

## PET PALACE

### people & their pets

Look out for the Arab Times series, the Pet Palace, and read about how people and their animals enrich each other's lives.

The Palace welcomes submissions by our readers. If you'd like to tell the world about your pet, send us a photograph and accompanying article for publication.



— Editor

Elsa the Yorkshire gets a professional haircut during a grooming competition at the Pet Expo 2019, a pet show in Bucharest, Romania on April 13. (AP)

By Juarawee Kittisilpa

It started as an over-sized litter and turned into a business plan.

When customers walk into Bangkok's "Corgi in the Garden" cafe, they're greeted by a dozen fluffballs on stubby legs rushing out to greet them, jump in laps and shake hands for treats.

The cafe houses 12 corgis, whose popularity has been soaring among Thai dog lovers for their roly-poly build and an almost infallible ability to make people smile.

"They're funny dogs, like their appearances, short and stubby. These are their unique appearances which I like," said cafe owner Tanchanok Kanawaong, the cafe owner.

"And I also like their laughable characteristics as well, they're so funny."

In Tokyo, Bangkok and other cities, "cat cafes" have been popular for years. The corgi cafe is roughly the same model - just for aficionados of the specific breed of dog most famously beloved by Britain's Queen Elizabeth II.

The queen's last purebred corgi died in October 2018. She kept some 30 corgis in her life, even inspiring an animated film "The Queen's Corgi" which has yet to get a release date.

Back in Bangkok, Tanchanok's commoner corgis are being put to work six days a week - but with plenty of nap breaks and run time in the garden, she says.

Customers pay about \$11 for one-hour sessions with the dozen corgis with names like Porkchop, Pumpkin, Salmon, Bean, and Babycorn.

One customer, 36-year-old Chutima Jaroonjintayanon, said she's here to "learn more about their characteristics" as she was considering getting a corgi of her own.

Tanchanok said she hadn't planned on running a corgi cafe, but a surprise litter of pups gave her the idea.

"I just wanted to share the love and happiness," she says. "Two of my dogs had seven puppies ... and the number grew, so we wanted to spread the joy with others."

Also:

PHILADELPHIA: The Philadelphia Orchestra's music director has gone to the dogs. And the cats.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin (yah-NEEK' nay-ZAY' say-GEN') has curated a playlist for four-legged friends that's being piped into the shelter at the Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

He debuted the playlist at the shelter last week. He says he was inspired by watching his own cats' reactions to music and wanted to create a soothing atmosphere for the shelter pets.

Scientific research has shown classical music is beneficial for a wide range of animals, including dogs and cats, by creating a calming environment.

Among Nézet-Séguin's suggestions are Chopin's nocturnes, which he says are ideal for afternoon cat naps.

Nézet-Séguin's playlist is available on Apple Music and Spotify. He also provides a personal note with each selection highlighting why he chose the work.

### Kuwait



Kuwait City during sunset. - Nourah Edhbayah-KUNA

### New Look

#### Provides safe environment for children of working mothers

## Lulua risks her life to bring hope to those in despair

This is the fourth in a series of articles on Lulua Abdul Wahab Isa Al Qatami, a pioneer of women's movement in Kuwait and in the Arabian Gulf.

— Editor

By Lidia Qattan

Special to the Arab Times

Higher education and the rising expectation of modern living led many women in Kuwait to seek employment outdoors; this triggered a new problem in society that prompted Lulua and her colleagues to find a solution.

With mothers working, little children were left in the care of foreign maids unqualified for such a delicate task.

Left in their custody without the supervision of their mother, the youngsters ran the risk of growing up spoiled.

The obvious solution was to provide a safe, enlightened environment for them in which they were happy and were provided with an early start in formal education.

In 1974 the Women's Cultural Society opened the first nursery in Kuwait; it began as an experiment with 7 children from the age of two to four.

The "Hathana Al Bustan" (The Garden Nursery) had a clinic, an internal playground and a team of highly qualified personnel: music and art teachers and health supervisors looking after the youngsters.

From the start the nursery was so successful that from one room in a rented house in Abdullah Al Salem district, was extended to seven class-rooms and about two hundred children: girls and boys frequenting it.

The nursery became so popular that

parents had to book a place for their child one year in advance; this spurred the society to open a branch at the Essential Education Institute in Kaifan for 50 children.

For its high standard the Garden Nursery was listed among the places for visitors to see as a fair example of the work done by Kuwaiti women volunteers.

#### Concerned

Concerned for the children of students and employees at the Kuwait University, in 1980, Lulua presented another plan for a standard nursery and held numerous meetings for the project to be adopted, but it was never implemented.

Among the proud achievements of the Women's Cultural Society were establishing two "Kari Al Hanan" (Village of Tender Caring), one in Lebanon and another in Sudan for which a large fund had to be gathered.

Among the many strategies adopted for raising the money was the Beneficence Bazaar, which, together with some very generous contributions from wealthy patrons made possible the realization of those villages.

The Karyia al Hanan in Lebanon was founded in 1979, housing 60 orphans provided with an education and trained for their future.

The village in Sudan is larger, it includes a clinic, a training center for women, a mosque and a school for el-

ementary and secondary education; activities based on agriculture and animal husbandry provide financial support to workers and employees.

2,000 orphans benefit from this institution, in which the personnel looking after the children are mostly mothers carefully selected for the task.

Both these villages have evoked the admiration of the UNICEF - the world organization for children's care, and the support of the Royal Family, especially from HH the late Amir, Sheikh Jaber al Ahmed, HH the late Father Amir, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Salem, and from HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed since the time he was Minister of Foreign Affairs.

