Elizabeth Warren is on a roll, but still faces big obstacles in 2020 presidential bid. P2-3

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Outdoing the odds, one step at a time

While many of her rivals are recalibrating their strategies and looking for new ways to stand out in a huge field largely eclipsed by former vice president Joe Biden, Elizabeth Warren is pressing ahead, tortoise and hare style, writes Janet Hook.

This is my life’s work. What happened to the American middle class has been the central issue I’ve worked on for decades. This primary gives me a chance to get out and talk about what’s broken and how to fix it — Elizabeth Warren, presidential hopeful.
COUNTERPOINT

“I love Elizabeth Warren’s energy. But I don’t think she’ll be able to beat Trump. The old money is not ready for a woman.”

— Rosa Wilson, president of Communications Workers of America

The polls may be middling, the fundraising so-so, but Elizabeth Warren has one key asset in her bid for the Democratic presidential nomination — a campaign plan more clearly defined than that of just about any other candidate.

While many of her rivals are recalibrating their strategies and looking for new ways to stand out in a huge field largely eclipsed by former Vice President Joe Biden, Warren is pressing ahead, tortoise and hare style.

She is unfurling one carefully honed policy proposal after another — child care, student debt relief, a tax on giant fortunes, combating opioid addiction.

“I’ve got a plan for that!” is her stump speech mantra.

Warren has also invested heavily in campaign staff in Iowa and other states with early primaries. She has a crisp, unchanging populist message rooted in years of arguing, as a professor and politician, that the government now works for people with money and power, not the middle class.

“This is my life’s work,” she said in a phone interview while travelling in Ohio recently. “What happened to the American middle class has been the central issue I’ve worked on for decades. This presidential primary gives me a chance to get out and talk about what’s broken and how to fix it.”

Warren has been on a roll over the last month, in a series of well-received performances at candidate forums — on CNN, before women of colour and other black activists, at a labour-backed event.

For the first time, a national poll in April showed her in second place — albeit just barely, and way behind Biden. She is on the cover of this week’s Time magazine.

People are coming off the sidelines,” she said in the interview. “When I talk about what’s broken, they get it. When I talk about how to fix it, they get it.”

But most polls still show her lagging, and two gigantocoulders block her path.

One is Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, her ideological soul mate, who has dominated among progressive voters who might otherwise have her base.

Even if Warren were to surpass Sanders as the left’s principal alternative to Biden, however, the other impediment looms: she is being held back by a peculiarity of this year’s Democratic presidential electorate.

Voters, more than ever, are acting like partisans and basing their own candidate preferences on “electability” — their guesses about how candidates will fare in a general election more than a year away.

“I love Elizabeth Warren’s energy,” said Rosa Wilson, president of a Communications Workers of America local in eastern Iowa, who heard Warren speak at a Democratic Party dinner here but supports Sanders. “But I don’t think she’ll be able to beat Trump. The old money is not ready for a woman.”

Standing out and gaining voter attention in a field of more than 20 poses a challenge to all the candidates who are not named Biden or Sanders.

Senator Kamala Harris of California recently seized an opportunity to shine again in her signature tough-questioner role, confronting Attorney General William Barr in a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing. Former Republican Beto O’Rourke of Texas traveled to Yosemite National Park to roll out a climate change plan. Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey tried to up the ante in the gun safety stump speech mantra.

But Warren’s struggles have been particularly perplexing because she entered the 2020 race with far more political assets than most of her rivals. She had a big national fan base for her work as a consumer advocate. She was a darling of the left in 2016 when progressives begged her to run against Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary.

When she didn’t run, progressives flocked to Sanders — and many still harbour resentment against Warren for refusing to endorse him in his primary fight against Clinton.

Warren and Sanders, long-standing allies in progressive causes, have avoided taking shots at each other now that they are rivals in the Democratic Party’s left lane. Asked after a campaign event in Iowa why progressive voters should support her over Sanders, Warren dodged the question. “All I can do is tell you what I am fighting for and my plan to get there,” she told reporters.

But there are clear contrasts between the two. Sanders, a democratic socialist who criticises some in the party establishment and is still not registered as a Democrat, paints mostly in broad thematic strokes when he campaigns for his signature issues of “Medicare for All,” free public college and a higher minimum wage.

Warren proclaims herself a capitalist who thinks markets should be firmly regulated, not abolished. She is presenting herself as a less divisive candidate with a much more policy-specific, concrete vision.

At a candidate forum held by the People, an organisation for women of colour, Warren got a standing ovation for speaking bluntly about racism and her specific plans to remedy it in healthcare, housing and other areas.

Sanders drew some jeers from the same audience who thought him insufficiently focused on the concerns of people of colour.

Early polls can be volatile, but polling was invalidated by the nonpartisan RealClearPolitics website show a clear trend in national surveys: Sanders has outpolled Warren by wide margins, but since Biden got in the race, the edge has narrowed. Sanders and several other candidates have lost ground; Warren has remained stable.

Warren may have more room for growth than Sanders among potential primary voters, according to a survey in late April by two progressive groups, Data for Progress and YouGov Blue. Asked which candidates they were considering or ruling out, the survey found that 19% said they were not considering Warren and 40% were considering her. 28% were not considering Sanders, and 36% were.

