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Teaching basic life skills to students through theatre

Theatre is an enjoyable tool to teach basic life skills such as listening, following directions, respect, and communication. Most importantly, classroom theatre is instrumental in imparting visual, auditory and hands-on learning to school students.

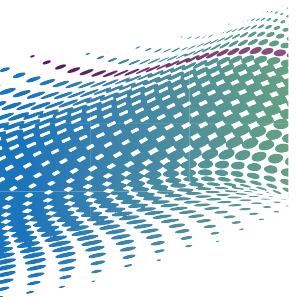


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Teaching basic life skills to students through theatre

SANAULLAH ATAULLAH
THE PENINSULA

Theatre is an enjoyable tool to teach basic life skills such as listening, following directions, respect, and communication. Most importantly, classroom theatre is instrumental in imparting visual, auditory, and hands-on learning to school students.

The students can make more connections between fiction and reality. They may retain more information because they are having more fun. The students are also honing their memorization skills by remembering a few lines.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education attaches great importance on school theatre. "Starting from next academic year, a special curriculum for theatre arts will be added to the secondary level government schools," Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Dr. Ibrahim Saleh Al Nuaimi told *The Peninsula*.

He said that theatre is considered as one of the most prominent educational institutions due to its pioneering role in building nations and promoting moral and national values among youngsters.

Ministry of Education and Higher Education is running the second School Theatre Festival at Abdul Aziz Nasser Theatre at Souq Waqif giving opportunities to teams from government schools to compete in drama shows. Dr. Ibrahim Saleh Al Nuaimi said that private schools will be invited from next years to participate in the festival.

The festival is hosting drama shows by schools students on different issues such as nationalism, awareness, heritage and morality. The festival will continue until January 23 at Abdul Aziz Nasser Theatre, after that it will move to Theatre of the Qatar Scouts and Guides Associ-



Dr. Ibrahim Saleh Al Nuaimi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

ation in Umm Sennim from January 26 to 28.

Speaking about the festival, Dr. Ibrahim Saleh Al Nuaimi said: "The School Theatre Festival enhances the activation of the theatre role in schools, due to the fact that it enhances the oral and written expression."

He said that the festival explores the energies of students and develops their aesthetic and literary taste and gives them life skills such as public speaking, team spirit and communication skills.

"I noticed through theatrical performances of schools during the first day of the festival, the great interest of school administrations in forming and supporting theatrical teams," said Al Nuaimi.

He said that theatre gives fun and excitement. "The School Theatre has many benefits; providing

entertainment, enhancing linguistic skills and increasing vocabularies of the artists," said Al Nuaimi. He said that theatre also helps in developing ability of the students to express and create educational and moral values among them.

Educational Psychologist, Amina Ibrahim Al Hail said that the theatre provides remedies to the people with psychological problems. It educates children positive values and makes shy children bold. She said that theatre also teaches students shouldering responsibilities and love for team work.

"The students also trained through theatre works and play for speaking properly," said Al Hail. She said that they also learn about body language by playing different characters during the play. "School theatre is a very useful tool to create awareness about behaviours influencing students to shun the bad habits," she added.

Maryam Numan Al Emadi, Director of Al Ruqaiya Preparatory School for Girls said that the school is running an initiative of drama theatre for four years. She said that the girl students benefited from the program in developing their personalities.

"We noted the students who participated in the program are enjoying great speaking power, interaction and cooperation. I think the students need drama classes since childhood. We as school should develop the art skills of students," said Al Emadi.

She said that the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to resume the activities of school theatre is praiseworthy because school can benefit a lot from this.

"The artists of drama club in our school are able to face the society and help achieve the goal of Qatar National Vision 2030 as they can represent the country in intentional forums," said Al Emadi.



"Al Ruqaiya Preparatory School for Girls participated in the second School Theatre Festival with a play 'Sanat Al Majd', a Qatari initiative in which 10 girl students performed," said Al Emad adding that the school has a drama club enrolling 40 girl students.

A total of 18 primary and preparatory schools are participating in the ongoing second School Theatre Festival. Over 484 students will perform during the festival with 18 plays with the support of 21 authors, 24 directors, nine poets and 11 composers. The first theatre of the second School Theatre festival began on first day with the show of students of the Saud bin Abdul Rahman Model School.

The play was entitled 'Together... We Build the Nation'. The students of Nusseibah Bint Ka'ab Elementary School for Girls performed in a play entitled 'Needle and Thread'.

The show was a unique kind of creativity that includes all aspects of creativity, including girl students 'performance, sound and music effects, decor, directing, and theatrical text.

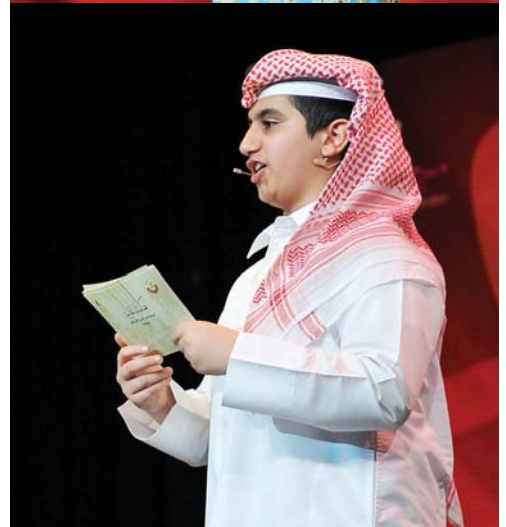
The play ends with demonstrating a paragraph on the Qatari folklore. The School Theatre competition continued its shows for the second day in a row at the Abdel Aziz Nasser Theatre in Souq Waqif, where the activities of the second day included a play, 'Your family is waiting for you - your country needs you'. A group of promising talented artists at Hamzah bin Abdul Muttalib Preparatory School performed in a play (Do not Rush) under the supervision of school director Muhammad Abdullah Al Balushi.

The show deals with a real-time issue to catch the attention of people on reckless driving in Sealine area. The play tells the story of a group of friends challenging each other for car race in Sealine area.

A friend of them kept advising them to stop adventure of reckless driving but in vain. After a heated argument, the race of reckless driving began with an exciting video that ends with the tragedy of the collision of the two cars leaving one person in intensive care unit and other to operation theatre.

They were discharged from hospitals in wheelchairs regretting on their acts, but it was too late. Then they decide to launch an initiative entitled (Do not rush, not to be reckless) with the participation of the General Directorate of Traffic to educate young people about the seriousness of the demonstration which could claim the life.

PICS: SALIM MATRAMKOT/THE PENINSULA



Amina Ibrahim Al Hail,
Educational Psychologist



Maryam Numan Al Emadi, Director of Al
Ruqaiya Preparatory School for Girls

DPS-MIS conducts orientation programme for Class X students



DPS-Modern Indian School (DPS-MIS) organised an orientation programme for the students of Class X to provide them with the necessary guidelines for the upcoming All India Secondary School Examination 2019-20 on Tuesday.

