COVER STORY

Balancing act
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USEFUL NUMBERS

Emergency 999
Worldwide Emergency Number 112
Kahramaa – Electricity and Water 991
Local Directory 180
International Calls Enquires 150
Hamad International Airport 40106666
Labor Department 44508111, 44460537
Mowasalat Taxi 44588888
Qatar Airways 44490000
Hamad Medical Corporation 44392222, 44393333
Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation 44845555, 44845464
Primary Health Care Corporation 44593333, 44593363
Qatar Assistive Technology Centre 44594050
Qatar News Agency 44496005
Q-Post – General Postal Corporation 44464444

Humanitarian Services Office
(Single window facility for the repatriation of bodies)
Ministry of Interior 40253371, 40253372, 40253369
Ministry of Health 40253370, 40253364
Hamad Medical Corporation 40253364, 40253365
Qatar Airways 40253374

PRAYER TIME

Fajr 3.25am
Shorooq (sunrise) 4.52am
Zuhr (noon) 11.32am
Asr (afternoon) 2.59pm
Maghreb (sunset) 6.12pm
Isha (night) 7.42pm

quote

“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”
— Thomas A Edison

COMMUNITY

Community Editor
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Round & About

Ayogya
DIRECTION: Venkat Mohan
CAST: Vishal, Raashi Khanna, Parthiban
SYNOPSIS: A corrupt police officer decides to alter his life choices and change his actions after he encounters the death of a young innocent child.
THEATRES: Landmark, The Mall, Royal Plaza

Kee
DIRECTION: Kalees
CAST: Jiiva, RJ Balaji, Anaika Soti
SYNOPSIS: Kee exists in two worlds. It is a cyber thriller. It is a love story. And the big problem is that it can’t find a balance – everything seems the same old. Keeles fills his frames with technology. There is no proper storytelling. Kee comes as a reminder that everyone who carries a smartphone is a potential prey for hackers.
THEATRE: The Mall

Royal Plaza Cinema
Palace (1): Maharshi (Telugu) 2:15pm; Maharshi (Telugu) 8:15pm; Student of The Year 2 (Hindi) 11:30pm.
Royal Plaza Cinema Palace (2): Uyare (Malayalam) 3pm; Long Shot (2D) 9pm; Ayogya (Tamil) 11:15pm.
Royal Plaza Cinema Palace (3): 100 (Tamil) 2:15pm; Avengers: Endgame (2D) 8:15pm; Uyare (Malayalam) 11:30pm.

The Mall Cinema (1):
Maharshi (Telugu) 2:15pm; Maharshi (Telugu) 8:15pm; Kee (Tamil) 11:30pm.
The Mall Cinema (2):
Ayogya (Tamil) 2:30pm; Student of The Year 2 (Hindi) 8:15pm; Ayogya (Tamil) 11pm.
The Mall Cinema (3):
Student of The Year 2 (Hindi) 2:30pm; Avengers: Endgame (2D) 8:30pm; Uyare (Malayalam) 11:30pm.

Landmark Cinema (1): Uyare (Malayalam) 3pm; Uyare (Malayalam) 8:30pm; Avengers: Endgame (2D) 11pm.
Landmark Cinema (2): Maharshi (Telugu) 2:15pm; Maharshi (Telugu) 8:15pm; Uyare (Malayalam) 11:30pm.
Landmark Cinema (3): Ayogya (Tamil) 2:30pm; Student of The Year 2 (Hindi) 8:15pm; Ayogya (Tamil) 11pm.
**EVENTS**

India to Qatar – Symbiosis of Cultures  
**WHERE:** FBQ Museum  
**WHEN:** Ongoing till July 31  
Under the context of cultural exchange, FBQ Museum brings together the treasures of the museum owned collection in order to promote mutual understanding, recognition and appreciation between Qatar and India. Composed of five main topics, including historic links between Qatar and India, and cultural similarities between Qatar and India.

**Ballet Lessons**  
**WHERE:** Music and Arts Atelier  
**WHEN:** Ongoing  
**TIME:** 4pm – 8pm  
For more info e-mail at registration@atelierqatar.com or call on 33003839.

**Summer Camp for Special Needs**  
**WHERE:** Step by Step Centre for Special Needs  
**WHEN:** June 30 – August 1  
**TIME:** 8:00am – 12:30pm  
During this time, all therapists and teachers will be working together, running individual, peer and group sessions within classes. The children will continue learning age-appropriate concepts, work on social skills, life skills training, arts and crafts, music, and fun activities such as water play.

**PLEASE UNDERSTAND ME! : A Parent-Child Workshop**  
**WHERE:** Inspire Training Academy, C-Ring Road  
**WHEN:** May 18  
**TIME:** 3:30pm – 7pm  
Right Track presents ‘PLEASE UNDERSTAND ME!’ – a unique parent-child workshop aimed at helping you create a deeper bond with your child by understand his/her motivators and stressors, preferred learning styles and multiple intelligences. Early bird registration closes on May 15. (Includes Iftar boxes for fasting participants). For further details, contact 55448835.

**Arabic Calligraphy Workshop**  
**WHERE:** TCA Campus, Behind Gulf Times Building  
**WHEN:** Wednesday – Monday  
**TIME:** 6pm  
Arabic Calligraphy workshop is back. Come and learn the artistic practice of Arabic handwriting and calligraphy at Music and Arts Atelier. The lessons will take place every Saturday, Monday and Wednesday at 6pm. For more information, contact registration@atelierqatar.com

**Artistic Gymnastic Classes**  
**WHERE:** Qatar Academy Msheireb  
**WHEN:** Ongoing  
**TIME:** 3:15pm – 4:15pm  
The olympic sport using horizontal bar, rings and floor exercises on mats for the children from age 4 till 16. Only for QR280 per person.

**After School Activities**  
**WHERE:** Atelier  
**WHEN:** Ongoing  
Music and arts activities for students taking place after they finish their day in school includes Group Music lessons, Hip-hop, Ballet, Drawing and Painting, Drama Theatre & Taekwondo. Ages between 5 and 10 years old after school hours.

