

Gulf Weekly

The community newspaper at the heart of Bahrain

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'Decade of delight and so much more to come'

Exclusive interview with City Centre Bahrain's senior mall manager, Duaij Al Rumaihi
SEE PAGES 12 & 13

SEVENTH HEAVEN

ONE of the world's top business personalities has flown into Bahrain for this morning's official opening of his company's latest hypermarket located inside one of the kingdom's newest malls.

Yusuff Ali M. A., an Indian businessman and philanthropist, will be attending the 100,000sqft store's ribbon and cake-cutting inauguration ceremony at The Atrium Mall & Towers, close to the Saudi causeway on the edge of Janabiya and Saar.

It will be the 156th Lulu Hypermarket and the seventh on the island and the chairman and managing director of Lulu Group International, which owns the Lulu Hypermarket chain worldwide, remains as enthusiastic today as he did when his amazing retail journey began.

Speaking exclusively to *GulfWeekly* he said: "I'm always excited about welcoming yet another store to our growing network.

"It's a new beginning, a fresh opportunity to serve customers and grow a circle of valued clients. The Atrium Mall is

EXCLUSIVE
By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



designed in a unique manner and with a university adjoining it, there will be excellent footfall – and its geographic location next to the Saudi-Bahrain causeway will help us to tap a new market.

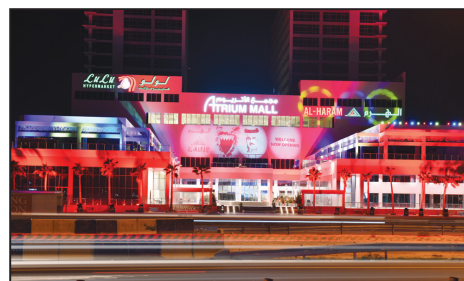
"It's also a sign of Lulu Group's unwavering confidence in Bahrain as an economic growth centre. I thank His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, HRH the Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and HRH the Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Premier Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa for the confidence they have reposed on

us. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Deputy Premier His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa."

GulfWeekly covered the opening of the first store in 2007 at Dana Mall in Sanabis. It wowed shoppers with the concept of competitively-priced food, electrical items, clothing, homeware and more. It expanded its presence to Riffa, A'ali's Ramli Mall, Hidd, Juffair Mall and Galleria Mall, Zinj before the latest venture.

"Over the 11 years that we have been in Bahrain, we have grown tremendously and I believe that we have changed the way the retail industry serves customers," said Yusuffali.

Turn to Page 4



BIG DAY: The new mall lit up at night and, right, Yusuffali



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GulfWeeklyBookClub – in association with The Bookcase

BOOK OF THE WEEK by Linda Jennings – CORDIALLY INVITED, ZOE SUGG, 9781473687776 (HODDER & STOUGHTON) BD9.800 for GulfWeekly Book Club members

● So many beautiful books are in time for the festive season and here are some for you to tuck into on the journey home during those long and tiring flights and waiting at the airport.

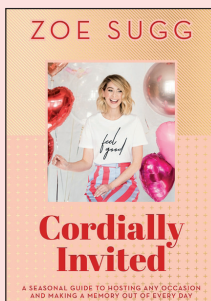
FOR as long as Zoe Sugg can remember she has loved welcoming friends and family into her home, whether it's to celebrate someone else's big day or just being with friends, there is nothing she enjoys more than putting her energy into making any occasion special.

In Zoe's eyes the best thing about getting people together is that there really is no right or wrong way: maybe you want to plan a throw-everything-at-it shindig, or simply make a special effort for one guest. Mostly it's about how people feel when they're in your company. How the smallest of gatherings can feel momentous, and the biggest of parties can feel intimate.

Over the years Zoe has shared glimpses of this side to her in her videos, with millions of viewers taking daily inspiration from her life. In this book she shares her best and never seen before ideas in print.

Divided into seasons, and woven through with Zoe's own stories and memories, this book reveals her favourite events – big or small – throughout the year and how to celebrate them in style.

From practical ideas for how to feed your guests and hacks for unexpected get-togethers to simple but impressive DIYs and those personal touches people will remember, *Cordially Invited* is Zoe's blueprint for making



an event and a memory out of each day.

Zoe Sugg the UK's most subscribed to female creator on YouTube and went to the Number One spot in the best-selling charts with this, her latest book.

IN A HOUSE OF LIES, IAN RANKIN 9781409176886 (ORION), BD9.800 for GulfWeekly Book Club members

THE iconic Ian Rankin is back with a new Detective John Rebus novel – this year's essential must-read crime novel.

In a house of lies everyone has something to hide. A missing private investigator is found, locked in a car hidden deep in the woods. Worse still – both for his family and the police – is that his body was in an area that had already been searched.

Everyone has secrets too. Detective Inspector Siobhan Clarke is part of a new inquiry, combing through the mistakes of the original case. There were always suspicions over how the investigation was handled and now, after a decade without answers, it's time for the truth.

Nobody is innocent either. Every officer involved must be questioned, and it seems everyone on the case has something to hide, and everything to lose. But there is one man who knows where the trail may lead and that

it could be the end of him: John Rebus.

MY MUM TRACY BEAKER, JACQUELINE WILSON, 9780857535221 (CORGI), BD6.400 for GulfWeekly Book Club members

JACQUELINE Wilson wrote her first novel when she was nine, and she has been writing ever since. She is now one of Britain's most beloved children's authors.

As well as winning many awards, including the Children's Book of the Year, Jacqueline is a former Children's Laureate, and in 2008 was appointed a Dame.

At last – her bestselling, ultra famous and totally brilliant Tracy Beaker is back!

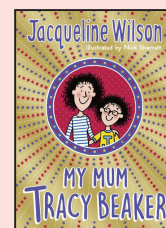
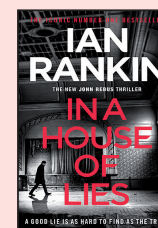
Tracy has returned, hand-in-hand with her daughter Jess, and she's ready to make her childhood dreams come true. For Jess and Tracy Beaker are the perfect team. They do everything together.

Jess thinks Tracy is the best mum ever, even when she shouts at her teachers!

Tracy has made the perfect home for Jess, leaving The Dumping Ground far behind her. Yes, their flat's a bit mouldy. It's only just big enough for two. And the Duke Estate is a bit scary. But it's their happy home. That was until Sean Godfrey, Tracy's rich boyfriend, whisks them away to his mansion, life of fast cars and celebrity stardom.

Will Jess's brilliant mum turn into a new person altogether? Will Tracy realise that her childhood dream might not be what she needs after all?

Join the **FREE** Gulf Weekly Book Club in association with The Bookcase by emailing bookclub@gulfweekly.com with your contact details.



Jacqueline Wilson is one of the most cherished authors for a reason. Her characters never needed a cape, or a special power to be a hero to generations of children; just huge imaginations, a bit of fierceness and a big heart. And, there is no hero fiercer or more iconic than Tracy.

My Mum Tracy Beaker is a fantastic new story, reuniting readers with a much-loved old friend and some old enemies and just like old times, it's packed full of illustrations from Nick Sharratt.



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From Page 1

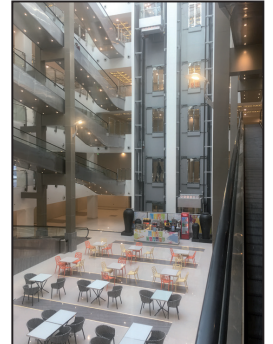
"The Lulu promise of quality, variety and cost-effectiveness truly made a mark. But as a business house, what we found attractive about Bahrain was the vision of its leaders, the ease of doing business and the transparency of the business environment. And, to add to this, the people of Bahrain – whether in government, in our team as staff or in our shops as customers – have given their regard to Lulu and I am humbled to receive this respect."

So, why has the Lulu concept proved so successful? Yusufali, from Nattika, Thrissur district, Kerala, explained: "Firstly, wherever we establish our footprint, we embrace the community. We spend time finding out what makes the community tick and we become a part of it."

"In Bahrain, for example, you will find that while our core customer service values are the same, our aisles are stocked slightly differently to meet specific area needs. Moreover, every employee from the directors to the shop floor assistant believes that the customer comes first."

"It is this attention to detail that makes shopping at Lulu a personalised experience

All set to open store at new mall



OPENING DATE: The latest Lulu being prepared on Monday for the grand inaugural event later this morning and, right, inside the mall

and not just an anonymous, impersonal one. That, I believe is our USP (unique selling point)."

The new store will keep the winning formula, he promises. "I want to thank every resident of Bahrain for their warmth and loyalty to Lulu," said Yusufali.

"I'm sure that the new store shall also live up to the much-appreciated Lulu retail experience. We look forward to serving our customers in this new hypermarket."

"I always say, if the shoppers cannot come to Lulu, Lulu will go to them! And, at Atrium Mall, we

will be straddling two major geographic locations – the Saar and Janabiyah area of Bahrain, as well as the steady stream of customers from Saudi Arabia. So this 156th store is certainly getting close to the community in a different way."

The slip-road into Saar and Janabiyah, off the Saudi Highway, has been dubbed 'Saudi Corner' by locals, as revealed exclusively in *GulfWeekly* when building work started, and the Atrium Mall & Towers is the second of four new shopping and leisure destinations to open in the vicinity.

The mall is owned by a group of real estate investors and operated by a management team.

It will eventually boast 55 retail stores and food and beverage outlets, a children's play palace and cinema complex. The university is housed in the east tower and the west tower will be residential.

Mall manager Prakash Sorari said his mobile phone 'hasn't stopped ringing' since news that Lulu was to open and he was 'so excited' he couldn't eat. It's a case of déjà vu as he was in a similar role at Galleria Mall when Lulu opened there in 2016.

As well as local residents and Saudi visitors, Lulu's first-floor store will have the added bonus of serving students and staff members attending the newly-opened campus of The British University of Bahrain, which works in partnership with the University of Salford, Manchester.

With that in mind, the store will have a make-your-own salad bar, gluten free, healthy local and world cuisine options. It also promises numerous opening 'super

deals – super savings' on its massive range of goods.

Yusufali's astute business vision and strategic mind have evolved ambitious growth plans for the group and ensured their materialisation through a team of people who share his drive and dynamism. Headquartered in Abu Dhabi, the capital city of the United Arab Emirates, the group is best known in the Gulf through its chain of popular malls and stores.

Lulu Group, with its 48,600 strong workforce from 37 different nations and operational bases extending over the UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, China, Kenya, South Africa, Uganda, Turkey, Spain, the UK, US, Philippines, Sri Lanka and India, is one of the most successful corporates of the times with a steadily ascending growth curve over the years with an annual turnover of \$7.4 billion globally.

Apart from his busy business involvement, Yusufali is equally active on the social front and is associated with various organisations. The philanthropist in him has always come to the forefront in organising huge and timely relief measures from the Gulf during recent natural calamities in India.

In recognition of his remarkable achievements in business and industry and his distinguished services in the field of social work, he was conferred the prestigious Padma Shri Award by the former President of India, Pratibha Devisingh Patil.

He has also been bestowed with a British royal accolade for his contribution towards boosting international

trade. Lord Lieutenant John Crabtree, HM The Queen's special representative, handed over the award to Yusufali during a glittering ceremony held at the Birmingham Council House. Later in the day he met Her Majesty at a royal reception for the Queen's Award recipients at Buckingham Palace.

Despite the awards and business success, Yusufali has no plans to rest on his laurels. "I'm very lucky to be living in an age when technology has shrunk the world," he said. "My home country India and my country of adoption, the UAE, is where I spend most of my time but as the Lulu Group expands around the world, I think wherever there is a Lulu or the potential for one, will be a place I shall feel at home in. As they say – the world is my oyster!"

And the worldwide web will be playing a part too. "I must also take forward my first statement and tell you that we shall shortly launch our powerful online shopping experience – and then Lulu will definitely be closer to its customers than ever before," he said.

As for bricks and mortar, Yusufali is not counting. "I'm not fixated on numbers," he said. "The Lulu Group works towards a holistic success rather than any set number of stores."

"I must say that I believe that market phenomenon such as recession or slowdown are temporary conditions and it does not stop us from forging ahead with our plans."

"We are currently working on 26 different projects in different countries in the GCC as well as in Egypt, India and the Far East. I think we shall be crossing our 200th hypermarket mark by 2020."



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Plea to help rescued dog

A kind-hearted dog lover has set up an appeal to relocate a furry friend which she found scared and abandoned on one of the kingdom's beaches.

British expat mum Ellissa Williamson was walking on Nurana Island when she came across the miserable mutt, who she quickly named Teddy after his soft coat and cuddly nature.

She is now attempting to raise £600 (BD287) on donation site *GoFundMe* to relocate him to Canada where he can find a foster home.

"I was out dog-walking on Nurana, which is quite isolated, and I found Teddy with a gash on his leg which needed urgent medical attention," explained former *GulfWeekly* columnist Ellissa who lives in Saar. "He was also hungry, dehydrated and frankly looking quite desperate."

"Some boys had been throwing heavy stones at him and he was very scared. I managed to coax him into my car and he just sat quietly, relieved to be safe. I took him straight to the vets where he was de-wormed, de-ticked and given antibiotics."

"He was definitely a pet until quite recently, I'm sure, as he loves company, is extremely affectionate, has immaculate teeth and jumped into the car without any hesitation."

In next to no time, Teddy was soon back on his feet, his leg stitched up and his strength slowly returning. However, Ellissa already has a number of pets, plus three children, and cannot take on another dog permanently.

Therefore, she decided to raise awareness of Teddy's

COMMUNITY REPORT
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

plight on a *Facebook* group named 'Rays of Hope', a project which relocates animals to North America firstly to fostering and adoption centres, and then on to permanent homes.

She explained: "Unfortunately, I cannot keep Teddy after his rehabilitation but he is so kind, and everyone comments on how handsome he is. He's a real head-turner, very sociable and loyal."

"I have tried very hard to find his original owners, local adoption or fostering help, with no luck. There are an enormous number of strays here in Bahrain and they endure terrible suffering. The rescue centres are completely full too so I was feeling so sad for Teddy."

"However, I was put in touch with Rays of Hope and I love what they've done for other animals here in Bahrain, with some 85 injured stray dogs now relocated to Canada and the US to find loving, homely environments."