Vijayasree, Academic Coordinator, IX & X, briefed the students on examination ethics and emphasised on a proper planning and effective study schedule to excel in the examination. She also encouraged them to maintain healthy food habits and right sleep pattern during their examinations.

Highlighting the importance of the first milestone of the students' career, headmistress, Mary Cruz, gave valuable pointers to the students and advised them to keep stress, nervousness and anxiety at bay. She also cautioned them against any kind of malpractice and stressed on the need of maintaining absolute integrity during the examination.

CBSE Coordinator, Ashraf Sultana, gave general instructions to the students and urged them to reach the examination centre well in advance to avoid any kind of hassle. Altogether, it was a fruitful session and was well-received by the students.

—The Peninsula



Birla Public School organises Annual Sports Meet



Chief Guest Mohammed Rizlan Iqbar, Vice-Captain of the Qatar National Cricket team, with Vice-Principal, CBQED, Bhavna V S, H M Shruti Boodle, teachers and students during the sports meet.

Sports and physical activities are a part of our natural endeavours. It increases the mental and physical abilities and helps in developing our personality. Sports day brings new energy in the heart and mind of every child. The much awaited 16th Annual Sports Day of Birla Public School (BPS) was held recently, with great zeal and excitement.

The formal function began with evoking the blessings of Almighty which was followed by the National Anthem of both Qatar and India. After welcoming the guests, the day moved into the opening ceremony of Annual Sports meet. March Past of the four houses was a feast for the eyes.

The School Captain Zoya and Master Aalim led the parade and it was followed by lighting of the torch. The school captain Zoya hoisted the school flag. All the house captains took the prestigious oath.

The Chief Guest Mohammed Rizlan Iqbar, Vice-Captain of the Qatar National Cricket team, declared the sports meet open and addressed the gathering. C V Rappai, Director, and the Principal, A P Sharma, too encouraged the students with their motivational speeches.

The wonderful display performance of the students of Mass PT stole the show. The blooming buds of Birla showcased their team spirit in the form of display. The Zumba, Karate and the Yoga performance mesmerised the spectators. The winners were honoured by the Chief Guest and the leadership team. The highlight of the programme was the games conducted for the parents.

—The Peninsula





Love Lavishly soaps: Eco-friendly & handmade with care

A forced break from work and a long-existing struggle with soaps resulted in the birth of Love Lavishly, a homemade soap that is gaining popularity in Doha, thanks to Torba Farmer's Market at Qatar Foundation and QatArt Makers Market at Katara.

Founded by Anju Philip, Love Lavishly is a natural handcrafted soap brand that is made in Qatar. Chocolate Valentine, Ocean Breeze, Acne Buzzer are few of the soaps that this home-based business offers. They have now launched a new winter collection with unique colours and fragrances catering to specific needs.

Made from natural and skin-loving ingredients, the soaps contain organic oils such as olive oil, coconut oil, castor oil and exotic butters like shea butter, cocoa butter, kokum butter, Lye and other organic ingredients like oats, honey, rose powder, sandalwood powder, turmeric, sea salt for exfoliating properties.

"All the colourants used are eco-friendly and absolutely safe for the skin. Our soaps are suitable for dry, patchy, sensitive, oily and acne-prone skin types. The soaps are hand made with utmost care keeping in mind the wellbeing of our customers," said Anju.

Priced at QR35, the newly launched winter collection has 12 variants of soap including lavender, lemongrass, oats, milk and honey, watermelon, acne facial bar and

many more. Love Lavishly also has shampoo bars that are priced at QR30.

A private sector employee, Anju had to take a break from her work and embrace the life of a homemaker. She was venturing into a new phase of life when she had to look for other opportunities. Anju says, "I always struggled with a skin condition and using dish washing liquids was next to impossible for me. I was doing some research on that when I found a recipe to make liquid soap. The soap not just cleaned the utensils but also took care of my skin. I was excited as I felt that this could help many people who have skin issues and are unable to use soap."

Anju began working on recipes to formulate different kind of soap bars and working along with her was her friend Stella, together the two of them went on to develop this business as it stands now.

"My family and friends have supported me and motivated me throughout, even in the most trying times. This business was a leap of faith that took me on a journey where I am not just running a business but helping others. I intend to branch out into other things, help women going through hard times to learn a skill and find confidence in themselves," says the entrepreneur who is part of a community of handcrafts QatART.

—The Peninsula

Nepal's Tamang community celebrates New Year

SACHIN KUMAR
THE PENINSULA

Nepal Tamang Ghedung Qatar celebrated the Lhochhar festival, marking their New Year, on January 17, at Asian Town Cricket Stadium Recreation Hall. More than 600 Tamangs attended with their traditional attires. H E Dr. Narad Nath Bharadwaj, Ambassador of Nepal, was the chief guest of the event. Gyan Man Tamang, Vice-President of Nepal Tamang Ghedung, along with other notable personalities from the Nepali community and Nepali businessmen attended the event.

Performances by artists Phulkumar Bamjan Tamang, Shubha Ghalan Tamang and Purnima Lama Tamang from Nepal was another attraction of the celebration. They performed their famous Tamang Selo and Nepali songs.

Delivering a speech, H E the Ambassador said: "Tamang is fifth largest indigenous community of Nepal with a population 1.7 million. They have own culture and tradition. They made notable contribution to develop the country. According to history of Nepal, many Tamang leaders were directly involved to change Nepali political circumstances".

He added that, "Tamang Selo is the beauty of their culture which attracts Tourism in Nepal. I am happy to be a part of Lhochhar Festival Celebration and thanks to Tamang community in Qatar for organising such an

event which will support to promote Visit Nepal 2020."

He added that the community leaders and members should respect and follow the rules and regulations of Qatar while organising any community events.

Tamangs are one of the indigenous inhabitants of Nepal. They have their own distinct culture, language and religion. They follow a lunar calendar, along with the Buddhist and Bon people in the Himalayan regions of northern Nepal.

They mark Sonam Losar as their New Year, whereas many, including Sherpas and Bhotes, mark Gyalbo Losar. The festival has Tibetan and Chinese origins.

Lhochhar is a combination of two words (Lho+Chhar) in Tamang Literature ie Lho stand as Year and Chhar stand as New which we generally use in English as New Year.

The Tamang have a unique tradition of marking each year with distinct creatures, from a list of 12 which are Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Bird, Dog and Boar. This year the Tamang are celebrating the year of rat which starts from January 25.

Binesh Tamang, Chief Advisor of the Tamang Ghedung Qatar, said the last 15 days of the year is a time to clean and prepare a welcoming atmosphere for the New Year. The monasteries perform a special ritual, mask dance, to expel negative forces. People go to monasteries, stupas and chaityas and perform ceremonial rituals there.



H E Dr. Narad Nath Bharadwaj, Ambassador of Nepal to Qatar



Within 36 to 72 hours of the baby's birth, a drop of blood is taken from the baby's heel to screen for over 80 disorders. Should the blood sample detect any illness, a newborn screening coordinator will contact parents immediately.