She brought her message to red states late last week by travelling through West Virginia and Ohio to promote her new initiative to combat opioid addiction.

Warren’s stump has sought to rebut the idea that she’s less electable than a candidate like Biden. Roger Lau, her campaign manager, put out a memo earlier this spring challenging the assumption that cautious, centrist ideas would be more successful in 2020 than a bolder progressive agenda.

“This is not a moment for incrementalism or timidity; it is a moment for moral clarity about the structure of our economy, our society, and our democracy,” he wrote. “Elections are not won by nominees chosen to appeal to or pacify the other side: elections are won by candidates who inspire their party’s voters to turn out on election day and who have an effective organisation to drive it home.”

Another source of doubt comes from a common belief, even among many women, that after Clinton’s defeat in 2016, Democrats risk another if they nominate a woman.

When Warren was asked about that at the Houston forum, she took a deep breath, edged forward in her chair and answered with the passion of someone whose campaign depended on this point.

“Are we going to show up for people that we didn’t actually believe in back when we’re too afraid to do anything else?” Warren said. “That’s not who we are.”

She asked her voters that she faced similarly deep doubts when she ran for the US Senate in Massachusetts more than a decade ago against a popular Republican incumbent, Scott Brown. People warned then that the state was not ready to elect a woman.

“I’ve been around this block before,” Warren said. “When I first ran for Senate in Massachusetts, reporters wanted to talk about my clothes. Partisans wanted to talk about my voice.”

Indeed, some voters still comment on her voice and speaking style. She is often described as schoolmarmish and shrill even by some admirers, reacting to a presentation style of a woman who spent years in teaching before coming to the Senate.

— Los Angeles Times/ TNS
Study finds there is such a thing as too much coffee

By Nancy Clanton

Some mornings it might feel like you can’t get enough of it, but a new study suggests too much coffee can be harmful.

Studies have found that coffee consumption ‘may help prevent several chronic diseases, including Type 2 diabetes, Parkinson’s disease and liver disease.’ There is little evidence that drinking moderate amounts of coffee, three to four cups a day, poses any health risk. The key words here are ‘moderate amounts.’

A new study from the University of South Australia suggests there is a point where drinking coffee becomes a health risk.

“Coffee is the most commonly consumed stimulant in the world, it wakes us up, boosts our energy and helps us focus, but people are always asking ‘How much caffeine is too much?’” Professor Elina Hypponen, one of the study’s researchers, said in a press release.

Researchers at the university analysed the health records and the self-reported coffee consumption of 347,077 people between the ages of 37 and 75 in the UK Biobank. The Biobank is a national and international health resource with unparalleled research opportunities, open to all bona fide health researchers.

The study found that people who drink one to two cups of caffeinated coffee a day had a lower risk of cardiovascular disease than people who drank decaf or no coffee at all. But for individual who consumed six or more cups of caffeinated coffee a day, the risk of cardiovascular disease increased 22 percent.

The researchers found no genetic cause for this increase.

“This is the first time an upper limit has been placed on safe coffee consumption and cardiovascular health.”

“In order to maintain a healthy heart and a healthy blood pressure, people must limit their coffee to fewer than six cups a day, based on our data six was the tipping point where caffeine started to negatively affect cardiovascular risk,” Hypponen said.

Even though the research says five cups of coffee is permissible, Hypponen said each person should know his or her own limit. If you begin feeling jittery, irritable or nauseated, she said, you might have reached your limit for the day.

The study was published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. – The Atlanta Journal-Constitution/TNS

Virtual reality can help people with dementia

Virtual reality (VR) technology can enhance the quality of life for people with dementia by helping them to recall past memories, reduce aggression and improve interactions with caregivers, says a study.

The technology helped patients recall old memories by providing new stimuli difficult to achieve, due to ill health, or inaccessible within a secure environment, said the team from the University of Kent in the UK.

“VR can clearly have positive benefits for patients with dementia, their families and caregivers. It provides a richer and more satisfying quality of life than is otherwise available, with many positive outcomes,” said Jim Ang, Professor at the University of Kent.

For the study, the researchers picked eight patients aged between 41 and 88 who are living with dementia, their families and caregivers. It provides new stimuli difficult to achieve, due to ill health, or inaccessible within a secure environment.

“With further research it will be possible to evaluate the elements of virtual environments that benefit patients and use VR even more effectively,” Jim Ang added. – IANS

Close friend’s death can affect well-being for four years: Study

The death of a close friend will significantly affect a person’s physical, psychological and social well-being up to at least four years, says a study.

The study, published in journal PLOS ONE, shows that the trauma caused by the death of a close friend can endure four times longer than previous studies suggested.

The researchers warned that a lack of recognition about the time it takes people to mourn a close friend is leading to inadequate support made available during the grieving process.

The research involved 26,515 Australians, of whom 9,586 had experienced the death of at least one close friend.

“The study found people grieving a close friend suffered a significant decline in physical health, mental health, emotional stability and social life,” said study lead author Wai-Man (Raymond) Liu, Associate Professor at Australian National University (ANU). “We found there are serious declines in the health and well-being of people who had experienced the death of a close friend any time in the last four years,” Liu added.

