To this end, NBB, as reported in FinTech Focus, has joined Bahrain FinTech Bay as a founding partner and the bank's chief strategy officer, Yaser Alsharif, was recently appointed as the chairman of the hub's advisory board and a member of its executive board.

Supporting NBB in the development of its digital transformation strategy and its implementation, alongside in-house IT and banking teams, are international consultants, Roland Berger.

MOVING FORWARD:
Jean-Christophe



Just three steps

BAHRAIN Islamic Bank (BisB) aims to woo prospective customers to open new accounts and apply for a multitude of financing products and services, in addition to credit card applications, in 'three simple and easy steps' through its mobile application and online electronic portal ... and without the need to visit a branch.

Described as a 'quantum leap', it is another 'further advancement' and an 'integral pillar' of BisB's three-year Back-to Basics strategy.

"Providing seamless digital services by eliminating the need for our customers to visit an actual branch is of most importance to today's more technologically savvy end user," said Dalal AlQais, GM of BisB Retail Banking, pictured above. "By following three easy steps online, customers will be able to get any banking product, or perform most transactions with ease, and within two business days, a BisB representative will arrange to meet the customer for verification and to collect all necessary documents."



Faster, friendlier and secure

AS PART of its digital transformation strategy, Ithmaar Bank, a Bahrain-based Islamic retail bank, has launched its new state-of-the-art eBanking service, which it says offers customers a faster, friendlier and more secure online banking experience.

The eBanking service from Veripark provides Ithmaar Bank customers with a digital platform accessible directly from tablets, mobile phones and computers at any time and from anywhere in the world.

"Our new eBanking services brings the most sophisticated banking services to our customers' fingertips," said Ithmaar Bank CEO, Ahmed Abdul Rahim, pictured above. "It is a reflection of our commitment to listen closely to our customers' evolving digital requirements and work hard to ensure that we meet and exceed their expectations."

"This new service is launched as part of the bank's digital transformation initiative that will put us on par with some of the best in the world."

Customers will be able to seamlessly execute many of their regular banking transactions and services without ever having to visit a branch. They can, for example, immediately and in real-time, open various types of accounts, order new cheque books, issue eCards or transfer funds at the click of a button or the tap of a touchscreen.

They can also apply for financing or credit cards or even supplementary credit cards for family members, pay multiple bills and manage their personal budgets. As an additional feature, Ithmaar Bank has also introduced the feature of secure image for login to the new eBanking service to provide customers with additional cyber security.



Banking to do good

KUWAIT Finance House-Bahrain (KFH-Bahrain) has launched a new product called Jazeel introducing a fully digitised E-KYC - Electronic Know-Your-Customer - process allowing customer information validation online, via video conferencing, through an app.

In line with the bank's FinTech strategy, customers will be able to open accounts without having to visit a branch, make transactions and use other services and new features.

Through its slogan, 'Banking To Do Good', Jazeel aims to reward its community members with unique socially responsible features, revolving around self-development, education and health care.

The platform provides a number of specialised custom-made features such as forensic documents analysis, digital documents scanning, plus signature and facial recognition. These features will allow for 'genuine verification' via the application in real time mode and will immediately alert the bank of any tampering issues.



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Ramadan Guide



Listings, lifestyle, travel, entertainment and sporting events by Kristian Harrison

THE Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay invites guests during the holy month to break their fast at the Al Bahrain Ballroom, featuring a buffet with a wide selection of traditional Bahraini fare prepared by Executive Chef Hyung Gyu Kim and Executive Pastry Chef Imad Boukli.

Iftar will take place every day from sunset until 8pm, and Ghabga daily from 9pm until 2am. A live band will play traditional music in the Ramadan tent.

Priced BD26++ for Iftar inclusive of soft beverages and Arabic coffee, and BD13++ for kids between five and 12 years old. Ghabga is BD28++ inclusive of buffet beverages, and BD14++ for kids between five and 12 years old. Kids below five years old enter free, and 13 years above are full price. Groups of minimum 30 people pay BD23++ per person for Iftar inclusive of beverages and BD25++ per person for Ghabga exclusive of beverages.

A large section within the Al Bahrain Ballroom will feature a kid's club hosting fun activities as part of the hotel's Kids For All Seasons Club. On the 15th day of the holy month, the hotel will be celebrating Gergaoun with children, staging a fashion show and entertainment from a traditional band, from sunset until 8.30pm.

The Bahrain Bay Kitchen will be hosting a three day brunch buffet during Eid Al-Fitr with brunch buffet, live cooking stations, and a vibrant family atmosphere. Priced BD28++ including soft beverages or BD38++ with selected beverages.

For reservations call 17115500.



Experience tradition this Ramadan at The Sheraton Bahrain Hotel with Iftar at the Awal Ballroom, boasting a traditional Arabic décor, dishes, juices, and a dates corner and crepe station for all guests to enjoy. Iftar buffet is served from sunset to 8.30pm.

Priced BD16++ from Sunday to Wednesday, and BD17++ from Thursday to Saturday. Children from four to 12 years old charged BD8.5++, and below four years old dine for free.

The hotel will be serving a daily Ghabga at Al Safir Restaurant from 9pm to 2am, priced BD12.9++ for adults. For reservations, call 17533533 or book online at www.sheratonbahrain.com

The Diplomat Radisson Blu Hotel, Residence and Spa, is hosting a curated Iftar at Bahrain's first rooftop venue, Al Fanar, during the holy month, featuring Arabian dishes and an overlooking view of the skyline of Manama. Priced BD14net per person. The hotel also invites guests to enjoy a unique dining experience with Ghabga at Blu, to enjoy a warm Bahraini hospitality ambiance. Priced BD14net per person. Special group packages are available for ten guests and above.

For details, call 17531666 or email sales.diplomat@radissonblu.com

This year, celebrate Ramadan at Al Murjan Ballroom in The Movenpick Hotel Bahrain, with an Iftar buffet and live cooking stations, from sunset to 10pm. A designated beverage station will also be serving a range of classic Ramadan juices such as tamarind, Vimto and jallab.

Priced BD19net per person inclusive of Ramadan beverages. In the spirit of the holy month of giving, BD1 will be donated from all bookings to a Muharraq charity fund. Also, during this month, two lucky winners will win a round-trip ticket to any destination,

sponsored by KLM. For more information, call 17460017 or email bahrain.fb@movenpick.com

The Elite Seef Residence & Hotel is celebrating the holy month with Iftar every evening at Oasis and Il Giardino with

an unlimited international and oriental buffet with soft beverages. Priced BD7.990++ per person and BD3++ for children.

The hotel will also host a daily Ghabga with a Ghabga platter available for two or per family, and live entertainment. Priced BD14++ per person or BD16++ for two adults and two kids.

For details, call 17583388. Enjoy Iftar and Ghabga at Elite Resort & Spa's Noor Tent, featuring a Ramadan buffet and family entertainment. Priced BD9.9++ per person for Iftar and Ghabga, and BD5.5++ per person for Suhoor.

For details, call 17313333. The Elite Crystal hotel is hosting Iftar buffet during the holy month of Ramadan at The Lotus. Priced BD7.9++ for Iftar and BD14.9++ for a Ghabga platter for two.

For reservations, call 17360360. The Elite Grande Hotel invites guests to its Iftar at Julio's, featuring international and oriental buffet with soft beverages. Priced BD7.990++ per person and BD3++ for children. Suhoor is priced BD5++ per person.

There is also a Ghabga by the pool at H2O rooftop lounge, with live oud performances on the weekend and free henna designer for ladies and children. Priced BD14++ per person or BD16++ for two adults and two children.

For details, call 17565888.



Guests at Al Areen Palace & Spa Bahrain during the holy month can enjoy an Iftar buffet, available on weekdays for BD14++ and BD16++ on weekend on the Early Bird package. The Ghabga buffet is priced BD13.5++ on weekdays and BD15++ on weekends on the Early Bird package. The regular package deal offers an Iftar buffet on weekdays for BD16++ and on weekends for BD18++, followed by the Ghabga buffet, which is BD15++ on weekdays and BD17++ on weekends. All buffets include sweets, Ramadan juice, live cooking stations and a raffle draw on weekends.

The hotel is also offering three discounted meal-and-spa options on its desert pool villas. The first package is for only BD140++, including desert pool villa and Iftar or Ghabga or breakfast. The second package is for BD160++, including desert pool villa, Iftar or Ghabga or breakfast, and a 30 minute massage treatment. The third package is for BD190++, including desert pool villa, Iftar or breakfast, in-villa BBQ, and a 30 minute massage treatment.

The Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea & Spa is welcoming the holy month



with an evening of delightful fare in its award-winning Ramadan tent, Layali Al Zallaq. There will be a selection of traditional dishes and live Arabic entertainment. Iftar will take place daily from sunset until 8.30pm, and is priced BD19.5++ inclusive of Ramadan juices and beverages. Ghabga will take place weekdays from 10pm to 1.30am, and weekends from 10pm to 2am, and is priced BD19.5++ for food only.

For reservations, call 17636363.

The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa is celebrating Ramadan with its famous Khaimat Al Khaleej at the Awal Ballroom. Iftar and Ghabga will take place daily, and will feature live Teppanyaki grills, chocolate fountains, a date tower, and live traditional entertainment. Priced BD20++ for Iftar from sunset until 8pm, BD18++ for Ghabga from 10pm onwards on weekdays, and BD20++

for Ghabga from 10pm onwards on weekends. Special rates available for Prestige Club members. Children up to five years enter free of charge, and between six and 12 years receive 50 per cent discount. To find out more about the offer and special packages, call 17713000.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain is celebrating the spirit of giving during the holy month of Ramadan. For every Iftar dinner, a donation of 500 fils

will be made to children and mothers' welfare societies. Enjoy an Iftar buffet with a selection of traditional Arabic specialties served daily at La Mosaïque restaurant. Priced BD14.520net per person.

Iftar and Ghabga private packages start from BD14.520net per person, for a minimum of 30 guests and above at Bahrain Conference Centre. For bookings and details, visit www.cb-bahrain.com or call 17531122.

The Intercontinental Regency Bahrain will be serving authentic culinary dishes prepared by its award-winning chefs throughout Ramadan.