'Heel prick' saves lives

FAZEENA SALEEM
THE PENINSULA

It is often called a 'heel prick' test as it involves taking a few drops of blood from the baby's heel. While most babies look healthy, there are some medical conditions that are not visible. For this reason, all newborns in Qatar are screened for vision, hearing, metabolic and endocrine diseases as part of the Qatar Newborn Screening Program.

Within 36 to 72 hours of the baby's birth, a drop of blood is taken from the baby's heel to screen for over 80 disorders. Should the blood sample detect any illness, a newborn screening coordinator will contact parents immediately.

Once parents are informed about the test results, the baby's care will continue with a multidisciplinary team who will work promptly to provide early treatment for the diagnosed condition to ensure the baby's wellbeing and safety.

Qatar was the first country in the region to establish a national newborn screening program, which was implemented in December 2003.

Newborn screening is the practice of testing all babies in their first days of life for certain disorders and conditions that can hinder their normal development. This testing is required for babies born in any hospital in Qatar and is typically performed before the baby leaves the hospital. If the conditions included in the newborn screening program go undetected or not treated, they can cause serious health problems starting in infancy or childhood. Early detection and treatment can help prevent intellectual and physical disabilities and life-threatening illnesses, according to Dr Tawfeg Ben Omran, Senior Consultant, Clinical and Metabolic Genetics Division at Hamad Medical Corporation.

"The newborn screening program is free of charge and is considered one of the most successful preventive public healthcare programs," said Ben Omran.
"In other countries, there is a possibility of some

newborn babies being left out from the screening. But in Qatar the Program provides a 100 percent coverage and every baby born is screened," he added.

At the time of its inception, the screening panel included 32 disorders. Over the years, the panel has been expanded and now includes more than 80 diseases. Recently, screening for blood disorders was included and the plan is to add additional disorders. The incidence of metabolic disorders is one in 961 babies and the incidence of endocrine disorders is one in 1,767 babies.

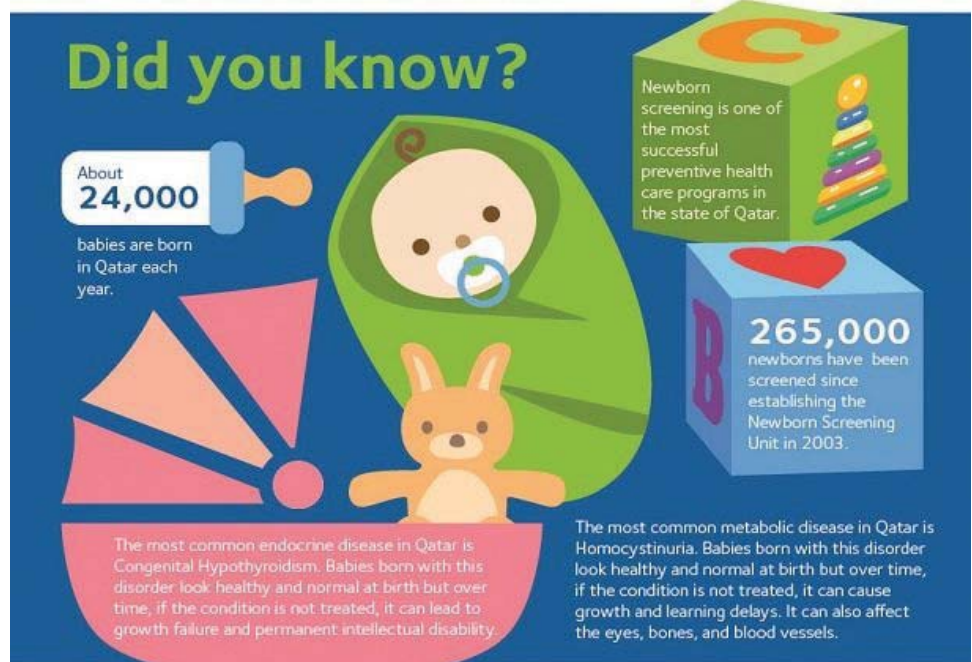
To date, the newborn heel prick test has been administered to more than 300,000 babies across the country. The screening quickly identifies specific harmful or potentially fatal disorders that aren't otherwise apparent at birth.

Under the Qatar Newborn Screening Program, 1,000 babies have been diagnosed with a rare disorder or genetic condition.

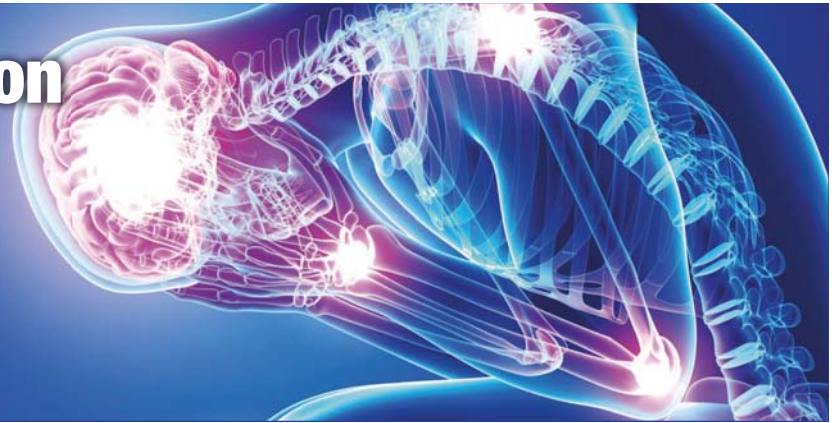
When it's suspected that a newborn has a disease, healthcare professionals communicate with his or her parents, taking into consideration how difficult it will be for them to hear the diagnosis. It can be an overwhelming experience for many parents because the need for treatment is almost always immediate.

The screening, which quickly identifies specific conditions and disorders that are not apparent at birth, has resulted almost all babies diagnosed in Qatar being successfully treated for potentially fatal and disabling conditions.

Qatar Newborn Screening Program is divided into three components; the Newborn Screening Unit, which works with maternity units and primary health care teams to coordinate testing and follow up of results, the specialised laboratory that conducts the testing, and the teams that provide treatment to affected babies, both short- and long-term.



Chronic inflammation is dangerous, and you may not even know you have it



Most of us think of inflammation as the redness and swelling that follow a wound, infection or injury, such as an ankle sprain, or from overdoing a sport, “tennis elbow,” for example. This is “acute” inflammation, a beneficial immune system response that encourages healing, and usually disappears once the injury improves.

But chronic inflammation is less obvious and often more insidious.

Chronic inflammation begins without an apparent cause — and doesn’t stop. The immune system becomes activated, but the inflammatory response isn’t intermittent, as it is during an acute injury or infection. Rather, it stays on all the time at a low level.