"I would love for Teddy to be one of those lucky

animals who could get to run in open fresh air spaces, with his tail wagging, feeling loved and happy. We believe he's around 18 months old, so he has his whole life ahead of him."

In order for this to be achieved, £600 needs to be raised to fly Teddy to his new life. At the time of printing, the figure stood at £355.

Ellissa has already covered numerous medical costs, so all future donations will go towards his future life.

Ellissa said: "His journey and costs will all be shared and if we get enough donations, we would even be able to help more vulnerable stray or abused dogs finding new 'forever homes'."

"He's honestly the most loveable dog you could ever meet, and it astounds me that anybody could ever dream of abandoning him. He deserves his new life, one of love and happiness. Thank you so much to everyone who has donated so far and for anyone who decides to support Teddy in future."

● To donate to Teddy's cause, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/forever-home-for-teddy>



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FinTechFocus

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

Racing ahead with data goal

ONE of the most data-driven sports on the planet is gearing up to protect the interests of its teams in a bid to come out on top on the track next season.

When thousandths of a second can make the difference between success and failure, it's no wonder Formula One teams are fuelled by a desire for secrecy, partly driven by memories of historic espionage controversies.

Ironically, the latest team to strike a deal in the dizzy world of data is one of motorsport's most successful which has just suffered a season of despair, promising changes aplenty.

Williams Martini Racing has just announced a new technology partnership with Acronis, a global leader in hybrid cloud data protection and storage. As part of the agreement, Acronis will deliver innovative data protection solutions, including back-up, disaster recovery, software-defined storage, and file sync and share.

Formula One is one of the world's most technologically-advanced sports. At every Grand Prix weekend, teams capture hundreds of gigabytes of telemetry data, and produce terabytes of engineering and test data in the garages which transfer instantly to their factory bases.

Data analysis fuels innovation and technological development. The ability to interpret the data and make informed decisions is often what sets teams apart, making it the most valuable asset, one could argue, in the race towards the finish line.

Acronis says its expertise



SPELLING IT OUT: **SB, below, from left, Robert, Williams' F1 car on track and Paddy**

in data protection will assist Williams deal with the growing volumes of data without compromising the security and flexibility mandated by Formula One. Through its partnership with Acronis, Williams will be able to access a full set of

innovative data protection solutions.

"Technical innovation is at the heart of everything we do at Williams, and with that comes a crucial need to protect our data," said Claire Williams, deputy team principal, Williams

Martini Racing.

"Acronis will protect Williams' on-premise and cloud service data with backup, disaster recovery, and secure file sync and share solutions. We are delighted to be partnering with Acronis whose values mirror our

own to push technology and innovation. We look forward to them helping to deliver practical solutions throughout the coming season to support our racing efforts."

At the recent Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, *GulfWeekly* met up with Clare and Serguei

Belousov. Serguei, known to his buddies as SB, is a charismatic Russian-born multi-millionaire boffin, founder and CEO of Acronis, who has lived most of his life in Singapore where he set up the company in 2003. It was incorporated in Switzerland in 2008 and now boasts more than 1,000 employees in 18 countries.

To mark its 15th anniversary, the software company expanded its 'commitment to knowledge' by establishing a non-profit foundation that supports initiatives designed to foster education in order to gain and protect knowledge which includes building schools and helping recently-released prison inmates increase their chances of employability. "All evils are caused by insufficient knowledge," the 46-year-old father-of-seven said.

And when you've got it, you've got to keep it safe. "As the world becomes more digital, cyber protection will become a basic human need," he added. "In sport, privacy is all important as teams compete with each other and there is a need to ensure that the information they have does not leak out. Security is extremely important."

Speaking from a location in the Gulf region enriched by the discovery of oil, Serguei described 'data as the new oil'.

British motor racing engineer Paddy Lowe, previously executive director of the invincible Mercedes F1 team, is currently the chief technical officer at Williams Martini Racing.

After what has been an 'annus horribilis' for the team, 2019 could see a change in fortunes with the fairy-tale F1 comeback of



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Pole Robert Kubica, whose right arm was seriously injured in a 2011 rally crash, joining young British Formula Two champion George Russell in the driver line-up.

On the technical side a problematic aerodynamic stall at the diffuser will have been resolved and a season full of secret data will help to determine a fresh approach.

"We're very excited that we have two new drivers," Paddy said. "A combination of a talented rookie and a legend of the past in Formula One with all the experience he brings.

"On top of that we have a new car and a new set of aerodynamic rules which give us a great opportunity. We want to be an independent team that can win the championship and we are starting now to build the foundations to do just that.

"It will be a long road, it's a very challenging situation in Formula One, both technically and commercially – how we create a better balance in the sport between the manufacturers' teams and the independents. All of these battles have to be won. We are determined to do much better next year."

Acronis' aims to play its part too. John Zanni, the company's president added: "Speed, technology, innovation, and a never-give-up attitude are at the heart of our DNA and this is what unites us with Williams."

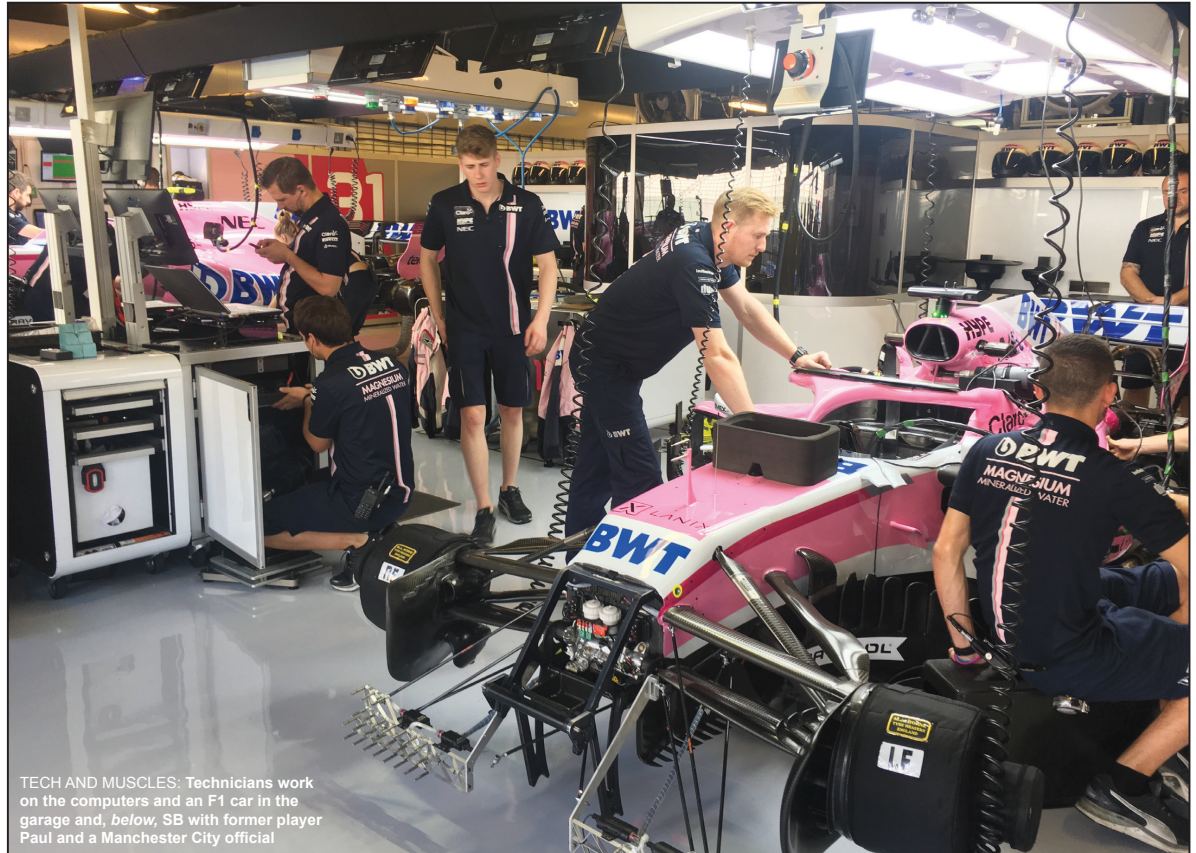
And, it's not the first connection with F1. Acronis also has an official data protection technology partnership with the Racing Point Force India team who next season will be known as Racing Point F1.

The company already provides backup, disaster recovery, software-defined storage, file sync and share, and artificial intelligence-based ransomware protection to the team's factory, wind tunnel and trackside IT infrastructure.

As part of the agreement, the Mission Control Room at the team's UK factory in Silverstone, was named 'Acronis Mission Control Centre', signifying the value of data and importance of data-protection in the sport.

As soon as the cars hit the track, the control centre starts receiving a live stream of data, allowing engineers and race strategists to run simulations and feed information back to the drivers.

The control centre also maintains real-time contact with the engineers at the pit wall, providing help and extra information during the



TECH AND MUSCLES: Technicians work on the computers and an F1 car in the garage and, below, SB with former player Paul and a Manchester City official

races and between sessions.

And it's not only motorsport. Acronis has formed a technology partnership with the Premier League North London giants Arsenal to provide data protection to the club's growing IT infrastructure.

Developing a winning game plan means recording and analysing the number of passes within certain areas of the pitch, touches in the opponent's box, goals scored off set pieces, and more – all of which are factors that are meticulously studied before, during and after every match.

Acronis also provides secure storage of every first-team and academy training session recorded at the club's training ground – which amounts to 8TB of data a year, the equivalent of 875 matches.

During the weekend in Abu Dhabi the company also welcomed Manchester City on board with former star Paul Dickov coming along to the party with the Premier

League trophy. As part of the partnership, Acronis will help the Premier League champions to enhance and develop its data backup and storage capabilities.

Technology, data in particular, is increasingly important to teams in this ever-developing digital age. So much so, that during the days leading up to important matches, data is available through iPads in the City locker room so that players can review historical data with their coaches and make last-minute adjustments to the playbook.

It is also vital for the team to analyse data in their post-match analysis.

As SB said, data is the new black gold and trophy-winning and money-spinning success for all teams it appears will be determined digitally.

In top-flight sports, team and competitor analysis is growing more important than ever to gain an upper hand over the opposition.





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Festive Guide

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

Today (December 5)

Every Wednesday is 'Wings and Wisdom' night at Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House inside Best Western Plus - The Olive Hotel. It's a quiz night with an added bonus of BD10 for 'all-you-can-eat' chicken wings. Call 17360063 for details.

Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain hosts a stylish yet rustic BBQ Experience on the terrace of Baharat Restaurant from 7pm-11pm, showcasing succulent ribs and Wagyu prime rib steak. There is also live music from Deux Sons. The BBQ buffet is BD18net including soft drinks and water, or BD24 net including selected beverages. Call 17171000 for details.

The Sheraton Hotel Bahrain hosts an evening of live music at An Nada Lounge by Filipino band Strings & Harmony every day except Saturday. This takes place from 8.30pm-12.30am during weekdays and from 8.30pm-1.30am during weekends. Call 17533533 for details.

Enjoy a selection of delicious cakes crafted by skilled culinary hands all day at Furn Bakery, located in the Westin City Centre Bahrain. Call 17171441 for details.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's famous steak night starts from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant priced BD18net, with the 1kg steak-eating challenge too. For details, contact 17531122.

Spend time with friends and family in an Afternoon Tea experience at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Lobby Lounge and Ritz Gourmet Lounge. Indulge in new items on the menu and enjoy the piano entertainment on Fridays and Saturdays. Afternoon Tea is served from 3pm to 5pm priced BD21++ per set. For details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Treat your special someone to a romantic dinner by the sea at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain. This is staged daily at the sea breeze area and private island from sunset to 10pm. Priced BD350 per couple at the sea breeze area and BD500 per couple at the private island. For details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's spa provides a refreshing wellness package, complete with a full-body massage followed by Vitamin-C scrub to help protect your skin. Priced BD90 for 90 minutes. This package is available until Sunday. For details, contact 17586808



or e-mail rc.bahrz.spa@ritzcarlton.com

Celebrate your birthday at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Gourmet Lounge where celebratory Afternoon Tea, lunch, dinner menus and an inclusive birthday cake are provided. The special menu is available for a minimum-of-two and maximum of 10 guests. This offer is ongoing until Sunday. For details and reservations, contact 17586499.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's poolside Italian restaurant, Vento, is offering a wide selection of pizzas from wood-fired ovens and artisan pastas. Available on weekdays from 11.30am to 11pm, and weekends from 11.30am to 12pm. For reservations, contact 17115500.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is offering family spa-bonding sessions. Its 'Relaxed Us' offer aids muscle tension, releases stress and promotes wellbeing, 45 minutes for BD80. The 'Beautiful Us' offer is designed to cleanse, gently exfoliate and hydrate skin with a 100 per cent chemical-free product range from Australia and the UK, 45 minutes for BD85. The 'Glowing Us' offer is a special indulgent full-body treatment, 45 minutes for BD85. For reservations, contact 17115000.



Reef Resort's lobby café Chocolaterie is offering an array of signature teas, coffees, pastries, and delectable hand-made chocolates. The ideal

venue for morning coffee or afternoon tea. Every day from 4pm-6pm. Net price of BD4. For details, call 13110110.

Reef Resort's Tokyo Reef restaurant features a specially-created set menu that is offered on weekdays (Saturday-Wednesday, closed on Mondays) and guests can watch as the chef prepares sushi and sashimi before their eyes. The promotion is BD15++ per person. For details, call 13110110.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's band the Eye Candies will entertain every evening, except Saturday, at Harvesters. The outlet is also dishing up a new Camel Burger and staging a Beast Burger Challenge which, if finished in the stipulated time, offers the meal for free, a T-shirt and wall of fame celebrity status. It runs daily from 11am to 9pm and is priced BD8.410. For details, contact 17531122.

Tomorrow (December 6)

Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House hosts Thursday Night Lights from 7pm-9pm. This event showcases local and international musicians in Bahrain. Don't miss American country legend Rusty Golden performing live every Thursday through to Sunday. Call 17360063 for details.

There will be a Seafood Night at Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands, every Thursday from 7pm-11pm. BD12++ for adults, BD6++ for children aged six to 12, children below six dine for free. For details, contact 16000099 or email dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com



Elite Resort & Spa hosts a sea & grill buffet dinner every Thursday and Friday from 7pm to 11pm at Al Naseem & La Brasserie priced BD12++ per person. For details, contact 17313333.