Daily Iftar buffet price is BD15++, with Ghabga priced at BD14++ at the Rifaa Ballroom, served from sunset. Special packages include a whole ouzi and appetiser featuring a slow-cooked lamb with hot and cold mezzeh, sambousek and more, priced BD150net, serving up to 20 people. The second special includes a half ouzi and appetisers, with slow-cooked lamb, a variety of hot and cold mezzeh and more, priced BD80net, serving up to 10 people.

For details and reservations, call 17208308 or email

convention.icbahrain@ihg.com

The Furr Bistrot & Bakery at The Westin and Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain is hosting an Iftar buffet starting from the first day of Ramadan, from sunset to 8.30pm, priced BD18net per person. The a la carte Ghabga menu will be served from 9pm to 1am.

For details, call 17171441. The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain will be serving an Iftar buffet followed by a Ghabga in its Ramadan tent, all throughout the month of Ramadan from sunset to 2am. Featuring traditional Arabic and international cuisine in the stylistically reimagined Massaya Ramadan tent. Priced BD25++ for Iftar from sunset to 8pm, and BD27++ for Ghabga from 9pm to 2am. Pergolas can be booked for a maximum of eight guests, priced BD300++ with silver service included. Call 17586499 or email rs.bahrz.restaurant@ritzcarlton.com



A bright and breezy new restaurant has opened in a popular dining out strip to help capture those balmy days enjoyed holidaying around the Mediterranean Sea.

Rather and wait until after the holy month, the Mawasim Restaurant & Lounge enjoyed its soft opening last weekend joining the growing Galleria Mall food scene in Zinj.

The restaurant attracted appreciative diners looking for something a little different to break their fast but still capturing a taste of home comforts.

Celebrated Jordanian Chef Maher Ramzi, 42, who commands a strong following after spellbinding work over a five year spell at popular dining destinations in Bahrain, explained: "It's a medley, it's a fusion actually, it's my creativity plated. There are Arabic touches with bold yet simple flavours of the Mediterranean."

"The Arabic name of the restaurant means 'seasons' and our aim is to create meals for all seasons covering all the glorious seasons across the Mediterranean coast."

Mediterranean Cuisine combines a vast range taking in all the countries that border the sea - Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Morocco.

French and Italian foods are so well-known in Bahrain, it's almost like diners don't think

of them as Mediterranean anymore, even though they are, especially Italy, which as a peninsula is virtually surrounded by the Med. Though some have carved out distinct niches, Tunisian, Turkish, Lebanese, Moroccan, Egyptian and Spanish cuisine all play a part in adding to the explosion of flavour.

At one point the Turkish based Ottoman Empire ruled all the Mediterranean South and East of Greece leaving a common cultural influence.

And Spain for about 700 years, was ruled by the Moors, a name for peoples of North Africa and the Middle East.

The Mawasim Restaurant & Lounge comes under the umbrella of Chrome Concept Restaurant Management Company, the F&B division of the Dadabhai business family, the same company that brought the popular WOK Station concept to the kingdom.

The aim has been to capture a growing audience of Gulf-based families who visit the Med during the holidays and want to enjoy the taste of the cuisine and a touch of the ambience when they return home.

No expense has been spared to deliver a tasteful



FANTASTIC FUSION: Chef Maher, right, restaurant interior and examples of the cuisine

dining destination. The restaurant décor compliments the theme of Seasons. The interior is inviting, elegant and is inspired by the use of many natural finishes. The warm lightings with hint of colours gives a contemporary, comfortable and cozy environment. The blue and

yellow coloured seating have cushions thrown in for that extra comfy feel.

Statement carved wooden lanterns adorn the ceiling adding to the warmth factor and the sheer drapes allow privacy or a great view while dining.

The menu designed by



Chef Maher combines all the insight he has gained on his travels. His culinary journey has taken him across Europe, meandering into the lap of royal experience at the Al Baraka Palace, Jordan and eventually making way to other Middle Eastern countries in managerial and

executive chef roles.

The menu is simple yet features the many flavours and ingredients of Mediterranean cuisine famed for its wide use of seasonal vegetables, olive oil, grains, fish and meat. Other important ingredients include olives, cheese, aubergine, courgette, lemon juice, vegetables, herbs, freshly-baked bread and yoghurt.

Pizza lovers are in for a treat too with not only traditional toppings but some special localised treats too. Pasta and risotto are also specialties alongside gourmet sandwiches.

Some of the stand-out dishes include a Pesca Salad, Legendary Burger, Tikka Bahraini Pizza, Spinach le Gratin, Porterhouse Lamb Chops and Chef Maher's Med twist to the classic Sayadieh Lebanese fish with rice family favourite dish.

The all-day restaurant can seat more than 200 guests. To honour Ramadan, Mawasim Restaurant & Lounge has a special launch deal offering guests 50 per cent off their food and beverage bill until tomorrow. The restaurant is open from 6pm to 2am during the holy month. Call 77232377 for more details.

Eating Out

The places to dine in Bahrain plus culinary tips for the food connoisseur

Home comforts with style

AN Arabian Nights themed Ramadan experience at the Intercontinental Regency Bahrain is attracting visitors from far and wide.

The Intercontinental Regency Bahrain's Al Rifaa Ballroom has been transformed into an outdoor-style market arena with trolleys and stalls full of delightful treats.

A large shimmering lighting fixture adds to the 'eating under the stars' illusion with vibrant multi-coloured silk fabrics draped around it to create a tent-like look.

Sparkling twinkle lights also cascade from silk hung up over the bountiful buffet and a trolley with Arabic-designed cloth has been turned into a juice station. There are two entrances to the beautiful ballroom with one featuring bags full of spice to entice people with savoury scents and the other boasting more pretty lights and silk scarves.

Raf Griep, the hotel's culinary director, said: "This year we wanted to offer our guests something different as I feel that's what they are looking for. We didn't want to create a regular tent and we wanted a more colourful venue."

"The theme is inspired by the traditional fanoos, which is a Ramadan lantern that is lit and has many colourful sides to it. We wanted to replicate that look in the ballroom which is why there are silk fabrics draped in different corners of the hall and backlit



HAVING A BALL: Settling down for a feast, bottom left, Executive Sous Chef Mohammed and, right, culinary director Raf

GOURMET REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

to support the concept and it still looks like a tent but boasting different colours.

"Also, we added different Arabian-souq like touches throughout. We wanted to offer our guests a local Ramadan feel but in a contemporary way and so far they are loving it from the colours, the ambience, warm service and of course the great food."

So much so, that the venue has been attracting guests

from not only Bahrain but neighbouring Saudi Arabia too.

Bahraini Executive Sous Chef Mohammed Samara, who has Jordanian descent and have lived in the kingdom for 28 years, alongside his multi-national culinary colleagues, has created a feast for the eyes ... and it tastes as good too.

This year, he has even introduced a clever selection of healthy hummus variations including beetroot and avocado. There is a live cooking station concocting

scrumptious falafels from scratch and a mixture of saj delights.

Chef Mohammed said: "I cook for guests in the same manner as if I'm at home cooking from my kitchen. We have visitors from Saudi Arabia and across Bahrain returning each year to our iftar for the qoozi, kofta and mulukhiyah. I love feeding people and am happy that they love my food. I just want people to feel happy and at home."

As the chef made his way around the tables shaking

hands with friends, greeting guests and suggesting dishes to try, the hubby Sam and I, began putting his culinary skills to the test.

The mezza section was full of delightful greens such as fattoush, potato salad, Spicy Lebanese-Style Potatoes Batata Harra, corn salad, green bean salad, moujadara, tomato and mozzarella, vine leaves and the velvety beetroot hummus and avocado hummus.

There is also an assortment of thinly-sliced veggies, cherry tomatoes, feta cheese

and other nibbles. Sam enjoyed the beetroot hummus while I couldn't get enough of the avocado which really captured the flavour.

I plated an assortment of meats and chicken from the mixed grill, vermicelli rice covered in white bean 'fasoulia nashfe' lamb stew with seven spices. This is another favourite of mine and it was full of flavour. There was also beef harees with cinnamon and kofta, grilled fish with harra sauce, pasta with pink sauce and other goodies.

The Qoozi Bahraini dish of roast lamb with rice was rich and delicious. The meat was juicy and tender.

We ended the dining experience with a delicious hot bread-like pudding Umm Ali dessert and a cold bowl of chocolate, vanilla and cookie and cream ice cream, as Editor Stan tucked into a bowl full of hot date pie he insisted on calling sticky toffee pudding with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

● For prices and timings, check out the Ramadan Guide on Pages 8 & 9 and watch Stan's interview with Chef Mohammed and Raf (with a small appearance from yours truly) by placing your smart phone over the QR Code.



Eating Out

The places to dine in Bahrain plus culinary tips for the food connoisseur

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WIN a 'Dim Sum Platter' for two at Wok Station by answering this quiz question and emailing your answer to editor@gulfweekly.com. Which Wok Station outlet serves Business Lunch? a) Galleria Mall, Zinj b) Platinum Tower, Seef. Entries must be received by noon on Sunday. The first correct one opened will be emailed a coupon. Normal GulfWeekly contest rules apply. The Editor's decision is final.

THERE are tantalising Turkish delights in store for visitors to the stunning Al Areen Palace & Spa's Qasr Al Sultan Ramadan tent.

You'll find the marvellously mustached Chef Ali working tirelessly stoking the hot coals for the Shish Kebabs as slices of succulent pieces of shawarma are carved on to plates alongside majestically marinated chicken sizzled to perfection close-by on a pan.

That alone must conjure up images of fast-breaking brilliance and the spread of more Arabic and Asian fare, with other international selection presented along long buffet tables, just add to the delight.

Executive Chef Janardan Das and his talented team of chefs have conjured up several staple dishes as you would expect at this time of year, including everyone's favourite, Leg of Lamb Qoozi.

The Chicken Biryani was outstanding but my dish of the formal opening event last Saturday evening was a gorgeous Turkish green beans dish called Zeytinyagli Taze Fasulye.

You may recall that GulfWeekly recently highlighted the resort's grand launch of its newly-improved and rebranded health club, Fitness For Life, with celebrity guests, sporting challenges and family fun.