Experts think this may be the result of an infection that doesn’t resolve, an abnormal immune reaction or such lifestyle factors as obesity, poor sleep or exposure to environmental toxins. Over time, the condition can, among other things, damage DNA and lead to heart disease, cancer and other serious disorders.

“Unlike acute inflammation, which benefits health by promoting healing and recovery, chronic inflammation is characterised by persistent increases in inflammatory proteins all throughout the body and can damage health and promote several major diseases,” says George Slavich, associate professor of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences at UCLA, referring to small proteins called cytokines that the immune system releases at the site of an injury to promote recovery.

“People typically don’t know that they have chronic inflammation until it’s too late,” he says.

Individuals often learn they have chronic inflammation when they develop an autoimmune disease, such as Crohn’s disease, lupus or Type 1 diabetes, since inflammation is a hallmark of autoimmune disorders. But experts believe chronic inflammation also plays a role in developing heart disease, cancer, kidney disease, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, neurodegenerative disorders, cognitive decline and mental health illnesses, such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and schizophrenia.

Scientists are still learning about why chronic inflammation is so dangerous and how it contributes to disease. Meanwhile, they suggest actions people can take to reduce their risk, specifically by changing certain behaviours.

Numerous factors appear to raise the risk of chronic inflammation, among them social isolation, psychological stress, disturbed sleep, chronic infections,

physical inactivity, poor diet, obesity and exposure to air pollutants, hazardous waste products, industrial chemicals and tobacco smoke.

Experts believe individuals can reduce their risk by adopting lifestyle changes, including eating a healthy diet, improving sleep, exercising regularly, quitting smoking and finding ways to decrease stress and exposure to environmental pollutants.

“Diet is one of the key factors that influences inflammation in the body,” Slavich says. “Whereas fried foods, red meat, sodas, and white bread and pastries that have refined carbohydrates tend to increase inflammation, fruits, nuts, green leafy vegetables, tomatoes and olive oil tend to reduce inflammation. Therefore, while diet is not the only factor that can be targeted to improve immune health, it is an important one.”

Scientists think chronic inflammation causes oxidative stress in the body, which is an imbalance between the production of dangerous free radicals, molecules that harm healthy tissue in the body, and antioxidants, substances that clean up waste products and neutralise them. This can damage DNA as well as proteins and fatty tissue, which in turn accelerates biological aging.

“Chronic inflammation is involved in not just a few select disorders but a wide variety of very serious physical and mental health conditions,” says Slavich, senior author of a recent paper signed by scientists from 22 institutions urging greater prevention, early diagnosis and treatment of severe chronic inflammation. “Indeed, chronic inflammatory diseases are the most significant cause of death in the world today, with more than 50 percent of all deaths being attributable to inflammation-related diseases.”

Researchers still don’t understand the exact mechanisms of how certain behaviours influence chronic inflammation, although a few examples are clear. In heart disease, for example, cigarette smoking and air pollution irritate the arteries, which stimulates inflammation.

“The ‘damage accumulation’ theory is a possibility, but the reality is that we do not know whether inflammation is causing these health and functional problems, or whether it’s an indication that some other process is evolving that undermines health,” says Luigi Ferrucci, scientific director of the National Institute on Aging. “The evidence is clearer for cardiovascular disease, since it has been demonstrated that

blocking inflammation with specific drugs prevents cardiovascular events. For the other outcomes, it’s still uncertain.”

Chronic inflammation can contribute to cognitive decline and mental health disorders by boosting age-related immune system deterioration, known as immunosenescence, and by promoting vascular and brain aging, which, in combination, degrade neural and cognitive function, experts say.

“Chronic inflammation can also cause threat sensitivity and hypervigilance, which gives rise to anxiety disorders and PTSD, as well as fatigue and social-behavioral withdrawal, which are key symptoms of depression,” Slavich says.

Scientists say more research is needed to identify biomarkers or other substances that suggest the presence of chronic inflammation.

There are probably hundreds of these potential diagnostic tools produced by the immune system, but they remain unidentified, Slavich says.

The most widely used test measures levels of C-reactive protein (CRP) in the blood. CRP, a substance produced by the liver, rises when chronic inflammation is present, although the standard CRP test is nonspecific — that is, it indicates inflammation, but cannot pinpoint exactly where it is. A second, more sensitive test (hs-CRP) suggests a higher risk of heart attack, although it too can be imprecise.

Some doctors screen for CRP as part of routine physical exams and also among people at risk for heart disease and autoimmune conditions. Experts think wider screening could identify more patients. “This isn’t a bad idea,” Ferrucci says.

Another test — this one more specific to heart disease — screens for myeloperoxidase, or MPO, an enzyme released by white blood cells that kills harmful bacteria in inflamed blood vessels. Increases in MPO can be dangerous, causing further damage to arterial walls, which encourages the formation of clots. These, in turn, can block blood flow, leading to heart attack and stroke. MPO also reduces the effectiveness of HDL, the “good” cholesterol, and removes nitric oxide, which is important for the regulation of healthy blood flow.

The good news, however, is that people worried about developing chronic inflammation can take affirmative steps to prevent it.

“If we make people aware of these risk factors, our hope is that individuals will reduce the factors that apply to them,” Slavich says. — *The Washington Post*

ANDREA SACHS
THE WASHINGTON POST

In the first weekend of 2020, seven Democratic presidential candidates blew through Iowa like a snow squall. Elizabeth Warren appeared in Manchester, Maquoketa, Davenport and Dubuque. Bernie Sanders also stopped by Dubuque, in addition to Grundy Center, Mason City and Boone. Joe Biden logged significant miles around the Hawkeye State as well, visiting Waterloo, Davenport, Grinnell, Vinton and Des Moines.

I landed in the state capital at the same time as John Delaney's Sunday event in Sheldon and checked into my room while Biden was speaking in Davenport. If I had unpacked a little faster, I could have caught the tail end of Tom Steyer's talk in Newton. But after the flight, I just wanted a snack, without the politicking.

Over the next few weeks, all eyes will bore into Iowa, the first state in the country to hold a caucus or primary. The Democratic candidates are blanketing the Midwestern state, jockeying for supporters before the February 3 caucuses. (A few Republicans challenging President Trump, such as Bill Weld and Joe Walsh, are also popping up in Iowa.) The politically minded will focus on the policies, positions and personalities of the POTUS hopefuls, but I was more interested in the datelines — the destinations and attractions that will be here long after the politicians have moved on to another state, another election. While the candidates come to Iowa for votes, I came to Iowa for Iowa.

For three out of every four years, Iowa is relegated to flyover status. So, you can't blame the state of corn, Hawkeyes and Herbert Hoover for basking in the spotlight while it can.

As a resident of Washington, DC, my ears have been

rubbed raw by political talk. But in Iowa, the topic seemed refreshing and new. Like the time I spotted my college professor on a beach in Rhode Island. I found her more compelling in a different environment.