“We all know that when someone loses a partner, parent or child, that person is likely to suffer through a significant grieving period. Yet death of a close friend, which most of us will experience, is not afforded the same level of seriousness by employers, doctors, and the community,” Liu added. – IANS
**Good sleep, mood can help you stay sharp in old age**

**RESEARCH** The researchers found strong associations between working memory and three health-related factors such as sleep, age and depressed mood.

Artificial intelligence-based systems can predict death and heart attack in patients suffering from chest pain with greater accuracy than humans, says a new study.

Doctors use risk scores to make treatment decisions, but these scores are based on just a handful of variables and often have modest accuracy in individual patients. Through repetition and adjustment, machine learning, the bedrock of AI, could exploit large amounts of data and identify complex patterns that might not be evident to humans, said the study presented at the International Conference on Nuclear Cardiology and Cardiac CT (ICNC) 2019 in Portugal.

“Doctors already collect a lot of information about patients, for example those with chest pain. We found that machine learning can integrate these data and accurately predict individual risk. This should allow us to personalise treatment and ultimately lead to better outcomes for patients,” said study author Luis Eduardo Juarez-Orozco of the Turku PET Centre in Finland.

The study enrolled 940 patients with chest pain. During an average six-year follow-up there were 24 heart attacks and 49 deaths from any cause.

Working memory is the part of short-term memory that temporarily stores and manages information required for cognitive tasks such as learning, reasoning and comprehension.

Working memory is critically involved in many higher cognitive functions, including intelligence, creative problem-solving, language and action-planning. It plays a major role in how we process, use and remember information.

The study found that age is negatively related to the ‘qualitative’ aspect of working memory – that is, how strong or how accurate the memory is. “Other researchers have already linked each of these factors separately to overall working memory function, but our work looked at how these factors are associated with memory quality and quantity – the first time this has been done,” said Weiwei Zhang, Assistant Professor at the University of California, Riverside in the US.

“All three factors are interrelated. For example, seniors are more likely to experience negative mood than younger adults. Poor sleep quality is also often associated with depressed mood,” Zhang added.

The researchers performed two studies. In the first study, they sampled 110 college students for self-reported measures of sleep quality and depressed mood and their independent relationship to experimental measures of working memory.

In the second study, the researchers sampled 11 members of a community ranging in age from 21 to 77 years. In this study, the researchers investigated age and its relationship to working memory.

The researchers are the first to statistically isolate the effects of the three factors on working memory quality and quantity. Although all three factors contribute to a common complaint about foggy memory, they seem to behave in different ways and may result from potentially independent mechanisms in the brain.

These findings could lead to future interventions and treatments to counteract the negative impacts of these factors on working memory.

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**Low humidity raises flu risks during winter months**

Low humidity is a key reason behind people falling sick and even dying from flu during the winter months, says a study.

Decreased humidity lowers the immune system’s defences against flu infection, says a study published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (PNAS). It offers an insight into why the flu is more prevalent when the air is dry.

For the study, researchers used mice genetically modified to resist viral infection as humans do. The mice were housed in chambers at the same temperature, but with either low or normal humidity. They were then exposed to the influenza A virus.

They found that low humidity hindered the immune response of animals in three ways. It prevented cilia, which are hair-like structures in airway cells, from removing viral particles and mucus. It also reduced the ability of airway cells to repair damage caused by the virus in lungs.

The third mechanism involved interferons, or signalling proteins, released by virus-infected cells to alert neighbouring cells to the threat. In a low-humidity environment, this innate immune defence system failed.

“Hence well known that when humidity drops, a spike in flu incidence and mortality occurs.

If our findings in mice hold up in humans, our study provides a possible mechanism underlying this seasonal nature of flu disease,” said Akiko Iwasaki, Professor at Yale University in the US.

While humidity is not the only reason in flu outbreaks, it’s an important factor that should be considered during the winter season.

Increasing water vapour in the air with humidifiers at home, school, work and even hospital environments is a potential strategy to reduce flu symptoms and speed up recovery, researchers said. – IANS
Chicken shawarma, king of street food

I was asked recently about one of my favourite Middle Eastern dishes that I enjoy the most and my unbiased answer is chicken shawarma. I can consume this delicious sandwich anytime of the day and night.

Shawarma is a Levantine Arab meat preparation, where lamb, chicken, turkey, beef, veal or mixed meats are skewered and placed next to a vertical spit and rotated and roasted.

The meat is thinly sliced and served in a pita bread with traditional accompaniments. The spit fire can be electrical, or gas operated. The remaining block of meat is rotated slowly next to the fire to cook it evenly and is sliced as per requirements. The distance of the meat from heat determines the cooking speed and the heat control in the equipment.

Shawarma can also be served in a plate or as a sandwich wrap. It is usually eaten with salads like tabbouleh, fattoush, tomato and pickled cucumber. The toppings include tahini, hummus, pickled cucumber, olives, carrots and turnips.

There is common confusion surrounding the shawarma and gyro, they both are alike yet different. They are both staples of Mediterranean / Middle Eastern cuisine that have gone mainstream all over the globe. So, let’s find out what exactly is the difference between them. The first reason why people confuse between them is their similar appearance and style of preparation.

At first glance gyros and shawarma look like the same thing. The meat for both is shaved from a large cone that slowly turns and roasts all the time, cooking the meat in its own juices. And below this surface of similarity, the two meals share a common ancestor - the Doner kebab. Invented in Turkey around 18th century, Doner kebab means rotating grilled meat.