**Hobby Classes**  
**WHERE:** Mamangam Performing Art Centre  
**WHEN:** Wednesday – Monday  
Mamangam Performing Art Centre, is a holistic performing arts institution and a one stop solution for adults as well as children looking to explore their talents in various art forms. We offer classes in contemporary, Bollywood, hip hop, Indian classical dance, music (Hindustani and Carnatic), arts and craft, karate, yoga, percussion (Chenda, Thimila, Elathalam and Madhalam), violin, harmonium, public speaking. Additional services include dance education, choreograph music videos and dance cover albums, choreograph dance musical projects, corporate workshops and events, choreograph events for schools, colleges, alumni meets and corporate and choreography events. For details, call 33897609.

**Career Guidance**  
**WHERE:** Right Track Consultants, Al Sadd  
**WHEN:** Sunday – Thursday  
**TIME:** 6pm – 8pm  
Career guidance for course, country, college and entrance for students of Grade IX-XII, of all curriculum. Career assessments administered for stream preference, career test, branch preference, personality, multiple intelligence and learning styles and productivity. For more information, 55448835.

**Sunset Desert Safari with Iftar**  
**WHERE:** Sealine Beach  
**TIME:** 2pm – 10pm  
Enjoy a day out in the relaxing singing sand dunes of Mesaieed along with a thrilling dune bashing experience. This 8-hour getaway takes you all the way to the breath-taking inland sea beach aka Khor Al Adaid to watch the Sunset. Break your fast with lavish Iftar at the resort. Only for QR280 per person.

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Compiled by Nausheen Shakh. E-mail: gtlisting@gmail.com. Events and timings subject to change.
‘Motherhood penalty’

Time’s Up and #MeToo have provoked long overdue conversations about inequality, but less attention has been paid to how a lack of support for families in a competitive, male-dominated industry may be holding women back, writes Meredith Blake.

Nearly every mother in Hollywood has a horror story.

There was the time screenwriter and showrunner Aline Brosh McKenna was 8½ months pregnant and a studio executive joked, “I guess today would be a bad day to punch you in the stomach.”

There was the time Nisha Ganatra, director of the upcoming Mindy Kaling film Late Night, went on a scouting trip to India when she was a new mom and found herself driving around the country in a van “with 15 dudes,” pumping breast milk in “a woodshed in the middle of a desert and an outhouse behind a restaurant.”

There was the time a dream job offer fell through for Oscar-nominated Mudbound cinematographer Rachel Morrison because producers panicked that she’d be going back to work a few weeks after giving birth — something she was willing to do to help realise one of the most exciting scripts she had ever read. The experience, she says, “made me acutely aware of the prejudices in this industry, specifically in my line of work.”

Being a working parent in the United States, the only developed nation in the world without a federal paid parental leave policy and where the cost of childcare can consume a single paycheck, is challenging no matter one’s gender or line of work.

It is especially hard on mothers, who are more likely to rearrange their work schedules to take care of their families and, according to research, are often hit by a “motherhood penalty” — losing out on raises and job opportunities because they are perceived as less professionally committed than their child-free peers (and men with children). Numbers can vary, but a groundbreaking 2001 study by sociologists Michelle Budig and Paula England found a wage penalty of 5 percent to 7 percent (depending on experience) for each child a woman has.

For women in entertainment — an industry where the hours are gruelling and unpredictable and travel to faraway locations is the

This is an industry that does not protect the interest of parents

— Aline Brosh McKenna, co-creator and showrunner of Crazy Ex-Girlfriend and mom of two teenagers
norm — the conflict between work and family can be brutal. While executives at places like Netflix get generous paid leave and many studios have on-site childcare centres, Hollywood is powered by an army of freelance artists and crew members who do not have reliable access to such perks.

Time’s Up and #MeToo have provoked long overdue conversations about inequality in Hollywood, but less attention has been paid to how a lack of support for families — especially mothers — in a competitive, male-dominated industry may be holding women back.

“The hours and the travel associated with production, coupled with a lack of resources, are a huge contributor to the gender disparity,” says Sara Fischer, head of production for Shondaland, the company founded by writer-producer Shonda Rhimes.

Workplace discrimination against women who are breastfeeding or pregnant is illegal, but women in a variety of roles in the business — from writers, actors and directors to below-the-line crew members — say they’ve faced significant challenges, skepticism and even outright hostility as mothers. Some, including a Netflix employee who recently alleged she was fired after becoming pregnant, have taken legal action.

On top of that, pop culture, for generations largely created by men, rarely seems to get motherhood right. (Would you believe not every woman’s water breaks with a dramatic gush?) The word “pregnant” was once too vulgar for I Love Lucy, but thanks to female-led shows, including Better Things, I’m Sorry and Jane the Virgin, which depict the ups and downs of parenthood with bracing honesty, and performers like Amy Schumer and Ali Wong using their pregnant bodies as comedic weapons, that is beginning to change over time.

And now some powerful women in the business are trying to transform a Hollywood culture they see as antithetical to parenting by working throughout their pregnancies, creating kid-friendly workspaces, pushing for more humane, predictable hours and normalising things like pumping breast milk on location.

At a time when television is driving the cultural conversation, the writers room is a bubbling cauldron of creativity, but for parents it can also be a kind of prison. In contrast to screenwriters, who generally work alone and make their own hours, TV writers who generally work alone and have taken legal action.

In her job as showrunner of the upcoming Hulu series Little Fires Everywhere, she’s taken family schedules into consideration, choosing a writers room in a convenient location for her overwhelmingly female staff rather than one in Venice, near her home.

“Combining gruelling, unpredictable hours with an atmosphere of widespread sexual harassment — a survey last year by the WGA West found that 64 percent of female writers had experienced workplace harassment — and it’s little wonder gender parity seems so far off. In October, NCIS: New Orleans showrunner Brad Kern was fired for a string of harassment allegations, among them, allegedly bullying a nursing mother on his writing staff.

“Tell women they should expect to go to work and not see their children,” Brosh McKenna says, “I definitely think it’s keeping women out of the business.”