Businesses around the state are capitalising on this moment. Sock Spot, a vendor in the NewBo City Market in Cedar Rapids, carries election-themed sport socks with candidates' names (Mayor Pete [Buttigieg], Warren), public service announcements ("Do the right thing 2020") and unifying slogans ("I vote for snacks"). The store's owner, who was wearing chihuahua-print socks, said the Bernie and Trump styles with unruly hair (comb included, to tame the locks) were doing well. But if votes were based on sales, Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes would become the next POTUS.

Raygun, a printing, clothing and novelty retailer with several locations around the state, slaps a crooked smile on the straight face of such serious subjects as politics, social causes and Iowa stereotypes. The company, which leans left, has created islands of candidate-related merchandise within its stores. Here, you can pick up books by Warren, Sanders and Biden, among others; T-shirts ("Give Pete a chance!"); and laser-cut ornaments (Warren hanging with Lizzo and a gun-toting cat). If you have lost track of which candidates have dropped out of the race, check the discounted rack: The "Iowa for Beto" shirts are on sale.

On weekends, diners, including many Drake University students, stand in line for breakfast at Waveland Cafe in Des Moines. The place is packed. But on a Monday morning, I had many seating choices: counter or booth, by the photo montage of regulars or the wall of signatures by journalists and politicians. Two bites into my rye toast, I noticed a familiar face with a Ned Flanders moustache and a Hawaiian shirt. I dropped my

slice to say hello to Waveland owner David Stone. I asked him how the cafe had become a campaign and press stop during the caucuses. He said it gained national attention in 2000, when Tom Brokaw reported live from the 54-seat diner. This year, CNN wanted to set up operations inside, but Stone declined: feeding frenzy before media frenzy.

"They can't take over the restaurant on a weekend," he said. "We are extremely busy, and I can't have cameras getting in the way of my customers."

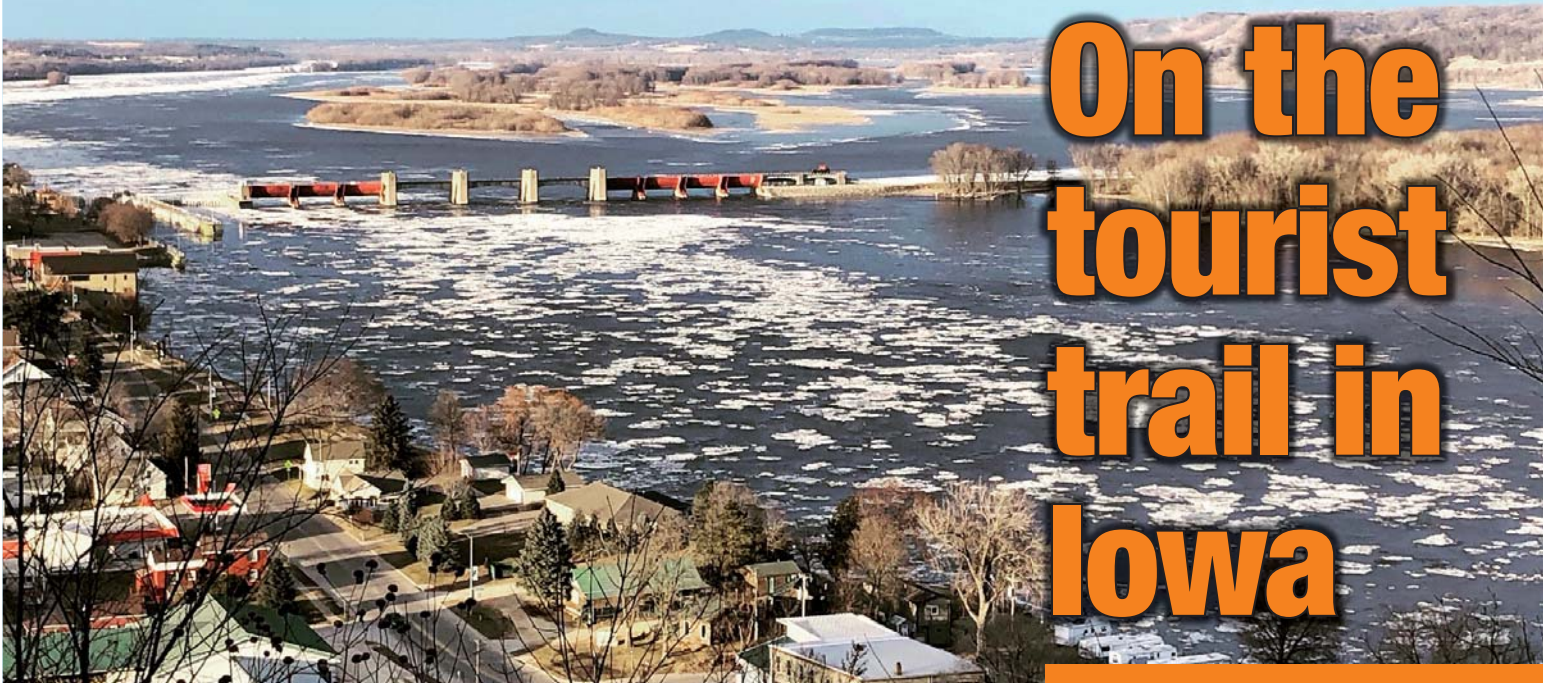
Not even Aquaman could move the mountain of eggs and potatoes. When Jason Momoa, a native Iowan, wanted to hold a family reunion at the diner last year, Stone agreed, but only if his party arrived at 7am and cleaned their plates before the official opening hour of 8. "He complied," Stone said of the herculean actor.

Since 2004, the Hamburg Inn No. 2 in Iowa City has held the Coffee Bean Caucus. The process is much easier than the actual Iowa caucuses. At the front counter, guests take a bean from a jar and drop it into a smaller container (a paper-clip holder?) embellished with the name of their preferred candidate. At the end of the day, the staff transfers the beans to the larger Mason jars lined up on a shelf near the front door. The policy is one person/one vote, but everyone can participate, including non-natives (often called "captive" in Iowa-speak), children and foreigners.

"This gives us a really good sense of what the consensus in Iowa City is," said Elise Prendergast, the front house manager, adding that Bernie Sanders won in 2016.

On the Tuesday morning I stopped by, Buttigieg and Sanders were bean-to-bean, and Mike Bloomberg's canister was empty. Elise said the numbers are always in flux, however. After the December debate, Amy Klobuchar's bean count rose.

The restaurant is lined with press clippings, and



toward the back, you can genuflect before a shrine to past candidates and ex-presidents. In 1992, three years after leaving office, Ronald Reagan visited the Hamburg Inn and sat at what is now the Presidential Table. According to the menu from his visit, he ordered meatloaf, french fries, green beans, a roll with butter and apple pie a la mode, which he ate first.

Of course, tastes and diets have changed since the Reagan years, so I asked Elise for her menu picks. She recommended the hamburgers and pie shakes, a blend of vanilla ice cream and pie - America in a glass.