Friday (December 7)

Check out The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's new Pearl of Arabia-themed night from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too. A Friday date has been added to the regular Saturday session by public demand. For details, contact 17531122.

● See Eating Out Page 11



Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House presents its 'Small Town Throw Down' brunch – the only five-hour brunch in the kingdom – from 11am-4pm every Friday. It features a buffet and specific table orders. There's also karaoke. Call 17360063 for details.

Bahrain's Sweetest Brunch takes place every Friday from 12.30pm-3.30pm at Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain's Baharat restaurant. Enjoy the award-winning sweet and savoury experience for BD26net including soft drinks and water, or BD38net including selected beverages. Live music from duo Deux Sons accompanies the fare. Book for 10 people or more and receive 20 per cent discount. Call 17171144.

Enjoy a lavish dining experience at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's restaurants by indulging in a culinary extravaganza at La Med, Italian classics at Primavera, exotic Indian fares at Nirvana and prime steaks and seafood at Plums. This will be held today from 12.30pm to 3.30pm, priced BD35 per person with soft drinks and BD39 per person with selected beverages. For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

At the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa's China Garden Restaurant, Chef Ding and his culinary brigade will be offering pan-seared Chinese delicacies. For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfhotehbahrain.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's La Mosaïque Restaurant is hosting an International Theme Night Buffet every Friday, from 7pm onwards, priced BD13net. For details, contact 17531122.

The Wyndham Garden Manama in Juffair is offering a Friday brunch at Café Mosaic from 12.30pm to 4pm, where food and soft drinks are priced BD12++ while food and selected beverages are priced BD22++.

A buffet is served every Friday from 12.30pm-4pm at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's La Med Restaurant, combined with drinks of your choice. Soft

drinks priced BD30++, special beverages priced BD35++.

For details, contact 17586499.

Eat and party at the Reef Resort's Pool Delight with an unlimited seafood BBQ buffet accompanied by the chill out music from the Beat's Zone band. Every Friday from 7pm. For details, call 13110110.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is hosting Friday Brunch at CUT by Wolfgang Puck Steakhouse from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. Priced BD26++ per person including soft beverages, BD26++ per person including extensive beverage package for ladies, and BD36++ per person including extensive beverage package.



Also at the hotel's CUT by Wolfgang Puck Steakhouse, a Bistro-inspired lunch is being hosted every day from 12pm to 3pm. For details and reservations, contact 17115044.



Elite Crystal Hotel has a Friday Pool Party brunch at Waikiki from 1pm-8pm with entertainment from DJ Santi, DJ Smiley and DJ Goose. It's free entrance for women with one welcome drink, BD10net for men with one complementary beverage and BD25net inclusive of unlimited selected beverages and grills. For details, contact 66666360 or 17360360.

Saturday (December 8)

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Pearl of Arabia-themed night takes place from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too. For details, contact 17531122.

Spice up your weekly brunch with a culinary journey around Mexico at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Cantina Kahlo Restaurant. This will be held today from noon to 4pm. Priced BD35 per person with selected beverages and BD20 per person with soft beverages. For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

A Kid's Special Movie Time takes place at Ramee Grand Hotel & Spa, Seef's second floor Banquet Hall every Saturday between 3pm to 5pm. Entry costs BD2, snacks included. For more details, contact 36693693 or 36479898.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Waves Seafood Restaurant is hosting a three-course business lunch, from Saturday-Thursday, 12pm to 4pm. The lunch is priced BD8net. For details, contact 17531122.

Experience spa treatments at the Crowne Plaza Bahrain's bFit Health Club. It is providing facials, body scrubs and combined packages to help guests relax and rejuvenate, while massage therapy focuses on alleviating stress and encouraging well-being. For more details and bookings, contact 17525812.

The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa is offering 'Art of Cooking' classes for those with busy lifestyles who have a passion for food. Classes feature demonstrations, from the building blocks of culinary practice to mouth-watering menus, led by professional chefs. Priced BD18net, including lunch. Seats are limited, book now. For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfhotehbahrain.com

Families can enjoy a buffet meal at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's La Med Restaurant every Saturday from noon to 3.30pm. Soft drinks are priced BD15++.

For details, contact 17586499.



Enjoy an authentic Italian buffet at Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands every Saturday, from 7pm-11pm. BD10net for adults, BD5net for children aged six to 12, children below six dine for free.

For details, contact 16000099 or email at dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com

Soak up the stunning views from the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's 50th floor and feast on Asian delights like Korean Fried Chicken Bao Buns, Wok Fried Shrimp

Dumplings and Brisket Wontons at the re Asian Cuisine by Wolfgang Puck's Saturday Brunch. The price is BD19++ and BD37++ with selected beverages.
For reservations, contact 17115046.

The Bahrain Bay Kitchen at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is staging a Saturday Brunch from 12.30pm-3.30pm offering a wide selection of Arabic favourites such as Lamb Ouzi and cold mezzeh, priced BD16++ including soft beverages.
For details, contact 17115000.

Sunday (December 9)

Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands is hosting a Ladies Breakfast for the price of BD4net, every Sunday until Thursday from 7am-11am.

For details, contact 16000099 or email dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain holds an Italian Night at La Mosaicque Restaurant from 7pm featuring pasta, pizza and more priced BD13net for the food only and there is a separate beverage package.
For details, contact 17531122.

Monday (December 10)

Check out The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's new One Night in Bangkok-themed night from 7pm at La Mosaicque Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too.
For details, contact 17531122.

Bahrain's award-winning Indian restaurant, Rasoi by Vineet, at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa,

is offering a new set menu by Michelin-starred Chef Vineet Bhatia, for the price of BD22++.

For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfothelbahrain.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Harvesters Back to School-themed party starts at 9pm. Entry is free.
For details, contact 17531122.

Tuesday (December 11)

Every Tuesday, Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House inside Best Western Plus - The Olive Hotel hosts an authentic Tex-Mex cuisine with



Latin entertainment from 5pm-midnight. Each week there are various food and beverage specials to keep things fresh.
Call 17360063 for more details.

Ladies Night at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa every Tuesday, where women receive a 50 per cent discount for the hotel's lounges, spas and restaurants, excluding Raosi by Vineet.
For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfothelbahrain.com

The Wyndham Garden Manama in Juffair is hosting an American Night at its Player's Lounge with duo, Notre Viú on stage. Enjoy special offers on selected beverages and Angus steaks every Tuesday from noon to 2am.
For details, contact

66316666 or email dining@wyndhamgardenmanama.com

At the hotel's Via Brasil Restaurant, the Cuban duo, First Class, Martha and Claudia, will perform live. Indulge in a Brazilian-style all-you-can-eat BBQ restaurant, where there is a wide selection of meats, salads, hot appetisers, side dishes and drinks selection to complement the meals. Located on the rooftop of the hotel, the restaurant provides scenic views overlooking the Bahrain skyline, open from 7pm-2am.



For details, contact 66316666.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain has a Catch of The Day Seafood Night starting at 7pm and priced BD18net (food only with beverage package available) at La Mosaicque restaurant.
For details, contact 17531122.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's bFit Health Club is offering swimming classes every Monday and Wednesday. Classes for children aged eight to 11 are from 4pm-4.45pm, classes for children aged five to seven are from 5pm-5.45pm, and adult classes are from 6pm-6.45pm. The classes are priced BD40 per month for bFit Crowne Plaza Bahrain members, and BD50 per month (eight sessions) for non-members.
For bookings, contact 17531122.

Fresh out of the oven

THE Bread Story, a restaurant and gourmet bakery, will be opening its doors next Wednesday in Galleria Mall, the popular shopping and dining destination in Zinj.

It will feature a 'creative bread-influenced menu' with specialty meats and vegetables aromatised with exotic spices, an array of hot and cold Levantine appetisers, salads, plus a plethora of pastry products and dough delights.

Specialty freshly-baked breads will include a selection of perfect pitas – filled, stuffed, topped and blended in savoury and sweet combinations – and Saj, an unleavened flatbread particularly popular throughout the countries of the Levant. Open from breakfast, lunch

and dinner, it will offer both traditional and chic Arabic fare. Arabian food and delicacies such as Fatteh, Kibbeh bi Laban, Sheesh Tawook and Lamb and Pistachio Kebab will feature on the menu.

The Bread Story, opened in the kingdom by Cuisine Crafts, will also offer an extensive takeaway and delivery service to cater for home and office orders.

Weddings and other special occasions, alongside corporate events, will be covered inside the 90-seat venue with an outside catering team available too.

For more details, visit Thebreadstorybahrain on Facebook and Instagram or call 17333505.

CINEMA CLUB JUFFAIR (TODAY)



Film: *When Pigs Have Wings*

Director: Sylvain Estibal

Duration: 1 hr 38 mins

Cast: Sasson Gabai, Baya Belal, Myriam Tekaia, Gassan Abbas

Plot: Jafaar, a Palestinian fisherman, seems to be the unluckiest man in Gaza. Swallowed up by debt and watching his neighbours reel in huge catches of fish whilst his net always turns up empty, he is desperate for a change of fortune. One day his prayers are finally answered, but Jafaar ends up with more than he bargained for when he looks into his net to find not fish, but a giant pot-bellied pig! With possession of the animal banned by both government and religion, Jafaar embarks on a hilarious quest to try and rid himself of the animal whilst keeping its existence hidden from the authorities, but not without trying to make some money first.

For details, call Huda Tabbara on 39682323.

FESTIVE FARE

THE Elite Hospitality Group's Elite Grande Hotel will be staging its Christmas Tree Lighting tomorrow from 6.30pm.

THE Sheraton Bahrain Hotel is offering a 'Traditional Festive Turkey To Go', featuring a full traditional turkey meal freshly prepared by the hotel's chefs. Trimmings include Brussel

sprout sage butter, glazed carrots, roast potatoes, parsnips and more. The price is BD65++ for seven-to-eight kilograms.

Order online at www.sheratonbahrain.com

The hotel will also be a variety of dining offers on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day:

- Christmas Eve Dinner at Al Safir Restaurant,

from 7.30pm-11.30pm. BD13.900++ or BD21.900++ inclusive of selected beverages. 50 per cent discount for children aged four to 11, and free for children aged three and under.

- Christmas Eve Dinner at Soie Chinese Restaurant, from 7pm-11.30pm. BD14.900++ or BD24.900++ inclusive of selected

beverages.

- Christmas Day Lunch with children's party, from 12.30pm-4pm. BD17.900++ or BD25.900++ inclusive of selected beverages. 50 per cent discount for children aged between four to 11 and free for those aged three and under.

- Christmas Day Dinner at Al Safir Restaurant, from 7.30pm-11.30pm. BD12.900++.

- Christmas Day Dinner at Soie Chinese Restaurant, from 7pm-11.30pm. BD14.900++ or BD24.900++ inclusive of selected beverages.

For more details, call 17533533.

THE Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain, is hosting a variety of events to celebrate the Christmas period.

Each day, through the month of December, guests can enjoy a Jolly Teatime Menu at the signature Lobby Lounge or Ritz Gourmet Lounge featuring holiday pastry traditions like mincied pies, stollen and panettone, along with a special menu of Christmas teas. Gourmet takeaways are also available at the Ritz Gourmet Lounge



for a selection of hampers and desserts perfect to accompany holiday gatherings.

Travelling families can enjoy the annual Ritz Kids Winter Camp, which will run from December 17 to January 7, with playful adventures and festive activities, while mums and dads indulge in '12 Days of Spa,' running December 14-26, featuring a range of daily complementary treatments and featured products.

On December 25, the

resort's Grand Christmas Brunch will feature a lavish buffet spread with live stations, a seafood and prime rib corner and a room full of desserts. The grand finale of the season ends with a New Year's Eve countdown to 2019 where the 9,000 square-foot Al Noor Ballroom lights up with the ultimate pizzazz for a night of Broadway-style entertainment.

For more details and reservations, call 17580000. **More listings on Page 10**



FESTIVE FARE

THE Gulf Hotel Convention & Spa will host its Christmas tree lighting ceremony tomorrow at 6pm in the lobby. Father Christmas and the Gulf Hotel carol singing group will be entertaining families.

Al Waha will host a lavish Christmas Eve Dinner Buffet, which will include the season's special roasted turkey and a variety of other dishes. The price is BD16++ per person (excluding beverages) and there is a 50 per cent discount for children aged six-to-12.

There will also be Christmas Eve exclusive set menus, with a traditional Italian offering at La Pergola by Perbellini and an Asian twist at Fusions. Both are BD20 inclusive of one glass of a sparkling beverage.

La Pergola by Perbellini is all set to wow you this Christmas with a traditional Italian Menu.

The Gulf Convention Centre is hosting a Christmas Day Grand Brunch, featuring a live band, Father Christmas and an exclusive play area with activities and mascots for children. The price is BD32 net, inclusive of selected beverages. There is a 50 per cent discount for children aged six-to-12.

Al Waha is also hosting its own Christmas Day dinner buffet which will include roast turkey, trimmings and a delectable festive buffet. The price is BD16++ excluding beverages. There is a 50 per cent discount for children aged six-to-12.

For more details, call 17713000.

THE Westin & Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain are offering a #Turkeyatyourdoorstep promotion where people can order a traditional turkey cooked by the hotels' chefs. The turkey, priced BD65 net, will serve up to 10 and comes with condiments such as roasted root vegetables, mashed potatoes, veal sausage and more. Chestnut and sage stuffing is served on the side, as well as cranberry jus and gravy.

There is free home delivery in Bahrain until December 24



from noon to midnight.

Sumptuous handpicked selections like Yule logs, house made Christmas cookie baggies, ginger bread and Christmas inspired pastries are available at Furn Bakery located at The Westin City Centre Bahrain and Longitude 50 at Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain from Saturday until December 26.

Until December 25, Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain is offering a daily lunch buffet at Baharat Restaurant for BD12++ per person available. It is available from 12.30pm-3pm.

A Christmas Eve Dinner will take place, costing BD26 net including soft drinks and water or BD38 net including selected free flow beverages from 6.30pm-11pm.

On Christmas Day, brunch will be BD26 net including soft drinks and water or BD38 net including selected free flow beverages from 12.30pm-4pm.