When it was introduced to Greeks, they renamed it as Gyros, the Greek word for turn. Likewise when it spread through the Middle East, it was called shawarma, an Arabic word for turning. Of course, if you have ever seen the meat gloriously spinning on a rotisserie, you’ll understand why these names came into existence.

The meat used in their preparation is another difference. The meat for gyro is a blend or usually a combination of two meats like lamb and beef, formed into a loaf before roasted on a spit. The meat is sliced off and served on a Greek pita before getting topped with tomato, onion and tzatziki (strained yoghurt sauce with cucumber, garlic, salt, olive oil and other ingredients) and some drizzle of hot sauce to give it an extra kick.

Shawarma on the other hand uses a meat cone made from packed down slices of meat - often chicken, lamb or beef. A shawarma also requires different preparation than gyro as its meat is marinated for as long as a day in a variety of seasonings and spices like all spice, bay leaf, cinnamon, dried lime powder, vinegar and cardamom.

There is also an array of toppings in shawarma’s wheelhouse including tahini, tabbouleh, fattoush, cucumber and hummus but no tzatziki and while it can be served wrapped in large pita, it can also be stuffed inside of hollow pita bread. French fries are also offered along in most places.

One this common between them is that they are both flavour packed sandwiches which are liked by all. Both are packed silvers of marinated meat that are slowly spit roasted on a rotating skewer at very high temperatures - allowing for the meat to cook in its own fat and gain an unparalleled succulence. Both are their respective king of street food and a common staple of working man.

Chicken shawarma

Ingredients
Chicken thigh 800 gm
Lemon juice 4 tbsp
Olive oil 1 tbsp
Garlic crushed 6 cloves
Vinegar 1 tsp
Salt to taste
Black pepper 1 tsp
Cumin ground 1 tsp
Paprika powder 1 tsp
Turmeric powder 1/2 tsp
Cinnamon ground a pinch
Red onion 1 no.
Parsley chopped 2 tbsp

For white sauce
Greek yoghurt 1 cup
Garlic minced 3-4 cloves
Lime juice 1 tbsp
Dried mint leaves 1 tsp
Salt to taste
Tahini 1 tbsp
Dill leaves few sprigs

Method:
To prepare a marinade for chicken, combine lemon juice, olive oil, crushed garlic, salt, black pepper powder, cumin, paprika, cinnamon, vinegar, tahini in a large bowl.

Whisk to combine and add the chicken, toss well to coat evenly and refrigerate for 2 hours or preferably overnight.

Preheat the oven at 425 degree and grease a baking tray with oil.

Add the quartered onion to the chicken and marinade and toss once to combine.

Arrange the marinated chicken and onion in the tray and roast in the preheated oven for 25-28 minutes or until it is browned or till the internal temperature is 75 Degree Celsius.

Meanwhile for the white sauce combine all the listed ingredients and blend to a smooth consistency, keep aside.

Remove the chicken and allow to rest for 3 minutes and then thinly slice the chicken and onion and keep aside.

In a heavy bottom skillet, heat olive oil and sauté the shredded chicken and onion to lightly brown from the sides.

Remove from flame and place the chicken mixture on warm pita bread and serve hot with chopped parsley, diced tomato, pickled cucumber, white sauce, olives and hot sauce.

Chef Tarun Kapoor, Culinary Mastermind, USA. He may be contacted at tarunkapoort83@gmail.com
Pakistanis working at Qafco bid farewell to colleague

Pakistanis working at Qatar Fertilizer Company (Qafco) in Mesaieed, recently organised an event to bid farewell to Tahir Abbass, employee at Qafco. Muhammad Rashid was the chief guest at the event. Furqan Ahmad Paracha compered the event.

Speaking on the occasion, Saeed Akhtar, Mujtaba Zaidi, Mushfaq Naqvi and Muhammad Rashid recalled the memorable moments they shared with Tahir Abbass during his stay in Qatar. They extended their good wishes to him for his future endeavours.

Tahir Abbass praised his colleagues and Qafco management for the support he received during his stay in Qatar. Tahir particularly thanked the Pakistani community in Qafco and noted that he is leaving with fond memories.

INMS and Qatar Charity organise Iftar event

International Nepali Muslim society (INMS) Qatar, in association with Qatar Charity, recently organised an Iftar event. The event was chaired by Mohammed Muktaza Musalman, President of INMS. Professor Ramesh Prasad Koirala, outgoing Ambassador of Nepal, was the chief guest at the event. The event was attended by notable personalities, including Fareed Khaleel Siddiqi, Chief Co-ordinator of Qatar Charity Friend Circle; Rajendra Kumar Sharma, Co-ordinator at Non Resident Nepali International Coordination Committee Middle East; and Ramzan Ali Miya, Chief Adviser of INMS. The event was attended by over 200 Nepali expatriates.