The concept cleverly continues with a special station of healthy fare amongst the choices of cuisine. For many observers it can be hard to understand

Turkish delights galore



MUSTACHED MASTER: Chef Ali and, bottom right, Chef Janardan glowing with pride at the grand opening

GOURMET REPORT
By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



— but Ramadan doesn't work like that.

Traditional foods are often calorific and it's hard to turn your nose up at dishes that your family enjoys or not eat at a time when everyone else is. And, this is where Chef Das has come up with the perfect plan — a range of tempting filling food that will not put on the calories.

The fresh Quinoa Salad is a fine example. Grown in South America for thousands of years, quinoa formed the staple diet of the Incas and their descendants. In recent years, foodies across the globe have heralded it as a superior alternative to bulgur wheat, couscous and rice. Though it often occupies a similar role to these grains in

dishes, quinoa is actually a seed from the same family as beets, chard and spinach.

It makes the perfect marriage, in my opinion, to the wonderful live Turkish meat pieces being prepared on the live stations outside. Chicken and Quinoa Salad were simply made for each other.

And, of course, eating

healthily means you can cheat a little when it comes to dessert. The fresh fruit slices sat happily on my bowl with a helping of Turkish homemade ice-cream produced by a mad hatter host, tantalising and teasing guests with his quick-handed tricks at the station. Guaranteed to raise a smile.

The Qasr Al Sultan the Ramadan tent's contemporary design with traditional Turkish elements make for a stunning affair this season, with a musical fusion of sounds produced by a talented do playing traditional instruments.

The Ramadan buffet takes place daily from sunset until 9pm pm and ghabga or suhoor from 9.30pm until 3am.

● Check Editor Stan's interview with Chef Das and Gabrielle Sol, assistant marketing manager by scanning the QR code with your smart phone or by visiting www.gulfweekly.com and our Facebook page.



Winning ways and h



ALL SMILES: Shanee at the school ground



YOUNGSTERS that have endured traumatic experiences and bullying at different schools across the kingdom have found a safe haven at the award-winning institute in Bahrain that recently picked up an international accolade and local honours.

Nadeen School Bahrain, known by parents, children and staff members as - 'Small School - Big Family' - received its prize for 'outstanding pastoral care' at a recent glitzy ceremony in London.

This year the primary school, situated close to the British Club in Umm Al Hassam, is celebrating its 40th anniversary having started in Ghufool with a mere 40 students has grown to offer spaces for 400. Shanee Puri, Nadeen's director of administrative affairs and co-owner, who runs the school with her mum, former teacher Pauline, said: "Our school motto perfectly encapsulates who we are and our holistic and empathetic approach to the whole-child, in a non-selective setting, is entirely unique to the Middle East, in our opinion.

"While we do put a great emphasis on academic strength, we also aim to nurture every student's inner spirit and allow them the freedom to express themselves. We do what we do at Nadeen because we want the students to feel happy, safe and confident."

As a result, The British International Schools (BIS) magazine took notice of the school's all-inclusive strategy and awarded them for their educational efforts and encouraging environment.

The BIS, along with ISC Research, staged an awards ceremony last month to honour top British Schools overseas in various sectors. Nominations included schools from 38 different countries of which little Nadeen won the Outstanding Pastoral Care initiative, the only school from the Middle East to bring back an award.

This prize goes to a school that supports pupil wellbeing, identifies and addresses specific student needs. It must also demonstrate a positive impact on student well-being, teaching and show that learning is designed to be sustainable and support the mission of the school.

According to the judging panel, Nadeen School won the accolade for its 'holistic approach to engage disaffected



COMMUNITY REPORT
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

students and accelerate learning'.

Some pupils arriving at the school had been disaffected by their experience at schools elsewhere, the judges noted.

The positive approach included creating gardens, caring for animals in a farm-like environment and an introduction to the arts. The inspiring initiative had also had such a positive impact on staff members that they had become 'more empathetic, creative and intuitive'.

"We believe that every child has the right to an education," Shanee explained. "We are the only non-selective outstanding school in Bahrain.

"Our admissions policy states that we will take a child regardless of level, background, or educational history on the proviso that we can meet their needs and that, by meeting their needs we do not adversely affect the other children in the class.

"Our pastoral care initiative is the driving force behind the academic and personal, social excellence our pupils achieve during their time with us. It covers the social, emotional and well-being of the children and is woven through everything that we do: from our mission statement and staffing to how we teach and support all of our pupils."

The school's pastoral initiative, which they call the 'holistic hook', is said to accelerate learning and raise a child's self-esteem considerably.

"Like many schools, we have hooks that capture whole class interests or specific groups' interests and we see their learning accelerate as they become empowered by particular topics or lessons," added Shanee. "But, at Nadeen School, we like to take that a step further.

"We consider the whole child and take a holistic approach, particularly for those pupils that are struggling to access



CHILLING OUT: Pupils soaking up the relaxing atmosphere and, above, Pauline

the curriculum - whether that is due to learning difficulties or social and emotional difficulties."

Apparently, 25 to 30 per cent of the pupils there require significant support with their learning. Some pupils enter the school with a variety of learning needs such as little or no English, considerable gaps in their education, specific learning difficulties, some profound learning difficulties and others with social and emotional needs.

Shanee explained: "Because of these needs, these children often have very low self-esteem or poor learning habits.

"Our lessons are dynamic, our scheduling fluid and many of our lessons are pupil-led and initiated. Our dedicated approach to each child ensures that they are always treated as an individual with unique talents and gifts.

"For a whole term one of our incredibly creative pupils, who came into school as selectively

mute due to very low self-esteem, dyslexic and with English as a second language, had many of her 1:1 support lessons whilst she painted murals around the school. This opportunity developed her self-confidence until she was able to confidently work in classroom settings.

"We have a large Learning Support Department to meet these students' needs. On top of the regular support classes we actively seek out their strengths and interests and create tailor-made activities and programmes for them to increase their confidence and to give them a sense of pride, ownership of their learning, and responsibility. These end up benefiting the whole school, as well as children who do not have specific learning needs, and add to our learning experience and learning spaces."

Their garden spaces, developed by groups of children, enable the school



FLASHBACK: At the awards ceremony in London, the organic egg sale and the start of the 40th birthday



Having fun at 40



family in Al Jasra, said: "The business, the teachers and the school encourages and inspires me."

Year 6 head girl Emily Troger, 11, from Janusan, joined the school in kindergarten and said: "I used to be really shy when I started and could barely talk to people. The teachers helped me find my inner-confidence - they took the time to help me and encourage me to speak up in class."

The school's success has produced its own challenges with demand for places continues to grow. Although its quirky buildings and greenery add to the creative and happy buzz that surrounds the school, a move to a new location is inevitable.

The school is an accredited member of the British Schools of the Middle East (BSME) association and a registered British School Overseas (BSO).

The current campus comprises four converted residential villas with connecting gardens, walkways and playground, lawn, outdoor learning spaces and the farm. Art and motivational signs cover the walls of the building, with recycled tyres providing pots for flowers and plants.

Nadeen School Bahrain was also the first school in Bahrain to introduce Chromebooks and Google Education in to the classroom, as reported in *GulfWeekly*, and is noted as one of the six outstanding schools in Bahrain as rated by the Bahrain Quality Assurance and the only non-selective one with learning support provision.

It was recently ranked as the highest scores amongst Bahrain private schools in an international assessment of literacy and reading. Its score of 590 was well above the national private school average of 486 and above the international average of 511.

Shanee said: "While we like our current campus and the wonderful memories it holds, we also realise the need to



ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT: Flashback to head boy Lawrence's pancake enterprise and, right, with head girl Emily

develop to meet educational needs of the future.

"We have been seeking permission from the Ministry of Education to move campus for the last year and are actively seeking land and partnerships for a purpose-built campus.

"In the move, we realise the need to preserve what Nadeen School is famous for: being a family-centred school where every child is recognised as a unique and special individual. Our unique 'village' feel will be replicated in order to maintain our current atmosphere and energy.

"We don't know now what many of the jobs of the future will be, but know that we have to prepare our pupils for a rapidly changing world. We look forward to helping create the learner and worker of the future and instilling in our students the skills of creative thinking, entrepreneurship, leadership, resilience, problem solving, emotional intelligence, and empathy as part of their educational journey."

At the end of January Nadeen School was informed its pupils had achieved the highest score out of all private schools in Bahrain in an international study of literacy and reading - the PIRLS examinations (Progress in International Reading and Literacy Study.)

"Our score was 122 points higher than the private school average and well above the international average," added Shanee. "This achievement was even more rewarding given that we are the only non-selective outstanding school in Bahrain. This, combined with our recent BISA award, validates our firm belief that every child has the right to an education and that every child can succeed. This means a great deal to us and we are so proud of our students.

"As a result we are now working closely with other Ministry of Education and government departments to help raise levels of reading and literacy in Bahrain, a partnership of which we are honoured to be a part."

The school also had the highest scoring student in Bahrain ... but that's another story. Watch this space.



to host interactive and specific, targeted lessons in a distinctive, natural learning space. There is an active farm, called the Nature Reserve, with ducks, chickens, a rooster and sometimes goats, run by the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.

There is also a sensory area that's covered in smooth rocks and includes bean bags and art work for children to enjoy. Teachers and children can feel at peace in this space as they can either read books or meditate on bean bags or make up their own stories using the picture stones.

When things get too loud sensitive children can retreat to the 'fairy garden' for further tranquility.

Both the farm and the garden give pupils throughout the whole school a chance to continue their learning in a natural environment that best suits their learning needs.

Shanee explained: "The farm is run as a sustainable business by pupils and the students hold

an organic egg sale weekly at the school gates."

The entrepreneurial spirit holds no bounds, it appears, as the school has also introduced a second business model called, Sh!ne - a beauty body scrub business, as the farm business was so successful at building pupils' self-esteem.

The businesses recognise pupils' strengths away from normal academics and showcase other talents such as collaboration, creativity, organisational abilities, communication and interpersonal skills, whilst still developing their English, maths and science abilities.

The pupils are clearly on board. Head boy, Year 6 student Lawrence Gerritsen, the 11-year-old managing director of Sh!ne, says the experience has inspired him to start up his own small business from home, selling Poffertjes, his country's traditional Dutch fluffy pancake desserts.