Enrol your children for gingerbread house decorating class every Saturday from 5pm-7pm at Furn Bakery for BD14++ per child that includes a gingerbread house.

You can opt for a ginger

house bread kit as well which you can decorate at home for ND12++ per kit.

For more details, call 17171144.

ENJOY a choir and sing along with Christmas carols in front of a giant Ginger Bread House at the Crowne Plaza Bahrain as it lights up its Christmas tree in the lobby tomorrow at 7pm. Enjoy Christmas beverages and cookies while elves amuse the kids with their antics and a surprise visit from Father Christmas with special treats.

A Christmas Eve dinner at Waves Seafood Restaurant will feature oceanic treasures displayed market-style and cooked to your liking. The cost is BD38 net with unlimited selective beverages. Children under five years of age eat free whilst those aged five-to-10 are priced at BD16 net.

A special Christmas Brunch for the family will take place on Christmas Day, featuring a live BBQ and cooking stations. The cost is BD33 net with unlimited selective beverages. Children under five years of age eat free whilst those aged five-to-10 are priced at BD12 net.

For more details, call 17531122.

THE Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is offering a 'Turkey to Go' feast for Christmas. It's available for home delivery or pick up until December 31. A roast turkey with chestnut stuffing, turkey sauce, cranberry chutney, mash potato, Brussels sprouts and carrots is priced at BD80++ for eight people. People can also opt for the roast beef meal that comes with mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables and rosemary sauce starting from BD22++ per kg.

For orders contact 17115500.

Festive Afternoon Tea is being held at Bay View Lounge with tasty goodies from noon- 9pm. It is priced at BD12++ or BD22++ for two people.

There will be a four-course dinner on December 24 and 25 at CUT by Wolfgang Puck, featuring Wolfgang Puck's signature soup, handmade pasta, roasted meats and fish, plus seasonal desserts. Christmas dinner will be served from 7pm-11pm, and is priced at BD45++.

The restaurant will also be serving a Christmas Day Brunch featuring traditional festive dishes such as mincemeat pies, Yorkshire pudding and croquettes from noon to 3.30pm. Priced at BD26++ with soft beverages, and BD36++ with alcoholic beverages.

Bahrain Bay Kitchen is serving an elegant Christmas Eve Dinner and Christmas Day Musical Brunch buffet of culinary delights. The buffet includes roasted turkey, New Zealand lamb leg confit, orange-glazed barbery duck, slow roasted Australia wagyu beef rump, Christmas fruitcake, Christmas pudding with vanilla sauce, vanilla and chocolate yule log, linzer torte, stollen and homemade panettone.

It will be served from 7pm-midnight on Christmas Eve and from 1pm-4.30pm

on Christmas Day and is priced at BD37++ with soft beverages, BD47++ with full beverage package, and BD18.500 for children aged between five and 12.

The Christmas for the Little Ones programme continues throughout the festive season, featuring an array of themed activities from candy hunts on the outdoor lawn to balloon art, face painting, making festive accessories, writing Letters to Santa, or cookie decorating with gingerbread house building.

In addition, the hotel's youngest visitors can look forward to meeting Father Christmas and receiving their special present during brunch at Bahrain Bay Kitchen.

The programme runs daily for children aged four to 12 from 9am-6pm on weekdays and from 9am-8.30pm on weekends. On New Year's Eve, it will be open from 9am-12.30am.

For details and reservations, call 17115044.

THE Jumeirah Royal Saray Bahrain will host its Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony tonight from 6pm. Children will perform Christmas carols while Santa Claus and his elves make a special appearance with goodies for the little ones.

The Palm Lounge is hosting a Christmas Eve Buffet Dinner with a variety of Arabian and international cuisines, live stations and a selected beverage selection. There will be a live band and Santa Claus will make an appearance. It will take place from 7pm-10.30pm and the price is BD30++ inclusive of soft drinks and BD 40++ inclusive of selected beverages.

On Christmas Day, there will be a Festive Brunch on the outdoor terrace, featuring a live band and fun activities. It will take place from 1pm-5pm and the price is BD30++ inclusive of soft drinks and BD 40++ inclusive of selected beverages.



Eating Out

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

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ONE of the kingdom's most popular dining destinations is dishing up a delightful new buffet of Arabic cuisine with a live cooking station and a touch of fusion fare to tantalise the taste-buds.

The Pearl of Arabia night was launched on a Saturday evening and has proved so popular it is now being run on a Friday night too at The Crownne Plaza Bahrain's La Mosaïque.

French Executive Chef David Miras, one of my favourite culinary masters on the island, often comes up with unique twists when it comes to his international options available at this spacious and elegant all-day dining restaurant.

This time he and his kitchen wizards have surpassed themselves with a mouthwatering prize series of pizza options.

The choices include Shish Taouk Pizza, Lamb Kofta Pizza, Seafood Pizza and Halloumi Pizza and each succulent slice is a heavenly combination of one of Italy's most famous inventions with a unique Arabic twist.

Bahraini Sous Chef Abdul Nabi was manning the live grill last Saturday and recommended the Lamb Chops and Lamb Kofta, marvellously marinated with his secret recipe of spices and delivered to the table.

The chops were the finest examples of one of my favourite meats I've ever tasted. Marveled at a medium majesty they were thick and succulent and were well worth the visit alone.

I accompanied the dish

Pizza the Arabic action!



TASTY TREATS: The pizza selection, juicy chops and Chef Abdul and, below, more dishes, the restaurant and supervisor Kalpesh

GOURMET REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



an amazing mix including Makdous, Labneh, Shanklish, Moutabel, Vine Leaves, Hummus and there was even a 'create your own' Fattoush, a Syrian or Lebanese salad made from toasted or fried pieces of traditional khubz bread, combined with mixed greens and other vegetables, such as radishes and tomatoes.

Other Arabic delicacies

with a selection of salad items, crisp and sharp and one of the reasons I often recommend this restaurant to friends and acquaintances. There's never anything limp about La Mosaïque.

The Pearl of Arabia provides

on the mixed grill counter included a delightful Doori fish fillet and solo Shish Taouk, ideal for those on the Keto Diet, including the good lady wife Kathryn, who want to avoid the dough in the pizza!

The Shawarma rotisserie was as popular as ever but the big rush on the night was for everyone's favourite,

the slowly-cooked Lamb Ouzi offering melt-in-your mouth meat pieces within a delicately-spiced bed of rice.

The soups being served were Lentil and my choice, a warming Cream Broccoli.

Leave room for a helping of Pasta Arabiata, a tasty take and clever misspelling of 'arrabbiata' which literally means 'angry' in Italian;

the name of the sauce refers to the usual spiciness of the chili peppers and Chef David's version is a little kinder taking into account local preferences.

Grilled Lebanese Chicken, Lamb Fasolia, Fish Harra and Chicken Salona were further choices in the buffet line-up, explained with impressive knowledge by delightful supervisor Kalpesh.

Arabic juices such as Jalab were ready to be poured alongside fresh mango and pineapple and for those with a sweet tooth, the dessert display featured Umm Ali, of course, Baklava, Mamool, Mahalabia, Basbousa and Jalebi. There was a selection of fresh fruit and cakes too.

Pearl of Arabia makes for a marvellous night out at a very favourable price of just BD13net. There is also a beverage package available.

Call 17531122 to book a table and for more information.

● Check out Stan's interview with Chef Abdul and Kalpesh by placing your smart phone over the QR Code.



CITY Centre Bahrain plans to celebrate its 10th anniversary in the way it does best ... with a fun-filled packed schedule of family events and rewards for shoppers to mark the milestone.

The popular mall is part of the Majid Al Futtaim retail empire which has expanded across the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Shoppers in Bahrain can join in on a whole host of celebratory activities throughout the months of December and January, kicking off with a chance to win a Lexus LX570s - Sports Line 2019.

Duaij Al Rumaihi, senior mall manager at City Centre Bahrain, said: "We're delighted to celebrate City Centre Bahrain's 10th anniversary with our customers and reward shoppers with incredible winning opportunities."

"Over the past decade we have hosted many great moments that have contributed towards the mall's position as the leading shopping, entertainment and lifestyle destination in the kingdom."

"It's an exciting time for City Centre Bahrain and we look forward to marking the milestone with unique experiences, world-class family events and compelling winning opportunities."

It's a formula that has worked extremely well for one of the kingdom's major tourism draws, attracting locals and expat residents as well as the many families who flock to the mall to shop, catch a movie, enjoy the children's amusement park arena, swim in the indoor waterpark or stay at its two five star hotels, The Westin City Centre Bahrain and Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain.

As part of the mall's 10th anniversary celebrations, visitors are invited on a unique celebratory and festive winter journey as City Centre Bahrain's Central Galleria is transformed into a stunning winter display and train station, taking customers on a journey filled with instant rewards and entertainment.

The attraction has been inspired by *Polar Express*, the iconic animated festive adventure movie based on the beloved children's book by Chris Van Allsburg. When a doubting young boy takes an extraordinary train ride to the North Pole, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery that shows him that the wonder of life never fades for those who believe. The Academy Awards-nominated film was directed by Robert Zemeckis.

Throughout the two-month long celebrations, which take in the National Day celebrations, Christmas and New Year festivities, City Centre Bahrain is offering shoppers the chance to win presents and prizes.

Shoppers who redeem receipts for BD30 have the chance to

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RETAIL EXCLUSIVE
By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



enter a draw and win the luxury car, whilst those redeeming receipts for BD50, will receive a Golden Ticket, which entitles them to an instant collectible gift and grants them access to the mall's multiple train stations, where customers can view the latest in winter trends, be transported on a 4D Journey to the North Pole, collect instant prizes and more.

Visitors are also invited to tap along with the 'Glitz & Glam' dance troupe, performing for the first time in Bahrain from January 10-12, in classical top hat and tails.

Since opening its doors in September 2008, City Centre Bahrain has maintained its position as the largest shopping, leisure and entertainment destination in the kingdom and leading the charge for the past seven years with a softly-spoken elegance and a steely resolve has been Bahraini Duaij.

He's now facing ever-increasing competition with rivals not only opening just up the highway but springing up, or planning to, from top to bottom in the kingdom ... and let's throw in the added challenge of online shopping to the mix.

Duaij, 46, arrived with an impressive pedigree having learned his trade at Seef Mall, working his way up from a position of assistant marketing manager in 1999 to the heady heights of GM of Seef Properties, before tackling the MODA Mall project at the World Trade Centre from construction, from what was 'a big hole in the ground', to promoting the entire project and overseeing the original shopping centre and its high-brow new edition.

"It has been a very fulfilling journey personally and it continues to excite and challenge me every single day," he told *GulfWeekly*. "I had seen a lot, done a lot, but this was the largest retail shopping centre development in the kingdom, so naturally I aspired to be a part of it."

He applied, jumped through 'all the hoops' and interviews to secure the position, and here he is seven years on, leading a 'talented team' for the decade of delight celebrations with a vision to ensure City Centre Bahrain remains well placed to tackle the challenges of the coming decade ahead.

Married to Heba Habib, they have two children, Khalifa, 17, and Rayana, 14. He proudly displays in his office an honorary membership certificate

he received for many years of 'outstanding membership' with the Middle East Council of Shopping Centres.

The key appears to be his ability to listen carefully to customers and respond swiftly to feedback, throw in an uncanny ability to read and anticipate upcoming trends, surround yourself with a highly-motivated and talented team and maintain the support of a progressive parent company.

"There have been a lot of achievements to date because Majid Al Futtaim, as a company, has a philosophy of continuous improvement, so we always improve on the assets that we operate and manage. City Centre Bahrain is considered one of the Big Five in the portfolio so it's always given the required attention."

"It's the largest in the country and it has been the largest since it opened 10 years ago, so although the competition has grown and intensified, in terms of scale, we're still the most favoured retail destination on the island with a footfall averaging 14 million a year now."

He appreciates much of the success is down to the constant influx of Saudi Arabian visitors. "They are most welcome. We cannot do this without them and we can't thank them enough," he said. "They are a very integral part. The whole idea of the development was to help serve tourists to Bahrain - by having two five star hotels with 460 rooms in total, having the only Middle East indoor water park - Wahoo! Waterpark - that launched with the mall and the largest 20-screen VOX | Cineco cinema, the largest hypermarket, Carrefour, in terms of floor space ... the list goes on and on."

"This development was built with the intention of being here for a long time and to serve as many locals and tourists as possible. "In my personal opinion, and speaking as a Bahraini, I think this has been one of the best and most successful examples of foreign investment in Bahrain. An Emarati company that has come in and invested millions of dinars here and it's worked for them and it's worked for the island, so it's a win, win situation - you can't get better than that."

"So it's a great investment and I'm personally very proud to be managing such a large operation. In fact, it humbles me every day when I think about it and, at the same time, it challenges me. "In total, if you take into consideration the number of retailers, we have in excess of 2,000 people working here and



UP FOR THE CHALLENGE: The *Polar Express*-inspired attractions at City Centre Bahrain and, right, fl

a good percentage are Bahraini as well.

"You cannot run an operation as big as this without a few challenges and the challenges come every day. One of the things I like about it is that you might think you're coming in for a routine day, check your emails and attend a few meetings ... instead all sorts of things happen, you can't imagine."

The mall is home to a mix of leisure and retail destinations with more than 340 outlets for fashion, dining, health and wellness and entertainment for the whole family to enjoy.

And you'd be surprised who might pop in.

Only last week American socialite and businesswoman Paris Hilton unveiled her latest perfume Platinum Rush, as highlighted in *GulfWeekly*, to hordes of admirers gathered around Al Hawaj's store.



When Yemeni Balgees Fathi stepped out on stage to inaugurate a fashion weekend 10,000 devoted fans flocked to the mall to see her perform.

"We've had a lot of visits from heads of state, celebrities, and well known socialites," said Duaij, coolly dropping in the conversation the name of Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal bin Abdulaziz al Saud, the billionaire Saudi businessman, investor, philanthropist and member of the Saudi royal family, as an example.

But Duaij admits to having occasional flustered moments too. One turned out to be amongst his 'most memorable' when HRH Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa arrived one February morning ... unannounced.

"As I was saying, you come to the office, have a coffee, open your email and then you get

a call: 'The Prime Minister's downstairs, you'd better come down NOW!'" recalls Duaij.

"I thought, that's not funny, I've just come in - it's too early for jokes like this. But I was told: 'I'm not kidding, come down, now!'"