“Virtually all writers in television are freelance contractors with little job security, which makes family planning difficult,” The Writers Guild recently negotiated a policy that allows staff writers on episodic television the right to take up to eight weeks of unpaid leave to take care of a new child and guarantees they can return to their original position — that is, if it still exists.

“Sleep is anathema to parenting by working throughout their pregnancies, creating kid-friendly workspaces, pushing for more humane, predictable hours and normalising things like pumping breast milk on location. — Shonda Rhimes, showrunner and single mom of three

seasons and there’s nothing you can do about it,” Brosh McKenna says. And working while expectant can be complicated, even when you’re the boss.

Liz Tigelaar was hired as showrunner on the Hulu comedy Casual when she was early in her first trimester and excited about the job, which would keep her busy until baby arrived. Having faced a long road via IVF and uncertain the pregnancy would stick, she kept the happy news to herself. But her exhaustion was intense, so Tigelaar occasionally resorted to napping on a foam egg crate in her car because she didn’t have a private office, just a shared writers room.

In her job as showrunner of the upcoming Hulu series Little Fires Everywhere, she’s taken family schedules into consideration, choosing a writers room in a convenient location for her overwhelmingly female staff rather than one in Venice, near her home.

“Accommodating a room around parents — and really mothers, because I feel like mothers have a different thing going on, whether people want to admit it or not — is really important,” she says.

As one of TV’s most powerful showrunners and a single mother of three, Shonda Rhimes has attempted to foster a parent-friendly work environment because, she says, “It’s a ridiculous idea to pretend that everybody is childless and to pretend that childcare is free and simple and easy to get.” On the set of shows like Scandal, nursing rooms and playrooms are standard. She has had crew members build bigger porches on the trailers for pregnant actresses so they wouldn’t have to teeter on narrow, unstable steps.

“Part of the culture here that nobody’s going to blink if there’s a kid in the office playing on the floor rolling a car,” she says of Shondaland, where employees are welcome to bring children.

That’s born out of the fact that when I wrote Grey’s Anatomy, I wrote it with a baby strapped to my chest. She learned to walk up and down the hallways of Grey’s. For me, that was the way this was going to work.”

Sara Fischer likes to say she has a St. Elsewhere baby, a “thirtysomething” baby and a Chicago Hope baby. Now the head of production at Shondaland, Fischer is a TV veteran and mother of three who spent years on set as an assistant director in an era when the industry was even less hospitable to working mothers.

During one of her pregnancies, a producer on a network drama told Fischer she’d be fired if she was caught sitting down, so she sat while hidden by a system of apple boxes in case he came to set.

In the mid-’90s, when her youngest child was a newborn who nursed constantly, Fischer was asked to work on the pilot for Buffy the Vampire Slayer. She had two kids at home with a nanny and didn’t want to lose money by paying a second caregiver to come to set. So she hired a college student who was interested in production to watch the baby, put her in front of the lens each day, and paid her as an extra. — Los Angeles Times/TNS
LIGS Golf Society organises 2019 Annual LIGS Ryder Cup

LIGS Golf Society recently organised 2019 Annual LIGS Ryder Cup at Doha Golf Club. The LIGS Golf Society offers golfers the opportunity to compete against fellow golf enthusiasts and to enjoy the social integration and expansion of the sport within Qatar. The season’s tournament kicked off with the Ryder Cup fixture between England and the Rest of the World. Following Aaron King’s Team England’s defeat in 2018 from Captain Pete Veale’s Team Rest of the World in 2018, this year’s Jamie Rooms’s England Team, embraced by old and new members in true golfing sportsmanship, won the competition from McNaughtan’s Rest of the World.

The annual tournament is supported by Byrnes, Hoare Lea and Q-fasteners. The signature gala prize-giving dinner was hosted at Doha Golf Club open terrace.

MES secures second runners up in CBSE Qatar Cluster Chess Tournament

The Boys’ and Girls’ Chess Team of MES Indian School recently bagged the overall second runners up position in the CBSE Qatar Cluster Chess Tournament which was held at Birla Public School for the students under 11, 14, 17 and 19 categories. In a tournament that had the participation from all the CBSE schools in Doha, MES secured 46 points in aggregate including the team championship to its credit by virtue of 4 gold medals in Girls’ Under-19 Category. In Under-14 Girls and Under 19, 17 and 14 Boys Categories of the tournament, MES bagged 16 bronze medals.

The Girls’ U-19 Team of MES got selected for the CBSE Chess National Championship to held in India later this year. Hameeda Kadar, Principal of MES, appreciated the efforts of the students.

WORKSHOP: Shantiniketan Indian School recently organised a workshop on ‘Total Quality Management’ for its faculty members, conducted by Dr Dheeraj Mehrotra, an academic evangelist, author and national awardee. Teachers were actively engaged in hands-on training in developing papers that can help in Statistical Quality Management, using various tools, including flow charts, brainstorming, data collection, graphics, pie diagrams, stratification, pareto analysis and histogram and cause and effect. Dr Dheeraj Mehrotra encouraged a discussion on problem solving, channelising, exploring, reasoning and identification. One hundred and sixty teachers participated in the workshop.
KRY elects new office bearers

Kirat Rai Yayokkha (KRY), an organisation of Qatar-based Nepali of Kirat Rai ethnic group, recently organised its 7th Convention. The event was chaired by Ekraj Rai, outgoing Chairman of KRY. Shiva Kumar Bhujel, Nepali community leader, was the chief guest at the event. The event also featured cultural dance performances, including Sakela and Dhami dance.


— Text and photo by Usha Wagle Gautam

DPS-MIS celebrates Lemonade Day

The Nursery Section of DPS-Modern Indian School (DPS-MIS) recently celebrated Lemonade Day. The students were dressed in yellow colour. Asna Naifee, Principal of DPS-MIS, also graved the occasion. A lemonade stall was also set-up on the occasion. The teachers also demonstrated a session on how to make lemonade. The lemonade was distributed to the security and the support staff to acknowledge their service that they provide in the torrid heat of the season.
Ramadan is a month of compassion and charity. The Muslims tend to give more and more charity in this month. They also get more compassionate towards the needy people.