At Eatery A in Des Moines, I ordered a Moscow mule and chatted with the moustachioed waiter about the restaurant's former occupants, first a Blockbuster Video store and later Barack Obama's caucus headquarters. I had read that a few campaign offices were nearby - Delaney's is a few blocks away - and wondered if he had a Spidey sense about the diners' identities. With the excitement of a wildlife enthusiast on safari, I asked him if he could point to any campaign workers.

"They wear buttons," he answered, scanning the establishment.

We didn't see any lapel accessories, but he did notice a man and woman of distinction in the booth behind me.

"Are you guys with the Well Pennies?" he gushed to the Des Moines-based folk-pop band. "I love your song 'Ooh La La.'"

That night at the hotel, I fell asleep to the duo's music and not the news headlines.

In Pella, a Dutch-accented town about an hour east of Des Moines, the woman in the white bonnet didn't want to talk politics. She had more pressing matters to discuss: pastries.

Bakeries all over town post signs in their windows for Dutch letter S. However, the employee at Jaarsma Bakery explained that the S-shaped sweets are traditionally baked for Sinterklaasavond, or Dutch Santa Claus Day, on December 6. For more seasonally correct snacking, she suggested an almond banket, a pastry similar to a letter but with more almond paste.

Jaarsma Bakery opened in 1898, about 50 years after the Dutch immigrants arrived in Iowa seeking religious freedom. The Old World traditions still run deep. Since 1935, the town has held Tulip Time, a springtime festival celebrating the Netherlands' flower power. The Vermeer Windmill, the tallest working mill in North America, soars nearly 125 feet high, its 82-foot-long blades whirring like a lazy fan. Five times a day, the Klokkenspel stirs to life with chiming bells and lively characters. There's Dominie Hendrik Pieter Scholte, who led the 800 newcomers to the City of Refuge, and his wife, Maria, who is in tears after all but one of her good dishes shattered during the crossing. (She is also upset about her new digs, a log cabin.) Wyatt Earp earned a spot on the musical clock because the gunslinger grew up here. His childhood home is part the Historical Village, a collection of 22 buildings including the Werkplaats, where wooden shoes are made, and the Delft House, which contains vintage pieces of the famous pottery.

Continuing east, I left Pella's self-described "Touch of Holland," for the Willkommen mat of the Amana Colonies, a National Historic Landmark. Starting in 1855, German immigrants fleeing religious persecution (see Pella, with a Deutschland twist) established seven villages on 26,000 acres of land in central Iowa. They lived communally until the Great Change of 1932, when they



split the shared nest for a more independent lifestyle. Today, about 1,600 people reside in the colonies, including 300 adherents of the Amana church, a breakaway sect of the Lutheran Church.

During the winter months, the historical buildings keep limited hours, but Jon M Childers, executive director of the Amana Heritage Society, held the keys to the colonies. We visited the communal kitchen and the church in Middle Amana, and toured the exhibits at the heritage museum, which included the world's first microwave and (empty) buckets of lard and barrels of pickled German cut beans from the subsistence days. Jon drove me by the 163-year-old Amana Woollen Mill, Iowa's oldest and only working woollen mill, the site of a new boutique hotel that is scheduled to open in the fall. In between stops, he told me how as a Boy Scout, he provided "security" for Ted Kennedy, who visited during his 1979-80 run for president. (The boys encircled the former Massachusetts senator.) More recently, Obama and Hillary Clinton spoke at the Festhalle Barn about a month apart in 2007; a year later, Bill Clinton stumped for his wife at the Amana RV Park. He also picked up a blanket from a shop Jon had set up in the registration office, for those chilly nights in Chappaqua, New York. I asked Jon what could politicians learn from the Amana colonists.

"Amana is inclusive," he said. "People sit and listen. It feels like a big family."

In the fantasy baseball movie *Field of Dreams*, the voice said, "If you build it, he will come." Meanwhile, the voice in my head said: "If you offer a house tour that doesn't involve standing outside in freezing cold, she will come." Someone clearly heard me.

I recognized the two-storey clapboard farmhouse in Dyersville from a corn field away. It sat above the baseball field, which looked smaller in person. I buzzed the doorbell and a guide ushered me inside. After putting on protective booties, I followed her through the kitchen, where a photo of Ray and Annie Kinsella, the fictional field-builders, sat on the counter. In the living room, the 1989 film played on a boxy TV, the sound off to prevent the tour guides from going mad.

I learned all sorts of movie trivia, such as the actor who played the "voice" remains a mystery (maybe Ray Liotta or Ed Harris, the husband of Amy "Annie" Madigan?) and the corn grew so high, thanks to human intervention, that Kevin "Ray" Costner had

to stand on a 12-inch platform. I stared out the bay window, a renovation care of Universal Studios, but didn't see any ghost players emerge. Maybe they are waiting for Major League Baseball to finish building its regulation field adjacent to the FOD.

On August 13, the New York Yankees and White Sox will compete in Iowa's first regular-season game to a crowd of 8,000. On this January morning, I had zero fans to cheer me. But I did have the voice in my head reminding me that the sooner I rounded those bases, the quicker I could return to my heated car.

Winter is prime time for viewing bald eagles in the Midwest. The birds of prey, which start arriving in September, hunt for food along Iowa's major rivers. I started my search for the country's emblem in the cafeteria of the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque. The res-

taurant overlooks Ice Harbor, a man-made offshoot of the Upper Mississippi. No luck on the birds, but even better, I found Jared McGovern, the museum's curator of conservation programmes, eating a chicken sandwich. Jared told me to look by the lock-and-dam systems along the Mississippi River, where eagles often feast on the fish uprooted by the rushing water. Plan B: Check the fields, in the off chance a farmer tossed a dead animal. Like many of us, eagles prefer fast food to a more labour-intensive meal made from scratch.

I followed Jared's instructions, driving out to Lock and Dam No. 11 (nothing) and Eagle Point Park (maybe something) in Dubuque. Standing on the lip of the park above the Mississippi, I caught a glimpse of two dark-feathered birds (juveniles?) and a third with a white head (mom or dad?). I tried to snap a photo to send to Jared for confirmation but couldn't free my hand from my mitten in time. Back in the car, I continued south on the Great River Road National Scenic Byway to Bellevue (Lock and Dam No. 12 and Bellevue State Park), Green Island and Sabula, the state's only island city. In Davenport, seagulls circled Lock and Dam No. 13 and Canada geese pecked at the frozen banks.

The next day, I had moved on from the bald eagles; I now only cared about blankets. I had returned to Amana and was walking down the street when a mother exclaimed to her son, "Bald eagle," and pointed at the sky. The little boy and I both looked up and watched the bird soar toward the setting sun. Tinted in golden light, the bald eagle looked regal and proud, even if he was just going to freeloader in a farmer's field.

I also spotted my button. A few hours before my flight back to Washington, I was drinking coffee at the Scenic Route Bakery in Des Moines when Jackson Boaz walked in wearing a "Students for Warren" pin on his wool jacket. The 15-year-old high school freshman from Northern California started every morning at the cafe with a cup of oatmeal. Iowa in January, he said, was "too cold for parfait." The young campaign volunteer shared his impressions of the state with me.