"Lo and behold, there's the Prime Minister. He actually got out of the car before I could arrive at the gate. He had asked his driver to turn off on his way to the office."

"He asked to see a few stores and I took him around the mall. I saw a side of him I had never witnessed before. I do go to his court and occasionally we say 'hello' at the usual traditional Bahraini gatherings, but being here with him, one-on-one, was phenomenal, just listening to him speak and the way that he handled himself with the people he met."

"Although he is, who he is,



R FESTIVE FUN

'Decade of delight and so much more to come' – mall boss Duaij



Back to the Prime Minister's visit, and dynamic Duaij



he was very humble and down-to-earth and took time talking to the store staff, asking about various products; 'Can I smell that perfume? Where's that made?' and things like that, and he said: 'Let's have a coffee', picked one of the coffee shops and we sat down ... and this was all unarranged.

"And, just listening to his wisdom whilst we walked around was something-else. We sat, had a coffee and talked about general stuff and then he said: 'Thank you for the hospitality, I very much enjoyed being here'.

"When things like this happen, when you get heads of state and celebrities dropping by, you never really know what's going to happen next!"

And he's clear to ensure every visitor to City Centre Bahrain feels like royalty and the on-going challenge is to keep them

coming back for more.

With that in mind, the mall is undergoing 'remerchandising'.

"We are changing a considerable amount of stores for various reasons, some economical, some concepts are outdated and need to be replaced with new ones, but the most important thing is that we have realised that there is a consumer mind shift. Consumers have changed."

It understandable when you do the straight maths and anyone with a young family, for example, will be well-aware that staggering changes in a child a decade can bring. Someone who was 20 when the mall opened is now 30, someone who was 10 is now 20 ... and those millennials are expecting a whole new experience.

"We are here to serve the whole family but we cannot ignore what's happening,"

he said. "Just take food and beverage as an example, right now there is a total mind shift in consumers and what they are demanding. They want a more experiential F&B – the type of experience that you see people posting on *Instagram* and *Facebook* all the time now.

"They want healthier options too. Vegetarian fare is being requested more and more and although we do have it, many restaurants have it as an option on their menu, but people are demanding a fully-fledged main offering.

"They are also demanding places willing to experiment with cuisine – maybe fusion fare, or a place where your plate gets served with dry ice underneath it so they can share the experience on social media. This is where the millennials are starting to show their influence as consumers and their demands are being met.

"We need to adapt and change and that's continuous ... and that never stops with us anyway.

"In Bahrain in the 1990s people were hungry for fast food outlets, then in the 2000s, at the beginning of the century, they started demanding a place where they could have a meal and embarrass somewhere on a special occasion with waiters and waitresses clapping and singing at the table with a birthday cake and candle on hand. Now there is demand for home-grown and regional outlets, not just in F&B but in retail too.

"The younger ladies are not just wearing black abayas, they are wearing them in all different shapes and patterns, so now they are looking for vendors who will sell them and keep innovating with style.

"Some people don't realise just how much influence consumers have. The brands that manage to change and adapt are continuing to prosper, some, however, have just sort of either given up or could not keep up with the times.

"By remerchandising the mall we will remain fresh for our consumers and will not lose them to competitors – we need to move on. We do not want the mall to look aged in their minds or in their perceptions.

"The retail landscape is changing, it's not just happening here, it's happening around the world and that's why we're

looking for more retailers that offer an omni-channel approach."

At its core, omni-channel is defined as a multi-channel sales approach that provides the customer with an integrated customer experience. The customer can be shopping online from a desktop or mobile device, or by telephone, or in a bricks and mortar store and the experience would be seamless.

"It's a combination of physical and online retailing," said Duaij. "We already have a few examples here, a furniture store that has downsized in terms of space. They've put their fast moving items on the floor but if you're looking for something different then the sales person will take you to a PC in the middle of the store, offer you a seat, and they will take you through their website and show you the item and the price and arrange for it to be delivered or collected.

"We are competing fully with online now. To our advantage more and more consumers want experiential offerings. You can't enjoy the feel of the fabric online or the smell of that new perfume, can you?"

"I honestly believe retail will always be around in one form or another, but definitely the landscape is changing. What is happening around the world catches us up and unique things happening here that are not available in other places, will spread across the globe."

The now and present is important too. Duaij inherited the dreaded mall 'parking' issue and has made massive strides to address the issue. "We faced the challenges and we accepted the comments that were coming from customers. We listened," he said.

"We are refurbishing the car parks and giving parallel parking to SUV vehicles. We have a considerable number arriving and they just couldn't fit into the gaps provided, hard as they tried, as courteous as they could be to other customers. Parallel parking is the solution but for every such space, you take away three for the angle.

"We made a compromise, we are providing one line for parallel parking for SUVs as well as normal parking spaces for smaller cars.

"We have also provided for families, a little bit wider so they can take out buggies and get kids in and out with ease. We also provide electric vehicle parking, that's the future, we're spending the money refurbishing so we may as well put it in now.

"Working on the project while the mall was fully operational was extremely challenging. But

the Basement and Level One have been completed. In the New Year we start on Level Two, and so on, and we keep going until we reach the top.

"I think that has been one of our major achievements of the past year. When we reopened Level One we went to see that everyone was OK as the cars were coming in, to ensure there were no hiccups. As soon as people parked their cars they came straight over and said: 'Thank you very much, we love this, thank you'. Just getting that kind of feedback is so satisfying."

Mind you, it's not the only accomplishments made as more than 60 initiatives have been introduced over the past 12 months, spurred on by customer feedback, including adding an overflow prayer area for Friday prayers to prevent worshippers from spilling out on to the walkways.

And, the baby changing rooms have been refurbished, upgraded, repainted and wallpaper added to add a welcoming warmth. The furniture will also be replaced shortly with sofas for parents who want to feed their babies in more comfort.

The mall's WiFi has been improved to 'double the speed' so Duaij and his team are hopeful the good news messages will quickly spread across social media.

"We do listen to our customers because it's the little things that can make all the difference," he said. "No one is perfect, and we don't pretend to be, but all we can say is that we promise to improve wherever we can and with the resources we have available.

"There's more to come and we're always looking to improve the customer experience. The competition, in all aspects, is out there but we always look at it from a positive perspective, we will try to retain our customers and attract new ones and, with due respect to them, we welcome competition, it's healthy. But having said all of that, touch wood, we are still the Number One retail destination in Bahrain – 10 years on – and that makes us very proud and happy.

"In 10 years nothing has been built that is bigger or better. We are still there and we are going to put up a fight. We are carrying the World Title Championship Belt and we're not going to let it go and, if anyone challenges us, we'll go in the ring with them.

"We will continue to do our best to serve our customers and everyone who walks in through the doors. Our message to our visitors is clear, please keep coming. My closing comment, we promise great moments for everyone, every day."

● For more information visit www.facebook.com/citycentrebahrain or www.citycentrebahrain.com





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The magic of networking appliances

MASTERTECH, a leading consumer electronics distributor, will now handle distribution of Hitachi home appliance products in Bahrain through its network across the kingdom.

The partnership was unveiled at a reception held at the Bateel Ballroom at the Wyndham Grand Hotel Bahrain Bay attended by executives from both companies and members of the media.

Jawad Yousuf Al Hawaj, chairman and MD, said: "We are extremely pleased to have been awarded the official distributor rights for the consumer electronics division of Hitachi in Bahrain. MasterTech caters to every consumer's needs and our goal is to provide the widest range of the best electronics, and we stand to uphold this image with distributing Hitachi's consumer tech in the region."

Hidekazu Zen, MD of Hitachi,



ON DISPLAY: One of the fridge-freezers and entertainment at the launch

revealed that the Japanese multinational conglomerate headquartered in Tokyo, has had a presence in Bahrain since the early 1970s.

He was 'excited' by the alliance as MasterTech was part of the Al Hawaj Group which represents many world-renowned brands.



"They provide excellent after-service support to the consumer and we believe that their level of experience and commitment will be beneficial to Hitachi's brand name."

To add to the celebrations, a magician entertained the guests, a violinist played on stage and a prize raffle draw was held.

Carrefour Hypermarket

Rahma Pomace Olive Oil 1tr 4ltr – BD6.990
Galaxy Jewels 650gm – BD3.990
My Club price – BD3.390
Snickers Celebrations 385gr – BD1.890
Daily Fresh Sunflower Oil 5ltr – BD2.791
My Club price – BD2.490
Perdix Whole Chicken 1200grx10 – BD6.900

Lulu Hypermarket

Egyptian Domiati & Double Cream Cheese per kg – BD1.190
Delite Butter Blend Unsalted per kg – BD0.750 fils
Kerrygold White & Red Cheddar Cheese per kg – BD4.450
Frozen Chicken 1.2kg 2pcs – BD2.090
Smoked Chicken Breast Fat Free per kg – BD6.590

Note: This offer is available from Thursday until December 12.

Al Jazira Supermarket Zinj

Maltesers Truffles Medium 12x200gm – BD2.600
Nestle Quality Street Jar 4x600gm – BD3.200
Nestle After Eight 12x200gm – BD1.800
Cadbury Heroes 12x185gm – BD1.500
Jealous Adventure Sweet 6x200gm – BD4.800

Jawad Supermarket

Libbys Mushroom 3x184gm – BD1.000
Madina Vermicelli 4x400gm – BD0.900
Emborg Cheddar Cheese 200gm – BD1.350
Emborg Havarti Cheese Portion 200gm – BD1.350
Libbys Tomato Ketchup 340g 2+1 – BD0.650

ONE of Bahrain's leading five star hotels staged a children's party with a difference to launch a special promotion that will entice families to stay ... with an extra special warm welcome for their daughter's favourite doll.

The Westin City Centre Bahrain launched a partnership with American Girl on Friday and around 25 girls with their beloved American Dolls attended a tea party to celebrate the occasion at Furn Bistro.

A special spread was set up at the popular eatery and amongst those in attendance were the Khalfan sisters Zain, nine, Lulwa, six, and Fatima, four, with dad, Osama and little brother, Isa, who will be two in January, joining in the fun carrying his toy cat, Chris.

Bahraini Osama, Arab Bank's head of retail, said: "My daughters absolutely love their American Dolls and were delighted to be invited to the tea party."

They are so dedicated to the dolls that they even wear matching pyjamas at bedtime, dad revealed. And they are not the only ones. As reported earlier this year when the outlet opened in City Centre Bahrain hundreds of devoted fans queued outside in

HOSPITALITY REPORT
By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com

anticipation.

What started as a catalogue company selling 18-inch dolls with historical backstories to young girls has evolved over more than 30 years into a toy industry behemoth, with multi-million dollars in gross sales each year.

The Westin City Centre Bahrain has launched a Super Sleepover room package that will include a special gift, an American Girl doll-sized travel bed with turndown service.

In January 2019, it will also be launching a special menu where girls can bring along their dolls for a tea party just like Friday's launch event which included cakes and strawberry juice with cream and marshmallows.

City Centre Bahrain mall owners Majid Al Futtaim teamed up with American Girl to bring the brand to Bahrain. The store offers an assortment of the popular historical and contemporary dolls, along with a selection of doll outfits, accessories, 'Dress Like Your Doll'



clothing, and the company's best-selling books. Also, for fashionable youngsters, the store features a boutique, where girls can create T-shirts for themselves and their dolls.

So how does American Girl maintain and grow its popularity? Experts point to several factors, including the exclusivity and personalisation of the brand. In addition, the fact that many millennials who are now parents grew up owning or wanting the dolls and reading American Girl books. They are eager to pass those experiences on to their own children.

"It's almost a rite of passage for kids," said

Adrienne Appell, a trend expert for the Toy Industry Association.

Anna-Marie Dowling, complex GM of The Westin Bahrain City Centre and Le Méridien Bahrain City Centre, couldn't resist popping by to witness the party, and Aisha Ameen, Majid Al Futtaim's brand manager travelled from Dubai to join in the fun.

The success of the initial tea party is likely to set the stage for further birthday parties and other celebrations too, held in a similar style.

For more details and to book the Super Sleepover room package call 17171000.

● **Living doll:** Page 15



WAVING HELLO: GM Anna with a doll and, left, the Khalfan sisters, below, guests tucking in and an American Girl ready for bed



Fashion Weekly

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

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Jalal's timely tips on the latest trends



FORGET about Fergie time, a leading Swiss watch-maker has celebrated the launch of its latest timepiece with the current Manchester United boss during an evening devoted to duality and team spirit.

The Special One is the nickname of football manager José Mourinho. It is only fitting that his watch be special as well ... presenting the Hublot Big Bang Unico Special One, a technical gem, to be produced in a limited series of 200 pieces.

"If I hadn't already known his nickname, I'd definitely have given him the same one after meeting him: José really is a one-off, unique in his nature and his expectations. Qualities that we share. Mourinho and Hublot, The Special Two!" claimed Ricardo Guadalupe, CEO of Hublot.

Instantly recognisable, this version of the iconic Big Bang design is adorned in blue. Why blue? Because it's Mourinho's favourite colour. Known for his sartorial elegance, he



SPECIAL ONE: Mourinho and the limited-edition timepiece

always wears a touch of blue, whether it's his suit, tie or shirt. So blue is painted straight onto the bezel and 45-mm polished ceramic case. Why red? Because, as Mourinho explained, red gives character.

The dial, with hints of red and black, is skeletonised so as to reveal Hublot's famous UNICO manufacture fly-back chronograph movement, the calibre HUB1242.

The movement can also be seen from the



back through the transparent sapphire case back and offers a 72-hour power reserve. The rubber-lined alligator strap boasts the same blue shade as the watch, adorned by red top-stitching.

Mourinho said: "I'm honoured to receive a second watch bearing my name from Hublot, and I'm particularly happy about this one," he said. "Since we started working together, I've been extremely impressed by the work ethic,

technical knowledge and inventiveness of the brand's watchmakers and engineers. Values that are very useful on the football pitch. And above all, we share the same passion, the same madness: football!"

Fergie Time, named after retired former United boss Alex Ferguson, remains a phrase used in English football referring to a generous or excessive amount of time after the injury time had been added at the end of a match, allowing a team more time to score a late equaliser or winner.