The event kicked off with the recitation of the Holy Quran by Seraj Khan, which was followed by a speech on the importance of Ramadan. Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest thanked Qatar Charity for the support given to INMS and noted that such Iftar programme is symbolic and the tradition has to continue as it is bridges people. Speaking on the occasion, Fareed Khaleel Siddiqi said his organisation is always happy to team up with Nepali community. He praised Nepali community for their intelligent and hardworking traits, and appreciated their valuable efforts in the development of Qatar. He expressed his happiness seeing the Nepali community as one of the leading community in Qatar. He thanked the professionals, skilled workers and manpower resources residing in Qatar for making Qatar proud in the development of Qatar.

Ramzan Ali Miya said the programme aimed at making people aware of Islamic values, strengthening the spirit of faith and promoting the values of solidarity and exchange among members of communities, especially in the holy month of Ramadan. Mohammed Muktaza Musalman, Chairman of INMS, thanked the gathering and Qatar charity for providing an opportunity to celebrate Iftar with Nepali community. The event was hosted by Ajmat Ali.

– Text and photos by Usha Wagle Gautam

SDBT inaugurates new boat

Siklab Dragon Boat Team (SDBT) recently inaugurated its new boat at Katara Beach Club. Dragon boating is a boat of 20 paddlers, a drummer and a steer's person paddling to cross the finish line faster than their competitors. It's a team sport that encompasses the elements of power, speed, synchronisation and endurance. The demand to dragon boating is mainly contributed to the sport's ability to accommodate a varied range of skill levels from novice to competitive. At the novice and recreational level, teams often form as a means of social outlet, team building and an alternative means of exercise.

As the newest addition to the growing number of dragon boat teams in Qatar, it is a major milestone to the team that it has acquired its own boat months after the establishment. The team is now more ready to intensify its training regime that focuses not only on the technical and endurance aspects of the sport but also on the collective teamwork. International and local races are already lined up for the team this year and even until 2020.
Health "is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

Biological diversity (biodiversity) is "the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems."

Biodiversity underpins ecosystem functioning and the provision of goods and services that are essential to human health and well being.

The links between biodiversity and health are manifested at various spatial and temporal scales. Biodiversity and human health, and the respective policies and activities, are interlinked in various ways.
Human health

Direct drivers of biodiversity loss include land-use change, habitat loss, over-exploitation, pollution, invasive species and climate change. Many of these drivers affect human health directly and through their impacts on biodiversity.

Women and men have different roles in the conservation and use of biodiversity and varying health impacts.

Human population health is determined, to a large extent, by social, economic and environmental factors.

The social and natural sciences are important contributors to biodiversity and health research and policy. Integrative approaches such as the Ecosystem Approach, Ecohealth and One Health unite different fields and require the development of mutual understanding and cooperation across disciplines.
Designing tomorrows, today

It was once coined that the ultimate measure of a man’s conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard. A frequent and keen traveller who transverses the roads of State of Qatar must have observed some elements of such sacrifice, and thus, can stamp this statement as true.

Even for a novice, moving from one point to another by road will unfold a rich culture that is deeply ingrained in the physical features one has to come across — one that is dyed in the wool of the people living here, both residents and expatriates.

The freedom of worship symbolised by presence of numerous places of worship adds to the morals and values that globally define this state. By all aspects, Qatar can only be said to be, for lack of a better statement, a scarce land of abundance and also an embodiment of serene beauty. A road trip on the highways of this great nation will offer more than enough to the eyes, and consequently, soul, of a keen adventurer. The domino effect evoked is a sense of relief and safety. As an explorer and a scholar of World Geography, a stop at every traffic signal has always been an opportunity to explore more about people, culture, and features either nearby or yonder.

Despite the unfavourable climatic conditions, the noble role being played by the state to conserve and preserve the environment is also evident along the highways. One can barely fail to notice a worker tending to trees and watering vegetation cover that make the areas green and eye-catching. All these are deliberate measures to ensure future generations find this great state a better place to live. With more funds being invested to make Qatar green, it is thus indisputable that it will soon become a green gold in the desert; an idol of many other nations that it already is.

And to the residents, Mother Nature won’t forgive us if we fail to undertake our individual responsibility of preserving and conserving the natural resources bequeathed us; using water sparingly, avoiding littering and responsible industrial waste disposal.

— Text and photos by Polycarp Maina
Inside opening night at the Cannes Film Festival

By Amy Kaufman

If you’re anything like me – that is, a millennial who feverishly clicks through photo galleries of celebrities on Just Jared or Daily Mail – you’re probably somewhat familiar with the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival.

Unlike in Hollywood, where stars simply pose in front of a step-and-repeat, the red carpet at the festival in the south of France is très dramatique: Black tie is required, celebrities don’t stop for interviews (photos only) and a climb up a large staircase is required – perfect for draping the long train of a gown, à la the Met Gala.

In other words, it lends itself to fabulous posing and glamorous couture, contributing to the mystique that has lured festivalgoers here for the last 72 years.

But what I didn’t entirely realise before attending Cannes was just how much gravitas the event carries within France itself. On Tuesday, when the festival kicked off with Jim Jarmusch’s The Dead Don’t Die, the 45–minute opening ceremony was simultaneously broadcast to 700 theatres countrywide, followed by a screening of the film. (Jarmusch’s movie launched in France on May 14 but won’t be released by Focus Features in the US for a month.)

Accordingly, there’s a lot of pomp-and-circumstance involved in the opening-night ceremony. An emcee announces each guest who walks down the carpet, and the livestream from outside is broadcast to those guests inside the Palais des Festivals who have already taken their seats.