An extraordinary illustration of such altruism was seen during a recent fundraising Suhoor organised by Pakistan Welfare Forum (PWF) in co-ordination with Qatar Charity. The Pakistani expatriate community attended the event in large numbers. They managed to raise as much as QR1.342 million to support educational and welfare programmes for Pakistani community in Qatar.

The Annual Suhoor gathering and fundraising event of PWF, a community welfare forum working under the patronage of the Pakistan embassy, was organised at Regency Hall in Al Hilal area. Fareed Khalil al-Siddieqy, Head of Admin Support Division Qatar Charity, was the guest of honour on the occasion. Hafiz Junaid Sial, Community Welfare Attaché at Embassy of Pakistan, was the chief guest. A large number of professionals, businessmen as well as philanthropists from the expatriate Pakistani community participated in the event.

Fareed al-Siddieqy, speaking on the occasion, appreciated the partnership between QC and PWF and informed the participants that QC is working with various communities in Qatar since long and has established a special centre to take care of deserving and destitute individuals and families. “Qatar Charity believes in providing hope and serve vulnerable communities in dignified ways by responding to their humanitarian and development needs”, Fareed added. He informed that QC has divided its works in different sections, including development projects, humanitarian assistance and sponsorship. He further disclosed that QC has spent nearly QR1.595 million on 58 beneficiaries of the Pakistani community during 2018 mainly in education and health sectors. He assured that this assistance would be continuing during the coming year as well for the benefit of deserving families.

Fareed al-Siddieqy hoped that ongoing relations between QC and PWF would be strengthened and enlarged in the coming months for jointly carrying out various welfare projects for deserving families of the Pakistani community in Qatar.

Tahir Mehmood, General Secretary of PWF, highlighted the forum’s background and achievements in various welfare programmes, including education, family welfare, medical and legal help for the needy. He appreciated the trust and full support of Pakistani community to PWF since its inception. He said that PWF has managed to engage the Pakistani families. He said that PWF members and help the needy Pakistan families.

Ahmad Hussain, President of PWF, appreciated QC for their support and their co-operation for PWF.

Mohammed Idrees Anwar, PWF’s founder member, quoted various verses of Holy Qur’an and Ahadiths [sayings] of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for giving special care to the destitute families through zakat and sadaqa and encouraged the participants to be generous enough to become PWF members and help the needy Pakistan families.

Ahmad also highlighted the operation of QC. He acknowledged the community admires PWF for welfare endeavours whereas the forum pledges to reach out to those who are in need of support.

Ahmed also unveiled PWF’s next project which is ‘Community Development Programme’ under which skill training would be offered in variety of trades to expatriate Pakistani youth both male and females helping them to become a part of skilled workforce in Qatar.

Mudassir Raja
International British School (IBS) recently organised Graduation Ceremony for the students of Grade VI and IX. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Shamila Ahmed, Founder and Managing Director of IBS, stressed on the students to equip themselves with adequate skills and knowledge to face the challenges and to excel in their career. Shaji Ali, CEO of IBS, said, “Dream big and achieve what you desire for.”

The ceremony was attended by Dr Harry, Principal of IBS, Ambily, Primary Co-ordinator; Cescil, Class teacher of Grade VI; Asia, Nuciba, Sajinee, Shani, Naimot, and Hisham, Co-ordinators; and Imran, Class teacher of Grade IX.

Hafiz Junaid Sial said, “On behalf of Syed Ahsan Raza Shah, Ambassador of Pakistan, I wish you all a very happy and blessed Ramadan. This event is planned every year. The very essence of this event is based on a very strong pillar of Islam that is Muslim brotherhood and serving others. I believe PWF has been playing a pivotal role in this regard. Collaboration with QC has synergised the efforts of the forum. The recent example is opening of First Ihsan School besides other projects undertaken by PWF.”

Talking to Community, Fareed al-Siddiqy said, “We have been working for development and welfare of different communities in Qatar culturally, socially, economically, educationally and medically. Such activities cannot be carried out completely by our own. We get co-operation and support from all communities living in Qatar. “The Pakistani community is one of the largest communities in Qatar. We have been working together for the development and welfare of the community. We have different kinds of projects in health and education that we support together. We both are raising funds to support different programmes.”

He added, “We work for all communities. My message to them is to join hands together and work for different expatriate communities. We all are together here. We need to work together. We also appreciate the donors who generate funds for charity works in Qatar. It is very necessary to continue our projects in Qatar.”

Acknowledgement:
Ahmad Hussain, President of PWF, appreciated QC for their tremendous support, co-operation and becoming partner of PWF in carrying out various projects and initiatives that would provide tremendous opportunities to those who value social responsibility.

The Alumni Association of India’s Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) recently organised AMU Alumni Qatar Community Iftar at Museum of Islamic Art Park. The Iftar was attended by more than 200 people including alumni, families and guests. Dr M S Bukhari, prominent expatriate industrialist and Chief Patron of AMU Alumni, was the chief guest at the event. The special guests at the event included Mohammad Sibtain Syed, Muntaz Hussain, Abhinash Gaikwad and Yawer. The programme was co-ordinated by Zeyaul Haque, Mohshir Alam, Javed Sultan, Farman Khan and Dr Ashna Nusrat. The event kicked off with a dua by Al Shaikh Mahmood Anani. He also spoke about the importance of the Holy Month of Ramadan and Zakat. He mentioned that Ramadan is a wonderful opportunity to repent for sins and wrong doings. “We should take the momentum forward and work for the purity of soul and enhancement of Tawwa,” he said. Dr MS Bukhari along with AMUAAQ committee members presented certificates of appreciation to multi-specialised free medical camp.

Dr Bukhari appreciated the President and team for multi specialised services and encouraged to keep up the good works. Jawed Ahmad thanked to all the guests and requested all the Alumni to keep up the good work and share the innovative ideas for the uplift of community and society.