"I love the energy here in Des Moines and in Iowa as a whole," he said. "They have this sacred role as the first in the country. It's like the political Super Bowl." Anything else? "The food has been pretty dang good."

Jackson was leaving in mid-January but hoped to return to Iowa for the caucuses - and maybe the oatmeal, too.



Crispy-skinned sheet-pan chicken and cabbage scores high on flavour and low on effort

Three things that make the author very happy: simple, sheet pan and supper. Add “scrumptious” to that list and you have an apt description of what this recipe brings to the table.

Here, bone-in chicken thighs are slathered with a sweet-and-tangy mix of grainy mustard and maple syrup, then cooked at a high temperature for 20 minutes. This step not only makes the chicken's skin extra-crispy, but also because the rendered fat is ultimately poured off the pan, you get that craveable crunch without any grease.

The oven temperature is then lowered and the same pan is piled with a jewel-red cabbage slaw, accented with the earthy ping of caraway seeds and dressed with olive oil, maple syrup and a brightening splash of vinegar. The crispy-skinned chicken is then nestled into the slaw to finish cooking as the cabbage warms and softens, and supper is served, splendidly.

CRISPY-SKINNED SHEET-PAN CHICKEN

Active: 20 minutes | Total: 1 hour
4 to 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 tablespoons grainy mustard
 - 3 tablespoons maple syrup, divided
 - 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
 - 2 1/2 pounds skin-on bone-in chicken thighs
 - 8 cups thinly sliced red cabbage, about 1/2 medium head
 - 1 medium red onion, sliced thinly into half moons
 - 5 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, divided
 - 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
 - 1 teaspoon caraway seeds
 - 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, or more to taste
- Steps**
- Position the rack in the middle of the oven and preheat to 450 degrees.
 - In a small bowl, mix the mustard, 1 tablespoon of the maple syrup and 1/4 teaspoon of the pepper.

Place the chicken on a large, rimmed baking sheet and pat dry with paper towels. Drizzle the mustard mixture over both sides of the chicken and rub some under the skin. With the chicken skin-side up, place the sheet pan in the oven and roast about 20 minutes, until

the skin has begun to crisp a bit.

Remove the baking sheet from the oven and reduce the oven temperature to 375 degrees. Transfer the chicken to a plate and discard any accumulated fat.

In a large bowl, toss the cabbage, onion, 4 tablespoons of the vinegar, the oil, the remaining 2 tablespoons of maple syrup, caraway seeds, salt and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Transfer the cabbage mixture to the baking sheet, spreading it evenly, and return the chicken, skin-side up, to the sheet, nestling it in the cabbage.

Roast 20 to 25 minutes, until the cabbage softens, and the chicken is crispy on top and registers 170 degrees on an instant-read thermometer. If the chicken is done before the cabbage, transfer it to a plate and cover with foil. Return the cabbage to the oven until it reaches desired tenderness.

Drizzle the cabbage with the remaining tablespoon vinegar and season with additional salt, if desired.

Nutrition (based on 6 servings, pouring off 3 tablespoons of chicken fat) | Calories: 430; Total Fat: 26g; Saturated Fat: 6g; Cholesterol: 185mg; Sodium: 420mg; Carbohydrates: 13g; Dietary Fiber: 3g; Sugars: 9g; Protein: 33g.

— *The Washington Post*

FILM REVIEW

'Bad Boys for Life' proves that the third time's the charm

Michael Bay didn't direct *Bad Boys for Life*, but in ways expected and unexpected his spirit lurks in the third instalment of the franchise that started with his feature debut, the 1995 odd-couple-buddy-cop-comedy-thriller *Bad Boys*. That was way back before the filmmaker was even a brand — a brand now most associated with loud, crass, action-packed blockbusters epitomised by five *Transformers* movies.

Early in the new film, Bay appears in a quickie cameo during a wedding scene in which the daughter of family man Marcus (Martin Lawrence) — one half of the film's titular detective duo, along with his playboy partner Mike (Will Smith) — is getting married. It's Marcus who's giving away the bride, but it's Bay, who briefly handles a microphone, in the uncredited role of emcee/wedding planner, who seems to be spiritually handing over the reins of the franchise to the two kids who took over directing duties from the action veteran: Adil El Arbi and Bilall Fallah, the 30-ish, Moroccan-born Belgian filmmaking duo who broke out with *Black*, a street-wise take on *Romeo and Juliet*, and who made *Variety*'s list of 10 directors to watch in 2018.

The young co-directors, who are billed, in the casual manner of their generation, simply as Adil and Bilal, bring a breath of fresh air and fun energy to a franchise that felt somewhat stale, even 25 years ago, when the first film was likened, not inaccurately, to a carbon copy of *Lethal Weapon*. Adil and Bilal aren't reinventing the wheel here. *Bad Boys for Life* is very much in the spirit of the first two films — cacophonous, at times preposterous, hyperviolent, coarse, silly — but a quarter of a century on from *Bad Boys*, it both acknowledges and punctures the absurdity of two

50-ish men, slower, more thickly upholstered versions of their former selves, as action heroes.

There was always a contrast drawn between Smith's Mike, the badder, more often shirtless of the two, and the married, more cautious and conservative Marcus, who as *Bad Boys for Life* gets underway is itching to retire, while Mike is dedicating himself to tracking down a Mexican assassin (Jacob Scipio) who is methodically executing a list of Miami justice system bigwigs: a judge, a prosecutor, a forensics expert.

The good-natured tension and ribbing between the two old "boys" is still there — and still a bit old hat — but there is a new dynamic that juices the entertainment factor. Mike is forced to work with a new, high-tech team of young operatives dubbed AMMO (for Advanced Metro Miami Operations). Led, of course, by an old flame of Mike's (Paola Nufiez), the three-person squad (Vanessa Hudgens, Alexander Ludwig and Charles Melton) demonstrates a borderline snotty disrespect for their elders that is, in the context of a sequel like this, extremely healthy.

Where Mike's policing style is old-school — he extracts information from a civilian informant (DJ Khaled) by whacking the guy's knuckles with a meat tenderiser — AMMO's methodology involves weaponised surveillance drones, cracking cellphone call logs and other, more generally bloodless tools of 21st-century law enforcement. The banter between Mike and the members of the AMMO crew lends the film a crackling humour that goes a long way toward defusing the frequent — and sometimes disturbingly dark — mayhem that characterises this movie.

During the film's climax, which takes our heroes to a creepy, decaying Mexican hotel decorated with the



trappings of Santa Muerte, a folkloric female personification of the Grim Reaper, Marcus refers to a "darkness that swallows you whole." It's a reference to a key plot twist that gives *Bad Boys for Life* a sub-text that is a bit heavier than what fans of the series might be used to. But the script, by Chris Bremner, Joe Carnahan and Peter Craig, always stays just this side of truly, deeply unsettling.