The entire arrival process is intricately timed: First come those you recognise but whose presence you are confused by, such as Eva Longoria, who apparently is at Cannes because L’Oreal is a sponsor of the festival and she is a face of the brand. Then a Belgian singer named Angèle came out to sing Cléo de 5 à 7.

And so on everyone takes their seats and the movie begins, right? No. Instead, a French actor named Édouard Baer who has 177,000 followers on Twitter emerges to become the master of ceremonies. Because Cannes is in France, he speaks in French, so foreigners have the option of grabbing a headset for language translation.

Even so, his monologue – accompanied by a very moody accordion player – was, uh, philosophical in nature. After making a nod to the late director Agnès Varda, he raised the question of how important the audience is to a filmmaker.

“In America, they deal in dollars – it’s impersonal,” he said of the theatre-going experience. “But in France, we’re more sentimental. We count the people.”

He continued to wax poetic about the importance of the cinema – how we live in a world in which social media invite us to create fictions about ourselves, and so in a movie theatre we are just “fiction in the face of another fiction.” Cinema, he said, is “human warmth,” something far more inviting than “eating pizza and watching Netflix.”

“Don’t go home this evening,” he told the audience.

Then a Belgian singer named Angèle came out to sing Soms T’Dè, a song from Varda’s Cléo de 5 à 7. It was pretty and she was wearing a flowing dress.

Enter the jury! Baer called each member of the panel to the stage as if they were a contestant in a beauty pageant, with each pausing centre stage under a spotlight and gesturing to the crowd. The only one to speak was Iñárritu, who told the crowd that Cannes had been “very crucial” to his career since his first film, Amores Perros, premiered here 20 years ago.

“We are going to be doing some exciting, delicious work,” he said, gesturing toward his fellow jurors, who were seated on a couch at the side of the stage. “I feel I’m about to taste some delicious fruits!”

After a reel previewing some of the “delicious fruits” that will be shown here over the next two weeks, Baer was back and at the piano, singing a song about Jarmusch being a genius with “crazy silver hair.” Again: Inexplicable. Very French. Kind of amazing?

Then Charlotte Gainsbourg, who had a role in Iñárritu’s 21 Grams, and Javier Bardem, who starred in the director’s Biutiful, emerged to officially declare the festival open. And yet it was still not time for the film to play. First, a production crew had to come and break down the entire set – meaning the piano, a giant golden Palme d’Or, lights and furniture. This took 26 minutes, during which the crowd sat restlessly, many taking selfies they weren’t allowed to take on the carpet.

Unfortunately for Focus Features, The Dead Don’t Die seemed to go over about as well as Baer’s emcee skills. There were a few laughs, but no one walked out gushing over what they’d just seen. Still, the tuxedoed masses made their way down the Croisette to the JW Marriott, where the film’s afterparty was taking place on the roof.

Because the cast had an obligation to attend an official festival dinner, none of the movie’s stars arrived at the bash until well after midnight. Not that many seemed to notice, given how many partygoers stopped to pose with the performers donning elaborate zombie makeup in the dark hallway leading to the event.

Inside, tents shielded guests from light rain, and a magician circled the room doing upclose card tricks. A 23-year-old Brit named Maximilian, the magician said he was a regular at Cannes (last year he performed at the late Paul Allen’s legendary yacht party). Then he took one of my rings off the沃尔链, linked on his keychain. Too bad he couldn’t work his magic earlier in the evening. – Los Angeles Times/TNS
POOCH CAFÉ

BY PAUL GILLIGAN

YOU CAN’T GET “HANGRY” BETWEEN FRIES!!

FOR TODAY, LOOK FOR A 90% CHANCE OF HOOKS, WITH INCREASING LURES AND WORMS, LATER IN THE AFTERNOON...
Super Cryptic Clues

Across
1 Naked king amid fascinated spectators? (8)
6 Determined to go down (3)
9 Copying fastener in silver (5)
10 How old is fruit or feathers? (4,3)
11 Small fib about hard stunt by cyclist (7)
13 Garments for space travel? (7)
19 Give refill to young boxer, perhaps (4,3)
21 Magnate forced to display reserve. Earliest documented use: 1836.
23 Some other age or epoch (3)
24 Seat for blind pirate (3)
25 American going west spots bears (8)

Down
2 The last to suffer when nurse comes round (4-3)
3 Scrap of cloth used in garage (3)
4 Observed with two bridge players - like a piper? (6)
5 Something funny about our players - like a piper? (6)
6 Mischief maker first in prison after fraud (5)
7 Young people have pole after fraud (5)
8 Biologist making racket placed in river (5)
9 Copying fastener in silver (5)
12 Lustful Hercules is confused about love (9)
15 Coffee blend somewhat represented in code (2,4)
16 Harsh name for a bird (7)
17 Score less than a hundred (6)
18 Marital relations (2-4)
19 Give refill to young boxer, perhaps (3,2)
20 London borough ignoring first indicator (5)
22 The last to suffer when nurse comes round (4-3)
23 Some other age or epoch (3)