The event was attended by Qamare Alam, Ali Imran, Dr Syed Jaffery, Shihab Yar Khan, Dr Nadeem Zafar Jilani, Zaauddin Ahmad, Abdul Karim, Abu Rizwan, Asif Khan, Ahmed, Imtiyaz Ahmad, Sanjeev Sharma, Khalid, Irfan Hassan, Irfanullah, Reza, Rizwan, Kashif, Tabish, Firoz Khan, Dr Moin Khan, and Shab Kaisar.
As a passionate photographer, I create a list of places to capture during weekends. The city of Doha — and Qatar as a country — has its own uniqueness at different times of the day. My favourite time to capture landscape pictures is half an hour before and after sunset.

However, I saw something very different recently when I visited the Doha Corniche on a Friday morning with my camera. The calmness in the surroundings and the beautiful sky really caught my attention. The serenity of a calm city brought so much peace to my soul that day.

While I drove further down towards the Fanar Islamic Museum I saw the refreshing look of this landmark building against the beautiful blue sky. The nearby Falcon Souq was another place that provides some nice architectural buildings on a cloudy day.

I use a Nikon D7100 with the 18-200mm lens which is suitable for any situation. However, I have few prime lenses which are used for specific photography projects. My favourite lens is the Nikon 85mm f1.8, which gives me very sharp pictures almost always.

(Part 2 appears in tomorrow’s edition)

— Text and photos by Rizny Ismail
@riznyismail
Amusing *Poms* celebrates senior-citizen cheerleaders

By Joseph V. Amodio

ack in the days on her hit sitcom *Cheers*, Rhea Perlman – as the hilariously caustic-witted Carla – would be more likely to wisecrack about cheerleaders than wax eloquent about them.

So it’s amusing to see her now, in the trailer for *Poms*, admitting to Diane Keaton and Jacki Weaver, “I always did want to be a cheerleader.”

Apparently, it’s true.

“The cheerleaders in my high school were the coolest girls – of course I wanted to be one,” says Perlman. 71. Perlman had to settle for being a “Go Getter,” a group several rungs below the cheerleader that sold team jackets. “We didn’t get to do anything with pompoms,” she says.

Well, it’s never too late. That’s the message behind *Poms*, starring Keaton, Weaver, Perlman and Pam Grier as women who form a ragtag cheerleading squad in their retirement community.

Directed by British documentary filmmaker Zara Hayes, the movie is inspired by a real-life phenomenon – senior citizen cheerleader groups that in recent years have sprung up across the country. These silver-haired cheerers, many with no traditional cheering experience, are ignoring the concerns of well-meaning (or out-and-out hostile) relatives and friends, and challenging notions of how women, especially women of a certain age, should act.

In Search Of Senior Spirit

It may come as something of a surprise to learn that cheerleading, with its pompoms and team pride, is a distinctly American pastime.

“When I was growing up, it didn’t exist in England,” says Hayes. “I think that’s why I was so intrigued by it.”

But unlike other iconic American inventions – baseball, jazz – cheerleading doesn’t get much respect, and cheerleaders in pop culture are often portrayed as cruel, cliquish, shallow. “I think it’s because it’s still seen as a female thing, and frivolous,” says Hayes.

And not for grown-ups – certainly not card-carrying members of the AARP.

That reality is made quite clear in *Poms* when Martha, a cynical New Yorker (played by Keaton) moves to a retirement community in Georgia. Fighting her own depression over mortality, and looking to shake things up, Martha decides to form a cheerleading squad. But who will you cheer for, she’s asked.

“Us,” she states. The crew she cobbles together – nursing home shoulders, new knees – finds itself in a high school gymnasium, stunned by the feats of today’s athletic cheerleaders. So was Perlman.

“When we walked into that auditorium, I had no idea that what cheerleaders had become,” she recalled.

Anybody who’s spent any time at Long Island Cheer, a training facility for enthusiasts starting at age five, knows that today’s cheerleaders rely heavily on gymnastic skills (flips, leaps, tumbling), with any and all genders participating.

Under the tutelage of choreographer Marguerite Pomerin Derrick, who has created moves for *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *A Bad Moms Christmas*, and *Little Miss Sunshine*, Keaton, Perlman and company rehearsed for several days in Los Angeles, then a week – a sort of cheerleading boot camp – in Atlanta, where the film was shot.

“I feel like we were practising all the time,” says Perlman, who also practised to a recording in her hotel room. They had to learn each routine twice – to a recording in her hotel room. They had to learn each routine twice –

Finding Great Source Material

As a documentary filmmaker, Hayes was eager to connect with real senior cheerleaders, and interviewed many, finding inspiration in their stories.

One woman in her mid-sixties, after surviving breast cancer, taught herself to do a split, something she’d always wanted to achieve. “I was like, this is amazing,” says Hayes, who admits she’s never been able to do them herself. “I’d tapped into something about ageing and women and what we expect women of a certain age to do?”

Or not do. Senior cheerleaders – even today – face serious pressures to act their age. And lower those hemlines.

Perlman’s character is discouraged from taking part by her husband, who makes it clear he thinks such activity – and short cheerleader skirts – inappropriate.

In real life, Perlman has never faced such limitations from others – “That’s not gonna happen,” she says, chuckling – but admits she limits herself. When shopping, she’s found herself drawn to clothes her daughters, who are in their thirties, might wear. Perlman is trim, fit, works out regularly, and knows she’d look good in them. “But then I go, ‘Wow, I probably shouldn’t wear these … because it doesn’t feel appropriate.’ So I still have some of that in my head.”

But maybe there’s hope. The majority of cheerleaders Hayes interviewed said they’d received abundant support from loved ones. And most people who hear the premise of the film?

“They just smile, she says. As a testament to that, Hayes added a surprise during the film’s final credits – a sequence of videos, made to look like real social media posts from people around the world imitating Martha’s cheerleading moves. In the film, Martha’s cheerleading is recorded and posted online, with the hashtag #Martashoves, much to her embarrassment. Hayes wondered what it might look like if such a thing went viral, and so sent footage of Keaton to various people across the world – from Burbank to Bangladesh – and let them create their own homage. The videos are fictional, but the enthusiasm in participants’ eyes seems real.

