

Somethin' different fitness

By Dorene Internicola

Young or old, active or aching, just about everyone can buoy their workout by plunging into the pool, fitness experts say.

But whether you're swimming laps or pedaling inside an inner tube, there's more to aquatic fitness than just splashing around.

"Swimming is just a great overall fitness activity. You're using all your muscle groups, balancing your body in that environment," said Dr. Barbara Bushman, an expert with the American

College of Sports Medicine.

Even at the shallow end aquatic exercises can improve balance in older people and help anyone with joint or orthopedic problems to stay fit.

"Anytime you're in the water you can basically unweight the body," Bushman explained. "There's the support of fluid around you."

Bushman, a professor at Missouri State University who describes herself as a runner forced into the pool by a stress fracture of the tibia, admits she is not a good swimmer.

"The only thing my doctor cleared me for was deep water running. The deeper

the submergence, the greater the resistance," she explained.

"In the pool you have to focus on good form. My form actually improved."

Attention to form is just as important if you're swimming for fitness.

"Take a few lessons so you can sustain that 20 to 30 minutes of aerobic activity you need, Bushman advises, "and learn different strokes for interval training and variety."

As group fitness manager at Equinox in New York, Mark Hendricks oversees the gym's Aqua Fitness classes, where, he says, 75 to 80 percent of the attendees are over 50 years old.

"We try to maintain their mobility," Hendricks said. "So many individuals lose range of motion as they get older. There's lots of spinal rotation. We move thru different planes of motion in the water."

Core work and suspension training, with the feet not touching bottom in the pool are part of the routine. He also uses small foam dumbbells and aqua gloves for resistance training.

"If you run in the pool you have much less skeletal pounding, and when you get older that's a wonderful thing," he said. "At that age you're not looking for a six pack, you're looking to play with your

grandkids."

And sometimes to forge social relationships as well.

The Senior Splashers Swim Team, average age 63, has been meeting regularly at a YMCA at Brooklyn, New York, for about six years.

"We started as part of the water aerobics program and found that we enjoyed being with one another," said team member Clara McDonald.

"Many of us have had replacement shoulders, knees, hips. We've had all kinds of orthopedic issues, but we want to make sure we stay in as good physical shape as we can possibly muster," she

explained.

"People come for physical therapy, find they like the water and decide they want to learn how to swim," she added.

Coach Richard Akers says learning to swim builds confidence at any age.

"Taking non-swimmers and seeing them develop builds my ego continuously," he said.

For Splash member Earl Patton the rewards go beyond muscle tone.

"What I get in the water is really therapeutic. Doing the butterfly I think about a large whale, a breaststroke is like exploring the water. Without swimming I don't think I could complete the day." (RTS)

Hughes visits Kuwait as part of his world odyssey

Briton travelling around the globe without flying

By Chaitali B. Roy

Special to the Arab Times

Some might downright dismiss him as a crazy, some as overly optimistic, others might shake their head as skeptics do, but the man to have proved them wrong is an auburn haired, bespectacled, cheery young soul from Liverpool, UK who has dared to share the dream that Jules Verne saw more than a century back in 1873, when he published his fictional novel 'Around the World in 80 Days'.

But Graham Hughes is no Phileas Fogg. He is not a fictional hero nor is he content merely circumnavigating the world. He has bigger and better plans. He has embarked on an Odyssey that will take him to every country in the world in one epic journey without flying. And while doing so he has already set a new Guinness World Record by visiting 133 countries in one year without leaving the surface of the planet.

Motive

But then that is not surprising. While explaining the motive behind what many might regard as a mad jaunt he notes, "Why do I want to go to every country in the world? Because this planet is ours. It's the only home we have known and it is the only home we will ever know. For too long the powers that be have decreed where we can and cannot go on this spinning rock of ours, our Pale Blue Dot. Their time is over — after centuries of needless bloodshed, pretty much every country in the world is now finally open for business. Let's go see 'em!" Unknown to many Graham Hughes was here in Kuwait and for a pretty long time at that on his way through the GCC countries.

Unfortunately his time here was plagued by issues of transit visas to Saudi or hitching a boat ride to Bahrain. But despite a few weeks delay, it worked out fine and Graham has once again resumed his journey. While in Kuwait he did a good bit of sight seeing, made several friends through the British Ladies Society and even took time off to speak to Arab Times.

Visa

An experienced backpacker Graham was not new to travelling when he ultimately decided to take the plunge in January 2009. Travelling and cinema had been his childhood passion and he set the stage for the grand Odyssey when he went travelling around the world in 2002. "I have backpacked around many countries before starting this journey," he said when asked about the preparation that went in for a trip such as this.

"Apart from that it was a case of going to the library and getting all the information."