Mourinho kept the legend alive last week and provided his own pyrotechnics on the touchline. With seconds ticking away, the Portuguese coach celebrated Marouane Fellaini's late 91st-minute Champions League winner against Young Boys by throwing a crate of drinks bottles to the floor.

The Hublot Big Bang Unico Special One is presented in a case worthy of its exclusivity: a box in the same blue shade as the watch itself, enhanced here and there with touches of black and red, sporting his signature in the window and containing a personalised Moleskine notebook. Perfect for recording the future feats of The Special One!

In time for her 60th birthday, Barbie has a new collaborator bringing her wide-ranging style to life for humans.

One of the largest sellers of vintage-inspired clothes, Unique Vintage, is working with Barbie parent Mattel on the first women's line to meticulously duplicate some of the doll's most iconic early looks.

In the process, the company also has taken care of the one thing critics love to hate about Barbie, her very plastic hourglass physique, by offering the outfits in sizes XS to 4X.

The collaboration, Barbie x Unique Vintage, celebrates 1950s and 1960s Babs. The company that sells online and in about 500 boutiques around the world plans to go even bigger for Barbie's big 6-0 next year, offering key fashion moments from across the rest of her decades.

Katie Echeverry is founder, CEO and creative director of Unique Vintage, an 18-year-old company based in the US state of California. With her long blonde locks and Barbie-esque dimensions, Echeverry said she was a Babs fan as a girl but was also a 'tomboy' who loved to play softball.

During a recent round of media interviews explaining how the collaboration came about, she donned a Kelly-green shawl dress worn by Barbie in 1962 and done by



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

Unique Vintage in a forgiving stretch fabric. Noteworthy was her most definitely un-Barbie upper-arm tattoo, on proud display in the off-shoulder outfit, as she recalled her luck.

"When I emailed Mattel, I didn't think they'd actually reply back, but they did, and I was thrilled," Katie said. "They ran with it. I couldn't believe they hadn't done it before."

Katie worked closely with Mattel but 'they didn't dictate what I chose'. Mattel opened its archives to her as she went about duplicating outfits, with adjustments to account for the real human form. She said she chose looks that 'spoke to me'.

Barbie, the doll, first hit store shelves in 1959. That year, she stepped out in a swirl of gold and white brocade for evening. The dress was among those Katie picked and sells for BD44 on uniquevintage.com. The matching collar coat with three-quarter sleeves trimmed in faux fur goes for BD56.

Katie's first Barbie go-around dropped in the spring.



FASHION FAVOURITES: Katie in the green with her friends modelling the Barbie range

Social media fans of vintage and of Barbie took notice and sales have been brisk, she said. For autumn, her prices range from BD33 for an A-shaped Barbie flare skirt in green with a white hem to BD75 for the doll's red miniskirt sleeveless sheath dress and short jacket

trimmed with calico-coloured faux fur.

It was important to Echeverry to choose looks that have remained iconic through the years but were wearable by women in the broad range of sizes she is committed to providing.

"I was like a kid in a candy

store," she said. After the first season went on sale, Katie watched the response online, where nostalgia kicked in among fans who recalled favourite outfits, some gushing how they'd always wondered what it would be like to wear the looks themselves.



That goes a long way in explaining why she was more than a little dedicated to getting the clothes right. "I went online and ordered every single vintage outfit myself. Mattel offered to lend them to me, but I was a little nervous about having some of their archives," she said. "In our fittings, we literally had the original Barbie dress next to the model. We moved Barbie. When I sourced fabrics overseas, I had Barbie clothes in my pocket and I was making sure we got as close as possible."

She was also dedicated to the price points she knows her buyers are after. "I know our customer and she doesn't want to spend a lot of money, and I understand that," Katie added.

Dressing up like Barbie

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In focus



ELYSIAN Natural Mineral Water launched its bottled water brand in the kingdom at a gathering staged at The Palace Boutique Hotel, under the patronage of Khalid Al Rumaihi, CEO of Bahrain Economic Development Board. The event was attended by dignitaries from Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the Norwegian consulate, along with members of media and other guests.

Khalid was joined by Lars Bunaes, MD of Telemark Kildevevann, Sheema Al Nafisee, founder of Elysian and Khalid Al Nafisee, former Saudi ambassador to the UN and Norway, for a ribbon-cutting ceremony.



THE INDIAN CLUB and Bahrain Tamils (BTUS) have collected relief aid for cyclone victims living in the districts of Tamil Nadu, a southern state of India, with the support of the local community.

Supplies collected include milk powder, candles, torches, cloths, bed sheets, towels, dry food and soap. They have been delivered to Chennai and sent by road to reach isolated villages.

Club president Cassius Pereira, general secretary Ricson Rebello, BTUS president Dr P. Karthikeyan and general secretary G. Senthil Kumar and executive committee members organised the transportation.



FOR the third time, Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance (BIBF) has won the prestigious Educational & Training Initiative of the Year Award at the annual Middle East Insurance Industry Awards. Its director Dr Ahmed Al Shaikh, received the award on behalf of the Institute at the official ceremony held in Dubai.

SocialScene

Why wait a month! Join Social Scene every week

Ritz-Carlton sparkles

FAMILIES from across the kingdom flocked to the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony staged at the Ritz-Carlton Bahrain's hotel garden where they were greeted by senior management and colleagues, carol singers, Santa and his helpers.

A stunning festive tunnel of lights was also on display and the hotel was also brightly lit up in readiness for the coming National Day celebrations.



Elite delight



THE Elite Resort & Spa Muharraq staged its Christmas tree lighting ceremony with a dazzling display of dancing and carol singing before the big switch-on. GM Puneet Saigal and his family, wife Aarthi and their daughters Aaliya and Aahilya, and his team, welcomed guests to the party.



Health Day



THE science department at Alhekma International School organised an annual Health Day for students to help spread awareness about diabetes. The event included health screenings, hands-on activities, presentations and health-related games.

Networking night



MORE than 100 people enjoyed a networking evening celebrating Belgian King's Night under the patronage of ambassador Piet Heirbaut at La Fontaine Centre of Contemporary Art in Manama.

Sri Lankan festival

LULU Hypermarket last week staged a Sri Lankan cultural and food festival. Former Electricity and Water Affairs Minister Abdulla Juma and Bin Juma Holding Company chairman opened the festival in the presence of Sri Lankan ambassador Dr Saj Mendis with the support of the ambassadors of the UK - Simon Martin, India - Shri Alok Kumar Sinha and the Philippines - Alfonso A. Ver.



InteriorsWeekly

Your guide to the best in-store deals of the week

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THE Roberto Cavalli fashion house is looking for future growth in the home decor and furniture sector, with a new project furnishing a luxury residential building in Bahrain.

CEO Gian Giacomo Ferraris revealed that revenues from home furnishings sales have increased to eight per cent from six per cent in 2016, when the Clessidra private equity fund bought a 89.6-per cent stake from founder Roberto Cavalli, who retains the rest. Cavalli's 2017 revenues were around BD65 million.

The Italian fashion designer and inventor is best known for exotic prints and for creating the sand-blasted look for jeans. The high-end Italian fashion house Roberto Cavalli sells luxury clothing, perfume and leather accessories.

Fashion houses like Cavalli, Armani, Fendi and Versace are also leaders in home décor, with residential projects in luxury locations around the world.

The Cavalli Home

Star will add his touch



STYLE MASTER: Roberto

Collection features select choices, inspired by colour, realised and adapted according to the furnishings. Including a range of home-ware from bed linen and tableware to glassware and cushions, the striking collection is said to be 'driven by passion and derived from Roberto Cavalli's vision, philosophy and style'.

Cavalli will completely furnish 247 apartments in the



NEW HOMES: An artist's impression of one of the apartments, right, Cavalli style

Waterbay luxury high-rise by the Bin Faqeeh Real Estate Investment Company. The waterfront units go on sale in January, ranging up to 2.2 million euros (more than BD940,000.)

The developers describe

it as a 'stellar oasis of luxury anchored at the most prestigious island in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Bahrain Bay'.

"Waterbay is a 10-storey building designed and developed with the most

luxurious hotels standards in mind – affording you the stunning views of the bay and gardens of the Four Seasons Hotel," Bin Faqeeh says.

"Why not choose to take a water taxi to the nearby Avenues Mall or dine from a

multitude of restaurants in the vicinity?

"The distinguished residential edifice is in the heart of Manama, a few kilometres away from the business district and the main shopping malls of Bahrain."



SocialScene

New mission



AMERICAN Mission Hospital will start accepting insurance patients at its recently-opened Zwemer Clinic, situated in the main Manama hospital premises. Initially, AMH has entered into contract with Globemed Bahrain.

Special deals

BARGAIN-HUNTERS queued to snap up special deals being offered at the Black Friday Sale at the Westin and Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain hotels.

Visitors signed up to receive 50 per cent off on many food and beverage and spa treatments at the popular hotels under terms and conditions.



Prize time

BAHARAT Restaurant located at Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain has notched another accolade. It was voted Bahrain's Best Middle Eastern Restaurant at the recent BBC Good Food Middle East Awards ceremony held at The Ritz-Carlton Dubai.

The BBC Good Food Middle East Awards, known for celebrating the best restaurants in the UAE, has introduced new prizes covering Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

These are the only awards in the region offering recognition solely based on customers' stamp of approval across different categories, organisers say.



Bake sale

LULU presented a charity Bake Sale outside its store in Dana Mall which also featured a talent competition and fashion show. Visitors also purchased copies of Fatema

Abid Mohsin's inspirational book 'My understanding of life as I know it'. The 23-year-old student who suffers from muscular dystrophy, who was featured on the cover of last week's GulfWeekly, attended the event with her parents.



High-flyers

NATIONAL carrier Gulf Air celebrated Bahraini Women's Day by operating an all-Bahraini female flight to Kuwait, both operating and hospitality crews. They were received by representatives of Kingdom of Bahrain Embassy to Kuwait, where they visited the embassy prior to attending a luncheon in their honour.

With 38 per cent female personnel, the airline's female workforce represents all Gulf Air divisions, ranks and levels of expertise.



Bahraini Women's Day is celebrated annually as part of an initiative by Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, Wife of His Majesty the King and President

of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW) to highlight the achievements made by Bahraini women towards the development and progress of the kingdom.



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or sexual violence)

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Hospital

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كل النساء مرحب بهن

THE launch of my self-published dessert cookbook *A Confectioner's Secrets* – for which *GulfWeekly* provided fabulous pre-launch coverage – took place recently at The Raven's Nest in Budaiya and was a tremendous success.

The event was graced by chief guests Mohammed Ismail, Yusuf Mohammed, family and friends and the very lovely MC Sadiya Sheikh took us through it flawlessly.

A short video trailer was played followed by a speech and a PowerPoint presentation. There were also many beautiful heart-touching reviews from people who have been on this incredible journey with me.

A Confectioner's Secret is my debut self-published desserts and baking cookbook which targets people with different skill levels. You could be a beginner or a seasoned professional baker, there's something interesting for everyone.

I realised that there were many around me with a penchant for baking who wouldn't step into the arena for fear of not getting the best results. This got me into conducting baking workshops and writing this book. Baking is fun and easy but can be undeniably daunting for a few.

The aim of this book is to turn the most reluctant novice into the keenest baker and to help practicing bakers step up their game.

I am a self-taught baker and recipe developer. It's been exciting trying new cake flavours, tasting from the best patisseries and recreating them in my kitchen with reckless abandon. I have made most of these recipes repeatedly for friends and family!

Each is accompanied with a picture and the chapters



include step-by-step recipes of bakes for breakfast, teatime treats and desserts for celebrations and soirees.

The beauty about food is that it transcends all barriers. It always brings people together; it's a source of love and helps foster stronger connections.

I want to reach out to everyone from different cultures, nationalities and culinary preferences to make the journey ahead a sweet and memorable one.

The cookbook, priced BD11, has 140 pages and includes professionally taken pictures taken by food photographer Ali Taleb. Zahra Al Alaiwat, a brilliant artist and graphic designer, has designed the book and its cover.

Mubina Maqbool.

● **Editor's note:** The books are available from Jashanmal stores and The Word Bookstore Café. For more details visit Instagram @meltingmomentss. The e-book version of *A Confectioner's Secrets* is available on Amazon too.

ADNAN Sport Events Management is pleased to announce plans to organise a charity Fun & Health Day Out on Friday, December 14, at 1pm, at the Corniche Al Ghooos Park, supporting Bahrain Cancer Society.

It is open to all – both sexes, all nationalities, from age eight and above. You can cycle, run or walk the 5.3km route or even

participate in all the events.

Please register online at www.adnanevents.org. There's an entry fee of BD2 per event. All those registered will receive a race number, a BD2 WAFI shopping voucher, a medal at the finish-line and a certificate will be emailed to each participant.

Entertainment on the day of the event will include a bazaar, face painting and there will also be a DJ playing favourite tunes.

Various hospitals will also offer free check-ups with medical assistance and an ambulance in attendance if needed.

There will also be six water stations en-route, plus water refreshments at the start and finish line.

For further information call 39132102, email adnan@adnanevents.org and visit www.adnanevents.org, Facebook.com/AdnanEventsBH and Instagram @adnaneventsbbh

Adnan, event director.

PARENTS of children with food allergies are being warned to watch for signs of 'allergy bullying' – a growing problem with an impact that ranges from hurtful to deadly.

Research has found that about one third of children with food allergies report being targeted by bullies as a result. Comments such as 'We can't have parties because of the food allergies that Jimmy

has,' or more aggressive ones, where they're saying: 'I'm going to hide peanut butter in your food'," were amongst the incidents reported.

Perpetrators may threaten or taunt their victims with potentially dangerous food such as peanuts or peanut butter.

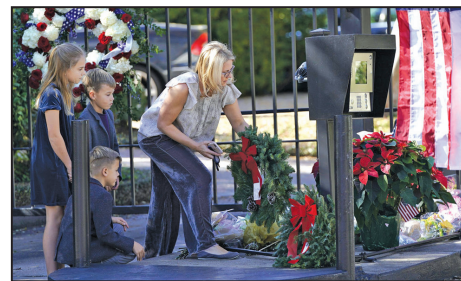
Parents whose offspring reported being bullied about a food allergy should notify the school and insist staff intervene. However, many children targeted because of their food allergies often don't report such incidents to their parents, making it vital to know the warning signs.