“It feels like there really is a viral hashtag – which I hope there will be when the film comes out,” says Hayes. “I mean, I really hope everyone starts doing ‘The Martha.’” – *Newsday*TNS
### Wordsearch

**Every letter of the alphabet is used at least once.**

Squares with the same number in have the same letter in. Work out which number represents which letter.

```
T D I N D E L T N A T E I S M  
S R E G I G E F S J Y U I L W  
A X E H N K N J T A N S B B R  
L Y O D C F G R O N O C S N E  
B W S A N A A H J G H R H V T  
L Z R E K U Z D J L P E R R T  
S X T V S O H B F E O E I O A  
T D L C B I E T B P C C E D L  
I G X P E C O P S J A H K W C  
Z L O R L V K N A L C I O R H  
M D A E C X K M K L L Y K Z A  
E L B B A B Y S A P M U H T T  
B A L L F X H N A P R O A R T  
B O L L S Z G W P I R K J W E  
T V B M I X C X I F P U V K R  
```

**Babble**  
DIN  
**Clank**  
Shriek  
**Roar**  
Blast  
**Babel**  
Howl  
**Clatter**  
Cacophony  
**Screech**  
Jangle  
**Blare**  
Thump  
**Chatter**  
Noise  
**Din**  
Thunder  
**Shriek**  
Clang  
**Blast**  
Racket  
**Howl**  
Yowl

### Codeword

**Codeword**

### Sudoku

Sudoku is a puzzle based on a 9x9 grid. The grid is divided into nine 3x3 squares. You are given a selection of values and to complete the puzzle, you must fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 square contains each of the digits 1-9 exactly once.

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4 1 8 7 6
6 1 3
4 5
7 6 1 4 3
2 4 8 9
9 8 2 1 3
2 6
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### Poomch Cafe

**Codeword**

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```
Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1 Garden seat designed for dogs (5,5)
7 Bishop’s warning about a Canadian province (7)
8 Nothing holds a fastener (4)
10 Profound philosopher’s first seen by river (4)
11 It proves playing is playful (8)
13 In France you read Italian (6)
15 Terrible ordeal in Texas city (6)
17 Cambridge eccentric losing male budgerigar, for example (4,4)
18 Compassion, we hear, for male deer (4)
21 Flier going round old vessel (4)
22 Shopkeeper we hear being more offensive (7)
23 Conventional mother bathing, perhaps (10)

Down
1 Part of roof beginning to break in high wind (5)
2 Some fearless nobleman (4)
3 Vagrants given transport to outskirts of Paris (6)
4 Odd seaman with girl on lake (5)
5 Journalist provided with cool building (7)
6 Standard deviation in tricky ads (9)
9 False step - error made by journalists (9)
12 Teacher not about to waffle (6,2)
14 Leo, for example, or a lady abroad (7)
16 Bishop, correct and smart (6)
19 A service revolution in part of India (5)
20 Ferry port gets rid of last bird (4)

Colouring

Answers

Wordsearch

Codeword

Yesterday’s Solutions
Get the fashion game right in summer

Scorching heat should not be your reason to ditch your fashion quotient. Embrace your natural beauty and minimalist aesthetics to bring out the best version of yourself in the summer season.

Stafford Braganza, National Makeup Artist at NYX Professional Makeup, gives tips and tricks to put your best face forward for a fresh look.

– Start fresh: Begin with splashing cold water on your face to get rid of all the excess oil and pat it dry, followed by application of a lightweight moisturiser.

– Primer comes first: Apply a face and eye primer for a smooth texture and even surface for your foundation to glide on easily. It prevents the foundation from melting down and helps your make-up last longer throughout the day.

– Use a lightweight formula: Avoid using heavy, full coverage foundation as it tends to melt away on sweaty skin. Swap it with a lightweight formula like BB creams or tinted moisturisers that are oil-free and have SPF to protect your skin from the harsh sunlight.

– Say goodbye to powder, and hello to cream: Use creamy versions of blush and eye-shadows as it settles effortlessly over the skin whereas powder tends to wear off easily. You could dust some powder over the cream skin and helps your make-up last longer.

– Go water-proof: Try water-proof versions of eyeliners and mascaras as they are better able to withstand summer sweating and last longer when your lids are moist.

– Love light lips: Choose light and soft summery, coral hues of nudes and pink lip tints and balms are your best friends for a smudge-free pout during the summer.

– Befriend the blotting paper: Always keep blotting paper handy when you are out and about in the heat to take off excess oil and perspiration.

Aries

March 21 – April 19

You generally enjoy your dreams, Aries, both the dreaming process itself and analysing them later. But tonight you might have too many to keep track of. While you will probably recall the most significant ones, it may be frustrating if you forget any of them. This might be the day to start a dream diary, if you don’t have one. Have fun!

Cancer

June 21 – July 22

A cerebral interaction may be at the top of your priority list today, Cancer. You might want to go to your favourite restaurant and have a great meal, including appetisers and dessert. Or you might feel especially energetic and want to take your partner for an engaging social outing. Make sure you don’t overdo trying to impress with your intellect.

Libra

September 23 – October 22

You've been hoping for a quiet day on the job, Virgo, but too many calls could come your way. You might have to juggle several at once. Don’t try to deal with every problem. Exercise your triage abilities and take care of the most pressing first. Let the others go.

Capricorn

December 22 – January 19

A friend may offer you a gift today, Capricorn. It could involve money, favours, time, items you need, or something else. Be discriminating about what you accept, and make sure you offer to reciprocate. Insist, if you must. As generous as your friend may be now, later he or she could feel used or else call in some favours that you aren’t willing to perform. Accept graciously, within limitations.

Aquarius

January 20 – February 18

The temptation to take centre stage might be too strong to resist, Aquarius. Someone may ask you to tell a story. Your gift with words and vivid imagination should serve you well. Keep it brief. If you go on too long, your friends could fidget. Time your performance by watching their expressions. Do it right and you will be asked to do it again.

GEMINI

May 21 – June 20

Today you might work on your spiritual practice or studies, Gemini. You could read a book on the subject, attend a lecture, or practice some kind of discipline such as yoga or meditation. The only caveat is don’t try to do too much at once. You could tire yourself out. Concentrate on one thing at a time. The information will still be there tomorrow!