British filmmaker Graham Hughes spoke to the British Ladies Society at their coffee morning at the BLS premises on May 3. Graham is travelling to all countries in the world using only public transport — no planes or cars allowed. He already holds the Guinness World Record for last year's travels. He is raising money for the UK based international charity Water Aid.

The idea had been burgeoning for long and he decided to take it one day at a time. "Sometimes when you make a plan, like when I arrived in Kuwait, I had no idea I would be stuck here for a pretty long time. This is the longest I have been in any coun-

try, so we should really take one day at a time."

He did try to hitch a ride on one of the cargo ships or oil tankers who quite understandably refused. "The only way I could get out of here was by getting a Saudi visa and that took me six weeks." But he is not complaining. He takes it all in his stride. After all this is the same man who believes that "on your death bed, do you want to look back on the stuff you bought, or the stuff you did?"

"What tires me is getting stuck. I don't get tired when I am on the move. I enjoy it too much," he explains when asked if it is tiring to travel relentlessly without a break. Graham has already been to 155 countries. "There are only 45 countries left to visit out of which five are in the GCC. It doesn't sound like that many."

But it does include countries like Eritrea, North Korea and Bhutan. I think I will be able to do it, but I don't know how long it is going to take." Graham's epic adventure, if it goes according to plan will not cost him more than \$ 27,000. He has achieved this gargantuan task through simple means like couch surfing, accepting local hospitality, sleeping on trains and ships and hitching lifts. "I have done a lot of sight seeing here," he said of his stay in Kuwait. "In some countries I don't go sight seeing as I want to go back and spend some time. I am trying to leave some stones unturned."

With a degree in Politics and Modern History from Manchester University, he runs his own studio in his hometown of Liverpool. A man of many parts, he has written and directed a number of short films and won the inaugural Liverpool 48 Hour Film Challenge in 2006. He is also very closely involved with the local music scene made famous by the legendary Beatles. "I am now hoping to break into feature films. My journey is going to be a part of an upcoming Television Series on National Geographic Adventure."

Hostile

That will my first big break in terms of film making," he explains. Speaking of his journey which has taken him from the world's largest to the smallest country, from the hostile to the friendliest of places he says, "There is not many countries I haven't been to. I am proud of that. I know where people come from and that's a great feeling." With three passports already full and a fourth on its way, (they could easily become museum pieces), he explains his choice of public transport. "I am not allowed to fly. I cannot drive. I have done a lot of it by overnight buses and trains. I have been on cargo ships and on banana boats. I have hitched rides on private yachts. It has actually been a variety of transportation. One of

the cool things I did was managing to get a lift on a big cruise ship when I was in the Caribbean. It was brilliant," he recalls. "I am willing to give any form of transport a go."

Needless to say, the journey has not been devoid of the occasional hiccups. There were times when he had to risk his freedom. In the West African Island of Cape Verde he was held for six days in a tiny, dank cell. "I was held without charge in a couple of countries in Africa. Both times it didn't dissuade me. I just felt very angry because they had no reason to lock me up. All my papers were in order. It was a waste of a lot of time, but in terms of risking my life, I do not put myself in war zones. I do not put myself into harm's way. I think a lot of backpackers do the kind of things I am doing. I take precautions. I take my pills every day because malaria is one of the biggest killers in the world."

Charities

The Odyssey undertaken by Graham Hughes is in aid of Water Aid, an international non governmental organization which aims at transforming lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world's poorest communities.

"When I think in terms of charity, I like simple charities with very clear stated goals and Water Aid is very clear in what it wants to do. It aims at supplying fresh, clean safe water to some of the poorest people in the world. It also pushes the UN to make access to clean water a basic human right because at the moment the biggest killer of children in the world is diarrhoea. It is not malaria or war or famine or poverty. It is something as simple and as preventable as diarrhoea. It does not require an expensive course of antibiotics to cure diarrhoea."

All you need is a solution of water, sugar and salt." Having travelled around the world and experienced the warmth and hospitality in many places has left Graham determined to do more. "If I can do anything to help I would love to because these are the same people who have in the course of my travels taken me into their homes and have really shown me how wonderful people all over the world are. People around the world have been so welcoming and accommodating. When I was in Iran I was blown away by the hospitality I was shown. It made me feel very positive about the world and where we are going." Witnessing a shuttle launch in the US, or being escorted on his way back from an African island by 40-50 dolphins, Graham Hughes has seen it all. To him life is one big adventure. As we follow him on his journey through his blog www.theodysseyexpedition.com, we marvel at his audacity and spirit of daring reminiscent of the British explorers of yore.

Music

Soprano Loilier and Brecourt to perform at gala concert

Stage set for finale of Treasure of Talents festival

By Valiya S. Sajjad
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, May 31: Kuwait Chamber Philharmonia (KCP) will be holding a special Gala Concert by soprano Aurelie Loilier and pianist Gaspard Brecourt at the final round of the 9th Treasure of Talents Festival on June 12 at Hashemi II Grand Ballroom in Radisson Blu Hotel.