These include a change in behaviour, such as being sad, upset, or withdrawn. If they have a real aversion to going to school, you want to get to the bottom of it. If there's something more, something deeper, you'd want to be there and have open communication at all times so that you can deal with it."

Sandra Hong, MD and allergist at Cleveland Clinic.

WE regret to announce the passing of former US President George H.W. Bush on November 30, 2018, in the United States, at 94 years of age.

The embassy earlier this week opened a condolence book for all American citizens to express their sympathies and honour his memory.



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

YOGA may be good for clearing negative thoughts and slipping into the relaxation zone ... but it appears to make some proponents of the activity slightly forgetful.

With the growing size of its yoga family, one yoga group in Bahrain says it has become impossible to keep all the mats that students leave behind.

"We have dozens of mats that we have lovingly stored for a really long time, we need your help in claiming your mat back, soon," the owners pleaded. "If you love your mat, act now."

Mats must be collected no later than December 15 or they will be donated, although the Whisperer is unclear what good cause would want them. Something to ponder whilst I'm meditating.



President George H.W. Bush dedicated his life to serving his country and the American public in the military, in domestic politics and foreign affairs.

He was truly a 'point of light' who inspired others

to public service. He was a devoted husband and dedicated father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

To visit the official George H. W. Bush Memorial website, please visit www.georgehwbush.com

**Sincerely,
AmCham Bahrain Team.**

● **Editor's note:** George H.W. Bush was president from 1989 to 1993. His funeral service is set for today at Washington National Cathedral. Afterward, he be returned to Houston to lie in repose at St Martin's Episcopal Church before burial tomorrow at his family plot.

I AM taking a poetry class this semester at university. Asking about any aspiring poets or poetry enthusiasts in the class, our professor was met with silence. Clearly, we're not a very introspective bunch.

I've only ever read poetry in required lessons, as I have to do now, never choosing to pick it up on my own terms.

Reading of prose is

Youth Talk

By
Sarah Belal



straightforward; you get what you came for. There's usually no need to decipher any underlying messages, or grapple with form, metre and rhyme that can sometimes make for a

hard read. I personally find it infinitely more engaging.

With poetry, there's the analytical aspect that can make reading it slightly intimidating.

As such I became curious about why someone might enjoy reading, or even writing poetry.

Quite befitting of our time, poetry aims to get across an idea with fewer words. It is its relatively short

length that seems to prove appealing for some. Maybe it is poetry's musical quality that attracts others to it?

For some, lines of poetry may provide advice or comfort, and can be quite reassuring for those who read it. Like a mantra, memorised lines of poetry can be recited in times of turmoil, uncertainty or even happiness.

And I understand that writing poetry can be quite healing for someone who might want to effectively pour out his or her feelings; there are even therapy poetry writing workshops in existence! It gives one the chance to explore emotions that would be hard to grasp otherwise.

Then again, people read and write poetry because

they can.

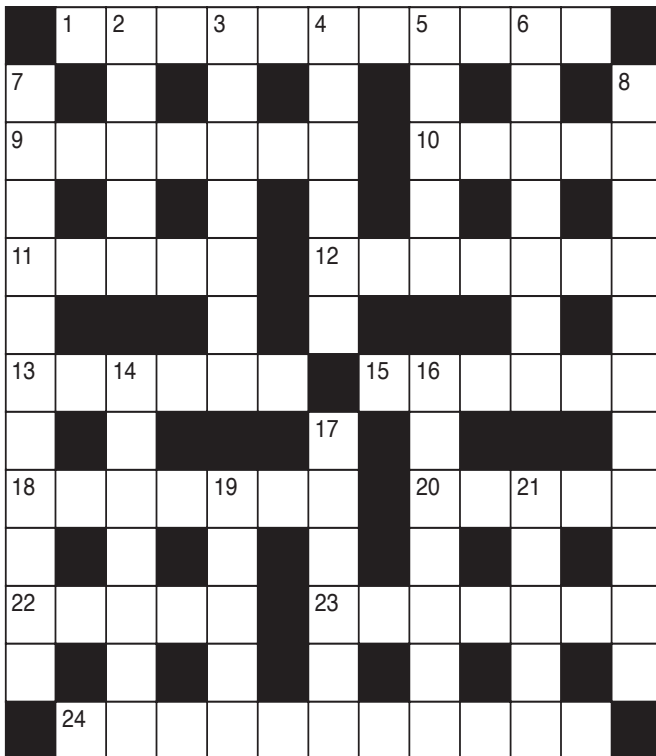
Will I come out of this course more appreciative of poetry? Perhaps; I've already acquired favourites. But most importantly I have realised that with poetry, just like with any type of artistic expression, there's bound to be something for everyone. Do our readers have a preferred poem? Please share.

Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Liaise (11)
9. Ebbbed (7)
10. Less frequent (5)
11. Energy (5)
12. Effective (7)
13. Take in (6)
15. Aft (6)
18. Non-specific (7)
20. Kingly (5)
22. Correct (5)
23. Withdraw (7)
24. Postulate (11)

DOWN

2. Happen (5)
3. Lunacy (7)
4. Nakedness (6)
5. Joyous song (5)
6. White ant (7)
7. Sexton (11)
8. Newness (11)
14. Arsenal (7)
16. Cloud formation (7)
17. Char (6)
19. Wireless (5)
21. Pasture (5)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... wrote the stage plays *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* and *The Petition*?

WHAT ... Shakespeare play features the character Tullus Aufidius?

WHERE ... did the film director Luis Buñuel die in 1983?

WHEN ... did the *Archie Comics* comic book character Archie Andrews first appear?

WHO ... recorded the 1953 UK No 1 single *She Wears Red Feathers*?

WHERE ... was the film director Terry Gilliam born?

WHEN ... was Ahmed Ben Bella elected as the first President of Algeria?

just so

YEHUDI MENUHIN

ROUGH

YELTSIN

cc

float

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

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 1 Fabulous; 5 Solo; 9 Hard; 10 Magazine; 11 Adore; 12 Unfortunately; 18 Hesitate; 19 None; 20 Proverb; 21 Bogus; 22 Yank; 23 Derisive.

Down: 2 Abandon; 3 Undergo; 4 Unaccountable; 6 Orifice; 7 Overtly; 8 Panama; 13 Unhappy; 14 Festoon; 15 Rotten; 16 Tenuous; 17 Languor.

JUST SO: The eighteen twelve overture, A guinea pig, The North pole, When in Rome

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Lloyd Alexander; Australia; Scotland; 1975; Peter Hall; The five pillars of Islam; India; 1961.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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



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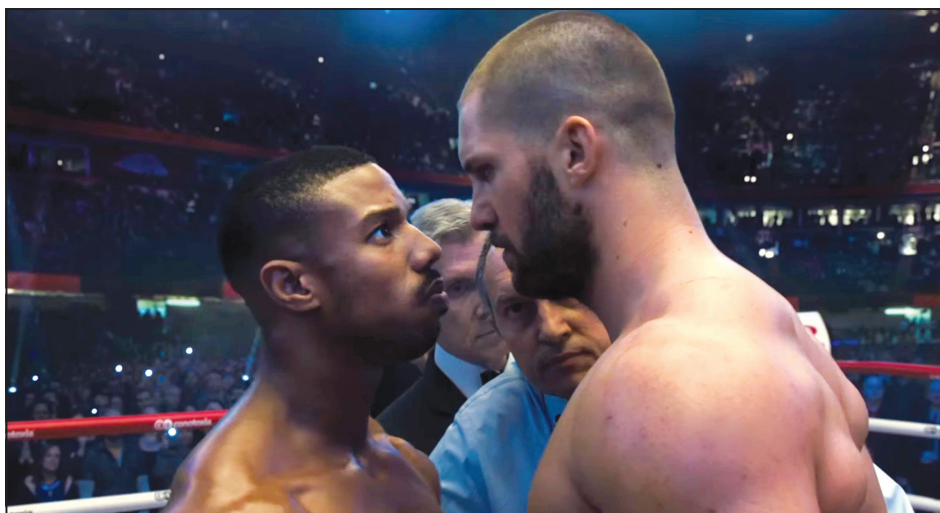
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Film Weekly



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



Falls to the canvas

WHILE *Creed II* continues boxer Adonis Creed's fight to establish his own identity, the sequel ironically falls victim to the very lesson he has to learn: the only way to live up to a legacy is to create your own. Sadly, *Creed II* just doesn't do that.

Ryan Coogler's stylish, intense 2015 original worked so well because it told us an old story in a new way, always knowing when to go a little over the top and when to underplay things. That understanding is where *Creed II* director Steven Caple Jr's seeming attempt to recreate the same tone misses the mark so glaringly. *Creed II* tries so hard to live up to its predecessor that it doesn't end up having much of its own identity.

Had Caple abstained from the *Creed* formula a little more and made this movie his own, we could have had a much more interesting story, instead of a rehash of a film that already skewed close to the 1976 classic.

Creed II picks up with Adonis (Michael B Jordan) on top of the boxing world and indulging in some of the same pomp and circumstance that his father was known for, entering the film's first fight with overblown drama of Pretty Ricky Conlan's arrival in the final fight of *Creed*. When one of the first things you see your hero do immediately evokes the villain of the previous film, the writing's on the wall for what that character's arc is going to be.

Much of the film's drama feels preordained and subsequently isn't very exciting, which is especially disappointing considering who's in the other corner of the ring.

For as much as the previous film makes of the struggle to get out of the shadow of the past, *Creed II* features some distracting call-backs to the franchise's history. Hearing Ivan Drago (Dolph

CREED II

STARRING: Michael B Jordan, Sylvester Stallone, Dolph Lundgren

DIRECTOR: Steven Caple Jr

GENRE: Sports Drama

RATING: PG-13

RUNTIME: 130 Mins

Lundgren) bring back his iconic "break him" line once would've been great ... but you're going to hear it a lot more than once.

Creed II made a big gamble by featuring Viktor Drago and his father Ivan as the antagonists. As the film constantly reminds us, Ivan Drago killed Apollo Creed in the ring just before Adonis was born. Ivan's subsequent loss to the avenging Rocky shattered him and saw his family run out of Russia in disgrace. So Viktor's story parallels Adonis'; he's a man whose turbulent upbringing was defined by the outcome of that fateful fight. There was opportunity there to make Viktor a compelling foil to Adonis, but the film doesn't let us get to know Viktor or what he wants, so he really isn't that interesting.

While the Dragos disappoint as villains, the central trio of Adonis, Rocky, and Bianca are still easy to invest in and carry *Creed II* through its shakier parts. The struggles these three characters have to overcome outside of the ring are far more interesting than any of the fights inside it. Jordan's Adonis proves to be far more vulnerable as his battle this time is less against the ghost of his father and more against himself and his continued desire to create his own legacy.

Sylvester Stallone continues to be a surprisingly moving father figure to Adonis here. He has less to do with the

boxing action this time around, but he excels at humbling Adonis and imploring him to remember what he's fighting for. Stallone's pained conflict about whether to support Adonis in his fight against the Dragos is understandable, given how guilty he still feels about what happened to Apollo. The Italian Stallion ends up getting the biggest laughs and the most stirring moments of the film.

Tessa Thompson continues to shine as Bianca, keeping Adonis' growing ego in check while exhibiting perhaps as much bravery as her partner while fighting her own battles. Adonis' relationships with Rocky and Bianca keep the film grounded and, in a lot of ways, are the only thing keeping *Creed II* on the rails. We want Adonis to win largely because it would hurt too much to see the pain he's put Rocky and Bianca through be for nothing.

You'll notice that for a movie that centres around boxing, I've barely mentioned it here. That's because the fights in this movie are deeply forgettable – not just because Creed's opponent is a bland and vague character, but because the straightforward cinematography of these scenes just doesn't have any of the vivacity of the fights from the previous film.

Ultimately, just like Adonis himself, director Ryan Coogler proved with *Creed* that this new iteration of the *Rocky* franchise could stand on its own and forge its own legacy. *Creed II*, however, can't seem to let the past go, abandoning the exciting new path blazed by Coogler in favour of evoking what's come before, with undeniably diminished results.

● **Now showing in:** Cineco, Seef II, Avenues, Oasis Mall Juffair, Wadi Al Sail, Saar

KRISTIAN'S VERDICT



1 popcorn – stay home
5 popcorns – start queuing

Bite-sized trailer

Instant Family

DIRECTOR: Sean Anders

CAST: Mark Wahlberg, Rose Byrne, Isabela Moner

PLOT: When Pete (Mark Wahlberg) and Ellie (Rose Byrne) decide to start a family, they stumble into the world of foster care adoption. They hope to take in one small child but when they meet three siblings, including a rebellious 15 year old girl (Isabela Moner), they find themselves speeding from zero to three kids overnight.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, Seef II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Oasis Mall Juffair



The Girl in the Spider's Web

DIRECTOR: Fede Alvarez

CAST: Claire Foy, Beau Gadsdon, Sverrir Gudnason

PLOT: Lisbeth Salander, the cult figure and title character of the acclaimed *Millennium* book series created by Stieg Larsson, will return to the screen in *The Girl in the Spider's Web*. In the first-time adaptation of the recent global bestseller, young computer hacker Lisbeth and journalist Mikael Blomkvist find themselves caught in a web of spies, cybercriminals and corrupt government officials.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, Seef II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Oasis Mall Juffair



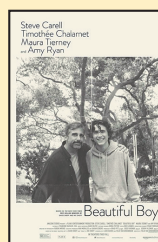
Beautiful Boy

DIRECTOR: Felix van Groenigen

CAST: Steve Carell, Timothée Chalamet, Maura Tierney

PLOT: Based on the best-selling pair of memoirs from father and son David and Nic Sheff, *Beautiful Boy* chronicles the heartbreaking and inspiring experience of survival, relapse, and recovery in a family coping with addiction over many years.

SHOWING IN: Seef I



imdb movie charts

Current Position	Title	Weekend Takings	Gross to date
1	Ralph Breaks the Internet	\$26M	\$119M
2	The Grinch	\$18M	\$204M
3	Creed II	\$17M	\$81M
4	Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald	\$11M	\$134M
5	Bohemian Rhapsody	\$8M	\$164M
6	Instant Family	\$7M	\$46M
7	The Possession of Hannah Grace	\$7M	\$7M
8	Robin Hood	\$5M	\$22M
9	Widows	\$4M	\$33M
10	Green Book	\$4M	\$14M

ONE of the world's most iconic cars is celebrating its golden anniversary with a trip down memory lane and a look to the future.