Scorpio

October 23 – November 21

You look especially attractive today, Scorpio, and it’s doing wonders for your self-esteem. Even members of your household notice. But you probably feel more like staying in than going out. If you want a friend to notice how you look, it might be a good idea to extend an invitation to visit your home. You will get to stay in and still be admired.

Pisces

February 19 – March 20

A gathering could bring you lots of good news and useful information, Pisces. The problem is that there might be too much. You will want to remember it all, but your memory may not be as sharp as usual. Before you attend a gathering, grab a notebook and pen. That way you can write down whatever you want to look into later.

Taurus

April 20 – May 20

Too many invitations to social events may come today, Taurus. This might be one evening when you want to relax at home, but you won’t want to say no to anyone. Analyse each invitation. Consider the location, host, other guests – whatever seems most significant to you. Attend only the ones you think you will really enjoy. Follow your heart.

Leo

July 23 – August 22

Relationship matters may prove too intense today, Leo. You may be having a rough week. Your partner may be especially demanding of your time and energy. This might be a good day to schedule some time alone. Go for a massage, sauna, or hot tub – by yourself – and relax. That way you will be more refreshed when you meet with your friend in the evening.

Virgo

August 23 – September 22

You’ve been hoping for a quiet day on the job, Virgo, but too many calls could come your way. You might have to juggle several at once. Don’t try to deal with every problem. Exercise your triage abilities and take care of the most pressing first. Let the others go.

Sagittarius

November 22 – December 21

Today, Sagittarius, you might want to make a declaration of love. That’s fine if you’ve been involved for a while, although you could overwhelm your partner if the relationship is new, beware! This could feel like too much too soon. Your friend could respond by backing away or even disappearing. Use restraint or you might have the opposite effect to the one you want.
How we should receive Ramadan

People have various ideas and ways of receiving the blessed month of Ramadan and invest this occasion in fulfilling their favourite actions and activities. Some of them make this an occasion for laziness, illleness, sleep and negligence. Some acts of obedience that they could otherwise be doing. Others find this a good opportunity for watching shows on satellite television while others stay up late at night and use this precious time to pay visits, go to markets, relax, make trips and the like while others make it an occasion for exaggeration in eating, drinking and doing whatever they like, as if Ramadan is the month of food and drink, and not the month of fasting.

However, there are some other people for whom Allah The Almighty wants good for and thus guides them to the right way so that they became able to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong. Such people receive this blessed month warmly and happily since they believe that it is a golden opportunity to attain forgiveness for sins and make a new start that would be sin-free. In fact, the blessed month of Ramadan is the month of forgiveness, mercy and emancipation from Hell. The Prophet, sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), used to give his Companions glad tidings on the arrival of Ramadan saying: “There has come to you Ramadan, a blessed month which Allah has enjoined you to fast during which the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hell are closed, and the rebellious devils are chained up. In it there is a night which is better than a thousand months - whoever is deprived of its goodness is indeed deprived.” [An-Nasai, Al-Albaani: Saheeb (Authentic)]

Consequently, these people knew well the virtues, rewards and goodness of this blessed month and thus they decide to reap all these fruits and benefits so that they may not be among those who will say [what Allah The Almighty Says (which means)]: (I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life.) [Qur’an 89:24-25] or say (what Allah The Almighty Says (which means)’: [My Lord, send me back, that I might do righteousness in that which I left behind.] (Qur’an 23:99-100) They do not wish to be among those who will regret their negligence at a time when regret will be of no use.

Therefore, those people whom Allah has guided to receive the blessed month of Ramadan properly, are determined to do the following:

1. Sincere Repentance

   Repentance of sins is obligatory at all times, especially in the month of Ramadan. If a person does not repent in Ramadan, then when would he repent? If one does not feel regret in Ramadan, then when would he feel regret? Allah The Almighty Says (what means): (And turn to Allah in repentance, all of you, O believers, that you might succeed.) [Qur’an 24:31]

   O you who delay His repentance, until when will you postpone it? You told yourself: When I fast in Ramadan, I will repent. Well, here are the days of the blessed month of Ramadan fast approaching, yet you still refuse to turn to your Lord in repentance. You are turning away from Him, not coming closer to Him. You still insist irresolutely on your disobedience. Do you not fear that the Angel of Death may come to you while you are in such a state? How could you be guided to the path of repentance while you firmly insist on going in the opposite direction? Allah The Almighty forgives all sins: He spreads out His Hand at night to accept the repentance of the one who has sinned during the day, and He spreads out His Hand by day to accept the repentance of the one who has sinned during the night. Allah The Almighty rejoices over those who turn to Him in repentance and over the regret of the sinful people. Therefore, He opens a door from the direction of the west for seventy years for the purpose of repentance, and it will not be closed until the sun rises from the west as the Prophet, sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), said, [Ahmad and At-Tirmithi]

   So where are those who long to turn to Allah The Almighty in repentance?

2. Receiving Ramadan by devoting all actions sincerely and solely to Allah The Almighty

   One concept should be very clear to all from the onset: If your acts lack sincerity, then do not bother devoting all actions sincerely and solely to Allah The Almighty. Allah The Almighty Says (what means): (So whoever would hope for the meeting with his Lord - let him do righteous work and not associate in the worship of his Lord anyone.) [Qur’an 18:110]

   It was narrated that the Prophet, sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention), said: “Allah The Almighty Says: ‘I am so self-sufficient that I am in no need of having an associate? Thus whoever does an action for someone else’s sake as well as mine, I will leave him to whom he has associated with Me.” [‘Ala’uddin]

   Fasting is one of the greatest acts of worship that instil sincerity in the heart of the Muslim. This is because the fasting person cannot be known except by Allah The Almighty, The Most Exalted, especially if he observes fasting in days other than the days of Ramadan and even in Ramadan, for one can pretend that he is fasting while he is not. In addition to this, the fasting person keeps away from the slightest thing that can affect his fasting out of sincerity to Allah The Almighty and seeking His pleasure. Therefore, Allah The Almighty has hidden the reward of fasting and made it for Himself in much the same way as the fasting person has hidden his fasting from other people, and of course Allah The Almighty only gives that which is bountiful and plentiful. Allah The Almighty says in a Qudsi (Sacred) Hadeeth: (Every deed of the son of Aadam (Adam) will be rewarded between ten and seven hundred fold, except fasting, for it is for Me and I shall reward it Myself.) [Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

3. Receiving Ramadan by adhering strictly to the Sunnah of the Prophet, sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention)

   No act can be accepted unless it meets two conditions: that it is accompanied by a sincere intention, which is that one should do it only for the sake of Allah The Almighty, and in that it is in accordance with the guidance of the Prophet, sallAllahu ‘alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention).