Sudoku

The Mall Cinema
(1): Ugly Dolls (2D) 3pm; De De Pyaar De (Hindi) 9pm; The Convent (2D) 11:30pm.
The Mall Cinema
(2): De De Pyaar De (Hindi) 2:30pm; Mr. Local (Tamil) 11pm.
The Mall Cinema
(3): A Dog’s Journey (2D) 3pm; Avengers: Endgame (2D) 8:30pm; Monster (Tamil) 11:30pm.
Landmark Cinema
(1): Ugly Dolls (2D) 3pm; The Convent (2D) 9pm; Mr. Local (Tamil) 11pm.
Landmark Cinema
(2): De De Pyaar De (Hindi) 2:30pm; De De Pyaar De (Hindi) 8:30pm; Uyare (Malayalam) 11pm.
Landmark Cinema
(3): Monster (Tamil) 2:30pm; A Dog’s Journey (2D) 8:30pm; Avengers: Endgame (2D) 10:30pm.

Royal Plaza Cinema
Palace (1): Monster (Tamil) 2:30pm; De De Pyaar De (Hindi) 8:30pm; Mr. Local (Tamil) 11pm.
Royal Plaza Cinema
Palace (2): Uyare (Malayalam) 2:30pm; A Dog’s Journey (2D) 9pm; Lizzie (2D) 11pm.
Royal Plaza Cinema
Palace (3): Ugly Dolls (2D) 3pm; The Convent (2D) 9pm; Avengers: Endgame (2D) 11pm.

Wordwatch

inveigle (in-VAY-guhl, VEE-guhl) MEANING: verb tr. to get something or to persuade someone to do something by deception or flattery. Earliest documented use: 1400.
USAGE: “To happy music, pretty boys, girls, and hermaphrodites performed a weird group dance on stage.”

meeplo (MIH-puhl) MEANING: noun: A game piece shaped in a stylized human form. Usage: “In ‘Five Tribes’, players maneuver wooden meeples around the board, with each meeple having a special power.”


HERMES + APHRODITUS — 1500
Hermaphroditus
ETYMOLOGY:
noun: A game piece shaped in a stylized human form. Usage: “In ‘Five Tribes’, players maneuver wooden meeples around the board, with each meeple having a special power.”

MEANING:
noun: A woman admired for her courage, achievements, or noble qualities. ETYMOLOGY:
A blend of she + hero, from Latin heros (a demigod or man with heroic qualities, plural: heroes), from Greek heros. Ultimately from the Indo-European root ser- (to protect), which also gave us conserve, observe, preserve, and reserve. Earliest documented use: 1836.
USAGE: “When I met you in New York, you were my shero. I wanted to be you.” — wordsmith.org
How to ring in the new for a stylish summer holiday

Do itch the dresses and glam up for your summer vacation with a suitcase packed with something new. Ritika Taneja, Head Category Management at ShopClues and Jankee and Stuti Desai, Founders of The Fancy Pants Store, give out fashion tips that will ensure you travel in style without carrying a dress.

- Denim skirt: You can never go wrong with a denim skirt on a vacation. Pair this with a one-piece for that dressy look.
- Or, just put on a tank top and a bolero jacket if you’re heading out for a mid-day break or even a dinner at a nearby eatery.
- Co-ords: Invest in a pair of co-ords for your holiday wardrobe. You could also opt for a yellow or pastel hue to add an unexpected element to your holiday look.

Co-ords are etching their way into wardrobe staples and come in lots of combinations. Depending on your destination, you can choose a crop top with shorts, a high slit skirt with a strappy top or even a holiday stunner like long flared pants with a slogan tube top and a jacket.

- Playsuit: We would recommend a printed playsuit or jumpsuit because it brings a really fun vibe to a holiday outfit. It’s comfortable but still so chic. With the right accessories, it’s a look you can take from a day of sightseeing to a fancy dinner. You can pick one that is fit and flair for a flirty, feminine look. Accessorise it with a hair band and a stack of bracelets to complete your look.
- High-waist trousers: If you’re not a beach person and prefer to just soak in the spirit of a new destination, you can choose a jumpsuit because it brings the dresses out from under your skin! You can pick one from a day of sightseeing to a fancy dinner. You can pick one that is fit and flair for a flirty, feminine look. Accessorise it with a hair band and a stack of bracelets to complete your look.

Do you have a tendency to give more weight to popular opinion than your own feelings, Libra? Maybe you only want to see movies that everyone talks about, listen to the popular music, or read best sellers. In short, your tastes are exactly like most of America’s. Is this what you want? Even when you don’t like a movie, you may say you do if everyone else does. Listen to your ideas today.

Your thoughts are leaning toward the past, Scorpio. You aren’t some mental housecleaning and rid yourself of notions that were rooted in order to move into the future. You would also like to empty yourself of all negative ideas and thoughts. It’s time to do this.

Your excellent analytical skills may not be up to par over the next few days. You seem overwhelmed by your emotions. You have a hard time hiding your feelings and processing the information you receive. Instead of trying to understand people, you tend to interpret their actions and imagine things that aren’t true. Be careful of your judgment at the moment. It’s way off base!

People can read you like a book today, Sagittarius. Because of the current planetary positions, you’re a bit touchier than usual. Your reactions to certain situations are written all over your face. You’re blushing and your hands are sweating and trembling. Each of your gestures reveals emotion. This would be a great time to be in love. Watch out for love at first sight!