Lawrence, who lives with his



celebrations as the school searches for a new site to expand

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Property Weekly

A guide to the best properties home and abroad – edited by Mai Al Khatib email: mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

Plans in place for the show

PROPERTY seeks looking to purchase a new home and investors interested in upcoming developments will find a plethora of offerings on show at The Bahrain International Exhibition (BIPEX) during the 'best time to buy'.

The property show, which is in its 11th edition and organised by the Bahrain Society of Engineers, will be held on November 1 to 3 at the Bahrain International Exhibition & Convention Centre in Manama.

The exhibition annually serves as one of the platforms used to promote the region's major infrastructures and real estate projects. This year, the event will showcase the critical role of

Bahrain's economic diversification by highlighting its major achievements in infrastructure, real estate and leisure projects.

The society recently unveiled its plans for the November event to invited guests, developers and members of the media at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay.

Dr Dheya Tawfiqi, president of the Bahrain Society of Engineers, explained that the value of the present and future real estate projects exceeded BD30 billion in Bahrain only and that these figures were increasing.

"This is an indication that the real estate market plays a significant role in the economies of the region and also reflects the role of engineer and the engineering establishments in contributing in this direction," he added.

A series of ongoing 2018 BIPEX Forums focusing on a 'Building Communities, Developing Bahrain' theme will highlight education, healthcare, housing and transport.

Mohammed Khalil Alsayed, chairman of the organising committee for BIPEX, said: "The new real estate regulatory environment unveiled for the kingdom is another step to providing stability to the sector. Due to this, it is more than likely that the field will be left open only to serious players."

"It's important to appreciate that after a period of transition and adjustment, the price-levels could be on a steady growth path into the immediate future. It would not be unreasonable to say that the best time to enter the market is now."



FLASHBACK: Last year's successful show and, left, Dr Dheya, below, Mohammed

LocalNews

THE Brits showed they know just how to celebrate a wedding at home and in Bahrain as families and friends joined together to watch Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's royal wedding day.

British ambassador Simon Martin his wife, Sophie, were guests of honour at the British Club in Um Al Hassam which was adorned with red, white and blue bunting with a decorated marquee on the lawn.

All eyes were glued on a big screen to watch an emotional ceremony that captivated the world as the prince and his bride exchanged vows and rings before the Queen and 600 guests at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

Only last weekend Simon and Sophie, were in the same town for the Royal Windsor Horse Show celebrating Bahrain's own royal Shaikh Nasser storming to victory in an endurance race in front of Her Majesty The Queen and his father, His Majesty King Hamad.

The Martins said the town

No masking royal joy

COMMUNITY REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



was buzzing even then and picked up some mementoes including Harry and Meghan masks, below, they sportingly wore at the Brit Club before passing them on to others in the crowd for the obligatory selfies.

The American TV star wore a white boat-neck dress by British designer Clare Waight Keller and Prince Harry was given special permission from the Queen to keep his short beard while wearing the frockcoat uniform of his former regiment, the Blues and Royals.

As Meghan walked down the aisle a spontaneous round of applause erupted as refreshments named 'When Harry Met Meghan', 'Blushing Bride' and 'Suits you Sir' were placed

carefully on the Brit Club's trestle tables between the mini Yorkshire puddings with roast beef & horse radish and creamy chicken vol-au-vents.

Kiwi expat Tanja McKeown said: "Beautiful, gorgeous and so elegant." And those sentiments were echoed around the room with words like 'simple, classy and stunning'.

The wedding service combined British tradition with modernity and the bride's African-American heritage.

The next round of applause greeted the end of the address by the excitable The Most Rev Bishop Michael Curry, president of the US Episcopal Church. Blunt holidaymaking Yorkshire pensioner Brian Moore told his elder brother, David: "He went on a bit."

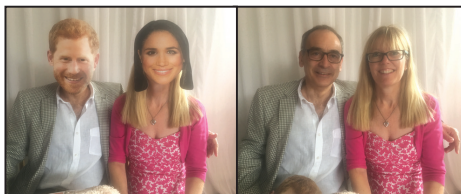
But the biggest roar came with the kisses on the chapel steps as the newlyweds - now to be known as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex - showed the world that love has everything to do with it.

The bride's dress was not the only one to capture the crowd's imagination. Teacher Grace Blair, 27, won



HAPPY DAYS: Tanja on a table with friends, below, Brothers Moore, and best dress winner Grace

a 'best dress' competition and a BD50 prize, after wearing a stunning blue number she wore at her own wedding reception three years earlier. The mother of 15-month old, Ivory, said the royal wedding gave her the determination to fit back into the gown for the first time since motherhood.



Education Matters



An educational insight and comment by head teacher Chris Fenton

AND so in this Royal wedding week, in fact on the eve of the wedding, the news coverage of the braying and nonsense of people swathed in Union Jack flags was briefly interrupted to mention that, yet again, there had been another US school shooting in which as of today, 10 people had died.

Can you imagine what that felt like for the parents of the students at that school? Can you imagine getting a phone call or a message to say that there had been a shooting at your child's school in Bahrain? Your blood would run cold. You would do everything you could to get there as quickly as you could and to hold your child in your arms, if you could.

Can you imagine how terrified the students were, knowing that what they have

heard about in so many cases of extreme school violence around the world and seen on so many news reports, was happening to them. It must have been terrifying.

And can you possibly even begin to imagine what was going through the mind of the sick individual who sought to get revenge, make his point or just generally get some attention, (although in this case we might find out as he is still alive and detained in custody) by planning and then executing a random mass murder?

Let's hope we never have to know what these things feel like.

The thing is though, in my opinion, more must be done to keep children in Bahrain safe at school, no matter where they attend. I've had some very interesting conversations with parents whose children attend a variety of different schools on the island since my last article on this issue, most of

whom couldn't believe how easy it was to gain access, but who also who hadn't previously given it a second thought.

In order to once again highlight the current situation here, I conducted another experiment.

This time, I used somebody else's CPR to see if I could use it to gain full access to children and staff in school either playing or involved in lessons.

I walked up to the security guard, gave him my FEMALE friend's CPR and presumed that I would be turned away. The guard didn't look at the CPR and gave me a security pass which opened the door and allowed me in.

Now, when I pointed out the mistake that he had made, he wasn't embarrassed or even apologetic, he got mad and asked me to leave, which is fine ... but again, it was too little, too late.

I'm not asking for schools

to employ prison-like security, but I am asking them and all those involved in education in Bahrain, to step up and examine their entrance and exit procedures just to see how watertight they really are since if your car has to be checked over when you visit a hotel or

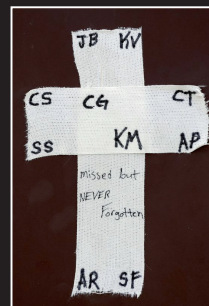
your bag has to be checked sometimes when you enter a shopping mall, at the very least shouldn't there be a law that expects schools to have an agreed level of security to protect the children and staff inside, one that is regularly checked and if flaunted would lead to serious

repercussions?

I don't think that's unreasonable at all.

Thank you for the comments I have received about this matter so far and please don't hesitate to get in touch with your views on the security practices in your school.

THE suspect in the Texas school shooting began his attack last Friday by firing a shotgun through an art classroom door, shattering a glass pane and sending panicked students to the entryway to block him from getting inside, witnesses said. Dmitrios Pagourtzis, 17, fired again through the wooden part of the door and fatally hit a student in the chest. He then lingered for about 30 minutes in a warren of four rooms, killing seven more students



and two teachers before exchanging gunfire with police and surrendering, officials said. Meanwhile, students

on Saturday were being let back inside Santa Fe High School to gather belongings they abandoned when the gunfire began. The school's grief was on display at an evening baseball game where Santa Fe players had crosses painted on their faces and the initials of shooting victims written on tape around their wrists. The team also fashioned a tape cross over the dugout with 10 sets of initials and 'missed but never forgotten'.

SocialScene

Graduation ceremony



AL-HEKMA International School recently held its 23rd graduation ceremony on school grounds where graduates proudly received their American High School Diplomas. The school's president Dr Mona Rashid Al Zayani welcomed the attendees and congratulated them and their families and presented AHIS accomplishments and achievements.

Educational trip



STUDENTS from Hamad Town Secondary Boys School visited KFH-Bahrain's main office as part of InJaz Bahrain's Job Shadowing Programme. During an introductory session, the senior management, as well as other experienced members of staff from different departments such as human resources, business development, cards & e-channels and operations, gave presentations to the students on the various functions in the bank, and the type of knowledge and skills needed in the workplace.

Filling contribution



THE Rotary Club of Manama presented 1,200 food parcels to the needy in collaboration with various charitable organisations throughout Bahrain. This is the 30th year that RCM has undertaken this humanitarian service.

In focus



IN CELEBRATION of the 72nd Festa della Repubblica – the Italian Republic Day – a classic guitar recital by Lorenzo Bernardi and Thu Le was held at the Gulf hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa's Al Dana Ballroom. Italian ambassador to Bahrain Domenico Bellato and his wife, Laura, welcomed guests at a pre-event reception gathering.



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Fashion Weekly

Keeping you in on the latest trends and what they wore in the past

Here comes stylish summer

AN online retailer has collaborated with social media personalities to celebrate a popular high street and mall store's latest campaign highlighting statement denim, dots galore and wild summer wear.

Namshi inspires its shoppers to experiment with their style. It recently teamed up with popular fashion bloggers including Milli Midwood, Haifa Zakaria Arora, Natasha Ekstedt and Bijal Soni to showcase the different looks that are trending this summer from Topshop's Spring Summer 2018 Collection.

● Wild and free:

Women can embrace their free spirit by opting for a carefree pyjama-style outfit with an animal-print satin shirt or a comfortable leopard-print jumpsuit. If animal prints aren't for you, then add a hint of urban jungle to your look with a pair of strappy printed sandals.

● Do denim:

This season, the brand features the Cropped Wide, the Mom, the Jamie and the Straight denim to offer women a variety of options and styles for every size, cut and fit. There are basic black looks, hues of blue, distressed denim, playful



FASHION
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

colours, graphic prints and floral embroideries suitable for every occasion.