Mercedes-Benz released the Stroke Eight saloons of the 115 and 114 model series in 1968 and set new stylistic and technical standards and helped establish the tradition of today's E-Class coupes.

The coupes of the 114 model series rounded off the top end-of-the-model range of this first independent upper mid-range series by the German marque.

The third Stroke Eight body variant to follow in December 1968 was the saloons with a long wheelbase and, later on, chassis for special-purpose bodies. Technically, the coupe closely resembled the saloon. Its design, however, clearly set the sporty-elegant touring car apart from the four-door model; the front and rear windows were flatter than those of the saloon and, together with the roofline, which was 45mm lower, created a dynamic silhouette.

By the end of production in August 1976, Mercedes-Benz had built a total of more than 67,000 Stroke Eight coupes of the 114 model series. The

Off down memory lane

CLASS CAR:
The original
Stroke Eight



MOTERING
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

most successful model, with 21,787 units, is the 250CE. The top-of-the-line model – the 280CE – was built 11,518 times.

Some 60 per cent of the coupes were exported. Today, they are among the most sought-after classics on offer from All Time Stars, the Mercedes-Benz Classic dealer.

The four-cylinder models are grouped as the 115 model series, whereas the six-

cylinder variants form the 114 series and also lay the groundwork for a coupe.

Mercedes-Benz used a 130bhp six-cylinder carburettor engine for the saloons, and in the coupes they used a variant of the M114 engine with Bosch

D-Jetronic electronic fuel injection, worth a staggering 150bhp at the time and making the capable of hitting 199kmph.

This was speed considered almost magical at the time for passenger cars, although despite thousands of laps

around the Hockenheimring race track, it could never quite hit the mythical 200 mark.

From 1972 onwards, the engine becomes the standard for the 250C, when Mercedes-Benz introduced the new 280C (160bhp) and 280CE (185bhp) coupe models. In 1973, Mercedes-Benz introduced the facelifted coupes of the upper mid-range series. The company retained the 250C, 280C and 280CE engines.

Here, the focus shifted from performance to safety, which

translates into movable outside mirrors that can be adjusted from the inside, dirt-repellent trim on the A-pillars and dirt-resistant tail lamps.

As early as 1973, the coupes of the 114 model series were fitted with the four-spoke safety steering wheel from the S-Class, head restraints and automatic safety belts for the front seats as standard equipment.

The simultaneously revised design included elements of the S-Class 116 model series introduced in 1972, such as a low and wide radiator grille and a redesigned front apron.

Now, 50 years on, the current E-Class coupe of the C238 model series aims to advance this excellent history by impressing with its wide range of models and regularly enjoying top sales numbers when it comes to new sports car registrations around the world.

● For more details, ring 17785454 or call into the Al Haddad Motors showroom in Tubli.



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Fraud Analyst-Bahrain

Gulf Connexions is currently working with one of the leading banks in Bahrain to help them source a hungry, eager and career driven individual to join their team in the designation of Fraud Analyst. This opportunity is ideal for someone looking to develop their career within the banking and finance sector.

Responsibilities:

- Complete fraud order scanning accurately and in a timely manner
- Performs analysis on existing and newly emerging fraud patterns
- Manages use of fraud and company specific tools
- Works closely with other team members to ensure that new accounts are verified and reviewed in a timely manner so that new gamer experiences are not adversely affected
- Identifies potential process improvements in the fraud processes
- Maintains effective working relationships across the team and departments as necessary
- Contacts customers to validate authenticity of clients' accounts
- Communicates with external groups for group needs
- Compiles and create reports to clearly outline department's progress

Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in Banking and Finance, Business Administration or similar.
- Ideally the candidate will have a minimum of 12 months experience in risk management, fraud investigation however fresh graduates will also be considered.
- Knowledge of card processing, payment fraud prevention/detection techniques, On-line Fraud Management is an advantage.
- Detail oriented individuals with excellent research, organizational, and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously and work within tight deadlines.
- Strong organizational, communication, presentation, and interpersonal skills.
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By KRISTIAN HARRISON

kristian@gulfweekly.com

PETROLHEADS in the kingdom were treated to a true car-nival as the latest edition of the Bapco Bahrain GT Festival proved to be a roaring success.

Over Friday and Saturday, the festival featured more than 100 cars in three categories, headlined by the new FIA GT Nations Cup. There was also the first-ever running of the SRO GT4 World Final and a stunning climax to Patrick Peter's Classic Endurance Racing Series.

Aside from the racing, there was plenty to enjoy off the track too for the thousands of motor sport fans who flocked to the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

On track, Team Turkey made headlines after becoming the first-ever winners of an FIA GT Nations Cup race, closing out the weekend with a superb victory under lights.

Their victory was marked by a dazzling fireworks display to match the explosive action on the circuit.

In other news, CMR won the Main Race in the GT4 International Cup, while the Bryant pair of Oliver and Grahame competing in a 1964 Shelby Cobra posted a fine double in the Bahrain Classic Challenge.

The Turkish pairing of Ayhan Guven and



MAIN EVENT: Action from the FIA GT Nations Cup



Salih Yuloc steered their Mercedes-AMG GT3 to the chequered flag after an eventful 27 laps around the 5.4km track.

After starting from pole,

Guven and Yuloc claimed first place 3.311 seconds ahead of the runners-up from Team UK, represented by Christopher Buncombe and Christopher Froggatt driving

a Ferrari 488 GT3.

Coming away with the final podium place was the Team Denmark duo of Nicklas Nielsen and Johnny Laursen, who were 4.459s behind the

winners in their own Ferrari 488 GT3.

Russia were classified fourth, China were fifth and Italy rounded out the top six. The rest of the final

classification, from seventh through 14th, respectively, included Hong Kong, Malaysia, Argentina, Thailand, Japan, Mexico, France and Sweden.

Not classified were Germany, Belgium, Australia and Belarus.

Afterwards, one scrutineer revealed that the Mexican's Ferrari vehicle arrived late to the circuit having been held up by suspicious officials at the United States customs.

There was also said to be a warm atmosphere in the paddock, with drivers particularly enjoying the opportunity to represent their country rather than just themselves or a team. After years of racing against their friends and compatriots, it was a clever change of pace.

In the GT4 Main Race, CMR claimed a fantastic victory. Their No 35 Alpine A110 GT4, driven by Pierre Sancinena and Pierre-Alexandre Jean, cinched the chequered flag after 25 laps.

After starting the race from way back in 18th position, CMR managed to battle to the front and eventually claim a well-deserved win. They finished the hour-long session with a 5.677s gap ahead of Phoenix Racing's no.5 Audi R8 LMS GT4, driven by Nicolaj Moller-Madsen and Milan Dontje, who started from pole.

Classified in third place were 3Y Technology 9.338s behind, with Enzo Guibbert and Gilles Vanneet competing in a BMW M4 GT4.





HIGH-FLYING: The Monster Truck Show

Sainteloc Junior Team came fourth, Academy Motorsport Ltd were fifth, and AKKA-ASP Team finished sixth.

The Main Race marked the end of the season for the participating GT4 teams. It was the first-ever GT4 International Cup, which brought together champions from various GT4 series held across the globe and affiliated with head organisers SRO Motorsports Group.

In the other main race, Oliver and Grahame Bryant completed a perfect weekend in the Bahrain Classic Challenge. They won Race Two to complete a fantastic double after also previously topping the timesheets in Practice and Qualifying.

Driving their 1964 Shelby Cobra, the Bryants won the meeting's second event with a massive gap of 55.128 seconds from the rest of the pack.

The Bryants had earlier clinched first place from pole in the 24-lap Qualifying and were virtually unchallenged for the victory. They finished a comfortable 42.023 seconds ahead of runner-up Guillermo

Fierro in Race One.

Fierro, in a 1960 Maserati T61, was the runner-up once again in Race Two, while Edwin Stucky and Ludovic Cholley sharing the duties in a 1964 Shelby Cobra Daytona completed the podium placers in third. They were 1m 48.311s off the winners' pace.

In fourth were Peter Muelder and Christian Traber in a 1965 Bizzarrini 5300 GT, fifth was Malte Muller-Wrede in a 1965 Marcos 1800 GT, and in sixth were Jan Gijzen and Anthony Schrauwen in a 1958 Lister Knobbly.

The Bahrain Classic Challenge was held in co-operation with Patrick Peter's Sixties Endurance Racing Series, which is a popular category featuring iconic machines and usually only found at Europe's premier venues.

Aside from the racing, thousands enjoyed the wide variety of family entertainment all throughout the day at the BIC vending area.

There was an array of

acts to keep young children engaged, while everyone was left in awe by a series of thrilling performances, chief amongst which was the exciting Monster Truck Show.

This was worth the entrance fee alone, with the drivers showing all of their 60 years of combined experience as they did jumps and stunts over parked cars ... or simply drove straight over them. The local scrapyard should be making a killing this week!

Also wowing audiences was the Stannage International Stunt Team, who flipped, twirled and drifted their way into the hearts of onlookers as they brought their death-defying tricks to the kingdom with lashings of pyrotechnics.

After being a big hit earlier in the year at the Formula One, the Suspended Catch Air Device (SCAD) Freefall returned to offer thrills and spills ... quite literally. It's the only system in the world that allows you to drop unattached and in a controlled free-fall. The rider gets to the release point at 50m high by using a winch

via cage to the top.

The SCAD jump master activates a descend system and releases the diver after a countdown, after which there is an unattached freefall.

Another brilliant act was Maple Staplegun. Armed with hula hoops, office items and a quirky attitude, Maple amazed with manipulations mixed with absurd improvisations and physical comedy.

After the fans had left the circuit and the cars were being packed away for shipping, the BIC's chief executive Shaikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa expressed his delight at the success of the festival.

He said: "Fourteen years after our very first GT Festival, it has been a pleasure to welcome all the teams and fans to the BIC for a weekend of superb action and entertainment. I thank our partners at SRO motorsport, the team here at the BIC, the Bahrain Motor Federation, as well as our sponsors. Without all of them, this weekend would not have been possible."

Campbell trains hard in determined bid to finish

From Page 24

She will return to compete again this year having inspired many, including Angus, to step up their game.

He is a member of The House of Prayer, Wheels & Banter Society, made up of a team of enthusiasts who regularly go out cycling and have been also running 5km twice-a-week since January and following YouTube tutorials on technique.



Since then, Campbell has also taken part in four events organised by the Bahrain Triathlon Association, including a sprint triathlon and an Olympic triathlon. He also runs every Saturday at Harbour Gate with other runners, joggers and walkers, and credits the Discipline Academy, a calisthenics and gym centre located at the same location, for improving his strength and conditioning.

He explained: "I'm 57 now, and my goal, since I seriously started training, was to finish a 70.3 before my 60th birthday. If I finish this weekend, then great, and if I can't quite manage it then I have three more years to try again!"

"I've had so much support from friends and family. My sincere thanks go to Discipline Academy; Skate Shack Cycling; Go Tri Life; Bahrain Triathlon Association; Boost Bahrain; Hamala Beach Resort, and finally, my son Roddy who purchased a second-hand 1980's Peugeot aluminium racing bike to enable me to train whilst I visited him in Newfoundland to ride with him while I was there. It's a lot hillier and colder in Canada, so it's put me in good stead!"

"Last but not least to my long-suffering wife, Janet.

"Ultimately, I'm trying not to set myself a goal as finishing in itself will be a tremendous accomplishment ... but if I can get under seven hours, I'll be delighted."

This year's course will kick off at The Avenues Bahrain waters, where one lap of 1.9km will begin and finish at the mall. This event will incorporate a rolling swim start for age group athletes and professional athletes.

Competitors will then transition to the bike, riding from the landmark twisted tower in Bahrain Bay through the city, passing landmarks such as the Bahrain World Trade Centre, Bahrain Financial Harbour, Dilmun Burial Mounds, National Charter Monument, Bahrain International Circuit and then back to Manama.

Finally, there is a three-loop run course on King Faisal Highway, giving spectators a chance to cheer on the athletes. Families and friends can watch and wait for their loved ones next to The Avenues, where the finish line will be situated.



MEDAL MOMENT: Campbell has 2018 shirt and prize to match



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READY FOR ACTION



TAKING A SOAKING: Campbell in action last year and, below, his inspiration Al Shaikha

THE kingdom's fitness fanatics, along with premier athletes from around the world, will be converging on land and sea this weekend for the annual Ironman 70.3 Middle East Championship Bahrain.

The gruelling triathlon, featuring a swim, a bike ride and a run, will take place on Saturday and encompass a point-to-point race that passes by the island's new and historic attractions. Whilst many eyes will be on the professionals who are competing at the latest stop on the world circuit, in many ways it is the amateurs who are the true heroes of the events, competing for personal pride and satisfaction over international glory.

One such competitor is Angus Campbell, 57, who is competing in his first full Ironman a year on from taking part in the swim section as part of a relay team, which also consisted of his friends Fran Treadgold and Tom Reynolds.

The Scotsman, who is the CEO of the Bahrain Financial Harbour Holding Company when he isn't busy training for the triathlon, was inspired last year by what he saw and has decided to take a step up this year.

He said: "I only did the swim last year, but I was immediately swept in by how great the atmosphere was. Everyone was very supportive and encouraging. To be honest, considering the intensity and pressure, it was



IRONMAN
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kristian@gulfweekly.com

very friendly.

"At our level, it isn't really competitive and your only goal is whatever time you want to achieve personally. There's no failure ... unless you don't make it across the finish line of course!"

"Although I took part in the relay last year and was euphoric just to finish that part, I was overwhelmed by a certain lady, Shaikha Al Shaiba, who was competing in the entire event with one arm.

"I must admit that I felt slightly ashamed not being

able to do a full Ironman with all my limbs and being perfectly fit, whilst this inspirational woman did it. That galvanised me to get off my backside and make sure I'd do the whole event."

Action girl Shaikha was featured in *Gulf Weekly* before the Ironman last year. She lost her arm following complications after treatment to remove a growth, which was discovered when she was six-months-old. Two operations later in Bahrain and gangrene set in, bone cancer was diagnosed and specialists in London had to amputate part of the limb almost up to the shoulder.

Turn to Page 23



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