This is an excellent time to share your feelings with the person you love, Pisces. It might seem a little scary to you. You’re usually a reserved person, but you may surprise yourself with the passionate declarations that reflect your happiness now. Take advantage of this, because things could change over the next few days. You may go back into reclusive mode!
Muhammad sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) preached, according to Ibn Hisham, that the story of Makkah and beyond will one day be unsupported for long. The whole story is a loneliness. Truth will not go unsupported for long. The whole story is a loneliness. Truth will not go unsupported for long.

The Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) knew the lengths to which the Quraysh would go to undermine him. He also knew the lengths to which the Quraysh could go, and requested the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) to abandon his mission. However, the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) did not yield to pressure.

A Jewish woman from Acre, who questioned him: “Why did you do this?” “To kill you,” was her defiant reply. She was told, “Allah would not have allowed you to do it.” [Muslim]

In the battle of Uhud when the rear guard action of the Makkani army had disorganized the Muslim army and had turned the tables, the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) stood as firm as a rock even though he sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) had suffered personal injuries.

When Abu Sufiyan taunted the Muslims and shouted “Victory to Hubal!” (Hubal was one of their idols), the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) asked Umar may Allah be pleased with him to shout back: “Allah is our protector and friend. You have no protector and friend. Allah is Great, Magnificent.” [Ibn Hisham]

Again in the battle of Hunayn, when the unexpected assault of the army had swept the Muslim force off its feet and a defeat seemed imminent, the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) did not yield ground. With trust in Allah he showed such courage that the Muslim army rallied behind him to win a signal victory. – Islamweb.net
Keep sipping water at night to stay hydrated while fasting

By Mudasir Raja

There is no doubt in that the holy month of Ramadan is a time of test for Muslims. It is, however, important for those who fast to keep themselves healthy. Keeping in mind the hot summer days and long fasting hours, it is pertinent for those who fast to keep themselves hydrated.

During Ramadan, those who fast fight a constant battle against thirst. Drinking water becomes a rare luxury. Experts urge on the fasting people to keep themselves hydrated. Keeping the body hydrated is crucial as they are culturally used to back away from the juice. They urge on the fasting people to stay hydrated during Ramadan.

Another piece of advice is to have at least two glasses of water at every Suhoor. It helps in staying hydrated during the long fasting hours. At Iftar, one should break the fast every night with one or two glasses of water and a few dates. Breaking the fast with dates is not only tradition because that is how the Prophet Muhammad [PBUH] broke his fast; dates also help with hydration since they are a natural source of glucose, which encourage the cells to store fluid and fuel for energy.

It is also helpful if one carries water within the body. According to the experts, men and women should drink 3.7 litres and 2.7 litres of water respectively every day.

Doctors stress that in Ramadan it is necessary to drink plenty of fluids, especially water. Water, juices and soups, as well as vegetables and fruits, are good sources of fluids for the body.

However, a fasting person should drink extra water because it contains no calories and could compensate for the body’s fluids lost due to fasting.

Other calorie-rich drinks can cause weight gain and stimulant drinks such as coffee and tea can increase fluid loss because they are diuretics. Eating meals high in salt and hot spices may increase thirst and the body’s need for water, therefore eating such foods are not recommended at Suhoor as they may cause extreme thirst during fasting.

Experts suggest some ways to stay hydrated during Ramadan. They urge on the fasting people to back away from the juice. During Ramadan, those who fast fight a constant battle against thirst from dawn to dusk. Do not drink juice to break the fast. A lot of people focus on juices because they are culturally used to breaking their fast with two glasses of juice, but that’s what causes weight gain.

According to the experts, people who fast need to intake good amount of water both at Iftar and Suhoor. Water is better for hydration and essential for almost all major body functions, including helping dissolve minerals and other nutrients from food to make them accessible to the body.

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It is also helpful if one carries one litre bottle of water while working out in hot and humid conditions for long hours. It is also recommended to avoid strenuous exercise while fasting for Ramadan.

Food Tips: What to eat?

By Azmat Haroon

One of the things you realise as you travel, grow older and explore various cuisines is how over the centuries different cultures have adapted food items by changing the recipe according to local and taste. One such lesson I’ve learned over time is that Chinese food has a different flavour everywhere and it means different thing to different people. Sweet and sour chicken is one such dish that has a distinct variety of its own in many cultures. Part of the reason is the basic sauce used to make the dish because sweet and sour is a generic term that includes many styles of sauce, cuisine and cooking methods. Although it is commonly used in China, it’s varieties have also been used in Europe since the Middle Ages. In China, sweet and sour sauce can be found in many regional cuisines and people also don’t realise that Chinese cuisine comprises of dozens of individual cultures and culinary traditions and so the ingredients used to make sweet and sour chicken vary across China as well.

However, food experts would agree that although the choice of vegetables is also important — for instance, the debate over whether or not pineapple be used in the dish — things that makes sweet and sour sauce such an addictive pleasure is its most basic components — the marriage of vinegar and sugar.

Here are some restaurant we think serve the best Chinese variety of sweet and sour chicken.

Top Places for Sweet and Sour Chicken

• Chi’Zen
• D’Chopstix
• Shanghai Garden
• P.F. Chang’s
• Chowking