● Dotting over dots:

Polka dots don't ever seem

to go out of style and are all the rage this season making an appearance on delicate sleepwear-inspired slip dresses, fun and flirty crop tops, elegant wrap skirts and flowy-cropped trousers.

● Blaze away:

Brighten up your work wear look with a range of tailored blazers in vibrant colours, including a striking yellow, a warm burnt orange and a classic navy blue. Keep it classy with a statement striped style or add a touch

of sporty-chic with a timeless denim jacket.

Snap up different looks and designs from www.namshi.com or find these styles at Topshop in City Centre Bahrain or at The Avenues Mall.



Capsule collection launched featuring intricately-designed gowns

LEBANESE-FRENCH designer Ingie Chalhoub has created a Ramadan and Eid Capsule Collection for the first time.

Ingie, ranked number 69 by Forbes on the latest 100 Most Powerful Arab Women List and a leading style icon, founded the Etoile Group in the Middle East and recently released three intricately-designed gowns exclusive to her French-inspired brand INGIE Paris in Bahrain, Dubai, Kuwait and Riyadh.

The shimmery silhouettes combine a subtle balance between glamour and tradition while the ornate woven lamé and rich

damassé fabrics add a sophisticated modest look. The necklines have been deliberately designed to be feminine, simple and graceful embellished with decorative elements including flat bows along the neckline or waistline.

Also, each gown comes with a complimentary option of adding from a selection of pre-designed Swarovski crystal artworks and customers are free to decide on its placement which makes each gown even more special and personalised.

Her collections are often featured at Etoile La boutique in City Centre Bahrain.



cerebrally crust & crema



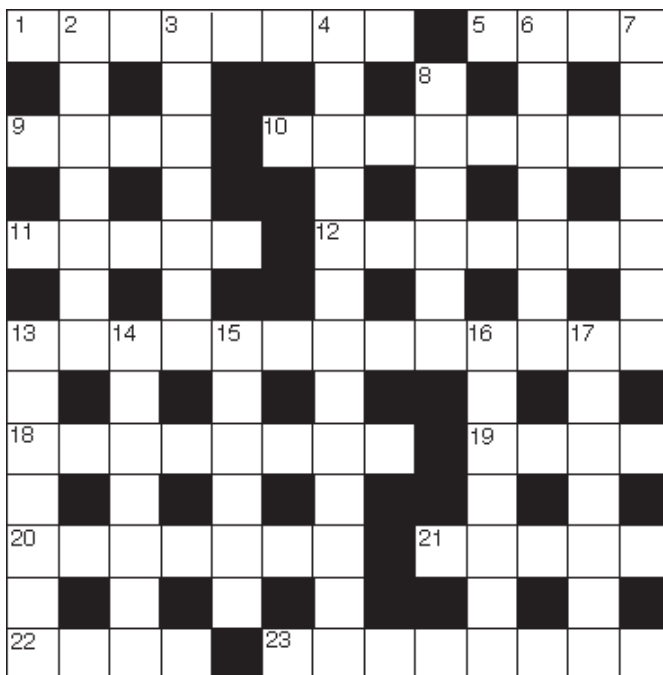
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PLANET DONUT & BAKERY

WIN A CUP OF COFFEE at crust & crema by answering this quiz question and emailing your answer to editor@gulfweekly.com
Coffee in the United States is only grown in California, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. a) True b) False
Entries must be received by noon on Sunday. The first correct one opened will be emailed a coupon. Normal GulfWeekly contest rules apply. The Editor's decision is final.

Quiz winner: Fazila Qamar won coffee and cake by correctly answering that espresso coffee has a) one third of the caffeine content of a regular coffee.

crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Posture (8)
5. Fete (4)
9. Overtake (5)
10. Values (8)
11. Defend (5)
12. Recount (7)
13. Repeated outbreak (13)
18. Deserted (8)
19. Weapons (4)
20. Red (7)
21. Essential (5)
22. Abate (4)
23. Reprove (8)

DOWN

2. Defame (7)
3. Underwriter (7)
4. Impartial (13)
6. Desist (7)
7. Ascetic (7)
8. Decimal (6)
13. Rejection (7)
14. Shorten (7)
15. Powerless (6)
16. Avoidance (7)
17. Circumference (7)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... wrote the book on courtesy *Talk to the Hand*?

WHAT ... rock group played at Les Battersby's wedding reception in Coronation Street in 2005?

WHERE...has René Préal been elected President for the second time?

WHEN ... was the journalist Carol Thatcher born?

WHO ... released the 2005 album *On the Outside*?

WHAT ... was the name of the robot dog in the television series *Doctor Who*?

WHERE ... in Asia is Lake Urmia?

WHEN ... did Guatemala declare independence of Spain?

just so

HOBOHO HOBOHO HOBOHO HOBOHO
HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO
HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO
HO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO
HOBOHO HO HO HO HOBOHO

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w
t w i c e
c
e



STOP

loaf loaf loaf loaf loaf loaf
loaf loaf loaf loaf loaf loaf
loaf

darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

Last week's sudoku

3	1	7	8	6	2	5	9	4
2	4	8	9	1	5	7	6	3
5	6	9	7	3	4	2	8	1
7	9	1	2	5	3	6	4	8
4	2	3	6	7	8	1	5	9
6	8	5	4	9	1	3	7	2
9	3	6	1	8	7	4	2	5
8	5	4	3	2	6	9	1	7
1	7	2	5	4	9	8	3	6

3	7	2	8	1	5	9	4	6
6	9	5	7	3	4	1	8	2
4	8	1	9	6	2	5	7	3
1	4	3	6	8	7	2	5	9
7	5	8	3	2	9	6	1	4
9	2	6	4	5	1	8	3	7
2	6	7	1	4	8	3	9	5
8	3	9	5	7	6	4	2	1
5	1	4	2	9	3	7	6	8

darn tough sudoku

7	6	8	1	3	4	2	5	9
3	2	5	9	6	8	7	4	1
4	1	9	2	5	7	8	6	3
2	5	4	8	1	9	3	7	6
8	7	3	5	4	6	1	9	2
6	9	1	3	7	2	4	8	5
1	8	7	6	9	3	5	2	4
5	4	6	7	2	1	9	3	8
9	3	2	4	8	5	6	1	7

Sudoku

	3			8		2		5
		8			7			
2		4		5	3	6		8
			2				1	
3			9		5			4
	2			3	1			
5		3	7			4		1
			5				6	
7		1		9			8	

Sudoku

				1	8		2	
6	7		5	3			4	
2						9		
		4	2				8	
	5			8	6		7	
	8				1	3		
8		1					9	
	9			2	4		5	6
	2		8	7				3

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 1 Widest; 4 Cosset; 9 Involuntarily; 10 Salient; 11 Ocean; 12 Appal; 14 Myths; 18 Theme; 19 Repulse; 21 Authoritative; 22 Asleep; 23 League.

Down: 1 Whimsy; 2 Developmental; 3 Salve; 5 Oratory; 6 Spine-chilling; 7 Trying; 8 Unite; 13 Awesome; 15 Strata; 16 Grain; 17 Recede; 20 Place.

JUST SO:

Back to back, Be fruitful and multiply, To coin a phrase, The rain in Spain

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Ian McMillan; Johannesburg; Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts; 1926; Gelindo Bordin; Abs; Peru; 1977.

Darn Tough Sudoku

				3	5	8		
	1		7			9		
6		7						
	2		8				5	
	3			6			8	
	4				2		6	
						4		8
		2			9		1	
		1	3	8				

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WE would like to express our gratitude for the excellent coverage of our handover ceremony published in last week's *GulfWeekly*.

We really appreciate you taking the time in your busy schedules to meet with us and discuss the latest development of Swiss-Belhotel Seef Bahrain.

We were also thrilled to see the prime position

you gave the article in your newspaper, we value your constant support and could not have hoped for a better partner than *GulfWeekly* to announce this significant news to the community.

We really look forward to working with you again and would be more than happy to help you in any way for your future coverage.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Alban Dutemple and
Herve Peyre.

DURING Ramadan, hunger and dehydration might affect our cognitive abilities which often means that our ability to make wise choices when it comes to what food and drink that we consume during after the period of breaking the fast.

We as a generation are

much more aware of our health and well-being now so it is a good time to make others aware of what is and isn't good to eat during Ramadan.

Swapping fried food for grilled goodness, ditching samosas, swerving sugar and salt, and spending nights drinking as much water as possible could help.

Academics and students on Birmingham City University Sport and Exercise and Nutrition courses in the UK have written up a guide featuring tips on nutrition, hydration and exercise to help people fasting to keep to a regular routine as much as possible.

The points were based on analysis of the common foods consumed during the month, along with reflection on what ones are best at providing sufficient energy throughout the day. It includes:

- Water, water and more water during night time hours – experts advise to drink as much water as possible during Ifaar and Suhur times.
- Learn the importance of balance – when fasting your body is deprived of nutrients

that your system needs. The experts emphasise that it is so important to make sure that when you can eat, you keep your meals balanced so that you feed your system enough nutrients from each group.

● Think about the alternatives – swap deep frying for grilling, baking or shallow frying and swap heavier foods for lighter alternatives. For example, swap cake and chocolate for fruit and yoghurt.

● Fitness and fasting can work together – gym enthusiasts can stick to their routine of working out every day. Light exercises are great to keep blood flowing and the system working. Cardio exercises are also fine to do when fasting as long as you don't overdo it.

● Excess salt causes extreme thirst during the day – experts say that meals with high salt are not ideal to eat during night time hours because they can cause thirstiness during the day and is best to be avoided.

● Keep energised without water or snacks – experts advise that there are small things you can try each day to keep you alert and maintain your energy. Things like taking small breaks from revision or work and going on small walks, writing daily to-do lists or listing what you're finding difficult and working on combatting these, and planning meals to make sure you're eating the rights things to get good

KEEPING with the Royal Wedding theme, Editor Stan was delighted by the inclusion of *Stand By Me*, performed during the ceremony by The Kingdom Choir.

It reminded him of one of his first ever celebrity interviews with Ben E King in a dingy dressing room in Northampton.