The concert will begin at 8 pm, following the performances of the festival finalists starting from 6 pm. The festival is held under the patronage of the Ambassador of France to Kuwait, Jean Rene Gehan.

Aurelie Loilier began studying piano at the age of five. After winning several awards in piano competitions, she decided to devote herself completely to singing.

Recitals

Since 2002, she has been performing recitals regularly along with pianist Gaspard Brecourt and harpist Julien Marcou. She has also done orchestral Mozart performances at the Congress Palace in Le Mans and Soissons Abbey with Orchestra Ostinato conducted by Gaspard Brecourt.

In 2003, she began singing in prestigious concerts like 'Une Soiree avec les Fontanarosa' at Sully-sur Loire Festival, in Biarritz, Voiron, Pau, Merignac and Paris in

2006 at the 'Theatre des Champs-Elysee'.

Aurelie sang the leading roles in operas like Cinarosa's 'Matrimonio segreto' (Gattieres Festival in 2002) Menotti's 'Medium' (Paris in 2003), Donizetti's 'Elisir d'Amore' (Congress Palace le Mans in 2004), Puccini's 'La Boheme' (Theatre d'Herblay in 2005), Mozart's 'Finta Giardiniera' (Paris and Bruges Concertgebouw in 2006) and 'Cosi fan tutte' (France and China), Boieldieu's 'Jean de Paris' and 'Ma tante Aurore' (Theatre Imperiale Compiègne in 2007) among others.

At the Fontainebleau Theatre Aurelie presented sacred music from Bach, Pergolesi, Mozart and so on. In France, she rendered vocal recitals with Gaspard Brecourt. Last year, the duo performed concerts in Russia with Hermitage Ensemble, and did opera performances in Verdi's 'Traviata' and Dupray's 'Les Elements' with New Europe Orchestra in Paris.

Performed

Gaspard Brecourt did his musical studies at Master Radio France and at the CNR of Boulogne Billancourt, where he obtained top honors in piano, music theory, percussion, harmony and counterpoint.

Gaspard Brecourt worked as Head of Vocal and Songs Department in different



Pianist Gaspard Brecourt (left) and soprano Aurelie Loilier will perform in Kuwait on June 12.

opera theatres in France and abroad. Some of the theaters where he worked include l'Opera de Paris, Theatre Imperial de Compiègne, Strasbourg Opera House or Teatro Colon in Argentina.

Gaspard has also performed as an accompanist at vocal recitals. He is also the Director of of Nouvel Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France.

Since 2005, he has been conducting

operas like Puccini's 'La Boheme', Mozart's 'Cosi fan tutte' and 'Don Giovanni.' He has performed at Theatre d'Herblay, Theatre de Fontainebleau and Theatre d'Enghien among others.

Gaspard also presents sacred music from great repertoires such as Bach's St. John Passion (Chamber Orchestra of Versailles at Theatre Fontainebleau) and Mozart's Requiem with Magnard's Orchestra (Church La Madeleine).

At Theatre Imperial de Compiègne he conducted Chabrier's 'Une education manquee'. In 2007, he conducted Boieldieu's 'Jean de Paris' and 'Ma tante Aurore'. He has also conducted Mozart's 'Mariage de Figaro' and yhe world premiere of 'Cyran de Bergerac' by contemporary composer S. Xarhakos at the National Greek Opera in Athens. In Tokyo he conducted the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra.

Between 2007 and 2009, Gaspard was the Musical Director of 'Theatre Francais de la Musique'

Among his other projects are Carmen by G.Bizet, Cyran de Roxane in Compiègne and Metz, several concerts in Japan with the T.M.S.O and the Kyushu Symphony Orchestra. He will conduct the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra in 2012.

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examinees, (who took their exams in March 2010) by the Central Board of Secondary Education of Delhi. The result of Classes X and XII are declared around the third week of May every year as per the practice the second phase of helpline will begin on the day of the declaration of Class XII results and will continue up to 15 days thereafter.

The exact date of declaration of Class X results will be announced through this column. For details call: Asha Sharma at 4340882 from 8 am till 12 noon on all the working days for 15 days after all India Senior School Certificate examination result declaration.

June 2

IEI announces seminar: The Institution of Engineers (India) Kuwait Chapter is pleased to announce a seminar on June 2, 2010 at 6:45 pm at the Seminar Hall of Kuwait Society of Engineers on the following topics: 1. "Brief introduction of General Conditions of Contract, Legal Clauses and Conditions (1971). December 1997, Revised Edition." Speaker: Engr Mohammed Fareedul Haq Imadi, Project Administrator, Hill International. 2. "Real Time Operation Systems". Speaker: Engr P. Karunakaran, Senior Specialized Engineer, Water

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