   And we will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient, Who, when disaster strikes them, say, ‘Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.’ [Qur’an 2:155, Sahih International]

Patience is one of the most difficult things for the soul. Therefore, patience represents half of faith and the patient will be given an immense reward as Allah The Almighty Says (what means): [Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account.] [Qur’an 39:101] — Islamweb.net
How to change your life in Ramadan

Try these proven techniques for a successful positive change in your habits during Ramadan and beyond!

Acknowledgement and identify your bad habits: Let's start by admitting you need to change. If you are in a state of denial, you won't recognize that you have a bad habit to change.

Pick a habit for this month: Prioritise your bad habits and focus on one for this month. If you are committed to changing at least one habit, you will see remarkable results.

Realise that it's in us to change: Don't believe the old saying, “You can't teach an old dog new tricks.” You can break a bad habit if you really want to. No one else can change your habits, if you don't want to.

Remind yourself of Death and Hereafter often: “Remember the Day of Judgment and the Consequences of all the pleasures (i.e. death),” the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) once stated. (Hadith-At-Tirmidhi.)

Change your Environment: Resist the negative peer pressure by finding a better company of friends. Collective action to change is very powerful. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) explained this peer pressure effect with the analogy: “A good friend and a bad friend are like a perfume-seller and a blacksmith: The perfume-seller might give you some perfume as a gift, or you might buy some from him, or at least you might smell its fragrance. As for the blacksmith, he might singe your clothes, and at the very least you will breathe in the fumes of the furnace.” (Hadith-Sahih al-Bukhari & Muslim)

Exercise: Physical exercise is important for lasting change. You may not realise that by exerting yourself in spiritual exercises like the reading of Qur'an and Hadith, fasting, giving charity, zikr (remembering Allah), spending time in the Path of Allah etc helps in eliminating a number of bad habits. Through the spiritual light of doing noble deeds, evil ones will gradually be eradicated from your life. Allah says: “Indeed, Salah restrains from shameful and unjust deeds” (Qura'n:9:45). A person complained to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about someone who read salaah and also committed theft. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said “His salaat will very soon warn him off that sin.” This shows that the evil habits can be got rid of by adhering to good practices. The doing of good deeds such as remembering Allah cleanses the heart. A clean heart encourages a person to do good deeds and refrains one from evil habits! Moreover, exercising your will power (struggle to fight temptations) for this month helps you kick all kinds of bad habits and form new good ones. Willpower is like a muscle; the more you exercise it, the more you strengthen it.

Think of yourself as a changed, different, new person. This simple psychological shift in your thinking about your own image can do wonders. Tell yourself, “I can’t continue this ill-behaviour; I am better than that. I am stronger. I am wiser.”

Reward success: The most fundamental law in all of psychology is the “law of effect.” It simply states that actions followed by rewards are strengthened and likely to recur. Unfortunately, studies show that people rarely use this technique when trying to change personal habits. Setting up formal or informal rewards for success greatly increases your chances of transforming bad habits into good ones, and is far more effective than punishing yourself for bad habits or setbacks. As Muslims we should also remember that the ultimate reward is Allah’s Pleasure and Paradise in the Hereafter.

Get help: Tell someone about your effort to change if it helps. He or she may keep you on track and may offer some good advice. Read books that will encourage you to do virtuous actions. Join the various (amaal) programmes in your local mosque. Ladies should endeavour to join their local learning groups. There are good and sincere people who are ready to assist. We are not an island - We are an Ummah!

Boost your spiritual immune system: By fasting, doing good actions, i'tikaf (seclusion), spending time in the mosque with the pious friends of Allah or going in the path of Allah will boost your Imaan (faith) which will provide you with internal strength to overcome temptations to reverting to old bad habits.

Remind yourself of Death and Hereafter often: “Remember often the terminator (or destroyer) of all the pleasures (i.e. death),” the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) once stated. (Hadith-At-Tirmidhi.)

Resolve to continue on and follow up: Giving up bad habits or learning good habits requires regular maintenance and determination. It is a long, ongoing process, also known as “Takluyah” in Islamic terminology. It’s more difficult than the first few steps of change. (“How many times have I dieted, for example, only to gain the weight back?”). So ensure that you follow up. Link yourself to a good Allah-fearing Islamic Scholar, make a habit of spending time in the path of Allah and constantly engage in noble and charitable work.

Develop a relapse strategy: How do you ensure not to return to your bad habit you are trying to change? Some people donate money to a good cause every time they return to sinning or a bad habit. This reminds them of the ‘cost’ of going back to old bad habits. Others try physically demanding acts to deter them from reverting to old ways. For example that if you do — act that you will keep three fast or pay so much sadaqa (charity) etc.

Ask Allah for help (Dua): Make asking for Allah’s help an integral part of the overall change process. Ask for Allah’s help before, during and after every attempt at kicking a bad habit. Do so sincerely, even begging and crying, like a child does when he or she really wants something. Allah is ever-willing to help and to respond to our needs, but it is us who must take the first step towards Him. Allah will never disappoint us! Allah Ta’ala says “Ask me, and I will answer your call…” (Qura’n 40:60) “And whosoever is conscious of Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He (Allah) will make a way for him to get out (from) every (difficulty), and He will provide him from (sources) he could never imagine!” (Qura’n 65:2-3)

So surely you can do it. Just trust and pray to Allah and make that great change this Ramadan! — muslimvillage.com