The song was originally performed by the late great American singer-songwriter Ben E King who penned it with Jerry Leiber, and Mike Stoller and the humble singer told Stan its significance as he made him a cup of tea.

Ben E was a member of The Drifters who had a string of hits in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. The act was put together by the Treadwell family who owned the name and auditioned, selected the singers and paid them a basic wage.

They were top of the Billboard charts and about to play in front of a 3,000-strong audience in New York City. The boys in the band thought they deserved a bigger slice of the financial pie and, as leadsinger, nominated Ben E to demand an increase before the show.

He was sacked and the remaining members stepped

energy levels can all have a big impact.

Dr Huda Al-Kateb,

THE WHISPERER

You don't know me; I know you, I know what's being said about you. I'm the 'whisperer'. I am socially mobile: Arab, Brit, Indian, Pakistani, American and the rest, they all invite me and share their world with me. Not much gets past me but if you think it may have done, email me on...

...editor@gulfweekly.com



out on stage. On the car back Ben E was distraught. "I was a black man in America and had just lost my job. My wife was pregnant and I didn't know what to say when I turned up at the front door."

"I told her what happened, she looked me in the eye, and said 'I'll stand by you'." Inspired, the next morning he called into a recording studio, said he had an idea for a song, and was signed up immediately.

Stand By Me became a smash hit across the globe. Twenty-five years

later he was approached by Hollywood producers working on a coming of age movie starring some of the hottest young names, including the late River Phoenix, asking if he would mind if they used the tune and the name for the title.

"We were invited to the opening screening in 1986," Ben E told Stan. "I remember seeing *Stand By Me* in bright lights and I pulled over the car. We looked at each other and cried."

The song became a massive chart hit again. It may well be again.

Programme Leader,
Birmingham City
University.

● **Editor's note:** The full guide is available on the university's website.

THE Royal Wedding certainly did not disappoint. I, like my bunting and Union Jack flags are still coming down from the excitement of Saturday. Like 18 million Brits I was glued to a screen and I loved every minute of it.

The way Prince Harry looked at Meghan as she walked down the aisle and the constant hand-holding proved just how besotted they are with one another.

The grace and strength shown by Meghan's mother, Doria Ragland, who sat alone a million miles from home, with such poise and dignity.

Meghan's Givenchy dress was beautifully simplistic, stunning although from certain angles it looked like the top half didn't look as if it fitted properly, but really who cares, her whole look from head-to-toe was flawless

Elissa's island life

An expat wife, mother, artist and runner



and the dress will definitely stand the test of time.

When Meghan walked herself down the aisle part of the way and then was escorted the rest of the way by Prince Charles, it was a very touching moment, I did have to reach again for a tissue.

During a very emotional service, it was also a time for a little laughter to see the look on some of the royals' faces during a long and passionate 14-minute sermon by the Bishop Michael Curry. Zara

Tindall's gawping reaction, in particular, was priceless and I was surprised the bishop didn't crash the Internet.

And now as a married couple the Duke and Duchess will begin their journey into married life, and as I finish eating the last slice of my homemade Victoria Sponge, washed down with tea in my new royal commemorative mug I wish them a very happy future and hope that Bahrain is included in their future royal tours. Wouldn't that be something?

THE last couple of years popularised many debates and one of these was tolerance.

Many people today feel that tolerance is a concept that remains an option to people. The best and only option in my opinion is 'both acceptance and appreciation'.

With so many different people in the world today, carrying with them so many different beliefs and traditions, there still exists, inherent in these differences, a common value of consideration, kindness, empathy and, this similarity, is much larger than any difference that divides people.

In this course of differences, amongst many, I have vegan friends, party-animal friends, atheist friends, and you know

Youth Talk
By
Saamia Zia



something, they are all right in their decisions, because they have chosen their own paths in life while respecting the choice others have taken. Only when people accept this and truly respect and acknowledge others' dissimilarities, will the world become a happier place.

Even though many people still believe that they hold the right to moderate how 'accepting' they are to cultural, social, economic and religious differences, it is appalling how people forget that this choice is like moral values.

It is as important as holding the door for the person behind you, helping

the elderly, respecting your parents and that is how we have the sort of empathy and understanding for humanity.

It is the month of Ramadan and it is very fulfilling to see how people following different religions and from different countries have embraced the essence of this month.

This is one of the best things about Bahrain, its infinite willingness to observe and respect all the festivals and important events - from Christmas to New Year - Eid to Diwali.

To all us residents here, such are the important lessons that we learn and that is what helps us grow into people who are far more appreciative, evolved and complete as individuals of today and leaders of tomorrow.

Film Weekly



Movie-loving Kristian Harrison checks out the big screen releases on show in a cinema near you



The savage sequel

THE first *Deadpool* was a surprise hit, breaking box office records for an 18 or R-rated movie with its blend of over-the-top action and side-splitting humour.

Expectations might be higher this time, but *Deadpool 2* comfortably satisfies them, delivering a sequel that's crasser, gorier, and mostly funnier than the first. Occasionally it runs a little short in terms of plot, and doesn't make the most of its side-characters, but it's a strong second outing for the Merc with a Mouth.

Deadpool 2 is unmistakably Wade Wilson's (Ryan Reynolds) movie. He dominates every scene, steamrolling everyone around him, even returning characters from the last film.

Deadpool is the star here, with Reynolds effortlessly bringing him to life once again. Credited as a co-writer this time, Reynolds blurs the line even further between himself and the character over whom he clearly feels a special ownership. He's perfect in the role.

The impulse to go bigger with a sequel is admirably kept under control. In fact, the stakes are refreshingly low for a superhero movie. Wade's not trying to save the world - just himself. And, if you were to summarise the plot, it probably wouldn't take more than a handful of sentences.

Most of the runtime is instead spent dropping Wade into potentially funny scenarios. Within the first hour, he trots the globe offing bad guys of all nationalities, attempts suicide, urinates in a bar, kicks back in his apartment, takes an obscene amount of nefarious substances, and hangs out with his buddies.

This scattergun approach suits the manic nature of the character, and leads

DEADPOOL 2 REVIEW

STARRING: Ryan Reynolds, Josh Brolin, Morena Baccarin

DIRECTOR: David Leitch

GENRE: Superhero

RATING: 18+

RUNTIME: 119 Mins

to a fair amount of laugh-out-loud moments. One of the best sequences sees Wade attempting to join the X-Men. Not only is Wade allowed to tear his way through Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters, we see him in the field, bringing his own distinctive approach to resolving fraught human-mutant relations.

While it yields some great moments, it also feels messy and a little unstructured, as if you're watching loosely-connected episodes of a sitcom rather than a cohesive movie heading somewhere with a purpose.

The script bulges with rapid-fire one-liners and references to just about everything. *Deadpool* is seemingly aware of every other superhero movie and isn't afraid to call them out, repeatedly. While some of these barbs may raise a smirk, for the most part they feel forced and already a little dated.

Far more amusing are the unexpected allusions, which add a weird texture to Wade's personality and the movie. Who knew he was such a fan of Barbara Streisand's *Yentl*? Or that he's obsessed with a conspiracy theory involving the song *Papa, Can You Hear Me*?

There's also plenty of nervous laughter prompted by just how far *Deadpool 2* is willing to push its violence and the levels of gore. There's some gloriously gross

stuff in there that even had this usually unperturbed viewer cringing a little.

Director David Leitch brings a wonderful sense of character to each of the film's many fight scenes and ensures each is reflective of those participating. The opening montage sees *Deadpool* creatively mutilate and decapitate gangsters across the world. It's a savage sequence amusingly set to the beat of Dolly Parton's *9 to 5*.

By far the funniest moments are when *Deadpool*'s allowed to subvert a scene from within, reacting to events as they unfold and bouncing off the characters around him - whether that's joining the X-Men or assembling his own mutant team. It allows enough time for the fourth-wall to be built back up, so when he inevitably knocks it down, it has a much greater impact. He's far less effective when allowed to riff at length and without purpose.

Furthermore, the film feels small scale in its use of location, particularly compared to the recent Marvel blockbusters. Most of the set pieces feel like they take place across the same few blocks of downtown Vancouver we grew familiar with in the first movie.

Overall, *Deadpool 2* improves on its predecessor in many ways. The action scenes in particular are spectacular with their visceral violence and gore, and most of the jokes land on the mark. However, there is an occasional sense of trying too hard to make a joke when the drama can speak for itself, and the movie's plot and scope feels a little bit on the small side compared to other superhero films.

Now showing in: Cineco, Seef II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Mukta A2

KRISTIAN'S VERDICT
 1 popcorn - stay home
 5 popcorns - start queuing



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Bite-sized trailer

A Wrinkle in Time

DIRECTOR: Ava DuVernay

CAST: Storm Reid, Oprah Winfrey, Reese Witherspoon

PLOT: Following the discovery of a new form of space travel as well as Meg's father's disappearance, she, her brother, and her friend must join three magical beings - Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which - to travel across the universe to rescue him from a terrible evil.



SHOWING IN: City Centre, Juffair, The Avenues, Seef II, Saar, Dana, Wadi Al Sail, Seef Muharraq, The Walk

Life of the Party

DIRECTOR: Ben Falcone

CAST: Melissa McCarthy, Debby Ryan, Gillian Jacobs

PLOT: When her husband suddenly dumps her, longtime dedicated housewife Deanna turns regret into re-set by going back to college - landing in the same class and school as her daughter, who's not entirely sold on the idea. Plunging headlong into the campus experience, the increasingly outspoken Deanna - now Dee Rock - embraces freedom, fun, and frat boys on her own terms, finding her true self in a senior year no one ever expected.



SHOWING IN: City Centre, The Avenues, Seef I, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Seef Muharraq, The Walk

Breaking In

DIRECTOR: James McTeigue

CAST: Gabrielle Union, Billy Burke, Richard Cabral

PLOT: Gabrielle Union stars as a woman who will stop at nothing to rescue her two children being held hostage in a house designed with impenetrable security. No trap, no trick and especially no man inside can match a mother with a mission when she is determined on breaking in.