Mike, for his part, characterises that same plot twist with a euphemism, saying that he has a "history" with a certain character. But at this point, he has a history with lots of characters: not just Marcus, but their now gray-haired police captain (Joe Pantoliano, who, of course, returns — how could he not?).

It is that history that Adil and Bilal both honour and gleefully flip off here. Like their cinematic forebear Bay, they told *Variety* that they hope one day to become a brand, specifically one known for "in-your-face, entertaining, next-level..." With this film in the can, a sequel hinted at in its ending, and discussions underway with producer Jerry Bruckheimer for directing *Beverly Hills Cop 4*, they're already well on their way.

—The Washington Post

Things to do this weekend in Qatar (Jan 23 - 25, 2020)



DFI Movie Screening – Little Women

Doha Film Institute will screen *Little Women* this weekend at MIA. Greta Gerwig's adaptation of the 1868 novel is about four young women, each determined to live life on their own terms. The movie has won six nominations at the 92nd Academy Awards.
When: January 23-25 | 7pm
Where: MIA – Auditorium



Popular Bollywood singer Sonu Nigam and his crew of 32 members which includes musicians, dancers and others will perform live in Doha. His collection consists of Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Kannada, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, English, Bhojpuri, Urdu, Nepali and Marathi songs. He has sung more than 10,000 songs in his career and has won Indian National Film Award. The tickets for the show range from QAR 40 to QAR1000.

When: Thursday, January 23 | 7:30pm
Where: Asian Town Amphitheater

Chinese food festival and Cultural performance

To celebrate the Chinese New Year, Dragon Mart will put on an exhibition of Chinese food and cultural performance. The performances include dragon dance, lion dance, kung fu tea, Chinese musical performance and others. Free Entry!

When: Every Friday & Saturday, until February 7 | 4pm to 10pm
Where: Dragon Mart Qatar



"Spanish Artists in Doha" Exhibition

Katara Cultural Village is hosting the 'Spanish Art in Doha' exhibition in cooperation with Arts and Cultures Without Borders association, the exhibition will see the participation of 14 Spanish artists and Qatari artist Hessa Kala, who is a member of Art Without Borders.

When: Until January 30 | 10am - 10pm
Where: Building 47, Katara



New Year Concert 2020

The New Year Concert will follow the Viennese musical tradition that started in Vienna, Austria in 1838, featuring the Austrian composer, Johann Strauss II, along with various short pieces of polkas and waltzes. The concert will be conducted by Alastair Willis and will feature Waseem Kotoub on solo piano.

When: Saturday, 25 January | 7:30pm
Where: Katara Opera House

This weekend we have something for everyone - music lovers can head to Katara or those who like to watch a movie can head to MIA, while others can enjoy the food festival and the fashion show happening this weekend. Read on to pick and choose your activity this weekend!

Shop Qatar 2020

A much awaited colourful shopping celebration in the country, Shop Qatar is here. The 25-day festival will give residents and visitors a chance to explore and enjoy Qatar's diverse retail offering including everything from luxury malls and high-end boutique venues to themed, entertainment-rich shopping centres, as well as authentic souqs and bazaars. Throughout the festival, all participating malls will host free roaming shows and family-friendly entertainment as well as a colourful lights and confetti show every weekend.

For the first time in Doha, the National Tourism Council presents the designer of the stars Nicolas Jebran the inspiring celebrity designer fashion show. Free entry for all, priority will be given to registered participants.

When: Friday, January 24 | 6pm-8:30pm

Where: Al Hazm Mall

Children's Fashion Show

When: Friday, January 24 | 2pm

Where: Mirqab Mall

Designed by Qatar

When: Saturday, 25 January 2020

Where: Al Hazm Chinese Drummers

When: January 25 - 31 | 4:00pm - 8:30pm

Where: Mall Of Qatar, Doha Festival City, Lagoona Mall, Gulf Mall, Landmark, City Center, Hayatt Plaza, Villaggio, Al Mirqab, The Pearl, Al Khor Mall

Justice League Parade

When: January 21- 31 | 2pm - 9pm

Where: City Center, Hayatt Plaza, Landmark, Lagoona, Gulf Mall, Doha Festival City, Villaggio, Mirqab Mall, Al Khor Mall

Jazz Arabesque

When: Friday, January 24 | 7pm

Where: City Center Doha

Metro Street Food – Food Fest

First ever outdoor metro event hosted by Q sports, with combination of food, beverages and a mini golf course setup at the DECC Metro station.

When: Jan 1 – April 2020

Weekdays: 12:30pm – 11pm; Weekends: 2pm – 12 midnight

Where: DECC Metro Station



Mahaseel Festival

The biggest edition of Mahaseel Festival is going on at Katara with more than 40 stalls to buy vegetables, flowers, honey, dairy and meat products offered by local companies at discounted prices. There is also a large area where children can enjoy inflatables in addition to a giant tent where they can play various computer games such as VR games making the festival a one-stop-shop for families.

When: Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays until March 31 | 9am to 9pm

Where: Building 22, Katara



"Magnificent Cultures" Exhibition

Katara in cooperation with the Embassy of Italy in the State of Qatar presents "Magnificent Cultures" Exhibition By the Italian artist Luigi Ballarin.

When: January 18 – 29, 2020 | 10am to 10pm

Where: Katara; BLDG 18



Qatar, India & the Gulf: History, Culture and Society Exhibition

Qatar National Library exhibits connections between India, Qatar and the Gulf over 4,600 years as a part of the Qatar-India 2019 Year of the Culture. The exhibition reveals how this ancient relationship has influenced their history, culture and society in profound and surprising ways.

When: Until February 29, 2020; 3pm – 8pm

Where: Qatar National Library



MIA Park Bazaar



A weekend market which is a modern take on Qatar's old souq tradition will have around 50 stalls offering a wide variety of products. The bazaar at Museum of Islamic Art park will have stalls selling ready-to-wear clothes, caps, footwear, shayla, sunglasses, bags, jewellery, watches, cosmetics, fragrances, and other accessories. The stalls representing home-based businesses also sell home display items and sumptuous home-cooked cuisines to the visitors.

When: Fridays from 2pm to 8pm and Saturdays from 12noon to 8pm

Where: MIA Park

Guitar Clinic with Jack Thammarat

Yamaha's famous Guitarist and winner of Guitar Idol 2009 competition Jack Thammarat will perform at the Lagoona Mall. Free Entrance.

When: Friday, January 24 | 7pm

Where: Music Square, Lagoona Mall.



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The Island of The Pearl-Qatar, an iconic mixed-use urban development of architecturally distinct precincts, offers everything residents, retailers and visitors need, in one location. From beachfront Viva Bahriya apartments to high-spec office space in the Abraj Quartier. From the charming Venetian atmosphere of Qanat Quartier, to prestigious Porto Arabia stores, to the famous restaurants of Medina Centrale. It's a world that's alive with wonderful surprises.

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