To alleviate human suffering caused by wars or natural disasters around the world Lulua and her companions were at the forefront of those helping out, even risking their lives to bring a ray of hope to those in despair.

Incidentally, Lulua's fight for the emancipation of woman developed into a ruling passion from the time she became involved in the women movement that began in 1987, that year in cooperation with the Center of "Annulment Illiteracy" at the Ministry of Education, Lulua opened morning classes for adults at the society itself to stamp out illiteracy in the country.

The response of women to learning was so encouraging that the Ministry opened 8 centers for morning classes in town and suburbs at the elementary and intermediate levels of education.

At the same time many conferences were held on behalf of fighting illiteracy in the Third World, and Lulua Al Qatami was chosen by the UNESCO to act as Ambassador in this field.

Since the sixties as more women began leaving home for paying jobs, financial independence made them to challenge the old concept of married life; the result was a sharp increase in the divorce rate.

Alert to the new problem Lulua and her colleagues set-up a Family Council in 1965, and organized meetings and conferences to discuss the issue with the cooperation of University professors and men of Religion. In 1983 a Bureau was formed for discussing laws safeguarding family and children welfare.

Women's emancipation can never be fully achieved unless they have a saying in the Parliament where they can represent their cause and the cause of their children.

The true concept and spirit of democracy is the involvement of both men and women in government affairs.

#### Abrogated

As mentioned, the Kuwaiti Constitution written in 1962, and approved by the Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al Salem Al Sabah holds equal rights, duties and privileges for women as for men, but the first Parliament elected in 1963, and all subsequent ones elected through the years abrogated the rights of women to vote and run for Parliament thereby defeating the true purpose of democracy in the country.

This made Lulua determined to redeem women's political right in regional and global conferences, in which she represented the Kuwait women's movement, beginning with the fourth Berlin World Woman's conference in 1975.

From that time Lulua's stand for woman's suffrage in parliamentary



Lulua Al Qatami

election, has been constant, till poor health got the best of her.

When she brought the matter before the Kuwaiti Parliament and high authorities, it gained the support of the more enlightened segment of society and of eminent men, first among them was the Prime Minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Salem Al Sabah, but the conservatives remained closed on the issue, they even influenced their women, who using religion rose in protest of women's suffrage, refusing their constitutional political right the others were striving to regain.

Shocked by the protests of those women Lulua reminded them that Islam itself has granted to women the right of equality

It is of crucial importance for woman to play a more active role in politics if the country is to be truly democratic and progressive; because woman has different ways than man in looking at life.

A woman's family and children responsibility makes her more conscious of their welfare; this is reflected in her stand in political and social involvement.

Obviously the myth concerning women's participation in politics still linger on, in spite of those who have the power to influence a change have recognized women's contribution in the advancement of their country and their importance in political affairs.

First among them was HH Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad who as soon as he became Prime Minister in 2005, he chose a lady, Dr Masouma Mubarak to be part of his Cabinet of Ministers. In the following year 25 women ran for parliamentary election, but none was elected, in the election of 2009, 4 women became MPs, in the next 2 were elected and soon resigned.

Obviously women's true participation in politics has to come from society itself, a society free from old myths and believes.

People act and make choices according to their belief; we consciously alter our belief by thinking about it, questioning and testing it.

We create our belief and opinion through personal experience, knowledge of the world and cultural inculcation; as we gain new knowledge due to sophisticated discoveries and social media our view of the world changes, indeed we come to realize what works and what needs changing.

We are reluctant to change our belief because it holds everything together, it makes sense to us, losing that belief is like losing that sense of the world that gives structure and meaning to our lives.

To be continued

April 19

**STECI Passion Week Service:** Passion Week Service of St Thomas Evangelical Church of India Kuwait Parish will be as follows. 19th April Good Friday Service from 10.30 am to 1.00 pm at KTMCC Hall and Easter Service on 21st April Sunday 4.30 am to 6.00 am at KTMCC Hall. Good Friday message will be delivered by Rev Johnson Alexander,

Vicar of St Peters CSI Church. Parish vicar Rev John Mathew will lead all sessions. During this week the members are requested to avoid one-time meal daily and use that amount to feed those who are in hunger and need. 'Uposhanavaram' offertory will be collected during the Good Friday Service. For more details contact 99601739/97678480.

Continued on Page 18

click

Latest

Continued from Page 14

St Paul's Church Holy Week: St

Paul's Anglican Church, Ahmadi, Kuwait, is open and welcomes all who wish to attend the following English services during Holy Week and Easter:

■ **Maundy Thursday:** April 18 at 5:15-7:15 pm. This service is a commemoration of the institution of the Holy Eucharist which forms a very central and key part of Christian worship and the washing of feet. Venue: Church House at No. 7, 6th Street

North, Block 14, Ahmadi, Kuwait. A communal meal will be served after the service.

■ **Good Friday:** April 19 at 9-11 am. Join the Christian Church in commemorating the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ its founder and Savior. Meditation upon the Last Seven Words spoken by Jesus Christ on the Cross and Reflection on the Passion Narrative will form the liturgy. The

Church's Youth Group has a special presentation. Refreshments will be served with Hot Cross Buns after the service.

■ **Easter Sunday:** April 21 at 7-8:15 pm at St Paul's Anglican Church, Ahmadi. This is quite ideal for those people who have work commitments during daytime.