SHOWING IN: City Centre, The Avenues, Seef II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Seef Muharraq, The Walk

imdb movie charts

Current Position	Title	Weekend Takings	Gross to date
1	Deadpool 2	\$125M	\$125M
2	Avengers: Infinity War	\$29M	\$595M
3	Book Club	\$13M	\$13M
4	Life of the Party	\$8M	\$31M
5	Breaking In	\$7M	\$29M
6	Show Dogs	\$6M	\$6M
7	Overboard	\$5M	\$37M
8	A Quiet Place	\$4M	\$176M
9	Rampage	\$2M	\$92M
10	RBG	\$1M	\$4M

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Motoring Weekly

Steering you to the best deals on wheels

Driving ahead in fine spirits

Traditionally, during Ramadan, the automobile sector is known for introducing or launching new promotions, writes Kristian Harrison. It all comes as part of

the spirit of giving. Not only that, the end of the month brings Eid, where it is common practice to offer money and gifts to family members and, if you're really lucky,

it could be a shiny new motor. Bahrain's popular dealerships have a variety of Ramadan deals on wheels, here are a few MotoringWeekly favourites:



● **Al Haddad Motors** is celebrating the holy month by offering deals on all Mercedes-Benz models with tailor-made packages that cater to its wide range of customers.

Among the benefits included in the driving package is special Ramadan pricing on all models, along with insurance and

registration. In addition, the company is also offering a three-year service package which includes vehicle checks by its team of highly-qualified and professional technicians.

For more information, contact the showroom in Tubli on 17785454 or visit the Mercedes-Benz website <https://mercedesbenzme.com/bahrain/en>

● **K E Kanoo** is offering special deals on its Geely range of vehicles. This includes a free three years or 60,000kms service package with extended warranty up to five years, insurance, registration and rust proofing.

The company is also offering a five year/100,000km package on all of its Mazda vehicles.

Customers can also opt for a special finance deal with both marques, featuring

three months deferred instalments and a special finance rate of interest. For more information call 17680110 or visit www.geely.kekanoo.com and www.mazda.kekanoo.com



● **Motorcity** has announced its Ramadan campaign has begun and will run throughout the month.

The company is partnering with a number of financial institutions to offer customers the chance to purchase vehicles from their favourite marques and only begin payments in 2019.

Passenger car brands Volvo, Subaru, SsangYong and Chery are offering customers special prices and the benefit of purchasing a car during the promotional period with zero down payment.

Motorcity's attractive 'peace of mind' package is also included in the offer where customers can benefit from free rust proofing, free roadside assistance, and a five-year or 150,000km warranty. Volvo cars also offer a buy back guarantee from Motorcity.

Commercial vehicle brands Isuzu and Maxus are also featuring special deals on selective models eligible for the zero down payment scheme.

Motorcity Senior General Manager, Bijan Majidi said: "This year, we want to focus on the customer's peace of mind. We want to give people the chance to buy their favourite cars from us during the holy month and only begin their payments in 2019. Our carefully tailored 'Peace of Mind' package is also included, guaranteeing our customers have nothing to worry about."

For more information on Motorcity's Ramadan offers, visit or call the Motorcity showrooms in Sitra - 17736222, Sanad - 17621162 and Nuwaidrat - 17702111 or log on to Motorcity.com.bh



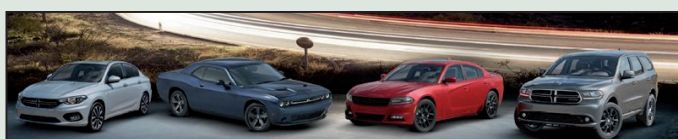
● **Behbehani Brothers** is staging a special promotion during Ramadan, with customers being offered the chance of winning back the price of their car.

Until June 30, everyone buying a Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge or Ram vehicle will receive a raffle coupon. At the end of the promotional period, a draw will be held in which one

lucky customer will win back the price they paid for their car.

The raffle draw will be held in the Behbehani Brothers showroom in Sitra on July 2.

In addition, there are special Ramadan offers on vehicles including the Jeep Grand Cherokee, Dodge Durango R/T and the Dodge Charger Hellcat.



MotorSport

All the best action from Formula One



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MERCEDES driver Valtteri Bottas had the fastest lap on the final day of Formula One testing in Barcelona.

Bottas had a time of 1 minute, 16.904 seconds at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, just ahead of Ferrari reserve driver Antonio Giovinazzi. McLaren's young reserve driver Lando Norris was third fastest.

Bottas' time was the fastest ever in testing at Barcelona, although it was about eight

Bottas makes his mark on final day of testing

tenths of a second slower than the track record set by teammate Lewis Hamilton in qualifying for last weekend's Spanish Grand Prix.

"We had a good baseline from last weekend and used it to work on different set-ups, trying out bigger changes than we normally would on a race weekend," explained Bottas, who came



RACING AHEAD: Bottas testing in Spain

runner-up to Hamilton in the last race.

"We also tried to gather some information on

the tyres, as we will see similarly smooth tarmac at Silverstone and Paul Ricard. I enjoyed being back in the car and I'm looking forward to being back in action next weekend in Monaco."

Giovinazzi ran 148 laps last Wednesday, the most of the 13 drivers who made it to the track. Kevin Magnussen of Haas, Charles

Leclerc of Sauber and Pierre Gasly of Toro Rosso also took part, with most other teams using junior and development drivers.

Williams used reserve driver Robert Kubica, who at the weekend was back in an official F1 session for the first time since almost losing his hand in a rally accident in 2011. Max Verstappen had the fastest time with Red Bull on the first day of testing on Tuesday, clocking 1:17.538.

FORMULA ONE big guns Mercedes will be starting a fresh chapter in its long and successful racing history as Season 6 of the ABB FIA Formula E Championship gets underway.

Two all-electric racing cars from the new Mercedes EQ Formula E Team will join the series for the start of the 2019/20 season.

With technology that is as innovative as it is complex, Formula E is a new racing world, which is why newcomers have so much to learn and so many challenges to master. But at least the Mercedes EQ Formula E Team is able to draw on the combined experience and technical know-how of its motorsport family and successful motor racing pedigree.

"The combined know-how of the Mercedes family at Affalterbach, Brixworth and Brackley provides the perfect foundations for our new Mercedes EQ Formula E Team. I cannot imagine a better combination to take on this kind of project," said head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport Toto Wolff.

"Formula E is a unique series with some very specific challenges for its teams. We know the level of competition is extremely high and we will approach the challenge with energy and humility.

"There can be no other approach when we are up against 10 competitive manufacturers, many of whom have years of experience in the series."

The heart of the new car will be developed at Mercedes-AMG High Performance Powertrains (HPP) in the UK. The Brixworth technology hub is the Daimler Group's global centre of excellence for

Mercedes eyes E action



SMOOTH RIDE: Britain's Sam Bird from DS Virgin Racing competing during the Formula E Hong Kong ePrix race

high-performance hybrid technology. HPP has set the benchmark for hybrid expertise in Formula 1 for many years.

Its in-house engineers have been working on challenging high-performance projects for more than a decade including the original KERS Hybrid system in Formula One and the SLS AMG Coupé Electric Drive electric super sports car which was developed jointly with Mercedes-AMG. However, it is the expertise acquired during the development journey of the current F1 hybrid power unit that will form the cornerstone of the Formula E technical project.

The Mercedes EQ Formula E Team plans to call on the proven expertise of HWA AG in Affalterbach for its trackside race operations. HWA has traditionally been responsible for design, development and operations of the Mercedes-AMG Motorsport DTM cars. The record books show that HWA is the most successful team in DTM history with 10 drivers', 13 team and six constructors' titles.

The reigning Formula 1 World Champion team Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport will also play a supporting role. The Brackley-based team has won four drivers' world championships and four constructors' championships, all with hybrid power, in the past four years.

In addition to technical expertise, proper preparation will also play a key role in the run-up to the team's race debut in the ABB FIA Formula E Championship. HWA AG is already active in the all-electric racing series and is supporting Monaco-based Team Venturi as a technical partner during the current Season 4 (2017/18).

For next season, Season 5 (2018/19), HWA AG will enter the championship as a Venturi customer team, which will give the team vital racing experience with the new Gen2 cars being used from Season 5 onwards.

The Mercedes EQ Formula E Team will contest its first race in the ABB FIA Formula E Championship in Season 6 (2019/20). Mercedes-Benz is already involved as a partner



Saudi Arabia on track for electric races in Riyadh

FORMULA E has signed a title sponsorship worth more than \$100m with Swiss technology company ABB – a seven-year contract through to 2025 for the electric-powered motorsport series.

The deal 'is a strong sign and proof of the attractiveness of this championship, which is still in its infancy', Jean Todt, president of motorsport governing body FIA, said.

The four-year-old electric series is trying to grab attention in a sport dominated by the long-standing petrol-based Formula One championship. Although the cars are quieter compared to the ear-splitting, fuel-guzzling engines in F1, Formula E touts its environmentally-friendly qualities and accessibility to fans.

Fans can walk to watch Formula E street races in Berlin, Buenos Aires, Hong Kong,

Mexico City, Paris, and New York and will soon be able to do the same across the Causeway.

Formula E's 20th host city will be Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia – the first location the championship will visit in the Middle East.

The electric series has announced a 10-year deal with the country's General Sports Authority and Riyadh will host the season-opening race of the 2018/19 championship in December – the first event with the new Gen2 machinery – subject to the approval of the FIA's World Motorsport Council.

"The moment when those green lights go on in Riyadh, Formula E becomes of age," FE CEO and founder Alejandro Agag said. "For me that moment will be as big as the first start of the inaugural race in Beijing."

in the European Formula E races in Rome, Paris, Berlin and Zurich with its EQ brand.

The name EQ stands for 'Electric Intelligence' and is derived from the Mercedes-Benz brand values of 'emotion and intelligence'.

The EQ brand encompasses all key aspects for customer-focused electric mobility and extends beyond the vehicle itself. The spectrum ranges from electric vehicles to wall boxes and charging services to home energy storage.

As regards to the Mercedes EQ Formula E Team, the EQ designation forms an integral part of the name, so 'electric intelligence' will now feature on the starting grid of the ABB FIA Formula E Championship in Season 6.

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Golf Weekly

Teeing off to a great read

Remembering ace Debbie

THE inaugural Debbie Lane Memorial Trophy tournament was held at the Royal Golf Club to remember the former ladies captain in an event set to become an annual fixture on the golfing calendar.

Organised by Karin Lutz and other helpers, a field of more than 80 players played on the Montgomerie course in an 18-hole Florida Scramble format.

The majority of the club's lady members competed, with members of the Awali Golf Club also invited to join in. Players wore shirts sponsored by Seef Dental in Debbie's favourite colour purple.

At the post-golf prize-giving, current ladies club captain Caroline t'Kint de Roodenbeke gave words of thanks to those who had contributed to the event, as did widower Rob Lane, highlighting the generosity of the members.

There was a vast amount of side contests on course, including The Debbie Lane Putt on hole 15 which was a nearest the pin competition, using Debbie's old putter.

In the main competition of the day, Matthew and Araceli Deakin along with teammate Ronan Armstrong shot an incredible nett score of 56.6 to win by 4 whole shots. Jason Smith, Sanne Smith plus Tabea and Reinhold Lutz came second with a nett score of 60.9. In third place, with a nett score of 60.9, was Kevin Ross, Sam Kobeisi, with Sanjay Lal and Tapan Vaidya.

Results:

1st Place – Ronan Armstrong, Araceli Deakin, Matthew Deakin – Nett 56.6, 2nd Place – Jason Smith, Sanne Smith, Tabea Lutz, Reinhold Lutz – Nett 60.6, 3rd Place – Kevin Ross, Sam Kobeisi, Sanjay Lal, Tapan Vaidya – Nett 60.9.



PRIZE TIME: The winning team members pick up their trophies and prizes with Karin Lutz and Anne Quintino

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The World Cup dark horses

VOICEOFSPORT
with Killian Harrison

IT'S that time of year again when the Premier League season is over, the World Cup squad has been announced, and England are suddenly the favourites; riding a huge wave of optimism after a couple of friendly wins against minor European and African footballing nations.

So the usual rhetoric goes anyway. By now, after 52 years of hurt, I think even the most ardent England fan, the one who parades around the host nation with his bare gut spilling over his Adidas shorts, thumping the Three Lions badge tattooed across his bicep, would be reluctant to label us as a serious threat.

Nevertheless, there is room for cautious optimism.

Gareth Southgate has displayed his ruthless streak as England manager long before the confirmation of his 23-man World Cup squad, and those left out were the latest examples of his determination not to be swayed by reputation.

Joe Hart, Jack Wilshere and Ryan Bertrand joined Wayne Rooney, Theo Walcott, Daniel Sturridge and Chris Smalling on the list of players to be discarded during his 18-month reign in charge.

Billed as a safe pair of hands when appointed as Sam Allardyce's successor in 2016, following the controversial departure of his predecessor after just one game in charge, Southgate was portrayed as football's Mr Nice Guy. But, since taking on full-time a role over which he was initially hesitant, he has been bold virtually every step of the way with his decisions and selection and his squad for Russia, which has an average age of 26 years and 18 days, is all about potential and possibility, rather than a second or third shot at redemption for those who failed before.

Whether England can win the World Cup remains to be seen and, with a potential quarter-final against either Brazil or Germany, a place in the last eight may well be the limit of Southgate's ambitions. But at least this squad will go into the tournament without too many

scars of the past, burdened by memories of abject failure and an inability to cope with pressure.

There are no survivors from those taken by Fabio Capello to South Africa in 2010 and only five of Roy Hodgson's Brazil 2014 party have made the plane. Southgate has simply cleared out the old guard; he started with Rooney and Walcott during qualifying and completed the job by leaving Hart, Wilshere and Bertrand at home.

In goal, the big call was overlooking Hart, who has 75 caps but was farmed out on loan by Manchester City for the past two seasons and couldn't even make the West Ham starting line-up for most of this season. With Jordan Pickford and Jack Butland obvious choices, Southgate has taken a chance on Burnley's Nick Pope on the grounds of form, which should, in reality, always be the first criteria.

The absence of a top-level playmaker in midfield is a problem that Southgate has had to grapple with since taking charge, so his options in that area lack the creative flair of the leading nations in Russia.

Wilshere may once have had the potential to tick that box, but the Arsenal midfielder now lacks the requisite fitness and finesse. Physically, he also struggles to compete against the most accomplished teams and players.

Ruben Loftus-Cheek is Southgate's biggest gamble but the Chelsea midfielder, who spent the season on loan at Crystal Palace, was outstanding against Germany and Brazil last November and so has earned the chance to impress in Russia.

Up front, Southgate possesses a world-class striker in Harry Kane, while Jamie Vardy once again proved his credentials for Leicester with 20 league goals this season. And with Sterling and Jesse Lingard offering a goal threat from midfield, the concerns over Marcus Rashford's form and Danny Welbeck's ability to avoid injury are not quite as worrying.

Indeed, another noteworthy aspect of the squad concerns the versatility offered by many players. For example,



YOUNG GUNS: Southgate and, below, England's World Cup squad for Russia

Alexander-Arnold, Ashley Young, Fabian Delph and Eric Dier can play in defence and midfield, while the attacking midfielders included also offer a certain fluidity.

Ultimately, there can be no escaping the fact that this squad is largely unproven at international level, with the shadow of Euro 2016 and the defeat against Iceland still hanging over the team at a major tournament. But Southgate's selection has brought a freshness and sense of realism to the England set-up; the big question is how long that will last before misplaced optimism takes over.

With their draw, England have a good shot at making the quarter-finals, which is a respectable result and should be the aim.

England do not have the players of a Brazil or Spain, they do not have the squad depth of a France or Germany, and they do not

have the likes of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo who are capable of almost single-handedly carrying their nations to World Cup glory.

But what England do have in abundance is potential ... which is better than a bunch of over-hyped primadonnas who fail to deliver.



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TOP OF THE LEAGUE FOR LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL SPORT

May 23 - 29, 2018

SILVERWARE AT LAST!

AFTER 18 years of trying, the Awali Cricket Club's Touring Taverners finally bowled over the opposition to claim a maiden trophy, the Chiangmai International Cricket Sixes Vase.

Since 2001, Awali had scored a successive stream of ducks competing at every level, from the prestigious major cup category through to the lowly spoon section, with more than 100 different players having made the trip to Thailand.

Team captain Bob Phillips, the facilities manager at the Bahrain Rugby Football Club, has attended every year, and was delighted to finally see the Awali name on a Roll of Honour at long last.

"Back in 2001, we set out into the unknown as five players and one fan," he explained. "We were granted Sri Lankan former Test player Ramesh Ratnayake as our sixth player and, in true Awali fashion, we proceeded to dump the tournament sponsors out of the event before flattering to deceive later in the week.

"However, it was here that the foundations for Awali's true legacy at the tournament were laid. Year on year we returned with equipment, money and anything-else that was requested so that we could help the Thais develop the game's junior players by putting on coaching clinics.

"All of this helped to provide the support necessary to see numerous underprivileged children graduate in various local cricket programmes, initially to regional teams then national teams and now to being some of the leading players and coaches in Thailand.

"On top of this, we ensured that each of our guides on these trips have had their university education funded and we now boast a number of graduates working across the globe."

The Chiangmai Sixes is

CRICKET EXCLUSIVE
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

an international invitational event which this year saw 40 teams drawn from 11 nations to compete in one ladies and six men's competitions across 109 matches in seven days.

Having run for 31 years, it is the largest sixes competition by participation and one of the oldest staged globally. It is hosted by the Chiangmai Gymkhana Club in some of the most scenically beautiful surroundings in the country, with all teams are invited to have their own team cabana for the week to watch the tournament.

In recent years, upcoming Awali players have been invited and supported, including 18-year-old star batsman Sahil Rathod. The average age of the side has tumbled as its mobility and cricketing abilities have impressively improved. This has led to the team reaching two finals in three years.

The 2018 tournament started brightly for the Taverners. A win against Thai Tavada, a team comprised of children they had ironically helped train in previous years, and a tense victory over Australia Darwin left them top of their group and heading for the knockout competition.

A first Vase round game against the Northern Territories Bushrangers saw Awali emerge with a comfortable 28-run victory,



STRONG STROKES: Ishtiaq batting, below, from left, the Awali team, Bob with the prizes and Thai dancers at the memorable awards dinner

before a semi-final 16-run win saw them in the final once again.

Finals Day started grey and miserable, with the matches played intermittently between rain delays. After being made to wait far beyond their scheduled start time, with the nerves jangling with increasing

ferocity as the light started to fade, Awali's turn against strong Australian outfit Saint Francis De Salle's Summer Saints came.

Having lost the toss, the Taverners went on to the field and conceded 73 runs for the loss of only a single wicket. A few glum faces around the Awali camp were

definitely concerned that yet another Awali foray in to a Chiangmai Final was going to end coming up just short, knowing they would have to post more runs than at any other point in the week.

Opening batsmen Mohammed Ishtiaq and Sahil Rathod strode to the wicket in good form with a

strong belief that their target was achievable. However, as Sahil almost immediately returned run out, the burden was to fall on a so-far misfiring Soji Jacob.

Ishtiaq again magnificently made his way to the Chiangmai compulsory retirement figure of 30, but a glimmer at the other end had seen Soji starting to find the middle of his bat too.

Awali struggled through two tight opening overs to only post 27, but the third brought 20 valuable runs with the fourth starting in the same vein. This was tempered by the retirement of Ishtiaq, who was replaced by Mohammed Waqas.

Much to the delight of the watching Awali players, biting down to the last of their nails, some swiftly struck boundaries by both batsmen meant another 20 was conceded in the fourth over, leaving only seven required to win in the final over.

Waqas added the runs in three balls, and the Awali players and supporters erupted in delighted as they finally claimed their long-coveted crown. Philipps said: "Indeed, it has taken 18 years to cement Awali's legacy in Chiangmai with a tournament win, a place on the Honours Board to accompany all the previous good work off the cricket field.

"We are absolutely thrilled to bring the Vase back to Bahrain, it's been a long time coming!"

The winning Awali team was: Bob Phillips (c), Sahil Rathod, Steve Turner, Mohammed Waqas, John Rees, Mohammed Ishtiaq, Kumar Nair, Soji Jacob, Maher Jaber, Gerrard Hall.



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